

MR ST. JOHN BRANIGAN, formerly Commissioner of the Otago Police, died on Wednesday.

THE Sydney Morning 'Herald' says: "New Zealand has a fine resource in its pastures. From what is generally known about the runs in the two colonies, it is quite safe to say, that on the average, it takes more land to produce a pound of wool in New South Wales than it does in New Zealand."

THE 'Hawkes Bay Herald,' a strong supporter of the present Ministry, says, in a recent leading article, that "disaffection is rife on the East Coast, and may, as it did at Poverty Bay a few days ago, burst forth at any moment."

ONE of the Auckland papers boasts of a runner who earns from 15s to 20s a week by collecting coppers, threepenny bits, and small change, and exchanging them with the hotelkeepers at a slight remunerative discount. This young boy can always oblige any publican or shopkeeper with ten shillings worth of coppers, for which he expects to receive ten shillings and sixpence.

MR VOGEL, says the Wellington correspondent of the 'Thames Advertiser,' referring to the debate on the question of reduction of duty on gold, made a remark which contained a good deal of truth—namely, that no doubt all those members who spoke in favor of the reduction would feel themselves bound to vote for it, but that they would feel much obliged to other members to vote on the other side, and so defeat them. The gold-mining interest, the correspondent says, is victimised in New Zealand. Money is borrowed for railways and public works and for immigration, while the gold produce is specially taxed, and public works for the development of the industry are sparingly granted, and only on terms of sure repayment to the Government. The reduction of sixpence, carried in a former Session, on the gold duty, was obtained in the House by a "fluke," which is not likely to be repeated.

THE 'Bruce Herald,' referring to the larcin element at Milton, says:—"It may not be thought that, in a small village such as this, there is but little fear of evil consequences resulting from boys being allowed to amuse themselves on the streets for an hour or two of an evening. We have no doubt parents think so, otherwise so many boys would not be found prowling about when they ought either to be in their beds or improving their minds at home." It then hints of very gross doings of which it has been informed, on the part of boys prowling about under cover of night, and strongly warns parents to keep their boys at home. It closes with an extract:—"Where is your Boy at night?—The practice of allowing boys to spend their evenings in the streets is one of the most ruinous, dangerous, and mischievous things possible. Nothing so speedily and surely marks their course downward. They acquire, under the cover of night, an unhealthy state of the mind, vulgar and profane language, obscene practices, criminal sentiments, and a lawless, riotous bearing. Indeed it is in the streets, after nightfall, that boys generally acquire the education and the capacity of becoming rowdy, dissolute men. Parents, do you believe it? Will you keep your children home at nights, and see that their home is made pleasant and profitable?"

THE Wellington correspondent of the 'Lyttelton Times' thinks that the Education Bill will stand a very poor chance of getting through the Upper House. "The subject, also," he says, "is one on which many of the honorables would like to express themselves at considerable length, and altogether, the Education Bill, 1873, is evidently already doomed to be one of the innocents slaughtered this year."

ACCORDING to the North Otago 'Times,' Newcastle coal is selling at Oamaru, at £6 a ton.

A MAORI named Tai Tu was burned to death in his hut on Mr James Crane's farm, Taieri Beach, on the 4th inst. Deceased, who was about seventy years of age, and was distantly related to Mrs Crane, slept, in accordance with Maori usage, on the bare ground in a hut, wrapped in a blanket near a fire. He was seen alive, previous to thus retiring, on the evening of the 4th inst., and on the following morning the hut was found burned down, and all that remained of deceased was the charred trunk of his body.

## TELEGRAMS.

(From the daily papers.)

WELLINGTON, September 5th.—Captain Baldwin, one of the directors of the National Insurance Company, proceeds to Napier to-day, in the Paterson. While here he has imparted a fresh impetus to the share list, and applications are coming in rapidly. Twelve thousand shares have been applied for here.

The s.s. Rangitira, which has arrived from Jackson's Head, reports that the wreck of the Rangitoto has broken into three pieces.

The commission of (Militia) Major Finmore, of Wanganui, has been cancelled.

ALEXANDRA, September 5th.—Te Kuri, who was formerly in charge of the akaki in Orahiri, warns the Europeans who are depositing their cattle inside the King's boundary to remove their cattle, or they will be driven away. The Natives have leased the land to the Europeans, but the Kingites are determined to prevent them from occupying it.

AUCKLAND, September 6th.—The barque Lady Bowen, bound from Sydney to London, has put in here, with 30 feet of her bulwarks carried away, and short of water, owing to the capsizing of her tanks. She will probably be detained a week.

The shares in the National Insurance Company applied for here now number 25,005.

OAMARU, September 6th.—Some blocks of concrete have been successfully deposited at the site of the breakwater by means of the steam crane manufactured in Dunedin. The weather was fine at the time, and there were numerous visitors present.

CLYDE, September 6th.—The gable of the Alexandra brewery fell whilst being repaired, killing a man named Edward Thompson, breaking the thigh of another man, named Simmons, and badly bruising a third man.

MAKETU, September 8th.—Messrs Davis and Mitchell have purchased a million acres of land for the government, and are negotiating for other purchases.

NELSON, September 8th.—A tremendous thunderstorm took place to-day. The rainfall was quite unprecedented.

WELLINGTON, September 8th.—Judge Rogan has withdrawn his action for libel against Mr Ballance editor of the 'Wanganui Herald.'

AUCKLAND, September 8th.—A large schooner built for Captain Read, Poverty Bay, was launched to-day. She was christened the Julius Vogel. A steamer for the Waikato river has been launched at Onehunga.

WELLINGTON, September 9th.—To-day before the Supreme Court, Mr Travers applied for a writ of *habeas corpus* for the bodies of the prisoners from the ship William Tapscott, who are now in gaol. The writ was granted.

Mr Halcombe, the Agent in New Zealand of the Emigrant's and Colonist's Corporation, yesterday paid £15,000 to the General Government, on account of the Fielding purchase.

## GREAT FIRE AT AUCKLAND.

AUCKLAND, September 7th. THE largest and most destructive fire that has ever occurred in Auckland, broke out in the centre of Queen street at 12 o'clock last night. The fire was discovered in Rowley's millinery establishment. The Fire Brigades were soon on the spot, but water being scarce, their services were almost useless. The whole of the west side of Queen street, from Victoria street to Newmarket House at the bottom of Cook street, is in ashes. So also is the lower half of Wellesley street. Altogether 58 buildings are down. The premises of Mr Whitson, brewer, Newmarket House, and the east side of Queen street, had a narrow escape, being several times on fire. A large number of the buildings destroyed were uninsured. The total destruction of property is estimated at about £60,000. Darby's Thistle Hotel and two adjoining buildings were insured for £1000, and the stock and furniture for £7000. Mr Darby estimates his loss at £4000. The United Service Hotel, owned by Mr Hancock, was insured for about £3500, including the stock. Mr Hancock loses £2000, and on other properties altogether about £4000, being £5000 above his insurance. On the previous day he had taken in £300 worth of stock. The Anchor Hotel, owned by Mr King, was partly insured. The Central Hotel, owned by Mr Whitson, was insured. The following is a list of the principal places destroyed:—

Queen street.—Darby's Thistle Hotel; premises of Caley, baker; Smith, green-grocer; Young, butcher; Currie, blacksmith; Newnegan, pawnbroker; Page, Central Hotel; Schwartz, watchmaker and jeweller; Rowley, milliner; Jamieson Bros., boot warehouse; Mathieson, confectioner; Broad, locksmith; Grey, confectioner; Blair and Lambert, grocers; Watson, grocer; Hancock's United Service Hotel; Mark, pawnbroker; Bartlett, photographer; Duuning, green-grocer; Brookes, bootmaker; Hemus, bootmaker; Williams, chemist; Aery, watchmaker; Henderson, bootmaker; Harrison, tobacconist; Marsh, grocer; Saunders, tailor; Barnett, pork butcher; Farriner, watchmaker; Williams's Anchor Hotel; Lendrum's livery and bait stables.

Wellesley street.—Webb's Buildings; premises of Possaniskie, tailor; Mair, grocer; Coupland, hay store; Ward, paperhangar; China Bazaar.

Several accidents occurred. Three firemen fell from a verandah, and one of them named James Fuljames was seriously hurt. A man named Charles Bowden dropped down dead in the street during the fire. Mr Williams, proprietor of the Anchor Hotel, broke a blood vessel, and lies dangerously ill. During the fire a N.E. gale was blowing. Heavy rain commenced immediately after, and has continued since.

September 8.—The fire has excited a great outcry relative to the want of a water supply. No water was obtainable, and although the two fire brigades promptly attended, they were unable to do much good. An attempt to pull down Mr Neumege's premises to stay the progress of the fire failed. A strong gale blew the flames along with fearful rapidity, licking up the dry wooden buildings in a few minutes. The fire was stopped by the intervening spaces of the Old Market site next the Thistle Hotel, and Newmarket place, at the bottom of Grey street. The whole of the intermediate blocks were burned out, the fire crossing Wellesley street. Many of the buildings destroyed were very old wooden structures, and their destruction, it is believed, will effect a great improvement in the appearance of Queen street. The following are the total insurance losses:—Royal, £3535; Scottish Commercial, £1600; Norwich Union, £3700; New Zealand, £1750; South British, £2050; Pacific, £1000; Victoria, £1900; Liverpool and London, £700; Northern, £200; total, £16,435. No clue to the cause of the fire has been obtained.

TIMARU, September 10.—The Lady of the Lake left Oamaru at 7 o'clock last night, to proceed to the Molyneux. Soon after leaving she sprung a leak. Captain Fall made for Timaru, where the vessel was beached splendidly at 10 this morning. She then had 6ft. of water in her hold, and the crew had been baling and pumping all night. The water at one time was near the fires. Captain Fall displayed great judgment in beaching her. The vessel is apparently not much injured, and may be got off. She will not be sold. The sea is now very high.

A pathetic incident, says the 'Pilot,' occurred during the floods at Binghampton. A Mrs Fox residing near the cemetery gate, heard, in the morning, a peculiar moaning in the direction of the cemetery. Going there she found a little child waist-deep in water and weeping near a headstone, which marked a lonely grave. Upon being questioned, she said that she lived a long way off. She had heard that the graves were covered with water, and she feared that her mother's would be washed away. So she went to keep her poor watch and ward beside it. She was kindly cared for, and returned to her motherless home.