

Hon. Evelyn Ashley, Political secretary to the Colonial Office, replied that the verdicts were of a surprising character, but that it was impossible for the Imperial authorities to interfere.

Prince Bismarck is urging the Clerical party to withdraw their objection to the subsidy of the direct mail line to Australia.—How the questions of religion and navigation, nevertheless, are mixed up in this particular matter, it is difficult to understand.

Major Kitchener, who for some past has been in command of a body of Bedouin irregular troops stationed at Korosko, telegraphs from that town that he sighted the rebel army during a recent reconnaissance. Detailed accounts from independent resources confirm Major Kitchener's report, and show that a strong body of rebels is marching from Korosko town, about half-way between Assouan and Wady Halfa, 100 miles from the southern boundary of Upper Egypt, and commanding the passage of the Nile. Another body of Arabs is known to be marching towards Dongola, an important Nubian town above the third cataract of the Nile. In view of the threatened attacks of Arabs and their possible advance farther northward, the Sussex Regiment has been ordered to proceed at once to Assouan, the frontier town of Upper Egypt, and an important strategical position. The increasing gravity of the situation is causing considerable alarm, and anxiety is felt for the garrisons and inhabitants of Dongola and Korosko, which are believed to be threatened with attack. Another regiment will follow the Royal Sussex to Assouan within a short time, in order to strengthen the garrison at that place.

WEDNESDAY.

The Selwyn County Council have consented to give 4d a dozen for the destruction of sparrows, chaffinches, green linnets, and skylarks.

A child named White, at Wellington, had the muscles and sinews of one of its legs torn away below the knee by getting its leg entangled in a trolley wheel while the trolley was in motion.

A few days ago it was mentioned that two apprentices of the barque Examiner had been poisoned by eating a tin of jam with a Hobart label. One of them, named Frank Trew, died yesterday afternoon at Sumner. It is not certain that death is directly attributable to the jam, but it was undoubtedly accelerated by it.

A correspondent of the *Daily Times* telegraphs from Wellington:—"On the news reaching Wellington that a requisition was being signed requesting Sir Julius Vogel to stand for Dunedin Central, Mr. Bracken intimated to Sir Julius that he would not oppose so able and experienced a politician, providing that Sir Julius would stick to the Liberal party. In reply, Sir Julius gave Mr. Bracken to understand that he had not the slightest intention of opposing him, as, from what he had learned, Mr. Bracken was trusted and esteemed by Mr. Macandrew and other leading Liberals. On receipt of this reply Mr. Bracken made up his mind to stand for Dunedin Central, and to contest the seat against all aspirants."

A careful examination of the remains found at the Three Kings, Auckland, showed that they must have been in the ground for many years—in all probability a quarter of a century. Of course it is a common occurrence to find the remains of Maoris in the volcanic caves around and in the vicinity of the Three Kings; but Mr. Bishop says the Maoris never interred their dead in the manner this body was buried, and he does not think, even though the remains are those of a Maori, that they were buried there by a Maori. There is one remarkable thing in connection with this discovery—viz., that the large bone of one of the fore arms appears to have, at one time, been fractured, but the setting of the fracture appears, by its newness, to have been the result of considerable surgical skill.

At the Odd-Fellows' Hall, Christchurch, last night, the infant Blondins exhibiting on the tight-rope, the eldest, a girl of about 11 years, who had just completed 52 miles, having been walking all day, took her little brother, two and a half years old, on her back and mounted the tight-rope. He was blindfolded, but not fastened to her. Her stocking being wet with perspiration caused her to slip, and she screamed, "I am falling!" and immediately fell, fortunately from no great height, as she was over the stage. She sustained no further injury than a bruise on one arm and a considerable shake. The little fellow was also considerably bruised. The police at once stopped the performance, and the father of the children promised not to continue the show.

The following is the substance of the convention which, as Lord Kimberly announced in the House of Lords on the 16th inst., has been agreed to by the French and English Governments as preliminary to holding the projected European conference on Egyptian affairs. By the terms of the convention it is stipulated that the present British occupation shall cease, and British troops be withdrawn at the beginning of 1885, if the other European Powers consider that the stability and tranquility of the country will then be sufficient to warrant the adoption of such course. With regard to the question of Egyptian finance, it is agreed that in order to secure the control of the Egyptian national debt, and extend the control of the budget, the office of President of the Egyptian Council of Ministers shall be held by an Englishman. The convention also refers to the necessity for ensuring the preservation of Egyptian neutrality in time of war. In this connection England engages hereafter to propose the adoption by the Powers of a treaty similar to that by which in 1870 England, Prussia, and France agreed to respect the neutrality of the Kingdom of Belgium. The agreement to neutralise the Suez Canal is based upon Lord Granville's circular of January, 1883. Mr. Gladstone has stated that the agreement is entirely contingent upon the results of the projected Conference, but if Parliament rejects it the Government will resign.

THURSDAY.

At the annual meeting of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, Mr. L. D. Nathan (president) delivered the usual address. He regretted that he was unable to congratulate members on a successful year. As a reflex action of the Southern depression, the demand for kauri had fallen off in that market and in Australia, and there was a glut in American and Baltic timber. He eulogised the San Francisco mail service as the best we ever had, and thought it would be supreme folly to supersede it by a worse. He condemned the so-called

improvement of the bankruptcy laws. Mr. G. Reid was elected president for the ensuing year.

The sixth annual meeting of the Bakaia and Ashburton Forks Railway Company was held yesterday afternoon. The report showed that the line has been paying over 3½ per cent, after deducting all charges. The organised opposition to the district rate has prevented it being completed, but when this has been settled in a court of justice the directors will be in a position to declare a dividend. The traffic receipts were £7,500, and the revenue in excess of working expenses £2,570. Mr. B. M. Morten was elected a director, and £50 voted to the directors for their services.

In the House of Commons on Monday night Mr. Gladstone made a statement regarding the convention which has been concluded between England and France in regard to Egyptian affairs. The Premier announced that it was optional with England to withdraw her troops from Egypt before 1888; that France had repudiated the idea that she desired a renewal of the dual control, or an Anglo-French occupation, after the British evacuation. The Premier further stated that the Conference of European delegates will meet to decide upon Egyptian financial questions, and that the decision thereon will be submitted to Parliament; and failing the approval by Parliament of them, the Government will resign.—The Hon. E. Ashley announced that 1000 British troops are under orders to proceed to Natal to reinforce the garrisons in that colony, and that it has been decided to increase the forces in the reserve territory in Zululand.

In the French Chambers, during a discussion on the Egyptian question, M. Ferry spoke in praise of England's lofty and disinterested policy, but the Chamber dissented from his statement. The *Standard* doubts whether the agreement between England and France will escape shipwreck. The *Times* complains that England concedes too much and receives nothing in return. The English Press generally complin of the want of knowledge shown in the financial proposals. It is probable that the Opposition in Parliament will bring down a vote of censure on the Government after the conclusion of the Conference.

The German Reichstag is unlikely to pass the proposed subsidy for a German mail service to Australia. Prince Bismarck states that the grasping policy of the English colonists in the Pacific is offensive and irritating to Germany.

Cholera of a sporadic character has broken out at Toulon. Numerous deaths have already occurred, and a panic has arisen, with the result that an exodus of the residents is proceeding. General precautions against the spread of cholera have been taken on the Continent. The mortality at Toulon from the disease is decreasing.

In the House of Lords Earl Granville has announced that the British Government had decided to waive the claim to the district of Angra Pejuma, west coast of Africa, regarding which diplomatic negotiations have been proceeding between the English and German Governments.

London, April 25.—A tremendous excitement was caused here this afternoon by the arrest of a supposed dynamiter in Dublin, and the statement that he was the redoubtable P. J. Sheridan. Many of the evening papers issued special editions, with huge headlines, and the eagerness with which they were bought and read shows the vast hold that the dynamite fever still has on the minds of the people. It was soon known that the arrest, which at one time promised such important results, had been made through the vigilance of special detectives recently sent from London to Dublin by Sir William Vernon Harcourt, on the advice of Chief Inspector Jenkinson and Chief Secretary Trevelyan. The Home Secretary was sitting in the House of Commons when the news was received of the capture of Sheridan, and many members from both sides of the House flocked around him to offer their congratulations. While they were thus engaged, somewhat to the interruption of business, later news was received to the effect that the supposed Invincible was only a harmless commercial traveller, carrying dynamite samples for innocent uses, and the members quickly withdrew to their seats, some of the Tories looking rather sheepish over their effusiveness.

OTAGO LAND BOARD.—At Wednesday's meeting consideration of J. McBride's letter respecting the payment of arrears of rent on a section at Waihemo was deferred. T. Nichol's application for deferred payment license section 14, block XVI, Blackstone, was granted; G. Turnbull's application to purchase 20 acres, section 32, block XIII, was referred to the district land officer; W. Mason's application to exchange section 39, block II, for section 3 and 4. Dart, was refused. On the application of G. Cooper, it was agreed to offer section 40, block IX, as land of special value. W. S. Cooper's application to lease, for lignite-raising five acres, section 8, block III, Wendon, was referred to the Schools Commissioners. J. O'Brien's application to purchase section 2 and part of 3, block I, Tuapeka East, was referred to the district lands officer. W. Shirres' application for a water-race license on the Waitaki river was granted. It was agreed to issue a license to J. H. Jenkinson to occupy sections 1, 2, 19, 20, block XV, Port Molyneux, at £1 per annum. B. Charles' license, section 15, block III, Lauder, was forfeited. J. Whitburn's application for a fish-farm at Silver Lake, Dart, was refused. On the application of Mr. Withey to purchase quarry reserve, block VII, Waihemo, it was resolved that the land and, as it contained a watering-place for cattle, should not be sold. On the application of A. Allan, it was agreed to offer section 17, block X, Waitahuna West at 25s per acre. Certificates of application for gold-mining leases in block II, Cairn Hill, were approved as follows:—Sections 38 and 39, James Higgins; section 33, Richard, Milner and others; section 40, J. T. Baker and others; section 30, James White; section 40, George Lithgoe; section 42, James McCormick and others; section 36, R. J. Pitches and another. The application of H. Russell and T. Caldwell to purchase sections 32 and 34, block VII, Rock and Pillar, was approved. The following applications to purchase deferred-payment leases were approved of:—Edward Walders, section 2, block III, Waipahi; John Ballantine, sections 14, 15, and 16, block XXV, East Gore; James Tamblin, section 3, block IX, Teviot. The application of W. Moffitt and E. Vial to lease section 7, block III, Waikaitia was referred to the School Commissioners.