

been taken from his head in the interval. An inquest will probably be held.

There is a story going round the lobbies (says the Wellington correspondent of the *Daily Times*) in reference to Mr. Thomson's interview with Sir George Grey, which is certainly very good, and is solemnly averred to have the further merit of being true. Mr. Thomson was accompanied by Mr. Wakefield, and the interview is said to have been of the briefest character. Directly the hon. member for Clutha appeared, and before he had time to say a word, Sir George is reported to have said, "Good morning, Mr. Thomson. I've no doubt you will form a very good Ministry. Good morning, Mr. Thomson." There the "interview" absolutely ended, and it is generally agreed that, supposing the yarn to be true, never was such delicate business transacted in such an expeditious manner.

The *Bruce Herald* reports the death of Mr. John Tobin, fellow-monger, of Kaitangata, who was drowned by falling into the river on Monday evening. He went to his home with a companion about 9 o'clock, and sent his friend into the house to light the lamp. Having done so, the other party, not seeing him about, went to the towaship and made enquiries. Not finding him at either of the hotels, he went home. Next morning the body of Tobin was found in the river. The bank is about 20 yards from his house, and he had evidently fallen in almost directly after he had left his friend to light the candle. He had evidently made an effort to recover himself, as when the body was found the hands were full of grass from the river bank, which he had no doubt clutched in the endeavour to save himself. Mr. Tobin has been resident in Kaitangata for the last 11 years, and was held in high esteem by his friends and neighbours.

An inquiry into the accident to the Ringarooma was held at Lyttelton yesterday afternoon before Mr. J. Olliver, R.M., and Captains Saunders and McIntyre, nautical assessors. Voluminous evidence was taken, showing that when the ship struck she was going four or five knots, and should, by reckoning, have been 20 miles to the south and a little easterly of her real position. She was so close to land that a biscuit could have been thrown ashore, but the fog was so thick that the land could not be seen till a gust of wind slightly lifted the fog. After she struck soundings were not taken, as the captain had no doubt of his position. There was scarcely any wind, and no broken water, only a swell. The captain had at times experienced an indraught current setting in shore off Banks Peninsula. The compasses were all right. No log had been used by the officers or crew the night before the accident.

It is reported that New South Wales will place a five-million loan in the market in the autumn.

Dr. Nachtigal has annexed Paquena and territory to the southward of the Orange River.

Five thousand British troops, under the command of General Earle, are expected to reach Dongola on December 6, *en route* to Khartoum, to the relief of General Gordon.

The Chinese Government has forbidden the evacuation of Langson. Intelligence is to hand from Peking that the flag at the French Embassy of that city has been lowered, and that the protection of French subjects resident there has been confided to the Russian Legation. In consequence of the definite refusal of the Chinese Government to accept the French ultimatum, all hopes of averting war have been abandoned, and diplomatic relations with China were formally interrupted to-day, when M. Ferry forwarded his passports to Hi Fong Pao, the Chinese Ambassador. Instructions have been sent to Admiral Courbet to take steps to obtain reparation from China on account of the Langson affair without further delay, and it is expected that active hostilities will at once be commenced by the French war-vessels in Chinese waters.

Telegrams to hand from the Transvaal state that the Republican Executive has issued a proclamation at Pretoria announcing the creation of a Boer Republic in Zululand, and its refusal to further recognise the independence of native Zulu chieftains.

#### MONDAY.

Sir George Grey (says the correspondent of the *Otago Daily Times*) is preserving great reticence as to his intentions, but there is no doubt he is still hoping to be able to form a Ministry. He has had a long interview with the Hon. G. M. Waterhouse, but with what result has not transpired. It is not thought at all likely, however, that he will get any assistance from that quarter beyond friendly counsel. There is a rumour current that, failing the co-operation of older politicians, Sir George will try a Ministry of "young bloods," and various aspiring young members are mentioned as likely to be honoured with an invitation to join him. Sir George Grey is said to be particularly desirous of forming a Ministry of some kind, and that it should be afforded an opportunity of bringing down a policy, as he has several measures which he considers of great importance, and is anxious to submit. It is said, however, that they are not of a very practical character. A general impression still prevails either that Sir George will not be able to form a Ministry at all, or that, if he does, it will be opposed at the earliest possible moment and defeated.

A decision was given in the Ringarooma inquiry on Saturday. The Court found that the Ringarooma had steered the usual course till about 20 miles off the Peninsula. There the set of the current had carried her nearer the land than was supposed, though the lead might have been heaved oftener; yet when the vessel struck everything was done by the captain to ensure the safety of the vessel and passengers. The discipline of the crew seemed admirable. They would direct that the certificates of the captain and officers be returned. They would not direct the costs to be given against the captain.

Satisfactory headway (says the *Mount Ida Chronicle*) is being made with the construction of the Government head-race to Spec Gully. Nearly two miles have been completed, and there is every probability that a large quantity of water will be used for mining purposes in Spec during the approaching season. There is some talk of an attempt being made to work some of the terraces on the east side of Main Gully, where, it is asserted, wages from £2 to £5 per week could be made, if water were available at a reasonable price.

Many miners in the district who have been working unpayable ground for some time past are on the look-out for new El Dorados, and the signs betoken that during the coming season mining matters will be more than ordinarily active.

The *Thames Advertiser* reports the following extraordinary case:—A woman named Mrs. Freeman, who resides somewhere in the vicinity of Waio-Karaka Flat, labours under a singular hallucination, respecting which she has for a long time been the cause of annoyance to the police and court authorities. The burden of her complaint is that a number of boys are in the habit of invading her house at all hours and "holding heated irons to her face and body," and that she is in continual fear that they will do her some injury or destroy her property. Though her statement does not carry the least probability, the police have at various times made enquiries in order to ascertain for themselves whether the woman had any ground for complaint, but have come to the conclusion that she is the victim of monomania. As, however, she is perfectly harmless, it is not considered necessary that she should be placed under restraint.

The *Wellington Post* criticises Mr. Hatch as follows:—"The new member for Invercargill had not uttered a dozen sentences when it became evident that he was an unmitigated bore, with every promise of developing into a Parliamentary nuisance of the Rees and Speight type. His assurance appears as unbounded as his wit is poor. The House has rarely, if ever, before been condemned to listen to such an exhibition of pretentious volubility from a new member as Mr. Hatch treated it to last night."

It is a very happy thing (writes the *Lyttelton Times*) that Mr. Thomson has dropped out of sight. His delight at the assumption of his high task was about his sole qualification. No doubt there are plenty of men in the House who would have been proud to serve even with Mr. Thomson as Premier, but the Opposition has given all aspirants a lesson which they take to heart. In a House capable of refusing a fair trial to a good policy, ambition is shy of vaulting up into high places for the mere pleasure of becoming the butt for the shafts of ridicule with the certainty of speedy catastrophe. Probably Mr. Thomson's secondar, the illustrious Mr. Hatch, who objected to the now out-going Government because he wanted the interests of triple morality looked after, and gambling put down, would have been delighted to take office. He would revel in the novel portfolio of Minister of Morality, and would not object to see a portfolio of Agriculture created, for his eye when it is not on morality, is altogether directed to the agricultural and pastoral interest, more particularly the latter. Mr. Hatch knows more about making sheep dips than he knows about making speeches or doing the business of any portfolio of morality or any other. As one of those colts for whose advancement he expressed such a tender solicitude, unhappily he cannot be stayed from making speeches, and dips he will continue to make as long as it suits him. The probability is that Mr. Thomson took an early opportunity of snuffing out the pretensions of Mr. Hatch. The certainty is that all the gentlemen he interviewed so industriously took an early opportunity of snuffing out the pretensions of Mr. Thomson. It is a good thing for the country; it is also a good thing for Mr. Thomson. The member for Clutha is not the kind of man to have greatness thrust on him. Had that great difficulty been got over, he would have found himself claiming that fair trial which he denied to his predecessors, and he would have found himself getting it too—getting, that is to say, coals of fire heaped on his benevolent but mistaken head. He would also have been compelled to enter into the very kind of combination which he so bitterly criticised in that speech, which our Wellington correspondent seems to think was written by "the other old woman." Mr. Thomson's collapse has saved the country much waste of time, and himself much bitterness of heart-burning. He has returned to the privacy for which he is so eminently fitted. No doubt it has been a bitter pill for Mr. Thomson to swallow. It is easy to imagine him beginning his descent upon the lobbies with jaunty air, and accosting each several leader with swiftly-increasing sense of disappointment. But we will throw a veil over the sufferings of this much ill-used person.

Much interest (says the *Mount Ida Chronicle*) is being displayed in reefing matters at Rough Ridge and Serpentine. At the latter place several parties will, so soon as spring appears, commence prospecting; and Turnbull and party will, presumably, endeavour to have their new find, which lately yielded four ounces per ton, tested to depths lower than it has yet attained. It is expected that the stone will increase both in quality and quantity as it descends.—Rough Ridge, however, is the principal centre of attraction just now. A company is forming for working one of the main lines of reefs there, and it is intended that operations shall be commenced shortly in a thoroughly efficient and systematic manner.

Ireland won the Elcho Shield rifle match at Wimbledon. The scores were: Ireland, 1583; Scotland, 1476; England, 1474.

A telegram despatched from Foochow states that Admiral Courbet bombarded the Chinese arsenal near that town for three hours, and entirely destroyed it, together with seven Chinese gunboats which were sunk by the fire of the French snips. Two other gunboats escaped. The European residents of Foochow have not been molested, although great excitement prevails among the native population. Three Russian ironclads have been despatched to reinforce the Russian fleet now cruising off the Chinese coast.

Opium-smoking has increased to such an extent in New York that the authorities confess their inability to prevent it by law.

Mr. Parnell deeming it not prudent to leave Ireland at the present time, the Irish National party will be represented at the conference of the Irish National League of America, to be held in Boston on August 13, by Messrs. Thos. S. Sexton and John E. Redmond, who goes on to Australia to lecture.

The plague has made its appearance at Kars and other stations in the Caucasus. Eight hundred persons died at Bedra during May.

Russia and Germany have adopted a treaty against the anarchists. In future Russians will not be allowed to reside in Germany without the permission of the German Government.

Great precautions were taken at Warwick on July 29 to ensure order in the trial of Daly, Egan, and McDonnell, suspected dynamiters. Strong barriers were erected to protect the approaches to and from