

News of the Week.

FRIDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday Sir G. Grey gave notice that he would move for leave to introduce a bill for the repeal of the Property Assessment Act, and in lieu thereof to introduce a bill for imposing a land tax; that he would move for a reduction of members' honorariums this session; also that he would introduce a bill to regulate the admission of persons to the practice of the law; also a bill to admit affirmations in lieu of oaths.—The Hon. Major Atkinson said they were aware that he had undertaken the duty of forming an Administration. He had so far succeeded, having secured the co-operation of six gentlemen, who had been sworn in that afternoon. He himself took the portfolio of Premier and Commissioner of Stamps; Mr. Wakefield, Colonial Secretary; Captain Russell, Postmaster-general; Mr. Hursthouse, Minister of Lands, Immigration, and Agriculture; Mr. Mitchelson, Public Works; and the Hon. Mr. McLean, Trade and Customs. That left one portfolio still to be filled up. This he hoped to be able to fill up before the House met again—at all events, before they settled down to business next week. Meantime he would ask them to grant sufficient supplies to carry on the government for the time being. He would not ask a large amount—in fact, he would simply ask the amount proposed to be asked for by his friends opposite. It would be a little over a fortnight's supply that would be asked for—viz., a sum of £75,000 for Consolidated Revenue purposes, and £75,000 for Public Works purposes.—Mr. Stout said the intention of the Opposition was not to stop supplies that night. They recognised the necessity for these being granted. However, they meant to deal with the Government in another way. This was simply a renewal of the Atkinson Government, against a continuance of which the country had in the late election most distinctly pronounced. In view of that fact, he would give them notice that he would at the very earliest moment move that the House has no confidence in the Government.—The House afterwards went into Committee of Supply on a message from the Governor that interim supply be granted. A bill for the amount asked for (£150,000) was then introduced and passed through all its stages. The House rose at 8.45 p.m. till 2.30 p.m. to-morrow.

The supply of locally-grown tobacco-leaf is far short of the requirements of the Auckland manufacturing establishment, and supplies have to be got from elsewhere. Yesterday the Auckland Tobacco Company got 5000lb of cured leaf by way of Sydney from America, and the same Company have a large supply of American and Havannah-cured leaf on board of the Arangi, now on her way to New Zealand.

A child named Giles Smith has been poisoned at Waingarua through drinking carbolic acid.

Hop culture is an industry which is about to be established in Wellington. Messrs. W. H. Levin and H. D. Bell, owners of an estate of 550 acres at Lowry Bay, formerly belonging to the Government, have decided to ascertain the suitability of the soil for hop-growing, and all arrangements have been entered into with Mr. Stafford, son of the late Mr. Hugh Stafford, an old settler in Nelson, for the establishment of nursery gardens on portion of their property. An area of 20 acres will be cultivated.

A new Roman Catholic Church is to be built at No Town (says the *Kumara Times*). Its dimensions are 40ft. by 19ft. Messrs. Seabrook and Arnott, of Greymouth, are the successful tenderers, and the price is £254, for which they have to furnish everything. Some of the furniture of the old church will be available.

At a meeting held in the East Belt Oddfellows' Hall, Christchurch, about 230 persons were present, and the following amendment was carried by 54 to 35:—"That this meeting strongly censures the action taken by Mr. Reese in voting against the Stout-Vogel Government, and considers his explanation unsatisfactory, and begs to remind him that the views of a member of Parliament ought to coincide with the views of the majority of his constituents. This meeting informs Mr. Reese that the electors of Stannore are thoroughly opposed to a Ministry containing Major Atkinson, and I hope that he will vacate his seat if he cannot conscientiously vote against it." The following original motion was also carried by 48 to 40:—"This meeting having heard the explanation of Mr. D. Reese as to his reason for voting against the late Stout-Vogel Government, considers them unsatisfactory, and his matter in the action inconsistent and totally at variance with his political pledges given before the late election of members. This meeting, therefore, has no confidence in him as the member in the House of Representatives for Stannore district; and that the chairman be requested to forward this resolution to Mr. Reese."

It is really difficult to see (says the *Wellington Post*) how Major Atkinson can surmount the obstacles which surround him on every side. The country generally will not look kindly on his return to power except as a member of a strong coalition Administration. It is tired of him and of his finance, and a general impression prevails that the latter demands strict and independent examination. If he does succeed in forming a Government from his own side of the House, and it is in any way tolerated, Major Atkinson's natural arrogance will certainly be so intensified that he will become almost unbearable. It is a very sad condition of affairs that any public man, however able, should be led to regard himself as being indispensable to the existence of a Government.

Mr. Wm. J. Harker has purchased a large house together with two and a half acres of ground, and has presented them to the city of Napier, to be used as a Fever Hospital. The gift cost the donor £1,100.

Reports to hand state that fully 1000 Chinese were killed and over 3000 wounded during the bombardment of the Foochow arsenal by the French fleet, and that 80,000 Chinese destroyed the French in Tonquin, losing several thousands themselves. Admiral Courbet is now engaged, bombarding the Kaing-Po forts.

Lord Wolseley and Earl Northbrook start for Egypt on Monday next. It has transpired that Lord Wolseley is proceeding there, because General Stephenson has declared that the transport of the proposed Soudan expedition *via* the Nile valley is not feasible.

A meeting has been arranged to take place between the German, Austrian, and Russian Emperors. Their Majesties will be attended by the Imperial Chancellors.

Major Kitchener reports from Dongola that spies have informed him that General Gordon has obtained a decisive victory on the 11th inst. over the rebels who surrounded Khartoum, and that during the engagement two prominent rebel leaders were killed.

SATURDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday the following bills were introduced and read a first time:—To repeal the Property Assessment Act and substitute a land tax; to regulate the admission of persons to practise in courts of law; to substitute affirmations in lieu of oaths; to reduce any sum that may be payable to and receivable by certain members of the Legislature for the expenses of honorarium during the present session; to provide for the construction of a harbour at Gisborne (Sir G. Grey). For the better securing of the purity of intoxicating liquors (Mr. Levestam). The Winton and Port Chalmers Boroughs Empowering (Mr. Cowan). To amend "The Licensing Act 1881" (Mr. Steward). To amend "The Auckland College and Grammar School Act 1877" (Mr. Dargaville). Changing the Trust of the Christchurch Market Reserve (Mr. Holmes). The Napier Harbour Board Empowering and Loan (Mr. Smith). To amend "The Anatomy Act 1857" (Mr. Fulton). To amend "The Employment of Females and Others Act 1881" (Mr. Bradshaw). Napier Hospital (Mr. Smith). To Define and Regulate the Hours of Labour within the Colony of New Zealand (Mr. Bradshaw). School Committees Election (Mr. Steward). Hokitika Racecourse Reserve (Mr. Bevan). Presbyterian Church of Otago Amendment (Mr. Larnach).—Mr. Stout moved—"That this House has no confidence in the present Ministry." The debate (says the correspondent of the *Daily Times*) was conducted in a friendly way, and at first it was understood that after the leaders had spoken a division should be come to at once. Subsequently, however, a new tactical move was adopted by the Government, Mr. Guinness being put up to move the adjournment till Tuesday. The debate was continued by Messrs. Shrimski and Monteath. The latter also made a very favourable impression by his maiden speech. Like Mr. Guinness, he declared in favour of the Government. Mr. Garrick followed, and gave some reasons against the adjournment. He also attacked in vigorous terms the administration of the Atkinson Government. Hukuene wound up a speech containing a long Scriptural quotation by pronouncing himself in favour of the adjournment. When in the simplicity of the noble savage, he urged that Sir George Grey and Sir Julius Vogel should meet the younger members and teach them what is right, he was received with roars of laughter, which was not abated when on reflection he added; "My opinion is that these two stir up strife." Wi Pere spoke next, and spoke with great energy against the Atkinson Government, frequently banging the desk in front of him. Mr. Locke exposed some of the fallacies in Wi Pere's speech, and Messrs. Bevan and O'Connor next spoke in succession. In reference to the negotiations for a coalition, the Atkinson party states that they were willing that each party should nominate four Ministers, but that the negotiations fell through owing to the Opposition objecting to Major Atkinson being Premier. There seems to have been another misunderstanding on the subject, and it is difficult to ascertain exactly what took place.

At the Belfast freezing-works during the past 14 days, 7500 frozen sheep have been sent to load the Ionic and Tongariro, and 4000 more are being prepared for the Florida next week, after which 7000 are to be prepared for the Aorangi.

The Clinton correspondent of the *Clutha Leader* writes:—Great excitement prevailed in Clinton on Wednesday evening last, the cause being the funeral of the late J. T. M. E. G., M.H.R. A large crowd, attended by a hearse and the Clinton Brass Band, anxiously awaited the arrival of the 9.10 p.m. train from Dunedin. To all appearance the coffin containing the charred and battered remains of the ex-Minister, who died of larrikins in Dunedin, was taken from the train and safely deposited in the hearse, which immediately started for the Cemetery, accompanied by the Band playing the "mournful Dead March in Saul," and a large concourse of people. At the end of Manse road an individual dressed as a clergyman in white surplice joined and took the lead of the procession. On arriving at the Cemetery a dark figure appeared, and climbing the gate demanded whose "carcase they had there," and on being informed whose remains they sought to bury in hallowed ground the gatekeeper yelled with a mighty voice: "No traitors admitted here! Go and cremate the remains." Fearful yells followed the announcement, and the procession turned back to the town. On arriving at the market reserve the coffin was lifted out of the hearse, the lid knocked off, and the whole propped up on end. A tin of Hatch's sheep dip, which, however, had the odour of kerosene, was poured over the whole, a match applied, and amid a perfect storm of hurrahs, groans, yells, and howls, the effigy blazed merrily. The Band again struck up, and the crowd shortly dispersed quietly to their homes, satisfied that this the first effigy burning at Clinton had proved thoroughly successful.

The twenty-fifth annual meeting of the Canterbury Chamber of Commerce was held yesterday. Mr. J. Cooke was elected president, and the Hon. J. T. Peacock vice-president. The Chamber has 116 members, and seven were added to-day. Its assets are £2246, and liabilities £334. The Committee's report, which was echoed in the retiring president's address, referred to the railway rates, the West Coast railway, the direct steam service, the state of trade, the conference of Chambers at Wellington on September 15, overloading ships, the rescue of the Sarah W. Hunt seamen, and other matters of interest to commercial men. It took a hopeful view of trade prospects, especially those of frozen meat and wool.

It will be observed from our Wellington telegrams (says the *Daily Times*) that Captain Fraser has given notice of his intention to move for a return of the number of patients killed by jumping from