

There was a warm debate in the House this (yesterday) afternoon on the third reading of the District Railways Bill (says the Wellington correspondent of the *Daily Times*). Accusations of jobbery were freely exchanged. Mr. Rolleston declared that it was a job on the part of the Government. Mr. Stout rejoined that if so, the Government of which the hon. member for Geraldine was a member in 1879 proposed an even greater job in regard to the same railways. Mr. Thomson, of Otaia, who also strongly opposed the bill, was fiercely attacked by Mr. Seddon, who dragged up the Oatlin's River contract to the hon. member's detriment, and also accused him of having taken steps to get the motion for the appointment of a committee of inquiry expunged from the order-paper. Mr. Thomson explained that he knew nothing of the contract being let until he was told it had been done. The Speaker and Mr. Holmes both absolved him from the other charge in regard to the motion, whereupon Mr. Seddon withdrew his accusation, and the hon. member came out of the embroglio with flying colours. Mr. Bryce protested against charges of this kind being introduced into debate, and against the *tu quoque* style of argument which has lately been adopted in the House. Sir Julius Vogel replied on the debate, and a division was taken on the third reading, having been called for by Mr. J. W. Thomson. The result was a large majority in favour of the bill, the number being—ayes, 40; noes, 21.

Two boys, named Arthur Hands and O'Bowles, inmates of the Kohimiri Training School, narrowly escaped death by eating tutu berries. Their heads became swollen, and they had to be kept walking to prevent them going into a state of coma.

Charles Brahdock, employed at Oropi sawmills, fell down a well while in an epileptic fit on Monday, and was drowned.

The *Waipawa Mail*, of the 10th inst. says:—"We regret to have to record a very serious accident which occurred on Wednesday evening. The Rev. Fathers Ahern and Sauzeau were returning from inspecting the new church at Wallingford, when on coming to the cutting, some drain tiles, which had been placed on the bank since morning, caused the horse to shy and it swerved away and went over the precipice some 30 or 40 feet. Just as the trap was going over the bank, both gentlemen jumped out, Father Ahern escaping with a few bruises, but Father Sauzeau fell heavily, and on trying to rise, it was found that his leg was broken. Some horsemen who had just passed them, returned to their assistance and a spring cart being got, a bed was placed in it and Father Sauzeau was brought on to Waipawa, where he now lies, Dr. Keed having set the limb. Although suffering great pain all night, we hope to hear to-day that he is progressing favourably. The cart, or rather its remains, lies still on the river bank, and the horse escaped without any known injury. The practice of leaving tools, barrows and materials on the upper side of a road is a reprehensible one, yet anything but unrequent.

Labour supplies the following:—The New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company is in possession of 347½ square miles of land in Queensland. Our readers will no doubt be interested in knowing how much land is held by other monetary institutions in the same colony. The New Zealand and Australian Land Company holds 2,061½ square miles, or 1,319,280 acres. The Bank of New South Wales 18,052 square miles, or 11,043,680 acres. The Commercial Bank, 7,829 square miles. The Scottish Australian Investment, 6,265 square miles. Making a grand total of 68,112 square miles or 43,592,240 acres.

The English Government have agreed to a proposal from the German Government that a conference of delegates of Powers, interested should be held at Berlin next month to consider the best means to secure freedom of commerce on the Congo and Niger Rivers.

The meat by the Tongariro is now selling in London at 6½ to 7d per lb. and the prospects of the market appear capital for all arrivals before Christmas.

Arrangements were made for a Conservative meeting at Birmingham on Monday evening, and Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Randolph Churchill were present with the object of delivering addresses but owing to the organised opposition of the Birmingham Liberals, the meeting ended in serious disorder. The Liberals had gathered in strong numbers at the meeting, and refused to allow the speakers a hearing, and the disturbance increased until violence was used on both sides. Many of those present were injured before the rioters could be dispersed. Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Churchill narrowly escaped being mobbed and maltreated.

Rumours have reached Cairo to the effect that Colonel Stewart was not killed at Wady-el-Homar, but is a prisoner in the hands of the Arabs. The steamer *Massighera*, which was despatched in advance up the Nile with a cargo of cables and other gear to be used by the boats in making the passage of the cataracts with the troops, has arrived at Dongola.

Mr. Romily, Deputy High Commissioner in the Western Pacific, will take temporary charge of New Guinea until the arrival of Major-General Scratchley. With respect to New Guinea, the British Government hope, with the Queen's prerogative and the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, to be able to create a competent jurisdiction. They also desire to treat the Colonies as a consulting committee on matters relating to that island. The *Nord Deutsche Zeitung* (North German Gazette) is of opinion that the limited protectorate established by England over New Guinea will result in the agreement of Germany. It also expects that further agreements in regard to other portions of the Pacific where English and German interests clash will be made.

News is to hand that 600 French troops at Tamsui were led into an ambush, when 20 of their number were killed and beheaded. The remainder managed to return to their ships in safety. The French have promised not to molest Shanghai if their countrymen are not molested.

Eight Nihilists, including Vera Filpava, who were arrested for being concerned in various Nihilistic plots, have been sentenced to death.

THURSDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday, on the motion for going into Committee on the East and West Coast (Middle Island)

and Nelson Railway Bill, Mr. Rolleston objected to the bill. After reiterating many of the objections already stated, he made an attack upon the Treasurer. He said Sir J. Vogel had taken advantage of his position years ago to get himself made Agent-general, and then at a critical moment in the Colony's history he had preferred a large claim for remuneration for duties discharged at the time he was engaged as Agent-general. That was not the class of man they could trust implicitly to at a time like this. Sir J. Vogel had, after a lengthened absence from the Colony, again made his appearance in their midst. The first thing he told them was that they had been dozing in his absence, but now that he had returned they were to resume their former activity, and that the Colony was henceforth to progress not by slow and sure degrees, but by leaps and bounds. In this they could discern the old recklessness to which they owed their difficulties, and he hoped they would pause before they again gave themselves over to the influence of that same spirit. The motion for committee was put, and carried on the voices. In committee, progress was made up to clause 4. On clause 5, Mr. Fergus moved that progress be reported—ayes, 14; noes, 35. The motion was lost.

Intelligence has been received that on the 8th inst. a considerable French force was landed at Tamsui, in Formosa, and that a severe engagement with the Chinese ensued, in which the French suffered heavy loss, besides being compelled to withdraw and retire to their ships in the port.

An official yellow-book, issued at Paris, shows that France and Germany have agreed to propose to the projected conference that the Congo and Niger Rivers should be treated like the River Danube is.

The French Government decided that the Recidiviste Bill should be discussed at the next sitting of the Chamber, but this was resisted and a motion passed deciding to await M. Levieles' report as to the suitability of Cayenne for the deportation of criminals before proceeding with the measure. It was contended that the present haste in the matter was uncivil to England, although it might appear pleasing to Germany.

Intelligence to hand from Suakim states that the inhabitants of Amara have joined Osman Digna.

England is urging that the dealings of the Conference to be held in Berlin should be limited to the unoccupied African territory.

BISHOP MURRAY ON EDUCATION.

(From the Sydney *Freeman's Journal*.)

THE opening of the convent-school at Dubbo gave Dr. Murray an opportunity of replying to adverse criticism of our schools, which he used with judgment and dexterity. Neither vulgar abuse nor uncharitable innuendo, in marked contrast to the critics, found a place in his reply; but he spoke as became a Christian Bishop, conscious of a just cause. What was the use of mere assertion, when he had demonstration at hand? The very facts of the case revealed by the scene before him showed the folly of those who prophesied that the Public Instruction Act of 1881 would deal a death-blow to the Catholic clergy. In a distant country town, in which is one of the finest and best-mastered Public schools in the colony, a poor and scanty population of Catholics, at the bidding of their clergy, have denied themselves several thousand pounds to build a Convent-school; and although they are taxed to support the Public school, they not only refuse to derive any benefit from it, but they tax themselves again in order that their children may be educated in a school counteracted by their clergy. But Dubbo is but a sample of almost every other town in the colony. In the Diocese of Bathurst alone the Catholic laity have paid no less than £52,950 for the building of Catholic schools, and in addition to that, last year alone, they subscribed £10,979 towards their maintenance. And if the figures of the other dioceses are examined, there will be found the same practical proof of the wish of the laity to have their children educated in Catholic schools. No stronger disproof of the prophecy could have been adduced. As his Lordship aptly put it:—"So much money would not be spent to carry out a mere fancy or a factious opposition to the Public Schools Act. There must be a strong conviction as to the necessity of religious education in the minds of the few thousand parents in this diocese who spent £53,000 to build and £10,000 to maintain our Catholic schools." This, we think, must be self-evident to everyone who is not wilfully blind. It is one thing for a man to have an opinion, but it is a very different thing for him to back that opinion with his money. His doing so is a proof of his sincerity and earnestness.

We are glad that his Lordship drew attention to the efficiency of our schools, for it is at least due to the laity who make such sacrifices that their children—the fathers and mothers of the next generation—should receive a sound education. Of course, in the absence of Government inspection it is almost impossible to gauge exactly the relative quality of the education given in the Catholic schools, but we are inclined to agree with his Lordship that the secular instruction alone is equal to that given in the Public schools. But when that is added, which marks the difference between instruction and education—that training of the heart which makes a man a good citizen, husband, and father, which is unknown in the Public school system—the superiority of our schools is evident. No wonder that our rulers feel it, and shrink from a comparison. We fear the public will never make that comparison until the superiority of Catholic education is manifested in the after lives of those who are now educated in our schools.

Count Seebach, son-in-law of Count Nesselrode, Chancellor of Russia, before dying, some weeks ago in Paris, joined the Catholic Church on his deathbed.