

holds the opinion that the New Guinea and New Caledonia difficulty is altogether too slender a basis for such a Federal movement on the part of the colonies, and furthermore, it would be premature of them to consent to support such a scheme without seeing their way clear to continue it with utility to themselves.

The fact that the foundation-stone of a new convent and convent school was to be laid at Pukekohe on Sunday, Oct. 19 (says the *Auckland Weekly News*) excited a great deal of attention, not only in the neighbourhood in which the ceremony took place, but in settlements within a radius of twenty miles, and in Auckland also, where a large amount of practical sympathy had been shown towards the movement. The church grounds, about five acres in extent, are within a short distance of the centre of the settlement, in a commanding position, on the top of a gentle slope from the railway line, and facing one of the main district roads. On it have quite recently been erected a handsome church well adapted to the requirements of the congregation. On one side of the church is a well-built presbytery occupied by the Rev. Father Costello, the energetic priest, and, on the other facing the same road, is a Catholic hall, 50 feet x 35 feet. This is not yet quite finished, and is not lined, but it was turned to useful service yesterday as a dining-room for the large number of guests assembled. The blocks and plates of the convent building are already laid some distance at the rear of the church. The building is to be plain, but suitable, and measures 80 feet in length by 38 feet in width, the studs 14 feet in height, and the roof of galvanized iron. Its form is that of a double cross. At one end will be the select school, 20 feet by 38 feet, at the other end will be the dormitories, etc., a space of equal dimensions, and the body of the building, 25 feet in width, with verandahs on each side, will have a hall six feet in width running through, and the spaces on each side will be divided into four rooms. The design was prepared and the building is being constructed, by Mr. Goodwin, a local builder, and a member of the church committee. As already stated there was a large attendance. A special train, which left Auckland at ten o'clock, brought up the Very Rev. Father Walter Macdonald and about 120 visitors. The settlers in the neighbourhood mustered in good force, and amongst those present were visitors from Mercer, Fokeno, Waikuku, Waipipi, and other districts.

A telegram posted at the Corner to-day (says the *Thames Star*) conveyed to the public the welcome intelligence that another haul of picked stone and specimens—this time 40lbs—had been obtained in the winze below the 230ft. level, Cambria, and a good show of gold left visible. At the time of my visit, matters in the winze were looking really well, and it seems, judging from present results, as if the opinions frequently expressed as to the richness of this piece of ground were about to be verified. The winze is about 15ft. deep and the lode, which is lying flat, is over 8ft. wide in the west end, and fully 4ft. thick in the east, a strong body of solid quartz. The specimens hitherto have been found in the east end, in about 13in. of the hanging-wall portion of the lode, though the precious metal is seen freely in dabs in the footwall portion. The whole reef is remarkable for the quantity of mineral it contains, and the gold is mixed with this mineral, which is a favourable indication, and one which portends that the stone will crush better than it looks. The 40lbs bagged this morning is of good quality, a portion of it being obtained from the bottom of the winze (where gold is still showing), and the remainder from a point on the west side, about 2ft. above the bottom, where yesterday's haul was bagged. Good gold is still showing here. Preparations are now being made to rig the windlass, and when that is done the manager will have a chance of continuing the east drive. There is no sign in the winze of the pinch which occurred in the drive. The west drive is now in about 37 feet from the crosscut; the reef continues to show gold freely, and on the footwall are a number of stringers, also showing the precious metal when broken. The leading stope over this drive is in some 12 or 14 feet from crosscut, and eastward it is about 7ft., the lode in both ends yielding excellent dirt. Ten head of stamps are now employed at the Queen of Beauty battery on the company's dirt, and before long the manager hopes to keep them regularly at work.

Parleying is now proceeding with the view of effecting a compromise on the franchise question.

Some anxiety is felt for the French position in Tonquin, on account of the Chinese blockading it.

The Dorsetshire Regiment is at present at Chatham, prepared to embark for the Transvaal at a moment's notice.

Intelligence has been received from Khartoum through a noted Arab shiekh, who reports that at the end of September the greater portion of the garrison there were deserting, and that General Gordon had embarked with 2000 soldiers and refugees, and steamed northward; but the rebels succeeded in sinking several of the vessels, which completely barred the passage of the river to Berber. The only steamer that succeeded in passing upward was that with Colonel Stewart on board, and it was subsequently wrecked. General Gordon, with the rest of the flotilla, succeeded in retreating as far as Shendy, where they were all captured by the rebels. The Khedive has sent a telegram to her Majesty the Queen confirming this news. General Wolseley and staff have arrived at Dongola.

#### WEDNESDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday, replying to Mr. Hobbs, whether Government will take steps to set aside blocks of land not exceeding in all 5000 acres, situated in the Bay of Islands, Hokianga, and Mongonui districts, for Highland crofters, on similar terms and conditions to those embodied in section 31, "Waste Lands Act 1877," and Amendment Act 1884, and whether they will take action to induce a number of the said crofters to occupy the said blocks. The Hon. Mr. Ballance said it would be as well to wait till the experiment had been tried in the South Island before taking any further steps in this direction.—Mr. J. C. Brown presented a petition from the Catholics of Tuapeka, protesting against the injustice of the education system.—The Hon. Sir J. Vogel moved the committal of the New Zealand Loan Bill. Mr. Holmes protested against the immigration vote in the schedule, on the ground of there being so many unemployed in the Colony. Mr. Guinness objected that the lines of

railway mentioned in the schedule had not been specified. Mr. Grigg said the vote for immigration was a very necessary provision. He strongly defended the vote. Dr. Newman was opposed to the immigration vote, except as regarded nominated immigrants. Sir G. Grey was opposed to the vote. He hoped the House would remove the item altogether. The Hon. Sir J. Vogel said that out of the £30,000 on the schedule £17,000 was for actual liabilities. The Government felt bound to carry out the agreements made with the nominated immigrants. It was proposed only to introduce a desirable class of immigrants. It was also proposed to bring out as an experiment half-a-dozen Highland crofters. He thought it was to be regretted that a larger amount for immigration could not be voted. It was very desirable to encourage population to the Colony, although perhaps the present time was not the most suitable. He looked forward, however, to a more prosperous time, when a much larger stream of immigration would be required than was at present provided for. The House went into Committee on the bill, and the whole of the clauses were passed with slight amendment.

The members of the congregation of St. Mary's (says the *Napier Telegraph*) are united in their expression of regret at learning that Father Cassidy has been appointed to the New Plymouth district. A brilliant preacher, and unremitting in attention to the duties of his cure, Father Cassidy has endeared himself to everyone of his co-religionists, and will take away with him the respect and good wishes of all those who had pleasure of his acquaintance outside the Catholic Church. Father Cassidy leaves for New Plymouth next week.

A boy name William Ansley, aged 14, was drowned yesterday afternoon in the Wanganui River at Arawamoho. He had gone to bathe, and is supposed to have taken cramp. The body was recovered within an hour of the occurrence.

Bishop Luck writes from England that he intends to bring out with him four Benedictine fathers and perhaps two or three secular clergy.

By recent legislation the life of the telegraph operators in this Colony has been rendered anything but a happy or desirable one (says the *Wellington Evening Press*). The imposition of another hour's work a day upon a class of men whose occupation is, under the best of circumstances, a great mental strain, and the closest of ties, and whose daily working time was sufficiently long under former regulations, is one of the worst political acts of the present session. When it is remembered that the individuals who are affected by this arbitrary infliction are young men, to whom a fair amount of relaxation from work is as much a necessity to their health and the proper performance of their duties, as light, air, regular habits, and regular diet, it will be understood what a great evil has been committed. . . . The Government and the House have, in this their last dealing with the telegraph operators, been guilty of an infringement of the dictates of humanity and justice, which may fairly be recorded on the same page as the endeavour to "boycott" the "strikers," by damaging their chances in the neighboring colonies. That transaction remains as an indelible stain upon its perpetrators and the administration of the day, and this last one will reflect almost as discreditably upon the present Government. Even at this eleventh hour, however, the evil can be abated, if it is only as regards these country stations, and we trust the House and the Commissioner of Telegraphs will see to it before the session closes.

At an extraordinary general meeting of shareholders of the Auckland Tobacco Company, the following resolutions were carried unanimously:—"That the capital of the Company be increased to £25,000 by the issue of 2000 new shares of £1 each; that the stock-in-trade, machinery, and other property of the New Zealand Tobacco-growing and Manufacturing Company should, if possible, be purchased by the Auckland Tobacco Company for such price and on such terms as the directors shall deem right and expedient.

Lord Derby proposes that the colonies shall appoint a council to advise and assist Major Scratchley in the control of the affairs of New Guinea. He also asks that the colonies should double the subsidy; and the Admiralty advise the purchasing of a steamer for the use of the High Commissioner.

In the House of Lords on Monday Lord Granville took occasion to deny the statement current that the Khedive had wired to the Queen that Khartoum had fallen and that Gordon had been made prisoner. The report to that effect is now generally disbelieved. Intelligence has been received that the Mahdi is gathering his forces around Khartoum, and has summoned General Gordon to surrender.

#### THURSDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday, the Hon. Mr. Stout moved the second reading of the Civil List Act Amendment Bill. He said it was intended to provide for the appointment of an extra Minister, who would have charge of the Mines Department. He referred to the importance of the mining industry, which required to be looked after more carefully than had hitherto been the case. The Government thought it would be advisable to have the Department under the charge of one Minister, who would devote the whole of his time to the office. If the House desired to see the mining industry more fully developed, they would support the proposal now brought forward. He would not take up further time at this stage of the session, but simply move the second reading of the bill. Captain Sutter objected to the proposal to appoint an extra Minister. He said there was no necessity whatever for it. He thought too much importance altogether was given to the goldfields. For his part he considered the Colony would be better off if there was not a gold digger in the Colony. Mr. Barron moved the adjournment of the debate for a fortnight. He thought by that time the Government might be able to make some adjustment of the Ministerial portfolios. Mr. Levestam and Mr. Peacock supported the adjournment of the debate. Sir G. Grey said if the bill got into Committee he should move to substitute two under secretaries for the proposed Minister. The Hon. Sir J. Vogel defended the proposal to appoint an extra Minister, on the ground of the state of the public business demanding it. The Government would be prepared to consider the question of appointing two under secretaries instead of a Minister if it was the wish of the House. If the adjournment for a fortnight were carried,