

News of the Week.

FRIDAY.

SIR JULIUS VOGEL has acceded to the request to address a public meeting at Auckland shortly.

At a half-yearly meeting of the Bay of Islands Coal Company the report showed that 15,486 tons coal was raised during the half-year, an increase of 2920 tons on the previous half-year; but the hardness of the coal and cost of raising had absorbed the total receipts and £208 balance, leaving £5 to carry forward. A resolution was carried asking the directors to make representations to absolutely remit the royalty.

A man and wife who arrived at Invercargill on Tuesday tell a singular story of how they were duped into making the journey on foot from Christchurch—a distance of 370 miles. They state that they were passengers per the ship Waimate, the husband being a gardener. Shortly after their arrival in the Colony both their children died, and he could get no work. One evening he met a man, who said he had a place at Invercargill, and engaged him at £6 a day to go down to work on it. The pair having no funds, started to walk here, thankful for a chance of work. They were 22 days on the road, in boisterous weather, and frequently slept out. On their arrival they found that no one of the name (Henty) was known here, and their case became desperate, the woman being near confinement. Their case was brought under the notice of the Benevolent Institution, and lodging was provided, since which the ex-immigration officer (Mr. Lillicarp) has obtained a situation for them.

The Christchurch *Press* states that on Tuesday a little girl, one of the pupils at the Rangiora school, died from the effects of brain fever, brought on, it is supposed, by over zealous study. In her delirium before death supervened, she kept constantly going over sums, writing lessons, geography, and other subjects which are found in the school table.

At Hawera, on Wednesday afternoon, Michael Bourke, brewer, and Harry Hughes, brewer's assistant, were charged with having knowingly conveyed spirits on which the full duty had not been paid; and Thomas Lloyd, publican, was charged with having in his possession spirits on which the full duty was not paid. All three were remanded. It is understood that distillation has been going on in some part of this district—variously stated to be Kakarama, Woodville, and Manutahi—for the past eight or nine months, and that a large number of people are implicated. The latest information is that a still has been discovered on the Otoia-Opahu block, between Woodville and Manutahi. Further arrests are those of George Beamish (ex-publican at Patea) and John Anderson, one of the whisky-makers. One Jessop, of illicit whisky-making fame, will bear witness for the prosecution in this instance.

A man has been arrested who it is believed is implicated with Gilbert, now in custody in connection with the dynamite outrage at the Tower. He (Cunningham), is suspected of being concerned in the explosion at King's Cross station last year.

The assailant of O'Donovan Rossa is a hospital nurse named Dudley. It is supposed that her act was prompted by her indignation at the recent action of the dynamitards in London. Her sanity is doubted in some quarters. Rossa's wound is not a fatal one. The partisans of Rossa stigmatise the woman as a British emissary sent over to take Rossa's life. Mrs. Dudley is regarded in the United States as a heroine. Up to the present Rossa's medical attendants have been unable to extract the bullet.

It is expected that Italy will occupy Souakim.

Portugal has seized the banks of the Congo.

The Chinese outworks at Kelung have been captured by the French, with a loss of 11 killed and 53 wounded.

The Hon. G. J. Goschen, speaking at Edinburgh, said that the union of the Colonies was essential to the Empire.

The Porte has sent a strong protest to Rome against the recent annexations by Italy on the Red Sea coast. It is stated that an agreement has been concluded between the British and Italian Governments under which Italy will help England to establish Government in the Soudan, and will occupy Massowah and perhaps Souakim. A second Italian expedition destined for Massowah, will leave Naples on Monday next.

A force consisting of 80 British Hussars and some Egyptian troops, which was despatched to Handoub to burn it down, had effected that purpose, and was returning to Souakim, when it was surrounded by a large body of rebels. Heavy fighting ensued, but the Hussars and Egyptians succeeded in effecting their escape with the loss of eight men killed, five of whom were Hussars. Colonel Freemantle, commanding the troops at Souakim, telegraphs to headquarters that the officer in command of the force of Hussars and Egyptians exceeded his instructions.

SATURDAY.

The Hon. the Premier and the Minister of Mines were met 12 miles from Reefton by a large Reception Committee from Reefton, and escorted to Cronaden. Here a slight hitch occurred, the arrangements having been altered at the instance, it would seem, of Mr. O'Donnell, of Westport. The Ministers were to stop at Cronaden, so as to visit Boatmans next morning. The Reception Committee pointed out that this would completely upset the arrangements made in Reefton, where everything was prepared for the arrival of the Ministers. The Ministers seemed prepared to continue the journey, but Mr. O'Connor actively resisted this, and was rather severely snubbed for his interference by the Reception Committee, who viewed his act as insulting to the Committee, the County Chairman, and the representatives of the district. Eventually a compromise was effected, the Hon. Mr. Larnach proceeded to Reefton and the Premier remaining at Cronaden. The preparations at Reefton were on an elaborate scale, the State school and other buildings being illuminated.

A band of music and torchlight procession met the Minister of Mines, and preceded his conveyance to the hotel, and the line of march was ablaze with fireworks. On reaching the hotel three cheers were given for the Minister of Mines by the large crowd assembled, and the Hon. Mr. Larnach briefly acknowledged the compliment. He apologised for the absence of the Premier, and hoped that his visit to the district would enable him to discharge the duties of his office with advantage to the mining interests and the Colony generally. A large crowd blocked the street for some time after, and the band performed in front of the hotel for half an hour, when the demonstration ended. The public, however, did not quite understand the proceedings, the unexplained absence of the Premier from the reception forming the subject of comment. Yesterday morning the Premier and the Minister of Mines, accompanied by the County Chairman and other visitors, proceeded to Boatmans, and inspected the Low-level Tunnel, Welcome battery, and the other principal mines. After lunch the Premier addressed those assembled, and expressed himself highly pleased with the reception accorded them. The importance of the mining industry to the Colony was not fully understood or appreciated. After what had been brought under his notice justice would be done. The Hon. Mr. Larnach and Mr. Seddon also addressed those present, and cheers were given from the Premier, the Minister of Mines Mr. Seddon, and Mr. Brennan. The party then returned to Beefton. The Ministers will leave for Greymouth on Sunday morning.

M. de Haarven has gone to Waiwera to interview Sir Julius Vogel. He had brought with him from Belgium three silver-mounted fowling pieces for presentation to Tawhiao, Te Tui, and Te Wheoro. Te Wheoro is urging the Kingites not to seek redress at the hands of the Colonial Government. The Home Government, he said, would do this, and if after six months' grace the Colonial Government refused to do their duty in the matter, of Mr. Gorst, M.P., would be sent out as a Royal Commissioner, and the whole management of the Native affairs would be placed in his hands.

Telegrams are to hand from General Wolesley stating that the Mahdi has captured Khartoum through the treachery of some of Gordon's followers, and that Gordon is probably a prisoner. Further intelligence has been received showing that Khartoum fell on the 26th January. Sir Charles Wilson, with a detachment of the Royal Sussex Regiment, arrived there by the steamer from Metemneh on the 28th. They found the city occupied by the enemy, and they forthwith retired under a heavy fire from the river banks. The steamer was afterwards wrecked below Shabukli cataract. All on board were saved, and were landed on an island, from which a steamer was sent to rescue them, Sir Charles Wilson returning to El Metemneh, under a heavy fire from the rebels, who were posted along the banks.

MONDAY.

The *Courier* reports that payable gold has been discovered on Mr. B. T. Elliot's farm, near Tapanui, and a sample of the gold obtained, which was exhibited in Tapanui, gives promise of good results.

Mrs. Buckley, wife of the Colonial Secretary, met with a painful accident on the Wellington race-course on Saturday. After partaking of lunch in Sir William Fitzherbert's phaeton she was about to leave the carriage when her foot slipped and she fell forward, striking her face on one of the sharp iron rods which guide the reins over the splashboard. The rod tore her nose from near the nostril to over the top of the bridge. It is not expected that she will be disfigured.

The Recidivists Bill has passed its second reading in the French Senate. M. Rosseau contended that the recidivistes would be an acquisition to the Colonies. France is unanimous in demanding that the convicts should be relegated. M. Beranger's scheme, which would have largely superseded the present bill, has been rejected.

The Chinese have sustained several defeats in Tonquin recently. The French forces, under General Negrier, have captured a Chinese camp near Lang-son.

A cathedral at Jacobstadt, a town of Russia, in Finland, has been dynamited.

The feeling of public indignation and disgust pervading all classes of the people regarding the miscarriage in the Soudan is unparalleled, and in consequence consols have declined one-half per cent. Profound sympathy is expressed on the Continent at the failure of Lord Wolseley's expedition to rescue General Gordon. It is reported that 2000 of Gordon's followers were massacred, and the Palace at Khartoum was completely gutted by the rebels. Some of the reports state Gordon was killed, and that there was 15 days' hard fighting, while others say that two parties betrayed him, but that he is alive, and still defending Khartoum. The *Observer* states that Lord Wolseley has been instructed to suppress the rebellion if General Gordon is dead. The Italian Government are prepared to send 35,000 troops to the Soudan if necessary.

Sir Charles Dilke, speaking at Paddington on Thursday evening, stated that Count Munster, German Ambassador at London, was, on the 26th January, instructed to convey the British Government's protest against the German annexation of North New Guinea as being contrary to a promise made by the German Government to England. Prince Bismarck contends that the recent annexation by England of a part of Northern New Guinea is at variance with the assurance by Earl Granville. The latter replied that this step was rendered necessary from a fear of filibustering. In connection with the question of annexation the following particulars have been published:—In August Prince Bismarck intimated to the Imperial Government that Germany would protest against the northern portion of New Guinea being annexed by Great Britain. To this intimation Earl Granville replied that the limit of British annexation would be only the southern coast; and in September he informed Prince Bismarck that, in consequence of the pressure brought to bear by the Australian Colonies, the English Government had decided to protect all unoccupied territory except a small piece at the north of the island. Prince Bismarck objected to this, and in October, Earl Granville reverted to the first intention of only annexing the southern coast. In December the Hon Robert Meade, one of the