

## MONDAY.

The M.H.R. for Tuapeka (Mr. J. C. Brown), in company with a Southern resident, returned to Napier on Saturday from an over-land trip, having visited several properties between Gisborne and Wairoa under offer to them by the Natives. The country they passed through is, in their opinion, for agricultural and grazing purposes equal to anything they have seen, and the whole of it is at present unused.

Black's flourmill at Winton was burnt down on Friday night. The fire started at one of the walls of the building close to where the oat shellings were kept, and is believed to be the work of an incendiary. A man employed as baker was sleeping upstairs, and had only time to escape, partly dressed, by dropping from an upstairs door. There was no water, and nothing was saved. The building was insured for £500 in the South British Company's Office. The loss is estimated at about £1000 above that.

There is great enthusiasm among Volunteers at Christchurch in regard to proceeding to the Soudan. Several officers and men have expressed readiness to join a New Zealand contingent if formed. It is calculated 200 partly-drilled men could be enrolled easily.

The Victorian Government have informed the War Department that they have a battery of artillery and a Nordenfeldt gun ready to despatch to Fouakim. In the House of Commons on Thursday evening Mr. Gladstone made a speech in which he said the offers of the Colonies of troops for Soudan testified their attachment to the Throne and would draw closer the bonds of the Empire. Earl Derby, speaking in the House of Lords, said that the country was deeply indebted for the spirit shown by the Colonies. The Government had decided to accept the services of the New South Wales troops, and details were being arranged with other Colonies who had offered contingents. The Duke of Cambridge said he rejoiced at seeing assistance offered by the Colonies.

A proclamation has been issued by the Queen stopping men on active service from joining the reserve, and embodying the militia for garrison duty.

It is believed that Russia and France have arranged to divide Asia Minor and Syria between them.

The Anglo German dispute respecting New Guinea centres on the possession of Huon Bay.

News is to hand that Major-General Sir Herbert Stewart died on Monday last at Gakdul, from injuries received at the battle which was fought near Metemneh on the 19th ult. The latest telegrams from Korti report that the enemy is harassing the British troops at Abuklea, to which place Sir Redvers Buller recently retired from Gabat. It is said he will fall back on Gakdul as soon as the necessary camels arrive at Abuklea.

At the meeting in Sydney on Saturday night in connection with the patriotic fund the principal speakers were Sir James Martin (Chief Justice), the Hon. Edmund Barton (Speaker of the House of Assembly), and Sir Patrick Jennings. Resolutions were passed confirming the objects of the meeting. The total amount subscribed is now over £15,000. The preparations for the despatch of the troops are nearly complete.

The Victorian Government has received a reply to its offer of troops for the Soudan. The Imperial Government expresses high appreciation of the tenders of Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland, but is unable to accept them, as the troops could not arrive until too late. If, however, operations in the Soudan are prolonged until the autumn, the offers will be considered.

Sir Stafford Northcote, speaking in the House of Commons, eulogised the gallant and spirited offers of assistance made by the Colonies for the Soudan. These remarks were received by the members of the House with prolonged cheering. The offers have created a marked impression in Berlin.

It is believed that France, if permitted to annex the New Hebrides, is willing to guarantee all missionary rights, and undertake not to send convicts to the group.

The Government of South Australia, have received a telegram from Earl Derby stating that the Imperial Government will share in the expense of the annexation of New Guinea.

A well-known native named Epinesha (Ebenezzer) expressed himself somewhat quaintly on the subject of dog taxation during the Parawai korero (says the *Thames Advertiser*). He said that if his kuris had committed a theft, say stolen a pair of trousers, he would not object to their being seized; or if the policeman was hungry and wanted a meal he would willingly kill a dog for him; but he was decidedly opposed to the apprehension of his pets simply because their owner had neglected to pay the tax levied upon them. The explanation was received with roars of laughter, and the waggish old gentleman resumed his squatting attitude, evidently congratulating himself that he had scored a point.

The manager, Mr. Fred. Evans, brought down on Wednesday 390 ounces of bar gold, the result of 220 tons of quartz, crushed at the Phoenix battery, Skippers reef (says the *Wakatip Mail*). Things are pretty lively at the Phoenix mine just now. A new turbine has just been erected for the battery. There are some 25 men at work at the new—or rather old Aylmer's race in the Left-hand Branch, preparatory to the erection of a turbine of 150 horse-power to work the electric machine, which latter—two miles distant from the machine-house—is, by connection with two wires, to drive the battery. When referring a fortnight ago to the erection of the electric apparatus, we stated that the whole was to be kept by the contractor in working order for nine months; but it should have read that the electric apparatus only was to be kept in working order for that period, the motive power—the turbine—to be provided by the owner, Mr. G. F. Bullen. We understand that it is contemplated, in course of time, to erect one or two more turbines, to work hole-boring machines, drive stone crushers, etc.

The tobacco grown this season at Katikati (says the *Bay of Plenty Times*) has surpassed the expectation of the growers. The plants are now 3ft. high, with about 20 to 30 goodsized leaves on each plant.

The *Manawatu Standard* gives the following account of the late accident to Mr. Edward Dixon's son at the Fitzherbert-street cordial

manufactory, Palmerston North:—"The boy was labelling bottles, assisting Mr. Beck, who was corking at the time, and had just taken one in his hand to place the label on it, when it burst in his face, a piece of the glass entering and cutting clean out the left eye, which fell on to Mr. Beck's hand. The work of a moment was taking the poor child over to Dr Macintyre and having the wound dressed, the boy never from the first giving any evidence of fear or suffering, but patiently and manfully bearing the pain. He is only about 12 or 13 years old, and has been lately confined to a darkened room through weakness of sight after illness. He was left here by his father for change of air last week, the latter returning to Wellington.

## TUESDAY.

On Saturday a man was nearly burnt in a bush fire, near New Plymouth. In starting a burn he remained too long, and being enveloped in the smoke, did not know which way to get away from the fire. Being nearly suffocated, he cried for help, and was rescued by another man going among the burning trees and dragging him out in an insensible condition.

Since the offer made by Captain Hamersley for service in the Soudan, he has received offers from nearly every man who went to Parihaka with him. The Volunteers at Timaru are very anxious to hear the result of the decision of Government on the matter, and trust that in any case the Imperial Government will be communicated with.

The weather has been glorious here for weeks past (writes a Nelson correspondent of the *Tuapeka Times*). The crops are all in, and the yield has been an abundant one. The hop yield will also be very heavy, but prices will hardly pay for picking—viz., 6d per lb. Two years ago the hopgrowers got from 2s 6d to 3s per lb, so the great fall in price will seriously affect the whole district. It is estimated that there are 1000 acres under hops this season.—In the Marlborough province the crops are all in the stack, and threshing is proceeding in all directions. The yield per acre is the heaviest ever known there.

An inquest on the remains of Mrs. Prendergast, murdered by her husband, took place at Pokeno on Saturday. Prendergast was present, and manifested great unconcern, frequently ejaculating "I did it." On one occasion, when impatient at the length of time taken by the clerk to write down the evidence, he remarked with a chuckle, "You might hang half-a-dozen of us in the time you take." Prendergast has been brought to town and lodged in Mount Eden Gaol. He still continues in the best of spirits. The funeral of the late Mrs. Prendergast took place at the Presbyterian cemetery, Pokeno, on Monday afternoon, the procession being fully a quarter of a mile long.

Captain Edwin suggests starting a patriotic fund in New Zealand to help the Sister Colony in sending her troops to the Soudan, and has forwarded a donation as the nucleus of the fund.

Nearly the whole of the crops in the Pukeuri, Papakaio, Awamoko, Untroon, and Marawhenua districts have been cut (says the *North Otago Times*) and stacking is being pushed ahead while the fine weather lasts. The yield of both wheat and oats will be without doubt very much above the average, and in some instances the crops of these cereals are remarkably heavy. Very little barley has been grown in the above-mentioned districts, wheat being the principal crop.

Mr. A. D. Bennett (late captain of Auckland Naval contingent on service), in company with the Mayor, waited yesterday upon Sir Julius Vogel and represented to him that he had been solicited by a large number of men who have had military experience to raise a corps for service in the Soudan. He was prepared to form such a corps at once if the proposal should meet with the approval of the Government. The Colonial Treasurer replied that several applications had come in from various parts of the Colony. They would come up for consideration at the Cabinet meeting this week. Mr. Bennett might submit his offer formally. Acting upon these suggestions, a telegram was despatched to the Hon. the Defence Minister at Wellington, offering to raise a force of 300, all hardy and experienced men, and each company of 100 men under a lieutenant who had previously seen service, within six weeks; and Mr. Bennett, as a guarantee, offers to start a subscription with £25.

News is to hand from Central Asia that a Russian force is advancing from Turkestan towards Panjeh, a town on the river Murghab, about 50 miles to the south of the present Afghan-Turkestan frontier line. In consequence of this step, Sir Peter Lumsden and the British members of the Anglo-Russian Commission have retired from Sarakhs to Herat, fearing that a collision will take place between the Afghans and Russians owing to the encroachment of the latter on Afghan territory.

An engagement has taken place in the neighbourhood of El Metemneh between the friendly Arabs and the tribe of rebel Haden-dowas, when 2000 of the latter were killed. There is an enormous gathering of the rebels under Osman Digma at Tama.

The European Conference agreed to the neutrality of the Congo River. The Conference will close on Thursday next.

It is believed that the acceptance of the Sydney offer for the Soudan will promote federation of the Colonies. In an article on the refusal of the Imperial Government to accept additional Colonial troops, the *Times* states that the reply is ungrateful, and it further expresses the opinion that the aid of Colonial troops will be needed. The *Standard* says the refusal is a distinct blunder, and characterises the reasons given for not accepting the troops as weak.

## WEDNESDAY.

Mr. A. D. Bennett's office at Auckland was besieged by applicants yesterday morning desiring their names to be placed on the roll of his proposed free naval contingent. Among them were several ex-naval officers with most excellent discharges from the Royal Navy, and one with special certificates on torpedo and big gunnery and marine mine work. Mr. G. Hazell, late rough-riding sergeant-major in her Majesty's service, and now keeping a riding-school on the New North road, has communicated with the Minister of Defence offering, if required, his own services and the use of his riding-school for the