

News of the Week.

FRIDAY.

THE Wellington Press says:—His Worship the Resident Magistrate delivered two very curious judgments. Two defendants were charged with contravening the enactments of "The Employment of Females and Others Act 1881," inasmuch as they did not give their assistants holiday on Saturday afternoon, as provided by law. Both were proved guilty, and of course had to be punished. The defence set up in one case was that the girl in question was staying of her own accord to make up time she had lost through coming late. His Worship said that in that case the fine would doubtless come out of her pocket. It seems hard that because an employer of labour breaks the law, the servant, who probably had no desire to work, but had no power to refuse, should have to pay the penalty. In the other case it was alleged that the girl was not a factory operative under the Act; she was engaged to carry parcels, mind the shop, and fill up her spare (?) time in the workroom. His Worship held that she could not be employed in the workroom after 2 p.m. on Saturdays without infringing the Act, but suggested, as a means of evading the law, that the girl should be employed in the workroom until 2 p.m., and then put into the shop as a saleswoman! It is proverbially easy to drive a coach and six through an Act of Parliament, but it is somewhat unusual to see a magistrate acting as a finger-post on the road.

Further particulars published in Melbourne regarding the Simpson's road bank robbery show the affair to have been skillfully prepared and carried into execution. The robbers effected an entrance into the building through a window and awaited the arrival of the manager and his assistant inside the bank. The attack was so sudden that resistance was impossible on the part of the victims, who were gagged and bound hand and foot and placed under a table, where they were eventually discovered. The total proceeds of the robbery amount to £1165. A reward of £550 is offered by the National Bank of Australasia for such information as will lead to the arrest and conviction of the criminals. The police are actively prosecuting their investigations, but up to the present have been unsuccessful in their endeavours to obtain a clue.

SATURDAY.

Eight hundred tenders were received for the New Zealand loan, covering £8,860,000.

I (Wellington correspondent of the *Daily Times*) learn on good authority that the minimum at which the new loan is allotted is £100 3s 6d, and not "£103 3s 6d" as stated in the evening papers. Ministers are jubilant at the success of the loan, which, of course, they attribute to the English capitalists' confidence in their finance. Experienced commercial authorities here, however, are inclined to attribute the result rather to the extreme depression of British trade, lack of confidence at Home, and the difficulty of finding good investments for capital, to which also has to be added the confidence always felt by the British public at large in the real solvency and vast resources of this Colony.

M. de Freycinet, Minister for Foreign affairs, is making inquiries regarding the alleged religious persecutions at the Loyalty Islands.

Sir Peter Lumsden expresses a doubt whether peace will be preserved between England and Russia. There are now 15,000 Afghan soldiers in Herat.

News is to hand that a party of rebel Arabs have occupied Korti, which place was formerly Lord Wolseley's head-quarters on the Nile.

A treaty has been concluded between Germany and the rebel chief Lamco. Germany has demanded that the Sultan of Zanzibar shall discontinue hostilities towards that chief. The *Nord Deutsche Zeitung*, the semi-official organ of the Government, in referring to the question, disclaims all designs on the part of Germany to acquire territory in Zanzibar, but expresses the hope that England will induce the Sultan to desist from provoking Germany.

The Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., president of the Board of Trade, addressed a crowded meeting of his constituents at Birmingham on Thursday evening. Regarding Egyptian affairs, Mr. Chamberlain stated that obstruction on the part of the French Government to the policy of Great Britain in Egypt had delayed the evacuation of that country by the British forces, and would perhaps finally render it a matter of impossibility.

A Cabinet Council has been summoned for to-day, when the Ministry will come to a decision as to the renewal of the Prevention of Crimes Act in Ireland.

MONDAY.

The Auckland branch of the Irish Land League have contributed £213 to the general fund of the League, £100 to the payment of Irish members' fund, and £33 to the A. M. Sullivan testimonial fund.

At St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, last night, the Most Rev. Archbishop Moran, who is about to leave for Europe, was presented with a beautifully illuminated address and two photographic albums, containing views of the buildings which have been consecrated by him.

Arrangements for the reception at Sydney of the New South Wales Soudan contingent are now completed. The programme includes a grand military display, in which 3500 Volunteers will be engaged.

The third series of Colonial wool auctions commenced on Thursday, when 9700 bales were submitted to a good attendance of Home and Foreign buyers. Cross-breeds ruled about 3d higher than the March sales, while faulty merino wools exhibited rather a weaker tendency. The sales are announced to close on July 16.

The *Novosti Vremya* newspaper publishes a telegram stating that Abdul Rahman Khan, Ameer of Afghanistan, has been murdered by his suite.

A meeting of the Imperial Cabinet was held on Saturday, as announced, but the Ministry were unable to come to a decision as to renewal of the Prevention of Crimes Act in Ireland.

News to hand from the Island of Crete states that serious disturbances have recently taken place among the populace.

In the House of Commons on Friday night, Mr. Gladstone stated that England and Russia had come to terms with regard to arbitration as to the Afghan frontier question, and both countries were agreed as who was to be appointed arbitrator.

In the House of Commons on Saturday the memorial presented by the recent Maori embassy was brought up for consideration. During the discussion that took place the Hon. A. Evelyn Ashley, M.P., Parliamentary Under-secretary for the colonies, stated in the course of his speech that the memorial would receive due consideration, but that the Imperial Government were not entitled to interfere in the international affairs of any Colony to which the right of self-government had been granted.

TUESDAY.

Dr Hector, at the request of the Government, forwarded per Tongariro three cases of Taranaki iron sand to M. de Harven, at Antwerp. While in the Colony M. de Harven expressed a wish to obtain a sample of the sand to have it tested.

A telegram from Taupo states that 5000 sheep, in three separate mobs, have passed there for the Northern markets. It is estimated that fully 60,000 sheep have this season passed through Taupo from Hawke's Bay for Auckland and Northern markets.

The rumours which were current on Sunday in Melbourne of several arrests having been made in connection with the Simpson's road bank robbery proved to be correct. It was announced to-day that the police had arrested six men and three women in various places on suspicion of being connected with the affair. The cart in which the robbers drove off has also been found, and identified by those who saw it at the time of the robbery. When the prisoners were searched at the police station £100 in notes of the National Bank of Australasia were found upon them, together with a large sum in gold.

Cholera has broken out in the town of Mureia, on the south-east coast of Spain.

Old Dongola has been evacuated by the British troops.

Further details to hand in regard to the disturbances in Crete show that a number of Cretan Deputies boarded the steamer which was bringing Savas Pasha, the new Governor, and attempted to prevent his landing, declaring that he had been appointed contrary to the wishes of the Cretan people.

Major-general Sir Peter Lumsden arrived in London on Sunday from India. He met with an enthusiastic reception, being warmly cheered by the large crowd which had assembled to welcome him.

The earthquakes in the province of Cashmere still continue with great severity. Great damage to property has taken place, and many houses have been swallowed up by the fissures in the earth.

WEDNESDAY.

The Kaikoura correspondent of the *Lyttelton Times* writes as follows:—The Catholic Church folk held a bazaar and concert in the early part of the month, realising over a hundred pounds as the result of a few weeks, which must have been entered into with thorough earnestness. The whole proceedings passed off remarkably well, being set down as the most successful effort entered into by the religious bodies here. Matters taken in hand by the Catholic Church party here always seem to hit the popular taste and go well. Assistance is rendered by ourselves, the combination of forces seeming to be a very happy one, and ensuring success at the outset. An attempt was made to divert the aid promised by those who were not of the Catholic Church communion, but it proved not only abortive, but contributed to the success of the undertaking. It is a mistake when people in small places will not work in harmony to promote the welfare of one's neighbours' interests, simply because one does not participate individually in that particular cause. The Catholic concert was repeated on Monday night for the benefit of the Public Library. The attendance was large and the entertainment a success.

In the Auckland Supreme Court yesterday Mr. Justice Gillies granted a certificate to the Speaker of the Legislative Council in the matter of introducing a bill to allow the leasing of St. Mary's Convent property for a term of 66 years.

Major Cantley hands over charge of the defence works at Wellington to-day. As a compliment to him one of the forts is to be named Cantley Fort, but it is not yet decided which.

A bell (says the *Bruce Herald*) has been successfully established in the steeple of the Milton Catholic Church. It has a pleasing tone, and harmonises admirably with the other church bells of the town. The attractions of the town are slowly but surely increasing.

As the Mines Department is now a separate portfolio, the Hon. Mr. Larnach has decided to make, at an early period of the session, a Mines Statement, much in the same way as the Minister for Public Works prepares his. The Statement will be comprehensive, and deal fully with mining industries in each district. In this year's Statement Mr. Larnach will recommend the adoption of Professor Black's suggestion as to the establishment of mining schools, and for that purpose has induced his colleagues to place a sum of about £17,000 on the Estimates. It is not intended, however, that the Government shall bear the whole cost of such schools, as they will only be established in districts where the miners are willing to contribute to the cost. Sets of samples will be procured from England to assist in instructing the mining community in mineralogy, etc. From his recent tour of inspection Mr. Larnach has ascertained that the principal wants of miners are additional water-power and the cutting of tracks through heavily-wooded country, so as to enable prospecting to be carried on.

The examination of the prisoners in custody for the Simpson's road bank robbery was concluded at Melbourne on Monday, when the whole of them were remanded, bail being refused. The police have been taking active steps to prevent the disposal of the plunder