

by any confederates. Four of the prisoners have been identified by witnesses as the same who were seen to drive off from the bank and subsequently to enter Studley Park. Further search in the Park resulted in the recovery of £200 in National Bank notes and a bag of silver, which had been buried in the ground.

It is currently reported that an agreement on the Russo-Afghan frontier question has been virtually arrived at between Great Britain and Russia, the latter Power having yielded in her demands for the Zulifikar Pass. The statement published in the Russian journals to the effect that the Ameer of Afghanistan has been murdered by some member of his suite has not been endorsed from any other source, and the news is disbelieved by the authorities at London.

THURSDAY.

In the House of Commons Mr. Gladstone stated that it would be premature to assert that the difficulty with Russia had passed over.

In consequence of the Sultan of Zanzibar's action in opposing the Protectorate recently established by Germany over the territory to the northward of Zanzibar, it is expected that the town will be bombarded by German war vessels at present in the neighbourhood. The claims put forward by Germany to the town of St. Lucia on the sea coast of Northern Zululand, and which was recently annexed by Great Britain, have been withdrawn.

In the House of Commons on Tuesday Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's motion condemning the Budget proposals of the Government came on for discussion. Mr. Gladstone said that the Budget question would mean the life or death of the Government. Mr. Childers, Chancellor of the Exchequer, charged the Tories with opposing concessions to the colonies. Some excitement was caused during the debate by the Parnellites jumping up on their seats and endeavouring to speak. On the division being taken the motion was carried by 264 to 252. The defeat of the Government was quite unexpected. A number of Liberals abstained from voting. A meeting of the Cabinet was held afterwards, at which it was resolved that the Ministry should resign. Mr. Gladstone accordingly proceeded at once to Balmoral and informed Her Majesty the Queen of the decision arrived at. Parliament has been adjourned until Friday.

CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own Correspondent.)

June 9, 1885.

A QUESTION has arisen about the scholarships in the Board of Education, worth £40. In North Canterbury these were till 1882 open scholarships. In that year the North Canterbury Board restricted theirs "to all children who have attended regularly any public school under the Board from the commencement of the December quarter, previous to the date of the examination, provided that the children attending secondary schools, who have held any of the Boards' scholarships, may compete in classes C, D, and E." The head master of Christ's College Grammar School, the best of its kind by the way in New Zealand, wrote to the Board of Education at its last meeting, suggesting a return to the old rule. In his letter he made two points—one was a statement of his conviction that the Board had not shut out competition through dread of superior teaching elsewhere; the other was that as the scholarships are not confined to the children of poor people, all children have a just claim to compete. The demand of the headmaster, backed by his insinuation of the dread of competition, flustered the Board a little. The matter was postponed, the secretary being instructed to furnish each member with a copy of the headmaster's letter, and a copy of the Board's resolution of 1882, which the chairman said had not been arrived at "without grave debate." One of our morning journals strongly advocates a return to the open scholarships, on the double ground of the increased competition and of justice to all alike. To refuse Catholics, who contribute to the revenue, the opportunity of competing, the writer said, was as bad as it would be to keep them out of the public schools, to which they also contribute. This is very remarkable. The essence of the Catholic educational position is that Catholics are shut out of the Government schools. There are as you know hosts of people who insist that they are not. The owner of a well-fenced paddock, might as well say that he does not keep the poor sheep and cattle off his grass. O dear no! There is only the fence. The discussion in the Board of Education will have its uses. If the minor matter of the scholarships is decided according to justice, the major question of aid to denominational schools will logically be decided too. The practical outcome is of course very different, still it will be something to have had the question of justice enquired into. Hitherto nobody has allowed the question to be raised at all. The truth is that the more it is stirred, the worse the position of the advocates of injustice appears to be.

Father Ginaty is back from Wellington (where he was present at the opening of the College), looking all the fresher for his trip. Sunday being within the octave of Corpus Christi, we celebrated it with High Mass in the morning, and procession of the Blessed Sacrament in the evening after vespers, Father Ginaty preaching an impressive sermon on the Real Presence.

We are all now in the commercial vein. The starting of the Janet Nichol has inspired most of us with a desire for the peaceful conquest of Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, Rarotonga, and many another island "at the gateways of the day." Most of us are represented by the Industrial Association who have taken advantage of the free pass offered by the Government to send a delegate. Mr. T. Pavitt, an old Christchurch resident who has had considerable experience of commercial matters is the chosen label, as one of our writers has put it. What trade is to be opened up no one seems to know. That is why Mr. Pavitt is at this moment ploughing the seas. The islands have a magnificent position, and we want to share it. The difficulties in the way are obvious; it is also obvious that by sitting still nobody will overcome them. There may not be a great deal in this exploration of a trade route. The enterprise is at least in the spirit of Josh Billings' advice to

people who want to milk cows, not to get a stool and sit upon it, waiting for the animals to lay up alongside.

"Great is the truth, etc.," as I need not remind your readers. What I will say to them is that a gentleman who is here after some extensive cruising in the island trade has borne a striking testimony to the superiority of the Catholic teaching in the Pacific. "Never give a Wesleyan credit in Fiji," says Mr. Tichborne, as reported in the *Lyttelton Times*. "A Catholic is quite another pair of shoes. The priest will see that he pays up, and in a Catholic district you can leave your cashbox wide open on a tree stump all day and never miss a cent—unless a white man comes along." Mr. Tichborne is not a Catholic himself. He has explained that trade in these regions is a matter nowadays of cash, not as of old of barter. The trader pays for his produce in cash out of a bag of dollars, shillings, francs, sovereigns, as the case may be) the money varies with the locality, which he carries with him. Having received their cash, the Natives buy the trader's goods with it. So that leaving an open cashbox anywhere unguarded is distinctly a temptation even in Fiji. The testimony this shrewdly observant wanderer has borne to the high influence of the grand old Church ought to be widely made known.

Of political speeches we have had a most luxuriant crop. As usual it is a crop of wiry old straw, which obstinately refuses to yield grain to the diligent thresher. There is one thing about the collection that will interest the political world outside of Canterbury, viz., that they show how closely the bulk of the Canterbury members intend to stick together during the coming session. Another remarkable thing there is, too. The member who has nailed his educational colours to the mast more formally than any, the member who has most loudly cried "No Surrender," of cost or anything else, is Mr. Montgomery. And Mr. Montgomery has no following.

Your remarks last week on the monopoly of the Canterbury lands were most true, as well as severe. That is the true cause of the depression, as several public men have pointed out lately. Labour cannot find employment, and the agriculturist who comes with enough money to make him with decent prices a prosperous yeoman passes Canterbury by.

Colonel Whitmore has been here. As beseems a soldier, he did not let the grass grow under his feet. Rapidity, as those who know him always say, was ever the Colonel's strong point. It was his rapidity which drove Tito Kowaru out of the Taranaki and Patea country in 1868-69. Tito never got leave to rest the sole of his foot. Whenever the scouts reported his whereabouts, no matter what hour of the day or night it might be, no matter what work had been gone through, the Colonel turned his men out then and there, and went off in pursuit; moreover, he never sent his men when he did not go himself. How he met his officers in this district, the papers will have told you. What they did not tell you is that he pricked the bubble dissatisfaction with great effect. It has been persistently represented to the Government by certain malcontents that the whole force is not in accord with the officer commanding the district. The Colonel, when the officers were all assembled, asked that anyone who had a grievance should out with it. It was found that there was no grievance, except against some of the regulations.

The determination of its London directors to wind up the Grain Agency Company has not caused any surprise here. It has been an open secret all along that the Company never was a success. One thing in the Company's history has, however, occasioned surprise, and ought to be remembered. When Messrs. Stead and Cunningham sold their businesses to the Company, they guaranteed interest to the amount altogether of some £15,000. When things were getting bad in the wheat trade, these gentlemen took over a large number of grain cargoes that properly ought to have been consigned on the Company's account. The result was as they knew it might be; over and above the £15,000 they had guaranteed, they paid the Company (i.e., saved it from loss to that extent) no less than £70,000. This did not save the Company—perhaps nothing can make grain-buying profitable to a company—but their handsome conduct, so rare in this grasping age, should be remembered to their credit.

An accident at Rangiora has its moral. In the dead darkness of the night an old man is plodding along a country road; a buggy is going along at a good pace; the old man does not hear, the driver of the buggy does not see. There is a thud and a cry, and the old man's days are numbered. At the inquest, it came out that the young man in the buggy left the stricken victim on the roadside, drove into Rangiora, delayed there before reporting the accident, one of them actually going to a hairdresser's and getting his hair cut! The Coroner's remarks on this "inhuman brutality" will be endorsed far and wide. The moral for all who drive in buggies at night is that they must keep their lamps in order. One lamp was broken in this case; hence the accident.

Word has reached us that the statue of the late Mr. Moorhouse is complete. Mr. Moorhouse was the father of railways in Canterbury. The Lyttelton tunnel is his great work. You will see that we still honour our great men in the old way.

It is grievous to see that the earthquake shocks are still continuing in Spain, and that their effects are felt in so many towns and places. The shock which occurred in Andalusia on Saturday was felt to a considerable distance, and in a town in the province of Malaga three houses fell. Fortunately no one was injured by the fall, but there was naturally a wild alarm amongst the inhabitants, who fled from their homes and encamped in the open country surrounding the town.

Cardinal Newman has just celebrated his 84th birthday at the Birmingham Oratory. The *London World* says:—"His Eminence who is enjoying a second youth rather than a second childhood, shows an amount of vitality quite surprising to those who some little time ago were anxious about his health. He said Mass at seven o'clock on the morning of his birthday, and later received visits from a number of his friends. With one of these, Mr. Wilfred Ward, a son of his old friend, the Cardinal was able to talk for an hour and a half, although a few months ago his doctors told him that half an hour was to be the extent of his conversations."