

# News of the Week.

FRIDAY.

THE Wellington correspondent of the *Daily Times* wires as follows:—Although some reticence has been observed on the point, I understand that the following are the resolutions of the Freetrade Committee yesterday, which can no longer be deemed confidential, as they have been circulated among members. They are as follows:—“That the Committee object to the proposed increase in the customs duties on the following grounds: (1) That such duties appear to be designed in the increasing the customs receipts to press more heavily upon the poor than upon rich. (2) That such duties that appear designed to protect the agriculturists are so misleading as to apparently protect items of export. (3) That such duties as are protective in their nature are in many cases not wanted by local producers, and in other cases protect some industries to the detriment of others.” A general meeting of Freetrade members has been convened for Monday next.

In the House of Representatives yesterday, the following bills were introduced:—The Juvenile Accidents Prevention Bill (Mr. Hatch), the Mortgage Debentures Bill (Sir Julius Vogel), the Postal Note Bill (Sir Julius Vogel). Mr. Seddon moved the second reading of the Mines Act Amendment Bill. He said the fees for miners' rights had been reduced in all the other colonies, but had been retained at £1 in this Colony. The present bill proposed to reduce the charge for rights to 10s. It also proposed to reduce the charge for business licenses to £3 instead of £5. The motion was agreed to.

James Fletcher, a well-known West Coast carrier, left Reefton at midday yesterday for Greymouth with a seven-horse team. At 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon a man riding in the same direction found Fletcher lying in the wheel-way of the road with his leg broken. A cart went out from Reefton to bring him on, but he died on the journey. He was conscious when found, and explained that he fell off the box, and the waggon-wheels passed over the small of his back. Deceased was widely known in the Colony. He leaves a wife and family in Greymouth.

Several deferred-payment settlers applied to the Southland Land Board yesterday by petition, to permit them to suspend payment of rent for three years, on account of the difficulty of bringing the land into cultivation. The Commissioner informed them that the Board had no power to grant such permission, but had just passed a letter to the Under-secretary for Lands, recommending that capitalisation be permitted after one instead of three years' residence.

It is announced that the Very Rev. Dr. Walsh, Bishop of Kildare, has been appointed Archbishop of Dublin, in succession to the late Cardinal McCabe. The Most Rev. Dr. Moran, Archbishop of Sydney, will be created a Cardinal at the next Consistory.

The Agent-general have interviewed the Right Hon. F. Stanley, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the recidivistic question.

Germany annexes all the islands off the coast of New Guinea between the Equator and the eighth degree south latitude, and between the one hundred and forty-first and one hundred and fifty-fourth degree of longitude.

General Gordon's diaries have been published, and have caused an immense sensation. In them he compares himself to Uriah the Hittite, whom King David ordered to be placed in the foremost position in battle, subsequently causing the army to desert him, and thus causing his death.

The members of the new Ministry were sworn in on Tuesday. The Right Hon. Sir William Hart Dyke, M.P., has been appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff replaces Sir Evelyn Baring as British Consul-general in Egypt. The Right Hon. R. Bourke has been appointed Under-secretary for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Henry Chaplin, member for Mid-Lincolnshire, will be Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and the Right Hon. David R. Plunket, Q.C., Minister for Works and Public Buildings. It is considered probable that Mr. William J. Harris, M.P. for Poole, will be Under-secretary for India, and Lord Dunraven Under-secretary for the Colonies in the new Ministry.

SATURDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday the following bills were introduced:—The Gaming and Lotteries Act 1881 Amendment Bill No. 2 (Mr. Fitzherbert), The Patea Harbour Board Bill (Major Atkinson).—Sir Julius Vogel moved the second reading of the New Zealand State Forests Bill. He said many hon. members would recognise in the bill a reproduction of the bill he brought in in 1874, and it was substantially the same. There were, however, some alterations in the present bill for which there were several reasons, one of which was that when the bill was introduced previously the provincial section of the House was warmly opposed to it, on the ground that it had led in some measure to the introduction of the bill for the abolition of the provinces. After detailing the principles of the bill, which was brought in for the preservation of the State forests, he said it was proposed under the bill to borrow £50,000, of which £10,000 was only to be borrowed in any one year. It was also proposed to vest the control of the forests in a commissioner, who would be subject to the authority of Parliament. The chief duties of those who would be entrusted with the charge of the forests would be to look after the existing forests, and, when necessary, to plant new forests. The bill also provided for proper Parliamentary control of the scheme, and in no way give the Minister in charge of the forests any extraordinary powers. He thought it was evident, as timber was decreasing all over the world it would immensely increase in value. It was altogether deplorable the manner in which the forests were destroyed at the present day. Their preservation, it was well known, affected the rainfall to a very considerable extent, and it was most necessary to take some urgent measures to preserve them.

The New Zealand Agricultural Company are asking for an extension of the time for paying off their debentures. The annual meeting of the company will take place on the 30th.

The Agent-general will ask the Hon. J. Stanley to endorse Lord Derby's approval of the prohibitive laws proposed to be taken should the French Government insist on their recidivistic scheme.

Reports have been received from Gippaland that a promising goldfield has been discovered on the Snowy River, and a rush has commenced in consequence of the glowing accounts of the prospectors.

The Home Government have decided to grant two commissions in the Imperial Army to New Zealand and to each of the Australian Colonies for young men from 19 to 22 years of age who have served at least two years in the Colonial forces. Competitive examinations will be held for the commissions, and the examination papers will arrive by the next mail.

The House of Commons met on Thursday, and after the issue of new writs rendered necessary by the appointment of the Ministry, adjourned until July 6, when the result of the elections will be known. Mr. Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett has been appointed one of the Junior Lords of the Admiralty. The positions of Attorney-general and Solicitor-general have not as yet been definitely filled. In the House of Lords the Earl of Salisbury stated that he had at first refused to reconsider his proposed resignation, but that her Majesty the Queen appealed to him to accept Mr. Gladstone's assurance of support.

MONDAY.

Mr. Errington, who has for some time acted as unofficial representative for Great Britain at the Vatican, has had a baronetcy conferred upon him.

Germany and Austria are encouraging England to adopt a firmer policy in the administration of Egyptian affairs.

The appointments of Lord Dunraven as Under-secretary for the colonies, and Lord Harris as Under-Secretary for India, are confirmed.

Reports from various parts of Spain show that the cholera epidemic is increasing in violence, no less than 1100 cases, of which 500 ended fatally, having been reported to the authorities yesterday.

A London special of June 3, says the desperate condition of the Scotch land market is shown by the surprising number of estates now offered for sale in Scotland. One auctioneer alone advertised to sell on June 2, estates valued at £2,500,000. Many Americans are in the market looking for Scotch property.

Berlin papers of May 29, have alarmist articles over the trouble between the Sultan of Zanzibar and the German East African Company. They hint that Germany may be compelled to declare war against both England and Italy.

Mr. Dion Boucicault, D. G. Boucicault, Mina Boucicault, and a select company of players, are passengers by the Zealandia for Sydney. They will make a tour of the Colonies and give New Zealand a round of Boucicault's well-known Irish dramas, and also produce a brand new play called "The Jilt," the last contribution of Boucicault to dramatic literature.

The fund now being raised in Ireland for the benefit of James Stephen, ex-Fenian head centre, recently expelled from France, amounts to £7000.

When the Bill is introduced in Parliament, as is proposed, to provide a royal residence in Ireland for young Prince Victor of Wales, it will be opposed by the Parnellites, on the ground that Ireland has more than enough of vice-regal pageantry now in Earl Spencer's Court at Dublin Castle.

The Anglo-German Fiji Commission has agreed that Germany will not establish a penal settlement in Southern Pacific. Some difficulties have occurred between some French and Italians. One of the latter slapped the face of a lieutenant of chasseurs as he was coming out of the theatre. The Italian was arrested and condemned to six days' imprisonment. The French general thought the punishment inadequate, and issued an order commanding all officers in future, on the least provocation from Jews and Italians, to draw their swords. He also decided to punish the orderly officer whose face had been slapped for not running his assailant through.

Sir Peter Lumsden, in an interview, said, referring to the Anglo-Russian situation, that it might be weeks or months before matters were again brought up, but that the difficulty was sure to break out afresh sooner or later, and that before long. The old frontier included all that was best in the 80 miles of desert land that was now to be given up to Russia. Sir Peter further said that Russia is now able, through the possession of Penj-deh district, to provoke fresh complications. Russia wants an ethnological frontier, and he proposed a geographical one. The Ameer has now 15,000 troops at Herat. When the Russians first advanced that place was quite open, and it would have fallen at once, for the population were, and even now to some extent are, siding with Russia. Sir Peter arrived at Vienna on June 5, and proceeded to London. In an interview he said Colonel Alkanoff had openly boasted to the Afghans that the Russians wanted to take Herat, and a great deal more. He further said Russia would never have urged her absurd demands if she had believed England was in earnest in resisting them. Later despatches from London say the Government is in despair over the fierce and outspoken denunciation of the Afghan breakdown which he has scattered along his path from Constantinople to Paris. He is thoroughly exasperated, and he does not care who knows it. When he arrived in Paris, almost the first greeting he received was a telegram from the War Office ordering him to see no more interviewers. Efforts are being made to cashier him, but it is known he has great influence in the highest quarters.

A London special of May 27 says the Russian censors of the Press are exerting themselves to the utmost to suppress the fact that, notwithstanding favourable prospects of peace, Russian preparations are still being pressed with extraordinary vigour. News, however, reaches London by various round-about routes, and it is known there is an immense movement of troops towards Central Asia. Large bodies of infantry, cavalry, field artillery, and railway and telegraph builders are pressing forward in almost a continuous stream from European Russia through the Trans-Caucasian provinces.