

rich alluvial ground has been worked immediately under it on the range.

The negotiations between England and Russia on the Afghan frontier question are making satisfactory progress, and it is announced that a joint protocol has been signed on the subject.

Count Hatzfeldt, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, has received a dispatch from the Spanish Government re-stating the claim of that country to the Caroline Islands. The tone of the note is amicable, and the hope is expressed that Germany will recognise the Spanish claim. Prince Bismarck in a dispatch states that possession of the Carolines is not a sufficient inducement to tempt Germany to be unfriendly with Spain.

A dinner was given at the Beaconsfield Club to Lord Carington, new Governor of New South Wales. The Duke of Buckingham proposed the health of Lord Carington, lauding his ability. Lord Rosebery, speaking on federation, said it was a question which would require Lord Carington's nicest discretion in dealing with. The recent difficulty over the Carolines showed, he said, the enormous importance of Colonial questions among the Powers, and he considered that Colonial statesmen ought to watch it closely, as "earth hunger" was at present dominant amongst the nations.

Great scarcity of food prevails at present in the Mysore district of Bombay, and the authorities believe the recurrence of famine to be inevitable.

#### TUESDAY.

The Humphrey's Gully Company finished washing on Saturday, and weighed up on Monday morning, giving 215oz. This is the total amount since the tunnel was put through. The Company is preparing an interim report, showing the number of days employed in washing, the quantity of water used, the quantity of ground washed, and the probable supply. The directors profess satisfaction at the result.

The wool market is weaker. Large reserves of old stocks are tending to aggravate the present depression. The increasing supplies which are being received from the upland districts of South America threaten a permanent reduction in the price of Australian merinos. The number of bales catalogued is 120,000, and the number withdrawn, 21,000.

The Archbishop of Aix city, in the Department of Bouches-du-Rhone (France), has died from cholera.

It is asserted in Madrid that Germany has occupied other important islands belonging to the Pelew, Caroline, Marshall, and Gilbert groups. Strongly excited feeling against the action of Germany (according to the *Melbourne Age*) continues to prevail in Spain. It has been ascertained that France is fostering the feeling of irritation. It is stated that Russia has only conceded the Zulfikar because of the possession of other and superior routes to Herat.

The stockraisers of Buenos Ayres (says the *Age*) have commenced the regular exportation of beef and mutton to compete with the Australian trade. Several steamers, fitted with refrigerating chambers and stores, have been constructed for the Buenos Ayres trade.

#### WEDNESDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday, replying to Mrs. Barron, if the Minister of Defence has had under his notice, and has considered the resolutions passed at a public meeting held in Dunedin on the 9th inst., to hear an address from rear-admiral Scott, and to discuss the defences of New Zealand; and if he will give effect to the recommendations contained in the resolutions, which were to the following effect: That the proposed expenditure on defences should be curtailed; that the orders sent to England for heavy guns, ammunition, torpedoes, search lights, engines, machinery, etc., should be as far as possible countermanded; and that the land defences of the Colony should be entrusted to the Volunteers,—the Hon. J. Ballance said he did not agree with the opinions expressed by Admiral Scott. They were contrary to the opinions held by the highest authorities. It was the intention of the Government to carry out the plan agreed upon.

Caroline Stevens, daughter of Mr. W. K. Stevens, commission agent, Auckland, has died of brain fever, evidently the result of the mental strain during the recent pupil teachers' examination. In her last moments she kept on reciting lessons and tallying up figures.

The new discoveries at Te Anau Flat, Waikaia (says the *Mataura Ensign*), continue to offer encouragement to miners. A large number of applications come before the Warden next Court day, and there is little doubt a permanent and valuable run of deep ground is being developed.

The Criffel corres. ondent of the *Daily Times* writes as follows:—The weather has changed for the better. The frosts have lessened in severity and the snow is gradually disappearing from the top. About 80 men are now located on and about Criffel. Many shafts have been bottomed since I last wrote, but without success; in fact, up to date no new finds are reported. Like the diggers, business men from a distance, so it is rumoured, intend rushing this field, but I would advise them to have a care and to think twice ere they take so precarious a leap.

#### THURSDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday, Mr. Pyke moved that a fresh conference be appointed to consider the Mines Act Amendment Bill. He referred at some length to the injustice suffered by the goldfields from successive Governments, and said the conference from the other chamber had refused to come to any compromise whatever. Mr. Seddon said Government had not given the conference that assistance which might be reasonably expected. He pointed out also that the Government had altogether failed to give that justice to goldfields which they had promised to give. The Hon. R. Stout said it was no use denying the Legislative Council the rights it possessed. So far as the gold duty abolition was concerned he had never advocated it, and he had told the miners so. He thought some concession should be made as to reducing the fees for miners' rights. If a conference from the House were appointed he had no doubt they would do their duty. The motion was agreed to, the conference appointed being Messrs. Stout, Bevan, and Guinness.

The English Government announce that, so far as the purely commercial aspect of the question is concerned, England will support Germany in her pretensions to the Caroline Islands. It is considered likely that Germany will invite the Powers to define rules for annexation in the Pacific.

## THE LAND PURCHASE BILL.

(Dublin Freeman, July 18.)

It appears the terms of the Land Purchase Bill, of which intimation has been given in both Houses of Parliament, are before the Government. We are informed that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland submitted at Saturday's Cabinet Council a draft of the Bill. It provides for the repayment of the capital and interest in forty-seven years, and each annual payment is to be fifteen per cent. under the existing judicial rents. It will be remembered that in May of last year the late Government introduced a Bill with the same object, viz.—to facilitate purchase. It proposed to advance the whole of the purchase money to the tenant who was unable to find the cash himself, and to charge for it at the rate of £3 5s per cent. The term of repayment was to be 33 years, and the annual payment both for interest and sinking fund would have amounted to five per cent. The terms of the new Bill will be awaited with great interest. An Irish solicitor writing to the *Times* on the subject warns her Majesty's Government that no measure of financial relief, however liberal, will be of any avail unless the departmental and legal obstacles to the working of the purchase clauses of the Act of 1881 are removed:—"The Bill of 1884 offered no relief in that regard. We cannot have two courts for the sale and transfer of land in Ireland—one court to which incumbrancers must apply for relief by sale, or in which an owner must sell such portions of his estates or such interests as would not come under the provisions of a Purchase Bill, and another court to which he must apply if he desires to carry out sales to tenants. It is estimated that three-fourths of Irish estates are encumbered or so circumstanced, and comprise such different interests, that they could not be dealt with under the Act of 1881 or the Bill of 1884; and we are told that at the present time there are over 1,000 petitions for sale pending before the Landed Estates Court. Again, unless the 25th section of the Land Act of 1881, which empowers the Land Commission to purchase estates for the purposes of re-sale, is repealed, the salutary provisions of the second part of the Tramways Act of 1883 are rendered nugatory. The State will inevitably be brought into direct relations with the tenants as landlords, and the price of land will be indirectly regulated by the Government standard instead of the ordinary laws of supply and demand."

## DION BOUCICAULT ON IRISH CHARACTER- ACTING.

On the occasion of his opening performance at Sydney, Mr. Dion Boucicault made the following speech:—"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I do not mistake the nature and character of the magnificent reception you have given to us this evening. I know what it means perfectly well. At least I feel so, and find that you have come with your hearts in both your hands to offer it to one who has served the English public for many years, and one who has contributed to your enjoyment for a long while. I know that I have been fortunate enough to be a popular author before you for many years past, and that very popularity now handicaps me as an actor, and I am obliged to race against myself. I hope you will understand my position when I say that I am here to a certain extent as the creator of that new form of Irish character which I have introduced to the world. Some 25 years ago I wrote the 'Colleen Bawn.' I found at that time what was called the stage Irishman in possession of the stage. I am an Irishman, I was born and bred there. Therefore I write of what I know, and speak of what I am sure, when I say that the 'stage Irishman' does not exist in Ireland at all. He may have existed there at one time, but I doubt it very much. If ever he did exist—that drunken fool, that witless object, at whose blunders you were called to laugh—I must say I have never seen the object in Ireland, and if he ever did exist, then I say the species is extinct. It is certainly not among those registered by Darwin. Now, ladies and gentlemen, I will ask you to observe that I introduced into the Irish character, as represented in my plays, one grand and simple element which never before existed in the stage picture of Irish life, but which has always been associated with the national sentiment—namely, the element of pathos, and with it delicacy and goodness of heart; for, with all their mistakes and blunders, I have always found the lowest Irishman to be a gentleman, and the lowest Irishwoman to be a lady. They may be rough, and have a thousand faults, but they have that one great redeeming characteristic. I wish you to observe, and hope that you will kindly do so, that in writing the Irish characters of my plays I have endeavoured to faithfully portray these traits of character. So I have endeavoured to teach those around me to act the parts of Irishmen and Irishwomen in a delicate and refined way, without whooping and twirling a stick, and prancing round the stage, as you may have seen the Irishman represented before. I ask you to judge from that point of view. Perhaps some may be dissatisfied and rather surprised that our rendition of Irish character is in the highest form of delicacy, and different from others which you may possibly have seen upon the stage. I did not ask the public of Melbourne to look at the matter as I do you, from this point of view. As long as I can think, write, and act, I will not write, speak, or do anything which may bring discredit upon the Irish nation and character, to the people of which I am so proud to belong."

The *Standard* says:—Mr. Parnell has selected Mr. Sexton to stand for the Scotland Ward Division of Liverpool.