

The following figures are taken from the agricultural statistics for New Zealand:—Number of holdings—freehold, 18,758; rented, 5,850; part freehold and part rented, 2,744. Land under crop—wheat, 390,818 acres; oats for green food or hay, 65,466 acres; oats for grain, 319,858 acres; barley, 28,146 acres; potatoes, 20,488 acres. Estimated gross produce—wheat, 10,270,591 bushels; oats, 10,520,428 bushels; barley, 737,163 bushels; potatoes, 104,581 tons. Quantity of last year's crop on hand when farms filled up—wheat, 123,554 bushels; oats, 110,761 bushels; barley, 5,932.

Captain J. McNeill, of the lake steamer Antrim, was caught between some trucks at the Kingston railway terminus, on Monday, and severely shaken. He is progressing favourably.

The widow of the engine-driver Meek, killed recently at the Dunedin terminus, has been allowed a gratuity, equal to six months' pay, by the Railway Department.

MONDAY.

Renewed persecution of the Jews has broken out at Rostoff, in Russia.

The French have been defeated in Anam, and it is believed a rupture may take place between them and China.

The Auckland coursing meeting was finished on Friday. Mr. Buckland takes the first prize of £30; Mr. Hogan second, of £20; and several prizes of less value will also be distributed.

An explosion occurred in Peterborough, England, blowing up the sewer in the principal street. It caused great alarm, and is believed to be the work of the Dynamitist Society.—Nevertheless, it might be hard to define the end to be gained by the Society in meddling with sewage. An explosion which recently took place in a sewer at Paris was otherwise accounted for. But John Bull in a fight is an unreasoning animal.

Messrs. Hunt and White are the successful tenderers for the Waioha railway contract (formation only) from Morrinsville to Te Aroha, the price being about £13,000.

The *Lyttelton Times* reports that the Onchunga iron has been tried by Mr. J. Hill, of Sydenham, who thinks that, when properly rolled or manufactured, it would be equal to the best Swedish.

The Czar has issued a manifesto in one of his coronation proclamations announcing a qualified amnesty to the Polish insurgents who took part in the revolt of 1863, with partial remission of penalties, and arrears of taxation. No mention is made in the manifesto of constitutional reforms.

Archbishop Croke, on his return from Rome, has met with a grand reception through the South of Ireland.

Mackay's labour-recruiting in New Guinea has occasioned a bad impression in political circles.

The Government have decided to accept the annexation of Southern New Guinea, and to convert it into a Crown Colony.

Lady Mountmorres, Mrs. Blake, and Field, the wounded jurymen, have each been awarded by Government £3,000 as compensation.

The French forces in Madagascar have occupied all the northern ports, and the warships are reported to be shelling unarmed villages.

At the wool sales 91,000 bales have been catalogued, and 7,000 withdrawn. Coarse merino and cross-bred wools continue a half-penny per pound below the March rates; but the price of sound combing qualities is improving.

Messrs. Hamilton and Chapman, Dunedin, received on Saturday telegrams giving the following gold returns for the week:—Welcome Co., 315oz. of amalgam from 89 tons of quartz. Keep it Dark Co., 450oz. of amalgam from 198 tons of stone; and the retorted gold for two weeks amounts to 206oz. Dunedin Dredging Co., (Alexandra) 30oz. of gold for the week.

Mr. Isaac Wilson, member for Kaiapoi, is dangerously ill at Wellington.

The house of Mr. Campbell, carrier, Evans Flat, was burned down on Tuesday, owing, it is supposed, to the overturning by a cat of a kerosene lamp. Insurance £75.

While fishing off Centre Island the other day (says the *Western Star*), Mr. Irwin, of the ketch *Raven*, came across a "monster of the deep," in the shape of a shark, measuring, judging by the length of the boat they were in, not less than 15ft. The fish had become entangled in the meshes of a net which had been cast, and in which it nearly came to grief. In the absence of means to despatch the monster, it escaped.

The dredge *Excelsior* (says the *Tuapeka Times*) is still at work at Rae's beach, the proprietors being unable, owing to the lowness of the river, to get to their destination—viz., M'Cunn's beach. The *Hope of Dunkeld*, which is still at work at Carson's beach, is on a good run of gold; this dredge is worked in three shifts of eight hours each.—We are indebted to our Waipori correspondent for the following items of mining news:—The Undaunted Co. are still working the surface-stone with very satisfactory results. The battery is now kept running full time.—Messrs. Cox and Clifford have a very nice cake of retorted gold as the result of their last monthly washing.—There is nothing further to write with regard to the quartz claims. In alluvial mining things are moving along quietly as usual. I hear that Messrs. O'Brien Bros. do not intend washing-up till November next. They are at present on a very good run of gold. For many years this party's claim has paid handsomely.

It is reported that one of the purchasers connected with the alleged dummyism has instructed his solicitors to take immediate steps to obtain a *mandamus* to compel the Land Board to issue his license.

Between 30 and 40 horses were shipped at the Bluff for Melbourne by the *Tarawera* on her last trip.

At Christchurch an Interprovincial Freezing and Storage Company, with a capital of £50,000, is projected for the purpose of purchasing, freezing, and exporting native game, fish, meat, and general produce.

The Marquis of Queensberry, brother of Lady Florence Dixie, in a letter to the *London Telegraph* on April 21, appeals to the Eton gentlemen said to have been in the vicinity at the time of the alleged attempt on his sister, to come forward and make a full and direct statement.

A further sum of £27 6s 6d has been collected in Christchurch for the sufferers from the floods in the Rhine.

A correspondent of the *Lyttelton Times* records the death, at Rangiora, of Sir Michael Le Fleming, the representative of an old Westmoreland family. He arrived in Canterbury by one of the early ships and took up a run under Mount Torlesse, naming it Easedale Nook. Sir Michael has led a retired life for years; but many will still remember the kindness and helping hand extended to them by Sir Michael in the days of his prosperity.

The *Lake County Press* says that the ravages of the keas among the sheep have already become more serious to the flockowners of the Wanaka district than the inroads of the rabbit.

The Te Awamutu Races were won as follows:—Hurdle Race, Rakau; Maiden Plate, Welcome Day; Te Awamutu Handicap, Bewi; Waikato Stakes, Victoria; Publicans' Purse, Bewi.

A tremendous cyclone passed over a portion of the State of Mississippi, reducing the towns of Wesson and Beauregard to ruin. Thirteen persons were killed and 75 wounded in Wesson, and 23 killed and 90 wounded in Beauregard.

The Connecticut Arms Company have received an order from China for 250,000 repeating rifles, in view of the trouble with France over Touquin.

Californian horses taken to the East are suffering from an undefined epidemic, the ravages of which are like scrofula in the human system. The favourite mare *Wildflower* has been attacked.

Five cases of leprosy are reported in Chicago. The disease is also reported in New York. Medical men are of opinion it is spreading in the United States.

Mr. Caleb Whiteford, R.M., is to be the second member of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the management of the Dunedin gaol.

The *Freeman's Journal* has a severe article on the attitude assumed by the Pope in connection with the policy of the Irish agitators. It asserts that his Holiness has been misled as to facts, and that he is acting in ignorance of the principles which actuate the leaders of the Irish agitation. Mr. Sexton, member for Sligo, suggests that a deputation should be sent to Rome to lay the details of the agitation before the Pope and to remonstrate with him upon the action he has taken.

Egan has delivered an address at Chicago on the attitude assumed by the Pope in connection with Irish affairs. He asserts that the encyclical letter issued by the Pope is an unwarrantable exercise of the Papal power, and urges the Irish people to resent it.

It appears that the encyclical letter issued by the Pope, forbidding subscriptions on behalf of Parnell, has so far had an effect contrary to that intended by his Holiness.—This and the two foregoing paragraphs are telegrams published in the Melbourne papers, and we do not know what the amount of truth they contain may be. We shall have to wait for some six weeks still for the Irish papers to bring us the true account of what this matter has, in fact, been.

A fire occurred at Mount Eden at five o'clock this morning, and destroyed three two-storey shops and a dwelling-house, together with their contents. It originated in the premises of Thomas (chemist), Gardener's (butcher) and Sayers's (grocer) were the other places destroyed. The cottage occupied by Kirkman was injured. Surman, who owned Thomas's and Gardener's shops, was insured for £400 in the New Zealand office. Thomas's stock, furniture, and fixtures were insured for £250, and Kirkman's furniture for £65 in the same office; Sayers's building, stock, and furniture were insured in the South British office for £50.

A flood is feared at Wanganui.

TUESDAY.

At the timber-yard of Mr. Bartlett, in Hardy street, Nelson, yesterday afternoon a lad named David Burns, in charge of a horse and dray, removed the blinkers from the former, and was about to feed the animal, which started. Burns held on to its neck for a few yards, when he fell, and the wheel of the dray passed over his chest. He was removed to the workshop, and spoke once or twice, saying, "What will my poor mother say?" He died directly after the arrival of the doctor, and about ten minutes after the accident. At the inquest a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

The Christchurch Diamond Company have resolved to increase the capital to £300 by the issue of 100 shares, for funds to secure a mineral lease for 21 years.

An engine-driver named Richard Shaw, slipped at the Timaru Railway station on Saturday, and broke his leg.

Major Atkinson, speaking at Hawera last night, said the opposition was disorganised because it contained at least two sections, one led by Mr. Montgomery, and the other, smaller, but more compact, by Sir George Grey. Sir George Grey added to confusion by assuming the leadership of both when it suited him, and simply passing Mr. Montgomery on one side. Anyone knowing the two men and their positions in the House, and the country must be aware that this would continue so long as Sir G. Grey was in the House. He could assume the leadership whenever he chose. The speaker gave the programme of the approaching session as follows:—The Government would bring in a number of consolidating bills and social measures. There would be the Abolition of Entail and Settlement Bill, a Bankruptcy Bill, and a bill to deal with married women's property on the same lines as the English Act, and a number of other bills, to which he need not specially refer, in continuation of the policy of last session. A large amount of social work was sure to be gone through.

The Governor arrived at Napier to-day, where he was accorded an enthusiastic reception.

A man named Samuel Peterson broke his neck by a fall from a ladder on Thursday, at Mr Goodman's farm, Green Park, Canterbury.

Charles Fleming has been charged at Christchurch with setting fire to his father's premises.

Mr. Duncan, in addressing his constituents at Pukeri last night, said he thought it was only fair that a percentage of the revenue contributed by Roman Catholics should be returned to them to aid their schools.