

# News of the Week.

FRIDAY.

THE meat preserving works at Rockhampton, Queensland, were totally destroyed by fire yesterday. The loss is estimated at £90,000, of which £20,000 is covered by insurance. The following are the policies held by New Zealand offices:—Colonial Insurance Company of New Zealand, £1500, three-fourths of which is re-insured; United Insurance Company and South British, each £2100; New Zealand Insurance Company, £2100, of which £870 is re-insured; Union Insurance Company of New Zealand, £5000, National Insurance Company of New Zealand, £500. The remainder was held by English offices.

A considerable number of Boers are joining Cetwayo, and it is expected the king will shortly take the field against the rebel Zulus. The Boer envoys who were appointed to proceed to England to negotiate for the settlement of the Native difficulty in the Transvaal leave on the 17th instant.

The *Cromwell Argus* of the 11th inst. writes:—Miners throughout the district would do well to keep a sharp eye on their tail-races, as the season for this handy class of robbery has again commenced. This time last year one or two parties suffered through their tail-races being cleaned up for them, and the blame was generally and conveniently laid at the door of John Chinaman. Last week, Mr. M'Donald and party, at Quartz-reef Point, discovered that during the night some depredator had cleaned up a portion of their race, plundering, it is estimated, some eight or nine ounces of gold. Fortunately the water was turned off, or no doubt the thief would have secured larger booty. As it was, he had to carry off washdirt as well as gold, and would doubtless pan it off at his leisure. In this case the culprit is supposed to be a European, and it is a pity he cannot be brought to book for his mean thievery.

A fifth child has died from injuries received at the fire in Walsh street, South Yarra.

The Collingwood correspondent of the *Nelson Colonist* telegraphs:—Sixty-nine ounces of gold from Golden Ridge from about twenty tons of mullock and quartz, obtained in sinking winze 50ft.; stone very rich.

The old Independent Chapel and parsonage at Hamilton, Auckland, the property of the Rev. H. Davis, was burnt down on Wednesday. Most of the furniture was, however, saved. The insurance is £600 in the New Zealand office. A billiard saloon was burned down also. The *Waikato Times* and Union Bank were only saved from destruction by strenuous efforts. The table and furniture in the saloon were insured for £150 in the London and Lancashire Union. The Bank was insured in the Union for £1500.

At the Canterbury Land Board two licenses to prospect for tin in Alford Forest, and one license to prospect for gold in the Horwata district, were granted.

On Wednesday evening a little girl named Grace Aitken, four years old, daughter of W. Aitken, farmer, Longbush, was playing in some bush which had been recently fired to clear off. She sat on a log which was still smouldering, and her clothing took fire, and was burned up to her waist before the fire was extinguished. The poor child is severely burned, and the doctor is doubtful if she will survive the shock to her system.

A fire broke out last night and destroyed two shops. That of Hagan, a bootmaker, was insured for £100 on the stock and £100 on the building in the New Zealand Office. His loss exceeds the insurance. The fire broke out in the premises of Faragher, tailor, whose building was insured for £75. His stock was uninsured, and he is a heavy loser. Had the night not been very calm the fire must have done extensive damage, as the buildings were situated in the centre of the town.

The express from Dunedin to Invercargill yesterday ran off the road at Oteramika and caused a delay of three hours. A loop-line is being put in at the place, and it is supposed that something had been left loose. The train was fortunately going slow, as it had just come up a steep incline and was stopping to let down some school children. The engine and three waggons left the track. The difficulty was got over by roughly finishing the loop-line, and getting the train past on it. The engine is somewhat knocked about, but no injury was sustained by anyone on board.

Lord Derby, in his dispatch on the annexation question, claims that the interests of other countries is a serious impediment to a complete jurisdiction over the Western Pacific and other savage islands, and there is also the impediment of the great distances which separate them. He states that there is no evidence to show that the Colonies had sufficiently considered the responsibility attached to the annexation of these islands. There is nothing in the despatch with reference to New Guinea. His Lordship, in communicating with Earl Granville respecting the threatened development of penal establishments by France similar to that in New Caledonia, stated that he expected to receive protests from the Agents-general on the subject.

Dr. Connelly, who, with his brother, was arrested at Limerick on August 22, charged with conspiracy to murder has been committed for trial.

A telegram from Westport states that the the Guiding Star Company's mining manager reports that he has exposed and cleared down the reef in several places on the north side of the Maori Gully, adjoining the Morning Star lease. Wherever so exposed the reef shows good gold.

The Communist agitation in Croatia is increasing daily. A serious disturbance took place to day at Jacobowitz, when the troops fired upon the rioters and killed 15, besides wounding many others.

Between September 6, 1882, and August 30, 1883 (says the *Clutha Leader*) Mr. James Smith, of Greenfield, supplied 19,500 fat sheep

either to the Refrigerating Works or to the Burnside saleyards. In addition, within the same dates, 2500 were used for the home farms and station supplies.

The first estimate of £90,000 as the loss by the fire near Rockhampton is overestimated. It is now believed that £40,000 will cover the damage done.

SATURDAY.

Captain Hultain, of the ketch *Reliance*, was knocked overboard while the ketch was jibbing early yesterday morning off Whangarei Heads. He swam for half an hour, cooeying in vain, then stripped his clothes off and made for the shore, three miles off, guided by the light. He landed on the beach nearly dead, after swimming three hours in a heavy sea.

Over £600 is to be given in prizes at the next Auckland regatta.

The following tenders were received for the Waimatu contract of the Seaward Bush branch railway:—Accepted: H. Jagers (Invercargill), £2771. Declined: John Walker, £2991; Frank Morgan, £3244.

Messrs Redmond and Walsh have received telegrams from the West Coast and other parts of the Colony, welcoming them on their mission, and informing them that arrangements are being made for their reception. They had intended to take a run to Alexandra to see the country, but time will not permit of that being done at present.

Messrs Pickering and Co.'s flaxmill at Spring Creek, Marlborough, was totally destroyed by fire on Thursday evening, only the wheel being saved. It was insured in the Liverpool and London and Globe for £300. The loss is estimated at £515.

Major Barker, of the Salvation Army, arrived from Dunedin at Timaru yesterday, and was welcomed by the local corps of the Army, who then proceeded to march through the principal streets of the town with a drum and tin-whistle band. They had been warned by the Mayor and others that their actions were likely to frighten horses, but they refused to desist. The result was that a child narrowly escaped being killed by a runaway dray (the horse in which was frightened by the noise) passing over its legs and breaking one of them.

A young boy named M'Crae fell into the river at Kelso, Tapanui, on Thursday night, and his elder brother jumped in after him. The younger child was carried away, and his body has not yet been recovered. The elder boy was rescued by his uncle.

The Southland County Council have rejected a motion to annex the district south of Lake Wakatipu, at present part of Lake county. They accepted a tender for county buildings in Clyde street, Invercargill, of brick and cement, at £2164. The ridings of the County having been altered, two members will resign, and offer themselves for re-election by the new districts.

MONDAY.

The *Standard* considers the danger of a foreign convict establishment in the Pacific as sufficient to justify the attitude of the Colonies in regard to annexation, and condemns Lord Derby's despatch as cold, curt, and unsympathetic. The colonies are only asking what is vitally essential to their welfare, and this the Government, with gratuitous unkindness, refuses to give them on account of political pedantry.

After the recent fighting in Anam, the French authorities beheld 30 "Black Flag" prisoners. The *Times* says if France prosecutes the Tonquin campaign she will probably embroil herself with Europe.

The latest intelligence from Canton states that the Europeans in that city are very uneasy in consequence of the violent anti-foreign placards which have been extensively posted there.

All the mortgages on Mr. Parnell's Irish estates have been paid off by public subscription.

Latest reports from Tonquin claim that the French troops have carried the principal positions occupied by the Anamese at the point of the bayonet. General Bouet has retired upon Hanoi, leaving garrisons in possession of the various forts recently captured.

The British Government have remonstrated against the action of the American authorities in sending back three emigrants alleged to be paupers. The persons in question were going to join their friends in America, who promised to take care of them, and they produced letters to this effect upon their arrival.

The Pope is drawing up an encyclical against divorce. The denizens of Pleasant Point (says the *Timaru Herald*) are considerably exercised by the appearance among them of a most unexpected visitor. A few days ago Mr. Robert Anderson discovered, snugly ensconced under a large gorse fence around his garden, a fine specimen of a hedgehog. Whence it came remains a mystery, as no one in the district was aware of the presence of a single specimen in the country, and great interest is taken in it, especially by the young folks. It must have been tamed, as there is no difficulty in getting it to stretch itself and move about and feed freely.

The Mayor of Hokitika, on a large requisition, has called a public meeting to consider the unsatisfactory working and management of the harbour, and to devise means for remedying the same.

The Arrow correspondent of the *Daily Times* wires as follows:—The Marlborough contractors have struck a body of stone about 18in. wide, but no gold has been discovered in it. The stone is looking well, and is on the line of the Garibaldi reef.

A Prospecting Association, with a capital of £2000, has been formed to thoroughly prospect the Malvern district, where some excellent samples of gold have been found.

Mr. Jacobsen has returned from Alford Forest. He states that sinking has been commenced, and some stones found rather larger than those sent home by Mr. Kelsey.

The Ross United Gold-Mining Company have successfully tapped water in the old workings, relieving the pumping engines in the main shaft. They are now keeping the water down easily at two strokes a minute less than formerly.