

SPECIAL TELEGRAMS.

(Per Anglo-Australian Telegraph Press Agency.)

AUCKLAND, Monday.

The 'City of Adelaide' sails with the Southern portion of the San Francisco mails to-night. The weather was very wet, and consequently there was a thin attendance at the races. Autumn Handicap—Batter, 1; Parawhona, 2; Golden Crown, 3; Discord bolted. Batter won by three lengths. The Champagne Stakes was a walk-over for The Bird. Selling Stakes—Never Miss, 1; Dundarra, 2; Trial Stakes—Bismarck, 1; Range, 2.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

MAKETU, Monday.

A tangi and also festivities connected with the anniversary of the Queen's Birthday have delayed the native meeting at Te Puki. Business commences on Wednesday morning. Large numbers of natives are assembled at Maketu on their way to the meeting.

SOUTHERN TELEGRAMS.

(Per Anglo-Australian Telegraph Press Agency.)

WELLINGTON, Monday.

The s.s. 'Phoebe' went out to fetch the ship 'Wenington'. She took a crowd of excursionists at 2s 6d per head, and brought her in about 3; all well on board; all the immigrants are to be landed to-morrow.

PORT CHALMERS, Monday.

Arrived: Ship 'James Nicol,' Fleming, from London, with 301 statute adults, all well.

ARRIVAL OF THE ENGLISH MAIL (VIA SAN FRANCISCO).

(Per Anglo-Australian Telegraph Press Agency.)

AUCKLAND, Monday.

The s.s. 'City of Adelaide,' Captain Brown, arrived shortly before eight o'clock this morning with the English and American mails. She left Sydney for Auckland on the 9th, at 3 p.m., with 50 saloon and 37 steerage passengers. Arrived at Auckland after a pleasant passage, on the 17th, at 2 p.m. Found H.M.S. 'Rosario' in port. About 8 a.m. on the 19th the 'Cyphrenes' and 'Tartar' arrived from their respective ports. 'Franshipped mails and 35 saloon and 45 second and third cabin passengers into the 'Cyphrenes,' and received the New Zealand mails and passengers from the 'Tartar,' which then sailed for Sydney at 1:30 p.m. The sailing of the 'Cyphrenes' made it impossible to tranship the New Zealand cargo without detaining the 'Tartar' and the 'City of Adelaide' too long. Completed coaling the 'Cyphrenes' early on the 20th, and left for Auckland at 2 p.m. The 'Cyphrenes' for San Francisco, and H.M.S. 'Rosario' for Liverpool, sailed the same day. Experienced fine weather till the 24th, when it blew rather fresh, with a heavy sea. The 'Macgregor' arrived at Sydney on the 9th, after a passage of about nine days.

ENGLISH NEWS TO APRIL 22.

The Grand Duke Alexis is the only member of the Imperial family who will accompany the Czar on his visit to England. In the House of Lords the Marquis of Salisbury, Secretary of State for India, said the harvest in India promised to be abundant, and that the present provisions against famine were undoubtedly ample.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. Smollett moved, that the suddenness of the late dissolution of Parliament was deserving censure. He characterized the act as a coup d'etat by which the last Government sought unconstitutionally to retain power. He declared that Mr. Gladstone had resorted to a stratagem which was ungenerous to his friends, insolent to his opponents, and barely honest to the nation. Mr. W. Hallway seconded the motion. Mr. Gladstone's suggestion of the assertion that the dissolution was secretly planned as untrue, absurd, and impossible. He challenged a repetition of the word "trickster" as applied to him. Upon the refusal of Mr. Smollett to repeat it, he charged him with lack of decency and manliness, and then defended the act of the dissolution, which he declared would have been more inconvenient had it been postponed. Upon concluding his speech Mr. Gladstone left the House. The motion was negatived without division. Much excitement was manifested during and at the close of the debate.

THE DEATH OF JOHN PHILLIPS.

The death of John Phillips, geologist, is announced to-day. He was seventy-three years old. His death was caused by accident.

A PROSPECTUS HAS BEEN ISSUED IN LONDON CONTAINING PROPOSALS FOR THE FORMATION OF A COMPANY TO TAKE OVER HALL'S AUSTRALIAN STEAMSHIP LINE.

The proposed capital is £200,000 in 30,000 shares of £20 each. The seven promoters take one share each, four of whom, including Mr. Hall, who stipulates for a salary of £1,000 a year.

A LOOK-OUT OF FIFTEEN THOUSAND MINERS IS EXPECTED IN CORWALL.

The amount of bullion withdrawn from the Bank of England balance to-day is £11,400. The amount of bullion gone into the Bank is £20,000.

THE EXPECTATION OF ANOTHER RISE OF THE THAMES, AND AN OVERFLOW OF THOUSANDS OF PERSONS TO THROG THROUGH THE BRIDGES WHICH CROSS IT.

The water did rise an immense height, but no damage was done.

PLACARDS ARE PASTED UP IN THE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS OF ENGLAND, CAUTIONING INTENDING EMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES, ON THE AUTHORITY OF CONSUL ARCBIB OF NEW YORK, THAT 40,000 PERSONS ARE READY TO RETURN TO ENGLAND.

FOREIGN NEWS.

The Carlist General Sabala, commanding the Carlists, has issued a proclamation denouncing the punishment of death to all persons furnishing food to the cities of San Sebastian, Rofira, and Irua.

A DISPATCH FROM PEDRO ABANTA SAYS THAT AN ARMY OF 5,000 REPUBLICAN TROOPS ARE MARCHING ON VALMAYEDA, A TOWN 22 MILES FROM BILBAO.

Particulars of the elections in Switzerland indicate that the plebiscite on the revision of a Federal Constitution, resulted in a majority of 100,000 in favour of revision.

THE GERMAN TRIBUNAL OF SAVERNE HAS CONDEMNED AND IMPOSED A HEAVY FINE ON THE BISHOP OF NANCY FOR A CHARGE TO THE CLERGY ISSUED LAST JULY.

Three millions of rials intended for Carlists, have been seized in Santander. A rumour is current that the Carlists asked Marshal Serrano for an amnesty. Senor Castelar has written a letter in which he declares himself in favour of a Federal Republic.

A FRENCH STEAMER, THE 'AMERIQUE,' HAS BEEN WRECKED NEAR THE ISLANDS OF USHANT, 20 MILES FROM BREST.

The chief officer was drowned, and the remainder of the crew and 180 passengers were saved. A subscription is being made in all parts of the States. Eighty thousand dollars were soon subscribed in New York.

HONOLULU ADVICES STATE THAT THE KING HAS RETURNED FROM A TOUR THROUGH THE ISLANDS, DURING WHICH HE SOUGHT TO MAKE HIMSELF INTIMATELY ACQUAINTED WITH THEIR CONDITION.

He was everywhere cordially received. A session of the Legislature was opened by the King. In his speech, which is highly spoken of by the press, he urged the desirability of economizing public expenditure, of immigration, and of free labour, of the scheme for irrigation of water supply, and of opening steam communication with Australia and San Francisco.

A SUBMARINE CABLE BETWEEN AMERICA AND HONOLULU IS PROJECTED BY AMERICAN CAPITALISTS.

The passengers and crew of the 'Amerique' were rescued by English, Norwegian, and Italian vessels. One of the latter arrived at Brest with the crew. The 'Amerique' was not a new vessel; she was formerly the 'Eugenie L'Impatrice,' and one of the finest steamships of the line. The loss of this fine ship, following so close on the loss of the 'Europe,' created great excitement in New York. The 'Amerique' was somewhat smaller than the 'Ville de Havre,' but similar in build.

ADDITIONAL ENGLISH NEWS.

The steamer 'Atrato,' after repairing and passing inspection, left at Easter with 400 emigrants for Canterbury and Otago. Several emigrants, who left the first time, refused to proceed, and returned to their homes, after enjoying the trip and several days' rations free.

A TERRIBLE EXPLOSION IN THE MINES AT DUNKELFELD CAUSED THE DEATH OF 53 PERSONS AND SEVERE INJURIES TO 20 OTHERS.

Joseph Arch is to arrange extensive emigration of farm labourers from England to America.

THE STEAMSHIP 'FARADAY' HAS BEGUN TO LOAD WITH THE NEW ATLANTIC CABLE, WHICH WILL BE LAID DIRECT TO THE UNITED STATES.

Two railway accidents have occurred in England, resulting in death and injury to twenty persons.

MR. GLADSTONE, IN REVIEWING THE BUDGET, SAID HE RECALLED THE REDUCTION OF A PENNY ON THE INCOME-TAX AS AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF THE TAX.

The bill abolishing the sugar duties has finally passed the House of Commons.

AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' UNION, £1,000 WAS GRANTED FOR THE RELIEF OF LOCKED-OUT LABOURERS, 4,000 OF WHOM ARE NOW EXISTING ON UNION FUNDS.

A LONDON LETTER SAYS: "IN THE EASTERN COUNTIES OF ENGLAND A BITTER CONTENTION EXISTS BETWEEN THE FARMERS AND LABOURERS, THE LATTER HAVING JOINED THE UNION. THE WARWICKSHIRE LABOURERS DEMANDED AN EXTRA SHILLING A WEEK. THIS WAS REFUSED, AND THE LABOURERS CONSEQUENTLY STRUCK ON ONE OR TWO FARMS. THE FARMERS GENERALLY RETALIATED BY LOCKING-OUT ALL THE UNION MEN, DECLARING THAT HENCEFORTH THEY WILL EMPLOY ONLY NON-UNIONISTS. THE LANDLORDS ARE SUPPORTING THE FARMERS, AND THREATEN TO EJECT TENANTS WHO DO NOT HOLD ALOOF FROM ALL RELATION WITH UNIONISTS."

THE PARLIAMENTARY VOTE TO DEFAY THE ASHANTE EXPEDITION AMOUNTS TO £200,000.

A new movement has begun in London for a parliament of working men. An organization has been formed and a committee appointed.

A BILL WAS INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT AT THE INSTIGATION OF THE EARLY CLOSING ASSOCIATION FOR CLOSING ALL SHOPS AT 8 P.M.

Dr. Kenely has been excluded from the press of the Oxford Circuit for want of etiquette in the Lichborne case. This deprives him of professional status, no junior being allowed to engage with him. In a letter to the press Dr. Kenely indignantly denies the charges made against him, and says he dissents from the verdict of the jury. He believes the claimant still to be Lichborne, and that the real Arthur Orton will be in England before twelve months, acknowledged as such, and defendant released.

THE REPORT OF THE EASTERN EXTENSION OF THE AUSTRALASIA AND CHINA TELEGRAPH COMPANY SHOWS THE YEAR'S PROFITS TO BE £156,975.

A dividend equal to 6 1/2 per cent. has been declared, and £30,950 carried to the reserve fund.

THE BRITISH STEAMSHIP 'QUEEN ELIZABETH,' FROM CALCUTTA FOR ENGLAND, BECAME A TOTAL WRECK AT PUNTA ARENAS, SPAIN.

Twenty-three lives were lost, including H. J. Allardyce, missionary to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, with his wife and three children.

FRANCE HAS SIXTY MILLIONS VOTED FOR REPAIRS OF FRENCH FORTIFICATIONS.

April 18. With reference to the escape of Rochefort and his companions, the Paris *Revue* says the escape of the French criminals has already led to an exchange of notes between the Cabinets at Versailles and St. James's. According to information received by the English Government it was a French vessel fitted out by friends of the prisoners, having on board a crew of 25 men, 17 convicts were to be carried off, but when the moment arrived only five were ready, the others being engaged at the work assigned them. The English authorities declare that the captain fraudulently hoisted the British flag, but the French believe they can prove that the vessel was equipped and prepared in a British port, and that the British Government should be held responsible. Upon reaching Sydney Rochefort telegraphed for 25,000 francs from M. Adam, formerly prefect of Paris police, and guardian of his children. After satisfying himself that there was no attempt at a hoax, M. Adam forwarded the money, part of which had been supplied by two newspapers, viz, the *Republique Francaise* and the *Lappal*. M. Victor Hugo also contributed 6,300 francs.

40,000 FRANCES HAS BEEN SUBSCRIBED FOR THE RELIEF OF THE LABOURING CLASSES IN PARIS.

The distress grows wider daily. Two batches of Lotzringers (Lorraine) priests, 37 in all, have been tried

IN COURT AT METZ FOR READING FROM THE PULPIT A PASTORAL OF THE BISHOP OF NANCY COMMANDING THE FAITHFUL TO PRAY TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN TO INTERCEDE FOR THE SPEEDY RE-UNION OF THE ANNEXED PROVINCES TO FRANCE.

Of the first batch, eleven ecclesiastics were condemned to a fortnight's imprisonment, three to one week, and the remainder acquitted.

AN OFFICIAL REPORT RELATIVE TO CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS, SAYS THAT AFTER THE TURKOMANS HAD BEEN PUNISHED FOR ROBBERIES, TRANQUILITY WAS PERFECTLY RE-ESTABLISHED, AND THE TRIBUTE COLLECTED FROM JUMAUDEN, ALTHOUGH WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY.

The people of Ushakou, on the left bank of the Amudaria, have since declared themselves most grateful to the Russians who have liberated the Khivese from the oppressions of Jumauden.

ITALY.

A large number of Roman noblemen attended the Vatican on March 23, to pay homage to the Pope as a counter-demonstration to the celebration of the King's accession. His Holiness made an energetic speech, praising the unalterable devotion of the Roman nobility, who had given the world unique example of faithfulness in adversity. A considerable meeting of Romans was held at Loggia di Raffaello, and saluted the Pope with frantic cheers.

AMERICAN NEWS.

SAN FRANCISCO, April 27.

From fifteen to twenty thousand people have been driven from their homes by the breaking of a level on the banks of the Mississippi in Louisiana. A large breadth of the best cotton lands were overgrown, and the crops ruined or greatly damaged. From Cape Girardeau to the Red River there are seven or eight million acres of bottom land ranking as the most productive land in the world. The product of this fertile tract in a good season is worth four or five hundred million dollars. At the last accounts several thousand people occupying these alluvial lands were not only driven out, but were in a starving condition. New Orleans telegrams state that the most gloomy reports continue to be received of the inundation in various parts. The whole of the Arno Valley is submerged, and houses, barns, implements, and animals have been washed away. The inhabitants fled to the highlands, where they remain in a destitute condition. A letter from the Red River country says:—"We are entirely overflooded, and all bankrupt. We have no provisions, no money, and many are starving. The water over the country is still rising. The cattle now drowned are dying for want of food. Sheep and hogs were drowned by the hundreds."

THE BANDIT VAQUEZ, FOR WHOSE HEAD A REWARD OF 15,000 DOLLARS HAS BEEN OFFERED, IS AGAIN RAVAGING THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES OF CALIFORNIA.

He seized the ranchero of San Gabriel, a mission near Los Angeles, and compelled him to write a cheque for 500 dollars.

THERE IS AN EPIDEMIC OF CRIME IN SAN FRANCISCO, SIX VIOLENT DEATHS OCCURRING IN ONE WEEK.

A murderer committed suicide beside the body of his victim, and another nearly similar case occurred a few days after, but the coroner's jury disbelieved the statement of the survivor, and found him guilty of murdering his comrade.

PRESIDENT GRANT HAS VETOED THE SENATE CURRENCY BILL.

The President's message on the Navigator Islands will soon be printed. The report of Commissioner Steinberger has attracted considerable attention.

THE CONFLICTING CLAIM TO THE GOVERNORSHIP OF ARKANSAS CAUSES GREAT ANXIETY.

Brooks and Baxter, the rival claimants, have each raised an army. Federal troops have been called on to restore quiet.

RIO JANEIRO, THE MAIL STEAMER HAS ARRIVED FROM RIO JANEIRO, AND REPORTS A RIPE REPUTE BETWEEN THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC AND THE GOVERNMENT OF MONTE VIDEO, BECAUSE OF ZURRIATO ARBITRARIO CLOSING THE RIVER URUGUAY AGAINST ORIENTAL VESSELS.

A settlement of the difficulty is hoped for.

VENEZUELA ADVICES STATE THAT GOVERNOR PULGAR, OF MARIACAO, HAD FROM THE PROVINCE TO KINGSTON, ON ACCOUNT OF POPULAR REVOLT AGAINST HIS DESPOTISM.

News has reached Panama of the loss of the Chilean coasting steamer 'Tacha,' with nineteen persons. The loss of life is attributed to the panic which seized the crew, two of whom made off with the only boat.

THE FRIENDS OF STOKES, THE MURDERER OF JAMES FISK, INTEND APPLYING FOR A PARDON.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

Yesterday was celebrated as the Birthday of Queen Victoria, but owing to the inclemency of the weather it was not a very enjoyable holiday. During the previous night there has been a succession of heavy rain storms, and the morning broke so threatening and cloudy that it was almost determined to postpone indefinitely the Volunteer display. A considerable number of excursionists started for Auckland to the races, and on other business, no doubt, by the 'Golden Crown' steamer, which left Tararu at half-past 7 o'clock. The cricket match, which was to have been played at Parawhona, had to be postponed altogether, but although during the morning the rain came down in torrents, the holiday was observed, not alone by the braves and public offices, but by the principal mercantile establishments and stores. Much regret was felt that the day turned out so wretchedly wet and stormy, for many were prepared to enjoy themselves to the utmost extent possible in various ways.

THE VOLUNTEER PARADE.

Was of course looked forward to as the principal event of the day, but up to the last moment there was an uncertainty as to whether there would be any parade at all. It had been arranged that the various Volunteer corps were to be conveyed by train free of expense to Tararu, where the parade was to be held and a *feu de joie* fired, but it was, we think, wisely decided after it was found that taking the men out to Tararu in the rain they should make short work of it, and after firing the *feu de joie*, assemble in the commodious drill-shed of the Naval Volunteers for the distribution of the district and other prizes. The necessity for this course was very much regretted, particularly as the Auckland Navals, under the command of Captain Le Roy and other officers, had come to the Thames for the express purpose of joining their comrades in arms at the parade in large numbers. The Thames militia, headed by their fine band, made a good muster, and the band performed a variety of airs in front of the entrance to the company's hall, prior to the assembly being sounded. Upon this the companies marched to the beach in

front of the Naval Hall, where they fell into position, the Scottish Company occupying the right, and the left being brought up by the Cadet Corps. The Auckland Navals formed a distinct company, as also did the Thames Navals. The No. 2, No. 3, and the Rangers were brigaded together. Each company having taken its place, the command of the battalion was taken by Captain Murray, in the absence of Major Cooper. (The command of right belonged to Captain Le Roy, who was the senior officer present, but he courteously resigned his privilege to Captain Murray, and as he could not of course then take a command under him, he resigned the command of his own corps) to Lieutenant Chapman, and took his position alongside Captain Murray. The battalion was then wheeled into line in close order, facing the sea. Open order was then taken, and the order was given to load with blank cartridge and fire a *feu de joie*, which was done, the first volley being rather scattered, but the next two much improved. The battalion then re-formed companies, and was marched into the Naval Drill Hall, where a battalion square was formed, officers on the inside, and the agreeable task of distributing the prizes commenced. This latter task was performed by Mrs. Murray, Mrs. Spencer, Miss Belcher, and Miss Spencer, Captain Murray officiating as commanding officer. There was a large number of the general public present, and the proceedings were very interesting. Captain Murray said that in the absence of Major Cooper he would distribute the district prizes to those who had signed for them, but before doing so there were other prizes to be distributed, which they would proceed. The first prize for presentation was a handsome sword to hon. Captain Swales, of the T.E.V. Cadet Corps. It had been subscribed for and purchased by the members of the corps as a mark of appreciation for the interest which Captain Swales had taken in the affairs of the company. The sword was presented to the youthful officer by Mrs. Spencer with a few appropriate remarks. Captain Swales thanked the members of his company for the presentation, and said that he would always make it his study to advance the interests of the Thames Engineer Cadet Corps. A medal presented for competition by Mr. J. D. Grant to the Thames Scottish Cadets, which had been won by Sergeant Horne, was presented to him and pinned on his breast by Mrs. Murray. Another handsome Maltese Cross, presented by Mrs. Murray to the Thames Scottish Company, for competition, was presented to the temporary winner, Vol. Sharp, by that lady. The next presentation was a handsomely-ornamented drum-major's staff, made by Mr. P. Speucer, of Parawhona, which was formally handed to Drum-major Campbell, of the Thames Scottish band, by Mrs. Spencer. This completed the extraneous prizes, and the presentation of the district prizes was then commenced. The first called was Staff Sergeant-Major Grant, the winner of the first prize in the first set, which consisted of a handsome medal and £10. In making the presentation, Captain Murray said that he was sure all the Volunteers were glad to see this prize won by Sgt.-Major Grant, for the great interest which he had taken in the success of the companies and in volunteering generally. Captain Murray then handed the medal and the cheque to Mrs. Murray by whom the medal was pinned on his breast, amidst the cheers and applause of all present. The following prizes in the first set were afterwards presented:—

Vol. McLean, T.S.V. £ 5  
Lieut. Carnie, T.E.V. 6 10  
Capt. McLeod, T.S.V. 3 0  
Vol. Karl, No. 2 2 10  
Sergt. Wilson, T.N.B. 2 10  
Sergt. Somerville, T.S.V. 2 10  
Vol. Graham, T.S.V. 2 0  
Vol. Littlejohn, T.S.V. 2 0  
Vol. Chew, T.N.B. 2 0  
Sergt. Johnson, T.S.V. 1 1

In presenting the latter prize, Captain Murray said that he thought it right to mention that Sgt. Johnson was a Volunteer who had seen hard service in New Zealand, and also in the Imperial Army both in the Crimea and in India. He was an excellent attendant at parades, a first-class drill, and he was a good example to all the Volunteers of the Thames. (Cheers.)

Vol. Trenwith, No. 2 £ 1

There were numerous other prizes for presentation in this set, but the winners had not signed the receipts, and the presentation of the prizes in the second set was then commenced. The first prize was won by Vol. Samuel Robinson, of the Naval Brigade, and amounted to £3. In presenting it Capt. Murray said that he was glad to see the prize had been won with a good score. Vol. Robinson was a young shot, and a very promising one, and he had no doubt he would do well this year in firing in the first set, which he would have to do. (Cheers.) The following prizes in the same set were then presented:—

Vol. McCaul, T.S.V. £ 4 0  
Vol. Aylett, No. 1 2 10  
Vol. Peony, T.N.B. 2 10  
Vol. Downie, T.S.V. 2 0  
Vol. R. Robinson, T.N.B. 2 0  
Vol. Harris, T.N.B. 1 10  
Captain Brassey, T.N.B. 1 0  
Hon. Captain Swales 1 0

There were five other prizes in this set to be presented, but the receipts had not been signed. The presentation of the Cadet prizes then took place as follows:—

Lieutenant Mace, T.E.V. £ 3 0  
Cadet Fraser, T.E.V. 2 0  
Cadet Campbell, T.S.V. 0 15  
Cadet Dabb 0 15

This concluded the prize distribution. Captain Murray then thanked the battalion for the large muster of the different companies, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. He would have much pleasure in conveying to Major Cooper the intelligence that all their exercises were very well done. He called for three cheers for Major Cooper, which were at once responded to. He then called for cheers for the ladies who had presented the prizes, which were heartily given. He then called for cheers for the Auckland Navals, which had honoured them by their presence. The cheers were heartily accorded. Captain Le Roy then called for cheers for the Thames Volunteers, which were responded to by the Auckland Navals. Captain Brassey then called for cheers for Captain Murray, which were given with the utmost enthusiasm. The square was then formed and column reformed, and the battalion headed by the bands playing alternately marched to Shortland, where they broke off for five minutes, and the column marched back again left in front.

PROTESTANT ALLIANCE FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

THERE WAS A LARGE ATTENDANCE LAST EVENING IN ST. GEORGE'S HALL, AT THE SOIREE OF THE PROTESTANT ALLIANCE FRIENDLY SOCIETY OF AUSTRALASIA, ALTHOUGH THE WEATHER WAS EXCEEDINGLY STORMY. THE HALL WAS DECORATED WITH FERNS AND NIKAU AND FLAGS ALL ROUND. THE FOLLOWING LADIES PRESIDED AT THE TABLES:—Mrs J. Bull, Mrs T. R. Jones, Mrs J. J. Bull, Mrs Perston, Mrs Scott, Mrs Airy, Mrs Dodd, Mrs Marsh, Mrs Power, Miss Macky, Miss Richards, Miss Hanley, Miss Moore, and Miss Dickson.

At the conclusion of the tea service, the tables were cleared away, and the meeting was constituted, being presided over by the Rev. J. Hill. After the performance of a duet on the piano by Mrs F. R. Jones and Miss Scott.

The CHAIRMAN said: It affords me no little pleasure to preside at the first soiree of such an important and useful institution as the branch of the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australasia established here. The great value of friendly societies is now, we may say, universally acknowledged. To make some provision for sickness and death is a duty imperatively demanded of every man, by the uncertainty of the continuance of health, and life. To live for the present alone—to leave the contingencies of the future wholly unprepared for, is unworthy of the rationality with which man is endowed, and inconsistent with the solemnities with which life is associated; and he who does so commits a grievous wrong, not only on himself and those depending on him, but on the community in which he resides. I am not here to-night to decry other friendly societies existing in this place, or elsewhere. I value such too highly for this; I have seen too much of the good such associations do for the poor, and the hundreds of families are kept from the uncertainty and inadequate assistance of charity, when sickness comes into the dwelling, and the bitterness of sorrow is somewhat alleviated when death smites down the loved one; and I most heartily wish prosperity to every society that has for its object the alleviation of human sorrow in this way, and that manages its affairs wisely and well. But I am here to-night to say that by its principles and its rules, and its liberality and its security, its success and its prospects, the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australasia deserves a prominent place among all such associations. (Cheers.) In origin this Society is Australian. There was a Protestant Alliance Association in Victoria, and one in New South Wales. These have now been united. That the Society may be extended to New Zealand the words "of Australasia" have been adopted. In Victoria there are about 1,800 or 2,000 members; and in New South Wales about an equal number. The Society is composed of lodges situated in the different districts. In New Zealand there are yet, I believe, only two such lodges—this one at the Thames, and one in Dunedin. The number of members in Dunedin I do not know, but the membership here has reached the very respectable number of 180. There are four points in the constitution of this Society worthy of notice. The first is the monetary advantage which its members receive. By a small weekly payment a weekly allowance is obtained when there is sickness, and a sum is paid when there is death. Now a comparison with the tables of other societies places this one in a favourable light. The sickness fund is a local fund, that is, every lodge manages it for itself; but the funeral fund is a general one, that is, there is only one fund throughout the whole Association, thus giving a great security and stability as possible. In short, the machinery of the Society is worked economically, and the scales of payments, and of benefits, are as liberal as the safety of the Institution will permit. The second point is; that in addition to the monetary assistance when it is required, there are all the sympathy and the help which the bonds of a true brotherhood can secure. There is not at the meetings of the lodges of this Society the mere payment of the weekly charges; there are not, so to speak, those commercial transactions only—so much paid for so much got—but there is the eloquent and unmistakable expression of those thoughts and feelings which bind men together in a common brotherhood. (Cheers.) Every member at his initiation enters under a solemn obligation to cherish to all the members proper feelings of regard and brotherly love—to protect their characters when wrongly reviled—to suffer no injustice to be perpetrated upon them—to sympathise with them in their trials and troubles, and give to them the succour they may need if in his power to do so. The value of such an obligation as this it is impossible to over-estimate. For often in this world of difficulty and danger men are in circumstances in which they need sympathy, protection, and assistance not within the range of ordinary friendly societies. The third point in the constitution of the Society is loyalty—an unfeigned, unfeigned loyalty to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland. (Cheers.) We believe that the success of friendly societies and of all brotherhoods depends on good government in the countries in which they exist, on laws which will maintain peace and order, and secure the privileges and protect the rights of man. We believe that with all its faults the British Government is such a government. Therefore the members of the Protestant Alliance desire that the colonies shall remain under the sway of the British sceptre—not only so, but that in the succession to the British throne that element on which so much depends—I mean the Protestant element—shall ever continue. (Cheers.) It is one of the conditions in the succession to the British throne that it be Protestant. Only a Protestant can sit on that throne. The imposing of this condition we believe was wise, and was fully warranted, as we believe, by the facts in the history of the British people. We believe that this is one of the broad and enduring stones in the solid foundation on which the prosperity and the glory of the British nation rest. Some others, of course, do not think this; but this is the opinion of Protestants—not only this opinion, but their settled conviction. This being the case, it is the ungratified desire of his Association to keep all the colonies under the sway of the British throne; and not only so, but to do all they can to maintain this important, this essential Protestant element in the succession to the British throne. Hence, in the emblems of our Society a crown—a crown meant to represent the British Crown—occupies a prominent place; and the proceedings of all our lodges are closed with these words, which emanate not only from our lips, but from our hearts:—"God save the Queen!" (Applause.) The

fourth and last point allude to is, that this Society is a benevolent one; not merely on monetary a benefactor, nor on the bonds of human brotherhood, nor on the peace and order secured by loyalty, but on the doctrines and principles of the religion of Almighty God. Yes, and these doctrines and principles of the religion of Almighty God, not as they were found covered with the dust and the numerities of ages before the Reformation, but as they were rescued on a level and brought forth to the clear light of heaven by the noble and the glorious efforts of Luther and his coadjutors. We believe—and we must be excused for saying what we believe on such a momentous theme—that the doctrines of religion are to be found as they are found—found as man needs them—in the form which we call Protestantism. Therefore if we desire to found our institution on religion, we are bound by conscience, bound by the laws of heaven, bound by the necessities of a fallen world, to base it on religion as exhibited under the glorious name of Protestantism. (Cheers.) We believe that all the safety, all the happiness of men both in this world and the next is in religion; therefore, we have adopted religion, true religion, Protestant religion, as the foundation on which our Society shall rest. I said that the Crown—the Crown of England—has an important place in the emblems of our Society. I have to add that there is something else also occupying an important place, viz, the Bible. The emblem of our Society is in fact this—a Bible with a Cross resting on it—the Word of God, and the Crown of Britain lying on it. And well surely may any Society that takes the Bible for its foundation take to itself the name of Protestant, as this Society has done, for it was Protestantism that rescued the Book from the shelves of mysteries—from darkness, from ignorance, superstition, and oblivion; and that gave it into the hands of men—the hands of the humblest and the poorest, so that its precious light now cheers the inmates of the lowliest cot, and sends the soul of many a beggar in faith and in joy to the house of God. (Cheers.) In the monastery of Erfurt Luther found a Latin copy of the neglected book. It shed a flood of light on his own mind, and remained the glory and the power of the Protestant Reformation throughout all the struggle. There, then, is the fourfold emblem which binds this institution together—fidelity to oneself and dependents against the day of sickness and of death; fidelity to all the members in the bonds of a true brotherhood; fidelity to the throne of England, based as it is on Protestantism; and fidelity to religion as it has been preserved and maintained by Protestantism. Such a Society, I say, deserves to prosper; and such a Society, I venture to say, shall prosper. God shall bless it, and it shall prevail. I have no doubt that at the next anniversary soiree—whenever my life will be so long—the number of members will be greatly increased; and this not only at the Thames, but elsewhere. By the next mail from Sydney there will come, we expect, from the Grand Lodge, power to constitute lodges in Auckland and throughout New Zealand; and we believe that in a short time there will be no place of any importance in New Zealand that shall be without a branch of the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australasia. (Cheers.) In concluding these remarks, I have to express the pleasure I have in seeing so many ladies present. If any should encourage such societies it is they. To increase the happiness and to lessen the sorrow in our hearts and homes we look to them; and they cannot but be greatly interested in such a means for this purpose as our institution presents. Under their rule and approval we anticipate a bright future for the Thames branch of the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australasia. (Loud applause.)

Mr Airey then sang "The white squall," and Mrs Dodd and Miss Hanley the duet "Flow on, thou shining river." The latter piece was encored. Mr Scott Hunter then recited, in very excellent style, "Jugurtha's Prison Thoughts," and Mr T. R. Jones sang "The Englishman," which was received with great applause.

Rev. James McKee then addressed the meeting. He said he had great pleasure in being present on that occasion. It must give the committee very great satisfaction to see such a large meeting that night, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. He would congratulate the members of the Alliance on the success which had attended them during the past twelve months, which no doubt had been in a great measure owing to the efficient officers they had been able to secure. (Cheers.) There had been a want in the Protestant community here which this Society was calculated to supply. There were some who would not join the Orange Institution for several reasons. It might be on account of its name, as some thought that in the name of Orangemen there was something antagonistic to those principles of peace, and something which roused their enemies against them. There could be no such feeling as that in regard to the Protestant Alliance, which met the requirements to some extent of Orangism, and further had the additional advantage of being a benefit society. There were many benefits, as they had heard from the Chairman, which the principles of that Society represented. It was a Society which supplied food to the hungry and it might be medicine to the sick, and when widows and orphans were in distress it supported them. How then should it not receive the sympathy and support of all Protestants? There was another element, namely, that of union. They as Protestants had a common enemy, and that enemy was the Church of Rome. This Society united them, and it might be medicine to the sick, and when widows and orphans were in distress it supported them. How then should it not receive the sympathy and support of all Protestants? There was another element, namely, that of union. They as Protestants had a common enemy, and that enemy was the Church of Rome. This Society united them, and it might be medicine to the sick, and when widows and orphans were in distress it supported them. How then should it not receive the sympathy and support of all Protestants? There was another element, namely, that of union. They as Protestants had a common enemy, and that enemy was the Church of Rome. This Society united them, and it might be medicine to the sick, and when