

LOCAL AND GENERAL NEWS.

We had the pleasure yesterday of examining a very superior cultivator manufactured by Mr. Bannerman, of Limestone-street, for Messrs. Sahl and Tatham. It is certainly the most complete and creditable thing of the kind ever produced in the colony, and is much superior to the imported article. It would be impossible without the help of a diagram, to explain this implement. It runs on three wheels, and is provided with seven shares or teeth, which may be lowered or raised at pleasure according to the depth required. The implement is chiefly intended to answer the purpose of cross-ploughing, and, as it covers a great width of ground (about nine feet) the saving in time and labour must be very great. Every part of the machine, even to the wheels, is made of wrought iron, which, while it adds considerably to the strength, also increases the cost somewhat. The cultivator we saw is for eight or ten bullocks, and the cost was £22, but Mr. Bannerman proposes to manufacture some smaller ones for two or three horses at a lower cost. Any of our readers who are interested in agriculture should go and see this clever piece of mechanism.

Last week four male patients and one female were received at the Lunatic Asylum, Wongaroo, making the number in the house 140, namely, 99 males and 41 females.

William Hendren directs the attention of speculators and others to his clearing-out sale this day (Thursday), at Clune's Hotel, at 11 o'clock. See advertising columns. No reserve.—[Adv.]

The new item of rents under the leasing Act of 1866 produced upwards of three thousand pounds in the quarter, nearly equal to the total of the two previous quarters. It is the fashion in some quarters to decry the Leasing Act as a failure, but this statement can be made only in ignorance of the facts. It has facilitated settlement in a very considerable degree. Already the rent has been paid on upwards of fifty thousand acres of land taken up under its provisions, and the quantity is steadily increasing. The favour with which the principle of leasing has been received by the public will necessitate its further application, and a large addition to the annual revenue will accrue from this source.—*Courier*.

On Friday morning last, three prisoners named Irwin, Dawson, and Morris, made their escape from the penal establishment of St. Helena, with the apparent intention of getting away from the island. A party of soldiers and warders started in pursuit of the runaways, who managed to secrete themselves in a thick scrub. Their pursuers, however, placed themselves in such a manner as to be able to discover any attempt on their part to leave their lurking place to procure food; they were, consequently, captured without resistance early on Saturday morning. In their possession was found two washing tubs and a washing board, imperfectly fastened together with rope; it was their intention to endeavour to reach another island by means of this frail craft. The Police Magistrate, Mr. Massie, and the Water Police Magistrate, Mr. Thornton, held an investigation on Monday last concerning the escape of the prisoners, and sentenced them to be flogged. Irwin, who appears to have been the ringleader, received thirty lashes, and Dawson and Morris twenty-five lashes each. The magistrates had occasion to sentence another prisoner named Hanlon to the infliction of twenty-four lashes for behaving in a very insubordinate manner. It may not be out of place here to mention that the danger of attempted escape of prisoners from St. Helena is increased by the number and ferocity of the sharks which infest the Bay.—*Guardian*.

Some few weeks ago, a man named Edward H. Pringle, travelling on the Albert River, happened to pass a blacks' camp on Coomangora Creek, in which he saw two half-caste children. Being struck by the peculiar whiteness of their complexion, he was induced to make further inquiries, and found that the mother was a half-caste, and that the father, an European, was employed as a stockman on the Logan. It appears that the mother was with the blacks and living with one named Charley, who had already sold a third child of the same mother for the sum of £2,

living with one named Charley, who had already sold a third child of the same mother for the sum of £2, and refused to give the others up unless he could realise a like sum on each. Mr. Pringle communicated the circumstances to Dr. Challinor who laid the case before the Colonial Secretary. The latter immediately directed the police to endeavour to gain possession of the children, but as yet that object has not been attained, as the blacks had left the place. The police are still making enquiries.—*Courier*.

A correspondent of the *D. D. Gazette* at the Nango gold-field writes:—It is rather remarkable that almost simultaneously with the execution of the Clarks of New South Wales that one should have sprung up in Queensland that for daring would have equalled, if not surpassed, his namesake, had not his career been cut short by the vigilance and highly commendable conduct of Mr. Mason, and some of the diggers. The only lady on the diggings was proceeding on foot to the township accompanied by her brother, when about 1½ miles on the road, Clark passed them on horseback, wishing them good day, when suddenly he turned round and covered them with a revolver and demanded the gold and money on their persons. The man fortunately had the 10 ounces of gold dust and money secured in such a way as to be able to shift it while the bushranger was overhauling him. Just at the moment a digger came along the road, and, attracted by Mrs. Mason cooing came to the spot, but was unable to render any assistance, but darted off in the direction of the diggings to report the occurrence to the husband of the lady; the bushranger pursued him, but without effect, and Mrs. Mason and her brother went into the bush, planted their treasure, and proceeded to the township for the police. In the meantime, the husband armed himself and taking the man that had seen the occurrence to identify Clark, proceeded in search, and in less than half an hour had secured the prisoner and was escorting him to the lock-up, when the police of Nango relieved them, and took the young gentleman into their custody. He and his mate Drury are committed for trial at Maryborough. The latter appears to be a notorious young man, being the same as was convicted of stealing a constable's horse at Leyburn last August. The horse ridden by Clark was lent to Drury about a quarter of an hour before by a Toowoomba man named Wilson, formerly in the employ of Mr. Martindale.

The anniversary tea meeting of the Toowoomba Congregational Church was held on Wednesday evening last. A public meeting afterwards took place, the Rev. J. T. Waraker in the chair. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. W. Brown, Toowoomba, Mr. Green, of Camden College, Sydney, and the Rev. D. Massop, of South Brisbane (who also took the service in the Church on Sunday, the 16th). In the course of the evening a purse was presented to the Rev. Mr. Waraker by Mr. E. W. Robinson, in the name of the congregation, and suitably acknowledged by the Minister. On the motion of Mr. Buckland (of Brisbane), a vote of thanks was unanimously accorded to the ladies of the congregation for the share they had kindly taken in the arrangements for the meeting, the tone of which was peculiarly good, the whole proceedings being of a caste to afford pleasure and profit to all assembled. On the following day (28th), the children of the Congregational Church Sunday School were invited to a customary treat. The games took place in the paddock adjoining, and at their close ample justice was done to the good things which had been very kindly and liberally provided for the children assembled.—*D. D. Gazette*.

We (*Guardian*) are delighted to see that there is at least one person in the world whom Mr. Macalister would go far to serve. The *Toowoomba Chronicle*, reporting Mr. Groom's speech in full, says thus—Mr. Groom speaking:—"I repeat to you that a grave crisis still exists in the colony, and electors are called upon to return members who will support a Government who are in favour of the people, and not of class interests. (Hear, hear.) With your permission I will now read a telegram to you that I have received from Mr. Macalister, which will prove to you whether I am alighted by members of the House or can only go in by rowdy voters, as represented by the *Gazette*."

I am suggested by members of the House or can only go in by rowdy voters, as represented by the *Gazette*. [Here Mr. Groom read a telegram from Mr. Macalister, offering, if necessary, to go up and vote for him.] There is a grave crisis, and Macalister believes in Groom for its redemption. After this, of course, they will dine together at Government House. Something has been said of Mr. Macalister canvassing here, but that fades into nothingness before the offer to go to Toowoomba in person. Would there have been the usual paraphernalia of deputations? Fancy the band playing—"See the Conquering Hero Comes," as the Premier went to the poll to secure the aid of Groom in the "grave crisis."—(Mr. Macalister did come to Toowoomba to vote for Groom, but our contemporary is wrong in imagining that any band played on the occasion. On the contrary, the Colonial Secretary, who was accompanied by Mr. W. Turner, appeared to avoid public recognition, and went by a back street to poll at the Town Hall. If he felt obliged to eat dirt, at all events he did it as privately as he could. Mr. Turner came up to vote for Groom because the opposition candidate, when Mayor of Toowoomba, endeavoured to obtain the Eastern slope of the Range as far as Helidon as a commonage, and got the promise of the Executive that it should be granted—which has never yet been fulfilled.—*Ed. D. D. G.*) (The Colonial Secretary also came to Ipswich to vote for Fleming, but was not quite so successful as at Toowoomba.—*Q. T.*)

The Northern Downs election has terminated in favour of Mr. Henry Thorn, who polled forty-five more votes than Mr. Coxen. This result, we are informed, is owing to the receipt of the following telegram, late on Sunday evening, at Jimbour, the station of the Hon. J. P. Bell, which was appointed a polling place in the *Government Gazette* of Saturday last:—"To James Challacombe, Esq., Jimbour.—George Thorn supports me for West Moreton; I support Henry Thorn for Northern Downs." This telegram was signed "J. P. Bell," and is pronounced to be a forgery. It appears, however, to have determined the result of the election. The appointment of Jimbour as a polling-place at the last moment, and the defeat of the object sought to be gained by such appointment by the adoption of the peculiar electioneering *ruse de guerre* we have detailed above, are facts worthy of remark in connection with the Northern Downs election.—*Guardian*—(and the facts must be taken together.—*Q. T.*)

Friday was the day appointed for the sittings of the District Court, but there were no criminal cases to be heard. In the case of cattle-stealing, adjourned from last court, the Crown Prosecutor had found no bill. A pair of gloves were presented to Judge Blakeney, who, in referring to the absence of crime in this district, hoped that the present was an indication of improvement which would continue. There are persons in Dalby who are ready to affirm that cattle-stealing is still carried on, although more cautiously than formerly. Every one will be prepared to recognize, however, the benefit conferred upon the people generally by the establishment of District Courts. The fact of more caution being required in unlawful pursuits is proof that considerable good has been done by these Courts since they came into operation. The cases of cattle and horse stealing which occupied the time of the Court two days on its last sitting, gave this town and district an unenviable notoriety, and we are disposed to consider that it was the severe and exemplary sentence which was then passed upon the prisoners that has been the primary cause of the present apparent absence of lawlessness. Now that there is danger of detection, it is to be hoped that unprincipled men will be deterred from preying upon the property of others, and that this district will become as remarkable for the absence of crime as it has hitherto been notorious for recklessness and dishonesty.—*Daily Herald*.

THE DALBY RAILWAY.—There appears to be some difficulty in proceeding with the railway works. A large body of men were engaged by Mr. Bourne's agents last week, but, we are told, at reduced rates of wages. The work was let out in sub-contracts, so that none of the men could sue under the Masters and Servants Act. During the week the men worked three days, and then the question arose as to who was to be looked to for payment when the work was done. As the Government

do not appear to have appointed any one as paymaster, and the men have lost all confidence in Mr. Bourne, they have struck work, refusing to resume it until it is definitely decided how they shall be paid. We trust the "difficulty" is a temporary one, and that satisfactory arrangements will be concluded in a day or two. —A singular result of making the railway between Dalby and Toowoomba has been brought to our notice by a gentleman of this district. Heretofore, a large section of country, commencing at a point a little above Penang, and running south-west alongside the Dalby Forest some distance, when it turns west till it is bounded by the north branch of the Oaky, has drained into that creek, but since the trenches of the railway have been cut, the drainage of this area has been conducted by the trenches into the Myall Creek, and to a certain extent increases the water supply of Dalby.—*Ibid.*

COOTA CREEK DIGGINGS.—This has been recognised as a golden region for some years, but about six months ago a Mr. Mason commenced with three other parties to search for the treasure, and not until February last could they get any payable quantity, and then only sufficient to cover their expenses. It appears that Mr. Mason had to pay the piper for his mates, and in order to accomplish so desirable an end, he even supplied another party with rations to the extent of £20, and afforded assistance to all that needed it in the way of supplies on credit—a fine example for a wealthy Toowoomba storekeeper. That so far from puffing the diggings into notoriety, he quietly came to Toowoomba and sold 17 oz. of gold purchased from diggers, and part the fruit of his own labours. The 15 oz. referred to by the *Queensland Times*, as having been brought to Ipswich by a digger, turns out to have been purchased in small quantities from the diggers, and taken to that town by a bright publican of Nannango; and had your contemporary, the *Q. T.*, been as cautious as you were in not publishing anything regarding the diggings until he had either sent up a reporter or requested some truthful person to send him a true account, he might have saved many a poor man a fruitless journey of 100 miles, and not endangered the peace of the township, as his short but encouraging paragraph did, by inducing penniless men to go there in search of a gold-mine, causing riotous behaviour. On Saturday and Sunday evening last, about thirty men from Toowoomba—evidently railway men—entered the township, and demanded rations and grog from the publicans, and, from the absence of police protection, the publicans were obliged to accede to the requests; but one of the storekeepers showed more valour, and defied them—threatening to shoot the first man that touched a thing on the premises, although they surrounded his house for the greater part of the night. At present everything is peaceable and quiet, and at most not more than eighty men are working in this neighbourhood. Supplies are equal to the demand, and at very reasonable rates: flour, 6s. per bag; sugar, 6d. per lb.; tea, 3s. per lb.; potatoes, 3d. per lb.; beef, 3d. per lb.; wood and water plentiful and free; tools—picks, shovels, cradles, &c., numerous enough. There is a carpenter on the ground, with planing, who makes cradles, &c., to order. I cannot give you the price of wines and spirits, as there is no public-house on the diggings, although I hear to-day that Mr. Mason purposes building one, and also that two policemen are to be stationed here.—Correspondent *D. D. Gazette*.