

THE Public Offices will be closed to-day and until Tuesday, the 26th December, inclusive, according to official notification in the Gazette.

THE Queensland Cricket Association have received a telegram from Mr. Wardell, secretary of the Melbourne Cricket Club, as follows:—"Team will leave Sydney definitely on the 30th January. Suggest playing in Maryborough on the 3rd and 5th February, and in Brisbane on the 8th, 9th, and 10th, as teams would have to leave on Monday, the 12th, to keep engagements in Sydney."

THE many friends of Mr. Thomas Curphey will regret to hear of his death. He left the colony a few months ago for the old country for the benefit of his health, but died after reaching his destination. Mr. Curphey was for many years a Custom House officer in Brisbane, and had, by sheer industry and attention to his duties, come to the front rank among the officials in that department. He was in the habit of making the voyage to England, and a list of Commissioners of the Supreme Court of Queensland for taking affidavits is published in the Gazette.

WE have received a sample of English potatoes and onions grown by Mr. J. Welch, of Ellangowan, in the Upper Warrego district, and which furnish proof as to the growing capabilities of that portion of Queensland for European vegetables. In the box accompanying them was a sample of the soil in which they were grown, which consists of a light sandy loam, moderately rich in phosphorus, and about average fertility but nothing extra. The potatoes, five in number, are large and clean grown, and to all appearance fine and sound, a really excellent sample; the onions are of fair size, well ripened and good, and both speak volumes in favour of the locality where they were produced. Land that can produce crops of this quality is certainly qualified to produce any other crop, and with anything like a fair season the Warrego lands could be turned to good advantage by proper cultivation. Our readers who would like to see these Warrego productions can do so by viewing the window of Mr. M. Rigby, seedman and fruiterer, Queen-street.

A CORRESPONDENT writes to the Queensland Times:—"After the departure of Mr. Griffith and party on Saturday last, a number of the few farmers who had met to welcome the honourable gentleman remained to talk over the general prospects of the district, and to form a farmers' club and all those present are anxious to see the club organized. Mr. Andrew Robertson, secretary and chairman, and Mr. Robert Wylie, secretary and treasurer. The objects of the club were stated to be the reading of papers and discussion of subjects bearing on farming, stock raising, and other matters generally. The subscription was fixed at 2s. 6d. per annum, and the first regular meeting is to be held on Saturday, the 27th inst. at 7 o'clock. The meetings are to be monthly and on the nearest Monday to the full moon, at Pratt's hotel."

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CHRISTMAS IN THE SHOPS.

YESTERDAY was a busy day with those who cater for the indulgent buyers of the festive season, and this day will no doubt be still more busy. The progress made so far in shop decoration is not great; that is to say, only about one out of every dozen business men have their windows set out as they are to be, and therefore it is premature somewhat to attempt to describe the decorations in prominent places. In all drapery establishments, with few exceptions, the solid work had to-day, but the finishing touches were left for to-day. The grocers, fruiterers, and butchers, could hardly make a start at all, and it was only by dint of careful packing that the articles intended to keep their articles fresh looking and sound for exhibition on Christmas Eve. On every hand, however, the signs of the coming festival were apparent. The streets were unusually well filled; up till 10 p.m. purchasers flocked in and out of the various places of business, and there was undoubtedly a good trade.

Among those who have taken time by the forelock, and have everything ready for to-morrow's display, are Messrs. Foster and Kell, the principal windows of their Queen-street premises, and Messrs. Watson and Kell, who is hand-painted, electro-plated, and other articles in their windows, and who is hand-painted, electro-plated, and other articles in their windows, and who is hand-painted, electro-plated, and other articles in their windows.

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MAIL NEWS.

OLD COUNTRY NOTES.

THE results of the autumn sitting, so far as they have gone, are certainly instructive, and in many respects curious. The Ministerial whip calculated upon a majority of fifty upon the famous first clause resolution, and very sanguine members of the party went on as to lay odds that the figures would even run to sixty, but that there would be eighty-four was not expected by any. This decisive victory looking that the Ministerial side in my last letter about the strength of the Ministry at the present moment. The doubtful Liberal after all voted straight, and many of them practical, patriotic statesmen.

THE TONGVIN EXPEDITION.

EXECUTION OF OBERDANK.

CONVERSION OF THE VICTORIAN LOAN.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS.

PRINCE ALBERT VICTOR.

OUR CABLE MESSAGE.

FATAL EXPLOSION.

DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

QUEENSLAND NEWS.

TOOWOOMBA, December 22.

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AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA.

THE BRITISH CABINET.

PROSECUTION OF MR BIGGAR.

RELIEF FOR IRELAND.

A NAVAL COMMANDER DISMISSED.

REUTER'S AGENCY.

HEALTH OF MR FAWCETT.

BREDFI AND THE FINANCIAL CONTROL.

COMMAND OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY.

THE TONGVIN EXPEDITION.

GERMANY AND RUSSIA.

THE QUEENSLAND MAILS.

THE FRENCH ANARCHISTS.

RESTORATION OF CETYWAYO.

DESTRUCTIVE STORM IN NEW-FOUNDLAND.

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