

well presiding. It was resolved to heartily welcome the inquiry into the fiscal system and the most effective means of defending and promoting the industries of the United Kingdom and the colonies, and securing the consolidation of the Empire. A Consultative Committee was appointed to concert measures of inquiry.

The Right Hon. James Bryce, the Liberal Cabinet Minister, member for Aberdeen, and a Little Englander, addressing the New Reform Club, said that it would be cheaper for Great Britain to subsidise Canada and Australia with a lump sum annually than to embark on a policy of colonial preference.

The Board of Trade at Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, has endorsed Mr. Chamberlain's Imperial preference proposals.

The address presented by the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Constitutional Club, to Mr Chamberlain was written a year ago.

Mr Balfour, in the course of his speech in making the presentation, said it would be folly to make fiscal differences a test of party loyalty. Negotiation in its true sense was impossible under present conditions. Our balloon had been kept up by throwing out sand bags, but now, when the sand was exhausted, we must consider our position. The issues raised were in nowise new. The existing evils and dangers had been emphasised for years by the Government and its members. The public would make a mistake in concentrating its gaze on particular methods for meeting the evils. It was not a matter of controversy whether food should be taxed or not, but whether evils existed which demanded a remedy. There was no real or substantial reason why the proposed policy, if wise and practical in other respects, should not be carried out without increasing the cost of living. What was wanted was freedom of negotiation for the purpose of increasing freedom of trade untrammelled by prohibitive tariffs. He would say nothing about the further object of strengthening Imperial unity, leaving that to Mr Chamberlain, the one man, dead or alive, who had given life and expression to the idea of Imperial unity. (Cheers.)

Mr Chamberlain, in replying, reciprocated Mr Balfour's compliment with a generous protestation of loyalty and fidelity. He paid a glowing tribute to the colonies rallying to the ideal of common obligation to the Empire, despite the indifference and slights and sneers to which they had been subjected in the past. There were many methods, he said, of promoting closer unity; nevertheless, they must consult and follow the wishes and interests of the colonies, remembering that the success of any Imperial union depended on the cordial support tendered from all parts of the Empire. He, in a certain sense, as the representative of the colonies, was bound to ask for an inquiry in pursuance of their suggestion that a closer unity would most profitably be reached by a commercial union through preferential tariffs. This was no party question. A preferential tariff was the only system capable of keeping the Empire together. He suggested that whether the exports of British manufactures to the colonies did or did not exceed those of all the protected States of Europe and America together, the latter was a group of exports that were continually and rapidly decreasing in quantity and in profitable character. He suggested, therefore, whether it would not be wiser to cultivate a trade with 10,000,000 kinsmen, taking from us £10 per head, rather than lose the opportunity for the sake of attempting to conciliate 300,000,000 foreigners taking a few shillings' worth per head. He added that the inquiry would also comprise the condition and relative progress of protected countries. Regarding a policy of retaliation, or as Mr Balfour had better described it, a policy of negotiation, if having something to bargain with we fell in negotiations we reserve to Britain her vast production instead of tolerating the ruin of her iron and textile industries by the importation of goods manufactured in protected States and sold here below cost price. He described as monstrous the accusation that the Unionist party intended to impose greater burdens on the poor. The cry of a dear loaf he declared to be an imposture. Even if the price of a particular article were raised by the tariff there would be compensation in other directions and the cost of living would not be increased in the slightest degree. He urged an impartial inquiry in relation to the inter-

ests of the majority of the population. His speech was cheered throughout.

The "Standard," in commenting on the speeches of the two Ministers, asks if the colonies will so far waive their policy of protecting local industries as to open a remunerative market to British goods, and adds that it will probably be harder to convert some of the colonies than to obtain the assent of some British constituencies to Mr Chamberlain's scheme.

AUSTRALIA.

In the golf championship of Australia Souther (New South Wales) beat Howard (Victoria).

Dr. Dowie, the wealthy prophet of Zion City, will visit Australia in December.

MELBOURNE ASSAULT CASE.

Mr Justice Hood, in sentencing a boy for assault on a girl, said that his experience of these cases was rapidly strengthening him in the opinion that there was a class of young people growing up here who live between men and savages so far as the sexual relation was concerned. The girls knew neither virtue nor modesty, and the boys neither honour nor honesty. They apparently feared the laws of neither God nor man.

MARKET FOR NEW ZEALAND WOOL.

With reference to the direct shipment of New Zealand wools to the Continent, proposals in connection with the matter and of arranging a direct steam line have been submitted to the European principals of those moving in the matter. It is understood that if a scheme is evolved the producers of New Zealand will receive cash down for their wool. While the trade in cross-breeds is not perhaps large at present, foreign buyers believe it can be largely developed.

N.S.W. STOCK RETURNS.

The stock returns for the year ended December last, allowing a considerable margin in each case for animals on adjustment outside the State, are stated to number: Sheep in the State, 26,675,000, decrease 15,183,000; cattle, 1,625,000, decrease 204,000; horses 421,000, decrease 34,000. The actual lambing of the whole State is estimated at 237.5 per cent.; spring lambing giving 40, autumn 203, and winter 197 per cent. The total clip is stated at 148,098,000 pounds, or a decrease of over 90 million pounds on the previous year. Pigs are estimated at 193,000, showing a decrease of 72,000.

A FIREMEN'S STRIKE.

Twenty-seven firemen and trimmers on the Orient liner Orita, which is in Sydney from London and the Mediterranean, have been convicted of disobeying the lawful commands of the Orient Company's officers.

It appears that these men were given for their breakfast meat which they considered too fat, and coffee which did not appeal to their palate. They thereupon decided to do no further work until the commissariat improved to their liking. The police, however, were sent for, and the matter was settled by the Stipendiary Magistrate at the Water Police Court sending each of the men to prison for a period of 21 days.

DROUGHT AT BROKEN HILL.

Altogether over 5600 men are idle at Broken Hill. The Government has taken measures to relieve any cases of distress, including smelting works and shipping interests in South Australia, 40,000 people are directly affected in two States.

The first water train arrived from South Australia on June 24, and the local Council took charge of selling it to the residents at a charge of five shillings per 100 gallons. The Municipal Baths authorities have urged the construction of storage reservoirs.

The Proprietary Company has a fortnight's supply of ore at Port Pirie Smelting Works. If these works are compelled to close twelve hundred men will be idle, besides a hundred engaged in the shipment of ore and in the limestone quarries.

SMALL-POX AT LAUNCESTON.

Five fresh cases of small pox were discovered in Launceston on June 24, including that of Dr. Bernard, house sur-

geon at the General Hospital.

Houses and patients are being isolated, and every precaution is being taken.

The Union Company insist that all passengers applying for tickets must produce the vaccination certificates.

Constitution prevails over the fact that since the 5th inst. no less than fifteen persons have been discharged from the hospital after suffering from what is now known to have been small pox, and that the disease is liable to be spread in all directions. A large number are being vaccinated. Strict precautions are being taken in the other States against Tasmania, which has been declared infected.

Everything possible is being done to prevent the spread of small-pox to Hobart. The mails and persons travelling by the mail trains are fumigated.

It is now stated that there is no doubt that the disease was brought by the Gracchus' passenger since the first patient had contact with him, and developed small-pox a fortnight after.

LIVER COMPLAINT FOR MANY YEARS.

ANOTHER STRIKING SUCCESS FOR BILE BEANS.

Too much importance cannot be placed upon the correct working of the liver. It is upon this important organ that many other organs are dependent for assistance in performing their allotted function, and once let the liver become out of working order, and the effect will soon be felt throughout the whole system. Such was the experience of Mrs Mary Barry, of Ryan-street, Petone, Wellington. This lady says:—"For many years I have been a sufferer from liver complaint, constipation, and Asthma, for which I have taken numerous so-called remedies, but without receiving any benefit. About two years ago I decided to give Bile Beans a trial, having heard a good report of their efficacy. After taking a few doses I felt relief, and, continuing with them, I was gradually restored to health, and even the Asthma was, to a considerable extent, relieved. Bile Beans are, without doubt, a first-class medicine, and I can strongly recommend them to fellow-sufferers." Bile Beans have now a world-wide reputation for curing Biliousness, Headache, Indigestion, Constipation, Piles, Debility, Female Weaknesses, Nervousness, Bad Blood, Pimples, and all skin eruptions, Bad Breath, Anaemia, Loss of Appetite, Rheumatism, and by giving tone to the system will ward off Coughs, Colds, and Influenza. Bile Beans are obtainable from all medicine vendors.

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GENERAL NEWS.

For walking up one of Birmingham's main streets carrying an umbrella measuring six feet across, and declining to close the huge mushroom-like covering at the request of a constable, the owner has been summoned to appear at the Police Court on the charge of obstruction.

"Observer" writes in mighty disgust to the "Northern Advocate" concerning the spectacle of the Mayor of Whangarei helping the surface-men to repair a street, and describes it as "unique in the history of the colony." Evidently "Observer" is not a follower of Ruskin.

An optician who visited the Wanganui Boys' School the other day found that the eyes of about 15 per cent. of the boys were affected. One of the lads was almost blind in one eye—a fact which was unknown not only to the parents of the boy and the schoolmaster, but to the lad himself.

A cablegram has reached the colony authorising the official receiver of the Midland railway to accept payment on behalf of the bondholders of the company of the amount agreed upon by the Government (£150,000) in bonds. Payment will be made in a day or two, and this will close negotiations between the company and the Government.

Though Commissioner Tumbidge declined to be "interviewed" before leaving the colony, he stated to the Christchurch police force, when bidding them farewell on Tuesday, that, unlike certain other heads of departments who had left New Zealand and who had shown a desire to find fault with the Government, he was pleased to say he was leaving the colony in friendship with everyone.

To bring the city drainage question to a head Dr. Sharman has given notice to move at the next meeting of the City Council: "That a conference be invited between delegates representing this council and the suburban local authorities, with a view to discussing the advisability or otherwise of settling a comprehensive drainage scheme for the city and suburbs, and the vesting of the control of such drainage in a general drainage board, having special statutory powers."

Dr. Ponare, native health officer, is back in Wellington after a round of visits to native villages in the North, where typhoid was prevalent, and on the West Coast of this island, where measles and scarlet fever had occurred. It was found that in most cases the epidemics were due to bad water and insanitary conditions, and improvements

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