

Free Trade there will be much more employment to be found in the British Isles, and there will be fewer people seeking to emigrate. In the opinion of many able to judge, the introduction of some measure of tariff reform into Great Britain is only a question of a few years at most. Mr. Asquith's Government shows signs already of breaking up, and as soon as the Unionists get into office fiscal reform will be the first item on their programme. Australia is faced with one of the gravest programmes possible. Her vast unoccupied spaces must be populated. If they are not populated with white men they will most assuredly be populated by the yellow races. Which is it to be?

The Late King of Denmark.

The death of the King of Denmark removes from our midst one of the most democratic monarchs of modern times. From his student days he insisted on sharing the everyday life of his people. When at the university in Copenhagen he lived in student's lodgings, and had no privileges beyond those enjoyed by other students. He began his military training in a similar manner. He was a simple private in the ranks, and shared the coarse rations of the ordinary soldier. He was subsequently promoted to the rank of sergeant. He waited long before he ascended the throne. He saw a younger brother and a son become full-fledged monarchs while he was just an ordinary Crown Prince. He was a fine man physically and mentally. He was always at the head of any philanthropic movement, and to the last remained attached to the simple life.

Like Comic Opera.

A curious position was revealed in the course of an appeal case that came before Mr. Justice Cooper relating to defence prosecutions. Two young men had been proceeded against by the Defence Department for failure to attend the recent Garrison Artillery Camp. The magistrate had dismissed the case on two grounds: First, that no offence was committed until the end of the year of training; secondly, that the defendants ought to have been proceeded against under martial law. It was argued that this decision meant that anyone could choose what camp he would attend, and so it might happen that all the officers might attend one camp and all the men another. Also, the artillery might attend a cavalry camp and the cavalry an artillery camp. It was further contended that a man who had never attended a camp was still a private citizen, and so could not be amenable to martial law. Mr. Justice Cooper said that the case had been very well argued, but the position as it had been represented seemed very much like comic opera. There is no doubt that such a position would render the Act to a large extent inoperative.

The Toll of the Air.

Aviation still claims its victims, in spite of the fact that we are repeatedly being told that modern science has rendered aerial navigation comparatively safe. At St. Louis, Missouri, an aviator named Wheeler, and his companion, named Glasser, were both killed during a flight in an aeroplane. The machine became unmanageable in the gusty wind, and, dashing into a telegraph pole, became entangled in the wires. Another aviator named Rogers was killed through a seagull obtaining control of a wire during the flight, and thus preventing Rogers from working the machine. At Brooklands two aviators were killed by the fall of the monoplane. In spite of the many improvements effected lately, the list of victims shows no signs of diminution. We are still a long way distant from the conquest of the air.

The Local Government Bill.

The proposed Local Government Bill has been pretty severely criticised in many quarters, but one of its most uncompromising critics is Dr. Newman, of Wellington. He says that the more he studies the bill the more he wants to murder it. He contends that the bill creates a dual control, and that there will be two bodies with power to raise loans and to levy rates. People are not fond of rates under any conditions, but the prospect of paying rates to two separate bodies is particularly calculated to raise the ire of the average citizen. The doctor points out that in the early days there were nine provincial councils,

and the people soon got rid of them. The bill proposed to create twenty-four provincial councils, which would be far worse than nine. The doctor goes on to point out that the new councils will prove expensive, and that there will in all probability be a decided increase in the rates. The clause in the bill that has provoked the most adverse comment is the proposal to place part of the cost of education on the local rates. It seems to me pretty generally admitted that the cost of education ought to be borne by the State. There has been considerable opposition to the bill from nearly every part of the Dominion, and it seems probable that considerable modifications will be necessary if the bill is to become law.

Mr. Asquith and Disestablishment.

It would appear that Mr. Asquith is not finding the question of the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church so easy as might have been expected. It was generally regarded as a concession to certain of his followers in return for their support of Home Rule. Most people seemed to think that it was a harmless concession, unlikely to arouse either much enthusiasm or much opposition. But the proposal to devote the revenue of the church to purely secular purposes has been resented in the most unexpected quarters. Twelve Labour members have protested against the bill on the ground of injustice. Mr. Keir Hardie has done an ill-service by proclaiming that if the Government can take away the revenue of the Church it can no longer protest against the proposal of the Socialists to take away the property of private individuals. He says that he will support the bill as being a first step towards the abolition of private ownership in land. Nor are the Nonconformists altogether pleased. More than one minister has pointed out that to devote the revenue of the Church to secular purposes is to strike a blow at religious influences at a time when we can ill-afford to weaken any spiritual force. The "Manchester Guardian" says that there is already considerable uneasiness in the ranks of Liberalism, and that outside the Welsh members, there is hardly a single member of the Liberal party who has not a strong desire to substantially amend the bill. It is the proposal to divert the revenue to purely secular purposes that forms the chief stumbling block. Mr. Asquith has promised to make substantial concessions in committee.

The Naval Estimates.

When Mr. Winston Churchill succeeded Mr. McKenna at the Admiralty the appointment was pretty freely criticised. His critics have received a surprise. He has proved himself to be a strong and resolute supporter of naval strength. Speaking in the House of Commons, he said, in view of Germany's extra naval expenditure having created the condition foreseen by him in his recent speech, he would ask for a supplementary vote for shipbuilding. Subsequently speaking at the banquet of the Shipwrights' Company, he said it was his duty to again ask Parliament for men, money and materials for the navy. He pointed out that it was essential that the fleet should be concentrated at a decisive spot in European waters. One of the most interesting points in Mr. Churchill's speech was his declaration that the main development of the next ten years would be the growth of an effective overseas force. The Motherland would maintain the supremacy at a decisive point, while the daughter States guarded and patrolled the rest of the Empire.

Women and Strikes.

A single man can enter on a strike with a light heart, but the case of a married man is very different. The married man is not able to move to other work as easily as a single man, and also the strike pay is often totally inadequate for the needs of a man with a wife and family to support. For this reason it seems only fair that the wives should have some say in the matter of a strike. We note that the strike leaders at Waikiki intend giving lectures to the wives and daughters of the men on strike on the manifold advantages to be obtained by a strike. We hope they may succeed in their efforts. It would greatly help the cause of industrial peace if, whenever the men went on strike, the women also took a hand in the game, and refused to cook, or wash, or sew, or mind the house, till the men returned to work. If a strike

A Famous Soldier

LIEUT.-GENERAL BADEN-POWELL

Founder of the Boy Scout Movement, Visits Auckland Next Week

A VERY distinguished visitor to Auckland next week will be Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Baden-Powell, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., well remembered as the guiding spirit in the gallant defence of Mafeking, and almost as well known since as the founder of the Boy-Scout movement. "B.P.," as he was everywhere called by everybody during the Boer War, has had a splendidly-filled service record. Born in 1857—the date of the Indian Mutiny—he may claim to have had Mars as his natal star, and he has certainly spent his life amid wars and the rumours thereof. He first saw active service with the 13th Hussars in India, Afghanistan, and South Africa; and next, after a spell at big-game hunting in India and Africa, took part as a Special Service Officer in the Zulu War of 1888. In the light of later developments it is interesting to notice that he was in this campaign selected to take command of the Zulu Native Scouts. It is not improbable that he added considerably to his knowledge of scouting during this period, since the Zulus are famous for their skill as trackers, and their inherited stock of bush-lore has always been the admiration of kindred spirits amongst the Britishers. After an expedition to Swaziland in the following year, Baden-Powell's next campaign was on the opposite side of the Continent: he was sent on special service to Ashanti under Sir Francis Scott on the occasion of the expedition against King Prempeh. Here he was placed in command of the native levies, whom he organised as scouts, and whom he transformed into first-class fighting material. He has himself chronicled the history of this campaign in his well-known and very readable book, "The Downfall of Prempeh," published the year after the Ashanti War. In 1896-7 it was "the camp and the laager again"—this time in Matabeleland, where he was Chief Staff Officer. His scouting proclivities were again in evidence here, for he contrived to put in some notable scouting work in the Matopo Hills, having with him a no less celebrated Scout than Major Burnham, a boy's hero if ever there was one, who led an extraordinary life full of thrilling adventures and hair-breadth escapes. Baden-Powell saw India again in the same year, when he was in command of the 5th Dragoon Guards.

From a hunting expedition to Kashmir he was recalled to take part in the greatest campaign of his career, the South African War, in which he was to make his name. On the outbreak of hostilities, he raised and commanded a Colonial Frontier Force for Rhodesia and Bechuanaland, and then took charge of the small force in Mafeking. From the 14th of October, 1899, although surrounded by a greatly superior body of Boers, and in spite of a close investment, of determined assaults, and of starvation rations, he and his plucky little garrison kept the flag flying until the siege was raised by Mahon and Plumer on May 17-18, 1900. It is a far cry now back to the dark days of the Boer War—the days after Methuen had been defeated at Magersfontein, Gatacre at Stormberg, and Buller at Tugela, and Ladysmith, Kimberley, and Mafeking were all hard pressed—and we are now-a-days a little inclined to take these things for granted, and to forget the stress and tension of that time. There has certainly been a disposition to depreciate the seriousness of the siege of Mafeking. Doubtless a great deal of hysterical writing there was, with ex-

aggerated accounts of what the garrison had to face; but when all allowances have been made for what appeared in the Press at a time of intense national excitement, the fact still stands out that the defence of Mafeking was one of the brightest and most gallant episodes of the war, and its moral effect was of the highest value. To obtain an idea of how it was regarded by competent authorities, we have to go back twelve years. In the "Times" of the day the siege was raised, a very just estimate of the garrison's work appeared, and in that always well-informed journal we find the following:—"There has been nothing like the defence of Mafeking in modern history. Kars and Lucknow were fine examples of valour, endurance, and resourcefulness, but in each case the means of defence were infinitely greater than those which were at the disposal of Colonel Baden-Powell and his valiant comrades, and the enemy who beleaguered Mafeking were well provided with modern artillery, and were able to make good use of their guns. The defence of Kimberley and the defence of Ladysmith will be recorded among the noblest achievements of the British Army, and the latter at any rate has had a decisive influence on the campaign. But there is a touch of romantic devotion about the defence of Mafeking that gives it a peculiar place in our military history. Perhaps no personage whose name has become prominent in this war is more admired and trusted than Colonel Baden-Powell. No man in our day has done so much with such slender means. None has shown a more unquenchable cheerfulness in the presence of crushing dangers and cruel trials. None has displayed a greater fertility of resource in devising expedients and in turning to the best account the gradually dwindling powers of a half-starved population. It is to the energy of Colonel Baden-Powell that we owe the organisation of the force which was able not only to hold Mafeking, but to keep the Boers back from raiding Bechuanaland. The Protectorate Regiment which was raised by Colonel Baden-Powell and Colonel Plumer has done work which cannot be over-estimated."

So much for Mafeking. It is Baden-Powell's chief claim to our regard, and just how big a claim it is might be realised if we could recall quite how we felt towards him at the time. Supposing he had come to Australasia to lecture twelve years ago instead of to-day, how we would have thronged to see him and to hear him! The achievement is none the less great because of the lapse of twelve years. He has himself, however, been helping us to forget it because he has focussed our eyes upon him in another capacity. That the Boy-Scout movement is a big idea is undeniably; that it will lead to great things in the Imperial sense is the belief and hope of some of the most eminent of our military experts, and upon this subject none speaks with greater authority and none has more belief and hope than the enthusiastic founder. He delivers an address at Auckland next Monday evening.

Freak Soldiers.

Visitors to Russia are no longer regaled with the sight of freak regiments. When Frederick Leveson-Gower went to Moscow in 1856 for the coronation of Alexander II, he noticed "opposite our house, as the procession passed, a regiment called Paulovski, all the men having turned up noses, and therefore resembling him. It seems it was the fashion here to compose regiments of men all having the same features. The late Emperor told recruits off according to their looks. There is one regiment of men all marked with the small-pox. This Paulovski regiment did a thing which amused me. Just before the cortege came up they all blew their noses at the word of command. This was in order that none of them might sneeze when the Emperor passed, as their doing so would bring him bad luck."

holiday is good for the men, so as to enable them to attend free picture shows and athletic sports, a strike holiday would also be good for the women, so as to enable them to pay calls and to take a day or two in the country. At present the men get all the best of the deal, while the woman has to keep house on a greatly diminished income and look after children rendered more than usually peevish by the lack of proper food. If women struck against a strike, we might see fewer strikes in our midst.