



ROUND THE WORLD.

THE AUSTRALIAN STATES.

New Zealand has only once had occasion to thank her stars that she did not join the Australian Federation when invited to do so by her sister colony. That once is ever since. When time and experience grease the wheels and reduce the friction, Federation will, doubtless, be a thing to be much desired in Australia, but it would not have suited New Zealand. Experience must be costly, and it is always better to learn at your neighbour's expense than at your own. So far there has been very considerable dissatisfaction in many of the States. The Federal tariff, as might be expected, proved one of the principal bones of contention. How it will work now it has become law remains to be proved, but if length and vigour of debate go for anything, the manner in which every detail was thrashed out should have insured a fairly workable result. After all, the wranglings of the different States over questions connected with Federal government practically go to prove the great need that existed for a system which would cause a community of interests and a united Australia.

FRANCE.

It is with a feeling of irritation one hears of lives being unnecessarily fooled away. The recent death of Emile Zola through sleeping in a room with a defective chimney comes under this heading, and is much to be deplored. Few, very few, writers have made such a

handsome income by their pens as Zola, and fewer still, perhaps, have shown a greater disregard for the beautiful in character or scenery. It is highly probable that the bitter struggles of Zola's younger days influenced his literary work through life, and made him prefer to paint in vivid colours the darker sides of human nature, and to almost totally ignore everything tending to brightness and beauty. Or it might be again that he knew his readers sufficiently well to know that these were the class of books to sell. The fine income he has made out of his works proved this fact incontestably. Be his motive what it may, there is no doubt whatever that Zola was a master of the style he chose, a position which, however, few writers of the present day would envy him. Zola certainly deserves high commendation for the vigorous manner in which he championed Dreyfus at the expense of considerable personal persecution.

CHINA.

In deploring the state of affairs which war entails on a country one is often slow to realize the advantages which afterwards accrue. In China, for instance, the foreign occupation has been productive of much good, and many useful lessons of European civilization have been taught to a people who have proved attentive pupils. At Tientsin sanitary measures, which were never adopted before, are now being carried out, and Yuan Shi Kai, the