

THE MERCURY.

HOBART: TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 1890.

EPITOME OF NEWS.

Tenders are called for various public works. Entries for Derwent Sailing Club race on Saturday close at 4 p.m. on Thursday.

Tenders are called for erection of cottages at Formby and Oatlands railway stations.

Baseball exposition on Association Cricket Ground this afternoon.

Nearly 900 spectators at New Norfolk sports yesterday.

Derwent Rowing Club Annual Regatta on Saturday, 28th inst. Programme in this issue.

Officers and Brethren of Rechab Lodge, 362, I.C., and of Lodge 343, I.C., meet this evening.

Slight gun accident at Mount Nelson yesterday. Lad named Cooper shot in the leg by a companion.

Good order maintained in the camp. Excellent practice, arrangements good, officers and men satisfied.

Perth encampment broke up yesterday. Commandant made a soldierly farewell speech to the men.

Glenora Horticultural and Cottage Garden Society Show yesterday excelled all expectations.

Brighton Races drew a large attendance yesterday. Doubling that of the previous year.

Hamilton-Weigall wedding St. David's yesterday afternoon. Nuptial knot tied in presence of large and fashionable assemblage.

"At Home" Government House yesterday in honour of Hamilton-Weigall marriage carried through most successfully.

Hon. Attorney-General visits England next month re Main Line Railway appeal case. Parliamentary session will thus probably be adjourned until September.

Hon. Alfred Deacon's house in Melbourne robbed of £450 worth of jewellery.

Influenza marching through the country districts of Victoria.

G. Minchin, a well-known South Melbourne footballer, is dead.

Casarean won a race at Williamstown yesterday.

Three horses ran a dead heat in a selling race at Williamstown.

Sydney Gold Cup won by Carbine the second year in succession. He started first favourite.

Grasshopper plague invading Victorian banks of Murray River and spreading southward.

A man has been arrested for stealing steamer Mayflower, which the cable message says was found in his possession.

A Melbourne man named Joseph Steel has been captured in Sydney with a large number of well-executed forged notes in his possession.

Messrs. Henry George, A. Trevon, and A. Trenwith debated Protection in the Melbourne Exhibition Hall last evening. Honours divided.

At the meeting of the Federal Conference when Mr. CLARK, one of the delegates from Tasmania, was about to propound a financial *modus vivendi* for the colonies, several members called out "don't go into figures." Mr. CLARK did not go, possibly because

he had discovered that the ground was more dangerous than he had at first supposed. Sir JAMES LEE STERRER, from Western Australia, did, however, go into figures to a decidedly unpleasant extent, and in so doing he gave matter for reflection and discussion of which not enough has been said up to the present time. The subject proved at once to be very unpleasant, so unpleasant that it has not been very generally dealt with, and has not attracted one half the attention that we might fairly have expected would be given to it. Indeed, Sir JAMES LEE STERRER, himself, won anything but golden opinions at the Conference. He was regarded as the dismal man. He was like the man at the tavern feast, who asks "how is all this to be paid for?" He may be said to remind us of the cheerful guest at a christening party, who quotes statistics of infant mortality, and goes away with the pleasant feeling that he has made everybody miserable. Still, though it is pleasant to talk about the purple thread of loyalty, and to hear that blood is thicker than water, we must come down to the hard facts sooner or later, and in such a case as this, perhaps, the sooner the better. For, we take it that in the interval between the meeting of the Conference in the beginning of the present year and the assembling of the Convention, in January next, this financial problem—which is the problem—should be fully discussed.

Public opinion should be formed in regard to it. Discussion should be made to show what the colonies are disposed to yield, and what they will insist on retaining. These are rather matters of public-opinion, on which the public mind should be made up long before the meeting of the Convention, or there is danger that its conclusions may be rejected by the local Legislatures. For, what they accept or refuse will be mainly determined by public feeling—by opinion expressed outside. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the subject should be set in all lights, so that it may be known whether there is a common ground on which the whole of the colonies can meet, and the Convention enter upon this most important discussion with all the advantage

enter upon this important discussion with all the advantage of learning what has been said about it from all points of view outside. For, it is necessary to bear in mind that we have not in this instance, what is so dear to the British mind, a clear precedent. The position of the colonies of Australasia is unique. Their indebtedness is larger than that of any colonies of which we have any record, which causes the problem of forming a central Government, which shall take over the whole indebtedness, to be one of, we may fairly say, quite unparalleled difficulty. It has been suggested that as most of the debt has been incurred for railways—Mr. HATTER estimates it to be four-fifths—the central Government might take over the lines, and so solve the problem. But, this is assuming the very point in dispute. Who can say that the colonies are prepared to give over their lines to a central authority, by which they would have to be managed, quite independently of the local Governments? Moreover, it must be remembered that the work of railway-making is still going on, in several colonies—in Tasmania for example—it can hardly be said to have been fairly begun, and how is the future policy to be directed? Shall the question whether there is to be a railway to the Huon be decided by a Parliament sitting in Hobart, or by one sitting, say, in Albury?

Those who have read Mr. PARKIN's second letter, which we published on Friday last, who did not know it before, will have learned that in Canada the Central Government took over the provincial debts. In return for Customs revenue, which the Provinces were no longer to raise, the Dominion Government undertook to pay certain subsidies, and the Provinces were left at liberty to raise revenue by means of direct taxation, royalties of mines, and the sale of Crown lands. In this case, as it appears, the Customs revenue was sufficient to pay the interest on the debts, and leave a surplus to carry on the work of the general Government with, so that there was no difficulty, when the point was once conceded. But, this is not the case in Australasia. Here we have a system of what Sir CHARLES DILKE calls government

Socialism, that is, the Government has undertaken to make railways, even to buy up those already made by private enterprise, to provide water for irrigation and domestic purposes, and do a great many things which have not been done by Governments elsewhere in British communities. Thus, the problem becomes complicated in many ways. There is first of all, and not the least important, the question of policy: Are the colonies willing to abandon their local railway system, directed by their own local Governments? We think not. We think that the Legislatures would not be prepared to let such power slip out of their own hands. For example, if Tasmania should buy the Main Line, will she be prepared to hand it over to a central Government, and thus lose that local control which is deemed essential to the welfare of the colony?

To show the difference of conditions, we may refer to the indebtedness of Canada and Australasia even at the present time. At the end of 1887, the latest returns that we have, the indebtedness of Canada, including the provincial debts taken over, was considerably less than one-third of that of the Australasian colonies. Its amount was 46,708,515 dollars, "after deducting the assets," whatever that may mean, probably sources of wealth not stated, or £9 9s. 9d. per head of the population. The total debt of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand was £160,227,689, or £45 2s. 3d. per head of the population, or roughly speaking, the revenue multiplied by 6½. The figures show at a glance the difference in the problems to be solved in Canada and Australasia, a difference so great as to necessitate the work of Federation being done on quite different lines. Mr. PARKIN tells us that the problem in Canada proved to be so complicated, that it threatened to paralyse the efforts of the Conference there, even in the later stages of the discussion. Indeed, it appeared for a time to be insoluble, but it was overcome by the forbearance, the tact, and the good-feeling of all political parties represented, and all political parties were pledged to the decision finally arrived at. From this it is clear, indeed nothing can be clearer, that our Convention must be representative of all

vention must be representative of all parties without exception, or it will be a failure, for the Legislatures will not ratify what the Conference may accept and formulate. What the something may be, has yet to be discussed, for even discussion has not yet been begun.

THE politician cannot be too strongly cautioned against sweeping conclusions drawn from figures, and especially from figures which relate to only a short period of time. An example in point is that of bank deposits, which the young and the simple are apt to regard as a sort of barometer, showing accurately the condition of a country. The mistake starts from taking the banker and the trader, people who only deal with the temporary aspect of affairs, as judges of general prosperity and future prospects, whereas they look to immediate results only, as a rule, and gauge all things by those which relate mainly to their own interests. Taking the past year, we find that the increase in the deposits in the Australasian banks, as compared with 1888, amounted to £5,006,306, a sum which represents the increase in accumulation of the colonies themselves in this form, together with such money as may have been sent to them for investment, and which has been deposited in the banks.

But when we come to analyse the figures, we find considerable difficulty in deciding on their precise meaning, especially if we set out with the foregoing conclusion that they indicate the condition of the several colonies. For, we find that whilst Victoria shows an increase of £932,729, New South Wales has an increase of £1,859,832. This is, certainly, rather a curious result, as it is understood that a large quantity of money was sent to Victoria during the year for investment, a fact which is said to account for the very large increase in imports over exports. Again, we find that the deposits in the Queensland banks decreased by £1,018,801 during the past year, as compared with the previous one, although it is generally understood that the colony is rapidly advancing in wealth, and developing its resources more quickly than, probably, any other of the whole group. Indeed, as demonstrated by Adam Smith, it is possible for a country to accumulate wealth rapidly where there is absolutely scarcity of money, a fact which politicians, merchants, banks and workmen's oracles will do well to bear in mind. Western Australia also shows a decrease amounting to £22,031, yet that colony cannot be said to have gone back in the accumulation of wealth, at least

yet that colony cannot be said to have gone back in the accumulation of wealth, at least if any reliance can be placed on the statements of those who should know what they are talking about. New Zealand shows an increase of £530,991, which will help to prove to many that she is recovering from her depression, though we shall do well to remember that she was recovering even when her deposits did not show so favourably. Tasmania shows, for her, the large increase of £991,155 for the year, which would lead us to rejoice, if we were not haunted with the idea that a large portion of it may be due to Government deposits. South Australia has an increase of £665,599, which will, we suppose, be regarded as highly satisfactory by her public men.

THE Hon. the Attorney-General is about to visit England. It has been decided by the Ministry that he shall do so in the interests of the colony, touching the Appeal to the Privy Council on the Main Line case. It has been thought best that he should personally place the points of the argument decided on by himself and Messrs. MacIntyre and Madden before the Court. It should be mentioned, incidentally, that during the recent visit to Hobart of Mr. Price Williams, the agent of the Main Line Company, he did not meet Ministers at all. Mr. Speight, who was with him, adheres to his original intimation that he could not ask Ministers to approach the Company with any offer less than £1,125,000. Ministers hold the opinion that Mr. Price Williams, if he came accredited to do business on behalf of the Company, should have placed on record a definite proposal, but this he did not do. The Government therefore have decided to go on with the appeal, and to this end the Hon. the Attorney-General will go to England, probably leaving Hobart about the middle of May next, and returning here in September. The Main Line Railway Company have intimated by cable message willingness to accelerate the hearing of the case by the Court of Appeal, and it will probably be brought on about the 15th July next. The absence of the Attorney-General will, as a matter of course, affect the coming Parliamentary session, fixed to commence in June next. At that date Ministers still intend to call members together to hold a merely formal session, for the purpose of adjourning until September, unless they find on inquiry that there is a general consensus of opinion that the session need not commence until September. So far as Ministers are at present advised, Northern and North-West Coast members are already willing that the session shall be deferred until the Attorney-General's return, and they anticipate little or no objection from other members. They base this opinion on the fact that the coming

base this opinion on the fact that the coming session will be the last of the present Parliament, and that, necessarily, no important questions other than finance will be touched upon. Supplies have been granted for the financial year, and the two important measures—Police and Local Government—will have to be relegated to the new Parliament.

NO CABLES.—Holiday keeping has put our cable service out of gear. No European messages came to hand last night.

TELEGRAPHIC.—The following memo. was received at the Telegraph Office yesterday from South Australia:—"Foonow wires Formosa cable restored. Berne wires cable between Santos and Rio de Janeiro interrupted. Hong Kong wires direct line to Swatow restored."

NORTH HOBART ELECTION.—A meeting of friends and supporters of Mr. C. Harbottle will be held in the Town Hall Committee Room, at 7.30 o'clock this evening, to discuss matters connected with his candidature.

HELD OVER.—We are compelled to hold over a batch of country correspondence and letters to the editor, but hope to find room for it all in a day or two.

THE INVENTOR'S GUIDE.—Messrs. G. G. Turri and Co., of Melbourne, have sent us a copy of their pamphlet "The Inventor's Guide to Obtaining and Selling Patents." It is designed to fulfil a double purpose, first that set forth in the title, and secondly giving a description of existing patent laws, and their serious defects. Under either aspect it fulfils an important mission. It shows what may best be done with any useful invention, so as to secure the full advantages to the inventor or assignee; it shows what should be avoided, what may be attempted with good assurance of success, and what is best left alone. All this is set forth in plain and concise language, and refers not alone to the patent laws of the colonies, but to those of the principal countries of the world, special attention being called to international privileges. One suggestive hint is given. After recounting some of the immense fortunes made from fortunate inventions the author says:—"I have noticed that the most profitable patents are for very simple inventions which one might at first think worth very little, and these simple inventions cost so little to put upon the market, and need occupy so small a portion of the inventor's time that it is always advisable for an inventor to rather devote all his energies to developing and perfecting and finally introducing his simpler devices and improvements, than those which are more complicated, more expensive, and therefore less likely to command general adoption, in time to be of any financial assistance to their originator." Messrs. G. G. Turri and Co., we may add, are legally appointed international patent agents.

T.S.N. Co's. TRIP.—The 160 passengers from Victoria brought over by the s.s. Pateena spent Easter Monday in visiting places of interest in and around Hobart. Some found their way to New Norfolk, some to Glenora, and others were not content until they had scaled Mount Wellington. All appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed themselves, for when the steamer cast off

All appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed themselves, for when the steamer cast off from the wharf at 7.15 p.m., they had nothing but praises to bestow on all they had seen. The steamer's departure was made the occasion of a pyrotechnic display from her decks. Numbers of rockets ascended and these were answered by a similar display from the s.s. Onah.

TRAP ACCIDENT.—Mr. Downie, tobacconist, of Elizabeth-street, and three others were thrown from a dog cart yesterday whilst coming from the Brighton races. One of them is said to have two ribs broken, the other three escaping with severe shaking. Mr. Downie owns a mare with trotting propensities, and obtaining a dog cart from D. West, Palace Hotel, drove his three friends to the races. It was on the return journey the accident happened. They were coming down the hill from the course to the main road when one of the reins broke. Pulling on the remaining portion caused the horse to swerve, and a collision with a telegraph pole resulted. The trap was damaged and the mare somewhat shaken.

REMINDER.—Mr. and Mrs. Eltham's pupils' invitation concert takes place this evening in St. Andrew's schoolroom. The entrance to the room is from Bathurst-street, and the programme commences at 8 o'clock.

MASONIC.—P.M. Brother Steane, of Victoria, is announced to deliver to Lodge 801, E.C., this evening, a lecture on Freemasonry. Lodges 345 and 362 I.C., will attend.

CRICKET.—The match between Southern Tasmania and the Melbourne Cricket Club was concluded on the S.T.C.A. ground yesterday, the visitors suffering defeat by 10 wickets. With one wicket down for 175 runs, the locals increased their score to 289 before they were disposed of. In their second innings Melbourne made 125, and the 20 runs wanted by the Tasmanians to score a victory were obtained without the loss of a wicket.

BASEBALL.—This afternoon on the Association Cricket-ground the visiting team of Victorian baseballers will endeavour to place those Hobartians who attend, *au courant* in so far as some of the features of the game are concerned, although it is certain an intimate acquaintance therewith cannot be gained from a single exposition. There should, however, be plenty of fun for on-lookers, and the additional attraction of novelty. Play commences at 2 o'clock, and will last until 5 o'clock. At the conclusion of yesterday's cricket match, several of the visitors gave an exhibition of the American national pastime. The majority of the spectators who witnessed the day's cricket stayed and watched the proceedings, which they seemed to enjoy. The game has its attractions and with a couple of exhibition matches would most likely "catch on" with the young folks of the city, as the Yankees say.

S.S. HUON EXCURSION.—The Huon is advertised to leave at 8.30 this morning for Shipwright's Point and all ports, returning again this evening. As the boat runs at excursion fares, and the trip is always a pleasant one in fine weather, no doubt there will be a good company aboard.

KING-STREET CHURCH.—Services in connection with the seventh anniversary of this church were held on Sunday and Monday. The Sunday services were conducted by Mr J. Doan in the morning, and in the evening by Rev. I. H. Palfreyman. "The Re-

J. Deane in the morning, and in the evening by Rev. I. H. Palfreyman. "The Resurrection" and "The invisible world seen by faith," (2 Kings vi., 17), were the themes discussed to the edification of the hearers. On Monday an excellent tea was partaken of, provided by Mr. Costain, and arranged and served by Messrs Palfreyman, Onslow, Round, Roberts, Butler, Hurst, and Smallhorn. After tea, the public meeting was held, the Rev. I. H. Palfreyman in the chair. Several friends gave suitable addresses. The report, read by Mr. Roberts, secretary, said the work had been prosecuted during the year by public worship, Sunday school, and Gospel Temperance meetings with encouraging success. Mr. B. Minton presided at the organ, and a number of anthems and special hymns were well and heartily sung. Altogether, the meetings were agreeable and successful.

ROAD TRUST MEETINGS.—The annual meeting of landholders in the Victoria Road Trust district takes place in St. James Schoolroom, Victoria, at 1.30 p.m. to-day. The election for the Gordon Road district takes place to-day; there are five candidates nominated for the three vacancies, viz.:—Messrs. E. G. Ford, T. Hawkins, T. Taylor, W. P. Taylor and F. Yealand. To-night a meeting of the landholders of the Sandy Bay Road district will be held in the school-room to hear addresses from the various candidates for the forthcoming election. Bream Creek election is fixed for the 19th inst, nominations closing on the 12th; Esperance for the 26th, nominations closing on the 21st; Glen Fern for the 26th, nominations closing on the 19th; Upper Huon for the 19th, nominations closing on the 14th; Longley on the 23rd, nominations closing on the 18th; New Norfolk election takes place on the 12th inst, polling from 12 noon until 4 p.m.; Gould's Country, election on the 28th, nominations close on the 18th.

CITY POLICE COURT.—Before His Worship the Mayor yesterday, John W. Lynch, for being drunk and disorderly was fined 5s. or seven days. For disturbing the peace James Kildea was mulcted in 5s. or seven days, and Thomas Gallagher in 10s. 6d. or 14 days. On a charge of being idle and disorderly, Bridget Fox was sentenced to one month's imprisonment. Caroline Clarke was ordered to pay 10s. 6d., or go to gaol for 14 days for using obscene language. A similar penalty was inflicted on Ellen Lovell for being drunk and incapable. James Parker, charged with stealing a silver watch, valued at £5, the property of Myles McPartland at New Town, on or about the 9th ult., was remanded to the 11th inst.

VICE-REGAL COACH TRIP.—The *Pail Mail Budget* of February 27 contains the following paragraph relating to the Governor's recent coaching trip:—"Last month Sir Robert Hamilton, the popular Governor of Tasmania, accompanied by Lady Hamilton and his Private Secretary, went for a 400 mile coach trip through the country districts of the island colony, the P. S., Robinson by name, a good fellow and genial withal, handling the ribbons all the way in addition to doing his usual secretarial duties, and from all accounts he appears to have had his hands full all the time. Sir Robert and Lady H. enjoyed the trip immensely, and little wonder in a country where the roads and climate are simply perfection."

SHOOTING ACCIDENT.—A lad named Cooper, who resides at Sandy Bay, was shot with a

gun in the leg yesterday afternoon by another boy on Mount Nelson. It is supposed that the gun was fired accidentally. The injured lad was taken into Mr. Duffy's house, and afterwards to his own home.

GOOD WORK AMONG BOYS.—The Boys' Brigade, to which Lord Wolseley presented colours the other day, affords a striking example of the rapid growth nowadays of popular movements. Originating with a Sunday school in Glasgow a few years ago, the number of companies affiliated to the central body in 1886 was 44. In the following year the number had risen to 124, in the year after to 202, last year it was 292, and now only six weeks after the beginning of the present year there are just 400, with a total number of 17,000 boys and 1,300 officers. Nor is the movement confined to this country, the United States, Canada, and Australia having taken it up, while South Africa is about to follow suit. Although the idea of the Brigade originated with some teachers belonging to the Free Church of Scotland, it is entirely unsectarian. Its real aim is to afford religious teaching to lads at that difficult age when they are just leaving school. Lord Wolseley, however, more than hinted that the Government might do worse than provide the boys with real rifles to use at their drill instead of the toys which they at present carry.

RAPID SHORTHAND WRITING.—At an examination for Speed Certificates held at the London Phonetic Shorthand Writers' Association on January 30, Mr. Bernard de Bear, of the Metropolitan School of Shorthand, London, successfully accomplished the task of writing from dictation 2,000 words of ordinary newspaper matter in 10 minutes (being at the rate of 200 words per minute), and afterwards correctly transcribing his notes. Mr. B. de Bear has since been awarded a Speed Certificate for 200 words per minute, and he has also received, in commemoration of the event, a gold presentation watch, suitably inscribed, from Mr. Isaac Pitman. Although several other shorthand writers have the credit of being able to write at this phenomenally high rate of speed—notably Mr. Reed, of London, and Mr. Watt, of Edinburgh—the honour is due to Mr. de Bear of establishing the first reliable record for 200 words per min. to Mr. de Bear, like the above-mentioned gentlemen, writes Mr. Pitman's system of shorthand, and he was trained in the speed rooms of the Metropolitan School of Shorthand.