

The maritime labor dispute at present existing in Sydney involves the possibility of a general strike of European seamen throughout the colonies. Subject to certain contingencies the malcontents have already threatened to dictate a strike to all the adherents of the Maritime Labor Union in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide. Our telegrams inform us that such a demand, if made, would be obeyed by the great majority of the maritime unionists in the ports named. What such a strike would mean cannot be readily specified. For one thing it would involve a paralysis of our inter-coastal trade, but in our own case the perhaps most serious portent of it, considered in conjunction with the threatened strike of coal miners, is a coal famine in Victoria. Whatever the ultimate result of such a strike as is threatened, it would in any case cut off for a time our supply of coal, and when we are told that the stock in hand would not keep the Victorian railways going for more than a week or so, and that a stoppage of the usual coal supply means the probability of Melbourne being left unlit, owing to want of the raw material for making gas, the serious nature of the situation appears at once. There is no doubt that the promoters of the strike are aware of all this, and propose to use the knowledge in their own interests. There is as yet a possibility, and unfortunately only a possibility, that the extreme step may be not taken, but, whether it be or not, the main features of the difficulty are worth reciting. At the best it furnishes an interesting problem in the ethics of trades unionism. At the worst it would mean a social disturbance which would necessarily excite the keen interest and perhaps the active interference of the residents of these colonies far and wide. The Maritime Labor Union, the headquarters of which are at Sydney, and the affiliated branches located at all the principal Australian ports, is at issue with one or more sections of Australian steamship-owners on three very serious points. In the matter of steamers trading between Australian and Chinese ports, the union demands that they shall be

manned with Europeans instead of Chinese; that the eight hours system shall be preserved intact; and, thirdly, that the rate of wages and overtime pay agreed to in 1884 shall be strictly adhered to. Just about a year since the Northern Steamship Company, at Auckland, locked out its hands because they refused to accept a deduction of £1 per month in wages and to forego certain accustomed payments for overtime. The men thus compulsorily discharged took the matter into their own hands, and by co-operative action started a line of steamers to compete with those of the company between Sydney and Auckland. Commercially speaking, this move was a failure, and some six weeks since it was deemed advisable to open negotiations with the old company, with a view of winding up the opposition and returning to the old footing of employers and employed. In the meantime the company had become affiliated with the Steamship Owners' Association, a powerful body which has branches throughout Australasia, and, as is supposed, in consequence of this the overtures of the representatives of the malcontent employes were coldly received. Without following the negotiations step by step, it is enough to say that the Maritime Labor Union has come to the conclusion that the separate dispute with the Northern Steamship Company has been undertaken in the interests of the steamship owners, by the more powerful association above alluded to, and that the united body means to attack—1st. The right of seamen to protest against the employment of Chinese hands. 2nd. The eight hours' system; and 3rd. The usual wages payment for overtime. The Maritime Union is, as we have said, a very extensive and a very powerful one, with branches in every important Australian port, and its ultimatum as at present shadowed forth, is unconditional surrender on the part of the Steamship-owners' Association on all three of the above points, or else a strike which would throw our whole inter-colonial trade into confusion, and produce inconveniences and losses of a very serious nature. The natural course would appear to be to submit the whole question to arbitration, but

the whole question to arbitration, but to this the Maritime Union will not at present agree, fearing, as they not unreasonably do, that a majority of arbitrators might decide against the dearly bought concessions of eight hours labor and payment for overtime. It is regarded as ominous that the Steamship Owners' Association has adopted the quarrel of the Northern Steamship Company in these matters, although the larger body has not hitherto attempted in the case of any other lines represented by it to make similar reductions. Nothing can be said as to the probable result of all this, except that negotiations are going on of which it should in fairness be added that they have no promising indications. The dispute between the coal miners and the mineowners is on the same old lines. The men say the rates proposed for hewing coal are too low to be fair or just, while the owners affirm that they cannot afford to give more. The men agree that there is no way of reducing such a conflict of opinion but by striking in mass, and this is just what they threaten to do. The most sinister aspect of the case is the common belief that, if extreme steps are taken they will be the joint action of the dissatisfied miners and the dissatisfied sailors, that these two bodies will make an offensive and defensive alliance, with results in the form of a strike such as Australia has not yet seen.

THE ceremony of unveiling the RUSSELL-THOMSON statuary in our Botanical Gardens yesterday was not attended so largely as might have been expected, because the weather was too wintry for out-door enjoyment, and still more, perhaps, because no distinct programme of the procedure was placed before the public of Ballarat and its district. It is well that this should be understood, because the Ballarat people who have been, as a class, lavishly generous in subscribing towards the adornment and improvement of our streets, buildings, and reserves, have an ever ready recognition for such special donations in this direction as that which was yesterday handed over to the representatives of Ballarat. Of the statuary itself a description has already appeared in *The Star*, and the

the statuary itself a description has already appeared in *The Star*, and the high praise given to it by the writer in a purely art sense was, we believe, endorsed by the gathering yesterday in every particular. Such commendation is the due, and in a certain sense the reward of the successful artist, but those who were grouped around the pavilion yesterday, and listened to Mr GILLIES, himself a personal friend of the donor, while he in well-chosen and feeling words officially conveyed the gift of one of the Ballarat pioneers to the city he loved so well, were probably chiefly conscious that the thing of beauty before them was the offering of a once esteemed and beloved citizen, rather than the work of any artist, however able. This is as it should be. Works of high art are appreciated here; they are precious things to us, but better and dearer still, are the evidences of the feeling of those who, having helped to found Ballarat, and to rear it into its present position, show by such acts as that of the late Mr J. R. THOMSON in this case that they regard the place with a love as enduring as life itself, and leave mute witnesses of that regard for coming generations. We have been and are, as a community, singularly rich in members who have made almost princely recognition of the claims which old Ballarat has upon their regard. The list of these is too long to be given here, and to single out only a few might seem to be invidious. The doctrine of civic patriotism needs little enforcement on Ballarat, but it is the doctrine taught by the RUSSELL-THOMSON bequest, and the statuary in the pavilion will teach it as strongly as some of the marble figures recall a memorable and awful record of the past.

A meeting of the Builders and Contractors' Association was held last evening at the Mechanics' Institute in reference to the question of a reduction of the hours of labor from 48 hours to 45 per week. Mr Barker, president of the association, occupied the chair. At a previous meeting, when the letter from the Laborers' Protective Union was considered, it was decided that the 48 hours per week be adopted as a general rule throughout the building trade, and that the masons receive a month's notice of the decision. A deputation was also appointed to wait upon the local architects, and the deputation last evening submitted the following report:—

architects, and the deputation last evening submitted the following report:—

"According to resolution the members appointed waited upon the architects this morning to receive their decisions, they having been made acquainted by letter of the business transacted on Wednesday evening. The unanimous expression was to hold out against the demand, and their sympathies were entirely with the contractors. Mr Gilbert had taken the trouble to interview the proprietors and committees of buildings under his supervision, and reported that Mr Reid was prepared to allow half-time overtime in the event of a strike. Mr Powell, secretary of the Art Gallery, assured Mr Gilbert that they need not apprehend any trouble if it came to the worst, and Mr Gilbert would answer for Mr Coghlan that there would be no objection raised. Messrs James and Piper, Molloy (for Mr Figgis), Brazenor, and Legge also pronounced themselves decidedly against any infringement of the eight hours' system." The report was adopted, and it was decided, on the motion of Mr Hunt, seconded by Mr Stansfield—"That notice be sent to the various unions in connection with the building trades, and that a month's notice be given to the masons." Mr Stansfield remarked that there seemed to be an impression that they were trying to do away with something that already existed. The fact was that the laborers were going for eight hours' pay for seven and a-half hours' work. They could not allow that to one trade and not to the others. They must do their duty between the laborers and the public, and could not charge an exorbitant price for work to pay the laborers. Other trades when they wished to have a half-holiday on Saturday worked it off during the week or lost their pay for the time. The secretary mentioned, during the discussion, that he had asked one of the masons whether he was paying his men a full week's wages for 45 hours work, and was told that he paid them by the hour. A vote of thanks was passed to the architects on the motion of Mr Parnell seconded by Mr Reynolds, and a similar compliment to the chair closed the meeting.

The ceremony of unveiling the statuery purchased from the Russell-Thomson bequest for that purpose was performed at the City Gardens yesterday by the Premier of the colony, the Hon. Duncan Gillies. That gentleman arrived by special train from Melbourne at half past 11 o'clock, and after partaking of the hospitality of the City Mayor proceeded to the gardens. There was a fairly large concourse of people there, notwithstanding that the time was an inconvenient one to many, and the fact that the City Council had not made any arrangements worthy of the name for the ceremony. Mr J. Noble Wilson, on behalf of the trustees of the donor, handed over the statuery to the Mayor of the City, Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, M.L.A. The mayor accepted the gift on behalf of the citizens, and called upon the Hon. D. Gillies to address those present. The statuery having been unveiled, Mr Gillies delivered a brief and pointed address, and the proceedings terminated after three cheers

and a brief and pointed address, and the proceedings terminated after three cheers had been given for Mr Gillies, the mayor, the trustees, and Mr Stoddart. Subsequently the Premier visited the School of Mines, and was shown over the establishment. He was then driven to the site for the new Fine Art Gallery, where the buildings in course of erection and the plans showing what the appearance of the gallery will be when it is completed were inspected. Mr Gillies expressed himself as highly pleased with what he saw, and with the evidences that the School had already given of its great utility. The Premier left for Melbourne again by a special train at 2.45 p.m. A report of the proceedings will be found elsewhere in *The Star*.

The present Mayor of the City (Lieut.-Col. Smith, M.L.A.), whose term of office expires to-day, yesterday informed a representative of *The Star* that he has not the slightest intention of standing for re-election as mayor. This expression of his intentions was made in consequence of several prominent citizens interesting themselves in getting up a petition to the City Council asking them to re-elect the present mayor. On Cr Smith's feelings in the matter being made known to the gentlemen who had taken the initiative, they at once issued instructions to stop the canvass for signatures to the petition.

Mr M. Stapleton, ex-president of the Amalgamated Miners' Association, who is leaving the district to take charge of a mine at Woods' Point, was yesterday made the recipient of a very handsome presentation by a number of Ballarat friends. The presentation took the form of a very pretty gold locket and several useful volumes. The locket bore the inscription:—"Presented to Mr M. Stapleton on the occasion of his leaving Ballarat, as a mark of esteem." There was a good gathering of friends at Fern's hotel, and Mr T. Porter in few appropriate and highly eulogistic remarks, referred to the esteem in which Mr Stapleton was held. He said he regretted that he was leaving Ballarat, but pleased that he was doing so to better himself, and on behalf of the subscribers presented him with the souvenirs referred to. The health of the recipient was honored, and he suitably responded. Mr Stapleton left by the afternoon train for Melbourne en route for Woods Point.

The Ballarat City Council will meet at 10 a.m. to-day, to elect a new mayor and transact other business.

To-day the third match of the season between the Ballarat and Ballarat Imperial football teams will be played on the Saxon paddock. Of their previous contests one has been won by each club, consequently considerable interest is taken in their third meeting. Both clubs are likely to be represented by their best team, and the match should draw a large attendance.

The Mayor of the City has received a telegram from the clerk of the Legislative Assembly, stating that the Parliamentary Reception Committee have arranged a visit to this city of members of the Parliaments

reception committee have arranged a visit to this city of members of the Parliaments of Australasia who are now in Melbourne. The visitors will arrive by special train at 11.30 a.m. on Tuesday next, returning to Melbourne at 4 p.m. The mayor has been requested to assist the committee in making arrangements for the reception and showing them places of interest.

A large load of trees and shrubs of various kinds passed through this city yesterday for the Ballarat Miners' Racecourse. The trees were presented to the club by Messrs Rennie and Co., seedsmen, Mair street. The committee at the present time are using every endeavor to beautify and make the race grounds as attractive as possible, and great indebtedness is due to Messrs Rennie and Co. for their handsome donation. The programme for the 24th inst. appears in another column. Nominations close on the 13th inst.

The monthly meeting of the Ballarat A. and P. Society will be held at Craig's hotel this morning at 11 o'clock. After the meeting the Hon. Phillip Russel will entertain the members of the committee at dinner, when the photographs of the members will be presented to him.

A lad named Martin Rider, 16 years of age, who resides at Clarendon, had a narrow escape from death on Thursday. It appears that he had been out shooting, when a shower came on and he took shelter under a tree. Rider started off to run home when the rain stopped. The trigger of the gun somehow was caught by some bushes and the weapon went off. The charge just grazed the side of his face, some of the pellets entering his right cheek, which was slightly blackened and scorched. He was brought into Ballarat, and admitted to the Hospital.

The many friends of Mr Robert Reed, an old and highly respected resident of Ballarat East, will be sorry to hear that he is at present lying dangerously ill at his residence, Grant street.

We are informed that the mission conducted by Mr Robertson in the Bible Christian churches in Ballarat has resulted in much good, both at Skipton street and at Humfray street, and the churches have been quickened. The mission will terminate on Sunday for the present. Mr Robertson will leave the Ballarat circuit with the good wishes of many friends, and a pressing invitation to visit the circuit again further on in the spring.

The resignation of Mr T. O'Brien, late of Allendale and Egerton, as a member of the Victorian police force, has been accepted. He intends engaging in mercantile pursuits in Toowoomba, Queensland.

We have been shown a handsome address illuminated and engrossed by Messrs F. W. Niven and Co., 40 Sturt street, to the order of the congregation of Barkly street Wesleyan Church, for presentation to Mr John Letcher, the well-known legal manager. The artistic work has never been equalled in Ballarat, and the whole reflects credit upon the artists employed by the firm. The design consists of views of Lal Lal Falls, Kirk's

Dam, Barkly street Church, and a picture of a mining claim, all of which are entwined with wreaths of flowers. The address will be on view to-day at the establishment of Messrs Hughes and Opie, Sturt street, next the Unicorn hotel.

The secretary to the Orphan Asylum, desires to acknowledge with thanks the sum of 7s 6d from Miss Wilson, who secured a special prize at the Alfred Hall Skating Rink on Thursday night for the representation of the character of "Nell Gwynne."

Mr J. C. Thomson, P.M., and Mr Murray, J.P., presided yesterday morning at the City Police Court. A woman named Margaret Nicholson was charged with being the occupier of a house frequented by persons having no lawful visible means of support. The case was adjourned for a week to allow the police to make enquiries. George Lilley, charged with stealing a box of clothes from the Unicorn hotel, was further remanded until Tuesday next. A number of debt cases were disposed of.

Mr Wm. Gale, J.P., attended the Town Police Court yesterday, and fined two inebriates.

Mr T. Williams will address the electors on Monday evening next, in the Town Hall, Ballarat East, when he will give an account of his late stewardship, and show reason why the support of the ratepayers should be afforded him during the forthcoming election.

The fortnightly meeting of the City Council will be held on Monday afternoon, at the usual hour, 3 o'clock. At a quarter to 4 a special meeting will be held, to confirm a regulation appointing stands for cabs, &c., and regulating the fares for the hire of such vehicles.

The Fisk Jubilee Singers will commence a short farewell visit to Ballarat in the Academy on Wednesday, 15th inst.

Mr George Clarke, who has acquired fame as an evangelist under the style of "The Christian Athlete," and who has been charming crowded audiences in Melbourne by the vigorous as well as the excellence of his addresses, will commence a mission in Ballarat this evening, when, at 8 o'clock, in the Manchester Unity Hall, he will inaugurate his services with an address to Christian workers. When in Melbourne Mr Clarke delivered addresses to the "grads." and "under-grads." of the University, and we have it on the authority of one who was present that the schoolmen were held spell-bound, many who had come to scoff remaining to applaud. Mr Clarke's addresses have found favor with the *élite* of the metropolis, his Excellency the Governor, Lady Loch, Lieutenant-Governor Sir William F. Stawell, and others attending, and expressing satisfaction at his outspoken utterances. Manly, straightforward, and fearless, he holds up his Master for the admiration and imitation of men, and shows that the true man must of necessity be a true Christian. The full arrangements are advertised elsewhere.

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At the meeting of the proprietors of the Union Bank of Australia, held in London on 30th ult., a dividend of £1 10s per share—equal to 12 per cent. per annum—was declared. A sum of £18,263 was carried forward, the reserve funds remaining at £980,000.

The treasurer of the Ballarat Fire Brigade desires to acknowledge receipt of the following donations:—Messrs Leggo and Sons, £1 1s; Magill and Coghlan, £2 2s; Guardian Insurance Company, £2 2s; C. E. Jones, M.L.A., £1; K. H. Sutton, £1 1s; Broadbent Bros. and Co., £1 1s; Martin and Grose, £1 1s; Jones and Trembath, £1 1s; Lakeland Bros., £1; Nettle Bros., £1; E. Murphy, M.L.A., £1 5s; E. Lugg, 10s; W. Walker (batter), 10s 6d; A. W. Hager, 10s 6d; Mrs Shelley, 10s; Mrs Reigelhuth, 10s; Bateman, Clarke, and Co., 10s; A. Cant, 10s; D. J. Wheel, 10s; J. C. Smith, 8s; M'Culloch (turner), 5s.

H. Heuly was one of the successful candidates for the position of junior clerk in the Railway Department. He was prepared by Mr M'Lean, of Victoria College.

A numerously-attended meeting of the committee of the Bungaree, Dean, and Warrenheip Ploughing match (writes our local correspondent) was held at the Leigh Creek hotel on Wednesday evening last; Mr John Walsh presiding. The sub-committee recently appointed to select suitable land for the purposes of the match stated that they had inspected the land offered by Mr H. M'Kay, of Dean, and also that of Mr T. Walsh at Leigh Creek, and the land in each locality was really most suitable. It was ultimately decided to hold the match on Mr Thos. Walsh's land at Leigh Creek. The programme and all particulars in connection with the match will be advertised in due course. Some routine business having been disposed of the meeting adjourned.

The friends of Mr Nicholas Fitzgerald, M.L.C. (says the *Argus*), will learn with great regret that a serious accident happened to him on Wednesday night. On his return from the dinner at Government-house, he was alighting from his carriage at his residence, when he missed his footing on the carriage step and fell on his shoulder, sustaining a fracture of one of his arms. The unfortunate accident will render it necessary for Mr Fitzgerald to be confined to his house for some time, and prevent him from writing.

A young man named George Harrison, printer, from Melbourne, has been found dead on Mr Geo. Simms' Strathallan Estate, nine miles from Echuca. He arrived at the estate on Tuesday in an exhausted condition from Echuca, where he had been drinking. After being regaled with food and put to bed, where he slept 12 hours, he got up and wandered about, and on Thursday was found dead.

A boy about 10 years of age, named Alfred Francis Hockey, son of a carter at Dunolly, has been drowned in a waterhole. He had been sent by the housekeeper to get some

has been drowned in a waterhole. He had been sent by the housekeeper to get some pipeclay, and it is supposed he fell into the hole.

A Brisbane telegram published in the *Age* says:—"Willis, the teller in the Queensland National Bank at Mackay, was brought up at the police court, charged with the embezzlement of £200, and was remanded.—A meeting of the sporting men was held at the Australian hotel, and after discussion a committee was appointed to arrange a great sculling contest, to be held on a three-mile course on the Brisbane River about the 6th December, the prizes aggregating £800, namely £500 for first, £200 for second, and £100 for third.—A young man named Findlay, aged 27 years, bookkeeper to Messrs M'Donald, Patterson and Fitzgerald, solicitors, was ascending an unfinished lift on the firm's premises, when his head was jammed against a projecting beam. Findlay lived only a few minutes.—The land on which the Wharf street Baptist Church stands has been sold to a Melbourne syndicate for £16,000 cash. The church authorities will erect a new building at the corner of Wickham terrace and Edward street, at a cost of £10,000."

The *Colac Reformer* understands that a meeting will be held during the course of next week, to take into consideration the question of floating a company in Colac for the purpose of establishing a factory for the production of butter, cheese, ham, and bacon, &c.

A Sydney telegram, published in the *Age*, says:—"The public school teacher at Orange, named Levy, was on Thursday committed for trial for alleged criminal assaults on one of his scholars, though the medical evidence disproved the charges. He was also committed for trial on a second charge of attempted suicide. He now lies in a critical condition in the hospital, where the charge was heard.

For the first time for upwards of three years camels for burthen have been seen at Wilcannia. "They consisted," the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* states, "of 13 adult beasts and three young ones, and came down from Kallara station, on the River Darling, 80 miles from Wilcannia, to take back to that station shearing supplies. Each adult beast takes on an average about 5 cwt, and their Afghan owner, who is under contract, expects to do the return journey in four days. The last time the camels came here they were used to carry supplies to Momba station and bring loading here for shipment. That was during the great drought of 1883 and 1884. The Momba camels were originally obtained from Sir Thomas Elder's breeding establishment at Beltana, in South Australia, where the sires and dams were imported from Asia.

A shocking accident happened on Thursday on the premises of Messrs M'Donald, Paterson, and Fitzgerald, solicitors, Brisbane. A young man, named Robert Finlay, a bookkeeper, was being conveyed to one of the upper stories of the building on an open luggage lift, when his head got jammed against the cross-beam of the lift frame. His

luggage lift, when his head got jammed against the cross-beam of the lift frame. His head stopped the lift, and it was some time before the accident was noticed. His head could only be extricated by sawing through the beam, and the lift then continuing its ascent caused the body to fall a distance of 30 feet. It was found that Finlay's skull was fractured and his neck dislocated. The deceased (says the *Argus*) was very popular in athletic circles, and was a prominent member of the Liedertafel. He had relatives in Victoria.

A Sydney telegram published in the *Age* says:—"At the meeting of the Irish National League last night, Mr E. B. Freehill, secretary to the league, read a letter from Mr Joseph E. Biggar, M.P., in which Mr Biggar's hearty thanks were returned for the liberal subscriptions from Australia forwarded by Mr Freehill. The letter further stated that Mr Parnell expected in August next to send one or two members of his party as delegates to the Australian colonies. 'The sympathy and material support of the Irish abroad is,' the letter adds, 'of the greatest value to the Irish both in Parliament, where political conflict goes on; and to the poor tenants in Ireland, who have to fight for life and home with the tyrannical landlord party, backed up by an unscrupulous Government.'"