

sitting for about a month, but practically nothing has been done yet.

During the recess Mr. Deakin, prime minister, invited Mr. Chamberlain to visit Australia to try to induce us to accept England's "offer" with regard to preferential trade. Mr. Chamberlain declined. He is probably too busy trying to get Great Britain to accept the "offer" made by the colonies. Preferential trade was mentioned in the Governor General's speech at the opening of parliament, but the question is really dead in Australia.

The arbitration and conciliation bill has again been introduced. It was on an amendment to this bill that the Barton ministry was defeated last year. The Deakin ministry will probably get beaten in the same way, which may mean a change of government.

Mr. Irvine, the State premier of Victoria, has retired on account of ill health, and has been succeeded by Mr. T. Bent. Irvine was by far the strongest man in the local ministry. Most of the reforms he set out to carry have been obtained: Economy, reduction of members of both houses of parliament, and reduction of the property qualification for electors of the upper house.

The elections under the new constitution will soon be held. The Opposition party has put forward taxation of land values, which is supported also by the Labor party, as one of the principal planks of their platform.

The See ministry in New South Wales was returned at the last election, in 1901, pledged to reduce the numbers of the State parliament. Nothing was done in that direction until at the end of last year, when a referendum was held on Federal election day to let the people vote on the reduction of State members. The choice was limited to 125 (the present number), 100, and 90. By a large majority 90 was carried, and the local ministry at once prepared a bill and mapped out new electorates; so it seems probable that the next election in New South Wales will be held under the new act.

The proposal to work the Rand mines with Chinese labor has opened many people's eyes to the underlying cause of the Boer war. Public meetings have been held to protest against it, and a motion condemning it was carried in both Federal Houses. Mr. Deakin sent a letter of protest, as did Mr. Seddon, of New Zealand, a thorough imperialist, and worshiper of Chamberlain. Deakin and Seddon were politely told by the home authorities to mind their own business.

ERNEST BRAY.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, May 5.

What appears to have been a bloody and important battle in the

Russo-Japanese war (p. 55) has been fought on the western or Manchurian side of the Yalu river. The fighting occurred in connection with a Japanese movement in force across the Yalu from Suku, on the Korean side, to Chintiencheng, on the Manchurian side. The Russians describe it officially as the battle of Turenchen. Gen. Kuroki commanded the Japanese troops; Gen. Zassalitch commanded the Russians. The battle was fought on the 1st. Apparently the Japanese outnumbered the Russians about three to one, but this disparity is supposed to have been equalized by the fact that the Japanese were the assailants in the open, while the Russians fought behind entrenchments. The Japanese are conceded to have been victorious, the Russians having retired from Chintiencheng and Antung, to the south of it, back to Fenghuancheng, which lies to the west of both places and slightly north. Japanese official reports estimate the Japanese loss at 798 killed and wounded; Russian official reports estimate the Russian loss in killed at from 2,000 to 3,000. The Russians suffered heavily also in their loss of field artillery.

Following the authentic reports of the Japanese victory at Chintiencheng, came rumors of their capture of Newchwang, the point on the Russian railway at the head of the Gulf of Liaotung, which commands rail communication southward and menaces Port Arthur from the north. This rumor came from Chefoo, China, in a dispatch of the 4th to the London Chronicle as follows: "The Japanese landed troops at Yinkow on the 1st, under cover of the guns of a squadron of Japanese cruisers, and attacked and captured Newchwang on the 2d, after a fierce battle, the Russians falling back to protect the railway." This rumor is not verified and is probably false. It appears to be certain, however, from dispatches of the 4th from Tokio that the Japanese have succeeded completely in blocking the entrance to Port Arthur and thereby bottling up the Russian fleet at that point.

Colonial warfare by the Dutch against natives in Java and Sumatra has furnished an occa-

sional item of news during the past month or so. For 250 years Holland has maintained a profitable colonial system in these islands and on a greater part of the Malay archipelago. One of the features of this system is an institution resembling peonage, under which the natives are held in a species of slavery, they and their descendants, for the working out of debts. In more recent years a paternal despotism has somewhat modified the rigors of peonage; but the natives have never become reconciled to their foreign masters, and a continuous though desultory warfare has been the result. Lately this warfare has been carried on with the Atcheenese, of the extreme north of Sumatra, against whom the Dutch declared war in 1873. They are pure Malays and the most civilized of all the native tribes. This war is still in progress, and it is to its prosecution that the recent news reports refer. On the 2d of April an Amsterdam report told of a dispatch of that day from Kota Raja, Island of Sumatra, announcing that a column of Dutch troops operating in Atcheen province had engaged a strong entrenched body of Atcheenese in the Gajocloes district, with the result that 541 Atcheenese were killed, although the Dutch lost only 3 men killed and 25 wounded. The latest report from the seat of this colonial war, also from Amsterdam, is dated May 3, and tells of a dispatch from Batavia, Java, saying that a Dutch column had captured the Atcheenese position at Tjante after a desperate fight, in which 190 Atcheenese were killed, the Dutch casualties being only 7 killed and 43 wounded. These fights appear to mark a new outbreak, for a series of campaigns, begun in 1898 and ending last August, was supposed to have subdued the Atcheenese.

Germany's colonial war in German Southwest Africa (p. 25) is not encouraging to the home authorities. Although an official dispatch of April 16 told of a repulse on the 13th of a superior force of Herreros who were moving upon Oxumbo, Berlin reports of the 28th tell a different story. The commandant of the Grootfontein district had cabled that the Germans there had suffered severe