SHIPPING.

ARRIVALS.—January 10.

Dandenong, steamer, 575 tons, Pain, from Melbourne January 7. Passengers—Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher and family (5), Mrs. Elkington, Mrs. Mitchell, Dr. O'Connell, Messrs. A. Marks, Milne, M. Cormack, Perdreau, Quested, and 3 in the steerage. W. H. Smith, agent.

Mystery, schooner, 82 tons, Swing, from Baffle Creek. Parbury Brothers, agents.

Balclutha, steamer, 272 tons, Hill, from Rockhampton 5th instant. Passengers—Mr. and Mrs. Moses and family, Mrs. M'Dermott, Miss Driscoll, Messrs. J. W. Dunlop, J. Connell D. S. Wallace, J. Wallace, and 16 in the steerage. A.S.N. Co., agents.

Alexandra, steamer, 425 tons, Grainger, from Rockhampton January 7th. A.S.N. Co., agents.

James Paterson, steamer, 291 tons, Darrell, from Rockhampton 6th instant, Passengers—Mrs. Schmidt 2 children, and servant, and 10 in the steerage. A.S.N. Co., agents.

DEPARTURES.—January 10.

Queen of Nations, ship, for London.
Tasmania, steamer, for Hobart Town.

PROJECTED DEPARTURES.

For London.—La Hogue, this day; Maid of Judah, 28th January; City of Manchester, Queen of Nations, Glendower, and William Duthie, early. For Auckland—Luna, steamer, this day. For Maryborough—Black Swan, early. For New Caledonia—Colonist, this day. For New Zealand—Airedale, steamer, this day. For Brisbane—Florence Irving, steamer, this day. For Melbourne—City of Adelaide, steamer, 12th instant.

ENTERED OUTWARDS.—January 10.

Florence Irving, steamer, 348 tons, Fitzsimons, for Brisbane. A.S.N.Co., agents.

Black Swan, steamer, 214 tons, Bristow, for Maryborough. A.S.N.Co., agents.

City of Adelaide, steamer, 615 tons, Walker, for Melbourne. A.S.N.Co., agents.

Luna, steamer, 169 tons, Ellis, for Auckland. Captain, agent.

Sam Cearns, ship, 1422 tons, Williams, for San Francisco, via Newcastle. Willis, Merry, and Lloyd, agents.

Agnes Banfield, barque, 491 tons, Scilly, for Hongkong. Colonial Sugar Company, agents.

Dandenong, steamer, 575 tons, Pain, for Melbourne, via Newcastle. W. H. Smith, agent.

Maid of Judah, ship, 665 tons, Hyling for London. Montefiore, Joseph, and Co., agents.

Sarah Nichol, schooner, 52 tons, Tullock, for Maryborough. J. Thorne, agent.

Albyn's Isle, barque, 360 tons, Houston, for Petropaulovski. M'Donald, Smith, and Co., agents.

Tasmania, steamer, 285 tons, Lyon, for Hobart Town. Willis, Merry, and Lloyd, agents.

Mystery, schooner, 82 tons, Irving, for Rockhampton. Parbury Brothers, agents.

CLEARANCES.—January 10.

Tasmania, steamer, 285 tons, Lyon, for Hobart Town. Passengers—Mrs. and Miss Dess Thompson, Mrs. Macleay, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson and 2 children, Misses Anderson (2), Mr. and Mrs. H. C. White and 2 children, Mr. and Mrs. H. Bell, and 3 children, Miss Bell, and servant, Miss Terrier, Mr. and Mrs. G. Moss, Miss Brookes, Mrs. T. Zealand, Rev. J. G. G. Barrett, Dr. S. W. Tucker, Messrs. Rolin, W. Hibbert, Lavers, D. Forbes, H. Reeve, W. Reeve, G. Shoobridge and Ward.

La Hogue, ship, 1331 tons, Goddard, for London. Passengers—Mrs. and Miss Promer and servant, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Beauchamp and 7 children, Rev. — Lassetter, Miss S. Miles and servant, Mrs. Isaacs, Misses Isaacs (2), Mrs. Lyons, 2 children and servant, Mrs. Cruickshank, Miss Scott, Mr. and Mrs. Fry, Miss Bodle, Miss E. Handcock, Messrs. C. Armstrong, Scott, H. Carterson, F. Thompson, Bern, W. M'Mukan, J. W. Butler, Trunbeskie and Son, Rodd, J. Ritchie.

Coastwise.—White Cloud, for Brisbane Water; Curranbene, for Jervis Bay; Elizabeth, for Hawkesbury; Duke of Edinburgh, Fox, Dart, Brilliant, Lavinia, Martha, Ellen, and Saxonia, for Newcastle; Undaunted, for Richmond River; Gipsy, for Twofold Bay.

IMPORTS.—January 10.

Dandenong, steamer, from Melbourne: 12 coils lead pipe. J. M'Ilwraith; 1 case, E. Forest; 1 keg, Evans, 1 mowing machine, J. Hill; 10 cases, Elliott Brothers; 1 case, L. Carpenter; 44 casks, J. Graham; 7 cases, M'Kanney; 1 bar steel, J. Young; 5 cases, Griffiths; 2 cases sewing machines, Gordon and Goteh; 8 pieces bluestone, Eaton; 25 cases insulators, Government New South Wales; 297 cases brandy, 1 trunk nuts, 4 packages tobacco, 15 cases spices, F. J. Stutchbury; 2 trunks boots, Callaghan and Sons; 5 trunks boots, G. M'Evoy; 1 package, Chapman and Co.; 1 parcel, G. Ball; 2 parcels, J. Bradley; 1 parcel, G. Rhodes; 1 parcel, Garrick; 1 parcel, Wolfen and Co.; 1 case, C. Moore and Co.; 20 chests tea, Parbury Brothers; 5 packages tobacco, W. Wolfen and Co.; 46 packages tea, J. R. Gibbons; 1 case, W. Mears; 2 parcels, Gordon and Goteh; 1 cask, R. R. Towns; 2 cases, J. Jacobs; 10 cases, Woodward; 62 packages, W. Arieil; 1 package, Fitzgerald; 16 pieces bluestone, 500 bags rice, 37 cases, 26 packages, Order.

Mystery, from Baffle Creek: 120 bales skins, Gilchrist, Watt, and Co.; 39 bales wool, half-bale hair, 34 hides, 8 casks oil, 7 casks tallow, and a quantity of bones and horns.

James Paterson, steamer, from Rockhampton: 15 bales wool, Fraser and Manson; 53 bales wool, Rabone, Feez, and Co.; 34 bales wool, John Richardson; 22 bales wool, Flood and Campbell; 73 bales wool, Gilchrist, Watt, and Co.; 10 bales wool, R. Towns and Co.; 12 bales wool; Montefiore, Joseph, and Co.; 38 bales wool, Dangar, Dangar, and Co.; 13 bales wool, 2 parcels gold (264 ozs. 14 dwts. 18 grs.), Australian Joint Stock Bank; 1 parcel gold (62 ozs. 15 dwts.), Union Bank; 1 chest, 1 box, 1 package, Scott, Henderson, and Co.; 4 bales wool, 16 bales skins, Order; 51 bales wool, C. W. Lord; 64 bales wool, H. Towns and Co.; 5 bales skins, 20 bales wool, J. Eales; 26 bales wool, Montefiore, Joseph, and Co.; 30 bales wool, London and Chartered Bank; 16 bales wool, Irwin and Turner; 30 bales wool, Richardson and Wrench; 3 bales skins, 6 hides, 86 bales, Gilchrist, Watt, and Co.; 21 bales wool, 18 bales skins, Rolleston; 30 bales skins, Thompson; 34 bales wool, Morehead and Young; 14 bales wool, R. Knox; 19 bales wool, H. Belt; 16 bales wool, J. Milson.

Balclutha, steamer, from Rockhampton: 67 bales wool, Hon. T. Holt; 1 bale wool, 10 hogsheads 2 tierces 6 quarter-casks tallow, 64 hides, Mort and Co.; 157 hides, Morehead and Young; 14 bales wool, Frazer and Manson; 24 bales wool, R. Towns and Co.; 29 bales wool, C. H. Humphrey; 31 bales wool, Fanning, Griffiths, and Co.; 10 bales wool, 5 tierces 1 cask 1 hogshead tallow, 2 casks oil, 13 bales wool, J. Milson, junior; 7 hides, Henry Belt; 122 bales wool, Gilchrist, Watt, and Co.; 36 cakes copper, Peak Downs Copper Mining Company; 15 bales wool, C. M. Lord; 9 bales wool, A.S.N. Co.; 4 bales skins, 26 tierces tallow, Order.

Coastwise.—White Cloud, from Brisbane Water: 35 tons wood. Lois Montez, from Macleay River: 600 bags maize. Curranbene, from Jervis Bay: 23,000 feet timber. Fanny Louis, from Shoalhaven: 200 bags maize, 1500 spokes. Mary Ann, from Tuross River: 14,500 feet timber, 37 bags bark. Elizabeth, from Hawkesbury River: 1010 bushels maize, 54 bags grain. Dart, Brilliant, Lavinia, Mariposa, Martha, Ellen, and Saxonia, from Newcastle: 1210 tons coal.

SHIPS' MAILS.

Closing at the General Post-office as follows:

For London.—Nourmahal, this day, at noon; La Hogue, this day, at 6 p.m.

For Auckland.—Luna, this day, at 3 p.m.

For Napier, Wellington, Taranaki, Nelson, Picton, Lyttelton, Otago, and Wanganui.—Airedale, this day, at 3 p.m.

For Brisbane.—Florence Irving, this day, at 4 p.m.

For Grafton.—Agnes Irving, this day, at 7.30 p.m.

The steamship Dandenong left Hobson's Bay on the 7th instant at 4 p.m., passed Gabo Island on Sunday at 1.15 a.m., and entered Sydney Heads on Monday at 4.15 a.m. Experienced moderate S.W. winds to Gabo Island, and light E. winds and thick weather the remainder of the passage. Passed the steamship Yon Yangs off Gabo Island.

The Aberdeen clipper ship Queen of Nations, for London, was towed to sea yesterday.

The ship La Hogue, yesterday, cleared outwards at the Customs, for London, with a large number of passengers and a full cargo.

The steamship Alexandra left Rockhampton at 11 a.m., January 7th; off the Pilot station, 2 p.m.; passed Cape Capricorn, 3.15 p.m.; Lady Elliot Island, 1 a.m., on the 8th; Indian Head, 10.40 a.m.; Cape Moreton, 9.35 p.m.; Cape Byron, 6 a.m., on the 9th; Smoky Cape, 7.15 p.m.; Port Stephens, 8 a.m., on the 10th; entered the Heads, 3.40 p.m. Experienced light variable winds and fine weather to Smoky Cape, and thick hazy weather the remainder of the passage.

The steamship James Paterson left Rockhampton at noon on Thursday, and came to anchor in Keppel Bay same night; cleared Keppel Bay, 8 a.m., Friday; passed Lady Elliot's Island at 8 p.m., same day; Cape Moreton at 6 p.m., on Saturday; Smoky Cape at 6.30 p.m., on Sunday; Seal Rocks at 5.30 a.m., on Monday, and entered the Heads at 5.45 p.m. Had strong easterly winds to Breaksea Spit, thence moderate variable winds and cloudy weather.

The steamship Balclutha left Rockhampton on the 5th instant, at 11.30 a.m.; anchored at Sea View Hill at 4.30 p.m., on account of a strong S.E. gale blowing; weighed at 5.30 a.m., on the 7th, and rounded Breaksea Spit at 11 p.m.; arrived at Sydney on the 10th, at 3.30 p.m. Had brisk easterly winds and cloudy weather to Cape Moreton, and S. and S.E. winds the remainder of the passage. Passed the steamships City of Brisbane and Egmont, bound north, off Smoky Cape.

Yachting.—In a recent issue of this journal, inferring to a challenge from the Clio to the Ixion, it was erroneously stated that the latter yacht had defeated the Clio in a private match. It transpires that the challenge was immediatley accepted by the owner of the Ixion (Mr. Brown) the day he received it, best and best men, or owners to sail with amateur crews. Mr. Bradford, the owner of the Ixion objected to this arrangement, but wished to sail with a crew composed almost entirely of professionals. This the Ixion declined, but accepted the challenge on the terms mentioned above. We notice in our issue of to-day a challenge from the Ixion to sail either Clio or Bronzewing.

[By Electric Telegraph.]

NEWCASTLE.

Arrivals.—January 8: Union, from Dunedin; Ino, from Sydney. January 9: Morpeth, Alert, and Hercules, from Sydney; Moonta, from Wallaroo; Our Hope, from Melbourne; Admiral Jombyer, from London. January 10: Margaret and Mary and Janet Dickson, from Sydney.

Departures.—January 8: Spec, for Melbourne; Prince of Wales, for Adelaide. January 9: Sir Isaac Newton, for Clarence River; Lizzie Coleson, for Richmond River.

MARYBOROUGH.

Depart ure.—January 7: Lallah Rookh, for Melbourne.

BRISBANE.

Departure.—January 10: Lady Young, steamer, for Sydney.

TWOFOLD BAY.

Departure.—January 10: Tien Tsin, for Launceston.

MELBOURNE.

Arrivals.—January 9: Murray, from Port Albert; Penola, from Adelaide; Scotia, from Portland; Duleep Singh, from Liverpool; Kent and Dunbar Castle, from London. January 10: Wonga Wonga, steamer, from Sydney; Sarah, from Mauritius; Sprinbok, from Newcastle.

Departures.—January 9: Layard, for Newcastle. January 10: Planter and Howarden Castle, for London; Prosperity, for Hokitika; Ino, for Grey River; Anne Moore, for Circular Head.

SYDNEY HEADS.

DATE.	TIME.	WINDS.	REMARKS.
Jan. 10.	8.30 a.m.	E.	Light and clear.
	Noon.	E.	Ditto and ditto.
	5 p.m.	E.	Ditto and ditto.

COMMERCIAL.

The import market opened more briskly yesterday than has been recorded since the commencement of the holidays. Country orders were more numerous, and several transactions were reported.

Ale.—Bulk ale is very firm, and it is not improbable may bring higher rates until the new brew comes to hand. Yesterday Marrian's was sold at £8, Joules's at £7 15s, and Bass's No. 3 at the same figure; bottled also realised fair rates; and Edmund's pig brand porter 10s 3d per dozen.

Cornsacks are very firm, and a few parcels have changed hands at full rates.

In Metals we hear of a small parcel common galvanised iron being placed at £23 per ton.

Teas are moving off very quietly at fair market rates. Last week's auction sales have for the present rendered sales more difficult to effect.

The monthly meeting of the committee of the Sydney Chamber of Commerce was held at the Exchange yesterday the chairman, Mr. J. L. Montefiore, presiding. There were also present the following members:—Messrs. John Alger, R. Molineaux, Edward Chapman, and John Keep. Communications on various subjects connected with commerce and maritime affairs were laid before the meeting. The annual general meeting of the members of the Chamber was fixed to be held on Monday, the 17th January at 4, o'clock p.m., and the report of proceedings during the past year to be presented by the committee was prepared. The secretary was instructed to ascertain when it will be convenient for the Honorable the Postmaster-General to receive a deputation from the Chamber on the subject of a reduction in the rates of charges for telegraphic messages.

Messrs. Richardson and Wrench sold by auction yesterday the landed estate of the Fitzroy Ironworks Company at Nattai, together with plant, machinery, tools, &c., for the sum of £10,000; also, three allotments, town of New Sheffield, Mittagong, for £12 12s.

The amount of Customs duties received yesterday was as follows:

Brandy	...	...	...	£278	7 3
Gin	...	...	...	657	9 0
Whisky	...	...	...	17	15 11
Rum	...	...	...	511	10 0
All other spirits		...	...	125	0 0
Wine	...	...	...	36	11 0
Tobacco and snuff		...	...	222	14 0
Tea	...	...	...	1071	8 3
Coffee and chicory		...	...	12	3 10
Sugar, unrefined		...	...	611	14 2
Rice	...	...	...	86	5 5
Dried fruits	...	...	...	5	0 0
Pilotage	...	...	...	32	19 9
Dues	...	...	...	3	0 0
Ad valorem duty		...	...	1049	9 5
Total	...	...	...	£4711	7 3

The import entries passed at the Customs yesterday were as follows:—5 cases wine, Stewart, Garrick, and Co.; 80 bales fibre, Wallach Brothers; 40 dozen oven tiles, 347 fire tiles, G. E. Crane; 9 cases sewing machines, Saddington and Sons; 30 trunks boots, M. A. Worms; 1377 packages tea, M'Donald, Smith, and Co.; 8 casks oil, Parbury Brothers; 87 packages cutlery and fancy goods, Berens, Levi, and Seligman; 42 packages, Dalton Brothers; 30 boxes candles, 10 bags oatmeal, W. Ariell; 2000 cars, 100 cases sarsaparilla, Smith Brothers and Co.; 177 packages hardware, J. Keep; 60 lengths cast iron pipes, 23 bundles iron tube, 8 packages, C. Brown; 6 packages boots, Myers and Solomon; 50 barrels currants, Smith Brothers; 7 trunks boots, E. Vickery; 114 cases claret, Parbury Brothers; 9 packages hardware, J. C. W. Hinsch; 25 plates iron, H. R. S. N. Co.; 19 packages drapery, J. F. M'Donald; 105 boxes tin plates, 50 cases claret, 200 quarter-casks brandy, Learmouth, Dickinson, and Co.; 6 cases pianofortes, L. Moss; 8 packages, J. Reading and Co.; 2730 staves, J. Johnson; 11 packages, M. Alexander; 10 cases sarsaparilla, J. Jacobs and Co.; 197 casks cement, W. Patten; 152 packages chairs, 17 cases sewing machines, 2 cases lampware, Vennard and Stevens; 75 packages drapery, C. Newtown, Brother, and Co.; 20 cases glass, J. R. Cattell; 2 trunks boots, Callaghan and Sons; 13 cases drapery, C. K. Moore; 12 cases chairs, 4 cases looking glass, 2 packages, J. F. Wooster; 7 cases boots, Berens, Levi, and Co.; 14 packages pianos, W. H. Paling; 20 chests tea, Parbury Brothers; 5 trunks boots, J. M'Evoy; 275 bundles hoop iron, 10 packages, J. Richardson; 68 kegs nails, 15 kegs powder, 848 packages ironmongery, F. Lassetter and Co.; 23 trunks boots, Callaghan and Sons; 300 cases geneva, H. M'Crea; 5 cases tobacco, W. Wolfen and Co.; 150 boxes clothes pins, 100 cases oysters, 68 packages earthenware, 300 packages, S. Hoffnung and Co.; 83 packages hardware, 173 packages preserves, Levick and Co.; 32 packages paints, 400 kegs nails, 74 packages, Rabone, Feez, and Co.; 3 packages, Cohen and Levy; 40 packages tea, Brown and Co.; 400 cases geneva, 20 bundles nuts, 200 cases pickles, 500 boxes candles, 175 cases salad oil, 50 cases castor oil, 110 cases sardines, 100 cases fruit, 165 packages, J. Fraser and Co.; 660 bags salt, 40 hogsheads 20 quarter-casks rum, 18 packages, Gilchrist, Watt, and Co.; 52 packages brandy, 2 packages rum, J. Williams; 8 bales cotton, Smith Brothers and Co.; 37 cases stationery, 127 packages, J. Sands.

Exports per Egmont, steamer, for Rockhampton: 14 packages tea, 2 packages tobacco, 100 bags sugar, 2 cases wine, 12 packages tea, 164 bags potatoes, 387 kegs nails, 10 bags rice, 39 bags salt, 72 cases fruit, 16 bags onions, 50 bags maize, 150 packages.

Exports per Tasmania, steamer, for Hobart Town: 86 hides, 13 cases fruit, 25 bags maize.

Exports per City of Brisbane, steamer, for Brisbane: 118 packages brandy, 10 cases geneva, 100 packages tea, 2 packages hops, 1 package tobacco, 3 packages tea, 60 cases wine, 482 bags sugar, 20 boxes tin, 12 packages tea, 38 cases starch, 230 packages hardware, 50 packages pickles, 20 packages ollstores, 15 packages iron, 50 boxes corn flour, 32 kegs butter, 11 bales woolpacks, 170 cases fruit, 179 bags potatoes, 20 bags bran, 48 bags onions, 412 packages.

Robbery Under Arms.—On Monday morning last, an impudent case of robbery under arms occurred at Mr. Honey's hotel, Cuddell Creek, near Narandera; but we are happy to say that the robber was promptly arrested, and has since been fully committed for trial for the offence. The particulars, as far as we have been able to gather them, appear to have been these:—On the day we have named a young fellow, with dark brown curly hair, dark moustacho, but no whiskers or beard, and mounted on a stylish-looking horse, with a good saddle and bridle, rode up to the hotel, with and, after some little time, challenged another man he met with at the house to ride him a race for a small stake. The challenge was accepted, but when the horses were brought to the post the one ridden by the stranger would not start, and, becoming enraged, he led him down to the creek, and there very deliberately cut his throat. Returning to the hotel, he said that he was on the look out for Power, the bushranger, and produced a loaded revolver, which he shortly afterwards placed at the head of another man present, and demand his money. Under the threat the man produced his money, but the robber took from him only one pound note, saying that if he had not known some of the man's friends in Ireland, he would have taken everything he had. Information of the robbery was at once dispatched to Narandera, and senior-constable Foley posted off to Cuddell Creek, and fortunately arrived there in time to arrest his man. The prisoner was brought before Mr. T. A. Browne, and fully committed to take his trial at the next sittings of the Circuit Court in this town.—*Wagga Wagga Express.*

The committee of the Bathurst Hospital have received a minute from the executors of the estate of the late Mr. John Poole, conveying the intimation that they hope to be able to hand over to the Institution the sum of £91 as the proceeds of the estate for 1869.

DIARY.

Sun Rises.	Sun Sets.	Moon's Age	High Water. Morning.	High Water. Evening.
h. m.	h. m.		h. m.	h. m.
5. 7	7.13	9. 1 a.m.	2. 2	2.31

January.—Full Moon.—18th. 12h. 50.0 a.m.

The Empire.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1870.

It appears from the Queensland papers that a timely discovery has just averted disasters of the most frightful character—the burning of ships at sea. Two vessels were about to sail for England with cargoes of colonial produce, including large quantities of wool; one was still receiving cargo at Brisbane, the other had completed her loading and gone down to the Bay, when happily it was discovered that the wool in each of them had begun to heat. Several bales were relanded, opened, dried, and repacked. The report of these facts has naturally excited a good deal of comment. It is remembered that within a short time three ships sailing from Queensland with wool, the Fiery Star, the Blue Jacket, and the Omar Pasha, have been destroyed by fire. And the thought of the terrible doom to which the crews and passengers on the two ships above referred to would almost inevitably have been subjected, if the ships had left the Bay before the discovery was made, is vividly depicted to the imagination. It is concluded, not without reason, that the tremendous danger incurred might have been avoided by a little care in seeing to the wool being dried before packing it. And some indignation is consequently expressed at the want of regard for the interests and the lives of those concerned.

While public attention is alive to the subject, it will be well if means are taken, in accordance with the dictates of science and experience, to prevent the recurrence of similar evils. The spontaneous combustion of wool has undeniably been the cause of the destruction of several ships, and of not a few lives. In past years vessels sailing from Port Jackson have been burnt through the ignition of wool in the hold. The origin of spontaneous combustion is still enveloped in some obscurity, and chemists of eminence entertain different opinions on the subject; while there is no uncertainty as to the effect of certain materials coming together, as when strong nitric or sulphuric acid is mixed with wool, straw, oil, or other combustibles, and causes fire, in many instances it is not so easily ascertained what are the elements to which the fire is to be ascribed. And, as bearing especially on the question of the spontaneous combustion of wool, there has been some controversy amongst scientific men as to whether moisture or oil is the real cause of combustion. It is stated by one chemist that all kinds of woollen articles imbued with oil, when collected in a heap, are liable to spontaneous ignition. Hemp, jute, tow, and flax, under similar circumstances, may ignite. Whether oil or moisture is accounted the cause of the combustion in such cases, is a question of comparatively small importance. The experience of those concerned in the management of wool in this country sufficiently establishes the conclusion that danger is incurred by moisture. If it cannot be assumed, with perfect safety, that the oil contained in wool is not a source of danger when moisture is avoided, it is on the other hand certain that moisture either causes or greatly increases, the tendency to combustion. All who have had considerable experience in the management of wool appear to be agreed in this. It has happened again and again at a shearing that a portion of the wool has been shorn when the sheep were wet with rain; and when packed without being thoroughly dried, it has shown signs of heating. As far as we can judge such heating has never been observed except in cases where the wool had got damp. The yolk or oily matter in the wool is not supposed to be of itself a cause of ignition. This point may require further scientific investigation. But at all events it is distinctly proved that in cases where, either at shearing or at the time of shipment, rain has fallen on the wool, the result has been combustion, or such heating as threatened unless arrested to lead to combustion.

It is stated that the owners of the wool destroyed by fire in the Omar Pasha, having insured their produce at 20 to 30 per cent. above the London market price, received the amounts without the slightest demur; so that the loss of the vessel secured to them the advantages of "high figure, quick returns, and no expenses." Without entering into any question as to the accuracy of this statement, we may reasonably conclude that the very fact of having the cargo insured to its full value must affect the judgment of those concerned as to the risks incurred by the manner of packing sanctioned by their authority. It does not follow, even if there was less caution than there would have been if the shippers of the wool had borne all the risk, that they were wantonly indifferent to human life so long as their pecuniary interest was safe. Far be it from us to impute any such inhumanity. But from the universal influence of self-interest in quickening the apprehension, it is reasonable to conclude that those who perceive that any want of caution may expose them to great personal loss are more likely to see the dangers that beset their property than those who know that whether their goods are safe or not their money is safe enough. It is no reflection on the integrity of shippers of wool that is insured to its full value to suppose that they are less likely to guard against all possible danger of spontaneous combustion than they would be if their receipt of the value of that wool depended on its safe transmission. And it may happen that all the care of the owners of wool is rendered unavailing by neglect or accident over which they have no control. Such is the force of capillary attraction in wool that if there be any leakage into the compartments of the hold where it is packed, the water will be drawn up into the centre of the wool, and there induce fermentation, heat, and perhaps fire. The commanders of vessels have of course a very strong motive to take every precaution in their power to prevent the endangering of their own lives and the lives of those that sail with them; but though this motive may insure the captain's best efforts to prevent the access of new danger after the cargo is brought on board, he cannot be expected to know what has taken place at the woolshed, or in the course of transit from thence to the place of shipment.

So great is the public interest in the prevention of disasters of the kind, that it seems right to require, on behalf of the public, a thorough examination of the wool to be shipped at our ports. The preservation of life is of course the highest consideration for the community. And on this ground it might be argued that, if possible, qualified public officers should be obtained for the examination of the cargoes sent down for shipment. But there are other considerations which, though inferior in their nature, may after all prove more effectual in putting a stop to the evil. If such fearful catastrophes as those which befel the Fiery Star, the Blue Jacket, and the Omar Pasha are repeated until a general apprehension is fastened on the public mind that whoever sails in a wool-carrying ship incurs the risk of so terrible an end, people who desire to go to England will avoid these ships. The commerce of the ports which obtain this evil reputation will suffer, and the general prosperity will be injured. It is, therefore, highly necessary that the attention of the public and of the Government should be directed to this question, with a view to the adoption of additional securities against the dangers incurred by spontaneous combustion.

New Mail Route to England via San Francisco.—We have much pleasure in being able to state that final arrangements have been completed for the establishment of a line of steamers between Sydney and San Francisco, calling at New Zealand and Honolulu. The undertaking has been projected by an American Company to be called the Californian, New Zealand, and Australian Mail Steamship Company. Mr. H. H. Hall, The United States Consul, of this city, is manager of the company, and has chartered the Australasian Steam Navigation Company's steamships Rangatira, of 460 tons register, and the Balclutha, of 261 tons register. The first named steamer will open the line from Sydney about the 1st March next, carrying the mails as far as Honolulu; the service between there and San Francisco will be performed by American steamships.

The Opera.—It is understood in musical circles that Mr. Lyster's Opera Company will open at the Prince of Wales on Easter Monday (28th March). The opening night at Melbourne is fixed for the 5th February.

Signor Devoti's Concert.—The concert given last evening by Signor Devoti was an enormous success. The School of Arts was crowded to suffocation, and the selections of music that were given were much applauded. Miss Kosten, Miss Florence Ryall, and Mrs. Cordner, with Mr. Jackson, Mr. George Russell, Mr. H. Gooch, Mr. L. Simmons, and Signor Devoti were the principal performers. Mr. Wangenheim gave as an interlude his comical intermezzo, and Mr. Major, the champion Scotch dancer, and Mr. H. M'Innes, the champion piper, also appeared in their characteristic costume, and gave the dancing and music of the Highlanders.

The Chief Justice on Intemperance.—The address delivered by Sir Alfred Stephen in the Masonic Hall, on the 11th December, 1869, has been published in the form of a pamphlet by J. L. Sherriff, 18 Wynyard-square. A report of the address appeared at the time in the *Empire*. In the preface and appendix which are published with the address in the pamphlet, the author has given additional illustrations of the subject. He shows that "the annual expenditure by the people of this colony on taxed drink is rather above a million of pounds sterling." By the recorded views of Dr. Albert Day and Dr. Storer, of Boston, of Sir John Hall, and of Dr. Edmund Parkes, of London University, he sustains the opinion that the regular use of alcohol, even in small quantities, is injurious to the health, and that both within the tropics and in the frigid zone man can endure the extremes of climate better without any alcoholic drinks. The object of publishing the address in this form is thus stated: "The appalling facts adduced in that address supplied from sources too reliable to admit of dispute, and for which the authority is in each case given, may thus, it is hoped, enter every dwelling, and at length be the attention which a great national evil demands; an evil shown to be so enormous, and in its results so frightful that it is thought men in whatever station knowing of such things will feel it impossible to remain passive; and that even the most apathetic may be aroused to a sense of the horrors which surround them. Is this representation," he asks, "overcharged? If not, shall we attempt nothing to arrest the impending ruin? These are the questions solemn and vital, which reflection must press on the conscience and heart of every man."

Wholesale Robberies at Redfern.—On Saturday night last, about 10 o'clock, two men stuck up a female near the city boundary stone, corner of Clevelandstreet, but failed in obtaining any booty from her, as she had nothing on her person. Shortly afterwards another female, passing in the same locality, was stopped by another man, and lost her purse; but whether she was robbed of it or not could not say. At a later period, after a dust-storm, which took place between 12 and 1 o'clock, on Sunday morning, the premises of Mrs. Clarke, the Albert Cricket Ground Hotel, were feloniously broken into and robbed, and seven or eight shillings abstracted from the till. It seems that the thief or thieves passed through the back window of a room, in which a man was sleeping, but whom they did not disturb, and from thence they gained access to the bar. They then visited the adjoining premises, a grocer's shop, and took away money obtaining nothing else. It is supposed that the same parties afterwards went to Mrs. Waggo's, who keeps a shop in Redfern. An entry was effected by the window of a child's bed-room, from which the marauders passed through a sitting-room into the shop, the till of which was robbed of gold, silver, notes, and copper, to the amount of between £6 and £7. The remaining contents of the till, some bills, &c., had been carried away to a place opposite Baptist's Gardens, where they were found on Sunday morning, lying about in all directions. It seems clear that the visit to Mrs. Waggo's took place after the dust-storm, as the prints of feet were clearly visible in the morning on the sand in the vicinity of the premises. The residents of the neighbourhood have been seriously alarmed by these and other occurrences of the past week.

Suicide at North Shore.—The City Coroner held an inquest yesterday afternoon, at the Union Inn, Lane Cove road, on the body of Edmund Marshall, lying dead in an out-house adjoining the Union Inn. Constable William R. Reilly deposed that he is stationed at St. Leonards. About half-past 4 o'clock on Saturday afternoon William Trinkett reported that a man was lying dead in the bush. He then proceeded to Eaglehawk Gully, off the Lane Cove road, on the property of Mr. Alexander Berry, and he there saw the body of a man lying on the left side, face partly down, left hand and arm underneath the body, and the right hand across the chest. The body was dressed in moleskin trousers, Scotch twill striped shirt, cossack boots, and cotton socks. The body was lifeless. There was a large wound in the throat, and a strong smell of drink arising from the body. About a yard from the place where the body was lying he found a dark tweed coat and three coloured pocket handkerchiefs. About ten yards from the body he observed a gunyah against a tree, and inside observed a pillow made of broken bark and fern. It bore an impression as if some person had laid on it. He also found a slate-coloured wide-awake hat, also a dark tweed vest with the figure 1 on the inside of the right breast. There were marks of blood on the vest. He found the razor (produced) wrapped up in paper, as it now appears. It was under the the log which formed the gunyah. The blade of the razor was clean, but the handle was besmeared with blood. He also found two bottles; one contained sherry, and the other port wine. About two yards from the gunyah there was a pool of blood, and between that and the place where the body was found there were three other small pools of blood. The body was lying in a watercourse, with a little water about a yard away. On searching the body he found a box of matches. The body was subsequently removed to the Union Inn. Dr. Ward examined the body. The boots were branded B broad arrow 7. There was a large quantity of blood on the bough of a tree which was lying near the entrance to the gunyah. There were no indications about the gunyah to show that a struggle had taken place. Edmund Trickett deposed that he is a quarryman, residing at North Shore. He was out parrot shooting, and went to Eaglehawk Gully to get a drink of water. He got a drink, and was returning to his brother, when he saw a man lying on the ground, about five yards from him, and about thirty from where he got the drink of water. Witness sent information to the police, and he remained about the locality till constable Reilly arrived. Thomas Falsard deposed that is employed at the hospital for the insane at Gladesville, as chief attendant. The dead body just viewed by the Coroner and jury, is that of a man named Edmund Marshall. He was discharged from the Asylum on the 29th December, 1869, by the Visiting Board. Deceased was an inmate of the institution for about two years. The papers received with deceased when he was admitted stated that he had a suicidal tendency. During the time he was an inmate he never attempted to commit suicide, although he was entrusted with tools. The books produced were the same as those served out to the inmates of the hospital. Fifteen shillings were given to deceased when he was discharged. Dr. R. D. Ward, residing at North Shore, deposed that on Sunday he was called to see the body of a man lying dead at the Union Inn. The cause of death was apparent—a large gap in the fore part of the throat, extending from one side of the neck to the other, and about seven inches in length. The wound must have been caused by some sharp cutting instrument. The exact situation of the wound was undistinguishable. The appearances are quite consistent with the supposition that the wound was self-inflicted. The body must have been dead some two or three days. The jury returned a verdict that deceased committed suicide, but that he was of unsound mind.

TELEGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE.

[FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS.]

THE GOLD-FIELDS ELECTIONS.

FORBES.

Monday Afternoon, 5.10.

The poll for the election of a member to represent the electorate of the Western Gold-fields was taken here to-day. The numbers polled were as fallows:—Church, 98; Redman, 39; Eagar, 3. Great excitem ent prevails.

BATHURST.

6 o'clock.

The following are the returns for the Western Gold-fields electorate:—

	Church.	Redman.	Eagar.
Forbes	98	39	3
Bathurst	36	2	6
Tambaroora ..	31	0	48
Hill End	113	0	74
Sofala	62	0	69
Wattle Flat.. ..	41	0	58
	381	41	258

ADELONG.

Monday, 6 p.m.

The following are the polling returns received this day for the Gold-fields South:—

	Baker.	Stephen.
Young	37	5
Grenfell	224	58
Arnluen	34	82
Kimo	24	1
Kiandra	10	4
Adelong	39	20
	368	170

ROCKY RIVER.

Monday, 6 p.m.

The poll for the election of a member for the Northern Gold-fields took place to-day. The polling at Rocky River was as follows:—

Wisdom	.. 62
Roman	.. 24
Rourke	.. 17

No other returns had been received.

MELBOURNE.

Monday.

H.M.S.S. Barrosa sailed to-day for Hobart Town, having succeeded in getting the majority of deserters from the squadron on board.

The squadron will sail from Hobart Town for New Zealand this afternoon.

The Wonga Wonga, steamer, arrived from Sydney on Sunday morning at 1 o'clock.

The Auckland, steamer, will sail for Sydney to-morrow.

The Caduceus, which arrived on Saturday from London, brings 400 immigrants, who landed to-day, and were taken to the Immigration Depot.

The ship Kent arrived yesterday from London, and the Melmerby, Duleep Singh, and Dunbar Castle from the same port.

The brig Sarah has also arrived from Mauritius with a cargo of sugar.

Monday, 2.11 p.m.

The Wonga Wonga has arrived.

The Rev. Mr. Wanulton preached the Rev. Mr. Ramsay's funeral sermon yesterday.

The English pedestrians were defeated by colonial runners. The result has caused general disappoint ment.

Flour very firm.

2.14 p.m.

Messrs. Frazer and Co. have sold 416 chests of the Japan teas. A little concession on the part of the consignees would have led to the whole lot being quitted. Negotiations are still pending.

1.36 p.m.

There is to be a meeting, to-morrow, of dealers and others concerned in colonial produce, to consider the question of regulating the prices and weights of grain. The meeting is to be held under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce.

Messrs. Frazer and Co. have sold by auction 4800 bags sugar,