

tion have to plead with the government for a chance to move a vote of censure. The Liberal leader asked the government for a day to discuss a vote of censure. At a time when parliamentary votes in a critical division were depending on the government's exposition of its attitude to Mr. Chamberlain's propaganda, Mr. Akers-Douglas, as Mr. Balfour's spokesman, said that the government were opposed to any duty on raw material or food. That declaration took several hesitating Unionists into the government lobby. After that two cabinet ministers accepted office as vice-presidents in an organization for converting the country to the taxation of food and raw material. One of them openly announced that he had brought Mr. Balfour's blessing with him. Under these circumstances the leader of the opposition very properly asked for a day to discuss a vote of censure in the hope that Mr. Balfour might finally enlighten the House on the artificially obscure subject of his intentions. Mr. Balfour replied with a flippancy, for which he was taken to task by the Standard, that the Opposition could have either a part of July 21 or a part of August 1. Even this description flatters his generosity, for the offer of a fragment of July 21 was conditional on the Opposition's agree-

ing not to debate some important parts of the budget. The leader of the Opposition accepted August 1.

On August 1st the Liberal leader moved his vote of censure which brought on a debate in which Mr. Lyttleton, Lord Cecil, Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour participated. The motion was rejected by a vote of 282 to 210, a majority for the government of 78. The large attendance of members indicates the importance which both sides attached to the occasion. Mr. Chamberlain urged the Premier to call a conference with the colonies to consider the subject of preferential trade. Premier Balfour rejected the idea that every member of the cabinet must agree on every point before the country. He was a free trader but free trade had more than one definition. He concluded by saying "It is our business to find out what the Colonies can give, what we can give, what they want and what we want." That seems to us a rigmarole altogether unworthy of the office Mr. Balfour holds. It means nothing and was meant to mean nothing, because Mr. Balfour knows that if the government go to the country on the direct issue of preferential trade, they will be absolutely carried.

#### THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR MINISTRY.



HON. HUGH MAHON.  
(Postmaster-general.)



SENATOR MACGREGOR.  
(Vice-president of the executive council.)



HON. HENRY B. HIGGINS, K.C.

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