

The Railway Commissioners are making a desperate effort to cut down working expenses, with what success remains to be seen. The workshop employes throughout the colony have been put on short time, old hands have been superannuated, and many able officials have been "shunted" altogether. The Railway Commissioners estimate a saving of £4000 a year. Having regard to the sweeping character of the changes, amounting to a reorganisation of the system, we gravely doubt whether the saving of £4000 a year, if effected, will be commensurate with the sacrifice of efficiency. £4000 a year is a mere flea-bite in the expenditure of a gigantic undertaking like the Government Railways.

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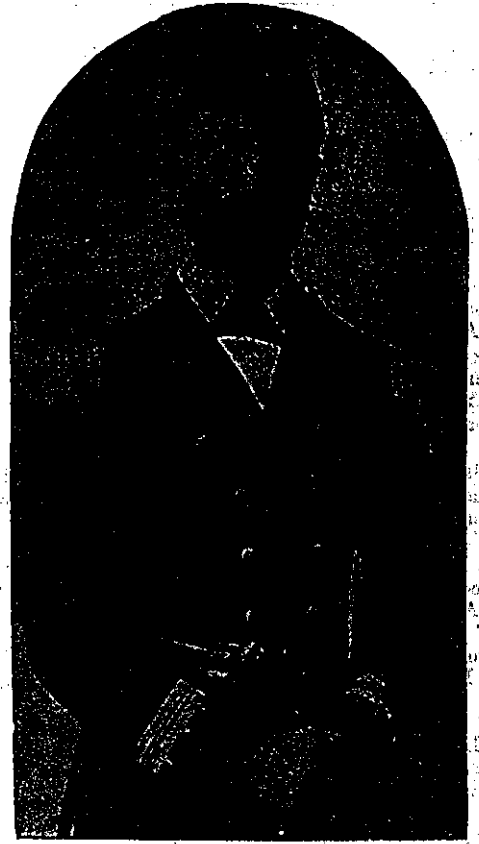
The appointment of Sir George Grey, K.C.B., as Privy Councillor, is a nasty jar for Parkes, who, by the way, has completed his fortieth year as a legislator, having entered the old Legislative Council of New South Wales on May 2, 1854.

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The most valuable senses to a journalist are his sight and hearing. He can do without a leg or two, or even without an arm or two, for if he is a clever enough writer he can dictate, but once his hearing, or more particularly his sight, has gone, his career is about brought to a finish. To the descriptive writer or critic his sight is everything. The average journalist is probably subjected to a severer daily strain on his eyes than any other professional man, and the conservation of his powers of sight is a question that demands his attention. Glasses are soon necessary, and, if not properly adjusted to the eyes, become a source of more evil than good. What is necessary is a system of sight testing, and Mr. Kohn, who has made a study of the subject, seems to have perfected such a system. One of our representatives called on him a few days ago and had his sight tested with the following results:—He was first informed that he had myopia (whatever that is), and then was taken to a seat a few yards away from a couple of cardboard signs bearing inscriptions in different kinds of type. After being catechised as to his age, whether he was married or not, how many children he had, and what his opinions were on the Prohibition question, a pair of gigantic spectacles were fitted on his nose, devoid of glasses, but furnished with slots into which to drop discs of varying magnifying powers. A dark sphere was first dropped into the groove in front of one eye and glass after glass tried on the other until the exact calibre of the power of the sight was ascertained. The same course was pursued with the other eye until both were correctly judged. Our representative was somewhat alarmed on being told that there was a difference of one entire "dioptric" between his two eyes, but was calmed again on learning that other people's eyes ran to several "dioptries" difference occasionally, at any rate the result was the manufacture of a *pince nez* that has since given comfort and ease to the possessor.

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At a North Canterbury township recently a young lady refused to dance with a gentleman simply on the ground that he was not a Prohibitionist. A week later the gentleman was cantering down a lane, and in front of him saw the same lady dismounted with a broken saddle-girth, and not even a hair-pin ready to effect repairs. As she was not in his set he rode quietly past, and she—well, she had to tramp about a mile to the nearest house, and we are still asking does Prohibition prohibit?



**Dr. Gillon.**

Dr. Gillon, who is medical surgeon in the Wellington navals, left Wellington last month on a visit to England for the benefit of his health. Dr. Gillon is a native of New Zealand, was educated at the Dunedin High School, and took his degrees at the University of Glasgow. After leaving college he was appointed by Sir Julius Vogel as medical officer of the *Warwick*, one of the last ships which brought Government emigrants to New Zealand. He arrived in Wellington fifteen years ago, and was appointed Resident Medical Officer of the hospital, which position three years later he resigned, and entered into general practice. Dr. Harding is his *locum tenens*. We wish the doctor *bon voyage* and hope his six month's holiday will do for him what he has done for so many of his patients—give a complete restoration of health.

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They are drafting a Bill in Melbourne to provide for an issue of State notes. This is the first step towards a State Bank. The State Bank is a reform of the near future, when the masses are sufficiently alive to their own interests to overcome the opposition of the moneyed classes. The State takes the risk in connection with the present system of banking. Consequently, the profit should belong to the State. Moreover, under a State system of banking, we would not have business people liberally accommodated in the matter of overdrafts to-day and ruined by the application of the screw to-morrow. This is really the cause of much of our present depression.—Auckland *Observer*.

Under the will of a farmer named Thomas Whitely, of Mount Blowhard, a legacy of £500 has been left to Eliza Tonkin, daughter of Charles Tonkin, of Hokitika.