



Able and most courteous of men, Mr. James Wallace is about to sever his connection with the Wellington-Manawatu Railway Co., of which he is the secretary and general manager. Failing health necessitates this step being taken. Wellington is greatly indebted to the untiring exertions of Mr. Wallace, who, as one of the promoters of the Wellington-Manawatu railway, has helped to open up trade between the interior and the Empire City. We wish Mr. Wallace a speedy recovery to good health. There's grit in the man yet.

Both the W.C.T.U. and nearly all the political leagues have had something to say about the C. D. Act in Auckland, and the raising of the age of consent. Yet thousands of women never heard of the Act, and are, therefore, totally ignorant of the objectionable features in its administration. It has given opportunities for the display of a marked insincerity of expression and a wide divergence between conduct and principle, as many of those who condemn the Act as degrading to the sex, and calculated to prevent fallen woman from regaining her social position, have not been remarkable for relaxing the stern laws of conventional morality to an "unfortunate," or of treating the partner of her guilt with equal severity.

There is one thing that many embryo lady politicians have to learn. That is: that the social evil is as much a natural outcome of our unsound and unhealthy social conditions as the millionaire and the pauper are. The fact that the economic pressure of the times, which renders marriage impossible to so many of our young men, compels a continual fight against nature, does not appear to strike them. With secure employment and sufficient wages to all the marriage rate would increase, and legislative tinkering on the social purity question be unnecessary.

What hidden and mysterious force is disturbing the internals of contemporary journalism and producing the faint ruffles on the surface which presage a change of tone, is hard to divine. Take the Wellington newspapers. As to the 'Evening Press' it was of course understood that the suddenly developed Socialistic flavour and ultra-Liberal principles enunciated were only necessary during the period of reconstruction. The large shareholders in the background were a guarantee that the old olloy would eventually be reverted to. But to find the stern denouncer of all fads, Utopian ideals, and Charlatanisms, actually supporting the Betterment Bill, and relaxing its malignant animosity to the party in power, is an unexpected surprise. The 'Evening Post' has been a shining example of the "orthodox

capitalistic journalism," which follows reverently and respectfully in the rear of public opinion, and preaches the gospel of "things as they are." Its approval of an advanced idea and its neglect to abuse the Premier, even for once, is terribly disquieting. The position is again complicated by the "New Zealand Times" evincing a tendency to give a strong support to Sir Robert Stout, and to present the cold shoulder to the Premier. Surely Sir Robert and the Liberal-Temperance-Conservative Party cannot have bought John Junius McKenzie's shares.

Let us pass on to something more pleasant to contemplate—woman. Always delightful and interesting—but uncertain—you never know what she's going to do next. How far the various mushroom organizations which the extension of the suffrage has brought forth can be said to give accurate notion of the desires of the whole sex, cannot be decided, as the male sex are generally excluded from their meetings. But it is evident from the resolutions which emanate therefrom, that their lack of worldly knowledge and experience is about equal to their faith in the powers of Acts of Parliament to purify human nature.

The Wellington Art Club are to be congratulated upon the vast improvement shown at the exhibition just held as compared with last year's show. There are a few horrible crudities, such as the perfectly outrageous "blue girl" of Mr. Nairn, but as a rule the work is more sober in tone, more devoid of glaring imperfection in colour treatment, and the drawing shows a great advance. But really some of Mr. Nairn's friends ought to get hold of him and reason with him over the risk he is running of ruining a good reputation by showing such crack-brained stuff as the "blue girl." He should remember that he is the accepted art guide and mentor of a large number of young people who look blindly to him for their art teaching, and when he perpetrates such atrocities as the one we have mentioned he is not only doing himself an injustice, but he is setting the very worst of examples to all those with whose art instruction he is entrusted. His landscape work is so excellent that the picture in question is all the more regrettable. Clever Miss Hill, most versatile of young Wellingtonians, shows great advance in her work. The portrait of Mr. Nairn is capital, and both in landscape and in still life studies, this talented young artist displays an ability which is all the more creditable in that the exponent is so young. Miss Hill has an excellent future before her if she will but continue to study with that conscientious industry which she has displayed up to the present.

It is lamentable to observe the extent to which "commercialism" predominates in the local Council—to the exclusion of justice and humanity—as instanced by the recent tenders for the supply of a horse, cart, and man, to do corporation work, being accepted at a price of 7s 10¹/₂d per day. The Lyttelton Town Council pay 14s for the same services.

This sort of thing can only be prevented by extending municipal suffrage—to "one person one vote," and the consequent ousting of those councillors who represent "bricks and mortar." The people are tired of the "respectability" which enters the Council to get its own side of the road paved, or its own front door illuminated.

Of course, this is all due to the "hard times," which are accountable for many things, most notably the increased num-