

# After Dinner Gossip

AND

## Echoes of the Week

### A Welcome to the Red Funnel.

The warm and splendidly substantial welcome—in which the "Graphic" most cordially joins—given by the public to the "Red Funnel," the new magazine issued by the Union Company, and edited by Mr. A. A. Brown, is a worthy recognition of a notable literary achievement; and is without question well deserved. The very high standard of the New Zealand press, daily and weekly, and the fact that in all four corners of the colony there are papers which each and all give weekly illustrations far superior to anything issued in Australasia, and in many instances equal to the finest English productions, has long been subject for remark on the part of visitors, and those in other countries to whom any of the publications alluded to are from time to time posted. To these is now added a monthly, also illustrated, which is worthy, and which one trusts and believes is destined, to take its place amongst the finest imported magazines, which pour into the colony from Europe and America. The amount of money which is spent on light literature in this community, together with that found for amusements, more especially the theatre, is truly amazing, and just as it was pleasant to record a financial and artistic success to a New Zealand composer, Mr. Alfred Hill, the other day, so it is now a matter for general congratulation that some of the cash so freely lavished on magazine-reading is to find its way into the pockets of the promoters of the "Red Funnel Magazine," and the contributors and artists, whose efforts are selected for our approval.

In the ordinary way of business we have several times pointed out that as a means of advertising the colony, and so promoting the general, and therefore individual, welfare and prosperity, this journal plays a useful and not unimportant part, and it need scarcely be pointed out that the "Red Funnel Magazine" has a similar service to give in the State, and one which is of more value than many are apt to suppose. New Zealand is yearly becoming better known in England, and the advantages it offers to emigrants of all classes, as well as to tourists, are sedulously insisted upon by those in authority as occasion offers. But there is still an astonishing amount of ignorance and a belief that in coming out here the traveller or the emigrant has to face hardships, privations, and inconveniences which are little or no existence. Few, perhaps, believe that we are amongst savages, though, amazing as it sounds, there are those who have this fantastic idea; but, on the other hand, the vast majority still have some hazy sort of idea that we live in a very comfortable and princely sort of way, wholly deprived of the advantages of intellectual intercourse, and the culture of the arts of literature, the drama, and painting. It is by the circulation of a magazine such as the "Red Funnel," and of the illustrated papers of this colony that this absurd idea is best dispelled. A country which can produce such a magazine and support it, cannot obviously occupy the sad intellectual position so many of our friends at Home imagine. And if we overcome this notion we do much, for there is a very large and ever-increasing class who would consciously think of coming to live amongst us if they were convinced that, in addition to all the natural and financial advantages of settling in our country, they would still be able to enjoy the majority of those privileges which are erroneously supposed to be the possession of older settlements. Let them see that in music, in art, in education, and in literature we can hold our own, and we have done much.

And, as we have said, the "Red Funnel Magazine" is a valuable and powerful new comer in this crusade against the ig-

norance of those across the seas as to the conditions of our social and intellectual life. Here are admirably written articles and short stories by writers of unquestioned ability, led by no less a personage than Admiral Finschaw, K.C.B., who contributes a short but pregnant essay on Australian defence. This special page is not the place for a detailed review of a most admirable production on which all concerned may be congratulated, but it is here we can welcome amongst us a new power for good, and one which will certainly not merely be felt within our shores but will exert a beneficial influence far beyond the seas, through which the "Red Funnel" is so well known a feature.



### Yet Another Auckland Hospital Scandal.

It seems absolutely hopeless to expect anything but impenitence, gross blundering, scandals, and stupidity from the Auckland Hospital. Doctors come, doctors go; so do Boards and chairmen; inquiries are instituted, complaints are substantiated, and fresh ones take their place. There are quarrels, disclosures, bitter revilings, and even Royal Commissions, and nothing ever happens in the direction of reform. No sooner does oblivion follow the nine days' wonder of the latest scandal, no sooner does some inconceivable banality or criminal carelessness arouse a brief indignation and fizzle out than another and a worse takes its place. An atmosphere which induces lethargy and crass stupidity, which smother's common sense, and renders individuality and responsible action impossible, would seem to brood over the institution and act disastrously on all who have aught to do with it. Its latest achievement is worthy of anything that has gone before. A woman with a baby at her breast 14 days old was ordered to the Hospital by a well known practitioner (Dr. Frost). On arrival there in the ambulance the manager took the mother in and refused admission to the suckling infant, though both he and Dr. Aikin, of the Hospital, were told distinctly that there was no one at the father's home to look after the child, and that the doctor in charge strongly urged its admission. At first Dr. Aikin promised to do his best, i.e., "look up the rules," but this was evidently not satisfactory, for, as stated, the child was refused admission, and taken from its mother's arms. Its father on his return home from work found it at home in the sole charge of an eleven-year-old girl. He then received a letter from Sister Jane, of the Central Mission, recommending that during the mother's absence at the Hospital he should give the infant to some competent nurse to take charge of. At last he got a neighbour to take charge of it. As the child seemed somewhat unwell on the 24th, Dr. Knight was called in. On the 25th the child was taken to Nurse Gibson's, where it succumbed. These are the bald facts of its pitiful little tragedy as could well be imagined; and, if this is not a signal instance of a child being literally and outrageously done to death by red-tapeism and stupidity of the grossest order, I am sure I do not know what would be considered so. Competent witnesses (Nurse Gibson and Dr. Frost) both swore at the inquest that the child was healthy when torn from its mother's arms. That it might not have lived even if admitted to the Hospital is, of course, possible, but it will be the opinion of all women, and most men, that its chances with its mother would have been better, even if she were not allowed to entirely feed it, to which, by the way, Dr. Frost saw no objection. But imagine what must have been, and must forever be, the state of the mother, deprived of her babe at the door of the institution, and now informed of its

death. All the doctors of the universe, all the officials of bumbledom, will not persuade a woman so afflicted that the death of her infant does not lie at the doors of those who refused it admission; and bitterly will she curse the stupidity of those who could make such a rule, and of the weakness of those who would blindly carry it out. How many more rules of this stamp are there? At the recent Commission we found out there was a man writhing in mortal agony at the portals of the institution, and peremptorily refused admission or attendance because there was not an order from certain medical men. It was admitted that the case was one for instant treatment, and that the man was in mortal agony; but the janitor barred the way. Rules before relief was the dictum!

Language fails before such grotesque, such colossal, and such criminal a procedure.

Now another rule results in the death of an infant (or would seem to the majority to have done so), and has inflicted unthinkable mental suffering on the mother.

How many more rules are there? one repeats.

We, the public, who foot the bill, have a right to know; and it would be satisfactory to find out exactly when, where, and how sufferers can obtain admission to that extraordinary institution.

### Kangaroo v. Lion.

They admittedly had hard luck all through the piece, but after making all allowances one is forced to confess that Darling and Co. were not equal to the task set them. Many of us were somewhat surprised last season when Warner's not too first-class eleven recovered the ashes, and bore them over the sea, but the sequel proves what I have previously expressed, that Australian cricket is not what it used to be. The game is experiencing one of those slumps which are inseparable from cricket, or in fact any other game. The Cornstalks are quite up to county form, and, in fact, are a bit above it, but they are many points behind a test eleven. We hear a good deal about "new blood," and that sort of thing, but an impartial observer of the game across the Tasman Sea would be puzzled to know where to suggest alterations in the team that went Home in this summer. It is also significant that the men who have been of most service to the Kangaroo in his endeavours to recover the ashes are old stagers, while the new blood was a conspicuous non-success. The batting of the colonials was disappointing, with half-a-dozen brilliant exceptions, but the bowling was the weak spot, as we all anticipated. As events turned out, it was even worse than we dared to fear, and it is here that Australia will have to improve vastly before we can expect to have the ashes once more on this side of the globe. The aggregate of wins in test matches is slightly in favour of the Old Country, and it was the fond hope of all good Australians that this season their

chosen would be able to equalise matters. Unfortunately, they were doomed to disappointment. England has won 33 matches, Australia 28, and 14 matches have been drawn. A rather amusing barometer of the popularity of the several members of the colonial team in the Old Country is provided by the scheme of a London journal, which auctioned a lot of autograph portraits of the visitors, in aid of the Fresh Air Fund. The results were as under:—

- TRUMPER.—Five at 5/, four at 3/, two at 2/.
- CLEM HILL.—One at half a guinea, one at 7/6, two at 5/, seven at 3/, and eight at half a crown.
- ARMSTRONG.—Six at 5/, one at half a crown.
- HOCKESS.—Two at 5/, three at 3/, one at half a crown.
- NORLE.—Two at 5/, seven at 3/, one at half a crown.
- DARLING (the captain).—Four at 5/, four at 3/, and six at half a crown.
- GREGG.—One at 5/, three at 3/, and four at 2/.
- MCLEOD.—One at 4/, three at 3/6, two at 2/.
- KELLY.—Two at 5/, four at half a crown, one at 2/.
- COTTER.—Four at 5/, three at 3/, and one at 2/6.
- DUFF.—One at 5/, one at 4/, two at 3/6, and two at half a crown.
- HOWELL.—Three at 3/6, two at 3/, and two at 2/.
- LAYER (the manager).—Two at 5/, one at 3/, and two at half a crown.
- GREEN.—One at 3/6, two at 2/, three at 1/.
- NEWLAND.—Two at half a crown, and three at 1/.

### A Chance at Last for Ambitious N.Z. Authors and Composers.

Hardly a week passes when the editor of this paper is not, at personal interview, or by many letters, requested to furnish New Zealand writers with hints as to the best way of placing their efforts before the public, and entering on the career of literature. From the secretary of the Lyceum Club, London, I have received a communication which affords a very excellent answer to such queries. Here it is:

"The necessity of making known and finding a market for the writings of colonial authoresses in the Home Country is one of the chief objects of the Lyceum Club, which has for its aim the bringing together of all the intellectual and artistic women of the world. So much good work has reached the headquarters of the Club, 128, Piccadilly, London, England, that it has been decided to publish volumes of work contributed entirely by colonial members, Australia, Africa, Canada, India and New Zealand each being represented by a volume or volumes, according to the quality of work. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, wife of the Colonial Secretary, is deeply interested in the scheme, and many prominent English writers, including Thomas Hardy, Robert Barr, Mrs Flora Annie Steel, etc., etc., have promised to judge the work sent in.

"There are no restrictions as to the length or nature of the literary work—short stories, sketches, poems, and even novels being allowable, but owing to the enormous quantity anticipated,

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