

DEATH OF HON. A. PITT

PASSES AWAY PEACEFULLY

CHRISTCHURCH, Sunday.

The Hon. A. Pitt, Attorney-General, Minister for Defence, and Minister in charge of the Government Accident and Fire Insurance departments, died at 5.15 this morning at Nurse Turner's private nursing home, where he underwent a serious operation a few days ago. On Friday he showed considerable improvement, but he slowly sank all day Saturday, and could not retain any nourishment. He continued to sink during the night, and at 4.30 a.m. asked for a cup of tea, which was given him. He then fell into a deep slumber, and died peacefully in his sleep.

On the news reaching Wellington, orders were immediately given for the despatch of the Government steamer *Tutanekai* to Lyttelton. She will reach port early to-morrow morning and will wait until the arrival of the second express, which will bring the Premier and the Hon. A. J. Millar up from the South. The body will be placed on board, and the steamer will leave direct for Nelson, where the interment will take place. It is understood that the funeral will not be a military one.

The late Minister's two daughters, who are at present in Christchurch, his private secretary, the Premier, the Hon. J. E. Millar, and probably the Hon. W. Hall-Jones, will journey by the *Tutanekai* in order to be present at the funeral.

AUCKLAND CONDOLENCES.

TELEGRAM FROM THE HON. GEO. FOWLDS.

Referring to the death of the Hon. Colonel Pitt, the Hon. G. Fowlds said to a "Star" representative to-day:—"He was an exceedingly fine spirited man, with a very high sense of public duty. He possessed a keen, clear, legally-trained mind, but at the same time was able to take a practical view of every question that arose. He was also a man of culture, a polished speaker and always considerate of the feelings of others. The death of such a man will be keenly felt by his colleagues, and his place will be very difficult to fill."

EULOGIUMS BY BENCH AND BAR.

The death of the Attorney-General was referred to at the opening of the Supreme Court Criminal Sittings on Monday by his Honor Mr. Justice Edwards, who, addressing the Grand Jury prior to delivering his charge, said:—"You will all have heard with great regret of the sudden death of the Hon. A. Pitt, Attorney-General of the colony, and highest officer of the Court. Probably many of you knew him, for he was well known throughout the colony, and wherever he was known he was regarded with feelings of admiration, respect and affection. He has been removed very suddenly from us, as his late great chief so lately was, and if it were possible I would, as a tribute to his memory, adjourn the Court, but the exigencies of public business do not permit this. I shall put before you the bills, and I must proceed to deal with certain persons who have pleaded guilty, and remanded to appear here to-day. With that exception I shall adjourn the Court as soon as that business has been disposed of. I am sorry that I am not able to adjourn the Court absolutely. The Hon. J. A. Toke (Crown Solicitor) also paid a tribute of respect to the deceased's memory on behalf of the legal Bar of Auckland. He had been asked, he said, by the Bar, in the absence of Mr. Dyer, who was the president of the Law Society, to express to his Honor their full concurrence with the words he had expressed publicly this morning, and to add their own tribute of respect to his

memory. Of his learning and ability he need not speak. These were eloquently testified to by the high position to which he had attained in the counsels of the country and as Attorney-General and leader of the Bar in this colony. He (Mr. Toke) had the honour of being a fellow-member with him in the House of Representatives in the year 1881. His genial, kindly and courteous disposition then attracted all to him, and the lapse of a quarter of a century had made no change in him in that respect. Through all the vicissitudes of political and party strife the same characteristics remained with him to the end, and his passing away out of this life was universally and profoundly regretted, not only by the members of the Bar, and by all the profession, but by all who knew him and who had watched his career. The Bar of Auckland joined with his Honor and with the public in offering their deepest condolence and sympathy to his sorrowing family in their sad affliction and irreparable loss.

His Honor said it was his privilege to know the late Attorney-General for over a quarter of a century, and he had always found him a courteous, kindly gentleman, who won the respect and affection of all who knew him. Whether among the members of the Bar or among the members of the public, all who knew the late Albert Pitt entertained a feeling of affection for him, and deeply regretted his sudden death and the loss which the colony had thereby sustained.

Before business was commenced in the Magistrate's Court on Monday, Mr. J. C. Martin referred to the death of the Hon. A. Pitt, late Attorney-General for the colony and Minister for Defence. Mr. Martin said that he mentioned the dead statesman to the Court in his capacity as Attorney-General, the head of the Bar in this colony and the solicitors' branch of the profession. The Attorney-General occupied a somewhat different, though theoretically analogous position, to the King's Attorney-General so far as the Bar was concerned, because the age of our colony and judicial procedure did not constitute a Bar such as existed in the Old Country. Consequently the Attorney-General in New Zealand was not heard of so prominently as the Attorney-General at Home. From personal knowledge, Mr. Martin knew how keen the hon. gentleman's interest had been in the legal profession, and also the high ideals which he considered that members of the profession owed not only to their clients but to the Courts in which they practised. It was always his wish that the members of the Bar and solicitors should adopt and try to act up to and be controlled by the same rules and ethics which governed the two branches of the profession in England.

Mr. McGregor felt that his friend was only voicing the regret of the whole of the legal profession of Auckland in the sincere regret which he had expressed at the death of the Hon. Colonel Pitt.

Mr. Dyer thought the references made were very proper, for the death of the Hon. Colonel Pitt would be keenly felt by the public at large, and even more so by the members of the legal profession, whose esteem and confidence he had always possessed. "I have only to express my own sincere regret," concluded Mr. Dyer, "at the untimely death of an able lawyer, a good statesman, and one who was also, in his day, a good soldier."

AT THE POLKE COURT.

At the Police Court on Monday, his Worship, Mr. C. C. Kettle, K.M., said:—"Before the business of the Court begins I should like to express my deep regret at the sudden and unexpected death of the Attorney-General,

the Hon. Colonel Pitt. Only a short time ago the hon. gentleman visited Auckland. On that occasion I saw him, and discussed with him questions relating to the administration of justice, in which he took a very keen interest. Amongst other questions was the difficult question of dealing with habitual drunkards, the indeterminate sentence question, and also the question of the independence of the bench of justice; especially of district judges and magistrates. He was then in indifferent health, but I did not anticipate that the illness was of such a serious character. I have seen by the papers that he underwent a serious operation in Christchurch for the trouble from which he was suffering, but unfortunately he had not the strength to withstand the serious shock and passed to that undiscovered country from which hitherto no traveller ever returns. I am sure the profession will say with me "Peace to his ashes." He took a keen interest in all matters affecting the welfare of the profession, and I am sure his sudden and unexpected death will be regretted throughout the length and breadth of the colony. I understand the funeral will take place on Wednesday, and I propose to adjourn this Court for that day."

Mr. J. R. Reid, on behalf of the Bar, said they had hailed with delight the appointment of Colonel Pitt as Attorney-General. He expressed the deepest regret at the sad and unexpected death of the hon. gentleman. His loss would also be keenly felt in other spheres. As Minister for Defence Colonel Pitt had always taken a keen interest in defence matters. He had established a new system which they all felt sure would be of the greatest benefit in the defence of the colony.

Sub-Inspector Gordon said the deceased gentleman had always taken great interest in police affairs. His loss was most deeply regretted.

FROM HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR.

His Worship the Mayor (Mr. A. M. Myers) forwarded the following telegram to Miss Pitt:—"On behalf of the citizens of Auckland, accept sincere sympathy in your sad bereavement in losing your respected father, whose sterling qualities have won the esteem of all."

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY.

Genial and courteous, the Hon. Albert Pitt was a popular man in the General Assembly, not only with those on his own side of the House, but with members of all shades of political opinion. He came to New Zealand when a young man from Tasmania, and entered into business as a barrister and solicitor at Nelson in partnership with Mr. Moore; after serving on several local bodies in Nelson he was, in 1881, elected to the House of Representatives, but retired shortly afterwards, and was called to the Upper House in 1889 by the Seddon Government. Just prior to the meeting of the last Parliament, in June, 1903, he was offered the Attorney-Generalship by the late Premier, and he accepted the position, acting as representative of the Government in the Upper House. He held this portfolio until the formation of the present administration, when, in addition, he undertook the portfolio of defence, and the Colonial Secretaryship. During the absence of Sir Joseph Ward at the Postal Conference he acted as Minister for Railways and Postmaster-General, and in the latter capacity opened the Parnell Post Office on the occasion of his last visit to Auckland, prior to the opening of the session. He took a keen interest in the Volunteer movement, and rose to the rank of colonel, being commandant of the Nelson

district. At the time of the Te Waihi rising he proceeded, with his battalion, to Parihaka, where the rebels surrendered. He commanded the Diamond Jubilee contingent in 1897, and was granted the Victorian decoration for long service in the Volunteer forces. He was chairman of the Federation Commission when that Commission took evidence on the question of the Federation of New Zealand with the Commonwealth. He was an earnest administrator, and his uprightness and courtesy made him universally respected and admired."



THE TRAMWAYS DISPUTE IN AUCKLAND.

The talk of the town last week was the sensational conclusion to the trouble which had been brewing between the tramway company and their employees over the dismissal of two conductors, Messrs. Beaton and Isaacson, who, it was alleged had been dismissed without being allowed to bring evidence in refutation of the charges brought against them—Beaton being charged with having written something offensive on a tram car window, and Isaacson with insolence to a passenger. The union asked for their reinstatement, and also they asked for a board of appeal to which cases should be referred before a man was dismissed. Mr. Hansen refused to entertain these proposals. Several meetings were held by the men, and much correspondence passed between the union and the company, but without any definite result. On the 13th instant the men decided that unless their demands were conceded they would refuse to teach any more learners. Next day a number of men did refuse, and they were dismissed. This brought matters to a crisis, and there were rumours of a strike. From noon people were on the qui vive, and it was noised about that the men would come out at 3 p.m. A large crowd gathered about the lower end of Queen-street, but nothing unusual occurred. Shortly before five p.m., just when people were leaving business to go home, several cars were stopped at the bottom of Queen-street, and conductors and motormen left them standing. Cars began to pile up rapidly, and soon there was a long queue of deserted trams in Queen-street, with more in Customs-street East and Customs-street West. To make matters worse, it began to rain, and very soon the street was thronged with would-be passengers. A few men strook to their cars and continued to run them amid the hoots and groans of some of the more excitable onlookers. There was a good deal of excitement, and amusing incidents were plentiful, but the police only found it necessary to arrest one man whose sympathies got the better of his discretion. The men all gathered and reaffirmed their resolve to have the matters in dispute settled, and a conference was arranged with Mr. Hansen, the men asking: (1) That Conductor Beaton be reinstated; (2) That any man accused of an offence involving dismissal shall in future have the right to produce evidence in his favour if procurable. It was finally agreed that Beaton should be allowed to resign instead of being dismissed, and all imputations against his character were withdrawn. The second clause was agreed to, and it was announced that all the men dismissed that morning would be put on again. The men then went back to work, and traffic was resumed at about 8 p.m.

Shabby (home from banquet): M'dear, blame an' wind slight, an' don't turn clock sho low it's go out.

Mrs. Shabby: Are you intoxicated? Who ever heard of a clock going out?

Shabby (after a supreme mental effort): My dear, my clock's hole is of shrike.