

ROUND ABOUT THE COLONY

Karori Tramway.

All the material for the completion of the Karori electric tramway has arrived in Wellington, and no time is being lost in pushing the work to a conclusion. The Borough Engineer (Mr. Thompson) reports that the length of single track has been laid with the exception of about twenty-five chains—six at the tunnel, four at the deviation, and some fifteen chains before reaching the cemetery gates. The whole of the track between Tinakori-road and the tunnel will be completed by the end of this week, and he calculates that the cars should be running over that section by the end of the month, and the service should be in operation by Easter—the end of next month. Besides laying the twenty-five chains of track, there are a few loops to put down here and there. The last of the hardwood poles are being erected near the cemetery this week, and as soon as the Electrical Syndicate moves its wires, the work of suspending the overhead wires will be pushed ahead.

A Helping Hand.

Comment is being made in Dunedin on the fact that Mr. Owen, conductor of the Besses o' th' Barn Band, put the Kaikōrā Band through the "Heroic" selection, one of the pieces to be played by the band at the Exhibition contest. A newspaper controversy followed this announcement, and an explanation, made to a reporter of the "Dunedin Star" by Mr. J. Dixon, who is travelling in Boosey's interests with the "Besses," contained some interesting statements. "We arrived in Wellington on the Riviera," said Mr. Dixon, "and Mr. Owen, who knows Lieutenant Herd, of the Wellington Garrison Band, gave him two hours at the 'Heroic' selection. This was given, not to the band, but to Mr. Herd himself. Mr. Owen explained the whole run of the selection to him, pointing out how to make the most of it, and so forth. He then gave about an hour's interview on another score to Mr. Jupp of Jupp's Band, Wellington. Then came Mr. Crichton, of the Wanganui Band, and Mr. Owen gave him about half an hour on the 'Heroic' score, besides Mr. Owen played through the selection with his own band for Mr. Crichton's benefit. After that Mr. Owen gave the Woburn band about four hours' lesson on 'Tannhäuser,' conducting for them. Many other persons also came up and sought Mr. Owen's advice in regard to the coming contest, and he gave his advice freely. In Dunedin Mr. Owen was present at the rehearsal of the Kaikōrā Band, and after the playing of the 'Heroic' he offered them certain suggestions, criticisms, and so forth, but did not put the band through. It is Mr. Owen's intention to do the same for every New Zealand band that asks his advice, hoping by this means to be of some local service in trying to get the New Zealand bands into the method of his own band. He is simply inundated with applications from bandmasters to give advice, and he intends to do it. This, of course, is all without money and without price—he is not seeking to make anything out of it at all."

Only a Nuisance.

The efforts of the Chamber of Commerce to have an end put to the financial loss and public annoyance caused by the Te Aro section of railway have been only partially successful, remarks the "Wellington Post." "The Government declines to discontinue the unprofitable service," says the annual report of the chamber, "but the annoyance caused to the public has been greatly reduced by the discontinuance of the running of about two-thirds of the number of trains formerly passing over this line. It is to be hoped that before long the whole section will be removed, as it does not afford facilities for the transport of goods. The Minister also consented to throw the full width of the roadway on Cus-

tomhouse-quay open to public traffic contingent on satisfactory arrangements being made with the City Council as to the formation of the road."

The Golden Mean.

Farmers have suffered severely in the North by floods, and in the South from absence of rain, but in Taranaki they seem to have experienced a happy medium. The "Stratford Post" knows of many cases in this fortunate district in which farmers have been giving free grazing to hundreds of acres to keep the grass in check. The Taranaki sheep-farmers view the situation with great satisfaction, as there is every prospect of obtaining record prices for their lambs and surplus sheep. The dairy farmers, the "Post" says, are certainly putting up records, and some of their returns are astounding. One of the leading suppliers on the Plains is drawing £640 a month for milk alone, and a number of farmers are drawing £1 5/ per acre per month for milk only. Perhaps the record in small holdings is held by Mr. E. Long, a settler near Manaia, who milks twenty cows on forty acres, and drew £53 for last month's cheque.

A Necessary Work.

Dr. Farr, of Christchurch, at the last meeting of the New Zealand Institute read a letter he had received from the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, Carnegie Institution, Washington. It was stated that the German Government had already responded to the demands of the department, as far as the magnetic survey of the Pacific Ocean was concerned, and had assisted in equipping Heimbrod, one of the department's magnetic observers, who is making observations in the Pacific Islands. Dr. Farr urged that a combined effort should be made to send an expedition, representing all branches of science, to the Pacific Islands in the Hinemoa or the Tutanekei next summer. The trip could embrace visits to the Antipodes, Auckland, Chatham, and other islands. After some discussion, Dr. Thomas moved:—"That this Institute desires to express its complete sympathy with the projected scientific survey of the southern islands, and that it be an instruction to the Standing Committee to wait upon the Minister for Marine and impress on him the importance of such survey." This was carried.

"Out."

Owing to a certain undesirable element among the list of "paying guests" visiting the Exhibition, board and lodging has not been so very profitable in some cases as it might have been. And boardinghouse keepers have learned another rule of the game, viz.: "That down the fire escape and over the fence is 'out.'"—Christchurch "Star."

Quite Unusual.

A local poultry-keeper has a startling tale to unfold, says the Taranaki "Herald." He has, he says, a silver Wyandotte pullet aged four months, which has developed mouse-killing propensities. The other day he saw a pullet attack a mouse which was in the fowl-yard, and having caught it she did not leave it until she had shaken the life out of it.

Worth The Trouble.

There are many little incidents connected with the Italia search which are very interesting (says the North-Auckland "Age"). For instance, on one occasion a piece of iron about a foot square was sent up on a board. It was covered with seaweed and had a worthless appearance, but it was suspiciously heavy. When cleaned it was found to have a few hundred pounds' worth of

half-sovereigns corroded on each side of it. Then a cigar-box was about half filled with half-sovereigns—this little lot amounted to £459. Then there was the danger of the schooner getting on the rocks, only skillful seamanship averting disaster. Quite exciting work, but we should imagine the results so far are very gratifying to the officers and crew.

Sensible Idea.

Dr. Mason, Health Officer, has prepared a report with reference to the periodical medical inspection of school children, especially as regards the nose and throat. It may be repeated that in many parts of the world the importance to the ear, eye and teeth of examining children from a health point of view is rightly recognised. Dr. Mason's proposals are concerned with thoroughly safeguarding the children. It is desired to discover in good time ailments or defects of the eye, nose, throat, teeth and skin. Many children suffer from an adenoid growth, which not only interferes with proper breathing, but, by blocking up the canal leading to the ear, produces an amount of deafness which impairs the ability of the pupil to take full advantage of what the teachers say. The unhealthy habit of mouth breathing is usually the result of an obstruction at the back of the nose. The inhalation of unwarmed air—that is, air which has not passed through the nasal passages—has a deleterious effect on the sensitive lining of the lungs. The sense of smell is also diminished by the non-use of the membrane of the nose. Another most important point is the question of eyesight, and the headaches of which children between 13 and 14 years complain are in many instances due to some physical defect in the structure of the eye. Occasionally you find children accused of inattention and backwardness, when as a matter of fact they may be unable to see the blackboard. In addition to examinations by medical men, teachers will be asked to keep a careful watch on children, and note those who are afflicted with a cough. A little dry hacking cough is very often the forerunner of consumption. The importance of recognising this is very great indeed, adds Dr. Mason, not only for the sake of the cougher, but of other children.

Inquiries from America.

By the last San Francisco mail the Tourist Department received over 1200 letters from all parts of the world, 90 per cent of which were inquiries from people who are seeking detailed information as to the climate and characteristics of this country and the conditions of life, with a view to making New Zealand the scene of their life's endeavour. A great proportion of the letters are from the United States of America and Canada.

A sample of the laconic style of correspondence that prevails in America is the following letter—one of the foregoing—of a University man dated from Howell's, N.Y.:—"Saw the advertisements in 'Farmer,' re New Zealand, and write for information. Am a Canadian, a British subject, graduate of Toronto in arts and theology, but owing to ill-health will have to relinquish my profession, but lived and worked the first twenty years of my life on farm in the province of Ontario. Having decided to go into agriculture (as my health is first-class then), the question of where to go is important. Western Canada where I have travelled, is rather severe. What opportunities are there for the production and sale of milk, etc., markets, raising of fruit, probable cost of getting there, etc.? Have just completed reading 'Progress of New Zealand in the Nineteenth Century,' authors H. F. Irvine, M.A., and O. T. J. Alpers, M.A., which verify your splendid advertisements. When I found that 97 per cent of the people were British, the prospect is somewhat different to living where 85 per cent of the people are foreigners."

School Children's Teeth.

Nearly a year has elapsed since the matter of paying attention to the teeth of children attending school was brought before the Wellington Education Board. It was then decided to allow the Wellington Dental Association to make a systematic examination of the teeth of children in the higher standard of the State schools. As to a very great ex-

tent; the preservation of the digestive organs depends on the soundness of the teeth, it may be said that good teeth conduce to the pleasure of living, and even to longevity, the obvious reverse being physical troubles of a diverse and painful character. This established, the value of a comprehensive report on children's "second" teeth cannot be underrated, and must create a great deal of interest as it has a bearing on the physique of generations to come.

Summarised, the returns furnished by those appointed to do the work by the Wellington Dental Association and compiled by Mr. W. H. Didsbury, show that the teeth of 1148 children (488 girls and 600 boys) of Standard IV., V., VI., and VII., were examined. The lines of the examination were:—

1. Teeth that needed filling.
2. Teeth that should be extracted.
3. Abscessed teeth.

It was found in the 1148 children examined that 5887 teeth (3706 upper and 2181 lower) needed treatment, an alarming average of over five teeth per head in children whose ages ranged from eight to sixteen years. "This average," says the report, "may appear low, but, really it is very high indeed, for we must remember that it applies to many children who have not yet erupted all their teeth."

The following table gives particulars as to the teeth needing treatment in the different schools:—

School.	Pupils.	Ages.	Carious Teeth.
Newtown (2)	152	9.15	818
Whitson	231	9.15	912
Thorndon	232	10.16	1345
Terrace	215	8.15	1112
Island Bay	35	9.14	180
Mt. Cook	40	9.15	260
Potone	204	9.15	1047
Father Lane's	39	9.15	223

Main Trunk Line and Settlement.

Is the railway doing any more than conquering distance? asking a Wellington paper, discussing the Main Trunk line. What development is resulting? Anyone who rides up the bush road from Taihape to Turangerere will see the outward and visible signs of development at all points of the horizon—black or blue-grey smoke-wreaths curling up from a dozen different sections where the holders are burning off. The season is good for burns, the work of forest-conquest is everywhere in evidence, and if the Government's remedy for native tenures grows as fast as the grass does, the valley of the Hantapu will flow with milk and honey. Many unkind things have been said of the pumiceous, tussocky Waiouru soil, yet it is not without its possibilities, as is evidenced by the turnip and clover paddocks at the Waiouru station homestead, where 23,000 sheep are shearing at this very moment. Farther north again the line penetrates the noted Karoro run, with its homestead of Wai-one. This beautiful Maori name, which fairly melts on the tongue, is not to be perpetuated in the railway guide, because some other place has annexed it. The railway station will be called Niua. Of the Waimarino, its timber and its soil, enough has been written. Suffice it here to say that the brightest prospects seem to be before Okaihake, if the prices of land do not soar too high. The history of the sawmill and the settler during the next few years is bound to be one of strenuous activity.

Prominent noses seem to have been the property of many great men. Lycurgus and Solon had noses six inches in length, and Ovid was nicknamed Naso on account of his large nose. Scipio Nasica derived his name from his prominent olfactory organ, and Alexander the Great and Cardinals Wolsey and Riebelieu all had large noses. On the medals of Cyrus and Artaxerxes their noses came clear out to the rim of the coin.

Washington's was the true aquiline type, indicative of firmness and patience, as was the nose of Julius Caesar. Mohammed had a singular nose. It was so curved that a writer has told us that the point of it seemed continually striving to insert itself between his lips. The noses of Franklin, Shakespeare, and Dr. Johnson all had wide nostrils, betokening strength and love of thought. The nose of Napoleon was exquisitely, though firmly, chiselled. He often said, "Give me a man with plenty of nose!"

Frederick the Great had so large a nose that Lavater offered to wager that blindfolded he could tell it among ten thousand by merely taking it between his thumb and forefinger.