

The News of the Week

IN THE DOMINION.

Parliament meets for its final session on Monday, June 29th.

The price of bread in Christchurch has been advanced to 7d for cash and 7½d booked per 4lb loaf.

The master bakers of Napier intend to raise the price of bread by ½d. per 2lb. loaf as from June 1.

There are about 20,000 civil servants in the Dominion, of whom 5,000 are located in Wellington.

At a meeting of the Cabinet last week, it was decided to supply the Auckland Acclimatisation Society with 500,000 rainbow trout ova.

A public meeting on May 18th decided to establish a museum in Pāpāngi. A number of valuable articles have already been received, and promised.

The Government has purchased a property on the Waikanae beach, near the leading lights, as a site for a new grotto for Gisborne.

The sum of £12 was stolen from the guard's van of the express train on May 19th, during the journey between Auckland and Remuera.

Deer are becoming unpleasantly plentiful in the Wairarapa district, where on one sheep farm last year 2,000 were shot as "nuisances."

It is estimated that New Zealand has an available coal supply of 1,200,000,000 tons, of which not more than 20,000,000 tons have been touched.

Enormous numbers of rainbow trout have been observed in the Waikato River at various places between Wairakei and Waitotapu.

Frederick Hall, who was found guilty of an attempt to murder Alex. J. Muir at Lyttelton on March 7, has been sentenced to imprisonment for life.

Christchurch tramway employees are airing grievances, and if they do not get satisfaction from the Tramway Board will invoke the aid of the Arbitration Court.

At Masterton, it has been resolved to take a poll of the ratepayers on a proposal to borrow a sum of £30,000 for the purposes of extending the drainage and sewerage system of the borough.

Angora goats are in demand throughout the Dominion, farmers paying as high a price as 20 10s. for one of these animals, because of their usefulness in checking the growth of noxious weeds.

Owing to the very small attendance, Mr. Tom Mann, the Socialist leader, refused to speak at Hastings, stating that the experience was unique in his 20 years' lecturing.

A young lady, Miss Minnie Hart, was taken with a heart seizure at His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland, on May 18th, and died soon after she was taken to a neighbouring chemist's shop.

For the first time in the history of the Otago Harbour Board it is expected that the income from the Board's endowments will total £10,000 at the close of this financial year.

Northern Steamship Company's accounts show a net profit for the year of £8,778 16/3. A dividend of 7 per cent absorbs £8,681 3/4, and £1,288 12/11 is carried forward.

Masterton Borough Council has decided to purchase the Masterton Show Grounds for recreation purposes, subject to the approval of the ratepayers being secured.

A housemaid in one of the large boardinghouses in Hamilton, whilst cleaning out one of the bedrooms found that a toothbrush made of celluloid had been ignited by the sun's rays shining through a glass decanter full of water.

A poll was taken by the Kawhia County Council on May 21st for authority to borrow £2,000 for increasing wharf accommodation at Kawhia, building sheds at Oparau, Kinohaku, and Awaroa. The proposals were carried by 87 to 2.

Heavy north-westerly gales interfered with shipping on the West Coast of the North Island on Saturday and Sunday last. The scow Maroro, seven days overdue from Wanganui to Raglan, is reported missing.

In the Magistrate's Court, in a case in which a tenant sued his landlord for damage done to furniture by vermin in the landlord's house, Dr. McArthur held that there was no implied contract on

the part of a landlord in letting a house that the building was habitable.

A prisoner named Frederick Hall, who has since been sentenced at Christchurch to imprisonment for life for attempted murder, tore up a blanket in his cell while awaiting trial, and made a rope from it, which he presumably intended to use in an attempt to escape. The attempt, however, was frustrated.

Tenders have been dealt with by the Government as under for the erection of the Seddon Memorial at Wellington:—Edwards and Son, Wellington, £2746 (accepted); W. J. Helyer, Wellington, £2808 19/0; Michael Krain, Wellington, £3945; J. Bouskill, Auckland, £3910; J. and A. Wilson, Wellington, £3996.

Reuter's Telegram Company has declared the usual dividend at the rate of five per cent per annum for the half-year ended December 31st. The amount of the company's reserves is now £93,152. Cash in hand, bills and investments at December 31, stood at £118,339, and freehold properties were valued at £45,899.

The jubilee of the Loyal Napier Lodge, Independent Order of Oddfellows, Manchester Unity, established in 1854, was celebrated by a reunion on Saturday night. The function was numerously attended, and the speakers included the Mayor (Bro. J. Vigor Brown) and Bros. J. Smith and Madeley, of Wellington.

Ivan Black, who pleaded guilty at the Wellington Magistrate's Court to conducting a scheme by which prize money was gained by a mode of chance, was fined £10 and costs. Accused had instituted a sweepstake on the Wanganui Steeplechase, and tickets had been distributed all over New Zealand.

At last census there were 124,592 marriageable bachelors and 114,959 spinsters in the Dominion. The excess of bachelors over spinsters is 9,633, or 108 single young men for every 100 single girls. In 1901 there were not enough young men to go round, the proportion being 97 to every 100 girls of marriageable age.

Joseph Coddio, owner of the launch Matakana, which collided with the Lady Roberts in the Lower Harbour on the night of Easter Saturday, has been committed for trial at Dunedin, on a charge of manslaughter. Mr. Hay, solicitor for accused, contended that an error of judgment, which was the finding of the coroner's jury, could not be made a ground for a charge of manslaughter.

The new Y.M.C.A. Buildings in Wellington were officially opened on May 18th, in the presence of a very large number of visitors, by Mrs. Williams. The building, with extras, cost about £14,000. About £2000 is now required for furnishing. There are forty bedrooms in the building. Addresses were delivered by the Prime Minister, the Mayor, Mr. Aitken, and the Hon. G. Fowlds.

At the Supreme Court, Christchurch, on May 22nd, Alexander Robinson was charged with the manslaughter of his mother, Margaret Robinson, whom he is alleged to have neglected to provide with the necessities of life, by reason of which she died. He was also charged with failing to provide her with medical attendance. Evidence was given similar to that in the Court below.

At the adjourned inquest touching the death of Edmund John Bourke, who was found some days ago in a dying condition at Westport, subsequently succumbing, the jury returned a verdict expressing the belief that Bourke met his death by foul play, and that Connelley, Hallinen, and Anderson were all implicated. Hallinen and Anderson stand charged with murder. Connelley is the Crown's chief witness against the two prisoners.

That there was justification for the establishment of a female employment bureau in Wellington by the Labour Department is borne out by the applications made thereto during the first week of its existence. About twenty employers have applied for servants, while about forty applications have been received from persons desirous of obtaining employment, the various callings represented being housemaids, waitresses, housekeepers, nurses, cooks, general servants, ladyhelps and charwomen. The bureau has been instrumental in securing employment for a fair proportion of the applicants.

A very fine collection of films of New Zealand life and scenery (especially of the Hot Lakes district) has been to the Fran-

co-British Exhibition, in order to familiarise the British and Continental visitors with the possibilities of New Zealand as a country for settlement, commerce, sport, and for recuperation in especially beautiful and healthful surroundings.

Hawks and Rabbits at Rotorua.

A letter received by the Rotorua Rod and Gun Club from Mr. T. E. Donne, General Manager of the Department of Tourists and Health Resorts, deals with questions of interest. Mr. Donne writes: "As regards the poisoning of rabbits within the district: Poisoning is probably the most fertile source of feathered game destruction in New Zealand, but of course sportsmen must recognise that the subjection of the rabbit pest is of greater importance generally to a district than is the protection of game, and I think there is no chance of the Stock Department being influenced to discontinue its efforts in this connection. Your request has, however, been submitted to the Chief of that Department. As far as hawks are concerned, I regret that I am not prepared to recommend the payment of a bonus for their destruction; they are recognised as being invaluable rabbit-killers, and on these grounds they are deserving of protection in districts where rabbits are likely to get a strong hold if not kept down."

Empire Day.

The Empire Day celebrations in Great Britain were spread over three days.

A million children attending the schools in London saluted the flag on May 22nd, and lectures and exercises relating to the movement were given in 1,000 schools.

At the London County Council's instance a patriotic programme and lessons on the duties of citizenship were conducted in nearly every school, and the flag was saluted, London's lead being generally followed in the provinces.

The Municipal Councils of Battersea and Poplar refused to fly the flag.

The display of bunting in the East End of London was greater even than in the West End. A hundred of the poorest children purchased small flags.

The Duchess of Albany distributed prizes at the Escher national schools, where the Earl of Meath addressed the children on the subject "How best to help the Empire."

Lord Tennyson, the Earl of Meath, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Mr. Rason (Agent-General of West Australia), Senator Dobson, and Councillor Weedon, of Melbourne, spoke at a similar demonstration in connection with the boys' brigades.

Massed bands played at the Exhibition at Shepherd's Bush. A large school at Peckham has been temporarily transformed into a museum for the display of products of the Motherland and colonies, lent by Mr. J. W. Taverner (Agent-General for Victoria), and others. The scholars attending the exhibition were much interested in it.

Assisted Immigration.

The Labour Department has received a number of forms for the use of those who wish to nominate suitable persons for emigration from England to New Zealand. When filled in the forms are sent by the Under-Secretary for the Department to the High Commissioner, and if the persons nominated are deemed suitable they are granted passages at reduced rates. The Government has made arrangements for the passages, and the payments required from passengers are:—Second-class, £27; third-class, £12 and £10—a reduction to the passenger of £11 in the second-class and £9 in the third-class. Residents in the Dominion may nominate near relatives for passages, and pay the money to the Under-Secretary for Immigration. The persons nominated must be under fifty, and must have a suitable occupation. Agriculturists with a capital of £25 and domestic workers are granted passages without the nomination from New Zealand. The final selection rests with the High Commissioner.

Charge of Manslaughter.

At the Supreme Court, Christchurch, on Friday last, William Alexander Robinson was charged with the manslaughter of his mother, Margaret Robinson, whom he is alleged to have neglected to provide with the necessities of life, by reason of which she died.

He was also charged with failing to provide her with medical attendance or a competent nurse.

A verdict of guilty was returned, based on the fact that accused had failed to call in a medical man, which failure was due to an error of judgment. The judge ordered accused to pay £10 towards the cost of the prosecution and ordered him to come up for sentence when called upon.

Auckland Tramway Strike.

The fears that a tramway strike would be the outcome of the friction between the Auckland Electric Tramway Company and its employees have been realised, and on Friday last at twelve o'clock precisely motorcars and conductors, in the presence of a large crowd, left their cars standing in Queen Street as a protest against various acts of the management to which they have taken strong exception. The principal grievance of the men consists of an alleged breach of agreement by the manager, in dismissing employees without assigning reason and giving them an opportunity of replying to charges. The manager, Mr. Walklate, holds that he has not broken the agreement. Various conferences have taken place between the manager and the strikers, without a settlement being arrived at, and meanwhile the entire tramway service is at a standstill. The strikers, who number about 250, decline to submit the matter in dispute to arbitration.

The following telegram, which was despatched by the secretary of the Union to the Minister for Labour, shows the attitude of the men:—"The Government, not being able to do anything for us in bringing to book an autocratic general manager, my Union in self-defence has unanimously decided to leave the cars at noon to-day unless stipulations are agreed to. Our action is not against the Arbitration Act, but is a struggle for existence.—Arthur Rosser."

On Monday forenoon, after hearing an address from Mr. Edward Tregear, Chief Secretary for Labour, the strikers agreed to submit the matters in dispute to a special Board of Conciliation, and that in the meantime the running of cars be resumed.

The Christchurch Robberies.

Joseph Egan, James Keegan, and Frank Bolton, with several aliases, were charged at the Magistrate's Court, Christchurch, on May 19th, with having on May 11th and 15th broken and entered the shop of J. T. Mellarg, at Woolston, and stolen £18 worth of goods. The same men were charged with what is virtually highway robbery under arms, having assaulted and robbed Charles Marshall and stolen from his person a gold ring, two keys, a purse and £4 5s. in money, of an aggregated value of £5 17s. These men are alleged to be the men concerned in the assaults and robberies in Fitzgerald-avenue on Saturday night and Sunday morning.

There was a large gathering of people outside the Court, and the prisoners met with a lively reception. The police endeavoured, by taking an unaccustomed route, to get the accused in quietly, but the crowd found them out. There were loud cries, including encouraging adjurations to "lynch them," to "kick them," and otherwise to take immediate revenge upon them for the offences they were charged with.

The men, it is said, made no admissions of any kind. When spoken to about the assaults, they displayed signs of being very severely scared, and endeavoured to keep up their courage by singing.

Visit of the American Fleet.

The American fleet, which is shortly to make a voyage to Australasian waters, has left San Francisco for Pigeon Sound.

Mr. Deakin has invited the Imperial Government to have special representation of the British fleet at the welcome to the American squadron.

Probably the official landing of the American Admiral and his staff will be at the spot in Pigeon Cove where the first Governor-General (Lord Hopkoun) landed.

One of the features of the reception will be magnificent illuminations on all the headlands within Sydney harbour.

Deputations from the Wellington branch of the Navy League urged the Premier to use his best endeavours to