

the British manufacturer something like £100,000 per annum, besides strengthening his position in the market.—Mr. R. H. Morgan, British Trade Commissioner.

Were it not for the willing and devoted discharge of their priesthood by the men who act as lay readers, the spiritual problems of a new country would be far more difficult even than they are. The lay reader in New Zealand is not seldom a missionary and a pastor among his fellow settlers.—Bishop Nelson.

The Maoris seeking to enter upon a University course are under a great disadvantage in having to be instructed and examined in a language other than their mother tongue, and they are in a worse position than many other aboriginal races who have never by solemn treaty been promised all the rights and privileges of British subjects.—Mr. Wilson, Headmaster, St. Stephen's School, Auckland.

He regretted that Mr Allison was not again a candidate, but he trusted that his retirement would be only a temporary one, as there was not the slightest doubt that the late member had been one of the best that Auckland had ever sent to Parliament.—Mr. W. F. Massey, M.P.

From personal experience he did not agree with the ideas of some people that Australian-made goods were inferior to the imported article. In future, Australians would be able to supply nearly everything they required for their own use.—Sir Harry Rawson, Governor of N.S.W.

One of the most pleasurable features of this electioneering campaign to me has been the fine spirit of good-comradeship which has marked its conduct from its start to the present time. I have not found it even necessary in any of my meetings to refer to either of my political opponents or fellow-contestants. This is as it should be. There is no spirit of bitterness in this contest, and I am glad to see that the same esprit de corps is operating in the various electorates throughout the city.—Mr. J. P. Luke, Wellington.

The funny man was in evidence at Mr R. A. Wright's meeting. The question he put was: "If you are such a good man, could you walk on water like St. Peter did?" The candidate replied: "I could walk far better on water than I could on whisky."

I do not mind being blamed for my own shortcomings, but I can hardly fall in with the idea that I should shoulder the weaknesses of every other man going by the name of Wright in New Zealand.—Mr. R. A. Wright, Wellington.

What they wanted was an agricultural high school, as was being done in Gisborne, so that children could have the choice of three courses, which would include a general course, a commercial course, but, and perhaps most important of all would be the third, the agricultural course.—Mr. G. Hopben, Inspector-General of Schools.

The operations of the shipping ring, or conference, controlling all steamer freight from Great Britain, was to a substantial extent responsible for the diversion of British trade. He found numerous cases where this ring was carrying German and American goods at much lower rates than British goods, the difference in some cases being as wide as £2 per ton.—Mr. R. H. Morgan, British Trade Commissioner.

"What happened to him?" "O, he was lauded to the skies, and thinking it would last forever, he did not take his parachute along."

THE GUINEA POEM

A CHEQUE for £1 1/2 has been sent to the writer of this verse—Mr. N.E.B., Mole-worth-street, Wellington.

Woman's uses: Dirty clothes— What a sorry sight! Hazy thought, dark thought Washing snowy white

WIN A GUINEA! Prize Poem published every Saturday. Best original four SHOUT-line verse about "SOAPIN" wins each week. "SOAPIN" wrapper must be enclosed. Address: "SOAPIN" obtained Washing Powder, P.O. Box 625, Wellington. Write for Free Art Booklet, containing 25 valuable Hints on Washing.

The Club Smoking Room

By HAVANA

THE elections," began the M.P., "have resulted in a great victory for the No-license party. This has come as a surprise to many persons, but those who have carefully watched the trend of public opinion will recognise that the verdict of the country represents very accurately the feelings of the people. It has been no catch vote carried on a passing wave of enthusiasm; it is part of a very widespread conviction that our present haphazard way of conducting the liquor traffic stands in urgent need of reform. It cannot be denied that things have occurred to shock the public conscience, such as the "lambling down" case, for instance; and many moderate men have voted for No-license as the best available remedy. And apart from this we have to take into account the present craze for legislation, and the belief in the policeman and the gaol as the most effectual moral agents. Ours is an impatient age as well as a materialistic age. We have lost faith in the efficacy of religion, and we have transferred our allegiance to the power of the law. It is the old contest between the thunders of Sinai and the grace of the Mount of Beatitudes."

"I honestly confess," replied one of our new members, "that I do not believe in the power of what is called moral suasion. It has been tried for nearly two thousand years, and what have we got to show for it? Is the world any better than it was? We have poverty, vice and drunkenness in our midst as much as ever. All real reform has come from our parliaments rather than from our pulpits and churches. You can abolish evils by law, and they are effectually abolished, if the law is properly enforced. I do not deny that in isolated cases religion has affected individuals, but all history teaches us that compulsion is far more effective as a moral agent than persuasion or exhortation. The most devout professing believer in the power of the gospel shows by his constant appeals to the legislature that he considers the gospel is useless without the law. As one writer says, prayer is no use without the ballot box. You may preach charity as much as you like, and the result is infinitesimal. But, heavy taxation of large properties compels men to provide for their poorer brethren."

"I am afraid," replied another member, "that what you say is only too true. Christianity is a counsel of perfection, too high for ordinary men. It is an ideal, but it is not practical. Socialism offers a practical solution of our difficulties in regard to poverty, prohibition offers a practical solution of our difficulties in regard to the drink traffic. The Socialist says that if men will not be charitable of their own accord, the law must step in and make them share their wealth with others. The prohibitionist says that if men will not abstain from alcohol of their own accord, the law must step in and compel them to abstain. I hope to see the day when the issue will be total prohibition for the whole Dominion and a bare majority. It is against the whole principle of democracy that a minority should dictate to a majority. The people will not tolerate for long a state of affairs where eight thousand votes can block a reform backed by ten thousand voters. Reduction I regard as a farce, it confuses the issue and can do but little good. Nor do I altogether approve of a system by which the hotels are shut on one side of the road, and opened on the other. The only real solution of the drink question is absolute and total prohibition for the whole colony, and temperance reformers should devote all their energies towards securing this. It would be a proud day,

for New Zealand if she could lead the world in sweeping away the drink traffic."

"Exactly where you two people have studied history," interrupted the professor, "it is not for me to say; but if history teaches us one thing more than another, it is this—no moral reform worthy the name has ever been brought about by coercion. Lycurgus tried it in Sparta, and it failed. The Christian Church tried it, and it failed. Botany Bay tried it, and it failed. If you study Runtree and Sherwell's volume on the temperance problem, you will notice that in the United States prohibition has been most successful in the more sparsely populated districts, and in places adjacent to licensing towns. This is likely to be the case here. The suburbs surrounding our cities are likely in time to completely abolish licensed houses, but this is partly because a public house is held to depreciate property. The suburbs are mostly inhabited by a class of people who do not use public bars, and what they want they keep in their own houses. But they know that they can always get anything they require without any trouble. The case of a city is different, and you will find in America that the more densely populated States have had to abandon State prohibition as a failure. For the question rests on a different footing from our criminal laws. No one denies the terrible evils of intemperance, but many people believe in a moderate use of stimulants. In the same way no one denies the many evils that arise from unlimited competition, gigantic Trusts, and the accumulation of riches in the hands of a few, due to our respect for the rights of property. But many believe in competition within limits, in combination for business purposes, and in the right of the individual to what he has earned or inherited. The Socialists would prohibit all three, because their abuse has led to acknowledged and widespread evils. But the question is, 'Are we prepared to accept the doctrine?'"

"For my own part," answered the schoolmaster, "I would say that I am, we must abolish everything from which harm may come. I am a firm believer in coercion, when coercion is for the good of the individual or of the community. You cannot stop at moderation; it isn't in human nature to do so. Allow a man to begin to accumulate wealth, and he will not stop till he has grabbed all he can get, regardless of the rights of others. But if you prohibit private ownership, you prevent any chance of abuse. Why should we run risks when they can be so easily prevented?"

"I am too old-fashioned," put in the cynic, "to be able to subscribe to the new evangel. I know that the great wave of popular feeling is in favour of State regulation of everything. I recognise that even in the matter of how we spend Sunday the law is invoked as our moral agent. I saw at a glance that Gibson Smith's book on the Atonement was heretical. The modern doctrine of the Atonement is 'Strike out the Top Line.' I should still believe in the power of Christianity, though I was opposed by all the religious sects in Christendom. Christianity has made legislative reform possible by changing men's hearts, and our laws against theft and robbery and violence are capable of enforcement solely because they rest on the all but unanimous approval of the general public; in short, they rest on Christian conscience. But a law imposed by one large section of the community on another nearly as

large can never be successfully enforced. It is resented, and resentment leads to evasion. The evils we deplore so much in the drink traffic are largely due to the fact that we have never attempted anything in the nature of reform, nor have we striven to provide any healthy, rational counter attractions. The parable of the house swept and garnished is true, even though it does come in the Bible. The motto, 'Overcome evil with good,' is true, even though it was given us by St. Paul. The love of a little child, the love of a good woman, have reclaimed men whom the terrors of the law have failed to touch. It is a grave danger to religion when men desert the preaching of the grace of God for the preaching of the power of the State. I believe the day is not far distant when the churches will be forced to exclaim, like Wolsey:

'Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my King, He would not in mine age Have left me naked to mine enemies.'

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