

which should prevail, and the wards were not clean. The place was overcrowded, and the grounds untidy and insanitary. He found a lack of harmony between the administrative officers, due to outside interference, and a want of definiteness in regard to duties. Despite all drawbacks, the patients had been well cared for, but 67 were too many for one man to look after. The economic side of the hospital had been neglected, and mismanagement was rife. Out of 19 nurses, only two were trained nurses, but that there was not that absolute disloyalty to the matron as some people endeavoured to make out, was shown by the fact that four senior nurses had offered to stay on if required after they had passed their examinations. The hospital books did not contain enough information, but this was due to the secretary being overworked.

Dr. Valintine recommended the appointment of an extra medical officer at £200 per annum, and additional help for the matron.

The matron (Miss Florence Edwards) forwarded her resignation.

Mr. W. Shrimpton gave £1000 towards the erection of a new children's ward in memory of his son.

Canterbury's Wheat Yield.

Canterbury's yield of wheat this year will be the heaviest for many years. In mid and North Canterbury fifty bushels per acre is common on medium land, and the best land shows a much higher average over all of between 35 and 40 bushels. Harvest operations are often interrupted by wet weather, and after cutting the weather was so uncertain that not a few farmers threshed from the stock before the grain matured, merchants rejecting this wheat as not full milling or export. Much of it will have to be exposed in bags in paddocks, maturity being secured by this means. If stored in bags in a granary without weather drying in a paddock it will degenerate rapidly. The harvest is so abundant that merchants and millers are holding off till market indications become more pronounced. The weather this week has been perfect for all kinds of harvest work, and stacking is proceeding apace. A very large area is still in stock, and the grain is giving promise of excellent sample when threshed under proper conditions. Feed is abundant everywhere, and root crops give a pleasing prospect. Hands are scarce in some districts, and there is plenty of work everywhere for willing men with some knowledge of field work.

Deadly

A new explosive called "Mortite," the invention of a New Zealander, was tested at Nelson recently, when shells of chrome steel, weighing respectively 25lb, 27lb, and 28lb, with walls 1 1/2 in thickness, were successfully exploded. It was stated that service shells of the same weight would require to contain 22oz of bursting charge, as against the 5oz of "Mortite" which were used, and the walls of service shells would be only 1/2 in thickness. The new explosive is not a nitro-glycerine compound, and can be handled as carelessly as cordite, but it is said that it does not deteriorate with age. Negotiations are in progress with the British Government regarding the explosive.

The Aeon Salvage Expedition.

The auxiliary scow Zingara left Auckland on Sunday for Christmas Island with the Aeon salvage expedition. Captain W. Robertson is in command, and the second in command is his son, Captain L. Robertson. Captain Holmes being also associated with the party. Mr. F. Goodman, who accompanies the expedition, has considerable experience as a master shipwright and in salvage work. Mr. Henderson goes as secretary. The Zingara carries an experienced diver and diving gear, two chief engineers, two firemen and a winch driver. The vessel is fully equipped with necessary gear, and present indications point to a successful result of an enterprising venture.

The commanding officer of the Auckland military district has finally decided to hold the Easter manoeuvres for the forces comprising the Auckland district at Morrinsville.

A young man named T. L. Thomson, who slept on the premises had a narrow escape in a fire which occurred last week at Thompson's in the shop of Mr. Lindsay, draper, who had his stock much damaged. In order to protect the trout in the rivers from destruction the Canterbury

Acclimatisation Society has decided to offer the high price of 1s. per head for shags, which play havoc among the small fry.

The Minister of Railways expects to make an announcement this week with regard to the personnel of the Commission which is to inquire into the allegations of incompetency and mismanagement at the Addington Railway workshops.

The Auckland Drainage Board which is to take in hand the big work of draining Auckland and the outside boroughs, etc., which will eventually be Greater Auckland, is now in working order, and last week made arrangements for raising £100,000 out of the £500,000 which they are empowered to borrow.

A well known settler of Awarua, Kawhia, Mr. A. Pearson, had a marvellous escape the other day. He was getting out of his launch when the hammer of a pea rifle he was carrying got caught, and the weapon went off. The bullet entered Mr. Pearson's eyebrow, and came out under the skin without doing him any harm.

COMMONWEALTH.

Another Bomb Outrage.

Another bomb was thrown at Broken Hill last week when an attempt was made to wreck the home of the accountant of the Block Ten mine. The bomb exploded outside the house, shattering the windows and doing other slight damage.

The Government is offering £200 reward for the discovery of the authors of the explosions at Broken Hill during the past six weeks.

Owing to the protracted arbitration proceedings, workless miners are feeling the pinch, and an increase in the strike funds is urged.

Business at the Barrier is at a standstill. Most of the landlords have received no rent since the trouble began. South Australia railway receipts have also greatly decreased, and Adelaide is flooded with unemployed.

Judge Higgins, who is adjudicating in the Broken Hill arbitration case, has announced that he would not attempt to vary the contract system, as the matter was too delicate to be touched.

Henri de Josselin, accountant of the Bank of N.Z., Sydney, has been arrested on a charge of embezzlement. The alleged defalcations extend from 1906, the amount involved being about £600.

Depressed Coal Trade.

The depression in the Newcastle coal trade during the last few months is having a serious effect upon the district. A large number of miners have been without constant work for months, and the starting of relief works is urged.

Too Much Competition.

The N.S.W. Labour party is starting a campaign against the Government's policy of securing immigrants through the Salvation Army, which was characterised as an attempt to lower wages. It was decided to hold public protest meetings.

Vancouver Service.

The Federal Government has communicated with Dr. Coulter, representative of the Canadian Postal Department, expressing appreciation of the Canadian Government in sending him to Australia in connection with the All-Red Route. It recognises the importance of rapid communication with Canada, and the importance of linking up two great ports of the Empire, but regrets that owing to the present state of the finances it is unable to concur in the proposal for a subsidy.

The message adds that when the financial limitations imposed by the Constitution are removed, the Federal Government will be in a better position to deal with the subject.

As to appointing a representative to the conference of governments interested, owing to the absence of the Prime Minister and other Ministers from Melbourne it is not possible to give a definite reply.

Canada is making great arrangements for furthering the projected All-Red route from Britain to Australia by way of Canada.

WANTED TO PURCHASE, about 50 millions of Milk Bally. Address particulars to M.L.K. 585, Star Office.

The population of Sydney and suburbs at the end of last year was 592,100.

The steamer Paroo has arrived at Fremantle from Singapore with a case of smallpox aboard.

A Bendigo bakery owner, named Reid, has been sentenced to five years' imprisonment for illicit gold buying.

The deportation of kanakas from Queensland cost the Federal Government over £31,000.

A rich find of alluvial gold has been made near the silver mining township of Sunny Corner, 125 miles west of Sydney, in the Bathurst district. The largest of several nuggets weighs 18 ozs.

The New South Wales Navigation Department propose the installation of the Morse apparatus at the principal lighthouses, to enable vessels to signal at night.

The Free Trade League has adopted resolutions against any attempt to sink the fiscal issue at the Federal elections, and condemning the suggested alliance between the Cook and Deakin parties.

Mr. W. M. Hughes, Federal Attorney-General, in the course of a speech last week, predicted an appeal to the people at no distant date to say whether a chance should not be given the Labour Party Government.

THE OLD COUNTRY.

Death of Sir F. Wills.

The death is announced of Sir Frederick Wills, director of the Imperial Tobacco Company.

Sir Frederick Wills, Governor of Guy's Hospital, was a member of Parliament representing North Bristol, where his company's works are situated, from 1900 to 1908. He was the seventh son of Henry O. Wills, and was 42 years of age. He owned large estates, and is survived by three sons and three daughters.

Poor Law Administration.

The Poor Law Commission's report recommends the title of "Public assistance" instead of "Poor law relief," abolition of guardians of workhouses in the present poor law areas, and the transferment of the work to borough and county councils, with experts helped by the public assistance committees, who will link private charities to public assistance, the creation of labour colonies for the unemployed, and the creation of labour exchanges.

The report is a gigantic one of 40 volumes.

The Distressful Country.

In the course of the debate on the Address-in-Reply in the House of Lords, the Marquis of Londonderry (Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1886 to 1889), attacking the Government, said the condition of things in Ireland was a scandal and disgrace to any civilised country. He emphasised the increased outrages under the administration of Mr. Birrell (Chief Secretary for Ireland). In some counties the horror was inconceivable, and the people's lives were a hell upon earth.

Lord Denham replied that two-thirds of the country was peaceable. After referring to intimidation in other parts, he admitted that circumstances might conceivably arise compelling the enforcement of the Crimes Act, or an appeal to the Legislature for special additional powers.

Lord Macdonald stated that personally he would have been inclined to give short shrift to the agitation. He hoped the land purchase would be completed in ten or fifteen years.

Murder Charge.

The jury has disagreed in the case of Mrs. Haskell, who is charged with the murder of her son, a crippled lad of 12 years of age, at Fisherton, Salisbury, on October 31.

The murder occurred at 10.30 on the night of October 31. A cousin of the victim called at the house at that hour, and had just entered the back door when he heard his aunt cry out, "Stop that man; he has murdered my Teddy." The woman rushed into the road and raised an alarm. There was some suggestion that the murderer was bent upon a robbery of a particularly mean character. The crippled boy had for some years been saving up all his odd pence to purchase a cork leg to take the place of the limb he lost some years ago. The neighbours, out of their small earnings, had

been extremely generous to the boy, and he had saved about £8, which he kept in a box in a bedroom. Mrs. Haskell stated that directly after her nephew knocked at the door she heard a noise in her son's bedroom and saw a man come downstairs and escape by the street door, throwing down a blood-stained knife as he ran.

Drunk or Drugged?

Captain Young, of the barque Culluna, who was recently landed at Falmouth on the voyage from London to Sydney, it being alleged that he was violently delirious, has been acquitted on a charge of drunkenness.

He has counter-charged the mate with conspiracy and with drugging him.

Owing, it was declared, to Captain Young being incapacitated and suffering from delirium, the barque Culluna, which put into Falmouth on the voyage from London to Sydney on January 22, with the crew in a mutinous condition, steered an erratic course to 60 miles beyond the Lizard. The captain was so violent that the chief officer grappled with him and chained him, lowering him into the lazarette. The crew insisted on returning. Captain Young was medically treated at Falmouth, and a successor was appointed.

Cheering if True.

The "Evening Standard" announces that secret army experiments in aviation have been conducted in remote parts of the country for many months past.

The results achieved, declares the "Standard," place Britain ahead of any other nation in aerial navigation for army purposes.

For some time past Mr. Cody has been conducting aeroplane experiments at Farnborough Common, where the British balloon school is situated, but the measure of success he achieved was not very great. Apparently these experiments were in the nature of a blind to cover the real aviation experiments. If Britain is ahead of Germany and France in aerial navigation for army purposes then she must have made great progress indeed, for both these countries have accomplished much with the balloon type of airship and with the heavier-than-air machine. The War Office has been very harshly criticised for its laissez-faire policy in regard to aviation, but if the "Standard" be correct it could afford to accept all such criticism in silence, and, in fact, with satisfaction.

Colonial Loans.

A New South Wales 3 1/2 per cent loan of £1,580,000, at a minimum of 97 1/2, repayable in 1950, and redeemable at par in 1930, has been underwritten on the usual terms, and is quoted at par to 1/4 per cent. premium.

The "Financial Times" asserts that the loan is not a great bargain compared with the Indian 3 1/2 per cent. loan.

The Westport Harbour Board's £200,000 5 per cent. loan has been over-subscribed, and is quoted at 1/4 per cent. premium.

Imperial Press Congress.

An Imperial Press Conference Committee has just been appointed to arrange subjects for discussion at the forthcoming Congress.

The first function will be a banquet, at which Lord Burnham, principal proprietor of the London "Daily Telegraph," will preside.

In Name and Fact.

The new ocean-going torpedo boat destroyer Swift, of 1800 tons, has proved herself aptly named.

She was designed for a speed of 36 knots per hour, but on her trials on the Clyde last week she attained a speed of 38 knots, thus equalling the record of the flying Tartar, which recently ran at 38 knots under service conditions after a year's work.

Anglican Ritual.

The voluntary offerings to the Church of England for central and diocesan societies and parochial purposes for the year ending last Easter, totalled £7876.740.

The Canterbury Convocation Committee, which has been sitting for two years, recommend a revised lectionary (optional) and Eucharist vestment (optional).

It is also recommended that the use of the Athanasian creed be optional. Where there are many communicants,