

The News of the Week

IN THE DOMINION.

New Zealand's Position.

SIR JOSEPH WARD was entertained at lunch by the Government of New South Wales on Wednesday last.

In the course of an interview, he said the position in New Zealand was good. Some of the reports as to the state of things in the Dominion had been very much exaggerated. The cause of a great deal of the slump was due to the fall in wool values a year ago, and over-speculation in land in some parts of the country, making the money market tight.

The wool exports had now improved, while the Bank of New Zealand had had a remarkably good year. The tightness of money had caused a few people to employ as little labour as possible. The financial condition of the country, from a Government point of view, was good. The most pessimistic must realise that the resources of New Zealand were so great and so widespread that the check must be of a temporary character only.

Sir Joseph left for Melbourne to-night, en route for England.

The "Sydney Morning Herald," commenting on the interview with Sir Joseph, says: "We scarcely need Sir Joseph's assurance that New Zealand is sound. Her production this year was greater than ever, and there is no reason to apprehend that there will be any serious halt in her steady expansion for an indefinite number of years to come."

The "Herald" adds that the fact that the drop in value of the chief product, wool, should have given the country such a severe shock is the best evidence we have that there was undue inflation in land values.

The Half-Million Claims.

A close scrutiny of the Parliamentary Blue Books by a "Post" reporter has unearthed some ancient history connected with Webster and his claims against the New Zealand Government. The records go to show that the claims have been much in evidence since 1887. In that year a report on the bona fides of the claims was made by Mr. (now Sir Robert) Stout. In the late eighties and the early nineties the matter was again before Parliament at various times during six years, a second report being submitted by Sir Robert Stout in 1893. The records cover hundreds of pages, but a few extracts from Sir Robert Stout's opinions and the Parliamentary papers show that the greatest consideration was at all times extended to the man who succeeded in getting the Senate of the United States to further his claims.

The Hon. Geo. Fowlds, in an interview, said it was Webster's claim that was taking Dr. Fitchett to England. It was a very odd thing. Webster was an American, who had been a settler in New Zealand in the days before the colony was actually founded, and he had lodged a claim for certain lands supposed to have been bought from Maoris. All claims of such description were adjudicated on by a commission, and Webster was then given what was considered his proper allowance. His claim had been appearing and re-appearing within the past 40 years, but he (the Minister) did not think that the present case would have very serious results to the Dominion. "You know," added Mr. Fowlds, "claims have been lodged for land bought from Maoris, mostly in the North Island, and the total area claimed exceeds the area of the North and South Islands by nearly a million acres."

Moose for New Zealand.

Mr. Douglas Howard, commissioner of the Dominion Park, Banff, Canadian Rockies, is now engaged in making a collection of moose for New Zealand, in accordance with an arrangement made with Sir Joseph Ward. Mr. Howard recently informed a representative of the "Otago Daily Times" that the animals will be delivered at Vancouver next December, when they will be about six months old. Indians under an arrangement with Mr. Howard under which they rear the moose calves on cow's milk until they have be-

come hardy enough for shipment. A caretaker from New Zealand will proceed to Vancouver to take charge of the moose.

Effects of Radium.

It is expected that some interesting results will be obtained from experiments in connection with the effect of radium on fish, which are being conducted in a well at the Canterbury Museum. The investigations are being carried on by a committee appointed by the Canterbury Philosophical Institute.

South African Union.

The Hon. James Carroll, Acting-Prime Minister, who returned from Hawke's Bay on Friday, received a cablegram from Sir Joseph Ward, from Adelaide, stating that he has cabled as follows to the President of the South African Convention:—

"On behalf of the Government and people of New Zealand, I desire to offer my heartiest congratulations upon the consummation of the great work of South African union. I am satisfied it marks a distinct step forward, not only in the prosperity of South Africa itself, but in the consolidation of the great Empire to which we are all proud to belong, and are so anxious to see strengthened."

Knox Residential College.

The official opening of the Knox Residential College for divinity students took place last week. The function was very largely attended by prominent citizens, and was in every way a success. The proceedings opened with a dedicatory service conducted by the Rev. Jas. Chisholm (Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly), and thereafter addresses were delivered by the Rev. A. Cameron, the Hon. G. Fowlds, the Rev. D. Borrie, Mr. John Ross, the Rev. W. Hewitson (master of the college), the Rev. Canon Wood-Thorpe, the Rev. P. W. Fairclough, the Rev. Dr. Watt, Mr. J. H. Walker (Mayor of Dunedin), Mr. Jas. Allen, M.P., and Professor Gilray. In the afternoon the Rev. Mr. Hewitson held a reception.

Military Training.

Military people and others interested are advocating the establishment of a permanent training ground for mounted infantry. Taihape is suggested for one place in the North Island. Major Brandon, speaking at a volunteer smoke concert last week, made a strong appeal for separation of military control of the defence forces from political influence.

Railway Appropriations.

The following appropriations for railway works have been passed by Cabinet for expenditure:—Stratford-Ongarue, £7,000; North Auckland Main Trunk 14,000; Kawakawa-Grahamtown, £3,000; Westport-Inangahua, £2,000; Riversdale-Switzerland, £1,200; Orepuki-Waiata, £800; Catlins River, £4,500. The votes are larger than might have been expected to meet the demand for work for men out of employment.

Waikō Going Dry.

Another obscene language case was heard in the Waikō Police Court on Saturday, when a man named R. Swann was convicted, fined £2 and costs 7s, for an offence committed in an hotel. The hotels are now full every night, men evidently being bent on celebrating the last few days of the license period. Startling rumours are afloat as to what will happen on Wednesday evening, when the hotels are to be finally closed.

COMMONWEALTH.

Sir Joseph Ward in Australia.

Members of the State Cabinet welcomed Sir Joseph Ward on his arrival in Melbourne from Sydney on June 23, and he was entertained at luncheon at Parliament Buildings. In addition to the State Ministers, the Federal Prime

Minister (Mr. Deakin), the Minister for Defence (Mr. Joseph Cook), and the Federal Treasurer (Sir John Forrest) were present.

Mr. Deakin had to leave early to attend the opening of the Federal Parliament, and in his absence Sir John Forrest proposed "Our Guest," remarking, in doing so, that Sir Joseph Ward was recognised as a very strong man throughout Australasia and England. He had accomplished great work during his strenuous public career, and Australia was proud of his latest act in offering Great Britain a Dreadnought.

Proceeding, Sir John said he regarded the coming conference as the greatest in history since the days of Napoleon, and he wished Sir Joseph Ward a successful mission. He was sure New Zealand's Prime Minister would take a leading and distinguished part in the conference.

Sir Joseph Ward, in replying, said he was proud to represent loyal New Zealand. He regarded the conference as a momentous one in the Empire's history, and would gladly co-operate with Australia's representative in the promotion of the Empire's interests.

A party of Ministers gave Sir Joseph an enthusiastic send-off.

Federal Capital Site.

The report of the Federal Capital Site Advisory Board has been tabled in Parliament. The whole proposed area of 648,587 acres is described as suitable for building purposes, and the water supply as good and plentiful. The Board considers a practicable railway route can be found between the capital and the coast at Jervis Bay.

The Government introduces a bill at an early date to fix the exact site of the capital.

In the House of Representatives, Sir William Lyne gave notice of motion in favour of a bill to remove Customs tariff anomalies.

The Government anticipates that it will have a majority of about 10 on Mr Fisher's motion, under which it is proposed to discuss the platforms of the Labour party and of the coalition.

Shipping Disasters.

A boat containing Captain Lindstol and six members of the crew of the Norwegian barque Orleans, bound from the Seychelles to Dunedin with a cargo of guano, reached Macquarrie Heads on Thursday night.

The captain reported that the barque foundered twelve days ago.

Another boat, containing the mate and six seamen, is missing.

Captain Lindstol states that the Orleans, when 200 miles off the Tasmanian coast, opened out and commenced to leak badly. He was obliged to abandon the ship and the crew took to the boats, which were well supplied with food and water.

The weather was exceptionally rough, and the men suffered great privations. Those who landed are in a very weak state. The boats kept together till Wednesday afternoon.

A sharp lookout is being kept for the one still missing, which is presumed to be off the coast.

The second disaster occurred at Adventure Bay, where the barque Natal Queen, which was finishing loading timber in heavy weather, grounded on the rocks and filled. The crew of nine landed safely.

Latest reports are that the vessel is likely to become a total wreck.

Remodelling Sydney.

The final report of the City Improvement Commission, which has been sitting since May of last year, recommends a comprehensive scheme for the remodelling of Sydney, including the immediate introduction of the underground electric railways in the city and suburbs, the widening of Elizabeth-street for its entire length to not less than 100 feet, creating, widening, and improving some other streets. Other recommendations include the generally beautifying and developing of the city, the removal of Prymont Bridge, providing new traffic routes to the wharves, dealing with the slum areas, and housing reforms. It is considered that the scheme will meet the needs of traffic for the next twenty-five years, at the end of which, at the present rate of increase, it is estimated that the population of the city and suburbs will be a million and a quarter.

THE OLD COUNTRY.

Great British Airship.

The Parliamentary Aerial Defence Committee state that an airship of 237,500 cubic feet is approaching completion, and it is hoped to sail it from Paris to London before the Parliamentary session concludes.

The committee has secured the option of purchase of the vessel for the nation. She will have two propeller motors, each of 220 horse-power, will carry petrol for a 700 miles journey, will be able to accommodate 25 passengers, and have a speed of from 35 to 40 miles an hour.

The "Daily Mail" offers £5000 to build a garage to enable the airship to remain in England until the test.

In addition to the huge airship now building, over which the British Government has an option of purchase, Vickers, Son and Maxim are preparing to construct a huge airship at Barrow.

The "Daily Mail's" offer of £5000 towards an airship garage to enable the first airship to remain in England until after the tests, has been accepted, and the work of building commences immediately.

The British Government is fully alive to the necessities of the situation, and, face to face with the problem of aviation, neither British nor naval officers are depressed; they believe that "we shall come out on top." So far, little that can be described as practical has been accomplished, save by the Wright brothers. The Navy will devote itself especially to dirigible balloons; aeroplanes will be the special province of the Army authorities. The naval officer is essentially a practical person, a handy man with a curl of gold on the cuff of his sleeve. Now that money will be forthcoming, he will set to work, and there will be the scientific committee just appointed by the Government to deal with all theoretical points in mathematics, meteorology, and kindred subjects. The Admiralty have already selected a suitable place for building dirigibles, and for testing their capabilities for the work they are to be put to. They have, in fact, already begun the construction of several of these airships, and hope to find a type that will be useful in half a gale. The aeroplane, the Admiralty thinks, will be for the Army, the dirigible for the Navy, and, though Britain may be late in starting, the responsible officers do not fear for that.

An Immense Work.

Cabinet has decided to overhaul the drainage, and reorganise the water supply in London.

The work will take 15 years to complete, and a loan of £10,000,000 will be issued.

Birthday Honours.

In connection with the official celebration of His Majesty's birthday, a number of honours have been conferred. No new peers have been created.

The list includes the following:—

BARONETS.

Twelve baronets are created, including—

Mr E. H. HOLDEN, M.P., Liberal, managing director of the London City and Midland Bank.

Mr T. W. NUSSEY, M.P., Liberal barrister-at-law.

Mr C. D. ROSE, M.P., Liberal, formerly a partner in the American banking firm of Morton, Rose and Co.

Mr T. T. L. SCARISBRICK, M.P., Liberal.

Mr ARTHUR OSMOND-WILLIAMS, M.P., Liberal.

Mr ARCHIBALD WILLIAMSON, M.P., Liberal, partner in Balfour, Williamson and Co., merchants, Liverpool and London, and a director of the Royal Insurance Co.

Sir DYCE DUCKWORTH, consulting physician at St. Bartholomew's Hospital (created a knight in 1896).

Mr H. LONGMAN, a member of the firm of Longmans, Green and Co., publishers.

Dr. HENRY MORRIS, President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

PRIVY COUNCILLORS.

Five gentlemen are called to His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, including—