

which are frequent, and steam is reliable. Suction gas is cheaper, but not so satisfactory, and an expensive storage battery would be necessary to get a steady light. With regard to tramways, Mr. Marchant is of opinion that self-propelled cars are preferable in a small system to the overhead method in vogue in big cities. As regards a reservoir, Mr. Marchant points out that the present water supply of the town depends upon the integrity of a main pipe 20 miles long giving 300ft. pressure. No storage is provided. He points out the danger and inconvenience which would follow a temporary failure of such a supply, and says that, in his opinion, a reservoir must be provided with a minimum capacity of two million gallons. He suggests the construction of such a reservoir immediately over the Freezing Works. On the subject of extending the breakwater, he points out that the effect of the present state of things is that during storms, or quite moderate swells from seaward, a furious sea runs in the entrance channel to the Turanganui River. "The channel," he says, "is positively dangerous, and it says a great deal for those navigating it that no serious accident has so far occurred." To remedy this, Mr. Marchant proposes a 300ft. extension of the breakwater built on the same principle as that at New Plymouth, designed by himself, the extension being canted to seaward to provide a wider entrance. It will be readily conceded that if Gisborne is going to embark upon all these schemes at once, the hands of the two local bodies concerned will be full for a long time to come.

Palmerston's Military Tournament

In these days, when thoughts about defence matters fill the minds of all good citizens, a military tournament, such as that which has just taken place at Palmerston North, deserves at least some passing notice. Among the illustrations in this issue will be found some interesting pictures of this important event. It is satisfactory to know that beautiful weather favoured the tournament. There were over a thousand men in uniform on the grounds, representing no less than 55 corps from the whole length and breadth of the Dominion, and a very large course of spectators. As the "Manawatu Evening Standard" remarks, it does not require much knowledge of military affairs to appreciate the importance of such a gathering to the volunteer movement of the Dominion, and that importance is emphasised by the magnitude of the event. A gathering which attracts men of every conceivable branch of the service in vigorous and whole-hearted competition must react in a beneficial way upon the standard of efficiency and increase the popularity of the service. There has been some misapprehension in the public mind as to the nature of this tournament. It is quite a mistake to suppose that it is a sports gathering. It is nothing of the sort. The men do not go to the military tournament primarily to enjoy themselves, though he must be a sour sort of volunteer, of little use to his country, who does not enjoy such a tournament. The men take the whole thing most seriously, and fully realise its value as an incentive to good work. That this is really so is proved by the increased efficiency shown by all branches and also by the substantial increase shown from year to year in the number of corps represented. Last year some 39 corps had squads at the tournament. This year, as already stated, there were no less than 55 corps represented, an increase, and a gratifying one, of 16. On the opening day his Excellency the Governor, who was escorted to the ground by the Manawatu Mounted Rifles, reviewed the troops. The most admirable arrangements were made for the reception of the competitors. All the visiting competitors had to do on their arrival was to go straight to their tents which had been pitched for them by the Palmerston Guards Rifles at the suggestion of the organiser and secretary of the tournament, Sergt.-Major Dovey, whose praises are loudly voiced by all who had anything to do with the affair. Sergt.-Major Dovey has apparently had wide experience of tournaments, and his great executive ability was brought to bear with the most gratifying results. The judges for the tournament were chosen with great care, being the best obtainable in the Dominion, so that competitors had no quarrel on that score. They were: Artillery events—Capt. R. O. Chesney, A.A.G. Engineer and signalling—Capt.

J. E. Duigan, N.Z.M. Mounted events—Capt. R. O. Chesney, A.A.G.; Capt. W. F. G. Levin (late 1st King's Dragoon Guards). Infantry events—Staff Sergts.—Major H. Peacock, W. Atwell, L. F. McNair, T. McCristoll. Bugle and Trumpet—Major C. D. Mackintosh. Field sketching—Sergt. H. Petersen, R.N.Z.A. Ambulance competitions—Lieut. Col. J. R. Purdy, Surgeon-Major J. W. O'Brien (Commonwealth Forces), and Surgeon-Capt. P. R. Cook. Altogether the whole thing was very successful.

Naval Scandals.

England is not the only country that has war office scandals. The cables tell us that the officials in charge of the German shipyards at Kiel are undergoing a period of perturbation as a result of an inquiry being made into the way the financial side of the ship-building business is being conducted. The work appears to be not so much conducted as simply let slide. The merchants who make this "marine store" dealing their peculiar business have naturally taken advantage of unbusinesslike officialdom and have made huge profits. Their favourite method of buying cheap being to form a ring, allocate each lot of brass or bronze fittings, or whatever might be offered, to a member of the ring and then refuse to bid one against the other. Naturally the German War Office finds itself a heavy loser, and so—an inquiry.

The officials in charge of the yard state in extenuation, that their business is war, not "old-junk," and after all, it is a quite reasonable excuse, one can hardly expect a naval officer to be able to frustrate the shrewd methods of "the man of business," who, when he delivers the well-worn axiom to the effect that "business is business" frequently means that "sharpening" is business. During the South African War there was an amazing amount of crooked contracting, and in consequence, Lord Kitchener advised that capable business men should be appointed to arrange such contracts and supervise the carrying out of them, and that seems to be the only fit method of checking abuses.

The officials who are charged with incompetent supervision stated in their defence that they were more concerned in making their department efficient and ready for war. Also, they declared that they were ignorant of the market values of the materials sold. The first excuse will probably appeal to the German authorities more than the last, which, of course, is exactly what they are in disgrace about. The scandal should at all events call attention to the fact that a smart officer is not necessarily a smart business man, and that only sound business men should have charge of business matters. The French Government has been aroused by the recent revelations of naval mal-administration, and England still hears echoes of the South African contracts inquiry, and may be relied upon to endorse Lord Kitchener's recommendation in a practical manner.

The Development of Mesopotamia.

That blessed name, Mesopotamia, seems likely to become something more than an incitement to devotional enthusiasm. Sir William Willcocks has a scheme for irrigating and developing that country, so that it may once more assume its erstwhile proud position of being one of the world's chief granaries. Sir William Willcocks, who is famous as an irrigation expert, has been engaged by the Turkish Government to evolve plans for the opening up of Arabia. In a report recently submitted to the Turkish authorities he advocates the construction of a railway from Baghdad westward to Damascus, where it will connect with the line running to the seaport of Beirut. If this scheme is carried out it will be greatly to the benefit of Turkey, and, incidentally, to Europe generally, not to mention the country served by the line. The projected German railway from Baghdad to Basra, on the Persian Gulf, though it serves the rich Euphrates Valley, would not be able to compete against the more direct communication with the Mediterranean ports, for, to reach the Mediterranean from Babra necessitates a sea journey from the Persian Gulf through the Red Sea.

Sir William estimates the cost of irrigating the Mesopotamia at something over two millions and the cost of the Baghdad-Damascus railway at two and a-half millions. The estimated cost of the railway, which works out at a little more than £3000 per mile, seems remark-

ably cheap, especially when compared with the cost of railway construction in New Zealand; but, doubtless cheap labour and level country will counterbalance the outlay needed for transport of materials. Sir William Willcocks is of opinion that the railway will be yielding profits before the irrigation works are commenced, which means that Turkey will have a source of vast revenue when once the wilderness begins to blossom into corn lands, and that there will be another corner in cereals that may either allay the hunger of Europe or fill the pockets of American speculators, as the Fates direct.

The French Premier.

Something of a sensation appears to have been created on the Continent by the new French Premier, who has threatened that unless the Chamber of Deputies will obey his orders he will promptly resign. A change of Ministry means far less under the French constitution than under our own, for no dissolution is necessary, and a country which has seen forty-one Ministries come and go within less than forty years would not be seriously alarmed by the prospective advent of another. But the circumstances under which M. Briand took office were so exceptional and the man himself is so interesting a figure that his elevation to power was watched with eager anticipation not only by the French people, but by their rivals and enemies. The overthrow of the Clemenceau Ministry was so unexpected that the emergence of M. Briand was a thoroughly dramatic surprise. But the chief importance attached to his acceptance of the Premiership lies in the fact that he is a professed Socialist, and that he first won his way to public notice and parliamentary fame by advocating the doctrines of the Continental Socialists in their most aggressive and militant form.

A Meteoric Career.

The question as to what use M. Briand will make of his opportunities is rendered all the more interesting by the remarkable and fascinating personality of the man. Trained to the bar, he soon turned his attention to the complaints and aspirations of the workers, and he has spent most of his life—he is only forty-four years old—in demanding redress for their grievances. M. Briand has a great reputation as an orator, and as a Parliamentary debater he stands supreme even in the French Chamber of Deputies, where the eloquence of political assemblies reaches its high-water mark. Gifted with a magnificent voice, singular readiness of speech, remarkable logical acuteness, and a copious and picturesque vocabulary, he has succeeded during the past ten years, not only in holding great public audiences spell-bound by his rhetorical fervour, but in extorting praise even from his political foes by his extraordinary capacity for overwhelming his opponents in debate, and for carrying a hostile house with him against its will. More than this, he has displayed remarkable skill in putting difficult and dangerous measures through Parliament. His greatest achievement in this direction was to draft the bill that in its ultimate form secured the separation of Church and State in France. In handling this subject, M. Briand, according to the "Temps," exhibited "inexhaustible energy and boundless fertility of resource," and the peaceful settlement of this most dangerous question is universally admitted to have been due chiefly to his exertions. An orator, a statesman, and a skilled Parliamentary manager, M. Briand should indeed "go far," but more than anything else, he is a Socialist, and therein consists the chief interest of his meteoric career and his phenomenally sudden rise to power.

Socialistic Views Modified.

There are many grades of Socialism represented in the French Chamber of Deputies; but M. Briand would be the first to admit that in the earlier years of his public career he was one of the most extreme and radical exponents of his creed. Only eight years ago, addressing a huge mass meeting of workers ripe for insurrection, he declared: "I firmly believe that a general strike is practicable—it will be the social revolution. Go forward," cried the present Premier of the French Republic, "with swords, pistols, and rifles! Far from disapproving,

I shall regard it as a duty to take my place in the ranks if necessary." But M. Briand, since he attained a leading place in Parliament, has frankly admitted that his views have been fundamentally altered. When Jean Jaures, the acknowledged leader of the French Social Democrats, charged him with changing his opinions, he answered boldly, "Who that is not bereft of reason does not change?" When he accepted office in the Sarrien Ministry a few years back, his Socialist colleagues denounced him as a renegade, and formally excluded him from the Socialist fellowship. But this excommunication has not prevented the Socialists individually from continuing to support Briand, even though his professions of faith have continually taken a milder and more conciliatory form as the years have passed. He has learned, he declares, that the workers of France have never gained much by revolutions, and he has decided that the policy which suits their interests best must combine "advanced social measures" with "orderliness and peace." He has admitted, virtually, that he is "a good Republican" because the established constitution, he believes, will enable the workers to gain their ends without violence and without irrevocable injury to the country. "I accept," he has said recently, "only such ideas as are practicable. I deal not with dreams and fancies but with the realisable facts of life." No wonder that the "red" wing of the Socialist party reviles him as a traitor to the cause. But the French nation as a whole believes not only that his Socialism is sincere and honest, but that he will endeavour to carry it into effect by constitutional means; and the outside world will watch with deep and absorbing interest the efforts of this extraordinary man to reconcile his almost fantastic conceptions of social reorganisation with the practical conditions of public life, and the limitations of political action that have already modified his views so profoundly.

Double Shuffle.

The attitude which the leading Harmsworth journal, the "Daily Mail," has taken towards the Budget in British politics, is something in the nature of a political harlequinade. According to the "Review of Reviews," Lord Northcliffe suddenly took into his somewhat vagrom fancy to convert the "Daily Mail" into a huge megaphone through which he roared the praises of the Budget. The effect was electric. The Anti-Budget party felt as if their own familiar friend had treacherously smitten them under the fifth rib. The Liberals were correspondingly elated. Never had there been such a "volte face" executed since the same quick-change artist executed a sudden right-about-face on the subject of the "stomach tax." A fierce and frenzied cry of dismay and disgust went up from the Tory ranks—and Lord Northcliffe wobbled again. After giving the coup de grace one day to those who were fighting the Budget, he came out next day with articles pointing out the best way to defeat the Budget. The best way, it seems, was to adopt its social reforms and cry aloud for Tariff Reform! In the name of the prophet—figs! With this double-shuffle recedes once more into the distance the lingering hope that some day Lord Northcliffe may develop a political acumen worthy to be compared to the marvellous journalistic flair which has given him his unique position on the English Press.

Cynic: "She knows his footsteps a mile off in the midst of a hundred others, sees him coming from the corner of her eye, pats her hair and smooths her dress, and jumps a foot with surprise when he ascends the piazza steps."
Cynic: "Who?"
Cynic: "All of 'em!"

THE SUMMER EXHIBITION
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(THE ROSE SHOW)
Will be opened in
THE CIRCUS HALL
By His Worship the Mayor on
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AT 3 O'CLOCK.
Doors open at 2.30.
The Children's Exhibits will be staged in
St. Andrew's Hall.
MUSIC. AFTERNOON TEA.
Admission, 3s. Children, 6d.
W. WALLACE BRUCE, Secretary.