

## GENERAL NEWS.

Dr. Wohlman, the English bacteriologist appointed by the Government to take charge of the thermal springs, reaches Wellington by the direct steamer *Itapehu* on Tuesday. His headquarters will be at Rotorua.

The Kawhia "Settler" states that a local settler, Mr Mason, brought a thousand sheep through from the Waikato to stock his grazing ground at Taharoa. This, it is said, is the largest drive of sheep that has come through this forty miles of bush track from the inland districts.

At a meeting of the committee appointed at a recent public meeting to make arrangements for a memorial for soldiers who have fallen in South Africa, it was unanimously resolved to inform His Excellency that the committee cannot see its way to support the proposals put forward by His Excellency to establish a veterans' home in Auckland as a fitting memorial to soldiers from the Otago district who have fallen in South Africa.

Christchurch teachers are very indignant at the Board of Education's decision to appoint only teachers who have had charge of a school to headmasterships and first assistantships in large city schools. They state that country teachers will have an unfair advantage, and talk of holding an indignation meeting.

A "Star" runner named Harold Routh, a lad of sixteen, was stuck up in one of the by-streets in Mount Ras-kill on Saturday night, by a couple of young fellows, who relieved him of the ten dozen "Stars" he was delivering, and also took his hat. The runner states that his assailants were apparently about 20 years of age. They said nothing to him, but simply seized his bags and made off with them, going towards Kingsland across the paddocks, a number of ten "Stars" revealing their trail. About 50 of the papers were found hidden in a paddock yesterday in one of the bags. The robbery is a singularly motiveless one, and the case is probably one of larrikinism.

Investigations into the extraordinary yarns published in the "Star" as to the stripping of young women by masked men in Mount Eden and Upper Vincent-street, only go to strengthen our original surmise that the first story was the result of a hallucination, and the second merely invented to give a show of truth to the first. The author of the second yarn which was published was invited to call at the "Star" and substantiate the statements made, but has not yet done so. We are more than ever convinced that while the earlier yarn was more or less manufactured, the second was entirely so. There is every reason to believe in the sincerity of the parents of the girl in question, but there is equally strong ground for believing that the girl herself was, says that journal, under some hallucination. The police fully endorse this view of the case. Inspector Cullen is not surprised at receiving sensational stories, which is a common occurrence in the official life of the force. In fact, the Inspector informed a "Star" reporter who saw him that he at the present time had another communication of a parallel nature, which was of a nature that could not be published.

It now transpires the outbreak of anthrax is on the farm of Mr C. J. Storey, of Rangiwaka, near Te Awamutu. Six cattle died while feeding on turnips, but the remainder were saved by removal. This is the third outbreak in Waikato. Each occurred while cattle were feeding on turnips. It is reassuring to know the mortality has ceased. Storey and Ward are progressing satisfactorily in the hospital, but Cunningham's face is swelled beyond all recognition and presents a loathsome sight. He is in a dangerous condition and is not expected to live.

The Health Department is informed that the outbreak of anthrax in Waikato appears to have originated from the importation of infected manure not properly sterilised; that cattle became affected by the manure and passed on disease to the men working among them. Several of

the cases are serious. The department is taking the necessary steps to prevent the disease spreading.

Mr Robert Cunningham, of Te Rau-hu, the anthrax patient, died in the Waikato Hospital on Sunday. He had improved considerably since his admission, and his friends hoped for his recovery. Yesterday he appeared well, and spoke to the matron, but soon afterwards expired without a struggle.

The deceased was a pioneer settler in the early days, and served with Von Tempsky's Forest Rangers and also in Major Jackson's troop of cavalry at Te Awamutu. He was very highly respected, and was one of the most popular settlers in the district.

Should the scheme of the re-arrangement of Parliamentary electorates proposed by the Representation Commissioners be given effect to, the new House of Representatives will consist of 80 members, of whom 41 will represent the North Island and 39 the South Island. The number of European members returned by each island will be equal—namely, 38—but in addition the Maori members have to be reckoned with. There are four Maori electorates in the colony, three being in the North Island and one in the South. On the basis of the respective native populations in the North and South Islands, the South Island Maoris are really not entitled to a member at all, as out of the total Maori population of the colony, which was 43,101 according to last year's census, only 2446 live in the South Island. Each of the North Island Maori members therefore represents an average population of about 13,500, whereas the Southern Maori member only represents less than a fifth of that number. Including the Maori members the North Island will under the Commissioners' proposals have a majority of two in the new Parliament.

A meeting was held in the Public Hall, Maungaturoto, on Tuesday, July 1st. Mr W. J. Bailey presided, and Mr Hy. Cullen and the Rev. E. C. Davidson having addressed the meeting, the following resolutions were passed; proposed by Mr H. E. Flower and seconded by Mr W. H. Cullen:—(1) That this meeting of Maungaturoto residents, having heard the statements made upon the sworn declaration of George Fowlds, M.H.R., merchant, of Auckland, Chas. E. Davidson, Congregational minister, of Maungaturoto, Henry Cullen, store-keeper, of Maungaturoto, William Gittos, Wesleyan minister and missionary to the Maoris, and Wesley Spragg, merchant, Auckland, such declaration having reference to the conduct of the Stipendiary Magistrate (Mr T. Hutchison) while he was acting as Chairman of the Waitemata Licensing Committee at its sitting at Helensville on Tuesday, the 10th day of June, respectfully requests that the Minister for Justice will cause enquiry to be made into the charges contained in that declaration, and if such charges are found to be substantiated, to take such action as the case demands." (2) Moved by Mr C. Ford and seconded by Mr J. Cullen: "That this meeting enters its strong protest against the action of the Waitemata Licensing Committee in thrusting a license upon a district where it was neither wanted nor required, especially as in so doing they violated the spirit of the Licensing Act and went in direct opposition to the expressed wish of a majority of four-fifths of the bona fide residents of the district, and would respectfully urge the electoral district to vote solidly for reduction at the next local option poll so as to enable us to remove this wrong from our midst." (3) Moved by the Rev. C. E. Davidson, seconded by Mr E. J. Flower: "That this meeting hereby instructs the Chairman to convey to the editor of the 'Star' our appreciation of his able advocacy of the cause of liberty and justice in contending against the thrusting of a license in our district in violation of the spirit of the licensing laws and against the expressed wish of a majority of the residents of the said district." The meeting was very enthusiastic and, considering the state of the roads, was fairly representative of the "no license" party in the district.

## POLITICAL.

In the House last week a considerable number of petitions were presented from Christchurch in favour of the abolition of the totalisator.

Mr Fowlds is to ask what steps the Government intends to take to equalise the representation of the North and South Islands in the Legislative Council.

In reply to Mr Napier, the Postmaster-General said he hoped the railway arrangements would be such as to warrant the steamship owners putting on a daily steamer between Onelunga and New Plymouth.

In reply to Mr Meredith, the Acting Colonial Treasurer said the question of abolishing the mortgage tax would be dealt with in the Financial Statement.

Mr Pirani was informed that the Government will consider the question of making concessions to members of friendly societies visiting Rotorua, but he thought it would not be advisable to give one class of persons such a preference.

The Impounding Act Amendment, which defines the "nearest pound" in the original Act to mean that pound which, having regard to the condition of roads or rivers or the like circumstances, can be most conveniently reached.

In reply to Mr Monk, Sir Joseph Ward said the great majority of cable messages received from Mr Seddon in London were coded, and the importance of the subjects warranted the expenditure. Hundreds of cable messages had been transmitted to Australia by request, and to many private persons.

Amongst the motions on the Order Paper in the House of Representatives was one in the name of Mr George Fowlds, who wants a return showing—(1) The number and names of licensed victuallers against whom informations were laid in the Auckland and any other districts, under the jurisdiction of Mr T. Hutchison, S.M., for breaches of the Licensing Acts during the past five years; and (2) the result of the hearing of such informations.

Among the papers laid on the table of the House by the Acting-Premier, one shows that the revenue for the year ending 31st December, 1901, amounted to £3,600,702, the principal heads being: Funds at 1st January, 1901—Renewal of premiums, assurance annuity, and endowment, £266,815; interest, £142,449. The total expenditure was £34,907, and the amount of funds on 31st December, 1901, was £3,285,415. The report of the Post and Telegraph Department for the year 1901 shows the following results:—Receipts: Postal £281,095, telegraph £212,415; grand total £488,573. Expenditure: Postal £281,096, telegraph £212,415; total £488,573; the balance of revenue over expenditure being £22,816.

## New Fire Brigade Station.

Although the ceremony of opening the splendid new quarters which the Auckland City Council has provided for the Fire Brigade in Pitt-street does not take place for some weeks, the builders have got sufficiently forward with the work for the brigade to take practical possession.

The arrangements are of an elaborate and up-to-date character. The engine room is extensive and conveniently placed, communicating with the street by three sets of folding doors. The flooring is composed of Val de Travers, a material of the nature of asphalt, and was laid by the same firm as is now engaged in paving Queen-street, namely, the Neuchatel Asphalte Company. Four iron pillars and girders support the ceiling. At the back of the engine room are six horse boxes, each door of which is separately supplied with a magnet arrangement, which enables an operator in the watch room to throw them all open instantaneously. The watch room and battery room is the first room on the right hand side on entering. This is the room where alarms of fire will be received; where the operator by a movement of the hand will fling open the stable doors, set the electric bells tinkling in every bedroom in the building, and set the whole staff astir. Should the firemen be playing billiards or in the social hall upstairs they will be able instantly to shoot down into the engine room by means of the two sliding poles which lead through the ceiling, while the city in general will be aroused by the ringing of the six-inch bell hanging outside—the signal for traffic to keep clear. The firm alarm system, the installing of which is now in hand, will enable alarms to be given from eighty different parts of the city and suburbs by the breaking of the glass face and the pressing of the button.

The rooms alongside the watch room, and also at the opposite side of the building are bedrooms, with the exception of the room opposite the watch room, which is to be Superintendent Wolley's office. The yard at the rear, with concrete floor and exit to the street, is well supplied with laundries, carpenter's and blacksmith's shop, lavatories, coal houses, etc. On the ground floor, also, there are kitchen and dining room, pantries, and other rooms for the use of the men. The upstairs portions are reached by two outside and two inside staircases. The apartments over the watch room and adjoining rooms are the foreman's quarters, and include three bedrooms, dining-room, kitchen, etc. A similar suite at the opposite side of the building form the realm of the superintendent. A feature of the yard not yet built will be a look-out tower, which will be used for the additional purpose of hose drying.

The builder is Mr George Baildon.

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## NATIONAL MUTUAL

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