

basis of the actual loss to the vendor, and not any fancy valuation.

According to late American experience the municipal authorities need cudgel their brains no longer in searching out a means of dealing with the dust fend, which is the source of so much discomfort and vexation every summer. There can be no two opinions that the present method of keeping this pest down is not only expensive, but also entirely unsatisfactory, so it is time we tried a better method of coping with the evil. The latest method adopted in America is the use of crude petroleum oil, which not only settles the dust, but is also cheap, and makes the roads firmer and more durable. It has had a thorough trial in many American cities, including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Calton, and Redlands, on the Pacific Coast. In other places it is still on trial, being used on roads which were formerly very expensive to keep free from dust. In many large towns, however, oil is an accepted institution, and is not only used on the streets, but also on country roadways leading to the city. Americans claim many advantages for the use of oil over the ordinary system of street watering. It does away with watering carts and the expense of keeping horses; the streets only require a spray of oil twice a year to keep them entirely free from rising dust; it has a hardening effect on the roads, and gives a smooth, firm surface that allows either an increase of load or greatly decreases the strain on horseflesh, while the cost of maintaining the roads is considerably lessened in consequence of the binding and strengthening effect of the oil.

Anyone making the West Coast trip to Auckland just now (says the Wellington "Post") cannot fail to be impressed with the progress the North Island is making. In Auckland suburban property grows steadily more popular, and the light volcanic soil in Mount Eden and adjacent districts, though full of the volcanic stones that are used for fencing, is wonderfully prolific of fruit and garden produce. The city itself is in the transition stage of the tramway conversion, and the most noticeable feature of the streets is the "yard-arm erections" for the overhead trolley system. Queen-street has recovered from its recent eruption, and is now a handsome broad thoroughfare, asphalted throughout, except on some of the footpaths, which make inferior walking to the main road. North Auckland—"the roadless North"—also finds itself a little further ahead. Dairying is advancing, and the new native grass, danthonia, is proving a valuable factor on the poorer lands of the kauri gum peninsula. Lands that will not take the sown English grasses do well under danthonia, and the demand for seed is said to exceed the supply.

A great hoax was perpetrated upon the residents of Temuka on Sunday. Early in the morning (according to the "Herald") a rumour gained currency that a whale, 85ft in length, had become stranded on the beach near the mouth of the Ophi. The statement was generally believed, and in the afternoon all the townspeople who could manage it journeyed to the beach. It is estimated that more than five hundred went to see the monster whale. Among the conveyances that left town were several drags full of passengers. When the beach was reached the visitors realised they had been "had." The hoax was taken in good part, and those returning kept up the error. It might truthfully be said the whole town was taken in. Numbers of Timaru cyclists were among those who went to the scene. A large crowd assembled at the post-office corner and greeted the visitors with fraternal cheers as they returned home.

Young girls are always to be found amongst the Brough audiences, but many parents decided that "Iris" was not a young person's play (says an Australian exchange), and forbade their daughters to see it. Some girls

who had been promised a visit to "Iris" mentioned it, after Bible class, to the clergyman of their parish, with whom they are on terms of familiar friendliness. The clergyman went to their parents, and persuaded them not to let their daughters go. It may be impossible to whip people into the theatres when they have no particular desire to visit them; it is at least quite as impossible to rope them out when they wish to go with the fervent wish of the theatre-loving Australian girl. These young persons said that they wished to "take the air" on Wednesday afternoon. They then collected all their girls they knew who were "not allowed to see 'Iris'" and went to the matinee in a large party. "Iris" is a play which, though painful, is of powerful interest, because the actors seem to be real people, living and moving in a real drama. One scene, where the lovers wait for the dawn, is quite Shakespearean. The piece is beautifully staged and played by the Broughs. All the girls were, of course, in love with Mrs Brough (Iris), and greatly concerned at her unhappy end. Iris being discarded both by the lover she cares for and the one she does not. "Let us hope," said one "young person," who was in tears, "that Laurie will take her back when he hears that the Spaniard has turned her out." "I'm jolly well sure he won't," retorted another. "Beast!" added a third. They carried their indignation and distress to the clergyman, who was much moved by their recital. Mr Brough cruelly took off the play before this clergyman had a chance to sample it for himself, but he preached a sermon the following Sunday. He condemned authors who wrote and managers who produce such plays, ending with the sweeping statement that it is almost entirely owing to them that men of the world treat women in the way they do. He is now hoping for two things—a revival of "Iris," so that he may judge for himself, and, next, that the season will not end with a problem piece, for the girls in his class have told him that they will attend the last performance, even if they have to put up with standing room only.

There is nothing more damaging to fine oratory than a few cold figures (says a writer in the "Australasian"). Mr Seddon has been telling them in England that Australasia can supply them with all the meat they require and Sir Edmund Barton, in a play upon words, said that Australia wished to become the nation's butcher—the aspiration being, of course, strictly peaceable. Now, England is in the matter of acres a very small country, yet in her small and fertile fields she has just about half as many sheep as all Australia; and England's sheep, taken head for head, are about half as heavy again as ours. If the whole of the stock in Australia—sheep and cattle—were sent to England to-morrow, they would be just about sufficient to feed that trifling island for some three months. When we get this sense of proportion fairly brought home, we realise that the man who is content to talk of Australia's flocks and herds just now, instead of doing his best to breed them, is wasting time, talent and energy in the wrong direction.

A few months ago a cash box containing £25, a cheque and an old age pension voucher was stolen from the Sumner post office. Later on £22 of the cash was returned, but the perpetrator has never been discovered. On Saturday, however, a man named James Maffey found the cash box in a clump of broom on land belonging to the Church Property Trustees, opposite the Council Chambers. The box contained the cheque and the old age pension voucher, but nothing else. It gives no indication as to who committed the theft.

Apropos of the open air cure for consumption here in New Zealand considerable criticism and ridicule was launched against the proposal to house the patients in tents. It is of interest, therefore, to learn that at Roston the same scheme is being adopted.

One learns from the "Transcript" that consumptives will be housed in "camps" composed of tents arranged

in a circle around an open-air fire, and surrounded by a wall of duck eight feet high. Each of these tents, says the "Transcript," will be a consumptive's home. He will sleep there, even through the coldest weather, with no other protection than plenty of felt blankets, felt boots, and a jug of hot water.

The tents are to be made of 12-ounce duck, and are to be only seven feet high, with four-foot walls, boxed in around the bottom a foot from the ground. They will be lined with weather-paper. The flaps will open towards the fire, the tents making a little circle about a clean gravel court. In the duck wall which will surround the whole will be a single entrance.

The people who live there will wear one heavy suit night and day. Each of them will take one quick, soapless bath a week, and will eat three hearty meals a day, with coffee in the morning and hot chocolate any time of the day or night. Their bill of fare will include milk, eggs, vegetables, bread and butter and meat—chiefly beef, mutton or pork broiled on spits before the fire, or roasted in the embers, or boiled down into soup.

This open-air life is expected to cure them of their disease. The method is the result of experiments made last winter by a scientist whose name has not yet been divulged. This gentleman pitched his tent during the coldest part of a January, which was more than usually cold, and stayed in it until the early spring.

"Such a life," he said recently, "quickly fortifies a man's bodily powers, sending him back to ancestral or wild life. The skin, nails and hair toughen and thicken; pulmonary catarrh stops; hemorrhages cease. A man becomes insensitive and fearless. All his energy goes to nutrition, all his powers are concentrated in building and repair. He falls asleep at twilight and wakes at dawn, ready to eat. Incidental disaster affects him little; he changes from a hothouse plant to an oak."

At one of the Sydney clubs last week an elderly and a youngish man were sitting side by side watching a tournament game. When it had finished, the elderly man inquired of his companion if he'd like 50 up. He said he would, and his challenger proposed to play for half a sovereign. This was declined, as the challenged one "feared he might lose it." They finally agreed to a five shilling wager, the senior player to break, which he accordingly did. He took off his coat, and chalked his cue, and that was all of his portion of the game, as the younger player ran out the

50 with an unfinished break. The challenger put his coat on, paid the wagger and table, and then asked the marker who his opponent was. "Mcnamott," was the reply.

Dust reigned supreme in the streets of Wanganui last week, and, as usual, the shopkeepers suffered considerably. One irate business man, commenting in the absence of the watering cart, attributed it to Mayoral foresight (says the local paper). "His (the Mayor) knows what he's doing," said the injured one; "he thinks if he gives us a real good 'doing' we'll all vote solid for the water loan!"

Where did Solomon obtain his gold? This has been a Biblical problem for many hundreds of years. Mr M. Cohen undertook to give a possible solution at the Feilding Poultry Association dinner on Wednesday. Several of the speakers during the evening had held forth as to the ability of women in the poultry yard. Talking upon the theme, was it not possible, indeed, highly probable, asked Mr Cohen, that Solomon had his wives poultry farming? That was how he became so rich.

M. Leoncavallo, the well known Italian composer, has just left Paris in despair. He came here to write the music for an opera, in which, as already announced, he is collaborating with the Emperor William. His Majesty has composed two acts, and proposes shortly to complete the five.

The subject is the famous story of Roland, embodying the atmosphere of the Charlemagne period, of which the Kaiser is known to be particularly fond, and several French and English critics, who have seen the Emperor's verses, say that they have great literary and dramatic spirit.

M. Leoncavallo, however, has been so imprudent as to let the Kaiser know his address, and he receives so many telegrams daily, making changes and modifications of various kinds that in despair he rushed off to an obscure part of Italy, where the Imperial librettist will be unable to reach him by wire.

The opera is to be brought out in Berlin in Italian next winter.

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