

# News of the Dominion.

## OUR WELLINGTON LETTER.

April 23.

### The Mayoral Contest.

**M**UNICIPALLY the week has been distinguished for two things—the Mayoral election campaign and the protest made by a few Councillors against giving information to the Press about things which the public has a right to know. For the election, things have gone tamely enough, and there is no saying which of the two candidates is going to win. There is a general idea of a mild character that the new man (Mr. Crawford, of Miramar) represents the Conservative element, and that the veteran (Mr. Wilford), who has been beaten for the Mayorship no less than four times, represents the Liberal interest. The idea is as far-fetched as it is mildly diffused. No man could tell from their speeches what side of politics the men are on, and it would puzzle the most ingenious to tell what general politics have to do with the matter any way.

### An Amusing Complaint.

The other matter was amusing. The reports of the year's transactions in the tramways, on the Engineer's proposal to duplicate the Waimiri water supply, and on the electric business of the year, got into a local paper before the Council had got its eye on them. It is pleasing news after the tramways have made £8,000 after paying all charges for interest, sinking fund, and maintenance on a liberal scale. It is not less satisfactory that the City Engineer sees his way to save half the estimated cost of the Waimiri duplication, no less than £75,000. It is good to know that the electric business has prospered in the hands of the Council. Then why should it be had that these things have got to the knowledge of the public, who own the trams, the water supply and the electric plant? The fact that there was a row only proves that the Council has not yet acquired an accurate knowledge of the difference between things that ought to be confidential and things that ought to be given to the public at once. It is true that these reports were, when sent from the Finance Committee to the individual Councillors, marked "confidential." But there was no occasion for their being so marked. The reason for "confidential" is that the contents of packages so marked refer to negotiations, or character, or other matters which obviously are not fit for public discussion at the stage at which they happen to be at the time of reporting. In this case there is no reason for anything but the utmost publicity. Happily the Council did not lose its head out of respect for the man who bleated their futile complaint. It proves that the Council is not going to return to the error of the old way of rushing for Committee at every turn. As to the subject matter of these divulged reports there is not a single citizen who is not delighted with the information so promptly made public.

### Mr. Millar in Australia.

From Australia the report arrives that the Minister for Railways has said that he will have some good suggestions to make to his colleagues about the railway management, material for which he has picked up in the course of his inspection of the Australian systems of working. Which is to the Minister's credit, proving him to be a man not above learning things that come in his way. He has at the same time declared his opinions very strongly about the system of management by commissioners. They are, he declares, nothing but "buffers" between the public and the politicians on one side and the Government on the other. It appears (this, of course, he did not say) that the shelter thus obtained is liked by the Australian Government. The public opinion of the Dominion turned from its long ago, we all remember with pleasure, on the ground that democracy understands its basic principle of trusting the people and the representatives of the people. In a country which has made so many successful experiments in the management of various lines of business, any other conclusion would have been surprising.

### Colonel Fitzpatrick's Appointment.

Another item of Australian news has found very interested hearers. I refer to the appointment of Colonel Fitzpatrick, who attended Lord Kitchener on his visit here, to the command of the Commonwealth forces. The Colonel gained golden opinions from all who met him here as a capable soldier and pleasant gentleman. Also, there is satisfaction because the appointment throws some light—indirect perhaps—but nevertheless significant—on the reports spread about Lord Kitchener's alleged protest at his Malta appointment, and his very prompt denial of the same. The Malta appointment was created, we were told at the time of its creation, for the purpose of organizing all the forces of the Empire on a homogeneous basis. The appointment of the Marshal's chief officer to the command of so large a unit of these forces cannot but be good from this point of view. It may be part of the shadows of a coming event.

### An Opposition Revival.

When a body long believed to be dead gives some signs of revival, there is excitement according to the importance of the person in question. There are such signs about the inert mass of the Opposition. They are carried in a series of rumours to the effect that a strong effort is to be made shortly to revive the corpse by process of reorganisation. Hence, it is supposed, the visits of Mr. Massey to southern parts. Mr. Fisher has drawn attention to the matter indirectly by his outburst against his new chief, finding fault with the Opposition for its policy of what he derides as "all Massey." Whether this represents a bid for diluting the mixture with "Fisher," in the character, perhaps, of the new chief who is to be elected by a sort of "comp. ballot," is premature to discuss. It is an absurd idea, of course. But the rumours of an Opposition revival are growing. To the more experienced eye they seem much like the usual professional mutterings of things dreadful, alarming, and decisive.

### The Powers of the Dominion.

About the position of seamen in British-registered ships plying on the coast, we shall have to wait for daylight until the Privy Council decides the appeal allowed by the Appeal Court. The position is curious. The seamen of the Huddart, Parker boats which engage in the coastal trade, but are registered out of the Dominion, do not get the same wages as the Arbitration Court has assigned to the seamen who work on board the rival ships locally registered. The Crown contends that our shipping law enables the Crown to insist that these wages shall be paid on the coast and to refuse clearance to the boats until they are paid. On the other side, it is contended that the British Act does not directly give any such power, and that therefore our Act is in this matter "ultra vires." To which it is replied that the British Act does give power indirectly to refuse clearance, because it gives power to insist on the extra wages, and that without the power of refusing clearance the power in the matter of the wages would be a dead letter. The Court of Appeal, with one dissent, upheld the "indirect" contention, and leave was given to appeal to the Privy Council. What is raised really is the power of the Dominion Legislature to govern within its own limits with sovereign power. The Chief Justice has always held that it has, and that, moreover, the Judges of the Old Country are not as alive to the fact as they ought to be. When the decision arrives it will be time to discuss the matter further—should it be adverse to the Dominion claims. For the present it is enough to say that any other contention than that on which the Appeal Court decided will be intolerable, and some steps will have to be taken.

### The Public Credit.

At the opening of the Wharariki bridge in the Rangitikei, Sir Joseph Ward took the opportunity to praise the enterprise of the settlers who had subscribed a large sum of money for the work so as to earn the help of the Government, declaring that his Government would be always ready to help such men. It is an important utterance. He took the opportunity at the same time to say reassuring things about the state of credit, dwelling on all signs of returned

prosperity. The public credit he measured by the Australian standard, happily, with an Australian loan issued at 90 and a New Zealand one at 98. It was likewise a good opportunity for upholding the Ministry's system of travelling at large and often. How can Ministers know anything if they do not go about and see? It is an old theme of the Liberal regime, as fresh and strong as it was when Mr. Ballance first set forth on the platform with his colleague to the astonishment of the political world and the delight of the country folk who appreciated the attention greatly.

### Defence Training-ground.

The Board appointed for the purpose of recommending to the Government the site for permanent training camps under the Defence Act had its attention in the North Island chiefly confined to two sites, one near Waimarino and the other near Wairoa, both on the Main Trunk. The area required, about 5000 acres, is available without much difficulty in both cases, and it is understood that the military member of the Board favours Wairoa. The Board leaves for the South on Saturday. Several sites, all in Canterbury, are suggested, and it appears probable that a site near Culverden will be proposed.

### Healthy Appetites.

Some idea of the amount of food, etc., consumed at the recent gathering of Maoris at the Papawai Pa (Wairarapa), has been given by Mr. H. Parata. The list includes nine bullocks, 20 sheep, 17 bags of shellfish, eight tons of potatoes, 13 bags of sugar, 200lbs of fancy cakes, etc., 1100 2lb loaves, 120 gallons of milk, 2wt flour, eight boxes of butter, four cases of jams, six large tins of cabin biscuits, two tons of eels, one ton of pumpkins, besides condiments and sundries. Fourteen tons of firewood were burned for cooking. The number of Maoris present was about 1000.

### Imports of British Goods.

The following comparison, compiled from the British Board of Trade returns, should be interesting as showing the marked falling-off in the imports of British-made goods during the two months ending 28th February, in the years 1908, 1909, and 1910:—

	Two Months, Ending 28th Feb.		
	1908.	1909.	1910.
Beer and ale	7,342	6,003	4,587
Spirits	38,919	30,081	27,656
Iron and steel, and manuf. thereof	180,553	132,370	127,402
Copper, wrought and manuf.	10,338	8,604	4,482
Carry	4,881	3,400	4,704
Hardware	22,647	17,265	16,954
Cotton piece goods of all kinds	132,264	116,987	122,424
Woolen and worsted manuf.	91,260	75,797	81,876
Haberdashery and millinery	20,207	13,991	13,135
Jute manuf.	7,114	5,882	5,882
Linen piece goods of all kinds	20,032	18,243	19,080
Apparel	132,258	125,890	128,631
Boots and shoes	42,508	42,477	38,222
Saddlery	7,700	4,368	5,063
China and earthenware	19,845	15,718	11,957
Writing and printing paper	18,153	16,307	17,135
Cement	6,721	5,224	3,272
Stationery, other than paper	9,345	6,400	6,328

### Our Railways.

Whilst at Levin on Thursday the Prime Minister (Sir Joseph Ward) made some interesting remarks on an important phase of the railways policy. As regards the decision of the Government that future railways must pay 3½ per cent on the cost of construction, he said he would like to make the position quite clear. If the proposal had been in operation 25 years ago he was sure that one or two of the present railways would never have been built. The fact was that the Government would require to get a guarantee of a return over a period of years of the 3½ per cent on the cost of construction of a proposed line. If that were not insisted upon, the result would be one of two things—either a less vigorous policy of construction or a very great increase of the cost of freight and rates to make a reasonable return in respect of the whole of the railways. Before starting on a line the Government should ascertain whether it would be able to pay 3½ per cent on the cost of construction within a reasonable time. Lines which would be a very heavy burden for all time were undesirable. To prevent the construction of really unprofitable lines the Govern-

ment was following a sound route by saying that there should be a system—he did not say as inflexible as the laws of the Medes and the Persians—under which there would be what was only a reasonable return on the cost within a reasonable time. Districts benefiting would be required to guarantee to contribute any difference between the earnings and 3½ per cent of the cost. That was exactly what the Government proposed to ask the country to agree to. It should be agreed to in order to get the uncompleted lines finished as early as possible, as, in the meantime,

## QUITE CRIPPLED BY SCIATICA.

Could Only Hobble About on Sticks.

This Man Found no Relief until he Tried the Tonic Treatment which cured him.

Mr W. P. Lamb, the well-known tailor, of 144, Little Collins-st., Melbourne, was so crippled by Sciatica that he could finally hobble about on sticks. His case is another instance of the uselessness of treating a nervous complaint like sciatica with liniments. Of course, they didn't do him any good. When he found out that he had to treat the cause of his trouble and build up the run-down nerves, he began to take that splendid nerve tonic, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and they quite cured him.

"I used to suffer cruelly from Sciatica," said Mr Lamb. "It came on gradually in the left leg and left side, and at last I was quite crippled with it. I was in Adelaide then, and got so bad with it that I had at last to walk about or rather hobble on two sticks. I used to try all sorts of liniments to get a little relief. One doctor I went to wanted to operate on the sciatic nerve, so you can tell I was pretty bad. The pains would extend from the hip to the knee. The hip was so sore and tender I couldn't put my finger on it. Every movement was a torture, sitting or standing, or lying down. I dreaded the night time as I always felt worse. I'd lie for hours in one position groaning with pain and longing for the daylight, afraid to move, and when I did it had to be done very slowly, and with the greatest difficulty. Every nerve seemed on fire, and as if something was gnawing and tearing at each muscle. Practically I was never free from pain, especially in the hip. I was a journeyman tailor at the time, and I don't know how I got through my work. Often I had to knock off and take a spell, as I always felt worse when sitting or keeping still, and I'd be too stiff to move after a rest. I dreaded to have to go out, and I never fit for my work. A cold day or a change in the weather would make the attacks worse, and I hated the idea of winter approaching. My poor wife had a nice time with me, as the pain used to make me desperate, and I'd have to be waited on and looked after. Some days I could only get to my place at the dinner table by clutching the table with both hands, and hobbling slowly round it, and when I'd get there I couldn't eat for the pain. I don't think anyone could have gone through more suffering than I have done. It wore me away to a perfect wreck. I'd have been glad to die, and have done with it all. Every now and then a twinge would dart through me as if I were on the rack and being torn to pieces and red hot knives being plunged in and pulled out again. My wife would have to help me to bed and lift me in by degrees, one leg at a time, and there I'd lie like a log, and have to be helped up in the morning, much the same way. I owe my recovery solely to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I read of them in a Broken Hill newspaper, and made up my mind to give them a trial. I had been taking them for about three weeks before I felt any better. As I took them the attacks became less acute, till at last I was quite free again." Mrs Lamb, who was present at the interview, bore out her husband's statement.

Don't let any dealer talk you into taking something which he says is "just as good." If you are pestered to take a substitute, send 3/ for one box, or 16/6 for six boxes, to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co. of Australasia, Ltd., Wellington.