

# News of the Dominion.

## OUR WELLINGTON LETTER.

WELLINGTON, February 25.

### Advertising in the Tram-cars.

WELLINGTON'S City Council, usually a very sensible body of men, occasionally makes a bad break, and lays itself open to the public's annoyance or the public's ridicule; and then it writhes in sorrow for a week or two, and finally puts matters right by a rescinding resolution. This, I fancy, will be the end of the Council's latest freak, which takes the form of plastering the inside of the municipal electrical cars with tradesmen's advertisements. The deed was done at Thursday night's meeting of the City Council, when it was resolved, on the motion of Councillor Hindmarsh, seconded by the Mayor, Mr. Wilford, "That, considering that nearly £2000 a year can be made out of letting spaces on and in tram cars for advertising, the right to place neat and suitable advertisements in the cars be sold or let." Mayor Wilford made some illuminating remarks; the principal one was the statement that anyone who had seen the style of advertising adopted in the Auckland tram cars would say that it was not a detriment but an ornament. Only one councillor—Mr. Thompson—had the courage to give straight-out opposition to the disfiguring of the cars with advertisements. The Council seemed dazzled, in fact, by the brilliant prospect of earning £2000 from the advertisements, to say nothing of the "ornamental" effect of these appeals to the public to buy sandals's boots or pills or corsets or greatly reduced trousers. In committee, after the meeting, the Council decided to invite tenders for the right of advertising on the cars, on such spaces as the Council might deem fit, the advertisements to be standardised and specimens to be submitted, the advertisements to be on the inside of the cars only, the Council to have the right of censorship.

Naturally, the Council's action has brought out many caustic comments from the suffering public. There is, indeed, something very quaint in Mayor Wilford's idea of what constitutes an "ornament." Can anyone wonder that our Wellington standard of artistic taste is a barbarous one, when that City Council, headed by the Mayor, approves of this fashion of tramcar decoration?

It is far worse, really, than hanging an advertisement of somebody's whiskey in the art gallery; for everyone must see the tramcars, and there will be no escaping the glaring, glaring advertisements there. The worst of it is, too, that they are to be displayed inside the cars, where one's eye can't get away from them, and will perforce have to read what it detests, and read and read it again. It is not as if the Council was in great need of the money, for it isn't. It is a wealthy corporation, and can very well afford to dispense with such an objectionable form of revenue. We'll all await the Council's censored advertisements with a good deal of interest. Advertisers won't pay much for a severely censored puff, one is certain. Wellington streets are hideous with advertisements of the ugliest kind; they stare at one from boardings and blank walls everywhere; and now we are not to escape from them even when we take refuge in a street-car. The simplest remedy I can see, and one that I think will be adopted by many citizens, will be to quietly refrain from buying the goods advertised in the city cars; this will have its effect in one season. But I hope that that measure of retribution won't be required, and that the force of public opinion and public ridicule will bring the Council to its senses before it begins its work of caricaturement, or ornamentation as Mr. Wilford will have it.

### From "Bare Motiti."

Our Wellington waterfront is not nearly so interesting in the picturesque sense as that of Auckland. Here everything is severe and hard and practical, reflecting perhaps the municipal idea of the "city beautiful," tram cars included. There are wharves crowded with steamers, of all kinds, from the big 12,000-ton London liners to the little coasting

hookers, like the venerable Storm Bird, that go wave-punching up and over our off-times stormy east and west coasts. There is seldom a sail to be seen, except the smoke-grimed jibs and trysails that the little steamers carry to help them on their way. Sailing-craft are becoming rarer and rarer as the years go on; and we have nothing like Auckland's big fleet of coasting schooners, ketches, and scows. Wellington's annual inwards and outwards tonnage is greater than Auckland's, but it is almost exclusively steam.

It is a relief to the eye, therefore, to occasionally see a sailing-craft at the wharves. Our white-winged visitors are mostly timber or grain carriers from the South; there are just two or three schooners and ketches still in these trades. But just now there is a little visitor from the warm Bay of Plenty, where the maize and the kumara grow. She is the auxiliary screw schooner, Waiaapu, with a cargo of maize from Motiti Island, off Tauranga. I just mention her because it is rather curious to find Motiti given as a departure-place. You very seldom hear Motiti mentioned nowadays, but it was a famous islet in the days of the long ago. The long flat island, bare of bush—"Motiti wahikore," or "firewood-less Motiti"—was celebrated amongst the Maoris long before the first European trader anchored there to barter for pork and dried "eds." It was a great battle ground; you will find a sanguinary story or two about it in Manning's "Old New Zealand." In these days of peace it grows big crops of maize, and that's why we find the handsome little schooner Waiaapu lying at the Wellington breastwork just now.

### The Early Days of Wellington.

If the City Council went sadly astray when it tackled the subject of advertisements in tram-cars, it at least showed some sense of the fitness of things the other night in a discussion on the desirability of preserving records and other treasures relating to the early days of the Wellington Settlement. The Council decided that an Early Settlers' section should be started at the Municipal Museum, which lies out Newtown way, not very far from the new Government House, and it resolved to ask the co-operation of citizens. The idea is a good one, so long as care is taken not to clash with the Dominion Museum, of which Mr. Hamilton has charge. An excellent Early New Zealand section is being got together by Mr. Hamilton, but the present antiquated building is inadequate for its purposes, and prevents any decent display of the great collection of antiquities that is stored in its precincts. However, the new National Museum to be established in the big brick barracks building on the hill locally known as Mt. Cook, to which the present Museum is to be transferred as soon as possible, there should be ample space to show the historic relics that have accumulated during Sir James Hector's and Mr. Hamilton's periods of control at the Museum.

### Early Memories.

In the meantime, old settlers and their descendants will do a national service if they will assist in this matter of the collection of Early-Wellington relics and records. I see many ways in which a section of this kind could be made interesting. For instance, we ought to have pictures of the "Tory" and the "Cuba" and "Aurora" and other pioneer ships of the New Zealand Company of the 1839-40 era; Heaphy's and Bree's early pictures of Wellington, and pictures, also, of the celebrated Maori chiefs, such as Wharepaouri and Te Pahi, who welcomed the founders of Wellington, and so assisted the white man to get his footing in Port Nicholson.

### Ngarimu and the Jew's-harp.

Talking about the early days of Wellington, I remember six years ago having a talk with a fine old Maori lady who witnessed the arrival of the first ships of the New Zealand Company in Wellington Harbour, and the landing of the pioneer settlers on the Petone (properly Pitone) beach. She was a Ngati-Awa woman, old Ngarimu, of the Lower Hutt. Ngarimu was a young girl at the time, and her tribespeople lived in populous villages all round the shores of this harbour—the ancient Whanga-nui-a-Tara.

She told how the Maoris gathered on the beach and danced haka and sang songs of welcome, as the boatloads of wondering (and perhaps a little scared) newcomers came ashore on the beach where they built their short-lived township called Britannia. "Toia mai te waka" ("Haul up the canoe"), was their great song, and they chanted it all together and waved their mats and green branches. The previous day it was, I think, that the goods given in exchange for the site of Wellington, were distributed amongst the Maori. Ngarimu was there, and as a share of the spoil she received a jew's-harp—"roria" was what the Maoris called that primitive instrument of music and for many days and weeks thereafter the Maori population of the Whanga-nui-a-Tara could have been seen squatting in the sun for hours practising the "roria," and adapting the love-songs of the race to its twanging music. "That was the first time we ever saw that music thing, roria of the pakeha," said old Ngarimu. "It gave us great delight. We got other presents from the first white men, cloth with moons and other devices on it, and sealing-wax, and pots, and muskets and gun powder; but what I liked best was the new roria."

In fact, the payment to the Maori chiefs for the land in which the city of Wellington now stands consisted in part of jew's-harps—several gross of them, I think, speaking from memory of that historic document the deed of sale. How many jew's-harps and barrels of gun-powder, and sticks of sealing-wax would it take to buy up Wellington now! There's a little problem in high finance!

### A Splendid Swim.

News comes from across Cook Strait of a fine swimming exploit in that part by a young schoolmaster, the Dominie at Ocean Bay, in Port Underwood. I give the story as it appears in a Marlborough paper; it is worth recording, particularly as the local papers don't seem to have noticed the par:—

"Something of an unusual swim was performed by the schoolmaster, Mr. Skelley, of the Ocean Bay School, and D. V. Hosking, the school champion. A boat took the swimmers across Port Underwood and into Cutter's Bay. Schoolmaster and pupil entered the water in Cutter's Bay, swam out of the Bay, and made for Ocean Bay across the Port. A strong tide took the swimmers well up the Port, and towards the end of the distance caused a very hard swim against it in order to enter Ocean Bay. The cold caused young Hosking to enter the boat as he reached Ocean Bay point. This youthful swimmer had covered two miles. Mr. Skelley continued and swam into Ocean Bay beach, a total distance of two and three-quarter miles. The whole distance from beach to beach was done in 1 hour 20 minutes. Taking into account the strong and unfavourable tide, this time is very good indeed. As far as it is known, Port Underwood has never been swum before."

### Japanese in New Caledonia.

About 1,000 Japanese workmen recently went to Thio, New Caledonia, to work in the Nickel Co.'s mines. They replaced several hundred Japanese who went back to Japan, but several correspondents at Thio, writing to the "France Australe," Noumea, seem to think that the newcomers are a higher class of men than those whose places they took. Although they are working as common miners, many folk at Thio think they look "like non-commissioned army officers." It was originally intended to bring about 3,000 Japanese workmen to New Caledonia to open up the mines in view of the increased demand for nickel. When the first shipment arrived many influential persons in Noumea protested, and the Nickel Co. announced that it would bring out no more Japanese. The "France Australe" files of which arrived in Sydney last week by the F.M.S. Pacific, announces that it has definite knowledge that arrangements are being made to continue the immigration movement.

### New Zealand Wireless.

Regarding wireless telegraphy, the Prime Minister last week made a statement to a reporter in reply to criticism of the Government's action in having accepted the tender of the Australasian Wireless Company, Limited, (£23,730) for two high-power stations and for five low-power stations. There were two other tenders, the Leuell and the Marconi Companies.

The Government, said Sir Joseph Ward, after full consideration, resolved to accept the tender of the Australasian Wireless Company, as being from the standpoint of the Dominion the most satisfactory one in every way. The Government fully considered the offer of the Marconi Company, which for the same number of stations was approximately £30,000 higher than that of the Australasian Wireless Company, a difference in the price which made the Marconi offer prohibitive. Before coming to a decision, a close investigation of the merits of the Telefunken system, which is used by the Australasian engineers in London, was made by our own engineer. The opinion of our consulting engineer in London was also obtained, and upon their reports the Government was satisfied that the Telefunken system was better suited to our requirements than the Marconi, to say nothing of the enormously lower price. Apart from the report of our engineers, we called for and obtained a guarantee from the company that equally good results would be secured. Then the system to be operated between New Zealand and Australia as carried on by the Telefunken method will require only 70-h.p., and for the same guaranteed system the Marconi Company specified 200-h.p., so that not only in the prime cost but in the cost of the annual working the Marconi system would have been much more expensive than the other.

The Press has evidently been inspired to suggest that, in accepting the Telefunken system we are accepting a foreign nation as against the Marconi. I need hardly say that this aspect of the matter was fully considered, and the fact remains that there is no system in operation at present that is not a foreign invention. Marconi, Telefunken and Leuell, in that respect stand in the same category, but the company whose offer we have accepted is a British company, which, we are advised, have purchased the rights of the Telefunken system. Whatever system we had adopted, whether Marconi, Telefunken, or Leuell, they can all work with each other without the slightest difficulty. Every precaution has been taken as far as New Zealand is concerned, in seeing that the conditions of the contract protect the Dominion upon all points that are requisite. The Government has followed the advice of its expert officers, in addition to which the system has been proved in various parts of the world to be up-to-date in every respect. To raise the question of the foreign element in this matter is unwarranted. The control and working of the wireless system that New Zealand is adopting will be entirely in the hands of our own staff, and no foreigners are required or will be engaged in connection with it, so that the suggestion of trouble in time of war has no foundation.

### AILING HOUSEWIVES.

#### BILIOUSNESS AND HEADACHE ENDED.

#### BILE BEANS, WOMAN'S TRUE FRIEND.

As a family medicine, Bile Beans are unequalled, and a box should be in every medicine chest. "I cannot speak too highly of Bile Beans as a general corrective," says Mrs. M. Glanville, of Somerset-street, Spreydon, Christchurch, New Zealand. "About four years ago I was a martyr to biliousness and indigestion, and often had severe attacks of headache and dizziness, which caused me to neglect my domestic duties, and considerably impaired my appetite. In search of relief I tried numerous remedies, which only resulted in spending money without obtaining any benefit. Some friends then recommended Bile Beans, and I decided to give them a trial. I felt a decided improvement for the better after I had finished two boxes. After persevering with Bile Beans my appetite returned, the dizziness and headaches disappeared, and finally the biliousness and indigestion ceased to trouble me. My health was restored, and I was completely cured by Bile Beans."

Both old and young have a friend in Bile Beans, for they are mild in action, do not gripe, and are easy to take. Bile Beans are a proved remedy for indigestion, biliousness, constipation, headache, bad breath and sluggish liver, stomach disorder, piles, fainting fits, that tired feeling, general debility, lassitude, anæmia, and female ailments. A dose or two in time may save pounds in doctors' bills.