

News of the Dominion.

OUR WELLINGTON LETTER.

Alleged Shortage of Labour.

REGARDING the alleged shortage of labour for industrial concerns, the Manufacturers' Committee of the Chamber of Commerce reported that as the outcome of the conference between the committee and the Industrial Association, the Hon. J. T. Paul being present, it was resolved to recommend that a conference be held between the associations of employers and employees respectively, so that when they had agreed upon the position they would be able to make joint representations to the Government with a view to obtaining relief. Such resolution had been conveyed to the associations interested. In moving the adoption of the report, the president (Mr. L. M. Myers) said that the action of the Union had been justified by subsequent events. Acting on the recommendation of the committee's report a delegation from the employees of Boot Manufacturers' Union and from the Boot Manufacturers' Association, held two meetings, with the speaker (by request) as chairman. A great deal of evidence was carefully sifted, and a good deal of information was extracted from it, while both sides showed an amicable desire to get at the truth of the matter. There was a similar meeting of the white workers being negotiated, and consequently, the matter being sub judice, he could give no expression of opinion.

A Bishop's Difficulties.

In the course of his sermon at St. Mary's Cathedral last evening, the Acting-Primate (Bishop Julius) made some forcible remarks touching the trials of a bishop. He took for his text five words of St. Paul, "Of all men most miserable." There was in Worcester Cathedral, he said, a tomb which bore as its inscription the single Latin word, "Miserrimus"—"most miserable." Now, if there was a man to whom the world might justly apply this term, that man was St. Paul. He had left his position, his friends, his wealth—all that the world held most dear—and for the sake of his belief became a wanderer upon the face of the earth, ending his life in imprisonment and a degrading death. And yet it was under only one conceivable circumstance that St. Paul would have had written on his tomb the word "Miserrimus." If his faith had proved vain and useless he would indeed have been "of all men most miserable." "If there is any ghastly business under the sun," continued the preacher, "it is that of a bishop who doesn't believe in what he teaches, but has to keep up appearances, and go on his way as if it were not a mockery and a sham. If such a man could be found his tomb might well bear the one unhappy word. You may talk lightly of a bishop and his work, but I wouldn't give a cick for the business of keeping up institutions and not saving souls. It is not enough to belong to a church which is respectable, ancient, and decent, unless it is devoted to God's service. The position is nothing; whether he were the wealthiest of bishops or in poverty, like St. Paul, it would be better for a man to drive pigs to market than to govern a church which had lost its faith. But there is another side to the picture. If your Bishop comes in the fulness of faith, comes to Auckland and looks on the little land of his diocese, sees strife and factions, parties looking for fights, not souls; sees numbers who belong to no church, outcast women, neglected children, he will see behind all this the gospel of life, which will bear him up in his many trials and difficulties. It will help him along his way, and often when he feels he hasn't done as well as he expected, I would ask you, then, to pray for him, even if your prayers are short. Then I want you to hark him up."

A Youth Drowned.

Clarence Morrish, aged 21, was drowned off Paraparauu Beach, Wellington, last week. He went out in a canvas boat with another youth named Hyde, and when half a mile from the land the boat was struck by a wave and capsized. Morrish sank and was not seen

again, but Hyde was saved by his father. Morrish's people live in Wellington, but his father and brother are at present in Christchurch.

Railways and Loans.

In reply to a railway extension deputation the Hon. T. Mackenzie said the question of borrowing for feeder railways, which were palpably payable and urgently necessary all over the country, must soon be considered. Such a storm was raised over the five million loan, however, that the Government thought it might be an indication that borrowing, even for reproductive purposes, must be restricted.

New Zealand Fish.

It is often asserted that the fish in waters round about our coast are neither so good or so varied as is the case round the coast of Britain. Judging from an interview published in the "Post," Capt. Eastick, of the trawler *Nora Niven*, thinks otherwise. There is no finer fish than the "gayback," or mackerel, he says, but we have mackerel in these waters bigger than the European mackerel—a finer fish altogether. He had caught them in Hawke's Bay, but had not the proper gear to catch them in large quantities. "Do you know of a finer dish than a plate of fried sprats?" he asked again. "I don't—fried or smoked, they are fit for a king. Well, sprats, anchovies, and sardines are all the same. We have them in New Zealand. Enormous shoals of them; tons upon tons at a time. We don't catch them because we haven't the gear; but we have them here when the time comes. We want drift nets. Here, in these waters," Captain Eastick continued, "wind and weather rule the movements of the fish. More so than in the North Sea. There the weather is more stable; but it has grown worse and more unreliable of recent years. The fishing industry of New Zealand is capable of enormous expansion," he went on; "but the distribution of the British fish has become a fine art." Captain Eastick held that the sole of Northern Europe was a fish superior in point of flavour, texture, and everything else to the New Zealand sole; but in all other respects the New Zealand fish were well up to the North Sea standard.

Inadequate Bathing Facilities.

An interesting decision was given at Auckland Police Court by Mr. E. C. Catten, S.M., in the case in which two charges were levelled against Oscar Symonds, in that on March 19 he wilfully and indecently exposed himself on the Takapuna Beach, and alternatively that he committed a grossly indecent act.

His Worship's judgment was as follows:—"Two informations were laid against the defendant in respect of the same act, one charging him with wilfully and indecently exposing himself, and the other with committing a grossly indecent act. What the defendant did was to undress and put on a bathing suit on the Takapuna beach without proper shelter. The defendant did not wilfully expose himself, and that charge may at once be dismissed. It is complained that young men undress upon the beach without proper shelter, and come out of the water and roam about the beach with nothing on but their bathing suits, making it very awkward for ladies who desire to use the beach. In these days a coat of paint is not considered a proper dress, and a wet bathing dress amounts to very little more than a coat of paint. It is quite possible, therefore, for either of these acts to amount to indecent behaviour within the meaning of the Police Offences Act. The section of the Act, however, is not, in my opinion, intended to meet the cases most commonly complained about, which are due for the most part to acts of mere carelessness or thoughtlessness on the part of young men. The difficulty would be overcome if the authorities having control of the beaches would make by-laws, applicable to the more frequented beaches, requiring bathers to have proper shelter when they undress, and also making it an offence for bathers, while wearing only the ordinary bathing dress, to go

elsewhere about the beach than between the dressing place and the water. As it is now, offenders against ordinary decency can be convicted in cases only where there has been gross indecency, and there may be many cases due to thoughtlessness or carelessness—of which the present case is an instance—in which it would be rather hard on the offenders to convict them under the provisions of the Police Offences Act, but in which they might quite reasonably be made liable to a fine under a by-law. No conviction will be entered in the present case."

Cleansing the City.

The Health Department reports that the sanitary staff of the Auckland City Council is heartily co-operating in the measures to have the city thoroughly cleansed of all matters likely to cause or convey plague or other disease infection. The people, Dr. Monk states, are generally conforming with the directions issued, and the suburban boroughs, as well as the main borough, are closely supervising their sanitary departments. At the same time, he remarked, there will be no letting-up in the work, and people who do not show reasonable expedition in having their premises put in the required cleanly order will be dealt with under the extraordinary powers which have been for the moment vested in the Health Department officers. So far no fresh plague patients have been reported, and the cases in hand are progressing satisfactorily.

"Rigorous enforcement of the by-laws," is the special instruction under which the city sanitary staff is now working, and it seems probable that prosecutions for by-law infringements are pending. This applies particularly to the matter of rubbish removal. There is a special form of rubbish receptacle prescribed by the by-laws, receptacles of this sort must be used by residents. Then, too, the Inspector has stated his intention of jumping with both feet on the practice, common to business and private people, of placing rubbish receptacles on the street. The practice is a breach of the by-laws, which provide that such receptacles must not be placed outside of private premises, and that the dustmen shall go ten feet inside the street alignment to lift the receptacles. At the moment the Sanitary Inspector also has his mind set in dealing with damp cellars. In almost frequent instances the cellars of North Queen-street are earthen-floored, water-sodden, and subject to flooding, and consequently provide harbours for rats. The by-laws require that cellars be concreted and water-tight, and the owners of underground stores will be called on immediately to undertake the expense of having their cellars made proof against both water and rats.

Generally speaking, the cleaning of the city is being actively pushed on. Inspectors are pursuing their back-yard duties inquisitorially, and the rat-poisoning operations are unreleased, while a rat-catcher has been added to the staff. This man has had a good deal of experience in his business at the London dockyards, and his complaint that the rats that come to his traps are few, would appear to be a sincere compliment to the thoroughness of the preceding rat-poisoning. A "Star" representative was this morning assured that there would be no slackening off in the cleansing efforts for some time to come, and until the authorities were thoroughly convinced of the city's cleanliness.

Beaten to Death.

James Stephen, a storekeeper at Stavely, and for 35 years a resident of that district, met his death in a very sad manner on Saturday. He was found early in the morning in his garden quite dead, and black and blue with bruises, near a water-wheel which generates electricity in his house. It is surmised that last night he caught his foot in a rut and fell against a revolving belt, and was entangled therein, and beaten to death.

A Heroic Miner.

At an inquest at Roundhill on the bodies of Joseph Bates and Frank Smith, who were killed through the rising of sludge in a mining shaft, the jury returned the following verdict:—"That Joseph Bates and F. Smith met their deaths as the result of drowning, caused by the blocking of the suction pipe, and that there was no blame attachable to anyone." They wished to place on

record Smith's noble conduct in giving his life to save his mate. The following rider was added:—"That no work is being done at night in dangerous ground."

Defaulting Seaman.

At the Police Court on Monday, before Mr. M. Casey, J.P., a case of interest to mariners and shipowners was heard, when Edward Conroy Ireland, a seaman, was charged with having failed to observe an agreement entered into between himself and the master of the Norwegian barque *Lindstol*.

From the evidence it appears that a custom exists amongst a certain class of seamen to get an advance either of money or clothes, when signing an agreement to join a ship, and then fail to join. In the present case the accused signed on in Auckland for a voyage from Hokianga to Sydney and back, in the *Lindstol*. The agreement was entered into, according to law, before the Danish Consul, and this was to the effect that the owner of the barque was to find accused in food and clothing in Auckland until a steamer was ready to convey him, with others, to Hokianga, where the *Lindstol* was lying. Eleven men entered into this agreement in Auckland, but only one kept his contract, and the result was that the ship was delayed for 14 days at Hokianga, and men had to be taken on at a greatly advanced wage.

Mr. Casey said that it was absolutely necessary that such steps should be taken as would protect owners of vessels from loss through this cause. He pointed out he had power to inflict three months' imprisonment, but as this was the first case of the kind to come before him, he would be lenient. Accused was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment.

Arms and the Man.

Owing to the wet weather the garden party arranged to take place at Hamilton on Friday was abandoned, and a meeting was held at the Town Hall instead. The Mayor of Hamilton (Mr. J. A. Young) presided, and amongst those present were the Hon. Geo. Forde (Acting-Minister for Defence), General Godley (Commander of the Forces), Colonel Wolfe (O.C. Auckland), Colonel Allen Bell, Captain Spencer Smith, and Mr. H. J. Greenslade, M.P.

UNIQUE AMONGST DEMOCRACIES.

The Minister stated that if universal training was a success it would be due to Colonel Bell and the district. New Zealand had taken up a movement that was unique as far as Anglo-Celtic organisation was concerned, and with the exception of Switzerland, in modern times at any rate they had no instance of democracy establishing a system of universal military training or military service. The eyes of the world were watching the movement. He was no jingoist or military enthusiast, but he thought it was desirable that every able-bodied man should be fitted for the defence of his country. They had entered upon the scheme with great expectation, but it was going to cost a very large sum of money. However, if the revenue to meet the expenditure was equitably collected, the people could afford to pay the sum required for the training of the young men. It was most desirable that we should be in a position to defend the country if required. Perhaps the first consideration was the physical development and mental training of these young democratic communities, and this was the minimum result they had a right to expect from the movement. He felt sure it would result in the elevation of the national character, but it was essential that the whole community should take an interest, especially mothers and sisters, otherwise they could not expect bad results. If the taxpayer realised that for the money expended they were getting a higher moral standard, they would regard the money required as simply so much expended in the cause of education. No money was found more readily than the amount required for that purpose. He hoped the time would never come when our young people would be compelled to fight, but if so, they should be prepared for the emergency.

THE YELLOW PERIL.

Continuing, the Acting-Minister for Defence said that England and her dependencies did not realise what the horror of invasion was. In these Southern lands we had raised the standard of a White Australia and White New