

# News of the Dominion

## Strategy Legitimate.

THE question of means to be adopted by the police in the detection of sly grog-selling was referred to in the Dunedin Supreme Court. In summing up in a case of alleged illicit traffic in liquor, Mr Justice Williams said it was perfectly well recognised that strategy had to be used in order to catch people at this business. It was perfectly legitimate that strategy should be used, because the offenders could not be caught without it, nor could it be expected that a person who acted as an informer must necessarily be a very desirable individual. In the present case, the person to whom the liquor was alleged to have been sold had been actuated in the matter not by greed for money, but because he had a spite against the accused. That was an element which must be taken into consideration in deciding how far his evidence was credible.

## A Scandal.

"The state of some of the roads of the North is a scandal," remarked Mr. A. Cochrane at the Local Government Bill conference at Auckland last week. He stated that over one road, within 20 miles of Auckland, all the store cattle coming from the North to Auckland had to pass. It was in such a state that a vehicle might sink in a hole to below the level of the road. Hundreds of cattle were lost in traversing it; and it was a wonder that any got through. "It is not because it can't be helped," he concluded. "It's all for the want of a few hundred, or perhaps a thousand, pounds. If the people of the city knew the difficulties that are in the way of bringing stock to town it would have been remedied long ago." The meeting, a few minutes later, passed a resolution urging that the Government should give special subsidies for the construction and maintenance of arterial roads.

## Civil Service Vacancies.

It seems passing strange that although last year some two or three thousand young people passed the Junior Civil Service examination, there appears to be an unaccountable disinclination on the part of many of the successful candidates to accept offers of employment. In Wellington the number of cadetships to be filled every year is considerable, and even at this early stage some 800 of the successful examinees, taken in order of merit, have been offered employment, and yet a sufficient number has not been procured. Some of those who have refused the offer have no desire to enter the service; others from the country who have been offered cadetships away from their homes are averse to leaving the parental roof; and others, again, are desirous of continuing their education. It certainly is significant that, of the 800 or so whose names appear first on the list, sufficient cannot be found to fill all the vacancies.

## Plumbing Trade.

The Federated Plumbers and Gasfitters' Association has forwarded to the City Council a proposed "Plumbers' Registration Bill," which the association had drafted, the object being to make the rules for registration uniform throughout the Dominion and to ensure that a plumber, once registered, would not be subject, as now, to the varying rules and fees imposed by each individual municipality. It was proposed also to give plumbers some representation among the examiners. The association ask the Council to have the proposals submitted to the forthcoming municipal conference. The Master Plumbers' Association asked that consideration of the matter be deferred for a month, and the Council consequently allowed the matter to stand over.

## A Denial.

Representatives of the Chinese community in Christchurch have written to the newspapers denying the rumour that Chinese intend to start a furniture factory in Christchurch. They say that the Chinese have not sufficient money to finance such an industry, or to instal machinery to enable them to compete with the big factories already in existence.

## Strike at Waikoi.

The all-absorbing topic of general interest during the week has been the strike of miners employed in the mines of the Waikoi G.M. Co. and Waikoi Grand Junction G.M. Co. In all about two thousand miners are concerned, and they with their wives and families represent about 5000 persons practically dependent on continuation of work in these two big properties. The strike arose upon a demand being made upon the companies that they should compel the enginedrivers employed by them to become members of the Miners' Union. The latter recently cancelled their registration under the Arbitration Act and joined the N.Z. Federation of Labour, while the enginedrivers elected to remain under the Arbitration Act. The mining companies intimated that the dispute was one in which they could not interfere. A strike was thereupon declared, the whole of the miners engaged in the Waikoi and Junction mines came out, and the companies in turn stopped operations completely, leaving the adjustment of the dispute, so far as they are concerned, with the Federated Association of Mineowners. The next week the executive meets in Wellington next week to decide upon their course of action. In the meantime all three parties concerned—the companies, the Miners' Union and the Enginedrivers' Union—are standing firm, but there is so far no indication of the Lower Thames unionists being drawn into the struggle. The strike means a loss to Waikoi miners of £6,000 a week in wages, and, as credit has practically been stopped by shopkeepers, a long delayed settlement must involve severe distress.

## Public Recognition.

His Majesty's Theatre, Gisborne, was packed the other night,—hundreds of people being turned away—on the occasion of a public presentation to Sir James Carroll, in recognition of his services as member for Gisborne in Parliament. The Mayor (Mr. W. Pettie) presided, and there were also present the Prime Minister and the Hon. W. D. S. MacDonald (Minister for Public Works). The chairman stated that telegrams had been received from all parts of the Dominion, also a cablegram from Sir Joseph Ward expressing regret at being unable to be present. After referring to Sir James Carroll's valuable services in Parliament as member for the district and Minister of the Crown, the Mayor presented Sir James Carroll with an illuminated address, a handsome "Canteen" heavy gold cigar-case, and for Lady Carroll a solid silver sifter. The proceedings were very enthusiastic. Among the speakers were the Prime Minister, the Hon. Mr. MacDonald, and Messrs. F. Lawry (ex-M.P. for Parnell) and Dillon (ex-M.P. for Hawke's Bay). In the course of his reply, Sir James Carroll said he had always fought beneath the Liberal flag, and any party forming under that banner must have his support.

## Mental Defection.

Speaking to a reporter recently, the Minister of Education (Hon. J. A. Hauran) said he was surprised at the number of applications made for the admission of children to the home for mental defectives at Otekaikai. There was not sufficient accommodation to comply with all the requests. The demand was so pressing that it was apparent additional accommodation would have to be provided. In his opinion the solution of the problem did not lie in periodical increases of accommodation. They must go to the root of the trouble and endeavour to bring about a condition of society under which the defective element would reach an irreducible minimum. The first necessity was the creation of a sound public opinion on the subject of an atmosphere of thought leading to efficient and well-considered action.

## Hospital Troubles.

The trouble that has arisen in the Auckland Hospital, and which led to the threatened resignation of the nursing staff, was the subject of a lengthy inquiry during the past week. The matron, after making a statement in reply to certain charges made against herself and justifying her management, formally handed in her resignation, which was accepted.

## Industrial Decisions.

Two important decisions bearing on industrial strikes were given by Mr Justice Sim in the Arbitration Court at Auckland last week. In the case against the General Labourers' Union, arising out of the strike of men employed in city and suburban drainage works against subcontracting, the union was fined £60 and costs. In the waterside workers' strike, arising out of a refusal of unionists to discharge the Paparua on November 22 unless increased pay was conceded, the Court held that there had been a strike, but that it had not been proved that it was authorised by the union, which set up the defence that it was not bound by the action of its secretary.

## Financial.

The financial year ended March 31st closed with a surplus of £806,695. The expenditure on annual appropriations increased last year by £753,494. There were small decreases in the expenditure of the Finance, Native, and Legislative Departments, but otherwise there was an all-round heightening of expenditure, in which Defence and Education figure largely. Among the permanent appropriations is the sum of £386,062 spent on old age pensions. This shows an increase of £20,927 compared with the previous year, and there is also the small total of £1,961 to represent the first few months' pensions to widows under the new scheme. During the year the sum of £381,483 was expended upon the acquisition of land under the Lands for Settlements Act.

## Nuisance.

Complaints which have been made from time to time regarding the manner in which trains coming into the King Country are frequently crowded with persons under the influence of liquor were discussed last evening by the Te Kuiti Church of England Men's Society. It was decided that representations should be made to the authorities with a view to having the practice stopped. There will probably be a difference of opinion as to the cause of the evil, but no two opinions can exist as to the necessity for suppression of the nuisance.

## A Definition.

The question, "What constitutes a local article?" was asked at a recent meeting called by the Industrial Association, in connection with the "local industries week," which it was decided to hold about the middle of next month. The questioner was Mr B. Buttle (last year's president of the Association). He said that he had been similarly interrogated by many people since last year's display week. After the brief discussion which followed very little doubt remained that for the purposes of the forthcoming display the general acceptance of the term was, "Anything which is made up in New Zealand and employs a considerable amount of local labour in the process." This would, of course, apply to articles manufactured from imported raw material as well as to goods made of New Zealand produce.

## East Coast Railway.

At a recent meeting of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce the principal matter for discussion was the suggested routes of the East Coast railway. Work is now in progress on this line, which commences from Waikoi, and which is extended to form part of the main East Coast route from Auckland to Wellington, but only at scattered points, as the exact route has not yet been definitely fixed. South of Tauranga two possible routes are suggested, one keeping close to the sea coast, and cutting across the Rangitaiki swamp, and the other taking a shorter line and passing behind Matata, a good distance from the coast. The general opinion was that the inland line, although over rougher ground, would be not only the cheaper to construct, but its construction would be a matter of better policy. Not only would it command more traffic, but the line would pass within 20 miles from the Rotorua terminus, and therefore easily be connected. A large number of visitors would thus be drawn from the districts near the line to the south.

Representations are to be made to the Hon. W. D. S. MacDonald, Minister for Public Works, asking him to fully consider these points before finally settling the route.

## A Useful Body.

The twentieth annual meeting of the Auckland centre of the St. John Ambulance Association was held in the concert chamber of the Town Hall last week, his Excellency the Governor (Lord Islington) presiding. There was a large attendance of the public, and amongst those on the platform were Lady Islington, his Worship the Mayor (Mr. C. J. Parr), who is ex-officio president of the centre, Mrs. Parr, and a number of other ladies and gentlemen. In moving the adoption of the annual report, Lord Islington said it plainly showed the interest which had been taken in ambulance work during the year, and the energy with which it had been carried on. On behalf of all those interested in the work of the Association, he wished to express his gratitude to those who had given time and labour in teaching ambulance methods in the city and suburbs, and to those who had attended lectures and gained awards for first aid and for medical and surgical nursing. He also paid a tribute to the retiring officials, with special reference to Mr. William Rattray, who had held the position of secretary for seventeen years, almost the whole life-time of the centre. Referring to the centre's hopes for the future, he mentioned the project for establishing a permanent ambulance station in the centre of Auckland, and to the granting of a site under most advantageous terms by the City Council. A sum of £2000 had been raised, and he strongly urged the citizens to raise as soon as possible the further £1000 which was needed to comply with the conditions laid down by the Council. He urged that benefit societies, trades organisations, and all similar bodies be asked to contribute, for he felt that no building in Auckland would do so much for the public welfare.

In a short address Mr. Parr said the Ambulance Association did a most important educational work, for what was more important than the training of a young person in first aid, hygiene, or nursing? Young women in particular were bound to be better wives and mothers for such training. He felt that the Council was doing no wrong in setting aside a valuable endowment for the use of the Association. He wanted to appeal to the citizens to raise the sum still required, so that the building might be opened by his Excellency the Governor within a year, and humorously suggested that his brothers of the law might suggest to some of their clients the propriety of a bequest to the Association, when the making of a will was in hand. (Applause.)

The election of officers for the coming year resulted as follows:—President, his Worship the Mayor of Auckland; vice-presidents, The Right Rev. the Bishop of Auckland, the Hon. George Fowles, Revs. W. B. Gillam and R. Somerville, Drs. Gindler, King, and Purchas, Messrs. M. A. Clark, J. J. Holland, A. S. Russell, C. J. Tunks, and the Hon. E. Mitchelson; hon. treasurer, Mr. W. Rattray; hon. auditor, Mr. A. S. Russell; secretary, Mr. G. C. Gorrie; committee, Mr. J. J. Holland (chairman), Messdames Benjamin, Oliphant, Rattray, C. Smith, Miss Edmiston, Messrs. W. Braekenrig, W. F. Goulstone, F. J. Hutchinson, A. G. Pilkington, W. Rattray, Rev. W. Heady, and the members of the honorary medical staff, with power to add to their number.

The first aid and nursing certificates, medals, and labels gained during the year were presented by Lady Islington.

## A Luxury.

When a judgment debtor was being examined at the Auckland S.M. Court lately he admitted that he spent about 5/- per week on drink and occasionally went to the pictures. Mr. C. C. Kettle, S.M., remarked that while he liked men to enjoy themselves, still a man who was only earning £2 4/- a week could not afford to fritter away money on drink, pictures, and other luxuries when he had a wife and family to keep. The cost of living nowadays would not permit of that.

The Hero: "Keep a brave heart, darling, for the worst is yet to come!"

Voices from the Back Stalls: "W'y, wotcher gain' to do now, mate? Sing!"

Grandpa sits in his racy chair,  
And talks of when he "was young";  
He sings the praise of those bygone days,  
And the throng never throbs his tongue.  
But if we talk of our modern times,  
And things that are near and newer;  
There's only one thing whose praise he will  
sing,  
W. E. Woods' Great Peppermint Cure.