

Licensed Victuallers' Page.

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MR BIDDLECOMBE'S REPLY TO THE REV. L. ISITT AT BRADFORD.

In our last issue we referred to the Rev. Leonard Isitt's speech at Bradford, and intimated that in our next issue we would deal with Mr Biddlecombe's reply to the "reverend" New Zealander. So far as we can gather from the report, as published in the *Bradford Daily Argus* of March 4th, Mr Isitt boasted of the "amazing charity" he was prepared to bestow on Mr Biddlecombe, and the next moment designated his opponent as a hypocrite. Mr Biddlecombe, in his reply, refrained from all personalities, and in this respect adhered much more closely to the rules of debate than his reverend opponent. Mr Isitt charged his opponent with being the author of the articles which had appeared in the *Argus*, hostile to Mr Isitt's mission; but the editor of the paper positively declared that Mr Biddlecombe had never written one single line to the paper in connection with the mission, excepting a letter appearing over that gentleman's signature. We are under the impression, judging from the tone of the debate, that had Mr Biddlecombe charged Mr Isitt with doing certain things and a positive denial had been subsequently made, that denial would have been accepted, followed by a graceful apology for having erroneously made the statement, but, to all appearance, the Rev. Mr Isitt and his Bradford opponent are built on different lines, and we think that those who desire to be classed as gentlemen, would prefer to be built on the Biddlecombe lines. Before the debate already indicated took place, it was insinuated that at one of the lectures delivered by the New Zealand cold water champion it was stated by a Mr Weldon that Mr Biddlecombe would not put in an appearance at the proposed debate, but it was subsequently shown that in no case had an engagement made by the party to which Mr Biddlecombe belongs been broken, whilst on the other hand it was proved to demonstration that the teetotal party had on some occasions failed to meet their opponents on a platform duly convened meeting. One notable instance was cited as follows:—"I can give an instance the other way, one in which, strange to say, Mr Biddlecombe was the speaker. The society in King's Lynn, was having a debate on local option. On one side was Mr Kempstor, of the United Kingdom Alliance, but a speaker was wanted to oppose him. The local agent of the U.K.A. advised that the Liberty and Defence League should be asked to furnish an opponent to Mr Kempstor. Ultimately it was arranged that Mr Biddlecombe should go to Lynn. His name, &c., was furnished, when Mr Kempstor wrote "that he had an important engagement, and that the debate must be adjourned *sine die*." Comment on this is needless, as it clearly shows where the fear to meet an opponent came in. Coming back to Mr Biddlecombe's reply, he made "mince meat" of the assertion that the Armenian atrocities were the result of the indulgence in alcoholic liquors, and proved that they were directly traced to the action of the depraved teetotal demons, the Turks. He further quoted figures to show that whilst, in some cases, the consumption of drink had increased, cases of conviction had gradually but surely decreased, and the same proof applied to pauperism. He also quoted an American Government return of criminal statistics, showing that

in the year 1882 1,282 murders were committed by teetotalers against 1,267 by persons who had been convicted of drunkenness, or who were known to take drink. Thus there were more teetotal murderers than drunken murderers. He effectively rebutted the statement that England was the most drunken nation in the world, and in support of his argument quoted Mulhall, and said that, with the exception of one or two small and feeble nations, England was one of the most sober nations on the face of the earth. (From the teetotalers—"It's a lie.") He further advised his reverend opponent, seeing he knew so little about the subject, to go out to Turkey and remonstrate with his atrocious teetotal friends there, instead of going about the country trying to persuade respectable people like his audience to give up the moderate use of alcoholic beverages. After his effective reply, Mr Biddlecombe resumed his seat, and took a drink from a glass and afterwards from a bottle. Upon this a scene of indescribable confusion took place, the fanatics rising to their feet and crying "turn him out." Mr Biddlecombe declared that he had only taken a drink from a preparation which was purely medicinal in its character. Taking the proceedings altogether, we do not think the New Zealand teetotalers have any reason to feel proud of their champion as he appeared at Bradford.

TEETOTAL LEGISLATION IN ENGLAND.

The English *Licensed Victuallers' Gazette* has the following interesting particulars concerning trade items before the English Parliament:—

"The Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill is Mr Peter McLagan's time-honoured measure, which proposes on the requisition of not less than one-tenth of the householders, that one of three resolutions may be adopted by a bare majority, viz.:—1. That the sale of alcoholic drinks be prohibited. 2. That the number of licenses be reduced. 3. That no more licenses be granted. There is no compensation, monetary or time, offered; but, nevertheless, it is a well-known fact that if the decision rested with the Scottish members alone, this dishonest measure would be passed by a large majority. Fortunately for our friends in Scotland, however, English members have a finger in the pie, and, therefore, if they be well whipped up, the Bill should be ignominiously rejected on the motion for its second reading.

"Another Bill, not a teetotal measure, but one which more nearly concerns the wholesale than the retail trade, that has attained a most favourable position, is the Beer Adulteration Bill, brought in by Mr Quilter and his friends, which stands as the first order of the day for Wednesday, March 25. It proposes to enact that every person who sells or exposes for sale, by wholesale or retail, any beer brewed from any ingredients other than hops, or malt from barley, shall keep conspicuously posted at the bar, or other place where such beer is sold, a notice stating what other ingredients are contained in such beer. Penalties of £5 for the first, and of £20 for any subsequent offence, half of which is to go to the informer, are to be inflicted for non-compliance with the proposed enactment. We have no doubt that the Country Brewer's Society will be equal to the emergency of securing the rejection of the Bill, which, to be just and logical, ought to apply equally to manufacturers of pork pies, sausages, and other 'mysteries.'

Among other Bills affecting the Trade which have been introduced, but have but a poor prospect of being discussed, is Mr Broadhurst's Licensing Acts Amendment Bill, the object of which is to abolish what is known as the tied-house system, 'by which tenants of licensed houses are compelled to purchase the goods sold by them from the owners or lessees of their houses.' There is no doubt that in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire there is a strong feeling in favour of the Bill among licence-holders, but in other parts of the country, and especially in the metropolis, there is a very luke-warm feeling on the subject, and little interest is taken as to whether the Bill passes or not. As a matter of fact, however, it has scarcely a chance of even being debated, inasmuch as it is the last order for Wednesday next.

"Immediately preceding it on that day (4th March) is the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, the provisions of which are the same as passed by the Select Committee in the Session of 1888, and reported to the House. Its object is to compel the closing at nine o'clock on Saturday night, and during the whole of Sunday, of all places for the sale of alcoholic drinks in Dublin, Belfast, and the other towns exempted by Parliament in 1878 from the operations of the Irish Sunday Closing Act. Whether owing to an oversight on the part of the central organisations of the Trade in the metropolis, or to the fact that the Bill was brought forward last session on the day the late Speaker's daughter was led to the hymenial altar by Mr Maguire, the intimate friend of Mr Cecil Rhodes and 'Dr Jim,' this Bill, greatly to the disgust of our friends on the other side of St. George's Channel, and especially Mr P. J. Lennox, B.A., the able and esteemed secretary of the Dublin Licensed Grocers' and Vintners' Protection Association, was read the second time by an overwhelming majority, and

committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, from which awkward predicament, from the Trade's point of view, it was released by the dissolution of Parliament. There is but little likelihood of the Bill being similarly dealt with this session, thanks to the energy of Mr Lennox, who, possibly taking a lesson from the past, last week came to London and succeeded in inducing Mr McCartan, Mr Michael Austin, Mr Doogan, Mr William Redmond, and Mr Patrick McHugh to block the Bill.

TRADE TOPICS.

We hear that the police made a special examination of the Napier hotels after hours on Saturday night week, with what result the secrecy that doth begrid a policeman lately, prevents us from ascertaining.—Napier exchange.

Diner (to waiter): "Waiter, I don't think much of this chop." Waiter: "I can't understand it. You're the third gentleman as 'ave complained about that chop. I suppose I shall have to give it to one of our regular customers."

Judge: "What's the charge?" Policeman: "Intoxicated, your honour." Judge (to prisoner): "What's your name?" Prisoner: "John Gunn." Judge: "Well, Gunn, I'll discharge you this time, but you musn't get loaded again."

W. Perrin, licensee of the Exchange Hotel, Napier, was on Monday convicted on two charges, one with serving customers after eleven o'clock at night, and the other with having a barmaid in the bar after that hour. He was fined 50s on each charge, and the license was endorsed.

Charles Dickens did not pen the following for the special information of the temperance apostles, but if he had he could not have better hit the mark:—"If temperance societies would suggest an antidote against, hunger, filth, and foul air, or could establish dispensaries for the gratuitous distribution of bottles of Lethe-water, gin palaces would be numbered among the things that were."

At a meeting of the Liberty and Property Defence League, held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, London, Lord Wemyss gave an interesting address, in the course of which he said that certain bishops had lately waited upon Lord Salisbury regarding liquor legislation. If legislation were needed in that direction, then the bishops were a failure, because their appealing to the law proved that their moral influence to teach the people what was right was of no use.

The Rev. William Gillies, writing to the *Timaru Herald* concerning the whisky at the Hon. W. Hall-Jones' banquet, says:—"When I became aware that whisky was being supplied, I challenged the caterer." Mr Gillies further says:—"I have brought pressure to bear upon licensees, trying to secure a better observation of the Act, and when a committee composed largely of teetotalers takes to breaking the Act, I am not going to shut my eyes and pretend not to see it."

Mr E. South, formerly of the Railway Hotel, Mar'ou, has managed somehow to pull himself away from the "boys" in the Rangitikei, and is now mine host of the Taranaki Hotel, New Plymouth, one of the favourite old hosteleries of the town. Its close proximity to the railway station makes it a handy place to put up at. Sometimes the sports do congregate at the Taranaki, and when arguments are on I think the new proprietor will be able to hold his own, particularly on Rangitikei, Wanganui, and Manawatu racing.

Apropos of drink reform, Judge Murray, passing severe sentences on two men convicted of brutal assault at a drinking club, said these clubs required most stringent legislation, and much more strict control than the police were at present allowed to exercise. They held out temptations to working men to spend money and gamble, and they took the worst form of the old-fashioned uncontrolled public-houses. The Judge referred to the larrikin pushes which infest the city as "congregations of human jackals, which wanted wiping off the face of the earth."

Mr Louis Doyle, the popular manager of the Star Hotel, Albert Street, Auckland, has reason to be pleased with the increased patronage that has been accorded to this well-known house since he has assumed control. Mr Doyle is well-known to most of our readers on the East and West Coasts, having represented the proprietors of the Domain Brewery for two years prior to undertaking the management of the Star. His genial disposition and the happy knack he has of making people comfortable, are no doubt responsible for the success he has achieved in his new rôle.

Messrs Dwan Bros., the well-known Wellington hotel brokers, report having sold Mr Michael Higgins' interest in the Clyde Quay Hotel, Wellington, to Mr A. Merlet, well-known in Wellington; Mrs McKenzie's interest in the Royal Hotel, Masterton, to Mr J. O'Meara, of Masterton; Mr W. H. McClelland's interest in the Foresters' Arms Hotel, Ghuznee Street, Wellington, to Mr H. Worger, late of Queen's Hotel, Wellington; the Railway Hotel, Johnsonville, for Mr H. C. Green, to Mr B. Walker, of Wellington; Mr Robert Reid's interest in the Britannia Hotel, Willis Street, Wellington, to Mr Chas. McCarthy, late of the Rutland Hotel, Wanganui.

At the anniversary dinner of the South London Licensed Victuallers and Beersellers' Trade Protection Association in London, on February 26, the following letter from Dean Hole, of Rochester, was read:—"Though I am unable to add to my long list of arrangements for February, I much appreciate the compliment of your invitation, and would have gladly testified my sympathy with your Association, and my antipathy to tyranny and cant. The Christianity and common sense, which alone can teach true temperance, seem to be more and more ignored by teetotalers, who would incarcerate mankind in Pump Court, and turn all the birds of the air into water-wagtails."

Messrs. Hadfield and Co. are comparatively recent arrivals in Palmerston North, but they have stayed right there, and a bright idea has dawned on them. They recognise that a large proportion of the residents and settlers in the Manawatu district like a "drop o' good beer," and this they are now offering in bulk to the public from the Burton Brewery, of which they are now proprietors, after having made large additions to the plant, which also enables them to turn out a first-class article in bottled ale and stout. Mr Hadfield is a specialist in the brewing line, and has graduated in some of the best breweries, which enables him to turn out such tip-top brews.

In connection with the Government's proposed action to quash an order made for the removal of Mrs Morrison's license from Rotorua to Paeroa, the Government have been advised that as Mrs Morrison's lease, which was granted by the Lands Department in July, 1895, provides for the removal of both license and premises, it would be futile to take action to quash the order for removal. But it appears, however, that the removal contemplated was to another part of the township of Rotorua, and the power given in this connection was absolute, and without limitation. The whole matter has been referred to the Surveyor-General, as the Government were not aware, when notice was given of the objection to removal, that he had written to Mrs Morrison giving his consent to the removal.

A point of interest to the trade was raised in the Police Court at Invercargill on Monday, arising out of a charge against a prohibited person for being found on licensed premises. Counsel took objection that the order had been taken out against his client without notice to him. This was admitted by the other side, but it was contended that the licensing laws allowed such orders to be issued on *ex parte* statements of the applicants and witnesses, and therein differed from the common law right of a man to have an opportunity to show cause why he should not be convicted. A long argument took place on the point, and Mr Poynton, S.M., decided that the order was not good. The simplest way out of the difficulty was to declare that the man was not a prohibited person, and let his friends take fresh action in proper form.

An experiment in the direction of the municipalisation of hotels has just been established at Elan Village. The rules of management are decidedly stringent. Youths are not served, and the house is only opened from twelve o'clock until two, and from half-past five to nine in the evening; on Sundays it is closed all day, but it is open from 1 to 9 p.m. on Saturday. The net profits for the first half-year were £140. The house is conducted on similar lines to those advocated by the Bishop of Chester. This experiment was made by Mr Lees, the secretary of the waterworks at Birmingham, who, in concluding his report, says that individually he is an abstainer, but he was perfectly certain that he was serving the interests of temperance better in providing wholesome liquor, under proper regulations, than attempting to prohibit the traffic altogether.

The reject of Christchurch, Mr T. E. Taylor, delivered one of his vehement vituperative speeches at the so-called Temperance Conference in Dunedin the other day (says "Timotheus" in *North Otago Times*). I say so-called Temperance Conference advise-ly, because the people who assemble and call themselves temperates, and assert that they represent the Temperance people of the colony, are not themselves temperate, and it is sheer audacity, of which the Prohibitionist has a never-failing supply, for these individuals to assert that they are the truly temperance people of the community. Prohibition is a sort of sponge in the hands of Mr Taylor and other one-ideal individuals of his genus, with which they imagine they will clean the slate of human iniquity. There is a sad dearth of both worldly philosophy and Divine teaching about this new religion—Prohibition.

A well-known and wealthy squatter is now in England enjoying the breezes of his native land. In Australia, relates "Atticus" in the *Leader*, he was not much at looking upon the wine when it was red; he preferred whisky. Having a bad attack of gout he called in a celebrated London physician, whose first care was to ascertain if the patient had been under medical treatment in Australia. "Oh, yes, I went first to Dr. —, of Collins-street, and he asked me how much whisky I drank. I told him about a bottle a day, and he then said I must reduce it, not drink more than half a bottle." "Well, what did you do, Mr Woolbags?" asked the London physician. "I changed my doctor," said the squatter. The fashionable medico took his fee and the hint.

A point of licensing law, not sufficiently known or understood, was recently raised at Thornecombe Petty Sessions, in the county of Dorset, England, when Mrs Edwards, of the Castle Inn, Hawkechurch, was summoned for permitting intoxicants to be consumed during prohibited hours, and several men were also summoned for being on the premises. One of the defendants, Woodley, was a traveller, and was entertaining several visitors who lived in the village, and another of the defendants was employed to assist Mrs Edwards, but he only drank ginger-beer. After a long legal argument between the defending solicitor and the Bench, the summonses were dismissed, it being held that Mrs Edwards was justified in serving Woodley, who in turn was justified in entertaining his friends. The defendant who only drank a *non-intoxicant*, ginger-beer, was also dismissed, as the offence contemplated by the statute was that of getting intoxicating liquors, so that if his decision is good law, it would seem that a licensed victualler may keep open his house at any time for the sale of anything except intoxicants, though any person found on any licensed premises except an inmate, servant, or lodger, or anyone whose presence is not in contravention of the Licensing Acts, would be liable to a fine.