



**THE PUMP'S IDEA OF FAIR PLAY.**

There is an old Rocky Mountain story about a trapper who, meeting a bear in a very tight place, addressed himself to the Almighty in prayer. "I do not ask, oh, Lord," he said, "that you should give me any advantage over the b'ar; all I ask is that you won't give the b'ar any advantage. Just see fair play." This, roughly speaking, is the attitude of mind in which the Trade recently approached the Government. "Let"—they said in effect—"let the people of the Colony decide whether there is to be a legitimate trade in liquor, under proper control, or a lawless traffic in all the vile abominations that make men drunk and drive them into the lunatic asylums. Only let the question be put in such a way that all the electors in the country will see that it is to their interest to vote. If the majority of the people decide that there is to be no trade in liquor, so be it; but do not allow the prohibitionist party to buy votes at the price of sly grog-shops."

The fine distinction drawn by one of the deputation of alleged teetotallers that waited on the Premier the other day will deceive nobody, not even the rest of the teetotal party. It was this, that whereas the people had the right to deal with social sins, the sins of individuals were no affair of the public. Drunkenness is not a moral offence so long as it is not contracted in the public-house. What a pity it is that the no-license party should be endowed with so little wisdom. Is there a man of the world, or a professional man, who does not know that home drinking, secret drinking, is an evil by the side of which the inordinate consumption of liquor in hotels sinks into insignificance? We do not, of course, admit the right of the prohibitionist to interfere with the drinking habits of the people at all, except in the rational and admirable way of reclaiming individual cases of excess, but there is something exceedingly grotesque in the spectacle of a fanatic locking the hotel door with one hand and offering the customer as much liquor as he likes to drink with the other—and not good liquor either.

The Pump party's platform has only one plank—"Down with the Trade." The party doesn't care how much drink is consumed, so long as the sale of liquor is not legitimised, just as they do not mind how widespread immorality may become, so long as the law does not recognise it. They don't care for the inside condition of the sepulchre, so long as it is nicely white-washed on the outside. They ask the Government to crush the Trade in the interests of the sly grog-seller, but they do not recognise the sly grog-seller. They ask that the Trade may be squashed in the interests of "fair play and democracy." Fair play! Imagine the fair play that the average patron of a sly grog-shanty gets. Democracy! What sort of government of the people is it that subjects a large section of that people to the horrors of the shebeen? We say nothing here of the atrocious injustice which the prohibitionist fanatic is seeking to inflict upon those engaged in the trade. It is enough to indicate what is likely to happen to the "people" whom he would deliver over to the tender mercies of the scum of the earth. "Fair play and democracy!" To see such fair words put to such ignoble use is enough to make an honest man sigh. Also, the sight of the Isitts, and the Taylors, and the Atkinsons dishonouring the business that a Father Matthew ennobled somehow, suggests pigs in a flower garden.

**Trade Topics**

The St. Helier's Bay Hotel, under the capable and enterprising management of the present proprietor, Mr H. C. Hay, has become one of the most popular of our suburban hostelrys. St Helier's Bay is one of the most beautiful seaside resorts in the colony, and the number of visitors there is largely on the increase. Mr Hay is specially fitted to cater for visitors, and the house is eminently well adapted for the purpose.

Mr W. J. Baker, so well and favourably known as licensee of the Alexandra Hotel, Chapel-street, and subsequently of the Avondale Hotel, has purchased Mr W. Dyer's interest in that old-established house the Britomart Hotel, Customs-street. Mr Dyer, it is understood, takes over the hotel at Kaukapakapa.

R. E. Flegg, Te Aroha, writes to ask if an hotel license in New Zealand can be held by a single man? Certainly.

Says the London "Advertiser": "A conference of burgomasters has recently discussed the constant increase in the number of public-houses and the unfavourable conditions, from the sanitary point of view, in which they are established and conducted in Belgium. Contrary to an opinion which has gained almost general credence, no administrative authorisation is required for the opening of a public-house. The communal authority can only intervene if the sanitary regulations are infringed, or if the tenants come within the law respecting drunkenness. The burgomasters came to the conclusion that public-houses, in the matter of sanitary regulations, should occupy the attention of the authorities in the same way as other houses are looked after, and addressed a petition to the Government to that effect."

Among recent improvements in the building trade of Wellington may be mentioned the completion of that fine structure, erected on Lambton Quay, and facing the Bank of New Zealand, known as Barrett's Hotel. The new proprietor, Mr J. J. Kelly, has furnished the latter in a most lavish and up-to-date style, leaving nothing undone which would conduce to the comfort of visitors. The rooms are all large, lofty and well ventilated, and there are two bathrooms and lavatories on each floor. Many of the single bedrooms are the size of the double rooms to be found in most hotels, and the beds induce the weary to slumber. The excellent catering to be obtained at Barrett's, the unsurpassed quality of the liquors supplied, together with its central position, must render this hotel one of the most popular of the Empire City. We may add that Mr Kelly is a most genial host, and the tariff a moderate one.

Says the Wairarapa "Leader" of a recent date:—"The Prohibition larrikin was again strongly in evidence at the meeting held by Mr W. W. Collins at Pahiatua. There could be no objection to an interjection or two in the course of an address on such a burning question as Prohibition, but for the most part the Prohibitionists are professedly Christian people and ought not to behave as would mere heathens. Yet in their conduct at Pahiatua, as at Christchurch recently, the Prohibitionists have set an example which may be followed. For example, last night Mr H. D. Bedford, the senior member for Dunedin, was to lecture at the Olympic Theatre, Pahiatua, in reply to Mr Collins. Suppose the people who are not Prohibitionists had gone to the meeting in strength and turned the whole thing into a farce? How would the Prohibitionists like it? Serve them right, then, if they are compelled to take a dose of their own medicine."

culated to prevent the possession of liquor in a district than was Mr McNab's. Any person 'supplying, delivering, or sending' liquor was to be liable to fine or imprisonment. To have superadded to such a clause the further one that 'any person within such district in possession of liquor' should be similarly liable, would have been only a refinement or satire, so to speak. No man can possess liquor if no one will give it to him. Mr Isitt betrays a glimmer of reason when he insists that there would be no commonsense or justice in supporting such a law. But the temperance party supported it in 1895; and is plainly and unmistakably changing front in opposing it now."

Frank Carpenter foreign correspondent for leading American newspapers, in a letter from Germany, says:—"It is wonderful how the Rhine Valley is cultivated. For the greater part of the distance between Cologne and Mainz it is very hilly, but every inch of available space is used. The mountains are terraced, in places the earth being held in by walls of stones, and in some of it, carried up from the low-lands on the backs of women and men. Some of the patches are no larger than a bed quilt, and a field a yard wide will run a long distance around a hill or up a mountain. This is especially so in the vine growing regions, which are in the most mountainous parts of the valley. The soil is carefully handled. It is fertilised and so treated that although it has been producing for centuries it still yields abundantly. I expected to find Rhine wines cheap, but the best are exceedingly dear. The prices rise and fall according to the season, for sometimes the crop is short, causing a general rise. The idea prevails in America that the Germans drink only beer. This is not true. They consume vast quantities of wine, and their wines on the average are good. Every city has scores of wine restaurants and beer restaurants side by side. The difference is that anything ordered in the wine restaurant costs considerably more than the same thing in the beer restaurant. Even beer costs more if taken in the wine restaurant. The people often drink wine with their meals, and it is a common thing to carry wine along with a lunch on the cars."

The Legislative Council of the Isle of Man have just passed a Bill amending the Licensing Amendment Act of 1881. In this Act there was a clause providing for the closing of licensed premises during the time of polling at the general election, which was repealed by the House of Keys Election Amendment Act, 1903, and it has now been agreed that there shall be substituted the following enactment:—

When the election of a member or members of the House of Keys is being held, the licensed premises of any publican within the electoral district, or, if the electoral district be in a town, of any publican within the limits of the town, shall be closed, as to the sale or giving gratuitously or otherwise of intoxicating liquors, between the hours of ten in the morning and seven in the evening of the day on which the polling (if there be a poll) at such election shall take place.

This practically means that the whole of the houses are closed for the day. As the Lord Bishop in the course of the debate remarked, "It seems a strong provision." But excursionists arriving by the steamer and bona fide travellers will be provided for, the main object of the clause being to prevent electors from receiving or standing drinks during the progress of the election. (The Isle of Man is a long time after New Zealand.)

An organisation known as the Licensing Vigilance Society has just completed its first year's work at Ipswich, England. The report states that "observations were made by sixteen watchers stationed in eight sections of the town," all of whom had definite instructions. The object of the society, it appears, is to secure the full benefit of existing laws for the suppression of drunkenness, and the proper conduct of licensed houses. The executive considerably inform all whom it may con-

cern that they have no desire or intention of interfering with any legitimate business of the trade, but intend to do all they can to reap the full benefit of existing legislation designed to prevent or remove the evils of excessive drinking.

Judging by the results so far, the compulsory closing of 37 North Melbourne hotels, as a consequence of the local option vote, will involve claims for compensation amounting to nearly £50,000. The Compensation Court has been dealing with about two cases a week, on an average, and will, at that late, be occupied for three or four months yet in hearing the evidence and making awards. Up to 8th July eight hotels had been adjudicated upon, and the total amount of compensation awarded to owners and licensees is £10,383 16s 5d, or, in round figures, £1300 per hotel. If this average is not exceeded, the total will be over £48,000, and it is quite possible that it will be more. The question of compensation to breweries, where they come in as a third party having an interest, will have to be decided in some cases. There are several points of law and intricacies in cases, the consideration of which may extend the sittings of the court till very late in the year.

The S.A. Temperance Alliance, through its president, Sir Frederick Holder, has resorted to a novel scheme to raise the wind. The "modus operandi" was a lunch given by Sir Frederick, to which the Alliance invited its friends, and as many prominent citizens as they could secure, whether teetotallers or otherwise. Of course, the lunch was merely an excuse for calling them together, with the object of obtaining promises of subscriptions in support of their cause. Each guest had a printed slip placed before him to sign and fill in the amount he would give in support of the objects of the Alliance, and the speakers generally laid themselves out to induce the guests to liberality—in fact, pure begging in disguise. The majority of those who attended were the same old Alliance crowd, but no doubt the influence of Sir Frederick was the cause of the Premier and a few others being present who were not teetotallers, such as Sir Joshua Symon, who, by the way, owns and runs one of the largest vineyards in the State, besides being the owner of hotel property in the city. We noticed also that Mr T. Pickup, the ex-president of the Licensed Victuallers, was one of the guests. He forwarded his begging slip "per waiter" up to the chairman, not filled as requested, but with a memo. on the back, asking whether he would be allowed to speak, but the reply from Sir Frederick came, "Most certainly not," and Tom's faith as to the fairness of the Alliance is now greatly shaken.—"A.B. Journal."

The editor of the New Zealand "Times" appends the following note to Mr Isitt's letter, in which he contended that the Temperance Party had not changed its programme:—"Mr Isitt says that the Temperance Party supported in 1895 the proposal that no liquor should be legally sent into a no-license area. He adds in the next breath that the party did not then support the proposal nor does it support it now, that the possession of liquor should be an offence. But if liquor cannot legally be sent into a district, how can anyone in the district possess liquor? Mr Isitt is surely contending for a distinction without a difference. No imaginable provision could be better cal-

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