



A FRESH CHAMPION.

Now that there are so many hirelings and vendors of untruths in the field against the trade, it is refreshing to discover a man of the stamina of Mr. Bagnall. This gentleman has been watching the trend of recent events, and becoming disgusted with the prohibitionist's more than questionable methods, has, on behalf of British fair play, at last stopped forward to combat them. Mr. Bagnall addressed a crowded audience in the Lyceum Theatre, Palmerston North, last week, and was listened to throughout with the utmost attention.

His speech was marked by strong trenchant criticism, and the complete absence of those abusive allusions so favoured by prohibition fanatics. Mr. Bagnall did not wildly harangue his audience, or blackguard the prohibitionists; he spoke in a perfectly sane and rational manner, and put the plain truth of the matter before his listeners.

Touching on the reason for the present fierce antagonism to the trade shown by the outcasts of other countries who lead the prohibition agitation in New Zealand, Mr. Bagnall said that he could hardly conceive that anybody who hoped to promote the welfare of humanity should leave such scenes of misery and degradation as those to be witnessed any hour of the day or night in any one of the big cities of England, or the Continent, or America, to come here where such a state of affairs was almost unknown.

This is just the question that every reasonable man who has ever moved outside New Zealand is constantly putting to himself, and the reason to such a one is obvious. Who are these fanatics who, under a cloak of religion, spread slanderous lies and make a fat living out of the pockets of the foolishly credulous people who follow them? They come to New Zealand because they cannot succeed in their own countries. They find that, being a minister, does not bring in enough money, so they start off for a country like this, where a fine living can be made by the man who is utterly unscrupulous and knows how to gull the general public.

It is a comparatively easy thing, one would imagine, to make a person who knows but little about a certain subject believe practically anything so long as the necessary lies are carefully worded, and that the prohibitionist leaders are past masters at the genteel art has been proved times out of number. There is a large section of the community, however, who are ordinary rational mortals, and these naturally view with disgust the sickening trail of misrepresentations, lies and slanders perpetrated in this otherwise grand little country by a handful of moral and social outcasts from abroad. The only remedy apparently for this evil is to get people to understand the sort of reptile they are housing, and when they awake to the fact we have no hesitation in stating that the teetotal fanatic will be promptly shot off to try his evil practices elsewhere.

At a largely-attended meeting of all the hotelkeepers in the Waikato electorate, held at the Hamilton Hotel last Friday, the following resolution was unanimously agreed to:—"That, at this meeting of hotelkeepers in the Waikato electorate, it is distinctly understood that the trade takes no part, either directly or indirectly, in the election of a member for the House of Representatives at the ensuing elections, but confines itself to the local option poll alone."

There is no doubt that Gisborne has a great future before it. The back country is exceedingly fertile, and now that the railway is being pushed on—though very slowly—there are signs all along the line of new homesteads being established, and the heavy bush lands are rapidly being laid under grass. Some 12 miles out from Gisborne is the thriving settlement of Ormond. This town is pleasantly situated, and, possessing an

extremely healthy climate, is a favourite summer holiday resort. Those who visit the place will find first-class quarters at the Ormond Hotel, which is under the proprietorship of Mr. C. Neenan.

Further up the line, some eight miles beyond Ormond, is the picturesque little town of Te Karaka, the present railway terminus, and destined to become a place of considerable importance on account of several main roads converging at this point. The Waipaoa River flows past the town, and adds much to the beauty of the place. There is a good hotel, while buggies and saddle horses may be hired from Mr. Cassidy, who runs coaches regularly to Whatatutu and other outlying districts.

Last year there were 169 prosecutions in the colony for sly grog-selling, resulting in 113 convictions, as against 216 prosecutions and 151 convictions during the year previous. In this connection the Commissioner of Police remarks that the decrease of 47 in the number of prosecutions against sly grog-sellers does not necessarily indicate a decrease in the number of persons engaged in this "deplorable and troublesome class of offence," but rather that more secrecy is adopted to prevent detection. He adds that although special action is taken from year to year, and frequent prosecutions are instituted and punishments inflicted, the result is somewhat disheartening, as it does not appear to have the desired effect in diminishing the number of such offenders or offences. The police find that the difficulty experienced in former years of obtaining evidence in these cases continues, perjury being frequently indulged in to prevent a conviction.

The Wanganui "Herald" reports that a daring robbery took place last Thursday evening, when Messrs. Williams Bros.' (grocers and wine and spirit merchants) premises were broken into, and a large quantity of liquor and goods stolen. The perpetrator had evidently planned his work well, as the iron bar which keeps the shutters in place was bent and wrenched off, then the shutters were pulled down and the window was smashed, leaving a hole large enough for a person to get through. About three dozen bottles of ale, a case of assorted wines, a few bottles of dry gin, and a quantity of goods were taken out of the window. The robber seems to have confined himself to taking what was in the window, and just as well, as the safe contained over £14. Messrs. Williams Bros. estimate their loss at over £30.

A meeting of the Napier Licensing Committee was held on October 9, Mr. Brabant, S.M. (chairman) and Messrs. C. Saunders and Henry Williams being present. A temporary transfer of the license of the Napier Hotel was granted from W. Parnell to W. Gifford, there being no opposition on the part of the police.

Efforts have been made to produce a good whisky in the Commonwealth, but, up to date, have not been so successful as in distilling the brandy spirit (says the "Australian Brewers' Journal.") Some experts say that special water is required, and a colder climate. We have not yet tasted colonial whisky to be compared to the Home-made article. One of our best authorities says that "Whisky is made in Scotland, Ireland, and the United States; but the best comes from Scotland," and in proof of this assertion we have only to look at our own imports of whisky.

Messrs. Bass' mammoth excursion to Yarmouth has recently taken place, no less than 8000 employees and their friends from Burton, London, and various agencies being conveyed in sixteen special trains to the popular seaside town. Every other brewery, too, has had, or is about to hold, its annual outing, the day forming a bright spot for all in the year. Brewery excursions are particularly well organised as a rule, and the generosity of the firms is greatly appreciated by the employees.

Our Taranaki correspondent writes (October 14):—"The licensed victuallers in the Taranaki electorate, which includes New Plymouth, are now hard at work in seeing that their interests are not neglected at the coming poll. They are sanguine that continuance will be retained. As regards the other electorates in our province, I hear conflicting accounts. I hear that Egmont is sure to retain continuance, Inglewood and Waitara being the chief towns in Mr. Jennings' representation. The Patea electorate, including the towns of Stratford and Patea, will also, I think poll for continuance. Hawera electorate seems doubtful, but if the licensed victuallers put up a good fight, I see no reason why the poll should not result in a continuance vote. There is one thing certain, that the trade in this province has awakened to the fact that these periodical polls must be fought to a finish, and not allowed to be mere matters of form, as in the past. The average Britisher has a decided objection to be coerced into what he must drink, and in this phase of the question the prohibitionist canvasser will find a stumbling-block to his mission."

Mr. C. J. Webb, the Northern Tasmanian representative of the Cascade Brewery Company, now careers through the country per medium of a motor car (says the "Australian Brewers' Journal.") The roads, consequent on the long spell of wet weather, are not too good in some of the hilly districts just at present, and Mr. Webb had a novel experience on the road between Scottsdale and Derby recently. The car got stuck, and he enlisted the services of a couple of bullocks from a team near at hand. The spectacle of the bullocks hauling the car up to the Camp Hotel, with the motorist steering, is described as being comical enough to form the subject of a pictorial postcard.

We regret to have to record the sudden illness of Mr. Lorimer proprietor of the Greytown Hotel. He is suffering from a stroke of paralysis, and lies in a precarious condition.

The Rev. W. Thomson, representative of the Licensed Victuallers, and Mr. Isitt will probably meet on the public platform at Dunedin this month, says an exchange.

The Commercial Hotel, Stratford, is now under the able management of Mr. and Mrs. Pollock. Travellers may therefore be assured of receiving the very best of accommodation and comfort there.

As is usual during show week, the accommodation at the majority of the hotels, boardinghouses, and coffee palaces in the city is fully occupied (says the Launceston "Daily Telegraph.") "Can't take any more" is the general tenor of the proprietors' remarks. One hotelkeeper informed a "Daily Telegraph" reporter that he had fixed up some beds in his sitting-room. "My show week boarders come back every year," he explained, "and as they won't go anywhere else they have to take the best I can give them. Oh, no, we won't run short of tucker. I've cooked 80 pounds of salt beef alone. They like it." Others who take in lodgers—whether at hotel, coffee palace, or boardinghouse, had the same tale to tell, though that portion relating to the salt beef varied, of course. All, however, boasted of largely augmented supplies of "tucker."

Lord Roberts, while on a motor car ride, called at the Spa Hotel, St. Neots, Huntingdonshire, for tea. Noticing a newspaper supplement portrait hanging up, he asked: "Who is that old chap hanging up there?" The landlady replied, "Dear old Bobs," and explained that she revered him for what he had done for the country, though she had never seen him. As he was leaving, Lord Roberts said: "Don't say again you have never seen Lord Roberts." He told her who he was, and promised to send her his portrait.

It was not a liquor but a No-license party advocate who mixed the metaphor last Sunday night, and caused the crowd to lay back its head and laugh. "In America," said Mr. Palk, "wonderful country—they put live sausages in at one end of the factory and turn them out dead pigs at the other!" After vainly gesticulating for some minutes (the "Manawatu" "Daily Times" reports) Mr. Palk made himself heard again and reversed the process.

FIRE AT MESSRS. CAMPBELL AND EHRENFRIED'S MALTHOUSE.

A fire that did a large amount of damage to a stock of malt and barley occurred at Messrs. Campbell and Ehrenfried's malthouse in Khyber Pass Road last Friday night. The fire was discovered at about ten minutes to eleven, and the Parnell and Newmarket brigades were promptly on the scene.

The kiln in which the fire originated, known as the No. 1 kiln, and malthouse, contained some 1200 sacks of malt and 1500 sacks of barley, the whole of which has been destroyed by fire and water, whilst the malthouse sustained considerable damage. The value of the malt and barley is estimated at about £2000, and the damage to the kiln at £1000. How the fire started is a mystery, as all the appliances are thoroughly up to date, and the furnaces were recently overhauled. The maltster (Mr. Morton) left the brewery at ten o'clock, and all was safe then. The fire seems to have originated at the top of the kiln, although how it could have obtained a hold there is not known.

With the aid of a good supply of water the Newmarket brigade soon had the fire under control, so that the Parnell brigade had not much to do when they arrived, and soon retired.

AIR-DRIED HOPS.

After many years' study and experiment, I am prepared to say that the true principles for drying hops are not generally understood. Imperfect drying means imperfect hops; and in the hope that all concerned may benefit, I shall give the result of my investigations as clearly as possible within the limits of a short article.

Hops in their natural state, when first picked, possess the purest and most delicate flavour. It is necessary to dry them, or they will not keep. The fresh hop is three-fourths water, and if left in bulk for a few hours after picking, a sweating process begins, which causes rapid deterioration. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to dry the hops, and the process should begin immediately after they are picked, and continue uninterruptedly until the drying is completed.

The following methods of drying are in vogue:—

1. The European method, by which the hops are dried in the open by the sun. This means would be ideal were it not for rains or unfavourable atmospheric conditions. For any but the smallest crops this method is impracticable, on account of the space required to spread the hops. With this system the grower is always obliged to dispose of his hops to the merchant when they are only half dried, and the merchant completes the drying by means of artificial heat.

2. The open-fire (English) method, in which the hops are laid on a kiln floor and dried by an open coal or coke fire under the hops. The heat and fumes from this fire permeate the hops, and detract from the flavour and brewing value.

3. The furnace, or American method. This is the same as the English method, except the fires are not open, and furnaces, or stoves, are used. The principal objection to this method, and the English method also, is that it is impossible to dry the hops except at too high a temperature, or to dry them evenly. The hot air arising from the fire or furnace comes in contact with the hops lying next the hop cloth, and immediately absorbs moisture from the hops. As soon as this air becomes moisture-laden it is much heavier and cooler, and intense heat is required to force the air up through the hops. The result is the hops next the floor become over-dried, while