

SLY-GROG SELLING.

At the City Police Court William Clark and Edwd. Barrett were charged on three separate informations (January 20th, 21st, and 22nd) with selling beer without being licensed so to do.

Sub-Inspector O'Donovan conducted the case for the police, and Mr. Wilford defended the accused.

The Sub-Inspector said defendants were partners in a restaurant business, known as the Strand Cafe, situated on Lambton Quay, near Martin's Fountain. They had been in possession of the place for some months. The police had been in possession of information that drink had been sold for a considerable time, and steps were taken to ascertain whether the information was correct. In the event of a conviction he would ask for the infliction of a severe penalty for each offence. The offence was aggravated by the fact that it was not only a case of selling liquor without a license, but the sales had taken place after 10 o'clock at night, when the 10 o'clock licensing arrangements for hotels was on trial.

Charles Le Fevre, probationary constable, said that on Friday, January 19th, he and two other probationers went to the Strand Cafe at 10.15 p.m. A waitress showed them to a room, and they had supper. Before they went away they saw some men in another room drinking beer. The following night his party returned at half-past 10. The same waitress showed them into a stall. After they had given their orders for supper, they were asked what they would like to drink. Witness said he would like a glass of beer if he could get it. The waitress said he could have that if he paid 1s 6d extra. The waitress went to a window and called, "One on." A bottle of beer was then brought, and witness and his companions drank its contents. On going, witness asked whether they could take a bottle of beer away with them. The waitress replied in the affirmative, and brought a bottle of beer, which was paid for by Keane, one of the probationers who accompanied witness. This bottle was in possession of the police now. Witness saw Clark, but did not see Barrett. Witness went to the premises again, when a search warrant was executed. Two dozen full bottles of beer were seized.

Mr. Wilford cross-examined the witness at length concerning his reason for going to the cafe, with the object of showing that it was with the intention of procuring liquor after hours. Witness admitted they wanted to get beer if they could, but there was no intention to endeavour to make defendants sell the beer. Witness had asked the waitress to "join" the party, but she had refused. Mr. Wilford asked questions concerning witness "making love" to the maid; but he only admitted asking the girl what night she was off.

Joseph Keane, probationer, said he went to the cafe under instructions. He remembered the previous witness asking the waitress to make an appointment. Witness did not see Barrett.

William Charles Rutledge, probationer, and Sergeant Rutledge also gave evidence. The latter said he executed the search warrant, and found a num-

ber of bottles of beer and seventy-four empty bottles on the premises.

Mr. Wilford: Inside or outside?
Dr. McArthur: They were empty inside, I think! (Laughter.)

Continuing, Sergeant Rutledge said Clark had wanted to know whether he was allowed to keep a couple of gallons of beer on the premises for his own use. Witness had paid for and procured beer while in the shop.

Mr. Wilford: Do you know there is not one restaurant in town where you can't get a bottle of beer before 10 o'clock by paying in advance.

Sergeant Rutledge: I know there are places which won't send out for liquor.

THE DEFENCE.

Mr. Wilford, for the defence, said that on the night in question Clark had no knowledge that these particular people received liquor. Evidence would be tendered to show that on some nights a "runner" employed at the restaurant went over to a hotel as many as a dozen times to procure liquor for customers. There was nothing in the Licensing Act to prevent a restaurant-keeper saying to a customer, who asked for beer, "Give me your shilling and I will buy it for you." This practice was largely indulged in in Wellington, and was a method of keeping custom. These three men went into defendants' restaurant for the purpose of making them break the law. He was not saying anything of the ethics of the matter. When the detectives got there, they saw a young girl, and in order to be more successful one of the men began making love with the maid. It was no offence against accused if the girl took a bottle of beer from one of the defendants' private rooms; took money for it and did not hand the money over to her employers. He then proceeded to call evidence.

Violet Paton, waitress, said she had been employed by the Strand Cafe for about a fortnight. She remembered Le Fevre calling with some other men. He said he was from Rotorua. He asked her to make an appointment. If anybody called for liquor before 10 o'clock a man employed in the house was sent across to a hotel for it. She was not allowed to take orders after 10 o'clock. She told defendants that she would get them beer "if they would not tell the boss." She went to Mr. Clark's room for it; but he did not know witness had taken it till the next day, when he was making up his books. He then asked her how much she had charged for it. On her replying 1s 6d he said: "You had better keep it, but do not go to my room again."

James Carlyle, pantryman, gave evidence as to his running messages to a hotel for beer, etc. for customers.

DR. MCARTHUR'S REMARKS.

Dr. McArthur said he did not believe the story of the waitress. Defendants would be each fined, £25 costs 3s 6d.

Mr. Wilford asked whether His Worship would make a pronouncement in reference to liquor which would be a guide to other restaurant-keepers.

Dr. McArthur said they would have to learn for themselves. For his part if any liquor was kept on the premises he would consider it kept there for sale.

Mr. Wilford then mentioned the heavy penalty inflicted. Would they be given time to pay?

His Worship said one person had escaped, and in another case where this was done he did not think the fine had yet been paid. This was a worse case. It was not only selling without a license, but the offence was committed after hours.

Mr. Wilford: If these men had £10,000 they would not be asked to pay more than £250.

Dr. McArthur replied that he was sorry that wilful perjury was committed in these cases. Magistrates could not have given their evidence better than the three men for the prosecution. But a young girl had gone into the box and declared what he believed to be absolutely untrue. She knew she was not telling the truth.

Sub-Inspector O'Donovan: All the more disgrace on defendants for the girl being put in the position she is. It would be better for the hotels to be open than this sort of thing take place.

Mr. Wilford made an appeal for the girl. He said the evidence she had given was exactly similar to what she had told him at his office some days ago.

Dr. McArthur: I will not retract a single word. She was not speaking the truth. In reference to the other two charges (to which the defendants pleaded guilty) he did not wish to be vindictive, and would inflict costs only (these amounted to 24s).

Mr. Wilford: My clients have not the money.

Dr. McArthur: Well, they will have to go to gaol.

Mr. Wilford: They have only got the good will, for which they gave £80.

Dr. McArthur raised objections to letting the men go unless someone went security for them.

Mr. Wilford said his clients would be ruined.

Mr. O'Donovan said he had no recommendation to make.

Mr. Wilford: Will Your Worship give them a day or two to sell out.

Dr. McArthur: They may clear out. This closed the case.—"New Zealand Times."

LOCAL DISHES.

When King Henry I., in 1135, succumbed to the seductions of that historic feast of lampreys, the dish by no means fell in popular estimation. On the contrary, although this delicacy was directly responsible for the monarch's death, the lamprey became a dish of such repute in the neighbourhood of the Severn, where the fish most abound, that the town of Gloucester was ordered to give a lamprey pie, with a raised crust, as an annual tribute to the sovereign at Christmas time. A few years later, however, the citizens apparently allowed themselves to become preoccupied with other matters at the festive seasons, and this contribution to the royal larder was overlooked; for history records that in the reign of King John "the men of Gloucester gave 40 marks to the king to have his goodwill, because they regarded him not as they ought in the matter of their lampreys." A pie continued to be sent till the Municipal Reformation Act of 1835, the city account books

showing details of amounts paid for the fish, and for cooking the same, carriage, etc. Some years ago a former Mayor of Gloucester ascertained through the Lord High Steward that, having regard to the ancient custom, her late Majesty would be willing to accept a royal lamprey pie from the Mayor as a birthday offering and token of loyalty and affection of the citizens; and the custom has since been kept up by succeeding mayors. Lampreys, or elvers as they are likewise called, are still highly esteemed in the county as an article of food. The fish, which closely resemble young eels, appear in shoals in the Severn and Wye about April, when they are often caught by night, with the aid of a lantern. A common mode of preparation is to press them into cheeses which are eventually cut into slices and fried. They are also potted. The harvest gathered from the sea affords a pleasant diversity of fare at many points around our coast. The Yarmouth bloater is world-famous; the Colchester Oyster Feast is an annual function that may well be the envy of every other Corporation, and as a civic banquet yields precedence only to the whitebait dinner at Greenwich. Though the Cornish pilchard has recently shown itself shy of those waters, it must be included in a list of local specialities. Both in its uncooked state and tinned a la sardines, it is a recognised article of commerce. That our pilchards have to be sent from Cornwall to Italy to be tinned, thus incurring needless sea-freight, is a slur on our principles of commercial economy. The Americans will tell you, regarding their natural products, that they eat what they can, and can what they can't. We manage the former, but not the latter. The marinated pilchard is, however, a method of preparation confined to the county, and is most generally employed by the Cornish housewife. The fish are placed in a jar with vinegar and spice, and then the jar is subjected to a long baking in the oven.

While many dishes of local repute need only to be known to win instant approval, others are undoubtedly an acquired taste. As an example, one may mention Laver, a dish for which there is a great demand on the borders of the British Channel, particularly in North Devon and South Wales. It is made with a species of dark brown seaweed which is scraped from the rocks. On the south side of the Channel it is prepared with vinegar, and eaten as a salad or pickle, while the Welsh mix it with oatmeal and make it into little brown cakes. To the uninitiated, it is not appetising in appearance; but judging by the voracious demand there is for it in the vicinities named, it must become more palatable after a longer acquaintance. Another little known item of daily fare is the Ormer, which is consumed in large numbers in the Channel Islands. This shell-fish is found on the rocks around the islands. It formed one of the luxuries of the place as far back as the 17th century, since the following appears in a quaint pamphlet dealing with Sark, published in London in 1673, and entitled, "News from the Channel; or the discovery and perfect Description of the Island of Serke, by a gentleman now inhabiting there, to his friend and kinsman in London." Speaking of the food of the island, the writer says: "For holy timber, our three staple commodities are fish, fowl, and rabbits. Of the first, a little industry will purchase us a hundred sorts, particularly a large fish we call a wrack-fish, which we split, and nailing it to our walls, dry it in the sun for part of our winter provisions. As also a large shell-fish, taken plentifully at low tides, called an Ormund, that sticks to the rocks, whence we beat them off with a fork or iron hook. 'Tis much bigger than an oyster, and like that good either fresh or pickled, but infinitely more pleasant to the gusto; so that an epicure would think his pallet in paradise, if he might but always gourmandise on such delicious ambrosia."

(To be concluded next week.)

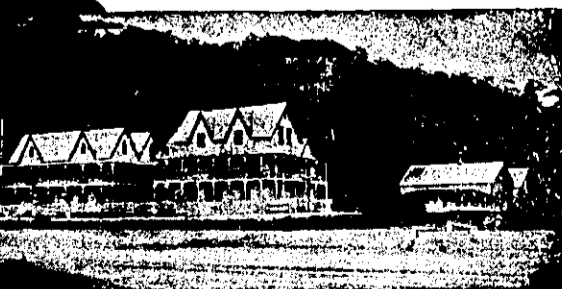
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