

stituted, are above reproach their decisions are judicial and uninfluenced by party feeling of bias. Each court consists of a county judge and two Police Court Magistrates. In spite of all that has been said, I think on the whole, New Zealand can learn something from us in licensing matters at any rate."

**AN APPEAL ALLOWED.**

An appeal involving the question or what is included in the term "licensed premises" was heard by Mr Justice Cooper in banco last Saturday morning. Constable Beddek, of the Thames, appealed from a decision of Mr S. Bush, S.M., in the case of the Police v. Victor Bowdler, who was charged with having been found on the licensed premises of the Cornwall Arms Hotel when such premises were required by law to be closed. The Hon. J. A. Tole appeared for the appellant, and the respondent was not represented.

Mr Tole said the respondent admitted having been in the yard of the hotel, but denied that he was there for the purpose of committing a breach of the Licensing Act. The Magistrate dismissed the case upon the ground that the yard was not included in the definition of "licensed premises" under the licensing laws, and that the house was all that was specified in a license. Mr Tole argued that the Magistrate was obviously wrong, for although the Act of 1904 dealt with licensed premises, but gave no definition, he overlooked the fact that with the Licensing Act of 1904 was incorporated the Licensing Act of 1881, which gave a clear definition as to what "licensed premises" meant, showing that a yard was included.

His Honor said he need not go farther than the New Zealand Statistics to allow the appeal. He agreed with Mr Tole that the Act of 1881 and its definition of "licensed premises" applied. This definition included "every room, building, closet, cellar, skittle ground, stable, out-houses, or any other place whatsoever, appertaining to such house or place." When a license was issued by the Licensing Committee, it included necessarily all the matters which were referred to in the definition of section 4 of the Act of 1881. It would be absurd to say that if an innkeeper permitted drunkenness in his yard or stable that he would not be liable under the Licensing Act. He referred the matter back to the Magistrate with a direction that the ground of dismissal was wrong in law, but if the Magistrate was satisfied that the respondent was upon the premises with a reasonable excuse, then he ought to dismiss the prosecution. Seeing that the respondent had not opposed the appeal he would not allow costs.

**LOVE AND THE LICENSING ACT.**

Under the Licensing Act, Sidney Bryant, a youth, was proceeded against at the Bendigo (Vic.) Court on 18th February, on a charge of having been on the licensed premises of the Red Lion Hotel, Bryant said that he had been invited to Barnard-street, during prohibited hours, tea by the licensee's husband. Afterwards he had taken a girl from the hotel for a drive. Inspector Gray: "What kept you at the hotel after your return?" Witness (diffidently): "Well, I was courting." (Laughter.) Mr Moore, P.M. (promptly): "That is the very best of reasons. You are discharged." Albert Lawrie and Andrew Scott raised similar pleas in their defence, and they were also discharged. Agnes Matilda Rowe, licensee of the hotel, was then charged with having permitted the persons to be on her licensed premises during prohibited hours, but Inspector Gray said that, in view of the fact that there were so many young girls and sweethearts at the hotel, he would withdraw the charge. —"Australian Brewers' Journal."

**A BOTTLE QUESTION.**

In the local police court last Monday, two young men named George Jones (alias Goddard) and John Cadigan were charged that, on March 22, they were rogues and vagabonds, in that they endeavoured to impose upon Daniel Arkell, by a false representation, with a view to obtain money. Sub-Inspector Gordon prosecuted, and Mr Singer defended. Herbert J. Arkell, manager of Arkell's brewery, Newton Road, said that Cadigan was employed at the brewery as a bottle-washer. He also had authority to receive bottles brought for sale. His duties were to count the bottles, and hand the ticket into the office for payment. On March 22 a ticket was handed into the office signed by Cadigan, and crediting Jones with the sale of 30 dozen quart bottles and 30 dozen pint bottles. Suspecting that something was wrong, witness questioned Cadigan about the bottles, and he said that they were washed and filled up immediately. To Mr Singer: Between February 27 and March 21, 350 dozen bottles were missed.

Charles Fredk. Cork, book-keeper, employed by Messrs Arkell, said that Cadigan presented the ticket for payment, and Jones asked for the money, but witness did not give it to him.

David W. Elliott, storeman at the brewery, said that no quart bottles were brought to the brewery on March 21 or March 22.

George Dixon, a bottler, employed at the complainants' brewery, said that he had a suspicion that bottles were being paid for without being received. In consequence of this witness was instructed to keep a watch. Jones did not bring any bottles to the brewery either on March 21 or March 22.

Some further evidence was also taken in support of the charge.

Accused, who reserved their defence, were committed for trial. Bail was allowed, in two sureties of £50 in each case.

**THE MORPHIA HABIT.**

Under the title "The Black Idiot," M. Laurent Tailhade contributes to the *Mercure de France* a striking article on the alarming increase of the morphia habit in France and other Western countries. After disposing of some misconceptions, such as that morphia produces dreams and visions, whereas its chief primary effect is an extraordinary pleasurable stimulation of the wakeful imagination, the writer speaks of some of the orgies to which the cult of the "elixir of death" has given rise in Paris. The son of a banker is named as having died in a hideous lodginghouse of the Faubourg St. Honore, after having squandered 20 fortunes, at the end of eight days of uninterrupted morphinisation. It is, however, far from the case that all maniacs of this kind are members of aristocratic clubs or wealthy demi-mondaines like a certain "Queen of the Sahara," as to whom Dr. Berillon has published his observations. Morphine has, M. Tailhade declares, fewer poets among its victims than alcohol, but more politicians. "Dr. Louveau saw General Boulanger make an inspection in the Elysee Gardens in 1887, at the moment of the Schedule incident. Prince Bismarck only spoke in the Reichstag after having injected a fairly large dose, and toward the end of his life he used his favourite drug largely. Guy de Maupassant, maniac at once of morphia, ether, and cocaine joined symptoms of general paralysis with toxic delirium in the asylum where he ended his life so miserably. And well-informed persons state that Dr. Babinski submitted the illustrious Charcot to daily injections of several centigrammes of morphia during the last months of his life." Alphonse Daudet was another eminent victim. Most of the houses that pretend to cure the habit are either conducted on the lines of a casino, the patients having abundant liberty to obtain illicit supplies of the drug, or are something very like private prisons, where suicide is not unusual. There are, however, a few sanatoria where, in a month of severe restriction, the victim is weaned of his fatal predilection, and real cures are effected.

**SOBER NORWAY.**

The commissioners appointed by the Scottish Temperance Legislation Board last August to visit Norway and investigate the working of the liquor licensing laws in that country, have followed up their interim report by an exhaustive review of their inquiry, accompanied by elucidatory charts and statistical tables. The commissioners were Mr John Cowan, ex-master of the Edinburgh Merchant Company; Professor James Seth professor of moral philosophy, Edinburgh University; Mr John Mann, jun., chartered accountant, Glasgow; and Mr Hector Munro Ferguson, of Assynt, Novar, all of whom sign the report. Within the past half-century, the commissioners say, Norway has been transformed from one of the most drunken of European nations into one of the most sober, and this they attribute, apart from the general advance in education, to two main causes—the growth of a strong temperance sentiment and progressive temperance legislation, under which the people are invested with powers of local control, with considerable latitude in the choice of the means of control. The sparsely-populated country districts have the power of an indirect local veto, while the towns have the option of direct local veto of spirits, or "management" by disinterested companies, known as "Samlags." So far from being antagonistic forces, these systems aid each other. The commissioners explain the constitution of the Samlag as follows:—In the towns of Norway the Town Council is the licensing authority, and fixes the number of spirit licenses required to meet the reasonable convenience of the town, after the town has decided by vote that the traffic in spirits shall be carried on within its bounds. These licenses are then granted to a disinterested company called a Samlag, which thus holds a

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monopoly of the retail trade in spirits. The Town Council retains the right of supervision over all the operations of this company. The committee, which apportions the surplus profits, consists of an equal number of representatives of the shareholders and of the Town Council. The initiative regarding the destination of the surplus rests with the directors of the company, who made proposals to this committee, but the ultimate decision is not carried into effect until it has been approved by the Governor of the district after consultation with the magistracy and the Town Council. Since the establishment of the Samags about £1,400,000 has been expended on "objects of public benefit." During the past eight years the proportion accruing to the State has been increased and set apart till 1910 to form the nucleus of an old age pension fund, which now amounts to £500,000. In Sweden the surpluses are used to reduce the burden of the rates, and therefore the towns have a very tangible interest in the liquor traffic, whereas that interest is entirely absent from the municipal politics of Norway, and the purity of Norwegian municipal life is safeguarded against one of the most insidious and deadly kinds of attack.

**ABSINTHE.**

Such has come to be the horror with which absinthe is regarded by many in France that it is referred to as the "scourge," the "plague," "the enemy," and "the queen of poisons." Absinthe is a liquor of an emerald green colour, consisting of from 47 to 80 per cent. of

alcohol, highly flavoured with the aromatics, wormwood, anise, fennel, coriander, calamus aromaticus, hyssop and marjoram. The special variety of this drink depends upon the proportions and kinds of these flavours composing it. Its quality will also depend upon the quality of its constituents. Since any unpleasant taste may be easily concealed by the strong aromatic used, the alcohol employed in this liquor is frequently very impure. Absinthe heads the list of toxic essence. The ordinary absinthe contains a far larger percentage of alcohol than does whisky. Consequently its toxic effects are far greater than are those of whisky, for to the increased amount of alcohol there is added the deadly wormwood. Absinthe was introduced into France in rather a curious way. It was brought there after the Algerian war of 1844-7 by the soldiers, who, on their campaign, had been advised to mix absinthe with their wine as a febrifuge.

**WALKED OUT OF THE DOCK.**

Mr W. W. Jacobs has said that it is only their surprises that makes the stories take. To illustrate what he means, he tells a story of a counsel defending a man accused of housebreaking, who spoke like this: "Your Lordship, I submit that my client did not break into the house at all. He found the parlour window open, and merely inserted his right arm and removed a few trifling articles. Now, gentlemen, my client's arm is not himself, and I fail to see how you can pun-