

ing body is adamant in one area and putty in another.

In one town there is an organised official campaign, which has as its object the wiping of the public-house out of existence, and in a neighbouring town there is a recklessness in licensing which is nothing short of a scandal.

As an instance of the latter contention, I will take the town of Bedford, the town in whose gaol the inspired tinker, John Bunyan, wrote his immortal "Pilgrim's Progress."

There is a narrow street or lane in Bedford which contains four registered Common-lodging-houses, and close by are another registered common lodging-house and an unregistered lodging-house. These are all the Common lodging-houses in Bedford, and every one of them is licensed to sell beer. I will give the particulars in each case.

No. 1.—Registered Common lodging-house. The beds. Price of bed fourpence. Licensed for beer. Bar open to the public during regulation hours. No refreshments other than drink supplied on demand. The tramps and vagrants and nightly lodgers have access to the bar from the common kitchen, and obtain drink during prohibited hours and all day on Sunday. This house joins two other licensed houses.

No. 2.—Registered Common lodging-house. Same conditions as No. 1. Twenty-two beds. Entrances for public two. One drinking bar. No refreshments other than drink supplied on demand. Joins two licensed houses.

No. 3.—Registered Common-lodging house. Seven beds. Entrances for public two. One drinking bar. No refreshments other than drink supplied on demand. Is twenty-seven yards from one licensed house and thirty-four yards from another.

No. 4.—Registered Common lodging-house. Twelve beds. Two drinking bars. No refreshments other than drink supplied on demand. Is twenty-seven yards from one licensed house and sixty-seven yards from another.

No. 5.—Registered Common lodging-house. Twenty-five beds. One drinking bar. No refreshments other than drink supplied on demand. Is fifty

yards away from one licensed house and fifty yards from another.

No. 6.—Unregistered lodging-house. Lodgers pay weekly. Licensed to sell beer.

I have taken these particulars from the Report made by the Head Constable of Bedford to the Annual Licensing Meeting on February 9, 1904.

In order to ascertain if the conditions were still the same I have quite recently visited every house here mentioned, and I found the condition of every registered Common lodging-house in Bedford exactly the same as in the Report of 1904.

There is access into the drinking bar from the common kitchen in each house.

In the kitchens I found the character of the lodgers to be of the usual Doss-house or "padding ken" order. In some of these kitchens there were women as well as men, the house being a "mixed" one—that is, accommodating both sexes.

Here, then, we have a town in which every registered Common lodging-house has a beer license, and all the houses are, as I have shown, in one small area, and close to other licensed houses.

Many of the lodgers are beggars, and make a practice of soliciting alms in the streets. They spend the money they get in this way "on the premises."

Each of these houses is practically a tramps' hotel, but food is not supplied as at an hotel—only drink. In spite of this fact, all the Doss-houses are licensed as beer houses, and anyone taking a bed ticket, which costs fourpence, is able to drink on the premises during prohibited hours.

This is a plain statement of facts. I leave them to the consideration of the authorities and all who are interested in

the present campaign for a Reform of the Licensing Laws.

#### CIGAR-LEAF GROWING.

A return has been presented in the Federal Parliament showing the number of cigar-leaf growers in Australia, and the acreage each has under cultivation. Queensland has the largest number, there being 28 growers in that State. Their holdings vary in size from a quarter of an acre to 10 acres. In Victoria there are three cigar-leaf growers, with small acreages. In Tasmania three Chinese are registered as growers, but no leaf has been produced by them since 1904. In no instance has it been found in New South Wales that leaf is being grown specially for the manufacture of cigars.

#### CIGARETTE SMOKING.

Drastic legislation to put down cigarette smoking by juveniles is to be introduced in the House of Commons next session. A draft Bill contains the following provisions:—

1. Every person, who knowingly sells or delivers or permits or suffers to be sold or delivered any description of cigarettes to any child under the age of sixteen years, shall be liable to a penalty of not exceeding 40s for the first offence, and not exceeding £5 for any subsequent offence.

2. Nothing in this Act shall prevent the employment by a licensed person of a member of his family or his servant or apprentice to manufacture, or, as a messenger, to deliver cigarettes.

3. Every child under the age of sixteen, who shall be found in possession of cigarettes, or found smoking tobacco in any form, shall, upon conviction, be liable to a penalty of not exceeding 40s for each offence, and shall be subject to the provisions of the Youthful Offenders Act, 1901.

4. For the purpose of this Act, the word "cigarette" shall include cigarette papers or wrappers, and cigars, cheroots and tobacco.

5. This Act may be cited as the Cigarette (Sale to Children) Act, 1908, and shall come into operation in three months after receiving the royal assent.

#### TALE OF A BAWBEE.

When a representative of the Wellington "Post" visited Mr A. Hamilton's office at the museum the other day, he found the director poring over a bawbee, a real bawbee. Mr Hamilton was not fondling the coin in the way that the miser is supposed to embrace his beloved gold; he had merely a scientific interest in the little bit of thin silver about the diameter of a half-penny. It was just a wafer, a debased thing issued for circulation in Scotland by Charles I. The bawbee was one of a number of old coins presented by a lady in Dunedin to a Scotch church for conversion into current coin of the realm. Like many other possessors of ancient coins, this lady imagined that the relics of other days would be worth comparatively large sums of modern money. That is a mistake; the bawbee, which is not in first-class condition, has probably only melting-pot value, the merest trifle.

As a matter of fact, collectors are not willing, as a rule, to give large sums for old coins, unless they are in excellent order. The romance of a coin that has passed from one hand to another in other centuries has no charm for them; they prefer the bloom of the mint. They prefer to be the first that ever burst upon the metal. Therefore values are usually based upon the condition of the curios.

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£1300—SNUG LITTLE FREEHOLD HOTEL, doing £35 weekly; 175 acres; on the line of railway construction. Inquire early.

£1000—LEASEHOLD HOTEL, South Canterbury; takings £25 weekly; rent, £2 per week; lease, 2½ years to run, with right of renewal. Stock at valuation.

£2000—SOUTH CANTERBURY—Two-storied Freehold Hotel, doing £58 weekly; 50 acres land; orchard, sale-yards, etc.; practically a railway terminus.

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STAFFORD-STREET, TIMARU.

A noble of Edward III., dated about 1354, a very fine specimen, may be bought for £1 15s; about half that amount is intrinsic value, and the balance is for antiquity (about 3s 6d per century), "dirt cheap." An angel, that beautiful coin issued by Henry VIII., may be had in very fine condition for £1 15s. The guinea-piece of George I., in excellent order, can be secured for £2 7s 6d. If it is wanted, just as it came from the mint, the price is £4 15s. The guinea of George III.—the spade guinea—can be got, almost new, for £1 15s; mint specimens fetch £2 7s 6d. The 7s gold piece of George III., a very curious little coin, seldom seen, can be had for 10s, but if a specimen of 1813 is sought—a year in which very few were minted—the quotation is £1 10s. The piece of Queen Victoria, struck in 1887, can be obtained, in mint condition, for £5 7s 6d. The coin publications do not give quotations for specimens that are not in fair order.

#### AMERICAN BUSINESS MEN.

Physicians, says the New York "Herald," have long been preaching the doctrine that American business men live too fast. With the telegraph, the ocean cable, the telephone, and other modern facilities, the man of affairs can do in one hour work that formerly would have occupied six. It might be thought his working day would be correspondingly shortened. Nothing of the sort has occurred. The speed with which trade can be effected has simply accelerated his pace, and he not only works faster, but more hours than ever, with corresponding increase of business and responsibilities. To keep up this energy he eats too much—sometimes drinks too much—for a man who spends most of his working hours at his desk and takes no open air exercise. Physical deterioration is inevitable, and when a period of more than usual stress and anxiety arrives he is liable to succumb. Even from a sordid money-grabbing point of view his manner of life is a mistake. A day's shooting, yachting, riding or golf and an occasional change of scene give new strength and vitality and a clearer brain. In perfect health and possession of all his faculties the man has an acuter insight for the direction of affairs, and can accomplish more than if he spent the whole time in his office or counting-room with his nose to the grindstone. The man who thus preserves his health pooh-poohs as mere spectres a host of things which otherwise would worry him into his grave, and he will be living, active and prosperous for a generation after the survivors among his unwise colleagues have passed into a wretched and enfeebled premature old age. What American business men must learn is to slow down, take wholesome recreation and above all quit worrying, even over real troubles when they come, whereas most of them now worry over troubles that never come.

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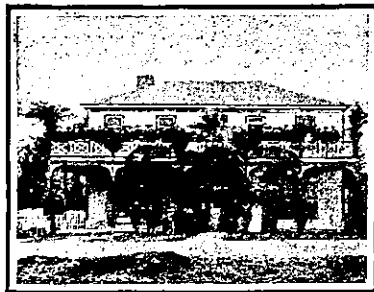
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Corner of Barnard and North Streets, opposite Law Courts. Five Minutes from Railway Station. Splendid Sea View. Hot and Cold Shower Baths. Terms: 4s 6d Per Day, or 25s Week.

### MASONIC HOTEL, NELSON. CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP.

This long-established Hotel, which has always been the Headquarters in Nelson for Tourists and Commercial Travellers, has recently been purchased by Mr. H. Baigent.

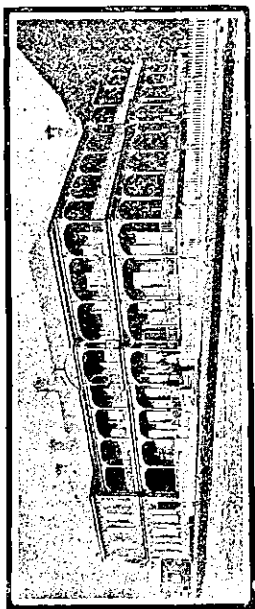
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