

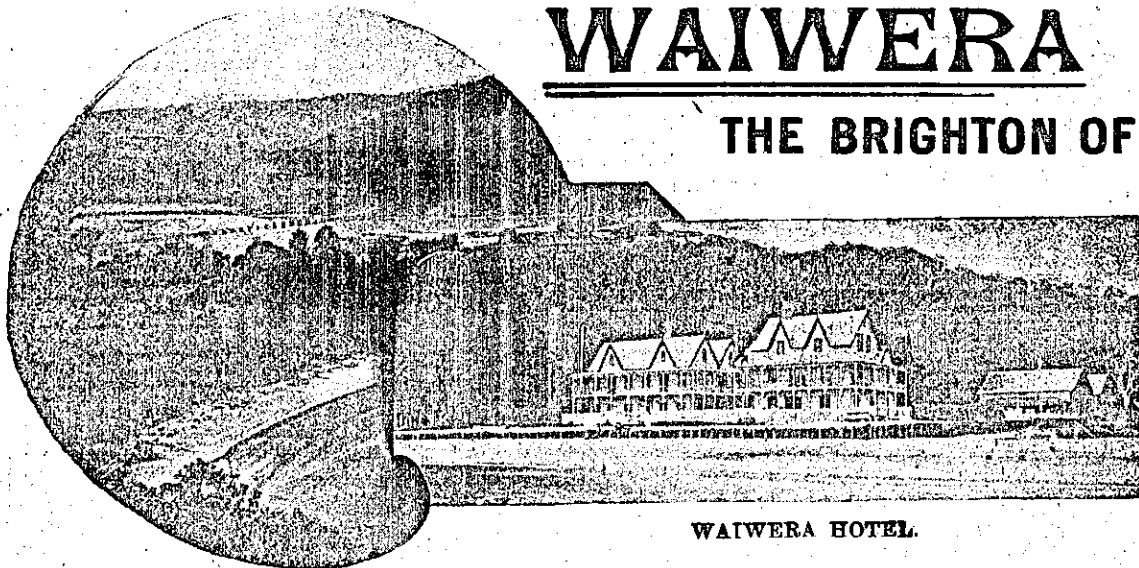
Mr Hutchison, S.M., at Dargaville, last week, dealt with three cases of sly-grog selling. Arthur Hull, of Kaihu, was fined £15 and £5 costs. William Adams was fined £25 and costs £5. Peter Powich, an Austrian, living at Aratapu, was convicted and fined £10 and costs. Mr McLeod appeared for defendants, who in each case pleaded guilty. In Hull's case fifty-one bottles of liquor were confiscated, and in Adams' case 234 bottles.

The accumulation of builders' material outside the Royal Hotel, which is in course of extensive alteration, was the cause of a couple of cases at the Auckland Police Court last week. Mr Tanner, the well-known livery-stable keeper, in passing down Elliott-street in the dark one evening, came in contact with a wheelbarrow on the footpath, and roughly pushed it away, whereupon an over-zealous young policeman, named Wade, accused him of having put the vehicle on the footway. Warm words followed, and the policeman laid an information, which was dismissed by the Magistrate, who evidently declined to believe the policeman, or treat the matter seriously. In the other case, the contractor was fined a nominal sum for not keeping a sufficiently good light on the obstruction.

What the landlords of respectable hotels have to put up with was evidenced by a case that came before the local court last week. A dispute of old standing, relative to a pawn ticket, created bad blood between two gentlemen of humble station, one of whom is a bottle gatherer, and the other apparently of no particular occupation. They carried on the feud in a series of episodes whenever they met, and the quarrel came to a pretty head when the pair foregathered in the bar of the Grosvenor. Words were followed by blows, and the bottle gatherer, whose name is Ward, received some severe knocks on the head from a bottle and a pewter pot, while the other, Brockbank, alleges that he got a black eye. The latter now stands committed for trial. The landlord was in his office at the time, or the assault would assuredly not have been committed.

The new English Licensing Act now in force adds greatly to the burdens and responsibilities of the Trade. It will no longer be permissible, under any circumstances, even of the greatest charity, to allow anybody with the least symptoms of drunkenness to be on the premises, no matter where he obtained the liquor. To do so will lay the license-holder open to the charge of "permitting drunkenness," and he now has to prove that he "took all reasonable steps for preventing drunkenness on the premises." The law now assumes the license-holder to be guilty until he proves himself innocent, taking a leaf out of the French book, and a very un-British leaf at the best. There is another curious effect of one part of the Bill, which, though not affecting the license-holder, affects his customers. Under one clause, a loan to enable a man to get a drink who was not quite so sober as he might be, though the lender was never on the licensed premises when his loan was subsequently spent, might be said to be aiding and abetting a drunken man to obtain drink on licensed premises. We have often wondered how the licensed victualler is to know the habitual drunkards, even when furnished with a printed list of them, for anyone can give a false name and address when suspected and questioned. But the Chief Constable of Plymouth has rushed in "where angels fear to tread," and devised a method of his own. He proposes to personally photograph habituals coming within his ken, and to distribute copies, with descriptions, amongst all licensed victuallers in his borough, for their confidential inspection. Only one habitual will give him "a tall order" in the photographic line if each victualler is to have a copy. And fancy the landlord, the barman, and the barmaids all consulting the album, and going through it before serving a customer! No, no, Mr Constable—the idea won't work!

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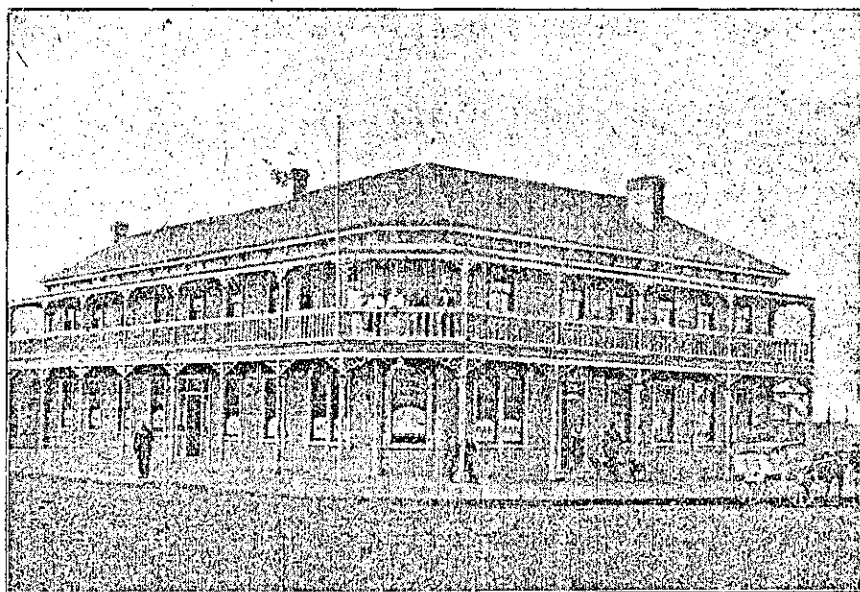
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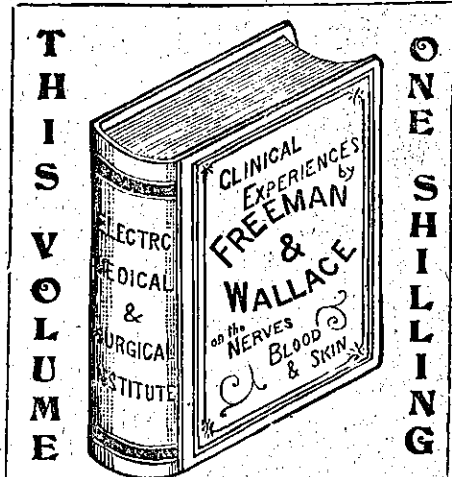
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