

NOTES FROM THE CAPE.

(Own Correspondent of the London "L.V. Gazette.")

Capetown, July 17.

The Western Province Licensed Victuallers' Association is making itself felt, and if not destined to be a power in the land generally, will most certainly be one so far as Trade is concerned. The association has been deputed the proper party to convene an annual conference of Licensed Victuallers in South Africa on matters connected with Trade interests, and if they have that honour it has not been without hard work, and of their secretary Mr. Johnson. Whatever power the Trade may have they intend to use in the forthcoming election by resisting all efforts to cripple the legitimate Trade. As a body, they rightly protest that they are a respectable one; and as a member of our Legislature remarked, "What was wanted was proper laws for the licensed victuallers, so they might make their legitimate Trade workable." This is, of course, a stale truism to you, a platitude almost; but none the less a verity; the true temperance reformers are those in the Trade who earnestly desire to supply a want which man will have, and yet, at the same time, keep their hands clean of the abuse of what a popular writer, Mr. H. G. Wells, makes one of his characters call "the blessed gift of alcohol." And what we licensed victuallers here are preparing eagerly to fight is further repressive laws against selling to natives, combined with a villainous trapping system which makes criminals of them against their will. The prevention of honest trading only leads to smuggling houses, and naturally an increase of the evil. What can you expect of the nigger, when you find the white man insisting on his liquor when his neighbours try to prevent him obtaining it. There has yet one more club been started at Prohibitory Road, and a rather showy one at that; it was no fault of the proprietor, who, having a clientele, tried in the first place to come under the ordinary licensing laws.

Now that there is an increased duty on imported spirits the measurement system is to be adopted, as I told you. Sixteen tins to the bottle is the capacity of the automatic gauge that is to be put in the place of the cork. This is very fair deal-

ing, inasmuch as on the steamers the C. U.S.S. Company make fourteen, and they pay no duty at all and give no choice of brand.

Says a Johannesburg correspondent of a Capetown weekly: "People are grumbling at the abolition of the barmaid. Since the law prohibiting the employment of women in bars was passed many months ago I find that it has been the means of sending a lot of respectable girls on to the streets." (Ladies' journals and pseudo-Christian papers please copy.)

The following leaderette from the "Cape Times" is too important and too concise for much further condensation, so I must ask you to take it over en bloc. Heaven only knows that our wines want improving if any trade is to be done in them. Our grapes are good enough, and the yield per acre surpasses that of any other country in the world. Any educational wine farm has long been maintained at much expense with little practical result. Why? Because our sapient officials and administrators know better than the experts they ask to advise them. Here is the article:—

"We have recently had occasion to call attention to several remarkable features in connection with the administration of the Agricultural Department so far as the wine-making industry is concerned. There was, first of all, the report of the Viticultural Expert, in which he declared that the Constantia Farm was of no value to the industry, either by way of instruction or example, and in which Mr. Dubois urged the necessity of establishing a central experimental station, where the most modern methods of viticulture and the most up-to-date processes of wine-making would be followed. In the same report Mr. Dubois pointed out that the Constantia site was admirably suited for this purpose, adding that if, on sentimental grounds, this was deemed impracticable, another equally suitable site must be procured. Next there was the report of the officer of the Agricultural Department who at present supervises Constantia. This gentleman, who is in no sense an expert, deprecated interference with the present system of management at Constantia. Finally, there was the reply of the Secretary of Agriculture to Mr. Dubois' report, practically on the lines of the inexpert opinion, telling the viticultural expert to have nothing more to do with Constantia than with a private

farm, and consigning him to an inadequate plot at Stellenbosch. Now we learn that the viticultural expert has sent in his resignation. We sincerely trust that the select committee which has been appointed on the motion of Mr. Lewis Michell, will to all things 'seriously incline.' Why has Mr. Dubois resigned? Is it because, having been brought in as a viticultural expert, his recommendations in that capacity have been so coldly entertained that he finds the position impossible? If so, who is responsible? Is the colony to be fooled into maintaining a farm at Constantia which is absolutely of no use to anybody except the officials who run it? These are some of the questions to which the select committee, we trust, will elicit a clear answer."

This letter would be incomplete without some reference to the visit of the Corinthian football teams, really the item of most popular interest here just now. The Association team has carried all before it, and only received a slight check at Bloemfontein. We hardly know whether to be pleased or sorry at the doings of the Rugby lot. This country always was fairly strong on Rugby, but had not hitherto made a hard fight with footballers from home. We seem to have learned our lesson, however; and have so greatly improved that the much-vaunted team from the Old Country have suffered defeat in every match to date. They are a fine lot of athletes, but too heavy and not smart enough, or else our men have thoroughly well learnt the lesson impressed on them by previous visitors. There is so much enthusiasm here as to colonial prowess that it requires no great gift of prophecy to assert that a representative lot of South Africans will take a place on English fields when the next season comes round. I will venture yet another prophecy, and that is that amongst those to guarantee the expenses of a party who will make warm work for home footballers there will appear the names of some of our most prosperous licensed victuallers.

THE LIQUOR LAW.

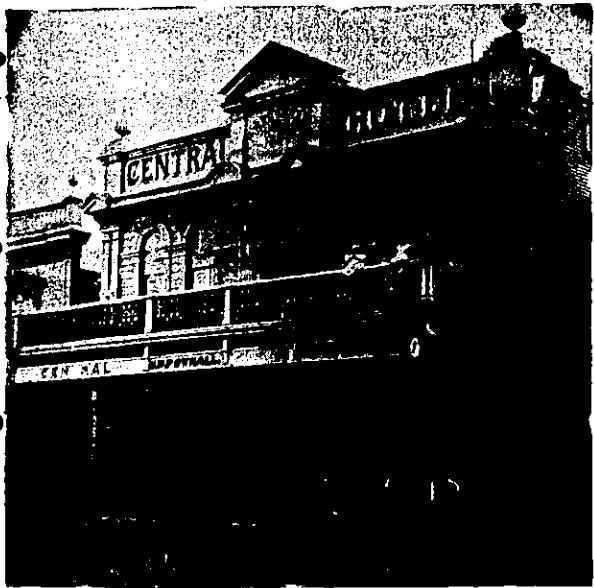
George Dempster, jun., was, at Invercargill, on Tuesday, fined £50 and costs for selling liquor within Mataura, a "no-license" area. The defence was that the liquor was purchased for a social to Dempster, who was leaving the district, and that he made no profit. The magis-

trate, Mr. McCarthy, said he had hesitation in saying that the defendant's evidence was an insult to the intelligence of the magistrate, and that it would not impose on the credulity of a sixth standard schoolgirl. The license of Archibald Totheringham, whose license for the Woodlands Hotel was refused at the annual meeting of the Awarua Committee, pleaded guilty to selling liquor, and was fined £25 and costs.

The Supreme Court, at Christchurch, on Tuesday, was occupied with the case of the Ashburton Club. The club's charter was revoked by the Colonial Secretary on June 30. The trustees of the club applied for a mandamus, calling on the Colonial Secretary to hear the matter judicially, which they submitted was not done, or, in the alternative, for a writ of certiorari quashing the revocation of the charter. The Crown abandoned the plea that a revocation of charter followed on the introduction of "no-license," and relied on the alleged impropriety of the club 18 months ago in selling liquor to members outside the club. Judgment was reserved.

The "Morning Advertiser" states that the Hon. Rupert Guinness, who is to marry a daughter of Lord Onslow, is a young man who in a short time has done much to make the newspapers talk about him. He was born twenty-nine years ago, long before his father (who has just given £50,000 to the hospitals of Dublin) became Lord Iveagh, and he began to distinguish himself as an oar very soon after he went to Eton. Then he took up sculling as well as rowing, and while he was at Cambridge won the Diamonds twice and the Wingfield Sculls. He went to South Africa and made himself so useful that he earned a C.M.G. Very seldom indeed does such an honour fall to the lot of such a young man. When the war was over he began to think about politics, and very nearly contested one election this spring. He is liked everywhere, because he is good-tempered, good-hearted and good-looking. He has no longer the slim figure which distinguished him in his sculling days, but he is a fine-looking fellow, with a merry twinkle in his eye, and as pleasant a smile as you can see on a summer's day.

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