

THE LICENSEE VICTUALLERS' GAZETTE

(Copy.)

MESSRS. ARTHUR CLEAVE AND COMPANY, LIMITED.

Proprietors N.Z. Sporting and Dramatic Review, Licensed Victuallers' Gazette.

Dear Sir,

At the Annual Meeting of the Licensed Victuallers' Association of New Zealand, held on the 19th October, 1910, a resolution was unanimously adopted constituting the Sporting and Dramatic Review, the official organ of the Association for the Dominion.

H. J. WILLIAMS.

Secretary N.Z. L.V. Association.
Wellington, October 20, 1910.

AND STILL THAT MAJORITY.

THE "UNDEMOCRATIC" THREE FIFTHS.

AND THE "DEMOCRATIC" BARE MAJORITY.

Candidly speaking there is no such thing as "majority" rule in this country. We are innocent enough to believe (some of us that is), that, because we have the Second Ballot (made on the German pattern and open to just the same objections as are raised there), and because the Liberals have held office for 21 years that, therefore, we have majority rule. But let the reader figure it out for himself. Is there any member of the Parliament of this country who can claim that he is put there by the majority vote of the people of New Zealand. Sir Joseph Ward, for instance, is returned by the electors of Awarua; Mr. Massey by the electors of Franklin. At the best these gentlemen are returned by a majority of the electors of their respective constituencies. Other gentlemen returned by majorities in the electorates they represent, support Sir Joseph and Mr. Massey, and as the majority is with the former he and his party (miscalled as "Liberal") rule the roost. But everyone knows that there are scores of things done by Sir Joseph Ward's Government that do not meet with the approval of the majority of the electors, and, in the present temper of the people it is seriously open to question whether Sir Joseph Ward would be returned again to Parliament, were his seat in the House made dependent upon an actual plebiscite of the people. Yet Sir Joseph remains the head of the Government, dictating its policy (such as it has), and deciding with his colleagues (elected in similar fashion to himself), the conditions under which the people of this country must live and move and have their being, so far as mundane affairs are concerned. That this is so, must be admitted. It has also to be recognised that, under existing conditions, it is next to impossible for the democracy to assert itself against the autocracy of Ministers, only two of whom (Mr. Fowlds and Mr. Millar) can claim to represent metropolitan constituencies. All things considered, therefore; it does seem a little absurd that so much fuss should be made over the necessity of enforcing majority rule in a country where the system of government fails to provide for the due expression of the feeling of the people, and for the return to Parliament of men who may claim to have the direct support of a majority of the people.

THE "BARE" MAJORITY.

On the liquor issue, "our friends the enemy" are claiming the right to decide the questions of "No-Licence" and "Prohibition," on the bare majority. And their chief argument is that the three-fifths majority is "undemocratic" and that "bare majority" rule is "simple justice." Conceding for a moment that it is so, and that 339 persons would be right in

submitting to the rule of 1000, and that the latter would be right in demanding the submission of the 999, what happens? With the so-called "liquor evil" out of the way the Anti-Tobacco League starts its operations. There are more non-smokers in the community than smokers, because for one thing in certain centres there are more women than men, and the women hold the balance of power. In time both the pipe, the cigar and the seductive cigarette are ruled out of existence, and the "Peeping Tom" fraternity, having of necessity to justify their existence, cast round to find some other "evil" to grapple with. If the racecourse survived the Anti-tobacco crusade, it would assuredly go next, and the theatre and vaude-

the majority and winning its way against seemingly overwhelming odds. Democracies, moreover, become as tyrannical in their methods of rule and administration as autocracies. And the one great boast of the English speaking races has been the liberty of thought, speech and action secured to the minority by British law. The Prohibitionist aims directly at restricting that liberty. He wants the bare majority for coercive purposes. The "three-fifths" (coercive though it also is in its avowed purpose) moves too slowly for him. And if he succeeds in achieving his purpose and in enforcing his "rule of thumb" methods, there is no telling where he will stop. If "bare majority" rule on the lines he advocates it

regret expressed right through the community, extends to the ranks of the licensed victuallers and to the liquor interests generally. There is probably no class in the community that respects a fighting man more than the licensed victuallers, and Mr. Taylor was himself so much of a fighter, and had such fixed tenacity of purpose in all that he undertook, that friends and opponents alike could not fail to respect and admire the man, although they might, and did, disagree with his principles and modes of action. In the Prohibitionist camp, Mr. Taylor's name was one to conjure by. No one could move upon an audience or bend it so easily to his will as the member for Christchurch North. In the political arena it was the same, although, curiously enough, his own constituents never really trusted the hon. gentleman, for he failed to retain their confidence beyond the life of any one Parliament. Thus he was returned for one Parliament and rejected for the next, returned for the next Parliament and defeated by an overwhelming majority when he stood for re-election in 1905, the position being again reversed in 1908, when he got back by a majority nearly as large as that by which he had been previously defeated. Much of this was due to his own erratic disposition, and to his lack of ballast, his judgment sometimes proving very faulty. But, in some measure, it was also due to the fickleness of the Christchurch people. Even the sternest critics Mr. Taylor has had, have, however, always admitted that whatever vagaries may have characterised his conduct, he was always actuated by the best of motives and impelled thereto by an overwhelming sense of duty. If it be correct to say that he was a man of impulses, it is none the less true to say, that these impulses were dictated by the conscientious feeling that he was in the place where it was demanded of him that he should act, in accordance with the promptings of that higher moral sense that was so much part of the man's life. He may have been mistaken in much that he said, and in much that he did. But, whoever heard anyone seriously accusing Mr. Taylor of having an "axe to grind?" A man of fads and fancies, he was yet gifted with great humanitarian principles, and would probably have made his influence much wider felt had his opportunities been greater. He was settling down nicely into the Mayoral duties in Christchurch, and was developing sound administrative abilities, when death laid its hand upon him. A brave, courageous man, he claims our respect and homage. Peace be to his memory!

IF PROHIBITION COMES.

WHAT IT MEANS TO NEW ZEALAND.

If Prohibition is carried in New Zealand it means, says the "Home Journal" that in four years, during which no further poll can be taken.

1. All licenses of every description to sell liquor lapse.
2. All breweries must cease.
3. All wholesale importers of wines, spirits, or beers must cease.
4. It shall be unlawful for any person to import into New Zealand, or to manufacture, sell, or have in his possession for the purpose of sale, intoxicating liquor of any description.
5. Special exception is made under regulations for medicinal, scientific, sacramental, or industrial purposes.

It may also be added that provision is made whereby no question regarding Prohibition shall be submitted to electors until National Prohibition has been in operation over four years.

The friends of Mr. Arthur Weekes, of the Hunterville Hotel, will regret to hear that his wife is seriously ill in a private hospital at Wanganui.



MR. REUBEN GRAY, as Strephon, in "The Arcadians," to be produced at His Majesty's Theatre on August 14.

ville shows would as assuredly follow. Out they would all go like the remnants at a "clean sweep" rag sale. And when life has been thus rendered drab and colourless for the multitude, by the "bare majority" having its way (and being guided thereto by the noisy ravings, rantings and croakings of the demagogues whose utterances are regarded by them as those of the Gospel itself), the "simple justice" of such rule appears in a very different light. Nor has the rule of the majority, ever been associated with other than an oppressive disregard for the rights of the minority. We may search the pages of history almost in vain to find any great principle that has been asserted, or any great reform achieved by the majority. It has always been by the minority striving against the might of

will really be the acme of perfection in democratic government, then democratic government must stand forth self-confessed as a snare and a delusion.

THE LATE MR. T. E. TAYLOR, M.P.

In the presence of death we are always ready to recognise the better qualities of our opponents, and to join with their sorrowing friends in the sympathetic feeling of regret that lives should be cut short in the midst of their usefulness. The tragically sudden death of Mr. T. E. Taylor, M.P.,—tragic in its unexpectedness—has come as a shock to the community generally, and we believe we are right in saying that the feeling of