

At a sitting of the Waihi Magistrate's Court on Tuesday, before Mr. F. J. Burgess, S.M., D. O. Jolly and Sons, of Dunedin (wine and spirit merchants) were fined 20s and costs 7s for sending a case of liquor into the Ohinemuri no-license district without having notified the clerk of the Court at Waihi in terms of the Licensing Act.

Some misconception arose over the severely condensed cable report of the remarks made by the president of the Australasian Medical Congress regarding the effect of alcohol on the race (says the "Christchurch Press"). What Dr. Pockling really said was that as an agent in natural selection, alcohol was believed to be a stringent, if not more stringent, than tuberculosis; weeding out the susceptible and leaving the propagation of the race, in great measure, to those on whom the craving for alcohol had no hold. Whilst opinions differed as to the harmfulness of alcohol used in moderation, there was no question that, taken in excess, it was damaging to the individual, as well as productive of much misery, poverty, distress and crime, and a potent cause and a serious complication of disease. But while this was so, there was no proof of the claim that it caused racial degeneration, but all the evidence was the other way. Whilst all agreed that measures that could be proved to work for the permanent lessening of intemperance should be encouraged, the difficulty came in deciding as to what sort of measures should be adopted. "Nature eliminates drunkards," said the president. "Temperance reformers, well-meaning, and deserving of all praise though they be for their efforts, but ignoring the lessons of evolution and history, seek to eliminate drink. This seems hardly possible in a civilised community, where anyone can easily manufacture alcohol, if he cannot buy it, or he can substitute some still more poisonous narcotic. We see already how inebriates, prevented from getting alcohol in a purer form, are taking to drinking methylated spirits."

In an address on Prohibition at the First Church, Invercargill, the Rev. J. Gibson Smith, now of St. Andrew's, Wellington, said that: "He did not believe alcohol was a poison; and while there was much cheap science quoted to that effect, the great mass of experience proved that there were multitudes who used alcohol in moderation without suffering harm. If Prohibitionists regarded it as a poison, there was no sacrifice in abstaining from it; but they stultified themselves when they urged moderate drinkers to give up the indulgence for the sake of their weaker brethren, as a matter of sacrifice. From the way some Prohibitionists talked, they seemed to think that if they gained Prohibition the millennium would dawn, and there would be no more crime or trouble. He had a different idea; for there would still be sin and misery until the human heart was changed."

A report was recently circulated alleging that the miners of Waihi were prepared to vote for the restoration of license in the Ohinemuri district on condition that they were given an interest in the licensed houses in the district, and participated in the profits accruing from the sale of liquor. Approached on the matter a prominent official of the Waihi Miners and Workers' Union said that the executive of that body had no knowledge or cognisance of any such desire on the part of its members, but subsequent proceedings go to show that correspondence has passed on the subject. It seems that as the outcome of a suggestion made to an official the union the official wrote to a member of an Auckland brewing firm asking if any person had been authorised to approach the union on the question. To this a non-committal reply (marked "private") was received a day or two ago, which, according to the union official, hinted that the "trade" would be willing to discuss the question generally with representatives of the union. The letter was submitted to members for consideration at a special meeting on Saturday night, when it was decided that no action be taken, and the communication was ordered to be received.

#### LIQUOR IN "DRY" DISTRICT.

#### SIGNATURE TO AN ORDER.

A case presenting some peculiar features was heard before the magistrate, Mr Burgess, at Thames on Thursday. A resident of Kerepehi

(Hauraki Plains), which is situated in the Ohinemuri no-license area, was charged with sending an order for liquor without forwarding his address in writing and his name, Thomas H. Evans.

The police, in the course of investigations, found an order signed "T. H. Evans," which formed the basis of the charge. The defendant denied all knowledge of the order, which he declared to be a forgery. His last order he had given to the hotelkeeper, who supplied the order connected with the present charge. It was given at Christmas.

The defendant, at the order of the Court, wrote his ordinary signature, which, on being compared with the signature on the order produced in Court, was declared to be unlike.

The magistrate said the police had failed to prove that the defendant was the man who had forwarded the order, or that he had signed it. There was evidently a case of forgery.

The information was dismissed, but the police are making further inquiries, and more will be heard of the matter.

#### THE WORKER AND LIQUOR.

#### RATHER AMUSING MEETING.

Post Office Square was the scene of a rather amusing meeting at Wellington, reports a local journal.

The Queen's Statue having been removed some time ago, a new orator's vantage had to be arranged for. This was forthcoming in the form of a cart from the nearest stand, and from the deck of the vehicle the speakers held forth.

A lady, whose speech made it unmistakable that she was a wee bit Scotch, was introduced as Mrs Barton, who had been for some time a parish councillor of Glasgow. A fair-sized crowd of working men had assembled to hear Mrs Barton. After some introductory remarks Mrs Barton said before her she saw the working men, and all round were the results of their labours—these streets, these edifices, etc. And what had the liquor traffic done—

A voice: "What has prohibition done?"

Mrs Barton: What has the liquor traffic done? We have never had prohibition; we are only going to get it now!

She thought that the country which legalised the liquor traffic ought to have some pity for its victims. The "moderate man who could drink off his bottle of champagne" cared little about the working-man victim of drink who helped to make the brewer rich. "If you want a titled aristocracy in this country, we will let you have some of them. We will send them out as immigrants. They are not wanted here." (Laughter.)

There were here some interruptions, and Mrs Barton invited one of those who were making them to get up on the cart with her. He did so, and subsequently another worker mounted the vehicle.

"As long as I am a working man, and as long as I have a shilling in my pocket," the latter declared, "if there is a drop of drink in the country I will have it. If I want a bottle of ale I am not going to Mrs Barton to say I want—"

Mrs Barton: "You wouldna' get it!" (Laughter.)

The worker: "If I wanted a plate of porridge—" (Hear, hear.)

Mrs Barton: "Ah, now; you would get that."

As time was petering out, the working man was retired, and Mrs Barton continued her address.

In conclusion, she said: "I am going back Home soon, and I want to go Home with three ringing cheers from the workers of New Zealand."

The town clock: "Do—re—me. . . Bang!"

Workers' voices: "One o'clock! Time to start work!"

Mrs Barton (fluttering a small white handkerchief): "Now, friends, three cheers."

The "cheers" were rather faint.

#### PORTERING IN HOTELS.

A case of some interest to hotel licensees was dealt with by the Arbitration Court on Tuesday last.

The Labour Department, at the request of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union of Workers, sought for a ruling as to whether or not a worker employed at the Queen's Hotel, Auckland, for three and a-half hours during the evenings was a porter within the meaning of the existing award. Mr. Gohns, Inspector of Awards, in stating the case said the question had been before Mr. Kettle in the Magistrate's Court in April last, and on the evidence it was then decided that the

person employed was not a porter, and the case was dismissed; fresh evidence would, however, be now called to show that the work performed was portering as generally understood, he then called in support of his contention a member of the Union who had worked as porter for a short period of 22 hours at the Queen's Hotel.

Mr. Singer, who represented Mr. G. H. Foster, the licensee of the hotel, questioned the witness desiring to know whether or not portering did not necessarily include the carrying of luggage, attending to messages and such like. The witness admitted that that was so and also that the person employed by Mr. Foster did none of this work.

The man employed at the hotel during the evenings was next called by the Labour Department, and in answer to Mr. Singer stated that he had been told by the licensee to do nothing but keep order in the bar and passages and to see that no undesirable entered the premises.

After a brief deliberation the Court, without calling any defence, ruled that the work performed was, from the evidence, not that of portering within the meaning of the award, and gave judgment accordingly.

Mr. Singer, in view of the fact that case had incurred a considerable amount of his client's time and attention by being twice dealt with, asked for costs. The Court awarded the sum of £2 2s.

#### THE LICENSING BILL.

#### A DISCUSSION IN PARLIAMENT.

A discussion on the administration of the Crown Law Office, which took place in the House of Representatives in Committee of Supply on Friday, developed a desultory commentary regarding the employment of Mr. A. S. Adams, of Dunedin, to draft the Licensing Bill of last session.

Mr. A. S. Malcolm (Clutha) said that there was a presumption among some people that the Bill was prepared practically under the instructions of the No-License party.

The Hon. J. A. Millar said he understood that Mr. Adams was asked to prepare a Bill on the lines that had been virtually agreed on by the two parties as the best solution of a very troublesome question.

Herries remarked that, compared with the drawing up of the Native Land Act, the drafting of a Licensing Bill would be child's play. It was in bringing the contending parties together that Act was called for.

Mr. L. M. Isitt (Christchurch North) commended the judgment of the Government in entrusting the preparation of the Bill to Mr. Adams, who possessed the intimate knowledge of the licensing question to enable him to prepare a satisfactory measure. One of his constituents had asked him if there was not some unholy swindle in connection with this fee. He (Mr. Isitt) maintained that it was a fee quite in accordance with what would be charged by responsible legal men.

#### IDYLLIC.

Arthur: "When we are married, how sweet it will be to sit in the garden of an evening, with the summer sun setting, and—"

Mabel: "Yes, darling, and I will bring out my work whilst you water"

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the garden and roll the lawn, and pull up weeds. And you will chop the wood, and bring up coal and lay the fire for the next day. All before bedtime. Won't it be lovely, dearest?"

Arthur: "Ye-es, dear."

#### A SAD, SAD STORY.

The man dashed down the street after the retreating tram car.

Every muscle in his body was strained, his breath came in quick gasps; beads of perspiration stood out upon his forehead.

"I'll catch that tram," he muttered, "or die!"

Faster went the tram car, faster went the man.

At last the pace began to tell, but still the man struggled on. He drew near the tram car. His hand clutched the rail. He made a final effort, jumped, and landed exhausted on the platform.

The conductor touched him on the shoulder.

"Get off!" he said brutally. "We're going to the depot. There are no more cars to-night!"

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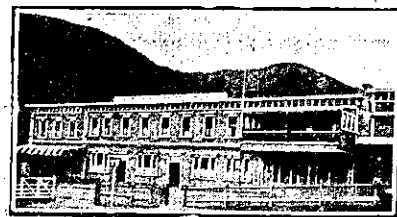
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