

THE :: PASSING :: SHOW

TOPICS OF THE WEEK, BY A CAUSTIC CRITIC.

Since the stirring times when Onehunga was dominated by Lady-Mayor Yates New Zealand has been spared the pains of petticoat government in local affairs. Onehunga tried the experiment, and the Dominion has benefited by the experience. Never again, thank you, ladies! You can ape our ways and adopt our nether garments, but you mustn't try to purloin our right to govern this benighted country in our own way.

From time to time our daily Press tells us of an astute Yankee globe-trotter who lands on these shores, meets an unsophisticated reporter, and pull his leg with tarradiddles about American public men keeping a watchful eye on these wonderful isles so as to profit by our experimental government. Of course we all know this is only Yankee flapdoodle and Yankee humbug, because ninety per cent. of the inhabitants of the States don't know the first thing about New Zealand—that we gave a Dreadnought to save the British Empire. They don't even know that we have a real live baronet as uncrowned king, and "Pelorous Jack" to guard our coast against foreign invaders, to say nothing of our valiant territorials and brave boy scouts.

If our Yankee cousins—we do like claiming relationship with great people: don't we call Great Britain mother and Canada sister—knew about Onehunga's Lady-Mayor, do you think for a moment they would have adopted a similar monstrosity? Yet they have. Hunnewell—of course you all know where that city is, the same as American citizens know where the Queen City of the South is!—has recently fallen under the awful spell of petticoat government by electing one Ella Wilson as Mayor, during a temporary wave of suffragism. Within a week of her appointment the Mayor aroused very strong feelings in the town by announcing that she intended to place a woman at the head of the police force in the community.

The Councillors reckoned this was a bit over the odds, and promptly told their civic chieftess that she had better float out, and that if she declined they would refuse to levy rates. This was pretty sultry, because the municipality of Hunnewell was so poor that the officers of the council could receive no salaries, so they refused to work with the Mayor. As a consequence the official business of the town was almost at a standstill for some time.

The vindictive Mayor—such a nasty trait about the weaker sex—told her opponents very plainly that she will not be turned from the course she has set. "I am not going to resign, and don't you forget it," she said to a reporter. "On the contrary I am going to have a city administration composed of women from dog-catcher to Mayor. I want a woman city marshal. A woman can handle the police force just as well as a man."

This same dogmatic Ella had a strong strain of conceit—so unlike most women (?)—for she went on to say: "Because we have no regular marshal now I am doing the work myself, and I believe the town is cleaner morally now than it ever was when a man had the job. Women can tell by sense of smell whether the law is being broken and gaming places and other resorts are open, and my nose is as good as anyone's. I will add also that when I quit office there won't be any men crowding round over what they 'put over' on me."

The Auckland Ministers' Association are out on the warpath again, and threatened to scalp every candidate for Parliamentary honours, who will dare countenance any form of recreation on the Sabbath. Gee whiz, what a proposition they are up against?

There are many brands of "kill-joys" in this already sufficiently melancholy "Land of Promise," but they are all turned out from the same fanatic factory. There are also many brands of sinners. But they are altogether a different species of mankind. The sinner may be quite as enthusiastic over his special hobby, but he, unlike his human antithesis, the kill-joy, does not attempt to proselytise. A person may be a teetotal crank, an anti-nicotiner, an anti-gambler, or an anti-anything that goes to make life worth living, but you will always find that besides his pet craze, he is also a Sabbatarian.

The perennial plaint of the prudish parson is apparently going to blossom forth again over what they term "Sabbath profanations," which includes sea bathing, playing tennis and golf, boating and fishing, and even picnicing on Sundays. There can be no doubt that every year the New Zealanders, who glory and thrive in health-giving outdoor recreation, are giving more of their Sundays over to invigorating sport and manly

convictions of a small minority should not be allowed to weigh against the advantages of the vast majority.

The very laudable and common-sense propoganda of the N.Z. Sports' Protection League has received a serious set-back in Auckland as a result of the indescreet and wholly unauthorised utterances of the self-styled district secretary. We found it necessary in our last two issues to strongly criticise Mr. R. A. Armstrong's methods of organising—or should we say disorganising?—the northern branch of the League. Mr. Armstrong resented our criticism, but subsequent events seem certainly to have justified the attitude we adopted.

As an outcome of the two meetings of the Parnell branch of the Sports Protection League, at which Mr. Armstrong constituted himself the mouthpiece of the organisation, he strayed far from the track laid down by the Board of Control, and propounded his own ill-conceived

was to prevent further inroads on sport generally. It was defensive, not defiant.

In the face of this Mr. Armstrong explained that so far the Auckland Mutual Sports' Protection Association (of which he claims the dubious honour of being the founder) was concerned, it was not yet under the control of the N.Z. Sports' Protection League. In other words it still remains an independent organisation. How many members does Mr. Armstrong imagine he would have enrolled in Auckland if he had explained this to the hundred who have been enrolled since the N.Z.S.P.L. came into existence last August at Wellington?

Further does Mr. Armstrong think the clubs that guaranteed his salary share with him the notion that the Board of Control in Wellington is not the accepted executive of the League throughout the Dominion? If Mr. Armstrong really regards the various associations he is endeavouring to form for the alleged purpose of sports' protection are not responsible to the Board of Control in Wellington, why is he accepting members on forms bearing the names of the executive of the N.Z.S.P.L.? Surely some further explanation is required.

Since politics in the Australian Federal and State legislatures have come under the domination of Labour, the tone of debate has not been in the ascendant; in fact, it often descends to the undignified level of a drunken brawl between inebriated firemen. Here is a sample from a debate in the Federal House of Representatives this month:

Dr. Maloney twitted Mr. Cook with a lack of Imperialism for letting the contract to an American firm.

Mr. Kelly (to Dr. Maloney): He's a better Imperialist than you.

Dr. Maloney: I'll pull your nose for that outside. (Uproar.)

Mr. Kelly: You are always advertising yourself inside and outside the House.

Dr. Maloney: You are always knocking about with barmaids and actresses. (Uproar.)

Mr. Kelly: You are a contemptible little cad.

Dr. Maloney (rising): Come outside.

Mr. Kelly: I'll say that outside if you like.

Dr. Maloney was going outside, when he was pulled back into his seat, and Mr. Kelly went on with his speech.

"I tell you travel develops a man. If he has anything in him it is sure to come out in travel. Particularly on a coastal steamer."



MR. E. W. ALISON, SENR., PRESIDENT, TAKAPUNA JOCKEY CLUB.

games. Very naturally this is having the effect of reducing the attendances at the churches, and also—which is really the wormwood for the kill-joys—curtail collections, and in turn the Parsimonious Pecksniffs' stipends. But when the whole question of Sunday observance is boiled down, it becomes quite a simple question of: "Is it wrong to make the best use of Sundays?"

Industrial and commercial competition has become so keen during recent years that only a favoured few, who mostly live on the proceeds of sweated humanity, are able to count any other day but Sunday as an "off day." Consequently on that day the young, full-blooded manhood of this land should not be counted wrongdoers if they accept the perfectly logical doctrine that everything that helps to make Sunday bright and pleasant, that adds to the vitality of manhood, that is likely to improve our race mentally and physically, and that better fits the subject to take his place in the battle of life, should be encouraged. The religious

notions of what the League should stand for.

Naturally enough Mr. Armstrong proved a rotten guide and led the Parnell flock into a quagmire where they are now surrounded by a flock of howling wolves, otherwise designated the Auckland Ministers' Association.

The worst feature, however, of the attitude Mr. Armstrong took up, is the fact that he is liable to injure the cause of sports' protection throughout the country by arousing the antagonism of the moderate section of the community, who were previously prepared to support the propoganda as outlined by the Board of Control.

Of course the organising secretary of the League in Wellington promptly denied that the League was fighting for the restitution of the book-maker, the extension of the totalisator and betting, or the multiplication of racing days. All the League desired



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