

lent institution to carry on their good work during the coming winter. Notwithstanding the prosperous condition of the Dominion there were always cases of want and distress in our midst, owing to illness and other causes, and it was the duty of those who were in a position to do so, to assist in alleviating such distress.

### Oamaru

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

May 22.

The first general meeting of St. Patrick's Club was held at the rooms on Monday evening, 17th inst. The chair was occupied by the president (Mr. T. O'Grady), and there were over 40 members present. The principal business of the meeting was the election of committees to direct the different branches of the club. Three committees of five members each were appointed as follow:—Dramatic committee—Messrs. Mulvihill, Barry, Ford, Cagney, and Curran; debating and entertainment—Messrs. J. Molloy, Mulvihill, Breen, Curran, and Barry; billiards—Messrs. Maxwell, Cagney, R. Griffiths, Barry, and Ford. Wednesday evening was fixed for the weekly debates, the opening meeting being for 26th inst. In regard to the dramatic branch of the club, a first-class production is promised when the company appears at the Opera House in July next. Generally speaking, the club is in a flourishing condition, and much enthusiasm is evinced by the members, which promises well for a successful season. The comfort of the club room has been materially increased by the erection of a large open fireplace, the stone for which was kindly donated by Mr. J. H. Gay, to whom the club is much indebted.

## Interprovincial

The Geraldine Road Board appears to be more fortunate than kindred bodies in the matter of rate collection, for at last meeting it was shown that only 17s 2d was outstanding in rates for last financial year.

'It is a most remarkable thing how the cost of living seems to go up as the Arbitration Court goes round,' said Mr. Justice Sim at Gisborne during a sitting of the Court. 'Everywhere the Court sits they tell us that that is the dearest place in the Dominion in which to live.'

Among the applicants for the position of wardman at the Stratford Hospital, for which place a strong, active young man is required, was one from an aged pilgrim of 78 summers, who briefly wrote that he was looking for a nice job, and 'had no experience of hospitals except as a patient.' He was reluctantly passed.

Taranaki is said to have withstood the financial depression better than any other province in the Dominion (says the *Herald*). Some evidence in support of the statement is afforded by the returns of one of the biggest business concerns in New Zealand. It has twenty travellers, and the returns of its Taranaki representative head the list.

A witness giving evidence before the Timber Commission said that, unlike those of Australia, the New Zealand trees did not revive after a fire. 'Once,' he added, 'a New Zealand tree is scorched on the outside, that tree is dead and useless for other than ordinary building timber.' He also stated that a grub attacked the scorched tree, but the living tree was exempt from the pest. The destruction of bush from Pahiatua to Mauriceville had been tremendous.

'Have you made a fortune at saw-milling?' asked Mr. Field, M.P., of a witness at the Timber Commission at Wellington on Friday. The witness smiled. 'As a money-making business,' he replied, 'it's the worst thing there is. I have two of my own boys working at the mill, and I often tell them to get out, and find something better to do but there's a fascination about the dashed thing. Once a man takes it up, he can't get away from it.' Mr. Jennings, M.P.: 'Like the drink habit!' Mr. Hanan, M.P.: 'But that's curable.'

The present extraordinary activity of Ngauruhoe appears to be affecting the whole of the adjacent country to a renewal in some part of the old thermal life (says an exchange). The bed at Waihora Bay, on the western end of Lake Taupo, was suddenly awakened out of the long years of calm in which it has slept. While the big volcano, 30 miles or more distant, was in the height of its eruption, a fishing party on the shores of the bay were aroused by two loud explosions, and in the morning the

waters of the lake were quite warm, while numbers of fine trout, some as heavy as 18lbs, were floating on the surface or lying stranded on the shore.

At a meeting of the general committee in connection with the Penguin relief fund in Wellington on Tuesday, the sub-committee's report stated that inquiries had been made in 89 cases affected by the disaster, and relief given in 44 cases to the extent of £581. The total contributions to date are £1855. The committee does not consider that a special canvass for further funds is necessary, as the amount promised and in hand should meet all requirements. The sub-committee was empowered to act on the lines already adopted.

Speaking at a social gathering in Christchurch, Mr. J. Piper, of Petone, referring to the devious ways of the Defence Department, mentioned an amusing instance. A corps in the Wellington district some eighteen months ago elected two lieutenants, one first and one second, and in due course sent their names forward to the Defence Department. They received an answer stating that as the name of the first lieutenant began with a W, and that of the second with a letter of the alphabet higher up, the respective positions must be reversed.

It is fairly well known (says the *Dominion*) that the reason Pelorus Jack meets almost every vessel which goes through the French Pass is that he may rub off some of the sea parasites which usually infect all large fish, and which eventually cause death. It is possible that Jack has the fragment of an idea that every vessel he can brush his silver side against will put years on to his life, and from the manner in which he swims and snorts and gambols by the bows of the vessels in the Pass, it appears that his self-constituted position as pilot is an immense delight to him. The other day, when he was guiding the Te Anau through the channel, he gave such an extraordinary display, that a Maori, who had been an interested spectator of the scene, rushed below for a glass of beer, which he offered as a libation to the sportive grampus. Passengers do not state positively that 'Jack' assuaged his thirst, but they declare that afterwards, when he left the vessel, he appeared to wave a fin with the jocular benevolence which otherwise would not have been demonstrated had he been a fish possessed of real teetotal principles.

On being asked as to the date on which Parliament would assemble and as to what course would be taken to determine whether he would attend the Naval Conference in London, the Prime Minister has made a statement to the following effect. He explained that Parliament now stood prorogued until June 10, and that in New Zealand no power existed to enable the Governor, when a day had been so fixed, to call Parliament together for any earlier date, no matter how pressing the urgency or how great the crisis in England. Special statutory power was long since given to the King to summon Parliament at any time on six days' notice, notwithstanding that he had previously fixed by proclamation a later date for its meeting. Unfortunately, in New Zealand no such statutory provision existed. Where, therefore, matters of urgent importance arose requiring the Government to ascertain the will of Parliament the only course open was one which he (the Prime Minister) believed had been taken on several occasions in English-speaking countries—namely, of asking the members of Parliament to informally meet and discuss the urgent matters which had arisen, and so express their opinion and their will to the Government of the day.

Captain Hugo, Inspector of Fire Brigades, states that New Zealand's losses through fire have averaged at least £500,000 per year during the last few years. 'How can this waste be minimised?' he was asked by an *Otago Daily Times* reporter. In reply, he detailed some of the most frequent causes of fire. First in the list came the faulty method of constructing most wooden dwellings. They are provided with excellent material for spreading flames in the shape of light board partitions, covered with highly inflammable paper and scrim, while gaps between the boards were tongue-and-grooved, or more closely fitted, fire destructive element. 'If partitions were plastered there would be a chance of confining an outbreak to a single room, but when the brigade is called to the average dwelling house in New Zealand,' said the fire inspector, 'the whole place has to be soured before the seat of the fire is discovered. The remedy is quite simple. If only the lining-boards were tongue-and-grooved, or more closely fitted, fire would not spread so rapidly. Plaster is a better material for partitions, and brick houses are best of all.' Fires would be reduced in number, he said, if there were fewer chimney faults, some of which were due to earthquakes, and if all local bodies followed the example of the older and well-regulated cities by making the accumulation of empty cases, barrels, and straw a punishable offence.

For Children's Hacking Cough at night  
Woods' Great Peppermint Cure, 1/6 and 2/6