

NOTES FROM THE HOUSE.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT.

(From our special correspondent.)

The House spent Tuesday and Wednesday in practically advertising the Dunedin Star. The representative of that paper some time ago got hold of evidence taken before a Parliamentary Committee regarding the methods in vogue in floating dredging companies. The evidence was of particular interest to your Southern contemporary, as many of its readers were so badly 'had' over the dredging boom that they would not mind if someone were lynched as a salve for their losses. Evidence taken before such a committee is not to be published until presented to Parliament. When the first instalment of the evidence appeared in the Star the attention of Parliament was called to the matter, but this did not deter the paper from publishing a second, which action, needless to say, aggravated the offence. The representative of the paper in question is too old a parliamentary hand not to know that he was acting in defiance of the Standing Orders, and therefore he was aware of the risk he was running. A committee was set up to find out how he got the evidence, but, as everyone expected, nothing came of it. There are many ways of killing a cat besides drowning it, and in like manner there are more methods than one of obtaining official secrets. The main thing that the House had to determine was whether a breach of privilege had been committed, and why it should take two whole days to come to this conclusion is what the ordinary observer cannot understand. Eventually it was decided to impose a fine of £15, for which sum your contemporary got a big advertisement and had the satisfaction of publishing several columns of matter of great interest to its readers weeks before it can appear in any other newspaper in the Colony.

The privilege debate having cleared the air members set themselves seriously to work on Thursday, and several Bills were advanced stages.

The Right. Hon. Mr Seddon moved: 'That this House desires to express its detestation and horror at the diabolical, wicked, and unprovoked attempt made to take the life of the worthy and revered President of the United States, Mr William McKinley, and desires to extend to Mrs McKinley, the relatives of the President, and the American people its warm and sincere sympathy, and, further, shares with all good people the sorrow and grief that a man could be found who, without cause or provocation, should attempt to take the life of a good and great man; that members rejoice and are delighted to hear that the assassin has failed in his attempt, and that the wounds inflicted are not likely to prove fatal, and hope that the sufferer may recover speedily and be restored to health, and that he may for many years to come be of service to his country and the world at large.'

The motion was seconded by Captain Russell and supported by Sir J. G. Ward, and agreed to unanimously.

On the motion of the Premier it was decided to suspend the morning sitting for the remainder of the session.

The debate on the Financial Statement was resumed in the evening, the speakers being Messrs. R. Thompson, Kaihau, and Houston.

Another breach of privilege came before the House on Friday afternoon, the alleged delinquent this time being Mr. Pirani's paper. As the article complained of appeared several months ago it was decided, on the motion of the Premier, that no action be taken.

After speeches by Mr. Hone Heke and the Hon. Mr. Carroll the debate on the Financial Statement was brought to a close by the Premier, who defended the Government against the charges of extravagance and excessive borrowing made by its critics. As to the undue increase in the indebtedness of the Colony, he declared that for the 10 years before 1890 £11,638,000 had been added to the debt of the Colony, and only £9,206,502 during the last 10 years. But of the latter amount there was seven millions which did not involve the payment of a single penny of taxation in interest, and yielded an absolute profit of £60,926. The amount of the debt was also very much less in proportion to the population, as compared with the previous administration, and he showed that the Government had only increased the non-interest paying debt by 11 per cent. against increase of population of 19 per cent. Interest had only to be paid on non-interest producing debt, and on that basis the debt per head of population was only £54 as compared with £61 in 1891. The increase in taxation was only 6s 3d per head, compared with the amount when they came into power, and he contended that the prosperity of the country and the increased comfort justified that slight increase. Further, the interest payable per head was £2 18s 4d in 1891, and in 1901 was only £2 7s 3d. The quantity and quality of our produce had greatly increased, and there had been an increase of 25 millions in the improved value of the land. No country in the British Empire in the security it had to offer stood better than New Zealand. The expenditure during the past 10 years had increased by £1,500,000, but the revenue had increased by £1,600,000. Taking the revenue for the five months of the present year, there was an increase of £153,670, as compared with the corresponding period last year, and with good months to come he believed his expectations for the whole year would be more than realised.

On the House going into Committee of Supply Mr. James Allen took the opportunity of charging the Premier with having ordered the Tagus to proceed from Albany to the Bluff with the returning contingents contrary to the opinion of the medical officer on board, who considered the route too cold for the men. A long discussion ensued, during which Mr. Seddon warmly resented the charge that the bringing of the men to Dunedin had injuriously affected their health.

Eventually Mr. Allen modified his statements and the matter was allowed to drop.

Having passed the first item on the Estimates the House rose shortly before eight o'clock on Saturday morning.

Preventing the Spread of Consumption.

The Australian Health Society has issued an admirable leaflet on the question of how to prevent the spread of consumption. The following are the directions:—

1. The best safeguard is personal health. Such a birthright is denied to those born of weak or unhealthy parents. Its continuance depends upon obedience to the laws of health, and specially upon attention to residence, surroundings, clothing, diet, and development. Consumption can develop only where there is some local or general weakness.

2. The constitutionally weak require special care. The milk they drink must be beyond suspicion, their houses must be dry, their bedroom air pure, their ailments specially treated; while occupation and climate should be selected for them. Of special value are sea and mountain air and outdoor life.

3. A catarrh frequently affords the first lodgment to the germs of disease. Hence never neglect a cold.

4. The germs may enter by means of infected meat. The flesh of animals suffering from even early tubercular disease may convey the disease if eaten in a raw or partially-cooked state.

5. The germs may enter by means of infected milk, especially in the case of children. Mothers', wet nurses', cows' milk, known to be infected, must be absolutely forbidden. For entire safety, milk should be boiled before use.

6. Most frequently, however, especially in the case of adults, the germs enter by means of infected air. The spittle of the ordinary consumptive is a virulently infective product, which should be carefully and promptly disinfected and destroyed. He should expectorate into temporary receptacles only, which may be burned or scalded with boiling water. Neglect to carry out this essential precaution is the main cause of the spread of consumption. Handkerchiefs, bedding, floors, rugs, carpets, rooms, conveyances, halls, streets, etc., become infected by the dust of the dried sputum, and in this sputum lurk the germs of the disease. It is important to remember that the sputum should be kept moist until scalded or burned.

7. As far as possible, therefore, the consumptive should spit only into glass vessels containing a little water, and the contents should be destroyed by fire at the end of the day. When walking the patient should carry Dettweiler's pocket flask or similar contrivance. If handkerchiefs are used they should be of paper, and burned after use; or if of cotton plunged into boiling water before the sputum dries on them. Public spittoons should be filled with sawdust saturated with carbolic acid solution, and their contents frequently burnt. It is a menace to the health of those around him for the consumptive to spit indiscriminately. The consumptive may re-infect himself, and produce consumption of the bowels by swallowing his own sputum.

8. The consumptive should, if possible, have a bedroom to himself, open to the morning sun, and with as few furnishings as possible in it. The floor should be sprinkled (say with wet tea leaves) before sweeping, and the sweeping burnt; the furniture frequently wiped with some disinfectant solution, and contaminated articles disinfected by boiling water or steam. The room should be kept thoroughly ventilated, and before re-occupation should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

9. Individual effort should be supplemented by inspection of dairies and dairy cattle; inspection of meat supply; improved sanitation as regards the ventilation and dryness of the house; inspection of premises; disinfection of rooms, public spittoons, conveyances, and the like; the more general recognition of the disease as an infectious one; and the spread of information as the precautions which must be adopted if infection is to be prevented or resisted, especially amongst persons living with consumptives.

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Doctor: 'I hope your husband followed my prescription. Mrs. Smith: 'No, indeed. If he had, he'd have broken his neck. Doctor: 'Broken his neck?' Mrs. Smith: 'Yes; he threw it out of the fourth floor window. What he wants is a Daisy Cart from MORROW BASSETT's, and he won't be well until he gets one.—*.*'

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