

'Sweet and low' was beautifully rendered, and Miss Helen Gard'ner created much amusement with a sketch, 'The troubles of a schoolmaster,' in which she impersonated in turn a worried teacher and the various stupid pupils who did not or would not see the drift of her questions in mental arithmetic. Mr. Blackman in his own inimitable manner told some humorous stories, which caused much laughter. A vocal solo by Miss Cicely Gard'ner was much appreciated, and Mr. Gray, with Miss Helen Gard'ner, sang 'The umbrella' with considerable success. These with other items by the talented quartet were most enjoyable, and were received with evident favor by the audience. On the whole the entertainment was one of the best that has been given in St. Joseph's Hall for some time, and all concerned in arranging such an excellent programme are to be congratulated.

Interprovincial

Acknowledgment is made in the latest issued *Gazette*, on behalf of the Minister of Railways, of the sum of £50 forwarded from Christchurch by some person unknown, as conscience money.

It was reported to the Wellington City Council at last meeting that it was expected that very shortly rauges for cooking by electricity would be supplied to the public at a cost not exceeding £5 or £6.

Under the new motor car regulations it appears that all motor cars in Wellington will have to be numbered afresh on a new scheme. The town clerk stated when the matter was mentioned at the City Council that no extra cost would be involved for the fresh registration.

It is reported that the education of a number of children in the Forty-mile Bush is being seriously interfered with through their having to assist in milking operations. A case was mentioned in the Magistrate's Court at Masterton, in which a boy of twelve years of age had passed only the First Standard.

A witness stated in the Hawera Magistrate's Court last week that when he paid money away he did not take receipts. 'The sooner you do so the better,' replied the Magistrate. His Worship added that a lot of litigation in the courts would be saved if people would only take receipts or keep those given them.

A Nelson settler noticed a large swelling under the lower jaw of a fine Jersey cow, and feared he would have to destroy her. He consulted a friend, who expressed the opinion that some foreign substance had entered the flesh, and advised fomentations. The result was the discovery of a large darning needle firmly embedded, and on its removal the enlargement entirely disappeared.

At the last meeting of the Weber County Council a letter was received from Cr. Booth tendering his resignation, and offering to pay the expenses of electing his successor. He thought any councillor should do this when he resigned before his term of office expired. The council, not to be outdone in generosity, refused to recognise the principle, and gave instructions to have the vacancy filled in the usual way.

A good word was put in for the stoat and weasel by Mr. W. C. Buchanan (Wairarapa) in the House the other day. Mr. Field, member for Otaki, had complained that stoats and weasels were destroying his chickens. This, Mr. Buchanan considered, was arrant nonsense. He blamed the rats, not stoats and weasels. Mr. Buchanan said that he had read in the newspapers of stoats and weasels attacking children and lambs, but that was rubbish, and never took place outside the newspaper columns.

In the course of a discussion in the House of Representatives the other day it was stated that in the twelve no-license electorates there was a population of 144,284, with a total consumption of 293,314 gallons of liquor, equal to just a fraction over two gallons per head. In the licensed districts the population amounted to 855,716, and the consumption of liquor was 10,243,760 gallons, being 12 gallons per head—six times as much as the amount consumed in the no-license areas. The convictions for serious crime were fewer in no-license than in licensed areas.

Speaking in the House on Friday evening on Mr. Fisher's amendment on the vote for Parliament buildings, Sir Joseph Ward said it was originally decided to have a parliamentary building scheme that would cost £90,000 or £100,000, but the Wellington members and the Opposition had been so guilty of misrepresentation in regard to what the Government proposed to do and they had such wild ideas as to the amount of money being expended that the Government had recently decided not to carry out its original programme, and it would now carry out a more economical scheme.

As an indication of the widespread interest which has been taken in the remarks of Mr. V. G. Day, S.M., in regard to liquor in No-license districts, it may be mentioned (says the *Ashburton Mail*) that during recess, at a large school not far from Ashburton, the matter was keenly argued by ten of the pupils, some of whom championed Mr. Day, while some expressed themselves as in sympathy

with the objects of the public indignation meeting held on Monday. Finally, to settle the matter, children of parents who kept liquor in their houses agreed to hold up their hands, and it was found that these predominated by 6 to 4.

'There can be no question as to which is the more valuable of the two individuals as far as this country is concerned,' remarked the Hon. J. T. Paul in the Legislative Council, when commenting on the fact that a domestic servant could get an assisted passage to New Zealand for £2 16s, whilst a man who wished to bring his wife out, after having made a home for her in New Zealand, had to pay £10. The Hon. Dr. Pindlay thought any man who wished to bring his wife out to New Zealand would not have much difficulty in getting the £10. The fact that domestic servants got passages for £2 16s was no reason why women coming out to rejoin their husbands should be given the same concession.

Referring to the new celebrated anti-tobacco sentence imposed by Sir Robert Stout, the *Australasian* says: 'No doubt the facts of the case, as elicited, persuaded the judge that the prisoner sorely needed to be made a better man, and the elements of virtue in Sir Robert Stout's eyes are early hours, domestic habits, and the banishment of pipe and glass. It is very well from the blue-ribbon reform point of view, but as a judicial antidote to perjury the prescription seems a little crude. If the New Zealand Chief Justice, as a penalty for false swearing, is to enforce compliance with his own personal views on the subjects of drink, tobacco, and evening strolls, what is to prevent other judges making their own fads a legal compulsion upon any other class of offenders? For embezzlement we might easily see a convicted man bound to a vegetarian diet, a course of dumb-bells, and the reading of Jeremy Taylor; for arson, cold baths, camomile tea, and the wearing of a hair shirt might be the regimen imposed. The whole idea is clearly the outcome of judicial eccentricity, which could not safely be encouraged or imitated.'

As an example of the rise of land values in the city of Wellington (says the *Post*) the renewal of certain leases on the Te Aro reclamation, authorised by the City Council, is conspicuous. The section on the corner of Willeston and Victoria streets, on which a warehouse stands, is held on a twenty-one years' lease, which expires in February next. The rent has been £147 10s per annum. The council decided to grant a new lease at a rental of £420 a year, with rights of renewal for successive periods of fourteen years in perpetuity at ground rentals to be fixed by valuation for each period. In another portion of the city—on Lambton quay—the rental for a renewal term of lease was increased 75 per cent. on the present sum.

Lady Islington, in the course of an address at the opening of the Wellington Art Exhibition last week, said: 'I find myself wishing that the artists of the present day were more like those of a century or two ago. Their pictures were so finished, their hands so beautifully executed, men like Van Dyck and Sir Joshua Reynolds. There is almost too much impressionist work nowadays, though one cannot but admire the work of such men as Manet and Daubigny. In Paris there is a separate exhibition for the impressionist school, and one sees there such grotesque pictures as you can hardly imagine. A Frenchman made a bet he would have a picture accepted, painted by a donkey! He tied a paint brush to its tail, and tickled its nose with a whistle. The tail frisked about—the result was called a seascape, and accepted. I believe the authorities were very angry when they discovered the trick. This is a true story.'

The New Zealand drill ship *Pioneer*, now at Auckland, was in wireless communication with all the vessels of the fleet in Australia on Saturday night, the field of operations (says the Auckland correspondent of the *Otago Daily Times*) extending round the continent from Adelaide to Rockhampton. Though the *Pioneer* is fitted with only a medium-power apparatus calculated on a 500-miles radius in daylight, her chief operator (Mr. R. H. Newman) has achieved some remarkable results. He informed a *Star* reporter that he was frequently in touch with Adelaide (about 2000 miles), and he had received messages up to 3250 miles away, though it was impossible to despatch that distance with the *Pioneer's* instrument. Using the 2000ft wave length he despatched columns of news from the dailies to the Huddart-Parker Co's steamer *Ulimaroa* in the Tasman Sea on Thursday night last when the vessel was nearing Wellington. He has also been in communication with the R.M.S. *Makura*, bound from Sydney to Vancouver. Messages from the mail-boat ceased on Thursday night, when she was about 500 miles out from Fiji. As previously stated, the *Pioneer* was in communication with all the vessels of the fleet on Saturday night. The *Encounter* forwarded a message at 8 p.m., stating that she was then approaching Sydney heads. She reported all well, and stated further that the sea was calm and the weather bright and clear. The *Challenger* spoke from off Rockhampton, Queensland, reporting an east-north-east gale and high seas. The *Cambrian* and *Prometheus* were located in Sydney Harbor, but the other warships which called up did not disclose their positions, though the operator knows them to be scattered round the coast between Sydney and Adelaide. The greatest distance at which messages were transmitted was 1700 miles to the *Challenger* off Rockhampton.