

Trust store has been bought, and here the hogsheads, foodstuffs, cases of spirits (the Trust is permitted to import some spirits), furniture, coal, utensils, &c., will be stored. Issues to the various hotels will be made, A.S.C. fashion, every day. There will be a cool store attached and a saw-bench and perhaps, ultimately, a flower garden. Laundry on a large scale can be done at Elmwood Gardens.

Where will that important item, the beer, come from? There is a small brewery just out of town; another larger one, which has been out of commission for some years, is being renovated; and a well-known firm of Dunedin brewers can supply any quantity. The modern pressure system will replace the old keg-on-counter or hand-pump in the new bars.

The Trust dropped no bombshells when it announced its price-list. Sevenpence for a 12 oz. glass and 6d. for anything smaller. Spirits, when available, are 10d. a nip. There will be no "shouting."

No one will argue about the profits in the liquor trade. Takings on opening day in Invercargill were £1,262. But there is as little doubt about the costs of large-scale hotel buying, building, and furnishings. Public Account is backing the Trust, and the profits must first of all repay these advances and meet the cost of new hotels as well as the many incidental but not inconsiderable expenses connected with running the present ones. After that (and the time-lag shouldn't be too long) the profits may be distributed by the Trust within the Southland Land District for educational, cultural, and recreational purposes. Though the main object of the Trust is not to provide profits but to run better hotels at reasonable cost, Southland's schools, libraries, sports bodies, and charities

should benefit ultimately from the new system of control.

Of course, the attitude of many a canny Southland Scot is "Wait and See." Secretly they rejoice that, when Otago invades Southland in the post-war period to lift the Ranfurly Shield, Invercargillites will be able to celebrate the victory right beside the Rugby ground. Otago's attitude to this optimism is also, "Wait and See."

But the Trust, with some justice, requires more from Invercargill than waiting and watching. The venture is a co-operative one and its success will depend as much on the active assistance of drinker and non-drinker as on the plans of the Licensing Trust. "We want the support of the average citizens who are non-drinkers, and hope that they will use the restaurant as usual, thus preventing it from becoming a drinking-house only." If the teetotaler shuns the restaurant which serves beer, he turns it into just another public bar. If the drinker is always "one over the eight" he doesn't make the restaurant any more attractive for the teetotaler. Such is the argument of those who have been asked to provide facilities for drinking and at the same time discourage drink.

A lot will depend on the Trust's representative on the spot. The Trust contends that there will be no incentive to managers to trade after hours or serve a man above his capacity. Others argue that without some bonus system there will be no encouragement for the manager to make his house any better than the fellow's next door. Competition, they argue, is the soul of the liquor trade.

The Trust realizes the difficulties of its task, but, it believes that "with the good will of the public" it can make a success of the experiment.



The old Apple Hotel.