

We understand that a criminal action for libel is about to be brought against the proprietors of the Auckland Evening Star by Captain Fraser, Resident Magistrate of this place, for the statements recently published in that newspaper as comments on the late specimen crushing at Manning's, and the remarks of the magistrate on the action of the police in the matter. Messrs Gillies and Hesketh have been retained for the prosecution.

We are informed that it is the intention of Captain Brassey and the officers of the Naval, with the assistance of the company's honorary members, to obtain a boat for the use of the corps. We hope that they will receive some assistance from the Government to pay for the boat.

The choir of St. George's Church was strengthened last evening by the assistance of the Misses Fannie and Isabella Carandini, who favoured the choir with their presence.

The auxiliary crew schooner on the stocks at Mr R. Stone's yard in Shortland will be launched with this morning's tide, about half past 8 o'clock. She will be named the 'Rim.' Messrs Holmes Bros.' new paddle-steamer 'Hauraki,' intended for the Auckland, Coromandel, and Thames trade, will also be launched with this morning's tide at the building yard, North Shore, Auckland.

The Auckland Provincial Council will meet on the 1st of May next. Alterations and improvements are being made in the Council Chambers.

The Rev. C. M. Nelson officiated at St. George's Church yesterday, and preached before full congregations.

The s.s. 'Hero' is due in Auckland this (Monday) evening, from Melbourne and Sydney, and is announced to leave again on Friday.

Special sermons were preached at the Congregational Church yesterday, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the church. In the forenoon the Rev. B. G. Butland's discourse was chiefly directed to showing that the Congregationalists followed the practice of the churches established by the Apostles, so far as we could obtain information from Scripture. He also narrated the history of the Congregationalists, and showed what they had done and were doing. In the evening the Rev. Mr. Sharpe preached. On Tuesday evening a service is to be held in the Congregational Church, at which the Rev. Warlow Davies and Captain Daldy, of Auckland, are expected to be present.

Mr Whitaker and Mr Weston were engaged on Saturday in obtaining the information necessary to enable them to make claims on the companies benefited by the operations of the Pumping Association. The arrangement of this matter will be troublesome and difficult, as there are a number of complex elements to be taken into consideration. Mr Whitaker and Mr Weston have arranged for a number of surveys and estimates to be made to enable them to come to a conclusion. They will leave for Auckland to-day, but will return in about a fortnight, when the surveys required have been finished.

The Carandini Company appeared at the Academy of Music on Saturday evening. The pit and gallery were crammed, but there was only sparse attendance in the first seats, which are always badly attended on a Saturday night. Since the Misses Rosa and had all the qualities of a good vocalist in a high degree. Her place has been supplied by the Misses Isabella and Lizzie, and Mr George Cottrell, who gives variety by his comic songs and impersonations. In the first part, Miss Lizzie was encored in 'The Bird's Nest,' from Lucia Borgia. Mr Gordon in 'Will-o'-the-Wisp,' and Miss Fannie in the song 'Love's Request.' At the end of the first part, Mr Cottrell gave some amusing 'Sketches of Character,' with comic song. The second part contained some excellent music, which was well rendered, and there can be no doubt that with care and culture, the two younger sisters, Carandini will make most effective vocalists. Mr Cottrell gave with great effect 'Three Little Pigs,' and in answer to an encore sang a melody of Maori and English, which was exceedingly amusing. We understand that the company will be here for only three evenings, and we have no doubt they will have crowded houses.

'Martinet, late of No. 1 Royals,' writes:— 'To the Editor.—Sir,—Who would have thought some six months ago, that of all the Volunteer companies on the field, No. 1 Royals should have been the one to be disgraced at the annual inspection by the 'new broom.' The causes for my deficiency I ascribe to the following:—1st, the withdrawal of so many of its best members to the Waikato militia; 2nd, to the incompetence of the lieutenant when taking command; and last, but not least, to the outrageous conduct of a certain non-commissioned officer under the influence of liquor. Now, without presuming to teach the staff or any member of it their duty, I would simply remark that the sergeant-major should have given orders for the arrest or removal of said non-commissioned officer; this would have enabled us to concentrate our attention to the words of command, which under the circumstances was an impossibility. Taking all these things into consideration, Major Gordon might have overlooked our shortcomings; or at least put the blame on the sergeant-major. I am confident that if this company had a fair chance they would have acquitted themselves creditably. I understand that the Scottish were to have been inspected on the first night, but Captain Murray used some influence and got it deferred to the last. Of course poor No. 1 had to stand the first heat, any time would suit. I have no doubt that the public of the Thames have noticed the career of this company during its five years' existence, being enrolled shortly after the Fortify Bay massacre. They have at various times offered their services to the Government, and which have since been accepted. I venture to say that the resignation of this company will be looked upon by the public, as well as by their comrades, with regret, that should have been sanctioned and assisted as to render such a step necessary. I have no hesitation in saying that with a fortnight's drill the No. 1 would be as efficient as any company on the field, or in the colony.'

Mr Samuel Young writes as follows on the licensing question:— 'To the Editor.—Sir,—I shall be obliged if you will insert a few remarks I am desirous of laying before the public on this subject, especially on the part of the objection to my license. With regard to myself, I may say, with some degree of satisfaction, that my character for integrity has been well known throughout this portion of the colony for some years past, and my former character in the other colonies, where I have sojourned some years ago, always having paid my debts wherever I have been at the rate of 20s in the pound, and have never been ashamed to meet any of those with whom I have at any time had business transactions; and since taking upon myself the responsibility of a publican, I defy any man to say I have been remiss in any way in my duty, or that my house has been conducted in other than that of respectability; but still I am to be made a butt of by a set of men assuming to themselves the right to dictate morality to their neighbours. On referring upon this subject I am led to make a few enquiries, and leave them to reply. Who are the leading men of this set? On their heads of so excellent a character? Have they always been able to lay a clean sheet before their creditors? Of what standing are they in the community to which they belong? What right have they to dictate morality to us at the same time practicing other pernicious courses, entailing grief and losses upon their poor bewildered dupes? Surely such men ought not to be allowed to dictate to a whole community as to what is or is not a breach of public morality. I defy them, or some of them, to answer the foregoing questions in a satisfactory manner. I am not a devotee to look to fresh fields to practice their tricks, or to retire more strictly to their own business, and not aspire to matters above them, when they might in time become more respected and better members of the society to which they belong.'—ADVS.

A meeting of the Thames Football Club was held on Saturday evening. There was a fair attendance. Mr Gore was voted the chair. A committee was formed, consisting of Messrs Gore, Gudgeon, Crawford, Whitford, Robinson, Swanson, and Abrahams. Mr Donovan was elected secretary and treasurer. It was decided to have a match next Saturday, and a meeting afterwards to adopt rules, &c. It is expected that there will be a good football team this year, as there are several good players among late arrivals.

The *Coromandel Mail* is severe on some Government officials there. In Thursday's issue we find the following:—'We wish to give one word of warning, and in giving it we mean it. There is a General Government officer contributing to the miserable rag across the way, in direct contravention of the rules of the service. Even the re-transcribing of his productions has not been sufficient for concealment, and evidence on the subject has been placed at our service. We wish to do no injury, but we say for once, refrain.'

Mr G. Sibbin, auctioneer of Auckland, reports special bidding for 250 Mutton-in-Parro gold mining shares, started at 1d each, and ultimately knocked down for £2 12s.

The s.s. 'Ladybird' left Oehunga for the South on Friday with the following passengers:—Saloon—Mr and Mrs Hooper and child, Mr Turton and two children, Mrs and Miss Thorpe, Messrs J. Wallace, E. Bennett, G. E. Albertson, G. F. McPherson, F. H. Lewison, and Mrs A. Walker. The *Auckland Star* says:—'It is the downright reality that is brought to bear in the control and working of mines that has disgusted investors, and led to the complete collapse which has followed every period of activity in the mining market. And against this, we would direct the efforts of all who have become interested in mining properties, not with the view of selling with the first rise in the market, but in the hope of securing a fair return on their capital. While largely increased investment in mining in a legitimate way is worthy of all encouragement, and is indeed justified by the improved prospects of many mines at the Thames and Coromandel, everything approaching excitement or wild speculation is to be deprecated as playing into the hands of the juggling fraternity. Without doubt many mining properties are now selling well below their fair value, a state of matters easily traceable to the utter want of confidence in the management of our mining companies. The recent declaration of a dividend of £3 per share by the Old Whau has no doubt had much influence in directing the thoughts of outsiders to the bright side of mining speculation, and led them almost to forget the horrors of the Official Agency under which all have more or less smarted. But even in the case of this company, which has recouped half the market price of the shares in one dividend, there are unpleasant recollections of 'staring out' which the original holders of the ground will not soon forget; and although it may be useless to cry over spilled milk, we cannot reasonably blame those who have become the victims of misplaced confidence if they do give vent to their dissatisfaction at being called up to see others reap richly the harvest which they had sown, and be fully conscious at the same time that they were duped into the forfeiture of their just rights. We know that this, in more or less, the experience of mining communities everywhere, and an instance of the kind is given in our last San Francisco exchange, which contains the particulars of the starting out of English capitalists from a rich California mine just prior to the declaration of extraordinary dividends; but it is none the less necessary that we should guard against it here as far as possible. If mining were carried on with anything approaching honesty there would be fewer companies crippled by the non-payment of calls, and the services of the Official Agent would be less frequently called upon to intervene.'

On Friday evening between seven and eight o'clock, a fire reflected in the sky was seen in the direction of Epsom. Mounted Constable Bullen immediately took horse, and rode out in the direction indicated by the glare. Upon arriving at the old racetrack, at Epsom, he found a building, known as Potter's Barn, the property of Mr Potter, in flames. It was then raged to the ground, and the whole being rapidly reduced to ashes. From particulars we have obtained, it appears that two jockeys were in charge, having under their care three racehorses, two of the property of Mr Young, and one owned by Mr Marks. In the building was about a ton of hay and between thirty and forty pounds of saddle. The two men had left the barn to go to Mr Gwynn's hotel. It was soon after this that the building was seen to be in flames. Mr Gwynn, accompanied by Mr John May and Mr Leonard immediately hastened to the spot, when they discovered the flames had taken so great a hold upon the timber that there was no chance of saving it, even if means had been at hand. The three then directed their efforts to securing the safety of the horses, and by much trouble and at some personal risk succeeded in doing so. Nothing else was saved; the hay, saddle, and other valuables, to the value of £400, were completely consumed. The building was not insured, and the loss falls altogether on Mr Potter.—*Hayroll*.

At an inquest on the body of Joseph Redshaw, who committed suicide in Auckland, the following evidence was given by deceased's son:—'He found deceased hanging by his neck in the salt-house, from a rafter, by the clothes-line produced. He called Shau, who cut the deceased down. Witness then took the rope off the neck. The rope was fastened by a running noose. The body was warm, but the hands were cold. The arms were hanging at his sides, and his mouth was open. Life appeared to be quite extinct. His feet were two feet nine inches from the floor. Immediately behind the body there was a barrel, from which deceased appeared to have thrown himself. Deceased was dressed in the usual manner. Witness put the body in a cart, and took it to the house, where the jury had seen it. After this he went for Dr. Stockwell, and then gave information to the police. He last saw deceased alive at 10 o'clock on the previous morning, and he seemed rather depressed in spirits. He was perfectly sober at that time, and told witness that he (deceased) had to go to the Harp of Erin Hotel for a bullet, and instructed him to take some fellow into town. After this conversation witness did not see deceased alive. He was never in his habits at times, and had met with heavy losses in business during the last three weeks. He was in debt to the extent of about £1,000. About eight years ago he attempted to commit suicide by taking lead. At that time he was suffering from delirium tremens, and his life was saved by a strong emetic. He had said in witness's presence that 'it was enough to make a man do away with himself when he was short of money.' In July last he joined the Good Templars, but previously he had been in the habit of drinking heavily, and had suffered from delirium tremens several times. About a fortnight ago he had an attack of dysentery, and somebody advised him to take brandy. He did so, and continued to drink to excess till the time of his death. Witness had heard that deceased was suffering from delirium tremens on the night before his death. He owed witness about £15 for wages and money lent. The jury returned the following verdict:—'That the deceased died by his own act, and under his own hand, whilst in a state of temporary insanity.'

An American editor cautions his tall readers against kissing short women, as the habit has rendered him exceedingly round-shouldered. *Holloway's Pills*.—Holloway's Inquiry.—Surrounded as we are by exciting causes of disease, it becomes our duty to seek some means of expelling impurities from the body, or rendering them harmless. Professor Holloway has discovered a medicine capable of effecting this all-important point, and he generously placed it within the reach of the poorest. It is a simple, natural, and perfectly safe remedy, which cures all the ailments of the blood, which are attended with or without fever, inflammation, and other malady, and runs through the system, and cleanses the organs, and restores the victims to health. In malarious districts and unwholesome localities, it is especially useful, and is highly recommended by the best medical authorities. It is a safe, and within the last few years, has been adopted by the profession and the public.—ADVS.

SPECIAL TELEGRAMS.

(Per Anglo-Australian Telegraph Press Agency.)

GREAT FIRE IN AUCKLAND.

AUCKLAND, Saturday, 7 p.m. A great fire is raging in Queen-street. The premises of King, chemist; Marshall, fruiterer; Redfern, photographer; W. J. Hurst, produce merchant; Cheal, hairdresser; and Seymour, fruiterer, have already been burnt down. The *Southern Cross* and *Evening Star* offices and Vailo's drapery buildings are in great danger.

8 p.m. The fire is confined to the block of wooden buildings between Vailo's, the draper, and the *Southern Cross*, both of which are of brick. These were long in danger, especially the *Cross* office, but the brick walls stood well.

The fire originated in King's, the chemist, who was taking down a bottle of turpentine, and broke it against another vessel, the chemical steam of which ignited at the gas, and flamed up so rapidly that Mr King had to rush out without waiting to take even the cash out of the till. The shop was a dry, wooden building, and it burst out in a flame in a few minutes. Mr Redfern, the photographer, occupied the upper storey of King's building, and his place was destroyed before anything could be saved. Marshall's, the fruiterer, adjoining, ignited immediately, and burned with great rapidity. The fire in the meantime extended towards the *Cross*, carrying away Hughes's oyster shop; Seymour's, the fruiterer; Cheal's, the barber; Townsend's, produce merchant; and W. J. Hurst's, produce and coal merchant. The eight buildings destroyed covered not more than 150 feet of frontage. When all were a mass of flame the heat was intense, and only closing all the shops on the opposite side of the street, and great exertions on the roofs saved them from extending over there. The *Southern Cross* stood in the greatest danger. The engine-room was several times on fire. Ultimately great exertions saved it, though the wall was damaged by heat. The water supply was most inefficient. The fire engines were useless, though the firemen and volunteers exerted themselves to the utmost. The block was just permitted to burn out, exertions being directed to saving the neighbouring premises. The insurances, so far as ascertained, are:—Norwich Union, £1,200; New Zealand, £1,600; Victoria, £1,500; Royal, £100; South British, nothing. Chisholm's house at the Whau was also burned to-night. It was insured in the New Zealand office, but the amount is not known.

It is probable that the ship 'Dorette' will be admitted to pratique in a day or two, and the passengers in a short time later. No fresh cases have occurred. Application has been made to the Board of Health by the keeper for four constables to prevent the single female immigrants from wandering about the island with the male passengers. The application has been granted.—Share-market:—Sales: National Bank, 75s; South British, Insurance, 50s; Moanataiari, 37s; Albion (new issue), 35s; City of London, 24s; Tokaitan, 10s 6d; Queen of the May, 11s 3d; Old Whau, £3 2s 6d; Cure, 6s 9d. Buyers: Otago, £9 2s 6d; City of London, 24s; Red Queen, 1s 6d; Watchman, 4s 10d; Waitemata, 4s; Bird-in-Hand, 16s; Coliban, 10s, sellers, 12s; Thames, 6s 6d, sellers, 6s.

The brig 'Albion,' which had been loading sleepers in the Kaitiapa river, while coming out got ashore on the rocks, and broke her back. She now lies with four feet of water in her hold. She is owned by Messrs Henderson and Macfarlane, of Auckland, and is reported to be insured for £2,000.

Sunday, 10.30 a.m. The fire last night was confined to the premises named, although the substantial brick buildings occupied by the *Southern Cross* and Vailo's drapery had narrow escapes. The premises destroyed were all of wood, and the conflagration was checked by Vailo's at one end, and the *Southern Cross* at the other. The buildings were all old, and quickly demolished as the fire got firm hold. Great exertion was put forth to prevent the spread of the flames. Buildings in rear of those burning, which included the *Evening Star* office, had very narrow escapes, and at one time there was great danger of the fire extending.

The buildings destroyed were all owned by Mr W. Goodfellow, of Otahuhu, and were insured in the Norwich Union for £700, and in the Scottish Commercial for £500. Mr Hurst's stock was insured in the Victoria Office for £700; Marshall's in the Royal, for £100; King's in the New Zealand, for £700; Townsend's stock in the New Zealand, for £500; Seymour's stock in the New Zealand, for £200; Redfern's stock in the New Zealand, for £100. The following is a summary of the losses sustained by the insurance offices:—New Zealand, £1,500; Norwich Union, £700; Scottish Commercial, £500; Royal, £100; Victoria, £700. In addition to the insurances mentioned, some losses on damage to Vailo's buildings and the *Southern Cross* office will fall chiefly on the Norwich Union.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

TAUANGA, Saturday. The Lake district is being visited by the ex-Premier, Mr Waterhouse, Commissioner Seed, Mr St. Hill, and other well-known gentlemen. They express great admiration of the wonders of the district.—The Lands Court is sitting at Horowhenua under difficulties. The officers are laid prostrate with influenza. Hon. Hanna has been sixteen hours giving evidence. Mr G. Stewart determines on selecting Kaitiaki subject to the removal of native reserves. He leaves to-day overland via the Thames.

SOUTHERN TELEGRAMS.

(Per Anglo-Australian Telegraph Press Agency.)

WELLINGTON, Saturday.

Mr Baucke, whose claims have been before Parliament frequently, entered an action at the Supreme Court against the Hon. Mr Vogel, as the head of the Government. Plaintiff, conducted his own case, and has just been defeated upon all the points.—Passengers can now be booked here for New Plymouth on the West Coast, and Tauranga on the East Coast, as well as to Taupo and the Hot Lakes.—Mr A. Young has obtained the contract to Waipukurau and Napier.

NEW PLYMOUTH, Saturday. The natives have sold another block of land to the Government. Mr Parris yesterday made an advance of £100 upon the purchase of the land, which lies between two blocks alleged to be under offer to the Government.

NELSON, Saturday. Mr T. A. Fisher, merchant, recently made an assignment. His provisional statement shows liabilities £30,269, and assets £35,743, but the latter estimate is not likely to be realised.

LYTTELTON, Saturday. The schooner 'Herald' cleared for Auckland with 2,200 bushels of wheat 4 tons bran, 1½ ton of cheese, 1 ton butter, &c.

DUNEDIN, Saturday. Captain Hutton has reported the existence of a very valuable coal bed at Tokomairiro, extending over 60 square miles, and estimated to contain 1,000,000,000 tons coal, good brown, not lignite; and Captain Hutton states it is the most valuable in the colony, in seams from 3 to 20 feet thick. An engineer is at once to be sent up on a survey, and a branch line of railway, three miles, is to be constructed to convey it to the main line. It is expected that coal will be sold in Dunedin for 12s per ton.

FATAL GUN ACCIDENT.

A FATAL accident occurred yesterday to Mr John Duncan, of Shortland. It appears that early yesterday morning Mr Duncan went in a boat up the Thames river, and is said to have engaged in a pig hunt with some natives beyond Kirikiriki. Beyond the fact that by the accidental discharge of his gun Mr Duncan was shot through the heart and killed instantly, there are only vague particulars of the occurrence transpired. It appears that Mr Fullerton, who happened to be in the vicinity of Kirikiriki, was informed of the occurrence by some Maoris, and at once rode in to town and gave information at the Police-office in Shortland. It is said that the natives are to bring the body to Shortland, and an inquest will doubtless be held to-day. The following are the only particulars which we have been able to gather. Duncan, it appears, was armed with a double-barrel gun, and with one charge he shot a pig, which he placed for safety in his boat. He then reached for his gun and caught it by the barrel, drawing it towards him, but whether the weapon was on full cock, or whether the hammer was drawn back by something catching against it, we are not aware. At all events, the shot went off when the barrel was within a few inches of his breast, and the charge lodged either in his heart or its immediate vicinity. Death was, of course, instantaneous. The Maoris were considerably alarmed at the circumstance, and were for some time undecided as to what course they should pursue, but we learn that they finally determined to wait until the tide answered and then bring the body down to Shortland. Mr Duncan was well known in Shortland, and was a man who had a good deal of influence with the natives, with whom he had dealings to a considerable extent.

Since the above was in type, we have received the following account, which we believe to be accurate:—Mr Duncan and Elizabeth, his Maori wife, left Shortland at about 9.30 a.m. yesterday, to go pig-hunting at Opuni Point, the swampy land on the opposite side of the mouth of the Thames. He shot a pig, and was sitting upon it, smoking; his gun, which was loaded with a bullet, was lying on the ground near him. His dogs fastened on to another pig, and he reached for the gun, it is presumed, to go to where the dogs were. The muzzle of the gun was towards him, and in pulling it to him it exploded, the bullet entering his left breast. He at once fell back, and the only word he spoke was to Elizabeth, calling her 'Woman' in Maori. He breathed for some time, and commenced to bleed from the mouth and nose. Elizabeth stayed by him until his breathing ceased, and then she left and attempted to swim the Thames over to Kopa, but was obliged to return, as the current was then too strong. She subsequently got over back with her to where she left the body, about a mile from the river, in a swamp, but they were afraid. She then came on to Shortland, arriving much fatigued and exhausted. As nothing could be done in the dark, Mr Bullen arranged to send over a boat at daylight this morning.

OHINEMURI.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

April 14. Having lately returned from a trip to Waikato and the King country, I can fully endorse your statements as to the growing estrangement between the Waikato and the Ngatiamaipoto tribes. The cloud is, as yet, hardly bigger than a man's hand, but no one can tell how soon the storm may burst. The Government are quietly feeling their way and doing their best to widen the breach. If it were not for a few stubborn old fellows, I believe that Tawhiao and the Waikatos would come to terms at once. Not that they would come as the *Cross* says they ought—craving pardon, &c. They have been severely punished for what they have done—having lost nearly a million acres of good land—and have, moreover, been made to suffer for the sins of others. The Ngatiamaipoto tribe, who helped to start the war in Waikato, have escaped scot-free. Tawhiao says that he has no permanent abiding place—he is merely a sojourner. ('Kei te waawa ana te kainga.') Some of the Waikato natives, who were talking about repairing a house, said that it was of no use taking much trouble about it, as they would probably remove to some other locality before long. I think that if a good-sized block of land—say at Manganui—were reserved on the American plan, as native territory, and offered quietly to the Waikatos when the breach between them and the Ngatiamaipoto had widened a little more, it would go a long way towards settling the native difficulty for ever. Give them land which they can call their own, and let them do as they like within the boundaries, as long as they do not interfere with the progress of settlement elsewhere. So long as they are tramps and vagabonds on the face of the earth, there will always be the danger of fresh disturbances.

THE VOLUNTEERS.

THAMES SCOTTISH.

The annual inspection of the Thames Scottish Volunteer Company, band, and Cadets took place on Saturday evening, at seven o'clock, at their drill hall on the beach. Present—Captain Murray, Lieutenants Dey and Johnston, Honorary Surgeon Kilgour, Quarter-Master Carpenter, four sergeants, one pipe-major, one bugler, nine recruits, and 50 rank and file, making 70 all ranks. The band mustered 18, and the Cadets 20, giving for the whole parade a total of about 108. Major Gordon, the inspecting officer, was received by the company and Cadets with a general salute, the band playing a slow march. We observed the major walk down the line and inspect the men while standing at the present, and we should think that even his critical eye must have been pleased with the general steadiness and appearance of the whole. The company were afterwards put through the manual and platoon exercises, company square to receive cavalry, counter-marching, &c. Twenty-five of the company were put through the bayonet exercise in slow and quick time by the inspector. At the conclusion the men were again formed in line, and Major Gordon said:—'Thames Scottish, you are doubtless aware that I am not given to flattery, but I can say that my report to the Government will be a favourable one. I have not inspected a better drilled Volunteer company in the colony, although I have met as

good, yet their muster was nothing like yours. I would recommend you not to rest satisfied with your present attainments, however, but to go in for the higher branches of drill, and particularly the bayonet exercise.' In the intervals of drill, while the men were standing at ease, the band played several selections of quickstep marches. During their playing Major Gordon checked the time with his chronometer, and at the conclusion complimented Bandmaster Montgomery on his close approximation to the regulation step. Pipe-major Potheringham was also called to the front, and played several marches in excellent time. The cadets, who were commanded by Hon. Captain Dary and Lieutenant Phillips, were then put through rifle exercises, and wheeling and marching in fours and file. The youngsters handled their carbines well, and their marching was very good; the wheeling was a little unsteady consequent on some of the on-lookers being occasionally in the way. After inspection there was a march out.

THAMES NAVAL BRIGADE.

Major Gordon made the annual inspection of this corps on Saturday evening. The brigade was put through the manual and platoon exercise by Captain Brassey and afterwards by the junior officers, after which the Major took the company into his own hands and put the men through some drill that they little anticipated, after which he informed the officers and men that the Naval Brigade had only passed a tolerably good inspection as to their efficiency in drill, and then said he had been inspecting the howitzers during the day, and found that externally they were very well, but on a closer examination he found the wood work completely rotten; and he considered that, although the company had been at a great expense in building a hall for themselves, they ought to have built a shed for the guns. The company mustered 41 rank, exclusive of officers and the band, which mustered about 19 men; the brigade in all mustered about 68 men. We hope that Saturday's inspection will only stimulate the officers to continue to keep the company up to their position in the Volunteer standard of the Thames.

CHURCH PARADE.

There was an excellent church parade yesterday, when the Naval Brigade, the Thames Scottish, No. 2 H.R.V., No. 3 H.R.V., the Rifle Rangers, and the Cadets, attended together. The Thames Scottish attended by special invitation of the Naval Brigade as a return for a similar courtesy. The Thames Scottish mustered 65 in all, and were accompanied by their band; the Naval Brigade had 49 rank and file present, with four petty officers, four officers, and the band. Each of the other companies mustered about 30 rank and file. No. 2 would have had a larger attendance, but that a number of the men had not uniforms. The companies mustered at the Pacific Hotel, and thence marched to St. George's Church, under the command of Major Gordon. On the companies returning to Grahamstown, Major Gordon called out the officers, and said he was glad to see such a good muster for church parade, especially of the Thames Scottish and the Naval Brigade, which were a credit to the district. He was sorry that Major Cooper was not present, so that he might have had an opportunity of saying so to him. He would recommend the greys to amalgamate into two companies, which he thought would be quite sufficient for the district. Major Gordon then asked if Captain Lipseys was present, or any person representing his company, to apologise for, or explain the absence of the company from a parade called by the officer commanding the district. He said it appeared that Captain Lipseys had taken umbrage at what he had said when inspecting the company, as an advertisement had appeared in the newspapers asking the men to give up their arms preparatory to a general resignation. It was not in the power of Captain Lipseys to disarm his men. He had received his commission from the Queen just as he (Major Gordon) had, and his conduct in publishing the advertisement was highly unbecomingly and pernicious to the Volunteer movement. He (Major Gordon) would write to him, that he must cancel the advertisement.—The companies then marched to their private parades, where they were dismissed.

OHINEMURI.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

April 14. Having lately returned from a trip to Waikato and the King country, I can fully endorse your statements as to the growing estrangement between the Waikato and the Ngatiamaipoto tribes. The cloud is, as yet, hardly bigger than a man's hand, but no one can tell how soon the storm may burst. The Government are quietly feeling their way and doing their best to widen the breach. If it were not for a few stubborn old fellows, I believe that Tawhiao and the Waikatos would come to terms at once. Not that they would come as the *Cross* says they ought—craving pardon, &c. They have been severely punished for what they have done—having lost nearly a million acres of good land—and have, moreover, been made to suffer for the sins of others. The Ngatiamaipoto tribe, who helped to start the war in Waikato, have escaped scot-free. Tawhiao says that he has no permanent abiding place—he is merely a sojourner. ('Kei te waawa ana te kainga.') Some of the Waikato natives, who were talking about repairing a house, said that it was of no use taking much trouble about it, as they would probably remove to some other locality before long. I think that if a good-sized block of land—say at Manganui—were reserved on the American plan, as native territory, and offered quietly to the Waikatos when the breach between them and the Ngatiamaipoto had widened a little more, it would go a long way towards settling the native difficulty for ever. Give them land which they can call their own, and let them do as they like within the boundaries, as long as they do not interfere with the progress of settlement elsewhere. So long as they are tramps and vagabonds on the face of the earth, there will always be the danger of fresh disturbances.

By the way, I found that the excitement about the Thames Valley Railway was all at this end. The people of Waikato know very little about the Thames, and the local paper seldom or never finds space for items of Thames mining news. There are many old Thames people resident in Waikato who would be glad to hear how the goldfield is progressing, but the editor does not seem to be aware of the fact. He might, at least, quote the monthly gold returns. In railway matters, the whole attention of the different sections of the Waikato settlers is drawn to the question of the route of the Auckland line. Some wait it taken by way of Hamilton and Cambridge, while others want it to go through the

Delta. I have no doubt that, if a railway were made from Waikato to the Thames, the former could supply the latter with large quantities of farm produce, but at present, the Waikato settlers only grow to meet the local requirements—with the exception of cattle, which carry themselves to market. If they make or grow more than is consumed in the district, it does not pay, as freight is so high. It sometimes happens that, in trying to go on the safe side of the hedge, they leave themselves short. For instance, when I was in Alexandra, there was not a bit of butter to be got in the township, and oats were so scarce that I had to pay 8s per bushel for horse feed. The price of bread throughout Waikato is one shilling per quarter loaf. The King natives have sold a large quantity of wheat this season, yet, I see by a late paper that the result has actually been despatched from Lyttelton to Waikato with a cargo of wheat, oats, and barley! One might easily understand their having to import potatoes after the late bad season, but the wheat crops were certainly not a failure. I may here remark, en passant, that the circumstantial report, forwarded by telegraph, as to the burning of twelve stacks of wheat at Te Kuiti, was totally devoid of truth. A large extent of potatoes, growing in a bush cultivation, was destroyed by fire some considerable time ago. I was surprised to find some valuable blocks of land between Te Awamutu and Rangiaohia still in a state of nature. Upon enquiry, I was informed that the owners are certain Auckland capitalists, who are simply holding for a rise in value. Absenteeism and high freights are the great drawbacks to the progress of the whole Waikato district. However, a good deal of land has been changing hands lately, and most of the new owners are getting to work, so that, by the time the railway to Ngaruawahia is completed, I expect they will be in a position to export largely.

Don't you think that the inhabitants of the Poverty Bay district ought to suitably recognise the valuable expression of opinion given by Dr. Hector re the auriferous specimens from Tokomaru? He is reported to have said, 'That in the vicinity of where the specimens came from there would probably be found payable reefs.' Dear me! who'd he thought it? Certainly nobody else in the colony would have found that out. I think a deputation should be appointed to present a leather medal to the learned doctor, and at the same time request his opinion as to the best method of teaching our maternal ancestors to stook eggs. The Government Geologist has made so many mistakes when giving his opinion as to the auriferous nature or otherwise of different districts that, I suppose, he intends to be on the safe side in future. I dare say you will agree with me in thinking that his last opinion was not worth the cost of telegraphing all over New Zealand. I hope he will tell us something we don't know next time.

MINING MATTERS.

BRIGHT SMILE.—Retorting for the Bright Smile Company took place on Saturday at the Imperial Crown battery after a month's crushing with 15 head of stampers, and the return far exceeded the most sanguine expectations. The total yield is 6142z, which is much better than was expected, for the first part of the crushing was poor, consisting mainly of stuff from the No. 1 reef. Latterly, however, the stuff being largely mixed with stone taken out of the mines has shown up much better on the plates, and thus materially increased the average of the entire crushing. In the mine the progressive works necessary for the opening up of the new level are being pushed ahead with all possible despatch, but nothing of particular interest has transpired since our last report, except the discovery made in the north side of the claim in the drive from the Exchange shaft. This drive has intersected the lode a few feet inside the Bright Smile boundary, but the Exchange manager has obtained permission to drive back on the lode into their own mine from the point of intersection.

POLICE COURT.—SATURDAY.

(Before W. FRASER, Esq., B.M.)

DRUNKENNESS.—Robert Brown was charged with having been drunk and incapable.—Fined 10s, or to be imprisoned for 24 hours.—Ellis Jones was charged with the same offence.—Defendant stated that he was going by the 'Golden Cross,' and if he were kept, he would lose his passage.—Defendant was fined 20s or to be imprisoned for four hours.

KEEPING DISORDERLY HOUSE.

Catherine Norton or Clark was called to answer a charge of having no visible lawful means of support, having been previously convicted as an idle and disorderly person.—Defendant did not appear, and a warrant was ordered to issue.

BEING IN A DISORDERLY HOUSE.

Edward Scott was called to answer a charge that, being a convicted thief, he was found in a house in company with persons who have no lawful visible means of support, and did not give a good account of his lawful means of support, and also of his being in such house upon some lawful occasion.—Defendant in this case also did not appear, and a warrant was ordered to issue.

VAGRANCY, &c.

Mary Orr was charged with having no visible lawful means of support.—Defendant said she was only here a week.—Mr Bullen said this woman's husband had come to him and asked him to endeavour to get her away from Mrs Norton.—Constable Farlow deposed that he knew Mrs Orr for some months. He believed she lived by prostitution. His attention was called to Mrs Norton's house on Thursday night last. He saw defendant come out of that house that night. There was a disturbance at the house, and a great noise. He saw Scott and Mrs Norton in the yard. Mrs Norton was almost undressed. He had seen defendant frequently in that house. The people in the neighbourhood were constantly complaining.—Detective Brennan deposed that defendant's husband had asked him to use his endeavours to get her away from Mrs Clark's. He followed her from Auckland. She had been living with a man named Lynch, and associating with bad characters. She had been living by prostitution.—Samuel Moletoch deposed that he lived next to Mrs Clark's, in Richmond-street. He believed he had seen defendant there.—There was not peace in the house, night nor day, since Mrs Clark came back from Auckland. Last Sunday night, the noise and singing and rioting was disgraceful. A crowd gathered as the people were coming from church.—Defendant made a statement that she had been a very short time at Mrs Clark's. She would have gone to Auckland on the day before if she had not got the summons.—Defendant was found guilty, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GOOD TEMPLAR MOVEMENT.

To the Editor of the THAMES ADVERTISER.

Sir,—Nothing could be more inexpedient than the action taken by a Society who name themselves Good Templars in connection with the licensing of hotels in the Hauraki district.