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"The Digger."

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1920.

PENSIONS.

At the recent meeting of the Dominion Executive of the R.S.A., it was decided to take steps to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to increase the scale of pensions. To carry this into effect, it is proposed to ask the local Associations throughout the Dominion to take steps which will show the Government that the R.S.A. is a united force throughout the whole Dominion. In view of the attitude of the Minister of Lands, over the strength of the R.S.A. when dealing with the Rep. area state, it is absolutely imperative that returned soldiers should make a special point of not only being a member of the R.S.A., but be a real live contributor to its effectiveness. We frequently heard that the matter of pensions would be reviewed this Session, but all hopes of any increase are entirely shattered unless united action is taken. All along the line, from the early history of the N.Z.E.F., it has been one continual fight to achieve and preserve for the more unfortunate of our comrades, the barest limits of justice. The Minister has stated that it will saddle the country with too great a financial burden. An injustice is something that will be allowed to exist unless the Government are shown that we stand together. Labour organisations throughout the Dominion would not be treated so lightly. Half a dozen firemen on the ferry service can demand attention. The Government have increased wages in a number of its departments. Every industrial concern has had to do so in order that its employees may be able to compete with the increased cost of living. The Government have admitted the necessity for so doing, and when asked to increase the disabled man's pension, or his dependents', as the case may be, it has denied these men the same right—viz., to maintain a reasonable standard of comfort. There is no man who can live decently on a pension of £3 per week, which is the maximum. The lowest paid men in the

country get £3 10s per week, the Government assess the value of a maimed soldier at a lower rate than the lowest paid man. A miserable £3, in order that he may have the privilege of a mere existence. Surely he is entitled to something for being deprived of the joys of life. Unfortunately the pressure of space on our columns this week prevents us from covering the whole field; but in the meantime, we commend the Executive's decision to the thoughtful consideration of all returned men, and we will deal more exhaustively with this matter next week.

THE DIGGER'S LETTER BOX.

Mandoville notes unavoidably held over.

Caledonian Pipe Band—Report of social held over owing to column of historical matter arriving later.

"Correspondent," Isla Bank:—Notes are O.K., but you did not mention whether the proposed memorial is for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of those who fell in bringing about the "Armistice for the 1921 season."

THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS, SOUTHLAND ELECTRIC POWER BOARD.

Sir and Gentlemen,—In our issue of August 13th., we published an open letter to the Board. The effect of this has been to cause considerable comment and to intensify to an already existing state of uneasiness amongst the people of Southland. We drew your attention to the practice of going to Australia for men, without giving Southlanders a chance. These positions were not advertised for locally. In the "Evening Post" of August 24th., we notice that Messrs Hay and Vickerman are applying for two assistant electrical engineers at a salary of between £300 and £400 per annum. Now, will you state whether these men are for the local scheme, and if so, why are they not advertised for locally? Is it true that a committee drew up an agreement between the Board and engineers which has practically placed the scheme in the hands of the engineers, and that the Board now exists as a piece of machinery to satisfy legislative requirements? Is it not also true that the position of Public Works clerk was first offered at a salary of £12 a week, but the engineers subsequently made it £10 per week and £12 if the applicant makes good? It certainly seems like the same thing. Is it not true that a book was kept for applicants for employment to enter their names? If so, has it reached the rubbish bin, and what use was made of it?

Regarding the trip of the chairman to the Old Country, we trust you will not consider it impertinent if we ask whether it is legal to spend the Board's funds in this direction. In case this, and a few other questions are causing you some concern, we leave the matter for the consideration of the Board, and in the interests of the scheme and the Board, the time is ripe for a fearless member of the Board to resign and have the necessary freedom of action to satisfy the public uneasiness.—Editor, "Digger."

A CONTRADICTION.

(To the Editor).

Sir,—In your issue of Friday, August 27th., I note that "Spaniel," says that the owner of Paddy's Selection has not learned how to take a beating. With regard to "Spaniel's" version of the Wellington Show, who was not a spectator nor exhibitor, I presume that he is overstepping the mark when he writes such. I myself was in attendance at the show, and never saw nor heard such remarks as published in your issue. I will quote a piece that has appeared in the "Weekly Press," by an expert breeder, who was at the show and since has published the following:—"Irish terrier classes were poorly filled, but included one of two good ones. I liked J. Doe's brace, Rabymere Paddy's Selection, and Rabymere Paddy's Pride, much better than the winner, Miss Coleride (Blighly). The latter has a good harsh coat, but is quite wrong in colour, being a mahogany, with almost black ears, badly carried, his head is rather coarse, and he has not the desired racy appearance. Both of the Invercargill dogs have good coloured jackets, just a little softer and more open than is wanted, but they excel in outline, style, and Irish character. I made Paddy's Pride the best dare-devil benched. He is the right size, with good head, and ears, nice eyes, and showed well. His sire Paddy's Selection is a good type of dog. Size is much too big, head and expression are first-class, and has a fair quality jacket. Those who remember Jansen and Clark's Lurgan Lanty and Lurgan Looney,

will mark a strange resemblance in this dog."

I may state that this appeared in the "Press" on August 18th., by an expert who bred Irish terriers and has been the leading winner for years with his famous Airedales, receiving lately 200 gns. for a dog. This above should prove his worth as an authority on the Wellington Show. If "Spaniel" cannot do good, to keep the fancy together, then let well alone. I may state that Mr Taylor, of Auckland, who was the big winner, was surprised at not seeing the crack dog from the South. "Spaniel," will, I hope, in future events, give credit where it is due, or leave my dogs doings out of "The Digger."—I am, etc., J. DOE.

Our columns are not open for a personal attack on an anticipated correspondent and this portion has been excised.—Edt.

(To the Editor).

Dear "Jaques,"—I agree with you that discussion is healthy; I also agree with many of the scathing comments on current topics in your admirable column, and I always derive a considerable amount of amusement therefrom. It is a well-known defect, however, with those who write to amuse that they are often inaccurate and given to exaggerate. Your treatment of McCabe is an instance of this. After stating in reply to "A" that McCabe, in his debates "airily ascribes certain phenomena to telepathy," you now admit that he did not do so in his debate with Sir A. Conan Doyle, but you proceed at once to make another equally erroneous statement. You say that "he met them with the engagingly candid assumption that every one on the other side was either a liar or a fool." Even for one who aims at sensation and amusement this is a most outrageous statement to make, seeing that there is nothing in the debate to warrant such an assertion. Do, at least, try to be fair, "Jaques." Admit that you were wrong or quote from the debate to prove you are right. If McCabe had used language from which any such interpretation could be taken, would Sir A. C. Doyle have acknowledged the courtesy of his opponent, as he did do at the close of the debate. Mr McCabe is too much of a gentleman to descend to such methods, and is quite ready to give those on the other side credit for intelligence and honesty, as he did in the debate when he said near the close: "I stand here respecting to the uttermost the sincerity of Sir A. Conan Doyle," etc. I think you overrate men like Myers and Dr Hodgson when you refer to his crude opinions against theirs. If one reads his latest book, "Is Spiritualism Based on Fraud," without bias, the conclusion is forced on one in the words of the "Expository Times," that he "evidently knows his subject better than the most popular exponent of it." The shrewd investigators are the Dr Merciers, the Sir Ray Lankester, the Maskelynes and Devants, etc., who have exposed so many of their tricks that were once ascribed to the work of spirits.—I am, etc., JOHN.

Dear "Groper,"—You will excuse my saying so, but you appear to me more like an eel than a proper the way you wriggle. You roundly assert that the Bible wholly condemns slavery, but ask "why I did not mention that Theodore Parker was a minister"? It was not necessary; that only makes his telling indictment against the Christian Church the stronger. And, again, you say: "His vigorous campaign against slavery had Christ as its dynamic." Really, "Groper," you make me smile to see how you wriggle to get out of the net that such a young and inexperienced scribe as your humble servant has helped to weave round you. Because one Christian in a thousand preaches a humanitarian doctrine in spite of his creed you jump to the conclusion that it is the dynamic force of that creed which inspires him. Why did it not inspire others through the long centuries before the abolition movement started? Such an aged and experienced scribe as yourself should know that assertion is not proof. I quote from Scripture to prove that the Bible sanctions slavery. You reply by telling me that I "don't go far enough in my Scripture," and then, with a know-all sort of flourish, you proceed to give me your ideas as to why Jehovah permitted slavery among the Jews. If you want to convince give chapter and verse to show where the Bible condemns slavery. Your ideas or other people's ideas don't matter. I also want you to tell me why the passages therein upholding slavery were regarded as inspired and acted upon for over a thousand years, and why the Jews dealt in human flesh and blood all that time? Come to the point, Mr "Groper," and don't accuse others of not delivering the goods when you can't deliver them yourself.—I am, etc., JOHN.

SOCIAL NOTES.

Miss Peggy Penman gave a delightful dance in the Railway Library Hall last Monday. Twenty-five couples were present and a very enjoyable evening was spent. The hall was prettily decorated with greenery and showed much taste on the part of those responsible. Mr Danden supplied the music and dancing was kept up till 1 a.m. Songs were rendered during the evening by Misses Miller and Petrie, while Mr Gordon Reed gave a humorous recitation. Miss Penman who has just obtained her majority, was presented by Mr Isaacs (Christchurch), with the customary key. Those present were: Messdames Penman, King, Pedlar, Gifford, Fraser, Orr; Misses Godward, M. Clark, W. McKay, M. Kingston, Edie, J. Stuart (Oamaru), McChesney, Miller, Dunne, Nisbet, Brown, Brookes, Roscow, Agnew, Baird, M. Strang, E. Robbins, Petrie, Fraser, Smith, Stead, Walker, Lipscombe, Wade; Messrs Penman, King, Pedlar, Gifford, Doolan (Christchurch), Orr, Colling, J. Stead, R. Ritchie, R. Stephens, C. Broad, R. Royds, E. Kennedy, G. T. Matheson, L. Dkys, G. D. Connor, M. Wilson, Rice (2), G. Reed, J. Pay, D. McKay, C. Ashley, Petrie, and Vial.

The Returned Soldier's Ball was very successfully carried out in the King's Hall on Friday night. The hall was tastefully decorated with festoons of greenery and coloured lights. About 470 couples took part in the Grand March, which was led off by Colonel and Mrs Hargest. Some of the ladies present were:—Mrs Hargest, peach satin relieved with gold lace; Mrs Macdonald, lemon-spangled net over satin; Mrs Longuet, saxe-blue nun over gold gauze; Mrs Dr Snow, black taffeta and nunon; Mrs Blakely, black crepe-de-chene; Mrs Robertson, black taffeta silk; Mrs Provan, black lace over white satin; Mrs Farrant, black taffeta and crepe-de-chene; Mrs McFarlane, black satin; Mrs Thomson, black taffeta and nunon; Mrs J. McCulloch, electric blue satin; Mrs S. Lindsay, vieux rose crepe-de-chene and overdress of grey nunon; Mrs Newton, black crepe-de-chene relieved with Oriental trimmings; Mrs R. Wills, saxe blue and grey georgette; Mrs Gibson, Egyptian pink crepe-de-chene; Miss Crofts, saxe blue taffeta silk; Miss McKay, royal blue spangled net and black nunon; Miss W. McKay, pale blue nunon over red nunon; Miss Manson, pale pink crepe-de-chene; Miss M. Manson, cream lace with touches of pale pink; Miss M. Kingston, lemon crepe-de-chene; Miss Orange, lemon silk relieved with black; Miss J. McIntosh, emerald green crepe-de-chene, with overdress of nunon; Miss M. Crowther, cerise charmeuse and nunon; Miss F. Phillips, emerald green crepe-de-chene; Miss M. Hay, cerise nunon over satin of the same shade; Miss E. Stott, emerald green crepe-de-chene and nunon; Miss J. Gerrard, apricot satin with nunon overdress; Miss Lindsay, pale blue satin; Miss F. Hamilton, lemon nunon; Miss M. O'Byrne, pale pink net over satin of same shade; Miss E. Ballantyne, pale blue satin and nunon; Miss D. Pope, cerise crepe-de-chene with black nunon overdress; Miss I. Spiers, floral nunon; Miss Stettell, pale pink satin and cream lace; Miss M. Snow, cream lace with sea blue velvet; Miss G. Thomson, cream crepe-de-chene and nunon; Miss F. Coster, cream lace; Miss B. Gilman, emerald green crepe-de-chene with overdress of lemon nunon; Miss M. Thomson, taffeta silk and georgette; Miss Bruce, black nunon over pale pink satin; Miss M. Carter, white georgette; Miss Mitchell, grey crepe-de-chene with emerald green trimmings; Miss M. Jones, lavender crepe-de-chene relieved with violet ribbon; Miss B. Lyons, vieux-rose crepe-de-chene; Miss R. Ferguson, sea-green silk with net overdress; Miss Henry, lemon crepe-de-chene; Miss M. Murray, white crepe-de-chene; Miss I. Hislop, pale blue taffeta silk; Miss K. McKenzie, biscuit coloured satin; Miss I. Connor, champagne crepe-de-chene; Miss Grant, vieux-rose crepe-de-chene; Miss J. Olsen, cream net; Miss I. Laing, pale blue crepe-de-chene and cream nunon; Miss M. McChesney, white silk; Miss M. Laytham, pale blue satin; Miss F. Ronalds, white charmeuse satin; Miss F. Ronalds, black spangled net; Miss Gunion, saxe-blue net over taffeta silk; Miss Beadle, pale blue satin and nunon; Miss Oughton, cream crepe-de-chene; Miss Kenney, saxe-blue crepe-de-chene and nunon; Miss Fisher, pale grey satin; Miss I. McNeil, grey velvet; Mrs M. Percy, grey crepe-de-chene; Miss L. Norris, saxe-blue crepe-de-chene; Miss M. de Joux, blue crepe-de-chene; Miss M. de Joux, grey crepe-de-chene and pale pink net; Miss Wills, pale pink crepe-de-chene; Miss McNeillage, black taffeta silk and cerise crepe-de-chene; Miss de Joux, black crepe-de-chene and gorgette relieved with emerald green; Miss Keeney, white nunon over pale satin; Miss Henry, white nunon over pale satin; Miss C. Grant, saxe-blue crepe-de-chene; Miss A. Roulston, white net over