



Optimum Use of Reserves

THE Auckland Electric Power Board, in addition to having financed its magnificent new building in Queen Street out of reserve funds, finds itself with a matter of £30,000 in hand, which it proposes to devote to the reduction of rates to consumers. As a contemporary remarks, spread over a large area the sum may not amount to much in the case of each individual consumer, but it is a decided step in the right direction, that is, the popularisation and inexpensive supply of electricity. Both the achievement and the decision to apply the surplus in this manner reflects great credit on the Auckland Power Board and its management.

The Function of Power Boards

AN example of how two "good men and true" can look at the same situation from an entirely different standpoint was evinced at a recent meeting of an up-country Power Board.

A member who was professedly anxious to serve the interests of the community and the ratepayers of the district, expressed the view that the Power Board, unlike local bodies, should aim at being a profit-earning concern. With this view the chairman disagreed, contending that any revenue over and above expenditure should be returned to the consumers by reducing charges for electricity.

We are entirely in agreement with the chairman on this point, since any profits accruing to a power board can be derived from only two sources, viz., from the pockets of the consumers or by undue exploitation of employees. In connection with the latter source, it should be stated once and for all, that power board employees are entitled to exactly the same remuneration for their services, no more and no less, as such services are worth to any private employer or trading company, and since power boards work on capital advanced by the Government (ultimately payable by the public itself) and upon revenue received from consumers, it is obvious that any excess of revenue over expenditure should be devoted to the same purpose, that is, of enabling as many as possible to enjoy the benefits of electricity as cheaply as possible.

The case is not analogous with that of a municipality, providing more than one public service to its ratepayers, when it is sometimes advisable that the profits of one undertaking should wholly, or in part, be devoted to the support or building-up of another, in the interests of the community.

Prize Poem Competition

THE prize of half a guinea this week is awarded to "Betty K." for an appealing "Fragment." This writer has sent further contributions of freshness and high hope, suggesting the quick impulses and wide-open eyes of youth. Selected for commendation are "Sardonyx's" poem of "Yesterday," this being somewhat slight in verbal texture to be a prize-taker; and "Night Magic," joyous lines anent Harlequin and Columbine, by "Oh, Mack," which just fail to reach the winning standard.

J.V.W. makes unsuccessful attempt at poetic phrasing of Maori legend. We like better "The Nest," which tunelessly regrets man's inhumanity to busy birds, toilsomely building, with stick and straw, those poor little homes so quickly demolished by some "muddled oaf" out birdnesting.

M.B. (Gisborne): "Thistledown" is a pretty scrap; but the second poem bewilders by its insistent reiteration of scarlet, while "And your admiration it earns" is a line entirely unflushed by the poetic Muse.

"Hibiscus," we judge, is a tyro in the art of the written word, but rushes in with astounding audacity where literary lions have gone before. Let her read, mark, learn, and digest their work.

A Fragment

Silently, night that I love, you creep across
the hills,
And westward drive the dying ghosts of
light.

Your host of shadows circles you around;
soft spills
The dew of silence through the scented night;
And yet mysterious music fills the air,
Faint whisperings of sound are everywhere.

Tenderly, with a low lilt in his quaint quiet
croon,

The west wind stoops to kiss the upturned
flowers,

Then wanders onward, wistfully, alone. The
moon,

A gay gold crescent, dances with the hours,
The happy hours, star-spangled, kissed with dew;
Beloved hours of night, I love you too.

Beloved! 'Tis a word made purposely for you
Who wait me in this fair retreat of fowers;
For you, whose face is fashion'd out of dreams!
I knew

That I should find you here . . . Like April's
showers

Is the faint fragrance of your hair . . . Each tree
And flower leans near to hear . . .
Each star stoops low to see!

"Betty K."

A Vigorous Personality

THE success of the great forward movement in the cause of electricity that has been so effective throughout Great Britain owes much to the energies and personality of Sir Harry Haward, who retired from actual office as Electricity Commissioner at the end of last March, on completion of his extended term of office.

With the approval of the Minister of Transport, very wisely, arrangements have been made to retain Sir Harry Haward's service in

The Quest

I wandered east, I wandered west,
In search of one I'd love the best.
I wandered far through field and town,
Through city streets, through country
brown.

I wandered south, I wandered north,
Wondering when Love would come forth
To meet me. Then, one morn, I guessed
. . . And ended was my foolish quest.

I hastened home, for now I knew
That all the time Love was . . . just You!

"Betty K."

a consultative capacity. Sir Harry, who is now 67 years of age, was one of the original five electricity commissioners appointed in 1920 under the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1919.

Prior to that appointment he held the office of Comptroller of the London County Council for 26 years, during which time he was actively engaged in the investigation of various aspects of the finances of the public utility undertakings of London, including those relating to electricity supply and financial problems connected with the supply of electricity in the London area. He received the honour of Knighthood in 1917.

A Presentation Lamp-post

WHO knows that Wellington has a presentation lamp-post? Such a thing does exist, and stands at the Union Bank of Australia corner, and bears the following inscription: "Presented by Samuel Brown, Mayor, in commemoration of the lighting of the city by electricity, 1888."

The actual lighting of the city by the new power did not take place until 1889, being carried out by the Gulcher Company, which used water power at first, and afterward steam. It was not until 1907 that the city acquired the electric light and power plant from the Wellington Light and Power Company, since when the plant has been wholly replaced. Now the bulk of Wellington's power is derived from the Government's hydro-electric plant at Mangahao.