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THE—

# **SOUTH COAST SCRUTINEER.**

**A JOURNAL**

—DEVOTED TO—

**POLITICAL, SOCIAL  
& INDUSTRIAL TOPICS,**

TOGETHER WITH—

**A SUMMARY**

—OF THE—

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Printed and Published by ALBERT ERNEST WALKER, of Gundary,  
Moruya, at his Registered Printing Office, Queen Street,  
Moruya, in the State of New South Wales.

## **South Coast Scrutineer.**

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DEAR SIR,—

Herewith I take much pleasure in submitting for your approval and support the first number of the "South Coast Scrutineer." In this issue, which is necessarily of an introductory character only, I have endeavored to set forth my aims and purpose—aims which, I respectfully hope, you will deem of sufficient importance to justify you in giving them your sympathy and practical support. As an active worker in the journalistic fields of the south coast for the past thirteen years, I could hardly fail to have acquired an insight into the aspirations of the south coast people, and to have formed some ideas of my own respecting their realization. As I have remarked elsewhere, the mission of the "Scrutineer" will be to deal more particularly and in a more special manner with the larger questions affecting south coastal development than has been the case in the past.

I have fixed the rates of subscription at 12/- per year, or 3/- per quarter in advance; 3/3 per quarter if booked. Hoping that this new departure in south coast journalism may meet with your favorable consideration, and that I may be privileged to add your name to my roll of subscribers,

I remain, dear sir,

Yours obediently,

**ALBERT E. WALKER.**

"Scrutineer Office, Moruya, 6th June, 1903."



THE SOUTH COAST SCRUTINEER.  
"Peace, Progress, Prosperity."

SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 6, 1903.

OPEN LETTER

—TO—

Mr. John Emmott,  
MAYOR OF MORUYA.

DEAR SIR,—This being merely an introductory number, the "Scrutineer" feels that it cannot do better than address its opening remarks to you in your capacity as Mayor and first citizen of the important municipality from which it proposes to circulate. As a life-long resident of the south coast, you may be relied on to be in sympathy with anything having for its object the progress and development of the fair districts embraced therein. We take, therefore, a double pleasure in approaching you. The position you occupy in local municipal matters is, notwithstanding the sneers of those to whom the words "public duty" are nothing more than a mere term, a high and honorable one, and it will be well if in all instances it falls to the lot of men of high integrity, of good administrative ability, and who fully realise the responsibilities of the office. The general esteem in which you are held bears ample testimony to your possession in a more or less eminent degree of these qualities, and as the "Scrutineer" proposes to "walk in the way which is right," and keep the best possible company, it certainly can

do no better than place itself on more than a nodding acquaintance with Moruya's Mayor. Whether the friendly overtures with which it greets you in its initial struggle for existence will be permanently reciprocated, or whether in our respective representative capacities as time goes on, we shall, like ships upon the ocean, drift apart, it is for the future to decide. In any case, on one point we may be always regarded as unanimous, and that is to do the best, so far as our lights permit, in our day and generation for the place in which we have cast our common lot. Whether, amongst the many methods devised by many municipal councils, we shall be at one in our ideas as to the carrying out of a progressive programme of works for the improvement of this municipal district, it is too early yet to say, but it is not improbable that we shall not. Differences of opinion, however, are as admissible in matters of municipal administration as in all other affairs, and are, moreover, generally instructive, while they are not infrequently entertaining. And as instruction and entertainment combined provide the most popular form of mental food in these degenerate days, the "Scrutineer" proposes, under the goodwill, and with the aid of the worthy and, as the writer knows, self-sacrificing body of gentlemen over whom you preside, to supply in some measure this popular demand.

It is scarcely necessary to say, sir, that the respective paths of a municipal council and a newspaper

ALBERT E. WALKER.

Retirement Office, Moruya, 6th June, 1903.



are widely divergent. And yet there is, or should be, a strong connecting link between the two. They both represent what are regarded as the best known methods for securing good government within a community, and for giving effect to the best possible policy for ensuring its progress and stability, as well as securing for the people those modern conveniences which are so essential to the development and well-being of all partly-settled centres. Ordinarily, it is the duty of a representative body such as yours to originate, elaborate, and bring to a successful issue such measures as are best calculated to gain these ends. Ordinarily, it should be the duty of the press to co-operate as cordially as its views permitted. Too frequently, however, the press confines its attitude to carping, criticising, and otherwise harassing a council in the performance of its duties. Sometimes it maintains an attitude of stolid indifference to a council and all its works, an attitude which is, from a public point of view, even less desirable than the former. It is as well to say here that the "Scrutineer" is to be run on neither of these lines. It recognises a duty to your Council as the duly elected representatives of the ratepayers, and an equal duty to the ratepayers themselves, and while it does not pledge itself to refrain from fair criticism where necessary, it realises that its first duty is a clear and impartial statement of a case in the first instance. It realises further that encouragement and support are quite as

necessary a part of a newspaper's functions as criticism, and, so far as your Council is concerned, it sincerely hopes that the former will be its most frequent attitude. In discussing and ventilating matters having for their object the advancement of this municipality, we hope to be of some service to you. That there are many such awaiting treatment few will care to deny, but we leave the unfolding of them to future issues. While we regard Moruya as only a part of our constituency, still we have a special interest in it as our home, and if, in the years to come, we are able to look back on good work done, and good progress effected in co-operation with your Council, our mission shall not have been a wholly vain one.

Yours faithfully,

THE SCRUTINEER.

#### A Word to Stockowners.

As this issue of the "Scrutineer" hopes to be in the hands of most of those eligible to vote for the election of Directors for the Broulee Pastures and Stock Protection Board, it has a word or two to say in connection with the matter which may be of interest to them. It will be remembered that some months ago an election was held in accordance with the provisions of the Rabbit Act. That Act, however, proved so unsatisfactory when it was tested that it was almost immediately repealed, but presumably it remains in force until the fresh elections under the new Act take place. On the occasion of the election referred to, the old Broulee district was incorporated with that

of Braidwood, and although one south coast candidate was forward, he did not succeed in getting a seat on the Board. A week or two back this Board met in Braidwood, and proceeded to elect an inspector. The choice fell on Mr. H. L. Mater, who was appointed inspector for the combined districts of Braidwood and Broulee at an annual salary of £375. Which is not too bad for Mr. Mater. But seeing that the Broulee district elects its own Board at an early date, and it will be quite competent, and much better qualified, to select its own inspector, this paper wants to know what's the matter. Are the Braidwood men trying to hoist one of their residents on to this district and thus get him a double salary, which is to be spent in Braidwood? Mr. Mater has depastured to some profit on this district in the past as Secretary to the old Pastures and Stock Protection Board, and it is about time that little game was ended. One good billet is quite enough for one man these hard times, and there should be no difficulty in getting a Broulee district man who will fill the billet as competently as Mr. Mater. If there is difficulty about getting a local man, let them advertise outside for one. There are plenty of good men available, who will be only too glad to come and settle down in the district. The qualifications for an inspector are simple enough, and may be found set forth in the Act. The "Scrutineer" doesn't know Mr. Mater, and doesn't want to know him. But it objects to him occupying the position of inspector to

the Broulee Board when he already holds that position in connection with the Braidwood Board. We hope voters will make a point of ascertaining the views of candidates for election on this matter prior to recording their votes. We will gladly publish the names of all candidates who will pledge themselves to set their faces against this iniquity, and uphold the principle, "One man, one billet."

#### As you Like it.

A letter appears in last Tuesday's "Examiner," signed by Edw. W. Knox, in which charges of maladministration of the Customs Dept. by Customs Minister Kingston are freely hurled about. Without being at the moment in a position to speak with authority on the charges, the "Scrutineer" is prepared to back the integrity of C. G. Kingston any day against the statements of the chairman of that bloated crowd of fatmen, the Colonial Sugar Refining Co.

\* \* \*

Reported that a certain snuff-busting land-grabber, known to the Moruya district, who spends his Sundays pulpitering in his capacity as a lay reader, and puts in the balance of his waking moments in breaking the tenth commandment, has fallen in badly over a recent deal in property. It is said that he offers to give up possession if his money is returned, but t'other side isn't taking any, and intends going for something bigger. Said l.-g., if the Land Board does its duty, will fall in some more over further purchases. And the "Scrutineer" believes that in this case the Board is going to do its duty.



**'The Scrutineer.'**

The "Scrutineer" is the realization of an idea held by the present writer for many years. With a journalistic experience extending over a fairly lengthy period, more than thirteen years of which have been spent upon the south coast, the conclusion has long ago been arrived at that country journalism, viewed from all standpoints, is not all it might be, nor all it should be. And the reason is not far to seek. Country newspapers, excepting in the larger centres of population, have a limited circulation, which means a limited income, which means, in its turn, that the paper's size is limited. To the experienced and competent journalist, all these mean that he is reluctantly compelled to curtail his efforts, for his available space will not permit of his dealing fully and satisfactorily with all the matters pressing for attention in his particular locality. To the inexperienced man, or, as he is better known amongst the fraternity, the "journalistic jackeroo," they mean the same thing, only in a more aggravated sense. Incapable through lack of experience, knowledge or adaptability, he is in an even worse position than the first named, and his income is insufficient to permit of the employment of skilled craftsmen. The result of all this is that the ordinary country newspaper has failed to fulfil its true mission, and has degenerated into a mere record of the trivialities of everyday local life, while the more important matters—matters bearing on the present progress and future

prosperity of the district are either wholly neglected or only spasmodically dealt with. And the result is in some cases an unfair one to the pressmen themselves, for many of them are not only willing, but are possessed of all the knowledge and ability necessary to enable them to take up the higher duties of their calling, but for the depressing drawbacks we have indicated. The result is equally unsatisfactory and unfair to the country resident, who expects, not unnaturally, his paper to be not only a record of passing local events, but the champion of his present aims and the mouth-piece of his aspirations for the future. The thing is, in its true sense, utterly impossible under present conditions. The "Scrutineer" proposes, in a modest way, to take up those duties which the local journals, for any or all of the reasons stated, are unable adequately to fulfil, leaving them to carry on the work which they have, generally speaking, so capably carried out in the past. It is in no sense, therefore, the rival of any of the local or district papers, although from the very nature of its mission, it can scarcely hope to escape a conflict with some, or it may be, all of them. This is a contingency, however, which we anticipate, and which we are not averse to facing. We have decided views of our own with regard to the development of the south coast districts, and we desire to give them publicity. If our views, and the methods we propose for giving them effect, find favor in the sight of our south coast contemporaries, we shall be

heartily glad of their sympathy and co-operation. If they are criticised we shall be equally pleased, for we do not claim that they are beyond amendment and improvement, while close criticism and the discussion which it will entail must inevitably tend to awaken public interest, and much good may result.

\* \* \*

**Our Politics.**

In pre-Federation days the announcement of the fiscal faith that was in it was regarded as the first duty of a new paper. Following the time-honored custom in this respect, we may briefly say that we are heart and soul with the present Federal Government. We may further add that we will warmly welcome an extension of the present instalment of Protection until the "ideal Protectionist tariff" is realised, for we have a firm and unwavering belief that Australian industrial development is only attainable by the enforcement of a policy which will give the fullest possible amount of protection to local industries. Our reasons for this belief are, briefly stated, based on two facts: No nation in existence to-day has built herself up to a standard of high prosperity as the sole result of a continuous policy of Free-trade from her earliest beginnings. On the other hand, every nation on earth to-day which has risen to commercial and national greatness has adopted to a greater or lesser extent at some time or other a policy of Protection to local industries. And of all those which have risen to this proud pre-emi-

nence by this means not one is at present in sight which proposes to abandon the policy. Moreover, the rapidly-rising countries which are prominently forward just now—the United States, Canada, Germany, and Argentina—are all Protectionist, while the rise of a new Free-trade State is nowhere discernible. Again, during the first seven months of 1892, no less than 202,665 emigrants left Great Britain, 123,612 of whom went to the United States and 41,292 to Canada. The rush is always to the countries with the biggest tariffs, where work abounds and wages are good. We hope to deal from time to time with various matters of Federal concern, but with few exceptions, the general policy of the Barton Government has the "Scrutineer's" warmest approval and support. With regard to State politics, we may say at once that we are altogether opposed to the present constitution of Parliament. We have no sympathy with the present Government, and still less with the Opposition. At the same time, we recognise the presence of able administrators within the ranks of both parties, and as, since the relegation of the fiscal question to the Commonwealth Parliament, these parties have no point at issue excepting as to which shall occupy the Treasury benches, our intention is to advocate a coalition. The result of this will be to throw the Labor Party into Opposition. This party is at the present time entirely dependent for its existence on the trades unions of the State, and its policy is based on narrow



trades-unionistic principles. Thrown into Opposition, it will be compelled to broaden its policy on democratic lines, and it will be compelled to go out and preach the doctrines of true democracy throughout the length and breadth of the land. And the "Scrutineer" foresees great possibilities in such an Opposition. It may easily hold within the four corners of its policy the grandest programme ever submitted to the N.S.W. people, and a programme which will, sooner or later, find ready acceptance, and place the reins of government in its hands. Local government, the resumption of lands suitable for closer settlement, and the establishment of a State Bank are amongst the matters which we hope to bring under the notice of our readers in future issues. In connection with the last-named, we reprint an admirable article on the subject on another page, to which we invite attention and careful consideration.

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#### Our Mission.

Briefly and plainly put the principal mission of the "Scrutineer" is to preach the gospel of Decentralization. It recognises, as ninety-nine out of every hundred country residents recognise, that the progress and development of the country districts are only the secondary interest under the present scheme of State expansion. When we say the "secondary" interest, we mean that while the whole source of the country's wealth lies unquestionably within the country districts, still a large proportion—too big a propor-

tion—of that wealth goes solely to the aggrandisement of Sydney. And the building up of Sydney at its present rate, without a corresponding increase in the population of the country districts, is a distinct menace to the progress and well-being of those districts, as well as a huge stumbling block in the path of national and natural expansion. From the first days of responsible government—one might say from the earliest days of settlement—the whole trend of N.S.W. development has been in the direction of boosting up Sydney. Such a state of things was natural enough in the beginnings of settlement, but with the rapid growth of the population, and the opening up of inland areas, a set policy of rural development, as a mere means of building up a mighty and magnificent city on the shores of Port Jackson, was entered upon. That policy has never been swerved from even up to the present day, and how far it has succeeded let anyone tell who has visited the splendid city which now surrounds what is not unjustly termed "our beautiful harbour." A glance at the system of railway development, steadily pursued throughout all the past years, affords the best proof of the greedy and self-seeking policy we have indicated. Take all the main trunk lines of the State, with their numerous feeders, and it will be seen that they each and all gravitate to the one terminus—Sydney. Even the coastal terminus of the northern line could not be permitted at Newcastle, for fear that the N.S.W. coalopolis should prove

a formidable rival to the trading aspirations of the octopus capital. Sydney is to the country districts what the Sussex street parasite is to the country producer—what the lawyer not unusually is to his client—an unscrupulous blood-sucker. Not a pound of butter may be produced; not a dozen of eggs may be gathered, but they must each find a market in Sydney, and must each pay their toll to the Sussex-street man. Not a reel of common cotton may the housewife in the backblocks, or in the coastal districts either, handle until it has passed through Sydney, and paid its dues to the Sydney importer. No wonder this pot-bellied person is an ardent freetrader, but that is beside the present question. This system of centralization is not only a curse to N.S.W., but a grave danger to the country districts, and a clog on the wheels of national growth. We propose to show in our next and future issues the extent of this danger, and the consequences of a continuance of the system. Moreover, we believe that the south coast districts hold in their own hands the certain means of breaking in on it, and rescuing the south-eastern corner of the State, at least, from the commercial rapacity to which it is subjected at the hands of metropolitan selfishness and avariciousness. We shall lay our views in this respect before our readers, and we cordially invite the co-operation of our south coast contemporaries in ventilating and discussing the subject. If the "Scrutineer" can succeed in awakening an active interest in dwellers on

the south coast in this pressing urgent matter—a matter which becomes more and more urgent as time goes by—it will be in a position to proudly claim that it has, at any rate, justified its existence. Which is a big thing for a country newspaper to do now-a-days.

#### Here and There.

Later on the "Scrutineer" intends offering a prize periodically for best original verses contributed to its columns. There is plenty of latent poetical talent along the south coast, and our aim is to develop it. Conditions will be published later on.

\* \* \*

The dyspeptic rag which is ground out under a hyphenated name in the next street sneeringly reprints that a new paper is to be started "with its headquarters at Gundary." Well, what's the matter with Gundary? Can no good thing come out of it? Or do all the "good things" belong Tilba way?

\* \* \*

Mogo women have led the way in this district towards obtaining an intelligent knowledge of the new responsibilities thrust upon them with the franchise. More power to them and a clear insight into the devious dodges of the ordinary variety of carpet-bagging politician. If they will adopt as an unswerving principle hostility to any programme which emanates from their city sisters, the country "electress" vote will be a fairly safe one. The battle of city v. country is commencing, and the fight will be a lively one.



**Gleanings.**

A Manila paper says:—"The editor has a fine of 1000dol. gold and 60 days in Bilibid hanging over him. Kindly hustle in subscriptions in advance. If you have no cash, send in turnips."

\* \* \*

The Full Court of N.S.W. has very sensibly ruled that the Federal Collector of Customs cannot levy duties on goods imported by a State Government or purchased in bond for its own uses.

\* \* \*

In the House of Commons, Mr. Akers-Douglas, the Home Secretary, stated that the new regulations for the examination of bodies prior to cremation were so searching that it was believed that there would be more likelihood than before of detecting poisonings.

\* \* \*

About the meanest bridegroom up to date turned up in a country town the other day. His friends, as is usual at such functions, threw rice at the 'appy couple. The skinflint benedict stooped down, swept the rice into a heap with his claw, and pocketed it with the remark: "This'll do for the fowls, anyway!"—"Truth."

\* \* \*

"The Labor Party has better representatives, better principles, better methods, and better brains than any other party in Australia. The man who thinks the Labor movement is going to fizzle out is going to get a big disappointment. Some of its blockhead demagogues may have to go—the sooner the better—but the cause itself is immortal.—W.A. "Sun."

The State of Indiana has tackled a subject which will have to be dealt with by Australia when this country gets to be a little more progressive than it is. A Bill has been introduced into the Legislature of Indiana to supervise marriages. It is fathered by a Minister, and provides for the establishment of commissions whose business it shall be in their respective communities to examine all candidates for marriage with reference to their fitness to assume the marital relations and rear families. The Bill is introduced in the interest of the public health. It is designed to check the propagation of deadly diseases. It empowers the marriage commission to say who shall or shall not marry within the confines of Indiana. If either of the candidates be afflicted with consumption, insanity, or diseases liable to be transmitted to the children, the commission will be expected to discover that fact by expert physical examination and put an official ban on the marriage.

\* \* \*

In connection with the foregoing, and as a means of striking at the prime cause of some of the diseases mentioned, an Act of Parliament should also be passed to render illegal the contraction of the marriage tie between first cousins. Common sense is sufficient to restrain many from such a step, but there are others who, from ignorance or other causes, enter on it with a light heart, all unwitting or careless of the awful consequences. The "Scrutineer" can put its hand on one south coast case, at least, where, as the result of such a marriage, out of a large family two are the next thing to idiots, while the remaining members of the family are more or less "peculiar."

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## ON BANKING.

THE NEED FOR A STATE BANK.

ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS.

(From the "Worker.")

It is easier to open a bank without than with a crowbar. It is easier to start a bank than a daily newspaper. This is the modus operandi—Certain individuals profess to hold a large amount of unused capital. Probably they are only working the confidence trick; nevertheless, they hold a meeting or two, and then hire a large building with a brown stone front, get a bank charter, and then invite deposits by hanging out a brass-bound shingle. They are allowed, in consequence, to issue paper promises to pay on demand in gold money—gold being the standard currency of every market in the world. They pay depositors from 3 to 4 per cent. interest on their money; they lend it out at from 6 to 15 per cent., according to security. From the profits thus made, they pay to the shareholders on their alleged capital—frequently drawn out by means of overdrafts—dividends of from 10 to 25 per cent.

This may go on for years; the capital of the bank being absorbed in speculations, in maintaining concerns which have fallen into its hands by default—in land-owning, mine-owning, house-owning, business-owning, and so on—its supposed gold basis having little or no proportion to the quantity of its notes in circulation. The country is run during this period exclusively

in the interests of the idle and luxurious, the non-producers who have all the time been restricting the production of wealth—first, by the monopoly of its natural sources, and then by the limiting of all consumption through lowering instead of raising wages at a time when production was expanding, even within its artificial bonds. This induces a condition wherein the credit of the country is tarnished abroad while its wealth production and export cease to be sufficient to relieve the wants of its inhabitants, to balance imports with some pretence to equality, and to meet the claims of the foreign money-lender. Then comes the inevitable—a run on the banks, caused first by the fact that many people, thrown out of work and made bankrupt by the increased cost of living and heavy rents imposed by banks owning property in houses and land, want to draw out past savings in order to provide the necessities of life. They get their money with difficulty, and, others hearing it, a panic sets in. Then, in order to save the country, which means the bank shareholders, the Government, urged by financial and social ties, blood relationships and entanglements, begins the process of State Interference, and uses all the machinery at its command, all the credit of a temporarily and partially discredited nation, to build up the utterly damaged reputation of those banking institutions which, if forced into liquidation, would be utterly wiped out as entities from the face of the earth. By such means, and by the

assistance of other money dealers, the banking institutions are saved. Instances of a similar character have occurred also in Great Britain, where the Bank of England has been propped up not only by Government but also by the Bank of France.

It would be well here to compare the status of the private banking corporations with those of Canada. In the Dominion no bank can start business with less than £100,000 capital, and each has to deposit £50,000 with the Treasury as a measure of security. No bank is allowed to pay more than 8 per cent. to its shareholders until it has accumulated a reserve fund of not less than one-third its paid-up capital. Its note issue must not exceed the amount of the capital actually remaining and available after all losses are deducted, and a sum equal to 5 per cent. of the note issue must be deposited with the Treasury as security for note-holders. No bank is allowed to lend money on its own shares or on those of any other bank, or on land. No bank can hold any real estate—except for its own use—longer than seven years. Monthly returns must be supplied to the Government, which can also call for special returns. Also every bank is compelled to keep at least 40 per cent. of its cash resources in Government notes, of which there are in circulation £4,000,000, against which the Treasury holds about £800,000 in gold, consequently the State has a perpetual loan of £3,200,000 without interest.

It will be interesting at this juncture to read Premier Seddon's latest pronouncement on this subject. He said that "In regard to the Bank of New Zealand three questions would have to be considered next session—First, a State Bank in respect to note issue. He saw no harm in the Government issuing notes, as was done in Queensland. Second, a partnership with the Bank of New Zealand, the colony placing behind the institution a portion of the amount given as a guarantee to the bank, that sum to be interest bearing, thus giving the Government that control which he believed was essential, seeing that the bank did half the business of the colony, so that the bank would continue to be run on present lines. Third, that the colony should withdraw as quickly as possible, and leave the institution to shareholders and itself, and perhaps let it go back to its old position. The Government was not inclined to do this." It would appear, therefore, that New Zealand will shortly control not only its own paper money issue, but will also, by virtue of its relationship to the Bank of New Zealand, largely control the banking operations of that State. Which means that, commencing to rule that bank as predominant partner, it will end in owning it, lock, stock, and barrel.

To this must we also come. It is but a step from the supporting of the private banking companies in times of crisis to their ownership at all times. If the State's credit is able to divert ruin from the



banking bodies, it must have within it all the elements for the maintenance and self-control of a banking business. To do so would be of advantage to the people of the country, viewed in the mass, and to such of the units which go to make up a nation. We say this for many reasons. Firstly, because the State, which now raises capital for the development of public works by foreign borrowing, might far more readily and advantageously make use of the deposits of its own people for these ends. We now borrow money ostensibly at 3 per cent., but when we add thereto the expenses of brokerage and transmission, with other deductions, our loans cost us every penny of 4 per cent. Our local large investors would gladly take that for their money, and even a shade less. Apart from that view of the question, it would be better surely that our outward liabilities should be lessened, even if it were only by a mere act of book-keeping—their transfer to Australian lenders? Professor Widney, an authority on currency, says:—

The power to provide its own money is vested in each nation, and why should any nation leave this power unused as to its own relief, and whiningly beg other nations to loan it money? Why pay to use foreign money and let our own power to issue money lie dormant? We pay annually over sixty million dollars (nearly the annual money yield of our mines) for the use of some 1500 million dollars of foreign money; whereas we as a people have the power to issue this money for our own use and free of cost as a nation.

The argument is quite as applicable to Australian as to American affairs.

(To be concluded in next issue.)

#### Along the Coast.

We take this opportunity of thanking those of our brother pressmen on the south coast who have already so cordially welcomed our return to the ranks of active journalism.

Ever notice the resemblance—at a distance—between Police Magistrate Roberts and G. H. Reid? With a monocle on, the P.M. might easily be mistaken for Australia's champion figure-juggler. Nothing of the "Yes-No" about the local man, though.

Not generally known that country police magistrates are about the hardest-worked members of the public service. P.M. Roberts rarely gets in more than two days a week at his headquarters, and the same may be said of almost all the other country police magistrates.

Cobargo "Chronicle" says the motto of the new paper will probably be Reform. Which is just so. Reform is an article in which we might all deal with more or less advantage to ourselves, a fact on which the "Chronicle" is well qualified to speak with no small degree of authority.

Alderman Carden struck the bed-rock of common sense recently when he urged a reduction in grazing fees for the Swamp reserve. Present rates are preposterously high, and out of all proportion to the benefits obtainable just now, at least. In any case, the reserve was not vested in the Council for revenue-raising purposes, but for the benefit and convenience of the people.

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It sounds paradoxical, but it is nevertheless a fact that if the political pulse of Moruya beats at the next general election to the same time as at present, Captain Millard's best friends will prove his worst enemies. See the point?

The perturbation within the fold of the Moruya Mutual Improvement Society in connection with the Mechanics' Institute Committee's refusal to allow it the use of the hall at reduced rates is apparently subsiding. It is said by some doubting individuals, however, that the prevailing quiet is only the calm before the storm, as an organised effort will be made at the next meeting by means of a packed committee to gain the point. In which case, some fun looms ahead.

The recent fatal accident at the Wanatta public school, whereby an unfortunate lad of 15 lost his life through a tumble-down structure falling on him, has some bearing on the question of establishing "school coaches" for the convenience of children living in sparsely-settled localities in preference to the present system of building ramshackle shanties which are not capable of resisting a puff of wind. There is, at least, some stability about the central public school buildings. The "school coach" system, which is said to have given much satisfaction in the United States and Victoria, takes up the children in convenient localities and deposits them at the nearest central school in the morning, returning them in the after-

noon. Apart from the advantage of placing children at a higher-grade school, the system is said to be cheaper than our present one.

If one may judge by the number of candidates announcing themselves for Moruya at the next State election, Captain Millard's equanimity must be undergoing a strain just now. In addition to Mr. Alex. Hay, Alderman Boag, of Milton, is announced, while Mogo threatens to put a candidate forward, who undertakes to run under the banner of what a local paper calls the Liberal Reform League, tho' what the deuce that may be this scribe knoweth not. The push which ran a candidate under the auspices of the Liberal and Reform Association at Tamworth recently—successfully too—put the electors of that constituency in the remarkable position of having returned a man to Parliament on a vague cry of "reform," which he didn't explain, which the electors themselves didn't know anything about, and which the L. and R. Ass.—can it mean Liars and Rogues—didn't unfold all through the election.

In connection with our remarks elsewhere on the Pastures Protection Board, it transpires that matters are even worse than are therein indicated. It seems that the Braidwood Board is a purely local concern, elected under the new Act, and not under the old Act, as was stated. The Braidwood Board had therefore no shadow of justification for poking its nose into the affairs of this district, but it even

goes one better than electing its inspector for our use in that it calmly claims that Broulee shall pay a share of the cost of its (the Braidwood Board's) election. All of which goes to show that the Braidwood Board—or the man behind it—has a very poor opinion of the intelligence of Broulee voters.

The Moruya "Examiner" gives the following list of candidates nominated for election to the Broulee Pastures Protection Board:—R. M. Bate, Tilba Tilba, C. F. Warden, Milton, F. W. Cork, Milton, Joseph Jenner, Moruya, E. M. Mort, Boddalla, G. D. Du Ross, Moruya, W. H. Simpson, Moruya, H. J. Thomp-

son, Moruya, S. W. Bate, Central Tilba. The last-named was the only coastal candidate nominated for the last election under the Rabbit Board, but, if we remember aright, he didn't get out of the "teens." On that occasion he was nominated as an auctioneer, but this time his occupation is changed to "grazier,"—probably for luck. The date of election is not yet announced.

If you like the "Scrutineer," recommend it to your friends, and ask them to send their names along to this office. Terms 12/- per year in advance. Correspondence cordially invited.

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## THE SOUTH COAST SCRUTINEER.

An excellent leading article on the advantages of establishing a Union amongst the south coast timber-getters appears in yesterday's Moruya "Examiner." Union is the order of the day in all branches of industry, and in the face of the facts set forth in the article referred to, south coast sleeper-getters cannot fall into line with the general movement too suddenly. We hope to see a strong union formed, which will later on prove a powerful factor in controlling local elections to Parliament.

\* \* \*

Reported that an Eden lawyer is going to contest Eden-Bombala at the next Federal election. South coast electors, however, are usually shy of the legal fraternity as Parliamentary representatives, altho' Bega on one occasion returned "Tommy" Rawlinson, a popular local solicitor, who defeated one of the ablest men then in politics—the late J. P. Garvan. A dissolution occurring about twelve months later, Mr. Rawlinson was shot out in favor of the present member. Which is, perhaps, the gravest reproach resting on the intelligence of Bega electors, unless, indeed, it may be their continued return of the same individual. Rawlinson had a deep, and what looked like an undying hatred of centralization, and if he had remained in Parliament might have made a good fight against it. But he has been practising in Sydney a many years now, and has probably long ago become impregnated with the prevailing belief that Sydney is the be-all and end-all of New South Wales' destiny.

The formation of a branch of the Political Labor League at Cobargo, with another to follow at Bega on an early day, is a significant item in the none-too exciting political history of the southern electorate. A capable man, with any sort of a platform, would long ago have cut the ground from under the feet of Bega's present parliamentary incubus, but, somehow or other, the job was never taken on. Poor old Henry Clarke! A political tree of thirty years' standing which has borne throughout all that weary time, "nothing but leaves."

\* \* \*

The Bermagui-Cooma road is a matter which has been taken up at intervals by the various centres interested in its construction, but hitherto without success. Cooma is willing enough to back up any scheme which promises to provide means of transport to the south coast. The road mentioned is an easy day's journey to the coast from Cooma, but the route is the source of all the trouble. One proposal is that traffic shall come through Cobargo, another that it shall travel through Quaama, while a third suggests via Reedy Creek, with its coastal terminus at Punnakalla or Narooma. Government surveyors' reports are in favor of the Quaama route, but the disagreement between the coasters leaves the tablelanders helpless. Meanwhile, the Department looks complacently on, for it is in no hurry to provide facilities for the carriage of Monaro's wool to a port from whence it might ultimately be carried across the seas, and thus rob Sydney of her "little bit."