

RAFFLES.

Seven hundred and seventy-five licenses under authority of section 42 of the Gaming Act, 1908, were issued during the year. Of these 482 were for works of art, 282 for small amounts of alluvial gold, and 11 for alluvial gold valued at £5,000.

The following table shows the results of the £5,000 gold art unions :—

License No. and Name.	Gross Sales.			Commission on Sales.			Expenses.			Prizes.	Net Proceeds.			Lottery Duty.			Net Profit.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
49. Happier Days ..	17,907	7	6	2,686	2	2	2,934	14	6	5,000	7,286	10	10	1,790	14	9	5,495	16	1
50. It's Mine at Last ..	18,639	2	6	2,795	17	5	2,926	6	9	5,000	7,916	18	4	1,863	18	3	6,053	0	1
51. Mickey's Fortune ..	19,125	0	0	2,868	15	0	2,976	4	3	5,000	8,280	0	9	1,912	10	0	6,367	10	9
52. Just For Luck ..	18,215	12	6	2,732	6	11	2,937	0	7	5,000	7,546	5	0	1,821	11	3	5,724	13	9
53. Lucky Joker ..	19,311	10	0	2,896	14	6	2,982	8	7	5,000	8,432	6	11	1,931	3	0	6,501	3	11
54. Lucky for Once ..	19,669	17	6	2,950	9	8	3,011	10	10	5,000	8,707	17	0	1,966	19	9	6,740	17	3
55. Win-A-Lot ..	19,453	2	6	2,917	19	5	2,985	4	4	5,000	8,549	18	9	1,945	6	3	6,604	12	6
56. Where Next ..	24,292	7	6	3,643	17	2	3,031	12	11	5,000	12,616	17	5	2,429	4	9	10,187	12	8
57. Wheel of Fortune ..	23,035	7	6	3,455	6	2	2,951	11	1	5,000	11,628	10	3	2,303	10	9	9,324	19	6
58. Landed at Last ..	21,866	17	6	3,280	0	8	2,879	3	11	5,000	10,707	12	11	2,186	13	9	8,520	19	2
59. This for you ..	23,141	0	0	3,471	3	0	2,921	5	8	5,000	11,748	11	4	2,314	2	0	9,434	9	4
Totals ..	224,657	5	0	33,698	12	1	32,537	3	5	55,000	103,421	9	6	22,465	14	6	80,955	15	0

Of the net profits, £66,850 was allocated for the relief of distress, of which £55,000 was distributed to the various Mayoral or other recognized central funds established for the relief of distress, making a total of £235,000 made available from the art unions to these relief funds during the past four and a half years.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT, 1926.

The area of the Borough of Whakatane was declared to be a fire district under the Fire Brigades Act, 1926. There are now fifty-five Fire Boards in operation.

Legislation was passed making express provision for the manner and the form of debenture issues by Fire Boards when raising loan-moneys by this method.

Two conferences were held in Wellington consisting of representatives of the four metropolitan Boards and also the major boards employing permanent staff. The object was to discuss means of coming into line with the Government policy of reduced working-hours in so far as permanent brigadesmen was concerned. The conferences concluded with mutual satisfactory results.

The annual report of the Inspector of Fire Brigades will, as usual, be submitted separately.

EXPLOSIVES AND DANGEROUS GOODS.

Licenses.—Importation licenses were as follow: Gelignite, 225,150 lb.; Polar gelignite, 1,049,300 lb.; blasting-gelatine, 24,950 lb.; Polar blasting-gelatine, 17,500 lb.; gelatine dynamite, Nil; Polar gelatine dynamite, 62,500 lb.; Samsonite, Nil; Polar samsonite, 283,500 lb.; A2 monobel, 200,700 lb.; quarry monobel, 30,000 lb.; blasting-powder, 128,750 lb.; blasting-pellets, 73,750 lb.; sporting-powder, 23,540 lb.; detonators, 2,385,000; E.D. fuses, 485,000; safety fuse, 6,033,600 ft.; fireworks, 103,827 lb.

Other licenses were (corresponding figures for previous year in parentheses): Conveyance, 212 (215); sale, 601 (596); storage, 382 (390).

Examination of Explosives.—The practice of making examinations of all shipments of explosives imported into the country has been carried out as heretofore. Some little trouble is still being experienced with shipments from Great Britain, a number of the cases in the shipments being found damp. Information on the conditions in the magazine during voyages is now being obtained, but is insufficient yet to enable any definite conclusions to be drawn.

Low-freezing Explosives.—It has been indicated in previous reports that the Department was arranging for the bulk of gelatinous explosives used in New Zealand to be in future of the low-freezing type. It will be seen from the figures quoted above for the importation of explosives that the transition from older to newer type has now been practically effected. The low-freezing explosives have proved eminently satisfactory in practice, and it is noted from examinations of shipments from England that the physical condition of this type of explosive is better generally on arrival in New Zealand than that of the ordinary gelatines.

Legislation.—During the year the Department was approached concerning the importation into New Zealand of safety fuse of foreign manufacture. In the past fuse has been supplied by only one company, and as such fuse is manufactured to a standard approved by His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives no trouble of any consequence has been experienced with it for many years. It is extremely important that safety fuse should be constructed in accordance with rigid specifications in regard to rate of burning, stoutness of casing, &c., and it was felt necessary to provide for the closest supervision of fuse manufactured by a firm of the quality of whose products the Department had had no previous experience.

Regulations were therefore enacted setting up a standard to which fuse must conform and providing for its importation under authority of license issued under the Explosive and Dangerous Goods Act, 1908.

Accidents.—Whilst it is recognized that accidents in explosives factories will occasionally happen, it is a remarkable coincidence that fatal accidents should have occurred in both of the licensed factories in this country. These factories have operated now for very many years without any mishap, and it is regrettable that both should have been so involved in the same year.