

J. MICHELMORE & CO.,

RIVER-STREET, MACKAY. P.O. BOX 37.

— TELEPHONE 343. —

Wholesale Wine, Spirit, Hardware and General Merchants.
Forwarding, Shipping, and Insurance Agents.

PASSAGE AGENTS FOR THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH LINE OF STEAMERS.

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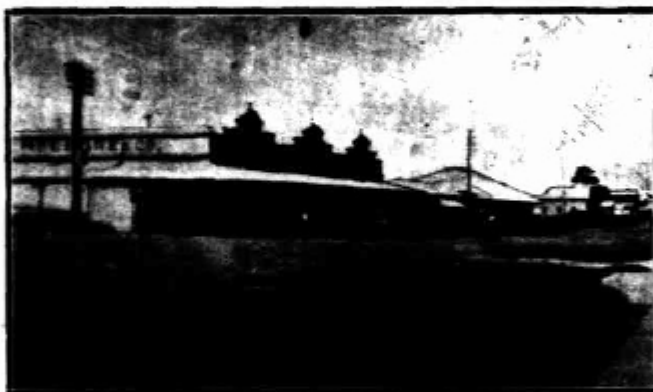
OTHER AGENCIES :

Ainslie, Buchanan's Dewar's, and
 Johnny Walker Whiskies.
 Foster's Lager, Fosters Special Ale
 (bulk).
 Tooth's K.B. Lager, C.B. Ale and Stout.

Buller's Stout.
 Guinness' Stout, bottled by E. and J.
 Burke.
 Lindeman's Wines.
 Martell's Brandy Hennessy's Brandy.

Burnett's Old Tom Gin.
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 Hendon's Geneva and Schnapps.
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Alston's Windmills.
 United Paints.
 Toulman's Varnishes.



By "Battler."

Although John Michelmores is physically a big man, I am not alluding to his strength athletically in this article, but to his moral and financial strength. My old-time Rockhampton friend, Harry Black, who at the time that I am writing this article is enjoying his seventy-eighth birthday, said to me:—"John Michelmores's word is his bond. If he says yes, he means yes, and if it is no, he will want the best of reasons for altering his reply."



I first met Mr. Michelmores 23 years ago, at the time of the big drought. Since then his business has flourished

School, Bath. He left school at the age of 16 years, and, having a fancy for the sea, he was apprenticed to a shipping firm, and shipped in a wind-jammer. The first voyage was such a bad one, and the ship was in such a bad condition, that he and the mate decided to leave. Their judgment was sound, as the ship again went to sea, and was not heard of again. Mr. Michelmores worked his way to Australia on a sailing ship as an able seaman, and was paid the princely price of one shilling a-month. He landed in Sydney in '86, and secured a storage passage to Mackay in the old-time steamer Timonee. He landed in Mackay with £2 in his pocket. His first billet was at Mendonland sugar plantation in the employment of Mr. William Hyslop. His wages were £1 a-week, which was raised after six months to £1 10s. After a time his employer complained of hard times and wished to reduce the wages to £1 again. As the young new chum was acting as overseer, he objected, saying that he had come to the country to go forward, and not backward. He went then jackerboosing on Fort Cooper (a property that he now owns) for six months, being in the employment of Mr. G. F. Bridgman. He then entered the service of Messrs. Byrne Brothers, store-keepers, where he remained two years. He did so well with the firm that it offered him the position of manager of a branch that it intended opening in Townsville. As he contemplated matrimony, he jumped at the chance, and he was greatly disgusted when the Messrs. Byrnes altered their mind and told him that he thought he was too young for the position. At the time a position was open for a shire clerk, and again Mr. Michelmores's luck stood

spirit and general mercantile business in the name of J. Michelmores and Co. was started. The partners were, the subject of this sketch, William Bagley, and Edmund Dimmock, who found the capital. In 1903 Mr. Dimmock sold out to Messrs. Bagley and Michelmores. In 1904 Mr. Bagley died, and his sons, Charles, George, and James, acquired his interest in the business and the various firms. Previous to the combine being formed, I forgot to mention, Mr. Michelmores had started business on his own account in a small building near the Imperial Hotel. He was his own carter and office boy. He travelled to Sydney to buy stock. It was at that time that the English traveller called on him. The new business premises were near the Prince of Wales Hotel, and is now used by the firm as a crockery store.

In 1903 a new chum named J. McDonald landed in the country, and, being level-headed, like most others of his countrymen, he approached Mr. Michelmores about securing a property, known as The Hermitage, close to the Hospital, for dairying purposes. A milk round was started in town. The venture proved a success from the start. In addition to the dairy, cane was grown, the first year yielding 700 tons and the next year 1200 tons, and now 4000 tons are cut. The firm is known as J. Michelmores and Co.

In 1911 Cook and Michelmores started business as graziers at Fort Cooper, Lenten Downs, and Lake Elphinstone and in 1914 J. E. Smith and John Michelmores bought and stocked St. Helen's (Dalrymple and John Arthur Macartney took up St. Helen's, Jellinecourt, and Bloomersbury, in the early sixties, and they sold to Sir John Macartney and J. Michelmores. As mentioned in

of fats are sent to Mackay. When the slump in cattle came he speyed heavily, and he is now reaping the benefit in having a number of fat cows to sell. He considers that mixed cattle or store cows are not bringing their true value in comparison with the price that bullocks are bringing.

It is 23 years since Mr. Michelmores started his small business. To-day he is a wealthy man. Riches have not made any difference to him. He is just the same unassuming gentleman as in his battling days. For a very busy man I have never met one more approachable, excepting, perhaps, our own Mr. W. H. Rudd. Cases I have heard of where John Michelmores has stuck to people through thick and thin, in some cases where the luck has been very bad for them. He does not bother about the money provided that the game is played, but any who try tricks have a very short shrift. Mackay could not have a better citizen. Mr. Michelmores has an iron nerve and a generous heart. I have seen him coming into business in his large comfortable car, and every corner of it was packed with kidding that he had picked up on their way to school. He works all his problems out on paper, and he is the only man that I have met who does so and can afterwards prove his figures correct. I have tried it in a butchering business, and found it a rank failure. He put a problem to me, saying:—"I bought so many cows at such and such a price last week, and at the same time I bought so many bullocks at so much. Which do you think will turn out the best deal?" From a casual glance I said:—"The bullocks will give a quicker and a better return." He got to work with pencil and paper and showed that, if

... met Mr. Michelmore 20 years ago, at the time of the big drought. Since then his business has bounded ahead, not only in the mercantile line, but in station properties and sugar plantations. As I sat in his cool office on the river front and heard the story of his life, it sounded like a romance. There was nothing boastful about his story, and, as I looked into the clear blue eyes and listened to the quiet voice, it struck me that his foresight was almost uncanny, while, if luck has any bearing on a man's destiny, surely John Michelmore has had a fair share. He was born in Devonshire, near Dartmouth, in 1867. He went to the Devon County School for four years and then to the Western

a position was open for a shire clerk and again Mr. Michelmore's luck stood to him. He was second in the contest. As Mr. Michelmore remarked, "I might have been a shire clerk yet." However, he gave his employers notice and said that he intended starting business on his own account. Just at the time a traveller came from England looking for an agent in Mackay to handle Ainslie's whisky and Allsopp's ales. The shipment came to several thousand pounds. It was a great lift for a young man starting in business. Mr. Michelmore explained: "It is not all 'I' in this business, and I want every man who helped me to get credit for doing so." In 1891 a wine and

and Bloomfield, in the early sixties, and there sold to Sir John Macarthur and R. Graham. As mentioned in another article, William Landsborough discovered and named Fort Cooper and Nobla. At the time Mr. Michelmore was at Fort Cooper the area of the run was 600 square miles, and it carried 10,000 head of cattle. Prior to that time it carried 50,000 sheep and 4000 cattle. Since Mr. Michelmore became owner he has cut 14 homesteads out of the property, which is now used purely for fattening. Three thousand bullocks are fattened. During my visit Mr. Michelmore sold 1,500 fat bullocks at 48 per head. This year he has bought 10,000 cattle, and weekly mobs

"The bullocks will give a quicker and a better return." He got to work with pencil and paper and showed that, if the season kept as it is, the cows would show a profit of over 60 per cent and the bullocks of about 33 per cent. The stations are worked economically, and motor cars are used for moving the stock from one point of view to another. The history of the Carmilla lands has been told before. Mr. Michelmore bought the land for about 4s. 6d. an acre, arranged to lay a tramline through it, and opened up the richest sugar land in the district, selling at from 47 up to £30 an acre. In that case also the first buyer was let in on easy terms, and went out a rich man.