

Minor Matters

This has certainly been a phenomenal season for potatoes, or as the 'Graphic' office boy calls them 'spuds.' From all directions come descriptions of splendid crops. And, as the Wai-kato 'Times' suggests, this need not be wondered at when individual tubers can be got to scale 7 lbs. This was the weight of a potato brought into Cambridge a day or two ago. It was of the Late Rose variety, and though not particularly comely was quite sound.

'Faith in dreams,' remarks the 'Taramaki Herald,' with its accustomed sagacity, 'is very deeply rooted in some people,' and it proceeds to prove the assertion with the following recent and local instance, which is certainly not uninteresting:— 'Some months ago a New Plymouth resident had a dream. In that dream he had terrific visions of himself as a prosperous petroleum explorer, and surrounded with all the luxuries and advantages such a position would give. The details were remarkably vivid; the firm where he had purchased the plant in Scotland, the locality of the boring operations, and the exact depths at which oil was struck were all clearly outlined, and so distinct was the impression made that he decided then and there to follow the matter out. He accordingly disposed of his business, went to Scotland, purchased a small plant from the firm he had seen in his dream, and came back to this district. Omata is the location, and the gentleman named Ius, we understand, succeeded in reaching a depth of 180 or 190 feet a short distance to within the depth he expects to tap petroleum. But at this stage he has struck a rocky formation, and the work is hampered somewhat. He still has, however, full confidence in the consummation of his dream.'

A well-known Dunedin cyclist met with a painful accident from a rather curious cause the other night. He was, according to the report sent the 'Graphic,' riding out to St. Clair, and the light on his machine startled some geese that were on the road. Instead of flying away from the ap-

proaching intruder, like the geese they were they charged straight for the light, and brought up against the front wheel, bringing about a general smash. The cyclist was badly knocked about, and in addition to other bruises had his arm fractured and a couple of ribs broken. So far as can be ascertained the geese, as usual in such accidents, came out of the fracas unhurt. The injured cyclist is making a good recovery, and is able to get about again.

The Dunedin Burns Club have, according to the local 'Star,' recently caused to be constructed a mahogany and glass case, which is to be used as a repository for a silver snuff mull, or horn, which formerly belonged to the Scottish bard. It is understood that the relic was sent to the late Dr. Stuart to be placed in the Otago Museum, but as the doctor died before this could be accomplished it passed into the hands of the trustees. The reason it has not been deposited in the Museum since then was the want of a suitable receptacle, but, as indicated, the Burns Club have now supplied the deficiency. The relic is a thoroughly authentic one, as full documentary evidence on that point is in the possession of the Club's secretary.

The toast of the 'Press' at banquets 'and sich' is usually a very perfunctory affair, but there are exceptions to every rule, and this paper is glad to notice that down Invercargill way the Fourth Estate was proposed in doggerel— we mean verse, by a talented Invercargill 'pote.' Here is the effusion:—

The cottage was a thatched one,
The outside oil and dim,
There's an awful noise within that
cot—
Whatever does it mean?

The night was dark and stormy,
The wind was howling wild;
A patient mother sat beside
A most unruly child.

She knew that all was over,
She might as well be dead;
That child had torn the 'Daily News'
Before it had been read.

The 'Daily News' is the local morning journal.

At Broken Hill the other night, during the opening performance of a 'Jack and the Beanstalk' pantomime (Broken Hill's first pantomime, by the way), a stalls patron was accompanied by a bull terrier. The appearance of Jack's 'cow' was received by the dog with growls of disapproval, and when the animal came forward and friskily began to 'bunt,' the little animal could stand no more. Bounding on to the stage it attacked the legs of the 'cow,' and the spectacle which followed of the forequarters strutting for the prompt side, and of the hindquarters and ribs struggling to a place of safety on the O.P. side, brought down the house.

Dunedin, apparently, is infested with some disagreeable characters now-a-days. That staid organ the 'Otago Daily Times' solemnly warns pedestrians out after nightfall to 'exercise considerable caution,' as several assaults have been committed in lonely streets. The most recent case reported is that of a resident of Mornington. He was proceeding home via High-street from the Shakespear Club's entertainment the other evening, when a man suddenly appeared from a dark corner and seized hold of him. The two struggled for a few moments, but, at the sound of approaching footsteps, the man shook himself free and ran away. The peculiarity of these cases appears to lie in the absence of motive for the assaults.

Our Maori friends are, according to the 'Wairarapa Daily Times,' occasionally as smart as Yankees. Recently a native pa, or pah, chartered a parson regardless of expense, to celebrate a wedding. When the blushing bride stood up to be spliced, the pah introduced with her another young girl who wanted christening. The Minister rather demurred to this side show, but let the contract cover it; but when, after the ceremony, a small coffin was introduced and he was invited to carry out an impromptu funeral, and thus complete a triple bill of fair, he broke down.

'Graphic' readers who despise the empty kerosine tin may perhaps take a 'tip' from the canny and plucky Melbourne grocer named M'Teigue,

who by the simple device of placing two empty kerosene tins, one on top of the other, against his store door, was enabled to guard his store from being robbed. At three o'clock on a recent morning, M'Teigue was awakened by a loud noise, and taking a loaded revolver and a lighted candle he walked into the store. There he saw a man standing near the door, meditatively eyeing the kerosene tins. M'Teigue asked his business, and the man replied, 'Don't get flurried, old man, it is all right.' M'Teigue, to frighten him, fired a shot into the wall at the side of his head. With an oath the man rushed at him, receiving a blow on the side of the face with a revolver, which knocked him over among some flour bags. He rose again and the two men struggled on the ground amidst a cascade of falling jam tins. The candle went out and the man escaping from M'Teigue's grasp, hid himself in a corner behind some bags. After vainly searching in the dark, M'Teigue fired another shot, which brought the man out of his hiding place, and he rushed out of the door. He was pursued, and a short distance away from the store he was joined by two companions, the three disappearing in the darkness.

In the notice last week, 'Flora Soap,' it should have been mentioned that the soap is an excellent one for household and laundry purposes, and is sold at a price which makes it available for general use. Mr H. N. Maddox, of Fort-street, is the Auckland agent.

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