

ROUND ABOUT THE COLONY

A "Kist o' Whanston."

It is not generally known (says the Napier "Telegraph") that in breaking down the old Presbyterian prejudice against the introduction of instrumental music in divine service St. Paul's Church in Napier holds a unique position, being the first church in the colony to make the innovation. Thereby hangs a tale. At a choir concert the other day the Rev. J. A. Asher stated that 40 years ago negotiations were first made for the union of the Church of Otago and Southland and the Northern Church, now happily consummated. In those days the fathers and brethren in the South had strong Calvinistic leanings, and their advances to the Northern Church were marked by the ruling passion of conservatism. Events, however, might have come to a head but for one sad fact. The fathers and brethren of the Church of Otago and Southland suddenly decided that they could not share the joys and sorrows of the Church of the North because—St. Paul's Church in Napier had an organ.

A Surprise for George.

George, a Chinese fisherman at Moturoa, New Plymouth, must have been surprised one day last week, says the "News," when the heavy weight at the end of his line proved to be a fish over 15ft long. After some difficulty the monster was landed and brought to town. Piscatorial experts claim to recognise it as a fine sample of the ribbon fish, rather rare in these waters. The unusual catch was the centre of attraction on the vacant plot near the Town Hall during the afternoon.

Vagaries of Anthrax.

A curious characteristic of the disease of anthrax was referred to by Dr. Mason in a lecture in Wellington, and illustrated with an anecdote. Three men, walking together in the Waikato, saw a bullock running at a fence. When they got up to the animal it was dead. They skinned it, and took portions of the meat home with them. It was subsequently found that the bullock was suffering from anthrax. The people who ate this meat did not die, but of the men who skinned the bullock, one died and the other very nearly died.

The C.J. on the Maoris.

Referring to the native race at the Napier Supreme Court, Sir Robert Stout, addressing the grand jury, said he noticed that of the six prisoners charged there were Maoris and one was a half-caste, which was an undue proportion considering the number of Maoris and Europeans in this district. It was said that the Maoris had increased of late years, as shown by the late census. That might be so, but to those of them who remembered this and other districts in the North Island 30 or 40 years ago it was perfectly plain that the Maoris were far less in number than they were in those days, whatever the census results might show. It seemed to him that if the Maori race was to be preserved it would have to become an industrial race. Of course it could not be expected that the Maoris could compete with Europeans in what might be termed mechanical arts; they were not so well qualified as Europeans for that, but they must look to industrial development in agriculture if they were to be of service as a race. From the calendar before him he saw that one or more of the natives who were charged and who had been before the Court previously had not taken to industrial pursuits, with the result that they were drifting away from good conduct to become criminals. "It is a sad outlook," said his Honor, "if the race is to be reduced to such a state as this, and there is therefore the more need, in our days of education and in all our efforts to civilise, to try and induce them to take up not merely pastoral but active agricultural pursuits if they desire ever to become good citizens."

A Factioned Schoolteacher.

Among the replies received by the Education Board in answer to their request for an expression of opinion by teachers on Dr. Mason's scheme for the medical inspection of school children, was one from a lady teacher on the West Coast; approving of the suggestion. She added: "No doubt it was the thin edge of the wedge for free dental attendance; free attendance for eye and ear trouble (the State providing eye glasses and ear drums). Free medical attendance would follow, and finally the State would bury its people." "Then," she facetiously wound up, "let's hope its functions will cease."

N.Z. Wine.

The reason why Australia and New Zealand, with an equally favourable climate do not produce wine equal to that obtained from the vintage of older countries was explained by Dr. Mason, in the course of a lecture last week. He said the French wine-makers did not rely on rule of thumb methods as makers in the colonies did. They employed trained bacteriologists to ensure that fermentation should proceed under the most favourable conditions. The secrets of the cultures by which this was brought about were never passed to any but the principals of firms. He illustrated the point by exhibiting a lantern slide picture of bacteria of a family which had been preserved by a firm of French vigneron for centuries.

Invitation to "Bobs."

It has been suggested, says the "Lyttelton Times," that the Education and Defence authorities should approach the Government with the view to inviting Earl Roberts to visit New Zealand during the Exhibition period, and undertake an extensive review of the cadets and volunteers. It is believed that a visit from the veteran soldier would evoke a great deal of interest, and that Earl Roberts' sympathy with and interest in the cadet movement would, if the colony sent an invitation to induce him to visit New Zealand.

Pretty Quick.

As showing the scarcity of houses in the Empire City, the following incident, which is vouched for, may be given. A Wellington gentleman who required a residence saw a suitable place advertised in the evening paper, and despatched his clerk to take the house without delay. The clerk hurried on his errand, but, alas, found on reaching his destination that a man in a motor car had arrived before him. This incident depicts how dwelling places are snapped up in Wellington, where houses have been a scarce commodity for years past.

In Buying Cows.

Captain Young, Government veterinarian, lecturing at Midhurst, gave some sound advice to young farmers on buying stock, pointing out that, while in buying horses they would be careful to examine for themselves, in buying cows they were too ready to accept the word of some who "were paid to tell lies." He advised them all to use their powers of observation, note the differences in the mouths of stock of different ages, as it was just as easy to tell the age of a cow as of a horse, and in many other ways to learn by experience which was much more valuable than that gained by telling.

Pelorus Jack.

A cinematograph picture of "Pelorus Jack" has been taken by the Salvation Army biograph operator. The photographs were obtained by placing the machine on a bow platform suspended from the bow

of a steamer during a smooth passage through the French Pass, in which locality it is the habit of this strange fish to escort passing steamers for miles.

Mean.

There are rumours that a particularly mean sort of a swindle has been worked on some of the Christchurch boarding houses during the past few days (says the "Press"). The mode of procedure alleged to be adopted by the perpetrators of the trick is to represent to proprietors of boarding houses or others who may be willing to accommodate visitors that he is the agent for a syndicate whose object is to act as a medium for bringing together those in search of board and lodgings and those willing to supply such accommodation during Exhibition time. He asks a fee of 5s. for registering the name and address of the person who is willing to receive the boarders, giving the address at which the principals of the syndicate are to be found. But on going to the place indicated, the victims of the swindle discover that the address is a bogus one. It is said that several landladies have been victimised in this way.

A Stranger.

A fully-grown wallaby has taken up its quarters on Mr. Knight's farm, the Rocks, just above the Upper Port Chalmers Railway Station. The animal appears to be very active, and quite able to take care of itself. Mr. Knight intends to protect it as far as possible, and as there is a patch of native bush on his farm, the wallaby may take up its quarters there. Where it has come from is at present a mystery, for so far as is known, no wallabies have been liberated near Port Chalmers.

White Owl.

What is undoubtedly a curiosity—an all-white Murrepork, has been caught by Mr. W. C. Watson, on his farm, Stuart-road, Eltham. Mr. Watson is having the bird stuffed to keep as a rare specimen, says the "Argus."

Sagacious Collie.

The collie dog is noted for its faithfulness, but an animal at a recent Waimate ploughing match showed more than ordinary devotion. Its master was a competitor in the hunters' competition, and mounted on his steed, rode over three flights of hurdles. In close pursuit followed the dog, and leaping in true hunting fashion, flew every obstacle in great style. An ordinary dog, says the North Otago Times, would have rested while its owner exerted the other animal for fame and glory, or if it had to follow its master would have trotted round the hurdles, or else crawled through between the battens.

Day's Bay.

Day's Bay promises to become still more popular as a seaside resort. The directors of the Wellington Harbour Ferries, Limited, have just completed negotiations for the erection of an up-to-date water chute at the bay. The plans and specifications are similar to the ones used for the Christchurch Exhibition, and are of the very latest design. As this is an exceedingly popular form of amusement in Canada, the United States of America, and Australia, the company anticipates that the chute will be well patronised. The contract, which is expected to be completed by the 9th of November, will entail a large expenditure and the employment of a large number of workmen.

Firewalkers at the Exhibition.

Arrangements are being made for the appearance at the Exhibition sports ground for one week of a tribe of firewalkers from the island of Beqa, Fiji. This tribe of firewalkers is being sent to the Exhibition by the Fijian Government, and practically is an adjunct to the colony's representation. The party will consist of twenty men. It is suggested that they will leave Suva on January 3rd.

Booming the Show.

Changes of an advance agent for leg calculations in the way of drinks and cigars were a factor in a civil action heard at the Wellington Magistrate's Court, relates the "Post." Mr. Ben Fuller, of the well known vaudeville company, on being called as a witness for the defence, said it was unusual to give an advance agent an open hand in extending the generosity of a company. He had eleven years' experience in New Zealand, and ten years in the Old Country, with entertainments, and said if an advance agent spent money on drinks and cigars, unless instructed beforehand, he paid for them out of his own pocket. Counsel for plaintiff put the question to him: "Does an advance agent meet men who can materially benefit a company if he gives them drinks?" "No," was the reply. "He gets plenty of promises usually." "What are the duties of an advance agent?" To go before the company, advertise it in the newspapers and by posters, and make arrangements for boarding its members." Counsel for the defence asked: "Are proprietors of newspapers likely to reduce an account because of sixpenny cigars?" "No," was the reply: newspapers are not to be bribed nowadays."

Flourishing Foxton.

"The casual visitor to Foxton at the present time will soon notice that the borough is experiencing another of the occasional booms that have been so noticeable during the past twenty years," remarks the travelling reporter of the Rangitikei "Advocate." The chief industry of the district for a number of years has been the manufacture of dressed flax, and the variations in the flax markets have had a corresponding effect on the business and progress of the town. At the present time upwards of twenty mills are working within a radius of six miles of Foxton, and as the price of flax is expected to remain at a good paying figure permanently there is every reason to believe that the present revival has come to stay."

The Mangator Estate and its Owner.

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policy. In 1871, he purchased from the Maoris for the Government the country between Takapanu and the Mamawahi Gorge—about a quarter million acres—on which now stand the townships of Norsewood, Ormondville, Damevike, and Woodville, surrounded with a closely settled and prosperous population. And this was once lawless Maoriland. He declined any remuneration for this purchase. Captain Hamilton is a sportsman, and was probably the first to introduce brown trout to the North Island. This was about 1870. He has contributed articles to the leading papers on subjects pastoral, military and sporting, and is the author of "Trout Fishing and Sport in Maoriland." This book has been very favourably received by the British and colonial press. It was written for, and published by, the Government, and should be in the hands of every sportsman tourist, as besides the chapters on fishing, shooting, and sport, there is a detailed description of over a thousand rivers, streams and lakes, aggregating about 18,000 miles in length. Captain Hamilton has prepared a map of the whole country showing how to get to the various places, and the distances by road and track, and the position of hotels, etc.

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