

# Wise and Otherwise

By "OLD SALT"

\*Nelson is one of the most conservative places you could get into. It has well been named "sleepy hollow," and Napier is another. Thus Mr. Rosser at the meeting of the Trades and Labour Council, and the pronouncement suggests a charming tableau, in which the naval and military heroes who made famous those historic names are arraigned before the Majesty of Labour. Having one of his ilk in our midst, bravo Napier of Magdala, it may be surmised, will be adequately defended; but what of Nelson? A brother shell-back to the rescue as arbiter between the man of deeds and the man of words—

Dear Mr Rosser, — We would like to have you see. That the naval hero of the British nation, Who aspired to so much fame, Had an aspirate to his name— So you must not spell "horatio" — "oration!"

Seeing that imitation green-stone is imported as glass—simply glass, and nothing more—the Customs authorities have no power to refuse admission to the transparent fraud; but surely something might be done to protect the innocent purchaser. Most folks will remember the advice given to a dweller in cities, who, while rusticiating, enquired from his host, how to distinguish between the edible mushroom and the deceptive toad-stool: "Eat it, and if you die it's a toad-stool!" For this reason I hesitate to advise that the trinket of doubtful origin should be jumped upon—it is metals that receive their hall mark by means of a stamp—and suggest that an effort be made to pawn it.

There is a saying translated from the Spanish which exhorts one to go to one's friends for advice, to strangers for help, and to relations for nothing; yet "uncle" is at times a very sympathetic relative, and a very present help in time of trouble. Under the circumstances alluded to in the preceding paragraph, I can imagine the avuncular counsellor—

"I much regret, my verbal friend, I cannot take this pledge; Although most willingly I'd tend, Were it what you allege.  
Fortune, we know's a fleckle Jade, Misfortune is your share; I know just where this stuff was made, Your 'jade' is false, but fair."

The somewhat heated controversy between Mr. Wilford and the executive of the Rotorua Rod and Gun Club as to the existence or non-existence of starving Maoris, and the means of subsistence of those who do not starve, tempts one to enquire whether or not the fish in our river, may be considered as among the kindly fruits of the earth, from which, in due season, we are promised enjoyment. The season certainly is fixed by legal enactment, but as the genus appears somewhat confused, and before confusion becomes worse confounded, I submit that they be grouped under the heading (not necessarily hot-headed) "passiflora succulent"—as my Latin is a little groggy, I had better translate that as "passion"-fruit.

The permanent secretary of the Agricultural Labourers' Union speaks to a Press representative in Christchurch with no uncertain voice while dealing with the alleged delinquencies of Mr. Justice Sim, but falters when he attempts to express his disgust with the finding of the Court. That after delivering the finding the Court "rose" seems to find an opportunity for a "Thorn" to point out how useless it is to kick against the pricks, while the declaration by Mr. Thorn that the breath is not knocked out of the body of his Union justifies the writer in giving him a free "quiff."

The confusion which exists in the minds of the public as to which is the more moderate in demand, as regards money and work—generally shown as

"Capital and Labour"—was an opportunity for illustration which was not neglected by the railway servants when formulating their appeal to the Minister as against the demands of an autocratic Government. This the request—"That dining-car men be placed upon the permanent staff, and that their hours be reduced." This appears to be a very reasonable request, and if "Carmen" bring them no fortune, it is to be earnestly hoped that the hours will pass quickly, and that none of them will be so ill-luck as to refuse the bread which is, after all, the staff of life.

A footballer's life is not always a happy one, if we may judge from the experiences of the lately returned Maori team from Australia. To be stranded in Sydney is not a pleasant position, nor is it much improved when the pocket is occupied by a writ—as a matter of fact, an empty pocket is much to be preferred. The players are frequently and strenuously exhorted to "play the game," but seeing how our dusky warriors were euhred, it might be as well in the future to see that there are not too many "Jacks" in the pack.

The suggestion that the visit of the American fleet should be commemorated by some permanent beautification of our streets—seems to be an excellent one, and there is every indication that it will be acted upon. The hills and valleys to be observed in Lower Queen-street are splendid examples of what may be achieved in landscape gardening, and it requires only a couple of rainy days to provide us with quite a chain of artificial lakes in Port and Customs streets. As a permanent reminder, Khyber Pass-road, down which, a witness at an inquest stated, the cars run at a speed of ten to fifteen miles an hour, or more swiftly than the Pukekohe express, might be renamed Fleet-street.

Curiosity is not a pleasing characteristic, to which to admit; but I must confess that I should like to know why a certain gentleman considers it necessary to advertise that he painted the power-house chimney for forty pounds? I have known a man to paint a town red without being a bit anxious to make a song about it; but the gentleman to whom I refer does not tell us the colour of the paint employed, and flouts our intelligence when he thinks that we will surmise that he did the work for fun.

## Unfit for the Army.

Alarmingly figures were given in the House of Commons recently by Mr. F. D. Acland, of the War Office, in regard to the physique of men who offered themselves for enlistment. They show that in London and the large towns of the kingdom from 40 per cent. to 75 per cent. of the would-be recruits were rejected. The figures are as follows:—

	Offered.	Rejected.
London	20,875	8,806
Birmingham	1,858	1,084
Manchester	2,523	1,821
Sheffield	1,031	383
Leeds	791	452
Newcastle	1,493	1,046
Sunderland	776	282
Glasgow	2,905	1,135
Glasgow	956	680
Edinburgh	1,590	628

The following figures show how the established and actual strengths of the forces have fallen off:—

	Establishment	Numbers serving.
1906-7	903,404	753,078
1907-8	893,141	730,045
1908 (July)	799,810	639,000

The Army is now smaller than it has been for many decades.

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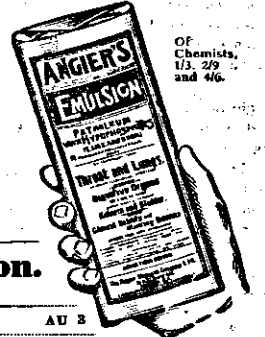
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