

FACTS, FANCIES, QUIPS & COMMENTS

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN PAPERS.

An instance of exclusiveness maintained under difficulties is reported from the ladies' cabin on an inter-colonial liner. All were sick except one lady and a cat, which wandered uneasily about. The lady ventured to stroke the cat, remarking, "Poor pussy." The cat was inclined to respond, and elevated its tail, in token of goodwill, when from a neighbouring berth came in choking tones the words: "Excuse me, that is a private cat!"

Have you ever seen a Maoriland bush road in winter time? I have (writes "Phiz" in the "Bulletin"), and what's more, have lived with one between me and civilisation. It is one of those things which affect a strong man just as a glass of water would if offered to a confirmed soaker! I have seen roads which are reputed to conceal in their bosoms whole herds of lost and sunken beer. I have driven sheep through paddocks, drawing staples on the way, because the road was a quagmire. On one occasion, where the "making" of the road had left a small ledge near the fence, I drove a mob of sheep along this ledge. But the ledge was broken in one place, and the liquid mud reached under the fence. What was the leader to do? Did that sheep stop? No; he took a header, and landed in the mud. His mates followed, and swarmed across his back. That sheep was a martyr to mud, and his monument was mud. But his memory is revered as a pioneer on that road. You will realise what mud means if you read this extract from a letter sent by a settler at Whangamona to the Minister of Lands (he was asking that something be done to his road):—"My little girl died last week. I couldn't get a doctor, and I couldn't get her to the cemetery, so I buried her in the clearing near by! You can't imagine how bad the road is!"

He was a very distinguished violinist, with a name you could pronounce three different ways, and he hated giving encores. His reluctance in this regard had moved his manager to curse behind town-hall organs in five continents. He was a hard star to drive at any time, but something happened one evening that nearly made him back out of the musical heavens. It was a vice-regal night, and the hall was filled with rank and fashion—all except one chair in the front row, which was filled with a suburban man from the bush. How the Man from the Bush managed to arrive at a guinea seat at such a show isn't clear, but the supposition is that he paid. He listened intelligently, applauded liberally, and seemed to enjoy himself until after the second-last number, when the Distinguished one's very evident reluctance to respond to the applause seemed to sour his enthusiasm and make him angry. "Encore! Encore!" he shouted, stamping vigorously on the polished floor and making a tremendous noise. "Come on! Encore!" The Distinguished One stood bowing ungraciously at the back of the stage, but didn't advance. The bushman kept on clapping with the crowd for a few seconds; then, with an angry exclamation, thrust his hand into his pocket and, pulling out half a crown, cast it on the platform. "Play, you iddler!" he roared,

shamelessly; "if you won't play for love, play for money!" History records that the Distinguished One that night snatched his priceless genuine Strad., valued at 1/11.

The only amusing thing now in progress in Sydney is the competition regarding the name of the capital city. The contest was instituted by the "Star." Surely the editor must feel like putting in "Nemesis" as his own contribution to the thousands of appalling names submitted to him. Only one humorist appears to have offered his help to name the Federal capital, and he hands out "Ballydudley." No one has suggested Ballyblackmaquew or Whack-bully, but Messina and Denmark and Inverness are in the list. Dudleyville and Deakinville are the offerings of the utterly banal mind. Guelphstown is grotesque, and the professors of such names as The Mother City of Australia and Hume International State ought to be remonstrated with for setting up such a standard of extravagance. We'd have to get special elongated envelopes to carry such addresses, and then the extra ink used would be a serious item. The choice of name rests with the Australian Parliament, and doubtless it will have the bad taste to select Federal Capital instead of Wombaton, or Woolgoldia, which are actually in the list of the submitted names.

I knew the growth of eucalyptus was remarkably rapid, but until the other day had no data on which to estimate the haste of the great Australian vegetable (says a correspondent in a Sydney paper). Was poking about one of the has-been auriferous creeks of Gippsland in company with the oldest inhabitant who had come in with the first rush some forty-two years ago. As we struggled on, the ancient emptied his stores of memory over me, pointing out the spots where big nuggets and rich dabs had been "gouged out." At last we came to his old claim, on the nose of a spur; and, as he piloted me over the uneven surface, I noticed a huge, dead stringybark tree lying prone. It had fallen with one root-prong in the soil in such a way that a living, vigorous tree towered skyward, firmly rooted to its dead progenitor. Called the old chap's attention to this, and he remarked that he "minded the dead tree well." He had grubbed it himself forty-one years ago. The growing tree was, of course, not over that age. We spanned it 4ft. from the ground, and found it about 6ft. 6in. in circumference. We estimated the length of the straight, symmetrical barrel at 80ft. Timber that grows like that cries aloud for conversation.

"Cic" learns new things about frogs: I was up to and until the last day of rest as ever was, under the delusion that dampness was absolutely necessary to the several breeds of frog. But on the above-quoted day, I stumbled on three fat brown members of the species, who, though far from moisture of any description, were none the less lively. If proof were needed of their energy, their frantically vicious leave-taking

of me supplied it. It was on the summit of a bare brown hill that I unearthed them. The Riverina thermometer halted at 103 deg. in the back verandah, and the nearest water shimmered at the foot of a hill just five furlongs distant. A slab of granite formed the frogs' gonyah, and the atmosphere was apparently their sole source of sustenance. It hadn't rained for three weeks. Yet they presented all the frownless, gay, and clammy aspect of their relatives who dwell in pools and surface tanks. Since then, in various discussions about the croakers, I have learnt that the green variety of them are also wont to wander long distances from water hereabouts. They invariably amble back to wetness, however, when the spirit moves them to deposit their spawn. This feat—I refer to the discovery of the water, and not to the spawning—is worthy of profound remark, inasmuch as the local liquid is stored in tanks, which are scattered promiscuously over the map at irregular intervals. Verily, the squat, beady-eyed hoppers know things.

British War Minister Haldane has been scoffing at the slack individual who "amuses himself, but does nothing for his country" in the way of defence; and, considering that London with 6,500,000 people—more than one-seventh of the whole population of the British Isles—has only supplied about 15,500 men to the Territorial Army, it looks as if Haldane had a right to jeer. Yet, in reality, he has none. Young men don't join the Territorial Army, because, if they do so, they get the sack. Employers don't want men who have to get a few hours' leave every now and then for drill. If training were compulsory the employer would have to put up with the disability, because all young men would have the same drawback; but owing to persons like Haldane it isn't compulsory, therefore, young men who volunteers loses his job and one who doesn't volunteer gets it. Probably the young man would like compulsory training as a break in the shop or office routine, but he can't get it; he only gets Haldane's foolish scoff. Haldane says in his bitterness that "a short, sharp Act of Parliament in war time" may compel the slack person "to do his duty in the matter of home defence"—in other words, he will be rushed to the front at the last moment, untrained, and not knowing one end of his gun from the other. A brilliant man is Haldane.

TROUBLE MAKING.

Trouble making is an older industry than the manufacture of steel. Cain, the trouble maker, got into action before Tubal Cain, the iron worker; and Eve got Adam into hot water long before the boiler makers union began business. There are three brands of trouble, imaginary, borrowed, and real. Imaginary trouble consists of railroad accidents, earthquakes, fires, suicides, diseases like the patent-medicine man makes, the poor-house, death, and the grave, carefully mixed and taken after a late dinner, or a drop in the stock market. Borrowed trouble is the kind we get from our relatives. Its principal ingredients are visits, borrowed money, birthday presents, advice, and expectations. But the real article is produced as follows:—Put the sandals of endurance on your feet, take your life in your hands and follow by turns How-to-be-Happy Philosopher, the Preacher of Physical Culture, and the Apostle of Diet.

THE MUSINGS OF AN OFFICE BOY.

The man who is in the biggest hurry to see the "boss" is usually the man the "boss" is in the biggest hurry to get rid of.

The successful politician knows the meaning of the words on the doors of a bank. It takes the "Push" to get in close to the coin, and a "Pull" to get away with it.

There is just two ways to win the "boss's" attention. Work hard or be a blonde stenographer.

When the head bookkeeper calls you down, don't get sore; just smile, and when the collector he has been dodging calls again, show him where he sits.

When the "old man" says he will be back in five minutes, don't believe it. It takes longer than that to put the ice in the glass.

When the good-looking stenographer comes in dressed up like a Broadway show window, act like you didn't see her. It is mean, but women must be taught their place.

Nothing succeeds like success, unless some one dies and leaves it to you.

Next to a soft answer, there is nothing like a soft drink to drive away wrath when the boss's wife has been waiting for him.

Always be kind to your inferiors, even the insurance agents. They have a right to make a living, even if they do make a fuss about it.

When the man from the country who is strong on his "boyhood days" talk wants to see the "boss" always show him right in, especially on Saturdays. It shows your heart is in the right place, if your head isn't.

When the bookkeeper who wears the roqueland in his buttonhole is whispering confidential over the phone, his face churned up into whipped cream smiles, don't walk away; get in close and listen. It shows a friendly interest, and he likes it.

When the "old man" growls at you for nothing, don't sulk; kick the cat. If you haven't one, borrow it.

The Maoriland Government has been reconstructed, and some more of the old Reddonites have been dropped out. A Maoriland Cabinet is a weird thing. For instance, Jimmy Carroll is Minister for Stamps and Deeds; J. A. Millar is Minister in charge of Machinery Department; G. Fowlds is Minister in charge of Mental Hospitals; and T. MacKenzie is Minister in charge of Scenery. Of course they have other portfolios as well—quite a heap of them. Almost anything is large enough to make a portfolio out of in Maoriland. That place may yet have a Minister for Back Doors and Yards.

Dr. Sheldon's Digestive
Tabules are not a Cathartic but a Digestive, and no pill habit can ever follow their use. The habit they induce is the habit of good digestion and consequently good health.

HEARNE'S BRONCHITIS CURE.

Those who have taken this medicine are amazed at its splendid healing power. Sufferers from Bronchitis, Cough, Croup, Asthma, Difficulty of Breathing, Hoarseness, Pain or Soreness in the Chest, experience delightful and rapid relief; and to those who are subject to Colds on the chest it is invaluable, as it effects a complete cure. It is most comforting in allaying irritation in the Throat and giving Strength to the Voice, and it neither allows a Cough nor Asthma to become chronic, nor Consumption to develop. Consumption is not known where "Coughs" have, on their first appearance, been properly treated with this medicine. No house should be without it, as, taken at the beginning, a dose or two is generally sufficient, and a complete cure is certain.

Small Size, 2, 6; Large Size, 4, 6 Sold by all Chemists and Medicine Vendors, and by the Proprietor, W. G. HEARNE, Chemist, Geelong, Victoria. Forwarded to any Address, when not obtainable locally.