

case, or dealt out "rats" to the little animal it was protecting. But, of course, this is a very low-class dog, like those who play in the Cathedral grounds or get on to "other varieties" benches at show time, and behave offensively, even when so honoured.

Mr Felix Tanner, the inventor of an improved air-ship, has built a model of a balloon which is controlled by the same methods, but costing only about one-sixth of the cost of his principal air-ship. He has considered that the money required to fit out and construct his air-ship, £2000, would be difficult to obtain without some practical illustration as to its utility, and has consequently made alterations, which reduce the cost considerably, but serve the same purpose, as far as the principle of his methods is concerned. He claims that a trial trip could be made from Thames to Auckland, and the balloon used as a captive, which would be a novelty in New Zealand. It could also be brought to serve the purpose of an advertising medium, and the money so gained by its sale would go towards constructing his ocean-travelling air-ship, to cost £2000, and estimated to do the trip to Australia in 24 hours.—(Waihi correspondent.)

News from Niue (Savage Island) goes to show that there is a good deal of dissatisfaction amongst the traders and natives at the Customs duties which have been imposed there, as the result of the incorporation of the island within New Zealand's boundaries. The duty on tobacco, one of the largest items of consumption, which formerly reached Niue free out of bond in Auckland, is 3/8 per lb, which is greatly worrying the Savage Islanders, and the enhanced price is expected to considerably restrict the trade.

The Demerara "Daily Chronicle" of June 4th last reports the death at Plaisance of "Old Mother Asher John," at the age of 124 years. Within the last year of her life she was to be seen going regularly to her farm, and was only confined to her house for six weeks prior to her death. The old lady never even had necessity to wear spectacles. Owing to her long life she had to mourn the death of nine children, 34 grandchildren, and 40 great-grandchildren.

A very large turtle, brought by the Moura from Fiji, was sold at an auction room in Wellington last week. The turtle was purchased by a syndicate of Chinamen. Because its shell had been broken the tender-hearted purchasers felt such sympathy for the turtle that they gave it liberty by dropping it into the harbour, with the observation from the head of the syndicate, "Him have hard luck!" A European, who "hated to see a good thing go to waste," offered the Chinamen an advance upon the price paid for the turtle, but the offer was refused.

A fine, bright, black-eyed, ruddy-checked Irish girl is housemaid at a banker's residence. Last week a foreign bawker called, trying to sell certain wares, and, after knocking at the front door, he demanded to see "de laity de house." "Out of this, ye monkey-faced divil," said the girl. "Sure we are all ladies here, an' if it's the mistress ye want to see, have the manners to ask for her," and she slammed the door in his face.

The "Cork Examiner" of June 13 states: "At noon yesterday a very interesting ceremony took place in the Exhibition Grounds, when the Right Hon. the Mayor was made the recipient of a very valuable presentation for the citizens of Cork by the Rev. W. H. Mahoney, on behalf of Mr J. J. O'Brien, of the well-known firm of Leyland and O'Brien, timber merchants, Auckland, New Zealand. The presentation consists of a number of specimens of New Zealand gum, timber, polished gum, gold and silver quartz, birds, etc., as well as several interesting Maori curios and illustrations of the flora and different phases of life in that distant country. The timber produced in New Zealand is, perhaps, the finest in the world, and

the specimens which now hang artistically arranged around the walls of the pavilion should prove of the greatest possible interest." The "Cork Examiner" devotes a good deal of space describing the various items of Mr Leyland's gift, and, after a few words referring to the business ability of the donor, records the fact that the Lord Mayor returned thanks on behalf of the citizens for the collection, which would be valued by the citizens, not only while the exhibition lasted, but for all future time."

Last week a public meeting was held at Hawera (Taranaki) to devise means of putting a stop to the larrkinism which has been prevalent there of late. The Mayor (Mr. Robbins) said the state of things was scandalous, and it was time something was done to have a stop put to the damage to property done by the hoodlums. Many complaints were made by speakers, and it was resolved "That, whereas the citizens have been disturbed and property destroyed of late, it is resolved that the Government be strongly urged to provide extra police protection by appointing a police officer for all-night duty."

Joe, the groom at a country hotel, is a hard case, and is largely dependent on tips for a living. He is, however, most attentive to any animals placed in his charge, says "Woomera." A lawyer from a neighbouring town, who acts on the precept that it is more blessed to receive than to give, spent a night at the hotel, and committed a pair of horses to Joe's care, one of which had a long and badly-matted tail. Joe pulled and combed it carefully, and expected a good tip, as the animal's appearance was much improved. But next morning the lawyer cursed him for ruining the appearance of his horse. "Fancy the variegated dog bluffing like that to avoid giving a tip," said Joe. "But, Lord, wouldn't he curse if he knew I got 2lb of hair out of that tail, and have sold it to the saddler for three bob. I have got the best of it after all."

The valuable paper read before the Auckland Institute by Professor Sagar, M.A., on the recent statistics of insanity, cancer and phthisis in New Zealand, has been issued as a leaflet from the Transactions of the New Zealand Institute. The chief points brought out by the professor, it will be remembered, were that when the changes in age-distribution of the population are taken into account, the supposed increase in the liability to insanity is a myth—in fact, that there has been an actual falling-off in the occurrence of this deplorable malady. This is also true of phthisis, which shows a substantial decrease. The deaths from cancer have undoubtedly decreased, but not to the extent which might be supposed from an examination of the percentages in proportion to the population, without reference to the larger percentage of people now in the colony than there were a few years back, at the periods of life within which there is a special susceptibility to this disease. The writer also concurs with the Registrar-General of England in the opinion that part of the increase is due to improved diagnosis.

It was at a certain church meeting, and the good Bishop was calling for reports. He had a rather stern, sharp manner, which sometimes jarred a little on the nerves of the more timid. By-and-bye he came to Brother B., a lay delegate. "Brother B., what is the spiritual condition of your church?" demanded the Bishop, briskly. "I consider it good," said the brother. "What makes you think it is good?" went on the Bishop. "Well, the people are religious. That's what makes me think so." "What do you call religious? Do they have family prayer?" "Some of them do and some do not." "Do you mean to say that a man may be a Christian, and not hold family prayer?"

"Yes, sir; I think so."
"Do you hold family prayer?"
"Yes, sir," returned the brother, quietly.
"And yet you think a man may be a Christian and not hold family prayer?"
"I have a brother who is a better man than I am who does not hold family prayer."
"What makes you think he is a better man than you are?"
"Everybody says so, and I know he is."
"Why does not your brother, if he is such a good man; hold family prayer?" thundered the Bishop.
"He has no family," meekly answered the brother.

A peculiar case came before Mr S. E. McCarthy, S.M., Invercargill, William Sim, Underwood, being charged with cruelty towards a son five years of age, whom, it was alleged, he had tied up in a sack as punishment for misbehaviour. Sub-inspector Green conducted the prosecution, and explained the facts, and called the boy, who said his father sometimes punished him with a strap, and on other occasions tied him in a sack, and hung him up to the rafters in the coal-house. He had been punished in this manner a number of times, and his knees particularly suffered. In reply to Mr Stout, the boy said he was very fond of his father, who was kind to him. The cause of his father punishing him in the way mentioned was that he quarrelled with his sister, whom he struck. He and his sisters were accustomed to playing with the sack and putting one another into it. Evidence was given in support of the boy's story.

Mounted Constable Emerson said that the father had admitted to him having tied the boy in the sack about half a dozen times to punish him, and leaving him in it for half an hour or an hour.

Dr. Hendry said the form of punishment alleged should not be applied by parents. The boy would be able to move to a certain extent in the sack, but some part of his body would be bent. If he were hung up there would be great pain in the knees, as all the weight would be there. Probably there would be a difficulty in breathing, but this would depend on the character of the sack.

Defendant said he had put the boy into the sack three times in two years. The boy was, on occasions, very wayward and hardy, and had to be firmly dealt with. He denied ever having tied him to the rafters, though he had threatened to do so. H. S. Bell, manager of Underwood Factory, and Rev. W. White gave evidence, stating that defendant bore a good character, and the latter said that, from his observations during visits to the house, he had found him an indulgent father. Other evidence was called with a view to showing that the father rather erred on the side of leniency.

The Magistrate said there was no

proof that the offence had been committed within the last six months, and that would have to be shown before the charge could be established. In dismissing the information he did not wish to say that he considered it proper for a boy to be tied up in a sack as punishment, and it was cruelty to leave him in that position for an hour. The evidence of the boy was absolutely unrelatable, as he contradicted himself, but there was the father's admission to the constable that he kept the boy tied up for an hour, and he had no hesitation in saying this was cruelty.

A gentleman, who is a great fowl fancier, was showing some visitors a pen of beautiful silver-feathered fowls he had recently imported from Austria, and when about leaving the poultry run, pointed to a small brown hen, saying, "That little thing hatched and reared that great fellow," indicating a remarkably large gander. The little brown hen, he explained, had shown great pride in her gosling, parading him before the less fortunate hens with broods of chickens, with the air of a mother who had gone one better than any of them. Every time the gosling enjoyed a swim in the duck-pond his little mother walked round and round until he had had enough of it. Each evening she trotted him off into the corner of the stable where her nest had been, and when he grew too big to fit in under her wings she would hop on his back and spread her wings over him as in his gosling days. One evening the 14-year-old son of the house thought to have some fun, and gave the young gander some sponge cake soaked in brandy. That the gander enjoyed the dainty goes without saying, but he became so disgracefully intoxicated that when his little brown mother came to take him to bed he waddled very unsteadily beside her, uttering a maudlin sort of cackle; then fell down and was unable to rise. This was more than the little brown hen could stand. She fled to the henhouse, resumed her seat on the perch, and after that night never again took any notice of her disgraceful son.

A young boy, who is being educated at a certain Boys' High School somewhere near, was recently introduced by his teacher to the "ditto" mark, whose labour-saving possibilities appealed to his fancy. His next letter to his father ran as follows:

Dear Father,
I hope you are well.
" Mother is " "
" Nellie " "
" Dick " "
" Grannie " "
I wish you were here with me.
" Mother was " "
" Nellie " " "
" Dick " " "
" Grannie " " "
" you would send me 10/,"
Your affectionate son,
JIM

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