

storage reservoir covering 1360 acres, having a circumference of about ten miles. The holding capacity is 6,400,000,000 gallons of water, from which all but 1,400,000 gallons are available for consumption. The maximum depth of the reservoir is 26 feet, and the maximum quantity of water that can be drawn is the flow from the Jan Jean in one day, viz., 42,000,000 gallons. Another 25,000,000 gallons is obtained daily from the Maroonah Falls. The average consumption per day in Melbourne and suburbs is 29,000,000 gallons, and the maximum 37,000,000. The total length of aqueducts is 76 miles, mains 187 miles, reticulation pipes 228 miles. There are 13,500 fire-plugs in the city and suburbs, and the area supplied by water is 123 square miles, which includes 105,000 houses. The present population is 494,000, but when it reaches 600,000 it will be necessary to seek a further supply. The charge per meter is 1/ per 1000 gallons, and the water rate sixpence in the pound.

Quite an industry has sprung up of late in the search of the greenstone in and around the Kumara district. A mild boom has, as a consequence, resulted practically as one of the Kumara banks is offering facilities for shipment to its London branch. It is said that for first-class stone as much as 8/ and even 9/ a pound is the ruling price in the Empire's metropolis and on the Continent. That there is money in the business seems evident from a transaction that took place within the week just closed. A party of Chinamen at Payne's Gully came across a block of greenstone of splendid quality weighing something over 500 lbs. They parted with it to a local syndicate for some £15; the latter in turn disposed of it to a local banker for £40, and he was subsequently offered £50 for his bargain, but refused it. Believing that a better market awaits in London it was shipped thence on Saturday. This experiment will be watched with considerable interest as the stone is probably one of the finest that has come to light in this district.

Captain Hutton has placed in the Bird Gallery of the Canterbury Museum a specimen of the kagu, a very rare bird, found only in New Caledonia. It is a handsome creature. Another one, the tooth-billed pigeon, bill and a plume. The kagu is one of the remarkable birds of Polynesia, with a light grey costume, a yellow called Didunculus, which is closely related to the extinct Dodo of Mauritius, and is found only in Samoa, is also represented in the collection in the Museum. The kagu was obtained by exchange from the Noumea Museum.

The Martinique eruption has evidently "got on the nerves" of the people of Mania. The "Witness" again makes hair-raising references to the probable behaviour of Mount Egmont. On Monday the journal says: "In these columns some weeks ago reference was made to the low rumbling noise heard occasionally in this district. We have been treated to a second instalment lately. The noise resembles the roar that comes from the discharge of a number of artillery pieces. It would seem as if it emanated from Mt. Egmont. Is this the indication of her vomiting forth, a la the Martinique?" "We hope the bad whisky in Mania will not be responsible for the creation of a panic," says a rival journal.

Footballing in the North appears to be rather exciting at times. A corresponding writes to the Kawakawa "Luminary" complaining of the reception the Kawakawa team one day recently received at the hands of the Towai-ites. "They were not satisfied with trying to knock our men out," he said, "but one of the Kawakawa men while playing was struck by an opponent with a clenched fist, and such as these (backed up by several of the Towai men, together with some Towai females, who gave vent to their feelings by expressions such as 'break their necks' and other unladylike remarks) were amongst the crowd whom Kawakawa had to

face. When the match was finished one Towai-ite actually stripped himself to the buff and challenged one of the Kawakawa men (his victor) to a stand-up fight."

Considerable excitement was created on board the R.M.S. Oruba, which brought several New Zealanders as far as Sydney, whilst passing through the Red Sea on the evening of the 3rd August by one of the Lascar firemen, who had been affected by the extreme heat, jumping overboard. A boat was immediately lowered in charge of Mr Edward Tibbits, second officer, and the man was picked up, the ship being on her course again in 20 minutes from the time of the occurrence. On the 31st instant the passengers presented the second officer with a gold pendant, suitably inscribed, and the boat's crew with £1 each as a mark of their appreciation.

A commencement will shortly be made with the direct steam service to South Africa, the steamers Norfolk and Kent, which conveyed two of the New Zealand contingents to South Africa, having been chartered to load in New Zealand for the Cape. The Norfolk will go on the berth almost immediately, and the Kent will follow about the end of this month. The steamers will load live stock and refrigerated and general cargo. Shippers are requested to provide food and attendants for live stock, a free passage being granted to one attendant for every 25 head of grown cattle, one for 40 head of heifers, and one for every twenty-five horses. The minimum number of stock which would induce a call for these steamers would be 100 head of cattle, 100 horses, and 150 heifers.

Signor Morosini, a well-known Italian banker, at New York, has cabled to the Mayor of Venice, offering £20,000 towards the rebuilding of the Campanile. Signor Morosini, as he is now known, has had a remarkable career. His real name is John Perteguazza, and he is a Venetian by birth. After the futile revolution of 1848 he emigrated, taking passage on the ship as a cabin-boy under the name of John Cronk, in order to escape the Austrian police. He arrived at New York in 1851, and for some time followed the humblest occupations until he was lucky enough to attract the notice of the late Jay Gould, whose son he saved from serious danger. Mr Gould took him into his business, and he amassed a fortune, which is estimated at the present time at over £12,000,000.

An amusing story of literary censorship comes from America. "Huckleberry Finn." Mark Twain's story, has been barred from the Denver Public Library for these reasons, furnished by Librarian Dudley: The book, by certain people, is held to be immoral; Huckleberry Finn, without using words, denounces the Sunday-school, and does not attend that institution; he indulges in profanity and tells things more serious than fibs in order to wiggle expeditiously and safely out of embarrassing situations; all of which are held to be highly prejudicial to the morals and good bringing up of youthful readers.

Surgeon-Major W. Mackenzie, who went to South Africa as Chief Medical Officer of the Tenth Contingent, interviewed in Taranaki the other day, said: "The next war—if there be one—which will happen in South Africa will not be between Boer and Briton, but between the colonists and the Motherland; the reason is the poor return loyalists have had from Great Britain. The loyalists say, what is the use of fighting for Britain; if you are her opponent you get better treated? This will require the most tactful and careful handling, or else there will be a flare-up some of these days which will indeed 'startle humanity.' The loyalists consider they would fare very well in a fight with England."

An interesting addition to the Maori collection at the Museum has been made, in the shape of an ancient carved poupou, or wall slab, from a carved house which stood at Whangaroa, near Tolaga Bay, many years ago. The house was the pro-

perty of a chieftainess of rank called Hinematoto, who was at Tolaga Bay at the time of Captain Cook's visit. It is supposed to have been built about the year 1790. The donation is from Mr F. L. Williams, of Gisborne.

The reported huge fortune of £21,000,000 sterling left to the relatives of the late Page O'Rourke, of Chicago, has attracted the cupidity of the people of the name of O'Rourke all over Great Britain and Ireland, and also, one understands, in this colony. Messrs. Henry and Scanlan, solicitors, Glasgow, who acted for a number of claimants, have opened up communication with the American Consul-General in London in regard to the authenticity of the reports. He has sent the following reply, which effectually crushes the rising hopes of the clan "O'Rourke":—

Consulate-General of the United States of America,

July 15, 1903.

Sir,—I have your letter enclosing newspaper clipping about the "O'Rourke Millions" in America. I think I can safely say that the whole story is fiction romance, plainly speaking, a scheme concocted to get money out of the "O'Rourke." The same scheme is industriously worked, and the unsuspecting pay for being humbugged. This newspaper article gives no data whereby the alleged fortune could be located. You know such fortunes do not lie around loose—is it supposed to be New York or California, 3000 miles away—or elsewhere? A man from my own State worked the game for several years by having an office in London to advise the unsuspecting that large fortunes awaited them in America; he had an office in New York, and he from there advised them that large fortunes awaited the legal heirs in Great Britain. This self-constituted benefactor got 18 years in an American penitentiary. If there was a man in America who left an estate of £21,000,000 (105,000,000 dollars), I would have heard of it. The whole scheme, as I say, is a fraud. Don't invest one cent in it. Very respectfully (Signed) H. Hay Evans, Consul-General U.S.

There is a fear felt by a number of residents of Wadestown and of Wellington that the beautiful piece of land known as Wilton's Bush—one of the few remaining bits of native bush land in the vicinity of Wellington—will be destroyed. Part of this land (about 130 acres) is held by natives, and recently efforts have been made to lease it. The Minister for Lands is endeavouring to have the land secured as a reserve, and will have a report submitted to him by the Surveyor-General concerning a proposed exchange.

The extent of bridge-playing among aristocratic ladies has received somewhat melancholy proof, says the "Liverpool Post." The other day the jewels of a titled lady were sold as Christie's, and realised the large sum of £70,000. The sole reason for the sacrifice was the debts which this lady had contracted in playing bridge. An old family estate, belonging to a Whig family, will shortly be sold in order to provide the means for defraying the gambling debts incurred by one of the great ladies of society, whose husband, rumour hints, is a prominent Cabinet Minister.

"A publican who chooses to supply drink to firemen on ships on the ground that they are bona-fide travellers will probably find himself in trouble," remarked the Chief Justice at Wellington the other day. "A man belonging to a ship," said His Honor, "is on board his house, is in his own home, and does not come within the description of a bona-fide traveller."

Young men, when going through the trying ordeal of getting married, are popularly supposed to be even more nervous than the bride, and very prone to get confused, both before and during the ceremony. A number of instances have been recorded of bridegrooms forgetting the all-important ring, and the other day a similar contretemps occurred at a local church. In this case, however, the young man displayed wonderful resourcefulness at a trying moment. Fumbling in his pocket as the clergyman was about to ask for the indispensable gold band he found to his horror that it was missing. Quick as thought he turned to a married relative of the bride, and whispered, "Lend me your wedding ring." The lady, fortunately, took in the situation at a glance, and did as requested. The service went on without interruption, and the ceremony was completed with a borrowed emblem.

A friend of mine who has been on a cycling tour in the South, brings home some entertaining stories of his experiences. One of the best related to a search for something to eat in a remote part of the country, where wayside hosteleries are few and far between. Arrived at last at the hospitable doors of an old-fashioned house, which offered accommodation "for man and beast," the hungry tourist demanded the best in the larder. The waitress, a simple rustic, was sorry, but bread and cheese was all she could offer to accompany the glass of ale. "Very well," was the customer's immediate reply, "let's have that, and as quickly as possible." It took ten minutes to procure the food, and the visitor showing some impatience, the barmaid felt called upon to apologise. "You see," said she, quite innocently, as the plate was passed over the counter, "We're