

A policeman called at the sports ground of a leading school and inquired for one of the teachers. Being informed that the object of his quest was not present he volunteered the information, "Oh, it's nothing very important. He has neglected to have the baby registered. That is all. I will call again." The happy possessor of the baby was naturally rallied a good deal about this. "It's the wife, you know," he explained. "She won't have the child christened, so I suppose I shall have to pay the fine." "Oh, I don't know," suggested a young unmarried teacher, "could you not let them take the baby?"

While the Royal Arthur was at Suva (writes "Dora" from Sydney) the mosquitoes played havoc among officers and men, raising great blotches and swellings on their faces. Those who smoked least suffered most. Had they known they would have followed the example of some of the Royal Arthur's commission (now in the Charybdis at Newfoundland), who, to prevent the same thing, cover their faces and hands with a mixture of tar and oil. The ship's company, nevertheless, got some enjoyment out of their trip, though the rain came down in torrents for four days out of the seven they were in port. Various "functions" were held, including the Fijian Club ball, a citizens' ball to the Administrator, prior to his departure for Levuka, an At Home on the flagship, given by the Admiral. At Government House there was a garden party and a musical At Home, at which dances and fire-walking were performed by the natives. The war dances were gone through by Samoans and Solomon Islanders, who remained after the Coronation festivities. The fire-walking was performed by natives from the island of Bora (the only natives who ever undertake the ceremony). It consists in making a huge fire of leaves and then placing stones on it. After the fire has burnt steadily for two days the stones attain white heat. The natives walk on the hot stones, chanting a dirge, and appearing not to mind the heat at all. The flagship's officers tried to imitate the natives in climbing trees for coconuts, but found they could make no headway. The Royal Arthur is very proud of the spears and other weapons decorating the ward-room, brought from Fiji by officers.

A Wellington resident has received a letter from a miner who recently left the West Coast (South Island) for South Africa, which gives a very discouraging account of things there from a labour point of view, says the "Post." The writer was earning 7/ a day at Durban repairing railway carriages and trucks, but that wage was by no means general, the great majority of unskilled labourers in the railway service receiving 5/ per day, although good carpenters and bricklayers receive 15/ and 20/. The railway men had just been on strike for better pay, and after being "out" for eight days, went to work on receiving a promise of a shilling per day extra, pending arbitration. At the date of writing it was not possible for workmen to get to Johannesburg unless they produced a letter promising immediate employment, and signed by some military officer. Things are much worse at Johannesburg than in Durban, wages being only 5/ per day, while board costs £7 10/ per month, as against £5 in the latter place. The writer adds that new arrivals are streaming into the country from all parts of the world, and there are at least fifty applicants for any vacancy, no matter what the employment. "The more references you bring the better if you want to get on." In conclusion New Zealanders are warned not to tempt fortune in South Africa unless they have means.

A late Christchurch High School boy has (says the "Press") just completed his career as medical student at Glasgow University. Dr. John Guthrie, jun., eldest son of Dr. Guthrie, late of this city, was "capped" M.B.C.M. on July 15th, and received "commendation," thus going through his complete course of study with

very satisfactory honours. He has been appointed Demonstrator of Anatomy to Professor Clelland, of Glasgow University, for a year, and in consequence has had to postpone two hospital appointments—one at the Royal Infirmary, as resident physician for six months; the other for the same period at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, as resident surgeon. Dr. Guthrie will therefore be engaged at the university and hospitals for the next two years. After that time he will be free to make a career for himself.

A recent Canadian invention consists of bricklaying by machinery instead of by hand. The machine, according to a consular report, worked by two men and a lad, will lay 400 to 600 bricks per hour. Door and window-spaces cause only a slight delay. The machine is suited for all plain work, such as walls, sheds, mills, factories, rows of cottages, piers of bridges, etc. Considerable pressure is put on the bricks, and it is claimed that the work is more firmly done than by hand. The invention will do the work of six or seven skilled bricklayers, and it is believed that a machine adapted to build a factory covering about sixty feet by forty feet could be put on the market for £100. The apparatus can be readily worked after a fortnight's instruction.

The Duke and Duchess of Orleans have returned to London. They left it some couple of years ago because the Duke, having endorsed a scandalous and disgusting cartoon of Queen Victoria done by a Frenchman, whom, to call an artist, would be to insult an honourable word, found himself "sent to Lord Coventry, to whom no one ever speaks" as a witty pseudo French translation once put it. The cartoon was done in the Boer interests, probably paid for by some of the Boer funds which were being scattered in Europe for such purposes. That the Duke's offence, for which he subsequently expressed regret, has been condoned by the statement of King Edward VII., that the door has been reopened to him, argues well for that British good temper which is always able to control itself. The Duke's regret was caused most likely rather by the consequences to himself of his almost blackguardly act than by sincere repentance. Though remembering the long asylum which he and his family obtained in England, he should have felt some penitence. The French Government, to whom the Duke is an enemy, cannot complain of his social restoration in England. The cartoon which caused his downfall, was only one of a series of filthy and insulting productions against the British, and Queen Victoria, with which Paris was full at the time, and which were permitted by the French Government.

The reckless cyclist was again in evidence in Christchurch last week, when the alarm of fire was given, and that a fatality was not recorded is surprising. At the Bank of New Zealand corner one engine was fast overtaking the other, the cyclist in question riding between them. Hearing the second engine coming he drew out, and came so close to the engine that the pole was only a few inches off his body, and had he not been going at a fairly fast rate he would in all probability have been run over, as the driver of the engine would have found it impossible to draw up his horses in a short distance. Cyclists riding to fires are prone to be somewhat careless, and should take warning in time before one of their number meets with serious injury.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody good, and the shearers' strike is regarded as quite a godsend by a class of bushmen on Sydney side. The strikers in the vicinity of big runs, working on the principle that might is right, carefully kidnap any non-unionists who are likely to spoil the unionists' chances of success by going to work at the pastoralists' rates. The kidnapped men are usually won over by arguments, protestation and appeals, with a certain suggestion of mischief at the back of all if moral suasion is not successful. The aim is

to win the sympathies of the non-unionists, and consequently the alleged prisoners are royally treated in the union camps, and are boarded and lodged gratis. The result is made apparent in a Riverina rabbit inspector's story. "I met old Tim the Whaler, the biggest beat and most hopeless loafer along the Murray; he was looking quite decent, and carrying a shearer's kit. 'What,' I said, 'you're not come down to work, have you, Tim?' 'Not so low as that,' he said. 'I am making for Pentlands. I'm a non-union shearer.' 'But the unionists are in camp there. They won't let you through.' 'Of course they won't. I'm going up to be took prisoner. So long.' Half the sun-downers in the country are now 'prisoners' in the unionist camps," adds the bushman, "and having a high old time. They're being kept from work by force, but you couldn't drive 'em to it with a bullock whip."

No artist has ever quitted England under such conditions of enthusiasm and distinction as those associated with the farewell to Madame Melba. A royal saloon was attached to the special train for her use, and the centre platform was kept clear for the large and distinguished party who came to bid her farewell. Her carriage was massed with a most remarkable display of flowers and fruit, and other parting gifts took the form of a diamond and turquoise necklace, a superb diamond ring, silver and jewel-set frames, several diamond-set gold pencils and purses, and numerous diamond trinkets. In fact the many notable people who compose her circle of private friends vied with each other in the bestowal of costly presents. All the great society personages who have closely associated themselves with Melba's career were either present at the station or represented by deputy.

The tour of the Australians in England closed last week. Two bowlers have obtained more than 100 wickets, but Jonah has not been given a chance lately. Darling and Hill both topped the 1000 runs, but the latter is not nearly so far forward as his friends expected him to be, and Trumper has entirely eclipsed him.

The name of the late Lord Cheylesmore has lately been much before the London public. It was announced a few days ago that he had left his magnificent collection of mezzotints and engravings to the British Museum. The first Lord Cheylesmore had a splendid collection of paintings. The second, lately deceased, was distinguished for his gallery of engraved portraits. The present peer is one of the most eminent of living authorities on war medals. During the past ten years there has been an enormous and sudden increase in the price of mezzotints. The possession of these works is becoming quite a fashion. Some of the prints

which the late baron purchased for £80 to £200 are now worth ten times those amounts, especially the engravings after Reynolds. Besides the interest attaching to this bequest Lord Cheylesmore's name has also appeared in the law courts. All the parties interested in the late peer's estate appeared before the Probate Court this week to ask that the lawyer's draft of a will made by Lord Cheylesmore some years ago should be accepted for probate. The actual will was stolen by a train thief named George Smith, at Waterloo station, some years ago, and from that time to his death the late peer was mentally incapable of making a new will. Smith, the train thief, who is now serving a term of penal servitude, appeared as a witness before the Court. He admitted that he had appropriated Lord Cheylesmore's dressing bag, and finding in it a number of papers, including a will, which were of no value to him, he had destroyed them. The Court thereupon pronounced for the solicitor's draft of the will.

An interesting coincidence, recalling a story which was told of the King some months ago, has just come to light.

The King, then Prince of Wales, it will be remembered, was one day leaving Marlborough House on foot, when he saw one of the maid-servants about to be removed in an ambulance carriage to a private hospital to be operated on for an internal malady.

The Prince walked over to the ambulance and spoke a few cheering words to the girl, assuring her that if she would be brave and endeavour to keep up her spirits she would soon be back again entirely cured.

It was a "life or death" operation, and the girl afterwards confided to her friends that nothing could have given her greater courage to undergo the ordeal than "the master's" confident and cheering assurance.

The history of her case justified the Prince's optimism, and in due course she returned to her work in the Royal household.

It has now transpired that the ailment from which the girl suffered was appendicitis, and when recently the King fell ill she was among the first to learn that the operation which His Majesty had to undergo was similar to her own.

The Queen, who had, like the King, taken the deepest interest in the girl's case, personally learned from her the details of her treatment and recovery.

There can be little doubt that both His Majesty and the Queen accepted the inevitable with all the greater confidence because of this living testimony to complete success of a similar operation, and to permanently improved health arising from it.

... THE ...  
**NATIONAL MUTUAL**

Life Association of Australasia Ltd.

Head Office for New Zealand—

CUSTOMHOUSE QUAY, WELLINGTON.

FUNDS OVER ... .. £3,250,000  
ANNUAL INCOME OVER ... .. £500,000

**Rates Low. Bonuses Large.**

MONEY TO LEND ON FREEHOLD PROPERTY.  
AGENCIES THROUGHOUT THE COLONY  
**Send for Prospectus.**

**J. B. GOULD, ORTON STEVENS,**  
DISTRICT MANAGER, RESIDENT SECRETARY.  
Queen Street, Auckland.