

Correspondence.

[We are not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents.]

COMMENTS ON IRISH SUBJECTS.—WILFUL DECEPTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET.

Christchurch, June 10.

SIR.—We are now so accustomed to seeing Irishmen maligned in the New Zealand Press, that each fresh batch of falsehoods is accepted as a matter of course by the Irish reader. That column of mail summary devoted to Ireland has always the same face full of lies. Its compilers do not even try to hide the cloven hoof under the cover of an occasional impartial summary. No; they seem as if they could not afford to lose even one opportunity to raise prejudice in the minds of our fellow-Colonists against everybody and everything Irish. See the sensational headings, in large type, to make known the only outrage committed in the whole world; and to make sure that no eye will miss the phenomenon, the like of which had never been known.

O, murderers and outragers, and swindlers unheard of, who fill the gaols of England, how virtuous you are in some people's eyes in comparison to an Irish peasant who will not pay his rent! And how emphatically certain all these outrages and explosions become when they are stamped with the seal of authority by our local editors who have always a great stomach full of holy indignation to pour out in true catch-penny style.

But, sir, this subject of character-murdering, though a grave one, has also its ludicrous side. I once knew a journalist on a paper in Christchurch, and indeed many knew him. His reputation was that he would never pay a penny of his just debts, if he could help it. Now, sir, would not any unaccomplished person think that this biped would find the "No Rent" manifesto of the Land League to be in sympathy with his natural tendency? One would think that the phrase "pay no rent" would have a charm for him. But I can assure you, sir, that in those days there was no more vigorous denouncer of the mean Irish than this editor, who could hardly express his scorn for the people who would not pay their lawful rent—lawful because he had made up his mind it was due of them. Even this specimen of human consistency is every day surpassed by many colonial writers on Irish topics. How readily and justly they will pounce on the presiding magistrate of a court of justice if it become known that he has not given an impartial hearing to both sides of the case. Yet these very editors when passing judgement on events in Irish politics show unmistakably that they have based their decisions on the evidence of the English Press alone—they will not, I believe, even deny that they never see the accredited organs of the Irish people; or that they have never consulted the pages of any eminent Irish authority. In the face of this, is it not deplorable to think that such writers are daily at work, in building up barriers of class prejudice between us and the other nationalities in these Colonies? I cannot help saying that all sense of honor, the very souls of men, must have fled those cowardly panders to the national prejudices of a dominant class. To scream out the faults of our countrymen is not the only stock trick of the colonial Press; to hide their virtues and their merits is also one of its daily troubles.

A glaring example of strong bigotry is afforded by the prominence which two of our papers have given to the untruthful report, that to a Scotch regiment belongs the honour and glory of winning the battle of Tannenberg.

A friend of mine sent to the *Star* an extract similar to what appeared in the TABLET, which extract shows, on the authority of English correspondents, that it was the Royal Irish Fusiliers who saved the Black Watch and two English regiments from disgraceful defeat. Note the reply to the request that the truth would be published; this *Star* Editor says:—"If 'Isleward' will write a suitable poem on the subject we shall be most happy to publish it." No doubt this was intended for a very killing piece of sarcasm, but the *Star's* correspondent seems not to be a believer in the divine right of editors; for, instead of the poem, he addressed to the editor a reply which may not be uninteresting to your readers. Of course I need not say the *Star* did not publish it; doubtless, the editor of the *Star* did not expect so much plain speaking. In concluding this long letter I must ask permission to bring before your readers in a future and briefer letter, another glaring abuse which shall claim attention.—Yours, etc.
PEPPER.

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'STAR.'"

"Sir,—I regret very much that I had been unable to give an earlier acknowledgement of your very kind offer, which gives me the opportunity of distinguishing myself in the manufacture of poetry "suitable" to your columns. And were I ever so inclined to avail myself of the heaven-born distinction to become a *Star* poet, I should be still under the necessity of asking your assistance to obtain the mastery of that very pregnant and all-knowing phrase "suitable poem." You may, Mr. Editor, be a Macaulay or a Jeffrey for aught I knew, and be as capable to pass judgment on the merits of a poem as you most undoubtedly are to express an opinion on the suitability of some candidate for, say, the drainage Board; though, sir, you must feel that there are some editors whom nature especially qualified to dilate on a suitable drain, yet denied them the faculty of judging the merits of a "suitable poem." I, therefore, think it just to my poetic aspirations to decline your kindness, and in doing so beg to say that the same fate which has nailed yourself to the editorial chair of an evening paper has given to me but the power to contribute to your columns the plain truth in plain prose.

"But the plain truth in plain prose was not suitable, and to be candid with you I hardly thought it would be where Ireland and

Irishmen are concerned. The attempt to have the *Star* publish the truth on this occasion was a mere experiment; and my failure did not disappoint me. Why should it, when after five of six years experience of your paper, I know your motto to be—"That no scandal about Irishmen is too glaring or too unjust for publication; that no bravery, however striking; no exploits however brilliant; no virtues, however high, must get a place in your paper if Irishmen are the actors."

Commercial.

MR. DONALD STRONACH (on behalf of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited) reports for the week ending June 11, as follows:—

Fat Cattle.—There was only a moderate number—viz., 151 head—forward for sale this day, and nearly all were lights weights and medium quality. Owing to the last two or three weeks' markets being over-supplied, and the trade having stocks on hand, the market was dull. Best bullocks brought £7 5s to £8 5s; others, £4 7s 6d to £6 5s; and cows in proportion. We sold on account of Messrs. Wayne and Leary (Akatore), 6 bullocks at £6 15s to £7 10s; W. Dunn (Deborah); 18 bullocks at £5 15s to £7 5s, 3 cows at £5 17s 6d; R. Paton (Fukeuri), 2 bullocks at £7 5s, 1 cow at £6 5s, 2 do at £4 7s 6d; and quote prime beef 20s, medium 15s to 17s 6d per 100lb.

Fat Calves.—Five were yarded, and sold at up to 31s each.

Fat Sheep.—The pens only contained 1303 head, of which about 400 were merinos. This small number forward caused brisker competition, and an advance of about 2s per head over last week's prices was obtained. Best cross-breds brought 17s to 18s; others, 11s to 15s 9d. We sold, on account of Messrs. H. and T. Little (Ngapara), 52 cross-bred wethers at 18s; C. H. Jessop (Ngapara), 28 do do at 16s 6d; J. C. Buckland (Tumai), 250 do ewes at 15s 3d to 17s. We quote mutton at 2½d to 2¾d per lb.

Fat Pigs.—129 were yarded, for which there was good competition, bacon pigs fetching 50s to 93s; others, from 15s to 45s. We sold 6 at 48s, 3 at 65s, and 3 at 69s.

Store Cattle and Store Sheep.—We have no transactions to report.

Sheepskins.—At our weekly auction on Monday we offered a large catalogue. The attendance of buyers was good, and prices realised, good under competition, were higher than those obtained last week. Dry cross-breds brought 1s 8d to 4s; do. merinos, 1s 3d to 4s 6d; green cross-breds, 2s 1d to 3s 6d; do. merinos, 2s to 3s 3d.

Rabbitkins.—The supply coming forward does not give much scope for extensive operations, but for all offered there is good competition, best skins fetching 1s 9d. We sold at auction on Monday: JK, 2 bags at 7d; 1 bale at 1s; NT, 1 do. at 1s 0½d; WC in triangle, 2 do., 1s 2½d; J, 1 do. 1s 4d; 2 do. 1s 6d; WC in triangle 6 at 1s 7d per lb.

Hides.—The market remains unchanged, and all parcels coming forward, especially heavy sorts, meet ready sale at from 2½d to 4½d according to weight and quality.

Tallow.—We offered a moderate catalogue on Monday. The attendance was good, but competition lacked spirit, and prices ruled lower.

Grain.—Wheat is exceedingly difficult to move. It would require considerable concession on the part of holders to push business, to which the majority decline to accede. Day by day prices offered are lower, and only prime milling saleable in limited parcels. We quote prime milling velvet and Tuscan, 3s 3d to 3s 4d; medium, 2s 9d to 3s 2d; fowls' wheat, 2s to 2s 6d. Oats: The demand for the last few days is not so active. Thin and discoloured sorts are almost neglected, while bright short kinds meet with buyers at about last week's rates viz., stout bright milling, 2s 1d; short bright feed, 2s; thin and discoloured, 1s 10d to 1s 11d, ex store. Barley: Prime/heavy malting is in fair demand at from 3s 10d to 4s 2d; medium, 3s 6d to 3s 9d; and milling, 2s 9d to 3s 3d.—Ryegrass Seed: There is no inquiry for this.

PRODUCE MARKET.—JUNE 12.

MR. F. MEERNAN, Great King street, reports:—Who'sa.e prices for the week are as follows, including bags: Oats, 1s 9d to 2s; milling wheat, 3s 6d to 3s 9d; fowls, 2s to 2s 10d; barley, malting, 3s 6d to 4s 3d; milling, 2s 6d to 3s 6d; oaten hay new, £3 10s; rye-grass, £3; chaff, £3 to £3 10s; straw, £2; bran, £4 5s; pollard, £4 10s; flour, £9 to £9 10s; oatmeal, £11 10s; fresh butter, medium to prime, 10d to 1s 1d; eggs, 1s 10d; salt butter, 8d to 9d; cheese, 4½d; bacon, sides, 8d; hams, 10d; rolls, 8d; potatoes, £2 5s.

MESSERS. MERCER BROS., Princes street, report:—Fresh butter, 1s ½lb. and 1lb. prints, best quality; 1s 1d per lb.; ordinary butter, 1s per lb.; eggs, 1s 11d; roll bacon, 8d per lb.; good salt butter, in kegs, 9d per lb.; cheese, 4d per lb.

Labouchere, whose free use of a sardonic pen in his sparkling society-paper, *Truth*, goes far towards proving that the name is no misnomer, declares a London court "drawing-room" in the reign of Queen Victoria to be "as discreditable and inhuman a spectacle as can be conceived." He gives a harrowing description of the privations of ladies attending these drawing-rooms. The costume they have to wear is a shock to decency and the comments they have to listen to, while waiting for hours in the broad day light in their chairs under the inspection of a London mob, are an outrage to the ears of any woman. When at length they enter the drawing-room "naked, blue-nosed and ashamed," they are met by a chill inhospitality which, it appears does not provide them with a glass of sherry to act as a reviver or a *demi-verre* of brandy to keep out the cold.—*Pilot*.