

Grave and Gay.

WHAT WOULD MY CAPTAIN SAY?

FREDERICK the Great of Prussia used to tell a laughable story of an experience of his own. During one of his campaigns in Silesia, he made it his habit to stroll through his camp in disguise at night, to come more in touch with his soldiers. One night he was stopped by a sentry, but, giving the proper password, was permitted to proceed. Instead of doing so, however, he endeavoured to tempt the sentry into accepting a cigar, saying that a smoke would solace his long watch.

"It is against the rules," said the soldier.

"But you have my permission," said Frederick.

"Your permission!" cried the soldier. "And who are you?"

"I am the king."

"The king be hanged!" said the incorruptible sentry. "What would my captain say?"—*Harper's Round Table.*

SOME IRISH WIT.

An Irish gentleman was shooting with an English friend, Mr. B. They had very little sport, so Mr. B. said, "I'll ask this countryman whether there are any birds about here." "No use to ask him," said his companion; "he'll only tell lies." "I'll ask him at all events," said Mr. B. "My good man, are there any birds about here?" "Lots of birds, your honour," said he. "Tell me what sort of birds." "Well, now, your honour, there's grouses and woodcocks and snipes and ducks and tillibines and all sorts of birds." "Ask him," whispered the Irish gentleman, "whether there are any thermometers." "Tell me," said Mr. B., "do you ever see any thermometers about here?" "Well, now, yer honour, if there was a nice frost the place would be alive with them."

A very bullying counsel named Freeman was completely put out in his cross examination by a very simple answer. A countryman who was a witness was asked, "So you had a pistol?" "I had, sir." "Who did you intend to shoot with it?" "I wasn't intending to shoot no one." "Then was it for nothing that you got it?" "No, it wasn't." "Come, come, sir; on the virtue of your solemn oath, what did you get that pistol for?" "On the virtue of my solemn oath, I got it for three and ninepence in Mr. Richardson's shop."

At another time the same counsel said to a witness, "You're a nice fellow, ain't you?" Witness replied, "I am, sir, and if I was not on my oath, I'd say the same of you."

A barrister named Bushe was making a speech for the defence when an ass began to bray loudly outside. "Wait a moment," said the chief baron. "One at a time, Mr. Bushe, if you please." The barrister waited for a chance to retort, and it came presently. When O'Grady was charging the jury, the ass again began to bray, if possible, more loudly than before. "I beg your pardon, my lord," said Bushe; "may I ask you to repeat your last words? There is such an echo in this court I did not quite catch them."

In catechising a little girl the clergyman asked her, "What is the outward and visible sign in baptism?" "The baby, please sir," said she.

Another, on being asked what an epistle was, said, "The feminine of an apostle."

Kingsley: "Don't you think it retards digestion to read a newspaper at meal-times?"

Bingo: "On the contrary, I find it a great help. When the breakfast is a failure devour the paper."

Here is a pleasant anecdote from the "Recollections" of Mr. Aubrey De Vere:—Another most amusing friend of mine was Edward Fitzgerald, an Irishman, the specialty of whose humor it was that the more comical were his words, the more solemn his face always became. I remember an illustration of this. After a large evening party, when nearly all the guests had departed, the rest remained to smoke. In that party was a man celebrated for his passion for titles. On this occasion he exceeded himself. All his talk was of the rich and great. "Yesterday, when I was riding with my friend, the Duke of —," "On Tuesday last, the Marquis of —" remarked to me. "It went on for a long time; the party listened, some amused, some bored. Edward Fitzgerald was the first to rise. He lighted a candle, passed out of the room, stood still with the lock of the door in his hand, and looked back. He could change his countenance into anything he pleased. It had then exchanged in a moment its usual merry look for one of profound, nay, hopeless, dejection. Slowly and sadly he spoke: "I once knew a lord too, but he is dead!" Slowly, sadly, he withdrew, closing the door amid a roar of laughter.

A minister, who was in the habit of visiting a certain family rather frequently, always required the stableman to drive him to the station, but never gave him anything for his trouble.

One night he began to question John about his spiritual welfare. "Have you ever been born again, John?" he asked.

"No," replied John, coolly; "but I drove a man doon here yesterday that had been born again, for he gave me half-a-croon to myself."

Mr. Gawne, of Dunedin (says the *Southland Times* of April 13, 1891), has just been on a visit to Invercargill to push business a little. Not that it wants much canvassing, for since he commenced the manufacture of his Worcestershire Sauce, the demand has kept pace with his capacity to supply it. He makes a really good thing, indistinguishable from the famous Lea and Perrin's, which he places upon one's table at a much lower price, and trusts to that to secure a steadily growing trade. Those who have not yet tried the colonial article should put their prejudice aside for a time and test the question with a bottle or two.—ADVT

Diocese of Auckland.

THE feast of Christmas was celebrated with great solemnity at St. Francis Xavier's Church, Whangarei, where a parish was established only five months ago. The good ladies of the congregation had the little chapel neatly and tastefully decorated. At the eight o'clock Mass a very impressive ceremony took place, when several children made their first Communion. At the eleven o'clock Mass, the choir, under the able conductorship of the choirmaster, Mr. Smiers, sang "Puer Natus," the "Gradual," "Offertory," and "Communion" from the Mass of Singenberg for three voices, in a manner which left nothing to be desired. In the evening Vespers were chanted at which nothing was omitted, all was done as prescribed by rubrics and the pronunciation of the Latin was most correct and clear; in fact, the conductor must be congratulated on his great success.

Whangarei is a little township in the North of Auckland, and the district is an extensive one. The Catholics are few and scattered. Throughout the district there are a number of Maories to whom the priest will have to attend. The erection of a new parish means a great deal of labour and trouble. Although we have a nice little chapel a priest's residence is wanted, the cost of which will be about £300, and though not able to collect much amongst his own flock, Father Smiers will be obliged to call upon the charity of others. Perhaps the readers of this little epistle, remembering the words of our Divine Lord: "Give, and it shall be given to you," might, in honour of St. Francis Xavier, assist me in this difficulty. Donations, however small, will be received with the greatest thanks by the Rev. Father Smiers, Missionary Apostolic, Whangarei, North of Auckland. All donations will be published. Thanking you, dear Mr. Editor,—I remain, yours sincerely in Christ, J. W. SMIERS.

AT THE FALL OF THE LEAF.

WHY do the leaves fall? "Bless me, I don't know," you answer. "I suppose because it is one of nature's arrangements."

Precisely; but why did nature so arrange? Why not have summer time always, with perpetual foliage? What is the meaning of denuded branches, withered flowers, daylight fading in mid-afternoon, and winter's cold and desolation? When you find out why the leaves fall you will have discovered one of nature's deepest secrets—*why men die.*

Suppose we try an easier problem. Why should Mr. William Steel have written such a sentence as this?—"At the fall of the leaf every year I got into such a state that I took no pleasure in anything."

No doubt there are minds so highly strung as to feel keenly the influence of outward conditions, changes of the weather and of the seasons, and so on, but they are rare, and for practical purposes they ought to be rare. Our friend Mr. Steel, happily for him, was not one of them. All the same he was a miserable man every time the leaves began to rattle to the ground.

Here's the way he puts it: "At the fall of the leaf every year I felt languid, tired, and weary, and took no pleasure in anything. My appetite was poor, and after everything I ate I had pain and fulness at the chest and sides. There was a horrible pain at the pit of my stomach, which nothing relieved."

Now this sort of thing would spoil a man's pleasure any time of year, but the oddity in Mr. Steel's case is that it always coincided with what you may call nature's bedtime.

"After a few months," he says, "the pain and distress would be easier for a while, but as autumn approached I became as bad as ever. In September, 1890, I had an unusually bad time of it. I couldn't touch a morsel of food, and presently got so weak I was unable to stand on my legs. Every few hours I had to be poulticed, the pain was so bad. I went to bed and stayed there for a week, with a doctor attending me. He relieved me a little, but somehow he didn't succeed in getting to the bottom of my ailment."

That may be, but it doesn't quite follow that the doctor was in the dark as to Mr. Steel's ailment. He might have understood it right enough, yet failed to cure it because he had no remedy for it among his drugs. That happens all the while. Still, the reader may ask, What's the good of knowing the nature of a complaint if we possess no medicine to cure it? There you have us; no use at all, to be sure.

Well, Mr. Steel goes on to say: "For some time I continued very feeble, and was hardly able to walk across the floor. If I took a short walk I felt so tired and done up I didn't know where to put myself. This was year after year for six years."

"Finally, I read about the popular medicine called Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, and made up my mind to try it. So I began and kept on with it for some time. The result was that the pain left me, and my appetite waked up, and my food tasted good and digested well; and presently I was strong and hearty as ever. That was three years ago, and the trouble has never returned. (Signed) William Steel, Hambleton, near Oakham, Rutlandshire, December 5th, 1893."

Mr. Steel is grocer and postmaster at Hambleton, and his case is well known there. His complaint isn't hard to see through; it was indigestion and dyspepsia. But why did it come on only in the autumn? What had the fall of the leaf to do with it? Let the reader study on that point.

Meanwhile it is a comfort to know that Mother Seigel's Syrup will cure it no matter when it comes on.

Freedom is the one purport, wisely aimed at or unwisely, of all man's struggles, toilings, and sufferings on this earth.—Carlyle.