

enced cable-demon. But now we are able to turn out almost sufficient newspaper anti-facts for home consumption, and even to export some to the English market. The latest consignment took amazingly well, and was greatly appreciated by the London press. It ran as follows: 'Many a gold mine has been found under the sea, and when, five years ago, a poor fisherman off Timaru, in New Zealand, pulled up a piece of quartz in his net, he naturally thought he was on the high road to fortune. Subsequently various syndicates have expended over a quarter of a million in trying to locate the mine, three divers have lost their lives in wandering about amongst the rocks, but the gold still remains hidden, though there is every reason to believe that it is there somewhere.' The practical and unromantic Timaru *Herald*—which has an amiable weakness for what Kinglake calls 'profane fact'—made searching inquiries and, of course, found that 'there ain't no such persons' as the 'poor fisherman' who fished up the quartz, nor the drowned divers, and that the whole story is a golden fable of the kind that enterprising youths concoct on the first of April to tell to the marines.

The Belfast Anarchy.

The courts have at last adopted a sane and common-sense method of dealing with the fearfully frequent outbreaks of Orange anarchy that have made the name of Belfast a by-word throughout the Empire. They have taken to imprisoning the clerical firebrands that have been the cause or the occasion of inciting the Orange proletariat to deeds of violence and outrage upon the Catholic minority who live in their midst. One of them is just now enjoying the hospitality of his Majesty the King in a place where he will be afforded a lengthy opportunity of pondering on the sinfulness and folly of his evil work. Had Government given 'the butt-end of the law' to the Revs. Drew, McIlwaine, Hanna, and other inflammatory clerical agitators long ago, Belfast would have been spared the dance of death and the savagery of destruction that marked the local wars of 1857, 1864, etc., and fraternal peace instead of unrelenting strife might now be reigning in the capital of Ulster. It is not a little singular that in Australia and New Zealand, inflammatory onslaughts on the Catholic body come almost invariably, not from the non-Catholic laity, but from clergy who profess it to be their duty to preach the Gospel of peace and brotherly love.

In Lighter Vein

(By 'QUIP.')

*. Correspondence, newspaper cuttings, etc., intended for this department should be addressed 'QUIP,' N.Z. TABLET Office, Dunedin, and should reach this office on or before Monday morning.

Geodetic.

In one of the reports laid before Parliament last week it was stated that there had been much discussion as to whether New Zealand should undertake the measurement of an arc on the earth's surface in this part of the globe. The Government, it seems, wants to see if this globe is a square globe. Scientific men tell us that it is not, but the Government evidently holds fast by Dooley's maxim: 'Trust iv'ry wan—but always cut th' cards'; and it has placed 18 pence on the estimates to buy a new two-foot rule for the man who is to do the measuring.

The earth may have been an oblate spheroid once upon a time—but of late our imperialism and our guid conceit o' ourself, and, above all, our Prosperity, have raised a considerable lump on this part of the earth's surface. In fact we are bulging so much that the 171st meridian has snapped and its two ends are now flying loose in the vicinity of Hokitika. If only Fiji and some of the other banana islands in the neighborhood can be induced to join us, it is the intention of the Government to slip away from the earth some dark night, and start in, all 'on our own,' as a new planet. For the present we are to be only a planet with the earth as a semi-detached satellite or hanger-on. Anybody that has vested interests in other parts of this back-parlor world of ours had better sell out—to some other New Zealander, if he can—before the news of our secession gets abroad. It is to take place pretty soon. If Mr. Mackenzie of Waihemo, and Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Hutcheson, and a few others could only be persuaded to represent this Colony at the King's coronation, the great trek into space would probably take place next June. We don't mind the South Sea blacks coming with us, but we have to draw the line somewhere, you know. Anyway, whether we 'seesh' or not, I don't think the 18 pence spent on that two-foot rule is extravagant.

A Far-seeing Boy.

According to a report in a North Island paper there is a youngster in the Manawatu district who is endowed with peculiar powers of vision. He can see just as plainly in the dark as at mid-day, and

can distinguish objects at a distance of ten miles, more or less—probably a foot or two less.

*

Beatrice, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, remarked to her avuncular relation (I believe that is the 'smart' term for uncle):—

'I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by daylight.'

If her other eye had been *comme il faut*, too, I suppose she would have been able to see two churches by daylight. Where the Manawatu boy, or medium, or hobbledohoy, can give points to Beatrice is in this, that he is able to see churches or anything else in the dark, even though the night were as black as Erebus or as a professional politician's conscience. What a pleasure it will be for this boy in after years, when he has grown old enough to stay out late at night, to come home and lay his hand on the matches immediately. But there can be no such thing as privacy while a youth of that stamp is around. I suppose up Manawatu way there is the average crop of those

'2 soles with but a single thawt,
2 harts which beet as I.'

Some time ago I attended a magic lantern entertainment in Masterton, at which a detachment of those harmonious 'souls' was present, and when the lights were low my tympanum was from time to time set whizzing by a sound resembling that made by a mule drawing his hoof out of a mud-hole. I rather think that if that gimlet-eyed youth were known to be there, with all the wizardry of his eyes on the alert, his presence would have been more effective than that of a squad of good-natured chaperones. His telescopic optic can sweep a radius of ten miles. Nature has evidently intended that far-seeing boy for a war-correspondent. During the Crimean War, numbers of these latter were able to sit in their hutches at the printing-offices in London and see everything that took place before Sebastopol. And thus—in the words of Hashbeeni in *The Casino Girl*, this Manawatu wonder is 'Nothing Noo.'

A Syllly, Syllly Thyng.

Two sweet young maidens write—the one from the North Island, the other from the West Coast—and, after graceful apologies that would soften the heart of a rate-collector, take me to task for including the fore-names they bear in my recent paragraph on the bizarre and fantastic and new-fangled appellations that are sometimes strapped onto children nowadays. One of my fair correspondents insists that the Christian name she bears is 'decidedly pretty,' and that 'the spelling of it is not at all disguised'; the other avers that her name is not alone 'pretty,' but 'quite uncommon.' The latter part of this fayre mayden's plea is incontrovertible. It may soothe the feelings of both to read what has been said by one who 'wrote sarrakustical' about the growing habit—which one, at least, of them expressly disavows, of disguising the spelling of the fore-name:—

'Where are the names, the pretty names.

The names we used to know—

The sweetly simple, girlish names,

We knew so long ago?

There are no Marys any more,

In this enlightened age;

The old name's never used to-day—

"Marie" is all the rage.

'The Kitties are all "Kathyrines,"

In this late age and day;

There are no Mamies any more,

For "Mayme" is the way.

The Fannies are all "Fany" now,

The girls we used to know

Named Alice have all changed their names,

Since "Alys" is the "go."

'The Pearls have gone to join the rest,

For "Pyrle" is up-to-date;

The Helens spell it "Helyn" now,

For it is very "late"

The Ediths are all "Edyths" now,

And, much as we may rue,

The girls named Lillie have gone o'er—

They spell it "Lyly," to'.

'O, gyrls, pray tell me why you do

This sylly, sylly thyng;

If we should ynto dayly lyfe

Thys kynd of spellyng bryng,

Confusion would be ryfe yudeed,

We'd lose our E's and I's

Yn keepyng track of spellyng whych

Ys very much too Y's.'

Quip