

Making History to Order.

We have all heard of the man with the hoe. But the Rev. Mr. Greenhough—so much advertised of late—comes among us from over seas as the man with the whitewash-brush. He has, apparently, a faith that is simple and childlike in the pleiocene simplicity of New Zealand audiences, for (according to the *Taranaki Herald* of October 30), he has been telling his audiences in the Garden Province that the Puritans were (among other very excellent things) the creators of religious toleration and individual liberty! Our reverend visitor from afar is entitled to take out a patent for this discovery, which will come upon historians who write history, and not historical romance, with the suddenness and aplomb of a shock from a battery of Leyden jars. As to personal liberty, it is rather unfortunate for the Rev. Mr. Greenhough's theory that the Puritans (despite their many sturdy good qualities) were sadly given to imprisoning, branding with hot irons, and flogging people who dared to wear coats, hair, bonnets, or skirts in a way displeasing to the elders, or to attend theatrical or other amusements, or to take 'a day off' from toil on Christmas or other old church festivals, or to whistle on the Sawbath. As regards religious toleration, it was a thing quite unknown to them. Cromwell hanged 'massing priests' and would not tolerate the Mass, even in Catholic Ireland. The Puritan New England States retained penal enactments on their statute-books till a comparatively recent date. The real originator of equal civil and religious liberty and toleration to every creed was the Catholic colony of Maryland, and there the Quakers and the thousands of other victims of Puritan persecution found a home and the right to worship God in any way they pleased.

The 'Root' of the Problem.

Mr. Nelson, a Scandinavian publican residing at Whakarewarewa, has turned for the nonce into 'a lit'ry chap' and has been telling his friends the 'old salts,' through the columns of the *Auckland Weekly News*, sundry facts and fancies about a hurried trip which he recently made to Europe. The flood of well-merited ridicule which greeted the attempts of Wilkie Collins and Max O'Rell to describe Australia and the Australians from the windows of a railway carriage might well deter amateur casual penmen from perpetrating such impressionist folly in other lands. But such common-sense considerations do not seem to have weighed with mine host of Whakarewarewa. He has a few harmless superficial notions to say about France and Germany. But—*venenum ex cauda*—the sting is in the tail of his letter, the part in which he refers to his visit to Ireland. Our Scandinavian friend entered the country accompanied, apparently, by a bundle of Exeter Hall tracts and a large vinegar crust. 'One must admit,' he writes, 'that it is an extremely difficult and delicate task for an outlander to get at the root of the so-called "Irish problem."' But the 'difficult and delicate task' turns out to be the merest intellectual trifle for the penetrating mind of the outlander from the sulphur-laden atmosphere of Whakarewarewa. A squint at Dublin, a rush across the Bog of Allen to Galway, and then off to New York, and presto! he has dug up the 'root of the Irish problem,' examined its every tendril with Sam Weller's double magnifying electroscopic spectacles of hextra power, and finds that the microbe which causes the wrongs and woes of Green Eire of the Tears is—the priest!

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Whakarewarewa has spoken. The cause is ended. Political economists must now revise their theories. Historians (Lecky included) must burn their books. Nationalists, Liberals, Unionist-Liberals, and Conservatives must recast their political histories. The British Parliament must repeal a few score of its Acts relating to Ireland. The priest—*voilà l'ennemi!* We did not know it before, but we know it now: the priest (and not a certain specific series of Acts of Parliament) destroyed the once prosperous Irish woollen trade, in the interests of British manufacturers. The priest contrived (not the saving 'Ulster custom' but) the infamous Irish land laws, which legalised the wholesale confiscation of tens of millions of pounds worth of property created by Irish tenant farmers, which tore the roof-trees from over the heads of hundreds of thousands of the hapless peasantry and forced them to seek a home or a grave in foreign lands, and which produced the recurrent famines, one of which swept a million of the maddened people off the face of the earth. It is the priest who over-taxes the impoverished country to the merry tune of some £10,000,000 annually above its proper contribution. The priest is, of course, responsible for the fifty Coercion Acts passed in eighty years, for the habitual jury-packing, for the organised police conspiracies, for the imprisonment and hanging of thousands of innocent persons. And if the gimlet-minded outlander from Whakarewarewa burrows a little further to the root of the matter, he will, no doubt, find that it is likewise the priest 'who fills the butchers' shops with large blue flies.' The obvious remedy for the 'root' trouble discovered so suddenly and so auspiciously by Mr. Nelson is to hang all the

priests in Ireland on a sour apple-tree—at any rate, to hang them. No fresh Act of Parliament is needed to effect this. The existing machinery in the hands of the Irish Executive is amply sufficient for the purpose. Dublin Castle has only to direct into the proper channel the chronic police-conspiracy for the perpetration and 'discovery' of crime. Packed juries and Jack Ketch may be confidently counted upon to do the rest. And when the last priest is left swinging under the drop, over-taxed, landlord-ridden, police-ridden, place-hunter-ridden, packed-jury-ridden, Castle-ridden Ireland will suddenly cease to be the earthly hell-of-the-damned of her people and will miraculously blossom into a matchless Elysium. Mr Nelson is at home in Maori art and curio. But he would have done well to have made a close study of the 'extremely difficult and delicate' Irish problem before dogmatising upon it in the public press. His great discovery of the microbe of the 'Irish problem' reminds us rather forcibly of Sir Paul Neal's discovery of the elephant in the moon. The elephant turned out to be a dead mouse in the telescope. Mr. Nelson's discovery is likewise a *ridiculus mus*. And after reading of it in the *Auckland Weekly News* we can well credit his statement that he began this famous trip on All Fools' Day.

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.

Bartle on Inventions.

'An inventor,' said Bartle to me at the White Island Hotel the other day, 'is a poverty-stricken jaynius who patents a thing that was well known to Pharaoh an' all th' ann-cient Agyptians of old. Ye never yet heard tell, Quip, iv a new invention that was invinted be somebody, that somebody else didn't write to th' papers to say that th' thing was as ould as Mathulesa's goat, an' was as common in Agypt in th' time iv Pharaoh the Fourth and Rampages the Second [he probably meant Ramesses the Second.—QUIP] as rabbit-inspectors wor in New Zealand in th' reign iv Richard th' Wanat. Whin Mark Cooney—a towney iv mine, be the way, an' own first-cousin to me wife's nevy—invinted his wireless tillegrafts it was reported in th' press that about 'leveenteen million other jayniuses and Con Kelly wor on terms iv th' greatest intimacy wid Mark's iliothric waves—that they knew thim waves since they were on'y ripples not big enough to crack a soap-bubble nor to make a soda-wather cork bob its head. An' whin Rontgen invinted thim x rays for takin' th' photygraft iv a man's insides, betune evvin an' eight million others confessed publicly that they were friendly enough with th' Ulster-V'lets [Bartle probably meant the ultra-violet rays]—no relation to y'r frinds, the Ulster Orange, Quip—to ax th' loan iv five bob—an' he rayfused. An' invintion, Quip, that isn't already known to th' general public or to th' ann-cient Agyptians isn't worth invintin'.

A Particular Invention.

'Fr instance, there's th' phonygraft clock. It wasn't known to th' ann-cients. Th' nearest they ever got to it was th' ornery 'larm. Most iv thim mummies, Quip, are simply ould Agyptians that wint t' bed wid th' 'larm set for half-past seven at th' side iv their ear an' iv coorse, they're asleep yit. But ye can't sleep with a phony-clock. Ye tell it th' night before what ye want it to tell ye in th' mornin', an' it tells it to ye with an accent an' puts in a few little swears on its own account. I seen it advertised in some papers an' ordhered it from a Namerican fellow. At half-past 'leven next day it took bad and began to make a bigger hullabaloo nor forty biler-makers all in a row. Thim it got worse an' yelled out long stretches iv Wagner music. Thim it became oily an' persuasive. "Bartle, y'r breckstuf's gettin' cowlid. Bartle! yer sow! Ye haven't put th' alum in th' beer. Hallo, Bartle! There's a dog-fight up th' street." Thim it stopped to get its breath. Next it thried the piety on me—it knows me wake pints. "Oh, Bartle, Bartle, isn't it a sin f'r ye to be lyin' there whin ye could be turnin' men into biled owls in th' bar?" I ouldn't stan' it no longer. That fool iv an' invention wudn't let me sleep. I got up and saized the poker an'—well, no matter. But, Quip, athrow, whisper—if ye're acquainted wid anyone that buy scrap-iron, jist tell him to bring his dray round and shweep out me room.'

The Marriage Market.

Selden—who, by the way, was a very knowing old fellow, even though he *did* live 250 years ago—said that 'of all actions in a man's life, his marriage does least concern other people; yet of all actions of our life, 'tis most meddled with by other people.' These