

## JUDGMENT.

(Continued from page 5.)

"Ah! Well, look here, Mr Foster, if you ever want money, you come to me! That's my address!" He drew out a card. "Never mind how much it is. You come to me! Don't listen to anyone else. Make what inquiries you like. You'll find Dixon Drake has the reputation of always giving a square deal. When you want money, come to me."

Dick was bewildered, and sought for further information, but Mr Drake would say no more, and soon afterwards he took his departure.

"Do you think your friend is mad?" asked Dick, when the patron had gone.

"Maybe. He's the only man in London who'll buy my pictures. I wish he'd go round biting people. It's the kind of madness that ought to be spread," said Pinch.

The two friends sat up late talking that night, and when Dick chanced to mention his difficulty in finding rooms, the artist soon solved the problem.

"My dear boy, you must stay here, of course! Plenty of room! We'll share ex's, and take it in turns to get up and light the fire."

So it was arranged.

The next few days were weary, desolate days for Dick Foster.

A profound depression held him in its grip. It seemed to him that all the flavour had gone out of life. There was nothing more to live for.

Try as he would, he could not keep his mind from dwelling on the dear girl now lost to him for ever.

Waking or sleeping, her sweet, gentle face rose up before his eyes. He saw it everywhere.

He felt he would go mad, and at times his thoughts even turned to suicide.

"I must get away," he muttered to himself. "I must put the ocean between us. I cannot bear to be in the same city with her. Here am I within a twopenny bus-ride of her door, and yet I can never—I must never—see her again!"

He called again at the offices of the Australian contingent to see if his departure could be hastened.

He received no satisfaction, however, and was told bluntly he would have to wait his turn.

Angrily he was turning away when the official called him back.

"Foster—Dick Foster, of the ——. Wait a bit! I think we have a letter for you. Ah, yes, here it is! It has been lying here some days."

Dick stared at the letter which was tossed over to him, and then picked it up almost reverently with a hand that trembled.

Somehow he staggered out into the street.

Then standing unmovable in the jostling crowd, he tore open the envelope and read:—

"Dear Mr Foster,—Daddy is very, very ill. He wants to see you. He keeps asking for you. You must please come at once.—Yours sincerely, Kitty Chase."

(To be Continued.)

## OTAHUTI NOTES.

Last Saturday saw the final match for the Shield between Waiianiwa and Otahuti teams.

After a hard, close game, the Waiianiwa team were victorious, kicking a penalty goal shortly before time. The Otahuti forwards put up a great exhibition in defence against a considerably heavier pack, and their stubborn opposition kept the opposing forwards at bay during the greater part of the second spell. Contrary to expectations, there was little back play, it being perhaps the closest match of the season, and the forward division of both sides had a very hot time.

Dr. Ritchie Crawford controlled the game in his usual able manner.

An appreciative tea was served in the hall after the match, at which a pleasant half-hour was spent by a large gathering of the sporting community. Mr David McFarlane, as President of the Otahuti Club thanked the Waiianiwa team for the splendidly clean game they had played, and for the excellent refreshments provided. Mr J. Galt for the Waiianiwa Club, responded in his usual humorous and capable manner.

Later in the evening, a smoke concert was held, being attended by numerous players and supporters of the Waiianiwa, Otahuti, and Wrights Bush Clubs. The usual toasts were honoured in an enthusiastic manner, and many excellent speeches made, besides vocal efforts of an extraordinary high character; the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" brought a memorable evening to a close.

## The Nature Column.

(By "Student.")

("Student" will be pleased to receive notes on any branch of Natural History. Observations on birds, insects, plants, etc., will be equally welcome. If using a pen-name, will correspondents please enclose real name and address.)

Mr R. Gibb, of Menzies Ferry, in the course of a conversation last week, said that while ploughing lately he was pleasantly surprised to see a flock of Buller's gulls (Larus Bulleri), to the number of fifty-five following the plough. He said it almost seemed as if the whole of the gulls of this species in Southland had gathered there. Mr Gibb remarked that this bird is rare in Southland and he had only seen occasional pairs about Mossburn in the river-beds. They kept together and did not mix with the black-backed Larus dominicanus. The Buller's gull is easily identified from its near relative the mackerel gull owing to the fact that the latter is always black.

Mr Gibb also told me that the stilts were breeding in numbers in the swamps and round lagoons adjacent to his homestead, and this disposed of an idea held by some local naturalists that the stilt did not breed in Southland.

Buller's gull is a rare bird pretty well throughout New Zealand, it is however, found in numbers on the Buller river. It does not usually come to the seaside, and in fact appears there very rarely. It is an inland bird frequenting the lakes and rivers. Its diet also appears to be entirely different from its seaside cousins, for it is said to feed mostly on moths and insects which are generally plentiful among tussocks. In general appearance it is very like the little mackerel gull (Larus Scopulinus) which is to be found commonly at the Bluff.

Larus Scopulinus is the little gull which may be seen any day on the small strip of beach below the Freezing Works at the Bluff. It is a never failing source of entertainment to picnickers on the beach. With its pearly grey wings and back, and red bill and feet, it is always admired. It is said that this gull is an inveterate thief and will watch an oyster catcher extracting a dainty morsel, and will thereupon chase the rightful owner until it secures the tit-bit for itself. I was much amused to see one of these gulls on one occasion cheekily abstract a sandwich laid down by a little kiddie. While the youngster indulged in a copious draught of tea the gull hopped up and decamped with the sandwich, much to the boy's chagrin.

This gull does not usually leave the seaside but occasionally it is to be found inland.

The other gull common at the Bluff, round the coasts, and inland, where it is to be seen following the plough in hundreds, is the black-backed gull. This bird is not nearly so friendly as the little mackerel gull but at the Bluff it is fairly tame. It will be noticed that some of these gulls are brown and not black. These are the young birds. It has been stated that it takes about four years before the young birds take on adult plumage.

Some years ago information relating to the habit of the black-backed gull in attacking sheep was published in a local nature column. Any notes on this and the other two gulls would be welcomed. Information as to their habits is not to be had in any quantity, and is wanted.

For the benefit of country readers who may chance on a nest of the Buller's gull it may be said that the egg is broadly oval—though they vary much in shape—is greyish white in colour and freckled with purplish brown markings. Mr T. H. Potts describes the eggs as much handsomer and bolder in marking than those of other species. One to two eggs are laid in a nest.

My statement that the rainfall of England is about 30 inches has been challenged by some of those who lately enjoyed the hospitality of that country. Some think that the Old Country is a dull wet country but meteorological records do not support this. There are some very wet places in England but the South is comparatively dry. A rainfall map of the British Isles for last March which I have before me shows that the average over a large part of England for that month was two inches. The weather of London was as follows: Rainfall a little over half an inch, thirty-three hours sunshine, eleven wet days. Sunshine is apparently a scarce commodity in London. Fort William with nineteen inches of rain is the highest shown, while of the other towns listed only Edinburgh had more than two inches. The climate of Britain cannot be so bad as some of our Diggers make out, for it must be remembered that in agriculture alone, she produces about as much as New Zealand.

## Passing Notes.

BY JACQUES.

Laugh where we must, be candid where we can.—Pope.

The Rev. Gibson Smith said, at the First Church Diamond Jubilee, that the hardest thing in life is preparing a "real, uplifting sermon." I dunno. Has he ever tried listening to one of the ordinary kind.

"A" is evidently a nice old gentleman, with grey whiskers, a big library, and a great admiration for himself. With what a superior air does he pat me on the head and twit me on my 'youthful inexperience and impetuosity.' And how paternal is his fear that, without corrective chastisement, I may yet grow to take myself seriously. Which goes to show that "A" is rather skilled in the gentle art of "squelching." I suppose I should wilt—but, somehow, I don't feel like it. Pure perversity on my part, no doubt. But now to get down to brass tacks re McCabe. "A" doubts some of my statements, and (quite properly) asks for references. Well, McCabe's affirmation (which "A" admits would be dogmatic) that telepathy had been scientifically established was quoted in the "Literary Guide" of July, 1910. In "The Religion of Sir Oliver Lodge" (page 54) McCabe says: "These (telepathic) experiments are to me convincing." Again (ibid, page 76) he roundly and erroneously asserts that "the one type of (spiritist) experiment from which the action of telepathy is rigorously excluded never succeeds." These are only one or two samples of many similar utterances on Joseph's part. "A" can dig out the rest for himself.

Re the £1000 offer for proof of telepathy. It appeared in the "Times" in August, 1911. "A" will find the full text of the advertisement in Mann's "Follies and Frauds of Spiritualism" (page 153). Or, if he will look up "The Religion of Sir Oliver Lodge" (page 54), he will read McCabe's own words: "It is only fair to say that a scientific electrician of my acquaintance has publicly offered many times a sum of £100 for a successful experiment. At one time £1000 was offered and advertised." So "A" will never more be able to shake his wise, grey old head and say: "I never heard of it, so don't believe it." He must believe McCabe.

The Magistrate's task is not always an easy one—as Mr McCarthy, of Christchurch, found when called on recently to adjudicate in a maintenance claim preferred by a scold against her husband. The Magistrate's sympathies were evidently with the worse half, but the Law said he must allow the claim. Still, with rare temerity, he spoke his mind to the woman, who had given abundant proof of her maddening volubility.

"I would not live with you," he said. "I don't want to live with you," retorted the virago.

"If I were your husband," concluded the Magistrate, "I would flee to the highest mountain to escape from you."

As a hint to the victim, well meant, no doubt, but weak and futile. Still it was perhaps the best thing he could think of, now that the fine old institution of the "ducking stool" is obsolete, and whipping seems temporarily unfashionable. The problem of the shrew is admittedly a difficult one. True, everybody—with certain exceptions—has an infallible recipe. The exceptions are those who are married to the vixens. I have only once in my life known an exception to these exceptions. He was a Sydney cabman who married a widow who had developed a natural gift for nagging to such a point of perfection that she had driven her first husband to suicide. ("He preferred hell to Nell," the neighbours used to say). The cabby, however, proved more than a match for her, and by a method as simple as it was effective. When the first rosy flush of marital bliss having died down, she opened on him the fire of her lingual artillery, he sat and smoked serenely, and fixing her with an "ancient mariner" sort of look, ejaculated, "Ol' Boko's the allusion being to her exceedingly large and red nose—and this he repeated every time the least pause in her tirade permitted him to slip it in. Nothing more he said, but the "damned iteration" of that one irritating epithet quickly reduced her to a state of incoherent rage and hysterical

despair. And a very short course of this treatment resulted in a perfect cure. To all husbands cursed with nagging wives I give the recipe free, asking nothing but their gratitude when they have proven its efficacy.

Since the war (and part of its dreary aftermath, no doubt) the world has experienced a strange epidemic of those good resolutions with which hell is said to be tessellated. The visitation is only temporary, of course, and we shall soon get back to normal again. Still, while it lasts, the cynically inclined may get some fun out of it. Its latest sporadic outbreak was in Sydney, where, in "inspirational, semi-religious" conference, Australasian advertisers proclaimed their resolve to henceforth strip all advertisements of their gaudy fictional plumage, and to substitute therefor the severe, Quaker-like garb of "truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." The proposal is a revolutionary one, and, though at first glance, it seems a thing to be desired, yet,

"Since the pleasure is as great  
In being cheated as to cheat,"

it is doubtful what kind of a reception it would meet if carried into effect. We are loth to part with our illusions. Think of the disappointment of the poor wretch who knows he has a hundred and one separate and distinct complaints to learn that "Granny Goosefoot's Green Globules" can only cure ninety-seven of them, instead of the whole lot as heretofore. And would the house buyer feel at all grateful, think you, to the land agent for frankly telling him that the £750 property he is buying is only worth £500 after all? Not on your life. The man who is being taken down always loves to believe that he is taking down somebody else. And the land agent's advertisement, at present, helps him to this comfortable frame of mind. Again, just fancy the result of the ragman candidly telling the lady that the £40 grey fox cloak was the best rabbit-skin obtainable. She wouldn't thank him for his honesty—and he wouldn't sell that cloak. And so on, and so forth. It is all very well to dream dreams like these Sydney advertisers are doing, but there is a very hard row before the man who initiates the foolish endeavour to make honesty and veracity an integral part of his business.

## KINGS AND PRINCES HAVE MET.

KING COAL, SURNAMED  
BILANDISIDE.

It is said, on excellent authority, that this powerful and wealthy monarch can trace an unbroken lineage right down the dim corridors of history to the great King Cole the First, of jovial and immortal memory. He would seem to have inherited most, or all, of the more prominent characteristics of his illustrious forbear, excepting, perhaps, those of avoirdupois and capacity for merriment. True, it is rumoured—though the rumour is not generally credited—that once, long ago, he did essay a smile, but the effort proving too painful, he broke it off abruptly, and has never attempted it since. His life is ascetic, and his views severe, while his usual expression seems to be one of perpetual regret that the good God did not make a better job of the world. Still, he has periods of relaxation from his usually gloomy outlook on life, and men and things, and in these gentler moments we may be certain that he permits himself to regard with a lenient eye the shortcomings of the Deity. It is always pleasant to think of magnanimity in the great and powerful.

Ordinarily reserved and taciturn, His Majesty can be provoked to extreme and violent volubility by the sight or mention of any one of his special aversions. These are many, but the limits of space forbid mention of more than two or three. First (though not, perhaps, in importance) comes the motor hog. It is said that His Majesty's dignity has more than once been sadly impaired through his having to

skip precipitately from before some reckless motorist to whom speed regulations were as things that were not. However that may be, it is an undeniable fact that the royal temper becomes explosive at the bare name of a motor hog. Some years ago, it is alleged, he endeavoured to get the speed limit reduced to about two miles an hour, but his Councilors, fearing the consequences of such a drastic measure, compromised by bringing it down to forty or thereabouts. foiled in this, His Majesty has since devoted his time to the composition of a "Hymn of Hate" of the aforesaid motor swine.

Next I may place the Trade Union secretary or delegate. It is regrettably difficult to obtain His Majesty's opinion of these pests, for the mere mention of them reduces him to such a state of babbling incoherence that he is powerless to put his feelings into clear, intelligible words. We are left largely to deduction and imagination.

Another pet aversion of His Majesty are those who presumptuously dare to hold views at variance with his own. His attitude towards these, however, is not so much one of hatred as of contempt. Those who think differently are damned fools and that is all there is about it.

Other objects of his dislike are "Pro Bono Publico," "Fiat Justitia," "Paternalism," and the rest of that tribe who find delight in rushing into print about this or that or nothing at all. On these he keeps a watchful eye, and every new and then, as opportunity offers, he solves out, and, on general principles, gives them a swift drubbing, and then hastily retires again to the seclusion of his castle.

His monarchy may be described as a dual one. At his rural kingdom of Nightcaps his black subjects supply him with certain minerals, in return for which he allows them the wherewithal to get bread and meat and a whole lot of beer. The minerals thus obtained he distributes, for the most part, among his white subjects in his urban kingdom of Invercargill, getting for them the wherewithal to buy greater quantities of bread and meat and bigger lots of beer. The difference between the two quantities of bread and meat and beer is called profit, and his belongs to His Majesty. The process is beautiful in its simplicity; anyone by adopting it can become a king.

But the course of profit-making, like the course of love, "never did run smooth." His Majesty has had much trouble with his subjects, but chiefly with the black ones. Every now and then—to pass the time, or for any other old reason—these start a revolution, or "strike," as it is colloquially termed. Then the King tears his hair, and in frenzy asks what he has done to deserve all this. wishes he had never been born, and so on. Still, although at times the outlook seemed pretty dark, His Majesty has somehow or other, by the exercise of much diplomacy and other means, managed hitherto to smooth over the difficulties and retain his sway. Latterly these open rebellions have been less frequent. But do not deduce therefrom that the royal bed has become more rosy. Quite otherwise, in fact.

For within the last year or two the blacks have contracted a mysterious and maddening malady, closely allied to sleeping sickness, and to which, for want of a better, the name of "gospelopoly" has been given. Chief among its more unpleasant symptoms are an unconquerable lethargy, loss of strength, a sort of paralysis which makes rapid movement impossible, a tendency to fall over one's own feet, dimness of vision making it hard to find the tools that are wanted, etc., etc. (in fact, a whole lot of etc.). Its effect were various and serious, but the gravest of them all was the havoc played with profits. So near were these to annihilation that at one time His Majesty was at the very verge of despair. Fortunately, at the moment when all seemed dark and hopeless, he invented, or learned, of an excellent prescription for staying the erosion of profits. It was called "Pushion," and proved so efficacious that His Majesty once more enjoys untroubled rest. In fact, he says he will never again be without a bottle in the house.

"People who drive motor cars are apparently not familiar with their responsibilities," said His Honour Mr Justice Herdman, addressing the Grand Jury at Christchurch. "It is notorious that motor cars and motor bicycles are driven in a most reckless manner about the streets." The case under notice was one in which a man was charged with manslaughter as the result of a fatal motor smash. "Cases of this kind are becoming quite common," continued His Honour. "Some of the drivers of motor cars don't recognise that they have a duty to the public, and that if they commit a breach of that duty they render themselves liable to criminal as well as civil proceedings."