

Passing Notes.

BY JACQUES.

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

Two local doctors are to act as judges in the Labour Carnival Baby Show. Daredevils!

A recent "News" par. refers to our leading industrial concern as the "N.Z. Milk By-Products Co." "By-products!" Such is fame.

During September a dozen people over 80, and ten between 70 and 80 years of age, passed out in Wellington. Looks as though a deadly epidemic of Methusalemitis has struck the Empire City.

According to a recent cable Norah March announces that "many women of private means are prepared to face independent motherhood," and to bring up the children without any mere man's assistance. Probably by this time Miss March is very busy answering inquiries as to the whereabouts of those women.

Dairy farmers have been informing the Butter Prices Investigation Committee that butter making has been carried on at a loss during the last two or three years. That accounts, no doubt, for the phenomenal rise in farm land, and dairy cattle prices during that same time.

"Groping," in last week's issue of the "Digger," gives an amusing instance of that curious form of aphasia commonly known nowadays as "Spoonerism." Here is another, which has been (with what truth I know not) tacked on to Sir Robert Stout. During a Supreme Court trial a witness questioned as to certain distance, said that it was about fifteen miles "as the cry flows."

"You mean," said the examining counsel, "as the flow cries."

An embarrassing titter went round the court, and the judge, with a benevolent desire to relieve the situation, leaned forward and said:

"A mere slip of the tongue in both the witness and yourself, Mr. —. Of course we understand that what both of you meant to say was that the distance was fifteen miles as the fly crows."

My friend Bill came over again last Sunday—this time to borrow my wheelbarrow. He sat on the back doorstep and smoked in pessimistic silence for a few minutes. I waited. Presently it all came out.

"By cripes, Jax, this cost of livin' business is gettin' a terror. Last night the old woman went into a shop up town and bought a pound of cooked 'am. Three bob, as I'm a livin' sinner. Wotjer think of that? Three bob for a pound of 'am!" I imprudently hazarded the opinion that perhaps ham at three shillings a pound was a not altogether indispensable luxury.

"But, blimey, Jase," he retorted truculently, "a feller must eat something. But it's not only 'am. Look at the price of coal, an' boots, an' clothes, an'—an'—well, everything. It's gettin' too strong altogether. An' now, on top of it all, they're goin' to shove up the price of butter another notch or two—or rather about a dozen all at once. Wotinel are we goin' to do. I think it's about time the Government took a hand in real earnest, an' swung up a few of these blanky profiteers. If they did, I betjer the cost of livin' wouldn't be long tumblin' down."

After a brief interval of silence, during which Bill filled and lit his pipe, he abruptly changed the subject.

D'yer thing, Jax, that eggs will go up again at Cris'mas?" (Bill is one of our largest city poultry farmers.)

I explained that commercial prophecy was not my forte, so I could offer no opinion of value on that head. But, I added, I hoped not.

"Well that's where we differ," said Bill. "I think there's goin' to be a big rise, an' I've got 'opes that they will go up to three bob a dozen again. Anyway I'm picklin' all my eggs now expectin' it." And he marched off with the barrow leaving me pondering over—oh, quite a lot of things.

The Rev. Harold Sharpe's attack on the Ne Temere decree has evoked a reply (there may be more before this sees print) from one W. Burke (our respected Dean?) to the effect that the decree

somehow doesn't really mean what it seems to mean, that what it says is tempered with quite a lot of reservations, exceptions, concessions and "such like," and that, on the whole, it is a highly respectable thing. Also, Archbishop O'Shea and other prelates of the R.C. Church have been putting in overtime explaining that the general objection to the Papal dictum is merely another manifestation of no-popery bigotry, P.P.A. mendacity, and so forth. Which is all very well in its way, but — Well, here is the position in a nutshell. There are a few dozen people who are outside the R.C. fold, but who have certain human feelings. Among these are reverence for their mothers, love for their wives and children, and regard for their own honour. Now these people have been told by, or through, the public press (their chief, or only, source of information) that the Ne Temere decree declares, or somehow implies, that, though a marriage may conform to the law of the country, it is imperfect unless solemnised before a priest, and that the offspring of such marriage is of dubious legitimacy. Whether this is correct or not I cannot presume to say. But that is the general impression, and, in matters like this, it is with impressions that we have to deal. Now, these few dozen people aforementioned are feeling quite as sore—perhaps a little sorer—at the attack (as they understand it) by the R.C. Church on their mothers, wives, and little ones as the R.C. Church is feeling over the activities of the P.P.A. and kindred associations. Would it not be wise and well, in view of all the circumstances, for the R.C. Church to publish, verbatim et liberatim, the whole text of the decree so that the public may judge for themselves whether the Pope or Howard Elliott is in the right. Any newspaper in the Dominion would gladly give the space—and would add enormously to its circulation thereby.

Sometimes our only statesman can be more foolish than the good Lord intended him to be. This was shown in his recent promise—or threat—to seek legal opinion as to whether or not a certain Labour resolution in favour of an industrial Parliament was seditious. It may have been, of course, that other things said at the same Labour meeting would bring the speakers within the four corners of some old Act or other, but to use the particular resolution quoted as the basis of legal action would be to bring William the Conqueror and his party into everlasting ridicule. The industrial Parliament has long been regarded by many—of all shades of political opinion—as the natural and necessary corollary of extended State industrial and commercial activity. It has been freely advocated through the press and on the public platform, and has furnished many a mutual admiration Society with matter for debate. Pamphlets have been written on the subject, and in many a standard work on political economy it has the dignity of a chapter or more to itself. Yet no one, so far as I know, has ever discovered anything treasonable, seditious, or in any other way objectionable in the proposal until now. Truly William has a keen nose for rats. Also it would seem that he has some rats.

If that part of Labour which is represented in our Trades' Unions has any sense of humour it must have many a laugh at its own funny antics. With one foot for ever in the sea and one on shore, it is consistent in nothing but its inconsistency. To-day it curses the profiteer, and to-morrow demands a wage based not on its own real economic value, or the increased burden of living, but, on its own scarcity. Probed deeply one form of profiteering proves very like the others. Again, at nearly every Labour meeting resolutions in favour of a "White New Zealand" are passed, yet when it is proposed to bring out enough British immigrants to make that ideal realisable, Labour gets up on its hind legs and says a lot of unpleasant things in a very unpleasant tone. As though our pigmy population can hope to long keep out the hordes of Asia unless it grows much more rapidly than it is doing at present. Then

we have demands as rapid as machine gun fire that the Government shall "do something" to reduce the cost of living, and to enforce those demands Labour strikes, or goes slow—and up again, as a necessary consequence, go the prices of coal and boots, and other things. It does not seem to strike Labour's brilliant mind that the quickest and easiest way to reduce the cost of living is to have fewer strikes, work harder, and so flood the world's markets with the things that Labour needs. Another instance of Labour's inconsistency (though there are hundreds more), and then I'm done. The powers that be have been frequently threatened with dire penalties of late by the greater power behind the pickaxe, and shovel for penalising the conscientious objector to military service. Yet, at the very time of writing this there is every prospect of serious trouble on the West Coast and elsewhere because certain workers there have conscientious objections to being dragged into paying a levy, of which they do not approve, to the Broken Hill strikers. Truly, as a crowning act of humour, Labour should take "Semper eadem" as its motto.

SCIENCE NOTES.

THE TREASURES OF COAL-TAR.

If you put a bit of soft coal into a test-tube (or, if you haven't a test-tube, into a clay tobacco pipe, and cover it over with clay) and heat it, you will find a gas coming out at the end of the tube, that will burn with a yellow smoky flame. After all the gas comes off you will find in the bottom of the test-tube a chunk of dry, porous coke. These, then, are the two main products of the destructive distillation of coal. But if you are a born chemist, with an eye to by-products, you will notice along the middle of the tube, where it is neither too hot nor too cold, some dirty drops of water and some black, sticky stuff. If you are just an ordinary person you won't pay any attention to this, because there is only a little of it, and because what you are after is the coke and gas. You regard the nasty smelly mess that comes in between as merely a nuisance, because it clogs up and spoils your nice clean tube.

Now, that is the way the gas-makers and coke-makers—being for the most part ordinary persons, and not born chemists—used to regard the water and tar that got into their pipes. They washed it out so as to have the gas clean, and then ran it into the creek. But the neighbours—especially those who fished in the stream below the gas-works—made a fuss about spoiling the water, so that the gas-men gave away the tar to the boys for bonfires or sold it for roofing. But this same tar, which for a hundred years was thrown away, and nearly half of which is thrown away yet in the United States, turns out to be one of the most useful things in the world. It is one of the strategic points in war and commerce. It wounds and heals. It supplies munitions and medicines. It is like the magic purse of Fortunatus, from which everything wished for could be drawn. The chemist puts his hand into the black mass and draws out all the colours of the rainbow. This evil-smelling substance beats the rose in the production of perfume, and surpasses the honeycomb in sweetness.

It is interesting to recall that anaesthetics like novocaine and stovaine are derived from coal-tar; anti-pyretics like aspirin, acetanilid, and acetphenetidin; specifics such as adrenaline prescribed for Addison's disease, soamin and arsacetin for sleeping sickness, salvarsan for blood disease, and phenolphthalein used as a laxative. Saccharin, dulcin, and other sweeteners are obtained from the same source; essences like cinnamon and cumarin; photographic developers of various kinds; lyllite, melinite, and trinitrotoluol (called TNT for short), which did such destructive work on the battle-front in Europe. So diverse are the products that it seems incomprehensible that all can be found in one original product.

In the distillation of coal-tar we obtain from the light oil such products as benzol, toluol, xylol, pyridine, phenol, and cresol. From the middle oil we get naphthalene, and from the heavy oil comes anthracene. The refined tar and the pitch left as a residue have their uses. Great industries have been built upon each and every one of these remarkable products, and the chemists have only begun their work in this line. The future is full of possibilities.

Tuberculosis is increasing in British Honduras, and the Legislature of the colony has asked the Imperial Government to take steps to meet the situation.

DRAUGHTS.

(Conducted by F. Hutchins).

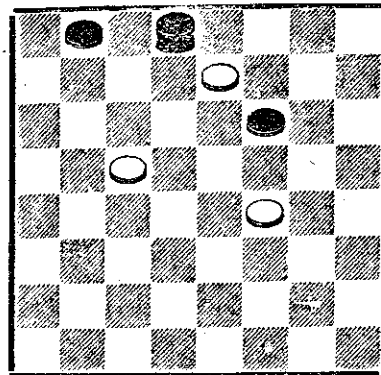
All communications of interest to readers of this column to be addressed to "Draughts Editor," 28 Biggar street.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

GEO. H. BROWN.—Your solution to Problem 29 is correct.

PROBLEM 30.

By J. T. Gordon, Sheffield.
(No. 235 in the "Week.")
BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and draw.

Black 1, 11, King 2.

White 7, 14, 19.

A pretty conception, and one which reflects considerable credit on author.

SOLUTION OF PROBLEM 29.

Black 1, 2, 7, 13, 26; White 22, 25;

K 9, 16, 27. Black to play and win.

26.30 22.18 22.18 9.18 1.5

25.21 25.22 15.11 2.6 2.9

30.25a 18.15 18.14 11.2 5.32

Black wins.

(A) 1.5, 27.23, 5.14, 16.19, 2.6, 22.18, 6.9,

18.15, 30.25, 15.10, 7.11, 10.7, 25.22,

7.3 drawn.

The following two games between Messrs C. C. Clark and H. O. Dorsey decided the State Championship. Shortly after playing the Ohio championship match, we regret to hear that Mr Clark was stricken with paralysis, and removed to a sanatorium in a serious condition:—

DOUBLE CORNER.

Black—CLARK. White—DORSEY.

9.14 4. 8 17.13 14.18

22.18 22.17 16.20b 23.14

5. 9 8.11 31.27 9.18

24.19 32.23 10.15 30.25

11.15a 11.16 19.10 15.19

18.11 24.20 6.15 25.22

8.24 15.24 13. 6 18.25

28.19 28.19 2. 9 29.22

7.11b 3. 7 25.22 19.24

25.22c 20.11 1. 5 27.23

11.15 7.16 22.17 24.27

27.24 Drawn.

(A) Safest reply. 11.16 leads to many

subtle combinations.

(B) 4.8, 25. 22, etc., draws.

(C) 19.15 is a good line for White.

(D) 10.15 is also quite good.

DOUBLE CORNER.

Black—DORSEY. White—CLARK.

9.14 16.20 2. 6 3.12

22.18 22.18 10.16 18.15

5. 9 8.11 10.15 6. 9

18.15a 29.25 24.19 22.18

11.18 4. 8 15.24 1, 13.17c

21.17 25.22 28.19 15.11

14.21 6. 9 8.12 7.16

23. 5 26.23 19.15 27.23

12.16a 9.13 12.19 19.26

25.22 23.19 15. 8 31. 6m

W. wins.

(A) Quite a strong line for White.

(B) The following interesting var. is given

by John Robertson:—

10.14 6. 9 8.11 6. 9

25.22 19.15 25.22 32.27

8.11 10.19 2. 6 21.25

24.19 23. 7 31.26 30.21

7.10 14.23 10.14 14.17

27.23 26.19a 28.24 21.14

4. 8 3.10 9.13 9.25

22.18 29.25 24.20 27.23

Drawn.

(C) Dorsey remarked after the match that

19.23 would have drawn, and 19.24

nearly have won.

VARIATION 1.

19.24 17.22 22.25 29.25

32.28 27.24b 24.20 30.26

13.17 20.27 25.29 25.30

28.19 31.24 20.16

And Black should win.

(D) 30.26, 18.22, 26.23, 25.30, 18.14, 9.18,

23.14—Drawn.

(E) Although a winning advantage yet

there is some play required.

The Invercargill Draughts Club tourney

for 1920 has been brought to a close. The

following is the prize list. There were

12 entries, each player having to play four

games with every other entrant. Two of

the players did not finish:—

Handi. Points

cap. scored. Total.

A. Thom ... 12½ 18 30½

W. Adcock ... 12½ 15 27½

F. Hutchins ... 10 26 26

J. McGregor ... 10 15½ 25½

AUCTION—"NO RESERVE."

(Contributed).

I kenna weel hoo to begin,
I've got so much to say;
I canna get each thing put doon
An' gi'e the screed fair play.

O', McKay's gran', matchless Auction
Mart!
The folks that I saw there!
Whaur they cam' frae, an' what they
bocht—
A rather big affair.

A wife oot the Waiianiwa way
Wad liked a carpet cheap,
An' there wis carpets, rugs, an' mats,
An' carpet-ends a heap.

But when they were put up for sale
She thoct they gied gey dear;
The folks jist lauched at her an' cried—
"We mak' oor ain price here."

They'd feather bolsters, beds an' quilts,
An' feather pillows, too;
A bird, was sell't—I think the geese
On which the feathers grew!

An' kitchen dressers, chiffoniers,
An' cupboards, shelves, an' presses,
An' bracket things for fixin' on
An' fillin' up odd places;

An' girnels, barrels, washin' tubs,
An' baskets, bags an' creels,
An' tables (with an' without leaved,
An' forms composed o' deals;

An' bicycles an' bassinettes,
Go-carts, perambulators,
An' chicker-coops wi' nests an' roosts,
An' patent incubators;

An' fenders, kerbs, an' grates an'
stoves.

An' stoves for paraffin,
Steel fireirons, as weel as bress,
Fire-dogs an' a fire-screen;

Stop-watches, timepieces, an' clocks,
Theodolites, chronometers,
The wristlet things that flappers wear,
Eyeglasses, specs., barometers;

An' sideboards couches, parlour suites—
Ae dandy suite wigs there:
I think he ca'd it "the ston,"
A really swank affair;

An' organs with an' without teeth,
Piano without wire,
An' gramophones quite fit to lead
Invercargill's "Male" Choir;

An' lots o' things that I forget,
An' things I canna spell,
An' things I canna get to rhyme,
Wi' some queer words, as well.

An' cae sic samples maun suffice,
For mair you mauna look;
To tell o' a' that I saw there
Wad fill a great big book.

But if I see you at next sale
I'll tell you mair about it;
An' if you canna' get to that,
Ye'll hae dae without it.

WHITERIG NOTES.

Last Friday evening the farmers and settlers of Whiterig gathered to bid farewell to Mr W. McKinnon, who is leaving the district. Mr J. Stark was in the chair, and eulogising the guest's good qualities, made him a suitable presentation. Several others present endorsed the Chairman's remarks, songs, recitations, and story interspersed, making a most enjoyable evening.

NORTH INVERCARGILL SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

The usual monthly meeting of the committee was held recently. Present: Rev. Collie (chairman), Messrs Kent, Kiesel, Purdue, Bain, Attley and Gregory. The head master reported that the average attendance was 302.8, the average roll number 346.8 and the percentage of attendance 87.3. The average attendance for the quarter ended is 295.9, the average roll number 343.8, and the percentage of attendance 86.1, this low attendance being due to sickness. Miss Brown left at the beginning of the month, to take up her position as infant mistress at the Bluff. Miss Cameron has been appointed to fill the vacancy until the end of the year. It was decided that plans and specifications be prepared for levelling the playground. The matter of advertising was also decided that Mr Blake be added to the works committee and that the committee unanimously nominate him for the vacancy on the Education Board. Accounts amounting to \$14 12s 6d were passed for payment.