

# Passing Notes.

BY JACQUES.

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

The strenuous life. A Wellington clergyman did some groaning recently over the day's burdensome programme. "To-day," he said, "I had a funeral at 10, a wedding at 2, a meeting of clergy at 2.30, a garden party after that, and then tea. And I've got to prepare two sermons for Sunday. And they say the clergy are not a hard worked lot." Well, that fellow has my sympathy. It would take very little more—say a rubber at whist and a visit to the picture show—to break him down altogether.

I know Mr Gavin Brighton to be a sober and God-fearing, albeit somewhat pugnacious citizen. That he should deliberately and of malice prepense perpetrate a practical joke is as inconceivable as that he should forego any opportunity of combatting others' views on theological or kindred matters. I must, therefore, accept his attack on me in last week's "Digger" as written in all seriousness. Which makes it the more humorous. Listen. He says, inter alia, "Telepathy . . . is a means by which two persons can, without visible means of communication, let the other know that the other is in great stress or trouble, although the one may not be able to state in what form the trouble has overtaken the other. The stress so acts on the troubled one, and both being in unison, or tuned to the same pitch, acts on the other." Presumably Mr Brighton intended this passage to have some meaning but, for the life of me, I cannot discover it. Whether one is the other, or the other is one, or each is both or neither, is more than I can make out. If Mr Brighton will write it all over again—in a slower, louder, clearer voice this time—I will have another wrestle with it; when perhaps some glimmering of light will penetrate to my dull brain.

Again, later on he says: "Spiritualism is 'demonstrable,' therefore so many of our well learned men have had to acknowledge certain facts because they were not acquainted with certain active forces or bodies working out the will of the overruling power which governs the earth; so some of them have fallen to try and purge and make them clean." Really, Mr Brighton should be more careful; to write like that is an even more serious matter than to put "Pigs in Clover" into one's hands.

Socialism is a damnable thing; closely allied to atheism, Bolshevism, and all those other isms that make us shudder. We have been told so over and over again by the press, the pulpit, and the Premier. And their multitudinous warnings against the horror have received full confirmation in the disquieting reports which are reaching us, with growing frequency, from across the water. Only the other day came the harrowing news that the Government trawlers were pouring fish into Australian cities in such vast quantities that it was only bringing the miserable price of twopence per pound. True, there was a profit, even at that price, but the profits were so far less than usual that all right-thinking men must regard the action of the Government as a deliberate attack on the sacred institution of private enterprise. Also, the Commonwealth merchant fleet is seriously hampering the laudable efforts of private shipping companies to build up fat dividends for their shareholders; the State woollen mills are selling tweeds, etc., at prices that are simply ridiculous; and in Queensland—if Mr McManus is to be believed—prime meat is being retailed at from 3½d to 5½d per pound over the counters of the State butcheries. All of which goes to prove that the Australians are mad, sir, made as a March hare; and that the country is rapidly drifting in the direction—as Mr Mantalini would say—of "the demned bow-wow." It is reassuring to us, however, to know that Mr Massey has no sympathy with such nonsense—as is shown by his declared intention of taxing any municipal trading enterprise that may threaten the time-honoured privileges of that bulwark of the Empire, the profiteer.

Who says the church does not move? Perish the slander. It is only a few years since the clergy of all denominations were fighting tooth and nail the vile doctrine of

Darwinism—"that gospel of dirt," as it was contemptuously styled. Thousands of sermons and clerical pamphlets were levelled against it, and the last years of the venerable scientist's life were embittered by what amounted to systematic persecution. The evolutionary propagandists who followed him fared no better. Huxley's whole life was one long fight with superstitious ignorance, and it was a good thing for him that his mind was cast in such a mould that, as he himself once said, "he didn't care a damn" what his clerical detractors said of him. Having regard to these facts it is refreshing to see that at least an odd cleric here and there is, more or less grudgingly, conceding the scientific truth of the evolutionary doctrine. The latest is Canon Barnes, who, in a paper read before the Southland Church Congress, admitted that "Man was not created by God, but is the end of a vast evolutionary process"—though he qualifies this by adding, "of Divine design." It is comforting, of course, to science to receive this clerical concession, but most evolutionists would be sorely puzzled to discover in "the vast evolutionary process" any evidence of "Divine design." "Nature is one with rapine," and "from scarped cliff and quarried stone" we get abundant evidence that she was never any better than she is now. The story written there of the progress and development of life makes ghastly reading. Moreover, the many blundering, blind alley experiments that Nature seems to have been constantly making make it difficult to discover the operation of omniscient beneficence. Still, if Canon Barnes can perceive it, he is, perhaps, fortunate in his faith.

McSweeney is dead—self-immolated to his country's cause. The world had been long and eagerly watching the unequal fight between one weak, solitary man on the one hand, and the tremendous forces of constituted "law and order" on the other. There was something at once sublime and pathetic in the spectacle; sublime in McSweeney's heroic, self-sacrificing devotion to what he believed to be right and truth, and pathetic in the hopelessness of the struggle. Many of us—even other than Home Rulers and Irishmen—had hoped that some ingenious brain would discover a reasonable and satisfactory means of escape from the impasse that had been created, without loss of dignity or sacrifice of principle on either side. Therefore the news that McSweeney had been allowed to die brought to us not merely a thrill of horror, but a feeling of despair. For it is not too much to say that the incident destroys every hope of our reconciliation with Ireland, who will now look on us as having declared war to the knife. Surely we, in our greater power, could have found some way out of the difficulty without any injury to our prestige. Clemency is not necessarily weakness. It seems to me that we have harped too much on the dignity of the nation and the majesty of the law, and too little on the strings of justice and mercy. And we will most assuredly pay the price later on. We have had few friends among the nations in the past; we will have still fewer in the future. Perhaps dead McSweeney is destined to win a greater victory over us than we like to think of now.

## KINGS AND PRINCES I HAVE MET.

### SULTAN STIVEN.

A little journey to the northward of the desert of Driazel lies the beautiful and restful oasis of Wolistoun—which, translated, means "The City of Good Times." There, in the caravanserai which he has established—which he has benevolently established—for the saving of lives, reigns Sultan Stiven the First, the kindest autocrat of whom history bears record. Thither, from surrounding arid parts, flock many pilgrims, with cracking throats, husky voices, and spittle like wads of cotton, to pay him homage and nimpence a "spot." It was a red letter day in my career when the editor's instructions, my own thirst, and a taxi took me to that delightful spot to interview his mirthful Majesty. I found the chambers, corridors, passages,

and other parts crowded with his subjects. These were, for the most part, very merry fellows, full of laughter and speaking a strange, but pleasant tongue. I caught and memorised a few of the words, such as: "Cumanavaspot," "Fillemup-agane," "Sameasbeforburt," "Avan-otheralongome," and others which, though not understood by the uninitiated, yet strike musically on the ear.

The Sultan, however, seemed to speak all their languages, and evidently knew all their ways and tastes, and so never once failed to satisfy the craving of each particular soul. To one he would hand out a "wiskispot" (as it is called in their tongue); to another a "longum" or a "meelum" (according to capacity); to a third a "portagaf"; to a fourth "ginan-bitters"; to another "samewithdash," and so on. And each would take his gifts and shout his praises, and blow off the froth (which, I understand, is a religious rite), and smile at each other, and wink and say "Eresluck," "Appidays," "Thousanayear," and other fraternal and friendly greetings. Thereafter silence would follow, save for a pleasant gurgling as the lotions trickled down to the easing and healing of tormented throats. There were one or two cases, however, in which the passage downward of the liquor was followed by a distinct hissing and a slight cloud of steam, as when water is thrown on a hot ploughshare. This, the Sultan explained, was due to their foolish persistence in saving up a prize thirst too long. However, by repeating the cooling operation frequently, the fever in each case was at length assuaged, and the relieved ones patted themselves on their Little Mary's and said, "Aha! Richard is himself again." We knew then that all danger was past.

As the old saw has it, "All roads lead to Wolistoun." Every one ends at the door of the Sultan's caravanserai. No one passes without halting. In fact, it is in common report among the people that every motor car with a vestige of self-respect, automatically stops there and refuses to proceed until its owner has alighted and entered to see the ruler, or his Grand Visier, Ferid el Baldey, about a dog or any other old matter. When the business is concluded, and the owner emerges, with a moist upper lip, a smiling face, and a pronounced bulge in the region of the hip pocket, the car again becomes tractable, and proceeds on its way, purring contentedly in the consciousness of duty faithfully performed. And it is said that even a Ford will, in its mad elation, attempt sometimes to shatter records when its master has tasted happiness in the tavern.

There is little need to descant on the physical appearance of the Sultan, since that is well known to all the Rubinoses, who constitute the great majority of his subjects. Passing reference may, however, be made to his pleasing and happily increasing rotundity. This, he modestly claims, to be the natural reward of a good life—that is, good living. His paths are virtuous and his habits regular. He takes frequent exercise at certain pumps that he has fitted up for that purpose; he has only a few, or more, meals a day, and he never drinks anything stronger than whisky. These things, combined with the daily performance of his benevolent duties and plenty of fresh air on race days, have given him a corpulence that is a joy to himself and every one else but his tailor. That luckless individual declares that if the monarch puts on any more "binjies," he will have to get him to hold one end of the measuring tape while he (the tailor) walks round him with the other.

In his good work of manipulating the pumps, handing out the bottles, saying "Givitanameboys" and piling the shekels into the treasury, the Sultan is ably assisted by his Grand Vizier. And this good and faithful servant has also his reward in a comforting and comfortable adiposity. But, as one star differeth from another, so does the Sultan's corpulence differ from that of the Vizier. For while that of the former inclines more and more to the front so that it threatens shortly to hide his feet for evermore from his sight, that of the latter tends to extend backward, until even now it keeps the chair he sits on a long way away from the rest of his body. The Sultan's fatness has been likened to a coming event that casts its shadow before, but the Vizier's to a stern reality. However, they are good fellows both, and may their shadows never grow less.

At present there are 26,513 steamers in the world, with a tonnage of 54,000,000 tons, while the sailing ships number only 5082, with a tonnage of less than 3,500,000 tons, or one-fifteenth that of the steamers. In 1888 the tonnage of steamers was 36,200,000, and of sailing vessels 12,600,000 or more than one-third of the steamers. In 1850 the steamers and sailing ships were about the same—6,500,000 tons each.

## ANGLING NOTES.

BY "CREEL."

It was a very bright summer's day, the heat and warmth of life radiated from the earth, and brought the beads of perspiration to the angler's brow. Fish were shy so my chum and I adjourned to "Ye olde English tavern," presided over by mine host "Bert." In the cool of the evening bath room life seemed easier, and the fish easier to catch. Seated on a barrel—er—chair, was of course the oldest inhabitant. Addressing my chum and I he said, "Well, gents, you been fishin'?" We assented. "Well," he said, "I don't mind havin' a dr—er talk with you fellers. (He got it), and then proceeded thus: "Yer see, gents, I used to be some angler me'self in me young ter days, and I remembers a day similar ter this, when it was very 'ot an' dry. (Yes, thanks, gents, the same again). An' I wuz fishin' the Noo River at Oporo, just below the railway bridge. Fish wuz very scarce, but 'arter a while a good nor'-wester started to blow, an' the fish began to take alright. I landed some very nice fish, when all of a sudden I strikes a regular beauty, twenty pounds weight, if an ounce. (Here he wiped his lips and Baldey accepted the hint.) Well, gents, I played that 'ere fish up an' down the river just below the railway bridge for an hour, and at last got him near the top of the 'ole, ready to gaff him quick. Jest at that moment, blowed if a train didn't come over the bridge, an' a spark from the engine landed on me line, as I stooped to do the trick. There was a suddint straightenin' of me rod, and the beautiful fish disappeared from sight. Yes, gents, that wuz 'ard luck; blowed if the spark from the engine didn't burn through me line. I've never fished since; took on racin' instead. (Yes, Bert, I'm going home now). Goodbye, gents, take my tip an' never fish near the railway engine."

(The editor and "Jacques," arrived just too late to hear this interesting fisherman who lied in the er—West).

Incidentally I would like to inform Jacques, that under circumstances as related above, not only fisherman—but others—will lie anywhere.

## RE ANGLING CLUB AT GORE.

On making enquiries recently I was rather disappointed to learn that nothing definite had been done in the way of forming a club. I am sure it only wants the convening of the initial meeting to establish a club, and I was assured by some of the anglers, who reside up Mandeville way that they would give the project their whole-hearted support. I would suggest to Messrs J. P. Wylie, Y. Young, L. Popplewell, J. Gillies, Jas. Hoffman, J. McArthur, and other enthusiasts, to make a special effort to inaugurate a club, and the members of the Southland, Mataura, Wyndham, and other clubs, would be only too pleased to send delegates, to give advice, and the benefit of their club's experience in drawing up rules, arranging competitions, etc. Let's hope to get intimation very shortly that the movement is in train.

Mr J. McArthur, Gore, creel 11 fish recently for one day's fishing on the Otamita. Included in the take were two splendid fish that scaled 3lbs 15ozs each. They were caught on the red body Wai-pahi fly.

Owing to a typographical error in last week's notes, Mr A. C. Lyon was credited with two bags of fish secured by Mr H. A. Lyon (ex railway guard).

Mr Geo. Friend, Balfour, fishing the Waimea recently, landed 14 fish averaging about 2lbs. Red body Wai-pahi was the killing fly.

On the Dunsdale last week a local angler creel 15 nice fish on the fly. He reports the river as being exceptionally low for this time of the year and also states that the weed and slime are very bad, the river requiring a good "fresh" to clear it out.

The following is the result of the "bare fly" competition held under the auspices of the Mataura Angling Club on Labour Day:—

Name.	No. of Fish.	Weight.
		lbs. ozs.
D. Cameron	51	39 4
H. Cotterell	37	29 4
D. McGowan	22	17 —
J. Murdoch	21	13 4
	131	98 12

## —Novice Competition.—

W. Murdoch	14	8 4
R. McLean	6	4 —
	20	14 4

## TRIANGULAR CLUB COMPETITION.

We hear that the annual Shield Competition between fourmen teams representing the Southland, Mataura, and Wyndham A.C.'s respectively, will be

decided in all probability on Wednesday, 10th November. This year the waters of the Oreti, in its lower reaches close to Invercargill, are to be the scene of the contestants' finesse and skill with rod and line.

Wyndham Club are present Shield holders.

Wyndham's team is "Messrs J. R. Mitchell, A. Udy, G. Strang and C. King, with Messrs G. Bogue and D. Caldwell for emergencies."

## BIG HAUL OF TROUT.

The second competition of the 1920-21 season promoted by Wyndham Angling Club took place on Wednesday afternoon, October 20th. The conditions, although fairly favourable, were not first-class, a blustering sou'-wester interfering with the best-laid schemes of the competitors. There was an entry of 12 rods, and when "time" was called in Gray's Sample Rooms, at 9 o'clock, 10 anglers had weighed in. The count showed that the aggregate number of fish tallied with the number—134—brought along to the club's opening competition on 1st inst. The total weight this time was fifty 104lbs heavier—114lb 13ozs to 94lb 4ozs. Most of the fish were in prime condition. Mr Gerald Bogue produced the heaviest single fish—scaling 3½lbs. The following was the result of the weigh-in:—

Competitor.	No. Fish.	Lbs. Ozs.
Dave Caldwell	21	19 8
Allan Udy	21	17 8
John E. Mitchell	18	15 12
George Strang	12	14 12
Gerald Bogue	10	11 —
Allan Young	6	9 4
Peter Barnett	12	8 4
Chas. King	15	8 0
A. A. Aitken	9	6 0
J. B. Macpherson	10	5 0
	134	114 13

It was a competition governed by sealed handicaps; and so soon as "weight adjusting" was over, the following were announced as the prizetakers:—

Caldwell (plus 10 p.c.), 21lbs 7 2ozs 1  
Udy (scratch), 17lbs 5ozs 10 4  
Barnett (plus 100 p.c.), 16lbs 8ozs 4  
The other handicaps were:—Mitchell (scratch), Strang (10 p.c.), King (20 p.c.), Young (25 p.c.), Bogue (50 p.c.), Aitken and Macpherson (50 p.c.).

The formal proceedings over, the surplus fish were distributed among the members of the club.

The Southland Angling Club held their initial competition on Labour Day, and some twelve anglers weighed in after their strenuous efforts with rod and line. The conditions were any legal bait on any river in the Southland Acclimatisation district. Some very good bags were caught, and the following is the final result, after the handicaps and conditions were taken into consideration.

Name.	No. of Fish.	Weight.
		lbs. ozs.
R. Sinclair (Dipton)	30	30 8
W. Steel (Invercargill)	30	19 6
J. Ogilvy (Lumsden)	15	14 0
W. Brown (Winton)	30	17 13

## —Other Competitors.—

A. W. McBean	24	18 13
H. Kelly	30	18 0
N. R. MacKay	29	17 0
H. A. Lyons	30	16 8
A. Branks	30	15 13
H. Hammond	30	15 12
A. Macdonald	16	13 13
W. Jenkins	20	8 6
	312	211 8

## ASSISTED PASSAGES.

It has been decided to extend the "boat-inated passages" system to enable any permanent resident of the Dominion to nominate persons residing in the United Kingdom. This can be done irrespective of questions of relationship or occupation, providing that an undertaking is given that employment will be awaiting the nominees on arrival and that adequate provision will be made for their maintenance after arrival. A considerable number of immigrants are awaiting opportunities to secure berthing accommodation to enable them to proceed to the Dominion. In future suitable domestic servants will be granted free third-class passages together with an allowance of £2 for expenses. It is hoped that this may be the means of securing a much larger number of suitable girls for the Dominion. The Imperial Government has commenced its new immigration scheme for ex-service men. These ex-service men, with their dependants, will receive free third-class passages, provided they are approved under one of the agricultural settlement schemes of the overseas Government or are proceeding to assured employment, and are otherwise acceptable to the Government of the territory to which they desire to go.