

RANDOM NOTES.

"A chiel's amang ye takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent 'em."

ACCORDING to the census there is but one beggar in all New Zealand, and Canterbury is the felicitous Province favoured with the possession of this *rara avis*. Perhaps the supposed paucity of the gentry may be accounted for by the fact that the data furnished by the enumerators is the unchallenged report of the persons most interested, and it is a title of which but few are envious. Were, however, the returns to be compiled in other fashion, and the collector to receive the estimate of Magguffin about Magginnis, and *vice versa*, it is very probable the prosperity of the Colony, and the apparent absence of all impecuniosity would be found to be somewhat fallacious. I am not aware whether the representative of this class in which Canterbury rejoices lays his claim to the prerogative in a pecuniary or figurative sense, but I feel convinced that if he puts forward his claim in the latter, and meanness be any qualification for the term, Otago has been grievously wronged by the honor allotted to the sister Province.

Appropos of the foregoing, the following is not a bad case in point; for the truth of which I am prepared to vouch. A local weekly journal, which claims to be the leading paper of its class, and which is now far advanced in its teens, was lately paid a visit by a bucolic subscriber, who urged the fact of over a dozen of years' subscription, to plead the reduction of 6d. per quarter in future. The appeal was supported with a pathetic eloquence which deserved success, but in vain; he was informed that on principle (to be veracious no doubt the orthography would admit of alteration) his petition had to be rejected. With tears in his eyes, the suppliant issued the order which in future would deprive him of his weekly solace, and returned despondingly to his flocks and herds. One week passed, and then another, but the strain was too great, before a third publication had been missed, the disputed sixpence was disgorged, and his dearly bought pleasure once more enjoyed. I believe of all the shires of England, Yorkshire takes the palm for keenness and shrewdness. A story is told of a traveller who had stopped for a few days at an inn in that county, and being struck with the remarkable quickness of the ostler, asked him where he had been born, and how long he had been employed at the inn. On being informed that Yorkshire had given him birth, and thirty years of his life had been passed in the one employ, the gentleman, remembering the reputation of Yorkshiremen before alluded to, remarked, "I wonder that one from your county, possessed of such shrewdness would not have made himself master of the inn during all those years." "Ah, but sir," rejoined the ostler, "You seem to forget that master's Yorkshire too." I need not pursue the simile further; substitute *carefulness* for shrewdness, and change the nationality, and the reason will be apparent why the demand was inexorably refused.

Now that the much-abused Knecker can be no longer a safe stock subject for needy paragraphists, the vacuum caused by his secession would appear to be filled by no less a personage than the Hon. Sir Julius. The absence of the Premier, and his well-known erratic conduct, which seems to be trammelled by precedent, is an inexhaustible subject for the imaginative penny-a-liner, and it is most amusing to peruse the different courses marked out as the future career of the doughty knight. By one he is to replace Dr. Featherston as Agent-General; another marks him out the successor of the Marquis of Normanby; while a third has it upon undoubted authority that the Colony has seen him for the last time, and in future he will fly at higher game than colonial politics. Well, even if any of the three contingencies take place, have we it not on the authority of the 'Guardian' that the Colony is blessed with a rising young orator and statesmen, whose eloquence so far is a stranger to our Colonial St. Stephens. To use an old adage, "There are as good 'Fish' in the sea, as ever are caught."

I am not aware if there is any peculiarity in the climate of Marlborough calculated to deaden the feelings or distemper the mind, but certainly one should be so led to believe who could spare time to glance at the columns of the 'Express.' The effect of a red rag on a bull is not productive of greater effect than the sight of the *TABLET* on the presiding genius of the Blenheim oracle. Improbable as it will appear, its editor is perfectly satisfied to fix upon himself the stamp of unreliability and mendacity for the pleasing but questionable gratification of contradicting a contemporary which has incurred his displeasure. The following appeared in its issue of June 30:—"We have just laid down a Marlborough paper in which 'prime mutton' is advertised as being on sale in Blenheim at twopence per pound. Two pence per pound! 'Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness, some boundless contiguity of shade,' in the Wairau or Kaikouras, that one might eat mutton to the full at twopence per pound. Dear Wellington! Dear in more senses than one. Let our housekeepers compare the Blenheim with the Wellington butchers' bill.—Wellington Tribune." It will be thus seen that the 'Express' takes credit to itself for being the Marlborough paper quoted, and transfers the "feather in its cap" to its columns. The *TABLET* fell into the same error as the 'Tribune,' and published the item as a fact. Forgetting the old adage anent the necessity of good memory, &c., the *Express* became quite oblivious of its self-laudation as the inventor of the news, and thus waxed eloquent in its issue of July 3, four days subsequently:—"Somebody has been cramming the Dunedin *TABLET* again. In its issue of June 19, appears the following sentence:—"In contrast to the rather high-handed action of the Dunedin butchers in raising the price of meat beyond its present extravagant rate, we may mention that at Blenheim beef is sold at 2d. per lb." It then fully contradicts the extract copied into its columns on the 30th ult., and sneers in language peculiar to the 'Express' at the gullibility of the *TABLET* in putting faith in the accuracy of the statement. However, it must be admitted that ungracious as were the sneers indulged in, they were not without reason, for the

TABLET should have known the exact amount of credibility to be accorded a journal which is so barefaced as to brazen forth its want of veracity for the pleasure of "cramming" a contemporary. *Experientia docet*, and no doubt the *TABLET* will give the "Express" a wide berth in future. If the *TABLET* is to blame, its greatest fault lies in the fact that it placed the same amount of credence in the statement of "A Marlborough paper," as that accorded the assertions of respectable journals, and consequently was made the victim of misplaced confidence.

HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

CHRISTCHURCH BRANCH, No. 82.

The following is the Auditor's report and balance-sheet of the Branch to the 10th of June, 1875:—

It is again our pleasing duty to report favorably on the financial position of this Branch for the quarter just ended.

We have carefully examined the books and accounts, and have much pleasure in stating that we have not only found them carefully and correctly kept, but also in a most masterly manner.

The various funds have a good balance to their credit, at the balance-sheet clearly shows.

We beg to call your particular attention to the very creditable manner in which our retiring Secretary has discharged the duties of that office from the establishment of this Branch up to the present time. He has now not only prepared the ordinary balance-sheet of the quarter, but also a summary balance-sheet of the Branch, as also a balance-sheet of cash account. As the work of the Secretary is fast increasing, your auditor's suggest that the Secretary's salary be raised to £25 per annum; and that a guinea be also allowed for each audit, *i.e.*, half a guinea for each auditor per audit. Judging from the amount of work now to be done, we trust that you will agree with us in considering the above only just and reasonable. Herewith we beg to submit the above-named balance-sheets.

CORNELIUS SEXTON, } Auditors.
JOHN O'NEILL, }

Summary Statement of the financial position of the Christchurch Branch, No. 82 of the H.A.C.B. Society to June 10, 1875.

To amount cash in Bank at interest	200	0	0
" " " current account	76	0	7
" " " Executive Directory			
(Funeral account)	51	19	0
			327 19 7
To amount due by members for contributions, goods, &c., &c., over 28s. each	33	0	0
To amount due by members for contributions, goods, &c., &c., under 28s. each	20	15	6
			53 15 6
To amount goods (including Officers regalia and furniture) in use of Branch	41	3	0
To amount goods in hands (or in stock) when sold, shall realise	22	15	6
			63 18 6
			445 13 7
Amount due by Branch to any source whatever			0 0 0
Total			445 18 7

ED. CONNOR, Secretary.

Examined and found correct,

Cornelius Sexton,
John O'Neill.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing term of six months, commencing June 10, 1875:—President, Brother Thomas O'Connell; Vice-President, Bro. E. Connor; Treasurer, Bro. Jas. Hagan; Secretary, Bro. E. Connell, pro. tem.; Assistant Secretary, Bro. Jas. B. Sheath; Warden, Bro. John M'Luigan; Guardian, Bro. Jacob Ely; Sick Visitors, Bros. P. Donnelly and John C. Ridley; Auditors, Bros. John O'Neill and C. Sexton; Medical Attendant, Dr. Campbell.

REEFTON BRANCH, No. 71.

The half-yearly meeting of the Reefton Branch, of the Hibernian Society, was held for the purpose of filling the different offices which had become vacant through effluxion of time. The following brothers were proposed and carried unanimously, as the office-bearers, for the coming six months:—President, Mr. M. Bryan; Vice-President, Mr. C. Crowley; Secretary, Mr. J. M'Arde; Treasurer, Mr. W. Williams; Warden, P. M'Guire; Guardian, Mr. M. Cullen. Brother Vaughan, Past President, proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring officers, which was accorded with acclamation and which was responded to, on their behalf, in a pithy address by Brother M'Arde.

It is a pity that so many excellent stories are "almost too good to be true." Such a tale seems to be the one which explains the origin of that prodigious collection of monkeys which form so large a part of the Jardin d'Acclimatation in Paris. A Bordeaux shipowner, who is noted for insisting on a strict obedience to instructions on the part of his captains, some time ago gave written orders to one of the latter to bring back from Brazil, whither he was going, one or two monkeys—"Reportez moi 1 ou 2 singes." The *ou* was so badly written that the captain read "1002 singes;" and the result was that the owner, three months after, found his ship returning, to his utter stupefaction, overrun with monkeys. For a week apes were a drug in the Bordeaux market, and, adds the story, the Jardin, hearing the news, took care not to lose so good an opportunity of laying in a large stock. A capital tale. Do we believe it?—Well, no; we don't.