

Notes

The First of May.

May-day has passed in Europe without the usual Socialistic eruptions, though it is to be feared that the quietness was not due to any abatement in the demands put forward by the Socialists, but rather to the circumstance that their attention was otherwise occupied. It would be idle to hope that the suppression of the Belgian riots will secure a peace that can be secure and lasting. The elements that caused the upheaval still exist, and, like the fire of a volcano, will escape with the additional violence caused by repression. The Socialistic element on the Continent is a much more deadly and dangerous one than that with which liberal politics are associated elsewhere. The Socialist of New Zealand, for example, is a mild mannered individual who probably wears spectacles, and whose dream of a socialistic paradise is bounded by the rate on the unimproved value, municipal ownership of everything, and representation of minorities, this being varied in as many shades as there are individual idiosyncrasies. But the European Socialist is a much more dangerous animal. He wants blood. He is particularly avid for it in Russia, where indications of unrest are exceptionally alarming. The disaffection seems at length to have permeated the army, for we read that the men of a regiment at Moscow have been removed to a remote province because they refuse to fire on the rioters. And that a marine detachment has been similarly punished for a like reason. The designs of the Nihilists have for many years necessitated the closest guard upon the royal person, and most people have read of the elaborate precautions which are taken to protect the Czar from assassination. Not even the Sultan of Turkey is surrounded by a stronger chain of guards. Therefore a journey from the capital to Moscow, whither the Czar and family go on the 25th of this month to lay the foundation stone of a monument to the late Czar, is a matter for serious consideration. No doubt the French elections have provided a safety-valve for surplus Gallic socialistic energy, and of course recent events in Belgium must account for the absence of disturbances there. Elsewhere the demonstrations seem to have passed off quietly, the enthusiasm of the celebrants probably expending itself in oratorical fireworks. This is at least something to be thankful for.

Wilful Waste.

The Christchurch *Press* has an enterprising and inquisitive reporter who has been noting the astonishing amount of waste that occurs in even a comparatively small city like Christchurch. He gathered his information from a visit to the rubbish destructor. 'Within the last few days,' he says, 'about seven cart loads of rubbish have been taken to the destructor, and already there is a small heap of marketable material, chiefly metal, which has been put aside. Amongst some of the rubbish to be burned are to be noticed shavings and pieces of wood that scores of families would be only too glad to get for household use. There are also a number of bottles, and an enterprising "bottle-oh" man would do well to enter into a treaty with the City Council to obtain all the bottles sent along as rubbish. Any observant person may notice that the same waste occurs in every town and even in the vicinity of many residences. This is the result of a colonial disregard for seeming trifles, and a lofty contempt for small things. It is a well known fact that in large cities elsewhere the household and trade rubbish is eagerly competed for. In the colonies it is thrown to waste or burnt. There was a time in the early goldfield days when pennies were too contemptible for common use, and when threepenny and fourpenny pieces were almost unknown. Some men who formerly despised them would now be glad to pick them up, and the riotous waste that prompted men to light their pipes with bank notes, or eat them sandwiched with bread and butter, could have no other ending but poverty. Even in this small Colony thousands upon thousands of pounds must be wasted annually in disregard of apparently trifling things, but when the national attention becomes roused to the virtues of thrift, as in the individual cases we have mentioned, these trifles will be utilised.

What's in a Name?

Though, as Ophelia says, a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, it is sometimes hard to convince people that no particular efficacy is implied by a designation. There is the liqueur Benedictine, for example, which many people suppose is made by monks. The fact is that the secret of making it was discovered by a druggist, who at first started on a small scale. But as the sale of the cordial grew rapidly, he bought the ruins of the old Benedictine Abbey at Feccamp. He turned this dilapidated structure into a distillery, and called his liqueur Benedictine. As soon as a man or a

woman becomes famous, something or other, usually an article of dress, is named after him or her. The Wellington boot came in about the time of Waterloo, and was the dress footwear of our fathers. Its antithesis, the Blucher, was named after the Duke's rival and friend. The brougham was named after the Lord Chancellor of that name, because he adopted it in place of the old hackney coach, and the victoria was, of course, named after the late Queen. The Albert chain, which superseded the old fob chain or the still older one worn round the neck, and still sported by ladies, was named after Prince Albert, who visited Birmingham in 1849, and received a specimen as a present from the jewellers. The Garibaldi jacket is not even yet extinct, and the Kossuth hat needs no explanation. The Cardigan jacket was first worn in the Crimea, and is named after the leader in the famous charge of the Six Hundred. It is even still worn. To Miss Amelia Bloomer, of New York, the world is indebted for the name of a garment (or is it garments?), much derided among conservative people. Dolly Varden hats and Fauntleroy suits are named after Dickens' heroine and Mrs Burnett's juvenile and aristocratic hero respectively. One can already buy a Bobs suit and a Baden Powell hat. It is not only to articles of dress that the names of celebrities are given. Shakespeare makes Mrs. Page declare that she cannot tell 'what the dickens his name is,' but we must not be misled by this into supposing that the 'Great Scott' of one who is astonished refers to the 'Great Unknown.' It is a modified form of oath, like 'zounds,' 's-blood,' and other favorite expressions of the bloods of former days. The term boycott was created in 1881, when Captain Boycott, an unpopular landlord, was ostracised by order of the Land League. 'None of your blarney' comes down from the year 1602, when one Cormach Macarthy, lord of Blarney Castle, who was a wily and soft-spoken Irishman, wheedled General Carew into raising the siege. The Black Maria, in which prisoners are conveyed from the court to the gaol, owes its name to a burly Boston negress named Maria Lee, who kept a sailors' boarding house. When the constables were in a difficulty, it was a common thing to send for Maria, who collared the refractory and led them to the lock-up. The process of adding words to the language is thus going on every day. Some of them become permanent acquisitions. Others, as ephemeral as the fashion thus indicated, die, and are forgotten only to be resurrected in the pages of contemporary literature.

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.

'THERE'S nothing like a little judicious levity.'

R. L. STEVENSON.

Obituary.

Mr. Dooley observes that 'greatness manes white whiskers.' This accounts for all the fuss that has been made over the polar bear who died recently in the Sydney Zoo. He had white whiskers all over his countenance, and all over the back of his head, and all over his chest, and all down his back right to the end of the little leather tag with which all self-respecting bears conclude. It is strange that we never heard of this bewhiskered old gent before he passed in his checks. But as the philosopher of Archey Road remarks in another place 'Th' principal ingreejment iv fame is bein' dead.' It was so, anyway, in the case of the gentleman who has earned a reputation for nodding.

'Seven cities warr'd for Homer being dead,
Who living had no rooffe to shroud his head.'

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The poor bear died of a cold. The doctor in attendance couldn't tell at first whether it was a cold or only the plague, there is such a similarity between the two complaints. Fancy a cold killing a Polar bear who, up in the Arctic, where his parents earn an honest living by knocking explorers on the head, used to spend his nights perspiring on the shady side of an iceberg. Somebody must have left the gate of the Zoo open and thereby created a draught. Anyway, he has gone where all good bears go to.

The following is the death notice, printed for private circulation only:

In the last week of April, 1902, at his residence, Cage No. 27, The Zoo, Sydney, Pole R. Bear, after a brief but fatal illness; aged 17 or 71 years. Private interment. Flowers respectfully declined. North Pole papers please copy.