

Notes

The Carlists.

The King of Spain, being 16 years of age next Saturday, is to be crowned immediately, and this recalls the circumstance that there has always been a large party in the northern provinces of the country styled the Carlists, who contend that the rightful claimant to the Spanish throne is a descendant of a junior branch of the Spanish Bourbons. When King Ferdinand abrogated the Salic law early in the present century, in the interest of his daughter, Queen Isabella, his nephew, Don Carlos, took it very much to heart. On Queen Isabella's accession to the throne there were a number of Carlist uprisings, which were repeated in 1855 and 1860. The first Don Carlos died without children in 1861, and his rights devolved upon his brother, Don Juan, whose son, the present Don Carlos, was born in 1848. In 1868 Don Juan abdicated his rights in favor of Don Carlos, and in 1872 Don Carlos raised the standard of revolution in northern Spain. This war lasted for four years, until late in 1876, when the last stronghold of Don Carlos, Touloso, was taken, and the remaining Carlists were obliged to flee into French territory. Don Carlos went to Paris, but in 1881 he was expelled from France on account of his sympathy with the Count De Chambord. He has five children; four daughters and one son, who will probably in some future time be a trouble to Alphonso XIII.

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Don Carlos is an exile from his own country, being under a decree of perpetual banishment passed by the Spanish parliament because of his frequent attempts to organise revolutionary movements against the present Government. He is now 54 years old, a man of fine appearance, large stature, a full beard and portly figure. He occupies one of the handsomest palaces upon the grand canal, and remains in Venice almost continuously for reasons over which he has no control, because he is not a welcome visitor at any of the European courts, and France is the only country where he can travel with comfort or pleasure.

Ben Trovato.

There is a story told of a lady who was asked by a neighbor for the loan of a tub. She replied that her tub was leaking; further, that one of the hoops was missing; a neighbor had borrowed the tub; besides which, she hadn't got a tub! Some such reasons underlie the couple of stories which follow:—A minister of the Episcopal Church of America was much abused for intolerance and bigotry. The story was that he had dragged his wife away from a revival meeting and forced her to go home with him. He let the story travel until he had a fair chance to give it a broadside. Here is his reply: 'In the first place, I never attempted to influence my wife in her views or in her choice of a meeting. Secondly, my wife has never attended any revival meeting. Thirdly, I have not myself attended any of these meetings for any purpose whatsoever. To conclude, neither my wife nor myself has any inclination to go to such meetings. Finally, I never had a wife.' A somewhat similar reply is credited to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the present Premier of Canada. He was on what is sometimes called a stumping tour of Ontario during a recent bye election in that province. The election was bitterly contested, and efforts were made both by the Liberals and Conservatives to stir up race and religious prejudice. A Quebec Liberal, whose acquaintance with Sir Wilfrid was only political, sent this telegram to the leader:—

'Report in circulation in this country that your children have not been baptised. Telegraph denial.'

To which despatch the Premier sent this reply:

'Sorry to say the report is correct. I have no children.'

The Shipping Combine.

The formation of the gigantic trust, of which Mr Pierpont Morgan is the head, recalls the reflection that such methods are rapidly becoming universal, and demands the consideration not only of politicians, but of publicists generally. There are already nine great trusts in the United States. These are the American Telephone and Telegraph Co., with a capital of 23 millions of pounds; the Western Union Telegraph Co., with a capital of nearly 30 millions; the Amalgamated Copper Companies, with a capital of 31 millions; the American Sugar Refining Co., with a capital of 18 millions; the Continental Tobacco Co., with a capital of nearly 20 millions; the Standard Oil Co., with about the same amount; the United States Leather Co., with a capital of 25 millions; the Pullman Co., with a capital of nearly 15 millions; and the greatest of all—the United States Steel Corporation, with a capital of 200 millions. Besides these large combines there are others. The total number, according to the list published in the New York "World" Almanac for 1902, is 163, with a combined capital of 800 millions of pounds. From such

figures the colonial commercial imagination shrinks appalled. The national debt of New Zealand is somewhere about 50 millions of pounds. That represents the capital invested in managing the public affairs of, say, 800,000 people. We have not yet been informed of the extent of the capital proposed to be invested by the Morgan Combine in shipping, but it must be very large, as nine millions were given for the White Star line alone. And that line is only one of four of the finest British lines which have passed into American control. Mr Hooley was accounted a wonderful financial genius, and he played only with single millions. The American variety of the genus throws hundreds of millions about and arrests the attention of governments. If President Roosevelt seriously contemplates the clipping of the wings of trust and combines, he should get to work early, ere they become too strong for the Targuinian method of decapitation.

The Martinique Cataclysm.

The eruption on the island of Martinique, one of the French West Indian group of islands, recalls the most disastrous events of its kind which have happened in the world's history. Particularly it brings to memory the eruption of Vesuvius that obliterated Pompeii from the face of the earth. For three days Vesuvius, which is about six miles distant, continued to pour out hundreds of thousands of tons of inflammable matter, which, wafted by the strong winds, rested on the doomed town, and buried it high above the top of the tallest buildings. Under the accumulated weight the roofs soon gave way, and at the end of three days not a single trace of the once busy town could be discovered. Indeed so complete was its extinction that for 1700 years no one seemed to know the location of the town, and to chance alone must be attributed its discovery. The French West Indian Islands are extremely beautiful, and they owe their beauty entirely to their volcanic formation. They were settled by the French in 1665, and have remained in French possession ever since, with the exception of the short interval between 1794 and 1816 when they were British. Mt. Pelee, the source of the present outbreak, is only 4450 feet high, but from the descriptions it would seem that nearly the whole side of the mountain fell in and liberated the confined mass of molten matter. The town of St. Pierre, now obliterated, was singularly beautiful. Travellers have vied with each other in depicting its charms. Indeed, the beauty of the whole group of Antilles is almost unequalled in the world. And the catastrophe brings an added regret from the fact that the people are mild and inoffensive, as well as extremely handsome in form and figure. Distant though Martinique is from France, it nevertheless forms an integral part of the Republic, and sends its members to the Chamber of Deputies. This circumstance will naturally quicken French sympathy, and from the Mother Country as well as from elsewhere the disaster will be mitigated as far as monetary help and sympathy are effectual. In the same volcanic belt lies St. Vincent, now also suffering from a similar visitation from La Soufriere. It was in 1812 that Morne Garon exploded and buried 10,000 people under molten lava. Notwithstanding these calamities people will still cling to the regions, where, however, nature is extremely kind, and soon hides her scars with luxuriant vegetation, and human confidence is restored as quickly.

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.

To Cyclists.

It used to be said when cycling first became fashionable that pedestrians no longer had any rights except funeral rites. But it seems to me that the shoe is on the other foot, and it is time that cyclists did something to protect themselves. Let them form themselves into a society for the Prevention of Inspectors of Nuisances. The other day I was 'biking' along the footpath in a town not fifty miles away from Wanganui, when I perceived a pedestrian turn a corner and come towards me. I was a stranger to the place, and thought the individual was an ordinary sensible citizen. But he was the Inspector. I gave him a wrong name, like the enthusiastic cyclist that I was, and remembered suddenly that I had to see a man about a dog in a neighbouring township that evening. It is quite easy to pick the 'man in blue' the very first time, but not so the Inspector. If I had been able to identify my man I could have pedalled down some side footpath, and so spared myself the

BROPHY & Co.

having had 20 years' experience of the district are in a position to give reliable information as to the Grazing and Dairying capabilities of Property in the Manawatu and surrounding districts