

we fear it will meet. The noble duke's case is of a nature precisely opposite to that of the theatrical manager, who has a space that he is desirous of filling. The manager desires that as many as possible shall gain admission, and for that purpose exhausts the arts that ingenuity can suggest. If he is astute he creates seeming difficulties. He opens the sale at an unprecedentedly early hour in the morning, so that the impression may be created that the worm is only for the very early bird. At other times he ostensibly gives up in despair the attempt to discriminate, and boldly submits the seats to auction, with the result that even hardened playgoers become enthusiastic speculators, sometimes with the very gratifying result that they lose money. But no such device is available on such an occasion as the Coronation. Precedent is the bugbear that stands in the path. In a similar difficulty, though on a much smaller scale, Lord Beauchamp, when Governor of New South Wales, attempted to solve the problem by sending white tickets to favored people giving them admission to a Government House levee by a certain door, and to others, less distinguished, a blue ticket affording access by a less imposing entrance. The device was promptly termed the seidlitz powder, from the ebullition that followed the mingling of the white and the blue, and probably the step contributed quite as much to Lord Beauchamp's unpopularity in Sydney as his unfortunate remark before his arrival about the antecedents of the early settlers. Of course the Duke of Norfolk has no unpopularity to fear, but if he is at all of a sensitive disposition his duties must involve no little discomfort.

The Smallpox.

Colonial immunity from this scourge has led to a great diminution of vaccination, and the Health department has been pointing out by means of a circular that it is necessary to continue the precautions that experience has proved to be effectual. There are considerable numbers who hold conscientious objections to the inoculation of their children, and this has arisen almost entirely from the old system of arm to arm vaccination. It is beyond a doubt that many diseases were spread in this way. Legislation has at length responded to the undeniable demand for relief from this risk, and arm to arm vaccination is now not only discountenanced but absolutely forbidden by law in this Colony. At the same time the Government maintains a supply of pure calf lymph which is given to medical men free of charge. In every centre, also, there are medical men who perform the operation gratis, and thus compulsory observance of the law entails no hardships. The law deals tenderly with such as still retain conscientious scruples about vaccination, and provides a form, to be had on application, which being filled in and handed to the proper official, absolves the parent from penal consequences. It may be admitted that anomalies are to be found which throw doubt on the infallibility of the process—discovered by Jenner, but with a supply of lymph direct from the calf there is little risk of collateral disadvantage, while the figures point to comparative immunity as the result of vaccination. A conscientious objection that is only a scruple, and has not the strength of a conviction, may, therefore, be removed by the reflection that if vaccination does not do any good it can at all events do no harm.

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A curious feature of the recent smallpox epidemic in London was the harvest gained by the insurance offices in connection with it. London's population flocked to insurance offices in order to get insured against the epidemic. In the history of Lloyds no such plethora of insurance was ever recorded as arose on account of the scare. All classes took advantage of the underwriters' charges of 2s 6d per £100 for vaccinated risks, and 3s 4d per £100 for unvaccinated risks, though for the East End districts the premium was as high as 2ls. Some financial men were insured for as much as £7000 against the risk of catching smallpox, but the average policy was about £500. Those who took out insurance policies were said to be curiously indifferent about revaccination. Firms usually making out two hundred policies daily were averaging six hundred, and the insurance brokers and clerks were working long after hours. The medical reports inferred that May or June would be the worst months, which would have been a serious menace for the success of the Coronation festivities, but recent cables state that the epidemic has abated.

Swords into Ploughshares.

Mr. Seddon's prophecy that the blockhouses would be turned into creameries and butter factories is an exceedingly happy variant of the text which refers to the turning of swords into ploughshares. Mr Seddon is the child of fortune. He has but to hold up his cap and favors fly into it. From the very inception of the South African war events have so shaped themselves, so far as New Zealand's connection with it is concerned, that Mr Seddon has come out prominently on every occasion. When other men were silent, he spoke. When others hesitated he acted. When in the earlier stages of the

war terms were spoken of, Mr Seddon declared that no peace compatible with the independence of the Boers would satisfy the colonies. In this phrase he created and crystallised a colonial sentiment, and raised New Zealand, which is among the smallest of the colonies, at a bound from the position of a dependency to the status of an active consulting partner in the Imperial firm. Undoubtedly the moral effect of Mr Seddon's actions on the Continent has been prodigious. It has probably been far greater than the circumstances warrant, and there may be some compunctious reflections that our irrepressible Premier has to some extent made us all partners in his 'bluffing.' But even if this should be the case, it is undeniable that in such a juncture the end justified the means. And now, as if to strew more roses in his path, Mr Seddon is on the spot where the peace negotiations are going on. Doubtless he has met the redoubtable De Wet and the other Boer leaders at Vereeniging, and if, as now seems well assured, peace follows, the funny papers will be provided with an excellent text for descanting on the influence of his personality. Thus will lustre be added to his participation in the ceremonial in London, and his royal progress through the kingdom, and thus will again be verified the ancient saying which in the modern vernacular reads: 'It is better to be born lucky than rich.'

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.

Allopath v. Homœopath.

It is true that New Zealand is in the volcanic line (as if it were some commercial traveller), but I have expert authority for stating that the recent discussion in Dunedin anent medical etiquette has nothing to do with the cataclysm in Caribbee. The simple fact of the matter is that, as somebody has remarked before, doctors differ and patients die. It appears that amongst medical men there are two schools, or to speak more correctly, kindergartens, the allopathic and the homœopathic; and the members of the former don't 'play speaks' with the members of the latter, or let them 'play in their yard' or 'holler down their rain-barrels.' Lay persons can hardly tell one school from another. Both kinds dig you in the ribs and feel your tongue, and ask you to poke out your pulse, and cough and come again. And both kinds write worse hands than a boy in Standard II. But there is a difference. The allopath principle is to cure by producing in the patient unlike symptoms to those of the complaint treated. For instance, if you are suffering from cacoethes loquendi or a gumboil on your back, the allopath will keep pattering about with you until he has succeeded in giving you a hob-nailed liver or the plague. The homœopathic principle is to cure by producing in the patient like symptoms to those of the complaint treated. Thus if you have broken your leg with an axe, the first thing a homœopath will do is to break your other leg with an axe. The one point upon which all agree is that payment by results is an invention of the gentleman who goes about, as Artemus Ward says, 'like a roarin' line seekin' whom he may devour sumbody.'

Superstitions.

There is one thing in favor of the doctors—namely, they have done away with the necessity of having witches or seventh sons of seventh sons about the place. In 'ye good olde day,'

'ere doctors learned to kill

And multiplied with theirs the weekly bill,'

if a man had anything between a broken back and that tired feeling, he would apply to the aforesaid seventh son of a seventh son for a drink of boiled weeds, gathered with the left hand on a moonlight night while he stood facing nor-east by south and repeated something like 'Sockdologer, sockdologer.' Now he goes to the doctor and seems to get just as well. Some people laugh at these old superstitions. Nevertheless some of them contain a good deal of sense. A White Island man kept a horseshoe over his kitchen door for a long time. At last it brought him good luck by falling on the head of his biggest creditor, giving him concussion of the brain. And everybody must admit that it is unlucky to get run over by a train on a Wednesday. It is also said to be unlucky to get married on a Friday. That is true, anyway. Why should Friday be an exception?