

Mr. James Browne ("Snyder"), late editor of the Poverty Bay Standard, has commenced business in Gisborne as auctioneer and commission agent. His life has been a singularly changeful one. In the early days of Tasmania he was a newspaper writer. Shortly afterwards he became a stationer and music-seller in Geelong, and followed that up by entering into the crockery-ware business. It was not long, however, before he resumed literary pursuits, and became a contributor to the Geelong Commercial Advertiser and Looker On, a small evening sheet. When the goldfields broke out in New Zealand, he left Victoria, which at that time was suffering from a terrible financial crisis, and came over to Otago, where he became connected with some of the public journals, and acted as "Own Correspondent" for the Lyttelton Times and other New Zealand papers. From thence he went to Marlborough, and started a paper during the Wakamarina rush at—we believe—Marlborough; but the diggings were a failure, and the hopeful population that had grown sufficiently large within a few days to maintain a paper were compelled to decamp, leaving insufficient support to keep the paper going. "Snyder" next turned up on the West Coast, where he was connected with several newspapers, and was proprietor of one during the palmy days. Strange to say, however, his West Coast newspaper career was characterised by the same misfortune, and he besought fresh fields. After numerous changes, our hero found himself in Auckland, where he was engaged editing the Herald, with his son Montagu—the late sub-editor of the defunct Guardian, and the "Simpson" of the Mercury, and subsequently sub. of the Otago Daily Times—as sub-editor. Next we find him at Coromandel, proprietor of the Coromandel Mail, where he lived a life of seclusion for about a year, his native wit and humour, like sparks from the anvil, penetrating into the remotest corners of the Colony, and illuminating the face of many a reader. The Poverty Bay Standard was the next paper that had the benefit of his facile pen, and now he has abandoned a life in which he would have been a bright star had he chosen to adhere to his particular line in some populous centre. He is now an old man; but we would not be surprised if he were to burn his rostrum and hammer, and resume a life of literary toil, anxious to give to the world his ideas on auctioneers, frequenters of auction rooms, and the auction business in general. It would be worth reading.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT.**—Mr J. Browne writes as follows:—"I trust that space will be found in your issue of to-morrow to allow me an opportunity of returning my most grateful thanks to all those gentlemen who acted with so much kindness, and gave such generous aid and careful attention to me after meeting with a severe and painful accident on Saturday night last. To the assistance I received from the young brothers Macfarlane, I am probably indebted for my life. Had they not have come so timely to my aid I should in all likelihood have remained on the spot throughout the night, on which I was thrown from my horse. I desire to express my thanks to Mr Saunders, the landlord of the Roseland Hotel, to whose house I was taken. I shall never forget his considerate kindness and help. To Mr Daniel Page, I owe my bringing to town. A more tender and skillful man to remove a sufferer in great bodily anguish without increasing it, I cannot imagine. To the prompt professional attendance of Dr Howell, and to Mr H. E. Webb, I also have to express the gratefulness of my feelings. To all others who kindly aided me my most sincere acknowledgments are due. If I have not expressed myself in the way I could wish, it is because I write in great pain lying in a position in which a pen can only be used with great difficulty.—I am &c., James Browne.

## Poverty Bay Herald

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The respect in which the late Mr James (Snyder) Browne was held, was fully demonstrated by the large following at the funeral on Sunday afternoon. The deceased gentleman, being a Mason of long standing, was accorded a Masonic burial, some 90 members being present. There was a very large gathering of ladies and children at the cemetery. The Rev Mr Fox read the burial service, and at Holy Trinity Church in his evening service referred in very expressive terms to Mr Browne's death. The Masonic ceremony, accompanied with the usual honors, was very impressive.

The following, which is written to the Otago Daily Times by its Auckland correspondent, refers to one well known in Greymouth:—"It may interest some of your readers to hear that Mr James Browne, formerly on the staff of your paper, and well-known in Dunedin, gave a lecture at the Mechanics' Institute, which, for racy humor, has not been surpassed in Auckland. The subject selected was the 'Reminiscences of a Journalist.' These reminiscences extended over a period of thirty-five years. Mr Browne took his hearers back to the convict times and the autocratically-ruled press of Tasmania, and carried them through the struggles of Bent and Falconer to establish, under great difficulties, the freedom of the Press there. Those were days when the triangles were rigged at the pleasure of the Governor, and white men, whether convict or free, were liable to the lash, without hope of practical redress from the authorities of the Colonial Office in London. The personal experiences of Mr Browne—then a lad—were agreeable enough, but he soon quitted Tasmania, with other adventurous spirits, for the mainland of Port Philip. Thence, in afterdays, in various parts of the continent and in New Zealand, his experiences were of the most varied character. Richly told, and abounding in traits of kindness, the lecture took well, and the lecturer was vociferously applauded. One of the most telling bits was his description of the consequences of the practice peculiar to English papers of giving reports of trifling cases of debt and drunkenness of no interest to the public, but of infinite importance to the Mrs Grundys of their respective streets. Mr Browne was eloquent especially in showing the miserable effects on erring or thoughtless young men, thus branded publicly by the practice, which he, it is to be hoped, not vainly denounced."

The 'Coromandel Mail' says:—Mr William Sharpe, the engineer of the Mania has stated in the presence of several persons, that he will throw all letters and papers overboard which are addressed to the Editor of this Journal. Legally and perhaps morally we do not think he has any right to do this; but nevertheless by doing so he will be conferring on us a great obligation. The letters sent us are usually of a most unpleasant nature. They are for the most part dunning letters demanding payment for moneys due and owing; letters asking disagreeable questions and et cetera, which we never care to read and never reply to. We should take it as a personal favor on the part of William Sharpe if he would throw us overboard in the body when we take passage in the Mania. We are tired of the monotony of life, and the very indifferent beer obtainable in Coromandel. We wish to be with the angels, or to become a twinkling star, or to go and keep company with the man in the moon who must lead such a dull and wearisome life. We would sooner be anything than what we are. Take your way of it O, engineer.—*Confide recte agens*

Mr James Browne, better known under the *nom de plume* of "Snyder" has, we learn, given up the proprietorship of the *Coromandel Mail* to take the editorship of the *Poverty Bay Standard*. The proprietor of that journal, in securing the services of Mr Browne will, we feel sure, not be long in discovering that he has obtained one of the most experienced and versatile journalists in the Colony. As a humorist and descriptive writer Snyder has no equal, certainly no superior in New Zealand. As editor of the *Auckland Herald*, in which journal he commenced and continued to write for nearly three years a series of most humorous articles under the title of "My Sentiments," he succeeded in very largely increasing the circulation of that very old established journal. "Old Snyder," as he is generally called by all those to whom he is known, is never offensive, never personal, and never wounds or hurts the feelings of those whose acts or words it may be his business to comment on. In private life Mr Browne is very much respected, and from his genial nature and large fund of anecdote and personal recollections, extending over a life period in the several Colonies of the Southern Hemisphere, his society and companionship are always welcomed.

We are glad to notice that the *Weekly News* has shown its sense of what is right and proper when it falls into error. We take the following from this week's issue of that journal:—"In accordance with the rules of fair journalism an apology is due to 'Snyder,' for having charged him with plagiarising from Mark Twain, and in making it I do not wish to impair its force by any absurdly improbable explanations. But while accepting all the blame attaching to 'putting my foot in it,' I must disclaim being actuated by the motives attributed by 'Snyder.' I do not, and could not, entertain feelings of envy, hatred, or malice towards the writer of the articles bearing the above signature. Perhaps it is only right to state that I myself was ruthlessly sold and imposed upon thereby. I was assured positively by a gentleman (not in any way connected with this journal) that the articles were identical, which turns out to be incorrect, although a certain resemblance in the structure of the sentences, and the vein in which the subject is treated, might easily mislead one unless reading them side by side. Remembering how the *HERALD* had already annexed wholesale paragraphs from the *Danbury News*, I thought it just possible (after the positive statement made to me) that 'Snyder' had for once yielded to a similar temptation. I am glad to find that such is not the case, and I therefore hold my informant morally responsible for this journalistic squabble.—*CAMEO.*"

THE St. George's (London) Chronicle records the death of Mrs Evan Williams, who died suddenly on the 16th June at her private residence, Great Portland street, London, in her 80th year. For the long period of fifty years the deceased lady gave the whole of this long portion of her valuable life to the spiritual wants and in relieving the sick and the suffering poor in the West End of London. All the business places on the line of the funeral procession were closed, and the streets thronged with mourners, young and old, to whom the Samaritan lady had given her best years in relieving their needs. Mrs Williams at one time enjoyed the confidence of her Majesty the Queen in distributing her private charities. The coffin was covered with wreath offerings, and many by request were placed in her grave. The deceased lady was the eldest daughter of Lord Viscount Montague Browne, who in 1805 sunk his title when his estates passed away from him. In society he only permitted himself to rank as a private gentleman. Mrs Williams was a sister of Mr James "Snyder" Browne, bookseller of Gisborne, who is now the sole surviving member of one among the oldest of English families.

The Gisborne correspondent of a Southern contemporary writing his first impression of Gisborne, says:—"Then the members of the glorious Fourth are a fine lot here, generous to a fault, and not possessed of those narrow indel feelings which actuate journalists in other towns of more importance than Gisborne. There is a sort of harmony of ideas, and a desire to help each other along, which one cannot but admire. Of course I've met Snyder, a thorough Press man. I knew he was the first time we exchanged greetings, because he said to me after being introduced, 'How-are-you-old-man-come-and-have-a-drink?' The greetings and the liquor were all mixed in the one breath, so I was sure he belonged to the Fourth Estate. Then I met another Press man there, on a flying visit from the South, and I was also certain he belonged to the inky ilk because he said, 'How are you, lend me ten bob.' There was a little difference in the greetings, but they are both familiar to the profession."

### THE LATE MR BROWNE.

NEARLY every paper in the Colony has published an account of the life of the late Mr Browne, accompanied by appropriate remarks. The N.Z. Times says, "He belonged to a very old family, but seldom spoke of his pedigree." The Dunedin Star says, "His humorous writings under the signature of 'Snyder' were once familiar to every newspaper reader from the North Cape to the Bluff." The Taranaki Herald reprints a short autobiography Mr Browne once published, from which it appears that, quitting his friends without leave, he first went to South America, and from there to Tasmania in 1844, and at Launceston an accident made him a reporter. Having narrated how he had been engaged to do the book-keeping (of which he knew nothing), Mr Browne proceeds:—"A few minutes after introducing myself to the newspaper editor and proprietor, his solitary reporter (an assigned servant) in a state of inebriation staggered into the office and helped himself to a corner of the table, and resting the heel of his right boot on his left thigh, he commenced by declaring he wasn't going to stand it any longer. He would be d—d if he would. "Here," he went on to say, "is that jolly old parson at it again to-night with piety and the plate. You'll want me to report the speech, and I won't. I have had to report five religious meetings in the last fortnight, and upon my responsible soul I am getting religiously mad. I won't do it, and I want someone to lend me eighteen-pence;—eighteen-pence is one-and-six-pence. Will anyone lend me one-and-six to keep me quiet? I don't want to break or spill anything, but I want one-and-six. First, second, third and last time at one-and-six. If no one says one-and-six, then make it a Robert." The editor said I would have to go and report the clergyman's speech. . . . I reported the speech, but I know that it came out something fearful. I put words into the speaker's mouth he never uttered, so that when it was read the following day the parson, to any impartial reader, not knowing his kindly honest nature, would estimate him as something to which a burglar must have appeared quite an amiable character.

"Snyder," in the Poverty Bay Standard recently produced a funny paragraph upon the intellectual acquirements of the Justices of the Peace of this colony. The editor of the John O'Groat Journal, published at Wick, Scotland, has accepted "Snyder's" observations in sober earnest, and in the exuberance of his joy at the comparison furnished by the "Great Unpaid" of his immediate neighborhood reproduces "Snyder's" paragraph with the addition of the following heading, "Nothing So Bad In Caithness."