

all kinds were charged by the town clerk either to "sundries" or "incidentals. If a petition was sent in by suburban rate-payers, complaining of the streets, we would see into matter at once, so as not to allow burgesses the opportunity of saying we were dilatory. The clerk would be instructed forthwith to order four carriages for the next morning, when we would drive out and inspect the nature of the complaint for ourselves. We would remain all day, and sometimes late into the evening, viewing the long lines of streets, which were with verdure clad, from the balcony of an hotel, when we would drive back to our homes. At the next meeting the expenses of the carriages, the landlord's bill for liquors and *et ceteras* would be charged to No. 1, 2, 3, or 4 Ward, as the case might be. If we had lately been sticking it on heavy to Ward No. 1, we would tell the clerk to charge it to some other ward. We always acted impartially in these matters. The town clerk was a remarkably pleasant man. He used to invite councillors four times in the municipal year to a grand dinner at his own expense. Always within a week after one of these dinners, the clerk would ask for a rise of salary, which he at once obtained. When, at last, he was afraid to ask for any more "rises," he requested clerical assistance. We acceded to this application at a picnic to which he had invited councillors and their wives and families. We allowed him clerical assistance on three different occasions. I recollect once, when he presented the account for clerical assistance, we asked him whom he had employed. He said no one—he had done the work himself during office hours, and therefore, considered he was entitled to draw it. We were so struck with the reasonableness of the explanation and the clerk's powers of hard work, that we raised his salary on the spot twenty-five per cent., upon which, the same night, he treated us all to boxes at the theatre at his own expense. I remember, on the occasion, Coppin played in "Jeremy Diddler." There was nearly a row when the burgesses came to know that incidental expenses and petty expenditure exceeded the amount spent in local works by £2000. The rate-payers grumbled and threatened to call a public meeting; but, as we had just borrowed £25,000 of one of the banks, and being well in funds, we quieted their complaints by knocking the rate down from two shillings in the pound to ninepence. All of us had proposed to retire at the expiration of the year, which was a fortnight previous to the interest on the loan falling due; so, of course, we would be right enough. We voted ourselves a guinea for sitting on a committee when business was done, and half a guinea for an adjourned committee. Committees sit ten minutes, and adjourn once a week for six months on a stretch. I never knew such indefatigable committeemen as we were. They were good times then. There was not a wife's brother of us, or a nephew, or an uncle, who hadn't a corporation contract on hand, and the corporation used to shell out its money to assist them to carry on the work, and pay wages and material. We had no difficulty over our water scheme. One councillor had a pond five miles distant, which he called a lake, with a native name to it; another had a creek twenty miles away, which was dry nine months out of the twelve; and one, who was an engineer, wanted to raise water from the river by means of a powerful pump, driven by local-made steam-engines. The burgesses didn't care which way it was, because they were informed there would be no additional taxation. Well, we didn't go and quarrel—not we. There were four schemes, and we drew lots for them in the clerk's private room, out of the Mayor's hat. The one who drew the longest strip of paper was to name the particular scheme, and we were all to vote for it, which we did, and when tenders were called and accepted there was not a councillor but considered he had done his duty. That £25,000, and the money raised for the water scheme, has not been paid to the present day, and councillors who had nothing to do with raising or spending the loan (as I read by the local newspapers regularly forwarded me) are being blackguarded by the municipal public for burdening them with excessive rates to pay off the interest, repayment of the principal not being dreamed of. Now this was what I call something like doing the councillor business. We never called one another names, nor imputed motives; but we increased in flesh, and our families multiplied; we waxed fat but never kicked; and I look back with pride to my past municipal career, and hope, when I am elected to the next vacancy in the

Tauranga Council, I shall be instrumental in inaugurating quite a new regime.

HOW TO GET RICH.

I suppose there is scarcely a day passes by but what someone says he wishes he were rich. Now if to have more money than you owe or spend is to be rich nothing is easier. One may learn the art of becoming rich just as easily as he may learn to be a blacksmith or a carpenter. To know how to grow rich is one of the simplest of the lower arts and sciences. This is it. You earn fourpence; you spend twopence, and put the other twopence somewhere in safe keeping; and so on until your twopences grow into shillings, and pounds and hundreds and thousands. If you see a man in distress pass him by. If a man appeals to you for a charitable donation button up your trousers pockets and say I wish you a very good morning. That's the way to get rich and there is nothing easier to learn. The worst of getting rich is that when you have got your heaps together your people will be wanting you to die that they may get your money and perhaps only to make ducks and drakes of it. Now I don't want my relatives to want me to die, and so whenever I get ninepence more than what I owe—but when that will be who shall say?—I intend to stop getting richer. If my relatives want me to die for ninepence they are a mean lot that's what I say. But upon my word there are people in this world who would pray for your death to secure eightpence and your old clothes.

AN ARTFUL DODGE.

It was very artful, and he gloried in it; he thought it was smart. So it was. It wasn't bacon, nor it wasn't ham, but it was something in that line of business. It was an article scarce in the Auckland market. It was scarce pretty generally throughout the colony. A trader in it says to a customer, "The article is uncommon scarce. I'm going to hold at present for a stiff price, and I'm just going down to the telegraph office to tell my agent to hold." And presently the trader goes down to the telegraph office. Well, you know how careless people are when they are writing out telegrams from a copy they have prepared. They forget and leave the copy behind them on the telegraph desk. Well, the trader I refer to went down to the telegraph office to tell his agents to hold on for a very stiff price, when what should stand between him and his gaze but the rough copy of a telegram left carelessly and unthinkingly among the telegraph forms. It read this way: "I have twenty-five thousand bushels afloat. Will be a drug in the market within a fortnight. Sell all you can at any figure." Then the trader was taken aback, and instead of telling his agents to hold, he told them to realise at any figure. And they realised, and the agent of that man who had so forgetfully left the telegraph message on the telegraph office desk bought the whole stock, and cleared the matter of three hundred pounds. There was no twenty-five thousand bushels afloat. The article was scarce; it is scarce now. But it is too late for the trader to tell his agents to hold, after he told them to let go—and they let go. But he won't act upon any future occasion, upon information left outside the window of a telegraph office. For that telegraph message was a plant. No copy of it was ever sent. It was a smart trick, wasn't it? but not a clean one.

MY MILKMAN'S VIEWS ON A MILK-AND-WATERY SUBJECT.

HE had just turned from the kitchen door, and was going away up the back steps, when I came out, and I said to him, "Now, is the milk you have served that little lady of mine with the genuine article; is it pure and unadulterated, and quite OK, with no nonsense about it?"

Then the man having turned round and faced me, placed a can, one of which he held in each hand, on the ground, and penetrating me with his gaze, quietly remarked that it was a cold morning and the days were uncommon short.

I said that was no answer to my question. Was his milk what it should be? was it the kind of milk the "Dairyman's Daughter," whom he must have read all about, would serve out to a moral, paying customer? Was it pure and undefiled?

Then the milkman, with quite a sweet smile, said he had been told beef would be up tuppence a pound in about another

week, which would make it come down hard on the poor.

"Now," I said, "you are evading my question. I ask you once more, has the milk I am paying for had the butter taken out of it, and the cream off of it? Has it been skimmed and soluted with water? Is it the same quality of article we read of that is to be found in the land which is said to flow with milk and honey?"

And the milkman fell into a reverie. After a time he said, in a small still voice, that a land which flowed with milk and honey must have lots of two things. Lots of cows and lots of bees; and he couldn't help thinking that the bees would be very hard on the cows. It was not a country he should care to set up in in his line of business. Here he stopped, and set to thinking again.

I said, "You have not given a reply to my enquiry. You have heard of the law in connection with milk, and the law will be put in force."

He remarked, "The law be blow'd." "And your milk, then," I said, "is not the genuine article—not the clean potato, so to speak, or you would not evade a straight up and down enquiry."

The milkman came down two steps; walked towards a table outside the kitchen door, and sat down on a corner of it.

"Mr Snyder," he said, "I recollect once my mother give me something for dinner which I couldn't make out what it was. The smell of it, and the look and the taste of it left it a mystery. So I said, 'Mother, old girl, what sort of o' grub is this?' wher she turns round from the fireplace and she says, 'Jem, don't you ask no questions, when I won't be a telling you any lies.' Now, I takes you to be a gentleman with an uncommonly large sum total of a very fine understanding, which is betrayed in your countenance, as clear as the look of a guilty conscience when it is detected in the very act of stealing a pair of boots. What my mother said to me I say to you; and don't you be too inquisitive. Now, look here,—cows is dear to buy and dear to feed, and they gives very little milk, and it can't be done a the price it's going at, no how, without the introduction of water, as a system by which a milkman won't be seized on for rent nor summoned for tucker."

I said, "Why not charge more for your milk?"

"Will you give it? Will you give me tuppence more a quart than I'm charging?"

I said I would.

"Ah, you might, or you mightn't; but we'll say you might, after a civil growl or two. But will old mother Shanks, next door, give the extra tuppence? or old mother Skinemalive over the way? Rayther not. The old girls would tell me that they could get their milk cheaper from another man. But not the genuine article, mum," I says. "Oh," says Skinemalive, "I don't see that there's no difference. You all cheat much of a muchness, and I ain't going to have my milk of you if you charge more than anyone else." And what one old woman says a young woman says, and an old man worth, may be, twenty thousand pounds a year, says. Why, if I was as honest as would carry off the gold medal at a grand exhibition, I couldn't get people to believe it when the question of tuppence a quart extra was brought on the board. There's the magistrate, who is a very nice gentleman for a select tea-party on a small scale, goes and tells a man as how he makes four-and-fourpence a day out o' water, which he ought to be ashamed of himself. Now that man has to my knowledge got six little uns, besides what's before him for seven of 'em, which, of course, I'm not supposed to know anything about. He can't make four-and-tuppence out o' milk, and so he has to make it out of water, which is about as innocent a way as he can set to work. Look at them noospapers backing up the Magistrates. One says that adulterated milk is death to children and has been sending ever such lots on 'em to the grave. Why there's nothing I know of so bad for a little baby as new milk as it comes from the cow. You put the milk down its little throat and then dandle the little thing on your knee, when the shaking of the new milk inside turns it into fresh butter, and cream cheese, and curds, which gives babies indigestion and tightens 'em up like a drum, when they go to an early grave, and put their parents to all sorts of expense for mourning. Mothers are very forgetful. Milkmen ain't not so much so; and so it is that children never die from new milk from the cow at 4d a quart. I don't see why

milkmen in particular are to have a down put on 'em. If I do put water in my milk it ain't so bad as short-weight bread with alum in it, or coffee with sawdust, as one of the noospapers say it is, or sand in sugar. I go to a chemist, and says my little girl's got something wrong in her inside, and he puts me up a bottle of stuff of which he says she is to take a teaspoonful once every four hours, with two small pills, which is to be taken one at night and one in the morning, and a box of sarve, which is to be rubbed in when the pains come on; and he charges me four-and-six for what don't cost him threepence, and says, 'No, my good man, you don't catch me giving eightpence a quart for milk.'

"I'll tell you what it is, Mr Snyder, we all live by getting the better of one another; some one way and some some other way. I believe it's a wise provision of nature. It keeps us lively and wide-awake, when on the contrarywise we should be a continually dropping off to sleep. A man says to me, 'I'll toss you for two pints of beer.' I say, 'No, you don't. That would be placing things on an equal footing. The coin is just as likely to come down man as woman; but I don't mind playing you a game of euchre for a drink;' because, you see, Mr Snyder, I think I could lick him at that. The people in this blessed world is always trying to play the winning game.

"Now, Mr Snyder, this is a cold morning, and I don't mind striking a deal. If you have got such a thing as a little good rum inside your establishment to give away, I'll supply milk upon the same terms, and halve and divide with you."

I hadn't the rum, and so, as my milkman remarked, "it was impossible for the thing to eventuate."

WHAT THE LANDLADY TOLD ME CONCERNING WICKEDNESS

YES, Mr Snyder, what you say is quite true, landlords of hotels do see some strange things, so do landlords' wives. They call this Auckland by some very fine names, as you know. They call it the City of Churches, and they call it by the name of the Twelve Apostles, and they say this thing and the other thing of it; but I see a good deal that makes me at times think quite different.

You see this is a respectable quietly conducted hotel, and it's a little out of the way and that's why we are often patronised, although I don't sometimes like the patronage we get. But then, you see, Mr Snyder, what are we to do? I can't be going to ask every married couple who comes here for accomodation for a night or a week or two as the case may be, whether they have got their marriage certificates in their pocket. May be they have and may be they haven't. You see the thing can't be done.

Once a couple came to me, just as gentle a couple as you would wish to look upon. Well, they said they were going away south by the steamer which started in a couple of days, and they wanted to stop at the hotel. Of course, as we had accomodation, I was very glad to tell them that they should be made as comfortable as possible. Then the gentleman calls for sherry and water for the lady, and a whisky hot for himself. My husband goes about getting the drinks, while I sat down in a chair, and began to think a bit.

I said to myself, I have seen that gentleman's face somewhere; but for the life of me I couldn't at the moment recollect. Then I goes into the kitchen to tell the cook about what he was to get for his breakfast next morning. After this I went to tidy up the bedroom where the gentleman and his wife were going to sleep. Then I went into the bar to relieve my husband while he got his supper. And all this time I was thinking where I had seen this gentleman's face before. I knew I hadn't seen the lady's—at least, not that I recollect; although I must say there was a manner and a look about her I did not much care for.

Well, all of a sudden the whole thing came before me like a dream, and I jumps up and goes into the private parlour, where the two were sitting talking together, and beckoning the gentleman out I told him I wished a few words. He was very polite indeed, and said:—

"Certainly—what was it I wanted?" Then I looked at him straight in the face which he didn't seem to like a bit; for he looked down and made pretend to brush the knee of his trousers with his pocket handkerchief.

"Now," I said, putting my hand on his shoulder, "that lady in the room is not