

down while describing circles around it. Portions were making for the back-yard, and parts of it travelled in the direction of the coal-box. Later in the day I interviewed the brewer, and he laughed, which riled me considerably. He said it

was my earliest attempt. I was like a mother with her first baby, just a little awkward about the matter. The next effort on my part would be crowned with a success which would entitle me to my own congratulations. He would send for the keg and have it replenished. I hadn't the courage at the moment to say, "Don't do anything of the kind," for at that moment he was operating on my behalf at a hoghead into a crystal goblet. The keg came home again. This time the tap worked to perfection. It didn't miss fire once. I delighted to show my friends what an economical arrangement I had entered into. And they all declared that nothing could be finer. It was on the third afternoon the tap refused to yield its liquid treasure. I thought I hadn't taken the peg out of the air-hole, but I had. I thought then the hops might have got into the tap, and I blew up the spout until warm air was felt to be coming out through the spile. Then it was I discovered the cask didn't hold any contents. The operations of trying that tap had been too much and too heavy for it to stand against.

I got an arithmetic book, and making every allowance for omissions, I ascertained that every half-pint of beer I had consumed on my own account stood me in one and fourpence ha'penny. Afterwards I found it stood me eighteenpence; for when the bill was delivered at a later day I ascertained six shillings was charged for the cask. I complained of this to the brewer; I said casks wasn't beer. The brewer said when I sent the cask back he would return the six shillings. I went back home to give instructions, and found that the female of my household had knocked the head in and converted it into a kitchen coal-skuttle. I think a problem in political and domestic economy might be worked up out of this touching narrative.

OUR COMMERCIAL MORALITY.

If there is one man in the two islands of the colony whom I respect more than another, it is His Honor the Chief Justice. I often feel tempted to go and steal a horse, or to get appointed treasurer to a company, that I may work out problems in cash-books, and eventually get convicted, which would allow me receive a sentence at the hands and from the lips of His Honor. I know he would do it so gently, and in such a kind and persuasive manner. It would be accomplished so unostentatiously, yet withal with so much firmness and goodness, and in such mild and choice language, that when he mentioned the terms of years for which the governor of the gaol was to take me under his protection, I should leave the dock wishing the sentence was a much longer one, that I might have enlarged opportunities in the vigils of the night, or in the intervals of stone-breaking, of contemplating the way that sentence was delivered, and so improve my mind.

It is always a subject of pleasant thought to me to feel that I have been permitted to render that good judge some service; for was it not I who instructed His Honor in the game of "Yankee grab?" which enabled him in so lucid a manner to sum up a case after a three day's patient hearing of Maori witnesses, who, when upon oath, can lie harder than any other people under the stars, including all the rest of the heavenly bodies. It was one of those actions in which the Maoris and Europeans were concerned, and in which sections of land were also concerned; but whether it was the noble savages who were trying to get the better of the enlightened Europeans, or vice versa, I waver and fluctuate, and feel in the aggregate nonplussed.

On the occasion under notice there was a division between two parties of certain allotments. When the division was drawing to a close, it was discovered that an odd allotment remained over and above, which was disposed of by the contending parties going "Yankee grab" for it. This transpired in evidence, when His Honor, leaning forward in his seat, said, "Gentlemen, may I enquire what is to be understood by the term 'Yankee grab?'" But the barristers present merely muddled the explanation, and he remained in a mental fog until the next day, when I explained to His Honor (in print) that "Yankee grab" was a combination of skill and chance, by which a triplicate of dice might be thrown a given number of times in

settlement of any difference of opinion as to who of two or more should cover the expenditure incurred in the ordering of a bottle of wine. It was also explained to His Honor that there were precedents on record where a conclusion had been arrived by the same process in the matter of two half-pints of ale, delivered in tankards of pewter. Was it not also I who explained to the whole Bench of Judges all about the powers given to the right bower in eucbre, and that to be eucbred was a humiliating reflection to any man who had allowed himself to be placed in that position. All this is merely preliminary to show that Judges are but mortal, and it is not their fault if they don't know everything.

A young man appeared before His Honor a few days ago, and obtained, through the admirable machinery of our bankruptcy laws, a discharge from all his pecuniary liabilities. On this occasion, His Honor addressing the young gentleman soon about to leave the Court in a manner which would enable him to look every man in the face and say: "Thank Heaven I owe no man anything"—said: "It is always a disgrace to see a man placed in your position; unfortunately here there is little odium attached to it just now. But in advanced life the first questions asked of a person under examination would perhaps be—'Have you not been a bankrupt?' 'What did you pay in he pound?' and so on."

Now, His Honor is a most learned man, and is no doubt thoroughly up in the laws relating to commerce, but in commercial practices he is as innocent as a sucking babe.

I have been induced to allude to the circumstances by what fell from a commercial intimate of mine who had been reading His Honor's address to the young man. "Why," said my friend, "bankruptcy, you ought to know, is the basis, the foundation stone, the Alpha and Omega of all commercial transactions. Look here: a man, whom I don't know much about, comes to me, and he wants me to sell him a lot of goods. The first thing I ask him is, 'Have you been a bankrupt?' If he says 'No,' then I say, 'You must owe money somehow to a good many someones.' And he probably says he does, but tells me that he has always paid his way, and he hopes he always will. I say at once to this man, 'You go and be a bankrupt—clear off all your liabilities—then come to me, and I will give you a credit for what you want. But don't you think I am going to let you have a lot of my goods for some of your creditors to seize and walk off with. You go and be a bankrupt, and you will feel a relief, and an ease of mind, and have a gentleness of slumber which you have not known for many months of days and nights. When Hamlet advised Ophelia to go to a nunnery, he could not advise her more strongly than I do you—go and be a bankrupt; renovate and re-varnish your credit that your commercial days may be long in the land, and when you have departed you will be long held in memory—although what sort of memory will perhaps depend upon circumstances."

Supposing now that two men, each unknown to each other, and each coming on his own account, were to call at your store and order, I will say 50 boxes of sperm candles, a ton of soap, a quarter-cask of brandy, and ten dozen of broom handles, and when you had booked the order each man had said to you, out of the hearing of the other, "Mr Snyder, I must be drawn on at three months' date for these articles." Supposing then you put to the first customer this question, "Have you not been a bankrupt?" And supposing he said, "Yes; but it is quite two years ago, and then I paid nineteen shillings and elevenpence in the pound." Now supposing again you said to number two customer, "Have you not been a bankrupt?" And again supposing he said, "Yes; I was released last week from all my liabilities, and paid my creditors fourpence three farthings in the pound. I ask you, Mr Snyder, which of these two men, when credit was wanted, would you give it to?" And I said I would give it to the nineteen and elevenpenny man. "Then," said my friend, "you and I differ materially. I would give it to him of the fourpence three farthings. The one has given up to his creditors every shilling he possessed in the world, leaving nothing for himself, while the other has, so to speak, given up nothing. My dear Mr Snyder, I tell you what it is, the consciousness of doing what is right must be very soothing to one's own heart, will wash best I am

an sure, and last longest; but the fact that a man who has given up his assets, even unto the last farthing, is not so much thought by the outside world as the man who gives up nothing must be very galling, and he wants a lot of inward consciousness to make up for it all. Commercial morality, my dear Snyder, is at a very low ebb in the colonies. Why, I don't pretend to say, but I have always observed the want of commercial morality generally goes into partnership with the want of political honesty. They go well in harness for a time."

"SNYDER" DISCOURSETH ON MUSIC AND MORALS.

[FROM THE AUCKLAND "WEEKLY HERALD."] THE three Misses Carandini are phantoms of delight; likewise Madame Carandini, all but the phantom part, which couldn't be expected or looked for. I like Mr. Gordon, and should like him better if he wasn't always singing about shipwrecks, and churchyards, and graves, and sextons, and snowstorms, and gathering in dead bodies, which must be anything but delicious to contemplate, leaving out the departmental work of the gathering in. I don't go to concerts to be made uncomfortable, and to be reminded in double-bass tones that the time is not far distant when I shall have to be gathered in myself.

I like things to be in keeping. What do Miss Isabella and Miss Lizzie Carandini mean by coming on to the stage and telling people that they have been wandering o'er the mountains? Miss Isabella is in yellow satin, and Miss Lizzie in blue silk; and they laugh in their song, which they wouldn't do if they had had a mountain or two to wander over such as I have had in my time. I am of opinion that Miss Lizzie's blue silk dress wouldn't have looked quite so fresh as it did if she had been over mountains wandering as she said she had on the occasion I was present. And then, because I have taken a middle seat on the front row, Miss Fannie comes on to the front, and fixing her eyes upon mine says, right before five hundred people, "Did I not love thee?" A good many girls have told me this sort of thing in my time, but they didn't go blurt-ing it out before company. There was a want of delicacy in the way Miss Fannie did it, although I dare say she meant no harm. Then getting over her love for me in ten minutes afterwards, in company with a gentleman, the two of them sing in all sorts of flats and sharps, "The sailor sighs." Now I know a good bit about sailors, but I don't think I ever heard one sigh. I have heard them swear and curse a good deal; and I have seen them often and often in a state that may be termed tight, and I've seen them in a good many attitudes, but I don't ever remember seeing a sailor in the attitude of sighing. I should like to see him only once—just to see how he would do it. Then what does Miss Isabella, in white muslin and scarlet trimmings, intend to convey when in musical octaves she says, "I'll seek for thee in every flower?" THEE I suppose means a man; but in a man-hunt no girl that I was ever acquainted with would go seeking him in every flower, when it stands to reason nothing under a very big Victoria Regia would hold him. I think Miss Isabella would go seeking for a sweetheart in a more likely spot. "Down in a flowery vale," which the Carandini nightingales sing in the latest Parisian fashion, has a very pretty sound, but I never saw a flowery vale but what there was a swamp near at hand, or a blind creek running through it, and, unless ladies wear watertights, I should recommend them not to attempt flowery vales, but keep on the garden walks.

I'm not complaining about the singing of these young ladies, because nothing can be nicer to the palate. I can't help being impressed with the belief that Miss Fannie was born with a very mellow-toned flutina inside of her, which she substitutes to express so exquisitely the susceptibility of her emotions. As for Miss Isabella, she can go so low that her voice almost gets out of sight, afterwards going so high that one begins to surmise whether she will ever get it back again. And for Miss Lizzie—well, all I ask of Miss Lizzie is that, the next time she goes wandering over the mountains, I know some one that would be far better company for her than either of her sisters.

I don't exactly know what made me open up with the subject I have touched upon, because I had a different theme in my mind. There is a debating class in Dunedin, and the subject lately under discussion was, "Has music a moral tendency?" and a lot of boys decided, by a majority of all present but one, that there never was, nor never will be, morally, anything more moral than music. It's a say in this matter I want. I don't think music has a moral tendency. I can't see, if it has, where it is, or why, in what way, or how. The moral tendency of music isn't witnessed when an imperfect drum-and-life band plays before a newspaper office when writing has commenced. That

I can answer for. Did anyone ever feel their morals improved by the music and vocalisation of the "Traviata," the "Trovatore," or the "Borgia?" And professional musicians who have been playing harps, and flutes, and pianos, and those sort of things all the days of their lives, are they, I should like to know, more moral than other people who can only play effectively with a knife and fork? Are not a good number of them a little less moral than the general run of people? When people go to oratorios, do they go away with any impression that they ought to keep the Ten Commandments a little stricter than they have been keeping them; or do they criticise the performances and say how some one sung a note too high, or another hadn't got any voice at all, and so on, and so on, and so on? Are the bagpipes moral? I should like to possess the imagination of that man who could look me straight in the face and say he could extract morals out of bagpipes. If he could do that he could extract pork chops or anything else out of them. When men go out to kill each other in battle is their blood not heated and their cruel passions aroused by the sound of instruments? Do they not shoot and slay to quick music? Nothing very moral here, I fancy. When those four amiable French ladies, a few nights ago, proved to the world to what a low estate women may bring themselves, the music which accompanied the dancing wasn't, to my thinking, of a very moral or elevating character. If I keep a low dancing saloon with girls more than half-nude, whose business it will be to dance with any or all how may ask them, what would the whole thing be without music? Is not music the handmaid to much that is unseemly and indecorous, as witness the ballet and certain national dances? Did the sound of a trombone ever cause a moral idea to permeate, when it didn't happen to make one shudder? How much morals might a drum be supposed to produce when it was well tightened up and played by a blacksmith? I like good music when I can hear it without having to pay anything, but I never felt more moved after it than I did before. I know I have often felt very thirsty, and when, on entering my door, I have happened to stumble over the door-mat, or supper wasn't ready, those domesticated in the establishment were unable for the next few minutes to discover any improvement in my morals as conveyed through the organ of language. I say nothing, of course, about sacred music, which when well played is very beautiful, but the sounds of which never yet, and never will to the end of time, turn a sinner from the error of his ways, any more than will the chimes of those three bells which, manufactured from the captured cannons of a noble and gallant people, are to be placed by the people of Canterbury in a house dedicated to the service of God.

I want to relieve my mind of something which has long oppressed me. At an *al fresco* entertainment, a few days ago, I sat next to a lady who eat cranberry tart with pickled onions in combination. She appeared to enjoy herself. After a time she laid down her knife and fork, and asked me to pass the mustard. I passed, and fled. What I want to know—Does anyone recollect a parallel case in which cranberry tart, pickled onions, and mustard were used in company?

OURSELVES AND OUR TROUBLES.

If, as may have been remarked of late, by some of our readers, there have been a disjointedness, an abruptness, and a marked inequality in some of our columns of written matter, we desire to offer an explanation. The editorial, reporterial, and printing offices of the HERALD are separated from Messrs. Bourke and Smith's eminent auction mart by boards of about half-an-inch in thickness—certainly not more than half-an-inch. Now, during the last three or four weeks there have been placed in the mart on view, for trial, and for sale, two pianos, a powerful concertina, violin and an organ. And the manner in which these pianos have been thumped, and the organ has been ground, and the violin scraped, and the concertina experimented on by amateurs and others utterly ignorant of the "concord of sweet sounds," has sent us at times raving mad with vexation and anger, and bringing our gray hairs down with sorrow to the grave. We have tried to concentrate our thoughts upon the subject matter before us, so that we might produce something intelligible and distinguishable, but no sooner