

continued the Professor, addressing Aston, his favourite student, whose delicate, almost feminine style of beauty had earned for him the name of Dolly.

"My affections are most humble, I have no ambition to see a good-lier man," quoted the chaperon, with her hand on the shoulder of young Jim Thomson, the juvenile of the party.

Amid gay laughter and good-natured badinage appropriate names were at last chosen for the whole party.

Men.—Prospero, Bardolph, Mercurio, Hamlet, Benedict, Bassanio, Gratiano, Antonio, Petruchio, Lorenzo, Gobbo, Ferdinand, Ariel.

Girls.—Ophelia, Portia, Katherine, Nerissa, Rosalind, Beatrice, Audrey, Titania, Diana, Viola, Cordelia.

The youthful chaperon insisted upon being Epilogue, "because," said she, "my word, of course, will always be final."

On the twenty-third of December, away started a very merry party, some riding, others driving.

Over twenty-five miles of rugged road we travelled gaily—climbing bush-clad ranges, descending fern-lined gullies, until at last we reached the Valley by the Sea, which was to be our holiday home.

The two waggons bringing provisions, tents, and luggage, had arrived before us, so the men at once set to work to pitch the tents on an ideal camping-ground—a green flat, bordered on two sides by limpid streams, which united and flowed to the sea. In front of us a bold, rocky headland; behind, the bush-clad hills, a roaring waterfall and rippling cascades; to the left, a disused flax-mill, which would serve as head-quarters if the weather should be wet.

Under the pohutukawas our three tents were pitched—a large oblong tent for the girls, an octagonal one for the men, and the Professor's own little private tent.

Under the largest tree a fly was stretched for a dining-tent, delight-

fully uncertain seats were improvised, and, as Bardolph said:

"There you are! What more could you wish for?"

"Beds!" wailed The Epilogue, whose camping experience was nil. "Are we to sleep like 'Massa on the cold, cold ground?'"

But Bardolph had instructed the waggoners to cut ti-tree and mange-mange for beds, and The Epilogue regained her cheerfulness.

Bardolph had arranged everything—even to a plan of work—for we expected to be our own cooks and bottle-washers.

Four campers—two men and two girls—were on duty for each meal. The Professor only was exempted.

The Shakesperian time-table was interesting reading.

Here is a sample:

KARE KARE CAMP,

29th December, 1900.

Breakfast, Mercurio, Gobbo, Diana and Titania

"I almost die for food, and let me have it"

Dinner, - Portia, Audrey, Bardolph, and Ariel

"What say you to a piece of beef and mustard."

Tea, - Nerissa, Ophelia, Gratiano, and Hamlet

"Say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat."

Supper, - - - - General Scramble

"Let good digestion wait on appetite."

Washing up - - - - Caliban

Yes, we had found a Caliban in the shape of a deaf mute who inhabited a shanty behind the flax-mill, and who was glad to earn a few shillings by gathering wood, keeping up the fire, and washing the dishes.

From a farm over the headland we obtained fresh meat and bread; but as fresh meat meant much cooking, we did not have it every day. Tinned beef, tongue, fowls, or fish, served quite as well.

Once, indeed, Bassanio killed a wild pig, which, with a commendable effort to appear modest over his achievement, he laid at the feet of Titania.

"You pig!" screamed the ungrateful Fairy Queen—not apostrophising the inanimate carcass.

"Comment," exclaimed the Professor, "but this is too charming! We can now have the historic dish