



THE Easter holidays have come and gone after the manner of such things to the varying satisfaction of the participants. On the whole the holiday appears to have been more satisfactory than usual. The weather all over the island seems to have been favourable to outdoor excursions, so the campers-out, yachtsmen, and picnickers generally had a pleasant time. The majority of less energetic mortals also appear to have derived pleasure from the holiday, but there is always a discontented appearance about business people after one of these enforced holidays. They mean increased work before and after, in order to compensate for the time lost, and one frequently feels inclined to doubt whether the game is worth the candle. There is, too, no doubt about the disorganising effect of 'a day off'—a fact we have remarked upon once before in these columns. There are few people, for instance, who do not cordially detest Monday as a working day, simply because they have 'run down' on Saturday afternoon and Sunday, and one feels doubly irritable on tramping, busing, or training it down to work on the Tuesday after a Monday bank holiday. Yet of all our holidays Easter is the most pleasant. There is more of it in the first place, and the time of year is infinitely more enjoyable than Christmas. The weather is cooler, and there are no tiresome family re-unions—that most deadly form of boredom—which makes Christmas a dreaded infliction in the eyes of many of us.

PASSING from generalities to particulars, the accounts of the holiday and the manner in which it was spent in the different towns and centres contain little out of the usual run. In Wellington Easter Monday was too windy to be really pleasant, but still pleasure-seekers were able to congratulate themselves on the absence of the downpour which seemed almost a certainty all day long. The churches of the Empire City were, by the way, in common with churches all over the colony, greatly patronised on Sunday, many non-church goers being attracted by the Easter decorations, which appear to have been most elaborate and extensive in Wellington this year. In Auckland the holidays were graced by the most perfect weather possible. A whole fleet of yachts left the harbour, and there were scores of water excursions of every sort.

THE excellent arrangements of the railway department in the matter of excursions to Rotorua and Okoroire was another cause for the exodus from Auckland. Both at Whakarewarewa and at Okoroire the hotels were more than full, but everyone appears to have enjoyed the outing immensely. But it was the Auckland race meeting, of course, which attracted the greatest number of northerners. The arrangements were, as a matter of course, excellent, and the usual compliments in which we join were bestowed on Mr Jercival. Caterer McEwan was also worthily commended on all hands for the excellence of the luncheon provided. The music was of the usual order, and the sport more than tolerable. It will be noticed from the list of frocks in the Auckland letter that there was no falling off in the smartness of the race dresses.

IN Christchurch the weather was also magnificent, but sultry. A large number of people went camping, and there were an unusual number of picnics. Summer was, it may be imagined, full to overflowing, the beach being a joy that never appears to cloy. Hammer Springs is further afield, but the place was full of visitors the whole week end. The race meeting was well patronised, but of this function we shall have more to say next week. As for Dunedin, excepting that there was no rain, no news has come to hand as to how the holiday was spent.

A CORRESPONDENT writes from Wellington: 'Perhaps this note should be sent to your Lady Editor, but I have heard so many persons commenting on the matter referred to that I thought the best plan to adopt would be to refer the question to the Editor, and let him deal with it as he has a mind to. How, or why is it (the question is) that the same identical people are mentioned in the ladies' letters to newspapers time after time and year after year as being present at this, that, or the other assembly and no other? The different dresses of the same ladies constitute the one eternal variation. Are there no other ladies, or if there be, don't they—or do they—also wear dresses? Are the ladies that are mentioned, mentioned because they are the best-looking, or the best dressed, or the most aristocratic, or democratic? Are they the most talented, or the most highly educated? Are they the tallest, or the shortest, the most graceful, the most girlish, the most womanly, or the least affected? If one but knew the principle on which the selection was made, and so tenaciously clung to during (I may say) ages, one could go into the philosophy of the thing, and perhaps follow out a very interesting study. But at present all is dark around this mystery. Although I am putting the question to gratify the left-out-in-the-cold feminine mind, I can myself say that I haven't overstated the matter at all. During the recent visit of the Brough and Brucicaut Company to this city the dress circle of our Opera House was crowded night after night with new faces—and new dresses. It was pointed out to me, in journal after journal, that throughout the season the same ladies, and only the same, were mentioned in each; the hundreds of others were not noticed once. That they wore dresses (and really nice dresses) I can vouch for. Perhaps there is an explanation of this abstruse problem.'

THE difficulty of avoiding anything like cliques in the society letters is a problem which has presented itself over and over again to the editors of the NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC. The only solution of this intricate question which commends itself is that society people themselves should come forward and lend their aid towards the due representation in black and white of themselves and their pretty costumes, for it is a source of pain and grief to the ordinary contributors to society news that they are only human, and only possess one memory and one pair of eyes each. The chief centres of civilisation in this colony are rapidly increasing their population, and that population is, unfortunately, of a migratory nature. It is this constant change of residence, which is one of the difficulties our society correspondents have to contend with. Another is the rapid growth of our girls into young ladies with smart new frocks and dainty millinery, which all demand adequate description in a popular journal. Now, if those who certainly merit an equal place in this fashionable chronicle, and who are left out from circumstances over which the editors have no control, would kindly club together and send in their names and a brief description of their gowns, they would greatly oblige. One young lady might do it for herself and friends, signing her own name, in confidence, to the editor, not for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

It is almost a pity that so talented a violinist as Miss Bessie Doyle should have challenged comparison by declaring herself the equal of Lady Hallé (Norman Neruda). Miss Doyle, is a great violinist, and a very beautiful one, but she can no more compare with Lady Hallé than can her young pianist, a very clever young fellow, with Paderewski. One would never have dreamed of making a comparison, which would be more than usually unfair, but for the fact that Miss Doyle declared at the top of her programme that she shares with Lady Hallé the distinction of being the greatest lady violinist of the world. Apart from this rather stupid bit of 'brag' on the part of this artist, there is nothing but praise due to Miss Doyle. If not yet a Lady Hallé, she gives promise that she will be one before long. That she is the greatest lady violinist who has visited this colony is a certainty. Her playing is magnificent, and the two concerts given in Auckland have aroused the greatest enthusiasm. No more artistic violinist has visited this colony, and her physical gifts, her undeniable beauty of face and figure, are an additional attraction of considerable weight. Miss Doyle is fortunate, too, in the baritone of the little company who support her. Mr Mackenzie has a most excellent voice of great power, and sings as if he thoroughly enjoyed it. In the soprano she is hardly so fortunate. As a professional singer Miss Birch cannot be accounted a startling success. The company tour the island, and their concerts should be largely attended by musical people.

It must be a matter for deep thankfulness to all interested in the ornithological progress of the colony that at length that important and valuable bird, the morepork, is receiving due recognition in England. The *English Graphic* says:—'A rare Australian bird is now in the Zoo, that curious kind of goat-sucker known scientifically as Cuvier's "podargus," and popularly as the More pork from its peculiar note. It has a huge mouth, and can bolt a big mouse comfortably. The podargus is reckoned an unlucky bird, and it maintains its reputation by choosing tombstones as its favourite perch.' We are, of course, quite prepared to be swallowed up in the larger tract of land known as Australia. That New Zealand is a separate island has penetrated the brains of only a limited number of the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland. That its flora and fauna are the same as Australia's is taken for granted. In the case of the morepork, which we must henceforth call the podargus, the existence of New Zealand as one of its *localities*, is ignored, or more probably, unknown. This is only one of the many slights that this very important colony is continually receiving at the hands of the mother-country.' True, the Waitomo cavern has just been announced at Home, and astonishment and congratulation struggled for the mastery when our friends at the other side of the world realised that such natural beauties were actually visible and reachable in bright little Maoriland.

WE frequently hear of people who suffer from insomnia, and as no one reading this paragraph can be sure that he or she may not be the next victim of this distressing complaint, a remedy, or perhaps one should say an alleviation, should be hailed with enthusiasm. Perhaps it should first be stated—but this does not in any way discount the value of the suggestion—that the idea comes from America. The Yankees are marvellously ingenious, and possess remarkable inventive capacities. Better than this, they have the push and pluck to use them to advantage. But *revenge a nos meutons*. A smart society woman who is troubled with sleeplessness is 'at home' two nights in the week to all her lady friends who are similarly affected. The guests appear in any sort of costumes they please, *peignoirs*, tea-gowns, bath-ropes, or any respectable covering, in short. The lights are dim, the conversation low and dull in the extreme. Soothing music is to be rendered in one room, hot chocolate and light wafers are obtainable in another. Couches and easy chairs are scattered all over, and anyone is allowed to fall asleep whenever or wherever they please. As an improvement on the soothing music, which some people might find irritating, an unpopular preacher's sermons might be procured, and read aloud at intervals, or discussions for raising money for church purposes might be started. The latter when announced as 'meetings for that purpose' are always very badly attended, and are therefore, presumably, uninteresting. For a man's insomnia party, cold water, gruel, no pipes, no cards, plenty of sermons, a little of the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' a few wakeful babies to hush to sleep, etc., might prove adequate soporifics.

'FILTHY lucre' cannot be so grimy an article after all as Scripture teacheth us to believe, else why do Christian congregations strain their inventive faculties to an extent bordering on the ridiculous in the effort to possess it. The newest departure (and one which certainly beats the record for ingenuity in, shall we say, religious money grabbing) is a scheme that rumour reports to have been set on foot by would-be shining lights of a certain suburban Presbyterian congregation. To explain would be what the grammar books call 'useless circumlocution.' Allow me to bequeath to posterity the eloquently concise and explicit epistle which lately emanated from the joint brains (?) of said shining lights, being transmitted on two respective sheets of note-paper, to two other shining lights:—'Snowball to raise funds in aid of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Ponsonby. The funds of the above church having fallen Short [note the emphasis lent by a 'cap'] during the last year, it has been decided to set rolling a Snowball. Firstly, you are earnestly requested to contribute the sum of one shilling by postal note, and enclose it in this letter to Mr _____. Secondly, you are requested to make two copies of this letter, putting on each the next number to that which is at the head of this letter; also give your name and address on each copy and forward them to two friends. As soon as the number 12 has been reached the snowball will be stopped. If you are not able to do this, please send the letter you receive to Mr _____, as this will be the only way of knowing when the chain is broken. But please do not let it break in your hand.'

WE have heard of respectable gambling institutions known as sales of work; we are not ignorant of the juvenile lottery bag that cullmeth itself a Christmas tree; the man-trap bazaar and sacred cantata are, too, too well-known commodities, but a snow-ball! The name in itself is a marvel of appropriateness and tact, so suitable to our sultry climate, so suggestive of heavenly example which lavishes good gifts as generously as it showers the spotless snow. And there is humour, too, as everyone will observe who only ponders it long enough, in the idea of hurling this gentle, playful missile at the head of some cheerful giver, who will gal-