

lantly respond, and forthwith project it at the cranium of another cheerful giver. The unfortunate part is, that when he has received several hundreds of the playful things from several hundreds of nearest and dearest friends within the course of one week (which his well-known character for liberality renders more than likely), to say nothing of expending gulms of paper in the heroic resolve to pass on the odd—i mean touching appeal, the cheerful giver will be apt to make use of language resembling the climate in temperature, and relegate the snowball to a place where snowballs are not. The bazaar is not misery pure and unadulterated to unfortunate masculines, although it approaches preciously near that melancholy standpoint. There are usually girls to flirt with, or caudly to make oneself sick over, or forget-me-not buttonholes, or some other equally useful equivalent for hard cash. Again, the sacred cantata, though destructive to nervous constitutions, means only a shilling or two out of pocket—a reflection, like Cadbury's Cocos, both grateful and comforting. But the snowball—it possesses the vices of Tennyson's brook, with none of its virtues. Sad that a message so pathetically worded as the above should excite remarks so forcible, but all sad stories have a moral, and this is the moral of the snowball: Be nobody's nearest and dearest friend, avoid friendship at all costs, if snowballs are a-rolling. So shall ye escape tribulation.

WHEN a feminine critic comes forward in the columns of a contemporary to point out the errors in men's lawn tennis costume, she would seem to have considerable claims on our attention, though by hiding her strictures in a paper—*Hearth and Home*—dedicated to the edification of her own sex, she does not go quite the most obvious way to court it. It was really high time for somebody to give a hint to the gentlemen whom 'A Candid Eve' is in the habit of meeting in the tennis court, if indeed they 'affect very smart sleeveless vests or jerseys of silk,' and play 'in the presence of ladies with bare arms, neck arrangements of the most pronounced Byronic type, and nude ankles, about which their socks wobble.'

THIS is not the costume in vogue at tournaments, and we hesitate to believe that it is common at garden parties. In the early and experimental days of lawn-tennis a short-sleeved (but not 'sleeveless') jersey or two were to be seen, but the fashion did not make friends, and we thought that it had become extinct. It was of one of the wearers that a lady remarked that he was presumably in his right mind but could not be said to be clothed—a specimen of the satire which is fatal to such eccentricities. This particular costume will not nowadays find defenders, and there is no necessity for its assailant to proceed to extremities, as she very nearly does in the dangerous argument 'when women play tennis they do not divest themselves of half their clothes.'

OUR fair critic has another grievance which, as far as we are aware, has at any rate a better foundation. It is that the lawn tennis player fastens (without securing) 'the drapery about his lower limbs with a gaudy silk scarf in place of the more reliable but less decorative belt,' and is thus compelled to resort from time to time to something like a nautical 'hitch.' Now this very gaudy silk scarf is probably an attempt to conform to or imitate the Darwinian principle; and it must be very disappointing to the wearers to hear that natural selection after all selects a belt. What is even worse is that the representative of the ladies actually thinks that 'nothing is so becoming to a pink-and-white-faced Englishman as a fine white cambric shirt and grey flannel trousers.'

Is it for this that we discard our favourite undress, and don the easily spotted and shrinkable 'whites'? Who would have considered himself to be fully dressed even for a cricket match in grey trousers? The article is accompanied by an illustration which supplements the dress described with a very tight-looking 'blazer,' a cigarette, a chequered cap (peakless), and a stiff, white, stick-up collar. There are a few happy mortals who are not prevented by infirmities of the flesh from wearing such a collar and playing well in tournaments.

FROM Wellington a valued correspondent writes:—'Everybody here is extremely gratified at the result of the licensing election. When I went into the booth to vote, a perplexed old lady with voting papers in her hand implored me to help her. All she knew was that she wanted to vote for the sake of the children, but how to do this she hadn't the remotest idea. I knew what the poor woman meant, and was sorry that I could not help her in any legal way. Hundreds of voters, male and female, were in the same peculiar quandary. There were some eleven hundred informal papers. An immense and most surprising number voted for prohibition, and it is stated that fully two thirds of informal votes were papers of electors who desired prohibition. This I think very likely. They were mostly the votes of women, however. Everybody claims a substantial victory, and Sir Robert Stout appears peculiarly pleased. The *Post* says it is rather pleased. The *Evening Press* is quite pleased. The *Times* says nothing at all, but on the whole is also pleased.

I understand a meeting is to be held next Wednesday to determine what is to be done with several returning officers, who also appeared enveloped in the same fog which obscured so many others, and generally to ascertain, if possible, how things actually stand. It will considerably elucidate matters to determine this.'

PICNICS, as a rule, are rather too much of the 'small beer' order of functions to merit being placed on record in topics of the week. An exception must be made, however, in favour of that given by Mr Butler, of Sargood, Butler, and Nichol, in Melbourne, to the employees of Sargood's firm in Auckland. In the first place the affair was so thoroughly well and at the same time so gracefully done. Not merely were the champagne, the luncheon, the music, and the general arrangements absolutely perfect of their kind, but the example to other large firms and offices was so excellent. Reunions of this sort do more to establish good feeling and loyalty between the heads of the 'house' and those who assist them to make its fortunes than can well be imagined. It would be very pleasant if other of the big business men in New Zealand would emulate the kindly feeling and generosity which prompted Mr Butler to entertain the employees and friends of Sargood's. To describe the picnic at length would absorb too much of our space. The run down the harbour in the *Britannia*, the races at Motatapu, the fishing, the good cheer and the speeches were all enjoyable. The catering of Mr McEwan came in for special and well-deserved commendation, and the brand of champagne supplied was excellent. Among the guests were Mrs John Ross, Mr and Mrs Thompson (McArthur and Co.), Captain Anderson, Mr Ranson, Mr Smith, Mr Friend, Mr and the Misses Brett, and a few others.

A LADY contributor to the *Pall Mall Gazette* makes a complaint, in bright and rather bitter language, against the modern young man. Men are so used to look upon the other sex as a natural and non-resentful object of their own complacent criticism, that this will seem to many of them contrary to the natural order of things. Still, they are often, it must be confessed, immensely anxious to know the opinion which women entertain of them, though with the same kind of superior curiosity with which Englishmen await the opinion of a Frenchman who endeavours to record his imperfect impressions of their great country; it doesn't matter; but still they like to know. The complaint of the ladies, put shortly, is that the modern young man is not companionable. It is rather a serious allegation, and one which, from its very moderation will invite attention, the more because the idea of companionableness is very familiar to men, each of whom thinks, as a rule, that whatever his shortcomings in the larger order of social functions, he is a very companionable creature when alone and taken as he is. In the words of Mr Joshua Tubbs, they will feel 'hurt,'—not angry—but hurt.

THE *Pall Mall's* lady contributor finds young men such bad company that she is almost vindictive. She asks so little of them—so she thinks, forgetting Thackeray's axiom that no man can be a good companion to a woman till he is middle-aged—that she vows that taking them as they are and in a lump she dislikes them, and would do anything if one could do without them. Quite young ladies are, of course, the last people from whom to expect a 'true relation' of their private views about young men. Of those whom they like best, they naturally say least. They are all fugitives from the court of inquiry in this respect, or else unwilling witnesses. But women—that is, young ladies who have grown rather older—may be relied upon to say what they think; and the lady in question takes care to fortify her position by avowing that she has 'arrived at a time of life when most women desert the idol of middle-aged distinction at whose feet they sit as girls, and listen by preference to the egotistical prattle or love-making of boys.' Pretty hearing this for middle-aged distinction!

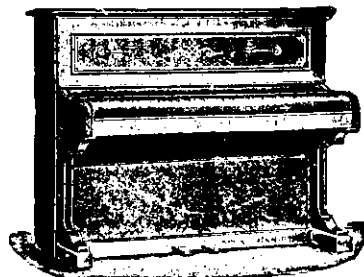
BUT here the lady is hardly consistent; for we believe our diagnosis is correct, and that what she wants is that young men should be companionable—and egotism and flirtation are not 'company' in the sense she requires. As she writes to 'relieve her feelings,' we may assume that matters are not quite so bad as she paints them. But neither in the 'statesmanlike young man'—that is, the serious and rather priggish youth—nor in the wicked young man, nor in the ladylike young man, nor even in the ordinary young man, does she find the society she seeks. As the first is a naturally old young man, she can hardly expect to find in him the companionable qualities of youth. Young ladies are far more ready than might be expected to admit a liking for the well-informed young man, even though a prig, or for the polite young man, even if rather effeminate, because cleverness and politeness are qualities which they can admire quite separately from any regard for their owner. Besides, there is a certain safety for a girl in talking with a prig or a courtier. The former, at any rate, is pretty sure to be thinking mostly about himself; whereas the nice, ordinary young man is apt to be thinking about her, long before she thinks anything at all about him, and is apt to be 'too previous' generally.

Now, the priggish young man never creates anxiety of this kind, and so gets the credit of being better liked by women than he is. As the chief complaint of the *Pall Mall's* lady contributor against the wicked young man is that he is not wicked enough, but only a feeble kind of impostor, we may assume that he is only inserted to complete the classification. Her estimate of the ladylike young man is amusing. 'I have noticed,' she writes, 'that when a woman tries to be a man, she is very rarely anything like a gentleman. But the ladylike young man is frequently a very well-bred young lady. His little graces and attitudes are often very pleasing in a way. He sympathises keenly with the very minor troubles of life, and waves the serious ones aside with a paradox. He is effeminate and effete, yet amusing for a time, until you dread the recurrence of his little exclamations. He seems to be unpopular with other men; and as one can hardly put that down to jealousy, his society is not an honour to a woman. He is not one's idea of what a young man should be. Still, he is not uncompanionable.' The last sentence of this not very kind description contains what we have indicated as the probable clue to the ladies' discontent with the modern young man, and incidentally a very sufficient justification for the favour which women show to youths of whom men blindly declare that 'they never can see anything in them.' The ordinary young man is negatively preferable, of course. Supposing him to be neither a prig or a bore, nor despised of his fellows like the ladylike young man, nor immodest. Suppose him to be ordinarily well bred. My general complaint is twofold. Firstly, he is too fond of personal chaff, which is a good (?) substitute for conversation, but is a nuisance when conversation would else have been possible. Besides it implies a previous education in tedious details, and without that is unintelligible.'

WE may grant the justice of that at once—the barrack-room education of public school and college life, without women's society and with a narrow and familiar circle of interests is mainly responsible for it. But, secondly, 'He is too calculating. I do not wish my friends to go to the dogs; but to be always thinking of their advantage certainly clogs some of their finer feelings—their sense of pathos, say, or their sympathy generally. There was more abandonment about young men when I was a girl, and though it sent some of them under, the others were, I venture to think, more amiable. Nowadays, if the ordinary young man is poor, he is always thinking (and frequently talking) about "getting on"; if he is rich he is always keen about having his money's worth; he wants to buy life at store prices.'

ANOTHER lady writes to complain that the hard work of modern life is destroying all nobility of character. We don't believe it. Most men of noble character have rather overworked than underworked their energies; though the graces may rather suffer from the effects even of an eight-hours day. But one of the first visible results of the calculating frame of mind in a young man, who has not realised, as the older ones do, that motives are nearly always mixed in every way of life, is to produce the stupid habit of attributing commonplace or even sordid motives all round—an indication that the fears of the *Pall Mall's* contributor as to the decay of sensibility are not groundless. But women have the remedy partly in their own hands; and it is to be hoped that if their experience agrees with that of the writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, they will make use of it. They have only to make it understood that, in their opinion, reference to personal profits and loss and pecuniary aims and ambitions are 'not good form,' a rule very well understood and acted upon until lately by well-bred people, and that particular form of social defect will soon cease to form a barrier to companionship between modern young men and women.

W. G. THOMAS,
WHOLESALE and EXPORT PHONOGRAPHER
STEAM WORKS: GOSPEL OAK GROVE,
KENTISH TOWN, London, N.W., England



A PIANOFORTE SAME DESIGN AS CUT
FOR
22½ GUINEAS, INSECT AND VERMIN PROOF
Packed in zinc lined cases and shipped to any New Zealand Port FREE.
SPECIALLY CONSTRUCTED FOR THE COLONIES.
7 OCTAVES, trichord treble, check action, pinned hammers keys made and covered in one piece and screwed. Iron frame volume sound board and eucalyptus pedal. Hundreds of these perfect Pianos have now been sent to all parts of the World. PRICES—Half cash with order, balance on production of shipping documents.—ILLUSTRATED LIST OF OTHER MUSICALS, free by post on application.