

WHALING OFF THE COAST OF NEW ZEALAND.

THE VIKING UP NORTH.

(SEE ILLUSTRATION, PAGE 34)

THE port of Auckland, famed throughout the world for its yachting waters, has many favourite resorts within easy distance of the city, but to those yachtsmen who desire a longer cruise none possesses so much interest as a trip along the northern coast as far as Whangaroa Harbour. En route there are many safe harbours and bays only a few hours' sail from each other, so that if any bad weather is met with all that is necessary is to run for one of them, and drop anchor till the gale is over. Bon Accord Harbour, at the Kawan Island, so well-known to yachtsmen, Omaha Bay, Whangarei, Tutukaka, Ngonguru, Whangarua, Whangamumu, Bay of Islands with innumerable bays and nooks, and Whangaroa, are all in turn visited by the larger yachts during the summer, but at the end of the summer none perhaps possess so much interest as a trip to Whangamumu to see the whaling operations of the Messrs Cook.

About two miles outside Whangamumu Harbour, a curious method has been adopted by the Messrs Cook to capture the leviathan of the deep. Instead of the ordinary way of catching whales with harpoons, etc., the mode of operation adopted to catch the whales is to net them, the same as is done on a smaller scale with mullet, etc. This very unique method of whale hunting aroused the curiosity of those well known yachtsmen, the Bloomfield brothers, and their yacht, the Viking, being all ready equipped for a voyage up north, started away from the moorings off Judge's Bay, Auckland, with a fine S.W. breeze. Bon Accord Harbour was reached after a fine run of three hours, and it was here the yacht lay at anchor for the night. Early next morning a start was made for Whangarei, but the wind was very light, so that the yacht did not get inside Whangarei Heads till 3 p.m., and then went up the river as far as Marden Point. Later in the evening she dropped down to Calliope Bay, where she anchored for the night. Next morning broke 'clock calm,' so it was decided to remain at anchor all day, fishing, shooting, etc., around the Heads to pass time away. All hands were roused out early the next morning as a fine southerly breeze was blowing, and it was decided to start straight away for Whangamumu. Soon after passing the 'Hen and Chickens' a whale was sighted; not long after two more were passed, so the hopes of all began to rise at the prospect of good sport. A spanking breeze all the way to Whangamumu resulted in the anchor being dropped at 3.30 p.m.

This method of catching whales is to get them first meshed in a net, and when they are properly tangled up to use the harpoon and the deadly lance to despatch them. The net is set from the end of a rocky islet about two miles outside Whangamumu along the coast. It seems that about this time of the year the whales leave the southern latitudes and go along the coast of New Zealand, and one of their regular tracks is to pass by this particular rocky islet, and often to pass between it and the mainland. Formerly the Messrs Cook used to chase after them in whaleboats, but latterly the idea struck them that if a long strong net were constructed it would be easier to capture them as they passed so close to the Island. A net was made and put out: A huge whale got into it, and Mr Cook says, 'didn't he make a mess of it before being captured.' The hunters then thought this game wouldn't do, so inventive minds being at work it was decided instead of making one long net to make a number of smaller ones ten fathoms square with a six foot mesh. These being made it was then decided to tie them together with slight rope, so that when a whale got meshed in one particular section it would carry away that small section only, leaving the other ones intact. As may be imagined, strong rope is required for these nets. They are made of two inch ropes spliced into iron rings in lieu of the ordinary net hitch, and are floated by means of ten gallon kegs fastened along the top of the net. The excitement when a whale gets meshed is intense, and when one is seen from the look out on the islet approaching in the direction of the nets all hands immediately are in the three whaleboats ready for action. Generally the whales cruise in company, so whilst the Viking was there four came along and appeared to be making straight for the net, and fortunately one of them came within its folds and got meshed—then the fun began. The whale first alarmed by the mesh getting firmly fixed over his head, lashed out furiously with his tail, and soon broke away the section he was meshed in. He came to the surface repeatedly, and once leaped clean out of the water with the net tangled around his head, and the barrel floats dangling about everywhere. The boats being now in pursuit, the harpooner stands with his harpoon ready. At the first chance the harpoon is driven in to make fast, the lances are now brought into play to inflict their mortal thrusts. It is dangerous work, but the men know their duty and drive the keen-edged lance deep into the body of the whale. Out spurts blood from the nostrils when the whale 'blows,' indicating that the lance thrust has successfully touched a vital part, and soon after another thrust or two is given, when the whale exhausted from loss of blood turns over and dies.



DUNEDIN society people will be glad to hear of Miss Joe Riche's engagement to Professor Haaswell, of Adelaide. The wedding is to take place shortly.

ORANGE BLOSSOMS.

HOWARD-GREENSILL.

PICTON was en fête on Thursday, 28th June, to witness the marriage of Miss Sybil Greensill, second daughter of Mr J. A. R. Greensill, of Brooklyn, Pictou, to Mr Harry Jerome Howard, of Parawhannu. The bride, who was born in Pictou, and whose family were some of the very first residents in the district, arrived at Holy Trinity Church punctually at 2.30 p.m., and passed through the porch, which was lined by her bridesmaids on either side, leaning on her father's arm. Miss Linton, who presided at the organ, played superbly, whilst the choir sang, 'The Voice that Breathed o'er Eden.' The Rev. A. H. Sedgewick performed the ceremony, after which the organ pealed out the 'Wedding March' as the procession entered the vestry.

The bride, who looked lovely and sweet, was dressed in cream silk delaine, the train, sleeves, and corsage being bordered with swansdown. Fastening the train to the skirt was a long wreath of orange blossom, lilies of the valley, and myrtle blossom, another half wreath on the corsage, and sprays on the sleeves, which were made in the gigot style with epaulettes of rich corded silk. A large veil of tulle, embroidered with flosses, fell from a wreath of orange blossoms which adorned her hair. The bride also wore a beautiful gold brooch with a horseshoe design thickly set with pearls, and carried a spray bouquet of white camellias, Chinese lilies and maidenhair fern.

The bridesmaids were six in number—Miss Mary Greensill, sister of the bride, and Miss Kathleen Howard, sister of the bridegroom, wearing frocks of pink nun's veiling made with elbow sleeves gathered into puffs, and banded with pink satin ribbon, and finished off with cape frills, pink silk hats to match, and bouquets of chrysanthemums and *asplenium bulbiferum*; Miss Ethel Greensill and Miss Nina Greensill, wearing cream nun's veiling, and silk hats to match, made like the elder bridesmaids' dresses, etc., and Miss Rosy Greensill, and Miss Kitty Woodward Andrews, two tiny ones who were born on the same day, and were quaintly dressed in long frocks of pink nun's veiling gathered on to a yoke, with a college cape hanging from the shoulders behind, puffed sleeves edged with white vandyke lace, and a collar of the same; skull caps of white lace lined with pink silk; each carried a basket of pink and white camellias, and shared with the bride the admiration of all beholders. The bridegroom's presents to the bridesmaids were gold brooches to the four elder ones, and silver brooches to the two small ones. Mr Maling Greensill, brother of the bride, acted as best man.

The church was crowded from end to end, and was prettily decorated by the bride's girl friends, a triumphal arch spanning the broad aisle arranged on the western side of the church for the bridal procession. The chancel was especially beautiful, being draped with lycopodium, and ornamented with the new illuminated panel, and texts, finished by Mr G. W. White, and presented by himself and Mr H. C. Seymour to the church. Rice was plentifully scattered on the bridal party and their friends, as they left the church, and with the rice went all good wishes for the future of the happy pair.

PRESENTS literally poured in upon the lucky bride—valuable, useful, and ornamental—and testified to the esteem in which she is held for her amiable disposition and kindness of heart.

AFTERNOON tea, to which only very old friends and relations were invited, was dispensed by Mr and Miss Greensill at Brooklyn. The cake was a three tier one, beautifully decorated, and placed on the middle of the table, which in turn was decorated with arm lilies and white camellias, and laden with everything that was most delicious. The party assembled consisted of Mr and Mrs H. J. Howard, Mr and the Misses Greensill (four), Mr and Mrs Sedgewick, Mrs and Miss Allen, Mr (Captain) Baillie, Lieutenant and Mrs Baillie, Mr, Mrs and the Misses James Greensill, Mr, Mrs and Miss Gard, Mr and Mrs John

Conolly, Mr and Mrs John Mowat, Mrs and Miss Duncan, Mr and Miss Howard, Mrs Fuller, Captain and Mrs Dalton, Mr T. Pülcher and Miss Pülcher, Mrs Strang and Messrs Greensill.

MR AND MISS GREENSILL gave a dance in the Public Hall the same evening, Mr and Mrs H. J. Howard coming in for a few minutes to say good-bye to all their friends who were not present during the afternoon. Mr Arthur Foden, who supplied the music for the dance, played the 'Wedding March' when the young couple appeared on the scene, and there was quite a rush to congratulate them and wish them *bon voyage* in the ship of matrimony. The bride wore her travelling dress of navy blue hopsack made with flared basque and gigot sleeves, black Roundhead toque trimmed with navy blue plush and osprey, and neck scarf of white Indian silk edged with Honiton point. The happy couple left during the evening by the Rotorna for Wellington en route for Wanganui, wherefor the present Mr Howard is residing.

HUNTING.

AUCKLAND.

THE Pakuranga Hounds met last Saturday at the Scotch Church, Tamaki, whence they passed on to Mr Harris' farm, about sixteen miles from Auckland. Hares were innumerable, but the day was too hot, so that the scent would not lie. A brilliant day like Saturday has its disadvantages as well as its advantages. Many a fine and fat pussy crossed our way, but disappeared to some safe nook. The jumping mainly consisted of stone walls, though I did see three gentlemen, in preference to a wall take a gate—Messrs Gorrie, Bloomfield and Wynyard. A drag was laid through about three miles of stiff stone wall country, similar to that where pussy had been sought; there were of course a few spills, but none attended with any serious results.

AMONGST those present I noticed Mrs McLaughlin, Mrs Wallace-Rees, Misses McLaughlin, Clayton (Sydney), D. Davis, Thomas, Campden Darnett, Roberts, Anderson, etc. Messrs Ware, Tonks, Halstead, Harris McLaughlin, Gilmore, Lockhart, Wynyard, Noaks, Conningby, Gorrie, Bloomfield, Darnett, Fenwick.

AMUSEMENTS.

MONTAGUE-TURNER OPERA COMPANY.

DURING the past week the opera season in Auckland has attracted the almost undivided attention of musical people. The performances of the various operas presented have been attended by excellent and enthusiastic houses. 'Girolle-Girolle,' in which Miss Colley made her first appearance, was so popular that it had to be reproduced this week, when it again met with an enthusiastic reception. Miss Annie Montague appeared as Arline in the production of 'The Bohemian Girl,' which was twice given to large and appreciative houses. In this rôle Miss Montague is seen at her best, and met a series of successes, the audience repeatedly demanding encores, to which Miss Montague bowed her acknowledgments. Mr Farley's fine voice was heard to great advantage as Count Arnheim, and Mr Fred England's Devilshoof is a fine and remarkably clever bit of character acting, and is unquestionably the best thing he does. Miss Montague wore some splendid dresses in 'The Bohemian Girl,' notably a very handsome trained gown of rich rose-coloured watered silk draped with rich lace and embroidered with pearls. This was, of course, in the third act. In the first the usual gipsy dress was worn, but Miss Montague's gipsa dresses are a veritable creation. The gipsy who were one of them in real life would be a tolerably affluent person. They are liberally covered with sequins, and huge ropes of what were presumably pearls of a very large and fine order.

THE SKATING RINK.

The first club night of the present season at the Columbia Rink, in Auckland, was held on Thursday last. A very smart gathering assembled in the gaily decorated rink, which is certainly excellently managed. The floor, which was rather rough on the occasion of the opening carnival a week beforehand, was greatly improved, being indeed in excellent order. The evening was fine, but frosty, and the *souppon* of sharpness in the air appeared to have an excellent effect on the spirits of the skaters who enjoyed themselves immensely. Professor James was unremitting in his attention to his duties, and the arrangements were in all particulars, excellent. Amongst those present were Mrs Hitchcock, Mrs Humphrey Haines, Mr Rathbone, Mrs Smith (Remuera), Mrs Massey Baker, Miss Churton, Miss M. Charlton, the Misses Scherff (two), Miss Noakes, Miss Forbes, Miss R. Bowles, Misses Lusk (two), Miss Buddie, Miss M. Firth, Miss G. Firth, Miss Snell, Miss Kilgour, Miss George, Miss Bursell, Miss Power, Miss Auckland, Miss M. Auckland, Miss Gorrie, and many others whose names I forget. Amongst the gentlemen were Messrs Withers, Churton, Gordon, Forbes, Gorrie, Ware, Dargaville, McCormick, Lockhart, Anderson, Lawford, Sullivan, and a whole host of others. The observed of all observers were Miss G. G. and her friend in the reformed dress, which is certainly admirably adapted for skating.