Society Gossip.

AUCKLAND.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 15.

So quiet is the social atmosphere just now, that it almost amounts to stagnation. Everyone is either away from home, or finds all her friends are away, and therefore it is of no use trying to get up a party. However, things are looking brighter, and this week we are anticipating a more enjoyable time. Mrs Scherff (Glenalvon) gives a large

'AT HOME'

on the occasion of the marriage of her eldest daughter, to Professor Seager. The ceremony takes place at St. Sepulchre's Church on Wednesday afternoon. The guests will then adjourn to the residence of Mr Scherff.

OUR FOLKS.

Mr and Mrs Bull with their youngest daughter, Miss Beatrice, are contemplating a voyage to England, leaving their daughter to have a tour on the continent of a year's duration. The two elder sisters, Misses Ethel and Rosa, will make a lengthy visit to Australia. They are all at present staying at Waiheke.

Many Auckland people are summering at Lake Takapuna for a change during the warm months. Amongst those who are at present there are Mrs Devore and family, Mrs Ware and Mrs Arch. Clarke, etc.

STREET GOWNS.

I have noticed some very smart gowns while I have been shopping or calling. Mrs R. Clifton looked very well in a coral pink bengaline, veiled in cream ecru lace; Mrs (Colonel) Dawson, navy serge, white vest, sailor hat; Miss Maud Wilkins, grey skirt, pink blouse, white sailor hat; Mrs (Major) George, grey *tussore* silk, white sailor hat; Miss Thomas (Christchurch) looked *chic* in white muslin, white sailor hat with blue bands; Miss Ida Thorne-George, blue drill, white vest, sailor hat with flying white gossamer veil; Miss Rookes, navy delaine skirt, white muslin blouse, navy and white straw sailor hat; Miss Hesketh, navy gown, white vest; Miss Beale (Ponsonby), black merino, white vest; Mrs Shirley-Baker, black silk; Mrs Arthur Taylor, black cashmere, white vest, sailor hat; Mrs Leathem, slate grey skirt, pale pink blouse, brown felt hat; Mrs H. Tewesley, pretty pink Liberty silk veiled in cream insertion.

TENNIS AND THE RAIN.

Through the unpleasant state of the weather I have been unable to go to the different lawns. The afternoon tea given on the Mount Eden Lawn to welcome Mr Hooper last Saturday had to be postponed. A few came, but soon returned, as it began to pour heavily.

THE AUCKLAND YACHT CLUB

must, at some early period of its existence, have committed a dire offence against the weather prophet, or, unwittingly even, trod upon the corns of Jupiter Pluvius himself, for each annual picnic day is attended with a tempest of rain, and 'winds that blow'—not from the south, but more generally from the nor'-east. Such was the case on Saturday, excepting that the wind retired early from the contest, giving the 'worser' of the two evils a free innings, and oh—, how it rained! Fortunately, during the hours which were spent ashore at Drunken Bay, the rain subsided, and the Eagle's crowded party dispersed in many groups along the beach to boil their respective 'billies' or assist in the general tea-making supplied by the Club. At dusk, the entire fleet of yachts anchored in Drunken Bay ranged themselves in a circle round the 'Eagle,' where an excellent selection of songs was rendered by the Liedertafel under the leadership of Mr Towsey. The ferry boat reached Queen-street Wharf again about 11.30 p.m. The orthodox and sensible picnic costume being almost universally worn, namely, a sailor hat, light blouse of some description, and serge skirt, this occasion hardly calls for a detailed account of ladies' dresses, but I will give a few of those I noticed: Mrs Scott (Onehunga), navy blue drill costume, small flowered bonnet; Mrs Towsey, fawn check cloak over old rose cashmere, velvet bonnet; Mrs Williamson, all black; Mrs Shirley Baker, handsome black dress and mantle; the Misses Baker wore navy blue and white costumes, with fur-lined navy cloaks to match; Mrs Sloman, navy; Mrs Forbes, heliotrope dress with broad white belt and sailor hat; Mrs Neill, black; Mrs — Neill, white blouse, and black skirt, gem hat; Mrs McCormick, black dress with black lace mantle and bonnet; Miss Morton looked well in fawn; Miss J. Morton, white blouse and sailor hat trimmed with blue ribbon, dark skirt; Miss C. Sloman, pretty cardinal dress; Mrs W. Bloomfield and her sister-in-law, Mrs George Bloomfield, who sailed in the Viking, wore white blouses with black skirts and sailor hats—a correct yachting costume; Mrs Brigham, black dress and hat; Miss Brigham and her sister wore black and white striped blouses with black skirts and hats; Miss Banks, becoming blue drill costume, white hat; Miss — Banks, pale blue and white blouse, navy skirt; Miss Beatrice Bull looked pretty in a rose pink blouse and holland skirt; Miss Ethel Bull, heliotrope and navy; Mrs Bush, black and white costume, black hat; the Misses Bush looked well in navy blue dresses with light blouses; Miss Elsie Lusk, pretty blue dress, sailor hat; Miss Alice Lusk, I think, wore black; the Misses Von Sturmer, pretty light dresses and hats; Mrs Atkinson, black; Miss Ethel Atkinson wore a becoming white dress, white sailor hat with brown gossamer; Miss Bedlington, white and navy; Mrs Beale, brown and red figured blouse with tweed skirt, gem hat; Miss Otway, navy blue costume with white blouse, and white sailor hat; Mrs Hughes, all black; Miss Eva Hughes, I think, wore white; Miss Francis George, pretty cream nun's veiling blouse, black skirt and black hat; Mrs Jones, stylish black costume; Mrs Edgar wore a handsome brown brocaded silk; Miss Freda Langsford, black; Mrs (Colonel) Dawson, black cashmere dress, and bonnet.

PHYLLIS BROUNE.

WELLINGTON.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 9.

Now that the Christmas and New Year holidays are over, we are a little gayer than when I last wrote.

Lady Glasgow, in her usual kind and considerate way, gave

A LARGE BALL TO HER SERVANTS

and their friends on Thursday night, which was enjoyed most heartily by all. I believe the Ladies Boyle did all they could to make it a success.

On the same night there was

A SMALL DANCE

given on board the s.s. Rimutaka, which was at the time lying at the Queen's wharf. Among the few present were Lady Augusta Boyle, Captain Preston, and the Misses Fairchild, Izard, Williams, Rose, Brandon, Stowe, Johnston, etc. Captain Greenstreet made a capital host, so that a very jolly evening was spent.

Mrs Arthur Pearce gave a very small dance at her summer residence

AT LOWRY BAY

on New Year's Eve. A number of her friends drove out from town, and danced the New Year in.

Mr and Mrs H. D. Bell and family are at Lowry Bay again this summer.

The members of the

THORNDON TENNIS CLUB

who visited Christchurch for the championship matches did not do quite as well as we Wellington people had hoped. The only trophy brought back by our players was that won by Miss M. Kennedy and Mr H. M. Gore, for the combined doubles. I was glad to hear that Miss H. Hitchings, of Napier, had won the ladies' championship singles. She does try so hard, and takes such an interest in the game, it is quite a pleasure to see her play. They were most fortunate in the weather, though I heard that the heat was very trying, especially for the lady players.

I have seen several of our lady representatives since their return, and from their appearance I should say that while they were striving to cover themselves with glory, the hot sun stole away their complexions.

We are expecting the Williamson and Musgrove Comic Opera Company here shortly. There is nothing so enjoyable as a

COMIC OPERA

I think. I heard some little time ago that they would not include Wellington in their round, as the expenses of the Opera House are so great, but now they have changed their minds and will be here quite soon now.

PERSONAL ITEMS.

The Bishop of Salisbury has arrived in New Zealand. He is the guest of Lord and Lady Glasgow in Wellington.

Miss Hilda Johnston has gone to the Rangitikei district, and is at present staying with Mrs Dan. Riddiford.

The lovely house and grounds belonging to Mr J. E. Nathan in Hawkestone-street, have been bought by Dr. Grace. Mr and the Misses Nathan intend making England their home, and leave New Zealand at an early date. The Misses Nathan will be greatly missed in Wellington by their many friends, whom they have so frequently entertained in different ways. We all wish them *bon voyage*.

OPHELIA.

DUNEDIN.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 12.

There having been no news in the former part of this week, I am afraid my letter this week will be somewhat short. There is so little going on now, everyone seems still away.

On Friday, January 11th,

AN ENJOYABLE MUSICALE, GIVEN BY MRS MCKERRAS,

must be chronicled. The table decorations were exceptionally pretty, being a creation in which scarlet geraniums, maidenhair fern and white crepon paper were artistically disposed. The musical items were delightful—really good—and were contributed by the Misses Royce, Reynolds, Skerratt (Wellington), and Macassey, also Mr Gully and Mr Clowes, of Omatu.

AMONGST THE DRESSES

I remember Mrs Mackerras, black broché; Mrs Todd, yellow silk and black velvet trimmings; Mrs Buckland (Hobart), white brocade; Mrs Jowitt, white crêpon; Mrs Richardson, black velvet; Miss Mackerras, black silk with trimmings of jet and lace; Miss L. Mackerras, white silk; Miss Amy Mackerras, heliotrope silk; Miss B. Mackerras, white crêpon; Miss Stephenson, black silk, white fichu; Miss Skeritt, white silk; Miss Aggie Roberts, pale green silk; Miss Royce, cream silk, blue trimmings; Miss Farquhar, pink brocade with sprays of white flowers; Miss Shand, heliotrope covered with black net; Miss Maclean, white silk; Miss Wright, pink, with green trimmings; Miss Ulrich, blue silk, silver trimmings; Miss Macassey, black silk; Miss Scott, white nun's veiling; Miss Reynolds, pink silk blouse, velvet skirt; Miss Driver, black lace, white satin sleeves; Miss Kate Royce, salmon pink silk, frills of Limerick lace; Miss Lily Roberts, pale pink silk; Miss Skerrett, cream silk banded with crushed strawberry velvet; Miss Lily Trent, white crepon, satin ribbon trimmings. Also Messrs Gully, Tapley, Henry, Menlove, Robinson, Broad, Clowes, Hume, Buckland, Todd, Maclean, Jowitt, Hornibrook (Adelaide), Moulden (Adelaide), Edmonds, Pascoe, Reynolds, Vansenden, Borrows, Sleigh, Richardson, and one or two others.

PREPARATIONS FOR A LARGE GIPSY TEA

had been prepared by Mrs W. Neill on Saturday, the 12th inst., for her sister, Mrs Burns (Melbourne), but owing to the inclemency of the weather the picnic had to be postponed.

AILEEN.

BLENHEIM.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 5.

Blenheim has been quite gay during the visit of the Wellington

PARLIAMENTARY RECESS CLUB.

The visitors were entertained last Sunday by Mr and Mrs Griffiths, who invited a number of their friends to meet them. They all spent a very pleasant time in the pretty garden.

On Monday the visitors gave a most

SUCCESSFUL PICNIC

to White's Bay, about forty-five being conveyed thither in drags. The P.R.C. men were Messrs Holmes (two), Wright, Buckle, Barraud, Barron, Browning, F. Laishley, Royal, Coath, and their guests were Mesdames Griffiths, Carey Holmes, Snodgrass, McIntosh, Greenfield, Park, A. Farmar; Misses Rees, Hull, Smith (two), Carey (three), Carly (Wellington), Robertson, Broadbent, Farmar (three), Dodson, Ferguson, Messrs Griffiths (two), Dunn (two), etc. A very good time was spent, in spite of a few light showers. On their return to town the party found a capital dinner at the Criterion ordered for them by their hosts, and all finished up the evening at the Bank of New Zealand with dancing and music.

On Tuesday the

TENNIS MATCHES

were played in unfavourable weather, the ground being wet and the balls heavy. The visiting team were entertained at lunch at the Criterion, and a large number were present on the Club grounds in the afternoon, tea and dainty cakes, etc., being provided and dispensed by lady members of the Club. Tea was served in the pavilion, owing to the rain. Some of the matches were very exciting in spite of the rain. The tournament was won by the Wellington men.

DANCE GIVEN AT ST. CLAIR.

On Tuesday evening a most delightful and enjoyable dance was given by Mr and Mrs T. H. Hanna in honour of Mr and Mrs Andrew Hanna (Auckland), who are spending their Christmas holidays at St. Clair. The house, which is perfectly adapted to a dance, was charmingly decorated with cabbage trees, toitoi, raupo, and banks of daisies and moss. The supper table was most effectively and originally arranged with Spanish broom, grass, and oats, and was laden with all the delicacies of the season. Miss Hull (Auckland) was decidedly the belle, in white silk and pink velvet sleeves and frills; Mrs Snodgrass looked well in cau-de-nil silk and dark green velvet, and so did Mrs McIntosh, who wore black velvet and tamarisk flowers; Mrs Vavasour wore handsome white silk and pale blue; Mrs Hanna (who should have been mentioned first), wore brown brocade, and Mrs McRae, black velvet; Mr and Mrs Clayton, Mr and Mrs Greenfield, Mr and Mrs Holmes, Mr and Mrs Crawshaw, Mrs Park, Misses Fell (two, Picton), Carey (three), Redwood, Williams (two), W. Black, Messrs Vavasour, Snodgrass, McIntosh, Weld, Church, C. Hodson, Griffiths (two), Dunn, E. Conolly, E. Pasley, Holmes (two), Buckle, Barraud, Night, Barron, F. Laishley, Coath, etc., etc. Dancing was kept up with keen enjoyment till the small hours, when 'Auld Lang Syne' in the hall brought this delightful dance to a close.

VERA.

PICTON.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 8.

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

are once more past, though the memory of a pleasant time still clings to us. For Picton folk generally Christmas 1894 was a truly happy one. Old friends from north and south, and from east and west, flocked back to the old nest, and filled each home with mirth and jollity; fun and frolic was the order of the week, old reminiscences were raked out from memory bags and new developments unfolded. Every house seemed to be full to the brim, and yet elastic enough to hold another who had no such home to go to.

On Wednesday Mrs Andrews gave a

CHARMING LITTLE GARDEN PARTY

to the grown-up young people, and having collected quite an army of young men as well as girls, the affair was most successful, and the guests heartily enjoyed the tea and dainty cakes, not to mention unlimited raspberries and cream, etc. Mr and Mrs Andrews seemed to enjoy the affair quite as much as their guests did.

On New Year's Eve, Mr and Mrs Gard gave a large

EUCHRE PARTY

which was voted by all present to be the very best ever held in Picton. Eleven tables were kept going merrily till midnight, when all joined hands in 'Auld Lang Syne' and the New Year was inaugurated by all the jolly old choruses possible, in which everybody joined. It looks as if the old days are coming back again, when Rougemont—Mr Gard's residence—is once more the pleasantest house in Picton. Among those present were the Misses J. and S. Gard, Mr and Mrs J. Mouat (Blenheim) and Mrs J. Conolly, who ably assisted Mr and Mrs Gard in entertaining their visitors. The visitors were Mr and Mrs Fenwick, Mr and Mrs H. Howard (Wanganui), Mrs Sealy, the Misses H. C. Seymour (three), Linton (two), Phillpotts, Western, Greensill, Allen, Mr Robinson (England), McBeth (Wanganui), McIntyre, M. Greensill, E. Greensill, Mrs Welford (Marton), and Messrs Temple, Maling, G. Allen, Riddle, Dunn, Gregory, Burden, Scott, Carey, Fox, Greensill (four), Seale, Blakiston, E. Conolly, Mitchell, and Western. The first prizes were won by Miss K. Seymour and Mr Burden.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

was celebrated as usual, the church bells ringing out a welcome to the New Year, whilst rockets and fireworks made things lively near the wharves, though a steady downpour of rain prevented the bonfires from going off.

THE ANNUAL REGATTA

on New Year's Day was not so well attended as usual owing to the weather, which set in for a decidedly bad start, and has kept up in that spirit ever since. Only two Blenheim crews contested the events, and they were far too light to get anywhere near the winning post against our heavy men. It was admitted, however, that the Blenheim crews pulled well, and in a far more scientific manner than the Picton men, who want scientific training. The Church of England held a sale of refreshments, and did remarkably well, clearing over twenty pounds.

THE AMUSEMENTS

during the holidays were boating parties, tennis, cricket, and a Christmas tree, which brought in the handsome sum of twenty pounds for the Presbyterians, and was a great treat to the children. A rowing tournament for trophies was also got off during Christmas week, and created much excitement. Mrs H. C. Seymour, Mrs Allen, and the Misses Allen, Seymour, Greensill, and Philpotts providing afternoon tea on the Spit for the rowing club and their friends.

Among the

HOLIDAY VISITORS TO PICTON

were Mr and Mrs Travers (Wellington), Mr and Mrs J. Mouat, Mrs J. Conolly, Mr and Mrs Howard (Blenheim), Mr Henry Greensill (Brisbane), Mr and Mrs H. Howard (Wanganui), Mr G. C. Allen and Miss Allen (Wellington), Mr Haslett (Pahiatua), Mr H. Baillie (Carterton), Mr G. Allen and Mr Burden (Blenheim), Miss McBeth (Wanganui), Miss Robinson (England), Mr Wright (Blenheim), Mrs and Miss Robertson (Feilding), Mrs Welford (Marton), Mr and Mrs A. Duncan, Mr W. Duncan, Mr A. Scott, the Misses Waddy and Mr G. Waddy, etc., etc.

JEAN.

CHRISTCHURCH.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 10.

After the demoralising effect of too many holidays I once more take up my pen to give you a few jottings of our doings in this City of the Plains. The

TENNIS TOURNAMENT

was keenly fought out, and great interest taken all through by a large number of spectators, in spite of the heat. The weather has been gloriously fine for weeks, and those engaged in outdoor sports, picnic parties, and others show signs of the power of old Sol. Auckland claims one champion for tennis (Mr Hooper), and Napier the other (Miss Hilda Hitchings), the play of both being really masterly.

On New Year's Day Lyttelton took the giant share of holiday makers, some twenty-two or twenty-three thousand people being in and around it. Besides the regatta, marine excursions, etc., H.M.S. Royalist was in port, the Doric, and several other large steamers, always a source of interest to landsmen. The commander and officers of the Royalist entertained a number of friends on board, and a magnificent display of fireworks finished up the proceedings.

On Thursday evening a

PRIVATE DANCE

was given by a few ladies to Captain Goodrich and his officers in the Canterbury boatsheds, the floor of which is an excellent one for dancing, other arrangements being equally good. The hostesses were Mrs Cunningham, Mrs Denniston, Mrs P. Campbell, Mrs R. Macdonald, Mrs G. Gould, and Mrs H. Cotterill. Visitors were very numerous, and the evening was a delightful one and much enjoyed by all present, 2.30 p.m. coming much too quickly. Mrs Cunningham wore a very handsome gown of very pale green satin brocaded with pink, diamond ornaments; Mrs Denniston, a lovely pink corded silk with black lace and jet trimming; Mrs P. Campbell, heliotrope silk with primrose coloured panels; Mrs R. Macdonald looked well in crimson brocade, shoes and fan to match; Mrs G. Gould, shot pale blue and pink silk trimmed with lace and dark fur; Mrs H. Cotterill, pretty white silk and pale pink cloak; Mrs Alan Scott (who has just returned from England), trained black satin gown; Mrs J. Hall looked extremely well in white brocade with berthe and sleeves of green satin finished with passementerie; Mrs Burns, pale blue silk and brocade, pearl embroidered belt; Miss Cowlishaw, a very pretty gown of white brocade; Miss Bassington, beautiful grey bengaline trimmed with steel; Miss F. Wynn-Williams, coral pink silk; Miss — Wynn-Williams, white satin; Miss Reeves, pale blue trimmed with black lace; Miss Haslam, pale grey satin; Mrs R. Tabart, pink with black velvet sleeves and trimmings; Miss Hargreaves, a lovely dress of pink silk; Miss Hutton, cream with black trimming; Miss Spooner, cream corded silk trimmed with lace; Miss Bowen, white relieved with green; Miss Neave, white with yellow trimming; Miss Mellish, a striking dress of sapphire velvet with front panel of blue and white striped silk; Miss Roberts, yellow silk, the bodice trimmed with black lace insertion; Miss Turton (Dunedin), a pretty gown of heliotrope trimmed with cream lace; Miss Roberts (Dunedin), navy blue velvet, the bodice finished with white lace; Miss Kitto, blue silk, bands and panel of black velvet.

AN AFTERNOON PARTY.

Mrs Cowlishaw invited a number of tennis players to meet the officers of the Royalist on Wednesday, but the weather after the long spell of fine, was of a very different nature, and drove all inside, where dancing in one of the large drawing-rooms and other pursuits only made the afternoon speed all too quickly. A delicious afternoon tea was dispensed, our host and hostess making everyone enjoy themselves.

POLO

was played most vigorously in Hagley Park on Saturday afternoon, when Mrs G. Gould dispensed afternoon tea to a large number of visitors, amongst whom were the Hon. Mrs Parker, Mr and Mrs P. Campbell, Mr and Mrs Alan Scott, Mr and Mrs Otterson, and others.

We are looking forward with very great pleasure to the arrival of the

OPERA COMPANY,

it is so long since we have had a good company here, and we shall all be so glad to have Nellie Stewart again.

General Fulton and daughters have taken a house in Oxford Terrace, East, and we hope may remain with us some time.

Mountaineering is quite

THE CRAZE OF THE SEASON,

and the honour of reaching the summit of our noble and hitherto unsurmountable Mount Cook falls to some plucky New Zealanders—Messrs Fyfe, Graham, and Clarke—to be now, circumstances being favourable, followed by Mr A. E. Fitzgerald (England) and party. Mr Fitzgerald has brought a Swiss guide and all the latest appliances for ice climbing, and everyone wishes him success, though the precise object to be gained puzzles many. News has reached us of a few adventures already, but their spirits do not seem at all quenched by these trifles.

'Camping out' is another craze of ours, and at Sumner this year the flower camps have increased enormously both in number and