The New Zealand Graphic

And Ladies' Journal.

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A FEW weeks ago the Auckland Ladies' Benevolent Society were called up to face an unpleasant and unfortunate fact. The winter, then tardily taking its departure, had been one of the longest and wettest ever known in the colony, and the Society had its hands more than usually full, so that at the time we have mentioned it found itself at the end of its financial tether. The question was how to raise funds? At last an inspiration—really it was little less—came to one of the most prominent members. 'Let us,' she urged, 'have a Floral Fête such as they have at Nice and at the Botanical Society in London.' So it was decided. Of the success it achieved, it is scarcely necessary to speak. Nothing to compare with it has ever been known in Auckland.

The momentous day dawned all too perfectly. It was a matchless morning, and high hopes must have been entertained of a perfect day. But, alas! before nine the sky became overcast, and the prospects of a bright sunshiny afternoon became sorrowfully remote. However, the rain held off, and the clouds floated high, so that everyone hoped for the best, and decorations were proceeded with apace. Long before noon the road which led to the show ground was busy with flower-bedecked vehicles laden with huge bundles and baskets of flowers and greenery, the evident desire being to put the finishing touches to the exhibits on the ground, and thus lessen the danger or damage in transit.

Mishaps, of course, there were. There was, for instance, a tandem which never turned up. The leader became obstreperous, and the wheeler being annoyed in turn, backed the heavily beflowered vehicle into the hedge. A hot and dusty young man struggled and did his best to set things right, and a lady stood afar off and scolded. It was useless. She might as well have been nice and sympathised. The trap was not got out of the hedge till the flowers were completely ruined, and it returned sorrowfully to town.

As one o'clock drew near the ground rapidly filled, and the sight-seers began to arrive by hundreds and thousands. The burgesses of Auckland and their wives, their sisters, their cousins, and their aunts, not to mention the children, seemed determined for once to take the advice of Horace and to cry—

> Hence sordid care, hence idle sorrow,
> Death comes apace, to-day—to-morrow;
> Then mingle mirth with melancholy,
> Wisdom at times is found in folly!

and to set out and enjoy themselves for this day at least, whatever worries and troubles there might be in the future.

Amongst the exhibitors all was now in the old phrase 'bustle and confusion.' Dainty little flower-decked maidens careered here and there with tiny bouquets elaborating designs, and putting final touches to the decorations of their carts; the decorated dogs growled and attempted to fight whenever a chance offered; and a garlanded pig kept up an intermittent squealing which drowned the impassioned pleadings of the judges that the go-cart exhibitors would range themselves in procession for the judging. And now, while this important duty was being transacted, some of us found it well to take a general view around. Fears were once entertained that the public would not rise to the occasion, that exhibitors would not know what was required of them. Surely no one on the ground on Saturday afternoon was not more than satisfied, was not absolutely astonished at the completeness with which the idea of the floral *fête* had been grasped, and the splendour with which it was carried out. There can never be again any need to go to European papers for illustrations of the type of decorations required. The taste, the originality, the constructive skill displayed in Auckland was a surprise and delight to all. It surprised and delighted none more than those who have seen the great floral *fêtes* at Nice and Paris. Potter's Paddock has indeed seen many fine sights, but certainly never one more novel or more beautiful than this. The grandstand was densely packed. Not an inch of standing or sitting room was left. The majority of those there were ladies, and so bright and varied were the colours of the dresses that the stand from a distance presented the spectacle of a huge bank of brilliant flowers, an impression which added considerably to the *tout ensemble* of the gay scene.

> 'On the green enamelled sward'

were gathering every description of gaily-decked vehicles, some falling into their places to await the word of the stewards, and to be ready to promenade before the judges; others, less conscientious, driving about and admiring each other's vehicles. What a splendid sight it was! Dog-carts, drays, buggies, tandems, tax-carts, waggonettes, all beautified and decorated out of knowledge to be seen on every side. Herrick might well have been there to sing, as he did for the hock cart,

> 'Come forth, fair dame and see the cart
> Dressed up with all the country's art.'

It was, indeed, impossible to know which way to look. One's eye was distracted by the profusion, and each car seemed lovelier than the last. What an incredible expenditure of time and patience these exquisite results must have entailed. For in a matter of this sort there is no effect produced without an infinitude of care.

> 'If little labour, little are our gains,
> Man's fortunes are according to his pains.'

at one moment one was captured as some smart pony trap enamelled with flowers

'Present their shapes, while fantasy discloses
Millions of lilies mixed with roses.'

These swinging by at a smart trot, one's attention was turned from them to some huge brake

'Full of fresh verdure and unnumbered flowers.'

from whose garlanded and silken bowers looked out the laughing faces and bright eyes of the beauties of an age gone by—an age of powder and patches revivified on this occasion for our delectation. *Anon* a troupe of cyclists swept around us, the noiseless safeties gaily bedizened with flowers, and many of the riders in fancy or comic costume. One had rigged up his machine as a yacht with remarkably good effect, and another had almost covered his machine with exquisite white tiger lilies. This gentleman, we noticed, by the way, caught the judge's eye later on, and received, as he well deserved to do, the first prize.

'Colours go and colours come.'

Frenzied press men rushed wildly about, vainly attempting to glean information as to entries and prizes; stewards with their red cross badges galloped excitedly hither and thither, endeavouring, with little success, to make the traps, buggies, and carriages fall into their proper positions. And let it here be said that, though the organising power of the committee was perhaps none of the best, it was the irresponsibility of the exhibitors which caused much of the confusion.

Photograph fiends there were by the score. The GRAPHIC specials ran alternately hither and thither in the altogether hopeless task of endeavouring to secure shots at the vehicles of first prize winners. The crowd always desired to be in the picture, and though perfectly good-natured and kindly, they flatly refused to listen to the continued plaint of the unfortunate photo fiends, 'Stand back there, please.' 'Do, please, stand back there, ladies and gentlemen.' Nevertheless, by infinity of patience these gentlemen did get some very successful pictures, as is amply proved by the reproduction therefrom on this and other of these pages.

But enough of generalities. It was high time to push our way to the grandstand and attempt to see something of what the judges were doing. This proved impossible, but a space was secured lower down.

THE GO-CARTS

had passed, and very beautiful they were—masses of flowers most delicately arranged with lovely childish faces to set them off. The task of judging must have been very severe. Mrs Cheeseman's boat, exquisitely embowered in flowers, was very original, but even more beautiful was Miss Purchas' cart—a delicious harmony in yellow. Mrs L. Bloomfield's Japanese jiniksha was well worthy of the place it gained. All in this class were indeed excellent. Beautiful carts were shown by Mrs Stone, Miss Goldie, Miss Whitney (with cart drawn by dog), Miss Clark, Miss Jessie Webster, Miss Doris Tewsley, Mrs T. Wood, Mrs Kernott, the Misses Haslett, Nelson and Tibbs, Miss Merven Rattray, Master Bubba King, Master Gorrie, Master Benford, Mrs Archie Clarke, Mr Mackay, Miss Crofts, Mrs Ehrman, Mrs Burton. The

PERAMBULATORS WITH BABIES

were naturally the object of absorbing interest on the part of the fair sex. A lovely arrangement in maidenhair and white, with a beautiful child ensconsed, took first prize in Mrs Duncan Clarke's name, the second falling to Mrs Ward. Other exhibitors were Mrs Thompson and Mrs Elliot.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL CART.

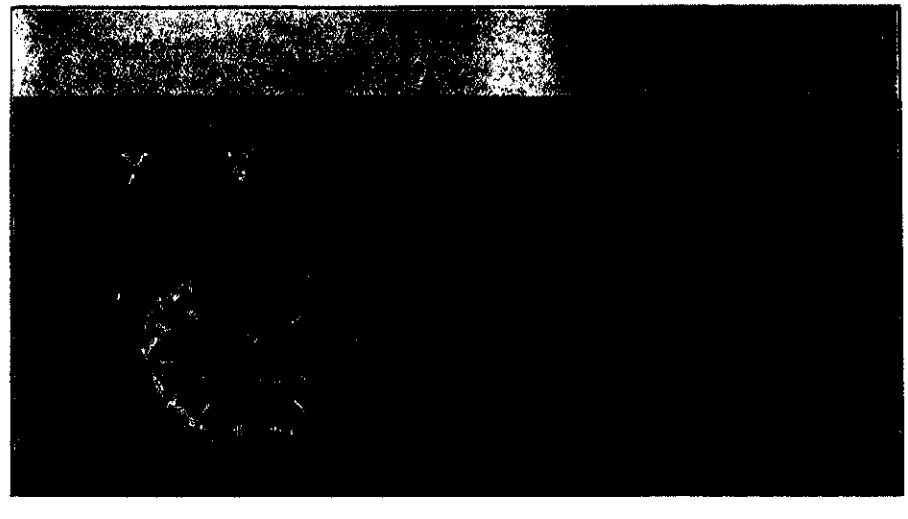
Following this came one of the prettiest of the day's exhibits—a hand-cart exquisitely decorated and drawn by some twenty girls clad in white fancy dresses and picture hats. Inside this cart sat representatives of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Loud and long was the applause which greeted this exhibit, of which a picture is given. Amongst the

ORIGINAL CONVEYANCES,

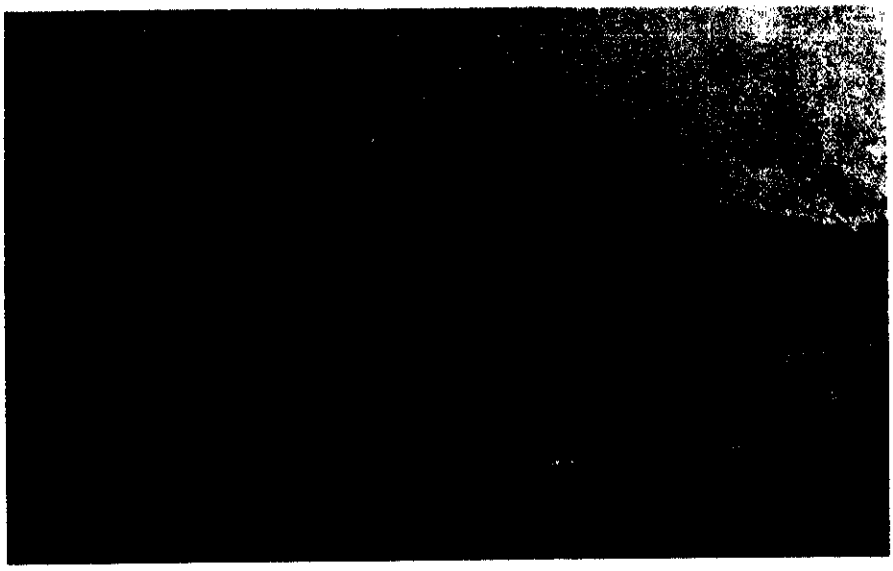
some of which paraded about this time, was a Maori canoe exhibited by Mrs Coombe Baker, drawn by children dressed in Maori costume. Seated in the canoe was the gravest and most dignified of very juvenile *rangitiras*. This was one of the most original, and certainly one of the best worked-out ideas of its class, and well worthy of the first prize. The May Queen and her retinue—the cart covered with roses drawn by about thirty children—was extremely pretty, and a very good idea, and evoked loud applause from the stand. Another very pretty notion was that of Mrs Ivan Clarke—a tiny yacht on wheels with children drawing it dressed to represent marguerite daisies, which was the chief feature in the decorations. A picture of this exhibit is given amongst our illustrations. It gained the second prize in its class. A small whaleboat was mounted on a decorated trolly, and inside the boat was a crew of boys in the Club uniform. The manifest endeavour of

MISS E. BRETT'S PANSY COSTER CART—1st prize.

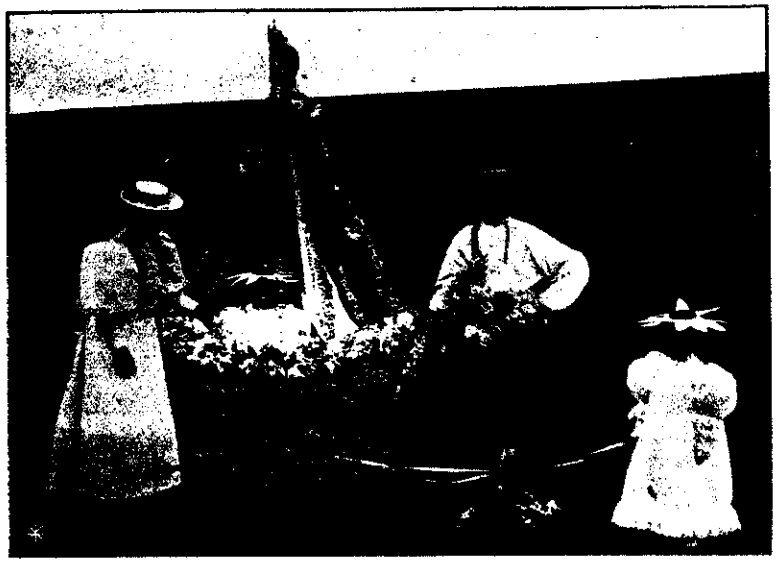
MRS HAINES' COSTER CART—2nd prize.



Photos specially taken for N.Z. Graphic. MISS FLO REACH'S COSTER CART—3rd prize.



GRAMMAR SCHOOL—4TH FORM EXHIBIT.



MRS IVAN CLARKES, ORIGINAL CONVEYANCE—2nd prize.

THE PONSONBY 18TH CENTURY STAGE COACH.
Photos specially taken for N.Z. Graphic. 1st prize.

the Club was to send an exhibit which should keep them well before the public, and for this the West End Rowing Club must be warmly commended. Their efforts were crowned with success, a special prize being awarded them. What were St. George's and Auckland about that they did not have their 'cruiser' there? Mrs Calder entered a bath chair; the Band of Hope Union, a life-boat; Master Cruickshank, a dog and cart; Mrs Davis, an invalid chair; Misses Mary and Phyllis Davis, dog and cart; Mr Benford, a palanquin; Miss Gorrie, a boat; and Mrs Kilgour, the May Queen and retinue, of which something has been said elsewhere. It is impossible to give even a brief description of these exhibits. All deserved praise, and all were worthy of prizes had there been prizes for all. Dogs and carts were *en evidence*, and won considerable applause, besides creating endless amusement.

CHILDREN'S PONIES

were not judged till later in the afternoon, but may well be discussed and dismissed here. The boys' class was enormous, and had to be divided into juniors and seniors. The first honours fell to Master S. M. Lewis, whose saddle cloth of green and marigold was most artistic. Master M. Pierce came second, and Master Leo Walsh third. In the juniors Master Dignan, with pink and white saddle cloth, was first, Master Ransom second, and Master Gorrie third. All these were excellent. Amongst the girls Miss Eileen Gallagher, in blue and white, daisies and cornflowers, carried off first prize, Miss Speight, of Parnell, being the decorator and designer. Miss Bloomfield's was unquestionably one of the prettiest there. The child herself, her pony, and the flower decorations were all in harmony, and certainly she and her steed divided with the first and second prize-winners the admiration of the crowd. Miss E. Tylden scored second honours in this class, and well deserved them. Other entries in this class were:—Masters James Dickey, A. S. Rose, Walter S. Mill, Templeton Reid, Sellars, Charlie Herrold, D. Gorrie, J. Gorrie, F. Brown, T. Hull, M. Pierce, Thos. M. Lewis, Edwin Bamford, Jack Buckland, Rosser, Nelson Morrin, Allen Tighe, George Tighe, F. Martin, Mrs McArthur, Misses Hilda Morrin, Logan, Goring, Whistler, Ida Percival, E. Rae, A. Watkins, Skelton, Brookfield and G. W. Owen.

Before passing to the larger vehicles let the place of honour it so richly merited be given to

THE MAYOR'S CARRIAGE.

As a specimen of the larger type of exhibits, and take it for all in all, it was a credit to the Mayor and to the city. It was without doubt one of the most effective, most decorative vehicles on the ground, and the turn-out would have done credit to any city in the world. Drawn by four splendidly caparisoned horses, the Mayor's landau was an admirably designed and excellently carried-out scheme in red and white. The arrangement of the flowers was altogether remarkably artistic, and the result beyond criticism. No photo can do justice to this, or in fact to any of the exhibits, since colour played so important a part in them, but our picture gives some idea of the beauty of the design and the completeness of the arrangement.

TWO-HORSE VEHICLES.

There were not many entries in this class, but assuredly that which took first prize was one of the most interesting on the ground. Miss Horne had arranged her carriage as if it were owned by some ladies of a Cairo harem. It was greatly admired. Inside the carriage sat the ladies of the harem, and in attendance was the Sais or runner. The ladies' costumes were those familiar to visitors to Egypt—black shawls with white muslin veils over the face. The Sais wore a huge white turban and yellow tassel, and the carriage was nicely decorated in three shades of yellow. Mrs Cowan's conveyance was decorated very nicely, the arrangement being in the form of a basket of flowers. She gained second prize, and Mrs Kerr-Taylor's waggonette was third.

Approaching the description of the

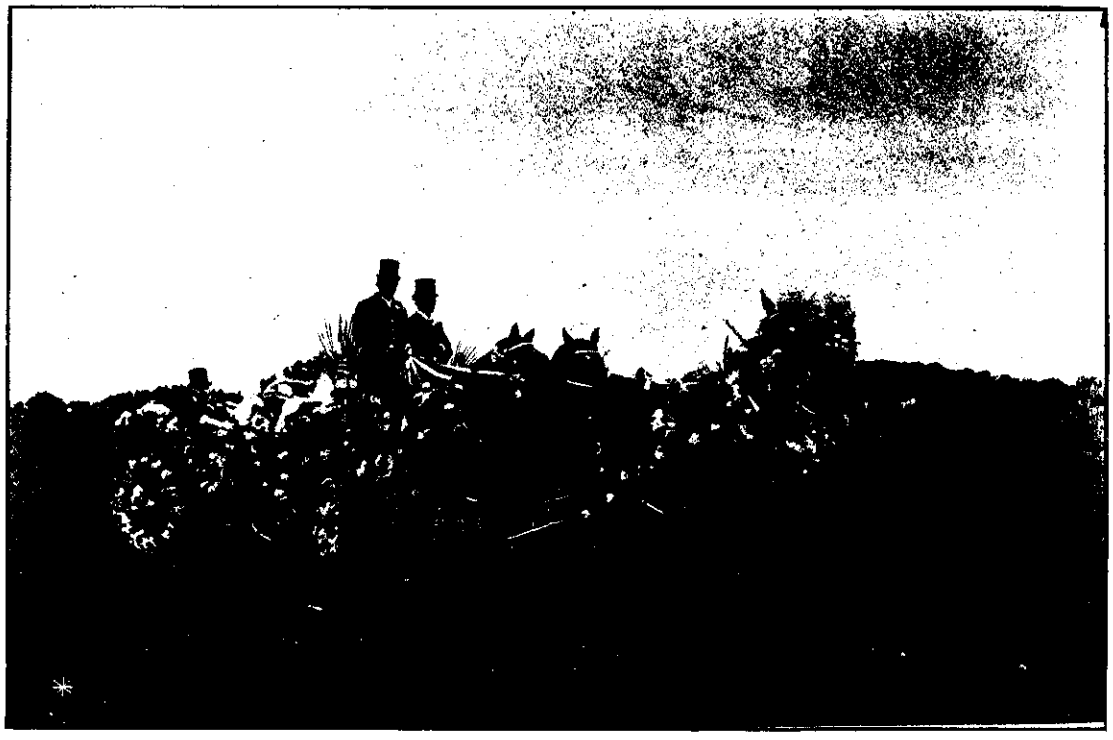
BRAKES AND DRAGS

one may well falter. The difficulties of the position were felt by the judges. Here was a set of exhibits of altogether unusual and unlooked-for merit. They decided to divide the class into two—one for drags, the other for waggonettes. Miss Thorpe and

THE LADIES OF REMUERA

took first prize in the drag division, and no description in black and white can do justice to the high character of the taste displayed. The drag was simply covered in white, the horses being relieved with touches of red. From within the silken and beflowered bowers peered the pretty faces of a bevy of laughing damsels becomingly befrocked in white, with just a relieving touch of red and natural flowers in their picture hats. Over their heads fluttered a banner with the proud device, 'Remuera,' in gold letters. To have placed Ponsonby second to this—beautiful as it was—was, of course, out of the question, and the judges took the course alluded

A.L.B.S. 1895 FLORAL FETE.

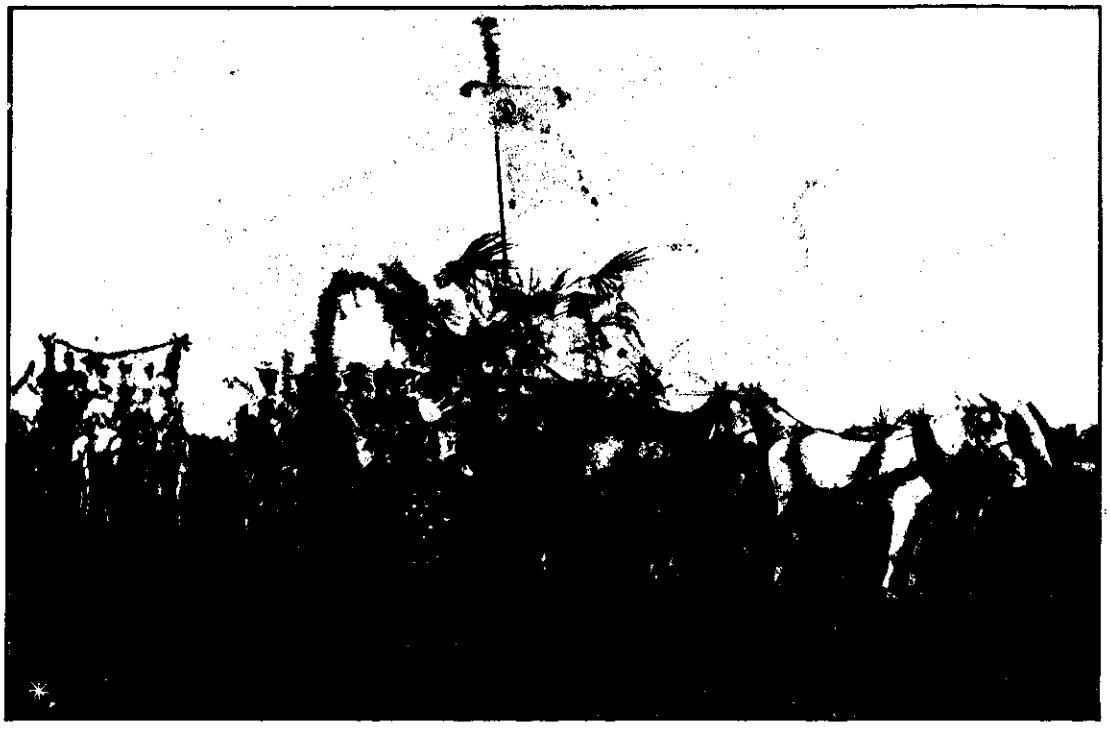


THE CARRIAGE OF HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF AUCKLAND (MR J. J. HOLLAND).

Photos specially taken for N.Z. Graphic.

MRS GEORGE R. BLOOMFIELD'S DOG CART—1st prize.

FLORAL FETE AT POTTER'S PADDOCK



PARNELL DRAG — 2nd prize.

REMUERA DRAG — 1st prize.

Photos specially taken for N.Z. Graphic.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE GRAND STAND.

PONSONBY WAGGONETTE — 1st prize.

DR KING'S COACH — extra prize.

Photos specially taken for N Z Graphic.

MISS THORPE'S WAGGONETTE — 1st prize.

THE MAY QUEEN AND ROSE QUEEN PROCESSION.

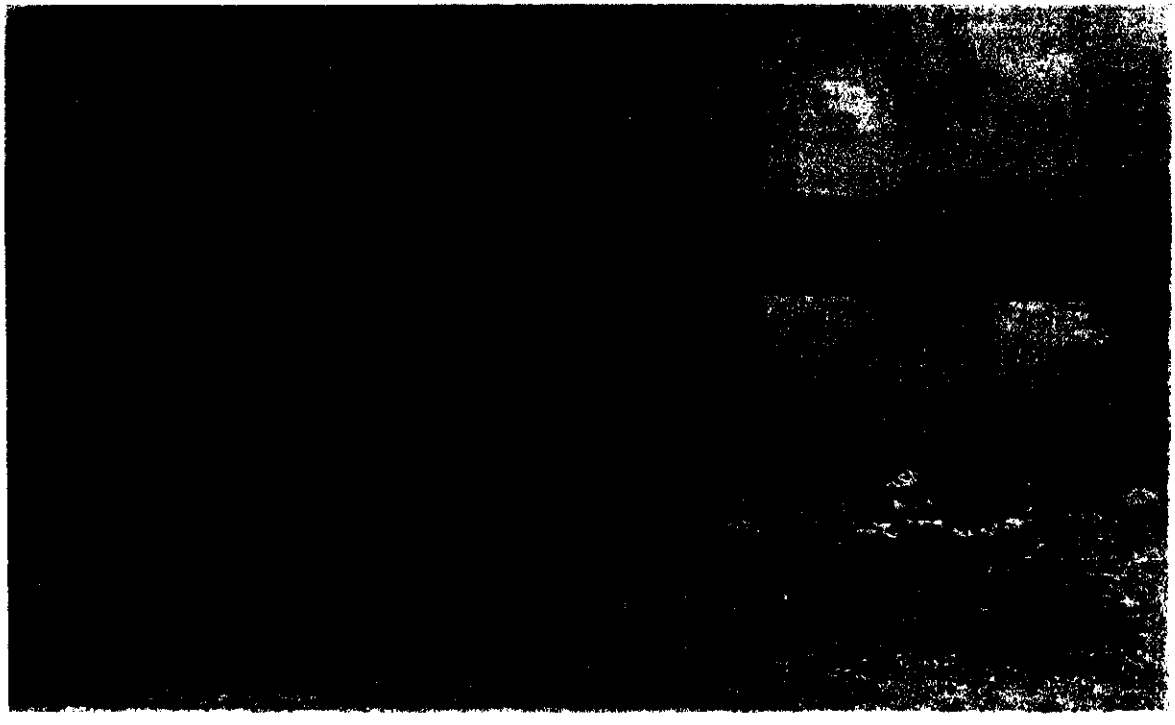


Photo specially taken for N.Z. Graphic.

MRS COOMBE BAKER'S MAORI CANOE — 1st prize.

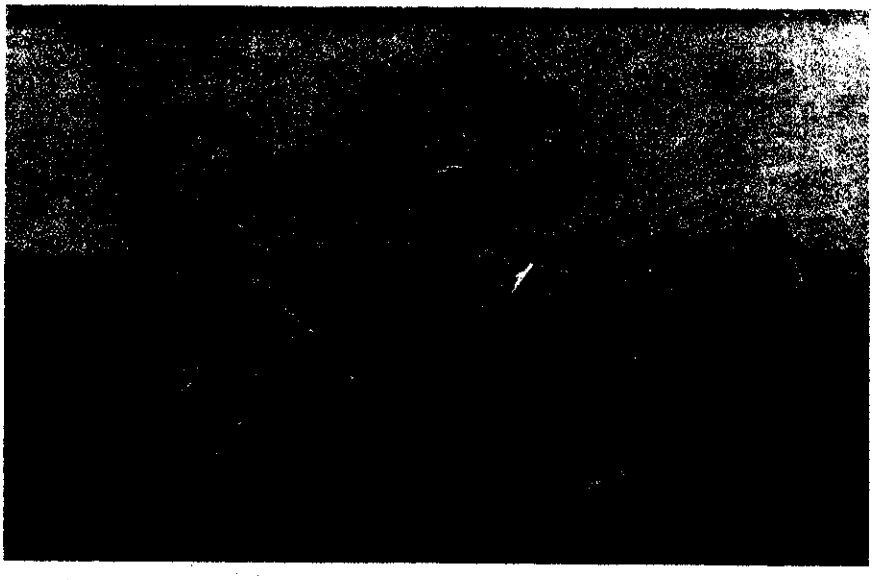
to above and gave Ponsonby first prize in another class. It was hoped this would satisfy all, but it did not quite meet the case either. The verdict of the judges was scarcely that of the vast majority of the public. Miss Devore and the Ponsonby drag should unquestionably have been voted the first place for all. It was in almost every particular greatly superior to either Remuera or Parnell, though both of those drags were exceedingly pretty. But the Ponsonbyites had struck out by far the most original idea, and carried it out with far more completeness than shown in either of the other two. Here was represented an old time coach. There were postillions in red; there was a bewigged and beflowered coachee, and inside there were lady passengers in powder and patches and the costume of the times. The whole affair was indeed most complete. Unlimited care had been spent in thinking out the idea, and the result was satisfactory in the highest degree. The public regarded it as the most original exhibit of the day, and wherever it moved it attracted a crowd. The drag appears in more than one of our photos, and some idea of its novelty and general effectiveness may be gained therefrom. Miss Devore and her friends must be most warmly congratulated. Their achievement was a notable one. The drag was driven by a gentleman with the historic name of John Gilpin. Messrs Basil Calder and John Brigham were the smart postillions, and the gay little groom or footman was Master Charlie Stokes. The waggon was lent by Mr J. J. Craig. Parnell, a symphony in crimson and white with crimson flags, came in for a very considerable share of admiration and applause, and was a distinct credit to Miss Mowbray and the ladies who accompanied her. Dr. King, in the only real coach on the ground, made a fine show. It should be mentioned that Miss Thorpe took a second prize in the class created for the Ponsonby drag. It was somewhat overheavily decorated, but nevertheless looked handsome and effective.

COSTER CARTS.

Before the buggies came on, and their number was legion, we took the opportunity to examine closely the coster carts, which had already been judged, but which we had been unable to see by reason of the crowd. One of these must be pronounced a perfect picture. It was decorated entirely with pansies, and one ached to think of the trouble that its preparation must have entailed.

PREPARING FOR THE SHOW.

MR R. THOMAS' DOG CART—3rd prize.



MRS WINSTONE'S GIG—2nd prize.

Photos specially taken for N.Z. Graphic.

MISS ETTIE IRELAND'S GIG.

But it was worth it. If the labour had been twice as great it would have been worth it, for this was of the smaller fry the most perfect of all exhibits, the perfection, indeed, of what artistic decorations should be. It aroused an immense amount of enthusiasm as it went by, and one heard on all sides unqualified approval of the exquisite taste displayed. No description of its form need be given, as a photo appears herewith, and certainly as one looked on that superb mass of colouring one felt that words would also fail to do it justice. The sight of all those pansies reminded one of Herrick's pretty fancy of how pansies or heartsease, as he calls them, came to exist. He says:

> Frolic virgins once these were,
> Overjoying, living here:
> Being here, their ends denied,
> Ran for sweethearts mad and died.
> Love in pity of their tears
> And their loss in blooming years,
> For their restless loveless hours
> Gave them heartsease turned to flowers.

Miss E. Brett was the exhibitor of this, and deserved the highest praise for her energy and taste. It was driven by Miss Ethna Pierce, a dainty, smiling little lady robed in white. It was accompanied by a real live coster in true coster costume, and one who might have stepped out of one of Chevalier's songs for the occasion. He was undoubtedly one of the favourites of the day. Mrs Haines, coster cart, with a Pierrot in attendance, was also quite admirable. It was composed of roses and choice flowers, and was admirably arranged with a marvellous crown and cupola, from under which peeped the mischievous faces of the driver and his companion, Master and Miss Lewis, son and daughter of Dr. Lewis. Mrs Haines' cart was greatly eulogised, and she deserves great credit for its unqualified success. Miss Flo Reach, with a very pretty design of Summer and Winter in England, took 3rd prize.

As to

THE BUGGIES AND DOGCARTS,

it is impossible to speak of them in detail. Let us, as a class, take the buggies first. There was not one that was not pretty. Mrs Tilly well deserved the prize she took. Her buggy (surely a Victoria phaeton, by the way) was a simple mass of pink geranium, and the effect was heightened and intensified by the costumes of the ladies who rode inside. Mrs Morrin came second, and Mrs Makgill and Miss Dargaville third. Miss Muriel Dargaville must be warmly congratulated on a daring, but exceedingly effective turn-out in deep vermillion and white geraniums, the whole of the interior being a glorious blaze of red flowers. Mrs J. C. Colbeck's trap with nikau palms and tasteful decorative design was one of the most successful while Mrs Goring's turn out, though quiet and unostentatious, attracted universal admiration by reason of the excellence of the taste displayed and the distinguished appearance of the occupants of the trap. Miss Percival's buggy, too, was very pretty—another symphony in pink, and Mrs Morrin's buggy found many admirers, the splendid horse driven adding greatly to the effect. Other exhibitors were Mrs Crowther, Mrs Duncan Clarke, Miss Eva Percival, Miss V. Dowell, Mrs Browning, and Mrs Seccombe. Every buggy entered was, as has been said, worthy of prolonged attention, and the difficulties in the way of judging must have been extreme.

Amongst

THE DOG-CARTS

Mrs G. R. Bloomfield carried off first honours. Her dog-cart was decorated in pink and green, and she herself was gowned in pink and white to match those colours. The *tout ensemble* was effective to a marked degree, and there is no doubt she thoroughly deserved the prize. But it was a question if she should not have been bracketed equal with the superb turn-out driven by Miss Ireland, a veritable *creation* in marigold, and from the artistic standpoint, incomparably one of the most beautiful of many beautiful things seen on that day. Whoever arranged that dog-cart, with its wheels of marigold, its rich ribbons to match, and the exquisite costumes in sympathy with the scheme of colour, was an artist in the highest sense of the word. It made a picture which for simplicity, and richness of effect could not have been eclipsed in any part of the world—a picture which the writer has certainly never seen equalled at any flower *fête* in Europe. The two were, indeed, of equal merit, for Mrs Bloomfield excelled in arrangement, and in the time and labour expended. Mr R. J. Thomas, in a dogcart decorated in pink, won a deserved third prize, Mrs Mahoney being bracketed equal. But it is useless to individualise in this class. All were good, and so many were in pink that to say much more is merely to repeat what has been said several times already. The following were the entries in this class:—Mrs G. R. Bloomfield, Dr. Erson, Miss Barton Ireland, Miss Henton, Miss Worsp, Mrs Chatfield, Mrs Wingate, Mrs E. Mahoney, Mrs J. Edwards (tax cart), Mr R. J. Thomas, Mr C. Leys, Mrs Greenway, Mrs Markham, Mrs J. C. Smith, Mrs Enoch Wood, Miss Macfarlane, Mrs Kernott, and Miss Hazel Buckland. Several of these did not, however, come out in this class, but

amongst the gigs, and the exhibitors numbered about ten.

In the gigs again there was much doubt as to which was the most effective and most artistic and beautiful. Miss Etty Ireland drove a light little gig completely arranged in white, and it was admitted on all hands to be a strikingly beautiful piece of work. The skilful manner in which this young lady handled the ribands was likewise the subject of general remark. The pony spun the trip along at a prodigious rate, and the trap and its occupant were accorded a very enthusiastic reception by the crowd. Mrs Firth and Mr F. Winstone took the prizes. Mrs Firth's arrangement in yellow was greatly admired. The wheels, springs, etc., were covered with

. . . the yellow flowers,
Children of the flaring hours,
Buttercups that will be seen,
Whether we will see or no.

And the effect was charming in the extreme. Miss Buckland's gig was certainly one of the prettiest. It was a perfect bower of roses, which had been arranged with most admirable taste and infinite care. Mrs Smith's gig was slightly overladen with colour, but as an example of painstaking decoration, it was exceedingly praiseworthy. The entries for the gig competition were :—Miss Etty Ireland Miss Reid and Miss K. McMillan, Miss Sellars, Mr F. Winstone, Mrs Bewes, and Dr. Purchas, junr., but as has been said, several from the dog-cart class preferred to show in this.

Taken as a whole, the trollies were scarcely things of beauty. The temperance people made a big effort to improve the shining hour with one of Mr J. J. Craig's waggons with pictures of the evil effects of drink. The introduction of such pictures was in abominable taste, and this trolly was the only ugly and vulgar thing seen that day. The introduction of the temperance question on an occasion of this sort was but another example of the utter tactlessness which does so much to keep back the cause of temperance in this colony. The West End Rowing Club have been mentioned elsewhere. Theirs was, of course, far the best trolly.

Nothing much can be said on behalf of the carts and express carts classes. The prizes in the former were taken by Mr Chapman first, and Mr E. W. Morrison second. Mr Ware was the only exhibitor in express carts, and of course took the prize. His cart was prettily decorated.

POLO PONIES.

The polo ponies were an excellent class, but everyone admitted that Mrs W. Bloomfield well deserved the prize she gained. The rug of white marguerites with which Mr Bloomfield's clever-looking little nag was covered was a veritable work of art, and must have taken a very long time and an inconceivable amount of patience in its manufacture. Mr Chas. Purchas' (2nd prize) and Mrs E. D. O'Rorke's (3rd prize) ponies were also most tastefully decorated.

BICYCLES AND TRICYCLES.

These were divided into two classes. In the first there were two entries—Miss Rica Goodall and Miss Jessie Webster. Both machines were very prettily decorated, and deserved prizes. In the second class, the adults, the entries were very numerous, and the display made by the representatives of cycling was altogether creditable to the wheeling fraternity. The comic costumes of several of those who took part in the 'bike' procession provoked much laughter. Those who had rigged themselves up as the New Woman were greeted with outbursts of mirth wherever they went. The following were those who entered :—Messrs John Rendall, J. E. Skeates, P. T. Upton, James Whitelaw, S. Upton, Herman Schmidt, J. A. Peacock, G. A. Morton, Surman, H. Martin, L. Henning, W. M. Service, T. Inglis, Harrison, J. W. Browne, C. Gilbert, L. Hoffmann, R. G. Dacre, J. Selby, C. Waters, T. A. Patterson, T. Gould, H. Foster, Nicholl, C. Palmer, H. B. Gordon, A. G. Buchanan, Curteis, E. Trendell, H. Trendell, W. J. Dallen, and A. Foster. The first prize fell to Mr J. E. Skeates, the honour of decorating whose machine belongs to Mr Edward Turner, of Karangahape Road. That gentleman must be pronounced a connoisseur. The work was beautifully done, and the mass of lilies which filled in the entire body of the machine was exquisitely beautiful. The handles were in white and blue, showing the initials of the artist, and the wheels were effectively dope in lilies and gladioli. Mr J. A. Peacock took second. Mr Jas. Whitelaw was placed third, and Mr Foster was very deservedly highly commended.

PETS.

It was an extremely difficult matter for the judges to make the awards. Several classes had proved puzzling, but how to deal with this, when each pet had an attraction of his own, was a problem few would have cared to face. Three prizes were given—Mrs H. N. Garland's dog, 1st ; Mr Rose 2nd for a dog ; and Miss Cashel for a Persian cat, 3rd. But it was felt at the time that no one in this class should be sent empty away. One pet is

MRS COLBECK'S BUGGY. MRS TILLY'S BUGGY — 1st prize.

MISS MURIEL DARGAVILLE'S BUGGY — 3rd prize. MISS PERCIVAL'S BUGGY.

Photos specially taken for N.Z. Graphic GROUP OF BICYCLISTS.

just as good as another, and a great deal better in the eyes of the owner. It was therefore decided to give each exhibitor a memento of the occasion, and these can be obtained by those forwarding their names to Mrs Campbell. The pig might well have been awarded a special. He was a gentlemanlike fellow, and had no grave differences of opinion with his master, Mr E. Smerdon. A pink poodle, dyed, and owned by a very pretty young lady, excited some interest. One wonders, also, how he looked after the rain.

FIRE ENGINE.

The Auckland Fire Brigade were awarded a well-deserved special for a tastefully-decorated hose reel and manual engine.

PARASOLS.

Those who entered for these prizes were: Miss Jessie Webster, Miss Rendall, Miss Owen, Miss C. Donald, Miss K. Williamson, Mrs Lyons, Miss Westwood, Miss A. Thompson, Miss J. Thompson, Miss G. Thompson, Miss E. Andrews, Miss M. Hesketh. The honour of first place fell to Miss A. Thompson, whose parasol was certainly a work of art, and of remarkable beauty. Miss Hesketh ran a close second, and Miss Rendall third. All those who exhibited in this class showed taste, and many considerable ingenuity.

COOKERY COMPETITION.

In connection with the *Fête* the committee had arranged a cookery competition. The following has been furnished as the prize list in this department:—Special, for largest and best exhibits cooked by gas: Miss Rosa Beedell. Iced Cake: Special prize, Miss M. Fort. Plum Cake: Miss W. Kissling, 1; Miss Alice Harris, 2. Sponge Cake: Miss Upton, 1; Miss R. Parsons, 2. Madeira Cake: Miss Binney, 1. Jam Sandwich: Miss Muir 1; Mrs Hyatt, 2. Rainbow Cake: Miss F. Preece, 1. Iced Cocoanut Sandwich: Miss Gregory, 1. Seed Cake: Miss Bain, 1. Pastry: Miss R. Beedell, 1. Scones: Mrs Hale, 1; Mrs Bruce, 2. Home-made Bread: Miss F. White. Sponge Squares: Miss A. Gillott, 1. Sweets: Miss Abbott, special prize for exhibit of 25 different kinds of sweets. Turkish Delight: Miss Nora Hay, 1. Cocoanut Ice: Miss Rosa Beedell, 1.

MR J. E. SKEATES — 1st prize. Mr Rendall's Bicycle.

JUVENILE COMPETITION.

Toffee: Miss Gubbins, aged 11 years, 1. Turkish Delight: Miss Cora Anderson, aged 14 years, 1. Plum Cake: Miss Effie Hanna, aged 13, 1. Rainbow Cake: Miss Cora Anderson 1. Sponge Sandwich: The first prize was awarded to a competitor, aged 12 years, whose sole identification was the initials L.N.W.

There is not much 'a mere man' can say of this competition saving that they were a considerable temptation to 'the Press' who had been obliged to come to the show before it was possible to get any lunch. Miss Rosa Beedell, who took the special prize, a fine gas stove, well deserved her honours. Her exhibit was a very creditable one. She has evidently the housewifely instinct, and many a man with a bad manager at home and a wretched cook must have envied the household where that stove will go. Miss Abbott's sweets, too, deserve more than casual mention. They looked very good indeed, and were, moreover, nicely arranged. Miss Cora Anderson is a clever and promising cook for cakes. She took more than one first prize.

Judging had now taken at least twice as long as was originally expected. It was approaching four, and there were yet no signs of the announced grand procession. Throughout the afternoon rain had threatened, and while the judging was yet incomplete it commenced to pour in a business-like way that made it evident that unless a miracle happened, and the rain supply was turned off abruptly, the *fête* must be ruined midway. For some time both public and exhibitors struggled on bravely, and tried to appear as if they thought it might clear up shortly. The unfortunate children who were doing the Maypole dance persevered pluckily in the drenching wet, but the spectacle was not inspiriting, and as the violence of the downpour increased the patience of performers and onlookers was alike exhausted, and a break made for the friendly shelter of the sheds and stables. That was the beginning of the end. The judges descended from their posts, doubtless feeling as Coleridge felt when he wrote:—

> Oh rain, if you will but take your flight,
> Though you should come again to-morrow,
> And bring with you both pain and sorrow,
> Though stomach should sicken and knees should swell,
> I'll nothing speak of you but well;
> But only now for this one day,
> Do go, dear rain, do go away.

But, alas! the watery god would not be appeased. The rain increased in fury, and it quickly became evident that the only safety lay in flight. 'Tis all over,' said the Committee in despair. And then that dread order—an order never issued save in moments of tragedy—was given, the order—'*Sauve qui peut.*' It was a cruel ending to one of the most brilliant functions ever seen in Auckland—a function which we hope to see become an annual fixture. To Mrs Nelson, Mrs Goodall, Mrs Haines, and the other ladies who took so arduous a part in arranging the affair the utmost credit must be given. Their task was one of the utmost difficulty, and the manner in which they carried it out must be a matter of pride and congratulation to them for ever and a day.

The photographs reproduced in this article were specially taken for us by Messrs Walrond, Utting, and Frith. Owing to the rain, a number of exhibits which would otherwise have been photographed were missed. A fine negative was obtained of Miss Ireland's turnout, but an unfortunate accident prevented our reproducing it. This is a matter we greatly regret, as the tandem was one of the prettiest things on the ground. Considering the badness of the light, and the difficulties in the the way, we think the photographers did exceedingly well, and that the present issue will be appreciated by all.

THE TANDEM THAT CAME TO GRIEF.

THE YELLOW CAT.

BRAT (my Irish terrier) loathed the yellow cat. Of course I think he has a perfect right to his own sentiments and feelings about her and do not expect him to change them. But I insist that he shall let her alone, and refrain from chivvying or worrying her. So when in direct defiance of my commands he yields to the impulse of the moment and gives chase to her, and comes back to me waggling all over with apologies, I sternly resist his blandishments and administer a castigation. When we have made it up we generally talk it over. 'I am really very sorry it has happened again,' says Brat, 'but I simply can't stand that cat. I tried very hard not to chase her this time' (which I knew to be perfectly true, as I had watched him quivering with suppressed emotion as she walked towards him); but the idiotic thing bottled under my very nose, and before I knew where I was I was after her, and she had flown up a tree.'

'I should like to know what's the good of that cat!' he said a little later. 'I have told you again and again,' I reply, 'that she kills mice.' 'As if *I* couldn't kill mice,' he says with scorn, 'a jolly sight better than a cat, too—quickly and neatly. Why, the way that cat kills a mouse is enough to make anyone sick! Plays with it and tortures it, and kills it by inches, and then eats it! Ugh! I'd clear the house of mice in a jiffy if you'd only let me sleep in the passage instead of out in the stable. Of course I don't particularly care about killing mice. It isn't sport. But if you want them killed you've only to say the word and give me an opportunity.' And on another occasion: 'if you knew the things I know about that cat,' he said, 'you would have let me worry her long ago. Why, the language she uses is something awful!'

Though I would not for the world admit it to Brat, I feel that there is a certain amount of truth in what he says about the cat, and to a degree I share his sentiments about her. At the same time there are things about her that I cannot help admiring—her cold reserve and decorous behaviour under all circumstances, and the astounding independence with which she lives her own life and thinks her own thoughts.

Before I made her acquaintance she used to live in the stable, and was, I believe, the property of the stable boy. She must have had some sort of fellow-feeling for him, for when he left she, as it were, packed up and moved into the kitchen, and a sort of bond of union grew up between her and the cook. Its basis seemed to be an understanding that they should let each other alone. They never spoke to each other, as far as I could hear. They just lived together in the kitchen, and respected each other's independence. But one felt that they thoroughly understood each other. It would have been intolerable to that cat to have been asked questions as to where she had been or where she was going, or what she was thinking about. The cook felt this instinctively and acted accordingly. And it would have been irritating to the cook if the cat had walked about and got in her way and tripped her up when she was at her work. The cat knew this, and avoided it. When I went into the kitchen to order the dinner I generally found her rolled up asleep in a small wicker chair with a cushion on it, that she had entirely appropriated to her own use. Very occasionally, and only when there was no cooking going on, I found her sitting bolt upright on the hearth, gazing pensively at the embers, and looking as if her mind was far away in the regions of abstract thought and only her outward form decorated the hearth. But whatever her attitude, it was always one of dignified repose.

The peaceful current of her life was undisturbed for two years. At the end of that time the cook married and went away. On the day on which she walked away in her wedding garment a new cook walked in and took her place. The cat sat up and gazed steadfastly at the new arrival for about a minute, and then, having apparently satisfied herself that she was not the sort of person she could stand, got up and walked deliberately and firmly out of the room. As far as I know she never set foot in the kitchen again. The new cook informed me that the day after she arrived she had met her in the garden. 'She walked alongside of me quite friendly-like,' she said, 'till I stooped down to stroke her, when she suddenly went for me and clawed hold of my legs so vicious that she almost drew blood, and then bolted away into the bushes with her tail up, and I never saw her again.'

After that she disappeared entirely for three weeks. Then one morning when we were sitting at breakfast she appeared at the dining-room window and made a face that looked like a 'meeow.' We let her in at once. She looked wretchedly thin and miserable, and had scratches on her face as if she had been in the wars, and also she had completely lost her voice, for though every time we caught her eye she looked as if she wanted to say something, all she did was to open her mouth and make a noiseless face at us.

We provided her with a saucer of milk and some fish at once. She devoured them eagerly, and then walked round the table shooting her head and back up at any hand that showed a tendency to pat her, purring hoarsely, and every now and then gazing at us and making the same noiseless remark she had made at first, and showing signs of gratitude and feeling that I had not deemed her capable of. I gathered that what she was trying to say was something to this effect: 'I have had a horrible time, and can stand it no longer. You must let me stay here.' So I told her that she might as long as she behaved herself and did not interfere with Brat. She gave a responsive purr when I said ihis, and jumped lightly up on to a corner of the sofa, where, after sitting lost in deep thought and gazing at vacancy for a few minutes, she curled herself up and went to sleep.

The next six months of her existence were passed principally on the corner of the sofa, where she was unmolested, and where I had ample opportunity of observing her ways. Her daily routine never varied. She fed—she performed her toilet—she slept. The performance of her toilet had a fascination for me. She did it with such scrupulousness, attending to every part of her person in turn. First, sitting up, she would wash her head and face all over with her hand. Then stretching herself full length on the sofa she would lick herself from her neck down, back and front, ending up with her legs. Not a square inch was neglected, but it always seemed to me she bestowed an undue share of attention on her right leg which she would hoist over her shoulder and groom with an energy that appeared to me a little overdone—but perhaps my observations were at fault.

As I said, she spent a peaceful six months on the sofa. Brat accepted the situation, and let her alone, and she seemed quite happy. Then the even tenor of her life was again disturbed. It is my almost invariable habit to go into the kitchen every morning when I order the dinner. But, being more than usually busy on one occasion, I sent for the cook to attend on me in the dining-room. As she stood before me discussing joints and vegetables, I noticed that the cat had awakened, and was sitting bolt upright, gazing at her with an expression of mingled horror and surprise. 'Good Lord!' she seemed to say, 'that woman again. I hoped she was dead.' So marked was it, that the cook noticed it; for after returning the gaze for a minute she said, 'I can't abide that cat, m'm. Nasty vicious thing! She'd go for me again if I gave her the chance.' The animal gave a slight start, as if she understood the purport of the words, bristled slightly, and then, as if to say, 'No; I really can't stand this!' jumped off the sofa, walked stiffly out of the window on to the lawn, and disappeared round the corner of the house.

From that day to this she has not shown her face. I have given orders that when next she calls she shall be encouraged with milk and fish and treated kindly—but it is three months now since she went off, and I begin to think she has gone for good.

She wanted but little here below, that cat—one chair or the corner of a sofa, and to be let alone and not to have the companionship of those she loathed forced upon her. It seems hard that that little was denied her. But such is life!

PROFESSOR PEART (OF FITZGERALD'S CIRCUS) DIVING FROM THE FORE-TOP-GALLANT YARD OF THE SHIP 'BORROWDALE,' IN AUCKLAND HARBOUR.

S. G. Frith photo.

TIME DRAGGED.

LITTLE Johnny, having been invited out to dinner with his mother, was commanded not to speak at the table except when he was asked a question, and promised to obey the command.

At the table no attention was paid to Johnny for a long time. He grew very restless, and his mother could see that he was having a hard time to 'hold in.' By and by he could stand it no longer.

'Mamma!' he called out. 'When are they going to begin asking me questions?'

ROUND THE BREAKFAST TABLE.

[WITH APOLOGIES TO THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE.]

APROPOS of the Floral Fete,' said the Professor, 'I propose this morning the discussion of flowers, as a subject suitable to our sunny clime and our mouth of flowers.'

'I *love* flowers,' said the Simple Little Miss, 'excepting yellow ones, which kill the complexion. Some of them have such *delicious* meanings. Have you ever studied the "Language of Flowers?"'

'All my life,' said the Professor, 'has been devoted to studying the language of *flour*, whose English equivalent is bread and butter, and I have found its idioms so engrossing, its "where," "when" and "how" such difficult parts of speech to master, its adjectives of quantity and quality so limited in degree, as to leave me no time for the study of any other language. But I have heard that books of the sort are written, to be pondered long and earnestly by Du Maurier's "Young Person" and made the first stepping-stone to the Divorce Court. The Young Person must on no account be permitted to so much as glance at literature dealing with the vital questions of her day, lest her maiden meditations be rendered less maidenly, but how becoming in sweet seventeen to be familiar with the contents of her dainty pocket manual, and items of such paramount importance as "Fuchsia, Stoop Down and Kiss Me," etc., etc. How priceless the knowledge which enables her to blush, or simper, or sigh as occasion and the appropriate moment arrive. The Young Person in the old-fashioned novel was always "culling" flowers as fresh and sweet and spotless as her innocent self, when her lover, or the party destined to be her lover after the regulation number of hair-raising horrors, arrived on the scene. He generally talked in this strain: "My Amaryllis, the rose-bloom in your lovely countenance pales with its radiance the roses in your tiny pa-lm." A stutter here would be fatal, should he favour the "aw" for "a" vernacular of the Colonial "chappie," but one never reads of a hero who is Colonial, or has a stutter. The Young Person in real life would tell him he oughtn't, he really oughtn't, to be so silly, and she hopes ma isn't looking, and wonders if he has seen the new fern in the conservatory. Not so the Young Person in novels, who turns deathly paie—which young persons up-to-date would find a troublesome, not so say impossible accomplishment—and lowering her silken lashes, replies in accents quivering with emotion, "Augustus, I have gathered them for you; accept these blossoms as symbols of my undying affection." Slow music and curtain.'

'Flowers are pleasant,' said the Practical Man, 'when like Mrs Soap-manufacturer's poor relations, they are made to "know their place," which isn't Parliamentary debate. Gardens of flowery metaphor hurled at an inoffensive public are apt to deaden the olfactory sense, and strangle any other sort the speaker may have contemplated. The dry-as-dust nature of the utterance appears to contain the stimulus of bone-dust for his crop of thoughts, so profuse is his flowery verbage, while the House yawns or betakes itself to Bellamy's, and the public rage. Only to "England's Cherished Bard," as George Meredith calls the Leading Article, is it granted the right to blow daily bellows of choice and varied word-blooms, *pro bono publico*, but then the public don't have to pay the editor for his nosegays, while every member's flower shop has to be supported at the rate of £240 per annum, which makes all the difference. Regarding the Floral Fête last Saturday, one cannot but feel that its "object all sublime" is calculated to do immense good to the community, and particularly the young community of Auckland, apart from the practical benefit its success has afforded the Benevolent Society. For to create a love of the beautiful in the heart of youth lays the first rafters to their unconscious striving after the beautiful in impulse and in action. "Through nature up to nature's God" is not the less a true though muchly-quoted maxim. Ouida, I think it is, makes *colour* and the love of artistic combination a religion with one of her heroines, while Ruskin has devoted much eloquence and not a little genius to the subject. Although not prepared to acknowledge the art of colour-combination a religion, one feels that the study and cultivation of flowers as an art should do much to foster the sentiments of true religion in the young. We have all had cause to remember the enforced "Sunday book" of childhood, which taught us to root up the wicked weeds and slugs from the gardens of our hearts. I don't exactly remember whether slugs were mentioned—perhaps not—as they somewhat spoil the effect, but I know the weeds were a trump card of the Sunday book. It seems to me more profitable to encourage the children in cultivating their flowers—the weeds will die a natural death: in other words, to fill their play-hours with every healthy and innocent recreation, and leave no room for weeds or slugs or anything else; to help them withstand the sirens of temptation with the music of Orpheus rather than the cords of Ulysses. This, the new "flower movement," inaugurated by Mrs Thomas and other Auckland ladies, and through their diligent efforts resultant in a successful Children's Flower Show, and Saturday's Floral Fête is eminently calculated to do. Think, moreover, of its purifying influence on the older generation—men in danger of blinding their souls with the clay of Waihi, women of drowning theirs in afternoon tea. Like Cincinnatus, turning from the affairs of state to follow his plough, fathers will leave their cares of business and their mammon worship, to interest themselves in the agricultural and floral pursuits of their children; mothers will modify their fashionable and profitless and everlasting "calling" to assist their own and other poor little ones, whose parents are struggling too hard for the dear necessities of life, to afford the luxury of a few plants in a square inch of garden. The new movement, will, we trust, prove the seed-field for "purer manners, simpler laws," and a rich harvest of enduring, nation-making virtues in the rising generation. Then the flowers of our sunny Southern land will no longer be mute witnesses to deeds of tyranny, oppression, and shame. As poetic fancy puts it—

"Alas, each hour of daylight tells
A tale of shame so crushing
That some turn white as sea-bleached shells
And some are always blushing."

Without cherishing an impossible Utopian dream for New Zealand, I yet prophesy that we shall ere long blush, not for our follies and our sins, but at the world's praises of our national integrity and its admiring tribute to the happy social, religious, and political conditions of the land of our adoption.'

MR MAUGHAN BARNETT'S WELLINGTON MUSICAL SOCIETY.

ON Monday evening next, December 16th, in the Opera House, Mr Maughan Barnett's Musical Society will give its second concert of the season. A shortened version of the 'Messiah' will be performed by a chorus and orchestra of over 200 vocalists and instrumentalists. The soloists being Madame Eveleen Carlton, Miss Parsons, Messrs John Hill and Prouse. Mr Maughan Barnett will conduct.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

WE are accustomed to be told that almost everything we have or do in this colony is 'better managed in America.' It is an every-day experience, for some one who has been over to 'Frisco, or gone Home *via* New York, to observe patronisingly of something we colonials have admired: 'Ah, yes, very nice for a new place, but you should see how they do this in the United States, my boy.' At first, of course, one used to feel inclined to say fervently, 'Something the United States,' but eels so they say get used to skinning, and the custom has rendered us callous. At the same time there are one or two things in which I have always prided myself New Zealanders could hold their own even against the United States. I was not prepared, for instance, to be informed on the arrival of the 'Frisco mail boat the other morning that New Zealanders didn t know how to meet a mail boat or—brace yourself for a shock—how to kiss. So far as 'meeting a mail boat' is concerned I remarked that I didn't know there was any special means or method, mode or manner about it, but I warmly controverted the distressing assertion that in the humble social virtue of kissing New Zealanders could not hold their own against all comers, including 'men, women, and children of the native race'—I mean the United States. 'A poor thing, sir, but our own,' I quoted, or slightly misquoted, and went on to say that here was a thing of which New Zealanders made somewhat of a speciality. He interrupted in the rude way such men have, 'That's all your eternal ignorance. Wait till we get home, and I'll show you something that will convince you they manage kissing better in the States, and have more of it.'

Now, I put it to my readers, could any New Zealander stand that? 'More of it!' boly Jehosophat! 'Better managed' would have been enough, but to say 'more of it.' Monstrous! Naturally I hurried him home, and he exhumed a New York Journal of recent date in which the arrival of a mail steamer arriving at the wharf was made the subject of a half-column article. He said his eldest brother had written that article, and that his brother had been sent to do it because of his passion for hard fact and severity of style which would render it certain there would be no exaggeration. I read the article, and I must confess it flattened me considerably for a moment. It begins fairly enough:

'Right or wrong everybody likes to see kissing—that is, everybody who isn't soured on life. The sight isn't equal to the act, but nevertheless, it is a cheering sight.'

THAT'S all right: no one in this colony, at all events, will deny that. 'The sight isn't equal to the act,' 'that's so,' as they say in Yankee land. The scribe then goes on to say that there are places in the city where every kind of osculatory salutation can be witnessed several times a week. New York is one better than we are here, and there's no use denying it. I would say it was a good job too; but my 'Murrican friend would only retort unpleasantly, 'sour grapes.' One of the occasions alluded to appears to be the arrival of a mail steamer, which, it will be remembered, we don't know how to do. This is how they manage it in the States:—

The end of the pier is packed with as happy an aggregation of mortals as can be found anywhere. Out in midstream is the big, black hulled steamer. Nearly everybody on the pier is going to kiss somebody on the steamer, and *vice versa*, and in most instances the exchange will not be limited. Pleasurable expectancy makes everybody good-natured. The crowd doesn't mind having its toes trod upon or its elbows jostled. Pushed and pulled by panting little tugs the ocean leviathan, itself powerless and unwieldly, crawls toward the pier. At last she gets near enough for recognitions to be exchanged. Handkerchiefs are waved frantically. Kisses are wafted across the intervening space. Greetings are hurled from shore to ship and from ship to shore. Everybody is in a tight place, but nobody can keep still. Women on the pier and on the steamer jump and clap their hands ecstatically.

So far so good, taken all round, and with a table-spoonful of salt or so that would stand for a description of the arrival of a Sydney mail boat, bar the tugs (our tugs are usually of the human description and on the wharf), and the statement that everyone is going to kiss someone. Our people don't do it that way. However, to proceed:

It takes an awfully long time to get the big steamship snug alongside of the pier. It is deliciously tantalizing to those who are impatiently waiting to rush into one another's arms. But it gives the mere spectator, who has no such reason for impatience, time to observe that there are some stunning girls on board that steamship. The glow of health is on their cheeks and the light of love in their eyes, and they look their prettiest because, in their excitement, they forget themselves entirely. The breeze toys with bangs, whisks veils aside and sets their hair adrift. But their eyes are on 'Tom' or 'Harry' or 'Charley,' on the pier, and they are oblivious to such trifles. They won't be so to-morrow; they will be just like other girls then, but now they are different, and that very difference makes them so attractive, and makes you wish that you were 'Tom' or 'Harry' or 'Charley.' The steamship is

made fast at last, the gangplank is swung out and the race to get the first kiss begins.

HERE certainly is a touch of nature which makes us all kin. Everyone who has met a steamer must have wished he was meeting one of the girls on board, for there always are pretty girls on board somehow. But somehow we in New Zealand miss what follows when this reporter 'with a passion for cold fact' describes that race for the first kiss :—

A man starts in the lead, and is half way down when a puff of wind lifts his hat. He pauses to clutch it and loses the race. A superb brunette, with hat securely moored darts by, and in another moment is embraced by stalwart arms, and two spirits have 'rushed together at the touching of the lips.' Nor do they mind who sees it, and the spectator looks on without compunctions of conscience. In a moment the osculatory engagement becomes general. It is kisses to right of you and kisses to left of you. You can't see them all, can't see one-tenth of them, but the regret vanishes when you recollect that it will be practically repeated two or three times a week for a month to come, so that you can come again and see what you missed the first time because nature limits you to one pair of eyes. All the world loves a lover, or ought to, and naturally the kisses which lovers exchange interest one most. There is something about them—the look which accompanies them, the blush which acknowledges them—by which they are recognised and classified.

No, we must admit it. We cannot do this or see this in New Zealand. People here do kiss under similar circumstances, but they do it hurriedly and shamefacedly. In a conservatory, at a moonlight picnic, in a conveniently shaded verandah corner, in a garden nook, the New Zealand lover is, as my American friend would say, 'no slouch,' but in bestowing an unaffected affectionate kiss of greeting in public he does not shine. However, let us see how the Yankees conclude their reception of a mail boat, etc. :—

Osculation continues unrestrained for half an hour or more. There is contagion about it. It makes you feel like kissing somebody yourself. It almost prompts you to go up to some girl and say, 'Pardon me, but I am a stranger to everybody here and there is no one to kiss me. Don't you feel sorry, and won't you try to console me?' But the rules of polite society forbid it, and if they didn't, 'Tom' or 'Charley' or 'Harry' would have something to say that wouldn't be a bit pleasant.

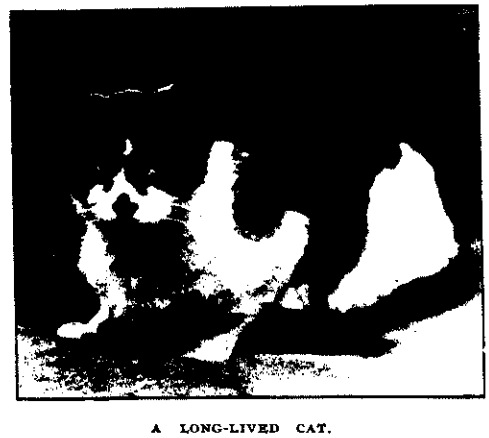
SPACE forbids further quotation, but I fear the foregoing has made it clear that the Yankee's contention is proved. We do not know how to receive a mail steamer. It is a pity, too, for the wharf would be a pleasant lounge on mail days if the programme our matter-of-fact reporter describes could eventuate at our New Zealand wharves.

EVERYONE in these days suffers from headaches—at least nearly everyone appears to do so. I have come across a cure which I have not seen described elsewhere, and which I read is almost invariably efficacious. Thus run the directions :—One of the best cures for an obstinate headache is the simple act of walking backward. If suggested, this cure is usually scoffed at because it is so simple, but the man who recommends it is well known, and asserts positively that he has yet to meet the sufferer who, having tried it, has failed to gain relief. 'Nobody,' he says, 'has yet discovered or formulated a reason why the process of walking backward should bring sudden relief, but that it does, and will do so, appears beyond argument. Physicians say that it is probably because the reflex action of the body brings about a reflex action of the brain, and thus drives away the pain that when induced by nervousness is the result of too much going forward. Don't you know how at such times you have the feeling that everything in your head is being pushed forward? As soon as you begin to walk backward, however, there comes a feeling of everything being reversed, and this is followed by relief. The relief is always certain, and generally speedy. Ten minutes is the longest I have found necessary. An entry or a long narrow room, makes the best place for such a promenade. You should walk very slowly, letting the ball of your foot touch the floor first, and then the heel, just the way, in fact, that one should, in theory, walk forward, but which, in practice, is so rarely done. Besides curing nervous headache, there is no better way to learn to walk well and gracefully forward than the practice of walking backward. A half-hour of it once a day will do wonders toward improving the gait of any woman.

ARE country people in this colony more kindly and unselfishly good-natured than townsfolk. It certainly seems so to me. A few days ago business compelled me to pay a flying visit to the country. A young couple, for whom I am trustee, arrived from England, and it was my duty to travel up country with them and see them duly settled with their goods and chattles on their farm. As this was the first attempt at setting up housekeeping, the said goods and chattels were somewhat extensive, and the 'settling down' process a slightly arduous undertaking. From the moment of our arrival the kindness and resourceful helpfulness of those who lived in the neighbourhood was simply amazing, and I could not help contrasting it with the indifference with which the majority of townsfolk would have shown under similar circumstances. For instance, the moment the little steamer (the place is on one of the Northern rivers) touched the wharf, a neighbouring station-holder, a complete stranger to three of the party, came on board, insisting, on behalf of his wife and himself, that our whole party should forthwith accompany him home and 'put up' under his roof until such time as our furniture was unpacked and our own establishment settled. He would not hear of our stopping at the country 'pub,' and there and then sent the ladies off under convoy of his son. He himself remained in the pouring rain helping us to get our innumerable packing cases safely stowed for the night.

AND as it was with him it was with everyone else. To have hired labour to assist in getting the furniture and packing cases to the new domicile would have been impossible, and if not impossible, ruinous. But there was no need. Assistance was given on every side, and in a genial you-would-do-the-same-for-me sort of style that prevented one feeling overwhelmed with one's obligations. Lumping huge packing cases into punts (the mode of conveyance in that part of the world), bruising one's hands and shins in the porterage of a heavy iron stove—the most heaven-forsaken article to 'fetch and carry' of which I have experience—and generally doing the duties of a rouseabout on behalf of newly-arrived neighbours, seems to be regarded as quite a matter-of-fact affair in the country, or at least in the part of the country I refer to. I do not think similar unselfishness and helpfulness is characteristic of the town. The wear and tear of business life, our intentness on coining the almighty dollar, smother and destroy the virtues referred to which still live in the country. Our town motto is the ancient 'Nothing for nothing, and very little for sixpence.'

A GENTLEMAN interested in the question of the longevity of cats has sent me the photo which appears below, and which he believes represents one of the longest lived cats on record. The photo was taken when the cat was 16 years and 7 months old, and she lived to the truly marvellous age for a cat of 17 years 1 month and 5 days. The origin of the domestic cat is, I learned on looking up the subject, enveloped in mystery. Reference is made to it in Sanskrit writings 2,000 years old, and still more ancient records of it are to be found in the monumental figures and cat mummies of Egypt. The latter, according to De Blainville, belong to three distinct species, two of which are said to be still found, both wild and domesticated, in parts of Egypt. The Gloved Cat of Nubia (*Felis maniculata*), which also occurs as a mummy, approaches most nearly in size, and in the tapering form of the tail, to the domestic cat, but Professor Owen has shown that there are peculiarities in the dentition of the species, sufficient to invalidate its



A LONG-LIVED CAT.

claim to be considered the ancestor of the domestic form. The difficulty of recognising this ancestor in any single wild species has led many naturalists, including Temminck, Pallas, and Blyth, to the conclusion that *Felis domestica* is the product of many species commingled; and whatever weight may be attached to this view, there is sufficient evidence to show that domestic cats in different parts of the world have been greatly modified by frequent crossings with such wild species as occur in those parts. In the north of Scotland at the present day, the native species is believed occasionally to cross with the house cat, the product living in the houses.

THE disposition and habits of the domestic cat are familiar to all, and need not be dwelt upon here. It has never evinced that devotion to man which characterises the dog, though many individual cases of feline attachment might be quoted. It becomes, however, strongly attached to particular localities, and will find its way back from the most distant places although conveyed thither under cover. How it performs such feats has long puzzled naturalists, and no theory that has yet been advanced seems adequately to meet the case. It has been contended recently by Mr A. R. Wallace that a cat which is being conveyed to a distance blindfold will have its sense of smell in full exercise, and will by this means take note of the successive odours it encounters on the way; that these will leave on its mind 'a series of images as distinct as those we should receive by the sense of sight;' and that 'the recurrence of these odours in their proper inverse order—every house, ditch, field, and village having its own well-marked individuality would make it an easy matter for the animal in question to follow the identical route back, however many turnings and cross roads it may have followed.'

AMONG the ancient Egyptians the cat was sacred to Isis or the moon; temples were raised, and sacrifices offered in its honour, and its body was embalmed at death. Nor is this feeling quite extinct among modern Egyptians, for in Cairo at the present time there is an endowment in operation for the lodging and feeding of homeless cats. In the folk-lore of European nations the cat is regarded with suspicion as the favourite agent of witchcraft, and seems often to have shared in the cruelties inflicted on those who were supposed to practise the 'black art.' In Germany at the present day black cats are kept away from the cradles of children as omens of evil, while the appearance of a black cat on the bed of a sick person used to be taken as an announcement of approaching death.

IN the recent number of the *Zoologist* Mr Taylor White, who has been farming sheep in New Zealand for many years, has some interesting notes upon the Kea parrot, *Nestor notabilis*. Mr White writes in a somewhat combative spirit, but his report, despite the science correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, confirms the accepted belief that the Kea has in recent times entirely changed its habits. Mr Taylor White was in New Zealand before the Kea began to attack sheep. According to him, it did not originally live upon berries and honey, as Mr Wallace suggested in his volume upon Darwinism. It lived in the mountains above the forest-line, where berries do not grow, and its food was the lichen upon stones. Shepherds began to find that sheep which had missed a shearing and so had long wool, died suddenly, the only sign of death being a small round hole far down the back. The cause of the hole was found to be the Kea, which, according to Mr Taylor White, was attracted to the sheep by the resemblance of the wool to lichens, and chose the particular spot because it could hold on securely there, in spite of the attempts of the unfortunate animal to dislodge it. According to the same authority, the parrot had no special predilection for the kidney-fat, but simply picked a hole to obtain blood.

WHETHER Mr Taylor White be right in supposing the resemblance of long wool to lichens to have been the cause of change, or there be more truth in the earlier suggestions that the Kea learnt the ease of a carnivurous habit from the pickings of slaughterhouses and afterwards went straight to the sheep, is a minor matter which may or may not be settled; but it is interesting to find additional corroboration from one who has seen the change in progress, of a complete change from vegetable to animal food occurring in a short space of years.

OUR MUSIC SUPPLEMENT.

WITH this issue is presented another of the music supplements which have proved so popular in the past. 'Sweetest Blossom' is a particularly pretty little song with a novel echo effect. It will probably be an even greater favourite than anything we have published hitherto. The music is by Herbert Justice, several of whose compositions are favourably known to GRAPHIC readers.

CREATING AN IMPRESSION.

BUT the life of the touring actor is not always a happy one. There are occasions when the treasury ghost fails in his accustomed stroll, and bad business, or a levanting manager, often brings a tour to an abrupt and eminently unsatisfactory conclusion.

I know two actors who were left as the term goes, 'on their uppers,' in a town in the heart of the Midlands. Their manager had skipped away with whatever funds may have been lying at the bottom of the company's chest, and the disconsolate twain had drawn very little salary for some weeks. Their landscape was a bleak and wintry one, but Johnson had plenty of the stuff that is alleged to spring eternal in the human breast.

'If we can only reach Blankhampton,' he said, 'I am pretty sure of an engagement for us; anyhow, we shall be able to rub along for a week or two until an opening occurs, for I have some good chums there.'

Jackson, the other mummer, devoutly trusted that the future might be as rosy as his friend opined. They formed themselves into a committee of supply, and 'uncle' was visited and offered certain detachable articles in lieu of his contribution towards railway fares. They managed to rake up sufficient for that important item, but they had very few coppers to spare after they had paid for their tickets. 'Never mind,' said Johnson, 'it will be all right when we get to Blankhampton.'

They had no luggage. It was hypothecated, but they cared little. Their long railway journey was a blissful one, for were they not journeying to a harbour of refuge? Hope, however, assuages no appetite, and they began to get very hungry. But food is out of the question when cash is out of reach.

At a little countrified junction, where they were awaiting a train, a man of distinctly rural aspect approached them. He sported a smock, and a red, smiling face. And he carried a wicker-basket.

'Beg pardon, gents, for troubling ye, but be ye passing through Dashminster?' he asked.

'Yes,' said Johnson, 'We're going through to Blankhampton.'

'Mought I ask ye to dew me a favour, gents, if ye would be so kind? I ha' got yere a couple o' homin' pigeons, and I wants to try 'em. Would ye let 'em out of the train at Dashminster for me?'

'Certainly,' said Johnson, 'we shall be very pleased to oblige you. Here's the train.'

The wicker basket with the pigeons was carefully deposited on the hat-rack, and with renewed assurances as to their willingness to oblige the farmer by letting his birds loose at the proper point, Johnson and Jackson went speeding on the way. 'It's forty mile from here,' were the farmer's last words, 'but the birds 'll find their ways home aright.'

On the train went, and the two friends nodded off to sleep. Dashminster was passed, but the pigeons were forgotten. Johnson awoke soon afterwards, and aroused Jackson. 'There's only one worry for us, now,' he remarked. 'That is, lodgings. Landladies are suspicious persons, and, seeing no luggage, may ask for a deposit. Then we're up a tree.'

Jackson looked blank. 'Can't we face it out? Let us say our luggage is coming on. Don't dash my hopes, now, just as I am dwelling on the delights of a dinner!'

'Dinner!' ejaculated Johnson. 'Yes, we shall have to spring the landlady for that at once. That's where she will want a bit of the ready money on account!'

'Unless we can dazzle her!'

'Ah! but how is that to be done?'

At that crucial moment one of those poor pigeons cooed, or, rather, gave utterance to whatever sound naturally emanates from a pigeon. It was an unfortunate thing for the pigeon to do, looked at from his point of view.

'By Jove!' cried Jackson. 'We've forgotten to let the pigeons loose! And we're a long way past Dashminster!'

He reached up for the wicker basket, and opened the carriage window.

Johnson was a man of ready wit. He laid a restraining hand upon his friend's shoulder, and said—

'Jim, do you like pigeon pie?'

Jim dropped back in his seat. He was startled, thunderstruck. But thoughts of savoury things fomented in his brain.

'Rather!' he said.

'We'll have those pigeons for dinner,' remarked the other.

'But—but—the farmer—'

'Can't help his troubles at present. We must eat. And don't you see what an effect it will have upon the mind of the lady who lets lodgings, when we throw down a brace of birds, and say, "Make a pie of those?"'

'She'll think we're millionaires! But shall we take them to her as they are, or——'

'You wring the neck of one, and I'll despatch the other.'

The fell deed was soon accomplished. There was a small piece of paper attached under the wing of each bird, bearing the owner's name and address. This was carefully saved by Johnson, but the wicker basket was dropped out of the window. The pigeons were tied together by the feet, and when Blankhampton was reached, they were an effective argument in favour of the actors' respectability when they sought for 'diggings.' The landlady dreamed not of requesting any deposit, and really made quite an appetising dish of the birds.

Brighter days dawned for Johnson and Jackson. They struck oil in Blankhampton, and they forwarded the farmer full value for the birds. Their explanation is worth recording:—

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to say that I incautiously let loose the pigeons entrusted to me at the very moment that an express train was passing. Unfortunately, the birds were both caught by the engine, and I saw them struck to the ground. Recognising that it was my clumsiness that led to this mishap, I ask you, as some recompense, to accept the enclosed post-office order.

TIMOTHY CHUBB

AND THE COLD PUNCH.

BY FRANCIS COURTENAY BAYLOR.

TIMOTHY CHUBB was a warm-hearted, pig-headed, high-tempered man. He was a good farmer, as the bursting barns, carefully-protected hay-ricks, fine cattle, neat fences, and beautifully-tilled fields of his five hundred acre farm attested. He was an ardent granger, and hated all railroads, their presidents, corporations, employees, ways, means, and methods with a fierceness that would have delighted Dr. Johnson, and alarmed most people who heard him talk of them for the first time, while the particular railroad that ran straight through one of his best meadows—the Southern and Central—was the Mordecai at his gate, a stench in his nostrils, the bane of his existence.

He was a strict but just and even generous master, and never lacked for men to 'handle' his crops, harvest when he would. He was an agressive, not to say merciless neighbour in the matter of stray sheep, predatory pigs, open gates, and broken fences, but a not unkindly one outside of these high agricultural crimes and misdemeanors, having been known to take off his coat and work much harder than any hired labourer in order to help save a friend's crop threatened by rain, and as liberal with his machines and seeds and tools, as with advice how to make the best use of them, if his sound, sensible, but dictatorial orders about 'top-dressing' and 'subsoiling,' and 'rotation,' and the like can be called advice.

He had been a peppery, masterful, but substantially indulgent husband to a meek spouse, who never contradicted him in her life, except upon one occasion when she found herself unavoidably obliged to *die* in the face of his most positively expressed statement that she was getting well rapidly, and would be 'out of that bed in less than a week.'

He was an imperious but really devoted father to his only child, a daughter, Lucy Merriman Chubb by name, and by nature a creature far meeker, shyer, and more timid than ever her mother had been.

Lucy was eighteen years old in the summer of 1883, when she returned from boarding-school to Clover Farm, bringing 'a diploma' (framed) that Admirable Crichton could never have honestly won, a great heap of tattered, dog's-eared, bescribbled school-books, treating of history, moral philosophy, physical geography, chemistry, astronomy, botany, trigonometry, etc. (whose contents it is unnecessary to say she knew by heart, and remembered and practised all her life long); some blank books in which had been carefully copied a whole series of her valuable and original compositions on the 'Mind of Man,' 'The Evils of Infidelity,' 'Reflections on the Universe,' 'Meditations on the True and Beautiful' (representing a prodigious amount of mental effort extending over a period of two years, during which she wrestled for three days out of every month with the loftiest problems that could occupy the attention of a Newton as conscientiously as any she-philosopher of eighteen that ever lived to become the attraction of something stronger than gravitation not wholly unconnected with apples); an album containing the autographs of twenty-five altogether congenial and utterly devoted friends; the last *Fashion Bazaar* (for 'a sweet polonaise' exactly 'adapted to slender figures'), and a delightful conviction that life would now begin to be interesting, romantic, brilliant, as full of delicious fruition as it had always been of delicious promise. In other words Lucy was 'finished;' but not in the sense of being done for.

LUCY WENT DOWN.

A more healthy-minded, sweet-tempered, wholesome maiden, a prettier one (if you like brunettes), and a pleasanter one for human nature's daily food, you could not have found in the whole State of Illinois. Not that she was extraordinarily gifted, witty, musical, or even vivacious; but because she was a sweet, unselfish, gentle young girl, full of kind thoughts for others, quietly cheerful, contented, fond of her father and home, and doing twenty things a day to brighten both, as a matter of course, too, not as a 'mission' a pleasure to herself rather than duty to others.

The high-shouldered old house with its steep roof, its heavy porch, its pleasant old orchard stretching away at the back, its homely, home-like environment of sheds and barns, hay-ricks, feeding-troughs and horse pond, its noisy fowls and placid cattle, took on a special and particular air of its own, an added charm that was over and above its own look of peaceful plenteousness, when Lucy came home. Lucy's neat, trim figure was to be seen here, there, and everywhere. Lucy's basket, and garden-hat, gloves, keys, and other feminine possessions were all about the place. She seemed to pervade the whole farm in a wonderful way. Her pony was in the nearest meadow; her spick and span little carriage was sitting with its feet up in the coach house, and could be plainly seen from the road that curved that way and then led off to the fields. Her flowers bloomed gayly in new beds made for them in the old garden. Her sewing was left on the circular bench under the great elm along with Tupper's 'Poems' and 'Thaddeus of Warsaw,' or some one of the Waverley novels, with which she was 'improving' herself. And she herself was among the currant bushes, in the dairy, the poultry-yard, the kitchen, in which last place, indeed, she achieved gastronomic triumphs that made glad the heart and genial the temper of her father.

He had told her that she was not to do anything; that he had all the 'help' he needed, and that there was no necessity for her 'to turn her hand to anything.' But Lucy was eminently domestic in her tastes, and energetic in her character, and she could no more have idled away her days in fine ladical fashion than she could have devoted her nights to squaring the circle. She took a turn at 'The Antiquary' or 'Plutarch's Lives' between times, when she was making preserves, because she had been told that she had a mind to improve, and was anxious to do her duty by herself as well as by other people. But her confections were never burnt in consequence of her absorbing interest in Scotch dialect or Roman consuls, and her pretty face showed a much more profound interest in the colour of her strawberries, and anxiety to have them satisfactory in quantity as well as quality, and 'come out even' with her jars when it was time to bottle them, than it ever did during the process

of improving herself by a patent method, that had the effect of making her turn over the pages very rapidly, but only to see how long the chapter was, and wish it a good deal shorter.

Her father was delighted with her conduct and character in every particular. He felt himself to be as directly the author of all that was admirable in it as of the abundant wheat crop that he had planted and was about to harvest. He was always convinced that everything that he did was right and could not but turn out well. Every thought almost that he could spare from the engrossing business of his life, his farming, was given to her. He settled in his own mind exactly what her future was to be. He was ambitious for her; she should be as much of a lady as anybody; she should marry a professional man of means and standing, and of his own selection. No farmer, with unsound views about everything 'from a to izzard,' need apply, or hope to live off him, and manage *his* farm.

The house was a different thing with her in it, but he must not be such a fool as to suppose that he could keep a pretty girl like that to light it up. What he could and would do was to marry her to the right man, and he flattered himself that he was the very person to decide who the right man was. Women never knew what they wanted, nor were they satisfied when they got it. When harvest was over he would settle that thing. There was young Lathrop the lawyer—here ensilage pushed Lawyer Lathrop, and Lucy, and all thoughts of marrying and giving in marriage quite out of his mind, and if he ever thought of them again for the next six weeks, it was with an agricultural serenity of conviction that there was 'plenty of time.' There was plenty of everything at Clover Farm, and the processes to which he had been accustomed were all slow ones of ploughing, and sowing, and waiting for the early and latter rain to moisten, for snows to protect, and sun to ripen, and all the patient forces that gradually wake from their sleep the living things in the darkness of the earth's bosom, that tassel in silken tufts and laugh in bearded grain, and flowers, and fruits, and all manner of good gifts.

But in Siberia it is said that the crops are planted, come to perfection, and are harvested within six weeks, owing to certain climatic conditions; and it is certain that in far less time an affection that has stood the test of half a century's wear and tear has been known to be planted, and to grow down to the roots of things and up to the heavens, if not to come to perfection; so that it was not remarkable that Lucy and John——

But I must introduce John properly. He introduced himself at Clover Farm not long after Lucy's diploma was framed and hung up in the parlour, making close connection with it even for a railroad man.

It is very curious how things get about. The lilacs in the garden are bare, or budding, and there is not a bee to be seen for miles around. They bloom, and lo! an army of winged despoilers settle upon every cluster. The cherries and strawberries are allowed to bud and bloom without hearing the rustle of so much as two pin-feathers, and encouraged, they go farther. But when the rain has cried over certain little excrescences formed slowly and painfully on stems and branches; when the sun has kissed the most delicious juices into them; when they are round, perfect, sweet, *ripe*, hark! Here they come! Birds, birds, birds! The most scientific head-gardener could never tell with anything like the same accuracy when that moment has arrived.

In the same way, when a charming girl gets home from school, pastors and masters, and teachers and governesses, and old men and children, and old women and maidens may not be aware of the fact, or may only learn of it slowly in the most indirect and roundabout ways; but if there is a youth within a radius of fifty miles, there will be one person who will know the when, and where, and a great deal beside—who she is her name, her abode, her looks, dress, manner very likely—and all this before the stage coach that brought her has reached the next town, very often, if the girl be particularly pretty or attractive.

Lucy had not finished unpacking her trunk, and shedding tears of sentimental regret over the life and companions that she had forever left behind her at Zion Hall; she had not arranged her work-box and desk and album and elegant portfolio of selected drawings and prize books about her room, or begun to take any sort of interest in the life she was to lead, the familiar surroundings that yet wore such a strange air, when John Deering found himself absolutely obliged to walk through Mr Chubb's 'yard' (and to pass, too, directly under the parlour windows) in order to get to his mother's house, as he came out from Midford to spend Sunday, as usual, at home. Nothing but dire necessity, of course, could have induced him to decide upon a route that took him a mile and more out of his way with the thermometer standing at ninety degrees. It is to be hoped that he felt repaid for the exertion by the mere glimpse that he got of Lucy (after swiftly reconnoitering the whole building) at an upper window, industriously engaged in brushing the dust from her travelling-dress.

She did not see him, and if she had it would have made no difference, for John was not one to strike the most susceptible maiden dumb with his manly beauty, and the idol of Lucy's heart (of whom she was thinking at the moment) was her very dearest, darlingest friend, Genevieve Thompson, to whom she had just written sixteen pages of protestation and undying affection. It must have been a satisfactory glimpse on the whole, for he immediately wanted another; and an unsatisfactory one, for it never seemed a complete experience. Every visit of John's for the next six weeks required to be patched with another, and the fact that he had just been to the house seemed to serve only as an imperative reason for going again as soon as possible.

He and Lucy had known each other very well as children, but had not seen each other for several years. The consequence was, that after the first conventional crust had been broken between them, four and twenty blackbirds began straightway to sing; or, to drop metaphor, everything combined to lead their thoughts and talk back to the (as it now appeared) delightful time when they had walked hand-in-hand in the flowery paths of happy childhood.

Mr Chubb, intent upon seed-corn and prize pigs and a new floor for the stable, had not the faintest notion of what was going on in the dairy, under the great cherry-tree, among the rows of old-fashioned four o'clocks in the dear old garden, on the horse-hair sofa in the best parlour; and if he had known of it he would have scouted the idea of 'two young fools like that thinking of marrying,' or of his daughter daring to dream in her wildest moments of disposing of her own heart, hand, and future.

He met John sometimes in the hall, or about the place, and nodded to him with careless good-nature; stopped him once or twice to ask him if his mother would sell 'that red Alderney cow of hers;' how wheat was quoted at Midford. But give him a thought as a possible suitor for his Lucy, 'the lawyer's lady,' as he already called her in his own mind, he never did. He had known 'that boy always' he told Lucy, who listened with eager, smiling interest, expecting to hear John finely praised the next moment—a hope dashed cruelly to the ground by his adding reflectively a moment later:

'He's freckled worse than ever; he's a regular turkey-egg.'

Such language applied to the beloved object is certainly not gratifying to anybody, and Lucy was disgusted, but only dared to bring out a mild:

'Oh, father! He isn't at all! His skin is so fine and white and delicate that every little blemish such as no one would ever see on you—or me' (hastily) 'is noticed at once on him. He's a little sunburnt now, but it will all come off. And those things don't matter in a man, one bit.'

'That's so,' agreed Mr Chubb, ramming tobacco into his pipe, and with no suspicion that he had been making an extremely offensive astronomical observation and finding spots on the sun. 'He used to be 'round here a good deal when he was a child, riding the horses to pasture and feeding the threshing machine. A nice little chap,' Mr Chubb resumed, 'but I've not seen him 'bout for two or three years. What's he doing, anyway?'

To this query poor Lucy, whose dearest wish it was that a good understanding should be brought about between her father and John, Lucy, the constitutional coward, could give no reply except the evasive one:

'He's in some sort of business in Midford.'

She simply could not say that John was the freight agent of the Southern and Central Narrow Gauge Line, knowing her father's prejudice to railroads in general, and rabid hatred of that railroad in particular. Her idea was that if she could keep this damaging fact in the background until her father knew what John was, all would be well. No one could know John and not accept any and everything connected with him. She counselled John to keep the thing from him. But John, who was a most manly and honest fellow, would make no promise of the kind.

'There's nothing to be ashamed of,' he said. 'I've got a clean record all through; that anybody is welcome to see. I am not going to tell any minnows or whales about it. I expect to be general freight agent at Sudbury in two years, and I don't see but what it's as good a business as raising pigs and popcorn. If your father don't like railroading, I am very sorry, but he'll have to lump it, that's all. I was intended for a farmer by my mother, you know, but it didn't suit me at all; it was too slow—like waiting for judgment day; so I got me a place on the road, and have worked up to where you see me. Don't you worry your little head about that, I'll fix that all right. I'll tell him.'

'John, I forbid you to say one word about it until I give you permission,' said timid Lucy. 'He'd forbid you the house. We never could see each other as we have been doing. Promise me that you won't.'

'Well, I won't then, unless he asks me about it,' said John, 'But I will if he does, and more too. What business has he got taking up such notions, if he is your father?'

The crop that year turned out splendidly on Mr Chubb's hands. There had not been such a yield for fifteen years. Not a farmer in the county had any fault to find with it, and that told its own story. Mr Chubb was radiant.

'It means five thousand clear laid by in Midford Bank. That's what it means!' he said to Lucy. 'And now I can attend to other things—other things.'

Not three days later Lucy was summoned downstairs to see 'a gentleman,' and thinking that there was but one man in the world, stopped to put on her freshest and most becoming muslin gown, the better to please John, whom she had not seen for a lover's eternity of four days. But she was disappointed to find quite another visitor seated on the horsehair sofa immediately under the famous diploma that ought to have proclaimed her Mistress of Hearts, so charmingly simple and sweet did she look in her bravery. It was Mr Lathrop, who came to meet her, and shook hands, and seemed to her to stay forever, although she had told him that her father had gone to Midford for the day.

Somehow, with vague yet acute feminine suspicion and comprehension, she disliked him on the spot; disliked his pallor, disliked his Roman nose, disliked his lisp; disliked most of all his flattering speeches and profuse compliments; was not even agreeably impressed by his neat dress, although, as a rule, she liked men to be what she called 'stylish,' and thought it the only thing that John lacked—no, not *lacked*, either. That idea she could never have connected with John, if he had been minus an arm, leg, or eye. Let us say that it was the one thing that she thought might be *added* to John.

After this a most amusing sentimental 'Box and Cox' situation existed at Clover Farm. On most days of the week Lawyer Lathrop simpered affably and prattled politely to and at Miss Lucy, who suffered many things at his hands, and accepted only such attentions as she could not decline with her father 'bossing' the affair and match-making in his own determined fashion. And every evening John Deering contrived to have an hour at least with his charmer, and needed nor desired the least assistance in doing his own wooing.

Mr Chubb's favourite poison was faithfully and regularly administered, he holding bottle and spoon; the antidote as regularly and most efficaciously given by a private practitioner, who understood the patient's symptoms and malady, and sympathized with her deeply.

Poor Lucy needed sympathy, you may be sure, for between the three men she was almost distracted. She had long since given up her correspondence with Genevieve Thompson under the pressure of her woes and difficulties. She could only fly for refuge to her 'Aunt Harriet,' as she called a distant, elderly, intensely romantic, and very admirable cousin who had lived with them at Clover Farm ever since the death of Mrs Chubb. And what that lady had to listen to from Lucy in the way of rhapsodies and praises of one lover, and ridicule and abhorrence of another, and lamentations over the misery of having the one taken from her and the other thrust upon her, will never be known. The conjectures, confidences, hopes, plans that were poured out upon that kind-hearted kinswoman would have utterly wearied and disgusted anyone less unselfish and attached; but Miss Harriet was never tired of hearing them. She longed and pined to be a *deus ex machina*, and bring Cousin Timothy to book, and get him to 'bless you my children,' and send them off to Niagara honeymooning. But she was 'a poor relation,' and Mr Chubb was not a man to take advice from his nearest and richest of kin. Besides, Lucy implored her not to interfere.

John came over rather earlier than usual one afternoon and caught, or was caught by Mr Chubb on the front verandah.

'Sit down: sit down,' said Lucy's father. 'How's corn going at Midford to-day, do you know! It was being thrown away yesterday. That's the worst of farming. If the year's bad, you've got nothing to sell. If it's good, nobody will buy what you've got.'

And Lucy's lover sat down, glad of a chance 'to make connection,' in professional parlance, with a gentleman who had a little daughter as well as a big crop to dispose of.

The two chatted on pleasantly enough for some time, John listening attentively and respectfully to the future father-in-law of his hopes and keeping an eye on the door to see if Lucy would come out, and all went well until Mr Chubb, mounting his hobby, began to give his opinion of railroads and everything that was connected with them. Warming with his subject, he past-participled the whole institution from presidents to Pullman porters, from securities to sleepers, and the Athanasian creed is mild and characterless compared to the richness and depth and variety of his curses against the very telegraph poles that countenanced such iniquity.

John's first feeling was one of dismay. It had come. His face got redder and redder, and finally he blurted out: 'Mr Chubb, sir, I am a railroad man. I'm the freight agent of the Southern and Central,' when he could no longer control himself.

'Then you are a —— fool, or a —— —— knave, and you've got the —— —— —— rascally business and thievin,' lyin' set of companions that ever was, outside of the penitentiary—that's all I've got to say about it,' announced Mr Chubb, rising in a turkey cock access of fury from his arm-chair. The glove was thrown down now, and John picked it up, and a pretty quarrel ensued, with this pleasant result—that John was ordered off the premises.

Dark were the days that followed. Miss Harriet tripped about the house actually and morally on tiptoe, going as 'delicately' as King Agag. Lucy, that pearl of a girl, was dissolved perennial in tears, which she had either just shed, was shedding, or would shed. John vanished. Lawyer Lathrop alone remained the same, came early, stayed late, brought gifts; was blind, deaf, dumb, apparently, where Lucy was concerned—that is, to her melancholy looks and vexed speeches; he proposed finally and was accepted—by Mr Chubb. He had heard all about John and hated him. He loved Lucy (to call an odious sentiment by a fine name), although he was perfectly aware of the state of her feelings. The fact was that he had sentimentally the cuticle of a hippopotamus. Lucy was lovely. Lucy would have Clover Farm and shekels some day. What were hearts and darts, and tears, and 'taradiddle foolishness' when compared with the solid advantages to be gained by such an alliance? So Lucy was informed one day that she was to marry a man she detested; very much as she might have been told that she was to change her dress.

'I've settled the whole thing. It is to be on the 25th of this month,' Mr Chubb announced. 'There's no use putting off a thing when it's got to be done. I've spoken to your Aunt Harriet; she'll get whatever you want in the way of wedding finery, and I'll see to the rest. All you've got to do is to get ready, my dear. Lathrop's a first-rate match for any girl, first-rate. Correct man; long-headed, even for a lawyer. Got a verdict against the Southern and Central, yesterday, for ten thousand—that Brownlow case. He's the very man for you. Got money laid by, and'll take good care of you. Smart, deep fellow; sure to get on, if he isn't one to palaver the women.'

Now, if Lucy, who had listened stupified to all this, had been a girl of spirit, the question of marrying Mr Lathrop would have been 'settled' indeed, then and there, if not exactly as Papa Chubb proposed. Not all the king's horses, nor all the king's men, nor all the fathers, mothers, grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, aunts, cousins, or friends in Christendom could have pushed her another step in that direction. But Lucy was very timid, very gentle, and all her life-long had trembled before her big, burly, imperious parent. She cried, of course, sobbed piteously, vowed passionately that she never, *never*, NEVER would marry Samuel Lathrop while she lived, and fled up to her room and into Miss Harriet's sympathetic arms, leaving her father vexed, but not seriously disturbed, convinced that she would 'come to her senses and give in.'

And in the end, as he had thought, she gave in. '*Chateau qui parle va se rendre.*' She consented to listen to Mr Lathrop. She had to listen to her father. The thing was 'settled' to suit Mr Chubb, who again, and this time formally, accepted the lawyer that had got a verdict against the Southern and Central. It was the most endearing fact that he knew of, that spruce, respectable, cold-blooded member of the Midford bar, for whom he had no great liking, except so far as he really

represented his own plan for securing certain advantages for his daughter. And so it came about that in two weeks from the time it was first mooted Mr Chubb's point was carried. Lucy was engaged, not to her 'dearest John,' as she had often pictured to herself; John, whose photograph she put under her pillow every night, and of whom her heart and thoughts were full, but to Mr Samuel Lathrop, of Midford. Miss Harriet was aghast; Mr Chubb, openly jubilant; Mr Lathrop fishily gratified and satisfied; John Deering in despair.

Matters were at this stage, and all was brisk preparation for the wedding when one evening Lucy went to her room. Her *fiancé* had spent the whole afternoon with her, and she had been only too thankful to see him drive off and to go to her room, where she cried and bathed her face, and cried again, and took off her hateful engagement ring and felt again comparatively free and happy, or at least less miserable. She was sitting there thinking of the same thing, or rather person, that always filled her mind, when Miss Harriet came in, looking excited.

'My dear,' she said, 'he's downstairs, and says he must see you.'

'He' was John Deering to Miss Harriet, and Lucy, of course, knew who 'he' was, and never confounded him for one moment with the late-departed Samuel.

'I can't see him. I can't see him. You must go down and tell him so. After the way I've treated him——' began Lucy, getting very pale, and bursting again into the ever-at-hand sobs.

'He says he will see you,' replied Miss Harriet. 'Poor fellow! You'd better go down. He may do something desperate.'

A fear of John's doing something 'desperate' was one of Lucy's haunting terrors, but then to see him as Mr Samuel Lathrop's *fiancée!*

'What does he want, auntie?' she asked. 'Oh, I can't, I can't!'

'You can't help yourself. If you don't go down, child, you may regret it,' said Miss Harriet. 'What are you afraid of? He knows you're engaged, for he told me so. Go along downstairs.'

Thus urged, Lucy went down, and John turned as pale as she was when he saw her. He was sitting on the horse-hair sofa, where she never sat now, partly because it reminded her of the days when she and John had spent so many happy hours side by side on its slippery, uncompromisingly hard surface, but chiefly because she could not so well regulate the exact and respectful distance that she wished observed between herself and her *fiance* there as when she took a chair. There were no demonstrations to fear from John. He did not so much as offer to shake hands. He had come to tell her something. And this was it, briefly told without the clauses and pauses of the agitated speaker, the interruptions and comments of the listener. Mr Chubb, a few days before, had sold his large crop to a firm in Fenton, a hundred miles away. It had been shipped and had got safely as far as a town midway between Midford and Fenton—Fairfield. A strike was imminent, and all traffic about to be stopped. John was at Fairfield; had found it out; knew that Mr Chubb's crop was on the track, and, for love of Lucy, had at the very last moment contrived to get 'every blessed car' sent off safely to Fenton just before the storm came that had ruined many shippers and done great injury even to such a powerful corporation as the Southern and Central.

This was the gist of the interview. But a good deal beside crept into it. John learned that Lucy still loved him, and was sacrificing herself to her father's 'notions.' Lucy was humiliated and delighted at once by this fresh proof that John was 'the noblest creature in the world.' They parted with love and hope both revived. Lucy thought that her father would be so touched by John's 'splendid conduct' that he would relent and repay him the only coin he would take. John determined that he 'would make a fight for it,' as he put it in his own thoughts.

But alas! it was Miss Harriet who was melted, and sang John's praises, and cried on Lucy's neck, and declared that Lucy and John were 'made for each other,' and that it was 'monstrous to part them.' Mr Chubb was vastly pleased, delighted, indeed, but he had no idea of doing anything more than *thanking* John, which he did that very night in cordial terms, and with a feeling that he was behaving handsomely, for he had a pen-and-ink-phobia, and never wrote a letter if he could possibly get out of it.

Perhaps he preferred that way of expressing his sense of the obligation for other reasons. He knew very well, now, from both Lucy and Miss Harriet, what John's feelings toward Lucy was, and of her affection for him. For one moment he even thought of 'settling' the matter all over again, and very differently. He had but a contemptuous opinion of women, however—their love, their hate, their intellect, their influence and character generally; and he soon convinced himself that it was too late, and that one man was not only as good as another, but better too, in this case. So nothing was changed. The wedding was to be, or he would know why, he said angrily.

Miss Harriet and Lucy were bidden to get ready for it and say no more. Miss Harriet and Lucy being what the French call perfect 'muttons,' *looked* unutterable appeals, wept, said a great deal behind Mr Chubb's back, *obeyed.* And John Deering raged inwardly, protested on paper, tried to get another interview with Lucy, failed, and was checkmated all around for the time being.

On the day before the one fixed for the wedding he made his last attempt, and it was as he was riding slowly back to Midford with the heaviest heart in the world that Mr Lathrop's new buggy, resplendent with paint and varnish, and drawn by a fast trotter, came bowling along *en route* to Clover Farm. Mr Lathrop was dressed in his best, and felt at his best. Recognizing John as he passed by him, he very kindly and delicately pulled a paper from his pocket and flourished it at him, calling out:

'See here! License! You can come to the wedding if you like. Do!'

Mr Lathrop was not a man of many impulses, but he could not resist the temptation to taunt his rival. And John would have liked nothing better than to have dragged him out of the buggy and laid his own whip over his shoulders. All the natural savage in him was aroused. He was not in a state of nature, though, in Africa or Ceylon or the Sioux country, where men may savagely resent barbarous treatment, and though by no means in a state of grace, he was presently jogging again toward Midford, and again in these civilised United States and the nineteenth century, with nothing but a red flush on his face to tell of his range and grief.

The day came. The wedding was to be at the farm. It was to be a quiet affair, only a few neighbours and friends being invited. It was to be at eleven o'clock sharp. The knot indissoluble was to be tied by the Methodist minister of Midford, Mr Carruthers.

Early as were the hours usually kept at Clover Farm, every member of the family for various reasons was awake on that particular morning long before the usual time, perhaps because none of them had slept well and some of them had not closed an eye at all.

Miss Harriet, who as housekeeper had 'the repast' (as she elegantly termed the wedding collation) very much on her mind, rose and dressed by lamp-light, peeped into Lucy's room, and found the poor girl a very spectacle for pallor and swollen eyes, and general dishevelled despair, had a final cry with her, returned to her own room and went downstairs with her mother's manuscript cook-book under her arm, and her hands full of silverware.

Lucy got up, and by way of preparing herself to become the wife of Mr Lathrop, got out a villainous and most unflattering photograph of John, and all the letters and presents, pressed flowers and other sentimental souvenirs that had come from or were associated with him, and spent two hours looking at them as well as she could for her tears.

Mr Chubb, the originator and promoter of this successful matrimonial scheme, was by no means as happy as might have been expected. He, too, had had a bad night of it. For one thing, only the evening before he had been informed by a neighbour that Mr Lathrop had been made the attorney of the Southern and Central by its astute president.

There could not have been unpleasanter news communicated. His son-in-law the representative of that road! The thought was intolerable, and worse still he couldn't help it, couldn't help anything; for, angry as he was, he felt that it was too late to break off the engagement he had made, though he thought of it for the first five minutes. He was afraid of public opinion; he was ashamed to ask it of Lucy after his high-handed course in the matter. And then, for another thing, he had been assailed by a whole host of doubts and fears now that his point was carried. Lucy had been a good daughter to him always—kind, affectionate, obedient. Had he as he phrased and summed up the account between them 'acted square and fair?' Perhaps he was a little hipped, for as a general thing he was firmly convinced of his own wisdom and was not given to admitting as a mere possibility even that he could be wrong.

It is certain that he was out of sorts, and was up and dressed before the first auroral flush in the east above the elms opposite his window announced that the day was at hand.

Some uneasy influence from the farm must have penetrated as far as Midford, for John Deering also had tumbled and tossed away the night on the creaking and shackling structure that did duty for a bed at his boarding house. What should he do? What could he do to prevent Lucy, his Lucy whom he loved, and who loved him, from being sacrificed by 'a brutal father' to a 'beast' of a lover. John thought in strong language, and even so his feelings were so inadequately expressed that he got up and walked the floor still thinking, thinking, and groaning aloud, and clinching his fist and biting his lips like the heaviest of stage villains instead of the worthiest and most simple hearted of men. At last he came to a conclusion, a conclusion so bold and startling that it almost stunned even him just at first. He *would* see Lucy again. He would get her to elope with him, if there was anything in love or a lover's eloquence, appeals, commands, despairs. This decided upon, he too arrayed himself and rushed out of the house, stumbling over the milkman and his cans at the door in his eagerness to secure a license (with which he means to begin the work of spiking the enemy's guns), utterly unmindful of the fact that it would be at least two hours before any office would be open, any official at his post.

It was only Mr Lathrop who slept the placid sleep of the victor untroubled by any doubts, fears, or alarms.

When Miss Harriet had 'seen to' a dozen things that were down in her mental memorandum, she gave herself up to ten minutes' intense study of her Virginian mother's receipt for 'Bermondsey punch,' chin in hand, seated on the back verandah. She then rose, and with a purposeful air took her way to the pantry to put into instant execution the instructions so clearly given. Bermondsey punch had always been in her family. It was a thing that no one who had once tasted ever forgot. It was natural that she should have thought of it at once when there was a wedding in question, even a wedding that she disliked and would have given a great deal to avert. She had a duty to society to perform and she meant to do that duty; but her soft heart and head were full of troubled, unhappy thoughts of Lucy and John, and unavailing regrets and wishes—so full indeed, that she was completely unconscious when the time came to do as she was bidden and 'stir in slowly one pint of old Bourbon previously mulled' that she had exactly doubled the quantity of spirit and halved the quantity of water ordered, by her absent-minded use of the pint and quart pots at hand. Quite satisfied with her work, on the contrary, she carefully covered the bowl when she had done, set in on the second shelf, and went off to attend to other matters.

Breakfast that morning was a mere mockery of a meal, and was over in ten minutes, Mr Chubb and Miss Harriet being alike eager to get over it, and Lucy still in her room.

It was about an hour after this that Mr Chubb, who had been prowling over the house restlessly ever since he had come downstairs, wandered aimlessly into the pantry. He stood there for a moment, looking idly at the cakes and cream and other toothsome dishes about him, with the interest that such dainties always arouse in a breast that is honest, and conscious of a capacity to enjoy and digest them at the proper time, and all at once he spied the punch-bowl above his head. Now it is a generally conceded and perfectly indisputable fact, that men have absolutely no curiosity; so it must have been that Mr Chubb felt it to be his duty to inform himself at once as to what that bowl contained. At any rate, he got it down, uncovered it, and examined it attentively. Some light was thrown on the subject by another organ than his eyes, namely, his nose. The little rings of lemon-peel that floated temptingly on the surface were agreeably corroborative of the theory suggested by the second sense, and a third was called to Mr Chubb's aid. He tasted it. It was all that Bermondsey punch was famous for, and more, as we know. He tasted it again and again. It improved on acquain-

AT THE VERY DOOR HE MET JOHN DEERING.

tance, like all really good things. Mr Chubb got down a glass and filled it—a cracked glass perhaps, for somehow it had to be filled more than once, and it could not have been that Mr Chubb, who was habitually temperate, and had voted at a late election against saloons and the selling of any and all spirits, could have had much to do with another fact—that it would not stay filled. When, however, the bowl was replaced finally, Mr Chubb's countenance was charmingly cheerful, and his heart was glad. Gone was his gloom, his doubts, his discontent. A world that had Bermondsey punch in it was the world for Mr Chubb after all, and he went off to array himself for the great occasion.

Mr Chubb was not ordinarily as sensitive a plant as the man who killed himself because he was so tired of dressing and undressing himself; but he must have found it exhausting work on this occasion, for in about

MR CHUBB TASTED IT.

ten minutes he was back in the pantry, and having administered restoratives to himself, was presently so far refreshed and recruited that he put on his hat and walked off into the grounds singing an air that he had picked up from the minstrels in Midford some time before. On he sauntered and sung, and sung and sauntered, until he came to a summer-house, that he had built for Lucy, at the foot of the lawn.

Here he turned in, feeling that he would rather sit down than not, and here, at the very door, he met—John Deering.

John was aghast, and stammered out something intended to be an explanation of his being there, and would have escaped, if he could, but Mr Chubb would not have it so. To come to a place with the intention of carrying off a man's daughter, and to be met and carried off by that daughter's father instead, is certainly a disconcerting and extraordinary experience that would confound the most accomplished Lovelace for a moment; and John felt himself taken into custody when Mr Chubb ran his arm through his and led him back into the summer-house, where he had been hiding for the last half-hour, waiting for a chance to get speech with Lucy, sight of Miss Harriet.

'Mr Chubb, sir, I didn't know—I didn't mean——' he began, and got as red as his own cravat, but was not allowed to get any further.

'Sit down, John, my dear old John! I always liked you, John. You are the finest young fellow in the country—a long ways the finest on the face of the earth. You are the best friend I've got in the world, John. Saved my crop for me—yes—you did—I love you, John, like a son,' began Mr Chubb, still clutching his arm and beaming Bermondsey upon him. 'I've always loved you, ever since you were a little boy 'round here riding the horses to pasture. Yes, John, there ain't anybody I care more for than I do for you. There ain't anything I won't do for you. Why, you saved my crop, don't you know that? Thousands of dollars! Thousands of dollars! Time of that there —— strike that I *wish* had of ruined that —— —— railroad.'

John had never heard of Bermondsey punch; and when this speech began he was the most astonished young man on this continent. But before Mr Chubb had finished, John had inferred the existence of Bermondsey punch, as a savant reconstructs a megatherium from a single bone, arguing backward from effect to cause. So he smiled, first to himself, and then at Mr Chubb soothingly, and replied that he wasn't in the Southern and Central any longer, and had never liked the work, still less his treatment as an employee of the road.

Out flamed Mr Chubb at once, and if words could have destroyed the Southern and Central, every trace of that powerful institution would have been swept from the State at once. But words couldn't; on the contrary, the whistle of a train passing at the bottom of Clover Farm was to be heard that very moment. Mr Chubb heard it, and raged more furiously. And now Mr Lathrop came in for a share of abuse.

John, who was getting utterly impatient, feeling that time was getting on, suddenly saw a gleam of light. He seized Mr Chubb by the coat in his eagerness, and begged, implored him not to let Lathrop marry Lucy.

'Who says that that scoundrel attorney of the road—I'll tell you about that, John. Who says he's going to marry my daughter?'

John could scarcely believe his ears. He trembled like a leaf in his agitation and desire to turn this mood of Mr Chubb's to good account. He could scarcely get out:

'O, sir! Mr Chubb, it's to-day. Stop it! Go right up to the house and stop it! Don't let him marry her! She will be miserable for life! That's the reason. I don't ask you to do it because I love her, though I do, with all my heart and soul; and always will; but it's because I know she will be miserable with that man—that scoundrel.'

'Yes, cold-blooded, white-livered rascal-attorney of the Southern and Central, I'll tell you about that. Sit down, John,' agreed Mr Chubb.

'Oh! no, sir. Don't. Don't sit down,' urged John, seizing him by the arm; 'go up to the house. Let's go up there together. He sha'n't have Lucy—never! never!'

'No, never. Sha'n't have my daughter. Always hated him. Hate him like poison. Who says he's going to marry my daughter? You marry her yourself, John. Come along. Marry her yourself. Got my farm, got every bushel of my crop—infernal rates! Sha'n't have my daughter at all. He's done took the position of attorney of the road. Just like him. I'll tell you about that. This is the way of that thing—'

Here Mr Chubb tried again to sit down, and his purpose was again frustrated by John.

'There isn't a minute to lose, sir,' said he, taking Mr Chubb's arm this time and leading on toward the house.

When nearly there he said:

'O! sir; did you mean what you said! Will you give Lucy to me? I came here to-day to get her. I've got the license in my pocket this minute. May she be my wife? Will you give your consent?'

'Yes, yes. Of course. Take her! Take her! Why haven't you married her before, John? I never loved a man like I do you, John. You've got the best head for figures, and the best disposition, and you are thought better of than any young man in this whole country-side, and——'

Here they arrived at the steps, and Mr Chubb, again showing symptoms of sitting down on the top one, John hurriedly guided him to, and deposited him in, his favourite arm-chair instead. It was now ten o'clock. He dashed up stairs and knocked at Lucy's door. She opened it. She was all ready for the sacrifice and looked a lovely image of woe. She cried out 'John,' and fell back a few steps. This was movement one. Movement two was a rush into John's arms, and a piteous outcry, 'O! don't let them take me from you!'

John explained how matters stood as soon as he could take the necessary time. Lucy was amazed, overjoyed, not difficult to persuade.

At half-past ten several guests and the minister had arrived. At thirty-one minutes past Lucy and John marched into the room, and were married immediately in front of the horse-hair sofa, Mr Chubb, all beaming blandness and Bermondsey, beside them; Miss Harriet, all tearful delight, opposite; the company much pleased and excited by this conclusion of a romance that they had been interested in for months.

At a quarter to eleven Mr and Mrs Deering were driving rapidly into Midford to take a train eastward, and Mr Lathrop was driving rapidly out to Clover Farm to take a wife. The two carriages passed each other on the turnpike, and as they did so Jon thrust out his head and a hand in which a folded paper was grasped. 'See this? License! Sorry you couldn't come to the wedding!' he cried, and dashed on.

Lawyer Lathrop caught a glimpse of Lucy. He half understood, but to make certain drove on to the farm, had a violent scene with Mr Chubb, and got back to Midford in a blue-black temper, the only person dissatisfied with the result of the cold-punch act.

Society Gossip.

AUCKLAND.

DEAR BEE, DECEMBER 9.

Of course the great event of the week has been the

FLORAL FETE

in Potter's Paddock. This is described elsewhere. I have only to chronicle briefly some of the dresses. The ladies in the various vehicles were smartly and picturesquely gowned in white, pink, and yellow. Amongst them I noticed Mrs Bews, Mrs Chatfield and daughter, Misses Kissling, Bush, Davy, Holmes, Dargaville, Crowther, Devereux, Devore, Nation, Griffiths, Firth, Hesketh (two), Heywood, Sellers, Ireland (two), Cave, Mowbray, Hare, Percival, Worsp, Whewell, McFarlane, Thorpe (two), Hay, Thompson (two), Tilley, Buckland, Kerr-Taylor, Mrs Greenway, Mrs Goring, Mrs Dufaur, Mrs Makgill, Mrs Mahoney, Mrs Browning, Mrs Rack, and Mrs Thorpe. Mrs Cowie wore black relieved with pearl grey; Mrs W. Bloomfield was much admired in white; Mrs Dargaville, handsome black merveilleux, dainty little bonnet of pale green and cream; Mrs (Dr.) Knight, fawn; Mrs Masefield, rich black silk, becoming little bonnet; Mrs T. W. Leys, eau-de-nil gown with full vest of darker shade of silk, large black hat with feathers; Miss Oxley, fawn crepon, white hat trimmed with cream; Miss Upton, riding habit; Miss Gorrie also in riding habit; Mrs Cotter, fawn gown with black silk bands, large sleeves of sapphire blue silk; Mrs G. Graham, handsome mulberry gown; Miss Wylde-Brown, white, heliotrope hat; Miss A. Owen, white muslin; Miss Laird, white and pink; Mrs Hudson, handsome black silk; Mrs E. T. Hart, white piqué, white toque trimmed with chiffon; Mrs Douglas, black; Mrs Sharland, white and black silk; Mrs C. C. Baker, dark costume; Mrs Crawshaw, black trimmed with lace; Mrs Self, pretty fawn gown, cape to match, pink blouse; Miss Otway looked charming in all pure white, white hat with strings; Miss Scherff was pretty in pink blouse, dark skirt, sailor hat; Miss E. Scherff, white dress, white hat; Miss D. Scherff also in white; Miss Macindoe, white, pale blue blouse; Miss Edmiston, white muslin with maize ribbon, bonnet of lilies of the valley; Miss N. Edmiston, pale blue muslin; Miss M. Peacock, fawn; Miss Cooke, white and black check gown, white hat with feathers; Miss Winnie Leys, pretty cream crepon, hat to match; Miss Hudson, forget-me-not blue crepon, large picture hat of white and gold straw, white strings; her sister was in pink; Miss Slater looked very dainty in pale blue; Miss Reeves, riding habit; Miss Eva Hughes, pearl grey, black lace hat with bunches of pink roses; Mrs Nelson; Miss Haultain, black; Miss Wallace, grey skirt, pink blouse; Mrs Charles Haines, pale pink gingham; Mrs Goodall, black relieved with heliotrope; Mrs Pritt and Mrs McKeen, black silk; Mrs Hugh Campbell, cream china silk flowered with lilac; Mrs Barstow, black; Mrs O'Rorke looked very pretty in grey with coral pink trimmings; Mrs Lucas Bloomfield, white batiste muslin; Misses Bleazard; Miles Wilkes and her sister were simply gowned in white; Miss Kate Isaacs, navy skirt, pink blouse; Mrs Theo. Kissling, grey lustre, white vest; Mrs Kilgour, fawn; Mrs Lyons, white muslin, pretty parasol covered with flowers; Miss Burrill looked *chic* in pink with bodice veiled in cream; Mrs Duthie, green silk, bonnet to match; Mrs Goodhue, black; Miss White, navy skirt, white blouse; Mrs Stevenson (Parnell) was much admired in white, hat and parasol *en suite*; Mrs Jackson, grey lustre, black bonnet; Mrs Thompson, black silk; Mrs Rathbone, dark skirt, pink blouse; Mrs Pollan, fawn; Mrs Gamble, slate grey gown, black bonnet; Mrs Walker (Ellerslie), black silk, pink poppies in bonnet; Misses Atkinson, pink and mauve, respectively; Miss Muir, pale pink; Miss Vera Alexander, green; Mrs Alexander, black silk; Mrs Woodroffe, grey check; Miss Buckland, navy; Mrs Broughton, Mrs Masefield; Mrs Blair, white; Miss Nicholson, dark skirt, white blouse; Mrs C. Baker, grey; Mrs Jack Roach, brown holland; Mrs W. Bloomfield, white; Mrs (Dr.) Bews, white; Mrs McLaughlan, black crepon, bonnet relieved with pink roses; Miss Hull, pink; Miss Wright, grey check; Mrs Bankhardt, black lace; Miss Bankhardt, grey lustre, hat relieved with heliotrope flowers; Miss Churton, dark skirt, light blouse; and her sister, navy delaine; Mrs A. Clark, fawn; Mrs Colbeck looked very well in dome blue; Miss Moss-Davis, navy blue skirt, pink blouse; Miss Sybel Davis, blue holland; Mrs Colegrove, grey trimmed with brown silk; Mrs Digman, navy gown, pink vest; Mrs (Colonel) Dawson, green lustre; Miss Dudley, heliotrope; Miss Dunnett, green; Miss Dowd, black with blue vest; Miss Elliott, Miss Edmiston, terre lustre; Mrs Gorrie, black; Mrs Bloomfield (Wononal, black; Mrs Ireland, black widow's weed; Miss (Barton) Ireland, pretty pink costume; Miss Rooke, navy; Miss Rookes and Miss Laishley, white spotted muslins; Mrs Gilmore, fawn; Mrs Jervis, grey; Mrs Gutheridge, grey trimmed with brown; Miss Hesketh, canary; Mrs Shipherd (*nee* Miss Hesketh), fawn costume figured in blue; Mrs Hay, black silk, bonnet relieved with heliotrope; Miss Hay, black and white spotted gown; Miss Howin, black and white; Miss Howard, grey skirt, pink blouse; the Misses

Herrold (two), grey and fawn, respectively; Miss Kissling, Mrs Ledingham, black; Miss Ledingham, grey with fawn lace; Miss Maud Martin, navy and white vest; Miss Leighton, grey; Miss Larkins, black; Miss Sellers, navy skirt, blue blouse; Miss Rathbone, fawn; Miss Minitt, navy; Mrs Wilke, black, and her daughter, blue; Mrs H. P. Norton, dark green trimmed with cream lace; Miss Pearce, green; Miss Percival, white batiste muslin; Mrs Ware, grey holland; Miss — Whitelaw, grey; Miss Whitelaw, navy, canary blouse; Miss — Worsp, white serge; Mrs Reid, black; Mrs Reed (Koramarama), fawn; Miss Banks, navy skirt, white blouse; Miss Rita Tole, navy; Mrs Aasenne, fawn; Mrs Hamner, black; Mrs (Major) George; Miss Edith Tanner, pretty light dress; Miss Seccombe, grey check; Mrs Owen, navy; Misses Tisdale, Mrs and Miss Upton, Mrs James Russell, royal blue velvet; and her two daughters looked pretty in sky blue with white vests; Miss Atkins, ciel blue crepon. Of course I have only been able to do a few who were present, as the rain made most of the spectators leave very early.

Miss Hilda Worsp is to be married next month, and I believe she is the recipient of some beautiful presents.

Miss Rennie Rookes is to be married in February, and will live at the Thames.

Mr, Mrs, and Miss Burns leave for a trip to the Old Country in March.

A MOUNT ALBERT RIDING PICNIC PARTY

to Nihatopu Falls took place last week. One of the party drove, so that the provisions could be carried without any trouble. The roads over the ranges are still in a very bad condition, owing to the wet season we have had. Luncheon was spread out in Mrs McLeod's garden, the horses having been tied in the neighbouring paddock. After luncheon, to which ample justice was done, the party walked through the bush to the falls, which have a very great flow of water this year. Amongst the party were Mrs Kerr-Taylor, Misses Gilmore, Misses Wilks, Ledingham, Kerr-Taylor (two), Sellers, Seccombe, Martin Wright, Messrs Hazard, Kerr-Taylor, Gilmore, Martin, Colson, etc.

During the last fine moonlight evenings the Avondale folk have been getting up large moonlight riding parties, which have been very successful.

The heavy downpour of rain last Wednesday forced the Remuera Bowling Club, Manukau Road, to postpone their opening of the green until Wednesday, the 11th, at half-past three.

THE ORCHESTRAL AND CHAMBER CONCERT

by Mr S. Adams' pupils on Monday evening last was a great success. The Choral Hall was crowded from stage to gallery. Mr Adams conducted most ably. Miss Edith Whitelaw acted as leader, and Misses Essie Holland and S. Cruickshank as pianistes. There were about forty performers, and the various items were rendered with a vigour and skill that charmed the audience. Some of the dresses I noted were: Mrs Porter, brown, brown toque with bunches of yellow polyanthuses; Mrs Lusher, black trimmed with white; Mrs Masefield, handsome black brocade; Mrs Dufaur, black with bands of sapphire blue veiled with black lace insertion; Mrs Beale, sea green blouse, dark skirt; Mrs T. W. Leys, black silk trimmed with lace, jet butterfly bonnet; Miss Torrance, pretty pink blouse, dark skirt; Mrs Biss, black gown, becoming heliotrope bonnet; Miss Biss, white blouse, Yankee hat; Miss Sloman, cream, black hat trimmed with white ribbon; Miss B. Devore looked pretty in a rose pink crepon blouse, dark skirt; Miss Whitson, pale pink; Mrs D. B. Cruickshank, mourning; Mrs Cruickshank, mourning; Mrs Douglas, shell-pink crepon finished with white lace; Mrs Crawshaw, black, full collar of heliotrope silk; Mrs Whitelaw, black gown, cascade of mreveilleux lace on bodice; Miss Miss B. Whitelaw, very pretty for get-me-not blue *chine* silk blouse, dark skirt; Mrs (Dr.) King, mourning; Miss Owen, black; Miss Ada Owen, soft white muslin blouse, dark skirt; Miss Vaile, pale blue frock; Mrs Cox, brown velvet, brown bonnet with wreath of pale yellow roses; Mrs (Dr.) Knight, forget-me-not blue embossed crepon, black lace insertion; black mreveilleux silk skirt; her two little daughters looked pretty in pink muslin; Miss L. Edmiston, pale blue blouse with straps and rosettes of blue ribbon, dark skirt; Miss N. Edmiston looked dainty in electric blue. Miss Bews, maize coloured silk blouse, dark skirt; Mrs Hay, white, jet bonnet; Miss Hart, white and pink pongee; Miss Kennedy, heliotrope; Miss Hewin, black; Miss Baxter, black serge skirt, pink blouse; etc., etc.

PHYLLIS BROUNE.

WELLINGTON.

DEAR BEE, DECEMBER 5.

Mr and Mrs E. J. Reid and their family leave by the 'Ionic' next Thursday for England, where they intend to make a prolonged visit. The furniture is to be 'auctioned' on Tuesday.

The Government House domestics held their annual picnic at Lowry Bay last Thursday, an outing which is thoroughly appreciated by all.

THE POLO

players should certainly feel flattered by the sustained interest taken in their pastime by Lady Glasgow and her daughters, who drive out to the field nearly every Saturday, and have pretty tea in the shed. Last Saturday was no exception to this rule, Lady Augusta driving her beautifully-matched pair, which, in the stylish little phaeton, always excites general admiration. Lady Glasgow wore a cool summer gown of blue linen, with lemon silk vest, small jet bonnet trimmed with cowslips; Ladies Augusta and Alice Boyle wore serge costumes with blouses and sailor hats; Mrs F. Baldwin wore a light brown linen costume with light vest; Mr and Mrs Baker were also there, and Mrs Beddard, who wore a very becoming dress of white drill with coloured blouse; Mrs Buddle; Mr Butler, Miss Cooper, in white; Mrs Alex. Crawford, Mrs Coates, Mr W. Johnston, Mrs Levin, Miss Medley in a brown holland costume with blue blouse; Mrs Mersereau, in blue crepon with vest and collar of blue silk, dress with dull yellow; Mrs and the Misses Menzies. Miss Pearce in black crepon; Mr Pearce, Miss Salt in a dark-brown dress with light vest, straw hat to match; Miss Skerrett, in a cream serge coat and skirt with checked vest; her sister in a green costume; Mr Alan Scott, an enthusiast from Christchurch, and several others, not forgetting the Maori lady and gentlemen. Among the players were Messrs Baldwin, Buckley, Crawford, Cooper and Captain Preston.

On the links there were about forty players practising, as for a wonder there was no special match to be played. Misses Bell, Dransfield, Duncan, Fairchild, Grace, Gore, Hislop, Izard, Morrah, Williams, etc., etc., were on the ground, and tea there also cheered both actors and audience.

Miss Lee gave a very

PLEASANT TEA

to her girl friends on Saturday, the trousseau being on view, and calling forth general admiration. The tea table was very prettily decorated with white flowers, and laden with all kinds of dainty condiments. Mrs Lee wore a handsome black dress relieved from sombreness by touches of yellow silk and lace; Miss Lee wore a black skirt and pretty white blouse, made with the broad turned-down collar, and finished with lace insertion; her sister wore black with pink and white blouse. There were a great number of fair guests present, but I shall only notice a few of them. Mrs Allan wore a stylish brown tweed costume with black hat; Miss Bodmin, in a pretty fresh costume of ochre-tinted drill trimmed with lace insertion, and a pale heliotrope blouse; Mrs Climie, a neat tweed costume, large black hat trimmed with exquisite roses; Miss Halse, grey tweed gown, black hat; Miss E. Maley looked well in a light drill dress with white blouse; Miss D. Hayward wore black with sleeves and trimmings of electric blue, black hat; Miss Hamerton, a pretty holland costume; Mrs Heaton looked exceedingly well in a stylish costume of black and lilac; Miss Johnston, fawn tweed with red and white blouse, white hat with bows of red ribbon; Miss V. Johnston, in a very *chic* gown of white muslin with butter-coloured lace; Miss Lingard looked charming in a pretty blue blouse embroidered in white, and black skirt; Mrs Stansfield, brown holland with pink blouse; Miss Toxwood wore a striped costume of white and heliotrope, large black hat; Miss Willis, black with white cambric blouse, sailor hat.

Mrs Goro has returned to town, much improved in health after her visit to Napier.

Miss Friend has also returned from Christchurch.

I hear that Miss Lilian Izard will probably go Home with Mr and Mrs E. J. Reid, but this is only a rumour.

The 'Liederkranz' held their

THIRD 'AT HOME'

a few days ago. The conductress, Madame Mertz, still wields the baton in able, undisputed authority, and the Society makes marked progress towards the higher planes of musical culture. Miss Ross and Miss Parsons take the leading positions, and worthily have they been so placed. The Countess of Glasgow takes a special interest in this Society, and attended the 'At Home' accompanied by her daughters and Captain Preston. His Excellency the Governor also extended his patronage. The stage was artistically draped with crimson curtains, forming a bold background for the graceful arrangement of ferns and palms, and prominent in the fore rested a silver harp wreathed in glossy ivy tendrils. Madame Mertz was handsomely gowned in black satin with berthe of white lace; Miss Ross wore a perfectly fitting dress of black mervelleux, the bodice being of pretty pink silk trimmed with cream lace; Miss Parsons, in a pretty and becoming white dress, with deep frill of lace on the bodice; her sister wore a simple dress of white, with black sash and bows; Lady Glasgow wore a rich brocaded gown, and long opera cloak lined with pink and edged with feather trimming; Lady Augusta Boyle wore white silk with delicate pompadour silk revers and panel; Lady Dorothy Boyle, white embroidered muslin with lace; Mrs Butt, black brocade and lace; Miss Cooper, black velvet, white lace fichu; Miss Fairchild, black, pale yellow silk bodice; Miss Hamerton wore a white gown with chiffon; Miss Pearce, black silk veiled in lace; Mrs Levin, black silk, jet trimmings; Lady Stout, black lace dress with jet; Mrs and Miss Hislop, Mrs Courtney, Mrs Castendyke, Miss Dransfield, Misses Gibson, Mrs Hume, Miss Kebbie, Mrs McGregor, Mrs Mee, Mrs Parker, Mrs Reid, Mrs Richardson, Mrs Ritchie; Miss Rose, Miss Ross, Mrs Swainson, etc., etc.

Mrs Patterson's

DRAMATIC RECITATION

evening was a marked success. The entertainment was in aid of the Society for prevention of cruelty to animals, and the general interest taken in this movement was manifested by the large attendance on Wednesday evening. Mr Paterson himself is always good, and always wins warm applause. He was in splendid form the other night, and his pieces all went with a spirit and zest that could not fail to carry the audience with him. Miss L. Watson also established her fame as a stirring and sympathetic reciter, and Miss Holmes was loudly clapped for her rendering of 'The Faithful Lovers.' His Excellency the Governor and Lady Glasgow were present, and their daughters, Lady Augusta, Lady Alice, and Lady Dorothy Boyle, also Major Elliott. Others there were Miss Burnes, in black with bodice of pale blue silk with collar of cream guipure lace; Miss Douglas, Mr and Miss Duthie, Mr and Miss Gore, Miss Hamilton, Mr and Miss Kirkcaldie, Misses Liddle, Mr Lingard and his daughters, Mr and Miss Mason, Misses Newton, Misses Patterson, Paton, etc., etc.

MEYE.

CHRISTCHURCH.

DEAR BEE, DECEMBER 7.

Mr Talfis Trimnell, of Wellington, gave

TWO ORGAN RECITALS

last week. The cathedral was well filled, the soloists, respectively, being Messrs March and Reeves. Mr Trimnell gives great praise to the organ.

On Thursday afternoon Mrs Helmore gave a large

'AT HOME,'

Owing to the glorious weather, it was diverted from the original musical intention into more of a garden party, though some good music was given by Mesdames Walding, Vernon, Haslam, Burns, Westmacott, Misses Gay, Helmore, Malet, and others. Mrs Helmore was gowned in a rich brown satin with passementerie trimming; Miss Helmore wore a grey dress shot with mauve; Miss E. Helmore, pink and white Madras muslin, chiffon trimmings; Mrs Pitman, elegant grey silk crepon, white and gold embroidered bodice, grey bonnet; Miss Reeves, pale green skirt, scarlet blouse veiled in black chiffon, picture hat; Mrs Lascelles, covert costing costume, toque with blue rosettes; Mrs G. Gould, coal green and white costume of alpaca and silk, large white and green hat; Mrs Burns, elegant vieux rose dress trimmed with black chiffon; Mrs Secretan, black ottoman silk gown, jet bonnet, feather boa; Mrs Lomax-Smith, pale grey, blue and pink shot silk bodice; Mrs Stevens, handsome black costume, blue trimmed bonnet; Miss Campbell, Mrs J. Williams, Mesdames Gould, C. Clark, Mathias, Brohan, Wynn-Williams, Denniston, Reeves, Maiety, Scott, Babington, Burges, Julius, Metson, Macdonald, Cotterill, Stead, Misses Campbell, Cowlishaw, Beswick, Tothurst, Williams, Aynsley, Mathias and others.

At the opening of

THE BOATING SEASON

on Friday, Mrs Lascelles and Miss Aynsley were hostesses, and all had a gay time as usual. Many visitors were present, as the day was fine at last.

AT POLO

on Saturday a good game was witnessed. Mr B. Lane provided tea, which was dispensed by Mrs G. Gould. Amongst those present were the Hon. Mr and Mrs Parker, Mesdames Hall, Cotterill, Babington, Archer, Otterson, Misses Baldwin, Cowlishaw, Gerald, Palmer, Williams, Friend, Ronaldson, Blakiston, Rolleston.

Miss Ethel Atkinson, niece of Sir. H. Atkinson, is about to settle here. She has just returned, having finished her education in London and Leipsic as a teacher of music.

Mrs Bruges has returned from Melbourne and Sydney.

The Misses Kilgour (Auckland) are staying with Mrs Little (Fendalton).

Mrs Marshall (Wanganui) is staying with Mrs Russell at Salisbury.

All are delighted at Mr Beswick's election as Mayor.

The Brough and Boucicault Company opened to a splendid house on Wednesday.

DOLLY VALE.

DUNEDIN.

DEAR BEE, DECEMBER 7.

On Wednesday afternoon Miss A. Coughtery (St. Clair) gave a very

PLEASANT AFTERNOON TEA.

Owing to the fearful weather very few girls turned up; in fact, I may safely say that nearly all present were St. Clair people. The tea-table was prettily decorated with roses, amidst sweets and cakes of the most delicious kind.

The same day Mrs J. Allen gave a large

LUNCHEON

for the Rev. Haskett Smith at her residence, 'Arana.' For some time past this gentleman has been lecturing here upon the Holy Land.

ANOTHER LUNCHEON PARTY

was given on Thursday by Mrs Fergus (Royal Terrace), as a farewell to two brides elect, viz., Miss Ramsay and Miss Moodie, who are to be shortly married. Some of those I remember present were Mesdames Fergus, J. Allen, Finch, Sargood, Cameron, H. MacNeil, Misses Ramsay, Moodie, Fergus, Rutherford, etc.

On Wednesday and Thursday of this week the

ANNUAL GUILD SALE

for All Saints' Church debt was held in the Parish schoolroom. Between ninety and one hundred pounds was made for two days, which, I think, considering all the sales that have been going on lately, is very good. Songs, *tableau civants*, recitations, short plays, etc., were given during both evenings.

On Friday Miss A. Bartleman gave a small luncheon party for Miss Nellie Ramsay. The table was simply one mass of roses. Those flowers seem to be the chief decorations now. Miss Bartleman wore electric blue spotted cloth, black serge skirt; Miss Ramsay, black serge jacket and skirt, small white sailor hat; Miss C. Ramsay also wore black jacket and skirt with sailor hat; Miss R. Neill, stylish fawn checked tweed, magenta velvet toque; Miss Ulrich, holland blouse, blue crepon skirt, white sailor hat; Miss Roberts, new black crepon dress, large black lace hat trimmed with pink carnations and feathers etc.; Miss G. Webster, olive green serge trimmed with red velvet, large black velvet hat with feathers; Miss A. Shand, stylish tweed, black hat.

On Friday evening Mrs J. M. Ritchie (Ralwraid) gave a

VERY DELIGHTFUL DANCE

for Miss Cunningham (Christchurch), who is at present staying with her. Being race week, there were a great many strangers present, especially gentlemen. Some pretty dresses were worn by Mrs Ritchie, in a handsome yellow corded silk daintily trimmed white chiffon; Mrs Davis, white satin covered with black grenadine, heavily trimmed with jet and lace; Mrs Kettle, white satin trimmed with white lace; Mrs Neill, handsome black brocade; Mrs Lintott, red satin covered with black lace; Miss Cunningham (Christchurch), yellow mervelleux with chiffon; Miss Cameron (Scotland), pale blue nun's veiling, bodice frilled with chiffon; Miss Faber (Brough and Boucicault Company) elegant white satin; Miss Rattray, blue corded silk epaulettes of green velvet edged with passementerie; Miss G. Rattray, pale pink surah, bodice covered with white chiffon; Miss Shand, sea foam green surah silk trimmed with green passementerie; Miss Webster, yellow brocade smartly trimmed with yellow corded silk and real lace; Miss S. Webster, heliotrope surah silk, spanglers of black chiffon and jet trimmings; Miss A. Cargill, black lace dress relieved with red satin ribbon; Miss Sise, pale pink surah, large sleeves of green serophane; Miss M. Sise, stylish white brocade; Miss Neill, white satin covered with white flowered net; Miss E. Ulrich, plum-coloured velvet; Miss Hardy, dainty biscuit-coloured broche banded with wide gold braid; Miss K. Hardy (Brough and Boucicault Company), stylish white silk; Miss Gibson, white satin covered with white net and trimmed with pale blue velvet; Miss Wright, gray satin with dainty fichu of cream lace; Miss Roberts, orange-coloured nun's veiling, unique epaulettes covered with real Honiton lace; Miss M. Reynolds, rose pink *glace* silk, large angel sleeves; Miss Graham, black satin; Miss S. Graham, white striped crepon, white satin sleeves; Miss Harding (Wellington), handsome blue corded silk; Miss Leslie, white striped muslin; Miss Roberts, pale blue corded silk lavishly trimmed with white satin and silver braid; Miss C. Reid, pink surah silk, the bodice lavishly trimmed with chiffon; Miss N. Reid, white brocade; Miss B. MacLean, apricot corded silk; Messrs Ritchie, Mills, Pasco, Clowes (Sydney), Stott (Wellington), Brent, Boyce, Webster, Tapley, Harris, Cheeseman, Hunter, Reynolds, Morris, C. Morris, Sise, Reid, J. Reid, Maitland, Cutten, E. Cutten, Gould (Christchurch), Warren (Napier), Duncan (Wellington), MacBain (Wellington), Hodgkins, Wright, Cameron, Hunter, MacLean (Christchurch), and a great many others too numerous to mention.

Saturday, the last day of

THE RACES,

the weather was simply perfect; but nevertheless, not nearly so many stylish dresses were worn as on Cup day. Some I noticed were Mrs Bothemley, white satin bodice covered with black chiffon, black satin skirt, stylish bonnet; Mrs Johnstone (Berwick), white satin veiled with white chiffon and trimmed with jet, smart black toque with white flowers; Mrs Kettle, navy blue costume, black chip toque with bunches of yellow cowslips; Mrs Brough, dark blue costume, white waistcoat; Mrs Sise, black figured cloth, small floral bonnet; Miss Butler (Wellington), yellow silk covered with flounces of white spotted muslin, large black hat with yellow roses; Miss Mills, grey checked tweed, black lace hat; Miss Cunningham (Christchurch), strawberry silk bodice covered with black chiffon, black crepon skirt and cape, small black toque trimmed with green shot ribbon; Miss Faber (Brough and Boucicault Company), stylish black crepon, ostrich feather boa, large black lace hat with bunches of pink poppies; Miss Temple (Brough and Boucicault Company), fawn costume, sailor hat; Miss Sise, white pique, small white sailor hat; Miss Webster, blue chene silk blouse, black crepon skirt and cape, dainty floral toque; Miss K. Stephenson, yellow flowered silk, large black lace hat; Miss Hardy, grey checked silk blouse, black chip hat; Miss K. Hardy (Brough and Boucicault Company), yellow silk blouse trimmed with black insertion, sailor hat.

AILEEN.

PICTON.

DEAR BEE, DECEMBER 3.

The Presbyterians organised a very successful

TEA MEETING

for Wednesday, which was, as usual, largely supported by residents of the town, who are all appreciative of the particular Presbyterian brew. The ladies presiding at the tables were Mesdames Smith, Lloyd, Oxley, Peek (two), Bragg, etc., and Misses Allsworth, Lloyd (three), Smith (three), Fuller (two), McCormack (two), etc. Among the crowd present I noticed the Revs. Allsworth, Hobb, and McKenzie (Nelson), Mrs Allsworth, Mr and Mrs McIntyre, Mesdames Allen, Seely, Younger, McNeil, H. Godfrey, Miles, etc., etc. During the evening some capital speeches were made, the Rev. McKenzie ending up an amusing and instructive speech by hoping that the Picton ladies might be long 'kippered' to dispense tea and earn the needful for the Presbyterian church. Some pretty anthems were sung. Mrs McNab, Mrs Atkinson, and Miss Eyes assisting the choir. The soloists were Miss Smith, 'Ring out Sweet Bells'; Mrs Atkinson, 'When Sparrows Build'; and a duet, 'Tired,' by Miss Maggie Lloyd and Mr James, which were all well rendered.

THE READING SOCIETY

met in the Institute on Friday, where Mr Howard gave a short disquisition on the life and character of Lamb, and read the essay on 'Roast Pig.' An instructive and amusing evening was spent, those present being Mrs and H. and Mrs Sedgwick, Mr and Mrs McIntyre, Mr and Mrs G. C. Howard, Misses and Miss Nora Allen, Mrs and Miss A. Seely, Mrs and Miss E. Seymour, Mrs Mackhane, Mrs Speed, Misses Jackson, Hay, Balfour, Millington, Ruth Seely, Captain Cummings and Master C. Seely.

THE CRICKET MATCH,

girls v. boys, eventuated on Friday after several postponements. Hardly anyone know that the much-talked-of affair was to 'come off' there and then. There were no umpires, and no referees, so of course the 'broomsticks'—good big solid shellah-looking arrangements—won by over a hundred runs. There was no afternoon tea either, very few spectators, and no excitement, no protests, and no nothing, so it has to be played over again when Mr Rutherford returns from Christchurch.

A more interesting

CRICKET MATCH

was played on Saturday between the Wairau and Koromiko Clubs, which resulted in a win for the Wairau's. Mr Crawshaw (Wairau) was the hero of the occasion, staying in for a whole innings, and carrying out his bat at the end. The scoring was very poor, but the Wairau's fielding was perfect, and the Koromiko men had little chance against such a nimble opponents. A new bowler (Mr Scott) appeared on the field, who is expected to give the Waitohi's a trundling when they and the Wairau's meet later on.

Mr and Mrs Rutherford and Miss Speed left last Thursday to drive overland to Christchurch. With the lovely summer weather which has at last set in, station life, and Christchurch gaieties, they are sure to have a good time.

The Picton Masons are sending out invitations for a grand social to be held on the 20th of December to celebrate the installation of the new Worshipful Master.

The Misses Greensill have issued invitations for a large afternoon tea and tennis on Wednesday.

JEAN.

NELSON.

DEAR BEE, DECEMBER 6.

Last Thursday the

NELSON AGRICULTURAL SHOW

was held in Richmond Park, and proved an immense success. It

was a beautiful day, and so crowds went out from town, and the grounds were gay with pretty spring costumes and well-dressed women. The Show was opened by the Premier, who, accompanied by Mrs Seddon, only arrived in Nelson that morning. Mrs Seddon was gowned in black, with becoming bonnet; Mrs Trask, pretty crepon gown with mauve silk and jet on the corsage, bonnet *en suite*; Miss Trask, becoming grey silk blouse, black skirt, large picture hat; Mrs Bunny, black crepon with white satin yoke veiled with black striped lisse, black hat with yellow flowers; Mrs Robinson, Mrs Pitt, Mrs Webb-Bowen, Mrs Preshaw, Mrs Roberts, black silk with corsage of flowered satin and lace, becoming toque; Mrs Thornton, white costume, sailor hat; Mrs Burnes, green cloth gown, stylish toque of forget-me-nots; Mrs Mackay, grey cloth gown, pretty jet bonnet; Mrs T. Glasgow, pretty blue drill costume, sailor hat; Mrs Percy Adams, black crepon with silk and jet, dainty toque; Mrs J. Sharp, pretty check costume, black picture hat; Mrs Cautobadie, Mrs McRae, Mrs Duff, Mrs Browning, fawn drill with pretty bright red silk blouse, sailor hat; Mrs Glasgow, black costume, jet bonnet; Misses Glasgow (two), becoming serge costumes, sailor hats; Miss Pitt, serge gown, black picture hat with forget-me-nots; Miss J. Pitt, serge gown, sailor hat; Misses Fell (two), black serge costumes, light blouses, sailor hats; Miss Sealy, pretty black figured gown with ecru lace yoke, becoming toque; Miss Bruce, black serge gown with white crepon silk blouse, black hat with pink roses and shot ribbon; Miss Armstrong (Masterton), stylish grey cloth gown with checked waistcoat, sailor hat; Miss Webb-Bowen, pretty creamy gown, stylish yellow straw toque; Miss A. Bell, black crepon with red moire silk yoke and jet bands, black hat with touch of red; Miss Wood, fawn tweed, with green and pink striped crepon silk blouse, becoming hat with pink roses; Miss Mackay, pretty gown of pink drill with black lace, large black picture hat; Miss Huddleston, Miss Hunter-Brown looked extremely well in a stylish costume of grey with white silk, becoming picture hat; Misses Preshaw (two), black skirts, white blouses, sailor hats; Miss Rayner, Misses Duff (two), Miss Pike, Miss Saxton, Miss Moore, becoming black gown with sleeves and yoke of white veiled with black lace, large black hat with lilies of the valley; Mrs Booth wore one of the prettiest gowns on the ground, it was of palest green with corsage of handsome embroidery, becoming green and gold bonnet; Mrs Douglas, dark green costume with toque of violets; Miss Macdonald, holland costume, sailor hat; Messrs Trask, Glasgow (two), J. Sharp, R. Kingdon, Seaife, Oldham, Wither, Pitt, Lunn, Burnes, Molesworth, Saxton, etc.

On Saturday afternoon, after a number of wet ones, we were at last favoured with a fine Saturday, and the Brook Club took that opportunity of opening their pretty

TENNIS COURTS

for the first time this season. They have now six courts, and all are looking so beautifully green and well kept, and were soon bright with energetic players. We hope yet to see the championship tennis meeting held in Nelson on the Brook Club Courts, and it would be a great incentive to Nelson players. During the afternoon delicious tea and dainty cakes were kindly dispensed by Miss Green, and much appreciated by the number of onlookers, as well as the thirsty players. Miss Green wore a cool cream gown, and small white hat; Mrs Roberts, exceedingly pretty and stylish gown of fine grey crepon with pale blue chiffon and silver passementerie, dainty toque of pink roses and shot ribbon; Miss Glasgow, handsome black silk and jet gown, small jet bonnet; Mrs Pickal (Sydney), pale green costume, and small toque; Mrs Bunny, black crepon skirt and cape with jet, white silk blouse, burnt straw toque with blue cornflowers; Mrs Tomlinson, black striped grenadine, black bonnet; Mrs Preshaw, flowered delaine, black bonnet with blue cornflowers; Mrs A. Glasgow, black crepon, floral toque of forget-me-nots; Mrs Jackson, Miss Green, Mrs Hobden, Mrs Townsend, Mrs Burnes, black skirt, white blouse, sailor hat; Mrs Macquarie, black, fawn bonnet; Mrs Clark, red, black hat with blue flowers; Mrs Webb-Bowen, Miss Watt, pretty green blouse, becoming toque; Miss Gribben, black crepon with yoke and full sleeves of silk and jet, floral toque of violets; Misses Glasgow (two), serge costumes, sailor hats; Miss Broad, black and white costume, picture hat; Miss Pitt, serge costume, black sailor hat with forget-me-nots; Miss Jackson, cream gown, black feather hat; Misses Fell (two), dark skirts, light blouses, sailor hats; Miss Leggatt, Misses Preshaw (two), blouses and skirts; Miss V. Lacy, drill costume, large white hat with flowers; Miss Edwards, checked green and white gown, corsage of shot silk, becoming toque; Misses Leger (two), black costumes; Miss Webb-Bowen, fawn gown with blue yoke veiled with ecru lace, black hat with blue flowers; Miss Tomlinson, white costume, sailor hat; Miss Evans, black skirt, pale pink muslin blouse, sailor hat; Messrs Macquarie, Clark, Green, Levien, Robison, Bell, Glasgow, Washbourne, Gilbert, Pitt, Duncan, and many others.

Next Saturday, if the weather permits, the Nelson Lawn Tennis Club open their new courts up the Maitai, when tea is to be provided by Mrs Mackay, and Misses Huddlestone and K. Fell. I hear the courts are looking well, so doubtless a number of players will turn up.

PHYLLIS

AT Wellington, the engagement of Miss Ada Gladys Rae, daughter of Mr H. Richardson Rae, to Mr A. E. Kernot, merchant, has been announced.

ORANGE BLOSSOMS.

MR RUDD TO MISS WOODS.

ON November 28th at the residence of the bride's parents, 'Linnwood,' Remuera, a very pretty wedding was solemnised by the Rev. Mr McNicoll—Geo. W. Rudd, of the Postal Department, formerly of Christchurch, to Lizzie, youngest daughter of Mr S. Woods.

THE bride looked very pretty in white Liberty silk trimmed artistically with rich lace and feathers, and wreath of orange blossoms and flowing veil; she also wore a handsome diamond and pearl brooch, the gift of the bridegroom.

HER sister, Miss Nellie Woods, as bridesmaid, wore a dainty frock of white spotted muslin trimmed with silk and violets; also a pretty amethyst brooch (the gift of the bridegroom), and carried a fairy basket of choice flowers and ferns. Mr Cyril Harris acted as groomsman.

The bride's mother, Mrs Woods, wore a handsome gown of black silk tastefully finished with jet and white chiffon; Mrs Woods, junr., black silk trimmed with black and white brocaded velvet; Mrs McNicoll, lawn, brown lace and silk, jet bonnet with yellow primroses; Mrs W. Glitze, black costume, pretty jet and lilac bonnet; Mrs Best, black silk, white silk Indian shawl; Mrs T. Huddle, grey silk, dainty black bonnet; Mrs Ellis, black satin; Mrs Lawry, lavender tweed costume, white trimmings, old gold bonnet; Mrs S. Lawry, black and white gown, jet bonnet relieved with pink heather; Mrs Basire, pink lustre, pretty bonnet of pink and green; Miss McNicoll looked charming in a shot tweed trimmed with shaded blue silk, stylish fawn hat to match; Miss Hunter, fawn shot silk, brown bonnet; Miss Hewson, dainty blue muslin, white hat; Miss Lee, pretty combination of cream and canary; Miss Collin, soft pink muslin, white hat; Miss Fleming, handsome green tweed, and tasteful white hat.

AFTER the ceremony the bridal party were photographed on the lawn, after which delightful afternoon tea was partaken of. The presents were both numerous and costly, including a token of esteem from Mr Rudd's fellow officers of the Postal Department, and many mementoes from the Southern towns. Later in the afternoon Mr and Mrs Rudd left for Maraietai amid showers of rice and good wishes, the bride travelling in a stylish costume of fawn tweed, brown and heliotrope hat.

GRAPHOLOGY OR PEN PORTRAITS.

ANY reader of the NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC can have his or her character sketched by sending a specimen of handwriting with signature or *nom de plume* to

MADAME MARCELLA,

'GRAPHIC' OFFICE, AUCKLAND.

The coupon appearing on the last page of cover of the GRAPHIC and twenty-four penny stamps must accompany each letter.

KATHLEEN MCDONALD.—If your specimen be your usual hand writing you have a strong, clever, and original character. Your mind is clear and vigorous, and you possess great powers of penetration and intuition. Your will is firm and resolute; you form your own opinions and maintain them steadfastly. You are self-reliant, self-contained, and very independent. Anything in the form of restraint is most objectionable to you; nevertheless you will yield to loving influence so long as the rule be a gentle one. Your affections are unusually warm, but you bestow them only on a few, and even they scarcely realise *how* deeply and unselfishly you can love or of what passionate devotion you are capable for you are exceedingly reserved, and if you desire to do so, you are capable of rendering yourself inscrutable. You have little ambition, and still less vanity, although you have a large share of pride. Your judgment is good, but critical, and inclined to be rather severe. Your temper is very quick, but entirely under control.—MARCELLA.

'Kitty B.'—You are exceedingly amiable and sweet-tempered, truthfully sincere, and very affectionate; but as I have to repeat so often to my correspondents, you are much too sensitive, and as you have only a moderate share of self-confidence, and a large amount of pride, I fear this must often cause you discomfort and mental suffering. You are generous and kind, quick in thought and feeling, with a lively imagination and much versatility; but lenient in your judgment of others. Your will is not very forcible, and you are susceptible of and easily influenced by public opinion. You are energetic when interested, but persevering effort is deficient, and this will be a bar to success, although you have a desire to excel, and are by no means without ambition. You have much prudence and caution, and, if you are convinced of the necessity for doing so, you can practise economy admirably.—MARCELLA.

FITZGERALD'S CIRCUS.

AFTER a season of seven nights and three matinees in Auckland Messrs Fitzgerald drew the pegs of their huge tent and departed with their whole caravan for the South. From every point of view the season must be pronounced a success. Financially the genial proprietors have very good reasons for satisfaction. The houses were packed at every performance day and night, and the gentlemen from the National Bank, whose duty led them to be in attendance every evening, must have found their task of carrying away the 'filthy lucre' no sinecure. For rather more than a week that part of Custom-street adjacent to the flour mills which is usually pervaded by the severest tone of commercialism, was given over to frivolity, and became the haunt of the small boy. The roar of the lion and the snarl of the tiger rose above the whir of the wheels, and roused the intensest excitement in the juvenile breast.

From the point of view of the audience also the show left nothing to be desired. The quantity was generous, and the quality much higher and more sensational than Aucklanders have been lately accustomed to. The great feature of the entertainment was unquestionably the diving of Professor Peart. From a small stage at the top of the tent—probably forty or fifty feet up—he plunges into a tank eight feet across and six feet deep. The apparent *confidence* and *ease* with which this astonishing feat is performed tend to diminish in the minds of the audience the real risk of the performance. From a height of fifty feet an object eight feet across does not appear a very large target, but when it is remembered that the target has to be hit, with the alternative of instant death in the event of failure, once, and sometimes twice a day, an idea will be formed of the nerve or lack of sensibility essential to the achievement of so perilous a business. Mdlle. Adelina Antonio's double backward somersault from the trapeze is risky enough, but compared with Peart's performance it is like having breakfast in bed. This lady also throws a triple somersault from a swinging trapeze, but her most graceful acts are done on a single rope, and are of such a nature that a description of them would read like the impossible. Scarcely less wonderful than either Mdlle or the Professor are the brothers Eclair, or the Demon and the Crocodile. The extraordinary contortions of these two would lead one to suppose that they were either entirely boneless, or else provided with whale-bone. The Crocodile writhes about like a hideous green slug, while the Demon, after crawling backwards through his own arms, and turning himself generally inside out, ends up by balancing the whole weight of his body on a bar of iron held between his teeth. In some ways the most remarkable feature of the show is the 'talking' horse Mahomet. Whatever be the method by which the horse is made to answer yes or no and to do sums correctly, the exhibition at least speaks of long patience on the part of the trainer, and miraculous sagacity on that of the horse. The rest of the entertainment is on an equally high level. The acrobatic feats and the riding by men and boys are excellent, but as these are the stock acts of a circus, they usually attract less notice than they deserve.

We hope and have little fear that Messrs Fitzgerald will meet with equal success in the other New Zealand cities, and if so it will be no more than their enterprise deserves.

GLAD TO SEE HIM.

AN American politician, commenting on the fact that in America a man is always expected to get up and say something on a public occasion, adds: 'But the silent men win.' This is not always the case, but it is a fact that many a man of worth and mettle hates to be 'evermore talking.'

It is said that Von Moltke was 'silent in seven languages.' Before the opening of a striking campaign he was walking the streets with head depressed when some busybody approached him, determined to extort from him a word in regard to current events.

'How are matters coming on, general?' he asked.

'Well,' said the general, 'my cabbages are coming on very well, but my potatoes want rain.'

It is a popular mistake that famous men like no topic of conversation so well as that of their own renown. Not long ago a celebrated novelist was the guest of honour at a brilliant reception. He had heard the praises of his own work until anyone but a conceited man would have been faint and weary, but he had borne up bravely through it all. Finally a timid man was presented to him, who said with an apologetic air:

'I'm ashamed to confess it, but I haven't read one of your books.'

The novelist bent forward, a look of relief and joy irradiating his face. He placed both hands on the newcomer's shoulders.

'My dear fellow,' he said, with a warmth he had not shown before, even to those of high degree. 'I am glad to see you!'

TILLIE: 'What are the wild waves saying?'

WILLIE: 'Can't hear them. The bathing suits are too loud.'

TOO MUCH NOISE.

EVERY effect has a cause, if only we have the wit to see it. Patrick had a fine chance at two partridges. He fired and missed.

'Now, now,' said James, 'you've shot nayther of thim.'

'Well, how could I,' said Patrick, 'whin the report of the gun frightened 'em both away?'

MINING NEWS.

THERE has been a decided upward tendency in values of mining stock this week, and steady buying has been done in respect to higher-priced shares in mines that are in the gold. The most remarkable advance has been made in Kapai-Vermont, which, after falling as low as 7s 9d one day, subsequently advanced to 12s 6d, and then receded to about 11s. The payment by the Waihi Company of £16,000 in the shape of dividends a week before Christmas should also tend to convince investors that large bodies of low-grades ore when systematically worked are more to be desired than pockets of rich specimens that are soon worked out. Probably to this may be attributed the fact that attentions of speculators is now turning once more to the Upper Thames mines, and for the last day or two there has been a marked increase in the number of buyers for those stocks. Waihi-Silvertons have registered a distinct advance, sales taking place as high as 55s, whereas a week or two back a parcel changed hands as low as 39s. Accounts from this mine continue of a very encouraging nature, and the result of the crushing with the new plant early next year will be awaited with interest, though of course the first run of the mill can scarcely be looked upon as a fair criterion to go by. Although prices of stock all round continue low as compared with those ruling a month or six weeks ago, still a better feeling prevails, holders having apparently lost that feverish desire to clear out at any price. Bunker's Hill has not yet got Legge's reef, and apparently speculators are beginning to realise that there is no reason why a four-acre patch at Coromandel should depress the whole market. One good effect of the recent depression in the mining market is that new companies are not now being rushed on the market, as the majority of investors, having quite enough scrip on hand, are not eager to go into new ventures. At the Warden's office, the clerks instead of having hardly sufficient time to receive money and applications, now have to pay a good deal of money every day for withdrawls. While the rush was on, money could be got for anything that was offered, but now the very best property would require considerable influence to float it. This is not to be regretted, as already enough properties have been floated to necessitate considerable expenditure if the shareholders intend to develop them. The boom on the Sydney Exchange should also tend to have a beneficial result on the local market, for confidence is catching. Two English companies have commenced operations this week at Coromandel to develop the Preece's Point property and the Kathleen. At Waihi and Waitekauri the Home Companies are now giving employment to some hundreds of men, no time being lost in getting to work to open up the mines and erect suitable crushing plant.

Altogether there is a more healthy tone this week pervading mining circles, and there is every reason to believe that after the holiday season the Exchange will open to brisk business.

MINING NOTES.

TRANSFER OF SCRIP.

The Legal and Finance Committee of the Chamber of Mines reported this week having conferred with Mr Lennox, Chairman of the Brokers' Association, relative to scrip being affixed to transfers. The Committee were of opinion that scrip should be issued in all cases, and that steps be taken to secure this being done. The Chairman said the matter had better be deferred, as the Brokers' Association proposed to hold a meeting to consider the matter.

THAMES.

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.

At a meeting of shareholders in this claim, it was decided this week to form a no-liability company with a capital of £6,000 divided into 60,000 shares of 2s each, nil paid up. Mr W. H. Churton was appointed legal manager; Messrs Spencer, Von Stormer, R. O. Young, R. Kerry, M. Niccol and J. D. Connolly, directors; the Bank of New Zealand, bankers; Mr A. E. Whitaker, solicitor; and Mr A. H. Taylor auditor to the company. The property is situated at Tararu, with an area of 27 acres.

NEW MOANATAIARI.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The annual meeting of the shareholders in this Company was held this week in Mr F. A. White's office, when Mr C. C. McMillan presided. The report of the directors stated that the output of gold had been slightly less than that of the previous year, and the expenditure had been considerably increased by the work of developing the 150 feet level, which was now well opened up, and the mine manager was very sanguine that the outlay would be repaid, as it was new ground in a good locality. As shareholders were aware, the directors had offered the property in London on the following terms:—£151,000 in 150,000 shares of 20s each, working capital £25,000, present shareholders to receive £50,000 paid up shares. This scheme had been modified, as the English people considered that if sinking was required the capital £25,000 would not be sufficient, and they asked that an extra £50,000 be reserved for future development. The shareholders would be asked to confirm the action of the directors in this respect. Receipts: By gold, £5,591 1s; from tributers, £172 4s 7d; by crushings, £1,046 11s 8d; by sale of boilers, £110; balance (bank overdraft), £1,612 10s 9d; total, £8 532 8s. Expenditure: By debit, October 31st, 1894, £134 18s 5d; wages at mine, £4,297 9s 6d; do. battery, £1,055 3s; mine and battery expenses, £1,804 5s 2d; drainage and license fees, £586 11s 11d; purchase of foreshore, £150; due sundry creditors, 31st October, 1894, £503 19s 5d; total, £8,532 8s 11d. The debit balance on the working of the mine was £1,440 3s 8d. The reports were adopted, and the retiring directors were re-elected.

At an extraordinary general meeting of shareholders held subsequent to the annual meeting it was resolved, 'That the shareholders confirm the action of the directors in disposing of the property on the terms submitted.'

RANGATIRA.

The drive in this mine is passing through a capital class of sandstone interspersed with nice coppery mineral, and flinty veins crossing the course of the lode, both good indications.

COROMANDEL.

NIL DESPERANDUM.

The work of developing this mine at Tairua is steadily proceeding, and the results will be awaited with interest, as this was the first property placed on the market from that district. The reef has now widened out to 27ft, and at present there is still no sign of the foot wall. The reef carries a little gold right through of a coarse nature. The lode has also been picked up on the surface 1,000 feet to the north of the No. 3 tunnel. This ore also shows good dish prospects.

WAIHI.

WAIHI-SILVERTON.

Shares in this mine have met with steady sale throughout the week at from 50s to 54s. A start has been made to drive on the new reef that was discovered a fortnight ago. The manager reports:—'The lode in both faces looks well, and the fair assay value of the quartz broken out from these two drives is £9 10s per ton. The total store to grass is 441 tons.

QUEEN OF WAIHI.

This mine adjoins the Silverton, and shares have firmed in price latterly. At a meeting of shareholders held this week the Chairman, Mr A. Kidd, explained that the directors had arranged to acquire the Maid of Honour ground which adjoined for 20,000 of the reserve shares. This would make the Queen of Waihi area about 200 acres. On the Chairman's motion it was resolved that the directors be authorised to sell the property of the Company on such terms as they may deem fit. Mr Kidd explained that under the proposed terms shareholders would receive share for share in the English Company.

KING OF WAIHI.

Good reports are received regarding this mine, which is amongst the properties taken up recently. While cutting away for the level some quartz which came away from the cap of the reef was found. Very fair dish prospects were obtained from several places along the reef. Nice colours of gold were got by pounding the quartz up. The new reef is about 12 feet wide.

FLOWER OF WAIHI.

The outcrop of a large reef has been found on this ground.

EL DORADO.

The outcrop in this mine shows a width of 136ft with the strike running north-west and south-east. The country has the proper colour, and the stone appears to be highly mineralised. It is stated that there is every appearance of this claim being an excellent one.

KUAOTUNU.

KAPAI-VERMONT G.M. COMPANY.

The second annual meeting of shareholders in the above Company took place on Thursday at Sydney. The report of the directors is as follows:—From the time we started crushing to the 30th of September, 1,941 tons of ore have been treated, for a return of £9,761 18s 6d—equal to £5 0s 7d per ton. Your directors have great pleasure in stating that the cost of the machinery has been defrayed out of proceeds of the gold, and that 2s per share has been returned to the B shareholders, and that the distinction between the two classes of shares has now been removed. A reserve fund has been created, and 5 per cent of the value of the gold won has been placed in the bank to the credit of a trust account. From the present south face, measuring along the line of reef, we have nearly 1,000 feet of the reef still untouched, and the underlie of the reef will go to a depth of thousands of feet before it leaves the Kapai Vermont ground. The balance-sheet showed a balance on profit and loss account on the credit side, of £1,367 6s 1d up to September 30th. Amongst the items of expenditure are: Wages, £3,401 11s 11d; stores, £381 18s; fuel, £451 2s 6d; directors' fees, £225; special grant to Chairman for services rendered, £52 10s; travelling expenses Auckland £56 7s 6d; do. Sydney, £55 17s 6d; stationery, £31 8s 5d; legal management Sydney and New Zealand, £200 4s; legal and travelling expenses in connection with management, £40 1s 11d; sundry expenses, including audit fees, cables, reports, assay fees, etc, £167 19s 7d. In the assets the mine was placed at £17,900, and plant, less 5 per cent. depreciation, £3,746. The trust account being 5 per cent of value of gold won, was stated to be £488 9s 3d, and the total assets, £24,448 13s 5d.

MAORI DREAM.

At a meeting of shareholders in the above Company, held this week a resolution was passed authorising the directors to dispose of the Company's mine and property on such terms as they may consider expedient. The directors were also empowered to execute all deeds and documents necessary to complete any sale.

GOLDEN ANCHOR.

The amalgamation of the Golden Anchor, Surplus, and Jessica mines at Kuaotunu is now practically completed, and the work of developing the united property will now be proceeded with. At an extraordinary meeting of shareholders in the Golden Anchor Company held this week the chairman, Mr M. Niccol, explained that it was requisite to increase the capital of the Company in order to acquire the surplus ground for 10,000 shares, and the Jessica property for 60,000. It was agreed that the capital of the Company be increased to £15,000 by the creation of 90,000 shares at 2s each, nil paid up. Resolutions were also passed authorising the directors to acquire on the terms stated, the surplus ground and the Jessica mine. The Chairman explained that with the Jessica property they would get about £900 cash held by that Company.

NORENA.

At a meeting of holders of syndicate shares in this mine held during the week, the chairman, Mr H. Brett, explained that the ground floated was 50 acres, but arrangements had been made to secure 30 acres adjoining for three of the reserved syndicate shares. It was then agreed to form a no liability company with a capital of £8,000 in 80 000 shares at 2s each, nil paid up, 7,000 shares to be reserved for the benefit of the company. Messrs H. Brett, Montgomery, J. B. Blakie and M. Montgomery were elected directors, Mr M. McGregor, solicitor, Mr Stevenson, auditor, and the Bank of New Zealand bankers to the company.

WAIATAIA.

Another parcel of 12lb of picked stone has been obtained from the low level in this mine. It was sent to town and placed on view at the office of the Company, where its richness was freely commented upon. Bands of rich gold could be plainly seen going right through the quartz. Apparently this picked stone is as rich as the last parcel of 19lb from the same reef, which, when treated at the bank, returned 35oz 1dwt of gold worth £3 0s 2d per oz, making the total yield from the 19lb, £105 8s 10d. The reef has been smaller than usual, varying from 8 to 18 inches in width. Gold showed freely in the quartz each breaking down.

MIDAS.

The newly discovered reef in this mine has now been cut through, and proves to be 22 feet in width. The average prospects of the drillings are from 15dwt to 1½ oz. The gold is very fine and only suitable for the cyanide process. The hangingwall formation is a splendid formation. The manager expects to cut the next reef in another 25 feet of driving.

KARANGAHAKE.

WOODSTOCK NORTH.

This mine consists of 9 acres situated at Karangahake adjoining the Woodstock and Ivanhoe properties. The drive is in very light country, which has caused the reef to pinch up. The stone is a good-looking body, with blue veins, and should be rich in silver as well as gold. Tenders are now called for driving a further distance of 50 feet, which is expected to carry the drive into a softer channel of ground, and it is to hoped it will, for the present is very expensive.

IVANHOE.

It was resolved at an extraordinary general meeting of shareholders in the above Company this week. 'That the capital of the Company be increased to £13,000 by the creation of 75,000 new shares at 2s each, 1d per share to be considered paid up in respect to 70,000 shares.' Also a further resolution was passed authorising the directors of the Company to acquire 60,000 shares in the Ivanhoe Company, the New Shotover Goldmining Company (No Liability), adjoining the property of this Company.

At a meeting of shareholders in the New Shotover Goldmining Company held the same day the resolution was confirmed that authorised the sale of the Company's property to the Ivanhoe Goldmining Company. Under the arrangement shareholders in the New Shotover Company will receive 86 shares in the Ivanhoe Goldmining Company for ever 100 shares held at the time of winding up the former Company.

MARINER.

A change for the better has taken place in this mine. The hard country has apparently cut out, and the drive is now passing through what appears to be a main break or slide. It is expected that the main reef will be picked up on the western side of the break. The ground in the drive at present is full of mineral, and several quartz veins are to be seen.

WAITEKAURI.

WAITEKAURI G.M. COMPANY.

Over 200 men are now engaged at this mine getting the site ready for the new battery, constructing water races, and developing the mine. The large reef recently intersected at the battery level has been penetrated for 33 feet, and as yet there is no sign of the footwall, so that should there be an improvement in the quality when driving is commenced upon it, this immense body of stone ought to be a splendid contributor of bullion. In any case, this new development will be watched with interest, especially as the ore body is of such big dimensions. A slight improvement is noticed in the quality of the ore being won from the face at Corbett's level.

THE JUBILEE MINE.

This mine is situated on the Alexander Gully, well known for the patches of alluvial quartz found there, some of which were very rich. The new Company has erected the battery at the north end of the claim in order to reduce the stone found in this gully. The course of this gully is undoubtedly under Leaghly's Blow, or the outcrop of the main Waitekauri reef from which the old Waitekauri Company took out £80,000. From the varieties of quartz found in the swamp, or head of the gully, it was always thought that there was more than one reef which had shed the stone and from an examination of the ground made by the mine manager he was led to believe that another body of stone, or a branch of Buller's reef ran across the head of the gully, in addition to the discoveries already made. On making this examination the manager, Mr Christie, found this outcrop, and a man was put on to prospect it, with the result that rich gold was got. Where first cut the reef is about 18 inches wide, and an average sample when tested gave a value at the rate of £20 per ton. The manager decided to open out upon the reef in order to develop the discovery, and a start was made at a point 21 feet below the outcrop, this being considered the most suitable spot. After laying down 100 feet of flat tramway and having driven 40 feet through the country rock the reef was cut, and was proved to be about 2ft wide, but the value here was only £2 3s 3d. Another 20ft was then driven upon the reef, which is now increasing in size and value. The stone at present being obtained is worth £4 15s per ton. Should the reef keep its present course the Jubilee Company will have over 380ft on the line of the lode, and about 100ft of backs overhead. This reef is running into the Waitekauri No. 6 mine, which adjoins the Jubilee. The present workings in the latter mine are about 100ft from the boundary. This new discovery is the most important yet made in the Jubilee ground.

A VALUABLE DISCOVERY.

The Auckland Prospecting Association appears to have been fortunate in that the men sent out a month or two ago have already, it is stated, made a very important discovery. The prospectors would not disclose the locality further than that it is between Waitekauri and Whare Kerangunga. The stone is entirely white, without a single blue vein, and when crushed in the mortar gives a splendid show of gold. Seemingly, it is worth hundreds of pounds per ton. Nothing has transpired so far as to the size of the reef. Some of the stone has been sent to town for the purpose of having it assayed.

PUKEPUKE.

BRITISH G. AND S.M. COMPANY.

At a meeting of shareholders in the British Gold and Silver Mining Company held this week it was agreed to form a no-liability company. The following gentlemen were elected directors: Messrs John Chambers, C. J. Tunks, C. S. H. Mackinney, Edwin Edwards, H. J. Johnston, G. E. Alderton, E. J. White. Mr G. C. W. Morris was appointed manager, the Bank of New Zealand bankers, and Mr W. S. Cooper auditor.

SOUTHERN MINING.

Mining is looking up at the Greymouth. At Langdons, nine miles out, 80ozs of gold was obtained from the Curtis claim. A number of very promising alluvial claims are also being worked and taken up at the Upper Blackball, 20 miles from Greymouth, with good results. A large water supply is being taken in, in order to sluice the ground, there being an ample fall. There is 60 feet of wash dirt, all payable, a good deal of it very rich.

The Consolidated Goldmining Company, Blue Spur (Dunedin), washed down on Saturday after a three months' run and returns amounting to 426ozs of gold, equal in value to £1,638, were obtained. Since 1892 the Company's indebtedness of £18,100 to the Colonial Bank has been paid off out of the proceeds of gold obtained from the mine.

WAIOTAHI.

This champion gold producer of the Thames which, having been systematically worked, has paid dividends for the last quarter of a century, crushed 220 tons of quartz this month for the usual returns of over an oz per ton, the yield this time being 243oz 10dwts of melted gold.

MOANATAIARI.

During the month 450 tons of ore and 35 lb of picked stone were crushed for a return of 156 oz of gold.

COLD RETURNS.

VICTORIA.

The crushing of stone from the new reef in the Prince Imperial section has again proved satisfactory, 44ozs of gold having been obtained from 35 loads of general quartz.

COLD EXPORT.

The Bank of New Zealand last week despatched for London four boxes of low-grade bullion worth £2,515, also silver pigs to the value of £850.

CALLS AND DIVIDENDS.

CALLS.		
Waihi South	0 0 ½	Dec. 6
New Whau G.M. Co. ..	0 0 2	Dec. 11
Tapu Fluke G. M. Co. ..	0 0 2	Dec. 11
Golden Hill G.M. Co. ..	0 0 2	Dec. 11
Waverley G.M. Co. ..	0 0 1	Dec. 11
North Star G.M. Co. ..	0 0 1	Dec. 11
Ivanhoe G.M. Co... ..	0 0 1	Dec. 11
Occidental	0 0 1	Dec. 11
Woodstock North	0 0 1	Dec. 16
Grace Darling	0 0 3	Dec. 16
DIVIDENDS.		
Waihi G.M. Co.	0 2 0	Dec. 14

AN AUSTRALIAN BOOM.

GREAT ACTIVITY IN STOCKS.

RICH DISCOVERIES.

SYDNEY, December 7.

The market all the week has been firm in mining. There has been great activity both in Broken Hill and West Australian stocks. Large sales were effected at improved prices.

Great Boulders, Coolgardie, came into prominence on the strength of recent developments, and values ranged from £6 12s to £6 14s, but afterwards eased slightly. The market value of the mine at the figure quoted tots up to the respectable sum of £1,056,000. The new find at the Great Boulder is more important than was at first supposed. The drive at the bottom of the level has been carried 160 feet south from the main shaft at the junction of two lodes, which were split by mullock. Further south is two feet of very rich stone. It was simply a mass of gold. The stone was almost hidden by a glistening coating of gold. In the crevices are seams of almost pure gold, in fine particles, while occasional lumps of stone containing two-thirds of gold have been met with. The lode at this point is over twelve feet wide, and all extremely rich, but only two feet sensational stuff. Heavy gold apparently runs along the wall for a long distance. The flow of people westward continues. Steamers for West Australian ports are crowded with passengers.

Broken Hill Proprietary shares, which early in the week were sold at 58s, closed at 65s 5d.

The new alluvial goldfields at Stringy Bank, near the old Gulgong field, in New South Wales, is attracting a lot of attention. A rush has set in, and claims are being pegged off in all directions. A prospector reported that he got 105oz of gold from 22 loads of dirt. Sinking ranges, they say, from nine to 20ft.

MINE MANAGERS' REPORTS.

BYRON BAY.—During the past week we have extended the drive on the reef at the low level a further distance of 15 feet, making 70 feet in all. At this point I put in a crosscut to determine the width of the reef, which I have since proved to be nine feet from wall to wall and carrying gold right through. There is also a band of stone on the hangingwall which yields good payable prospects. The class of country met with about the reef is all that could be desired or expected. In my opinion we shall have to drive a further distance of 150 feet before we shall reach the point under No. 1 level where the best gold was obtained. I am also continuing the drive on the No 2 reef on the western side of the creek, but in this direction I have not as yet met with anything sufficiently important to report upon.

MAORILAND.—During the past week we have extended the drive on No. 2 reef a further distance of 15 feet, making the total distance from the surface 95 feet. We are now passing through a splendid class of sandstone country, interspersed with nice mineral and flinty veins, which are very good indications for gold. The reef is maintaining its usual size, being between 3 and 4 feet thick, showing very fair dish prospects.

KAPAI VERMONT.—The main south level is in 230 feet from the main rise. The country is more puggy, which causes the reef to be split up. This is not a new occurrence for the lode, and generally causes a jump in the reef. The manager has no doubt the reef will be as large as ever before many feet have been driven. In the seventh stope the reef is 5 feet wide, all of which is crushed, gold being visible in the stone. In the third and fifth stope the reef is 3 feet thick, all of good quality. In the 2nd and 3rd stopes over the intermediate there is fully 4ft of good crushing ore. Going north at the same level the reef is 4ft in width, all of which is sent to the mill. The ore from the rise at the north end of the flat sheet is payable.

MIDAS.—The quantity of water coming in the face makes the manager think he is not far from another large reef.

NEW ZEALANDER.—The reef in the footwall in white, kindly-looking quartz, with blue streaks through it, a good description for gold.

BRITISH EMPIRE.—In the 54 feet crosscut there is a leader about eight inches thick. The Ellen reef should be cut in this crosscut.

TRY FLUKE.—In the Venus section the lode is from nine to twelve inches thick, and prospects fairly well. The rise on the Try Fluke reef is up 25 feet, the lode being from three to four feet thick. A portion of the footwall gives good prospects. The ore from the stopes in the Mariposa section is quite up to its usual value. There are 130oz of amalgam on hand from the plates.

JUPITER.—The eastern crosscut is passing through kindly country. The small lode is still about six inches, but the manager thinks he is on the track of some larger quartz.

WELCOME FIND.—In the crosscut the ground is now more favourable for gold than it has been for some days past. The No. 2 Just-in-Time should be to hand unless the hard channel of rock has caused its course to deviate. In a later report the manager states: "We have passed the point where the Just in Time No. 2 lode should have been struck by about 30 feet, that is supposing it maintains its usual strike and underlie. We passed a small leader averaging about 2 inches in width, about 35 feet behind the present face. I should recommend opening out on it, as it may improve hillwards."

CARNAGE.—In extending No. 2 crosscut past the reef cut two weeks ago, we have cut a reef two feet wide carring a little gold. It will take a few days more to determine its size and value. The No. 1 crosscut is still in splendid sandstone country interlaced with iron veins. The trench on the east side of the range is still being pushed ahead. Two small leaders have been cut in the trench, each carrying a little gold.

NAPIER.—The winze is down 27ft, and a few pounds of picked stone were obtained. A start was made to drive towards the City of Auckland reef, on the leader at the bottom of the winze.

MATAWAI.—No. 1 level has been cleared out, and a chamber is being prepared prior to commencing to sink on the lode, where gold was got some time ago.

BRITANNIA.—The ground in the northern end of the shaft is a bit tighter.

NEW TOKATEA.—The reef at No. 3 level looks remarkably well, being a fine compact body of stone fully 18in thick, and shows every indication for gold at any breaking down.

SOUTHERN CROSS.—The manager is now opening out on the leaders running towards the Hauraki Extended.

BUNKER'S HILL.—The main tunnel has been discontinued, and the manager is opening out north and south on the leader lately cut. There is a marked improvement in the class of country northwards, although the leader is still somewhat mullocky, and the leader should improve with it. A start has been made to sink on No. 1 leader. Very little quartz has been broken down as yet, but what has been taken out shows gold freely. About 15 tons of general dirt is being crushed. The result should be known on Monday night or Tuesday. The manager adds, "Although in my opinion it is Legge's leader that we are driving on, still I think it would be advisable to continue the tunnel another 25 feet. Good progress is being made with the erection of the machinery."

BUFFALO.—The country in the drive is full of mineral veins, some of them two inches thick.

INVICTA NORTH.—The drive at the Invicta boundary is in 180ft and should soon cut the reef.

GREAT UNITED.—The drive on the No. 3 is in 90ft.

INVICTA.—The staff of men was reduced in the early part of last week. Some of the quartz broken from the No 3 stope showed nice little blotches of gold. A portion of the reef in No. 4 is fair crushing dirt.

PHŒNIX.—There are three to four feet of flinty reef formation mixed with country rock in the drive near the centre of the mine. The quartz portion gives a little loose gold when washed, but not enough to be payable. Unless an improvement takes place soon, the manager thinks it would be unwise to continue this drive.

MAORI DREAM.—No. 1 reef is at present 1 foot wide. It is good crushing dirt and is all being saved for the mill, being equal to about an oz per ton. The reef has every appearance of opening out into a compact body of stone. The face of the crosscut is interlaced with quartz stringers. A body of stone 2 feet wide has been cut in the trench. The prospects are equal to one oz per ton.

A PEANUT HUNT.

A PLEASANT and easily arranged evening entertainment, suitable for winter or summer Christmas is prepared in this way:

First, put in order the room in which you intend to entertain your guests, as any change in the position of the furniture is undesirable after 'the party' is ready. It is a good plan to remove any fragile articles of bric-a-brac or furniture that may be within easy reach of the 'hunters.' Get a good supply of peanuts, according to the size of the room and the number of your guest.

Count the peanuts and record the number. Then let them be hidden in every imaginable, but particularly in every unimaginable, place. Exercise all your ingenuity, and remember that wits just as bright as yours are to find what you have concealed. Sometimes, however, it happens that a very conspicuous place is the last to be searched.

Now prepare as many little baskets, or receptacles of some sort, as you are to have guests. The little 'cat baskets' are very good for this purpose, but boxes or larger baskets will serve as well. A little decoration of some sort enhances the pleasure of the seekers, and at the close of the evening the baskets may be given as souvenirs. The small baskets may be prettily grouped in a large basket, and both may be tied with ribbons.

If the company is large, the players may be asked to 'hunt in couples,' and the baskets may be arranged to match each other.

When the hunt begins, those who have placed the nuts are to act as umpires, in case there should be any question as to the first finders, and they must also notice whether all the nuts have been found, and so determine the end of the game.

Sometimes a single nut is dipped inink or dyed red, and hidden away very securely, and the person who finds this particular red or black nut is the winner of the game. But generally the prize is given to the person or the couple whose basket shows the greatest number of nuts.

The game is usually prolonged until the hostess finds by actual count that all the nuts have been brought in; but there is a record of one game that might never have ended if the company had waited until the red nut was found. That same red nut, by the way, has been perched in a conspicuous place in the parlour for several weeks, and no one has yet discovered its resting place.

Prizes may be arranged for this as for any other game.

COUSINLY.

AMONG the hardest things which the infant Prince Edward of the royal house of England, the little son of the Duke of York and heir expectant to the throne, will have so straighten out when he is older is his relationship to his own father and mother. It constitutes a problem such as is seldom found outside of princely houses.

It is certain, however, that he is the third cousin of his father, and also the second cousin of his mother. This makes his relation to himself somewhere between that of a third and fourth cousin.

He is, as it were, his own double-third cousin—a relationship which it will doubtless take some time for him to comprehend.

Both his father and his mother are descended from George III. of England. George III.'s son Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge, had a daughter Mary who married the Duke of Teck, and became the mother of the Princess May, who married the Duke of York; and the Duke of York's father, the Prince of Wales, is the great-grandson of the same King George III.

The young prince will have the right to address either his mother, his father or himself as 'my royal cousin;' and he may, perhaps, excuse any partiality for his mother over his father by declaring that she is a nearer relation to him than his father.

The princely families of Europe supply many similar cases of tangled relationship, growing out of the successive intermarriages of cousins in nearer or remoter degrees.

THE SAGACITY OF ANTS.

THE sagacity of ants is almost inconceivable. A short time ago the writer watched the operations of a colony of shiny black ants (*F. fuliginosa*) which had formed a home inside a decayed stump in the garden. Near at hand a pink chestnut expanded its handsome flower spikes, many single florets falling to the ground. One morning the flowers were infested with aphidæ, and the ants busily searching their daily food discovered several green flies on a rosy corolla that had fallen to the ground. Watching the proceedings it was evident that the ants held a consultation; and ultimately a green fly was carried off in triumph to the inner galleries of the wood stump. The same afternoon the chestnut tree presented a wonderful sight. Thousands of black ants came forth in search of the aphide. In the morning not a single ant had ascended the tree trunk. Six hours after, however, the intelligent animals had arrived at the knowledge that the pink flowers laden with aphis had fallen from the tree above: it was not enough for them to gather a few flies from the ground, but they discovered that if they ascended by way of the tree trunk and crawled downwards to the tips of the drooping branches flies innumerable awaited their patient exertions. So it happened that whole regiments turned out, marching up and down the tree in regular file, then turning homeward 'with milk and honey blest'; for it is well known that ants store aphidæ in their cells, milking the sweet nectar as human being—if they knew how—milk the cows.

MAUBIKECK,

THE LION-TAMER.

By Seward W. Hopkins.

Author of 'JACK ROBBINS OF AMERICA,' 'IN THE CHINA SEA,' 'TWO GENTLEMEN OF HAWAII,' 'ON A FALSE CHARGE,' ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

My reflections, as the long hours dragged themselves along toward morning, were anything but refreshing.

The dominant thought, of course, was that I had got myself into a bad scrape and would probably lose my life. I saw no way to prevent the successful execution of any plan for my punishment or extinction which the *prefetto* saw fit to put into operation. The law was against me. In fact, had there been any opportunity to prove my innocence of the charge of murder, the power of the *prefetto* was so great that my punishment for entering his house to carry away Barlotti might be as severe as he chose to make it.

For one moment the thought did come to me: 'There is the United States Minister.' I dismissed this idea as holding out no hope. To begin, I would have great difficulty in proving to our representative that my act was justifiable. And my knowledge of the policy of our State Department led me to believe that no matter how innocent I was or how much of an injustice my punishment might be, I could expect no succour from my government. And even had I felt sure of assistance from that quarter, I had no means of communicating with our representative. In fact, I was entirely cut off from all communication with the world. My friends would probably never know what became of me. My only hope was Mutterelli. And where, through all this, *was* Mutterelli?

Calling to my assistance all the nerve I possessed, I resolved to put on as good a face in the matter as possible, and not allow the *prefetto* or his guards to see any signs of weakness in my demeanour.

The room in which I was held was well lighted by a large lamp which hung from the ceiling. I drew a chair under the lamp, and with the same monchalance which would have characterised me had I been in my favourite corner at the Lotus Club with the major and Dilkins around me instead of the black-looking Sardinians, I pulled from my pocket and began to read *the paper I had taken from the table in Pacho Maligni's room.*

This act of mine was not merely bravado. I resolved to learn the contents of that manuscript, if I died the next day. I did not know but it would be taken away from me, and even though I escaped from Cagliari, I would never know the secret of the red box.

As I opened the paper to read, I narrowly watched the guards to see if the act had any significance in their eyes. Certainly it had none, for they smoked cigarettes and chatted to each other, ignoring my performance, and carrying their zeal in the *prefetto's* service only to the point of preventing my escape.

I read the paper over quickly, and then again slowly, digesting every word of the remarkable production. The writing was poor and cramped. The construction was odd and faulty, as if the work was beyond the meagre powers of the writer. The spelling was bad, yet I devoured it with no thought of criticism. It read as follows:

'New York City, in the Stat New York, in the United State of America, May 16, 18—.

'To the person who, when I am dead, shall obtain this paper, I salute. It is that I am at every day in the great danger of being killed by an accident in my profeshun that I leave in this form the story of Nita Barlotti, that perhaps in some long day to become she may be restored to those where she belong and who haf lost her. And it is that I hope the person who reads this letter first is an hones person that I now betray this secret that is upon my heart, but wich I am not powerful to solve nor to do justit to the dear signorina, who in like my own daughter to me. And I, who am known to the world as Barlotti, the Trapeze King, pray to that person who reads these word to do what he can and what I cannot to the good end that Nita Barlotti may know who she really is, and may come into her own if she is, as I belief, the daughter of a rich person.

'It is that I am most in America, and shall perhaps die among the English-speaking people, that I use not my own language to write, and it is that wich makes my words not to be the words of the educated man.

'It will be a surprise to the person who find this to know that my name it is not Barlotti, but Sigmotte. Yes, I am Antonio Sigmotta, and Barlotti is the name I haf taken in the circus to please my brother, who was very rich and a physician in New York.

'When I came this country I was poor—very poor. I went to my brother, and he was angry to me in word, but he did some kindness to me that he let me live in his house till I haf money to keep myself. I make contract with Maligni to go in the circus as trapeze actor, and my brother mak me change my name, so not to disgrace him.

'While I lived with my brother I was sad that he was a bad man, and swore oaths and drank much liquors, and was drunk much of the time. And bad men came to see him.

'My brother haf many times told me he was a professor in one big college where medicine is taught. This I do not know.

'One day I went into my brother's private room for something. It was a workshop—he call laboratoria or some like that. It was at the night, and was very dark. My brother was in his bedroom. I did not know what he was doing, and he did not know I was in the house, for I had been out and just came in.

'I lighted the gas in the laboratoria, and found what I was looking for—some medicine he gave me when I had the aching of the head.

'As I was about to turn back the gas to go out, I saw a bundle on the floor. It seemed to me that it move. Then I stood still, and I hear a little cry like a child. I rush to the door. I listen for my brother, but he not to be heard. I open the bundle. It was a sack, with strings in the end. It had in it a little child—a girl. I drew it out. The child breath and moan, but do not seem to know, and then I know my brother had given it a drug.

'Then I hurry, trembling much, and I took some cloths and other things and I make a rag baby just the size of the child I took from the sack. I put the rag baby in the sack and made it tight like it was before I opened it. Then I quick carry the live child to my room and hide it in my bed. Then I watch. Pretty soon my brother come and go to the laboratoria. I keep quiet so he do not hear me, and follow him. He take the sack and my rag baby and steal from his own house like he was a thief, and I knew he was worse. Still, I follow him. I knew that no one would touch the child, because I had lock the door of my room and haf the key in my pocket, and it was so heavy with the drug that it would sleep yet longer.

'My brother went into a dark street and went to the docks on the East River. I saw him take a stone and tie a cord to it and around the sack. Then he threw all into the water. When he saw it sink he turn round and sneak home. In twenty minutes I come home like I had not been there before, and my brother was sitting in the library reading and smoking and drinking wine, like he was not a murderer. I spoke to my brother, but did not drink wine with him, and then I went to my room.

'I had in New York, near my brother's house, a sweetheart. I met her at a concert hall, and I often went to see her at her house. She was a great singer, and I love her, so I want to marry her. She was a good girl, and her name was Nita.

'Late in the night I took the child, and when my brother was asleep I stole from his house and carried the child to Nita. I told her all about my brother, and she promised not to say one word, for I knew my brother would kill me if he knew. I was then intend to find out who the child was, and if she had parents who love her, give her back. But I must go with Maligni in the circus, and I leave the little girl with Nita till I come home. When I come home my brother Charles was gone, and I never saw him again. Nita was married to me and she called the little girl Nita after herself. For a few years my wife Nita, and little Nita, travel with me in the circus, but my wife Nita take sick and die. Then I haf little Nita put in a big school in Albany, and she is there now.

'I haf a pin and a locket and chain wich little Nita wore, and wich I haf kept. They will be in the box with this letter. On the pin is the name Alice. The locket haf a picture of a beautiful lady. I took this picture out and put a little slip of paper under it with the date on it when I found the child.

'This is all I know. I love little Nita like she was my own. My brother's name is Charles Sigmotta, but I do not know where he is. Little Nita is at Madame De Long's school in Albany, in the Stat of New York.

'I swear by all the holy saints that what I haf written is true.

'ANTONIO SIGMOTTA.'

Here, indeed, was a valuable document. My exultation was so great that I seemed to have Ralph Gravescourt completely routed, and Edith Broughton's sweet face seemed to smile encouragingly at me from way across the sea. But after a few minutes of supreme gratification, the thought flashed over me that the statement of Antonio Sigmotta, otherwise known as Barlotti, did not in any way connect Ralph Gravescourt with the case. Of course, the photograph, the pin with the name Alice engraved upon it and Nita Barlotti's striking resemblance to the wife of Charles Gravescourt, were to my mind conclusive evidence, but would the evidence hold in law? I knew it would not.

I took the locket from my pocket, removed the picture and found a slip of white paper bearing a date. I examined this, and my heart throbbed with excitement when I saw that the date of Doctor Sigmotta's attempted murder of Nita Barlotti was the same as that inscribed upon the tombstone in Trinity Cemetery, New York, as the date of little Alice Gravescourt's death. I carefully replaced the paper and the picture, and with wild dreams of what might occur if I ever escaped from the clutches of the *prefetto*, I passed the remainder of the night half sleeping on a broad, low couch that stood in one corner of the guard room.

CHAPTER XVI.

I HAD, I suppose, what must from courtesy be called a trial. If a tribunal where the law is all on the side of the strong, and where the prisoner does not understand one-half what is being said about him, much less have anything to say for himself, and where the judge is the plaintiff, can be said to give a man a trial, then I had a trial.

In the morning I was served with a substantial breakfast, and soon after I had disposed of it I was conducted before the *prefetto*. The elder Maligni looked at me with a venomous glance, and I saw in the faces of the crowd of men around him not one glance of friendliness. They were Sardinians, all of them, some being in the uniform of the guard, some being evidently men of rank, and others dressed in the garb of priests and friars from the monastery. And every one looked upon me with the same malignant expression as did the brother of the man I was supposed to have killed.

Among the spectators was a rascally-looking fellow who was called by the *prefetto* 'Pordino,' and as he seemed to have the friendship of the powerful Maligni, I at once identified him as the Count di Pordino, the uncle of Henry Thorlane, spoken of by Mutterelli.

So far as my being a force or factor in my own behalf was concerned, I might as well have been absent.

First one of the priests said something. Of course, I did not understand all that he was telling the *prefetto*, but I understood enough to know that he was testifying that he had seen me near the villa the day before, and that my action was such as to indicate evil designs. Then a man who looked as he might be a house-servant jabbered something, which I did not understand at all. My trial was now well under way.

The captain of the guard testified and told how I had been captured while fleeing from the place, how I attempted to shoot the guard, and how I was making off with Nita Barlotti, the facts as known making it perfectly plain to him that my object in murdering Maligni was to abduct his bride.

Nita was not brought into the room during the trial, and did not seem to be an important factor. There was not a friendly voice raised in my behalf. I made an attempt to speak, but was ordered to be quiet.

When the testimony was all in, the *prefetto* turned to me, and said:

'Young man, I have listened to the evidence against you, and I find that you are guilty of the murder of my brother. From to-day, you are the same as dead. The sentence which I shall impose upon you is that you be put in the Cagliari prison and work for the State during the remainder of your life. That is all I have to say to you.'

'But!' I cried, springing th my feet, 'I am not guilty. I swear to you; *prefetto*, that I do not know who killed your brother! I had no cause to hate him or to wish him dead! But others had? An attempt at his life was made in New York. I saw it, but I had nothing to do with it. Your brother had enemies who have tracked him here. I—'

'Enough. You were seen yesterday, in company with another, examining my villa and grounds. At night my brother is murdered, and you are found on my property, carrying off my brother's promised wife. It is enough.'

Then, turning to the guard, he uttered a command, and I was conducted from this hall of justice to my prison.

The prison of Cagliari is what is called 'Torre dell Elefante,' a veritable fortress, standing on the high ground of the city, overlooking, on the south, the waters of the bay, and to the northward the rising mountains and valleys beyond.

As I entered the great iron gates of the prison yard, and heard them clang behind me, I felt the deepest despair, and admitted to myself that there was little hope of regaining my liberty.

I was at once given into the hands of the keeper of the prison, and was put, through the regular routine of measuring, photographing and otherwise identifying, common in European prisons. My hair was shaved close, and my moustache as well. My clothes were taken from me, and I was clad in the bi co'oured pri-on suits with which Sardinia clothes its prisoners.

These suits are made of stuff very similar to that in use for the same purpose in the United States, but the colours, instead of running in stripes, are divided in the middle. One half, measuring from a line drawn from the nose downward is dark, and the other light. When I had been thus clothed, I had one arm, leg, and the right side of my body black, and the left arm, leg, and half of my body a dirty grey.

My watch, the go d locket and pin that I had taken from Maligni were t ken from me, but the letter of Antonio Sigmotta was returned to me with a shrug of the keeper's shoulders, as if to indicate that if the possession of a piece of paper would make me any happier, I might have it for all he cared to the contrary.

This done, I was conducted with scant ceremony to a dungeon cell, and was thrust into it, my brutal keeper taking the unnecessary trouble to give me a kick before he locked me in.

If my reflections had heretofore been gloomy, they were now doubly so. I could but feel the most horrible forebodings for the future. Yet, I declared to myself, I would never give up altogether.

My cell was perhaps twenty feet square, high up in the tower, and overlooked the north.

The floor was of stone, and the walls of some kind of cement. The furniture consisted of an iron bedstead, an old chair, and a sma'l table. The light came through a small grated window which was above my head, and in the corners of the cell there was a damp, clammy darkness that I could feel as well as see.

Somehow I had acquired a bull-dog sullenness that was not at all part of my nature. I felt that had these things happened to me before I had met the unfortunate Maubikeck, I would have now lost all hope and fortitude, and would have thrown myself upon the bed of my cell in an agony of despair, and perhaps would have lost my reason throught it all.

But I had learned something from the dead, and I resolved that, no matter what came, or what I might feel, I would exhibit no emotion, no fear, no regret, to the sneering eyes of my relentless persecutors.

For a time after I reached my cell, I was greatly worked up, the excitement of the day and of the previous night having a try effect on my nerves. But as the hours wore on, the fact that I had slept little began to tell on me, and I grew drowsy. Sitting on my hard chair, I gave myself up to my bitter reflections, and finally my head drooped, and, overcome by the drowsiness which was increased by the silence of my cell, I fell asleep, and my waking meditations became merged in a dream in which I renewed acquaintance with Major Simmons and Dilkins, and saw their faces, and the face of Edith Broughton, and the faces of other friends peering at me, some in pity, some in alarm, some with love. And most strongly outlined among them all was the calm, stern face of my dead hero, Maubikeck. There was an inspiration in that face as, half sleeping, I saw it looking down at me. It bade me rouse myself. It shone like a beacon before me, leading me to a resolution that I would never have reached but for this fantastic appearance. It brought to my mind the heroism of Maubikeck, by whose death I was given life. The manliness of his nature seemed imparted to mine. I recollected that Nita Barlotti, the girl whom I had sworn to save, was still in the hands of men whose purposes were not always good. My own love for Edith

Broughton welled up within me, and surged through my heart as it had never done before. Perhaps an hour passed, and I awoke. My dream was ended. I awoke from it a new man. My despair had gone, in its place had developed a resolve *to escape*. Yet the prospects were meagre. The prison was a strong one and well guarded.

I arose from my chair and walked around my cell. The air was damp. The cement walls were clammy and moist. My footstep, ringing on the stone floor, gave out a startling sound.

Near the window I paused. I saw some words carved in the cement wall. They were in shadow, and it required some minutes of effort before I could decipher them. Shading my eyes from the light which came through the grated window, I gazed steadily at the letters until, accustomed to the dim light which fell upon them, I made them out.

On one line, carved in bold letters, was the name 'Henry Thorlane.' And under it, in smaller but no less distinct character, were the words, 'I will avenge.'

I was in the cell occupied once by the son of the Englishman about whom Mutterelli had told me, and who was now, according to Mutterelli, in the monastery of The Saints.

Moved by curiosity, I felt along the walls even in the darkest corners, hoping to find something more from the prisoner of state, and feeling a morbid interest in the promised vengeance of Thorlane. I wished sincerely that I might effect a co-operation with him, and unite my energies with his in destroying the power of the *prefetto*.

But he was in the monastery and I was in the prison. The chances of communication ever being established between us were remote, indeed.

But the motto of Thorlane strengthened my resolution to escape, and from that moment I had no other idea in my head. There was no room in my brain for any other thought than that. It filled me and moved me and controlled my actions.

The first thing to be done was to learn as much as possible of my surroundings. This was an easy matter so far as the cell was concerned. I knew every inch of it already.

But there was the window.

I dragged the table across the stone floor and climbed upon it. It put me just high enough to enable me to look out through the strong bars of the little window.

Looking down, I saw that the prison yard extended about forty feet from the prison walls, and was surrounded by a stone wall, surmounted by sharpened spikes, over which it would be impossible to climb. An armed sentry paced to and fro in the yard, adding another factor to the impracticability of trying to escape in that direction, even if I could obtain an exit from the cell into the yard. But if I could not get over the spiked fence I could look through it, and a fine stretch of country lay beyond the forbidding points. To the right I saw just a portion of the monastery rising above the trees—just one end of it. Farther away I saw a high tower, which I recognised as one which Mutterelli had shown me when we were taking our reconnoitering tour on horseback. It had then been to the east of us. Putting it in line now with the corner of the monastery, gave me the impression that I was looking northward. The tower was not north from me, but off to the right, which would be nearly east. But a line from my little window, straight ahead, would, I thought, lead directly to the northward and, therefore, *away* from Cagliari.

A winding road extended from the east, being near the prison, where it first came within the range of my vision from the window. Then it turned northward, crossed the valley, and pursued a zig zag course up a ragged mountain side. It was rough, and looked as if it might be difficult of ascent. And from my perch in the window, the far-off rocks and hills and rugged paths seemed to offer no end of hiding-places if I could but reach them. Of course, I would be at a disadvantage in not knowing the country, while those who would be my pursuers knew, probably, every foot of it. But this difficulty seemed small and insignificant compared to the greater and present one of iron bars and stone walls.

Still meditating, pondering and cudgeling my brain over the problem of escape, I stepped down from the table, replaced it and took a few turns around my cell to stretch my legs.

I was getting hungry, and knew that it must be noon. I supposed they fed prisoners in Sardinia, and waited patiently for my portion. I did not expect anything very appetizing, but to successfully put into operation any plan to escape I must have my full strength, and to that end I determined to devour whatever food they put before me.

Dinner time came at last, and I was agreeably surprised to receive at the hands of the keeper a substantial meal. Doing justice to this, I felt like a new man, ready for any emergency and willing to take any chance for liberty. But I must, I reasoned, bide my time and wait for a promising opportunity. If I made an attempt to escape and failed, I knew that I would be put in irons or otherwise confined, so that any further attempt would be impossible.

I remembered that the *prefetto* had told me that I was to be put at labour for the State. As yet there had been no hint at what this labour might be. Perhaps I was not to be kept in this cell many days, but, like Henry Thorlane, removed to the monastery or some other place, there to work out my punishment.

I knew that so long as I was in that cell I could do nothing without first taking the life of my keeper, and I did not wish to kill a man who was but doing his duty to his government as he understood it. And even if I killed him, I knew that the danger of detection before I got away from the building would be very great. So I resolved to wait awhile, and to conduct myself as to allay all suspicion, lull my keepers into a sense of security, and then see what would be done with me.

And so I waited. The night came on, and with it my supper, which I ate with less relish than I had my dinner, because it was not as good a meal, and because the lack of exercise interfered with my usually ready appetite. During the long night I lay on my prison bed, sleeping part of the time, but having wakeful hours, in which I pondered and studied over the great problem of my life—how to escape and carry the plans, now seemingly ended in disaster, to a successful termination.

And one day followed another in this wise, and night followed night, until I had spent a week in the prison. I had heard nothing from Mutterelli, and gave him up. Having lost sight of the promised reward, he had, no doubt, lost all interest in me. I had held no communication with the outside world, because it was not permitted. I gained the good will of my guard or keeper, and he spent many an hour with me—the locked door between us—I in my cell, he in the corridor, talking through the window of the door. For this officer of the State had taught me many words of the language, and I found that, with my knowledge of Latin, it was not difficult to pick up the peculiar dialect of Sardinia.

This whiled away the time pleasantly, and I thought the ability to make myself understood in the native tongue would be a valuable help to me if I ever succeeded in effecting my escape. So I drew him on, learning all I could each day, hoping, dreaming, waiting for that supreme moment in which my blow for liberty should be struck.

CHAPTER XVII.

'Number 101!'

'What is it?'

'You are to be put into a road gang this morning, and go out to work on the public boulevard.'

I was known as Number 101. My keeper imparted the above delightful information to me on the ninth day of my imprisonment.

I say delightful because I mean it, and do not use the word in an ironical sense. The news was indeed delightful and gratifying. It was what I had waited for. It was the beginning of my labour for the State, and my hopes rose, for now, surely, I would find an opportunity to strike for my liberty.

'When am I to go?' I asked in a disinterested way, as if it did not matter to me whether I remained in the cell or worked outside.

'In one hour. Be ready.'

I had been ready a week.

That hour seemed as long as any of the previous days had seemed, so eager was I to get outside the walls of the prison, to breathe the pure air again, to stimulate my muscles with exercise, and to work for my own deliverance.

When at last the hour was up and I was called, I stepped from my cell, and was conducted by an armed guard into an open court, where a score or more of prisoners were assembled.

They were an ugly-looking lot. There were faces in the crowd that showed the passions of hate and all forms of wickedness. They all seemed to be Italian or Sardinian types. I was the only exception. I was placed alongside a villainous-looking ruffian, whose malodorous presence was decidedly nauseating. We were about in the centre of the column, which was formed of twos. We were guarded by a dozen armed men, all about as villainous in their appearance as my fellow prisoners.

Having, by dint of great executive ability, loud talking, and cursing, got us in proper form, our keepers marched us forth to do the work to which we had been assigned.

We were marching along the road leading northward from Cagliari; then turning to the west, we journeyed in that direction about an hour. At last we came up a rough road leading to the northward, that bore indications of being an unfinished work. Stones and piles of sand lay about. Stakes were driven into the ground to mark the edges of the road. It was, as I correctly surmised, a new public road, leading from Cagliari proper, in the shore region, out to the suburbs, and was to be a smooth, hard road for driving and pleasure-taking.

I judged from the direction that this new road ran parallel with, and perhaps four miles distant from, the one I had seen from my cell windows, running over the ragged mountains.

The officer in command lost no time, but put us at once to work. Most of the prisoners had evidently been there before, for they seemed to know just what to do, as if they were resuming work that had but recently been laid down.

I was put at digging up the new ground in advance of the levellers, and for four mortal hours did I swing a pickaxe into the soil of Sardinia. The very outrageousness of my imprisonment and labour made me smile grimly, as I wondered what my fashionable friends in New York would say could they see me 'doing time' for the *prefetto*.

Dinner time came, and we stopped work long enough to eat the meal that was prepared for us.

After dinner, I, in company with the same ill-smelling ruffian who was my marching partner, was sent some distance away to bring back a supply of cement in a wagon drawn by a small horse, a rugged, stout little animal, that did not seem to feel fatigue.

My Sardinian partner and I stood up in the wagon, I doing the driving, while behind us sat a guard with a rifle in his hands, directing me.

As we left the main force behind, my heart began to beat violently and my brain to work quickly, for now, I thought, the only opportunity I would get had come.

Rounding a bend in the road, we were entirely out of sight of the others. No houses were near. There were no passers-by. Surely no time could promise better for my purpose than the present.

We travelled in this way perhaps three miles. Then we came to a sort of storehouse or shed, where we stopped. The guard had the key to the shed, and handing it to me, he ordered me to open the door.

I did as I was told. Nothing could exceed my humility and meekness at that moment.

The stuff used for these roads proved to be a kind of asphalt brought from the coast farther north, and stored in the shed until needed. It was now dry, and lay in piles of broken lumps and blocks.

The guard stood looking on while my companion and I proceeded to carry the stuff out to the wagon and load up for our return trip. I had resolved that this return trip would never be made—at least by me.

I had made several trips to the wagon, putting in lumps of the asphalt, my fellow-labourer keeping close to me, assisting in the work. We passed close in front of the guard, who by the time we had worked a quarter of an hour had lighted his cigarette and had grown less watchful.

Suddenly an overwhelming influence seized me, and I struck the blow that I had been dreaming of ever since my incarceration.

I had not the least cause to feel murderously inclined toward the guard, but it was my liberty against his life, and the balance fell my way. I had reached his side with a heavy piece of the asphalt in my hands. Without giving him time to raise his rifle, I lifted the lump and sent it crashing against his skull.

With a groan, he fell into a heap on the floor.

I sprang to the horse and began rapidly to loosen him from the waggon. But now an enemy arose upon whom I had not counted. My fellow-prisoner, either from a mistaken sense of duty or from a desire to win favour and perhaps pardon for himself, sought to prevent my departure. He sprang upon me, and we had a hand-to-hand tussle, in which it seemed at times as if I was going to get the worst of it. Backward and forward we swayed, now with his hand at my throat, now with my fist square against his jaw, writhing, twisting, biting and kicking until I finally got a good grip on his throat and nearly strangled him.

Seizing him with a mighty effort, I hurled him against the body of the guard, and with a last pull at the straps, freed the horse from his encumbrance.

Leaping upon his back, I banged his sides with my heels, and away he went to the northward, carrying me toward freedom.

But the Sardinian prisoner was not yet beaten. I heard the crack of the guard's rifle behind me, and felt a stinging sensation in the back. I was shot.

The immediate result of the wound was to urge me to redouble my efforts to get away. The little horse pounded the ground as he did all in his power to aid me. Still I belaboured him with my heels to increase his speed.

I felt the warm blood oozing down my back, and began to feel weak and dizzy. Even though I had not been hit in a vital spot, I knew that the loss of blood would finish me unless I was able soon to stay it. But to halt now would be death anyhow, and I kept on. The rifle was fired again, but this time the distance was too great for the Sardinian's aim, and I was not touched.

On, on we went, my little horse and I, past woods and past farms, until I saw the road across the valley, which I had seen from my prison window, and which had seemed to lead to places of refuge in the mountains.

I was now so weak from the loss of blood that I was swaying from side to side, and almost blinded by dizziness.

I clung desperately to the horse until we had crossed the valley, and had reached the verge of the forest and the upward curve of the mountain road.

So far as I knew, I was not yet pursued.

Suddenly my horse stumbled and fell. My weakness was now so great that my hands refused to cling; my legs were as those of a man paralyzed. I rolled from the animal's back and fell with a thud by the wayside. Relieved of his burden, the horse recovered his footing and plunged forward out of sight.

I was stunned by the fall. Many bright lights seemed to play before my eyes. Music sounded in my ears. I remembered

nothing of my imprisonment or my escape. I was in another world, then all was blank; I knew nothing.

How long I lay thus I do not know. It could not have been long, for the alarm must have been given and pursuers would be after me.

I became conscious of a burning sensation in my throat, then an excruciating pain in my head, then another in my back; my arms and legs tingled as if filled with needles. I felt something pressed to my lips, and again the burning in my throat. My mind grew calmer. I opened my eyes. Vision had returned to me.

Bending over me was a monk. He was clad in a long black gown or cassock, and strings of beads hung around his neck and from his waist. His broad brimmed black hat had fallen, and his closely shaven head glistened in the sunlight. He wore large, coloured glasses, through which he peered in a peculiar fashion, as if he was near-sighted. A book, which he had perhaps been reading, hung suspended by his side. Near by stood a patient mule, which he had no doubt been riding.

'You are wounded, son,' he said, in a voice that was soft and almost womanly.

'Yes, father,' I replied, my own voice coming only in a whisper. 'I have been shot.'

The monk's face was very pale—unnaturally white, I thought. He looked at me through his goggles a moment before answering.

'You are wounded in the back, son,' he said. 'Is it the work of an assassin?'

'I will tell you the truth, father,' I said, weakly. 'I am a prisoner of the State. The brother of the *prefetto* was murdered. I was accused of the murder, and though I knew nothing about it, I was convicted. I was at work on the public road to day and escaped. A fellow prisoner fired at me with the guard's rifle and wounded me. They will be after me soon.'

'Alas, son! This is a bad business.'

The monk, as he said this, glanced nervously around, as if apprehensive of detection in thus succouring a prisoner of State who had escaped.

'Do not leave me here, father,' I whispered. 'I am innocent of murder. I swear it.'

The monk seemed to hesitate a moment.

'I will not leave you,' he muttered. 'I will not leave you. But your wound must be bound. The bleeding must be checked.

'There is no time to do it here,' I said. 'Get me away—anywhere out of sight. I can stand it.'

'Take another swallow of this good brandy,' he said, again putting the welcome flask to my lips. I took a long pull, and felt much invigorated thereby.

The monk put his hands under me and lifted me gently from the ground. I seemed to be but a child in his arms. Holding me across the back of his mule, he easily mounted, and, speaking to the animal, we were soon moving up the mountain side.

Nothing was said by either of us during the ride. In fact, I was so much hurt by the slight jolting motion of the mule that my dizziness and weakness came on again, and it seemed as if the bleeding from my wound had broken out afresh.

We did not travel far in this way—perhaps a quarter of a mile. Then we had come to a thick portion of the forest, and we were in a rugged mountain region. The monk had been peering from side to side, as if in search of something, and suddenly halted his mule before a tall, white-barked tree that stood near the edge of the road.

'I thought I knew the place,' he murmured to himself. 'That is certainly the tree.'

Sliding from the saddle to ground, the monk took me in his arms and carried me into the forest. He spoke to his mule, and the animal followed him.

He carried me carefully over rocks and fallen trees and through seemingly impassable places. He seemed to know fully every foot of the uneven ground and to be looking for some particular spot.

'Ah!' he exclaimed at last. 'It is here. The soldiers of the prefetto will have work to find you here.'

'And you will not betray me, father?' I asked.

'Nay. I know full well the ease with which the prefetto imprisons falsely. You are safe here. And you will be fed.'

'I thank you, father,' I said, in gratitude.

We had entered a grotto. The air inside was cool and sweet. I could hear the murmur and ripple of a spring and mountain stream near by. I felt a sense of rest and security, and my trust in the monk was firm.

The grotto was a large one, lighted by the opening, and farther in by a small hole in the roof, which was nearly covered with vines. The rocks inside were bare and white. It was a marble hall in verity. Scattered around were various articles, which indicated that once this grotto had been inhabited. Here was a drinking cup, carefully placed on a ledge of rock near the bubbling spring. In another spot stood a little stove, upon which the former occupant, perhaps, cooked his meals. And in another place, where the rock was flat and projecting some five feet from the wall, a pile of furs was laid, as if for a couch or bed.

Upon this I was laid by the monk, who at once began to relieve me of my clothing and to dress my wound. I was perfectly conscious when he began. I felt his presence, though he said but little. But there came a reaction, and I felt myself sinking gradually into a dreamy state. I felt a burning sensation in my head. I lost the power of sight. I was keenly athirst, and called incessantly for water, which was given me.

I felt that I was dying.

No longer was I in the grotto with the monk. I was in New York, sitting in the window of the Lotus Club chatting gaily with the major and Dilkins. I was enjoying a supper at Delmonico's, with the well-known waiter bending over me to listen to my orders, the bright electric lights around me, groups of handsome men and beautiful women laughing and talking at the different tables, and the major sitting opposite, telling me the latest story of high life.

I was even at times plunging through the paths in Central Park on my splendid horse, and the gay equipages that I passed, the groups of riders from the schools near the Grand Circus, the gray-coated park police, all were as natural as if they were not the phantasmagoria of a brain fever.

I was now at the circus and gazing with wonder and admiration at Nita Barlotti, the trapeze queen, and at Maubikeck, the lion-tamer, in their respective acts.

Then the visit to Ralph Graviscourt's rooms and the discovery of the photograph was as vivid in my mind as on the day it actually occurred.

And again the circus, the blazing rope, the danger that Barlotti was in, the efforts of the lion-tamer and myself to save her.

And so on, I lived over and over again the stirring scenes of my last days in New York, and the departure of Maubikeck and myself on the steamer.

And then the accident; Maubikeck rushing into my room and carrying me on deck; the scene at the rail; my departure in the small boat—all were vivid and real to me again. But instead of the darkness and the fog that covered everything and obscured my vision, I saw, surrounded by blazing light that seemed to come from heaven, the calm, silent figure of Maubikeck, standing with folded arms amid a score of frightened, demented creatures, waiting for the death that was inevitable. And I saw the vessel lurch and go down, still with the silent figure at the rail. Down, down she went—in a moment more all would be lost—now all were down.

But no!

The vessel, indeed, had sunk. And there, standing on top of a wave, still in the glare of the light from heaven, stood Maubikeck, and above him, in red letters, seemingly of fire floating in the air, I saw the words, 'If you are saved and I am not, *save Nita from Malipa!*'

The flame and the white light went out together, and I was in Italy bargaining with Signor Branderi for a guide and interpreter to go with me to the Island of Sardinia.

I was vaguely conscious of a lapse of time as I lived over these scenes. I seemed to feel that some one was near me. At times I thought I heard my name called out in the darkness that surrounded me, and I thought I replied. But I knew nothing real. There was nothing of actual life about me. After a time I seemed to feel that my body was cold and like stone, and my soul was free. It soared away and mingled with other white-robed figures, all bathed in a light like that which had streamed upon Maubikeck on the sinking steamer. And Maubikeck was there, only instead of being a soul, like myself, having left the clay behind, he was Maubikeck, as I had known him, still in his magnificent flesh form, and as magnificent in the heavenly surroundings as he had been among earthly scenes.

And he stretched forth his hand to me, and said:

'You have done well, Wilberton. Be not despairing, for out of your trouble shall come happiness. I have seen your efforts

to rescue her whom I love, and for this you shall have happiness upon earth.'

And my soul came back into my body of clay and warmed it.

Again I fancied I heard the rippling of a stream.

Again I thought that marble walls surrounded me. At first it seemed that I was in a tomb, but gradually consciousness came to me and I awoke. The bed of furs was my couch; the grotto walls were above me. An odour of something came to my nostrils faintly. I turned my head.

A fire was burning in the little stove. By it, a cigarette in his mouth, holding something over the coals, sat Mutterelli. I essayed to speak. Only a whistling sound came from my lips. Mutterelli rose and looked at me.

'All right, signor,' he said, in the calm voice of a man who knew what he was doing and had been going it a long time. 'It will be ready in a minute. A bit of toast and a sip of wine will do you good. Keep still. You are all right, signor.'

Vaguely I wondered, and dimly I realised that I must have been very ill. But where was the monk? And how came Mutterelli here where the monk said none could find me? Yet the monk had said that I would be cared for and fed, and his words were true.

'Mutterelli!' I whispered.

'Signor! You know me!' he cried. 'Jesus be praised! You have long been near death, but now you will be restored to life. Ah signor! How's that?'

As he said this, he put a wooden board before me, upon which was a glass of wine and a bit of white breast of chicken and a slice of toast. Tenderly propping me up in his arms so that I could eat, he fed me, and nothing that I had ever eaten in Delmonico's tasted half so good as that dainty morsel in that hour of my return to earth.

'Ah!' I said. 'That was good, Mutterelli.'

'Sleep will be better, signor. You have had a hot fight and need rest. Sleep on. Do not think or trouble about anything. You are safe, and when Mutterelli tells you so, you know it is true.'

With this he left me and went out of the grotto, perhaps to avoid my questioning. I closed my eyes and a delicious sense of rest stole over me, and I fell asleep.

I slept long and sweetly, and awoke much refreshed. Feeling strong, I raised myself on my elbow and looked about. Squatting on a low stool near the opening of the grotto was Mutterelli, smoking the inevitable cigarette, calmly paring some potatoes, the expression of his face being one of utter content and placid happiness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

'MUTTERELLI!' I said in a whisper, which was all the voice I could raise.

Mutterelli laid down his knife and came toward me.

'You called, signor,' he said.

'Where did you come from, Mutterelli?'

He looked at me contemplatively without replying.

'Where is the monk?' I asked, without waiting for a reply to my former question.

Mutterelli put his finger to his lips.

'You are not to talk, signor,' he said. 'Be patient, and when you are stronger we will speak of it. You have been very ill, signor.'

'How long have I been in the grotto, Mutterelli?' I asked.

'Sixteen days, signor.'

I sank back on my fur couch, overcome by a sense of weakness and utter helplessness. Sixteen days. And it seemed as though it was but an hour since the monk had carried me into the grotto, and had set about dressing my wound. And the change from the monk to Mutterelli was so strange, so unexpected. Yet Mutterelli was calm, and seemed perfectly at home in this strange place.

When he had replied to my last question, he offered me a glass of wine, which I drank. Then he turned and walked out of the grotto. I remembered that he had done this when I first saw and recognized him, and realised that this was his method of enforcing silence. So alone I lay, and in my weakness wondered what chain of circumstances had led Mutterelli to the grotto.

In about an hour Mutterelli returned. He placidly went about the grotto preparing a meal. He lighted a fire in the little stove. He got water from the spring in shining tins, which were evidently new. He made coffee. He put potatoes to boil in an iron pot. He cooked some chops which were of the mouflon or native sheep. He poached eggs. During all of which he spoke never a word to me, who lay on my side gazing at him with wondering eyes.

'Now,' he ejaculated, when everything was done to his satisfaction.

'You have prepared quite a banquet, Mutterelli,' I said.

'Yes, signor.'

He drew a rough table, evidently made of the local wood by the former occupant of the grotto, near to my bed, and laid upon it dishes for two. I was agreeably surprised at this, for with my returning strength my appetite was good. The aroma of Mutterelli's coffee refreshed and invigorated me. The odour of the chops and the sight of the golden yolk of the poached eggs produced in me a fierce desire to get at them and satisfy my hunger.

Mutterelli propped me up in a half sitting posture, and fixed my dinner on a plate.

'Now, signor,' he said, 'if you are hungry eat.'

And I did eat. With every mouthful I seemed to be putting new life and strength into my body. How good it all was. Even the potatoes were flaky and white. It was a feast fit for the gods.

Yet my guide and present nurse would not allow me to eat all I wanted. No doubt I had all that was good for me, but it seemed as if I could go on eating all day. But Mutterelli knew too much to allow me to over feed.

'You have had enough, signor,' he said.

'What! I have just begun.'

'No. You have eaten plenty. You are not strong enough, signor. By to-morrow you may eat more; then the next day more. In a week I will not object if you eat a whole mouflon.'

He cleared away the table, and took the dishes outside of the grotto. In a few minutes he brought them back, clean and dripping, and set them on edge to dry.

Then he slowly rolled a cigarette in his fingers and lighted it.

He drew a stool near my bed and sat down.

'How do you feel, signor?' he asked.

'I feel much better,' I replied. 'That dinner of yours just made a new man of me.'

And indeed my voice was much stronger, and proved the truth of my words.

Mutterelli was evidently going to talk, so I waited patiently for him to begin.

'You have been very sick, signor,' he said finally. 'It is now sixteen days since you came here.'

'Yes,' I replied; 'so you told me before. But how many days is it since *you* came here?'

'Sixteen, signor,' he replied calmly.

'You followed me?'

'Yes, signor. I was told where to find you.'

'Then my hiding place is known?' I said.

'Yes, signor. Your hiding-place is known to me, and to the monk who brought you here. That is all.'

'And you saw the monk? You must have seen him, for he only could tell you where to find me.'

'Yes, signor, I saw the monk. The alarm was given after you escaped, and I heard it. I at once slipped away, and began looking for you. Others were looking for you, signor, in less friendly spirit than was Mutterelli. The *prefetto* has his men out looking for you, signor. They went out the day you escaped, and they are out yet. They will stay out, too, for all they will find you.'

'But I don't understand yet how the monk happened to pick you out to trust above all others. Did you know him, or he you?'

Mutterelli fumbled his cigarette.

'Yes, signor. I had seen the monkin Genoa, and he has seen me here. He is a good monk, signor. When I met him I asked him if he had seen a prisoner running away. He looked at me closely and recognised me. Then he said he had not seen a prisoner running away, but he knew where there was a wounded man who needed careful nursing, and he thought this wounded man had been a prisoner and had run away. That is the way he does things, that monk. He was always mysterious like that.'

'But if he trusted you merely because he knew you, he will surely trust others. He must know plenty of others in Sardinia.'

Mutterelli mused a second.

'Yes, signor, he knows plenty in Sardinia, but he trusts only me. I alone have his confidence. The monk and I belong to the same secret society, signor, though I am but a poor member. See, signor?'

'What!' I replied. 'A monk a member of a secret society. Is it possible?'

'Yes, signor, in Sardinia.'

He opened his jacket, and under it was a peculiar vest of white silk, upon which were embroidered some symbols in gold.

'The monk and I are brothers in this,' said Mutterelli, tapping the gold insignia.

'And where is this kind monk now?' I asked. 'I must have opportunity to express my gratitude in a suitable manner. He saved my life, Mutterelli—he and you.'

Mutterelli shrugged his shoulders.

'It is hard to say where he is now, signor. He will be around before you leave here. He has visited you often.'

'What is his name, Mutterelli?'

'He is Brother Michael, signor, of the Order of Jesuits. He is high in favour with the general of the order, signor, and travels much, doing missionary work.'

'And the monks at the Monastery of The Saints? To what order do they belong?'

'They are Jesuits, signor,' replied Mutterelli.

The exertion of talking had been severe, and I felt that I must stop.

'You are weary, signor,' said Mutterelli. 'You have talked too much. You must rest. I will leave you.'

He sauntered toward the entrance of the grotto, and I saw him pause long enough to twist the end of another cigarette and light it. Then he disappeared through the marble arch.

I lay back on my furs, wondering. Mutterelli had answered all my questions in a straightforward manner, yet I felt an uneasiness as to the truth of what he had said. There was, in my mind, a vague yet rapidly growing conviction that Mutterelli and the monk were one and the same. I knew that Mutterelli was a master hand at disguising. The timely meeting between the monk and Mutterelli; the implicit confidence which the monk reposed in Mutterelli, who, I knew, had a price—all these things, as I thought them over, convinced me that Mutterelli was Brother Michael, and Brother Michael was Mutterelli. So far he had done well. But how was I ever to get away from Sardinia, and how was I going to continue my efforts to restore Nita Barlotti to the sphere in life to which I knew she belonged?

CHAPTER XIX.

'MUTTERELLI, I want to ask you a question.'

It was the second day of my renewed life and I felt much stronger, and had been watching Mutterelli with a feeling of amusement as he puttered around, doing this and that for his own comfort and mine.

'Ask it, signor,' he replied, waving a gun-cleaner at me. He had just sat down to clean a rifle which, I suppose, he used to shoot the mouflon and other game upon which we were feeding. 'There is no law in the grotto to compel me to answer it if I don't want to.'

'No,' I said. 'But there is no reason why you should not tell me this, if you know. Have you any idea who really killed Pacho Maligni?'

Everything dropped from Mutterelli's hands, and he stared at me, seemingly overcome with surprise.

'Who killed—who—who killed *Maligni*? What is that, signor? Oh, yes, I forgot. No, signor, I do not know who killed Maligni.'

Something in his looks made me think that his reply was prompted by an idea that my mind had not fully returned to me, and that I did not remember the killing of Maligni.

'What have you forgotten? *I* don't know who killed him. I know I did *not*. I never killed anybody, unless it may be that poor devil of a guard whose head I smashed with a lump of asphalt.'

'You didn't kill the guard,' said Mutterelli. 'He was only stunned.'

I was rejoiced to hear this. My greatest—in fact, my only—regret in the whole business had been the unpleasant necessity of silencing that guard.

'But Maligni? exclaimed Mutterelli. 'You did not kill him?'

'No,' I replied. 'I swear it. I did not even see him struck. I was outside of the villa making my way to the gate with Nita Barlotti, when I heard him cry out and heard the alarm given. I *saw* him when I was on the balcony, but he got up from his chair and left the room. The next time I saw him, he was lying dead. I am as much in the dark about it as any one.'

Mutterelli whistled.

'This is news to me, signor. I thought, of course, you killed Maligni. But if you did not, then who the deuce did?'

'I don't know. That is what I want to know.'

'You *shall* know, signor,' said Mutterelli, and his jaw snapped. 'Nearly a month has been wasted, in which, perhaps, I could have run the murderer down and set you free. But I will do it yet, signor. Do not fear. I will know who the murderer of Maligni is in less than sixteen days more.'

'Find him,' I said, 'and the twenty-five thousand lire that I promised you shall be doubled.'

'Ah! Thank you, signor. Mutterelli is faithful, but he is poor. Therefore he is grateful. I must see Brother Michael to-day. If I can find him.'

The last sentence seemed to be an afterthought. My own opinion was that if the wily Mutterelli wanted to see Brother Michael he would not need to go far—a mirror would show him the Jesuit's face.

That afternoon Mutterelli went away and did not return until long into the night. When he did come in, he breathed heavily, and seemed like a man who had been drinking much wine.

'You have found gay companions, Mutterelli,' I said.

He looked at me solemnly, his face being illumined by the candle he held unsteadily and his eyes blinking wisely.

'Yes, signor,' he said, struggling desperately with his voice. 'Brother Michael and

I had much to say to each other. But it is too late for patients like you to be talking. Go to sleep.'

I could get no more out of him, and I lay there in silence watching him, as in the dim light of the candle he moved about preparing to go to bed.

In a far corner of the grotto, upon some boards laid lengthwise, some furs like those on which I lay had been placed. Upon this rude couch Mutterelli stretched himself and was soon snoring away as if he was reposing on the softest bed in his probably comfortable home in Genoa. And as I thought of it I laughed softly to myself. It was probably a strange place for Mutterelli to be sleeping. Yet, more than that, the thought came to me that it was a strange couch for a monk. And laughing again at Mutterelli's clumsy attempts to deceive me, I fell asleep.

The days passed slowly after this, yet I mended rapidly. As often as needful Mutterelli dressed my wound, and my returning strength brought renewed ambition and stronger determination to carry to a successful issue the purposes that had brought me to Sardinia. But I could get nothing out of Mutterelli. As my strength increased his absences from the grotto grew longer, until at times he would be away for a day and a night at a stretch, in which intervals of his absences I would turn cook and supply myself with viands. And as Mutterelli's absences grew longer, his communicativeness grew less. I plied him with questions about the monk and about the prefetto and about Nita Barlotti, but all I got, day after day, were reiterated cautious about leaving the grotto and vague and misty sentences about great plans being laid for my benefit by Mutterelli and 'Brother Michael.'

Nita Barlotti was still at the country residence of the prefetto, and Mutterelli informed me that it was rumoured that she would soon become the bride of the Count di Pordino. I could not see how or wherein the count was any improvement over Pacho Maligni, but confined as I was to the grotto, I was, of course, powerless then to do anything in her behalf. And Mutterelli partially reassured me by saying that the count would not be allowed to wed her, for when he and Brother Michael had got my affairs straightened out, they would attend to the case of the Count di Pordino and his proposed marriage.

All this was pacifying and almost satisfying in the early days of my convalescence, when I was too weak to do anything but lie upon my bed of furs and watch Mutterelli and listen to his remarks, with mingled doubt and admiration. But there came a day when I was no longer weak, and when the blood, full of life, rushing through my body, gave me vigour and a desire to go outside again into the world and see for myself what was going on, and do for myself what I had become convinced no one else would be able to do for me.

It was on one of these days when Mutterelli was away that the spirit of unrest seized me, and I grew impatient and nervous at my enforced idleness.

Mutterelli, with his usual regard for my comfort, had procured in some way a supply of good cigars, and I sat on my bed, with my back against the perpendicular wall of marble, smoking one of these. If I had had anything to read, perhaps I would have felt easier; but my stock of literature was limited to a copy of the Paris edition of a New York paper, now several weeks old, which Mutterelli had become in some way possessed of. I had read this from title page to the last advertisement about a dozen times and knew it by heart.

Slipping from my couch I meandered uneasily around the grotto, grumbling inwardly at the unpleasant delay in my plans and thinking hard, trying to help myself out of my present difficulty.

I had not examined the grotto very carefully before, and I was surprised, when approaching the entrance in my aimless ramble, to see letters carved in the rock away to the right of the arch. Stepping to this spot, I read the words easily, so deeply and evenly were they cut into the marble:

'HENRY THORLANE.
I WILL AVENGE.

The same words and in the same form as I had found them in the cell in the Torre dell Elefante.

Henry Thorlane, then, was no doubt the former occupant of the cave. But now a puzzling question arose: When could he have carved those letters in the grotto? Previous to his arrest he would, for all I knew, taking Mutterelli's story into the matter, have no cause for vengeance. And Mutterelli had said that he was in the monastery, from which there could be no escape. Yet there was his name and his motto—his war cry—carved in letters that would last for centuries, in the marble rock before me. One of two things was certain. Mutterelli did not know all the story before Thorlane's arrest, or he did not know what had happened afterward. It was possible that Thorlane had escaped, made his home in the grotto, and had been captured again. Or—and as I thought this, my heart stood still a second—what if Mutterelli was right and Thorlane had been put in the monastery and had gained the confidence of the superior and had joined the order unknown to the prefetto or anybody outside the Jesuit circle inside the monastery walls. And if so, then, perhaps Mutterelli *was* Mutterelli and no one else, and the monk who had rescued me was *Henry Thorlane*.

This would account for his knowledge of the place, and would place the stories of Mutterelli regarding his share in the matter, the meeting with the monk and the recognition, more in the light of truth.

Still pondering upon this, I began to look still farther for evidences of Henry Thorlane's occupancy. Groping about in corners and around ledges I bruised my finger nails feeling for more carved letters.

I found no more letters, but I did find a trap door. My fingers came in contact with an iron ring. I knew it must have been placed there for a purpose. I pulled it. It did not move, and I did not dare exert my strength for fear of reopening the wound in my back. I lighted a candle, for the ring was in a dark portion of the grotto, and closely examined the place. I found that the ring was fastened to a wooden cover, which was held in place by two large pieces of rock which were laid upon it. These I rolled away, and the trap door came up easily. The opening thus made led into a small, cellar-like hole, not deep enough to admit a person standing erect, but quite large enough for a man to crawl into if pursued, and by lying on the floor, make discovery almost impossible. And lying on the floor was a wooden box or cheap kind of trunk. I managed to get this out, and opened it. It contained clothing of various kinds, masks, beards, wigs, in fact, everything that was needed for a complete disguise. And as I examined this most fortunate find, I chuckled aloud, for a most desperate scheme had come into my head, and with the discovery of the trunk of clothing, my impatience to be up and doing was doubled, tripled, quadrupled.

I would be free!

And Nita Barlotti should at last know who she was, and be placed in possession of her own.

(To be Continued.)

AN ill-natured man says that all men ought to marry, because it is so 'handy to have somebody to blame when things go wrong with you.'

MICHAEL THE UPRIGHT.

MORE than two hundred years ago there lived in Holland a little boy named Michael. His parents were poor, and wished to bring him up to some trade; but Michael's heart was set upon being a sailor, and nothing else would do. So he was allowed to have his way; and his father got a berth for him in a vessel about to sail for Morocco, on the coast of Africa. It belonged to a merchant who was in the habit of carrying out bales of cloth to sell to the natives of that place. As he went himself in the ship, he had full opportunity of testing the character of his new 'hand,' and he very soon found that he was something worth having. Not only was he quick to learn his duties, but, what was far better, he was a boy to be trusted. Whatever he had to do he did it in the best way he could, whether anyone was looking at him or not. 'This is the boy I want,' thought the merchant; and Michael rose rapidly. His industry, patience, and honesty were known and honoured by all. At last, one day the merchant fell sick, and could not go with the vessel, which was laden ready to sail for Morocco. What could he do? He knew of only one person to whom he could entrust his cargo. He sent for Michael and told him that he must go in his master's stead. Michael was young, and the responsibility was great, but it was his duty and he did not flinch from it. The ship sailed with Michael in charge, and in due time, he might have been seen arranging his cloth in the market place at Morocco. Now the city was governed by a despot called a Bey; and so despotic was he that he could do what he liked with the lives of his people without anybody to call him to account. On this very morning he came into the market, and, after inspecting the various pieces of cloth in Michael's keeping, he fixed on one and asked the price. Michael named it. The Bey offered half the sum named. 'Nay,' said Michael, 'I ask no more than it is worth; my master expects that price, and I am only his servant. I have no power to take less. The Bey's face grew dark with anger, and the bystanders trembled, for they knew that it was certain death to oppose the wishes of the cruel governor. 'I will give you till to-morrow to think about it,' he cried, and he walked away. Michael put back the cloth and began calmly to wait on his customers. 'I am in God's hands,' he said, when those around him begged him to give in and save his life. 'He who is not true in small things, how shall he be true in great? If my master loses one penny through me, I am not a faithful servant.' The morrow came. The Bey appeared as before, only that besides his other servants the public executioner followed behind him. He asked the same question, and he got the same answer. 'Take my life if you will,' added the brave Michael, 'but I shall die with a clear conscience, and as a true servant of my master.' It was an awful moment. Everybody expected to hear the order, 'Strike off his head!' and in a moment it would have been done. But it was not done. The face of the Bey suddenly changed. 'Thou art a noble soul,' he cried. 'Would that I had such a servant as thou art! Give me thy hand. Christian, thou shalt be my friend. I will make of the cloth a robe of honour as a memorial of thy fidelity.' And the Bey threw a purse of gold upon the table, took up the cloth, and departed. And the young man who was thus faithful over a few things did not go unrewarded. We do not lose sight of him there. He rose step by step till he became an admiral, and he fought the battles of his country as nobly as he sold his master's cloth, and the name of Michael Ruyter, known at that time over the world, is still honoured and remembered in his native country. And the thing about him which they love best is this, that in the very face of death he dared to do what was right!

DIFFICULTIES OF COOKING.

IN African encampments the question of food is a burning one. How to obtain provisions, how to cook them when procured—these are problems of absorbing interest in a pioneer camp. The authors of 'Adventures in Mashonaland' say that it is curious and interesting to watch the process of victualling a new country. The trader throws the most eccentric provisions on the market. At one time, the author says, nothing but tinned lobster could be purchased at their settlement; and at another time the whole of Manica breakfasted, dined and supped on *foie gras*.

Our cooking utensils consisted of a three-legged pot and a frying pan. How were we to create a dinner? We boiled the ex flesh in the three legged pot, whence it issued in the condition of shoe leather. Mixing the meal with water, we made the most horrible half-cooked flat cakes by beating the dough on hot stones. There was neither baking powder nor yeast in the country.

One day we received a present of venison, shot by a Mr Teal. Now I had from time to time saved up a small quantity of sardine oil, believing myself to be a famous housekeeper. In a moment of vain self-confidence I undertook the dinner that night, and we invited Mr Campion to come and eat venison steaks.

I fried those steaks in my sardine oil, and served them proudly. They positively looked like real steaks, such as people would eat at home. But, alas! scarcely had two mouthfuls been eaten when every one fled from the table, and my wonderful dinner was abandoned to the little native who waited on us. He certainly enjoyed it immensely, so even that ill wind blew somebody good; but it was unanimously decided that henceforth I was never to be trusted with the preparation of meals.

WHY HE WOULDN'T PAY.

A YOUNG man was standing beside some luggage for a train, when a porter came up to him, and said:

'Sir, that luggage is overweight.'

'Who says it is?' asked the man, who stammered badly.

'Well, I think it is,' answered the porter, 'but we will weigh it.'

During the conversation a crowd had collected around them, and another porter came up, and asked what was the matter. The man stammered out:

'F—irst he says it is overweight; then he—says he th—inks it is overweight, and th—en he says he will weigh it.'

The porters then took hold of the luggage, and carried it to the office and weighed it.

'It is over-weight, and you have got 1s 9d to pay,' said porter No. 1.

'Sh—an' pay it,' the man said.

'Well, if you won't pay it we shall fetch the stationmaster,' said the porter.

'Fetch wh—o you like; sh—an't pay it,' again stammered the man.

The stationmaster was duly fetched, and on arriving asked what the bother was about, when the man again said:

'F—irst he says it is over-weight, and then th—inks it's over-weight, and then he weighs it, and says it is over-weight, and I have 1s 9d to pay. Sh—an't pay.'

'Well,' said the stationmaster, in a rage, 'why won't you pay it?'

'Because it is n—not my luggage,' answered the man, and walked off.

PRESENCE OF MIND.

DURING the popular excitement and riotous demonstrations in Russia, growing out of the outbreak of cholera, a priest at Saratoff was attacked by a mob. A man had shouted upon seeing him:

'There's the man that seized me and buried me alive! I've only this instant escaped from the grave that he put me in!

The excited people, thoroughly convinced that there was a murderous conspiracy against them, rushed upon the priest with cries which showed their determination to put him to death.

The priest folded his arms and smiled.

'You have just come out of the grave, you say?' he called to the man.

'Ay, that I have!'

'Then how,' asked the priest, 'does it happen that you've had time to get drunk already?'

As it was found that the man's breath smelled of liquor, the laugh was turned upon him, and the crowd left the priest unmolested.

The same popular excitement in Russia has been the occasion of an example of what may be called poetic and picturesque retribution which would be possible only in a despotic country.

At Nijni Novgorod, where the authorities and physicians were making a strenuous attempt to stifle the cholera, a merchant led a violent agitation which was directed against the doctors. He circulated reports that the physicians were burying patients alive, and endeavoured to influence the people against them.

The governor-general of the province caused the merchant to be arrested, and after an examination was convinced that the charge against him was true.

'I am going to give you a government appointment,' said the governor, 'as a reward for what you regard as your exercise of public spirit.'

'A government appointment!' said the man, delighted.

'Yes. I appoint you a nurse on the floating cholera hospital in the river. There you will have an opportunity to see whether there is cholera or not, and also to observe whether any persons are being buried alive.'

The man was sent, therefore, to take care of cholera patients. It is unnecessary to say that he was not highly pleased with his 'appointment.'

MR DUANE, OF AUCKLAND.

WE shall print the whole of Mr Isaac Duane's letter, only regretting that it is not longer. He might have mentioned that June, the month in which he wrote, is the coldest month in the year in his country, and January the hottest. He might also have reminded us that New Zealand is almost as large as great Britain, with a much more desirable climate. He might further have said that it is a wholesome place to live in, as it contains few physical sources of disease, and possesses no insect so noxious as the English wasp. Yet on reading his letter we shall find that those attractive islands in the far Southern Sea are not free from an enemy we are called upon to fight here in England, as elsewhere throughout the world.

'I have much pleasure in writing you,' says Mr Duane, 'as to me it is a privilege as well as a duty to describe an experience in which I am confident you will be interested.

'Ever since I was a boy I have not only suffered from indigestion in its worst form, but I have been a martyr to it. Such success in life as I have achieved has been in the face of the constant opposition set up by this miserable complaint. All its symptoms are familiar to me as the smoke of London is to a dweller in that rather grim old city. The bad taste in the mouth, the fitful appetite, the distress in the stomach after eating, the pains in the chest and back, the dull headache, the sense of weariness and fatigue, the depression of spirits, the want of ambition to take hold of any labour, the weakness resulting from lack of sufficient nourishment, etc—all these were part and parcel of my life from my youth to a time I am going to speak of in a moment.

'I can only account for it by assuming that I must have inherited a tendency to this disease. At all events it cast a gloom over my whole history up to the date of my recent happy deliverance. The record of the sleepless, wretched nights I passed would make almost a volume by itself. Times beyond counting I have arisen from my bed in the morning, glad the night was gone, and yet in no frame of mind to welcome the day. To the chronic dyspeptic rest does not bring strength as it does to others.

'You will hardly need to be told that I made every effort to obtain a cure. I tried medicine after medicine—now something I thought of myself and then something advertised in the newspapers. And as to doctors (against whom I desire to say not a word), I tried one after another, and faithfully used the prescriptions they gave me; but nothing more than temporary relief came of it.

'About four years ago a friend spoke to me of the great reputation of Mother Seigel's Syrup in curing all ailments of the digestion, and urged me to make a trial of it. I might as well say frankly that I had little faith that it would do me any good; but I was in such pain that I was in a mood to try anything that offered the remotest chance of a cure. So I bought a bottle, and the very first dose made me feel better. This was so cheering and hopeful that I continued taking the Syrup, and to my surprise I grew better and better until I was cured. All the symptoms which made my life a burden for so many years are now gone, and I am a different man. If ever, from any cause, I have a temporary recurrence of indigestion, a few doses of Mother Seigel's Syrup produces immediate relief, and leaves me in good health. You have my full consent to publish this letter. I am well known in Auckland, and always glad to tell any one by word of mouth what a wonderful cure your remedy worked in my case. (Signed) Isaac Duane, coach-builder, Karangahape Road, Auckland, New Zealand, June 25th, 1895.'

Our Home readers will perceive that not in England alone but in far distant quarters of the globe this celebrated medicine is known, and is successful where others do not avail. It is the most commonplace of truths that its praises are sounded wherever civilisation extends, and in almost every written language the name of Mother Seigel's Syrup finds an acknowledged place.

VITAL QUESTION.—An exchange prints the saying of a small boy who, without knowing it, perhaps, has begun to apply one of the most important principles of the military art. 'Did you see a boy about my size round the corner?' he inquired of an elderly gentleman who was passing. 'Yes, I believe I did,' said the man. 'Did he look ugly?' 'I didn't notice.' 'Did he look scared?' 'I don't know. Why?' 'Why, I heard he was round there, and I don't know whether he wants to lick me, or whether he's afraid I'm going to lick him. Wish I did.'

Sadder and Wiser.—The ill-natured mastiff that had made a leap at the tail of a passing cow, and got kicked into the gutter for his pains, picked himself up and limped slowly away. 'It never pays,' he said, 'to jump at a conclusion.'

LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS.

THE, or one of the most important adjuncts to a 'toilette' and that which is always the last thing to receive consideration is the umbrella. Can anything produce a more terrible effect; can anything spoil an otherwise smart confection as effectually as a shabby sunshade? A few words on the topic will certainly be appreciated. The sticks are to be longer and the handles more inclined to roundness than they were last year. The knobs will be mostly in metal and in some cases handsomely studded with jewels, either real or false. These will be *en tout cas* (those very handy arrangements made both for sun and rain) in all the tones and tints of shot silks; and our sunshades are to be realms of delight. Soft fluffy chiffon and lace flounces smother the new parasols; while some of the sunshades for severer wear are to be in rich gros grain and taffetas silks assuming decided colourings, such as water cress green, violet or brown. White and cream moire sunshades also figure on this season's fashion-list.

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Every year the milliners are becoming more and more artistic in their arrangement of the pretty nothings that play so important and flattering a part in the dress of womenkind. One hovers in quite a bewildered condition in the midst of crumpled green straw toques smothered with blue hyacinths, and large yellow shapes veiled with

THE EN TOUT CAS HAT.

delicate cream lace, with a relief in the way of a couple of glossy black plumes. A column would only hold but a very minute portion of the description of the various styles of smart head-gear. However, among all these much-bespangled, beflowered and befaced confections a woman, with the least eye to the all-important practical, would wonder how all these flimsy frivolities would look on a rainy day, when the winds are high and the clouds are low; for the majority of those who turn out hats and bonnets always seem to think of the sunshine. Here is an excellent suggestion for a *canotier* shape, wearable in all weathers. The straw is rough and cinnamon-brown in colouring, an *envolee* of bows in green and brown shot ribbon being secured at the side. Round the crown of medium height there is a twist of the silk with two cut-steel brooches pinned on each side, and fastened button-wise. These metal ornaments are very much *de mode* and afford a first-rate finish to any hat.

Excepting in tailor-made gowns, in which case the coat matches the skirt, jackets are not half so popular as was prophesied at the end of the winter. There is nothing very *chic* about a cloth paletot worn with a dress of a different colour. This blend, to my mind, generally suggests Sarah out for the day. Of course an exception may be made in favour of those exceedingly smart *sleeveless* coats so popular in Paris. For the making of these, satin, velvet, and rich lace or guipure *appliqués* are not considered too costly. However, the bell-cape, in which the material is in no way stinted, is the out-door garment *par excellence* of the season. This full mantle, cut so as to stand out quite crispy, reaches just below the elbow, and is therefore not in the least dowdy as regards length. Crepon, more popular than ever, is mostly employed for these capes, the roughest make possessing the greatest style. My second sketch gives the model of a dainty summer tippet in very light fawn crepon. Accordeon pleating is here brought into request with great effect, and at intervals are straps of cornflower blue satin embroidered with small copper sequins. An old-world collar in deep cream coarse guipure is headed by a chiffon ruffle of the *bluet* shade, while the now unavoidable rosettes are in the thick lace. There is rather an inclination at present for jet spangles or chenille fringes, but in quite a modified way, as is shown by our cape model. The lining, by the way, is in surah shot, from delicate tan to blue. A mantle of this kind appeals especially to girls who don't care to buy too many clothes at the same time, for it serves both as a day and evening wrap.

A SMART CAPE.

And now it's *à votre tour*, mesdames, to have your gowns commented on! The reign of Henry IV. is to inspire the dressmakers during the coming season. The high scoop-collars and neck ruchings hail from this interesting period, while the up-to date skirts are not unlike those worn by the ladies of those good old times. Taffetas silks striped either vertically or horizontally, with a contrasting colour; and soft ecru mull muslins, lavishly embroidered, to form trimmings, pouch fronts, or, as the summer advances, entire toilettes, are already inscribed in this spring's fashion book. Here is a silver-

A RECEPTION GOWN.

grey taffetas frock, striped with turquoise blue, and showing cape-revers in velvets of the cerulean hue, that diminish into narrow lapels. These meet at the waist-line, and are overlaid with some embroidered ecru muslin that matches the bordering of the cape. There is a pleated front of the same soft material minus the *broderie*, and from the left side hang blue velvet streamers. While awaiting mild days when the sunlight shall command us to don the freshest and brightest of raiment, a gown of this kind would be very suitable for smart indoor occasions.

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My fourth sketch is a tasteful walking dress of greenish crepon with suggestions of pink wavy lines in clusters. The neck and long frill are in pink lisse over the short shoulder cape, which is lined with pink silk like the belt. An exquisite lace collar with pointed ends to the

WALKING COSTUME.

waist appears under the cape in front. The bonnet is simply pink blossoms with dragon's gauze wings in front.

HELOISE.

QUERIES.

Any queries, domestic or otherwise, will be inserted free of charge. Correspondents replying to queries are requested to give the date of the question they are kind enough to answer, and address their reply to 'The Lady Editor, NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC, Auckland,' and on the top left-hand corner of the envelope, 'Answer' or 'Query,' as the case may be. The RULES for correspondents are few and simple, but readers of the NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC are requested to comply with them.

Queries and Answers to Queries are always inserted as soon as possible after they are received, though owing to pressure on this column, it may be a week or two before they appear.—ED.

RULES.

No. 1.—*All communications must be written on one side of the paper only.*

No. 2.—*All letters (not left by hand) must be prepaid, or they will receive no attention.*

No. 3.—*The editor cannot undertake to reply except through the columns of this paper.*

RECIPES.

ASPARAGUS SOUP.—100 heads of asparagus, 3 pints of stock, salt, pepper, a lump of sugar, ¼ pint of cream, a little spinach greening. Cut away the hard tough part of the asparagus, and boil the rest till tender; drain, throw half into cold water till the soup is ready, and press the other half through a hair sieve; add the latter to the stock, bring it to the boil, add seasoning and a lump of sugar; cut the remainder into pieces the size of peas, put them into the soup for five minutes, add the cream and greening, pour into a tureen and serve.

LAMB CUTLETS A LA DAUPHINE.—2lb lamb cutlets, ¼lb butter, the yolks of 3 eggs, breadcrumbs. Cut the cutlets from the best end of the neck, shape them neatly, trim off the fat, and skin and leave ½in bone bare. Heat the butter in a stewpan, let it get quite hot, then fry the cutlets in it, but do not let the butter get brown. Drain them, and let the butter cool, mix the beaten yolks of eggs with it, pass the cutlets through it till they are thickly covered. Strew breadcrumbs over, and fry once more. Dish in a circle, with puree of peas in the centre.

NEW POTATOES SAUTE AU BEURRE.—Potatoes, 4oz butter. Rub off the skins of the potatoes with a coarse cloth, wash and dry them well, and put them in a saucepan with the butter; stew gently for about half an hour, shaking the saucepan every two or three minutes, so that they may be equally cooked. Sprinkle a little salt over, and serve very hot.

CHERRY PUDDING.—2lb cherries, lemon-rind, thin bread and butter. Wash and stone the cherries, put a layer of them at the bottom of a well buttered pie-dish, strew over sifted sugar, and a little grated lemon rind; lay over this some thin bread and butter, and repeat the layers till the dish is full, leaving cherries at the top; pour one teacup of water in the dish, and bake in a good oven for three-quarters of an hour.

FREEZING POWDERS.—Here are a number of recipes for freezing powders: (1) 4lb of sulphate of soda, 2½lb each of muriate of ammonia and nitrate of potash. When about to use add double the weight of all the ingredients of water. (2) Equal parts of muriate of ammonia and nitrate of potash. When required for use add fully more than double the weight of water. (3) Nitrate of ammonia and water in equal proportions. (4) Carbonate of soda and nitrate of ammonia, equal parts, and one equivalent of water.

AS THE LAW WAS THEN.

AMONG the trial justices in the early part of the last century was Richard Bushnell, a man described by the Hartford *Times* as having been townsman, constable, schoolmaster, poet, deacon, sergeant, lieutenant, captain, town agent, town deputy and court clerk. His court records are interesting for their quaint simplicity and frankness, as well as for the light they throw upon the sentiments and customs of the day, and the tenderness of the public conscience. Here are some extracts:

'3rd of June, 1708. Joseph Bushnell of Norwich complained against himself to me, Richard Bushnell, Justice of the Peace, for yt he had killed a Buck contrary to law. I sentenced him to pay a fine of 10 shillings, one half to ye county treasury and one half to complainant.'

'July 20, 1720. Samuel Sabin appeareth before me, R. B. Justice of the Peace, and complaineth against himself that the last Sabbath at night, he and John Olmsby went on to Wawecoas Hill, to visit their relations, and were late home, did no harm, and fears it may be a transgression of ye law and if it be he is very sorry for it and don't allow himself in unseasonable nightwalking.'

'An inferior court held at Norwich ye 19 Sept. 1720. Present R. Bushnell Justice of ye Peace. Samuel Fox, juror pr. complaint, Lettis Minor and Hannah Minor plaintiffs, for illegally and feloniously about ye 6 of Sept'r. inst. taking about 30 water-millions which is contrary to Law and is to his damage he saith ye sum of 20 shillings and prays for justice. This Court having considered ye evidence don't find matter of fact proved, do therefore acquit the defendants and order ye plaintiff pay the charge of Presentment.'

On one occasion an Indian, having been found drunk, was sentenced by the justices, according to the statue, to pay a fine of ten shillings, or receive ten lashes on his naked body.

The Indian immediately accused Samuel Biss of selling him two pots of cider. Now the fine for the latter offence was twenty shillings, one half to go to the complainant. The Indian thus obtained the exact sum necessary to pay his fine.

Other justices were not less severe and impartial. Among the records of Justice Isaac Huntington we find the following:

'1738, July 12th, John Downer and Solomon Hambleton for profaning the Sabbath day, by oystering, fined five shillings and costs.'

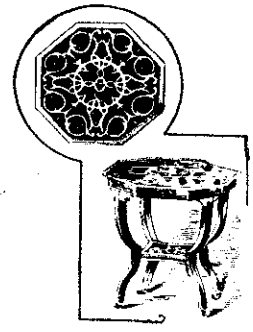
'2nd day of November, 1738, Mary Leffingwell, on ye 24th day of September last, it being the Saboth or Lord's day (and not being necessarily detained) did not duly attend ye public worship shall pay as fine to ye treasury of ye town of Norwich the sum of five shillings and cost of suit.'

A Canterbury citizen, Paul Davenport, appeared before Justice Huntington, and accused himself of having ridden home from Providence on the Sabbath day. He was fined twenty shillings.

Two young men and two young maids, presuming to 'meet and convene together and walk in the streets in company, upon no religious occasion,' were fined three shillings each.

POKER WORK.

WHETHER we have given up calling a 'Spade a spade' or not, is a matter open to doubt, but we have certainly given up calling a poker a poker, as far as describing that burnt wood engraving for what was once known as 'poker' work is now called 'pyrography.' It is very much more artistic than it used to be when people did not think so much of design, but more of things being what they called 'hand done,' as if that did not frequently describe all the ills which they suffered under. People have learnt nowadays that unless a hand be guided by an educated mind, it is not likely to accomplish much in the way of decoration. So many frightful things have been done in the name of poker work that now there exists a kind of prejudice against its being undertaken. This is a pity, for some really beautiful things may be accomplished with this platinum pencil. There are quantities of white wood articles which can be procured for a small sum, and with a little industry turned into charming pieces of furniture, and in this matter the various stains, which are really not at all difficult to deal with, help towards a good effect if judiciously applied. This kind of decoration can be used on other material besides white wood, I have seen some exquisitely beautiful bits of leather, which could then be utilised for blotting books, photograph frames or letter cases. The design which I give here is one which is particularly applicable for an inexpensive white wood tab'e, and if a little trouble and pains be expended I am sure it will fully repay the worker.



PYROGRAPHY.

HINTS TO MOTHERS.

A B C. RUG.

I WOULD like to tell how to make an A B C rug for the little ones who have not learned to read. Make twenty-six round pieces from some durable cloth, and upon each work with worsted a letter of the alphabet. Buttonhole stitch these to a firm foundation, and upon the remainder of the latter stitch upon the machine rows of scallops in such a way that each row will overlap the preceding row just enough to cover up the foundation. Finish with a row of buttonholed scallops (all of which should be cut from goods that do not ravel easily), and you will have a rug that the children can call their own and from which they will enjoy learning their letters. I made one out of gray pants cloth and used dark red worsted to work it with. I am well pleased with the result. I wonder how many mothers have knee protectors for their children. If those who have none would once try them, I think they would never wish to be without them. I have two rollicking little fellows who have worn them all winter and so far I have not had to darn a single hole in the knees of their little stockings, the place that always used to give out first. I wish I knew of some way to keep the heels and toes from coming through!

PERSUADED NOT TO DIE.

A FEW days ago the friends of a prominent society woman were startled by the report that she was dangerously ill. The town talker, in speaking of her illness to a particular friend of the lady, brought out the cause of the illness. She is allowed by her husband so much a month for dresses. During the last social season she bought so many handsome ball costumes that her allowance only seemed a drop in the bucket toward paying for them. Her costumes attracted so much attention that her vanity was excited and she endeavoured with each succeeding dress to surpass the last. This she succeeded in doing. Every action must have a corresponding reaction. Her pleasure, caused by being the best dressed woman in the city, has given place to her sorrow, caused by her having the largest millinery bills of any woman in that place. The bills were sent to her amounting to £300. She immediately retired to her bed. Doctors were sent for, but for a week she continued to grow worse. Her husband became alarmed, and told her that if she would just get well he would do anything for her. She said she could not. At last in despair she told him that if he would pay her bills she would get better. Her doting husband promised to do so, and she immediately recovered.

THE ORIGIN OF 'PIN MONEY.'

PIN money is a lady's allowance of money for her own personal expenditure. Long after the invention of pins in the fourteenth century the maker was allowed to sell them in open shop only on the 1st and 2nd of January. It was then that the court ladies and city dames flocked to the depôts to buy them, having been first provided with money by their husbands. When the pins became cheap and common the ladies spent their allowances on other fancies, but the term pin money remained in vogue.

BRITISH POLITICS.

WHEN Mr Cecil Raikes became Postmaster-General of Great Britain he issued an order which illustrates how thoroughly the British Government is administered on business principles.

Mr William H. Smith was then First Lord of the Treasury, and also the head of the house of Smith and Son, the great 'news agents' of London. For many years the embossed postage-stamp on the wrappers of the newspapers distributed by the house had the name of *W. H. Smith and Son* woven round it in a wreath, a distinction shared by no other firm.

Mr Raikes ordered that the wreathed names should not appear, and the order had to be obeyed by his colleague, who could offer no remonstrance to the Postmaster-General's scrupulousness.

Another incident, illustrating that two men may be earnest political antagonists and yet warm personal friends, occurred when Mr Smith became a candidate for Parliament. Meeting his friend, Mr Lawson, of the *Daily Telegraph*, the leading Radical paper, Smith said to him:

'My dear Lawson, do you know what I have gone and done? I've accepted an invitation to stand for Westminster.'

'Delighted to hear it!' was the reply. 'You're the very man of all others we should like to have. Rely upon me to do all in my power for you.'

'Oh, but I am the Conserative candidate, you know.'

'Whew! that alters matters rather. Rely upon it I'll do all I fairly can to keep you out.'

He was as good as his word, but his opposition made no difference in their friendship which continued warm to the end.

TO 'BACK' EMBROIDERY, ETC.—The best thing to use is a thin coat of cobblers' paste spread with the finger over the back of the work to secure the various ends of wool and silk, and give a little more firmness to the embroidery, which must be stretched face downwards over a drawing board, and secured with drawing pins. The paste may be bought from shoemakers, or made at home with flour mixed rather thickly with the addition of a little glue, and a pinch of alum added before boiling. Let the paste dry, then smear smoothly over the whole surface.

CHILDREN'S CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN.

Any boy or girl who likes to become a cousin can do so, and write letters to 'COUSIN KATE, *care of the Lady Editor,* GRAPHIC *Office, Auckland.'*

Write on one side of the paper only.

All purely correspondence letters with envelope ends turned in are carried through the Post office as follows:—Not exceeding 4oz, ½d; not exceeding 4oz, 1d; for every additional 2os or fractional part thereof, ½d. It is well for correspondence to be marked 'Commercial papers only'

COT FUND.

I HAVE already sent out a large number of cards, and shall be very pleased to forward any to cousins who may be willing to collect something. Even if they do not feel equal to a card, some of them might like to send me sixpence or a shilling, in stamps, for the Cot Fund. When asking for a card, please send full name and address. Perhaps some of the cousins might like to keep the cards. In that case, copy out names of donors and subscribers, with their contributions, on a neat piece of paper, sign your name exactly as I have written it on your card—so as to tally with my book—and send me this list with the money. I think you had better close up your envelope, and put the Lady Editor's name (Mrs Rattray) on them for safety. If you send the card, fold it in two, and it will come up in an ordinary envelope.

By next week I hope to open the subscription and donation list. I received my first cash this morning—half-a-crown—but will enter it with the rest of the money. —COUSIN KATE.

Per Cousin Agnes:—B.B., 1s; Mrs R., 1s; Mrs Ross, 2s 6d; Rev. R. Scott West, 2s 6d; Mr J. C. Greer, junr., 2s 6d; Mrs Hammond, 1s; Mrs Buckleton, 1s; Miss E. Wilson, 1s; Mrs Young, 1s; Mrs Jefferson 1s.

Per Cousin Charlie (Newton):—Cousin Charlie, 1s 3d; W. F. and E. A. Gibb, 1s; Lady T., 1s; A Friend, 1s; A Friend, 3d; A Friend, 1s; A Friend, 6d; E.O.S.A.S., 1s; D.C.H., 1s; C. Hilditch, 6d.

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I think Cousin Muriel's suggestion is a capital one, and also a very kind one. If you will kindly send me a card when you get them I will do all I can to help you. I will endeavour to get 5s a year if I possibly can. Dear Cousin Kate, I want you to do me a favour. I wish you would distribute these few circulars I am sending you among your friends in Auckland. As you will see, we are getting up a Doll Show to get funds for our church in Picton. They want to get as many dolls as they can to make a good show. I heard you had a grand Doll Show in Auckland some time ago, and it was a great success. I hope ours will be, too, but as Picton is small compared with Auckland, our Doll Show, I fancy, will be small compared with yours. We had a beautiful day here on the 11th. The Friendly Societies of Marlborough held their sports in Picton on that day. A great many people came from all round, which made Picton more lively than usual. I am sending you a scrap-book I have just finished for the Orphanage Home. If you will kindly see that they get it I will be very much obliged. I am sending you the answers to a few puzzles, and hope they are right. I must conclude now hoping my letter is not too long.—With love from COUSIN LOUIE.

[I would so gladly send you a card, if I had your surname! Please send it to me as soon as possible. Also say whether I may not keep that lovely scrap-book and give it to the first child who occupies our cot, to be kept there for every little one who comes after? Your doll show ought to be a good one, so I will give the prize list, as some cousins might like to try, though I fear you have sent it up too late.—COUSIN KATE.]

DOLL DRESSING COMPETITIONS, JANUARY, 1st, 1896.

Class 1, open to all competitors, prize £10. Class 2, for girls not over 14 years (dolls not to exceed 30 inches in length), prize £3. Class 3, for girls not over 12 years (dolls not to exceed 24 inches in length), prize £2. Class 4, for girls not over 10 years (dolls not to exceed 18 inches in length), prize, £1. *Conditions*: 1.—Prizes to be awarded by vote of the visitors to the Show, the admission ticket serving also as a ballot paper. 2.—Each doll will bear a distinguishing number, but no name or other clue to the identity of the exhibitor will be given. 3.—Competitors will receive free tickets of admission, but will not be allowed to vote. 4.—Intending competitors must enter their names and classes with the Secretary on or before November 30th, 1895. 5.—Competitors found to be over the specified age will be debarred from exhibiting. 6.—Dolls for competition must be sent in to the Secretary not later than December 20th, 1895. 7.—It will be optional with the competitor either to present the doll as a donation to the show fund (in which case no entrance fee will be charged), or to have it returned; but this must be stated with entry of names. 8.—Entrance fee for Class 1 (£10 prize) 2s 6d; for Classes 2, 3 and 4, 1s.—E. W. MILES, Secretary.

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—May I become one of your band of cousins? I go to the same school as Cousin Amy. I was one of four fairies in an entertainment called 'Our Toys.' I am willing to help the 'Cot' all I can. I will send six penny stamps to become a member of the Humane Society. Please send me a badge. I will put my surname, but I do not wish it printed.—With love from COUSIN ALICE.

[I have sent you a badge and a card. Thank you for helping. That entertainment must have been a thoroughly good one. Cousin Amy is an excellent correspondent, and I am very pleased to add you to my list. Just think of the number of pen-and-ink relations you have suddenly got. Where are you going for Christmas?—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE,—I was glad to receive the collecting card for the 'Cot Fund' yesterday. I now return it to you full, also 14s 6d. As you will see some of my friends gave me half-crowns instead of shillings. Please send me another card, as I think I can get it filled before I go away for my holidays.—Your loving COUSIN AGNES.

[How delightful of you to collect so much in one day! Your letter and enclosure came just in time for this week's GRAPHIC. Thank you very much indeed for both, and for future promises. I have, of course, sent you another card, and wish an equal measure of success. I must open the Fund at once. I have no time for more, or this will not be printed.—COUSIN KATE.]

P.S.—Any Auckland cousins can leave their money at Mr Rattray's Office, 192, Queen-street, over Atkins, draper.

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—It is some time now since I last wrote to you. I will tell you something that will make you very glad. The collecting card came Friday about half past four, and although not collecting till a quarter to seven, I had only two blank spaces left. These I got filled on Saturday. I collected 8s 6d in all, paying well for such a short time. Please find amount in stamps enclosed, and also please to send another card. I never saw any answer as to what the Seven Wonders of the World are. Are you going to the Floral Fête on Saturday next? I am going, I think. It will be well worth seeing. Didn't it rain on Hospital Sunday! I wore my badge with the regalia of my Order.—I remain, COUSIN CHARLIE. Newton.

[Thank you very much for the collection for the cot, and for your promise of more. I have willingly sent you another card, which you will receive long e'er this meets your eye, and will therefore know your money has reached me safely. Mr Rattray, 192, Queen-street, over Atkin's, draper, has kindly consented to receive any money left for the cot. You have the honour of being the second cousin to send in a full card. It is capital.—COUSIN KATE.]

TWO DAYS' 'CYCLE RIDE THROUCH CHESHIRE.

[CONTINUED.

IT was nearly five o'clock when we left Knutsford. We got on to the old Roman road, which is very wide, and as level as a billiard table; so we were able to go at a tremendous speed. It was almost a straight road to Warrington, our next stoppage. By our right we could plainly see the Derbyshire hills lit up by the red glare of the sun, which was turning everything purple around us. At a corner of a road on our right is a cottage which bears the date 1411, four hundred and forty-seven years ago. This date refers us almost to the period 1403, when Percy Hotspur at the Battle of Shrewsbury was slain, and many a Cheshire knight and squire fell fighting on his side; to the time when Henry V. invaded France; before Joan of Arc had been burned in the market place of Rouen, 1431; before the Wars of the Roses had desolated England; before printing had been invented; and almost a century before America had been discovered. How interesting it is to come across these land marks of English history! When I gazed at this old structure, with its date 1411, it made all important events which happened at the time or thereabouts of this date stand out, from my country's history, plainly and visibly in my mind's eye. We were told that, along this old Roman road, Canute the Great travelled; Charles II. passed on his way to Worcester; George I. and George IV. and our dear Queen Victoria with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, on their way from Chester to Chatsworth. Not very far from here is Robin Hood's well, where that great outlaw and freebooter of Sherwood forest had drunk on his way to Knutsford. We read this motto over the well:

If Robin Hood be not at home
Stop and take a drink with Little John.

Before we got many miles from Knutsford a head wind sprang up, which made it very difficult for us to go fast. We came to rather a high hill—at least it seemed so to us, perhaps because the wind was so strong. At last we reached the top, and the doctor said that we deserved a rest, which we certainly did. We rested there a few minutes, and then started on our way again. Warrington was but four miles further, and we could see the tall chimneys long before we got there. We went under the Bridgewater Canal, and farther on the railway arches, and then we came out alongside the Manchester ship canal, but nearer Manchester than Runcorn. We crossed over the canal by one of its huge swing bridges. We had yet another bridge to cross over, and that was over the Mersey, at Warrington itself. Then we passed out of Cheshire into Lancashire.

Dirty and smoky Warrington may be, but it is not without some antiquity. There are some very old houses in the town, and it was the scene of many a battle in the time of the Wars of the Roses. There is a small museum in the town, where many interesting relics can be seen, such as horses' bridles, bits, stirrups, spurs, swords, and pieces of armour, all of which have been found in the locality. In a glass case at the far end of the room you can see a pair of boots, gloves, helmet and sword, which belonged to Oliver Cromwell. In another small room adjoining, there is an old Roman boat which was dug out of one of the banks of the Mersey close by Warrington. We made our way to one of the oldest hotels in the town—the Lion Hotel. My grandfather always used to put his horse up here when he came to town, so I know the manageress, Mrs Taylor, who (after enquiring as to the health of my parents, Uncle Harry, and Cousin Edie) went off to see that we had something nice to eat, and also that it should be served quickly, as we could not stay long. Before we left we visited the old ball room, which is noted for its swing floor. Like the George at Knutsford, the county balls are held here. It was here that my mother attended her first public ball. The ceiling is most beautifully carved, and the walls are pannelled with mirrors. We gave our horses a drink of oil which they needed very much, as mine began to screech when we entered Warrington. We left the Lion Hotel at 6.15 o'clock. We found the main road to Liverpool very wide and level, so riding was comparatively easy. On a mile stone at the side of the road we saw that it was twenty miles to Liverpool, so we quickened our speed, as we wanted to reach home by nine o'clock, for we had another long ride to go on the morrow. The setting sun was like a red ball of fire, which almost blinded us, so bright was the red glare. Soon half of it disappeared into the earth, and then the whole of it went out of sight. I suppose it went to break the dawn at New Zealand and wake up my New Zealand cousins to their daily tasks.

(To be continued.)

PUZZLE COLUMN.

GUESSES AT ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.

(1) James. (2) Bertie. (3) Edgar. (4) Androse. (5) Noel.—COUSIN LOUIE.

A BRAVE LITTLE GIRL.

THE photograph on this page is that of little Miss Iris Frances Dunlop, aged four and a-half years, daughter of Mr Charles Dunlop, of Gisborne. She distinguished herself recently by rescuing her little brother, a year younger than herself, by pulling him out of the Tarewhero River. The two children had wandered down to the jetty alone, and before their absence was discovered the little boy had slipped over the end. It was high tide, and a moment's delay would have cost him his life. With

marvellous presence of mind, Iris flung herself flat on the jetty, and leaning over, caught her brother in the nick of time, and the two frightened and excited little ones made their way back to the house. The plucky girl said afterwards: 'If I hadn't pulled him out, he would have been an angel; least p'raps, he *might* have been a *crab*!' There is no doubt he would have been drowned.

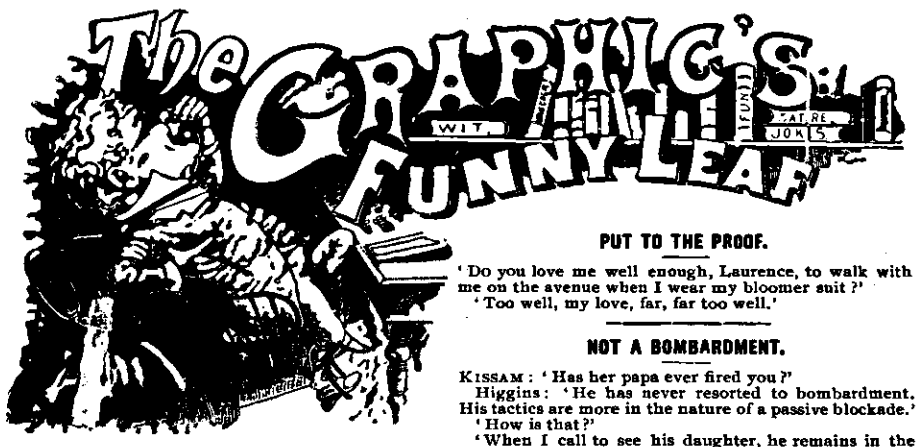
This brave child received the GRAPHIC Cousins' Humane Society's badge in recognition of her pluck and presence of mind in saving her little brother from a watery grave. The badge was presented to her on her fifth birthday.

SOME CURIOUS CALCULATIONS.

SOME clever scientist has made up the following table, showing the span of life granted under normal conditions to various living creatures and things:

The life of a field-mouse is a year.
The life of a hedgehog is three times that of a mouse.
The life of a dog is three times that of a hedgehog.
The life of a horse is three times that of a dog.
The life of a man is three times that of a horse.
The life of a goose is three times that of a man.
The life of a swan is three times that of a goose.
The life of a swallow is three times that of a swan.
The life of an eagle is three times that of a swallow.
The life of a serpent is three times that of an eagle.
The life of a raven is three times that of a serpent.
The life of a hart is three times that of a raven.
And an oak groweth five hundred years, and fadeth five hundred years.

Certain portions of this table are hard to believe. An easy calculation shows that if it be accurate the hedgehog lives three years; the dog, nine years; the horse, twenty-seven years; the man, eighty-one years; the goose, two hundred and forty-three years; the swan, seven hundred and twenty-nine years; the swallow, two thousand one hundred and eighty-seven years; the eagle, six thousand five hundred and sixty-one years; the serpent, nineteen thousand six hundred and eighty-three years; the raven, fifty-nine thousand and forty-nine years; and the hart, one hundred and seventy-seven thousand one hundred and forty-seven years.



A BAKER'S DOZEN.

'WILLIAM,' she said in terror, 'the clock has just struck thirteen.'

'Has it?' he replied, with a yawn.

'Yes. Isn't it dreadful?'

'No. It's all right.'

'You must get rid of it. I won't have it around the house.'

'It's none of my clock,' was the impatient response. 'You bought it yourself, you know.'

There was silence for a time, then she remarked complacently:

'It's all right, William.'

'What's all right?'

'The clock. It's a bargain clock. I guess the man threw in the extra strike for good measure.'

SHE DODGED THE RULE.

THERE is a wise rule at Smith College that an undergraduate must not go to dine with a man who is not a member of her family present or prospective. A nice young fellow went to see a girl at Smith and asked her to go to dine. She had to ask the president if she might go.

'Is the young man your brother?' inquired that functionary.

'No,' said the girl.

'Is he your cousin?'

'No,' said the girl.'

'Are you engaged?'

'Not yet,' the blushing maiden answered, 'but I think we will be when we come back, if you will only let me go!'

Professor Seelye relented.

KLEPTOPHOTOGRAPHY.

HE: 'See that nice looking chap over there?'

She: 'Of course I do. Would I miss anything like that?'

He: 'Well, you want to watch him; he'll take anything in sight.'

She: 'Gracious. Is he a kleptomaniac?'

He: 'No; he's an amateur photographer.'

NEEDFUL EXERCISE.

CLARA: 'I have not seen Mr Nicefello with you lately.'

Maud: 'He is practising at the boat club.'

'I did not know he cared for rowing.'

'He doesn't, but he joined a crew to please me.'

'To please you?'

'Yes. I thought rowing would strengthen his arms.'

ETHEL: 'What did you do when your *fiancé* said he was going to have his moustache shaved off.'

Maude: 'Oh, I set my face against it.'

PUT TO THE PROOF.

'Do you love me well enough, Laurence, to walk with me on the avenue when I wear my bloomer suit?'

'Too well, my love, far, far too well.'

NOT A BOMBARDMENT.

KISSAM: 'Has her papa ever fired you?'

Higgins: 'He has never resorted to bombardment. His tactics are more in the nature of a passive blockade.'

'How is that?'

'When I call to see his daughter, he remains in the parlour during the whole of the interview.'

ANSWERED.

SHE: 'Do you men still pursue the even tenour of your way?'

He: 'No; we are content to pursue the even fiver now, if we think you have it to lend.'

'That's enough to try anybody's patients,' as the doctor exclaimed when he found his bottles all mixed and without labels.

A LA FRANCAISE.

HE had proposed to her, and she was about to reject him, so she began: 'Well, to be plain to you——'

'You can nevah wiz me be plain, nor wiz anyone else. You can nevah be plain, nevah, nevah; you are too beautiful for zat.'

What could she do but accept him after that?

SOLEMN EXPERIENCES.

SHE HAD HAD ENOUGH TO KNOW ALL ABOUT MATRIMONY.

A MINISTER'S wife who conceived it to be her duty to give a kindly and motherly word of advice to the young couples who came to the parsonage to be married one day went down into the parlour in advance of her husband for the usual little chat with a couple who had called 'on important business,' as they had expressed it.

The good woman found the couple sitting side by side on a sofa in bridal array. The bridegroom, who was evidently several years younger than the bride, seemed a little flustrated, but the bride was perfectly calm. After a few commonplaces the minister's wife said:

'You realize, of course, that marriage is a very solemn thing. It is not to be entered into lightly. It is, or ought to be, for life.'

'Yes, that's what I used to tell Jim,' said the bride.

'Jim?'

'Oh, he was my first husband.'

'Indeed! Then, of course, you know what the duties and responsibilities of married life are. They are many and serious. Both husband and wife must learn to bear and forbear.'

'Yes; that's exactly what I used to say to Bill.'

'To Bill?'

'Yes; he was my second husband.'

'Oh, you must realize deeply the solemnity of marriage because of these experiences.'

'Yes; I used to say to Jake that marriage was no laughing matter. Jake was my third husband.'

'Indeed? My words must seem useless to you after—'

'Well, to tell the honest truth there's mighty few pointers you kin give a lady whose had three husbands an' all of 'em livin'. If I don't know what the rocky side o' matrimony is I don't know who does. Serious business! Well, I should say so! But Willie an' me are startin' out right an' I guess we'll stick fer good, eh Willie?'

The bridegroom blushed and smiled faintly, and when the minister entered at that moment the bride arose to her feet and said:

'Come on, Willie; here goes for another solemn experience.'

THE SUMMIT.

'SPEAKING of the drawing,' remarked the artist, 'I reached the acme of the draughtsman's ambition to-day.'

'Ah, indeed?'

'Yes, I drew a check and it was honoured.'

METHOD IN HER MADNESS.

'I OBJECT, my dear, to your asking that woman to dinner. She's the greatest gossip in town,' said Mr Perkins.

'I know that, John, but we don't know any newspaper men, and I don't see how else to get an account of our dinner in the papers,' replied Mrs Perkins.

A MEAN FELLOW.

MR BLINKS: 'I met a woman to-day that I thought a good deal of once.'

Mrs Blinks: 'Oh, you did?'

'Yes. I used to do my very best to please her.'

'Humph!'

'I did everything I could to win her affection.'

'My goodness!'

'And at last I succeeded.'

'Wha—'

'She granted all that I asked, and by so doing made me the happiest man alive.'

'Merciful—'

'I asked her to come right up to the house with me to-day, but she had some shopping to do, and cannot get here until supper time.'

'Mr Blinks, I am going right home to my mother.'

'She isn't at home, my dear. It was your mother that I met. She gave me you.'

KEEPING THE TEMPERATURE DOWN.

MAJOR MCLAUGHLIN put a new man at work at his mine the other day drying out dynamite.

'Now,' said he, by way of explanation, 'you have to keep your eye on that thermometer in the heater. If it gets above 85 you're liable to hear a noise around here. When it reaches 82 degrees you have just three minutes in which to work, for it takes three minutes in which to rise to 85.'

'A hour later the major returned to see how the man at the heater was doing.

'Well, how is it getting along?' he inquired.

'Oh, first rate.'

'Do you watch that thermometer?'

'You bet your life, I do, and I'm keeping her down.'

He reached into the heater and pulled out the thermometer.

'Whew! She's up to 84,' he remarked. 'There, that'll fix it.'

He jammed the thermometer into a bucket of cold water and hung it back in the heater. Then he wonderod what McLaughlin was running for.

DENTIST WOULD NOT MIND.

HE: 'You were getting ready to go out, and I'm afraid my call is inopportune.'

She: 'Really and truly, I would much rather stay here and talk with you than keep my engagement this afternoon.'

He: 'I am delighted. But can the engagement be broken without causing hard feelings?'

She: 'Oh, yes; the dentist won't mind.'

AMONG THE HEATHEN.

HELEN, aged four, was spending a night away from home. At bedtime she knelt at her hostess' knees to say her prayers, expecting the usual prompting.

Finding Mrs I—— unable to help her out, she concluded thus:

'Please, God, 'scuse me. I can't 'member my prayers and I'm stayin' with a lady that don't know any.'

LITTLE BESS (to visitor): 'You ain't black are you, Mr L.?'

'Black, child? No, I should hope not. What made you think I was?'

'Oh, nothin'; 'cept pa said you was awful niggardly.'

POETS take in the beauty of Nature. Their wives take in washing.

WE have an idea that we will purchase a bicycle after a while. We know of a good place to get the wind with which to fill the tyres.