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Guy Fawkes' Day in the Transvaal.

"PLEASE TO REMEMBER——MAJUBA HILL."

(The British Government has obtained a War Vote of £10,000,000.)

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THE FOURTH GENERATION.

By Sir Walter Besant.

Author of "All Sorts and Conditions of Men," "Herr Paulus," "The Master Craftsman," "Armorel of Lyonesse," "The World Went Very Well Then," "All in a Garden Fair," "Children of Gibeon," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

A REMOTE ANCESTOR.

It was a morning of early March, when a north-east wind ground together the dry branches on which as yet there were no signs of coming spring; the sky was covered by a grey cloud of one even shade, with no gleams of light or streak of blue, or abatement or mitigation of the sombre hue; the hedges showed as yet no flowers, nor even the celandine; the earth had, as yet, assumed no early vernal softening; there were no tender shoots; dolefully the birds cowered on the branches, or flew up into the ivy on the wall, where they waited for a milder time, with such patience as hunger only half-appeased would allow. Those who live upon berries and buds remembered with anxiety that they had already eaten up all the haws and stripped the currant bushes of all their buds, and must now go further afield; those who hunt the helpless chrysalis, and the slug and the worm and the creeping creatures of the field, reflected that in such weather it was impossible to turn over the heard earth in search of the former; or to expect that the latter would leave their winter quarters on such a day. At such a time, which for all created things is far worse than any terrors offered by King Frost, the human creatures who go abroad wrap themselves in their warmest, and hurry about their business, in haste to finish it and get under shelter again.

The south front of the house looked down upon a broad terrace paved with red bricks; a balustrade of brick ran along the edge of the terrace; a short but nobly designed and dignified flight of stairs led into the garden which began with a broad lawn. The house itself, of the early eighteenth century, was stately and spacious; it consisted of two stories only; it had narrow and very high windows; about the first-floor windows ran a row of small circular louvres in the roof, which was of a high pitch and of red tiles; the chimneys were arranged in artistic groups or stacks. The house had somewhat of a foreign appearance; it wa sone of considerable pretension; it was a house which wanted to be surrounded by ancient trees, by noble gardens and stately lawns, and to be always kept deep in the country far away from town houses and streets; in the surroundings of a city, apart from gardens, lawns, park and lordly trees, it would have been out of place and incongruous. The warm red brick of which it was built had long since mellowed with age; yellow lichen clung to the walls here and there; over one wing, that of the west, ivy grew, covering the whole of that end of the house.

The gardens were more stately than the house itself. They lay round a most noble lawn. On one side grew two cedars of Lebanon, sweeping the bare earth with their drooping branches. On the other side rose three glorious walnut trees. The space between was a bowling green, on which no flower beds had ever been permitted. Beyond the bowling green, however, were flower beds in plenty. There were also box trees cut into the old-fashioned shapes which one only sees in old-fashioned gardens. Beyond these was a narrow plantation of shrubs mostly evergreen. Then stretched out, in order, the ample kitchen gardens, the crowded orchard, and the "glass." Here, also, were ranged the bee hives in a row, for the owners of the house were bee masters as well as gardeners.

The whole was stately. One was filled with admiration and respect for so noble a house, so richly set, only by walking along the road outside the park and gazing upon the house from a distance. There were, however, certain bounds imposed upon the admiration and respect of the visitor. These were called for, in fact, by the gardens and the lawns, and the "glass," as they must have been in the past. As for the garden of the present, it was difficult even to guess when the hand of man, the spade of the gardener, had last touched any part of the place. Everything was overgrown; weeds covered the moulds which had once been beds of asparagus and celery, the strawberry plants fought for existence and maintained it, by the sacrifice of fruit with thistles; couch grass and those thistles, with shepherd's purse and all the weeds of the field, covered and concealed the flower beds. The lanes and walks were covered ways, long since rendered impassable by reason of branches that had shot across them; the artificial shapes of the box trees, formerly so trim and precise, showed cloudy and mysterious through the branches which had grown up outside them; the bowling green was covered with coarse grass never mown from year to year. In the glass houses the doors stood open; the glass was broken; the vines grew wild, pushing their way through the broken panes. There could be no respect possible for a garden in such a condition. Yet, the pity of it! The pity of it! So fine a place as it had been, as it might again become, if gardeners were once more ordered to restore it to its ancient splendours.

If one turned from the garden and walked towards the house, he would notice, first, that the stairs of brick leading to the terrace were a good deal battered and broken; that many bricks had been displaced, that weeds grew between the bricks, that in the balustrade there were places where the square brick pillars were broken away; that, if he mounted the stairs, the brick pavement of the terrace showed holes and damaged places here and there; that if he looked at the house itself he would discern there, as well as in the garden, a certain air of neglect and decay. The window frames wanted painting, the door wanted painting, there were no curtains or blinds visible anywhere; one or two panes of glass were broken and not even patched. Stately, even in decay, were house and gardens; but the spectator shivered, as one shivers at the sight of age and decay and death hovering over what should still be rejoicing in the strength of manhood.

On this morning, when the cold of winter ushered in the deceitful spring, a man was walking to and fro on the brick terrace. He was a man very far advanced in life. Cold as it was, he wore no overcoat; he had no wrapper or handkerchief round his neck; he wore no gloves.

When one looked more closely, he was not only advanced in years, he was full of years—over full—running over. His great age was apparent in the innumerable lines of his face; not in the loss of his hair, for his abundant white locks fell flowing, uncut and untrimmed, upon his shoulders, while a full white beard lay over his ample chest. His age was shown by the heightening of the cheek bones and the increased prominence of the nose, in the sunken mouth and the thin lips, and the deep-set eyes. But though his face had been roughly handled by time, his frame seemed to have escaped any touch. Old as he was, he bore himself upright still; he walked with a firm, if not an elastic step; he carried a stick, but did not use it. He was still six feet three, or even more, in stature; his shoulders were still broad, his back was not curved, nor was his huge, strong body bowed, nor were his strong legs bent or weakened. Nothing could be more anomalous than the difference between the man's face, chipped and lined and covered with curves and diagrams, like an Ordnance Survey map, and his figure, still so strong, so erect, so vigorous.

He walked from one end of the terrace to the other rapidly, and, so to speak, resolutely. Then he turned and walked back. He looked neither to one side nor to the other; he was absorbed in some kind of meditation, for his face was set. It was a stern face, naturally—the subject of his thoughts made it, perhaps, still harder and more stern. He wore a kind of shooting jacket, a broad-brimmed felt hat, stout boots fit for the fields, and leggings, as if he were going to take out his gun, and he carried his stick as if it had been a gun. A masterful man—that was apparent at the outset; aggressive—that was also apparent at the moment; defiant—of what? Of whom? Evidently a man built originally as a fighting man, endowed with great courage and enormous strength; probably, also, with a quick temper; retaining still the courage, though some of the strength had gone, and the fighting temperament, though his fighting days were done.

There was no sound about the place — no clatter of servants over their work, no footsteps in the house or outside it, no trampling of horses from the stables, or sight of gardeners working quietly among the forlorn flower beds; all was silent. And the cold wind whistled, and the old man without the common protection from the wintry wind, walked methodically and rapidly from East to West and from West to East.

So he went on all the morning, hour after hour, untiring, over this meaningless exercise. He began it at nine, and at half-past twelve he was still marching in this aimless manner, turning neither to the right nor to the left, and preserving unchanged that fixed expression which might have meant patience—a very old man has to be patient—or it might have been, as I have called it, defiance—a man who has known misfortunes sometimes acquires this expression of defiance, as one who bids Fortune do her very worst, and, when she can do no more, still repeats with courage, "Come what may."

In the distance, half a mile or so away, was a clock in a church tower. If one listened from the garden one might hear the striking of the hours; without waiting for it and expecting it one would not hear the clock at all. A melodious clock at a distance falls in with the general whisper of the atmosphere. We call it silence, but indeed there is no such thing in Nature. Silence would drive us mad; in the country we hear a gentle whisper, tuneful and soothing, and we say it is the sweet silence of the country, but it is not; it is the blend of all the country sounds.

At the open door of the house, at about half-past twelve, appeared a young man dressed warmly as was due to the weather. He was tall—over six feet in height; his face resembled that of the old man strikingly; he was certainly some close relation. He stood at the door looking on while that walk, as dismal, as monotonous, as purposeless, as that of the prisoners in their yard, went on minute after minute, hour after hour. He stood there, not hour after hour, but for a full half-hour, watching and wondering.

"Always and every day—and for all these years!"—to give words to his thoughts. "Why this tramp day by day every morning; always alone, always silent, seeing and not seeing, dead to outward things, apart from the world, taking no interest in the world? No recluse in a vault could be more lonely. No occupation; nothing to do; nothing to think about. Good heavens! What does he think about? No books, no newspapers to read; no letters to write. Why?"

He had heard some rumour—not at home, for his mother, for some reason, told him nothing about these things—of a shock. Something happened which put the man off his balance; he became this solitary. Yet, they said, not mad at all. There was no sign of madness in him; only this strange way of solitary life. And he had carried it on for close on seventy years! Seventy years! It is the whole life of the average man, and this strange creature had spent the whole time alone, in silence, in solitude, and without occupation. It was not the whole span of the man's own life, for he was now completing his ninety-fifth year.

From the distant church tower came presently the striking of the quarters, followed by the stroke of one. At that moment an old woman came out; passed in front of the visitor in the doorway and stood watching to catch the eye of the master. She said nothing, but stood there until he noticed her presence. Perhaps he was expecting her. He stopped; the old woman retired, her master entered the house, taking no notice whatever of the young man as he passed him; his eyes looked through him with no gleam of recognition or even of intelligence as to his presence. Yet this young man, the only one of all his descendants, paid this visit once a month to see if he was still in health and cared for.

He walked straight into the room which was his single sitting-room and dining-room and living room. It was the library; a large room with a north aspect, lofty, and at all times of the year rather dark and cold. A good fire burned in the broad old-fashioned grate. Before the fire was a small table—it had formerly stood in the window for a reading or writing table; now it served as a table set there for the old man's meals. The cloth was, in fact, spread, and the early dinner laid upon it; a plain dinner of steak, potatoes, and a bottle of port, which is the beverage proper to old age: it warms and comforts; it pleases and exhilarates; it imparts a sense of strength, and when the common forms of food can no longer be taken this generous drink supplies their place. The walls were lined with shelves, which were filled with books. Evidently some former member of the family had been a scholar and bibliophile. The books were all bound in leather; the gilt of the titles had mostly disappeared. If you took a volume from the shelf you found that it had parted from the binding; or that it took advantage of the movement to remove itself from the binding; had you examined long enough you would have found that there was not one book in the whole library of a date later than 1826. Of all the thousands upon thousands of books published in the seventy years since that time, not one was in this library. For instance, the Quarterly and Edinburgh Reviews—they stood here bound. They stopped at 1826; the Annual Register was here also, bound; it stopped at 1826. And on this great library table there were lying, as if for daily use, scattered volumes and magazines which had been placed there for the reading of the house in 1826. No one had touched the table since some time in that year. A long low leather chair stood beside the fire, the leather was in rags and tatters, worn to shreds; at the table was placed a splendid great wooden chair, which looked like the chair of a hall porter; the carpet was in rags and tatters, except the part along in front of the shelves; there it was whole, but its colour was faded. In front of the fire was placed a common thick sheepskin.

The young man followed his ancestor into the library. He took a chair, placed it by the fire, and sat down, his long legs curled, watching and waiting. He had been in the same place before. The silence of the old man, the meaningless look in his eyes, terrified him on the first occasion. He was then unaccustomed to the manner of the man. He had gradually grown accustomed to the sight; it no longer terrified him, and he now sat in his place on the other side of the fire, resolved upon making sure that the old man was properly cared for, properly fed, properly clad, properly looked after in all respects, that his health was good, and that there was no need of seeking advice. He sat down, therefore, by the fire and looked on while the old man took his dinner.

The visitor was the great grandson of the recluse. He was also the heir of his house and the future owner of the place and its possessions. As for what he was by calling you shall hear presently. Being the heir presumptive he assumed the duty of making these occasional visits, which were received—as has been stated—in silence, and with not the slightest show of recognition.

Without heeding his presence, then, the old man took his seat at the table, lifted the cover, and began his dinner. It consisted, every day, of the same dish. Perhaps there are not many men at ninety-four who can devour every day a full sized steak with potatoes and bread, and can drink with it a whole bottle of port. Yet this is what the recluse did. The descendant for his part made it his business that the port should be of the best and that the steak should be "treated" scientifically, in order to ensure its tenderness and juiciness.

He took his food fast and eagerly. One could have perceived that in earlier days he must have enjoyed a great and noble power of putting away beef. He took his steak with fierceness, he devoured an immense quantity of bread, he drank his wine off in goblets as in the old days he had tossed off the great glasses of beer. He did not sip the generous wine, nor did he roll it about in his glass and hold it up to the light; he drank it, as a child drinks water, unconsciously, and yet eagerly, regardless of the taste and careless of its qualities.

When the bottle was empty and there was nothing more to eat he left the wooden chair and cast his great length into the long easy chair, where he stretched out his legs towards the fire, and, leaning his head upon his hand and his elbow on the arm of the chair, he gazed into the fire, but with eyes which had in them no kind of expression. "Evidently," thought the spectator, "the old man has two senses left; he likes strong meat and drink, the physical comfort that they provide, and he likes the warmth of a fire." Then he rose slowly and stood with his back to the fire, looking down upon his ancestor, and began a remonstrance, which he repeated with variations on every visit.

"Sir," he said, "I come to see you from time to time, as you know. I come to make sure that you are cared for, and that you are well. I come to see if anything can be done for you. On these occasions you never fail to pretend that you do not see me. You make believe that I am not present. You do see me; you know I am here; you know who I am; you know why I am here. Very well. It is, I suppose, your humour to affect silence and solitude. Nothing that I can say will, I suppose, induce you to break this silence."

There was no sign of recognition, no reply, or any change of movement.

"Why you have imposed upon yourself this life long misery I do not know, nor shall I inquire. Perhaps I shall never know. It seems to me a great mistake, whatever the cause. For if it was in consequence of another person's fault, or another person's misfortune, the waste and wreck of your own life would not remove the cause, and if it was any fault of your own such a wreck and waste of life would only be an aggravation of the offence. But as I do not know the cause I have no right to speak on this point. It is too late," he went on, "to make up for all the years you have thrown away, but is it too late for a change? Can you not, even now, at this late hour, go back among your fellow creatures and become human again, if it is only for a year or two? I should say it was harder to continue this life of loneliness and misery than to go back to the life for which you were born."

There was no answer.

"I have been over the house this morning," the young man went on pitilessly. "You have allowed it to fall into a shameful condition. The damp has got into pictures and wall paper; it will use many thousands to restore the place to a condition proper to a gentleman's house. Don't you think you ought to spend that money and live in it as a gentleman of your position ought to?"

There was still no answer. But then the heir expected none.

The old man lifted his head from his hand and dropped it back on the chair. His eyes closed, his hands dropped, his breathing was soft and regular; he was asleep.

His great-grandson still stood over him. This kind of scene affected him but little, because it occurred on every visit. He arrived at eleven or so; he walked across the park; he saw the old man doing his morning tramp; he spent an hour going over the empty, desolate house; he watched the old man taking his walk; he followed him into the library; he watched him taking his food; he stood over him afterwards and addressed his remonstrance. This was always received, as George the Third received the remonstrance of the City of London, in silence discouraging. And always in the midst of the remonstrance the patriarch fell asleep.

The young man waited awhile, watching his great-grandfather of ninety-four. There was very little resemblance between a man of that age and himself at twenty six. Yet there may be some. And no one could look upon that old man without becoming conscious that in early manhood he must have been of singular and wonderful comeliness; full of strength and vigour, of fine proportions, of noble stature, and of remarkable face and head. All these things the descendant possessed as well, but in less marked degree, with more refinement, perhaps, the refinement of scholarship and culture, but with less strength. He had done what he came to do: he had delivered his message; it was a failure, he expected nothing less. He might as well go, there was nothing more to do, or to be obtained, by staying.

But then a very remarkable event happened. He heard, for the first time, the voice of his great-grandfather. He was to hear it once more and only once more. No one, except himself on this occasion, had heard it for nearly seventy years.

The patriarch moved in his sleep, his fingers twitched, his legs jerked, he rolled his head. Then he sat up and clutched the arms of his chair; his face became twisted and distorted, as if under the possession of some evil spirit. He half rose to his feet, still holding to the arms of the chair, and he spoke. His voice was rough and harsh, as if rusted with long disuse. His eyes remained closed, yet his attitude was that of someone whom he saw—with whom he was conversing. What he said was this:

"Yes—I can speak—I can speak—and end it."

Then he sank back. The distortion went out of him. He laid his head upon the chair; calm and peace, as of a child, returned to his face; he was again asleep—if he had been awake.

"A dream," said the looker on. But he remembered the words, which came back to him, and remained with him—why, he could not tell.

He looked about the room. He thought of the strange, solitary, meaningless life, the monotonous life, the useless life, that this patriarch had lived for so many years. Seventy long years! This recluse, during the whole of that time—for seventy long years—had never got outside the walls of his garden; he had seen none of his old friends; only his great-grandson might from time to time visit the place to ascertain if he were still living. He had done no kind of work during that long time; he had not even put a spade into the ground; he had never opened a book or seen a newspaper; he knew nothing that had happened. Why, for him the world was still the world before the Reform Act. There was no railways, there were no telegraph wires; none of the inventions and improvements and new ideas and new customs were known to him, or suspected by him; he asked for nothing, he cared for nothing, he took interest in nothing; he never spoke. Oh, the wretchedness of it! The folly of it! What excuse could there be—what reason—sufficient for this throwing away of a life in which so much might have been done? What defence could a man have for thus deserting from the Army of Humanity?

As long as this young man remembered anything he had heard of this old man; it was always the same story. He was a kind of family bogey; he always lived the same life, taking the same walk in the morning and sleeping in the afternoon. Sometimes his mother would tell him, when he was a boy, scraps of history about the Recluse. Long ago, in the reign of George the Fourth, the gloomy solitary was a handsome, spirited, popular young man; fond of hunting, fond of shooting and fishing and all outdoor sports, yet not a boor or a barbarian; one who had passed through the University with credit, and had learning and cultivation. He had a fine library which he used; he enjoyed conversations with scholars, he had travelled on the Continent, a thing which then was rare; he was thinking of entering the House. He had a fine, though not a large, estate, and a lovely house and stately gardens. No one in the country had greater reason to be satisfied with his lot, no one had a clearer right to look forward to the future with confidence, than Mr Algernon Campaigne. He remembered all this talk.

He now contemplated the sleeping figure with a curious blend or mixture of emotions. There was pity in the blend; there was contempt in it; there was something of the respect or reverence due to an ancestor. One does not often get the chance of paying respect to so remote an ancestor as a great-grandfather. The ancestor lay back in his chair, his head turned a little on one side; his face, perfectly calm, had something of the transparent waxen look that belongs to the newly dead.

The young man went on thinking of what he had heard of this old man, who was at once the pride and the shame of the family. No one can help being proud of having a recluse, an anchorite, in the family—it is uncommon, like a folio Shakespeare; moreover, he was the head of the family, and lived in the place where the family had always lived from time beyond the memory of man.

He remembered his mother, a sad-faced widow, and his grandmother, another sad-faced widow. A certain day came back to him—it was a few weeks after his father's early death, when he was a child of seven—when the two women sat together in sorrow, and wept together, and conversed, in his presence—but the child could not understand—and said things which he recalled at this moment for the first time.

"My dear," said the elder lady, "we are a family of misfortune."

"But why—why?" asked the other. "What have we done?"

The elder lady shook her head. "Things are done," she said, "that are never suspected. Nobody knows, nobody finds out, but the arm of the Lord is stretched out and vengeance falls upon the guilty, upon his children and his grand-children unto the third and fourth generation——"

"The helpless, innocent children? Oh! It is cruel."

"We have Scripture for it."

These words—this conversation—came back suddenly and unexpectedly to the young man. He had never remembered them before.

"Who did what?" he asked. "The guilty person cannot be this venerable patriarch, because this affliction has fallen upon him and still abides with him after seventy years. What misfortunes? But they spoke of something else. Why do these old words come back to me? Ancestor, sleep on."

In the hall he saw the old housekeeper, who stopped to ask after the master.

"He spoke just now," he said.

"Spoke, sir? Spoke? The master spoke?"

"He sat up in his sleep and spoke."

"What in the name o' mercy did he say?"

"He said, quite clearly, 'I can speak and end it.'"

"Say it again."

He said it again.

"Sir," she said, "something dreadful will happen. It is the first time for seventy years that he has spoken one single word."

"It was in his sleep."

"The first time for seventy years! Something dreadful, for sure, something dreadful is going to happen."

(To be continued.)

ON THE EDGE OF A PRECIPICE.

(Published by Special Arrangement.)

By Mary Angela Dickens.

Author of "Prisoners of Silence," "Against the Tide," "Some Women's Ways," "Cross Currents," "A Mere Cypher," "Valiant Ignorance," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TWO OF A TRADE.

"She's no business here at all to-night, it's my opinion."

"I never saw a girl look so ill in all my life."

"It isn't so much that she looks so ill; she's so awfully odd."

The speakers were a group of girls waiting in the wings of the Victorian Theatre that night for their cue, and the object of their comments was Violet Drummond, who stood at a little distance from them at another entrance. Her reappearance after her illness had naturally caused a good deal of excitement in the theatre; the more so as her health was not considered by her critics to be by any means restablished.

The girl who had spoken last cast a furtive glance at her and then went on:

"She seems quite stupid! Have you noticed?"

"She's never what you'd call lively," interposed the first speaker with a little sneer.

"I know; but she seems quite dazed to-night. She hardly answered when I asked how she was. She looked at me like an owl."

"And yet she's playing just the same as usual. It's very odd."

"She looks frightened, if you ask me," put in another girl, "thoroughly scared. I wonder whether those Cochranes bully her?"

"Have you seen Rachel Cochrane to-night?" said the first speaker eagerly. "She's like a demon! There's nothing else for it. Everyone who opens their lips before her gets simply scarified. And she looks—well, my goodness, she looks diabolical!"

Of course they may pitch into her in private," said the third girl with a laugh. "But there's nothing of that about Cochrane—at any rate—in public. He's sugar itself to her lately. Haven't you noticed? It's my belief he's making up to her. Hullo, that's us!"

And they trooped on to the stage.

Violet Drummond meanwhile stood perfectly motionless. She had still some minutes to wait, and she was evidently listening mechanically for her cue. The comments of the girls—as such rough judgments are apt to be—were amply justified by her appearance. She had lost flesh, and there was an almost transparent delicacy about her fair face, which no doubt served to heighten the strange effect of its expression. It looked numb and stupid. The only sign of feeling about it was in her eyes, and the feeling there was a nervous fear. She started violently as a man's step came towards her, and looked around apprehensively. The new comer was Rastrick, and as she saw him the apprehension faded slightly out of her face.

"Why do you wait here?" he said, in a low voice. "You should have gone to your room and let them call you again. You must not over-tax your strength."

Rastrick's manner was consideration itself. Nothing could have been more solicitious than his reception of her had been, and he had made every arrangement possible for her comfort. But there was a new note in his manner to-night, nevertheless, a touch of protection which seemed to outweigh the deference of a manager towards a valuable leading lady. Violet looked at him vaguely.

"I would rather stop here," she said.

"As you like," returned Rastrick with an easy smile. "Then they must give you a chair—a comfortable chair. By-the-bye, can you tell me whether Cochrane is in the theatre to-night? Ah, how opportune! Here he comes!"

He looked away from her, towards a figure which was just coming into sight. Then a slight movement caused him to turn towards her again, and he uttered a sharp, though low-toned exclamation:

"Miss Maynard, what are you thinking of? It's not your cue."

Violet had moved swiftly to the entrance to the stage and was trying with trembling hands, that refused to do her will, to open the door. On Rastrick's words she turned her face, looking at him over her shoulder with scared eyes. Then, as he laid an imperative hand on her arm, she shrank away.

"I forgot," she said. "I wanted to go away. Oh!"

Cecil Cochrane reached them at this moment, and she became suddenly very still. Cecil nodded to Rastrick and addressed her, directly.

"Are you all right?" he said, solicitously. "Is there anything you would like?"

"Some champagne," said Rastrick, promptly. "Would that be the right thing, Miss Maynard? Let me send for some for you."

"Not unless you wish to send her into a raving fever," returned Cochrane coolly. "My dear fellow, it's necessary to keep Miss Maynard quiet; not to stimulate her."

Violet had never taken her hand from the fastening of the door. Her whole attention seemed concentrated in following the scene. As Cochrane spoke the last word a little sigh of relief came from her. She had heard her cue. She opened the door and glided on to the stage, leaving the two men alone. They eyed one another for a moment, and in the glance of each there was a covert challenge and defiance; then Rastrick said:

"I want to have a talk with you, Cochrane. Come to my room after the curtain's down, will you?"

He spoke rather brusquely, but no change in Cochrane's face betrayed that he noticed this.

"Always delighted to have a chat," he said smoothly. "But won't it do before the curtain's down? I propose to see Miss Maynard home. We're rather anxious about the effect of her work on her to-night."

"Very sorry," was the answer, "but what I have to say is strictly private. We are likely to be disturbed any time in the evening."

Cochrane shrugged his shoulders.

"Very well," he said, "I suppose I must stretch a point for you, dear boy. Only don't keep me long."

"No, I won't keep you long," returned Rastrick, with a little smile.

About five minutes after the fall of the curtain, accordingly, Cochrane made his appearance in the manager's room, elegant, suave, slightly supercilious, as usual. If there were any curiosity in his mind as to the subject of the interview before him it would have been impossible to detect it from his tone or manner. Rastrick on the other hand seemed to be a little nervous. There was a furtive triumph in his shifty eyes, but he was evidently by no means easy. He tried to cover any embarrassment he might feel with an air of business-like decision and composure.

"That's all right, Cochrane," he said. Come in and sit down and let us get to business at once."

"Oh, it's business, is it?" said Cochrane, nonchalently, as he threw himself into a chair.

"Yes, it's business. Deuced unpleasant business you'll call it, I daresay, before we've done. Now, look here, Cochrane, you remember what we said at Brighton?"

"I remember that we—disagreed," said Cochrane. "You had an idea that you would like to put your hand into Miss Maynard's pocket and I didn't see it from the same point of view."

"You preferred to keep your own hand in sole possession," retorted Rastrick. "You made a mistake. You'd better have taken me into the business then, for I want a larger share now. Yes, my boy, I want a great deal larger share and you'll have to give it me."

And Cochrane smiled blandly.

"Really!" he said.

"Really. You remember that I told you I would find out your little game with Miss—with, let us call her Miss Maynard? I've done it, my boy."

Cecil Cochrane did not change colour, but his eyes seemed to narrow themselves slightly.

"That sounds very clever," he said. "At least you evidently think it very clever. What does it mean, exactly?"

"It means that I have traced out the whole thing," returned the other. "You were a flat, Cochrane, clever fellow though I always thought you. Didn't you realise how easy it would be to anyone who cared to do it?"

"When you can leave off rejoicing in your own keenness, and tell me the facts we shall be more at leisure to discuss my brains," returned Cochrane, with a sneer. "Confound it, when some men think they've brought off a sharp thing what a noise they do make about it, to be sure. It's the novelty, I suppose."

"That's as it may be," said Rastrick, angrily. His strong point did not lie in repartee. "Anyhow, here's the fact for you. I know all about—Miss Maynard. I know how you got hold of her."

"Very interesting, of course, but I don't see that it does you much good. You can publish it in next week's 'Era' if you like, as far as I'm concerned."

Rastrick took no notice.

"I know where she came from," he went on, watching Cochrane all the time. "I know her name. It's not Sylvia Maynard. She's never seen France in her life, and she has no necessity whatever to earn her own living."

"Anything more?" enquired Cochrane. "Really, this is almost exciting in its freshness and originality."

"It's a neat little thing in family history," said Rastrick, slowly. "Mr Drummond would have done better to fork out when you wanted those few hundreds in the autumn, wouldn't he?"

Cecil Cochrane leant suddenly back in his chair, and there was a dead silence. At last Cochrane rose abruptly. The suavity had died out of his face, and with it much of the effeminacy. It looked coarse, calculating and even brutal.

"You've done me," he said, between his teeth. "Curse you, you've done me!"

He turned and began to pace roughly up and down the room, and there was another silence.

"How did you do it?" he asked.

Cochrane threw out the words violently, but Rastrick took them up as though relieved by the opportunity for speech. He had been watching Cochrane almost breathlessly and he had allowed his previous words to pass almost unanswered. It was evidently not part of his plan to quarrel with the man he had beaten.

"It was easy enough," he said. "I put on a detective and he interviewed your old landlady. Then they turned up Miss Drummond as missing, pieced the affair together—photographs and that kind of thing—and there you are. The bicycle was the final link—the number and the name of the agent, you know."

Cochrane turned upon him savagely.

"How did you trace the bicycle?"

"Well, that was rather a lucky fluke. Your landlady's servant overheard my man asking about it, and offering a little reward, and she heard Mrs Simmons say that she couldn't remember what had become of it. The girl did remember, as it happened, and she slipped out after my man, and told him the name of the people who took it away. And, by the merest chance, you know, they'd stored it away with some others instead of breaking it up."

A muttered oath came from Cochrane, and he continued his walk for a few moments in silence, then he threw himself into the chair once more.

"Well," he said, insolently, "that's your hand, is it? Now, what do you propose to do with it?"

"That depends upon you," was the answer. "There are two alternatives, you see. I can take my information to Mr Drummond, Kirk Mary, Westmoreland, and get the reward, which is not to be sneezed at, or I can stand in with you and take half profits. There ought to be a good haul for each of us, if we work the girl properly."

"There's another alternative," said Cochrane, "which you seem to have overlooked. Take your information to this Mr Drummond and claim your thousand pounds. You'll have to prove first that Sylvia Maynard is his daughter. And if I deny it, I think you'll have some difficulty in doing that."

Rastrick sprang to his feet with an oath.

"Deny it!" he said. "Confound it, you've just admitted it."

"Possibly," said Cochrane, "to you alone. But you certainly wouldn't be able to prove that! And I think you'd have considerable difficulty in making out a case."

"But the girl herself!" cried Rastrick. "Do you mean to tell me that she would deny her own father?"

Cochrane smiled. He had not felt sure whether or no Rastrick's knowledge extended to Violet Drummond's mental condition, and he saw now that there were limits to his opponent's grasp of the situation. Exactly what value was to be set upon this fact he would not have been prepared to say, but the ignorance of an adversary was always to be reckoned upon as a trump card.

"I think I may say that she certainly would," he said. "You don't suppose we've kept her all this time against her will, do you?"

Rastrick collapsed for the moment. There are many men, capable of any amount of meanness and falsehood on their own account who are yet staggered by the idea of anything not perfectly ideal in the conduct of a woman, especially if the said woman's capacity for lying collides with their own. Then he revived a little.

"The bicycle!" he said. "The bicycle would do for you, if nothing else would."

"It might," said Cochrane, callously; but I haven't had time to see all round it yet, and I don't feel sure."

"We shall be cutting our own throats if we let it come to a trial at all," said Rastrick, boldly. "The girl must be as hard as they're made, and that kind of woman is never to be trusted; but there's no doubt about it that she has caught on! Look here, Cochrane, I've done you, as you said. But it's all in the day's work, and you'd better make the best of it. Half-profit is not to be sneezed at, and that's your game. We've got to go into it together."

"You're very cock-sure," said Cochrane. He rose as he spoke, and stood surveying the other man with evil eyes. "Perhaps you're too cock-sure. I've got to think it over, anyway. Am I to understand that half-shares is your modest request?"

"Half-shares," returned Rastrick. "I'll give you twenty-four hours; until to-morrow night, that is. Take my advice and don't make a fool of yourself."

"You're too kind, dear fellow," was the answer. "That's a piece of advice I should never think of giving you. Until to-morrow night, then."

CHAPTER XIX.
RACHEL'S PROPOSAL.

It was not late when Cochrane left the theatre. And as a rule, on those nights when he did not take Violet Drummond home, he did not generally go home himself until the small hours of the morning. To-night, however, he hailed a cab at once, shaking his head as he did so at a man who was passing, and who stopped to ask him if he were not coming to his club.

"Not to-night, dear boy," he said. "I've been kept longer than I like already. Miss Maynard's ill, you know, and I'm anxious about her."

"She played to-night, didn't she?" said the other man.

"Oh, yes," returned Cochrane; "she played to-night, and I'm anxious to hear how she stood it. She's too highly strung, you know; altogether too highly strung."

"She wants a rest, I expect," said the other, eyeing Cochrane curiously. "Well, good night, old fellow."

"Good night," answered Cochrane, and jumped into his cab.

It must have taken a remarkable exercise of mental force to keep Cochrane's voice so suave and his expression so easy and unconstrained, even for those few seconds. The change that came upon him as the cab drove away suggested the sudden removal of a deliberately assumed mask.

Cecil Cochrane was going home to think. In twenty-four hours he had to take a decisive step, a step whereof the significance had presented itself fully developed in every detail to his keen and highly developed perceptive faculties. Twenty-four hours was time enough. A man who could not arrive at a conclusion in that time would never know his own mind, in Cochrane's opinion. But it was not too long. He had no intention of wasting any of it, and he was marshalling the facts of the case before him as he was driven through the rapidly emptying streets. Arrived at home, he went straight to his own room, changed to a smoking jacket and slippers, and then went into the sitting-room. It was not Rachel's custom to sit up for him, and he had told her that he should be late. He was rather surprised, therefore, when he opened the door, to see her standing at the other end of the room, half-turned towards the door, as though its opening had taken her by surprise.

Rachel was dressed in black, and either the colour or form of her dress enhanced her peculiarities of figure and made her look smaller and slighter even than usual. By contrast with her almost dwarf-like physique her head and face seemed to stand out to-night with absolutely weird effect. Her face was perfectly colourless even to the lips, and it looked drawn and haggard. Her brows were contracted until the dark eyebrows met, and under them the great brown eyes flashed and gleamed as though with a fire which was consuming her. She had evidently been pacing up and down the room.

"I thought you said you weren't coming in till late," she said. Her voice was high-pitched and thin.

Cochrane looked at her for a moment. He had not lived for ten years by his wits without learning that it is not wise to neglect even apparently irrelevant factors in facing a problem.

"What's the matter?" he said.

She turned fiercely away from him.

"Nothing!" she said. "Why have you come home?"

Cecil Cochrane did not press this question. He was accustomed to wait for any information he desired and could not at once acquire. Nor did he answer her directly.

"How is she?" he asked.

Rachel caught her lip savagely between her teeth.

"Sylvia?" she said. "Oh, she's all right! She was hysterical when I got her home, but I gave her her sleeping draught, and she went to sleep directly."

She moved towards the door as she spoke, as though she intended to leave her brother alone, but Cochrane stopped her.

"Stop a little, Rachel; since you're here you may as well know what's going on. You've got your share of brains when you choose to use them, and I may as well see how the matter strikes you. Come and sit down."

Rachel hesitated a moment, and then—a curious testimony to the force latent in Cecil Cochrane's nature—she obeyed him. She retraced her steps slowly and sat down.

"Don't be long," she said. "I'm tired. I want to go to bed."

"You wont want to go to bed when I've finished," said her brother. "We're in a hole, my girl, and I've got to find out which is the best way out. Do you remember that I said to you a little while ago that if the truth came out about this girl we should find ourselves in the wrong box?"

The fierce indifference of Rachel's expression gave way in a flash. She looked at him, and her eyes seemed literally to blaze.

"What do you mean?" she said.

"I mean that Rastrick's got hold of it—curse him!" he said.

Rachel's hand, clenched until the knuckles showed white, lay on the table by which she sat. It suddenly relaxed.

"Rastrick!" she said. "Rastrick has found it out?"

"He's been on the trail some time," said her brother, "and he's done the trick, as a fool will now and then. He's got the whole story—who she is—where she comes from—her connection with us, and how we got hold of her. He can give the whole thing away to-morrow if he likes."

"How did he get at it?" said Rachel, eagerly. "Did Sylvia tell him anything?"

Cochrane stared at her.

"Sylvia!" he said, impatiently; "what could she tell him?"

"Why, about her accident; her loss of memory, and all that," retorted Rachel. "Did he get on the scent in that way?"

Cochrane shook his head decisively.

"No," he said; "that's the only part of the story he didn't know. I don't know what put him up to the game originally. He thought she was odd, and he got hold of the idea that you taught her, only he didn't know what to make of it. And he's always looking out for fishy things that he can get a bit out of. He showed me his hand about a fortnight ago; wanted me to take him in with us and threatened to unearth the whole affair. I thought he might turn out dangerous, then, fool though he is, but I didn't reckon on his getting it through so quickly."

Rachel was tracing patterns on the table-cloth with her finger, and frowning intently.

"That was when the idea of marrying her came into your head," she said, abruptly.

"That was it," he said. "I thought I could have made it all safe before Rastrick began to move in the matter. But it's no good crying over spilt milk. The point is, what's the next move?"

"What does Rastrick want?" asked Rachel.

"Oh, he opens his mouth as wide as it will go," said Cochrane coolly. "Trust an ass like that. He wants a half-share—not even a third. You and I to have half the money and all the work—he to have the other half the money and do nothing for it."

"And if you don't close with him?"

"He goes to old Drummond and gets the thousand pounds reward."

Rachel made no comment, and there was a moment's silence. Then Cochrane went on, laying out the facts before him as it were, as much for his own use as for Rachel's.

"There are two side issues," he said: "one of which he does not take into quite sufficient account, I think, and the other of which he ignores altogether. Really, it's hard to be done by such a Juggins. We might deny his story altogether. It's not an easy thing to prove identity under any circumstances; and if we worked it well, got up some witnesses to our statements, and so on, the other side would find it very awkward. But it would be an expensive business and a risky one. The other point, which Rastrick has altogether overlooked, is that I might go to Mr Drummond to-morrow and get the thousand pounds myself. But I'm bound to say that I don't incline to that any more than Rastrick himself does. The thousand pounds is not enough."

"You're inclined to be in with Rastrick, then?" said Rachel. Her voice was rather odd, and preoccupied.

"I'm inclined—yes; on the first blush that seems to me the wisest thing to do," said Cochrane slowly. "It's a cursed nuisance, but I'm inclined to think that it's the least of two evils."

"And what about the idea of marrying her?" said Rachel. "Do you mean to give that up?"

Cochrane smiled, unpleasantly.

"Not altogether," he said. "But you see it seems likely to take time. At present the notion appears to give her convulsions, and that won't pay. By and by I shall try again."

"And meanwhile," said Rachel, in a low, scornful tone, "you let Rastrick beat you, you gave in to a girl, and you cut away the ground from under your feet by throwing her into Andrew Hamer's arms. I did not think you were such a fool, Cecil."

Cochrane had stirred slightly as she began to speak. He was leaning over the table now, with his arms folded, watching her intently.

"What do you mean?" he said. "What would you do?"

"If I were you?" said Rachel. She lifted her head at last and flashed a look at him so full of burning life, so instinct with passion, that Cochrane felt his own pulses quicken vaguely as he met it. "If I were you I would do them all. I'd marry her to-morrow. Where would they be then?"

Cochrane leaned back in his chair and began to drum lightly with one hand on the table.

"That's all very fine, my good girl!" he said rather contemptuously. "But those things are not so easily managed. I can't drag her to church, or before the registrar, by the hair of her head. And it would take considerably more than twenty-four hours to get her to go quietly."

"Bah!" cried Rachel. She sprang to her feet as she spoke. Her eyes were blazing and her face worked with excitement. "Where's your spirit, Cecil? Where's your resource? She loathes you—yes, of course, she does. And she thinks she loves Andrew Hamer. She's engaged to him. Did you know that? But it only means a little management, after all. You can't marry her absolutely by force—of course I know that. But she can be made to marry you all the same, and she shall."

"Explain," said Cochrane. He had not moved, but he was looking up at her, his eyes narrowed to mere slits. "Engaged to Hamer, is she? That won't do, of course. What have you got in your head?"

"You'll want time," she went on rapidly; "two or three days to make her understand what she's got to do. How long have you to make up your mind?"

"Until to-morrow night."

"Very well, then. Before to-morrow night we must take her away. We must disappear. Oh, it's not easy, I know, but it can be managed. She's not known out of London at all. We have never had her photographed, you see, and we must go to some out of the way place where we shan't be noticed."

"An out of the way place won't do for that," interposed Cochrane quickly. "It had better be a town. Well?"

"Well, we shall have her all to ourselves," went on Rachel, recklessly, "and she's used to doing as we tell her. She's not at her brightest, either, just now."

"She can become a little stupider if you like," said Cochrane. "It's the medicine she's taking, and it can easily be made a little stronger."

Rachel paused abruptly, and looked at him with a flash of repulsion passing across her face.

"That won't be necessary, I think," she said. "I can manage her without that kind of thing. You get a special license of course, and there need be no delay. By the time they've hunted her out, Rastrick and her father and her lover, she'll be Mrs Cecil Cochrane; and the game will be yours. Do you see?"

"I see that you've got better brains and more daring even than I thought," said Cochrane, calmly. "It's a wild plan, of course. No one but a woman would have thought of it. But it has its merits, and I'll do it. It's crude as it stands, and I shall have to work it up a bit, but I think it'll come out well. There's only one important point to be considered first. I've got to marry her out and out, you see. It won't serve our purpose if it's not strictly legal. I shall have to marry her in her own name. And she'll have to sign herself, not Sylvia Maynard, but Violet Drummond, in the register. Shall we ever be able to make her do this? It seems a little thing, but it might easily upset the whole apple-cart."

A harsh laugh broke from Rachel.

"When she's come to a state of mind to marry you quietly," she said, "she will have come to a state of mind in which she'll do anything she's told. Let's settle the details."

She sat down at the table again, propping her chin on her clenched hands, as she confronted her brother, eager, resolute and reckless. Two hours had passed, and they were still sitting there, talking in low, rapid tones.

(To be continued.)

The Handsomest Man in India.

The camp lay scattered broadcast across the face of the hill. Over it all, together with the unspeakable loneliness of the place, was an Indian sun, now setting redly behind a clump of flowering bamboos.

"That's the deuce of it," remarked one of two kharki-clad men who were walking towards a bell tent pitched under a couple of dusty tamarind trees—which tent was their mess.

"That's the deuce of it, old chap. When those blessed bamboos start flowering it always means something unpleasant, according to the natives. It's plague this time, they say."

"Yes, poor devils!" the other answered. "They have it down there now on the plains—Heaven alone knows where it will end. Suppose it can't reach us up here, otherwise they would not have ordered us to stay."

"Confounded nuisance!" replied the first speaker. "Such a God-forsaken hole for a handful of Englishmen to grind out their existence in. Wonder if they'll send us any one to replace the poor chaps who have died, or if they'll just leave us here and forget all about us?"

His companion smiled gravely.

They were the only two remaining officers of what had shortly before been a fairly large punitive expedition.

It was a curious turn of affairs, indeed, which had brought them thus together, face to face every day of their lonely life in that strange hill encampment. Before they left their cantonment with the expedition they had been sworn enemies, eating out their hearts with a hatred which almost amused the on-lookers.

Of course a girl was at the bottom of it all—a small creature with bright eyes and an aggravating little mouth; a girl who was so young that she saw no harm in making men love her for fun.

If only she had been a trifle older.

People did not seem inclined to let her off on the score of her youthfulness; especially the men she trifled with. They swore to themselves about her heartlessness, and when next you heard of them they were mostly in command of small expeditions against rebellious natives.

Maybe the two lonely men spoken of here had smarted more than the others, and the case with them was a curious one. Mary Barrow had allowed them both to make ardent love to her, and quietly sent them about their business when they asked her to marry them.

She had seemed to take such a delight in their war-to-the-knife attitude towards each other. It puzzled many people, the two men themselves included; but Mary withstood them all and gave no sign.

They went off with the punitive expedition without a word of farewell to her. But one of them noticed something as they marched past her father's bungalow—Mary hiding behind a hedge of lentenna, watching their departure. He saw two big tears in the eyes he so dearly loved, and decided that they must be for his rival, even though she had refused him.

He looked up at his rival now as they sat together outside their mess-tent, while the Indian evening played softly around them.

"George!" he thought. "What a strikingly handsome Johnny he is! What a face! What a physique! Why, I'm a stunted pigmy beside him, and so are most other men. Yet little Mary refused him. I wonder she dared, for women are mostly afraid of physically big chaps like Heatherleigh. And all the time I believe she loves him. Strange!—yet I think she must do, else why those tears? I could swear they were there in her eyes; I'd swear to it against everything."

"Say, old chap," he ventured aloud, "you're singularly quiet, aren't you? Nothing to talk about, eh?"

"Nothing beyond our chances of being left up here till we rot," Heatherleigh answered moodily. "Daresay we'll get the plague in the end, and that will finish us all off nicely. We can bury each other till the last man pegs out."

Dr. Powell shivered.

"Maybe it won't come," he said steadily. "We have plenty of time to wait and see."

After a brief silence Heatherleigh spoke out sharply, a curious expression of feeling crossing his handsome features.

"Powell," he said, "I wonder what has become of the little woman we both loved so blindly? Suppose she's 'hipped' many another Johnny since we left, eh? Jove! How I should like to see her again and give her a little lesson. I feel convinced that she has a heart somewhere. If fate ever sends me across her path again I'll find her heart and break it for her. It will save other chaps from being hurt as she hurt you and I."

Powell only grunted. He would have given his life to save the little woman even a finger-ache.

"I fancy she must have had some reason for playing with us both," he said, eventually. "Heatherleigh, my belief is that, in spite of everything, she secretly loves you."

Heatherleigh laughed nastily.

"Wish to heaven she did!" he exclaimed. "Then I could give her her lesson."

Powell's face was newly marked with small-pox, and it made his plain countenance almost hideous. Heatherleigh had been down with the terrible disease first, and Powell watched him day and night to prevent his good looks being spoiled for Mary. The doctor himself had not come off so well, Heatherleigh being ignorant on matters which stretched beyond the parade-ground and the orderly-room. Nevertheless, he did his utmost for the sick man, and if Powell did come off with some ugly scars—well, he came off with his life as well, and the two men, so totally unlike, became friends.

Their eyes looked away to the distant horizon, which skirted a desolate strip of scorched-up plain. It was the only view upon which their sight ever gazed, and the handful of white men under them gazed eternally at it too. They had no other recreation.

They never quite remembered afterwards how it happened; but Powell and Heatherleigh, as they still watched, fancied that some curious moving spots suddenly appeared on the horizon line.

They both started to their feet, paled a little, then sat down. They laughed stridently.

"Couldn't be anybody coming, could it?" Heatherleigh said in a thick kind of whisper.

"No, of course it could't!" Powell snapped almost crossly.

They had grown so weary and sick of the longing to see a fresh face.

They watched for half an hour, and then it was nearly dark. By the end of that half-hour they knew that some one was indeed coming.

Across the desolate plain could distinctly be seen a creamy white Arab horse, bearing on his back the form of a woman in a white drill riding habit. Just behind her, also on Arabs, were two men in kharki.

Powell and Heatherleigh had not spoken a word. Their surprise chained their tongues, and if their heart-beats were faster neither guessed.

Someone was coming at last, and because the utter dreariness of their recent life had attacked their nerves, they were afraid to show themselves to each other. They remained absolutely mute; it was the safest plan, they decided.

Just as the last streaks of day went out of the Indian sky, the figgures became easily distinguishable.

Heatherleigh clutched Powell's arm and held it as though in a vice. His breathing was hot and laboured; his eyes straining and expressionless with the stare in them.

"Great Heavens!" he managed to finally cry out. "It's little Mary Barrow! And here of all places on God's earth!"

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To say the least of it, Mary was just a bit of a nuisance in the camp. True, she never seemed to stir outside her tent; but she was always peeping out, and the men felt forced to pay more or less attention to their personal appearance, which was a troublesome matter on a short allowance of kharki.

The party had been travelling in a different direction altogether, but were driven back by the rapidly advancing plague, and eventually found themselves under the jurisdiction of Powell and Heatherleigh.

Had the two men—Mary's father and a friend—put in an appearance alone, the others would have been crazed with gladness. But a girl as well! How thundering awkward! And that the girl should turn out to be little Mary Barrow! Heatherleigh had been almost praying for a chance to be revenged on her; yet now that she was here in answer to his prayer, he could not seem to advance matters one single bit.

Mary kept her tent and Powell kept his.

"Father," Mary said to Colonel Barrow one morning, "I thought you told me that Dr. Powell was in this camp."

"Yes, my dear, so he is."

"Humph! Then it is his back I see sometimes. Father, what's the matter with his face?"

"Marked with small-pox, my dear."

"Badly?"

"Yes, badly."

Mary did not mention it again till evening.

"How did he get small-pox, father?" she asked.

"Looking after Heatherleigh."

"Captain Heatherleigh isn't marked?"

"No. Powell knew how to prevent that."

"Indeed!"

Next evening, just as the Indian sun sank redly behind the flowering bamboos, Mary Barrow and Dr. Powell met face to face at the back of the mess-tent. It was their first meeting, and Mary had designed it.

She started when she really saw him; she had no idea he was as bad as that.

"Awful, isn't it?" he said, grimly, reading her thought in her eyes. "Time will efface the marks a lot, you know. And if it doesn't—well, what matter? A chap may as well be pitted with small-pox as die of plague or liver. See those flowering bamboos, Miss Barrow—the natives declare that it is a sign the plague will come and remain a very long while. Quaintly superstitious, don't you think?"

"Oh, yes, indeed."

Such a strange meeting! He wished heartily that she would not stare at him so.

"Never was a good looking Johnny, was I, Miss Barrow?" he burst out, jauntily.

"You are very rude to talk like that," she answered. "I hear you were terribly anxious to save Captain Heatherleigh from being marked—why so?"

"No special reason. Only I thought as you were fond of him, you might like his beauty preserved intact. Anyway, I know most women would." Mary winced.

He had no right, surely, to talk to her in that way. Yet maybe, she thought, she had brought it on herself.

"Yes," she said, quite calmly and decidedly, "women think an awful lot of good looks."

He took her at her word, which made his suffering worse than ever.

Captain Heatherleigh saw them standing there together as he walked towards the mess tent.

"Heavens!" he thought, "Is she at her old game again? And up here? Can't she leave the poor old chap alone? She refused him once—surely that ought to be enough for any girl."

Mary took to holding little receptions in her father's tent after that, and in spite of their feelings towards her, her levees greatly relieved the monotony for the men. Her little face grew daily smaller and whiter. Only Powell saw the change, and wondered what was the matter with her.

Heatherleigh was making fast and furious love to her, and this time did not mean it.

"Don't, old chap," Powell often said to him. "Leave the little woman alone. Don't hurt her. She was terribly young when we proposed to her. I fancy she is learning wisdom for herself now without any lessons from you."

Heatherleigh smiled. If he could break her heart he would do it, he said, and feel quite justified.

So, while that little human drama was working itself out among the small white population on the hill-side, the natives they had but recently driven back were brightening up their dahs and old rifles.

A fresh party arrived at the camp, driven there also by fear of the plague. With them were two white women, and after that Mary Barrow did not seem to take things so seriously.

Powell held aloof from her altogether. He just sat still and waited to see the result of Heatherleigh's lesson.

One morning early she startled them all by bringing a newly-brightened and sharpened dah into camp. That day there was work to be done—the pitching of tents in a close little mass and the making of mud fortifications round them. The plague might or might not come; but it seemed a dead

certainty now that the unfriendly natives intended paying them a visit.

It became necessary to send out a reconnoitring party, to be back in camp at daybreak the following morning. Heatherleigh went, and as they did not return all next day, great anxiety was felt about them.

Powell thought Mary looked whiter than ever, and towards evening suggested riding out some little distance to see if he could pick up any trace of the missing men.

Colonel Barrow, who had taken temporary command, would not hear of it at first, but finally yielded.

After riding for several hours, Powell was almost blinded for a second or two by suddenly coming upon a wild flare of light in a clearing in the jungle. Mad shouts reached his ear; for a brief space he stood paralysed. Gaunt black moving forms showed horribly in the hideous light of the naked lamps they carried.

Powell dismounted, tied his horse to a tree, and stealthily made his way towards the scene of the revel, hoping that the darkness would conceal his presence.

All at once a sight met his eyes which seemed to make the blood freeze round his heart. Those yelling demons were dancing madly round the prostrate forms of the men who had been sent out to reconnoitre. Merciful heavens! How had they managed to tumble into this?

And where was Heatherleigh?

There, standing erect in front of him, his big form bound to a tree-trunk, his every limb rendered useless. Two women were perched on old ammunition boxes, poking at his face with curious long, sharp, pencil-like instruments.

The natives were shouting in a language of which Powell knew just sufficient to understand the work they were engaged upon.

"The gods do not know him! They have not marked him! Mark him, mother! Destroy the womanly smoothness of his face! Make him to look even as we do, who have been marked by the gods!"

Being marked by the gods meant that they were all frightfully pitted with small-pox. Powell's fascinated gaze was chained to the appalling scene for fully sixty seconds. Then he suddenly pulled himself together.

He must stop it somehow. The ghastly business must not continue. For little Mary's sake he must save Heatherleigh's life, and his good looks as far as possible.

Had he arrived too late? He had heard of this mysterious inoculation by native women to imitate small-pox—but never till now had he credited a single word of the report. Poor old Heatherleigh! He must be suffering positive agony. And little Mary—what would she say if she could see?

Powell felt absolutely hopeless when it came to the point of doing anything. Only strategy would avail, and no plan seemed likely to present itself to his brain. The women dug their instruments into Heatherleigh's face once more. Powell shivered convulsively as though he himself had felt the pain—then, ere he properly realised what he was doing, he rushed from the darkness right into their very midst.

They paused at his sudden appearance, and immediately saw the livid small-pox marks.

"Hold, mothers!" one of the ringleaders shouted. "Here is one whom the gods have marked, and he has dropped out of the sky. Let us hear what he has got to say?"

Powell's eyes met Heatherleigh's agonised ones. Clearly the poor chap had already had more than he could stand.

"Speak!" yelled the native. "If you have any message from the gods, make it now."

For another second Powell looked helpless, and felt worse; then an idea struck him.

"The gods are busy at the plague stations," he said, clearly, in a language they would nearly all understand. "But they marked me thus, so that you might know; then sent me from a far distance beyond the hills to warn you of your danger."

Fear crept into their dilated eyes. No one grinned or danced.

"Our danger?" they whispered, hoarsely. Powell heard them; and by degrees the great crowd closed in about him.

"Yes; your imminent danger," he continued in a loud distinct voice. "It was but one week yesterday since the bamboos in this district burst into flower. The gods have declared that before those flowers shall die the plague shall strike this place on its way across the plains. Look!" His voice grew louder. "Look, and look, and look!"

He pointed to some bamboos just over their heads, the blossoms on which already appeared to be withering.

"They die! They die!" screamed the hysterical natives. Their limbs were drunk with toddy, but their brains were clear.

"The gods have warned us! The plague will come. Fly! Fly from this spot, far beyond the hills; ay, even to the furthermost limits of our country. Fly! Fly!"

Pen could never describe the wild confusion which followed; but ere daybreak there was not a sign of them anywhere. They had indeed fled, and they took Powell with them, declaring that as the gods had revealed one message they would likewise reveal more. Heatherleigh and his men did their best to rescue him; but it was a poor best in their terribly exhausted condition.

They managed to crawl back to the camp on the hillside, and made their strange report.

Mary Barrow's thin little face flushed hotly when she heard that they had left Powell to the natives.

"You left him to such a fate as that?" she cried to Heatherleigh, looking straight into his eyes, and hardly noticing the scars on his face.

"How dare you leave him! Don't you know those awful natives will butcher him and tear him to pieces? How could you leave him? How could you?"

Heatherleigh gazed narrowly into her little wistful face.

"It's an awkward position to explain to you," he said slowly. "You see my first duty was to my men—I had to get them away; they were dying of exhaustion. We did our best, nevertheless, to get hold of poor old Powell; but the natives were too strong for us."

He turned on his heel and walked straight to his own tent. He sat on the bed for hours thinking, his face dripping with great beads of perspiration.

"I said I'd break her heart, and I've done it," ran the gist of his thoughts. "But, oh! I never thought to break it like that! Poor little woman! So all the time she loved Powell, and now she will never set eyes on him again. What a sorry little story! If I had but known I'd have got him back here somehow. I'd have sacrificed my own life and all the others to give him safely to her! Oh, oh! Poor little woman! How she will suffer, and it might have been different! Old Powell was right when he said she was too young to know her own mind at the time we spoke of love to her. If only she had been a little older things would have been so different. And now they are parted for ever. I have broken her heart in a way I never expected—and I would give my whole life to see her once more happy. Poor little soul!"

* * * * * *

A year had passed.

Heatherleigh had regained much of his good looks—he was once more the handsomest man in India. The marks were still on his face, but women never saw them; and men had discovered certain unexpected traits in his character which won their deep respect.

Mary Barrow still suffered from the loss of Powell, though no one guessed it save Heatherleigh. He knew, because he had broken her heart. And as he watched her day by day he felt he could have willingly parted with his own life to be able to tell her that Powell was not dead.

She had lost her reputation for mild flirtation. She had grown older.

One night, as Heatherleigh sat alone on the verandah of his bungalow—they had returned to the cantonment long since — he started slightly at hearing some one slowly ascending the verandah steps.

He looked up.

A face from the dead confronted him! A ghost stood there! The ghost of the man he wanted most on all the wide earth to see! The ghost of Powell!

"Merciful heavens!" he almost shouted.

"One mouthful of brandy, old chap," a low hollow voice whispered. "It has taken me all this time to escape from those demons, and I'm nearly done."

Heatherleigh forced him into a chair.

"Is it really you?" he shouted huskily. "Not a wraith? Your living self? It feels like you. Thank God, man, that you have come back."

He was thinking of Mary.

"How did you get here? What have you been doing? Here's the brandy! Quick! Swallow! Then talk!"

At the end of half an hour they were still talking.

"Mary loves you," Heatherleigh was persisting.

Powell would not hear it.

"How could she be expected to," he said, dejectedly, "with a chap like you knocking about. She told me herself that good looks count awfully with women."

"Well, they don't. She didn't mean it. We are both of us absolute ninnies when it comes to understanding the first beginnings of women. Now, then, old chap, there's the bath-room! Hurry up! Those old clothes will have to do—we've no time to get you any more. Make yourself as decent as you can with water and hair brushes, and then I'll take you over to the Barrows' bungalow myself, in case you miss your way. That poor little woman has been waiting long enough."

Powell rose sulkily.

"I don't believe it," he said. "She told me herself that she considered you the handsomest man in India."

"Come, old chap, hurry up! I'm not the handsomest man in India now, you know — those two native women spoiled my beauty for me. Lord! How they did hurt!"

"Look at your physique," Powell was starting off, but Heatherleigh forcibly helped him along to the bath-room.

"Why, I'm an undersized pigmy compared with you," he finished fifteen minutes later, when he had rejoined Heatherleigh.

His sudden appearance nearly took all the life out of poor little Mary.

"Didn't they kill you, after all?" she cried, with wide open eyes. "Didn't they butcher you and tear you to pieces? Did they let you come back? Did they let you come back to —me?"

"Mary, do you care?"

She nodded.

"I have wanted you terribly," she whispered.

"Well, I'm bothered if I can understand it," he ejaculated. "There's Heatherleigh—one of the biggest and——"

"That was just it," interrupted Mary. "That's just why I said No when you asked me to marry you. You see, I have always admired size, and Captain Heatherleigh happened to propose to me just before you did, and—and—well, never mind now. I shall never be so silly as to compare you with him again, for I love you more than all the world."

It is doubtful whether he yet realises it, though Mary strives every day to show him more plainly.

Anyway, he loves his little girl-wife with the great big heart of him, and though they are a small couple their happiness is gigantic.

THE McWILLIAMS SPECIAL.

BY F. H. SPEARMAN.

It belongs to the Stories That Never Were Told this of the McWilliams Special. But it happened years ago, and for that matter McWilliams is dead. It wasn't grief that killed him, either; though at one time his grief came uncommonly near killing us.

It is an odd sort of a yarn, too; because one part of it never got to headquarters, and another part of it never got from headquarters.

How, for instance, the mysterious car ever got started from Chicago on such a delirious schedule, how many men in the service know that even yet?

How, for another instance, Sinclair and Francis took the ratty old car reeling into Denver with the glass shrivelled, the paint blistered, the hose burnt, and a tire sprung on one of Five-Nine's drivers—how many headquarters slaves know that?

Our end of the story never went in at all. Never went in because it was not deemed — well, essential to the getting up of the annual report. We could have raised their hair; they could have raised our salaries; but they didn't; we didn't.

In telling this story I would not be misunderstood; ours is not the only line between Chicago and Denver: there are others, I admit it. But there is only one line (all the same) which could have taken the McWilliams Special, as we did, out of Chicago at four in the evening and put it in Denver long before noon the next day.

A communication came from a great La Salle Street banker to the president of our road. Next, the second vice-president heard of it; but in this way:

"Why have you turned down Peter McWilliams's request for a special to Denver this afternoon?" asked the president.

"He wants too much," came back over the private wire. "We can't do it."

After satisfying himself on this point the president called up La Salle Street.

"Our folks say, Mr. McWilliams, we simply can't do it."

"You must do it."

"When will the car be ready?"

"At three o'clock."

"When must it be in Denver?"

"Ten o'clock to-morrow morning."

The president nearly jumped the wire.

"McWilliams, you're crazy. What on earth do you mean?"

The talk came back so low that the wires hardly caught it. There were occasional outbursts such as, "situation is extremely critical," "grave danger," "acute distress," "must help me out."

But none of this would ever have moved the president had not Peter McWilliams been a bigger man than most corporations; and a personal request from Peter, if he stuck for it, could hardly be refused; and for this he decidedly stuck.

"I tell you it will turn us upside down," stormed the president.

"Do you recollect," asked Peter McWilliams, "when your infernal old pot of a road was busted eight years ago—you were turned inside out then, weren't you? and hung up to dry, weren't you?"

The president did recollect; he could not help recollecting. And he recollected how, about that same time, Peter McWilliams had one week taken up for him a matter of two millions floating, with a personal cheque; and carried it eighteen months without security, when money could not be had in Wall Street on government bonds.

Do you— that is, have you heretofore supposed that a railroad belongs to the stockholders? Not so; it belongs to men like Mr. McWilliams, who own it when they need it. At other times they let the stockholders carry it—until they want it again.

"We'll do what we can, Peter," said the president, desperately amiable. "Good-by."

I am giving you only an inkling of how it started. Not a word as to how countless orders were issued, and how countless schedules were cancelled. Not a paragraph about numberless trains abandoned in toto, and numberless others pulled and hauled and held and annulled. The McWilliams Special in a twinkle tore a great system into great splinters.

It set master mechanics by the ears and made reckless falsifiers of previously conservative trainmen. It made undying enemies of rival superintendents, and incipient paretics of jolly train-despatchers. It shivered us from end to end and from stem to stern, but it covered 1026 miles of the best steel in the world in rather better than twenty hours and a blaze of glory.

"My word is out," said the president in his message to all superintendents, thirty minutes later. "You will get your division schedule in a few moments. Send no reasons for inability to make it; simply deliver the goods. With your time report, which comes by Ry. M. S., I want the names and records of every member of every train crew and every engine crew that haul the McWilliams car." Then followed particular injunctions of secrecy; above all, the newspapers must not get it.

But where newspapers are there is no secrecy, as you very well know. In spite of the most elaborate precautions to preserve Peter McWilliams's secret—would you believe it?—the evening papers had half a column—practically the whole thing. Of course they had to guess at some of it, but for a newspaper story it was pretty correct, just the same. They had, to a minute, the time of the start from Chicago, and hinted broadly that the schedule was a hair-raiser; something to make previous very fast records previous very slow records. And—here in a scoop was the secret—the train was to convey a prominent Chicago capitalist to the bedside of his dying son, Philip McWilliams, in Denver. Further, that hourly bulletins were being wired to the distressed father, and that every effort of science would be put forth to keep the unhappy boy alive until his father could reach Denver on the Special. Lastly, it was hoped by all the evening papers (to fill out the half first-column scare) that sunrise would see him well on toward the gateway of the Rockies.

Of course the morning papers from the Atlantic to the Pacific had the story repeated; scare-headed, in fact, and the public were laughing at our people's dogged refusal to confirm the report or to be interviewed at all on the subject. The papers had the story, anyway. What did they care for our efforts to screen a private distress which insisted on so paralysing a time card for 1026 miles?

When our own, the West End of the schedule, came over the wires there was a universal, a vociferous, kick. Despatchers, superintendent of motive power, train-master, everybody, protested. We were given about seven hours to cover 400 miles—the fastest percentage, by the way, on the whole run.

"This may be grief for young McWilliams, and for his dad," grumbled the chief despatcher that evening, as he cribbed the press despatches going over the wires about the Special," but the grief is not theirs alone."

Then he made a protest to Chicago. What the answer was none but himself ever knew. It came personal, and he took it personally; but the manner in which he went to work clearing track and making a card for the McWilliams Special showed better speed than the train itself ever attempted—and he kicked no more.

After all the row, it seems incredible, but they never got ready to leave Chicago till four o'clock; and when the McWilliams Special lit into our train system, it was like dropping a mountain-lion into a bunch of steers.

Freights and extras, local passenger-trains even, were used to being sidetracked; but when it came to laying out the fliers and (I whisper this) the White Mail, and the Manila express, the oil began to sizzle in the journal-boxes. The freight business, the passenger traffic, the mail schedules of a whole railway system were actually knocked by the McWilliams Special into a cocked hat.

From the minute it cleared Western Avenue it was the only thing talked of. Divisional headquarters and car tink shanties alike were bursting with excitement.

On the West End we had all night to prepare, and at five o'clock next morning every man in the operating department was on edge. At precisely 3.58 a.m. the McWilliams Special stuck its nose into our division, and Foley—pulled off Number One with 466 — was heading her dizzy for McCloud. Already the McWilliams had made up thirty-one minutes on the one-hour delay in Chicago, and Lincoln threw her into our hands with a sort of "There, now! You fellows—are you any good at all on the West End?" And we thought we were.

Sitting in the despatcher's office, we tagged her down the line like a swallow. Harvard, Oxford, Zanesville, Ashton—and a thousand people at the McCloud station waited for six o'clock and for Foley's muddy cap to pop through the Blackwood bluffs; watched him stain the valley maples with a stream of white and black, scream at the junction switches, tear and crash through the yards, and slide hissing and panting up under our noses, swing out of his cab, and look at nobody at all but his watch.

We made it 5.59 a.m. Central Time. The miles, 136; the minutes, 121. The schedule was beaten—and that with the 136 miles, the fastest on the whole 1,026. Everybody in town yelled, except Foley; he asked for a chew of tobacco, and not getting one handily, bit into his own piece.

At that instant George Sinclair stepped out of the superintendent's office. He was done in a black silk shirt, with a blue silk four-in-hand streaming over his front—stepped out to shake hands with Foley while the hostler got 466 out of the way, and and another backed down with a new Sky-scraper, 509.

But nobody paid much attention to all this. The mob had swarmed round the ratty, old, blind-eyed baggage-car which, with an ordinary way-car, constituted the McWilliams Special.

"Now what does a man with McWilliams' money want to travel special in an old photograph gallery like that for?" asked Andy Cameron, who was the least bit huffed because he hadn't been marked up for the run himself. "You better take him in a cup of hot coffee, Sinkers," suggested Andy, to the lunch-counter boy. "You might get a ten-dollar bill if the old man isn't feeling too badly. What do you hear from Denver, Neighbour?" he asked, turning to the superintendent of motive power. "Is the boy holding out?"

"I'm not worrying about the boy holding out; it's whether Five-Nine will hold out."

"Aren't you going to change engines and crews at Arickaree?"

"Not to-day," said Neighbour, grimly; "we haven't time."

Just then Sinkers rushed at the baggage-car with a cup of hot coffee for Mr McWilliams. Everybody, hoping to get a peep at the capitalist, made way. Sinkers climbed over the train chests which were lashed on the platforms and pounded on the door. He pounded hard, for he hoped and believed that there was something in it. But he might have pounded till his coffee grew cold for all the impression it made on the sleepy McWilliams.

"Hasn't the man trouble enough without tackling your coffee?" sang out Felix Kennedy, and the laugh so discouraged Sinkers that he gave over and sneaked away. But at that moment the editor of the local paper came round the depot corner on the run. He was out for an interview, and, as usual, just a trifle late. However, he insisted on boarding the baggage-car to tender his sympathy to McWilliams.

The barricades bothered him, but he mounted them all, and began an emergency pound on the forbidding blind door. Imagine his feelings when the door was instantly opened by a sad-eyed man, who thrust a rifle as big as a pinch-bar under the editorial nose.

"My grief, Mr McWilliams," protested the interviewer, in a trembling voice, "don't imagine I want to hold you up. Our citizens are all peaceable—"

"Get out!"

"Why, man, I'm not even asking for a subscription; I simply want to ten—"

"Get out!" snapped the man with the gun; and in a foam the newsman climbed down. A curious crowd gathered close to hear an editorial version of the ten commandments revised on the spur of the moment. Felix Kennedy said it was worth going miles to hear. "That's the coldest deal I ever struck on the plains, boys," said the editor. "Talk about your bereaved parents. If that boy does not have a chill when that man reaches him, I miss my guess. He acts to me as if he were afraid his grief would get away before he got to Denver."

Meantime Georgie Sinclair was tying a silk handkerchief around his neck, while Neighbour gave him parting injunctions. As he put up his hand to swing into the cab the boy looked for all the world like a jockey with a toe in the stirrup. Neighbour glanced at his watch.

"Can you make it by eleven o' clock?" he growled.

"Make what?"

"Denver."

"Denver or the ditch, Neighbour," laughed Georgie, testing the air. "Are you right back there, Pat?" he added, as Conductor Francis strode forward to compare the Mountain Time.

"Right and tight, and I call it five-two-thirty now. What have you, Georgie?"

"Five-two-thirty-two," answered Sinclair, leaning from the cab window. 'And we're ready."

"Then go!" said Pat Francis, raising two fingers.

"Go!" cried Sinclair, and waved a backward smile to the crowd, as the pistons took the push and the escapes wheezed.

A roar went up. The little engineer shook his cap, and with a flirting, snaking slide the McWilliams Special drew slipping away between the shining rails for the Rockies.

Just how McWilliams felt we had no means of knowing; but we knew our hearts would not beat freely until his infernal Special should slide safely over the last of the 266 miles which still lay between the distressed man and his unfortunate child.

From McCloud to Ogallala there is a good bit of twisting and slewing; but looking east from Athens a marble dropped between the rails might roll clear into the Ogallala yards. It is a sixty-mile grade, the ballast of slag, and the sweetest, springiest bed under steel.

To cover those sixty miles in better than fifty minutes was simply like picking them off the ponies and Five-Nine breasted the Morgan divide, fretting for more hills to climb.

Five-Nine—for that matter any of the Sky-Scrapers—was built to balance ten or a dozen sleepers, and when you run them light they have a fashion of rooting their noses into the track. A modest up-grade just about counters this tendency; but on a slump and a stiff cliff and no tail on you feel as if the drivers were going to buck up on the ponies every once in a while. However, they never do, and Georgie whistled for Scarboro' junction and 180 miles and two waters, in 198 minutes out of McCloud; and looking happy, cussed Mr McWilliams a little, and gave her another hatful of steam.

It is getting down a hill like the

hills of the Mattaback Valley which pounds the rack out of shape at such a pace. Five-Nine lurched at the curves like a mad woman shook free with very fury, and if the baggage-car had not been fairly loaded down with the grief of McWilliams, it must have jumped the rails a dozen times in as many minutes.

Indeed, the fireman—it was Jerry MacElroy—twisting and shifting between the tender and the furnace, looked for the first time grave, and stole a questioning glance from the steam-gauge toward Georgie.

But yet he didn't expect to see the boy, his face set ahead and down the track, straighten so suddenly up and sink in the lever and reach at the instant for the air. Jerry felt her stumble under his feet — caught up like a girl in a skipping-rope — and grabbing a brace looked, like a wise stoker, for his answer out of his window. There far ahead it rose in hot curling clouds of smoke down among the alfalfa meadows and over the sweep of willows along the Mattaback River. The Mattaback bridge was on fire, with the McWilliams Special on one side and Denver on the other.

Jerry MacElroy yelled—the engineer didn't even look around; only whistled an alarm back to Pat Francis, eased her down the grade a bit, like a man reflecting, and watched the smoke and flames that rose to bar the McWilliams Special out of Denver.

Five-Nine skimmed across the meadows without a break, and pulled up a hundred feet from the burning bridge. It was an old Howe truss, and snapped like pop-corn as the flames bit into the rotten shed.

Pat Francis and his brakeman ran forward. Across the river they could see half a dozen section-men chasing wildly about, throwing impotent buckets of water on the burning truss.

"We're up against it, Georgie," cried Francis, despairingly.

"Not if we can get across before the bridge tumbles into the river," returned Sinclair.

"You don't mean you'd try it ?"

"Would I ? Wouldn't I ? You know the orders. That bridge is good for an hour yet. Pat, if you're game, I'll run it."

"Holy smoke !" mused Pat Francis, who would have run the river without any bridge at all if so ordered. "They told us to deliver the goods, didn't they ?"

"We might as well be starting, Pat," suggested Jerry MacElroy, who deprecated losing good time. "There'll be plenty of time to talk after we get into Denver, or the Mattaback."

"Think quick, Pat," urged Sinclair; his safety was popping murder.

"Back her up, then, and let her go," cried Francis. "I'd just as lief have that baggage-car at the bottom of the river as on my hands any longer."

There was some sharp tooting, then the McWilliams Special backed; backed away across the meadow, halted, and tooted hard enough to wake the dead. Georgie was trying to warn the section-men. At that instant the door of the baggage-car opened, a sharp-featured young man peered out.

"What's the row; what's all this screeching about, conductor ?" he asked, as Francis passed.

"Bridge burning ahead there."

"Bridge burning ?" he cried, looking nervously out. "Well, that's a deal. What are you going to do about it ?"

"Run it. Are you McWilliams ?"

"McWilliams? I wish I was for just one minute. I'm one of his clerks."

"Where is he?"

"I left him on La Salle Street yesterday afternoon."

"What's your name?"

"Just plain Ferguson."

"Well, Ferguson, it's none of my business, but as long as we're going to put you into Denver or into the river in about a minute, I'm curious to know what the blazes you're hustling along this way for."

"Me? I've got twelve hundred thousand dollars in gold coin in this car for the Sierra Leon National Bank—that's all. Didn't you know that five big banks there closed their doors yesterday? Worst panic in the United ; ates. That's what I'm here for, and five huskies with me eating and sleeping in this car," continued Ferguson, looking ahead. "You're not going to tackle that bridge, are you?"

"We are, and right off. If there's any of your huskies want to drop off, now's their chance," said Pat Francis, as Sinclair slowed up for his run.

Ferguson called out his men. The five with their rifles came cautiously forward.

"Boys," said Ferguson, briefly, "there's a bridge afire ahead. These guys are going to try to run it. It's not in your contract, that kind of a chance. Do you want to get off? I stay with the specie myself. You can do exactly as you please. Murray, what do you say?" he asked, addressing the leader of the force, who appeared to weigh about two hundred and sixty pounds.

"What do I say?" echoed Murray, with decision, as he looked for a soft place to alight alongside the track. "I say I'll drop out right here. I don't mind train-robbers, but I don't tackle a burning bridge; not if I know it," and he jumped off.

"Well, Peaters," asked Ferguson of the second man, coolly, "do you want to stay?"

"Me?" echoed Peaters, looking ahead at the mass of flame leaping upward—"me stay? Well, not in a thousand years. You can have my gun, Mr Ferguson, and send my cheque to 439, Milwaukee Avenue, if you please. Gentlemen, good-day." And off went Peaters.

And off went every last man of the valorous detectives except one lame fellow, who said he would just as lief be dead as alive anyway, and declared he would stay with Ferguson and die rich!

Sinclair, as he might not get another chance, was whistling sharply for orders. Francis ran forward breathless with the news.

"Coin? How much? Twelve hundred thousand. Whew!" cried Sinclair. "Swing up, Pat. We're off."

Five-Nine gathered herself with a spring. Even the engineer's heart quailed as they got headway. He knew his business, and he knew that if only the rails hadn't buckled they were perfectly safe, for the heavy truss would stand a lot of burning before giving way under a swiftly-moving train. Only, as they flew nearer, the blaze rolling up in dense volume looked horribly threatening. After all, it was foolhardy, and he felt it; but he was past the stopping now, and he pulled the choker to the limit. It seemed as if she never covered steel so fast. Under the head she now had the crackling bridge was less than five hundred—four hundred—three hundred—two hundred feet, and there was no longer time to think. With a stare Sinclair shut off. He wanted no push or pull on the track. The McWilliams Special was just a tremendous arrow, shooting through a truss of fire, and half a dozen appalled and speechless men on each side of the river waiting for the catastrophe.

Jerry MacElroy crouched low under the gauges. Sinclair jumped from his box and stood with a hand on the throttle and a hand on the air, the glass crashing around his head like hail. A blast of fiery air and flying cinders burnt and choked him. The big engine, alive with danger, flew like a great monkey along the writhing steel. So quick, so black, so hot the blast, and so terrific the leap, she stuck her nose into clean air before the men in the cab could even rise to it.

There was a heave in the middle like the lurch of a seasick steamer, and with it Five-Nine got her paws on to cool iron and solid ground, and the Mattaback and the blaze—all except a dozen tongues which licked the cab and the roof of the baggage-car a minute—were behind. Georgie Sinclair, shaking the hot glass out of his hair, looking ahead through his frizzled eyelids, and gave her a full head for the western bluffs of the valley, then looked at his watch.

It was the hundred-and-ninetieth mile-post just at her nose, and the dial read eight o'clock and fifty-five minutes to a second. There was an hour to the good and seventy-six miles and a water to cover; but they were seventy-six of the prettiest miles under steel anywhere, and Five-Nine reeled them off like a cylinder press. Eighty-nine minutes later Sinclair whistled for the Denver yards.

There was a tremendous commotion among the waiting engines. If there was one there were fifty big locomotives waiting to charivari the McWilliams Special. The wires had told the story in Denver long before, and as Five-Nine sailed ponderously up the gridiron every mogul, every consolidated, every ten-wheeler, every hog, every switch-bumper, every airhose screamed an uproarious welcome to Georgie Sinclair and the Sky-Scraper.

They had broken every record from McCloud to Denver; and all knew it; but as the McWilliams Special drew swiftly past, every last man in the yards stared at her cracked, peeled, blistered, haggard looks.

"What the deuce is the matter?" cried the depot-master, as Five-Nine swept splendidly up and stopped with her battered eye hard on the depot clock.

"Mattaback bridge is burnt; had to crawl over on the stringers," answered Sinclair.

"Where's McWilliams?"

"Back there sitting on his grief, I reckon."

While the crew went up to register, two big four-horse trucks backed up to the baggage-car, and in a minute a dozen men were rolling specie-kegs out of the door, which was smashed in, as being quicker than to tear open the barricades.

Sinclair, MacElroy, and Francis with his brakeman were surrounded by a crowd of railroad men. As they stood answering questions, a big prosperous-loking banker, with black rings under his eyes, pushed in towards them, accompanied by the lame fellow, who had missed the chance of a lifetime to die rich, and by Ferguson, who had told the story.

The banker shook hands with each one of the crews. "You've saved us, boys. We needed it; and needed it badly. There's a mob of five thousand of the worst-scared people in America clamouring at the doors now; and now we're fixed for every one of them. Come up to the bank. I want you to ride right up with the coin, every one of you."

It was an uncommonly queer occasion, but an uncommonly enthusiastic one. Fifty policemen made the escort and cleared the way for the trucks to pull up across the sidewalk, so the porters could lug the kegs of gold into the bank before the very eyes of the panic-stricken depositors.

In an hour the run was broken. But when the four railroad men left the bank, after all sorts of hugging by excited directors, each of them carried not only the blessings of the officials, but each in his vest pocket a cheque, every one of which discounted the biggest voucher ever drawn on the West End for a month's pay; though I violate no confidence in stating that Georgie Sinclair's was bigger than any two of the others. And this is how it happens that there hangs in the directors' room of the Sierra Leon National a very creditable portrait of the kid engineer.

Besides paying tariff on the specie, the bank paid for a new coat of paint for the McWilliams Special from caboose to pilot. She was the last train across the Mattaback for two weeks.

THE TRAPPINGS OF LIFE.

BY WINIFRED GRAHAM.

"To advance in life—in life itself—not in the trappings of it."—Ruskin.

I.

"Will you come up, please?"

The words were spoken by a small page-boy in the hall of the Hotel Metropole, London.

I felt decidedly nervous as I followed him into the lift. Being only twenty at the time and left recently an orphan, I must have looked rather pitiful, dressed in deep mourning, with pale cheeks and an anxious expression.

I was shown into a private sitting-room, where a strange lady greeted me. She was dark, and small, with very bright eyes and almost unnaturally red lips. Her fingers were heavily jewelled and felt cold to the touch.

"You are Miss Edgell, I suppose?" she said, motioning me to a chair. "I have your letter here."

Mrs Michael took up a black-edged sheet as she spoke, and glanced at the writing.

"Yes."

"Have you been out as a governess before?"

"No. My mother only died a month ago, and now I have to earn my own living."

"Poor girl!"

She fixed her keen, dark eyes upon me as if reading me through and through.

"You don't look much of a blue stocking, but that does not matter to me. You only wanted very youthful pupils, I understood, or I should not have placed myself in communication with you. I have one small boy, and he is very good, I can do anything with him. I have been trying to find a nice, pleasant young person who would be more of a companion for Archie. I don't think children ought to be crammed with learning."

A sigh of relief escaped me. I had so dreaded being questioned as to my capabilities.

Never having contemplated the role of governess, and with a natural antipathy to lesson books, I felt like a masquerader as the interview opened. Now I breathed more freely, while hope rose in my heart.

"Would you mind going abroad with us? You see, though my husband is English, I am a Russian, and we spend a good deal of our time at Petersburg."

The idea charmed me. I told her I had always longed to travel.

"I was afraid I might have some difficulty in getting an English girl to accompany us just now. There has been so much talk lately about the disturbed state of Russia. For myself, I never pay any heed to these commotions."

I remember, though it is many, many years ago, the strange thrill of excitement I felt at her words. I had inwardly rebelled against the deadly monotony and routine of my fate. Here was a chance in a thousand, an opportunity of seeing the world, and escaping from the old country, that held only sad associations for me.

"I am not in the least frightened," I said.

I fancied I detected a half smile flit over her face.

"Perhaps you have not read the papers lately since your trouble. It is sometimes like that; people lose interest in outside things."

I confessed I could think of nothing but plans for my own future, when the necessity for action arose.

"It's these secret societies," she exclaimed, "that are a perfect terror to the country! They have agents who murder everyone desirable to remove. What with the assassinations of state officers, and whole towns being set on fire——"

"Oh yes, I know of that," I said, eager to disown my supposed ignorance. "But surely things have quieted down by now."

"To a certain extent—because the people are continually bullied by the police and crushed by officials. They can hardly bear the treatment, so rigorous has it become. Scarcely a mouse can move in a Russian town to-day without a written permit. But I must not drift on to the subject, or I shall get carried away; and we Russians have to be very careful of our tongues."

So saying, she talked about terms, and various duties in regard to Archie, which shall not be chronicled here. Suffice it to add, that when I left the hotel I was no longer a free agent, but engaged at Archie's governess, and partial companion to his foreign mother.

II.

It certainly seemed a delightful situation, and as the bustle and excitement of foreign travel was entirely new to me, I appreciated my good fortune accordingly.

We journeyed in most luxurious fashion, Mr and Mrs Michael, a cousin of his, Harcourt Scott, myself, and the small boy, an independent little fellow, with his mother's bright eyes.

Mr Scott was a man of about thirty, with a short pointed beard, and well moulded features. I liked his kind, low voice, as he conversed in the train.

He told me stories of Russia, and kept Archie quiet when I grew sleepy and tired with talking.

To a girl who has never been further than Cornwall for a summer holiday, a journey of three or four days seems an eternity.

I felt as if my kind employers and Mr Scott were quite old friends by the time we reached Petersburg.

"You must be glad to see your native land again," I said to Mrs Michael.

"A queer look came in her dark eyes.

"My husband has business here," she replied. "I needs must come. I have no love for this great city, though I was born in it. All my people are dead, killed, frozen, by their country's cold heart. But it is a long story. My father did much for the state, yet received no gratitude or recompense. It is often the case with great public benefactors. I despise and hate ingratitude, the crying sin of the age."

Her words came sharply. She looked a woman capable of revenge.

"How sad for you!" I murmured.

She smiled—a bitter flickering smile.

I had always heard her speak lightly, and the sudden change of tone surprised me. I felt there were depths in her character that a mere outsider like myself could never probe. From the first I had a vague suspicion of something queer, inexplicable, uncanny, about this woman. I often could not look her in the eyes without feeling dizzy. Their brightness dazzled me. Archie simply worshipped his mother, and would crawl into her arms, falling asleep while she crooned a little song. I had never seen him disobey her, through all the fatigues of the journey, though he contradicted me flatly on several occasions, for which indiscretion Mr Scott severely reprimanded him.

As soon as we were settled in Petersburg I began my daily task of instilling knowledge into my young charge. The lesson hours were short, and we spent the best part of our day out walking.

There was so much to amaze and interest me in this magnificent city on the banks of the Neva, the splendour of which all but took my breath away at times.

I noticed that Mrs Michael hardly ever left the house, and wondered at such apathy in so young a woman. She talked seldom, and her brow was perpetually furrowed as if from thought, or some hidden anxiety.

Mr Michael and his cousin were not often at home, so she consequently spent the greater part of her time in solitude.

"Are you unwell?" I said one day.

"No," she replied quickly. "Why do you ask?"

"I thought you were not quite yourself. Forgive me; but you look pale, and very thin."

"Perhaps I am bored, it is the wrong time of the year for this place. You cannot imagine what a gay sight the river will be in a few months' time, with people skating and the sleighs. There are so many ways of amusing oneself then. The iceboats are grand, glorious, fitted up with sails just like yachts, and the ice-hills or flying mountains make splendid going. We glide down them on sleighs at a tremendous pace, and the force carries us up another."

I could see, as she talked, that her thoughts were far away from the scenes she was describing.

"Is Archie in your room?" I queried; "it is time we went out for a walk."

"Yes; I will fetch him. Poor little fellow, he fell asleep on my sofa; he is such a sleepy child."

"It is rather unnatural," I said; "boys of his age don't, as a rule, get tired in the daytime."

"Unnatural!" she said, fretfully. "Really Miss Edgell, I wish you would not suggest that Archie is different to other children."

I felt snubbed, and resorted to silence; but I noticed my pupil seemed singularly dazed and stupid as I dressed him for our walk.

Before we started, Mrs Michael joined us, carrying a little knapsack of Archie's in her hand, which she strapped over the boy's shoulder.

"In case you should get hungry before lunch, I've put up some biscuits for you, darling," she said, kissing him. "But don't eat them till you turn to come back, for it isn't very long since breakfast." Then she added to me in a whisper: "Don't let him open it too soon, as I've put some sweets in for a surprise. You can't know your way about yet, Miss Edgell, but Archie is as good as a guide. He has so many favourite walks."

With these words she watched us go.

Hand in hand we walked down the Nevskoi Prospekt, the finest street in the city, planted with great trees and 130 feet broad—a street of enormous palaces, churches, government buildings, and shops.

My pupil led me along at a sharp pace. I wanted to pause and look at the queer lights and shadows on the Nikolayevski Bridge, which joins the English quay to the other shore. This great bridge is unique, being built of granite, while the rest are only boats. Archie seemed to fear I was going in that direction, and tugged my arm.

"This way," he said, "this way; such a pretty walk."

I allowed myself to be guided, in consequence of Mrs Michael's advice; but when eventually Archie turned into a lovely "prospekt" (street) with a deadly dull outlook I grew uneasy and protested.

"I don't want to walk here," I said; "it isn't pleasant. We may lose ourselves."

Archie was stubborn, and, regardless of the remark, stumped on.

I grew angry, turning sharply round.

"How dare you disobey me—didn't you hear what I said? Really, Archie, if you can't do what you are told——"

But before I could finish the sentence, he had slipped his hand out of mine, and hurried ahead, running at a slow trot.

I followed hastily, unaccountably frightened; I knew not why.

"Will you stop Archie!" I panted peremptorily.

I was just upon him, when a tall figure in the ordinary dress of a Russian peasant came between us. The costume is very simple—a hat without a brim, a sheepskin coat, and coarse, baggy trousers tucked into large boots. But even in that moment I guessed he was not a moujik. He was hardly dirty enough, and his beard was not quite uncombed as the beards of these peasants. He caught hold of Archie, laying one hand on his shoulder and thrusting the other into his satchel, from which he seized a packet. I tried to interfere, but a second later the man had vanished.

"He has stolen my biscuits, he must have been awfully hungry," said Archie.

"How dreadful!" I cried. "Come home at once."

I was shaking with fear, and hurried into the more frequented thoroughfares, holding the boy tightly by the wrist.

A number of grey-coated soldiers passed us going for exercise in the Champ de Mars. The sight of them somewhat calmed my feelings, but, still too frightened to walk, I hailed a "drojki" (Russian cab), and drove back to the house. The driver, or "iss 'vosch," as he is called, was a mere bundle of rags.

"Why wouldn't you obey me, Archie, I said, as we rattled along. "I can't bring you out again if you behave like that."

The boy looked up at me with quivering lips.

"I don't know! I don't know!" he said, and burst into tears.

I put my arm round my refractory charge, and drew him nearer. Somehow I felt sorry for the child.

When we got in I told Mrs Michael exactly what had happened. She put off the subject lightly.

"Some of these wretched moujiks are almost starving," she said. "They would do anything for food—even robbing a child."

She did not scold Archie for his disobedience to me, but petted him more than usual. She put him to bed herself that evening, kissing him many times.

After dinner Mrs Michael went to her room to write letters—her husband was dining out—so I found myself left alone in the drawing room with Mr Scott.

As usual, he drew me into conversation, asking me what I had done during the day, and whether I was tiring of Petersburg. I told him the incident of the morning, watching his face rather more shrewdly than usual. It grew strangely anxious as I detailed the adventure.

"I'm very glad you told me," he said, "very glad."

"Why?" I queried. "There was nothing in it, after all—a hungry moujik after biscuits."

"Child," he said, addressing me for the first time in this familiar tone, "don't believe that; it was only Vera's story. The thing is not easy to explain, but I feel as if something were brewing in the air. I think it would be as well if you went back to England."

I stared at him amazed.

"I—can't—go!" I stammered.

"If it is only a matter of money," he urged, "let me help you."

I felt the colour rise to my face.

"Oh, no, no! Why should I go?"

He paused before replying.

"I will speak plainly, and Heaven forgive me if I am wronging my cousin's wife. He, poor fellow, is taken up with his own affairs; he does not know what these Russians are—the women especially—when they chafe under a grievance. Vera considers her family have been wronged by the State; even to speak of this skeleton in her cupboard turns her livid with passion. Spirits such as hers make for anarchism.

The very word chilled my blood.

"My suspicions have been aroused seriously of late," he continued; "but I have said nothing. What happened to-day confirms my suspicions. In this country any letters are liable to be opened by officials; nothing

secret can go safely through the post. The passing of papers of importance becomes a science, and it looks as if Vera were carrying it to an unheard-of extent. She confessed to me once that she frequently mesmerises her child in order to have him entirely under her influence. Her will power doubtlesaly guided him to-day, and Heaven knows what the supposed packet of biscuits contained. Vera must have been in league with the man, or she would have been furious at a stranger laying hands on her boy."

"But surely," I gasped, "Mrs Michael wouldn't——"

"Don't trust in her an inch," added the man; "I believe her to be thoroughly unscrupulous—a woman who would not spare a young girl like you. That is why I advise—no, I beg of you to go."

I shook my head. I think I never felt more brave, more determined, than at this moment.

"Whatever happens, I shall remain," I replied. "But I thank you for your warning, and only hope it may prove groundless."

III.

Some days after this event, towards evening, I was seated alone with Mrs Michael. Archie had gone to tea with some small friends, accompanied by a maid.

We were quite by ourselves in the house, except for the servants. Imagine, then, our astonishment when a perfect stranger was ushered into our presence—not a gentleman!

When the door closed behind him, he stated his business shortly in broken English.

His statement seemed to paralyse Mrs Michael.

The house, he told us, had fallen under suspicion, and he was in authority to search the premises and its inmates.

At first she indignantly denied any such authority, but our alarming visitor politely informed us he came from the head of the police, quietly, in order to cause no scandal should their suspicions prove unfounded. He then produced official papers, before which the unfortunate woman blanched to a deathly hue. I shall never forget the look of desperation in her face, nor the sudden cunning, born of distraction, which crept into her eyes.

She sidled nearer to me, as if seeking protection. I felt her clinging to my dress, while I watched the man rummaging in her desk, turning out drawers and private boxes.

Suddenly she advanced a step forward, saying something to him in Russian.

He turned quickly, addressing me in English harshly.

His demand seemed reasonable enough, merely a request that I would turn out my pockets.

With the haste of innocence I proceeded to obey.

I thought as I felt my gown that I must have placed a copy-book of Archie's there. Pulling out the contents—something new to me—a plan drawn in red ink with queer signs at the corners, fell on the floor.

The man seized it eagerly, while a cry of righteous horror escaped Mrs Michael.

"So you are the traitor—the spy!" she exclaimed, turning to me with a look of withering scorn. "It is through you that an honest house has fallen into disrepute."

I was too taken aback to utter a word, for I saw through her trick plainly. To save herself she had passed the danger on to me. I knew now why she clung about my dress before speaking to the detective in Russian.

"If you will come with me quietly," said the man, showing a pair of handcuffs, "I'll not use these."

I shudderingly assented by a gesture of my head, already picturing the horrors of Siberia. My cloak and hat lay on the sofa, just where I had thrown them when coming in an hour since. I put them on mechanically, and followed the man.

A cab was waiting outside, into which he hustled me, and we drove away in the dark together.

IV.

My escort remained silent till the driver pulled up outside a large building which looked like a hotel. Then he bade me follow him through a side door up a staircase.

A moment later I found myself alone locked into a cheerful room where a fire blazed, for it was already getting cold.

I stood petrified, staring at the dancing flames, with the terror of this great calamity turning me faint and sick.

Presently the door opened again—a cry of joyful wonder escaped my lips as I rushed forward to greet my friend and counsellor, Harcourt Scott. He was holding the fatal plan in his hand and smiling reassuringly.

"You've had a narrow escape," he said, "and I've caught my lady with her own weapons! Poor child, don't look so frightened. I think I have saved both you and her."

"What does it all mean?" I asked bewildered.

He drew a chair forward, into which I gladly sank.

In a few brief words he explained the mystery.

"I scented the danger," he said, "and determined to step in before the authorities. I happened to know that the police have the Michael's house under their supervision, and propose to raid it to-night, ransacking every corner from roof to basement. I guessed Vera would make you her victim—that the papers would probably be discovered in your boxes. She is bad enough even for that! I have risked my life to ascertain her secret; made myself a partial confederate with her allies. This plan in red was all the olice had to find. I saw 'all,' but it is enough to send her to Siberia."

As he spoke he dropped the thing into the heart of the great fire, watching it burn.

"And the man," I asked, "who arrested me?"

"He is my old and faithful servant, bless him! A fellow of strong courage, tact, and a consummate actor. I was forced to leave that part of the matter entirely in his hands. He has gone back now, to take a written explanation from me to my cousin, who, I fancy, will bring his wife out of Russia immediately. She has done harm enough already."

What I said, how I thanked him for my deliverance, had better be left to the reader's imagination, for I cannot remember now what words I used. It is more than twenty years ago.

"You must own at last," he said, smiling, "that I know best, and let me take you back to England."

What could I do? I was stranded alone in Russia without money, ignorant of the language, and with my only woman friend turned to an enemy—so I gladly accepted his kindly escort, the "faithful servant" fetched my luggage, and together we journeyed back to safer shores.

If propriety is shocked at the conclusion of my story, I am very sorry. Perhas my readers will be interested to hear I am now Mrs Harcourt Scott.

I sometimes meet my cousin Vera Michael in London, but we don't bow. This is Harcourt's wish.

(The End.)

CONCERNING LITTLE TEMPERS.

We call them "little" tempers, but without much reason, for they do big mischief, most of the time. And it is so very, very easy to fall into the habit of indulging one's self in these little tempers and tantrums, and so almost impossible to break oneself of the habit afterwards. It is the newly-married Edwin and Angelina whom I have again more particularly in my mind this week, for I have seen so many young people drift apart, of late years, simply and solely because one or other of them would give way to these small irritabilities and attacks of crossness, and because there seemed to be no one at hand to point out to them how utterly and entirely foolish they both were. And when I say "drift apart," I do not mean for a moment that they have drifted into the misery and disgrace of the divorce court. Nor do I mean even that they have said to each other, "Very well, then, as we can't agree, you had better go your way, and I will go mine." Things do not often come to that pitch, between ordinarily well-brought-up and well-meaning young married people, but I know that many of my readers will understand what I mean when I urge them to be more careful how they quarrel. I would beg of them, earnestly, to think many times before they run a risk of widening that "little rift within the lute," about which, no doubt, Angelina has often sung to Edwin, in the happy days of courting, without imagining for one moment, that the "slowly widening" could ever have any possible application to her own case.

It is the very slowness of the widening that makes it so difficult to perceive the breach, and, therefore, would I again urge upon the young wives among my readers to be careful how they allow these "differences" to begin. As I said some few weeks since, men require to be managed very carefully, and the happiest women are undoubtedly those who lead their husbands gently in the way that they should go, without any suspicion crossing the minds of the said husbands to the effect that they are being led. A wife who is anxious to get her own way, and who is persuaded that it is the right way, must never open proceedings with a frown and a pout. Should Edwin come home tired and disagreeable the best plan is for you to ignore the fact altogether. Wear your sunniest smile and your prettiest gown when you find your other (I will not say better) half disposed to be grumpy. Tell him of anything amusing that may have happened during the day, and beyond and above all things, do not bore him to death with long and weary anecdotes as to the bad behaviour of the servants. It cannot be a matter of vital interest to him that Jane cleaned the doorstep so disgracefully that it looked as though no hearth-stone had been near it for a week. Nor can you expect him to feel wildly excited when you graphically relate to him all the suspicions you have felt as to what the cook can possibly have done with that last shilling's worth of new-laid eggs.

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If you pour forth such trivial woes as these, night after night, at dinner and afterwards, into Edwin's ear, can you wonder that he gets bored, and that he snubs you, perhaps, with a weary, "Oh, yes, my dear; but surely you told me all that yesterday?" Then you are offended and hurt; you sulk a little, perhaps. Edwin gets really angry, lights his cigar, slams the hall-door, and goes off to finish the evening at his club. Out of such silly little tempers as these, serious quarrels have often grown, and therefore would I most earnestly beg the young wives among my readers to avoid most carefully these small bickerings, and trivial offences and differences of opinion. Much must depend on temperament, of course, for some women are lucky enough to be born with a bright and sunny disposition, and a temper of smiling good humour, which even the crossest and most disagreeable man cannot ruffle or disturb, but these are, unfortunately, few and far between.

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The man who is naturally good-tempered and patient, I have yet to meet, though such a creature may perhaps exist somewhere. That there are men who have trained themselves to appear good tempered, I am willing to admit, but in many cases it is the wife who has to exert all the patience, and the husband who provokes her and begins the little quarrels which often end so disastrously. The moral that I am most anxious to press upon Angelina, however, is not influenced in any great degree by the admitted evil temper of man, or by the fact that it may have been Edwin who began the quarrel. It matters not who began it, so long as it is not allowed to go on. Let Angelina even go so far as to admit that she was entirely in the wrong, even though she may make to herself a mental reservation to the effect that she was right. At the same time, if you are anxious that any real happiness should fall to your share in your married life, dear Angelina, you must stop the quarrel at all costs, and at once, and refrain from ever alluding again to the argument that caused it, either in the way of triumph or resignation. Leave well alone, and change the subject if you value your future peace of mind. Remember that little tempers sometimes lead to very serious quarrels, and agree quietly to differ with Edwin, while you allow him to think that he has got the better of the argument. Such an ostensible defeat as this is more valuable to Angelina; could she only be brought to realise the fact that any triumph gained by nagging, and that senseless determination to have the last word, which is supposed to be so essentially feminine a failing. I say "supposed to be," with all due deference to masculine opinion, although I have known cases where Edwin would simply do anything in the world sooner than allow Angelina to enjoy that delightful privilege.

THE MATER.

Topics of the Week.

THE BRAVE BOERS.

The Natal authorities did very properly in urging the citizens of Ladysmith to make no demonstration when the Boer prisoners, taken at Elands Langte, were marched into the town. The captives, as was pointed out, were brave men, and it would indeed have been a sorry thing for the civilians to triumph over them on such an occasion. Of course, it would never have been necessary to address the same caution to the soldiers. Not only would the chivalric etiquette of war condemn the display of any braggart feeling, but it is singularly unlikely that the men would have the least inclination to treat their captives otherwise than with respect. For it is impossible that in a true soldier the soldier-like qualities of these farmers should be unappreciated. Whatever the justice of the cause for which they have taken up arms, no one can question the valour they have displayed. One cannot but admire the stand they have made. It is indeed extraordinary that such a small nation could have dared to offer the resistance it is now doing to the overwhelming might of a Power like Great Britain. I cannot call to mind the case of a single people in similar circumstances who could present such a warlike front as the Boers are doing. They are a mere handful of rough farmers with no pretence to military training or military organisation, and yet there they are giving battle to the Power whose ships are on every sea, and whose flag has won its way to the uttermost ends of the earth. Where is the civilian community of the same size as the South African Republic that could equip an army like that the Boers have? Could we in New Zealand, with a population many times the size of that of the Transvaal, raise a body of men who were willing and able to try conclusions with a trained army supplied with all the latest devices of science for destroying life? It is more than doubtful if we could. Certainly, from no section of our population equal to the population of the Republic could we get together a force of men of the same number and fighting calibre that Joubert commands. Imagine the province and city of Auckland, or the Province and City of Wellington being required to furnish a fighting force of some ten thousand men. They would do it, I doubt not, for there is plenty of courage and all that kind of thing among us. But I would not give much for the efficiency of the body when brought face to face with a modern army. What a terrible ordeal to meet must be the up-to-date artillery? Even tried soldiers may shun the terrible rain of the Maxims and the death-dealing Lyddite shells, and how would poor raw civilians feel under the same circumstances? Then all honour to the Boers for their gallantry, which, all things considered, is consummate. We have to beat them, but even as we do so our admiration for their fighting qualities will suffer no diminution.

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AN AMERICAN VIEW OF THE COLONIAL CONTINGENTS.

Many of the American newspapers appear to be unfavourable to England in regard to the latter's interference in the Transvaal, and endeavour to make it appear that the Old Country has neither the sympathy of the world nor of her colonies in the step she has taken. It is easy for the irresponsible American editor to declare that the world does not view with any particular favour the British policy in South Africa. I do not suppose that a nation which has so many rivals jealous of its greatness can expect very much favour or sympathy from them, and it is to a large extent safe to say that they are hostile to any course that promises to augment her prestige and power. But it is hardly so easy to prove that the colonies are opposed to the war, especially in view of the fact that they are all sending volunteers to fight in the ranks of the Imperial army in South Africa. The irresponsible American editor is not likely, however, to let facts stand in his way if he has a theory to prove or a doctrine to preach, and this is how he disposes of the loyal action of the colonies. "We cannot say," says one omniscient member of the tribe, "that even the sentiments of the British colonies is favourable, the offer of a regiment here and there summing up the display of public interest and perhaps evincing no more than a desire to get rid of an undesirable part of the population by making it food for powder." Ye gods! and this is how history is made and taught in America! I make little question that that editor in some dim convolution of his brain has an idea that Australasia is the abode of convicts and their disreputable descendants, and the brilliant idea has occurred to him of discounting our loyalty by assuming that our contingents were composed of the scum of an extremely tainted population. The reckless ignorance here displayed is not without its humorous aspect to be sure, but I would protest, if it were any use to do so, against the wholesale libel of which we are the victims. Just fancy what conception the readers of that paragraph must carry away with them of the character of the contingenst, and how, when the latter are mentioned in the cablegrams the misled American mind will picture a brigade of scoundrels.

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THE ADULTERATION OF NEWS.

No doubt it is to some extent unavoidable, but there is something extremely exasperating in the utter unreliability of the war cables despatched from London and the Cape in the matter of the Boer war. One's feelings are, for example, harrowed over a supposed inhuman action in the destroying of a train of women and children by the Boers, and scarcely has the relief of finding that this precious piece of news is incorrect been experienced, before we are—in spite of our patriotism—shocked at the slaughter of 1500 Boers entrapped on to Lyddite mines. There is something which does not quite fit in with our notions of fighting in this item, and we are relieved to discover later that it was 50, and not 1500 Boers who were killed, and that the happy despatch was effected, not with Lyddite mines, but with a dynamite train. Proper telegraphic communication with the front being impossible, the news is no doubt brought down by natives, and gains so much in transit as to smother the original grains of truth it contained. But some sort of effort should be made to guage the probabilities of a story before flushing it over the world. The contradiction of a report such as this is usually met by the public with a somewhat contemptuous animadversion on the publishing paper. For in this as in so many other cases the public deliberately puts its ostrich-like head in the sand and refuses to see that itself and itself alone is to blame in this matter. "Give us news," is the cry of the multitude on occasions of this sort. "If you don't, your paper is no good." Therefore every correspondent knows that his primary object is to get news—correct if possible—but if not—well—news. The whole tendency of our day is for sensationalism as against accuracy. It is occasionally possible for a daily paper to provide both, but this is not the rule. Yet if the editor of one of our leading colonial dailies were to insist on substantiating the correctness of all the war messages and important cables he received, he would not merely drop hopelessly out of the journalistic race, but would infallibly be voted a crank. Nowadays we do everything in a hurry and require our news in a hurry also. Absolute accuracy under the circumstances is not to be hoped for. But at the same time one cannot help sighing over the fact and looking hopefully forward to the time when the inevitable reaction must follow, and thep ublic absolutely refuse sensation at the price of correctness. Something of the sort appears to be setting in already in England. The new journalism, which at the beginning did good work in arousing a spirit of enterprise in the collection of news, has of late years decided that a "live paper" must "go one better" than this, and that if there be no news, why news must be created. As everyone knows, the gentle art of manufacturing sensations has reached such a point in the States that the newspapers have ceased altogether to be regarded as journals or records, and are recognised as the highest modern type of imaginative fiction. The evening journals in London have so well followed the lead of their trans-Atlantic cousins in this respect that a very strong feeling of disgust is now being manifested with regard to them and their methods. So unblushing is their effrontery in the exaggeration or manufacture of news items, so blatant their vulgarity in the way of sensational headings and catch penny posters, that it is now proposed in all seriousness that the adulteration of news shall be placed on a similar footing with the adulteration of food. That the editor who outrageously expands a telegram to make a sensation out of it shall be as liable to prosecution as the grocer who sands his sugar, and that the selling of a paper on a wilfully created bogus sensation shall be accounted equal to obtaining money under false pretences. There is reason in this if one comes to think of it. No doubt the editors concerned would say "How on earth can I help it if a subordinate makes a good story out of a mere nothing?" The grocer has not infrequently attempted the same defence, but of course it never avails. That it is becoming necessary we all know; we can even out here see the reflection of the evil in the vagaries of the cable agents who are perpetually sending out items at night for the pleasure of contradicting them next day. Journalism "a la Yankee" has never, I am glad to say, been taken up in this colony. A tendency to run riot over head lines is as far as we have got here, and long may it remain so, for most fully do I agree with the rather pungent remarks of a most able advocate of the putting down of news manufacture and sensation mongering, when in speaking of the "new journalism," he remarks: "We may set it down as a distinct offset to the advantages of civilisation. Its daily practice of the art of forgery in the production of bogus foreign telegrams is not to its credit. Its cultivation of the art of lying is not to its credit. Its fomentation of popular hysterics isn ot to its credit. Its support of the cheaper forms of snobbery by the creation of a thousand and one tinpot reputations is not to its credit. Its ignorance of the language, by the degradation of which it thrives, is not to its credit. There is nothing to its credit but its balance at the bank, but since it lives for that and that alone, it is naturally satisfied if it gets it. No man's necessities outrun his desires."

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THE MEMBERS' RETURN.

When Mr Morrison, the member for Caversham, returned after the rising of Parliament to the bosom of his constituency he received a royal welcome, and I understand that it is intended to give him a banquet and a purse of sovereigns. Mr Millar, another member, is also to be treated in a somewhat similar manner by his constituencies. But, alas, such gratitude and generosity is the exception rather than the rule. It is rare, indeed, that the returning member finds himself in the position of the Prodigal Son. Much more frequently he has to reckon with a constituency that has many faults to find with his conduct in the House, that is sulky or indifferent to him. So that most members have misgivings when, at the close of a session, they turn their faces homewards. Many endeavour to slink unobserved to their abodes, and to make a great pretence of courting obscurity, because they know perfectly well, the rogues, that there is not the least chance of anyone troubling his or her head about their return. The homecoming of members at the close of a Parliament, when the coming election is looming large as at present, is a much more momentous business than the return at the end of an ordinary session. Then the representatives come back to rest, but at the close of a final session, they have, as a rule, got to fight. I have often thought how trying it must be for the returned member on such occasions. During his long absence in Wellington, —unless like Mr Morrison he has made himself much and often heard in Parliament—the chances are that he has become half forgotten. Then other candidates, rivals, that is, have come into the field, and diverted the mind of the fickle multitude to themselves. His face has become comparatively unfamiliar to the man in the street, and when he goes abroad among the electors he feels somewhat of a stranger. You might compare him to the aged Ulysses returning to find his faithful

Penelope (in this case his constituency) besieged by numerous suitors. And unfortunately he can have no such assurance as the classical wanderer had that Penelope has been true to him. What wonder then that doubt, distrust, suspicion, by turns lay hold on a mind already jaded by the work and worries of the session, and, worse than these, the thought that another was undermining his influence and taking away his political character while he was absent in Wellington. You will generally remark about the member back from a final session a more or less nervousness of manner, and a marked desire to ingratiate himself with the electors. Of course, all candidates evince the same desire, but I fancy the old member much more than the new, for the former feels that he has not only got to create a good impression, but has also in all likelihood several bad ones to remove. Of course, when one is met with a purse of sovereigns and a banquet, the case is quite different. Then the member strikes the stars with his sublime head; but, as I said at the outset, how rare, how very rare, are these tokens of gratitude and confidence.

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THE MAN WHO CONFESSED.

It is to be doubted whether, at the present moment, the death of even the most eminent literary man would arouse even a momentary flicker of interest, so engrossed is public attention with matters more sensational. It is not therefore to be wondered at that the demise of Mr Grant Allen which occurred this week was passed over entirely without remark as a minor cable brevity of extremely minor importance. Yet perhaps there is more that calls for remark in the consideration of the work and character of the deceased scientist and novelist than would be the case with men of greater eminence in literature.

It has been the bitter experience of many brilliant and clever men to find their best and worthiest efforts unappreciated. It has fallen to fewer to discover that though the public would have none of their good work it was willing to take any quantity of what was distinctly inferior, and of very mediocre quality. Mr Grant Allen was one of these men. Recognised as one of the most able and lucid writers on certain scientific subjects, he found that this work—undoubtedly his best—was appreciated only by the minority who are interested in such matters.

A chance incursion into the realms of fiction revealed to him that he possessed the faculty of telling a story. He at first tried to make his stories what he thought they ought to be, but as he has told us, he found that the more he wrote down to the public taste the better it paid him. Other men have discovered the same thing before, but so far as my recollection goes Grant Allen was the first and is the only man who has openly said so. "Much of what I write is rotten," he said, "much is vulgar in style and conception, much is utterly unworthy of me and my powers, but you prefer rottenness, and like vulgarity, and whereas you refuse to buy my best, you tumble over each other in haste to purchase what I know to be bad, but which has been specially manufactured to meet your degenerate tastes." This cynical declaration was made very much more forcefully, and at considerable length, in one of the foremost critical magazines or reviews, the "Nineteenth Century" if I mistake not. Nothing could have been more contemptuous than the tone the novelist adopted towards his patrons. That he utterly despised them and their tastes he reiterated again and again, but since by pandering to their appetite he could secure to himself luxury and leisure in which to write other and better works he would do so, and having obtained goods and leisure would issue now and again, he said, "hill top messages," which would be his best, but which he felt sure would not pay. Naturally the article caused much comment at the time, most of it fiercely antagonistic to Mr Allen. His attitude in the matter was denounced as "a pose" by the weightier and wiser critics, and the younger men shrieked in horror at such a shameless confession of the worship of mammon, and said that it was the bounden duty of every man to give the public only what he knew to be his best even if he had to starve. And of course everyone agreed with these beautiful sentiments. None of us would dare to deny our duty. In theory of course we must all give the public what we know in our heart of hearts to be best for it, but alas and alack, how many of us dare to do it? How many even of our parsons dare denounce the shifty conduct, the meanness, the roguery which just escapes that name, which are daily practised by the most respectable members of their flock under the shamefully abused excuse that "business is business?" They know that under cover of "business is business" things are done which merit the most scathing condemnation, yet they never attempt it. They would pretend ignorance, or make some well sounding excuse if you pressed them, but at the bottom of it all is visible expediency. "It doesn't pay" to put the matter in all its ugly vulgarity. And it is the same throughout, the press not by any means excepted. Grant Allen openly admitted to this bowing down in the house of Rimmon, we do it and deny it, there is all the difference. Probably it is inevitable; it is part of evil of our nature, and it is impossible for the majority of us to overcome it. There are of course men who do do so, and if they are successful, and despite their refusal to bow before the false Gods, rise to high places in the land, then we do them honour. But those who through the same brave resolve fall by the way, we merely pass with some disdainful remark about eccentric persons incapable of making their way in the world. Whether the author of those marvellously clever "Strange Stories" was merely humbugging as an anti-humbug or not I have never been able to decide in my own mind. Unquestionably, however, the later novels were of an utterly different class to those first stories in which something approaching genius stood revealed. But whether the unabashed vulgarity of say the "Adventures of Miss Caley" were less objectionable than the Hill Top series is, to say the least of it, a very open question.

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THE LATEST CURE.

A hitherto unknown experimentalist—I suspect he must be an American—claims to have discovered a means of curing insanity by injecting goat lymph into the patient's veins. But why the goat? To judge by that common slang expression "playing the giddy goat," which I understand means behaving with somewhat unrestrained levity. The goat has never been credited with a larger degree of sanity in his composition than most other beasts of the field, but rather less. Perhaps, however, the discovery is another triumph for homoeopathy. And what a triumph! If the madness of mankind could be cured by the injection of goat lymph we should soon be living in a very different world, that is, of course, if the stock of goats did not run out. There is always that danger, for the amount of insanity, altogether apart from what finds its way to the lunatic asylum, is probably incalculable. Consider the sacrifice of kids that would be necessary to cure the boundless silliness and inanity of the race. Man is indebted to the lower animals for many things, but it would be rather a strange condition of things if we had to go to them direct for the renovation of our brains, as we are indirectly obliged to them for the renovation of muscular tissue. Think what it would mean to all of us were the principle here suggested universal in its application. If we could acquire the qualities of the different animals by injection of their lymph, the coward might become a very lion in bravery, and the bully inherit something of the tenderness of the dove. The wicked would cease from troubling after a brief treatment by the doctor, the gaols would be empty, the policeman's occupation gone and virtue reign triumphant. And even if this medicine had only power over physical conditions and not mental, what a boon it would be in this age of shattered nervous systems, dyspepsia, and "that tired feeling." Imagine being endowed with the nerves of a British bulldog, the digestion of an ostrich, or the unwearied energy of the tiger. But I am afraid that the vision is but a vision. It is a dream that has been dreamt over and over again since the dawn of creation. Was it not to gain the virtues of the men they had killed in battle that our Maoris ate their bodies? Probably they deluded themselves into the belief that they actually did assimilate the prowess of the deceased as they did their flesh; but we know better. So before we pin our faith to this latest cure for insanity we shall require some very tangible proof of its efficacy.

Current Comment.

THE 'FRISCO MAIL RIVALRY.

The Aucklanders have rejected, and by political combination defeated, one compromise. There is, however, another which has on a previous occasion been supported in these columns (says the Wellington "Post"). It is that Auckland should be made the port of arrival for the incoming mail, and Wellington the port of departure for the outcoming steamer. Such an arrangement would give Auckland, it is true, more than her fair share of the service, but it would be a distinct improvement on the present system. The Southern districts would at least have the chance of answering by return mail. This compromise also will no doubt be opposed vigorously by the Northerners, who are gradually forcing a conflict upon the question whether they are entitled to the mail service at all. Is all the rest of the colony to be sacrificed to the selfishness of Auckland? If Wellington were made the distributing centre altogether, Auckland merchants would still have time enough between the incoming and outgoing mails to reply to their letters, whereas at present Dunedin people never have any time to spare, and more often than not have their outward mail closed before the inward one arrives. It is unnecessary, however, to repeat the many arguments that can be, and have been, advanced in favour of Wellington. We would only ask our own people to make common cause with those of the South Island in compelling a reconsideration of the position, and a re-arrangement of the mail service in the interests of the many and not of the few.

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A TIMELY WARNING.

The dredging boom, so much in evidence at present, is beyond question based on a solid foundation (says the Dunedin "Star"). The returns in certain fortunate claims reasonably indicate that there are rich deposits to be exploited in the beds and on the banks of the rivers, and that the field for investment is, at the least, distinctly promising. Where, however, the carcase is, there will the vultures be gathered together, and we find the speculative promoters to the fore with all sorts of schemes, offering attractions to the sanguine of making much out of little, and sketching visionary prospects of big dividends and accumulated wealth. The temptation to gamble in shares has taken hold of all classes of the community, from the staid merchant and the substantial tradesman to the clerk and the office boy. Shares are consequently being taken up with no idea of meeting the inevitable liability of calls, but in the certain hope of selling out at a profit. There will beyond question be a rude awakening when the day of reckoning arrives; when calls come thick and fast, and there is no chance of unloading; when everybody wants to sell, and nobody is particularly anxious to buy; when the statements of flaming prospectuses are tested in the fires of experience, and it is found that all is not gold that glitters, and realisation falls very short of anticipations based on the reports of mining experts, who always have such a wonderful knowledge and appreciation of ground which they have never succeeded in utilising to their own advantage.

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OVER-WORKED PREMIER AND UNRULY HOUSE.

In habits and behaviour the House has not during the past session shown any sign of improvement. The hours kept were scandalous; the conduct of members was frequently very bad (thinks the N.Z. "Times"). This too, despite the fact that the Speaker was more than usually alert to suppress personalities and uphold the dignity of the Chamber. Perhaps some of the responsibility for disorderly "scenes" must be placed upon the Leader of the House, who was all the session suffering from over-work. However, with two Ministers absent, one an invalid hardly able to address the Chamber, and another struggling half the time to rebut charges made against his administration, Mr Seddon's achievement in leading the House so well can only be described as wonderful. There is not another man in the colony who could have filled the position half so well; happily, perhaps, there is not one so rash as to make the attempt. Those who incline to blame the Premier for tactical mistakes and occasional lapses from the highest standard of political tact and temper, should remember the herculean nature of the task he set himself before they judge or condemn. Taking all the circumstances into account, the Premier deserves to be warmly congratulated upon the ability with which he managed the House during a period when personal and party feeling ran higher than it has done for ten years past. By achieving what he has done, almost unaided, with a small majority, and with followers made restive by the nearness of a general election, Mr Seddon has proved that he has not deteriorated in force of character, tact, and ability to handle men.

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LIBEL LAW AND PRESS PRIVILEGES.

Commonsense would suggest that the newspaper giving an accurate report of statements made at a public meeting should be privileged (says the "Southland News"), but against this it is urged that were such the case evilly disposed persons possessed of means might be able through the medium of "men of straw" to gratify their malice or spite. There is not much, however, in this view. A scandalous or libellous statement made in a crowded meeting is so far public property that it becomes the topic—probably with embellishments—of the "man in the street." And, a quite possible contingency—the absence from the meeting of the person assailed or maligned—he is placed in the awkward position of having to hear half a dozen or more contradictory versions of what really was said about him. For it is an established fact that after the lapse of a few minutes, to say nothing of hours or days, no two persons will give exactly the same version of what they both firmly believe to have heard. The person aggrieved is, therefore, placed at a disadvantage—that is if their discretionary power of elimination has been exercised by reporter or editor, in that he has no positive legal evidence. Were reports privileged he would have at best, the least questionable, proof in the reporter's notes. As to suppositious immunity of the "man of straw," there is already the recourse of criminal action for libel. The procedure under this may be somewhat cumbersome, but it should not be difficult to simplify it so as to make punishment swift and sure.

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MODERN JOURNALISM.

It is vulgar in its mendacity, vulgar in its catch-halfpenny scares, in its thoughts, and in its way of expressing them (says a writer in the London "Referee"). And the mournful truth is that in the ancient cant of the trade it supplies a want; its existence is an answer to a popular demand. It is at once a consequence and a cause of ignorance, of sensationalism, of vapid incapacity for thinking. It reflects the modern mob as in a mirror. It images the greedy passion for emotion which has no reference to justice and reason, as when it transforms the figure of a sordid murderess into that of a tragic victim to a brutal law. It is no less true to the popular vice of unreasoning feeling in its occasional clamour for war. It plays, in short, to its own audience, and if its audience were of a different sort would play other tunes. Like everything else, it acts and is acted upon. It could not exist without the existence of certain lamentable elements in the character of the people, and it constantly tends to augment the characteristics by which it lives. "My sons," said the preaching friar to Fennartz and Sweynheim, when he found them and their clumsy printing press by the wayside, "you carry here the very wings of knowledge. Oh, never abuse this great craft! Print no ill books! They would fly abroad countless as locusts and lay waste men's souls." And the chronicler of this episode—real or imaginary—adds: "The workmen said they would sooner put their hands under the screw than so abuse their goodly craft." But those were days of much simplicity and little competition, and there was then no great beast of a populace to roar for garbage.

Minor Matters.

Although a soldier's life is not all beer and skittles, I daresay the thousands of cigarettes, the contributions of preserved fruits, the lollies—"from a Southland veteran"—the opium pills, the quinine, the music of the donated piano, and the memory of that tabooed bit of bunting, will (says a writer in a Nelson paper) make matters lively over the dreary ten thousand miles of ocean to Algoa Bay. Then the presence of a choice three hundred chargers will be welcome in case of any accident to the propeller shaft, for these noble animals can then be quickly turned into that Parisian favourite, "horse-beef." Dr. Bakewell used to delight to tell how the men of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, knowing the forlorn character of their ride, nonchalantly took out their tobacco pipes and smoked as they rode across the valley towards the Russian batteries. If our contingent wishes to emulate those heroes, they must be careful not to use up all the cigarettes before they reach "Afric's sunny fountains," otherwise yclept Port Elizabeth and the Transvaal.

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An old Hawkesbury settler was, according to the "Bulletin," up before the Court t'other day, charged with making too violent love to a woman; and got off. The old man was 85; so there's hope for Australia yet. Case recalls that of another old Hawkesbury identity—a chicken of 80 or so, who drank his pint of rum daily (local made), and throve on it. The ancient had noticed with pain some of his neighbours being rammed into ready-made coffins, and charged a big price for them, too; and he thought he could do better than that. He had a nice bit of seasoned scantling in the yard, so he got a carpenter to measure him up, and make a coffin which should be a credit to the 'Oxberry. When the job was half done, a thought struck the old man, and he went out and stopped the work. There was his son, a lanky six-footer, had heart disease, and might die any moment. The old man was only five-foot-four; but he reckoned that, if the coffin was made to fit the son, he could get into it too, if his turn came first, and all the contingencies would be provided for. So they measured up the son, and made the coffin his size, with a neat little sliding partition at the bottom that the old man could rest his feet against or the son could take out altogether. Sure enough, three months later, the son died, and they took the partition out, and gave him the right sort of funeral. Then the old man reflected that there was a bit of scantling left, and the carpenter set to work at his size, and finished a very neat suit of dovetailing—which is still waiting.

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At the close of the late session, which terminated the thirteenth Parliament of New Zealand, it is interesting (says the "Post") to note the periods of service given by the leading members of our Legislature. Sir Maurice O'Rorke has attended no fewer than 40 sessions of Parliament. He was first sworn in as a member on the 3rd June, 1861. Seven years later Mr Rolleston came into the House, and he has seen 28 sessions. Major Steward has attended 27 sessions, and Captain Russell 26. The other members who have been longest in the House are:—Mr Seddon, 25 sessions; Mr J. W. Thomson (Clutha), 24; Messrs W. C. Buchanan, A. J. Cadman, and John McKenzie, 22; Mr A. R. Guinness, 19; Hon. Thos. Thompson and Mr T. Parata, 18; Messrs Scobie Mackenzie and George Fisher, 16; Hon. Mr Carroll, Messrs George Hutchison, John Joyce, F. Lawry, J. G. Ward, Robert Thompson (Marsden), 15; Hon. W. Hall-Jones, 12; Messrs W. Carncross, A. W. Hogg, R. M. Houston, J. W. Kelly, R. Meredith, C. H. Mills, R. Moore, W. W. Tanner, 11; Mr Felix M'Guire, 10. Mr Rawlins is the only member who has been present for only one session.

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Mrs Goodwin, better known as "Biddy of Buller," died at Reefton last Thursday of senile decay, aged 96 years. As far as can be ascertained she was the only female miner in New Zealand, having pursued that occupation up till about three years ago, when failing health compelled her to desist.

A little contrivance that promises to confer a boon on the ladies and bring a handsome fortune to the owners has just been patented in New Zealand and Australia—a spiral hairpin, the invention of Mr E. R. Godward, of Invercargill. It operates simply, cannot fall out, and from its construction one half of the ordinary number of pins will suffice to hold the hair securely even in a gale of wind. Arrangements are now under way to obtain the patent rights in America and Europe. An inspection of the pin and its application to the hair warrants the belief that it will come into firm favour and completely oust the one now in use, and which is provocative of no end of annoyance to the fair sex.

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A contributor to "To-Day" re-tells a story which went the rounds a few years ago. A man was going by the night mail to Carlyle. Before starting he called the guard, tipped him heavily, and said, "I am going to sleep, and am a heavy sleeper, but I must get out at Carlisle. Get me out at all hazards. Probably I shall swear and fight, but never mind that. Roll me out on the platform if you can't get me out any other way." The guard promised, the train started, the man went to sleep, and when he woke up he found himself at Glasgow? He called the guard, and expressed his views in very powerful language. The guard listened with a sort of admiring expression, but when the aggrieved passenger paused for breath, he said, "Eh, mon, ye have a fine gift o' swearin', but ye canna haud a cannle to the ither mon whom I rolled out on the platform at Carlisle."

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That the contingent for the Transval was splendidly equipped becomes strikingly manifest on looking down the long list of articles provided by the authorities, says the "Times." In addition to all the necessary horse gear, arms and uniforms, the men were provided with cholera belts, great coats, holdalls complete with brush and comb, knife, fork, spoon and housewife, several different kinds of shirts and even blacking and shoe brushes were not forgotten. Those in charge evidently spared neither money nor trouble in fitting out the troop.

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Apropos of this and of the collection of raisins, tobacco, cigarettes, etc., etc., for the men during the Waiwera's voyage, one old soldier, who has seen much roughing, called on a Southland editor with a suggestion that some philanthropist should invite tenders for a supply "of lollipops packed in water proof paper, sucking bottles, and preserved milk" for the N.Z. contingent. He thinks that these would be fitting accompaniments of the cigarettes, quinine pills, etc., showered on our embryo soldiers by the beneficent Wellington public. He also suggests as a piano has been presented them, that an accompanist should also have been provided to enable them to thoroughly enjoy the trip.

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A Sabbath School teacher in Auckland who had been telling the story of David ended with: "And all this happened over three thousand years ago." A little listener, her blue eyes opening wide with wonder, said, after a moment's thought, "Oh, dear! what a memory you have got!"

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There is a very smart gang of pickpockets at Wellington just at present. At the Wellington Opera House last week two Wairarapa men were picked upon as fit subjects, and one had his hip pocket cut out and relieved of his money. The other nearly lost his watch, but felt it being slipped from his pocket, and caught hold of it. He failed, however, to see the would-be pickpocket. Several other cases are reported.

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The latest cricket yarn is by no means a bad one. The occasion was a match of some moment, when an "All England" team were playing against a score and two of local luminaries in the South of England. Among the "All England" representatives were Abel and Lohmann, from whom great things were evidently expected by those who had engaged them for the match. A provincial fair was being celebrated on a part of the field where the play was proceeding, and attached to these festivities were the ubiquitous cocoanut shies. Nearly all through the contest the play had gone distinctly in favour of the local team, and when their final batsman was sent in they appeared to have an excellent chance of winning. Presently, one of the batsmen sent a splendid ball clean over to the cocoanut stand, where Lohmann was watching his chance. The artful fielder saw the ball roll in among the cocoanuts, where it was very soon lost to sight. Resolved, however, to lose no time, he seized a small cocoanut and hurled it over to Abel, who was wicket-keeping. Abel at once got his man out, and, slipping the nut into his pocket, kept his own counsel, until Lohmann adroitly returned the real article. And to this day the local twenty-two know not how the professionals won that match.

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A curious thing about ladies' fashions is that we no sooner get accustomed to one style than the dear creatures are off in hot pursuit of another. Take, for instance, the fashion in hair. We had lately got to like the fringe, which was a vast improvement on the waterfall; but the fringe, among certain of the fair sex, is being supplanted by what may be called the whiskers—that style of arranging her tresses which makes Belinda look as if she had borrowed those side adornments from her brother. It is dreadfully ugly, this latest fashion. If it should "catch on," it will only be because Belinda desires more and more to lessen the distinction between the sexes. Having appropriated her brother's hat, collar, front, waistcoat, and —other things, why shouldn't she seek to get as near as may be to his hirsute attachments? And if whiskers, why not beards and moustaches? In that case, depilatories and processes for the removal of superfluous hair will be no longer in demand. But the new fashion may take a turn in the direction of the old chignon—a horrid and dirty arrangement that was in full swing thirty years ago. The chignon was accompanied by pads — resembling plummets or polonies in shape and size—which were hung on each side of our darlings' heads. These pads were concealed of course under the hair, except at night, when they were hung—like Kilkenny cats on a clothes line—over the back of a chair. It must be admitted that the chignon, encased in a chenille net, had its uses when Belinda happened to have a back fall on the ice. But no use that anybody ever knew could be ascribed to the polonies. Nevertheless, there are many things much more unlikely than the development of the present side-whisker style into the old polonial fashion.

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Coincidence reached its long arm out after a Victorian family a few weeks ago. The father and two sons were camped near timber on a windy night. A tree came down over the tent, killing the father, and pinning one son under the ruins. Son No. 2 in the endeavour to extricate his brother upset a billy of boiling water over his foot, scalding himself badly. Assistance was obtained and the two sufferers removed for medical aid, a third brother being wired for. He arrived the following evening, and when dismounting from his horse, got a kick from the faithful steed which laid him on his back beside the other two, with a badly damaged leg. Two sisters were also summoned, and in driving down were upset from a gig, and added to the list. Up to date the remaining unhurt member of the family has been able to successfully dodge misfortune.

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A figure robed in white suddenly presenting itself in a lonely spot on a dark night is calculated to disturb the equanimity of the least susceptible, and it is not surprising that several young ladies, returning from church service at Woodlands on a recent Sunday became almost prostrate with fear when an apparition of this description suddenly hove in sight. Inquiries were instituted and revealed the identity of the practical jokers, who appeared before Mr Poynton, Stipendiary Magistrate, in due course. They were lads named Joseph Mathieson and John Berry, who were charged with threatening behaviour and admitted the offence, one of them stating that when going home he took a sheet off the clothes line, and, throwing it over him, proceeded to enjoy himself at the expense of passers-by. They were also charged with removing gates and again pleaded guilty, though they denied the insinuation that they had been connected with recent acts of larrikinism which had been committed at Woodlands. Each was fined 10/ with costs 3/6.

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Mrs Langtry's new 28-year-old husband comes of very wealthy people, but his own future is believed to consist mostly of expectations. Mrs L. is said to have lost large sums on the turf, and to be under the necessity of retrieving matters. "The Degenerates," the new Haymarket piece in which she plays heroine, was written for her, and apparently round her own very mottled career. Writes Emily Soldene to Sydney "E. News": "The piece is audacious to a degree, inasmuch as it portrays the career of Mrs Langtry with wonderful fidelity and how well she plays it! She is a comedian and polished woman of the world, par excellence—not a melodramatic-taking-the - stage - stand-in-the limelight woman, but a delightful woman, who has lived her life, and owns up. 'I'm what I am,' says she with a charming moue, 'not what I ought to be.' I wish I could tell you half the clever things she has to say, and the clever way she says them. She likes a gallop in the morning with the 'Liver brigade'—because it's mostly men.' She is a divorcee, and her late husband 'suffered dreadfully from decree nisi,' and died—of 'rule absolute.' She races, she gambles (there's a roulette table in the drawing room). She owns horses. She's good for nothing, but such a fascinator. 'Well, Bobby,' says she to the Duke of Orme, 'you used to go the pace with me.' 'Only for a few furlongs,' says Bobby, cuddling his knee; 'you're such a stayer!' Talk about a stayer! Mrs Langtry played at the Haymarket Monday evening, was in the selling paddock, Doncaster, Tuesday morning, and played at the Haymarket Tuesday evening. Now, about Mrs Langtry's looks. She absolutely looks just about as old as she is, neither more nor less: a little thin in the face. The once beautiful ivory complexion, soft and white, has gone. She has the appearance of a 'real hunting woman—cross-country rider, flying her fences like a bird, her face tanned, figure slender, exquisite, shoulders square, head well up, the blue eyes once upon a time soft and wandering, are now bright, shining and bluer—much bluer. They rival the wonderful diamonds and turquoises she wears on arms, neck, round the waist, on her diamond dusted bodice. Her expression is charming—such good temper, such a dare-devil, such a good heart—when you get at it (she doesn't wear it on her sleeve). No wonder the men fall in love. I myself am full of admiration for her and her special and highly entertaining gifts. But she is not an object of reverence to all persons. Dining up the river the other day a peripatetic nigger put his head in the open French window, 'Gif hus er job, Mister. Hi can sing. Hi sung ter th' Prince down hat Cowes; an' Hi've sung ter Mrs Langtry an' hall 'er 'usbands—dead an' halive.'"

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It is reported to the Nelson "Mail" that certain agents are travelling around the orchards treating fruit trees with a blight specific for which they say a patent has been applied for. The charge made is 1/ a tree for treatment and 17/6 a gallon for the specific, and it is alleged that the agents claim to be working under the sanction and approval of the Department of Agriculture, and "doing trees for the Government." An orchardist of the district recently made inquiries of the Department of Agriculture, and the appended telegram has been received: "Wellington. Have never recommended any patent blight specific. —— has no authority to use my or any other Government officers' name. He has not applied to Registrar for patent. Letter follows. (Signed) Kirk, Government Biologist."

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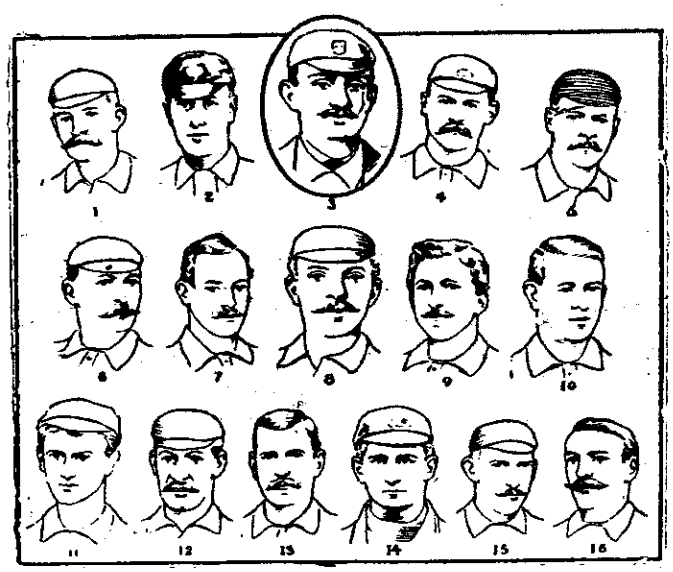
And now, say the authorities, the game which ousted croquet is itself fallen upon evil days, and croquet seems likely once more to enjoy a measure of what was her own. "The spread of golf has done for tennis what tennis did for croquet," but, curiously enough, the introduction of golf has rehabilitated the less imposing game. There is no longer need to be apologetic or deprecatory in confessing yourself a croquet-lover. It is now a strong, scientific pastime, recognised as requiring thought and skill, and grown only the more interesting from its remarkable series of vicissitudes.

Our London Letter

The time has now come to say good-bye to cricket. We have had a wonderful season, and yet in a sense a disappointing one, the proportion of drawn games having been so excessively large. This is due not to any deterioration of the bowling generally, but to the abnormal spell of dry weather. The year has been eminently a batsman's, and new records have been created all along the line. Nothing has been so remarkable during the present season as the wonderful advance of C. L. Townsend as a batsman. His entry into county cricket some four years ago was marked by his great success as a slow bowler, but though overwork and dry wickets have rendered him less deadly in that direction the old Cliftonian has more than compensated for his decline as a bowler by the brilliance of his batting. In the last match of the season he completed his 100 wickets and 2,000 runs, thereby equalling the performance of the great "W.G." in 1876. K. S. Ranjitsinhji is the first player to score over 3,000 runs in a season, and has beaten the record held by Grace with 3,159 runs, or an average of 63.18. In justice to the Grand Old Man of the greensward, however, it must be remembered that twenty-three years ago, when he made close on 1,800 runs with an average of 78,. matches were not so numerous, or wickets anything like as perfect as to-day. Major Poore has galvanised Hampshire into something approaching life with a startling average of 91.23 for seventeen completed innings, and easily heads the list, and C. B. Fry, who has played brilliant if somewhat erratic cricket, claims the honour of compiling the highest total—181—against our Antipodean visitors. As everybody knows by now the County Championship ended in a win for Surrey, who were at the top in 1895, but only fourth in 1898. None will grudge them the honour, though many sympathise with Yorkshire. True, the Oval team has played an unusual number of draws — 14 out of 26 matches—but apart from this Surrey has on the whole shown distinct superiority to its rival. K. J. Key has once more piloted the team to success, but the laurels are divided between Abel, Hayward, and Lockwood. Both the first-named have accomplished the feat of making over 2,000 runs, and so far at least as Oval wickets are concerned Abel still ranks as a wonderful batsman. Hayward, too, played in great brilliancy in the test matches, and Lockwood, back in his best form again, rendered yeomen service to his county both with bat and ball. F. S. Jackson, too, has had a capital season, and, though starting somewhat indifferently, wound up in fine form with an average of 45 for 44 innings. Hard wickets have naturally told against the bowler, but Albert Trott created a new world's record with over 200 wickets and a thousand runs. Considering the billiard table pitches that have been the rule, the slows of Rhodes and Paish have met with astonishing success, the Yorkshireman claiming 179 victims at 17 apiece, being second only by a fraction to Albert Trott. In Rhodes the broad-acred shire have found a worthy successor to Peate and Peel. With their victory over the South of England at Hastings, the Australian cricket team concluded their 1899 tour. Throughout they have been abnormally successful, for in 35 matches, 16 have been drawn, 16 won, and only 3 lost, thus eclipsing the record of Murdoch's team of all the talents which visited the Old Country in 1882. In the test matches the "rubber" is on their side with the one outright victory, though it must be confessed they had some considerable luck in the later fixtures. Curiously enough the three home counties, Essex, Surrey, and Kent, were the only teams to lower the colours of the Kangaroo. The Australian skipper heads the average of the team with the capital figures of 1,914 for 46 completed innings, an average of 41. Noble, too, has batted well and consistently, while to Victor Trumper, the youngest member of the combination, goes the honour of having compiled an innings of 300 not out—a record score for an Australian on English soil. Trumble has shown considerable improvement in his batting since his last visit, and with Howell, Noble, and Jones, the Broken Hill fast bowler, has shared the arduous labours of the attack.



THE CLOSE OF THE CRICKET SEASON: PLAYERS WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES.

(1) Major Poore. (2) W. Rhodes. (3) Prince Ranjitsinhji. (4) J. Darling. (5) T. Hayward. (6) K. J. Key. (7) F. S. Jackson. (8) R. Abel. (9) C. B. Fry. (10) V. Trumper. (11) C. L. Townsend. (12) A. E. Trott. (13) W. H. Lockwood. (14) M. A. Noble. (15) H. Trumble. (16) E. Jones.

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Thanks to the prolonged spell of fine weather, cricket died unusually hard this year, but with the County Championship decided, and the Australian tour at an end, even the brightest sunshine and the best of wickets could not avail to keep alive public interest in the summer sport, especially as with the advent of September the innumerable football clubs throughout the country settled down to serious business in their own line.

TWAJL.

Captain of the Kaffir Football Team now on a Visit to England.

The football season will very soon be in full swing, and it promises to be of exceptional interest. Not the least interesting feature of it will be the visit of the Kaffir team—all full-blooded natives—who have come from the Orange Free State, where the sport is enthusiastically followed, to try their luck against English players at Home, and no doubt also with the object of picking up all they can of the science of the game from such exponents as are only to be found in this country. The team is captained by Mr Joseph Twaji, who is a footballer of five years' experience. He is twenty-five years of age, and on his native heath plays centre-forward for the Oriental, one of the strongest teams in the Free State. Twaji is also a cricketer, and in athletics generally is well known in that part of South Africa from which he hails.

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Commandant Cronje is the best fighter the Boers possess. General Joubert is now sixty-eight, and is scarred by many a wound from English bullet and native assegai. He led the Boers at Majuba Hill, where 280 English gave up their lives, General Joubert losing but five men. He beat the English at Laing's Nek, commanded the forces at Bronkohorst and Spruit, and finally caught Jameson through quick mobilisation of troops and superior marksmanship. He fought in the native wars when President Kruger was commander, and these two became bosom friends. They and one other Boer were selected to conduct the affairs of the Transvaal when it was in rebellion against England in 1881, and Joubert has several times come within a few votes of beating Oom Paul for the presidency. He will probably be the next to assume that position, as he holds different views from Kruger. He believes that if the Uitlanders were given the franchise, in a reasonable time they would become good citizens, and that this is the way to solve the problem. At the same time he will not sanction revolt, and when the Jameson raiders were in Pretoria gaol he was one who favoured shooting them for their offences.

COMMANDANT CRONJE.

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THE MAN FOR RHODESIA.

Colonel Baden-Powell, who is now at Buluwayo, looking after British interests in Rhodesia, has had a large South African experience. He has a truly marvellous bump of locality. After once traversing a country, however wild, he is always able to retrace his steps, and he can discern instinctively the best route for a regiment on the march. He is always on the alert, and the natives have christened him "The watchman who never sleeps."

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An officer of experience is Colonel Edward Willis Duncan Ward, C.B., who for the past six years has acted as Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General on the Home District Staff. He has just left England for Natal, where at Port Elizabeth he will assume the duties of disembarkation officer, and be concerned in the establishment of bases of supplies and communications in the event of hostilities. He joined the Commissary-General's Department of the army in 1874, and for his services in the Soudan campaign of 1885 was promoted Assistant-Commissary General and mentioned in despatches. On the formation of the Army Service Corps he was transferred to it. He has had a deal of staff experience in Great Britain and Ireland, and was in the last expedition to Kumasi, and organised the supply column. His services were acknowledged in despatches, and he was made a C.B. and promoted colonel shortly afterwards. When the army authorities took over the management of the Royal Military Tournament, Colonel Ward became treasurer, and for the last three years he has been secretary. He is undoubtedly one of the most able officers in his corps, and probably the most popular staff officer the Home District has known for a lengthened period.

COLONEL WARD, C.B.

NOT WHAT HE MEANT.

An amusing story is told by Mr Bray, Q.C. Some time ago Mr Bray was examining a medical witness in a "running down" case. The doctor was giving details as to the injuries received when Mr Bray gravely asked: "And, sir, have you attended the plaintiff since he committed suicide?" A pause ensued, which was followed by a roar of laughter round the Court, while the confused counsel hastily busied himself in his brief. To this day not even Mr Bray himself knows what question he intended to ask.

COLONEL BADEN-POWELL.

Sports and Pastimes.

TURF FIXTURES.

NEW ZEALAND.

November 4, 6, 11—Auckland Racing Club Spring
November 22, 25—Coromandel Racing Club
November 22 and 24 — Wellington R.C. Spring
November 23 and 25—Dunedin J.C. Summer
December 2 and 6—Takapuna J.C. Spring
November 25, 29—Otahuhu Trotting Club Spring
December 25, 26, and January 1, 2—Auckland Racing Club Summer
December 26 and 27—Thames J.C. Annual
January 29, 31, February 2 — Takapuna J.C. Summer
February 17, 21, 24 — Otahuhu Trotting Club Summer
April 16, 17, 21—Auckland Racing Club Autumn

DATES OF COMING EVENTS.

NEW ZEALAND.

November 4—Auckland Guineas
November 7—New Zealand Cup
November 9—Canterbury Derby
November 11—Canterbury Cup
December 25—Auckland Cup
January 1—Great Northern Derby

AUSTRALIA.

November 4—V.R.C. Derby
November 7—Melbourne Cup

NOTES BY MONITOR.

Last year's Auckland Cup winner, Uhlan, was shipped from New Plymouth recently in charge of Edgar Russell to fulfil his N.Z. Cup engagements. Some Taranakites are very sweet on the son of Cuirassier's chance, and think that either he or Battleaxe will win the big Southern race.

In the Sandown Park Handicap, run over a mile, at Melbourne last week, Voyou, a much-fancied Cup horse, was among the starters, but failed to run prominently, although the son of Bendigo, with 9.2 in the saddle, was made favourite. Tablik (6.9) gained first place, while Surge and The Rock filled the other positions.

On Saturday last the Moonee Valley (Vic.) races were held, the principal events of which were the Cup and Phoenix Handicap. In the former Sweetheart, carrying 7.0, defeated the favourite, Djin-Djin, by two lengths, with Orient in the third place. In the Phoenix Handicap, a win was scored by the Melbourne Cup candidate Voyou, who, with 9.2 in the saddle, ran home ahead of Flodden and Adjuster.

Word was received from Melbourne during last week to the effect that the well-known Anglo-Colonial sportsman, Mr S. H. Gollan, had purchased that promising three-year-old colt Australian Star (by The Australian Peer—Colours). The colt's future destination will be England, but he is to be allowed to fulfil his V.R.C. engagements before being shipped Home. It transpires that Mr Gollan was also negotiating for the purchase of the Caulfield Cup winner Dewey, but so far nothing has come of it.

At a recent sale of blood stock, held by Messrs Tattersall at Doncaster, England, a chestnut colt by Carnage was sold to Mr F. W. Dwyer for 500 guineas. Mr W. Cooper gave 1000 guineas for a filly by Trenton from Musidora, by Bend Or from Lonely. Mr S. Darling secured a yearling colt by Carbine from Lady Kendal, for which he paid 680 guineas. The top price at the sale, namely 3000 guineas, was given for a chestnut colt by Bend Or from Silver Sea, which fell to the bid of Sir J. B. Maple.

During the week the Dewhurst Plate, a seven furlong race for two-year-olds, was run at the Newmarket Houghton Meeting, and once again Lord William Beresford's American-bred gelding Democrat was successful, thus following up his win in the Middle Park Plate. The Prince of Wales' colt Diamond Jubilee finished in second place, while the Duke of Westminster's brown colt Goblet got third, this curiously enough being the exact order in which the same colts finished in the Middle Park Plate.

The Auckland Trotting Club will make a profit of about £130 over their Spring Meeting. At the Summer Meeting, fixed for December 23, 27 and 30, the good sum of £1,250 will be given in stakes, the principal event being the Trotting Cup of 3000yds, two miles. The programme has been forwarded to the New Zealand Trotting Association for approval.

The well-known English trainer John Porter has trained three "triple crown" winners, viz., Ormonde, Common and Flying Fox. He has also been successful with six St. Leger winners—Petu, Gomez, Ormonde, Common, La Fleche, Throstle and Flying Fox.

The V.A.T.C. made a profit of £1500 over their recent meeting. This was £100 more than last year, and the stakes were £300 better. The acceptance fees were about £220 less than last year, but the takings on Cup day £400 more. T. Payten headed the list of winning owners, his cheque amounting to £2125.

It transpires that Mr Abe Bailey is the new owner of Chesney, and not Mrs Langtry. The colt will be trained in England by Mr Robinson.

It is more than likely that the Caulfield Cup winner Dewey will go to England. He was under offer to Mr S. H. Gollan last week for 2500 guineas, the conditions being that if purchased he was to remain in Payten's hands until after the V.R.C. Meeting, the trainer to pay all expenses and take half of any stakes he may win.

In Melbourne Cocos was well supported for the Caulfield Cup, and there ruled as favourite. It appears he is in the same stable as Dewey, and finished well up, being fourth in the race. The son of Abercorn is reported to be going well in his work, and he is bound to make a bold bid for the two mile race on Tuesday next.

Business on the New Zealand Cup has been brisk during the week, Sir Launcelot has advanced in public favour, and now is firm at 4 to 1 against, Seahorse has slightly eased, 6 to 1 being accepted about his chance. Fulmen, Battleaxe, and Miss Delaval all stand with 7 to 1 against their names, while Uhlan and Explosion follow at two points longer. 14 to 1 is on offer against Castashore, Double Event, and Pitch and Toss, with 16 to 1 Malatua and Douglas. The other quotations are 20 to 1 Djin-Djin and Tauhei; 25 to 1 Bush Rose, Crusoe, Skobeloff and St. Haro; 40 to 1 Labourer, and 50 to 1 Huka and Rubia.

Ormo stands at the list of winning stallions in England, this position being achieved by the successes of the Duke of Westminster's colt Flying Fox, who has contributed £36,225 out of the £37,088 standing to the credit of his sire.

On Saturday morning I had a look at the horses working at Ellerslie. There was a light drizzle falling, but most of the horses were put through good work. St. Peter and St. Ursula went once round at top, the mare having all the best of it at the finish. Auld Reekie negociated the course twice, striding along very freely. Lady Avon was sent a spin over four furlongs with Crusade, showing great dash. Tamaki went twice round, and is evidently a much improved horse. He should nearly win a race next Saturday. Opua and Bradshaw jumped the steeplechase course in great style, the first-named fencing in capital style. Wairongomai has a very fast seven furlongs, this being the gallop of the morning. Record Reign was sent twice round, Miss Blair bringing him home, but she was not of much use to her stable mate. The Hon. Mossman's team were all working mostly over four furlongs. Glenarm did strong work, and is a much improved horse, and may repay watching in the Hunters' on the third day of the meeting. The hurdler Troubadour was treated to light work, and the full brother to Nor'-West looks very fit, Favona and Straybird did steady work and the former appears to be improving. Lillie and Knight of Athol ran a strong mile in which the grey rather more than held his own. The rest of the horses were given easy tasks.

THE NEW ZEALAND CUP.

On Tuesday will be decided the big event of the turf in Maoriland, the New Zealand Cup. The acceptances for this are very large, and speculation all through the winter months and right up to the present time has been very brisk. Going through the list of those left, Douglas is noticed at the top of the acceptors, and I think with his big impost he must be passed over. Battleaxe comes next, but this horse has shown such in and out running that a true idea of his form is hard to arrive at; still he has been backed for a good deal of money, and his party seem sanguine about his prospects. Castashore is reported to be looking very fresh, and I hear privately that his owner thinks the son of Castor will just about take the race. He has certainly won such a number of races that his constitution must be above reproach, and as the track is reported to being very hard, the horse may stand the strain as well as any engaged. Explosion has a large number of followers, but I have lost faith in this handsome son of Cuirassier, whose race deeds are not up to his track performances; while again Southern writers state that he is showing traces of soreness. Uhlan is a good stayer, as witness his win in the Auckland Cup last year, and he cannot be altogether over looked for the two mile race. Tauhei is reported to be in good form, but I would prefer the grey mare if the distance were shorter. Very good accounts have come to hand from time to time about Fulmen. It must be remembered that this horse ran second to Tirant d'Eau last year, and also annexed the Otago Cup. He has not done much in public since, but I fancy will be found one of the very hardest to beat next Tuesday. Djin Djin is very fit, but like Tauhei I would rather associate him with a shorter trip. Then comes Seahorse, and it must be confessed that his brilliant showing at Hawke's Bay fully warrants the support which has been accorded the chestnut son of Nelson. To my mind he looks like a stayer, and although the weight is quite enough for a three year old, still I think him fully capable of taking his own part with the rest. At the time of writing it is problematical whether the owner of Crusoe will elect to send him to Ellerslie or Riccarton, so that I cannot say anything about him. Pitch and Toss is thought by many Southerners to have a chance, but with 7.5 I hardly think she is class enough to win. Sir Lancelot now ranks as first favourite. He won very easily at Hawke's Bay, and if the going is soft I should not look farther for the winner. The track is, however, reported to be in a cast iron condition, and unless rain falls it is possible that the son of Dreadnought may break down at any minute. At the same time if he goes to the post fit and well his chance must be second to none. Rubin is a horse that with his light weight is bound to make a creditable showing, while another thought highly of is Malatua, who has shown a great improvement in form. Miss Delaval is much fancied by her owner, but I am firmly of opinion that two miles is a bit beyond her tether. Labourer has been backed, but I must pass him, and come to Jupiter, who to my mind is one of the picks of the handicap. He has won races under big weights, and his present feather impost should be a luxury to the son of St. Clair. Mr Stead has St. Ilario and Skobeloff engaged, and it may be that the latter will be the one to act on behalf of Yaldhurst. To sum the matter up, I will take the following half dozen to be in the first flight at the finish, and these are Fulmen, Sir Lancelot, Seahorse, Castashore, Jupiter and Battleaxe, while to reduce the matter to one, I will go straight out for Fulmen, with Sir Lancelot next best.

THE V.R.C. DERBY AND MELBOURNE CUP.

On Saturday racing will be commenced at Flemington, this being the opening day of the big Spring campaign. The event in which most interest is taken on the first day is the V.R.C. Derby, and it is very rarely that the race has seemed so open as it does at present. The A.J.C. Derby winner Cranberry is engaged, and if he was in the same condition as at Randwick I should look no further for the winner. He has, however, receded in the betting quotations to 7 to 1 against, which seems to indicate that the son of Cranbrook is below par. I notice that he has been given swimming exercise, which indicates that he is not quite himself. Still, the horse is a very lazy worker, and will very likely yet run prominently. Scorn is another whose chances were highly thought of, but his very indifferent display in the Caulfield Cup has caused backers to lose faith in him. Lancaster is constantly spoken of by newspaper scribes as a splendid-looking colt, but it must be confessed that his deeds so far do not justify the expectation of seeing him annex the Blue Ribbon. Tremarden is a horse that is sure to run forwardly, and his victory in the Caulfield Guineas was, according to the Special Commissioner, a far more meritorious one than most folks imagined. Still, it is generally conceded that he is built more like a sprinter than a horse capable of galloping the Derby distance. Latest reports go to show that Parthian is daily improving, and it may be that the son of Grand Flaneur will do far better than he did at Randwick. In a gallop with Australian Star Parthian did exceptionally well the other day, and he has come into prominence in the betting in consequence. On the strength of his win in the Caulfield Guineas and Caulfield Cup it is small wonder to find Dewey at the head of the Derby quotations, and there can be little doubt that he is a good one, and with Australian Star not entered, and Cranberry somewhat amiss, I must take the son of Lochiel to do the trick this year, although it should be a very hard race between him and Scorn.

On the following Tuesday the Melbourne Cup will be run for, and there is every prospect of a very strong field turning out for this event. Cocos is at the head of the handicap, and despite his weight of 9.6 the son of Abercorn has been well backed, his running in the Caulfield Cup having greatly pleased his admirers. Wait-a-Bit is a horse that ran well last year, and with 8.12 he has been nicely handicapped. I have a liking for the chance of Le Var, the six-year-old son of Lochiel and La Valette. He did well in the weight-for-age races at Randwick, and judged by the training reports is thoroughly wound up for the big event. One of my earliest picks was Fleet Admiral, and I must still have him on my side, as from private advices the handsome son of Richmond has steadily been getting into good trim, and should strip very fit on the 7th. Voyou won a race at Moonee Valley last Saturday, carrying 9.4, and with 8st. opposite his name he is sure to be prominent in the race, and is evidently Allsop's pick. He will probably have the services of F. Fielder to ride him, so that there will be a good horseman on his back. On Gauleon's running in the Caulfield Cup he must prove dangerous, and it may be that Mr Oxenham's horse will emulate the good deeds of his brothers, Gaulus and The Grafter. Mora was supported for a lot of money in the Caulfield Cup, in which race she ran out of a place, but this does not seem to have daunted her party, as she has been heavily supported for the race under review. All the crack three-year-olds, with the exception of Australian Star, are engaged, and I should not be surprised to find the winner coming from this division, but the running in the Derby will throw some light on this problem. At the time of writing Dewey, Cranberry, and La Carabine seem likely ones among the three-year-olds. Without going into the matter further I will elect to act on my behalf Fleet Admiral, Dewey, Voyou, Le Var, Cocos, and Gauleon, and to reduce this still further, I will place them—

FLEET ADMIRAL.....1
COCOS 2
DEWEY 3

AUCKLAND RACING CLUB SPRING MEETING.

A commencement will bemade with the Spring Meeting of the Auckland Racing Club next Saturday, and as the acceptances are very good it seems probable that a capital afternoon's sport should be witnessed. Racing will commence at one o'clock, and there are eight events to be decided. The ball will be opened by the President's Handicap, over one mile, for which there is a field of sixteen engaged. The Southern horse Pokonoko should make a very bold bid for victory if his party decide to send him North, while of the others St. Jack and Swiftfoot have good chances. The Auckland Guineas which follows is of a more open nature than usual, owing to the

absence of the Auckland crack three-year-olds at Riccarton. Without going into the question in too much detail I cannot help thinking that the issue will rest with Jim Keane, Halbadier, and St. Peter, and they may finish in that order. Then comes the Welcome Stakes, a five furlong flutter for two-year-olds. On the form shown by Lady Avon at Avondale she must make a bold bid for this, and her most dangerous opponent may prove to be Formula, a shapely-looking sister to Multiform, which will have the services of the Sydney horseman J. Gainsford. St. Elyn and St. Olga are both sure to run prominently, but I think Lady Avon will be the safest to trust. The next race is the Handicap Hurdle, over one mile and three-quarters. Mr Evett has cleverly concealed the winner, which should come from Splinter, Shylock, and Straybird, but personally I incline to the chances of the former. In the Shorts Handicap 15 horses are entered, and although it seems a very hard race to pick I think Hastings and St. Clements should lead the field home. The City Handicap over one mile and a quarter has attracted a nice field of seventeen, with that good horse Record Reign at the top of the list, and despite his heavy impost I fancy that he may just about win from Coronet and Firefly. The ponies are next catered for with a seven furlong handicap and another good field should face the starter, as thirteen have accepted. On his Avondale running Clansman should be hard to beat, while of the others Pipiwharauroa and The Slave are bound to run forward. The Flying Handicap terminates the first day's sport, and although the scratching pen is sure to be freely used in this race I will take a shot at Cuirasette to win, with Winsome as a dangerous lightweight.

The privileges in connection with the meeting were sold last Friday at Churton's Bazaar, and realised a total of £650, as against £577 last year.

The following are the acceptances.

HANDICAP HURDLE RACE of 100sovs. One mile and three-quarters.

	st lb		st lb
Shylock	10 8	Crusado	9 3
Splinter	10 8	Favona	9 3
Troubadour	10 8	Forty-seven	9 0
Straybird	9 10	Korowai	9 0
Dentist	9 10	Tip	9 0
Verdi	9 4	Opoua	

CITY HANDICAP of 200sovs One mile and a quarter.

	st lb		st lb
Record Reign	9 2	St. Crispin	7 11
Waiorongomai	8 10	Red Lancer	7 11
Swordfish II.	8 7	Lillie	7 9
Coronet	8 6	Doctor	6 12
Crusoe	8 5	Knight of Athol	6 11
Cavalier	8 3	Corrette	6 8
Bluejacket	8 3	Hamoa	6 7
Firefly	7 12	Regalia II.	6 7
St. Ursula	7 12		

PRESIDENT'S HANDICAP of 100sovs. One mile.

	st lb		st lb
Pokomoko	8 7	Toroa	7 5
Miss Blair (late Bellbird)	8 7	Solo	7 3
		Corporal	7 2
Bellbird	8 7	Castaside	7 0
Swiftfoot	8 3	The Needle	7 0
Castroline	8 0	Khama	7 0
St. Jack	7 12	Chancellor	7 0
Wellington	7 7	Hamoa	7 0
St. Innis	7 5	Tamaki	6 7

SHORTS HANDICAP of 100sovs. Five furlongs.

	st lb		st lb
St. Clements	9 8	Blairina	7 3
Rex	8 6	Miss Blair (late Bellbird)	7 3
St. Elmo	8 7		
Sultan	8 5	Porangi Potae	7 2
Cuirasette	8 3	Toroa	7 0
Hastings	8 0	Blairearrig	6 10
Laetitia	7 12	Milo	6 7
Moment	7 5	Kaitiri	6 7

FLYING HANDICAP of 100sovs. Six furlongs.

	st lb		st lb
St. Clements	9 5	St. Jack	7 5
Firefly	8 10	Moment	7 2
Cavalier	8 7	Blairina	7 0
Cuirasette	8 0	Porangi Potae	7 0
Hastings	7 11	Chancellor	6 10
Laetitia	7 8	The Needle	6 10
Dayutree	7 8	Brilliant	6 8
Picklock	7 6	Winsome	6 7

FIRST PONY HANDICAP of 50sovs. Seven furlongs.

	st lb		st lb
Lena	8 7	Texas	7 7
The Slave	8 5	Edison	7 7
Clansman	8 2	Miss Lane	7 6
Nora	8 0	Blue Paul	7 4
Cluisine	7 12	Mumoa	7 0
Rangiuru	7 12	La Rose	6 10
Pipiwharauroa	7 12	Francis	6 7
Kitty Flynn	7 10		

THIRD DAY.

HUNT CLUB STEEPLECHASE of 70sovs. About three miles and ahalf.

	st lb		st lb
Riot	13 0	Lindon	10 7
Jim	12 7	Cannon	10 7
Charcoal	11 10	Mountain	10 7
Nap	11 10	Kaiser	10 7
Glenarm	10 10	Tennewaitia	10 7
Clonmel	10 7		

HUNT CLUB HURDLES of 50sovs. Two miles.

	st lb		st lb
Jim	12 7	Tennewaitia	10 6
Riot	12 0	Lindon	10 0
Ongo	11 2	Turk	10 0
Thelma	11 2	Mountain	10 0
Glenarm	11 0	Kaiser	10 0
Waitress	10 9	La Belle	10 0
Bullion	10 7		

FARMERS' STEEPLECHASE of 30sovs. Once round Steeplechase course.

	st lb		st lb
Cannon	11 7	Miss Drury	11 0
La Belle	11 0	Hops	11 0
Peter Simple	11 0	Success	11 0
Gayboy	11 0	Snowy	10 0

CRICKET.

NORTH SHORE V. GORDON.

Owing to the Domain being required for the cycling sports, the above was the only championship match played on Saturday. It was generally considered that the game would result in a close thing, and although at the finish the Shore proved victorious by six wickets, it cannot be claimed that it was a runaway win. The batting of the North Shore team was marked by extreme caution, and none of the batsmen took liberties with the bowling, as is shown by the fact that it took them nearly two hours and a half to knock off the hundred runs required to win, and Wynyard, whose batting is generally of the dashing order, was at the wickets for nearly two hours in compiling his score of 53 not out. To this player may be ascribed in a great measure his team's victory, as going in to bat at a critical stage, he defied all efforts to dislodge him, and finally wore down the opposing bowling. His innings had only one blemish, a snick just finding its way between the wicketkeeper and slip. Taken all round, though he has often played more brilliantly, this was about the soundest innings I have seen Wynyard play. Mills 31, played his usual steady game, and his contribution was an exceedingly useful one to his side. He was caught in the slips off a splendid ball sent down by Williams.

Buddle also deserves great credit for the stand he made, keeping up his wicket while Wynyard did most of the runs, and occasionally scoring off balls off the wicket.

Gordon made a very game fight of it, both their bowling and fielding being excellent, and there was no appearance of slackening right up to the finish. The wicket gave the bowlers no assistance, being one of George Mills' best, which is saying a good deal. As showing the keenness of the attack the first portion of Williams' analysis is interesting, viz., fourteen overs, ten maidens, four runs and one wicket.

A few more matches such as this, in which the interest was maintained right up to the finish, would do much to increase the public interest in cricket, and the Association have, I think, done wisely in increasing the time to be occupied by senior matches to three days.

GOLF NOTES.

(By BOGEY.)

I follow up the course of my notes of last week by giving what I consider the "Par" score of the Auckland Golf Links, allowing as before the necessary number of strokes, a first-class player would require to reach a hole and two putts.

Holes	Length	Score.
1	320	4
2	370	4
3	230	4
4	215	4
5	320	4
6	300	5
7	265	4
8	220	4
9	175	3
10	370	5
11	435	5
12	440	5
13	320	4
14	100	3
15	420	5
16	320	4
17	240	4
18	420	5

Total—5380 yards, 76 strokes.

This "Par" score has never yet been equalled, but has been very closely approached by the splendid score of 77 made last May, and which will probably stand as the record for the links for a very long time. The score made on that occasion was as follows:—

3 5 4 2 4 5 4 4 4—35 out
5 5 5 5 4 5 5 3 5—42 in.

77

It will be noted that I have given the "Par" of the Forest Hole as 5. As it is practically an impossibility to reach the green in 2 strokes owing to the high second over the trees, I have allowed three strokes as the number necessary to reach the green.

On Thursday, 9th November, the Committee of the Auckland Golf Club has determined to have an "At Home" day on the Links. In the morning an approaching and putting handicap competition will take place, and also a handicap driving competition. A caddies' match will also be played. In the approaching and putting competition the Committee has resolved to keep to the lines of last competition, viz., each competitor to hole a ball from each of four distances, viz., 20, 50, 80 and 120 yards from the hole. Handicaps will be limited to four strokes, and such a liberal allowance should induce the longest handicap men to compete.

At the last competition held on these lines four players tied with 11 strokes each, and on playing off the tie the winner returned a score of 10.

In the afternoon a mixed foursomes handicap will be held over an eleven hole course, viz., the ladies nine holes with the addition of the Polo and Upolo holes.

Owing to the tremendous growth of spring grass at holes 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, the Committee has notified the Club that these holes are to be considered as closed for play. This will not, however, preclude any ardent players from playing, or rather grass-cutting those particular holes if they so desire. The Committee will endeavour to keep the old nine hole course in a fit state for play. I should very much like to see the Committee get some sort of a horse cutter to work on the links so as to keep a track, say a chain and a-half wide, in good order. This is done on many inland greens in England with most excellent results, but most of the Clubs in this part of the world are not wealthy enough to keep a horse-cutter at work in a proper manner.

Most links in New Zealand become more or less unplayable while the strong spring growth of grass is on, especially the courses in the North Island. Gisborne becomes quite unplayable, and Auckland, in spite of heavy stocking, is in a bad state during October and November. Wanganui and Miramar have practically closed their season by this time, but Dunedin is in the fortunate position of never suffering from too much grass.

I have been informed that the Otago Club is seriously talking of holding the next New Zealand Championship Meeting in May. Of this course I thoroughly approve. In New Zealand there is no time so pleasant as the autumn for golf. The weather is more settled, there is less wind and rain, and the various links are in their best order for play. For some time past the tournament has been held either in the winter or the early spring, and that time of the year the weather is notoriously capricious. Nothing spoils a meeting so much as bad weather, and it is a pity to subject what is practically our only meeting to the chances of the most unsettled season.

It may be urged that next May is too near last championship meeting, but it is far better to err on the near than on the far side. After the Otago Club hold the meeting in 1900 it is Auckland's turn in 1901, and the Auckland Club would certainly wish to have their course in perfect order for the meeting, and the only time for doing so is in the autumn.

Christmas is not altogether a suitable time for the big golf meeting, but I should be very pleased to see Easter looked on as the regular time for the meeting, and the time for the keen golfer to take his annual holiday.

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WELLINGTON.

We are approaching the end of the golfing season, the grass is getting long, and there are other attractions, such as yachting and fishing. There will probably be one more "Putter" competition for the ladies and another "Cleek" competition for the men. The Hutt Golf Club are having a mixed foursome competition on Saturday, the 28th. Last Saturday was given up to sending off the contingent. Two of our members, Major Madocks and Captain Ward, went to the war. We hope to hear of their playing golf in Johannesburg with Kruger as a caddie.

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CHRISTCHURCH, October 26.

Things are very quiet here in golfing circles at present. The Hagley Park Links have been practically unplayable for the past three weeks, owing to the strong growth of grass, and Saturday next will see the end of the season for that course, when it is proposed, if possible, to hold a caddies' match. The greens on the Russley course proper are for the time being closed to members, and will probably remain so for another month. An exceedingly attractive nine-hole course, however (quite apart from the original one), has been marked out for the convenience of members, and in spite of the roughness of the natural "greens," a most enjoyable game can be obtained. Mr J. R. Scott, of Dunedin, who is a recognised authority on golfing matters, visited the links a few days ago and expressed the opinion that it was the finest golfing country he has seen in New Zealand. The greens at present are somewhat rough, and will require a good deal of money expended on them before they are first-class, as the soil is very dry and sandy, and the nor'westers, with their scorching heat, burn up the grass in the summer. However, the committee intend to take the question of constant watering into earnest consideration, and with the large membership which the club now possesses, ample funds should be available for all necesssary improvements. It is an expensive matter to keep two courses going, but here it is necessary, owing to the distance of Russley from town, and the lack of a regular coach service. But Rome was not built in a day, and it is hoped that in the future regular communication will be established. The road to the links is an excellent one for bicyclists, and the distance can be covered easily in half an hour. The majority of members adopt this mode of locomotion. The golf house is now finished, and though small it is very comfortable. The secretary has had a large plan of the links prepared, which has been framed and hung up in the house. The plan is very complete, giving lengths of holes and all the principal hazards. Reduced copies have been issued by him, I understand, to the secretaries of the New Zealand and Australian Clubs for their information. The small plans are very neat indeed. Though this is the "off" season members are still coming in, five more being up for election at the next meeting of the committee.

NIBLICK.

BOWLING.

On Saturday afternoon the Ponsonby Bowling Club opened their green at Jervois Road for the season. A large attendance was present and the Newton Band discoursed sweet music. Mr James Kirker, the president, formally opened the green, which was very jumpy. During the afternoon the following ladies presided at heavily laden refreshment tables: Mesdames Kirker, T. Brown, Hurndall, Sutherland, Stichbury, Ballantyne, the Misses Edmiston and Blades. The arrangements for the gathering were most complete and reflected credit on Mr J. Blades, the hard working secretary.

A match, President v. Vice-Presidents' teams, ended in the former winning by 23 points. Appended are the scores:—

No. 1 Rink: A. Hegman, R. Spreckley, W. Gorrie, J. Kirker (skip), 21, v. C. Hudson, L. Moritzson, J. Carlaw, R. Ballantyne (skip), 13.

No. 2 Rink: J. B. Massey, W. Kayle, J. W. Stewart, A. Coutts (skip), 18, v. S. G. Vaile, R. Mitchell, C. Blomfield, J. Edmiston (skip), 18.

No. 3 Rink: J. Wilkins, J. Morran, J. Beeroft, A. Stewart (skip), 32, v. J. M. Lennox, H. Munro, G. M. Handcock, A. H. Brookes (skip), 21

No. 4 Rink: R. Tudehope, C. Spooner, T. Steadman, R. Eagleton (skip), 24, v. T. Ashton, R. W. Keals, T. Crawford, G. Court (skip), 19.

No. 5 Rink: J. W. James, J. C. Dickenson, J. Warren, A. Dingwall (skip), 16, v. J. Bonskin, E. Hodgson, J. Hutchison, A. Sutherland (skip), 19.

No. 6 Rink: W. Hutchison, C. J. Parr, D. Stewart, D. B. McDonald (skip), 18, v. M. Jones, Ranson, J. Newell, J. M. Laxon (skip), 22.

No. 7 Rink: T. Mitchell, W. J. Rees, A. Towsey, W. Culpan (skip), 19, v. T. Jones, G. M. Main, H. Rankin, W. Lambert (skip), 16.

No. 8 Rink: J. Schischka, Duder, A. Hosking, T. Peacock (skip), 16, v. J. C. Robinson, E. Dutton, W. Pirritt, H. W. Brookes (skip), 17.

No. 9 Rink: Butler, C. Westpfahl, R. A. Bodle, A. Holden (skip), 17, v. A. G. Bartlett, E. Farley, T. Watson, L. Dunshea (skip), 21.

No. 10 Rink: E. Hoyte, Lesser, F. Prime, Dr. King (skip), 25, v. E. R. Jones, E. Barker, A. S. Russell, A. J. Hurndall (skip), 6.

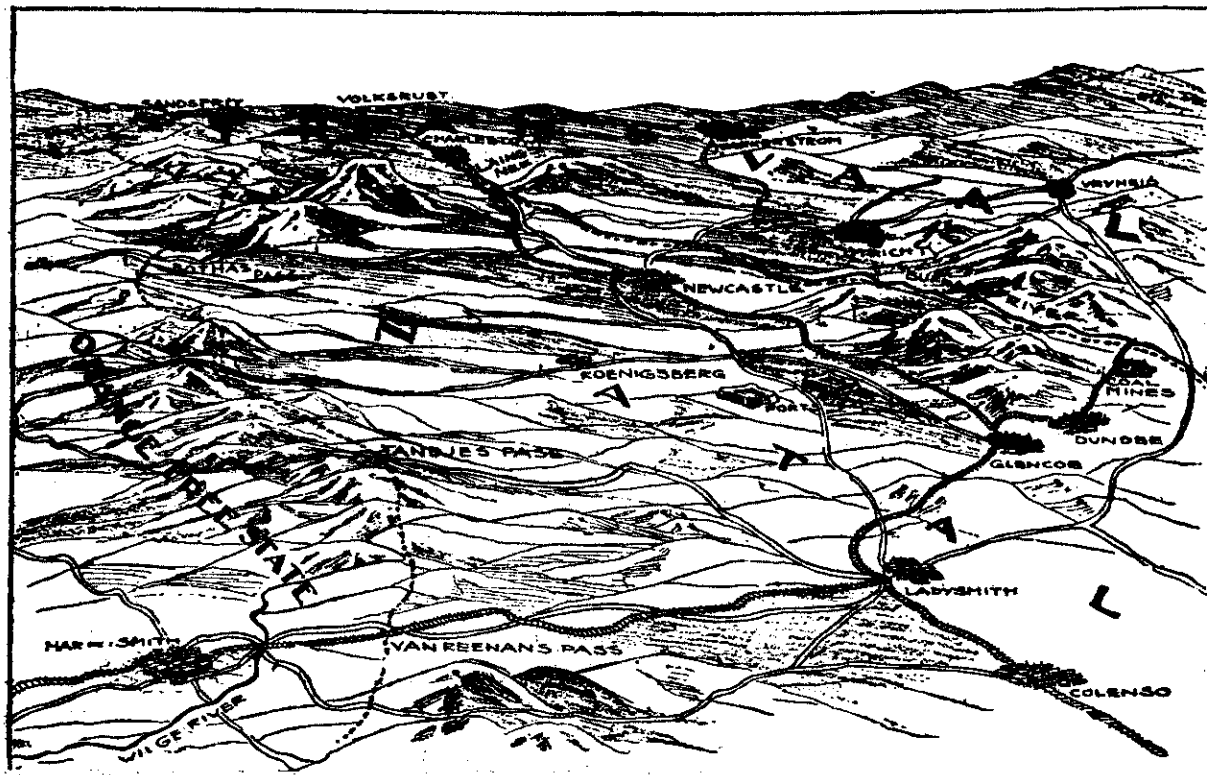
No. 11 Rink: T. Tichbon, Benton, R. James, G. H. Laurie (skip), 23, v. Tindale, J. Buchanan, G. Glenister, Haseiden (skip), 20.

No. 12 Rink: Greenhough, T. Usher, W. Garland, Geo. F. Brimblecombe (skip), 16, v. T. Finlayson, Phipps, A. Littler, J. Court (skip), 30.

LAWN TENNIS.

AUCKLAND LAWN TENNIS CLUB.

The Club intend opening their lawns on 4th November. The ground should be in good order this year, a lot of time having been spent on it. The officers for this season are:—President, W. Coleman, Esq.; vice-presidents, Dr. W. H. Parkes, Arthur Myers, Esq., R. H. Abbott, Esq.; hon. treasurer, R. H. Abbott, Esq.; committee, Messrs Hill, Bilton, Peacock, White; ladies' committee, Mesdames Coates and Bilton, Miss Cooper; hon. secretary, Alfred Baker (P.O. box 410), 15 Queen-street. Telephone, 894.



SOUTH AFRICA. MAP OF THE SEAT OF WAR, SHOWING THE CONFORMATION OF THE COUNTRY.

Music & Drama

POLLARD'S OPERA COMPANY.

"ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES."

The Pollards, reinforced by a number of members of Messrs. Williamson and Musgrove's pantomime company, commenced their Auckland season on Friday last, and have been playing nightly to splendid houses. The success is in every way deserved. Never before has there been such a pantomime put on the New Zealand stage as "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves." Those of us who can remember the magnificent Christmas productions of the Home theatres, more particularly those of Drury Lane, will appreciate what Mr Pollard has done for the amusement of New Zealand. The general opinion among all who know what pantomime is must be that "Ali Baba" is a marvel for this part of the world. The scenery and dressing is on that lavish scale of gorgeousness which befits a pantomime. Scene succeeds scene of marvellous beauty, and the production from the rise to the final fall of the curtain is calculated to charm both eye and ear. Nothing that we have seen here before can equal the corn and poppy ballet and the march of the forty thieves clad in silver armour. Every night these two items evoke deafening applause. The pantomime is one that old as well as young can enjoy, but no doubt the youngsters will derive the most unalloyed delight from these pictures that so wonderfully realise all their dreams of fairy land. No well conditioned parent who has been young himself, and has known the pleasures of pantomime, should fail to give his children a chance of witnessing an entertainment of such an entirely innocent character as this dramatisation of the old story of our childhood's days. We can promise that what between wondering at the gorgeous scenery and dresses, and laughing at Mr Percy, Mr Quealey, Mr Stephens, and of course that marvellous donkey, "Edward," the boys and girls will have a time of it that they will not soon forget. All our old favourites, such as Miss Maud and Miss May Beatty, Miss Stephens, and the rest, are to the fore again in clever songs and dances.

Mention should be made of the imitations of well-known actors by Mr Albert Whelan, and the magnificent series of tableaux, "The Spanish Armada," "Capture of Manila," "Battle of Santiago," "Battle of Omdurman," and "Britannia and her Sons," which concludes the performance.

The words of "Ali Baba" are by Mr Arthur Adams, a young New Zealander, formerly on the staff of the Wellington "Evening Post," and now with Messrs Williamson and Musgrove. The ballet music is by Mr Leon Caron. The pantomime will run this week, and "The Belle of New York" will follow on.

When last heard of the Georgia Magnet was in Taranaki.

Miss Maud Beatty, now Mrs J. Milbourne, severs her connection with Pollards at the end of this month. Australia will be her future home. I understand she has no intention of returning to the stage.

On Wednesday last Mr Arthur Towsey gave the second of his musical matinees in the Choral Hall, Auckland. He was assisted by Mrs Parkes and Messrs A. L. Edwards and S. Jackson.

The chief attraction at the Auckland City Hall where the Gaiety Company still command big houses despite the powerful opposition of the Pollards are the Faust Sisters, a trio of particularly smart acrobats, the American sketch artists Rayston and Rayford, and Albert McKisson and Frank Yorke, two new funny men. The Gaiety Company has now entered on its thirty-second week in Auckland.

The Auckland Liedertafel gave the third concert of their season on Friday last. There was a large audience on the occasion and an excellent programme was rehearsed. A feature of the concert was the singing of Rule Britannia at the opening in which all present joined.

Rumour says that Messrs Williamson and Musgrove intend to dissolve partnership before the end of the year. Their lease of the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, expires next month.

On Wednesday and Thursday evenings the Hamilton Amateur Comedy Company played "The Magistrate" to crowded houses.

The Brough opera in Melbourne on the 4th inst. "The Gay Lord Quex" being the initial performance.

Mr Wallace Brownlow is now with the Harry Conor Company in Western Australia.

A Florence newspaper declares that an American millionaire has offered £20,000 for the reversion of Mme. Patti's throat. The wonderful organ, however, has been bequeathed, it is said, to a London hospital.

To America we have of late years been indebted for several strange entertainments, but for nothing stranger than the mixture of varieties and spectacle presented at the Olymptic Theatre, London, by Messrs Carl and Theodor Rosenfeld (says the "Daily Chronicle.") "A Trip to Midget Town" is a mere frame in which to exhibit the eccentricities of some half-dozen dwarfs, whose labours are diversified by ballets and processions carried through by persons of ordinary growth. The oddities of the little folk are apparently of the go-as-you-please type—at all events, they might be, as for the most part they have but slight connection with the story so far as the latter can be understood. There are other diminutive performers who are scarcely small enough to be considered dwarfs in the sense in which dwarfs are regarded by a curiosity-seeking public having some experience to fall back upon in such a matter. The genuinely tiny specimens of humanity referred to resemble other dwarfs, in that they have the sharp shrill voices peculiar to their class, and that, judged by their facial appearance, they might be any age, from 24 to 44 years, or more. They can sing (in the customary fashion of dwarfs), they can dance (without exception actively and neatly), they can whistle, they can play instruments, and two or three of them are really humorous. But even the exposition of such a diversity of gifts does not completely oust dullness from a performance filling close upon three hours and a half.

The Auckland Young Ladies' Orchestra give their grand concert of the season in the Choral Hall this (Wednesday) evening. The soloists will be Misses Maud Howard and E. McIntyre and Messrs Tonar and Pollock.

The Pollards originally intended to produce "The Geisha" during their present season in Auckland, but it was found impossible to get the piece and properties from the other side at this time, and the production will not take place till Christmastide. The famous piece will be introduced to New Zealand at the Wellington Opera House on Boxing night.

Exchange Notes.

Record output of bullion this month.

Total yield, £59,761.

Increase on last month's output £5000.

Ohinemuri mines yielded bullion worth £47,097 last month.

Barrier Reefs shares advanced in price during the week, being sold as high as 5/. Excellent ore is showing in No. 2 level

Shareholders in the Ohinemuri Co. met this week and approved the scheme submitted for amalgamating with the Waihi Consolidated Co.

Specimen stone continues to be won from the Bunker's Hill mine, Coromandel.

The reef at No. 2 level in the Progress Castle Rock mine, Coromandel, varies in size to about 6in, shows an excellent class of minerals, and in breaking down the quartz strong dabs of gold were seen. This block of ground promises well for future development.

The Cambria lode in the Moanataiari mine, Thames, is 6 feet wide, and strong blotches of gold are seen in the stone.

Crushing has commenced at the Eclipse Company's new ten stamper battery. Everything, including aerial tramway, is working splendidly.

The result of the past month's operations in the Mariposa G.M. Co. was that bullion worth £203 16/3 was obtained from 236 tons of ore treated.

English holders of Woodstock shares have adopted the reconstruction scheme.

N.Z. Drug Co.'s shares advanced to buyers 52/ this week.

National Bank shares have steadily firmed in price, 54/ being offered without sales resulting.

Sales of N.Z. Insurance shares took place at 61/6.

Enquiries were made during the week for National Insurance at 17/4, and Standard Insurance at 13/9.

The London Board of the May Queen Co. this week cabled: "Reconstruction rumours are unfounded; amount of working capital available is £7,500.

A parcel of 39 tons of quartz from the New Moanataiarari mine yielded bullion worth £330 17/7.

Waihi shares sold at £8 15/, as most encouraging accounts are received regarding the recently discovered lodes in the mine.

The erection of a two-head stamper battery for the Sheet Anchor Company at Omahu is nearly completed.

Waihi Grand Junction shares advanced in price this week on the Exchange, buyers offering 22/, without sales taking place.

Sales of Grace Darling shares took place at 2/4.

N.Z. Crown Mines sold at 14/, and Talismans at 12/6 during the past week.

A sharp advance took place in Mt. Lyells, buyers' price going up from £10 17/6 to £11 5/.

After being without inquiry for some time, National Mortgage shares were wanted this week at 18/6.

An excellent return was obtained by the May Queen Company this month, 94 tons having yielded bullion worth £664 7/9. Tributers also crushed 54½ tons for £184 19/4.

The lode in the winze of the Maratoto mine is being broken out to an average width of 4 feet, without any sign of the footwall, and the average assay value of the ore is £4 11/ per ton.

The new development in the N.Z. Crown mine at the No 2 level below the Waitawheta Creek has for the last 100 feet produced much richer ore. Nice golden stone is frequently met with, and it is considered highly probable the Company has a long reach of payable stone southwards.

A parcel of 24 tons of ore from the Welcome Jack mine at Kapowai, near Gumtown, was treated at the Thames School of Mines, and yielded bullion worth £280. This makes £543 15/6 from five tons.

The Komata Reefs Company during the last month crushed and treated 180 tons of quartz for the satisfactory return of £625. The low level tunnel during the same period has been advanced 121 feet, making a total distance from the mouth of 1738 feet.

Quite a rush has set in at the Gumtown field, and over a dozen mining sections of 100 acres each have been applied for. The claims are mostly on the Kapowai block, in and around the vicinity of Slip Creek, and about six miles from Gumtown.

The Waihi Grand Junction Company has decided to sink a shaft to the west of the Waihi mine, right on the main road to the township. It is intended to sink 500 feet.

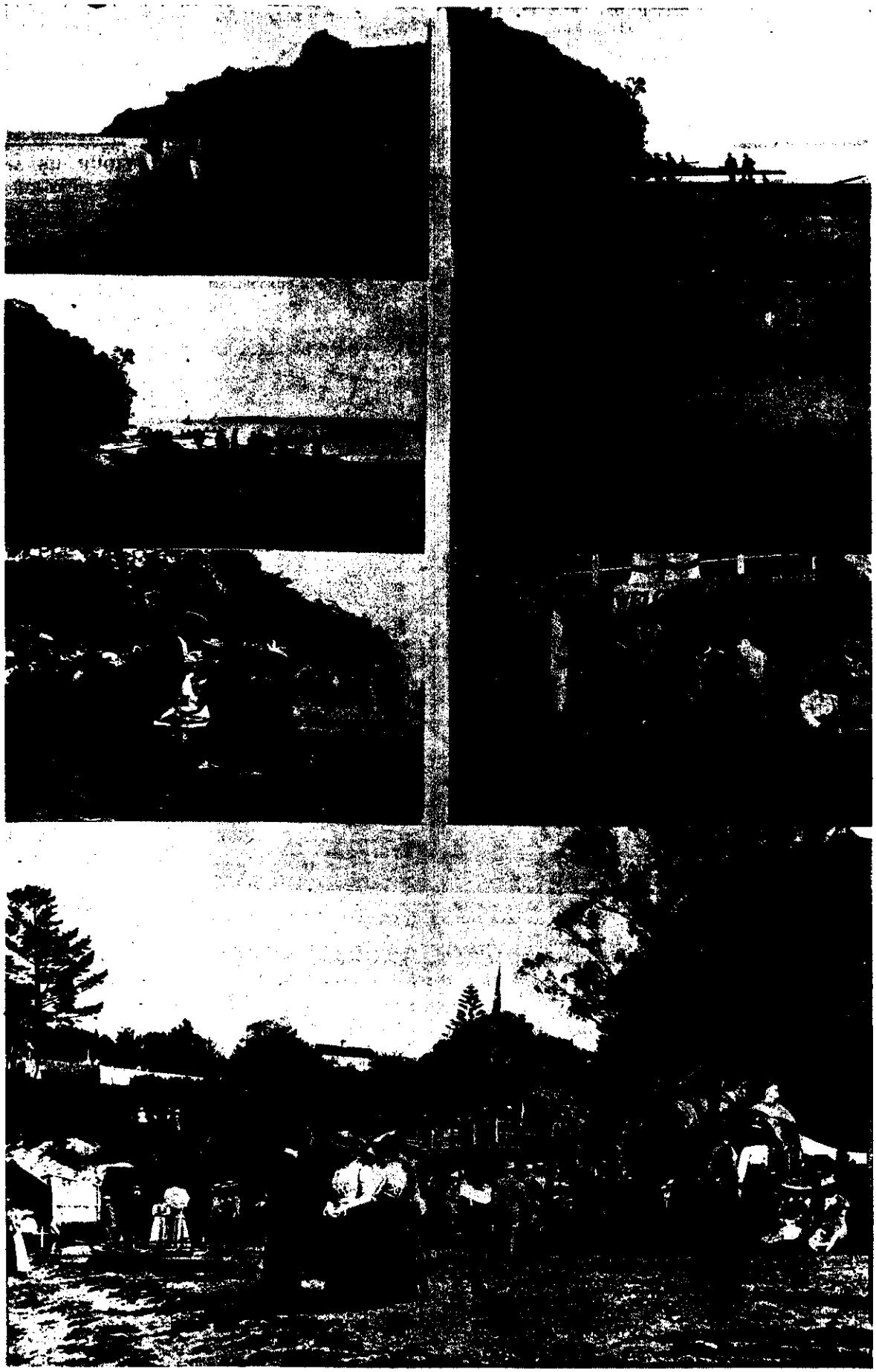
The return from the Tararu Creek Company's mines for the past month's operations was £1336 from 1317 tons of ore.

Tandem claim has been acquired by the New Four-in-Hand Company for 6000 shares.

DEATH OF MR WM. LEYS.

It is with sincere regret that we record the death of Mr Wm. Leys, which took place at Colombo on the 5th of October. The deceased arrived in Auckland in 1863, by the ship "Tyburnia," one of the vessels chartered in connection with the Albertland special settlement scheme. Having served his time as a bookbinder, he commenced business on his own account in Victoria-street East in 1870, subsequently removing into Wyndham street, and retired about two years ago on account of failing health. Four months ago he proceeded to England for medical advice, but his ailment being pronounced incurable he immediately took passage by the Orient steamship "Ophir," with the intention of reaching home if possible. On arrival of the vessel at Colombo Mr Leys felt too weak to continue the journey, and he entered the private ward of the Colombo Hospital, where he received great care and kindness during the few days of life that remained to him. Mr Leys had always taken an active interest in public affairs, and was especially impressed with the poverty and suffering arising from the failure of physical powers in old age, and the keen competition which results in the aged being thrust on one side. By lectures and pamphlets he warmly advocated the adoption of an Old Age Pensions scheme, and laid down the lines which have since been embodied in the New Zealand statute, namely, that the pension should be payable without previous premium to all the aged whose circumstances rendered such aid needful, on the same footing as Civil service pensions, in recognition of services rendered to the State as good citizens and taxpayers. These pamphlets he printed and circulated at his own cost to all public bodies and representative men throughout the colony. There is no doubt that the agitation thus fostered, materially assisted in developing public opinion on the subject, and hastened the adoption of the Act in this colony. Mr Leys was a strong champion of universal compulsory education. He was chairman of the Ponsonby School Committee for several years, and latterly occupied seats at the Board of Education and Harbour Board. He was always identified with the Liberal side in politics and for some time filled the position of Chairman of the Liberal Association. Few men in Auckland were more widely known or more respected. He leaves a widow and one young daughter to mourn their loss.

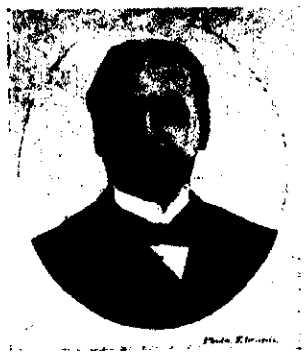
The deceased was buried at Colombo by the Rev. Wm. C. Fleming and the Rev. G. McKelvie, Presbyterian ministers.



The Opening of the Rowing Season in Auckland.

Photos. by Walrond. ST. GEORGE'S ROWING CLUB'S "AT HOME."

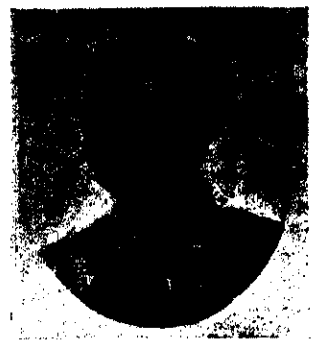
BRITISH OFFICERS IN THE TRANSVAAL.



LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR C. M. CLARKE.

Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke, who is in South Africa with the troops from India, has been in command of the forces at Madras since 1893. He entered the army in 1856, and from 1861 to 1866 served in New Zealand. In the Zulu war of 1879 he achieved distinction, and saw active service also in Basutoland in 1880-81. From 1880 to 1882 he was Commandant-General of the Colonial Forces of the Cape of Good Hope. He has been Deputy Adjutant-General in Ireland, and in 1892-93 held the same office at headquarters. He is fifty-nine years of age.

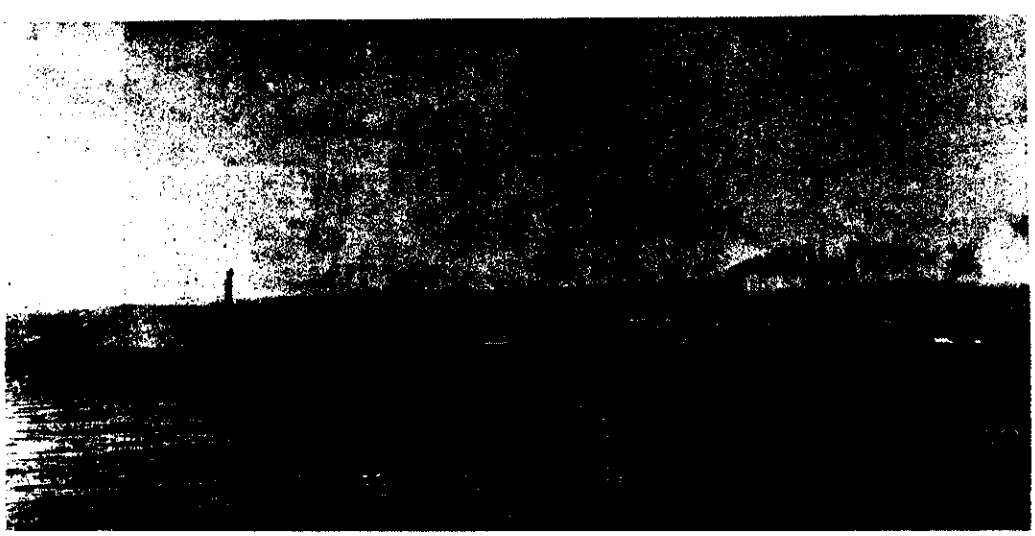
Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. Dick-Cunyngham, a distinguished officer in South Africa, who was wounded at Elands Laagte, commanded the 2nd Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders at Rawal Pindi during the Frontier War of 1897. Colonel Dick-Cunyngham bore a distinguished part in the Afghan War of 1878-80, for which he was mentioned in despatches, received the medal with two clasps and bronze star, and won the Victoria Cross. He is experienced in South African warfare, having served in the Transvaal campaign of 1881. Lieut.-Colonel W. H. Dick-Cunyngham is forty-five years of age.



LT.-COL. W. H. DICK-CUNYNGHAM.

THE CAPTAIN AND OFFICERS OF S.S. WAIWERA, WHICH CONVEYS THE N.Z. TRANSVAAL CONTINGENT TO SOUTH AFRICA.

BACK ROW.—Mr Sutherland, Chief Steward; Mr Anderson, Fourth Officer; Mr Moyle, Third Officer; Mr Smith, Third Engineer; Mr Allen, Fourth Engineer; Mr Pettigrew, Boiler-maker; Mr Brewer, Chief Refrig. Engineer; Mr Winship, Second Refrig. Engineer; Mr Beveridge, Third Refrig. Engineer.
FRONT ROW.—Mr J. C. Chaworth-Musters, Second Officer; Mr Lowden, Chief Officer; Captain Stuart; Mr Macpherson, Chief Engineer; Mr Alexander, Second Engineer.



Lewis, photo. THE LAST OF THE WAIWERA.

FINAL DEPARTURE OF THE TROOPSHIP WITH THE N.Z. CONTINGENT FOR THE TRANSVAAL.

BEHAVIOUR P'S AND Q'S

HINTS TO BROTHERS.

When playing games of croquet or tennis with women, a young man who loves the game for its own sake is often placed in rather a difficult position—he must either beat the girls he is playing against out and out, or he must do injustice to his own form of play in order to give them a chance of winning sometimes, and so having an enjoyable afternoon for no one enjoys themselves if they are beaten at every game.

Now in these cases circumstances must be taken into account, so hard-and-fast lines are impossible to lay down. For instance, if the girls are champion players and the winners of prizes, you of course meet them on their own ground and play your very best, doing your utmost to win the game.

If you succeed, and play again and win again, then it is as well to say to your opponent, "I think I am a bit stronger than you at this; shall I give you points?" This puts the whole thing into the girl's hand—she either accepts or refuses, and stands and falls by her own decision, leaving you at liberty still to play your best.

But it is not so much about these sort of matches we have to think as of the afternoon party when games are introduced to make people happy, and alas! so often have the contrary effect.

The reason is not far to seek, and often can be traced to the discourtesy that one player shows who is very good and strong at a game in playing against others who are not very good, although they delight in playing, and are straining every nerve to do their best.

In these cases it is much more gracious and more gentlemanlike to play beneath your own strength; you will very likely have an opportunity late in the day of being pitted against someone of your own calibre, and showing the onlookers what you can do.

But suppose that this should not be the case, and that you have for the sake of the general "go" of the game to hide your light under a bushel and play badly in order to give the others a chance, you will be well repaid by playing in a bright, amusing game instead of seeing flushed and irritated opponents, who are evidently for the time being detesting you, and any real judge of the game will understand that you are holding yourself back—they will see it from the form in which you play—and will be sure to understand and appreciate your motives.

Croquet has been always found to be a game particularly trying to the temper, and after all can you imagine, if you were a woman—not a very young one, perhaps, and yet young enough to enjoy the game—what it would feel like to be croqued away from your hoop every time you were within measurable distance of going through it, and to have to spend nearly the whole of the game away from the rest of the party, who would naturally in that case appear to be having "such a good time," while you were left solitary away from it all time after time?

It is so easy to notice these sort of things, and by a little thoughtfulness to avoid making someone wretched. "Let mercy season justice," particularly when playing croquet with ladies.

A family game against your sisters or cousins ought to be conducted, on the contrary, on the strictest lines. Each knows the strength of the other, and you give or take points, as the case may be; but each ought to play up, and in their very best form, for a family game is a sort of practice, and the better each one plays the more the rest will improve; and if any member of the family in this case loses his or her temper, the sooner he or she gives up playing games of skill the better, for they are by temperament distinctly unfitted for them.

THE HUMOUR OF PUBLIC NOTICES.

When they attempt a public notice in English, foreigners are often unconsciously humorous. Here are a few samples:—

The following notice appeared on an art exhibition in Tokio, Japan:—"Visitors are requested at the entrance to show tickets for inspection. Tickets are charged 10 cens. and 2 cens. for the special and common respectively. No visitor who is mad or intoxicated is allowed to enter in, if any person found in shall be claimed to retire. No visitor is allowed to carry in with himself any parcel, umbrella, stick, and the like kind, except his purse, and is strictly forbidden to take within himself dog, or the same kind of beasts. Visitor is requested to take good care of himself from thievely."

Outside a restaurant in the same city swings a signboard reading, "Let food be eventuated," while another advertises eggs as "extract of fowl."

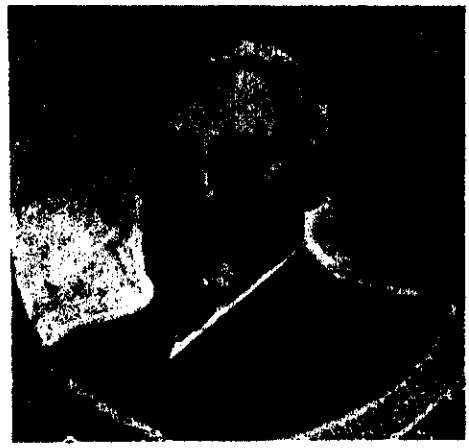
A recent visitor in Yokohama saw painted on shop fronts, "The All Countries Boot and Shoe Small or Fine Wares," "Old Curious," "Horseshoe Maker Instruct by French Horse Leach," "Cut Hair Shop," "If you want sell watch I will buy, if you want buy watch I will sell," "Hatter Native Country," and "Autematic of Nausea Marina" (remedy for seasickness).

The Chinese, of course, also make sad hash of our tongue. Witness this on a laundry at Shanghai, "With reference to notify you for the employed in the various laundries in Shanghai. But any washerman is quite inability of disadvantage to washing any public, and though the high price ruling now for rent, charcoal, coal, soap, rice, &c., it is never counterfeit. The Committee of the Laundries Guild are now to notify the general public, which must will be increase. If any gentleman or lady will unbelief, upward a few lines will can see the daily news is written quite distinctly, and obliged many thanks."

The same people have a horrid habit of getting rid of every girl born after the first, and thus was necessitated a warning over a pool at Foochow: "Girls may not be drowned here!"

Some quaint contortions of English are exhibited in Norwegian resorts. Here are a couple. In an hotel:—"Bath! First-class bath. Can anybody get. Tushbat. Warm and cold. Tub-bath and shower-bath. At any time. Except Saturday. By two hours forbore." At Jotunheim: —"The hotel for tourists, is laying by the foot of the eminent Skagastolstinder, the largest field in Jotunheim for top-mounters. The best leaders are to be had. It is the best place for country-layers."

Notices in England are hardly less funny at times. For example:—



THE LATE GRANT ALLEN.
Novelist.

About four miles from Canterbury the following may be read:—"Traction engines and other persons taking water from this pond will be prosecuted."

Over a row of chairs appeared: "These chairs are for the use of ladies. Gentlemen are requested not to sit in them while ladies are using them."

This was an alarming notice lately published in Oxford Cathedral:—"Evensong will be said at 8.0 p.m., and the sermon preached from Monday to Friday inclusive."

Mr Anstey (of "Vice Versa") tells of a seaside resort where the free seats are labelled—"Mr Jones of this town presented these seats for the public use. The sea is His and He made it."

The postmaster of an Oxfordshire village fixed this up:—"Have gone fishing; will be back in time to sell stamps."

At Boston is the prominent sign: "Cole and Wood, dealers in wood and coal."

A lady in Clifton announces herself as "Milliner and Modest."

A Bermondsey cough-drop seller rises to this height:—"Truth is the Pioneer of Light, and springs supernal in the Human Hart. Virtue is the reward of truth, and worth is ever the same. Jones's cough-drops are of sterling worth. They cure all diseases of the Pulmonial Organs."

An English town-crier was sent round to call this:—"Whereas several idle persons have lately made a practice of riding on an ass belonging to Mr ——. Now, lest any accident should happen, he takes this method of informing the public that he is determined to shoot the said ass, and cautions any person who may be riding on it at the same time to take care of himself, lest by some unfortunate mistake he should shoot the wrong one."

HOW GOUNOD BECAME A MUSICIAN.

Shortly before his death Gounod wrote a brief sketch of the manner in which he became a musician, and this has just been published for the first time by the Petit Bleu, of Paris. It is wholly from Gounod's pen, and, as an autobiographic fragment, will surely prove of much interest to all admirers of the famous composer of "Faust."

"I was thirteen years old," he begins, "and was a pupil at the Harcourt School. My mother, a poor widow, was obliged to work hard for her living and had to trudge through snow and sunshine in order to obtain the means for her children's education. I was continually worried over the thought that she was sacrificing herself for me, and I longed for the day when I could set her free from her unworthy labour. Her views, however, in regard to my future differed from mine. She had destined me for a university career, whereas I ever heard an enticing voice saying—'You must be a musician.'

"One day I told my mother about my heart's desire.

"'Are you in earnest?' she asked.

"'Yes; in dead earnest.'

"'And you will not go to the university?'

"'Never!'

"'Where will you go, then?'

"'To the Conservatory.'

EARLY AMBITION.

"It was now her turn to say 'Never.' It seemed fated then that I was to remain at the Harcourt School until I had finished my studies, and that, if misfortunes still dogged my footsteps at that time, I would have to become a soldier. I could not look to my mother for any help. She would rather that I should do anything else than become a vagabond musician.

"'My dear mother,' I finally said to her, 'I will stay at school, since you wish it, but one thing I am determined on, and that is that I will never become a soldier.'

"'Do you mean that you will not obey the law, which calls for military service?'

"'No, but I mean that the law will be a dead letter so far as I am concerned.'

"'What do you mean?'

"'I mean that I will win the "Prix de Rome," which will free me from the necessity of becoming a soldier.'

A FRIEND IN NEED.

"My mother then abandoned the idea of trying to make me change my mind. She decided, however, to lay the matter before Father Pierson, my school principal. The jolly old gentleman summoned me and began in a fatherly tone of voice:—'So, my little fellow, we are going to spend our life among musicians?'

"'Yes, Mr Pierson.'

"'But music! Is that a profession?'

"'What about Mozart, Meyerbeer, Weber, Rossini? Didn't they have a profession?'

"The good principal was somewhat taken aback and replied hastily:—'Oh, Mozart—that's a different matter altogether. He gave proof of genius when he was only your age. But you! What can you do? Let us see.' With these words he scribbled on a sheet of paper Joseph's ballad, beginning, 'When my childhood was passed.' Then he handed me the sheet. 'Come, let me have some music for these words.' I ran off and two hours later I came back to him with my first musical composition.

"'Good gracious!' said the old gentleman. 'You're a terrible fellow. Go ahead and sing your little song now.'

"'Sing? Without a piano?'

"'What do you want a piano for?'

"'To play an accompaniment. It is impossible in any other way to set forth the true harmony of a work.'

"'Oh, nonsense! I don't care a fig for your harmony. What I want to know is whether you have any ideas, any true musical temperament. Go ahead now.'

HIS FIRST SUCCESS.

"I began to sing. When I had finished, I glanced timorously at my stern critic. Tears stood in his eyes, tears were rolling down his cheeks. I saw that he was strangely moved, and I was not surprised to find myself the next moment in his arms.

"'It is beautiful, beautiful, my boy,' he said. 'We will make something out of you. You shall become a musician, for the real fire is in you.'

"In this way I gained a champion. Finally, my mother took me to Reiche, my first music teacher. She was still troubled about me and she whispered into Reiche's ear:—'Don't let him have an easy time. Let him see the dark side of the musical profession. I will bless you if you send him back to me a music hater.'

"Reiche, however, could not please her in this way. After a year he was obliged to say to her in reply to her inquiries:—'Madame, you had better content yourself. Your boy has talent. He knows what he wants and nothing can discourage him. He knows already as much as I do, and there is only one thing which he does not know, namely, that he knows something.'

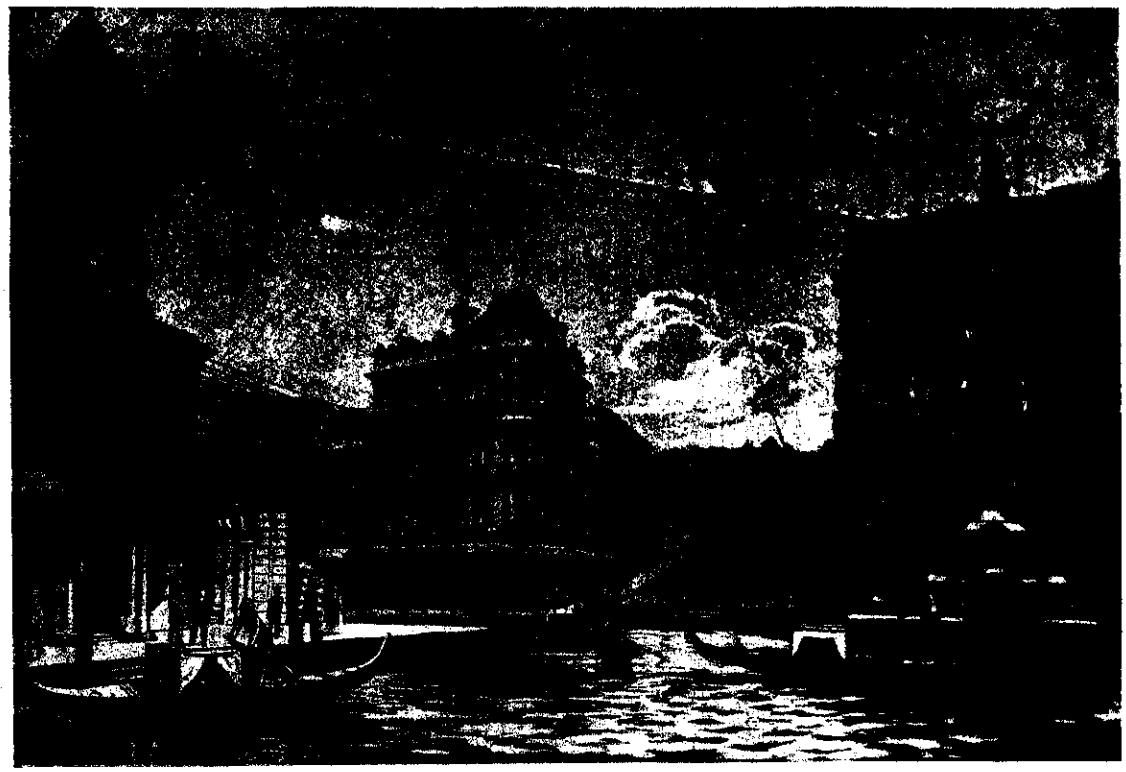
"I knew this also, however, for every one who is not an ass possesses self-consciousness. Three years later I won the 'Prix de Rome,' and I had accomplished my heart's desire."

FLIGHT OF ENGLISH RESIDENTS FROM JOHANNESBERG.

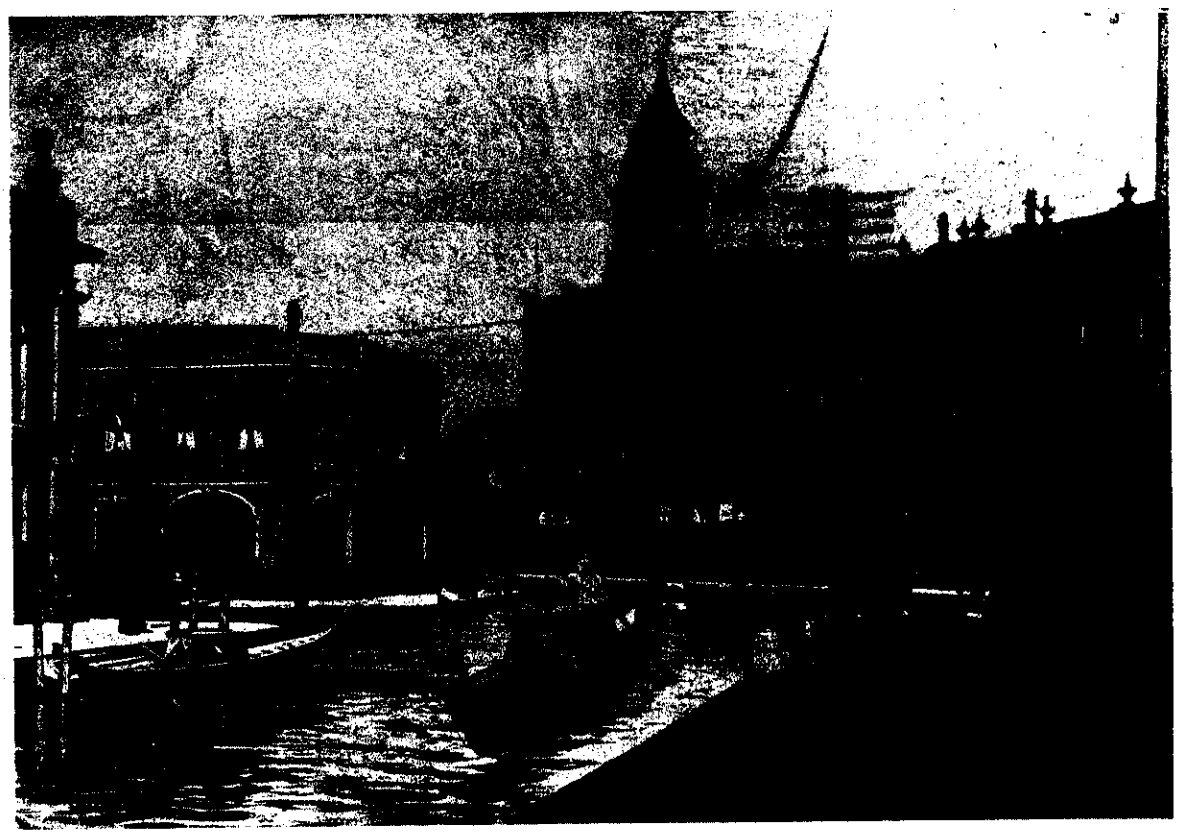
CANALE DELLA REGINA (QUEEN STREET), AUCKLAND.

SHORTLAND STREET, AUCKLAND, VENETIANISED. [SEE LETTERPRESS.

Venice at the Antipodes.



GRAND HOTEL CORNER, DUNEDIN, VENETIANISED.



WELLINGTON AS VENICE. THE EXCHANGE. [SEE LETTERPRESS.

Venice at the Antipodes.

The Overhead Wire System of Electric Traction.

THIS IS THE SYSTEM TO BE INTRODUCED INTO AUCKLAND.

AUCKLAND ELECTRIC TRAMS.

WHAT THEY WILL LOOK LIKE.

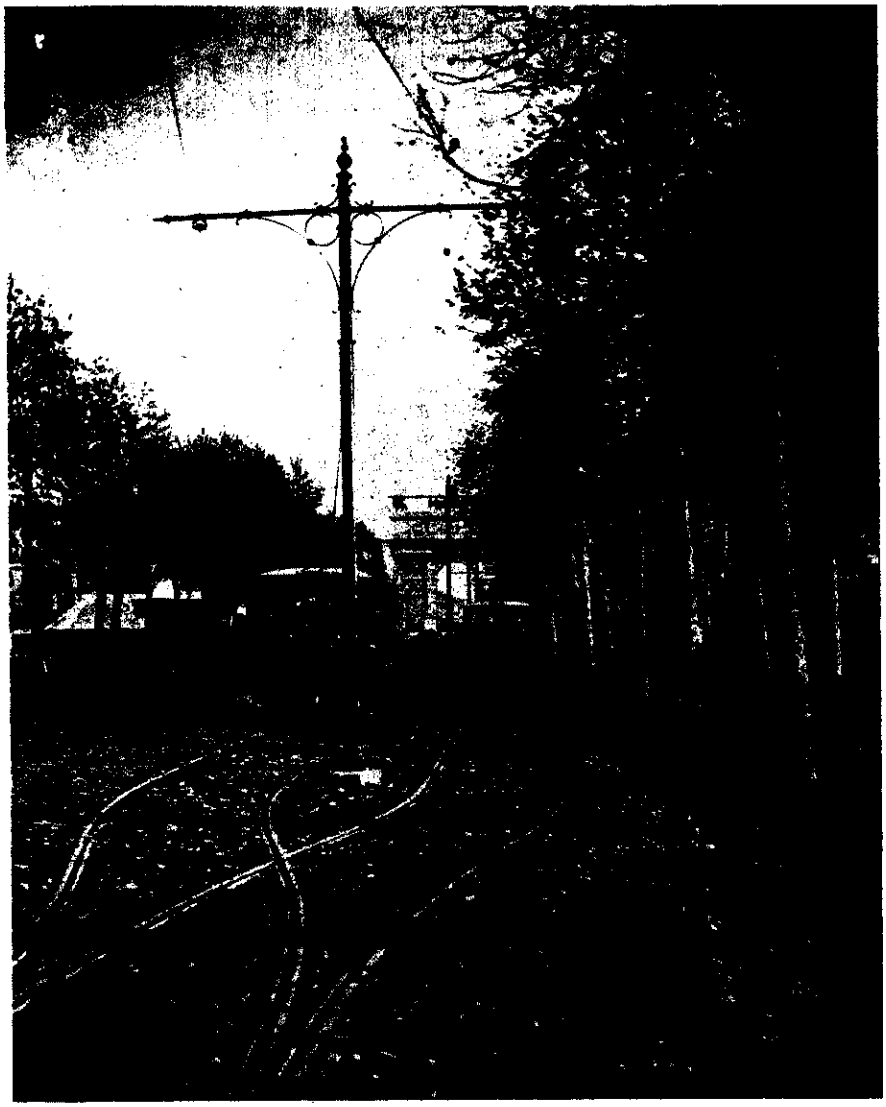
In this issue there appear some pictures of the style of electric tramways which are shortly to be started in Auckland. Two of our pictures show the trams as they are now running in Milan, in Italy, and the other representing the cars in use, was taken in Newcastle, N.S.W.

The pictures show exactly what Aucklanders may expect, as the installation will be exactly similar.

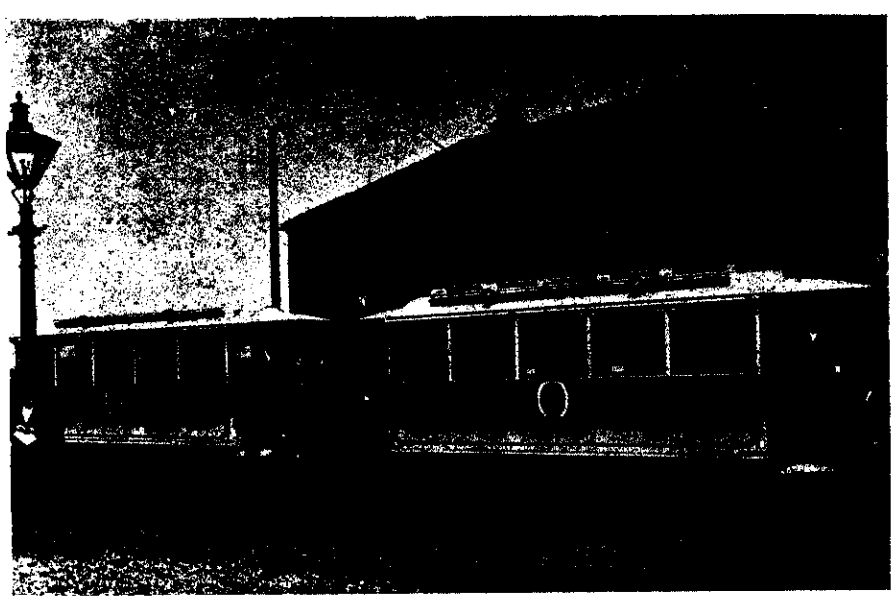
The system adopted is known as the "overhead system." In this system the distribution of electric energy is by means of a wire (called the trolley wire), supported by insulated brackets, at a height of about 20 feet above the ground, over the track for its whole length. Each car has attached to its roof a long slender arm (the trolley pole, hinged at the base, so that its outer end may move in any direction. At the outer end, a small deeply-grooved wheel is fixed, which, by means of springs at the base of the trolley pole, is pressed against the under side of the trolley wire, and so runs along as the car proceeds. The current from the wire passes through the wheel and down the pole to the motor, from which it is returned to the source of supply by the ordinary tramway rails, which have special connections (bonds) at the joints to facilitate this. For simplicity of operation, cheapness of construction, flexibility in adaptation, and reliability in service, this system is superior to any other. Quite 95 per cent. of the world's electric tramway mileage of to-day is worked on this system. It has been in continuous service in the United States for the past twelve years, and during the last few years no radical change has been made in its design. These facts point clearly to its satisfactory character.

American and Continental companies have carried the system through its experimental stages, and it is now ripe for general adoption. Practically the only objection to this system is an aesthetic one. With the earlier examples of clumsy wooden poles, and the indiscriminate festooning of wires overhead, there was good reason for this objection; but this is no longer the case with the present perfected methods of construction.

We were supplied with the photos by the courtesy of Mr Hansen, representative of the Electric Traction Company, Limited.



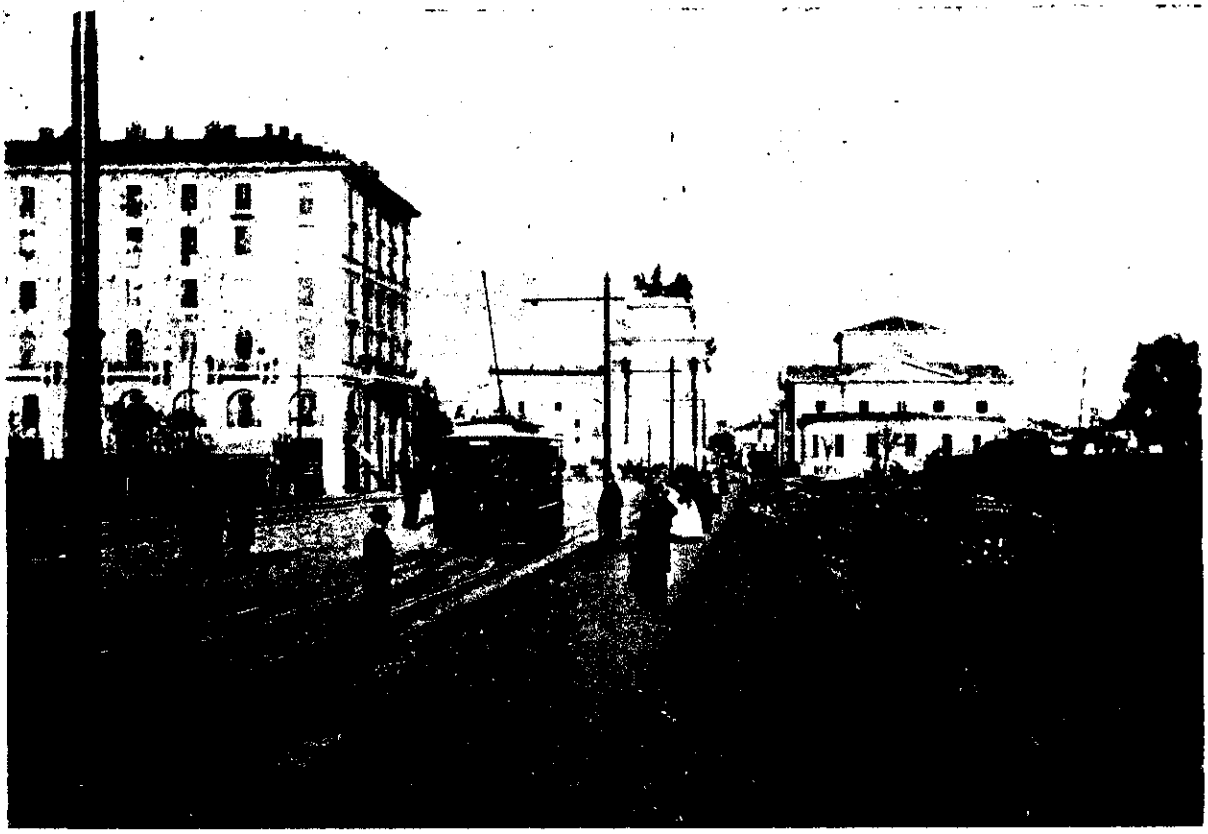
OVER-HEAD WIRE SYSTEM OF ELECTRIC TRACTION IN ITALY.



CLOSED TYPE OF CARS IN USE IN NEWCASTLE, N.S.W.

THE DUCHESS OF YORK'S "LOVELY LITTLE PIG.

"M.A.P." tells an interesting story of the recent visit of the Duchess of York to Longford Hall, the seat of the Hon. H. J. and Lady Catherine Coke. During her stay at Longford the Duchess visited most of the places of interest in the immediate neighbourhood, including the glass works at Hatton, where she watched the process of ornamental glass-working for over an hour. Lord Lathom, who was one of the house party invited to meet the Duchess, drew her attention to a grotesque little glass pig one of the workmen had modelled. It was really an admirable specimen of the glass-worker's art. "Oh, what a lovely little pig!" exclaimed the Duchess in tones of delight. "Do make me another with wings on, and then we will be able to sing, 'When the Pigs Begin to Fly.'" Another pig was soon modelled, and a pair of wings deftly fashioned and fitted on, much to the amusement of the party. The winged pig will be included in the glassware which is to be forwarded to the Duchess from Hatton, and will doubtless become a source of entertainment in the Royal nursery.



STREET IN MILAN, ITALY.

COMMISSIONER-STREET, JOHANNESBURG.

STOWAWAYS.

"I am not given to losing my temper," said a captain to a writer in "Cassell's Magazine," "but I confess that when on one voyage we found that no fewer than fourteen men had managed to stow themselves away below, I felt inclined to give them all a ducking, and said so." This was the captain of an Atlantic liner, a man to whom the stowaway is a perpetual nuisance. Though the strictest watch is kept to prevent his getting on board, it is rare for a trip to be made without one or two specimens of the deadhead fraternity being carried, willy-nilly, free. Of course this is not done entirely without connivance on the part of somebody on board the ship. The stokers are not infrequently the guilty parties. With their or others' aid the stowaway gets down into the hold and finds a dark corner in which to secrete himself until the vessel is at sea. Then if he is discovered and set to work, he does not mind. It is not work he is afraid of, but the being without work, and the bread that accompanies it. When it is considered what an enormous thing an Atlantic liner is, and how many dark places there are in her vast interior, it is not surprising to hear that scores of men during the course of a year get free passages across the "herring-pond" in one ship or another—and this, though a steamer never leaves port without a search being made to see that no unauthorised person is on board. Many are discovered in bunkers and other such places, and, of course, carefully conducted on shore; but not a few manage to elude detection, and, of course, once away from land little is to be feared from discovery. There is a curious notion prevalent among some sailors; it is that a stowaway is a lucky passenger to carry. Asked once why it was, an old salt answered, that he never heard of a ship being lost that had a stowaway on board. Of course, he had an instance in point to relate. It was to the effect that a stowaway was discovered in hiding on an outgoing vessel at the last moment and ejected. Shaking his fist at the captain, the would-be voyager cried: "I'm glad you turned me out of your rotten ship; neither she nor you will live to see Christmas Day, while I shall." The prophecy proved a true one. The vessel went down within a week of sailing, and only the second officer and a few men were saved. One wonders how such a superstition arose, if superstition it can be called.

FORDING THE TAIRUA ON THE ROAD TO THE BROKEN HILL MINE, THAMES.

The War IN THE TRANSVAAL.

THE "GRAPHIC'S" ARRANGEMENTS.

The readers of the "Graphic" will be pleased to learn that the fullest arrangements have been made for the "Graphic's" being supplied with pictures and descriptive matter of the campaign in South Africa. The journal has had a special correspondent at at the seat of the war since the beginning of hostilities, and more recently arrangements have been made with other gentlemen now on their way to Natal to forward news of whatever may be of interest to our readers. The latter will therefore be in a singularly good position as regards information of what is passing in the ranks of the New Zealand contingent.

A gentleman who had a parrot taught it to say "H'um," in variety to its rather profance vocabulary. One day he was showing it off to a friend, but Poll, in a fit of sulkiness, would not say a word. The gentleman getting in a temper, caught it by the neck, and threw it in the fowl-yard, saying, "Say 'H'um,' you beggar." After a while, feeling ashamed of himself, he went to look for the dead parrot, but on reaching the fowl-yard a rooster and six prize Minorca hens lay dead, while Poll had the seventh by the neck, saying, "Say 'H'um, you beggar."

Personal Paragraphs.

His Excellency the Governor, attended by the Hon. C. Hill-Trevor, left Wellington in the Waikare for Australia. Upon his arrival in Melbourne Lord Ranfurly will be the guest of the Governor of Victoria, Lord Brassey, during Cup week, and will afterwards pay a visit to his property at Mildura. His Excellency intends to be absent from New Zealand for about six weeks.

Captain Alexander, Private Secretary to the Governor, cabled to the War Office upon war breaking out in the Transvaal, offering his services, and has received a cable from the War Office to the effect that his regiment, the 14th West Yorkshire, was leaving England with full strength, but promising him the first vacancy that occurred while the Regiment is in South Africa. Captain Alexander has therefore remained in New Zealand, awaiting further instructions from the War Office. By his unfailing courtesy and tact as Private Secretary to Lord Ranfurly, Captain Alexander has become exceedingly popular in New Zealand, and his plucky return to duty will be accompanied by the good wishes of many friends and well-wishers in all parts of the colony.

Mrs Ring, Oxford, spent some days with Mrs de Courcey, Drury, last week.

Mrs W. Leatham, of Auckland, has gone on a visit to her friends and relations in Taranaki.

The Ladies' Club, a new institution in Christchurch, is to be opened today. Mrs Denniston, the President, will make a few remarks on the uses of the Club, and afternoon tea will be supplied to members only, who are privileged to bring one friend.

Mr O. Rudell, of Samoa, has arrived in Auckland from the Islands.

Mr Norman Macbeth, of Christchurch, left for Sydney, via Auckland, together with Mr Malthus, to be present at the Queensland Athletic Association meeting.

Mr and Mrs Sievwright, who are up in Auckland on a visit from Dunedin, have been stopping at the Star.

Mr G. Kettlewell, of Christchurch, is away in Australia on business, and expects to be absent another month.

Mr Kennedy, of Wellington, with Mrs Kennedy and his daughter, is paying a visit to Auckland.

Mr L. B. Wood, Inspector of Schools, returned to Christchurch from England last week, his health having greatly improved.

Mr Culling, proprietor of the Mataura Falls paper mills, who is leaving Mataura to reside at St. Clair, Dunedin, was last week entertained at a valedictory social. Responding to the toast of the evening, Mr Culling said the paper-making industry was steadily progressing. The works had been enlarged, and the present sale of paper was just about equal to what they could comfortably manufacture. The trade might slacken—and no doubt it would—but they hoped to be always able to do well. He mentioned the fact that at the commencement of operations the returns for six months were £700 to the bad. That was about 15 years ago. He might have done a good deal to advance Mataura, and he might not have done all that he ought, but he had done his best. He had not intended to reside at Mataura, but came only for a short time at the request of his partners, who considered him the best person for the work. He now felt quite sorry to leave a place where he had so many friends.

Mrs Meredith, nee Miss Hardy-Johnstone, who has been on a visit to her mother, Hereford street, Christchurch, has returned to her home in the Wairarapa, with her two small children.

An enthusiastic send-off banquet was the other night tendered to Mr Finlay McLeod, who is leaving Milton. Handsome presentations were made, and a very representative company was present. The Mayor occupied the chair, and was supported in the vice-chair by the Very Rev. Father O'Neil. The highest tribute was paid to Mr McLeod's services to the neighbourhood, and to the high respect in which he is held at Milton, and great regret was expressed at his departure.

The Wellington Garrison Band received a most enthusiastic "send-off" from Wellington upon their departure in the Zealandia for Sydney, en route for the Bathurst Band Contest. The Premier, the Hon. J. G. Ward, and an immense crowd assembled on the wharf to wish them success and "bon voyage," and as the steamer moved away from the wharf cheers for the Band and for the popular Bandmaster Herd were given, and heartily returned. The Foresters' Band, who had played the members of the Band to the wharf, aided by the City Bands, played the air, "Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgot" from the deck of the steamer Hawke's Bay, the Garrison Band answering by "The Girl I Left Behind Me." The Band intend giving a concert en route at Napier in aid of their expenses, and Wellingtonians are very sanguine of their success at the coming contest.

Mrs C. R. Pollen, who has been on a visit to her relatives in Auckland, returned to New Plymouth yesterday by Monday's boat.

The Hon. J. Carroll has been to Wairoa, in order to see his father, who lies dangerously ill there.

Mrs Shakespeare, of the Kaipara, who went Home some months ago, is on a visit to the relatives of her late husband in Ireland. She returns to the colony with Mr and Mrs. Gibson, of Marahamo, Pahi, about March next.

Mrs C. H. Dummett, of London, is at present on a visit to Auckland. She is accompanied by her maid, and is stopping at the Star Hotel.

The many friends of Mr Heinrich Ferdinand Von Haast, eldest son of the late Sir Julius Von Haast, of Christchurch, will be interested to learn that he has joined the London staff of the Sydney "Daily Telegraph."

Mrs Nancarrow, of Dunedin, arrived in Blenheim last week, and is staying with her sister, Mrs White.

Miss Ross, late of Riversdale (Southland), was, prior to her departure from that district, presented with a handsome gold chain from her numerous friends and well-wishers. The presentation was made by the Rev. Mr Kirkland, who referred in warm terms to Miss Ross' many good and amiable qualities, and wished her every happiness and prosperity in her new life at Milton.

Miss Scott, of Picton, has been staying a few days in Blenheim with Mrs H. Horton, at Mrs Farmar's residence.

A sad affair is reported from Winton, where the 15-months old daughter of Mr James Keith was accidentally poisoned on Wednesday night through drinking carbolic acid, of which she got possession. It appeared that a young woman named Clara M'Inerny was suffering from toothache, and used a carbolic acid mixture to relieve the pain. She left it on the dressing-table in a small uncorked bottle, and the child, having access to the room, managed to get hold of the bottle, and drank a portion of the contents. Dr. Riley was summoned at once, but was unable to save her life.

Mrs and Miss Moore left Blenheim about the middle of last week for Wellington, to see as much as possible of Mr E. Moore before he left in the Waiwera.

Mrs and Miss Reeves, of Christchurch, are visiting Mrs Lance, Horsley Downs.

Mrs Lane, Christchurch, who has spent the winter in Sydney, has returned home, bringing her niece, Miss Cleveland, with her to spend the summer.

Mr W. Ewart, of the Government Insurance office in Invercargill, is spending a portion of his three weeks' leave in Blenheim with his mother and sisters.

Mr and Miss Ronalds and Mr and Mrs H. Cotterill, Christchurch, have gone to Dunedin on a visit.

Mr and Mrs A. Mowat, of Blenheim, spent a few days in Wellington last week.

Miss Beswick, Christchurch, went to Dunedin last week to be present at the wedding of Miss Florence Mills (Dunedin) and her brother, Mr H. Beswick.

Mr and Mrs J. Conolly, Mr and Mrs Clouston, Mr and Miss Rogers, Mr and Mrs C. Powell, Miss M. Douslin, Miss J. Chaytor, Miss Denniston (Christchurch), Miss K. Thomas (Christchurch), and Messrs Chaytor, Sturrock, Dodson (3), were amongst the large number of persons who went from Blenheim to Wellington to witness the demonstration and embarkation of the contingent.

Mr and Mrs Heaton Rhodes, of Christchurch, and Mr and Mrs G. F. Rhodes were in Hawke's Bay last week, to be present at the wedding of Mr Frank Perry and Miss Donnelly.

Miss Ledger, of Nelson, has gone to Dunedin to be present at her brother's wedding, which takes place early next month.

Mr and Mrs W. Derry were in Christchurch last week, the former on business, while Mrs Derry was the guest of Mrs Waymouth, Merivale.

Mr and Mrs Bowie and family, who have spent many months in Nelson, returned to the South last week.

Mr and Mrs Fred Burns, Geraldine, are visiting Christchurch.

Miss Pollen has returned to Wellington after a short visit to Nelson.

Miss Denniston has returned to Christchurch from a visit to Wellington.

Several Nelson residents who went to Wellington to be present at the ceremonials in connection with the departure of the New Zealand contingent for South Africa have returned home. Amongst those who went were the Mayor (Mr Trask), Mr Talbot (Mayor of Richmond), Crs. C. Harley and Rout, Colonel Pitt, Mrs Trask, Mrs Rout, Mr and Mrs Brusewitz, and others.

Major and Mrs Richards have returned to Christchurch from a visit to England, looking very well and having greatly enjoyed the trip. Both have taken up the duties of teaching again, Mrs Richards at her school for young ladies, Worcester street, and Major Richards as drill instructor.

Mrs Street, of Birtley, Parnell, who is at present on a holiday trip to Australia, accompanied by her two nieces, Miss Rooke and Miss Giles, are expected to return to Auckland about the end of November.

Mrs Troutbeck, of Wanganui, is visiting her numerous friends in Napier.

Mrs Salmon, of Parnell, gives the first garden party of this Auckland season on Wednesday afternoon, November 8th.

Miss McKellar, New Plymouth, is on a visit to Wellington.

The Parnell Shakespearean Club hold their annual At Home on Monday evening next, November 6th, at St. Mary's Parish Hall.

Rev. F. E. Evans and Dr. Hutchenson, who have been attending the Synod in Auckland, have returned to New Plymouth.

Mr Joe Parker, of the "Herald" Office, New Plymouth, has been spending a few weeks in Wellington, but has now returned.

AN OLD GAME REVIVED.

The game of patience has become quite the craze with old and young. In former years Patience was the game chiefly played by old people who could not read much at night. The grip this game has on people is extraordinary, and regular players are to be found sitting down and playing at all odd minutes, and especially after tea in the winter months, when there is little to do before dinner. All sorts of names are given now to the different varieties. One is known as "Sir Tommy," another is called "Miss Milligan." Then there is the "Star," "The Long Lane," "The Harem," "The Lesser Pyramid," and a kind which is very difficult and aggravating to do is called "The Demon," while another which also gives a great deal of trouble is called "The Divorce Court."

WORDS THAT MADE WARS.

Great wars from little causes spring; at least that has been the case in many fierce conflicts of the past. A despatch altered in one or two points by Bismarck brought on the Franco-German war. Palmerston said facetiously that only three men in Europe ever knew what the Schleswig-Holstein troubles, which led to two wars, were about, and two of them died before the conflicts began, while he (the third man) had forgotten. A slighting reference made by Frederick the Great of Prussia to Madame Pompadour of France was said to have been one of the causes of the Seven Years' War. John Bright declared that England and her allies drifted into the Crimean War without realising it until after the commencement of hostilities, and that, moreover, they did not know what they were fighting for even after they started.

SECOND CRYPTOGRAPH COMPETITION.

Four Prizes of 10s. each.

NEW CRYPTOGRAPH.

On the cover of this issue will be found the Coupon for another Cryptograph. The date of closing for this competition is November 18th, and the prizes will be the same as in the last.

RESULT OF FIRST CRYPTOGRAPH COMPETITION.

The Cryptograph Competition, which closed last week, attracted an enormous number of competitors. Being uncertain as to whether the style of this competition would be generally appreciated and understood, we purposely made the cryptograph an extremely easy one. The result has shown us, not only that cryptographs prove a very attractive form of mental exercise amongst our readers, but that we need not necessarily choose such very familiar quotations as—

"Tell me not in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream,"

from Longfellow's "Psalm of Life," for our object. This, as hundreds of our competitors rightly conjectured, was the correct solution of the cryptograph set. All the hundreds of answers sent in being correct it became our duty to select the first four. The coupons were rolled into balls, the lot were well mixed, and the following four were then taken from the box:—

MISS PHYLLIS KEELING,
Broad Street,
Palmerston North.

MR JACK BRIGGS,
Newton, Auckland.

MR F. H. ROACH,
Porangahau, Hawke's Bay.

E. A. CLAYTON,
Harbour View,
The Terrace, Wellington.

Postal Orders for the amount of the prizes have been forwarded to the fortunate winners.

A new competition on the same lines announced on the second page of the cover.

GEOGRAPHICAL COMPETITION

* PRIZE £5. *

FOUR CONSOLATION PRIZES OF 10s. EACH.

In the list below will be found six uncompleted names of places in New Zealand, all of which begin with W. The stars represent the missing letters, and all you have to do is to substitute the proper letters for the stars, and send them (WRITTEN ON THE COUPON which you will find on THE COVER OF THIS WEEK'S "GRAPHIC"). If correct, you will get the prize.

You may send as many lists as you like if they are written on coupons.

If no one wins the prize, ten shillings each will be given to the four competitors whose lists are the most nearly correct. In the case of five or more of these competitors being equal, the prizes will be given to those whose lists are first taken from the sealed box. If more than one competitor places the whole list correctly, the first prize will be divided.

Here follow the names:—

WANGA * * * *
WOOD * * * * *
WAIK * * * * *
WAI * *
WAI * * *
WAI * * * *

The competition will close on November 1st.

Mark envelopes "Geographical Competition."

As in all "Graphic" competitions, the decision of the Editor is final.

Some More Anecdotes.

OF NO USE TO HER.

The other day a woman came to a grocery store where she saw in the window some fresh looking eggs. So she went in and asked the grocer if they were good. "Yes, ma'am," says the grocer, "they can't be beaten." "Oh," says the old lady, "they are no use to me if they can't be beaten, as I want them for a cake."

"GRACE AT ALL TIMES."

"Weary Willie" and "Tired Tim" were walking across a paddock, wondering which way they could get through the the tall gorse fence that surrounded them on every side, when Weary Willie, turning round rather quickly, saw a bull coming, or rather rushing towards them. "Tim," said he, "that bull looks as if he is coming for us." "What shall we do? We can't git out and we can't git over." "Ah," said Tired Tim, with a solemn face, "I do now remember a prayer my mother taught me when I was but a three-year-old," and taking his mate's hand, he said the following grace: "For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful."

THE NEW MAMMA.

A widower married a second time, and his choice was a wealthy lady about fifty years of age. When the bride and bridegroom returned home from the wedding the husband, introducing the wife to his children, said: "My dear children, kiss this lady. She is the new mamma I promised to bring you." After taking a steady look at the "new mamma," little Charlie exclaimed: "Papa, you have been cheated! She isn't new at all!"

"NO TALKEE ENGLISHEE."

A Chinaman was once "hauled up" before a magistrate, and charged with some offence. In reply to His Worship's usual query as to whether he pleaded guilty or not guilty, he would only answer:

"Me no sabbee. Me no talkee Englishee."

The magistrate, however, who was quite accustomed to this proceeding on the part of many Celestials who came before him, turned to him and said:

"That answer won't do for me. You know English well enough, I'll be bound."

"Me no sabbee. Me no sabbee," were the only words to be drawn from the obstinate Chinkey; and no Chinese interpreter being in Court, the magistrate taking the matter into his own hands, directed the case to be proceeded with, as if the accused had pleaded "not guilty."

After hearing the evidence of the witnesses, the accused was fined ten dollars and costs.

The clerk to the bench, who was a bit of a wag, called out to the accused:

"John, you are fined twenty-five dollars and costs."

"No, no!" promptly replied the non-English speaking Chinee; "he say me fined only ten dollars and costee."

PAT WAS MARRIED.

A native of Ireland, landing in Greenock, wanted to take the train to Glasgow. Never having been in a railway station before, he did not know how to get his ticket.

Seeing a lady, however, going in, Pat thought he would follow her, and he would soon know how to get abroad. The lady, on going to the ticket-box, placed down her money, and said:

"Mary Hill, single." (Mary Hill is a suburb of Glasgow.)

Her ticket was duly handed to her, and she walked off. Pat, thinking it was all right, put down his money, and shouted:

"Patrick Murphy, married."

An Irish hen-wife from Otahuhu went into the City Market with a live cock, which had lost an eye in warfare. While exposing the bird for sale, a man offered her "three bob" for it. "Be aff wid yez," exclaimed Biddy; "three bob for a cock like that!" "Wey, hinney," said the man, "it has only yen eye." "Wan eye, did ye say?" roared Biddy. "It's you has wan eye. Can't ye say that the intelligent crater is giving me the wink not to take your price?"

THEN THEY LAUGHED.

It was when the travelling circus made its appearance. The ordinary large crowd was there standing round listening to the music and loafing about. The small boys were also there waiting for any possible opportunities which might arise of getting in without payment. A man went up to one group of urchins.

"Want to go in, boys?" said he.

"Rather," came in a chorus from the lads.

They marched in front of the official at the pay-box.

"Count these boys," said the man; and the guardsman of the wonderful exhibition numbered the grinning lads with his finger as they rushed by him and scattered on seats inside.

"One, two, three," counted the official, and finally announced eleven.

"All right, said the man. "All right; that's all," and he turned away.

"Hold on, there; aren't you going to pay for these boys?"

"Pay for 'em?" said the stranger. "Not me. I said nothing about paying for 'em. I wanted to know how many there were. You circus men are good at figures and I ain't. I asked you to count them. Much obliged," and away he went, astonishment preventing the official from making any further effort to stop him.

mright shoffil'lil

JERRY'S MISTAKE.

Jerry and Mike were two dock labourers, and both partial to a "dhrop o' the craythur."

"Could ye dhrink a wee dhrop o' whisky?" asked Jerry one morning.

"Sure, an' can a frog shwim!" replied Mike; "but whaar can ye git it?"

"Whist!" said Jerry. "Mum's the word! It is shtored in the fust flure beyant."

"But the dure's locked?" queried Mike.

"Ye Omadhaun!" ejaculated Jerry. "Come wid me."

So they descended into the semi-dark cellar, and Jerry, having explained that he had located a cask of whisky, proceeded to bore through the flooring above with an auger, and so into the cask. Jerry held a bucket and caught the liquor.

"Sure, an' the cask must ha' been narely empty," said Mike, "for the bucket's not full."

However, they each dipped in their pannikin, and took "a long pull and a strong pull," but ——

"Oogh!" they both exclaimed, as dashing down their pannikins, they doubled themselves up, Jerry groaning, "It's pisoned I am, intirely"; while Mike made for his pal, yelling, "Ye murdherin' spalpeen, ye've kilt me!"

Discretion, however, prevailed, and they ultimately discovered that they had broached an old whisky cask filled with pickled pork, and had drawn off and drunk the brine.

HIS OPINION OF HIS COUNSEL.

Assize prisoners have occasionally but little faith in the ability of counsel assigned for their defence. Not long ago a prisoner was informed by the judge that his defence would be undertaken by X, "and," added his lordship, "that will cost you nothing." Prisoner, however, held a different view, and was heard to remark that his lordship "hadn't done the straight thing, nohow."

"What do you mean, sir?" asked the judge, sternly.

"Well," said the prisoner, "you said as the Court would provide counsel, and it was a-goin' to cost me nothing. If that's my counsel," he continued, indicating the rather diminutive gentleman who had been set apart for the defence, "it's a-goin' to cost me ten years, an' no less."

A Scotchman was once advised to take shower-baths. A friend explained to him how to fit up one by the use of a cistern and colander, and Sandy accordingly set to work, and had the thing done at once. Subsequently he was met by the friend who had given him the advice, and being asked how he enjoyed the bath: "Man," said he, "it was fine. I liked it rale weel, and kept myself quite dry, too." Being asked how he managed to take the shower-bath and yet remain dry, he replied: "Deed, ye dinna surely think I was sae daft as to stand below the water without an umbrella."

ENGAGEMENTS.

The engagement is announced of Miss Frederica Peacocke, second daughter of Fitzroy Peacoke, Esq., of "Rocklands," Epsom, Auckland, to Dr. Pabst of the same city.

The engagement is announced in Nelson of Miss Gribben, B.A., Girls' College, to Mr Ralph Catley, of Messrs Cock and Co., Nelson.

The engagement is announced of Mr H. Didsbury, manager of the New Zealand Insurance Company, to Miss Norah Skeet, both of New Plymouth.

The engagement is announced in Christchurch of Miss Hill-Fisher and Mr Stewart, son of Dr. Stewart.

Miss W. Hill-Fisher is engaged to Mr E. Wright, of Avonside, Christchurch.

The engagement of Mr Jack Ormond, youngest son of the Hon. J. D. Ormond, of Hawke's Bay, to Miss Kettle, is announced in Napier.

The engagement has just been announced of Miss Rhoda Bach, a popular Ponsonby young lady, to Dr. Ernest Williams, son of the Rev. Williams, of Ballarat.

The marriage of the Rev. Edmund M. Cowie, son of the Bishop of Auckland, to Miss Eva Marshall, daughter of the Rev. Jas. Marshall, of Remuera, will take place on the 14th of this month.

ORANGE BLOSSOMS

ROBINSON — BARTLETT.

A quiet wedding was celebrated in Picton on Monday, 16th October, when Mr H. W. Robinson, engineer of the s.s. Paeroa, was united to Miss Annie Bartlett, second daughter of Mr Arthur Bartlett, a trusted employee of the Railway Department. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. R. J. Allsworth. The bride's dress was French grey lustre, made with white vest, collar, and cuffs, white Leghorn hat, trimmed with white chiffon and marguerites, bouquet of marguerites and lilies of the valley. The bridesmaids were the Misses Emily and Emma Bartlett, sisters of the bride, dressed in pink, with white sailor hats, Miss Frances Bartlett, cousin of the bride, in silver grey lustre, and Miss Daisy Bartlett, sister of the bride, in pale blue and white; all carried bouquets of clematis, forget-me-nots and maidenhair fern. Mr A. S. Bartlett (Nelson) was best man. The cake was a handsome one, and as the bride and her family are old residents of Picton, the presents were numerous. The going-away dress was of brown serge. The happy couple left for Wellington the same evening with a good send-off from their many friends.

GREENSILL—BOYCE.

Another marriage in which Picton people were interested took place in the Presbyterian Church, Renwicktown, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. W. O. Robb. The parties were Mr W. J. H. Greensill, second son of Mr J. A. R. Greensill, of Picton, and Miss Jean Boyce, third daughter of Mr and Mrs Boyce, of Renwick. The bride, who was accompanied by two bridesmaids, wore a very pretty navy blue travelling dress, trimmed with cream silk, a pretty hat, trimmed with cream silk and ostrich plumes, and carried a bouquet of white lilac and maidenhair fern. During the afternoon the bride's parents entertained a number of guests at afternoon tea, among whom were Mr and the Misses Greensill (Picton), the Messrs Greensill (2) (Mahau Sound), Mrs H. Howard (Springlands), Mrs T. Cawte (Mahakipawa) and others. The happy pair left early to drive to Cullensville, where they are to reside. A great many wedding presents were received by bride and bridgroom.

ELLIOTT—MORGAN.

A prettily arranged wedding was celebrated in All Saints' Church, Aratapu, on Wednesday of last week. The bride was Miss Florence Rose Morgan, and the bridegroom Mr J. E. Elliott. The young couple are well and favourably known, and the nuptials occasioned a considerable amount of interest amongst a wide circle of friends, a number of whom filled the church to the door. The service was choral, Miss Stevenson presiding at the organ.

The Rev. A. J. Beck was the officiating clergyman.

The bride looked charming in a white lustre adorned with silk and passementerie, and she wore a picture hat with feathers. She wore an amethyst bracelet, a gift of the bridegroom.

Miss Rhoda Morgan (sister of the bride) and Miss Una Vousden were the first bridesmaids, and were attired in pale cream, with touches of heliotrope. The two little maids were the Misses M. and W. Lowrie (nieces of the bride), and were frocked in lemon coloured veiling trimmed with white silk and lace, and wore hats to match.

Messrs Thomas and Jacob Elliott (brothers of the bridegroom) attended as groomsmen.

After the ceremony the bride and bridegroom, radiant with happy smiles, proceeded down the aisle to the strains of the "Wedding March," and as they entered their carriage their path was strewn with flowers. The bridal party drove to the residence of the bride's parents, where breakfast was partaken of, when the usual toasts were proposed and duly honoured.

The presents were numerous and valuable, and comprised gifts from All Saints' choir and Sunday School, and from the children of the Aoroa Public School.

DARRACH—LAWRIE.

A wedding of some interest in the neighbourhood was celebrated recently at Mahurangi Heads, when Miss Lizzie Lawrie, third daughter of Mr J. Lawrie, was married to Mr Sydney Darrach. The Rev. R. McKinney performed the ceremony, at the residence of the bride's parents. The bride, who was accompanied by two bridesmaids, Miss Kisper and Miss Darrach, looked very pretty in an ivory silk dress, with veil and orange blossoms. Her attendants were also very becomingly arrayed in light costumes. Mr Ronald Darrach was best man to his brother. A very large number of costly and useful wedding presents were bestowed on the happy pair, who left the same afternoon for the honeymoon, which was spent at Auckland.

BROAD—CLARKE.

A very quiet wedding took place last Thursday morning at 1 p.m. in St. Mary's Church, New Plymouth, when Mr E. Broad, manager of the Bank of New Zealand, Inglewood, and Miss E. Clarke were joined together in the holy bonds of matrimony.

The bride, who was given away by her brother-in-law, Mr Stone, of Inglewood, looked exceedingly well in a grey coat and skirt, the former faced with white satin, dainty white hat, trimmed with ostrich feathers. She also carried a lovely shower bouquet.

The bridesmaid's costume was pale yellow muslin trimmed with white, hat en suite, and carried a prettily arranged bouquet.

Archdeacon Govett performed the ceremony, and IM Duigan, from Wanganui, acted as best man, while Mr Golding presided at the organ.

The wedding breakfast was held at Mrs Stone's (sister of the bride), Inglewood, and the happy couple left by the four o'clock train en route for Christchurch, where they intend spending their honeymoon. Mrs H. Fleming, sister to the bride (Auckland), who was at the wedding, wore a handsome black silk, relieved with white, toque of black feathers and scarlet flowers.

PERRY—DONNELLY.

Never has there been such a wedding in Hawke's Bay as that which took place at Omahu on Wednesday, October 25th, when Mr Frank Churchill Perry, of Christchurch, was married to Maud Airini Tiakitai, only child of Mr and Mrs G. P. Donnelly, of Crissoge and Waimarama, in the Omahu Church, in the presence of a crowded congregation, indeed, scarcely a tenth part of the guests were able to get into the church, and the road was lined with carriages. The bridal carriage arrived punctually at twelve o'clock, drawn by four white horses, and having as a bodyguard Taranaki and Tareha, dressed in the kharkee uniform of the New Zealand Contingent when they went Home to be present at Her Majesty's Jubilee in 1897. When the carriage arrived near the entrance of the church it was met by a large number of Maoris waving green boughs and singing songs of welcome, and they preceded it to the church, which had been beautifully decorated for the occasion with white flowers and a wedding-bell of white stocks, with a clapper of arum lilies, was suspended from the chancel.

The bride was accompanied by her father, G. P. Donnelly, and her court train was carried by two little pages, Masters Ewan Troutbeck (Wanganui) and Rei Karauria, and she was followed by two bridesmaids, her cousins, the Misses Ada and Louie Hoadley.

The wedding gown was of the richest white satin Duchesse, the front being draped with rare lace, caught with sprays of orange blossoms, and the dress was further ornamented with lovely white plumes on the collar and train. The bride wore a wreath of orange blossoms and tulle veil, and her chief ornament was a beautiful pearl necklace. Her bouquet was composed of roses, carnations, etc.

The pages wore Louis XIV. costumes of white satin, to match the bride's dress, white satin capes edged with silver, and dainty white hats with plumes. The bridesmaids were tastefully dressed in white silk, prettily trimmed with chiffon, gathered into deep frills round the skirt. They also wore Louis XIV. capes of white satin, and their hats were of white velvet wreathed with long white plumes. They carried long silver wands tied with white satin ribbon. The bridegroom presented them with pearl and turquoise daggers, and to each of the pages he gave a pair of gold sleeve links.

Mrs G. P. Donnelly, mother of the bride, was stylishly dressed in black silk relieved with orange, and toque en suite with orange ribbon; and Mrs C. R. Hoadley, the bride's aunt, wore black silk and lace, the bodice trimmed with heliotrope; Miss Donnelly was in dove coloured silk relieved with white.

Owing to illness the Bishop of Waiapu was unable to be present, and the Ven. Archdeacon Williams performed the ceremony, assisted by the Ven. Archdeacon Langley, of St. Philip's, Sydney, cousin to the bride, and the Very Rev. the Dean of Waiapu. Mr Percy Perry supported his brother as best man. The bride was given away by her father.

The ceremony over the bridal party proceeded to Mr and Mrs G. P. Donnelly's house at Crissoge, and under a canopy on the lawn the bride received the congratulations of her numerous friends, after which the wedding breakfast was served in a long marquee. The wedding cake, which was six feet high, was surmounted by a Maori canoe, rowed by two cupids. Then a Maori haka was danced in front of the house, and later in the afternoon Mr and Mrs F. C. Perry started on their way to spend the honeymoon in Wellington and the South. The Maoris were also entertained at their pa at Omahu in celebration of the happy event.

The bride travelled in a dress of royal blue Irish poplin, trimmed with handsome guipure lace, a pink hat trimmed with pink chiffon, roses and black plumes, grey cape over pink.

The principal of the six hundred guests were Mrs George Rhodes, of Canterbury, who wore a dainty pale blue brocade and hat to match; Mrs Langley, of Sydney, was in black; and Mrs D. Perry, in pale blue and fawn; Mrs Heaton Rhodes, of Christchurch, had a pretty pink silk check, the bodice was trimmed with guipure lace and rose chiffon, and a large black picture hat had bunches of pink flowers; Mrs R. D. D. McLean looked charming in a pink chiffon dress over pink silk, on which were innumerable rows of black velvet ribbon; her black hat was trimmed with pink and cream roses; Miss Castellaine wore a tan gown with orange revers; and Miss Coates' black and white gown had a magenta silk waistcoat and facings; Lady Whitmore had on a becoming costume of narrow blue and black striped silk, and trimmed with cream guipure and black ribbon, and a small bonnet with flowers; Mrs Carlile's pretty dress was of pale mauve silk covered with white muslin and trimmed with mauve ribbons, and her black hat had mauve flowers in it; Mrs Bidwill wore a grey dress with grey hat to match; Mrs Fenwick had a dress of pale yellow silk and a white hat with yellow flowers; Miss Fita Roy and Miss Louie Fitz Roy wore white; a very pretty dress of pale green check silk was worn by Mrs R. B. Smith; and Miss Edith Williams also wore green trimmed with black; Mrs Balfour was in black and yellow; Miss Balfour wore a becoming dress of pale yellow muslin arranged tastefully with black velvet ribbon and lace, white hat with yellow flowers; Miss Muriel Balfour wore a pretty dress of white muslin arranged with white ribbons, and white hat; Mrs Rousld wore a pretty shade of grey silk figured with blue flowers, and a large white picture hat; Mrs Kettle wore blue, with a blue tailor-made coat and black hat; Miss Kettle was in white muslin and insertion over rose pink silk, and a hat trimmed with pink and blue; Mrs Lusk wore a delicate cream silk dress, the skirt edged with lace and the bodice trimmed with lace and pink baby ribbon, her hat being a dainty black chiffon, with black plumes; Mrs Coleman was in blue and white flowered muslin and straw bonnet trimmed with black; Mrs Antill's dress was of violet cloth with a white yoke, her bonnet being trimmed to match; Miss Florence Watt wore a blue dress and a white hat with blue ribbons; Mrs Turnbull was in black grenadine trimmed with green, and a black bonnet; Miss Twigg was in white pique, and burnt straw hat trimmed with pink; Miss Violet Twigg also wore white; Mrs Russell Duncan looked very dainty in blue and biscuit colour; Miss St. Hill was entirely in white; Mrs Sainsbury looked striking in a handsome black moire, bonnet en suite; Mrs Locking had a handsome dress of black and green; Miss Locking wore deep cream silk with rows of black velvet; Miss Muriel Locking was in white embroidered muslin over white silk; Mrs Troutbeck (Wanganui) wore grey and black; Mrs Canning looked well in black and heliotrope; Mrs Von Dadelzsen had a stylish black dress relieved with white, and a mauve hat; Mrs Logan wore black; Miss Macfarlane had a dainty white costume; Miss Morecroft looked well in a dainty blue muslin dress; Mrs Lunauze was in black; Miss Seale, white muslin; Miss Amy Seale also wore white muslin; Miss Giblin's white muslin dress over blue silk looked very dainty; Miss Kennedy had a stylish fawn dress relieved with white, and hat trimmed with blue; Mrs Lines was in pale blue and white; Miss Chapman's navy blue silk had a white silk yoke; Mrs Cornford had a black grenadine costume over crimson; Mrs Sunderland was in black; Mrs Thomson wore a dainty cream muslin dress trimmed with green velvet ribbon; Mrs De Lisle was in grey, and black hat with pink roses; Mrs A. Kennedy wore blue flowered muslin; Mrs Griffin looked exceedingly well in pale heliotrope trimmed with guipure lace, and hat to match; Mrs Jardine was in black.

The list of the wedding presents is as follows:—Bride's father and mother, billiard table and cheque; His Excellency the Governor and Lady Ranfurly, silver clock; Crissoge and Waimarama employees, silver kettle on stand and silver tea service; Turamoe employees, silver tea service; Lady Mary and Lady Hilda Kepple, smelling salts bottle; the Bishop of Waiapu, Bible; Mrs Rhodes, The Grange, silver rose bowl; Mr and Mrs A. Giblin, sweet dish; Mr and Mrs C. Dalgety, Christchurch, silver manicure case; Miss Reeve, cigar case; Mr and Mrs Lowry North, silver table napkin rings; Mrs and the Misses Lowry North, silver tea caddy; Mrs Canning, picture; Mrs G. Rhodes, Christchurch, silver teapot; Mrs Peacock, greenstone paper knife; Mrs and Miss Margoliouth, Tennyson's Works; Mr Claude Sainsbury, vase; Mr and Mrs Colenso, Indian work; Mrs Crane and Mrs Nash, Sydney, cushion; Mr and Mrs Moss Davis, watch card case; Mr and Mrs Brooking, liqueur stand; Mr and Mrs J. N. Williams, silver powder box; Mr Raphael, Christchurch, silver candlesticks; Mr and Mrs Lusk, silver bonbon dish; Mr and Mrs Morris, Doulton vase; Mrs G. Rhodes, pearl pins; Mr and Mrs A. L. D. Fraser, silver buckle and belt; Mrs Tekeke, koroni mats; Hiriru Kurauria, tatangi mats; Ekara Tuahene, kiwi basket; Mr and Mrs R. D. D. McLean, Irish wedding ring; Mr and Mrs George Rhodes, Timaru, silver-backed brushes; Monsieur Le Ben, stag; Mr and Mrs Hill, eggboiler; Mr and Mrs H. Jackson, salt cellars and pepperpot; Mrs Hudson Langley, Sydney, hand painted satin table cover; Mr and Mrs J. Vigor Brown, pair cut glass scent bottles; Captain and Mrs Hill, dessert knives and forks; Mr and Mrs J. D. Ormond, silver salt cellars, mustard and pepper pot; Mr and Mrs Coleman, silver salt cellars; Mr and Mrs Morton, silver bread board; Mr and Mrs Sunderland, salad bowl; Mr and Mrs Turnbull, afternoon tea spoons; Dr. and Mrs Thomson, silver table gong; Mr and Mrs Oscar Lines, scent bottle; Mr and Mrs Sainsbury, carvers; Mr and Mrs Fairfax Fenwick, picture; Mr and Mrs Wenley, silver fish servers; Dr. and Mrs Tosswill, photograph frame; Mr and Mrs Hoadley, fish knives and forks; Mr and Mrs C. Ried, silver cake dish; Mr and Mrs Sandtmann, horn

inkstand; Dr. and Mrs Thomas, Timaru, silver pepper pots; Mr and Mrs King, match box; Mr and Mrs Sydney Johnston, silver vases; Mr and Mrs Hector Smith, silver egg stand; Mr and Mrs Archibald McLean, silver egg stand and boiler; Mr and Mrs Park, table napkin rings; Mr and Mrs Sanderson, toast rack; Mr and Mrs C. Perry, Timaru, silver candlesticks; Mr and Mrs Meckersey, cut glass scent bottle; Mr and Mrs Morrin, Auckland, silver manicure case; Mr and Mrs Lowry, entree dish; Mr and Mrs Smithson, melon knife; Mr and Mrs R. H. Rhodes, Timaru, silver salver; Mr and Mrs Hamilton Russell, string case; Mr and Mrs W. Nelson, turquoise and pearl star; Dr. and Mrs Jarvis, bowl; Mr and Mrs Wright, Timaru, crumb scoop; Mr and Mrs Alec Lean, silver photo frame; Mr, Mrs, and Miss Beamish, picture; Dr. and Mrs Bernau, clock; Mr and Mrs Gilpin, purse; Mr and Mrs H. Gore, picture; Mr and Mrs J. B. Rhodes, silver and cut glass vase; Mr and Mrs J. Beamish, silver buttonhook; Dr. and Mrs Tod, pearl and green enamel bangle; Dr. and rMs Ronald, screen; Mr and Mrs Twigg, cut glass celery jar; Mr and Mrs Logan, silver table napkin rings; Mr and Mrs Eccles, silver mounted brushes; Mr and Mrs Jamieson, silver table napkin rings; Mr and Mrs Ellison, sugar bowl and spoon; Mr and Mrs J. Rhodes, silver gravy jug; Mr and Mrs H. Williams, fruit stand; the Dean of Waiapu and Mrs Hovell, bowl; Mr and Mrs Russell Duncan, silver candlesticks; Mr and Mrs M'Lennon, silver and shaded glass lamp; Mr and Mrs A. Gore, knife rests; Mr and Mrs P. S. McLean, driving whip; Mr, Mrs, and Miss Luckie, pair vases and bowl; Mr and Mrs J. Wilson Craig, ivory brushes on glass stand; Mr and Mrs Nimmon, egg stand; Mr and Mrs Jardine, books modern painters; Captain and Mrs Davidson, brass bellows; Mr and Mrs Paul Hunker, silver photograph frame; Mr and Mrs O'Rorke, Christchurch, silver bread board; Mr and Mrs M'Niven, bowl; Mr and Mrs A. Rhodes, Christchurch, silver salver; Mr and Mrs H. Humphries, handkerchief and gloves sachet; Mr and Mrs M'Vay, rug and straps; Mr and Mrs Waterworth, Madras hall vase; Sir Robert and Lady Stout, Cameos of Literature; Mr and Mrs A. Kennedy, claret jug; Mr and Mrs N. Kettle, pair cut glass and silver vases; Mr and Mrs Baxter, silver cucumber dish; Mr and Mrs E. R. Bidwill, Worcester jug; Mr and Mrs Broughton, mat and mere; Mr and Mrs Dinwiddie, two pictures; Mr and Mrs Moeller, pair mother-of-pearl brushes and silver and china fruit dish; Mr and Mrs Nat. Beamish, bicycle inkstand; Captain and Mrs Russell, gold clock; Mr and Mrs Frost, silver knife rests; Dr. and Mrs Menzies, silver sugar ladle; Mr and Mrs J. Cato, lace and silk scarf; Mr and Mrs Brabazon, salt cellars; Archdeacon and Mrs Williams, silver hot water jug; Dr. and Mrs Perry, the Hutt, silver fruit trays; Mr and Mrs Kurepo, Maori mats; Mr and Mrs Arnott, dressing table set; Mrs and Miss Groome, coffee jug; Mrs Pearce, Sydney, fancy work; Mrs Swanston, Maltese dessert mats; Mrs Carlile, afternoon tea set; Mrs Hamlin, morning tea set; Mrs Rainbow, cribbage board; Mr and Mrs James McLean, picture; Mrs Taylor, knife rest and bread fork; Mrs Carlyon, silver jewel box; Mrs Innes and the Misses Davis, teapot and cups; Mrs and Miss Flora McLean, Barbatine plaque; Mrs R. H. Mackenzie, picture; Lady Whitmore, jewel case; Archdeacon Langley, Sydney, Prayerbook; Mrs Dickson, midget photo frame; Mrs and Miss Macdonald, lace work; Miss Baby, brooch; Miss Tutin, lace table centre; the Misses Ada and Louie Hoadley, carver rest; Mr W. Bond, Doulton vase; Mr J. Ried, silver mounted brushes; Mr Leonard Hales, jam dish; Major Mair, vases; Mr and Miss Kennedy, silver candlesticks; Mr Grimshaw, Auckland, lace bark pincushion; Paul Karauria, silver cheese tray; Paika Pitiera, six serviette rings; Pitiera Turetahi, jam spoons and butter knife; Mr B. Chambers, Browning's and Tennyson's works; Mr W. Bethune, picture; Turangi Karauria, picture; Mr Macfarlane, tea caddy; Mr V. Wright, Christchurch, silver shoehorn and buttonhook; Hirika Rameka, Maori curios; Mr Kinross White, silver cake stand; Mr A. G. Cotterill, butter dish; Mr George Cotterill, jam dish; Miss Matthews and Miss McHarg, paper knife; Mr Shrimpton, pair butter dishes; Mr Hardy, paper knife; Miss Page, carved bellows; Mr W. and Miss Wood, carved palm stand; Miss Hewlings, greenstone salt spoons; Miss Burke, bread fork; the Misses M'Lernon, tea strainer; Mrs Langley, St. Philips, Sydney, Worcester swan vase; the Misses Pearse, Sydney, silver bonbon dish; Mr R. B. Williams, Edenham, bonbon dish; Mr E. Watt, oak decanter stand; Mrs Lindsay, cigarette case; Mrs Hagan, white satin painted table centre; Mr Buchanan, Christchurch, flask and cigarette case; the Misses Spencer, fancy work; Mr and Miss Moore, gold bangle; Miss Bower, tray cloth; Miss Mary Jackson, bread fork; Miss Ada Ormond, cut glass jam jar; Miss Donnelly, biscuit barrel; Miss Lovell, cheese scoop; the Misses Dorothy and Gladys and Master Ernest Bernau, nut crackers; the Misses Annie and Violet Twigg, silver tea caddy; Miss Locking, painting of wisteria; Miss Muriel Locking, satin painted dessert d'oyleys; Mrs Davis Canning, paper knife; Miss Gladys Sommerville, dessert mats; Miss Una Williams, silver salt cellars; Crissoge housemaids, silver flower pot; Mr W. Heathcote Williams, vases; Miss Palmer, carved mirror; Mr and Mrs Gorman, easy chair; Mr and Mrs Harper, butter dish; Mr F. Donnelly, silver match box; Mr and Miss Caulton, greenstone knife rests; Te Piwa, kiwi mats; Mrs Konaho, heibei mats; Mr and Mrs Woolmer, bonbon dish; Mr and Mrs Heaton Rhodes, fish knives and forks; Mrs and Master Ewan Troutbeck, brass tray and stand; Mr and Mrs Arnott, dressing-table stand; Mr Hutton Peacock, sugar basin and cream jug; Mr and Mrs Hyde, pair pipes; Mr Raphael, set pipes; Mrs Glendinning, case of carvers; Miss Maggie Cotterill, jug; Mr E. Nelson, entree dish on stand; Miss Florence Watt, breakfast dish; Mr J. Ormond, table napkin rings; Mr D. Hill, butter knives; Mr G. Ormond, silver vases; Mr F. Ormond, hairpin box; Mr A.E.G. Rhodes, cheque; Mr G. E. Rhodes, cheque; Mr Popham Sainsbury, vase; Miss Bogle, picture in frame; employees at Meadowbank, entree dish; Mr C. Perry, Christchurch, silver hot water urn; Mrs Herrick, pickle forks; Mrs Balfour, cushion; Miss Balfour, fancy work; Miss Muriel Balfour, writing pad; Paraone Kuore, two mats, bag, and Maori chisel; Wherua Karauria, kiwi bag and greenstone; Mr Crerar, picture; Mr Groome, table napkin ring; Mr E. V. Palmer, tobacco box; Miss Heath, gum bottle; Mr J. Lyon, thistle cruet; Peti Karaitiana, kiwi and paepaeroa mats; Mrs Carrol, 1 weka and 3 fancy feather mats; the Misses Douglas, jam dish; Mrs and Miss Douglas, nut crackers and knife; Messrs W. J. and A. F. Douglas, bread fork, cheese scoop, butter knife, and pickle fork; Mr and Miss Coates, brass standard lamp; Miss Castellaine, paper knife; Miss Ida Todd, picture; Messrs Land and Heighway, bridle; Miss Chapman, Doulton jug; Miss Edith Cotterill, hot water jug; Mr Joe Williams, cheque; Mrs Wallis, bread fork; Mr and Mrs F. Riddiford, clock; Mr and Mrs Griffin, serviette rings; Mrs Von Dadelzsen, handkerchiefs; Miss Large, books; Mr L. Higgins, fruit dish; Misses Hitchings, lace work; Mr and Mrs Martin, egg cruet; Mr and Mrs Lanauze, bread fork; Mr and Mrs Welsman, scent bottle; Miss Gleeson, work bag; Mr Norman Mair, serviette ring; Mr John Holt, table gong; Mr Newton, pair Doulton vases; Miss Judy Turnbull, table centre; Mr T. W. Lewis, silver inkstand; Mr T. C. Lewis, butter knives; Mr and Mrs Crowley, smelling bottle; Mr C. J. Lewis, sugar ladle; Mr and Mrs Brinson, album; Mrs R. Tareha, mats; Tuiri Tareha, mats; Otene Wirihana, patuparaoa; Konaho, greenstone; Mrs Piwa, mats; Notimerehera, Maori kits and greenstone; R. Tareha, mats; Maud Tuahene, pillow cases and mats; Rangi Turoa, small Maori mats and greenstone; Annie Teira, mats; Mr O. Werihani, mats; Mrs Kerei, mats; Rawina, kiwi mats; Awhekaihe, puipui mats; A. Karawia, kaka mats; Hoana Pakapaka, silver purse sovereigns, two greenstones; Mr and Mrs Sommerville, Samoan shell dishes; Mr Richardson, cheque; Mr and Mrs H. Donnelly, Standard lamp; Mr T. W. Robjohns, cream and sugar jug; Mr M. Davies, Christchurch, silver gong; Te Arora Kiokio, Maori mats.

Miss Wylde-Browne, Auckland, is staying with Mrs O'Neill, Claudelands.

Mrs Palarait, North Shore, spent a few days last week with her mother, Mrs Saudes, Hamilton.

Mr and Mrs T. L. Murray are spending a holiday at Weston Lea, Hamilton.

Miss Jackson, Hamilton, is paying a visit to Mrs Brewis, "Jesmond."

Miss W. St. Paul, Auckland, is on a visit to Mrs Coates, Hamilton.

FRENCH ACADEMY OF ART EXHIBITION.

The exhibition of pictures by Messrs C. F. Goldie and J. L. J. Steele at the French Academy of Art, Auckland, derives its chief interest from the magnificent painting of "The Arrival of the Maoris in New Zealand," the joint work of the two artists mentioned. The subject is one that must have occurred to the minds of New Zealand artists on many occasions, but the obvious difficulties of carrying it into execution doubtless prevented anyone attempting it till now. There are many ways in which such a subject might be treated, but we certainly think Messrs Steele and Goldie have chosen the most effective in presenting the starving voyagers from far Hawaiki at the moment when, hopeless and desperate, they catch a glimpse of land through a break in the storm. The canvas, which is a very large one, is full of suggestion. The lowering sky and dark weary waste of waters over which the weather-battered canoe is making its way conveys the idea of utter loneliness, and brings into splendid relief the glint of sunshine which illuminating one corner of the picture shows to the exhausted watchers in the canoe the first, faint indication of land. But it is on the barque itself and those in it that the attention dwells first and last. There is a terrible attraction in these naked emaciated figures huddled in all different postures of agony and despair in the canoe. The artists have made a special study of each of the twenty members of the crew who are visible—a study of wonderful minuteness. The fact that the bodies are, as Maoris would be under the circumstances, almost naked has afforded the fullest opportunity of the painters to delineate the expression not merely of the face but of the entire frame, and they have made the very most of that opportunity. Famine and despair are writ large all over those scarecrows of human beings. Their ribs may be counted, showing through the thin covering of flesh, their limbs are those of skeletons, and there is a world of terrible meaning in the contortions of their bodies. The picture is certainly most gruesome. Its very artistic merit makes it so. Were it less appalling it would be less true, less a triumph for the artists. It is a picture that must command attention. We shall probably have more to say about it in detail when we come to review the principal pictures at the exhibition of the Society of Arts next week, where it will be on view. Among the other large pictures in the Academy "The Explorer's Last Message," one of Mr Steele's happiest efforts. Finely drawn, and magnificent in its colour, it is a subject full of interest. Mr Goldie has one large canvas of Christ as a child teaching in the Synagogue, and a very large number of smaller works that display his talent as a portrait painter.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

Dear Bee, October 27.

During the last few weeks quite an epidemic of

FIRES

has taken place in our usually well-ordered community, and almost a system of terrorism has been established, timid women and nervous old men being almost afraid to retire for the night for fear of the fire fiend. Altogether five attempts have been made to burn down our principal thoroughfare, Devon street; and that the wretched attempts did not succeed is mainly owing to the prompt action and splendid efficiency of our local Fire Brigade, without whose efforts there is little doubt that our main street would have been in ruins. Two separate and deliberate attempts have been made to burn down the Bank of New South Wales and the "Herald" office, the latter being so nearly successful that it was almost a miracle the whole block escaped. As it was, the stock and plant were greatly damaged, but fortunately the machinery escaped with but trifling injury, owing to the well-directed energy of the captain and officers of the Fire Brigade, who turned their attention to saving that part of the building first. It is to be hoped that the miscreant, who seems to have deliberately planned all these disasters, will be brought to justice. At present the police have one man in custody on suspicion, but there will be a much greater feeling of security when the real culprit is found out and punished with the utmost rigour the law will allow.

THE OPENING OF THE CRICKET CLUB

was held last Thursday afternoon in the Recreation Grounds, but owing to the showery weather there were not so many ladies there as were expected. Afternoon tea was provided by the Club, and was dispensed by Mesdames A. H. Holmes, S. Teed, and Misses A. Teed, B. Knight, B. Rennell, and E. Rennell. Amongst those present were: Mrs Oswin, navy costume; Miss Curtis (Wellington), black, relieved with white; Miss Teed, royal blue, braided with black; Miss Knight, black costume, white hat; Mrs D. Teed, fawn costume; Mrs A. H. Holmes, royal blue blouse trimmed with white insertion, black skirt, hat en suite; Mrs S. Teed, brown costume; Miss Knyvett, black; Miss Rennell, green costume; Miss E. Rennell, green and black.

The Drill Hall was a scene of gaiety last Thursday evening, as the City Band held a most

ENJOYABLE SOCIAL

there, and the former was tastefully decorated with bunting and arum lilies. In the centre of the hall was a raised platform, on which sat Mr McKinnon Bain's orchestra, whose music was a feature of the evening. The supper table was a very pretty sight, it being daintily arranged with a large epergne of yellow "broom" in the centre, with smaller vases of jonquils and ixias dotted among the appetising dishes, all of which was due to Mrs H. Cottier and Miss J. Cottier. This dance was the first that was held in the Drill Hall since it has been altered. The walls are now lined and suitably finished off, and there has also been a gallery put up for on-lookers, from which are very commodious dressing-rooms, obtainable from flights of steps at either side of the gallery. Amongst those there were Mrs C. T. Mills, handsome black satin, with passementerie trimmings; Miss M. Morey, cream, and scarlet flowers; Miss N. Moverly looked pretty in cream; Miss Pierce, white muslin and pink flowers on shoulder; Miss Treeby, white, and pink sash; Mrs A. Fookes, pale blue; Miss Loveridge, white and pink; Miss Way, white, and lavender sash; Miss Page, pretty pale blue silk frock; Miss —. Pierce, white muslin, blue sash; Miss Niery, pink, and black and pink chiffon trimmings; Miss Treeby, pink blouse, black skirt; Miss Christensen, white and scarlet; Miss Jackson, black, and satin bodice, red flowers on shoulder; Miss Edgecombe looked very pretty in pale gold, trimmed with frills of blue chiffon; Miss L. Wood looked well in white, with pink satin and chiffon trimmings; Miss —. Abbott, green, and cream sash; Miss Loveridge, pretty white muslin; Miss B. O'Donnell, yellow and scarlet flowers; Miss L. Carthew, white silk; Miss Abbott, pink, and cream lace; Miss I. Hill, white and heliotrope; Miss —. Trigger, pale primrose blouse, with flowers on shoulder, dark skirt; Miss Hart, white, and gold sash; Miss Weller, blue and cream lace; Misses Skelton (2), black; Miss Bellringer, white muslin, yellow sash; Miss Martin, gold; Mrs Johnson looked well in black and scarlet; Miss Bosworth, cream blouse with red flowers, black skirt; Miss Clarke looked striking in a dainty dress of black, bodice of black and blue chiffon, rucked sleeves of the same; Mrs Gillespie, black satin and pink; Mrs Jury, grey and pink; Miss Moon, pale blue and silver; Miss Allen, pale pink; Miss Eva looked pretty in white; Mrs W. Russell, black; Mrs H. Cottier, black, and pale blue blouse; Miss J. Cottier, green silk blouse, dark skirt; Miss Arnold, rose pink; etc.; and Messrs Fookes, Mills, Messenger, Thomson, Halse (2), Brash, Woodhouse, Parker, Cottier (2), Gillespie, De Silva, Birch (2), Loveridge, Way, Tunbridge, Treeby, Skelton (2), Peddy, Ford, Hoskin, Abbott, Edgecumbe, Carthew, Bellringer, etc.

NANCY LEE.

CHRISTCHURCH.

Dear Beet, October 23.

The opening night of "Rip Van Winkle," given by the operatic section of the Natives' Association, on Thursday last, was not as crowded as it should have been considering the merit of the performance. Taking it as a whole it is a most creditable production, it is a very long opera, and requires a great deal of staging, especially the second act, but it was more than well done, it was beautifully mounted, and Mr H. H. Rayward, who took the part of "Rip," as well as stage manager, did more than any professional ever undertakes to do, and did it well, being the rollicking careless Rip to the life. Miss Alexander, of Kaiapoi, was "Gretchen," and looked so sweet, especially in the second costume, a peasant's dress of pale blue with band of tan velvet, tan velvet bodice and white muslin yoke and sleeves, tan shoes and stockings, pale blue hat and tiny white muslin apron. Miss Maude Graham made an excellent "Katrina," and looked charming in the third act in an Empire gown of maize silk, the belt of ruby velvet embroidered in gold, large black velvet hat with feathers; the six ladies of quality attendant upon her looked extremely well in Empire gowns of various colours in beautiful shades, the sashes tied high up, and large hats with feathers. Mr Bowring was a perfect "Nick Vedder," his broken Dutch-English being quite a feature. All the minor parts were equally well done and dressed. The children, "Alice" and "Hans," (Master Jack Pollard), were wonderfully good, little Alice looked about five or six years old. A pas seul by little Miss Karkeek in an acordion dress of scarlet over black, with glittering sequins on the hem, was a pretty performance, especially when the Company formed round her and danced a country dance. The "Rhine Fay," taken by Miss Julia Sandstein, gave another very graceful dance in a white dress covered with silver spangles. Another very pretty dance was a ballet by eight girls, four in pale and dark blue, and pale blue hats, and four in yellow and old gold, with yellow hats; all carried staffs with long streamers to match the costume; the dance, arranged by Mr Dundas Walker, was a most graceful one, and encored every time, as indeed all the dancing was. Mr Walker took the part of the "Goblin," and looked every inch a goblin. "Derrick" was personated by Mr Winter Hall in his usual finished style. Mr F. Hobbs made a splendid "Burgomaster," and Mr Sydney Bell was excellent as "Hendrick Hudson." Mr H. Sims, being "Hans," after the lapse of 20 years, and as a lieutenant in the navy comes home in a beautiful costume of white satin waistcoat and breeches, and Royal blue coat, all trimmed with gold lace, and a cocked hat. There was a large and efficient orchestra, Mr H. Wells conducting. Flowers were plentiful, the performers receiving much recognition from the audience. There was also great enthusiasm over the patriotic songs. The first night Mr P. Hockley in uniform, accompanied by eight or ten soldiers, carrying the Union Jack and our Ensign, marched on at the end and sang "Soldiers of the Queen," Britannia being shown at the back, and with the whole Company on the stage it was a brilliant scene; this went off into "God Save the Queen," the audience joining in. On Saturday night there was a crowded house, and "Rule Britannia" was sung while the tableau was shown, followed by "God Save the Queen," and three cheers for the contingent. Among the audience were Mrs Louisson and party, Dr. and Mrs Jennings, Mr and Mrs G. Humphreys and party, Mr and Mrs A. Tyree, Mr and Mrs Sandstein, Mr and Mrs Graham, Mrs H. Sims, Mrs and Miss Barker, Misses Prins (two), Mrs Bowen and party, Mr and Mrs H. Meares; Mr and Miss Connal and party, Miss Lean, Mr and Mrs Marsh, Misses S. and D. Meares, Miss J. Turner, Mr G. Bonnington and party, Mrs Bruce, Mrs Hobbs, Mrs Bell, Mr. Mrs and Miss Howie, Mr and Mrs Burns, and Miss C. Lingard, etc.

On Thursday evening

A VERY SUCCESSFUL DANCE

was given by Mr and Mrs Henry Wood at their residence, "Avonside." The house and garden were beautifully illuminated, with seats about the garden. The verandah was closed in and furnished with lounges, etc., making a delightful sitting-out place. The supper, a sit down one, left nothing to be desired, and the decorations were lovely of white lilac, double cherry blossom and maiden hair fern, interpersed with high stands of candles, with artistic shades. Mrs Wood, wore a handsome black satin, lover's knots on the bodice of cream lace, hair very high with black osprey; Miss Bullock, in black, with bright blue trimmings; Miss M. Bullock, blue silk with white silk braiding; Mrs Bullock, handsome black broche with old lace; Mr and Mrs Arthur Rhodes, the latter in black and diamond ornaments, black osprey and diamonds in her hair; Mrs Parbury, rich black satin; Mrs Wigney, black; Mrs Walcot Wood, pink, with white chiffon; Mrs Wardrop, pale blue; Mrs J. Turnbull, bright cerise with white ribbon; Miss Cowlishaw, green; Miss Russell, white silk with violets; Miss S. Meares, white with pale green sash; Miss M. Tabart, green silk with cinnamon brown chiffon; Miss Prins, white satin and real lace; Miss C. Lean, terra cotta satin trimmed with net and gold lace; Mrs (Dr.) Jennings, black; Miss Thomas, pink; Mrs Woodroffe, black; Miss Wilson, white; Miss Palmer, green silk; Mrs Harley, black relieved with red; Miss Harley, pale blue satin; Miss H. Denniston, brown silk; Mrs Denniston, old gold satin with black; Messrs Clark, Day, Harman, Collins, Williams, Atkinson, Lawrence, McKellar, Reid, Batchelor, Orbell, Winter, Henderson, Flower, Ollivier, Jameson, Palmer, Cowlishaw, Turnbull, Gresson, Denniston, Wood (3), Dr. Jennings, and several officers from H.M.S. Mildura. Miss Scrivenor's band supplied good music.

October 25.

The first Garden Party of the season was given by Mrs Pat Campbell on Friday at Ham, the lovely grounds looking their best at this season of the year. A band was stationed on the lawn and played merrily at intervals, so that we soon forgot the unpleasant journey out through wind and dust, while meeting friends and strolling on the velvety green sward that looked as if dust was unknown. Mrs Campbell received in a black skirt and green silk blouse, pretty hat to match. Among the guests were Mrs Wardrop, in a becoming heliotrope gown; Mrs Ogle, a dainty pink; Miss Palmer, black and white check costume, and black Eton jacket; Mrs Denniston, in black and green; Mrs Arthur Rhodes, royal blue coat and skirt, Panama hat, with poppies and wheat; Mrs H. H. Cook, fawn costume; Miss Cook, white pique; Mrs J. M. Turnbull, pale grey gown and pretty hat; Mrs Carlyon (Napier), black grenadine; Mr and Mrs Stevens; Mrs Boyle; Mr and Mrs R. Macdonald; Mr and Mrs F. Cowlishaw; Mrs and Miss Cowlishaw, Mrs Louisson, Mrs Pitman, Mrs Woodroffe, Mrs and Miss Malet, Mrs J. D. Hall, Mrs and Miss Julius, Mrs and Miss Harley, Mr and Mrs Studholme, Mrs and Miss Tabart, Mrs and Miss Wynn-Williams, Mrs G. Harris, Mrs Embling, Mrs G. Gould, Mrs Wigram, Mrs and Miss Harper, Mrs H. H. Loughnan, Mrs J. Deans, Mrs and Miss Hill, Misses Ainger, Neave, Aitken, Ulrich (Dunedin), Harmann, Hardy-Johnstone, Sanders, Dr. Campbell, Messrs Perry, Macdonald, Wilson, Cowlishaw, Harkness, Rhodes Burns, Dudley, etc.

"Rip Van Winkle" by the Natives' Association has run its course, and given great pleasure to hundreds in

the Theatre Royal this week; but I hear they will be sadly out of pocket by it, which is not encouraging to stage another. Among the audiences were Mr, Mrs and Miss Bloxam, Mrs Martin, Mrs Potts, Miss Dobson, Mr and Mrs W. B. Common, Mr and Mrs Meredith-Kaye, Mr and Mrs G. Way, Mr and Mrs de Renzi Harman, Mrs and Miss Denniston, Miss Steele, Mr and the Misses Hargreaves (2), Mr and Mrs Foster, Mr and Miss Raphael, Mr and Mrs W. Hume, Mr and Mrs Fountain Barber and party, Messrs Wallick, Denniston, Ormsby, Mrs Pritchard, Miss Connal, Miss Godfrey, Miss C. Lean, Miss M. Strouts, Mr and Mrs W. Reece and party, Mrs Morton Anderson, Mrs R. Anderson, Mr and Mrs Tyree, Mrs and Miss Wither, Dr., Mrs and Miss Thomas, Messrs Guise and F. Brittain, Mr and Mrs Izard, Mr and Mrs F. Grnham, Mr Acton-Adams, Mrs and Miss Bickerton, Mr and Miss Bonnington, Mr and Miss Deamer, Misses Fairhurst, Grant, etc.

On Sunday those who had gone up to Wellington to witness the departure of the troops returned to Christchurch, some very sad, others only deeply impressed. Amongst them were Mr C. Louisson (Mayor), Mr, Mrs and Miss Lewin, Mr and Miss Dumpier-Crossley, Mr and Mrs Radcliffe, Mr and Mrs Neave, Mrs Cardale, Drs. Anderson (2), and others.

DOLLY VALE.

PICTON.

Dear Bee, October 23.

This has been rather a gay week with us, and the young people in particular have been excited over the

FANCY DRESS BALL

given by Miss Hallet for her pupils and friends. It was certainly the ball of the season, and quite eclipsed all others in interest and arrangements. The decorations were Miss Hallet's own design, and with a little assistance from one or two pupils, her own work, and everybody awarded her the palm for artistic beauty and arrangement. The nikau palms and kei-kei were lightly arranged on the walls, and lycopodium festooned from corner to corner, with Chinese lanterns hanging here and there, and Japanese paper fans and flowers scattered about in seemingly careless fashion. A large mirror occupied the lower end of the room, which was draped with curtains and furnished with couches, etc.

THE SUPPER

was beautifully laid out on the back of the stage, the table for visitors being in the centre, and for the pupils at the end, the front of the stage being furnished with easy-chairs for the guests.

THE DRESSES.

Miss Hallet represented the "Village Belle" in her gavotte dress of pink and white, with high sash, and hat profusely trimmed with pink, white, and cardinal roses, with long streamers of cardinal ribbon floating down her back. The belle was unanimously voted to be Miss L. Cragg, as "Little Miss Muffitt," in pale blue and white, with high sash, and pretty hat, and a monstrous spider on her frock; Miss Kathleen Owen came next as a nurse, but, indeed, all the little people looked so quaint and pretty that it seems hardly fair to specify any one in particular. Miss Eileen Sealy was "Bo Peep"; Miss Irene Sealy "Spring"; Miss Nash "School Girl"; Miss Susan Cragg "Stars and Stripes"; Miss Maud Morris "Cinderella's Fairy Godmother"; Miss Jeannie Seymour "French Fishwife"; Miss Rose Greensill "Grandma"; Miss Carrie Humber "Bride"; Miss Olive Oxley "Red Ridinghood"; Miss Laura Oxley "Kate Greenaway"; Miss Moira McNab "Italian Peasant"; Miss Mary Cragg "Maid of Normanby"; Miss Olive Cragg "Folly"; Miss Una Wilkins "Stewardess"; Miss Alice Card "Swiss Peasant"; Miss M. Robertshaw looked very pretty as "Clematis" in her white gavotte frock, and a spray of native clematis in her hair, while a charming bunch of that beautiful flower curled naturally round a staff in her hand. The only two visitors who responded to Miss Hallet's desire to see them in fancy dress were the Misses Nora and Grace Allen, the former as a "Hungarian Peasant," and the latter, who was much admired as "The Geisha Girl"; Master Fell was a "Turk"; Master Len. Robertshaw "The New Woman"; Master Roy Robertshaw "Brigand"; Master Tennyson Greensill "Little Lord Fauntelroy"; Master George Blizzard "Picton Volunteer"; Master Bos. Robertshaw "French Cook"; Master Alan Oxley "Guy Fawkes"; Master Frank Oxley "Little Boy Blue"; Master C. Perano "Clown." The guests were greatly pleased at the dancing of Miss Hallet's pupils, and especially with the gavotte, which was well executed by the pupils. The guests were Miss Flower (Kaikoura), in cream frock and ribbons; Miss Ethel Greensill, in pink silk; Miss M. Fell, in white muslin, with pretty lace sleeves; Miss Isabel Seymour, black velvet skirt and pink silk bodice; Miss Howard, black and silver; Miss Harris, black and pink; Miss Mackenzie, black; Miss Speed, black skirt and cream silk bodice; Miss Jackson, pink broche; Mrs Riddell, heliotrope silk; Mrs Thompson, black silk and lace; Miss Hay, black lace, with red; Mrs J. Scott, black silk, with black chiffon; Miss Western, pink silk, with chiffon frills and sash; Miss H. Dart, black, with pale blue; Miss E. Dart; Miss E. Philpotts, white silk; Mrs Beauchamp, black silk, with white lace; Miss Johnston (Blenheim), white silk; Miss Greensill, pale blue, with pink chiffon; Mrs Howard (Springlands), cream, with cream lace; and Mesdames (Dr.) Scott, Allen, Sealy, Wilkins, Philpotts, Cragg, Godfrey, Jackson, Mathieson, Fell, Buick, Robertshaw, Oxley, Blizzard, etc., and Messrs Robertshaw, Fell (2), Cragg, Nash, Seymour, McCormick, Peek, Greensill (3), Beauchamp, Anderson, Western, Oxley, Malfroy, Blizzard, Morris, and a little crowd on the stage who came to look on.

On Friday evening a crowd congregated on the wharf to see off lucky friends and neighbours who were going to see the N.Z. contingent off in Wellington. Several others were disappointed, as the steamer was full up, and the agent refused to issue any more tickets. The spectators on the wharf gave their quota of cheers for the contingent and groans for the Boers, and then sang "Rule Britannia" and "Soldiers of the Queen." Among those going across was Mr Edward Chaytor, captain of the Marlborough Mounted Rifles, whose heart is with his men, and who would dearly like to follow their fortunes—or rather lead them—to South Africa.

The Picton Rowing Club formally opened the season on Saturday last.

The Afro-American Minstrel Company gave a short programme on Sunday evening after service. A fair house collected, though no notice had been given of the entertainment, which was good.

JEAN.

NELSON.

Dear Bee, October 23.

On Monday afternoon Miss Nina Jones entertained a number of her friends at a

"WISTARIA AFTERNOON TEA,"

which yas quite a novel form of entertainment, but was much enjoyed by all present. Each guest wore a spray of Wistaria, and on arrival was presented with a card, in the corner of which was a beautifully painted Wistaria flower, and written across were the words "Wistaria Chinensis." From the letters of these words each guest had to make as many other words in ten minutes as possible. The prizes, two photo frames, on which sprays of Wisteria were beautifully painted by Miss Nina Jones, were won by Miss Nellie Gibbs and Miss Julie Tomlinson, who each made over ninety words. A most dainty and delicious tea was partaken of in the charming garden, amidst bushes of wistaria and other sweet scented flowers.

Miss Nina Jones wore a pretty gown of soft white muslin over a wistaria coloured slip, becoming hat to match; Mrs Jones wore a handsome black costume; Miss Jones also wore black. Amongst those present were Mrs Worthington (Invercargill), the Misses Trix Atkinson, Burnett (2), Boor, Cuthbertson, Barnicoat, Gibbs (3), G. Jones, King, Marsden, Preshaw (2), Pike (2), Rayner, Robertson, Sexton, Stodhart, Tomlinson, Talbot (2), Mules and others.

The young people were all made very happy on Friday evening when Mrs Sclanders gave a

DELIGHTFUL DANCE

at her residence at The Port. There were a large number present, and all spent a most enjoyable time. Mrs Sclanders, who received her guests in the dancing room, wore a handsome silk blouse of black and white, black silk skirt; Miss Kathleen Sclanders looked charming in a pretty frock of soft white muslin over blue, blue silk sash; Mrs Richmond wore black, white lace cap with pink ribbons; Mrs Kissling, light grey silk blouse, black skirt; Mrs Alex Sclanders was much admired in white muslin over bright pink, pink silk sash; Miss Richmond, pretty light silk evening blouse, black skirt; Miss Greenfield, who supplied most of the music, wore a light evening blouse and dark skirt; Miss Florrie Richmond, yellow evening dress; Miss Phyllis Buchanan looked handsome in bright red; Miss N. Fisher, white silk lustre with bands of white satin ribbon; Miss Booth, pink with trimmings of white lace and narrow black ribbon velvet; Miss M. Glasgow, buttercup silk; Miss E. Ledger, Nil green; Miss M. Mackay, white muslin with trimmings of red velvet; Miss E. Sealy, pretty green veiling; Miss Robinson, yellow; Miss Phyllis Fell, green and white striped silk; Miss N. West, heliotrope, with silver trimmings; Miss S. Blackett, pink muslin; Miss V. Leggatt, pink and white; Miss Edith Kempthorne, pink; the Misses Reece, Kelling, C. Edwards, L. Preshaw, Bailie, Enright, Marks, L. Tomlinson, and Trent all wore white, brightened with different colours; Miss Ruth Furgneson and Miss Maginnity wore pale blue. Amongst the gentlemen were Messrs Sclanders, A. Sclanders, Sclanders (3), Kissling, C. Levien, Kempthorne (2), Blackett, Leggatt, Houlker (3), Robinson, Mackie, Heaps, Preshaw, Fell, Richmond (2), Adams, Bowie, Edwards, Watts, and many others.

PHYLLIS.

NAPIER.

Dear Bee, October 27.

The annual athletic sports in connection with the Boys' High School took place at the Recreation Ground on Thursday, and were in every way most successful. The weather, though windy, was fine, and the influx of visitors was fairly large. Afternoon tea was provided by Mrs Wood, who wore a holland coat and skirt, and a black toque relieved with crimson poppies; Miss Matthews had a black costume and hat to match; Miss Maccabe wore grey; Mrs P. McLean's dark brown dress was trimmed with guipure lace; Mrs Warren wore a stylish fawn cloth costume with a white yoke, and a sailor hat; Mrs Bowen was in grey and white check; Mrs Logan wore a black and grey blouse and a dark skirt; Mrs Hall's grey cloth dress was trimmed with white braid and a white yoke; Mrs Lines had a brown coat and skirt, a rose pink vest, and a black hat relieved with pink roses; Mrs Wenley, with a black coat and skirt, also wore a black hat trimmed with pink; Mrs Jarvis wore green braided with white, a scarlet vest, and a black hat trimmed with scarlet; Miss Braithwaite was in navy blue, with a lemon-coloured waistcoat and a sailor hat; Miss Louie Hoadley looked well in a green costume, and she wore a pretty black hat with a profusion of mauve flowers; Miss Hamlin wore a fawn jacket and a navy blue skirt; Mrs Rutherford was in black relieved with white; Miss Severn had a white dress and sailor hat; Mrs Carlile wore grey.

It was a most disagreeable day for the opening of the tennis season on Saturday afternoon, but in spite of the wind and dust all the principal members of the Club were present, and an enjoyable afternoon was spent.

MARJORIE.

HASTINGS.

Dear Bee,— October 27.

The Town Hall, Waipukurau, was well filled on the occasion of a delightful concert in aid of the Waipukurau Hospital. Mr George Hunter, M.H.R., made an opening speech, in which he complimented the Hospital staff, after which the concert commenced. The first item on the porgramme was an overture, "Torquato Tass" (Donnizetti), by the Waipawa orchestra of sixteen performers, namely, Miss M. Moroney, pianiste; Miss Buchanan, Messrs H. Liddle and O'Halloran, first violins; Misses S. Buchanan and Kate O'Halloran, Messrs W. Arrow and Bone, second violins; Mr W. Golder, tenor horn; Mr J. J. Cosgrove, euphonium; Mr J. Golder, bass trombone; Mr F. J. Shanly, 'cello; Mr H. Steere, flute; Mr M. Murray, clarionet; Mr J. Stone, side drum. The orchestra was conducted by Mr James Cosgrove. As an encore to his "Yeoman's Wedding Song," Mr G. M. Hall, of Christchurch, gave "Soldiers of the Queen." Miss Lillie Large, who came from Napier, sustained her reputation for singing by giving a charming rendering of Tosti's "Serenade," "Lads of the Village," "Ye Banks and Braes," and Arne's "The Lass with the Delicate Air," and was always heartily encored. Miss Tanner gave Braga's "La Serenata" very pleasingly, and as an encore "Hushaen." Mr Mannering, who has a fine tenor voice, gave with eclat Blumenthal's "My Queen," followed by "The City by the Sea," which left little to be desired. The solo, admirably sung by Mr Slade, "Will-o-the-Wisp," concluded the first part of the programme. The second part, in which the accomplished performers again distinguished themselves, had a brilliant finale in the beautiful Italian duet, "Giorno d'Amore," in which the Misses Lillie and Amy Large were vociferously recalled. Some delightfully amusing recitations were also given during the evening by Mr J. G. Swan. After the National Anthem, the company entertained themselves by dancing until an early hour on the following morning. Some of those present were—Mesdames Gilbertson, Paul Hunter, R. Johnson, and White, and Messrs J. Ormond, jun., J. W. Harding, D. H. Potts, Hunter, White, Norris, R. Johnson, L. Mackersey, etc.

DOROTHY.

BLENHEIM.

Dear Bee, October 23.

The Afro-American Minstrels opened here on Wednesday night, when they had a large and appreciative audience. At noon, on each day of their stay, the band, brought by the Minstrels, passed through the principal streets to Market Place, and on the Rotunda there played some lively music. They also played outside the hall in the evenings, as soon as the doors opened, and the crowd thus attracted quite blocked the street. The Company is a large one, and the grouping on the stage, when the curtain rolled up, was very effective. The lady members, in gay attire, occupied seats in the middle of the stage, behind them on raised seats, the band in uniform, and towards the front on either side the black-coated minstrels. Instead of having programmes, each item was announced by one of the ladies. The performance had the charm of novelty, was extremely mirth-provoking, and Black Dante performed some conjuring feats very cleverly. Mr Ernest Hogan is a clever comedian, and his representation of a preacher at a camp meeting was exceedingly good. On the first night Miss Madah Hyet, the "Bronze Patti," was encored for "Merrily I Roam," and in response sang "Life's Dream is O'er," with Mr Saulsbury, who sang from the middle of the hall, which gave, at first, the impression that one of the audience was joining in, but had an excellent effect. Great interest was taken in the "Cake Walk" on the first night, when the cake was taken by New Zealand, though I think that it should have been awarded to South Australia, whose dress of black satin, with gleams here and there of vermilion was very striking, and dancing graceful. The minstrels had a season of four nights, and a matinee on Saturday, all of which I believe were well attended.

The Musical Helpers arrived here at the same time, and gave two entertainments in Wesley Hall, which were, I hear, exceedingly good.

A merry-go-round, with a steam organ, has taken up a position in the centre of the town, and the insistent, strident notes of the organ are to be heard far and near. A special interest is attached to this particular one, for it is that which a councillor of a little town not far distant, wished to have placed in position to play the National Anthem on the arrival of the Governor. It is needless to say that his wish was not realised, though it would be quite as consistent to have our loyal sentiments ground out by an organ, as to have our hymns of praise sung by a choir.

The Wairau Tennis Club opened their courts on Saturday afternoon, to which the members of the Marlborough Tennis Club were invited. There was a high wind all the morning, which moderated in the afternoon, and the courts being well sheltered a pleasant time was spent. The President of the Club, Mr R. McCallum, made a brief speech. Mrs R. McCallum, who provided the afternoon tea, was assisted by several young ladies in dispensing the dainty refreshments.

A party of nine of the Stoke Rifles, from Nelson, came to fire a match against the Blenheim Rifles, and met at the Butts on Saturday afternoon. The visitors were defeated by 9 points, but it is only fair to say that owing to the high wind, they could not fire at the long ranges, only the 200 and 300 yards ranges were fired over, which may have made a great difference, as they may have excelled at the longer ranges.

FRIDA.

WELLINGTON.

A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE DANCE was given by Mrs H. D. Bell at her residence in Hill-st. It came as an appropriate "wind-up" to the session, which is now practically over, and numbers of the session visitors have already left for their homes. For this occasion the house was prettily decorated with greenery and masses of lovely lilac blossom, and the supper table was artistically arranged with differently coloured flowers in tall vases. Mrs Bell received in a rich grey satin gown, trimmed with chiffon ruching to match, and handsome white lace on the corsage; the Misses Bell wore lovely white satin gowns, brightened with red velvet and flowers and pearl passementerie. Among the guests were Mrs Duncan, who wore a black satin gown, with soft white chiffon and lace fichu; Mrs C. Johnston, lovely oyster brocade, with bands of lace insertion let in the skirt, bodice trimmed with lace; Mrs Wason, black jetted gown; Mrs H. Crawford, yellow satin, the bodice softened with chiffon to match; Mrs Collins, black sequined gauze gown, and diamond ornaments; Mrs A. Pearce, palest bluey green brocade, trimmed with chiffon and velvet of a darker shade; Mrs Ian Duncan, in black satin, with white fichu; Miss Turnbull, lovely black sequined gauze gown, with cream roses on the bodice; Miss Duncan, white merveilleux and chiffon gown, trimmed with pearls; Miss George, pale green silk, trimmed with gathered rose pink ribbon; Miss A. Johnston, white glace silk, with white bead embroidery; Miss Hutchison, in white satin and chiffon; Miss Holland, white silk, veiled with rich white jewelled chiffon; Miss F. Brandon, pretty white satin, trimmed with chiffon and passementerie; Miss O. Gore, pale blue brocade, the bodice trimmed with white chiffon; Miss Fell (Picton), black satin, with white lace and pink roses; Miss Cooper, pale grey satin, with white chiffon berthe; Miss Izard, in white silk; Miss Una Williams, pretty white figured gauze; her sister wore white satin, with chiffon frills and white rosebuds; Miss Harcourt, white and pink figured silk, with white lace; Miss Sprott, white silk; Miss Coleridge, black satin, with white lace and chiffon; Miss Higginson, white figured silk and lace; Miss Biddiford, white and green chine silk, with chiffon frills; Miss Fitzherbert, white silk, with chiffon frills; her sister was also in a pretty white gown; Miss Rattray (Dunedin), pale green and white gown, with narrow black velvet ribbon bands. Also Dr. Collins, Dr. Martin, Capt. Maddocks, and Lieutenants Neave, Lindsay (Christchurch), and Chaptor (Nelson), all members of the N.Z. Contingent, and Messrs Tripp, Cooper, Johnston, Duncan, Higginson, Tripe, Harcourt, Gore, Watkins, Pearce, and many more.

AUCKLAND.

Dear Bee, October 31.

Miss Fanny Johnston, who is to be married on the 10th of November to Mr Bruce, gave

A VERY PLEASANT AFTERNOON TEA

to a few of her girl friends last Wednesday at her parents' pretty residence, Parnell. I hear there was another "tea" on Thursday. It was a very pleasant day, and the guests were able to roam about the verandah, the afternoon tea being laid in the dining-room. The table was very prettily decorated with spring flowers, and heavily laden with all manner of good things. Miss Johnston was assisted by her sister, Mrs A. L. Edwards; Mrs R. Johnston, Miss Maude Martin, and Mrs Edwards' pretty little girl. During the afternoon musical items were rendered by Mrs Hugh Wright, Miss Martin, Mr A. L. Edwards, and his little daughter. A few of the dresses were —Miss Johnston, dark skirt, pretty rose pink blouse trimmed with cream lace; Mrs Johnston, handsome black costume; Mrs Edwards, black skirt, black and white blouse; her little daughter looked dainty in white; Mrs Robert Johnston, pretty grey tucked muslin; Miss Martin, dark skirt, blue silk blouse; Miss Hesketh, black and white check trimmed with white satin, black hat; Miss M. Hesketh, dainty grey costume, violet hat; Miss Lennox; Miss K. Lennox, blue coat and skirt; Miss Leece, white skirt, green blouse, white and red hat; Miss Percival, white blouse, dark skirt; Miss Thompson and her sister, black and white costumes; Miss Gorrie, green muslin; Miss Wray; Mrs Hugh Wright, black silk trimmed with yellow silk, black and yellow hat; Miss Kempthorne, grey and white costume; Miss Hattie Brigham was much admired in cream serge, braided with white, large black velvet hat of the new shape, with a wreath of flame coloured roses resting on the hair in front; Mrs H. Johnston, green coat and skirt; Miss Cuff looked very pretty in pale grey with buttercup silk yoke and cuffs, black hat with primroses; etc.

BOWLING.

The Ponsonby Bowling Club opened their green for the season on Saturday afternoon. The weather was all that could be desired, and in consequence there was a large attendance of bowlers and their friends. Afternoon tea was served in the pavilion by ladies interested in the Club, and was appreciated by a large concourse of visitors of both sexes. The green was in splendid order, and a number of well contested games were played by members of the city and suburban clubs, who mustered in great force. The tennis ground connected with this green is in better order than during any previous year, and no doubt will be the scene of many pleasant games during the season. Among the ladies present were:—

Mrs J. Kirker, in a black coat and skirt, white vest, large dove grey hat with plumes; Mrs E. Mahony, bright navy blue gown braided with black, white hat with full crown of satin; Mrs J. W. Stewart, slate coloured braided costume, white hat; Mrs Court, black satin gown, brown bonnet; Mrs Ballantyne, black and green gown, bonnet to match; Mrs Peacock, dark blue crepon gown, black bonnet with buttercup ribbons and flowers; Miss S. Hudson, navy blue skirt and jacket, white Leghorn hat with roses; Miss Maud Hudson, grass-cloth skirt and jacket, with white revers, sailor hat; Mrs Gulliver, black costume; Mrs Morrin, black costume; Miss James, fawn skirt and jacket, white hat; Mrs James, black dress, black bonnet with green rosette; Miss Eva Leighton, sapphire blue velvet blouse, black lustre skirt, white sailor hat; Mrs Upton, black dress, black bonnet with Czar blue bow; Miss Kennedy, black skirt, pink blouse, sailor hat; Mrs Macdonald; Miss Macdonald, green skirt, floral blouse, sailor hat; Mrs Blades; Mrs Spreckley, mourning costume; Miss Muriel Blades, black skirt, blue checked blouse; Miss Connie Butler, green skirt, white tucked muslin blouse, sailor hat; Miss R. Russell, light skirt, white muslin blouse, white hat with blue bow; Mrs A. S. Russell, black dress, black bonnet with red roses; Miss F. Hart, fawn skirt, grass-lawn tucked blouse; sailor hat; Miss L. Butters, black and white checked blouse, black straw hat, black chiffon bows; Miss Maud, black skirt, grey silk blouse, black hat with feathers; Miss Peacock, pretty floral silk blouse, dark skirt, sailor hat; her sister wore a pink blouse, black skirt, white hat; Miss George, black skirt and jacket, with white revers covered with black braid, white sailor hat; Miss M. George, sage green skirt and jacket, sailor hat; Mrs H. Griffiths, black skirt, blue and black bodice, sailor hat; Mrs Littler, handsome black satin, white vest veiled in black lace, bonnet to match; Miss Morrin, dainty grey striped silk blouse, grey skirt, white sailor hat; Miss Metcalf, grey lustre, black hat with fawn and grey feathers; Miss Edmiston, white silk dress, with rows of pearl passementerie, white toque with feathers; Miss Nellie Edmiston, black skirt, blue blouse, picture hat; Mrs T. Mahoney, Gobelin blue dress, black velvet toque with wings; Mrs Dickenson, fawn, with electric blue silk edgings, black hat; Mrs Brimblecombe, black merveilleux, black Gainsboro' hat with feathers; etc.

Mrs Sowerby's plain and fancy ball took place on Thursday evening last at the Choral Hall, which was artistically decorated with greenery, white arum lilies, and red bulbs. During the early part of the evening a handsome present consisting of gold chain with padlock (upon the padlock her name, and also date, were engraved), and two gold sleeve links were given to Mrs Sowerby by her grown up pupils. The floor and music was all that could be desired. The supper table was decorated with yellow and red crinkly paper, arranged in shapes of shells, relieved with vases of red and yellow flowers. Amongst those present: Mrs Sowerby, black silk veiled in black net, with a silver embroidered design of lover's knots; Miss Knight; Miss Burns, white fancy silk, with black velvet ribbon waistband and shoulder knots; Mrs Pitcher; Miss Kelly, white muslin; Mrs Stodart, black silk; Miss Bindon; Mrs Howard, black silk finished with lace; Miss I. Crawford, Miss E. Crawford, Misses Chapman (2), Mrs Evans; Miss Daisy Anderson, cachucha costume of red and blue striped skirt, red velvet zouave, white lace vest and sleeves, small cap on head; Miss Hancorn, Mr and Miss Hellaby, Miss C. Jones, Miss Jones, Miss Scott, Miss Parks, Miss Keogh, white silk, pink silk evening blouse with lace let in the neck; Miss Thomas, white flowered silk with silver bead passementerie; Miss Simson, grey silk trimmed with tulle, powder and patches; Miss Beehan, white silk; Miss I. Beehan, white; Mrs Nedson, black silk skirt en traine, red silk evening blouse with fawn lace; Misses Nelson (2), white silks; Miss Hill, striking combination of black and yellow; Mrs Best, black; Miss Ruby Best, white accordion pleated skirt dancing costume; Miss Brewer, in fancy costume representing a Maori, was simply immense; Misses Cohen (2) were both attired in white silk ruched and tucked and finished with white Empire sashes; Miss Newell looked pretty in azure blue chine silk; Miss Pittar, handsome black velvet costume with edgings of tulle; Mrs Cuthbert, dark grey; Miss Bell looked very sweet in a shell pink Mousseline de soie; Miss L. Bell, yellow silk trimmed with black velvet, a triangular yellow silk hat; the wearer represented Vanity Fair; Mr McCormick, Cricketer; Mr Queerie, Court dress; Miss Whitaker, white silk; Mrs Woollams, Miss Evans, Miss L. Knight, Miss White, Misses Williamson (2), Miss Wilson, Miss Butters; Miss Bochn, Mr and Mrs Reid, Miss Whittier, Mr and Mrs Cleghorn, Miss Cuthbertson, Miss Hughes, Mr and Mrs Connell, Miss Duirant, Mrs Busby, Miss Tyler, Miss McConnell, Miss Beddue, Miss Craig, Mrs Peat, Miss Carter, Miss Pilcher, Miss Busby, Miss D. Brown, Mrs and Miss Spencer, Mrs Innis, Miss E. Parsons, Miss Howard, Mrs Hanson, Miss Kenary, Miss Schiska, Miss M. Busby, Miss Larkins, Miss Johnson, Miss Manning; Mrs Parsons, Miss Mahon, Miss Parsons, Miss Brown, Mr and Mrs Spencer, Miss J. Winks, Messrs Godon, Hanson, Whittier, Bourke, Croft, Ted Jowitt, Cardno, Martin, Haselden, Winks, Miller, Rainger, White, Henry, A. Winks, Cambell, Watson, Gilmore, S. Phillips, Busby, Smith, Muller, Huxtable, Barclay, Bourke, F. Howard, East, James, Carr, Tyler, McConnell, Carlaw, Lambert, Cleghorn, Wood, Whitley, Luckning, Johnson, Cooper, H. Simson, Parkinson (2), Graham, Lloyd (Waikato), Hemus, Jowitt, Johnston, Shera, Ansell, Burns, Mitchell, Saunders (2), Hill, Jervis, Peacock, Gilbert.

A very interesting lecture was given by Mr T. Cheeseman, F.L.S., in the large hall of the Auckland Institute on Rarotonga. At the request of several of the principal botanists of Europe, Mr Cheeseman recently spent two months on the island for the purpose of fully investigating its botany, which has not hitherto been done. The lecture was illustrated by limelight views. The pictures were all from photographs taken by Mr Cheeseman himself. After the lecture Mrs Cheeseman, ably assisted by her sisters, the Misses Keesing, entertained their friends to refreshments of coffee, tea, cakes, etc. The table was prettily decorated with pink flowers, pink ivy geraniums and white spring bulbs, interminglded with greenery. Mrs Cheeseman wore a black skirt, black velvet blouse with red carnations at neck, black toque with wreath of red roses. Amongst those present were Mrs and Misses Keesing (2), Mr and Mrs Thos. Peacock, Miss Peacock, Mr and Mrs Peacock, junr., Mr and Mrs Stericker, Mr and Miss Batger, Miss Stoddart, Mrs S. Kissling, Mrs Moss, Mrs Armitage, Mr and Miss Philips, Dr. and Mrs Charles Haines, Dr. and Mrs H. Haines, Miss Edith Isaacs, Mr and Mrs Stewart, Misses Stewart, Mr and Mrs Lyons, Mrs Gillies, Mr H. B. Morton, Mr Payton, Mr and Mrs McMillan, Misses McMillan (2), Mr and Mrs Yates, Mrs Gorrie, Miss Townshend, Mr and Mrs Tewsley, Mrs Upfil, Mrs A. Hunter, Mr and Mrs Walker, Misses Cheeseman, Mr and Mrs Guttridge, Mr and Mrs Denniston, Mr Graves Aickin, Miss Aickin, Miss Goodwin, Dr. Purchas, Mrs Upton, Mrs and Miss McDonald, Mr and Miss Savage, Mrs Goodall, Mrs A. P. Friend, Mrs Petrie, Prof. Pond, Prof. Talbot Tubbs, Prof. Segar, etc.

AFTERNOON TEA.

Among the pleasant little functions of the week was an impromptu afternoon tea, given by Miss Hewin, in the D.S.C. tea-rooms on Friday. The time passed pleasantly in the enjoyment of excellent tea and other delicacies of the 4 o'clock repast. The hostess looked charming in a lovely pea green silk blouse, with semi-low neck, black surah silk skirt. Among the guests were Mesdames Goldie, Holland, Lusher, Lennox, J. R. Gray, Kennedy, Hart, Turner, Jhan, Eyrie, Watt, Johnston, Blaikie, Porter and Miss Westwood.

ORGAN RECITAL.

An attractive programme of music was provided for at Mr Arthur Towsey's second afternoon organ recital on last Wednesday. The vocalists were Mrs W. H. Parkes and Mr A. L. Edwards. Mr S. Jackson contributed to a notturno and a concerto for clarionet and organ, which were much appreciated. Mr Towsey's items were: Overture from "Saul," "Pastorale," (Kullak), "Minuet and Trio" (Haydn). Offertoire in D Major (Batiste), and Festal March (Elvey). These recitals should become favourite musical functions in Auckland, as they are in the leading cities in the neighbouring colonies. There was a good attendance. Mrs Parkes wore black moire gown, with heliotrope silk yoke and epaulettes, veiled in black lace; Mrs Goldie, navy skirt and coat, white satin vest, black velvet toque, with satin crown and black feathers; Miss Towsey, black frock, black hat, with tips; Mrs Denniston, pale green dress, white satin vest, green hat, with wreath of pink carnations; Mrs Seegner, dark grey gown, trimmed with black braid, black hat, with clusters of red roses; Miss Rita Tole, pale blue and white striped silk blouse, black skirt, white hat; Miss Haven, grey and white floral muslin blouse, black skirt, fawn basket straw hat, with white and pink striped ribbon; Miss Rose, brown costume; Miss Laird, white and pale blue striped blouse, black skirt, white hat; Mrs (Dr.) Dawson, black and grey figured gown, black bonnet, with red rosebuds and ivy leaves; Mrs Kingswell, black skirt, black and silver grey striped bodice, trimmed with pink ruched ribbon, black tulle toque, with red roses; Miss Baker, black figured lustre, heliotrope silk vest; Mrs B. Lloyd, gazelle brown cloth skirt and jacket, white sailor hat; Mrs Donald, electric blue cloth tailor-made gown, pink silk vest, yellow basket straw toque, with violets and black erect plumes; Miss Donald, black and white shepherd's plaid frock, trimmed with black braid, white sailor hat; Miss Cooper, fawn cloth skirt and coat, brown hat, with natural ostrich feathers and yellow wheatears; Mrs A. B. Reynolds, cream chine silk blouse, black and white check skirt, black hat, with old gold silk bow; Miss Stella Alexander, black frock, cream and narrow black striped sac jacket, Leghorn sailor hat, with tulle crown and cream and red roses; Miss Watson, reseda green cloth skirt and jacket, brown hat, with straw trimmings; Miss Parsons, pale blue blouse, navy skirt, white hat, with navy band; Miss Jessie Cox, fawn figured lustre; etc.

JUVENILE DANCE.

A very successful juvenile dance was given by Miss Bessie and Master Sol. Ziman, in Mrs Sowerby's Hall, on last Saturday evening. The dance was given to celebrate Master Ziman's birthday, and the young people had a very happy time. Un-

fortunately, in the early part of the evening something fell on Miss Bessie's foot, and prevented her taking part in the dancing. However, the little hostess, who was well supported by her brother, made the evening so attractive by her attention to her guests that the young folks could scarcely say their adieus.

Among those present were:—Miss Bessie Ziman, blue silk; Miss Ehrenfried, pink silk; Miss Violet Tibbs, white; Miss Butler, blue and white; Miss Yates, white; Miss Douglas, blue velvet; Miss Rita Moritzson, blue; Miss Gordon, flower muslin; Miss Moss-Davis, white muslin; Miss Ruby Moss-Davis, white muslin; Miss Gordon, flower muslin; Miss Marks, white silk frock; Miss Daisy Benjamin, white silk; Miss Roie Nathan, white silk Empire frock; Miss Cooper, blue silk; Miss Metcalfe, nil green frock; Miss Pearl Gorrie, pink; Miss Sybil Lewis, white silk; Miss Kronfeld, white silk; Miss Kenny, white; Miss Hanna, white silk; Miss Aubin, white; Miss Stevenson, pink; Miss Haslett, green; Miss Edna Pearce; Miss Tole; Miss Cartwright; Miss Masefield; etc.

The annual At Home given by St. George's Rowing Club took place on Saturday last at St. Judge's Bay, Parnell, and was as usual a great success. The weather though threatening in the morning turned out quite warm and summer like in the afternoon; though chilly in the shade, it was particularly hot on the beach. Under such favourable circumstances it was not to be wondered at that many of the ladies had donned their light summer muslins, and the many hued colours constantly changing as the wearers moved about made a picture of dazzling brilliancy not easily forgotten. Grey checks braided with black were very much in evidence.

The band was present, and took up its position under the trees in Mrs Street's property, with that lady's kind permission, which just overlooks St. Judge's Bay, whence they enlivened the proceedings with concourse of sweet sounds, notably selections of the newest and most popular airs.

Seats were arranged on a grassy knoll, so that those who took interest in the boat racing could watch without being disturbed by the moving crowd. Afternoon tea was served to the visitors, handed round with charming alacrity by the members of the rowing club.

Amongst the ladies present were:—Mrs Atkinson, black silk; Misses Atkinson (2), dark skirts and pink and blue blouses respectively; Miss Aubrey, fawn coat and skirt, with rose pink at neck; Mrs Archer-Burton, fawn coat and skirt, shot violet vest, hat en suite; Mrs F. Baume, black cloth habit fitting costume, relieved with black velvet, white let in at the neck, black hat with black tulle and white feathers; Mrs Brett, grey check skirt, fawn cloth jacket, pink straw hat with black trimmings; Miss E. Brett, very striking combination of green alpaca, with green check silk, made with scalloped skirt, white vest, lilac hat trimmed with violets and green leaves, pretty coquelicot red parasol; Mrs E. Bloomfield, Lincoln green skirt, fawn jacket, hat with green silk and pink roses; Miss Brigham, fawn coat and skirt; Miss Burns, blue veiled in fawn net, finished with ruched blue bebe ribbon; Mrs Bamford, dark green costume; Miss Withers, a combination of grey and blue; Miss Cochrane, dark skirt, white blouse; Mrs Chambers, black; Miss Laishley, dark skirt, fawn jacket, black picture hat with ostrich feathers; Mrs Hugh Campbell, prune shaded gown trimmed with fawn lace; Mrs Logan Campbell, black; Mrs Robert Dargaville, black skirt, black and white plaid muslin blouse, black hat relieved with purple; Miss Dargaville, dark skirt, light blouse; and her sister wore a Lincoln green tailor-made gown; Miss Bush (Thames), navy serge; Miss Devore, slate grey trimmed with red velvet; Miss Devereux, brown; Mrs White, black; Miss White, grey check; Miss Denniston, dark skirt, terre blouse; Misses Gorrie (2), dark skirts, light blouses; Miss — Thorne-George, dark skirt, light blouse; Miss (Theo.) Kissling, violet skirt, white pique reefer jacket, white hat with violet silk; Mrs Goodhue, black skirt, black and red striped blouse; Mrs Chatfield, pine green serge with black velvet edgings; Mrs Gillies, fawn with bebe ribbon trimmings; Miss Horton, grey trimmed with white; Miss Otway, fawn coat and skirt; Miss Clapcott, fawn cloak; Miss Hesketh, slate grey; Miss Grace Hesketh, grey check with black braid, and another sister wore a grey check; Mrs Johnson, grey muslin; Mrs Hatchison, brown costume strikingly trimmed with white braid, brown hat with flowers; Mrs Jones, black; Mrs Wiseman, grey costume with violet trimmings; Miss Harper, dark skirt, light blouse; Mrs A. P. Friend, black costume with red vest; Miss Friend, dark costume; Miss Phillips, dark skirt, pink blouse; Miss Whitaker, grey plaid skirt, white blouse, white picture hat with ostrich feathers; Miss Power, dark skirt, canary blouse; Mrs John Roach, navy serge, with blue round neck, pretty hat with cornflowers; Mrs Gordon, grey lustre; Miss Cooper, blue costume veiled in striped net; Miss Morton, brown and black striped tailor-made gown; Miss Blenzard Brown, dark skirt, light blouse; Miss Horne, black silk trimmed with lace, hat relieved with violets; Miss Cuff, grey check skirt, white blouse; Misses Kensington, dark skirts, light blouses; Miss Keogh, navy; Mrs Thomas, black; Miss Thomas, fawn trimmed with braid, sailor hat; Misses Lusk (2), dark skirts, white blouses; Mrs Lyons, green tailor-made gown; Mrs Fraser, black fancy lustre with cream lace on blouse; Mrs Jervis was much admired in brown holland, royal blue velvet toque with cornflowers and dash of orange silk; Misses Preece (2), dark skirts, light plaid blouses of pink and blue respectively; Miss F. McDonald, brown cape, black gown; Miss MacAndrew, black dress, fawn jacket, sailor hat; Mrs (Dr.) Naylor, autumn brown costume, hat en suite, trimmed with pink roses; Miss Pierce, dark skirt, light blouse, black toque; Miss Purchas, white serge, orange vest; Mrs Fitzroy Peacocke, navy serge; Miss Peacocke, slate blue coat and skirt; Miss Wallace, brown; Mrs Moss, black; Miss Moss, dark skirt, plaid velvet blouse, hat with primroses; Miss Moss, dark skirt, grey check blouse; Mrs Markham, navy; Mrs Salmon, black silk with velvet cape; Miss Salmon, royal blue costume; Miss Percival, grey lustre; Miss Hull, slate grey coat and skirt; Miss Reeve, sage green tailor-made gown; Miss Lennox, fawn; Miss Kitty Lennox, navy; Miss Rich, dark skirt, light blouse; Miss McCrae, grey tailor-made gown; Miss Gillies, fawn costume trimmed with rucked bebe ribbon; Miss Mary Wright, green; Mrs Rathbone, white pique skirt, green flowered blouse, black velvet hat with ostrich plumes; Mrs S. Kissling, black silk, black cape; Misses Kissling (2), dark skirts, light blouses; Mrs Von Sturmer, pearl grey, with braiding, relieved with pink silk, with padlock, upon the padlock her white sailor hat; Miss Von Sturmer, brown; Miss Stevenson, brown; Miss Upton, slate grey; Miss Savage, slate grey; Misses Winks, navy; Misses Laird (2), navy; Miss Thorpe, green skirt, green velvet blouse, red tie, sailor hat with red band; and her two youngest sisters wore dark skirts and light blouses; Miss Wynyard, navy; Miss Day, dark grey tailor-made gown; Miss De Bourbell, black serge; Misses Caro (2), dark skirts, light blouses; Mrs Herrold, black; Miss Herrold, grey; Miss Dowell, grey check with black braid; Miss Winnie Leys, green and white striped blouse, dark skirt, white sailor hat; Mrs R. Johnson, pretty black and white muslin, black velvet toque; Misses Hesketh, one in grey and the other sister in black and white check, both very pretty costumes; Mrs Jervis, holland dress, blue and yellow toque; Mrs Russell, pretty costume, black and white check. There were many more very pretty costumes; Miss Koskruge, handsome plaid skirt and green coat, hat en suite; Misses Kerr-Taylor, Royal blue dresses trimmed with white, white toques; Mrs George Hart, green coat and skirt, pink vest, gem hat; Miss Macdonald, black lustre skirt, check silk blouse, black velvet hat; Mrs Alfred Porter, royal blue coat and skirt trimmed with white, blue and white straw hat with band of blue; Mrs Cooper, black net over blue silk slip, floral toque; Mrs Seymour George, handsome black costume, dainty little bonnet with rose colour; Mrs John Reid, black lustre, large black hat trimmed with white, scarlet sunshade; Mrs Moresby, handsome black brocade, black bonnet.

My Hamilton correspondent writes:

We have had quite a gay week in Hamilton. The Agricultural Show attracted a very great number of visitors. The hotels and boarding-houses were taxed to their utmost. Fortunately the weather kept fine; though Thursday morning looked very threatening, the clouds cleared away and the afternoon was delightfully pleasant for the large crowd which assembled on the Claudelands show grounds.

A SUCCESSFUL RABBIT TRAPPER.

One of the best shots and rabbit trappers around the district in which he resides is William F. Byrnes, of Toolern, near Melton, on the Bacchus Marsh line, Victoria. "In fact," said Mr Byrnes to a reporter recently, "I am ever in my element when out on the hills trapping rabbits and securing game. Frequently I go away for days at a time, and my experiences have been many and are worth relating. Some time ago, however, I had to relinquish my trappings and shooting excursions on account of an attack of galloping consumption, which at one time four noted doctors in Melbourne declared to be incurable." Mr Byrnes said that he also suffered from tuberculous affection of the hip, great prostration, night sweats, a persistent hacking cough, loss of appetite, and an entire inability to move about. So bad did he become that he was removed to the Melbourne Hospital, where a very delicate operation was performed upon his hip. But this operation, although conducted under the most favourable auspices, and by the most skilful surgeons, scarcely brought the relief which was desired, and young Byrnes left the hospital in almost a dying condition. In fact the physicians recommended his removal to the Austin Hospital for Incurables. But Byrnes' family brought him home instead, as they thought his dying moments would be more peaceful in his own home. Several professional men also examined him and declared the case to be incurable. The persistent racking cough that every now and again attacked him became more severe than ever, and after a fit of coughing he would lie back upon the pillows so weak, white and exhausted, that the nurse would think his last moment had come. In fact a local minister was called in on one occasion, so certain were his family of his inability to live more than a few hours. But his relatives heard of the fame of Dr. Williams' pink pills and their wonderful efficacy, and at this stage they purchased a supply for him. The first few doses did not seem to benefit him much, but by the time he had taken a box he breathed more freely and the cough quietened down, and when he had used three boxes a wonderful improvement was apparent. The medicine was carefully continued until eight boxes had been taken. Day by day he increased in appetite and strength; he assimilated his food properly; the glow of health came to his cheeks; and his lips appeared full and red instead of pale and bloodless. At the end of a month he was able to leave his bed and walk about a little. Day by day his strength increased, until he was placed in absolute health and strength. Now he is strong and vigorous, and goes on his rabbit, trapping and shooting excursions for days at a time. All his skill has come back to him, and he thanks the day on which he took Dr. Williams' pink pills, which the whole district declares raised him from his death bed. Dr. Williams' pink pills cured Willie Byrnes because they—unlike other medicines—struck at the root of the disease and not at the symptoms. For the same reason this valuable remedy has effected cures in serious cases of diphtheria, bronchitis, pneumonia, typhoid and scarlet fevers, measles, paralysis, St. Vitus' dance, scrofula, eczema, anaemia, ladies' ailments, vital losses, and all disorders of the blood and nerves. Enormous sales create imitators, so be certain to buy packages upon which the full name in red ink is printed on the white wrapper. Sold by all chemists and storekeepers, and by the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Wellington, N.Z. Price three shillings per box, six boxes sixteen and sixpence, post free. A full account of Mr Byrnes' case with all details will be sent free upon application.

Mrs Rees, Ponsonby, is on a visit to her daughter, Mrs Manning, Hamilton.

OBITUARY.

The news of the sudden death of Mr Archibald Davidson Somerville, Manager of the Wellington Branch of the Bank of New Zealand, will be received with very deep regret in all parts of New Zealand, and by his demise the bank loses one of its most valued and popular servants. Mr Somerville had on Tuesday, the day of his death, been engaged all day at the bank as usual, and retired to rest shortly after ten o'clock, when he was seized with a fit of coughing, and broke a blood vessel, dying almost immediately afterwards in the presence of his wife and son, Dr. James arriving on the scene a few minutes after the occurrence, but only to find that life was extinct. Mr Somerville had been very ill for some time, but recently went to Fiji for three months for the benefit of his health, only returning about three weeks ago, and as his health appeared much improved, his sudden death will come as a great shock to his family and friends. The deceased was a native of Scotland, being born in Fifeshire in 1853, his father being one of the most distinguished lights of the Presbyterian Church. Having gained his first business experience in a leading mercantile house in Dundee, Mr Somerville entered the service of the Oriental Bank, where he remained till 1880, when he entered the service of the Bank of New Zealand, being almost at once transferred to the Auckland branch of the bank. After officiating as agent of the bank at Te Aro, Wellington, in 1886, Mr Somerville was moved to Fiji, where he remained on the bank's behalf for nine years. Returning to New Zealand, he was appointed manager at Napier, later on acting-manager, and then received the appointment of manager of the bank at Wellington, which position he retained until his death, at the comparatively early age of 47. All the flags in the city were hung half-mast high on Wednesday, as a tribute of respect to the deceased, who was greatly respected and esteemed in commercial and banking circles throughout the city, and his widow and family, of one son, and two daughters, will have the sympathy of a very large circle of friends in their sad bereavement.

The interment took place at the Karori Cemetery, on Thursday afternoon, the Rev. W. C. Waters, of St. Peter's Church, officiating at the graveside. The funreal cortege was an unusually long one, all the chief officers of the various banks in the city attending, also the Mayor of the City (Mr J. Blair), the Chairman of the Bank of New Zealand, prominent members of the commercial houses, the members of the Wellington Bowling Club, and prominent citizens. Mr Clive Somerville, only son of the deceased, was chief mourner, and Messrs John Ross, C. A. Ewen, H. Gilmer, and H. B. Lawry, officiated as pall-bearers. Many very beautiful wreaths and floral tributes were sent by the directors of the Bank of New Zealand, the local branches of the Bank, the Wellington Bowling Club, and by private friends from all parts of New Zealand, bearing witness to the great respect in which the late gentleman was held, in both his business and private life.

VENICE AT THE ANTIPODES.

One of the most popular of English illustrated magazines recently published a pictorial article entitled "If London Were Venice." The object was to draw what would be the appearance of the world's metropolis were its streets converted into canals and gondolas took the place of wheeled vehicles in its thoroughfares. One may question whether such a change would be an advantage from a utilitarian point of view, but the appearance at a first glance is certainly very attractive. In this issue we have borrowed the idea of our English contemporary, and our readers are presented with some views of Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin Venetianised.

DINNA' FORGET.

CHAPTER I.

I am thirty or thereabouts, and I am unmarried. I have been engaged for sixteen years. We parted at the Liverpool landing-stage, Jim and I, in our early teens, and we have not seen each other since. But I still wear his ring. It is a mourning ring, and contains hair. I don't know whose, and I don't suppose Jim knows. The ring came into his possession with the rest of his mother's effects, and he was too young at the time of her death to enquire about the hair. It did not occur to either of us that the ring was an unsuitable one for the purpose; it was the only one Jim had, and he placed it on my finger with a solemnity that awed me.

"Don't forget me," he pleaded, the tears he was too manly to shed almost blinding his eyes. "Oh, my dear little Pat, don't forget me! I am going away to make my fortune, so that we may get married. Promise me, with your hands in mine, that you will be true to me for ever and ever."

It seemed a big promise, and the magnitude of it made me cry. But I loved Jim better than any one else in the world, except my guardian; so in a choked voice I repeated the words after him, and he said I was never to forget that I was engaged. Then he told me to put my arms round his neck and kiss him, and I did that too, though there were a number of people about, and my guardian was smiling curiously. Jim had trained me to habits of obedience, and I knew he would stand no nonsense at this supreme crisis in our lives.

He was four years older than I, and very big, and strong, and handsome, whereas I was but small for my age, an elfish little creature, with great dark eyes and a quantity of curly, unmanageable nut-brown hair. I don't suppose any one but Jim ever thought me pretty.

"Pat," he would say, "I'm going to kiss some colour into your cheeks; that is all you want to make you beautiful. A real princess you will be some day, and sit upon a throne—that is, one of the best drawing-room chairs, you know. And from all quarters of the globe, by which I mean the city, princes—merchant princes, you understand—will come and worship you. They will fall down on their knees, and they will say, 'Be mine, fair lady.' That is what they will say," commented Jim, puckering his brow perplexedly; "but they will be quite wrong, because you are not fair at all, but dark. Then you will throw back your head—so, and you will reply, haughtily, 'Begone, every one of you! For I belong to Jim, and if he were to come in and find you here, there would be bloodshed.'"

I demurred a little to this, for I was a romantic child, with my head crammed full of fairy lore, and this fancy picture of prostrate princes appealed to me.

"Who says I belong to you?" I asked mutinously.

"I say so," Jim replied, his blue eyes flashing, "and before you are many minutes older you will say so yourself."

He seized me in his arms, and marching to the wall that enclosed our garden, placed me upon it. Then he removed the ladder and sauntered away, his hands in his pockets, and his nose in the air. In about five minutes he returned, and asked me politely if I belonged to him. I answered meekly that I did, and I have belonged to Jim ever since.

It was the greatest nonsense, but it was such sweet nonsense; and when it was decided that Jim should go out to his uncle in New Zealand, we regarded our careers as almost at an end. We began to take short and gloomy views of life, relinquished our games and mischievous practices, and resolutely declined to entertain the idea that our hearts were still intact. We begged the cook—and there was something heroic about this—to be less prodigal with her sweetmeats, for, privately, we were a good deal ashamed of our appetites.

I think Jim felt the parting most—his was the deeper, stronger nature—but I did most of the crying, and I cried consistently every day for a week after the vessel had sailed. Then I went back to school, and the first words I heard, spoken in tones of sincereat conviction, were:

"My goodness, Patricia, how ugly you've grown! Whatever have you been doing?"

"Getting engaged," I answered, with dignity—but I cried no more after that.

None of the heroines I read about ever fretted to the extent of making themselves ugly. After bathing their faces in warm water they always looked more beautiful than ever, because of a "little touch of languor that served to heighen their charms." I lost no time in testing the hot water cure, and then I peered anxiously in the glass. Alas! I saw no beauty or languor or charm of any sort. Only a small, white, woebegone face, ruffled hair pushed back, and big brown eyes full of a kind of wistful entreaty—and next day I wrote to Jim telling him how ugly I had grown, and offering to release him from our engagement.

When I told my guardian, he gave a funny little cough.

"My Patricia," he said, lingering fondly over the name, it is too early for you to trouble your pretty head about such matters. It will all come soon enough; too soon, maybe, for your peace of mind."

He sighed heavily, and I drew his head on to my shoulder, kissing and comforting him as was my wont when he seemed in trouble.

"Sweet, tender lips," he murmured; "so like your mother's, child!"

But I afterward heard him remark to his housekeeper, Martha Hewitt, that they two—meaning himself and Martha — were frivolous, feather-headed creatures compared with the children of the present day.

"An odder pair," he said, "was surely never sent to plague an old bachelor!"

I think he meant "bless," but plague was the word he used.

My guardian's brother, Mr James Hurrell, to whom Jim had gone, was a bachelor, too; and there had been one other brother, Jim's father, who had died of fever while marching at the head of his regiment to Coomassie. Mrs Hurrell never recovered from the shock, and she died about the same time as my own mother, who was also a widow. I had no relations living that I knew of, and Jim always declared he was glad of it.

"Aunts maul one so," he said, "and male cousins might have given trouble."

Ever alert for information, I was anxious to know why male cousins might have given more trouble than female cousins. But Jim, who was very lordly in his ways, said I must understand once for all that male cousins might have given trouble, and that I must not ask any questions.

In due time his answer to my letter arrived. He said it was impossible I could have grown so ugly in so short a time, but in any case I might have known that it would make no difference in his feelings. "Ugly or not, I intend to marry you," concluded Jim severely, "so don't let me hear any more such rot. Remember that you are my promised wife, and that I shall come home and claim you as soon as I have made my fortune." Alas! that letter was written sixteen years ago, and Jim's fortune is not made yet.

CHAPTER II.

As time passed, as the weeks lengthened into months, and the months rolled on into years, I came to regard that little scene enacted at the Liverpool landing stage as mere childish folly—an incident to be remembered only with an amused smile, or a ripple of laughter, as I glanced at the ring on my finger. That sombre pledge of my betrothal had become a fixture. At first it was the recollection of Jim's tear-dimmed eyes which rose up between me and any half-formed resolution to discard the ring. Afterwards it was my physical development that held it fast.

At eighteen there was no longer any question of my growing ugly. My glass told me wondrous tales of my beauty, and my portrait, painted by a Liverpool artist, had the effect of making him wildly and most unreasonably jealous. Our engagement was to him a definite and positive fact; he clung tenaciously to the hope of our future union, and his letters spoke eloquently of the love with which his heart was full.

I used to wonder how with so little fuel he contrived to keep the fire of his love for me burning so steadily. I should have wondered still more had I known the passionate intensity of that love. In my thoughtlessness I never realised that the years passing so lightly and pleasantly over my head were years of toil and anxiety to poor Jim, whose happiest hours were those spent in writing to his little sweetheart at home.

"I am eating my heart out, here in Invercargill," he wrote me once, "waiting for you, Pat; working for you, dear; wearying for you always. The probation is long, my darling, and at times I have need of all my patience and courage. Then it is that the thought of you strengthens and sustains me. You are my star of consolation, my one hope, one thought, one dream in the world. Oh, Pat, be true to me! Don't forget your promise—don't forget. . . ."

"Don't forget! don't forget!" that was ever Jim's cry, and I would ask myself, laughing, how, with so many and such urgent reminders it was possible for me to forget. Dear, generous, faithful-hearted Jim! I was not worthy of him. But I did my best. I tried to live up to the high ideal he had formed of me, and I endeavoured to infuse into my letters some of the impulsive warmth of my childish affection. The sad truth, however, remained—that the correspondence which was all the world to him, simply bored me.

But if I did not love Jim in the way he desired, I certainly did not love anyone else; and for the jealous fears which haunted him he had no cause whatever. Truth to tell, I found men, as a rule, disappointing, in many instances downright dull; and I looked in vain, among the many suitors for my hand, for the hero of my dreams, the ideal lover who should enchain my mind as well as heart and be at once my companion and my king!

He never came; and as time passed I grew more than reconciled to his absence—grew, indeed, to regard my freedom and independence as priceless possessions. A husband, I reflected, would be a very undesirable and unnecessary appendage. He would probably be a talker, he would certainly be a hindrance to me in my writing, and for aught I knew he might even be a tyrant! And for love? Well, I had my guardian, and I wanted no one else.

Some gentlemen were discussing me at a ball, and I was so placed as to make escape impossible.

"Patricia Lang," said one; "oh, yes, you are right! Absolutely without heart, a beautiful statue—nothing more."

"I'm not so sure about that," said another. "See her with her guardian! Mr Hurrell, at all events, does not find her heartless. Rather, I should say, call her a beautiful enigma—and as much so to herself as to anyone else. The girl is for ever looking for something—looking vainly, as it would seem. It's curious, pathetic even, to watch her at each fresh introduction. Hope, expectation, indifference, disappointment, are depicted successively on her expressive face. Evidently she finds us in the last degree tedious and uninteresting."

"It's 'copy' she's looking for," murmured a deep bass voice. "Beware of a woman who writes, for it is just these, with their analytical minds and their heads full of learning who do all the mischief. Their very coldness is a provocation and a challenge. I wonder how many hearts Miss Lang has broken this season. What, in Heaven's name, is she waiting for?"

Ah, that was just it! What was I waiting for?

CHAPTER III.

When I was twenty-six I lost my dearly-loved guardian. He passed away peacefully, his hand in mine, and the story of his love for my mother fresh upon his lips. Her name, Patricia, like my own, was the last word he uttered, and there was a world of tenderness in his low accents.

"She was the best and sweetest, just as she was the most beautiful woman that ever lived. . . . Your father met her first. Had it been otherwise—but I have never allowed my thoughts to dwell upon that. . . . The joy of loving her was great, and a man cannot but be better for having known and worshipped such a woman. . . . Did she know? Yes, and reproached herself, as she had never any cause to do, for having spoiled my life. . . . She made it the richer and fuller for the passing sunshine of her presence. . . . 'We needs must love the highest when we see it,' and if she had lived—ah, well! God did not so will it. . . . She left you, her greatest treasure, to my care. Tell me, my Patricia, whether I have redeemed the promise I made to your mother twenty years ago."

I could not speak for the great sob that rose in my throat, but I bent my face to his, and I think he understood and was satisfied.

This was my first real sorrow. I had fretted sadly for Jim, but the grief of a girl of twelve is not lasting—and I had my guardian then. Now I felt quite alone in the world, and had Jim happened to return in these days of my desolation, he might have carried the fortress of my heart by storm and married me off-hand.

I did not take kindly to the friends and acquaintances who, with the best intentions, sought to comfort me. I shut myself up and refused to be comforted. In the end my health broke down, and Martha Hewitt, who was devoted to me, came forward with a bold proposition.

"I've been thinking, Miss Patricia," she said, "that it will be well for us to leave this place. It is not home any longer without the master, and you are just fretting yourself to death. I don't know what Mr. Jim would say if he saw you now—and after charging me so perticklar to take good care of you, too!"

I twisted the little mourning ring round and round on my finger; it seemed to get looser every day.

"Where could we go?" I asked listlessly.

"We might go and live in Liverpool," suggested Martha, who loved a city—and I caught at the idea.

In a city it would be possible to lose oneself, and obtain the repose which is denied one in the suburb. Here I could not stir twenty yards from my own door without encountering a dozen or more acquaintances, and their sociability was appalling. How they talked! It got on to my nerves at last, and Martha's plan seemed to offer a ready and effectual means of escape.

The reluctance I should otherwise have felt to leaving the Manor House was lessened in great measure by the spoliation which had for many years been going on around it. Every inch of ground had been seized upon by the ubiquitous builder, the sound of his hammer was ever in one's ears. All day long, carts laden with bricks and timber went grinding past our very gates. Houses and shops sprang up in every direction. A gymnasium was built, a Technical Institution, a Town Hall.

Picturesqueness was fast giving place to conventionality. The hills that I loved were in process of being levelled and laid out in prim lawns and gardens. A recreation ground was threatened, a marine lake and promenade were promised. Rumours reached me of diabolical designs upon the shore; plans of the contemplated improvements were on view in a certain shop-window. They made me shiver. It seemed only a question of time ere the District Council would lay ruthless, reforming hands on the sea itself. The sunsets, happily, were above and beyond its reach, and on no part of our coast are they more beautiful—as Turner, who came there to paint them could testify were he still living.

And the noises! Steam-rollers, school-board children, and street organs made the place a pandemonium; while bicycles rendered the life of the poor pedestrian about as intolerable as it could be. Herein we paid heavily for our exceptionally good roads.

place a pandemonium; while bicycles rendered the life of the poor pedestrian about as intolerable and insecure as it well could be. Herein we paid heavily for our exceptionally good roads.

Of the Waterloo of sweet memories and musings—the dear, primitive, peaceful Waterloo of my earliest recollections—not a trace remains. And when I hear others extol the

public-spirited policy of the powers that be, when I look round at the grand houses and the gaily-dressed people, I feel constrained to cry out in my sorrow:

"Take away your fashionable seaside suburb, and give me back my Elysium!"

The Manor House was about the last bit of antiquity left in the place, and my guardian had been offered fancy prices for the property.

"When I am gone, my Patricia, you can do as you as please," he would say, and I was touched to the heart to find that he had left me not only the house, but everything else of which he died possessed.

"Jim will have my brother's money," so ran the letter of instructions; "it was an arrangement made between us when the dear lad went out. Some day, perhaps, the property will be united, and the dearest wish of my heart fulfilled, for I have thought there must be some other motive, my darling, apart from your desire to remain with me, at the root of your rejecting so many good offers. But do not, through any quixotic notion of pleasing me, do Jim the great injustice of marrying him without love. He is worthy of a better fate than that—worthy of the best this world can give him. . . ."

The reading of this letter caused my ears to flow afresh. Why couldn't I love Jim? Why couldn't I? I asked myself this question so often that the words seemed beaten into my brain. They danced before my eyes in my dreams; they echoed through the silent corridors; and the very walls of the library, where I spent most of my time, seemed to cry out continually: "Why can't you love Jim?"

It was maddening unendurable. Martha was right; I wanted a change. I would go to Liverpool, and there, in some quiet square or old-world, half-forgotten terrace, I would seek a haven where I could weave my romances undisturbed.

CHAPTER IV.

My father and mother, whom, sad to relate, I do not remember, must have been a very remarkable pair. Hardly had I been twelve months settled in my new home before I received a letter from a firm of solicitors at Southampton, informing me that under the will of the late Dame Angela Wynne, I inherited property to the amount of twenty thousand pounds.

I was thunderstruck. I had never in my life heard of Dame Angela Wynne, and my first thought was that there had been a mistake. But, no! A copy of the will was enclosed, and I saw at once that there could have been no mistake.

"And I bequeath," so ran this strange document, "to Patricia Lang, only child of the late Captain Robert Archibald Lang, R.N., the residue of my estate, in the belief that her father's daughter will make a good use of the money, and as a token of the sincere admiration and respect for a high-minded, chivalrous, and most loyal English gentleman.

Here was a romance! Who was Dame Angela Wynne? And what had my father done to merit such recognition at her hands? From the solicitors I could gleam nothing beyond the fact of their late client's having instructed them to keep an eye upon Patricia Lang, ward and adopted daughter of Mr. Benjamin Hurrell, of Waterloo, near Liverpool. Dame Angela had been living for many years in retirement at Boulogne, where she was a liberal subscriber to various charities. She had travelled much, but had not, to their knowledge, visited England during the last twenty years. She was unmarried.

I searched in vain amongst my guardian's papers for any mention of this eccentric lady, and I wondered whether he had been aware of the eye that was being kept upon me. My father's letters afforded no clue to the mystery. They were written from various foreign ports, and to me, accustomed to Jim's lengthy and loving epistles, they seemed strangely brief and unsatisfactory. I had no letters of my mother's. Those she had written to my guardian were buried with him at own request. So it was left to me to piece together as best I could the puzzle of these four lives; and the conclusions I drew were so painful and pathetic, that I could only hope they were erroneous.

There came to me with this legacy conscientious scruples about Jim. He was, I knew, sadly crippled for want of capital; and would not helping him be putting the money to a good use? Would he accept it, though—without me? Only too surely I felt that he would not. Then ought I not to sacrifice myself, trusting to time to rekindle the old love? Jim's personal magnetism was great, and perhaps—who could tell?—the vague longing which is supposed to lie dormant in the hearts of most of us might wake up suddenly at sight of him.

But when my letter was written and posted, and I had leisure to reflect upon what I had done, a sort of terror took possession of me. Jim would certainly come home and marry me, and I should be miserable for evermore. Did I not know him? Strong, cool, resolute, exacting, masterful! He would call me his queen, but in reality I should be little better than his slave. It was a terrible prospect, and the more I tried to shut my eyes to it the more terrible it became. I sought distraction out-of-doors, and now it was that I began to experience all the delights and advantages of living in a city.

The gardens of the quiet square in which I dwelt were a mass of foliage: the grass was green, and soft as velvet—I might have been miles in the country. Yet I was so centrally situated that I could reach on foot in half an hour points of interest so widely apart as Princes' Park, the Botanic Gardens, and that splendid and salubrious promenade, the Liverpool landing-stage. I was also within easy walking distance of the noble block of buildings which comprise our Library, Museum and Art Gallery—our treasure-house of knowledge and entertainment; while University College, that brilliant centre of academic, social and literary life, was but a stone's throw away.

I was returning from the college one lovely afternoon towards the end of May, when just as I reached my own door the postman came up and handed me a letter. It was from Jim! I hastened to my own room, tearing open the envelope as I went. And this is what, with tears of rage and pain in my eyes, I read:

"Burwood Station, 7th of April, '92.

"My dear Patricia.—I must respectfully decline your leap-year proposal. It is very good of you to think of sacrificing yourself, but it is not a sacrifice I want, and no amount of generosity will satisfy a man's heart and soul. Before you again take the initiative in what you must excuse me for reminding you is essentially a man's concern, be careful to ascertain precisely what it is the man requires. To offer money to one who has for years been hungering for love is little less than an insult, and to say that I am disappointed in you, Pat, is to express very inadequately what I feel.

"Upon one point you may set your mind at rest: have no fear that I shall disturb your solitude. When you can say to me simply and straight from your heart, 'Jim, I have not forgotten the old days, and your love for me and mine for you, and I want you,' I will come home—not before. And do not deceive yourself, young lady. No man or woman can be sufficient for his or her own happiness in this world, and sooner or later you will find this out.

"There will come a time when books alone will not satisfy you, when you will have a healthy, natural craving for love; and if then the right man comes along, he will know how to make you feel through all your being the ecstasy of passion and self-surrender. I believe yet that I shall be that man. In spite of your denials and contradictions, I believe your heart has never really wavered in its allegiance to me, and I can wait. Your always devoted

"Jim."

My first impulse was to tear this letter into shreds and fling them away. Then as I re-read it, comprehending more fully Jim's state of mind as he wrote, realising as I had never done before his deep, undying love and exquisite fidelity, a great wave of passionate remorse swept over me, a lump seemed to rise in my throat, and pressing the letter to my lips, I broke into a storm of sobs and tears.

"Oh, Jim, Jim," I wailed, "how could you so misunderstand me?"

CHAPTER V.

"Put up the bill, Martha, and we will try to let the house furnished," I said, staring moodily out of the window; "another week of this will drive me crazy, I think."

The rain was beating pitilessly against the window panes; the garden was strewn with dead leaves which dropped heavily from the trees; and the late flowers, bent by the storm lay wet and broken on the ground. Beyond the garden, fields and hedges were enveloped in a dull, grey mist; the hills were invisible, and from the sea came the ceaseless, melancholy sound of the fog horns.

"Lor', Miss Patricia," remonstrated Martha, "and who would take a furnished house at the seaside in winter—such weather, too!"

"Enthusiastic golfers—and who ever met a golfer who was not enthusiastic?—care nothing about the weather; and that is just the beauty of it, Martha, for we have here one of the finest links in England. I rely absolutely upon the golfers; so put up the bill, like a good soul, before we are cut off in our prime."

Martha was considerably beyond her prime but she allowed the statement to pass, and hurried away to do my bidding.

When, four months ago, hunting about for seaside apartments, I lighted upon this charming cottage, standing back from the highroad, midway between Hoylake and West Kirkby—its garden a wilderness of sweet perfumes—I thought I had found another Eden. We came in the time of roses, remained all through the hot, dry, beautiful summer, and not until October, with its chill and wet came to remind me that winter was close at hand, did I begin to weary of my purchase.

For I had bought the property with the intention of converting it ultimately into a Home for Poor and Aged Gentlewomen. It was to succour as many as possible of these to prevent them, when age or ill-health unfitted them for work, from drifting into the workhouse, that I determined to devote Dame Angela Wynne's legacy. What were my troubles compared with the sufferings of these poor, stranded women, most of whom had seen better days? Yet the truth must be told. In spite of the deep interest I took in them, the earnest efforts I was making to brighten their lives, my own sorrow, my grief and mortification, would remain uppermost in my thoughts, and my cheeks would burn and my eyes fill with angry tears as I recalled some of the expressions I had used in my last letter to Jim.

Surely there is nothing more complex or difficult to understand than a woman's heart. Through years of tenderest love and devotion it will remain cold and unresponsive, and then—strange perversity!—a few stern words, the contemptuous manner of a moment, an unexpected repulse, and lo! a sudden revulsion of feeling takes place, and a love, all the more vehement for being so long pent up, finds expression in mad, sweet words, impulsive promises, prayers, entreaties—oh what had I not said!

I was furiously angry with Jim. How could he leave such a letter unanswered? Certainly, if he wished to punish me for my contumacy, he could not have done it more effectually. Then it occurred to me that he might be ill—dying, perhaps, and this thought was so terrible that I telegraphed. The telegram, like the letter, remained unanswered; and then I knew, if I had never known it before, that without Jim and Jim's love life would be for me henceforth a dreary solitude.

The bill was put up, and for three days nothing came of it. The rain descended steadily, determinedly, and my spirits, always so susceptible to nature's moods, sank lower and lower. It was as though something of the gloom without entered into my heart to further chill and depress me. But on the fourth day there was a change. The rain ceased, the wind rose, and the rapidly shifting clouds showed some blue sky beneath. In the afternoon the sun peeped out fitfully and a little shamefacedly, as though apologising for its long absence; and I threw down my book with a little glad cry. I would go for a run on the shore.

But just as I reached the door it was opened suddenly from the outside, and Martha appeared, looking much flustered.

"A gentleman has come to see the house, Miss Patricia," she began, "and——"

"And he has brought the sunshine with him," I interupted. "Look, Martha!"

"Yes, Miss Patricia; but he wants to take possession at once!"

"Of the sunshine? Greedy man! Oh, now Martha, don't distress yourself; you shall not be hurried, I promise you."

I smiled reassuringly at her as I went toward the drawing-room.

The stranger was standing with his back to the fire as I entered—a tall, broad-shouldered man, whose square jaw and overhanging brow seemed to give power and character to his face. He was wearing blue spectacles, and I noticed with surprise that he had laid aside a heavy travelling coat and cap. This, and the eagerness with which he advanced to meet me, certainly appeared to justify Martha's worst suspicions.

I bowed a little stiffly, and he stopped short, bowing also—bowing with a whimsical and audacious politeness which made me feel inclined to summon Martha to show him out. Being, however, as anxious to let the house as he apparently was to take it, I swallowed my indignation and invited him to be seated. If his references were satisfactory, there was, I reflected, no need to quarrel with his manners.

He sat down in the same humorous fashion in which he had bowed. Nothing, he seemed to be protesting, could well be funnier than sitting down or bowing.

"You want a furnished house in Hoylake?" I began, briskly, anxious to get the interview over.

"I want this furnished house!" he replied, promptly.

"How can you tell till you have seen it?" I inquired, vaguely suspicious.

"I have seen quite enough to know that it will suit me admirably."

There was suppressed amusement in his tone.

"A golfer, perhaps?" I questioned, feeling unaccountably nervous.

"Oh, certainly a golfer."

I breathed more freely. Golfers were, I knew, a little mad, and no doubt this one was aware that the links adjoined our back garden.

"And when should you want the house?"

"I want it immediately."

He rose, and resumed his old position on the hearthrug—the position of the master of a house.

"Then there is no more to be said," I returned, rising also; "for I am not prepared to leave at a moment's notice."

The man was insufferable.

"I don't want you to leave, my—darling!"

The last word was scarcely breathed above a whisper, but I heard it, and, really frightened now, I was moving hastily to the bell, when the stranger caught and held me fast.

"We shall not quarrel about terms," he said, in strangely familiar tones, "for I will pay you so—and so—and so ——," kissing me with an unrestrained passion and impetuosity that was almost fierce. "Oh Pat, Pat, to think you should have forgotten your own old Jim!"

I stared at him for a moment with wide, uncomprehending eyes; then the room began to swim round, the ground to give way beneath my feet; a thousand voices shrieked in my ears: "Dinna' Forget! Dinna' Forget!" and with a half-smothered cry I fell backward in a dead faint.

When I recovered consciousness I was lying on the couch with Jim's arm still encircling me, and Jim's blue eyes, no longer disguised behind glasses, fixed anxiously upon my face.

"Drink this," he said in the old half-peremptory manner I remembered so taking a tumbler from Martha's hand and holding it to my lips. "Now, how do you feel, my darling? Ah, that is better!" as the colour crept slowly back into my cheeks. "But you look delicate, little girl. I hope you have not been ill — naughty, I know you have been so very, very naughty, my sweetheart!"

My heart was too full for words. I could only lie and stare at Jim—stare with happy, shining eyes that were afraid of losing sight of him for a moment. Martha answered for me.

"Miss Patricia has not been strong this long while, sir," she said, speaking severely to hide her emotion; "never quite the same since master died; and you gave her a shock just now, which, begging your pardon, sir, you shouldn't have tried to deceive us."

"Deceive you, Martha? Nonsense! Nothing was further from my inten-

tion. But when I saw how completely I was forgotten, and when I found that the role of house-hunter was to be forced upon me, I played the part to the best of my ability. Upon my word, you almost persuaded me, between you, that I had returned home for the express purpose of playing golf on sodden grass in the winter time. I had half a mind to——"

"We should have known you in a minute without those blue glasses," Martha struck in, still with uncompromising severity, and I understood quite well how she reproached herself for not recognising her old favourite. "But what with covering your eyes, and covering your mouth," she frowned at Jim's long, fair moustache, "and covering——"

"I should have known you anywhere, Martha, covered or—— I should have known you in goggles and a respirator! As for these," indicating the spectacles, "I told you at the time of the sunstroke that I should have to wear them until my sight was fully restored. Yes, yes, my darling, I am all right now, and can dispense with them quite well; I wish I had thought of it sooner."

Jim's lips were again pressed to mine, and he was whispering tender, foolish, passionate words of endearment.

"My little one, my own sweetheart, how beautiful you've grown! Speak to me, dear. Tell me I am not dreaming; that it is really you I am holding in my arms at last—at last! Oh, I can scarcely believe in my happiness!"

I could scarcely believe in mine! My world, in the space of one short hour, had become transformed and glorified. A wild joy was throbbing at my heart, a strange, intoxicating delight filled my soul. In my utter content I could have lain where I was for hours; gazing at Jim, listening to him, receiving his caresses. But there stood Martha, and she was crying so quietly and copiously that it seemed almost cruel to disturb her. Still, there are situations when the presence of a third person is a little embarrassing, and I felt that this was one of them.

"Martha," I said, smiling into my lover's eyes, "I think you had better remove the bill, for Mr Hurrell seems determined to take possession at once! And we don't want more than one such tenant."

The bill was on a board in the garden, and Martha, with a muttered "No, indeed!" hurried away to take it down.

"The idea," I murmured then, "of kissing me like that before Mrs Hewitt!"

And this was all I could find to say to Jim after a separation of sixteen years!

CHAPTER VI.

"A romance of the Middle Ages! Don't talk nonsence!" said Jim, a few hours later, as with his arm round my waist we passed from the dining-room, where we had partaken of "high tea," to the drawing-room, where the lamps had been lit and a blazing wood fire gave us the cheeriest of welcomes.

"Of course, I know," he went on, holding me before him with both hands "that you are twenty-nine—or rather, that you will be next week; but you don't look——. No, stand still! I have not half done admiring you yet—you don't look a day over twenty; and in your violet velvet gown, with these soft lace ruffles at your throat and wrists, you are adorable, my Patricia."

Before Jim's bright, searching gaze my colour came and went, and he laughed mischievously.

"You remind me," he said, "of the child Pat who used to stand just—so! A little criminal awaiting sentence; do you remember?"

"Am I likely to forget? Your sentences were out of all proportion to my crimes, Jim."

"Oh, I don't think so; you were mostly very naughty — but such a charming culprit, such an odd and fascinating little creature! Come, look up, my darling, I want to see the love-light in your eyes. What eyes, Pat! Oh, it is like heaven just to see your face again!"

"It is a heaven you might have enjoyed six months ago," I said sedately, as he drew me down beside him on the couch.

"No, Pat, I think not. Your first offer"—I winced—"was hardly one that any man with a grain of self-respect would accept. Even if I had been the poor man you thought, I should still have declined to be the pensioner of a woman who, believing her heart to be dead, proposed to marry me from a sense of duty. As it happened, though, I was not poor; for the land in which I had invested Uncle Tim's savings turned out more valuable than I anticipated. I knew there were vast mineral stores beneath the surface, but I did not expect to find gold—and gold in large quantities! I am a rich man, Pat, and what I want, what I have always wanted, is your love, sweetheart, not your money."

"I am glad I offered you the money without the love," was the unexpected comment I made upon this long oration.

"Pat!"

"Yes, I am glad; because it was your answer to that letter that made me feel—I mean, that made me think—that is, that made me know——"

"Yes, yes," cried Jim, impatiently; "that made you feel, and think, and know—what?"

"Oh—can't you see? Don't you understand?"

"See! Understand! Of course not. The man doesn't live who can fathom a woman's motives. But I can tell you this, Miss Lang: you were fortunate in being out of reach of my arm when that letter arrived, for it put me into one of the biggest rages ——"

"But that was just the beauty of it," I began, provokingly, and immediately collapsed, for before my startled eyes Jim triumphantly waved an envelope—an envelope containing, oh! I knew only too well, what.

"Your second offer!" said Jim, smiling at my confusion. "What, are you ashamed of having written words that brought me the greatest joy of my life? Oh, Pat, Pat, you are just one of the small pieces of inconsistency that a man breaks his heart for."

He restored the letter to his pocket-book.

"You may ask me for it again on our wedding-day," he said, taking my eager, outstretched hand into his own.

"How soon will that be?" I inquired anxiously.

Whereupon Jim, turning away his head, begged me not to press for an early day.

"I only landed at Plymouth last night," he murmured apologetically, "and I'm fatigued. Give me time."

"Oh, Jim," I cried, with a joyous peal of laughter, "what a tease you are still!"

"And what a tantalising child you are still."

"How could you leave a letter like that unanswered?" I asked reproachfully.

"Is not my presence here sufficient answer? I was at the Otago diggings when this dear letter reached Invercargill. It was sent on to Dunedin, there to wait till called for. Of course, had I known my little girl would find her heart so suddenly, and give it me so fully and freely—what a beautiful blush, Pat!—I would have arranged for letters to be forwarded. As it was, I only received this six weeks ago, and winding up my affairs with a despatch that bewildered the colonial mind, I took the first steamer home. I doubt if a letter could have come quicker."

"You might have telegraphed," I said, thinking of the cruel suspense of the last few months.

"And given you the opportunity for escape! How can I feel sure of you, Pat? There, there, my darling, do not let those tears drop. See! I

am going to bind you to me with fetters of gold."

He produced a small morocco case, and taking from it a lovely gipsy ring set with diamonds and sapphires, slipped it into the place of the little mourning ring which had done duty so long.

"You never told me how faithfully you had worn this," he said, putting my first engagement ring carefully away.

"I am afraid I never told you anything you wanted to hear, Jim," I answered remorsefully.

"Never mind, you shall make up for it now—I am just famishing for love—and you shall begin by telling me that you will be married on your birthday."

"Oh, Jim—so soon!"

"Now, Pat, I hope you are not going to be naughty," and the tone was so exactly that of the Jim of sixteen years ago that, closing my eyes, I could almost fancy myself back in the old garden at Waterloo, with the apple-blossoms falling all about me, and great beds of carnations and mignonette filling the air with their fragrance.

"At all events," I said, with a deep sigh of satisfaction, "you cannot put me on the wall."

"Can't I, though! We shall see. By-the-bye, Pat, you must take me to Waterloo and show me that wall."

"Gone!" I said, in tragic tones. "Gone, too, the old house and garden; and in their place, springing up like mushrooms in the night, rows and rows of small houses, all exactly alike, and all equally ugly. They build by the mile at Waterloo, and cut off into lengths. Oh, you would not know the place, Jim; it is quite spoiled."

Jim laughed, but he frowned a little, too.

"My darling, you must not grudge to dwellers in small houses the benefit of fresh air and sea breezes. I cannot allow you to become exclusive and misanthropical, little girl."

"I want," I said, with startling abruptness, "to build a home for twenty-nine poor and aged gentlewomen with Dame Angela's money — if you don't mind, Jim."

"Mind! I shall be delighted to help you in any scheme for ameliorating the condition of the deserving poor of either sex. I should say that a home for twenty-nine aged gentlewomen would be an admirable institution. But why twenty-nine?"

"Because I am so happy, and because—oh, can't you guess? Well, I'm surprised you can't guess!"

"What it is," said Jim, with a shrug of resignation, "to have a romancer and a riddler for one's sweetheart!" He took my face between his hands, gazing intently into my eyes. "You mean," he said at length, his own eyes kindling, "that at twenty-nine the right man came along and made you feel——"

"Yes—yes—oh, Jim, how strong you are! Do let me go—please!"

"Not until you have said you love me for ever with all your heart, that you are mine and mine only, that I have but to command and you will obey. Come, the words are your own."

"Oh, that letter!" I groaned. "Am I never to hear the last of it?"

Jim laughed caressingly, but he did not offer to release me, and it was growing late. So there was no help for it.

And afterward, as I stood with him for a moment in the garden, we both glanced up involuntarily at the sky—so unclouded and bright with stars—and I whispered shyly:

"Jim, did you know that Guardy wished it—our marriage, I mean?"

"Yes, my darling."

"Do you think he knows?"

"I am as sure, sweetheart, as that your love is all my own at last."

"What a beautiful world it is!" I said, watching the moon as it sailed calmly, serenely in the heavens, casting its silvery glamour over all the landscape.

But Jim, jealous of my glance, turned my face up to his own, quoting softly:

"What hath life been? What will it be?
How have I lived without thee? How
Is life both lost and found in thee?
Feel'st thou 'For Ever' in this 'Now?'"

An Unexpected Denouement.

Our town was a done-up one. Several new towns had sprung up near by, another railroad had run through the country back of us, and these things stopped us bein' the cattle and grain shippin' point we used to be. Business grew pretty poor; there was lots of vacant houses, there was a whole lot of empty sheds in the old abandoned stock-yards, and an old roller rink. Just the place for the winter quarters of the Pringle Circus Company, the manager said, and the people were tickled to death. The old stock-yards and its sheds was just the place for the horses, camels, elephants, sacred oxen and such like, while the caged animals could be kept in the roller rink. The performers could live around town in the vacant houses. I said the

PEOPLE WAS TICKLED.

Most of 'em was, but not all. Some said the circus men would be demoralisin' to the boys with their bad ways and stories of circus life. They would be ridin' their horses around, would git to racin' probably, while the camels and hippopotamuses were coarse-lookin' brutes that would spoil the artistic sense of the people that stared at 'em day after day. The peaceful quiet of the town would give way to a worldly riot, they said. The town certainly was quiet. There wasn't scarcely a temptation in the place except to go to sleep when you ought to be workin'. The principal of the graded school, Professor Stebbins, was specially against it. He talked against it and wrote pieces that come out in the county paper; but that's all the good it done him. The circus meant money to the town year after year, and the people were bound to have it there.

"How much money did you ever bring to this town, Stebbins?" asked old Sam Anderson, proprietor of our leadin' store. "We'd rather have a little less culture and more money in this burg. You keep on teachin' the kids and let us men of financial experience look out for the welfare of the town."

Well, one day in November, the camels and horses come, but didn't nobody come with 'em. They was consigned to old Sam Anderson and he put 'em in the sheds. It seems the performers was goin' to run a little museum for a few weeks in the city of Rockford, and the roustabouts that done all the work had gone on strike. So the manager was shippin' things along as he could, little by little, and askin' Anderson and other prominent citizens to look out for 'em for him.

Then the yaks and the elephants come and the lion, and the first went to the stock-yards and the lion's cage was put in the rink. Next day come another cage and in it was the

WILD MAN FROM BORNEO.

Well, sir, he was a sure-enough wild man, one they had to keep caged. He wasn't no Irishman tattooed, but the genuine savage article, six and a-half feet tall, with a big club. The manager wrote some directions about him, but the pen was so bad and the ink so pale that the letter couldn't all be made out. It said to put the cage in the rink and open the door so he could git out, but not to git within reach of him, and to have a barrel of water in there for him, and to——

"To what?" That was the question. Not another word could be read though all the prominent citizens took a try at it. The beginnin' of the letter said the manager would be along in four or five days, so our people thought things would be all right until he come. The inside of the rink had all been fixed up with sheet iron, the windows barred, the doors braced with iron bars; so there was no danger of the wild man gittin' out. There was a sort of a peek hole up in the door with a slide in it. We hauled the lion's cage up so we could reach through this peek hole with a pole and drop meat into the cage. We put a tub of water in with him, and then we put the wild man's cage up so we could reach through this peek hole without trouble. Then we unlocked the door and ran like thunder.

Come supper time, Anderson climbed up to the peek hole and passed in a basket full of ham and eggs, mashed potato, and an apple pie. The wild man took off the cover of the basket where it was hangin' on the end of the pole, looked in, sniffed, and then he hauled off with his club and

SMASHED THE WHOLE THING INTO BITS.

"Well, if he don't like that he don't get nothin' else to-night," said old Sam Anderson, as he shut the peek hole and jumped off the box he had been standin' on.

Next mornin' a chunk of beef was dropped in through the top of the lion's cage, and the wild man came runnin' up as if he was hungry enough to eat even that, and old Anderson thought he'd surely eat the fried potato, coffee, and doughnuts that was passed through in a second basket, but he smelled at it and smashed it all like he had done before.

"Well, that's all he gits to-day," said old Anderson. "If they ain't good enough for him he can go without." But, just the same, he begun plannin' what he'd give him next day. It wouldn't do to have the critter git sick on our hands.

"I'll give him roast pork," said Anderson. "No; come to think of it, to-morrow is Friday and all them wild tribes of Borneo is Catholics, ain't they, and wouldn't eat meat?"

So he fixed up a baked pickerel and a lot of fried perch. Next mornin', the wild man come up and acted like he was tryin' to snake out some of the lion's meat when it was thrown in, but the lion had gobbled it all up before he got there. This made old Anderson sure that the wild man would be glad to get the nice fish, but he wasn't. He smashed this basket up like he had done the others, and then he

YELLED LIKE A STEAM ENGINE

and ran around poundin' the wall with his club until the whole town, pretty nearly, had collected outside the buildin', wonderin' what the matter was.

By and by the wild man quit his noise and looked calm, but sorter desperate, just the same. However, old Anderson had begun to hope the trouble was over, when what did the wild man do but walk right up to the lion's cage, unfasten the door, and start to climb in. Anderson didn't wait to see any more, and jumped and run.

"Run!" he yelled to the crowd outside. "Run! run! the lion's eating the wild man."

We all did run. Some of us for the reason Anderson did, which was because we couldn't bear to stand around and listen to the agony of a feller man bein' et up by a wild beast; others because they was scared by Anderson's wild and sudden outbreak and didn't know what they was runnin' for. Seems like we heard a single roar, but we wasn't sure.

Next mornin' Anderson wouldn't let nobody look in and he wouldn't look in himself. He said he wouldn't view or let anybody else view such an awful spectacle as would be seen there. That evening the manager come. He was told all the circumstances from the arrival of the wild man and his goin' crazy, to his committin' suicide by havin' the lion eat him.

"Couldn't shoot himself with his club, couldn't beat himself to death with it. To have the lion eat him was the only way," said Anderson.

"Why didn't you give him raw meat like I said in my letter," asked the manager. "Didn't I tell you he positively wouldn't eat nothin' else?"

"Couldn't read your blamed letter," said Anderson, kinder spunky.

"Well if he's committed suicide like you say he's done, it's because he went hungry four days account of gittin' nothin' he could eat and was druv crazy in consequence."

We all went into the rink, the manager leadin'. Stebbins was standin' in the entry, lookin' stern and reproachful. The manager peeked through the peek hole.

"I opposed the comin' of this demoralizin' circus," said Stebbins in a loud voice. "It has come and it has not been here a week before we have been called upon to behold the most horrible death of a feller human bein'."

The manager threw the big door wide open and walked through and we all looked in. The wild man had et the lion.—"Puck."

A LOVERS' QUARREL.

"Darling Ethel, if I could only make you understand how I love you and how I long for the day when you will be really my own."

"Really and truly, Edgar?"

"Love, can you doubt it? I am straining every nerve, saving every sixpence, to set up a fitting home for my angel."

"How perfectly sweet of you! I am doing what I can too. I have made four cushions and a tea cosey, and ever so many d'oyleys. But, Edgar—"

"Yes, my precious."

"You won't be angry if I say something?"

"Angry—with you! The idea!"

"Well, then—oh, I'm certain you will be vexed!"

"My sweetest, unless you are about to tell me you ceased to love me—"

"Oh, no, not at all. That's all right, dear boy. I was only thinking—mamma was saying—that you spend a good deal of money over cigars and tobacco, and also over your camera. She says if you cared for me as much as you pretend you would not waste so much on your own pleasures and hobbies."

"Really, Ethel, I must say I think your mother takes an unwarrantable—"

"There now—you are angry, and with poor dear mamma too! I believe it must be true what she says—that you have a temper like a volcano. To flame out like that just because I proposed a trifling act of self-sacrifice to you, after all you have said. But I don't care. You can keep your old camera and you can smoke your horrid cigars. I know now that it is them you care for, not me." (Sobs.)

"Now, Ethel, be reasonable—"

"I am reasonable. How dare you say I am unreasonable? It is you who are that—to expect me to take meekly a second place in your affections. Let go my hand. I want to go home to mamma."

"A second place! Why, Ethel—"

"Oh, don't say things after me like that. I hate it! And you know it is true. You give far more time and thought to your camera than you do to me. I wouldn't so much mind it you could take a decent photograph, but you cannot. You always make me out a perfect fright."

"Excuse me, but my photographs are considered extremely faithful. If, in your case they do not turn out things of beauty you can hardly lay the blame on me."

"Thank you, Mr De Slyde. The coarse brutality of your remarks is no doubt an indication of your real character. Thank heaven, I have discovered it in time. Let me inform you, sir, that you may cease your strenuous saving of sixpences as far as I am concerned. Spend them—spend them freely on Havanas and developers, or whatever you call them. As for me I will give my cushions and d'oyleys to the church bazaar. All is over between us."

"Oh, nonsense, Ethel. Don't be ridiculous! Suppose I were to ask you to give up your bicycle—"

"I am not ridiculous. I mean every word I say. From this moment we are strangers, and I would not give up my bike for you or any man."

"Then why require me—"

"That is quite a different thing. You are a man and ought—oOh, mercy, Edgar, there is a bull making straight for us. Whatever shall we do?"

"He is making for you, I imagine. No doubt your scarlet sunshade has attracted him. I shall get over this gate. As a perfect stranger I do not presume to advise you."

"Edgar, stop! Save me, Edgar! You know I didn't mean what I said. Edgar, I'll never be horrid to you again. Oh, that dreadful brute! I never knew before what a lovely thing a five-barred gate is, though I never should have got over without your help. You darling boy, you have saved my life, and if that tiresome man were not staring at us so I would kiss you this minute."

"Then you take back—"

"Now, don't rake up that wretched quarrel all over again, Edgar, dearest. It was just too silly for anything. I do love you, and—there, that aggravating man has gone, so I'll prove it."

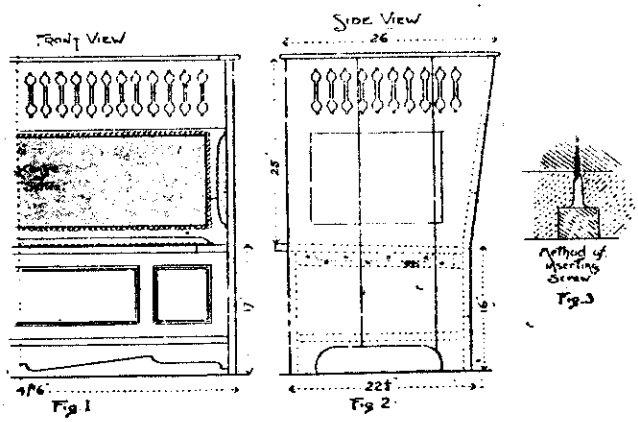
Notre Margot.

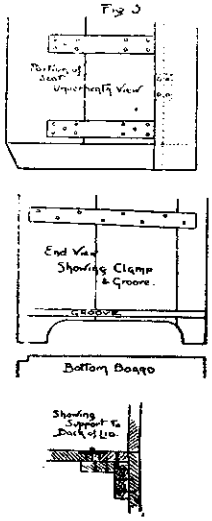
AS SEEN THROUGH WOMAN'S EYES.

HOME MADE FURNITURE.

A HALL SEAT AND HOW TO MAKE IT.

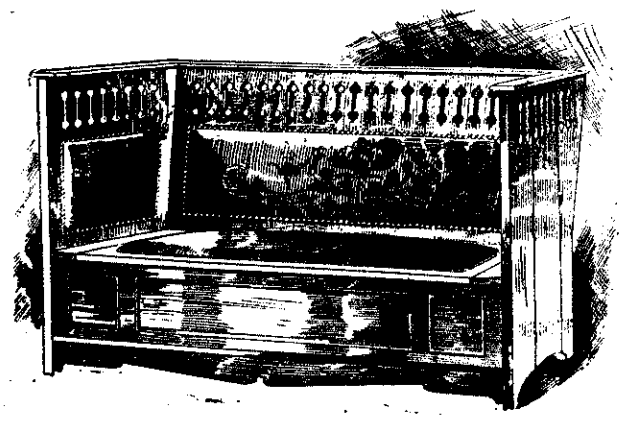
Judging from the number of appreciatory letters which have come to hand during the last week or so, the number of New Zealand women of limited means, who appreciate designs which enable them to obtain uncommon articles of furniture at ridiculously cheap prices is infinite. All the designs published up to date, have proved even more popular than I had hoped, and as the cry is still like Oliver Twist for more, I give this week a design for a seat or settle for a hall or study or dining-room. As will be seen, it is severely simple, and so easily made that even our dear old friend in journalism, "the veriest tyro" of a amateur carpenter should find no difficulty therein. But, if there be no convenient amateur handy, the odd job carpenter of the neighbourhood will easily understand and fix up the carpentry parts, and you yourself can see to the finishing touches, which after all are most important. The material required is not extensive nor expensive. Inch kauri nine inches wide will do admirably, but of course more ornamental woods can be adopted if means permit. Inch stuff will afford ample strength, and about 60ft, 9in. wide, will be needed. Three boards, not less than 7ft. long—to cut into the six lengths required—will be needed for the ends, and, say six, not less than 9ft. long, for the back and front, and the top and bottom of seat. A few small strips of 2in. wood will presently be required for the "clamps" upon which the top of the seat will rest and the "lining" underneath.





Having obtained this material, the first thing to do is to cut it off exactly to the sizes which are here given in this miniature working drawing. The design is so simple that, with these definite measurements, a full-sized drawing is rendered unnecessary. The aim has been, in devising this box settle with back, to relieve the amateur of any dovetail work, glueing, or other complications. Thus the seat rests on the clamps which are shown in Fig. 3. These clamps keep the ends well together. It is suggested that the bottom of the box should be let in a groove made on the inner side of the ends after they are thus clamped and, as shown in Fig. 3, this groove should not come to the end. With a tenon saw and small chisel this groove can be worked without much difficulty.

The cut-through decorations of our settle, though "busy looking," are not formidable. A centre-bit of the desired size and a key-hole saw will execute the cut-through work in the back to perfection, and a bow-saw will readily cut out the shaping of the front bottom board and the ends. The upholstery is also of the crudest kind. It consists of some Madras hides, with just an inch or two of stuffing laid beneath—if a little "curled hair" is not obtainable a layer or two of some old blanket, or rug, would give the necessary bulge and softness—fastened on the surface with brass or copper studs. If, prior to these finishing touches, the wood had been stained a dark "leaf green" and wax polished, the effect of the reddish tint of the hides and the copper studs would be seen at its best. Some fabric, such as tapestry or velvet, could of course, be used, but the hides would be most in keeping with the general sturdiness of the present notion.



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WHAT TO DRINK WHEN IT IS HOT.

The hot weather may come on us suddenly at any time now, and some hints on drinking in hot weather may be of service to "Graphic" readers.

By "drinking" in hot weather we do not mean the taking of beer, wine, or stronger liquors, for there is nothing to discuss in such a question. There is no one competent to speak on this subject, even though he may indulge moderately himself, who does not admit that the human system is better without alcoholic drinks in hot weather. But "intemperance" does not consist alone in indulgence in intoxicating beverages; many a man has died of "intemperance" in eating and drinking who never allowed so much as a glass of cider to pass his lips.

The most dangerous of all drinks in hot weather is ice-cold water; for being without cost and without taste, it is often taken in enormous quantities, whereas if it cost money, seldom more than a single glass would be taken at a time.

Like many other things, ice-water is in itself a blessing, and only as an abused gift becomes a curse. When one is overheated, ice-water taken sipwise is refreshing and cooling, but when swallowed in great draughts it is a deadly thing.

If the temptation to take a "long drink" cannot be resisted, the water must not be cold; even cool spring-water is dangerous so indulged in. The proper way is to rinse the mouth and gargle the throat first with cold water, then take a couple of swallows—not gulps—and so on, alternately gargling and drinking.

The first time this plan is tried, one will be astonished to find how little cold water is needed to quench thirst and refresh the heated body. One glassful used in this way will do more good than three or four taken like a horse.

It must not be understood, however, from anything said above, that the drinking of water in hot weather is injurious. On the contrary, large quantities should be taken, two quarts or more a day, but it should be taken a little at a time, and not too cold. The body is constantly throwing off water in the form of perspiration, and water must be supplied to replace the loss.

We have spoken only of water, because this is the basis of all cooling drinks, and because we cannot drink quarts of lemonade or any other sweetened and flavoured beverage without causing the stomach to rebel, but when taken in moderation, soda-water, ginger ale, and the like, are harmless.

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LOUNGING COMFORTS.

Among the requisites for summer outings are big, fluffy, sensible out-door pillows and cushions with strong washable covers. These are made for real use, and not for show, and whether the home be surrounded by shady hammock-hung trees and roomy porches, or whether the holiday maker must seek his pleasure in the woods or by the seashore, he is sure to find some place where cushions will make his repose stil more inviting. The first consideration of these lounging comforts is their durability. Daily use soon soils them, and the material must, therefore, be washable. A pretty hammock pillow not only adds additional comfort, but gives a touch of colour that is refreshing. The best materials are Turkey-red of the best quality, and blue and grey linen.

An effective hammock pillow had a cover of Turkey red stamped in star-fish pattern, and outlined in white working cotton. On the reverse side were the owner's initials worked in white, and the pillow was piped with white braid. Common grey towelling, with a red stripe on each side, made a cover for a second pillow. At each side of the stripe was worked a row of cat-stitching in red cotton, and on the upper side of the pillow, also in red, were the words, "Sweet be thy dreams." Another pillow was of buff linen, worked in brown washing silks, and a fourth was of blue linen, outlined with a star and crescent pattern in white cotton.

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HARDENING THE CONSTITUTION.

Men talk about "hardening the constitution," and with that view expose themselves to summer's sun and winter's wind, to strain and other efforts, and many unnecessary hardships. To the same end ill-informed mothers souse their little infants in cold water day by day, their skin and flesh and bodies steadily growing rougher and thinner, and weaker, until slow fever, or water on the brain, or consumption of the bowels, carries them to the grave; and then they administer to themselves the semi-comfort and rather questionable consolation of its being a mysterious dispensation of Providence, when, in fact, Providence had nothing to do with it. Providence works no miracle to counteract our follies. The best way we know of hardening the constitution is to take good care of it, for it is no more improved by harsh treatment than a fine garment or new hat is made better by being banged about.

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To remove pimples take regular exercise and the daily sponge bath. Then eat neither rich nor greasy food, and do all that is necessary to make the blood good and pure. It is wise, at the same time, to bathe the face with some harmless healing lotion. Listerine, in three times as much boiled water, is very soothing. After sponging on the face quite often for a few days, apply eau de cologne in which is a pinch of borax. These two washes act together very nicely. Eat plenty of fruit, particularly lemons, oranges, figs, and grapes.

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SICK HEADACHE.

The periodical recurrence of sick headache with many persons is a grievous affliction. Those who suffer from it should correct every habit and avoid all indiscretions which they know are likely to be followed by an attack. They should also overcome every derangement of the system which exists, if possible, and strengthen every part and function of the same. In fact, they should treat at first, not the head and its aches, but endeavour to build up the general health. In the attempt to do so they must not indiscriminately dose themselves with drugs, but rather depend upon pure air, exercise, sufficient sleep, good, wholesome food, and other measures of like character. One of the greatest essentials in treatment will be a careful selection of diet and a rigid restriction to those articles of food which, in their experience, have proved the least burdensome to their digestive organs.

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VALUABLE TOILET HINTS.

However clear a skin may be, if it is not even in texture it cannot be wholly pleasing. We may take a hint towards making it so from those who rear thoroughbreds for the stables. These beauties of the four-footed world have skins as supple, smooth, and shining as satin of price. They gain such by constant friction and nerve stimulus. The brush does the work needed by a hairy coat, but the finish is given with flannels and the palm of the hand.

A bath towel plied with vigour night and morning on the body is the best complexion brush. The silk face cloth has a peculiar effect. Used dry, with little friction, it seems to carry with it every particle of dust, oiliness, and cast-off matter from the skin, leaving the bloom of marble fresh from the finishing tool. A half-minute's rub every hour renews the freshness, like that left by skilful powdering. And what woman does not thrill at the charming triumph of being accused of powdering, when a rub of her cheek on a black sleeve proves the utter groundlessness of the charge?

The scented silk cloth in the pocket, instead of the powder-puff, keeps

the complexion in repair, rubs out the wrinkles, trains the eye-brows flat, and seems to reduce the pile of down on the cheeks. Diet has everything to do with retaining the effect, for water and silken friction may refine the skin for a time, but the permanent cure must be internal.

CONDITION OF CHILD'S TONGUE.

One of the points to be considered very carefully, both in health and disease, is the condition of the child's tongue. In spite of the fact that a baby may acquire the habit of putting out its tongue unnecessarily when the mother would have it look its best, it is wise to teach it, at as early a period as possible, how to put the tongue out, and to open its mouth so as to expose the whole truth.

Children are mimics, and the mother who has taken singing lessons and learned to curve the tongue down, thus exposing the throat to its fullest extent, would do well to make a game with her children, encouraging them to such imitation. If she will open her mouth and make the sound a-a-h—, letting the tongue form a curve in the lower part of the mouth, her baby will copy it, and the chances for required applications to the throat, in case of diphtheria and other maladies, will be greater. Apropos of this, another nursery game, which is valuable in its far-reaching possibilities, is the putting on to the child of a rubber bib and teaching it to gargle. Have some sugar and water, and let the little one, in its imitative performances, even spill a great deal and swallow some. If the result is accomplished and the child learns to gargle, there will be gained a better opportunity for curative measures in case of simple or malignant throat maladies.

HOUSEWIVES' HELPS.

To test the freshness of an egg, drop it in cold water. If it is fresh it will sink, if stale it will float.

Never trim a lamp wick with scissors. It is almost impossible to cut it clean and straight. Just rub the burned part off with an old cloth.

To make a carpet look bright that has lost its colour, sponge it off well with strong soap suds in which a little turpentine has been poured.

When a nutmeg is old it has no oil. If you are in doubt about its being good, pierce the nutmeg with a needle. If good, oil will immediately spread round the puncture.

If you use a wooden pail about your household and it begins to shrink and leak, fill it with water and then stand it in a tub filled with water. This will swell the wood so it will leak no more.

PREVENTING PRICKLY HEAT.

The mother whose children suffer in hot weather from prickly heat will be glad to know that if she will put baking soda into the water in which her children are bathed she may do much toward preventing the arrival of the irritating malady. She should not wait until the rash appears before she adopts this simple means to stop its progress, but may all through the summer have soda added to the little ones' bath water. In one family where this precaution was taken none of the children was troubled with prickly heat during the entire season, although every preceding year the small boys and girls had been liberally peppered with the distressing eruption.

A NEW OCCUPATION FOR WOMEN.

The man's wife was in the country, and she had written to him ask ng him to buy her some stockings, telling him the size, style, and price to pay. The man reached the shop where his wife had told him this certain kind of stocking was to be found. His natural courtesy obliged to him to hold one of the doors open for several minutes while a crowd of women passed in and out, taking the act of courtesy as a matter of fact. Finally he became provoked and tired and abruptly gave up his place as door-keeper.

He got to the stocking counter at last and sank upon a vacant stool. No one appeared to notice him and no one came to wait upon him. He did not seem to mind much at first, and just sat there looking around, and, to his way of thinking, getting braver and bolder every moment. Women came and women went; they told what they wanted, made their selection or merely looked over the stock and went away, and still he sat there and no one came near him. By this time he had quite regained his presence of mind, and, getting tired of sitting there unnoticed, got up sufficient courage to ask the floor walker to get some one to wait upon him.

A voice saying, "What is it you wish, sir?" caused him to look up quickly, and there stood a young and pretty girl, smilingly awaiting his reply.

He mustered up courage enough to say:—

"Ladies' stockings."

"What colour and what size, please?"

Then he began to fumble in his pockets for the letter telling the size, colour and style, but that letter was nowhere to be found. He grew hot and then cold, his face got red, he knocked his umbrella down and it fell with a crash. As he stooped to pick it up he dropped his hat, and, finally, was so mixed up and confused and by this time so irritated at the pretty, smiling girl, who was so cool, calm and collected, that he blurted out:—

"Oh, show me your very latest styles in No. 10."

She laid out a selection for him to choose from which almost blinded him. They were striped and dotted and open worked, and of every imaginable and unimaginable fancy under the sun.

He made his selection at last, purchasing four pairs of brilliantly coloured hose at about three times the price his wife had told him, and left the shop hugging his precious bundle, feeling himself a hero in the strife.

He stopped at the post office and sent his bundle away, and then, with the conscientious dignity of a man who has done his duty, no matter how disagreeable it was, he went home.

In a day or two he received a letter from his wife, and a few hours afterward the stockings by post. His wife said:—

"You know that I wear size 8½. Those stockings are in the most horrible taste. I am sending them back to you. I know there was a pretty girl behind the counter, and she was guying you by palming off all the old stock she had. Get those stockings exchanged at once and send them to me."

In despair he went to see his chum and persuaded the chum's wife to make the exchange for him. Now he goes around and declares that any woman who will purchase the things wanted by men's wives while they are out of town could make a fortune.

AS IN A LOOKING GLASS.

Do not believe everything you see in the looking glass. The reflection in the mirror does not portray one's likeness with absolute accuracy. The hair is wrong in tone, the eyes are not correct in colour, and complexions are hopelessly libelled by this specious household deceiver. It is certain that if the looking glass told the truth the sales of various complexion washes would greatly decrease, for any fair skin looks grey and pallid in a glass, and as a result many women ruin their splendid complexions by trying to improve them because they look unsatisfactory in the mirror.

You may be certain that however plain your face seems, it is not so plain as it appears in the tell-tale mirror. Secondly, you cannot assume your natural expression while peering in a looking glass.

The eye must be in a certain position before you can see at all, and the eye, so far as expression is concerned, governs the face. The consequence is that you can see only one of your expressions in the glass, and that one of tentative examination.

AMIABILITY RECIPES.

Don't find fault.
Don't believe all the evil you hear.
Don't be rude to your inferiors.
Don't repeat gossip.
Don't underrate anything because you don't possess it.
Don't do about untidily dressed on the plea that anything does for home wear.
Don't contradict people, even if you are sure you are right.

A HINT ABOUT CANDLES.

There are many sojourners in country cottages at the present time who are compelled to do without the convenience of gas, and to use candles in their bedrooms. As everyone knows, the gutterings and drippings of a candle are trying to the temper, and there is the ruin that is often inflicted upon carpets and garments. An authority declares that the dripping tendency may be greatly lessened if the candles are, during the daylight hours, kept in the ice-box. They will burn twice as long, and drip one quarter as much if they are kept on ice until such time as they are needed for immediate use.

BOOTS AND SHOES.

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THEM.

So-called cheap boots and shoes are not, as a rule, worth the buying. They are generally badly-cut and badly-made, and are dear at any price.

Never buy new boots in the morning. After the night's rest, the feet are smaller than later in the day, and shoes that would be comfortable then may be decidedly tight when your feet have widened through standing on them.

Ready-made shoes fit some feet, but if they do not fit yours don't be persuaded to buy them. Corns, bunions, and tender feet are the results of uncomfortable boots and shoes. A well-fitting boot, too, makes the foot look smaller, just as a well-fitting glove apparently decreases the size of the hand.

Now that satisfactory boot-trees can be bought for as little as 1/8 a pair, everyone ought to afford them. Their

cost is well repaid by the improved appearance of the boots and shoes that are always placed on them immediately after wearing. Wrinkles are smoothed out, the proper shape kept, and the cleaning process is much easier.

If possible, buy boots and shoes three months before you want to wear them. To make the soles more durable, pour some castor-oil into a plate, stand the soles in this, and leave for three days. The oil must not be deep enough to touch the leather. Then wipe the soles with a cloth, rub a little of the oil well into the leather, and put the boots away till you need them, airing and cleaning them occasionally.

Whilst boots are fairly new, orange-juice is an excellent polish. Rub it on, let dry in, and rub with a soft duster till a brilliant polish is obtained. Soles and heels must be blacked as usual.

When glace kid begins to get shabby skimmilk and good black ink, mixed in equal proportions, is a good reviver. Apply it with a sponge, let nearly dry, and polish with a soft shining-brush.

Patent leather should be cleaned with milk or a little sweet-oil well rubbed in. Never wipe this leather with a cloth dipped in water. Water makes the leather look dull. Clean soles and heels with blacking.

Stains on brown shoes can be removed by rubbing the spots with methylated spirit. Polish afterwards with the following cream: One ounce of muriatic acid, half an ounce of alum, half an ounce of spirits of lavender, half an ounce of gum-arabic, and a pint of some skim milk, or more if it is too thick.

If your boots get very wet, fill them with dry bran, which has been slightly heated in the oven; lace or button them up, and hang in a warm, airy place to dry, but not near a fire. The bran absorbs the moisture, and leaves the leather soft and pliable.

When dry rub a little castor-oil well in, leave till next day, and clean as usual. The same bran can be used many times.

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FAMILY NAMES.

Just now there seems to be a fashionable craze to give the same Christian name to all the sons in a family, not as an only name, but always as the first, and then to add a second name that the child shall be called by, as to have one name answer for half-a-dozen sons would be a little awkward, to say the least. This, of course, ensures the family name being carried on, even if death should be busy with the children. The Queen, of course, has always given the names of Albert and Victoria to all connected with her, and the Dukes of Beaufort follow this rule very rigidly.

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UMBRELLAS AND PARASOLS.

How fashions change! Not long ago it was considered vulgar to have anything but a plain handle to your parasol, umbrella, or en-tout-cas. To be sure, it might be of gold or silver, or some expensive wood; but simplicity was the correct thing. At the present moment, the more weird and uncanny-looking a beast we can mount on our handles the better—uncouth creatures that grin and smirk at you, and when possible are made of diamonds. Flowers are also the fashion, and poppies, roses, and carnations disport themselves gaily on all hands, and really are charmingly pretty.

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WHITE OSTRICH PLUMES.

TO CLEAN THEM, FOLLOW THIS RULE.

White ostrich plumes are very smart this summer. But they soil, alas! how rapidly. To clean them, dissolve four ounces of pure white soap cut into portions in four pints of hot water, placed in a large basin. Beat up the water with the hands or a small whisk until a lather is obtained, and into this dip the feathers. Wash one at a time and rub it gently up and down with the hand under water; then dip it instantly in clean, very hot water, and get someone to shake the feather in the sun while the others are washed in a similar manner. When washed and dry, procure a blunt knife, or a smooth strip of whalebone, and curl the feathers by taking just a few strands of feather at a time, and, beginning near the stem, curl them upon the knife between the fingers.

You must not endeavour to accomplish a crisp twizzling curl, for such are very much out of vogue. The fronds or strands are made to curve wider, gracefully and evenly, but not with a light curl at all.

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MOTH-MONTHS.

HINTS TO KEEP YOUR GARMENTS.

Now is the opportunity of the clothes moth, that most destructive of household pests. The warm damp evenings of the early summer, when furs and woollens, though little used, are still kept out in case of possible need, are those in which it finds its greatest opportunities and works its most appalling mischief—mischief often not discovered until months later, when the cherished garment is found to be a total wreck.

Extreme care should be taken to prevent the moth from laying her eggs in your furs. Only beating them and your heavy clothes will keep the pests away. Therefore, when you give your furs a cursory examination and lay them away until autumn, alas and a-lack-a-day! when the autumn comes the fur flies, and Ichabod is written above your beautiful wrap. So if you wish to escape such catastrophe be careful. Pounds of tar and camphor will not preserve your garments if the moth eggs have already been deposited when they are laid away. Practical experience proves that while the moth objects to strong odours of any kind, the worm which does the mischief has apparently no olfactory organs and will do its deadly work in the midst of tar and camphor galore. Expose all winter garments to a hot sun and beat them and shake them with energy. If there are no moths in the garments when laid away, and you wrap them securely in newspapers (moths, like other evil-doers, object to printer's ink), you may feel reasonably secure that they are safe. The thing is to make certain that no moths are in them and that none can get at them.

SAVED BY HIS FRIEND.

Mr Anders Bergerson has had an experience which, to use his own words, "will suffice for a lifetime." Mr Bergerson is a shearer, and in the "off" season resides at Makaretu. "You must know," he told our reporter, 'that shearers see a good deal of life—travelling from one shed to another during the season, they cover a good deal of country. I remember well the good turn a friend did for me when I had what I might term 'the experience of my life.' It was whilst sheering in October, '97, after a long spell of wet weather, that I was seized with terrible pains in the hip down the back of the thigh, under the knee and right down to the ankle. It was just like hot needles boring through me, and I was told it was sciatica. No doubt, the attack was the result of exposure to the wet. Then a dull, aching pain came in my back, a symptom, I believe, of kidney disease, and I could never obtain a good night's rest. For a year this went on, and the agony I suffered was terrible. I tried everything I could think of, including many advertised remedies, but without avail. Then a friend suggested that I should try Dr. Williams' pink pills. My sleep improved before I had finished the first box, and the pains in my limbs and back gradually lessened. I continued with Dr. Williams' pink pills, which soon effected a complete and permanent cure. My back is straight and strong now. I can use my limbs freely and without pain. I eat and sleep well. For disorders of the blood and nerves, Dr. Williams' pink pills are, in my opinion, unrivalled." This is the universal verdict, for Dr. Williams' pink pills have cured, in all parts of the world, over sixteen thousand cases of sciatica, neuralgia, rheumatism, bronchitis, lung and chest disorders, consumption, liver and kidney troubles, St. Vitus' dance, scrofula, eczema, paralysis, locomotor ataxia, and nervous disorders. The genuine have the full name, Dr. Williams' pink pills for pale people, printed in red ink on white paper. Sold by chemists and storekeepers and by the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Wellington, N.Z. Price, three shillings per box, six boxes sixteen and sixpence, post free. No sufferer should hesitate to try the remedy which has brought brightness and health to thousands of homes all over the world.

THE WORLD OF FASHION.

By MARGUERITE

I think most people will agree that the chief characteristic of the dress of 1899 has been its grace and simplicity, and frocks have never been more beautiful than they are to-day. But, alas, we are not all possessed of the slim willowy figure which seems to be the style of the fashionable woman of the present day, and in our endeavour to look beautiful are apt to go to extremes, and just now it is dangerous to exaggerate the fashions. A stout woman should be careful to have her skirt cut so that it will flare out well at the bottom, otherwise it may transform its wearer into a perfect caricature. Everything lies in the cut and sweep of the skirt. Then the fashion of wearing a light skirt with a blouse of a darker shade is a trying one for stout women, although nothing looks prettier on a slender figure. The light skirt seems to increase the size of the hips, as you may prove for yourself by putting on a white pique skirt and a pink silk blouse. A yoke of black lace laid round the hips of the white skirt decreases the size of the hips greatly, and is to be advised. A yoke of black lace looks pretty worn over both the blouse and skirt of a white dress.

Three useful styles are to be with us again this summer—the coat and skirt, blouse and Eton. They appear season after season, and are always welcomed, for in spite of all that has been said about our fickleness we know when a fashion is becoming and useful. The coats and skirts are endless in variety and style, and for the seaside or holidays nothing else seems to be so much worn. So also are the new Etons, while as for blouses—their name is legion. A new colour this season is oeuf de cane, a lovely shade of blue, and everything is being dyed this bluish tinge; poppy red, fuchsia red, and all shades of brown are also fashionable. Many of the new muslins are to be seen in these various shades of brown. Scarves are much fancied, and some of the most fashionable are of black Chantilly lace, although many are made of piece lace or spotted net. Worn with light muslin dresses they look very smart, and give a finishing touch to a chic toilette.

A FOULARD GOWN.

Foulards are to be much in vogue this summer, being so cool and light, yet so much more serviceable than muslin, which has no wear in it at all. The colourings too are varied and fresh looking. A very modish toilette of dark blue and white silk foulard is shown in this figure. The skirt is made with a pointed tunic edged with a flounce of soft white lace. The bodice is slightly pouched, and round the shoulders is worn a fichu of the same soft white lace, which cascades down the front to just below the waist. The wrists are finished by white lace ruffles.

Apropos of wrists, the cuffs of the up-to-date gown still effect the mediæval style coming to the knuckles after shaping closely into the wrist. This mode does much to reduce the apparent size of the hand, and is a boon where bony or ugly wrists are a source of disquiet.

The hat with strings is much in evidence just now, which said strings may be either of ribbon, lace, tulle, chiffon narrow or even bebe ribbon velvet.

TWO SMART HATS.

I saw such a pretty hat of burnt straw the other day, trimmed with turquoise-blue ribbon. This was greatly turned down at the back, following the present fashion, to meet the low-dressed hair, a broad bow across the front and another across the back. Nearly all the hats bend down a good deal in front, a great deal at the back, and upwards slightly at the sides. Many bear tulle strings, and quite rarely is the straight trimmed hat of yesteryear seen now on smart folk. The two hats of which I give you a drawing illustrate two styles of the moment. The first one, more of a toque for breezy days, is a magpie combination of black and white straw. It is trimmed with stiff black quills, and a bunch of white roses held by a strass buckle. The second hat is of the new corn-coloured straw, with trimmings of black velvet and white marguerites; the strings are of white muslin. And writing of hats reminds me of the newest kind of black hats. These are of very coarse straw, and merely trimmed with black glace silk and a couple of black ostrich feathers, but they are not really half so pretty as those of black chip, lined with a ruffling of black tulle, and a big black tulle choux and feathers as trimming.

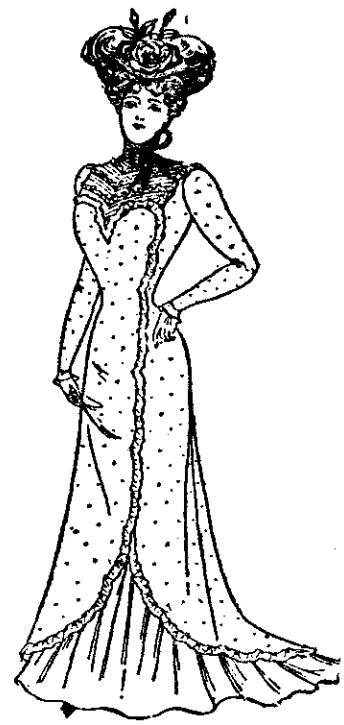
A TRIO OF MAGPIE HATS.

I had three ideas in magpie hats destined for Goodwood sketched for you. At the left hand side there was a creamy white straw with a white millinery bird tucked beneath the brim at one side, cream roses and black velvet buckled with steel finishing the graceful picture.

For the centre chapeau lilies of the valley were relied upon, of course, with their own green leaves, mingled with black velvet ribbon twisted into a couple of choux, and the brim of the hat was adorned with a fall of lace, while white tulle strings brought from the back were to be tied beneath the left ear.

White tulle stitched in tiny puckers composes the charmingly light weight hat that remains to be described. The back turned up abruptly was finished with black velvet ribbon tied in a bow to rest on the wearer's fair hair.

There was another bow of black velvet ribbon at the other end of the chapeau, the ends of which are seen to be just appearing above bunches of white hydrangea, topped with a bushy Paradise plume of pure cool white.



PRINCESS DRESS IN GRASS LAWN.

This figure is an illustration of an embroidered grass lawn dress in Princess shape, trimmed with grass green ruching and opening over an underskirt of green mousseline. The top of the corsage is of alternate rows of ecru insertion and green ruching. White serge is another standby; it comes in for most occasions, is invaluable for river wear and for tennis, and looks nice for walking. White is much worn in London at present, and Londoners seem to be realising the fact that it is not really extravagant wear. The city dame often errs quite as much as her country sister in her sartorial judgment. Extremes of fashion, flimsy gauzes and laces, and trains are as out of place amongst rural surroundings as uncompromisingly severe suits are in London. Nothing is in worse taste than to take down a lot of half worn, soiled finery to finish off whilst out of town. Such an occasion should be studied and catered for as well as any other, and whilst for the country girl there is an excuse, for the townswoman there is none; she has suitable models before her always in the shops, and she has, or ought to have, a more highly developed sense of the rigorous conventionalities of dress. It does not involve so much expense as other outfits. Pique, holland, zephyrs, tussore, and foulards for lighter wear, tweeds and serges for rougher use, and a simple dinner frock and tea gown for occasional evening wear—I say occasional, for very often a dressy blouse suffices when the evenings are long, and the house is exchanged for the open air as soon as the meal is over.

Amongst the many channels for reviving lace, the broad lace collar and cuffs of the Stuart days comes as a welcome one. This revival will probably not last very long for adult wear, as imitations will probably soon grace the shoulders of the East End belle at six three-farthings, and the Lady Vere de Vere will speedily cast her priceless square of old point or Honiton at once aside. It is, however,

A SUMMER FROCK.

a particularly pretty mode for children, and with them is likely to last longer, as exclusiveness is not demanded in their case so severely. A lace set of this kind looks very pretty and dressy over a simply made little frock such as shown in the figure. This is of periwinkle blue foulard, gathered fully into a round yoke collar, with full loose sleeves, and the hem finished by a row of tiny tucks, which form the sole ornamentation beyond the lace collar and cuffs aforesaid.

One of the prettiest dresses of the season is a French design of cerise and white check foulard, the skirt of which is very tight round the figure, like a "fourreau." The fulness begins about half way down and increases to the bottom. In front the material is

FOULARD DRESS TRIMMED WITH LACE.

cut on the cross, and forms a seam down the centre of the apron. The skirt is trimmed with two rows of broad Chantilly insertion. The uppermost starts from the waist, runs about half way down and turns round in a hoop behind. The second is about twenty centimetres below it. It forms a chevron in front and a hop behind. Both rows of insertion have scalloped edges, and are bordered with narrow black velvet. The lower part of the skirt is plain. The corsage is a blouse, slightly gathered at the waist. It is cut low and square both in front and behind, over a yoke of cerise taffetas made in small pleats. Round the edges of the decollette are two rows of black lace insertion, separated by six rows of narrow black velvet in undulations. The neck trimming is of cerise taffetas, pleated like the yoke.

At the fall of the right shoulder is a rosette of the same material with pointed ends. The waistband, also of cerise taffetas, is draped and fastened on the left side beneath a rosette with two double pointed ends. The sleeves are slightly puffed at the shoulders, and tight down to the wrists. They are ornamented with five hoops of Chantilly insertion, each embroidered on both sides with narrow black velvet. The hat which completes the costume is of black straw, turned up "en bataille" in front, and ornamented with a pair of Walkyrie wings, between which is a large rosette of English application lace, fixed to the hat by a strass buckle.

A TRIP TO PARIS.

WHAT THE HUB OF THE FASHIONABLE WORLD IS DOING THIS SEASON.

What gay visions a toilette, a chapeau, even a pair of gloves fresh from Paris conjure before the average feminine eye! Year by year this sensation becomes more of an extravagance, entailing an unnecessary journey to Paris or the trouble of sending thither—trouble that really need never have been taken.

There is nothing startling in this fact. It merely means that, owing to the enterprise of our shopkeeprs and the facilities of steam and post, we can get in London things fresh and hot from Paris, or as new and beautiful as those Paris has.

We have but to look out for good establishments, and then we may rest assured that we can buy therefrom feminine furbelows that are quite as up to date as those the capital of France can give us. Many French houses actually synchronise with their branch establishments in London.

At one emporium near Piccadilly they receive a consignment of fresh hats every day from Paris, so that the

NEWEST OF THE NEW

millinery is obtainable there each twenty-four hours. Then there are expeditions made by all the big West-end shopkeepers, not once a month, as used to be the case, but on an average every week, to Paris.

A favourite day to spend there is Saturday, and the return is made in time for business on Monday, no precious hours being lost thereby to the London trade. To their honour and glory be it said that the "lady" modistes and milliners who startled society by setting up shop some ten or fifteen years ago matured this practice.

One of them used to bring over a whole workroom full of fitters, cutters, finishers from her branch establishment in Paris, keeping them in London a month and then transferring them back to Paris for a month. She thereby secured constantly fresh ideas for her business in London, which was in consequence a highly flourishing concern.

But when all is said and done, it is enjoyable to run over to Paris, see the newest models on their native heath, and make one's purchases. A toilette forms the most delightful excuse for a trip across the Channel, and what London woman does not enjoy such an occasion? It is a real

TONIC TO SOCIETY'S SLAVE.

Let us imagine, then, that we have travelled to Paris, and that we are revelling in the newest and brightest ideas procurable for our embellishment during the season now about to begin in good earnest. We are to see, and have sketched, the prettiest models imaginable.

The drawing shown above represents two gowns, which have just been made by a very smart house to be worn on the first fine day at the races. The figure wears pale grey crepe de chine gathered in tiny horizontal fashion, and an overdress of cream coloured lace, through which narrow black velvet ribbon is passed en coulisse.

To thread velvet through and through lace motifs will be one of the leading trademarks of good dressmaking this season.

Note, too, how subtle the drapery question is becoming. It is an art to devise and execute some new way of applying this mode of embellishment. The other is a princess shape gown of pale grey cloth, with a trimming of silver buttons, and a narrow edging of black and white taffetas, and the gown fastens under the join of the white and grey cloth.

SKETCHED ON THE BOIS.

HOW TO LOOK COOL.

If you come in after a long round of shopping and receive a sudden summons to the drawing-room to meet some unexpected guest, do not be dismayed at the crimson face which meets your eye as you stand before your dressing-table mirror. Likewise do not seek a remedy in the bath-room. Many women think the only way to cool off is to bathe the face lavishly in cold water. This is a great mistake, and, with a thin skin, will only intensify the colour.

Dash the water on throat and neck as freely as you choose, particularly at the back of the neck; but if the face is bathed at all, let it be done sparingly; then sponge it with Florida water, and, lastly, apply a generous coating of rice-powder. You will look ghastly, but let the powder remain while you add the few necessary touches to your toilet. Then, just as you are to descend, dust off all superfluous powder lightly, and you will welcome your guest fresh and cool, not only in appearance, but in reality.

PRETTY WOMEN AT BREAKFAST.

A woman who looks pretty at breakfast is pretty without doubt. It is one thing to be charming at a ball in the daintiest of draperies, with "touching up" of all sorts, and under the gaslight, but quite another thing to be pretty in a cotton blouse, with the morning sun full in the room, and all the homely accessories of daily life by way of background. There are plenty of girls who are pretty on the seashore, in big shade hats; on horseback, in a habit; but the family breakfast-table is the test. Yes, it is the test, not only for beauty, but for better things. If the smiles are bright and the speech soft, the movements gentle and the temper sweet, then you may rely upon the disposition under almost any circumstances.

I should advise any man who had fallen in love, and did not quite know whether he had done wisely, to get "her" father to ask him to breakfast, and so decide the matter.

A PROPOSAL INDEED.

Adolphus Hunt: Don't you think it would be a noble thing for you to do with your wealth to establish a home for the feeble-minded?

Miss Rox: Oh, Mr Hunt, this is so sudden!

CHILDREN'S PAGE

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 2oz, 1d; not exceeding 4oz, 1d; for every additional 2oz or fractional part thereof, 1d. It is well for correspondence to be marked 'Press Manuscript only.'

Please note, dear cousins, that all letters addressed to Cousin Kate must now bear the words 'Press Manuscript only. If so marked, and the flap turned in, and not overweight, they will come for a ½d stamp in Auckland, but a 1d from every other place.

THE 'GRAPHIC' COUSINS' COT FUND.

This fund is for the purpose of maintaining a poor, sick child in the Auckland Hospital, and is contributed to by the 'Graphic' cousins—readers of the children's page. The cot has been already bought by their kind collection of money, and now £25 a year is needed to pay for the nursing, food and medical attendance of the child in it. Any contributions will be gladly received by Cousin Kate, care of the Lady Editor, 'New Zealand Graphic,' Shortland street, or collecting cards will be sent on application.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL "GRAPHIC" COUSINS.

A NEW COMPETITION.

My Dear Cousins, — I want to talk to you — especially my girl cousins—very seriously about the new Competition which is now open—the Competition for the Best Dressed Doll sent me. I want you to dress these dolls for the children in the Hospital and Orphan Homes, and the children of people so poor that they never get a Chrishtmas present. Now read over carefully the conditions and try and observe the rules strictly.

THE PRIZES.

First prize, half a sovereign.
Second prize, five shillings.
Four other prizes of half-a-crown each.

CONDITIONS.

The
DOLLS WILL BE PROVIDED
free until further notice. Any cousin who wants to dress a doll has only to write to me or call at the "Graphic" Office; but,

AND THIS IS IMPORTANT,

they must bring or send with their own letter one from either their parents or guardians or teacher stating that they will see that the doll is returned in good order directly it is finished. Remember, the dolls are for other children's presents and not for you to play with.

You may dress the doll in any way you like, as a boy or girl, or baby, or sailor, or soldier—any way you like whatever—but you must make the clothes yourself, though you may have them cut out for you. They must all "put on and take off."

The Competition will remain open until further notice.

The dolls are now ready and may be obtained by any cousin sending in a request as I have explained.

I do hope, dear cousins, you will enter into this competition with spirit. For very little trouble you can in this way give a vast amount of pleasure to others. And that is always well worth doing, is it not?

COUSIN KATE.

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Dear Cousin Kate,—Many thanks for the badge and collecting card, which I received safely. I received the doll when I went to "Graphic" office for it, and now I have got it I will do my best to make it look as nice as I can. My cat had six kittens, but five were drowned, and I lost the other. There were three grey ones, two black ones, and one black and white one.—I remain, Cousin Charlotte.

[Your letter on the pretty paper has just arrived, and I am going to try and get it in this week's "Graphic," though it is rather late, so you must not expect a long answer. Very likely your cat has hidden the little kitty you think is lost. They often do that when some of their kittens have been drowned. I hope it will come back again, as kittens are so nice to play with and so pretty.—Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—I am very sorry to say that I have not written to you for a long time, but I hope that you will forgive me, because I have been very busy with my lessons, as I passed my last examination. I would very much like you to send me a doll to dress, and I will dress it very nicely. I am going to the Elsthorpe School now, and I like the teacher very much indeed. We are getting lovely weather now. There are lovely ferns in the bush, and we have got such a lot of lovely flowers in the garden; there are beautiful stalks, jonquils, forget-me-not and cowslips, and many others. That is all I've got to tell you.—I remain, your loving cousin, Florrie Murphy, Oero.

[Dear Cousin Florrie,—There is nothing to forgive you for. Of course, if you have been extra busy with your lessons I could not for a moment expect a letter. But I am glad to get one now, and hope you will often remember me when you have a few spare moments. I will send you a doll this week. I am glad you are fond of ferns and flowers, because so am I, and one likes one's friends to be fond of the same things, I think, don't you. My garden is rather blown about by the wind, but I hope it will get right soon now, and that I shall have plenty of flowers.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I am writing to ask you to send me a doll to dress. I do not get very much time, as I am busy at school now—the work is harder because the worst examinations come at the end of the year. All the same, I should like to make a child happy, so I will try and dress a doll. As it is my bed-time, I must say good-bye.—From Cousin Phoebe, Wellington.

[Dear Cousin Phoebe,—You are a very kind and thoughtful little cousin to offer to dress a doll when you are so busy. I will send one early this week, and you will get it almost as soon as the "Graphic," I expect. Did you go and see the departure of the Contingent? I would so like to have been there.—Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—I am staying with my Auntie in Hamilton for about a month. I have a ride on my cousin Jack's pony every morning and evening; it is lovely. He also has a dog named Rosie, and dear little pups. I go down to the Lover's Walk nearly every day, and read or sew, at the end of it there is a little spring flowing into the river. It is lovely water to drink. My Auntie's house is quite close to the river, and we can watch the trains going across the bridge. I am going to the Show with my Auntie and cousins on Thursday. My two cousins went up for examination last week, and they both passed; one is in the Fifth, and the other in the Seventh, and have got a week's holiday. I have seen by the "Graphic" that you are getting a lot of new cousins. With love to all the cousins and yourself. Good-bye.—I remain, your loving cousin, Clare.

[Dear Cousin Clare,—What a splendid time you are having up with your Auntie at Hamilton. It makes one quite envy those rides on the pony and the walks down by the river. I know how pretty it is, for I have been

JUMBO'S EXTREMITY IS JACKO'S OPPORTUNITY. ASSISTED BY THE TORTOISE HE EXTRACTS A THORN FROM JUMBO'S FOOT.

1. Jumbo in trouble. 2. An idea strikes Jacko. 3. Because the tortoise is so slow, Jacko carries him to the rescue. 4. They get to work. 5. The offending thorn comes out. 6. To the joy of all parties concerned.

to Hamilton, though not for some time. Why do you not persuade your cousins to become "Graphic" cousins as well. I am sure they must be nice, unselfish and thoughtful children, for they seem to be making your holiday so pleasant. I wonder if you like watching trains as much as I used to do, and, in fact, do still. It used to be one of my greatest pleasures when I was about ten years old to sit on a bank near our house and see the trains rush by, and make up stories to myself about them, and where all the people were going. My brothers used to put pennies on the line to be flattened out by the train. I often wonder we were all of us not killed when doing this, for it was very dangerous, besides being very naughty. Your cousins seem to be very clever, having passed their examinations so well.—Your affectionate cousin, Kate.}

WILLIE'S WISH.

A STORY ABOUT A LITTLE BOY WHO LONGED TO BE A MAN.

"Willie, I will not allow you to climb that wall; you will break your neck," said Mrs Walters to her little seven-year-old son.

Willie came down, looking very disgusted.

"It is a shame," he muttered to himself. "I can't do anything — I can't throw stones, I can't swim my boat in the cistern, I can't paint the old cat white, 'cos she's so dirty! It's all horrid, and I wish—I wish I was a man!" And Willie sat down on the garden-seat and sulked.

"SO YOU WANT TO BE A MAN, DO YOU?"

Presently he felt a soft touch on his arm, and, starting up, he saw the funniest little creature possible. He was only about a foot high, and had a long white beard reaching to his knees, and he wore a curious little coat of green, and had a hood of red. His feet were clad in sandals, and he carried a long staff in his hand.

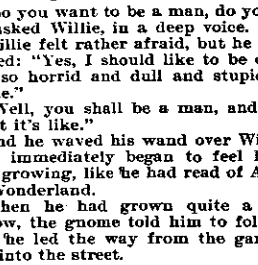
"So you want to be a man, do you?" he asked Willie, in a deep voice.

Willie felt rather afraid, but he answered: "Yes, I should like to be one; it's so horrid and dull and stupid at home."

"Well, you shall be a man, and see what it's like."

And he waved his wand over Willie, who immediately began to feel himself growing, like he had read of Alice in Wonderland.

When he had grown quite a big fellow, the gnome told him to follow, and he led the way from the garden out into the street.



WILLIE BEGAN TO FEEL HIMSELF GROWING, LIKE ALICE IN WONDERLAND.

People stared to see such a big man as Willie walking along with the gnome, and presently a poor woman came up to Willie and begged a penny of him; but he had no money, and so had to refuse her.

"That was not manly of you!" said the gnome; and he opened a little pocket-book he was carrying and wrote something in it.

Then they went into a large office, where there were a great many clerks writing. Willie and the gnome passed by the clerks, and went into a smaller room, where a gentleman was sitting, who looked up as the two entered, and Willie at once recognised his father.

"Oh, daddy!" he exclaimed.

But Mr Walters stared in blank astonishment.

"Are you the new clerk?" he asked him.

"Say 'Yes,'" prompted the gnome.

And Willie obeyed him.

"Then go and join the clerks, and start entering these accounts in a book, and see they are all correct."

And he thrust a pile of dreadful-looking bills in Willie's hands, and opened the door and called out:

"Here is the new book-keeping clerk, Mr Brown. See that he has a new book."

Willie next found himself sitting among the clerks, looking vacantly at the pile of bills and at the new account-book which had been given him.

"What am I to do with these?" he asked Mr Brown.

"Why, enter them, to be sure! Don't you know?" replied that gentleman.

"Go on; do as you are told," whispered the gnome. "You are a man. You surely know how to enter a few bills?"

But Willie did not. All the clerks looked at him in astonishment, and when he began to cry they all burst into a roar of laughter. Billy could stand it no longer, so, seizing his hat, he fled out of the door, down the stairs and into the street.

"A nice sort of man you are," said the gnome. "I am quite ashamed of you. Here, take this, perhaps it will do you good; it does most men." And he thrust a large cigar into Willie's hand.

The boy was delighted, for it was his ambition to smoke, like father did; so he lighted it up, and they walked along the street.

"Now you are a man, you will have to provide for yourself," said the gnome.

"But I have no money," answered Willie.

"That doesn't matter; you must make some; men always do."

Willie looked rather disconsolate. Presently he began to feel rather ill, and the ground seemed to be jumping about.

"What's the matter?" asked the gnome.

"I—I—I don't know, sir, but I feel a little sick."

"Oh, how silly! Fancy a man of your size not being able to smoke!"

Willie couldn't stand this rebuff, so went on puffing away at the cigar; but it was too much for him, so, throwing it down, he came to a standstill.

"Look here," he said, "I'm tired of being a man, please turn me into a little boy again."

But the gnome was nowhere to be seen; he had disappeared, and Willie was alone in a strange street. And oh, how ill he felt!

"Oh, I do want to be at home!" he sobbed. And people stared at him, and many laughed.

Then he began to feel worse than ever, and felt himself sinking down on the ground—down, down, down.

"Oh, what's that!" he cried. And, opening his eyes, he saw his mother bending over him.

"What are you doing, Willie?" she asked. "Here you were nearly upside down on the seat and screaming as if someone was killing you."

Willie rubbed his eyes, then jumped up and began to feel himself all over.

"Am I Willie, or am I a man?" he asked his mother.

"Why, Willie, of course!" she answered. "You've been dreaming, my darling"—and she put her arm round him and led him in.

When they were having tea, Willie told his mother the whole story.

"It was awful, mother," he said; "and now I see that men are not so happy as little boys after all."

Mrs Walters smiled, and she always says nothing did Willie so much good as his strange dream.

THE END.

FABLES FOR CHILDREN.

By Cousin Jim.

Mrs Cow was grazing in the meadow, when she was disturbed by hearing a tiny voice addressing her. The big jaws immediately stopped working, and her eyes opened in wonderment. Wherever did that voice come from? Mrs Cow looked this way and that, and finally discovered a wee cowslip shaking with fear beside her. "Who are you?" she asked. "Oh, I'm a namesake of yours!" replied the cowslip, picking up his courage. "A what?" asked the cow. "A namesake, you know—one called after you," was the answer. "Oh, I see," said the huge brindle. "What do you want?" "It's what I don't want." "Well, what is it that you don't want?" "I don't want you to step on me." said the cowslip, laughing. "Kindly be a little more respectful," said the cow severely. "I am respectable." "I didn't say you weren't respectable. I said you were disrespectful." "No, you didn't. You said I was respectful, which is quite different." "I said you had better be more respectful," repeated Mrs Cow, trying to keep her temper. "Well, never mind what you said," screamed the cowslip, in a violent rage. "Get out of this meadow; it doesn't belong to you." This impertinence the cow could not endure, so she nipped the cowslip with her lips and ate him.

ON THE ROAD TO THE MOON.

In a dark green pool there lived a family of frogs. There were two sons, and they were very mischievous, always doing something they had no right to do. One night these two boy frogs were sitting on the bank when they saw the moon come out from behind a cloud. They were very frightened, because it was the first time they had seen the moon, and they dived into the water. Having asked their father about the great ball in the sky, he, as a very learned man, explained the matter thoroughly. The next time they saw it they thought it would be ever so nice to go up there. "How can we do it?" asked one. "Oh, easily," answered his brother. "I know the way." So they went to the other side of the pool and began to climb a tree, the branches of which overhung their home. When they had gone a long way up, they met a squirrel, who asked in an angry voice what they wanted. They were terribly frightened at his huge tail, but they managed to tell him that they were going to the moon. "Then," said he, "you have no right to trespass on my property, so you'll have to go to the moon by some other road." With that, he knocked them off the tree, and they fell with a terrible splash into the water, nearly frightening their poor grandmother out of her wits. When they told their father about the journey, and about the frightful monster they had met, he whipped them soundly and fastened them up in a sandhole till they had learned to behave better.

FLIPPY.

A TRUE STORY.

Two very little farmers, in pink sunbonnets, walked down the long furrows, dropping corn for grandpapa. As they let the little yellow kernels fall to the ground, they sang together the jingle which he had taught them the night before:

One for the blackbird,
One for the crow;
One for the jinny-worm,
And one for to grow.

Every time they said "one," they dropped a golden grain into the hollow formed by the corn-maker. In that way they put just four kernels into a hollow; then they trudged on to the next place, and sang the same rhyme; and so, dropping four grains to each hollow, they went singing down the furrow. Grandpapa had said that he would follow right after them with his hoe, and would cover up the corn in hillocks.

Now close behind them came Flippy, the old hen. She was called that because she had such a funny way of flipping up and down when she tried to hurry to the place where the chickens were being fed. The two little farmers in sunbonnets, Phyllis and Margery Grey, could not see Flippy following after them. Neither did they know that every time they said "one" and carefully dropped a grain of corn, Flippy, chuckling as only queer old hens can chuckle, gobbled a grain right down her old throat.

By the time the pink sunbonnets reached the end of the furrow, they thought they would turn around to see how pretty the long row of yellow quartettes looked before grandpapa covered them up. But not one grain could they spy! Nothing but Flippy swallowing the last kernel, while her little squeaking brood hopped anxiously after her. And there was grandpapa leaning on his hoe and laughing as hard as he could. With a twinkle in his eye, he said to the amazed little planters:

"That corn's come up the quickest of any I've seen yet!"

Phyllis and Margery were so disgusted that their careful work should have been thus destroyed, that they decided not to drop any more till after dinner.

When they had eaten their dinner, however, a man came to paint the porch floors, and that, of course, made Phyllis and Margery anxious to paint, too. So they put on their Brownie over-alls, to make them look as much as possible like real painters, and then they went out to coax.

"Go ahead, then, girlies!" said grandpapa good-naturedly. "You've come to the country to have a good time, so get all the fun you can out of your visit."

Then he showed them how to fill their brushes and paint evenly the back porch floor. They took such pains that it really looked very well. They were so delighted with their afternoon's work, that as soon as they had finished their good country supper of bread and milk, they took grandpa by the hand, thinking they would surprise him with the shiny freshly-coated floor. But just as they came to the porch, who should strut across it but Flippy and her cheeping brood! And behind her stretched a path of three-toed tracks, all dotted over with thirty or forty baby tracks.

Phyllis and Margery looked at each other, not knowing whether to laugh or cry.

"Well, well!" said grandpa's cheery voice, "I never saw anything to beat the half-witted way that Flippy has of tagging after you! I guess she wants to show you that country life is as full of trouble as it is of fun."

"Never mind!" laughed Phyllis. "We'll do it all over again to-morrow; but before we begin we'll just coop up Mrs Flippy."

Charlotte Brewster Jordan.

THE TRUTH.

Young Married Woman: Do you believe that those women who write for the papers telling how to manage husbands get along better with their husbands than we do?

Experienced Friend: Nonsense, dear! They are not married!

POPPER DEFINED AT LAST.

Tommy: Who were Fox's Martyrs that the Sunday school teacher was talking about?

Popper: Well, I guess most of them were the people who had to listen to his sermons.

HITS AND MISSES.

("There is a possibility of an Australian team of lady cricketers visiting us at no distant date."—Daily Paper.)

Advance, Australia! But pray forbear
Your cricket amazons to us to spare;
What team have we to "put them in their places"—
Unless we matched your Beauties with our Graces?—"World."

GEORGE, DON'T.

"Mamma, I know the gentleman's name that called to see Aunt Ellie last night—and nobody told me either."

"Well, then, what is it, Bobbie?"

"Why, George Dont. I heard her say George, Dont' in the parlour four or five times running. That's what his name is."

IRISH REASONING.

Bridget (reading laboriously): Hev you seen this, Pat? It sez here that whin a mon loses wan av his sinses, his other sinses get more develyuped. Fr instants, a blind mon gets more sinse av hearin,' an' touch, an'——

Pat: Shure, an' it's quite true: Oi've not'ced it meself. Whin a mon has wan leg shorter than the other, begorra, the other leg's longer, isn't it, now?

A REASONABLE REQUEST.

A preacher in Scotland once found his congregation going to sleep one Sunday before he had fairly begun. On seeing this, he stopped and exclaimed: "Brethren, it's no fair. Wait till I get a start, and then, if I'm no' worth listening to, gang to sleep; but dinna nod yer pows before I get commenced. Gie a buddy a chance."

HIS STANDING.

She: "What makes you call Tom Brazen a beast? I should say he was a man among men."

He: "Yes, but among women he is more or less of a lion."

QUITE SUFFICIENT.

Principal of Ladies' School: Will you have your daughter instructed in the different languages?

Father: No; one tongue is sufficient for a woman.

A BIG DIFFERENCE.

"That is your charming daughter, is it not, sitting at the piano?"

"No, I never saw her before!"

"Then I don't see why the silly goose doesn't stop her tiresome hammering!"

DOING ONE'S BEST.

"Whatever station in life you may be called to occupy, my boy," said the father, in sending his son out into the great world, "always do your best."

"I will," replied the young man, with emotion. He never forgot his promise. Years afterwards, when a prosperous man of business, he did his best friend out of a large sum of money.

BETWIXT AND BETWEEN.

Uncle inquired of little Bobby if he had been a good little boy.

Bobby: No, I haven't.

Uncle: Why, I hope you haven't been very bad?

Bobby: Oh, no; just comfortable.

A CHANCE TO RISE.

Young Man: I see you advertise a vacancy in your establishment. I should like to have a position where there would be a chance to rise.

Merchant: Well, I want a man to open up and sweep out. You will have a chance to rise every morning at five o'clock.

HOW TO TREAT THEM.

The Victim: If you'll call about this time to-morrow ——

The Canvasser (hopefully): This time to-morrow, sir?

The Victim: Yes—I'll be out.

THE PLACE FOR PEACE.

"My husband is more amiable since we live in a flat."

"I don't see the connection."

"Why, he hasn't room enough to kick."

A CONSCIENTIOUS JURY.

First Citizen: "If you had any doubts of the guilt of Mrs Borgia, the alleged poisoner, why did you vote to hang her?"

Second Citizen (who was on the jury): "Well, you see, the trial made her so notorious that we knew if we didn't hang her, she'd soon be appearing on the stage."

She: "You admit, my dear friend, that your income would justify marriage, if it were not for your expensive tastes."

He: "I, expensive tastes? You are joking! What expensive tastes have I?"

She: "Well, me, for instance."

TO SILENCE FATHER.

Ethelberta: I want a pair of slippers for pa—number tens, and—squeaky.

Genial Shoemaker: Squeaky, miss? I'm afraid we haven't any of that kind.

Ethelberta: I'm so sorry. Couldn't you make him a squeaky pair? There is a certain young gentleman who visits me frequently, and—and it would be very convenient for him to know just when pa is coming downstairs.

SHAKESPEARE'S LIMITATIONS.

"It beats me," mused the modern theatre manager. "This here William Shakespeare wrote the play of 'Hamlet,' in which Ophelia gets drowned, yet he leaves the drowning scene out."

"It does seem queer," observed the stage carpenter, with a touch of vanity; "but maybe he didn't know how to make a tank."

GETTING READY FOR THE ENEMY.

"Mother writes that she will be here to-morrow for a short visit, my dear."

"Very well," he replied; and as he left the house he patted his little boy on the head kindly and said, "Bobby, didn't you ask me to buy you a tin whistle and a drum the other day?"

"Yes, pa."

"Well, I will bring them to-night."

AN EASY PROFESSION.

"Well, Bobby, what do you want to be when you grow up?" Bobby (suffering from paternal discipline: "An orphan."

A LITERARY ACCIDENT.

An exchange tells of an author who was "the victim of a literary accident." He must have received a cheque from a pay-on-publication periodical a few hours before he died.

A COUPLE OF GROWLERS.

"That dog certainly seems almost human at times," said old Mr Fussy.

"Yes," replied Mrs Fussy. "He growls over his food quite as much as you do."

VERY QUESTIONABLE.

Mrs Henpeck: You have been very aggravating at times, and we have not always got along very well together; but still, if I had to do it over again, I'd marry you just the same.

Mr Henpeck (under his breath): I'm not so sure about that.

HELPING ONESELF.

A man who bore unmistakeable evidence of impecuniosity looked in at a baker's shop the other day.

"Can you help a poor man?" he asked the proprietor.

"Can't you help yourself!" was the baker's angry inquiry.

"All right, sir," said the caller, as promptly picking up a loaf he walked off.

THE COOK'S CHAPERON.

Mistress: "I saw two policemen sitting in the kitchen with you last night, Bridget."

Bridget: "Well, ma'am, yez wouldn't hov an unmarried lady be sittin' with only one policeman would yez? The other wan wuz a chaperon."

A BASE INSINUATION.

O'Rourke: Oh, Dinnis, Dinnis, me heart's broke. Me boy Moike's run away and enlisted. It was the foightin' blood in him.

McIntyre: Well, what's the use worryin', Pat? Oi always tould yez the boy took after his mother.

When the police arrived both were disabled.—Chicago "News."

A FAVOURED CLASS.

Irate Passenger (who has just managed to scramble on to a tramcar that didn't stop): "Suppose I had slipped and lost a leg—what then?"

Conductor (consolingly); "You wouldn't have to do any more running then. We allers stop for a man with a crutch."

HAPPY IN DIFFERENCE.

Booking Clerk: Where for, sir?

Tipsy Traveller: Let me' shee——

Booking Clerk: What station do you want?

Tipsy Traveller: Er—what stations you got?

IN A SIMILAR PLIGHT.

"I married your daughter, sir, and I must say I have never ceased to regret it."

"Sympathise with you, my boy, I married her mother."

A CANINE INFERENCE.

Father: I wonder what makes that dog afraid of me! He always behaves as if he thought I was going to kill him.

Son: I expect he's seen you whipping me.

A SURE SIGN.

"How did you come out of that last speculation of yours, Glowly?"

"None of your business."

"Sorry that you lost, old man."

HIS FRIEND 'AMLET.

"Come and dine with us to-morrow," said the old fellow who had made his money and wanted to push his way into society. "Sorry," replied the elegant man, "I can't. I'm going to see 'Hamlet.'" "That's all right," said the hospitable old gentleman, "bring him with you."

BUSINESS FIRST AND LAST.

"You villagers seem to be a rather deliberate lot of people." "I s'pose we be. There wuz a feller drowned down in the creek a spell ago. He yelled 'Help, help!' afore he went down th' last time, an' th' editor of th' village paper heard him, an went back to th' office an' put in his paper two 'help wanted ads.' an' charged 'em up to th' estate, by gum!"

BUSINESS FIRST.

Fussy Man (hurrying into a newspaper office): "I've lost my spectacles somewhere, and I want to advertise for them, but I can't see to write without them, you know."

Advertising Clerk (likely to be general manager some day): "I will write that ad. for you, sir. Any marks on them?"

Fussy Man: "Yes, yes. Gold-rimmed, lenses different focus, and letters L.O.C. on inside. Insert it three times."

Advertising Clerk: "Yes, sir. Eighteen shillings, please."

Fussy Man: "Here it is."

Advertising Clerk: "Thanks. It gives me, sir, great pleasure to inform you, sir, that your spectacles are on the top of your head."

Fussy Man: "My Stars! So they are. Why didn't you say so before?"

Advertising Clerk: "Business before pleasure, you know."