On Wednesday afternoon Mrs Wilson, opawa, had a very large gathering, and a most enjoyable time was spent. Mrs Wilson wore a silvery sand silk like the tone and green of a pigeon's breast; Miss Smithbrine, very handsome long mauve silk beaurtiful; Mrs Reeves, black costume, black and yellow bonnet; Miss Moss, a very pretty grey gown; Mrs Bowie, sweet gown with small brown bonnet. Mrs Whiting pleased everyone with her playing. Mrs Wilson sang "Tosti's Aprile, and Mrs Elliott, Miss Cholmondeley, Mr Grant and Mr Acland also sang. The music was very good. The same afternoon Mrs Alan Scott had a children's party, and to their intense delight, a Christmas tree.

On Thursday the Misses Beerwick had a great gathering of young ladies to afternoon tea. These afternoons, now there is not so much tennis, are really charming, and I hope all the girls I know will have one in turn.

Mrs Murray-Aynsley had a luncheon party at Paterson on Saturday for Miss Buckley, who is on a visit here. Among those present were Miss Smithbrine, Miss Cowlishaw, Miss Fisher, Miss Reeves, and Miss Wynn-Williams.

Racing seems to be out of favour this winter. Mr Gould has bought the rink, but it remains closed. The charm of racing has departed with the disappointing growville proprietor.

A very pretty quiet wedding took place at St. Luke's Church on Tuesday at half-past one. The bride, Miss Alice Stringer, looked exceedingly fine in a most becoming grey cloth travelling dress and hat, and carried a lovely bridal bouquet. The bridegroom was a son of Mr Aaron Ayres. After cake and wine at the house of the bride's father the happy pair left for Summer.

DOLLY VARE.

DUNEDIN.

JUNE 12.

DEAR BEE,

Mrs Reynolds has taken advantage of the lull in social circles to bring the Free Kindergarten school into notice again. The funds were raised this time by an entertainment of a most interesting character given in St. Matthew's Schoolroom, which was crowded to the doors. The entertainment consisted chiefly of *tableaux vivants* interspersed with songs, and where the chief attraction lay was the fact that well-known young ladies and gentlemen stood for the figures and contributed the music. The song, "The Old Garden," was followed by the tableau which represented a very pretty old garden, and near a fountain a lady was standing dressed in the ancient and becoming costume so well known by its silent petticoats and tucked overskirt, with large white hat and a profusion of flowers. When the curtains had admitted the pretty picture the curtain fell and rose again on an altered scene under a different lighting effect. Two lovers had come to woo—one Mr Reynolds, in an ancient and costly suit of black, with knee breeches and silk stockings, and the other Major Young in uniform. The curtain fell again, and rose with new lights effects upon the maiden and the soldier, who had won the day. Then Miss Colville played a handsome song, and the "Paradise and Peri" followed. Miss Stewart represented the angel with long gold-spangled robes and wings, while the Peri knelt at her feet in supplication. The second scene showed the angel pointing the Peri through an archway of flowers, and the saint holding her welcome to Paradise. "Auld Robin Gray" was another very pretty tableau, representing the story at various stages. The song is always an old favourite, and upon this particular occasion the touching story was presented in all its pathos. Miss Turton was "Maggie," and in the first scene she and "Jamie" are happy lovers; then in the next she sits sad and drooping with her "father trying her sadly, and her mother looking her in the face with tears that's like to break." In the third scene she is Auld Robin Gray's wife and Jamie the returned. In it is a play there is not another scene where Auld Robin Gray is in heaven and Jamie and Maggie happy. Such things seem in novels that are not true to life, but it seems like a girl who sacrifices herself in kindness to others must bear the direst penalty to the end. Auld Robin Gray lives on for ever, and Jamie's heart breaks and dwells apart. He marries another girl, has a large family, goes in for politics, grows master of that and well-to-do, is highly honoured by his fellow citizens, and when at last he lies near Auld Robin Gray's death he thinks, "Well perhaps it is just as well that things are as they are." Ah girls! the sentiment of youth dies out. You think and your lover thinks that under other circumstances could you possibly be happy, yet the time has brought eternal farewells has also brought renewal of hope and affection. It is were not so we should not be able to bear it. Yet, strange contradiction, nothing kindles pain within, and after intervening years have passed away the memory goes back to old days, and over the dying embers of the fire we sit and dream. The present fades; our sorrows, our cares, our loves live again. Empty the life that has no living past.

Well, we have wandered away from the Kindergarten evening. The painting of Moses was the greatest success of all the tableaux, and the grouping of the masters showed off to the greatest advantage a number of young ladies who always look well. Among them were the Misses Reynolds, Fairclough, Stewart, and Macknight.

In my last letter I told you of the intended departure of Miss Woodbridge. She left by the Arawa last Thursday, pleasing to break her journey at Rotorua where a large gathering of professional friends had to see her off. Where on matters in point I may add that Mr Bain's chain set concerts on Saturday evenings are proving highly successful.

The Queen's Birthday, as what you, was of course held on Monday instead of Saturday. As the Forbury course there was a meeting, and the day being bright and crisp, with a clear sky as warm sunshine, a number of people were there. I have known the sand-drifter in a summer day, for if there is any wind to be it blows off the sea, and makes things very uncomfortable. But upon the Queen's Birthday there was no wind at all, and the sunshine seemed quite in the mood. The ladies sported their furs and sealskins, which seem to be as much worn this season as ever, but a few very pretty costumes were visible, uncovered by cloak or coat. Mrs Johnson, who always looks well, wore upon this occasion a tailor-made gown of a dull red cashmere, perfectly fitting and perfectly plain. Mrs Anthony McMaster was also a pattern of good taste. She wore a very fine black serge gown with a white cloth jacket, with high collar and lapels lined with red satin, and a dressy little hat to match. Mrs Willie Neil wore rather a bright red with white napkins and vest; Miss Reynolds, a dark green tailor-made cashmere costume; Mrs Finch, terra-cotta; and Miss Henrietta, tailor-made blue serge.

The general news is that there seems to be every prospect of a hard, dull winter. For one good yesterday I heard of sixty applications. All the good that the Exhibition was to have accomplished is not yet apparent. It seems to me that people during the carnival season overlived their income, and are now retrenching. Be that as it may, everybody is now complaining of hard times, and there is a worry war going on in the papers about railway and trades unions, which looks very much as though there were matters of an more stirring interest to take up the columns.

Our old theatre is now shut up, undergoing repairs. I am afraid you will think I keep the theatre as an outstanding topic, but I assure you I am never more serious than when I tribute to it. Hoarding is round the back part of it, and the sound of the hammer tells that something is going on there. *Mais* I will describe to you when I see it. Meanwhile the churches are vieing one with another to gather in all the loose coin there may be about. In my next letter I must tell you of a new way to get up a social, very original, and encouraging a good deal of fun—tea meetings and bazaars, like the things you get there, are so stale. Trusting I have aroused your curiosity sufficiently to make you desire my information next week, I must now conclude.

RUBY.

AUCKLAND.

JUNE 13.

DEAR BEE,

The fortnight events of the season was the production by the St. Mair Company, on Wednesday evening, of the comedy drama "Chums," written in New Zealand by Mr David Christie Murray, the eminent novelist. Special interest attaches to the play from the fact that it has been written amongst us, and the associations are essentially those of the land we live in, the plot being laid in Otago. The Opera House was crowded with a brilliant and fashionable assemblage, and the utmost enthusiasm was manifested as the play progressed, Mr Murray being called before the curtain between each act and accorded quite an ovation. Mr St. Mair, Miss Florence Seymour, and the wonderfully clever child, little Leo Byrne, sustained the leading parts, and they, with the other members of the company, were also called before the curtain again and again. I must not forget to tell you the scenery was exceedingly pretty, in the second act especially so, when a New Zealand bush scene was shown with a real waterfall in the background. I add, dear, the names of some of the ladies present, and a description of some of the toilettes worn. Mrs Thomas, a beautiful evening dress of black silk and lace, the low bodice profusely trimmed with jet; her sister, Miss Russell, looked extremely well in a pretty coral pink evening gown, white kid gloves; Lady Clarke wore a handsome gown of navy blue silk with revers and cuffs of silver grey silk; the bodice, which was tight, was finished at the neck with a diamond brooch; grey kid gloves, cardinal satin mantle, and cluster of cardinal roseboids nestling in the hair; Lady Clarke was accompanied by a lady wearing a lovely ruby silk gown; Mrs Finlayson, black silk gown, opera mantle of crimson plush; the Misses George (Sir George Grey's youngest nieces) wore pretty pale blue and white dresses, respectively, their fair hair tied with pale blue ribbon; Mrs Kissling, handsome black merveilleux gown, pretty creme and heliotrope cap, white kid gloves; her daughter wore a stylish black lace gown; Miss Henderson, pretty pale pink evening dress, aigrette of pink feathers in the hair; white kid gloves; Miss Watson, pretty creme velvet gown, peacock blue plush mantle, white kid gloves; Miss Harding, stylish vieux rose gown trimmed with silk the same shade, creme gloves; Miss Warne Parnell, stylish black lace evening dress, the low bodice edged with jet; Mrs Day, black silk skirt, full bodice of cardinal silk; Mrs Taylor, handsome gown of black lace and moire silk, white kid gloves, gold ornaments; Mrs W. Berry, black silk gown, white kid gloves; Miss Moss, golden brown velveteen evening dress; her sister wore pale green; Miss Macintosh, dark brown costume; Mrs Dr. Lindsay, stylish gown of rich shot silk, combined with grey silk, fawn gloves; Mrs W. Whitman, black silk gown. The orchestra stalls were full, but I was unable to see who were there.

The Opera House was again well filled on Friday evening, when Messrs Herald and Berkeley, two old residents of Auckland, were tendered a benefit performance by the members of the Saint Mair Company, assisted by local amateurs. The programme was a lengthy one, the first part consisting of vocal selections by Miss Florence Seymour, Miss Henry Kennedy, and Mr T. Jackson; recitations by Messrs Saint Mair, Senior, and little Leo Byrne, who, dressed as a girl, caused much amusement by his advice to young ladies in the art of flirting. Miss Seymour sang with considerable taste and expression "The Minstrel Boy," and in response to an encore, "Scenes That Are Brightest." Miss Kennedy and Mr Jackson were also successful in their respective songs, while the recitations were excellent. In the second part the amusing comedy, "The Strangers," was admirably performed. In the first part Miss Seymour and Miss Kennedy both wore pretty evening dresses. Miss Seymour's was of cream satin and lace, the bodice cut low, and sleeveless; it was quite without trimming, and fitted faultlessly; diamond necklet and long white kid gloves. Miss Kennedy wore a very effective gown of heliotrope silk, with overskirt of heliotrope silver-spangled gauze, and daintily with bands of heliotrope ribbon. The bodice was of silk trimmed with bands of gauze. The evening, unfortunately, was wet and unpleasant, and in consequence evening dress was not very generally worn in the circle. I noticed there Mrs F. Earl, Mrs Macknight, Mrs Tayler, Miss Gorrie, Misses Brett, Mrs Hartham, Mrs Lewis, Mrs Hudson, Miss Kirchman, Mrs Parsons, Mrs and Misses Moss, Mrs Thompson, and a great many others whose names I at present forget.

The formerly re-union of the members of the Remuera Musical, Social and Literary Society on Thursday was a most successful one, the Mount Hobson Hall being crowded to excess. The programme, which was unusually good, consisted in the first part of selections of vocal and instrumental music, etc., the amusing little comedietta, "Old Salmagundi," forming the other half. The comedietta was performed very successfully some little time ago in the Catholic Institute, and on Thursday was repeated. I understand, with precisely the same cast, and played with the same success which attended its first production, much actual success being due to Mr J. F. Montague, who appears in the leading part. During the interval for conversation and refreshments I had an opportunity of seeing some of those present. Amongst the number were Mrs Russell, Mrs Carr, Mrs Lennox, Misses Herrold, Mrs Burton, Mrs Hardy, Miss Hardy, Mrs Clark, Mrs Finlayson, Miss Finlayson, Misses Harrison, Misses Pickmere, Mrs Earnshaw, Mrs Buckland, Miss Stevenson, Misses Robertson, Miss Short, Misses Westwood and Mrs Tewsley. I venture and it is intended to finish the next social with a short dance.

The first dance of the season in connection with the Ponsonby "At Homes" took place on Friday, and was well attended by the youth and beauty of the Western suburb. The evening was a most enjoyable one, the floor was in excellent condition, good partners being plentiful, and the music was just lovely. With these essentials to success what more was to be desired? Mrs Upton wore an elegant black silk gown; Mrs F. Cooper, stylish black lace gown make over cardinal satin; Mrs Deacon, very handsome black silk gown profusely trimmed with jet; Miss Deacon, very pretty black net gown relieved with aigrettes of crimson feathers and ribbon; Miss Masefield, extremely pretty gown of white Russian net make over white satin; Miss Bastard, handsome costume of black lace relieved with cluster of crimson roses; Miss Buchanan, very becoming dress of sea green Russian net; Miss Alice Tye, pretty black grenadine gown with large sash of pale blue silk; Miss Evans, stylish pink net evening dress; Mrs E. Buchanan, black lace gown with sash of amber silk. Miss Dixon wore a very pretty dress of red satin, and her sister, Miss Ada Dixon, looked exceedingly well in black, with gold ribbons and gold flowers. Miss Maier was very becomingly dressed in white satin, relieved by an elegant cluster of pink roseboids on the low corsage.

Miss Florence Seymour was the recipient of a very graceful recognition of her talents prior to the close of the season of the St. Mair Company. Misses Christine Murray and St. Mair wrote her a joint note, expressing their regret at the loss she recently sustained by the partial destruction of her wardrobe, and their acknowledgement of her services in the production of "Chums." They requested her acceptance of an accompanying parcel, which on being opened proved to contain about forty yards of the loveliest plush imaginable.

Musical and social circles in Auckland lose two gifted members in the persons of the Misses Reeve, who, with their parents, Mr and Mrs Page, left on Thursday last for Christchurch, there to take up their future residence. On Wednesday afternoon a large number of friends and well-wishers, including the members of the Young Ladies' Orchestra, of which Miss Reeve has acted as conductress since its formation, assembled in the Choral Hall for the purpose of making them a presentation. Miss Lucie Harrison, on behalf of the Young Ladies' Orchestra, in a neat little speech presented Miss Reeve with a beautiful jewel cabinet of choice New Zealand woods, and her sister, Miss Josephine Reeve, with a handsome gold brooch, as a token of remembrance from Auckland friends. Both sisters were deeply moved, and expressed their thanks for the gifts, and also for the kindly feeling shown towards them. Miss Reeve, besides acting as conductress of the Young Ladies' Orchestra, was a leading member of the Choral Society, and also the Amateur Opera Club. In "Iolanthe," the last opera produced by the Club, Miss Reeve achieved considerable success in the title role, and in "La Mascotte," the opera now in rehearsal, she was, I understand, to have taken a prominent part.

I have just time to add that I went to the opening performance of "Dorothy," and was simply charmed with the music, the costumes, and the lovely scenery. In the circle I noticed Mrs Alfred Nathan, Mrs Moss Davis, Misses Brett, Mrs E. Mackenzie, Mrs T. Mahoney, Mrs F. Earl, Mrs Macklachan, Miss Sommerville, Mrs A. Hanna, and a great many others, but I have not time to tell you more.

MURIEL.

SYDNEY GOSSIP.

JUNE 5.

DEAR BEE,

We have all been much interested lately in the South International Tennis Tournament. The double-handed events were won by New South Wales by 11 sets to 10 sets. One lady, who played very well, winning the handicap singles—Miss Scott—has been practising on a comparatively uneven court, which is a very risky thing to do. For several strokes together this lady played with a shortened handle, which had not as all a pretty effect. Lady Carrington and her daughter graced the Tournament with their presence, Lady Carrington presenting the prizes afterwards to the successful competitors. It goes without saying that His Excellency the Governor was also there.

Mrs A. Joseph, who was lately visiting Auckland, gave a very charming "At Home" last week at her pleasant residence in Edgecliff-road, Woollahra. It was exceedingly well attended, and the fortunate guests enjoyed a musical treat. Mr Charles Benjamin and Mr Somerville being in excellent voice. The comic songs given by the latter provoked a great deal of laughter. They say, "Laugh and grow fat," so I warn anyone who is afraid of the powerful coming wine in his or her case to avoid listening to Mr Somerville if they can help it. Red was a good deal worn; I saw one costume in this colour on a tall girl, with a red hat to match. Wonderful to say, it had been chosen with great taste, and really suited her very well. Some people wear a fashionable colour without any regard to their complexions. I noticed rather a peculiar dress worn by another lady. It was tailor-made, and of a black material, over the skirt-front of white linen was a little too masculine, and this was rendered more pronounce by the addition of a silk tie.

Did you hear that Miss Mary Anderson does not intend to give up the stage after her marriage? They say she will play better than ever, rendering more fully parts which she has hitherto treated too coldly.

INGOLDSBY.