

ing well, followed with the song, 'When the Flowing Tides Come In.' Mr F. L. Jones was also in good voice in his song, 'Queen of the Earth.' Miss M. Morrison gave a beautiful rendering of the 'Serenade,' with a violin obligato by Signor Squarise. 'The Village Blacksmith' was well rendered by Mr H. S. Hennert, and by special request a flute solo by Mr H. Mass, Fantasia on 'Pagani's' 'Witches' Dance.' The second part opened with a piano solo, Rhapsodie Hongroise No. 2, by A. Barneyer. Miss Blaney, of whom very pleasant recollections were entertained, was very warmly welcomed. Her lovely voice was heard to advantage in 'Call Me Back,' with violin obligato by Signor Squarise. 'Father O'Flynn' suited Mr Densem admirably, and then came a violin obligato by Signor Squarise, which brought forth much applause. 'Too Late' was another favourite by Mrs Angus. The concert closed with a vocal quartette, 'Madrigal,' from 'Mikado,' by Miss Blaney, Mrs Angus, Messrs Jones and Densem.

Much regret is felt here at the unexpected death of Mr James Clark Brown, for many years M.H.R. for Tuapeka. He died at St. Clair after an illness of some months, from which he partly rallied several times. He was well enough during the recent contest to give several addresses.

The Rev. W. Scorgie, Presbyterian minister at Tapanui, was made the recipient of a handsome purse of sovereigns prior to his departure on a holiday trip to the old country.

My next letter, I hope, will be brimful of interesting news about the Sounds trip, which will make up for the uninteresting character of this.

MAUDE.

LONDON.

DEAR BEB, JANUARY 8.

We are in the midst of our winter of discontent. For my own part, I greatly enjoy the frost, but I regret to learn that the extraordinarily cold weather of Christmas week, with its horrible combination of fog, frost, and snow, has caused an incalculable loss of money to London tradespeople. The fancy shops suffered especially, for the biting cold prevented foot passengers from passing admiringly at the pretty articles in the windows, and then going in to buy. All outdoor movement, in fact, was difficult and dangerous. The old suggestion of glass-covered streets has consequently been revived, but it is very unlikely we shall ever go to that expense.

I have just seen a photograph of the oldest clergyman in the Church of England, the Rev. John Elliott, Vicar of Randwick, Gloucester, who on December 19th entered upon his hundredth year. He has been rector of the parish for just seventy-three years. A pretty long time, don't you think? He is a little deaf, otherwise he shows few signs of his great age, and can walk quite well. He delivered a short address in September, 1890. His youngest son is sixty, his eldest daughter seventy-two.

I am not at all sure that the very latest form of improved dress will be popular, although it has certainly much to recommend it. Mrs Charles Hancock is responsible for the new departure, which is described as having for its most characteristic features the substitution of a waistcoat for the bodice, with neat supplementary chest pieces, an over-jacket, a short skirt reaching to within five inches of the ground, knickerbockers in place of petticoats, and gaiters. Lightness and warmth have been studied in the choice of material. It offers no marked contrast with methods already known and accepted by custom, but is rather an adaptation to the conditions of city life in winter of the dress now frequently worn by ladies on the moors or hunting with beagles. The shortness of the skirt is its most striking characteristic, and for wear, cleanliness, and comfort, the shortened dress will compare favourably with the more familiar flowing garment now in use. To ladies who are the slaves of fashion the convenience of reduced length in the skirt may seem too dearly bought at the cost of appearance, but, except for this, the new dress has certainly much to commend it.

I saw a lovely old teapot the other day, made out of what do you think? You couldn't guess, so I will tell you. A retired general has had the gold lace which adorned his uniforms made into a teapot. The gold lace is really silver, with a gold thread outside. The handle is of ivory, on one side are the crest and monogram of the owner, on the other his regimental motto; the lid is surmounted by the royal crown. What lovely things some of us could make by appropriating the gold lace of our military relatives!

The marriage of Jeanne Hugo with Alphonse Daudet's son will take place very soon. These two fortunate scions of a literary house will start life in very luxurious circumstances, for Jeanne has an income of 120,000 francs, and the celebrated novelist is dowering his son with an income of 60,000 francs, and these two sums represent over £7,000 a year. Scribbling pays better in France than in England. All classes, high and low, have an insatiable passion for novel-reading.

The Queen spent a quiet Christmas at Osborne, only her three youngest children and their consorts being of the party. Princess Beatrice, who, as you know, has become very fond of acting, is getting up some more *tableaux vivants*. These must be a delightful break in the monotony of Court life.

The Prince and Princess of Wales had their Christmas family party augmented this year by the presence of the Duchess of Albany and her two little children—Princess Alice, who is not yet eight years of age, and the little Duke, who is only six. It was the first time for many years that children's voices had rung through the corridors at Sandringham at this season—not, in fact, since the young Princesses of Wales were merry children, laughing and romping all through the house, and it must have brought back happy memories of those days to the Prince and Princess; yet the happiness was overshadowed as the presence of the little fatherless Duke of Albany vividly recalled the loss of a beloved brother so early called away. The absence (I believe for the first time in her life) of the Duchess of Life from the home circle, and also of Prince George, who is at present on the other side of the world, made the Prince's family party seem very incomplete and many loving thoughts and words were bestowed on the absent ones. The Royal party have had some good sleighing and skating at Sandringham. The Princesses Victoria and Maud, like the Princess of Wales, are accomplished skaters, and cut figures very gracefully, but they chiefly delight in playing hockey on the ice, and with their

'erook' sticks send the balls spinning over the ice in all directions. The whole of the Royal party joined merrily in the game this Christmas, and the laughter and shouts from the lively group on the lake broke the solemn stillness of the snow-clad park.

The proper place of the Duke of Clarence and Avondale (eldest son of the Prince of Wales) has just been announced. He is fourth in order of precedence, coming after the Prince of Wales, the Dukes of Edinburgh and Connaught, but before the little Duke of Albany.

I think I have given you about enough gossip for this time, at all events, so will close after just describing a lovely gown from Worth's which has attracted some attention. It was of *crêpe de soie*, not amber, not maize, but just the tint of ripe corn. A deep border of bullion fringe shaded with amethysts was round the edge, and this same magnificent passementerie appeared in bands across the full bodice. The fan was of ostrich plumes, shaded from deep plum to palest lilac, and the dainty shoes were plum coloured velvet, with an amethyst on each. It was a robe to dream about. With best wishes for the New Year,

A CITY MOUSE.

Owing to the accident to the Taravera, some of our usual letters have not arrived in time to appear this week.

HOW TO KEEP YOUTHFUL IN APPEARANCE.

UNDER the heading of 'Another Strange Profession' I read the following:—'We have our "manicures" and our "massages." What do you think of the latest feminine profession, the "facewasher"?' According to one of the professional facewashers in London very few women know what it is to possess a clean face. This is how you manage it. The face is washed in various waters. The first is tepid, the second is warm, the third is hot, and the fourth is boiling. At this point the face may be compared to a face handkerchief that has been washed and is rough dried. Before it can be ironed the handkerchief must be sprinkled with water, or the wrinkles won't come out, and the same rule applies to the face, only cream must be substituted for water. The face-washer gently anoints the skin with this, and then starts on the ironing. She uses the first and second fingers on both hands, nothing else, for the iron. First the forehead is attacked, then the eyes, then the corners of the mouth, and lastly the throat. The lines gradually get fainter, and some of the young ones disappear altogether, but the ironing goes on for twenty minutes. But this is not the end. The face is washed again, and precisely in the same numbers of waters as before. This time the first water is boiling hot and the last cold. Then the face is gently tapped with the fore-fingers until a pretty pink colour fills each cheek; then you have done after an hour and a-half's work.' Fancy, and yet women mostly waste quite that time each day, and some spend as long in 'getting up,' so that for those who wish to look young and beautiful for ever this is a far cleaner, and almost certainly a more effectual way of attaining the object, and does away with the grimy, dirty appearance on the edge of some people's cheeks, which betrays the too free use of cosmetics. After a few more generations I do believe women will turn out quite sensible. The 'massage' is one of the most delightful and health-giving of our fads, and when a good substitute is found for youth by a youthful face and form gained by natural means, and the paint box and powder, corsets, high-heeled shoes abolished, and a few other reforms appertaining to the toilet and costume are brought about, men will have to declare that the higher education of women has had some good results. Never until men cease to admire beauty will women cease to strive to be beautiful, so that every healthful and natural means should be welcomed, and even applauded, so that those harmful follies that so many women and girls indulge in may vanish one by one.—*Dunedin Correspondent.*

A GREAT STATESMAN AND HIS ROSES.

THERE is a pretty incident in the private life of Lamoignon de Malesherbes, the French statesman and naturalist, which illustrates better than any noble actions of his public career the love and esteem he inspired.

The good old man loved roses above all things, and during the summer, which he passed at his Château de Verneuil, near Versailles, all his leisure moments were spent in caring for these cherished flowers. With his own hand he had cleared and prepared the ground in a woodland space, and planted it with young bushes, which after a time formed a most beautiful rose-grove. He also made a grassy bank and an arbour where he could find shelter from the too ardent rays of the sun, and in this secluded spot he spent whole hours reading and working.

It was the frequent boast of M. de Malesherbes that he never lost a rosebud; they seemed to grow by magic, each variety realising his fondest hopes. 'Lamoignon of the Roses' was the name given to him by his intimates, and he was never weary of showing his friends his 'Solitude,' as he called his favourite spot.

One morning M. de Malesherbes went down to his garden much earlier than was his wont, and seating himself on the turf near his arbour, gave himself up to the delight of the scene, fairer than ever in its dewy freshness. A light sound called him from his reverie, and thinking it might be some timid fawn come to the stream near by to drink, he watched in silence. What he saw was the prettiest milkmaid in the world who, filling her pail at the stream, proceeded to water the roses.

The pail was filled and emptied many times, every bush receiving full measure, till finally at the last clump M. de Malesherbes, who had been watching in breathless astonishment, came forward, and in his turn surprised the young girl, who gave a startled little cry.

'How came you to be watering my roses, my child?' said the kind old man reassuringly.

'Oh, monseigneur, it is my turn to-day,' stammered the girl.

'How your turn?'

'Oh, yes, monseigneur; to-morrow it is Jeannette's turn, and yesterday it was Angèle's.'

'But, my dear, I do not understand.'

'It is a secret,' said the poor girl blushing rosy red, 'but since monseigneur has seen for himself, I will explain, that he may see no harm was intended.'

And thereupon the little milkmaid, reassured by a kind smile, told her little story. How the villagers from the surrounding hamlets loved monseigneur for his benevolence and ever kind interest in their work, and how they had established a rule by which they could make some return to their patron. 'And when we saw monseigneur at work among his roses we thought what to do. And a rule was made that every young girl who had come to her fifteen years should be of age to help, each in her turn on her way back from carrying milk to Verneuil, and it is now four years that I've had the honour of watering the roses of our benefactor and father.'

M. de Malesherbes was deeply touched by this little confession. 'I no longer wonder,' he said, 'that my roses bloom as they do, and from this time my Solitude shall be dearer to me than ever before, for it is my children that have made it beautiful!'

Then as the young girl curtailed and turned to go, M. de Malesherbes said:

'And your name, *ma belle!*'

'Jeannette Dubois, at your service, monseigneur.'

'Thank you, Jeannette; if I can ever serve you, let me know. There may some day be a marriage portion had to make up; I will answer for it if I may have a kiss in exchange.' And the venerable man stooped and kissed the rosy upturned cheeks of the proud little maid, who ran home to tell of the honour conferred upon her.

Not long after this there was a fête and the young villagers met to have a dance in the immediate neighbourhood of the little arbour.

'Farewell to my roses,' sighed M. de Malesherbes, 'for what rustic swain can forgo the pleasure of decking his sweetheart with the freshest buds.' But the next day when M. de Malesherbes went down to his retreat at early morn bearing a spade and rake to restore order, behold! all was freshly raked, and not a bush had suffered. And the good man exclaimed, 'I would not exchange my grove and arbour for the richest palace of the world.'

One day his valet told him that a young girl in the greatest grief wished to see him, and on her appearing all in tears he inquired into the cause of her trouble.

'Ah, monseigneur,' she cried, 'you only can help me.'

'Say on, my child.'

'This morning, monseigneur, it was my turn to water your honour's roses, and I picked one of them and so broke my vow; sobbed the poor maiden.'

'One little rose. That surely is not much,' smiled M. de Malesherbes.

'It is enough to disgrace me in the village,' said the unhappy girl, 'for that malicious Jacques saw me and has spread the report, so that for a year I cannot enter the grove, and the lads passed me by in the dance, even Mathieu, and I must stay single all my life.'

'No, my dear child,' said M. de Malesherbes, both touched and amused, 'that punishment is too great; come, and I will plead for you,' and taking the poor girl by the hand he led the way to the village green where the dance was being held. Here the great statesman pleaded her cause, and so eloquently that the disgraced milkmaid was forgiven and her honours restored.

Soon after the now happy girl and Jeannette too were married, and M. de Malesherbes added to their *dots* a bouquet of his choicest roses. This was the beginning of a custom, and for many a long year the roses from the 'Solitude' formed the bridal bouquets of the village brides.

SEWING SONG.

I HAVE a little servant
With a single eye;
She always does my bidding
Very faithfully;
But she eats me no meat
And she drinks me no drink,
A very clever servant, as you well may think.

Another little servant
On my finger sits,
She the one-eyed little servant
Very neatly fits;
But she eats me no meat
And she drinks me no drink,
A very clever servant, as you well may think.

Now, one more little servant,
Through the single eye,
Does both the other's bidding
Very faithfully;
But she eats me no meat,
And she drinks me no drink,
A very clever servant, as you well may think.

A needle and a thimble,
And a spool of thread,
Without the fingers nimble,
And the knowing head,
They would never make out,
If they tried the whole day,
To sew a square of patchwork, as you well may say.

MARY J. JACQUES.

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