

BACHELOR APARTMENTS.

THERE is always an air of mystery and romance to the feminine mind in the mere name of clubs and bachelor apartments.

When a club gives an entertainment of any kind the fair sex are certain to respond to the invitation with alacrity and with the intention and avowed purpose of examining man's haunts, seeing what men do in their clubs and going away with a general impression that a club is always *en fête* and turned upside down.

If there is such a disposition to examine clubs, there is a still greater one to see a bachelor apartment, and an invitation to dinner at one of these would be far more eagerly accepted than one to a dinner given by the more prosaic married people.

There is a *swayson* of wickedness about the idea of a dinner at a bachelor's house, even though the dinner is chaperoned by a dame as proper and correct as Mrs Grundy herself. It is, however, a chance given to few, as there are but few bachelors who keep establishments capable of giving dinners, though the apartments themselves are in many cases every way suitable.

The great army of bachelors in great cities have to be housed as well as fed, and in all these cities there are plenty of apartments for bachelors only. Paris takes the palm of them for apartments, the luxuries of which are simply wonderful. And next to Paris come New York, though individual instances here can compare with anything the Parisian capital can produce in the way of perfect comfort, good taste and perfection of appointment.

One often hears the remark, 'I wonder why — don't marry.' Perhaps if his apartments were seen and his life watched the reason could be given. A bachelor with cultivated tastes can get around him a combination of comfort and luxury that cannot be found in most married people's houses, however wealthy. There is also the freedom of bachelor life that has its charm, the capability of packing a portmanteau and departing to the uttermost ends of the earth if the spirit so wills, with none to question, no one to ginsay, only one's self to consult.

There may be another side to the question, for when sickness or depression takes a strong hold, the care of the servant, however excellent a man he may be in the cleaning of trousers, varnishing of boots and scientific oiling of hats, is but a poor exchange for the tender nursing of a wife, mother or sister. A bachelor's life on the whole, however, if he be a rich bachelor, makes him a man who need not be pitted, and when his time does come—as come it almost always does—he will settle down into double harness as quietly as if he had been broken to it years ago, and though the contemplation of the flickering flames of the winter fire may recall the days when he was a gay young dog and a festive bachelor, the pleasant little card parties and the festive suppers, he will arouse from his cogitation as a cry from the nursery reminds him that times have changed, and think that after all he has made a change for the better.

ADVANTAGES OF A BAD MEMORY.

A BAD memory, says a satirical writer, is always a good thing to a bad poet. He finds his mind full of fine thoughts and fancies, which make him feel proud of himself. Not remembering that they are the fine thoughts and fancies of other poets, he naturally imagines that they are his own, and makes free use of them accordingly, and thereby acquires the fame of an original bard among the sections of the public that is blessed with memories no better than his own. Then, too, the benefits of a bad memory to a man who is fond of reading can scarcely be over-estimated. It at once makes his small library as inexhaustible as that marvellous pitcher of water from which everyone might drink as much as he required, and still it always remained full to the brim. He may read a good novel or a good poem and enjoy its beauties to the utmost; but in a short time he has quite forgotten them, and can take up the same book and read it again with as much delight as if he had never read it before. This is a joy in which the man with the good memory cannot indulge. The exquisite pleasure one feels in reading some of our best books for the first time he can enjoy but once. If he takes up the book a second time he too clearly remembers the whole plot and how it will end; it is stale and unprofitable to him; it has lost its gloss of newness, and he marvels at the delight it gave him when he read it before. But to the man with a bad memory the book never becomes stale; he can always read it again after a short interval and renew his former raptures over it. He is a happy man. For him the rose never loses its fragrance. He eats his cake and has it, in spite of the proverb, and will continue to eat and have it as long as he lives.

THE MERCER REGATTA.

LAST Saturday the Mercer Annual Regatta was held at that locality on the Waikato River, and was attended by, into a number of visitors from Auckland by special excursion train. A page of illustrations elsewhere will afford those readers of THE GRAPHIC who have not visited Mercer some idea of the locality, and of the very interesting aquatic sports which comprise the Regatta. Mercer is now about the only place in New Zealand where a genuine Maori canoe race can be seen, and the Maori sports constitute the chief attraction in the Regatta there. The Maoris of the vicinity entered into the preparations for the regatta with great zeal, and in order to get up a race for large canoes (Wakatiwai), one *Aapu* had a very large canoe cut out at Mangatawhiri, on the Waikato, last month specially for this contest. The sight of a number of well-manned canoes paddling up or down the river gives visitors some slight idea of the spectacle the noble Waikato often presented in the old times of Maoritanga, with whole fleets of plumed and decorated *Wakatiwai* sweeping along its surface on some warlike excursion. Those times are changed now, and at the most all the use John Maori can find for his canoe is to paddle himself and *whāine* or a few potatoes and pigs across the river. One of the most amusing contests in regattas of this sort is the canoe hurdle race, which often, as depicted in our illustration, causes great fun through the inability or tardiness of the craft to leap the obstacle. The Maori *whāine* race, too, is often productive of much merriment. We should mention that it is very greatly owing to the untiring exertions of Mr 'Tommy' Porter, a well-known Mercer boniface, that the success of these annual regattas is due.

A PERSEVERING CONTRIBUTOR.

A GOOD many years ago a magazinist whose name is now famous sent his first manuscript to a magazine. It was rejected. After a time he sent another, which was also rejected, and next month another, which met the same fate.

Instead of being crushed by all this ill-fortune he began to send in two or three manuscripts every month, consisting of essays, sketches, poems, romances and tales of adventure, but not one of them all was accepted by the editor of the magazine in the course of the half year during which the patient writer kept up his merry lullaby.

This writer, however, did not become discouraged, but continued to send more and more manuscript to the office of the magazine, and at last they are thrown into a waste paper barrel near the editorial table without being looked at for the editor had become disgusted over the scribbler's pertinacity. The receptacle in which the manuscripts were kept came to be known in the office as '—'s barrel,' and every month to the end of the year, he continued to add to its stock. The editor had ceased to take any interest in this paper stock, or in its growth or in the barrel, but often



ALFRED STEVENS.
Drowned near Wairoa South, Auckland, February 15th.

A CLEVER FRAUD.

THE police records of the French capital have just been enriched by another of those clever bits of Parisian roguery that make plain ordinary swindling appear in comparison as inartistic as hod carrying. The Parisian dailies published lately this announcement:

'A splendid wedding will take place here toward the end of the month. M. W. Thompson, a millionaire American broker, will marry Miss Ellen Barber, the only daughter of the highly respected Rev. J. M. Barber of New Zealand.'

About ten days after this notice appeared a man with a white beard and in clerical garments introduced himself at the jewellery shop of Mme. Prevost as Rev. Dr. Barber, and asked that an attendant be sent with a great variety of jewels to his house in Bassano, in order that Mr. Thompson, his future son-in-law, might choose fitting wedding gifts for the coming bride. The old man designated some £2,000 worth of jewels as the most likely lot for his future son-in-law's taste and left. The next morning Mme. Prevost herself took the jewels designated and some £1,000 worth more to the house in Bassano-street. She was led into a splendid reception-room by a maid-servant, who took her card to the 'pastor.' She was received in a few minutes by the old man in a salon crowded with evidences of the wealth of the occupants. He said:

'My daughter is too ill to rise. Her fiance is with her, and if you will step in they will make their selection together.'

The 'pastor' opened the door to admit the caller to his daughter's bedside, but was stopped by a woman's voice: 'The woman must come to-morrow. I am not able to see strangers to-day.'

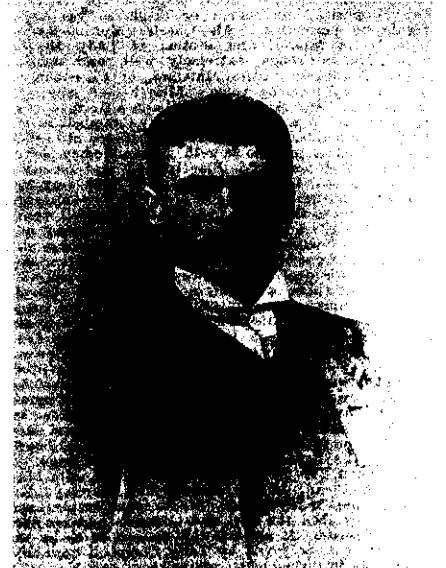
'But, my dear child, you can just take a glance or two, so as to tell us what you wish,' remonstrated the 'pastor,' and then turning to Mme. Prevost: 'The poor girl has a terrible headache and objects to seeing strangers. I will just give her a look at the things myself, and then give the order.'

He took the tray with the £3,000 worth of jewels, gave Mme. Prevost an album of views of the Yosemite for her entertainment, and then went to the woman in the next room. He returned to chat with Mme. Prevost, but was called away by the announcement, 'I have made my choice.' The pastor remained away five, ten, fifteen minutes. Mme. Prevost became nervous, and knocked at the bedroom door. No answer. She tried it. It was locked. She hurried to the other doors. They, too, were fast. She screamed and pounded until the janitor came to her rescue. The false pastor and daughter and maid-servant had gone and have not been seen since. They had taken the rooms the day before and had not even paid the rent.

Sunday School Superintendent: 'Who led the children of Israel into Canaan? Will one of the smaller boys answer?' (No reply.) Superintendent (somewhat sternly): 'Can no one tell? Little boy on that seat next to the aisle, who led the children of Israel into Canaan?' Little boy (badly frightened): 'It wasn't me; I— I— I just moved yere last week.'



JOHN BURNSIDE.
Drowned near Wairoa South, Auckland, February 15th.



J. Martin, Photo.
ROBIN WHITNEY.
Drowned near Wairoa South, Auckland, February 15th.

YACHTING FATALITY AT WAIROA SOUTH.

WE publish in the present issue the portraits of three of the four young men who were so unfortunate as to lose their lives in the yachting accident near Auckland on Sunday, the 15th of February. The party consisted of Robin Whitney, Alfred Stevens, Gordon John Hale, and John Burnside. They started early in the day to pass over from Wairoa South to Chamberlain's Island, a distance of some five miles, and reached their destination in safety. In the evening they set out to return, but never reached home. On the following Friday the body of Whitney was discovered near the shore, with his watch stopped at a quarter past eight. Two days later the bodies of Burnside and Stevens were also recovered, and subsequently Gordon Hale's body was found. So far nothing has been seen of the yacht.

We have to acknowledge our indebtedness to Messrs Hurton Bros., Dunedin, for the permission to reproduce the views of Dunedin, on the first page of this issue.

told humorous stories about it to his literary visitors, who laughed at them, as a matter of course.

One of these visitors, after laughing at a story about the barrel and the prolific contributor to it, got the notion that there must be 'something in' a writer of such extraordinary pertinacity. He took out of the barrel a manuscript, which happened to be a poem, looked at it, liked its opening, grew enthusiastic as he continued to read it, and when he had finished its perusal glorified the writer of it and told the editor of the magazine that this was a grand work which ought to be given to the world at once. It was printed in next month's magazine, to the amusement of its writer.

The popularity of the new poet was soon made manifest, and further productions of his pen were now in demand. The old barrel was ransacked. The essays and other things there were eagerly seized by the editor of the magazine and were printed month after month.

The writer of the rejected manuscript began to hear of his renown. High remuneration was offered to him for his handiwork. His name is now known far and wide. He has for years past been enjoying the rewards of that extraordinary pertinacity and patience which he displayed when he first strove to gain admission into the literary field.