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1. Yap or Eap (Western Carolines). 2. Flat Islands. 3. Valan (Eastern Carolines). 4. Caroline Town. 5. Duperry Islands.

VIEWS OF THE CAROLINE ISLANDS.—SEE LETTERPRESS.

Miss Wentworth's Idea

(BY)

W. E. NORRIS,

Author of 'Matrimony,' 'My Friend Jim,' 'The Rogue,' 'A Bachelor's Blunder.'

CHAPTER X.

O go straight to head-quarters for information sounds like a wise principle to act upon; and indeed the system is said to have been adopted with success by certain eminent statesmen and diplomatists. Yet, if the truth were known, it might possibly be found that the statesmen have not wholly disdained other means of arriving at their ends, because, unfortunately, the desire of the candid inquirer for a plain statement of facts is not always shared at head-quarters. No one, therefore, will be surprised to hear that Sylvia, in spite of her bold resolution to interrogate Sir Harry Brewster as to the circumstances connected with his divorce, knew very little more about them at the end of three weeks than she had done at the beginning. She did, indeed, summon up courage to put a point-blank question to him, but his reply was such as to render further questions almost impossible. It was too true, he said, that he was a divorced man, but Miss Sylvia would understand that he could not talk much to her upon such a subject. He might add that it was an excessively painful one to him.

After that, what more could she do? She ventured upon an occasional hint; but these he ignored, and finally she said to herself that she really did not care to pry into matters which were none of her business. The past was past and had better be forgotten; the present was quite enjoyable enough to content her.

If the present had not contented her no blame could have attached to Sir Harry Brewster, who was indefatigable in devising schemes for her amusement.

Although he did not come very often to the house, he contrived to make arrangements for meeting Sylvia almost every day of the week, and what was still more clever of him was that he also contrived to secure the necessary escort in the person of her father. Mr Wentworth did not mind incurring a little trouble and inconvenience for the pleasure of Sir Harry's society. Sir Harry was not only himself entertaining, but had a number of entertaining friends whom it was a change and an amusement to meet. As for Muriel's apprehensions and warnings, they were preposterous upon the face of them; impossibilities do not occur, and Mr Wentworth had a comfortable habit of treating all disagreeable occurrences as impossible.

Muriel herself ended by shutting her eyes to what, after all, was not obtruded upon her notice. When one is helpless, one may as well hope for the best; moreover, she had now a good deal more to occupy her thoughts than she had hitherto had. Every day she spent several hours with the sick children, whose affections she had no difficulty in gaining: the Sisters made her welcome and were not averse to chatting with her about the rules of the Society to which they belonged, and in the principles of which they had the firmest faith; from time to time she encountered Mr Compton, who was always in a hurry, yet never passed her without saying a few friendly words, and she had come to look forward to the visits of Colonel Medhurst, who frequently happened to drop in about tea-time. Upon the whole, her life just now was pleasant to her, notwithstanding the modesty of its immediate aims; and, that being so, she was disposed to take a more sanguine view of the proceedings and prospects of others.

One day Sylvia received a letter which ought to have delighted her, yet, somehow or other, failed to produce that effect, and the contents of which she did not at once communicate to Muriel.

'We are going to have our annual ball next Wednesday,' Lady Morecambe wrote, 'and there will be two others in the neighbourhood in the course of the week; so you see the time has come for you to redeem your promise. We shall expect you on Monday, and I will undertake to provide you with as many good partners as you can wish for.'

Instead of jumping for joy, Sylvia found herself wondering whether she could not find some excuse for declining this seductive invitation, and it must be acknowledged that at first she was a little surprised by her own hesitation. However, she accounted for it by reflecting that she really had not more than one ball-dress fit to wear and that she could not afford two new ones; also that balls were poor fun when you hadn't an idea who your partners would be; finally that Sir Harry Brewster had promised to take her to see a polo match on the day named by Lady Morecambe. The approach of the post hour found her still irresolute, and she was sitting at her aunt's writing-table in the drawing-room, biting the end of her pen and sighing, when Sir Harry Brewster was announced.

Sir Harry, who was always careful to observe the laws of conventionality, hastened to explain that he had asked for Miss Wentworth and had been told that she was at home.

'One Miss Wentworth is at home,' answered Sylvia laughing, 'and the other will be soon. Sit down and help me invent a polite fib. Lady Morecambe has asked me to go down to them next Monday for their ball, and I don't think I want to go. What shall I say to her.'

'When I don't want to accept an invitation,' observed Sir Harry, 'I always say I'm afraid I can't manage it; but perhaps ladies are expected to give reasons. Why don't you want to go, though? It's sure to be well done, and I expect you would enjoy it.' He added presently, 'I'll go, if you will?'

'Have you been invited?' asked Sylvia, with a sudden change of countenance.

'No; but that's a trifle. I'll get Morecambe to ask me.'

Sylvia looked down and began to draw patterns upon the sheet of paper before her. 'Do you know,' she said hesitatingly at length, 'I don't think Lady Morecambe quite—likes you.'

'Oh, if that's all, I'm sure she doesn't,' he replied. 'Lady Morecambe is—shall we say prejudiced against me?' Then, perceiving what he was probably meant to understand, he resumed: 'I shan't beg for my invitation until the last moment, you know, and I shan't apply to her ladyship at all. Meanwhile, please write an acceptance. I'll undertake to say that when you enter the ball-room you will find me on the spot, waiting to claim a dance.'

From the above fragment of dialogue it will be seen that three weeks had brought about a decided change of relations between these two persons, and that Sir Harry had, consciously or unconsciously, ceased to pose as the benevolent admirer of mature years. Sylvia scribbled off the letter, pausing every now and again to throw a remark over her shoulder.

'I don't know why Lady Morecambe should be prejudiced against you,' was one of these.

'Oh, I think you do,' responded Sir Harry, tranquilly. 'In a general way of speaking, the British matron is prejudiced against me, and the British matron is not wrong. I don't complain—but at the same time I must confess that I don't care. So long as you don't share the good lady's prejudices, she is very welcome to them.'

'But perhaps I should,' observed Sylvia turning a somewhat uneasy countenance towards him, 'if ——'

'If you were as well acquainted with my misdeeds as she is? Very likely you would; and that is why I shall not confess them to you. I will only take the liberty of pleading that I am not quite so black as I am painted.'

During the period of silence which followed this audacious assertion Muriel came in and recognised the visitor with a look of annoyed surprise which did not escape his notice.

'You will have to dismiss your butler, Miss Wentworth,' said he; 'his mind is too logical for his position. You have evidently given him a general order to the effect that you are always out when you are at home, and a deductive process of reasoning has led him to conclude that you must be at home when you are out. Anyhow, he assured me that you were at home, and upon the faith of that statement I followed him upstairs. I can't pretend that I regret having done so especially as I arrived just in time to persuade Miss Sylvia that she ought to accept an invitation to Lady Morecambe's ball, which she was thinking of refusing. Nobody understands how to make a country ball go off better than Lady Morecambe.'

'I had not heard anything about it; Sylvia did not mention it to me,' said Muriel, with a perplexed look. And then as her niece vouchsafed no remark: 'Are *you* going to this ball, Sir Harry?' she inquired.

'I am sorry to say that I haven't been asked,' replied Sir Harry, imperturbably.

Sylvia bent over the envelope which she was addressing. She was perhaps a little ashamed of her confederate's *suppressio veri*; but, on the other hand, the fact that he was making himself her confederate was not disagreeable to her. As for Muriel she both felt relieved and looked so.

'Of course you will go, Sylvia,' she said. 'When did you ever refuse an invitation to a ball?'

'Oh, I am going,' answered Sylvia. 'Only I doubted about it because Lady Morecambe says there are to be two other dances, and I have neither frocks nor money to buy them.'

'If that is all, I'll provide the frocks,' said Muriel, who indeed was in the habit of supplementing her niece's allowance by frequent gifts of that description.

In the innocence of her heart, she felt quite grateful to Sir Harry for having urged this change of scene upon Sylvia, and began to think that, bad as he was, she might have wronged him by suspecting him of designs which only a hardened scoundrel could have entertained. It was, therefore, with unwonted graciousness that she said: 'I hope you will stay and have a cup of tea with us.'

'He will be delighted,' answered Sylvia for him. 'I say so to save him from telling a direct falsehood. Sir Harry would prefer a sherry and bitters; he doesn't really like tea; no *man* does. Not even your long, solemn soldier, Muriel, though he meekly swallows about a quart of it every afternoon to please you.'

Muriel, slightly displeased, was beginning to say that neither Sir Harry Brewster nor anyone else gave her the least pleasure by swallowing what he did not like, when she was interrupted by the entrance of the 'long, solemn soldier,' whose arrival at that hour had, to tell the truth, become a matter of almost daily occurrence.

The candles had not yet been lighted, so that Colonel Medhurst did not notice the presence of a stranger until after he had exchanged a few remarks with Muriel and had turned to shake hands with Sylvia. The latter since her aunt said nothing, took upon herself to accomplish an introduction by which both men appeared to be disagreeably affected. Sir Harry on hearing the name of Colonel Medhurst, rose hastily, made a half bow and looked around for his hat, while the other standing stock-still, clenched his fist and muttered something suspiciously like an imprecation. There was a brief pause; after which the Colonel, whose voice was trembling with anger, said:

'I have not tried to meet you, Sir Harry Brewster; I know that I should gain nothing except a little personal satisfaction from giving you the thrashing that you so richly deserve. But since chance has brought us together in this very unexpected way, I will take this opportunity of telling you that you are no gentleman and that you have no business to be in any lady's house. I am sure if Miss Wentworth knew as much about you as I know, she would not permit you to enter hers.'

'My good man,' returned Sir Harry, calmly, 'there is one thing which certainly ought not to take place in any lady's house, and that is a brawl. Here is my card. If you wish to thrash me, and think you can do it, by all means call upon me at any hour which it may please you to appoint; but, for your own sake, don't indulge in strong language under circumstances which make it impossible for me to answer you.'

Colonel Medhurst was one of those quiet, sensible men who very seldom lose their temper, and who consequently have had little practice in the difficult task of self-control.

'I am not going to treat you as if you were a gentleman,' he retorted, forgetting that he was asked to show some consideration for his hostess, not for his enemy. 'Wherever I meet you I shall say what I said just now, and, as you very well know, I can justify my words.'

'In that case,' observed Sir Harry, 'it is evident that one or other of us must retire. I will leave you to explain and excuse your behaviour to Miss Wentworth. No doubt, if she thinks it worth while, she will allow me to state my own case some other time.'

He then took his leave in a manner which was not devoid of quiet dignity; and, as the slight pressure which he ventured to give to Sylvia's fingers was distinctly returned, he went away without much fear as to ultimate results.

Yet his predicament was really an awkward one, as he might have realised, had he not been rendered a little dull of comprehension by the comparative facility with which he had regained his position in society, after a temporary period of eclipse. Medhurst when he was left alone with the ladies, grew a little cooler, though he was still much agitated.

'I suppose I ought to make you an apology,' he began; 'I ought not, perhaps, to have brought about a scene in your drawing-room. But I think you will forgive me when I tell you that that man was my sister's husband, and that she was compelled to obtain a divorce from him while I was away in India. You won't wish or expect me to give you all the particulars of the case; but I may say this—that she proved personal cruelty. He struck her on more than one occasion before the servants. And the worst of it is that he has not been punished; he was glad to be set free. It is she, and she alone, who has suffered.'

'I don't think you owe us any apology, Colonel Medhurst,' said Muriel, who looked penitent and ashamed. 'I knew—my brother told me—about the divorce; but I didn't know who Sir Harry's wife had been.'

'Your brother told you, and yet you continued to receive him!' exclaimed Medhurst. 'Well—I am surprised. I must say that I am surprised.' Muriel, feeling that it would be a little undignified to plead her own repeatedly expressed reluctance to receive the culprit, remained silent; but Sylvia said:

'Why are we to condemn Sir Harry unheard? Of course you are angry and you won't admit that there can be anything to be said for him; but there *are* always two sides to a case.'

'It is impossible to explain away facts which have been proved in a court of law,' returned Colonel Medhurst, coldly. 'If you will excuse me, I will say good-night now. I am sorry that this encounter should not have taken place elsewhere; but as regards what I said to that man I have nothing to retract and nothing to regret.'

'I can't compliment your friend upon his manners,' remarked Sylvia, when the door had closed behind the irate colonel. 'One may forgive him for having insulted Sir Harry, though perhaps it would have been better form to wait until they were both out in the street; but I don't know what right he had to be so rude to us.'

'He wasn't rude,' answered Muriel rather sadly, for she felt sure that her friend would now be her friend no longer, 'he was only offended, and he had a right to be that. We ought not to receive Sir Harry Brewster; I have thought so all along.'

'Papa doesn't think so, it seems,' returned Sylvia, preparing herself for battle; 'nor does Lady Morecambe. What have we to do with the sins which our acquaintances may have committed in days gone by? I suppose that even Colonel Medhurst, if he were put into the confessional, would have to plead guilty to a few peccadilloes.'

But Muriel declined the fray. She reserved what she had to say for her brother, with whom she sought an interview in his study before she went to bed, and to whom she gave an account of the afternoon's events.

'Dear me, what an odd coincidence,' remarked Mr Wentworth, after patiently hearing her out. 'Now that you mention it, I think I do recollect that the lady's maiden name was Medhurst. Well, of course we mustn't let these two fire eaters come to fisticuffs here. You had better give the necessary orders to the servants.'

'I doubt whether Colonel Medhurst will ever come here again,' answered Muriel: 'I am sure he won't if Sir Harry Brewster is to be admitted. Surely there can be no question as to which of them ought to have the door shut against him.'

An unwelcome idea was suggested to Mr Wentworth by this speech. He had always taken the possibility of Muriel's marriage into account, but only in the same sense as he had contemplated the possibility of the house being burnt down or of his own premature demise. Just as there are a good many non-marrying men, so one occasionally comes across a non-marrying woman. He had mentally included his sister in the latter restricted class, and it is needless to add that he had done so very willingly. She was free to marry if she pleased, only her marriage would mean the curtailment of a considerable proportion of his personal comforts; and that may have been one reason why he at once jumped to the conclusion that Colonel Medhurst was in no way worthy of her.

'I am not prepared to shut my door against anybody,' he rejoined rather sharply; 'but supposing, for the sake of argument, that I had to be so uncivil, I would rather turn my back upon Medhurst, who is simply a heavy nonentity, than upon Sir Harry Brewster, who is a man of the world and a pleasant companion.'

Muriel declined to take up the cudgels on Colonel Medhurst's behalf. 'I daresay you would,' she replied: 'but why will you persist in shutting your eyes to the fact that you are not the only person in the house? It isn't for your sake or for Colonel Medhurst's but for Sylvia's that I want you to put a stop to this intimacy with Sir Harry Brewster.'

Mr Wentworth laughed. 'One of the funniest things about women,' he remarked, 'is the obstinacy with which they cling to an idea when there is not a tittle of evidence to support it. I have had more opportunities of seeing Sylvia and Sir Harry together than you have, and if you will believe me—but of course you won't—neither of them is dreaming of a project which is palpably inadmissible. I grant you that Sir Harry treated his wife abominably; but, as she was not a relation of mine, I don't feel called upon to avenge her wrongs, Colonel Medhurst naturally does. Very well, let him avenge them in any way that may recommend itself to him. If cutting our acquaintance is one of them, I shall submit uncomplainingly.'

'You don't think it worth while to shield Sylvia from the risk of a great misfortune then?'

'My dear Muriel, haven't I just told you that the risk has no existence, except in your imagination? If you will only leave Sylvia alone and give her time, she will probably end by marrying Johnny Hill. She won't marry Sir Harry Brewster for two good reasons. Firstly: he won't ask her, and secondly, I shouldn't allow her to accept him if he did. Colonel Medhurst and he must settle their differences between them; only as I said before, I should take measures if I were you, to prevent a settlement from occurring in this house. Our obvious course is to remain neutral.'

Muriel sighed and left the room. She could do nothing with this selfish optimist; but she inwardly registered a vow to the effect that if Sir Harry Brewster had the effrontery to call again, he should find neither her nor Sylvia at home.

CHAPTER XI.

It is not with impunity that a sober, middle-aged man can permit his passions to gain the mastery over him. In the inevitable reaction which ensues his self-esteem is sure to sink to a very low ebb, and he not only feels that he has behaved like a fool, but is apt to conclude that he has been inexcusable in so behaving. So, in spite of the unbending attitude which Colonel Medhurst had assumed on taking leave of Miss Wentworth, he had not proceeded far on his homeward way before the voice of his conscience began to make itself heard. Nothing—so he said to himself—can justify a fracas in the presence of ladies, and if an actual fracas had been averted, the credit was due to Sir Harry Brewster, not to him. For two pins he would have caught the man by the throat or knocked him down. He shuddered as he inwardly made that acknowledgment, and told himself that he was no better than a vulgar ruffian. Of course what he ought to have done, on hearing who the stranger was, was simply to go away. At the most he might perhaps have explained his reasons for doing so in a few words.

But it was too late to think of that now. What he had done could not be undone, and he must accept the consequences. One of these certainly seemed to be that a coldness would arise between him and the woman whom he no longer disguised from himself that he loved, and another, he supposed, would be that he must make some appointment to meet Sir Harry Brewster. That the man deserved to be insulted did not alter the fact that he had insulted him; he could not very well refuse to take any further notice of one whom he had treated in that way.

At the same time he did not, now that his head was less hot, see what satisfaction either of them was likely to obtain from a meeting. It was all very well to talk about thrashing Sir Harry; but such things if they are to be done at all, must be done upon the spur of the moment, and pistol and rapier have fallen into disuse in this country. Under the circumstances, therefore, nothing could be exchanged between him and his enemy except abusive language, which was scarcely a fit method of fighting for men to adopt. More mature reflection, however, led him to believe that there was, after all, just a possibility of some good resulting from the proposed interview. Remembering what Muriel had told him about her uneasiness respecting her niece, it dawned upon him that the undesirable suitor of whom she had spoken could be no other than Sir Harry Brewster, and he immediately made up his mind that he would at least relieve her of that source of anxiety. That it was in his power to do this he felt little doubt. It was not in his power to do anything for his sister; if he killed Sir Harry she would be none the better off, nor would she thank him. Her injuries were irremediable; but surely, knowing what he did, he could bring pressure enough to bear upon this scoundrel to preserve an innocent girl from sharing her fate. He had the simplicity to imagine that a threat of exposure would suffice; for, although nothing was more probable than that he man would tell Miss Wentworth a tissue of lies, these could easily be proved to be lies by the production of a file of old newspapers.

The outcome of his meditations was that, as soon as he had dined, he despatched the following telegram to the address given him by Sir Harry Brewster: 'Shall I find you at home at eleven o'clock to-morrow?' Telegraphing had the double advantage of insuring a speedy answer and obviating all necessity for conventional forms of epistolatory politeness. Sir Harry's reply was not long in reaching him.

'Glad to see you at the hour named.'

'I wish I could make you sorry to see me, you villain!' muttered the colonel, grinding his teeth, as he tossed the slip of paper into the fire. 'Ah, if only you and I had lived a hundred years ago!'

But one must needs conform to the usages of the period to which one belongs, and an Englishman in the latter part of the nineteenth century has no means of healing his wounded honour save such as a court of law may be pleased to accord him. Colonel Medhurst, therefore, presented himself at Queen Anne's Mansions on the following morning, like any ordinary visitor, and was admitted as soon as the ball-porter had ascertained that Sir Harry Brewster was out of bed.

It was in Queen Anne's Mansions that Sir Harry Brewster resided at this time, his family mansion in Grosvenor-square having been let for a term of years owing to unavoidable circumstances. The suite of apartments which he occupied formed very comfortable bachelor's quarters, nor would anyone have supposed on seeing them, that their owner was suffering from financial straits. Their owner, clad in a crimson plush smoking-suit, had finished his breakfast and was enjoying a cigarette and the perusal of *The Sportsman*, when the grim Colonel was announced. He at once got up.

'I really don't know whether it is any use to ask you to sit down,' he said; 'but pray do so if you feel inclined. In fact, you may consider me entirely at your orders. I am ready to give you a cigar or to clear away the furniture and engage in a stand-up fight—just as you please.'

'I came here,' answered Medhurst, speaking in the sharp, *staccato* accents of a man who has some difficulty in controlling himself, 'because, after what I said to you at Miss Wentworth's house yesterday, it seemed to me that I was bound to accept your invitation to meet you alone. It is for you to decide whether there shall be a stand-up fight or not. For my own part, I don't propose to break your bones, because I don't see what would be the good of it.'

Sir Harry smiled. 'You are a heavier man than I, Colonel Medhurst,' he remarked; 'but, lest you should think that I am afraid of you, I may mention that I know how to use my fists about as well as any man in England. I doubt whether you would get a chance of breaking any of my bones in two hours. Besides which, I agree with you that there would be no particular good in it if you did. Well, what can I do for you? You consider that I treated your sister badly and I do not deny it. Would you like me to cross the Channel and fight a duel with you? If so, I am quite willing to oblige you.'

'No,' answered the other, gloomily; 'I don't see that there would be any good in that either. And why should I let you have a shot at me? I meant what I told you yesterday; you are not a gentleman and you have no title to be treated as one.'

'From the reason which you gave just now for your visit,' returned Sir Harry, without losing his temper, 'I supposed that you wished to give me an opportunity of avenging an insult. If you didn't, and if you won't fight, may I venture to ask why you are here?'

The question was certainly excusable; but Medhurst, who had not expected it to be put quite so soon, was not prepared to answer it forthwith. He gnawed his moustache for a moment and then remarked:

'You don't deny having treated my sister badly, but, in my opinion, "badly" is scarcely a strong enough word to use. As much as that might have been said if you had at least kept you hands off her; but to beat a defenceless woman is—well, it is simply to put yourself outside the pale of common humanity.'

'On my side,' replied Sir Harry, 'I may say that "beating" is too strong a word to use. I will tell you exactly what happened. Your sister is a pious woman, and like many other pious women she has the gift of exasperating sinners beyond all bearing. She so exasperated me by accusing me of misconduct in the presence of the servants that one evening I took her by the shoulders and pushed her out of the dining-room. On another occasion when her maid was in the room, she came close up to me and poured out a torrent of abuse against a woman of whom she was jealous and whom she mentioned by name. I was angry with her for mentioning names; I threw up my hand rather with the intention of waving her back than of touching her, and I certainly did hit her on the arm. The maid afterwards swore that I had boxed her ears—which was a lie. Mind you, I admit that I was violent and I admit that my wife had reason to be jealous; only I submit that when you speak of my having beaten her, you go too far.'

'There is the evidence of eye-witnesses, which was not refuted and which was believed by the jury,' returned Medhurst, doggedly; 'I am not bound to accept your version of what occurred. I don't care to discuss the matter; it is past mending. But one thing I wish to say to you: you must cease your visits to Miss Wentworth's house. It has come to my knowledge that you are paying attention to her niece—a girl who is scarcely more than a child—and you can't suppose that I shall allow that to go on. Even you ought to feel that such attentions on your part are a little too infamous.'

'I have been very forbearing with you, Colonel Medhurst,' answered Sir Harry; 'I have tried to make every allowance for the indignation which you express and which I should express quite as forcibly, I daresay, if I were in your place. But I must point out to you that you are now putting forward claims which are wholly inadmissible. Naturally, I am not going to tell you whether you are mistaken or not in imagining that I am paying attentions to Miss Sylvia Wentworth; but, if I were, I could not recognise any right on your part to interfere with me. We will drop that subject, if you please.

'Then I shall direct Mr Wentworth's attention to the report of the proceedings instituted against you in the Divorce Court.'

'Of course you are at liberty to do so; although I presume that he is already acquainted with them. Possibly, if I think fit to make the attempt, I may convince him that the evidence was not strictly in accordance with the facts.'

'Possibly you may, if you are shameless enough—as perhaps you are. And yet it does seem to me that no human being with a spark of manliness left in him could be quite such a rascal. Surely it is no great thing to ask that you should refrain from bringing misery upon a girl who isn't old enough to understand what a history like yours means! You have escaped scot free; nobody has punished you for what you have done; as I have told you, I myself don't intend to punish you——'

'Oh, excuse me,' interrupted Sir Harry; 'you really must not expect me to thank you for sparing me. I have offered to give you any kind of satisfaction that you like to ask for; if you won't take advantage of my offer the fault is not mine. Upon no conceivable ground are you entitled to dictate to me who my friends shall be.'

There was no disputing that assertion, and Colonel Medhurst, after a moment of meditation, realised that he could not dispute it. 'Very well,' he said; 'you will take your course and I shall take mine. I don't think so badly of Mr Wentworth as to believe that he will let you into his house when he has heard what I shall tell him about you.'

With that he turned on his heel, and left his antagonist, feeling that he had by no means had the best of the encounter.

And now it seemed to him to be nothing less than his simple duty to call in Upper Brook-street and make a more ample apology to Miss Wentworth for his treatment of her visitor than he had made at the time. He had been in the right so far as Sir Harry Brewster was concerned, but he had certainly been in the wrong in creating an embarrassing situation for a lady, and he felt that he ought to say so. Perhaps he may also have been influenced by a strong desire to make his peace with the lady in question; but if so, he was honestly unconscious of it. Towards five o'clock, therefore, he wended his way westwards, animated by sentiments of the most penitent humility.

Now, it so chanced that at the same hour Muriel was returning home from her daily visit to the children's hospital, and thus it was that she was overtaken within a few yards of her own door by a gentleman whose aspect was very much less warlike than it had been on the occasion of their last meeting.

Medhurst offered his excuses a little awkwardly yet after a fashion which was neither unflattering nor displeasing to their recipient. She understood very well that he could not bring himself to express regret for having used plain language to a scoundrel, but that he was mortally afraid lest, by so doing, he should have lost the good opinion of one whose friendship he valued, and she hastened to assure him that there was no ground for that apprehension.

'You could not have acted in any other way,' she declared; 'you only said what it was impossible to help saying, and I quite agree with you that Sir Harry Brewster ought not to be allowed to enter our house. But what can I do? It is not my house, and my brother laughs at the idea of my setting myself up as a judge of the morality of his acquaintances.'

'It isn't as an acquaintance of your brother's that you object to Sir Harry Brewster,' remarked Medhurst unwittingly taking up a somewhat more peremptory tone than he would have adopted, had he been reproached for his indiscretion. 'I won't pretend to be ignorant of what is so obvious, and it is difficult to me to believe that Mr Wentworth can be ignorant of it either.'

'He can always manage to shut his eyes to things which he doesn't wish to see,' sighed Muriel. 'I have told him what I am afraid of; but he treats it as a mare's nest. He doesn't want to cut Sir Harry Brewster, who amuses him, and he refuses to believe that there can be any danger in the case of a man who is almost as old as he himself is.'

'But even admitting that there is no danger, he must see that his daughter ought not to be upon intimate terms with a man of that character. I think, if you don't mind, I will have a little talk with him upon the subject.'

'Of course I don't mind,' answered Muriel, 'but I am afraid he will only laugh at you. I have told the servants I shall not be at home to Sir Harry Brewster in future. That much I was entitled to do; but I can't prevent Sylvia from meeting him elsewhere. Fortunately she will be going down to the country in a few days, and I have written to beg Harriet Morecambe to keep her as long as possible. I don't think Sir Harry is serious: it is about her that I am frightened.'

In speaking with so much frankness Muriel was giving Colonel Medhurst a proof of friendship which he appreciated and which gladdened his heart.

'We ought to be able to protect your niece between us, Miss Wentworth,' said he confidently. 'Brazen it out as he may, that rascal must be ashamed of himself and must know that he hasn't a leg to stand upon. Anyhow, I'm glad to think that he won't be received by you any more. Probably Mr Wentworth has forgotten some incidents of which I shall take the liberty to remind him.'

Muriel, who by this time was standing on the doorstep, smiled and looked doubtfully at him. 'You won't be angry if you are politely requested to mind your own business, will you?' she asked.

'Not I! I consider it my business to be of use to you in any way that I can—and I don't lose my temper very easily, Miss Wentworth, though I did forget myself in your presence yesterday.'

Muriel smiled again and held out her hand. 'I won't ask you to come in this evening,' said she, 'because I think perhaps you had better not meet Sylvia; but if you care to call in a few days you can do so without any fear of finding Sir Harry Brewster in the drawing room.'

So the day ended for Colonel Medhurst a good deal better than it had begun. With what weapons he was to defeat the machinations of Sir Harry Brewster he hardly knew; but one thing was, happily, beyond doubt, namely, that he had entered into an alliance with Muriel Wentworth.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A MODEL HUSBAND.

It was one of those wild nights you read of in nine novels out of ten.

The cold spring rain splashed viciously against the panes and the shutters rattled and banged as the fitful gusts of wind swept through the deserted streets.

It was lodge night, but Brother Fay concluded to stay at home for once, particularly as his mother-in-law was on her periodical inspection tour, and spending a couple of weeks with him.

With a sigh he rolled back in the rocker, his feet in a chair and a newspaper spread open before him like a screen.

Presently he chuckled, and wife and mother looked up from their sewing inquiringly.

'Rather a remarkable case,' he exclaimed, looking over the top of the paper, and with a suspicious twitch about the corner of his mouth, he read aloud:

'"A model husband died recently. He had been married forty-three years and never spent a night away from home."'

'Well, I should say he was a model husband,' broke in the old lady grimly. 'Just think of it, Mary dear, forty-three years and every evening spent at home. No lodge could coax him away from his family,' she added, significantly. 'Poor man, he ought to have a monument a mile high,' and she sighed deeply.

Brother Fay held the paper a little higher, and continued:

'Never spent a night from home. He was paralyzed.

Without, the storm beat harder and louder (a habit storms have at such times) while within silence reigned, save the suppressed rustle of the paper and the 'swish' of the thread through the pillow-case on which the old lady was working.

INTER-PROVINCIAL CHESS TOURNEY.

WELLINGTON V. AUCKLAND.

TOWARDS the end of May a match by telegraph was begun between the Wellington and Auckland Chess Clubs. This was the first occasion on which there has been a trial of strength between them, although the clubs have each been in existence many years, and is therefore a welcome sign to enthusiasts of the game that the popularity of chess is increasing. The Auckland Club has had a continuous but qualified existence for some twenty-seven years, and was re-organised some seven years since. Some of the original members were Messrs Gorrie, Lush, Rice, Heather, Garland, Jakins, and Dr. Horne, none of whom, however, now figure as active members. Lately the club has had the misfortune to lose its three leading players, so the tourney with Wellington did not result victoriously for Auckland, though they made a good fight. After three successive Saturday-evening sittings, the game ended with the score as follows:—Wellington, seven wins to Auckland's five, and three draws. We here publish the portraits of the successful members of the Wellington team.

MR. BARNES.

MR. F. K. KELLING.

THE CAROLINE ISLANDS.

(SEE ILLUSTRATIONS, FRONT PAGE.)

THESE obscure islands in the Pacific Ocean, the possession of which formed at one time a bone of contention between Spain and Germany, lie to the north of New Guinea in 5° 45 and 10° 25 N. lat., and extending to the east beyond 165° E. long. They were named Carolines, or Carolinas, from an island discovered by Lazeano in 1686, and so named by him in honour of his Sovereign, Carlos II. of Spain.

These islands number about thirty, and until comparatively recently were seldom visited by Europeans. Hogoln, the largest, is situated on the eastern extremity of the group. Yap, in the extreme west, is next in size, being about two-thirds less. The others are very small.

Most of the trade of these islands is in the hands of Englishmen and Germans, the staple articles of commerce being copra and *bêche-de mer*.

Though Spain claims sovereignty over the Carolines, she never appears to have done much in the way of trading with them, but seems to base her alleged right to their possession on the fact that they were discovered by a Spanish naval officer.

Among the more complete early accounts of the Caroline Islands is that by the Jesuit, Juan Antonio Cantova, who visited several of the islands in 1721, and during his second voyage thither, 1731, was killed at the Island of Mogmog. It is chiefly the voyage of Captain Duperrey, in the French ship *La Coquille*, in 1828, to the surveys of Rear-Admiral Lutke in the Russian corvette *La Seniavine*, and the works of Captain Cheyne, and Dr. Gulick of the Hawaiian mission, that we owe, says a writer in the *Field*, our present geographical knowledge of the Caroline Islands, for, though there are at the present time several white settlers in the Yap group acting as agents for English and German houses, they have done little to furnish us with further information.

Yap differs considerably from any other island in the group, inasmuch as it is larger and has a different soil, probably being of volcanic origin. It is, strictly speaking, not one island, but three, as the northern portion is interserted in two places by narrow channels. The northern half of the island is traversed by a ridge, which at one point attains an altitude of about 1,100ft.; the southern portion is flat, covered with underwood, above which rise numerous cocoanut palms; and we doubt not that many of our readers will be somewhat surprised when they are informed that this island, for the possession of which Germany and Spain were so nearly coming to loggerheads, is only seventeen miles long, with an average breadth of four miles—about half as large as the Isle of Wight—and that the value of the whole of its produce would not be sufficient to pay the expenses of a small cruiser to protect those engaged in trade. The navigation is extremely dangerous, and its position is by no means exceptionally advantageous for the purposes of a coaling station. The native population is estimated at ten thousand. They are a fine able-bodied race, of light copper complexion, and are of Malay origin. Both sexes wear long hair, and tuck it up in the form of a knob on the side of the head. The dress worn by the men is very scanty; but the females are decently clad, their dress consisting of a petticoat formed of long grass, or banana fibre. Both men and women wear hats made of palm leaves, similar to those worn by the Chinese. The implements of warfare in use among these people are knives, clubs, slings, and stones. The natives of Yap are now peaceably inclined to the white traders; but not long ago they were notorious for their cunning and treachery, having murdered several crews of vessels, whom they had succeeded in surprising. Viewed from the sea the island has a pleasant aspect, as will

Connolly, Wellington.

MR P. TAIT.

Wrigglesworth & Binns, Well.

MR. S. LYTTLEJOHN.

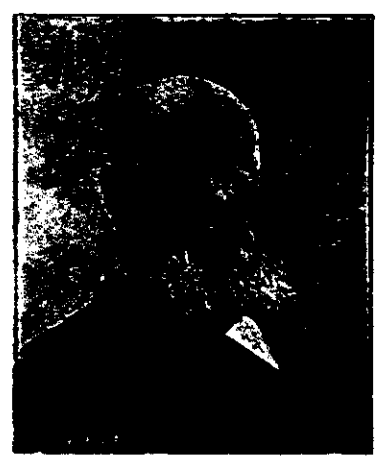
Wrigglesworth & Binns, Well.

MR F. H. BAKEWELL.

Wrigglesworth & Binns, Well.

MR. J. W. TURNBULL.

MR. W. MACKAY.



George, Christchurch.

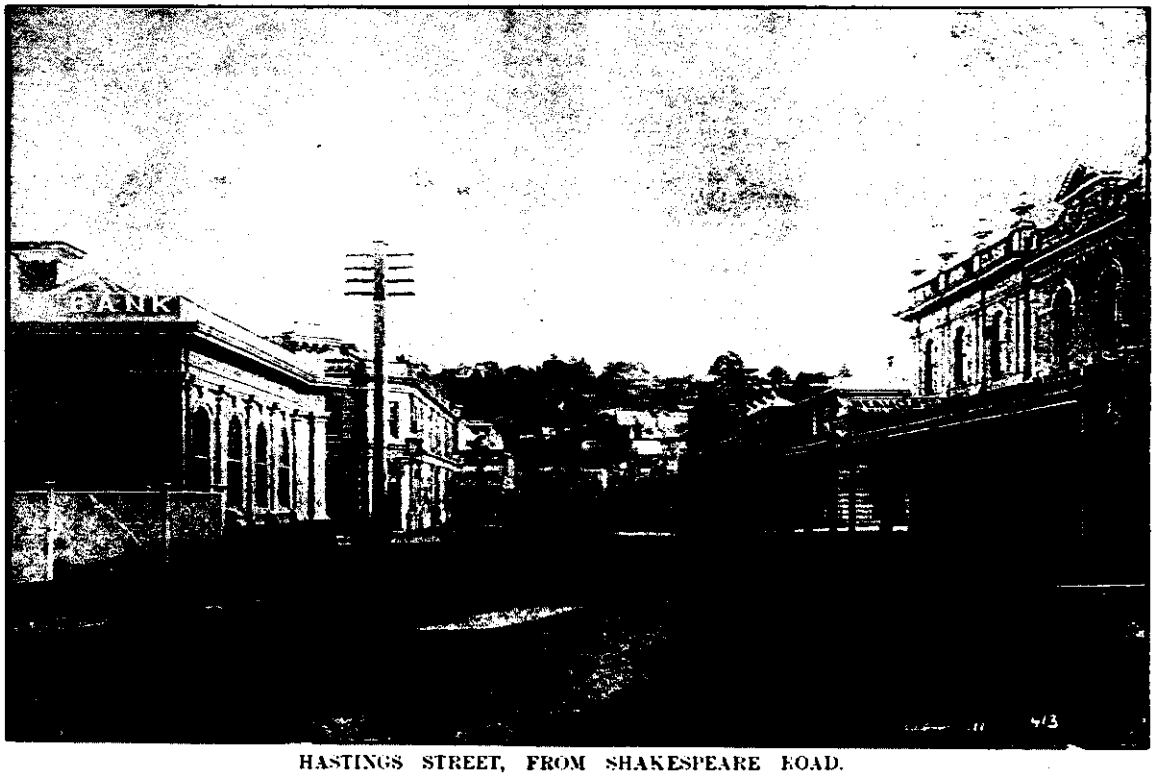
MR. C. W. EKSTROM.

CHESS TOURNAMENT—AUCKLAND V. WELLINGTON.

be seen from our illustration, being interspersed with many houses, and villages with regularly laid-out streets. Most of these are situated near the shore, amongst groves of cocoa-nut, bread fruit, and betel-nut trees. Each village has a large paved square, where the chiefs assemble for consultation; and the houses, which are well constructed, having their sides covered in with wicker work, and their roofs thatched with palm leaves, form an oblong, of which the square is the centre. Owing to the scarcity of large timber, the natives get their proas built at the Palau Islands. They are sometimes as much as seventy feet long, and are constructed with very small planks sewed together. The bottom is formed like a wedge, and the keel being crescent-shaped, they draw a good deal of water. They are very weatherly, and sail exceedingly fast in smooth water.

The climate is described as being remarkably pleasant; and though hurricanes are unknown, strong south-west gales prevail towards the close of the monsoon season, late in August and September. This is also the season of very light winds, when sailing vessels experience great difficulty, and some danger, in getting about amongst the islands.

HASTINGS AND TENNYSON STREETS.



HASTINGS STREET, FROM SHAKESPEARE ROAD.

VIEWS OF NAPIER.

From photos. by J. Martin, Auckland.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK, AND CONCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE.]

Two Letters

(By Brander Matthews.)

I.

FROM THE 'GOTHAM GAZETTE' OF APRIL 21.

FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT.

GEORGETOWN, DEMERARA, April 1.

R STEAD looked over the cliff again. Not one of the White Indians was in sight. So he knew he had a good start. To stand still was but to invite death. His one chance of life lay in reaching the bridge first. He set off at once at a rapid pace notwithstanding the heavy weight of treasure which lined his belt. If it were absolutely necessary to save his life, he was ready to abandon the gold, but only under the most desperate circumstances did he intend to give it up. The pursuers meant to kill him and to get his precious burden; and Mr Stead was resolved to prevent, if he could, their doing either.

Knowing that his enemies were now following him closely, he looked back with every few steps he took. In the fear of a fatigue which might prevent his reaching his object, he dared not over-exert himself, but he walked as fast as he thought wise. He rested himself now and again by breaking into a jog-trot whenever the incline of the ground was not too abrupt. He had covered nearly two-thirds of the distance from the brow of the hill to where he might hope to find the bridge when he caught the first glimpse of his pursuers; the outline of a single man stood out against the horizon. He quickened his pace.

When next he looked back there were four or five men gathered together in a little group about the tall chief. As his eyes were on them the chief waved one hand, and the warriors sprang forward in a brisk run. He had seen them, and he knew that they could see him. It was now a question of speed. If he could get across the bridge safe and sound, it might be that he could hold it until nightfall should give him another chance of escape. If they should catch up to him on the open ground, or if there should not be any bridge at the spot where he hoped to find it, then all would be over; his life would not be worth an hour's purchase, however dearly he might sell it.

The ground favoured him just then, and he dropped into a gentle run. Soon the declivity became too steep for so rapid a progress, and he fell back to a walk. Again he looked at his pursuers. The little group about the chief, not so compact now as when he had first seen it, had covered more than a quarter of the distance which had separated them. And behind these were three other groups rushing toward him, stretching across the slope one after the other.

Mr Stead set his teeth and strode forward. For five minutes he toiled steadily upward; as he neared his goal the ascent was steeper. When he could no longer resist the desire to see whether or not his enemies were gaining on him, he turned his head again. The chief and his followers were but a few hundred feet behind him—scarcely beyond bow-shot; and tailing out over the inclined plain were half a hundred more White Indians, all racing toward him. As they saw him looking at them they raised fierce yells of hatred.

In ten yards more Mr Stead came out on the brink of the river, which rolled along in a deep gulf below, whence it sent out a cloud of spray from a thundering cataract, scarce a hundred feet before him the gulf was spanned by a slight swinging bridge.

Mr Stead saw it, and he gave a gasp of relief; knowing there was now no more need to husband his strength, he rushed forward as fast as he could. When he came to the foot-path which led to the bridge he was still a hundred feet in advance of the nearest of his pursuers. He crossed the frail and vibrating structure as swiftly as he dared, though it trembled beneath his tread, and swung from side to side until it almost threw him off into the dark abyss below, where the river raged fiercely along. As he was toiling up the farther half of the bridge the White Indians arrived on the brink of the cliff behind him. They paused and two of them fitted arrows to their bows. One of these missiles missed Mr Stead, the other struck him in the back of the waist, and broke off against the plates of gold which protected his person at that place.

When he set foot on the firm land and faced about, three of his foes were already on the bridge and crossing over. He stood still in the centre of the path and took deliberate aim and fired. The foremost Indian threw up his hands and fell sideways from the bridge. A second shot struck the next man in the right thigh, and he dropped back, vainly grasping, as he turned in the air, at the ropes which supported the fragile pathway, and dropped down into the dark water which was roaring along the bottom of the chasm more than a hundred feet below. The third man had but just started on his perilous passage: when his two predecessors perished so suddenly, he hesitated for a second, then he sprang forward again. The chief stretched out his arm and stayed the other White Indians as they came up, waiting to see what might be the fate of the third man. Mr Stead held his fire until this man—a tall, handsome fellow—was within fifty feet of him, then he pulled the trigger, and the pursuer, shot through the heart, sprang up into the air, and fell down into the gulf below, knotted into a convulsive ball. Then Mr Stead, seeing that there was no movement on the part of his enemies to attack again, reloaded his revolver.

By this time nearly all the warriors had assembled on the other side. Several of the late-comers were about to run forward on the bridge, but the tall chief called them back. Suddenly a flight of arrows shot across the chasm, and fluttered down before Mr Stead's feet. He was just out of range, but he thought it best to discourage any desire they might have to use him as a mark. Taking careful aim, he fired his revolver again, and the bullet broke the chief's arm. An awful yell arose at this, and for the third time the chief had to restrain the impetuosity of his followers. Mr Stead could not but admire the reckless bravery of his foes, eager to sacrifice their lives to avenge their leader.

For a few minutes there was a respite. While an old man carefully bandaged the chief's wounded arm, the others gathered about them and raised a weird, irregular, pathetic chant, which seemed part of the ceremonial of cure. Mr Stead took advantage of the lull to consider the situation. So long as he could hold the end of the bridge he was safe; they could advance across it only one at a time, and their numbers were therefore of no advantage to them. Yet this security was but temporary; he dared not abandon his post, for his safety depended on his defending it. He was forced to remain where he was, and to make no attempt to proceed on his journey. His foes outnumbered him fifty to one. They could tire him out and they could starve him out if they were willing to settle down to a siege. They might even separate, and while one detachment kept him at bay, the other might retrace its steps to the place where he shot the bird of ill omen, and where their canoes were; then, crossing the river in these, they might come down and take him in the rear.

This scheme seemed to have occurred to the chief at the very moment that it suggested itself to Mr Stead. From his commanding position the American saw the leader of the White Indians call a man forward and give him a series of orders, accompanied by gestures which Mr Stead found no difficulty in interpreting. When he had received his instructions the chosen leader of the detachment went among his comrades and picked out a dozen of them. These he drew up in line before the chief, who spoke a few words of advice, apparently, and of warning. When the chief, ceased, his followers raised a shout of anticipatory triumph, shaking their weapons in the air, and casting looks of hatred against the single American. Then the designated group broke away from the main body and ran back on their own trail. In less than five minutes they were lost to sight.

Mr Stead had no doubt as to the meaning of the departure of this detachment of his foes. He knew that in a definite time—probably four or five hours—he would be outflanked. With an enemy behind him, against whom he could have no protection, his doom would soon be sealed. He saw that if he wished to save his life, and to bear off the treasure which had been confided to him, and which he had bound himself to convey safely to its destination, he must do something, and he must do it quickly.

His first thought was to pick off his opponents one by one, as he had wounded the chief. But a moment's reflection showed the impossibility of this proceeding. There were still nearly twoscore White Indians at the other end of the bridge. By taking them unawares, he might hope to kill ten or a dozen. But what would this profit him? The rest would hide themselves behind the rocks, and, securely under cover, they could then bide their time, exposing themselves only when their comrades might announce their arrival on his side of the river. And yet another reason deterred him. His stock of ammunition was limited; he had barely a score more cartridges.

To remain where he was would be impossible, and to retreat while his foes might at once cross the bridge after him was to invite an immediate death. His only hope of safety was so to bar their passage across the river that he might continue his journey without fear of their following him.

The bridge was of a kind uncommon in Guiana, but frequent enough in the passes in the Andes, where it was found when the soldiers of Pizarro first trod the soil of Peru. It is probably the most primitive form of the suspension bridge. It consists of two stout cables stretched across the valley in a pendant arc. These cables are made of the pliant woody stems of climbing plants, twisted into bush-ropes, as they are called: and they are almost unbreakable by any strain likely to be put on them. These tough and flexible cables are fastened to huge rocks on each side of the gulf, running parallel with each other, less than a yard apart. They are floored with light planks laid across from cable to cable, and securely lashed by bands of manurie, a finer cord made of osier withes or lianas. On each side of the main cables and a little above them is another slighter bush-rope, intended to serve as a hand-rail for those who trust themselves on the fragile and oscillating bridge.

To block a delicate suspension-bridge like this so as to debar a passage across it would be impossible. But as Mr Stead, under the pressure of impending death, took stock of the situation and considered the matter in every light, he saw that it might not be impossible to destroy the bridge. Tough as were the huge cables of twisted vines, he believed that he could saw through them with the knife which every South-American traveller must needs carry. Unfortunately as he found, he could not do the work of destruction except in full sight of the besieguering foe. On his side of the river a lip of rock thrusting well out into the valley had been chosen as the landing-place; the two cables had been stretched tightly across, then they disappeared into the earth, being apparently made fast to subterranean stones.

Mr Stead made a most careful examination. His one chance of safety was to destroy the bridge, and the one place where this could best be done was at the very verge of the precipice from which it projected. In fact, to work to advantage, Mr Stead saw that he would have to bend forward over the yawning chasm. For this reason he removed his treasure-belt or jacket, laying it at his feet. He looked to his revolver, preparing a little pile of cartridges ready to his hand, wisely thinking that the White Indians would probably renew their attack as soon as they discovered what he was doing. He sharpened his knife. Then he seated himself between the two cables at the edge of the shelf of rock, and began the task of cutting them in two.

He had laboured for several minutes before the White Indians took any notice of his movements. Then one of them began to watch him suspiciously, and called the attention of the chief. In a minute they discovered what his object was. A wild shriek of rage arose, and two men seized their weapons and sprang forward along the bridge. Mr Stead shifted his knife to his left hand and grasped his revolver. The two White Indians came on as fast as their swinging foothold would allow. When they were within forty feet of him he fired, and the first man fell back. He fired again, and the second man, tripping on his comrade's body, which lay dead across the foot path, dropped down, turning spasmodically until he struck the water below, and was hurried out of sight.

Mr Stead reloaded his revolver and resumed work.

Other White Indians hung back just at the entrance to the bridge, doubting and undecided. The American kept his eye on them while he went on with his labours. The vegetable fibre of the bush rope was singularly resisting, and to cut it called for strength and skill and time. There was a hesitation among his adversaries which gave him opportunity almost to sever the cable at his right hand; at least it was more than half cut through, when his knife broke, and the best part of the blade slipped into the abyss.

At this moment he noticed an unusual movement among the White Indians. They had withdrawn a little to a clear space on one side, and there they had formed a ring around the chief. Chanting a wild but simple refrain, they circled about their wounded leader, who stood erect in the centre, beating time by striking the ground with a hollow bamboo staff he held in his unwounded hand. The rude and monotonous song they sang resembled a dirge, wailing and funereal; it was broken at regular intervals by discordant shouts.

With the stump of his knife still serviceable, Mr Stead was at work on the cable at his left; but he never took his eyes from the enemy. He could not guess their purpose but he felt sure that it portended evil to him, and that he must be more than ever on his guard.

Suddenly there was a shout louder than the rest, and one of the White Indians broke from the ring and stood on one side. Then the same monotonous wailing began again; and in due season there was another loud shout, and a second man left the ring and took his place by the side of the first. A third time the rude chanting began, the chief beating on the ground with his bamboo staff, and after the same interval there was again a loud shout, and a third man took position with the other two.

This proceeding puzzled Mr Stead, and, without slacking his labour on the left-hand cable, he bent his attention to the doings of his foes. Strange as was the rough chant, which soon began again for the fourth time, there seemed to the American something familiar in its rhythm. He had no memory of having ever heard it before, yet it rang with a pulsation vaguely resembling something that had fallen on his ears somewhere. For a while he could not place it. But as it concluded for the fourth time with a shout, and a fourth man stood aside, there came back to Mr Stead the echo of a foolish rhyme of his childhood, a jingle of gibberish, unmeaning, but useful, for it served to designate that one of his boyish playfellows whose duty it should be to chase and touch the rest of them.

Then, as the strange strain arose for the fifth time, the American knew what it was, and he saw its significance. It was a counting-out rhyme, by which the followers of the tall chief were choosing men for a special purpose. Different as was the doggerel he had used in his boyhood from that which he heard now, there was the same marked regularity of beat, the same simple rhythm, and, above all, the same result.

A fifth man took his position beside the others who had thus been chosen by chance. When the song ceased again, a sixth man stepped out of the ring and joined his five comrades.

Mr Stead was working away steadily, and he had made a deep cut in the cable at his left, softer and more rotten than that on his right, so that his labour was not harder, though he now had but the stump of a knife.

After the six men had been selected the rhythmic chant ceased, and the ring was abandoned. The White Indians gathered about the chief to receive his instructions.

Then, and then only, did Mr Stead discover their intent. The chief knew that the revolver could fire only six shots without reloading. He had picked out six men to sacrifice themselves by drawing these six shots, after which the American would be defenceless. The rest would rush forward. The plan was simple, and it bid fair to succeed.

Mr Stead worked on with desperate energy. Every second was precious to him. If they would delay their attack but five minutes longer, the bridge would be cut, and he would be secure from pursuit.

But they did not delay a single minute. The six men stepped to the head of the bridge, and stood one behind the other, ready to advance. The chief came forward beside them and raised his hand. They fell on their knees, and he waved his staff above their heads, while the rest of the White Indians uttered a shrill cry, half defiant and half sorrowful. Then they arose and girded themselves for the certain death to which they were going. The others fell in line behind them, headed by the chief.

Mr Stead saw that the moment had come. He rose to his feet to await the attack.

A moment more and it came. The chief gave the signal. A yell of rage and hate broke from the throats of the White Indians, and the six doomed men set forward to cross the bridge, in single file, followed by the chief and the rest of their fellow-tribesmen. More accustomed to the oscillations of so frail a structure, their progress was far more rapid than Mr Stead's was when he had been forced to run across the bridge with the enemy close behind him.

When the first of the six had reached the body of a man who had been killed when Mr Stead began to cut the cable, the American fired, and the White Indian plunged forward head-first into the chasm. Then Mr Stead fired again, and the second man, reeling forward, grasped the corpse which lay across the bridge, and together the two—the dead and the dying—dropped headlong into the gulf below. A third shot, and a fourth shot, and a fifth shot, and three more of the assailants were swept from the bridge.

At the sixth shot the revolver missed fire, and the last of the chosen six was within twenty feet of Mr Stead when, on the second attempt, the trigger did its duty and the bullet found its billet in the doomed man's heart.

The six shots had done their work, and the six men had done theirs. The seventh man—the chief himself—was not more than twenty-five feet distant when the last ball left the American's revolver. There was no time to load again. The best Mr Stead could do was to fight for his life man to man, at the head of the bridge. He grasped the revolver by the barrel, and he stooped and with his left hand seized the stump of the knife. He thought that the seconds he had yet to live were counted, but he did not blanch; and he looked death in the face and flinched not.

But it was not to be. Fortune favours the brave. Though he had not had time to cut the cables wholly in two, he had weakened them so that they were unable to bear the strain of the whole band of White Indians. The foremost was barely a yard from the end of the bridge when the left cable parted, and Mr Stead saw his foes fall together into the dark river below. With a mighty effort the chief, who was at the head of the line, reached forward to clutch the solid earth. His hand grasped the treasure-belt, which had lain

at Mr Stead's feet all through the fight, and it clasped this with the grip of desperation. In the sudden emotion of deliverance from death, Mr Stead was not prompt enough to see this minor danger, and the chief of the White Indians bore with him to the bottom of the turbulent river the gold which the American had risked his life to save. To expect ever to recover it is hopeless.

There is no need to delay your readers with a detailed account of Mr Stead's return to civilization. As soon as he was free from the danger of pursuit, he set out for the village of friendly Indians, which he found, as he had expected, some fifteen miles further down the river. Here he was well received, and supplied with the means of continuing his journey.

While at this village he made inquiry for Austin, who had basely deserted him in his hour of peril. To Mr Stead's great grief—although not at all to his surprise—he found that nothing had been heard of Austin. And as yet nothing has been heard of the fellow. It was nightfall when Austin thrust loose from the bank and started alone on his voyage down the river. In his fright it is probable that he forgot the rapids before him until it was too late to turn back, or even to check his canoe. Barely a mile below the point where he abandoned Mr Stead, the river becomes narrow and the bank precipitous, and there is a succession of cataracts. It was above this gulch that Mr Stead fought for his life, and it was probably in this gulch that Austin met his death by the wrecking of his canoe in the turmoil of waters. If once the wood skin had got caught in the rush of the rapids, there would be no possible chance of escape for its solitary occupant. That this is what happened to Austin seems now beyond doubt, since no other explanation of his disappearance is possible. Coward as the fellow was, it is sad to think of his dark and lonely voyage to a certain and horrible death.

It was only the night before last that Mr Stead arrived here at Georgetown. Yesterday I had the pleasure of meeting him, and of hearing the full tale of his adventures from his own lips. In transcribing these for your readers I have passed the night. It seems to me to be a duty which a man of letters owes his fellow-man to set forth simply and succinctly so brave a fight against terrible odds as that which Mr Stead has just fought. It is the study of a strong character like his, and of brave deeds like this, which restores our faith in our common humanity.

I have thought it best also that the facts of this outrage on an American citizen should be laid before the people of the United States as soon as possible, that the State Department might be moved to take prompt action.

This letter goes back to you by favour of Mr Joshua Hoffman, whose beautiful steam-yacht, the Rhadamanthus, is to sail for New York this afternoon. Mr Hoffman has been spending a fortnight in these waters; he expresses himself as delighted with the scenery, and much benefited in health by the rest he has obtained.

I expect to sail for the Orinoco early next week, and you shall hear from me again at the very first opportunity.

A.Z.

II.

FROM THE 'GOTHAM GAZETTE' OF APRIL 22.

OFFICE OF THE ESSEQUIBO GOLD COMPANY,
75, BROADWAY, NEW YORK, April 21.

To the Editor of the Gotham Gazette:

SIR,—I have read with interest the entertaining letter from an Occasional Correspondent which you have published this morning, and which purports to give an account of an extraordinary outrage recently committed in British Guiana on an American named Stead by a tribe of hitherto unknown White Indians. I hate to have to spoil so sensational a story, but I see that there is a sort of to-be-continued-in our-next at the end of his letter, and I feel, therefore, that I am only anticipating the correction the Occasional Correspondent will be forced to make as soon as he knows what has happened since he wrote. Perhaps you will excuse me if I suggest that before writing he might have inquired more carefully as to the value of the information he received.

What has happened since then is that the man Stead was arrested yesterday for theft and for attempted murder. The thing he tried to steal was the gold entrusted to him to convey from the mines to the coast. The man he tried to murder was his accomplice in the intended theft—Austin.

When I inform you that Austin is in New York, that he has confessed fully his share in the robbery, and that he has accused Stead of an attempt to put him out of the way, it may occur to some of those who may have read the exciting letter of the Occasional Correspondent that he is a gentleman of an unduly confiding nature, and that he has inadvertently allowed himself to be used by a rascal.

The exact facts of the matter are that Stead and Austin, being entrusted with the gold of the Essequibo Gold Company, conspired to steal it. When they had arrived near the canon across which Stead claims to have fought so brave a fight against such long odds, they dug a hole and buried the gold, Stead telling Austin that he would invent a tale of an attack by the White Indians, who exist in local superstition, but whom nobody has ever seen. That night the thieves fell out, and Stead set Austin adrift in a canoe without a paddle, knowing that there was a water-fall ahead, and hoping that his accomplice would be drowned. Apparently Austin is reserved for another fate; his canoe sank on a rock in shallow water: he waded ashore, and was taken up by a band of friendly Indians, with whom he journeyed slowly to the coast. He arrived at Georgetown about Midnight, a few hours before the Rhadamanthus sailed. Going to a friend's house, he heard the story Stead had been telling, and in fear of his life he determined to fly the country. This friend had done some trifling service for Mr Joshua Hoffman, and thus Austin succeeded in being taken aboard the Rhadamanthus without the knowledge of the people of Georgetown. There is a pleasant irony in the fact that the very yacht which bore away the Occasional Correspondent's account of Stead's single-handed combat with impossible White Indians over a non-existent bridge should convey also the one man who knew the whole truth.

On his arrival here yesterday Austin came down to the office of the Essequibo Gold Company and surrendered himself. He made a clean breast of his share in the attempt to rob the company. We cabled at once to the Georgetown police. We learnt that Stead had been away in the interior for a week, and that he had just returned. He was about to take ship for England when he was arrested. The stolen gold was found in his possession.

I have to apologise for this trespass on your space, but enemies of the Essequibo Gold Company try to use ghost stories like that of the Occasional Correspondent to depress the securities of the company, and as its president it is my duty to prevent this. Besides, just now I am a bull on the market.—Your obedient servant, SAMUEL SARGENT.

A WOMAN TAKES A CLERGYMAN FOR A PICKPOCKET.

A WEALTHY lady was going down town in a tram car, with a considerable sum of money in her purse. At one of the stations there came into the tram a man by whose face she was struck, and she instantly said to herself that he must be a pickpocket. When he sat down beside her she thought of her well filled purse, and resolved to watch him.

Suddenly her suspicious neighbour put his hand down at his side. She felt it slide down until it touched her purse, and instantly she put out her own hand and seized the stranger by the wrist. He did not struggle, and she was in some perplexity as to what she should do next, but she thought that if he should attempt to get away she could at least, show that she had him by the wrist with his hand in her pocket.

She said afterward that she could not tell why she did not give an alarm at once, but she sat quiet, waiting for her neighbour to make the first move.

They rode in this way for some distance, when to her amazement the stranger at one of the downtown stations prepared to rise.

'If you will let go of my arm, madam,' he said, with the utmost coolness, 'I will get out here.'

He half rose as he spoke, and to her utter confusion the lady discovered that his hand, instead of being in her pocket, was thrust into the pocket of his own ulster. The garment hung down so that his hand had pressed against her purse without being in contact with it, and she had been holding him by the wrist with no apparent excuse whatever.

She was overcome with confusion, but managed to say that she had thought his hand to be in her pocket. The stranger smiled and went out, while a gentleman near by leaned forward to say: 'Don't you know who that is, madam? That is Rev. Dr. Blank.' The name was that of of the best-known clergymen in the city.

THE CUCKOO.

IN *Longman's Magazine* is an interesting account of the cuckoo's well-known, and seldom seen performance of excluding the young of the bird who has hatched it. One of the most graphic sketches of the occurrence by an eye-witness is that of Mr Gould's 'Birds of great Britain.' The account by Mrs Blackburn, who watched the movements of the young cuckoo is full of interest. The nest under observation was that of the common meadow-pipet, and it had at first two eggs in it besides that of the cuckoo. 'At one visit,' continues Mrs Blackburn, 'the pipets were found to be hatched but not the cuckoo. At the next visit, which was after an interval of forty-eight hours, we found the young cuckoo alone in the nest, and both the young pipets lying down the bank, about ten inches from the margin of the nest, but quite lively after being warmed in the hand. They were replaced in the nest beside the cuckoo, which struggled about until it got its back under one of them, when it climbed backwards directly up the open side of the nest and hitched the pipet from its back on to the edge. It then stood quite upright on its legs, which were straddled wide apart, with the claws firmly fixed half-way down the inside of the nest, among the interlacing fibres of which the nest was woven, and, stretching its legs apart and backwards, it elbowed the pipet fairly over the margin so far that its struggles took it down the bank instead of back into the nest. After this the cuckoo stood a minute or two, feeling back with its wings, as if to make sure that the pipet was fairly overboard, and then subsided into the bottom of the nest.' The rejected bird was replaced, but on again visiting the nest on the following morning both pipets were found dead out of the nest. Mrs Blackburn continues:—'The cuckoo was perfectly naked, without the vestige of a feather, or even a hint of future feathers; its eyes were not yet opened, and its neck seemed too weak to support the weight of its head. . . . . The most singular thing of all was the direct purpose with which the blind little monster made for the open side of the nest, the only part where it could throw its burthen down the bank. I think all the spectators felt the sort of horror and awe at the apparent inadequacy of the creature's intelligence to its acts that one might have felt at seeing a toothless hag raise a ghost by an incantation. It was horribly uncanny and gruesome.'

THE SEA BREEZE AND THE SCARF.

HUNG on the casement that looked o'er the main,
Fluttered a scarf of blue;
And a gay, bold breeze paused to flutter and tease
This trifle of delicate hue.
'You are lovelier far than the proud skies are,'
He said with a voice that sighed;
'You are fairer to me than the beautiful sea;
Oh why do you stay here and hide?

'You are wasting your life in this dull, dark room;'
And he fondled her silken folds.
'O'er the casement lean but a little, my queen,
And see what the great world holds!
How the wonderful blue of your matchless hue
Cheapens both sea and sky!
You are far too bright to be hidden from sight—
Come, fly with me, darling, fly.'

Tender his whisper, and sweet his caress,
Flattered and pleased was she;
The arm of her lover lifted her over
The casement out to the sea:
Close to his breast she was fondly pressed,
Kissed once by his laughing mouth;
Then dropped to her grave in the cruel wave,
While the wind went whistling south.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

TRUTH is not a salad that it must be served in vinegar.

Great men are only ordinary men with their hair combed.

A TOAST.

Here's to the maiden of 'bashful sixteen,'
Whom I've often heard of, but never have seen.

Originality is a thing we constantly clamour for, and constantly quarrel with.

When an ass kicks at you he does so because he recognizes that you are unlike him.

THE MARRIED MAN SINGS:

'Mid pleasures and palaces often I roam,
But when I would grumble there's no place like home.

There are some people in this world who wouldn't be satisfied if they were perfectly contented.

Artist: 'How do you like the portrait?' Sitter: 'Well, I don't exactly like the nose.' Artist: 'Neither do I—but it's yours.'

'Cool as a cucumber' is scientifically correct. Investigation shows that this vegetable has a temperature one degree below that of the surrounding atmosphere.

THE PRUDENT GIRL.

Whene'er she meets a charming man,
She tries to learn as soon as she can—
What is his family? What is his birth?
What are his prospects? What is he worth?

The older a man grows the more pleasure he takes in thinking that the young are not as wild as he used to be, and will never be as good as he is.

Statistics prove that one man in a million lives to be one hundred and eight years old, and it doesn't always happen that the man who can be least spared makes the long-distance record.

The following lines were found about fifty years ago written with a diamond on a pane of glass in an inn at Dublin:—

Life is like a busy inn where travellers stay.
Some only breakfast and are soon away,
Others on dinner wait and are well fed,
The oldest sups and goes to bed.
Long is his bill who lingers out the day,
He who goes the soonest has the least to pay.

Yvette Guilbert, the favourite of Parisian concert halls, says she'd rather earn her £160 a night and be deluged with bouquets on the stage than be a queen on a throne and never have a moment free from the presence of stuffy old chamberlains and gorgeous spies.

A sister of the Confederate General Price was recently married. The lady is a well-preserved, refined, and well-educated woman of fifty. 'I waited thirty years for my husband, and it was not until three weeks ago that he came for me,' she said to a reporter, who interviewed her on her wedding tour.

A QUALIFIED GIFT.—In St. John's College, Oxford, there is a very curious portrait of Charles I., done with a pen, in such a manner that the lines are formed by verses from the Psalms, and so contrived as to contain every Psalm. When Charles II. was once at Oxford he was greatly struck by this portrait, begged it of the college, and promised, in return, to grant them whatever request they should make. This they consented to, and gave His Majesty the picture, accompanied with the request—that he would return it.

THE ISSENITES.—During one of the entr'actes (says a Home writer, in criticising Ibsen's 'Hedda Gabler') I was asked if I had noticed what a singularly unprepossessing set of people Ibsen's female worshippers were. I had not, because my attention had been fixed upon the performance; but on returning to the theatre I took a glance round, and certainly acknowledged the truth of the assertion. Apart from a few actresses, who, of course, had come for business purposes, there was scarcely a good-looking woman in the theatre. Even when Nature had not made them ill-favoured, they had endeavoured to spoil their personal appearance by loud, vulgar, mannish attire.

HOPE FOR HIM.—How often do we hear a parent say of a mischievous boy, 'I would not mind so much if I could only believe him.' Whatever his other traits truth is essentially the touchstone of a boy's character. 'I don't know that you will be able to do much with him,' said a father to the principal of a school, to whom he had brought his son as pupil, 'he is so full of mischief.' 'Does he tell the truth?' asked the principal. 'Can I always depend upon his word?' 'Oh, yes,' said the father; 'he is honest, he will tell the truth, even when it is against himself; you may depend upon that.' 'Then we can manage him,' said the principal. 'He will make a reliable, manly man.'

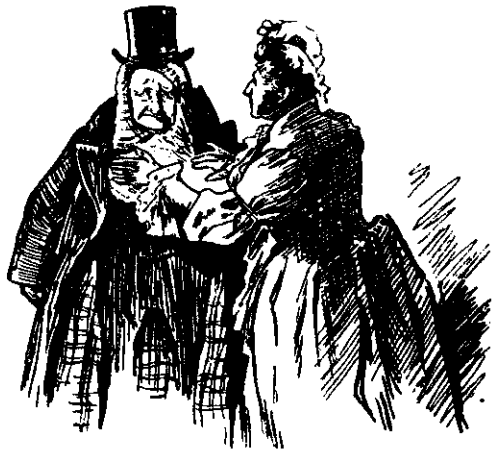
HOW HE GOT IN.—When the Art Exhibition for the Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876 was decided upon and artists were invited to send pictures, Mr Thom, an artist, went to Philadelphia and gained admission to the unfinished gallery where he wished to study the environment of his work. While there he noticed two spaces, one on either side of a big entrance door, which were so high and narrow that it would be pretty hard work to find pictures to fit them. These spaces he carefully measured, and going home went at once to work to paint pictures of that shape. When the pictures arrived their mechanical fitness befriended them as well as their intrinsic excellence, and they were 'well hung,' while the names of the rejected were legion. Art has made some advances in this country since 1876, but nobody has yet arisen earlier in the morning than Mr Thom did on that occasion.

MOONLIGHT PICNICS IN GUATEMALA.—Reading novels at midnight by the light of the moon is possible in Guatemala. It is no uncommon thing to see a senorita reclining in a hammock with a book in her hand on her father's verandah in the Costa Cuca district, Guatemala, between twelve and one o'clock in the morning. There are no moonlight nights in the United States or in England like in Guatemala. The moon at certain periods of the month is so bright that it is as light outdoors as during the day. It is too hot during the day in Costa Cuca to be out for pleasure, and all little excursions around the country are arranged to take place at night when the moon is bright. For instance when a few friends desire to take a horse-back ride around the country the pleasure is never arranged to take place during the day time. The night is always selected and the moon furnishes the light. Picnics, boat-rides and all pleasure parties take place when it is known the moon will furnish the light.

A Model Judge, in Two Chapters.

In a dispute, which came up lately in an English court between Miss Dorothy Dene and her dressmaker, Judge Bacon ordered the dresses to be put on, and minutely examined them as to length, fit, and position of seams, and finally decided on several alterations. The accompanying illustrations show the way in which a judge improves his mind in these special lines.

CHAPTER I.



There was a poor, dear old judge who seemed very troubled and out of sorts. Mrs Judge really did not know what to do with him: she took the greatest care of him, always wrapping his wig over his chest when he went off in the morning.

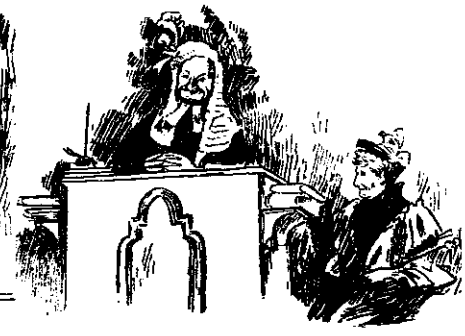
He had a habit of sneaking mysteriously to his private room, and locking himself in for hours.

And many's the time poor Mrs J. would try to see what he was doing through the keyhole.

CHAPTER II.

Until one day he forgot to lock the door, and was discovered cutting out the latest Paris gown. 'Fact is, my love,' he said, 'I could not help feeling that, as one who knew nothing of dressmaking, I was unfit to be a modern judge. It preyed upon me. If, however, you will now kindly cast your eye over my efforts, I think you will admit that—ah!'—and he swelled with honest pride.

From that day he was another judge. He felt that he was fitted for his profession. To fling off his gown, and critically examine seams and gussets, was now a pleasure.



He got all the dressmaking cases. 'Isn't he a sweet old thing?' the ladies would whisper in court. 'I always get him to cut out my gowns now.' He's the most successful judge going.

NO. 5,555.

José Bomba always believed that he would win in the lottery. He was an assistant in the barber shop of Don Simon Pesetero in the good city of Talavera, and passed his life in dreaming of fortunes which he was sure would come. Then he would marry Frasquita and be happy. Unfortunately, neither of them was blessed with a peseta.

José extracted teeth and followed his master when there was work to be done in the village. Frasquita shaved the clients with a sure hand. For their services they each received 200 francs a year and board. The board consisted of a daily allowance of bread, two sardines, half-a-dozen tomatoes and water at discretion.

When the time came for José to join the army he comforted Frasquita by the assurance that they would be rich and might get married. Then he kissed her and went away to join the carabineers for four years.

When he was gone she found that she had to do all his work, even to the drawing of teeth, for Don Simon was penurious and saw his opportunity to save 200 francs a year.

One day Frasquita sought the master.

'Sir,' she said, 'will you advance me 20 francs on my wages?'

'Twenty francs, you little prodigal, what do you want to do with it?'

'I had a wonderful dream.'

'Well, what has a dream got to do with 20 francs?'

'I dreamed that 5,555 would win the capital prize in the lottery and I want to buy the ticket.'

The old man shrugged his shoulders and gave her the money with a growl. Frasquita took the gold piece and all the week seemed happier than usual. When the annual fête of Talavera came around, she amused herself like a fool, gorging herself with fried fish, cakes and avelines of Valence, placing three wax candles before the statue of St. Reque to obtain the prompt return of her lover José.

The barber was in the habit of reading aloud from the newspaper every night in his shop to a select circle of clients. One evening just as he had finished a long political article he suddenly paused and grew pale.

'Well, Uncle Simon, what is the matter with you?' said one of the auditors.

'Oh, nothing. I am tired of reading; besides there is nothing interesting.'

He rose and went into the back room where Frasquita was writing.

'My little Frasquita, you had better go to bed. The air is chill and I am afraid you will get the rheumatism.'

The crowd held their breath. Never in the memory of man had old Pesetero addressed an inferior in such language.

Frasquita rose and went up the stairs. Don Simon called after her. 'I think you get up too early for a girl of your age. In the future you need not go to work until 6.'

When he returned to the shop he made some excuse to get rid of his friends, who by this time believed him thoroughly mad.

Once alone he took the paper out of his pocket and stood under the light.

'No, I was not mistaken. It is No. 5,555 which has won. Frasquita is now worth 200,000f.—200,000f.'

He walked up and down, much agitated, wondering how he could appropriate this fortune without danger.

He evidently had formed a plan, for when he entered the shop the next morning he was rubbing his hands. Frasquita was sharpening the razors.

'My child,' he said,' sit down here by me. I have a serious suggestion to make. It is now six years since you have served me faithfully. I may have appeared at times somewhat brusque, but that was to prove you. To-day the proof is finished.'

'It was rather long,' said Frasquita.

'Possibly, but now things will be different; we will leave the past alone. For six years I have appreciated your good qualities. As for me, I am sixty-five years old, but still strong and hearty. I am worth 160,000 francs besides my shop. What do you say—will you marry me?'

At this proposition Frasquita almost fell off the chair. Certainly the future was not attractive but the fortune was large. Meanwhile she thought of José.

'Will you give me eight days to think it over?'

'Yes, but on condition that during that time you speak to no one. I am afraid you may be influenced against me.'

'I promise.'

She wrote to José and received a laconic response. 'Leave everything to fortune.' So she consented to marry Don Simon.

On the day of the marriage it was necessary that husband and wife should deposit their fortunes in the hands of the notary. It was then that Don Simon asked carelessly:

'By the way, you bought the lottery ticket, No. 5,555, I believe?'

'Not at all. That was a pretext. I spent my 20 francs at the fête of Talavera.'

'Miserable! Wretch—infam——'

Don Simon fell, smitten by a stroke of apoplexy.

José returned tranquilly from his regiment, took possession without astonishment of the girl, the store and the fortune!

A HEAD OF DEATH.

HIS is a story that Dr. Clarke Forster told us after dinner:—I had had a busy morning—some twenty patients, one on the heels of another—and now that the last had departed and noon was long past I began to think hungrily of my luncheon. But just as I got up to leave my consulting-room my servant entered and handed me a visiting-card upon which was engraved the name 'Mr Alexander Carathwaite.' 'There can be but one Alexander Carathwaite,' thought I, 'and he is Alexander Carathwaite, the famous iron king and millionaire.'

'Show him in,' I said to my servant.

The person who presently seated himself opposite me struck me as a singularly healthy looking invalid, tall, robust, with a clear, ruddy skin and a bright grey eye. However, 'What is the trouble?' I asked.

'Well,' he answered, 'it's a queer case, but, to put it briefly, I'm afraid the trouble's here,' and he tapped his forehead.

'Let me hear your symptoms.'

'It's a long story,' said he, 'and I must begin it at the beginning.'

Therewith he plunged his hand into an interior pocket of his coat and brought forth a small tissue-paper parcel. 'This,' he explained as he unwound the paper, 'is rather a valuable antique. It came as a present to my wife the other day from the Earl of Salchester, whom we entertained when he was in America a year or so ago. As you see, it's a mirror. The glass is believed to be a specimen of mediæval Venetian work, and the frame is unquestionably a magnificent bit of cinque-cento.'

The whole affair was no bigger than a lady's hand. The glass, unusually thick and fluted round the edge, was veined and spotted and bleared over with a fine bluish mist, like the eye of an aged man. The frame was indeed magnificent. Oval in shape and evidently of pure gold, so soft, at any rate, that you could have indented it with your finger-nail—it was sculptured with no fewer than five exquisite nude female figures, disporting themselves in fantastic but graceful attitudes amid a profusion of delicately chiselled fruits and leaves. Three of these figures reclined upon tiny golden couches, in each of which was set a lustrous ruby; the other two rode upon conventionalized lions, and each lion held a pearl between his teeth. At the base a pair of dolphins twisted their tails together, and formed the handle. Upon a scroll at the handle end were incised the date, 1561, and the initials E.D.

'It is a beautiful piece of work,' said I, laying it aside, 'and I envy you the possession of it. But what has it got to do with your visit here?'

'Everything,' he returned. 'It's this way.' He paused for a moment; then he went on. 'Last night, after dinner, I picked that little mirror up, and I said jokingly to my wife, "This, my dear, is a magical glass. If I hold it over my waistcoat, thus, and you look in, you will see straight through, into my heart, and behold the face of the woman I love." So Mrs Carathwaite laughed and looked, and of course she saw her own face. Then, to carry on the farce, I said, "Now let me see whether it will show me the face of the man you love." And, always laughing, I held it over her breast, and looked in.'

'Yes,' I prompted, as he paused again.

'Well, doctor, instead of my own face what I saw reflected in that glass was a grinning death's head—a skull. I saw it just as plainly as I see you now. I looked at it steadily, without moving, for—I should think—three minutes. It never varied. A human skull in absolute details, eyes, nose, teeth, even the very seams between the bones, perfectly distinct. I'm not a superstitious man, but I confess the sight gave me gooseflesh. If I were superstitious I don't know what I might think. I'm not a drinking man either, or else I should believe it was a touch of delirium tremens. As it is, I'm at an utter loss to account for it in any way, except on the theory that it's the beginning of mental disease.' He spoke nervously and looked at me anxiously when he had done. He was plainly in a 'white funk.'

'Humph! You say you saw it steadily for two or three minutes?' I inquired.

'Yes.'

'Then did it disappear?'

'It did not disappear till I moved. As soon as I moved, the death's-head disappeared and I saw the reflection of my own face.'

'Have you ever had any similar experience before? Ever fancied you saw an object just before you that in reality had no existence?'

'Never in my life.'

'Is your digestive apparatus in good shape?'

'In such perfect shape that I'm never conscious of possessing such a thing.'

'And your general health—'

'Superb.'

'Let me feel your pulse.' His pulse was firm, regular, and proper in time. 'Show me your tongue.' His tongue was pink and clean. 'Open your eyes wide and look toward the light.' His eyes were steady in their gaze, the pupils contracted readily, and the lid dropped spontaneously upon approaching my finger.

'Did you tell your wife what you had seen?' I asked.

'No, I didn't want to alarm her. She noticed that I stared at the thing in rather a startled manner, but I laughed it off.'

I was silent for a while, toying with the mirror, and wondering what the case might mean.

'Well, what do you make it out to be?' he enquired.

'Oh,' I replied, 'I can't say as yet. I haven't sufficient data. The trouble may be in your optic nerve, it may be in your liver, and it may be elsewhere still. I should have to put you through a lengthy examination, and just at this moment I am too tired and too hungry to begin one. If you will give me time to eat some luncheon I'll be in better trim.'

'Oh, certainly, certainly. Only, can't you tell me at once whether you think I am going to lose my reason?'

'I hardly think you are going to lose your reason,' I replied. 'And now, if you will excuse me for a little, I'll go downstairs and take a bite. Perhaps you would like a chop and a glass of wine yourself?'

'Oh, no thank you, no thank you. I shan't be able to eat with any appetite until this fear is off my mind.'

While I swallowed my hasty luncheon I thought the matter over. It puzzled me a good deal, but suddenly, as I was folding up my napkin, an idea struck me which I hoped might clear the whole matter up.

Rejoining Mr Carathwaite in my office I said to him, 'I have come to the conclusion that this is a case for a specialist. If you like I will go to a specialist with you.'

'I am quite at your orders,' he responded. 'Do you think it's the brain or the eye?'

'I hope it's neither; but the specialist will tell us.'

We entered my carriage and were driven downtown to a famous curiosity shop in Seventeenth street, just west of Union square, the proprietor of which Mr Maverick, is esteemed, as everybody knows, one of the most learned authorities in antique curios.

'Here we are,' said I, getting out of the carriage. 'Will you come?'

'But what are we going in here for?' questioned Carathwaite.

'To consult our specialist,' said I.

My patient looked mystified, but he followed me into the shop.

I presented my card, and asked to see Mr Maverick. In another minute we were closeted with him in his private office.

'Will you hand Mr Maverick your mirror?' I demanded of Carathwaite.

Maverick took the mirror and looked it over. He studied the frame through a magnifying glass. 'This is a bit of work from the hand of Etienne Delaulne,' he announced, presently; 'one of the most skilful goldsmiths of the sixteenth century. I don't know where you got hold of it, but I may tell you that it is infinitely valuable. I have never seen a finer specimen of Delaulne's handicraft, nor one in a better state of preservation.'

'And the glass?' I queried. 'We are especially interested in the glass.'

'The glass,' said Maverick, 'is probably Venetian. I must examine it a little.'

He went to the window and began to scrutinize the glass, twisting it about and peering at it from various angles. 'Ah, yes, I thought so!' he exclaimed all at once. 'Come here, gentlemen,' he called to us.

He held the glass off at a certain oblique angle, and inquired: 'Now, when I hold it like that what do you see?'

Carathwaite simply uttered a long, low 'Ah-h-h!'

'Why, I see a human skull,' I said. 'A most perfect image of a human skull. I would swear it was the genuine reflection of a real one. How it gets there I can't for my life imagine.'

'Ah, that was the art of the Venetian glass-workers,' said Maverick.

He crossed the room and took from a book-case a volume entitled 'Manual Arts of Mediæval Italy.' He ran over a few pages, found his place, and read aloud, 'Venetian looking-glasses of the sixteenth century were often ornamented with grotesque designs—serpents, skeletons, skulls, sometimes crucifixes—produced in the coating of quicksilver in such a way as to be visible only at one angle of vision, and then to give the effect of a reflection of some exterior object.'

'Well, doctor,' said Carathwaite, smiling rather sheepishly, when we had regained the street, 'you have effected a speedy cure. What's your fee?'

THE ONLY RESORT.

PERHAPS one of the happiest of the long list of marriages between American girls and foreigners is that of the eldest daughter of General Edward Beale, now the wife of Mr Bakhmetieff of Russia, Secretary of Legation at Athens. Twelve or thirteen years ago, as an attaché of the Russian legation, the young foreigner met and at once fell desperately in love with Miss Beale. The young people carried on their love-making under the cover of friendly darkness in Lafayette square, Washington.

One night the watchman went his rounds as usual, and thinking the square to be empty, carefully locked the gates and departed to his home. Unconscious of this fact, the lovers roused from their absorbing conversation and prepared to leave the square. Their consternation at finding themselves imprisoned was in no wise improved by the subsequent discovery that not a soul seemed to be stirring on the streets who could come to the rescue.

There was no help for it. The only way out of the difficulty was to climb the massive iron spiked fence. With great difficulty the young lady climbed to the top, when, to her horror, just as her feet sought to secure a resting-place in the descent, the gruff voice of a policeman shouted menacingly in their ears.

Rapidly giving directions in French to Miss Beale to proceed with all speed possible and run for home while he engaged the intruder in conflict, Mr Bakhmetieff successfully tusselled with the fellow until, happy in the knowledge that his instructions had been carried out, he gave himself into the custody of the officer, knowing that, as a member of a foreign legation, he would be liberated immediately upon arrival at headquarters.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

LIGHTNING RODS.

Although lightning rods are regarded by most people as conducing to safety, a certain number persist in a contrary opinion. In view of this, it is interesting to note that, in a recent storm at Alnwick, in England, the lightning struck the chimney of the armoury magazine and stores of the 3rd Northumberland Fusiliers, demolishing it, and cracking the wall almost to the ground, notwithstanding that on the opposite chimney stack on the same roof a lightning conductor was affixed.

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SAVING SOULS.

A German chemist has invented a preparation which, it is claimed, when applied to the soles of shoes, has the effect of increasing their wearing capacity from five to ten times, besides making them waterproof. The preparation is applied after the shoes are finished and the soles are buffed. The right to use it has been sold to the Bavarian Government for the army. The inventor says it has been tested in the German Army satisfactorily.

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ELECTRIC TRAMS.

It is evident that electric-power is to be the motive power of the future in cities. New York city is constantly warring upon the elevated system, not alone because it is inadequate, but because of its noise and dust and disturbance of residents. Edison and others argue for an arcade electric road under the principal streets. It will come to this within a few years. Despite its irregularities, the electric motor is the motor of the future. The history of steam as a power shows no such advance as electricity.

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BUS AND TRAM TICKETS.

Receipts are given by the conductors for cash fares. These receipts are put up in pads, one hundred to the pad. Each pad has its distinctive number, and each receipt its serial number. The conductors are charged with their money receipts every night, and when they settle the next night must return the receipts in the pad, or must return cash to correspond with the missing receipts. In order that the public may be interested in receiving and taking care of these receipts they are given a money value, that is, upon the return of one hundred receipts at the office of the company the bearer will be entitled to six street car tickets. In other words, the receipts are worth a shilling a hundred, enough to justify people in saving them.

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A QUEER SPIDER.

Far up in the mountains of Ceylon and India there is a spider that spins a web like bright yellowish silk, the central net of which is 5 feet in diameter, while the supporting lines or guys, as they are called, measure sometimes 10 feet or 12 feet; and riding quickly in the early morning you may dash right into it, the stout threads twisting around your face like a lace veil, while, as the creature who has woven it, takes up his position in the middle, he generally catches you right on the nose, and, though he seldom bites or stings, the contact of his large body and long legs is anything but pleasant. If you forget yourself and try to catch him, bite he will, and, though not venomous, his jaws are as powerful as a bird's beak, and you are not likely to forget the encounter. The bodies of these spiders are very handsomely decorated.

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THE VALUE OF ROOKS.

In Holland rooks are in disfavour on account of the damage they are said to do to seeds and young shoots. The country swarms with them, and the opinion is that there are too many. Last year a colony of them settled at Leyden and built their nests on the trees which border the Rapenburg. As, however, they made a good deal of noise, and it was feared that later on the young birds would prove a nuisance to the ladies and gentlemen who live in the Rapenburg quarter, a fiat went forth from the Town Council that the rooks were to be shot—and shot they were. Undeterred by the fate of their last year's comrades, the rooks again selected the Rapenburg as a nesting site this year, and complaints being again made to the municipality a fowler was employed to shoot them. As he did not know a jackdaw from a rook, many of the former have shared the fate of the latter, or have taken themselves off to a place where gentry less do congregate, and where the caws of the friendly rooks are considered less objectionable than the noise of a fowling-piece. Thus the jackdaws, which always formed such a pleasing feature in the academic town of Leyden, are now almost entirely absent from their old haunts.

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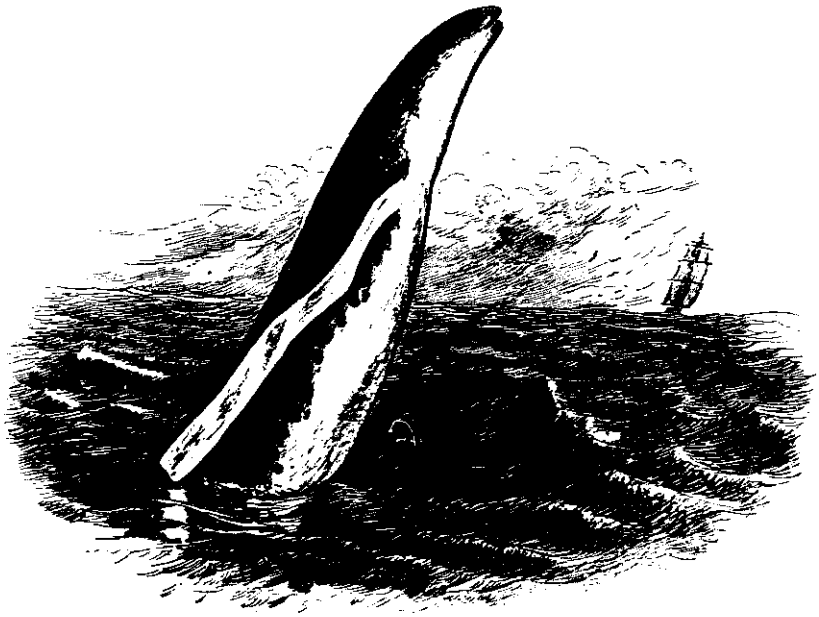
SPIDER SILK.

It is said that spiders' threads may be woven, which is true enough, that they are more glossy and brilliant than those of the silk-worm, which is not supported by the conclusions of those who have compared the two side by side, and that enough of it was once secured for the weaving of a suit of clothes for Louis XIV. Now stockings have certainly been made from spider silk, and gloves too, for specimens of each were presented to the Royal Academy of Paris, and to the London Royal Society, in 1710, and there is an indefinite mention of waistcoats being produced from this remarkable fibre. But this is the first that has been heard of an entire suit of clothes furnished by spiders. As it has been calculated that it would be necessary to rear 55,296 of the larger spiders, or 663,552 of the ordinary sort, to yield a pound of the silk, we may regard that suit with some hesitation. It is most probable, however, that it is only a case of slipshod inaccuracy after all; for it is on record that M. Lebon, of Montpellier, sent a pair of gloves made from spiders' silk to that same Louis XIV., and a faulty memory with careless haste has most likely made a suit of clothes out of them.

THE SEA-SERPENT AGAIN.

ON the morning of Saturday, the 24th of July, when the steamship Manapouri was abreast of Horoera Point, on her way from Auckland to Gisborne, a few passengers were sitting abaft of the funnel, where they obtained warmth and shelter from a stiff south easter, when one of the party drew the attention of the others to a sea-monster about a quarter of a mile off on the starboard bow, which would, about every two minutes, slowly rise its head and part of its body to an estimated height of twenty feet, in nearly a perpendicular line from the surface of the water, and when in that position gyrate, displaying a black back and a white belly, about the colour of the under side of a patiki (the colours met about half-way on the monster's side), and two arm-like appendages of about ten feet in length, which appeared to dangle about like a broken limb on a human being. It would then suddenly fall back into the water, scattering it in all directions. It kept on a course parallel to the steamer, and was in view for about ten minutes.

A week later, when the Rotomahana was off Portland Light, between Gisborne and Napier, what was supposed to be an immense sea monster was sighted. The chief officer standing on the bridge had his attention called to the animal by the quarter-master, who was looking out of the door leading to the wheelroom. There was a heavy sea running at the time, and the quarter-master states he first noticed a long, dark-looking object rise slowly from the water about half a mile from the vessel until it reached a height of thirty or forty feet. It then slowly disappeared, and when it next made its appearance it was much closer to the ship. The quarter-master saw the serpent appear four or five times before he drew the chief officer's attention to it, when they both marked it rise perpendicularly out of the water to a great height, within a hundred yards of the vessel. After withdrawing into the water that time it was not seen again. Both men who saw it say it could not have been less than a hundred feet long.



THE SEA SERPENT AS SEEN BY MR. A FORDE MATTHEWS, OF GISBORNE.

The result of the dissemination of the above reports has been to cause a renewed discussion of this *vexata questio*. Scientists in the colony are not disposed to accept the above evidence as convincing, and Sir John Hector explains it away on the theory of optical illusion, assuming the object to be a large tree with a projecting branch. Old sailors, on the other hand, assert that the creature is the hump-backed whale, which behaves in precisely a similar fashion, and large numbers of which have been passing along the New Zealand coast during the last three months. For the present illustration we have to thank Mr A. Forde Matthews, of Gisborne.

ENGLISH SPELLING.

SOME compositor, disgusted with the inconsistencies of English orthography, has been at the pains to construct the following elaborate travesty. The ingenious reader can lengthen it at his own pleasure. Know won knead weight two bee tolled thee weigh too dew sew:

A rite suite little buoy, thee sun of a grate kernel, with a rough around his neck, flue up thee rode as quick as a dear. After a thyme he stopped at a gun house and wrung the belle. His tow hurt hymn, and be kneaded wrest. He was two tired to raze his fare, pail face. A feint mown of pane rows from his lips.

The maide who herd the belle was about to pair a pare, but she through it down and ran with awl her mite, for fear her guessed wood knot weight. But when she saw the little won, tiers stood in her eyes at the site.

'Ewe poor deer! Why dew you lye hear? Are yew dyeing?'

'Know,' he said, 'I am faint.'

She boar hymn inn her arms, as she aught, to a rheum where he mite bee quiet, gave him bred and meet, held a cent bottle under his knows, untiole his choler, rapped hymn up warmly, gave him a suite drachm from a viol, till at last he went fourth as hail as a young hoarse.

THINGS WHICH ARE NOT WHAT THEY SEEM.

EVERYBODY in town is buying flowers. Everybody has a rose or a pink in his or her buttonhole, or branch of lilacs in his or her hand. The perfume of the flowers brings back to everybody that country which is God's own, and which man who could only take bricks and build houses could not have made. It makes every human being want to walk across the grass and feel the soft ground under the feet, notwithstanding the care with which the sign of 'keep off the grass' is put everywhere. Everybody wants to get out into the parks, where they can get great mouthfuls of sweet, fresh air, and oh, you people, who are fortunate enough not to be dwelling in great cities these spring-time days, please don't forget not only the poor, but just remember that to the sick and the lonely a rose or a branch of lilacs will bring a happy time; a time, maybe, of reminiscences, but still the perfume of the flower will carry a joy with it wherever it goes. Sentimental? Well, you can't blame a woman for being a bit sentimental these spring days, when the sun is so bright and the flowers are so sweet. And what is a woman without sentiment, anyway? You wouldn't like her, and nobody else would. But men in reality have much more sentiment than women.

The other day I was standing on the corner, and a very fine turn-out went by. A woman with marvellous, glossy black hair and great dark eyes, beautifully dressed and looking the embodiment of happiness, smiled and bowed to me, and just then I heard a voice near me say, 'I wish I were that woman.' I looked around, and there stood a sweet-looking dainty little creature, quite as attractive in her simple frock as was madame in her gorgeousness. For all the girl saw was the prancing steeds, the beautiful gown, the richness of lace and the loveliness of silk. She couldn't see far enough in the deep eyes to discover the sadness and disappointment that lay therein. And I wondered what that girl would think, or if she wouldn't change her wish, if she knew exactly that woman's life. This is part of it.

She is the wife of a very rich man, and to-day if she wants £1 she has to get it on one of her accounts and have them charge it to frills and furbelows. She doesn't know what it means to have money to spend. She can give her name for an enormous amount to a charity and her husband will send the cheque; she can buy the best of everything in New York or Paris and the bills will be paid, but she cannot have any money to handle. And why? Because her people are poor, her husband does not like them, and he will not permit her to give one cent to them. A year ago her brother, a young boy, did as many another boy has done, got into some trouble, and £400 was required to get him out of it. To be quite plain, he had forged a man's name, and this man said: 'If you will get the money I will save you from shame, and because I believe you have suffered for this, I will keep you in my employ.' The boy's future depended on his getting that money. The man knew the boy had a rich sister, and it never entered his head that she would not easily and gladly give her brother the £400. Her brother went to her and told her the story, and she said: 'Charlie, what can I do? You know I never have a penny.' And then he told her how much depended on it, and she said, 'I'll get you that money in some way.' And this is how she did it: She took the diamond necklace that had been one of her wedding presents, and which had cost nearly ten thousand dollars, and she carried it to a pawnbroker, where she got two thousand on it. Since that time she has never been able to get the amount of money needed to get it out, and it's only by saving and pinching that she has enough to pay the interest on it. That she may never have to wear it, she has assumed a fashion that very much pleases her husband.

She wears no jewels whatever except a tiny diamond heart that he gave her, and he is convinced that she shows marvellous taste in refusing to exhibit her diamonds, pearls, rubies and emeralds, as do the climbers in society, for as everybody knows she has them, she can afford not to wear them. At one time she was very ill, although she was never quite out of her mind. When the time came around for the interest to be paid, she sent for a friend, confided her secret to her, and in this way it was paid, the necklace was saved, and the husband is still ignorant. Some day he will find out the secret, and if she was wise, she would tell him now.

SECOND

CHRISTMAS STORY

COMPETITION.

THE success attendant upon the production of the last CHRISTMAS NUMBER of THE NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC induces the management to again entertain the idea of repeating so satisfactory an experiment. The object of evoking a body of contributions bearing, in their incidents and associations, upon the peculiarities of colonial life was in a great measure realised, and indicated that the mission of the GRAPHIC in encouraging local talent is being fulfilled. It being the desire, of the projectors of the

NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC

that ample time and opportunity should be afforded to intending competitors this year; and, taking into consideration the fact that an early delivery is absolutely necessary for the purposes of illustration, the announcement of the second

CHRISTMAS STORY COMPETITION

for THREE PRIZES is now made to the readers of this paper, and subjoined thereto are the conditions by which the contest will be regulated.

The three selected tales will be awarded prizes in the following order:—

FIRST PRIZE	£5.
SECOND PRIZE	£3.
THIRD PRIZE	£2.

The GRAPHIC, however, is to enjoy the privilege of publishing any others sent in, if they should be considered suitable.

In writing, these conditions are to be observed:—

1. The matter must not extend over more than four columns of space exclusive of illustrations. This means 6,000 words or less.

2. The incidents and features of the story must relate in a great measure to New Zealand, its history, more especially war incidents and adventures, its scenery, its climatic aspects, its old identities, its social and sporting gatherings, etc. Scenes may, however, be cast in other places, though a preponderance of that which possesses a local flavour will turn the scale in cases where the contributions are otherwise of equal merit.

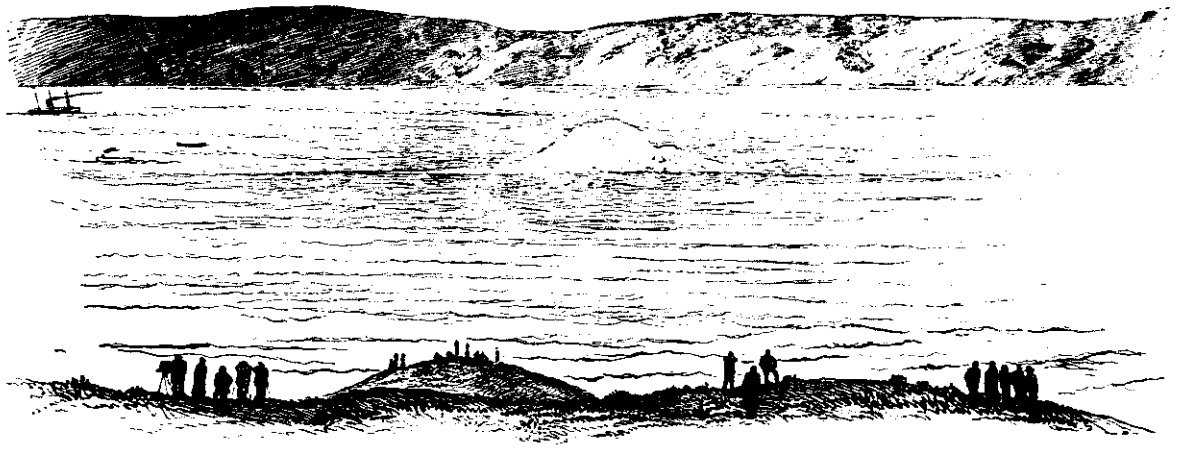
3. Each manuscript must be addressed to the Editor, Shortland street, Auckland, and have a motto inscribed at the head without the writer's name. Accompanying it must be a letter also addressed to the Editor, and at the back of it the words 'Christmas Story. Motto "such and such,"' repeating the motto in the manuscript. Inside of this the name of the writer should appear.

4. All contributions must reach the office before the 20th of September next ensuing. The result will be declared in the Christmas number.

5. Writing to be on one side of the paper only.

BLOWING UP OF THE WILLIE M'LAREN.

THE blowing up of the barque Willie M'Laren, which foundered on a rock in Worser Bay whilst bound from Newcastle, New South Wales, with a cargo of coals, was satisfactorily carried out on Saturday, the 1st of August. The expense of blowing up the wreck (some £60) had to be borne by the Syndicate, but the work was conducted by the Torpedo Corps, under the supervision of Captain Falconer. There were four mines placed in position at equal distances, two of them containing 250lb of gun cotton, whilst the remaining two each contained 125lb of the same kind of explosive. His Excellency the Governor and Lady Onslow witnessed the affair from the s.s. Waihi, on which they were the guests of the Hon. G. McLean, M.L.C., Chairman of the U.S.S. Company. The Government steamer Hinemoa embarked between 300 and 400 excursionists, nearly half of whom were either members of Parliament or Civil servants, and one-fourth ladies. Five minutes had elapsed from the time the signal was hoisted on the Hinemoa when the white signal flag on the torpedo boat was again waved, and immediately a dull and almost indescribable kind of shock was felt on the Hinemoa, followed by the sound of an explosion, and instantaneously there was a great upheaval of water. No sooner had the explosion occurred than wreckage of all description was observed floating about in the water, where but a moment before the lower masts of the foundered vessel had been seen standing. Now a rush was made by the flotilla of rowing boats towards the still seething water, in order to gather any fish which, being stunned by the concussion, may have floated to the surface. The fins of one or two sharks were observed from the steamers, and hundreds of eels, some of them as thick as a man's arm, were seen wriggling about lazily on the top of the water. Many of these were hauled into the boats, one of the naval cutters securing a monster conger eel.



BLOWING UP THE WILLIE McLAREN, NEAR WELLINGTON HEADS.

THE SCENE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE EXPLOSION.—From a photo. kindly supplied by Mr J. F. Bell, Wellington.

Mamma: 'Why, what in the world is the matter with Cousin Ned's moustache? It has turned all the colors of the rainbow.' Mabel (blushing): 'Well, mamma, you see he was in the cloak-room when I went in to develop my pictures this morning, and—and he ought to have known better, when I had the acid in my hand.'

French scientists are puzzling over a spider which was discovered in a cavity in a stone. 'It is estimated that the stone must be 4,000 years old; this notwithstanding, however, the spider is quite lively and very youthful in its antics. It is blind and has no mouth.'

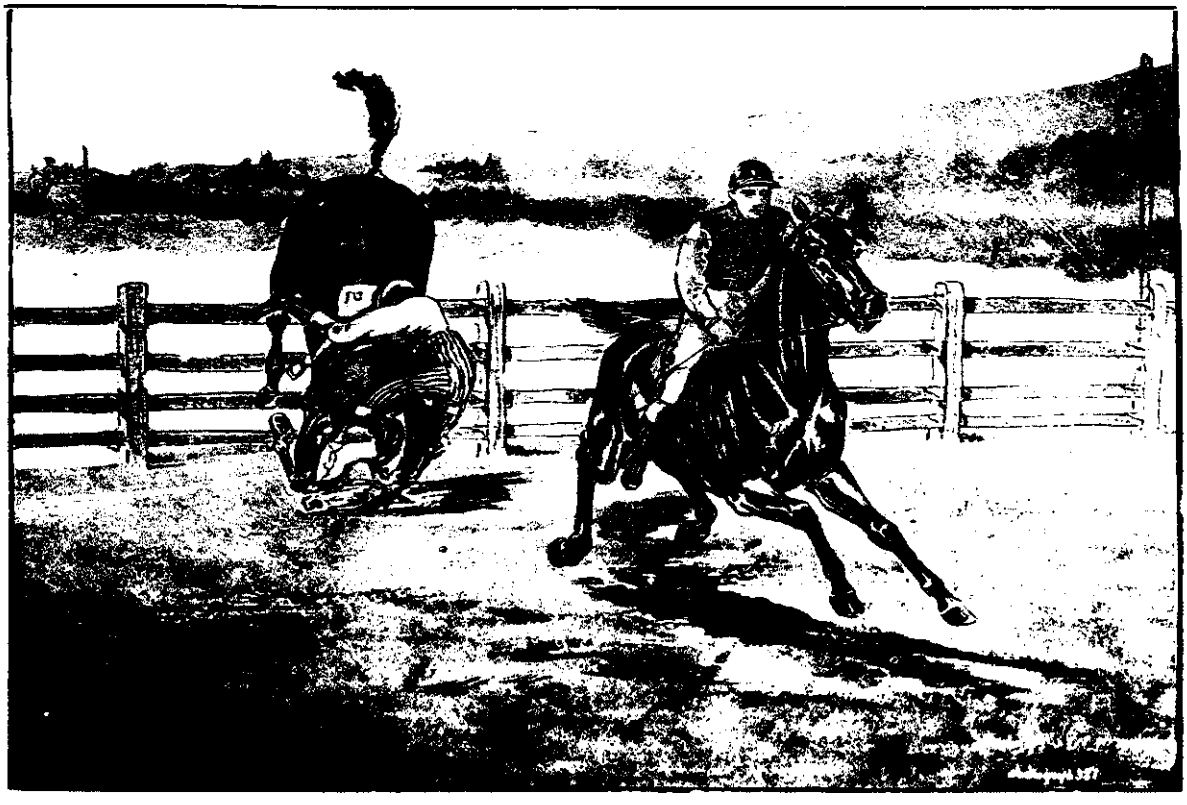
SAD END OF A GIRL'S ROMANCE.

Two weeks ago there died in an hospital at Boston, Mass., one of the principals in a romance that began, happily perhaps, in England, and ended wretchedly for all concerned in the United States. The woman in the case was the daughter of a noble English house; of the man's antecedents not much is known, and there is little in his career, after he had induced a beautiful and accomplished girl to elope with him, to justify her choice.

Lady Blanche Elizabeth Mary Annunciata was the eldest child of the second Earl of Gainsborough, and a sister of the present earl. She was beautiful and accomplished, and was twenty-four years of age when she fell in love with a man greatly her inferior in social station, and, as it happened, in almost every other respect also. Thomas P. Murphy was the organist in the chapel attached to the Earl of Gainsborough's seat at Exton Park, Oakham, Rutlandshire. He was born in London of Irish parents, who died when he was very young. As a boy he possessed musical talents which attracted the attention of some Catholic clergymen. They succeeded in interesting a wealthy Catholic lady in young Murphy's case, and the boy was sent to Leipsic that he might be thoroughly grounded in a profession which he promised to adorn. From Leipsic he went to Brussels and was graduated there from the Conservatory of Music. Rossini was one of the examining committee at the time, and Sir Arthur Sullivan was one of Murphy's classmates. Through the influence of his patroness and his clerical friends, Murphy, upon his return to London, was made organist at the Brompton Oratory. He found his health unequal to the task and resigned.

It so happened that just at this time the Brompton Fathers received three applications for organists. One of these came from Lord Gainsborough. Murphy was permitted to take his choice, and decided to go to Exton Park. Lady Blanche was an enthusiast in matters musical, and led the choir of the chapel in which Murphy had become organist. Under such circumstances the two met often. They fell in love—at least there is no doubt of this so far as the lady is concerned. It was some months after they had exchanged vows that the Earl of Gainsborough discovered the situation. He promptly intimated to Murphy that his resignation would be acceptable. Murphy expressed a desire to explain, but was informed that no explanation was needed.

Once more the musician found himself in London. He wrote to his sweetheart and she answered his letters. He asked her to meet him in London that they might be married, adding that he knew quite well that the Earl's consent could not be procured. Lady Blanche disappeared one day in the spring of 1870. She was at once followed, but when found she wore a wedding ring. She and Murphy had been married. The date of the marriage, according to Burke's peerage, was March 6th, 1870. The Earl of Gainsborough offered the organist a handsome annuity if he would betake himself to the Continent alone, and remain there. The offer was declined. It was understood that Lady Blanche was heiress to several thousand pounds bequeathed to her by a relative. This she did not claim, actuated by motives of pride. Husband and wife decided to sail for America, neither of them feeling comfortable in London, their story having become known. They were almost penniless when they reached New York and were in wretched circumstances when Murphy secured the position of organist at St. James's Church in that city. Lady Blanche soon found that she must either apply to her family for assistance or become a bread winner herself. She tried her hand at literature and several stories from her pen were printed in Lippincott's, and other magazines. The work was too much for her strength, and although her husband had secured a position under the Tweed Government in New York city, in which he was paid for doing nothing, he seemed incapable of keeping his money. Lady Blanche was finally compelled to apply to her father through the house of Baring Brothers, who had been instructed to honour all applications from her. With the money thus obtained she bought a farm in New Hampshire. There she died on March 21, 1881. After his wife's death Murphy sold the farm. So long as the proceeds lasted he lived recklessly, and finally died in absolute want.



THE UNITED HUNT CLUB CUP, WELLINGTON, JULY 26.

THE DRUID FELL AT THE LAST FENCE, LEAVING MR. O'ROURKE ON DAN TO WIN AS HE LIKED.

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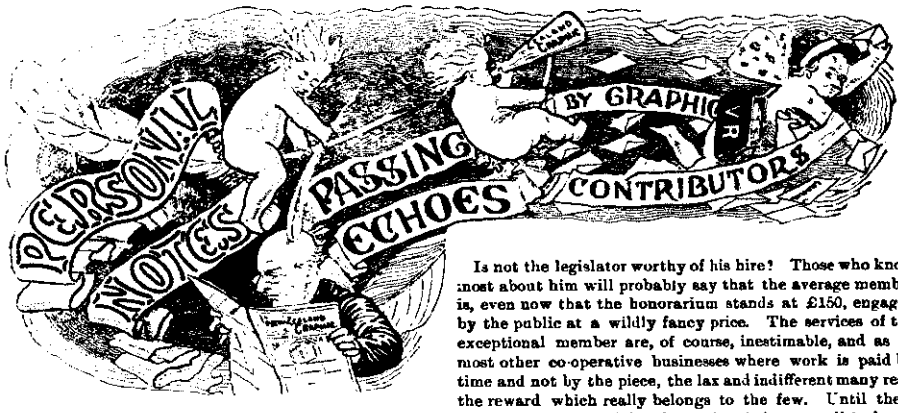
'My dear lady, your daughter is lovely,' said a flatterer, 'a perfect little pearl.' 'And pray, sir, what am I?' 'Oh, you are the mother of pearl.'



The New Zealand Graphic

AND LADIES' JOURNAL.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 1891.

AMONG the other existing institutions which will be favoured with a short shrift by the body of coming female voters will be the barmaid. Barmaids, as a class, have few friends. To the average woman who considers herself respectable, the barmaid is the embodiment of all that is evil. If, after hearing all that has been said of her in a gallinine convention, some misguided man ventures to seek refreshment at her shrine, he does so furtively and with the additional delight of feeling that he runs a chance of a wigging. If he is a young man and the experience is yet new, he marvels to find that the barmaid bears any human and feminine traits whatever. In some cases he is so agreeably disappointed that he falls in love with her forthwith, much to the consternation of the masculine friend of the family who was so incautious as to lead him to the shrine of the ambiguous syren.

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The said friend, being an old stager, has perhaps ceased to have much sentiment with reference to either barmaids or other maids, and the supposition that Dolly could ever strike a light in the bosom of his young *protégé* never entered his mind. He himself has long come to regard her as a useful adjunct towards assisting the enjoyment of the fluid, as she can talk just sufficient for the nonce, expects nothing special in the way of chivalry, and is prepared at any moment for his departure. To him this business-like indifference on her part is the charm, for he has a holy horror of magnetizing any woman, well-knowing the endless complications it entails

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The younger man, however, revels in the delicious flames chiefly springing from himself. Dolly is almost innocent of design in the matter, but is still enough of a woman to appreciate a man's flattery and admiration, and suckles the young calf with a very good imitation of the milk of feminine kindness. Her arts are those of the sisters who disown her, only more finished by experience, and her intentions are much less agglutinative, for though she has perhaps a tender feeling for her admirer, she is prepared for any amount of slipperiness on the part of man. He, however, is the headlong one, and precipitates himself into the pit of matrimony to the rage and disgust of his female acquaintances, who, finding they have missed their mark, charitably hope he may be miserable with the 'creature' of his choice. As for the friend, his credit being cracked with the family, he is driven to solace himself at the shrine of some other Hebe, who speedily compasses and adapts herself to his ideas.

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Barmaids are unpopular with other women because they have such unbounded opportunities. Even if the liquor business were robbed of its speculative element, and bars reduced to a condition of the utmost decorum everywhere, the prejudice would still exist. As men know, the great blemish of the calling is the necessity it carries with it of making custom at all cost, even among the low and dissipated; but this is merely the consequence of unrestricted competition. It is usually not from love but from necessity that a girl takes to the bar, and often deems herself fortunate in having headed many less suitable applicants. So long as there is so much selfishness, family and otherwise, and it is necessary to hustle for a living, the barmaid is entitled to some leniency of judgment. Few barmaids would fail to assert their dignity did society protect them against the avaricious demands of their employers, and there are many whose presence men seek with a feeling of kindliness and regard, founded upon a knowledge of the trials incident to their calling, and of the good sense with which they meet them.

Is not the legislator worthy of his hire? Those who know most about him will probably say that the average member is, even now that the honorarium stands at £150, engaged by the public at a wildly fancy price. The services of the exceptional member are, of course, inestimable, and as in most other co-operative businesses where work is paid by time and not by the piece, the lax and indifferent many reap the reward which really belongs to the few. Until these colonies obtain the right of enacting their own political constitutions by plebescite, and the voters fix the honorarium once and for all, the public will be treated periodically to this spectacle of a number of employés fixing the amount of their own salary.

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It is, as regarded from a business standpoint, a really good sort of joke to see this little farce going on in what is called the Council of the Nation. A body of men, hired by the electors at a certain rate, undertake to do the work of legislation at a particular figure, and as soon as they have got into the saddle, set about decreeing that their salary should be increased. There is nothing else like it in the world, because, owing to the absurd state of politics, there is no other sphere in life where such flagrant want of honesty and honour would be tolerated. A person with the ordinary sense of justice can understand a legislature contemplating the enactment of a law of the above nature to take effect after the next general election. In such case the voters would get timely notice of the change intended, and the question could be made a test one with candidates. As the matter now stands the public is in the position of Sinbad. It has put the 'Old Man of the Sea' upon its shoulders, and he is running the show with an utter disregard of the patron who has to pay the expenses.

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Retribution there is none, because however much people may vapour about dishonesty and immorality when it comes to roost within their own circle, the questionable acts of public men, especially when corporately perpetrated, seem to be forgotten with curious rapidity. There is not a fact more calculated to excite distrust and despondency in the mind of the advocates of advanced democratic legislation than this exhibition of 'smartness' on the part of those temporarily entrusted with the destinies of New Zealand. After the scorching condemnation of the men of the Vogelian reign, one would have thought that a newer and a brighter lesson was going to be read to the rising youth of this country. Of yore, Gallio was reported to have asked in despair, 'What is truth?' Now, if he had lived and read this, he might have been incredulous, but sad to say, it is the truth of a body of men who ought to know better.

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What a fearful and wonderful creation is the clerical mind? It is hermaphrodite, with something of the vigour of the male combined with the clamorousness and inconsequence of the female intellect. Whenever the civil power enacts aught bearing upon the questions of either education or marriage, there is certain to be some section of the Christian clergy calling down the lightning from the skies upon the tamperers with their exclusive prerogatives, which lightning, strange to say, never comes. Certainly in every body of ecclesiastics there are men who lay no claim to infallibility, and who are content to lend in silence personal assistance to the cause of progress. There are, however, always enough of the hide-bound belligerent type ready to rave thunderously from the public platform in a useless sort of way against the irresistible tide of advancing reform.

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Men, notably lawyers, doctors, scientists, and journalists, have never been very amenable to the influences of the clergy. Whatever may be the failings of the male sex, a dislike of logic and knowledge is not their weakest point. As Marie Bashkirteeff said, they are rather too much taken up with their intellect to be what is called 'good.' However that may be, laymen always knew how to fight and die for their intellectual convictions, and though the clergy of the existing generation have been very quick to appropriate the glory of the reforms won by the laity in the preceding generation, and to persuade women that the Church did it all, the historical facts are all the other way. Except in the case of mutual religious persecution, the clergy of every denomination have either opposed the laity, or having found opposition fruitless, changed front, and having stolen the laity's policy, endeavoured to aggrandize their own influence with women by inducing them to believe that the reforms originated with them.

Every layman notes in the clergy an approximation to the female modes of thought. The cleric who is exceptional in this respect is a mere accident in his profession, and the policy of his cloth pursues its course uninfluenced by him. The clerical mind, no more than the average female mind of to-day, originates nothing. It is essentially conservative, and would soon become intellectually and socially stagnant were it not for secular influences operating on it from without. A small contingent of the laity, known as philosophers or reformers, drag the clergy and the women on from the front, while the mass of the laity prod them on from behind. Owing, however, to the dead weight of ignorance fostered by the clergy in the minds of women and children, the progress must necessarily be slow.

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To get women married, and to rule the children resulting from the marriage through the mother, has been the sole aim of the clergy in every age. Hence marriage and education are the corner-stones of their domination, and to oust their influence in either is to practically clip their claws. Even Catholic countries have now, nearly all of them, swept away the religious sanction from marriage, the contract being established by mere civil ceremony. The clergy, however, seek to disguise this as much as possible by impressing women with the idea that they are not *legally* married unless in a consecrated edifice with all the mesmeric accompaniments of bridesmaids, bouquets, fine dresses, and voluptuous music. The English common law has never regarded the clergy as other than officials licensed by it to superintend the making of a civil contract, and the formula used at the Registrar's office is what really gives effect to marriage, and not the recital of marriage service. Without the inscription of their names upon the list of duly qualified celebrants at Wellington, no clergyman of any denomination in New Zealand could marry a woman to a man by mere virtue of his clerical character. When a woman goes to be married at church in England or in New Zealand, she may flatter herself that she is being married by a clergyman and being married in a church, but the state is marrying her all the same.

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And as the State marries her, so the State lays down the conditions under which her marriage may be dissolved. There is nothing compulsive or obligatory in these. The clergy are raving as if the law were intent upon divorcing couples by force, just as it makes citizens pay the property tax. The law is so logical that it says that the offending consort cannot get a divorce by reason of his or her wrong-doing. It is the consort who suffers, and innocently suffers, who may, if he or she like, apply to get divorced. If that consort's love has not waned, the aid of the courts will never be invoked. The clergy apparently seek to keep persons together when it cannot conduce to the general happiness of the parents or the offspring, and this they do for the reason that they regard marriage as a divine sacrament for which mankind was created, and not as a civil agreement constructed for the convenience of mankind. Strangely, too, the logic of facts is against them, for whenever the procuring of a divorce has been made more easy, their supposed disciples, the wives, have been more inclined to obtain relief than the husbands. This, possibly, shows that men are a bad lot, but since it also proves that women are ceasing to regard the influence of the churches, most men, not clergy, will view the fact as a convenient petard for hoisting the enemy.

THE MESSAGE OF NATURE.

THERE'S a dreamland over here,
Come and see! Come and see!
There's a glory over here,
Come to me! Come to me!
Lay thy head upon my breast,
I will lull thy soul to rest,
I will tell thee what is best.
Come to me!

There's a sweetness in the air
Over here! Over here!
Everlasting freshness fair
Over here! Over here!
List, my voice! Go tune thy ear,
Beauty's secret thou wilt hear.
Hark! the music of the sphere!
Come to me!

Peace and quiet reign above
Ever more! Ever more!
The beautiful and grand in love
More and more! More and more!
Hear the throbbings of my heart,
Learn the secret of life's art,
It will teach thy soul its part.
Come to me!

ALICE MEREDITH.

We shall always be pleased to receive accounts of entertainments, dances, etc., from any place where we have no regular correspondent. All letters to be signed in full, not for publication but as a guarantee of accuracy.

WANGANUI.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 12.

The public of Wanganui have been afforded a great treat on three evenings lately, by the staging of the well-known and popular opera of Gilbert and Sullivan's composition, the 'Mikado,' by the members of the Wanganui Musical and Dramatical Association. The Society have already put on before a Wanganui audience the following:—'Current Cash,' 'Iolanthe,' etc., all of which were well received, and creditably performed. In the opinions of many the Association, in proposing to stage the 'Mikado,' were undertaking more than they were capable of, but, fortunately, the management of the Association is composed of men who believe that where there's a will there is also a way, so once having made up their minds to put the opera on, they lost no time in putting their intentions into a practical shape. All who were dubious at the outset of the undertaking were, without exception, after having witnessed the performance, ready to acknowledge that they had been pleasantly surprised. After some months of most active and persevering rehearsal, the Wanganui amateurs appeared for the first time in the 'Mikado' opera. The house, though not crammed, was a good one, several ladies being present in evening costume, amongst whom I noticed Mrs Fitzmaurice, Miss Blanche Moore (of Nelson, who is at present on a visit to Wanganui), Mrs Barnicoat, Miss Peat, Mrs Comyns, Mrs Potter, etc. Almost at the eleventh hour a difficulty arose, which it was feared at first would delay the staging of the opera, Mr Fairburn, who was cast for the important character of Nanki Poo, the lover of Yum-Yum, having caught a severe cold, which rendered singing (of which there is a good deal in the part) quite out of the question. Fortunately, an excellent and most willing acceptance of the part was received at the hands of Mr W. H. G. Foster, mine host of the well-known Wanganui hostelry, the Steam Packet Hotel, who, although he was deprived of the necessary amount of time for rehearsal of such an important part as that assigned, yet sustained it in an admirable manner. Mr Foster appeared most to advantage in his rendition of the well-known solo, 'A Wandering Minstrel I,' and in the part-singing, too, he rendered valuable assistance; and taking into consideration the shortness of notice he had, his conception of the part is deserving of very great credit. The character of the Mikado was invested with the highest possible degree of dignity by Mr E. Withers, who wore the handsome dress appropriate to such a high dignitary, and in the song and chorus, 'My Object All Sublime,' he was greatly instrumental in rendering it in the effective and telling manner in which it was given. Mr Withers appeared to advantage in his conception of the part where he comes on the stage in quest of his lost son, Nanki Poo, and after having been informed by Ko-Ko that his command to have a person executed has been duly carried out, he finds out that it is his lost son, Nanki Poo, that has been beheaded. The poignancy of grief that would naturally follow was well sustained at the hands of Mr Withers. Perhaps the most meritorious part in the performance, and without a doubt the one upon which the most business devolved, was that of Ko-Ko, the Lord High Executioner of Titipu, as played by Mr W. M. Davidson, in the comic element of which there is a good deal in the opera, more especially in the second act. He made the best 'hits' of the evening, and each night he was undoubtedly the greatest in favour with the large audiences that packed the Oddfellows' Hall each evening. The potent and dignified personage of Pooh Bah, Lord High Everything Else, found the worthiest acceptance at the hands of Mr J. W. Day, whose fine, manly, and robust physique was perfectly in keeping with the dignified and haughty manner to be assumed. The many and amusing little witty points of dialogue which intersperses the opera were given in a most telling and effective manner by Mr Day, and although suffering considerably from a bad throat, his vocal efforts, too, were by no means inferior to the histrionic ability which he displayed. His little son as Ko-Ko's sword-bearer, did the little he had to do well, and it was somewhat amusing what deference was paid to him by the adult members of the chorus when he received from Ko-Ko the murderous looking weapon with which the executionary commands of the Mikado were carried out. Mr Norrie was cast for the part of Pish Tush, a noble lord, and he gave very material assistance in the concerted vocal items, but his enunciation appeared to be his weakest point. Miss E. Gerse gave a most pleasing and faithful representation of the important part of Yum-Yum, and her rendition of the character showed the most careful study, and very great natural talent and aptitude. In the scene where she finds her lover, Nanki Poo, and subsequently learns that he is doomed to be beheaded, and if she marries him it means burying alive for her, Miss Gerse gave a most vivid portrayal of the natural feelings which would arise under such trying circumstances. In the vocal efforts Miss Gerse appeared undoubtedly to most advantage in the solo, 'The Sun Whose Rays.' Miss Pawson and Miss Withers, respectively, assumed the characters of Pitti Sing and Peep Bo, both of whom acquitted themselves admirably. In the trio, 'Three Little Maids From School Are We,' these two last-mentioned young ladies, together with Miss Gerse, fairly brought down the house for their coquettish and pleasing rendition of this always popular ditty, and they received a vociferous encore. The difficult character of Katisha, an elderly lady in love with Nanki Poo, was capitally and cleverly sustained by Miss Lilly Kitchen, who invested the part with a large amount of business. The resentment assumed at finding her lover, Nanki Poo, had found greater attraction in Yum-Yum is worthy of particular praise. Miss Kitchen rendered the solo, 'Hearts Do Not Break,' in a telling and pathetic manner, for which she received a well-deserved encore. In the dance with Ko-Ko this young lady also made one of the most successful 'hits' of the evening, resulting in another recall. The costumes which cost something like £150, were really handsome, and reflect very great credit upon the local establishment of Messrs Nicholas and Rennington, by whom they were turned out. Mr A. Martin, who has only just removed his photographic studio to much more modern and extensive premises, has executed a number of large portraits of the principals in the opera, and they were on view for some little time before the opera was staged, and were universally admired. The scenery on the stage was specially painted for the opera by Mr T. H. Battle, and added much to the appearance of those taking part in the performance. Able assistance was rendered in this direction by Mrs Lennie Jones. Two large Japanese lilies on the proscenium wing from this lady's brush were much admired. The music was supplied by the Wanganui Orchestral Club, under the conductorship of Mr J. K. Manning, and rendered valuable service. The duties of pianist were, in the absence of Mrs Charles Greenwood, owing to her recent bereavement, ably performed by Mrs Meek (*nee* Willis), who formerly for many years acted in a similar capacity to the Wanganui Harmonic Society. To Mr W. J. Blake, stage manager, and Mr J. H. Keesing, chairman, too much credit cannot be ascribed for the manner in which all arrangements were carried out. Though each night of the performance the attendance was very large, yet perhaps if anything the last night was the most numerously attended. It was undoubtedly the most fashionable. The pupils attending both the Boys' and Girls' Colleges were present, the latter in charge of their head mistress, Miss Harrison. There were also a large number of ladies present in the dress circle in evening dress, amongst whom I noticed Mesdames Empson, Gifford, Marshall, W. F. Russell, Mrs (Dr.) Earle, Mrs A. Atkins, Mrs Harry Hole, Mrs Turner, Mrs (Dr.) Skerman (of Marton) Mrs Alex. Hatrick, Miss Russell, the Misses Earle, with whom was Miss Wilford of the Hutt, Miss Jessie Taylor, Misses Cameron of Marangai, Miss Ralston, of Foxton, besides several others, all of whom appeared to be very pleased with the performance. In all likelihood the opera will shortly be again put on, when Mr Fairburn will assume the character of Nanki Poo, which was so well sustained in the performances already given by Mr W. H. G. Foster.

We are to have plenty of amusements this week. The annual concert and dance, held under the auspices of the Turakura Football Club, is to be held in the Turakura Town Hall. Several local amateurs are going to take part in the concert, and most of them will, I expect, be prevailed upon to stay to the dance. I will give you an account of it in my next.

There are several other items to tell you about—a conversazione in the large hall adjoining St. Paul's Church, also the monthly social in connection with the ladies of the Church of England Working Guild. The latter is always well attended, and certainly tends to bring the members of the congregation together. A number of vocal and instrumental items are rendered, and liberal refreshments are dispensed during the evening, which renders it more of a social nature than it otherwise would be; but this letter is already too long.

DOROTHY.

NELSON.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 12.

The Provincial Hall was again the scene of great festivities, the occasion being the annual Masonic ball, which was, as they always are, a great success. The hall was tastefully decorated with flags, ferns, Chinese lanterns, etc., the ferns being arranged on the walls to represent the different masonic symbols. The Chinese lanterns were hung in one long row from end to end of the hall. The effect of the whole was most pleasing to the eye. It was really wonderful how so much decorating was done, as no nails or tacks are allowed to be used, so you can imagine how very hard that makes it for the unfortunate decorators. As to the supper, that was most *recherché*, and evidently *the* feature of the evening. The table looked very pretty with flowers tastefully arranged on it. The floor and the music were good, so you see, dear Bee, we had nothing to grumble at; yet, of course (or at least so say our male friends), we cannot be happy without finding fault with something, and this time it was the dreadful crush. One had hardly room to move. Towards the end, when a number had left, it was vastly improved. But there, complaining is not my forte, so that will last for a long time. The dresses were all bright, and some very handsome ones were worn. Mrs Morton was in a lovely pale heliotrope silk, beautifully made with a long basque and chiffon flounces, and was, I think, undoubtedly the belle. Mrs Pearson also looked extremely well in a pretty shade of pink silk trimmed with watered silk; Miss Watson wore a peculiar shade of lemon silk, relieved with brown velvet bands (an uncommon toilette); Miss G. Pritt wore a becoming gown of white cashmere handsomely embroidered with gold; Miss Catley, an elegant robe of apricot silk embroidered with silver; her sister, a lemon coloured net; Miss Trask, such a handsome dress of crimson satin, with a court train bordered with bunches of ostrich feathers; Miss Warner, a lovely robe of pale yellow net, with little bunches of primroses all over the front of the skirt.

The Poultry, Bird, and Dog Show took place in the Drill-shed. The exhibits this year were so numerous that there really was not room to inspect the different classes as one would like to, for so many people went that, what with people and exhibits, it was impossible to walk about comfortably. The show on the whole was most successful, especially the poultry and birds. An Art Union had been got up for the benefit of the show, and on the last evening great excitement prevailed, when the lucky winners heard their numbers called. Some of the prizes were very valuable. All had been presented by different citizens. The first prize was a double-barrelled gun given by Mr A. Glasgow, of Wakapuaka. I think nearly everyone went to the Show at some time or other, but the evening I was there I only saw Mesdames Glasgow, Watts, Percy Adams, J. Sharp, A. Glasgow, Pitt, and T. Glasgow, Misses Bell, Pitt, M. Seymour, Glasgow and Catley.

On the public holiday the first sports in connection with the Athletic Association took place. They consisted of cycling races, horse races, foot races, etc. They were held in Trafalgar Park. The attendance was by no means as large as it otherwise would have been, owing to the dreadful wind which prevailed. Those who did not turn out were wise, for there is no protection in the Park from wind, and it seemed to almost cut one in two, and was bitterly cold as well. Among the few who braved the elements were Mesdames Pitt, Littlejohn, Thornton, Misses Morgan, Homes, Curtis, Catley, Pitt, and Sealy.

In the evening a concert was given by a number of local amateurs in aid of the funds of the Athletic Association. Mrs Houlker sang two songs in her usual sweet manner. She was loudly encored; in fact, the audience in the back seats were decidedly unkind, and would not stop clapping until Mrs Houlker good-naturedly returned, which was hard for her, as she was suffering from a bad cold. Miss Pratt also sang very well, as did Messrs Fell, Grace and Wix. Mr Wix gave a humorous recitation, also Mr Kirkby. The theatre was well filled. Among the audience were Mesdames Watts, Fell, Percy Adams, Macquarrie, Pitt, J. Sharp, Homes, A. S. Atkinson, Misses Watson, Gribben, Fell, Sealy, Homes, and Curtis.

Mrs Macquarrie gave a small afternoon tea, when a pleasant time was spent by Mesdames Richmond, Lelanders, Broad, Booth, Pearson, Williams, Oldham, Sutton and Duff.

A second social evening was held at the Nelson club, and was as great a success as the first one. It was in exactly the same style as the former one—songs, recitations, readings, etc., then supper. Isn't it hard upon us, Bee, that we poor women have not yet been admitted within the sacred precincts of the Club, after all our male friends' promise, too? But I believe some of them are again agitating about it, so we shall still live in hopes, not fruitless ones this times let us trust.

Great excitement prevails here just now over the Jubilee of the Province, which occurs next 1st February. If the committee are only able to carry out all their plans, we may expect a week of gaiety. A book is to be compiled giving the experiences of all the old settlers in Nelson in the form of stories, which I should think would be very interesting.

In my next letter I shall have the masked ball to tell you of. We are all busy concocting our costumes. Some, I hear, are to be highly amusing.

PHYLLIS.

PATEA.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 12.

It is some time since I wrote you a letter, but this season's assemblies, and the ball given by the ladies, have been such a success that I must tell you about it—who were there, and what they wore, for really there were some very elegant costumes, and the hall was crowded. We had the best of music, and the most *recherché* supper, provided by the committee—Mesdames Munro, Jollie, Christie, Cowern, Smith, Perkins, Wilson, and Klingender. The hall was prettily decorated with nikau palms, ferns, and bunting, and the floor was simply perfection. Too much cannot be said in praise of Miss Jollie, who was secretary, and on whom the success of the ball certainly depended. The extras were well played by Misses Allister, Smith, Jollie, and Cowern, and Messrs Mussen and Jones. There were three *debutantes*—Miss Good (of Manais), in white fish net; Miss Shields, white net, with ribbon and lilies of the valley; and Miss F. Smith, white Liberty silk. Miss Munro (Wanganui) wore a very elegant dress of peacock blue satin; Miss Morse, handsome black net embroidered with gold and red silk; Miss Lysaght, black lace over lavender silk; Mrs J. Peat, black velvet; her daughter, a peculiar shade of pink; Miss Turner red brocade and net; Mrs Kemp, white silk net, white satin bodice, handsome panel of pearls; Miss Jollie, white tulle; Miss May Jollie, white merveilleux; Miss Testar, an olive green net over satin, long trail of pink roses. One dress I thought very simple and pretty—indeed, I heard more than one say that young lady was the belle; it was a cream muslin dress, baby bodice, deep ruche round the edge of the skirt; Mrs Lennie Jones looked very nice in a pink nun's veiling; Mrs Christie, blue silk, silver and blue tinsel; Mrs Wilson, handsome shot brocade gown; Mrs Wyburn, black lace, red poppies; Mrs Cowern, black merveilleux, and sulphur-coloured fish net; Mrs (Dr.) Perkins, dress of gaslight green, pink feathers; Miss Newing, black lace, blue ribbons; Miss Tompson, pink and gold gauze; Mrs Jollie, handsome black silk, ermine cloak. This delightful ball broke up about four in the morning, and I am sure everyone enjoyed themselves to the utmost.

The last of the assemblies was held on a bitterly cold night, making dancing very enjoyable. Mrs Cleary looked

very nice in black velvet and crushed strawberry; Miss Cleary, in white; and Miss A. Cleary, in red and white; Miss Mason, black net; Miss Kenworthy, white muslin, pink ribbon; Miss Balmforth, pink dress, pink feather trimming on the corsage and sleeves; Miss Gibbons, blue cashmere and satin; Miss Gibson, blue; Miss Taylor, blue (looked very pretty); Mrs Christie, black net and satin trimmed with jet; Miss Thompson, pink satin and nun's veiling; Mrs Balmforth, black satin; Mrs Ball, black silk; Mrs Hamerton, heliotrope cashmere and velvet; Miss Cowern, pink lace trimmed with white fur; Miss Morse, black silk net; Miss Jollie, cream satin and cashmere trimmed with lace. I hope this will not be the last of the dances, for there is nothing so enjoyable in the cold weather.

MARIAN.

[Thank you. Shall be pleased to hear from you again.—BEE.]

CHRISTCHURCH.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 11.

Everything is frightfully quiet but the weather, and that is variety itself, with the one exception—it cannot rain. The clouds blow up, and all looks black and promising, but the next morning is frosty as usual, and old Sol, with as broad a grin as ever, quite having the laugh at us for being so simple as to expect a rainy morning. Then I hear the menkind of the family talking in the most doleful way about the dull times, nothing doing, and so on, till really but for the brilliant sunshine one would feel quite miserable. It is just the time for long walks, and numerous parties are organised, principally for the two favourite ones—to Lyttelton *via* Dyer's Pass, or to Lyttelton *via* Sumner, and *vice versa*. The view on these lovely clear days is charming, and well worth the walk up the hill.

A few young people spent a very pleasant evening at Mrs Stack's, Fendalton, including a little dancing.

A South Canterbury wedding was celebrated at St. Michael's Church. The bride was Miss Islip, of Albury, and the bridegroom Mr T. E. Goodwin, of Fairlie Creek. The bride's dress was a pretty and simple one of white nun's veiling with silk stripe, a spray of orange blossom on the bodice, and wreath of same fastening the long tulle veil on her hair. There were four maids in attendance. Miss Islip and Miss Peache had dresses of cream nun's veiling braided with gold, hats to match with primroses. The two little girls, the Misses Rutherford, of Mount Nessing, wore ruby velvet frocks with broad sashes of white pongee silk, and ruby hats with large white ostrich feathers drooping over the brim. Each bridesmaid wore a gold safety-pin brooch with pearl initial, the gift of the bridegroom. The wedding party drove to the residence of Mr and Mrs J. D. Peache (the bride's uncle and aunt), where many good wishes were expressed for their future welfare. Mr and Mrs Goodwin left by the afternoon train for Ashburton. The bride's travelling dress was a grey Cheviot tweed.

At the meet Mr Lyon was able to be in charge again, having recovered from his accident. Aylesbury was the chosen spot for this day, and they had fairly good sport.

The rehearsals for 'Creatures of Impulse' are going splendidly, and we are all looking forward to this pretty play, while the juveniles have almost been off their heads with excitement over Mrs E. W. Humphrey's fancy dress ball. That will be a charming sight to witness, but I doubt if these great festivities are very good for the children. Like the age, I suppose, they live too fast now, and will have nothing to look forward to, but my mission in life is not to set the world to rights, and I am carried on with the great tide.

Almost every member of the Kilburn work party met at Mrs Alan Scott's, as usual. They are so soon to be discontinued that no one likes to be absent for an hour, the time is so pleasantly spent. Mrs Boyle, Mrs Julian Scott, and Miss Worthy gave short readings, Miss Robison recited, and the Misses Robison and E. Rhodes performed the little play of 'Ninon and Ninette,' and Miss F. Wynn-Williams played some very pretty violin solos.

Mrs Walters, Christ's College, had a very pleasant afternoon gathering. Among the many present were Mesdames Blakiston, Harper, Bowen, Worthy, Cox, Hennah, Izard, Banks, Neabe, and Scott. Songs were sung by Mesdames Burns, Andrews, Misses Helmore and Loughnan, and a recitation by Miss Worthy.

The 'Parnell Memorial' demonstration took place one evening at Lancaster Park, and all went well for a time. Crowds assembled in the park, and the procession was a great sight, but when about half over a real old-fashioned 'southerly' came up and dispersed the people pretty quickly, and put out the electric lights, and by the time the fireworks were due there was no one left to see. But I notice, with all the crowd, there are only a few pounds to hand over to the fund. That magic word, 'expenses,' runs away with so much.

Mrs Worthy had a large party for tennis and badminton. Among the players were Mr and Mrs Harrison, Mr and Mrs Weston, Mr and Mrs Andrews, Mrs and Miss Campbell, Mrs and Miss Loughnan, Mrs and the Misses Cowlishaw, Mr and Mrs Walters, Mrs Burns, the Misses Helmore, Messrs Mannering, Stewart, Maxwell and Gordon.

In the evening the Dialectic Society gave another of their enjoyable concerts in the University Hall, which was, as usual, crowded, but that failed to make it warm. It was a bitterly cold night, and people are not very enthusiastic somehow when cold. However, it was an excellent concert. Mesdames Burns and W. P. Townend sang charmingly, and Mrs Wilding played most brilliantly. Mrs Burns looked very sweet in her simple black lace dress; Mrs Townend had a handsome dress of pink brocade, with ruby velvet bodice and train; and Mrs Wilding wore black velvet trained dress with cream brocade front and vest. Mr Wallace's violin playing gave great pleasure, and the trio by Mrs Wilding, Mr Wallace, and Mr H. H. Loughnan was perfectly played. Mr Izard and Mr Maitland Gardner sang. Among the numerous audience I noticed Mr and Mrs Bevan-Brown, Mr and Mrs Purchas, Miss Cox, the Misses Robison, Mrs and Miss Cane, Mrs Hennah, Miss Clark, Mrs MacDonald, the Misses Hennah, Miss B. Tanner, the Misses Thorpe, Mrs and Miss Kimbell, Mrs J. P. Firth, and many others, and crowds of sweet girl graduates.

Bishop Julius laid the top stone of the Cathedral spire one morning between eight and nine o'clock. There were not many people astir, as it was not known he was going to do it, and being so early. His son was also on the platform at the top with him. A silver trowel was presented to the Bishop with an inscription, by Mr Stocks, the contractor. A chair attached to wire ropes was used for the ascent, and when on the journey, about half way up, a halt was made, and a very good photograph taken, so no one can deny now our Bishop has been suspended. The cross is not quite ready to be placed in position, and Mr Stocks has been making hay in the meantime by elevating those of an adventurous spirit at half-a-crown each.

The Rev. W. B. Stanford, our late canon, is not likely to return to New Zealand, as he has been appointed headmaster of St. Mark's School at Windsor since being curate-in-charge of a parish in Lincolnshire.

Massage has become quite the fashion here, and is highly recommended by the faculty. Mrs S. Palmer, from Wellington, has been here some months giving lessons, and also treating patients. She is generally recognised as a competent *masseuse*, and has instructed Mrs Macpherson, of the Rhodes' Convalescent Home, where patients are now received for the treatment; also Miss Rowan, of Mrs Rowan's Nursing Home, and in a number of cases immense benefit has been experienced.

DOLLY VALE.

MARLBOROUGH.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 13.

The Hunt Club races, the first held by the club, was a very successful affair altogether, the weather being propitious, and all the trades-people agreeing to 'shut up shop.' There was quite a large gathering on the course. Miss A. Williams' horse won the Ladies' Bracelet amidst great applause and excitement. There was rather more than the usual mild excitement over the shilling sweepstakes amongst the ladies up in the Grand Stand. A valuable horse belonging to Mr Roake unfortunately fell, and was so severely hurt that it is said he will never be able to race again.

The trades-people had a very pleasant social gathering under the auspices of a popular committee. Some musical selections by Miss McCabe, and a song, 'True to the Last,' by Mr George Carter, varied the proceedings with dancing till 2 p.m.

Surprise parties are becoming monotonous, but what are you to do in a small place like Marlborough? Anyone who will start something new and original in the way of amusement for the young people will be looked upon as a public benefactor. One party visited Mrs Raynor's hospitable homestead, and enjoyed themselves immensely. Mrs Raynor's name is a household word amongst the young people, and her hospitality proverbial with the young men who have gone to Blenheim as strangers, and experienced great kindness at her hands. A hoax was perpetrated on the indefatigable hand who go about with their suppers and take other people's houses by storm. Some circulars headed 'Surprise Party' were sent to various members of the contingent, requesting them to meet at a certain corner at a certain time. Twenty young people, laden with provision baskets, appeared on the scene at the time appointed, but the organizer of the party was conspicuous by his absence, probably chuckling to himself at the success of his scheme on the other side of the hedge.

The Marlborough Rugby Football Union got up a social to raise funds for the purpose of sending a team to try conclusions with foreign teams. The social was a fancy or plain dress—at the option of the guests affair, and appears to have been a success. Some of the Picton ladies were asked to go on the committee with the Blenheim ladies, but what with railway fares, tickets, and other unavoidable expenses mounting up, they were unable to avail themselves of the compliment paid to them. The fancy dressists were Miss Falconer (Picton), Dolly Varden; Miss Mary Raynor, Fair Maid of Perth; Miss Smith, French Peasant; Miss Horton, Grecian Maid; Miss Burton, Highland Lassie; Miss Gillespie, Julia; Mrs Brown, Magpie; W. Carey, Buffalo Bill; J. W. Hodgson, Lawn-tennis; S. Hodson, Page; Mr Menelaus, Sandy McPherson; Mr King, Yankie Grab; Mr Oldershaw, Irishman; Mr Ennis, Footballer; H. Purser, Bombardier; Mr Bothwell, Chinaman; Mr T. Nicholas, The Good Young Man Who Died; Mr Horton, Lawn Tennis; L. Griffiths, Lawyer; W. Seymour, Clown; C. Simson, Rowing; E. Pasley, Persian; A. Raynor, Volunteer Officer. I was unable to be present, so can only give a hearsay report, though I believe the management was excellent and the attendance very large.

Mr Thomas Watson, of Blenheim, gave a lecture on 'Robert Burns' to the Picton people for the benefit of the public lawn tennis court. As a rule, the public of Picton despise two things—lectures and glees—but on this occasion, whether it was that the continual frosts had sharpened their intellectual qualities, or that they could not resist so attractive a subject, this deponent knoweth not, but quite a large number of the residents turned out of their comfortable homes into the frosty night air, and sat entranced for two whole hours listening to Mr Watson's oratory. The glees, which were sung by some of the members of the late Musical and Dramatic Society, they took as 'bitters with the sweet.' They prefer solos, so why not give them the medicine they prefer? Mr Waddy, in returning a vote of thanks to the lecturer, made one of the very best impromptu speeches ever delivered in Marlborough, and was heartily applauded.

Mrs H. C. Seymour and Mrs Allen were asked to chaperone a party of young people out on the warpath to surprise Mr and Mrs Beauchamp, at Anikiwa, but at the last Mrs Seymour was unable to go, and the whole duty and responsibility devolved upon Mrs Allen. Captain Bannatyne, of the ship Nelson, kindly lent one of the ship's boats, capacious enough to hold all the party, and we left Picton at four p.m., and arrived at Anikiwa, which is situated at the head of Queen Charlotte Sound, at six p.m., just in time for tea. Mr and Mrs Beauchamp received the party literally with open arms, and made the strangers, of whom there were several, feel at home at once, whilst the young ladies, assisted by their guests, quickly prepared the tea. After tea the dining room was cleared of carpets and furniture, and a most enjoyable evening was spent. The flight of time was forgotten, and the small hours of the morning found us still doing the light fantastic. At three a.m. we all retired for a few hours' rest, the gentlemen camping down in the dining room, and all were up at an early hour, and some of them out quail-shooting before breakfast. After breakfast it was resolved to extend the excursion to Cullensville rather than go fishing, as was intended, so we packed up some lunch, and took leave of the Beauchamp family with cheers and good wishes, and a warm invitation from our host and hostess to repeat the surprise. We got into our nautical coach and proceeded to the Grove, about a mile across the bay, where we landed, and from thence walked to Cullensville, a distance of five miles. We paid a visit to Mr Greensill's store, and asked permission from Mr Frank Conoly to camp there. He kindly made some tea for us, and we forthwith proceeded to make ourselves at home. We might have been on short commons for a week, so hungry were we, and it was quite apparent that there was not nearly sufficient lunch to satisfy so many ravenous people, so a council of war was held. We had not intended to go to Cullensville, and were unprovided with money, but pockets were turned out, nevertheless. Mrs Allen found ninepence, and Miss Western one and sixpence, and the two went off in triumph to a baker's shop, where they invested their whole fortune in a loaf, a piece of cheese, and some biscuits. We fared sumptuously on that, and felt at peace with all the world. We then visited several of the claims, King Solomon's Mine first of all, where some of our young men being 'new chums,' were baptized according to rule by having the water turned on from the sluice whilst they were descending the shaft. Mr Wearne, the mine manager, was exceedingly kind, and wished us to stay and see them 'washing out,' but that would have delayed us too long. He had some very handsome nuggets amongst the week's 'takings.' The Wairarapa claim was the next visited, and there I went down the shaft in an ordinary bucket, impelled thereto by a desire to distinguish myself, and also to have something to relate to you. The shaft was 45 feet deep, and the sensation of going down not unpleasant till I began to twirl round like a tee-totum near the bottom. When there I sat down in a puddle, regardless of my dress, but still had sense enough to disentangle myself from the bucket, and let it be drawn upwards again. Mr Matheison came down the perpendicular ladder and lit a candle, by the light of which we explored the tunnel to where the men were at work—250 feet from the shaft. No one can imagine without seeing for themselves the wonderful work done by men in their search for gold, and that tunnel looked a dreadful place for men to be at work in—reeking of blue mud and dynamite, standing in water, and water trickling down upon them, out of the sunshine and out of the fresh air, they dearly earn the gold they get. Mr Matheison pointed places in the tunnel where they had found some splendid nuggets. The owners of this claim are called the 'Lucky diggers,' and have been very successful, as indeed they deserve to be. I went up once more in the bucket, and began to feel quite at home in it. Mr Matheison then washed out some dirt to show us the process, and we became the proud possessors of some small nuggets. Next we went to the Hibernian claim, where some of the others wanted to distinguish themselves by going down the shaft, but wanted me, as a veteran, to lead the way. My dress already bore the marks of another shaft and tunnel, and I had no desire to go back to Picton inside a whole casing of blue clay, so I declined the honour of leading them in this case, and we went to the office instead, and saw the bag of gold—the week's takings—and had the manner of assaying the gold explained to us, and many other interesting matters, which would make this letter far too long were I to tell them. A comfortable-looking brake stood ready in Allen-street, but we were penniless adventurers, and could not afford the luxury of a carriage and pair. Shank's ponies would have to carry us, we thought, to the Grove, but we hadn't gone far on our way before the brake overtook us, and the driver, known as Tim McClancy, insisted upon our chaperon and those of the party with her getting into the trap, and in spite of protestations—feeble ones, I admit—he drove us down to the Grove Wharf. Thanks, and the heartiest cheers that over-tired people could give, were all we had to give, but the memory of his good-natured action will live in our hearts for all time. On the wharf we found the Misses Beauchamp with a kettle of hot tea and some more eatables, which they, thinking we would be starved, had brought over from Anikiwa in a boat. We had to wait an hour for the 'middies' and the rest of the party who were walking, and then we took to the oars, or rather the middies did, and arrived at the Picton Wharf at 8 p.m., and all agreed that it was one of the very best excursions ever planned and carried out.

JEAN.

NAPIER.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 10.

The annual fancy dress footballers' ball took place in the large Drill-shed, and added one more to the very many pleasant balls that have preceded it, six hundred people being present. The floor was all that could be desired, and the supper perfect, thanks to the many kind friends who yearly provide our footballers' ball supper, and we really think our boys are getting more popular than ever, for everyone seems so willing to assist. The hall was quite picturesquely decorated with flags, ferns, and flax, the latter of which were brought down from Te Aute by Wi Duncan and several native footballers, our town boys working until one o'clock the previous evening at decorating. Great credit is due to Mr J. Gethin Hughes, who was secretary, and worked like a Trojan to make it the great success it proved to be. One and all say it was most enjoyable. Now I will describe as many of the dresses as I can remember, and those ladies and gentlemen who are missed out will know it is beyond my power to remember everyone present. But before starting I may say everyone looked nice, and the music of Newbould's band was charming. The wife of the popular President of the Rugby Union, Mrs Logan, made a capital Mother of Red Riding Hood, and was most assiduous in her attentions to the native footballers and their wives and friends. Mr Logan also did everything in his power to make it most enjoyable for them, also Mr Hoben, the Secretary of the Rugby Union, who appeared in native costume. Miss Bell, Student; Miss Hilda Hitchings, Daughter of the Regiment; Miss Kate Hitchings, Galatea; Miss Una Hitchings, Court Lady (looked very handsome); Miss Hitchings, Student; Miss Milly Rhodes, Fisher Girl; Miss Q. Hamlin, Greek dress; Miss Luckie, Powder and Patches; Miss Groom, Flower Girl; Miss Jago, Peasant; Miss Hughes, Peasant; Miss Cottrell, Red Riding Hood; Miss Taylor, Nun; Miss Bee Lascelles, pink evening dress (looked charming); Miss Roy, blue and black; Miss Bower, evening dress; Miss Lowry, evening dress (very pretty); Miss Peacocke, fancy costume; Miss Bennet, blue; Mrs Nicholls, pink even-

ng dress; Miss Cottrell, evening dress; Miss Carter, cream; Miss Peddie, Corsican Peasant; Mrs Sheath, evening dress; Mrs King, fancy; Miss White, Slave (one of the most effective costumes); Miss Gleeson, evening dress; Miss Raine, handsome evening dress of white silk; Mrs Hamlin, pink silk; Mrs Margoliuth, black silk; Miss Warner, a visitor from Nelson, wore one of the most charming evening dresses—a cream silk profusely trimmed with buttercups, cream ostrich fan, buttercup ribbons; Miss T. White, evening dress; Mrs Parker, black silk; Mrs W. Parker, cream silk; Mrs Jago, evening dress; Mrs Tabuteau, white silk dress; Miss Fulton, fancy costume; Mrs Peacocke, evening dress; Miss Rhodes, evening dress; Miss Locke, Peasant; Miss Anderson, white net evening dress; Miss Faulkner, pink; Miss M. Faulkner, cream, Miss Tiffin looked pretty, but her dress I have forgotten; Mrs Tiffin, dark silk; Mrs Cornford, black silk; Miss Smith, pale blue; Miss Chapman, evening dress; Mrs Peddie, black silk; Mrs Nichol, black silk; Miss Nichol, Ivy; Miss Hall, French Peasant. Gentlemen: Mr Von Sturmer, Mephistopheles; Mr Jack Hughes, Clown; Mr Gardiner, Maori girl (a splendid get up); Mr Wi Duncan, Maori Costume; Mr Frank Kennedy, Lord Tolloler; Mr Von Haast, Baby (he was much admired); Mr Charlie Kennedy, Court Dress; Mr L. Newton, Windsor Uniform; Mr Frank White, Cricketer; Mr Hughes, Soldier; Mr Sydney Hoben, Barrister (splendid costume); Mr Tabuteau, evening dress; Mr Hempton, evening dress; Mr G. Swan, evening dress; Mr W. F. J. Anderson, Faust, Mr King, evening dress; Mr Wilson, fancy costume; Mr Pyke, evening dress; Mr Logan, evening dress; Mr A. Kennedy, fancy costume; and Messrs Frank Williams, Trotter, Langford, Miller, Sheet, Fred Parker, W. Parker, Jack Parker, W. Swan, Sidey, T. Sidey, Shaw, Stubbs, Sayers, Levi, Peacocke, Ross, Macintosh, and many others were present, but I cannot remember their costumes.

Before closing I may add there are several weddings on hand. Miss Rose Williams is to be married to Mr Ellery, and Miss Bena Bendall to Mr Jack King. Miss Bendall is to be married in Wellington, and live there, but the young lady spent her childhood's days with us, and has visited us so often, and taken part in our amateur operas, etc., so much when visiting, that we really look on her as a Napier girl, although her home for many years has been Wellington. We wish her and her future husband all good wishes, which I am sure all who have met Miss Bendall will say heartily, 'Yes, so do I, for she is a most amiable girl.' Mr Lockie, of Sidey and Lockie, is to be married to a Wellington young lady shortly.

Mrs Arthur Gore has returned, and is looking as charming as ever.

I quite forgot to mention that the energetic Dean of Waiapu and Mrs De Berth Hovell have for the last few weeks being entertaining at afternoon tea on Saturday afternoons the whole of the seat-holders of St. John's Cathedral, taking the folks as their seats go in the Cathedral in rotation, and most jolly they have been. Music, nice tea and cream, cakes, and bread and butter galore, while Mr Spackman and Mr Herbert Spackman, the recent arrival from Home, and who is a splendid violinist, have delighted the visitors with music, as also has Miss Hitchings.

JACK.

AUCKLAND

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 18.

Although, the weather, was boisterous, cold, and extremely unpleasant, still it did not deter a large number of ladies from being present at Potter's Paddock to witness the weekly football matches. The Parnell and city clubs occupied the ground in front of the grand stand, and therefore their match excited the greatest amount of interest. The result was an easy win for Parnell, City not even getting a chance to score. Miss Atkinson (Park Road) wore a stylish dark tweed gown, fur collarette, and small hat with crimson trimmings; a young lady with her looked nice in a dark gown, handsome plush jacket, and stylish felt hat; the young bride, Mrs Herbert Gould, looked exceedingly pretty in a stylish brown tweed gown, hat to correspond, and feather boa; her sister, Miss Halliday, wore a neat and stylish navy cloth costume, fawn hat and fur pelerine; Miss Baird, stylish dark green costume, hat to match, and seal plush jacket; Miss Kirkwood, pretty navy blue cloth costume, the jacket trimmed with black astrachan, navy felt hat with feathers; Miss Hilda Ruck, stylish navy blue cloth gown, jaunty little black straw hat, and fur pelerine; Miss Jervis accompanied her, wearing a becoming navy and crimson costume, and small hat to correspond; Miss Wilson grey tweed gown, seal plush jacket, and brown Alpine hat trimmed with ribbon; Miss Mulgan, grey tweed gown with large spots grey felt hat and fur collarette; her sister wore a green costume, grey felt hat, and grey tweed jacket; Mrs Davey, long brown tweed cloak, and brown bonnet; Miss Devore was enveloped in a long fur-lined cloak, her hat I think, being black; Miss Bertha Devore was in navy blue; Miss Firth wore a stylish gown and jacket of navy blue cloth, and tiny hat to match; she was accompanied by Miss C. Lawford, also gowned in navy blue, the jacket opening over a full bodice of white material spotted with crimson, small green hat; Mrs Jervis, black costume, hat to correspond, and long grey boa; Miss Henderson, stylish plaid tweed gown, plush jacket, and brown felt hat; Miss Pierce, black mourning costume, hat to match; Miss M. Slator, brown tweed cloak, and pretty little hat; Misses Brown, grey tweed gowns plush jackets, and stylish black hats.

A private subscription Cinderella dance was given in the Forester's Hall, a committee of ladies assisting the gentlemen in carrying out the arrangements, the result being a most successful and exceedingly enjoyable evening. The floor was in excellent condition, while the dance music supplied by Mr Adams left nothing to be desired. Mrs Schappe wore a very handsome trained gown of rich cream satin with gold trimmings; Mrs Anthony, handsome black evening dress; Miss Montgomery, pretty dress of crimson gauze with gold tinsel stripe running through; Miss Knight, stylish gown of pale pink cashmere, with aigrettes of feathers; Miss I. Eaton, pretty red tarlatan gown; Miss J. Eaton looked nice in blue; Miss Warren wore a pretty cream cashmere gown; Miss Dickey, a dainty white cashmere evening dress; Miss M. Dickey, pretty cream cashmere gown; Miss S. Dickey also wore a pretty evening dress of gold satin trimmed with pale blue lace; Miss Cossar, a very tasteful gown of cream cashmere; Miss P. Cossar was in a black evening dress, the low bodice sparkling with jet; Miss Court, very pretty cream cashmere evening dress; Miss Scott looked nice in a pink cashmere gown made with demi-train; Miss A. Scott, pretty blue cashmere gown relieved with white; Miss E. Davis, becoming white evening dress, pink silk sash and ribbons; Miss Edwards, wine-coloured gown relieved with cream. A number of other pretty gowns were worn, but I have, unfortunately, forgotten the names of the respective wearers.

The Misses Billington entertained a number of friends at their residence, Richmond, a highly enjoyable evening being spent in dancing, etc. A special 'bus conveyed a number of guests from town, returning after midnight.

A very enjoyable birthday party was given upon the same evening at the residence of the Hon. W. Swanson, City Road, a large number of guests being present. Dancing was indulged in until the early hours of the morning, the guests dispersing after spending an exceedingly pleasant evening.

A delightfully enjoyable evening was recently spent in the Northcote Hall by a party of Ponsonby ladies and gentlemen, who were conveyed in a special steamer over to the quiet little marine suburb. The party was chaperoned by Mesdames G. W. Owen, T. Owen, J. R. Hanna, Brooking, and Palmer. Amongst the unmarried ladies were the Misses Devore, Harley, Beale (2), Porter, Woodyear, Owen (2), Terry (2), Palmer (2), Gill (2), Cobb, and several others. The supper was provided by the ladies of the party, each taking with her a well filled basket. It is, indeed, surprising what a delicious supper was produced from those baskets, the table just groaning under the weight of good things. The gentlemen engaged the hall, the steamer, and the musicians, the latter being the Italians who have lately charmed our citizens by playing in the streets. I need scarcely tell you the dance music was simply delicious, for not only do they keep perfect time, but they also play all the latest and prettiest airs. The harp is also sweet, and a change from the piano. The party returned to town shortly after midnight, delighted with their evening's pleasure, and declaring the dance one of the most enjoyable of the season. Evening dress was not worn, the ladies wisely wearing warm gowns, thus avoiding the chance of catching cold going to and fro on the water.

I noticed Mrs Whitney, jun., in town the other day wearing a handsome dark green gown, stylish little black mantle trimmed with astrachan, and black hat; Mrs J. L. Wilson wore a terra-cotta gown beautifully braided with black, and very pretty little bonnet, plush mantle; Miss Berry looked nice in a crimson gown, hat to correspond, seal plush jacket.

The members of the Choral Society are engaged at their weekly practice in the rehearsal of the cantata, 'The Crusaders,' for their next concert. The soloists are Miss Rimmer, mezzo-soprano; Mr G. M. Reid, baritone; and Mr C. Hudson, bass. In consequence of the cantata being short, the programme will in addition contain one or two instrumental items.

It is rumoured that an engagement has just taken place between Miss Edith Harrison, second daughter of Mr E. M. C. Harrison, and a gentleman well-known in Remuera.

The past week has been very quiet as regards public amusements. The Opera house is closed up, and there have been no concerts of any importance.

I hope to tell you shortly of a dance given by the Mikado Social Club in St. George's Hall, which, I believe, is to be a good one.

MURIEL.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 18.

Miss Kerr-Taylor, Alberton, gave a very enjoyable young people's dance in the Mount Albert Hall. There were about sixty present. The hall was very prettily decorated with greenery and flowers, many of the young ladies kindly assisting her to make the dance a success by playing the dance music. The best played item was a barn-door polka by Miss Blanche Banks, who looked charming as ever in white. A waltz by Miss Kempthorne, who was frocked in a pretty grey dress, and also a waltz by Miss Dixon, her brother accompanying her on the violin (she looked extremely pretty in a maize-coloured tulle), were appreciated. Mr Haigh kindly assisted with a Highland schottische. The most striking and stylish-looking dress in the hall was worn by Miss Larkins—a pale blue trimmed with gold braid. Miss Kadell looked sweetly pretty in a charming white tulle dress. The ladies and gentlemen were about equally divided, and everybody entered into the dances with great zest. The affair broke up about half-past twelve, all heartily thanking their charming little hostess, who was dressed in white trained silk trimmed with daisies and daisies in her hair—a dress which suited her admirably.

The Pakuranga hounds met this time at Mr Hayr's farm, Three Kings, where a luncheon was given. This was the first hunt since the hounds' return from Waikato. About a hundred people were present. It was a very unpleasant day, the wind being so dreadfully boisterous that it took a delight in disturbing all hats however comfortably perched upon the head. Amongst those present I noticed Mrs Bloomfield, Misses Percival, Garrett, Dunnet, Masefield, Evans, Shepherd, Yonge, Ball, Buckland, the Messrs Buchanan, Percival, Garrett, Yonge, Stewart, Gilmore, Bloomfield, Ware, Gorrie, Shera, Dunnet, and others I have forgotten. I saw driving Mr McLaughlin and his sister, Mr Abbott and party, Mr O'Sullivan, Messrs Lockhart and Mowbray. Miss Dunnet and Miss Kerr-Taylor were to the fore the whole time. It was really amusing to watch them both giving each other leads over the fences and walls. A drag was laid from Mr Hayr's to Three Kings. The first who came to grief was Mr Kettelwell, who took a somersault extremely well. I saw also Mr Garrett, who went a somersault very neatly, but unhappily landed on the side of his face. Mr Fred Shera, I believe had a nasty fall, too; he was riding Mr Lockhart's horse. There were many other falls. One man I saw turn a corner rather too sharply, and the result was a capsize to horse and rider. Mr Halstead fell, horse and all, over a wall.

I must tell you next week about a fashionable wedding which is to take place at St. Barnabas' Church.

HINEMOA.

WELLINGTON.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 14.

We have certainly enjoyed one of the best concerts given for a very long time this week—that of the Orchestral Society. Their new leader—Mr Conolly, the former conductor, having gone to Australia—Mr Otto Schwartz, was very warmly welcomed on entering for the first time on his duties; indeed, most of the great success of the concert was due to his energy and untiring zeal in the promotion of the good of this valuable society. Until a town is without a high-class society of this kind, one can hardly appreciate the great and lasting value of it. The great success of this last concert was a well-merited reward. There were no less than forty-three instrumentalists, some of them being young ladies. Amongst them I noticed Miss Richardson, wearing black velvet, slightly trained, and trimmed with ruffles of white chiffon; Miss Hirchberg, black lace; Miss Henry, black satin; and Miss M. Kennedy, also a black evening dress. Mr W. Widdop sang twice, choosing 'To Anthea,' and 'Remembrance.' Miss Mabel Hill, who was dressed in black lace, with low corsage and short sleeves, and long tan gloves, sang two exquisite little gems of Greig's; and Packer's 'Listening.' The *piece de resistance* was undoubtedly Mozart's 'Jupiter,' the overtures being 'Fierabras' (Schubert), and 'Anacreon' (Cherubini), and besides these they played some beautiful ballet music from 'Le Cid' and other operas. In the large audience I saw Mrs Valentine, Mrs Fisher, Mrs McClean, Miss McClean, Mrs Parfitt, Miss I. Cooper, Mrs A. Bell, the Misses Carr, Mrs Ed. Richardson, Mrs Ross Marten, Mrs Brown (the Lady Mayoress), and the Misses Knight, Dransfield, M. Reid, Tuckey, Black, Graham, and Wilford, but as I need a great deal of space to describe the fancy dress ball, I will not dwell longer on this.

Mrs T. C. Williams gave a very large fancy dress ball, there being fully two hundred and fifty if not three hundred guests present, many of them being visitors for the session, and others again coming down from the country especially for it. A great attraction during the evening was a *minuet* danced by about a dozen ladies and gentlemen, all dressed in quaint Watteau costumes. It took place about the middle of the evening, when the ballroom was cleared for the performers, and chairs and forms placed so that a good many could remain seated, the rest standing round the room. Of course, the best place to see from was the gallery overlooking the ballroom, which was crowded with eager sightseers, and indeed it was truly an exceedingly pretty sight, and seemed to carry one back into another generation to see the tall stately ladies with their powdered hair, patches and rouge, and the courtly gentlemen with their white wigs, knee-breeches, and beautiful lace ruffles. All the gentlemen were dressed in the same fashion, but with different colours, as were also the ladies, everyone of them wearing the becoming Watteau train coming from the shoulders. Mrs Arthur Russell wore a magnificent gown, the train of pink satin brocaded with a paler shade, the petticoat being of white satin richly embroidered with pearls, the bodice and petticoat both being trimmed with pink roses, and pink plumes placed high on the top of her powdered hair, and wore beautiful jewels; her sister, Miss Williams, looking particularly well with her Watteau train of lovely pale blue pompadour silk brocaded with flowers, the front of white silk handsomely draped with exquisite lace sparkling with jewels, and Miss E. Williams wore also pale blue with a pretty pink flower pattern over a petticoat of palest pink trimmed round the hem with cream lace and jewels. Miss Rhodes, of Christchurch, was in pale yellow brocade with quantities of lace; Mrs (Dr.) Collins, in cream brocade with front of striped gauze; Miss Hawkins and her sister both wearing mauve brocaded with a darker colour, with lace and ribbons; Miss Duncan, pale blue flowered silk over a pink frilled skirt; Miss Buller, all in cream, the train caught with huge pink roses; Miss M. Grace, cream satin, with train of bright green satin trimmed with pearl embroidery; and Miss Cooper, in a pink flowered train over a plain pink petticoat. Amongst the gentlemen dancers were Mr Walrond, in pale blue velvet with lace ruffles and and diamonds, Mr A. Cooper and Mr C. Pierce being dressed very much alike in crimson velvet braided with gold; Mr Prideaux Tancred, in fawn-coloured satin and silver lace, Mr H. Williams, Mr W. Williams, and Mr H. Vogel being almost dressed alike in black velvet, silver buttons, and lace ruffles; Mr A Rhodes, in drab satin and lace ruffles; Mr L. Tripp, crimson satin breeches and stockings, and black satin coat, and long white satin waistcoat; Mr G. St. Hill, crimson satin braided with gold, white and gold waistcoat. I hardly know where to begin and where to end telling you about the rest, but I will do my best. Mr and Mrs Williams received in the drawing room, the former wearing his ordinary dress suit with large scarlet lapels, and the latter dressed as Mother Hubbard, in a scarlet satin quilted petticoat, white fichu, and tall pointed black velvet hat, with white frill round the face, and lace mittens. Miss Eila Williams wore a pretty shepherdess dress, and large hat with flowers and ribbons, and her small sisters looked very dainty in pretty Kate Greenaway dresses of white muslin right down to the feet, and huge pink and blue sashes high up on the waist, and mob caps; their wee brother was a prince in crimson velvet tunic and cream silk tights; Mrs Izard wore a sort of Mother Hubbard dress with a cap (splendidly carried out); Mrs Fell, as an Apple Woman, in a huge poke bonnet and basket, was good; but perhaps the most amusement was caused by Gobo (Mr W. Moorehouse) in a huge clerical hat with his face capitally 'made up;' Mrs Moorehouse was Queen of Hearts; Mr Frank Allen was one of the best, being half white and half black, which had a very ludicrous effect, his wife being a peasant. Mrs Rhodes wore a magnificent turquoise blue velvet gown of last century, the paniers trimmed with cream lace, and quantities of diamonds, Mrs (Judge) Richmond and Mrs Ackland wearing Spanish dresses. Lady Buller wore powdered hair and black velvet train over a pink quilted satin petticoat, the time of Mary Queen of Scots, Lady Hall representing Mary Queen of Scots, Lady Hector being an old English lady with mob cap, and pink and blue gown; Mrs Still was Pharaoh's Daughter, in an Egyptian dress half covering her face, the Rev. Mr Still wearing his University gown; Mr H. D. Bell made a capital baker, Mrs Bell being an old-fashioned lady in lovely white brocade and fringe, and powdered hair; Mr J. Swainson was also a baker, and Mr Elkington also a cook or baker. Mrs C. Izard was Red Riding Hood, her

husband being an American Planter. Mrs Russell was a Spanish lady; Miss Russell was Priscilla, in mauve, with a spindle in her hand, Captain Russell being in uniform; Miss St. Hill representing a Daffodil, in yellow draped with art green, and carrying a huge artificial Daffodil. Mrs J. G. Wilson wore powdered hair, and black and mauve dress, Mrs Grace wearing her Court dress of the present day, Miss Grace having her pretty Japanese dress. Miss Richardson was a Dutch Peasant, Miss Lysaght and Miss Neal both being Grecian Ladies; Miss Ruth Atkinson, a Primrose, a pretty dress with a lovely artificial primrose on her head; Mrs H. Beetham, Poudre; Mr Beetham, Courtier; Mr G. Beetham, a Bishop; Mrs Beetham, an Italian Peasant; Miss Willis, Mrs Barron and Mrs Burns all represented Night, in black, with silver stars; Mrs D. Riddiford, Poudre; and her husband an American Lasso Man; Mrs Adams, a French Waiting Maid, with large black hat covered with white feathers, and her husband, a very handsome dress of crimson velvet and steel, and coloured silk sash; Miss Studholme, Music, a cream dress with bars of music, the notes in red; Mrs J. Mills, Lilac, a handsome mauvish satin embroidered with lilac, and quantities of lilac blossoms, and powdered hair; her husband, Negative, that is white dress suit, black shirt, etc., Mr Young choosing the same character; Dr. Jeffcoat, Old English; Mr Robison, Cavalier dress, large hat with feathers; Mr McGowan, Early English; Mr Boddington, a Courtier; Mrs J. P. Maxwell, Poudre; Mr Maxwell, Lord Nelson; Mrs H. Crawford, Marquise de Miramir; Mrs W. Percival, cream lace Spanish dress; Mrs C. Pharazyn, a last century lady, in pink brocade with velvet shoulder cloak, and large hat with feathers; Miss Pharazyn, a Milkmaid, carrying a three-legged stool; Mr C. Pharazyn, a Cavalier dress of black velvet, large hat with feathers; Mrs Newman, a Spanish Peasant; Mrs Travers, Olivia Primrose, and her husband, a Courtier; Mrs Coleridge, black velvet and fichu, and mob cap; Mrs P. Hunter, a Nurse; Miss Carr, a Red Cross Nurse; and her sister, Ophelia; Mrs Harding, a Magpie; Miss Harding, a Chatelaine; and her sister, Lady Betty; Miss Izard, a Watteau dress; and her sister, Elsie, Mr E. Izard being a Chinaman; Mr Wilford made a capital Pooh Bah; Mr B. Richmond was Aladdin, of lamp fame, in a lovely pale green dress trimmed with pearl embroidery, and a pink and green high-pointed straw hat: Mr T. Richmond being well got up as a Turk in white figured material with turban, and beads round the neck; Miss Reynolds, old English short pink dress and powdered hair; Miss Dransfield, Joan of Arc, in a handsome dress almost covered with silver sequins, silver helmet with white plumes; Miss Hadfield, Winter; Miss Hall, Elizabethan dress; Mr E. Hadfield, Oliver Cromwell; Mr H. Hadfield, a barrister; Miss Holmes, Poudré; Miss Gore, Liberty; and her sister, Union Jack; Mr H. Gore, black velvet tunic over tan tights; and his brother, a Courtier, in black and red satin, and lace ruffles; Mr Jackson, a Nigger, with huge collar and hat; Mr L. Buller, a Toreador costume; Miss Acland and Mrs Cooper were dressed alike as Students, Miss R. Acland being a Rose; Mrs R. Hart, Helen McGregor, with tartan sash; Miss L. Williams, Tambourine Girl; Miss Bennett, French Drummer; Miss Johnson, a beautiful old-gold and brown brocade; Miss H. Moorhouse, Little Miss Muffit, carrying a huge spider; Miss Barron, Satanella; and her sister, Maritana; Mr W. Barron, a Turk, as was also Mr H. Gully; Mr G. Bethune, a Druid; Miss Rolleston, a kind of Shepherdess, with large hat with flowers; Mr Avis, Scotch dress; Mr Gardner, a very good Turkish dress, with pointed shoes; Miss Hector, Minstrel Girl; and her brother, a Red Indian; Mr Bate and Mr G. Kemp were sailors: Mr W. Turnbull, a white suit; Mrs Parfitt, Poudre: Mr Parfitt, a French Court dress; Miss Darley, an Egyptian dress of scarlet and white; Miss McLean, a boating suit of blue and white stripes, with silver oars in her hair; Miss Knight, Elsie; and among the gentlemen in uniform were Mr Werry, Captain Duncan, Mr Anson, Dr. Collins, Dr. Martin, Colonel Pearce, Mr W. Wardell, Mr McCrae, Mr J. Leckie; Mrs Werry, Poudre, in red satin and white fichu; Mrs A. Bell, Poudre; Mrs Riddiford, Mrs Beetham, Mrs Hawkins, Poudre; Mr T. Cooper, a Yokel; Mr A. Cooper and Mr Biss, boating suits; Miss Medley, Normandy Peasant; and her brother, Admiral, with powdered hair and three-cornered hat; Miss Menzies looked like one of Sir Joshua Reynolds' pictures in black velvet with curls all over her head, her younger sister being a French Peasant; Miss M. Rhodes, Poudre, in white, with bright scarlet ribbons; Miss (Percy) Smith, Italian Peasant; Miss Welford, old English dress; Mr C. Johnston, a handsome Lord Nelson dress, his son wearing very much the same kind of dress; Mr C. Cooper, a Sailor; Mr S. Ludbrook, a Mexican; Mrs Fulton, a beautiful Russian dress, and her husband was in uniform; Mr E. Brown, an Italian dress; Mr Blackett, Student; Mrs Hawkins, Poudre, in lavender satin and pearl embroidery; and her husband, a Courtier, in red satin and gold lace; Mr G. Knight, Buntborne; Dr. Fell, Mr C. Pharazyn, Mr J. G. Wilson, and many others, but it is quite impossible to remember everyone. The house was most beautifully decorated, the ballroom decorations being chiefly carried out in flags draped with greenery, but the billiard-room was a work of art, the table being a delightful profusion of drapery, greenery, and flowers entirely lit with pink, yellow, and blue fairy lamps, and a few Chinese lanterns. The supper decorations were carried out with pink azaleas and hanging fairy lamps, and the drawing-room was bright with flowers, ferns, and toi-toi. The Earl and Countess of Onslow came about eleven o'clock, and stayed to see the *minuet*, the tiny Kate Greenaway children presenting her ladyship with an exquisite bouquet of violets and snowdrops. The Countess wore plain white satin with a long train, profusely trimmed with lace and diamonds. The *minuet* was performed twice during the evening, and the ball was not over until half-past two, so you can imagine how tired we felt the following day. As you will see by my description, more than half wore the same dresses as before, and this was at Mrs Williams' special request, for some of the dresses were so handsome it seemed a pity that they should only be worn once.

Did you hear about the gentlemen after the last fancy dress ball? *entre nous* they were all in a state of intense excitement awaiting the arrival of the GRAPHIC, and then there was a rush for copies. We found them out beautifully, for they could not help showing that they were as pleased as Punch at being mentioned. I really think I must mend my ways and mention some of the gentlemen at the ordinary balls. I do not see why I should not, as I have had proof positive that they like being taken notice of, in spite of the indifferent way in which they pick up the GRAPHIC and turn their eyes first of all to the ladies' letters.

Next week you will again be inundated with news for I shall have the Star Boating ball to describe, and also Lady Onslow's afternoon reception at Government House. Later on we are to have Mrs Robt. Pharazyn's large ball, and some private theatricals given by Dr. and Mrs Grace in the Theatre Royal.

RUBY.

DUNEDIN.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 11.

I told you in my last of Miss Gibson's engagement to Mr Baring. Mrs Gibson gave a dance to emphasize the joyful occasion. Quite a number of married people were asked, so that not all the young folks could be crowded into the rooms. It was a most successful affair, and dancing was indulged in till two o'clock, with a respite for a delicious supper. All the rooms presented a most charming appearance, being beautifully decorated with flowers. The hostess was attired in a rich black gown, and Miss Gibson looked charming in white, which always suits her. Among many pretty dresses Mrs Haggill wore a pearl grey broché; Mrs E. C. Reynolds, a lovely gown of green silk; Mrs Hosking looked charming in white silk, and Miss Ethel Maclaren, who made her *début*, wore a lovely soft-looking frock of white silk and tulle, and excited a good deal of admiration; Mrs Batchelor wore a rich pink silk broché; Mrs Robert Turnbull, yellow watered silk and tulle; Miss Stanford pale blue; Miss Ross black; Miss Nevill, a pretty white; Miss Butterworth looked well in pale pink silk; Miss Williams, a handsome terra-cotta silk; and Miss Mary Williams, green fisherman's net over white silk. Others among the guests were Mr and Mrs Mitchie, Mesdames C. Turnbull, Gallaway, Pym, Melland, Denniston, Ogston, Colquhon, Davies, H. Mackenzie, and the Misses Williams (2), Spence (2), Tui Stephenson, Cutten, Reynolds, Fulton, Rattray, Webster (2), Sievwright, McLaren (2), Roberts (2), Butterworth, Hunter and Macassey. Miss Tui Stephenson looked very pretty in black lace; Mrs Ogston, blue moiré, trimmed with white lace; Miss Cutten, white satin and fisherman's net; Miss Fulton black; Mrs Gallaway, pale terra-cotta tulle relieved with flowers; Miss Sievwright, white silk trimmed with gold embroidery; Miss Spencer, white satin and tulle.

The Ladies' Savage Club met as usual. The first number of their journal appeared, of which there was only one copy. I have not seen it, so cannot tell you of its contents, but I rather fancy these ladies will get tired of the journalistic attempts; perhaps, though, as it is only an amusement, it will carry with it its vigorating influence, like other amusements do that need exertion. The gentlemen and original Savages have got a big ladies' evening on the way. They are always delightful, and I think a supper a week or so later is to close the season. But to return to the Ladies' Club. Mrs Robert and Mrs Charlie Turnbull were present, also Mesdames Boyd, Davis, Rose, A. Bathgate, Pym, Hosking, Lindo Ferguson, Stilling, Melland, Bridges, Driver, also the Misses Driver, Mrs and the Misses Sise, Mrs Sinclair Thomson, Mrs and the Misses Spence, Mrs Eardley Reynolds, Mrs L. Denniston, Miss Roberts, and Miss Reynolds. Among those who contributed to the enjoyment of the evening were Miss Cargill, who gave a reading from Dickens, and Mrs Rose, who sang with her well-known sweetness. Mrs Ferguson and Mrs Monkman sang a pretty duet, Miss Rattray gave a reading, and Miss Sievwright also sang. Mrs Hosking occupied the chair upon this occasion, and a most enjoyable evening was spent.

Now that the violets are coming in again, ladies who are anxious to have pretty complexions can utilise them after they have done service on their gowns, by pouring boiling milk over them and bathing their faces and neck in this preparation for a quarter of an hour each day, as hot as they can bear it. A little violet powder will take off the shine that the milk is sure to leave.

The Juvenile Opera Company still continues to charm. Every night there is a good audience, while the Saturday afternoon matinées are crowded with delighted children, who perhaps never saw an opera before.

A grand concert given by Mr A. J. Barth drew a large audience to the Garrison Hall. The soloists were Mrs Murphy and Miss J. Joel, Messrs Blenkinsopp, J. Low, F. L. Jones, A. Adamson, J. Jago, W. Manson, W. Ibbotson, and W. Densem. Of these I enjoyed Mr Manson's song, 'Will o' the Wisp,' and Mr Blenkinsopp's rendering of the beautiful and difficult music that fell to him in 'The Desert.' This weird and lovely piece, which I told you of once before, occupied the latter half of the programme, a second hearing making one more in love with it than before. The Liedertafel are to be complimented. Herr Winckelmann and Signor Squarise contributed some of their exquisite pieces, Herr Winckelmann upon the 'cello, Signor Squarise upon the violin. Miss Busk also performed a lovely violin solo. Miss Blanche Joel, who looked very sweet in pale blue, both sang and performed in the orchestra. Mr Timson accompanied during the performance of 'The Desert,' his excellency in this capacity being well known. Mr Densem gave a grand rendering of 'Honour and Arms' (Samson). Mrs Murphy's name was down for 'In the Chimney Corner,' but was obliged to abandon it as she was suffering with an extremely bad cold. She is always a favourite, and while sympathising with her, the audience were also disappointed. She wore a very pretty gown of cream silk, her hair dressed in Grecian bands. Miss Busk played a violin solo, and Mr Barth a pianoforte solo, 'Grand Fantasia' on Mendelssohn's music to 'The Midsummer Night's Dream.'

Dr. and Mrs Colquhon most kindly entertained the Juvenile Operatic Company to a picnic. They were taken out in drags, etc., to Tomahawk, where they spent a delightful time running races, etc., their host and hostess leaving nothing undone to make the day a pleasant recollection of their visit to Dunedin, and one cannot help wishing that they may meet with many similar pleasures on their trip north. When they returned to town they were entertained to tea at Miss Mackenzie's tea room, Mrs Colquhon waiting most kindly upon them. Mr Tom Pollard has added another to his many successes in the production of this juvenile Company.

MAUDE.

LATE AUCKLAND NEWS.

Madame Bernhardt spent a few hours in Auckland on her way from Sydney to 'Frisco. She had a fearfully bad passage, the Mariposa being two days longer than usual over the trip, owing to the gale. Alas! the poor actress was very bad with *mal-de-mer*;—indeed, few of the passengers escaped. Madame Sara drove at once to the Albert Hotel, and enjoyed a bath and breakfast, but she absolutely declined all visitors, saying she was *trop fatiguée*. She bought a number of Maori curios, walking down Queen-street attended in a sort of procession by many of her company, also her lovely huge dog. Madame went out for a drive in the afternoon to enjoy the unrivalled view from Mount Eden. Auckland is a singularly unenthusiastic city, and the great actress was left very much to herself all day. She has such a wonderful face, and charming French manners. *How* we hoped she would have acted here! But the steamer carried her off in the evening.

SYDNEY GOSSIP.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 10.

The shops just now possess quite a charming appearance, especially noticeable after the dull sale windows of the last month or two. Now that the new spring goods are on view everything is bright and pretty—excepting the weather. Dainty figured delaines in all shades and designs, form the chief light dress material, while for heavier wear there are soft hairy tweeds with large patterns in various colours and shapes—spots, cone shapes, and others much resembling the old-fashioned Paisley pattern. The prettiest tweeds are called Epsom, Kicker, Camel, and Côtélé. I am told at the leading shops that spotted fabrics and very little else are to be worn, from the neat French cambrics to the most expensive costumes. Millinery seems to have reached perfection, as all the necessaries for that art—surely it can be called nothing else—appear to be lovelier each year, especially as regards artificial flowers. They are so natural that in some cases it is really hard to tell them from nature. This spring field flowers are to the fore, blue cornflowers and buttercups being the favourites. The hats are decidedly airy, and quite large again, I am happy to say. One I saw to-day had a large brim, and small cone-shaped crown, the whole being composed of sprays of lilies-of-the-valley; an edging of palest green chiffon, and velvet bows of darker green at the back, gave an effective finish. One thing our mothers, I'm sure, will be delighted at is the return of the good old-fashioned flower-brocaded ribbon, which they so much admired, and which is well adapted for and most effective in both hats and dressy cape. For wear just now the Bond-street hat (so suitable with a tailor-made costume) is ultra-fashionable. The trimming is simple, generally a broad band of velvet, with bow and quill feather at the side. Gloves and stockings are always expensive items in a lady's wardrobe, and I am afraid are going to be still more so. The correct thing is now to wear silk stockings with open-worked fronts to match each costume. In gloves, gauntlets, which had a run some seasons ago, are again in vogue.

Madame Bernhardt is to leave us by the Mariposa to-morrow. Her season closed on Saturday night with a scene not easily forgotten. On the fall of the curtain at the pathetic conclusion of 'La Dame aux Camélias,' the applause which rained on the artiste was continued long after she had bowed her acknowledgements. The audience were asked to keep their seats, and a few seconds later the curtain was raised, showing the stage occupied by Madame Bernhardt, surrounded by the members of her company, and many well-known Australian actors and actresses. After immense cheering, the waving of the French flag, and numerous floral tributes being handed to the great actress, the curtain was again lowered.

At a ball given at Pott's Point lately, there was something quite new to be seen in the way of table decorations. The long supper-table, instead of having the customary white damask tablecloth, was covered with crimson cloth, the flowers used (of which there was a perfect show) being buttercups, daffodils, and beautiful variegated leaves. The candelabra and other accessories were perfect, the whole making, indeed, a handsome sight.

New Zealanders can compliment themselves on their being ahead of Sydney people in some things—Sydney people, who flatter themselves that they are so quick at picking up anything new. The barn dance, which you have enjoyed for the last two seasons, is only just being heard of here, and is, as elsewhere, quickly becoming greatly favoured among enthusiastic dancers.

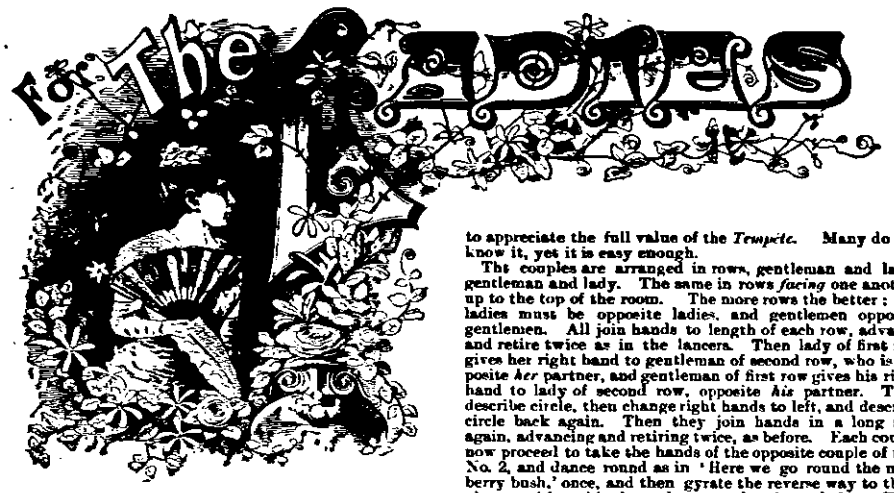
A well-known Sydney lady has evidently found, as many others have, a difficulty in suiting herself in the way of servants. From this has sprung a new idea, and the question, 'Why have half-educated, and sometimes in a big place like this, objectionable servants about one's home? Why not employ ladies?' It certainly does not sound practicable, but Mrs Darley is determined to try her 'scheme,' and if it is to be a success, she is the one to make it so. The three ladies she has at present are well considered, and of course, they do not do the rough work. They have a private sitting room of their own, and once or twice a week are invited to spend the evening with their mistress and her friends. It all sounds very nice, but do you think it can last?

AROHA.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DOLLY.—*Thank you. Address 'Lady Editor,* NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC *Office, Auckland.' Leave all MSS. open at the end, and the postage is only one penny per two ounces. Will other kind correspondents bear this in mind? I shall be glad to hear from Invercargill. Are there no society ladies there?*—BEE.

A MEAN JOKE.—'They say Chollie's injuries were the result of a practical joke.' 'Yes. The boys told him that a big, burly fellow in the bar-room was deaf and dumb, and Chollie walked over to him, and with a sweet smile told him he was a blank fool.' 'Well!' 'The man wasn't deaf and dumb.'



MERRY-MAKES FOR THE WINTER SEASON.

A SERIES OF PRACTICAL PAPERS WITH SOME NEW IDEAS.

No. VI.—'GENERAL POST' DINNERS.

SOUP, fish, flesh, fowl, game, etc., etc.! How long, how interminable seems the menu at most big dinners, when we find ourselves wedged between some wit who won't say an amusing thing and some idiot who can't; or, worse still, with old Mumblecrust on the right 'falling to' with the methodical precision of a scientist, and young Ladydah of the —th Hussars on the left, whose motto through life appears to be 'The —th don't talk!' How bored we are!

When the order of precedence is rigidly adhered to, few people can be happy. Many a young wife bitterly regrets the superiority of rank which entitles her to Lord Methuselah as a partner, and would willingly resign her rights in favour of bewigged Madame Nouveau Riche, to whose ears the witty sallies of Major Tallyho are as meaningless as quotations from Horace or Virgil.

Even when a couple is outwardly well matched, few there are who do not agree that conversation for two whole hours at a stretch with a mere acquaintance is a trying ordeal to those not well endowed with the 'gift of the gab.' The only way to avoid this monotony of companionship is to imitate the example of our refreshing cousins over the pond (who never allow anything to become stale, flat, or unprofitable, but understand the exact moment when and how to 'froth it up'), and insist on having General Post dinners. At a given signal from the hostess, every gentleman should rise, and each with one consent proceed to take the vacant place of his choice, till all are seated.

The rule of first come first served must be politely adhered to, and, should the slightest misunderstanding arise, the ladies on either side of the contested seat might act as umpires, whose decision should be considered final! Though one, or at most two, pleasant *tête-à-têtes* may be broken up by this arrangement, the majority of diners will be agreeably relieved by the change of position. To prevent disorder of glasses and plates, the cue for a general move should be given at the conclusion of a course, after the joint or *entrée*, according to the fancy of the hostess, who will touch a little bell, whenever she considers the moment advantageous. This very action requires most excellent generalship on the part of the lady of the house, who, if she finds things going swimmingly, will abstain from disturbing the serenity of the scene, only touching the bell to avert some of those awkward pauses, which, alas! will take place even at the best regulated feasts.

The General Post dinner, to be a *jolly* one, must be a *large* one, and served at different tables, each with covers laid for about four couples. The exchange of position and partner for the last hour of dinner will enliven the flagging conversationalists considerably. To avoid all setness and formality, the hostess should not couple her friends even on entering the dining-room, but allow the ladies or the gentlemen to draw the names of their companions haphazard from a hat.

At dances, too, the increasing formality is damping. Festive persons, who neither wish to bill and coo the whole evening, or valse their feet off, lean much to the 'all age' dance, which in one or two households has been tried with much success. Where the parents are not old enough to be shelved, and the children are not grown enough to be 'out,' an unbroken programme of *trois temps* is palling; besides this, youngsters between the ages of fourteen and twenty are not very proficient in the valse, and rejoice in more active amusement.

We all know with what joy 'Sir Roger de Coverley' is hailed at a country ball, and how good-tempered and frisky become the old under the influence of the young, and *vice versâ*. We have all experienced the pleasant novelty of the cotillon as a supper dance, and the delightful sense of freedom caused by the introduction of figures in which professional proficiency is not required. Why, then, do we not endeavour to revise our programmes? If we must have quadrilles, let there be but two sets, for the formal and stately; then a valse or two, as usual, to be followed by lancers. Polka lancers *de choix*; they are much brisker than the stupid old square figures, where people stand still and shiver till roused from apathy by becks, nods, and cries from discomfited *vis-à vis!*

After this, more valses, to suit the flirtatious, the vapid, or the bored, and then the *Tempête*. Very few of us seem to appreciate the full value of the *Tempête*. Many do not know it, yet it is easy enough.

The couples are arranged in rows, gentleman and lady, gentleman and lady. The same in rows *facing* one another up to the top of the room. The more rows the better; but ladies must be opposite ladies, and gentlemen opposite gentlemen. All join hands to length of each row, advance and retire twice as in the lancers. Then lady of first row gives her right hand to gentleman of second row, who is opposite *her* partner, and gentleman of first row gives his right hand to lady of second row, opposite *his* partner. They describe circle, then change right hands to left, and describe circle back again. Then they join hands in a long row again, advancing and retiring twice, as before. Each couple now proceed to take the hands of the opposite couple of row No. 2, and dance round as in 'Here we go round the mulberry bush,' once, and then gyrate the reverse way to their places. After this they advance and retire as before. That done, the first row, taking hands, dance sideways to the right side of the room, while row two does likewise to left of the room, then twice *vice versa*, and back to their places. They then advance and retire *once*, the second time each couple slips under the raised hands of their *cis-à vis* couple, the result being that the first row finds itself opposite to the fourth row, which has been dancing in the same manner The dance figures then begin again the same, till all the rows have passed to opposite sides of the room. If a row, on slipping under, finds no corresponding one to dance with, they must face about and wait their turn, but it is best to arrange the rows in couples, as then all get equal dancing. Easy music is to be found in the Cavendish music books.

Later can come the cotillon, to which, by-the-bye, a very amusing new figure can be added. A lady blindfolded is handed a laurel wreath and a dunce's cap. Two gentlemen then kneel; on the head of one she places the wreath, on that of the other, the cap. On opening her eyes she is, of course, borne off by the suitor she has crowned with laurels, leaving the dunce disconsolate.

The Norwegian dance is very amusing, and makes a good third scene to the evening, if Sir Roger is preferred as a *finale*.

By means of these dances, pretty girls whose spirits are more elastic than their steps, matrons passing their *premiere jeunesse*, youths whom hard exams have made into 'all work and no play boys,' will be enabled to take pleasure in a festive evening which will be none the less interesting to the *professional* dancers, who will, at the same time, have additional opportunities for 'sitting out.'

Those on the matrimonial market intent may find no fun in useless party giving and pleasure-seeking; the business of the human Stock Exchange is too engrossing for such idle speculations; but to others who walk wide of the risky mart—where millions come to ruin, few to fortune—these little glints of merriment may come and be welcomed to gild the pill of existence and clear the cobwebs of *ennui*, egotism, and acerbity from our over-taxed brains.—*Gentlewoman.*

CULLED CLIPPINGS.

A REPORT.

IT is reported that Princess Alice of Hesse, who is now in England with her father, the Grand Duke, is likely to be engaged to her cousin, the Duke of Clarence and Avondale. Princess Alice was born in June, 1872.

ESS.

The feminine termination has fallen into disuse of recent years, so that poetesses and authoresses are now seldom mentioned; but a paper calls attention to some new *esses*.

A reportress on a St. Paul paper speaks of a lady 'who is well-known as a real estate speculatress.' A Pittsburg paper alludes to 'the presidentress of the board of managers of the world's fair;' and an Indianapolis paper chronicles the elopement of a 'dime museum freakess.'

If this matter is to go on, it is time the school teacheresses were heard from.

THE MARCHIONESS OF WATERFORD.

The Queen sent a wreath of immortelles to be placed on the grave of Louisa, the once lovely Marchioness of Waterford, who died some weeks ago. This lady was one of the greatest beauties of her day.

It is related how the Court painter, Mr Hayter, was struck with her beauty, when her mother Lady Stewart de Rothesay took her daughter to him about the time she was presented. He used to tell how he was 'dazzled by the vision of loveliness' with her golden hair rippling down to her feet. Some years after, in a dangerous fever, that lovely hair had to be sacrificed; but the husband, the handsome Marquis of Waterford would allow no hand but his own to do the deed, and the story goes that the lovely tresses were buried with him, twined round his neck.

WOMEN ARE HANDICAPPED.

The *Gentlewoman* says:—'How oddly we women are handicapped in any fight with the world against the sterner sex. Mark Twain is now a millionaire. Yet the story is told of him that he was once seen with a cigar box under his arm, and was asked why. "I am moving," said he, "and carrying with me all my worldly goods." These consisted of an old pipe, a paper collar, and a necktie. Then we hear how of old the great general started for India with only a cake of soap, and of how a modern special correspondent left for the Soudan with only a comb. Very interesting my good men. Did you notice, though, the other day, that a certain female novelist was attacked because *she* was not well provided for? Suppose, now, a female journalist were asked to start at once for India to make an inquiry into the Zenana system, what would be said of her if she boasted, "I started with only the clothes I had on, a small pocket handkerchief, and a broken *pince-nez*?" It would not in any way redound to her credit. There's nothing interesting in a woman's poverty and little shifts. Oh, you men, you men! *You* can actually make *capital* out of the very vagaries which to us would be ruin.'

A JAPANESE LOVE-LETTER.

'Pardon this exceeding great familiarity, but oh! I do love thee truly. It was too nice of thee, darling, to come to see me; and I thank thee, oh! so much, for the pleasure thy visit afforded me. Thou didst then promise me thou would come again; and I am counting the weary days on my fingers—waiting. Oh! take pity on me, and come; my brain reels in a delirium of delight when I think of thee; come soon, love, for I await thee. I would I could unfold to thy gaze all the wealth of passion in my love laden-heart, which beats for thee, and thee alone; but alas! words are weak, I cannot. Oh! come to me:—

'"I pine for thee!
I pine for thee!
As pines the plover
By the sea
For its lover,
Where'er he be,
Ah! hapless plover!
Hapless me!"'

Figaro.

GLADSTONE ON THE WOMAN QUESTION.

Lady Florence Dixie, whose views on the woman question are so well known, has been sounding the G.O.M. on the subject. That gentleman has, however, lived long enough to have learnt the folly of committing himself, least of all to a woman.

The following is his somewhat ambiguous reply:—

DEAR LADY FLORENCE,—The question, not so much of the suffrage as of an abolition of all distinction as to political and civil duties, is a very large one. You may rest assured of one thing. (1) If I ever attempt to discuss it I shall make the attempt in a serious and considerate spirit. (2) As it happens, I do not share the belief that the change would be favourable to the Tory party, but rather lean to the opposite opinion. Rumours about me are very often fiction, and oftener still utterly misleading.—Believe me, etc.,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

To this Lady Florence has responded expressing her conviction that after the reverse to Mr Woodall's Bill the other day, women will learn 'that they have no one to depend upon for freedom but their own strong right arm.'

CLIMATE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

The British Empire covers so large a proportion of the surface of the globe that its reports upon climate may be taken as a report from the whole world. The recently published table of returns for the year 1889 shows interesting results. One of the most important facts brought to light is this, that the same stations year after year monopolize the extremes of heat and cold, of dryness and of humidity. No other inference can be drawn from this fact than that climate is far more regular and unvarying than we are apt to suppose.

The highest temperature in the shade, noted by the British observers, was at Adelaide. The point reached was one hundred and nine degrees, and this was on January 13th. The reader will bear in mind that Adelaide is situated in the southern hemisphere, and that it is mid-summer there when it is midwinter in England.

For the last five years Adelaide has recorded the highest temperature in the shade. The record for 1886 shows a temperature of one hundred and twelve and four-tenths degrees. Last year it had the highest temperature of any place in the sun—one hundred and seventy and seven-tenths degrees. It was also the driest station, having a mean humidity of sixty-three per cent.

The lowest shade temperature in the Empire was recorded at Winnipeg, on February Twenty-third, forty-two and six-tenths degrees below zero. This station had also the greatest range in the year, the greatest mean daily range, the lowest mean temperature, and the least rainfall, fourteen and ninety-five-hundredths inches. It does not appear as though the precipitation in the form of snow could have been reckoned in with the reported rainfall.

The highest mean temperature for the year 1889 was reported from Bombay, and the greatest rainfall was observed at Trinidad. It is curious to find that London was the cloudiest of all the stations in the Empire, and that it was also the dampest, its humidity averaging eighty one per cent. The brightest of all stations was Malta. This had only a little more than half the cloud of London.

SAY WELL AND DO WELL!

A SHORT time before Dean Stanley's death he closed an eloquent sermon with a quaint verse, which greatly impressed his congregation. On being asked about it afterward, he said it was doubtful whether the lines were written by one of the earliest Deans of Westminster, or by one of the early Scotch Reformers.

The Dean had come upon it by accident, and feeling that it expressed with singular felicity the true Christian proportion between doctrine and character, between good words and good works, he used it to point and adorn his sermon. Readers of THE GRAPHIC may be glad to add it to their collections of good words:

'Say well is good, but do well is better.
Do well seems spirit, say well the letter.
Say well is godly, and helpeth to please:
But do well lives godly, and gives the world ease.
Say well to silence sometimes is bound,
But do well is free on every ground.
Say well has friends, some here, some there.
But do well is welcome everywhere.
By say well to many God's Word cleaves,
But for lack of do well it often leaves.
If say well and do well were bound in one frame,
Then all were done, all were won, and gotten were gain.'

LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS.

VERY STYLISH TAILOR-MADE GOWNS AND COATS.

(SEE FASHION-PLATE, PAGE 329.)

FASHION is popularly supposed to be fickle, but in one respect, at all events, of late years she has proved herself undoubtedly faithful. The fashion for tailor-made garments certainly shows no sign of wavering, but, on the contrary, it increases in favour day by day. In proportion, however, as gowns and coats of this kind are more and more in demand, there comes the necessity for their completeness in all those little details which go to make a perfect whole. Realising how wide an interest is felt in the early novelties always brought out at this time of the year, I feel sure that my readers will be delighted to see the sketches on page 329, and which represent the most *chic* notions possible for the present season of late winter and early spring to be seen just now.

No. 1 is an entirely novel costume, made in one of those rough homespuns or scouring cloths, which promise to be so much worn this year. The design is a large check with faint lines of blue upon a fawn-coloured foundation. The skirt is cut with severe simplicity, while the bodice is made in a three-quarter coat shape, and turned back to show a smart little vest in a contrasting colour.

No. 2 is a most graceful long mantle of grey-green cloth, lined throughout with salmon-pink silk, and bordered with a very effective but quite narrow edging of wolverine. The only other ornamentation consists of a lovely appliqué with Louis Seize true-lovers' knots in velvet of a darker shade, surrounded by a beautiful design of braiding and embroidery.

No. 3 is a becoming coat, cut in the three-quarter length so much in favour at the present moment. It is a most elegant shape, and one that suits almost any kind of figure. The material employed is a golden brown cloth, most artistically braided, in the manner shown in the sketch, in an effective combination of brown and gold. The long tabs must be noted as being particularly smart.

No. 4 is a charming gown, cut with an artistic perfection in every line which must be seen in order to be fully appreciated. It is made in Venetian-red cloth, in a lovely new shade, somewhere between ruby and copper. Round the hem of the skirt there is a narrow bordering of black astrachan, and above that a design of black braiding simply but effectively arranged. The bodice is trimmed with astrachan and braiding to correspond.

In addition to these and many other smart gowns and coats, I saw the newest and daintiest things in the way of novel materials for the spring, including many charming checks and plaids in soft tones of grey and fawn colour; also an apparently inexhaustible stock of lovely silk vestings in pompadour and other designs, suitable for wearing with three quarter length coats in any of the new materials.

The merciful break which has come at last in the bleak winter weather, and has put an end, for a time at least, to all the discomforts attendant upon snow, frost, and fog, has naturally made one somewhat discontented with winter millinery, and glad to welcome anything which looks a little bit fresh and spring-like. I was looking in the other day at a well-known bonnet shop, Regent-street, and I was much pleased with some of the charming hats and bonnets which are specially adapted to meet the requirements of the very early spring season. For instance, some pretty little bonnets in black crinoline straw, trimmed with twists and loops of green velvet, and clusters of either lilies of the valley, violets, daffodils, or cowslips. Tied with narrow velvet strings, these spring flower bonnets are wonderful value. One bonnet was quite a new French model, with a bent about brim of black chenille openwork and a jewelled crown, trimmed with bands of velvet and small clusters of heliotrope ostrich feathers at the back. Another had a soft ruche of old rose pinked-out silk in front, a crown of black lace bordered with straw gimp, and strings of black velvet. A black crinoline hat in a large shape lined with leaf-green gathered gauze, and trimmed with clusters of lilac, and bows of shot ribbon, while a useful hat is made with a flat brim of drawn net turned up slightly in front, and trimmed with loops of ribbon, in almost any colour, drawn up to form a kind of crown, and surmounted at the back by a graceful osprey.

A much-patronised dressmaker has recently completed a very interesting order for a well-known lady living in India, and remarkable for her perfect taste in dress. These lovely gowns were one and all distinguished by the beauty of their colouring and the artistic perfection of their design. They included, among others, a dinner-gown, with bodice and long square train of black and white brocade, opening over a white satin petticoat, draped with a handsome tablier of black net with jetted silk embroidery; a ball gown with a front of pale yellow satin and a short train of palest pink and yellow striped brocade, the bodice trimmed with chiffon and passementerie, repeating the colours of the brocade; a white satin ball gown, the front of the skirt embroidered with tiger lilies in three shades of pink, the bodice arranged with folds of chiffon, and a vest of embroidery; a gown of rich cream bengaline, for the races, trimmed round the skirt with a narrow passementerie of white-and-gold, the bodice arranged with a gold girdle to correspond; a white brocaded silk dinner-gown, with a separate train, the front of the skirt draped with a tablier of crystal beads and silk embroidery; a pale pink brocaded silk dinner-gown, with a tablier of rich gold embroidery, bodice trimmed with gold embroidery and a golden butterfly; a pale blue Liberty satin race gown, with a tiny gathered flounce all round the hem edged with gold, the bodice made with bands of gold and a girdle to match; and a dinner-gown of blue embroidered silk and crêpe de chine, with a bodice daintily ornamented with crêpe de chine and silver trimmings.

HELOISE.

MOTHERS' COLUMN.

HINTS ABOUT TRAINING CHILDREN.

A MOTHER writes: 'I have repeatedly been asked; "What makes your boys so good?" My answer is, "Their training." From the hour of their birth to the present hour I have made a constant study of their dispositions, and acted accordingly, never failing to correct a fault, or praise a virtue, and to the latter I attribute my success. Children are very keen, and when they find that implicit obedience is rewarded by "yes" to any little request they may make, it will not be long before they will see for themselves how much is to be gained by obedience. Every well-accomplished task, no matter how small, should be praised, for appreciation is as great an incentive to children as to grown people. Another all-important fact in training children is, never to break a promise to them. Keeping their respect is two-thirds of the battle. When a correction is once made it should be for all coming time, and the child made to understand this. The reputation my three boys (between six and nine years) bear in school and among their neighbours, convinces me I can say to other mothers with perfect impunity—"Go thou and do likewise."—C.G.L.

HOW CAN CROUP BE PREVENTED AND CURED?

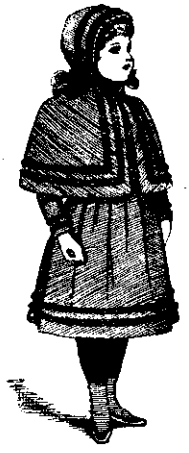
WILL some of the mothers having children subject to croup, give some remedies, and what will prevent an attack?—ANXIOUS MOTHER.

A correspondent says:—'A teaspoonful of half glycerine, half water, will break up a case of croup in fifteen minutes. If it does not, give a second dose; but so far, I have never needed to give the second dose.'

Another says:—'I think that a child need never have the dread disease if my simple remedy is given in time, or when the first hoarse cough is heard. A teaspoonful of syrup, or common treacle, and castor oil mixed, half a teaspoonful of each. Usually the first dose will loosen the phlegm, and the little one will go to sleep quietly; if not, follow it by the second in a short time. This has saved me many sleepless nights when my children were young.'—DORA.

A VERY PRETTY LITTLE FROCK.

I SAW such a dainty frock the other day,' says a London mother, 'so I send you a sketch of it. It was particularly suitable to an intermediate season, being moderately warm and comfortable-looking and feeling, without too much weight or heaviness of appearance. It was made of a rather light shade of terra cotta coloured merino, the skirt gathered into the waist of plain bodice, over which was worn



a cape coming to the waist; the closely-fitting hood in the new fashionable style was also of terra cotta merino, tied with black velvet strings, and the whole of the costume was trimmed with two narrow rolls of black astrachan about an inch and a-half apart. The general effect of this little dress was decidedly stylish, and very suitable to a child of from five to seven years.'

PUNISHING CHILDREN.

THERE seems to be only one way for children as for their elders to learn obedience—'by the things which they suffer.' But their sufferings should be strictly apportioned to their offences. Sometimes a whipping—stopping far short of cruelty—is the best punishment, the greatest kindness. The short pain, soon over, teaches a lesson to a child—too young to be reasoned with—that it never forgets.

With older children corporal punishment should be reserved for aggravated cases of cruelty or falsehood.

The parent who flies to the rod to correct every trifling fault or misdemeanour, will have no influence with her children when they are too old to be governed by force.

A child should never be struck in anger. A box on the ear may rupture the membrane that forms the drum, and cause permanent deafness. A hasty blow may do mischief that years of repentance cannot undo.

Punishment is for discipline, not for revenge. It is to teach the child to avoid evil and to do right. It never should be a vent for the angry passions of the mother. Love, patience and firmness are the instruments she must use to mould her child's character. Punishment is a means to an end; let her pray for grace to use it wisely.

Madame comes home from the theatre and finds Minna (the servant) sitting in the kitchen reading a book by the light of two candles. She is naturally annoyed at the girl's extravagance. 'Why, Minna, actually reading novels with two candles burning?' 'Not at all, ma'am,' was the servant's cool reply; 'that's only one candle! I just cut it in two half an-hour ago.'

QUERIES.

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

RULES.

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

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

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

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

QUERIES.

DOUGHNUTS.—Will you kindly give a recipe for these in the GRAPHIC?—LILY.

CHEESE SOUFFLE.—How do you make this? Shall be so much obliged if you can tell me.—E. DUNKLEY.

'Daisy' has much pleasure in commending the GRAPHIC to her friends, and would ask if any reader could give recipes for guava jelly, also for any other jams, jellies, or preserves from colonial fruits or vegetables.

'Daisy' would be glad to forward any recipes for your readers which she may have in return for theirs, she being a constant subscriber.

[I shall be very pleased to be the medium for the exchange of recipes.—LADY EDITOR.]

A DOMINO PARTY.

WAS making out my list, bill of fare, etc., for another luncheon when my husband made the remark, 'Better have us this time, Nell, it's unkind not asking us to any of them, and we have to foot the bills too.'

'All right. What shall it be? It can't be a progressive euchre or card party, for I've got the Congregational and the Episcopal ministers' wives down on the list. What do you say to a Domino Party?'

So it was decided. I invited eight couples including my husband and myself. When I invited the ladies, I told them to come and spend an afternoon with me a day or two before the party, and we planned to each one of us wear a long black robe (of black calico) over our evening dresses, black caps, gloves and masks. We put those on just before we left the dressing room to go down into the drawing room. Each gentleman was to pick out his own wife or pay a forfeit. The forfeit to be something his wife wanted very much. Oh! the rash promises those poor men made! The only man who knew his wife was the Episcopal minister, and he said the only reason he knew his wife was because she had a new pair of light grey, patent-leather tipped shoes on; she had shown them to him just as they were leaving home.

The ladies then threw off robes, caps, etc., and we sat down to little tables to play progressive dominoes. We played from seven and a half till nine o'clock. Ivorine souvenirs, in the shape of dominoes, three and a-half inches wide by five inches long, with a domino etched on them, a ribbon of a pretty light shade tied through a perforation in one end, were given to each guest.

Supper was then served. The table looked very pretty. In the centre of the table was a centrepiece of hemstitched linen with a border of carnation pinks outlined in bright wash silks, and a large rose bowl filled with carnation pinks and similax leaves. A boutonnière of a single carnation pink was pinned to each napkin. All the pretty dishes and dainty glassware I possessed was on the table. In place of lamps, I had wax candles. I had four antique silver candlesticks I wished to show off, and sister Em had the same amount; so I borrowed hers. They cast a pretty, mellow light over the table and room. Two young ladies and their best beloved young men waited on the table for me.

The first course was escalloped oysters, pressed chicken, potato salad, olives, pickles, jelly, cocoa, and little three-cornered slices of bread and butter.

Second course: Chocolate ice cream, domino cake, chocolate macaroons and ice water.

Third course: Black and white grapes, chocolate creams, iced tea.

ESCALLOPED OYSTERS.—Two quarts of oysters, a lot of crushed crackers; place alternately in a deep earthenware dish a layer of cracker crumbs, then oysters, seasoning each layer with salt, pepper, and small pieces of butter. When the dish is full, pour over all the oyster juice and enough milk to cover it all. Set away an hour and bake in a moderate oven fifty minutes.

PRESSED CHICKEN. — Two chickens. Boil and then separate the white meat from the dark, boil again till ready to fall off the bones, season with pepper and salt; take the bones and boil half-an-hour, take the liquor and pour over the chicken, heat through and put in crocks a layer of light meat and then one of dark. Put a plate on top and set a flat-iron on it to press the chicken; garnish with celery leaves.

POTATO SALAD.—Slice a dozen large, boiled potatoes, put into a dish and pour over them the following mixture. Boil three eggs hard, rub to a smooth paste the yolks, a teaspoonful of mustard, butter, salt, and one-half teaspoonful of celery, salt and pepper. Half a cupful of vinegar should be next whipped into it, a tablespoonful at a time. Chop up the whites of the eggs, and add.

DOMINO CAKE.—Half a cupful of butter, one cupful of sugar, one and one-half cupfuls of flour, one cupful sweet

milk, whites of four eggs, one and one half teaspoonfuls of baking powder, flavour with vanilla. Bake in long tin, about one and one-fourth inches in thickness when baked. Then make a boiled white frosting and cover the cakes. When cold, cut pieces the size you want the dominoes to be. Then make a horn of stiff white paper about five inches long and one and one-half inches across the top. Put in a spoonful of dark chocolate icing; close the horn at the top, pressing the icing from the small opening; draw a line across the centre of each little cake with the chocolate icing, and make spots like those on ivory dominoes. Keep the horn supplied with icing.

SALTED ALMONDS.—Blanch the almonds, and put in the pan with the almonds some butter and salt and place it in the oven, stirring to prevent burning, but let it brown, and serve when cold in fancy little plates.

CHOCOLATE MACAROONS.—Make frosting as for a cake, stir in two ounces of grated chocolate, drop on buttered paper, bake in a quick oven.

CHOCOLATE CREAMS.—Two and a half teacupfuls of granulated sugar, one-half cupful of sweet milk, boil five minutes, place the pan in cold water till cold enough to roll into little balls. Grate the chocolate, melt and roll the creams in it, set away to cool, season to suit the taste.

COCOA.—Place half a teaspoonful of Van Houten's cocoa in each teacup and pour over it boiling water enough to fill the cup; stir until all is dissolved, and let each one sugar and cream to suit themselves. The cups are to be filled with the cocoa and hot water and brought to the table.

BAB.

BUTTON-MAKING.

HOW VEGETABLE IVORY IS MADE INTO ARTICLES OF BEAUTY.

VEGETABLE ivory is a nut about the size of a very large horse-chestnut, and grows in a similar manner on trees. It is very solid and white throughout, and when polished has all the appearance of ivory. The nuts are cut into thin slabs of the thickness of the button wished. These slabs are then put into a lathe, when they are cut by a die, patterned one-half for the face and one for the back, revolving at a speed of 2,000 revolutions per minute. These halves are so arranged that as one half is brought against the slab the other retreats. The face of the button is always cut first, then the back die is brought up and, its edge meeting the circular groove made by the face die, the button drops out. The buttons are then thoroughly dried, and, becoming porous, readily absorb the aniline with which they are dyed.

The dyeing process is done scientifically, but is very simple. If a plain button is desired it is simply plunged into an aniline bath, but where a variety of colours are to be applied the process varies. Say it is desired to make a black button with a red design. The design is first stamped upon the white button with shellac. The button is then plunged into an aniline bath, and all parts exposed are coloured. When dry it is washed in turpentine to clean off the shellac, exposing the design in white. A red dye is then made of fustic, as this has no effect upon aniline. An aniline can be made of any colour, but as it will destroy any other dye it must be used only when all parts of the button which it is not wished to colour are protected by shellac. Where a multiplicity of colours are desired they are applied with sponges, much in the manner that a chromo lithograph is made. The ground colour is made of fustic and the others of aniline. The sponge is cut into the design wished for a certain colour and another sponge for another, etc., deftness being required to apply the colours accurately.

After being dyed the buttons are dried, rolled and polished on spindles. As practically no strength is required, and as girls are more skilful with their fingers than men, more of the buttons are made by girls. A good hand can make as many as fifty gross a day. When it comes to drilling the eyes 120 to 150 gross a day can be handled by one girl. The holes are always drilled from the face back. The drill used for this consists of four shafts revolving very rapidly and independently of one another. They are very fine and pass through a guard just before touching the button.

The delicate designs so popular this summer are stamped with a steel die with the desired design engraved upon it. The ivory is soaked before being stamped. The wholesale price of this vegetable is about a penny a pound, so that the buttons do not cost much to the producer.

THE HABIT OF BORROWING.

IT is the easiest thing in the world to begin by borrowing a newspaper, then a pattern, then a recipe, then a book; some day a gown is borrowed to look at; another day one is borrowed to try on to see if it would be becoming; then a little note goes asking that a fan be lent; and the fan once borrowed it becomes the easiest thing in the world to get either a bodice, a bonnet, or an embroidered petticoat. Now, when you began, if anybody had told you that you were a moral thief, you would have been most indignant; and yet that is just what you are. It would be much more honest to borrow your neighbour's money and never to return it, than to keep up a constant borrowing of your neighbour's belongings, getting out of them the wear that is not yours and the pleasure that is by rights your neighbour's.

What the mistress does, the maid does. In the kitchen they do not hesitate to borrow a patent coffee-pot and never return it; a pudding-dish, a little flavouring extract, some baking-powder or some oil. If they were asked if they returned all this, they would answer: 'Certainly not, why we would be just as glad to lend to them.' And the result is that your servants imitating your example, become systematic plunderers of your neighbours. My friend, do not get into the habit of borrowing. It is one of the most vicious you can possibly acquire. It makes you lose all respect for the rights of other people, and it can certainly give you none for yourself. The persistent borrower is a more or less well-spoken-of thief. The borrower does not hide her light under a bushel, for in time her friends and acquaintances grow to know of her weakness and avoid her. So stop at the book, and do not permit yourself to drift into what it is charity to call a very bad habit.

THREE FEET OF OBSTINACY.

BY L. B. WALFORD.

A GAY seaside resort was in full swing.

'It is a most *vulgar* place,' said a lady, calmly.

The speaker never went near the sea, and never scaled the cliffs. To her view there was only one spot tolerable in the whole neighbourhood—one oasis in the desert by which she was surrounded.

'I go to the Park, yes, every afternoon,' Mrs Chevenix now proceeded (she was sitting in 'the Park' as she spoke). 'I go in the afternoon, and also in the evening. There is really nowhere else, you know. There are a *few* people to be seen there; and one gets away from all the shocking noises.'

'When do you expect your daughter?' inquired a lady who sat by her side.

'To-night. And really—of course I shall be glad to see Hattie, but I am not sure—I almost wish'—with some hesitation—'the fact is, my dear Mrs Lothbury'—all at once confidence was decided upon—'the real truth is, that Windbourne is *not* the place for a young girl of my daughter's temperament. Hattie is a dear child; but she is a curious sort of affectionate, impulsive creature; and there is one thing she will do, and no one can prevent her—she *will* make friends. She will pick up people here, there and everywhere. She will not have been here three days before she will come flying in with the news that she has found somebody who is coming to call upon me!'

The two ladies were now joined by Hattie, who, half turning away, and yet stealing a shy glance of triumph as she spoke, said:

'Mamma, I—we—May and I had a little adventure before coming home.'

'Oh, adventure!' poor Mrs Chevenix groaned. 'I knew it. I knew what was coming as soon as ever you appeared. Your face betrayed you, child. You are at your old tricks again,' with growing irritability. 'Well, who, for goodness sake, who is "so glad to know we are here?" And who is coming to see me to-morrow?'

'Sir John and Lady Pullborough.'

Mrs Chevenix started from her seat, as though a pistol shot had been let off at her ear.

'What? Who? *Who* did you say? Why, Hattie—'

But Hattie had flashed away the instant the words escaped her lips.

It was her saucy revenge, and the little minx meant to have it.

Hattie was, what few girls are in these days, really and positively young. She went straight to the root of every matter as a child would do. She took fancies to people because they had nice faces, or nice voices. She took interest in whole families because they seemed fond of one another. When she was taken to shows of any kind, she would select, in the twinkling of an eye, the competitor whose partisan she meant to be. In crowded halls or churches, she would be almost breathless with desire that the late comers, the unpunctual people, for whom no one else had any mercy, should have the vacant seats which she could espy, and would fain have herself flown to point them out. In railway carriages she had actually been known to beckon travellers to the door, and assure them with outstretched hand that there was room within.

'And, of course, it is all *very well*,' Hattie's mother would observe, discontentedly; 'and they tell me that Hattie is a favourite because she has such pretty manners. But all the same—' and hereupon would ensue a confidence such as that wherewith our little story opens.

When Hattie had been two days at Windbourne, and had not in that time made any fresh acquaintances, her mother had been almost surprised.

'She is beginning to see; her eyes are getting opened,' Mrs Chevenix told herself, well pleased, 'If she only goes on as well as she has begun, I shall breathe freely at last. Of course it *is* a strain having a great grown-up daughter with such strength as Hattie has. She never tires; she flies about all day long from one thing to the other; and how can I, with my poor nerves and delicate health, fly after her? But if Hattie will only sober down, and be content to sit quietly with me in the Park—'

The next moment, however, showed that Hattie was not going to sit quietly with anybody in the Park.

'Mamma, I am off to the downs. There is the most magnificent view of the sea from a place above the golf-links, Aunt Sophy says, and this is just the day on which to see it.'

'A place above the golf-links, my dear! *Above* the golf-links!' Mrs Chevenix had never yet been above the golf-links, and had only once driven so far as that salubrious spot. 'Then, I suppose, you will not be in till dinner-time,' she added, plaintively.

She did not put a stop to the expedition, be it observed, the fact being that she would have had to answer for it to her husband had she done so, and Major Chevenix had opinions of his own about Hattie.

'Be content with drivelling away your own life, and bedabbling your own face with powder and paint,' he had once brutally told his wife. 'I won't interfere with you, but if you interfere with *Hattie*, by George! you will have me to reckon with! I will stand no nonsense, madam,' he had subjoined, so sternly, that from thenceforth the only daughter of the ill-assorted pair had as absolutely lost a mother's control as she had formerly missed her tenderness and care.

We will follow Hattie through the day—the day which shook all her mother's faith in her afresh.

Understand, then, that it is the afternoon of Hattie's third day at Windbourne-by-the-Sea, that she has so far been a demure, elegant specimen of young ladyhood, trotting hither and thither beneath the shadow of the maternal wing, and that she is now about to indemnify herself for two whole days of chatter and finery by a relapse into her real self, in congenial company and amidst soul-inspiring surroundings.

The two springing, youthful figures, then, whom we see breasting the hill-side in the summer sunlight, are Hattie and her cousin May Chevenix; both only children, both open, joyous, light-hearted little maids.

'Now we can do as we please and not be worried or bothered,' May, the school-girl, had cried, exultant; and exactly as they pleased the two accordingly did.

Even the wildest of wild spirits exhaust themselves, however, at last; and having skipped and gambolled and laughed themselves tired, the two happy young creatures presently alighted like butterflies upon a soft bunch of mossy thyme in the heart of a sheet of gorse, and there elected to boil their kettle.

Wonderful to relate, the kettle was willing to boil. Aunt Sophy's lamp—three good burners enclosed within a case of perforated tin—proved to be in perfect working order, and the protection of a thick prickly bush, into the midst of which the little stand had been plunged, enabled the flames to rise clearly, the result being that a soft cloud presently puffed away over the gorse, and the tea being popped in—a teapot had, of course, been dispensed with—the girls gleefully turned their attention to minor details.

'Now for the buns and butter,' said Hattie, fussing about.

'Now, May, you split and butter those great brown buns, while I see what Virginie has put in the other paper bag. Sponge-cakes! Oh, good Virginie! I love sponge cakes; and here are some slices of the cake Aunt Sophy had at her tea-party yesterday. Virginie has cleared the dish for us. She is a better Virginie than ever. Oh, May, here is actually another packet; I thought my load began to grow rather heavy. Dear me, we shall never eat all we have!'

Just then a young man in cricketing flannels shot out of the ground, as it seemed, just above the girls' heads, and barely succeeded in pulling himself up in time not to go head over-heels into the middle of their little feast. He had obviously been flying down the hill-side at full speed.

'Rude boy!' muttered Hattie, with an angry frown.

She and May had fancied themselves alone in this solitary nook, and a stranger was perforce an intruder.

'Beg pardon,' responded an equally indignant mutter back. The aggressor, it might have been perceived, considered he also had been aggrieved. ('A beastly mess of a picnic,' he was, in fact, saying in his heart, with a shudder of disgust.)

Then there was a moment's pause, during which all three impatiently awaited the dissolution of their involuntary partnership.

No one spoke, but the young man looked upward with a restive eye. Thence it was plain, help was to come. Nor was the help long in coming.

Within a few seconds, in far less time than it takes to write it, there was a rustling in the brake, and even nearer to the small encampment than the former invader had broken covert, there emerged a small, stumbling, breathless figure, who plumped into a gorse bush and rolled over, before any one could catch hold of him to prevent the mischance.

He was the smallest little fellow ever seen in trousers. His tiny white sailor-suit might almost have been made for a very large doll, and yet it suited every inch of the plump, rounded, healthy little frame.

'Why, he cannot be more than three years old,' decided Miss Chevenix, with the eye of experience. 'He certainly is not four.'

She could not help regarding favourably the little toddler: she and May were fond of children.

'Hi, Johnny,' said Johnny's companion, quickly, 'take care; come along.'

Johnny picked himself up, and stood still, his eyes growing round. What a delicious meal he saw before him!

All at once, doubtless, the little boy realized a sensation which had been imperceptible to him a minute before.

'Hi, Johnny, come along.'

This time the stranger, rather gruff in voice and red in the face, just lifted his hat to the young ladies in apology, as he endeavoured to cut short the scene.

But now a serious matter occurred. It is a very serious matter to bring a young, unreasoning child into the presence of a tempting display of viands just at his own tea-hour, and it was now considerably past Johnny Somebody-or-other's tea hour. For this cause it was that the said Johnny was being bustled along at a pace and down a steep incline which an older hand would have known was fraught with peril.

Johnny was all of a sudden very tired as well as dreadfully hungry.

'Come *along*, Johnny.' Emphasis on the '*along*' showed that the elder brother (Hattie and May had at once decided that the leader was the elder brother) was losing patience and temper.

Johnny, however, was not to be 'come-*alonged*' at by anyone in that tone of voice. For reply, he only drew a little nearer to the snowy table-cloth on which the good things were spread, and sighed aloud.

The sigh made Hattie Chevenix bite her lips.

She and May were in an awkward position, certainly; for all their boisterous glee, the outpourings of two glad young hearts, they were gentlewomen and had the instincts of gentlewomen; it took all desire to laugh out of them, to be thus confronted with a predicament in which two other unknown individuals played a part, and they were not in the least inclined even to smile at this crisis. Hattie only bit her lips, because she longed to give the little boy a cake, and bid him gently run away, and she knew that this she could hardly do.

Johnny's brother had now turned round, and got his back to the girls.

'Come along, you little beggar!' he reiterated, in an imperative undertone. 'Do as I tell you this moment, or you'll never come with *me* again. Come!' taking a pace or two forward, and looking over his shoulder.

Not an inch budged Obstinacy in arms. Rebellion made itself unmistakably evident in a humped back and pouted lips.

'You little fool! Come, I tell you!' Back came the discomfited elder.

Stock-still stood the child. He had seen, he had smelled; the very milk in the bottle had an irresistible fascination for his parched tongue. Large tears slowly welled up into the blue eyes.

Apparently without effect, however.

'I'll haul you along if you don't come.' The unfortunate speaker was at his wits' end, and he almost groaned as he gave vent to the appalling threat. 'Johnny, I say, come,'

he added, suddenly, in new and inviting accents, as though the happy idea had only just occurred, and was sure to prove irresistible.

But the wile was thrown away, as the entreaty and the command had alike been.

'Come, then, this minute.' Exasperated beyond endurance, the young man strode roughly to the spot, and brushing past Hattie Chevenix's summer draperies, he seized the delinquent with the obvious intention of hearing him off willy-nilly.

But this was more easily said than done. At the first touch of the hand which laid hold of his with a grasp the interpretation whereof was clear even to his infantile understanding, Johnny's forces of mind and body gathered themselves together in one final effort, and with a roar of rage and disappointment such as only a little boy or a little lion cub can emit, he flung himself down full length upon the moss.

A dark flush mounted to the brow of his unfortunate guardian for the nonce.

'If *ever again*!' he ground his teeth—'if I ever get let in for this again! Get up, you little *beast*—oh, confound you! What *am* I to do?' ejaculated he, the drops standing on his temples, and his broken breath coming and going in an agony of vexation and shame beyond the powers of endurance to conceal.

Meantime Johnny lay and bawled.

He looked such a little cherub lying there, kicking his little trousered legs and shouting with all the strength of his little healthy lungs, that at last Hattie Chevenix could stand no more.

Besides, what was to be done?

No one except a skilled and nimble nurse, can lift a kicking child and carry him off out of sight and hearing with anything like dignity or even safety; and on a steep hill-side the chances were that Johnny and his captor would have come to considerable grief. Add to which, what a dreadful predicament for the boy's poor brother to be placed in! If he carried Johnny far, Johnny's cries would resound till general attention would infallibly be aroused; if he set him down, would he ever get the little wretch to move on?

'He *is* a little wretch, but he has the dearest little face in the world,' thought Hattie, and made up her mind.

'I hope you will not think it strange,' she said, with a gentle shyness that was the most absolute contrast possible to the free prattling humour friendship and familiarity would have warranted, 'but I am afraid that poor little boy really is very tired—and hungry. If you would not mind, we shall be so glad to give him some of our tea, and when he has rested a little he will be quite good and ready to go on,' confidently.

A sudden cessation of the outcry by her side showed that somebody was listening.

'Would you not be quite good, Johnny, if you had a little cake and milk, and sat up here and ate it with us?' whispered the pretty lady in the naughty little ear.

'Es.' A loud sob, tribute to the departing storm, accompanied the promise.

'Then let me wipe your eyes,' added Hattie, bending over him. 'Johnny must not cry any more, but have a drink of nice milk and a sponge cake,' suiting the action to the words. 'May, the large horn cup,' hastily. 'Now, drink, dear; don't cry any more,' nothing but pity and tenderness in her tone; 'he really can hardly stop now.' She turned round with the feminine instinct to apologise for tears, and the silent figure in the background made a shift to seem appeased by the apology. 'He is so tired, and he is so little,' she concluded, drawing the small creature closer to her side.

'I am sure you are very kind.' The young man took off his cap and forced himself to accept the situation. 'I suppose I took him too far; but he told me he could walk,' he continued, in an aggrieved tone. 'I should never have dreamed of taking him all the way up here, if both he and his fool of a nurse had not said he could walk to the Head perfectly well, and had often done it before.'

'So I has,' said Johnny, with his mouth full and turning up a glazed face to his brother: 'offin.'

'Often? Then what in the name of—why could you not do it to day, then. Why must you go and make an exhibition of yourself just because you were with me?'

'You didn't carry me.' Johnny took another complacent bite, and his limpid eyes shone with satisfaction. How quickly the tears of childhood dry!

'Carry you!' echoed his brother, another flush of disgust deepening on his cheek. 'Do you mean to say that it was part of the programme that I was to carry you?'

'If I'm tired, nurse carries me.'

'She will carry you in future, as far as I am concerned,' retorted the young man, realising at length the trap into which he had fallen. Then perceiving that it was hardly polite to be thus arguing with the youthful culprit to the neglect of his entertainers, he endeavoured, shamefacedly, to make matters a little easier. 'I took him for a walk, and I suppose it *is* a little late,' he said; 'and I am sure you are very kind. I am most awfully ashamed. I will just go and sit over there till he is ready,' a good idea occurring.

'Will you not have a cup of tea yourself?' May Chevenix courteously proffered the second horn mug.

'No, thank you. I—I had rather not,' hastily. 'He won't be long. You are very kind. Poor little fellow!' and for the first time an infusion of something like compassion entered into the ill-used elder's tone. It is hard for one-and-twenty to be made a fool of (in his own mind), and not to feel wrath pure and simple against the guilty personage, however small and weak and at another time dear to the heart that little wicked gad-fly may be.

Johnny, munching away with a happy face, had something rather irresistible about him now.

But at the end of half an hour, when the gentleman reappeared upon the scene, the little urchin proved to be more irresistible still.

Replete with good things, comforted in his inner man, cooled down in the seductive retreat, and serene with all the trustfulness of his years, the little one had curled himself up into a ball in Hattie Chevenix's lap, and fallen fast asleep, with his rosy cheek upon her bosom.

Hattie's arms were locked around him.

Here was a new dilemma. But, somehow, it did not rouse the ire the former one had done.

'What is he up to now?' exclaimed the young man, under his breath. 'But, goodness'—internally—'how lovely the girl is! And what a—a—yes, I thought she was pretty before,'—he had been ruminating on the young lady's looks during his term of banishment—'but now she has the face of an angel. It is a beautiful face, I can't be angry with the boy if he *is* tired; it would be unreasonable. And the little imp has chosen good quarters for himself, that's certain.' Then aloud, 'How very unfortunate! Really I—I—we are most unfortunate. Forcing ourselves upon you like this!'

'Oh, no!' it was both the girls who spoke at once.

'He must not be awakened,' said Hattie Chevenix, decidedly.

'I am afraid he really must.' The demur, however, was but a faint one.

May Chevenix was busy packing up the tea-things. After a momentary hesitation, the stranger, whom circumstances had thus victimized, seated himself by her cousin's side.

'I never felt more ashamed in my life,' he said. 'I can't tell you how annoyed I am. He is a great weight. You will be very tired.'

'He is no weight; he is a perfect darling.' Then followed a bright blush, and an instant wish that the epithet had been less fervent. 'I ought not to have said that,' reflected Modesty, but Admiration thought otherwise.

'She is the dearest as well as the loveliest girl I ever saw in my life,' concluded a certain spectator, deeply moved. 'Johnny, I forgive you.'

Then followed a long pause.

Johnny slept peacefully on. Hattie smiled contentedly down upon him; the stranger watched them both. Every uneasy motion died out of his breast.

'I will tell you what I can do,' suddenly, however, he burst out at last. 'I will run down and fetch the carriage. The carriage can easily get up as far as that point down there, and then I will run up and carry Johnny down.' (N.B. No horror of carrying Johnny down now.) 'I shall only be gone about twenty minutes,' proceeded the speaker, springing to his feet. 'If I have luck, I shall catch my mother just come in from her drive, so there will be nothing to delay me.' Then he stopped with evident afterthought. 'We have trespassed so terribly on you—'

'Oh, don't—'

'But if you *could* kindly wait here?'

'Of course.'

'And the carriage can take you home first.'

'We shall not be late, thank you,' said the elder Miss Chevenix, in a clear voice. 'We are in rooms at this end of the town, and shall be home in time for dinner. It is no matter, not the slightest. We can wait quite well.'

He was off.

'Chevenix?' he muttered to himself as he hurried down hill. He had seen a directed envelope lying about (it had been used as a kettle-holder). 'Chevenix? I seem to know the name, and yet I cannot remember where I have heard it.'

Lady Pullborough, however, remembered instantly.

'My dear boy, they are here; I knew it. Those very rich, smart, but vulgar people who have taken Broadlands, don't you know? Sir John said I need not call unless I liked, as they are only tenants; and I did not like at all. I disliked all I heard of them. The mother is a most silly woman, with a *penchant* for singing the latest published ballads.'

'Come and see the daughter,' was all his answer.

The two were bowling swiftly along toward the downs, and in a few minutes after the last speaker had said: 'Come and see the daughter,' the barouche drew up at the nearest point to where the tea encampment had been made.

'You are coming up, are you not?' said young Mr Pullborough. He particularly wished his august parent to go up.

'It is very steep, my dear.' Her ladyship glanced ruefully upward.

'But Johnny may be frightened when he wakes.'

'So he may, poor darling. Oh, I will certainly come.' She had but the two sons, and worshipped them both; all the intermediate daughters went for nothing. 'Besides I must thank these young ladies.'

Lady Pullborough had a grateful heart.

'And I doubt their accepting to drive unless *you* ask them.'

He had no mercy, even when he saw her panting and struggling. He got her up somehow; and then came triumph.

The little sleeper still lay calmly slumbering, still was watched over by the angel face.

'Oh, *dear*, what a picture!' cried the mother under her breath, and the victory was won.

At length, the girls reached their lodgings, and it was subsequently to this that the conversation took place in the Park, which we have already heard.

Our little story is almost over.

Mrs Chevenix had been dying for Lady Pullborough to call, ever since they had become country neighbours, but had at last given up all hopes of the desired event. She had been so much chagrined as almost to have made her husband cut short his lease in consequence. Then to run up hap-hazard against the great lady at a place like Windbourne! To meet and to know her through Hattie! It was extraordinary, unheard-of good luck. She was now all excitement and anticipation.

'Really, it was most wonderfully fortunate,' she cried. She had followed Hattie as soon as ever the lilac robe was on, and had hurried as she had never hurried before. 'Really, it was a perfect scene in a play,' having heard the adventure, even to the minutest detail with interest. 'But how odd that we should never even have known that the Pullboroughs were here—never have met them in the Park, nor anywhere!'

'They never go to the Park. Lady Pullborough was not complimentary to the Park, mamma.'

'Was she not?' Mrs Chevenix's face fell a little. 'Did she think it—ahem—vulgar, Hattie?'

'I think so, mamma.'

'What, then, does she do with herself?' inquired Mrs Chevenix, after a moment's discomfited pause.

'She drives about the country.'

'And the son? What does he do?'

'Goes sea fishing. Oh,' cried Hattie, with the innocence of a babe, '*how* I should like to go sea fishing!'

'Well, well,' said Mrs Chevenix, cheerfully. 'I dare say you can go if the Pullboroughs ask you. I daresay your father would consent. But the extraordinary thing is,' with animation—'you must forgive my saying it, Hattie—but the strange thing is, that this introduction should be *your* doing. For you know, Hattie, you must confess, that you would have done what you did exactly the same if it had been the veriest beggar's brat who came by—you know you would.'

Almost the same words were said by another pair of lips one day not very long afterwards.

'By Jove! It was that which fetched me,' said Hattie's lover, as the two hung over the side of a sailing-boat, and held the hand-lines which the fish seemed to shun for the nonce. 'It was that which bowled me over, you know. You looked so pretty—but that was nothing, you looked so *good*, sitting there. I could not help thinking: "By Jove! that girl would have done the same for any beggar's brat who was in trouble," and—and—I like that kind of girl, you know.'

DAN'S WIFE.

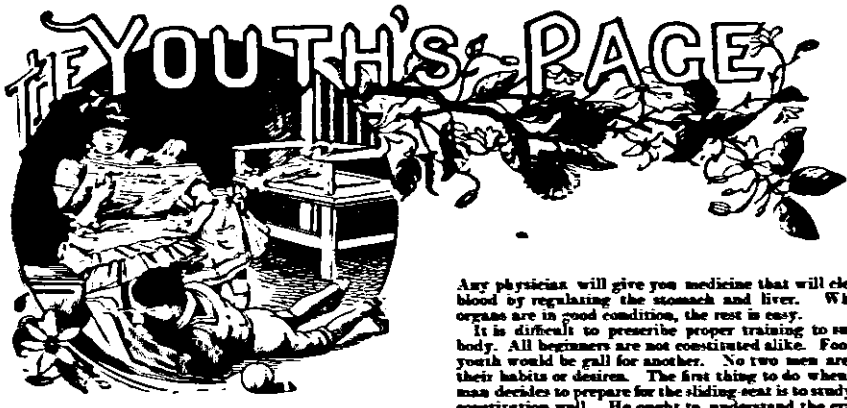
Up in early morning light,
Sweeping, dusting, setting right,
Oiling all the household springs,
Sewing buttons, tying strings,
Telling Betsy what to do,
Mending rips in Johnnie's shoe,
Running up and down the stair,
Tying baby in her chair,
Cutting meat and spreading bread,
Dishing out so much per head,
Eating as she can, by chance,
Giving husband kindly glance!
Toiling, busy life—
Smart woman,
Dan's wife.

Dan comes home at fall of night—
Home so cheerful, neat and bright;
Children meet him at the door,
Pull him down and look him o'er;
Wife asks how the day has gone;
'Busy time with us at home!'
Supper done, Dan reads with ease—
Happy Dan, but one to please!
Children must be put to bed;
All the little prayers are said:
Little shoes are placed in rows,
Bedclothes tucked o'er little toes;
Busy, wearing life—
Tired woman,
Dan's wife.

Dan reads on and falls asleep—
See the woman softly creep;
Baby rests at last; poor dear,
Not a word her heart to cheer.
Mending basket, full to top,
Stockings, shirt, and little frock;
Tired eyes and weary brain,
Side with darting, ugly pain;
'Never mind, 'twill pass away';
She must work, but never play;
Closed piano, unused books,
Done the walks to pleasant nooks;
Brightness faded out of life—
Saddened woman,
Dan's wife!

Upstairs, tossing to and fro,
Fever holds the woman low;
Children wander free to play,
When and where they will to-day!
Betsy loiters—dinner's cold,
Dan looks anxious, cross, and old,
Household screws all out of place,
Lacking one dear, patient face.
Steady hands so tried and true—
Hands that knew just what to do,
Never seeking rest nor play,
Folded now and laid away,
Work of six in one short life—
Murdered woman,
Dan's wife.

LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS.—VERY STYLISH TAILOR-MADE GOWNS AND COATS.—SEE PAGE 326.



SOLUTION TO PUZZLE.

ANOTHER correct solution of the missing word puzzle has reached me from Hannah McGuire, Reefton, who will also receive a copy of the GRAPHIC, as her letter bears the post-mark of August 4th.

HOW TO HANDLE A BOAT.

BY EDWARD HANLAN.

THE GREAT OARSMAN TELLS BOYS HOW TO TRAIN AND HOW TO ROW A BOAT.

CAN give no better advice to boys and amateur oarsmen, as to how they should row or train for a sculling race, than to tell my early experiences and the regimen and rules of exercise I followed to get myself into condition. In 1872 I began life as an amateur oarsman. Like all beginners, put myself into the hands of a trainer. I had the idea that training meant tearing yourself to pieces with exhausting work and literal starvation, and this seemed to be my trainer's idea, and for a long time I was foolish enough to follow his methods. After he had got my system into much worse trim than it was before I began to train, I rebelled, and since that time I have followed my own ideas regarding training, with the result that instead of breaking down at the end of five or six years, absolutely unable to row a decent speed, I am physically as capable as I was in my early life.

THE BEST METHOD OF TRAINING.

AFTER I had begun my own training, my ideas regarding this important part of rowing matters underwent a complete change. Instead of starving myself and doing hard work I built up my constitution by light work and eating what my system craved in the way of more substantial food. When I am in training I eat what I desire, excepting, of course, condiments and other indigestibles. The first thing to do in training is to get the blood in condition. Any physician will give you medicine that will cleanse the blood by regulating the stomach and liver. When these organs are in good condition, the rest is easy.

It is difficult to prescribe proper training to suit everybody. All beginners are not constituted alike. Food for one youth would be gall for another. No two men are alike in their habits or desires. The first thing to do when a young man decides to prepare for the sliding-seat is to study his own constitution well. He ought to understand the cravings of his stomach first and last of all. If his stomach fails him, that settles him. There are hundreds of athletes who put themselves in excellent condition on two meals a day. I would not advise any beginner to try this plan unless he feels certain he can stand it. There must be moderation in food, as there must be moderation in exercise. But the youth who starts out with the idea that he must starve himself to get into condition, will come to disaster. Nourishing food, no matter how much, if well digested, is what every beginner wants if he would put himself in good physical shape. It makes but little difference when the food is taken, providing it be taken at the usual time. A good breakfast for a lad in training can be had of oatmeal porridge, cracked wheat, brown bread and butter, a steak or chop, and a little fruit. Drink cold water if necessary, but it is better to drink nothing at all while eating. For dinner, which should never be eaten after 6.30 p.m., a piece of beef or mutton, as large as your hand, with potatoes and other vegetables and brown bread. Don't eat too much, and never touch dessert, except it be fruit. Always drink one or two tumblers of water on going to bed and upon rising in the morning. Never forget to take a nap of an hour or two in the middle of the day. Many cannot do this, but it is of a lasting benefit to a man in training. Get at least nine hours' rest at night. Avoid warm drinks as you would a plague. Tea or coffee are specially injurious to many, just as cold water and pure cream are helpful to all. Salt, pepper, spice, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and mustard are all hurtful, and, if used at all, should be used with great moderation. How true is Rousseau's saying: 'The stronger the body, the more it obeys: the weaker the body, the more it commands.' To be trained too much or too fine, as the saying goes, is worse a hundred times than no training at all.

Professional trainers invariably give the beginner too much to do. They will make him do the most absurd things, which in the end pull the lad down so fine as to make him as weak as a kitten. It will take a trainer a full year to understand a man's constitution; and, in the meantime, he will probably butcher him physically. That is why I claim it to be a great risk to put yourself in charge of a man whose method of training may not suit your constitution at all.

If the young man who starts out to train and row uses whisky and tobacco, he must break himself of both habits. These habits are positively injurious to a good sculler.

HOW I TRAIN MYSELF.

I WILL give you a short account of how I train myself. I arise at six or half-past six, walk one mile, running perhaps two hundred yards at a stiff speed, sufficiently to get my wind. Then I return and take a light shower-bath, after which my man rubs me down with flesh gloves, rubbing in all directions. Afterwards he goes over me with his hands and then fans me dry with a towel. I then rest for twenty minutes before sitting down to breakfast. I eat for this meal some fruit and a small steak, and drink a glass of milk and cream. After sitting around for an hour, I go for a two or three miles' walk. Then I go to my boat-house and am rubbed down. After this I take a spin over the course, rowing from twenty-six to thirty-two strokes a minute. This is simply an exercise row. The rubbing process is gone over again when I return. For dinner, I have roast beef or mutton, sometimes a fowl, with vegetables. I rest until half-past two, take a walk, and then go for another exercise row. Once or twice a week I take a 'spender' over the course. One thing amateurs should bear in mind: never leave your race on the river, that is, never row six races a week before the day of the race comes. It stands to reason that no man can row as hard as he is able, each day, and be in better condition the day of the race than when he began training. More races have been lost by 'leaving the race on the river' than I can name.

SOME IDEAS ABOUT RACING.

A WORD about amateurs, their regulations and laws controlling the Association. I think it would be a good idea to have two or three different classes of singles, doubles, and fours. For instance, a man weighing one hundred and thirty-five pounds, in my opinion, has not a chance when rowing against a man who weighs one hundred and sixty or one hundred and seventy pounds, or, in fact, one hundred and fifty pounds. A one-hundred-and-fifty pound man is large enough and strong enough to row anyone; but a small man has neither the power nor the endurance to be able to win a prize in any sort of a senior or a junior contest. He may be able to win one big race in ten years, but that is about all. And, therefore, I think it would be a good idea for the benefit of amateur rowing to class men according to their weights, and to have two seniors (heavy-weight senior and light-weight senior) in sculls, and the same in doubles, and also in fours; juniors likewise. Then the National Associations would find that rowing would be very much improved by this change.

Then again I notice that there is considerable controversy going around the press of this country in reference to the distance an amateur should row. In my own opinion, I think a mile is plenty far enough for any amateur; and I would never think of having a turning race except there are only one or two contestants. I speak from my experience in the Duluth Regatta, held a year or so ago. The races were a mile and turn for the fours, and the other races, and in every contest there were three or four foals, caused mostly by one boat colliding with another, so much so that several of the races were rowed over and delayed the regatta two or three days, and finally they had to resort to towing the races straightway, which proved very satisfactory. Amateurs are not like professionals; they have not the experience, and the consequence is that they do not steer as straight a course as professionals do.

SAUSAGE MEAT MONUMENT.

NINA'S aunt died, and as she had been very good to Nina, of course she was remembered a long time, six months, possibly. One day Nina was weeping at some sudden recollection of her pretty young aunt. 'But she'd be happy if she could see what a lot of beautiful sausage meat she has on her grave, wouldn't she?' sobbed Nina, remembering how her aunt loved nice things. The sausage meat was a shaft of coloured Italian marble.

HANLAN V. BEACH.

A RATTLESNAKE AS A BEDFELLOW.

BY CLARENCE BULLER.

PEAKING of snakes in one's boots,' said the old-timer,' it was on this road in the time of its building, and in this same rising country we are now passing through, that a man had the worst case of a snake in his clothes that I ever knew of. But this was no mirage, but a real, sure-enough rattler that crawled under the shirt of a sober man.'

The Union Pacific train was then entering the foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains. A little party of passengers, accidental acquaintances, were in the smoking compartment of the palace car enjoying their cigars and talking of matters relating to the country through which we were travelling. Conversation had turned upon snakes. The 'old-timer,' a portly capitalist from the mining region, went on with his narration, and we all listened.

'A party of us were in those hills yonder,' he said, 'when the railroad was building, getting out ties on contract, and were camping one night in a little grassy valley among the bluffs. We were sleeping on the bare ground in the open air. It was late in September, and the nights were getting cool in the mountains, and each man had turned in with his clothes on and rolled up in all the blankets he could muster. Next to me lay an Illinois man named Robert Jellison, a cool, moderate sort of fellow, but with plenty of nerve, as you shall hear. Some time about midnight I was awakened by hearing Jellison calling to me in a low voice. My first thought on waking was that some one might be tampering with the horses, and not wishing to make any demonstration until I found out what quarter the trouble was in, I got my hand on my revolver and whispered, without moving:

"'What's up, Bob? Indians?"

'Jellison was lying on his back perfectly motionless. Without stirring, he spoke in the same tone as before:

'"No; I wish it were. I think a snake has crawled up my trousers leg. Don't move only as I tell you. Don't wake the boys. He's quiet now and I don't want him set agoing. But get up easy and start a fire.'

'So I slipped out of my blankets, and moving around, raked the brands of the camp-fire together, piled on some wood, and soon had a blaze. While I did this Jellison was speaking in a monotonous tone without moving his lips.

'"He's feeling his way along under my shirt, but he keeps moving up all the time. His head is as far up as my armpits already and his tail isn't over my instep yet. I think he's a mile long and weighs a thousand pounds to the inch. The fire's all right, isn't it? Now come here and get the blankets away from me. The reptile is lying on top of me along my left leg and side. Begin on the right side, and work easy."

'Jellison's blankets were tucked tightly under him, and it was a ticklish proceeding to pull their edge from beneath him without moving his body, with the chance that at any moment I might encounter the head of his unwelcome visitor. Jellison growled from time to time with suppressed emotion as I jarred him ever so little and kept saying "Work easy." Finally I got the blankets clear on one side, and gently lifted them away from his body. He had turned in with his shirt, trousers and stockings on, and by the firelight I saw protruding from the left trousers leg six inches of the tail of a snake tipped with a big rattle. The reptile which had sought his present quarters for warmth evidently did not like the sensation of the cold air on the exposed extremity, for there was immediately an ugly wriggling movement under Jellison's clothes, and the snake's tail disappeared upward clear to the rattle.

'With all his nerve and coolness, the suspense was telling on Jellison. His face showed white in the firelight and the cold sweat stood in big drops on his forehead. "The snake's head is up to my shirt collar now," he gasped. "Take your hunting knife and rip my clothes open on the right side. His cold body is taking all the strength out of me. Work quick and don't mind the risk of cutting me."

'My hunting knife was as sharp as a razor, but I strapped it a little on my boot to give it an extra fine edge, and, working so as not to disturb the snake, I began at Jellison's right shoulder and cut clean through his clothes from the shirt collar to the bottom of the left trousers leg. Then stepping round to the other side and holding the garments so as they would serve as a shield, I laid them over on the left so as to leave Jellison's body exposed. A huge rattlesnake lay the whole length of the man's body, its tail resting on his instep, and its big triangular head reposing in the hollow of his throat. The reptile, on being uncovered, curved his neck a little by drawing up his body so as to look behind and see the cause of its being disturbed, then threw itself half in a coil, assuming the form of the letter S, with its head turned backward toward me. It then lay wholly on the body of Jellison. I remained perfectly still, except to take a position so that I should not be between the snake and the fire, and there waited.

'The reptile kept his position for awhile, and Jellison was beginning to feel the chill of the frosty air, so that his body shook in spite of himself. But the cold was telling on the snake likewise, and the warmth of the fire appealed to its feelings. As I kept quiet, it ceased to regard me, and began to move slowly toward the blaze, and presently slid entirely off the body of the man and glided over the blankets toward the fire.

'By the time the snake was a length away I had caught Jellison by the shoulders and pulled him up standing. I threw a pair of blankets over his shoulders, for he was shaking as with a fit of the ague.

'"Now, old man," I said, "you're all right. Hold still till I kill the snake."

'"H-h-hold on," said Jellison, his teeth clicking as he shivered with cold and the reaction from his nervous tension. "N-n-no n-n-man k-kills that snake but w-w-me."

'Up to this point no snake had ever been treated with greater consideration, and we had deferred to its prejudices at every stage of the proceedings. The reptile—a mountain monster over five feet long—was lying in coil near the fire, basking comfortably in the glow, but keeping his eye on us at every turn. Jellison picked up a revolver, and approaching to within a few feet of the snake, fired six shots into the coil as if it did him good to do so. By the time he had emptied the pistol the snake was dead, and pretty thoroughly cut to pieces. The rest of the boys had slept through all that had been going on, but at the sound of the first shot they came tumbling up in a hurry, with their guns in hand, ready for Indians. The business was over, however, and there was nothing for them to do.

'Jellison spent the next day in camp, with a needle and thread, trying to get his clothes sewed together. He said for weeks that he could feel that snake on his body wherever he laid down, and he dreamed of it at nights. He was with us for several months after, and to the last asserted that he had never got warm all over, but had always a cold streak on his body where the snake had lain.'

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

SOLUTIONS OF PUZZLE.

DEAR COUSIN KATE,—One cold, snowy morning a little boy called Harry Johnson went out for a walk across a large field. When he got to the end of it he came to a stile, which he jumped over, but he came upon his head instead of upon his feet. Some of his enemies who had seen his fall, ran up to him, and before he could rise they rolled him over and over till he was just like a big snowball, then they stuck him up by a fence and left him there. After he had been there for a long time a policeman found him, and to him Harry cried out for help. The policeman got a spade, and with it scraped off all the snow from Harry, who went home feeling very cold and uncomfortable. You can print it if you like.—MILTON FARQUHAR, 9 years old. Franklin Road, Ponsonby.

[Thank you, Milton. Yours is a nice story, but not right, as the boy had no enemies. Write again whenever you like. —COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE,—Having seen the picture puzzle in your issue of the 8th July, I beg to tender an answer which I think will suit. Cut No. 1 is a little Irish lad standing on a hill with a handkerchief tied round his head, as it is a cold July morning, and the snow lies thick upon the ground. The second picture is the same boy bent on enjoying a roll down the hill, and is in the act of starting. No. 3 is the same lad hardly recognisable, for he has rolled down the hill, and by so doing has accumulated the snow all round him. The fourth picture is where he is stopped by a post, and a man (maybe his father) is endeavouring to excavate him from the encircling mass of snow. This is the first time I have answered anything of this sort, and I trust it will not be the last. If this story should happen to take the first place, I should like to see it in print.—ALFRED ZACHARIAH. Christchurch.

[Your story is first-rate, but I almost think it is too good, and so is the writing, for anyone under twelve. Is that your age? Write again soon.—COUSIN KATE.]

JET BLACK.

BY GORHAM SILVA.

DURING two consecutive seasons the same pair of robins had made their home in a healthy thick-leaved young maple that grows near the porch of my dwelling. Devoted to the pair, my little daughter watches their nest-building every year with great interest. By creeping out on the porch roof, and carefully parting aside the branches, she is able to get a sight of the old bird brooding, and farther on a peep at the nestlings. The third year the robins built late, and their eggs cracked at the same time as those of a crow hatching in the top of a tall hickory not far away. A few days later, as I sat with my little daughter on the porch, we heard a sudden thrashing of heavy wings through the maple boughs overhead, followed by frightened chirps from the young robins; then all was quiet again. The little girl, anxious and excited, jumped to her feet, and seizing my hand, drew me upstairs to the roof. Treading cautiously to the edge, we peered into the nest, determined to find out if possible what had happened.

I had not long to wait. Flapping its wings fiercely, a large crow suddenly burst through the thick leaves down to the nest, and seizing in his beak the last of the young robins, flew away with it to feed its own young. Before the crow was fairly out of sight, and before we could get away, the robin mother was back to her rifled nest. Not finding her brood, she swirled distractedly about our heads, reproaching us with grieved, discordant cries. Distressed at the loss of her pets, my daughter declared she should hate crows as long as she lived, and implored me to get my gun, and go out and shoot the wretched crow that had made so much trouble. I did not wait to be urged, but seizing my bird-gun, soon had the old crow at my feet, my oldest boy climbing up to the nest to bring down the young crows, to rescue them from starvation by a speedy death.

No sooner did my little girl behold the woolly, impish-looking young crows than she forgot her grief for the robins, and begged one for her very own, asserting that they were 'too cunning for anything.'

Before the crow was fully feathered, he answered to his name Jet Black as intelligently as a dog, and followed us about with equal fidelity. He was so fine and so mischievous a crow, I believe, as ever lived. Nothing that sparkled escaped his beak. Every day we missed something; spectacles, a ring, brooch, thimble, penknife, or silver spoon. Only my little girl's tearful pleading saved Jet Black's neck from wringing. She was always searching for the missing articles, but it was a long time before we discovered the rogue's storehouse, though he usually flew toward the barn with his plunder. One day, however, when the boys were hunting in the big mow for eggs, they came unexpectedly upon it, cunningly hidden under a wisp of straw.

On Mondays Jet Black was usually in high feather. The sound of the clothes rubbed on the board and the smell of the suds seemed to exhilarate him. He hovered about the kitchen and poked his beak into everything, and was a great nuisance to Bridget, particularly if the earth under the clothes-lines was moist or dusty. When the clothes were hung out, until his little game was discovered, the mischievous thing would perch on the long lines of clean white clothes, and, gingerly treading over them, he would pull out one by one every clothes-pin, until the whole mass of spotless linen lay on the ground bedraggled with mud or dust. At such times Bridget's ire was something to be dreaded, and we were compelled on washing days to keep an eye on Jet Black.

The persistent rainfall delayed our planting this year. The seed onions were particularly late. It was fully ten days past the usual time of setting them, when one cloudy morning I resolved, 'rain or shine,' they should go into the ground, and I set my hired man, a slow, dull, painstaking, unobservant German, at the work. The patch to be planted was large, the drills long; a full day's work lay before him. Just before noon a drizzling rain began, but it did not prevent my going to see how the onion-planting progressed. As I approached the field I noticed the unplanted portion was strewn completely over with seedlings. Surprised, I looked closer. The German was creeping along the face of a drill, and behind him the crow was following cautiously, his feathers dripping with the rain.

'What can the villain be up to?' I thought.

I was soon made aware of the bird's little scheme. After planting a multiplier with great care, the faithful German shoved himself clumsily along on his knees, and began setting another; the crow, marching stealthily after him with equal certainty, beat over to the ground, jerked up the multiplier, and with a saucy fling of his knowing head tossed it on the field ahead of him. And so it went on to the end of the drill, as the man commenced on a returning drill, the crow noiselessly tripped to the rear, and the performance I had witnessed was resumed: the man setting a seedling, the crow pulling it up as he had done all through the morning.

The spectacle was so ludicrous that I could not resist laughing, vexatious as it was at this hurried time of the year, not to have a single onion planted on the whole field, and the day half spent. Provoked, I called to the man. He dragged himself stiffly to his feet.

'I hat dot field haf blanted,' he said, with satisfaction.

'No, you have nothing of the kind, John. The crow has pulled up every onion as fast as you have set it.'

Amazed, the man stared over the back drills, then his glance fell upon the crow waiting patiently at his side to resume his mischief.

'Dat isht a goot bird der kill,' he remarked, calmly; and going over to the first drill began his work over again.

KATIE'S STORY.

KATIE was going to bed, after a day of toil minding her sick and maimed dolls—chronic invalids all of them—and her b-e-a-u-tiful duck, the one old quacker that travelled with the hens because he had no better company. The robin that had been watching her out of the corners of his bright eyes, as he ran over the lawn and listened to her prattle, was asleep already, with his head under his wing, and Katie's hung heavily on mother's shoulder while she was undressing her. 'Now I lay me' had been said, with many yawns in between, and mamma's pet had been tucked in snugly; but just as the sleepy eyes were closing, she sat suddenly bolt-upright.

'Mamma,' she said, 'I want Johnny's picture-book—that with the lambs.'

'Hush, Katie!' said her mother, the least bit wearily; for the little feet and the little tongue had never ceased going one moment all day. 'Now we will go to sleep.'

'But, mamma,' and the big eyes pleaded earnestly, 'can't I have Johnny's picture-book this once?'

'Not to-night, dearie: it is too late.'

'Mamma,' said Katie, sitting up very straight and looking very solemn indeed, 'I heard a story of a little girl—she was a good little girl—that asked her mamma once, when she was put to bed, for the picture-book with the lambs. And the mamma told her she couldn't have it, and—and'—the baby voice fell to an awed whisper, and the eyes grew very big—'in just—about—two—minutes—she was dead!'

'My, Katie! And what killed her so quick?'

'Because,' said Katie, with conviction—'because she didn't get the book.'

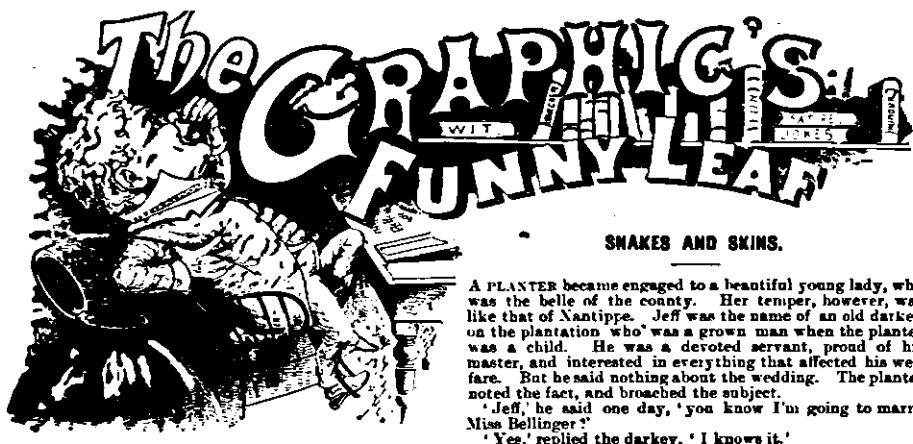
She got it, and in five minutes was asleep with it in her arms.

CHILDREN'S SAYINGS.

ONE Sabbath evening, not long ago, Edith was at the tea-table, and noticed some cheese on a plate before her. 'Mamma,' said she, 'is that the cheese we sang about in Sunday school to-day?' 'Why, no, Edith, you did not sing about cheese in Sunday school.' 'Yes'm, we did. We sung "Bringing in the cheese."' Which was her rendering of the familiar 'Bringing in the sheaves.'

One day at luncheon Mamie was very greatly delighted with some honey which had been sent her by a friend who lives in the country and keeps bees. After eating a while in silence, she exclaimed, 'Doesn't Mrs Lepley teach her bees to make nice honey?'

A LONG NECK AND A SHORT LEG.—'Charlie, I've forgotten whether it's the neck or the leg that you are fond of.' 'What is it—a goose?' 'Yes.' 'Then give me the neck, please.'



A CULINARY CRITIC.

JOHN BULL, he loves his beef and ale,
His puddings full of plums.
The Frenchman likes his fricassee
And frogs' legs with bread crumbs.

The Scotchman eats his meal of oats,
Like horses in a paddock,
His Haggis weird, his hodgepodge strange
And toothsome Finnan haddock;

And—tell it not in Gath, my boys—
In whispers be it said:
He sometimes even longs to eat
His marmalade on bread.

The German favours saurkraut,
The ripe Limberger cheese,
Hot and cold slaw, and other things,
That *he'll* digest with ease.

You join a band of Muscovites;
They wish you to the deuce,
Because you cannot make a meal
Off candle *à la Russe*.

Within a Chinese restaurant,
You hear a waiter halloa:
'Nice bird's-nest soup; roast rat quite hot—
And puppy dog to follow.'

You dine with a Sea Island chief,
Where all the dishes vary,
From yams on rice to babes on toast
And roasted missionary.

The Esquimaux' sarcastic smile
Pronounces you a lubber,
Because you have no appetite
For walrus oil and blubber.

And thus you find in many climes
Wherever you may roam,
The cooking is not quite the same
As that you get at home.

A SAD STORY.

SHE: 'I haven't seen you for five years, Mr Barker. How's that little romance of yours with Miss Henderson?'
Barker: 'Miss Henderson is no more.'
She: 'What! Dead?'
Barker: 'No; married.'
She: 'Ha! ha! You are still friends though?'
Barker: 'No; she married me.'

INTERFERED WITH THE GAME.

PAT (after watching a game of tennis for ten minutes): 'Oi say, Mister de Sappy, av yez 'ud take down thot fish net in the centher yez 'ud play the game bettber, that ye wud.'

SNAKES AND SKINS.

A PLANTER became engaged to a beautiful young lady, who was the belle of the county. Her temper, however, was like that of Xantippe. Jeff was the name of an old darkey on the plantation who was a grown man when the planter was a child. He was a devoted servant, proud of his master, and interested in everything that affected his welfare. But he said nothing about the wedding. The planter noted the fact, and broached the subject.

'Jeff,' he said one day, 'you know I'm going to marry Miss Bellinger?'

'Yes,' replied the darkey, 'I knows it.'

'I haven't heard you say anything about it,' said the planter.

'No,' was the answer, ''taint for me to say nuffin about it. I ain't got nuffin to say.'

'No, I know that, but you're doing a deal of thinking. What's your opinion about it?'

'Well, massa,' responded Jeff, with some hesitation, 'you know one thing—the most pisenest snakes has got the prettiest skins.'

A MISAPPREHENSION REMOVED.

LORD RUNNYMEDE: 'Aw—Miss Twumbull, I fawncy now, you weject my suit because you have no wank. That is verwy inconsistent for an Amerwican, you know. I fawncied an Amerwican girl would fawney herself my equal, and tell everybody my birth was a mere accident you know.'

Miss Trumbull: 'Oh, no, Lord Runnymede. I wouldn't disparage your birth in the least. I don't think it was a mere accident—it was a regular catastrophe.'

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE.

TEACHER: 'And why were Adam and Eve not to pluck the fruit from the forbidden tree?'

Small Child: 'Perhaps it was being saved up for jam!'

THE SMALL BOY'S REVELATION.

IT is the small boy who usually tells things. Not long ago a bright little fellow was peering over into the dish at the head of the table:—'What a little chicken for so many people!' The guests smiled surreptitiously, and his mother endeavoured to quiet him. But he was Banquo's ghost. After they had all been helped, and were eating, his face suddenly lit up, and clapping his hands he shouted: 'Oh, yes, I know now, mamma. This is the little chicken that was sick so long in the yard, ain't it?'

A BRISK WIND.

COUNTY TREASURER (to tourist): 'No, sir! We do not have cyclones in this part of Kansas. Sometimes the wind is a trifle brisk, but——'

Rip! Slam! Crash! Smash! Thud!

Treasurer (emerging from the big safe, ten miles away and ten minutes later): 'Yes, as I was saying, sometimes the wind blows pretty brisk. It—— Why, hello! That's that stranger impaled on that broken sycamore limb up thar! That's too bad! Kinder reckoned on selling him a couple o' lots.'

A TIMELY SUCCESTION.

HE was a young man who had been talking loudly of his father's riches and his own prospects, when an old woman leaned over the seat and asked:

'Young man, did you say your paw was rich?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'He'll be apt to found some charity, won't he?'

'I think so.'

'Settled on anything yet?'

'No, ma'am.'

'Then please call his attention to an idiot asylum.'

THE COMING HERO.

VISITOR (at reception a few years hence): 'Why is everybody crowding round that man over there in the corner? I don't see anything remarkable about him.'

Resident: 'That's barefoot Bill, Sockless Simpson's successor. (Proudly) He can suck three dozen eggs without stopping.'

PERKY LITTLE ETON BOY (at dance, to tall cousin): 'Here, have a waltz!'

COZ.: 'No, I won't dance with a mite like you.'

He: 'Here, I say you know, I think I'm rather the cheese.'

MISCELLANEOUS.

AN enterprising physician in California advertises:—'I will pay half the funeral expenses in cases where I am not successful.'

Watts: 'Wonder why they always call a locomotive "she?"' Potts: 'Maybe it is on account of the horrible noise it makes when it tries to whistle.'

A JUST REBUKE.

He was going to kiss her; just then he sneezed,
The which she didn't seem pleased at:
'I'd have you know, sir, a kiss from me
Is something that's not to be sneezed at.'

REMINDED OF HIS NUPTIAL VOW.—The Wife (3 a.m.): 'When you married me did you not promise to love, cherish, and protect me?' The Husband (sleepily): 'Yes.' The Wife: 'Well, then, get up, light the gas, and kill that mosquito.'

AS FAR AS SHE WOULD GO.—Dolley: 'Will you marry me, Amy?' Amy: No; but I——' Dolley (interrupting): 'Oh, don't get off that "be-a-sister-to-me" chestnut!' Amy: 'I don't intend to. What I was about to say is that I don't mind being engaged to you.'

DIDN'T FANCY THE LIGHT.—'You are the light of my life,' she said to him as she told him good-night at the front door. 'Put out that light,' growled her father at the head of the stairs, and the front door slammed.

FALSE ALARM.—Stranger (excitedly, to maid who answers the bell): 'Quick! quick! your master's ill! I saw him at the window, gasping, and throwing up his head, and clutching at his mouth—and—' Susan: 'Oh, 'tain't nothing o' that sort! He was licking a postage stamp, and it's stuck to the roof of his mouth!'

Jack: 'I don't see why you girls shouldn't hustle around like the rest of us and do things for yourselves! You could save lots of money by making your own hats and gowns.' Laura: 'I'd just like to know what you do for yourself?' Jack: 'I? Why, I've been making my own cigarettes ever since the 1st of January.'

A DIFFERENCE.—Husband: 'I think I can have this hat blocked so that it will do this winter.' Wife: 'Yes; of course. You are a sensible fellow.' Husband: 'And you can make your hat do, too, by having—' Wife: 'Indeed! Do you think I will wear a last winter's hat? You are the most foolish man I ever saw.'

GALLANTRY.—A Frenchman's gallantry to ladies is said to be always equal to an emergency. At a party a gentleman of that race stepped heavily upon the toe of a lady who looked up with an angry frown. 'Pardon, madame,' he said, bowing low; 'but I have forgot to bring my microscope.' 'Your microscope?' 'But yes; for to see ze leetle feet of madame!'

A NICE HUSBAND.—'How is your husband?' 'I suppose he is quite well, but I cannot say positively that he is. We have not spoken for several weeks.' 'Good gracious! Have you quarrelled?' 'Oh, no; we are the best of friends, I believe, but, you see, he is engaged in playing a game of chess by telegraph.'

She was one of the prospective crop of sweet girl graduates, and he, stroking the first growth of down on his lip, had been worsted in an argument on the superiority of the sexes. By way of a final clincher she said: 'Look at the vessel, a sublime and grand creation. They always call a vessel "she."' 'Well,' said he 'that's because she's no good till she's manned.'

NEVER AGAIN.

A FRENCHMAN, who taught French at one of the colleges for the education of young ladies in Edinburgh, was extremely punctual, and was regularly at his place every morning at nine o'clock. One morning, however, he came in fully half-an-hour late, and, noticing the astonished looks of the young ladies, he began apologising for his lateness thus:—'You must excuse me for being late this morning, ladies, but the fact of the matter is my wife has had a *leetil* boy. However, I give you my word of honour it will not occur again.'