

day, under a sky of cloudless turquoise blue. The air is so pure and clear, everything is so distinct, and over its long vistas of mingled houses and trees an exquisite peacefulness seems to be descending. To stand on such a Sunday evening where the park, the gardens, the river and Armagh-street meet, as the sun is setting and the bells are calling to prayer, is, perhaps, to enjoy the most sweetly religious picture presented by any town in the world.

It is, indeed, astonishing that such various phases of natural and artificial beauty should be met in a place which has been entirely created by the hand of man within the space of a generation. It shows what an extraordinarily gifted land New Zealand is. With its glorious sky and its bountiful, though not vexatious moisture, you have only to tickle and plant its empty plain, and your city is smiling with a mature beauty ere your last-born has well had time to grow his whiskers. And this is but a mild earnest of the wonderful things to come, as our land develops. Given the good taste of the Christchurch architects and gardeners, and not only the whole Canterbury Plains, but all over New Zealand our great-grandchildren will see towns and landscapes which will be miracles of beauty. When our chief cities number their quarter of a million or more, what are but small towns or hamlets, or mere names upon the map, will then be more than what Christchurch is now, and as closer cultivation and population increase, the intervening country will become but one continuous park and garden land dotted with happy villages.

But Christchurch has other pleasurable aspects. One can linger in its handsome gardens or Domain on a fresh November morning, wandering round along the willow-hung banks of the Avon, which divides them, or lying under the trees listening to the songs of countless birds. Or one can as sundown closes and the blustering nor-wester sinks to rest in the still warmth and starry beauty of an almost Australian night, take a boat and row the one you love best up the limpid stream—courting, yes, courting—the shadows before and the sweet reality at the back of the vessel. Or as summer is on the wane, you can walk through the pleasing suburb of Fendalton, and coming back through the Park when the afternoon sun is low, note the expansive meadow-land fringed with trees in every direction, and naught indicating the presence of man but the slight grey cathedral spire rising gracefully in front.

Or when at mid-autumn the leaves are in their decay, the early snows have fallen upon the distant ranges, and a balmy nor-west breeze is taking the edge off the frosty morning air, go out into the Park and watch the glorious sunlight flashing on the leaves like gold, and gleaming white on the Alps as on mountains of powdered sugar. Or if you think Christchurch is too flat start from the Cathedral south along Colombo-street on an August morning. In half an hour you will be at the foot of the Port Hills, in another twenty minutes you will be up a thousand feet or more overlooking the Canterbury Plains. What are England or Scotland to this? It is Piedmont over again. Beyond you is the Gulf of Lyttelton Harbour with its deep blue waters and the peninsula of Akaroa rolling away seawards; at your feet there are noble plains with a tiny-tiny Christchurch dotted on them, an endless expanse of greenish-brown melting away north and south into indistinguishable haze, and bounding all, a giant wall of white. Those are the Eternal Ranges sixty miles distant and thousands of feet in height.

But, to be fair and give the devil his due, we must paint some reverse to the medal. One should see Christchurch in its sloopy and flatulent fits. It has a way of becoming occasionally, in winter time, characteristically English. In its best moments it is too light and bright and rectangularly beautiful to resemble anything other than itself; but when its sky gets influenza and weeps for a month at a stretch, the damp, muddy, and bedraggled look of it is not a bad imitation of the face which our venerable mother country turns to her children with depressing frequency. Then in some summers it gets a terrible attack of the wind, which has given it an evil name. The nor-westers will rage several times a week for months filling everything with dust, spoiling your food and soiling your clothes. It may be said, however, that they scarcely ever blow after sundown, and the evenings which follow them are those most luxurious and suited for water parties in the whole year. A season of mildish nor-westers is, indeed, rather desirable than otherwise, and they are yearly losing some of their virulence.

The average of height in Christchurch people of both sexes is considerable, the average of good looks is also high, and that of taste in dress noteworthy. Whether the accumulated wealth around Canterbury is great, as the number of fashionable suburbs in Christchurch would seem to indicate, it is certain there are shops in all lines on a scale out of all proportion to the size of the town. Drapers, mercers, tailors, hardware men, booksellers, photographers, and music-sellers sell all things in a style worthy of a place of double the size in England. The business centre is around what is known as 'The Triangle,' just before you reach the Bank of New Zealand, where the five chief streets intersect, forming a natural focus for that purpose. In consequence of its flatness and convenient design it is one of the most accessible places in which a stranger can find himself for the first time. Standing here on the morning of Saturday, the market day or of a holiday, you get the concentrated life of the place passing before you—bicyclists, cricketers, boating parties, horsemen, trancers laden with holiday-makers for Lyttelton, Sumner, and New Brighton, and tennis enthusiasts. They are a pleasant, prosperous, happy-looking community, and take their pleasures with becoming cheerfulness.

It takes about an hour to reach Sumner, seven miles away, and a quarter less to reach New Brighton. They are places of an entirely different character, the former lying directly beneath the cliffs of the Port Hills, and the latter on the bleak, open sand dunes, some six miles to the north. Sumner is not an uncommon type of watering-place, with cliffs and its beach; but New Brighton, with its apparently interminable strand, is cast upon lines to accommodate a public equal to that of Paris or New York. The 'sandy links,' with intermittent scrub, seem to extend for miles, and when the tide is far out the sands look wide enough and long enough to gallop all the cavalry in Europe.

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The only 'Vertical Feed' Sewing Machine in the world is the New High Arm Davis. Head Office in New Zealand Hudson and Co., Christchurch.—ADVT.

## THE LADIES AND THE BADGER.

We ask five minutes' attention to an adventure of two ladies and a badger, the account of which we find in a carefully edited newspaper printed and published in the city of St. Louis, says the New York Tribune. In the consideration of this subject there are several things which we must not forget, the first of which is that the badger is a small animal, standing some seven or eight inches high, though it is somewhat wider, being built considerably on the architectural design of a single-deck East river ferryboat. Its hair is quite long, its skin loose and very thick, and beneath this there is a layer of an inch or two of fat, so that the real badger, or, if we may so venture to put it, the *per se* badger, is even smaller than would be supposed from his outside appearance. With these facts firmly rooted in our memories, we may proceed to a careful and unprejudiced consideration of the tale in question.

Two young ladies, wives of cavalry officers, left Fort Riley, in Kansas, one afternoon recently for a walk. While returning they were obliged to cross a little canon or ravine. At the bottom of this they came to a large tree which had been blown down. They scrambled up on the tree trunk to get across. They had scarcely done so when they heard an 'angry growl,' and on looking up they saw a badger on a ledge of rocks above them, the 'fierce and angered creature' being 'just ready for a spring.' We must not forget that the badger never gives vent to angry growls, unless, possibly, when driven into a corner by a dog, when (we desire to do full justice to the beast) he will fight stubbornly. We must remember, too, that the badger is not fierce, and that on this occasion he could not have been angered. Let us also keep in mind, in connection with the expected spring, that the badger's legs are only some four inches long.

The ladies at first were very much excited, as the animal appeared to them 'as large as a lion,' an optical illusion fortunately dispelled later on, or we should be obliged to remind the reader that the badger lives in a burrow rather less than six inches in diameter. One of the ladies jumped down from the tree trunk and ran up on a little ledge on the other side of the ravine some twenty feet or thereabouts from the badger. The fierce beast instantly began to make preparations to leap across to her. Let us not forget that his legs were four inches long. He began 'lashing his lean sides with his tail.' We should always keep clearly in mind the fact that a badger's tail is four and one-half inches in length and of a decidedly rigid nature. It might, perhaps, be convenient for the badger to sit down on while surveying a hillside with a view to sinking a wide burrow, but it should never be utilised for lashing purposes. Nor should we forget that the badger never has lean sides.

Fortunately the two ladies had their husbands' revolvers with them. Soon the infuriated badger 'sent his dark-brown body flying across the ravine.' We beg of the reader to remember the badger's four-inch legs and two inches of fat. Nor is the American badger endowed by nature with wings. As the badger leaped, however, each lady fired her revolver, or, as the account has it, 'two balls resounded through the air.' The badger fell to the bottom of the ravine with a broken leg.

At this point another badger, evidently the mate of the first one, appeared, with his 'ears laid back in anger.' Truth being our sole aim, let us bear in mind that the badger's ears are so small that they cannot be seen at all without brushing away the hair. The new badger leaped up on the ledge (we need not again remind the reader of the badger's legs and general build) and seized hold of the lady's skirts and began pulling her down the bank, also lashing the air with its tail. While this was going on the other lady, after several shots, succeeded in killing the first badger, and came to the rescue of her friend. The badger was too close to shoot, so she 'lifted a heavy rock' and 'sent it with all the force both her hands could command,' so that it 'crushed upon the creature's back.' This caused the badger to 'break from its shrieking victim,' 'taking away a large mouthful of dress material,' and to 'turn on its annoyner.' Both ladies now began shooting vigorously, and finally the infuriated monster, with a roar that shook the everlasting hills, rolled to the bottom of the ravine with a rumbling sound like an approaching earthquake, where it died.

We sincerely hope that the reader has derived much benefit from these few lines. To have done so, however, he must have kept constantly in mind these few well-known and indisputable facts:—First, that the Kansas badger does not range the country like a man eating tiger looking for human victims; second, that he is a small animal, rather broader than he is high; third, that he is always fat to the point of obesity; fourth, that his legs are very short; fifth, that his ears are concealed by his long hair; sixth, that he has no wings or other flying apparatus; and seventh, that his tail is short and stubbly like a sweet potato, rather than long and flexible like a garden hose. If these few facts were kept continually in view, the intelligent reader cannot but have obtained great profit from our article.

## AS YOU LIKE IT.

LIFE'S a jingle, life's a dance,  
See the mummies everywhere  
Hopping, tossing bells in air—  
How the hobby-horses prance!

I advance,  
Somewhat sick, the round to share.

Life's a yearning, life's a keen  
Sense of moments and emotions,  
Art and song and tone-devotions,  
Moods intense and joy and teen;

I have been  
Through the whole of such-like notions.

Life's a sad sepulchral song,  
Chanting of an unseen choir,  
Rising, falling, ever higher  
Striving up through clouds of wrong

Life's a long  
*De Profundis* from the mire.

Life's a jumble and a maze  
Where we trip and blunder ever,  
Halt performance, high endeavour,  
Panting strife and withered bays;

Pass the days—  
Rest at last from fret and fever.

KENNETH GRAHAM.

## WAIFS AND STRAYS.

ROYAL rakes bring a lot of rubbish to the surface.

Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to open your husband's letters.

Apples always look nice in the orchard that has a high fence around it.

A man's idea of being good to a woman is to give her opportunities to be good to him.

A man never wants anything so bad as when he is told he will have to fight for it to get it.

If the sweet girl graduate's gown looks all right her essay on the whole duty of man is bonna to take with the audience.

Hindu women are forbidden to read or write. Indeed, those who dare to indulge in such luxuries are often 'accidentally' missing.

The courage of the Turks is explained by the fact that a man with more than one wife ought to be willing to face death at any time.

Ethel: 'It is impossible to love more than one man at a time with sincerity.' Maud: 'True; but, thank heaven, we can make more than one man love us sincerely at a time.'

Spectacles were invented 600 years ago. The use of glass to aid the sight of defective eyes is, however, much older. Nero looked through a concave glass in watching the gladiatorial games.

### TIME'S CHANGES.

The little girl in early days.

In childhood's time so fair.

Ere yet her world has widened out.

'The doll is all her care.'

But when the years, with flying feet.

Their wondrous change have wrought.

The doll is then, and not the doll,

Becomes her only thought.

Among the Congo negroes when a man wishes a wife he secures one and keeps her on probation a year. If her temper and deportment are satisfactory he, at the end of the year, formally marries her. But should she prove an incumbrance, he sends her back to the parental roof.

When the mosque of St. Sophia, in Constantinople, was built, more than 1000 years ago, the stone and brick were laid in mortar mixed with a solution of musk, and the building, it is said, has been infected with the odour ever since. Probably age has imparted a musty odour, from which the musk story was fabricated.

Hamilton Aide declares in print that he never saw a lady at work all the time that he was in America. He went the length and breadth of the land and saw no pleasant litter of employment in the parlours that have nowhere the appearance of being much lived in. He has no doubt that American women do sometimes knit and sew, but they conceal it in some room which the visitor does not penetrate.

### TRUE AND BRAVE.

Is left us, to be true and brave;

Is a short step to the grave.

And life is a vain thing at best.

And I had rather be a man

And choke my love and bear my part

In God's unaltered plan.

Though it be with a broken heart,

Than walk an easy, thoughtless way.

And gather blossoms as in play.

While the world marks life years away.

ISAAC HERR.

NEED OF MORE OLD MAIDS.—The Professor of Natural Science at Ann Arbor was discussing to the students the process of fertilizing plants by means of insects carrying pollen from one plant to another, and to amuse them told how the old maids were the ultimate cause of it all. The humble bees carry the pollen; the field-mice eat the humble bees; therefore the more field mice the fewer humble bees and the less pollen and variation of plants. But cats devour the field-mice and old maids protect cats. Therefore the more old maids the more cats. The fewer field-mice the more bees. Hence, old maids are the cause of variety in plants.

SWALLOWING A HAIRPIN.—A curious case has just been recorded by a surgeon. A young lady applied for treatment, with the statement that on the previous day, while dressing, she had swallowed a hairpin. Three other medical gentlemen to whom she had been told her that this was only imagination on her part. However, she insisted upon the truth of her story, and emphatically reiterated that she had felt the foreign body, and emphatically reiterated that she had felt the foreign body in the 'back part of her nose.' Upon careful examination the surgeon found that some hard substance was present in the back part of the nostril. After much trouble the hairpin was removed. It was found to be about five inches in length from point to point.

A NUMEROUS FAMILY.—A few days ago an old man of ninety-three arrived at Barcelona, who quitted the country at the age of twenty to seek his fortune in America and has now returned to Spain with his family, which is thus made up: Sixteen daughters of whom six are widows, 9 married and one young girl; 23 sons of whom 4 are widowers, 13 married and 6 single; 34 granddaughters, of whom 3 are widows, 22 married and 9 maidens; 47 grandsons, of whom 4 are widowers, 26 married and 17 single; 45 great-granddaughters, of whom two are married and 43 are maidens; 35 great-grandsons, all single; 3 great-great-grandsons. Beside these there are 72 sons and daughters-in-law. In all 279 persons.

MACHINE MARRIAGES.—While France tries to increase her population by offering awards for large families and threatening to tax bachelors, Germany encourages the matrimonial bureau. One of these in Berlin received during eleven years 19,959 propositions for marriage from women varying in ages from sixteen to seventy-two years, and from men from eighteen and a half to seventy-nine years. That women not only are more desirous to wed than men, but that too earlier in life, was shown by the fact that 2,300 more applications came for husbands than for wives, while the average age of the male applicants was twenty-nine and a half years, or three years greater than that of the women. It is sad to relate, though perhaps their consolation is greater than their happiness might have been, that matches were brought about for 541 men, while only one-third of the would-be wives could secure helpmates.