

Neill (Clingford), lovely white merveilleux trimmed with striped apricot coloured brocade; Mrs Pim wore a pretty pale lilac brocade silk; Miss McLean, black trimmed with bright red; Miss Stephenson looked very nice in white; Miss Tui also looked well in heliotrope fisherman's net; Miss Roberts, cream merveilleux. A handsome dress was worn by Mrs Melland. The bodice and train were of brown velvet, the petticoat of striped cream satin edged with a full ruche; Mrs Robert Turnbull looked well in white and pink brocade. Three young ladies made their debut—Miss Alice Dymock, Miss E. Shand, and Miss R. Neill. The dresses of all three were of white merveilleux, Miss Dymock's trimmed with silver fringe, and finished with a silver grille; she carried a lovely white bouquet. Misses Neill and Shand's dresses were both trimmed with chiffon round the skirt and on the bodice. Both wore pretty white opera cloaks, Miss Shand's braided with silver. Mrs G. McLean, slate-coloured silk, with ostrich feathers, pink and slate-coloured; Miss G. Neill, broad striped pink and white silk. There were also present Misses McNeil, Scott (2), Mackerras (2), Grierson, Gibson, Morris, Belcher, Ross, Huxtable, Garrat (2), Webster (2), Shand, Rattray (2), Cutten, Reynolds, Martin, and Livingston. The large ballroom looked very pretty, and although so many were present, it was not overcrowded. The supper-room was tastefully arranged, the table draped with pale green silk, and ornamented with ivy leaves and white camellias.

Another large entertainment of a different character was given by Mrs Dymock in the form of an afternoon tea to Mrs Buller, which was a farewell previous to her leaving for Christchurch. Almost everybody was there, among them being Mesdames Preston, Macaasey, Standford, Gaultier, Denniston, Driver, Webster, Grierson, Lindo Ferguson, Hosking, Mackerras, McNeil, Rattray, McKenzie, E. C. Reynolds, Galloway, Scobie Mackenzie, Haggitt, Gibson, Davidson, Michie, Spence, Boyd, Sise, Thompson, Charlie Turnbull, Fenwick, Melland, Woodhouse, K. Turnbull, Shand, Holmes, R. Gillies, and Siewright, and Miss Gibson, who wore green braided with brown, and hat to match; Miss Reynolds, fawn costume; Miss S. Sise, light brown tweed, black jacket, and sailor hat; Mrs Hosking, black serge, red jacket, and sailor hat; Mrs Haggitt, grey spotted tweed; Miss Neill, brown serge, black jacket, and brown hat with brown feathers; Miss Driver, navy blue serge trimmed with black astrachan, sailor hat; Miss Spence, a light grey tweed and sailor hat; Miss McNeil, drab tweed, and black hat; Mrs Ferguson, red cloth dress trimmed with dark brown fur; Mrs Melland, grey check braided with gold, and black bonnet; Mrs Fenwick, light brown tweed; Miss Shand, navy blue serge and sailor hat; Miss M. Mackerras, dark green dress, black jacket, and black hat; Miss L. Mackerras, red serge, and sailor hat with striped band; Miss F. Spence, light brown tweed, and sailor hat; Mrs Macaasey, light grey tweed, blue jacket, and hat; Mrs E. C. Reynolds, navy blue serge, grey boa, and black hat; Mrs R. Turnbull, dark blue dress, sealskin jacket, and black bonnet trimmed with yellow. Miss Dymock looked very nice in a brown cashmere. Miss Alice Dymock, navy blue serge, made with Norfolk bodice; Miss Ruby Neill, grey tweed, black jacket, and red felt hat.

The Lady Savages still continue to give their entertaining Tuesday evenings, and it will be a matter of regret when the season comes to a close; but by and bye tennis will begin to claim attention again. The gentlemen Savages close their season by a supper. We of course, are not going. These things are not good for us. The last meeting of the ladies was at Mrs Wain's. Ferguson's, it was not a visitors evening, so there were just the members present. Among these Mesdames Hosking, Colquhoun, Davidson, Ogston, Melland, Spence, Gaultier, Woodhouse, McLaren, Sise, Boyd, Rattray, E. C. Reynolds, Stilling, and the Misses Rattray, Cargill, Spence, Rich, McNeil, Webster, Reynolds, Sise, and Siewright. The Misses Cargill acted a very amusing farce of their own composition, a skit on the Woman's Franchise. Miss Rich gave a lecture on the Sea serpent, which was also amusing, as well as interesting, and several songs were sung, Mrs Monkman's being very sweet. Only a limited number of tickets are to be disposed of for the gentlemen's evening which the ladies propose to give, and every individual lady in town would like to go, as well as the lady members. We read of the gentlemen savages in London giving a ladies' evening for the first time, so in that respect at least we are long way ahead.

A new art club, called the Dunedin School of Art Club, was opened in the Choral Hall. The enterprise has been the work of a few young men, who although following other occupations, are no mean artists. Mr E. Packer's name is among them, and Mr O'Keefe, Mr Hayward, Mr Sligo, Mr W. E. Hutton, and Mr R. F. Smith. Their idea was to cultivate art among young artists, and introduce it to the class of people who cannot afford to buy pictures. With this object in view the admission charge gives each one a chance at the end of the time of drawing one of the prizes in the Art Union. Quite two hundred pictures are displayed, some of which show considerable merit, all of which show skill and perseverance. I noticed several good pictures by Mr Packer, views of the Sounds, and several good studies of heads by Mr O'Keefe. Among the contributors are the names of Miss M. Wain, Miss J. Pollock, Miss A. Emery, J. Gilkour, J. McAllister, R. Coghill, Miss N. Hutton, D. Scott, P. McIntyre, and many others.

Before I close I must tell you about the Capping Ceremony, which took place in the Garrison Hall, which, as is usual upon such occasions, was thronged in every part to suffocation. The most exacting could not accuse the students this year of misbehaviour, although they never at any such time show deference due to high degree. They had their fun—very hearty fun—some of it being directed against the woman's franchise, the skeleton of a female being tawdrily dressed out, and raised by means of ropes to a very exalted position indeed, a few lines of Hugo's song, 'Who's going to wear them, I or you?' being sung to give effect, or rather imbibed in subdued tones. Their printed songs were witty and clever, and a cleverly drawn cartoon showed two doctors, easily recognisable, fighting over the lymph question. One sprawling upon the ground was represented as just having dropped a jar of Koch's lymph, while above him flourished the words,

'Oh what a surprise,
'Thy lymph's black eyes.'

The greatest enthusiasm was shown when the ladies stepped forward to receive their honours, showers of bouquets falling at their feet. These were chiefly composed of spring flowers, and it struck me as very appropriate, as the

ladies were so young, and gathering the first honours of their labour. Miss Sylvia E. Gifford, of Auckland, was among the M.A.'s, Messrs L. A. Sine, J. A. M'Nickle, and P. G. Morgan being the others. Among the B.A.'s were Miss Helen Alexander, Miss Catherine Ferguson, Miss Catherine Moss, and Miss Marian S. W. White. A wreath intended for Miss White fell at her feet, and Dr. Stuart smilingly stooped down, and raising it, placed it upon her head in his own nice, inimitable way. As had been done in previous years, the students had erected a platform in the body of the hall, and upon this their orchestra was stationed, unrecognisable in all sorts of disguises, one as Old Father Time, with a scythe and hour glass, an immense affair, which he kept turning in mute appeal through the speeches. But I must hurry.

Mr G. H. Schacht's *Année Soiree* was given by his pupils one evening last week, and they did both him and themselves credit. Misses Bertha Mendelssohn and Jessie McNeil played the opening piano duet. These were clever pupils of Mrs Singer. Master Cecil Williams, Miss Fanny Fergus, Master James Allen, Miss Rachel Marks, Miss Jessie Brown, Master Percy Braithwaite, Miss Violet Greig, Miss Mary McNeil, Miss Effie Inglis, Miss Gwenda Williams, Miss Jessie Bair, and Master Claude Williams were among those who gave remarkably clever selections upon the violin.

Bland Holt has opened. The Engineers' ball is upon us, and for an evening or two there is a pleasant outlook.

MAUDE.

[Owing to the enlargement of the paper and the interest taken in society gossip, we are giving more space to it, so that you need never hesitate about sending more than a column.—Bee.]

MARLBOROUGH.

DEAR BEE, SEPTEMBER 10.
The last hunt of the season, which always takes place at Mr E. Paul's property at Spring Creek, is over and done with, and the indefatigable members of the Hunt Club have to content themselves for a few months by relating most wonderful adventures of moving accidents by flood and field to any of their friends whom at any time they can manage to buttonhole.

Prescott has lately paid us a visit, and exhibited some of his really wonderful talent as a conjuring to a large and admiring audience. His skill in obtaining money by simply waving his hands has inspired many a youthful soul with fervour. Many are the disappointed millionaires amongst the rising generation whom the professor has tempted to borrow silk hats for the purpose of working a charm and causing half-crowns to rain into them. In the matter of egg-raising, the process was so simple that I, for one, am greatly surprised that anyone having any regard for their neighbours' feelings or their own pet gardens should keep fowls at all, when they can procure eggs *à la* Anderson at any time by twisting a silk bag about. I found out one of his tricks, though, when he gave me a box to put a lady's watch in. He left the key with me too, but there are ways of getting a slide out of a box without opening it, and the box was long enough in my hands to prevent any surprise on my part, when on opening it, I saw a canary instead of a watch, which appeared rising up out of a bunch of flowers on the stage.

Mr L. Allen, who has been promoted as accountant to the Bank of New Zealand, Hastings, was interviewed by his bachelor friends previous to his departure from Blenheim, and after some congratulatory and valedictory speeches, was presented with some valuable volumes. He was also the recipient of a handsome gold horse-shoe scarf-pin, which was presented by Mr Snodergrass, Manager of the bank, on behalf of the Bank staff. Mr T. Monat, of Gisborne, takes his place as teller here.

The last of Miss (A. P.) Seymour's seasonal assemblies successfully came off, and was attended by most of her usual clients, who spent a very pleasant evening. There have been so few dances this winter, that these monthly assemblies have been almost the only thing to look forward to, and will be greatly missed.

Society people in Picton, though few in number, are much more energetic than their Blenheim neighbours, judging by the number of events which 'come off' there. The Excelsior Club (the members being the teachers and pupils of the borough schools) gave one of their periodical socials. Quite a number of young people outside the society were invited, but no chaperones, the teachers, Miss Hay and Miss Gilbert, doing duty in that capacity. Games, to please the little ones, and dancing, including a lively kind of square dance, called here ninepins, for the older ones, passed the time away all too quickly till eleven p.m., when the party—to use the children's own expression—'broke up.'

The Picton borough schools, under the conductorship of the headmaster, Mr Howard, and assisted by a few friends, gave an entertainment in aid of the school library fund. These entertainments are always popular, and draw a large house, all the town being, as a matter of course, interested in the doings of the little folk. The very tiny ones, under Miss Gilbert, went through their Kindergarten performance, and sang their Lilliputian choruses correctly and sweetly, to the wonder and delight of their parents and friends, who all feel grateful to Miss Gilbert for the kindly care and attention which she bestows on them. The 'Imitation Song,' 'Mother's Little Maid,' 'The Dairymaid,' and 'The Little Sailor,' were all nicely sung by the mites. 'Mrs Nickleby's Courtship' was acted by Miss Howard, Miss Rackley, and Messrs M. and H. Greensill. Mr H. C. Seymour sang a comic song, which elicited a vociferous encore. Two charades were acted, and a comedietta, 'A Surprise Party,' but owing to the incessant undercurrent of conversation carried on in the hall, it was impossible for the audience to hear the plot of the surprise party, but judging merely from what one could see, it was a case of surprise all round. Miss Greensill kindly acted as accompanist, and Miss Lily Falconer played the overtures.

The sea-serpent may have been encountered for, but another curious fish has come to light from the waters of Queen Charlotte Sound. It is called a 'porotaki' by the Maoris, and is about five feet long. It is a *tapu* fish by the common herd, and only fit food for the highest chief in the land. Its resurrection—it is many years since one was seen—portends some great event about to take place.

Picton was *en fête* yesterday, on the occasion of opening the waterworks for the town. Everybody was in holiday attire, and everybody capable of walking two-and-three-

quarter miles wended their way up Eason's Valley under the viaduct, which crosses the valley just beyond the Eason's homestead, up the track made for the convenience of sledging plant to the reservoir, and which winds round the hills above a romantic stream, which in places becomes a ravine nearly a hundred feet below, and is here and there bridged across so as to get at the easiest gradient for the track. The processionists stop here and there on the bridges, and look down on the stream, which rushes and tumbles over its rocky bed, and admire the crisp-looking *asplenium bulbiferum* below, and then they look up to beds of *trichomanes reniforme* (the kidney fern), which grow so abundantly in the neighbourhood of Picton. Undeterred by the mud on the track, or the sharp rocks which metal it in places, our indefatigable party proceed to the end of the track through a short tunnel, which was left, I presume, to add to the romance of the situation, an idea of which you will obtain from your travelling artist, whom I met in Picton yesterday. At the end of the track we go down a ladder, and stand on the concrete, where the Mayor makes his speech, and presently Mrs Fell (the Mayor's wife) breaks the orthodox bottle of champagne, pours the contents into the reservoir, and after turning on the water, declares the Picton water-works open, and hopes the water may be a boon to the townspeople. I couldn't tell you half the people who were there, for many had scrambled up the hill, and were sitting about wherever they could find a spot level enough to hold them, but on the concrete I noticed Mrs Fell, Mrs H. C. Seymour, Mrs Allen, Mrs Duncan, Mrs Andrews, Mrs Beauchamp, Miss (A. P.) Seymour, the Misses (H. C.) Seymour, Miss Nellie Allen, Miss M. Fell, the Misses H. and E. Dart, the Mayor (Mr Fell) and councillors, the engineer (Mr Dartnell), the Inspector of Works (Mr Johnston), the contractor (Mr Carr), the Press reporters, and many others. At the far end of the dam stood the inevitable keg of Picton beer, in which, I suppose, everybody's health was drunk after the ladies had started on their homeward journey, and what was left was used by the bearers, who marched in procession down the track, and caricatured the proceedings at the time, by christening the bridges after the principal families in the town.

In the evening a public social was held, and never before was such a crowd of people seen in the Public Hall. The management of the affair had been left in the hands of Mr H. C. Seymour, and he, ably assisted by several ladies, who in turn were supported by generous donors of provisions, so that there was plenty and to spare for all the three hundred people. The supper-table was laid out on the stage, and it speaks volumes for the Picton boys, of whom there were a goodly number present, that not one single thing was touched on the tables till the ladies sat down to supper, though to get a view of the proceedings in the body of the hall they had to stand on the forms surrounding the supper-table, and the fruit and other good things looked very tempting. During the evening several songs were sung. Mrs Litchfield sang, 'For You and Me,' splendidly—if that is a proper superlative to use in regard to any lady's singing. Miss Speed, 'Love's Young Dream'; Miss Howard, 'The Song That Reached My Heart'; Miss Lily Falconer sang, 'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Town,' and received the only encore of the evening. Miss Allen and Miss M. Philpotts sang a duet, 'The Cousins,' very well indeed, though coming in, as it did, at the end of the programme, after dancing all the evening, their voices sounded rather tired. Mr Howard also sang 'The Powder Monkey.' Everybody seemed bent on enjoying themselves, and there was a sour look or a sad face to be seen all the evening. A set of Borough Councillor quadrilles were down on the programme, but when the time arrived for the City Fathers to seek their partners, the City Fathers were *non est*, and the City Mothers had to content themselves with more juvenile partners. Dancing was kept up till 2 a.m. There was no formal opening, and no question of precedence, and no Mrs Pnsh deliberately jumping Mrs Wright's claim, and so, in consequence there were no black looks. Mr Seymour had settled all that by letting the young people take the lead in a polka. I saw Mrs Fell, in black lace; Mrs (Capt.) Kenny, Mrs Duncan, Mrs Cragg, Mrs Oxley, Mrs Fisk, Mrs A. P. Seymour, Mrs Aitkens, Mrs Falconer, Mrs F. Godfrey, Mrs Scott, Mrs Miles, Mrs O'Donnell, Mrs Card, Mrs Blaynires, Mrs Hows, Mrs McIntosh, Mrs Jenkins, Mrs A. Price, Mrs Carlton, Mrs C. Western, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Gillies, Mrs Bartlett, Mrs H. C. Seymour (in heliotrope cashmere and chiffon ruffles), Mrs McNab (Blenheim), Mrs Andrews, and Miss Allen, the Misses Philpott, Webster (2), Carlton, Speed (3), Seymour, Pasley (Blenheim), Lloyd (2), Smith (2), Fuller, Allen (2), Seymour (H.C.—3), Scott (2), Howard, Young, Greensill, Falconer (2), Linton, Hunt (Wellington), Waddy (2), Fell, White, Hay, Gilbert, Kenny, Carroll, Jenkins, Price, Compton (Blenheim), Western (2), and Divens. All the old celebrities were present from Old Waverley (Mr H. Berkeley), who acted as pilot for Queen Charlotte Sound fifty years ago, down to some of the first white residents in Picton, who all remained to see the very last dance.

JEAN.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

DEAR BEE, SEPTEMBER 11.

And now for another chat, although there is not very much to chronicle this time. Of course there is not a continual whirl of gaiety in a little place like this, but we have the name of being a very light-hearted community. I hope it is not the sign of a 'grovelling' mind, but for my part I much prefer things in a small way. Don't you think, Bee, that small dances are much more comfortable and enjoyable than large ones? And it is the same with 'evenings,' and afternoon teas, and riding parties, and everything—to my mind, that is. Like Ibsen's Dr. Stockmann, I would rather belong to a minority than to the 'compact majority.'

Since I despatched my last letter to you, Mr Courtney has returned with another large contingent to bask in the shadow of Egmont. Some people are very fond of speaking against the 'invidious William,' but it seems to me that we have reason to be grateful to him. As I write I can think of many most desirable settlers who have come out by his advice, several of them capitalists, too. Of course, all the world over there are people who have not the capacity of succeeding *anywhere*, and if certain of this class have come out with him, I don't see that he should bear all the blame.