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In a Tight Corner.

THE DOVER EXPRESS.

CHAPTER I.

DOWN IN THE WORLD.

EVERYBODY knows how high stands the reputation of that eminent firm of solicitors, Messrs Link and Pogson. Everybody knows, too, that old Mr Link has now been dead nearly a decade and that two years ago the senior partner was old Mr Pogson. A very good lawyer, but not so entirely satisfactory as a man. Samuel Pogson, cold, practical and autocratic, was a hard master, feared and disliked by his subordinates as much as he was trusted by his clients.

Young Mr Link (who was not so very young, but whose iron grey hair looked juvenile beside the senior partner's white locks) fretted a little under Samuel Pogson's iron rule. He was little more than a clerk indeed, so far as the management of the firm's affairs was concerned. And if ever he raised his voice against any action of the senior partner's which seemed to him hard and tyrannical, old Pogson, who did not care what means he used to gain any object he had in view, would lean back in his chair, like the old fox he was, and beg Mr Link to remember that in his delicate state of health he could not stand the contradiction.

Mr Link began to think that 'delicate state of health' a fraudulent deception. He knew that old Pogson was supposed to suffer from a weak heart, and was accustomed to hear it suggested that the old man's real malady was the want of one. But as the senior partner had arrived safely at the age of sixty five and still seemed to enjoy life very thoroughly, there seemed some reason for Mr Link's suspicions.

At last an event occurred which caused the junior partner to throw aside some of his accustomed deference to the old man's judgment.

Among their clerks, and quite the best of them, was a young fellow named Clifford Semple, who had gained Mr Link's interest and respect by the strenuousness of his efforts to keep a wife and family in comfort out of his modest salary of three pounds ten shillings per week. This would have been comparatively easy if he had not been a man of education and refined taste, and if he had not had the unpardonable impudence to marry a girl of his own class.

These two creatures had the ridiculous excuse to offer that they loved each other. Two simple-minded, single-hearted beings, young, handsome, devoted, brought up in the improvident luxury characteristic of so many English middle class homes, they dared to face life together on a total income of £295 a year! This magnificent total was reached by the addition to Clifford's earnings of Blanche's income of £20 a year.

At first, of course, they found little difficulty in making it sufficient. They had to live, certainly, in what their friends would have called an 'impossible neighbourhood'; they had to save candle ends and eke out a small supply of cheap furniture with ingenious make-shifts. But in the morning glow of a happy marriage these things seemed trifles indeed. Blanche, too, proved upon trial to be clever with her needle, so that her proud husband often expressed a belief, which was luckily not put to the test, that she could have made him a court suit if he had wanted one. The young wife managed to get a few pupils for music, whose level of refinement and intelligence was as low as the remuneration of their teacher. And for the first year things went merrily indeed.

But when the babies came, when a little boy Geoffrey was succeeded by a little boy Wynne, and he again by a tiny girl, then it was that the powers of their parents' modest means were stretched to the utmost, and the poor mother's face began to look worn, and a grey tint, the sign of insufficient nourishment, to spread over Clifford's red-brown complexion.

Then, for cheapness, they went further and further out of town, and Clifford entered into abstruse calculations as to whether it was best to save two pence by walking two miles of the way to and from the office, or whether the extra wear and tear of his shoes did not more than eat up the sum saved.

They managed to be happy still, in a way; but there grew up a bitterness at the bottom of the heart of each, a rebellion against the severity and hopelessness of the struggle, which found vent sometimes in gloomy silence on the part of the husband, fretfulness on the part of the wife. Luckily the cause of their difficulties brought its consolation. The children were healthy and happy, just as pretty in their home made clothes as a rich man's children are in costlier ones, just as delighted with simple toys of papa's manufacture as they would have been with the handsomest dolls and rocking horses in Regent street. And, however badly the father and mother might have felt the pinch of poverty, they succeeded for years in keeping its cruel fingers from the tiny throats of the babes.

But in the year when the eldest child reached the age of five a terrible misfortune fell upon them. Clifford Semple fell ill of scarlet fever, and to his wife's great grief he was wise enough to go straight to the hospital. Through the kindness of the junior partner of the firm, and much against the inclination of Samuel Pogson, Clifford's salary was paid to his wife during the whole of the time that his illness lasted. This, however, proved to be only the beginning of his trouble. On his recovery he went to the seaside by himself for a short time, hoping against hope that a certain consequence of the fever, which now became apparent, would pass away.

At the end of a fortnight's holiday, which had brought him neither rest nor pleasure, the unhappy man returned to town and once more met his children. His wife, who had had one brief interview with him on his leaving the hospital, noticed his gloomy looks, the haggardness of his face, the expression of fear in his eyes. She hung about him tenderly, but he seemed to resent the anxiety he saw in her face and tried to disengage himself from her caresses.

'You are not strong enough to go back to the office yet, Clifford,' she said. 'Let me go up to town and speak to Mr Link about you. He is always kind and considerate. He will understand; he appreciates your value, and he will persuade Mr Pogson to keep your post open for you for another week or two, I am sure.'

But Clifford, who was holding baby Maude on his knee, took no notice of her suggestion. Blanche, who saw that her husband was in an irritable mood, did not at that moment press the point. She thought he wanted to forget his fears about his health in the society of his recovered children.

Geoff and Wynne, however, were not long in discovering that 'papa was different;' even baby Maude, popularly known as 'the corn crake,' on account of her peculiarly piercing screams, began to exercise her famous accomplishment before she had been long on his knee, and was removed, shrieking, by her mother. She, too, felt that 'papa was different;' that the pale, thin, grey-faced man was not the merry playfellow of a few weeks before. The boys began to play by themselves, for they got no answers to the questions they put to their father. Blanche took up her needlework with trembling fingers. A gloom fell upon the whole family. The boys made no entreaty for 'another ten minutes' when their bedtime came, but kissed their father constrainedly and followed their mother upstairs.

'What's the matter with papa, mamma?' asked Geoffrey, the elder and more observant. 'He isn't not a bit like what he was before he went away. When I asked him to come and see my wabbits he didn't move, and he didn't answer. He isn't not so nice as he was before he went away.'

'Sh-sh!! you mustn't say that, Geoff. Poor papa has been very, very ill indeed, and he isn't quite well yet even. Don't you see how pale he looks? When he is quite well again he will be just the same as ever.'

But though Blanche tried to believe this herself her mind was harassed by doubts and fears. There was something wrong about him, something which troubled him, something which he would not confess to her. When the children were in bed she went down stairs, resolved to try to gain his confidence and share his grief, whatever it might be.

He was sitting by the table poring over the evening paper when she re-entered the dining-room. His back was toward the door, and he neither moved nor looked up when she came in. With one yearning look at him, full of doubt and fear, she decided not to disturb him, and drew a chair to the opposite side of the table. He started up with an exclamation as he first caught sight of her; then with a curious, hang-dog look, as if ashamed of himself, he bent his head again over his paper. Blanche's eyes filled with tears. Unable longer to restrain herself she rose, put her arms round his shoulders and entreated him to tell her what was troubling him.

'I can't bear to see you shutting yourself up against me like this. You are brooding over something. I see it Why don't you tell me what it is? Why don't you trust me to help you to bear it? I know I could, oh, I know I could. Haven't we always borne everything together! I was so glad to think you were coming back that my heart felt bursting with happiness. And now — and now—oh, won't you tell me? Won't you tell me? Perhaps I even guess—and yet'—

Indeed the poor wife thought, as she noticed Clifford's wandering looks and his apparent new and startling indifference to the children and herself, that his mind was unhinged. This impression gained confirmation by his answer.

'I'm all right, dear,' he said. 'At least I'm nearly all right. Don't you worry yourself. I think I'll go to bed now; I'm tired, and I want to be up at six o'clock in the morning. At six, do you hear? Shake me, rouse me, make me get up at six, mind; I've an appointment to keep before I go to the office. And don't you worry yourself, dear; there's nothing to trouble about,' he added again, kindly, as he left her and went upstairs.

But his wife's face grew white with a grave fear, which began to take a definite shape in her mind.

Next morning she roused him at six o'clock, said very little to him before he started, and preserved as cheerful a demeanour as she could until he, without any further confidence, and without even the farewell peep at his children in their little beds, which he had never before omitted, left the house.

At half-past nine o'clock Clifford Semple, haggard, anxious, downcast as a convicted felon, presented himself at the office of Messrs Link and Pogson, and hastened to seat himself at his old desk with some work which was given to him, after only the briefest of greetings to his fellow clerks. He did not get on very well; he had to have something explained to him in connection with his work, and he did not seem to profit much by the explanation. The other clerks exchanged significant nods and glances. However, he was left to himself until half past ten, at which time, punctual to the minute, old Samuel Pogson arrived at the office.

He frowned as soon as he caught sight of Clifford, who took no notice of his entrance, being apparently too much absorbed in his own work to see or hear anything that was going on around him. Mr Link was away, and Samuel Pogson, who had bitterly resented having to pay the salary of an absent clerk, resolved to visit Clifford's sin upon him with severity, now that his partner was not present to stay his hand.

'Well, sir, and so you are back again, I see,' he began in an ominously dry tone.

Clifford, however, took no notice. He did not even turn around until a fellow clerk managed, unseen, to kick his foot. Then the unfortunate young man jumped off his stool reddening violently.

'Wonderful absorption!' said Mr Pogson sarcastically.

'I am much obliged to you, sir, for your kindness to us during my illness,' began Clifford in a low voice.

'I am glad to hear it. What are you doing now?'

Clifford was nervously watching his employer's lips. He did not answer.

'Well, what—are—you—doing—now? Can't you understand a plain question?'

The clerk who sat nearest to Clifford moved uneasily, but he could not make up his mind to dare to interpose, being afraid of making matters worse for his unlucky neighbour. Clifford made nervous movements with his hands, but still he made no reply. A confidential attendant, a hard-faced man named Page, who accompanied Mr Pogson wherever he went, felt called upon at this stage to venture a remonstrance.

'Mr Pogson is not very well this morning, Mr Semple. Pray, don't keep him standing here,' he said, in his low, cold, respectful voice.

But still Clifford appeared to take no heed.

'Go into my office. I wish to speak to you privately, Mr Semple,' said his employer.

He had to repeat his words before Clifford, seeming suddenly to awaken to comprehension, followed the direction of the old man's eyes and hastily obeyed. He stood with dull eyes and a bewildered manner before the senior partner, who entered, followed by the obsequious Page.

'I should like to have some explanation of your extraordinary behaviour this morning, Mr Semple,' began old Pogson, majestically.

Clifford looked up at him, grew red and white again, and then asked, in a low voice, 'Could I speak to Mr Link a moment, sir?'

'Not at present, certainly. Mr Link is at Pontresina.'

Clifford followed the motions of the old man's lips attentively. Noting the shake of the head with which these words were accompanied, he hung his head and grew dejected again.

'So your explanation, if you have one, must be given to me,' went on Samuel Pogson, as he allowed his attendant to take off the overcoat which, even in summer, he always wore. 'Well, what have you to say?' he asked testily, as he still received no response. Then, raising his voice in indignation, he continued, in a high tone, 'I expect an explanation, I say. Are you deaf?'

Clifford looked up despairingly.

'Yes sir,' he answered, having just caught the last word, 'I am deaf—since my illness—almost stone deaf.'

Samuel Pogson looked surprised, but not displeased. Now he had an excuse for getting rid of a man against whom his enforced generosity had given him a grudge.

'In that case,' he said, coming nearer to the young man and speaking loudly in his ear, 'of course we shall have to dispense with your services. I am sorry, exceedingly sorry; so, no doubt, will Mr Link be, but a deaf clerk is not of the slightest use in this office. I will give you a week's salary. You shall not have the slightest reason for thinking yourself ill used, but you need not come here again.'

'But, sir,' stammered Clifford, who had heard enough of this speech to understand its whole import, 'I consulted a physician this morning, and he says this deafness will be only temporary—only temporary, sir. I can bring you his written opinion.'

'I don't want his opinion. What's his opinion to me?'

'Only, sir, that you might give me another chance. I know the work of your office so well that I can be of almost as much use as ever. When you speak loudly, you see, I can hear quite well.'

'We couldn't keep our voices always for your benefit at the pitch I am keeping mine now. We should all be hoarse in a week.'

'Won't you keep me on, sir, for such work as I can do, at any salary you think I am worth? Until my hearing gets all right again?'

'No. You can come back when it is all right.'

'But, sir, in the meantime, no one will take on a deaf clerk.'

'Then why should I?'

'I've been here seven years, sir——'

'Getting a good salary, which has been raised more than once. Paid your salary, too, for weeks while you were away.'

Clifford could bear no more.

'For which I am very grateful—to Mr Link,' he said.

Old Pogson, who gave himself as many airs as an elderly beauty, sank back in his armchair as if exhausted by the interview. The attentive Page ordered Clifford to leave the room, and the poor fellow was hustled out. The head clerk gave him a compassionate hand squeeze as he put into his hand the little package containing his week's salary, which Pogson had sent out.

'Mr Link will be back in six weeks,' said the head clerk in his ear. 'I'll take care to tell him all about it as soon as he comes, and he'll have you back, never fear.'

'Six weeks!' murmured the unhappy man as he left the office, and opening the little packet in his hand.

Those four sovereigns would not go far, and the savings he had been able to make on his salary were very small. Perhaps, too, even Mr Link's influence would not suffice to reinstate him in the face of Pogson's prejudice. As for getting work elsewhere to bring him anything near two hundred pounds sterling a year, that, with his present disadvantage was, he felt, impossible.

And so it proved. Day after day he answered letters, he made personal application for situation after situation. Day after day he went through the same wearisome round, meeting shrug, head shaking, refusal. Only the brave hopefulness of his wife, who had guessed what his misfortune was before he would confess it, saved him from utter despair. He made a little money by law copying, and these slender means Blanche supplemented by various efforts, not disdaining the humble and unremunerative plain sewing when it came in her way. They had even to let rooms in their miserable little jerry-built home, a resource which hurt Clifford's pride more than any of the rest.

But the sum total of their meagre earnings was insufficient for their bare expenses, and presently both husband and wife saw with affright that under this regime of enforced economy the children were beginning to suffer. By this time the winter was approaching, and the thought of the privation his wife and children would have to suffer, with insufficient food and warmth, brought Clifford to the verge of madness.

Blanche was shocked one evening on coming into the little apartment which now did duty for drawing-room, dining-room, and study, to find Clifford examining, with an air of the deepest interest, some object which he held in his hand. Although he had not recovered his hearing, he generally knew by some instinct when his wife came into the room. On this occasion he turned abruptly to meet her, trying to hide what it was which engrossed his attention. But she, with white, eager face, being always on the alert for fresh misfortune, would not be satisfied until she had seen it.

And it was a revolver.

Her eyes met his, and saw a stealthy look of shamefaced avoidance which filled her with horror. She could not speak coherently; her utterance was choked.

'Clifford, you would never—think of the children—of me,' she gulped. And the poor thing threw herself into his arms.

He laughed loud and boisterously. He could always hear, or at least understand her.

'Nonsense; nonsense, dear; what are you thinking about?' cried he, with a miserable attempt at assumed amusement. 'This is young Barclay's. He brought it in for me to see. It's a first rate one. He bought it second hand—a great bargain.'

'Let me take it back to him, then. I don't know what young men want with such things,' said his wife tartly.

She took it almost by force from his hand and put it back in the lodger's room, and she did not forget the next time she spoke to the young fellow to reprove him sharply for having such nasty, dangerous things about in—in a house where there were children.

The weary weeks dragged on until the middle of October, when the crisis came at last. Clifford could bear no longer the pinched look he began to see in the faces of his children. One last desperate attempt he must make to see Mr Link. The junior partner must, he knew, have returned to England long before this, but on the two occasions when he had tried to see him he had been told at the office door, not unkindly, but firmly, by the old head clerk, that Mr Link was not there. A letter he had sent detailing his misfortune, and asking if there was any chance of reinstatement for him, received no answer.

On this occasion, however, he presented himself at the office with a dogged resolve to get at least a hearing. By ill luck the moment of his arrival was the most unpropitious possible. Half-past five was the hour at which the junior partner was in the habit of leaving the office, and at half-past five, therefore, regardless of the assurances of the clerks that Mr Link was not there, Clifford insisted on placing himself in the outer office in such a place that the junior partner could not fail to see him when, as he expected, that gentleman should open the door of the inner office to come out. The clerks did their best to dissuade him from his purpose, but they dared not raise their voices high enough to make him hear for fear of the autocrat in the adjoining room. At last, however, the head clerk seized him by the arm and said quickly in his ear that Mr Pogson would be coming out in a moment; that he was going to start for the Continent by the eight o'clock express, and that surely he knew Mr Pogson better than to worry him with expostulations on the eve of a journey, for on these occasions anxiety for his own safety always made the old gentleman especially testy.

Even if Clifford had consented to retreat he had no time. At that moment the door of the inner office opened and Samuel Pogson stood before him. The old gentleman stopped short, with an exclamation which was eloquent to the experienced ears of those present.

'Oh, so you've turned up again, have you?' he cried, not forgetting to raise his voice so that the afflicted man should hear. 'You're not content with the snubs you have received here already? You wish, perhaps, to drive me to get protection from the nuisance through the police court?'

'I've come, sir, to ask you again to give me another chance.' He spoke out firmly, almost loudly, being past caring for the number of witnesses to his humiliation. 'I'm sure you know, sir, that I would not have come here again to ask anything of you if I could help it. But I cannot earn enough to—to keep going; you can afford to pay me more than I can earn anywhere else, and yet be no loser. I understand the work, as you know, sir, after seven years. There is only my deafness against me. In every other respect I am just the man I was.'

But this was not true. The sunken eyes, the hollow cheeks, the pitiful air with which the poor fellow tried to carry off his fallen state betrayed him.

'If you would only try me, sir, for a week,' he went on, 'my children'——

He stopped short. On that subject he could not have gone on without some demonstration which his remaining self-respect forbade. There was scarcely another man in the room who had not a lump in his throat when Clifford stopped. Old Pogson alone, and his obsequious attendant Page, seemed unmoved, except to further indignation. Page, who was laden with rugs and small luggage, frowned at Clifford and held out his hand warningly. The senior partner gave a sarcastic grunt.

'Children!' said he. 'People have no business to bring children into the world when they haven't a safe income to keep them on. If you choose to saddle yourself with such responsibilities it is your look out, not mine.' With an instant's pause for breath to give greater emphasis to his concluding words, he went on:—'Understand, I don't want a deaf clerk. No; and Mr Link doesn't want a deaf clerk. So it will not be of the least use for you to come sneaking up here to-morrow, thinking that when the old man's gone the coast will be clear, for I've left explicit instructions upon this point, which will be carried out if I'm in Jamaica. Jamaica, do you hear?'

'Yes, sir,' said Clifford.

The old man had not finished his harangue. But the young one had heard enough. A new infirmity seemed to have come upon him. He turned and stumbled against the table on his way to the door. Without another word, either of entreaty or farewell, he staggered quickly out and ran down the stairs into the street.

For once Samuel Pogson was disconcerted. He was a cross-grained, overbearing, tyrannical old brute, who liked his own way and would have it. But he was not heartless; he was not insensible to suffering, though he liked to see a little of it in the faces of people who had crossed his will. The manner in which Clifford Semple had taken his departure gave him an exceedingly unpleasant sensation. He had meant to bully him for another ten minutes, and then, having rendered his victim utterly abject, to have extended to him the clemency which otherwise his partner would get the credit of on the morrow. And now the hot-headed young idiot had gone off, leaving a very uncomfortable impression behind.

Old Pogson affected to ignore this, however, and turned with extra sharpness to his attendant.

'Send me a cab, quick,' he said. 'This young cub's insolence has upset me, excited me. I feel quite ill.'

'Yes, sir; I don't wonder, sir. I'm surprised Mr Semple, after all these years of your kindness, didn't know better what he was about, sir.'

Samuel Pogson, under pretence of taking from the man's hand one of his numerous wraps, looked sharply into his face to see whether this was a touch of unaccustomed sarcasm. For his conscience was not clear. But Page's conscience was. It was a part of his duty to flatter his master and to humour his whims, an opinion of his own was a luxury he never allowed himself.

His mind, however, grew so uneasy in the course of dinner that he sent for pen and paper and wrote a note to his partner. In this he began by complaining vehemently of the infamous conduct of that fellow Semple, who had forced his way into the office and bullied him, Samuel Pogson, until he had made him feel seriously ill. He went on to say that it was not his custom to allow even such a miserable creature as this Semple to consider himself ill-used, so he advised his partner to take him on if he could find an opening at such a salary as his services at the present time were worth.

Old Pogson felt easier in his mind when this letter had been posted by Page before his very eyes, but he had told his attendant plaintively at the very same time that another interview with that impudent beggar he had taken down that afternoon would be the death of him.

In the meantime Clifford went straight home with a noise in his head like the clang of a steam hammer. No hope there, no hope there, no hope anywhere! That was the cry which rang in his brain. He walked the whole way from Lincoln's Inn Fields to Herne Hill without slackening speed once, yet without knowing why he walked so fast. But when he drew near his home he would not enter. What should he see? Those blue, anxious eyes of his wife, which had grown so large, so bright lately, that one noticed nothing else in her face; the little children, with the youthful roundness disappearing day by day from their features. He could not see them again with nothing to tell but disappointment, despair. He stopped short near the railway line, and a thought struck him which turned him into a savage.

Old Pogson would be passing within an hour over these very metals, on his way to take a luxurious holiday by the Mediterranean. Old Pogson, who had neither wife nor child to share the money he lavished upon himself and his comforts. Old Pogson, who had seen starvation in his face that day, and who had refused him, insultingly refused him, the means of earning enough to keep throughout the winter the life in his children's bodies!

By the time this last bitter thought had eaten into the man's mind he was scarcely sane. Another idea flashed into his mind, giving him a sort of electric shock. The train would stop at Herne Hill at eight minutes past eight.

Suddenly his limbs ceased to shake, and his brain seemed to clear. A frenzied resolve, sometimes vague, sometimes for a moment more defined, took the place of his despairing thoughts. He stood for a long time watching the gradual fall of night over the houses, and then he went rapidly back in the direction of his home. He let himself in without noise. Blanche was putting the children to bed; he heard a querulous little voice asking for a biscuit, and the poor mother's, quivering answer that there were no biscuits to-night. They were 'all gone.'

Then he stole into the lodger's bedroom, and with unshaking hands searched until he found the revolver. He loaded it and went out.

[TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

THE CZAR'S SHOT-PROOF CARRIAGE.

WHEN the Czar travels in Russia the precautions taken for his safety could not be greater were he in the enemy's country. A battalion of infantry is detailed for every two miles of distance, and, allowing 500 men as the strength of each battalion, every spot of ground on both sides of the track is covered by sentinels within easy distance of each other. The Czar is suddenly whirled off to the station, accompanied by the chosen twelve of his bodyguard, without pomp or circumstance, swiftly and silently.

The Czar always travels in a train of five carriages. His carriage is built in a peculiar way. The windows, while ample for light, are high, so that a person sitting down is invisible from the outside, and the sides of the car are fortified with plates of steel concealed in the ornamental woodwork, but amply strong to resist a bullet. There are two sentry boxes in the carriage, one at each end, and each looking out at an opposite side from the other. The guardsmen on duty in these apartments are shut in from any observation of the interior of the carriage, but at intervals of about two feet the whole length of the saloon are electric buttons communicating with the guard chambers, as well as with the two carriages, one containing the suite and the other in the rear, occupied by the guardsmen not on duty. So far as the train itself is concerned, the Czar could be no more secure in St. Petersburg. The train speeds on to its destination without a halt, except on account of accident. At a distance of not less than five miles ahead is a pioneer train, in which the Imperial Director of Railways and the chief engineer of the particular railway on which the Czar is travelling, always ride. As the pilot train whizzes by, the reserves along the line rush to arms and guard the sides of the railway, waiting until the Imperial train has passed, so that the spectacle is presented of continuous lines of soldiery for hundreds of miles.

Arrived at the end of his journey, the Czar is escorted to the quarters intended for the Imperial family. The streets are guarded by special constables in the attire of citizens. Every property owner has been called upon to supply one or more of these men at his own expense to do duty when the Sovereign makes a public appearance. The constables average one in ten of the crowd that thronga the streets, and, being in ordinary dress, they can mingle with the people, note what is said, and perhaps do something that will obtain them regular employment among the secret police. With one tenth the population engaged as spies upon the remainder, with troops enough concentrated to stand a formidable siege, and his faithful guardsmen dogging every step, the Czar goes through the forms of a visit to the ancient capital of Russia, or whatever city he may choose to honour.

Some one asked a bishop why he conferred orders on so many blockheads. He replied—'It is better the ground should be ploughed by asses than lie quite untilled.'

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

'We meet but to part,' as the comb said to the brush.

Never tell your wife that she is a charming singer unless you happen to be deaf.

The man carried away with enthusiasm is frequently brought back with disgust.

It is hard to make a bad actor or a bad cigar draw well without a great deal of puffing.

A Chicago firm advertises: 'Our dancing slippers for young ladies are simply immense.'

Your friends may not know much, but they know what they would do if they were in your place.

Now is the time when the small boy of the family is caught poaching on his mother's preserves.

'If it wasn't for hope the heart would break,' as the old lady said when she buried her seventh husband.

'It is very strange,' said the amateur gardener. 'I planted radishes there, and nothing but a lot of green stalks have come up, with not a single radish or sign of a blossom on 'em.'

In New York, 'Dorothy Apartments' is the name used to designate the feminine of bachelor apartments. The custom of living alone, unchaperoned and unsuspected, is increasing to a surprising extent among young women in that city.

A pretty girl in an Iowa town ran away from home to avoid practising on the piano. She must be a queer girl. It is generally the other members of the family who want to run away from home to avoid hearing the girl practising on the piano.

'Do you know, Fontanes,' said Napoleon, 'what I admire most in the world. It is the powerlessness of force to found anything. There are only two powers in the world—the sabre and the pen; and, in the end, the former is always conquered by the latter.

She had had a hard trial with him during his life, but had meekly borne her lot. Now, the end had come, and he was passing away. As she bent over him he handed up and said faintly, 'I am going,' and he went. 'He's gone,' said she, wiping her eyes, 'poor fellow, it's the first time I ever knew him to keep his word.'

A ROMANCE OF A MAN-OF-WAR.—A romantic incident is related of the Tourmaline's stay at Montreal. Among the visitors to the ship was a pretty young girl, who met a bluejacket by the name of Charles Moore. In comparing experiences while he was showing her about the ship, they made the interesting discovery that they were brother and sister. They were orphans, and were placed in an asylum in London in early childhood. Eleven years ago she was sent to Canada by an emigration society, and the boy was placed on a training-ship. They lost all knowledge of each other until the discovery brought about by their meeting. An unfortunate termination to the romance was caused by Moore's anxiety to remain longer with his sister. He begged for leave but was refused; and he jumped overboard to swim ashore, but was brought back and placed in irons.

A PERTINENT LESSON.—On one occasion, when Daniel Webster was delivering an address on the necessity for individual exertion and unflinching patriotism to avert the dangers that threatened the political party whose principles he espoused, he perceived a terrible sway of the packed assembly consequent upon the rush of those endeavouring to enter, and noted the danger that might ensue. The orator stopped short in the middle of a sentence, advanced to the edge of the platform, extended his arms in an authoritative attitude, and in a stentorian voice of command cried out, 'Let each man stand firm!' The effect was instantaneous. Each man stood firm, the great heaving mass of humanity regained its equilibrium, and, save the long breath of relief that filled the air, perfect stillness ensued. 'That,' exclaimed the orator, 'is what we call self-government!'—so apt an illustration of the principle he was expounding that the audience responded with deafening cheers.

REGARDING THE YOUNG MINISTER.

WHAT THE DEACON THINKS.

WELL, I don't know, perhaps his thought
Is learned and likewise deep;
His sermons, though, are so deuced short
I don't get time to sleep.

WHAT THE YOUNG MAN SAYS.

He may be good and all that's right,
But I like it not at all
To find him at my girl's each night
When'er I go to call.

THE OLD MAID'S OPINION.

He's awfully nice, but he gets very red
Whenever I hint that a preacher should wed
And I'd knit him some socks, a dozen or more,
If I only could learn just what size he wore.

WHAT A CERTAIN GIRL THINKS.

She thinks that he's all a man should be,
But at times feels rather hurt
When all her arts prove a mockery,
For the parson does not flirt.

WHO KNOWS WHOM HE WILL MARRY?—Young men think they know just what kind of a woman they will marry, and they are sure that they will marry no other. The rest is apt to prove them very much in error as to what they think they will do and will not do. They marry—most men marry some time—but two chances to three they marry a very different lady from the kind they have always dilated upon. A young man who has pertinaciously insisted that he will only marry a brunette will, in the end, marry a blonde. A young man who has always felt and said that he would marry only a blonde is very likely to marry a brunette. Such things come out very funnily. A pug nose has been the horror of a youthful sprig of fashion, and he has been heard many times to express his sentiments on that subject. Five years after, he is seen proudly escorting a pug-nosed wife. Another could never bear a 'dumpy' woman. He, after all, selects for a wife the fattest little woman he has ever known. A third likes robust women, and always had a dislike of the lean-and-lank order. By-and-bye, the tallest woman in the town has his surname, with a 'Mrs' prefixed to it. You can tell better about the weather afterwards than before; so you can tell better after marriage than before what kind of a woman was to be your wife.

STRATHMORE, WINNER OF THE DERBY.

TWO GREAT RACE-HORSES.

THE two great events of the racing season in the Antipodes are the Melbourne Cup and the Melbourne Derby, both run at the Flemington Race-course, in the early part of November. This year an additional interest was given to the two events by reason of the presence in them of a New Zealand horse, Strathmore, which it was hoped would rival the exploits of Martini-Henry in 1885. Strathmore so far justified the expectations of his backers by carrying off the Derby against a field of nine competitors. In the Cup, however, after running a game race in which he was to a great extent impeded, Strathmore came in third to Malvolio, the winner, and Sir William second. Inasmuch as Strathmore conceded 10lbs. to the former and 13lbs. to the latter, his defeat is something of which New Zealanders may well be proud, and the name of this son of Nordenfeldt will rank with those of the most renowned race-horses of the Southern Hemisphere. It is admitted on all hands that Strathmore is one of the best three-year-olds that has won the Blue Riband on the Flemington course. He was bred by Mr Thomas Morrin at the Wellington Park Stud, Auckland, New Zealand, from whom he was purchased by his present owner, Mr W. R. Wilson, for 350 guineas. Strathmore was sired by Nordenfeldt from Ouida, the dam of several other high-class race horses. Malvolio, the Cup winner, is a fine upstanding horse, and is the property of Mr James Redfearn. He is a son of the famous Malua, his dam being Nightcap. Malvolio was bred by Mr Redfearn, who also trained the horse, while he was ridden by his son George. It is noteworthy, also, that the sire of the second placed in the Melbourne Cup — Sir William — was of New Zealand breeding, so that altogether New Zealand has reason to congratulate itself upon the fine qualities with which its climate seems to have the power of endning both the people and the live stock reared within its borders. We present in this issue illustrations of Malvolio and Strathmore.

ANTIQUITY OF CARPETS.

THE use of carpets, an article of household furniture, is of unknown antiquity. It dates back, in all probability, to the patriarchal epoch, and followed naturally the invention of woven fabrics that were first employed as clothing simply by winding them about the person. These fabrics were used as beds by wandering tribes, and to sit upon in their tents, and so, by a process of transformation easily understood, and with some modifications of form and texture, to cover the ground as aids to neatness. In time mats made of rushes or of long grass were in part substituted for the woollen or linen draperies as cheaper and a more efficient protection from the humidity of the soil. Thus far had humanity doubtless progressed before the building of great cities, and ere carpets made with great skill and in complicated patterns became a luxury in the houses of the rich and the palaces of kings—that is to say, long before the beginning of authentic history.

Carpets were probably first used in India, or at least in those parts of Asia that are considered as the cradle of the race, but they are first heard of in Mesopotamia and in Persia, where they were made with a magnificence and an elaborateness of design hardly excelled at the present day. The carpets of Sardis, Babylon, Persia and Tyre were famous in remote Biblical epochs. From the far East these articles of royal splendour passed into Egypt and into Greece, where, on account of their great cost, their use could not be general. The Carthaginians used them when the Romans, their traditional enemies, slept on the bare earth and led a life that was of Spartan virtue, but hard and repulsive from a modern standpoint.

It does not appear that they were ever manufactured in Italy in the time of the Romans, and they could not consequently be much used except by the emperors and a few of the wealthier nobles, who employed them for decorating banquet halls, covering the couches on which they reclined at meals, or to spread over the throne and dais at imperial audiences. Their use to cover floors was exceptional, or at least partial, since the tesselated pavements of Roman houses were works of art which it would have been in doubtful taste to conceal, even by an oriental carpet into which was woven the whole story of Theseus and Ariadne. As to their cost, it is said that the Emperor Nero, paid for a second-hand carpet that had previously belonged to Metellus a sum that might be reasonably estimated at £20,000 in the currency of the United Kingdom. It was to be used at his banquets, whose magnificence was only equalled by his debauchery.

After the fall of the Empire carpets continued in use as usual in Persia, Syria and Byzantium, whose wealth and luxury were in singular contrast with the bareness and poverty of Western Europe, where this form of ornament and comfort was unknown and unimagined. French writers say that tapestries began to be manufactured at Rheims, Arras, and St. Quentin as early as the ninth century, but they must have been of poor quality, while their use was limited to hanging on the walls of castles and churches. In the eleventh century manufactories were established at Poictiers, Troyes, and Beauvais in France and in some of the cities of Flanders, the products of the latter soon acquiring a great reputation. The tapestries of Arras were famous for hundreds of years, and were used in England in Shakespeare's time, as we know by the famous scene in 'Hamlet,' where the melancholy Dane kills Polonius behind the hangings of his mother's chamber.

The Moors brought carpets into Spain in the eighth century, and in the thirteenth Eleanore of Castile brought specimens with her when she came to England. Their use, however, was not promptly vulgarized among the English, only a few of the rich being able to afford them, and they were still only employed for ornamenting the walls of churches and castles since they were far to pretty to be trodden on. English antiquarians assert that the manufacture of carpets was introduced into the island in the time of Henry VIII., but it did not evidently make rapid progress, as we are informed that Queen Mary had her palace floors strewn with rushes after the fashion of the time, while Queen Elizabeth had but one carpet to her name, though she died possessed of 3000 silk dresses. This solitary carpet the maiden Queen naturally had spread on the floor of her presence chamber as comporting more appropriately with the richness of her silk attire, and as a cleanly precaution against the rushes soiled with the mud of London streets carelessly brought in by the boots of her courtiers.

It is curious to remark the long time it took to bring the carpets into general use. Here was the richest and greatest Queen of her time possessed of but one carpet, though carpets had been in use in royal palaces for at least 3,000 years. Fashions in dress move faster, partly because the material necessary for their display is more easily transported, and partly because in past ages of the world the human race has cared more for the vain decoration of its person than for the elegance, comfort and convenience of its habitation. Take, for instance, silk and the luxury in dress that attend its use. Since its invention there has been no nation, civilised, half-civilised, or even semi-barbarous, that has not used the stuffs made of it with greater or less extravagance, stimulated always by vanity or a vulgar desire for display.

HIS ENGLISH FAILED HIM.

WHEN the United States ship Portsmouth reached Hampton roads fresh from the West Indies, she found in that port the German man-of-war Nixe, and in the course of a few days a warm friendship was established between the young officers of the two ships. Frequent visits were in order. Among the German officers there was one young man who thought—who knew—that he had mastered the whole English language in his short month in American waters. He was so sure of this that he hastened to exhibit his fluency whenever any of the American officers were about. This led to a trap which awoke the German somewhat rudely to a realisation of his error. He was on board the Portsmouth, conversing with a knot of officers, when a shower came up. 'This is quite a malignant storm,' he said, positively.

'Yes,' replied Ensign C., who stood near by, 'but it's only half as bad as it would be if it were twice as bad as it is,' a remark which caused the German to stare blankly at the speaker. He couldn't grasp it.

'Hey?' he finally said, with a dazed air.

'Oh! I merely remarked,' said C., 'that it might have been if it was, and it would have been if it could, but as it hadn't, it didn't—see?'

But the German didn't see. He edged his way slowly toward the gangway as though bereft of his senses. His eyes were glassy, his face was pallid and careworn. They never saw him again.

'I know my boy does not drink liquor,' said a dear but deceived mamma, 'because he has such an appetite for water every morning as soon as he's awake.'

MALVOLIO, WINNER OF THE MELBOURNE CUP.

AUCKLAND AMATEUR ATHLETIC AND 'CYCLE CLUB.

THE Auckland Amateur Athletic and 'Cycle Club, which is the strongest athletic institution in New Zealand, held its twenty-fourth carnival in the Domain Ground on Saturday, November 21st, when there were nearly five thousand spectators present. Besides the usual running, jumping, and 'cycling events, a somewhat novel display was given by fifty of the Maori boys of St. Stephen's Native Institution, who went through the dumbbell exercises and marching and counter-marching to music under the direction of their instructor, Professor Carrollo. It proved one of the best sights ever seen in Auckland.

The principal winner at the sports was JAMES H. BUCHANAN (the champion sprinter), who has a very pretty action, getting over the ground in an astonishing manner for so young a runner. Buchanan is not yet twenty years of age, and stands 5 feet 9 inches high, yet he has already made a name for himself on the running track, and gives promise of even better performances. Buchanan made his

F. W. Edwards, photo, Auckland.

J. C. HUTCHISON.

maiden effort at the last championship sports held in Auckland on February 6th and 7th, when he ran in the handicap events, but was unplaced with 7 yards in 120, and 8 yards in the 300. His next appearance was at the March sports of the Auckland Athletic Club, when he won the 100 yards with 3½ yards start in 10 2 5th sec, and the 200 yards with 7½ yards start in 20 2 5th sec. These placed Buchanan first for the Club's handsome Victor ludorum which he now holds. His third and latest appearance was at the last sports on November 21st, when by his performances he stamped himself as the fastest amateur sprinter in Auckland. He started no less than six times during the afternoon, viz, 100 yards championship, time to 10 4 5th sec (won hands down); 120 yards handicap (second heat), from the half yard mark, time 12 1 5th sec; 120 yards (final heat), time 12 1-5th sec; the run off of the dead heat in the 120 yards, time 12 1 5th sec; 220 yards handicap (second heat), from the 1 yard mark, time 23 2 5th (after being penalised 2 yards), the final heat of the 220 yards in 23 1-5th sec (many private watches made it 22 1-5th sec). In all these races, he finished first.

J. C. HUTCHISON is one of the best-known amateur runners in Auckland, particularly on account of his splendid run in the quarter-mile championship of New Zealand in February last, when, after one of the best races ever seen in Auckland, he was beaten by a stride by W. T. MacPherson, the New South Wales crack, in the good time of 50 2 5th sec. Hutchison's victories include a first in the 300 yards ladies' bracelet with 20 yards start on February 25th, 1888; second in quarter-mile with 22 yards on November 28th, 1888; third in quarter-mile with 5 yards on April 6th, 1889; first in quarter-mile with 10 yards in 53 4 5th sec. on November 30th, 1889; second in quarter-mile from scratch, being just beaten by J. Hill with 25 yards start in 51 1-5 sec.; first in quarter-mile from scratch on November 21st, 1891, in 53 4 5th sec. Hutchison also represented Auckland

C. Hemus, photo, Auckland.

H. DACRE.

at the New Zealand Championship meeting in 1889, but failed to distinguish himself. He has also been selected as one of the four to compose a New Zealand team to invade England next year, but it has not yet been definitely settled whether the tour will eventuate, but we are sure that should J. C. Hutchison measure strides with any of the English cracks we would have little fear of the New Zealander disgracing himself.

H. H. DACRE, the winner of the victor ludorum for 'cyclists at the last sports, is only a young rider, but gives great promise of becoming a fast pedlar. His victories on November 21st were first in the 1 and 3-mile, second in the 5-mile, and third in the 2-mile bicycle handicaps.

J. SELBY is a rider that has had very hard luck on the racing track. He started 'cycling in 1885, and has been a constant competitor at all the Club's sports. He is much faster on the road than on the grass track, and has established a 20 mile road record for Auckland, having ridden from Papakura to Auckland in 1hr. 29min. 35sec. Selby has ridden the same roadster machine, a 54-inch Rudge, since 1883. His victory in the 5-mile bicycle handicap at the last sports was a most popular one, and Selby was loudly cheered as he passed the winning post. Selby, who is well-built, and has a fine physique, unfortunately has the misfortune to be deaf and dumb.

A PICTURE OF THE SNAKE DANCE.

THE snake dances of the Moqui Indians have been frequently written about, but usually simply on hearsay evidence. It is seldom that any white man is allowed to be present at these ceremonies, but Captain Bourke, the notable exception, thus describes it.

The participants were composed of two bodies of men, thirty-six of whom danced with the snakes, and a smaller number who formed a chorus of singing men. These latter were the first to come upon the scene, and were dressed in bright-coloured embroidered kilts, sashes, anklets and beautifully tanned yellow fox skins hanging down behind the body. They bore small rattles in one hand, while in the other was held a stick, to which was fastened a couple of turkey feathers. This stick, they claim, carries the necessary protection of one's life and lets the snake's tutelary god know that none of his progeny will be injured or carried to remote lands.

These men made four or five circuits of the small plaza and then took up a position to the west side of it. In the centre of the plaza was a cottonwood shed. After they had arranged themselves in a state of extraordinary exaltation, the snake men came marching in with tremendous energy, as though inspired to bound across the mesa with a single stride.

These dancing men, like their predecessors, made four circuits around a large rock which stands in the centre of the plaza. They then faced the chorus and a song was gone through with. After this ceremony the snake men were divided into groups of three, and one from each three went into the cottonwood shed and extracted a snake from one of the logs, and, after putting it into his mouth, and firmly fixing it there with his teeth, he started on his round. His companion, with his arm around his neck, kept the tail of the snake in position with his left hand, while with his right, in which he carried a stick with two long feathers attached, he kept the serpent from becoming entangled in the hair of the dancer. The snake, after being carried around the circle, was thrown from the mouth, when the third member of the group gathered it up and carried it for the rest of the dance.

At times the serpents would try to make their escape, and would make a dash for liberty through the crowds which surrounded the dancers, and the spectators would scatter in all directions until the snakes were recaptured by the dancers and carried back into the circle and more securely held.

The visits to the shed were continued until at least 150 snakes had been brought from the enclosure, and all appeared to be in excellent condition judging from the manner in which they resisted capture after they had been dropped from the mouth. Two or three instances were noticed of large bull snakes being held by the neck and twining their bodies around the legs of the dancers. In one instance the snake had so entwined himself around the performer that he was unable to move for fear of falling. This predicament caused a great outburst of laughter, but it looked anything but funny to the dancer.

Those who danced with the snakes not unfrequently had three or four in the mouth at the same time, which, of all the performance, was the most repulsive. To see these naked human beings going around with the face completely hidden behind a mask of twisting and squirming snakes was enough to make the stoutest-hearted man shudder with disgust, yet the other members of the tribe greeted these manifestations with applause.

The applause of the spectators urged the dancers to greater feats, and as the dance proceeded the performance became most horrible to behold. Some of the dancers would take two large rattlers in the mouth at the same time, and as they slowly slung around the circle would chew on the living snakes until, in some instances, the serpents would fall to the ground completely bitten in two. One dancer, who appeared to be a leader, at one time had six serpents in his mouth, and the swinging ends of the reptiles made a gorgon appearance of his head as he whirled around the outer edge of the circle.

This ceremony lasted two hours, and when the dance was over the participants were thoroughly exhausted. While during the dance they had been upheld by the ecstatic condition, the reaction was terrible, and while there was no permanent injury to the dancers, it took several days for them to recuperate. This time was spent in sleeping and drinking a weak sort of broth made from the dead snakes which had perished in the ceremony. During this dance there is a peculiar lustre of the body and eyes which would indicate that the performers had been medicated and prepared for the ordeal through which they were about to pass. It was supposed by some that the rattlesnakes had been rendered harmless by the extraction of their fangs, but to show that such was not the case a dog was brought into the circle and was bitten by a snake. In a very short time the unfortunate animal was dead from the effects of the bite.

EGYPT.

IT is only of Egypt that one can say the country can be seen in its length and breadth from the deck of a vessel making a straight course. Egypt, familiar as it is to us, we hardly realise until we see it, is merely the valley of the Nile, which averages but two and a half miles wide on either bank. As the boat climbs the Nile against its three or four mile current from Cairo to the farthest point south that Tewfik Pasha can pretend to govern, or upon which he can levy tribute, the whole land can be spanned by the eye from our deck, and the present life and past monuments be seen by short excursions from our daily moorings.

Egypt, too, is a land not modern, though it exists, not complex nor of various aspects. It lived and led the world when life was simple. When life began to demand more variety it lagged behind, and now, when life is not supposed to be worth living without the utmost diversity and cosmopolitanism, Egypt, unable to afford but unity, drops back into something hardly of this world, almost prehistoric. It has no diversity of industries, contains no stirring population set one against the other by many and divergent in-

F. W. Edwards, photo, Auckland.

F. SELBY.

terests. It offers to the eye neither in landscape nor in architecture a variety suggestive of different ideas of beauty. The climate dictates imperiously but one mode of life. The Nile gives the inhabitants their soil and distributes it impartially and with chemical consistency from one end of Egypt to the other. It offers one mode of carriage to all, and even at this day there is but one railway for a few miles on the left bank, running its trains about the speed of the Nile current. It would seem that these old lands in the East have had their day, because our day demands a cosmopolitanism that they never have been able to give birth to or sustain. Even in population they seem unable to grow a modern city, a London or a Paris, that is, an unpatriotic mixture of every nation and temperament and of every phase of life.

Few foreign children are born there, and almost none at all reach maturity. When foreign blood is mixed with the Egyptian it is said to fade out of all effect in a generation or two and the old Egyptian blood is again pure. This is said to be the cause of the retention by the present Egyptian of so many of the traits of the men who figure in the ancient art on tomb and temple, in spite of what would ordinarily be almost overwhelming admixture of blood in the many invasions and conquests Egypt has suffered. Neither the villages nor the cities like Cairo and Alexandria have the least of the modern spirit, and the country of the Nile is as undiversified as the mud of which it is made, which forms the land and dictates its vegetable variety as it did 4,000 years ago.

F. W. Edwards, photo, Auckland.

J. H. BUCHANAN.

HER NEW DRESSMAKER.

Characters.

MRS FORBES, a young widow. MAJOR CHURNSIDE.

SCENE. *Drawing room at Mrs Forbes's. Easy chair L., chair R.C. Clock on mantel-piece, R. Other furniture at discretion.*

MRS FORBES (*enters*): 'I declare that dressmakers are the greatest nuisances in life—worse, far worse than even husbands, for when poor George was alive I could coax a new frock out of him with one-twentieth of the trouble it cost me to get it made. It was bad enough when the busines was in the hands of tradespeople, but now that dukes and duchesses have taken it up, one encounters all the vices peculiar to dressmakers with aristocratic *hauteur* and *nonchalance* thrown in. (*Sits, R.C.*) Everyone knows that the ducal house of *Cordelie et Compagnie* is the only place one can go to for garments; but it is much more difficult to get a new frock from them in a reasonable time, than to procure an invitation to their place in the country. After waiting for three whole weeks merely to *give* an order for a gown, I receive a note informing me that, if convenient—I presume to himself—their representative, Lord Adolphus Fitzculverin, will give himself the pleasure of dining with me this evening to talk the matter over. (*Rises.*) There's a pretty way of doing business! Makes me so nervous too; suppose the soup is cold, or the quails are overdone, he'll cut my stripes all wrong and I shall be ruined. Besides, its so embarrassing; how on earth can I talk to a lord about clothes? I shall have to dodge round the subject and lead up to it by degrees just as if I were trying to find out if his grandfather had been hanged for forgery; and all the time I shall feel conscious that he's taking me in from head to foot, and saying to himself, "My good woman, who on earth has clothed you up to now?" They all do that when you go to them for the first time, and it's very clever of them; but it always makes me so miserable and ashamed, that I feel I must cry out to them, "My good people, charge me *anything* you like, only make me fit to be looked at by you." Oh! dear (*sinking into chair*), I wish there were no such things as clothes in the world! (*Very slight pause.*) But no I don't, life would be very dull without the pleasure of cutting out one's best friends. Dear me (*looking at clock*), it's getting very late. I wonder what I have done with the ducal letter, for I've quite forgotten the time his lordship fixed for dinner, and oh—horrible thought!—I may have ordered it too soon! I had better go and look for the letter; now where on earth can I have put it?'

(*Exit.*)

MAJOR CHURNSIDE (*outside*). 'Oh, very well, I'll announce myself (*enters—his eyeglass has slipped round to his back—stops at door.*) What the deuce have I done with my eyeglass—and I as blind as a bat without it? Can't tell one person from another; never mind, here goes (*advancing to chair R.C. with outstretched hand.*) Ah, my dear Lady Segrave, how do you——? (*stops suddenly and examines the chair closely.*) Hullo, bad shot, nobody here! Ah! there she is (*advances to chair L.C., again stops short*). No; I verily believe there isn't a soul in the room. I wish people wouldn't have such deceptive furniture. (*Looks at his watch.*) It's strange that I should be the first arrival—a fortnight's invitation—that always means with her ladyship a dinner of twenty at least. Perhaps my watch is fast. (*Walks round and peers at the walls and furniture.*) House has been done up since I was here last. New decorations, new pictures, all the furniture shifted too. I don't like this playing at blindman's buff with the chairs and tables; it upsets a near-sighted man, especially when deprived by fate of his eyeglass. (*Sits down on chair R.C., after carefully examining it.*) Ah! Tom Churnside, my fine fellow, if you were only a married man instead of being a lonely bachelor your wife would be with you now, and you could see by deputy. Why am I not a married man? Well, the answer is simple enough, because I am single. But why am I single? Ah, why? If i hadn't quarrelled with little Kitty Thornhill before I went to India, and if she hadn't been in such a deuce of a hurry to marry a liverless, yellow-faced old Croesus, I might now——(*Sighs.*) Ah! it was a very little quarrel—I remember, and all about nothing too; I have often wondered if I was really in the right. We were going to a fancy-dress ball, I in uniform, she as a peasant. One evening—Jove! how it all comes back to me!—I had been dining with her people—her old aunt was reclining in an armchair as it might be there (*pointing*), sleeping off the effects of five courses and a bottle of Burgundy, and emitting gentle snores indicative of suppressed gout, while Kitty and I were—well, *very* comfortable in a remote corner. After a long interval of silence and—and—other matters, she at last said quite suddenly, "I have decided upon the colour of my frock for the ball." "Oh, have you?" said I. "Yes," said she, "I am going to wear pink." I shuddered. (*Rises*) "Surely, Kitty darling," said I, "you won't do anything so dreadful as that." "What do you mean?" said she; "I certainly shall wear pink, it suits me." "Oh, but," said I, "can't you see it doesn't suit *me*." "But *you* are not going to wear it," said she. "No, not exactly," said I; "but you don't understand. I shall be in uniform, scarlet,"—I was very proud of my uniform in those days—"we shall be seen together a great deal, for of course you will give me most of the dances, and think, oh think, how your pink frock will kill my scarlet coat; and I would as lief you killed me as my coat." Well, we had a heated discussion; I implored her to give way, but she resolutely refused, until at last, drawing myself up to my full height, I said with all the dignity I could command, "Katherine, the woman who does not respect the Queen's uniform is unworthy to be a soldier's bride." She laughed, and I left; and from that day we have never met. (*Sits in chair L.*) That peasant's dress killed her love and coloured my life.'

MRS FORBES (*enters at door—aside*): 'Oh! There's my ducal dressmaker (*coming forward—aloud*) How do you do? So glad to have the pleasure of meeting you (*shakes hands—half starts*).'

MAJOR C. (*starts up, aside after peering at her*): 'I'll swear that's not Lady Seagrave—a guest, I suppose, she's deuced friendly.'

MRS F. (*aside*): 'What a wonderful resemblance to dear old Tom Churnside—it quite startled me. However, to business. We must not waste time, but come to frocks without delay. (*Aloud*) Won't you be seated?' (*They both sit.*)

MAJOR C.: 'Thank ye! (*aside*) Seems quite at home here; how strangely her voice reminds me of Kitty!'

MRS F. (*aside*): 'What on earth shall I say? (*Aloud—abstractedly*) What a remarkably fine day it has been?'

MAJOR C. (*absently*): 'Eh, oh! remarkably. (*Aside, looks at watch*) It's about time some of the others turned up. I wish I had eaten more lunch.'

MRS F. (*aside*): 'Oh, I know. (*Aloud*) How charming the Row begins to look with the summer dresses!'

MAJOR C.: 'Oh, ah! charming.'

MRS F.: 'I suppose business is pretty brisk with you just now?'

MAJOR C. (*turns quickly*): 'Eh?'

MRS F.: 'Oh, I beg your pardon. I mean—I presume your professional engagements are somewhat engrossing at present.'

MAJOR C. (*aside*): 'Anyone would think I was the greengrocer come to wait. (*Aloud*) Well, no! I can't say they take up much of my time just now. We men, you know, are such material creatures. At this particular hour of the day our thoughts are ever centred on one engrossing subject, and one only, dinner.'

MRS F. (*annoyed, aside*): 'How vulgar! Won't talk business until he has fed; but he shall; I'll make him. (*Aloud, sweetly*) I thought perhaps you would like to have a little chat while we are waiting.'

MAJOR C. (*aside*): 'Wants to flirt! Well, I'm willing. (*Turns to her and assumes an engaging manner*) Shall be charmed, I'm sure.'

MRS F.: 'Well, I want you to tell me what you think of the little gown I'm wearing. It was one of Madame Celise's; only of course I cannot expect *you* to admire it.'

MAJOR C. (*not looking at the dress but at her*): 'My dear madam, I think it is unworthy of its wearer.'

MRS F. (*aside*): 'I knew he'd say that—they always do. (*Aloud, smiling*) Well I dare say we shall be able to do better in the future.'

MAJOR C.: 'I sincerely trust so—charms such as yours require perfect millinery—no, no! I mean they are worthy of perfection.' (*twirls his moustache with a self-satisfied air.*)

MRS F. (*aside*): 'Rather strong, but I suppose its all in the way of business. (*Aloud*) Do you think walking dresses will be worn short or long this season? They are so much more becoming short, don't you think so?'

MAJOR C. (*puzzled*): 'Oh! ah! That, I think, depends mainly on the wearer; but as regards yourself, if I may form a conclusion from the imperfect data available (*peering at her foot which obtrudes*) I should say that short frocks would make your attractions deadly.' (*again twirls his moustache.*)

MRS F. (*very annoyed, rising and taking stage*). 'This is too much! Lord or no Lord, I will not submit to fulsome nonsense from my dressmaker.'

MAJOR C. (*aside*): 'She's put out. Well, why couldn't she let me alone? She would flirt; and how can a man pay delicate compliments when he is as empty as a drum?'

MRS F. (*aside*); 'I suppose I must put up with it; but I'll serve him out; he shan't be paid for years!'

MAJOR C. (*aside, looking at watch*). 'Eight o'clock and nobody else come. Shall we ever have dinner, I wonder?'

MRS F. (*seated*): 'Now what do you say to our having a little talk about my new evening frock?'

MAJOR C. (*aside*): 'Confound her frock. I want my dinner. (*Aloud, politely*) Anything, my dear madam, that interests you interests me.'

MRS F. (*looking at her notes*): 'Well, then, this is my idea, and I shall be so glad to hear if you approve of it. I thought that (*speaking quickly*) I should like the jupe to be of some pale shade of *crepe de Chine*, draped with *point d'Alencon*; the corsage and train to be of old brocade, lined with *poult de soie* of a contrasting *nuance* and bordered with a *ruche* of ostrich feathers; the corsage to be cut low with *revers à la Directoire* and opening over a vest of *passementerie*; and I'm not quite certain about a *Medici* collar. There, what do you think of that?'

MAJOR C. (*aside*): 'What intolerable jargon! She's got dress on the brain. (*Aloud*) Very nice, very nice indeed, only to tell you the truth I found it a little difficult to follow.'

MRS F. (*eagerly*): 'Oh, never mind, I'll run through it again. The jupe to be of some pale shade of . . .'

MAJOR C. (*interrupting*): 'Oh, no, no, *please* don't trouble! A clear realisation of the conception has struck me like a flash of lightning. It is a grand—a magnificent idea, a millinery epic, a landscape in lace! (*Aside*) Will nothing stop her? I'm faint from exhaustion and want of food.'

MRS F.: 'Is there any alteration you can suggest?'

MAJOR C. (*quickly*): 'Nothing, I assure you, nothing; to alter would be to spoil. What! as the poet says, "Add another tint unto the rose!"—I mean the rose. (*Aside*) She's reducing me to idiocy.'

MRS F. (*aside*): 'He certainly has excellent taste. (*Aloud*) Well, now we must discuss the question of colour.'

MAJOR C. (*Aside*). 'Oh, good heavens! I'm getting desperate. (*Aloud*). 'Oh, ah! of course colour—a very interesting subject. What do you say to pink with scarlet trimmings? Very tasty, don't you think? (*She looks surprised*) Don't like that? (*Speaks wildly* Very well then, scarlet with pink trimmings; nor that? (*She stares*) Then pink and scarlet without any trimmings at all, or either with both or neither with nothing. It really doesn't matter now, it all happened so long ago.'

MRS F. (*Aside*). Scarlet and pink, long ago! what is the man talking about?'

MAJOR C. 'Don't like any of them! Well then, try something else, any colour you please. (*Aside*) Poor Kitty! Scarlet and pink.'

MRS F. (*aside*): 'He's very strange in his manner. He must have been drinking! It's really too shocking! (*Aloud, rising and going up*) I think, sir, it would perhaps be advisable for me to leave you until the effects of your luncheon have disappeared.'

MAJOR C.: 'My luncheon, madam! Give you my word I feel at this moment as if I had not lunched for years. Ah! I see, you fancy that I'm a little—eh? very natural on your part, for hunger and emotion have so upset me that I daresay I have been talking rather wildly. The fact is that your voice and manner remind me strangely of one from whom I parted long ago; it was those very colours, scarlet and pink, that drove us asunder, and some irresistible impulse forced them to my lips. My coat and her frock declined as it were to be on speaking terms, and both our hearts were drawn into the quarrel' (*goes L.*).

MRS F. (*aside*): 'It's very strange. That's exactly how Tom and I came to quarrel, and he's so absurdly like Tom; but he is, he must be, Lord Adolphus, or he wouldn't be here. (*Aloud coming down*) Surely I have the honour of addressing Lord Adolphus Fitzculverin?'

MAJOR C.: 'I think not—of course I speak subject to correction—but I have always been led to believe that my name was Churnside, Major Thomas Churnside, of the Bengal Staff Corps.'

MRS F. (*joyfully*): 'It *is* Tom! Oh, Tom, don't you know me? Can't you see who I am?'

MAJOR C. (*aside*): 'Coming to Christian names now; well, of all the forward flirts—(*aloud, looking for glass*) Know you? well, if you have such a thing as a No. 5 eyeglass about you I will answer the question at once, but if not'—(*turning away a little as if to look for glass*).

MRS F. (*sees it hanging at his back and takes hold of it*): 'There's your eyeglass!'

MAJOR C. (*turning round quickly*). 'Where?'

MRS F. (*giving it to him*). 'Here!'

MAJOR C. 'Eh? Oh! Thank you; and now, madam, to answer your question. (*Fixes it in eye*) By Jove, it's Kitty! This is a joyful surprise. (*Shaking both her hands*) How very glad I am to see you again after all these years—and you are you a little pleased to see an old—h'm—friend?'

MRS F. 'Yes, indeed, very. (*Speaking impressively*) Do you know I burnt that pink frock directly you left the house?'

MAJOR C. 'How sweet of you! and I exchanged into the Rifles the next day for the sake of the uniform.'

MRS F. 'How noble of you! (*Hesitatingly*) I hope—that is—is Mrs Churnside in town?'

MAJOR C. (*laughs*): 'Mrs Churnside! That lady's existence is still in the cloudy regions of the future. But Mr Forbes, is he quite well?'

MRS F. (*joyfully*): 'Oh, he's dead! (*Recollecting*) I mean, alas! he is no more.'

MAJOR C.: 'Hurray! (*Putting his arm round her waist* But I say, Kitty, what are you doing here?'

MRS F. (*looking at arm and disengaging herself*): 'Receiving in my own house a decidedly forward visitor. And pray, sir, what do you mean by passing yourself off as Lord Adolphus?'

MAJOR C.: 'Your house—Lord Adolphus! Kitty, this is too much for a hungry man. I came here to dinner at the invitation of Lady Segrave.'

MRS F.: 'My next-door neighbour; so you've come to the wrong house. Now for my explanation: do you know I mistook you for my new dressmaker!'

MAJOR C.: 'Oh, I say, Kitty (*turning round as if to show himself*) *do* I look like a dressmaker?'

MRS F.: 'You silly fellow, I mean a fashionable man milliner.'

MAJOR C.: 'Oh, that's what I look like, is it? Well, I suppose it's all right—dress parted us, and after all these years it is dress that brings us together again.'

MRS F.: 'Yes, and as it's now too late for you to go elsewhere, and as Lord Adolphus has evidently forgotten his engagement, you had better stop here, eat his dinner and talk about old times; so come, take me down (*takes his arm*).'

MAJOR C. (*dragging her to the door*): 'My dear Kitty, I'm starving.'

(*Exeunt hurriedly.*)

W. R. WALKES.

THE LITTLE LOVERS.

I THINK she has fallen asleep in the shade,
(Sing low, sing low—you'll awake her).
Oh, she's the loveliest little maid:
And her father's our family baker.

Such beautiful buns and chocolate cakes
(Sing low, very low—you'll alarm her);
And oh, such elegant tarts he makes!
And his name is Joshua Farmer.

And her sweet name is Elinor Jane
And her step is as light as a feather:
And we meet every day in the lilac lane,
And we go to school together.

And now and then she brings me a bun
(Sing low or she'll hear what we're saying),
And after school, when our tasks are done,
In the meadows were fond of straying.

And I make her a wreath of cowslips there,
As we sit in the blossoming clover,
And then she binds it around her hair,
And twines it over and over.

She's ten; I'm six; but I'm as tall
As she is, I guess, or nearly;
And I cannot say that I care for her doll,
But oh, I do love her dearly.

We are tired of playing at king and queen
(Sing low, for we must not awake her),
And she fell asleep in the grass so green;
And I thought that I wouldn't forsake her.

And when I am grown to a big tall man,
I mean to be smart and clever;
And then I will marry her if I can,
And we'll live upon tarts forever.

A SERVIAN STORY.

IN the year 1732, two Englishmen were overtaken at the small Servian village of Meduegna, by a courier riding post, sent by the British minister at the Sultan's court, desiring them to wait in whatsoever place the order might find them, until the arrival of important dispatches to be placed in the hands of the home government.

The courier having overtaken them was to continue on his way to Belgrade, and there cause to be prepared for their use a swift boat, well provisioned, to speed them up the Danube on their way to Vienna.

The halt at Meduegna was exceedingly vexatious to these travellers. The village was at no great distance from Belgrade where detention would have been less wearisome; that city being then for a brief period in the hands of the Austrians, who were making considerable additions to its fortifications.

One of our gentlemen was a young nobleman, who had been attached to the British embassy at Constantinople. He was now out of health and on his way to England. He had attached to his service, as medical adviser and friend, an older man named Dugan, a sort of surgical Dalgetty. Dugan came originally from the 'North Countree.' He had gone out to India as a ship's surgeon, had been in the employ of one of the native princes, had served the Turks in Egypt, could speak a variety of Oriental languages (all with his native burr), had had innumerable adventures, and could recount them to perfection. Lord Loftus had met him in Constantinople. He was an enthusiast in medicine and had seen much Eastern practice outside of the common range of a medical education, in which, however, he had taken his regular diploma in some Dutch university.

In this vexatious halt upon the plains of Servia, he showed the useful qualities of an old campaigner. He made his lordship comfortable in the best house (bad was that best) in the village; that of the *nachalnik* or titular head grandfather of the community. That a girl, fresh, pretty, shapely, and in picturesque costume waited upon them was a point in favour of their quarters. Their travelling commissariat was not a bad one; the doctor was skilled in cookery, and, like Mark Tapley, was jolliest in adversity. He represented the life and energy of the partnership, for Lord Loftus was dejected, hypochondriac, and variable.

There were Roman ruins in the neighbourhood, and after dinner, on the second day, the doctor proposed to visit them. Lord Loftus was indifferent to Roman ruins, but rather than be left to his own society, he consented to go and look at them.

Our Englishmen soon stood among broken masonry upon some rising ground overlooking wide, green plains, bounded by illimitable forests, through which roved countless herds of savage Servian swine. They picked up some bits of Roman pottery, and were turning to go home, when they heard voices. The doctor, who felt responsible for the safety of his lordship, motioned him back with his hand, while he, himself, creeping along the base of a broken wall, drew near enough to the speakers to overhear them.

There was nothing to alarm him. The voice was that of their handmaiden, Sterna, but it was well to ascertain what she was saying, as she might be giving information about them to some *heyduc*, *klept*, or robber. The doctor drew out his horse pistol, and felt for the hilt of his Persian sabre.

It was not long, however, before he made out that the young man by her side was but a harmless lover. He would have retired at once, or have summoned his friend to look with him on the handsome couple standing side by side, had he not noticed a mysterious figure lying at full length in the grass with eyes that glittered as they were fixed on the lovers.

'Sterna,' said a young man's voice, 'how long do these Englishmen remain with you?'

'They do not know, Anton; at least so I heard the *kawass*, who is in attendance on them, tell my uncle.'

'Sterna, is it not for admiration of thy bright eyes that they linger here at Meduegna?' One would think that English *gospodars* would push on to Belgrade.'

'Oh, Anton, no! They do not even notice me. They have nothing to say to me. What am I but a poor girl?'

The doctor smiled. He knew that the little coquette was not telling the simple truth to her lover. Some little innocent passages of mutual admiration had already been exchanged with her by both Englishmen.

'You have no right, Anton—' she resumed.

'No! I have no *right!*' he said, vehemently. 'We are not betrothed, my Sterna, but I am jealous of every man who looks at thee. O! my beloved, I am so unhappy. I dare not ask thee for thy love. I dare not speak to thy uncle. I am even hurting thy good name, my Sterna, by these meetings. I cannot ask you to share the trouble I dread daily. I walk under a cloud of darkness. I have a sorrow that thou must not share.'

'I am willing to share it, Anton, could that help thee. I am poor and an orphan, but I am true and strong. You have known me since we were children and kept the goats together.'

'And loved thee, Sterna, and hoped to marry thee—aye, *vowed* to marry thee—until my sorrow came. It was three years ago, O Sterna!' Here his voice sank. 'Thine uncle, our *nachalnik*, thought I was too fond of thee and sent me away to Kassova. I served there six months. There was a visitation in Kassova: the vampires. Many people died. And, Sterna, one night a vampire came up to the loft in which I slept and sucked my blood. I woke, all weak and dazed. I think I never since have been the same. It was the *heyduc* Milloc, who, in life, had been my friend. He had been dead three weeks. I cursed him, Sterna. I denounced him. I ate dirt off his grave. I had him dug up from the church-yard. I smeared my body with his blood. He was fresh and undecayed. He bled when they cut into him. When they drove a sharp stake through his breast, he gave a groan. They burned him to ashes, Sterna, and they wanted to deal with me for sorcery.'

The doctor here could hear the poor girl sob.

'Oh! Anton,' she said at last, 'did he give you any wound when he sucked you?'

'No, Sterna. Vampires give no wounds. Not one was given in Kassova. Are you shrinking away from me, my Sterna? I fled. You know I joined a band that raided on the Turks. The people of Kassova died like murrained sheep. They dug up many bodies. All were like that of Milloc. My comrades of our band said I was very brave. I only wanted to find lawful death in battle. They said, at last, I had a "horned skin." That is, that no lead or steel could enter me. I came home last year to my father's farm, now mine, since he is dead. I saw thee—thee so beautiful, my little love. If thou hadst had a dower, Sterna, I should have found thee married. There was still hope for me, for I am rich. "But no!" I said; "Sterna shall never give herself to one over whose head there trembles such a curse. One who, unless the curse runs out, may prove a vampire." And yet I am so jealous, Sterna! I am jealous of Black Stefan. I am jealous of the Englishmen. I suffer the torments of the damned when any lover speaks to thee.'

'Oh no, Anton, be not jealous. The strangers will soon go away. God send their horses wings. As to Black Stefan—couldst thou think it? Stefan never shall marry me. My uncle willingly would give me to thee—'

'Come, my lord,' said Dugan; 'I have heard enough, and what I heard is very curious. I will tell you about it as we walk back. I must know more upon the subject they were speaking of. In the interests of science and humanity, it is my duty to investigate a degrading superstition.'

As they turned to go away, he called out, loudly:

'Good-night, Sterna! I have heard what Anton told you. Let him come to me to-morrow, and I will give him a Frank spell which will keep him in all safety. And, Sterna,' he added, 'have a care. A man of your own people has been watching you as well as I.'

After this, the doctor and Lord Loftus went down the hill-side, crossed the plain, passed through some plum orchards, now a mass of snowy blossoms, and went home to try plum brandy and the native wine, which they pronounced well worthy of exportation.

'That vampire superstition is a very queer thing,' said the doctor meditatively, when, over their wine, he told Anton's story.

'I thought vampires are big bats,' said Lord Loftus, indifferently.

'So they are in natural history. But *these* vampires are ghosts of the most malignant kind. All other ghosts are harmless. These are the remnant of a belief among the Greeks and Romans. The harpies were some kin to them. The Dark Ages, of course, took all the poetry out of the Greek superstition. Every man who dies a vampire has a mania for coming back to earth of nights and biting the back of the neck of his best friend, who dies in what I suppose to be a fit, a few weeks later. After which, so long as the corpse is fresh, he bites, sucks and bewitches others. About five years since, they had an awful experience of vampires at Kassova. I should like to ride over there and ask some questions.'

'I could not spare you even for one day,' answered his lordship. 'Our route may come at any moment. And as to biting and sucking, any man might dream he was bitten by a big bat, who sleeps in Servia.'

Before going to rest, the doctor cut a slip of parchment from a MS. he was taking to England, and set himself to remember an old school spell:

A. B. R. A. C. A. D. A. B. R. A.
B. R. A. C. A. D. A. B. R.
R. A. C. A. D. A. B.
A. C. A. D. A.
C. A. D.
A.

Then he folded it, wrapped it in Persian silk, and suspended it by a string.

'It must be worn around the neck and never parted with,' he said to Anton, the next morning. 'If you wish to get rid of it, it must be burned and its ashes flung into running water. Which ever way we take it,' he added in English, showing it to Lord Loftus,' across, down one side, up the other, across any line beginning with the first letter and running up to the last, it forms the magic word, "Abracadabra."'

The delight of Sterna was extreme. She was ready to fall at the doctor's feet and kiss his slippers.

It was early summer. The haying season was at its height, and Anton was afield before day-break. About noon, the hay-cart, with its wide horned oxen, was seen coming into the barn-yard of Sterna's uncle. Anton stood on the load, waving his cap at Sterna. The Englishmen were sitting under a plum-tree, there being few attractions in a Servian cottage for anyone who can find fresh air and quiet out of doors.

Suddenly the oxen jerked the cart into a rut; they saw Anton waver; then he lost his balance and fell under the wheels.

Before the doctor could reach the spot, there was a little crowd around the fallen man. They carried him insensible into his own cottage. They undressed him to find a wound when, round his neck, they found a mysterious bag that was not a scapulary. Black Stefan mingled with the crowd, and whispered, 'Sorcery.' He reminded his fellow-villagers of what had well nigh been forgotten: that Anton Vrosh had been in Kassova during the vampire days.

'And that,' he added, pointing to the package, 'is witchcraft. It is a spell given to him yesterday by the Frank *hakim*. Do not let that man approach his corpse.'

Here Doctor Dugan, eager to succour the poor man, was hustled with angry looks out of the cottage.

Long after dark, the doctor, reading in his room, was roused by a low tap against his shutter. It was Sterna. She told him that Black Stefan had been with her, threatening to repeat every word of Anton's confession on the hill-side, unless she promised to be his wife before St John's Eve.

'If he tells them,' she exclaimed, 'my Anton will have a stake thrust through his heart! He will be burnt to ashes! He will be refused Christian burial!'

'What cruelty!' cried the doctor, 'they must not do that! I am not sure that the man is dead. Has any doctor seen him?'

'No,' she said, 'there are no doctors nearer than Belgrade. There are none in our district.'

'Then send to Belgrade without loss of time,' he said, 'or insist that I must see him.'

Sterna hurried away eagerly. The village magnates laughed her to scorn. The doctor had followed her, and stood among them.

'I believe,' he said, 'the man is in a trance, caused by cerebral excitement. It is a case of suspended animation. I have seen such things before. Once, in India—'

Here the assembly interrupted him. All the effect the doctor's speech produced was to make them think him a dangerous magician. The sooner Anton Vroch's corpse was disposed of, the better for everybody. The doctor took Sterna by the hand, and was leading her away, when the men gathered round them and barred their passage.

The corpse had been put into the bell-tower, a structure apart from the church, standing on a knoll beyond the village. There, it was decreed that the doctor and Sterna should also be shut up for the night, while a guard, under Black Stefan, kept watch outside.

In vain Dr. Dugan begged to communicate with Lord Loftus. No favours were shown him.

The corpse lay on a board. Its colour was but little changed, and the usual stiffness of death was only in the feet and fingers.

Sterna crouched from it as far as possible. The doctor bent over the dead man and examined him carefully. He applied his lancet, and a drop of blood came.

'Sterna,' he said, 'get up. Take wood and light a blazing fire on the hearth.

She did so. The employment roused her. For an hour the doctor laboured over the dead man. At last a quiver came over his eyelids.

'He lives! Behold, Sterna, he lives!' the doctor cried.

To his surprise, instead of joy, her feelings seemed of terror.

'Oh! what will become of him—of me?' she cried. 'They will not let us live among them. Whither shall we go? Men, when afraid become so cruel. We had better both be dead!'

That this would be the tragic end of their love story had never crossed the doctor's imagination.

'Oh!' she cried, 'they will say it is all witchcraft! We shall be burned for sorcery!'

At this moment, a noise above them attracted their attention. At one of the high windows appeared a human head.

'I see a ladder yonder; put it up and get me down.' said Lord Loftus, roused to energy.

'Go away, my lord!' cried Dugan. 'This is a more serious scrape than you suppose.'

'Sterna, put that ladder here, or I shall jump, and break my bones!' said the young nobleman.

'Now, let me help you,' he said, as he stood beside the doctor. 'Scrape or no scrape, I am in it, too. Make haste and bring the man to himself. Assistance, I hope, is close at hand. Our gnards are snoring. I emptied all our laudanum into their plum brandy.'

The rest is soon told. Within half an hour there was a sound of horses' feet. Lord Loftus ran up the ladder and waved a lighted firebrand. The troop halted. Lord Loftus directed his own *kawass*, whom he had sent to hurry up the escort with his dispatches, where to find Black Stefan, who lay stupified, and in whose pocket were the keys.

The door was thrown open. Two horses, with empty saddles, were led up.

'Come, doctor,' cried Lord Loftus, 'pick up your dead man. I presume, in your profession, you are not afraid to ride into the dark with a corpse before you.'

Anton wrapped in the *kabanitza*, or warm peasant's coat of the *kawass*, was lifted on a horse, and held there till the doctor mounted and put his arms about him. Then Sterna was lifted to Lord Loftus's arms. Off and away. The men were *janissaries*, who hated Servian peasants, and entered with spirit into the joke of carrying off a Servian girl and her half dead lover.

The party were pursued and nearly overtaken before they reached Belgrade, but they clattered over the draw-bridge and the men who pursued them were left outside the city.

However, at Vienna, it proved difficult to get Anton and Sterna married. The former had completely lost, what is called in France, his *état civil*. In Austria, then mistress of Servia, he was, to all intents and purposes, a dead man, and as such, not marriageable. The best that could be done was to have them married by the chaplain of the English embassy.

They could not stay in Vienna. Lord Loftus and the doctor found them a serious encumbrance to their journey until they reached a Dutch port and found a ship in which they embarked them, provided with ample means, for their settlement in America.

In due season they reached the Chesapeake. There they landed. Anton Vrosh became Anthony Rosh, as soon as his name appeared upon a list of Maryland taxpayers. His decendants are called Ross. There are a good many of them on the eastern shore.

TELLING THE BEES.

OUT of the house where the slumberer lay,
Grandfather came one summer day,
And under the pleasant orchard trees
He spake this wise to the murmuring bees:
'The clover bloom that kissed her feet
And the posy bed where she used to play
Have honey store, but none so sweet
As ere our little one went away.
O bees, sing soft, and bees, sing low,
For she is gone who loved you so!'

A wonder fell on the listening bees
Under those pleasant orchard trees,
And in their toil that summer day
Ever their murmuring seemed to say;
'Child, O child, the grass is cool
And the posies are waking to hear the song
Of the bird that swings by the shaded pool,
Waiting for one that tarrieth long!'
'Twas so they called to the little one then,
As if to call her back again.

O gentle bees, I have come to say
That grandfather fell asleep to day,
And we know by the smile on grandfather's face
He has found his dear one's hiding place.
So bees, sing soft, and bees sing low,
As over the honey fields you sweep;
To the trees abloom and the flowers a-blow
Sing of grandfather fast asleep;
And ever beneath these orchard trees
Find cheer and shelter, gentle bees.

EUGENE FIELD.

POWDER AND PUFF.

HERE was a jaunty air about the seedy man as he came in with a roll of manuscript under his arm. A rosebud was pinned daintily on the shiny lapel of his coat, and he swept the little room with a most gallant bow.

'Been in ladies' society to-night?'

'Yes, you noticed my bow, of course. Curiously enough, gentlemen, after I have been in ladies' society my gallantry is noticeable sometimes for a week. I was a gallant once. No, I do not need to look in the glass, but there was a time when I had a calf that graced a silk stocking, and I could pace a minuet with the best. *Ay de mi!* The calf has gone, gentlemen; let us drink to the departed calf.'

'A pretty rose she gave you.'

'Yes. Nature's own decoration; symbol of everything that is pure; and like all pure things sometimes the badge of everything that is false. A lady bestowed this order on me. It was a lady gave the badge of the highest honour in England.'

'Are you often taken like this?'

'No, unfortunately, it is but seldom this dingy lapel knows the caress of a dainty flower, and yet—and yet——'

'What?'

'It does seem harsh to say it, but her neck and shoulders were a study in chalk; her face was a pastel, with a long a. It was behind the scenes. I called to see the leading man about a play, and as I sat in the greenroom she came in and struck a pose before the long looking-glass. She rubbed off a little dab of powder from her nose. Gentlemen, one touch of powder makes all women kin. She looked superb, but when she gave me her hand, it had a gentle white roughness on the back that stopped the magnetism. She was fixing a bunch of roses at her corsage. She had torn an envelope off and thrown it in pieces on the floor. But she wore the flowers. Her lips had a redder tinge than nature ever gave, even in poetry. One of the roses dropped. I picked it up. She took it in her ivory hand, and with a little smile thanked me and gave it back. Ah me! The coquetry of a woman! I pinned it in my coat, and have felt like bowing ever since.'

'Perhaps she was struck with your gallantry.'

'No. It was simply the nature of the ordinary woman. A woman is never unwilling to make an impression on a man. Then she swept out of the room and went on the stage.'

'Why do actresses make up so much?'

'Well, partly for sensible reasons and partly because they are women. I think women learn to paint their faces from an infantine study of dolls. Mothers always give girl babies dolls about the first thing, and they go and get a wax figure with dabs of red on its cheeks and lips, and sometimes on its forehead and a shiny tow wig. The child gets her first impression of what can be done in making a human face pretty by looking at the doll. It might be all right if the baby did not invariably in kissing the doll imbibe, to speak delicately, the complexion, but she finds it is not real, and when she grows up and she does not look very well some morning she remembers the doll, and dabs a little rouge and powder on her cheeks.'

'There's something in that.'

'The women of Oriental nations paint. It has been so from the beginning of the world. In ancient Babylon they sold face powder warranted not to wipe off. There were manicures in Pompeii and hair stores in Herculaneum, and the girls of Carthage, I doubt not, painted their eyes with sloes, and—who knows—never washed their faces. But in the Orient women do not paint to hide the bad complexion; they paint purely for decoration. It is bad artistic taste, not deceit.'

'I guess so.'

'Why do actresses make up? Well, in all the days of the drama, from tallow and dips, through the development of oil and gas, up to the present, I suppose, it was necessary for appearance. The most brilliant complexion looked dark in the light. Now that we have electricity there is not so much need for make up; but it is a kind of disguise, I suppose. It would not do if things on the stage were what they seem. That is why so many men fall in love with actresses, and so few marry them. Now, what can you tell about an actress, when she is on the stage, even if she can't act. You know as well as I do that the lines and peculiarities of the face are very important guides to character. There are few things so potent as a dimple and a woman's chin, and when you see that smiling sign of good nature on the stage and become attracted to its owner it is rather trying to find she has washed it off when you are introduced to her in the real world.'

'It is kind of disappointing.'

'And as to hair—well—anyway, in ordinary life you have to be introduced to a woman at least twice—once with her hat on and again with her hat off—before you know her. And sometimes you need to be introduced to her every time she gets a new bonnet. To tell you the truth, gentlemen, the developments of civilisation are so confusing that I don't see how anybody is going to be identified if it goes much farther.'

'I guess we'll always know you.'

'I hope so—I hope so. You shall be my friends just the same when I reach that pinnacle of fame——'

'How are you going to get there?'

'Hush! You see that roll of paper? That is my masterpiece. Some day——'

'Tell us about it.'

'Some other time, gentlemen. It is very depressing behind the scenes of a theatre at a great play. Fancy Theodora in a small square room with walls all stained, seated on a stool before a looking-glass about two feet square. Trunks all around, skirts thrown on one side, dresses hanging up, an assortment of hares feet, powder puffs and camel's hair brushes on a little board table, with a piece of cloth or a piece of paper covered with powder and shades of rouge, and little spots of black where she has laid the implement she has used to pencil her eyes and eyebrows. Strange, gentlemen, is the thought that the spirit of a great Empress can develop itself, even in this cramped-up, disorderly, cubbyhole, and that a woman can spring from this motley gathering of sublunary and practical details of personal appearance to carry an audience into perfect illusion of tragic passion. Go to! After all, the smell and the flavour are all we want out of the dantiest viands; there is a plain, ordinary, everyday patent for freezing ice-cream, and it is only the cook who never eats with any comfort. The flowers grow out of the earth; nobody cares to look upon the wine when it is sour; the beauty of the Burgundy is sometimes killed by the taste of the cork; everything in life is illusion and the illusion of the moment. God be good to us! the five senses are all we have, and we can't trust them always.'

'You are pessimistic.'

'No; only I thought as I watched this beautiful creature posing before the glass in the green-room, how much illusion there was in the world, and how much attraction there could be in things, if only they had been created so. If this vision had been genuine, it might have cheered my lonely longing for the lovely, but it made me feel sad, that the beautiful could be so unreal, the unreal so beautiful.'

'She seems to have hit you pretty hard with that rose.'

'No. She is a product of the drama, the drama is a product of her. Men and women have never been satisfied with the way they have been created; never will be. Most people are satisfied with themselves, but they are not satisfied with other people. So they developed dramatists to create people that agreed with their imagination. When a dramatist does that he makes money. When he doesn't he is no good. Dramatists created new figures, actors dressed them up, and the dressing became popular. When the dramatists found that out they created more people that could be dressed up. Even old Shylock was never so popular as after Henry Irving made him a swell financier. And now the people in plays are more dress than character—just as they are in real life, for that matter. Gentlemen, the modern drama is a kind of 'spring opening,' and Sarah Bernhardt leads the world of millinery almost as much as she leads the world of acting.'

The rose fell from his button-hole as he gesticulated. He stooped and picked it up. He looked at it for a moment.

'See,' he said sadly. 'Her rose has powder on it too.'

And he picked up his hat and his manuscript and wandered out into the night.

PETER ROBERTSON.

REFORM IN WOMAN'S DRESS.

A MOVEMENT was started over forty years ago to agitate reform in woman's dress. The first attempt in the direction of reform was made during the spring of 1851, when the 'Bloomer costume' became quite common in some localities not only on the street but in the New England factories. In Boston an editor of that day states that in walking from School-street to Boylston-street, which is not over half a mile, he counted thirty-two young ladies dressed in the 'Bloomer style.'

We have reproduced here an illustrated portrait from a fashion book of July, 1851, about which the editor states:—'The engraving which we give herewith our artist has represented from life, it being the portrait of a lady who passed by our office up Tremont-street, and represents her dress precisely as she wore it. It was a regular "Bloomer," and created not a little surprise and excitement among the lookers on.' He further states that 'in anticipation of the general adoption of this mode of dress we see that a New York house has recently transmitted an order to Paris for an invoice of dress goods, with a deep border on the side. These goods are intended for ladies' short dresses, and the width of the cloth will comprise the length of the skirts. The skirt comes a little below the knee and buttons in front; the waist is cut plain and also buttons in front. The border extends around the skirt, and in front to the button of the waist, the latter being cut to have the border form the letter "V." The trousers are made loose, gathered into a band at the ankle. This will prove a change of dress indeed, but we do not look to see it generally adopted by any means. The press have encouraged it because it is so bold and laughable; public taste will soon condemn it, however.'

We reproduce this matter at the present time because the subject of reform in dress is being agitated extensively, and an innovation is proposed during the coming season. It makes little difference how successful it may be; the question of reform in dress will continue to be agitated, simply because there is room for such a reform, especially among factory girls. The long skirts are dangerous, besides being no ornament to the wearer; and it is surprising that some genius has not long before this devised a factory dress for girls, as most factories are now supplied with good dressing-rooms, it would be a very easy matter to don such a dress, and remove it when leaving work. A dress could be devised that would be much more comfortable to the wearer than the one now worn, and much less dangerous when working around gearing and shafting. We are living in a progressive age when sentimental notions are being buried without regret, and some one should take hold of the matter of the factory girl's dress and devise something that will be more appropriate for their work.

The 'Bloomer costume' was ridiculed out of existence. If a lady had appeared on the public street on a bicycle, riding the same as a man, at that time, she would no doubt have been mobbed. Yet the editor of this paper can sit on the piazza any summer evening, and even on Sundays, and perhaps count one hundred ladies riding bicycles precisely the same as a man, and no one now notices them, for such is the age we live in, and such is the condition of progress in the human mind. I can remember back to the year 1845, when a child, that a genius devised a wooden bicycle, perhaps it had four wheels, perhaps three; but strange as it may seem, it was not safe for him to appear on the public street with this machine. He had to wait until dark and steal away into the country, otherwise his machine would have been broken and the rider probably injured.—*American Exchange.*

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

EFFECT OF LIGHT ON MUSCLES.

M. D'ARSONVAL has recently succeeded in stimulating muscles by means of light. A freshly prepared frog's muscle was suddenly illuminated by the light of an arc lamp deprived of its heat rays by traversing a lens of a solution of alum. The muscles showed a slight tremor, and when the investigator further mounted it on a skin diaphragm stretched over a funnel, the tremors accompanying each impingement of the light emitted a sound which could be heard in the funnel.

A REMOTE POSSESSION OF THE WESTERN REPUBLIC.

Mr Ivan Petroff, the United States special census agent, has been engaged in taking the census of the natives of Nunivak Island, in Behring Sea, in 60 degrees N. latitude. He found the population to consist of over 600 natives. It was previously supposed that over 300 people occupied the island. There are no white men there, and the natives live in a most primitive style. Their only food is the flesh of the walrus, and their only wealth consists of ivory obtained from the tusks of that animal. There are a few land otter, but, apart from these, the natives catch no fur-bearing animals.

SMELL OF PLANTS.

The investigation of the influence of external factors on the smell of plants has shown that the direct and indirect influence of light is of most importance in the formation and evaporation of the etheric oils on which perfume depends. The odour of strongly fragrant flowers is intensified by heat and light, and is lessened in darkness without quite disappearing. When the whole plant is deprived of light the buds which were before pretty well developed yield fragrant flowers, the others are scentless, while if the flowers alone are darkened, all are fragrant. Certain plants open their flowers and smell only by night, but when these are kept continuously in the dark they in course of time lose their scent and also their starch. When light is again admitted to them, they regain both starch and fragrance.

ARTIFICIAL RAIN.

The *Scientific American* is rather sceptical as to the reliableness of the reported results of the rain-bringing experiments in Texas, and says:—'It is true a downpour often follows a clap of thunder; but this does not prove the rain was produced by the concussion. On the contrary, we know that rain probably results from the cooling of moisture-laden air, and simultaneously electricity may appear. Hence in thunderstorms the aerial concussions are most probably the results, not the cause, of rain formation. Nature works on a vast scale in producing rain; and it is idle to suppose that the burning of a little explosive matter can materially affect the boundless atmosphere of the skies. In a certain sense it may be claimed that rain always follows an explosion, since all atmospheric changes are successive. If to-day is fair, fire a gun, and it will rain either to-morrow or some following day. If to day is rainy, fire a gun, and it will be fair either to morrow or afterward. There appears to be just as much sense in appropriating public money for explosives to produce dryness in Alaska as to make rain, by similar means, in Texas.

A MAN WHO SHEDS HIS SKIN.

Dr. J. Frank lately reported to the Chicago Medical Society the case of a man who periodically sheds his skin. The shedding began in his first year, and has since then occurred regularly every July. He is taken with feverish tremors, increasing almost to paroxysms. He undresses, lies down, and within a few minutes the skin of the chest begins to turn red. The redness rapidly extends over the entire skin, and the feverish tremors continue uninterrupted for about twelve hours. Then he rises, dresses, and walks about in perfect health. The skin now begins to peel, and ten hours later it comes off in great patches. From the arms and legs it can be peeled off exactly like gloves or stockings. As the old skin comes away, a new epidermis, as soft and as pink as a baby's, is revealed. This new skin is very sensitive; the patient has to wear softened gloves and moccasins for about a week. After the old cuticle has been entirely removed, the finger and toe nails begin to drop off—new nails literally crowding them out. Finally, the change is complete, the man has a new skin and a new outfit of nails, and is ready to return to the mines. A lady in Washington County, Nebraska, who is 39 years old, has written to Dr. Frank that since 1876 she has had a like experience every second or third year.

Mr E. Giles, of Bombay, reports that he was standing one hot morning in the porch of his house, when his attention was attracted by a large dragon-fly of a metallic-blue colour, about two and a-half inches long, and with an extremely neat figure, which was cruising backward and forward in the porch in an earnest manner that seemed to show he had some special object in view. Suddenly he alighted at the entrance of a small hole in the gravel, and began to dig vigorously, sending the dust in small showers behind him. 'I watched him,' says Mr Giles, 'with great attention, and, after the lapse of about half a minute, when the dragon-fly was head and shoulders down the hole, a large and very fat cricket emerged like a bolted rabbit, and sprang several feet into the air. Then ensued a brisk contest of bounds and darts, the cricket springing from side to side and up and down, and the dragon-fly darting at him the moment he alighted. It was long odds on the dragon-fly, for the cricket was too fat to last, and his springs became slower and lower, till at last his enemy succeeded in pinning him by the neck. The dragon-fly appeared to bite the cricket, which, after a struggle or two, turned over on his back and lay motionless, either dead, or temporarily senseless. The dragon-fly then, without any hesitation, seized him by the hind legs, dragged him rapidly to the hole out of which he had dug him, entered himself, and pulled the cricket in after him, and then, emerging, scratched some sand over the hole and flew away. Time for the whole transaction, say, three minutes.'

A DRAMA OF THE BOSPHORUS.

IT was my fortune to be a spectator, in somewhat peculiar circumstances, of the last great drama enacted on the shores of the Bosphorus in the early summer of 1876. I was staying at the time in the house of a wealthy Englishman in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. The house, which stood on the crown of a hill, had been built originally as one of the numerous kiosks or royal pleasure-houses that jewel the shores and hills of the Bosphorus, and had been bestowed as a gift by Sultan Abdul-Medjid upon his German head gardener—from whose family it was leased by the host—and was known as the Bagtchevanbashinin Serai (Head Gardener's Palace). The building and grounds, after the manner of all royal kiosks, were surrounded by a lofty wall, and were separated only by a narrow road and another great wall from the grounds of the Sultan's favourite summer palace of Yildiz. So close were we, indeed, to our august neighbour's garden that from our upper windows we could by day catch fleeting glimpses of birds of gorgeous plumage in the Sultan's magnificent aviary—a model of the Sydenham Crystal Palace; while at night our rest was not infrequently broken by the roaring of the beasts in the imperial menagerie or the screams of the royal peafowl that perched upon our walls. On one side of us stretched a dreary desolate ravine strewn with rough stones that lay scattered in such chaotic confusion, such bleared irregular heaps, that hardly a spot of intervening ground showed between. This was the cemetery of the great Jew colony of Ortakeui Village, to whose landing-stage we daily journeyed down a rough broken road. Another road—a narrow stone-paved lane shut in by the towering walls, on the left of the Softas Medressé, on the right of Yildiz Gardens—led down to the Mosque facing the great gates of Chiraghan Palace. Immediately below us, at the foot of the steep hill, stretched the radiant front of Chiraghan itself—the Sultan's favourite residence; the dazzling whiteness of whose marble walls was lit up by bright gleams of colour from its crimson-curtained windows.

On one side of Chiraghan the tapering minarets of the Ortakeui Mosque pierced the sky. On the other side the huge structure of the Dolmabagtche Palace, ornate with every beautiful design that architect and sculptor might conceive, lay veiled from us on our hill by the towering cypresses and blossoming fruit trees of the Yildiz Gardens.

All around my host's house were scattered the dwellings of various functionaries whose duties kept them day and night in close proximity to the palace; and here were, too, so many caracols, or guard-houses, at intervals all round the walls of Yildiz that we in our neighbouring kiosk were always surrounded by a cordon of soldiery. With all these good people however, great and small, the English family was on excellent terms. The general of division in command of the troops quartered round the palace habitually passed one or two evenings each week in my hostess's drawing-rooms, where he would sit for hours, smoking incessantly and uttering perhaps one word per cigarette. When at length he withdrew, late in the night, we were wont to watch the dancing lanterns of his escort as the Pasha plunged and stumbled down the rugged roadway of the hill towards his quarters in Ortakeui. Another frequent guest we had, whose name has been much mentioned in the course of the present crisis. This gentleman speaks English like a native of Clapham; where, indeed, he was educated with a number of other pashas' sons, at a school kept by a gentleman named Balam—a fact which caused the Moslem boys to be known everywhere as Balaam's asses.

The friendliness of these powerful pashas made the sympathies of lesser fry easy to win. Their natural prejudices once overcome, the lower order of Turks are the most amiable of people, filled with kindliness and native courtesy that shows no study and has no formality. The children of the English house were speedily on terms of amity with beys and aghas, effendis and tchaouches, and with the gardeners, grooms, and keepers that thronged the palace precincts.

It was on the night of the 29th of May, 1876, that the first act in this Bosphorus drama was played. Some few of the Englishmen then in Turkey, who were intimate friends of Midhat Pasha, had known that a movement was being organized to depose Abdul Aziz from the throne of the Caliphate. His removal had been decided by a secret council of Ministers, headed by Midhat and Hussein Avni; and the fetvah of the Sheikh-ul-Islam had been given, sanctioning the measure. But no one knew when the plan was to be carried out. Indeed, as we learned a few days later, no time had been fixed, nor any definite programme decided on, when it became imperative that whatever was to be done must be done at once. Hussein Avni, the War Minister, held the army in the hollow of his hand, and was, of course the head and front of the conspiracy. Then suddenly the Sultan, in a moment of sanity, became suspicious of Hussein Avni. He decided on the 28th of May to dismiss him, and summoned him to the palace for that purpose. This being so, the War Minister had but one thing to do. It was now a question not merely of saving the State but of saving himself, and the wings of his patriotism quivered with eagerness in the wind of his personal apprehensions.

With us in the house on the hill the evening of the 28th of May had passed in its usual slumbrous fashion. Our friend the Pasha had paid his customary visit, and we were not unduly astonished when, on taking leave, he announced an intention of visiting the guards around Yildiz before seeking his quarters. We had, indeed, all of us been long in bed before warning of the impending event was given us.

At about two o'clock in the morning the household was aroused by a great outcry. Simoun, the kaponjee, or porter, rushed into the hall, shouting to us to get up, as the Turks had risen against the Christians and soldiers were marching on the house. There was, perhaps, some faint apology for this statement, as the prospect of such a rising had been for months a current topic. We all leaped from our beds, and in the quaint apparel warranted by the occasion, flocked into the hall to take counsel. There, Simoun and his son Christo, our Croat guardians—their waistbands bristling with knives—were busy loading guns and pistols in eager anticipation of a fight. They were prepared to defend us against all comers, and even suggested opening one of the gates so as to get the better at the foe. When it became apparent that we were not attacked, their disappointment was keen, and their distress at being barred from shooting any one was evidently genuine. The courage of our other attendants shone with a more feeble flame. Evanthea, a cook-maid, plunged into wild hysterical invective against the enemy, which was not easily stifled by pillows and hartshorn. Antonio, the Maltese cook, fled to the cellars and, there locked in, emptied his revolver into the ceiling, until, overpowered by emotion, smoke, and sulphur, he fell fainting to the ground.

We left the hall and the women in charge of our valiant Croats and crept to a little summer-house, hidden in overhanging foliage, built half-way up the garden-wall, in which was a barred window. In truth, an army was marching past our gates. As we watched, column after column of infantry tramped by over the uneven ground and down the narrow lane leading to Chiraghan. The men marched in absolute silence, broken only by the rattle of a cartridge box when a soldier stumbled among the deep ruts of the stony road. By-and-bye we opened a little door in the high wall of the garden and sought to mingle with the troops. But we found our egress barred by a sentry—a friendly guard from the caracol—who enjoined us to keep within walls, as there was 'work to be done.' There was nothing else to do; so we followed this advice and mounted to the flat roof to watch thence, as we could, the progress of events. For some time we saw nothing but the occasional glimmer of the bayonets as they disappeared down the lane leading to Chiraghan. At last the onward flow of troops slackened and ceased. For a time there was silence. Then, after an interval that seemed endless, the black front of Chiraghan was suddenly spangled with twinkling lights that flashed from window to window, settling after a while here and there, until broad spaces were illuminated. Glimmering lights, too, flashed out over the silent waters of the Bosphorus: the plash of oars fell on our ears; and at length, just as the first grey of dawn broke over Stamboul, a muffled murmur of many voices was borne to us across the water. Then, as in some fairy tale, the lights were extinguished, the palace-windows were blotted one by one from our view, the murmur of voices ceased, and calm and silence once more reigned around us.

The summer morning grew older and blushed into beauty, and Stamboul woke slowly to the life of another day. No one watching that peaceful awakening would have guessed that in the night just sped a mighty revolution had passed over the empire. Yet so it was. Not a shot had been fired; but in those brief hours of darkness the destinies of Turkey had been roughly remoulded. Abdul Aziz had been hurled from his throne and lay a captive in his own harem. Poor feeble Mourad, his brother, had been dragged from his bed in Dolmabagtche by stern Hussein Avni, and, wild with fear, expecting instant death, had been thrust, half clad, into a state barge and conveyed to Stamboul, to be recognised and acclaimed by the assembled army. . . . . The conspiracy was successful. The revolution was accomplished, and Turkey had a new master—whose name, was to be not Mourad V., but Hussein Avni Pasha.

The events that so quickly followed on this night's work need no recording here. The so-called suicide of the ex-Sultan four days later, the sad fate of his favourite Circassian wife, and the wild attempt of her brother, Tcherkess Hassan, to avenge his master's death and his sister's wrongs are matters that must still be present in the minds of English people. It chanced, however, by an accident, that I was to witness the final scene of this tragedy. This was enacted on the 17th of June, two days after Tcherkess Hassan had murdered Hussein Avni and Raschid Pashas in the War Minister's private house. It was soon after daybreak, and I was riding homeward across Stamboul from St. Stephano, where I had passed the night—a quiet bathing-village on Marmora shore, soon to be celebrated as harbouring a Grand Duke's army and giving a name to a treaty of peace. As I neared the old bridge I noticed that a great crowd was gathered on it. I was borne along by the throng until I neared the Galata shore, and here the crush was greatest and the crowd stood motionless. Soldiers were drawn up around the great gateway of the bridge, on which all eyes were turned in expectation. Soon there approached, and halted beneath the tall arch of the gate, a waggon surrounded by an escort; and in it, stretched on a mattress, lay the emaciated and bloodstained body of a man. The soldiers lost no time over the work they had to do. The two ends of a rope, passed through a great ring in the keystone of the arch, dangled close at hand, and one of these was made fast about the neck of the recumbent figure. A few brisk pulls, hand over hand, on the slack of the rope; a deep groan from the multitude; and Tcherkess Hassan, not the meanest of all the actors in this great drama, swinging high above the heads of his countrymen, was left to play his part as an example in the sight of all beholders.—*By an English Resident.*

FINE LADIES.

THERE are ladies and ladies—ladies who are gentlewomen, and ladies who are fine ladies; and the terms are not convertible. On the contrary, it seems to me that they are quite opposed to each other, and that, as the true gentlewoman is never the fine lady, so is the fine lady never the true gentlewoman. Fine-ladyism is a disease of long and steady growth, but of specially rapid development in these later days. There never was a time—save perhaps during the reign of the Fourteenth Louis and onward to the French Revolution—when women made it so confessedly a point of pride to be absolutely useless to themselves and their generation as they do now—never a time when the highest test of ladyhood was the lowest mark of womanhood. Indeed, just in proportion to the spread of the new doctrine called the Dignity of Labour has been the fine lady's abhorrence of the very mildest forms of practical usefulness; and in exact ratio with the advocacy of the theory of emancipation has been the proof of her unfitness for its practice. Fine-ladyism ignores both work and duties. A fine lady is one who imagines herself to be born into this great, suffering, toiling world of ours for her own pleasure only; and in nowise for more than this. What relations she holds with her fellow-man or woman she holds for herself, not for him—still less for her; for such good and advantage as she may be able to draw out of the association, but in no sense whatever for any good that she can bestow.

A FLOWER BALL.

A VERY successful flower social was held in connection with the Elwin Quadrille Assembly. The idea was taken from an interesting article in the NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC some months ago, and the writer thereof must take the credit for initiating this pleasurable gathering, giving a hint and a few particulars as to how a flower social should be managed. In all good enterprizes how often has youth taken the lead, and in this matter it has been the pioneer. It is fitting, I think, that it should have been so, for what in nature is so sweet and joyous as a flower, or the 'freshness of youth?' The spectacle presented to me on entering the Masonic Hall, Newton, was an inspiring and touching one. Like a throne, which any Fairy Queen might have been proud to occupy as she directed with her magic wand the light-hearted fays in their movements before her, the upper end of the hall was arranged, 'Studded with diamonds and decked with gems, the richest of Flora's treasure.' Dance ring—for, of course, the orthodox fairies must only dance within a ring—was formed by a slack rope of flowers, drooping at intervals, running round the hall and connected with the arms of the throne. The chandeliers were prettily festooned—dulling the edge of protruding remembrance, borne on the sight of the gas-jets, that we were living not in the days of Spenser, but in the cold, prosaic nineteenth century. The ceiling was so draped that the part uncovered seemed like the moon-lit blue of heaven showing through the canopy of some leafy bower. But if the surroundings call for so much notice, the actors in the scene deserve infinitely more attention. Each lady represented a flower, a wreath, or a floral device, whilst every gentleman wore a lady's favour. Pretty nearly every seasonable flower was present, the only one conspicuous by its absence being, as far as I could see, that orphan-looking wall-flower. But this variety is never seasonable, is it, Bee? The floor was all that could be desired, whilst the music of Messrs McEwen was splendid. If there are 'sermons in stones,' and 'books in running brooks,' there is language in flowers; and very eloquently was that tongue employed during the evening. The supper table was a sight to behold. Glass and silver-ware, sparkling in the gas-light, contrasted prettily with the greenest of ferns. Hiding in mossy beds (like the modest violet of our school-days) were golden oranges, whilst rising in the centre, and shielding many toothsome and dainty-looking sweets and fruit, were some of the most beautiful flowers that could possibly be procured in Auckland. The following are a few of the floral dresses worn:—Miss Lediard, white evening dress sprayed with honeysuckle; Miss De Jongh, black lace and red roses; Mrs (Captain) Moller, black silk and marguerites; Miss Gerrish, evening dress of pale green lace, pale pink roses; Mrs A. Scott, black lace over purple, trimmed with violets; Miss Wooley, white lawn, trimmed with wild roses; Miss J. Phillips, white, with pink ivy geraniums, beautiful bouquet; Miss M. Taylor, pink with forget-me-nots; Miss Ridgate, white, bride roses; Miss G. Ridgate, pale blue and white stripes, lovely pansy bouquet; Miss S. McNicol, white lawn, pink ivy geraniums; Miss Connell, cream nun's veiling, red and white roses; Miss J. McNicol, cornflower muslin, sprays of wild flowers; Miss Whittington, pink satin, white and pink ivy geraniums; Mrs Brown-Brown, red and white roses; Miss Lockhart, white dress, blue ribbon, white geraniums; Miss Evans, grey satin, coal black roses; Miss N. Evans, white roses and pink geranium; Miss Austin, black tulle with cream roses; Miss Trail, pink, ivy geraniums; Miss Moncur, white lawn trimmed with roses; Miss Moore, white muslin, blue ribbon, cream roses; Miss Long, red, and white roses; Miss Sinclair, pale pink satin, trimmed with clematis blossom, pretty coronet of hawthorn; Miss Marsden, black satin and black lace, marguerites; Miss Edmonds, grey satin, pearl necklace; Mrs Spragg, pale blue nun's veiling, honeysuckle; Miss McIllwain, white muslin, Maltese lace collar, large basket of flowers; Mrs Collingwood, white evening dress, red roses falling from shoulders to the waist; Miss Calvert, white, with white daisies; Miss McDuffin (Thames), white evening dress. The Hon. Secretary, Mr F. C. Basset, acted as M.C. during the whole of the evening, discharging the duties of this office in a most pleasing and satisfactory manner.—CONTRIBUTED.

SANDRINGHAM VILLAGES.

A GREAT charm of the Prince of Wales' estate at Sandringham lies in the thoughtful beneficent care that is shown for the housing and welfare of the employés. The three villages on the estate—Babingley, West Newton, and Dersingham—when the Prince acquired the property, were types of the primitive Norfolk village, so well described in Dr. Jessopp's 'Arcadia.' The houses were tumble down hovels, and the farm labourers, who only received 9s a week, could not read or write, and had all sense of self-respect crushed out of them. Now everything has suffered a change, and West Newton will challenge comparison with any model village in this or any other country. The cottages are so substantial and nice, and set amid such bright gardens, that anyone of moderate means quite envies the occupiers their happy lot. The church has been elaborately restored, a canteen, reading-room, and library erected, many miles of new road opened, and the common stretching towards Babingey has been entirely changed in appearance, and made beautiful by extensive plantations. A tall tower for the supply of water has been erected, and also a cottage hospital at Babingley. It is small wonder that whenever the Princess drives her ponies through the village that a cordial 'God bless her' is murmured with every deep curtsey from the mothers and the red-cloaked school girls. The village folk all believe that the psalmist wrote in his haste, like another oft-quoted aphorism, 'Put not your trust in princes. Wolverton Church and village also are exceedingly well ordered, as indeed a village ought to be where the convallaria is found wild. A hackney stud has been established here for the benefit of the tenants, to which everyone will wish success. If socialists like Tom Mann, and theorists like Mr Dyke Acland, had seen, like the present writer, the changes for the better that have been wrought from pure goodwill in these villages, they would be less sure of their cry, 'Perish the land system.' The Prince of Wales' example in this matter has been and is being followed by a great number of other landowners.

SPATOLINO, THE BRIGAND.

MANY years ago the name of Spatolino was a terror to persons whose business or pleasure led them to traverse the country in the neighbourhood of Rome. This famous brigand, who ruled the roads of that district for eight years, is said to have been the scion of an ancient family. He was a robber of the melodramatic type—handsome in person, fearless of danger, and of a physique muscular and sinewy to a remarkable degree.

There was a sublimity of impudence in some of Spatolino's exploits that lent a dangerous charm to the profession of brigandage, and brought more than one noble youth to an ignominious end. The anecdote of the 'coincidences' will serve to illustrate the character of the man.

An Englishman of wealth was about returning with his family to Florence. He engaged a courier about thirty years old, who spoke several languages, and had been travelling from one end of Europe to the other since he was a boy. The Englishman's family consisted of his wife, a grown-up daughter, and a son, aged about fifteen. The courier advised the travellers to be prepared for all contingencies, stating that he himself always went armed to the teeth, besides making his postilions carry loaded pistols in their belts.

Shortly before the party started on their journey, a French gentleman, with whom they had become slightly acquainted at Rome, asked permission to accompany them. He was a very gentlemanly person, and the travellers gladly availed themselves of the opportunity to secure an intelligent travelling companion.

As they were rolling along in the heavy carriage, the conversation turned naturally upon brigands. The Englishman related a story on the subject.

'Four or five years ago,' said he, 'a friend of mine was robbed and taken prisoner by a band of brigands on this very road. They took him away to the mountains, and he regained his liberty only after a tedious negotiation for a good round sum as ransom. This gang of bandits was, shortly afterwards, dispersed on information given by my friend. He told me that a French officer, stationed at Rome, was active in pursuing them, and that he was indebted to that gentleman for the recovery of valuables that he would not have liked to lose. His name was Roberts.'

'This is a coincidence,' said the French gentleman with a smile. 'I am the French officer who commanded the party by whom the gang was broken up, and here is the gold watch presented to me on the occasion by your friend as a *souvenir*. See here—"E. Roberts to his friend Leon Des Champs." We did not catch the chief of the brigands, though. His name, I think, was Spatolino.'

'Another coincidence!' cried the handsome courier, now for the first time joining in the conversation from the box of the carriage. 'Another coincidence—I am Spatolino. Hand over your effects!'

The pistols of the travellers were snapped at him—but they only snapped. His duty as courier was to look to the fire-arms, and he had done so effectually. Now the postilions dismounted, and, standing by the carriage windows, compelled the luckless travellers to hand over all their valuables, after which it was but the work of a moment to unharness the horses, with which the three robbers galloped away, leaving the travelling party alone, in a horseless carriage, and at a point at least ten miles distant from any place where assistance could have been obtained.

'Honour among thieves' is a saying susceptible of more meaning than one. Spatolino professed to have a deep sense of honour. This was the rock upon which he split.

Finding it impossible to cut off this redoubtable brigand by force, the authorities had recourse to stratagem. They put upon his track an active and sagacious officer of police, whose name was Angelo Rotoli, to whom a large bonus was promised for the capture of Spatolino, dead or alive. Rotoli obtained an interview with the brigand chief, by causing it to be intimated to him that the government wished to negotiate with him. They met each other, by appointment, at a certain spot. It had been agreed on, beforehand, that both were to come unarmed, but Rotoli violated this clause of the agreement, on which Spatolino upbraided him vehemently with having broken his word of honour. Nevertheless he listened to him. The proposal made by Rotoli was that Spatolino would receive a free pardon on condition of delivering up all his accomplices. The brigand, who had amassed a fortune, and was weary of his dangerous calling, agreed to this, further stipulating that his wife, also, should be exempted from arrest. 'Bring with you at eight o'clock to-night,' said he, 'twenty gendarmes and a troop of peasants, and I will guide you to our stronghold. I mistrust your word of honour, however, but hereby promise to pay you two thousand crowns if you carry out our agreement to the letter.'

Rotoli, having made his arrangements, went with his gendarmes to the place of meeting, where Spatolino soon made his appearance. A tedious and circuitous route at last led them to a lonely house in the mountains, where they halted, and, on a signal given by Spatolino with a peculiar whistle, the door was opened to them by his wife, a handsome but masculine-looking woman, who had long been a partner in the crimes of the reckless brigand.

'I have brought you some new comrades,' said Spatolino, 'the soul of honour,' to some eight or ten brigands who were seated round a table, at supper. This disarmed suspicion, and at a sign from Rotoli, his men threw themselves upon the robbers, and handcuffed them in a trice, whilst he, himself, seizing Spatolino by the neck, pressed the muzzle of a pistol against his temple, threatening to pull the trigger if he made the least attempt to struggle with him. Nevertheless, the brigand made a desperate resistance, but was overpowered and put in irons. 'Is this your word of honour?' said he to Rotoli; 'fool that I was to trust in a plebeian like you!'

A slight explosion now attracted the attention of the gendarmes to the woman who had nearly blown up the house, and all in it, by setting a train to a keg of powder that lay in a corner of the room. Her purpose was foiled only by the accidental circumstance of a wet spot on the floor, by which the train was cut off. She, too, was placed in irons, as the tigress was perceptible in her every movement.

The whole gang was marched off to prison. A commission was appointed to take evidence in the affair, before which more than four hundred witnesses were examined, and the investigation brought to light some of the most frightful details of assassination and robbery that ever have been placed on record. Spatolino, with eight of his accomplices and his wife, was tried in the criminal court. On being asked whether he had any remarks to make, he rose, and said: 'I am guilty of all the crimes that have been laid to my charge, and many more; but the worst thing I ever did was to trust to the honour of a low fellow like Rotoli.'

Spatolino was executed, with some of his accomplices, and his wife and the others were condemned to imprisonment for life.

UNMUSICAL ENGLAND.

I WAS the other day at a great concert given by a great violinist at St. James's Hall. The violinist was applauded—people came there for that purpose. An exquisite song of Schumann's was exquisitely sung, but created no effect. Another song of no special merit was poorly sung, but the singer had a high, a very high (I wish it had been an impossibly high) note, which she sported at the end with a regular squeal like a pig *in extremis*. She was encored rapturously. *Voila!*

Good people, you know no better, but do not call yourselves musical.

I was at Rossini's 'Stabat Mater,' also at St. James's Hall. If there is one thing the English hear more often than another it is Rossini's 'Stabat Mater.' They may be supposed to know it by this time, if they know anything. If there is one favourite piece, it is the 'Cujus animam.' (I have heard it on the street organs; it has also been turned into a waltz!') At the close of 'Cujus animam' there is an exquisite phrase or two—just a few bars, which, in the ears of musicians who appreciate the Italian school, is worth the whole song. With the singer's last note on that special occasion (and I appeal to concert-goers whether the practice is not frequent) down came the applause, and that exquisitely harmonious close was completely drowned! Dear people, you know no better—the singing man had done, and you did not care for the finishing off—good!—but do not call yourselves musical.

I attended a Monday Pop. It was in the palmy days of Joachim and Madame Schumann. Sims Reeves was announced. Mand was going to come into the garden again that night. I sat rather low down, behind two respectably dressed men—one had evidently brought the other 'to hear Sims Reeves.' Madame Schumann was playing her husband's sublime pianoforte quartet. The friend listened at first, but at last he whispered to his companion:

'Why don't he come on?'

'Who?'

'Why, Sims Reeves.'

'Oh, wait a bit!'

So he waited. The second movement began; the third—

'I say, why are they allowed to go on all this time?'

'Well, I don't quite know; wait a bit!'

Close, amid some applause—in which our friends do not join heartily.

Then follows a violincello sonata by Piatti and Madame Schumann.

'Where's Reeves?'

'Oh, he ain't quite ready, so they have sent these two on to make a noise—keep it up, you know—till Reeves comes. They ain't of no account, you know; wait a bit!'

So, at last Sims Reeves comes on, and is received with salvoes, in which our friends join heartily. It was a night when Reeves saved himself—opened his mouth—phrased perfectly. But, evidently, there was not enough for our friends' money. One or two chest notes at the end, and all was over! Blank disappointment—yea, disapproval.

'Well, that's a jolly sell! Come on! I wish we'd gone to the Hoxford!' And off they went.—REV. H. R. HAWEIS.

SHADOWS.

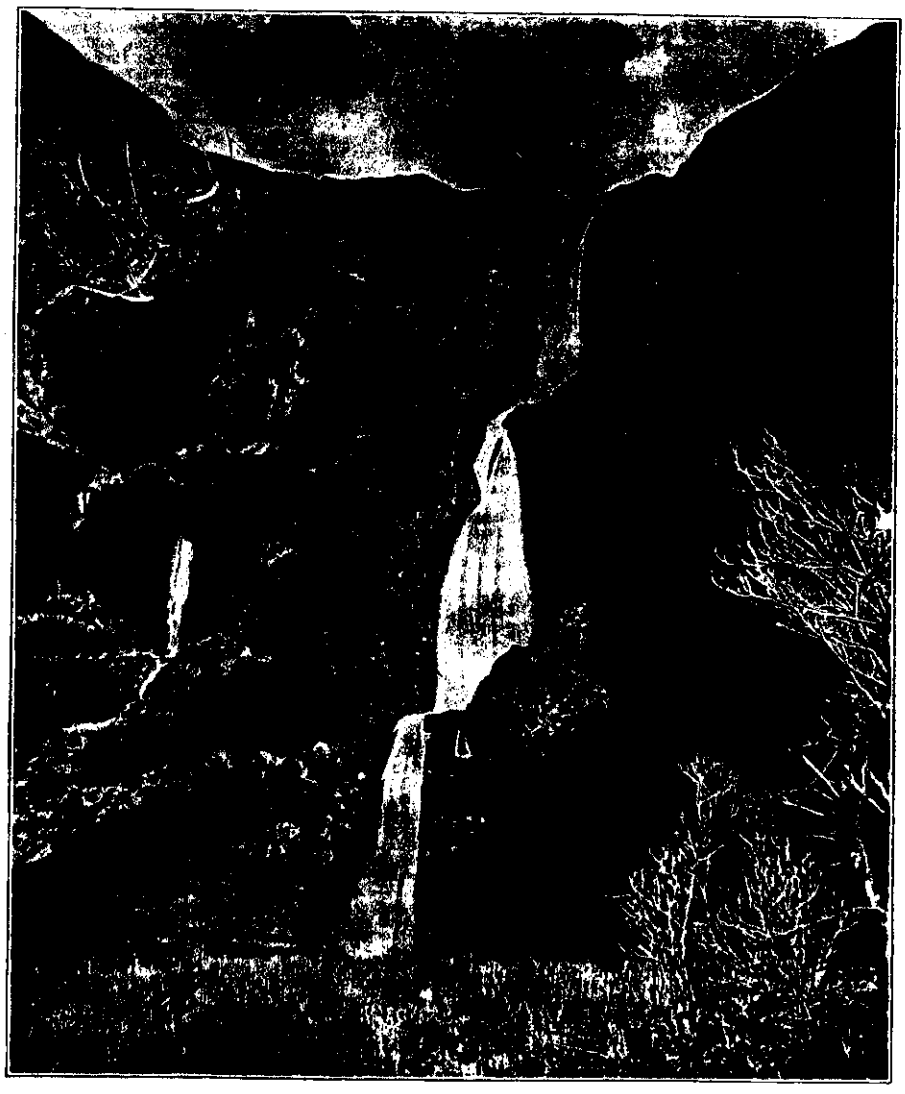
SHADOWS of the morning, on the way!
Shadows of the morning, fresh and gay!
Shadows of the morning like a maiden's tear adorning
For her bridal—oh! how soon ye pass away!

Shadows of the midday, cool and calm,
Shadows of oasis, and of palm!
Where a weary pair are resting, after heat of desert blest in
Airs that wander in those shadows, breathing balm.

Shadows of the evening, how they fall!
Sombre, dark and heavy, like a pall!
Slow at first, they quicken; then they thicken, thicken, thicken,
Till they rush upon us, myriads, veiling all.

Shadows of the midnight, dark and drear!
Shadows of the midnight, fraught with fear!
But for hopes we fondest cherish, faiths we dare not let to perish—
Oh! ye awful, awful shadows! And so near!

A.G.B



SUTHERLAND FALLS, MILFORD SOUND, OTAGO, NEW ZEALAND.

A MARINE MISTAKE.

'I'VE got it,' suddenly exclaimed Freddie Delamaine, flinging away his cigar-end, and bringing down his hand heavily on his friend's knee.

'Got what?' said the other, eyeing him doubtfully, and shifting his chair so as to put a little additional space between them.

'Why, an idea, of course. Look here, dear boy. There's no other way out of the mess you're in. You must marry!'

'Marry be hanged!' replied Mr Marmaduke Mooney, peevishly. 'Who the deuce will marry me, with the Jews at my heels, and less than a "monkey" to call my own in the world?'

'Have you tried your uncle again?'

'Yes, I told you I had. The old brute is immovable. First he swore I shouldn't have another sixpence while he lived, then he raved for half an hour about dissipation and the rest of it, and ended at last by showing me the door. He looked beastly well, too, confound him; so it's all up in *that* direction.'

'Very well, old man; you are at the end of your tether. As I said before, you must marry.'

'And, as *I* said before, who the deuce will marry me?'

'Oh, lots of girls. You're not such a bad-looking chap, you know, Marmy, although you do curl up a bit when a woman looks you in the face. But any sort of girl won't do for you—you want one with money, and that's what you have to find.'

'That's what I have to find,' repeated Marmy, grinning incredulously.

'Oh, *you'd* never find her, if you were left to yourself; somebody will have to do it for you, so I suppose I must.'

'You, Freddie?'

'Yes, dear boy. I rather think I can put my hand on the very thing you want. You remember old Covington?'

'Rather; rum old chap, beastly rich. Died last year, didn't he?'

'Yes, that's the man. Well, he left a lot of his money in trust for his niece, who was under age when he died. This year she has come into her money, and I happen to know that she is staying at Eastbourne with my friends the Wilsons. She's your girl, Marmy; the very thing.'

'Yes, yes, old chappie, it sounds all very well; but what will *she* say about it? Suppose we shall have to consult her first, eh?' And Marmy chuckled feebly at his own powers of sarcasm.

'Oh, that'll be all right, dear boy. Faint what d'you-call-it never won fair what's-its-name. There's nothing to do but to go in and win.'

'But I don't even know the girl.'

'What a fellow you are for raising obstacles! *I* know her, don't I? It's all easy enough. Come down with me to Eastbourne, and I'll call on the Wilsons and introduce you. Wish I could stay to see you through; but you know I've promised to be off to the moors with old Grindley next week, so we'd better start at once. If you don't pull it off, it will be your own fault, mind, not mine.'

The next day found the two friends comfortably quartered at the Queen's at Eastbourne, and in due course the Hon. Frederic Delamaine paid his respects to his friends the Wilsons at their pretty villa in Devonshire Place, and introduced to them and to Miss Ethel Covington his special and particular chum, Mr Marmaduke Mooney. Having thus accomplished his friendly mission, and having remained a day or two to watch over the ripening of the acquaintance he had been at such pains to initiate, Freddie took himself off to fulfil his engagement with Grindley and the moors.

'Stick to it, Marmy, old chappie,' he said, as he shook hands with his friend at the railway station. 'Only your confounded shyness of women can stand in the way now. You've got the field all to yourself, and if you only make the most of your opportunities you'll be able to send me news of victory before I come back from Scotland. Ta ta, and good luck!'

To do Marmy justice he did make the most of his opportunities. At a seaside place, where everyone congregates morning after morning upon the same half-mile of promenade, there is no difficulty in bringing about daily accidental *rencontres* with unfailing regularity, and Mr Mooney, despite a certain invincible nervousness in the presence of ladies, soon contrived to ingratiate himself with the Wilson party. He found Miss Covington an agreeable and decidedly good-looking girl, whose only perceptible drawback was a certain staid and rather prim air that did not render his task any easier of accomplishment, and that threatened, at best, to 'prolong the agony' over an inconveniently protracted period. Marmy noticed this with some concern, for he could not afford to wait indefinitely for the prospective sharer of his fate and defrayer of his debts.

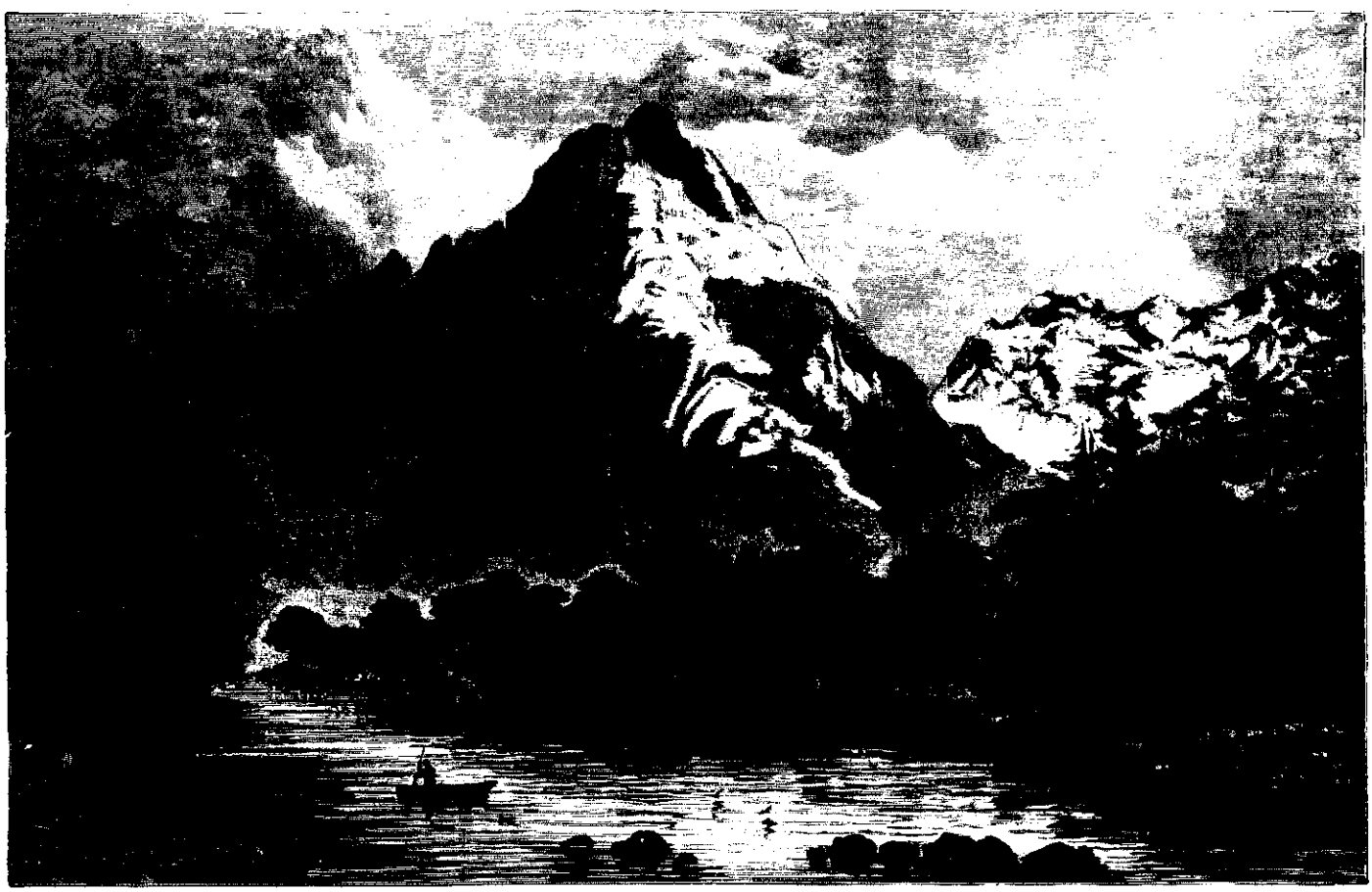
However, despite her tendency to what Mr Mooney, in a letter to his friend, described as the 'maidenly reserve business,' she at least showed no dislike for his society, and in the course of one or two excursions, in which he was invited to join the Wilson party, he managed to quietly show her a good deal of attention, which she did not appear by any means to resent. Afternoon tennis at Devonshire Park afforded him further opportunities, of which he was not slow to avail himself, and in the course of a fortnight he began to flatter himself that he was actually on the high road to success in the attainment of the object which his friend had set before him.

Just at this time, however, there was forwarded to him from town a letter of threatening import from one of his largest and most dreadful creditors, which convinced him that it was a case of 'now or never,' and that further delay would mean ruin to his chances. He must try his luck at once, he decided, as he flung the letter on the breakfast table and savagely decapitated an egg. Yesterday, amid the venerable bricks of Hurstmonceaux Castle, she had seemed to appreciate his attentions with more than ordinary cordiality; and, besides, nothing but disaster could come of further postponement. Yes, it should be to-day.

A couple of hours later he was nervously pacing up and down the hill by the Wish Tower, wondering how he should find or make an opportunity for the momentous declaration. After much mental disturbance he decided that Devonshire Park in the afternoon would afford the most likely chance for an unobserved *tête-à-tête*. In the meantime, he would keep away from the Wilson party, lest his nervousness should somehow betray him. But what should he do to help kill the time? And he made his way down to the bathing-machines that stood in tempting array on the beach just below him. He had missed his usual 'dip' before breakfast that morning on account of the roughness of the sea, and a tussle with the waves now would invigorate him, and put him in good form for the fateful business of the afternoon.

The sea still looked a little angry as he stepped into his machine, and the hoarse voice of the charioteer who jolted him over the shingle warned him not to venture out far unless he was a good swimmer. The warning was a necessary one, for Marmaduke was not a good swimmer. As he climbed rather cautiously down the steps of the machine into the foaming billows below, he rather wished that he had hit upon some other way of passing his time. No sooner had he reached the bottom of the steps than a big wave broke upon him, dashing him against the wheel of the machine with such violence as to leave him half-stunned. Before he could pull himself together, another wave took him, and he soon found himself receding from his machine and drifting helplessly through the surf, dazed by the buffeting he had received, and wholly unable to direct his course. To recover the machine and get back within its shelter at all cost was the object of his struggles, but being short-sighted, and having taken off his eyeglass with the rest of his ordinary apparel, it was difficult for him, with the water streaming from his hair, to discover his exact whereabouts. At last, however, his desperate efforts were rewarded, for after what seemed a prolonged interval of battling with the rude waters, he found himself facing a machine with the number '5' painted boldly above the portal. It was the number of his own machine, and, hailing the discovery with joy, he made his way with difficulty to the steps, climbed eagerly up them, and pushed open the door. As he did so, a sight met his gaze that seemed to petrify him with horror. Hanging from the various pegs, and scattered about the seats of the machine, were sundry dainty garments whose delicate laces and frills told of no masculine proprietor, and there, crouched in a corner, with a look of wild desperation on her face, a half-stifled scream on her lips, and a bath towel in the alarm of fear caught up, spread wide before her, was Ethel Covington, the girl to whom he was to have proposed that afternoon.

A little later in the day an express train conveyed to town a haggard, dejected-looking wretch, who curled himself up in the corner of a compartment, and seemed to shrink from public notice. Since then, Marmaduke Mooney has been through the Bankruptcy Court, and Ethel Covington has become the wife of a Colonial Bishop.



THE BARREN PEAKS, MILFORD SOUND, OTAGO, NEW ZEALAND.

Now that we have a plentude of rain machines won't some genius please arise and invent something that will successfully hail a horsecar?

In these days Cupid dresses in negligée attire and swings in a hammock. He looks like an idler, but he is as busy as a humming-bird in a rose garden.

A sure sign that the door-bell is going to ring—when you are the only one in the house and are in the bath-tub.

The New Zealand Graphic

AND LADIES' JOURNAL.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1891.

IT is curious to note how every year the feeling of *solidarité* is growing among the English-speaking peoples. Half a century ago, when there were no Australasian colonies worth consideration, when the United States had little more than a third of their present population, and a sparsely-peopled Canada was half in revolt against the ruling powers in England, it would not have entered into the mind of the most optimistic thinker to predict the development which would take place among the English-speaking race, and the greater good feeling which would now penetrate the whole body. At that time the Mother Country and her seceded daughter, Columbia, were not on the best of terms with one another. Isolation and estrangement had originally contributed to accentuate differences between them, and to a great extent gave rise to the war of the Revolution and that of 1814. On looking back in the light of our present liberality of knowledge we see how improbable such occurrences would have been under the present dispensation, and how, with more frequent intercommunication, the narrow views which tend to induce misunderstanding and rupture between those of the same blood are each year becoming lost in a wider sympathy.

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Much as new countries may resent the criticism of travellers from older societies, the frequent appearance of these passing comments alone indicates the interest which is taken in them. Curiously enough, directly after the second war between England and the United States in 1814, there began to spring up a literature of travel bearing upon the latter and proceeding from the pen of the ubiquitous British globe-trotter, who was even seventy years ago not to be deterred from exploring the mysteries of the Unknown West by the difficulties of travel. The Americans seem for many years to have contented themselves with absorbing their ideas of the mother country through the English literature transmitted across the Atlantic; but the knowledge of the peculiarities of America, in the absence of a native American literature and the present system of newspaper correspondence, was conveyed to the British Isles generally by one of those restless spirits animated by the old roving instincts of Raleigh and of Drake. Gradually, by this means, the growing democratic party at Home grew to take a deeper interest in their free brethren beyond the Atlantic, a process which was vastly accelerated by the growing popularity of the writings of Americans like Washington, Irving, Longfellow, Prescott, and Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe.

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It will never be known to what extent the Federal States owed the neutrality of England during the War of Secession to the influence of these writers. All well-wishers of the English race who recollect the imminent danger there was of England assisting the Confederate States to rend the Union asunder in 1863, cannot but be grateful to the memories of the above-named authors. The pen is mightier than the sword, and the human race owes a debt of gratitude to all those who have exerted their influence to link mankind together by the invisible but electrical chains of sympathy. Only the other day in the protest of a number of influential persons at Home against the contemplated refusal to receive the Australian cricketers we see a delightful indication of this sentiment, to which even the recently much-abused articles of these colonies by English travellers must have contributed their quota of influence.

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It is a remarkable feature of the age to note the extent to which popular sports tend to create a common feeling among those of the British race, and this tendency increases with each succeeding year. The Americans who formerly neglected open-air pastimes are fast changing in this respect, and the American papers are found rejoicing over the development of cricket in Philadelphia or the presence of a scion of Columbia in the Cambridge eight, just as might the Australian. Of course, the process does not escape the gibes of the Yankee press man, who is only too delighted to have a fresh object on which to exercise his wit, and the growing Anglo-mania in the older States comes in for some hard knocks at his hands. Similarly on the other side of the Atlantic rabid English journals, from time to time, raise a fierce tirade against or a querulous lament over the Americanising of English institutions, over the inundation of London with Yankee cousins, and the terribly free ideas which young English women are imbibing from that source, even unto revolting against chaperonage and riding upon bicycles. Assisted by a few fashionable marriages, the American girl is fast becoming the *mode* with the English middle-class woman, and while *la belle Américaine* infuses something more of dash and independence into the fair Britisher, the latter does not fail to impart something of her softness of manner and speech into her dashing cousin. Thus do the various sections of the British race scatter over the globe, and having garnered experience and developed new characteristics, come together again and exchange ideas to their mutual benefit and improvement.

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'She never told her love, but sat like patience on a monument,' says Shakespeare, and so in every generation there have been many women who have realised the fallacy of the saying that everything comes to those who wait, who have waited in vain for a proposal from the man of their heart. If after all they have consented to link their lot with another, the recollection of the man they did not get will always loom up regretfully in moments when the existing spouse fails to realize the expectations formed of him, and he sinks by comparison with a past ideal. Hard statistics represent the existence of laws operating everywhere, even in the region of romance, and shows us how the number of marriages are dependent upon the price of corn, and how a certain percentage of recreant bachelors and stranded spinsters can be predicted at any given period. The growing scope of science tends more and more to narrow the domain of free-will, but in the province of match-making it might still be possible for women to give a practical contradiction to the apparently inevitable by getting up and putting on the armour of 'cheek.'

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Of cheek there are, of course, all degrees, and if a man is to be compelled to falsify the doctrine of averages in his person, the lady who is going to illustrate her superiority to the laws of necessity, and is bent upon taking him prisoner in spite of his being predestined by statistics to go free, must regulate her artillery-practice accordingly. Base figures show that after twenty-five a woman's chances of marrying decrease by about one-third, but this still leaves a wide margin of opportunity in any individual instance, and if audacity on her part should not be productive of success, it can, at all events, afford her much more pleasure than self-suppression. Napoleon used to believe that the advantage always lay with the attacking party, and, indeed, nothing is more calculated to create faint-heartedness and end in failure than passivity. Unfortunately, the whole tendency of female education hitherto has been to inculcate passivity and make feigning in women a kind of second-nature. No wonder that they are at last rising and defying Mrs Grundy, and did they only realize what a coward and hypocrite that old lady is, they would have been much quicker to strike.

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As for men, they are not much better than Mrs Grundy, and they are terribly frightened of the onslaught of a fascinating woman, because they know that one of that sex never wastes her strength for naught. Men can sit down and commune with the flowers and enjoy the fragrance these insensibly distil with impartiality upon all around, but, unlike the flowers, the lady who will condescend to charm a man for any length of time gratuitously is yet to be discovered. No bill will be delivered, no formal account presented, but after the lapse of a period of ecstasy, mild bliss, enjoyment, or mere satisfaction, the sense of obligation will be rivated upon the unconscious dreamer, and he will be cornered in some way or another, and made to render a passing, or possibly a life-long service. Even under the present defective system much has been effected in this way. When the new regime is inaugurated it will be a question for men to consider whether anything short of absolute flight will avail. Possibly the time may come when they will be seen belatedly invoking the aid of Mrs Grundy, and sighing for the good old times when they could dodge the ladies behind her ample skirts and frowning brow.

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Mr Rudyard Kipling was struck by the political precocity of New Zealand. Even an Englishman accustomed as he is to the excitement of electioneering, is inclined to note the 'liveness' of politics in this young land, and to an Anglo-Indian the tendency must seem very much more pronounced. The system of British Government in India is as purely autocratic in theory as is that of the Russian Czar or the Emperor of China, and is a remarkable example of the way in which a democratic people has been obliged to adapt its methods to the requirements of oriental nature. Since the Indian Mutiny all that is best in the British intellect has united to devise the most righteous and benevolent form of despotic government which the world has ever seen. There the most liberal views hardly won in past ages by the advanced section of mankind are enforced in so far as it is safe and equitable for the benefit of a childlike people.

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Much as it is the custom to scoff at the pertinacity with which England holds on to her Indian Empire, she is so far right in that it is quite as bright a jewel in her bead-roll of fame as either America, Canada, or Australasia. If in the latter she has proved how she can successfully people the waste places of the earth, she has in the former demonstrated her capability of solving a problem in attempting which Imperial Rome lamentably failed. Compare the way in which England has treated India, even under the imperfect *regime* before the Mutiny, with the blood-sucking methods of ancient Rome towards her tributary provinces and the present rottenness and repression of the Russian autocracy. Persons who have lived long in India as one of the dominant race, acquire sentiments, benevolent certainly, but nevertheless despotic. Their maxim is 'all for the people through the Government,' and it works so well for everybody in India that they are apt to regard the political vagaries of Englishmen elsewhere as absurd, entirely forgetting that it is through such tentative processes in the past that the beneficent spirit in which India is governed has been evolved. There are even reactionaries in our midst who are inclined to contrast the prompt and lordly methods of the Indian Government with the hamble-scramble manner in which Government proceeds here, and would have us revert to a modified form of Crown Government. This is a wild notion akin to stopping time by arresting the hands of the clock. The appearance of over-government in these colonies is a sign of intellectual life and intelligence in the population itself, who seek to stumble upon a solution of the questions which perplex them and thus work out their own salvation rather than rely upon others to do it for them.

THE FIRST KISS.

SWEETHEART, 'twas but a while ago—it scarce seems yesterday,
Though now my hair is white as snow and yours is turning grey—
That, walking in the twilight haze, when bright stars blushed above,
You told me that you loved me and I kissed you for that love!

The first kiss, dear, and then your hand—dear hand, so soft and sweet!
Far whiter than the white, sweet sand that twinkled 'neath your feet—
Laid tenderly within my own. Have queens such lovely hands?
No wonder that the whip-poor-wills made sweeter autumn lands!

It seemed to me that my poor heart would beat to death or break,
While all the world, sweetheart! sweetheart! seemed singing for your sake.
And every rose that barred the way in glad and dying grace
Forgot its faded summer day, and, leaning, kissed your face!

I envied all the roses then, and all the rosy ways
That blossomed 'neath our feet are still my life's bright yesterdays;
But thinking of that first sweet kiss and that first clasp of hands,
Life's whip-poor-wills sing sweeter now through all the autumn lands.

FRANK L. STANTON.

AUCKLAND.

DEAR BEE, DECEMBER 1.

The Choral Society gave the fifth concert of their season in the Choral Hall before a crowded and fashionable audience; indeed, quite a quarter of an hour before the performance commenced there was not a vacant seat in the large building. Cowen's beautiful cantata, 'The Sleeping Beauty,' was the work performed, and as the cantata is quite new to Auckland, more than ordinary interest was taken in the performance. The music abounds with orchestral difficulties, but is also sweet and tuneful, and although there were imperfections, still the society are to be congratulated upon the success achieved. The solos were entrusted to Mrs Kilgour (soprano), Miss Reeve (alto), Mr W. Martin (tenor), and Mr Archdale Tayler (bass), Mr Martin undoubtedly being the most successful. Professor Schmitt conducted, and Herr Louis Tutschka led the orchestra. During the interval the orchestra gave a delightful rendering of the overture of Zebra. Mrs Kilgour wore a becoming gown of pale pink satin veiled with white net, white kid gloves, and gold and diamond ornaments; Miss Reeve wore a beautiful dress of soft shimmering white silk, with a moderately long train, white kid gloves, and carried a beautiful bouquet of crimson flowers. There was a full attendance of sopranos and altos, who all looked well in their white or cream gowns, and distinguishing colours of blue or crimson. Amongst the audience evening and plain dress were about equally worn. I noticed Mrs Stevenson, in a rich black silk gown; Miss Carr, pretty pink gown; Miss Hamlin, stylish black evening dress; Mrs Clark, handsome black silk gown; Mrs Ware also wore a beautiful black silk evening dress trimmed with jet; Miss Harrison, pretty pink evening dress; Mrs Atkinson, black silk gown; Miss Atkinson looked nice in a white dress and buttercup yellow sash; her sister wore pale blue veiling; Mrs Laurie, black silk gown; Miss Gill, pretty black gauze evening dress; Mrs Fisher, cream veiling gown; Mrs F. Earl, black silk and lace evening dress, the shoulders and sleeves of lace; Mrs Hudson Williamson, ruby silk gown with full front of cream silk; Miss Williamson wore a pretty long white cloak with collar of ostrich feathers; Miss Slator, handsome pale blue silk evening dress; Mrs Upton, black silk gown; Miss Upton, neat fawn costume; Miss Hall, black lace evening dress; Miss Bakewell, becoming blue cashmere gown with front of cream chiffon; Miss Biss, black evening dress, cream cape; Mrs J. Coe, handsome black merveilleux gown; Miss Edwards, pretty biscuit-coloured costume: Miss Ria Edwards, cardinal net gown, and stylish cream Tudor cape; Mrs (Colonel) Dawson, handsome black silk gown, gold ornaments; Mrs Donald, pretty flowered silk costume; Mrs Tewsley, beautiful heliotrope gown; Mrs Johnstone, black costume; Miss Johnstone, pretty pink veiling gown, with trimmings of ruby plush; her sister wore dove grey with white trimmings; Miss Kilgour, pretty black evening dress; Miss Puckey, dark costume; Misses Shirley-Baker were respectively attired in lemon-coloured veiling and pretty heliotrope evening dresses; Miss Moss-Davis wore a becoming blue silk evening dress with white lace trimmings; Mrs Cattanach, crimson silk gown with trimmings of plush; Mrs Bunby, beautifully embroidered plush mantle, and pretty little black and gold bonnet; Miss Binney, light costume and sailor hat; Miss Fisher, dainty white muslin gown; Miss Anderson (Parnell), ruby velvet gown, the square cut neck and short sleeves finished with cream lace; Mrs Henderson, black silk gown, black bonnet; Miss Henderson, fawn costume; Miss Milne, rich black silk gown; Miss Philcox, pretty light dress, plush mantle: Mrs Houghton, dark silk costume; Mrs H. J. Edmiston, pretty fawn costume; Mrs Brown, rich black silk gown trimmed with jet; Miss Rees, pretty white dress; Mrs J. M. Dargaville, handsome black silk evening dress richly trimmed with jet; Miss Chapman looked well in cream; Mrs Lewis, stylish black costume; Mrs Thompson, all black costume; Mrs Durrieu, pretty white evening dress; Mrs Masefield, black silk gown, ruby plush mantle; Miss Devore, black evening dress, and stylish crimson threequarter-cape; Miss Dunnett, black silk and lace evening dress; Mrs Thompson, handsome black silk gown, lovely lace collarette.

The Choral Society's orchestra give the first concert of their season immediately in the Choral Hall.

The Bland Holt Company now playing at the Opera House have certainly no reason to complain of want of patronage, for nightly the lower parts of the house are simply crowded to excess, and many, in order to obtain a good seat, are content to wait a full hour for the performance to commence. The dress circle has only been moderately patronised, and evening dress has almost been conspicuous by its absence. Amongst those present in the circle and orchestral stalls were Miss Moss, wearing a very pretty cream gown; Miss Percival, wine coloured costume trimmed with silk, and pretty white hat; her sister wore a dark green gown trimmed with fawn; Miss Dunnett, dark gown, and gem hat; Mrs Haines, all black costume; Miss Johnstone, fawn gown; her sister wore grey; Mrs Johnstone, black gown, and small black bonnet; Mrs W. Culpan wore all black; Mrs Archie Clark, black merveilleux gown with trimmings of lace; Mrs T. W. Leys, pretty gobelin blue costume; Mrs Jos. Ansenne, all black; Miss Brett, pretty greyish-blue dress trimmed with velvet; Mrs Gamble, stylish slate-coloured cashmere gown trimmed with ribbon velvet, small bonnet with velvet trimmings; Mrs Coutts, handsome black silk mantle, black bonnet; Mrs Barrett, fawn satin costume; Miss Wilkie, stylish black flowered costume; her sister wore a pretty pink gown trimmed with embroidery; Misses Firth, light grey costumes, gem hats; Mrs Watson, black silk costume; Miss Watson, pretty white dress; Miss Short, grey skirt and white silk blouse, gem hat; Mrs (Dr.) Lewis, stylish black gown with revers of black and white material, sailor hat; Misses Murchie, very pretty grey gowns with grey feather trimmings; Miss Scott, pretty white dress; Miss Davis looked well in cream; and Miss Johnstone, pale blue.

The result of the recent examination in music for the medals presented by the Countess of Onslow, and also for the exhibitions offered for competition by the Amateur Opera Club, has just been announced. The successful competitors for the Countess of Onslow's medals are Mr J. H. Phillpot, 1st; Mr McGinley, 2nd. The winners of the Amateur Opera Club's exhibition's first year students are Miss Harding, 1st; Miss Harper, 2nd. Second year students: Mr W. F. Forbes, 1st; Miss Law, 2nd. The examinations were conducted by Mr Thomas Wood under the auspices of the Auckland University.

The annual industrial exhibition in connection with All Saints' Sunday School, which was held in the schoolroom, proved a great success, and the school funds should in consequence be considerably augmented. In addition to the numerous exhibits entered by scholars for competition, a large number of articles were sent for exhibition by teachers, parishioners, and friends. The tables were prettily arranged, and amongst those taking part in attending, etc., were the Misses Oswald, Merritt (2), Woodyear, Gill, Devore, Fielder (2), Mesdames Calder, Osmond, and others. The exhibition was held on three afternoons and evenings, additional attractions being given at night by musical selections, Maypole dances, dramatised songs, Amazon marches, March aux Flambeaux, farces, spelling bees, stocking-darning competition, boot-cleaning competition, and a number of other amusements.

A very pretty wedding took place lately at the Grafton Road Wesleyan Church, the participants being Miss Mary, fourth daughter of Mr C. Laver, and Mr R. H. (Harry) Froude. Mr Laver gave his daughter away, and the Rev. W. Lee, pastor of the church, performed the ceremony. The church was filled with friends and acquaintances, both bride and bridegroom being very well known and respected. Mr Hooton very kindly attended and played the 'Bridal March' as the party entered the church, and as the happy couple passed down the aisle at the conclusion of the ceremony he gave the 'Wedding March' in splendid style. The bride looked very sweet in white nun's veiling trimmed with lisse lace, orange-blossoms, and ribbons, pretty tulle veil. The bridesmaids were the Misses Alice and May Laver, and Lizzie Froude, each becomingly arrayed in white nun's veiling with white and blue ribbons. Mr W. Bollard was best man. The wedding breakfast was partaken of by the company, numbering forty, at the house of the bride's father.

Mrs James Hardie, of Remuera, invited a large number of ladies to afternoon tea to meet Mrs Davidson, of Napier. The afternoon turned out a very enjoyable one. Among the ladies were Mrs C. C. McMillan, Mrs T. Brassey in red silk; Mrs W. F. Buckland, in a lovely black silk, and jet black bonnet with pale pink flowers. Some of the dresses were very handsome. Mrs Davidson sang 'My Dearest Heart,' and Miss Carr 'The Garden of Sleep.'

I must not close without describing a few very attractive walking costumes I have seen recently. Mrs Tewsley wore a very beautiful gown of soft cream material beautifully embroidered with coloured silks, heliotrope, I think, being the predominant colour, dainty little bonnet to correspond; Miss Zeenie Davis, pretty vieux rose costume, fawn hat trimmed with vieux rose flowers; Mrs Thiele looked well in a black skirt, and white spotted shirt and tie, gem hat: Miss Thiele wore a pretty muslin dress, and black gauze hat trimmed with flowers; Mrs A. J. Entrican, very stylish grey cambric gown with large white spots, grey hat; Misses Coleman, pretty dove grey gowns, white hats trimmed with feathers; Mrs J. L. Wilson, handsome green gown braided with black, black lace three quarter cape, and dainty little bonnet; Mrs Whitney (junr.), pretty white spotted tambone muslin gown, silk dust coat, biscuit-coloured hat trimmed with feathers; Miss Dixon, very stylish mourning costume; Mrs Jos. Owen, handsome black merveilleux and lace gown with white chemisette, black lace hat with white tips; Mrs Basil Thompson, grey cambric gown, white hat with grey gossamer; Miss Astley, pretty fawn dress, with black lace hat.

The weather is delightful for afternoon tea out of doors, and though our invitation to Alberton did not convey the *al fresco* idea, yet when we remembered the tempting grounds, we resolved on getting 'a little stroll in them' anyway. A very large number of ladies turned up. Gentlemen as a rule, are not supposed to care about tea, but a few put in an appearance during the afternoon; more came as we drove away. Not being a Saturday, of course very few could leave town, though the attractions of a charming country house, strawberries and cream, to say nothing of our *débonaire* hostess, Mrs A. K. Taylor, and her charming daughters, proved well-nigh irresistible. We talked a little in the drawing-room, and listened to Miss Ema Thomson's excellent rendering of the Prima Donna. Then we overflowed on to the balconied verandah, thence down a flight of stone steps to the lawn and first fountain, whose splashing sounded particularly cool and inviting. The tennis lawn was unoccupied. Why, I do not know, except that it was not a tennis party. Down the terraces we wandered to another fountain, guided hither by the sound of music. It was so fairy-like and pretty, coming from a large orange-tree close beside the water. Someone spoiled the charm by discovering it to be a musical box ingeniously concealed in the glossy foliage. Thence, fired with a laudable curiosity to get to the bottom of things, we strolled down the orchard slope to the damp, cool spot where a hydraulic ram forced the water up to the house and fountains. That was poetical and useful too. Now for art in another, even more prosaic form. We must all be clothed, and we like to know in what garments our friends arrayed themselves, on an occasion like the present. To begin at the beginning then, our hostess looked very fascinating in a widow's cap, and black grenadine with high lace sleeves; Miss Kerr-Taylor and Miss Mildred wore pretty flowered gowns, an eau-de nil shade preponderating, white hats; Miss Violet, in a becoming greenish frock; Mrs Richmond, black satin, mauve hat with feathers; Mrs J. M. Alexander, greenish-gray gown trimmed with velvet ivy leaves, apricot chiffon and gold bonnet; Mrs Motion, black satin and black lace, with an old gold bonnet; Miss Larkins, who was present with her father, wore a navy blue cambric, brown hat; Mrs L. D. Nathan, a mignonette green silk with black lace, hat and parasol *en suite*; Mrs W. R. Bloomfield, looked extremely well in grey cashmere, white vest, grey hat with feathers; Miss Anderson wore a stylish grey check, white vest, black braid; Mrs Gabriel Lewis, black satin; Mrs Haines, black cashmere; Mrs (Major) George, handsome black silk, old gold bonnet with variously coloured ribbons; Mrs Dignan, grey, and black hat; Mrs Payton, cream, hat with feathers; Mrs Moss-Davis, grey cashmere; and her daughter, cream and pale green delaine, cream hat with feathers; Mrs Bloomfield (Parnell), black silk; Miss Isaacs, neat black cashmere, black hat; Mrs Rattray, fawn silk, with some lovely geraniums fastened in her dress; Miss Davis, black. Really I cannot remember any more dresses, there were so many pretty ones, but I will mention some of those present. Mrs A. Carrick, Mrs (Captain) Worsp and daughter, Mrs Sam Morrin, Mrs Banks and daughters, Misses Bucklands, Mrs Firth and daughters, Mrs Bull and daughter, Misses Baker, Mrs Seymour George and daughter, Mrs Herries, Mrs Ware, Mrs Ruck and daughters, Mrs Goodhue, Mrs McMillan, Mrs Colbeck and daughter, Mrs J. B. Russell and Misses Russell, Mrs (Dr.) Lewis, Miss Whitaker, Mrs Chambers, Mrs Pritt, Mrs A. Nathan, Mrs Broham, Mrs Farelle, Mrs Dargaville, Mrs Duthie, Mrs Ransom, Mrs (Prof.) Thomas, Misses Mowbray, Scherff, Rookes, Hornes, Masefield, Lewis, Devore, Upton, Kempthorne, Evans, Sellers, Mrs Mitchelson, Mrs A. Clarke, Mrs Upfil, Mrs Gould, Mrs Carr, Mrs Suttie and Miss Suttie, and others. Amongst the few gentlemen, who are quite a novelty at an afternoon tea, I saw Major George, Messrs O'Rorke, Lockhart (2), Ansenne, Gilmore, Russell, Colbeck, Sykes, Clayton, Dufaur, and others.

Mrs (Major) George, 'Wapiti,' Epsom, gave a very enjoyable afternoon tea. It was, I believe, in honour of Mrs Colbeck, who is down from Kaipara staying with her sister for the Christmas holidays. Our hostess was frocked in a pretty flowered delaine, while Mrs Colbeck wore a red striped cashmere. Amongst those present were Mrs Broham, grey and brown cashmere; Mrs Walker, black lace dress, black velvet bonnet: Mrs Lawry, blue delaine with white lace, toque with cornflowers; Mrs R. Walker, grey cashmere, toque with cornflowers and feathers; Mrs Goodhue, green cashmere, green satin trimmings, black hat with brown feathers; Miss Banks, fawn cashmere, white velvet toque with roses; her sister, grey cashmere, large grey hat with feathers; Mrs Arnold, grey check, white toque, Miss Mowbray, brown cashmere; Mrs (Capt.) Colbeck, black silk: her daughter wore a pretty fawn cashmere; Miss Barstow, black cashmere, black lace hat; her sister wore a black delaine; Miss Binks, grey and striped shot silk, white hat trimmed with flowers; Miss Horne, navy blue delaine with white lace, black lace hat; her sister wore grey, and lavender vest; and others I do not remember.

Up here we are all so sorry to hear of the intended departure of our popular Governor and his Countess. Their unaffected interest in this colony, and their gracious, unpatronizing manners have won all hearts. We are looking forward with pleasure, deeply tinged with regret, to seeing them in January.

Influenza is not nearly so bad here as in other parts of New Zealand. I have, as yet, heard of no very severe cases, and trust we shall escape as lightly as we have hitherto done.

MURIEL.

NAPIER.

DEAR BEE, NOVEMBER 23.

The topic of last week was Mrs Sheath's concert. I will endeavour to tell you of it. The Theatre Royal was well filled and great taste was displayed in dressing the stage, which for the time was converted into a regular fairyland. Mr E. H. Bold was most successful with the limelight. A capital orchestra assisted, Mr C. P. Sheath conducting, and Mr Herbert Spackman officiated as leader. There was a strong chorus of sixty voices, and they sang well. Special praise is due to two concerted pieces. The overture to 'Masaniello,' by the orchestra, and 'I Know a Bank,' sung as a duet by Mrs Sheath and Miss Large. The orchestra played well in the overture, 'Bronze Horse,' and in 'Tannhauser March' (Wagner). The best piece of work by the chorus was in the opening of the concert when they sang 'O Balmy Night' (Donizetti), and 'War Song of the Druids' (Bellini). Miss Bowes got a well-deserved encore for her song, 'Lovely Spring,' and in response gave 'The Meeting of the Waters.' Mr Roberts sang 'The Spirit of The Whirlpool,' and was applauded. Mrs Sheath was recalled for Benedict's very florid 'Carnival of Venice,' and sang 'Home, Sweet Home,' in response. Mr Herbert Spackman's *De Beriot's* 'Scene de Ballet,' so pleased the audience that he had to give a repetition. Miss M. Collinge got a good reception for her singing of the sacred song, 'O, Rest In The Lord.' Miss Large caused a *furore* by her singing of 'Softly Sighs,' but that young lady did not reappear, although the concert was stopped for some little time by the plaudits of the audience. The curtain was lowered, to be raised later on a tableau, 'Tapers Brightly Burning,' by the lady pupils of Mrs Sheath. A quintette and chorus, 'Tho' Every Hope,' by Misses Guy and Collinge, Messrs Finch, Pollock, and Roberts was very good. Miss Levi sang nicely 'Should he Upbraid,' and Mrs Sheath and Miss Large sang a duet, 'Manuelita,' and in response to a pronounced encore sang

the duet already mentioned, 'I Know A Bank,' which was the vocal gem of the evening. Mr T. Sayers sang, 'Look Back,' and met with great applause. Miss Guy was in good voice, and met with a pronounced recall for her song, 'Di piacer mi balya il cor,' and responded with 'Beauty Sleep.' The concert concluded by the 'Tannhauser March' (Company) and the National Anthem. The accompaniments were played by Mrs Sheath, Miss Hitchings, and Mr H. G. Spackman. Mrs Sheath deserves praise for the manner in which she trains her pupils, and to her we owe a great deal in the teaching of singing here. Most unfortunately, two of her pupils could not appear owing to recent deaths in their families—Miss Ida Tiffin and Miss Bena Williams—both of whom, I hear, sing charmingly. Mr George Swan, who also is a pupil, and who is very popular, was unable to appear owing to having brought 'influenza' back from the Military Tournament held at Wellington. He has been confined to the house for two weeks, but I hear is progressing well towards recovery. It is quite an epidemic here at the present time. Mrs Horace Baker has had a very bad attack and is in a very weak state. Mr Baker and son also have had it.

There is a great deal of sickness in our pretty town at present. Poor Doctor Allen is very ill. We all hope he will get strong again, but he is very weak. The Rev. Parkinson, of St. Augustine's Church of England, is seriously ill, and not expected to recover. It is very sad, he is such a very popular man in his parish, and liked by everyone who comes in contact with him. He has recently returned from a trip to Australia, which his parishioners and friends hoped would restore him, but he has gradually got worse. Mrs Parkinson has every sympathy. Her adopted daughter is lying ill of consumption in the house, so her hands are quite full, and our good old Doctor Hitchings is far from well at the present time, and is causing his daughters very anxious moments. He still keeps driving on his rounds, but when seen walking looks very changed. We hope to see him looking his own self before long. Mrs Maurice Mason is looking herself once more after the severe attack of fever she had a few months back, and is going to reside at Hastings till their house at 'Te Aute' is rebuilt.

Mr R. Millar, for the last six and a-half years well and favourably known in connection with the Union Steamship Company here, left by the Manapouri to take up a position in the Hobart Office, to which place he has been promoted. Mr Millar was a most energetic officer, and combined with it a most pleasant manner, and was ever ready to render assistance and guidance to the travelling public by the Union Steamship Company or anyone who came in contact with him in the office or out of it. He takes with him the best wishes of a very large circle of friends, who congratulate him on his promotion, although sorry to lose him also.

Mrs Logan met with an accident while driving with Mrs Fairfax Fenwick, being thrown out of the dog-cart, hurting her elbow, which has proved very painful. Little Miss Mabel Burke got a bruised eye. The others escaped unhurt.

Miss Hamlin is wearing a very pretty grey dress and white hat; Miss Greenwood (Christchurch), who is on a visit to Mrs Ernest Tanner (Hastings), was in town last week looking charming in a cardinal dress, black jacket and hat; Mrs Fenwick is wearing a very pretty white dress and hat; Mrs Balfour also looks nice in a brown Tudor cape, Bond-street hat; Miss Bella Hitchings, large check dress, 'Melba' hat with pink flowers.

JACK.

DEAR BEE, NOVEMBER 28.

I hear you have a full description of Mrs Sheath's excellent concert, so though I have written you three or four pages on this subject, I will leave them out, and you will understand why my letter is short. Altogether the concert was a regular treat, and I hope it will not be long before we have another of the same kind. I must confess music is my weakness. I would rather go to a good concert than to any other kind of entertainment. While we are on the subject of concerts I must tell you that the Puketapu people have been coming out of their shell. They have actually had a concert, and a very successful one too. You know that Puketapu is a small village situated about four or five miles from Napier, and is a very quiet little place. The coaches run from Napier and back I think twice a day, which helps to liven the township. For this especial concert an omnibus was put on; it was positively crowded with people, and numbers of ladies, most of them carrying bouquets. The school-room, where the concert was held, was beautifully decorated, and a long programme was gone through. Amongst the performers were Misses Rymer, Harpham, Hislop (2), Hoaguard, and Crosse, Mesdames Spence, Spackman, and Anderson, and Messrs Spackman (2), Martin (2), Absolom, Peacock, Newbold, Le Petit, J. Parker, Kennedy, Von Haast, Pirani, Holt, Hughes, and Leroy. The accompaniments were played by Misses Rymer, Jensen, Crosse, Hislop, and Mr Spackman. The gem of the evening was Mrs Spackman's song, 'Call Me Back,' with violin obligato by Mr H. Spackman. We also had two enjoyable contributions by the 'Bohee Brothers.' During the interval light refreshments were dispensed by Mrs Oliver, and were much appreciated.

I am sorry to have to tell you, Bee, that the Hastings Choral and Orchestral Society is not now going to assist in the production of the 'Messiah.' I believe there has been a split in the camp, which is a thousand pities.

The Misses Fulton gave a most enjoyable dance a week or so ago. There were about forty couples present, and they all seemed to enjoy themselves most thoroughly. I haven't time to tell you all the guests who were present, but amongst them were the Misses Rhodes (2), Hughes, Millet, Humphries, Hamlin, and Mesdames Tabuteau, Hamlin, Fraser, Logan, and others. Mrs Tabuteau looked very nice indeed, as did also Miss Leslie Thompson, and Miss Hamlin; Miss Iris Fulton looked charming, and was very attentive to her guests. Mrs Fulton's house is such a delightful one for a dance. The garden is simply perfect, and on a moonlight night the view across the Bay is like a glimpse of fairy-land, it looks so shadowy and unreal, and withal so intensely beautiful. I am a lover of Nature, Bee, and hope you are also.

I am very sorry to have to write you that influenza has been rather busy in our part of the world, although most of the cases, I am happy to say, have been mild ones. We have, had two or three rather alarming cases notwithstanding. Mrs Horace Baker has been most seriously ill, and her little boy 'Racy;' indeed, all the family have been laid up, but Mrs Baker and 'Racy' have been far worse than any of the others. The latter has had whooping cough to struggle with as well as influenza. I haven't heard how Mrs Baker is the last day or two, but sincerely hope she is better. She is a most charming woman, and a great favourite. Dr. Moore had a slight attack of the same complaint, but I am glad to say he is about again. Dr. Hitchings has been seriously indisposed lately, and has consequently gone on a trip to the 'Sounds,' and has taken Miss Hitchings with him. I hope he will return to Napier quite his dear old hearty self again.

Mrs J. W. Carlile has not been very well lately, but I hear she is going away for a change, which is sure to do her good, far better than all the medicine in the universe.

Mrs Jim Wood is staying in Napier at present looking after her sisters, as her mother, Mrs Kennedy, has gone for a trip to Christchurch to see her other married daughter, Mrs F. W. Thompson. Mrs Wood is looking very well indeed, which speaks volumes for the Nelson climate, from which place she hails.

I don't know whether I told you that Dr. Jarvis is to be married about Christmas time to Miss Millet. Miss Louie Sutton's engagement to Mr Stewart is broken off.

I am told that Miss Lena Stuart, the niece of the Bishop of Waiapu, has passed a very successful examination in Edinburgh as a medical missionary. Miss Stuart was a great favourite when in Napier some two years ago, so we all take an interest in her doings. I hear she is going to India to devote her services to the Zenana Mission. I believe no strange male is ever admitted to this portion of a Hindoo's house. We heartily wish Miss Stuart all the success she so well deserves. Mrs Marsden Clarke, the Bishop's eldest daughter, is at present residing in Napier with her children.

I must tell you all about the cricket match which was played at Farndon Park in my next letter, the gowns worn, etc., but as I have to catch the mail now must say good-bye.

GLADYS.

HASTINGS.

DEAR BEE, NOVEMBER 22.

I am sorry to tell you our lovely weather has again broken, and lo and behold, it is quite cold, and is raining heavily. Isn't it tiresome? But I suppose the farmers want rain, so we mustn't grumble.

Mrs Grimwood and her daughter, Miss Violet Bogle, have returned from Tasmania looking so well. They have been away about two years, and they have certainly grown younger during their stay. Mrs Grimwood is such a dear old lady. Everyone is pleased to see her again, and our only regret is that she is not going to remain in Hastings. However we hope to see her sometimes in this quarter of the world, as she is not going very far away, only to Petane to her daughter, Miss Bogle, who has charge of the Petane school. Miss Violet Bogle is, I believe, going to take charge of Mr Vigor-Brown's little ones. Miss Maud Grimwood is residing with Mrs Joe Williams at Waipuna, about a mile out of Hastings.

Judge Richmond, Mrs Richmond, and Miss Richmond have been staying with Mrs (Captain) Russell for a short time. The two former came to Hawke's Bay in order to be present at their son's wedding. He was married to Miss Rochford, a Napier young lady.

You see, Bee, after all none of Mr Gollan's horses won the Cup. Oh, well, we mustn't expect too much all at once; perhaps next year he will have better luck. I don't think he can grumble, as they won two other races—the 'Oaks' and another, which is very good for a beginning, as the horses have not been very long in Australia, and may be a bit home-sick, if horses ever are taken that way. Mr Gollan's trainer, Mr Percy Martin, and family have gone to Melbourne, which looks as if the horses were not going to return to New Zealand just yet.

I am sorry to have to tell you that Mr Nat Beamish met with a nasty accident the other day. He was fencing, I believe, and the wire strainer flew up and cut his lip right through, besides knocking out several teeth. I am glad to say he is getting on very well after such an unpleasant experience. He ought to be thankful it is no worse.

I don't think tennis has started up here yet, although a little bird told me that Mrs Russell is thinking of starting shortly. The lawns at Flaxmere are very lovely, and tennis is always looked forward to there. We have no lawn tennis club at Hastings, but there are so many private courts one hardly wants a club, except in winter time, when an asphalte court would be a great boon. Now that Hastings is becoming such a large town perhaps something will be done in that way before next winter. In the meantime we have all the summer before us, and let us enjoy it while we can.

Mr Barnard, of the Union Bank, has gone for a holiday to Gisborne. Mr Brooke Taylor has taken his place for the time being. Mr Barnes, of the Bank of New Zealand, has been removed to a country district. I haven't learnt the name of the gentleman who has taken his place, but will tell you in another letter.

Before I close, Bee, I must tell you that Messrs Fraser and Robinson have bought Mrs Rainbow's school. They start under the new *regime* after Christmas. Mr Fraser is such a capital master; he is so energetic he deserves to succeed. He has the boys in such perfect order both in and out of school, and they are all so fond of him that it speaks a great deal in his favour that it is so. The school is a capital one. Amongst other things the boys are taught carpentering, which is a very useful accomplishment, and many are the pretty knick-knacks turned out by the Heretaunga boys made in spare hours. I am told Mrs Rainbow is going to reside at Tomoana.

We had a very novel entertainment here this week. A Mr and Mrs Gibson have been showing us how things are managed in Fiji, and they went through the ceremony of marriage in full Fijian dress. Mr Gibson gave an account of the Islands from his own observations, and illustrated his narrative with dissolving views. The lecture was held in the Wesleyan Church, and was most interesting. It is needless to say the church was full.

The Rev. J. Hobbs is giving a series of interesting lectures in St. John's schoolroom, which are very well attended.

I was sorry to hear of the death of Mr T. W. Lewis. He had gone to Sydney for a holiday, and caught the much-dreaded influenza, which ended in inflammation of the lungs, and quickly carried off the old gentleman. He was a great favourite, being such a genial cheery man. Much sympathy is felt for his two sons who reside here. I believe the body is to be brought back to New Zealand, and is to be interred in Wellington.

I have noticed some pretty spring costumes lately. Mrs C. Howard is wearing a pretty amethyst gingham trimmed with narrow velvet, bonnet to match; Miss Tipping, pink summer tweed gown, large white hat with pink ribbon bows; Mrs Henry Mason, fawn gown, pretty dust cloak, boat-shaped hat; Miss Annie St. Hill, fawn gown, sailor hat; Mrs Loughnan looks well in a cream delaine, long basque, black Bond-street hat; Mrs Joe Williams, grey gown, black bonnet with forget-me-nots; Mrs Vickerman wears a very becoming pale pink brocaded gingham, white sailor hat; Miss Nelson, grey figured delaine, grey chiffon frills, black hat with heliotrope.

DOLLY.

WELLINGTON.

(*Delayed.*)

DEAR BEE, NOVEMBER 20.

Of course you will expect to hear all about the Show. Well, to begin with, we had a glorious day, which was all that was needed to complete the perfect arrangements for the day. By twelve o'clock the Hutt Park racecourse, which was chosen for the scene of the show, was thronged with thousands of people, and during the afternoon thousands more arrived, and I am sure every available vehicle in the town must have been there, so many were there, and each, of course, was laden with gaily-dressed occupants. Each train, too, as it arrived poured out hundreds of town people. The town was completely deserted, and the show was the most successful we have ever had. In the afternoon Mrs Newman, wife of the President, provided afternoon tea for about sixty or seventy of her friends in the grandstand luncheon-room. The tea and delicious cakes, scones, etc., proved most acceptable, as you can well imagine on a very hot day, and when one is at least ten miles from town. 'But who was there?' I fancy I hear you saying. Well the whole of Wellington and Wairarapa seemed to be there, besides a great many visitors from other towns. However, that is decidedly vague, so I will try and remember a few of the thousands. Mrs Robert Pharazyn, Miss Pharazyn (Wairarapa), in pale green spotted with dark green, long flounced basque, large white hat with green foliage; her sister, Mrs Elgar, a gobelin blue phaeton cape; Mrs Charles Johnston, a very handsome bottle green cloth costume, turned back in parts with bright red silk, tiny gold and black bonnet; Mrs Newman, dark blue printed with white, the long basque trimmed with broad white embroidery, black lace hat; Mrs Menzies, the Misses Menzies, fawn costumes and large hats; Mrs (Dr.) Adams, black, and large black hat smothered with white ostrich feathers; Mrs C. Izard, fawn check; the Misses Izard, fawn, and black floral hats with strings; Miss Nelson (Napier), a pretty fawn costume checked with pink and green; Mrs Williams, Mrs Beetham, Mrs G. Beetham, fawn tweed; Miss Johnston, grey tweed, large black hat with strings; Miss Reeves, Miss Robison, Miss Grace, Miss M. Grace, a pretty saffron gown with broad band of white embroidery, and large black transparent hat with yellow roses; Miss Duncan, a large checked tweed; Mrs Richardson, black, and black and green bonnet; Miss Richardson, Mrs Buckley; Mrs Cooper, the Misses Cooper, Mrs Pratt, Mrs Gore, the Misses Gore, Mrs W. Moorhouse, brown costume with yellow silk vest; Mrs Maxwell, grey, and grey feathered hat; Mrs Parker, a grey costume; Mrs Jellicoe, gobelin blue flowered with white, long basque; Mrs Knight, the Misses Henry; Mrs Marshall (Bulls), fawn flecked tweed, and pretty black and gold butterfly bonnet; her sister, Miss A. Hadfield, pink zephyr and white tulle hat; Mrs H. D. Bell, a handsome heliotrope costume and white bonnet; Miss Bennett, (Rangitikei), fawn with mauve silk blouse under fawn jacket, transparent black hat with folds of white chiffon; Miss Worgan, pale blue; Miss M. Wardell, a pretty grey costume and hat; Mrs Hutton and Miss Barton (Wairarapa); Miss Miller; Miss K. Johnston, white pique and mauve flower toque; Mrs Parfitt; Mrs H. Crawford, in a handsome grey three-quarter cloak braided with gold; Miss Dransfield, brown costume with revers of yellow silk, and pretty sunshade; Mrs Wardrop, grey; Mrs Burns, Mrs Tilly, and the Misses Barron, Willis, Smith Harding, Burnett, Fairchild, Graham, etc., and among the lady riders who entered for competition were Mrs Holmes Warren, Mrs Dan Riddiford, Mrs Joe Rhodes, Mrs Scales, Miss T. Wardell, Miss McKelvie and Miss M. Moncton. Mr Fred Pearce's jumping was greatly admired. He is a splendid horseman. Miss McKelvie had a nasty fall, but very pluckily rode again afterwards. Among the gentlemen were Dr. Newman, Dr. Cahill, the Hon. C. Pharazyn, Mr C. Pharazyn, Mr G. Scales (who had a good deal to do with the management), Mr E. Pearce, and Messrs C., W., E., and G. Johnston, H. Williams, Govett, Werry, P. Hunter, Reynolds (Dunedin), Brown, Parker, Wardell, Bidwill, Vogel, Moorehouse, Wilford, Gore, Gardiner, Woolridge, Cooper, Turnbull, St. Hill, Beetham, Pratt, and Parfitt, Dr. Adams, the Hon. R. Seddon, Hon. J. McKenzie Mr H. D. Bell etc., etc. As to the actual exhibits, I really do not know enough about them to give an opinion, but the judges seemed highly delighted with everything. The grandstand and lawn looked so pretty with all the ladies' gay dresses, and from there could be obtained a splendid view of the whole course thronged with visitors. Swings, merry-go-rounds, aunt Sallies, a monkey on an organ, quoits, etc., besides the booths, all helped to make a picturesque scene, and a thoroughly enjoyable day was spent both by town and country folk.

Two war ships have just come into the harbour, the Tauranga being one. I hope some entertainment will be got up for their officers.

The night before the show we were entertained at a very pleasant little dance given by Mr and Mrs Charles Johnston at their Hobson-street residence. It was given as a farewell to Mr Earl Johnston, their eldest son, who leaves shortly for England to join the army, and amongst the guests were the Misses Grace, Menzies (2), Duncan, Richmond, Izard (2), Gore (2), Holmes, Reeves, and Moorhouse (2), and Messrs Richmond, Vogel, Brown, Williams, Woolridge, Gardiner, Gore, Cooper, and Turnbull. It was a very small party, but very enjoyable. We will be sorry to lose Mr Earl Johnston, who is already a great favourite with the ladies. Mrs Johnston is giving a series of small tennis

parties, which have been much appreciated by her young friends.

The Thorndon Lawn Tennis Club could not open on Saturday because of the bad weather, but the members have been playing all this week, and the ground is looking lovely. I suppose there will be no formal opening now. We were to have had a large afternoon tea had the weather been fine enough.

We are looking forward to the Athletic Club's annual sports.

The night before the Show the Harmonic Society gave an extra concert, which was well patronised. The capital programme drew all the musical people. Miss McClean sang 'Bel Raggio' extremely well; Mr Whittall, a new singer, gave two songs, Mrs Parsons one, Miss Greig one, a lovely old song called 'In the Meadows.' Mr Williams sang 'Last Night' and 'The Soft Southern Breeze' most beautifully. Mendelssohn's 'Hear My Prayer' was well sung by the choir, Mrs Parson taking the solo. Mr McDuff-Boyd played a violin solo, and Miss Medley and Miss Hammerton played a duet for two pianos splendidly. Two trios were sung, one by Mrs Desborough, Miss Stanford, and Mr Ross Marten, and another by Mrs Desborough, Miss McClean and Mr Mabin. The part-songs were exceedingly well sung, notwithstanding the fact of influenza having considerably diminished the number of the performers.

Nearly everyone has returned from Christchurch, where they have had a very delightful time. Mr Walrond came up for a few days, but has now returned. Most people are sorry to part with Lord and Lady Onslow, and speaking for myself, I am very sorry, for my slight acquaintance with them has been very pleasant, and I think the few who have got to know them will agree with me in thinking Government House a very charming place with Lord and Lady Onslow as host and hostess. They have certainly been most unfortunate in Wellington, too, having had so much illness, and this probably has kept them so much away from us. Let us hope so.

RUBY.

DEAR BEE, NOVEMBER 27.

I mean to tell you something about the Wellington Amateur Athletic Club's annual sports this week, for they had a capital meeting, the largest, I should think, they had ever had. The ground looked very pretty, for it was a glorious day, and everyone had donned their best. The grand-stand was crowded in no time, and those who arrived the least little bit late had no chance of a seat. During the afternoon we were all most thoughtfully supplied with delicious tea, scones, cakes, etc., by the Misses Gore, assisted by the Misses Menzies, the Misses Izard, Miss Bennett, and Miss Cooper. It was greatly appreciated, especially late in the afternoon when it began to get cold. Now, who was there? Dr. and Mrs Newman, the latter in a handsome brown tweed, made with a very long basque, and a small black lace straw hat; Mrs F. Pratt (Palmerston) wore black gown and long jacket, and white shirt, and Bond-street hat; her sisters, the Misses Cooper, the same; Mrs Charles Johnston and her little girls, in pretty cream dresses, and cream hats trimmed with peacock ribbons; Mrs G. S. Cooper, three-quarter black cloak, and jet bonnet; Mrs Dan Riddiford, black, and toque hat with poppies; the Misses Menzies, fawn, and large hats with flowers; Mrs Menzies, black; the Misses Gore, grey, and sailor hats; Mrs Gore, brocaded mantle, and black and gold bonnet with yellow tips; the Misses Izard, fawn, and black lace hats with cornflower and strings; Mrs L. Reid, dark fawn with long basque, and brown feather bonnet; Mrs G. Knight, black three-quarter cape over a black spotted silk dress, and a very pretty jet and flower bonnet; Miss Dransfield, brown costume, boat hat with yellow and white ribbon; Miss M. Grace, blue skirt, and white blouse, and sailor hat; Miss Rose, grey; and her sister, crushed strawberry cashmere trimmed with narrow bands of black velvet; Miss Una Hitchings, cream delaine spotted with mauve, the long basque trimmed with violet velvet, and mauve toque; Miss Holmes, a pretty blue and white print with frilled bodice, and small blue and gold bonnet with tips; the Misses Tuckey, dark blue with scarlet lapels, and sailor hats; Miss Medley; the Misses Harding; Miss Kemp; Miss A. Halse, dark green flowered with white; Miss Henry; Miss E. Richmond; Miss Morrah, gobelin blue striped with white, large white hat; Miss N. Reeves; Miss Marchant, grey corduroy, black lace hat; Miss Elliot, grey; Miss Fairchild, blue flowered print trimmed with white lace; Mrs Taylor; Mrs King, fawn with white waistcoat embroidered with gold; the Misses Brandon, Miss Brock, Miss Malcolm, the Misses McLean (Dunedin), Miss Knight, Miss S. Graham, in a grey three-quarter cape braided with black, white hat; Miss A. Bennett, cream delaine figured with mauve, flower toque; and the Messrs H. D. Bell, C. Johnston, Earl Johnston, H. Williams, D. Riddiford, Pratt, A. Cooper, Gardiner, Woolridge, Brown, Todd (2), G. Williams, C. Cooper, Anson, W. Turnbull, and Dr. Newman. A good many of the officers from the Tauranga and Ringarooma were there enjoying the keen contests, for such almost every event resulted in. The ladies' bracelet was won by Mr P. Nathan, Mr N. Gurr being 2nd, and Mr G. St. Hill 3rd. Amongst other successful competitors, and I am sure you will know most of them, were Messrs Guy Johnston, Ross, Gore, C. Gore, Gurr, H. Batger, W. Turnbull, Morrah, Tripe, Kirker, Harley, Heywood, and Howard. It was a most successful meeting, and everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy the day's outing.

We are very glad to welcome Mr H. D. Bell as our future Mayor. He got in by a large majority. Mr Worth was the only other candidate.

Sir Dillon and Lady Bell and Mr Ernest Bell have just arrived by the last direct boat from home. Sir Dillon suffered from gout on the voyage, but is quite well again now. Lady Bell is looking wonderfully well. They were warmly welcomed by their large circle of friends and relatives.

Mrs and Miss Duncan leave for England in a few days, and also Mr Earl Johnston, eldest son of Mr Charles Johnston. Mr Gwynne Williams, son of Mr T. C. Williams, also leaves us shortly to go to college at home. We will miss them all very much, but hope to see them out again in a few years.

There has not been much entertainment for our naval visitors beyond tennis. Mrs C. Johnston has entertained them at tennis, and several supper parties have been got up for them, and they are to be met frequently at the Thorndon Lawn Tennis Courts.

Influenza is still with us, and some cases have terminated fatally, while others are left very weak and ill. It is quite a common thing to hear of six or seven in a family being laid up at the same time, and yesterday I heard of a family of thirteen, ten of whom were confined to their beds, including the cook and housemaid. Dr. Grace is just beginning to get about again after it. Dr. and Mrs Kemp have recovered, but Sir J. and Lady Hector, Mr Robinson, R.M., Mr W. R. E. Brown, Mr and Mrs C. Izard, the Misses Izard, and many others are very ill with it. It has affected trade greatly, dozens in some cases being absent with influenza from the large warehouses.

I hear that Mr Thomas M. Wilford, son of Dr. Wilford, of the Hutt, and Miss Georgie McLean, daughter of the Hon. G. McLean, of Dunedin, are to be married next month, and intend residing in Wellington. I have not heard of any more weddings, but probably the next will be that of Miss Maude Wardell, daughter of our late Resident Magistrate, of Masterton, and Mr George Pearce, son of Mr Edward Pearce, of Wellington.

The weather is so warm we cannot find anything cool enough to wear. We seem suddenly to have jumped into the heat of summer.

RUBY.

CHRISTCHURCH.

DEAR BEE, NOVEMBER 26.

How flat and stale everything seems after our festival week! the races, balls, and garden parties are only pleasant memories now, and most of the visitors have returned to their homes. It does not seem possible to have a week without rain, during Show week, at any rate, for the weather is as contrary as it is possible to be always.

The day of Mrs Cowlishaw's garden party was a miserable specimen, and of all the guests invited, about ninety put in an appearance. It had to be turned into a musical afternoon, and a most enjoyable one it was. The weather cleared very much about four o'clock, but the garden was too damp for strolling about.

The Governor and Lady Onslow attended a performance of 'Pinafore' by our Amateur Opera Company in the evening. The Oddfellows' Hall was filled in every part with a fashionable audience, but cloaks were indispensable with the ladies, it was so cold. The opera seemed a little wanting in 'go.' I suppose the cramped stage had something to do with that. Mrs Edgar, as Josephine, was as charming as ever, especially in the second act, when she wears her cream satin bridal robe. Little Buttercup (Miss Buchanan) and Captain Corcoran (Mr Maitland Gard'ner) were excellent in the duet.

The next morning broke dull and threatening, but in spite of a few showers a large number found their way out to Riccarton, and though the stand was not so full as 'Cup Day,' an unusually large gathering of ladies was to be seen. The dresses were not so delicately pretty, the gloomy morning necessitating dark colours, but some handsome ones were worn. The Governor and Lady Onslow drove up just before the second race, after which, at the invitation of Mr Stead, they and a number of others adjourned for luncheon. Florrie's win of the Derby, the race of the day, was a very popular one, and she certainly did look a pretty creature when led on to the lawn to be decorated by Lady Onslow with the broad 'blue ribbon.' The Countess wore a very pretty dress of electric blue with embroidered vest of white, blue, and gold, a bonnet of gold lace and yellow flowers; Mrs Stevens, a dark grey corduroy velvet, with white cuffs braided with black; Mrs Wilder, a very pretty grey dress with embroidered front; Mrs Parker, long crimson cloak; Mrs Alan Scott, grey dress with large brown check, hat with white feathers; Mrs Banks, brown cashmere and velvet; Mrs Heaton Rhodes, grey dress and sealskin jacket; Mrs George Rhodes, light fawn-coloured dress; Mrs G. Rhodes (Timaru), grey dress; Miss Rhodes, grey with large spots; Miss E. Rhodes, blue and grey striped dress; Mrs Henry McKenzie, Stuart tartan dress; Mrs Burns, grey with dark green stripes; Mrs Stead, grey, with blue front and gold embroidery; Miss Palmer, a pretty pink floral delaine; Mrs Willock, brown; Miss Willis, grey, the jacket piped with white.

The second ball at Government House was given that evening and was greatly enjoyed by those fortunate enough to be present, and will long be remembered as a red letter evening in Christchurch. The dance of the evening was a cotillon led by the Earl and Countess, assisted by Mrs Alan Scott and Captain Guthrie. Some new figures never danced here before were gone through, one of the prettiest being the six-in-hand, Lady Onslow guiding the men, Lord Onslow the girls, each holding coloured ribbons with tinkling bells. At the end each one had a present—a small ornament, scent bottle, fan, flower or something. Supper was served on a number of small tables, different ladies being told off as hostesses, and arranging their own parties. The Countess wore white silk covered with ganze of the palest primrose, and blue velvet bows of a very soft shade, a Countess' coronet of diamonds, and magnificent diamond ornaments, and carried a bouquet of choice flowers. Lady Hall was in silver grey; Mrs Wilder, a strikingly pretty dress of white satin covered with black lace; Mrs Stevens, pale lavender dress, and lovely sprays of roses; Mrs Alan Scott, Mrs Stead, and Mrs Boyle all wore black; Mrs G. Rhodes (Timaru), pink silk of the palest shade with blush roses; Mrs Anson, rich black velvet with flounce and trimming of white lace; Mrs Mason, white satin draped with pale eau-de-nil tulle and bronze ribbons; Mrs Lomax Smith, black; Mrs Julian Scott, blue silk; Mrs Campbell, dark green silk; Mrs George Rhodes, white satin with gold trimming; Miss Rhodes, Miss Palmer, Miss Campbell, Miss Moorhouse, all wore white; the Misses Williams (Wellington), pale pink brocaded silk; Miss Studholme, white silk; Lady Hall, Mrs Stevens, Mrs Cowlishaw, Misses Banks, Harper, Bowen, Murray-Aynsley.

At the Tuam-street Hall a very different festivity was proceeding—the Rolleston banquet. That also was graced by a large number of ladies in the gallery, who listened for hours to speeches and watched champagne flowing below, and meekly took a half cold cup of tea.

The following day was fine again. Lord Onslow drove a small party out to Lansdowne in his four-in-hand for a picnic. It is a very favourite resort, and just now is looking its best.

Mrs Palmer gave a large garden party at Woodford. The Burnham Band was stationed on the lawn, and refreshments in a marquee close by. There were delicious ices and strawberries and cream. The little bandsmen played very nicely through the afternoon. Mrs Palmer wore a dark brown silk with train, handsome beaded cloak, and black bonnet; Miss Olive Palmer was in white; Mrs Lee, a floral delaine, and black bonnet; Mrs Wardrop, dress also of delaine, and white hat. Among the guests were Mrs J. D. Millton (Birch Hill), fawn silk with thick lace, hat with pink flowers; Mrs Harley, heliotrope silk; Mrs Stead, fawn-coloured silk; her niece (Miss Palmer), white, with grey three-quarter cloak; Mrs George Rhodes, dress of bluish-grey with pretty lace trimming; Mrs Smithson (Timaru), grey dress trimmed with black lace; Mrs Flavell, black; Mrs Bowden, blue grey dress; Mrs Lance, sapphire blue velvet; Mrs Otterson, Mrs Edward Lee (Southbridge), Mr and Mrs Leslie Lee, Mr and Mrs Worthy, Mr and Mrs Neave, Mr and Mrs Harper, Mrs Westmacott, Mrs Rolleston, Mrs Cox, Mrs Blakiston, Mrs Tabart, Mrs Macdonald, Mrs Ollivier, Mrs F. H. Brittain, Mrs Acton Adams, and the Misses Helmore, Cowlishaw, Gray, Beswick, Hennah, Moorhouse, Tabart, and many others.

In the evening the Jockey Club ball was held in the old Provincial Council Chambers, the loveliest room imaginable for a ball, and what would we not give were it only half as large again! The decorations were perfect, the galleries being screened with evergreens, and large floral horseshoes of beautiful roses showing up with good effect. One little room was a perfect bower, the lights being shaded with a lovely tint and masses of cream roses, no other colour. Light refreshments were served here on small tables, while the supper was of the most *recherché* kind. Mr Wanklyn and his assistants deserve great credit for the splendid success of this ball, as it really eclipsed previous efforts of the C.J.C. Lord and Lady Onslow opened the ball, the Governor dancing with Mrs Parker, the Hon. E. W. Parker and the Countess being *vis-a-vis*. The Countess wore a handsome dress of smoke-coloured satin, tiara of diamonds, and lovely diamond ornaments, and carried a bouquet of mountain lilies specially brought from Mount Cook by Messrs Dixon and Harper, I believe; they are such beautiful waxen flowers. Mrs Parker wore a handsome dress of cream and green. The other ladies of the set were Mrs Cunningham, in a lovely dress of pale blue brocade; Mrs Stead, a handsome black gown; Mrs Alan Scott, a magnificent dress of pearl grey satin with cuirass bodice of steel and pink pearl embroidery; Mrs Rhind, also in grey with passementerie trimming of Virginia creeper, the shades being lovely; Mrs Rolleston and Mrs Lance, both in black; Mrs Dalgety wore a very handsome dress of green and pink silk; Mrs G. Roberts, very rich cream brocade and pearl embroidery; Mrs W. D. Meares, a beautiful tint of brown silk and net relieved with a little colour; Mrs Common, vieux rose moire with train, and trimmed with point lace; Mrs G. Rhodes (Timaru), pale pink silk; Mrs Heaton Rhodes, white, with lovely brocade train; Miss Rhodes, grey satin; Mrs F. Graham, black; Miss Graham, white; Miss Way, pink; Mrs Beaumont, very handsome brown satin; Mrs Andrew Anderson, pale blue satin; Mrs J. Anderson, also pale blue; Miss Matson, cream, with gold girdle and trimmings; Miss A. Matson, pale blue; Miss Stephenson (Dunedin), pale blue satin with silver fringe round the bodice (a lovely dress); Miss A. Brett (Auckland), pale blue merveilleux with gold spray on the bodice and diamond pins; Miss Frankish, black; Miss Blakiston, Miss Cunningham, and Miss B. Cunningham all wore white; Mrs Cowlishaw, black; Mrs Rhodes, a handsome black dress; Mrs J. D. Millton (Birch Hill), white satin, her bridal dress; Miss Williams (Wellington), cream; Miss Mabel Gould, pink; Miss Cowlishaw, white; Miss Gladys Powell, a *debutante*, looked very pretty in her simple white dress; Miss Kinsey, crushed strawberry silk; Miss E. Tabart, pink; Miss M. Tabart, black; Miss Ethel Turner, pale blue; Lady Hall, grey silk and white lace; Mrs O'Herson, white silk; Mrs Prins, reddish-brown silk, pale blue revers and vest; Mrs J. Barker looked well in white silk and shrimp-pink velvet ribbons; Mrs Pitman, handsome white and pink brocaded satin; Mrs H. Buchanan, sweet dress of mauve, with violet ribbon and pansies; Mrs L. Harper, dark red satin; Miss E. Helmore, peculiar shade grey satin, beaded net; Mrs Dampier (Crossley), black and gold; Miss M. Gore (Wellington), pretty white silk; Miss G. Cowlishaw, Miss Harris, and Miss D. Roberts (*debutantes*) all wore pretty white frocks; Miss Allen (Timaru), pink silk; Miss L. Lean, black and gold cord trimming. Amongst others I noticed Mrs Lance, Mrs Wilson, Mrs R. Wilson (Culverden), Mrs Stead, Mrs Mason, Mrs Willock, Miss Clarke, Miss Studholme (Waimate), the Misses Courage (Amberley), Miss Grey, Mrs Anson, Miss Gerard, Miss Willis, Miss M. Gould, Miss L. Studholme, Miss Moorhouse, Miss F. Wynn-Williams, Mrs Fenwick (Napier), Miss Black, Miss Hutton, Miss Grigg, Miss Hall, Miss M. Sanders, Mrs Burns, Miss Ronalds, Miss Cox, Miss Reynolds (Dunedin), Mrs Bruges, Miss Potts, Miss Todhunter, Miss Banks, Miss Greenwood, Miss Meeson, Miss Millton, Miss Graham, Miss Hewlings, etc.; but out of so many lovely dresses, and with such a crush, it is impossible to describe all. The music was of Fleming's best, and that leaves nothing to be desired.

Thursday was also the first day of the Show, when those interested visit it to really see the things on view, the next day being what is called the 'people's day.' We were favoured with a perfect day this year, and it is said 21,000 people visited the ground. One of the events of the day was the arrival of the Governor driving his four-in-hand, a beautiful team of bays, which he handles to perfection. Seated on the box beside him was the Countess, smiling and gracious as ever. The Hon. E. W. and Mrs Parker were also of the party, Mr Walrond, Captain Guthrie, and some of the officers of the warships. The Countess wore a pale blue silk with floral design, and blue floral bonnet; Mrs Parker, grey dress with gold braid, black three-quarter cloak and grey hat. The committee of the Agricultural and Pastoral Association invited His Excellency and a number of friends to luncheon, which I am told was a most representative gathering, visitors being present from Auckland to Invercargill. The jumping was the feature of the afternoon, one lady taking part in the wire fence contest. I hope the Association will be able to build a stand before next year's show, the small one at present on the ground being almost useless to accommodate the multitude.

For the final day of the races we had a very showery morning, but it cleared up in the afternoon. The attendance for a third day was a very large one. The Governor, Lady Onslow and party again drove out, the Hon. Mrs

Parker accompanying the Countess. Lady Onslow wore a light fawn-coloured cloth trimmed with gold, velvet bonnet with gold wings. That grand old horse, Maxim, was brought on to the lawn during the afternoon, and he seemed fully conscious of the admiration bestowed upon him. He has been sold to an American.

Most of our visitors made their adieux that evening, the train and steamers being crowded, and so ends our carnival week of 1891, which may be counted more successful than usual.

DOLLY VALE.

TIMARU.

DEAR BEE, NOVEMBER 26.

Summer is now full upon us, and everything is looking bright and pretty, including the dresses of the ladies. Winter garments are cast aside, and from them we emerge, like the butterfly from the chrysalis, in gay colours, Cornflower blue seems to be quite the favourite colour, though I cannot say I much admire it. Several shades of heliotrope are also much worn this season, and very becoming they are. Nearly all the dresses are made with the very long basque which is now so fashionable, while blouses and tennis shirts are all worn outside the skirt, an improvement which we shall all appreciate. Many ladies are wearing pretty grey costumes, notably among them Mrs Perston, and the Misses Cramond and Hassel.

At the S.C.A.A.C. Grounds there was quite a fashionable gathering to witness the opening cricket match of the season, Bankers and Lawyers v. the World. The players were not very energetic, but that is quite excusable, as they had not had any practice this season: but that did not prevent the game being very enjoyable. Afternoon tea was dispensed in the grand-stand by Mesdames C. Perry and Smithson, assisted by the Misses O'Brien and Turnbull. Among the spectators I noticed Mrs C. Perry and Mrs Angus Macdonald in black; Mrs Smithson, black, with a white tennis shirt; Mrs Hassel, pretty blue dust cloak; Mrs Inglis, grey; and the Misses Archer, White, Ford, Lovegrove, Bamfield, Le Cren, and Beswick. Dr. and Mrs Lawson, who have just arrived from home in the Tongariro, were also there, the bride looking nice in navy blue with dark red braided waiscoat and panel, and hat to match.

A great number of people left by express for the Christchurch Races and Show, which are always held there in this month. We poor things who were left behind felt very jealous as the train moved off laden with our more fortunate friends.

The Prince of Wales' Birthday was, of course, a public holiday, there was nothing going on in the town, but numerous picnic parties wended their several ways into the country. A large party under the chaperonage of Mrs Perry, drove out to Storecroft, Mr A. Perry's farm, and spent a pleasant day among the trees.

There was great excitement in the evening on the receipt of the news that British Lion had won the New Zealand Cup, all the gentlemen and many ladies taking a great interest in the race. Of course, there were several horses in this district contesting the various events, and we were very pleased to hear that Mr Timaru Rhodes' Morpheus had won the Maiden Stakes, while Mr R. Allen's Saracen ran a good second to Clanronald, being only beaten by half a head.

Lately we have had such wretched weather—heavy rain and bitterly cold winds. It must be very bad for delicate people coming after the warm days we had last month. However, the sun reappeared, and the weather was much warmer when Miss Le Cren, of Craighead, gave a very pleasant tennis party. There were a good many guests, and those who were not playing enjoyed themselves, I think, as much as those who were, there being so much to see and admire in the lovely and extensive grounds. Afternoon tea was served on the lawn. Among the guests were Mrs F. Le Cren and Miss Nantes; Mrs Lindsay and her sisters; Mrs Perston, in a stylish blue dress with large white spots; Mrs Withers, who is here on a visit from Brisbane; and her sisters, the Misses White; Mrs Edmund Cook, in a handsome black and gold costume; Mrs C. Perry, Miss Turnbull, in a soft white silk and lovely pink roses; Miss Archer, Miss Lovegrove and her sister, Miss Beswick, Miss Chisholm, and Miss Kitson. The hostess, Miss Le Cren, looked very pretty in a dark heliotrope gown.

The day chosen by our Bowling Club as their opening day, was a most enjoyable one, and a pleasant afternoon was spent on their new green in Sefton-streeet. All the previous week was very showery and uncertain, but that afternoon proved warm and beautiful. Four hundred invitations were sent out, and quite that number of guests must have made their appearance during the afternoon. The green is in a hollow surrounded by a broad terrace, and beyond that again are rows of seats on a velvety sward. There were four rinks kept going during the afternoon, the players being selected from the vice-presidents and members of the Committee. There were four daintily-stocked teatables, presided over by the wives of the members of the committee. No 1 by Mrs Sutter, assisted by Miss McLean, Miss Taylor, Miss Mee, and Miss Sims; No. 2 by Mrs Cook, assisted by Mesdames Toshack and Gooch, and the Misses Lovegrove and Cook; No. 3 by Mrs Howley, assisted by Mrs Bamfield and her daughters; No. 4 by Mrs (Dr.) Reid, assisted by Mrs Moses, Mrs White, and Mrs Gillman. Among the guests were Mrs George Rhodes, of Claremont, in a stylish fawn costume; Mrs Smithson, looking very pretty in black; Mrs and Miss Wray, the latter wearing a fashionable black and white blazer; Mrs Withers, Miss White, Mrs Timaru Rhodes, Mrs Broderick, Mrs Bristol, of Kingsdown, wife of the president, in a handsome dress and black boa; Mrs Douglas and her daughters, Mrs Stedman, Miss Gardner, in a pretty blue print; Miss Le Cren and Miss Beswick; Miss Allen, in a pretty green flowered delaine; and her sister, in a sweet grey dress, and three quarter cape to match; the Misses Mayne, Mrs Gordon Wood, and many others.

On the evening one of the nicest concerts we have had for a long time was held in St. Mary's schoolroom. It was given by the members of St. Mary's Choir, and was the first of a proposed series. The room was arranged most charmingly with tables, settees, easy chairs and sofas, pot plants, etc. Japanese umbrellas were hung from the roof, and pretty Liberty muslin curtains draped each window. The stage, too looked very cosy and inviting. The comfortable chairs and sofas on that were occupied by the adult members of the Choir, the boys only going on the stage when they had to take part in the music. Two or three trios were sung by the lady members, and glees by the full choir, all of which were much admired for the perfect time and crispness with which the parts were taken up. In one trio, 'Ave Maria,' the solo was ably taken by Mrs Stubbs, and in another, 'Once Again,' the solo part was well sung by Miss Cooper. Opinions differ as to the gem of the evening, but my favourite was Greig's 'Norwegian Wedding March,' which was exquisitely played by Mrs S. F. Smithson, who also sang in her usual sweet and finished style. Solos were given by Mrs Stubbs, Miss A. Mee, Mr T. Jones, and Mr Ziesler, and were all heartily applauded. A charming duet of Rubenstein's, sung by the Misses Lilian and Mabel Cooper, was greatly appreciated. The same two sisters also played one of Schubert's lovely marches with great expression. Messrs Perston and Robins sang 'The Larboard Watch' exceedingly well. There was also a spirited recitation by Captain Jackson; and a very interesting address by our Archdeacon on church music in England; and last, but not least, there were, oh, Bee, such delicious tea and cakes of every description. The evening was brought to a close by the full choir's splendid rendering of the old favourite, 'Home, Sweet Home,' followed, of course, by the National Anthem. All agreed that the evening was a great success, and we all hope that the choir will hold to their present intention of repeating the entertainment once or twice a year.

A dance was given to Mr G. C. Matheson, who is leaving Timaru for Queensland this week. Mr Matheson has been here in the National Bank about six years, and is extremely popular, not only with the fair sex, but also among his male associates, which I always think speaks better for a man than anything else. He has been captain of both the Football and Boating Clubs, and has been most energetic and conscientious in his duties. The ball was held in the schoolroom, which was beautifully decorated. The floor, as usual was perfect, and the music (Woods' band) very good indeed. The extras were played by Mrs Antill and Mr Matheson. Supper was provided by his lady friends, and the table looked really beautiful with its profuse decorations of horse-chestnut blossom and large bowls of white peonies. All the ladies looked particularly nice, Mrs George Heaton Rhodes, who has just returned from England, being unanimously considered the belle, in lovely pale pink satin and chiffon gown, and cream three-quarter cloak; Mrs Antill wore a dress of two pretty shades of pink, and Miss Maggie Allan looked sweetly pretty in white and gold. There were several others in white, among them the Misses Turnbull, A. Cramond, Le Cren, Cook, Chisholm, E. Lovegrove, and Stubbs; the Misses Archer, Beswick, and Rutherford all wore black, which always looks nice; Miss M. Archer looked handsome in crimson velvet, and Miss White in pale pink; Miss E. White (who has just returned from Brisbane) wore a pale green gown with black lace; Miss Lovegrove looked well in old gold velvet; Miss Kitson and Miss Tripp were in pink, and Miss Raymond in sea-green; Miss Mee was not dancing, she having hurt her arm with tennis, and being obliged to wear it in a sling. Miss A. Mee and Miss Connie Lovegrove wore pale blue, and Miss Nantes, sage green. The ball broke up at 1.30, all agreeing that it had been a delightful evening.

Another night the gentlemen entertained Mr Matheson and Mr McLean, who also is leaving Timaru, at a smoking concert, where many flowery speeches were made and both gentlemen were presented with handsome testimonals, including beautifully mounted photographs of the Clubs.

A very sad loss has occurred amongst us lately. I refer to the death of Mr Wrenn, late manager of the Colonial Bank. Mr Wrenn has been here ever since his marriage, about two years and a-half ago, and has always been a great favourite. He was an energetic boating man, though his health was never very robust; still his death was most unexpected. He was only twenty-nine years of age, and much sympathy is felt for his poor young widow and her little boy. They leave to-day to join their relatives in Dunedin.

ESTELLE.

DUNEDIN.

DEAR BEE, NOVEMBER 25.

The arrival of the Governor and Countess of Onslow has sent a thrill of pleasure throughout Society circles. They are the guests of the Hon. George and Mrs McLean at Hazelwood. A number met our distinguished visitors at the station, and Sunday was, of course, spent quietly, only the family at Hazelwood being at dinner, at which Lady Onslow wore an exquisite gown of black and yellow uncut velvet.

The next morning her ladyship, in company with the Misses McLean and Mr Walrond, paid an unofficial visit to the Art Society's Rooms at the Choral Hall. In the evening the first of a series of delightful dinner parties was given by Mr and Mrs McLean. The handsome dining-room looked lovely, the table being decorated with exquisite white flowers, among which roses played a prominent part. The guests of two evenings were: Judge and Mrs Williams, Dr. and Mrs Batchelor, Mr and Mrs B. C. Haggitt, Mr and Mrs Ritchie, Mr and Mrs James Mills, Mr White, Mr and Mrs Morris, Dr. and Mrs Scott, Mr and Mrs Henry Mackenzie, Mr and Mrs Rattray, Mr and Mrs Spence, and Mr Walrond. Mr McLean took Lady Onslow in to dinner, who looked lovely in a magnificent gown of white uncut velvet, arms and neck and head one blaze of diamonds; Lord Onslow took Mrs McLean, who wore an extremely handsome gown of black and gold; Judge Williams took in Mrs Batchelor, who wore a handsome black velvet; Dr. Batchelor took Mrs Ritchie, whose dress was a lovely pale blue brocade; Mr Haggitt took Mrs Williams, who wore a charming dress of black net; Mr Ritchie took Mrs Haggitt, who wore a handsome réseda: Mr Mills took Miss McLean, who wore a lovely dress of black and scarlet; Mr White took Mrs Mills, whose dress was a very handsome one of black and yellow.

The next night the host and hostess of the Governor and Lady Onslow gave another dinner party. The table upon this occasion was as lovely as before in red. A centre piece of red plush was embroidered with gold, and all the candles shaded with red; the flowers were also red—roses and rhododendrons and other choice blossoms. Mr McLean took in the Countess, whose dress was of black watered silk with panel, of vieux rose with exquisite Venetian point lace, her bodice dazzling with diamonds: Mr Morris took in Mrs Spence, who wore black; Mr Scott took Miss G. C. McLean, whose dress was a lovely pink silk trimmed with heather; Mr McKenzie took Mrs Scott, who wore black silk with pale blue panel and pink revers; Mr Rattray took Mrs Morris, whose dress was turquoise velvet trimmed with blue figured satin; Mr Spence took Mrs Rattray; Mr Walrond took Mrs Mackenzie, wearing a very pale blue.

Mrs (Judge) Williams gives a dinner party, of which I shall say more in my next, as well as a whole list of other festivities, and if it only keeps fine there will be nothing to mar the race week gaieties. There is, however, a very big *if*, for for the last month it has been rain, rain more or less every day, oftener more than less.

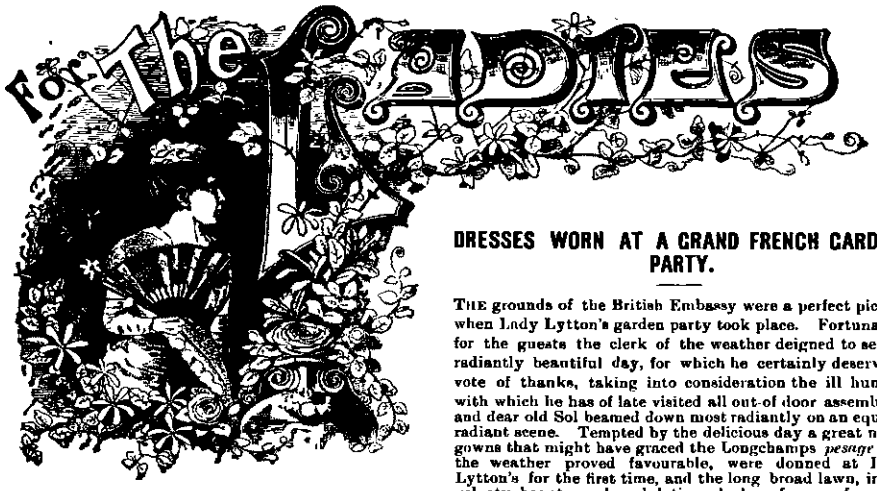
I have comparatively very little news for you this week, but in view of the budget I hope to have next, you must please let me off.

A good deal of regret would have been felt at the close of the Art Society's exhibition, were it not for the gay time coming, for many pleasant sociable evenings have been spent in the rooms, and more than one delightful afternoon tea. Lady Stout and Mrs (Dr.) Jeffcoat gave one on an immense scale, between five and six hundred guests being present. The rooms were literally packed with smiling faces, and the hostesses were kept shaking hands from three o'clock till six. Sometimes these large receptions are not very sociable, but this was all that could be desired. The refreshments were served by a number of the hostesses' friends, and Dr. Jeffcoat and Sir Robert Stout among other gentlemen helped to make the time pass pleasantly to the ladies. There was a good deal of capital music, Mrs Williams and her sister, Mrs Israel, singing charmingly. Miss Sievwright also sang, and Master Towsey and his sister played a duet. Miss Fitchett also played, and Mr Towsey sang. Mr F. L. Jones sang a very nice song, and Mr Macdonald gave a much appreciated recitation. Mrs Monkman was also among the vocalists. In such a crowd it is impossible to even see, much less remember half the guests. There were dozens of pretty dresses one admired, then forgot again, for they were crowded out of the memory by others as pretty, but I will do my best to recall as many names as I can. Among them are Mesdames Haggitt, C. Chapman, Reynolds, Morris, Sise, Shand, Towsey, Hales, Melland, Woodhouse, Ridings, Ogston, Moore, Neill, James Allen, Bowen, Finch, White, Hosking, Dymock, Garratt, Stephenson, Gillies, Stock, Williams, Fitchett, S. Thomson, Denniston, Macdonald, and the Misses Hodgkins (2), Morris, Fitchett, Hales, Garratt (2), Dymock (2), T. Stephenson, Reynolds, Sise (2), Joachim, Scott, F. Fitchett, Ziele, Roberts, Farquhar (3), Michie, Williams, Mackerras, Carew, Beal, Wimperis, Shand, and Macandrew. Lady Stout wore a very handsome dress of black merveilleux, grey bonnet trimmed with soft grey feathers, and red velvet strings: Mrs Jeffcoat, stylish dress of black silk and lace, large black hat with a spray of pale pink flowers; Mrs R. Gillies, dress of light electric blue, bonnet to match trimmed with pink roses; Mrs Chapman, very handsome dress of green silk, and cream bonnet; Mrs Oatway, black silk dress and black jet bonnet; Mrs W. H. Reynolds, black dress, lace mantle, and black bonnet; Miss Reynolds, dark green velvet dress, fur boa, and green hat; Miss Rachel Reynolds, fawn tweed dress, black hat with pink roses; Miss Ziele, very pretty dress of fawn and blue invisible stripe, light fancy straw hat covered with a spray of poppies and cornflowers; Miss Rooke (Auckland), black and grey striped silk dress, and black lace hat with crushed strawberry feathers; Mrs Stephenson, handsome black silk dress, and black bonnet; Miss Stephenson, heliotrope dress, and black and heliotrope hat; Mrs Jas. Davidson, prune dress, and black bonnet with jet ornaments; Mrs Farmer, very pretty dress of cream serge with collar and cuffs of dark red velvet, cream hat covered with long cream feathers; Miss Marshall, dark brown dress, black bonnet with yellow flowers; Mrs Israel, fawn dress and large cream hat; Miss Sievwright, navy blue dress, large speckled straw hat with pink roses; Mrs Towsey, very pretty fawn dress, bonnet to match; Miss Hales, heliotrope print, cream hat trimmed with feathers; Miss Farquhar, black dress, large bow of heliotrope chiffon at the neck, and black hat; Miss Scott, light green dress, grey jacket, black lace hat with white poppies; Mrs Bowen, black dress, lace cloak, cream feather hat; Miss Ormond, fawn dress, cream hat; Mrs Thompson (Christchurch), dress of French grey, with large woolly spots, grey areophane hat with grey pom-poms; Mrs Neill, large black and white check dress, black bonnet; Mrs Arthur Fulton, navy blue dress, white vest, cream hat trimmed with feathers; Mrs F. Fitchett, prune dress with vest of gold lace, bonnet to match; Miss Fitchett, dress of French grey with cream feather hat; Miss Williams, dark blue dress and hat; Mrs Hosking, black dress, Dorothy cape, and cream hat trimmed with yellow poppies; Mrs Coughtrey, grey dress and bonnet; Miss Beal, fawn dress, and black hat trimmed with forget-me-nots; Mrs Monkman, fawn dress and yellow hat; Miss Freeman, violet delaine with purple and yellow pansies, a large cream hat with cream ostrich feathers; Miss Fodor, white delaine flowered with blue, the collar and vest of blue silk, white muslin hat edged with tiny frills, and finished in front with a bunch of forget-me-nots; Mrs Adam, grey and brown invisible check, brown bonnet; Mrs J. Cargill, black dress, grey cloak, and black bonnet; Mrs Grey, crushed strawberry cloth, with white hat; Miss Anderson, pretty French grey costume.

The bachelors and Benedicts of Nenthorne gave an enjoyable ball. Among those present were Mesdames Fowler, Mills, M'Kie, M'Kay, Morgan, and the Misses M'Kay, J. Mills, M'Kay, M'Kie, Wicks, Bothwick, Bradbrook, Ryan, Talty, Fowler, and Hanlin. The very nice supper was supplied by Mrs Mills, of Nenthorne.

MAUDE.

A poor little mite of a boy came to the door, asking for work. 'Haven't you a father?' I said. 'Oh, yes,' he replied, 'but he can't do anything; he has brown kitties in his windpipe.'



AT HOME WITH THE LADY EDITOR.

SUBSCRIBER.—I am so sorry for you, as you say you wish to know how to restore the pile of a sealette jacket which has been much damaged by heavy rain. First, you should at once have hung it on a clothes horse in a cold room. It must not dry in hot air, as this flattens the nap. At least this is the case with sealskin, and I believe, with sealette also, though I must candidly confess I know very little about the latter. I think your wisest plan will be to get a very soft brush, and carefully brush the nap up towards the neck, and from the sleeves towards the shoulder. If you have a spare scrap of the sealette, try holding it up, and getting someone to iron it on the wrong side. A friend proposes that you should steam it carefully over hot water, then try the ironing on the wrong side. This plan is frequently successful with velvet. The object of holding it while some one irons it is, of course, to prevent the weight of the iron from crushing it. However, as I have been of very little help to you (for which I am very sorry), I must appeal to some of my clever readers. If anyone knows of anything that will assist us, will she very kindly send the suggestion to me for this column?

THE INFLUENZA.—Alas, many of us are again suffering from this serious complaint. I heard of an excellent but very disagreeable remedy the other day. It was given me by a lady who had just returned from Sydney, where she had been prostrate with a bad attack of influenza. She called in one of the best medical men, who owned to seventy-five other cases in his care at that moment. He prescribed a good dose of castor oil as soon as the peculiar pains are felt in the limbs, then later, about two hours afterwards, another dose. This is not intended as a purgative merely, but it creeps into the bones and relieves the pain. Does it not sound horrible? I would suggest another and very efficacious plan, which is far pleasanter, and quite sufficient for the mild (comparatively) cases we have in balmy New Zealand. The Sydney doctors say we in this colony are not at all likely to suffer either in quantity or quality as they have done in Sydney, our sea girt island resisting the influenza fiend with the healthy breezes we enjoy, whereas Paramatta and Sydney are hot beds of disease. But now for the remedy. Take a blanket, pour over it a quart of boiling water in which a piece of Barilla or cold-water soap has been boiled until dissolved. Wrap this at once round the patient, giving first a good dose of fruit salt. Keep the patient hot for an hour, then very gradually uncover one limb, carefully washing it in luke-warm water, and drying well, cover it up with something warm, and proceed with all the members of the body. Keep in bed for a day or two, giving aconite and arsenicum alternately. The bed must be carefully protected by waterproof sheeting from any dampness arising from the wet blanket. Quinine is a very good preventive medicine, but its virtues as a cure are not believed in as they formerly were. Still, after the castor oil the doctors give anti-pyrine and quinine. The great danger in the present form of the influenza is to the lungs. For this reason a good medical man will examine them carefully at each visit. It is not only those who suffer from weak lungs who are thus watched; the strongest lungs are rapidly affected. It is thus that the disease has proved so fatal. I have just heard of one case cured by inhalation of and imbibing eucalyptus.

WOMEN AND CHURCH MONEY.—Various comments regarding this subject have reached me. Some ladies say that they have quite enough trouble collecting the money for church purposes without being bothered about the spending of it. Others think their husbands ought also to have some work to do for the church, even if it be only disbursting the money their wives and female friends collect. A few quote St. Paul, and think that modern wives are not as content as they should be with a back seat. To the latter I would say that times have changed, and that in our modern civilization even St. Paul would not think of providing his females with such retiring and modest natures as he used to think became them. As for the good works in which he clothed them, he would surely be well satisfied with the garments of charitable work in which many modern women are enveloped.

HOW IT HAPPENED.

CHILDREN'S ignorance is sometimes more interesting than grown people's knowledge.

It was after a reading lesson, says an exchange, and the teacher asked:

'Now, Harry, can you tell me why it was that Ben Adhem's name led all the rest?'

'I don't know, ma'am,' answered Harry, 'but I suppose the names were arranged alphabetically.'

DRESSES WORN AT A GRAND FRENCH GARDEN-PARTY.

THE grounds of the British Embassy were a perfect picture when Lady Lytton's garden party took place. Fortunately for the guests the clerk of the weather deigned to send a radiantly beautiful day, for which he certainly deserves a vote of thanks, taking into consideration the ill humour with which he has of late visited all out-of door assemblies, and dear old Sol beamed down most radiantly on an equally radiant scene. Tempted by the delicious day a great many gowns that might have graced the Longchamps *pesage* had the weather proved favourable, were donned at Lady Lytton's for the first time, and the long broad lawn, in its velvety beauty and undulating shades of green, formed a delicate carpet for daintily-shod feet, the high and shady trees screening from the too ardent rays of the summer sun, and making the most exquisite background possible to the hundreds of gaily bright gowns and pretty women that, like brilliant butterflies, flitted hither and thither. Three large buffets were erected in the garden—one at the far end and the two others flanking the two wings of the mansion. The Tziganes, in their vivid scarlet coats, seated midway between the house and the Avenue Gabriel, played their most characteristic and enlivening strains. Everyone was enchanted with the party, or *réception en plein air*, as I heard several people call it; while many hostesses I also heard regretting their ill luck in having no ground in Paris to follow the English fashion of giving garden parties. Then, again, an open air reception has the advantage of allowing people to walk about, meet each other, chat, flirt, or listen to the music, according to their particular fancy. Lady Lytton's garden party has been the *clou* entertainment of the season, and our amiable and elegant Ambassadress is to be heartily congratulated on the enjoyability thereof. The afternoon sped by all too rapidly, and as the many visitors gradually took their leave, the chorus of *quelle délicieuse reception*, coupled with *quelle radieuse journée* was heard on every side. Lady Lytton looked most picturesque in a gown of fawn brocade with a dash design in soft salmon pink, and a small cabriolet bonnet of fawn straw, with pale pink feathers (exceedingly becoming, by the way); Lady Constance Lytton also favoured light Havana brown and wore a very pretty hat. Lady Emily Lytton appeared in light grey, with white and yellow trimmings, and hat to match. The Marquise d' Hervey de St. Denis wore a gown of velouting, of new bluish-mauve tint, the shades of the gentian blossom. Madame Beaudacky looked superb in a curious combination of du Barry pink, white lace, and a train of mourning (yes!) crape, the latter lined with pink soft silk; her large Louis XVI. hat also combined the three colours, it had a high panache of feathers and ospreys, and was pinned on with big grey and white pearls. Mrs Standish, looking more and more like the Princess of Wales—wore a silver-grey satin twill gown, tight fitting, and trimmed with three flounces of lace superposed round the skirt and had her throat tightly swathed in lace, tied at the back, and fixed with a series of small grey, black, and white pearl pins—never have pearls been so much in fashion—her bonnet was entirely black, in toque form, with chains and ornaments of jet. The sketches represent a dress worn by an English visitor, who looked very handsome in pale yellow batiste, draped with white embroidered tulle. The Tuscan straw hat was trimmed with pale pink satin ribbon pleatings of tulle and black wings, and the toilette worn by Countess de G——, a beautiful dress of grey sicilienne, brocaded with rings of darker shade. It was relieved with trimming of gold-hued sicilienne, and worn with a black hat.

DUST IN SPACE.

SOME of the oldest records of human history contain accounts of the fall of great stones from the sky. Until the opening of the present century it was generally believed by men of science that the ancients only imagined that they had seen rocks fall out of the heavens.

Modern science, however, has verified the truth of the ancient records, and we now know not only that stones and metallic masses, called aerolites or meteorites, do come tumbling down out of space, but that a fine dust, called cosmic dust, is continually sifting down through the atmosphere.

It is like the smoke and dust of a journey, for the earth is really journeying, along with the sun, toward the northern part of the universe, and as it goes it draws in with its attraction the refuse particles that apparently exist throughout space.

But while there can be no doubt of the existence of this silent rain of minute matter upon the earth, the difficulty has been to recognize it after it reaches the ground. Of late years, however, it has been found mingled in the ooze dredged up from the sea-bottom, and a few years ago when Baron Nordenskjold visited Greenland he gathered a quantity of dust particles from the great snow-fields there, which were believed to have come from the sky.

This conclusion was afterwards disputed, but lately a new analysis has been made, which seems to show decisively that a large part of the material really is cosmic dust. A computation based upon the amount found on the Greenland moors indicates that the earth must gather in, over the whole of its surface, at least one hundred and thirty-two thousand tons of the dust of space every year!

DRESSES WORN AT A GRAND FRENCH GARDEN-PARTY.

MOTHERS' COLUMN.

AT LIFE'S DAWNING.

THANK God, thou art welcome, thou frail little mortal,
So newly made heir to this earth and its cares.
Thank God, thou wast met at life's opening portal
By a father's strong love and a mother's glad prayers.

God pity the soul with sweet purity glowing,
That comes to our world but through sin and in shame,
Whose welcome is hatred, and bitter tears flowing,
At war with mankind and yet nowise to blame.

And pity the nursling, whatever the trouble,
That finds on its coming cold welcome at best;
Its cares and its trials through life must be double,
Where love is not given the innocent guest.

For, dainty wee spirit the Father has given
To us, with the message, 'Go, nurture for Me;'
There are thorns and rough rocks on thy road back to Heaven.
Thou wilt need all our love ere thy wings are set free.

JUSTICE WITH CHILDREN.

SO much has been said about the management of children that mothers begin to weary of it all, and yet of children I wish to speak. Would that my voice could reach every woman's heart, whether mother, sister or teacher. First, I wish to lead you back to your own childhood. Did you ever begin to do some odd job that you had not been told to do, but that you supposed yourself fully capable of performing, expecting to be thanked for kindly helping, only to find that you had done the worst piece of mischief that you possibly could, and more than all, were told that you had done it out of pure mischievousness? If you never had such an experience it must have been because the servants were so plenty that nothing was left to do, or that you were too indolent to exert yourself. A friend that I was visiting had a bright boy of six years, with a loving disposition, always willing to help every one, but apparently the most mischievous of children. His mother was in despair. She confided her trouble to me, and I resolved to watch him, and see if I could not find out the reason he had won such a name as 'Little Mischief.'

The next morning at the table, my friend remarked that the weather was so beautiful that she must remove her plants from the sunny window,they occupied to the verandah; but she added, 'I do dread to do it, it is so tedious, and it tires me so.'

I noticed how the little eyes sparkled, and knew as well as if he had told me, that the little fellow had heard what she said, and would try to do the much dreaded job for her. Not long after she ran over to Mrs A's, and no sooner did the gate shut than Harry was active. The flower stand was already in the accustomed place, waiting for the plants. One by one, carefully, he lifted the heavy pots, and, without breaking a leaf, transferred them to their summer quarters. Sometimes he paused a moment to rest, then went bravely to work again. His face was a picture of happiness. He was helping his mamma.

I watched, and wondered if this would also be laid to his mischievous propensities. My friend was gone rather longer than she expected, for, as she told me afterwards, Mrs A. had a love of a bonnet that she must see, as well as several costly additions to her parlour furniture. Ah! there lay the secret of her discontented looks, for she had told me that owing to several losses she would not be able to expend much money on her summer outfit. As she came in at the gate, her face passed through all the phases of surprise, dismay, and finally anger.

'Harry, come here this instant! What have you been doing? How dare you touch my plants?'

Stinging blows fell on the hands that had toiled so thanklessly.

'You are always into some mischief!' she exclaimed.

I watched the child; he was heartbroken. His bosom heaved, and his sobs were pitiful.

'Go to your room and stay the rest of the morning.' He obeyed.

'There! what did I tell you? How can I manage such a boy?'

'By simply understanding him,' I replied.

'What do you mean?'

'This: your little boy wanted to help you; I read it in his face. His motives were the best. You said it tired you so, and he generously did the disagreeable task for you.'

'But if he had dropped one?'

'He did not, and if he had, a broken plant is better than a broken heart. I tell you candidly, if you do not act differently with that boy, he is ruined.' They were harsh words but I knew the mother heart would in time forgive them.

'What can I do?'

'Put yourself in his place. Find out his motive, if you can, and believe me, ten times out of twelve, what passes for mischief is only a wish to lighten your burdens; a desire of a loving heart to help you.'

She went with me to the verandah. We re-arranged the plants, and I called her attention to the heavy pots, and then to the little aching arms and back, and after she had acknowledged she was glad they were moved, I begged her to tell her little boy the same.'

'What! acknowledge that I did wrong to punish him? I would lose all control over him if I did that.'

'Try this time, and see,' I urged. And she did. When she entered Harry's room he sat in a chair by the window, quietly watching the floating clouds. Still smarting from a sense of injustice, he did not look around, or smile.

'Harry, come here.' He obeyed. 'Why did you move the plants? Tell me the exact truth.'

He looked up to her face, and reading encouragement there he simply said: 'Because you said it tired you so. I am most a man now. I can help you lots. I did not break one, not one, Mamma, and they were heavy. Are you glad now I did it, Mamma?'

'Yes, yes, Harry, and I was cross and hurt your hand. I am sorry.'

'Oh, it does not hurt any more now. Next time, I'll wait till you tell me.'

They came back together, and I saw by the looks of my friend that she had learned a lesson not soon to be forgotten. That was six years ago. They called while passing through our town this winter, and a more gentlemanly, helpful boy, it would be hard to find. She said: 'I have you to thank. From the day of the much needed lesson, I watched, and looked into the motives of my child, and always found that the so called mischief arose from a desire to be useful. I soon got acquainted with my boy and had no more trouble with him. He is now my greatest comfort.'

Mothers, fathers, all that have charge of precious souls, beware how you misconstrue their motives! Though they may perhaps seem to do things out of pure mischief, be sure it is so before you punish them, lest they cease to care, and as they have the name, only wish to make it fact. Oh! the men and women that have gone to destruction from having their motives mistaken their actions misconstrued! Be sure none of these sins are laid to your charge.

DUDLEY DORN.

DON'TS FOR YOUNG MOTHERS.

BY FANNIE L. FANCHER.

DON'T do *everything* for the baby, that everybody recommends.

Don't dose it with soothing syrup.

Don't give peppermint teas for its nerves.

Don't worry and fret *yourself* ill, then expect a 'good baby.'

Don't give tapioca, cornstarch or potatoes, since without thorough mastication, starchy viands are difficult to digest.

Don't give meats of any kind. The Divine injunction is: *Milk* for babes.

Don't fail to form, early in its little life, a habit of regularity in nursing—from one to two hours is sufficiently often during the first few months. If you observe this rule there would be no need of the following:

Don't offer nature's fount every time the baby cries. A too *full* stomach is doubtless the cause of its pain.

Don't use the baby foods advertised unless recommended by those who have proved their merits, and even then they might not agree with *your* child.

Don't bind too tightly; nature will keep the baby from falling apart.

Don't dose with castor oil; but for constipation gently rub the abdomen. If delicate and emaciated, anointing with olive oil, after the usual bath, will prove beneficial.

Don't forget to give a drink of cold water at frequent intervals, if teething; it is very grateful to the fevered gums.

Don't allow a child to tear or destroy anything for amusement. I have seen mothers give *old* papers and books to their babies, thereby teaching a wholesale destruction of such things.

Don't attempt to bring up your child without seeking Divine assistance.

CLIPPINGS FROM SOCIETY PAPERS.

FRENCH ladies are just now reading with great avidity a book of counsels on the art of remaining young. An elderly belle, who is as fair to look upon to-day as seventy years ago, gives the following advice to ladies who go much into society: Do not sleep too long or too little. When you are going to be up late at a ball, try to sleep for an hour or so during the afternoon. On returning home after the ball, jump into a really hot bath and remain for half a minute in the water; immediately get into bed after being rubbed with a hot sheet or bath-towel, and then drink a small cup of bouillon, and half a wine glass of Malaga (a strengthening wine much used abroad, and too little known in England). Do not rise before ten o'clock the following morning, when ring either for a cold bath, or sponge all over with a large cold sponge, which is even more invigorating to the system. A cup of coffee and piece of toast, without butter, to follow.

On the same authority, we are assured nothing is so conducive to health as to wear a narrow piece of flannel from the nape of the neck down the length of the spine, tied with ribbons round the throat. 'This will keep colds, bronchitis, and phthisis in abeyance.' I fancy I can hear my readers murmur, 'The remedy is worse than the disease.' *Apropos* of hygiene, the custom would seem to be gaining ground of ladies, who are socially hard worked, giving themselves over to complete rest for a whole day in the course of every week or ten days. This rule, Mme. la Baronne S. assures us in her little book, is faithfully adhered to by many English beauties, and among others by Lady Londonderry.

THE following story of the young King of Servia has just come to light:—Alexander, it seems, had passed his first examination in mathematics *cum laude*, when he began to reflect that it was not becoming for a king to solve mathematical problems when he was disgusted with science, as the youthful king then felt he was. At this critical moment the Russian plenipotentiary sent in his card, and inquired whether the Prince felt inclined to join the Franco-Russian alliance? 'With all my heart,' young Alexander replied, 'provided the allied Powers will take care that I:—(1) Be released from learning the irregular Greek verbs; (2) That I am not any more bothered with trigonometrical problems; (3) That I am allowed to read novels during the hours devoted to the study of Cicero; (4) That I be dispensed from knowing the facts connected with historical dates. Finally,' he said, 'I want to be absolved from undergoing all trials and examinations relating to my studies, for I shall probably have trials enough waiting me if I join this alliance.' *Si non è vero è ben trovato!*

AT Dantzig, the officers of the 1st Regiment of Hussars have been presented by the ladies of the city with a set of table-linen, comprising a table-cloth ten yards long, and twenty-four serviettes, made of the best German flax. The table cloth is embroidered with four large beautifully executed damask rosettes, the two outer rosettes being flanked to the right and left by replicas of the historical kettle-drums and trumpets of the regiment. In the centre of the outer rosettes is embroidered in white silk the monogram of the regiment, 'F.W.R.,' overlapped by the Imperial crown. Death heads, the emblem of the regiment, and the star of the black eagle fringe the cloth at regular intervals, whilst above is a deep border of laurel-leaves which give the whole a most effective appearance. Indeed, it is asserted that such a magnificent table-cloth as this was never yet seen. The serviettes are a replica of the cloth, of course upon a greatly reduced scale. The Emperor, to whom it has been submitted, has ordered a duplicate cloth to be made for the Royal table, and also a counterpane for the Imperial couch, only the latter is to be worked on satin ground in coloured silks, with the colours of the regiment.

THOSE who make it their business or pleasure to chronicle the movements of Royalty might at least take a little pains to be accurate. A paper states that Prince George of Wales and Princess Maud are amongst the family party at Fredensborg. The news will surprise them as much as an item not long ago in an imaginative journal did the Prince of Wales, who, upon asking the Princess if there was any news, was told: 'Yes, you have a bad attack of gout.' 'Indeed,' said the Prince, with a laugh, 'I'm sorry to hear that.'

LADY HENRY SOMERSET, the popular president of the British Women's Temperance Association, is going to Boston, in America, to present the great petition, signed by about a million of women, against the present liquor traffic. As a speaker she is the finest woman orator we have—clever, logical, impassioned and eloquent. Few are aware of her extraordinary artistic power. Brought up in an atmosphere of art, her father, the late Lord Somers, having been a great connoisseur and authority on these subjects, and an artist himself, she inherited from him and Lady Somers, talents which, had she devoted herself to art, would have resulted in great things. She wrote and illustrated in colours, some years ago, a book called 'Our Village Life.' Lady Henry is also an exquisite needlewoman, and has designed and worked many beautiful embroideries. No one has better taste in arranging a room, planning a garden, or decorating a house, and she is also a woman of indomitable courage and pluck.

LAST winter, when the fire broke out at Eastnor Castle, she was entertaining a party of over two hundred friends in the Long Library. Her son came up to her and whispered that the adjoining room was full of smoke and flames. Without a word she got up and left her guests, rang the chapel bell, summoned the household, fitted the hydrants and hose, and sent to Ledbury for the fire-engines, then returned to her friends and told them what had happened. She kept perfectly calm and cool, directing everyone, and by her wise judgment the fire was subdued.

THE absurdity of a woman having no vote was never more apparent than in her case. Lady Henry has large estates in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, and most of the town of Reigate belongs to her, as well as the Somers Town estates in London; she pays rates to a large amount, and yet has no voice in making the laws on the subjects in which she is so deeply interested, while the most ignorant labourer on her estate can exercise his right to vote.

MOST of our readers will be interested in Miss Daisy Cornwallis West. The beautiful daughter of a beautiful mother, Miss West is well-known in Society, and being as amiable as she is charming, is a universal favourite. The news of her engagement to Prince Hans Heinrich of Pless, the eldest son of Prince Pless, has excited much kindly interest, and the young couple will be launched upon their new life when the time comes with the cordial good wishes of countless friends.

MISS CORNWALLIS WEST was the most talked-of new beauty at the first Drawing-Room this year. Curiously enough, although she is so pretty, she is not a bit like her mother, being very fair. Prince Hans is very tall, very fair, and decidedly good-looking. He has made himself very popular over here, entering keenly into all that goes on. He was elected a member of the Coaching Club this season, and drove a wonderfully smart team at the opening parade in May. He is also a very good leader of cotillon—for he led one with the Baroness Alfred von Oppenheim at the ball given by the latter last June, moreover, he has done his share of entertaining, for he gave a ball at the Savoy Hotel some six weeks ago, when Mrs Hwfa Williams was good enough to play the part of hostess.

FEW of those visitors to the Isle of Wight who have observed a gigantic barge stationary at the end of the jetty in the Osborne private grounds, are aware that this defunct vessel serves as a sea bath for any members of the Royal family who may desire a dip in the briny. By an ingenious arrangement the water can be made to rush in and fill the boat, thus forming a spacious bath, which is as convenient as it is safe.

APROPOS of bathing, I cannot help alluding to the eccentricities of bathing costumes, which generally make the morning the most amusing part of the day at a fashionable watering place. Our ideas on the subject are much more elementary than those of our neighbours across the channel, whose *maillot* invariably consists, besides the actual dress itself, of silk tights, corsets, shoes, and a hat, for a Frenchwoman never dreams of dipping her head. Added to this it is *de rigueur* to possess a cloak in which to walk to and from the water's edge.

Some weeks ago I saw the *robe de mer* of a dainty Parisienne friend who was starting to inhale the ozone at Trouville. It was an ideal costume. A very full tunic of thick guipure lace was pleated on to a tight lining of scarlet, and confined below the waist with a wide red silk sash. The sleeves were huge puffs of guipure tied up with red ribbons. Scarlet silk tights and trunks and pointed shoes of écru linen finished the costume, excepting a long red peaked cap on the head. An Eastern burnous enveloped her on the way from her machine to the waves.

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.*

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.

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.

COCOA-NUT PUDDING.—Will you or one of your correspondents kindly tell me how to make this.—MAUDIE?

PEARS IN A MOULD.—I should be very glad of directions how to cook and arrange these.—LADDIE.

HOUSE ANTS.—Could you oblige me with a remedy for the destruction of these troublesome insects?—DOMESTIC.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES.

'Mignon.'—You will very easily make black butter by putting some fresh butter into a frying-pan and cooking it until it is a deep brown colour, then put into the pan with it some parsley leaves which have been washed, dried, and picked from the stalks into small pieces. The parsley must fry in the butter until it is crisp, and then the butter and parsley must be poured either over the fish or whatever it may be going to be served with. Into the pan that the butter was cooked in, pour a little vinegar, two tablespoonfuls would be sufficient to use for a quarter-of-a-pound of butter; make the vinegar boiling hot and then pour it into the sauceboat with the butter. Have you ever used this sauce with cauliflower? I think you would like it very much.

'Stupide.'—I fancy the following manner of cooking kidneys will result in a dish very similar to the one you mention:—After the kidneys have been skinned, and the core removed, they must be cut in slices about a quarter of an inch thick, and put into a sauté pan after having been seasoned with pepper and salt, and fried quickly in a little hot butter for two or three minutes. The pan should be shaken during the time the kidneys are being fried to prevent them adhering to the pan. The kidneys when cooked should be placed in a steamer so that the grease may be drained from them. Clean the pan and put into it two or three tablespoonfuls of thick brown sauce, which should have a little sherry and a teaspoonful of Liebig Company's Extract mixed with it. When this sauce has been brought to boiling point add the sliced kidney, and let them thoroughly warm in the sauce, but the sauce should not be allowed to boil after the kidneys are added, or they will become tough. When served with nicely fried potato chips this makes a very excellent luncheon dish, and for a small dinner could be served as an entrée.

ONION PICKLE ('Martha').—Select one gallon of small-sized silver-skin onions. They are nicest when just grown to the size of a cherry. Peel and wash them nicely. Put two quarts of fresh milk and two quarts of water in a granite kettle, and make it quite salt. When it boils put in the onions, and boil them until a straw will readily pierce them. Drain through a colander, pour fresh water over them and drain again. Select for them glass jars with glass tops. It is not well to put pickle in jars that have metal tops lined with porcelain, for the vinegar acts on the cement that holds the porcelain in the top, and pickle and top are both ruined. Do not fill the jars quite full, as horseradish, celery and mustard-seed have yet to be put in. Fill one of the jars with vinegar to see how much will be needed for all. Measure it and put into a porcelain kettle. Put into it four tablespoonfuls of cracked allspice, two of cloves, two of mace, one of ginger, and one of cinnamon, and let it all boil about ten minutes. Mix in a bowl one tablespoonful of mustard, one of turmeric, four of sugar. Stir to a smooth paste with cold vinegar, and then stir it into the boiling vinegar and remove it at once from the fire. Into each jar of pickle put one tablespoonful of scraped horseradish, one of celery-seed and one of white mustard-seed. Pour the vinegar into the jars boiling hot, stirring it so that some of the spice will be in each jar. Seal close and set in a cool, dark place.

RECIPES.

DELICIOUS OX TONGUE.—The ox tongue should be covered with salt and allowed to remain all night; then let it be thoroughly rinsed in plenty of cold water, after which place it in a stewpan and cover it with cold water, and season the water with plenty of salt, and bring the water to boiling point. Then strain the water from it and press it until cold. Then braise it by placing plenty of vegetables in a braising-pan and about three ounces of butter. Place the tongue on the top of the vegetables, and fry altogether with the cover on the pan for about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. Then add a quarter of a pint of stock and two glasses of sherry. Cover the tongue with a buttered paper, and let it braise gently, keeping it well basted, and allow about twenty minutes to each pound weight to cook the tongue. When cooked, remove it from the pan and carefully take off the outer skin and place the tongue in a baking-tin and pour two glasses of sherry over it, and brush it over with a little liquid glaze, and put it in a hot oven for about fifteen minutes, keeping it well basted with sherry all the time.

BEIGNETS SOUFFLES A LA LEMON.—Put into a stewpan half a pint of water, two ounces of castor sugar, and a quarter of a pound of butter. Bring the water to boiling point, and then stir in quickly about five ounces of Vienna flour and mix into a smooth stiff paste, which should leave the pan quite clean. Let the paste cook on the side of the stove for about ten minutes, and stir it from time to time to prevent it being burned. Then turn the paste into a basin and set it aside until it has somewhat cooled, and mix into it by degrees three eggs, working the paste well until it is quite light, add six or eight drops of essence of vanilla, and then put the mixture into a large forcing bag with a plain pipe, and squeeze out a small quantity of paste about the size of a filbert, holding it over a pan of clean boiling fat, and cut off the paste and let it fall into the grease. Continue doing this until sufficient beignets are made. Turn them continually while they are cooking, which will take from eight to ten minutes. The grease should not be too hot, or they will become too dark in colour. They should be a nice golden colour when cooked and about the size of a small egg. Lift them out of the grease and drain the fat from them, roll them in castor sugar, which should have a little lemon peel and essence which has been pounded and passed through a sieve, mixed with it, and serve in a pile as hot as possible.

A CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST.

THE following menu is liberal provision for a company of twelve persons, with a good margin for additional guests, if such be found on this festival when people are supposed to gather in family parties.

But as there *are* waifs who are belated in getting home, or who have no home to go to, if you wish to share your Christmas cheer with them, have no fears; there will be ample sufficiency, and the bill of fare is certainly very charming.

MENU:

Grapes. Strawberries.
Oatflake and Cream.
Hot Rolls. Fried Oysters. Waffles.
Cream Toast. Chicken. Potato Chips.
Cucumbers Fried Sausage.
Coffee.

ROLLS.—One quart of flour, one heaping tablespoonful of butter, half a cup of fresh yeast, one cup of fresh milk, two eggs, salt to taste. Mix into a soft dough over night. Early in the morning knead the dough, mould into biscuit shape, though larger, flatten with the hand or rolling pin. Set to rise again in a well-buttered pan. When light bake a nice brown, and send to table hot.

OATFLAKE.—One quart of oatflake, three pints of boiling water, a level teaspoonful of salt, cook in a granite saucepan for half an hour, stirring *constantly*. Serve with rich cream.

WAFFLES.—One quart flour, one pint warm corn-meal mush, one quart fresh milk, six eggs, beaten separately very light. Mix thoroughly. Bake in waffle irons.

CREAM TOAST.—Slice white bread into even slices three-quarters of an inch thick, and neatly trim off the crust. *Toast* the bread a pretty brown, do not dry it up in the oven. Butter on both sides. Heat the cream hot, but not boiling, and pour over each side of each slice a tablespoonful. The toast must be *thoroughly* well-buttered to be nice. Put a pinch of salt in the cream. Serve in hot dish.

COLD CHICKEN.—Roast a chicken the day before, cut it up carefully, cover with white sauce made of cornflour cream, a small piece of butter, pepper and salt; add dainty pieces of parsley round the edge of the dish.

POTATO CHIPS.—Peel, and slice *very* thin, eight large potatoes. Lay the slices in salted cold water for ten minutes. Remove and dry in a soft napkin. Have ready boiling lard, drop in a light handful at a time, keep them separated. As soon as they are of a pale brown, lift out in a wire spoon, drain and place on a hot dish.

FRIED SAUSAGE.—Get the best article of genuine pork sausage seasoned with plenty of sage, black and red pepper, and salt. Mould into balls the size of an ordinary biscuit, flatten and fry in a hot frying pan. Let them brown on both sides and serve with their own gravy in a covered dish.

CUCUMBERS A L'ESPAGNOLE. — Choose two or three fresh, young cucumbers, peel them, and cut each one in halves lengthwise; next cut each half through the middle, thus forming four neat-shaped, equal sized pieces out of each cucumber. Take out the seeds, and dip the pieces in flour which has been highly seasoned with salt, pepper and a pinch of cayenne, then fry in hot butter, or good beef dripping, until richly browned. Drain the cucumbers carefully from the fat, and lay them in a saucepan; cover with good brown stock, and simmer gently until quite tender, but not at all broken: then take up the vegetable, place each piece on a slice of hot buttered toast of corresponding size and shape, and arrange neatly on a hot dish. Stir into the stock sufficient brown *roux* to thicken it to taste, boil up, skim if necessary, pour over the cucumbers and serve at once.

Decorate the table with quantities of flowers; add glass dishes of different kinds of preserve and honey, also boiled eggs.

Menus for dinner and tea will be given directly.

Wife (in front of hyæna's cage): 'We have been standing here now for a quarter of an hour and the hyæna hasn't laughed once yet.' Husband: 'That's very queer, for it has been looking at your new summer bonnet all the time.'

LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS.

PRETTY AND TASTEFUL MILLINERY.

(SEE FASHION PLATE, PAGE 689.)

SMART Parisian millinery of the most tasteful description possible may always be found at the house from which this week's sketches are taken, no matter what the season of the year may be. At the present time they are displaying a large number of the most charming hats and bonnets which it is possible to imagine or describe.

No. 1 is a very pretty bonnet in a mixture of gold galon and jet, trimmed with fine black lace and ornamented both front and back with bows of yellow ribbon. A quilling of fine black lace is placed on the top of the crown and the strings are of black velvet.

No. 2 is a charming little toque, which can also be used as a bonnet by the addition of strings if desired. It is made entirely of gold tinsel ribbon, most cleverly arranged and tied in a large bow in front. In and out the gold ribbon next the hair there are twists of jetted beads, while clusters of white ostrich tips are placed at the back, so that some of them rest upon the hair.

No. 3 is a graceful shape made in black Tuscan straw or crinoline, and caught up at the back with bows of lace and knots of velvet. On the crown, this hat is prettily trimmed with large bows of golden-brown velvet and a group of black wings.

No. 4 is a most becoming hat in black crinoline straw, trimmed with a wide pleated frill of white lace, and twists of soft white chiffon, held in place by a jetted pin. Some white ostrich tips are placed rather high at the back.

No. 5 is a quaint little hat in one of the newest fancy Tuscan straws, made with a small sugar-loaf crown, round which a wide blue ribbon is placed, threaded through large rings of jet. This same ribbon is afterwards tied in large bows high at the back. Underneath the brim there is a band of black velvet upon which a small bow is placed, the strings being of black velvet to correspond.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES' BOATING FROCKS.

THE Princess and her daughters wear the quietest of yachting dresses—blue serge as a rule when it is chilly, and when warmer, blue foulard. While all the yachting world is busy shopping at the one great house in Cowes the Royal ladies sent ashore for the head of it, and consulted him quietly on board the Osborne. Whatever the fashions may be, the Princess always has her yachting gowns wide in the skirts, and short, as well as light. The royal ladies, mother and daughters, wear silk blouses almost constantly when yachting or in the country, and occasionally have complete costumes of white or cream coloured serge.

A SENSIBLE WATERPROOF.

WHOEVER has had occasion to wear a waterproof cloak on a midsummer day has doubtless experienced a sense of discomfort difficult to describe in words. The almost intolerable heat and the profuse perspiration are quite as uncomfortable as a slight shower. A business woman gives as the result of her experience and needs some directions as to the making of waterproof garments, and insists that they may be made almost as comfortable as other wraps. A skirt is cut with gored front and sides and straight back width. It is cut ten inches shorter than the length of the figure from the waist-line to the ground. The top is turned in one inch, and the turned portion is firmly basted down. This edge is attached to a narrow yoke of rather loosely woven camel's hair or canvas. The sides and back should be sewed on in pipings or flutings, the upper edge of which is left open. To do this, pinch up a fold of the goods and sew it to the yoke. Face the hem up on the right side with a bias band of the waterproof material. Make a rather deep circular cape with a cloth yoke. The waterproof may be stitched on the yoke flat; the cape should be held down by loops of elastic cord attached to buttons sewed upon the skirt. Three buttons and loops, one on either side and one at the back, will be sufficient, or more may be added if the wearer pleases. Weights in the hem of the cape will answer the same purpose.

A round cape-collar of the waterproof, just large enough to cover the cloth yoke, should be sewed on in flutings around a narrow standing collar. Buttons and loops hold the cape collar in place.

With this arrangement, a rubber or mackintosh may be worn with comfort and ease. With a large umbrella only the skirt need be worn unless in heavy storms, and on damp or cold days the cape alone is a great comfort. For rainy evenings in addition to the skirt and cape, the inventor has a hood and long cape made in one. As she goes out a great deal of evenings, this is specially convenient and comfortable. No patent has been taken out by the inventor, and any lady of ingenuity can make such a garment for herself

A YOUNG LADY'S OPINION OF CATS.

I HATE cats, I don't care who knows it; I hate 'em. They are the type of everything mean and contemptible in human nature. They haven't one of its virtues, but all its vices. They are deceitful. They have no gratitude. They steal. They lie as well as they can without tongues. You cannot bribe them to be faithful. You cannot arouse a sense of pride by treating them with dignity. Spurn a great dog's friendly advances and you'll have hard work to coax him back again; but you may kick a cat out of the room and she will sneak in and leap into your lap with a hypocritical 'pur-r-r-r,' whenever she smells cream about. She will give you her caresses without loving you one bit, and scratch you when her claws are seemingly most sheathed in velvet. She will come back to the house you have left empty, because it has been a comfortable one to her. But she will never follow you as dogs do, through rain and shine and good and ill, and lie moaning on your grave at last, the only friend who mourns you. No one ever told or could tell a story of a cat which had in it one atom of constancy or generosity or affection or nobility, anything but contemptible, cunning meanness, gluttony and knavishness. Therefore do I hate the race most heartily, from the old grey cat in the area to the maltese kitten on the parlour rug; and always have and always will as long as I keep my senses.

Ladies' STORY Column.

THERESA.

THE beautiful young Countess Telka Erdodi was happy. In its cradle lay her first child, her little daughter.

The babe had been baptized, and in its ears had been placed its first earrings of red gold, their fastening a coronet. Half the nurse's time would be spent in keeping the infant from tearing these torments from its ears. But the custom must be observed at any cost. The old great-grandmother who had once worn them herself, had placed them in the ears of her daughter, her daughter's daughter, and now in the wrinkled, pink rose leaves of this small babe. Its cap, stiff with embroidery, stood high upon its head, and its robe, ornamented in the same way, was very beautiful. This was its state costume. It had been exhibited to its relatives and friends, had cooed and crowed and behaved itself perfectly, and now its nurse would array it in the little quilted gown which was kept for ordinary wear, and lull it to sleep. There was to be a feast and afterwards dancing and music in honour of the occasion.

The whole household was happy, and grief and trouble seemed so far away, that it might have been banished from the world. Attired in robes of rich fabric, jewels in her hair and in her ears, about her neck and arms and at her belt, the countess kissed her babe and descended the stairs, her train borne over the arm of her waiting-maid. As she entered the great hall, all saluted her, they uttered her name, the wine-cups were drained to her health, the health of the count, her husband, and that of the newly christened child Theresa.

The servants gathered about the door. Only the nurse with her white cap and apron, her voluminous silk dress, her gay stockings and round-toed shoes remained alone in the nursery. It seemed very dull and stupid there. What was the use of wearing a silk dress with so many yards in it and a cap of lace like that, if one was to be hidden away up there with a baby, however high-born?

She thought of her peasant-husband and of her own babe that she had left to earn money by being the foster-mother of this tiny aristocrat. There amongst her neighbours she was no one's slave. She revolted against her bondage.

'Bah! My little Ivan sleeps very well without being stared at,' she said. 'Why not this one?'

And leaving the room, she stole down the stairs and gained a spot where she could look and listen like the rest.

The feast was over; the dancing had begun. The chief peasants of the place, in their picturesque costumes were performing before the high-born ladies and gentlemen.

A handsome young man advanced toward a young woman, singing or chanting an invitation to dance. She bade him wait until she had spun her flax. The other young people joined in with words which, roughly interpreted meant:

'Dance now. While spinning flax, the dance is over. While spinning, love flies away. Dance while you can.'

Then all danced, each youth with a maiden, and ended by bowing, hand in hand, before the great folk, who gave them gold, drink to the men and sweetmeats to the women.

'They have a better dance in my village,' said the nurse; 'the dance of the sunrise.'

'You will have the pleasure of returning to your native village to see it, Sodrina, if you leave the baby to itself much longer,' said a voice in her ear. 'I'm no tale-bearer, but my lady's own maid is coming this way.'

Sodrina, frightened at the idea of losing her good wages, fled back to the nursery. Thus she missed the beautiful spectacle of the gathering of the great folk on the floor for their *valse*.

Oh, what music was that which the orchestra in the gallery discoursed! It sighed, it trembled, it touched young hearts with new thoughts, and awoke old memories in those of the elder people. Strong arms encircled delicate waists; passionate eyes looked into tender ones. Away, away! Who danced more lightly or smiled more gaily than the Countess Telka?

Suddenly screams, shrieks of terror, weeping and wailing, filled the halls and stairways. Into the great hall rushed the nurse, Sodrina, followed by the other servants, calling on their master, repeating the word 'Gone! Gone! Gone!' over and over again.

Gone, vanished, carried away by evil spirits or wicked fairies! The babe, the child of the house, the little Countess Theresa—gone, gone! the dance ended, the music stopped, all flew to the nursery, half hoping that all this outcry was caused by some superstitious fancy of its peasant nurse; for no babe of her age could leave its pillow, and who could bear it away?

Alas! the cradle was really empty, the silken coverlet gone, the linen sheets lying upon the floor, one little sock dropped upon the window-sill, beneath which ran a balcony with steps to the garden, and pinned to the pillow was a piece of paper, on which were written these words:

'It is not so long since you persecuted the gipsies that you can have forgotten them. You bade your servants drive them from your land and beat them with thongs. "Ungodly dogs," you said. "I would throw them to the bears, if I had my way. Their religion is of lard, and the dogs have eaten it. No Christian need regard them." And my boy died of those blows—my son. Though the gipsies have no God, they keep their oaths. I vowed revenge that day; I have taken it this. Before you read what I write I shall have thrown your babe to the bears: and they, hungry in the winter woods, will have devoured it.

A GIPSY MOTHER.'

The count uttered a cry of despair. With all the other men within call, he went forth to follow the gipsy woman and seek his child. But they found no trace of them, though in the frozen forests they heard the bears howl from their caves. Days after, a peasant gathering faggots in the woods, found a ribbon that had tied the child's sock, floating from a dwarf evergreen near a great bear's den. The discovery crushed the last lingering hope that filled the mother's heart—that the gipsy mother had not, after all, found it possible to be so cruel to an innocent babe, and that money might give her back her child.

From that time the count and the countess no longer knew appiness. A settled melancholy rested upon them, was visible in their voices and stamped upon their countenances; and they received, besides their dearest friends, only the most formal visits of ceremony, and continually wore deep mourning.

Time seemed to have no power to soothe their woe, and no other children came to comfort them.

In Hungary, at that date, there were many places in which the bears grew dangerous at times, and hunts, which were considered good sport, became necessary for the protection of those who lived near the forests. It was twelve years from the time of the disappearance of the count's little daughter when one of these hunts was organized. The bears, who in mild weather will live contentedly on nuts, roots, berries, and honey, would in winter, when these could not be found, descend upon the farms, carry away the little pigs, chickens and all small domestic animals, and, if attacked, turn upon human beings, and, seizing them in their furious embrace, tear them to pieces with their sharp claws.

This thing had happened to a farmer who defended his stock, and now from hill and valley, from cottage and castle, came forth armed and mounted men to do battle against these usually innocent creatures. Some in revenge, some for sport, some for the sake of the flesh which they esteemed good meat.

Amongst the gentlemen was the Count Erdodi. He rode at the head of the concourse into the forest, and desired nothing so much as to be foremost in the destruction of the bears.

The words of the gipsy's letter were ever in his mind—'I will throw your child to the bears.' Perhaps it might be that he should slay with his own hands the brute who had devoured his babe; the thought gave him a certain savage joy.

The hunters were very successful, and, after killing many bears, came at last, just at nightfall, upon a cave from which emerged a large and savage she-bear, who attacked them furiously. Her conduct convinced them that she was defending her cubs—under such circumstances the strength and courage of a female bear is astonishing. However, they conquered her at last, slew her, and were about to enter the cave in search of the cubs, when from its shadows emerged a form that filled them for an instant with superstitious terror.

At first they thought it some elfin thing of the woods, or a spirit that dwelt within the cave, but its conduct soon proved it some harmless human being, as with shrieks of grief and terror, moans and cries that wrung every bosom, it threw itself upon the body of the bear, and lavished embraces, tears, and kisses upon it, strove to lift its head and vainly endeavoured to drag it back into the cave.

It was, they now saw, a girl, slender and dark. Her black hair was long and wild, her eyes glowing and gleaming like jewels. When they touched the bear she attacked them with her nails and her little white teeth, and uttered fierce cries; and at last, when they endeavoured to seize her, she evaded them by climbing into the branches of a tree and ascending swiftly as a squirrel to its upper branches.

It was very difficult to capture her; but at last, she was bound and wrapped in Count Erdodi's cloak, and a stout peasant undertook to carry her back to the village with him.

'It is some child who has been lost in the woods,' he cried. 'See—there are rings in her ears.'

At these words, Count Erdodi, pale as ashes, dismounted from his horse and rushed forward. Bending over the palpitating being, he gazed upon its little ears, and saw, embedded in the flesh of each, a thread of gold which held a tiny jewelled coronet.

His lost child was found. The bear whom they had killed had frustrated the gipsy's designs by becoming its foster-mother. Before they left the spot the hunters gave the poor animal Christian burial; for surely the creature had had a tender heart within its breast. Tears took the place of prayers and afterwards the count marked the spot with a stone.

The little Countess Theresa was taken home. Kind treatment and caresses soon tamed her. She learned to love her parents and to speak. In two or three years she could prattle very prettily and tell her strange experiences.

According to her, the bear had certain modulations of voice by which it made known its wishes to her. It could call her, reprove her, or warn her of danger. If she screamed, it came to her at once. At night she slept on its bosom.

When Theresa began to understand the meaning of words, she always spoke of the animal as: 'Good mother bear.' She always loved it, and nothing pleased her more than when her father erected in his gardens—where all who chose may see it to this day—a fountain, in the midst of whose waters is a marble bear holding tenderly in her embrace a little, new-born babe. Beneath is this inscription:

'WHEN BRUTES HAVE HEARTS
MUST THEY NOT ALSO HAVE SOULS?'

And all this is perfectly true; and some people live, no doubt, who remember it all; for an account of the discovery of the wild child who had been nurtured by a she-bear and her restoration to her parents was given in the periodical known as the *Gazette des Portes de Frankfort*, March, 1805.

ONLY ONCE.

THERE is nothing like making the best of everything, but even when people do make the best of things they are very apt to put in a qualifying 'but' somewhere.

Two very old people were talking one day about the delights of old age.

'Why,' said one, 'we get the best of everything. At our house, all the tenderest bits of steak, the nicest morsels of chicken, the largest pieces of pie are saved out for me.'

'Yes,' said the other; 'at our house I have the most comfortable room in the house, the easiest chair, and the warmest corner at the fireplace.'

'And everybody looks at us kindly and respectfully.'

'To be sure. But, ah, John, it's sorrowful to think—'

'What, Jane?'

'We can't be old but once!'

LADIES' DRESSES, DUST AND DISEASE.

RECENT instructions issued by the chief of the Viennese police have reference to the inconvenient length of ladies' trains as worn in the streets of the Austrian capital. On general grounds, the public, we may rest assured, will not object to restrictions on these cumbrous and obstructive appendages. Taste, if it has (as we have always understood) a close connection with neatness, will also be gratified by this protest on behalf of simple dress. Health, which is equally concerned with personal cleanliness, will be sensible of a sanitary gain. But the Austrian police have even more in view. The flowing skirts, they contend, have a possible influence on the spread of contagion by the dust they raise. It is impossible with mathematical accuracy to disprove this possibility, but, surely, here is a case in which over-anxiety bred in a germ-haunted mind has usurped the leadership of practical sense. If otherwise, why does not traffic cease in the streets of Vienna, and what calamities may not be looked for when the heedless winds of September will scatter clouds of dust into every corner of the city?

TIMELY INVOCATION.

A MAIDEN lady, who lives alone except for her servants, owns a fine parrot which her nephew brought back from a visit to South America. The bird was sent to a professional trainer to be taught to speak, but when it was returned it obstinately refused to utter a word, and its mistress decided that the teaching had been a failure. Polly's cage hung in a dressing-room which adjoined its mistress's chamber, and at night the door between the two rooms was left open.

One night a burglar got into the house, and after packing up the silver below stairs, crept stealthily up to the chamber of the lady, where he proceeded to gather together her jewellery. He had got most of her valuables into a hand-bag without awakening her, when suddenly an unearthly voice from the next room called out loud enough to arouse the seven sleepers:

'God bless our home! God bless our home!'

The burglar was so startled that he dropped his dark lantern, and then, in trying to recover it, stumbled over a chair and pitched headlong to the floor. The lady suddenly awakened, screamed at the top of her voice, and the thief, now thoroughly demoralized, took a flying leap for the stairway outside the door of the chamber. He slipped, fell, and broke his leg, so that he was easily captured by the butler and coachman, who had come to the rescue of their mistress.

All this time the parrot had continued to cry at the top of its lungs:

'God bless our home! God bless our home!'

Polly evidently felt that the time for talking had come, and under the circumstances her mistress could not well get out of patience with her, although she screamed this one sentence for the rest of the night. Having begun to talk, indeed, she continued to chatter for the rest of her life, and was looked upon as a remarkably accomplished parrot.

A NOVEL MENU.

THE advent of any new idea in the way of dinner-table details is always welcome, and I think many of my readers may be amused by the following novel *menu* arrangement, and may, perhaps, be glad to base one upon it for their own use:—

PROCLAMATION TO OUR TRULY AND WELL-BELOVED—

OYEZ! OYEZ!! OYEZ!!!

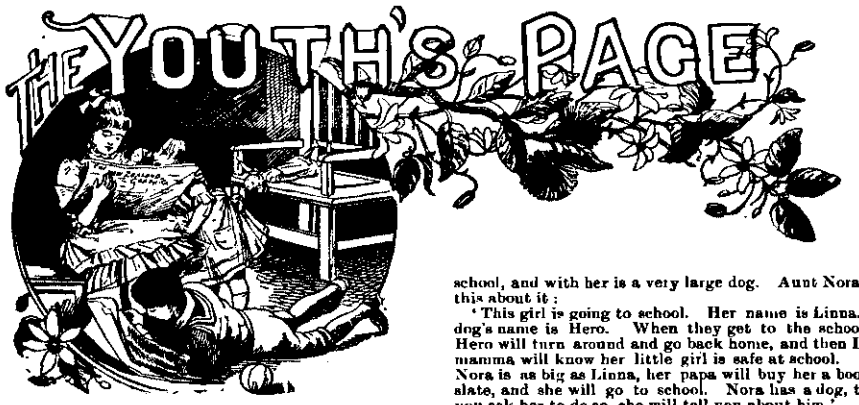
Know ye all men while yet ye live
That we a mighty banquet give.
Be seated then in mighty haste
And take Anchovy—not the paste.
Nor Eggs nor Wine shall ye disdain
For we have olives sent from Spain;
Our guests we trust we do not shock
For turtle's dear so 'Turtle's Mock,
And tho' all summer's beauties droop
We have the Spring or Summer Soup;
Fried Smelts, or if ye must be swell,
Take Salmon a la maitre d'hotel.
Pigeons have into Mushrooms flown,
Tomatoes into Sweetbreads grown;
Fair dames bedecked in bibs and ruffles
Think ye of Turkey done with truffles,
While gentlemen 'twill not want force
To make you swallow Celery Sauce,
This last wit's sadly from us wrung,
Oh, ladies, will you take Ox Tongue?
As we are Jews we have not ham,
But give you Peas and Saddle of Lamb
Like Drury Lane we make a fuss
When we can offer Aspara 'Gus';
Your eyes on sweets delighted glut
Macedoine Jelly and Cocoa-nut.
If all is well drink to your host,
And also Lord Mayor 'Savory' toast.
Ices we have, we've made them whole.
With Iceberg Pudding from the pole:
All kinds of Fruits of different shapes
From Melons green to Hot-house Grapes;
Then we say Grace like Bishop or Dean
So ends the banquet.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

Given under our Hand and Seal
This day of November.
Carlton Road, in the County of London.

This unconventional *menu* was printed in red and black, with coat of arms at foot, on rough-edged grey paper.

LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS.—PRETTY AND TASTEFUL MILLINERY. SEE PAGE 697.



ANSWERS TO CHARADES.

I.—Point-less.
II.—Rat tray.

LEARNING.

CHILD! if thou wouldst with truth and honour live
(Better, without, that thou shouldst cease to be,)
Thy first best years, thy first fresh efforts, give
To learning: all beside is vanity.

Learn, while the glorious sun in heav'n rides high,
And nature groans beneath his fervid scars;
Learn, when the silver moonlight floods the sky
Like veil of Artemis on clouds and stars.

Learn, ever learn, while yet thy youth is fair,
When womanhood is lovely in its strength,
When age, like frost, lies lightly on thy hair,
And when thy journey's end is near at length.

Learn! and thy sheaves of gathered learning bear
To brighter regions; thither shalt thou come
With songs of triumph; learning even there,
Amid the gladness of the Harvest Home.

MARGARET THOMAS.

SOME CHRISTMAS HINTS.

JUST three days till Christmas, and Lily Brown and I are having such fun getting ready!

I was over at Lily's and we got to talking about Christmas, and wondering what we would get this year, and telling each other what we would like to get, and I suppose we became excited and talked pretty loud, for Lily's brother Ned, who was studying in his room across the hall from us, called out, 'Girls, did you never hear that it is more blessed to give than receive? Why don't you talk about what you are going to give this Christmas?'

Now, I am ten years old and so is Lily, and when we came to think about it we felt ashamed that we have had so much experience in receiving and so little in giving.

And so we are seeing how many gifts we can make to others this year.

Ned says that if you were to hear of the number of Lily's gifts you would think she 'had fallen heir to a gold mine,' but that you would quickly change your mind if you saw them.

I know of twenty-seven gifts that I am going to give, and for fear that you may think I have fallen heir to a gold mine, I shall tell you what some of them are.

Some of them are not worth anything in money, but mamma says that a thing is worth giving when the one that receives it is happier because it is given to him; and some people care more for the love that goes with a gift than for the money that was paid for it.

My most expensive gift is for mamma; Aunt Nora showed me how to make it, and grandma gave me everything I needed for it except the ribbon and floss, for which I had to pay a shilling. I forgot to say that it is a crazy patchwork cushion.

For papa I have knit a pair of coarse mittens. The yarn cost 5d, but oh! how long it took me to knit them, and I did every stitch of them.

I have made a paper doll-house for Cousin Nettie out of a big pasteboard box. I cut out holes in the sides for doors and windows; then with a pencil I made the pieces I cut out look like doors and window-shutters and then I fastened them to the house again.

For hinges I pasted one edge of a strip of cloth to the door, and the other to the side of the house.

Red paper marked with a pencil made a pretty carpet, and the curtains are of tissue-paper.

There are pictures hanging on the wall with coloured pasteboard frames, and the furniture is made of pasteboard, small boxes and such things.

For little Cousin Nora, I have made a picture-book. I took four pieces of paper-muslin—each piece was about fifteen inches long and nine inches wide—and stitching them together down the centre on the machine made a book of sixteen pages. I scalloped the edges of the leaves with the scissors, and pasted in the pictures. I have seen books made like this before, but Aunt Nora has made mine different from all the others.

I left space by every picture for a piece of blank paper to be pasted, and on each paper Aunt Nora wrote something about the picture.

To make it plainer I will tell you about one picture. It is one of a little girl with book and slate on her way to school, and with her is a very large dog. Aunt Nora wrote this about it:

'This girl is going to school. Her name is Linna. The dog's name is Hero. When they get to the schoolhouse Hero will turn around and go back home, and then Linna's mamma will know her little girl is safe at school. When Nora is as big as Linna, her papa will buy her a book and slate, and she will go to school. Nora has a dog, too; if you ask her to do so, she will tell you about him.'

And so you see that everybody to whom she shows her book will tell her the same stories about the pictures.

My gift for grandmamma is a foot-warmer. It is two cushions tied together at two of the opposite corners with ribbons. Just the top side of the top cushion has to be pretty—it is of crazy patchwork, and mamma says I did my work well, only she doesn't know how much practice I have had lately. A ruffle from an old grey cashmere dress is pleated around the edge of the top cushion, and hides the lower cushion.

After Christmas if grandmamma wants to keep her feet warm while she is sewing, she can put a warm brick between her two cushions, and then her warm footstool will be ready for use.

My gift for Ned Brown is a kind of a joke, but I think that he may like it.

Ned is the greatest boy to collect, and he has collections of ever so many things. But I've something new for him; it's a nut collection.

The case for the collection is a big, flat pasteboard box, and with long, thin strips of wood papa divided it into twenty-six little square compartments, and one big one as big as four of the little ones together.

Then out of note-paper I made a little blank book that would just fit into the big compartment. The book has twenty-six pages besides the blue cardboard covers, and in it he is to write descriptions of the nuts—a page to a nut.

I have started the collection for him with ten nuts, counting a piece of cocoanut-shell as one, and that is all I can get. Do you suppose he could ever find sixteen more? As you may well guess, I didn't write the descriptions in the blank book.

Papa told me how to do Ned's nut collection. Of course I couldn't think of so many gifts if others did not help me with their suggestions, and help me make some of them, too.

I was a subscriber to *Our Little Ones*, a magazine for small children, for three years, and I have them all. When I was a very little girl mamma taught me to be careful with books, and these are not torn any and are very little soiled.

I have picked out fifteen of them to keep. I think so much of them all, but those fifteen I just couldn't give away.

The other twenty-one magazines will make gifts for fourteen children—two magazines to some and only one to others.

For Aunt Mary Doane, who works for mamma sometimes, I have made an ornamental fan to be put on the shelf over her fireplace.

From heavy pasteboard I cut out a fan the size of a large palm-leaf. This I covered with crimped tissue-paper and bound the edge of it with a strip of the paper—pasted it on. Then I put five picture-cards on the fan, one in the centre and one in each corner.

To fasten the cards to the fan I threaded a large needle with narrow ribbon, and then I pushed the needle through the card and fan, and back through the fan and card, and then tied the two ends of the ribbon together in a little bow.

Each card was tied down at two corners, and every card has the picture of a child or children on it. I chose that kind because Aunt Mary is so fond of little children.

To finish off the fan I took a wide strip of the tissue-paper and tied around the handle in a pretty bow. And for my part I think the fan is very pretty, even if Aunt Nora did laugh when she saw it, and I feel sure that Aunt Mary will be pleased with it, too.

Aunt Nora is so very particular how things look that I had become quite discouraged in trying to think of a gift for her, for I knew she couldn't care for anything that I can make, and I haven't any money with which to buy nice gifts. So I was very much relieved when mamma made a suggestion.

You see grandmamma lives in the next house to ours, and it seems to me that Aunt Nora is always wanting me to go down in town or somewhere for her. And I usually go, but sometimes I am pretty cross about it. Well, I have an envelope with thirty of my prettiest picture-cards in it for her, and with them is this little note:

Dear Aunt Nora, I did sigh and sigh,
For I had no money a nice gift for you to buy,
To make you something lovely I did wish to try,
But my poor work could only shock your 'artist's eye.'

But whenever you want an errand done
Just give me a card and see how I'll run!
And until these thirty cards are all given out,
I'll go at once, and never grumble or pout.

I don't know what Aunt Nora will think of this kind of a gift, but I do know that I'll be glad when I get all my nice cards back again.

And now I want to tell about Jimmy Crow, the man that works in the garden and saws wood, and such things, for papa. He lives by himself and does his own cooking, washing and mending.

Last summer he was always teasing Lily and me because we were such 'tomboys;' he said we would never be any help to our mammas, and that he didn't believe we would ever be able to even hem a towel or make the most common kind of cake.

Lily and I have a partnership gift for him. I have learned how to make Auntie cakes and Lily can make nice biscuits, and I am going to bake some Auntie cakes and Lily is going to make sandwiches out of some of her biscuits; and we have each hemmed a towel, and we shall take a large paper bag and put the towels in it first, then in smaller bags put the cakes and sandwiches, and put them in the large bag; and to make things look fancy we'll tie up the bag with a wide ribbon of coloured tissue-paper.

We have made up this rhyme to write on a card and pin to the bag:

We can use a needle and thread,
And we can cook—
You'll take back some things you've said
When inside you look.

I am afraid you will not think my gifts very nice, but I hope they will please the ones for whom they are intended; mamma has always helped me to decide if a gift was appropriate.

Although I have spent all of my money and done a great of tedious work (oh! knitting those mittens was just awful, but papa is as bad as Jimmy Crow about thinking little girls ought to know how to knit and sew and cook) yet I am already paid in anticipating the pleasure of giving.

And if the gifts I receive this Christmas do not equal my expectations, for of course I have thought a little about what I may get Christmas, I think that I shall most truly believe, anyhow, that 'It is more blessed to give than receive.'

ATTACKED BY A BUFFALO.

SIR SAMUEL W. BAKER in his latest book, 'Wild Beasts and Their Ways,' narrates an adventure which shows that a hunter's life may depend upon his attention to small details. Sir Samuel and Mr Dick were shooting in Africa, when they saw a solitary bull buffalo on the opposite side of a small creek. The bull was evidently in a state of great excitement, for as the hunters drew near the creek, he faced them, tore up the turf with his horns, and looked down the perpendicular bank, twelve feet high, as though meditating a descent.

Dick, who carried a little rifle, a single barrel, which shot a small spherical ball, had, by Sir Samuel's advice, doubled his charge of powder.

'Aim at the back of the neck, if the buffalo lowers his head,' said Sir Samuel to his companion, throwing a hard clod of earth so that it fell into the water at the foot of the bank. The splash caused the animal to look down, exposing his neck. Dick fired. The bull convulsively turned round, and fell upon his side.

The two men waded across the creek at a shallow place, and ran to where the prostrate animal was lying, apparently dead. Dick, standing in front of the bull's head, revelled in the delight of his first buffalo.

'Never stand at the head of a buffalo, whether dead or alive!' exclaimed Sir Samuel, whose experience had taught him to be cautious. 'Stand upon the side facing the back of the animal well away from its legs, as I am standing now.'

Scarcely had he uttered the words when the bull sprang to his feet, and blundered forward straight at the astonished Dick, not three feet distant. He jumped backwards to avoid the horns, but tripped and fell upon his back right in the path of the savage bull.

As quick as lightning Sir Samuel drew his long hunting-knife, and plunged it behind the buffalo's shoulder. The animal fell to the blow. He had received his death-stroke.

If the hunting-knife had not been tempered steel, with a keen edge and a sharp point, the story would have had a tragical ending. The blade, a part of an old 'Andrea Ferrara' Highland claymore, was eighteen inches long, two inches in breadth, double-edged, and as sharp as it was possible to make it.

Sir Samuel saw to it that it was always in the condition of a surgeon's lancet. He never left the camp for a day's shooting without first examining its point and edge. No servant was allowed to handle it, and when it needed sharpening, he himself honed it. When he struck the buffalo, the sharp double edge of the long knife divided the great artery of the heart.

SHE WAS VERY TIRED.

SUPERINTENDENT PORTER of the Census Bureau received a novel official communication the other day. It was an application by one of the girl clerks for a vacation and it ran thus:

There's a girl in a certain division
Who is tired as tired can be;
She would like to be detailed to number
The fishes that swim in the sea.

She says she will count all the sea shells,
Or the waves as they dash on the shore
And will give information concerning
The volume and depth of their roar.

She is weary of schedules and figures,
And longs to be domiciled where
She'll be worried with no 'rapid transit,'
Save that of the birds through the air.

She finds there's as yet no provision
To number the birds or their songs;
She will classify each feathered warbler
In the habitat where he belongs.

She would like to be sent to the mountains
For such computations as these;
To find with just how many windings
The brook finds its way to the seas.

She would count them (the mountains) or mount them
And issue a bulletin there,
That should state with precision the number
Of sunbeams afloat in the air.

She will number the stars in the heavens
And note every phase of the moon,
She will wait for the 'transit of Venus'
Unless you recall her too soon.

With zeal that is more than 'official!'
She will study the biped called man,
And will 'size up' his various virtues
As only a young woman can.

She will test with minutest exactness
The comparative virtues of each—
The Mohammed that comes to the mountain
And the lover that waits on the beach.

I venture to hope, Mr Porter,
That you'll further this maiden's design.
If you can, why, perhaps in the autumn,
She will find she may safely resign.

TOO FAMILIAR.

ONE may not, according to the etiquette of loyalty, speak too familiarly of kings and queens. As a subject was once reminded, who wished to give his sovereign a pair of stockings, 'The Queen of Spain has no legs.' She must not be supposed to walk, talk, or eat like ordinary mortals, and if one cannot escape the inference that she really is like the rest of humanity, surely nothing need be said of it.

When Queen Victoria visited Salisbury Cathedral, thirty years ago, there was, of course, a flutter of curiosity and loyalty throughout the town. Even the humblest houses had hung out some sign of rejoicing, and at the White Hart Inn, where the Queen intended to lunch, the landlady was fluttering about in her best silk, while the servants were gay with white waistcoats and flowers in their button-holes.

But that this show of devotion was not merely skin-deep may be guessed from an occurrence of the late afternoon, when the Queen had departed.

In the coffee-room of the inn were two young men, who were complaining to the waiter because they were not given eels for dinner, although the dish had been promised them. The waiter apologised profusely and remarked, in the way of excuse:

'Her Majesty has been here to-day.'

'Did Her Majesty eat the eels?' was the too familiar query, and at this the waiter's loyal soul revolted.

'It's no business of yours or mine, sir, what Her Majesty eats,' was his dignified reply.

ONE SHORT.

A SHIPLOAD of fine horses was recently consigned from Calcutta to Bombay, under the charge of a very honest but somewhat dull agent in the employ of the East India Company. While the horses were being landed at the slip, they managed to break away from the men in charge, and ran like wild animals through the city.

The agent caught one of them, and mounting him, gave chase. After several hours of exciting work, with the help of his men he had captured all but one of the horses, as he counted them.

Finally he made his reluctant way to the superintendent's office to give an account of the matter. The superintendent came to the door, and listened to his story.

'And you say there were one hundred and twenty-four horses in all, and you have eighty of them in the company's stables, and forty-three back in the steamer temporarily?'

'Yes, sir, all safe but one, and we cannot find him anywhere.'

'What is that horse you are riding? Have you counted him?' asked the superintendent.

'Well, I am an ass! Of course this is one of 'em!' and the agent rode off in disgust, while the superintendent roared with laughter.

BRIGHT STREET ARAB.

THERE are various sorts of punishment, and when a gentleman tries to be funny in some disgraceful way, he is apt to receive his just dues in the way of personal mortification. Lord Charles Beresford and Mr Gerald Coxe, two well-known society men in London, were taking a walk together, when a little crossing sweep asked them 'for tuppence.'

'No,' said Lord Charles, gruffly, 'I'll not give you a penny!'

Then a bright idea occurred to him, and he added, 'You see that constable yonder. Well, if you'll go and mop your broom up and down his back, I'll give you half a crown.'

The boy rushed away, promptly performed the act, and was as promptly arrested.

Lord Charles, his conscience pricking him, went over to remonstrate with the officer, and was himself taken in charge. Mr Coxe then attempted to throw in a few dissuading words.

'Aha!' quoth the officer. 'So you want to interfere, do you? Well, I fancy I shall have to run you in, too.'

So the three culprits were conducted away to the police station. The inspector in charge there gazed at them austerely.

'So you've been interfering with the constable?' he said, with solemnity. 'A serious charge; a very serious charge! Now tell me, sir, what is your name?'

'Mr Gerald Coxe,' answered the gentleman addressed.

Now this name was perfectly well known to the inspector, and it seemed to him extraordinarily funny that it should be claimed by a man who would take the part of a crossing-sweep.

'Oh, you're Mr Gerald Coxe, are you?' said he, sarcastically. 'Yes, you look like Mr Gerald Cox! Very good! Capital! And who are you, sir?'

'Lord Charles Beresford,' answered that gentleman.

This, in the mind of the inspector, deepened and complicated the joke.

'So you're Lord Charles Beresford!' he chuckled, grimly. 'Well, this is splendid! You look like Lord Charles, you do! Splendid! splendid! Now tell me,' he added, turning to the small boy, 'what's your name?'

The ragged urchin was in a serious quandary. He looked at Lord Charles and Mr Coxe.

'Look a-here,' he said, 'I don't know who ye are or what's yer game, but I ain't a goin' back on a pal!'

Then, turning boldly to the inspector, he said, in a tone full of heroic confidence, 'I'm der Dook of Wellington!'

A small boy who was spending the summer in the country was much annoyed by the mosquitoes. One night he stood their bites as long as he was able, but at length wailed forth, 'Oh, I wish I was a skeeter, and the skeeter me, and then wouldn't I bite that skeeter!'

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

LITTLE PEOPLE'S LETTERS

DEAR COUSIN KATE,—We are going to have a holiday on Thursday for the Agricultural and Pastoral Show. We had such a fine day for our last holiday. I am in the Fifth Standard at school. We had our examination in September. I passed in Mr Riley's drawing examination, and I got the only excellent in our school. Dear Kate, one night my sister Lily, my cousin Bessie, and myself were coming down a road when we met a herd of bullocks. It was a rather narrow road, and not very near to any house, so we just had to run. Lily ran down a little road that branches off the big one. I followed her, and thinking that I saw an opening in the hawthorn hedge, I tried to jump through it, but I found myself stuck. Bessie had managed to climb a bank on the other side of the road. It was a long time before we got home. I am glad that you put my stories in print.—ALICE WILLIS. Montecillo, Johnsonville.

[Thank you for your nice little letter, Alice. I hope you will write again. I am glad you escaped from the bullocks. —COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—We took a nest which had four little blackbirds in. One of them jumped out, and we could not find it again. The other three we took into the kitchen and put them on the table. The cook was very kind; she put a wire cover over them and a duster. One tried to fly on to the floor, and hurt himself somehow, at least he died by morning. The other two we put in a box and hung it near the tree. The father and mother birds came and fed them. The next afternoon we made a better sort of cage, with wire in front—quite a jolly one. The old birds were *so* silly. They perched in front on the shelf we put for them with worms in their mouths, and though the little ones chirped like anything, they flew away without feeding them. Weren't they stupid? So the little birds died, and I had to bury them in my new cemetery for animals because the old one is quite full. It has a kitten and two birds. The new one has about three birds and a frog.—Your loving cousin, WILLIE.

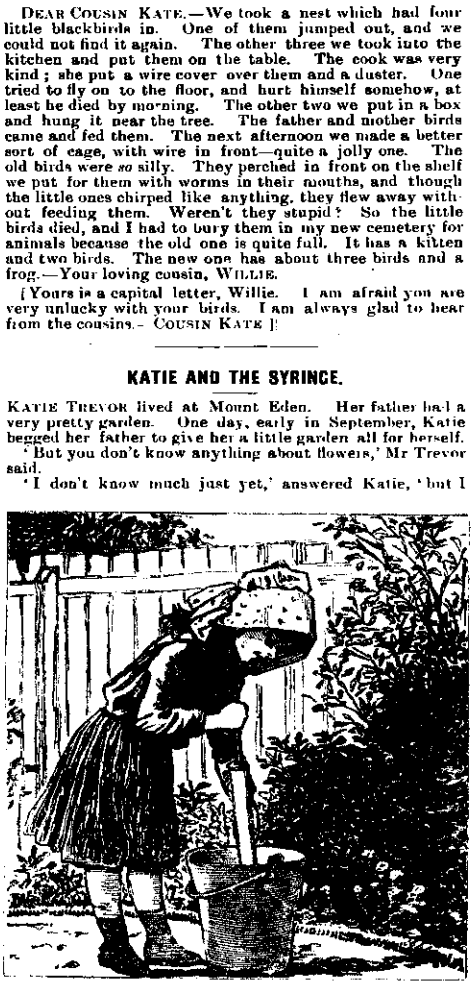
[Yours is a capital letter, Willie. I am afraid you are very unlucky with your birds. I am always glad to hear from the cousins.—COUSIN KATE.]

KATIE AND THE SYRINGE.

KATIE TREVOR lived at Mount Eden. Her father had a very pretty garden. One day, early in September, Katie begged her father to give her a little garden all for herself.

'But you don't know anything about flowers,' Mr Trevor said.

'I don't know much just yet,' answered Katie, 'but I



KATIE AND THE SYRINGE.

can learn a great deal. The bees are going to teach me, father.'

Mr Trevor laughed, but he told Katie she could have a little piece for herself close up by the fence.

There was a nice rose-bush in it, and two or three pelargoniums. Katie always called them geraniums; she said pelargoniums was such a hard word; it hurt her mouth opening it wide enough to get it all out at once.

Katie often worked in her little garden, and sowed some pretty seeds. They all came up, and then the snails heard of it, and crawled across the path from the lawn to taste and see for themselves.

One morning late in October Katie could not find a single leaf of mignonette, but instead, two fat snails were lying comfortably curled up under the board she had put to save her mignonette from being eaten. Katie put the snails on the path, and the board on top of them, and danced on it as hard as she could. Then she cried a little, she was so sorry her mignonette had all gone.

At last December came, and the roses flowered. How lovely they were! But alas! there is always some trouble in a garden. The horrid bronze beetles came too, and ate up all the leaves and some of the rose petals, so Katie borrowed her father's syringe and a bucket, and begged for some of Mr Trevor's mixture of soft soap and kerosene. Then she stood in front of her plants, just as you see in the picture, and sent the water from the syringe flying all over the rose-trees, and over herself also. Her pretty pink spotted sun-bonnet was quite spoiled, her frock was soaked, and so were her dainty little boots.

And what do you think happened to her next? Why, her mother put her to bed!

Poor little Katie!

But her father gave her trees a good dose with the syringe and sent the beetles away. L. F. R.

THE RACCOON FERRYMAN.

BILLY and Bolly were up at daylight, and ran to the window.

'Oh, it's raining again!' they both cried. And they must ride through it all day, in the mail carrier's open waggon, to get to the bay where they took the steamer!

But Billy and Bolly did not mind it, for they had grown used to rain during their visit at 'Grandma's house,' in the Puget Sound country.

Besides, they were going home, and now that the rainy season had set in on the Sound, these little mountaineers were homesick for brighter skies.

They stopped at the post-office store to get the mail-sack, and the storekeeper's wife ran out to the waggon, all through the rain, with a shawl over her head.

'What! You're not going to leave us!' she said to the two little boys. 'Why, I thought you were going to settle here!'

Neither knew what to reply, so mamma spoke up, and said they were going back because they loved the mountains.

'Well,' said the storekeeper's wife, 'it's a rough road and they will be tired, and they must take this to help them over it.' And she slipped two paper bags of candy out from under her shawl, and stuffed them into two bulging coat-pockets.

All the way to the bay, the road ran through the endless forest of firs and spruces; and everywhere it was drip, drip from glooming boughs on fallen logs, and ferns that stood as high as the waggon-wheels.

They came at last to the rope-ferry, and drove right on to the little ferry-boat, swinging to the big cable stretched across the river.

The driver got down and held his horses' heads, for the boat had no guards.

A man stood at the wheel that controlled the boat, and he began to turn it, and out they slid on the racing current, for the river was high from the rains.

The man at the wheel was a big man, and had a black beard that came to his waist.

Any boy but Billy would have known a man with such a beard could do anything with a boat, and he was standing close to Billy, too, for on the little deck the waggon almost touched the wheel he was turning.

But Billy could not keep from shutting his eyes when the water began to run by so fast on every side.

'Don't be scared, Billy!' said bold Bolivar. 'The ferryman'll make the boat go right.'

The bearded man heard him.

'The ferryman?' he said. 'If you want to see the ferryman, look over there!'

The boys looked, and saw a raccoon sitting on a bench on the opposite side of the boat.

'Watch out,' said the bearded man, gravely. 'He will come for the fare in a minute.' Bolivar got out his purse!

'He will not take money,' the bearded man said, peeping into Bolly's coat pocket. 'But wait; he will help himself. Here he comes.'

The 'ferryman' jumped from the bench, and climbed on the waggon seat.

The two boys made way for him, and sniffing about, he put his funny black hands first in one pocket, then another, until he found the candy bags. Then he took his fare.

'Oh, we must have him to take home with us!' said the two boys when they had landed safely. 'What will you take for him?'

The bearded man shook his head.

How could the ferry run, he said, without the ferryman? They must stay and settle on the river, and then they could see him every day.

But this could not be, and so they both shook the funny ferryman's little black hands, and were sorry to say good-bye, they liked him so well. MRS J. S. OAKLING.

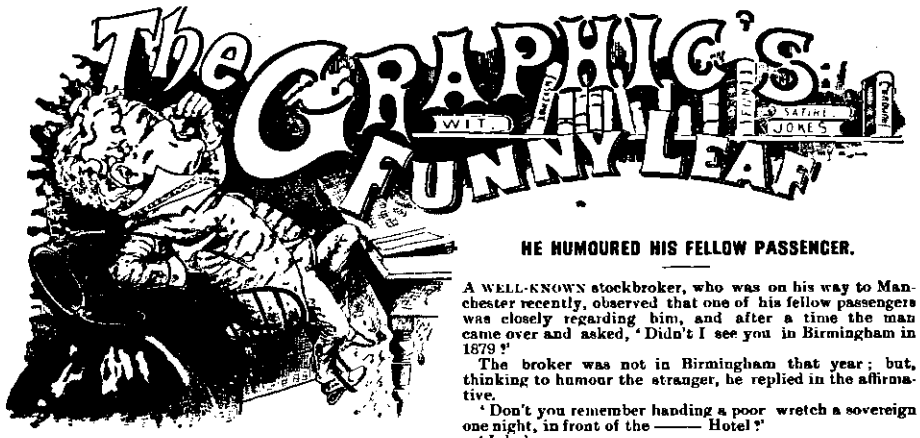
MONK AND HIS MASTER, AND THEIR LITTLE GAME.

A GENTLEMAN who has a handsome home in one of the fashionable suburbs has a fine St. Bernard dog. He has taught the intelligent animal a trick of which he is extremely proud. The dog's name is Monk. The trick is an elaborate one, and includes the telling by the owner of a dramatic tale of hardship. Upon a signal, Monk, who usually reposes in front of the broad open fireplace, lies down before his master, with his big head stretched out on the floor between his outspread paws, and looks up expectantly. Then the owner begins, in a low voice, the prologue.

It is a thrilling story of a poor wanderer struggling up the passes of the Alps, lost in the blinding snow. Monk listens intently to every word. His voice growing stronger, the gentleman describes the wayfarer as overcome with fatigue, and tells how, thoroughly worn out, he lies down to rest. At this point the gentleman stretches himself out on the floor, resting his head on his arm, face downward. Monk remains perfectly rigid. The gentleman goes on reciting in a tone growing gradually softer. He turns up his coat collar, and then, lifting one hand above his head, lets fall a shower of fine white paper.

As the pieces representing a gust of snow flurry down, Monk bounds across the floor, barking at the top of his lungs, and reaching the prostrate form of his master, lies down, stretching his paws across his back and poking his big black nose under his collar. He whines and snuffs and pounds the floor with his big white tail. Then, finding that all such efforts to resuscitate the wanderer are unavailing, Monk rises, and lifting his head, sends forth a howl of woe that would unquestionably bring the whole Alpine hospice to the rescue.

Then comes the climax. Monk seizes the helpless man by the coat collar, and is about to drag him away, when life suddenly returns, and the exhibition ends with a lively tussel between dog and man, and joyous howls of delight on the part of Monk. Of course a round of applause always follows the entertainment.



WHERE THEY SIT.

YE ANCIENT DAMSEL.

HER seat is within the pulpit's reach,
So she may smile on them that preach.

YE FAIRE MAYDE.

Near the centre she may be found,
In order to see well all around.

THE YOUNG MAN.

His seat is almost the very last one,
So he may skip ere the sermon's begun.

YE INQUISITIVE MATRON.

She chooses a pew down near the door,
That she may see all the bonnets before.

THE MISER.

He is not particular so long as he
Can find somewhere a pew that's free.

THE FAIR AGNOSTIC.

'Tis sad to see a woman who
At religious rule doth scoff
Because she cannot go to church
To show her bonnets off.

THAT SETTLED IT.

HUSBAND (looking up from his paper): 'What asses men make of themselves.'

Wife: 'What is the matter now, dear?'

Husband: 'I am looking at the love letters in this breach of promise case.'

Wife: 'Are they interesting?'

Husband: 'Interesting. They are absolutely sickening. Hear this. "My dear ducky; my lovely dovey." Ha! Ha! Ha!'

Wife (demurely): 'It does sound rather foolish, doesn't it?'

Husband (with a burst of laughter): 'Foolish? Idiotic, you mean. It's the worst nonsense imaginable to think that any man in his senses could write such stuff as this. "I send you a million kisses, my goosie, poosie, sweety, peety." Ha! Ha! Ha!'

Wife: 'Perhaps he loved her when he sent those letters.'

Husband: 'Suppose he did? Is that any excuse for writing such bosh?'

Wife: 'It should be. Here are some letters I found today when looking over my old relics—relics of courtship. They are very foolish, but very precious to me, I assure you. They are your letters. One of them begins, "My ownest own preciousest little ducky darling, my——"'

Husband (hastily): 'That will do. Put them in the fire.'

AFTER THE WRECK.

AARON MOSES: 'Mein vient!'

Diver: 'Well?'

A.M.: 'If yer seen a leedle feller mit a plue stribed jersey und a silk tie down dere peing him up virst. Dem suits and ties shrinks awful.'

HE HUMOURED HIS FELLOW PASSENCER.

A WELL-KNOWN stockbroker, who was on his way to Manchester recently, observed that one of his fellow passengers was closely regarding him, and after a time the man came over and asked, 'Didn't I see you in Birmingham in 1879?'

The broker was not in Birmingham that year; but, thinking to humour the stranger, he replied in the affirmative.

'Don't you remember handing a poor wretch a sovereign one night, in front of the —— Hotel?'

'I do.'

'Well, I'm that chap. I was hard up, out of work, and about ready to commit suicide. That money made a new new man of me. By one lucky shift and another, I am now worth £10,000.'

'Glad to hear it.'

'And now I want you to take £2 in place of that sovereign. I can't feel easy until the debt is paid.'

The broker protested and objected, but finally, just to humour the man, he took his five-pound note and gave him back three sovereigns. The stranger soon withdrew, and everything might have ended then and there if the broker, on reaching Manchester, had not ascertained that the 'fiver' was a counterfeit, and that he was £3 out of pocket.

A biblical shoemaker has the following hung outside his shop: 'People's understandings renovated and their frail soles made whole.'

PAPA (anxious that Freddy should make a good impression): 'Freddy, pass me that paper.' (Freddy does so immediately.)

Old Uncle: 'Yes, you are a good boy; and why do you obey papa?'

Freddy: 'Oh! 'cause he's bigger'n me.'

THAT WAS SUFFICIENT.

JIM WEBSTER was being tried for trying to bribe a coloured witness, Sam Johnsing, to testify falsely.

'You say this defendant offered you a bribe of $50 to testify in his behalf,' said Lawyer Gouge to Sam Johnsing.

'Yes, sah.'

'Now, repeat precisely what he said, using his own words.'

'He said he would get me $50 if I—'

'He can't have used those words. He didn't speak as a third person.'

'No, sah; he tuck good keer dat dar was no third pusson present. Dar was only two—us two. De defendant am too smart ter hab anybody listenin' when he am talking about his own reskelity.'

'I know that well enough, but he spoke to you in the first person, didn't he?'

'I was de fust pusson, myself.'

'You don't understand me. When he was talking to you did he use the words, "I will pay you fifty dollars?"'

'No, boss; he didn't say nuffin about you payin' me fifty dollars. Yure name wasn't mentioned, 'cepting dat he tole me ef ever I got inter a scrape dat you was the best lawyer in San Antone to fool de Judge and jury. In fac', you was de best lawyer in de town for coverin' up any kind of reskelity.'

'You can step down.'

A NATURAL MISTAKE.

'WAS your father a pirate?' asked young Fitztop of the girl of his choice at a clandestine meeting, after the old sea captain had urged his exit from the family mansion on the hill by the use of his pedal extremity.

'No, my darling,' was the reply. 'Why do you ask?'

'He seemed to be a good deal of a freebooter,' said the young man reflectively.

A MEAN TRICK.

HOSTETTER MCGINNIS has been paying his addresses for some time past to Miss Esmeralda Longcoffin. She had not given him the slightest encouragement, and he was about to commit suicide, when she threw him into a spasm of delight by asking him if he would do her the favour of giving her his photograph. He happened to have one with him, and he begged her to accept it, saying that it was the happiest moment of his life, etc. As soon as he was gone, the young lady called her servant, and, giving her the photograph, said, 'Whenever anybody who looks like that comes to the door, tell him I'm not at home.'

GEORGIE (aged 7, being undressed and put to bed): 'I wish I was a Freemason.'

Mamma: 'Why, dear?'

Georgie: ''Cause papa always is so jolly when he comes home from the Lodge, and you let him go to bed without undressing.'

MISCELLANEOUS.

SICK WIFE: 'If I die, John, you will never marry again, will you?' John (with unnecessary earnestness): 'No, indeed!'

Nurse Girl: 'Why don't ye put that brat to sleep an' have a good time while yer in the park?' Ex-Nurse Girl: 'It's me own.'

Collector: 'How many times do you wish me to call for this money?' Debtor: 'My dear sir, you need never call again. I shall not be offended.'

Young Man (to servant): 'Is Miss Clara engaged?' Servant: 'Hiving rist yer sowl, sorr, I hope she is. She's in the parlour now wid a young man's arm twice round her waist.'

The Judge: 'How old are you, madam?' Witness: 'I have no personal knowledge of my age, and hearsay testimony, I understand, is not accepted in this court.'

A dangerous medicine was praised by a lady, who advised many to take it. 'I know many who praise it to the skies.' 'No doubt, madam, for it has sent many to the skies to praise it.'

'This is a very healthy place,' observed a boarding-house mistress. 'Yes—for chickens,' said a boarder; 'I have been here two years and haven't seen a dead one yet.' She took the hint.

Young Doctor (on his wedding tour): 'Wifey, dear, just look at that peculiar blending of colours in the sky. The cloud overhanging yonder peak is exactly the colour of a diseased liver.'

SHE TOOK HIM AT HIS WORD.—He (11.45 p.m.): 'Why, I'd do anything in the world for you!' She (yawning): 'You will? Then for heaven's sake sneak home. I'm sleepy.'

'Young man,' said an apostle solemnly, 'do you realise when you retire at night that you may be called before the morning dawns?' 'Yes, sir,' responded the young man, 'I realise it fully. I am the father of a three weeks' old baby.'

'TAKE CARE!'—Polly: 'So you are really and truly engaged—how did it come about?' Patsy: 'Well, papa said he didn't care, mamma said she didn't care, Jack he didn't care, and I'm sure I didn't care, so we became engaged.'

Mrs Blossom (to 'bus conductor): 'Why didn't you stop the 'bus when I waved my hand at you the first time?' Conductor: 'I didn't know you wanted to ride, ma'am.' Mrs Blossom: 'What did you suppose I was waving my hand for?' Conductor: 'I thought you were trying to mash me.'

'What's the matter with the boneless wonder?' asked the fat woman. 'He seems down on his luck.' 'It's a love affair,' answered the living skeleton. 'He proposed to the two-headed girl yesterday, and one of 'em accepted him and the other refused him. No wonder he's all broke up.'

INCONTROVERTIBLE.—'And so you're married, Bridget?' 'Yes, mum.' 'What does your husband do?' 'An' sure, mum, he is a railroad dollrector.' 'A railroad director? That's a very important position. Are you quite sure it is that?' 'Faith, an' doesn't he shtand all day at the railroad directing people to the carriages.'

IRISH WIT.—Englishman: 'Pardon me, sir, but where do you come from?' Paddy: 'From County Cork.' Englishman: 'Then that accounts for your brogue.' Paddy: 'May I ax where you come from?' Englishman (proudly): 'From Worcester, sir.' Paddy: 'Then that accounts for your sauce.'

Little girl (looking over advertising page): 'Mamma, why do all these boarding houses object to children?' Fond Mamma: 'I'm sure I don't know. Go see what the baby is yelling about and tell Johnny to stop throwing things at people in the street, and make George and Kate stop fighting and tell Dick if he doesn't stop banging that Chinese gong so hard I'll take it away from him.'