

# Topics of the Week.

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## SOCIETY'S SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

EVERYONE feels that the season has outstayed its welcome, and all are sighing for the end. The ladies' gallery is a melancholy sight in its present half-deserted state when compared with the brilliant assemblage which was to be seen there in the early part of the season.

WELLINGTON girls are really knocked up with the season gaities, and many have had to refuse all invitations, whilst the wise ones have put miles between them and temptation.

MANY people are excited at the proposed £5 return ticket to the Melbourne Cup, and are talking of making up parties to go; but *mal-de-mer* is always an obstructionist to such little 'plays.'

A GOOD deal of surprise was felt when, at the last Government House dance, a few of the guests were invited to remain after the playing of 'God Save the Queen,' immediately after which another waltz was struck up for the few that remained.

A LARGE afternoon 'At Home' was given by the Primates and Mrs Hadfield, to the members of the Diocesan Synod, who are assembled in Wellington. Some solos and part songs, together with light refreshments, made the afternoon pass very pleasantly.

SIR GEORGE GREY is simply shadowed by Mr Rees, who never appears to leave his side. When the Knight comes into the House, so does Mr Rees; when he goes out so does Mr Rees.

AN exhibition of paintings, drawings, etc., was held in Nelson under the auspices of the Bishopdale Sketching Club. Unfortunately both days were wet, so the attention was not what it might have been. The walls as well as three screens were entirely covered with exhibits, and the club have reason to be proud of their members, for some most excellent work was shown. Mrs Topliss exhibited a number of paintings in oil, all very good, but the pick of them was a pretty river scene 'On the banks of the Maitai.' Miss Rochfort showed a splendid study of a Maori's head, very cleverly drawn. Miss Jones, a clever young artist had several paintings on view, the one most admired, being a boy seated on a wharf pile, although a landscape painting by the same lady claimed an amount of admiration. Other exhibitors were Mesdames W. Oldham, Patterson and Misses Fell, Harris, Clouston, Turner and Sadd. The Canterbury Palette Club had kindly lent a number of their paintings for exhibition, and these were justly admired. Altogether the Bishopdale Club are to be congratulated upon the success of their first exhibition, and Nelson people are looking forward to a repetition of this artistic treat every year.

The funds of the Nelson Lawn Tennis Club are at such a low ebb, that at a meeting of the members of the club, it was decided to canvass for subscriptions, to the amount of £75, that being the sum required to lay down a new ground. The present courts, being only two, are inadequate for the number of members who play, so a new ground is badly wanted. As to the wisdom of the plan hit upon for raising the money, only time will show, but to outsiders it certainly seems a rather cool idea to get people to subscribe to keep a private Tennis Club. The old courts are to be used for this year, and are looking beautifully green; the club is to be opened on Saturday fortnight. The Boating Club opens next Saturday.

THE Ladies Boyle are enjoying their holidays immensely, and every day may be seen driving in their tiny carriage sometimes laden with yellow broom or other spoils from the hill sides. At times, with Miss Hallowes, they take a ride in the traicar.

'THE Little Minister,' by Barrie, has been and is quite the rage in Wellington society, and many are the different

opinions as to its merits. 'The Wrecker,' by Stevenson, is also being a good deal read.

CENSORIOUS people, especially among the male sex, have sometimes been heard to call the season 'the marriage mart.' A particularly malicious bachelor says this year's has been a failure, 'as none of the lots offered found a purchaser. The bidding throughout was slow. Several lots might have been disposed of, but the offers not being considered good enough, they were passed in.'

SEVERAL ladies have joined the Hutt Golf Club, and declare themselves charmed with the game.

THE ladies of Timaru have taken up the Ambulance training with great enthusiasm. There are two large classes every week, and the private practising is a great feature. Bandaging parties are the last thing in the social way, and husbands, brothers, small friends of both sexes—everyone in short who will submit to be subjects are in great requisition. Plenty of useful work is done in spite of a good deal of fun some of the 'subjects' proving most refractory.

LADY DAVIS, wife of Sir Matthew Davis, whose affairs are engaging so much interest in Melbourne just now, possesses one of the daintiest boudoirs imaginable. The ceiling is composed of fluted fancy silk, and the heavy mouldings are covered with several shades of art plush. The walls are also covered with silk drawn down like the fronts of old-fashioned pianos. The dado is of plush, and the door is of the same material, save the panels, which are covered with exquisitely embroidered silk. The blinds are of thickly-gathered salmon pink silk.

THE Napier bowling green has been opened by a match and afternoon tea. The green will be ready for play on Saturday afternoons and holidays during October, as the young grass will be spoilt if too much play is indulged in at once. The courts are looking lovely.

OUR Napier letter has the following passage: 'There are terrible slips in the Gorge, and the express is late every evening in consequence, but I expect things will shortly be put right. I believe the passengers by one train were imprisoned for seven hours, which would be no joke, especially if they had no food. I think if I take my usual quarterly trip to Wellington I shall go by steamer, I am rather scared of the Gorge after all the rain we have had.'

HERE is a commendable idea. One of the favourite Napier bachelors gave a large afternoon tea the other day, when all his fair visitors declared they 'enjoyed themselves immensely.' Miss Garstin, Miss Rhodes, Miss Locke, Miss Taylor and Miss Cotterill were among the guests.

THE re-organisation of the Hawke's Bay Horticultural Society is on the *tapis*. At a recent meeting the following gentlemen were elected as a committee:—Messrs E. P. Platford, J. N. Anderson, H. J. Gilbert, J. G. Caw, W. Yates, J. P. Hamlin, H. Williams, A. P. Sheath, C. A. Fitzroy, B. Chambers, W. H. Smith, and G. Tanner.

Mrs TYERMAN gave a delightful little dance in St. Matthew's schoolroom, Hastings. About thirty couples graced the room. The decorations were very pretty, and the supper was exceedingly good. Mrs Tyerman made such a good hostess, she looked very charming in a black net gown with pink trimmings. Amongst the guests were the Misses Roach, Luckie, Wallace and Garry, who all looked very smart. Miss Luckie, in the opinion of most of the guests, was decidedly the belle. Mrs McEwan looked very nice, as did a young lady from Napier.

THE Napier Rowing Club has sustained a great loss, just at the commencement of the season too, which makes it all the more aggravating. The boathouse at the Western

Spit, with all its contents, was burnt. These consisted of five boats of the Napier Rowing Club (three of which were four-oar boats), a sculling boat owned by Mr Charles Kennedy, and two new boats which belonged to the Union Club, and which were only landed about a fortnight previously. The 'Wave Queen,' one of the sailing boats, was so badly charred as to render her almost useless. Nobody can trace the origin of the fire, it seems shrouded in mystery, but the Rowing Club have certainly sustained a very severe loss, for which everyone is most sincerely sorry. A strange thing happened on Sunday morning, a nearly new set of sails on a boat at the Western Spit were cut up, and rendered quite useless. Taken altogether, the thing looks very suspicious, to say the least of it.

THERE is scarcely a Christchurch social event in the whole week to chronicle, for what would have been worth seeing and recording was completely washed out by a deluge of rain. This refers chiefly to the opening of the boating season. Great preparations had been made, as usual, for the Saturday afternoon sports, and even a larger number of boats than usual were to take part in the procession. It was decided to hold it wet or fine, so as not to interfere with the opening for the sailing boats next Saturday at Sumner. A very large afternoon tea was prepared by the members in their pavilion, to be presided over by a number of ladies. About sixty people put in an appearance, so with tea and cake and a little dancing a not unpleasant time was spent once you got there. Outside everything was dismal in the extreme. The procession of boats was pulled off and one or two races, but instead of the banks of the river being thronged with bright-coloured dresses and sunshades till it looked like one large flower garden, a dark object might be discerned here and there with a streaming umbrella, making rapidly for the nearest shelter. Miss Hicks had issued about a hundred invitations for afternoon tea and witness the proceedings from the terrace in front of her house Avonside, where an admirable view of the whole thing is to be had. About twenty guests arrived during the afternoon to condole with her and one another, so with a bright and cosy room, tea, chat and music, an otherwise gloomy day was ended most cheerfully. But as far as the Show was concerned, the opening of the boating season for 1892 was a dreary failure—a 'watery waste.'

AT Kirwee (Christchurch) the members of the Tennis Club on Friday evening held their annual fancy dress ball, which, in spite of the very unfavourable weather, was enjoyed by about fifty couples. Visitors were present from Christchurch, Ashburton, and surrounding districts. Mr Gough's large grain shed, kindly lent for the occasion, was prettily and effectively decorated with flags, evergreens, and Chinese lanterns. The ladies supplied the refreshments, and Mr Rossiter (Christchurch) the music. Dancing was kept up with much spirit till daylight, the company joining hands and singing 'Auld Lang Syne.' Some of the dresses were much admired. Among the best were Miss Seeger, Eubree; Miss L. Davies, Harvest; and Miss Evans, Highland Lassie. A notable dress was worn by Mr John Brett, who represented the Rajah of Kirwee in a costume taken by the late Colonel Brett at the storming of that city in India. Cricketers, tennis-players, men-o'-war-men, volunteers, etc., were all there, but many appeared in evening dress.

'To every action there is always opposed a certain reaction,' and to the gay society people in Wellington this reaction has now come. Our correspondent thus bewails the state of affairs: 'As regards social matters, we have come to a full stop in Wellington, for there has been absolutely nothing going on this week. The only things that have kept us alive are the Italian Opera Company, Holloway's Dramatic Company, and Wirth's Circus. All three companies have chosen the very best time of year, and have had crowded houses in consequence of the prevailing dullness. As for the Italian Opera Company, they were just splendid, and they had a capital season. Signora Cuttica and Miss Brabazon were prime favourites.'

AMATEUR theatricals, when well done, are a delightful way of passing an evening. Mrs Walker, Green Hills, Ellerslie, must be congratulated on the success of the performance held at her house last week. The piece selected was 'Boots at the Swan,' and the various parts were ably taken by the Misses Walker, Forbes, and Elliott, and Messrs Walker, Sommerfield, and Crombie. Mr Walker's representation of the policeman was excellent; indeed, each of the performers deserves praise. Happily, also, no prompter was needed. A stage was nicely arranged on one side of the room, ferns and flowers liberally decorating the