SOCIETY GOSSIP.

AUCKLAND.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 15.

As you will gather from a paragraph elsewhere the Bahnson and Jackson concert was the event of the week. There were such heaps of people one knew present, but many of them wore such dowdy frocks. Here are some of the exceptions. First, decidedly, Mrs Jackson (of H.M.S. Katoomba), who looked charming in a gown of pink and green, very handsome silk opera cloak; Miss Wilkins, black velveteen, the front of the bodice and on the shoulders heavily trimmed with gold; her sister was in black lace, edged round the neck with pale pink chrysanthemums; Mrs Morgan was very pretty in white cashmere, artistically made; Mrs Edwards, pink silk with wine-coloured sleeves and trimmings; Miss Johnston, pretty white gown; Mrs Johnston (jun.), handsome black silk with small insertion of white brocade V-shape in front of the body; Mrs Tewsley, pretty salmon pink evening dress; Mrs Keep, black lace; Miss Chambers, dainty blue silk gown; Miss Mackay, pretty apricot net evening dress; Mrs Harry Jackson, delicate pink and white striped crinkled zephyr; Mrs Thompson, very handsome gown of brown silk, all the trimming being of rich embroidery; Miss Hay, black evening dress; Mrs A. Nathan, very striking costume of blue with black lace sleeves and trimmings; Mrs Davis, black lace over crimson, pretty white opera cloak; Mrs Bewes, dainty white Liberty silk and lace; Mrs Ware, black, finished at the neck and sleeves with pink chiffon; Mrs Dargaville, handsome gown of black and old gold; Miss Russell, cream dress with broad Swiss belt of old gold Liberty silk; Miss W. Russell, a pretty combination of pale blue and salmon pink; Miss Kilgour, a pretty heliotrope silk evening dress; Miss N. Kilgour, black; Miss M. Hull, white dress and opera cloak; Miss T. Hull, green and white flowered French muslin; Miss Brett, dainty white gown trimmed with lace; Miss A. Brett, white, very pretty white opera cloak; Mrs S. Nathan, black lace evening dress edged round the neck with pale grey ostrich feathers; Mrs Lewis, simple but pretty gown of green and white French muslin; Mrs Lee, crushed strawberry trimmed with white embroidery; Miss Pierce, pink and white striped crêpon; Miss Lyell, white silk evening dress; Mrs Innes, white silk, hand-ome white opera cloak; Mrs Cotter handsome gown of black surah silk; Mrs Ansenne, dainty white gown; Miss Ainsley, pretty corselet skirt of flowered sateen, blue and white flowered delaine body; Miss Lusk, black skirt, white silk blouse and feather boa; Miss A. Taylor, crushed strawberry gown; Mrs Baume, black net; Mrs Hanna, pale grey; Miss Jervois, white; Mrs Seegner, very handsome gown of lilac silk trimmed with a darker shade of velvet; Miss Lawford, black velveteen; Mrs Kissling, dark skirt, pale blue silk blouse; Misses Berry, pale blue nun's veiling.

We are afraid to venture off to picnics on land for fear they will be turned into water excursions before we return. Equally does the weather affect the pleasure voyages by steamer. These are apt to take the form of bathing trips. It is muggy and warm, and our pretty cotton frocks, though absolutely necessary, look out of place during the showers. Still it is more like summer than it is in Dunedin, where a friend just writes to me that she is enjoying a fire!

Amidst all these depressing circumstances, dear, Mr Bentley has been a boon and a blessing. I have seen the following

FROCKS AT THE OPERA,

which has been crowded nightly. Mrs Cowie, handsome black dress, white shawl, white cap; Mrs Nelson George (Waipiti), black silk skirt, white Liberty silk blouse; Mrs Colbeck Taylor, white cap with pink; Miss Colbeck, black net; Mrs Colbeck (Kaiparaa), handsome black lace costume; Miss Mair looked lovely in pale grey with red ribbons; Mrs Guthridge, grey with white vest; Miss Von Sturmer, black lace with red opera coat; Miss — Von Sturmer, brown velvet, and her sister in red velvet; Miss Percival, cream, and her sister, white cashmere; Miss Chapman, navy, grey jacket; Miss Boodle, cream, Mrs Gamble and Mrs Ransom, black; Mrs Jervis, sea-green delaine; Mrs Coates, black silk.

On the

EPSOM LAWN

they are very busy. Miss Bull is wearing navy with white top; Miss Payton, navy, with white blouse; Miss Russell, grey, with white corselet bodice; Miss Spiers, black, with white flowers in her hat; Miss Hesketh, navy, with blouse and white hat.

On the

UNIVERSITY LAWN

Miss Scherff provided the afternoon tea, and was prettily frocked in cornflower blue; Mrs Chapman was wearing a striking costume of red and cream striped skirt, cream body and hat. Miss Gorrie, their best lady player, has gone to Napier.

I have elsewhere said something about Polo play last Saturday, and now, I suppose, it only remains to describe the

DRESSES AT THE AFTERNOON TEA AT POLO.

Miss Bursill, pretty combination of grey and green ribbons, hat with flowers; Miss Haywood, black and white check; Miss Wilkins, white with green silk ribbons, and her sister white with lavender; Misses Kerr-Taylor were a study in azure nil and salmon pink; Miss Hay, pink and white striped and her sister navy with white front; Miss Cameron, fawn costume relieved with pink, fawn hat; Miss Buckland, grey, hat *en suite*; Mrs Billborough, black; Miss Scherff, prune; Mrs Cohen, pretty pink relieved with black velvet and black lace, charming hat with pink roses; Miss Phillips, grey with white hat; Miss Dixon, royal blue with guipure lace; Miss Cottle, electric blue relieved with fawn satin hat with cream feathers; Misses Firth, black.

During various peregrinations and a round of calls I have encountered the following frocks worn by well-known society people: Miss Moss, biscuit-coloured silk with Cossack jacket; Mrs L. D. Nathan, stylish mignonette green with black lace; Miss Nathan, mauve; Miss Clara Firth, black skirt with white blouse, small hat; Mrs Earle (Parnell), black; and her daughter, Miss Macdonald looked extremely well in lavender; Miss Ireland, a cream delaine, hair in French fashion, sailor hat; Miss Kilgour, white; Miss Keesing, black with white vest; Miss Chambers looks well in grey; Mrs Ware, stylish cream with white lace, black hat with white lace butterflies; Mrs Dargaville, navy with white vest; Miss Bursill looks extremely well in white with deep Mechlin lace and corselet bodice; Mrs Keesing, a pretty pink and white stripe; Mrs Reed, black merino, black hat with white flowers; Miss Harding, fawn dress and white hat; Misses Hooper, navy blue with white spot; Miss Shirley Baker, cornflower blue; Mrs S. Nathan, extremely handsome black silk gown covered with black lace, yoke, deep cuffs, and Swiss belt of bouton d'or silk, toned with black lace, stylish little bonnet with trimmings *en suite*; Miss Sinclair, stylish steel grey dress, pretty white hat; Mrs Colbeck (Kaiparaa), black skirt, black and white spotted blouse; Miss King, navy skirt, soft white muslin blouse with small red spot, sailor hat; Miss Percival, grey, with bonnet of pink roses.

MURIEL.

WELLINGTON.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 12.

I must tell you of some of the beautiful dresses worn at

MRS WALTER JOHNSTON'S 'AT HOME.'

The hostess received in a handsome gown of black brocade made with long train and big puffed sleeves, the corsage softened with lovely old lace sparkling with diamonds; Miss Johnston was in a pretty Empire gown of pink brocade trimmed with lace; and Miss Hilda Johnston wore cream silk edged with coloured embroidery and ruching; Miss S. Johnston was in soft white brocaded silk with folded Empire sash. The house party also included Mr Goring Johnston and his brother, and Colonel and Mrs Goring, of Auckland, the latter wearing a pale slate grey silk gown, trimmed, and trimmed with black lace and touches of scarlet; Mrs Charles Johnston wore a lovely gown of palest grey pompadour silk trimmed with turquoise blue and orange velvet, and softened with lace; Mrs W. P. Reeves, pale green silk with Empire sash and sleeves of bright pink silk; Mrs Kelsie, a beautiful gown of white silk with huge sleeves of black velvet, over which fell broad white lace, the long narrow train being edged with black velvet; Mrs (Dr.) Adams, pale green brocade trimmed with green velvet and gold braid; Miss A. Hadfield, cream silk with corselet of gold; Miss Hallowes, black with green ribbons; the Misses Menzies, white; Miss E. Johnston, pale grey brocade trimmed with chiffon and pearl ornaments; Miss Cooper, pale green; Miss Ida Cooper, white; her younger sister, pink; Miss Williams, black velvet with broad white lace over the puffed sleeves; Miss E. Williams, white silk trimmed with pearl fringe and lovely lace; Miss Brandon, red trimmed with silver passementerie; Miss Barron, red net; Miss Gore, cream gauze with green velvet sleeves and Watteau bow; Miss M. Gore, black with wreath of white flowers; Miss Izard, pink silk with Swiss belt of jet; Miss Curtis, a visitor, blue; Col. Fox, Captain Hunter-Blair, Hon. C. Johnston, Mr Barry Goring, and Messrs F. Kebbell, Cecil Kebbell, Pearce, Rolleston, Waring-Taylor, Anson, Cooper, Izard, Turnbull, Butterworth, Gore, Baldwin, etc.

Invitations are out for a small dance at Mrs Charles Johnston's, so that we will not be as dull as we expected to be for some little time.

RUBY.

CHRISTCHURCH.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 12.

The little world known as 'society' in Christchurch is 'not at home,' so after sending you one or two topics all is a blank. We are delighted at the thought of having the Governor and Lady Glasgow here again, though it will only be for a very short visit this time, but it will give us a little life.

The first trip to the Sounds starts with a full list of excursionists, and I notice the steamers returning from Australia now are calling at George and Milford Sounds, thus giving passengers a peep at these lovely spots.

The Hon. Mrs Parker is wearing a very pretty walking dress just now of smoke-coloured corduroy cloth, a V of silk (the same colour) let in the coat tail bodice back and front, the whole edged with gold cord, tulle hat to match; Mrs (Dr.) Jennings, a floral delaine of cream and brown, brown silk swathe sash and braces, white Tuscan hat trimmed with ostrich tips; Mrs Bickerton Fisher, an electric green with velvet frill, Swiss belt with passementerie trimming, white hat with ostrich feathers.

A friend writes me from Timaru that Mrs Elworthy, of Pareora, gave a delightful ball last week, and several Christchurch ladies were present. Mrs Elworthy wore a very handsome dress of salmon pink satin with train of brocade; Miss Elworthy, a very pretty confection of white and green. Among the Christchurch visitors were Mrs Pitman in a becoming gown of black with blue; Mrs Walters, a lovely dress of deep yellow silk; Miss E. Rhodes also charmingly gowned; Mrs George Rhodes had a beautiful dress of white satin with crystal trimming.

DOLLY VALE.

DUNEDIN.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 9.

Things are still quiet, a few private parties and the opera being the only excitement. The weather here is so lovely that Mrs W. H. Reynolds has turned her Monday's 'At Home' into croquet days, all visitors being invited to play, and has made croquet all the rage again. Mrs Judge Williams also has made her Thursday's 'At Home' into tennis afternoons, and in both cases very pleasant times are spent.

Last Friday Mrs Ogston gave

A EUCHRE PARTY,

Among the guests were Mrs Ridings, the Misses Williams, Gibson, Reynolds (two), and Sievwright.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES.

Dr. Batchelor arrived here on Wednesday, Mrs Batchelor remaining in London with her son and youngest daughter. The eldest Miss Batchelor is at school in Brussels. Dr. and Mrs Lindo Ferguson arrived by train on Tuesday night after about a year's absence. Mrs and Miss Gibson have also returned after a stay of six months in England. Both ladies are looking as charming as ever, and Dunedin people are very glad to have them back among them again. Miss Roberts has come back among us, after an absence of two years, most of which time was spent in Scotland. Mr and Mrs Wright and family returned last week; they brought out Miss Wright with them, who has been at Home studying for several years. Mr and Mrs Ritchie are expected in a month, when they will join their family at Carrington, near Timaru. Mrs Tower, who a few years ago lived in Dunedin, arrived from Sydney with her children and sister a fortnight ago, and intend to stay a few months; they are at present visiting Mrs Mackenzie. The Mackenzies are just now staying at Moreaki. They came in to the opera the other night, and Mrs Mackenzie looked very charming, her stay in the country is evidently doing her good. She wore a very handsome white opera cloak reaching to the feet.

VISITORS AT MOREAKI.

Moreaki is becoming a fashionable summer resort. Mrs Sise and family are staying there, and with them is Miss Gould from Christchurch. Mrs Sinclair Thomson and her family are also staying there. Mrs Grilson and family are staying at Broad Bay, where Mrs Ritchie and family are also spending the holidays. Mrs Mary Williams is staying with Mrs J. Thompson in Southland. Miss G. Gilkison is staying with the Miss Stephensons, who are at Waimea. Two Miss Barclays are spending their holidays at Wanganui. Mrs Stephenson and her family have gone out to their farm—Coomb Hays—for a few weeks.

DOINGS OF SOCIETY FOLK.

Mr and Mrs Bridgeman and family are at present visiting Mr and Mrs P. C. Neill at Chingford. Miss Medley from Wellington, and Miss Ronalds from Christchurch, are visiting Mrs James Mill's. Mr E. B. Cargill and his daughter, Miss A. Cargill, returned from America this week. They have been away four months, and have spent a very enjoyable holiday. Mr and Mrs James Mills entertained some of the Opera Company to supper last Sunday night. Mrs Jones and Mrs Maxwell are visiting Mrs Ronald MacMaster, near Oamaru.

THE OPERA SEASON

has been one of great enjoyment, and now that it is drawing to a close a good many are loud in their regrets. Looking very nice in the circle was Mrs Jaanus Mills, wearing a handsome square cut black silk beautifully finished about the neck and arms; Miss Inglis looked very nice in a blue dress cut low, and white Liberty silk opera cloak; Miss Wise wore also pale blue made up with soft white lace; the two Misses Dymock wore very pretty dresses with frills of deep chiffon round the low cut necks and also round the sleeves; Mrs Hules wore a handsome black dress, and her daughter, Mrs Jowitt, looked very nice in a pale blue dress, and white opera cloak; also looking very nice were Misses Kempthorne, Haynes, Macgregor, Backhouse, Mrs E. C. Reynolds.

MAUDE.

BLENHEIM.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 10.

At the New Year several Wellington tennis players came over for a match with our local men, and much to our satisfaction the latter won by 5 to 4. Elsewhere you find the list of results. The day was too chilly and dull to admit of light summer costumes, most of the ladies being seasonably clad in homespuns, tweeds, or serges. Mrs George Watts was very charming in grey with white vest; Mrs Lucas was admired in a well-cut grey tweed, with Eton coat over pink frilled blouse, small hat with white silk; Mrs Park, a pretty deep blue cloth gown with full front of deep blue and red silk; Miss Burdon was much admired in fawn tweed and cream silk blouse, small hat with quantities of becoming cream ostrich tips; Miss Cameron, fawn, and hat to match; Mrs Gibbes (Wellington), brown; Lady Campbell was present, already better for her change, but she has now left Mrs Cleghorn, and is at Bank House. There were also present Mesdames Griffiths, G. Robinson, Hiley, Sinclair-Thomson, and Mrs Vavasour, in well-made dark grey homespun made with longish coat over plain skirt, full frilled front of white merveilleux and stylish transparent black and white hat with black feathers. Misses Redwood (two), Martin, Horton (two) Smith (three), Rees, A. Pasley, etc., were also on the ground.

That evening the Wellington visitors were again entertained by

A SECOND SURPRISE PARTY

at the Bank of New Zealand, the evening being too cold and damp for the projected boating excursion. A most enjoyable time was spent by all present, and besides those who were also present on Saturday were Mrs Vavasour, in black figured net and purple pansies, the Misses Redwood (two), Misses Smith (two), Miss Burdon, and Mr J. H. Smith. The Wellington visitors were Mr and Mrs Gibbes, Messrs Barraud, Barron, Young, Allan, J. Holmes, W. H. Shore, B. Church, W. Clayton, and F. Laishley. On Tuesday, the 2nd January, a picnic to White's Bay was given to the Wellingtonians, and a large party drove thither in drags, and a very pleasant day was passed in spite of the uncertain state of the elements, the visitors returning to Wellington that evening.

Last Saturday there was a

VERY LARGE GATHERING AT THE TENNIS COURTS,

to partake of the delicious afternoon tea provided by Mesdames Thomas, Redwood, and J. Connolly. Mrs Vavasour and the Misses Redwood and Waddy assisted in dispensing tea, etc. Mrs Redwood looked nice in black; Mrs Conolly, pale pink and white striped muslin, navy coat and sailor hat; Mrs Vavasour well cut grey gown; Miss Waddy (Picton) was admired in navy blue with pretty soft cream blouse and becoming cream crepe hat with cream feathers and bowed ribbon; Mrs Rutherford (Picton) wore a stylish chocolate flowered gown and hat with pale terra-cotta poppies; Miss McGregor (Wellington) who was greatly admired, fawn corduroy sacque back coat with black guipure and ribbons, grey blue homespun gown and becoming hat with scarlet poppies; Miss Gibson (Wellington), fawn striped tweed, pretty black and white hat; Mrs Howard, black sacque back coat, a big cream crêpe bow at neck, black skirt and her handsome black picture hat with feathers and a dash of red; Mrs McIntire, Mrs Curtis, Miss Kebbell (Wellington), Mrs C. Goulter in well-made black figured crêpe cloth with ottoman silk, pretty black chip hat with silk to match; Mesdames G. Robinson, Griffiths, Smith, Dodd, C. Earp, Snodgrass, pale blue muslin; Mrs Lucas in grey with cream muslin blouse; Mrs Park, pretty blue flowered cotton and stylish white sailor hat and navy bow and aigrette; Mrs McIntosh was cool and pretty in a white embroidered gown and sailor hat; Miss Rees, blue grey gingham with blue and cream real lace to match dress, sailor hat with big bow in front; Miss Burdon again looked remarkably well in fawn; Misses Horton, A. Pasley, Cameron, M. Douslin, Smith (2), Smallbone, Dodson, Farmar, etc.

SINCERITY.

NELSON.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 9.

There has been very little going on in Nelson since I last wrote.

Among those present at the

TENNIS MATCH

were Mrs Macquarrie, in a pale heliotrope embroidered gown, black floral bonnet; Mrs Pitt, black striped muslin, black bonnet with white floral wreath; Mrs Percy Adams, pretty pink flowered muslin with yoke of ecru lace, but same shade as the lace with deep red and pink roses in a spray; Mrs Turnbull (Napier), becoming fawn crêpon, bonnet *en suite*; Mrs Levien, pale blue veiled with black flowered grenadine, black and yellow bonnet; Mrs A. Glasgow, blue cloth gown, deep red waistcoat, large black lace hat; Mrs Mackay, pale heliotrope with cream waistcoat embroidered in gold, bonnet *en suite*; Mrs Innis-Jones (Stoke), pretty pale grey crepon with narrow ruching round hem of the skirt, small grey bonnet relieved with white; Mrs Hackworth (Riverton), fawn skirt, white blouse, black Eton jacket, large black hat; Mrs Renwick, elegant toilet of black and grey striped silk, thick black silk sacque jacket, black and white bonnet; Mrs H. Sharp (Blenheim) stylish fawn checked tweed, white hat relieved with pink; Mrs H. Kingdon, Mrs Booth, Mrs Stafford, Mrs Littlejohn, Mrs Thornton, Mrs Bunny, Mrs Seaby, Mrs Preshaw, Mrs Ledger, Mrs L. Adams, Mrs Thompson, black skirt, black and white striped blouse, small black hat; Mrs Houlker, black gown, full white silk waistcoat, black hat relieved with white; Mrs Nalder (Kaipoi), black checked gown, Empire sash, becoming black hat; Mrs Pearson, Empire gown of dark blue and white checked pongee cotton, small sailor hat, her sister, Miss Browning, wore a similar costume; Miss Ledger, pretty costume of yellow striped crêpon trimmed with wide lace, small chip floral bonnet; Misses Pitt in white muslins with sashes, large white hats; Miss Heaps, pale heliotrope nun's veiling made stylishly, white silk waistcoat and large hat; Miss Forbes (Masterton), pretty and elegant toilet of pale grey with cream waistcoat embroidered in gold, grey hat with pink roses; Miss Hudson (Wanganui), green flowered soft silk, long black lace mantle, black bonnet with floral wreath; Miss A. Oldham, Miss Trolove, Misses Sealy (2), Miss Renwick, stylish fawn costume and hat *en suite*; Miss L. Fell, pretty blue flowered muslin, floral hat; Miss Kay, black skirt and jacket, black and white blouse, large white hat; Miss Duff, Miss Huddleston, grey Empire costume, trained, stylish white hat; etc.

Mrs Lyell gave a very jolly

LITTLE DANCE

at her residence at Stoke on Thursday, December 29th, but the invitations to town friends were very few, most of those present being country residents.

Mrs Booth gave

A SMALL PICNIC

to Mackay's Bluff on Friday, which was greatly enjoyed by those present. The Misses Henry-Edwards also gave a small picnic up to the Maitai. Among those present were Mr and Mrs Thornton, Mr and Mrs H. Dudson, Mrs Chester, Mrs Wix, Misses Sweet, Duncan, Macdonald (two), etc.

An exceedingly jolly evening was spent by those lucky enough to receive an invitation to Mr and Mrs Thornton's

PROGRESSIVE EUCHRE PARTY

on last Tuesday evening, the games proving very exciting.

PHYLLIS.

MARTON.

DEAR BEE, JANUARY 4.

Things have been very slow here lately, our only excitement being the Steen-Smith entertainers. Madame Steen is simply wonderful as a thought reader. Some of the tests given were very severe, but in every one she came out victorious. Although it was once bitterly cold there were people at the entertainment. I sometimes wonder at any company coming to Marton at all, they get so little encouragement.

On the 2nd (Monday) Mrs Howie of Fern Flats, gave a dance. Amongst those present were the Misses Watt (2), Brandon (3), Stevens, Mrs W. McBeth, Mrs W. Milne, Mrs T. Howie. Owing to it being a very nasty night and the long distance most of them had to drive or drive there were not so many evening dresses as usual, walking dresses being much less liable to spoil when strapped on one's saddle for miles on wet nights; but among those who wore evening frocks were Mrs McBeth, in white with pink sash; Mrs Ashworth, pale blue; Miss Brandon, black, and pink sash and frills; Miss Lolin and Florence Brandon, white with pale blue sashes; Mrs Wilson, white; Miss Watt wore a fawn dress; and her sister, a pretty dark check; Mrs Milne, fawn skirt with frilled shirt body. Among the gentlemen were Messrs Watt, Stevens, J. McAlley, Wilson, W. Milne, C. McKenzie and Howie (4). Extras were played by Mrs McBeth, Miss Brandon, and the Misses Howie, and several songs were sung during the evening by Mrs McBeth, Messrs McAlley, McKenzie, and two young ladies whom I do not know. We danced till daylight, when we all had breakfast—does it not sound queer?—and after changing dresses for habits rode home, having thoroughly enjoyed the night's gaiety, as only Mrs Howie's guests do enjoy themselves.

AROHA.