

Topics of the Week.

SOCIETY'S SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

HM.S. LIZARD is paying a visit to Wellington, and her captain and officers are rapidly making friends in the Empire City. They are all strangers, as it happens, which is rather unusual, as the officers in the navy change so often and so rapidly that one almost always finds someone on board that one has met before.

MRS (DR) COLLINS gave a very enjoyable little dance and invited a number of the officers of the 'Lizard,' and among the other guests were the Misses Wauchope, Everett, Rhodes (two), Grace, (Walter) Johnston (three), (Sidney) Johnston, Ingles, Trinnell, McGregor, and Holme. Messrs Pearce, G. Johnston, C. Cooper, Todd, Anson, Jackson, Captain Hunter-Blair, Captain Clayton, etc. King supplied the music and a very merry little gathering broke up at midnight, it being Saturday night.

A MOST delightful dance was held at Cam House, Picton, the residence of Mr H. C. Seymour, in honour of Mr and Mrs Seymour's silver wedding. Mrs Seymour being absent visiting friends in the North Island, was greatly missed by her old friends, though the Misses Seymour assisted by their cousin, Miss (A.P.) Seymour, made splendid hostesses, and Mr Seymour was in his element as a host. The guests numbering about fifty, enjoyed themselves amazingly, and the verdict all round was that it was the loveliest party held in Picton since the good old days when the Government Offices were *en evidence* at the top of High-street, and young men were far more plentiful than young girls are now.

A GENERAL topsy-turviness had taken place in the house. The large drawing-room had been completely denuded of furniture and decorated with flowers and ferns for the dancing. The dining-room opening into it made a cosy withdrawing-room, where the non-dancers played cards and lived over the old time parties again, and the dancers trooped in occasionally to stand round the roaring fire, and gladden the hearts of the elder ones by their bright, pretty faces. The verandah was curtained in and furnished with couches and easy chairs, and trills of pleasant laughter from thence mingled with the notes of the piano in the ball room. The small drawing-room was converted into a supper-room. The table in the centre looked like a poem with its garlands of jonquils and robes of orange Liberty silk, surrounding a 'feast of nectar'd sweets.' Dancing was kept up with unabated vigour till 4 a.m., and after joining hands and singing 'Auld Lang Syne,' at that bewitching hour when night and morning meet on the horizon, the visitors tore themselves away.

ON Wednesday evening in the Choral Hall will be celebrated the annual capping ceremony in connection with the Auckland branch of the New Zealand University, and the presentation of diplomas to those who have, during the year that has past, attained the degree of B.A. or M.A. That New Zealand women are coming to the fore in matters educational is clearly proved by the large proportion of female to male graduates each year. Seven ladies are to obtain certificates of degree on Wednesday evening, four the degree of M.A., and three of B.A. Their names are Miss Currie, M.A., Miss C. D. Grant, M.A., Miss Morrison, M.A., Miss Shrewsbury, M.A., Miss C. Frost, B.A., Miss J. D. Grant, B.A., and Miss A. Murray, B.A.

THE plain and fancy dress ball at the Spit, Napier, was a very great success. The hall was beautifully decorated for the occasion with flags, flowers, pictures, etc. The music was exceedingly good, and the floor capital. A most delicious supper was provided. The costumes were exceptionally pretty and tasteful. Miss King was much admired, also Miss Gilding. The gentlemen's costumes were varied and original.

THE Misses Connolly, Remuera, Auckland, gave a most delightful afternoon tea last Friday to their young lady friends. The weather was as disagreeable as it could possibly be, though it kindly cleared up for a short time to allow the guests to adjourn to their homes without being drowned. The Misses Connolly's residence is prettily situated at the end of Brighton Road on a knoll overlooking Hobson and Judge's Bays. The view from the window is extremely picturesque. Tea, coffee, and a great variety of cakes were handed round during the afternoon.

MRS OLIVER gave a large afternoon 'At Home' on Tuesday in Wellington, when the guests were all young people, and music and games occupied most of the time. Afternoon tea was prettily laid out in the dining-room, and the drawing-room was tastefully decorated for the occasion. Among the guests were Miss Dorothy Rolleston, of Canterbury, who is staying with Mrs Oliver for the session; Miss Wauchope, Miss Everett, Miss Cobb, the Misses Williams, the Misses (Walter) Johnston, Miss (Sidney) Johnston, Miss Ingles, Miss Cara Russell, Miss Acland, the Misses Hadfield, the Misses Gore, the Misses Grace, Miss Reynolds, and Messrs Vogel, Tolhurst, Baldwin, Richmond, Turnbull, Rolleston, etc. Mrs Oliver wore a pretty dull Gobelins blue gown, trained and trimmed with velvet to match and Miss Rolleston wore a dark green tweed with epaulettes of velvet.

THE Misses Albu's visit to the Avondale Lunatic Asylum on Thursday afternoon was a much appreciated deed of mercy. Mr Fuller (tenor), Miss Clarice Brabazon (pianiste), and Mr Plunkett (manager), were also of the party. The concert occupied about an hour. Miss Julie Albu sang 'Sing, Sweet Bird' and 'Ylang Ylang'; Miss Rose Albu gave 'Our Last Waltz,' 'Comin' thro' the Rye,' and 'Woman's Way'; Mr John Fuller sang 'Let me like a Soldier Fall,' 'Mona,' and 'Old Madrid.' An exquisite duet, the 'Miserere,' between Miss Julie Albu and Mr Fuller, was greatly liked, as was also Miss Brabazon's playing. Beautiful bouquets of violets were presented to the talented songstress, whilst one patient, known as the 'Empress of China,' gave Mr Fuller some white camellias. Another patient begged the Misses Albu to accept three little paintings of his own as a souvenir of their visit. The party were much pleased with the neatness, cleanliness, and order of the whole building. Through their whole concert tour these pleasing vocalists have generously made a point of giving each of the large hospitals and lunatic asylums a delightful concert.

LAST Friday Mrs McMillan (Auckland) had another of her fortnightly orchestral practices. 'Arstrath' is such a charming house, and the family are so musical, that these pleasant evenings are much appreciated and eagerly looked forward to by the Remuera young people.

ONEHUNGA is peacefully enduring the rain and recovering from the measles. The fortnightly tennis club dances are said to be increasingly successful. The Rev. L. M. Isitt is conducting a well-attended temperance mission, which is pretty nearly the sole excitement of the week.

THE highwayman has at last ceased to be the subject for conversation in New Plymouth, and will probably be left to meditate on his wrong doings for some time to come. Mr Harold Thomson, who captured him, has been presented with a gold watch and chain and a purse of sovereigns, and Mr Holme, who assisted Mr Thomson, received a diamond ring, all of which have been subscribed for by the residents of New Plymouth.

THE hunting in Dunedin has been specially well attended by ladies. The last meet was at Waikouaiti, by invitation of Mr Orbell. The run was over four miles, and the ground, owing to the recent rains, in very bad condition.

THE Orchestral Society gave the first concert of the new season with great success in the Opera House, Wellington, before a large and very appreciative audience, among whom were Lord and Lady Glasgow, Miss Wauchope, and Capt. Hunter-Blair. The great feature of the concert was the performance of Beethoven's Symphony (No. 8), an ambitious attempt for so young a society, but one which was crowned with almost complete success, the only fault arising through one of the hornists being at fault during one movement and considerably marring the general effect. Mr Alfred Hill, the conductor, is deserving of the highest praise for keeping up the standard of music at these valuable concerts, and his instrumentalists, many of whom are ladies, show evidence of real study in the interpretation of the various parts. The only vocalist was Mr E. J. Hill, who contributed two vocal solos with orchestral accompaniment, in a very pleasing manner, his voice being very good on this particular occasion.

A SOCIAL was given by the Civil Service Club, Dunedin, for the purpose of bringing into closer acquaintance members of the Civil Service. The City Hall was beautifully decorated for the occasion, and crowded with dancers. Robertshaw's Band supplied the music. Quite one hundred couples were present, and the long evening proved so enjoyable that it is intended to make it an annual affair. There was an excellent supper. The whole time was not devoted to dancing, some good music being interspersed, Mrs Murphy, Misses Muir and Treseder, Messrs Morrison, Manson, Martin, Graham, Packer, and others contributing songs. The Committee are greatly to be praised for the way in which they managed things, and if an evening of unqualified success could reward them for their labours, then they had that reward, for it was one of the pleasantest gatherings imaginable. It was a very cold and dismal day too, but while the rain poured outside, inside the City Hall all was brightness.

THE second of the series of Mr F. M. Wallace's concerts of chamber music took place on Thursday evening in the Provincial Council Chamber, Christchurch, before a packed audience. Musically it was quite equal to its predecessor, and not a few were sorry when it was over, and almost immediately began to talk of the next. The concert opened with a quartette by Mr Wallace and Miss Beath (violins), Miss Rich (viola), and Mr H. H. Loughnan (cello), which was beautifully and evenly played. Mr Wallace played a 'Romanza' by Max Bruch, its only fault being its brevity, Mr R. Trist Searell accompanying him. Mr H. M. Lund was the solo pianist, and gave Beethoven's 'Sonata in D Minor' with both fire and delicacy, and later he and Mr Wallace gave the great 'Kreutzer Sonata' for piano and violin in good style. Mr Hugh Reeve was the vocalist, and greatly pleased the audience with two songs of Schubert's, his third one from Tannhauser not being so successful. Commander Barriere and about twenty officers of the Nautilus were present by invitation of Mr Wallace, accompanied by Mr Arenas (Spanish Consul), Mrs and the Misses Arenas.

NAPIER seems determined to take the lead in summer games. A correspondent writes: 'We are to have a new tennis club, to take the place of the old Seaside Club, and to be called the Napier Lawn Tennis Club. The prospects look very bright, as we commence with a strong membership. The lawn is to be put into first-rate condition as soon as possible, as the season is to open in October. The following are the office bearers of the new club—President, Mr Horace Baker; Vice-presidents, Dr. Hitchings, Messrs G. M. Morris, T. W. Balfour, and G. N. Pierce; committee, Messrs C. Cato, W. Anderson, W. P. Finch, F. Rhodes, and G. P. Dasset; honorary secretary, Mr Jack Parker; honorary treasurer, Mr F. Kimbell.'

MISS GRACE, of Wellington, who is shortly to be married to Mr Wight, was presented with a handsome gown by the ladies of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and great regret was expressed by the Rev. Father Dawson, on behalf of the members, at her approaching departure for India. Miss Grace has for many years been an active member of the Society.

THE series of lectures on nursing and cooking in Dunedin, inaugurated by the St. John's Ambulance Association, and conducted by Dr. Jeffcoat, have been pleasantly concluded by a handsome presentation made to the doctor by Lady Stout, on behalf of the members. The gift was a massive oak and silver waiter. The lectures have been exceedingly instructive, as well as interesting, and many women are waking up to the fact that proper food means good health.

A PUBLIC meeting was held in Picton last week to consider the question of holding the Championship Regatta of New Zealand in Picton harbour. Mr F. Shaw, Hon. Sec. Blenheim Rowing Club, was present, and strongly advocated measures being taken at once to effect that end. A committee was formed to canvass Marlborough for support, and a resolution will be forwarded to the New Zealand Rowing Association to that purpose. Mr Shaw's enthusiasm will, no doubt, carry weight, and as Picton harbour is centrally situated, and eminently suitable for regattas, which can be held there in all weather, the Picton folks look upon the project as *un fait accompli*.

Mrs HARRY VOGEL got up a bachelors' dance in Thomas' Hall, Wellington, which proved most enjoyable. It was quite a small affair, and was called an Impromptu Bread and Butter Dance, but as the supper was a particularly delicious one, the latter term might as well have been left out; but it is strongly suspected, from the general appearance, that Mr Vogel's lady friends had been lending a helping hand, both in the supper and decorations. King supplied the music, and several ladies played the extras at supper time. As there were only about sixty or seventy guests in all, there was plenty of room, and the floor was in excellent condition. There was a dinner party at Government House on the same night, and several of the party—Miss Wauchope, Miss Holroyd, and Captain Clayton—arrived late.