HAWERA.

DEAR BEE, AUGUST 21.

I do not think I have ever seen a letter in your columns from this small but interesting town, and even now this is a letter that concerns the doings of another place, to wit, Patea, the bachelors of that little city having at last come out of their shell and given a Ball, and have truly surpassed themselves. The Hutchinson Hall was most artistically decorated with the ever-graceful nikau palm, mirrors and curtains while the stage was comfortably arranged as a drawing-room. The supper, supplied by Dustin, of Wanganui, was all one could wish for—ices, soup, and unlimited claret cup. The floor is universally admitted to be excellent. The Committee could not have been better chosen, and the M.C.'s were Messrs W. G. Jones, C. Cornwall, W. E. Pearce, and R. Smith, who worked hard to secure their visitors' enjoyment. Visitors came from Wellington, Masterton, Wanganui, all up the coast.

In giving the list of the ladies and their dresses it is impossible to avoid missing some, but the dresses one and all were charming, elegant, and certainly served to show up the wearers to perfection. Mrs Moore wore white satin and lace; her daughter, heliotrope surah and lace; Mrs R., black satin, cream lace sleeves; Miss Wright, Mrs Jim Peat, striking dress of pink satin with embroidered lisse over skirt and green moiré sleeves; Miss Jollie, Miss Lysaght, Mrs F. Lysaght, the latter in a peculiar shade of lizard green silk and chiffon; Mrs V. Smith, Miss Smith, Mrs T. Parsons, Miss Bremer, Mrs W. Cowern, Mrs G. Bayly, in black satin and net; Miss Testar, white and red; Miss Newling, pink crepe; Miss Reid, red satin; Mrs J. Peat, old gold satin; Mrs Jim Peat, navy satin and cream lace (very elegant); Mrs Christie, blue and gold; Miss Cowern, pink satin; Mrs H. E. P. Adams, pink brocade and black velvet; Mrs W. Brewer, pink brocade; Mrs Tonks, pink and green brocade; Mrs Woodward, cream and heliotrope; Mrs Hislop, cream and green silk; Mrs Scott, pale pink; Miss Goodson, cardinal silk; Miss A. Goodson, pale blue and pink velvet; Miss Good, cream with bands of yellow velvet; Mrs Perkins, very handsome red shot satin; Mrs Monro, an exceedingly beautiful cream satin and lace; Mrs G. B. Hamerton, cream with black and silver gauze; Mrs G. P. Pearce, in her bridal dress; Miss Gower, pink net; Miss Hunter, cream; Miss Parsons, pretty pink satin; Mrs Jacomb, black; and two daughters, pretty pale blue dresses; Miss Ball, a debutante, in white net; Miss Duckworth, very pretty white silk; Miss Monro, pink; Miss Turner, pretty black and pink; Miss Shields, pink silk; Miss Dean and her sister, both in cream gauze; Miss Black, in grey silk, pink sleeves; Mrs Horner, pale blue; Miss Welsh, blue and cream; Mrs Honeyfield, cream; Mrs Gibson, black; and her daughter, blue; Mrs Powdrell, grey and pink silk, etc., etc. The extras were played by Mrs Woodward, Miss Turner, W. Hamerton, W. Jones, Miss Cowern, and one or two others whose names I do not know.

Hoping I have not encroached too much on your valuable space.

IRIS.

(Thank you.—LADY ED.)

LONDON.

DEAR BEE, HYDE PARK, July, 1893.

I am sending you a few notes of our London visit, and of the New Zealand friends we have encountered so far. I was at such a pretty wedding last week. The bride is a daughter of General Brett. She wore a lovely plain cream satin, and the bridesmaids, white muslin trimmed with quantities of lace, white hats, and exquisite pink and white sweet-pea bouquets. The latter were of the now fashionable large shape, very long and trailing. My sister had a most lovely one at a ball, of heliotrope-coloured orchids, exactly the shade of her brocaded satin dress. We were at a flower show in the Middle Temple lately by invitation, and the orchids were really a magnificent sight.

The statue of the Queen by the Princess Louise,is, says report, despite the loyal criticisms of the press, a very poor thing. I have not seen it yet, so can express no opinion. I saw the Duchess of Teck and Princess May last month at a floral fête in the Regent's Park Botanical Gardens, but the crowd was so great it was difficult to get a good view of the Royalties. The crowds in London are amazing. No matter how many things are going on in one day at the same time, each attracts an immense number of people.

We have been to a good many capital concerts, morning ones usually. We have not been able to get seats for the piece in which Melba is singing. It is almost impossible to get good places for a popular piece unless you take them weeks beforehand, and it is not always convenient to do that. If a comedy called 'Charlie's Aunt' is performed in New Zealand be sure to go and see it; it is the most laughable thing imaginable. In 'Tannhauser,' Madame Albani is splendid, and the orchestra magnificent, but the piece is so long we left before the end. The intervals were also long, nearly half-an-hour. Ices are always handed round in London theatres, and are most acceptable. We have seen no rain, excepting a shower in Cairo, since leaving Colombo. Very nice for visitors, but terrible for the country. The Thames is getting dreadfully low.

NEW ZEALANDERS AT HOME.

Mrs Williamson is living near here, but neither of her two daughters is with her. We have not met Mrs McCosh Clark yet, but she has asked us to go and see her next Thursday. They are now living at Hampstead Heath. We are going shortly to see Mrs Barton Ireland, who is living at Ealing, four miles from here. Mr Gollan is going to take us all to Henley Regatta, and if the weather is fine it will be a delightful trip. Mr Gollan has been staying here ever since his arrival in England in January. He is 'on the river' every day, and will be in one of the Henley boats. We liked Mr Hawtrey's sermons. The choir is very good. The ladies wear mortar-boards and white dresses, which are very becoming.] At the meet of the Four-in-hand Club we saw the Carrés. Mrs Carré is thinner than when in Auckland, otherwise she looks well, and he is blooming.

WEDDING NOTES.

I must re-open my letter to tell you something about the latest Royal wedding. You will have seen a description of the event, I expect, so I will only tell you a few things I noticed. The scheme of Hampton and Sons' decoration, which extended along nearly the whole of their frontage in Pall Mall East, was carried out in blue Louis XVI. style, in shades of blue, gold and silver. The conception was allegorical, in the centre a large Imperial crown supported by winged angels, and surmounted by a huge trophy of British flags, from which floated the Royal Standard. From the Imperial crown was suspended a pale blue satin canopy with fringe of red and white roses—Lancaster and York. Along the whole front were placed May-poles with large gilt and silver baskets filled with red and white roses, and under these baskets flowed streamers in the colours of the general decoration. Part way up these poles finely-modelled winged Cupids holding gilt torches, with electric light, seemed to fly away from them; immediately underneath were white and gold banners with the quarterings of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The balcony front, which formed the most important part of the decorations, was draped with pale blue satin trimmed with gold fringe, having alternately at intervals gold and silver medallions with monograms 'G.' in silver roses, and 'V.M.' in gilt May flowers, surmounted by a Prince's crown and tied with lovers' knots. From each of these were festoons beautifully executed of white roses, and around medallions, wreaths of pink May blossoms. The lower part of the facade was decorated with columns of blue and gold. In the evening the balcony was filled with large palms, and the illuminations consisted of revolving coloured limelight effects and electric light. It was a splendid sight.

THE DUKE'S HOUSE LINEN.

I think the household linens supplied by Messrs Robinson and Cleaver of Belfast by command of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, for the furnishing of York House, St. James's Palace, well worth describing to you. They will show you the latest styles in this sort of house furnishing. There were a quantity of hand-woven double-damask table-cloths of various sizes one design being a series of exquisite ferns intertwined with ivy, lily of the valley, etc., arranged in the very latest style, having a bold centre-piece forming a complete bank of foliage surrounded with lovely sprays of ivy, etc., and it again surrounded by a charming border so placed as to be always seen upon the table and not hidden, as is the case with damasks ordinarily supplied by shops to the general public. In addition to this handsome woven border, is an outer one consisting of festoons of ferns and bouquets of ivy, etc., encircled in same, with a space of plain satin damask between, the whole effect of the weaver's skill being shewn by the distinctness of the foliage, appearing as if raised from the fabric. Another set of table-cloths supplied, of somewhat simpler character but still unique in design, has a pretty geometrical scroll with bouquets of arum lilies, palms, etc., on a fine plain satin damask ground forming the outside border; the inner border, arranged to shew to advantage on the table, consists of a striking band of geometrical design several inches wide, with choice bunches of lilies, palms, etc., at each corner, in the form of a medallion; the innermost portion of the border is formed of the Greek key with ornamental scroll, the whole centre being filled with iridescent stars, forming a choice example of the weaver's art as exemplified so successfully by Messrs Robinson and Cleaver in all their special damask designs. In all cases full sets of napkins, slips, sideboard cloths, d'oylies, etc., etc., to match the special designs of the table-cloths, were supplied. As well as napkins *en suite*, a quantity of others were chosen, including a very pretty design having a network scroll border, with the white rose, the bramble, and sprays of rosebuds. On a plain satin damask ground are bunches of wild roses and blackberries. An inner border has a moss scroll with charming bramble foliage closely entwined, and the centre-piece forming a circle of white roses and rosebuds, with centre of leaves and blackberries, all true to nature and botanically perfect. Of plainer articles a quantity of waiting napkins were made of an exquisitely fine diaper, manufactured for exhibition, and being one of the finest ever woven by the hand of man. Among the towels supplied were a quantity of Messrs Robinson and Cleaver's well-known grass-bleached, on which no chemicals are used in bleaching, but simply whitened by the sun on the green grass of the Emerald Isle; some were simply diaper designs, others of huckaback; also bath towels of the best qualities. A large quantity of exquisite toilet covers, specially made, and a number of rich lace antimacassars for toilets, chairs, and couches were also supplied by Messrs Robinson and Cleaver. All the articles comprised in the Royal order with which Messrs Robinson and Cleaver were honoured were marked with a design embodying the special badge of the white rose of York.

MAY BLOSSOM.

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