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And Ladies' Journal.

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THE MAILED FIST AGAIN, OR MADE IN GERMANY.

People Talked About

Campaigning With General Kuropatkin.

Mr Douglas Story, the first war correspondent to be attached to the Russian army, and the first to reach the scene of operations in Manchuria, has been lecturing in England on the war. The lecturer gave it as his opinion that when Kuropatkin first took command he had not more than 80,000 troops east of Lake Baikal. It was a remarkable parallel, he thought, with the position of the British in South Africa in 1899. General Kuropatkin, at the commencement of the war, stated that at the end of the first month people would say he was inactive, in the second month they would say he was incapable, in the third month that he was a traitor, and at the end of six months—nous verrons. They were at the end of six months, and every one of them was looking and watching and wondering what Kuropatkin was going to do. Personally, Mr Story was impressed with the enormous resources of Russia. He spoke with knowledge, having twice passed through Russia, Siberia and Manchuria, and he was of opinion that the resources of Russia up to the present had not been demonstrated to the world, and that the world was going to stand marvellously amazed at what Russia could do, and what Russia would do within a very few weeks. The war had not yet finished; it had hardly yet begun, and if it was to depend upon the armies at the front it must last some two or three years. He met General Kuropatkin first at Liao-yang. Kuropatkin was a hard worker, who personally kept control of every detail of his army. He welcomed every reinforcement, personally superintended the hospitals and every section of the army passing through his headquarters. He was a man to whom his own immediate staff was devotedly attached, and a man who had commanded the respect of every military attache who had gone to the front. Of Admiral Alexieff he wished to say that he was a man who possessed the absolute love and devotion of every member of his personal staff. Mr Story was not blind to the things

UNIQUE GROUP OF ROYALTIES TAKEN AT COBURG.

Photograph lent by Mr. Paul M. Hansen.

Back Row: Prince Louis of Battenburg, Grand Duke Paul of Russia, Prince Philip of Coburg, Count Mensdorf, Grand Princess of Roumania, Grand Duchess Sergius of Russia, the late Duke of Edinburgh-Coburg. Second row: Edward VII., the late Prince Henry of Battenburg, Grand Duke Sergius of Russia, Grand Prince of Roumania, Grand Duke Vladimir of Russia. Third row: Princess Phillip of Coburg, the Duke of Connaught. Fourth row: The late Prince Alfred of Edinburgh-Coburg. Princess Henry of Battenburg, Princess Alexandra of Edinburgh, Princess Charlotte of Meiningen, Duchess of Connaught. Fifth row: Czar of Russia, Czarina of Russia, Grand Duchess Vladimir of Russia, Duchess Mary of Edinburgh-Coburg. Sixth row: The German Emperor, the late Queen Victoria, the late Empress Frederick. Seventh row: Princess Beatrice of Edinburgh-Coburg, Princess Feodora of Meiningen.

that were said to have occurred between Admiral Alexieff and General Kuropatkin. He was not blind to the amount of responsibility which was thrust upon Admiral Alexieff's shoulders with regard to the present war; but he personally knew of innumerable instances of his great tact in dealing with the very difficult position he occupied as Viceroy of the Far East. Of other men on the Russian side he had a little to say, especially of Count Keller, the modern Skobeleff, who died with his face to the foe and 37 wounds in his body.

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The New Japan.

In 1881, some years after the restoration of the Mikado to power, the ministers of two of the four leading clans—those of Tosa and Hizen—resigned their offices on the Korean question. From these dissatisfied elements sprang two great political parties, the Liberal, founded by Count Itagaki of Tosa, and the Progressive, led by Count Okuma, of the clan of Hizen. Count Okuma has written an article on "The New Japan," of which the following translation appeared in "The Monthly Review:"—

"It is fifty years since Japan was awakened from the dream of two centuries and a half, and her door turned slowly on its hinges, which creaked with the rust of these long weary years. How it chanced that a country which received its ancient art, literature, religion, and civilisation from China through Korea, a country which until thirty-seven years ago had a mediæval form of feudalism for its social basis, a country which until then was only known for its harakiri and its two-sworded Samurai, should within such a short space of time become a seat of liberty and civilisation in the Orient, the object of admiration and envy not only of the Asiatic countries, but also of some of the Western countries, is one of the most perplexing problems in the history of the world. But the fact is very clear. From time immemorial, though we strove hard to preserve the national characteristics of our own race, we were always disposed to mingle with other races. The "Yamato Minyoku," as we proudly call our race, is an agglomeration of several tribes, or races, which came from the West and the South and the North. Moreover, our national character had always within itself the germs of liberalism, and therefore was never governed by a set of narrow national ideas, condemning the customs, laws, religion, and literature of other nations, which, if they were good, we soon adopted and assimilated with our own.

It may be asked, how was it, then, that we turned out the Portuguese missionaries and persecuted and massacred all the native Christians, and closed our door to Western intercourse for over two centuries? The answer to this question is very simple. Although the object of the pioneer of the mission, St. Francis Xavier, was to preach the gospel of Christ, that of those who followed him was by no means to spread the doctrine of Christianity, but to absorb our country by a series of most treacherous intrigues. However well disposed we were towards them at first, however willing we were to listen to things consonant to nature and reason, we could not tolerate that foreign intriguers should appropriate even an inch of our territory, and hence the wholesale massacre and expulsion.

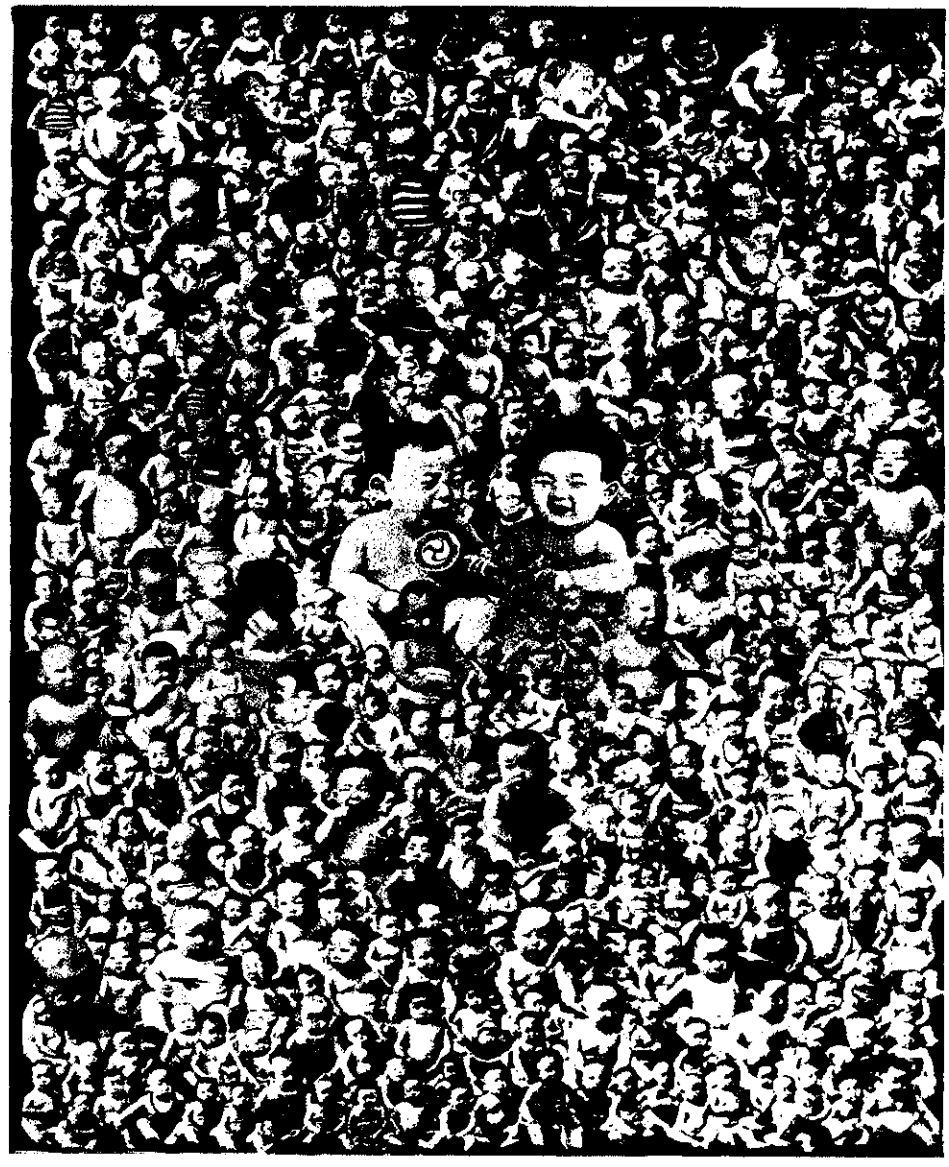
Nations who are not disposed to come into contact with other forms of civilisation, like the Chinese and Koreans, can never become great and prosper. Our people, as I have mentioned before, being composed of several races and tribes, have no prejudice or antipathy against a civilisation foreign to their own, but are always willing to import all those outside influences which are new and beneficial to them. When centuries ago the Koreans, whose guardians and protectors we now are, brought to us the religion, customs, laws, literature and arts of China we eagerly adopted them, and soon shaped them as would suit our national characteristics and aptitudes, both Buddhism and Confucianism especially being speedily assimilated with Shintoism. Thus, during the many centuries which have elapsed since the introduction of Buddhism and Confucianism there has never been a conflict between them and Shintoism. All of them have been interpreted and taught in such a way as would not be prejudicial to our past traditions and future prosperity. Had the Portuguese missionaries confined their energy to religious enterprises only Japan would easily have been transformed into a Christian country, with a sect of her own; for a few years' exertion by Xavier and his followers succeeded in making more than a million converts, including several of the feudal lords and their retainers—a most wonderful achievement when we take into consideration the population of the country in those days. When we remember that in Europe, in mediæval ages, religious conflicts were of frequent occurrence, and often were the causes of great and destructive wars and dynastic struggles, the absolute freedom with which foreign religions were allowed to establish themselves in this country becomes more evident. When St. Francis Xavier came to the "Land of Sunrise," Buddhism was the prevailing religion, and had a very strong hold upon the people. But the pioneers of the Portuguese mission had not only absolute immunity from persecution or interference, but their religion was eagerly taken up by every class of the population. The best evidence of this is given by no less an authority than Xavier himself, in the following letter which he wrote to the Christian Society at Goa in the year 1550. "The nation," writes he, "with which we have to deal here surpasses in goodness any of the nations ever discovered. They are of a kindly disposition, wonderfully desirous of honour, which is placed above everything else. They listen with great avidity to discourse about God and divine things. In the native place of Paul (a Japanese convert named Anjiro) they received us very kindly, the governor, the chief citizens, and, indeed, the whole populace. Give thanks to God, therefore, that a very wide and promising field is opened to you for your well-roused piety to spend its energies in."

And this letter was written at a time when a great religious schism was taking place in Europe, and Christian England was persecuting in a most pitiless way a sect of her own religion.

A nation which had been entirely given over to the influences of Buddhism welcoming a Christian mission in such a hearty manner looks at first sight as wonderful and perplexing as our progress during the last thirty years. But it must be remembered that from the earliest time, living in an island country, we had been free from that sort of foreign yoke and oppression which every nation has more or less to endure in turn. No foreign invaders had ever conquered or enslaved our land. True, centuries ago, our shores were occasionally menaced, and the island of Kiushiu, being exposed to piratical attacks, was made the object of pillage, and the frequent attacks of foreign adventurers finally led the Emperor Jingo (excuse the word, O reader, for the word simply means "Divine Success") to make an expedition to Korea and conquer the peninsula. Later the famous Chinese conqueror, Khublai Khan, with a magnificent fleet of galleys came to our shores, only to meet with the same fate as the Spanish Armada. Then again in 1592, the great warrior Hideyoshi tried to subdue Korea; but owing to his untimely death the great scheme had to be abandoned, and his conquering army was recalled. A nation which possesses a written history of 2500 years, and which has never had to endure any humiliation at the hands of foreign invaders, would naturally have no prejudice against other nations, and consequently our nationalism has no narrow selfish meaning.

Although the plots of the Portuguese missionaries had a sad effect upon the people for two centuries, when Commander Perry came to Uraga fifty years ago, and by his friendly action showed us that every nation was not like the Portuguese intriguers, and when we came to realise that in a state of isolation no civilised existence is possible, we at once opened our door to the outside world and were admitted into the comity of nations.

The second opening of our land to foreign intercourse, instead of rousing a feeling of hostility towards other nations as in China, served to enhance the feeling of friendship. But at the same time, having lived in peace for over twenty-five centuries, it is natural we should wish that no aggressive nation should disturb the peace of the Far East, and threaten the existence of our country. The China-Japan war was the outcome of the feeling that Korea under the suzerainty of China was a constant menace to the future prosperity of our Empire. The same feeling is the cause of the present war, for Korea in the possession of Russia means the loss of our national independence. How patient we were during the protracted and tedious negotiations with Russia all the world knows.



THE JAPANESE ARMY TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

TROUPE OF RUSSIAN MUSICIANS AND DANCERS.

HARD WORK: FILIPINO WOMEN AND CHILDREN DIGGING IN NATIVE FASHION.

"ROUND THE WORLD" PICTURES.

FOREIGN NATIONS AT THE WORLD'S FAIR, ST. LOUIS.

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THE BLACK MOTOR CAR.

By J. B. HARRIS BURLAND,

Author of "Dacobra," "The Unspeakable Thing," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER XXX.

"VENGEANCE IS MINE."

"I only ask two things of you,' said Jordison, "and then you shall both go free."

He was standing by the iron gate at the end of the tunnel. Arthur Holme and Lady Cliffe both faced him. Their wrists were still bound, but their faces glowed with the light of a great joy. They had been very near to death, but now life, and all that life meant to them, was within their grasp. Suddenly, and for no apparent reason, the man who had held them in his cruel grip, had bid them both go free. The night was over and the day was at hand. The sun itself, now rising from the east and turning the wide expanse of wet sand into a glory of gold, was not so resplendent as the light of freedom that had suddenly flashed up from the dark horizon of pain and death.

"I only ask two things of you," repeated Jordison, "but you must swear on the holy cross that you will do them. In the first place, you must both swear never to reveal either directly or indirectly, this hiding-place of mine, nor give any assistance, either direct or indirect, to those who desire to capture me."

"I will swear that," replied Holme, sternly, "though God knows what evil I shall do the community."

Lady Agnes murmured some words to the same effect, and Jordison produced a small bone cross.

"This cross," he said, "was found in these caverns, in the bony fingers of a man who perhaps died for his faith in the time of the Romans. It is, without doubt, a most holy and sacred relic. You will each swear the oaths I desire by your God and the hope of your future salvation, and you will each kiss this symbol of your faith to seal the words you have spoken."

Holme swore the desired oath and kissed the little cross. Then Lady Agnes did the same, repeating the words in a faint and faltering voice, and shuddering as her lips touched the bone symbol of early Christianity.

"Now," continued Jordison, "you must each swear to me a separate oath. You, Arthur Holme, must swear that you will tell Lady Agnes Cliffe the true story of your life, and that you will marry her before a year has passed. You, Lady Agnes Cliffe, must swear that you will marry the man you love in spite of all opposition on the part of your parents. There is nothing disgraceful in his past history. He is a true and sterling man. I have done him a great wrong, and I intend to repair it. Do you both agree to swear these oaths?"

The two young people looked at each other in bewilderment. They could hardly believe their ears. Jordison had attempted both their lives, and now, as an alternative to death, he asked them to swear to fulfil the dearest wish of their hearts. They could understand the necessity of the first oath, but the second one was incomprehensible. "Why," began Holme in a stammering voice.

"Don't ask any questions," broke in Jordison savagely and abruptly, "for I shan't answer them. Will you swear?"

"I will, so help me God," Holme said fervently, "if Lady Agnes——" and he stopped and looked enquiringly at the woman he loved.

"Yes, Arthur," she said faintly. Her white face flushed with crimson, and there was a tender light in her eyes.

They both swore the oath, and once more they kissed the cross.

"The hardway goes round to the back of the island," said Jordison. "Keep close to the land till you come to a white piece of rock. Then strike across the sand in a straight line between the white rock and a black post on the shore beyond the salt marsh. You will then find a road and have no difficulty in reaching home. Be sure and keep the straight line between the points I have named. On either side of you lies an enemy that will not be so merciful to you as William Jordison."

With these words Jordison took out a knife and cut their bonds and they were free. Without another word he unlocked the iron gate, and swinging it back on its hinges, stood aside to let them pass. They went out together without a word. Jordison watched their figures disappear round the end of the tunnel. He closed the gate with a crash and locked it. Then he turned abruptly on his heel and picking up a lamp from the ground, retraced his steps into the tunnel. And so William Jordison went back into the darkness, and his son went out into the light.

Twelve hours later the black car stood in the centre of the cavern ready for its last journey. Jordison had decided to run it to within a few miles of Liverpool before daybreak, and to make his way from that port to America. He had shaved off his beard and moustache, and his gaunt face looked wolfish and hideous in its nakedness.

Lipp had packed such things as they required for the voyage in two trunks, and placed them on the car. Concealed about their clothes, sewn here and there in linings, scattered singly so as to escape the notice of the most diligent Custom's officer, were £50,000 worth of jewels. They had been picked from their settings and occupied an amount of space that was ridiculously small compared to their value.

Lipp lit the lamps, and the two men took their seats in the car. Then Jordison started the engines, and a few seconds later they glided through the open door and slipped down the long narrow passage to the sea. When they emerged into the open the moon was shining brightly over the waste of sand and water. Jordison steered slowly round the island till he reached the white rock, then he turned off at right angles and made straight for a twinkling speck of yellow in the west. The black post was invisible at night, but this light, which shone from the West Ray lightship, lay some ten miles beyond in the same straight line.

They crossed the dangerous sands in safety, though every now and then a sudden sinking of the wheel warned the driver that he had run over the edge of the track. Then they glided up a gentle slope, passed over the edge of the bank which kept the tide out of the low lying land, and went slowly westwards over the marshes.

The road was execrable. It was little more than a grass track, and the stones that had originally formed its foundation protruded through the thin layer of soil. It ran parallel to the road leading to the Red House, some eight miles north of it, and joined the old Roman Causeway. It had been originally constructed to bring up sand and shingle from the beach, but had not been used for many years. Where it joined the Causeway it had sunk several inches, and was submerged for a hundred yards in a shallow lake of water. On either side of it lay many miles of desolate marsh land.

When the motor reached the main road Jordison turned to the left and went southward. Lipp pointed out in picturesque language that this was not the way to Liverpool.

"I am aware of that, Lipp," Jordison replied grimly. "I have to call at Heatherstone Hall first."

Lipp pointed out the risk and broke into a torrent of oaths at Jordison's fool-hardiness. But the latter intimated that his servant could leave the car then and there if he liked, and Lipp relapsed into sullen silence.

Shortly after 11 o'clock the car glided under the shadows of the overhanging trees in the park. Jordison alighted, and told Lipp to keep his eyes and ears open. If anyone discovered the car he was to run straight back to the cavern. He, Jordison, would understand what had happened, and could make his way to their hiding place on foot.

When he had given these final instructions, he climbed over the wall and made his way through the plantation into the park. His gaunt face looked horrible in the moonlight. The loss of his beard and moustache laid bare all the evil lines of his features. The head of a vulture, peering round for the dead carcase of man or beast was not more loathly to look upon.

And Jordison's errand that night was death. He had resolved to kill Marie de la Mothe before he left England. Then, at last, his life-work would be accomplished. He had found his son and provided the young man's future happiness. It only remained to pay the debt he owed to the woman who had made him the thing he was.

His unbalanced mind, no longer able to distinguish between right and wrong, saw no evil in the thing he was about to do. The cold-blooded murder of a defenceless woman had assumed the appearance of a splendid act of justice. Jordison compared himself to an executioner, who carries out the sentence of the law. No criminal, he argued to himself, was more worthy of death than this woman. She had taken no life, but she had ruined that which was more precious than mere physical existence—the soul of a man who might have done much good, but who had sunk lower than the beasts that perish. Jordison saw nothing of his own free will in the matter. He only saw that all the misery and crime of his life lay at the door of Marie de la Mothe, and for that he had sentenced her to death.

He crept slowly through the park, moving on all fours from tree to tree, and crawling slowly to the great white house that glistened in the moonlight. He was but a small black patch on the grass, to the eye of his God no more than a wolf advancing on its prey, but to himself the stern shadow of impending gloom, resistless, glorious in his purpose, inevitable.

In either pocket lay a heavy loaded revolver, and he carried a dozen spare cartridges. But these weapons were only to be used in case of discovery, when he might be cornered and have to fight for his life. For the purpose of his mission he trusted to a pair of muscular hands, the primeval weapons of man.

When he reached the house he was surprised to see that it was in darkness. Not a single light appeared in the long line of windows, save that which the glass reflected back from the moon. As a rule the Heatherstones entertained largely while they were in residence, and had guests at dinner nearly every night in the week. But to-night they had evidently gone to bed early, and Jordison was grateful for the good fortune which had smiled on his enterprise. It was, in his own mind, but one more proof that he was a chosen instrument of justice.

He crept cautiously through the shrubberies and made his way to the north side of the house. He effected an entrance through one of the windows of the servants' hall, and, taking off his boots, groped his way to the foot of the big staircase. He ascended this, and found himself in a long corridor, dimly lit by two gas jets, turned down to small bluish tongues of flame. He walked along it on tiptoe, and came into another and wider corridor, thickly carpeted, and leading to the principal bedrooms of the east wing. Here he was on known ground, and had no difficulty in locating the door of the Countess' bedroom. It was, as he had ascertained many months previously, the third door from the end of the corridor.

He placed his fingers on the handle and turning it softly, opened the door. Once again good fortune was on his side, for after the burglaries at Heatherstone Hall it was more than probable that it would have been locked. The room was in total darkness. He entered quickly and closing the door behind him, turned the key.

Once in the room and out of the light of the passage he breathed more securely. He leaned against the wall and listened. There was absolute silence. His hand touched the switch of the electric light. Then he hesitated. Though he knew that heaven would applaud his deed, he had no wish to see the thing he was about to do. No, she should die there in the darkness. It was a more fitting end to her life.

He held his breath and listened again. He thought it odd that he could not hear the sound of her breathing. The sudden thought struck him that he had perhaps, after all, mistaken the room, or that the family had left Heatherstone Hall, and that Lady Heatherstone, departing from her habits of over two years, had gone with them. Once more he placed his hand upon the switch, and once more he hesitated.

Then he crept stealthily from the wall, and as he moved across the soft carpet to the bed, he suddenly noticed that there was a strange smell in the room, a sweet sickly smell like perfume, or the scent of hothouse flowers. For some reason or other it brought back a vivid memory of a scene in his past life—the first day he had ever kissed Marie de la Mothe. He remembered it well. She was pinning a gardenia in his buttonhole.

When he reached the edge of the bed he stopped, and again listened. Then he passed his hand lightly over the coverlet

and discovered that there was someone lying beneath it. Then he moved his fingers along the recumbent form and across a pair of folded arms, till they touched the outline of a face hidden beneath a piece of velvet. He knew then that it was the face of the Countess of Heatherstone. He passed his hands under the edge of the mask, and suddenly gripped the throat.

But directly his fingers closed on the neck he whipped his hands away and staggered back from the bed, with difficulty suppressing a cry of horror. The flesh was cold as marble, and the chill of it went through his whole body from head to foot.

He crept through the darkness till he found the switch by the door. Then he turned the light on and looked towards the bed. There lay the Countess of Heatherstone with her arms folded across her breast, and a cross of white flowers at her feet. William Jordison went over and looked at her long and earnestly. The white hand of death had hidden the ravages of disease, as snow hides the ugliness of a devastated land.

Then suddenly he stepped forward, and replacing the velvet mask on her face, crept from the room like a beaten hound. God had taken her punishment into his own hands, and William Jordison knew that his Maker had discarded him, as a man discards a broken knife.

(The End.)

MAJOR, DUCHESS, LANDLADY.

A FARCICAL TALE.

(By "Chinstrap.")

"We shall meet again," said Sir Digby D'Affodil, Bart. (commonly known as "Onions"), major in His Majesty's Pink Dragoons, as he bowed over the plump, bejewelled hand of the Dowager Duchess of Walsinghame. "We shall meet again," he repeated, gently squeezing her Grace's fingers. The prophecy was indeed to be fulfilled, although scarcely in the manner the major anticipated. The duchess returned the insinuating pressure, and it is probable that the major would have proposed (and been accepted) there and then, but fell an unwelcome interruptionfi As it was, half an hour later he left Monte Carlo, where ten days previously he had met the duchess for the first time in his life, to rejoin his regiment at Westchester, a small garrison town, near to which, so it chanced, the duchess had a country residence.

. . . .

Taking him all round—and he was a fat little man—the major was not a "bad sort." But he had one besetting weakness, and that an incurable propensity for making love to every woman he came across. This would not have mattered so very much had he confined himself and his attentions to the matrons and maidens of his own set. But he did not, and when a man goes philandering outside his own class, trouble usually results. Trouble always was the outcome of the major's little flirtations, for, to do him justice, these affairs were never of a sufficiently serious nature to be called by any other name.

For instance, there was the afternoon he spent locked in a coal cellar, and the frigthful episode of the chimney-sweep's daughters, whose irate parent—but neither of these stories has anything to do with the present one.

The Pink Dragoons had moved from Southfields to Westchester during the major's absence on leave at Monte Carlo, so he came fresh to the place, and,a keen angler, was delighted to find that there was excellent fishing to be had in a stream some six or seven miles away.

A week or so after rejoining, the major repaired to the stream in question, and after a good day's sport he had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that a large whisky and soda was the one thing wanting to complete his contentment.

Casting around, he came upon a small, old-fashioned country inn, presided over by an exceedingly buxom and attractive landlady. A widow, the major at once concluded.

The major made himself agreeable, and so readily were his advances responded to that before long he found himself in the landlady's parlour.

By skilful strategy the major secured a seat adjacent to the landlady's, and automatically his arm slid around her waist. The landlady at once removed it, but the intrepid major as quickly returned to the charge. Again was the arm removed, and on the major attempting to test the truth of the saying that the third time is always lucky, a shadow darkened the door, and, looking up, the major beheld a big, black-bearded man regarding him intently.

The landlady and the major rose simultaneously.

"Lor', Bill, 'ow you startled me!" cried the landlady, with a little scream, while the major tried hard to think of something to say, and failed signally in the attempt.

"Wheel come off," said the big man, gruffly. Then he looked from the landlady to the major, and from the major to the landlady.

"Oh, Bill," faltered the latter, "this—this is my brother Tom. You've often 'eard me speak of 'im? T-Tom, this is my 'usband."

"Glad to meet you," said the big man, coming forward and shaking the major warmly by the hand.

The major did not reply to this friendly greeting.

He was torn between a frantic desire to fly at the big man's throat and an earnest conviction that his fingers ought to be surgically attended to at once. In the meantime, the landlady, having recovered her self-possession, became voluble, and, in a dazed sort of way, the major heard her explaining to her husband that he, Major Sir Digby D'Affodil, Bart., alias "Brother Tom," had unexpectedly arrived from Australia, where, as her husband knew, he was a public-house manager (shade of the D'Affodils!), and had run down to pay his sister a surprise visit.

The big man listened in grim silence, but when the landlady paused for want of breath he said, "Glad to see you," and again endeavoured to take the major's hand, an intention the latter frustrated by pretending to tie up his boot-lace.

Recovering an erect position and some presence of mind, the major said he must be going.

"Going!" cried the landlord in great astonishment. "No, no, my lad, we can't let you run away like that. Besides, the last train went to London half an hour ago. No, no," he repeated cordially, "once we've got you we'll keep you. I was goin' over to a friend o' mine at Northwich to-night, but the trap broke down; so now, missus, you go and get us something to eat——" the landlady left the room, followed by a despairing glance from "Brother Tom"——"and we'll make a night o' it. Now, Tom, you sit down and make yourself comfortable." (Throughout this interview the major had endeavoured to assume an easy posture, but had got no nearer to one than that ironically described in the drill book as "stand at ease.")

With that the landlord left the room, but, bearing a bottle and glasses and wearing a peculiar smile, he returned in time to find the major apparently so taken with the view that he had struggled half-way out of the narrow window in order to miss none of its beauties.

Reluctantly turning from the contemplation of nature, the major sat down and drank ostensibly to his brother-in-law's health, and in reality to his everlasting confusion.

During the next ten minutes the landlord, an inquisitive man, acquired some varied information about Australia.

He had just added to his store of knowledge the fact that the trams in Melbourne are drawn by kangaroos, when there was a slight disturbance outside, and an individual in shirt-sleeves, holding his hand tight-pressed against his side, staggered into the room.

"Ullo, Joe, what's up?" cried the landlord.

"Oh, lor, sir, I'm taken bad—mortal bad," groaned the new-comer, twisting his face into an expression indicative of extreme pain.

The landlord poured out a small, very small quantity of whisky, and handed it to the sufferer, who seemed to revive under its influence. But he speedily relapsed, and pointed mutely to the bottle.

"No, no, Joe," said the landlord kindly, but firmly; "what you want to do is to get to bed at once, and 'ave a good sleep," and taking the afflicted one by the arm, he half-led, half-pushed him from the room and shut the door.

Strange to say, "Joe," once outside, recovered miraculously, and ten minutes later, instead of being in bed, was walking briskly in the direction of Westchester, a fact which, no doubt, would have surprised and disgusted the confiding landlord.

"By George, Tom," said the landlord, returning to the table, "it's a mighty fortnit thing your dropping down 'ere today. There's Joe, my potman, ill, as you see for yourself, and there's no one to take charge o' the tap. I never allows the missus in there, and I must ha' something to eat afore I goes on duty again. You won't mind lendin' a 'and for an hour or so?"

Emphatically as the major did mind, there was a look in his brother-in-law's eye that warned him it would be impolitic to say so.

The landlord himself assisted the major to take off his coat, and, remarking that it was a warm night, he insisted on his removing his waistcoat also, carefully placing these articles of attire in a drawer, which he locked, remarking that some of the habitues of the private parlour were not altogether to be trusted. Then he showed the major into the sanded tap-room, and left him, after briefly indicating the various taps of ale, bitter, stout.

The major, however, apart from the fact that he felt as lightly clad as a ballet girl on the night of her stage debut, was, like Martha, "troubled about many things," and he paid little heed to the landlord's directions. There were three or four rustics in the bar. After staring hard at the new potman, they commenced talking about him. Fortunately the major could not understand their remarks, which were of an extremely personal nature, or the hypothesis of Mr Henry Grunzel that he was the first of the "Chineymen" "wot" were coming to take the honest bread out of British labourers' mouths—there had been a bye-election at Westchester a week or two previously—might have disturbed him. As it was, he stood there and revolved desperate schemes for escape.

Presently Mr Grunzel, failing to hold his audience, who deserted him in favour of Mr Charles Chickweed's contention that the major was a detective, come down to investigate the mysterious disappearance of old Mother Sammon's wooden leg, approached the bar and timidly asked for a "pot of ale." The major pulled a handle at random. Mr Grunzel took the "foaming pewter," tasted it, started, looked very hard into the pot, smelt it—proceedings the major watched with great anxiety—took another draught, and allowed a pleased expression to suffuse his countenance. Then, draining the pot to the dregs, he repeated his order, and whispered animatedly to his companions. In turn they ordered and gave repeat orders for "pots of ale," while Mr Chickweed went out and halloaed down the road, with the result that presently there was a regular "run" on the "Wild Rose's" ale at twopence a pint. The landlord, attracted by the unwonted clamour, came in and looked suspiciously around him, but on Mr Grunzel loudly asseverating that the beer got worse every day, he seemed reassured, and, after pleasantly recommending the major to "put his back to it," he returned to the parlour, whence there arose an appetising smell of steak and onions.

The major was about to try and purchase one of the rustic's coats, when a thick-set, bullet-headed man stumped in and elbowed his way roughly through the crowd to the bar.

The major was not to know that this was the celebrated pugilist, Mr William Slugger, of Shoreditch, who had come into the country to train preparatory to losing (per arrangement) his forthcoming fight with the Putney Pet.

Nor did the major know that Mr Slugger, having quarrelled with his trainer, had left that worthy lying in a ditch with a broken jaw, and was now determined to slake the thirst which had been bottled up for three days.

Still, Mr Slugger's demeanour suggested that he was not a man to be trifled with, and the major hastened to comply when Mr Slugger growled, "A pint o' bitter. And draw it quick, nose"—owing to an accident in the cricket field the major's nasal organ was of a rather peculiar shape.

Feeling that what was good enough for the yokels would not be good enough for Mr Slugger, the major hastily filled a tankard from another tap. Mr Slugger took a deep draught with surprising results.

Forgetting his manners, he flung the pot and its contents at the major's head.

A timely duck saved the major's life, but he did not escape a shower-bath, while the pewter did terrific execution among the bottles on the shelf.

The landlord came out, and Mr. Slugger came on. For once, however, Mr. Slugger had met his match, and by the time he reached the door he was almost apologetically explaining the outrage of which he had been a victim.

After depositing Mr. Slugger in, or rather on, the road, the landlord returned to the bar, took up a tankard (Mr. Grunzel's) and tasted it. Then he addressed himself to his potman.

After some prefatory remarks on the mental capacity of people who did not know the difference between ale at 2d. a pint, and treble X "bitter" at 4d. the same quantity, he proceeded to an exhaustive and critical review of the major's personal appearance.

On the whole the audience was of opinion that the lordland rose to the occasion, although Mr. Grunzel, rendered carping, perhaps, by the fact that in tasting his beer the landlord had inadvertently finished it, thought that more might have been made of the eccentricities of the major's nose.

However, the landlord had not finished his peroration, in which, as in "Fairyland" at the Crystal Palace fireworks, there were bombs—that is, verbal bombs—of every hue, when there came a frantic "hoot-hooting" outside, followed by a crash, screams, and a loud explosion.

Presently appeared two soldiers, in one of whom to his horror the major recognised his troop-sergeant major, bearing a half-fainting lady. The landlord dashed forward with brandy, the lady sat up, opened her eyes, caught the major's, and then the Dowager-Duchess of Walsingham fainted in real earnest.

Utterly frantic, the major caught up the landlord's coat, which the latter had taken off for the purpose of conducting Mr. Slugger to the door, and vaulting over the bar with surprising agility ran for his life.

Somehow the story leaked out, although the troop-sergeant-major denied on oath having betrayed his superior officer. A few days later when the anteroom of the Pink Dragoons was crowded the major, having to some extent recovered his equanimity, said to the cheeky and thirsty young subaltern, Mr. "Peg" Woffington:

"Well, young fellow, I think I'll stand you a drink. What'll you have?"

"Oh, thanks, major," replied Mr. Woffington, amid roars of laughter, "I'll have a pint of bitter—bitter, mind you, not twopenny ale."

Poor major. He found it advisable to exchange soon afterwards, and to this day the Dowager-Duchess of Walsingham believes that she was within an ace of being the victim of a swell-mobsman who had secured employment at the "Wild Rose" in order to burgle her Grace's residence.

(Copyright Story.)

LOVE AND WOLVES.

By F. Whishaw. Author of "Mazeppa, Etc

"It has been simply delightful," said Nora Rousakof, jumping out of the sledge at her own door. "Sledging by moonlight and through the forest would be lovely in any case, but hearing the wolves howl was a new experience—you are quite positive they were wolves?" she paused; both the brothers laughed.

"Noel and I know most things about forest life," said Cyril, who stood with her at the door, having assisted her from the sledge; and Noel who held the reins added, "I wish I had an acre of land for every wolf I have heard howl—weren't you a bit frightened, Nora?"

"Not a scrap—what, with two huntsmen of renown like you and Cyril? You must take me again one night."

"Would you dare come with us if we drove about after wolves?—you might see one or two — " Nora clapped her hands.

"Oh yes—yes!" she cried—"To-morrow if you will, or any evening; send me word beforehand and I'll be ready — good-night."

She gave Cyril's hand a distinct squeeze. "Good-night, Noel," she added, "I hope you weren't dull up there on the box?"

"Somebody must hold the reins," he murmured. He would have liked to add, "God knows I would prefer to sit quite close to you and hear your dear voice at my very ear, but that's Cyril's privilege."

The brothers were silent for a few minutes as they drove homewards, sitting side by side now, both very thoughtful.

"I am almost certain it's you, brother," said Noel presently; "she scarcely spoke a word to me, and how merrily and happily she chattered with you!" Cyril did not reply.

"Don't you think so yourself?" continued Noel, somewhat brokenly.

"I am afraid it is as you say, dear brother," Cyril replied softly; "God knows I am truly sorry for you."

"And God knows that since it may not be I, I am glad with all my soul that you should be the blessed one; I am not so mean as to grudge you happiness, brother!" Noel's words were brave, and his voice too, until the last sentence, when it trembled a little.

Cyril said nothing, but he took his brother's hand and pressed it. He did not speak, because he dared not tell Noel the truth, which was this:

Convinced as he was that Nora preferred him, the circumstance—instead of delighting him as Noel imagined that it must—weighed heavily upon his spirits. Until last autumn he had believed himself to be as much Nora's slave as Noel himself; both had known her and loved her from boyhood, they had played together as children, the Rousakofs being their nearest neighbours in the country; and devotion to Nora had been a kind of tradition between the brothers for the past dozen years; but this last autumn Cyril had made the acquaintance of an English damsel in St. Petersburg and — well, Nora's predilection for him had since weighed like a burden upon his conscience, for he knew not how best to act in the interest of all parties.

"How perverse are the ways of love," he reflected bitterly; "here is poor Noel dying for Nora, and can't have her because of me; and I am dying for Miss Dorothy Osborne, and can't tell her so because of Nora!"

"I'll tell you what we'll do, brother," he said presently. "The day after to-morrow we'll take her after wolves; I'll hold the reins, and you shall sit by her and tell her straight out that you love her; we shall see what she will say."

But Noel shook his head. "That would only make her wretched, because she would have to refuse me," he sighed; "better that you sit by her and tell her of your love; I have lost her anyway, you see, so that it will make no difference to me, and—and she will be spared a painful conversation."

"Very well, be it so," said Cyril after a moment, and the drive continued in silence.

But though Cyril had seemed to enter into Noel's suggestion, he did not intend to carry it out. He would have a last struggle for freedom and Dorothy Osborne, and at the same time do his utmost for old Noel. He would plead for Noel: Nora should at least know that Noel's splendid heart was hers to take or leave. "I shall say nothing about myself this time," Cyril reflected. "It will be easy to see if she really loves me! God grant that I may be mistaken, for if it be as I fear, I almost think I would rather be in Noel's shoes than my own. Thank the Lord I have said nothing to Dorothy as yet!"

A deputation came up to the Manor House that evening, half a dozen peasants from the village of Kamarof; there were wolves about, and hungry ones; the frost was severe, and the brutes were bold. Koslof had lost a sheep, Trubof a dog; Kuzma had had an old horse pulled down—all this happened last night; there must have been a dozen wolves about the village. "Save us, bairn," said the Elder or Starost, "they will eat us out of house and home!"

The peasant bowed low, and crossed himself in the direction of the ikon in the corner of the room.

"Good," said Cyril. "We will do our best for you, Starost, my brother and I; meanwhile see that your live stock is properly safeguarded at night. Is any part of Kuzma's horse left uneaten?"

"But little, barin——"

"Well, place what is left at the edge of the forest, close to a convenient tree; to-morrow night I will sit in the tree and watch for the brutes; to-night we will scour the forest roads for them with a squealing pig."

This method of driving hither and thither in the woods when wolves are known to be in the neighbourhood is a recognised way of getting a shot or two at the animals. A small brazen-lunged pig is placed in the well of the sledge, confined in a sack or a hamper, and it is the protests of the noisy little prisoner that form the attraction for the wolves, which soon begin to assemble, and to follow or accompany the sledge, at a respectful distance, in hopes of a meal.

During the day Cyril bade his younger brother ride over to the Rousakof mansion in order to ask Nora whether she would care to accompany them in their nocturnal wolf-hunt. "Make all the running you can with her," said Cyril, "for remember I am to have my innings to-night."

"It won't be any good," Noel sighed; "besides, I'm always such a fool when she's there, and can't string two sensible words together!"

"Don't come if you feel at all frightened about it," he told Nora presently; "of course, there's an element of danger when there are many wolves about, as there seem to be now."

"I'm not in the least afraid," said Nora; "still, if you would rather be without the responsibility of having a lady with you——"

"Oh, no, do come," Noel interrupted hastily. "I'm—I'm sure Cyril would be dreadfully disappointed if you didn't." An expression of impatience—almost a frown—passed quickly over Nora's face, but Noel did not observe it.

"Well, I'll come," she said. "I shall be ready at nine to-night."

Punctually at that hour the brothers called for Nora. Noel sat on the box seat, holding the reins, the girl took her place beside Cyril. There was no need to ask whether they had brought a pig with them, for the little brute was in full voice, having recommenced his yells with redoubled energy when the sledge stopped at Nora's door, doubtless in the hope of inducing someone to let him out of his basket and take him back to his mother and brethren.

Nora laughed. "We shall not hear one another speak!" she said, but Cyril replied that the pig would not maintain his present level of noise production; he would quieten down presently, and would perhaps even have to be shaken up, later on, in order that his invitation to the wolves might be sufficiently pressing. "If he falls asleep we shall get no wolves," Cyril laughed.

Then the long drive began through splendid pine forests lit up by a full moon, a sight to be seen once and never forgotten. The hush of night was almost unbroken, excepting when the pig —his basket shaken by Cyril's foot or by a jolt on the road—gave out piercing lamentations which murdered the beauty of the silence.

From time to time some great bird, asleep in the branches of a pine tree at the edge of the road, would wake in alarm and suddenly hurtle with much crackling of twigs and flapping of huge wings through the tops of the highest trees, deep into the sanctuary of mid-forest.

Cyril was somewhat silent, considering how he should commence the difficult enterprise he had determined to undertake, namely, to plead for Noel. It was difficult, because, supposing that Nora preferred himself, there was the danger of wounding her by seeming to desire that she should listen to Noel's suit. Nevertheless, the task must somehow be begun, and finished to-night.

Nora, too, was silent, drinking in the beauty of the solemn, moonlit forest that lay on every side of her. Her soul was elated with the majesty of the scene, her heart softened; there could scarcely be a more favourable moment to speak to her of love. She was ready to respond to any soft emotion, she was in an ecstacy of contentment and delight.

As for Noel, on the box he was silent too; as a matter of fact he had no one to talk to; but if he had he would have preferred to sit still and listen, for his heart was beating excitedly, waiting to hear the result of the proposal which he believed Cyril was about to make.

"Heaven knows what I ought to feel about it!" he thought. "I would not have dear Cyril's heart wounded, and yet—how shall I survive it if she accepts him, how shall I live, where shall I go from my sorrow? My God how I love the girl!"

Presently he heard the silence broken in the sledge behind him. Nora and Cyril had commenced a conversation, speaking softly, so that he could scarcely hear each word, though he listened with all ears. There was nothing dishonourable about this, for he had told Cyril that he meant to do so.

Listen as intently as he would, however, Noel could not catch more than a half of what his brother said; Cyril did not intend that he should.

" . . . So I have ventured to ask you. . . . " he caught these words, "whether it is merely friendship on your side, or . . . may hope that a sweeter word . . . in short, Nora, can you and . . . love . . ."

Nora's answer came to Noel's ears clearly and distinctly. She spoke in tones of exaltation, of concentrated, deep, certain feeling; there was no doubt and no hesitation; she spoke aloud and from the very depths of her being, so it seemed to Noel:—

"Oh, yes—yes," she said, "call it love, Cyril; with all my heart and soul I love——" A jolt, just at the last word, set the pig squeaking, so that Noel lost that one word, the most important of all, had he known it, for him!

Poor Noel, he listened no more, though the two behind him continued to talk. A dull booming and thudding had commenced within his head and heart; he sat silent, stricken.

"At any rate, dear old Cyril will be happy—and so will she!" This was the saving thought that kept him from despair.

Suddenly Cyril's voice broke upon his miserable reflections.

"Noel—look!" he cried—"on the right—one—two—four wolves——"

Noel roused himself with a start and looked to right and left. "And on the left three," he said—"no, four, five—and some follow behind."

Nora clapped her hands with delight and excitement. It was indeed a weird sight. Lank, grey, rakish-looking creatures were to be seen wherever the eyes were turned—running belly to earth, or travelling at a hand canter, dark forms against the white of the snow, threading their way between trees or frankly pursuing the sledge, yet all, as yet, at a respectful distance, and out of range of the breech-loader shot guns ready for them inside the vehicle. Occasionally the moonlight would catch the eye of one of them for an instant, as he turned his head toward the sledge, illuminating it with a ghastly sparkle that lit and vanished in a moment.

Noel was wide awake now, so was his brother; both young men were well aware that wolves, mere harmless cowards when met with singly or in couples, become extremely dangerous when packed; just as disaffected individuals among human creatures are comparatively innocuous, while an angry mob is as dangerous to deal with as a corps of madmen. Noel whipped up his ponies; they had seen and scented the wolves, and were already somewhat anxious, their ears working backwards and forwards, and their eyes showed white as they glanced to this side and that.

"Shoot when you can, Cyril," said Noel. "It is five miles to Gorka—I will see to the ponies."

A moment later Cyril fired a shot. A wounded wolf uttered a piteous howl, quickly stifled by its companions, which fell upon the poor beast and pulled him down. The taste of blood excited them; they came nearer, baying, yelping, howling as they ran. Cyril fired again and brought down his wolf, but fully a score seemed to follow on, though many stopped to fight over the carcase.

"It is serious, Nora, but do not be afraid; with Noel to keep the ponies to their work we shall pull through; we wanted wolves, but there can be too many of them!"

"Keep on shooting, Cyril," cried Noel from the box.

Cyril fired shot after shot, but the jolting disturbed his aim, and he missed several times; worse than this, on one occasion the ponies shied so suddenly from a daring wolf that made a dash at the head of the off horse that the sledge collided against a tree trunk. Cyril clutched at the girl by his side, and held on to her as the sledge righted itself; but the gun was thrown out with the concussion, together with the pig in its hamper; and Noel's gun, which lay in the straw at the bottom of the sledge, went also.

"Holy saints, you were nearly gone, Nora," exclaimed Cyril, white and trembling; "Noel, both the guns are lost——"

Noel made no reply. One of the ponies limped and was tiring; the situation was becoming somewhat dangerous. He whipped up his beasts and called cheerily to them; they responded pluckily. "Three miles, my jewels!" he cried. "A hundred jumps and you're at home—woo-hoop, boys! gallop!"

But the wolves grew more and more insistent; they crowded close in upon the sledge and one, from time to time, more rash than his fellows, sprang forward, as though to seize one of its occupants, though as yet his courage did not quite suffice, and his attacks proved but half-hearted. Several times, too, the horses were menaced, but Noel succeeded in keeping the brutes off by dint of vigorous lashing with his whip.

Terrified, panting, limping, the brave little ponies galloped on. One fell lame. Without an instant's pause Noel handed the reins to his brother:

"Vainka is lame," he said, "I must cut him adrift!"

He climbed along the shaft and performed the operation deftly and successfully; poor Vainka, finding himself free, darted off into the forest pursued by half of the wolves. They found his skeleton two miles away a few days later. Petka, the surviving pony, was the gamest of little animals, but the weight of the sledge with its three occupants, combined with the pace, soon began to tell upon him. Noel had taken the reins again. There was still a mile and a half to go.

"He will not quite do it," Noel thought. Nevertheless Petka struggled bravely on for half a mile in response to his encouraging cries. Then he slowed off seriously, and panted ominously. Noel sat and brooded upon his box seat.

"If I can do it," he reflected, "Petka may drag the lightened sledge in; if not, he won't, that's certain." And again—"what does it matter, so long as Nora is safe and Cyril survives to assure her happiness. Besides, if I made noise enough, I might—" A moment later he spoke:

"Take the reins again, Cyril," he said, suddenly and speaking very rapidly. "Petka tires, the load is too heavy for him. I heard your conversation a little while ago. My dear brother will make you very happy, Nora—God bless you both and good-bye in case I—"

"Brother, what are you saying, what are you doing," shouted Cyril, "it is you that Nora loves, man, she—"

But Cyril spoke too late, or at any rate he was so far too late that Noel had already taken the fatal leap from the sledge into the snow, but his words reached his brother's ears and that made an immense difference as matters turned out. Meanwhile the pony, Petka, sprang forward, for Noel's twelve stone six suddenly deducted from his load, made his task considerably easier for him. Cyril would have pulled up, however, but that at the same moment Nora shrieked and fainted, nearly toppling over the side of the sledge, so that he was obliged to give Petka a free mouth, and see that his precious charge did not fall out among the wolves. Three minutes later the good pony had dragged them clear of the forest, and the few wolves which had followed them so far, the rest having remained to settle matters with Noel, tailed off and returned howling whence they came.

Cyril thundered at a peasant's door; it was the hut of Spiridon, one of the gamekeepers on the estate. He handed Nora over to the care of Spiridon's astonished wife—

"Three men and horses, quickly, Spiridon, and the guns, my brother is among the wolves, a mile away!"

"Saint Nicholas!" exclaimed Spiridon, crossing himself as he ran to obey the barin.

Within twenty minutes Cyril and his men were back at the scene of the tragedy, or quasi tragedy; but by that time they had heard Noel's voice shouting uproariously from half a mile away, and they knew that all was well. Noel, it appeared, was up in a tree, addressing boisterous abuse to a company of a dozen wolves that sat and licked their lips beneath him; a volley soon scattered them, and down came Noel.

"How in the world did you do it, dear old chap?" asked Cyril, shaking his hand so long and so vigorously that Noel drew it away with a wince and a laugh.

"My good man, your words did it, not I; if you hadn't sung out that she loved me, by all the saints I should have let the devils have me; as things are, a thousand of the infernal mangy brutes shouldn't have got me; you should have heard me yell at them as I stood at the foot of the tree; I give you my solemn word, Cyril, they couldn't stand it; they fell back a minute, and gave me time to climb, though I think they have regretted it even since, and have been trying to tell me so! Do you know, dear old Cyril, since you shouted those words to me, I am positively drunk with happiness—but, what a brute I am!—forgive me, brother, I quite forgot; of course—my happiness means your sorrow—I—" Cyril laughed gaily:

"Oh no, it doesn't—I'm in love, Noel, but not with Nora," and Cyril proceeded to explain matters, to the wondrous delight of his brother, who had had no suspicion of the state of affairs.

Nora had recovered consciousness, though her condition of anxiety was deplorable until Cyril entered to tell her the joyful news of Noel's safety.

He came out again presently. "She wants you in there," he grinned.

"Cyril—for heaven's sake tell me, what am I to say!" murmured poor shy Noel—"I'd rather it was a dozen wolves—"

"Well, don't tell her so, you old fool," replied Cyril laughing and pushing his brother through the doorway; "you may thank your stars I did your proposing for you; go in and do the kissing for yourself, that's all she needs just now!"

Women Men Admire.

Years ago an unmarried woman of thirty-five was looked upon as a soured old maid. Nowadays she is in her prime, and will be the ideal of a young man, probably many years her junior. Young men have a penchant for falling in love with women considerably older than themselves, and men who have themselves left twenty-five behind find much pleasure in the companionship of these women, who at one time were supposed to have become soured by disappointment. Men find that younger women demand so much attention. They expect to be amused, or else they vote the men dull and uninteresting, whereas a woman of thirty or over realises that men are often too tired to rack their brains to discover new amusements, or that it may not be their nature to be entertaining and fascinating before a crowd, though they might be intensely interesting when with but two or three friends. The man finds the woman of thirty an excellent chum, a real companion whenever they go driving, golfing, cycling, etc. She does not expect him to propose to her, and he is not always afraid she may misconstrue his simplest remarks into a demand for her hand.

Complete Story.

The Miracle by the Roadside.

By LEO CRANE.

They were miserably dressed. At a time long past the man's knotted sash and the woman's neckcloth had been of the brightest colours, but now both were dull of hue and faded. In a great measure the couple were as their ornaments —the man seeming careworn and tired, the woman's face presenting a pallor where there was needed but the glow of health that she might be beautiful. They had both passed over the farthest boundaries of fertile Youthland and were facing a long, cheerless vista into the drear gray country of Age. Something strangely pathetic was pictured in their half-spent plodding manner. It seemed that living was some tedious task to them, without hope of pleasure or reward. Their features were drawn and hardened, their eyes strained from the anxiety of the groping way, for they had lo-t the one all-necessary guide through the deserts of life. Though together, they were yet alone.

Without a word they trudged doggedly over the uneven stones of the street, dragging after them a low cart, upon which was strapped an organ. The little iron-shod wheels bumped noisily, and often their squat strength would be sorely tested by the jolting of the cart into the ruts. With many whines and queer sounds they protested against this hard lot, for the organ was heavy. The man between the shafts of the cart said nothing, but pulled silently as a beast.

The organ was a rare box. Its rich casing of dark wood was quaintly carved into grapes and twisted vines, through which flowers peeped their dimpled heads and cupids danced merrily. It was filled with the sweet, gladsome melodies of happiness, light in colour and gracefully fantastic. Yet, perhaps because the man its master no longer hummed and smiled as in the old days, when his heart sang with the music, perhaps because the thing was satiated with its own comedy of rippling measures, it seemed to desire the tones of Life's graver hymns and the chanted monotones of misery and heavy labour. So the organ dragged upon the man heavily and wearied him. When it would settle down into the deep places, his muscles would have to strain. The breath of him would come then in short, jerking gasps, and the veins would start suddenly in his sweating temples until they resembled great purple threads knotted in an olive cloth.

The little patient woman, half harnessed to the cart's side by a leathern thong, seeing the man's endeavour, would struggle in feeble willingness to aid him, sometimes turning about so that she might the better plant her feet in the hollows. And when the stubborn thing, yielding to the terrible throbbings of their common heart, would crawl up the way they willed it should go, the toilers would gladly pause to tremble in very weakness.

"Will it be much farther, Giotto?" asked the woman after one of the e mighty struggles.

The frowning man stopped muttering his imprecations, and growled, in reply:

"It is in the country—have I not already told you?"

"Yes," she murmured, a trifle breathlessly, "and we have not yet left the city. The country must be far away, Giotto. Is it a very pretty country? You are tired. Could we not—could we not make just the old round to-day instead of——"

"Ah, yes," interrupted the man with a sneer, "and who will pay Petro his debt? What?"

"He will wait a little longer, perhaps," she argued, hopefully. "And sometimes—sometimes, Giotto, you know we do finely on the regular streets."

"Yes, sometimes," he cried out, angrily, dropping his hands down with a quite expression of weariness to grasp the handles again. "But we do not get a chance at a fete often, while the streets are always there. To-morrow we will go the regular way, for," and he shrugged his shoulders almost pathetically, "to-morrow there will be no fete. Those who wait for to-morrow never relish to-day. They barter reality for a phantom, and they are always waiting, waiting. No, no, Beata, let us have nothing to do with to-morrow. It is God's country. We will understand it when it comes."

"But are you not tired, Giotto?" asked the woman, monotonously.

"Tired? I am tired—when there is much money to be earned? No, I am not tired. You—you were weeping last night, and for what? You, answer me. Ah, yes, to go back to Sicily—to go back to Sicily. But that can only be to-morrow, and unless we go to the fete to-day, to-morrow may never bless us."

For the instant a flash of almost daring hope lighted the man's eyes, but again they died into the dull glow of bestial stolidity. His hands clutched in a tired way at the cart's shafts. "To see the hills again," he murmured, wearily. And the little woman gave a long sigh, but she said nothing.

"Well, here is a big step towards it," he called bravely a moment later. "Cheer up now, Beata mine, the fete is indeed a blessing to us. It will bring Sicily four days nearer; perhaps, besides paying Petro for this beast of an organ and its cart. Then, too the man told me if we came before midday we could have dinner—think of that. White bread, maybe, and —and a taste of wine." Here a look of desirous longing flooded the cavernous eyes of the man until in their way they seemed to speak. He licked out his dry tongue slowly across his lips. "Hurry, now," he muttered, "for it is not yet mid-day."

And at this the woman smiled a little hopefully. Yet she could not help seeing how wet was the man's hair in the glow of the sun or imagining the stretching of his arms' aching muscles.

"Yes—but," she half whispered, timidly laying her hand upon his shoulder in a slight caress.

"But what?" demanded he, sharply.

"I only thought you were so very tired, Giotto—so very tired. I do so want to go back to the hills, yes, but I do not care to bring even happy Sicily nearer by making you so weak."

"Hush! you are a fool, Beata," he muttered, impatiently, shaking free his arm.

"You do all the work, Giotto," she continued, softly. "You will not let me help you. And this strong sun is not good. It is different from that at home. Think of Guido and little Paula—" Her voice quavered tremulously with the slightest touch of a woman's whimper. "Would they not be here with us but for its hot breath? I do not want Sicily without—without you, Gotto."

Then the man's eyes, and they were at times not without their shades of sweetness, filled with tears; but instead of looking at her, he tossed his head in determined desire to be sullen, and even replied savagely through his clenched teeth, "Ah, yes, you—you were thinking only of yourself."

Stooping quickly, he grasped the handles of the shafts. He threw his body forward, and with an effort that made him groan set the wheels turning. "Come," he called, harshly.

So the little woman began to tug away at the strap again with all her strength. Giotto strained and bent down his shoulders so that she would have but a slight chance to pull. They walked onward quickly and did not talk. And neither the cart nor its weight of rosewood and comedy seemed lighter, if indeed quite so light as before.

The sun was now very hot. The city street was deserted. With a feverish intensity the glare beamed down upon the unshaded centre, where the rounded stones were as thousands of blisters raised since the dawn. About each was a viscous circle of irritating dust. The pale amber and white houses flung back into the street half their rightful share of the heat. The few trees were as if parched, and covered with so thick a layer of the withering dust that their green had all run into a sickly grey.

Many times the little bumping cart would rest and cease the jolting of its springs. The man would remove his hat, and while mopping from his forehead his heritage, grumble indistinctly. Yet always at these brief haults the woman's face would find some moment in which to relieve its tense lines by a smile of great sweetness. Like rare memories were these expressions. But often the man would be staring stolidly the other way, gaining nothing from these faint breaths of encouragement, unconscious of the ghosts of his youth. And so the woman in turr would sigh, knowing her glances impotent and wasted, a thought that gathered for its company tears. And the man, too, sighed, though angrily, feeling only in his averted face the burning of the sun, upon his heart the heavy burden of the years.

Sometimes they would both turn and gaze at the thing they dragged. As some monstrous embodied sin, it seemed bound hopelessly to their tired backs. Then the quick thought to cast off its chains—to be free—to run far away from it—would come, and swiftly following upon its heels, as the ache after the burn, their unharnessed souls would rush back to the loved shrine of their hearts' desire—to distant, blessed Sicily.

Once again they would rest in the charm of its quiet hills at sunset. In that instant the baking city would for them have faded. They were young, together, and on those flowered slopes that dip gracefully down to bathe rocky feet in a surf of feathered pearl. The gentle air was filled with the blown perfume of the grasses. Behind them, kissing softly the palest clouds, loomed the faint blue peaks, ever growing, and indistinct as the solemn mysteries of some calm faith.

Around her would be Giotto's arms; across his face would blow her loosened hair.

And now, away off at the edge of the enchanted sea a tiny sail glinted for a moment in the farewell glow, causing them both to rise and watch its course. The sky drooped down its long, delicate robes of pale green, so that the last copper beams could paint their folds in fading tints before cloaked in the sombre grays of twilight. Overhead, as a great winging gull with pinions of shadowed fawn, a single cloud hovered. Then one star, pure and solitary, a virgin beacon of the early night, would peer out modestly to guide the moon, a sail-set barque upon a placid sea. And the night wind, moist with the love of the waves, crept in as if afraid from the darkening waste of waters.

Sicily! Their own beautiful world of peace. Sicily! the land of their love-songs.

But heartlessly out from the sordid town a waggon crashed—and they were again in teh sweltering streets; sadder, older, with only the lines in the woman's face to speak of the children dead. Harsh and restless, as the discordant quarrelling of selfish wolves, came the thousand grinding noises of the city. Their hearts were once more leaden-weighted. Paradise was lost in the pitiless foreign glare. The man wiped the sweat from his brow, and without uttering a single word, as beasts, cursed, they went on again.

The summer day was growing old. The sun, having run its mad course, now seemed to have spent its fiercest wrath, and was turning even mild. But the earth yet steamed and the dust of the road's centre was heavy and hot. Its ribbon trail, a light streak amid the darker fields, showed where the highway crossed a distant hill.

And there, out over the crest of it, two tiny specks of black came creeping. Soon these two became three to the eye, but the three were all as of one body, uncouth and lumbering as some stupid beast in motion. After a while it became apparent that two of the objects lived and dragged a senseless third. They advanced slowly.

In perhaps an hour's time the toilers and their burden had descended to the pleasant shaded places of the intervening valley, crossed its old stone culvert spanning a brook, and without pausing once to rest, began climbing upward the longer and unshaded hill.

When crosing the culvert, cool in its green moss and the shade of drooping trees, smelling of the water and the damp moisture of long grasses, the woman who toiled beside the man gazed as if to stop a while there in the pleasant shadow would be heavenly. When they had gone a little way up the ascent, she plainly faltered, and turned to look back once, probably to relieve by the sight of clear wet green her aching eyes.

But the man kept on. Her short steps began to lag, and the leathern strap often became limp and slack as she ceased to pull upon it.

"Will you not rest a moment, Giotto?" she ventured, timidly. Without a word of reply, the man turned the cart half around, so that its wheels could not draw backward, and, dropping the shafts, sat upon them. The woman took a few dragging steps aside, and sank down wearily upon the dusty sod. For a few moments the man rested in silence. Then, in peevish restlessness, he began looking about for something in which to place his interest.

"I will count the money," he suggested. Removing his battered hat of yellow straw and drawing out from a trousers pocket a few coins, he dropped them one after another into the crown, counting in his mother tongue. As each bit fell his face assumed more and more of a disgruntled sneer. The very last piece he flung into the hat contemptuously.

"A fete they called it," he exclaimed, disdainfully.

The tired woman had been plucking the blades of grass near to her hand as a child does. She glanced up and nodded.

"But you would come, Gotto."

He glared at her and gritted his white teeth.

"And how was I to know they would be misers?" he asked.

She shrugged her little narrow shoulders. After a bit of silence she added to his complaint:

"If we had gone the regular streets we could have had dinner."

"Oh, that was your fault," he answered, harshly. "You would not walk fast enough. I told you he said 'before mid-day.'"

"Then why did they ask me to dance and sing for them? It is hard indeed when one is hungry and weak from the sun."

"We both suffered it," he declared, at length, decisively. "Do not talk of it again. Are you better than I am?"

She did not reply to this, but hung down her head a little. Then he swung the cart about and started forward. The little woman still sat by the roadside.

"Come!" he called, angrily, "we shall be late."

"I am so tired, Gotto; can you not wait a——"

"Come!"

It cost quite an effort for her to move from the place, yet she obediently hurried after his striding figure. Patiently she caught at the swinging strap and bent to her portion of labour. Five minutes' climbing passed with no sound other than the whining of the cart and the man's heavy breathing. Then, with a grim burst of derisive laughter, he cried out:

"They called it a fete! A paupers' feast!"

"You would come, Gitto," the woman murmured.

"For you," he snarled at her—"for you, that we might have Sicily nearer. Ah, Sicily—it is as far off as ever."

"Farther, perhaps," echoed the woman, in her changeless tone of the inevitable.

And the man, angered, his eyes firing as coals fanned into a glow by some dangerous wind, struck her cruelly. Full upon the mouth he struck her. A heavy blow barbed with rage. The little woman staggered slightly and drew one hand up to her lips. A few drops of blood began to trickle down from beneath her fingers. Her eyes seemed, in their dumb reproaches, as bruised as the reddened flesh, only they were filled with a patient sorrow, while the lips glowed feverishly. She said nothing.

"Now be quiet," the man growled, in a half tone of regret.

So on went the cart once more. Now fully two-thirds of the tedious hillside showed the marks of the dragging burden. And the wheels of it jolted and groaned in monotonous contentment, as if satisfied at last that its desire for life's miseries had been glutted. Doggedly the man bent down his head and shoulders, shamed within himself.

But suddenly he stopped and looked about, for above the grumbling noise of the cart there had sounded a faint cry. He saw the little woman reel a weak step or two in the road, catch at the carvel panels of the organ, and fall, striking sharp one of the bright wheel tyres. Silent and motionless she lay outstretched in the dust, one hand limply thrown as if in a pitiful gesture.

"Beata!" gasped the man in surprise. She did not move. Then dropping the handles, he knelt by her. Catching her by the shoulders, he tried to raise up the dead weight of her.

"Beata!" he called, fearingly—"Beata!"

A paralysing terror now completely possessed the man. He began to do and say childish things. He trembled violently, and his heart thumped within him as an engine gone mad. Up and down the long road he stared, and at the mute organ stupidly. No one was in sight.

By the roadside was an old wall, heavy with vines and decaying moss. Within the slight shade of it he laid the little woman tenderly and started off at a hard run for the brook at the hill's foot. Arriving there, he had no cup in which to carry back the water sought. But after a moment's hesitation he hurriedly tore out a large piece of his shirt bosom and placed it folded within the crown of his hat. This poor substitute he then filled, and with his hands clasped beneath it in a further effort to caulk the leaks, started up the steep path again, running and stumbling and panting.

Breathless he came to the wall. A terrible, nameless dread seized him when he saw the woman still as if dead. It bound his heart in coils and tried to strangle him. Quickly he splashed some of the water upon her face, and with fumbling fingers tried to unfasten the bosom of her dress. Nervously swearing, he tore it open at last and squeezed the last drops from the rag upon her breast.

"Beata!" he called again. But gone from his voice were all tones of anger and malignity. Only a loving emotion remained.

After a moment more her eyelids began to quiver slightly. So Giotto sat down and held her head upon his crossed knees. It was a cool and perfumed place. A few sweet wild flowers rustled with the grass. A pin dropped from the woman's hair, allowing the strands of it, slowly falling, to mingle with the growing blades of the ground. For a long time Giotto sat there. Often he seemed praying.

And when with a little gasp the woman's mouth opened, he saw immediately the bruised place inside her lips, and that only. Catching her up closely to him in repentance, he kissed the wound of his making. When he put back her head, Beata was smiling happily, for was not a strand of her blowing hair caught in the little gold earring he wore?—even as many a time long ago. And she laughed again with the old sweet laugh of a woman caught at love-making and caring not.

"Beata," he whispered, tenderly.

Her hand crept up to his neck in a caress.

"Ah—when you kissed me so," she sobbed, "I thought we were back—in Sicily."

"Some day—perhaps," he said to her, gently, smoothing back the hair from her forehead.

Then a great calm feeling of peace and forgiveness seemed to come to them out from the quietness of the fields. They both looked out across the rolling country. There, old, old visions took shape again. From the other side of the road, where the meadows dipped away tinged with pale sunshine and gray brown with wind-stirred grasses, and where flowers purely white nodded and swayed in a pattern of the rarest, they could just see a placid pond marking the field's end. A score of moss-crowned rocks were bathed in its reflecting surface. Beyond in the dim level stretches of growing grain the water seemed to be distantly continued until it faded and faded. There the sun had died but a moment before. The lemon and green of its last pallor darkened slowly into soft lavender and the warmest of scarlets. Above them, as a lazy home-winging gull, a single cloud of mottled tan went drifting. Suddenly in the mirage a tiny speck of white showed once.

"Look! look, Giotto!" cried out the woman, pointing, "is it not so like Tomaso's boat?"

The little speech recalled a host of olden memories. The man's grasp upon her wrist grew tight. They each knew the other's thought—Sicily! the land of their love-songs! He drew her up to him with a quick, passionate motion, and kissed from her eyes the tears.

Some day, Beata mine," he murmured.

"Now, Giotto—now——"

Like two children they laughed happily. The grim lines seemed to smooth out from their faces. A little later they went to where the cart stood. Grasping the strap and handles, with a common effort they started it. And paying no attention to the grumbling of its wheels, but kept step by step together, they trudged out over the hill.

Late that night the little iron-shod wheels rumbled over the stones of their home street. Near by, an indistinct blot in the gloom, a group of men and women gossiped upon a doorstep.

"You have gone far, Beata," called out from them a voice. "Where?"

"Oh, la-la!" replied the little woman, gaily, waving her hand, "we have been to Sicily."

(Complete Story.)

The Painted Ship.

He happened to be a guest at a village entertainment, and as it included a feast of baked meats his neighbour across the narrow table attracted the surgeon's attention. He decided that she had rather a good face, although he did not take her to be so young as she actually was. Amongst the many helpers she had seemed the most intelligent and industrious, going silently about her work while the others delayed to gossip and get in each other's way. Her service had been silently rendered, and no one had appeared to notice her much.

Now that she was near him having some needed refreshment, Whitley addressed a remark to her, not seeing why they should sit dumb because they had not been introduced. She answered quietly with a little flush as though it cost an effort to enter into conversation with a stranger, but her shyness was not awkward, and her brown eyes—a little hollow and wistful—were frank and clear.

As she was answering his second remark he saw a sudden alert purpose spring into those eyes—and she was instantly upon her feet to seize and catch a knife which some unskilled assistant had let fall. If the girl had not caught it the knife would have descended upon Whitley's head. As she let it fall harmlessly upon the table he took it up and found it dangerously sharp and heavy.

"I am extremely obliged to you, but I fear that in sparing me you have hurt yourself badly."

She shook her head and made some remark to the lady by her as though to end the incident, but Whitley was not so easily disposed of.

"I am perfectly certain you must have cut your hand; let me see it."

A very busy, bustling lady who was passing caught the words and paused interrogatively.

"Anything the matter, Hope; have you come to grief again?"

The girl seemed to shrink into herself and she cast a swift imploring glance at Whitley.

"There is nothing the matter, Annette; where are the children?"

As this was an exhaustive query the voluble lady's attention was diverted, and Whitley said no more; he merely asked Hope for the salt which was near her right hand—but she passed it awkwardly with her left. Now, a successful surgeon must naturally be a man of action, and without making any audible fuss he rose quietly as one who had finished and went round to her side.

"Come with me, please; I know all about it."

He spoke low, but with authority, and she obeyed. As soon as they had left the others she begged him to make no fuss, for the hurt was nothing.

"I am not going to make the least fuss. I know these grounds well, and it is quite easy to get out of the fashionable crush. I never attend large gatherings without sticking-plaster; on the last occasion it was a broken collar-bone due to too much beer; this is not your case, you know, so you need not be afraid."

Leading the way to a discreet little summer-house, he took her hand and undid the handkerchief to discover a deep cut right across the palm.

"This is worse than I thought; you must have grasped hard."

"I think I did—for I was frightened."

"Most unselfishly so—you probably saved me from a severe injury."

Her pale face lighted up, but she was less brave as he drew the cut together with a stitch.

"Don't hurt me—I have had so much pain!"

"I won't hurt you any more," he answered soothingly, neither did he embarrass her with questioning, for he felt that it was not physical suffering which had weakened her nerve without subduing her courage in an emergency. He looked critically at the hand as he bound it up.

"Your hand reminds me of my brother's; he is an artist; do you paint?"

A quick play of light and shadow made her quiet face expressive.

"A little—that is, I used to."

"Why do you speak like that, when life is only beginning with you?"

For he felt there were potentialities in this quiet girl who looked older than she was, although he did not know this.

"Beginning," she repeated; "I should not like to feel I was only beginning—the way would seem too long in front of me."

He was interested in her personality, but he was not satisfied with her frame of mind. Going back to town that evening he suddenly remembered that he had not asked her name. When he wrote to his friends to inquire about a girl named Hope, they could give him no information.

. . . . . .

To a man whose time is money the garrulity of his patients and their wearisome reiteration of things he knows quite well is annoying, but when this annoyance comes from the friend accompanying the patient it becomes unbearable. Possibly in this case there was some excuse for the friend, because the patient herself said nothing. Apparently she was the least interested of the three as she sat idly fingering some of the shining instruments on the table with a childlike curiosity. Her sister-in-law did all the talking, being well qualified for the task, and he appeared to listen politely while all his attention was centred upon this extraordinary patient who had no interest in her own grave case. When tired of her scientific toys upon the tables she looked round the room and a certain picture upon the wall caught her attention. Quite impulsively she rose from her seat and went close to examine it; when she turned round again she looked quite bright; evidently she had more sympathy with the painting than with herself.

As he watched her recognition dawned upon him, and going to her he took her right hand and looked at it; there was a scar across the palm. Meanwhile the talkative Annette's eloquence never ceased.

"As I've already said, Mr Whitley, she has been going about the house looking peaky and wretched for ever so long, but there was no getting a word out of her. I assure you I had the greatest difficulty in bringing her here this morning—I call it ungrateful and flying in the face of Providence."

"I am not ungrateful, Annette — I merely wanted to avoid giving any trouble—I didn't think myself worth making a fuss about."

It was the same voice which had told him five years ago that she had no wish to be at the beginning of her life; now she was perilously near the end of it, and she seemed to have no fear—no interest even in her own life. Mrs Edsell was obviously past patience with her.

"To hear her talk, Mr Whitley, one would think she had not always had a happy home with us—she has had every comfort, and never been sent out into the world like many girls. I assure you we were shocked when she broke down so deplorably, and her brother insisted —we both insisted — that she should come to you at once."

Something in the lady's manner suggested that she was speaking in self-defence and conscious of having overworked a willing horse. The surgeon's grave silence did nothing to ease her of this feeling, and when he told her plainly that he desired to have speech with his patient alone she did not like it, but she had to obey his polite ushering into the outer waiting-room, and then the two were alone. Hope Edsell answered his first question so absently that he had to recall her sharply.

"Miss Edsell, your case is serious; I must beg for your undivided attention." She obeyed him then as she had obeyed him five years ago, and he altered his manner, for he wanted her to recognise a friend in him: for the second time he touched her hand and indicated the scar.

—Graphic—Painted Ship—Thred . . . .

"You do not remember me, and yet you saved me a bad accident by injuring yourself instead?"

A pleasant smile dawned, as though she were interested at last, and after a word of surprise she turned again to the picture.

"How odd that we should meet like this—and you bought my picture—the only one I ever sold. I always liked it until I got tired of the little ship that would never pass under the bridge; you see it is still on the wrong side?"

She spoke with a gentle humour which was curiously out of place in so grave a crisis, and again he had to recall her sharply.

"Miss Edsell, I sent your sister-in-law out of the room that I might receive your confidence; I won't betray it, but I must understand your extraordinary frame of mind. You knew for months that something was seriously wrong, and yet you did not speak or seek advice! In a sense I am bringing a charge against you—one that you must answer!"

"Perhaps I thought the remedy might be worse than the disease—I have always dreaded pain."

"That may be part of the truth, but it is not the whole truth. I must know more before I accept the responsibility of your case. If you will not tell me yourself, I must apply to your brother, for there has been very culpable neglect somewhere!"

It was but the shadow of a threat which he had no intention of carrying out, but it vanquished her, and she began to speak quite hurriedly:

"Of course, I knew something was wrong; but as I was poor—I had a little money once, but it was sunk in my brother's business—and as I could no longer do much for Annette or the children, I thought—you see, there are so many women in the world that it seemed hardly worth while spending money on one who was neither strong nor clever—we must all die, and it seemed to me not to matter if I went a few months or years sooner. They were very kind, my brother and Annette, but they have a large family, and I hoped that perhaps one less to feed and house might make things better for them—I daresay these thoughts sound very silly to you."

She ended apologetically, and he felt that for one about to undergo a severe physical shock she was in a disastrous frame of mind. Love of life was an incalculable factor in obtaining a good result in such work as his.

"Are your statements quite accurate? My brother, who is an artist, thinks very highly of your handiwork."

She looked at the little picture again that was really a work of art, although the painted ship could not move along its course, and he saw her moved at last.

"It was just a dream—dead years ago —that I might have succeeded even a little. You see, lessons cost money, and they—it was thought that I might spend my time to better advantage. Naturally, if my talent had been real it would have fought for its life and won."

He saw the whole story—they had taken her money first and then made of her a useful drudge; neither had they noticed anything amiss until the drudge had finally broken down. And for this misusage there was no blame in her—no bitterness; only the feeling of being an unprofitable servant who was better dismissed and forgotten. Now, Whitley knew how grievously precious time had been wasted, but he was not entirely without hope of her, if she could be induced to take a firmer hold on life. Without entering into any details he told her plainly that she must submit to whatever they thought best within twenty-four hours, and then he tried to administer hope whereby she might live.

"If you recover—as I hope and trust you may—you will probably be stronger and better in every way than you have ever been. Moreover, I firmly believe that your life will enlarge and expand itself; I can see means whereby you may pursue your congenial employment—your labour of love not unprofitably to yourself and others. You may take my word for it that things will never go back into the old groove."

He did not realise then why he spoke so confidently, but, because kind encouragement is rarely wasted, his words cheered her, although she felt they had no basis in fact. She thanked him with her scarred hand in his, and he saw no fear of death in her quiet eyes; he might have been better satisfied if she had shrunk more from its near approach.

. . . . . .

She looked up out of those other times into the real world again—a world with kind, solicitous faces in it—and after listening vaguely for some minutes with no power of responding she managed to speak.

"Have I to live or die?"

Whitley bent over her with more than professional interest in a case that was to do him credit.

"The operation has been thoroughly successful; under God you are going to live."

The shadow of a smile parted the bloodless lips, but there came a little sigh as well.

"That will be more trouble—for everybody."

But she spoke more cheerfully in a day or two, and she even began to wonder where she was, for although something had been said about a private nursing home, she appeared to be the only patient. Moreover, a very sweet-faced old lady would appear from time to time at her bedside, and this lady's manner seemed to suggest that she was the mistress of the house.

On the first day that Hope was able to sit up she asked Whitley if she was really in a nursing home, and why there were no other patients.

"You are in the best nursing home that I know of—my mother's house!"

A delicate pink sprang into her pale cheeks, for she certainly had not expected to hear this.

"Your mother's house—and not yours?"

"In a sense it is mine, too. London houses are so much alike that you did not recognise it again—and you were concentrating all your attention on being brave, were you not?"

"But think of the trouble I am giving! Why did your mother—why did you——"

"Because we owe you a debt—she and I. Oh! pardon me, but we do. And you are going to paint me some more pictures by-and-bye when you are quite well and strong again."

From that moment she tried to hasten her convalescence, but it was not possible. When the nurse had been dismissed—for her services were not long required—Hope felt herself in a net of kindness from which there seemed no escape. If she had only known it, they kept her with them long after she was physically capable of returning to her brother's, giving her a breathing space for mental health to spring up and flourish.

She felt so cheered that one day—finding painting materials mysteriously to her hand—she was minded to ask for her picture from the consulting room that she might make a copy of it. Time flew for her over this engrossing occupation, and when Whitley entered she was looking flushed and happy in her labour of love.

"Surely you are much earlier than usual!—and what is that clock saying—it can't be so late!"

"The clock is telling the rigid truth; let me see what you are doing."

She was standing by the window to catch the last light, and he saw how her whole heart was in her work, and that this enforced burying of a talent had been a cruelty. As he came near a sudden consciousness made her cover her work from his sight; she spoke a little shyly, as though ashamed of her own simplicity.

"Don't look, for you would laugh. Do you remember my telling you that I had no patience with the little ship that would never sail under the bridge? I suppose by this time a breeze has sprung up, for it has sailed under at last."

But he took up the sketch and studied

it, not without knowledge and ability to criticise.

"This will be the best of the two," he said, "and you have made it morning instead of evening!"

"Yes, I wanted to make it brighter—then, if you like it better, you shall keep it instead of the other."

"But what if I desire to keep them both? The other is mine already, you know."

With her eagerness a little checked by his manner she spoke again:

"That reminds me; you said something the other day, weeks ago now I am ashamed to say, about my being able to earn my own living by this sort of work. I wonder if you would be kind enough to ask your brother if he thinks I should have any chance at all?"

"I would rather not trouble my brother on such a matter. I want you to do what I wish, and not listen to any advice from others."

She was checked again, not understanding why he should have changed his opinion. It disappointed her.

"But I thought I understood you to say that I might possibly succeed."

"I am not unsaying it—I think you would have a very fair chance. My dear, I fear I express myself awkwardly when it comes to affairs of this sort, but I can at least be plain. I disapprove of your scheme of independence because I want you to marry me."

A silence fell, and her face slowly darkened; for the first time he heard her speak with bitterness.

"You evidently think that a small service rendered years ago demands a high price."

She held out her hand for the unfinished sketch and it was unsteady. The man took it, for he saw the mistake she was making.

"My dear, you are all wrong; I liked you from the first moment I saw you, and I endeavoured quite fruitlessly to find you out again. My reason for asking you is the most old-fashioned one in the world. Hope, the simplest woman in the world knows when a man loves her?"

She looked at him earnestly and read the truth; then her eyes fell upon her sketch, and a smile that was like light touched lips and eyes.

"I did not know really—and yet something must have made me waft on my little ship with the wings of the morning."

Ellen Ada Smith, in "M.A.P."

Here and There.

First Passenger, promenading on the deck of a liner in mid-ocean, to second passenger, leaning disconsolately against the rail: "Have you dined?"

Second Passenger, dejectedly: "On the contrary."

A prominent Southern lawyer who had just repented of his wild ways and joined the church, was called upon in a religious meeting to pray. He started off very well, but did not know how to stop. After asking the Divine blessing on everything he could think of, he finally, with a determined effort, ended with these words, "Yours truly, P. Q. Mason."

Stories about the German Emperor are rife enough now. Here is a good one about his consort: "Not so long ago, when her boys were very small, one of the tutors wanted to take them out in a rowing-boat on the Havel. Her Majesty refused to let them go, and the tutor took courage to say the Kaiser had given his consent. Said Her Majesty, smiling: 'He may be Kaiser of Germany, but I am Kaiser of the nursery.'"

Many are the changes that are rung on a good joke. Phil May was once asked if he knew the Prince of Wales, to which the famous artist replied that he had not that pleasure. "That's very strange," said his questioner; "His Royal Highness told me that he knew you very well." "Oh, that's only his brag!" returned the imperturbable Phil. Now Mr Clyde Fitch, the American dramatist, is telling it afresh as the best Whistler story he ever heard.

At a prayer meeting in Mississippi during the Civil War a Presbyterian brother offered this prayer:

"O Lord, we thank Thee for all Thy boundless goodness; for this rich and beautiful land of ours; for our brave women and valiant men. We thank Thee that we are fully able to take care of ourselves on land; but, O Lord, we do most humbly implore Thy assistance when the Yankees send those infernal gunboats to destroy us."

This epitaph is to be seen on the tomb in the parish churchyard of Llanwrthwl, near Rhayader, Radnorshire, Wales:—

Under this stone lieth Meredyth Morgan,
Who blew the bellows of our church organ.
Tobacco he hated—to smoke most unwilling,
Yet never so pleased as when pipes he was filling;
No reflection on him for rude speech could be cast,
Yet he gave our organist many a blast.
No buffer was he,
Though a capital blower;
He could fill double G.,
And now lies a note lower.

Here are some of the terms used by Dr. J. Deniker, of Paris, in a recent lecture at the Anthropoligical Institute:—

Hyperdolichocephalic (very long-headed).
Dolichocephalic (long-headed).
Sub-dolichocephalic (moderately long-headed).
Mesocephalic (medium-headed).
Sub-brachycephalic (moderately short-headed).
Brachycephalic (short-headed).
Hyperbrachycephalic (very short-headed).

"I guess," said the Yankee, "that there's some good in your London fogs after all."

"Glad you think so," said Jones.

"Wal, I do. My life was saved out in the West by one last year."

"I don't understand you."

"No, perhaps not. You see, when I was here last year I bought a bicycle one thick day, and had it pumped up there and then, and booked straight for New York. Just nine weeks afterwards I was on that bike, being chased over the prairie by two hundred mounted Indians. I reckoned my scalp was as good as gone, when bang went my back tyre, and that's how I dodged 'em, sir. You see, that tyre was full of compressed fog—good fog, too—and when it streamed out and spread itself about, I guess them Indian fellers lost me in the mist!"

Most 'bus riders on a certain London route know "Rosy" Jones. He has earned the sobriquet by a judicious devotion to temperance, which has told on his nose; but he is most excessively sensitive on the point of its tender bloom.

Therefore, when the driver of a rival company drew alongside him recently, and bawled out the opening words of "'Tis the Last Rose o-of Su-hummer," Jones was wroth.

He turned an indignant glare on to the proboscis of his tormentor, which also glowed with rude health, or something.

"Well," he growled, "I ain't left bloomin' alone, anyhow."

It lingered grim with warning.
The sky of yesternight;
The world is clad this morning
In pearly beauty bright!
There always is a morrow
When pain shall have surcease,
And from the blackest sorrow
May come the whitest peace.

Edwin L. Sabin, in the "Woman's Home Companion."

A Chinese servant employed in a New York family, who lived next door to a famous woman pianist, left suddenly after only a few days' service.

His knowledge of the English language was limited, and the letter which he left at the Anthropological Institute his departure was written in Chinese. With the aid of an interpreter the gist of the communication was made out. "I do not mind your heathen parrot," said the letter; "I do not mind your barbarous customs of dressing and eating; but the lady next door who sits on the musical instrument every day is too much."

A number of actors were discussing recently the merits of different boarding-houses in a certain city, and the argument turned on the comparative meagreness of the table board provided by the various landladies. One of the party, who had listened quietly to the talk, now spoke up.

"If any of you fellows really want to put yourself on a rigid diet," he said, "go to Mrs. ——'s boarding-house in —— street. I came down to breakfast there one morning, and the servant waltzed up and asked me if I'd have ham or eggs. I said I didn't want to be grasping, and ordered the yolk of an egg—said I'd have the white of it for lunch."

It is said that it was an old captain of the Missouri river who gave us the word "state-rooms." His name was Slivers, and he had improved upon the cabins, which used to be merely curtained off from each other, by building wooden rooms, naming each after one of the States—Kentucky, Illinois, Pennsylvania, etc. So when a person came on board he would say, "What State am I in, Captain?" From this little beginning the state-room has spread all over the world. Nowadays, if a captain told a passenger the state he was in, he might be misunderstood.

A salesman for a bicycle concern met a farmer, to whom he tried to sell a wheel without success. The salesman finally gave him up in despair, but determined to make another effort on his return trip. A month later he made his way to the farmhouse, only to learn, to his disappointment, that his prospective customer had invested his savings in a cow—an act of folly upon which the salesman was moved to comment.

"Why," he exclaimed, impatiently, "think how easily you might have ridden about the country on a bicycle! You'd look funny riding into town on a cow!"

"Humph!" rejoined the farmer, "I reckon I'd look a durned sight funnier trying to milk a bicycle."

My kingdom is my sweetheart's face,
And there the boundaries I trace:
Northward a peaceful forehead fair,
A wilderness of golden hair;
A rounded cheek to east and west,
Her little mouth the sunny south—
It is the south that I love best.

Her eyes—twin sparkling lakes—
Hold stars by night—the sun by day,
While dimples in her cheek and chin—
Confusion to the traveller's way—
Are pitfalls Love, the rascal, makes—
And I have fallen in!

"Love's Geography," by W. M. Crocker, in the "Criterion."

The new steamship Baltic, which made her maiden trip to New York recently, had, as one of her passengers, a man prominent in Wall-street, who considers transatlantic trips as periods of rest.

There was a fellow passenger on board who knew the financier slightly, and who was very eager to improve the acquaintance. He did not get an opportunity until the second day out from Liverpool, when he saw the Wall-street man coming up on deck.

"Hello," he said; "bound for New York?"

"Yes," replied the financier; "where are you going?" and then he went off and sat down in a steamer-chair by himself.

There came a beggar to my door,
A comely little lad,
With sun-kissed hair and azure eyes,
With pensive mien, and sad.

So meek he seemed—so poor—alone,
I wept at such ill-faring:—
Regardez! When he entered in
He proved a robber daring.

He barred the door, he barred the pane,
(Defenceless quite he found me,)
A prisoner in my own demesne,
With braggart oaths he bound me.

He mocked my fears, he stole my heart,
With jest and jibe to flout me;
With rose-leaf strung on rose-leaf red
He wove his chains about me.

Quoth he, "Such sorry garb as yours
No thief would deign to borrow!"
He stripped me of my Cynic's robe,
Of Loneliness and Sorrow.

He found my store of Doubts and Fears,
Made loot to merry measure;
He scattered far to left and right
A hoard of doleful treasure.

He sealed my lips with kisses three,
And swore he'd stay no longer,
But though he made to loose my chains
I felt the links grow stronger.

Ay, strong as steel, these shackles sweet
I would not break nor sever—
A prisoner in my own demesne,
Love holds me fast, forever.

"The Marauder," by Meribah Philbrick-Reed, in "Life."

A new Swiss watch contains a tiny hard rubber phonograph plate, which emits out the hours loud enough to be heard 20ft away.

You are an hour late this morning, Sam."

"Yes, sah, I know it, sah."

"Well, what excuse have you?"

"I was kicked by a mule on my way here, sah."

"That ought not to have detained you an hour, Sam."

"Well, you see, boss, it wouldn't have if he'd only have kicked me in dis direction, but he kicked me de other way!"—"Yonker's Statesman."

We have several excellent vocalists on the variety stage who hail from Australia. Miss Ada Colley is one; Mr Hamilton Hill another; and now a third is appearing at the Alhambra in the person of Miss Violet Elliott, who is somewhat embarrassed at being described as the "lady bass." Miss Elliott is really a deep contralto, with a phenomenal lower range, and can get down to lower D in Loder's song "The Diver," which she has been singing. She is also capable of reaching the high G sharp of the mezzo-soprano. The young vocalist considers that she owes much of her vocal excellence to the healthy outdoor life she led in her native country.—"London Era."

According to a current anecdote, the Hon. Joseph H. Choate met in the street not long ago a friend who is a confirmed stutterer. Button-holing the American Ambassador to Great Britain as he was turning a corner, the unfortunate gentleman spoke as follows:

"I s-ss-ay, Ch-choate, c-c-can you g-g-g-give m-me h-h-half an hour for f-f-f-five m-m-minutes' c-c-c-c-conversation?"

Another story is told by a well-known Cabinet officer. He reports the following conversation as taking place during a chance meeting between stutterers:

First Stutterer: Y-you w-w-want to try D-D-Doctor H-B-B-rown, old c-c-chap, for that s-s-stuttering of y-y-y-yours.

Second: I-I-Is he a-a-a-ny g-g-g-good?

First: S-S-S-Shure; he's f-f-f-ine—h-h-best in the b-b-business; h-he c-c-c-cured m-m-me.

A well-known suburbanite who had been greatly troubled by the depredations of a neighbour's goat was driven to desperation one day when he learned that the animal had consumed a red-flannel golf-coat of his. Determined on the goat's destruction, he employed an unscrupulous small boy who lived in the neighbourhood to secure him to the railroad track just before the daily express was due. Some days afterwards a friend inquired with interest if the goat had been effectually disposed of. "Not on your life," was the disgusted answer; "that goat has a charmed life. He coughed up that red golf coat of mine and flagged the train."

No, siree, that dog won't bite;
Not a bit o' danger!
What's his breed? Shore I don't know;
Just a "boy's dog," stranger.

No St. Bernard—yet last year,
Time the snow was deepest,
Dragged a little shaver home
Where the hill was steepest.

Ain't a bulldog, but you bet
'Twouldn't do to scoff him.
Fastened on a tram one time—
Couldn't pry him off him.

Not a pointer—lest the same,
When it is all over,
Ain't a better critter round
Startlin' up the plover.

Sell him? Say, there ain't his price.
Not in all the Nation!
Jest a "boy's dog"; that's his breed—
Finest in creation.

McLandburgh Wilson, in "New York Sun."

It is told of the witty old French abbe, Pere Monsabre, that on one occasion a lady sent a message to him, just as he was entering the pulpit, that she must see him. After much beating about the bush, she came to the point. Vanity was her besetting sin, and only that morning she had yielded to the temptation of gazing at herself in the mirror and thinking she was very pretty. Pere Monsabre looked at her steadily for a minute, and then, in his soft, musical voice, he inquired kindly: "Is that all, my daughter?"

"Yes, father, that is all."

"Then, my daughter, go in peace. For to make a mistake is no sin."

"A Colonial Girl" writes from Natal to "Modern Society": "I have just returned from my first visit to England, and was charmed with the British Isles; but what surprised and shocked me more than anything else was to see females smoking. I consider it a pernicious habit that quite unsexes a woman. If a woman is seen smoking a cigarette in South Africa she is at once put down to be a very undesirable person. I am truly sorry that English women have debased themselves by starting the habit. I hope it is only a whim, and will soon pass away. Gentlemen may like to be in the company of these mannish females, but they seldom care to marry one. To my mind, a woman never looks so hideous and debased as when she is seen smoking."

That deadly implement, the hatpin of modern times, is a descendant of an equally formidable toilet article used by Roman women. The Aspasias and Julias and Claudias who decked themselves a couple of thousand years or more ago, to the undoing of the particular Balbus or Marcus they desired to fascinate, wore bone hairpins of prodigious length. Yet, like the women of this present time, they seem to have experienced the same difficulty in keeping them in place. This fact came to light during excavations at Silchester, near Reading, a hundred or so of these bone hairpins being found in the Roman bath, collected, maybe, by the bath attendant, to prove all these centuries later that there is nothing new under the sun, and that in all ages the same little foibles have been possessed by women.

Do you think of that hour in the twilight,
When Hesper was beaming above?
When I needed no Hesper for my light,
Being lit with illusory love?
But little did I or did you say,
As I fed with delight on the view
Of your chin that was slightly retrousse,
And now has developed to two.

I recall with what passion I pleaded,
I cherish the answer you gave,
When I told you my love only needed
To live or to die as your slave.
Small, small was the mercy assigned me,
But I see now it might have been less:
I remember you flatly declined me—
I remember you might have said "Yes."

—"A Grateful Memory," in "Punch."

The manner in which the British nation has come to indulge in luxurious habits and amusements on Sunday is declared by the Rev. R. J. Campbell, in the "National Review," to recall the decadent days of ancient Rome.

"So far from being the day of rest Sunday is becoming the most boisterous day of the week; it is the day when the rich man gives his choicest parties, and the day when the poor man gets drunk in the company of his boon companions. It is the day of social intercourse, from golfing engagements to prayer-book parade."

Mr Campbell proceeds to make a vigorous attack on the British working man.

"Two-thirds of the national drink bill," he says, "is incurred by the working man. His keenest struggles are for shorter hours and better wages, but not that he may employ them for higher ends. He is often lazy, unthrifty, improvident, sometimes immoral, foul-mouthed, and untruthful."

Mr Punch continues his proverbial philosophy of which we have previously given some samples:

Melancholy is charming; but it need not be cultivated while we have English cookery.

Be kind to all sentient creatures; you never know when you may need bail.

Neither cause, nor take, offence; but, if you must do one or the other, remember that it is always better to give than to receive.

Have a care for the first step in a love affair; an indiscretion with the hors d'oeuvre has spoilt many a fine appetite.

There's many an untrue word spoken in earnest.

Beware of applause; it is usually given by someone who wants exercise—or something.

Even the most dogmatic are not always wrong.

The race would generally be to the swift and the battle to the strong if those who ran horses and arranged the wrestling matches played the game.

It is better to be off with the new love before you are on with the old again.

When a woman says she wouldn't marry the best man alive she speaks the truth; she couldn't get him.

"To-morrow" is the reef that has cost the life of many a business man.

If every women's face was her fortune, there would be a run on the veil market.

Wild oats are not sown in straight furrows.

Justice might take your part, but injustice takes your all.

Too many irons in the fire eat up much expensive coal.

Don't take a polite acknowledgment for an encore.

The man who pumps at conclusions usually falls with them.

Curiosity ofttimes hides behind the mask of solicitude.

Everything comes to him who waits, except the waiter.

When you are arguing with a fool, just remember the fool is doing the same thing.

One of the strangest of farms in the country, if not in the whole world, is situated in Southern California, 265ft below the level of the sea. The place is known as Salton. It is a salt farm of about one thousand acres. Here the salt lies, as deposited by Nature, from six inches to sixteen inches in depth. The salt farmers are busy harvesting this crop the year round; and though the harvest has continued for twenty years, during which time more than forty thousand tons of salt has been harvested, only ten of the one thousand acres of the farm have been touched. The salt is first ploughed up into furrows; it is then thrown into conical piles by men with barrows, after which it is taken to the reduction works near by, and put into marketable condition. The work is done by Mexicans and Chinamen, the intense heat being more than the white man can endure.

Old Quidsby liked being rich very well indeed, but he wished that his chef would not write the menu in his native language—French.

"I should like to know what I'm eating for once, M. Alphonse," he said to that functionary. "Let us have the menu in English to-day."

"Oui, m'sieu. It ees ver' difficile, but I veel do it so, if you veel seize for me ze dictionaire."

A small but select party came to dinner that evening, and were somewhat astonished at the following menu:

Soup—Ant the tail of the calf.
Salmon in curl-papers.
Chest of mutton to the little peas.
Potatoes jumped.
Ducks savage at sharp sauce.
Charlotte at the apples.
Turkey at the devil.
Fruits variegated.

But Quidsby and Mrs Quidsby agreed afterwards that they had never presided over a more hilarious dinner-party.

An English gentleman went away to the far north-west of Canada, and there, almost within the shadow of the Rocky Mountains and alone, he turned up the unbroken prairie soil, and began to make for himself a farm.

There was a girl he left behind him—an English girl, of gentle birth and upbringing.

From her home of peace and comfort the girl was ready to go out to the wild, new land, and "rough it" by the side of the man she loved. "But this is an impossible thing," said her lover. "There is not even a house in which you could shelter. You and I must have patience."

When he had gone the girl did not give way to vain regrets. Instead, she sat down and very quietly thought the matter out.

Then she saw that the man had been right. She looked at her hands—long, white, slender hands with polished nails. They had never known the reeking washtub and the scorching cooking-stove. She looked in the glass, and saw that her face had only the delicate comeliness of a maiden reared in a town.

She realised also what the man in his kindness had forborne to say—that she would be a hindrance to him in his work.

Some painters go to an amazing amount of trouble to secure fresh subjects. Mr A. D. McCormick, has painted some pictures at an elevation of 20,000 feet in the solitude of the highest Himalayas, with not a vestige of any form of life in sight. At this altitude the slightest exertion makes even the strongest man gasp, because of the rarefied condition of the air. To cross one leg over the other makes one pant as though from an athletic struggle. The great Turner was once overtaken by a storm at sea, and had himself securely lashed to the mast, that he might observe it without fear of being pitched into the water. Mr Caledon Cameron, while painting his enormous picture, "Niagara in Winter," spent hours in zero weather suspended at a dizzy height over the Falls. That much deplored Russian war artist, Verestchagin, was as much at home on the battlefield as in his studio at home. And while bullets were whistling past his ears, and swords and bayonets flashed before his eyes, would calmly produce his sketch book and make a drawing.

Flirting in strange places is revealed in the following paragraph from the London "Express": "The Dean of Norwich intends to stop flirting in the nave of the cathedral, against which he protested on Sunday, by placing young people in the front seats, where they will come directly within his line of vision. 'I have taken steps,' said the Dean to an 'Express' representative, 'to prevent a continuance of the annoyance. I have instructed my seventy stewards, who give their services on Sunday evenings, to remonstrate with, and warn any persons whom they see talking during the service. A continuance or repetition of the offence,' he added, 'will be threatened with prosecution for the disturbance of public worship.' There was a detective present at the service on Sunday evening, and half a dozen seats have been removed from the back end of the nave."

The Princess of Monaco, who was Miss Heine, of New Orleans before she became a princess, has amazed a local magistrate by declaring that she never does or never can, count her money or jewels, says a Paris newspaper.

This contempt for wealth in detail was divulged during the Princess' examination as to her losses in the recent

burglary of her apartments in the Hotel Mercedes.

There might have been as much as £2000 in a desk that was rifled, she said, or the amount might have been £4000. She really could not tell. Nor was it possible for her to give any description of the missing jewels, as she had never counted them or estimated their value.

The astounded magistrate asked the Princess how she managed her financial affairs.

"Oh, when I go shopping," she replied, naively, "I just fill a bag with money and buy what I want. That is the end of it."

As to the missing jewels, she could give the police no help. It was possible, she thought, that a certain diadem might be identified.

"You see," she added, "it contained a large diamond that interested me. I wore it on the occasion of my royal entrance into Monaco. As to the other jewels, I cannot remember what they were."

Casting a shoe after a newly married couple is one of the oldest customs that still clings to the fabric of this up-to-date life. Centuries ago—nay, thousands of years ago—it was one of the means employed by the people of antiquity to indicate ownership.

When a piece of land was purchased or given to one, or a man acquired ownership of a house, a cow, or took unto himself a wife, it was the established custom to cast a shoe over the land, the building, the animal, or the woman, thus asserting to the world that he had acquired all rights of ownership.

The custom is mentioned in several places in the Bible; for instance, in Psalms ix. 8, where the phrase, "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe," is employed to mean that by this method will ownership be asserted. Few who do it probably know why they cast a shoe after the newly married, but in this ancient custom is its origin found. So does a relic of barbarism linger in our midst, and for her own sake the bride ought to see that it is no longer practised.

Many people who are not in the habit of dining at foreign restaurants are greatly puzzled how to choose dishes, owing to the menu being usually written in French. Here are a few hints to help them:—

Glace: A water ice. Glace sometimes means iced, used as an adjective.

Jardiniere is a fashion of cooking vegetables in their own juices; they are cut into fancy shapes. (Jar-din-yehr.)

Piece de resistance: The principal joint of the dinner, or the chief dish of any meal.

Potage (po-tahje): A general term for all kinds of soup.

Pate: Small pies, in which is served oysters, meat, or some sort of creamed mixture.

Puree: Vegetables or meat reduced by boiling to a thick pulp, and then thinned with a liquid until it is of the consistency of thick soup.

Soufle (soo-flay): A very light omelet or puff, which may be sweet or savoury.

Ragout (ra-goo): A stew, made of almost any kind of meat and vegetables, the kind giving it a particular name. Usually this stew is flavoured with wine just before serving.

Roux (roo): A cooked mixture of butter and flour, used for thickening soups and gravies.

"I fear, my dear madam," said the physician, "that your stomach will never recover its tone, unless you limit yourself to the simplest diet imaginable."

"Ah, sir," cried the woman, tears rolling down her cheeks, "would that I could! But that is impossible."

"Impossible! Why?"

"Because I am the wretched woman who supplies photographs of 'dainty dishes' to the fashion magazines. In order to photograph them, I must prepare them, and, as I cannot afford to waste expensive materials, I must eat them."

The physician started from his chair. "It is certain death," he cried. "What have you eaten to-day, my child?"

"I had for breakfast a shredded wheat biscuit filled with candied violets and olives, with a maple sugar and grated cheese sauce, the whole surrounded with a wreath of daisies for decorative effect. For luncheon," the horror deepening in her eyes, "a large ripe tomato stuffed with cold lobster, Newburg and chopped nuts, served with sherry and chocolate dressing. This was topped with a pure white chrysanthemum, and a few orchids were laid lightly about the plate. They made beautiful photographs."

"And they call men brave," murmured the doctor. "I now understand why so large a percentage of my patients are women."

The late Senator Quay used to enjoy telling of the tall stories recounted by the West Virginian anglers along the banks of the Cheat River (remarks "Harper's").

One day a stranger from Maryland, in search of sport, asked one of the natives whether there was good fishing in the vicinity.

"None better anywhere," was the reply.

"What kind of fish have you hereabouts?" asked the stranger.

"Oh, most all kinds."

"I hope there are some game-fish to be had," continued the man from Maryland. "Tell me, what was the weight of the largest fish ever caught in this region."

"Well, sir," responded the West Virginian, "we don't never take no weighin'-machine with us when we fish, so I wouldn't like to say, being an honest man, just how much that last trout of mine did weigh. But, stranger, I don't mind tellin' you that when I pulled that fish out of the water the river went down a foot!"

Marvels multiply unceasingly at the Hippodrome, where the perplexing Phroso has found a successor equally inexplicable in Zutka and the black box in which he is carefully packed, remarks a London theatrical paper. It seems impossible to believe that a full-sized man can be contained within its two-feet limits; but doubts are speedily set at rest by the gentleman who introduces Zutka unlocking the box, the sides of which collapse outward, and the figure of a tall pierrot is unfolded. Raising the figure to his feet, the operator touches a spring, and Zutka bows in the most natural way ere he is carried bodily by his guardian to the stage, where an electrical apparatus is set at work, and the doll's hands reach up and grasp a couple of rings which hang from ropes above his head. The figure is doubled in two, and his legs strapped to his body, which revolves in the approved gymnastic fashion. Having gravely acknowledged the applause, the figure is bundled unceremoniously into his ebony casket, which before being finally closed is passed round so that the audience may examine the doll—an ordeal which he undergoes with undisturbed rigidity. Regarded as an automaton, Zutka is a masterly piece of mechanism, but the stolid demeanour and inflexibility of the doll, and the manner of its disposal in the box, are all but incredible in a being of flesh and blood. Whatever it may be, man or marionette—or perhaps a combination of both—Zutka is certain to stimulate public curiosity to any lengths, and his composition is likely to be an open question for a long time to come.

But her slender body held a stout heart and a high spirit. So she set to work to learn roughing it at home.

First she went to some volunteer friends and asked to be taught to shoot. They put a heavy service rifle into her hands, and laughed at her. But she was not to be laughed at. She glued herself to the range, and soon made some of the members of the rifle club—of which she was the only lady member—wonder at her skill. Later she went to Bisley.

That was at last summer's great meeting, and there Miss Florence Lewis—that is the girl's name—became the centre of interest in the camp.

It was an unwonted thing to see a pretty blue-eyed girl lying on a firing mat and scoring "bulls" and "inners." All the men came to see her, and she was called the "lady shot."

From her shooting Miss Lewis claims that she has learned much. The handling of a loaded weapon, she says, gives her a sense of self-reliance, and has taught her discipline and patience.

With this new stock of patience she set to work on less congenial tasks. She blackened her white hands on grates, and roughened them in the washtub. She cooked, scoured, and darned.

Miss Lewis is not content with mastering all household work of the hardest kind. She means to be as useful as a "hired man" about the fields. So she is going down to a farm in Essex to work as an ordinary labourer. She will milk the cows, do dairy work, tend the sheep, and dig. The art of horsebreaking will be thrown in by way of a diversion.

"Then," she says, laughingly, "when I am a good farm hand, I shall take my gun and be off to Canada in the spring. And I'll rough it with the best of them."

It will surprise most people, and perhaps amaze Americans, to be told that there is an American order of knighthood. But such is the fact. Washington created one, naming it the Order of Cincinatus, after the Roman patriot. It is hereditary; but, swamped in the tide of Republican so-called equality, it has fallen into abeyance. The only instance which we can find of its existence to-day is that of M. de Bouille, the well-known French statesman. When he was sent as Ambassador to the Court of Madrid he wore it among the many decorations that glittered upon his coat.

Speaking of heraldry in America, a writer in a current magazine calls attention to a fact which may be verified seven days in the week by a walk along Fifth Avenue; how among the passing carriages he noticed many which bore arms to which the owners had no right, while an equal number bore monograms where a crest or coat-of-arms might justly have been blazoned. He goes on to quote an anecdote told by Mr Crampton, who was once British Minister at Washington. It seems that he imported a brougham from England, and on visiting a carriage-builder some time later found a miscellaneous collection of vehicles ornamented with his own arms. On making inquiries he learned that several citizens who "liked" the pattern had had it copied.

The grey tree whispered, soft and low—
"Would ye not have me ever so?
Do yet not see in my branches shorn
The hope of the life to the newly born?
Do yet not feel in the winter mist
The breath of Remembrance by Sorrow kissed?
When the sun is ended, and all things cease,
Shall ye not covet my gentle peace?"

—"A Song of Winter," by Mark Hyam, in "Pall Mall Magazine."

What is the lowest sum for which a passage round the world can be secured?

Here is a guide, culled from Mr Morley Roberts' latest work, "A Tramp's Notebook," for the man who wants to go round the world "on the cheap," and who does not object to "roughing it," says a London paper.

"He can cut the Atlantic journey to £3, and learn some things he never knew while doing it. I can put any one up to crossing America for £15 at any time. But if he spends £20, he can see Niagara, the work of God, and Chicago, the chef d'oeuvre of the devil. The Pacific can be done for £20 steerage; and he can stay in Australia a month for £10 and a year for £20 if he knows what I know. The steerage fare Home is £16.

"I fancy it would be the best investment that any young fellow could make. He would learn more of what life is than the world of London would teach him in the ordinary grooves in ten years."

This totals £84.

Armed with this guide, a newspaper representative visited Messrs Cook and Sons. An official glanced at it, smiled triumphantly, made a few lightning calculations, and then remarked:

"As far as travelling expenses alone are concerned, we could send a man round the world for £47 4/5. He would go from London to Southampton, third class; thence to New York, on the new steerage rates; rail to San Francisco; go by steamer to Sydney, and on, with 'open' berth accommodation (men only) to London. This fare includes Niagara, and the passenger would enjoy the luxury of travelling first class from New York to San Francisco. A really luxurious trip round the globe would cost exactly £182 18/. This would include a £60 berth across the Atlantic, and the very best accommodation on the trains; and would enable the passenger to visit Japan, China, India, and Egypt, returning by way of Naples, Rome, Turin, and Paris to London."

This month a select party will set out to make a trip round the world under Cook's wing. They will be away six months, and the tour will cost each passenger £490. This sum is inclusive of every possible expense of living. The £490 tourist can eat the very best dinner at Cairo or Calcutta, without a thought of even tipping the waiter. Cabmen and "donkey-boys," railway porters, and guides have no terrors for these lucky tourists. Cook's take all burdens from their shoulders.

After Dinner Gossip

and

Echoes of the Week.

The Weather.

That conventional first refuge of the incompetent conversationalist, "The Weather," has really occupied first place as a serious topic of the past week with all sorts and conditions of men. The adjectives applied to it have varied, according to the vocabulary and taste of the talkers, from the vulgar swear word to the carefully veneered and highly polished objurgations of the cultivated pedant, but there has been complete unanimity of sentiment. Anything more . . but there, fill in the condemnation for yourselves. It would really seem as if we had broken the record for rain, cold, wind and general unmentionableness of unpleasantness, so that that most admirable relative of the redoubtable Mrs. Harris, the oldest inhabitant, is credited with pronouncing that through the length and breadth of the colony this is the most adverse spring in the recollection of the present generation. Certainly it has deserved all the hard things that have been said of it, and at the time of writing shows no intention or hope of better things. Even an occasional fine or calm day now raises the spirits but slightly, for there remains the depressing conviction that it will be paid for by some inclement or unseasonable vagary and variety of wind and water on the morrow. It is a common belief that our seasons here follow almost exactly those experienced in the Old Country, and that a wet season "at Home" will be followed by similar damp dismalness out here. But this theory, to the correctness of which many plausible examples may be cited, goes very completely to the wall this year, for Europe at large and England in particular experienced a summer which for charm, warmth and length broke the record of many years. Several recently returned friends and acquaintances who spent the last six months or so doing the usual Old Country and Continental tour, relate that they did not experience half-a-dozen wet days all the time they were away; we, on the other hand, have already had what would be an ample share for the whole year, and summer seems as far off, from the feel of the air, as it was in August. There seems to be a pretty general opinion that our climate is changing, and it must be admitted that, save for certain weeks in April and May, it has not for some years past merited the eulogium of "glorious," to which we still cling, but which has become a mere "façon de parlez." How long ago is it since we had one of those long, settled summers, to which memory carries us back when we think of the days of our youth, or does memory—an unreliable jade—mislead us, and were the summers really no finer, only that we were younger and do but recall the sun and the joyfulness of adolescence? The brighter spots of life are, thank God, retained, when the shadows are forgotten, and when we fall into reverie of days gone by we do remember best the sunlight. Yet, sitting down to cross-examine reminiscence, it does truly seem as if there had been a change, and for the worse. Surely summer in the North, at all events, used to be well upon us in November, and from there on, but certainly from December to May you could fix a date for a picnic or a pleasure trip or outdoor entertainment with confidence, knowing that it would be a very "outside chance" that you would have a wet, far less a cold or unseasonable day. But not so now. We look upon it in the vulgar phrase as a "toss up" if we shall have fine weather for the holidays, and make our arrangements with an inquiet and apprehensive mind. Nor, does it seem to the writer, do we get the heat we used to say twenty or even fifteen years ago. The truly sub-tropical midsummer day, blazing sun and cloudless sky seems to have disappeared, and in its place we get a stormy sunginess which is far more trying. There was, by the way, an exceptional instance of what one might term the old-fashioned New Zealand summer day some five or six years since. It was a New Year's Day, and those who were picnicking or at the racecourse or anywhere out of doors will certainly easily recall it. It was gorgeously hot. Full measure of sun and running over. True some folk grumbled and a few fainted, but there is no pleasing all even in things climatic, and the majority, one believes, revelled therein. Anyhow, it would be pleasant to have a few such days now, and see an end of these raging winds and this seemingly eternal rain. It is time the weather authorities mended their ways. We want a change. Let us endeavour to hope we shall get it—and soon.

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The Morality Play and Its Value.

The production by the Knight-Jeffries Company of "Everyman," one of the old morality plays of early England, is, so far as the writer's memory serves, an absolute innovation in the colonial history of drama. Nothing anyway similar has previously been attempted, and the experiment was one which must have caused Mr Williamson, Mr Knight, and all those concerned, very considerable anxiety, for between absolute success and ludicrous fiasco, there was no middle place. If such a production failed to impress and impress in detail as well as in general, it must have aroused ridicule and given grave offence to those to whom religion is more than a name. "Everyman" is not a production on which to write a dramatic criticism, and if it were it would be dealt with in another portion of this paper, but it seems desirable to say here that the initial production in Auckland will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it, and that it was followed with a breathless interest amid an atmosphere of reverence and complete understanding which spoke volumes for the skill of those who took part. Completely well done, the medieval air duly preserved, and a severe restraint on every hand, both in acting, mounting and general effect, "Everyman" was a production of which Mr Williamson and his company may be justly proud, and which will assuredly create an intense interest whenever and wherever it may be repeated. And this brings us at once to the question, Is the production of such plays as this desirable, and does it serve a high purpose? Before seeing "Everyman" last week the writer certainly had his doubts, but these have been completely removed, and it is emphatically his opinion that nothing but good can come of such a play when so produced. The certainty of death, and the fact that the next second may be our last, is familiar, yet somehow we never do realise it completely. We see it fall on others, but we make an almost unconscious exception of our own case. We never (in health, at all events) fully realise it may be to-day with us. And probably this is not entirely ill. To be constantly and vividly conscious that in the midst of life we are in death would make many men and women morbid and miserable. But it is assuredly for our good to have the lesson brought home to us occasionally, and the play "Everyman" does this in a manner which none who witness it can, even if they would, disregard. We see everyday instances of sudden death, we know those stricken have to render the Almighty their account, but because the instances are so many they pass us by, and do not touch the imagination. Not so with "Everyman." There on the stage in the plentitude of health, high spirits and full enjoyment of all that makes life desirable, we see the presentment of "Everyman" —suddenly summoned to the Eternal Presence to render the account of his life, and every unit in the audience says to his or her soul, "That is myself." The agony, the despairing appeals for a little respite, the fruitless endeavours to gain comradeship for the journey, bring our personal position in the matter home with a keen sudden sense of reality which it is entirely impossible to describe. It leaves an impression which no book or no sermon could do, and if it is desirable that we should think on such things seriously now and then, why assuredly the careful and reverent production of such a play as this is to be desired. It is to be hoped Mr Williamson will repeat the performance in New Zealand and its production in Australia and its reception there will be awaited with interest.

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Christmas and the Giving of Gifts.

Christmas is again upon us, and there again looms before us the annual question of presents. No doubt there is virtue in the custom, so far as children are concerned, and unquestionably with regard to the poor, but it must be confessed that there has of late years been a tendency to abuse in this as in so many other matters, and the occasion seems opportune to call serious attention to this matter. As a colonial community we are simpler in our ways than our same class at Home, but we are marvellously inclined to imitate their foibles. Of the many foolish institutions which prevail in modern social life few are productive of more genuine discomfort than the custom of making unnecessary presents, i.e., giving, not to supply other people's wants, but merely because the donor is animated by friendly feelings—or at all events wishes to look as if he were. So says the writer of a most able article in a paper on this subject which was printed in the "Nineteenth Century" some little while back, and as the Saturnalia of gift-giving approaches it will be interesting and perhaps useful to go further into the same. Surely it is time a protest was made against this giving for the sake of giving — which is about as reasonable a practice as talking for the sake of talking—for under the cloak of kindness there has crept into the world one of the most irritating of social pests; arbitrary in its choice, for it does not let you give to whom you will; mercantile in its essence, for each man is bound both in his own eyes and those of the donor to make a fitting return, and maddening in the drain it makes on the intellect of the purchaser, who is not merely harassed by his ignorance of the other person's tastes, but is genuinely anxious to get the best show for his money.

Doubtless in theory (says the "Nineteenth Century" author) it is a beautiful thing to give, and when one is quite young it is a joy to receive, but the system of anniversary gifts in vogue nowadays is the very antithesis of "the quality of Mercy," it blesses neither him that gives nor him that takes; certainly not the donor, for whom, if he does the thing handsomely, a due observance of birthdays, weddings, and other occasions to which the idle fancy of man has attached the custom of giving, makes up a formidable item in his yearly expenditure, as well as an untold amount of suffering in the selection of an appropriate offering; neither can the receiver be congratulated on finding himself in possession of one more useful article, which is generally quite different from what he would himself have chosen, and yet leaves him the debtor of the donor till it is repaid. We do not perhaps suffer so much in the colonies as the unfortunates who constitute "the smart set" in England, but the reader has only to skim through the list of presents published in any account of a fashionable wedding as chronicled by our lady correspondents in the "Graphic" to know that even in New Zealand the wedding present tax has assumed senseless and onerous proportions. Moreover, the evil is one which is growing, and is one, therefore, which we should as good colonists set our mind to check.

From an ethical point of view the real objection to making presents is that every gift constitutes an infringement of the liberty of the subject. If the world really believed that it was more blessed to give than to receive, the man who took presents without making any would be looked on as a public benefactor; the fact that he is regarded as a curmudgeon proves that the world looks on a gift as an obligation. And yet, despite the ever-increasing difficulty of maintaining one's freedom amid the responsibilities of daily life, we wantonly add to our brother's burden by binding gifts upon his back. Ere the hapless infant can repudiate its responsibilities in articulate speech, god parents and friends of the family take advantage of its helplessness to thrust upon it christening mugs, spoons and forks, and nest-eggs for the savings bank. Thus started on its downward career the child grows up to look on presents as his natural right, and to feel a strong sense of injustice if the expected tip is not forthcoming. It is not till later on that a truer morality begins to assert itself, and he feels uncomfortable at the idea of receiving presents, so that often, while his lips are framed to grateful words, his inner spirit is murmuring, "Might have been sold for two hundred pence and given to the poor;" not that this reflection will at all prevent his trying to rid himself of his obligations by transferring them, in the shape of fresh presents, to the rising generation. However, his friends, perceiving his attitude, grow more considerate, and forbear to remind him by birthday gifts of his dwindling span, though they take an ample vengeance, when he has passed beyond all power of protest, by piling his bier with wreaths and crosses.

With regard to the things themselves, too, it is well to bear in mind the maxim, "Let the buyer beware;" for only a very limited number of articles are looked on as appropriate offerings. In the matter of food, for instance, any birds, beasts, or fishes which I have slain with my own hand will be accepted by my neighbour as a proof of goodwill; but a leg of mutton or a sweetbread left at his house with my card will almost certainly be taken as an insult. Chocolates and sweetmeats are, of course, permissible, and even cakes and biscuits of the more frivolous kind; but it would be regarded as a gross breach of decorum to offer a friend anything which could appease his hunger or sustain his life. At Christmas time, if one may judge from the shop windows, there is an extra license in this respect, the national conscience having probably gone so completely off its balance from continual reading of the "Christmas Carol" that to assail one's friends with cheeses and turkeys is looked on as part of the orthodox Saturnalia. But, with a few trifling exceptions, the rule holds good that a gift to be wholly complimentary must be wholly useless, and that only a person entirely devoid of decency so far insult his friends as to offer them any of the necessaries of life.

It is natural that one should branch off here into the evergreen question of shouting and to ponder on the strangeness of the anomaly which makes it a virtue for me to pay for a man's drink, but makes it "banal" to offer him sixpennyworth of food; but the long excerpts from the "Nineteenth Century" have already made this article over-lengthy, so that phase of unnecessary giving must be left to take care of itself.

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Keeping His Own Counsel.

Someone has said that words were given man for the purpose of concealing his thoughts, and another person has remarked that the art of public speaking lies in deluging your audience with words without leaving any definite impression on their minds. If anyone believes in these two sayings, and acts up to them, Mr Seddon is the man. One can never be certain of what he means, or, to be more explicit, one can never pin him down to saying what one thinks he means. He is a past-master in the art of framing sentences so as to always leave a hole through which he can duck his head when people begin to throw things. After listening to one of his characteristic speeches you gather certain impressions and proceed to act on them, but are somewhat disconcerted to find that the author of the words you suppose you are acting upon denies having used them. There is generally a secretarial shorthand writer around when Mr Seddon is making a speech, and you are politely referred to the notes if you persist in holding to your contention that Mr Seddon said "so-and-so." And, sure enough, you will find that he said "such-and-such." The nuance is very slight—almost imperceptible—but it is just sufficient to change the whole import of what you thought the great man had said. This annoys some people, but after all it is the natural and legitimate defence of the popular orator. Think if Mr Seddon had to mean all he said, or all you thought he said. The prospect is really too appalling. He is the Niagara of oratory, and, to carry the simile further, we may liken his little acts of obfuscation to the spray and foam which hide the real water. The High Commissionership is the latest subject upon which Mr Seddon has been using his words—torrents of 'em—to conceal his

thoughts. Everybody wants to know what he is going to do in the matter. Is he going to take the billet or is he not? And people are quite short in the temper because he won't tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If he were a mere private person he could tell people to mind their own business, but publicity and popularity ever did carry with them certain pains and penalties. Personally, I also must confess to some pardonable curiosity as to "the King's" future movements, but would not like to press it to the point reached by some people, who use bad language because he declines to let them into the debatings of his mind. It isn't a matter of state, after all, is it? Judging from my experience of Mr Seddon, the explanation of the situation is clear. He will hold on to the Premiership of New Zealand as long as he can. The Prime Minister in a colony of some 800,000 people in these days of Empire and "hands all round" among the British looms up very large indeed alongside the highest "Commissioner" who was ever hoisted to position. Mr Seddon's health is the only disturbing factor in the case. If that break down he will have to eschew the strenuous life of the politician, and the High Commissionership would presumably be the most honourable retreat for the old war-horse. A man like Mr Seddon would naturally shrink from telling his hopes and fears to the crowd—in fact, if he did he would not be the great man he is—and this phase of the question reminds us of the awful isolation of the man in high authority. Do you remember Kipling's pathetic tale of the loneliness of the Admiral in "A Fleet in Being"? It is very true, and to the ordinary confiding mortal this impossibility of indulging in the luxury of a confidant or two would make life intolerable.

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A Good Story.

Hospital nurses occasionally have very amusing experiences when they exchange the hospital for private work. The first private case that fell to a nurse lately was in one of the western suburbs, and despite the fact that her patient, a little girl, was very ill, the "kudos" obtained from the presence of a trained nurse, the frequent visits of a doctor in h's carriage, and the general air of importance seemed to quite compensate the parents. "Nurse," said the mother, "would you go for a pound of candles for me?" The nurse demurred, but finally gave in, considerably amused, for the reason she was sent the message was that the grocer and his wife should be impressed. She bought the candles, and had them entered to Mrs Black, as had been desired, and was conscious on her way backwards and forwards of slanted window blinds and faces behind curtains. "If they carry her out," said the mother, referring to the patient, "I'm not sure that I wouldn't like the coffin all white, with her name on it in silver tacks." "She's not going to die," said the nurse sharply. "No, pray heaven, no, but one must be prepared for the worst. Mrs Blank'd send flowers, we sent a wreath when her baby died; and I think it'd be up to Mrs Dash to send a wreath, too, we've dealt there regular. However, we must hope for the best."

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"Creditors Generally."

The law assumes now and then a sportive mood, and then its grave professors foot a measure with the bravest of gallants. Beneath the fell swoop of technicalities, legions whole of meritorious facts lie done to an unworthy death, and the cap and bells of the law make jocund revel on the corpses of the slain! But your legal humorist is fickle (writes "Lex" in the "Australasian"). Anon the mood changes, and then let technicality beware, whilst sound common sense and fair justice have their way. Thus in years past it was solemnly decreed that "creditors generally" in a deed of assignment of a debtor's goods means all his creditors. Now with that conclusion few would wish to wage war. But suppose the deed was expressed to be for the benefit of all such persons as the trustee shall adjudge on evidence to be creditors. Did that include all creditors? Why, no, quoth the law, for it may be that the trustee would improperly exclude some creditor, and so the disposition is not necessarily for the benefit of the creditors generally. Whence it followed that the signing by the debtor of the deed of assignment was not an act of insolvency within the meaning of the Insolvency Statute, and so the debtor could not be made insolvent on the basis of the assignment of all his property, but had the chance of putting the petitioning creditor to the expense of proving some other ground for obtaining a sequestration. Lately, however, the Court (or a majority of its members) has come to the conclusion that there has been too much legal refinement and too little reasonable reading of the phrase "creditors generally." So it is held that where a debtor assigned his assets to a trustee in favour of such persons as by reasonable efforts should establish their right to be included as creditors, the deed should be treated as one for the benefit of creditors generally, and a sound basis for a petition for the sequestration of the estate of the debtor at hands of a creditor who had not come in under the assignment.

TURF FIXTURES.

December 7 and 8—Woodville J.C. Summer

December 10 and 16—Christchurch R.C. Summer

December 16—Alexandra J.C. Annual

December 26 and 27—Reefton J.C. Midsummer

December 26, 29, January 2 and 3—Auckland R.C. Summer

December 26 and 27—Taranaki J.C. Christmas

December 26 and 27—Thames J.C. Summer

December 26 and 27—Manawatu R.C. Summer

December 26 and 27—Northern Wairoa R.C. Summer

December 26 and 27—Dunedin J.C. Summer

December 31 and January 2—Greymouth J.C. Summer

December 28—Ashhurst-Pohangina R.C. Annual

January 2—Wyndham R.C. Annual

January 2 and 3—Rangitikei R.C. Summer

January 2 and 3—Hawke's Bay J.C. Summer

January 2 and 3—Vincent J.C. Annual

January 2 and 3—Wairarapa R.C. Summer

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Small Investor, Paeroa.—Wairiki was not scratched for the Auckland Cup. It was taken for granted that his owner would not require him to be handicapped. Your bet as to the weight he would receive is off.

"Subscriber," Huntly.—Geordie won the Trial Handicap and Cheltenham Handicap on the first day of the T.J.C. Spring Meeting last year. He also won the Spring Handicap the second day, Romeo running second to him. Romeo also ran second to Cavalry in the Welter Handicap on the same day.

TURF NOTES.

Mr C. O'Connor has been appointed starter for the Ohinemuri Jockey Club.

Nominations for all events at the A.R.C. Summer Meeting close next Friday, the 9th inst., at 9 p.m.

Only two horses have succeeded in winning both the Auckland and New Zealand Cups—Lochiel and St. Hippo.

Nominations for all events at the Auckland Trotting Club's Summer Meeting close next Friday, the 9th inst., at 9 p.m.

Mr W. Knight's handicaps for the second day of the Takapuna meeting were not up to that gentleman's best form.

The pony Wheterere was brought from Gisborne last Sunday, and has gone into F. Stenning's stable. Wheterere is a full sister to Calle Iris.

J. McHugh, the trainer of Wairiki, returned from Melbourne last Sunday. It will probably be five or six weeks before Wairiki will be able to return.

Mr W. Walters on Monday informed me that at Glenora Park there are 25 mares running, including his own and other owners', which have at foot foals by Soult.

Three boxes have been engaged at C. Warren's, Ellerslie, on behalf of F. Holmes, who is expected here shortly with three of Mr Friedlander's horses.

Accommodation for three horses has been engaged at the Harp of Erin Hotel for Mr E. J. Watt, whose team will probably consist of Melodeon, Starshoot, and King Billy.

Dolores is to be put to the illegitimate game, and it is almost a certainty we will see her name figuring amongst the hurdle races to be decided at the A.R.C. Summer Meeting.

John Rae has received an addition to his team in the shape of a three-year-old by Cuirassier—Repulse (by Castor—Alda), who was recently purchased by a patron of his stable from Mr J. Muir.

Frank McManemin is handling a fine big upstanding three-year-old filly by St. Crispin—Zip. The filly is owned by Mrs E. Davies, and the name of Bad News has been claimed for her.

Geordie and Black and Gold have both incurred penalties for the Railway Handicap. Geordie has earned 7lb, bringing his weight up to 8st, and Black and Gold 3lb, making his weight 8st 0lb.

Nervine, by Phoebus Apollo—Eve, who has been turned out for about twelve months, has been taken in hand again by W. Mobberley. Nervine has been gelded during his retirement.

The Whatawhata Racing Club are making great preparations for their forthcoming meeting. The course has been ploughed down, and a number of improvements have been made, and the committee are looking forward to a successful gathering.

Beyond a few small lines business over the Auckland Cup and Railway Handicap double is virtually at a standstill. Backers are evidently holding off until after the acceptances are declared on Friday, 2nd inst.

The racehorses Malanta, Native Rose, Sol, and Liberator were offered for sale at Messrs A. Buckland and Sons' yards last Friday, but in each case the reserve was higher than the amount offered, and they were passed in.

Returned visitors who were present at the Waitara Meeting last Thursday, have a good word to say for Maniopoto, by Soult—Fishgirl, who won the Maiden Plate there. Maniopoto is spoken of as likely to win further distinction before long.

The following country programmes have been passed by the Auckland Racing Club: —Ngunguru, December 26; Coromandel Hack, December 26; Te Puke, January 2; Ohaupo, January 18; Waiowaka, February 17; Ohinemuri, March 17 and 18; and Mauku February 23.

Mahutonga has not been asked to over-exert himself since his arrival at Ellerslie. He is looking big and well, and from his appearance one would not think that he had gone through the amount of racing that he has of late.

Fergius ran a good race in the Trial Handicap at Takapuna on the opening day, and his display was in marked contrast to that he gave at Te Aroha, where he was well supported by his owner. Last Saturday, the owner's commission was under a pound.

At the usual monthly meeting of the committee of the A.R.C., the following licenses were granted: Trainers: N. Cunningham and A. J. McKenzie. Jockeys: W. Wilson, P. Walsh, A. Berry, A. Blashford, J. W. Heaps, W. Gosnell, and J. Gainey.

In the Welter Handicap run at Takapuna last Wednesday Numa was made a very warm favourite, but once again he disappointed his connections, and at the finish of the race he was last but one. Numa must have been a pretty costly purchase for George Wright.

At the Takapuna Spring Meeting, a man was caught laying totalisator odds. The committee held a meeting, and after hearing the statements of the parties concerned, decided to warn him off the course for life. The A.R.C. will be asked to endorse the disqualification.

Charlie Weal is getting quite a large team together. During the week his stable was increased by the addition of a four year old mare by Leolantis—King Quail mare, and a half brother to Loch Erne, by Fraternite—Nightingale. Both are good looking sorts, and should turn out useful.

Horsa, who is trained in private by W. A. Scott, at Mangere, showed a great dash of pace in the Cambria Handicap at Takapuna. After the field had gone a chain, there was only one in it, and that was the winner. Horsa would have returned a dividend of about fifty six pounds had he not been bracketed with Luresome, the favourite, who ran second.

Mr F. L. Armitage, who recently went home, arrived there in time to attend the second October meeting at Newmarket, and saw Bachelor's Button win the Champion Stakes, and Carbine's son Wargrave win the Cesarewitch. The weather, he said, was glorious outside of London, but in the city thick with fog. Mr Armitage will be pleased at the success of his filly Lydia at Takapuna on Saturday when he receives the news.

A well-known penciller recently laid a local owner £20 to £1 that Savoury beat his horse in the Railway Handicap, both to start and one to win. The penciller, who is generally noted for his shrewdness, must think that the race is a moral for Mr Stead's colt, as the horse he backed him to beat has been given a chance by some of the turf scribes.

Bellman, who raced so well at Takapuna on the opening day, must be put down as one of the most surprising of equine timber jumpers. He has pulled up very lame on at least five occasions to my knowledge, apparently broken down, and not expected to see the post again, but he comes up smiling at regular intervals, and it is doubtful whether he was ever very much better than on Saturday last.

After Loch Lomond's faulty jumping on the opening day of the Takapuna Jockey Club's meeting, which resulted in the death of his rider, A. Butler, he did not find many supporters for the hurdle race on the second day, which we won, paying the good price of £10 odd in a field of six. Loch Lomond's display of jumping, both in the Hurdles and Steeplechase, was perfect.

At the monthly meeting of the committee of the Auckland Racing Club, held on Thursday, the previous resolutions granting licenses to bookmakers other than members of Tattersall's was rescinded, and another passed to the effect that only members of Tattersall's Club be allowed to bet at the club's meetings. The passing of the latter resolution will be greatly appreciated by members of Tattersall's.

Otto Madden is gradually creeping away from W. Lane in the list of winning jockeys in England, but racegoers will be glad to know that the injured jockey is improving, though slowly. Madden had scored at last count 129 times out of a possible 640, as against Lane's 124 out of 568. D. Maher has got over his century by one, but he has only had 370 mounts. Halsey is next, but a long way behind.

At the recent Agricultural Show, a good looking sort of a gelding named Pat, by Leolantis out of a Natator mare, dam of Taniwha, was awarded first prize for best three year old filly or gelding. Pat attracted the attention of a patron of C. Coleman's stable, with the result that an offer was made to his owner for his purchase, which was accepted, and Pat is now in training at Ellerslie.

The issue of the Auckland Guineas has at last been finally settled, and the stewards of the A.R.C., at a meeting held last week, instructed the totalisator proprietors to pay out the dividends on Boris as first and on Gladstone as second. The dividends payable are: Boris, £3 19/, and Gladstone 9/6, and can be collected at any time at the office of Messrs H. H. Hayr and Co., High-street.

A short time ago Gwenlad's owner was advised by H. French that it was useless to persevere with the mare, as there was very little chance of her standing a preparation. This fact came to the knowledge of Frank Ross, with the result that he made overtures for her lease which were successful. As again evidencing the fact of Ross's skill with cripples, the little Brigadier mare faced the starter in the Stanley Handicap last Wednesday, and getting to the front early made no race of it, winning easily by a couple of lengths.

The winning sires at the Takapuna Jockey Club's Spring Meeting were Soult (3), Seaton Delaval (2), and Brigadier, Flintlock, Gilead, Recluse, Freedom, Lord of the Isles, Hilad, Muskapeer, Tasman, Hotchkiss, Tetford, and Cuirassier one each. R. Hannen is at the head of winning trainers with three wins. F. Conway and McLennan two each, and Ross, McKinnon, Heaton, Gall, Deeble, Mahmanemin, Scott, Weal, Barr, and Butler one each. Of the jockeys, Julian, Marchant, Pinker, Chaafe, and Deeley had two winning mounts apiece, and Gray, Murray, Deeble, Ryan, Sutton, Howard, and Scott one each.

In a private letter from a friend who saw Pretty Polly meet with her first defeat which was in the Prix Du Conseil Municipal at Boulogne, in France, the writer says he never saw a worse example of bad judgment than Maher exhibited. He was watching what he thought was his only danger, Zinfandel, and the selling plater, Presto II., was presented with a win which in a true run race would never have happened. This was very annoying to Major Loder. The best of horsemen everywhere make mistakes; we find this the case in New Zealand.

Writing from Ireland anent the defeat of Pretty Polly, the correspondent of the "Sportsman" says:—"For Pretty Polly's defeat I can find no excuse. The mare looked and went well. I have seen it stated that Maher on Pretty Polly and M. Cannon on Zinfandel should have gone after Presto II. sooner. Had they done so, I do not believe that the result would have been different. Doubtless the going, which was holding, was against Pretty Polly and in favour of the winner, who is a much better horse than most people give him credit for. It is said that those closely connected with Presto II. landed a good stake. He is trained by Lawrence at Maisons-Laffitte."

When Bellman and Hinau finished first and second in the hurdle race at Takapuna, a good many people appeared to have forgotten that Hinau was the same that raced at Ellerslie, winning the first maiden hurdle race of 1½ miles at the winter meeting of the A.R.C. 1901, in 3.22 3-5. Hinau raced in the spring of 1901 in two steeplechases and two hurdle races, since which time, three years, he had not carried colours. Hinau is getting on in years. He was considered a very useful gelding when taken to Australia to race about five years ago, but was generally very unlucky. He may be considered so to have bumped up against Bellman on Saturday.

This is how American "Sports of the Times" refers to a disqualification imposed: "J. K. Hughes, the elongated owner and bookmaker from Dennison, Texas, will race no more at Delmar. He has been prominently connected with St. Louis racing for several years, and owns a very useful lot of platers, but they couldn't run to form, and Judge Murphy has ordered that entries from the Hughes stable be refused. The stable has frequently offended, particularly with Edgardo and Ferquoi Pas. It was a very dull race run by the latter that resulted in the banishment of the stable. Mr Hughes is free to race on any other track, but he is not desired at Delmar."

At the inquest touching the death of the Messrs R. and E. Duder's trainer, Butler, caused by the blundering of hurdle horse Loch Lomond at the Takapuna races, a question was asked as to whether any of the jury knew if the deceased had backed the horse he was riding, as that, said the coroner, would indicate whether he wanted it to stumble. One can scarcely imagine that such a question should have been asked. Horsemen don't go out in hurdle races with the fixed intention of trying to bring their mounts down while racing at a speed of better than two minutes to the mile, and don't contemplate suicide in that way. It is painful to think that a suggestion of such a thing should have crossed the mind of anyone, the case having been a sufficiently distressing one.

Another pressman has passed away to the Never-Never Land in the person of Mr Andrew Jackson—"Hippona," who attended to the sporting columns of the "Auckland Star" for many years. Until about four years ago, when overtaken with a serious affliction which incapacitated him from further literary work, the deceased was an energetic news-gatherer, but from that time dropped quietly out of sporting journalism, but continued on in commercial business for the Brett Printing and Publishing Company, with which firm he had been connected in various departments for about 30 years. A few weeks ago he was suffering from paralysis, and was removed from the Hospital to his father's residence at Glasgow terrace, Grafton road, where he passed away on Sunday. He was buried at Purewa last Tuesday. In writing the obituary notices of sportsmen, my late confrere invariably closed with a hope that the sod might rest lightly o'er their graves—a nice sentiment, which may be repeated of deceased, and will be endorsed by a great many of his friends and acquaintances.

During the progress of the Te Aroha meeting I paid a visit to John Lennard's farm, which is situated a few miles from the Te Aroha township, and had a look over the three yearlings which it is John's intention to offer for sale at one of the forthcoming yearling sales. The lot, which are three in number, comprise a bay filly by Seaton Delaval—Vieux Rose, by Hippocampus—Rosarina, full sister to Val Rosa, Alba Rose, and Carl Rosa. The filly, which was foaled in October, is well grown, and should produce keen competition when she appears in the ring. A brown colt by Phoebus Apollo—Roxana, by Cuirassier—Vieux Rose, foaled in September, is a fine, compact little fellow who looks like coming to hand early, and is just the sort likely to win the Avondale Stakes. He ought to fetch a good price. The bay colt by Hotchkiss—Dorothy, by Dauphin—Bragela, foaled in October, is a fine, commanding colt, and has every appearance of turning out a racehorse. Altogether the trio are equal in looks and conformation to any that I have seen this season, and the Te Aroha sportsman should have no difficulty in quitting them at a payable figure.

The fact that a couple of gentlemen held opposite ideas as to the age in which a horse develops his best pace brought about an interesting match last month in Chicago. Mr Williams held to the theory that thoroughbreds are raced too early. He is working on this idea, and has saved a number for racing purposes. These are not raced until after they are four years old. A Mr Sydney Paget is of just the opposite opinion. He believes in early two year old racing. The argument became so strong that it ended in a match being made between a four year old and a maiden 2 year old to gallop over three furlongs for £500 a-side, owners up, the winner to take both horses. The match aroused a lot of interest, but it was a poor contest, as the two year old won easily. This is only what I should expect. The youngster would beat the old horse over such a distance. Of course there are exceptions, but I should say that it would be good business backing the youngster every time.

The Middle Park Plate was first run in 1866, and has been won by many horses of note, including Melton, Minting, Donovan, Orme, Isinglass, Ladas, St. Frusquin, Galtee More, and Pretty Polly. Jardy's sire won the Derby and other classics in 1899, and his dam, Airs and Graces, captured the Oaks in the previous year. She was purchased by M. E. Blanc for 3000 guineas, while for Flying Fox the French owner bid up to 37,500 guineas. Both have well repaid him. Not since 1890 had a French horse carried off the Middle Park Plate prior to yesterday. Gouverneur won the race that year for M. E. Blanc, ridden by J. Woodburn, and nine ran. History is repeated somewhat on the present occasion, for Jardy credited M. E. Blanc with the race recently, and there were again nine starters. It was in the corresponding race in 1898 that Caiman (Sloan up) defeated Jardy's famous sire, Flying Fox, ridden by M. Cannon, by a length and a half, the pair being equal favourites at 7 to 4, and nine faced the starter.

The Budapesth correspondent of an English paper says that Mitchell, the American jockey, who had an engagement for two months for the stable of Mr Blaskovich, has left, his engagement having ended. The continual misfortune which pursued the bearers of the Kincsem colours this season, he says, seems to have lessened the credit of American training, and Mr Blaskovich will try to change fortune by returning to the old fashion. Dyer, the American trainer of the stable, is negotiating for a new engagement as trainer in one of the largest racing stables, while the establishment at God, where Dyer is training the horses of Mr Blaskovich, is to be leased. It is a time honoured establishment, connected with the name of the families of Hesp and Madden, where Hesp, the father of the present generation, trained the famous mare, Kincsem, in the "seventies," and innumerable winners for Mr Blaskovich. And Madden, father of the present English champion jockey, I think, used to ride these winners.

The following story of Fred Archer, the famous jockey, is told in the reminiscences of a well known turfite. It appears that when Archer was at Doncaster one year for the St. Leger, he received, the evening before the race, a parcel, which on opening he found to contain £100 and a slip of paper, upon which was written a promise to send him another £100 if the horse which he was to ride on the following day did not win. Archer went at once to the owner of the horse, Lord Falmouth, told him what had happened, and asked that another jockey should be given the mount. But Lord Falmouth woud not hear of this, and told Archer to keep the money, and also his engagement to ride. The great jockey accordingly rode the next day, and was, unfortunately, beaten by the shortest of short heads, after a ding-dong race. On his return home Fred Archer found on his table the other £100, as promised, and a letter thanking him for having obeyed the behest of his anonymous patron. "But," said the letter, "please do not cut it so fine another time."

Robert le Diable achieved a great performance in winning the Duke of York Stakes. He gave weight away to all his fifteen opponents, and to several of them nearly one-third of his impost. To Fermoyle, who followed him home, he conceded 23lb, and to the third, Flower Seller, 32lb. Few backers looked far beyond the son of Ayrshire (writes the "Sportsman") for the winner. "Robert" had previously won the City and Suburban and Doncaster Cup this season, in addition to other races of less importance, and is probably our best handicap performer. The field of sixteen was one more than did duty a year ago, when Sceptre scored, and it was Maher's first success in this event. In the canter down, Fermoyle, Pharisee, and Antonio went best, and of these the first two were prominent, almost from the fall of the flag, their colours being difficult to distinguish from one another. They stayed right in front for a long way, and rounded the bend together, but Maher had got Robert le Diable nicely placed on the inside, and it was quickly seen that the topweight was master of the situation. Flower Seller was running well, but nothing had any earthly chance against "Robert," who won without a serious effort.

Bachelor's Button competed in the Champion Stakes instead of waiting for the Cesarewitch. Only four ran, but the field was representative of quality, and was quite in keeping with the history of the race (says the "Sportsman"). Indeed, not since Friar's Balsam won in 1888 have more than a quartette faced the starter. A year ago Sceptre had only a couple of opponents. Yesterday the first three were quoted at 2 to 1, with Kroonstad at "tens." Mr S. B. Joel's five-year-old won handsomely by three lengths from William Rufus, who relegated the Derby winner into third place. Speaking of the performance, the "Special Commissioner" writes: "Bachelor's Button's stylish performance in the Champion Stakes yesterday puts the son of Winkfield quite in the front rank, and, when retired from racing, magnificent specimen of a thoroughbred as he is, he should prove a very valuable stud horse. Had Mr S. B. Joel reserved the five-year-old for the Cesarewitch, I am inclined to think that, with all his weight, he would as nearly as possible have won, and another Irish-reared colt—reference is made to the winner of the Clearwell Stakes—Shah Jehan—is likely to do further good service for Sir Edgar Vincent, and credit to his sire, Persimmon. The youngster is evidently a rare sticker."

From the moment that M. E. Blanc expressed his intention of sending Jardy across the Channel (writes "Vigilant") to throw down the gauntlet in the Middle Park Plate, grave apprehensions were entertained lest our premier juvenile prize should be taken to a foreign shore, and yesterday the worst fears were realised. Not that we begrudge our Gallic neighbours their handsomely-earned success, for, after all, Jardy is English-bred on the side of both his sire and dam, but the poverty of the land was so glaringly exposed that the outlook for our classic races next year is decidedly grave. Indeed, the situation would look well-nigh desperate if the rumours that Cicero has become a little thick in his wind could be proved to have any foundation in fact, for Jardy is certainly not the best candidate that M. Blanc has engaged in the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby, and St. Leger of 1905. The son of Flying Fox created anything but a favourable impression in the paddock owing in the main to the fact that he was badly broken in his coat. He is a hard brown with a white off hind stocking, and has the white snip down his nose, that distinguished his sire, but he certainly does not inherit the excitable

temperament of the latter, for both in the finishing and at the post his behaviour was most exemplary. He seems a little short in the rein and somewhat narrow, and though exception can be taken to his forelegs, they are doubtless sound enough.

A good deal has naturally been written in the English sporting papers about the defeat of Pretty Polly in France. In the "Sportsman" "Vigilant" writes:—"After Maher had ridden Robert le Diable he departed for France to fulfil his still more important engagement. It is many years since there has been such an exciting international contest as that which was brought off yesterday. The defeat of Pretty Polly, not to mention that of Zinfandel, by M. Gastou Dreyfus' "ugly duckling," Presto II., can only be regarded as a gigantic fluke, for the winner has not only recently been twice defeated by Governant, (to whom he was once third and once unplaced), but also by Hebron, who only last month gave the son of Reuil 12lb and a beating at Maisons Laffitte. Yesterday, however, Hebron, conceding an additional 6lb, was not in the first four, and the very heavy going evidently was just to the liking of Presto II., who was never headed from start to finish. It is said that Maher and Cannon lay somewhat too far out of their ground, but as I did not see the race, I am not in a position to judge of that. Better judges of pace than these two jockeys it would be hard to find, but it is, of course, quite possible, as our French correspondent says, that they were so much occupied in watching each other that they ignored Presto II., until too near home. Such catastrophies have happened before now."

The acceptances for the Auckland Cup, Railway Handicap, and Auckland Steeplechase fell due last Friday, and from the lists that appear in another column it will be seen that the events have undergone considerable reduction. The Cup has been reduced to 10, which is distinctly disappointing. Mr Stead has withdrawn all of his team with the exception of Cruciform, and the fact that he is content to rely upon her to score a victory for his colours must be taken as a strong tip in her favour. Mahutonga, Melodeon, and Romeo all remain in, as does Scotty, while Starshoot, who is in the same stable as Melodeon, has also been paid up for, and if he is preferred to his stable companion on the day may prove the hardest nut for the top-weight to crack. Ghoorka is the only representative of Prosser's stable, and this fact alone entitles him to respect. At present it looks as if Cruciform or Starshoot will provide the winner. The Railway Handicap drew forth an acceptance of 17, and Mr Stead seems to hold the key to the position with Savoury and Rubia. The Steeplechase has only eight acceptors, and on paper it looks as if Up-to-Date would score a comfortable victory.

The judgment of the Appeal Court in the case of Jeffs v. the Canterbury Jockey Club, which club had disallowed his claim to the stakes in the Criterion Handicap run in November, 1903, was published on Saturday, and was a complete reversion of the finding of the club. We are becoming used to very lengthy judgments in connection with cases requiring interpretation of our racing laws, but the judges in this instance were replying to a statement of the club's case made by a sub-committee, which statement has not been published. They went exhaustively into the matter, and it is quite clear that they relied more upon what the custom had been in receiving entries prior to November, 1903, by clubs generally than the rules themselves bearing upon the question of entry. Mr Jeffs' mare Petrovna having been so often entered and raced and properly described on the C.J.C. official card while his property and by her previous owner, a question of informality, amounting to what would have been an insufficient description of any horse entered for the first time, and a mere ground for disqualification or forfeiture of claim to stakes, could not well hold in the present case. The judges asked for the production of the whole of the entries of horses for the November, 1903, meeting, but the executive of the club, for reasons best known to themselves, neither produced the entries nor offered any reason for their non-production, which called forth the displeasure of the judges. Whether they were right in asking for the nomination papers of all owners for other races than the one upon which the claim of Mr Jeffs was based is a matter for argument. We are nowhere told that Mr Jeffs had asked for them in trying to make good his claim. Almost every secretary and other officials know that the rules of racing relating to the entry of horses have been and still are more honoured in the breach than in the observance, and that but few owners make their entries strictly in conformity with the rules. It is a fact that very few secretaries see that entries are properly completed as required. There are, however, some exceptions. Now most people know what the custom has been. It is known that the rules have been infringed in the matter of making entries and in various ways through carelessness or ignorance, but custom cannot be urged against well-defined rules. No one with the instincts of a sportsman could take pleasure in learning that an owner had lost a race through a trifling informality in an entry, or from an oversight in employing a rider who had been riding without having obtained a license; but it would now seem that we are having racing conducted more on commercial lines than ever, and that the smallest point is seized upon by some of our racing men to take advantage of the most trivial breaches in the racing code. We have had no end of legal opinions on racing matters during the past year or two. It is to be hoped that when we get the revised rules they will be more easily understood by all concerned, for the many cases we have had from time to time have served to show that numerous lawyers have differed greatly as to the proper construction to be placed upon our racing laws.

TAKAPUNA JOCKEY CLUB.

This club concluded their Spring Meeting in fine weather. The attendance was large and the racing interesting. The totalisator turnover amounted to £3613, which included £514 invested in Robertson's double totalisator, which appeared to meet with favour. The increase on the two days as compared with last year amounted to £434, the grand total being £14,389. The totalisator staff employed by Mr Bloomfield carried out their duties satisfactorily, as did Mr Wynyard (secretary) and his assistants.

The first race of the day was contested by half a dozen runners. Hellman was favourite, and Hakaria and Loch Lomond the outsiders. Hakaria did not acquit himself at all well; Loch Lomond and St. Rowan made the pace, and Loch Lomond was in front all the way, Bellman with his substantial lumpost being unable to catch him, though he ran a good race. Irish was some lengths off third. Loch Lomond's supporters received a fine dividend of £10 13/. The jockeys in this and subsequent races wore crape on their arms out of respect to the jockey Butler, who was killed from his fall from the last-named gelding on Saturday.

There were nine competitors for the Stanley Handicap of four furlongs, and Mr O'Connor mounted the platform about half a dozen times only to see the horses become disorganised. At last patience was rewarded with a good start, the horses going off in perfect line, Anchorite showing out soon after the start in first place, but letting Gweniad up next the rails that filly shot through and led the rest of the journey, and a good race home resulted in Liberator, who hung in on Anchorite, just beating that mare for second place, while Black and Gold, the favourite, was fourth. Gweniad paid the good dividend of £6 11/, but for a time no second dividend was declared pending an inquiry into the alleged interference with Anchorite, which was finally settled by Liberator being placed second, the dividend being £1 7/.

The Spring Handicap also attracted nine runners, and Avalanche was the one that had most friends, though Geordie had nearly as many supporters. After Geologist and Te Aroha had made play for about six furlongs Avalanche came to the front and galloped home an easy winner by quite three lengths, after her coming Zuleika and Te Te Aroha; but Geologist stumbled at the turn, and Maro fell over Satmau, Geologist's rider, and had to be destroyed. Dixon (who rode Maro) and Satman were both temporarily knocked out, but neither was seriously injured.

The Vauxhall Handicap produced a capital race between three from the half-distance home, to which point Jean had led Sir Gilead. Then Lycia came at Jean, and after a great set-to Sir Gilead won by a head, with Lycia a neck off third. After these came at an interval of four lengths King Paul and Simple Simon. King Paul did not begin well, or would likely have been upside with the three leaders, if not in front. Julian and Ryan, the respective riders of Sir Gilead and Lycia, were never seen to greater advantage in finishing. There were 12 runners.

For the Second Pony Handicap half a score of runners weighed out. From the entrance to the straight Solitary came through next the rails, and Pinker sitting still landed the stake with the somewhat uncertain daughter of Recluse by about three lengths. Dividend, £9 11/.

The scratching pen was used just before the Cantley Handicap, leaving only four starters, and of these Black and Gold was a strong favourite. He was very fretful, and so also was Liberator, but the last-named went to the front and led all the way, The Middy, the outsider, getting into second place, Black and Gold finishing last of all.

The Steeplechase was a pretty race, and was won in the last half-mile by Princess of Thule, who would have found Wairaka more formidable opponent had he been kept closer to his horses at an earlier stage.

The Welter, the concluding item on the card, was won easily at the finish by Zuleika, who had King Paul and Yolette as nearest attendants. Numa was favourite, but ran a bad race.

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AUCKLAND RACING CLUB'S SUMMER MEETING.

ACCEPTANCES FOR THE AUCKLAND CUP.

The following acceptances were received last night for events to be run at the A.R.C. Summer Meeting:—

AUCKLAND CUP of 1500sovs. Two miles.

	st lb		st lb
Cruciform ...	9 0	Ghoorka	7 9
Mahutonga ..	8 12	Starshoot	7 8
Melodeon	8 8	Gladstone ...	7 6
Romeo	8 7	Miss Lottie..	7 4
Scotty	8 3	Idas	7 3

RAILWAY HANDICAP of 400sovs, six furlongs.

	st lb		st lb
Hoboto	9 0	Lady Annie	7 9
Marshal Soult	8 7	Avalanche ..	7 8
Rubia	8 6	Numa	7 8
Kremlin	8 5	Strathavon	7 5
Savoury	8 4	To-morrow	7 5
Boris	8 4	Seabird	6 12
Black and Gold	8 3	Beau Seaton	6 10
Golden Vein	7 11	Crichton	6 9
Alisa	7 10		

AUCKLAND STEEPLECHASE HANDICAP of 250sovs, about 3½ miles.

	st lb		st lb
Up-to-Date..	11 3	Bellman	10 9
Prin of Thule	10 9	Pharos	9 12
Diago	10 5	Loch Lomond	9 7
Catherine Gordon	10 0	Hiuau	9 7

GREAT NORTHERN FOAL STAKES of 500sovs. Six furlongs.

Mr E. W. Allpott's br c Foremost, by Phoebus Apollo—Forme
Mr S. Bradley's b c by Soult—Lady Musket
Messrs R. and S. Duder's br c Devonport, by Soult—Anna
Mr J. A. Harding's b f by Phoebus Apollo—Field Mouse
Mr A. Leonard's b c Carl Rosa, by Seaton Delaval—Vimx Rose
Mr J. D. Manson's b c by Stepniak—Ranee Nuna
Mr D. O'Brien's br c Multifid, by Multiform—Heriot
Mr J. P. Sinclair's br c by Hotchkiss—Mantle
Mr G. G. Stead's b c Sungod, by Multiform—Otterden
Mr G. G. Stead's ch f Nocturiform, by Multiform—La Notte
Mr G. G. Stead's br c Delaware, by Seaton Delaval—Stepfeldt
Mr E. J. Watt's br c King Billy, by Merriwee—Indian Queen.

GREAT NORTHERN DERBY of 750sovs. One mile and a-half.

Sir George Clifford's ch c Signalman, by Clanranald—Weatherette
Mr H. Leek's b c by Cyrenian—Hinemoa
Mr F. Macnamemin's ch c Dunmore, by Hotchkiss—Dunoon
Messrs Sarich and White's br c by Explosion—Sybil
Messrs Jackson and A. J. Simmelhag's ch c Gladstone, by Seaton Delaval — Miss Gladys
Mr G. G. Stead's ch f Nightfall, by Multiform—La Notte
Mr G. G. Stead's br c Savoury, by Simmer—Melodia
Mr J. Tristram's br c Zecchino, by Musketry—Sequin
Mr R. Turnbull's ch c Boris, by Stepniak—Shepherdess
Mr W. Wood's br c Rambler, by Hotchkiss—Queen Cole.

TENTH ROYAL STAKES of 500sovs. Six furlongs.

Mr F. B. Ross' br f Gweniad, 3yrs, by Brigadier—Gwendoline
Mr S. Bradley's b c, 2yrs, by Soult—Lady Musket
Sir George Clifford's ch c Signalman, 3yrs, by Clanranald—Weatherette
Mr H. Friedlander's b f Cranewan, 2yrs, by Stepniak—Britomart
Mr J. A. Harding's b f 2yrs, by Phoebus Apollo—Field Rose
Mr H. Leek's b c, 3yrs, by Cyrenian—Hinemoa
Mr A. Leonard's b c Carl Rosa, 2yrs, by Seaton Delaval—Vimx Rose
Mr W. Morgan's ch c Ottoman, 3yrs, by Hotchkiss—Crescent
Mr E. Morgan's Hiro, 2yrs, by Cyrenian—Epine
Mr J. D. Manson's b f, 2yrs, by Stepniak—Ranee Nuna
Mr D. O'Brien's br c Multifid, 2yrs, by Multiform—Heriot
Messrs Sarich and White's br c, 3yrs, by Explosion—Sybil
Mr J. P. Sinclair's br c Air Gun, 3yrs, by Hotchkiss—Mantle
Mr G. G. Stead's b c Rubia, 3yrs, by Stepniak—Madder
Mr G. G. Stead's b c Sungod, 2yrs, by Multiform—Otterden
Mr G. G. Stead's ch c Nocturiform, 2yrs, by Multiform—La Notte
Mr G. G. Stead's br c Delaware, 2yrs, by Seaton Delaval—Stepfeldt
Mr J. Tristram's br c Zecchino, 3yrs, by Musketry—Sequin
Mr R. Turnbull's ch c Boris, 3yrs, by Stepniak—Shepherdess
Mr E. J. Watt's br c King Billy, 2yrs, by Merriwee—Indian Queen
Mr J. White's b c, 3yrs, by Cyrenian—Windmill
Mr W. Wood's br c Rambler, 2yrs, by Hotchkiss—Queen Cole.

TURF TALK FROM THE SOUTH.

(By Telegraph.—Own Correspondent.)

CHRISTCHURCH, Saturday.

Mr Moss declares that the price which he received for Canteen has been greatly exaggerated. It was not nearly 2000 pounds.

Lady Somnus, by Somnus, and Jane Eyre, by Rex, have foaled colts to the Government stallion Scorpion. The former's has since died.

After his unsuccessful efforts at the C.J.C. spring meeting, Blackstone was treated to a spell. He will be taken up shortly to be prepared for the autumn campaign.

The sub-committee of the Canterbury Jockey Club, set up to conduct the Petrovna case before the Court of Appeal, are much interested at the finding. In a lengthy letter to the current number of the "Weekly Press" they express regret that the court should have permitted itself to deliver a judgment which, "in the tone by which it is animated and the terms in which it is couched, resembles much more the address of a defending counsel than the utterance of a presiding judge." The committee protests that the decision in the Bagrips appeal and the Petrovna appeal "are strangely inconsistent," and appends the opinions of Messrs Harper and Stringer, two leading barristers, in support of its conclusions.

There is a disposition locally to back Cruciform for the Auckland Cup. Up to the publication of the acceptances Mr Stead made no announcement regarding his intentions, and in default of one, backers were in the dark until last night.

Although the North Canterbury J.C. annual race meeting on Thursday opened amid a drizzle, the rain cleared off, and the meeting was held in pleasant weather. The attendance was small, and included few visitors from town, but speculation was slightly brisker than the last year's meeting. The going was hard and fast, which accounts for the times registered in several of the events. Only three horses started for the North Canterbury Handicap, which fell to Lolah, the outsider of the party. The daughter of Musketry cannot be trusted to get a mile in decent company, but neither Antigone nor Quicklire could take her along fast enough to thoroughly extend her. The field for the Hack Race was no larger than that which contested the principal event, and the Saracen mare Stranger won easily. Betting on this race was restricted to a total of £1 10/, and only half a sovereign was invested on the winner. Lolah was brought out again for the Rangiora Welter Handicap, but this time failed to get a place, the Apremont mare Nor'-wester winning by a head from Clanbarn, with the disappointing Ellbank a bare length away.

Welbeck's half sister, Pensive, was made a strong favourite for the Flying Handicap, and justified the confidence reposed in her by winning easily from King Stork and Antigone; but her stable companion Blue Stocking, who was most in demand for the Malden Hack Race, was beaten by the three-year-old filly Melinda, by Musketry—Marbled. Shortly after the meeting closed, rain set in heavily, and continued through the night and all day yesterday. It was not wanted by the farmers, but it will benefit the tracks at Riccarton.

OUTDOOR SPORTS.

RESULTS OF SATURDAY'S MATCHES.

CRICKET.

CHRISTCHURCH, Tuesday.

After a brief foretaste of summer the weather broke in the early part of last week, and has been wretched ever since. On Monday the weather was suggestive of June rather than December. As a result training operations have been much impeded.

Sir George Clifford's team for Auckland will consist of Quarryman, To-morrow, Golden Vein, and Signalman. Quarryman, To-morrow, and Signalman will leave to-day (Wednesday), and will be joined at Wellington by Golden Vein, who has remained in the North Island since the Feilding meeting. The horses will be under the charge of E. Cutts.

Mr Stead's team, which will leave on December 14th, will probably comprise Cruciform, Savoury, Rubio, Nightfall, Sungod, Delaware, and Nightfall's (dark) brother Noctuiform.

Cruciform is now a strong favourite for the Auckland Cup, and Savoury occupies a corresponding position in the railway handicap.

A story got abroad here that after the C.J.C. meeting Mahutonga remained in Canterbury, and was being trained at Yaldhurst. The story was untrue, of course, and how it came to be invented nobody knows. Probably it arose out of the fact that Mason is known to entertain a strong admiration for Mahutonga.

Cannie Chief and Tossers returned on Saturday from their fruitless visit to Feilding.

Cutt's team has been further strengthened by the inclusion of Treadmill and Brave Heart. The former was brought down from Stoneyhurst on Tuesday of last week, and has resumed work. He looks just in nice condition to begin a preparation, and his forelegs, the seat of the trouble which necessitated his withdrawal from training, look as if they would survive another preparation. Brave Heart came up from Ashburton, where she had been on a visit to Pilgrim's Progress. She was accompanied by Catherine Wheel, who, with a nice looking colt by Clanranald, has gone on to Stoneyhurst.

The local horseman, McCluskey, intends being present at the Auckland Racing Club's summer meeting.

As Zetland shows little signs of improvement, he is to be blistered and treated to a spell.

De la Rey and King's Guest are among the Riccarton horses booked for Dunedin at Christmas time.

The Christchurch Racing Club's summer meeting will be opened next Saturday, and continued on the following Friday, which is the province's anniversary day. The acceptances for the principal event on the first day are:—

Windsor Handicap of 100sovs, one mile: Stepdancer 8.13, Secret Society 8.10, Terrapin 8.6, Sandy 8.5, De la Rey 8.2, Lady Lyonors 8.1, Magnificent 7.10, Ability 7.7, Lolah 7.4, Manjess 7.2.

Lady Lyonors or Ability may win.

In the minor events the following horses may run forward in their respective engagements:—Nursery Handicap: Hilarity and Rueckeugh. Springston Welter Handicap: Magnificent. Flying Handicap: Master Alix and Sandy. High Weight Handicap: Stepdancer.

A. H. Frew, the well known Victorian trainer, passed through Christchurch last week on his way to Auckland. He inspected some local horses, and I understand was much impressed with Magnificent, who he thought has the makings of a fine steeplechase horse.

It is rumoured here that further proceedings may be taken in the Petrovna case.

Mr H. Howell, a gentleman well known in Invercargill racing circles, died last week.

The Castor gelding Satchedon has resumed work at Wingatui.

A filly by Casket—Parvula, and a colt by The Officer—Sabia, have been broken in by L. Lawson, the Southland trainer.

AUCKLAND FIXTURES POSTPONED.

Owing to the Amateur Sports being held on the Domain on Saturday, the Cricket Championships were postponed till next Saturday.

FROM HAWKE'S BAY.

NAPIER, Monday.

The cricketers were favoured with splendid weather on Saturday. In the High School v. United fifteen senior match the boys suffered their first defeat since they have been at cup cricket. The High School second innings closed for 98—Fenton 35, G. Bogle 14, Andrewes 15. Macassey obtained seven wickets for 33. United won by 40 runs.

In the Scinde v. United eleven match the former's second venture closed at 240. Hawke played capital cricket for 93, and White contributed a useful innings of 78. White 15, Whitey 12, and Ashcroft 11 aided in the run-getting. Monro 4 for 35, and Howard 3 for 19, bowled best for United, whose innings ended at 179—Hughes 41, Howard 33, Monro 29, Leevers 24, Lusk 17, Martin 16. Scinde won by 61 runs. Hawke, who took three wickets for 40 runs, was the most successful bowler for the winners.

The junior cup results were:—Port Ahuriri, 99 and three for 29, v. Scinde, 40; Hastings, 74 and three for 24, v. High School, 49.

WAIRARAPA FIXTURES.

MASTERTON, Monday.

The Masterton-Carterton senior heat was resumed with the following result at the close of the day's play:—Carterton, 148 and 81 for seven wickets (Beechey 24 and Smart 20); Masterton, 67—Parton 19, Logan 14, Jones 11.

In the junior match Masterton made 40 and 46 for six wickets, and Greytown made 58.

The Scinde Club (Napier) meet Masterton Thursday rep. team at Masterton on 27th December.

WANGANUI FIXTURES.

WANGANUI, Monday.

The much-talked-of senior match Victoria v. Britannias attracted a fair number of spectators on Saturday. Victorias batted first and compiled 95—A. O. Cove 23, Smithles 17, Armstrong 14, Caldwell 12. Francis secured the bulk of the wickets, taking six for 22. Britannia amassed 138—Watt 45, and Ashwell 40 playing well for their runs. The other double-figure contributors were Francis 20, and Radike 20. Martin, four for 31, and Armstrong, three for 20, bowled well for Victoria.

In the Victoria v. College match the former were disposed of for seven runs. Middleton put up a record by capturing seven wickets for six runs. College made 59. Victoria totalled 77 in its second essay, and College secured the necessary runs to win for the loss of three wickets.

CHAMPIONSHIPS AT WELLINGTON.

WELLINGTON, Monday.

The weather was fine and wickets in capital order for the resumption of senior cricket championship matches on Saturday. The display was in marked contrast to the previous exhibitions this season, play being vigorous and interesting throughout.

Phœnix compiled 150 in its second venture—Barton 50, and Waters 48 laying on the wood freely. Hales, Luckie, and Latimer divided the wickets for Wellington, which knocked off 18 runs to win under the hour for the loss of two wickets. Hickson 45, Richardson 27, and Weybourne not out 27, freely posted the weak Phœnix bowling.

The Old Boys—Newtown heat is still unfinished, the latter requiring 61 runs with six wickets to fall for victory. Old Boys made 175 in their second innings—J. Blacklock 39, Staples 24, Jacobs 24, C. Blacklock 18, Dixon 18, Beechey 17. Alpe, Turner, and Plimmer bowled best for Newtown, which so far has 126 runs to its credit for the loss of four wickets—Barron 44, Alpe 26, Plimmer 13, Spraggon 11, Day not out 11.

The Junior Championship matches resulted as follows:—Wellington College beat St. Patrick's College by eight wickets; Midland, 150 and 10 for two wickets, v. Waiwetu, 51; Wellington, 168 and 23 for one wicket, v. Phœnix, 96; Thorndon, 143, v. Austral, 82; Wadestown, 108, v. Johnsonville, 109; Old Boys, 138, v. Newtown, 104. Third class: Albion, 212, v. Midland, 67 and 68 for six wickets; Karori beat Gas Company by 74 runs; Phœnix won by default against St. Patrick's College; Johnsonville beat Thorndon by 86 runs; College A was defeated by Wellington by 10 runs; Old Boys beat College B by five wickets; Newtown beat Austral by four wickets. Fourth class: Johnsonville beat Wellington by an innings and 20 runs. Junior Association: Poneke 82, v. Y.M.C.A. 31; Wanderers 61, v. Woollen Co. 163 for four wickets; Express Co. defeated Harbour Board by nine wickets.

Public Schools senior championship:—Hutt beat Brooklyn by nine wickets; Clyde Quay defeated Thorndon by 10 runs; Mount Cook beat Petone by 40 runs. Junior championship: Mount Cook defeated Petone by an innings and 71 runs; Kilbirnie beat Karori by 10 runs; Wadestown beat Te Aro by an innings and 24 runs.

The Hutt Valley Association:—Seniors: Petone, 52 and 129, v. Hutt, 44; Old Boys beat St. Augustine by eight wickets. Juniors: Rivals A beat Petone United by an innings and 60 runs.

CHRISTCHURCH RESULTS.

CHRISTCHURCH, Saturday.

In the first grade cricket matches the wickets were all heavy. Midland A had much the best of the day's play against Lancaster Park, having been put in by their opponents. Midland after a poor start finally made 155 (Barry 40, Whitta 24, H. Lawrence 20). Lancaster Park in their turn made a poor show, and have lost nine wickets for 52 (H. C. Ridley 20). Lawrence took 4 wickets for 27, Strange 5 for 25. United won the toss against Lancaster Park B, and sending their opponents in got them out for 35. Fisher took 5 wickets for 7, and Sims 6 for 20. United made 125 (Sims 48, Marsh 26, Talbot 13, Oliver 10). Hunt secured 6 wickets for 44 runs. Lancaster Park in their second innings have lost one wicket for three runs. At Sydenham Park the Midland B created a surprise by leading Sydenham in the first innings. Sydenham made 81 (Egnu 41, Fowke not out 14), and Midland B 86 (Horner 23, Ward 15, Wilson 12).

ATHLETICS.

A.A.A AND C. CLUB'S SPRING CARNIVAL.

The Auckland Amateur Athletic and Cycle Club held its fiftieth sports meeting on the Domain Cricket Ground on Saturday afternoon. Threatening weather and counter attractions interfered with the attendance, which was not very large, and the club will probably have to face a loss on the meeting. An interesting programme was provided, and there were good fields in each event, the meeting being thoroughly successful from a sporting point of view. The arrangements for the meeting were well carried out by the hon. sec. (Mr F. J. Ohlson), hon. treasurer (Mr C. C. Palmer), assisted by Mr H. G. Chevis. The ground was a trifle soft, but otherwise the conditions were favourable for the competitors. Considerable interest was manifested in the wrestling, in which five competed, the conditions being the best two out of three falls in the catch-as-catch-can style. Two others who entered were not allowed to compete, having tried their skill against Merzouk when the Turkish wrestler and Carkeek were in Auckland. The bouts were all interesting, and one or two clever falls were obtained. The brothers Fraser were left to contest the final, and, after losing the first fall C. R. Fraser secured the two last, and won the contest, R. M. Fraser being placed second. The gymnastic display given by the boys of the Costley Boys' Institute, under the guidance of their instructor, Professor Potter, was remarkably good, and was watched with keen interest. The boys went through dumbbell and physical drill with the precision of clockwork, and followed this up with an exhibition of military horse work. After going through the usual vaulting and jumping exercises the boys somersaulted from the top of the horse after a jump from the springboard, and then somersaulted from the springboard without touching the horse, very few failing to land on their feet. Their diving over the horse on to the mattress, followed by a "flip" to the perpendicular, was loudly applauded. After grouping pyramid fashion, the boys gave a clever running mase, the whole exhibition proving the boys to be remarkably well up to their work. Following are the results:—

100yds Handicap.—L. B. Todd, 7yds, 1; H. G. Chevis, 5yds, 2; T. P. Myles, 3yds, 3.

Half Mile Bicycle Handicap. — P. A. Smith, 30yds, 1; C. V. Sutherland, 10yds, 2; L. G. Hall, 40yds, 3. Time 1m 14s.

Half-mile Flat Handicap.—W. T. Wynyard, 15yds, and G. C. Speed, 30yds, dead heat, 1; J. B. Aicken, 42yds, 3. Time 2m 5 1-5s.

Half Mile Bicycle Handicap.—Final: P. A. Smith, 30yds, 1; C. V. Sutherland, 10yds, 2; G. Hall, 35yds, 3. Time 1m 14s.

Webster, scratch, 3. Time 24s.

220yds Flat.—Final: C. G. Dickeson, 13yds, 1; H. G. Chevis, 10yds, 2; L. B. Webster, scratch, 3. Time, 24s.

One Mile Bicycle Handicap.—Final: P. A. Smith, 40yds, 1; R. Farrell, 35yds, 2; C. V. Sutherland, 20yds, 3. Time, 2m 44 2-5s.

120yds Hurdles Handicap.—A. R. Gatland, scratch, 1; L. B. Todd, owes 12yds, 2; C. G. Dickenson, scratch, 3. Time 18 2-5s.

100yds Handicap, for youths under 16.—Final, R. Sprague, 5yds, 1; A. J. O'Driscoll, scratch, 2; W. Kelsall, 5yds, 3. Time, 10 4-5s.

440yds Flat Handicap.—P. P. Myles, 20 yds, 1; H. G. Chevis, 10yds, 2; J. B. Aicken, 22yds, 3. Time 53 2-5s.

Two Mile Bicycle Handicap (ladies' bracelet).—R. Farrell, 60yds, 1; C. V. Sutherland, scratch, 2; H. Butterworth, 90yds, 3. Time 5m 44s.

Steeplechase Handicap.—G. C. Speed, 18s, 1; W. T. Wynyard, 6s, 2; A. Rogers, 12s, 3.

AQUATICS.

AUCKLAND ROWING CLUB.

The Auckland Rowing Club held a picnic and trial fours at Lake Takapuna on Saturday afternoon, when there was a good attendance. The trial fours resulted in the trophies presented by the president (Mr W. Coleman) being won by the following crew:—A. Fleming (stroke), Geo. Hogan, Jones, Garrett, Brewer (cox.) Mr W. Coleman acted as judge.

ST. GEORGE'S ROWING CLUB.

Club trials were held on Saturday last, and being upside-down trials created much interest. The final resulted in Steele's crew beating Laird's by half a length. The winning crew was as follows:—H. Steele (stroke), H. Brassey (3), V. Dunne (2), E. Stone (bow), R. Pycroft (cox.) The final selection for the novice crew to compete in the novice fours at Huntly regatta on Jan. 23th resulted in the following being picked:—B. Totten, stroke; P. Steele, 3; R. Laurie, 2; J. Kinder, bow.

NORTH SHORE YACHT CLUB.

The above club held its first cruising race to Awaroa Bay on Saturday. Fifteen boats entered, the prizes being presented by Messrs W. A. Wilkinson, W. Mackenzie, and A. Campbell. The race was started at 2 p.m., handicaps being given at the start. A fresh westerly breeze enabled the boats to make good time down, the winner turning up in Waiorea, 4m. 1; Waireke, 4m, 2; and Ngatira, scratch, 3.

WELLINGTON, Monday.

Third handicap yacht race of Port Nicholson Yacht Club resulted after an interesting race in favour of Waitangi, which sailed the course in 5hrs 6mins, Aorangi, the other contestant, occupying 5hrs 9mins. The latter had to concede her rival 6mins 30secs handicap. Muritai, the only entrant for the second class handicap, sailed over the course. A fresh north-west breeze was in evidence throughout the afternoon.

BOWLING.

OPENING OF THE ROTORUA GREEN.

Delightful weather favoured the opening of the Rotorua bowling green on Saturday, several hundred persons being present. The opening ceremony was performed by the president, Dr. Wohlman, who expressed a hope that additional green accommodation would be provided, as the membership was outgrowing the facilities for play. The jack was thrown by Mrs Wohlman, and the usual matches between the presidents' and vice-presidents' teams followed.

FROM WELLINGTON GREENS.

WELLINGTON, Monday.

The bowling greens were in good order on Saturday, and play in the various club games was interesting in most cases. Playing for the Townsend Buckles (Victoria Club), the challengers, Guise and Mack, defeated the holders, Mayer and Hulston, by 28 to 22.

On the Petone green the holders of the badges, skipped by Lolos, defeated the challengers, led by Wylie, by 21 to 17.

At the Newtown green the holders (Newtown) defeated the challengers (Victoria) by 26 to 15 for the Edwin Feathers. The holders of Donk's Feathers, skipped by Roberts, defeated the challengers, skipped by Campbell, by 24 to 17.

The second round of the pennant matches will be played next Saturday.

NAPIER SHIELD MATCHES.

NAPIER, Monday.

The bowling shield match Hastings v. Bluff Hill took place at Bluff Hill green on

Saturday, the visitors winning two out of the three games. The only play of an interesting character was that between the teams skipped by Laing and Maddison.

LAWN TENNIS.

WEST END V. MOUNT EDEN.

Grade A.—Men's doubles: Grossman and Mair (Eden and Epsom) beat Patterson and Louguet (West End) 3—6, 6—5, 6—3. This was a very close struggle, and the West End pair almost won the second set, which would have given them the match. Longuet played the best game of the four.

Grade A.—Mixed doubles: Miss D. Udy and A. Brown (Eden and Epsom) beat Miss Whitelaw and Baker (West End) 6—3, 6—4. The win for Eden and Epsom was largely due to Miss Udy's fine cross-court drives, which prevented any effective net play on the other side.

Grade B.—Ladies' doubles: Miss A. Stewart and Miss N. Brown (Eden and Epsom) beat Mrs Genties and Mrs Burton (West End) 6—1, 6—1. The Eden and Epsom pair were altogether too vigorous and severe for the West End ladies. The courts were very dead and slow as a result of the recent rain, and this seriously affected the play in all the matches.

SHIELD MATCHES AT WELLINGTON.

WELLINGTON, Monday.

The lawn tennis shield matches were continued on Saturday, Wellington effecting a surprise by downing Brougham Hill by 8 sets to 5—93 games to 82. A game full of interest eventuated between Newtown and Petone, the former winning after a severe contest by 8 sets to 5—91 games to 79. Thorndon easily defeated Victoria College by 12 sets to 1—103 games to 57. In the second class championship matches Victoria College beat the crack Brougham Hill combination by 7 sets to 6. Khandallah and Taita fought out an interesting finish, the former coming off victorious by 7 sets to 6. For the senior shield Newtown is leading with five matches won in the first round. Thorndon, four wins, is next. In the second class competition Khandallah has won three out of four matches.

RIFLE SHOOTING.

WELLINGTON MATCHES.

WELLINGTON, Monday.

The Guards defeated the Upper Hutt Rifle Club by the narrow margin of eight points, the respective totals being 708 and 700.

The competition for the Ranfurly Cup will be conducted at Trentham next Saturday.

PIGEON FLYING.

WELLINGTON JUNIORS' MATCH.

WELLINGTON, Monday.

Thirty birds competed in the Wellington Junior Flying Club's race from Hunterville to Wellington, the results being:—Mr A. Andrews' Silver Dart, 898 7-9 yards per minute, 1; Mr R. Draper's Toff, 898 13-18 yards, 2; Mr J. Barry's "286," 895 8-9 yards, 3.

BIG FEDERATION RACE.

The largest federation race that has yet been attempted in the colony is to be flown this wek from Russell to the different parts of the North island. It is anticipated that in all eleven clubs will be competing, with an aggregate entry of about 100 birds. There was a similar race held last year, but on nothing like so great a scale as this. The bords arrived from the South on Sunday, and will be taken charge of by the Auckland Homing Society, which is acting as the Associated Clubs' agent in Auckland. They will be specially marked white here to ensure that the birds are not tampered with, and on a certain date and hour this week they will be liberated at Russell. The club owning the birds that put up the fastest time to their respective lofts wins the trophy which is being given.

AUCKLAND RACES.

The following races have been flown under the auspices of the Auckland Homing Society:—On November 24th, from Blenheim, airline distance 325 miles: 1st, R. Pounsford's A.F.C. 1177, velocity 813yds per minute; 2nd, A. Partridge's A.R.P.C. 572, 811yds. On November 25th, second race from Blenheim: 1st, A. Partridge's A.R.P.C. 444, velocity 1001yds per minute; 2nd, R. Pounsford's A.F.C. 1168 and A.F.C. 747, 1000yds. On November 26th, from Frankton, distance 71 miles: 1st, E. Atkin's A.F.C. 969, velocity 950yds per minute; 2nd, Mr Dunn's Tom Brown, 949 yds; 3rd, R. Pounsford's A.F.C. 1352, 948 yds. The club's next long distance race is from Christchurch, 486 miles, the greatest distance yet attempted by the club.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

NAVY LEAGUE DINNER IN LONDON.

Mr H. F. Wyatt, who has recently returned Home from an oversea mission to the British possessions in connection with the Navy League, was entertained by the League on October 21 last at a banquet at the Trocadero, London, and a large company was present, under the presidency of Mr H. Seymour Trower, in honour of the occasion. The toast, "United Empire," was proposed by the Agent-General for New Zealand, who said that the supreme link of the Empire was sentiment, and as long as that remained no amount of dawdling and blundering, official or otherwise, would affect the unity of the Empire. Mr H. F. Wyatt, replying, said he wished to express his gratitude to many eminent men in the colonies who had assisted him during his peregrinations and had adhered to the objects and aims of the Navy League. It had to be proved to the colonies that they were dependent upon the power of the sea. The shadow of the Monroe Doctrine was over Canada, and it was his business to point out there that the Monroe Doctrine itself rested on the command of the sea. The same principle of sea power applied as strongly to Australia, which, if that command were lost, would be broken up into separate States, and to New Zealand, where he found a very keen appreciation of the importance of the British Navy. He trusted that the principles of the Navy League, which he had done what he could to make known throughout the Empire, would help to consolidate and maintain it.

FARMING AT WAINGARO.

Waingaro is a flourishing district some 17 miles west of Ngaruawahia, which is its nearest railway station. It includes some very good land, particularly for grazing, and every year sees more acres of the bush land laid down in grass. Many of the people who have settled in this favoured locality are offshoots of well-to-do Auckland families, and although they are so far away from town, they manage to make life most agreeable. Well-known names in the district are those of Messrs Bull, Seavil, Upton, McMillan, Stevenson, Allen and others. The photographs we give in this issue were taken on Mr Harold Bull's place by Mr Allen, and they give a good idea of life on a Waingaro farm. The settlers have a very live polo club, whose members always give a creditable account of themselves when the tournaments are held. Apart from its importance as a rising sheep and cattle district, Waingaro is also becoming known as the locality of some very good hot springs, which are very popular with those who have tried them.

BANDS AND BANDSMEN.

(By Presto.)

A correspondent takes me to task for my remarks re the permanent office for drum-major in the Devonport Band. I hold no brief for Devonport, and I maintain my judgment was unbiased. He says the rule was made to benefit bands like the Shore, because on certain occasions Sergt. Withers would not be allowed to be their drum-major, and if they got another man to fill the position, the sergeant could coach him, and then they would always have their own man. This argument may be all right from an outsider's point of view, but I maintain the bandsmen concerned have a right to complain, in view of the fact that professional conductors are allowed, and surely any bandsman will agree that marching is as important as playing, i.e., seeing there is a marching competition. "Trombone," in the "Canterbury Times," has some notes from an Auckland correspondent. I should judge, however, he is not very intimately acquainted with his subject, for he says that the contest committee is formed entirely of citizens. That is not so, and I think such an impression may do harm, and it is no compliment to local bandsmen. The committee is formed from the local bands, each sending three members, and also appointing three citizens. The same writer also takes exception to Mr Cater being appointed coach, remarking that Lieutenant Hunter is well qualified to look after his own men. That opinion belongs, of course, to the correspondent, but he must not overlook the fact that it was the men of the Garrison Band who asked Mr Cater to coach them, and the paragraph in question is, I take it, a slight on Mr Cater. I am confident of this, that Messrs. Hunter and Cater work in harmony, but of course some one is bound to find fault.

The Austral Champion Band Contest of Queensland was held in Toowoomba on November 8th. The test selection was "Le Domino Noir," and was won by the Gympie Town Band, with Inverell Austral Band second, and Gympie Monkland Band third. "My Pretty Jane" was the cornet solo, and the prize fell to A. E. Kerr, of Gympie. R. Hall, of Maryborough, came out top with the euphonium solo, playing "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep." The horn solo, "Will Ye No Come Back Again?" was won by J. Napier, of Gympie, with a Gympie man second and third.

When Sir Arthur Sullivan first propounded his scheme for a national band contest, very few people can have realised the rapidity of its growth (remarks a Home exchange). Only thirty-nine competing bodies could be raised in 1900, but since then the rivalry has so greatly increased that 156 bands, with 4000 performers, entered the lists on October 1 last. There were no fewer than seven separate contests in progress at the same time—some in the building, some on the outside, and others, again, in remoter parts of the ground. Chief interest, of course, was directed to a couple of dozen crack bands which competed for the thousand guinea trophy, which has to be held three years in succession before it becomes the absolute property of any set of instrumentalists. As an immediate solatium, however, there is a prize of £40 for the winning team, together with silver medals for each member. Last year the Besses o' the Barn Band was victorious, and Black Dyke took the honours twelve months earlier. Not a few of the onlookers were quite prepared to see one or the other again successful, as they were known to be in splendid form, and certainly played the selected pieces with admirable skill. But so did many of their rivals, with results that caused a very genuine surprise. It was not till late in the evening that Lieutenant Charles Godfrey and his brother judges were ready with the award, which showed that the Hebburn Colliery Band had scored most points. The Wingate Temperance Band was second, Irwell Springs third, Rushden Temperance fourth, Abertillery Silver fifth, Black Dyke sixth, and Kirkby-in-Ashfield Temperance seventh.

The famous band of the Grenadier Guards gave their farewell concert at the St. Louis Exhibition on Saturday evening, October 8, between six and eight, the concluding items being "Auld Lang Syne," "The British Grenadiers," "The Star-Spangled Banner," and "God Save the King." Over 15,000 people were present. Immediately the last strains of "God Save the King" had been played the crowd became most enthusiastic and shouted for "Three cheers for the Grenadier Guards." The cheers having been given, a speech was demanded, and Mr A. Williams very cordially complied. The Grenadier Guards had played daily for six weeks.

The Railway Department, as will be seen from an announcement in this issue, is making special provision for the holiday tourist traffic by running an extra express train between Auckland and Rotorua from December 21 to January 10.

Mr Max Pemberton's readers will be interested to learn, on the authority of the "Bookman," that some of the documents on which Mr Max Pemberton founded his very striking romance, "Beatrice of Venice," were discovered by him in a dusty old box in the shop of Mr Edwards in Marylebone-road, London. Having searched all London for an exact account of the correspondence between Napoleon and the Venetian Senate, Mr Max Pemberton discovered it in a pamphlet published in 1804, lying in an old packing case over which he stumbled when looking at Mr Edwards's shelves. Mr Pemberton declares this was the most remarkable experience he has ever had, for he just stooped down to see what the top book was, and, lo, it was the complete account of Napoleon's dealings with Venice.

The Hospital Inquiry.

THE COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

WELLINGTON, this day.

The Cabinet this morning had under its consideration the report of the Royal Commission on the Auckland Hospital, which is as follows:—

"In the year 1901, prior to the appointment of Dr. Collins, the administration of the Hospital was left in the hands of Dr. Inglis and his subordinates, and of the Honorary Staff. Owing to certain newspaper agitation, the Hospital and Charitable Aid Board determined to make a change. The Honorary Staff pressed strongly for the retention of Dr. Inglis, at an increased salary, and for the appointment of a junior surgeon and physician in addition, all to be resident at the Hospital (and consequently to be single men), the Honorary Staff continuing to perform all save the simplest operations, except in cases requiring instant assistance. This proposal the Board negatived, and an entirely new departure was taken by the appointment of Dr. Collins as Senior Medical Officer. The intention of the Board was apparently to curtail as much as possible the work and responsibility of the Honorary Medical Staff, and to place the Senior Medical Officer in a position unique in the history of any City Hospital in the colony. The effect of this has been to create friction between the Honorary Medical Staff on the one hand, and the Board and Senior Medical Officer on the other; has caused the resignation of many of the ablest men on the Honorary Staff; and has prevented others from applying for a position which is usually eagerly sought after by the first men in the profession.

Since the appointment of Dr. Collins as Senior Medical Officer, in January, 1902, there appears to have been a steady deterioration in the surgical and medical work of the Hospital, to the manifest detriment of the patients.

The generally recognised interpretation of Rule 73 has resulted in all cases of fractures and dislocation being dealt with by and under the direction of the Senior Medical Officer, and instances are not infrequent where fractures have been set and attended to by the junior resident, with disastrous results. As examples of these results we cite the cases of Colhoun, Allen, McLeod, and Peake (vide evidence pages 286, 441, and 256; also charges 21 and 18, and 1 and 2, of "Additional Charges," made by Dr. Neil in respect of these cases).

Colhoun states that he arrived at the Hospital about midnight in some date in February, 1903, with a broken arm. There should have been three medical men on the premises, but none came to see him. His arm was fixed up by a nurse for the night. Next morning Dr. Collins and Dr. Williams examined him, went away, and left the two juniors, Dr. Horsfall and Dr. Bennett, to set it. They did so, and Dr. Horsfall attended to the arm until the bone had united. Then Dr. Collins examined the arm, and found it had to be broken again, and it was broken accordingly.

William Allen arrived at the Hospital with a broken arm on February 13th, 1903, at 10.15 a.m. He endeavoured to get a doctor, but none came to examine him until 1.30. Then Dr. Collins examined the arm, and sent him upstairs to bed. The arm was set by the two juniors, Drs. Horsfall and Bennett. Ten days afterwards it was "taken down" and reset by Dr. Horsfall, assisted by a nurse. This second setting was also a failure, and a photograph thereunto appended), taken by means of the X rays (Exhibit 9), shows the reason. Allen had to return to the Hospital, and then to undergo another operation. His arm is not strong now.

John Donald McLeod was admitted into the Hospital on Saturday, the 20th February, 1904, suffering from a broken thigh. The accident happened at Waipa on the 18th February. The limb was temporarily dealt with by a local doctor, who ordered him to the Hospital. He was admitted between 5 and 6 o'clock in the evening, on Saturday, the 20th February, and the limb was not attended to until the following Monday, when it was set by Dr. Bennett, one of the junior residents, who put on a Liston splint. The broken thigh was not examined by the Senior Medical Officer until a fortnight after the admission of the patient. From that period the fracture appears to have been properly attended to. The result of the case is that the fractured limb is crooked, and is one inch and a half shorter than its fellow. The attached photograph shows the present condition of the limb (Exhibit L).

WILLIAM PEAKE'S CASE.

William Peake was admitted into the Hospital on the 31st January, 1903 suffering from a fracture of both legs and a fractured jaw. The case was admittedly a serious one. The broken jaw, which appears to have given much trouble, was set by a junior resident (Dr. Horsfall), the Senior Medical Officer ordering the Charge Nurse of the ward to tell Dr. Horsfall to put the jaw in splints. The patient was in the Hospital for six months, when, being dissatisfied with his treatment, he left, and went into a private institution. He states that a short time before leaving the Hospital he was informed by the Senior Medical Officer that the fractured limb was uniting, and that he proposed to put the leg into plaster of Paris. On his entering a private hospital it was found necessary to remove a quantity of dead bone before the fracture could possibly unite. This appears to be one of those cases where an immediate operation was absolutely necessary, and one in which every effort should have been made to procure the attendance of some member or members of the Honorary Staff to operate. We are by no means satisfied that such steps were taken. The operation was performed by the Senior Medical Officer, assisted by the junior residents, Drs. Bennett and Horsfall. The case should, under the Rule 73, have been placed under the charge of the Honorary Staff. It was a case requiring serious operative interference, and as such the sole treatment and responsibility did not under that rule rest with the Senior Medical Officer.

The patient complained of the food served to him, and also states that the visits of the Senior Medical Officer were irregular and infrequent.

It is perfectly clear to us from the evidence that the operation for the removal of dead bone, which was performed at the private hospital, should have been performed at the Public Hospital three months before the patient left it.

THE WALLIS A. WHITE CASE.

It is now our duty to report on a most serious charge against the Senior Medical Officer, Dr. Collins, made respecting the treatment and subsequent death of a patient named Wallis A. White. We find the facts proved before us to be the following:—

On the 17th May last White was brought to the Hospital dangerously ill. He was put to bed and examined by Drs. Collins and Neil. On being questioned he indicated the left side as the seat of pain, but Dr. Collins, in spite of a remonstrance from Dr. Neil, determined to perform the operation for appendicitis, in which the incision is made on the right side. That incision was made accordingly, and the appendix was found to be normal. Dr. Collins then manipulated the large intestine adjacent to the appendix. He found the intestine distended with gas, and certain faecal concretions were also present. He then made two incisions in the bowel, the upper incision was the smaller of the two, and was apparently made with a view of getting rid of the gas contained in the intestine. The lower incision was situated about an inch and a half above the place where the appendix leaves the bowel, and from this orifice he extracted two faecal concretions each about the size of a walnut. He stated in his examination before Dr. MacGregor that these concretions were not sufficient to cause obstruction of the bowel. After suturing these two incisions; and the incision over the appendicular region, he made the median incision, in order to ascertain the position of any perforation that existed—the existence of a perforation somewhere being at that stage of the proceedings apparent. He also stated in his examination before Dr. MacGregor, at the departmental inquiry, that he found the anterior wall of the stomach very friable, and having three perforations in it, and that he had great difficulty in uniting them. The post-mortem examination disclosed the fact that there was only one perforated ulcer in the duodenum. After suturing that ulcer he then proceeded to put a line of stitches or sutures in a portion of the stomach wall, where no ulcer existed; this line of sutures was situated near the small curvature of the stomach, and apparently the sutures included a portion of the small omentum. The sutures were put in the stomach wall at a point where it was clearly proved no ulcer could have existed, the post-mortem examination showing that the stomach was an unulcerated one, and that there was no evidence of any ulceration, except the one perforated ulcer in the duodenum, which is not, strictly speaking, a portion of the stomach. The median incision was then closed, and the patient carried upstairs to bed, after having been two hours on the operating table. He died two days afterwards. We are unanimously of opinion that the reliable evidence before us shows:—(1) That the incision for appendicitis ought not to have been made; this, however, is stated to have been a mistake which even a skilful surgeon might make. (2) That the two incisions in the intestines near the appendix were both of them most dangerous and unnecessary. (3) That the sutures above referred to put by Dr. Collins in a stomach, which was proved to be an unulcerated one, can only be characterised as wanton and uncalled-for surgery, without any justification whatever, and that the time taken up by that portion of the operation apparently lessened the patient's chances of life. (4) That though the patient on his admission to the Hospital was in a very dangerous condition owing to the perforated ulcer in the duodenum, he had a chance of life which was seriously diminished by the malpractice of Dr. Collins. (5) That in order to conceal his malpractice, he falsely stated to Dr. MacGregor at the departmental inquiry that he found the anterior wall of the stomach very friable, and having three perforations in it, and that he had great difficulty in uniting them. Dr. Craig at the same inquiry stated that Dr. Collins "explored the stomach, which presented three ruptured ulcers, one of which was one and a half inches long, the edges were of such a friable nature that they could not hold the sutures." Dr. Parkes stated at the same inquiry: "Here in the stomach I saw two perforations (not three), the larger an opening at least an inch long." With statements of this nature before us, we should have felt great difficulty in arriving at any satisfactory conclusion. Fortunately the exhumation of the body of Wallis White was ordered by the Colonial Secretary. The post-mortem was conducted by Drs. Savage and Full, and the stomach and intestines were preserved and shown to us. Both of these gentlemen gave us much valuable testimony, and their evidence coupled with our own personal examination of the specimens enabled us to judge of the value of conflicting testimony in this matter. The stomach and inclosed intestines have been sealed up and delivered to the Inspector of Police.

ETHEL MAUDE McINDOE.

One of the charges made against the Senior Medical Officer was that he had performed the operation of hysterectomy upon Ethel Maud McIndoe, and that the operation was unnecessary and unjustifiable. A careful investigation of this charge showed that the operation was performed by Dr. Parkes, one of the honorary staff, assisted by Dr. Collins. The conclusion to which we are led by the expert medical evidence is that the diagnosis of the disease was, under the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the case, a reasonable one, and that the operation was justifiable. In addition to the cases above mentioned, numerous complaints were made against the Senior Medical Officer as regards surgical practice. We do not consider it is necessary to discuss these complaints in detail; some were apparently abandoned, as no evidence was led in respect of them, while others appeared, when investigated, to be of little or no importance. Those complaints which refer to the absence of the Senior Medical Officer from the Hospital, his perfunctory attendance in the wards, and his actions as regards the pathological laboratory will be dealt with under the head of general administration of the Hospital.

CONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD.

The Board is elected annually, and a continuous policy (so necessary to the proper management) is impossible. It is also complained that the Board is not a suitable body to manage a Hospital, as its functions include dealing with questions of charitable aid. This latter complaint can be met by the creation of the Hospital into a separate institution, in accordance with Sections 42 and 43 of "The Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act, 1885."

To meet the first mentioned difficulty we suggest an alteration of the Statute whereby the Board in the first instance would be elected for three years, and thereafter a certain proportion of the members (say one-third) should retire annually, in rotation. It should consist of representatives elected by the local bodies and nominated by the Government, and provision should be made whereby there should always be at least one medical man on the Board.

PRESENT CONDITION OF THE HOSPITAL BUILDINGS AND SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS.

The present condition of the Hospital buildings, both as regards the buildings themselves, with the exception of the Children's Hospital and the Nurses' Home, is far from satisfactory. The main, or old, building consists of a basement and two upper storeys. The basement is in a highly insanitary condition, cold, damp and cheerless. It is in this portion of the building that the padded rooms, for what may be termed semilunatics and delirium tremens cases, are situated. The next floor, in which the first tier of wards and the operating room are found, is entered by a double flight of stone stairs, up which all patients have either to walk or be carried. The accident ward is on this floor. The large wards on each floor are in their construction entirely out of date, and, as regards their construction, devoid of those safeguards which modern science considers of first importance, especially as regards surgical cases. The lavatories are in a very insanitary condition, the bathrooms small, and inconveniently situated, and the arrangements as regards privacy, both in the male and female lavatories, are of the most imperfect character. The operating room can only be regarded as a makeshift. It is a small room, lighted only from one end, possessing none of those safeguards from septic influences which modern surgical science imperatively demands. There is no separate room in which to administer anaesthetics, no withdrawing or dressing-room for the surgeons. The patient must be brought into the room partially clothed, in full view of the surgeons surrounded by the instruments which are to be used upon his or her body. In short, the modern surgical requirements are conspicuous by their absence. There is no lift, and the patients have to be carried up or down flights of steps, to and from the operating room. A large and up-to-date operating theatre is in course of construction as an adjunct to the Children's Hospital, which has been constructed from the Costley bequest. This building, with its operating theatre, is situated about one hundred and fifty yards from the main Hospital, and between the Hospitals is situated an old wooden building known as the fever, or typhoid, wards. It is proposed to remove this, and to construct on or near its site new and expensive surgical wards, connected by a covered corridor with the new operating theatre. It is absolutely necessary that either this should be done or a new and up-to-date operating theatre should be constructed in connection with the old building. The former course is, we consider, the best, as it would be almost impossible to render any of the wards of the old buildings sufficiently aseptic for surgical work; it would be out of the question to carry patients to and from the old building to the new operating theatre for operation. Next to the Children's Hospital is the Nurses Home, and beyond that is the new building intended for the residence of the Senior Medical Officer. This could no doubt be utilised in other directions. In another portion of the grounds are suitable buildings intended for possible small-

pox and plague outbreaks. We beg to strongly recommend that the alterations to the old main Hospital building, urgently required, should be immediately undertaken, under the supervision of a competent architect, subject to the approval of the head of the Hospital Department. These alterations should, in our opinion, consist of:

1. A lift connecting all the floors of the Hospital with the basement. We are informed that a hand-lift, which could easily be manipulated, could be erected for from £200 to £300. 2. The demolishing of the tower stairways, and the inclusion of the space so obtained in lavatories and bath-rooms. 3. The erection of an up-to-date operating theatre in connection with the main building, if the new surgical wards contemplated, and above referred to, are not at once erected; and 4. Some attempt to render more sanitary the main wards. In this connection we consider it is of the utmost importance that all plans and proposals to improve the present building, or to erect new wards of any kind or description, should be referred to the Government Hospital Department for consideration and approval before the public money is spent upon them. We consider that the spending of large sums of money by an annually elected Board, which can in the nature of things have no continuous policy, is vicious in the extreme, and is likely to result in the waste of public funds. Under the Harbour Boards Act and the Tramway and other Acts, we find that before the expenditure of public money can take place, such expenditure must receive the consideration and sanction of Government departments, and we fail to see why the expenditure of public moneys in hospital improvements, half of which is contributed directly from the consolidated fund, should be exempted from this salutary check on expenditure.

LUNATICS.

There appears to be great difficulty in dealing with cases of mental disease, which are just on the borderland of absolute insanity. In most of such cases physicians will not certify that they are lunatics, and consequently they cannot be committed to an asylum; but their relatives or friends refuse, or are unable, to take charge of them, and bring them to the public hospital, where there is no proper accommodation for patients of this class. From the evidence before us, it appears that they are usually placed in the typhoid ward, and that persons suffering from delirium tremens are sent there also. The semi-lunatics are a source of constant disquiet to the fever patients, whom they occasionally attack, and the raving of a man in delirium tremens disturbs everyone in the building.

We consider the practice of placing patients of either class among sufferers from typhoid is most reprehensible. At other central hospitals such patients are rarely admitted, and, if admitted, they are sent elsewhere as early as possible.

THE RELATIONS OF THE SENIOR MEDICAL OFFICER AND THE HONORARY STAFF.

It is recognised as sound hospital practice that the authority of the honorary staff should be supreme in medical and surgical as distinguished from administrative matters. The resident officers are always in such matters subject to the honorary staff. This practice obtains, so far as we can learn, in all large hospitals throughout the colonies. If, therefore, a departure is made from a practice so universal, it lies strongly on those making the change to justify it on substantial grounds. About two years ago such a departure was made. The Board, by Rule 37, constituted the Senior Medical Officer the medium of communication between the staff and the Board, and by another rule (No. 74) gave him the privilege of attending meetings of the honorary staff, whilst the Senior Medical Officer, by insidious methods, such as calling the staff to useless consultations, and minor operations, and appropriating to himself many of the major operations, on the plea of emergency, sought to make himself, and not the honorary staff, supreme in matters medical and surgical. The advantages of placing the honorary staff in the position of responsibility in these matters are: (1) The sick poor receive the benefit of best professional skill, and (2) the doctors in attendance have the advantage of the collective wisdom of their brethren on the staff. The disadvantage of placing the Senior Medical Officer in supreme control is, judging by the present enquiry, that all difficult cases have a tendency to fall under the exclusive care of the resident, and such members only of the honorary staff as the former may choose to call to his assistance. One result of the change has been that the members of the honorary staff have not unreasonably been forced to the conclusion that they can only continue in office by sacrificing their self-respect, and the majority of them have accordingly resigned.

The reasons given by the Board for this departure from sound and recognised methods are of the flimsiest character, namely: (1) That it is improper that young and unmarried men, such as residents usually are, should have the duty cast on them of attending married women; and (2) that complaints against the honorary staff have appeared in the leading and correspondence columns of the local press. The first of these reasons is so ludicrous that it only requires to be stated to make obvious the ground of its rejection; and as to the second, it does not appear that proper investigations were ever made to discover that any justification existed. The Board would seem to have been satisfied with the mere making of the complaint, coupled with such imperfect knowledge as its members may have happened to possess. In all hospitals large enough to require an honorary staff, it should be insisted that the authority of that staff should be supreme in the before-mentioned matters, and no departure from this policy should be possible without the concurrence of some central authority, preferably the Minister in charge of the department.

The present system under which a senior medical officer has supreme command of the Hospital having utterly failed, it appears to us advisable to recommend the adoption of that which is usual in most central hospitals, namely, the appointment of two junior surgeons and one physician, who should be unmarried, and should reside on the premises, and should be subject in all medical and surgical matters to the honorary staff. The latter should perform all important operations, saving only those of emergency, *i.e.*, those that require instant treatment. The cost of this, we are informed, would be less than that of the disastrous arrangement now in force, and the ablest surgeons and physicians in Auckland, relieved from the incubus imposed upon them by the present rules, would not only be willing, but anxious, to serve on the honorary staff.

ALLEGED IRREGULAR ATTENDANCES OF THE SENIOR MEDICAL OFFICER.

The fact that no provision was made at the Hospital for the residence of a medical officer, and that in consequence Dr. Collins resided at a distance from the institution, will fully account for these irregularities.

AS TO MAJOR OPERATIONS.

These operations are required to be performed by and to be under the control of the honorary surgeons, after consultation (see Rules 21 and 36). Where the case is an urgent one, the Senior Medical Officer has a discretion to decide whether an immediate operation is necessary, but the ultimate responsibility of the operation rests with the honorary surgeon, who takes charge immediately on his arrival (see Rule 72). An exception is made in the case of fractures and dislocations (Rule 73), but even in such cases, where the honorary surgeon expresses a wish to take charge of the case, or it is one requiring operative interference, responsibility rests solely with that official. There can be no doubt that the rules cited have been persistently misconstrued and ignored by the Senior Medical Officer, who has taken charge of cases which should have been dealt with by the honorary staff. His conduct in this respect has had the tacit consent of the Board.

BACTERIOLOGY.

There is a skilled bacteriologist at the hospital, Dr. Frost, and it appears that her work has been considerably interfered with by the Senior Medical Officer. We are of opinion that the culture by the latter of bacilli, and specially of the anthrax bacillus, was fraught with danger to the patients whom he attended, and should have been most strictly prohibited.

As an example of the interference of the Senior Medical Officer, we may adduce the case of Miss Guthrie. It was suspected that she was suffering from tuberculosis, and Dr. Frost was requested to examine her sputum for the bacillus of that disease. She did so on ten different occasions, and the result was negative. Dr. Collins, however, gave it as his opinion to the honorary staff that the bacillus was present, and a recommendation was consequently made with respect to the treatment of that patient which might have resulted in her being sent to the Sanatorium for Consumptives at Cambridge.

ADMISSION OF PATIENTS.

The practice at present prevailing is not to admit any patient except in cases of accident, or palpably serious illness, without an order of admission obtained from some doctor. This practice, which was introduced at the request of the local contributing bodies, and is contrary to rules 13, 140 and 141, has entailed needless suffering to patients who have presented themselves for admission. These have not infrequently been seen by a porter, and refused admission until the prescribed order was obtained. The applicant, to procure this, has been compelled to travel some considerable distance in search of the Board's dispenser, or some other doctor, to whom a fee would probably be payable for examination. We fail to see why one of the resident staff (all of whom should never be absent from the Hospital at the same time) should not determine whether the proposed patient should or should not be admitted.

FEES PAYABLE BY PATIENTS.

By the 71st section of the Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act, 1885, the Board may claim from patients contributions according to their means. The primary intention of the Legislature is to make public Hospitals a place for the treatment of the sick poor, whilst not absolutely excluding the well-to-do. The practice of the Board has been to charge a fixed rate of 4/8 per day to rich and poor alike. This practice is in contravention of rules 142 and 143, as well as of the Statute. In the great majority of cases, however, the fixed rate has been either wholly or partially remitted. It cannot be said this is a compliance with either the Act or the rules, because once it is established a patient can afford to pay the prescribed rate, he is liable for that rate, whatever his pecuniary position may be. It must be noted that repeated demands were made for payment until the amount due is either paid, or, on application to the Board, remitted. This practice had had a two-fold effect—first, it has tended to keep the deserving poor out of the Hospital, and has retarded the recovery of those who have entered, by reason of the moral compulsion to pay, which the fixed rate has imposed on this class. (2) It has encouraged a not inconsiderable number of well-to-do, who are about 20 per cent. of the total number of patients, to make use of the Hospital, to the occasional exclusion of the poor. The reason the well-to-do under present circumstances avail themselves of the Hospital is obvious—the charge made is not even an adequate return for the board, lodging, and nursing, whilst the services of the staff, resident and honorary, inclusive of operations, are obtained free. The proper course would be to let it be generally known that in deserving cases no charge whatever is made, and that when a charge is made, it is in accordance with a rate fixed with reference to the means of the patient. Under such a rule the well-to-do would either be content to be treated in their own homes or they would seek the comparative seclusion of a private hospital. It must be here noted that whilst 20 per cent. of the patients admitted are of the well-to-do class, only seven per cent. of the total number admitted make any compensation to the Board. It thus appears that a certain proportion of those who are able to pay are not compelled to contribute anything towards the maintenance and medical attendance they have received in the Hospital. There is, thus, not only a loss to the Board, but the reception of so large a proportion of the well-to-do materially adds to the capital cost and upkeep of the institution.

DISMISSAL OF DR. NEIL.

Dr. Neil, it must be observed, was a member of the honorary staff, and the question whether this dismissal was justifiable depends on the further question whether Dr. Collins' method of operation in the case of Wallis White was in accordance with sound surgery. We have already reported it was not. No doubt the ground taken by the Board, after an inquiry had been held, was that Dr. Neil had approached its chairman (Mr. Garland) about the case. It was also complained that the doctor had been absent from duty for seven days, without leave, in contravention of rule 12. These grounds of dismissal were merely ostensible. There is in evidence a statement by the chairman, made at a prior meeting of the Board, that if he were a member next year he would do his duty and move a resolution in the direction of getting rid of the honorary staff, and it would seem from the manner in which the inquiry was conducted, and from the various reasons from time to time put forth by Mr. Garland for the dismissal, that it was determined on by the Board before ever the inquiry was held. In our opinion the dismissal, assuming the Board had power to dismiss, was without any justification. Taking the view that Dr. Neil did of Wallis White's operation—a view which the evidence has borne out—it was not only the doctor's privilege, but his duty, to at once communicate with the chairman, and it must not be forgotten that the only justification for the Board's arriving at the conclusion that Dr. Neil was absent without leave was his omission to sign the honorary staff's attendance book, as required by rule 16, an omission which the doctor satisfactorily explained to the Board.

FOOD SUPPLIED TO PATIENTS.

A large number of the witness s having been patients in the Hospital, complained to us of the quality of the food supplied to them. They described the fish as frequently rotten, and served with the scales on, and the fowls served with feathers. Other patients, on the contrary, stated that the food was all that could be desired. We do not expre s any definite opinion as to the quality of the food. Its inspection is, by Rule 68, cast on the Senior Medical Officer. This duty was relegated by him to the house steward. The matron of the Hospital should, we think, be charged with this duty. Her knowledge of the requirements of the different wards would, we conceive, enable her to perform it satisfactorily, and, moreover, it appears to us to be much more the province of a woman than a man to superintend the distribution of the food to the patients.

HYPODERMIC INJECTIONS.

It was proved that in one ward the male nurse or wardsman was in the habit of leaving open the cupboard containing poisons during his frequent absence s, and that it was a common practice for one patient to administer hypodermic injections to others. Such dangerous carelessness deserves severe reprobation.

OUT-PATIENTS' DEPARTMENT.

One of the complaints of the Auckland division of the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association is that there has been a recurring tendency to the erection of an out-patients' department in spite of the rules against it. There is no out-patient department in the Hospital itself. Rule 163, which deals with the matter, appears to be strictly followed. There is a pharmacy, which is situated about a mile from the Hospital, where persons of stricten d means can attend and receive medical advice and medicine gratis. We think this is a very satisfactory arrangement, and that no objection can possibly be taken to it.

THE MAINTENANCE OF CLINICAL RECORDS AND OTHER BOOKS OF RECORD CONNECTED WITH THE HOSPITAL.

We find that most of the Hospital records and other documents produced to us in evidence were incorrectly and carelessly kept. The entries in the clinical record books were of a most perfunctory character. In many cases the result of treatment is not given, there being merely an entry of the name and disease from which the patient was suffering. If operated upon, the word "Operation" appears, the effects of the operation one is left to imagine. The best books kept in the Hospital were those produced by the nurses. We forward as exhibits in this connection, three record books, namely, two case books, marked respectively, 1. R. H. and 2. R.H., and also what appears to be an admission book marked 3. R. H. The latter contains at page 9 an entry of the admission of Wallis White on the 18th May, 1904, case book 2, at page 146 under date 17th May, 1904, shows an entry, "White, disease necrosis, operation." There is no other entry in the name of White about that date.

The Auckland Hospital Operation book attached hereto shows on page 70 the description of the operation on Wallis White, the duration of the operation is there stated to be 40 minutes, the actual duration of the operation was 120 minutes. In case book No. 1 at page 10 is the entry of the case of Maud McIndoe. The particulars are entered in two different hand-writings, the description of the disease "fibroid tumor" which appears to be in the hand-writing of Dr. Collins, and must have been entered after the operation, is shown by the post mortem examination of the excised uterus, by Dr. Savage, to be incorrect; while the entry as to the consultation on the case, inserted below Dr. Collins' entry, is in a different hand-writing, and bears a date antecedent to the date of the operation. We refer to this as an instance of the careless and deplorable manner in which the clinical records of the Hospital have been kept. For this carelessness the Senior Medical Officer is responsible, by the Regulations of the Board (see Rule 54).

The Commission opened its sittings on October 15th, sat on 20 days, and concluded taking evidence on November 10th, 1904, having examined 93 witnesses.

Signed,

C. D. R. WARD.
R. BEETHAM.
S. E. McCARTHY.
(Seal.)

MUSIC AND DRAMA.

"Curtain-raisers," which went out of favour for a time, are being introduced again at the leading London playhouses.

The Knight-Jeffries Company, now playing in Auckland, will furnish the Christmas attraction in Wellington.

Mr Arthur Garner (says the London correspondent of the "Argus") is writing a book on "The Early History of the Australian Stage."

Miss Olga Nethersole has taken over the Shaftesbury from Mr George Musgrove. "The Prince of Pilsen" having been withdrawn.

Rudyard Kipling's story, "The Man Who Was," has been translated, in its dramatised form, into German, and is now being played at the Thalia Theatre, Hamburg.

Mr Watkin Mills and Mons. Perlovitz sailed from Perth, W.A., for England recently, after a successful series of concerts in the West Australian capital.

Historical plays, which are very popular in London just now, have had their number added to by "The Master of King's Gift," a restoration plot, at the Avenue Theatre, with Miss Lillah McCarthy in a leading part.

Mrs Brown Potter followed up her first experiment with "Forget Me Not" and "Cavalleria Rusticana." The former was to be replaced by a drama by a clergyman, the Rev Forbes Phillips, "For Church and Stage."

Mark Hambourg has been spending considerable time lately looking for new, good pianoforte work by British composers. He has been successful in his search, and at his forthcoming recitals both in England and the Continent he is going to include a group of each on his programmes.

A Vienna music-seller suggests that music should be printed in silver or gilt characters upon a dark ground similar to the lettering on the binding of books, as a preventive to the defective sight from which nearly all musicians suffer, and which probably arises from the over much reading of music as at present printed.

There is a cute suspicion abroad that the man who looped the loop at Melbourne Exhibition and missed his way once or twice in the beginning, was a more wily man than he got credit for. The idea is that it was a great advt. to miss the track and take a dive into the net once or twice. Looping the loop requires nothing but gameness, a steady nerve, and a true eye; centrifugal force does the rest.

Mr Edward Terry will shortly be married to Lady Harris, the widow of Sir Augustus Harris. The marriage will take place before Christmas, and the bride will accompany her husband on his tour in America, which will commence in January. Lady Harris's daughter, Miss Florence Harris, lately went on the stage and has been appearing in the provinces in Mrs Michael Gunn's company. We shall wish Mr and Mrs Terry every happiness.

Madame Melba is supposed to be in Paris trying to recover from the shock to her nerves occasioned last month by her motor running over and killing an old man. The chauffeur has just been sentenced by the French Court to six months' imprisonment and a fine of 200 francs. The diva meanwhile is really in London, and taking lessons from Signor Tosti every day. She has promised to sing, when in America, at Kansas City for Miss Elizabeth Parkins, who is a native of that city, and who will have a farewell concert there before proceeding to tour Australia.

Mr George Giddens, who recently returned from a long colonial tour, relates an instance of endurance by colonial playgoers. "One night—it was in New Zealand"—he says, "I was playing Mr Bloodgood, in "Are You a Mason?" Just before the curtain rose my business manager came on to the stage. 'Must have a chair,' he said. 'There's a farmer come to the box-office. He's ridden 45 miles to see the piece, and he's plastered with mud from head to foot. Wants a 5/ seat, and they're telling him he can't sit on one in his present state if he pays £5.'"

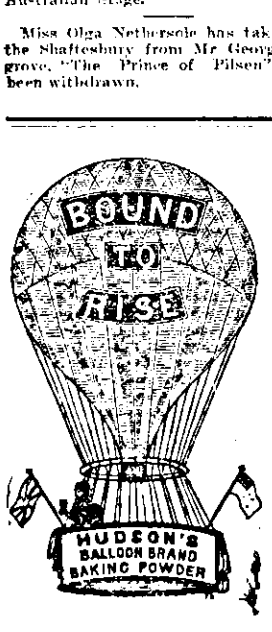
John Hollingshead, who has just died, was fond of recalling the most wonderful tour de force of its kind on record—namely, the adaptation and production of Balzac's "Mercadet" in 60 hours at the Lyceum. This was done to checkmate Benjamin Webster at the Adelphi. The book was got from Paris by the first mail on Saturday, and turned into English by George Henry Lewes, with the assistance of a staff of shorthand writers, as fast as he could dictate it. The slips were sent on to the stage, and learned and rehearsed. Rehearsals were continued through Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and on Monday night the play was produced at the theatre perfect.

A new wind instrument from Hungary, called the 'Tarogato,' has been introduced into the Bayreuth orchestra by Richter. It was employed for the interpretation of the melody towards the end of the first scene of the third act of "Tristan und Isolda," which announces the appearance of Tristan's ship on the horizon. It was written for the cor anglais, but is so unsuited to that instrument that it is usually taken by the hautbois. The general opinion of the musicians was that the tarogato gave a better result than any instrument that has yet been tried for this theme.

Mr Auguste Van Biene, who has just arranged to make a tour of the world, under the management of Mr George Musgrove, tells an interesting little story of how he came to compose the melody that he has now played thousands of times in "The Broken Melody. It suddenly came into his head as he was travelling in the train from Brighton to London, after many days of unsuccessful striving. He was talking with some friends at the time, but as the melody slowly shaped itself in his brain he could think of nothing else, and seized the first opportunity to write it down.

"The Eternal City," which drew a big house for its last presentation in Auckland on Friday has been followed by a very successful revival of "A Royal Divorce," in which Miss Jeffries makes a satisfactory Josephine. "The Sign of the Cross" follows, and then "The Silver King" closes the season. As Wilfred Denver, Mr Knight is said to be particularly interesting, giving an entirely new impersonation of the part. The best Denver we have had in the colonies was unquestionably Walter Bentley, and the worst, strange to say, Barrett, who, of course, originated the part. Titheradge was better than Bentley in certain scenes, and equalled him in most, but there were spots of genius in Bentley's earlier performances of the drama which give him the palm.

Mr W. S. Gilbert, when acting as chairman of the Edgware petty sessions recently, found fault with the fact that a man who was summoned for betting had been allowed to go on offending for three days when one offence was sufficient. Recently at that court, he said, a betting man had been fined £30, the full penalty on six summonses, and thinking the penalty excessive he had written to the Home Secretary pointing out that if the police allowed a man to bet day after day, and the magistrates continued to impose the maximum penalty of £5 for each offence, the amount of the fine would really rest with the action taken by the police, and they would become the judges. The Home Secretary replied that there was no need to permit a betting man to go on betting for several days, and added that the sum of £5 was the maximum penalty, and if there were several summonses it would be a good reason for reducing the penalty. The magistrates fined the defendant £3 on each summons. This reminds us of Mr Gilbert's alleged reply to the High Sheriff when the great librettist waited upon him in connection with his—Mr Gilbert's—appointment as a Justice of the Peace. "You have, I believe," said the Sheriff, pleasantly, "studied the law in your barrister days, and have a sound knowledge of it?" "That is true," said Mr Gilbert; "but I hope, sir, you will not consider that as an impediment!"



SHEEP FARMING AT WAINGARO.

See "Our Illustrations."

SCENES ON MR. HAROLD BULL'S FARM.

1. The wool shed. 2. Hard at work. 3. Saturday afternoon. 4. In time for the rise in wool. 5. Some of the flock. 6. Shearing time. 7. The Waingaro team puts in some practice. 8. A corner of the station.

ROVERS, SENIORS, WINNERS OF THE THAMES RUGBY UNION CHAMPION CUP.

BACK ROW:—R. Keating, T. Cooper (v.p.), W. Choat, H. Williams. MIDDLE ROW:—W. Sullivan (v.p.), N. Sandford (v.p.), B. Sandford, J. Dunlop, S. Baker, C. Quarterman, G. Smith. FRONT ROW:—A. P. Donslin (v.p.), C. McDuff, S. Dodson, W. McCollum (capt.), H. Hayward, C. Winder, W. Scott (pres.), Master McDuff.

Walter Chester, photo., Thames. ROVERS, FIRST JUNIORS, WINNERS OF THE THAMES RUGBY UNION CHAMPION CUP.

BACK ROW: W. Quarterman, J. Keating, S. Rae, P. Ryan, T. Watson. THIRD ROW: W. Elvin, J. Hedley, T. P. Williams, R. Cox, S. Wright, C. Smith, J. Cox. SECOND ROW: W. Chambers (pres.), H. Williams (hon. secy.), A. Maxwell, J. Stewart (captain), E. Rae, R. Smith, J. Dodson (line umpire). FRONT ROW: F. Cross, S. Hedley (mascotte), C. Rickit.

A STORY WITHOUT WORDS.

"SOON WE'LL BE IN LONDON TOWN, AND SEE THE KING IN A GOLDEN CROWN."

Study by Reid, of Windsor.

A GREAT BATTLE.

GRAPHIC ACCOUNT OF FIGHT AT LIAO-YANG.

By FREDERICK PALMER.

[Mr. Palmer has been with the Japanese First Army, under General Kuroki, ever since it landed in Corea last spring. He was present at the battle of the Yalu, and at all the subsequent engagements fought by this command, and was an eye-witness to the battle of Liao-Yang, which he characterises as "the greatest battle since Gettysburg."]

For five months the First Army had not seen the sea, a plain, or a railroad train. When we fought, it was over hills and ridges; when we camped, it was in twisting valleys. On August 24 we were still at Tiensuitien, which is twenty miles from Liao-Yang. Before we might fight in the great battle we must fight two battles of our own. Before Kuroki could swing into line with Oku and Nodzu, and the three converging columns should form an intact force, we must take a chain of majestic heights on either side of the armpit-deep Tang River

In that advance, the Second Division —the men of Sendai and northern Japan—formed the centre, the Imperial Guards our left, and the Twelfth our right. On the night of the 25th, when, a week's rations in my saddlebag, I spread my blanket under a tree, the Thirtieth Regiment was resting on a road nearby. I knew the Thirtieth of old. Its commander, Colonal Baba, stepped out of a twelfth century Japanese screen into a modern uniform. Two of his companies repulsed the first Russian approach on Motien Pass, and then pursued twice their numbers. Again, on July 30, one of his lieutenants, scouting a hilltop, came back yelling in boyish glee: "Slip your packs and hurry up! The whole Russian army is in the valley on the other side."

A RUSSIAN TRENCH CAPTURED BY THE JAPANESE IN A NIGHT ATTACK.

The first great battle to be fought with modern arms showed that the fate of great campaigns still depends on brute courage and brute butchery. Most of the critical points in the defence of Liao-Yang were taken by night attacks. In some instances the Russians, having lost a position, made a successful counter, and the Japanese, surging back, again regained it. The bodies of white and yellow men were mingled under the feet of the living, who thrust at each other with the bayonet. The dead were buried by shovelling the parapet of the trench into the ditch.

Copyright photographs from Collier's Weekly.

PUNISHED FOR LOOTING.

The Japanese are sharp with thieves. This looter was caught in the act in Liao-Yang, and were strung up for two hours as an example.

The Sendai men wanted nothing better than that. They did hurry—like mad. Gasping from their climb, they snuggled down to work with their rifles. Vainly the Russians deployed and three times vainly charged. When the Sendai men came to count dead and prisoners there were more than a thousand —not to mention the shelter tents and other spoils of a whole regiment. The commander of the battalion of the Thirtieth, which was engaged, doubtless apologised, Japanese fashion, for not getting more.

On the threshold of the first desperate charge—beginning an orgy of danger and of physical and mental strain without precedent—these veterans sat chatting softly and smoking cigarettes. Each had a white band around his arm, a barge to prevent fatal mistakes in a dash on a pass in the dark. And I was lulled to sleep by the murmur of their talk, and awoke with the sound of guns, to learn that their night attack had succeeded.

As ever in the First Army's career, we were in the valley and the Russians were on the hills which we must take. Northeast by southwest ran one long and intact ridge of the height of a thousand feet or more. One end of this we had won in the dark; that was the key. My favourite mountain battery, also a famous night worker, had here burrowed emplacements for its guns on the flank of the Russian trenches. Its ponies and ammunition train were well sheltered in a gully. Part way up the hillside in dips, where the enemy could not see them, was our infantry getting into position for the attack. Our movement was to sweep to the west, and thus wheel upon the whole length of the crest which the Russian infantry held.

The Japanese Advance.

On one of the ribs of the ridge which descended to the valley, I could see the smoke of the volleys of a detached Russian trench. The long summit above, with its boulders clear against the skyline, had three cones. Now the men who were advancing toward these by single file in three columns were not firing. Each had the cover of some rib that rose above the line of the general slope, and was more or less at an angle with the line of the crest. The man at the head of each column carried a little Japanese flag, and all had their rifles swung at ease. The manner of their advance seemed to say:

"We're quite used to this now. You'll catch a few of us, we know, but we'll take the hill—and that's what we were sent to do."

FOUR CANET GUNS CAPTURED BY THE JAPANESE AT NANSHAN HILL, AND DRAGGED 150 MILES BY HAND, IN ACTION AGAINST THE RUSSIANS AT LIAO-YANG.

They were the men with the ball. Their "interference" was the incessant rifle-fire poured over their heads by detachments posted at high points. Meanwhile, the little red-centred flags were steadily waved, so that the "interference" should never mistake friend for foe. These flags seemed animate, as if they were sweating and stumbling and righting themselves again as they picked their way over the rough, steep ground.

The most western column was advancing underneath, and in a line parallel to that of the Russian trench on the rib. The top of this trench was scraped by a sheet of flying lead, which some of my friends of the Thirtieth Regiment were weaving from a rib about a thousand yards away; and that is why the Russians could not take advantage of a mark fairly under the muzzles of their rifles. Some did not even realise their danger in time. When the head of the column swept over the parapet, a dozen figures sprang up as abruptly as so many jacks-in-the-box. The surprise was as sudden as the meeting of two men with umbrellas lowered at a street corner. Only the Russians were not at all embarrassed as to the proper thing to do. Their hands went up at the same time as their heads.

The Storming of a Trench.

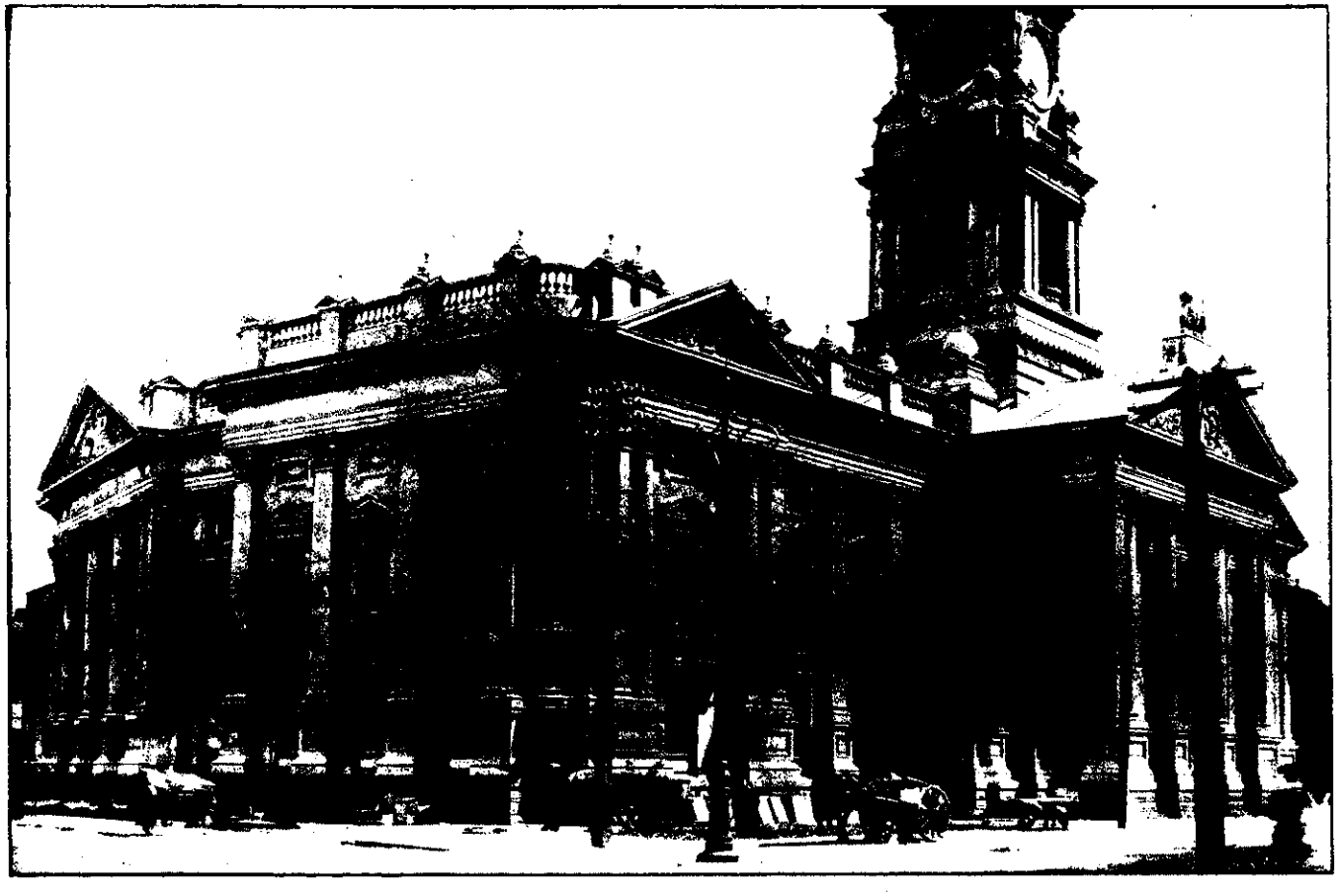
Having cut the car out at the siding, the train went on. Only half a dozen Japanese had entered the trench. They left one of their number to guard the prisoners. Then they rejoined the line, which, without seeming curious or interested, passed underneath the trench —according to programme. The incident was significant of the mind and the method of the Japanese army.

Five hundred yards from the summit the three columns took their final breathing spell and came together in three groups for the assault, while the little flags fluttered in the bushes that gave them cover. The mountain battery which had been quiet now realised the psychological moment for which it had been prepared by hours of

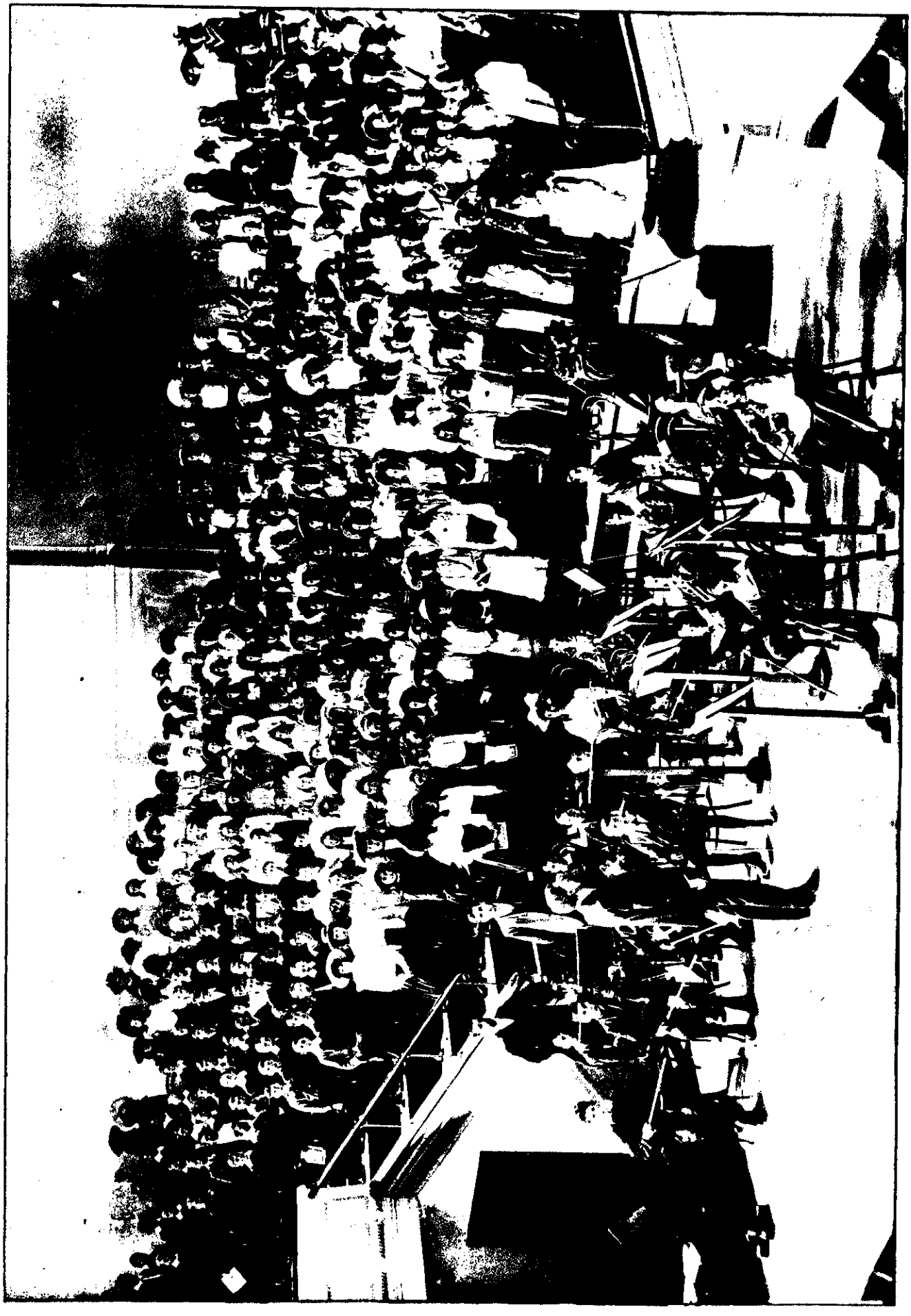
(Continued on page 45.)

SOLDIERS OF KUROKI'S ARMY BUILDING A FUNERAL PYRE PREPARATORY TO BURYING THEIR DEAD.

SPECTATORS AT THE WELLINGTON ATHLETIC CLUB'S MEETING, NOVEMBER 26.



WELLINGTON'S FINE NEW TOWN HALL, TO BE OPENED DECEMBER 7. A view taken from the corner of Cuba and Victoria streets.
Schaef, Eureka Studios, photo.



Choir of Children to Sing at the Opening of Wellington's New Town Hall.

Schaef, Savoy Studios, photo.

IN THE TWO-MILE BICYCLE RACE.

R. M. FRASER GETS A LEG HOLD ON TO C. STEVENS IN THE WRESTLING EVENT.

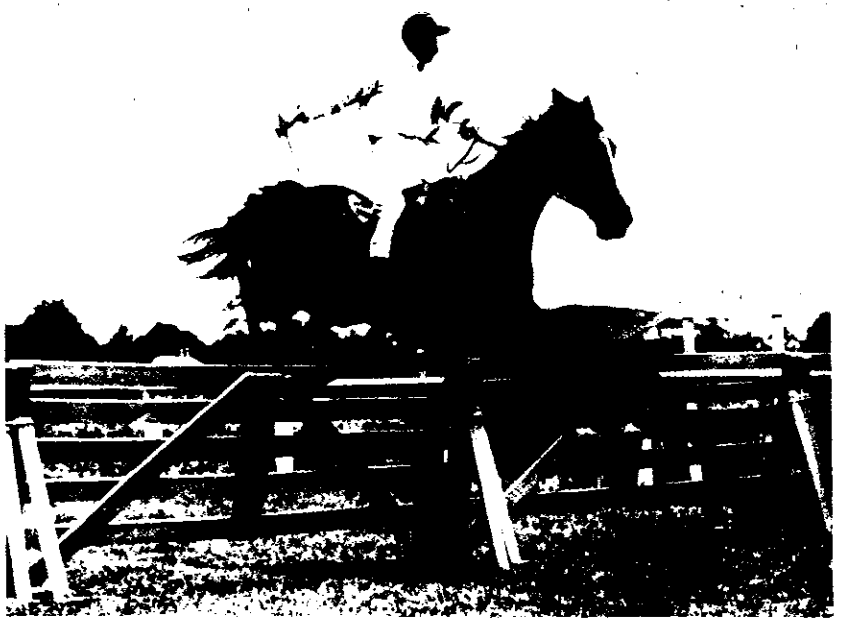
FIRST TIME ROUND IN THE HALF-MILE.

FINAL IN THE YOUTHS' 100YDS—R. SPRAGUE WINNING FROM A. J. O'DRISCOLL.

AUCKLAND AMATEUR SPORTS CLUB'S MEETING.

MRS. M. ROSS' ST. ROWAN, SHOWING MR. J. B. WILLIAMSON'S IRISH OVER THE HURDLE.

MR. F. B. ROSS' GWENIAD AND MR. R. HANNON'S LIBERATOR, RETURNING TO SCALE AFTER THE STANLEY HANDICAP.



MR. R. HANNON'S BELLMAN, WHICH FINISHED SECOND IN THE SECOND HANDICAP HURDLES.

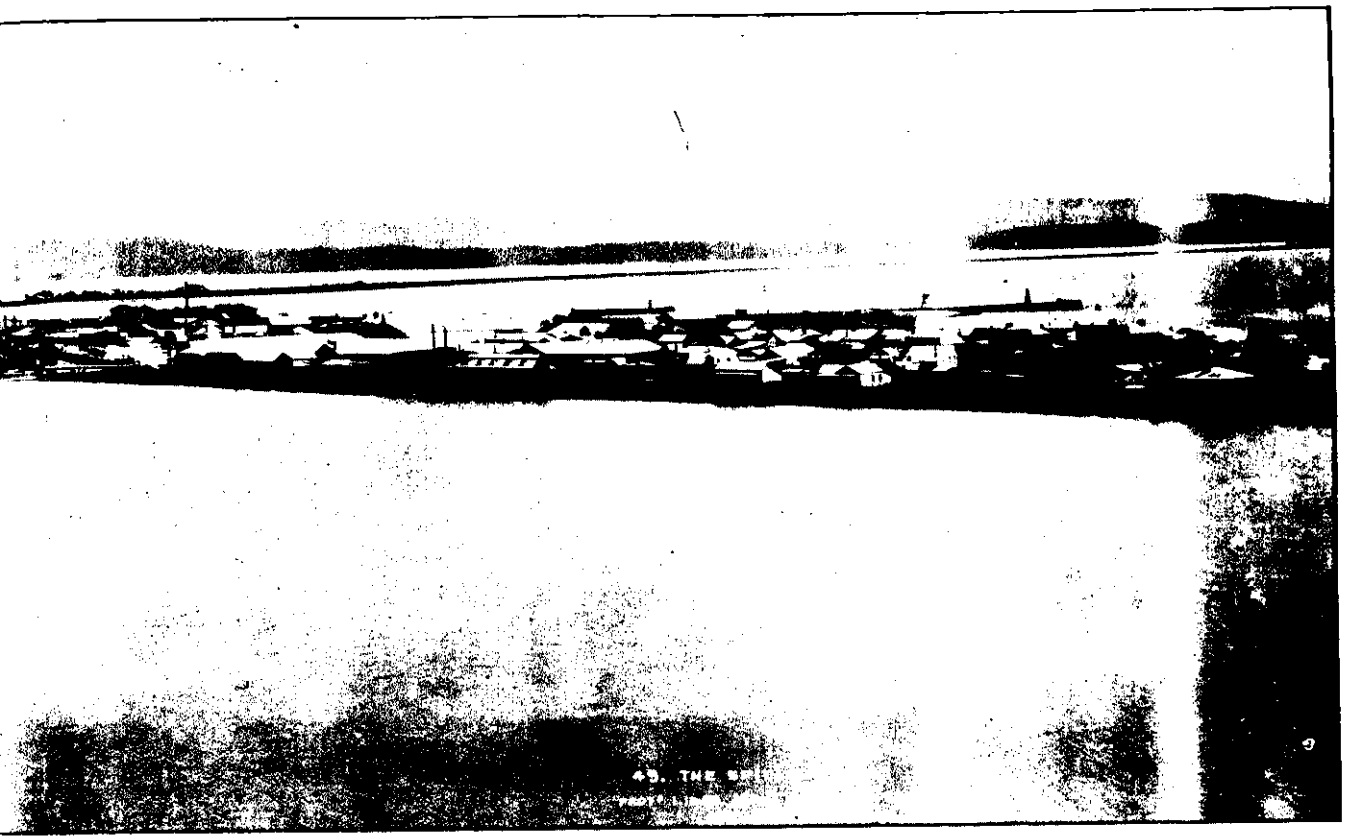
BRISK SPECULATION.

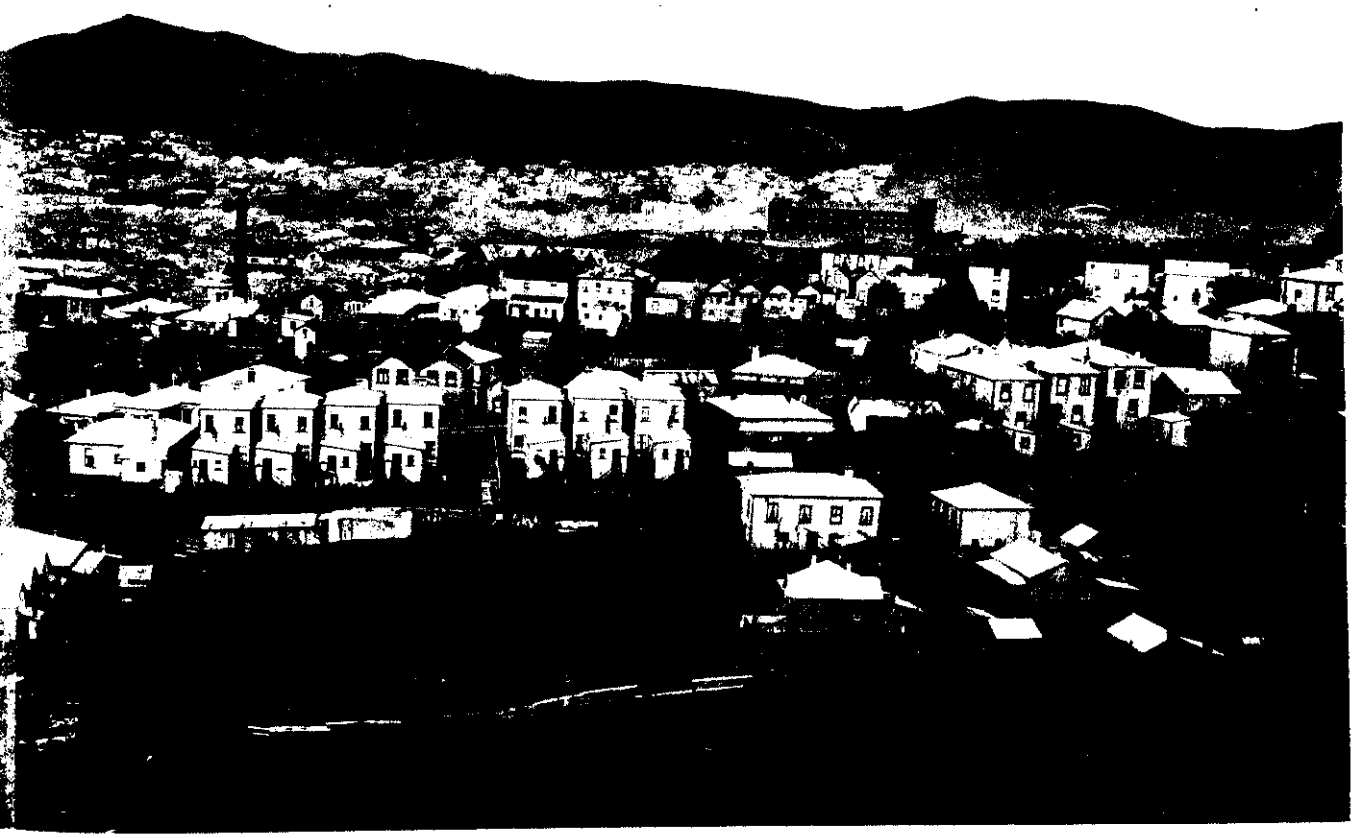
TAKAPUNA JOCKEY CLUB'S SUMMER MEETING.

Muir and Moodie, photo. THE SPIT,

Schaef, Sarony Studios, photo. THE LATEST VIEW OF

Two New Panoramic Views of





ON—THE TE ARO END.

sperous New Zealand Cities.

THE PEOPLE OF HAMELIN THREATEN THE MAYOR WITH DIRE TROUBLE IF HE DOES NOT GET RID OF THE RATS.

THE PIED PIPER COMES TO THE RESCUE.

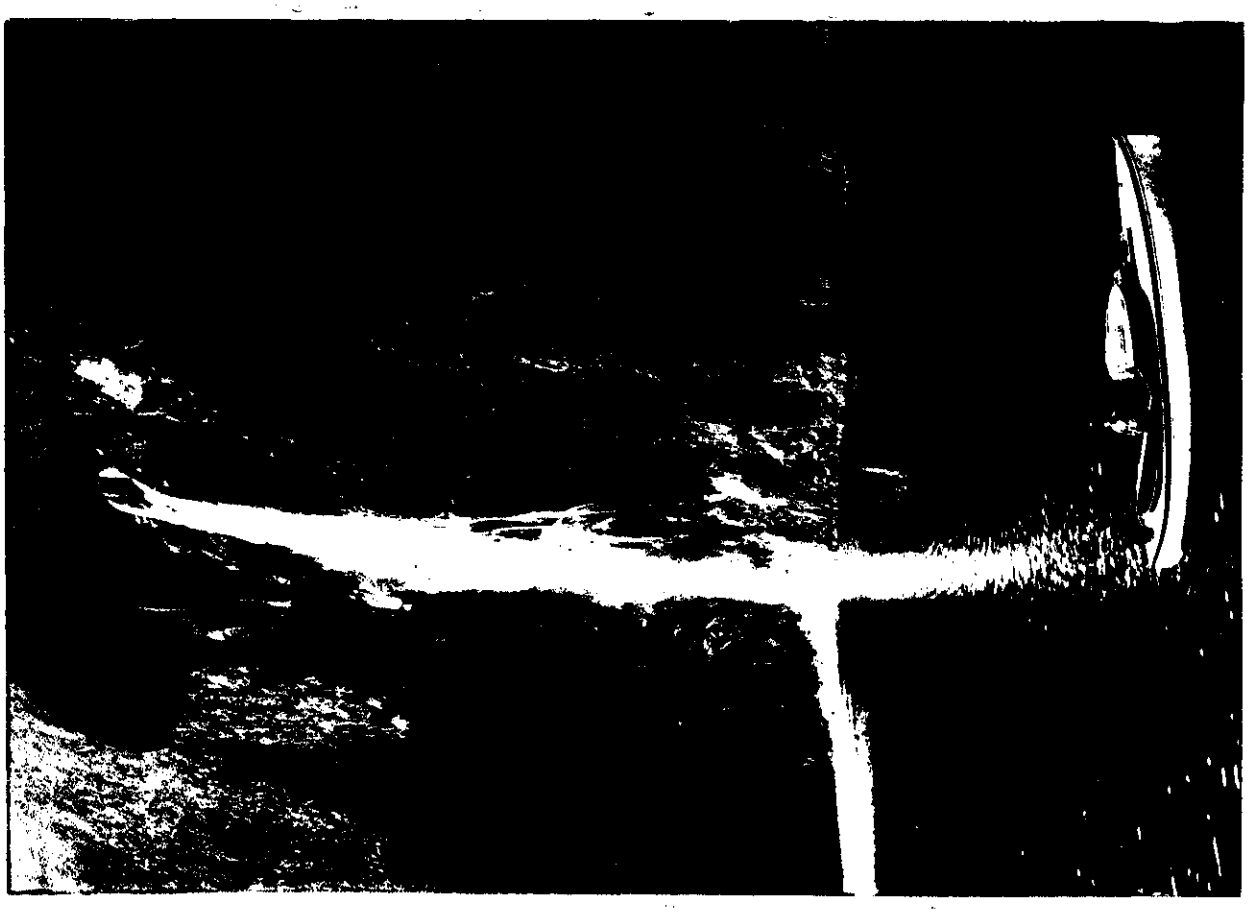
HIS OFFERS BEING REJECTED, THE PIED PIPER CHARMS THE CHILDREN AWAY INSTEAD.

BREAKING-UP DAY AT THE DIOCESAN GIRLS' SCHOOL, AUCKLAND.

"THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN" ON THE LAWN.

SIGNING THE TREATY OF WAITANGI.

This striking scene forms one of the panels of Wellington's statue to Queen Victoria which is being sculptured by Mr. A. Drury, A.R.A., who executed Auckland's statue to the late Queen.



IN FIORDLAND.

THE STERLING FALLS, MILFORD SOUND.

Tourist Department, photo.

THE BAYS—Messrs. A. Hanna, C. S. Baker, E. Clark and C. E. Purchas, who beat THE CHESTNUTS—Messrs. C. Crowther, E. D. O'Rorke, Dr. Maitland and Harold Cotter.

A RATHER GOOD JOKE.

THE VICE REGAL PARTY.

WATCHING PLAY.

AFTERNOON TEA.

Opening of the Polo Season at Auckland.

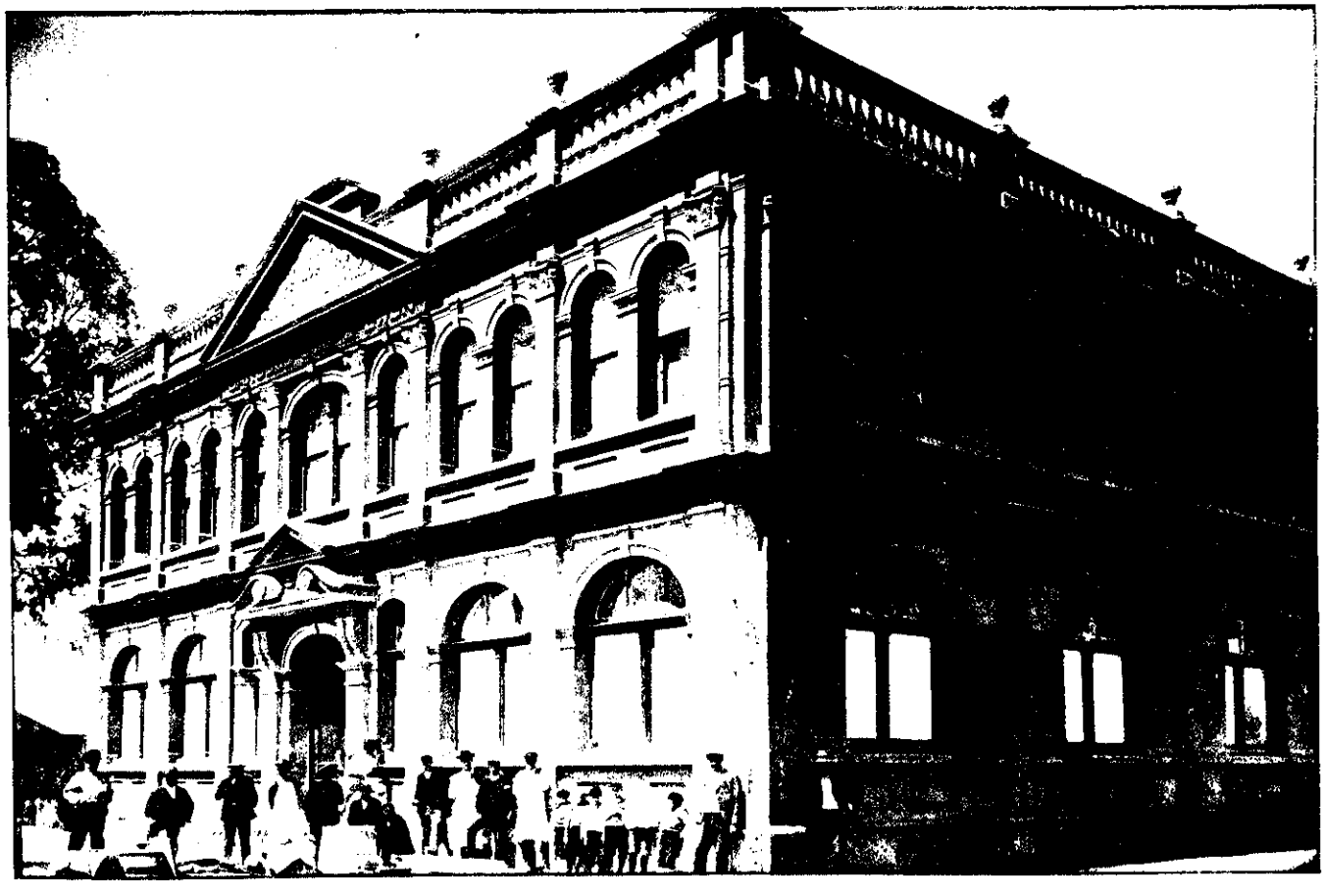
THE RECENT PRICE-BLUNDELL WEDDING AT WELLINGTON. From left to right: Mrs. Wills, Mrs. Wheeler, Miss Wheeler, Mr. T. Tripe, the bridegroom (Mr. W. H. Price), the bride (Miss I. Blundell), Mr. H. Blundell, Miss M. Brown, Mr. John Blundell, Mrs. J. Blundell.
Wrigglesworth and Binns, photo.

See "Our Illustrations." NAVY LEAGUE DINNER TO MR. H. F. WYATT ON HIS RETURN TO LONDON. Jack and Co., photos., London

NORTHCOTE AND BIRKENHEAD BAZAAR.

THIS SUCCESSFUL GATHERING WAS GIVEN IN AID OF THE VICARAGE RESTORATION FUND.

Hanna, photo. GROUP OF THE NEW PLYMOUTH EXHIBITION AND CARNIVAL COMMITTEE.



E. E. Goldsmith, photo. MESSRS. SARGOOD, SON AND EWEN'S FINE NEW WAREHOUSE AT GISBORNE.

AMONG THE DRAUGHT HORSES—THE LEADING FEATURE OF THE SHOW.

COMPETITORS IN THE RIDING COMPETITION.

JUDGING THE HACKS.

JUDGING LADIES' GIGS.

At the Hawera Show.

GLIMPSE SHOWING THE TRAFFIC BRIDGE.

A SHARP CORNER.

In the Manawatu Gorge.

A Great Battle.

(Continued from page 29.)

night work. Any shot in line found the target—that is, the main Russian trench. The storming parties had a breathing space and girded themselves for their final effort. Now they climbed upward as if death were at their heels instead of ahead of them. They did not fire; the "interference" could not without too much risk. The only thing was to reach the top, and before they could some must die, as every man of them knew. The flag of the centre column was waved triumphantly on its appointed cone a minute before the other two. Then we saw the figures on the skyline rushing to any point of vantage where, by sending bullets in pursuit of the flying enemy, they could score losses which should balance their own side of the ledger. The reserves might now go forward safely over the zone which had been fire-swept ten minutes before.

Fighting by Day, Working by Night

Thus the day's fighting was finished, but not the day's work, nor the day's drudgery, nor the day's misery. The wounded were yet to be brought in, and the dead and the fuel to burn them collected by weary limbs. The plunging fire of the Russians against the foe, struggling through the rough fields and over rougher, untilled slopes, had cost the division six hundred casualties, including the death of a colonel.

Late in the afternoon a deluge of rain washed the blood off the grass. The flood of water turned dry beds into dashing rivulets. The flood of slaughter, also settling towards the valley, passed on by the single hospital tent—already congested at daybreak from the night attack—into the village, whose population was crowded into a few houses in order that the wounded might be crowded into others. Through every doorway you caught a glimpse of prostrate figures and of white bandages with round red spots which made them like wrapped flags of Japan.

Dripping hospital corps men brought in dripping burdens covered with blankets or with the matting in which the rice and horse fodder of the army are transported. When darkness came, the lanterns of the searchers twinkled in and out on the hillside. Dawn found them still at work collecting stray Russian wounded, who had lain suffering all night in the rain, for a dollar and 50 cents a year and the glory which the Czar's service brings them. In the bushes, in the declivities between the rocks of many square acres—could every fallen man be gathered? How many cries coming faintly from feverishly dry lips and finally dying into a swoon were unanswered? At some future time, when a Chinese peasant stumbles over a set of bones, the world will not be the wiser.

In a room 16ft by 10ft, in which were 20 Chinese, I had slept on a chest about 4ft long, and awakened in the night to find my wet feet insisting that my head should take a turn at hanging over the side. In the morning, a mist which thickened at times into rain shrouded hill and valley alike. Mingled with it was the smoke of crematory piles, where layers of bodies were consumed between layers of wet wood. Riding back up the ridge, I passed sixty dead Japanese placed in a row under the dripping trees of a Chinese garden. Burial was to be their lot. There was not time to burn them.

Our division's losses were greater than at the Yalu. By this standard and by the physical effort expended as well, we should have routed. But we were only beginning. Our halt was due solely to the mist, which would not permit us to fulfil our programme to advance at the break of day. The infantry remained on the slippery hillsides, where they had raised their slight shelter-tents and placed wet cornstalks on the damp, spongy earth for beds. On the crest of the ridge, while the bodies of the Russians who had fallen in the trenches there yesterday were being buried, the staff stood helplessly looking out on the grey awning that hid the next valley and prolonged for a few hours the life of more than one fated big soldier of Russia and little soldier of Japan. Quick as General Nishi was to attack by night somem critical point with definite features, he hesitated to make a general advance in the fog, which eventually rose as quickly as a drop-curtain.

The Enemy Retreats.

Instantly we knew not only the scene, but also the plot of the play. The deep cutting revealed at our feet opened into a valley which led westward to the Tangho, with its fertile bottoms. The town of Anping was hidden by the projecting base of a bluff. We knew its location by a pontoon bridge thick with Russian wagons going in the same telltale direction. The waggons crossed stolidly. There was no precipitation in the lowering of the tents of the camp on the other side.

That first clear view of our position quickened every pulse at thought of catching a rearguard straddle of a stream. The mist had favoured the Russians. It had made our advance cautious and given them cover for retreat. Over the ridge, our infantry, breaking their way through the kowliang, made new paths over slopes where probably no army had ever passed before. After them went the mountain battery, sliding and plunging horses jerking the leaders off their feet.

With the bridge as a centre, our division was pressing in on the retreat from one flank and the Twelfth from the other. We trusted that the Twelfth was nearer than ourselves. The Russian cavalry was moving back and forth on our side of the river; the Russian infantry stretched across the mouth of the valley, while far over the hills the infantry and gun-fire of the Twelfth pressed closer toward the pontoon. An hour before dark remained. As detachments drew off, the line of Russian infantry became thinner. Some cavalry forded the stream, and then some infantry, too, did not wait on the bridge. "We are going to make them scramble for it," everybody thought, "and there will be sharp work down there in a few minutes."

"No, we're not," we knew a moment later, when one flash and seven more in succession spoke from the other side of the river to the left of the bridge. No shrapnel came in reply. The entry of the battery into the game settled it. The rest had no more dramatic interest than the last half of the ninth inning to the victorious "outs."

On the 28th the God of Battle rewarded us with a parterre box, where we could see the spectacle as a whole and in detail as well. At this point the Tang-ho bends sharply. By Anping it runs for a time due north; a mile from Anping it runs almost due east. From a high peak we looked down upon the bluffs in the stream-inclosed angle which concealed the waiting enemy, with irregular slopes mounting to a high ridge at his back.

Far to the west, on some rocky summit, I could see the glitter of a heliograph sending messages to and from all parts of the Russian line, which must fall back systematically lest some fraction or other find itself surrounded. We did not know then that the heliograph was on the hill of Chusan, which was the centre of the actual frontal defence of Liao-Yang itself. We named it "Kpropatkin's eye," and we were glad to be so near to the gentleman himself; so near to a decisive battle.

In the kowliang of the river bottom, on the opposite side from the Russian position, snuggled the Japanese infantry. Welcome was the hot August sun to dry clothes that had been wet for two days — welcome until ten in the morning. By noon it was hell, and the uniforms were wet again, not from rain or mist, but from perspiration. Overnight, while the infantry marched to its place, the guns had buried themselves in positions on the high ground nearest the river. My favourite mountain battery was set to look after a trench on the opposite bluff. In five minutes it had emptied that trench of a company of infantry.

These big Russians had a good mile to go in the range of shrapnel-fire. They were being kicked upstairs instead of downstairs, which is harder, especially on a hot day. When for a moment the mountain battery left them alone, they would bunch together at one side or the other, where the ascent was easier. Thus they made a good target again, and bang went a shrapnel over their heads, and wearily they spread out again under the commands of their gesticulating officers. Just when they thought that they had passed out of range, a burst of blue smoke, with scattering fragments, hurried them on like the crack of a slave-driver's whip. It was a man chase, nothing more or less, with the gunners standing as easily to their guns as spectators to their glasses.

II.

The expiring range flings westward a few detached ridges and hills, which are to the vast plain what rocky island outcroppings of a precipitous coast are to the adjacent sea. Between them gleams the steel track that caused the war; that marks the course of the main armies and is the first premiss in all their strategy.

Flowing eastward at right angles to the railway is the Taitse River, which makes a break in the range. The old Peking Road runs beside it. On the southern bank is a typical Chinese provincial capital. There the Russians had many storehouses and sidings. The last of the heights forms a barrier of defence to the east and south-east. These things made Liao-Yang a battle-ground—these things and a fortress at the terminus of the railway which must still cling to a hope of relief.

As from a promontory you might see a naval battle beneath, so we saw the artillery duel of August 30 and 31. The town itself waited and held its breath. The only sign of action there was the military balloon, a yellow ball that rose higher than the old pagoda tower. To the southward you saw the movement of hospital and ammunition trains, and under the shade of groves and farmhouses the waiting units whose aspect said that the army was engaged.

The Plan of Attack.

All these were set like pattern-work within a fence of fire presently as safe from wounds and death as a library nook from a driving storm. Further on along the railroad is a camel's hump of rock, Chusan—which we of the Second Division had named "Kuropatkin's eye," from the heliograph we had seen there during the fight of the 28th. In a semicircle, of which that was the midway point, and the Taitse River was the diameter, lay the Russian line of defence. The Second Army, which had fought its way along the railroad, was to extend over the plain to the left of the "eye" and enter Liao-Yang from that side. Eastward from the "eye" run the hills and detached ridges which mer the hills and detached ridges which merge into the range at right angles. Here is the "corner" among a chaos of heights, the Fourth Army, which had mastered the passes on the road from Takushan, came into position. On its right was the First Army, which had elbowed its way with many flanking movements through the mountains, until at last it saw the plain. Shoulder to shoulder on the day the masters had set, all the problems each had had to solve became significantly past history.

That old question which we had ever asked in the months of our waiting in camp on our way from the Yalu—"Will Kuropatkin stand at Liao-Yang?"—was answered for the trouble of climbing to the top of a ridge by the flashing of five hundred guns, like the sparks from wood when a red-hot iron is drawn across it. That scene of armed strength, the most magnificent since the Germans were before Sedan, did not turn my thoughts to Kuropatkin, but to another general, the head of the Russian railroad system. One sweeping glance told you that Prince Hilkoff had "made good" with his single-track railroad.

It was strange to find the first great battle with modern arms in the suburbs of a Manchurian town, and strange to find here on this day a tribute to a Russian nobleman because he had learned railroading over vast expanses from bureau to locomotive in America; strange, too, and Oriental, that a correspondent attached to the Japanese army should see the operations of the Russian better than those of the Japanese side. For a group of foreigners had taken the place of Kuroki's army. They occupied the right end of the line resting on the Taitse.

On the afternoon of the 29th, the Second Division had swung into position here very demonstratively, and on the night of the 29th it fell back in the quickest kind of a way, and, crossing the Taitse to join the Twelfth in Kuroki's flanking movement, left correspondents and attaches with their mentors to choose a place where they could see the plain for 20 miles around. In this relief map the only reduction to scale was the limits of our field-glasses.

No heliograph was being used on the hill of Chusan on that day, you may be sure. It was an island in a fog of shrapnel smoke. Along the spurs and as far past it as we could see, there ran literally a line of fire. In the dip between the "eye" and the spur the Russian guns were two tier deep. There we saw the game with weapons that hurled sixteen pounds of steel jacket inclosing two hundred odd bullets, played in much the same way that boys wage battle between snow forts. The trick is to fire when the other side is exposed, and to keep down when the other side replies. Every Russian battery, except those lost in the haze beyond the "eye," was visible; but we could not see a single flash from a Japanese gun. We could see only the results of the Japanese fire, while the results of the Russian fire we could determine in the "corner" alone.

In your ears always was a roar which, at times, was as thick as that of a cataract. If there were intervals free of any report, it brought you the speech of infantry so continuous that it purred like a rubber tire over a freshly macadamised road. This reminded you again that the guns were only the brasses and the drums of this international orchestra. On the last of the hills beyond the Russian batteries lay the Russian soldiery, and still beyond them, in front of the Japanese guns, the Japanese.

Charges and Counter-Charges.

What charges were being made and what charges were failing we could not tell. We only knew that any successful advance must send back the Russian guns. The infantry of the Fourth Army we knew were moving forward. We heard the cheers of a position taken, but saw not one of the Japanese soldiers who had taken it. Then we saw the Russians going over the ridge in a counter-charge, and we heard their cheers when they recovered what they had lost. Like every other part of the Russian line, they were put in position to resist to the death. They had been surprised, but they had kept the faith with the counter-charge.

These cheers called the spectator. I wanted to be nearer to the infantry line and to feel the pulse of that arm which is the bone and sinew of battle. But I knew, too, that I should miss that whole which had the fascination of a fortune at hazard on a throw. At any moment the line might break, and the confusion of many regiments and many guns would be under our eye. We watched its length feverishly for the first sign of weakness.

Facing the height's on which we sat were the Russians awaiting the attack on our right. The battery on the ridge directly between us and the town had us in easy range. One of the attaches chivalrously reasoned that its commander recognised through his telescope that we were only sightseers. More likely, having in mind the attaches and correspondents on the Russian side, he was not likely to waste his ammunition doing his enemy a favour. And the Russian gunners lay in the shade, and the Russian infantry looked over the near ridges for our coming. I wondered that Sheridan and Stuart did not turn in their graves.

Toward noon of the 30th, the clear sky of the early morning became overcast. Clouds hung above the smoky mist of the shrapnel. Nature was in no mood for rain; but the thunders of the guns literally shook it out of the heavens. The gusts of moisture came down angrily and niggardly. They were thickest where the fire was thickest. But none of the guns of either side stopped. As night came on, the flashes of the muzzles and of the shrapnel bursts put points of flame in a lowering mantle of darkness. When I fell asleep, I still heard some firing. It was the gunners' blind effort to dismay the infantry which lay grimly waiting on one side and grimly ambitious on the other.

The Dawning of Another Day of Battle.

The morning of the 31st was as fair as that of the 30th. Silver streak of stream and dust streak of road, and line of shrapnel smoke and gun-flashes, disappeared into the haze of an August day fit for the ripening of kowliang and corn. Liao-Yang lay still, a patch of silence on the plain. Its five bridges, including that of the railroad, were still unclotted spans across the stream. The white and drab houses of the native city merged with the green of their gardens. The military balloon was making its first morning ascension. Inside of the fence of fire the units of the army's rear seemed in the same position as yesterday. There was no lull in the thunders which had begun at daybreak. The last twenty-four hours seemed like a month. This artillery duel had become an institution.

But, yes, a closer look showed a change—a little change. The bursts of the Japanese shrapnel were now carried far to the other side of "Kuropatkin's eye" towards the town, and they played continuously over a Russian battery in a position further to the rear than any held before. By hand the men of Oku's army had dragged all the way from Nanshan, where they were captured, these five-inch Canets whose bite was worthy of their bark. The artillerists, too, who had struggled with them over bad roads, had their reward. Now, for the first time in this war, except at Port Arthur, the gunners of the victorious Japanese could stand out of range of the Russian guns which were his target. There is no joy sweeter to an artillerist's heart than that. Then, too, in that "corner" of congested hills and congested artillery fire, it was evident that some of the Russian guns had fallen back a little; but that might have been only to rectify the line.

The infantry supporting the battery on the ridges directly opposite the correspondents' citadel of observation, tramped heavily, Russian fashion, into the gully and up on to the ridge near us, and looked over the top of that and stopped there for a time. Past the battery on the bank of the Taitse-ho four guns trotted out leisurely in reconnoissance behind infantry and cavalry that had gone ahead. They were fairly in line with the rear of the Fourth Army. After a few shots in our direction, which met with no response, they went back, and so did the infantry on the ridges in front of the correspondents, without even sending us to cover with a volley or two. We felt most insignificant and unworthy.

Now, Kuropatkin, in his report, tells us that his plan was to let Kuroki isolate his army and then destroy it in detail. On the morning of the 31st, he says, he learned—presumably from this reconnoissance—of the broad gap in our lines; but he was being crowded so hard in other directions that he had no troops to spare for the opportunity. The daring of Japanese strategy had taken the nature of its enemy into account and had reckoned well. By his own confession, Kuropatkin had not discovered the gap until thirty-six hours after it existed. A half-dozen good American scouts would have informed him soon after sun up on the 29th; those men would have been worth more to the Russians than any half-dozen of their colonels.

When I first looked out on the plain and saw the two armies engaged, I was of the mind to see an epochal contest decided in a day or two, as Waterloo or Austerlitz were. The ammunition expended in a forenoon was more than that expended in the whole battle of Gettysburg. Long-range weapons and railways mean only that the railways have more to carry, and by sparring with guns and rifles while the infantry creeps forward, the openings for critical assaults develop themselves but slowly and grudgingly. Five hundred guns in line, with the shrapnel of as many breaking over them, doubtless presents the most stupendous spectacle ever brought into the vista of the human eye. Yet the most magnificent storm at sea would scarcely keep the most ardent admirer of nature's wonders from losing his sleep.

Field-glasses that had scarcely left their owners' eyes on the 30th now had long intervals of rest. We were in the presence of a gigantic tug of war, where the two teams seemed to hold each other steady, with never a flutter of the ribbon to one side or the other. The effect of that vast play of force hypnotically kept us in our places. To go nearer was to see only one of a thousand parts that I had already seen; that I was to see on the morrow; and so I remained.

Even Battles Grew Monotonous.

Beyond the river, to the north, we saw the breaking of Russian shells on the hills, which told us that Kuroki had made his lodgment on the flank, although he did not yet threaten the railroad. Far out on the plain to the west of the town we saw the fires which told of unexpected pressure there and the destruction by the Russians of any possible cover for the advance of the Japanese left. In that direction, too, we saw the movement of Russian reinforcing-columns. Nearer, on the sidings just beyond the Russian quarter, the smoke of a dozen locomotives spoke of departure for the wounded and if necessary, for the vital ammunition which should remain more. Liao-Yang itself still waited and watched on another lease of power for the old master, or the entry of the new. The bridges still unoccupied only meant that the way was clear when the time came to go.

There was no diminution in the volume of artillery fire. A second time, almost at the same hour, the sky grown ugly purple shed reluctantly the moisture which the sun had extracted from earth and stream. The drops hissing on hot barrels were at the same time cooling to the intent faces of the fighters. The flashes were plainer, while the blue curls of the smoke of the shrapnel merged with the mist. A second time, the sky having yielded its all, the atmosphere cleared, as varicoloured shadows passed over the sea of yellowing corn.

Silencing the Russian Guns.

The Japanese shells had crept still further past "Kuropatkin's eye." In the "corner" there was no question but the Russian infantry had fallen back, for the Russian guns were shifting their position to the rear. But between the last of the hills and the town, all obscured by the high kowliang, were the redoubts, the pits with stakes at their bottoms, and the barbed wire entanglements of the last line which was still to be taken by assault or commanded in flank.

When, with the gathering of darkness, I left the scene, my last glimpse was of a battery between the "eye" and a neighbouring spur. It was under a veil of shrapnel smoke, illuminated by lightnings, which quickly, stitch by stitch, the Japanese had woven.

"Can they stand that and fire again?" you asked. Beneath the mantle of smoke, like diamonds on a bride's head, the Russian gunners who had kept cover during the fusillade flashed their response as rapid as the sparks of a parlour match struck on the wall. Yet the bursts significantly outnumbered the flashes. Something said that the battery would not be there at daybreak.

The Japanese infantry had found the points in the wall of human flesh and smokeless powder that were weak. They had crowded so close that retreat was death, and advance their only salvation. That night they broke through with the bayonet.

III.

We had seen the battle and the field of operations as a whole. Now we were to see and feel a part—the intimate, trying part—when veterans used to victories, locking arms with superior numbers, should make the effort of two divisions the universe of our hopes and fears for three days of blood and heat.

On the night of the 31st, I rode on in the track of the flanking force, which had crossed the unfordable Taitse in face of a napping enemy. This was a by-road between the high hills, where, in the darkness, the torches and campfires of the commissariat lighted the maze of Japanese carts, Chinese carts, pack ponies, Korean and Chinese coolies, and all the plodding flesh, human or animal, which could bear or draw supplies.

At the river I met old friends in an unexpected place—the pontoons that we had used at the Yalu. They had not come with Nishi from Feng-Wang-Cheng along the old Peking Road; so they must have gone with the Twelfth, by mountain paths and over mountain passes. Luck is with these pontoons. Thus far they have caused the dismissal of two Russian generals; and well may the little engineers bail them out and repaint them in the hope of favours to come on other streams that lie on the way to Harbin. At the Yalu, Zassulitch concluded that the Japanese were going to cross at Antung, and awakened to find the bridge of his disgrace spanning an unprotected flank. Orloff evidently laboured under the same fulness of theory and lack of scouting practice. His wound at Yentai did not save him from public humiliation by his Emperor.

The Climax of Strategy.

Till we crossed the Taitse-ho, the war for the First Army had been the march of a pattern plan. Whatever the casualties, when night had fallen the day's work had been finished according to programme. This masterly trick with the pontoons, the nerve that had left a gap of five miles in an army's line and thrown a wing into the air, was the climax of our strategy here. Beyond the Taitse-ho the conflict became such as painters paint and writers write. On a level three miles across and ten miles from east to west, parallel with the railroad, the Second Division had its position. Its flank was in touch with the Twelfth; Inouye's Twelfth that had marched from Seoul, that had been first at Ping-Yang, first at the Yalu, first at Feng-Wang-Cheng, and now was the exposed end of an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men.

The task before us, to the eye comprehending only field and slope, was such as more than once before had occupied us for only a few hours' time. To the left was an irregular mountain, called No. 131 on the map, which, rising knuckle-like, formed a rampart buttressing the defence of Liao-Yang from the north-east. Across a narrow gap from its base there is a "little hill," Hayentai, not more than two hundred feet high at its highest point and scarcely four hundred yards long, but to many soldiers of both armies bigger than Mont Blanc. Across another level of a mile or more were two series of ridges, which the spectators called Four Finger and Five Finger. Their Chinese names, which I have since learned, mean nothing to me. I stick to those by which we knew them through three days, when every burst of rifle-fire and every salvo of shrapnel brought us some message of how the hazard was going.

The "little hill" the Russians had not properly fortified. It was quite neglected until the battle began. Elsewhere, but not here, the Russians had cut the kowliang over the approaches to their defences. That high millet, which is like field corn with a slightly thinner stalk, and two or three feet taller, overspread the plain.

The Russian and the Jap Way.

The Russian battery commander stays in his battery, his sight obscured by the smoke and dust; his perspective affected by the action immediately around him. This is one of the Russian prejudices. Every army has its prejudices, the product of national mind and habit, which are against the best approved thought of its own specialists, who are helpless to overcome them. The Japanese, conning the textbooks of the world, finding all modern progress new, are without prejudices; and the textbooks way for a battery commander, though he does not seem so gallant for picture purposes, and risks his life even more, is to stand at one side of the battery, where he can keep his eye out for the target and for the effect of his shells. Thus, really he centres his mind on the game and plays his gun as a winning pitcher plays his curves in baseball.

For two days I watched a Japanese battalion which lay in close order behind a slight rise. Half a dozen times the Russian guns seemed to have found it, and curls of smoke broke out at the right angle of height and distance. There were flutters in the mass of khaki, like that of the kowliang in a breeze; the movement to assist the wounded. But the battalion gave no such corroboration of Russian suspicion of its presence as to deploy. It was needed where it was; there was no better cover to be had. Stoically it held on. Directly the Russian, all oblivious of his fortune, turned the stream elsewhere, evidently determined to wet all the ground impartially.

The Japanese guns poured shrapnel into the village at the base of the "little hill," and ploughed the crest with howitzers. If a Russian gun had tried to swing into position there, it would literally have been blown off. The "little hill" was no place for guns. It was no place even for infantry to tarry long after taking it by storm, as later events proved. We caught glimpses of Russian infantry there early in the fight, but to remain was simply to set themselves up for slaughter.

Their departure did not mean that the hill was ours. Left and right they could bring fire on any force that tried to storm it. Rush by rush, however, our troops made their way through the kowliang. At nightfall we were in the village at the base of Hayentai. As the sun went down, our shells were still bursting on the crest, and the Russian shells were bursting over our guns and over the field at random. From the direction of

Liao-Yang we had heard no sound of firing all day. The tired Russians there were settling themselves in their second lines of defence, and the Japanese bringing forward their artillery so that it should command the town. When I fell asleep from sheer exhaustion, Hayentai was outlined by flashes of rifle-fire. In the pale moonlight, the Japanese crept out of the little village, and, foot by foot, in face of the flashes, with bayonet in hand, in overwhelming numbers at two a.m. they swept over the crest and bore the enemy back.

A Hot Morning's Work.

Yet there was no rest for them. They had to make their squatters' rights good—to improve their holdings instantly. More Russian guns and more Russian infantry had come up overnight. As the Russian line before Liao-Yang contracted, it yielded spare divisions for the protection of the flank. With the first streaks of dawn a mist of shrapnel smoke hung over the "little hill." The work of the spade in the blue, moist earth came after the work of the bayonet in the flesh. Like prairie dogs, the little men, who were to hold Hayentai for the long day before them, burrowed for their lives. While a few on the crest watched from cover there, the others dug deeper in their holes with the scream of shrapnel in their ears. If the infantry of the enemy came, then the enemy's guns must abate their fire as the charge approached, and the bomb-proofs would empty their guests over the crest to meet the onslaught. For the value of the "little hill" was not "in firing from it, but in having the other fellow off it."

Some of our guns had gone forward; others held the position of the previous day. The possession of Hayentai gave us the purchase to press in flank on Four Finger and Five Finger. Our columns of the Twelfth attacking them in front were making progress. Optimism ran high for the moment.

Once we had the Russians well flanked, it seemed to the eye studying the ground roughly, without staff knowledge, that the mountain to the left No. 131, would fall to us of its own weight. But the staff wanted that immediately, as well as Four Finger and Five Finger. The Imperial Guards, which was the third division in Kuroki's army, were still on the other side of the Taitse-ho. They were sent forward in demonstration on the river bottom toward No. 131; and on the river bottom they lay for hours. The gravel under their bodies was as hot as a stove lid. The shrapnel scattered it as the first raindrops do the dust of the road. But the Guards were too tired to mind that. They felt as if they had been fighting and arching since the world began; and they fell asleep, despite death and heat.

Meanwhile, the real charge broke out of the kowliang to the south-east of the little hill. It ran around the base of a slope and, dodging and dashing by rushes, swept upward, with dead and wounded in its track. The Russians came out of their cover, and, silhouetting themselves against the sky, fired at will, patronisingly. The charge was as hopeless as trying to scale a rope ladder with your hands tied behind you in a heavy sea. Its remnants came back in the night.

Kuroki Meets Twice His Numbers.

A schoolboy could have realised that Hayentai was vital to the Russians. It was to either commanding general's plans what a bridge over a stream is to a roadstead. There were Russian troops without end now at the call of the "little hill." They were coming over the bridge in retreat from Liao Yang, skilled by experience; they were pressing down from Mukden fresh from Europe. Kuroki, with two divisions and an extra brigade, making a total of a little over 30,000 men, was trying to drive back twice his own force.

Now, you can place only a certain number of men within a given length of trench. The Russian officer who commanded on the "little hill" doubtless told his superior officer that he could hold it against any number. He was right in theory, but wrong in practice against the Japanese. Liao-Yang brought a new feature into modern warfare—the night attack. The Russian officer in command of the "little hill" could not help himself. He was in the position of the resident of Johnstown who was correct in thinking that his drainage system was all right until the flood came.

But one thing we have noted, stage by stage from the Yalu, and that is that the Russian is learning, as the British learned in South Africa. He is taking notes out of the Japanese book and applying them as far as the limited intelligence of the average Russian soldier will permit; and the Russian soldier who has been under fire several times has had a most enlivening if not liberal education.

So the enemy, in turn, undertook a night attack. Again the shrapnel bursts flashed over Hayentai after the sun went down, while the rifles blazed out from the crest which had been a dead grey against the sky during the day. Report says that this effort cost the Russians fifteen hundred casualties. I know that two hundred bodies were left on a slope covering scarcely two acres in all. A gully approaching Hayentai was thick with dead, whose faces were upturned like those of people hastening up a gangway. A Siberian regiment and a regiment fresh from Russia—the old to steady the new under the first staggering blast and the new bringing ingenuous faith in his invincibility—came with drums—drums in the night! There was no artifice. The heavy Slav, like some mad giant, rushed upon skill with the rage of brute force. A torrent of men swept up Hayentai. They engulfed the Japanese who were there as the Japanese had engulfed the Russians the night before. Then the real struggle in the dark began. For the Japanese fought their way back before dawn and made Hayentai theirs for good and all.

Brute Courage Wins.

In this age of high organisation, some officers who sit in routine facing rows of pigeon-holes will tell you that war is entirely made with brains nowadays. All such should have seen Hayentai. There they would have learned that the taking of critical points, which are essential to academic plans, still depends upon brute butchery and brute courage. The visitor would have slipped in blood instead of dew. Like round figures on a carpet, the clots were set off on the earth where the grass was matted and worn away by struggle. It needed mincing steps to touch every one if you walked in a straight line. In a dozen places I saw red paths where wounded men had dragged themselves away into the kowliang. Following one of these, I came to the coagulation which told the story of the death agony.

The marvellous thing was that, at one period of the struggle, if a wounded man could only take himself ten feet to the rear, he was safe. Where the rounding crest dipped on either side, twenty feet apart, for a time the Russian and the Japanese line had lain in the dark firing at the flashes of each other's rifles. Slipping down the hill-side, with the bullets whistling overhead like a gale through the rigging, you were as much out of the danger zone temporarily as if you had been in Mukden. The positions were clearly marked by the systematic arrangement of the blood clots.

Wasn't there ugly work? Was quarter always given? I have been asked. My answer is that all was ugly work. Anyone who does not palliate it, in order to be consistent, must let a burglar in his own house shoot at him without firing in response. In such a situation, soldiers are not waiting on injunctions from a court to restrain the enemy's violence. Their articulations become less like human speech than like savage cries. They are the ghosts of the individuals who lined up on parade; ghosts trying to fight their way out of hell. The big mad thrust at every little man, and the little man thrust at every big man, and the big man used his bayonet in powerful lunges as the bull does his horns; the little man as a panther uses his claws. The Japanese officers, disregarding the sword of Europe—that decadent product of social functions—carried their samurai blades, which are made for killing at close quarters.

When I visited the military school in Tokio in 1901, as I watched the cadets fencing, according to Japanese fashion, I remarked: "That must be splendid training for the eye, and grand exercise."

"And extremely useful," an officer replied.

Bullets and Bayonets.

It was about this time that Herr Bloch, got his name frequently printed in all the papers on account of his book, which held that modern arms of precision would not allow armies to approach each other. And Hayentai and Chusan were only three years away.

The prostrate man might still be living, and he might still reach the bowels of an adversary with a thrust. Discrimination might be as fatal to yourself as throwing your oar overboard in a rapid. Men were shot into eternity and slashed into eternity; perhaps some were scared into eternity. But these were not the veterans. I spoke with one of the veterans, a Sendai man.

"You want to use your bayonet with your arms, not your body." (He spoke as cook would say, "The whites of two eggs well beaten," etc.). "The Roske uses his bayonet with his body. He sticks his head down and rushes at you. If he catches you you are spitted for good. He is such a big fellow that he lifts you fairly off your feet. If you are quick on your legs, though, you can step to one side, and then you have him; the only way with little men with short arms is to get in close.

"The first time I went into a night attack I kept thinking of all that my officer told me. I felt like I did when I went in as a recruit, and the surgeon felt me all over."

"Stage fright," I suggested.

But a country boy from Sendai, though he had studied his English primer well, and tried to improve himself so as to rise in the world, did not understand that. At least, I did not think he did, by the operation of his Japanese smile.

"The first time I struck a Russian I could feel my bayonet grate on his bone," he went on. "I did not think of it at the time, but when I thought of it afterward it seemed very awful. I had seen him coming like a big black shadow, and I had just time to dodge and I felt his bayonet go by my cheek like a razor does over your face. I pulled my bayonet out and sunk it in his neck before he had time to strike me. If I had not killed him he would have killed me. It is that way always."

Russian shrapnel continued to play over Haventai on the morning of the 3rd, while the Russian dead lay where they fell. Kuropatkin was now falling back out of Liao-Yang with his whole army. Against it was Kuroki alone; for the Second Army was without bridges, of course. The mass of the Russian force pressing back bore with all its weight on that flanking army of ours. If the enemy had known how much we were doing on nerve and how little on numbers, he would surely have tried to crush us. Though you could not see the increasing numbers of the Russians, you felt their overpowering effect, as you know by the draught that a door is opened in a dark room. We lay hugging what we had gained in a weariness that begot stubbornness. We had fought for ten days. For three days most of the Second Division had lain in the sweat-box of the kowliang eating unboiled rice with the stench of crematory piles and of the dead in their nostrils.

Completely Fagged Out.

As division after division appeared against us, we called for the reinforcement of the Guards. They crossed the river, such as did not fall asleep in their tracks, with stones for their pillows. It was a strange thing to see stragglers in the Japanese army; but it was stranger still that the army had strength enough left to move at all.

Then our communications with both the Second and the Fourth Armies were cut. This had happened once before—but when the Russians were not apparently advancing upon the Twelfth with a view to envelopment. That staff which I had watched on many fields did not forget its text-books when it gave the orders for retreat. Systematically the corps wires twitched with the orders for withdrawal, which were no sooner given than the pressure from the Russians eased. Kuropatkin was only making his departure safe; he was only striking a blow as he went.

Now the brave word followed the cautious word to the ends of the corps. Supplies were to be hurried forward; pursuit was to begin. But reaction now gripped out weary force. No stimulant of Imperial ambition, of clan loyalty; no ancestral faith could put more strength into the legs of this army. We had won a victory; but that did not mean so much to us as the fact that we had won the right to rest.—From "Collier's Weekly."

The Ownership of Vesuvius.

Vesuvius, with its eruption, has done, says the Rome correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette," more than provide magnificent fireworks to attract the foreigners; it has set four communes—Resina, Torre del Greco, Boscatrecase, and Ottajano—by the ears. It seems that each claims that the volcano stands within its confines, if not all, the greater part of it, and that it (the commune) can thus claim the taxes of the guides, Cook's railway, and the one hundred and one other things which yield money. The quarrel is a pretty one, and bids fair to be unending, as no sooner have the confines been established, and a comparative, if discontented, peace patched up, than the Volcano belches forth new lava, forms new hills and valleys, and obliterates the confines. Vesuvius almost seems to be making fun of the pigmies who dare to claim her as their property. Thus a new quarrel follows "ad infinitum," and the communes certainly spend more money in settling their claims than they ever get from the volcano. Since the late eruption, feeling has risen to such heights that the people of one commune throw stones at those of the others, and refuse to speak as they pass by. Each declares that it has ancient documents to prove its rights beyond dispute, but when the moment comes for exhibiting them they somehow have misplaced them. They would have been most useful to the Council of State to whom they have appealed, but they cannot be found. Meanwhile, until the quarrel is settled, Resina has decidedly the best of it, as, while the others were terror-stricken, she boldly fixed her confines by herself, taking in the whole mountain.

Society Gossip

AUCKLAND.

Dear Bee, December 6.

We have a busy week before us. On Thursday night there is the Northern Club Ball in honour of Lord and Lady Plunket, and on Saturday the most important and most beautiful outdoor function of the year,

THE FLORAL FETE.

The greatest preparations are in train for this, and if it is not a most brilliant success it will not be for want of vigorous work on the part of the promoters. Time, thought, and an infinity of pains have been freely lavished on the making up of the programme, and the fixing of general arrangements. Personally, should the weather prove propitious, I am willing to stake my reputation as a prophet in foretelling a record attendance to witness what will unquestionably prove to be the most beautiful outdoor spectacle Auckland has yet seen. The entries are good in all classes, and it will interest you to know that the Hon. Kathleen Plunket will drive her own smart little trap in the procession. Motor cars form a feature and the kaleidoscopic dances by school children should prove to be "monstrous pretty," as they would have said in Monsieur Beaucaire's day. But now I must tell you about the past week, which has been rather a dull one.

OPENING OF POLO.

The Auckland and Remuera Polo Clubs had a most successful opening last Wednesday afternoon, St. Andrew's Day. The vice-regal party included His Excellency the Governor and Lady Plunket, the Hon. Kathleen Plunket, Mrs. Wallis (wife of the Bishop of Wellington), her sister, Mrs. Williams, and Captain Braithwaite, A.D.C. Among others I noticed: Mr., Mrs., and Miss Morrin, Mrs. and Miss McCosh Clark, Mrs. Maitland, Mrs. and Misses Cotter, Mr., Mrs. and Miss Ware, the Misses Thompson (2), Macfarlane (2), Towle, Gorrie, Buckland, Mrs. Markham, Mrs. Greenway and Miss Firth, Mrs. Southey Baker and Miss Lloyd, Mrs. Pritt and Mr. J. L. Pritt, Col., Mrs., and Miss Baker, Mrs. Cheeseman, Mrs. and Misses Kerr-Taylor, Mrs. A. Hanna, Mrs. A. Clark, Misses Browning (2), Thorne George (2), Buddle, Mrs. Colbeck, Mrs. Kekwick, Mrs. and Miss Hope Lewis, Mrs. C. Buddle, Mrs. Tonks, Miss Horton, Mrs. Whitney, Mrs. and Miss Worsp, Mrs. Rose, Mrs. Seavill. Hunter's Band discoursed sweet music during the afternoon.

DRESSES AT THE THEATRE.

At the theatre on a couple of occasions last week I noticed the following frocks:—

Lady Plunket was in a beautiful gown of silver-spangled net with fichu of cream overlaid with black spotted chiffon, caught in front of corsage with cluster of crimson roses; Hon. Kathleen Plunket wore a lovely oyster-grey crepe de chine finished with ruched white chiffon and lace, and elaborately trimmed with herring-bone stitchery; Mrs Sydney Nathan wore white trimmed with beautiful lace; Madame Bocufve was handsomely gowned in black and silver; Mrs J. R. Bloomfield wore pale yellow; Mrs F. Bullin was in a very pretty shell pink silk inset with Paris lace and black skirt; Mrs Dr. Parkes, black skirt and very pretty white blouse, beautiful white brocaded silk opera coat with sun-ray pleated chiffon capes; Mrs de Clive Lowe wore a black skirt and very pretty white blouse; and her sister, Miss Vera Bell, wore black, the decolletage outlined with white; Mrs Macfarlane, rich black silk gown; Miss Innes, black, the bodice finished with deep cream lace Victorian yoke; Mrs Louis Myers wore a handsome black satin with lovely Maltese lace collar; Mrs Myers was also in black; Miss Myers was prettily gowned in white silk with pale grey opera coat; Mrs Edwin Horton, white silk, the bodice prettily draped with white lace caught with cluster of pink crush roses; Miss Horton also wore white; Mrs L. D. Nathan, rich black embroidered silk over white, lovely black and white opera coat; Miss Isaacs, black skirt and pretty ficelle-coloured blouse, threaded with turquoise blue ribbon; Mrs McCosh Clark, black and Miss Pearl Clark looked dainty in white; Mrs Phillips was in white with pale blue bow in coiffure; Mrs Sanford, black silk gown; Mrs Palmer wore a handsome black gown with tucked white chiffon vest; Miss Snell, wore black with deep cream lace pelerine collar; Mrs T. Hope Lewis, black satin with ecru insertion on bodice; Mrs W. R. Bloomfield wore a dainty white gown; Mrs Kekewick was in a charming pale grey silk; and her sister, Miss Buddle, wore white nun's veiling prettily shirred and finished with lace; Mrs Lundon, rose pink satin elaborately gauged and tucked, trimmed with Paris-tinted lace; Mrs T. W. Leys, dainty white tucked silk blouse, and black satin skirt; Miss Winnie Leys, was pretty in white silk inserted with lace; Miss Keesing, white silk veiled in fine black lace, with touches of pink, and a satin skirt; Mrs Cheeseman, black chiffon evening toilette; Mrs Colson, ecru silk gown; Miss Mitchelson, looked very pretty in a lovely rose pink silk evening frock with Limerick lace berthe; Miss Carr was charmingly frocked in white tucked silk and lace insertion; Mrs Templer, white tucked silk blouse, and black skirt; Mrs M. Boult, black silk toilette; Miss Boult was dainty in rose pink silk, and ecru lace transparent yoke; Miss Lena Butters looked charming in a cream satin blouse trimmed with silk lace insertion, and black skirt; Mrs Ernest Bloomfield wore a pretty light evening gown and handsome olive green opera cloak; Mrs Rose (Sydney) was in black; Mrs Montague, black satin trimmed with lace and Brussels net, cluster of crimson carnations in front of corsage.

THE CONCERT IN AID OF THE VETERANS' HOME

on Friday last did not meet with the support it deserved, either from the point of view of the programme, which was really excellent, or the object for which funds were to be raised. Much trouble had evidently been taken, and it was discouraging to find it meet with such scant recognition. A large party from Government House was present, and it was hoped their public acceptation of an invitation to the concert would have resulted in a large gathering of those who in Lord Ranfurly's time were industrious in proclaiming their interest in everything which concerned the Home. Presumably the axes of these folks are all ground, but, seeing that Lord and Lady Plunket take an equal interest in the Home as Lord and Lady Ranfurly did, the sudden cooling off of alleged enthusiasm in certain directions is assuredly in grievous bad taste, and is open to obvious and severe comment. Amongst those I noticed present were: Lady Plunket, who was attired in a handsome black peau de soie evening gown with a lace scarf loosely swathed round her shoulders and arms; Mrs Wallis wore a black evening toilette; Miss Williams was gowned in a soft white evening dress; Mrs Neligan wore a mourning gown; Mrs Auson was in a becoming blue and white Empire gown, and white evening coat; Mrs Bedford wore a white brocade and very handsome black evening coat with lace capette; Mrs Mitchelson looked exceedingly well in a white silk with black chiffon overdress, and lovely white ostrich feather boa; Mrs Parkes was in white brocade and a blue evening coat; Mrs (Professor) Thomas, white evening gown; Mrs Segar, white gown and handsome black evening cloak, trimmed with fur; Madame Wielaert wore white silk with a very effective ruched net overdress and flowing sleeves; Miss Somerset was in a rich black velvet with white lace berthe.

Mr and Mrs Davis gave

A MOST ENJOYABLE EVENING

on the 30th ult. at "Westward-Ho" to celebrate the coming of age of their youngest son and the arrival from England of their eldest son. The early part of the evening was devoted to progressive euchre. Miss Moore-Jones and Mr J. Sutherland carried off the first prizes, the booby prizes going to Mr and Miss V. Grey. Supper was served in the dining-room, the table decorations being exceedingly pretty. The latter part of the evening was devoted to song s and recitations, most of the guests contributing. Mrs Davis received her guests in a handsome green silk. Miss Davis wore cream silk and chiffon; Miss Phyllis Davis, soft white silk; Mrs Mowbray-Hutton (Melbourne), grey and pink silk; Mrs Hamlin, white silk, pink chiffon yoke and sleeves. Among the guests were Misses Moore-Jones, W. Moore-Jones, Laird, Bartlett, Grey, V. Grey, Smales, Headdy, Wright, Foote, C. Pilkington, Daisy Pilkington, Messrs Horace and C. Moore-Jones, Smales, Sutherland, Pilkington, Laird, Hamlin, and many others.

LIEDERTAFEL CONCERT.

The Choral Hall was filled to its utmost capacity on Thursday evening last, when the Auckland Liedertafel Society gave another highly successful concert, the fourth and closing one of the series. A programme of exceptional interest was presented, a special item being "The Miserere Scene" from "Il Trovatore," admirably rendered by Madame Lilian Tree, Mr Walter Whyte, and the choir. The items by the Liedertafel were of a high order of merit, and proved the efficiency of an able conductorship. Mr Herbert Bloy, the talented young violinist, delighted the audience with two violin solos, and organ and flute obligatos by Messrs Hornee Hunt and S. Poore respectively lent additional interest to the performance. Mr Walter Whyte's sweet tenor voice was heard to great advantage in the song, "Adelaide," and with Mr J. W. Ryan (basso) later in the evening sang "O'er My Head" ("Martha"); Miss Aulsebrook also sang "The Lost Chord" with much success. Mr Sydney Harbutt, the society's hon. secretary, with his usual energy, attended adequately to the details of the concert. Madame Tree looked exceedingly well in a black spangled tulle evening toilette; Miss Aulsebrook looked pretty in a white beribboned chiffon frock. Among the audience I noticed: Mrs T. Peacock, in a black satin gown, with vest of cream satin; Miss Peacock was in a pale blue surah silk, prettily trimmed with lace, and a dark skirt; Mrs Houghton, white silk blouse, with transparent yoke, dark skirt, and lovely pale green cloak with bands of velvet of a darker shade; Miss Hunt looked charming in a crimson chiffon blouse, with transparent yoke of Paris-tinted lace, black voile skirt; Mrs A. B. Donald, lovely pale grey pin-spotted voile gown, finished with white lace and jet; Mrs (Dr.)

King, rich mauve satin blouse, and black silk skirt; Mrs (Dr.) Hooper, black silk gown; with ecru lace motifs on bodice; Miss Hooper, white voile, prettily ganged and trimmed with ecru lace and touches of emerald green velvet; Mrs Hitchcock, black and white floral silk blouse, with black lace collar, black skirt, blue butterfly bow in coiffure; Mrs. Gresham, black silk gown, with decorations of cream lace; Miss Langford wore a lovely blush rose silk blouse, interlaced with pink chenille, and a black skirt; Miss M. Sloane, dainty white tucked voile and lace blouse, brightened with blue, and black skirt; Miss Margaret Sloane, becoming turquoise blue silk, trimmed with cream lace; Mrs. J. M. Brigham, black silk and lace gown; Miss Brigham was dainty in a white satin blouse and silk skirt, with blue ribbons; Miss Ella Brigham, white silk frock and pale blue ceinture; Mrs. H. Cooke, white tucked silk blouse and black voile skirt; Miss Gordon, very pretty white and emerald green spotted canvas voile, with lace jacket and crimson velvet ehou, black skirt; Mrs. Kissling, black velvet evening toilette; Mrs. Pilkington (Devonport) wore white Indian muslin; Mrs. Lambourne, black tucked merveilleux; Miss Dewar, white shirred silk and lace; Mrs. Warren Blythe wore a black and yellow gown; Mrs. Plummer, azure blue gown; Miss Bell, pale blue silk blouse, with white lace yoke, and dark skirt; Mrs. Pickering, black and ecru lace gown; Miss Pickering wore a very pretty white gauged silk blouse, contrasted with tangerine silk, dark skirt; her two younger sisters wore white and yellow silk respectively; Miss Baker, lemon coloured muslin gown, with white lace pelerine; Mrs. Mogenie, pretty light blouse, black skirt, and long theatre cloak; Miss Holland was daintily gowned in white and pink rose-bud muslin, trimmed with pink silk, red opera cloak; Miss Essie Holland, forget-me-not blue silk blouse and pelerine of rich cream lace, black skirt; Mrs. Mackay, smart black evening toilette, with transparent yoke and jet incrustations; Mrs Walrond, heliotrope chiffon blouse with white chiffon fichu, black skirt; Miss McKenzie, pale grey silk blouse and darker skirt; Mrs Williamson, black silk gown trimmed with cream lace; Miss Flossie Williamson, becoming white silk blouse with an ecru lace pelerine, black skirt; Mrs (Dr.) Walker, black silk gown with decorations of cream lace; Mrs W. Buchanan, emerald green silk blouse with yoke of Paris-tinted lace, black skirt; Mrs Alf Jones, black evening gown and white opera cloak trimmed with white fur; Miss Hickson, pretty white gauged silk gown, her sister wore a maize silk and Paris tinted lace frock; Mrs S. Jackson, lemon coloured silk blouse inserted with ecru lace and black skirt; Mrs J. W. Stewart, black and white pin-spotted silk gown; Miss F. Hudson was gowned in white hailstone muslin with black velvet bow in coiffure; Miss Maude, white silk and ecru lace.

A COUNTRY DANCE.

A correspondent writes: A fancy dress ball was held at the residence of Mr. C. J. Lindberg, Onewhero, recently, when the large number of 30 couples were present. The evening proved a most enjoyable one, dancing being kept up till the early hours of the morning, and all were unanimous in pronouncing it the best dance ever held in the district. A bounteous feast was prepared by Mrs. and Miss Lindberg, of which all heartily partook. Songs were interspersed during the evening by J. Poland, Drake, Ashwin, Stevens, Brooks, and all were well received. The dance music was kindly supplied by J. Liddle (piano) and J. Box (violin). During an interval S. Crawford, on behalf of the residents, took the occasion to thank Mr. Lindberg for his kind hospitality. The costumes for a country dance were exceptionally fine. Those worthy of special mention were: Miss McCullagh, as Russian bride; Miss A. Geraghty, yachting; Miss A. Andrews, Starlight; Miss Underwood, Pirouette; Miss J. Lindberg, Swedish peasant girl; Mr. F. Brown, Maori warrior Mr. J. Poland, Hussar; Miss C. Sheldon, bootblack; Mr. A. Drake, sailor; Mr. P. Geraghty, Father Christmas; Mr. J. Pollock, Sundowner. Among the others were: Miss R. Poland, Maori girl; Miss R. Poland, milkmaid; Miss Murray, ivy; Miss Pollock, poppies; Mrs. Lindberg, Night; Miss Geraghty, Star of Peace; Miss Liddle, Ferns; Miss R. Crawford, Hope; Mrs. Sheldon, Night; Miss I. Andrews, Baby; Miss Hawke, New Zealand; Mr. V. Lindberg, Gentleman; Mr. P. Geraghty, Harp of Erin; Mr. D. Fulton, Returned Trooper; Mr. T. Hector, Policeman; Mr. S. Crawford, Gentleman; Mr. Stevens, Gentleman; Mr. J. Poland, Highlander; Mr. J. Liddle, Oarsman; Mr. W. McFlinn, Jockey; Mr. T. McGuire, Stockman; Mr. C. Lewis, King of Hearts; Mr. L. McGuire, Bass' Pale Ale; Mr. H. Hawke, Lord Kitchener; Mr. J. Crawford, New Woman; Mr. T. Pollock, Hard Times; Mr. Murray, gentleman; and several others whom I did not know.

PHYLLIS BROUN.

CAMBRIDGE.

Dear Bee, December 5.

On St. Andrew's Day there was a good gathering at the

TENNIS COURTS AND BOWLING GREENS,

when some interesting games were played. Afternoon tea was presided over by Mrs Butler, the President's wife, and Misses Hally and Clark. Amongst those present I noticed Mrs Butler, wearing navy blue cloth bolero and skirt, white silk front, white hat, trimmed with blue; Mrs J. Stone, black costume, black and white bonnet; Mrs (Dr.) Roberts, black canvas voile, trimmed with gauging and insertion, white ostrich boa, white hat, trimmed with navy blue; Mrs R. J. Roberts, black dress with much tucking, white hat, trimmed with black; Mrs Earle, black skirt, grey coat, black hat; Mrs C. Roberts, black costume, large black picture hat; Mrs J. M. Hally, mourning costume; Mrs McDougal, blue and white delaine blouse, trimmed with green velvet, black skirt, white hat; Miss Stone, pale green blouse, black skirt, white hat; Miss Chalmers, white silk blouse, black skirt, white hat; Miss McNeish, pale green coat and skirt, white hat; Miss Hally, white serge blouse, black skirt, white hat; Miss A. Hally, pink blouse, black skirt, grey hat, trimmed with pale blue; Miss Willis, white silk blouse, black skirt, white linen hat; Miss C. Willis, spotted red and white blouse, black skirt, white hat with red berries; Miss Cave, navy blue canvas voile, pale blue satin front, blue hat with cornflowers; Miss Gwynneth, pink delaine blouse, black skirt, white gem hat; Miss Clarke, pink and white flowered silk blouse, black skirt, white hat; Miss K. Willis, pink muslin spoted blouse, navy blue skirt, and navy blue hat; Miss Feren, white frock, white hat, trimmed with black.

On Saturday afternoon last there was a large gathering present at the rifle range, at the invitation of Capt. Walker, the officer in command. Quite a novelty for Cambridge took place — a competition for ladies. Each lady competitor was in charge of a volunteer, who instructed her how to aim, etc., and loaded for her each time. Considering that most of the ladies had never handled a rifle before their scores were most creditable. Out of a possible 25 Miss C. Brunskill made 24, winning 1st prize, a gold brooch. Miss Bruce and Miss St. Aubin tied for 2nd with 23 each, and had to fire off three rounds more, Miss Bruce proving victorious and winning the second prize, a silver and crystal jam dish. Miss D. Gilfillan came 3rd with a score of 22, her prize being a cake. Afternoon tea was provided by Mesdames Scott, Butler, and R. J. Roberts. Amongst the ladies competing were Mrs Bell, Mrs Scott, Misses Richardson, Gilfillan, Hill, Willis, Hally, Chitty, A. Hally, Brooks, K. Willis, Brunskill, St. Aubin, Bruce, D. Brunskill, Piggot, Ferguson, Jeffries. Amongst the spectators were Mrs J. R. S. Richarson, Mrs J. R. Roberts, Mrs (Dr.) Butler, Mrs Earle, Mrs F. Gane, Miss Cave, Miss Gwynneth, Miss Brooks, Miss Keesing, and several others whom I did not know. Those who took part in the firing were delighted with it, and talk of going to Hamilton next week to take part in a similar function. A most enjoyable afternoon was spent by all present.

ELSIE.

GISBORNE.

Dear Bee, December 3.

Saturday last was the opening day of the

WHATAUPOKO TENNIS CLUB.

A great many members and their friends were present, and the afternoon was most enjoyable. A delicious afternoon tea was provided by the lady members.

Mrs Donner gave

A JUVENILE DANCE

on Saturday evening in Mr Kennedy's Hall. The dance was in honour of her daughter's birthday, and numbers of young people of all ages were present.

The same evening Mrs A. Watson gave

A SMALL DANCE

at Waimata, at which several town girls were present.

On Thursday afternoon Mr and Mrs Cyril White gave a large

"AT HOME"

at Wairakaia. The weather for a few days before had been simply abominable, and we had almost given up hopes of going, but Thursday looked a little brighter, and although it rained a good part of the afternoon a large number of guests drove out from town and the surrounding country. Croquet, tennis, and other lawn games were played during the afternoon, and a set of Lancers was danced on the grass to the music of the City Band. Mrs White received her guests in a pink and grey French muslin, pink tucked chiffon vest, and blue and white straw hat. Mrs A. F. Kennedy, who assisted Mrs White in entertaining her visitors, wore green voile and a cream lace hat; Mrs Jex Blake was in cream voile with deep shoulder yoke and deep lace, cream hat; Mrs F. Parker, navy blue serge Russian costume; Mrs Elliot, black voile, and a black hat; Mrs A. W. Rees, navy blue voile; Mrs Patullo, pink linen skirt and pink embroidered silk blouse, white hat with pink roses; Mrs Buckeridge, a beautiful toilet of black canvas voile with many flounces, the bodice having a deep pointed yoke of cream lace, large black chenille hat; Mrs Ernest Davis (Auckland), cream canvas with deep transparent lace yoke, edged with fringe, orange velvet belt, cream hat with orange roses; Mrs Hawkins (Auckland), navy blue striped canvas, hat with marguerites; Mrs Smith, tussore silk dress with silk insertion, pale green belt and black hat; Mrs Murray, pale blue voile, white vest, black hat; Mrs Mann, cream linen frock, French sailor, trimmed with heliotrope flowers; Mrs H. Smith, grey voile and large white hat with cream roses; Mrs C. Thomas, pink French muslin, pale green and white straw hat; Mrs Stock, white silk blouse, black voile skirt, black hat; Mrs H. M. Porter, pale blue and pink French muslin, burnt straw hat with cerise ribbons; Mrs Common, pale green costume, hat to match; Mrs Nolan, black voile dress, black hat; Mrs W. Barker, white silk blouse, black voile skirt, black hat; Miss Woodbine Johnstone wore cream accordion - pleated voile, crimson sash, hat to match; Miss Nolan, pale blue linen costume, black chiffon hat; Miss Bradley, white embroidered muslin, pale blue belt; Miss Wallis, navy blue cloth coat and skirt, white hat; Miss McLean, biscuit-coloured spotted muslin, pink belt, white chiffon hat with pink roses; Miss L. Monckton, navy blue coat and skirt, black hat; Miss Sheriff, blue muslin blouse, black voile skirt; Miss A. Evans, cream flannel costume; Miss W. Adair, navy blue coat and skirt, cornflower-blue hat; Miss Thomson, green cloth costume, green straw hat with dark pink roses; Mrs Winter, white silk blouse, black skirt, black hat with cream roses; Mrs McLean, black spotted silk,

hat to match; Mrs H. H. Wall, pale grey costume; Mrs Harry Bailey, pale blue and white tweed frock, dark blue hat; Miss Boylan, white linen Eton costume, frilled muslin vest, black hat; Miss E. Bradley, pale pink spotted voile, white French sailor; Miss R. Reynolds, pale blue muslin frock, black hat; Miss C. Reynolds, grey and white tweed coat and skirt, hat en suite; Miss Grey wore a very pretty pale heliotrope spotted voile, with deep lace yoke, threaded with black ribbon, black hat; Miss Willis, grey tweed coat and skirt, black hat; Miss C. Boylan, white linen skirt, white muslin blouse, hat with crimson roses; Miss Selford, tussore silk dress, red hat; Miss M. Bradley, white muslin and white hat; Miss D. Monckton, navy blue cloth coat and skirt, French sailor with cornflowers; Miss D. Brook-Taylor, white silk blouse, lace yoke, black skirt, and white hat; Miss Farmer, white silk dress, black hat; Miss Warmington, cream tucked silk, cream hat; Miss Cussen, cream cloth coat and skirt, pale blue hat, trimmed with pale blue folded chiffon; Miss E. Cussen, grey muslin dress, white felt hat with violet velvet, flowers, and ribbon; Miss Thomson, white muslin, with black spots, white hat; Miss M. Thomson, white muslin frock, black hat.

In the evening there was

A DANCE

in the woolshed, to which a number of the younger members of the party remained. It was one of the most delightful country dances that we have had. The floor was splendid, the music was good, and everyone was thoroughly bent on enjoying everything. Mrs White wore black satin, with white flowers, and white flowers in her hair; Mrs Jex Blake, cream satin; Mrs Munn, black silk; Miss Monckton, black silk, with black net; Miss D. Monckton, green brocaded silk and green velvet belt; Miss Willis, yellow silk; Miss Evans, yellow satin; Miss Nolan, white book-muslin, pale blue silk bow; Miss Wallis, black silk and pink roses; Miss Bennett, black silk, white lace; Miss Woodbine Johnstone, yellow silk; Miss McLean, black silk, white lace; Miss Boylan, cream embroidered muslin, black poppies; Mrs C. Boylan, white muslin; Mrs C. Thomas, pink muslin; Miss Sherriff, pink brocaded silk; Mrs R. Reynolds, white satin, covered with spangled net; Miss C. Reynolds, white spotted net over white satin, mauve sash; Miss Schumacher, black net over black silk; Miss Bradley, white silk; Miss Thomson, cream silk; Miss Grey, black accordion-pleated silk. Amongst the gentlemen were Messrs Cyril White, H. White, A. F. Kennedy, R. Williamson, Sherratt (2), D. Barton, Bradley, Monckton (2), H. Evans, Nolan, Burke, O. H. Butler, Iveson, Bennett, Dodd, Willock, Sherriff, Patullo, Schumacher, Dr. Schumacher, and Dr. Scott.

ELSA.

NAPIER.

Dear Bee, December 2.

THE BAZAAR

held at St. John's Schoolroom last week in aid of the Church Missionary Society was most successful in every way. Amongst those present were—Mrs Cargill, who was wearing a coat and skirt of cornflower blue frieze and a toque to match; Mrs Hovell, pale green voile, toque with heliotrope flowers; Miss Hovell, dark blue coat and skirt, bright red hat trimmed with poppies; Miss Twigg also wore dark blue; Mrs Stedman, red silk costume, black chiffon hat; Mrs Rochfort (Feilding), tobacco brown voile, becoming hat to match; Mrs R. D. D. McLean, black coat and skirt, white silk vest, large white hat trimmed with roses; Mrs Hansard was also in black and white; Mrs Edgar wore pale grey; Mrs Henley, gobelin blue voile, toque trimmed with chiffon; Mrs H. J. Smith, smart green costume, white hat relieved with rose pink; Miss Fell (Nelson), pale grey dress, large chip hat trimmed with pink roses; Mrs C. McLean was in black and white; Miss McLean, cream; Miss Kennedy, cream voile dress, daintily trimmed with yak lace; Miss K. Williams, black and white spotted blouse, dark skirt; Mrs Bowen, stylish brown costume, black toque; Miss Macfarlane, holland coat and skirt, cream chip hat; Miss E. Williams, dark blue voile dress relieved with white; Miss Thornton wore black; Miss Alpin, pale green trimmed with velvet of a darker shade; Miss Pasley also wore a becoming green costume; Mrs T. C. Moore, pale blue silk voile, cream hat.

The choir of St. Paul's Church gave

A SUCCESSFUL CONCERT

at St. Paul's Schoolroom, Dalton-street, on the 29th ult. A somewhat lengthy programme seemed, however, none too long for the audience, who persistently encored most of the artists, notably Miss Armstrong, who sang "Children of Sleep" (Moir). Mr Griffen gave "Hush Me, O Sorrow" (Somerset) and "The Lowland Sea" (Branscombe) in good style. Mr Gregson's rendering of a difficult pianoforte solo, "Spinning Song" by Raff, was applauded. Miss D. Paterson, a young singer with a remarkably powerful voice, gave "Beloved it is Morn," by Aylward; and Miss Scheele sang "When We Meet," by Hope Temple.

MARJORIE.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

Dear Bee, December 3.

Owing to the boisterous weather the attendance was not large at the Taranaki

AGRICULTURAL SHOW,

which was held on the racecourse last Thursday afternoon, but for all that it was larger than at any show held for years past. Among the ladies present I noticed: Mrs Alf. Bayly, in a black costume, fawn jacket, black and white hat; Mrs Fletcher, grey tweed costume, trimmed with black velvet, scarlet hat; Miss B. Evans, navy blue costume, piped with white, scarlet chiffon hat; Miss Cunningham, black, hat en suite; Mrs Percy Webster, pretty pale blue linen costume, white insertioned front, scarlet hat; Mrs Walter Bayly, brown and pink costume, hat to correspond; Miss Bedford, grey silk voile, scarlet hat; Miss D. Bedford, pink flowered delaine, cream hat trimmed with chiffon; Mrs Rowe (Inglewood), black costume, fawn jacket; Miss M. Gabb, cream silk blouse, dark skirt; Miss Fleetwood, navy costume, fawn hat; Miss Blackwood, black and cream costume; Miss Brash, scarlet linen, cream vest, hat en suite; Miss Bayley, dark brown costume, cream silk front, hat to correspond; Miss E. Bayley, cream costume, black hat; Mrs R. Bayley, black canvas voile; Mrs Harrison (Stratford), Lincoln-green coat and skirt, cream vest; Mrs Wylie, dark brown costume, red and pink roses in hat; Miss George, black, cream crash coat; Misses Roberts (2), pretty peacock-blue costumes, relieved with white, white felt hats; Mrs Cock, black costume, pink and black vest; Miss Cock, red and white silk blouse, dark skirt, fawn jacket, pretty scarlet and white hat; Miss Paul, black costume, seal coat, cream silk blouse, sailor hat; Mrs Walker, navy blue and white costume, hat en suite; Misses Sadler (2), black costumes, fawn jackets; Misses M. and H. Humphries, black and cream costumes, hats to correspond.

NANCY LEE.

WANGANUI.

Dear Bee, December 2.

On Friday Mrs Griffiths gave

AN AFTERNOON TEA

at her picturesque residence in Wilson-street in honour of Mrs Vennell, of Wellington, who is staying in Wanganui with her daughter, Mrs C. Millward. Afternoon tea was served in the drawing-room, and numbers of the guests played croquet. Amongst those present were Mesdames Moss, Browne, Dyer, Stevenson, John Watt, L. Jones, Vennell (Dunedin), Hatherley, C. Millward, F. Millward, Misses Anderson, Brewer, and others.

Last week Mrs John Anderson gave

A FLOWER TEA

for Miss Morrison, of Auckland. A delicious afternoon tea was laid in the drawing-room, with the table artistically arranged with masses of shizanthus. In the dining-room three large bowls of flowers were grouped, and the guests were allowed to look at them for a few minutes and write down all the names they could remember. Mrs C. Millward guessed the names of forty-eight flowers, and won the prize, a pretty silver-mounted cut-glass flower vase. Mrs Anderson received her guests in a black voile skirt with gauged flounces and tucks, pretty black silk blouse with bands of insertion and lace. Miss Anderson wore a smart blouse of pale blue silk with deep lace shoulder yoke, black voile skirt. Miss W. Anderson, tucked white muslin frock, the numerous frills edged with white satin bebe ribbon and lace; Miss Morrison (Auckland), black and grey muslin blouse with turquoise blue swathed belt, black silk skirt made with wide tucks; Mrs Porritt, black voile costume with champagne insertion, cream voile sun-ray pleated sac coat, black straw hat with chiffon and ostrich feathers; Mrs Peake wore black silk, her mantle was trimmed with jet and accordion-pleated frills of chiffon, black straw bonnet with chiffon; Mrs A. Blundell was gowned in a stylish champagne canvas profusely banded with green and cream galloon, tucked skirt with strappings of the same material, burnt straw French sailor with rouche of cream and green figured ribbon; Mrs Reid, pale green voile flecked with white and trimmed with cream lace, black hat with chiffon and plumes; Mrs Fenwick wore a smart frock of cream voile, the bodice with tiny black velvet ribbon bows and low neck effect of cream lace, black picture hat; Mrs Babbage, grey costume strapped with silk, black hat with autumn foliage; Mrs Greenwood, rose pink silk with champagne voile over-skirt, French sailor hat; Mrs Heywood wore a black voile costume, the Eton coat banded with champagne insertion, cream tucked vest, green and white French sailor hat with blue and green ribbons; Mrs C. Millward wore a dainty cream voile, black picture hat; Mrs Fred. Jones, black voile skirt, cream voile sac coat, black picture hat; Mrs Fitzgerald, black voile skirt, white tucked muslin blouse with lace; Mesdames Nicholas, Stanford, John Stevenson, and others.

THE TENNIS COURTS

are now occupied daily, and the various members are beginning to show their usual good form. Saturday was a delightful summer's afternoon, and there was a very large attendance on the courts. Afternoon tea was provided by the Misses F. Jones. Amongst those present I noticed Mesdames Pattle-Izett, Paget (Stratford), Barnicoat, Gifford Marshall, F. Hatherley, Griffiths, Mackay, Misses Moore, Earle, Cave, Barnicoat (2), Jones (2), O'Brien, Brabant, Stanford, McGowan (Invercargill), Trainor, Newton, McNeill, Izard, Pickering, Witchell, Mackay (Stratford), Messrs. Harold, Peck, Izard, Lomas, Armour, Jardine, Hardwick, Sumpter, Waterson, Hatherley, Dodgshun, Mackay, E. Johnston, and others.

A DELIGHTFUL CHILDREN'S PARTY

was given by Mrs Hogg, Wicksteed-street, for her little daughter Griselda. Amongst those present were the little Misses Hogg, Fitz-Herbert, Forde, Fairburn, Ida Humphreys, Florence Brookfield, Florence Clissold, Masters Hogg, Fitz-Herbert, Barron and others. Mrs Vaughan also gave one at her residence, St. John's Hill, on the same afternoon, when the children had a very merry time with all manner of games, etc. Amongst the little guests I noticed the Misses Vaughan (2), Marjorie Treadwell, Leslie Williams, Enid Heywood, Gertrude Dodgshun, Kathy Jones, Hazel Jones, and others.

THE WANGANUI HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

held their annual Spring Show in the Drill Hall on Wednesday and Thursday last. Notwithstanding the fact that the weather this spring has been distinctly unfavourable for flowers and vegetables, record entries were received for the show, and the quality was above the average. This year several attractions were added in the shape of a refreshment stall, under the supervision of Misses Stanford, Bayley and Hardcastle, and a sweets stall, presided over by Miss Dodgshun, both of which were well patronised. There was a large attendance on both days, and each evening musical selections were rendered by Mr Armstrong's orchestra and the T.Y.M.I. band. There were also gymnastic displays by the ladies' and men's classes of the T.Y.M.I., and other attractions. Amongst those present I noticed Mrs G. M. Palmer, in a navy coat and skirt, Panama hat; Mrs Sorley (Feilding), black Melton cloth tailor-made costume, black feather hat; Mrs Hope (Christchurch), long grey coat and skirt, white lace and silk blouse; Mrs Earle, black voile costume with gathered and flounced skirt, pelerine of Paris lace, grey straw toque; Miss Earle, grey voile costume, white feather boa; Mrs W. D. Anderson, grey coat and skirt, trimmed with white cloth and embroidered in black silk; Miss Dodgshun, white muslin, lace insertion; Miss Christie, grey crepe de chine, trimmed with black velvet; Miss Moore, grey tweed sac coat and skirt, Tuscan straw hat, trimmed with blue flowers and bandeau of turquoise blue silk; Miss Mason, pretty white embroidered costume; Mrs Alexander, smart black and white costume, black chiffon toque with white feathers; Miss Alexander, handsome blue costume; Mrs H. L. Peake, black costume, handsome cape with stole ends; Mrs Moore, navy serge coat and skirt, pompadour silk blouse, and black hat; Mrs J. G. Wilson (Bulls), pretty black voile, trimmed with gathered chiffon and lace, mauve hat, trimmed with tulle and feathers; Miss Wilson (Bulls), pink muslin, trimmed with insertion and lace, deep crimson hat, trimmed with tulle of same shade and cherries; Miss Barnicoat, white muslin costume, pretty white flower hat with tulle strings; Miss Phyllis Barnicoat, white muslin costume and hat of frilled muslin; Mesdames Wood, Fenwick, Serjeant, J. Anderson, Stevenson, Nicholls, Gresson, Babbage, Misses Izard, Gilfillan, Liffiton, Bayley, Brewer, Messrs Cecil Wray, Babbage, John Mason, Russell, Grace, Doodgshun, W. D. Anderson, and others.

HUIA.

HAWERA.

Dear Bee, December 1.

Wonderful to relate, the second day of the agricultural show was just as fine as the first; in fact, it was even better, I think. It was such a treat to have such glorious weather. There was a record attendance this year, and all the competitions were excellent, perhaps the one that caused more interest than any being the ladies' riding in divided skirts. Everyone seemed to be fascinated with them, as they all looked so very smart, and besides that how very much safer it must be, especially in jumping. Judging from the comments one heard on every side, I don't think it will be long before all the ladies down this way take to wearing the divided skirts for riding. There were a great many pretty frocks worn on the second day, and although it was impossible to notice them all, I was able to take note of some of them. Mrs W. Glenn (Manaia) was wearing a smart costume of grey-blue cloth, pretty front of blue and white, black picture hat; Mrs Sloan, dainty frock of grey voile, straw hat trimmed with pink roses; Mrs Gill-Carey looked very smart in a gown of blue

voile, the corsage being relieved with a yoke of embroidered creme silk and berthe of lace, blue straw hat trimmed with silk and blue hyacinths; Mrs Alf. Bayly (Stratford), frock of black voile, creme silk front, black and white hat; Mrs Nolan, grey costume, black hat; Mrs Baird, a black frock, pretty black hat trimmed with feathers and white osprey; Mrs Bruce Hair wore a dainty frock of white silk, tucked and inserted, black picture hat; Mrs Harrison (Eltham), tailor-made green coat and skirt faced with white, white straw hat; Miss Reilly was smartly gowned in a crash coat and skirt, prettily trimmed with lace medallions, creme and blue hat; Miss C. Reilly, dainty frock of white silk, shirred and tucked, white hat; Mrs Burton (Eltham) looked very dainty in a frock of green and white muslin, pretty hat to match; Mrs Brown, becoming frock of champagne voile, tucked and finished with ecru lace, green and white hat; Miss White looked very smart in a gown of crepe de chine over a glace slip, black picture hat; Miss Hawkens, grey voile gown trimmed with Oriental trimming, blue and white hat; Mrs Hugh Good (Geo) looked very smart in a black and white cloth costume, black and white hat; Miss Mitchell (Manaia), brown tweed costume, brown hat to match; Miss Baird, blue and white frock, white straw hat; Miss Eva Baird, pretty white silk, shirred and tucked, burnt straw hat trimmed with white silk; Mrs Jacobs, gown of rose frieze trimmed with velvet, hat to match; Mrs Grainger (Patea) looked very smart in a frock of blue linen, pretty red hat; Mrs R. D. Welsh wore a gown of green, the corsage relieved with a yoke of white embroidered silk, white hat; Miss Hamilton, champagne-coloured voile trimmed with black velvet ribbon and pink silk, blue and pink hat; Mrs. O'Callaghan, smart green and white silk coatee, black voile skirt, green hat; Miss Glenn (Manaia), pretty frock of green crash, creme hat trimmed with creme embroidered chiffon; Miss Douglas, black silk blouse finished with a transparent yoke of pretty lace, black voile skirt, pretty black and white hat; Miss Templer, crash Eton coat and skirt, blue and white spotted front, black picture hat; Miss Jollie wore a gown of tussore silk, black and white hat; Miss Hamilton (Manutahi), black and white costume, black and white hat trimmed with pink roses; Miss Greaves, crash coat and skirt, pretty creme hat; Mrs Rayney Jackson, a gown of black voile, pretty black hat; Miss Bayly (Normanby) looked very smart in a frock of tussore silk, profusely shirred, red hat; Mrs C. Goodson was wearing a gown of grey voile, the skirt having bands of shirred silk, green and white hat; Miss Brett, a frock of tussore silk, the skirt shirred and tucked, the corsage having transparent yoke of silk insertion; black picture hat; Mrs Ward (Manaia) looked very dainty in a frock of grey voile, pretty grey hat, grey ostrich feather boa; Miss E. Caplen, crash coat and skirt, straw hat trimmed with creme silk. Some of the gentlemen were Messrs. Glenn, O'Callaghan, Brett, Pitcher, Templer, Olliver, Blennerhassett, Baird (3), Turnbull, Goodson, Ward (Manaia), Bayly (Stratford), F. Glasgow (Eltham), R. Douglas, Rev. J. A. Jacob, Dr. Brown, Hunter (2), Good (Geo), Mitchell (Manaia), Dr. Leatham (New Plymouth), E. D. O'Rorke (Auckland), Dr. Harrison (Eltham), Williams, Willis, etc.

ENA.

PALMERSTON NORTH.

Dear Bee, December 2.

Saturday last proved a beautiful day for the opening of the

PALMERSTON TENNIS AND CROQUET CLUB.

Owing to the shortness of notice given, very few people were aware that the club's season was commencing, and consequently only a very small proportion of the members turned up. Only the croquet lawns were used, the tennis lawns being still too soft. A large number of new members has been elected, and a very prosperous season promises. A plentiful afternoon tea was provided by the ladies' committee and others. Among those present I noticed Mrs Harden, wearing a navy canvas voile with yoke and frill of string-coloured lace, large black chiffon hat with ostrich feathers and pale yellow roses; Mrs Campbell, pale blue floral muslin, bodice and skirt trimmed profusely with Paris tinted lace and insertion, cream French sailor with navy blue satin bows; Mrs McKnight, cornflower blue linen skirt and coatee, champagne lace vest, fawn chiffon hat with green velvet ribbon and wreath of shaded pink roses; Mrs Watson, black skirt, cream blouse with black spot, black hat with tips; Mrs Bell, black skirt, linen coat strapped with blue, cream hat with navy and white spotted ribbon; Mrs Tripe, blue skirt, white blouse, navy French sailor with blue flower; Mrs Gould, black and white floral muslin, cream hat with green and pale pink trimming; Mrs Jamieson, grey costume made with coatee, strappings of lighter shade of grey silk, navy French sailor; Miss Armstrong, black skirt, pale blue muslin blouse with transparent yoke of white lace, pale blue and white straw hat; Miss Randolph, grey and white costume, navy blue hat; Miss Reid, white muslin dress, white hat with pale blue glace bows and wreath of pale pink flowers; Miss Bell, cream skirt, white blouse, large cream hat with pink shaded and yellow roses; Miss Gwen Bell, white linen coat and skirt, pale green tie, Tuscan hat with green trimming; Miss Copeland, hopsack coat and skirt, hat with scarlet flowers.

Glorious weather prevailed on Wednesday for the first day of the

FEILDING RACES.

Palmerston is only about twelve miles distant by road from that town, and a large number of residents took advantage of the beautiful weather to have a day's outing. The excursion trains were also crowded by racing enthusiasts. Visitors to the races from Palmerston included Mr and Mrs Harold Cooper, Mr and Mrs Loughnan, Mr and Mrs Vandrey Baldwin, Mrs Percy Baldwin, Mr and Mrs D. Shute, Mrs W. Keeling, Mr and Mrs F. S. McRae, Mrs Warburton, Mrs Hankins, Mrs W. S. Fitzherbert (New Plymouth), Dr Graham, Dr and Mrs Wilson, Mr J. P. Innes, Messrs Waldegrave Bros., Mrs Copeland, Miss Montgomery, Mr Montgomery, Mr and Mrs Elkington (Napier), Mr and Mrs Milton, Mrs Tripe, Mrs Bell, Mr E. Bell, Mr Louisson, Mr Haynes, Mrs Cohen, Mr and Mrs J. Strang, Mr and Mrs Lionel Abraham, Mr and Mrs A. Bell, Mr Hammond, Mr Thynne. Thursday, the second day, was brilliantly fine till midday, when there was a thunderstorm, followed by an almost continuous downpour of rain for the remainder of the day. Large numbers had again driven over from Palmerston, and got a terrible drenching driving home.

Last Saturday the

POLO CLUB

opened its season with a match on the Hokowhitu polo ground. Several ladies interested in the game drove down to Hokowhitu to watch the play. Mrs Lionel Abraham dispensed delightful afternoon tea to all the visitors present.

Mrs T. Henry, who is leaving Palmerston to reside in Auckland, gave a

FAREWELL TEA

to her friends on Friday afternoon at Miss Watson's pretty tea-rooms in Cuba-street. The afternoon was most pleasantly spent with an advertisement competition. Each guest had four well-known advertisements pinned to her back, and had, by asking questions of the other guests, to find out what her advertisements were. At the conclusion of the guessing it was found that seven ladies had guessed all theirs correctly. Eventually Miss Montgomery proved the winner of the first prize, a quaint china hot-water jug, and Mrs R. Leary won the second prize. After the presentation of the prizes tea and the daintiest of sandwiches and cakes were served. Mrs Henry was wearing a becoming blue costume with touches of red, red French sailor with red wings; Mrs Armstrong, black skirt, long black silk coat, bonnet with violets; Mrs Haynes, grey dress with black trimming, black picture hat; Mrs Nairn, very pretty black voile dress, yoke of Paris tinted lace, black hat with white wings; Mrs C. Waldegrave, black canvas voile skirt, black accordion pleated coat, black hat; Mrs R. K. Reid, black voile dress, black hat with tips; Miss Copeland, holland coat and skirt piped with white, brown hat with red trimming; Miss May Copeland, blue canvas voile, champagne lace vest, red hat; Mrs Warburton; Miss Warburton; Mrs Leary, black skirt, fawn Norfolk coat, blue hat with cornflowers; Mrs Gould, black grenadine, white chiffon vest, black picture hat; Mrs Copeland; Miss Montgomery; Miss Reid, and others.

VIOLET.

WELLINGTON.

Dear Bee, December 2.

Everyone is still talking of Miss Beetham's wedding, which was one of the prettiest and largest seen in Wellington. She was so lucky in the weather, too, for the important day was gloriously fine and sunny, while the rest of the week was disagreeable. Both Miss Beetham and Mr Bethell are connected with so many of the best-known families that there were scores of visitors here for the wedding. White satin is usually trying wear in the day-time, but, thanks to a charming complexion and a crown of red-gold hair, the bride came through the ordeal triumphantly. In the evening there was the jolliest of dances given by the bride's aunt, Mrs T. C. Williams, to wind up the festivities. Mrs Williams' granddaughter, Miss Ida Russell (Palmerston North), made her debut, and was much admired in a fluffy white tulle frock, with touches of white satin. She had a pretty white shower bouquet. Another debutante was Miss Ethel Abraham (Palmerston North), who looked well in a white chiffon frock, accordion-pleated, and made with flounces. Mrs Williams wore pearl-grey crepe de chine, with a lace berthe and diamond ornaments; Mrs A. Russell (Palmerston), cream brocade; Misses Williams, ivory crepe de chine and lace dresses; Mrs Abraham (Palmerston North), black taffetas; Miss Abraham, white toile de soie, elaborately shirred and gauged; Misses Bethell, Fitzgerald, Fitzroy, and Beetham wore their pretty bridesmaids' dresses; Mrs Montgomerie (Wanganui), black satin, lace fichu; Miss Montgomerie, white satin and lace; Mrs A. Duncan, pink crepe de chine and roses; Mrs I. Duncan, white satin, with festoons of pale blue chiffon; Mrs Brandon, cream brocade; Miss Brandon, pink colienne; Miss L. Brandon, white satin; Miss B. Fitzgerald, white crepe de chine and lace; Miss Edwin, white satin and lace berthe; Miss Harcourt, ivory satin and lace; Mrs Hislop, pink crepe de chine; Misses Hislop, white satin dresses; Miss Duncan, Nil green chiffon and satin; Miss Riddiford, pale pink crepe de chine; Miss Rawson, lettuce-green satin and kilted chiffon; Miss E. Rawson, white muslin and lace, and pink sash; Miss Coleridge, black satin; Miss I. Coleridge, pale blue brocade; Miss Fell, white satin and lace; Miss M. Fell, white glace; Miss Tolhurst, ivory crepe de soie and pink roses; Miss Higginson, green crepe de chine and chiffon; Mrs Buchanan, pale blue crepe de chine; Miss Johnston, white glace and black lace and net; Miss D. Johnston, white lace and chiffon; Miss Fitzherbert, reseda chiffon and satin.

I hear that Miss Cecily Higginson is going to England next week in the Corinthic. This is sooner than she expected, but a cablegram the other day altered her plans. Lieut. Campbell, R.N., is now on the Mediterranean station, and his marriage with Miss Higginson will be celebrated soon after her arrival in England.

MRS PALMER CAMPBELL'S TEA

on Friday was a large and enjoyable one, though a tiresome shower of rain, which came on and caught people unawares, did its best to spoil their best frocks. However, special buses to the Kelburne tram enabled nearly everyone to get there dry. Tea tables were set in the dining-room and study, and the pretty decorations of cerise and white sweet peas were much admired. Upstairs the morning-room and balcony attached were visited by the many guests, who were delighted with the view of the hills and harbour below. Mrs Campbell received in a handsome dress of black taffetas with herring-boned insertions over white glace; Mrs McKellar wore black brocade and a black and white chiffon toque; Miss McKellar, blue voile with lace yoke and cuffs; Miss E. McKellar, cream canvas; Mrs Firth, grey voile with rose-coloured belt, and Leghorn hat with rose-coloured choux; Miss Contes, black glace and handsome coat; Mrs Hall, white canvas with mauve ruches; Mrs Fitchett, ecru voile with silk lace insertions, reseda and lilac toque; Mrs Coleridge, tussore silk and hat with roses; Mrs Bristowe, fawn voile; Mrs Beattie, pale grey canvas and black hat; Mrs Hales, royal blue and white foulard; Mrs Watson, Shantung silk and black hat; Mrs Blundell, blue voile; Miss Blundell, white muslin and chine sash; Miss Ward, white muslin and royal blue hat; Mrs Rhatigan, black voile and glace coat; Miss Turner, white muslin and black hat; Miss — Turner, pale blue linen and blue hat; Mrs Homewood, black voile; Miss Homewood, ivory cloth, and blue hat with shaded tulle and cornflowers; Miss Didsbury, deep blue voile with lace yoke; Mrs Martin, blue canvas; Miss Martin, blue muslin; Mrs Butts, black voile with white spots; Miss Butts, pale blue figured voile; Miss Stafford, white spotted muslin; Miss Nation, cream voile and red hat.

OPHELIA.

MARLBOROUGH.

Dear Bee, November 28.

The Agricultural Show was an unqualified success. The exhibits as a rule were more numerous and of better quality than those of previous years, especially in the domestic produce department. The attendance was very large and—what is of interest to ladies—the dresses were magnificent—for Blenheim, of course. People were there from all parts of the province, and friends met who only do meet on Show Day.

The Horticultural Society held their show also on Tuesday and Wednesday, but the larger attraction was elsewhere. It seemed a pity, because the flower show was really the best the society has held for years. Many of the prizes in bouquets, etc., and cut flowers went to Picton. Mrs Allen, Mrs Riddell, and the Misses Greensill were top scorers in the arrangement of flowers. Mrs Conolly and Mrs Griffiths had some

beautiful roses. One shown by Mrs Conolly took the prize as a specimen. A good many handsome pot plants were exhibited, but the people as a rule do not study the art of growing pot plants like they do in Picton, and that part of the show is left almost entirely to Mr Conolly.

A social gathering was arranged for Wednesday evening, and a most enjoyable time was spent. It was a private one, of course, got up for the entertainment of some of the visitors here for the Show.

The Roman Catholic garden party was also a great success, and the various amusements organised for the occasion of the Show fitted in the time of the many visitors to Blenheim.

The Waitohi Rifles were in camp last week, and the time was fully occupied with drill. On Sunday there was a church parade, the Garrison Band from Blenheim assisting by playing to and from church as well as the voluntaries for the service. Everybody was invited to afternoon tea, and turned up in force, the ladies' dresses adding colour to the scene. The men were kept fully employed attending to their many visitors. The band played selections, and were heartily cheered on leaving by drag for Blenheim.

The Picton Horticultural Society hold their show to-morrow.

Weddings have been of almost daily occurrence, the latest being that of Mr Henry Dobson, whose family are well-known, since Marlborough was, to Miss Daisy Cawte. Mr Dobson's father was Provincial Engineer of Marlborough in the early days.

MIRANDA.

CHRISTCHURCH.

Dear Bee, November 30.

The weather has been so very uncertain that it is almost a wonder anyone had the courage to attempt a garden party, but Mrs. Beckett, "Almora," Riccarton, wished her friends to enjoy her lovely garden, and so the guests were bidden, but no sooner had they arrived than down came the rain, putting an end to all outside pleasures. Among the guests were: Mr., Mrs. and Miss Neave, Mr., Mrs. and Miss Bowen, Mr. and Mrs. Harper, Mrs. and Miss Hill, Mrs. and Miss Deans, Mrs. Scott, Mrs. and Miss Ensor, Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. and Misses Sanders, Mr., Mrs. and the Misses Moore, Mrs. and Miss Wilson, Mr., Mrs. and Miss Anson, Mr. and Mrs. Morton, Mr. and Mrs. Day, Miss Cotton, Mrs. and Miss Inman, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, Mr. and Mrs. T. Cowlishaw.

Mrs. Andrew Anderson, "Merchiston," Opawa, gave a very pleasant afternoon and evening for young people. Some enjoyable games of tennis were played, and after "high tea" there was dancing for several hours, making an ideal party for her young friends. Mr. and the Misses Anderson zealously looked after everybody. Among those present were the Misses Elmslie, Lewin, Humphreys, Reece, Kitson, Chrystal, Simpson and Rolleston, Messrs. Chrystal, Overton, Murray, Harper and Thomas.

Mrs. J. Wilson, of Cashmere, had, during the week, a large party of juveniles, who greatly enjoyed the outing, and Mrs. George Gould, "Avonbank," also gave a children's party.

Mrs. Kinsey gave a large afternoon tea at "Te Hau," Sumner, for her daughter, Mrs. W. A. Moore, before returning to Dunedin. Some of those present were: Mrs. Chilton, Mrs. Waymouth, Mrs. de Vries, Mrs. Carey Hill, Mrs. Gilbert Anderson, Mrs. A. Anderson, Mrs. Garrard, Miss Wilson and many others. The view from Clifton (the new estate that has recently been cut up) is a beautiful one, and a day there is greatly enjoyed by Christchurch people.

Mrs. Denniston, Armagh street, gave a pleasant evening for her young friends on Wednesday, when the time was principally spent at bridge or billiards. Mrs. Denniston wore black evening dress; Miss Denniston, white silk; Miss M. Denniston, white crepe de chine; Miss Tolhurst (Wellington), pale blue muslin. Others present were: Mr. and Miss Nancarrow, the Misses Molyneaux, Fitzgerald, Humphreys, Wilkin, Campbell and Prins, Messrs. Brittan, Neave, Ollivier, Babington, Cotterill, Williams and Dr. Ulrich.

Miss Cox invited a number of guests to the breaking up of her assemblies, which took place in her new hall in Hereford street. The first part of the evening we witnessed some of the pretty figure dancing by her pupils, which was most daintily and gracefully done. A dainty supper was served in the refreshment-room, and dancing followed. Mrs. Cox wore a rich black merveilleux with white lace fichu; Miss Cox, pretty pale grey voile; Mrs. Hugh Reeves, pretty pale blue silk; Mrs. Blunt, cream lace over silk slip; Miss Julius, pale blue muslin; Miss Cotterill, black and white; Mrs. A. Anderson, black silk and cream lace insertion; Miss Anderson, pink chiffon; Miss Denniston, white silk; Miss Anson, pink gauze; Miss Campbell, white, relieved with heliotrope; Mrs. Denniston, black silk and cream lace. Others present were: Mrs. G. Harper, Mrs. and Miss Crossdaile Bowen, Mrs. and Miss Mills, Miss Tripp, the Misses Barker, Rose, Prins, Molyneux, Lewin, Mathias, Cook, Hennah, Rutherford, Moorhouse, Rolleston, Williams, Thompson, Messrs. Harper, Reeves, Vernon, Williams, Denniston, Cox, Nancarrow, White, Ross, Thompson.

The polo season was opened on Saturday, the ground being in excellent condition. Among the onlookers were: General and Mrs. Babington, Mrs. T. Cowlishaw, Mrs. J. D. Hall, Mrs. and Miss Lee, Mrs. Woodroffe, Mrs. A. E. G. Rhodes, Mrs. G. Gould, Mrs. Palmer, etc.

Mrs. Woodroffe had a small bridge party at her residence, Park Terrace, among those present being: Mrs. J. G. Palmer, Mrs and Miss Lee, Mrs and Miss Anson, the Misses Murray-Aynsley, and one or two others.

Croquet and tennis have again taken possession of us. The Misses Hill had some excellent tennis last Thursday, when among those playing were: Mrs. Blunt, Mrs. T. Cowlishaw, Mrs. Cotterill, Mrs. Woodroffe, the Misses Knight (Abberley), Lee and Moore. Croquet has even more devotees than tennis, and afternoons have been given by Mrs Ollivier (Opawa), Mrs. Guthrie Moore, Mrs. C. H. Croxton, Mrs. Coverdale (Riccarton), Mrs. McBride, Mrs. J. Gibbs, and others.

DOLLY VALE.

Complete Story.

A Lady of Moods.

By GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

"Heart of my heart, she has broken
the heart of me;
Soul of my soul, she will never
be part of me—
She whom I love, but will
never be love of me,
Song of my Sorrows—
My Lady of Moods."

Michael's death, in the season when his promise was being fulfilled, was a shocking loss to us who loved him; and a ten days' wonder. In a land of plenty, with money in his purse, a friend by his side, and the earnests of an unparalleled success pouring in by every mail, the man to whose robust body and vitality there seemed to cling a suggestion of immortality, had died of what the doctor in attendance declared to have been physical exhaustion.

The scene of Michael's death, and of his lonely burying, the Hill station of Nuwara Elya in Ceylon, was so far removed from the obliterating roar and change of New York that we, who were most interested and affected, despaired of receiving those particulars with which it is the touching custom of a man's friends to busy their minds on the melancholy occasion of his dying. It was idle to speculate, and the tragedy, by degrees, fell away from thought and talk. But it was not one of those visitations which can be wholly forgotten, and when it was learned that Prince Laniaski, of Warsaw, Michael's companion in Ceylon, had landed in America, there was a general reviving of interest.

Prince Laniaski is a long, emaciated man, with the lofty forehead, the ivory-yellow colouring and the Virgilian profile of the early Florentine poets. He has singularly deep-set, light grey eyes and the poise of an Oriental. In speaking English it is by deliberateness and not accent or construction that he distinguishes himself a foreigner.

"Michael," he began suddenly, and breaking off abruptly an entirely different topic, "died of physical exhaustion brought on by a broken heart."

I recalled everything I knew about Michael, which was much, and could not find any grounds for entertaining such a theory. There were plenty of vivacious flirtations to which I could have sworn, and with equal readiness I could have taken oath that in and about his native city, and in all my long and intimate knowledge of him, he had never been drawn by a serious inclination toward any woman. All this passed into my mind.

Laniaski looked at me steadily as if I had spoken aloud, and immediately answered my scepticism.

"You are are quite mistaken," he said. "At once well known and quite unknown to his familiar friends, there was a woman—a young girl—here in the very midst of you, who brought this thing upon him."

"I cannot think who," I said.

"Do you know a—Mrs Jolyff?" he asked.

"Certainly," I said: "I have known her always. I was one of Jolyff's ushers."

"Five years ago," said the Prince—"precisely five years. She was a Miss Carr—Miss Evelyn Carr. Michael has been dead precisely five years."

"My dear sir," I said, "there was nothing in little Miss Carr to attract such a man as Michael. She was a light-hearted, gay little flirt, of about as much use in the world as a butterfly, and just as charming to look at."

"Almost Michael's words," said Laniaski, "and yet he loved her in a way that is very difficult for you and me to comprehend."

"He saw very little of her," I said; "I am sure of that."

"My dear fellow," said the prince, "it does not take long to set fire to a haystack. If you like I will tell you the truth about the affair—all that Michael told me when we were together there in Ceylon."

"Evelyn Carr!" I said. "I was never so astonished."

"Seven years ago," said Prince Laniaski, "she was not known to him. He was very busy hammering gold in thoughts into immortal shape. Do you recall his 'Hymn in June'—in which there is a description of a young girl among the roses?

"You do not like the piece? Nor do I. Nor does any reader of perspicacity. In it there is too little of the divine fire which so crackled among the lines of Michael's later works. It is the composition of a youth maudlinly in love. But who else could have written it?

"Michael composed that hymn of three hundred lines extempore, standing upon a beach and addressing his passion to the sea. That is why it is so powerless—so—so rank. It was a June night, on the midnight of the night he met her, that he stood upon the beach smoking his cigar, and crying aloud to the waves of the passion and longing that were his. But as a poem it is very rank—very maudlin. June roses, a young girl, love—and death to philosophy.

"He met her at a dinner party in the country. He did not even sit next to her, he told me, but zigzag from her; she at one end of the table, himself at the other, and on opposite sides. She was then just out of the schoolroom, and had indeed only taken the place at the table of an older sister confined suddenly to bed by a touch of bronchitis. She had had her hair done up for the first time, and wore her first low-necked dress. It was of white silk, printed like a wall paper, with immense pale pink roses. Michael told me all this—once. And I have remembered.

"He said that when he took his seat at the dining-table he was a normal man of active habits, very hungry. He sat on the left of Mrs. Carr, the girl's mother, and begged her to forgive him for a few moments of gluttonous silence while he devoured his soup. 'I am so hungry,' he said, 'and the soup is so good.'

"And then he became so interested in the topic which he had started, to wit, the necessity of hunger being satisfied before conversation could begin, that his soup was taken from before him almost untasted. That was very like Michael. And then he looked up and to the left, and found that Evelyn Carr was looking at him. And he was the man to draw a girl's eyes out of her head—the lion face of him, the dancing, Saxon eyes, and the red glistening mane—the colour of the lighter markings in old Domingo mahogany. He said that for some moments she would not lower her eyes nor he his; and that then, and at the same moment, as if by mutual agreement, both looked away. That episode was repeated several times during dinner. With Michael it was a sudden call to his soul. But with the girl it was not that way at all. The first time she wished to see the effect of her eyes upon a man—any man. That is how I figure it. After that she felt a real attraction. But it was not of the soul.

'When the men were left to themselves Michael said that it seemed to him as if the room had been darkened; and though there were only two lamps burning under soft shades in the drawing-room, where the ladies had gone, he said that when he entered it it seemed bright like noon. He said further that this was not mere lover's talk, but an absolute, incomprehensible, physical illusion. He went straight to where she sat and placed himself beside her. He said:

"'We were not introduced. My name is John Michael and you are Miss Carr. My dinner was spoiled because I wanted to sit by you. I have never in my life seen anyone like you—never. I think you are a very wonderful person.'

"Those were his first words to her—right there in the drawing-room among all the chattering people—delivered in that quick, quiet way of speaking which was his when deeply in earnest. He said that she did not answer him, but looked straight in his eyes with a strange, questioning look, and that she moved uneasily. Then he said:

"'You are going to see a great deal of me, Miss Carr, whether you want to or not. It is one of those things that can't be helped. It is not your fault nor mine. I am going to know you very well.'

"His expression must have told her even more than his words. And her heart must have beaten gladly to have exercised so sudden an influence over the man whose genius was already beginning to thunder throughout the Eng-

fish-speaking world. But she did not say anything to him.

"'Miss Carr,' he said, 'will you come outside? I want to talk with you. I have never wanted to talk with anyone so much.'

"He stood by, expectantly. And after hesitation she stood up, too.

"'Outdoors?' she asked.

"Michael was never quite sure, but he thought these were the first words he had heard her speak. He said, 'Yes, outdoors,' and they walked over to where Mrs Carr was sitting, and Michael said:

"'Mrs Carr, your daughter and I are going to walk in the garden. It is June and there is a splendid moon.'

"Mrs Carr smiled and said something about not taking cold and not letting her little girl bore him, and they went out.

"Michael sat up in his bed when he came to that part of the narration and cried, 'Bore me! Bore me!—Holy Mother of God!'

"She started across the lawn to the rose garden, instead of going by the path, but Michael stooped and laid his hand on the grass and found that it was very wet, for there was a heavy dew. And he told her.

"'Does that matter?' she said.

"That was the second thing she ever said to him.

"They walked across the lawn very slowly, without speaking. Michael was unsteady with nervousness, and she, too, must have been in a state of nerves, for as they walked they occasionally swayed and came into contact with each other. She had not even put a lace over her bare neck and shoulders. And Michael said that in the moonlight they were wonderfully smooth and white, though in the house they had looked over-slender and girlish. He said that he could hear only the sound of his own feet on the grass; that her steps were so light as to make no sound. 'She drifted at my side,' he said, 'like a little cloud.'

"The night was hot and sultry, and the rose garden was full of fireflies that sparkled here and there among the sleeping roses. They walked up and down the little gravel paths, and every now and then would come into contact with each other; her shoulder touching his upper arm, his fingers brushing against her dress. They came to the end of the garden and Michael stopped and looked at her for a long time, she meeting his eyes without flinching. He said that he began to speak then, and that he did not know the sound of his own voice.

"'Two hours ago,' he said, 'I was my own man. Now I am yours. You can do with me what you please. All the way to this place I kept telling myself that I must not speak. That was why I said nothing to you all the way. I was giving myself orders. And now I am breaking them because I cannot help it. I did not believe that things could happen so quickly. But now I know. And you know. Are you going to say anything to me?'

"He said that she looked down then and answered that she did not know what to say.

"'You may call it little more than an hour,' Michael said to her. 'But I tell you it began longer ago than that—in Babylon, perhaps—or longer, when men lived in caves. You don't say anything to me; but why do you stand there and listen if you aren't going to care back?'

"'I don't know what to say to you,' she said. 'Nobody ever told me that they loved me before.'

"'Whenever I see you I shall tell you,' Michael said. 'When I can't see you I shall write it to you, until finally you are compelled to love me back.'

"'But,' she said, 'supposing it doesn't come to me, too?' And Michael told me that she had the expression of a little child who is puzzled—deeply puzzled about something or other. He stepped backward three steps deliberately and she stayed as she was.

"'If you stay where you are,' he said, 'I am going to take you in my arms and kiss you. But I am giving you a chance to get away.'

"She did not move.

"Michael told me that when little more than a boy he had nearly died of thirst somewhere in one of the great American deserts, and that water, when at length he found it, had not seemed so sweet to him as kissing that girl. At first she stood passive while he held her to his breast and kissed her, but after a time she began to cry and to kiss him back, and at the same time to struggle and push against him with her hands. Then he let her go.

"She retreated a few steps and stood looking at him.

"He could not, he said, for some time see her distinctly. She was vague and diaphanous to his eyes, like an object seen under water by a diver. And he said that it did not seem to him possible to draw sufficient air into his lungs to fill them. When this passed he went to her and took one of her hands in both his.

"'God knows,' he said, 'that I didn't go for to make you cry.' Tears filled his own eyes as he spoke. 'My girl mustn't be afraid of me. I love her too much—that's all—too much.'

"After that they walked up and down in the rose garden for awhile with their arms about each other. And every now and then they stopped, and he would strain her against his breast and kiss her and be kissed back. Then they went back to the house——"

"Prince," I said, "do you know that I was at that very dinner party of the Carrs'? And I remember, though I had forgotten, that Michael and Evelyn did go for a walk. And I remember them as they came in. Did Michael throw any light on that phase?"

"No," said the prince. "How was it they came in?"

"They looked bored," I said. "Her hair was not even rumpled—Jove, how it all comes back!—her dress—the white one with the wall-paper pattern—was heavy about the bottom from the dew and stained with green from dragging over the grass. They were the most self-possessed young people you ever saw. And do you mean to tell me all that—that business had been going on outside?"

"It was exactly as I have told you," said the prince. "it was later on that very night that he stood upon the beach under the starry sky, and chanted his 'Hymn in June' extempore to the sea. The man must have been half mad with passion and joy—but the hymn, after all, is very youthful and rank."

"But who else could have made it?" I said. "And then what happened?"

"After that," said the prince, "the most interesting phase began. We are confronted with the problem of a young girl who, to all intents and purposes, has given herself to a certain man, who loves him, who desires him—and who avoids him. You have remarked that Michael saw very little of her. That is quite true. She would not let him. He wrote to her every day—sometimes many times in one day—for nearly two years. I would like to have those letters. But it seems she destroyed them—after, I dare say, showing a few to her most intimate friends. She was capable of that. She destroyed them—she destroyed the glory of a mighty heart as it has never before been expressed. She destroyed the letters—and in due time Michael. I have seen some of the little notes which she addressed to him at this time—careless scrawls full of excuses. For the most part they were written on rough bluish paper, often blotted; and when I saw them they were stained by the sweat of the man above whose heart they had lain day and night. Such phrases as these ran through them, much underlined: 'I am terribly sorry, but mama positively says that I must go to Boston with her'; 'Your letter must have gone astray, because I never got it, or I surely would have been at home when you called'; 'Please don't be angry with me, but I honestly couldn't be there, after all!'

"For the most part she dodged him, as you might say, but now and again there were meetings between them; quite often, indeed, in public; but rarely alone. Yet when they were alone she was all that she had been to him in the rose garden, and Michael has told me he believed she might have been more. Yes; once they were somewhere—I have forgotten where — alone, in some woodland by the sea, I think, late in the afternoon, and Michael was pleading with her to say on what day she would marry him. But she would not say on what day. Then Michael took her in his arms and kissed her, and she kissed him back, many, many times.

"Michael kept saying, 'I want you so—I want you so!'

"And suddenly she hid her face in his breast, and trembled violently and said, 'Then for God's sake take me!'"

"In the name of everything," I broke in, "why wouldn't the little fool name a day and have done with it?"

"Because," said Laniaski, with more than his usual deliberation and with a ring of bitterness in his voice, "it seemed in those days that our poor friend was destined to become immortal rather than—rich."

"He became both," I objected.

"But not in time. Listen, my friend. That girl was a devil. She was the worst kind of a devil that is known. She loved our friend passionately, and she would not marry him because she feared to be poor. She kept away from him lest her very love for him should prevent her from making a rich marriage. That day, in the wood, was the only time that she said or meant a generous thing. For his own sake it is the greatest pity in the world that Michael was a gentleman; otherwise she would have been obliged to marry him."

"Better, perhaps," I said, "for him to be dead."

"I think not," said the prince. "It may sound strange to you after what I have said, but I think she would have made him a good wife. She loved him; of that there is no doubt. It was not a spiritual love, but let the term pass. She loved him." If she had married him then and there, I think all would have been well, for it was not long before money began to come to Michael in whole showers—literally in showers.

"But you can see why she was afraid to be with him, that is, from her point of view, having no wish to marry him. The end came like this. One day Michael, without sending word that he was coming, called at the Carrs' house in the country, and the maid told him that Miss Carr was somewhere in the garden; but she did not tell him that she was not alone. You have guessed, of course, that she was with Jolyff? Yes, in a sequestered nook of the rose garden. And what do you think she was doing? She was returning something that Jolyff had just given her—putting it exactly where it had come from—on his lips.

Michael walked right up to them.

"I had understood that you were

alone,' he said to Miss Carr. 'It was quite by accident that I saw what happened just now—but I thought it better to let you know that I had seen. Are you and Mr Jolyff going to be married?'

"She looked him straight in the eyes. And I will say that she was no coward to say what she did—and so proudly.

"'I would hardly, Mr Michael,' she said, 'kiss a man that I did not intend to marry.'

"Come, now, my friend, can you believe that?" said the prince. "Yet I have Michael's word for it, and, as we both know, he never lied."

"What did Michael do?"

"He felt for a moment as if spiders were stringing cobwebs in his head, and then his brain got wonderfully clear and full of notions. He turned to Jolyff and smiled.

"'Mr Jolyff,' he said, 'would you like to see something really quite remarkable?'

"Jolyff stammered and blushed as a man will who has just been caught behind a hedge kissing a girl.

"Michael made one stride to Miss Carr, crushed her to his breast, and kissed her over and over on the mouth. At first she struggled. Then she began to kiss him back. Between kisses he commanded her to say that she loved him, and she said: 'I love you—I love you.'"

"I'm damned," said I, and could hardly keep from laughing; "and what in Heaven's name did Jolyff do?"

"Jolyff?" said the prince. "Why he kept saying, 'I say, man, what are you doing?' over and over, he kept saying that."

"But he married her after all?"

"He did," said the prince. "She was very clever. But it is easy to see why Jolyff has never thrown any light on Michael's broken heart."

"And do you mean to tell me," I said, "that I was an usher at—at that wedding?"

"I have your own word for it," said the prince.

"I lied," I said. "I lied."

"Six months after they were married. Most of that time I was with Michael in Sumatra and the Straits Settlements. During that period—at the very beginning of it—his 'God in Heaven' was published. By every mail came fabulous royalties, and letters of fabulous adulation from all sorts and conditions of men among whom the English tongue is spoken. God! How that poem thunders! . . . for the ages of ages! . . . .

"Poor Michael! He is dead and we are alive—sipping our tea, watching the traffic of the Avenue, discussing affairs of the heart. To-night we are to dine and go to the play. And Michael lies there in Ceylon upon the top of a hill above the clouds, deep in his grave, covered with rocks lest the wild dogs should dig him up—dead, decaying, passing back into the womb of the great mother—and yet living with a glory which comes to but one man in hundreds of years—with a life that is, to this existence of yours and mine as flame is to ashes. . . .

"Adulation and royalties were not what the poor fellow needed. He became emaciated — thinner even than I, and I weigh less than a hundred and twenty pounds for all my height and endurance. I thought his trouble organic at first. His appetite was good, but food did not seem to nourish him. I thought that his stomach needed attention. But it was his heart.

"I persuaded him out of that rank, stenching island of Sumatra, and got him with me to Ceylon—to Nuwara Elya in the hills. There was a good doctor in that place, very gentle and wise—for a wonder an Englishman—and he tested and examined our poor friend, but there was nothing to ascertain. His heart was broken, that was all. The involuntary act of keeping it at work pumping was exhausting him—exhausting him and starving him. His room was next to mine. Often I went and sat with him in the night, and piece by piece he told me why he was dying.

"'But,' I would say, 'that girl did enough to bring any sane man to his senses, let alone you, my dear friend. Forget her—the little cat!'

"Even that did not comfort him. He would tap on the sheet—he was covered only by a sheet, and the contours which his body gave to it were the contours of bones—knees, ribs; all very shocking—he would tap on the sheet with his poor wasted fingers, and smile into my face.

"'Lani,' he would say; 'dear, simple old Lani!'

"During those last days he sang a great deal, propped up in his bed. He would have his bed wheeled to the window—his room was on the ground floor, and there was a double hedge, half calla lilies, half heliotrope, as high as a man, that looked in at him through the window. And he would sit there and look out and sometimes sing. You remember how loud and sweet a voice he had—like—yes, something like a negro's? God, how he could sing!

"One night I was wakened by the sound of his singing, and I said to myself, 'Good, he is amusing himself,' and turned half over, the better to listen. He was singing a canticle out of some church service—that which comes at the very end. How do you call it?"

"The Doxology?" I suggested.

"Yes; that was it. And it seemed to me in my drowsy state that nothing ever could have sounded so loud and beautiful and sweet.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

"Then the house became quiet, but presently I heard footsteps in the hall. They stopped before Michael's door, and I heard a sound of knocking and the whining voice of our landlord.

"'Mr. Michael,' he said, 'I'm very sorry, sir, but it's after hours, sir, and there's a lady in the 'ouse as says she can't sleep for the racket, sir.'

"It was after hours, my friend, and John Michael lay dead in his bed. . . ."

"At about that time," said the prince, lowering his voice, "sixteen thousand miles away, Mrs Jolyff and her husband were starting on their honeymoon. . . . I hope that some time while I am in town you will point her out to me.

"We could not get a coffin up to that high station in time, and so we buried Michael as he was, in his sleeping suit, and covered him with rocks so that the wild dogs should not dig him up. He had told me that, like Stevenson, he wished to be buried on the top of a high hill—on the top of Pedro, that tall mountain which overlooks nearly the whole of Ceylon, and is so often above the clouds. It was a long day's work.

"As he lay by the side of the grave which we had caused to be dug, his hair, that gorgeous mahogany-red hair of his, touched by the sun, crowned his white face like an auréole, and it seemed to me that we were about to consign to the earth—a martyr."

A victoria had drawn up in front of the Holland House, and a lady was giving cards and directions to a smart little tiger in dashing livery. The lady had a child with her in the victoria—a tiny mannikin of about two years.

"Prince," I said, "your wish to see Mrs Jolyff is easily granted. She's calling on somebody in the hotel at this moment, and is sitting outside in her victoria."

"So that is she," said the prince. "Will you present me?"

We went out bareheaded.

"Mrs Jolyff," I said, "may I present Prince Laniaski? He was with our old friend Michael in Ceylon when he died."

"Truly?" said Mrs Jolyff. "Were you really, prince?"

The prince bowed mechanically. He was not looking at her, but at the child, who for some unaccountable reason appeared almost to be attracting the eyes out of his head. I have never seen a gentleman—nor indeed anyone—stare so at anything. He turned to Mrs Jolyff with a start.

"Yes," he said, "I was with him."

"You must dine with us some night," she said, "and tell us about him. Will you?"

"Madame," said the prince, "I have travelled a great many thousand miles to tell you that I would rather enter the den of a rattlesnake."

He bowed, and with one last look at the child went back into the hotel.

"You presented that man to me?" said Mrs Jolyff, very white about the lips.

"Yes," I said. "Forgive me—I didn't know that he was ever taken like that—but he has had strange experiences and has listened to stranger stories. Goodbye."

The prince was back at our table, sitting with his chin between his hands. I sat down facing him. At first he did not seem to see me. Then he drew a long breath.

"My friend," he said, "that woman looks like a woman who—who is on her honeymoon."

"That was almost the last thing that I would have expected him to say.

"How long," he went on, "has Michael been dead? It is five years, is it not?"

"Yes," I said.

"How old is that little boy of hers?"

"About two."

"Have they others?"

"No."

"Strange," said the prince, "very strange, for it passes all reason."

"What is so strange?" I asked.

"The child—the child," said the prince, with some show of impatience. "Did you notice nothing peculiar about the child?"

"No," I said. "What?"

"Man," said the prince, "he has Michael's eyes and hair!"

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Stamp Collecting.

A new set of stamps was expected to be issued for Crete during the month of November, this year.

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The 6d orange and black stamp of the British Crown Colony, Transvaal, has appeared on the multiple watermark paper.

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The values of the Falkland Island stamps, King's Head type, that have appeared on multiple watermark paper, are as follow: ½d green, 1d scarlet, 2½d deep ultramarine, and 3/ dark green, the latter being the large size.

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On the stamps of Switzerland "Ausser Kurs" means "cancelled," and has been applied to the remainders of the 1881 issue before disposing of them to dealers, so as to render the stamps unfit for postal use.

• • •

Some forged overprints on stamps of German China have appeared. Careful examination renders detection sure, as all the genuine stamps of German China are overprinted in two different angles. First there is a steep slope of 50 degrees; this is the scarcer one, and, secondly, we find an ordinary angle of 45 degrees. Now, the forgeries are between both, but rather nearer the steep slope.

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The curious shell-design which appears on the stamps of Travancore is a crude resemblance of a conch-shell, with the entrance on the left, instead of on the right. This spiral usually turns to the right, with the opening likewise on the same side. A conch of the form illustrated on the stamps of Travancore is a very rare occurrence. Such shells the natives of Travancore regard as manifestations of the deity and value them accordingly.

• • •

It may interest collectors to learn that the post offices of the Indian State of Bussaher ceased to exist in 1900, but all the same stamps are still issued under State authority, and the proceeds of the sale of such posthumus issues goes to the State Treasury. A number of the stamps sold were no doubt genuine remainders, but the issues in the new colours have never been available for postal use, and may therefore be ignored by collectors.

• • •

No doubt some collectors have in their possession Gaudeloupe stamps with the overprint "T" in a triangle. "In 1893," explains a writer in the "Stamp Collector," "after a very long interval, postage due stamps were required in the French colony, and the 30c postage stamp of 1893 was therefore overprinted with a triangle standing on its point, and bearing the letter 'T' (meaning "taxer," to charge), the international postal code sign for deficient postage."

Three new value stamps have been issued for use in Nicaragua. Each has the same portrait in black and the inscriptions 11 de Julio, 1903. The values and colours are 15c crimson, lake and black, 20c mauve and black, and 50c olive-brown and black.

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The French colony of Gaboon, which hitherto used the stamps of French Congo, has now got a set of its own, the usual type with the word "Gaboon" printed in either blue or rose, beneath the numeral indicating the value. The issue is as follows: 1c black on azure, 2c brown on buff, 4c purple brown on grey, 5c bright yellow green, 10c rose-red, 15c grey, 20c red on green, 25c blue, 30c cinnamon on drab, 40c red on yellow, 50c brown on orange, 1 franc olive-green on toned paper, 2f violet on lilac, of lilac on pale lilac. Perhaps it is as well to explain that Gaboon is a settlement on the Northern part of French Congo, on the west coast of Africa.

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The preface to Messrs. Whitfield King and Co.'s revised edition of their catalogue of "Postage Stamps of the World," states that the total number of all known varieties of postage stamps issued by all the Governments of the world up to the present time is 19,242. Of this number 205 have been issued in Great Britain, and 5711 in the various British colonies and protectorates, leaving 13,326 for the rest of the world. Dividing the totals amongst the Continents, Europe issued 4080, Asia 3628, Africa 4005, America (including the West Indies) 6095, and Oceania 1425. A comparison of these figures with those published in March, 1903, will show that 1800 new varieties of stamps have been issued throughout the world in the space of eighteen months. The Republic of Salvador has issued more varieties of postage stamps than any other country, the number being 450. Poland and Wadhwam have each found a solitary specimen suffice for their postal need.

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With regard to the imperforated stamps of Antigua, a writer in the "Stamp Collector" points out that great caution is required in selecting them, as the ordinary perforated stamps of that island had such wide margins that it is possible for the perforations to be cut off without damaging the stamp. The writer adds: "The better plan is to secure a pair, or one showing the green line, etc., of its neighbour." It may not be generally known that Antiguian stamps were withdrawn from circulation in 1890, the general issue for the Leeward Isles being substituted. The Leeward Islands include Antigua, Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Christopher and the Virgin Islands, and adopted uniform postage stamps. Collectors can see by the postmark in which of the islands a certain stamp of the general set has been used, Antigua's cancellation is A02; Dominica, A07; Montserrat, A08; Nevis, A09; St. Christopher, A12; and Virgin Islands, A01. In 1899 the Virgin Islands broke away and issued the artistic Virgin set. After the succession of King Edward the other colonies also issued separate sets, and used them in conjunction with the "Leeward Islands" issue.

CHILDREN'S PAGE.

COUSINS' BADGES.

Cousins requiring badges are requested to send an addressed envelope, when the badge will be forwarded by return mail.

COUSINS' CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Cousin Kate,—Yes, I am trying to be a regular correspondent. I find it much more interesting to write every week. I, too, was very sorry I missed the train, and so could not go to Mount Pleasant. Olive had such a glorious time that I felt quite envious. Do you know, I think that Cousin Essie's twin sisters are old friends of mine. They are, if they used to live in Strickland-street. I wonder if Cousin Essie would mind enlightening me in her next letter to you. We used to go to the same school together when we were much smaller. Several companies of Christchurch volunteers have been in camp at Cashmere. Yesterday afternoon papa, mother, and I went to see the camp. It was situated in a perfect position on a sort of low lying table land, covered with short green turf. In the background flowed the river, and in front stretched the hills. The white tents scattered here and there, the gay red uniforms of some of the volunteers, mingled with the more sombre khaki of others, formed a very picturesque scene. The band played several lively military airs, whilst the volunteers handed round afternoon tea. We did not stay long, as papa and mother wanted to go to church in the evening. After we had tea Olive, Fenton, and I went round to the camp again, as Olive had not seen it. We arrived just in time to see the long procession of men and waggons disappearing round a bend in the road—the camp had struck. We went for a walk round the river, as it was not yet six o'clock, and it does not get dark now until long past eight. I think that the evening and the morning are the best part of the day for walking. There is not generally any wind, and everything is so peaceful and quiet. We had to pass through a paddock along the river which was full of cows, and with them was a bull. It was a great black creature, and was knee-deep in the river drinking, so you may guess we hurried through that paddock as fast as our legs would carry us. Just as we were nearing the stile at the farther end of the paddock the bull saw us, and at first it was quite startled at seeing the three of us running towards the stile. Then we heard it give a great bellow, and it came dashing towards us. Fenton was got over the stile first, then Olive and I scrambled over, while the bull, baulked of its prey, stood and bellowed with rage. We were a good deal scared, but we laughed over it when it was all over, and then continued our walk. We gathered some fresh young watercress, which is a favourite dish of father's, and at this time of the year it is always good. When we got some distance round the river we saw a lady and her husband fishing for trout, and we watched them for some time, but the fish, although every now and then leaping in the water like streaks of silver, would not bite. It must have been tantalising for the fishers, although, of course, very wise indeed of the fish, don't you think? In the deep dark pools of the river they swarmed, but, as I said before, disdained to be caught. I don't think I should care for trout fishing. It seemed such slow work. I would much rather fish for herrings in the sea. Have you ever been trout fishing, Cousin Kate? Father was thinking of getting a license, now that we are so close to the river, but I know he would soon tire of it, as he would be sure to get impatient waiting for the fish to bite. On the banks of the river we saw many wild strawberries forming, so we will know where to go in the strawberry season, won't we? I have nothing else to tell you, Cousin Kate, so I will have to say good-bye for the present. From your affectionate cousin, Winnie.

P.S.—I thank you for your kind wishes for my birthday. I forgot to mention the photos turned out horribly, so we went again. This time Olive was taken, too.—Winnie.

[Dear Cousin Winnie,—I was sure you would find it much nicer writing every week; there always seems so much more to say, somehow. I will try and remember to ask Cousin Essie if she lived in Strickland-street next time she writes. Are her twin sisters very much alike? I always wish I had a twin sister very much like me, because one can have such fun. There were two girls living very close to us who were twins, and wonderfully like one another, and they were always playing such tricks on all of us. I think a volunteer camp is always a picturesque sight even when it has not such a charming background as you describe. You have a much longer twilight in the South than we have up here, and I think it is the nicest time of the whole day in the summer, don't you? I wonder if you had walked quietly through the paddock whether the bull would have taken any notice of you. But, perhaps, you were wiser not to wait and see. People say that trout fishing is a most fascinating sport, but it always seems rather slow to me. I hope your photographs will be good this time. Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—I am afraid it is rather a long time since you received a letter from me; but I have been so busy with my lessons, and am really still, so this letter will not be very long; but I felt I would like you to have a few lines from me. This afternoon I had gymnasium, so you can imagine I am rather tired this evening. Last week I had a small theatre party. There were eleven of us altogether, and we did have such a jolly evening. We went to a piece called "Merely Mary Ann." It was most awfully pretty. We went in a private omnibus, and that was really part of the best fun of the evening. Last Sunday I went out to lunch and dinner, but beyond that I have done very little of interest. We are getting so excited about father coming home. You know he leaves on Friday, and by the time you receive this I expect he will be about here. Is not the war shocking? And I am very afraid England will be obliged to intercede. How very terrible it will be, if she does, won't it? The weather is beginning to get very cold, and I am writing this letter now by the fire, and on my knee, so that accounts for the writing, which I hope you will excuse. I have a new baby cousin, and I hear it is so pretty, although I have not seen it yet; but I hope to, soon. I received a letter from Cousin Gwen the other day, and was so pleased to hear from her. I am so very sorry, Cousin Kate, that this is such a short letter, but it is really better than nothing, is it not? and as it is getting late mother wants me to go to bed. My little baby sisters are such darlings, and I do so love playing with them. Good-night, now. I will try and write a long letter next mail. With love from Cousin Roie.

[Dear Cousin Roie,—It was very pleasant to get a letter from you, though it was not so long a one as usual; but, of course, I recognise that you have now increasing claims on your time, and that it is not always easy to find half an hour or so for letter writing. Your theatre party sounds very nice. I read the book "Merely Mary Ann" some years since, and can quite believe it would make a good and pretty play. We have been having some good acting in Auckland lately. "Monsieur Beaucaire," which you probably saw in London last year, we all thought lovely. I wonder if your mother would let us put a photo. of your baby sisters in the "Graphic." So many people would like to see them. Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—I would very much like to be one of your numerous cousins, as I like the "Children's Page" so much. I am 14 years of age, and my name is Cecilia. I have now left school. I have passed my junior and intermediate musical examinations, and am now commencing my senior work. The flowers are beginning to come out now, and the garden is looking much fresher since the weather is beginning to mend. Would you forward me a badge, please Cousin Kate? I am enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. Well, as this is my first letter I will close, with best love to you, Cousin Kate, and all my new cousins. I remain, yours, Cousin Kate, Cecilia.

[Dear Cousin Cecilia,—You are heartily welcome as one of our band of cousins, and as you have left school, I trust you will find time to write regular letters. If you decide to do so I am sure you will find the training useful afterwards. So many grown up girls nowadays find it dreadfully hard to write an interesting and intelligent letter; but anyone can learn to do so with a little care and constant practice. That is why, I think, all parents should encourage their children to write to the "Cousin's Page." To be able to write a letter and give a good account of anything you have done or anything you have seen is a very important faculty to cultivate. The wet, warm weather is certainly starting to make things grow, but we have had a dreadful spring. I will post you a badge some time this week, and hope it will reach you safely. Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—I have just had my lesson on the bike, and as I had a few minutes to spare I thought I would write my letter to you, as to-day is Tuesday. I can ride alone now, although I thought I never would be able to. We had several beautiful days at last, but it is so hot. On Sunday my sister drove mother and I for a long drive into the country. From part of the road we could see the Breakwater and the sea in the distance. It looked so calm and cool. Did you go to "Monsieur Beaucaire" and "A Royal Divorce"? My sister-in-law went to both, and said they were splendid. My cousin, Charlie Carter, that used to belong to Pollards, is now in London, and is I think performing at the Covent Garden Theatre, so he has worked himself up, has he not? Our friend from England arrived this it not? and as it is getting late mother morning. It is very interesting listening to her telling all about her travels. What a lovely long letter that was from Cousin Alison last week. I am afraid I would have gone to sleep in the middle of it if I had been writing it, as it was so very long. We have such a large pohutukawa tree in the garden. It is in bud just now, so we are hoping it will be out by Christmas. Our scarlet rambler is also coming out. Here is a rather good riddle for you: Question—What is the difference between a grocer selling a pound of sugar and an apothecary's boy with a pestle and mortar? Answer—One weighs a pound and the other pounds away. Two or three days ago my brain was full of news, but I am afraid it has all vanished. It is always the way when one wants to remember anything particular, is it not? but I hope you will forgive me this time, if I write a longer and more interesting letter next week, so ta-ta, dear Cousin Kate, with loving wishes to yourself and the cousins from Cousin Ila.

[Dear Cousin Ila,—I was much pleased to get your letter, and glad to hear you have mastered the bike. You will be able to go lovely rides now, and, if I remember right, there are some good roads round New Plymouth; here they are disgraceful. I would very strongly advise you to avoid overtiring yourself at first; there is often a temptation to go too far, and it is really rather dangerous. The riddle is certainly amusing.—Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—We have started practising for the May-pole. We are going to wear blue dresses and blue paper hats. I do hope that it will be fine. I was in Auckland when the last floral fete was held, but I did not go. We have been here four years this month. I went to Ellerslie last Wednesday. We went out by the five minutes to eleven train. I was so nice out there. I played with such a dear little boy. He is only eighteen months old. We did not come home until after eight. I did not go to the Show on Saturday. I was disappointed, because it is so interesting looking at all the different things. I have just been reading the "Family of Misrule." I read the "Seven Little Australians" a long while ago, so I was anxious to read the sequel. I have been doing another map in putty. It was an improvement on the first. You ought to have seen some of the girls' models. You would not know what they were supposed to represent if you were not told. I have no more news, so I will close with love to you and all the cousins.—Cousin Muriel.

[Dear Cousin Muriel,—I join with you in the hope it may be very fine for the floral fete, and I also trust it will be a decent day the day before. Last time it simply poured on the Friday, and it was dreadful work decorating. The fete will no doubt be a great success, and the Ladies' Benevolent Society should get a good sum. Let us hope they do, for they well deserve it. All Ethel Turner's books are charming, are they not?—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I am afraid you will think that I have left off writing to you altogether, but I never seem able to find time. I must really try and be more regular in future. On Wednesday, 9th, we had a play at school called the "Sleeping Beauty." Have you ever seen it? It is so pretty. I was Prince Valiant, and my sister was Fairy Rose. Between the acts we had songs and recitations. I recited a piece called "Robin Hood." I was very nervous when I began. One of the tableaux was a Japanese scene, and the other one was a fairy one. The four good fairies were holding the wicked fairy by different coloured ribbons, and it looked as if they were dragging her along. On Monday, the 14th, we went to Rotorua. We saw Wairoa geyser "romped" at Wahkarewarewa, and Ohinemutu, also Hinemoa's Bath, Hamurana, and Okere and Wairoa Falls. Did you go to see "Monsieur Beaucaire"? I didn't, though I wanted to very much. When I was at Rotorua I read such a lovely book, called "Queenie's Whim," by Rosa Carey. It is such a pretty story. I am so glad the yachting season has started, as we will be able to start having picnics in our launch, which is called Rehutai. I really must say good-bye now, with love

to you and all the cousins.—I remain, Cousin Gwendolen.

[Dear Cousin Gwendolen,—I was indeed pleased to again get a letter from you, for I had certainly begun to fear you had ceased to write. How very pretty your play must have been. I should like to have seen it. Perhaps I am going to one on Saturday by the children of the Diocesan School. You certainly had a fine time at Rotorua, and you are a very lucky girl to see so many wonderful sights. Is not Hamuruna lovely? It is my favourite of the Rotorua sights.—Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—I am not going to begin my letter by apologies as I always do, for it is no good crying over spilt milk. I just want you to see that I am going to amend for the future. We are staying at Rotorua at present, and are having a lovely time. We have been here for about a week, and the weather has been delightful the whole time. Gwen and Stella are also here. We have great fun together. The latter is sitting at the same table writing to you, and I must say it is to them both that I owe my new interest in writing to you. I had not written for so long that I feared you would have forgotten me completely. Yesterday we went for such a lovely motor-ride to Okere Falls. We started at two, and returned about half-past five. We saw the falls, which are wonderful. All the electric light of Rotorua is supplied by this wonderful motive power. But as you have of course been to Roforua and seen all the sights, it is no use my explaining them. There are quite a number of people up here, one of which is a darling little girl called Doris. She is just three, and has lovely golden curls. She has just come from England. Last Sunday Wairoa Geyser was soaped. It went up very high, but as there was rather a wind it did not go up to its usual height. Did you go to see "Monsieur Beaucaire," Cousin Kate? I did. It was simply charming. Mr. Julius Knight was splendid, as was Miss Jeffries. Have you read the book? I don't know which I liked best—the play or the book. The ending is slightly different in the book, but they are both exquisite. Have you read the "Two Vanrevels," by the same author? I have a new little cousin since I last wrote to you. She is just seven weeks old. She is such a sweet little thing. I love babies, don't you, Cousin Kate? She has been called Eileen. She has such a lot of hair. I am making a huckaback cushion in two shades of blue—pale and dark. Cousin Stella is showing me how to do it. I have made several cushions and cloths of the same work before, but in a different pattern. Clive, my little brother, loves to see the little Maori boys dive for pennies. He thinks it must be great fun to jump in the water and get pennies. The Sanatorium grounds are lovely at present—one mass of flowers. The roses are especially beautiful. There are such nice swimming baths here. I usually go into the "Rachel." It is a lovely large bath in the open air. Have you read a book called "Miss Primrose"? I have just finished it. I am afraid that is all the news I have to-day, so with much love to you and all the cousins.—I remain, your going-to-be regular cousin, Ruby, Auckland.

[Dear Cousin Ruby,—Your long and most interesting letter from "Whaka" makes complete amends for your not writing for a few weeks, and, as you say, you are going to try and write regularly, we shall all look forward to your letters. What a grand time you are having at Rotorua. I would dearly love to run up for a day or so to see the gardens, for I can just imagine how beautiful they must be. Last time I was up the chrysanthemums were out, and they made a glorious show of colour. Is there a good band there this year? I think the Government should give a large subsidy for the very best that could be procured. The Swiss Government helps at all the great Swiss resorts, and finds it pays. I enjoyed "Monsieur Beaucaire" more than any play I have seen for a long time. "The Eternal City" is nice too, but much heavier. The music is, however, glorious. Eileen is a very pretty name, and is very fashionable just now, is it not? I know a whole number of Eileens here and in the Old Country. I must stop now, as there are so many other letters to answer.—Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—I was very pleased to see my letter in the "Graphic," and to read your kind answer. I did not enter for the Riding Competition because I cannot ride well enough. I suppose you are waiting patiently for your show to come off. I hope it will be nice weather for you. Now, my dear cousin, I must close with love to you and all the other cousins.—I remain, affectionately yours, Cousin Vera.

[Dear Cousin Vera,—It was good of you to send me a nice little letter again this week. I hope you will write as often as you can. Our show passed off most successfully on Friday and Saturday last. The attendance on "People's Day" was over 13,000, and the crush was dreadful. You will have seen some photos of the jumping in the "Graphic."—Cousin Kate.]

✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Cousin Kate,—I would like to be a member of your band of cousins, as I enjoy reading your page in the "Graphic" so much. My name is Stella, and I am 15 years of age, and have for some years been a pupil if the High School. Will you please forward me a badge, Cousin Kate? I am enclosing a stamped envelope. The roses are beginning to come out down here now, and the garden is freshening up. We are having splendid weather down here now, but it is not summer weather at all—quite chilly in fact at times, but we do not feel it, sitting on the verandah with the screens drawn. I daresay it is very warm in Auckland? I was reading some of the cousins letters, and the idea of ripe strawberries, at this time of the year, quite gave me a shock. We must wait till Christmas, almost, for strawberries. Well, as this is my first letter I will close with best love to yourself and the cousins.—I remain your loving cousin, Stella.

[Dear Cousin Stella,—I am very glad you have decided to join our band, and would like you to read the answer to Cousin Cecilia, of your town, for all I said to her applies to you, and, in fact, any of the elder cousins. How very like your handwriting is to Cousin Cecelia's. I almost thought it was the same. The strawberries are now arriving in great quantities, but owing to the lack of sun there is little flavour about them yet. The roses are simply lovely just now here. I suppose it is too early for them down South?—Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—Thank you very much for the very nice answer you gave me to my last letter. No, we have not played many games of tennis yet, as it has been very bad weather, has it not, Cousin Kate? Well, about the competitions: Mary obtained second prize for scones. Have you tasted strawberries and cream this season? We have had them about six times. Mary brought home some cherries to-day; they were simply lovely. Mary tried barley sugar yesterday from Cousin Gwen's recipe, and it turned out very well indeed. But Cousin Gwen said to let it boil three-quarters of an hour, and Mary only let hers boil one quarter of an hour. Well, as Mary has finished her letter and given you all the news, I must stop now. So with best love to all the cousins and yourself, I remain your loving cousin, Aimee S.

[Dear Cousin Aimee,—Thanks for your letter. I am very glad Mary won a prize for her scones. I expect she is very proud of it, is she not? I have had strawberries twice this year, but they were not at all good—the rain had made them flavourless. Cherries are much nicer just now, but are very expensive, I think. I expect you will go to the Floral Fete. I wonder if I shall see you there?—Cousin Kate.]

✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Cousin Kate,—I have not very

much time to write to you, as mother wants me to come in and have some music, so I know you will excuse me if I do not write a very long letter. We were playing tennis to-night, and I beat Amy, for a wonder. Tennis makes you pretty tired. We have such a lovely number of flowers—the sweet-peas are magnificent. It is our school picnic on Saturday—I do not know whether I will be able to go or not. I should like to. Fancy, Cousin Kate, I don't believe I have walked down to Newmarket twice since the trams started. Shocking, isn't it? I forgot to tell you I had such a happy birthday on Sunday. I had lovely presents given to me. Amy gave me a lovely silver-mounted purse. I love getting presents, don't you, Cousin Kate? I am sorry to say I did not go to the Agricultural Show. I was awfully disappointed. I have had toothache once or twice to-day. Isn't it horrible? Mother is calling me, so au revoir, Cousin Kate till next week.—With best love from Cousin Mary.

[Dear Cousin Mary,—It was very good of you to find time to write me a few lines before your music. I am very fond of sweet peas, the colours as well as the scent, are just perfect. How much they have improved them of late years. I am glad you had a lovely birthday and plenty of presents, and I certainly have yet to meet the person who does not like getting them. Tennis certainly does make one tired, but it is magnificent exercise and very good fun.—Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—I have read the cousins' page, and would like to join it if you will accept me. Please will you send me a cousins' badge, as I am sending you an addressed envelope? I have got three pet lambs, which I reared from birth. We have been having very fine weather just lately. I do not think that I can write a very long letter this time, but I will try and write a longer one next time, so I think I will close my letter. Please do not forget to send my badge. —I am, yours truly, Queenie, Karioi, via Wanganui, N.Z.

[Dear Cousin Queenie, I am very glad that you liked reading the cousins' page so much that you wished to join the band yourself, and I shall be delighted to welcome you as one of my many cousins. I posted badges to you and Arthur this morning. I hope they will reach you safely. You must let me know if they did so next time you write. You have been luckier than we have been lately if you have had some good weather. It has been dreadful up here, and nearly all the holidays have been spoilt by the wet weather. To-day is St. Andrews' Day and a holiday, and it was pouring with rain this morning. It seems to be clearing off a little now, though, I'm glad to say. Well, Queenie, I must close now, hoping to hear from you again soon.—Cousin Kate.]

* * *

Dear Cousin Kate.—I forgot to write "Competition" on the envelope of my last letter. I hope it won't matter. Tui has decided not to go in for the competition, as she does not think she can write often enough. Father took me to the flower show in the Choral Hall on Friday night. There were some lovely flowers there, especially the roses, and I liked it very much. Did you go? What a lot of cousins' letters in this week's "Graphic!" You must get quite tired of answering them. I think Buster Brown gets naughtier and naughtier every week. He is very cunning, but I am glad I am not his sister. We are going to have our examination on Monday. I hope we will both pass. I have been going to the dentist twice a week for about three months having my teeth put straight. They don't hurt much, but it is a bother having to go so often. I am going to have my birthday party next week, and it is going to be such a lovely one. I only practise an hour a day now, as an hour and a half seemed too much. Tui and Olive are going away up the Waikato next week with mother. I am not to go, as my holiday is to be in January. Jack and I are looking forward to go to the Floral Fete. Are you going to decorate anything for it? If it were not so much trouble to get out there I should decorate the dolls' go-cart. Now good-bye, with love from Cousin Dorothie.

[Dear Cousin Dorothie,—Your not writing "Competition" on your last letter does not make the least difference. I only asked the cousins to do that because I wanted to know who was going in for it. I suppose Tui is a little too young to enter for the competition. I went to the Flower Show, too, and I thought it was lovely. The roses were exquisite, and there were such a number of them. The carnations were lovely too. I quite agree with you that Buster Brown gets worse each week. I would not like to live in the same house with him either. Your examination will be over by this time. I wonder how you both got on. You must tell me in your next letter. I am so sorry for you, for I think that going to the dentist is just awful, and they usually hurt dreadfully. I must wish you many happy returns of your birthday before I close. I hope you will have a fine day for your party, and that you will all enjoy yourselves thoroughly.—Cousin Kate.]

* * *

Dear Cousin Kate,—I am writing to you as I promised, but I don't know whether I will have time to write a long letter. We went to Whakarewarewa yesterday and saw Kereru play and the cauldron boiling over It looked so nice. We spent yesterday morning in the sanatorium. It was very pretty. There was a book party here last night, and I went to it. My sister and I came second and third in the guessing. She was second and I was third. It is not a very nice day to-day. We went out in the sanatorium this morning, but had to come home pretty fast, as it began to rain. I am enjoying myself very much. Now I must say good-bye, as my sister has come in for me.—Your loving cousin, Marjorie.

P.S.—We saw Wairoa Geyser soaped this afternoon. It went up very high, and was a splendid shot.

[Dear Cousin Marjorie,—I expect you have been wondering what has become of your letter, as it was not in last week's "Graphic." It came just a little late, so I had to keep it back for this week. It was very good of you indeed to write to me when you were away on your holiday. Most people want to do nothing but enjoy themselves when they go away on a trip, and find even letter-writing a nuisance. I'm afraid I do myself. What a delightful time you seem to have had at Rotorua, and you have been to so many places. You must have had better weather at Rotorua than we have been having in Auckland. You were very lucky to see Wairoa soaped, were you not? So many people go there ever so many times and never see it play at all. Did you see Waimangu, too?—Cousin Kate.]

* * *

Dear Cousin Kate,—I thought I would write to you again, although I seem to have absolutely nothing to tell you. But, I have only written once to you since the competition started, and one letter would not be much good, would it, Cousin Kate? They say there was a horrid nor'-wester in Christchurch to-day; but lucky me, in Lyttelton, escaped that. If I dread anything in this world, it is our dirty, dusty, sweltering nor'-westers, and in the summer Christchurch seldom has a week without one of these pests. I have been promised such a sweet little Persian kitten (at least its mother is Persian), so I do not expect it will be thoroughbred; but it certainly is a dear wee thing. I am to have it as soon as it is old enough to leave its mother. Yesterday Lyttelton was thrown into a state of excitement because of the wedding of Miss Coates (Canon Coates' eldest daughter). It was such a pretty affair, and there were numbers and numbers of guests. Instead of the usual orange blossoms, roses were substituted, and very lovely they look d. The bridesmaids also had bouquets of rose buds, pink ones, and they wore pink chiffon hats of exactly the same shade. Almost all the guests wore roses in some description or form, and it created quite a charming novelty. I hope you liked my description of the bush in my last letter; but when I wrote it I was so tired that I really did not do it justice. Neville and Winnie had their photos taken last Saturday, but they were not a success, so they are going to be taken again to-morrow, and if they turn out all right Win. is going to send you one.—With love to all the cousins and yourself, Cousin Olive.

[Dear Cousin Olive,—I always think it is a pity not to write letters because one has nothing particular to say, for somehow directly one commences there always seems such a lot to write about after all. Haven't you ever noticed that? Nothing makes it seem so hard as to get out of the way of it. I think each cousin must write about half a dozen letters at least for the competition. I know those Canterbury nor'-westers of yours, and I don't think anything in the way of storms can be worse. I have only experienced one, but it was a very bad one, and I didn't want to try another. Persian kittens are lovely little things, are they not? I went out to see a cattery the other day, and there were two of the most lovely Persian cats there that I have ever seen. I don't usually care for cats, though I like kittens, but I did covet one of those. A rose wedding would be lovely, wouldn't it, and there have been such quantities this year. I liked your description of the bush very much indeed, and only wished I could have been there to see all its beauties for myself.—Cousin Kate.]

* * *

Dear Cousin Kate,—I was so pleased at seeing my last letter in print, and I must thank you for such a nice long answer. I am afraid my letter will not be a very long one this week, as there is not much news. Cousin Nellie came over last Monday to see me. She walked over this time, and then went over in the evening in our sulky, which goes to Onehunga every evening to meet father, who comes out by car. Do you like animals, Cousin Kate? I am very fond of them, especially horses. We have such a frisky horse called Major, and every time I want to drive him out it takes me about an hour to catch him. At first I do not mind chasing after him, but it gets rather monotonous, and very often I have to let him go. To-day I managed to catch him, but not until I had done a great deal of running about. I generally drive my grandma to Onehunga one day in every week, so, really speaking, that is the only work the horse does. Our garden is quite a picture at present with such a number of different kinds of flowers out. You would not have thought it very pleasant walking over Mangere Bridge last week; you could hardly stand on your feet for the wind, and the spray was dashing up in your face. I thought the harbour looked very gloomy, with the Sarah and Mary on her side, the angry waves dashing over her. Well, dear Cousin Kate, I must conclude now, with best love to all my cousins, and accept the same.—From Cousin Olive.

[Dear Cousin Olive,—It is very nice for you and Nellie to be so close to one another. I suppose you can see one another nearly every day. I'm afraid I am not very fond of animals; I like kittens when they are small and playful, and I love horses, but any other animal is a nuisance, I think, especially when one lives in a town, and can only have a limited amount of room. It must be very tiresome having to chase Major for so long whenever you want to catch him, especially if you are in a hurry. You should learn to lasso him. Did you see the man at the Show lassooing the horses? I didn't, I'm sorry to say, but I heard that he was simply splendid. Perhaps if Major did a little more work he would be easier to catch. The gardens are looking lovely just now, are they not? I don't expect they will look so well after the Floral Fete, though, do you? I think I should have liked to walk across Mangere Bridge when that storm was on. I love being blown about and having the rain and spray beating on my face. It is so fresh and invigorating.—Cousin Kate.]

* * *

Dear Cousin Kate,—I am very sorry I did not write last week, but you must excuse me, as my grand-parents arrived home last week, so you can imagine the excitement. I have not seen the "Graphic" with my last letter in it so I cannot answer your questions — if there are any. My grandmother brought me home a lovely bracelet and a beautiful little watch, among a number of other lovely things. I passed my sixth standard at the examination, so am now in the seventh. We are very busy practising for our school concert just now, so you may be sure I have not much time for writing letters; and I have twelve tickets to sell for our concert. Next time I write I will be able to tell you whether I sold them all or not. We are having lovely weather just now. Are you? To-day was a glorious day. I suppose you are kept very busy answering letters every day, and I expect there are more just now, at it is getting near Christmas time. You must excuse this writing, as I am a very bad writer indeed. Dear Cousin Kate, I have no more news to tell you this week, so must close. Love to all

the cousins, not forgetting yourself.—I remain, dear Cousin Kate, yours truly, Cousin Millicent.

[Dear Cousin Millicent,—There was no need for you to ask me to excuse your not writing to me last week. I did not expect you to, and I am wondering how you found time to write this week, for you must have had such a lot to talk about to your grandfather and grandmother. Are they glad to be home again? What lovely presents your grandmother brought you. You are a very lucky girl to have a beautiful watch and bracelet. I congratulate you on getting through your examination. I suppose you will leave school soon now, as you have passed the sixth standard. I hope you will sell all your tickets, and that your concert will be a success. Are you going to perform? No, we are not having very nice weather here, but everyone is hoping it will be nice for Christmas. There are a good many letters to write just now, so I am obliged to make my answers rather shorter than usual.—Cousin Kate.]

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Dear Cousin Kate,—As you will see by the above address, I am up at Rotorua, and am spending a most enjoyable holiday there. We go out somewhere every day, and to-day is the first day it has rained since we have been here. On Saturday father, Gwen, Ruby (who is also up here) and I went for a lovely motor ride. We went twenty miles in one hour and twenty minutes. On Sunday I went for a drive all over the country for an hour; then we came back and saw Wairoa Geyser soaped. It went up splendidly—120 feet I believe. Then, after that we went for another long drive to the Fairy Springs. Have you ever been there, Cousin Kate? It is an exquisite sight—a little spring, all filled with magnificently shaded shells, which look beautiful under the water. As well as that, there are hundreds of trout swimming about. Yesterday afternoon a party of eight of us, including Cousin Ruby, Gwen and I, went for a glorious motor ride. We went in a motor that goes at the rate of 56 miles an hour, but the chauffeur said he had never driven it any quicker than 40 miles an hour up here, as the roads are rather thick. We went to a place called Okere Falls, and when we arrived there had tea and a rest, and then returned. Ruby and I spoke French nearly all the way, as we should have been having our French lesson that afternoon, and thought it would make up for missing it. One time we were going at 30 miles an hour, and frightened such a lot of traffic. There was a man on horseback, and he was leading another horse. The led horse bolted, and he had to chase it for about half a mile before he caught it. Also a lot of chickens and bullocks were on the roadway, but it did not take long to scatter them. There is such a darling little girl up here named Doris. She has snow-white hair, and if you ask her what it is she answers, "Lamb's wool." Gwen is at present playing with her, and I am afraid she will not find time to write to you. There are such lovely hot baths in the garden up here, but they are not half as big as the ones in the Sanatorium Grounds. Yesterday morning Ruby and I went down to the latter, and had great fun. We had letters from home last night, and they said that the Agricultural Show was such a success. It was lucky that they had such fine weather both days, was it not, Cousin Kate? I am longing for it to clear up for this afternoon, as dad said if it did so he would take us all for another motor ride. I think I will end this letter now, Cousin Kate, as there is no more news, hoping you and all the cousins are well.—I remain, sincerely yours, Cousin Stella, Auckland.

[Dear Cousin Stella,—What a lovely time you are all having up at Rotorua. Reading your letters this morning has made me quite envious. You have been most fortunate in having nice weather, too, have you not? I have been to the Fairy Springs. It is just a nice walk there from Rotorua and back, but it would be too far for you to walk there from Whakarewarewa. Did you see the monument raised to the trooper who was killed in South Africa? I should think most people would be quite satisfied to travel at the rate of forty miles an hour, especially on country roads. I love travelling at that rate, but I am always so afraid of running over something, so that rather spoils my pleasure as a rule. You are having such a grand time that you won't like coming home and settling down to lessons again, will you? I am awfully glad they had fine weather for the Show this year, but it almost seems as if we would have to be satisfied with those two nice days, for it has been simply horrid ever since.—Cousin Kate.]

They Decide to Travel.

"Fluffy," said Spot, "what do you intend to do when you grow up?"

"I have not given the matter a thought yet," replied Fluffy.

"I have," said Spot; "but to speak plainly, I find it not so easy to decide!"

"What choice is there?" inquired Fluffy.

"Well," answered Spot slowly, "there is rat-catching for one thing."

Fluffy turned up his nose. "I say," he cried, "is not that just a leetle vulgar, don't you know?"

"Possibly; but then, think of the excitement! I know a fellow who is a rat-catcher, and he has told me of wonderful adventures in cellars, hair-breadth escapes in drains, and of thrilling fights that he has had with sometimes as many as 20 rats at a time. Fancy that!"

Fluffy's tail unconsciously wagged with interest, and his round eyes glistened.

"Is your friend a big fellow?" he asked in an awe-struck voice.

"Not particularly big, but, then, he is tremendously strong! He lost part of an ear in one fight, the tip of his tail in another, and his face is all over scratches. Oh, he is a plucky one!"

Fluffy turned round and round until he was giddy in ridiculous efforts to catch a sight of his own short tail.

"I don't want to part with the tip of my tail," he said, "or to lose an ear, or be scratched. Can't a body distinguish himself in some other profession not quite so dangerous?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Spot, "fox-hunting would not be so dangerous; certainly hare-coursing would not, and both are interesting and exciting."

"And more genteel," added Fluffy.

"Then, you know," continued Spot, "one could make oneself useful by taking charge of sheep."

"And have to be out in all sorts of weather, willy-nilly, and never be certain of a bone! No, thank you; that is too hard a life for me."

"I fear that you are rather difficult to please!" said Spot. "But, come now, what think you of a watchdog's situation? To keep guard over a big human kennel, and to bark and snap at beggars and robbers?"

"That's better!" replied Fluffy, "an important position, comfortable lodgings, food and drink regularly provided, and respectability assurred."

"But rather lonesome, eh?" queried Spot. "I say, old fellow, one might do worse, you know, than be companion to some two-legged creature—a he or a she—and a comfortable old age provided for."

"Hem! There seems to be a variety of choice," said Fluffy; "but I should like to travel about a bit and expand my mind before I settle down."

"Ah! there may be a chance of that," said Spot, "when our folks take their summer holiday."

"Oh, ho! Have you any idea where they are thinking of going?" asked Fluffy.

"I believe I overheard the master say Devonshire—wherever that may be!"

"Is that across the Channel, do you suppose?" asked Fluffy.

"Very likely," replied Spot. "By the by, does the sea agree with you? Are you a good sailor?"

"I don't care the least bit about being bathed," replied Fluffy, dolefully.

"Oh, we are sure to get on," cried Spot, cheerfully, "All dogs swim, you know, so that is a good sign."

Poor Fluffy fairly whined. "Spot, you never mean to say that we shall have to swim the Channel?"

"Oh, I don't know," replied Spot, recklessly. "Captain Boyton did it, so why shouldn't we?"

Both dogs were silent for a time, and then Fluffy sighed. "Well," he remarked philosophically, "we shall see what we shall see, I suppose!"

They Decide——3 and 4

Not long after this conversation had occurred a train steamed out of Waterloo Station; in a guard's van, and under the guard's special care, were three dogs, a big one chained to a staple, and two small ones—Spot and Fluffy—in a cosy straw-lined hamper. The big dog was not a bit stuck up, and at once showed his friendly disposition by remarking in a hearty voice, "How do you do? Fine weather for travelling, is it not?"

"Capital!" replied Spot, while Fluffy wagged his tail and smiled pleasantly.

"May I inquire if you are going far?" asked the big dog.

"Certainly," replied Spot; "we are going to Torquay, in Devonshire."

"Are you indeed?" said the big dog. "A most interesting place to you and me, as so many of our prehistoric relatives lie buried there."

The eyes of Spot and Fluffy were big with astonishment. Their new acquaintance noticed this, and hastened to add, "Kent's cavern, you know, where so many remains of prehistoric animals have been found."

"I am afraid I am very ignorant, sir," said Spot, "but, to tell the truth, I don't know what you are talking about!"

"Nor I, indeed," said Fluffy.

The big dog smiled. "I beg your pardon," he said, "but you see I take care of, and am responsible for the important museum at Exeter, so I ought to know a great deal about doggish history. I am afraid that I take it for granted other folk are as much interested in history as I am."

"Sir," said Spot, "this is our first journey, for we have never been away from home before. If you would be so kind as to tell us something of what you know, we should be grateful, and it would help to beguile the way."

"I will talk with pleasure," replied the big dog good-naturedly, "on condition that when you are tired of hearing me prose you will kindly step on my tail as a reminder."

Spot and Fluffy laughingly agreed; the big dog lapped a draught of water, and held up a paw to claim attention.

"Do you know," said he, "what is the chief distinction between us dogs and our cousins the cats?"

"They mi-aou and we bark," said Fluffy.

"They can climb and we can't," said Spot.

"Those are certainly differences, but the chief distinction is in our claws, which are fixed, whereas the claws of the cat are sheathed, and can be drawn backwards and forwards at will."

Spot and Fluffy each put out a paw, and examined with interest their toes.

"We are supposed, you know," continued the big dog, "to be descended from the wolf or jackal; at any rate, dogs are of very respectable antiquity. You have heard of Egypt, I daresay?"

"That is the land through which the big river Nile flows, is it not?" asked Spot.

"Yes, that is it. Well, we know that dogs lived in the land of Egypt five thousand years ago."

"My whiskers!" gasped Spot, in surprise, while Fluffy cocked his ears, and looked as wise as he could.

"Four kinds of dogs have been discovered there, the hound, the greyhound, the watchdog, and the turnspit. Aye! and our ancestors were thought so much of that the dog was worshipped as a god under the name Anubis. Dogs were offered in sacrifice to Anubis, and their dead bodies were then embalmed, and carefully preserved as mummies."

"What in the world is that?" asked Fluffy.

"Why, the inside of the dog was taken out, and he was stuffed with spices and things, and then he became a mummy."

"Astonishing!" cried Spot.

"And a city was built all in honour of us dogs, and it was called Cynopolis, and one of the big stars was named Sirius, the dog-star. Oh! I can tell you, the old Egyptians thought heaps of us."

"Only the Egyptians?" asked Fluffy.

"Oh, no, the Greeks and Romans, too, appreciated our worth, and we served in their armies."

"What!" cried Spot; "soldier dogs?"

"Yes," said the big dog, "soldiers."

"Did they wear silver helmets and breastplates, and carry guns, and sit on horseback like the sentinels at Whitehall?" asked Fluffy eagerly.

"No," said the big dog, "they were foot soldiers. There was one very brave deed done by some Greek soldier dog which is mentioned in history books."

"Oh, do tell!" cried Spot and Fluffy together.

"Well, there was a large town called Corinth where dwelt lots of two-legged creatures in great kennels. And an enemy came by sea and landed in the dead of night, and stole upon the sleeping two-legged garrison. Every man Jack of them would have been killed had not fifty warrior dogs heard the footsteps of the foe; barking loudly their battle-cry they rushed fearlessly upon them. Then there was a dreadful fight, in which all the brave dogs were killed excepting one only; but by that time the garrison were wide awake, and seizing their arms they drove back the enemy with great loss. Thus Corinth was saved."

"And the brave soldier dog who was not killed—did they make him king?" asked Fluffy.

"I daresay they might have," replied the big dog; "but unfortunately he died of his fearful wounds."

Spot looked grave, and Fluffy sobbed aloud.

"Plenty of brave deeds have been done by dogs since then," said the big dog. "An army of eight hundred dogs was employed by the Earl of Essex in putting down the Irish rebellion, and I myself have the honour to be acquainted with a St. Bernard who wears a medal for valour, having saved the lives of twenty-two two-legged creatures—rescued from perishing in the snow."

"And Spot here knows a dog that killed twenty rats!" cried Fluffy, regarding his companion with admiration.

"I have a terrier friend who tackled a hundred rats in a room by himself, and killed the whole lot!" said the big dog. "Do you know there are 189 distinct

varieties of dog, and each in its way is valuable. Look, my friends, at the Esquimaux dog; what would the two-legged creatures up North do without him, I should like to know? A team of them can travel all day over the frozen ground, pulling a weight of half a ton at the rate of seven miles an hour!"

"Do you know any sheep-dogs, sir?" asked Fluffy.

"I can't say that I do," answered the big dog. "You see, they are so much engaged in business. In this country the dog drives the sheep, and acts for the shepherd; but in some other lands—South America, for instance—the dog is shepherd and sheep-dog too. He goes before the sheep and calls to them, and they follow him wherever he leads. He stays with the flock day after day, and only runs home for his meals."

"I expect the two-legged creatures would soon die if it wasn't for us dogs!" said Spot thoughtfully.

"Very likely," replied the big dog, "and that would account for the proverb, 'Love me, love my dog!' because the two are inseparable. Hello! here we are at Exeter, and I must say good-bye. So glad to have made your acquaintance."

The three dogs rubbed noses. "Pleasant journey!" barked the big dog, and waved his paw.

"Good-bye! Good-bye!" cried Spot and Fluffy.

When they were alone Spot cried enthusiastically, "Wasn't he a jolly dog?"

"Yes, indeed!" answered Fluffy; "and so well informed."

"Ah!" said Spot, "there is nothing like travelling to improve the mind."

"I say," said Fluffy, "let us follow out your idea with regard to a profession, and be companions to some rich two-legged traveller."

"I think we might do a great deal worse," said Spot. "And now let us have a snooze, for my head fairly aches with thinking."

Whereupon the two dogs coiled themselves cosily in their straw, and were soon fast asleep.

AS SEEN THROUGH WOMAN'S EYES.

The Plain Girl.

ARE THINGS "LOOKING UP" FOR HER AT LAST?

I am a plain girl, as even my friends who love me best are compelled to acknowledge, and I want, please, to protest vigorously against the pretty girl's rose-coloured view of the plain girl's prospects, which you printed some weeks ago (writes a correspondent in a Home paper). The trials of the pretty girl's triumphal progress through life simply aren't in it with the sorrows of the plain girl, however good and sweet and clever the latter may be; however loving and lovable she may prove to the rare—very rare—wise man who has wit enough to discover her hidden worth.

The pretty girl sheds tears of self-pity because someday, forsooth, she may lose her beauty, and be relegated to the shelf beside the plain girl.

But the plain girl starts on the shelf, and nine times out of ten does not come down from it her whole dull life long. Not for her the sunny side of youth, the swift dawn of admiration in some nice man's eyes, the rush to secure her for the first waltz, the charmed attention to her slightest word—all the little things that mean so little, but count so much.

And not for her the wonders of heroic love such as make the theme of song and story. Not for her the golden verse of Shakespeare, Byron, Tennyson; the immortal mirror of some great painter's perfect art. Will the pretty girl tell us one of all these who has recorded the praises of a plain girl?"

The plain girl lives divorced from all romance. She forms the grey, unnoticed background which is the beauty's foil. Her homely features and sallow skin only set off her scornful rival's milk and roses.

"Stand aside!" cries the verdict of mankind. "Way for Helen of Troy, for Cleopatra, Beatrice, Fair Rosamund, Mary Stuart, Lady Hamilton, and all the rest. For them the worship, and for you the toil. We have spoken!"

And the toast is still, "Fair women and brave men." Fair women—not good, or wise, or true, or tender!"

If the plain girl were less—or more—than "just a woman," perhaps she would not mind so much. Perhaps, then, it would be easier to wear a careless smile when the man who was talking so earnestly with such appreciation of her sympathy a moment ago, suddenly falters, and forgets what he was saying, because Dolly, silly, shallow, selfish little Dolly, has come into the room, and thrown one glance at him from under her long lashes.

The plain girl says no word of complaint, she has acquired a most admirable and Spartan power to endure (which does not imply to ignore) neglect, slights, and indifference chill as death.

But her whole heart throbs with the question that has echoed in—how many women's hearts?—since the days of Leah, despised of Jacob. "Why?—why have men only eyes for the outward shell?"—by na means necessarily the outward sign of inward and spiritual grace.

On the contrary, that first requisite of beauty, a good complexion, is too often the result of a thick skin, in its turn the mark of a selfish, insensible nature.

The delicate epidermis that accompanies sensitive perceptions—of which are born tact and sympathy, best qualities of a true lover—is too delicate to stand the wear of weather and hard water.

Thus the dewy freshness of childhood fades into the nondescript complexion of the plain girl. It is also a fact that all palmists agree that those very white hands, which do not change with heat and cold, mean selfishness. But that does not in the least prevent the novelist from gifting his angelically selfies heroine with just such lily fingers.

Who has not read the maxim of Hafiz (according to Kipling)?

"If IT be pleasant to look on, stalled in the packed serai,"
"Does not the young man try its temper and pace ere he buy?"

"If SHE be pleasant to look on, what does the young man say?"
"Lo! she is pleasant to look on, give her to me to-day!"

And who does not remember that biting little sentence in "The Liars," where Sir Charles Wyndham dissuades the pretty widow from taking up a profession by telling her:

"There are lots of dear, good, ugly women to do that!"

Exactly! There you have the world's view in a nutshell.

We live under a representative government, and bow to the ruling of the majority in all departments of life—save this one. For the small minority of beautiful women is considered far before the large majority of plain ones. Anything is good enough for the plain girl—the small dress allowance, the back seat in the box, the stupid partner at the dance, the drudgery of a career, or the second love of some man who has been singed into wisdom at the pretty girl's farthing taper. Why, even one's dressmaker takes twice as much trouble over the frocks she makes for one's pretty sister.

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Very Special Recipes.

EGGS, WITH ITALIAN SAUCE.

Eggs for supper dishes are considered to be par excellence by many. True, often they are so di-guised that one fears much of their vaunted digestibility must be lost, and I am afraid that I can only plead against this for the recipe below that it is such a delicious one that it must be excused on that score.

Required:

Six eggs—hard-boiled.
One ounce of butter.
One ounce of flour.
Two teaspoonfuls of chopped onion.
One bay leaf.
Sprig of thyme and marjoram.
Two chopped mushrooms (may be omitted).
One glass of sherry (may be omitted).
Half a pint of stock.
Salt. Pepper.

Boil the eggs for 15 minutes. During this process make the sauce. Melt the butter in a small stewpan. Add to it the flour, onion, and bay-leaf. Fry all these till the flour is deep golden-brown. Add the mushrooms and sherry, re-cook for two or three minutes, then add the stock.

Still till it boils. Simmer gently for 10 minutes. Season carefully and strain. Shell the eggs, and cut them in halves lengthways. Place them on a hot dish. Pour over the Italian sauce. Place round a border of fried or toasted bread, and cut in some pretty shapes.

RABBIT A LA ROMAINE.

I insert this recipe trusting it will meet the requirements of a reader who is weary of rabbits, boiled and roast.

Required:

One Rabbit.
Three tablespoonfuls of salad oil.
Four onions.
One and a half ounces of flour.
Half a pint of tomato pulp.
Half a pint of stock.
Half a tablespoonful of tarragon vinegar.
Salt and pepper.

Cut the rabbit into neat joints. Sprinkle them with salt, pepper, and chopped parsley. Heat the oil in a frying-pan. Put in the rabbit and the sliced onions, and fry a golden-brown. Then stir in the flour smoothly; add the tomato and stock.

Simmer about 30 minutes, or till the rabbit is tender. Take out the meat and keep it hot while you rub the sauce through a sieve. Re-heat. Skim well and add the vinegar. Arrange the joints on a hot dish, pour over the sauce, and put little heaps of boiled macaroni and stoned olives round.

PUREE OF CAULIFLOWERS.

Is a delicate white soup, very suitable to tempt the appetite of an invalid or convalescent patient. Though cream is mentioned in the recipe, it may be omitted if more convenient, or if not allowed.

Required:

One quart of white stock.
Three-quarters of a pint of milk.
One gill of cream.
One large cauliflower.
One ounce of butter.
Salt and pepper.
One tablespoonful of chopped parsley.
Half a blade of mace.
A small onion.
One and a half ounces of flour.

Wash the cauliflower very carefully and break off one breakfastcupful of the best sprigs. Put the rest into a clean saucepan with the stock, milk, onion, mace, and salt, and cook until the cauliflower is quite tender. When it is, take out the mace and rub the rest through a sieve. Put the sprigs of cauliflower into a pan of boiling, salted water and cook them till they are just tender, but not mashed. Keep them hot while you thicken the soup. Melt the butter in a saucepan, stir the flour in smoothly, then add these gradually to the soup. Stir it over the fire till it boils. Season it carefully, then slip the sprigs of cauliflower gently into it, also the chopped parsley and the cream. Make it quite hot, pour it into a hot tureen, and serve.

What Pleases a Man.

Generally speaking, a man likes to be told he is handsome, whether he is or not. He likes to be told he has small feet. This is a tip for wives. There is more virtue in a pair of tight shoes in keeping a man at home in the evenings than in all the Ten Commandments. It pleases a man to be asked for advice. You don't need to take it. Most men have advice to give away, and they are always willing to bestow it on women gratis. It pleases a man for a woman to depend on him. This is the reason why many foolish girls could get two husbands apiece, while strong-minded women remain old maids.

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How to Get to Sleep.

Nervous people who are troubled with wakefulness and excitability have usually a strong tendency of blood to the brain, with cold extremities. The pressure of blood on the brain keeps it in a stimulated or wakeful state, and the pulsations in the head are often painful. If these symptoms occur in your case, you should rise and chafe the body and extremities with a rough towel, or rub smartly with the hands to promote circulation and withdraw the excessive amount of blood from the brain, after which you will probably fall asleep in a few minutes. A cold bath, or a sponge bath and rubbing, or a rapid walk in the open air, or going up and down stairs a few minutes just before retiring, will aid in equalising the circulation and promoting sleep.

How Madame Calve Became an Operatic Star.

There is a strange similarity between the earliest hopes and aspirations of Madame Sarah Bernhardt and Madame Calve, respectively the greatest tragedienne and the most popular operatic singer France has ever produced. Both were drawn towards religion during girlhood days, and both became convinced that they would find their real vocation in the Church. There was, in fact, a determination in both their hearts to live the life of a nun. But fortunately for the world of art, the natural histrionic ability of the one, and the music in the other, asserted itself before either had time or opportunity to totally immure themselves in a convent.

It was with considerable misgivings, however, that Madame Calve abandoned her idea of entering a nunnery, and went from her country home in the South of France, in order to study music. As a matter of fact, it was necessity which drove her to take this step. Madame Calve's father died when she was very young, and her mother turned to her for help. The future prima donna even in those days possessed a very good voice, and she decided on a professional career in order to support the family.

But the struggle was a hard one, as Madame Calve has often confessed. It is true that she made a very successful debut on the operatic stage as Marguerite in Gounod's "Faust" at Brussels, in 1882, when she was but sixteen years of age. It is also true that Madame Marchesi, under whom the prima donna studied singing, prophesied a great career for the now famous artiste. But triumphs did not at first come very quickly. Perhaps the main reason for this was that in those early days, Madame Calve did not take great pains to develop her wonderful power as an actress, in addition to her musical ability. To quote the words used by the popular operatic singer during the course of an interview which she recently granted to an American journalist:

"At that time, and through long years, I am afraid I cared little for art. Even when in 1884 I appeared under the management of Victor Maurel at what is now the Theatre Sarah Bernhardt, in an opera called 'Aben-Hamet,' I fear I was a poor artiste. I acted without feeling, and I had little interest in my work. Nor did I improve when I joined the company of the Opera Comique. Indeed, I might never have been worth much, but for an impulse or inspiration which led me to commit what many friends considered a proof of madness. It occurred to me one day that if ever I was to become a great artiste, I must go to Italy. My health was not good at the time, and I was poor—pitifully poor. But I determined to risk everything, for I am of opinion that to succeed one must dare much.

"With only 500 francs in my pocket, I left Paris and proceeded to Milan, where, after much hardship and many adventures, I secured an engagement. But they hissed me in Milan. Yes, and now I can see that they were right to hiss. For I was then a bad singer and actress. On the advice of some musicians I returned to France, and took lessons of Madame Laborde, who taught me much that was useful. Then I went back to Italy, and this time I was applauded as heartily as I had once been hissed."

It was during this last visit to Italy that Madame Calve saw Madame Duse act, and the performance of the great Italian tragedienne made a profound impression on the singer. To revert once more to Madame Calve's own words:

"When I saw Madame Duse act, I understood at last the value and sincerity of art. I went again to see her, in fact became her disciple, and tried to profit by her example. At first to the best of my ability I tried to imitate her—to put more intensity into my tones, more nature into my interpretations. What I learned of Duse was invaluable to me."

Since those days Madame Calve's career has been one continuous line of successes. In view of the fact, however, that in her early days Madame Calve was once hissed at Milan, it is interesting to recall that when in October, 1891, Mascagni's "L'Amico Fritz" was produced at the Costanza Theatre in Rome, she was selected to create the leading soprano part in that important work.

When "Cavalleria Rusticana" was given for the first time in Paris, Madame Calve was chosen for the role of Santuzza. Later, she took the principal soprano part in the late Leo Delibes' opera "Rassa." Not only on the Continent, however, has Madame Calve won fame. Whenever she appears in London immense audiences pay tribute to her wonderful dramatic power and vocal ability, while her visits to America have brought her equal triumphs, as may be judged from the fact that for sixty performances in the latter country she has received as much as £19,000.

Very Special Recipes.

STEAMED EGGS WITH TOMATOES.

Those who appreciate egg cookery should test the virtues of this recipe before the chief ingredient used becomes too expensive a luxury. You will find it is an inexpensive, simple, and an extremely tempting dish to both eyes and palate.

Required:

Four eggs.
Two tomatoes.
Four slices of bacon.
Four pieces of buttered toast.
Two teaspoonfuls of chopped parsley.
One ounce of butter.

Well butter some small plain dariole moulds and sprinkle the bottom of each with chopped parsely.

Into each mould carefully break an egg. Place the moulds in a sauce-pan with boiling water to come half-way up them, and lay a piece of buttered paper over the top of the tins.

Let the eggs steam for about five minutes, or till they are set.

While they are cooking, cut the tomatoes in half and put them on a tin in a hot oven, put a little bit of butter on each, and cook till they are tender.

Toast the rounds of bread and the bacon before the fire. When all are cooked trim the toast neatly, lay half of a tomato on each slice, then slip an egg carefully on to the tomato. Arrange these neatly on a dish with the bacon.

Lace at £1,000 a Yard.

There is a legend that the first lace was made by a girl who preserved a beautiful bit of seaweed by catching all the dainty parts of leaves and stems to a piece of linen with fine thread. The most expensive lace manufactured today is valued at £1000 a yard. Such lace is made, however, in very small quantities. It is in imitation of "old point," and the thread used is of the finest filigree silver, the pattern being thickly encrusted with diamonds. The price of this trimming is about £28 an inch. The high prices which the fine laces command are, of course, occasioned by the careful workmanship that is required in their manufacture. Besides, the thread is very expensive, an ounce of Flanders thread having frequently been sold at £4 a pound. But this quantity can be turned into lace worth £40. At a sale of lace which was held recently in Brussels a point d'applique lace flounce brought more than £200, while some old Venetian point was sold for £2 an inch.

Always Keep Faith.

Many a woman, who would not think of lightly breaking a promise made to a grown-up person, is utterly careless about keeping her word with her children. She promises whatever is convenient at the moment, and apparently thinks that the breaking or keeping of those promises is a matter in which she can please herself, and that her children have no right to consider themselves aggrieved if she does not do so.

A mother who acts thus does her child grievous harm. She forgets that the sense of justice is strong in quite a little child, and that it is natural and reasonable that he should expect his parents to be as good as their word, and to fulfil their promises even at the cost of convenience. Promises should not be lightly broken, and the parent who is guilty of this soon loses his children's confidence, which is one of the sweetest things our little ones can give us.

When boys and girls learn to doubt their parents' truthfulness, they soon look around for someone else whom they can trust, and on that person they shower their affection and bestow their confidence.

Can Wives be Too Unselfish?

MEN ARE SPOILED BY TOO MUCH WORSHIP.

When a man marries, unless he is a prematurely old bachelor, or a crusted widower, he wants a wife who will be his closest companion through life. An old friend of mine, speaking of a certain mutual acquaintance who contemplated matrimony, said:

"Oh, So-and-so doesn't want a wife. He merely wants a cook. Why doesn't he advertise for one?" and she thus summed up in a few words a phase of married life which is far from ideal. For how many girls, during the first few years of their wifehood, raise up a Frankenstein of this nature which is destined to destroy their after happiness. And yet they err with the very best intentions.

The average marriageable maiden looking forward to the wedded state views her future through rose-tinted glasses, and it is often the fondest girl who takes an entirely wrong view of the duties she owes her prospective husband, as well as herself, in this respect.

His comfort shall always be her first and tenderest care; his favourite "weaknesses" studied, and his table prepared with the enthusiasm found only in a young wife; she will be more to him than a mother, and they will grow old together, grateful in each other's love and happiness. These are her reflections and resolves before marriage, and sometimes for long after. And for her part the self-made promises are faithfully kept.

From morning to night, every thought is on George's account. His likes and dislikes are anticipated with that intuition which only a loving woman possesses; early and late she is devising little surprises in her household economy, special dishes contrived with infinite pains because he once expressed a liking for them, and generally pondering to the selfishness inherent in the best of men.

Rather than George should go without a hearty breakfast (provisions having inadvertently run short) the only egg in the house follows the other items upon which he has commenced the day so that he shall not feel stinted. She can go without, and feels a peculiar pleasure in masking the empty state of her own plate in order that he shall breakfast with an easy conscience. At first he resents such innocent deceptions, but presently begins to accept this phase of her homage as his due.

Then the young wife wakens to the fact that George has wedded a sort of glorified cook-housekeeper, but this knowledge only makes her more than ever slave to her infatuation.

The little attentions he showered on her a few short months back have gradually ceased, and, almost unconsciously, she sinks day by day deeper into her self-made servitude. The drudgery of household cares, combined with despairing attempts to win back by culinary feats the affectionate premarriage days, prey upon her good looks, and before she is aware of her loss, she is regarded by the man to whom she is mated almost with an equivalent of the respect he bestows upon her charwoman.

The fact that his meals are carefully and punctually prepared, that his wants are anxiously studied, and that he is waited on hand and foot, now touches no grateful chord in his breast. What is she there for but to minister to his comfort?

It sounds a little hard upon a young wife who finds herself in this grievous state, but she has only herself to thank for it. Instead of being in every sense of the word a companion and helpmeet to her husband, she has as inevitably accepted her sphere of action in the kitchen as if she had taken a situation as a hired servant. It is not entirely George's fault. After all, man is but human, and when he finds someone who is prepared to metaphorically blacken his boots, to sink herself mentally and socially, he is naturally too selfish to forbid it.

As she has started, so our unhappy subject must go on. The cares of her home gradually absorb all her day; her leisure is occupied in planning fresh contrivances for George's comfort; she becomes jaded and faded before her thirties, and he, worse half, accepts all her sacrifices as part of the matrimonial plan.

How different might have been her lot had she adopted a different plan towards her husband from the commencement. A woman can be a good wife and an excellent housekeeper, and still retain a firm hold on her lord's affections. To prepare tasty dainties is by no means the sum total of the duties required of her. She should enter into his life as enthusiastically as she superintends his dinner; interest herself in his pursuits, his friends, his business; be prepared, in short, to be to him a sort of chum, and ready at all times to act as his understudy.

He learns to lean more every day on her judgment, and to consult her in matters requiring tact and skill. Instead of burying herself in her kitchen when he is at home, she is interesting herself in his methods, and so blending her personality with his that they possess "one heart, one soul."

Without appearing to do so, she is always quietly maintaining her right to be treated as an active partner in their little firm, and by these means she retains the affection and admiration of her husband far more effectively than if she were a queen of beauty and a French chef combined.

Any husband can be spoiled by too much hero-worship. Men are so apt to forget to be chivalrous, and while they denounce heartily the selfishness of others, they fail to notice the loving, blind devotion of the sweet little woman who gives up her life to them.

Use Vinegar Sparingly.

Vinegar is one of the common condiments which is useful, perhaps, in small quantities, but certainly injurious if taken too freely. A dinner salad, with two tablespoons of vinegar for six persons, is a good proportion. Vinegar, spices, in fact all substances, which in themselves preserve food materials, hinder digestion. A little acid, a very little, will sometimes prevent rapid, unnatural fermentation in the stomach, giving time for a weak digestion to assert itself. This habit, however, if continued for any length of time, will increase the digestive trouble by constantly aiding rather than strengthening the gastric secretions.

The stomach acid is mild and very easily overpowered by either strong alkalis or acids. Pickles preserved in vinegar are always to be condemned. They create an appetite by irritating the stomach, and, if continued, provoke gastric indigestion. Salads, where but a small quantity of vinegar is used, are the best conveyors of this condiment. Home-made vinegars are strong with acetic acid and have no virture over good manufactured vinegars except in flavouring. Apple imparts an agreeable aroma, which makes a pleasant and apparently mild flavour. Grape vinegar, made by adding yeast or "mother" to an uncooked, sweetened grape juice, is excellent, and with a tarragon flavour is one of the best salad seasonings.

The sweet pickle has no advantage over the sour one. Sugar, added to vinegar, makes it pass the palate more easily, but both enter the stomach as they originally were—the sugar as sugar, the vinegar as vinegar. There is no combination or neutralization of either. The perfectly natural palate refuses all very hot, bitter, sour or flat foods. But to meet our artificial cravings we overlook this fact and cover or disguise our likings that they may pass unnoticed. We cannot, however, deceive the stomach, and consequently we pay a heavy penalty.

THE WORLD OF FASHION.

(By MARGUERITE.)

Some of our smart elegantes have taken very kindly to the new colour "onion," and one of the most beautiful dresses made for the races was of onion-tinted taffetas of the new, soft and supple calibre, trimmed with narrow flounces of itself, flatly pleated at one edge, but at the other allowed to fall without restraint, a sketch of which costume the large picture reveals on the left-hand side. Onion is very reminiscent of champagne colour, for it has the distinctly golden tint of that so smart dye, though with it is mingled a suggestion of green. But to understand exactly the character of the colour a large Spanish onion has only to be consulted. Yet another variant of the same dye is "gooseberry," which is also a most obliging colour to choose for a taffetas dress, seeing that in it we have one of the quaint and charming colours of the bygone period from which we copy so often, which is very widely known as the early Victorian, though it ranges from the thirties to the sixties of last century. A lovely model in green taffetas is shown in the picture just mentioned, on the right-hand side. It is mainly trimmed with a ruche-headed flounce and a very deep puffing of taffetas, but a little extra colour is accorded to it by means of wreaths of applique wild roses, which the sketch portrays. Charming sleeves that droop far below a yoke of old ivory-coloured lace accompany it, reminding me to remark that the most important characteristic of the newest sleeves are the huge puffs. It is a novelty to embroider a taffetas frock with broderie Anglaise or punched embroidery, which looks lovely done in lavender silk upon a lavender background, or in blue, brun dore, or any chosen hue. Last year this self-same embroidery was always executed on white muslin, but to-day many of our muslins are made studiously plain, like a schoolgirl's, just as you perceive the illustrated model is, tucked above a full flounce, with a touch of stitchery round the yoke. It was on an exceptionally successful white muslin frock I know was destined for the races that I saw smilax green embroidery on the yoke, while the hat to be worn with the toilette was also the one sketched, and was a Leghorn one trimmed with green leaves and ribbon roses in two wreaths round the crown.

A GIRL'S FANCY DRESS.

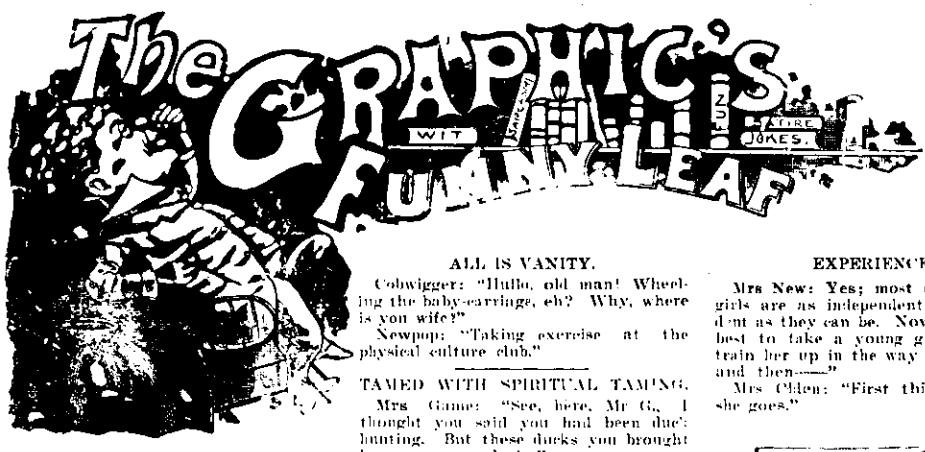
TOILETTE FOR A GARDEN PARTY.

THIS YEAR'S RACE MEETING WILL SEE THE TAFFETAS TOILETTE AT AN APEX OF POPULARITY, AS WELL AS LOVELY WATTEAU MUSLIN GOWNS AND THE SMART NEW CHECKED VOILE ONES.

A RACE GOWN
in taffetas changeant. Jacket of white cloth with taffetas revers.

A Summer Gown of Silk Spotted Voile trimmed with Irish Lace and Velvet.

Another Victorian Fashion has arrived in the form of a Tiny Parasol on a Very Long Stick, specially intended to accompany the Leghorn Hat, which is nearly as large as it is, and the Lace Mittens that flourished during the former term of popularity of both fashions.



HE KNEW.

Comedian: "So our manager has been sick. What did the doctor say?"

Soubrette: "Said he needed a change of scenery."

Comedian: "H'm! The doctor must have seen the show."

TRUE!

Brown: I have just discovered what it is that destroys a man's memory completely.

Green: "What is it—alcohol or tobacco?

Brown: Neither; it is doing him a favour.

ALL IS VANITY.

Cobwigger: "Hullo, old man! Wheeling the baby-carriage, eh? Why, where is your wife?"

Newpop: "Taking exercise at the physical culture club."

TAMED WITH SPIRITUAL TAMING.

Mrs Game: "See, here, Mr G., I thought you said you had been duck hunting. But these ducks you brought home are tame ducks."

"Y-es, m'dear; I tamed 'em after I (hic) shot 'em."

POOR DOCTOR.

Physician (looking into his ante-room, where a number of patients are waiting): "Who has been waiting the longest?"

Tailor (who has called to present his bill): "I have, doctor; I delivered the clothes to you three years ago."

WOMAN'S WAY.

She put her new dust coat away;
She said: "It was so gusty,
I shall not promenade to-day—
My dust coat might get dusty."

EXPERIENCED.

Mrs New: Yes; most of the servant girls are as independent and as impudent as they can be. Now, I believe it's best to take a young greenhorn and train her up in the way she should go, and then——"

Mrs Olden: "First thing you know, she goes."

SCARING HIM OFF.

"What's the trouble between Dolly and Ethel?"

"Why, Dolly told Ethel she would certainly accept Jack if he proposed, and Ethel went and told Jack."

ON HER DIGNITY.

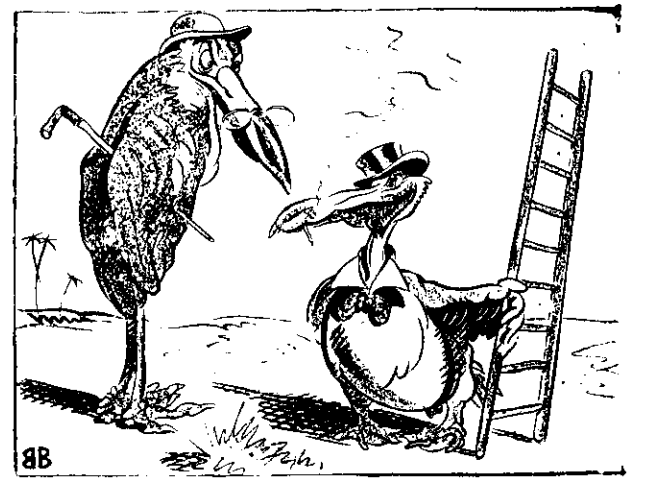
Mrs. Annex: I'll tell you what I'll do, Bridget. If you'll consent to stay I'll raise your wages.

Bridget: Listen to her, wud ye? Raise me wages, indade! Ye'll increase me salary, that's phwat ye'll do.

A POINTER.

"Ethel, don't you think if you take this box of candy to your sister for me she will take an interest in me?"

"Maybe, but her other beaux always give me a box of candy first, so I'll not take too much interest in them when they're with sister."



PREPARED.

The Adjutant.—Going to be best man at the Ostrich's wedding, eh? What are you doing with that ladder?

The Pelican.—Doing with it? Haven't I got to kiss the bride?

BEING POLITE.

"What's a bachelor girl, Pop?"

"That's what you call an old maid to her face."

A HARD PROBLEM.

"Is this Mdme. Pompon?" breathlessly inquired a man who had climbed several flights of stairs and been admitted into a darkened parlour.

"It is," replied the stately personage whom he addressed.

"The famous clairvoyant and fortune-teller?"

"The same."

"Do you read the mind?"

"With perfect ease."

"Can you foretell the future?"

"The future holds no mysteries that I cannot unravel."

"Can you unfold the past?"

"The record of all things past is to me an open book."

"Then," said the caller, feverishly taking from his pocket a handful of silver, "I wish you would tell me what it is that my wife wanted me to bring home without fail this evening, and name your price. Money is no object."

SNUBBED.

Little Girl: "Papa, it's raining."

Papa (whose temper is somewhat ruffled): "Well, let it rain!"

Little Girl (timidly): "I was going to, papa."

Mrs Careless (returning from the holidays): "Good gracious, George! the cat looks quite hungry."

Mr Careless: "Yes; now I come to think of it, it can't have had anything to eat for a fortnight."

EXPERIENCED!

"Hark, John! That must be the new servant. I heard a cab stop at the door."

"You'd better show her the house, dear, while I go and t'l the cabman to wait."

STANDARD DIRECTIONS.

He: "I understand that Mrs Wiggins rejected Mr Wiggins thirteen times before she accepted him."

She: "Yes. She evidently thought it best to shake well before taking."

WISHED TO GET EVEN.

"I see it stated here that the Sultan wears an iron undershirt."

"Say, I wish I had one like it to send to my laundry. I'd like to get even with 'em once in a while."

DIFFERENTLY PRONOUNCED.

"Don't you think he lacks aplomb?" asked Mrs. Oldcastle.

"Well," replied her hostess, "I don't know, but at the dinner the other night it did seem to me as though he couldn't get enough peaches."

T'OTHER WAY ROUND!

"Are you teaching that parrot to swear?" asked the benevolent-looking lady with unwonted indignation in her tone.

"Bless you, ma'am!" answered the old sailor. "No, indeed, ma'am; I'm taking lessons."

NOT HIS FAULT.

Practical Father: "If he says he loves you I suppose he does; but can he support you?"

Daughter: "Why, papa, you must know it wasn't his fault that the chair broke."

Small Harry: "Mamma, what is the meaning of hereditary?"

Mamma: "It is something you get from your papa or me."

Small Harry: "Oh, you mean a spankin'!"

UNDOUBTEDLY.

HAROLD—"They tell me, Ethel, that your aunt, Miss Thinly, will not go in bathing until after dark. Is it a fad?"

ETHEL—"No; it's a 'matter of form' with her, I believe."