

# The Club Smoking Room

By HAVANA

BISHOP NEILGAN," remarked the journalist, "has a happy knack of drawing out that mysterious person who writes letters to the papers. I think the society of journalists should give him a testimonial on his return to our shores. Good correspondence is a most valuable thing to any daily, but it is not very easy to get. Even the most experienced pressman can never tell for certain what will draw. Often subjects we think of great importance fall absolutely flat, while a comparative trifle will produce shoals of good and interesting letters. Look at the gallons of ink that were spilt when Jumbo was sold by the authorities of the London Zoo. Could any man have foreseen that the sorrows and woes of an elephant would have produced elegant epistles from such men as Ruskin and Matthew Arnold? The people seem to have resented being called pagans; but there was some truth, I suspect, in his lordship's indictment, or it would not have met with so much criticism. If he had said we were all drunkards, and that the results of licensed houses were 'ghastly,' and that Prohibition alone could save the colony, people would have patted him on the back and said 'Good boy,' because, as a matter of fact, we know that most of us lead a sober, if we do not lead a godly and righteous, life."

no great painters. As a consequence we have no great religious feeling, for religion is a reaching-out towards the unseen. The very churches are infected with the 'time-spirit,' and rely more on organisation than spiritual power. Refinement, culture, delicacy, are all being trampled under foot by the Juggernaut of Philistinism."

"We pay for these things," said the doctor, "not merely by the loss of the capacity for enjoyment, but by the loss of health. We no longer indulge in sport, we indulge in the luxury of watching professionals play games for us. We seldom walk or ride; we prefer to be whirled along in motors, or trams. We live our lives in a stuffy office, and have repaired the garden with the asphalted yard. Ledgers dull our brains, electric light robs our eyesight, hustle and the dread of delay our nerves, and the surgeon's knife is ever busy cutting out the crochets caused by our artificial modes of living. The phase is not new, and of course it will pass away again as it has done before, but the bell of materialism seems to me much worse than even the material hell of the Middle Ages."

"My dear doctor," remarked the cynic, "you and the dominie are really getting most horribly serious. You will never impress the masses with your views, and that at least ought to cause you joy. There is nothing more distressing than to find one's views meet with universal approval. It is such a humiliating confession of stupidity. Why try and draw the multitude away from the serene contemplation of their hoped-for heaven, which seems to consist of a place where they will eat not fat pork off gold plates in the company of prosperous retired grocers. The great questions of the day are no longer political, literary, or religious. We prefer to discuss such com-mundras as "Whea is a slipper not a slipper?" "What is a slaughterman?" or "To coupon or not to coupon." This last, by the way, seems a delightful problem. We could extend the system so indefinitely. We could put a coupon in the plate at church, we could post bakers' coupons to begging letter writers, we suspected of wasting money in drink, we could civilise the pagans of the back blocks by extending to them the inestimable blessings of the coupon."

"What I like about the present day," suggested the lawyer, "is the practical use to which we put the fine arts. Poetry no longer deals with either love or nature, it finds a higher sphere in singing the merits of Red Arrow ointment or Sapon Soap. To the maker of Limericks is given the seat of honour in the temple of the Muses. Painting and sculpture alike proclaim the merits of soup and pills. "The more practical we make our education the better will the people like it," was the wise statement recently made at a college meeting. We need not give up the classics altogether—we could bring them up-to-date. Our old friend Xerxes could be utilised thus:

"The Grecians would never have conquered Xerxes Had he used so-and-so's Reliable Teas."

You could point out that the prophet Elisea would not have been called a 'bold head' if he had used 'Thatchem-quick.' You could explain that Virgil's line "Yet tears to human sufferings are due" was written before we had learnt that backache kidney pills were better than tears. You could still read Shakespeare if you added practical notes. "Oh that this too, too solid flesh would melt" might have as a commentary "so it would

have done if he had used anti-fat." We could combine the old and the new to the infinite advantage of an age that has learnt to despise sentiment and value only the practical."

"They complain," said the schoolmaster, "that our children are overworked. We could easily remedy this by introducing the practical education of 'Dothe-boy's Hall'—"W-i-n-d-e-r, winter. Now go and clean them after learning how to spell them! That is my idea of really useful training. Whackford Squares was in advance of his time. He would be hailed as an educational reformer nowadays. I often think the old pagans must smile as they look down from the Elysian fields on our wholly unromantic and therefore joyless age. How insulted they must feel at being compared to us. Socrates preached a gospel of the immortal beauty of the soul, we preach a gospel of stuccoed villas and bile beans for biliousness."

## Our Illustrations.

### MOTOC-CAR GYMKHANA AT NAPIER.

A very successful motor car gymkhana was recently held on the Recreation Ground at Napier. A procession formed of over twenty cars, and headed by the president of the Automobile Club, in his fine car, lined up near the Marine Parade band rotunda, and drove round to the Recreation Ground, where an interesting sports programme was gone through. The principal events resulted as under:—  
 Appearance Parade.—"A" Class; M. Thomas, 1; G. L. Mackersey, 2. "B" Class; D. Bernan, 1; N. Kettle, 2.  
 Bending Race.—F. Wilson, 1; C. Duncan, 2.  
 Tortoise Race.—C. A. Hawkins, 1; J. H. Edmundson, 2; F. V. Kettle, 3.  
 Starting and Stopping.—F. V. Kettle, 1; F. Wilson, 2; N. Mackersey, 3.  
 Turk's Head and Pig Sticking.—F. V. Kettle, 1; A. Joseph, 2.  
 Potato Race.—T. Renata, 1; W. Robin, 2.  
 Tilting at Rings.—W. Robin, 1; J. St. J. Hindmarsh, 2.  
 Glass of Water Race.—G. Duncan, 1; J. E. Skrats, 2.  
 Lady Passenger Race.—W. Robin, 1; F. Wilson, 2.

## OBITUARY.

### MR. G. G. STEAD.

Mr. Geo. G. Stead, a leading citizen of Christchurch, died on April 20th. Mr. Stead sustained a sudden seizure a few days ago, from the effects of which he never recovered. The deceased was born in London in 1841, and came from an old Yorkshire family on his father's side, his grandfather being Mr. Mark Stead, of Richmond, Yorkshire, and from a Scotch family on his mother's side, his grandmother being a Fraser, a direct descendant of the noted Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, the last man beheaded in the Tower of London in the year 1747. Mr. Stead, in 1849, accompanied his parents to South Africa, where he completed his education at St. Andrew's College. In 1865 he returned to England, but, on the recommendation of several friends, he decided to settle in New Zealand, where he arrived in 1866. Since that date he has been a prominent figure in commercial and sporting circles. Mr. Stead took a leading part in the raising of a Canterbury contingent during the Boer War, and subscribed £500

towards the fund. In addition to holding the position of Chairman and Honorary Treasurer of the Canterbury Club, Mr. Stead also held the following appointments:—Chairman of Directors of the "Christchurch Press" Company, Chairman of Directors of Manning and Co., Chairman of Directors of the Christchurch Gas Company, Chairman of Directors of Warners, Ltd., Chairman of Directors of the Blackball Coal Company, Deputy Chairman Alliance Assurance Co., Director of Ma-on Struthers, Ltd., Director of the New Zealand Shipping Co. He filled the position of President of the Christchurch Chamber of Commerce in 1880, 1885, 1886. He was one of the Governors of the Canterbury College from 1891 to 1899, when he resigned.

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Weather and other circumstances permitting, the Company's steamers will leave as under:—  
**For Russell.**  
 CLANSMAN, Every Monday, at 7 p.m.  
**For Russell, Whangaroa, and Mangouli.**  
 CLANSMAN, Every Monday, at 7 p.m.  
 No Cargo for Russell.  
**For Awanui, Waiharara, Houkora, Whangaroa, and Mangouli.**  
 APANUI, Every Monday at 2 p.m.  
 No Cargo Whangaroa and Mangouli.  
**For Whangaruru, Helena Bay, Tutukaka, and Whananaki.**  
 PAEROA, Monday, 18th May, 1 p.m.  
**For Great Barrier.**  
 AUPOURI, Every Wednesday, midnight.  
**For Waikake and Coromandel.**  
 LEAVE AUCKLAND.  
 ROTOMAHANA, Tues, 28th April, 11 a.m.  
 ROTOMAHANA, Fri, 1st May, 2 p.m.  
 LEAVE COROMANDEL, VIA WAIHEKE.  
 ROTOMAHANA, Wed, 29th April, 6 a.m.  
 ROTOMAHANA, Sat, 2nd May, 7.30 a.m.

### FROM ONEHUNGA.

**For Hokiang.**  
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**For Raglan, Kawhia, and Waitara.**  
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 7th—11.45 a.m. 2 p.m. No str. 2 p.m.  
 9th—9.15 a.m. 11.45 a.m. No str. 11 a.m.  
 12th—11.45 a.m. 2 p.m. 1 p.m. No str.  
 14th—11.45 a.m. 4.30 p.m. 2 p.m. 5 p.m.  
 16th—12 p.m. day 9 a.m. No str. 9 a.m.  
 18th—12 p.m. day 9.30 a.m. 8 a.m. No str.  
 21st—9.15 a.m. 11.30 a.m. 9 a.m. 11 a.m.  
 23rd—9.15 a.m. 11.30 a.m. No str. 11 a.m.  
 26th—11.45 a.m. 2 p.m. 1 p.m. No str.  
 28th—11.45 a.m. 3.45 p.m. 2 p.m. 4 p.m.  
 30th—12 p.m. day 9 a.m. No str. 9 a.m.  
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 VICTORIA, Tuesday | May 19 | 2 p.m.

### FROM WELLINGTON FOR SYDNEY.

ELIMARO, Friday | June 5  
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