

But even when the heat was at its worse, some of the sticklers for form stuck to their frock coats and top hats, and it is said that the bank clerks, who spend their time in walking from one bank to another with portfolios full of cheques and bills, are prohibited from wearing any substitute for their topers.

Men are kittle coppers, and it is hard for one coming from another part of the world to fathom their habits or to arrive by the aid of pure reason at the proper wear for different functions. I met the other day at dinner an American attaché, who was humorously explaining how difficult it was for him with the best intentions in the world to do the right thing. "I went," he said, with his strong accent, "to a garden party the other day, and I thought I would be right there with a frock coat and top hat. But I wasn't. Every single man wore fannels and a straw hat. The next day I went to Lords to the Eton and Harrow match. The heat was tropical, and I thought, 'I can't make a mistake this time.' I went in fannels and a straw hat. Every single man had a frock coat and a top hat, and they didn't seem to mind the slightest little bit!" His story was fully corroborated a few days later by a lady correspondent to one of the papers, who thought it such a singular fact to be worth noting that she wrote "At the Eton and Harrow match a very smart society man appeared in a straw hat. He looked cool but conspicuous."

HATS AND BONNETS FOR HORSES.

But this is by the way. When this anecdote intervened, I was about to tell you of the latest fashions for horses, which the heat has introduced. The poor animals have suffered more severely than we humans. The buses in many cases ran only a third of their usual journey, and at every main stopping place there were men with buckets of oatmeal and water. Even then the poor horses were so exhausted that many of them fell after a brief exposure to the sun, and a large proportion died. To shelter their heads from the fierce rays of the sun, humane drivers began by placing cabbage leaves between the ears, or pieces of cardboard with holes for the ears. Soon it became quite fashionable for horses to have straw hats and bonnets, some old-fashioned and old-maidish, it is true, but others quite piquante in design. The drapery establishments must have had quite a stock taken off their hands. There were broad sun-bonnets, dainty director's shapes, and wonderful pyramidal designs, all with holes cut for their ears. But don't imagine that the horses' heads were plain, undecorated straw. Far from it. One animal had a bunch of red poppies on its burnt straw, another a large bow of chiffon, from a third's lofty structure dangled tri-coloured ribbons. Other coiffures had three superposed rows of tiny velvet ribbon, a brewery adorned the bonnets of its animals with wreaths of hop leaves, and a baker's horses' hats were trimmed with wheat-ears. The poor animals, crawling along, drooped their heads as if fully conscious of the grotesque appearance they presented. The havoc that spell of hot weather wrought with the horses here, which were being well treated, well fed, refreshed with drinks, and spared in every way, enabled us to realise the tremendous wear and tear of horseflesh that went on in the hot weather in South Africa, when water was scarce, and every pound had to be taken out of the horses.

We wound up our eighteen days with a terrific thunderstorm and continuous flashes of lightning all the afternoon and evening. The casualties reported next day from lightning were even more numerous than those in the daily list from the war.

London is very quiet just now, and the season concluded last week with a number of smart society weddings. Those which caused the greatest sensation were Miss Evelyn Millard's and the much-discussed union of Lady Randolph Churchill to young Captain Cornwallis West.

MISS EVELYN MILLARD'S WEDDING.

In the former case, in the words of the song, "St. George's Church, Banover Square, was crowded; you'd have thought the place would burst," for it was quite certain that an actress, and no graceful and refined one as "Madame Butterfly," would contrive a charming and pretty scene for the ceremony in which she was to play the leading part. And her wedding to

Mr Robert Coulter proved one of the most picturesque that has ever taken place in London. From the entrance to the altar the church was decorated with lofty arches, one quite 10 feet high, of red rambler roses and ribbon palms, banded up at the base with white lilies, marguerites, hydrangeas and roses. The final arch at the altar rail, under which the last part of the service took place, was all of white flowers. The pews were decorated with red and white roses, the window embrasures were filled with flowers, and the pillars were entwined with garlands.

The three hundred guests included all the leaders of the theatrical world, such literary celebrities as Mrs Craigie and Mr Anthony Hope, and such leaders of fashion as Lady Jeanne, General Sir Evelyn and the Misses Wood, the Speaker and Miss Gully. While they were waiting for the arrival of the bride, quite a concert took place. The Misses Chaplin and the organist played Mackenzie's "Benedictus," for violin and organ, Gounod's "Ave Maria," for violin, cello and organ, and an Andante of Goltzmann as a cello solo. The bridal music from "Lohengrin" followed, and the tenor solo, "He thou Faithful unto Death," of Mendelssohn was succeeded by Staff's "Cantata," for the violin. While the register was being signed Miss Alice Gomez sang a solo specially composed for the occasion, and the bridesmaids distributed favours of real orange blossom.

The bride looked very charming in her Empire gown of ivory satin, with yoke and sleeves of old duchess lace. A lovely trail of silver embroidered orchids and leaves wound gracefully round the gown, the flowers standing out in bold relief upon the satin, and following graceful curves round the figure from the shoulders to the feet. A long Court train was suspended from both shoulders—a mass of glittering silver sequins, supported underneath with innumerable ruffles of soft white chiffon, and carried by two pretty little train bearers, Miss Barbara Buneroff and Miss Muriel Baranen. The bride's veil was of old lace, and fastened with a diamond star. Her hair was charmingly dressed with a little bandeau of silver across the front, and clusters of orange blossom on each side. The bridesmaids, Miss Shelley Gully, daughter of the Speaker, Miss E. Wood, daughter of Sir Evelyn Wood, Miss Elsie Atward, the bride's sister, and Miss Agnes Blyth, were also attired in Empire style. They wore tiny coats of white brocade, finished with silver cords and tassels and buttons, over full skirts of spotted and white silk gauze finished at the hem with several soft gauze frills. Under the coats were folded Empire sashes of pale blue chiffon, while the yokes and mittened sleeves were of point d'Alençon lace. Each bridesmaid carried a long Empire stick, enamelled white, and finished with a gold top. Knots of pale pink roses were tied to the handles with bows and floating ends of pale blue ribbon. The bridesmaids wore miniatures of the bride, set in heart-shaped brooches of brilliants, the gifts to them of the bridegroom. Their hats were of cream-coloured straw, finished with ruchings of chiffon over the brims, and handsome Mogador feathers. Under the brim of each was a cluster of roses.

The bride's going away dress was also very pretty. It was of dull white cloth, embroidered with gold through the centre of both skirt and bodice. Lace was let in transparently at the neck, and the sleeves were slashed over under-sleeves of lace. A travelling cloak was provided of palest bisquit-coloured glaze, much strapped, and finished with a bolero and sleeves of heavy guipure lace and tiny silk buttons. A white felt Ravenswood hat, trimmed with rich white plumes and a large gold buckle, was worn.

One of the prettiest things in a pretty trousseau was a lovely evening cloak of white brocade, lined with rose pink satin, and finished with a wonderful roll collar and revers of shaded pink satin in accordion-pleated frills, each frill edged with satin roses made entirely of pink chiffon, so that when the front of the cloak is thrown open, the effect is that of the petals of a rose.

LADY RANDOLPH CHURCHILL'S WEDDING.

No marriage has been so much talked of for a long while as that of Lady Randolph Churchill to Mr George Cornwallis West, of the Scots Guards, which took place last Saturday, a veritable January and May match, as the bridegroom is younger than the

bride's eldest son. The bridegroom's people were naturally enough conspicuously absent, but a fashionable assembly gathered in St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, and a large crowd collected outside the church. Back from the war, there were Captain and Lady Sarah Wilson, Mr Winston Churchill, and the Duke of Marlborough, who gave the bride away.

The decorations were very chaste. Tall palms formed a natural arc outside the roof screen, with Annunciation lilies and crimson gladioli between, and the altar was covered with pure white blossoms. The bridegroom's height and slinness (in the actual, not the South African sense) were a great contrast to what one of the morning journals delicately calls the bride's "ample presence."

The Rev. J. Baden-Powell, cousin of "B.P.," assisted the Sub-Dean of the Chapel Royal, in tying the knot.

As a widow, Lady Randolph had no bridesmaids, but she departed from tradition in wearing a wedding dress, not of grey or heliotrope, but of pale blue chiffon, over glaze silk of the same tint. The skirt had broad bands of deep cream coloured Cluny lace down either side, and a founce of the same bordered the hem, over gathered chiffon frills. Close set tiny tucks ran downwards from the waist. The bolero bodice opened over a transparent décolletage of the same lace, which also furnished the sleeves to the elbow, whence they were finished with dainty puffs of the blue chiffon. Some slight drapings crossed the vest of white chiffon, and were drawn up on the left side, under a large diamond necklace was worn. The toque was a very large one, and was chiefly composed of tucked pale blue chiffon, with trimmings on one side of white roses, and a full soft ornament of marabout plumes. In addition to a small posy-bouquet of loosely arranged white roses, the bride carried a white vellum-bound Prayer Book.

Her travelling dress was also of pale blue, the material being French silk canvas, the front of the bodice arranged in small tucks, and almost veiled with a beautiful piece of antique rose point lace. Open work hem stitching was carried in long lines down the closely clinging skirt. With this costume she wore a long coat of bisquit coloured glaze silk, with trimmings of Irish point lace and large earlier cuffs. The toque was of blue chiffon, trimmed with mauve and blue convolvulus.

There was no wedding reception, but some of the Churchill family and a few intimas friends had an early lunch with Mr and Mrs Moreton Freeman (the bride's sister), before the departure of the newly-wedded pair for Broughton Castle, Banbury, lent by Lord and Lady Algernon Lennox, for the first part of the honeymoon. The latter end will be spent—with the kind permission of the Boxers—in one of the Chinese treaty ports, where Mrs Cornwallis West will supervise the "Maine" again.

A novel feature of the wedding was the co-operative wedding present, initiated by the Duchess of Devonshire, who arranged with some sixty of the bride's friends to combine their subscriptions in the purchase and presentation of a superb diamond and pearl tiara. Doubtless this example will be largely followed in subsequent cases.

AUCKLAND.

Dear Sir, September 18.

Last Friday evening the Auckland Master Plumbers' Association gave

A MOST ENJOYABLE SOCIAL in St. Benedict's Hall. The decorations were very beautiful, the walls being covered with a number of large, well hung mirrors, artistically draped in red and white, interspersed with pikau palms, while at the further end were two gabled recesses composed of ferns, flowers and bunting. On the stage two large punge ferns and other greenery formed a delightful nook for spectators, while a fountain playing enhanced the beauty of the scene. The supper tables were prettily laid out in yellow and white, with high vases of lovely flowers and all the dainties one could think of were provided by Mr J. Barber, the caterer. The music was supplied by Meredith's Band, who kept perfect time; in fact, all the arrangements reflected the highest credit on the secretary and members of the committee, who had spared no expense to make the function a success. The stewards were

Messrs Swales, Annett, Peace and Lonergan, and the committee comprised the same gentlemen, and Messrs McLeod, Doull, Blakey and Hitchcock. During the evening Misses Doull and Jowling sang, Mr Hooten played a pianoforte solo, and Messrs Hodgson and Fernandez gave a buxjo duct. A few of the ladies present were Mrs J. W. Swales, in a terra cotta, draped with black lace; Mrs Lonergan, black brocade relieved with red roses; Miss Lonergan, white with red flowers; Mrs Doull; Miss Doull, blue and cream; Mrs Stokes, heliotrope silk blouse and black skirt; Mrs Waddingham, black; Misses Waddingham (2), fawn finished with cream and pink respectively; Miss Fitness (who wore one of the prettiest dresses in the room), much frilled white muslin over bright yellow; Miss Jowling, white satin with red roses; Miss Davies, black velvet finished with cream lace; Miss Woodlands, blue satin blouse and white skirt. There were a number of other pretty dresses whose wearers I did not know. Some of the gentlemen were Messrs McLeod, C. Waddingham, H. Selwick, C. A. Peace, G. A. Annett, J. W. Swales, Doull, Lonergan, Blakey, Hitchcock, Dye, Hooten, Chappell, Stokes (2), and Winzenburg.

A MOST ENJOYABLE "AT HOME"

was given by Mrs H. W. Farnill, of Ponsonby, on Friday evening, September 7th. The house and grounds were tastefully decorated with flags and Chinese lanterns. The music was supplied by Marriage's Band, and was both spirited and good. The supper table was artistically arranged with pale green silk, white flowers and coloured lights, the room was also prettily decorated with flags and ferns. Mrs Farnill proved a perfect hostess, and looked stylish in handsome black silk, with silver trimmings. Amongst the guests I noticed Mrs Nelson (Canon), who looked well in black silk and blue; Mrs Goodhue, rose silk and black silk; Mrs Dr. Beale, black; Mrs Kerr, silk, with white lace; Mrs Dignan looked handsome in black lace and crimson roses; Mrs S. E. Hughes, black satin; Mrs Oldham, black silk, trimmed with white satin; Mrs Fred Oldham looked nice in cream and cerise; Mrs Webb, cream satin; Mrs Edward Owen, black silk; Mrs Thompson, black; Mrs W. Morpeth, pink; Miss Nelson looked well in white silk; Miss K. Nelson, black velvet, white lace; Mrs Dargaville, cream silk; Miss Metcalfe, in a becoming blue silk, and looked well; Miss Pococke looked pretty in black lace and pink roses; Miss Howard, white; Miss Oldham, cream lace, over silk; Miss Moir, pale blue; Miss L. Moir, white; Miss Hudson looked dainty in cream satin, fur trimmings; Miss F. Hudson, cream, with green velvet; Miss E. Richardson (Remuera), white; Miss Kerr looked well in pink silk; Miss Thompson, blue; Miss Phillips looked well in pale blue; Miss George, black; Miss M. Metcalfe, white; Canon Nelson, Dr. Beale, Messrs Edward Owen, Hughes, F. Oldham, F. Dignan, W. Morpeth, Brodie, Kerr, Croft, Dignan, Richardson, Dargaville, H. Thompson, Curtis (Wellington), George, Dalton, Saunders (2), Quinn, Hawkins, Wilson, Gannan, Hague-Smith, and others, were amongst those present.

A most enjoyable

IMPROMPTU DANCE

was given by Mrs Cruickshank, Alfred-street, on Wednesday last. Dancing was carried on in the large dining-room, which was most artistically decorated with numerous flags. The floor was in perfect order and the music was all that could be desired. The supper table looked very tempting, arranged with daffodils and freesias. All the dainties one could wish for were displayed on it. The evening being warm, the delicious ices were greatly appreciated. There were, I should think, about twenty couples present. Mrs Cruickshank looked exceedingly well in a handsome black silk dress, en traine, covered with silk net, transparent lace and yoke; Miss Cruickshank looked elegant in a rich black satin dress, en traine, finished with a white chiffon fichu; Mrs Reid wore an effective black and white silk dress; Mrs Pierce, green silk trimmed with white silk and lace; Miss Kempthorne looked very well in black; Miss Bullen, very pretty pink silk and roses on shoulder; Miss Cotter looked striking in black satin, en traine, relieved with white lace and blue; Miss Kinsling, handsome blue silk dress; Miss Cameron, pretty white gown and dainty Richu; Miss Richardson, blue gown; Miss Gee, yellow silk and chiffon; Miss Nelson, handsome pink satin gown; Miss Hancock, heliotrope mauve