

### Messrs. McCullagh & Gower, Up-to-Date Establishment, Auckland.

How times fly! and how some Auckland businesses progress! Two years ago I sat down to write for readers of the "Graphic" some account of the improvements and additions which Messrs. McCullagh and Gower had made to their premises, yet so fast has time sped that though this seems but yesterday, and the business of the firm has so still further increased—literally by leaps and bounds—that further and most extensive alterations have recently been carried out, improvements which seemed almost impossible, but which have nevertheless come to pass, and which after the expenditure of some £3000 leaves the firm with an establishment of unequalled appearance in the colony, and which might certainly grace any of the great shopping thoroughfares of the French or English Metropolis. The huge plate glass windows, with their brightly shining brass and gun metal name plates, are more handsome than anything hitherto seen in our part of the world, and travellers and tourists who see them in a city of 60,000 inhabitants may be excused if they rub their eyes and wonder if they are really 13,000 miles from Regent-street or Piccadilly.

At the invitation of the firm my friend Cicely and I attended an evening "At Home" show inspection on Tuesday last. The establishment, which was brilliantly lighted and beautifully decorated for the occasion, was crowded, and there must, during the evening, have been present fully 3000 visitors. Meredith's orchestra played a charming selection of music, and wandering round the huge establishment examining the host of beautiful things in every department, we spent as delightful an evening as women fond of pretty things could do. Let me first tell you that the enormous show windows, the largest plates of plate glass in the colony, I believe, are most beautifully dressed. One is arranged as a fashionable drawing-room, with several superbly dressed models artistically grouped; while in the other is a most effective display of dress goods, etc., arranged with infinite skill, and good taste. Auckland used to be notorious for poor window dressing, but this firm are leading the way in

changing all that. However, unless I begin at the first counters we came to and go right on, I shall never finish.

Our first stopping was at the glove counter, which has always been one in which this firm has taken a special pride. The newest things we saw were the Milanese silk finished gloves in the new champagne colour at 2/6, which have quite taken the place of the imitation swedes. I also noticed some cool-looking open-work lace gloves and mittens, but the things that particularly attracted our attention were the washing gloves in really good white kid which were marked 4/11, and which are quite a different class of thing to the old fashioned clumsy affairs which were certainly cheap, but which spoil even the prettiest hands. Having disposed of our hands we began to think of our feet, and examined a most complete selection of the daintiest stockings both in open work and embroidery. From here we naturally gravitated to the lace counter, and well! I really don't know how I am going to do justice to the extraordinarily fine display set out before us. It made us both break the Tenth Commandment over and over again, and wish for the purse of a millionaire; though, as a fact, many of the very pretty collars and vests, and in fact all the odds and ends which a woman loves, were far from extravagant. The variety of lace nowadays is really amazing. Amongst the most noticeable being the renaissance, santonche, point d'Arabe, bridges and guipure. Personally, I fell in love with an exquisite point d'Arabe cape collars which certainly did not seem dear at 19/11, while Cicely was more extravagant, and hankered after a lovely renaissance creation, which was 39/6 and all things considered not dear at that. Most of these and the choicer collars were displayed in a very effective crystal glass counter, which is a decided feature of the establishment, and immediately carries one back to the smartest of Regent-street emporiums. The same profusion in variety is found in the laces and insertions for trimmings, of which we were told one shipment had already been disposed of, while there is on show at present the loveliest collection imaginable, which arrived by the Karama; but these are disappearing so quickly that a further order has been called, which will be fulfilled before Christmas. A special feature for this year is the hand punched and embroidered lace flouncing, which is ex-

ceedingly beautiful, but somewhat expensive. The finest specimens costing up to 39/6 a yard, though beautiful designs can be bought at 12/6. The tuchia lace is also a decided novelty. Models of the real flowers hanging down, and very attractive indeed is a mixture of Tenerife and guipure cunningly finished with coloured dots. We both wanted for mother some of the exquisite real Maltese lace, which is effectively displayed in a glass counter. Silk yak lace, in champagne, black and white, will be sure to become popular, and is far from expensive, while the black and white drop ornaments are very uncommon and quite new. The continued popularity of the Oriental embroideries is, by the way, evidenced by the heavy stock there is to choose from. I must not forget the very latest idea in the shape of "judge collars," which are exceedingly fetching. The one I noticed particularly being composed of chiffon and lace with ermine tails. Before leaving this department I may mention the number of patent leather belts in black, and collars which are to be all the rage this year.

We next made our way to the show rooms, passing en route the parasol and umbrella department. The newest things here were in floral gleece silk, and also some plain with the daintiest of borders in matching colours. Tassore silk ones, I may say, still keep their popularity.

The show-rooms are, as you probably know, downstairs since the improvements and alterations, and really excellent taste has been displayed in the arranging thereof. There is a grateful absence of overcrowding of models. One can see the goods displayed with comfort. Blouses are more fashionable, and I certainly think more beautiful, than ever. The most charming are of softest white silks with insertions of eoru or other laces and chiffon. One which particularly caught my eye was of delicately fine white crepe de chine, with lace embroidered lattice-work insertion and motifs. Others in exquisitely pleated thin silks with eoru insertions were almost equally attractive, and the choice was quite distractingly wide, for one was always discovering one which seemed more lovely than the last. The prices run from about 15/ to £2 2/, so all purses are, after all, catered for. Some exceedingly pretty spotted silk blouses also attracted Cicely, but her heart went out most,

I think, to the delaine blouses which are really very smart and chic, and quite astonishingly cheap. With their dainty insertions, medallions, yokes, and sleeve cuffs of lace and chiffon, they are indeed effective and they are procurable from 7/11, at which price I saw several really charming ones in floral patterns.

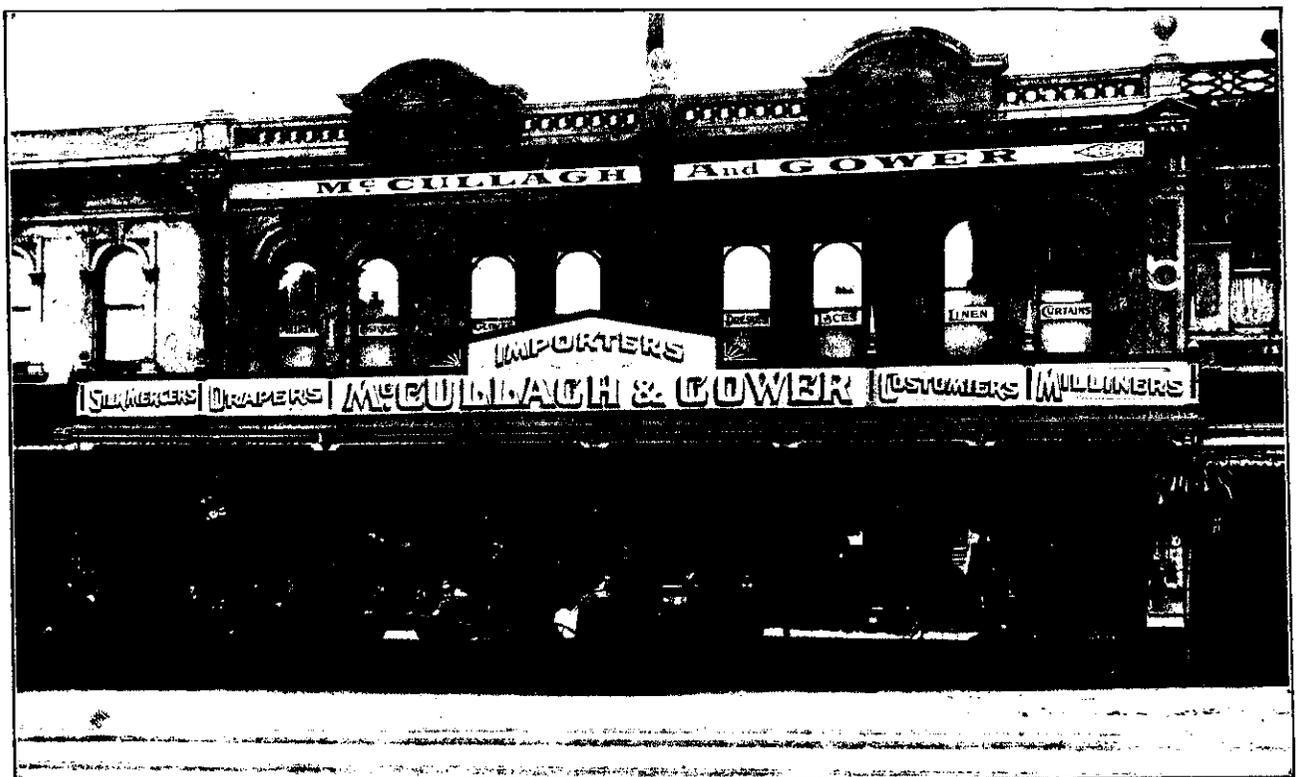
Amongst the very latest things in this department are the new coats, mainly in the inevitable champagne tint, which, by the way, varies considerably in shade, there being several tones of the same. These were the smartest of the smart, and have only just been landed from the Karama. They are all beautifully finished, and mostly with stole ends and Oriental embroidery. One which I much coveted was of champagne canvas voile over rich rustling silk, elegant lace collar and chiffon stole ends and cuffs. The price was beyond my purse, being £5 10/, but it was hard to resign it, for considering the quality and work it was certainly not dear. Another beauty was in palest grey summer cloth, with elaborately stitched turn-back collar and cuffs of gauntlet shape, and drop ornaments and fancy stole ends, a most uncommon and distingue garment, and luxuriantly lined with silk. Jackets in crash and linen there were in profusion too, and as showing how up-to-date we are getting, some long motor car coats in crash, with fashionable San Toy sleeves and large brass buttons—most imposing-looking affairs really. They would make ideal dust cloaks.

The full costumes in crash and linen were full of temptation to both Cicely and I; they look fresh, clean, and just the latest thing, and ought to wear like the proverbial nails. They can be had from 17/6 up to 49/, excellent ones ranging between these prices.

#### UNDERLINEN.

On the right of the show room is the underlinen counter, and here was a billowy and dazzling white display of exquisite torchon and muslin undershirts, artistically arranged and in the utmost profusion. How beautifully they do make these things nowadays, and at prices which would have seemed impossible even a few years ago. Every season our under garments seem to be daintier, and the designs more perfect. Some lovely petticoats in pile soft Japanese washing silk, with broad lace insertion

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Wairangi, "Graphic" photo.

A VIEW OF THE IMPROVED PREMISES OF MESSRS. McCULLAGH & GOWER.

Messrs. McCullagh & Gower's Up-to-Date Establishment, Auckland.