

poet of old years whose poems are lost, but who lives in single, disconnected lines.

So I had tea in the garden (the delight which has survived so many generations) that afternoon, as I had desired.

Just as we finished a mono came down on us like a wasp, and the officer alighted.

I paid the fine with a light heart, for, after all, I had come home at the least ten minutes earlier than I could otherwise have done; and, besides, had I gone into the city I should have had to pay 2/6 for a local mono out to the house. The officer gave me a receipt and wrote my name in his book. If it were found that I had before broken the regulation regarding using the parachutes I would be sent another account. Of course he did not say so. I knew it, however, knowing the law. Neither did he ask me if I had before broken the regulation. Our civilisation now gives no opportunity for lies. My name would be looked up at Webb House—that was all.

The officer folded up the parachute, went aboard, zipped away again, and left us in peace in the garden with the blackbirds.

FREDERICK NIVEN.

The Increase of Insanity.

Eminent doctors have renewed their alarms that insanity is greatly on the increase, but (says an American writer) it may only seem so. In the earlier days of our nation there was so much individuality, both of action and expression of opinion and of general behaviour and deportment, that the widest variations in demeanour were considered quite normal. Now any deviation from the accepted commonplace in manner or views is held to be eccentric if not worse. After centuries of the moulding influence of fixed ideas and fixed rules of conduct in China, the Chinese as a people came to look, speak, and act exactly alike. There is no insanity in China. Until Western nations appeared on its horizon with a few intellectual novelties as well as other bric-a-brac and Yankee notions there hadn't been a new idea in China for 2000 years. If we keep on locking up all our queer people in large brick and stone buildings and appointing "attendants" to watch over them, or, more especially, if we otherwise punish them by shunning them, casting them out from fellowship and political and social communion because of their weird views of sociology, marriage, political economy, dress reform, the nude in art, or vegetarianism, we shall in good time so discourage the development of original thought that we shall reach the restful, placid, and quite deceased mental state from which China is with great and painful struggles being resurrected. This is not to be taken as a reprehension of the restraint of persons who imagine they are fried eggs, and ask you for a piece of bread "in order that they may sit down," or the poor victims of melancholia that are wretched in the hallucination that they are Lady Jane Grey. There is real insanity enough, but, as nearly half of it, according to the figures of the medical experts themselves arises from alcoholism, and 40 per cent from "heredity," which is largely alcoholism in its secondary or tertiary manifestation, it is reasonable to conclude that the human race, where it is not thus artificially contaminated by the practice of bad habits, is essentially as good in its health of brain as primitive man.

Reading at Meals.

The habit of reading at meals is (says the "Family Doctor") to be condemned, and more particularly when it has grown to one of actual study, and when the reader endeavours to gain knowledge and save time at his meals. The solitary reader, if he reads, should only read what is light and amusing. The common practice of having the morning paper at our breakfast table is not especially injurious, as it furnishes items for conversation, and does not particularly exercise the brain, but if it should do so, it is advisable to at once discontinue it. Digestion is always best served when the mind is free from care, and when the physical processes of our frames are left to discharge their work free from nervous trammels. It is on the ground of the elevation of spirits produced by cheerful association with others that pleasant company at meals has always formed a condition of social enjoyment.

ENGAGEMENTS.

No Notice of Engagements or Marriages can be inserted unless Signed by Our Own Correspondent or by some responsible person, with Full Name and Address.

The engagement is announced of Mr. H. Monro, eldest son of Mrs. A. Monro, "bankhouse," to Miss M. Clouston, eldest daughter of Mrs. W. E. Clouston, "St. Andrew's," Blenheim.

Announcement has just been made of the engagement of Miss Heima Fraser, youngest daughter of Mr. J. C. Fraser, of Coromandel, to Mr. F. P. Burgess, barrister and solicitor, of that town.

The engagement is announced of Miss L. B. Duigan, daughter of the late Mr. Duigan, for many years Editor of the "Wanganui Herald," to Mr. H. Ostler, L.L.B.

Position of Women in France.

The gallantry of Frenchmen is proverbial; but it will come as a shock to most of us to hear that as soon as the result of an examination held last month in Paris for visiting doctors to the Paris hospitals was announced, and Madlle. Romme headed all her male competitors, her ungallant rivals commenced shouting, "Down with the examiners!" "Down with all women!" and raised what is known as a "chahut" against their woman conqueror. If this manifestation was against woman's progress, it was certainly most unjustified. In France a woman is treated with very scant favour by the law. She is, in fact, little better than a slave according to the Code Napoleon. When she is married she cannot spend a penny of her own money without her husband's signature, which is also necessary for every act in everyday life. She cannot even deposit money in a bank alone, and a Turkish princess who tried to do this lately was constrained to remark, "Is this what you call liberty in France? We are better off in Turkey." Until quite recently a woman had not even the right to spend her own earnings, and her drunken husband could take them away from her and her children without her having any redress. Nevertheless, the Frenchwoman has been steadily fighting her uphill battle, never claiming a privilege till she has proved her capacity for not abusing it. In this way women are admitted as witnesses to all notarial acts; they have votes for electing Consular Judges and seats at the Councils of the Prefectures, and they are already becoming numerous as advocates at the bar and practising as physicians. This is the first time that a woman has headed the list in the examination for visiting hospital doctors, but not long ago a Madlle. Monod passed first as house physician at Lyons, and there are many women now installed in the hospitals, both as "internes" and "externes."

A little fresh air girl, on her return to New York the past summer, refused to drink milk, as her custom had been. Upon being urged to drink it, she said, "I used to like it, but I know what it is now—it's chewed grass."

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Orange Blossoms.

COLEMAN—SWINBURN.

A WEDDING which created a good deal of interest was that of Miss Blanch May Swinburn, only daughter of the Rev. W.

Swinburn (vicar of All Saints, Gladstone, and formerly vicar of Waipawa), and Mr Herbert Napier Coleman, son of Mr and Mrs J. H. Coleman, of "Wattirau," Napier. The service, which was fully choral, was conducted by the Rev. W. Swinburn, assisted by the Venerable Archdeacon Neild, of Dunedin, and Canon Tuke, of Napier. The ceremony took place at Christ Church, Te Anau, on Wednesday last, and the church was prettily decorated for the occasion by girl friends of the bride. The bride was given away by Mr Allan Williams, and looked very graceful and charming in a lovely Directoire gown of ivory satin meleur. The gown was made with a long court train, the front panel of the skirt being elaborately soutache. The draped corsage was also finished with silk soutache, and the sleeves were of finely-tucked net. She wore a handsome tulle veil over wreath of orange blossoms, and carried an exquisite shower bouquet of white flowers with white streamers. The chief bridesmaid—Miss Nell Zichy Woonarski—wore a dainty French striped muslin Empire frock over pale blue glace, and large blue picture hat with tulle and lace; her gift from the bridegroom was a lovely little bino enamelled watch on safety pin. Two tiny maids—Mary Warren and Mildred Gardner—wore dainty white frocks of Indian lawn, inserted with lace over blue silk; their muslin hats over blue silk were wreathed with tiny pink rosebuds; they received as mementoes of the occasion enamelled pendants and chains, and they carried bouquets of pink rosebuds. The bridegroom's brother (Mr. E. D. Watt) acted as best man. The "Wedding March" was played by Miss Freda Davis. A reception was afterwards held at Te Anau College by Mr. and Mrs. Allan Williams. The bride's travelling dress was a tailor-made of hair cord lustre, trimmed with silk soutache braid, and hat of creme straw lined with blue and trimmed with pale blue chiffon and long plume; a long dust coat of pale blue completed her costume. (Napier Correspondent).

WILLIAMS—FERGUSON.

A marriage of some interest to New Zealanders took place on the 29th of December, when Miss Roberta Ferguson, of Christchurch, New Zealand, and Mr. F. Williams, of Hastings, England, were married at All Saints' Church, St. Kilda, Melbourne, by the Rev. Archdeacon Crossley. The bride looked handsome in a smart white linen costume, heavily embroidered, dainty white Maltese lace scarf, and large black hat. Miss Leith Staite, another New Zealander, wore a

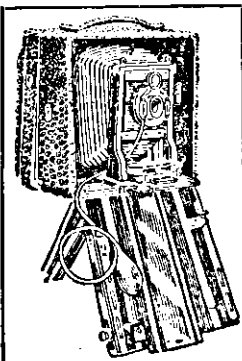
most becoming lavender Shantung silk costume, relieved with black, large lavender hat with black ospreys. The bridegroom was attended by the Rev. Horace Crotty, M.A. After lunch Mr. and Mrs. Williams left for "Graceland House," Healesville, on their honeymoon.

JONAS—MAHON.

A quiet but pretty wedding was celebrated at St. John's Church, Feilding, on January 14th, by the Rev. A. Innes Jones, the contracting parties being Mr. Charles O. Nathan Jonas, son of the late Mr. Emanuel Jonas, of Sydney, N.S.W., and Miss Ada Mabel Mahon, daughter of the late Mr. John Mahon, of Napier. The bride, who was given away by her uncle, Mr. Walter A. L. Bailey, was attired in a navy blue travelling costume and pretty Tuscan hat, with shaded roses. She was attended by her sister, Miss Ethel Mahon, who wore white embroidered muslin, daintily trimmed with lace and insertion, large black hat with feathers, and carried a bouquet of pale pink roses. Mr. Harold Bennetts, of Auckland, was best man. After the ceremony, the immediate relatives were entertained at the residence of the bride's mother. Later Mr. and Mrs. Jonas left for New Plymouth, en route to Auckland, their future home. The bridegroom's present to the bride was a pearl pendant and pearl and ruby brooch, and to the bridesmaid a gold bracelet. Mrs. Mahon, mother of the bride, wore black chiffon tulle and black hat with feathers; Mrs. Walter Bailey, black silk, black hat relieved with white.

Gorgeous Meals.

On their visit to Baroda, in the Presidency of Bombay, on November 16 last, the Viceroys and Lady Minto inspected the State jewels, which are among the finest collections in the world. They are kept in the old Nazar Bagh Palace, and are estimated to be worth upwards of £3,000,000. Here (says the "Times of India") one may see a famous diamond collar composed of 500 diamonds, in five rows, and two rows of emeralds. In the pendant is one beautiful diamond, larger than the Kohinoor, called "The Star of the South." There are chains of exquisite pearls, all about the size of a small nut, and perfect in shape and colour. There are gleaming necklaces of sapphires and rubies and rings worth a king's ransom. Greatest of all in attraction, perhaps, is a carpet woven of strings of pearls, with the centre and corners of diamonds. It is 10ft long and 6ft wide, and cost £200,000, and took three years to complete. This was made for the Gaekwar Khandi Rao, and was intended as a present for a lady with whom he was in love.



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