

reputation for splendid play. In the Grey-mouth match 87 games were played on each side, and ended in a tie. The players were beaten by four games. The Reefton Volunteers (or, to give them a more dignified appellation, the Inangahua Rifles) also departed to take part in the Hokitika encampment, with drums beating and banners flying, looking the very personification of valour and intrepidity.

"The man who wears a regimental suit  
Is nothing better than a raw recruit,  
But what of that."

Anyone would have thought that we were sending a contingent off to Samoa, to defend the rights and liberties of British subjects. Rumour says, however, that the martial ardour of our warriors very quickly evaporated when confronted with some of the stern hardships of even a mock war. Instead of proceeding in all their military splendour to one of the tip-top hotels, the word of command was given to proceed to camp immediately, and to camp our heroes unwillingly proceeded, where having to sleep on the damp ground they subjected themselves thereby to serious attacks of influenza, sciatica, lumbago, and goodness knows what besides.

This week there is a slight improvement in mining affairs. Keep-it-Dark, Progress and Globe mines still command the best price in the market, the two former selling at 36s and 35s, the latter at 26s. A tidy dividend has just been distributed amongst the shareholders of the last-named company, who are chiefly local residents. This means the circulation in Reefton of about £1800. Sweet is a dividend, and passing sweet to be a shareholder without having any calls to pay. Everything continues quiet in Boatman's. The Welcome has not yet resumed work, as the flae and other parts of the mine are undergoing repairs. Big River are saleable at 5s, but shareholders are sanguine of a speedy increase in value. Holders of shares in the United Alpine mine, Lyell, were greatly elated last week by the news that a large reef had been discovered, in one of the levels. Up to this, however, no gold has been found in the stone, but highly promising indications exist, and the best hopes are entertained of the gold-bearing nature of the reef.

Sir Harry Atkinson has been to Reefton. "He came, he saw, he conquered", just a flying visit, no time to linger in any place, consequently no special reception had been prepared for him. Just as well too, perhaps, for when they treated him to a banquet in Grey-mouth he coolly stated that in his estimation the money would have been better expended on roads and bridges. On his journey from Westport to Reefton the Premier had the rare treat of travelling along the most atrocious road on the West Coast, where landslips are almost an everyday occurrence, and traffic is constantly impeded. If tourists only had to travel along this route, the scenery would compensate them for all inconvenience and drawbacks, so wild is it, so sublime, so picturesquely grand, but unfortunately coachmen and waggoners, who have no time for the contemplation of the beautiful, have to pass along this road daily to the constant peril of life and property, and many and deep are the imprecations levelled against the Government for its parsimony in this particular direction. Some months ago a tremendous landslip occurred midway between Westport and the Inangahua Junction. Huge masses of rock had become detached from the overhanging cliff as if by some mighty earthquake, and precipitated hundreds of feet on to the roadway below, forming an obstruction which could not be removed for months.

While in Reefton several deputations waited on the Premier to make known to him the absolute necessities of the district. The county of Inangahua is not immoderate in its demands. If it cannot get what it wants, it will take what it can get. A subsidy for the maintenance of roads and bridges that cost the county close on £5000 yearly, a road in one direction and a bridge in another, with a few minor requests—this is the sum total of our requirements, and yet the Premier accuses us of extravagance in the past. It remains to be seen whether the modest wants of the county will receive the consideration they are entitled to during the next session.

On dit that an advertisement is to appear in each of the local papers next week headed "Lord Onslow's Poodle," and worded as follows:—"A beautifully enamelled and faithfully executed photo of the above charming little animal will be exhibited in the shop windows of the principal stationers of this town. The establishment whose window displays the best photograph will be entitled to the largest share of public patronage."—Kather a brilliant idea, this. Generally speaking, snobbery is objectionable, but a little deference towards aristocratic poodles is rather commendable than otherwise.

The glad tidings has been received at last that the Midland Railway is to be proceeded with at once. It is said that the formation of the line between Ngahere (Nelson Creek) and Reefton is to be let in five sections. This is good news for the unemployed. Five locomotives and several of the carriages have already arrived in Grey-mouth. One of the carriages is described as being an elegant affair, fitted up in the best modern style. It is forty-six feet long, and the floor rests on gutta-percha blocks so as to render the movement as smooth and easy as possible.

The Chilian Government has issued a decree prohibiting the immigration of Chinese into the republic.

The polling for East Perthshire Division, rendered vacant by the death of the late Mr. Stewart Menzies, M.P., took place on Tuesday, February 19. It transpired during the day that Mr. Carew M.P. for Kildare, who had been assisting the Liberal candidate, was arrested. Sir John Kinloch, the Liberal candidate, placed a carriage at his disposal after his arrest. On the way to the train the party visited Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, who expressed surprise at the occurrence. Sir J. Kinloch caused an account of the event to be telegraphed to all the polling centres. On Mr. Carew's arrival at Glasgow, he was at once driven to the Dublin Steamer, which sailed almost immediately. The result was declared late in the evening as follows:—Kinloch, 1005; Boase, 2289; Home Rule majority 1716. The following are the figures for 1886: R. Stewart Menzies, 3504; J.B. Holland, 2195; Majority 1309.

## IN THE MOUNTAIN MIST.

(BY MRS. GUTHRIE, in the New York Freeman's Journal.)

"NESTA, child," said the tired and busy mother, after tea, when the dusk of the winter evening was shading into darkness, "I forgot to give Richard Williams this list of things I want him to get for me in Carnarvon when he goes in with the milk cans to-morrow; will you run over to the cottage and give it to him?"

"Will you come, also, Gwen and Kitty?" asked Nesta, rising with alacrity. She was rarely tired and always ready for a run out.

"Too tired," said lively Gwen, having received an unspoken hint from Morgan, who was her devoted admirer.

"If you speak to me, Nesta," said laughing Kitty, "you'll disturb the frothing of my bowl of eggs, and the sponge cake will be ruined. Besides, there is not much fun scampering across the lome field at this hour, and out of the gate to hold sweet converse with the red-capped lad of the milk cans. Go on thy way rejoicing, maid of the golden locks, but go alone."

"There'll be one of your belated admirers outside, Nesta," said Morgan, who was engaged in cleaning his guns.

"Watching the windows as the mariner watches the Pole star," said Uncle Tom, of the shipping interests.

"Or as Luath watches where I am going to throw this morsel," said Owen. "Look at his eyes, and especially the expression of his tail. It is frantic with anticipation."

"Where did Luath spring from?" cried Nesta, her cheeks growing pink.

"Since the doctor's dog is at the door, the doctor himself is not far off," said Aunt Jenny smiling.

"He is turning in at the gate; I'll get him to be my escort," said Nesta saucily. "If he comes in he'll like to Kitty, and her fructed eggs will come to grief, and Gwen is too tired to do anything except to hinder Morgan over his gun."

And throwing her fur cape over her shoulders she ran out laughing. As a matter of fact, Terence Delaney was only too proud to be her escort; he had rarely the chance of a world with her alone. She found him rather grave, and not so much disposed to be merry as usual. When Nesta had delivered her message, they turned homewards again; they stood for a few minutes before entering the gate, looking down the wild Pass, which had a doubly weird and desolate look in the moonlight; it seemed but a mere trench between two mighty walls of rocks, shutting it out from all the world. Neither of them observed the crouching figure of a man behind a jutting spur of rock, close to the gate.

"You do not often come to the farm so late alone, Mr. Delaney," Nesta remarked, to break a silence that was becoming oppressive.

"Evan was busy to-night; he could not come," he replied. "He has been much annoyed to day. Hugh Griffiths and his following have been drinking heavily lately, and Hugh has been so abusive and outrageous in the quarry that Evan has been compelled to dismiss him and some others to maintain any kind of discipline on his gallery. I came to warn you; you know when Griffiths has these madman freaks on him he always attempts to annoy your people at the farm."

"Poor Hugh, I am so sorry! He used to be such a good fellow when we were children. I have nothing to fear from him. What a pity he has not more control over himself to keep from the drink; it always maddens him."

"I believe he feels very hurt at being excluded from your birthday party, Miss Nesta."

"Oh, you cannot tell how grieved I was to leave him out. I asked my father; he said he would not have the harmony of the evening spoiled by drunken rovers. Father is very hard to move when he takes up a prejudice."

The man behind the jutting crag clenched his fists in the moonlight with a passionate gesture.

"Are you cold, Miss Nesta? Will you have my plaid?" Delaney asked.

"Oh no, Mr. Delaney; I must run in immediately. Mother is waiting me every minute, and Gwen and Kitty will miss me."

"Stay just a minute. I love you; I so rarely see you alone—I may not have another opportunity," he began hurriedly.

"Please, Mr. Delaney, let me go," cried Nesta, trying to put off an evil hour; "I shall be scolded now for staying so long."

"You will not, indeed; Nesta, dearest, am I not going in with you? You know what I am eager to say; you must have seen my love—my devotion. Is there any hope that I can ever gain your love? I have nothing to recommend me but my own intense love for you."

"Please, please say no more, Mr. Delaney," the girl cried in distress. "I do not want to lose the friend I like so much, but not enough—enough—to—"

"But in time, Nesta; some time in the future—say that I may have hope of winning you."

"I am so sorry," and the merry brown eyes were dim with tears. "I am only a girl yet; I do not want to think of the future."

"Tell me, at least, that there is no one you prefer to me now, Nesta?" he persisted.

"I cannot tell you any more; you are unkind to press me," and the young girl's head bent lower in maiden bashfulness.

"I see," said Delaney, "there is no chance for me. It is Evan?"

Nesta's pretty head bent even lower; but she made no denial, only her tears began to flow freely.

"I am a brute to trouble you so much, dear. Well, that chapter of my life is finished; I am not going to pester you with it again."

"But surely I am not to lose your friendship, Mr. Delaney. You must come to the farm, and everything must be as before to-night."

"And Evan, Nesta?"

"Evan does not care much for me; I am too silly and frivolous. You see, I have known him much longer than I have known you, and—"