



## SOCIAL GOSSIP.

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DEAR CHRISTABEL,—

**W**HAT shall we talk about this week? There is absolutely nothing going on. We might discuss the weather, but that is a theme so varied. Did you ever hear of the small boy who began to read through the dictionary? He stopped when he got to the B's, because it changed the subject so often. So with the weather.

\* \* \* \*

I saw you playing tennis on Saturday, Christabel, in high heels—yes, quite high—also in a skirt which was too tight for you to run in easily. Oh, I know it was slit, very slit, because your underskirt was not tidy, and your white stockings were open-work, and you were wearing earrings. Don't do it, my dear girl, and especially don't wear earrings when you are playing golf or tennis.

\* \* \* \*

The Scottish Society celebrated Halloween on Friday night, October 30th, so the daily papers say. When I was young I always understood that Halloween was the evening of October 31st, the vigil of All Saints or All Hallows, and I know for certain that All Saints Day is November 1st. People do queer things in Scotland on Halloween, and if you have your wits about you in that country you can easily find out what your future husband will be like. It is the time of all other times when supernatural influences prevail. There are weird happenings, and Romance walks the earth.

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Mr. W. S. La Trobe, Director of the Technical Education Board, is suggesting the establishment of a dietician-laboratory and kitchen at the hospital, where a course under the dietician shall be an integral part of a nurse's training. Poor nurses! They have to sew and dust and sweep and wash, and do harder work than any general servant ever has to undertake, and learn to cook, and use their gumption—and pass all sorts of stiff exams. on all kinds of subjects—and now they are faced with yet another red-tape regulation. Give me a nurse with a kind heart and a steady head and the patience which comes with understanding, and tact, and, above all other qualities, a quiet and pleasant voice, and let her have a three years' training in a good hospital, and she will be ready for any emergency. If she can cook, so much the better. If she can't, let her get hold of a cookery book. Common-sense is much more useful than certificates for cooking.

\* \* \* \*

The New Zealand War Contingent Association in London is impressing upon colonials the fact that money and blankets are the best gifts we can send. The money will buy more blankets, if there are any procurable. Surely here is a chance for New Zealand? Our mills can make blankets with any of them. It is blankets, blankets, and more blankets that the soldiers are needing now—blankets and warm underclothing.

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Mrs. O. S. Watkins, Hobson-street, has received a cable message telling of the death of her brother, Major Robert Masefield, of the Shropshire Light Infantry. He was killed in action in France on October 24th.

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Mr. Moss, of Karori, has again met with a sad accident, this time in Napier. He was thrown out of a motor car, and the accident was caused by a child running across the road. Mr. Moss broke his already injured leg in two places above the knee, and cut his other leg to the bone on the edge of the curb-

stone. He was carried to the private hospital, in George-street, on the Hospital Hill, and there he must stay for at least two months. Mrs. Moss went up to Napier on Friday night. Even Mr. Moore will find it difficult to be cheerful under the circumstances. He is suffering considerably, but is doing as well as could be expected.

\* \* \* \*

A patriotic society is being formed for the purpose of relieving the distress of widows and orphans of the Allies. So far, only preliminary arrangements have been made. New Zealand will gladly do anything which will help to bring comfort to the poor desolated Belgian people. I have heard again from England, but I do not propose to tell you to-day, Christabel, anything more of the atrocities which have been perpetrated upon little children and women in that distressful country, Belgium. It is all too shocking and terrible.

\* \* \* \*

Miss Ethel Burnett, of Kelburne, Miss Dorothy Hursthouse, sister of Mrs. Arnold Atkinson, and Miss Anna Fell, went to England in the beginning of this year for the purpose of studying kindergarten work in the Froebel School in London. They have taken a flat until the end of the year, and passed their examinations with ease in six months, having done a good deal of preliminary work here before they started.

\* \* \* \*

Mrs. Walter Hislop made a Christmas cake some weeks ago, and because she is an excellent cook, her friends rushed her with offers to take shilling tickets for it. She raised £6 odd for the Patriotic Fund in this way, and Mrs. Shand won the cake.

\* \* \* \*

I have just been reading an interesting and amusing article on Love Poems. The writer declares "It is a strange thing that, much as women have entered the writing lists with men, there is one branch of literature which they rarely attempt. Take away Mrs. Browning and Christina Rossetti, and you will

scarce find a love poem by a woman, or, at any rate, a love poem which takes the woman's point of view. Probably many of the most cherished sentimental songs which wake the echoes of 'the drawing-room are the work of women—but they write as men. It is always the masculine aspect which is set before the public—the beloved is always feminine. and yet marriage statistics show that as many men have married as women," etc. The writer goes on to show that the two varieties of love poems can be very near, male and female. Why should not "he" as well as "she" have dwelt among untrodden ways? A female Tennyson might have begun a song in the following terms:—

"It is the youthful miller.  
And he is grown so dear, so dear.  
That I would be the pencil  
That trembles on his ear.  
For 'midst his curls, by day and night,  
I'd touch his neck, so warm and  
white."

Now Christabel, why don't you ask the Editor of the FREE LANCE to strike out in a new line with the Essay Competitions. I see that the editor of a leading English weekly has opened a competition for the best Love Letter, and all he asks is that the letters shall not be addressed to himself. He is evidently a bashful man. Ask the editor to call for Love Letters from Women. The public needs something to amuse it just now.

Mrs. C. Odlin and Mrs. H. Shaw left for Sydney by the s.s. Manuka last week, and were accompanied by Mr. C. Odlin.

You will be interested to hear that the Council has agreed to the admission of women "when and so soon as women are eligible for election to the House." Someone has rudely remarked that "the old women" in the Upper House are not at all anxious to welcome young women there. It is apparently taken for granted that only young women will rush the position.

\* \* \* \*

Queen Mary is receiving a wonderful response to her appeal. Socks. mittens.

cholera belts, shirts, etc., are daily sent to Lady Liverpool, who is bravely going about her work in spite of her heart-ache.

\* \* \* \*

Six small children have been interesting themselves on behalf of the inmates of St. Mary's Home, and have raised £11 by means of selling flowers, sweets and needlework at a fete which they organised and conducted. Well played, small people.

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Miss Isabel Wilford has indulged in an attack of appendicitis, and is progressing favourably after the necessary operation.

\* \* \* \*

All Wellington is feeling very sorry for Mrs. Samuel Brown, whose son, Stanley, died in a very sudden and tragic way early on Monday morning. Mr. Brown was a cheery, open-natured young man, and will be greatly missed by a large circle of friends.

\* \* \* \*

There is a good deal of talk going on just now about cream of tartar—its uses and its price. I do not know if you, Christabel, realise that it is an excellent tonic for the complexion, taken internally. There is an old-fashioned mixture of lemon juice, cream of tartar, sugar, Epsom salts, mixed with hot water, strained and doled out by the wineglassful every morning, well shaken before taken, and it is better than all the messy face-creams in the world for keeping the complexion clear and free from spots in the summer. Try it.

\* \* \* \*

Ten cases of gifts for the distressed Belgians and British were packed on Monday at Levin and Co.'s by the Mayor's Committee of the Countess of Liverpool Fund. Written messages of good cheer have been sewn to many of the socks, etc. I know of one batch of pants for little boys, made by a lady with skilful fingers and a large heart, and each little pair has a pocket, and in each pocket has been sewn a penny. Poor little boys! Can't you imagine them all thinking that they will think the

their delight. They will think the fairies have been working on their behalf.

\* \* \* \*

I see that the Princess Mary, who very recently put up her hair, has assumed her first public position. She is patroness of the League of Young Patriots. They aim at enrolling every boy and girl of the land for war service. There is work for all—sewing, collecting, planting, writing letters, and helping orphans and children whose fathers have gone to war.

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Little Cecil Haines has been engaged to play the part of "Suds" in "Seven Little Australians," and will make her bow to the public on Boxing Night in Sydney. She was chosen out of 300 applicants for the part. The Wellington public, who know this dear little girl, will be glad to hear of her success. Many Wellington children look upon Cecil Haines as a sort of fairy child, and they will be frightfully pleased and excited.

There is a very general feeling amongst women here that the colonies should assist the widows and orphans of British and Belgian patriots to emigrate. There is plenty of room for them in this new land, where sunny skies and fresh surroundings may put heart into them again. There is work for the women, and a welcome, and the move would be a mutual advantage.

\* \* \* \*

Since the war the ladies' gallery in the House has not been packed every evening as it used to be in happier days, when the nightly clash of wit was a pleasant relaxation and interest to many women. On Wednesday night, the floor of the House and the galleries were full. There was a rumour that the session would come to a close and that the usual Mock Parliament would be held while the House waited for the Governor's necessary signature. But though people hung about till a late hour, nothing much happened. Things are pretty dull there these days. Many members have already flitted, and the rest seem to stay merely for the sake of making conversation. I suppose when the electioneering

campaign is really on, more interest will be shown in politics. At present war news, and only war news, is read with interest.

\* \* \* \*

The Croydon School sports were postponed. Don't know why. Hard luck, for the day was fine.

\* \* \* \*

You remember Mrs. Estcourt, who was Miss Anson, and who lived in Hobson-crescent for a time, and whose baby was so delicate that when they went Home in June or July or May they had to take with them a trained nurse? Poor woman! Her husband is now a prisoner in Germany, and since she left Wellington her brother, Sir Denis Anson, has been drowned in a boating accident in the Thames.

\* \* \* \*

Here is a chance for you, Christabel. Miss Una Carter is giving a lecture on Invalid Dishes at the Gas Company's lecture hall next Wednesday. I am feeling a bit of an invalid myself. I wonder if the audience partakes of the exhibits. I hear the room was packed yesterday, when she gave a lesson on cake-making.

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The Rev. A. M. Johnson and Mrs. Johnson, also one of the well-known Tripe family, whose name is legion, and the two Misses Easterfield, have arrived in Melbourne safely, and should soon be here.

\* \* \* \*

St. Paul's annual sale of work was opened in the Sydney-street Schoolroom on Wednesday afternoon by Her Excellency, who was presented with a basket of mauve-coloured flowers by little Mollie Coleridge, the bishop's grandchild. The arrangements were excellent, and the decorations very pretty. Some of the stalls were very artistically arranged, and the parish is fortunate in possessing most energetic and enthusiastic workers. In the acting-vicar, the Rev. Cyril Harvey, they have a very original and hard-working helper. Usually, bazaars are run entirely by women. Not this one! Mr. Harvey recently gave a kitchen supper party. Only men were invited,



and one hears rumours of gay doings. Well, he stocked his kitchen stall with useful gifts, and is now presiding over it himself. If he were not such an excellent parson, one would imagine he had missed his vocation. It was quite interesting to watch him selling things. He had no idea of the uses of many of them, but that was nothing. He and his young men assistants sold everything easily, and delivered the goods per useful small boy volunteers. There were the usual guessing competitions and games. A Christmas tree in the centre of the room attracted many small people. The usual afternoon tea was consumed and the sweeties sold, and an unusual number of really useful and well-made garments found a very ready sale.

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On Thursday afternoon Mrs. Massey opened the bazaar, and was presented with a bouquet by Mrs. Ernest Hadfield's youngest daughter, Elizabeth, a tiny tot of three years old, who is the granddaughter of a previous bishop of Wellington.

#### MABEL.

I notice that a little Belgian was born up at Auckland the other day. Here is the announcement of its arrival:—"De Vidts.—On October 23, at Nurse Rathbone's, Devonport, to Monsieur and Madame Marechael de Vidts, late of Brussels, a daughter." Congratulations to the De Vidts on getting out just in time.

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Do you know that Miss Ellen Terry re-visited New Zealand this week? She arrived in Auckland on Monday last by the steamer Makara on her way Home via Vancouver. By the way, the outgoing passenger traffic by this line has fallen to zero since the war broke out. The Makara only carried 19 through passengers from Australia, and the New Zealand contingent which joined at Auckland consisted of one saloon, six second-class and one steerage, being the smallest on record.



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A lady principal is required for the Women's Students' Hostel in Wellington. Particulars as to salary, etc., are advertised in this issue.