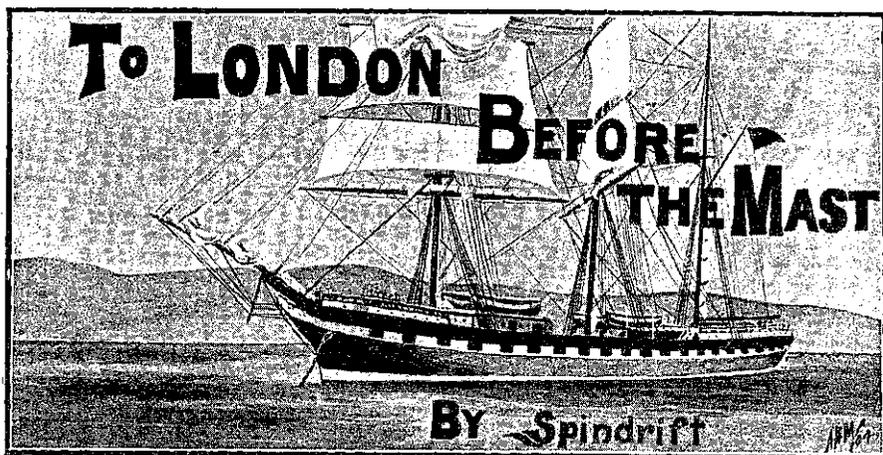




Tiger Shooting in Madras. A Royal Result.



PART I.

“Who hath desired the sea?—the sight of salt water unbounded—
 The heave and the halt and the hurl and the crash of the comber wind-hounded?
 The sleek-barrelled swell before storm, grey, foamless, enormous, and growing—
 Stark calm on the lap of the Line or the crazy-eyed hurricane blowing—
 His Sea in no showing the same—His Sea and the same 'neath each showing—
 His Sea as she slackens and thrills?”

So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen desire their hills!”

KIPLING.



HAD ever desired the sea, but the opportunity to fulfill my desire to anything like an appreciable extent had hitherto been wanting. I was a New Zealand born youth, and had never been many miles away from her coasts. The idea of making an opportunity for myself

struck me suddenly one day when spending my lunch-hour, as usual, among the shipping at the Wellington wharf. I was employed in an office at the time, and the employment was in no way congenial.

It was an ideal day, the deep blue sky was reflected in still deeper blue on the glassy waters of the harbour. There was not a breath of wind stirring and the air was balmy with the rich, healthy, and to me, most fascinating odours of tar and hemp. I sat on a wharf bollard and watched the bulging wool bales as they were swung aboard the

“Bonita,” a beautiful clipper barque of something over a thousand tons burden. The vessel herself took my fancy immensely, and as her fine lines and high tapering masts with their intricate maze of rigging delighted my eyes, the thought suddenly entered my head: “Why not ship aboard her, and cross this mighty ocean that I so love, and see the great metropolis and other parts of the world of which I have heard so much and seen so little?”

The suddenness of the idea startled me at first. I should have to give up my billet and whatever prospects attached to it, but I reasoned that the experience I should gain and the sights I should see would be infinitely better than spending the best part of my life between office walls. Yes, I would do it, I decided. With me to plan was to act, and without a moment's hesitation I was on the “Bonita's” deck asking for the skipper. He happened

to be on board, and in reply to my query, admitted that he was in want of a few more good men. The manner in which he emphasised the last words, and looked at my office clothes expressed doubt.

"Have you ever been to sea?" was his first query.

"Rather," I replied confidently, as the memory of a month's pleasure trip up the coast in a timber vessel the preceding summer recalled itself opportunely to my mind.

"Can you steer, handle sails and go aloft in rough weather?" asked the skipper.

I promptly replied that I could do all these things. This happened to be the truth, but if he had asked me whether I could take his place at that moment, I conscientiously believe I should have given the same answer. In exactly a quarter-of-an-hour after I stepped aboard the barque, I found myself signing articles in the shipping office for a voyage to London before the mast; or, as the document expressed it, as ordinary seaman of the barque "Bonita," Captain Crawford, from Wellington to London, and had agreed to be on board ready for duty at the end of the week.

This done, I returned to my office, wondering what sort of a fool my friends would think me. But the prospect of getting away from the cramped life there, and the thoughts of the vigorous new life with its unlimited possibilities that was opening out in front of me, made me care not a jot what they thought. It was with a delightful air of new-born independence that I entered the chief's room and gave him a week's notice.

He was dumfounded when, on inquiring my reason, I proudly informed him that I had signed on as a common sailor on a wool ship. He said he had thought better of me than that, and proceeded to give me fatherly advice, and to implore me not to throw away all the excellent chances of promotion I should have in such an up-to-date office as his, just for the sake of seeing a

little of the world. To this old woman's talk, as I regarded it, I listened very impatiently, being confident, as all inexperienced youths are, that I knew best what was good for me. I left the office in an uncharitable frame of mind. It was in a very different humour, however, that I packed my new outfit into a large canvas bag, and stepped aboard the barque at the end of the week.

I shall never forget the delight with which I first entered the roomy fo'c's'le of the "Bonita." Its floor was certainly in a disordered state, littered with coils of rope, blocks, and all manner of gear to be overhauled ready for use. But to me it was all delightfully novel and exciting, and for the first few days I went at the work allotted me with a rush.

And now I had good reason to be glad of the knowledge I had gained on the timber barquentine. Although naturally everything on the "Bonita" was on a much larger scale and a good deal more complicated, yet the work came much easier to me, and I felt quite proud of being able to understand the orders given me, and to know what was required.

Our crew were a very rough and tumble looking lot, as will be seen by the photograph I managed to get of them, and like all British merchant-ship's crews, they were of various nationalities. Three Norwegians, great powerful fair-haired fellows; two Scotchmen; a Russian Finn; three Englishmen, and myself, a New Zealander, were the occupants of the fo'c's'le. Then there were five apprentices, English boys, all of them. The skipper was a Scotchman, and the first mate also hailed from the Land o' Cakes. The second mate was a Nova Scotian. The men told me he was "a regular hard citizen," and I found out later to my cost, that the accusation was not a false one. Our third mate hailed from Liverpool, and it was his first trip as an officer. Our cook was a French half-breed, a bit

too mighty civil for my liking. He had a furtive way of reaching for his knife at the least appearance of a row of any sort, that was to my mind a trifle disconcerting. But taking them all round they were splendid workers, the sort of fellows likely to help our fine clipper make a fast passage, and that was the main point. The rate at which the piles of bales in the hold grew higher and higher each day, and the barque was got into sea-going trim, aloof and aloft, astonished me.

On that first night in the stream, I had been picked for the twelve to two anchor watch, and as I stood all alone in the still night on the fo'c's'le head, I thought of the hum-drum existence I was leaving behind me, and my heart glowed within me as I gazed up at the twinkling stars and down on the rippling waters and wondered what the glorious future had in store for me. Who could tell what might happen? There was romance in the very uncertainty. What weather would our



The crew of the "Bonita"

At last, one fine morning, not another bale would go in the hold, it was packed to the very hatches. The carpenter brought his axe and wedges, and carefully battened down the stout tarpaulins over all. The harbour tug came alongside, the shore lines were cast off, and the "Bonita," with her red ensign proudly floating from the peak, was towed to her anchorage in the stream, there to await the first favourable opportunity to spread sail and start on the voyage to which I was looking forward with such unbounded delight.

gallant ship meet on her long homeward bound voyage? Homeward, indeed, to all but me. For me she was outward bound—aye, outward into a new life altogether, a life that seemed to me so inexpressibly worth the living. We should sail over the seas where that bold mariner, Drake, sailed in the days of Good Queen Bess; we should see strange lands and strange peoples; and after all we should sight the gallant shores of England, the home of our fathers, and the envy of the whole world! With such thoughts as these in my mind what wonder that

my watch on deck seemed to me a very short one! But before I went below, I looked back towards the sleeping town, and wondered when I should again see the friendly wind-swept hills of dear old Wellington again.

At eight bells (eight o'clock) next morning the cry of "All hands on deck, get under weigh!" roused us from our bunks. It was a clear, bright morning with a crisp, freshening breeze from the Nor'-west, creeping in catpaws across the glancing waters of the harbour.

Now, for the first time, I realized the immense amount of work entailed in getting a large sailing vessel under weigh. Climbing on to the fo'c's'le head we fitted the capstan bars, and heaving together, commenced the laborious task of weighing the anchor. To me the scene was a very pleasing one. There was a special charm about the bright colours of the sailors shirts, and their very caps and Tam o' Shan- ters looked picturesque as they swung round. There was music in the clink clank of the capstan pawls, ringing out in the clear morning air as the cable came slowly in, link by link. And now one of our British Jacks struck up the first bar of that fine old sea chantey, "London Town." Inspired by the sound, the men buckled to their work with a will, and joined heartily in the rousing chorus which followed each line.

"Soon we'll be in London town,

Chorus: Sing, my lads, yo-ho-o!

And see the King with a golden crown.

Chorus: Sing, my lads, yo-ho!

Yo-ho, make her go, sing, my lads, yo-ho-o!

Who's afraid to face the foe?

Sing, my lads, yo-ho!"

The chorus swelled louder as the men warmed to the work, and the clanking of the capstan pawls rang still faster. Presently the first mate, who had been leaning over the rail watching the chain come home, called out: "Avast there!" and as the

chantey came to an end, and the crew paused in their labour, he ordered four of us aloft to loosen the topsails. Three sprang into the shrouds at once, and at a nod from the mate, I followed, making my way up to the foretopsail yards. Here, as we moved rapidly from yard-arm to yard-arm casting off the gaskets, the loosened canvas dropped in great white folds from the yards, and bellied out in rounded curves as the breeze freshened. From aloft I got a good view of the operations on deck; on the fo'c's'le the rest of the crew were already heaving round on the capstan again, and aft on the poop the captain and second mate were striding up and down watching and directing operations. After loosening the topsails and overhauling the clew-lines, we lay aloft to the topgallant yards, and repeated the performance there. By the time we had all clear for hoisting away, the anchor was straight up and down, and then it was, "All hands to the topsail halyards." That rollicking chantey, "Ratcliffe Highway," rang out lustily.

"As I was a strollin' down Ratcliffe Highway,

Chorus: Timmy-Way-yah, Blow the man down!

A charming young damsel I chanced for to spy.

Chorus: Oh, give us some time to blow the man down."

The ponderous yards crept slowly aloft until the topsails were spread as tight as boards. Then the topgallant sails, fore and main, were set, and the yards having been boxed ready for breaking away, all hands tallied on to the capstan bars once more, and with strenuous heaving the anchor was at last raised from its firm grip of New Zealand.

Freed from her anchorage, the "Bonita," with her headsails flattened in, swung rapidly away from the wind, and as her main-topsails filled out to the breeze, the foreyards were braced round sharply.

For an instant as the curving canvas strained and stiffened overhead, the good ship paused, like some beautiful sea-bird spreading its wings before taking flight, then giving an almost imperceptible list to leeward, she started forward with a growing ripple under her forefoot. Swift swirling eddies, and creamy lines of bubbles, ran faster and ever faster under her counter, and we were off at last for the open sea.

Although we were now clear of our anchorage the work seemed only beginning, there was the anchor

port watch went below to turn in. For a while we were so busy that I had no time to look about me at all, then I was ordered aloft once more to loose the main-royal. From this lofty perch, fully a hundred and forty feet above the deck, I had a good look around, and was surprised to find that we were already almost abreast of Pencarrow light. Ahead of us lay the open ocean with clear horizon; on either side the great brown hills of Wellington bathed in bright sunlight; and away astern Somes Island and the dis-



Apprentices on the "Bonita."

still to be catted and hauled in-board; sheets and halyards to be overhauled and coiled down; and the hundred and one other things to be done before all was shipshape. Watches had to be fixed, port and starboard, the first and third mates taking the one watch of four hours, and the captain and second mate the other. This was quickly arranged, and I found myself in the starboard watch under the captain and second mate, and as it happened to be our watch on deck, the

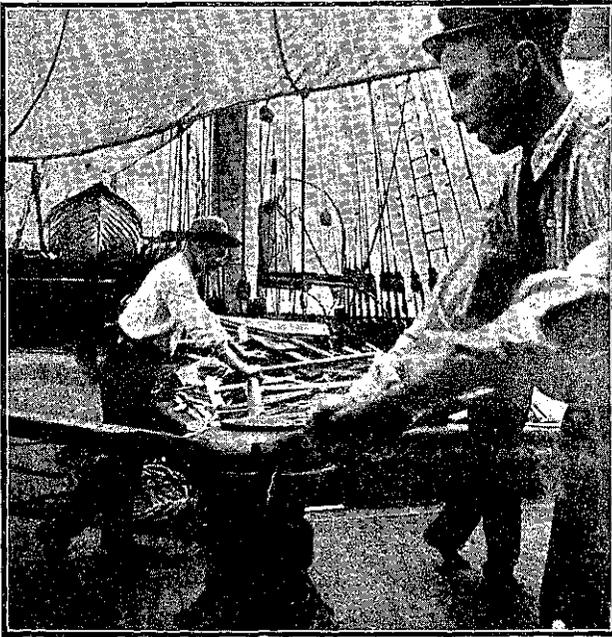
tant peaks of the Rimutaka range. It was goodbye to New Zealand now without doubt.

Eight bells (noon) soon came round, and the port watch relieved us on deck, leaving us free to go below and sample the kind of food we were to get on our voyage. One of our watch brought the dinner from the galley, and it certainly did not look promising. "Wet hash" was the name given to the unsavoury-looking mess, and it certainly was wet.

"Soup de boulyong" Froggie calls it," said the bearer, setting it down gingerly on the table, "two buckets o' water and one onion, and the bloke that gets the onion is lucky."

However, the rest of the crew took it philosophically enough, and each ladled a generous portion on to his tin plate and proceeded to devour it. Being as hungry as half a dozen hunters myself, I lost no time in following their example, and found the stuff satisfying, if not nourishing. We then turned into

ed, and knew by the sounds which followed that the watch were taking in the light canvas. Looking out of my port, I found the breeze freshening considerably, and a bank of cloud rising over the land showed dimly on the horizon. Eight bells struck, and we relieved the watch. The royals had been taken in, and the ship was gliding swiftly along under topgallant sails with the wind on her beam. The second mate set us to work lashing down the loose spars and all moveable gear. The port watch relieved us at six



Heaving on the Capstan.

our bunks for a sleep, but gentle Morpheus refused to visit me.

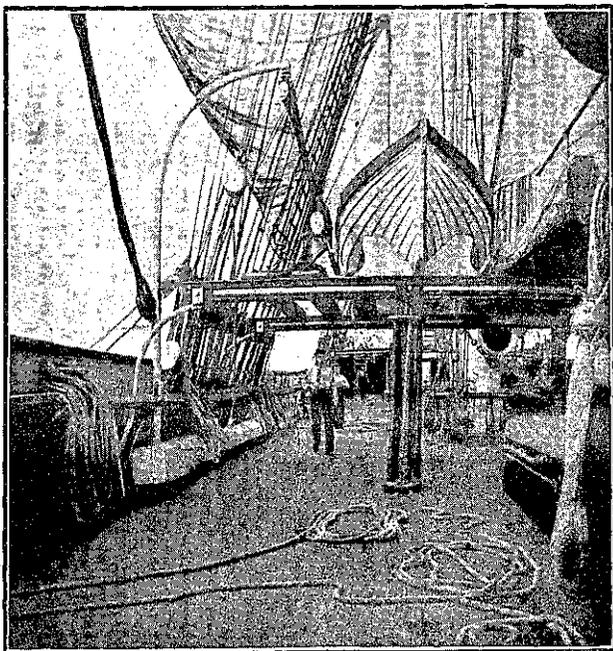
My mind was full of the events of the last few hours, and besides, I wished to see the last of the coast that would so soon fade away behind us. Acting on this impulse, I sat up in my bunk, and opening the port nearest to me, spent my first watch below listening to the sounds on deck, and watching the land breeze crisping the wave-tops into flashing foam in our wake. While so occupied, I heard an order shout-

o'clock—this being one of the short spells known as dog watches from four till six and from six to eight. But we were not to go below. The wind had increased so much, and the appearance of the weather was so threatening that all hands were ordered to stow the topgallant sails. This was regarded as fine weather work by the old hands, for there was as yet comparatively no sea running. But to me the work seemed quite hard enough. Our topgallant sails were the largest I had

yet handled, and as the barque began to feel the seas a bit, the swaying aloft was quite enough to make the work extremely awkward to a new hand. In astonishingly short time, however, the sails were neatly stowed on the yards, and the gaskets snugly passed round.

Looking from the crosstrees the view was an extensive one, the cloud-bank was fast spreading over the sky, and the land shewed dimly under the haze that the rising wind was driving before it. My native

gathering dusk, the white break of the seas looked ghostly, and the weird effect was heightened by the sharp whistling of the wind through the rigging which rose from the bulwarks, and appeared to vanish in the thick gloom aloft. It fell to my turn to relieve the wheel, and here a new experience awaited me, hitherto I had only steered in fine weather, but this time, as I grasped the wheel spokes, and looked down into the binnacle upon the swaying compass card, I realised the full im-



Deck view in fine weather.

land seemed inclined to give me a good send-off, and I soon discovered that bad weather makes work, even aboard a fine clipper like the "Bonita."

After a short spell below, which we spent in getting our oilskins and sea-boots ready for use, we of the starboard watch were called once more on deck by the striking of eight bells, to take the first watch up to midnight.

The sea was now rising fast, and the "Bonita" was flying along in fine style. In the half light of the

portance and responsibility of my duty.

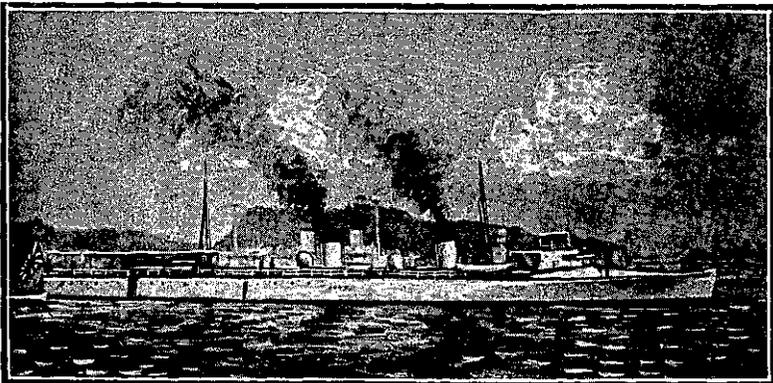
All around me darkness, the swish and rush of breaking seas, and a dim shadow aloft shewing where the topsails strained at the bolt-ropes; and before me the glowing compass card with its magic needle pointing steady and true to the North. East, south-east, our course lay, and handling the wheel carefully, I managed to keep the barque steadily on her course. Ever and anon the figure of the second mate appeared at my side,

and after glancing at the compass card, vanished again into the night. At ten o'clock (four bells), a Norwegian relieved me at the wheel, and I went forward to don my oil-skins, for the rain had now commenced in earnest. With the advent of the rain, however, the wind went down considerably, and by midnight we had the barque under top-gallant sails again, when the port watch relieved us, and we went below. This time sleep came to me readily, and I seemed hardly to have dropped off, before I was rudely awakened by someone shaking me violently, whilst the gruff voice of our Russian Finn announced that it was eight bells and our watch on deck. I crawled out of my bunk half asleep, and dragging on my sea-boots, followed the rest of the watch on deck once more. We found a clear starlit sky overhead, and above the end of the bowsprit the first pale gleam of daylight began to light up the eastern sky. One of our number went to the wheel, whilst the rest took brooms and buckets and commenced washing down decks. To me, so far, sea-life seemed to be always presenting

some fresh picture. The little group of men standing on the gleaming decks, the great white sails spreading away aloft from yard-arm to yard-arm, and the long curve of the bowsprit curtsying against the growing light, formed a picture that remains vividly impressed on my mind to this day.

Slowly the daylight broadened, the sea took on a greener tinge, and some light clouds high overhead turned roseate under the first beams of the rising sun. Then, from nowhere apparently, a great white albatross swung past with wings spread motionless, another appeared close astern, and as the sun lifted slowly above the horizon the whole surface of the ocean appeared to change like magic. The waves broke in gleaming silver, the spray from our bow drove past in glittering radiance, and the scene became most enchanting. A little later came yet another change, the sea turned a deeper blue, the breeze, freshening with the rising of the sun, drove magnificent white-horses after us out of the west, and the barque, with every stitch set, made her very best sailing.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



Japanese Des'rover, Usukamo.

Questions of the Day.

We invite original articles for the pages which we intend to devote to Questions of the Day, or criticisms and replies to those appearing.

IMPERIAL COMMERCIALISM.

FALSE GROUNDS FOR FEDERATION.

By COLONIAL.



T a time like this, when the spirit of Imperialism is in the air, and the Statesmen of Great Britain are discussing the means of cementing the scattered fragments of the Anglo-Saxon race, it requires a certain amount of daring to argue in favour of individual nationalism and national self-containedness.

By individual nationalism, I mean the development of nations on their own lines irrespective of political or commercial relations, and by national self-containedness, I mean the power of a nation to live within itself, by itself, and for itself.

I realise that the dream of a British Empire in its present sense is as vain as the dream of human perfection, and that a real federation of the Anglo-Saxon peoples on commercial lines is utterly impossible.

It is true that there may be a sentimental empire of language and literature, even of invention and practical knowledge; but the different sections of our race can no more come together on a basis of trade and commerce than can the members

of an ordinary family, when the interests of each are separate.

The future of the Anglo-Saxon race in the Home lands cannot be secured by preferential tariffs or political federations, for when Great Britain ceases to be able to compete commercially with other nations, it will be impossible for the Colonies to support its industries, unless taxed as nations and individuals are taxed to support what is no longer able to support itself. Apart from this view it would be unfair to expect the Colonies to retard their own development for the sake of what is called Imperial Sentiment.

Australia, Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand will not be content to raise food stuffs and raw material in order to exchange for British-manufactured goods. They have established, and will continue to establish, industries of their own, and their aim is, and will be, to provide all their own wants within their own country.

In another fifty years it is questionable whether Great Britain will be able to compete with any of her Colonies except in a few minor forms of manufactures. Canada, already is able to produce iron goods

cheaper than England or Scotland, and can sell already certain classes of machinery cheaper than England can supply them. Australia every year is becoming more independent of home productions, and the same may be said of New Zealand. South Africa alone seems to lag behind other Anglo-Saxon countries in this direction; but who shall say that with its abundant and varied mineral resources and its cheap labour it will continue to do so?

At present it suits the Colonies to exchange their raw products for manufactured goods, but it will not suit them when their own manufacturers are clamouring for trade, and their home markets are absorbing all the food material that can be profitably raised.

The dream of British Imperialism is built on the present conception of British commercialism, which roughly means the exchange of raw or manufactured products at a profit, and cannot lead to permanent success. It should be apparent to the most casual thinker that the future of all civilized countries depends upon national self-containedness. It may of course be possible that in the distant future there may grow up among British peoples a permanent interchange of luxuries or superfluities, but this will only be possible when each nation is able to supply more than its natural wants.

The very talk of British Imperialism, Federation of Anglo-Saxon peoples, Preferential Tariffs, shows that the leaders of our race recognise that the old system of commercial competition will no longer suffice to keep our race profitably occupied. Commercial competition was all very well when we could produce goods more cheaply than any other nation; but when nearly every nation is competing in the production of the same class of goods, it means that trade will go to those countries willing and able to produce them in the cheapest manner. Arguing from present circumstances it is probable that the

people of China, India, Japan, and possibly Russia, will become the manufacturers and traders of the world. When these countries adopt Western inventions, or when commercial Britishers or Germans utilise their immense mineral resources with the illimitable forces of cheap labour, will any commercial man believe that India or China cannot undersell goods manufactured in England or Scotland.

The terrible gospel of free competition, the belief that it is wise to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest has been preached by Great Britain for many centuries; and what has it given that country?—immense wealth for a few; a life of semi-slavery in factories and workshops for the many, and the physical deterioration of the race. What will it give Great Britain if carried to its logical conclusion?—competition with the rice-eating Chinese and Hindoo, and national death, for our race cannot and will not live in labour competition with the coolie.

New Zealand is not likely to enter into manufacturing competition with the rest of the world for many years to come, but can it succeed in the competition for the food supply even of Great Britain? Russia, America, and India have already driven New Zealand wheats from the London markets. Argentina, Australia, and Canada are fighting with us to secure the markets for wool, frozen meat and dairy produce; and whilst the system of free competition exists, is it possible that New Zealanders can maintain their present high standard of living, and still supply food products as cheaply as these other peoples?

Another feature must be considered. Commercial competition is already weakening the purchasing powers of our greatest customers. If Great Britain is to continue selling against her rivals, she must buy in the cheapest markets, and they will surely not be ours. Can

the New Zealand farmer pay high wages and supply butter more cheaply than that produced by the peasants of Russia? Can he, with his small areas of land, provide London with frozen meat at as low a price as that sent in from the cheap ranches of Argentina worked by Basques and half-breeds? There can only be one answer to these questions, and that is emphatically "No."

Free trade and free competition originated in selfishness and greed; and whilst Great Britain could benefit by it, it gave immense wealth to her manufacturers and land-owners, and physical ruin to those who toiled for them. The only freedom now left her is the freedom to sell in the cheapest market, and she can go on doing this until all her accumulated wealth is exhausted and ruin overtakes her.

Acting precisely on the same principles, so loudly advocated in the Mother Country, New Zealand can go on selling her agricultural produce in an ever-cheapening market, and disposing of her natural resources in the shape of timber, coal, gum, flax, until they are exhausted, and then, when this free competition begins to pinch her farmers and her artizans, our statesmen will have to look about for panaceas, just as English statesmen are beginning to put forward schemes of Preferential Tariff and Imperial Protection. What ideas New Zealand statesmen will evolve cannot be imagined.

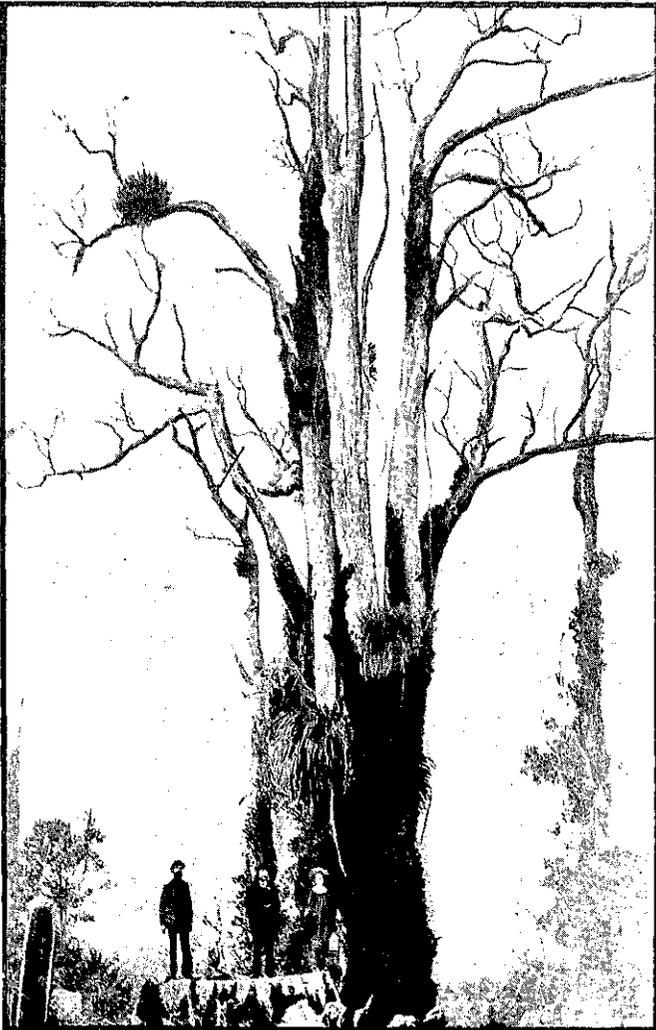
It is quite certain that Mr. Chamberlain's scheme of colonial preference for British goods, even if followed by the protection of raw products and foodstuffs imported from the Colonies, would not greatly benefit New Zealand, for she would still have as her competitors her colonist cousins in Canada, South Africa, and Australia, and the competition of foreign countries will certainly not be killed by a tariff in favour of colonials.

If Great Britain gives her colo-

nists a higher price for her raw material and foodstuffs than she gives to foreigners, she will certainly be forced to charge them a higher price for her manufactures, thus New Zealand in reality would gain only as much as she would lose. There is no hope for the future in any form of commercialism. The great extravagant interchange between nations can eventually only end in ruin. It is not possible for any country to go on cheapening its productions in order to meet competition without lowering the status of its workers, and making them practically slaves. Great Britain, as a nation, would utterly collapse if it ceased to labour for its customers, and these customers demand the ever-cheapening of the goods raised. The minds of our best thinkers must ever be on the stretch to invent and plan and scheme in order to sell pocket handkerchiefs to African niggers at a lower price than America or Germany. Our best workmen must wear themselves out in order to give our rivals cheap machinery. The physique of our labourers must be lowered in the race to give our enemies cheap coal and cheap ships in which to carry it. Up to the present time the invention and perfection of modern machinery has helped our race in this commercial competition without taxing the individual worker to any serious extent; but other nations are securing machinery equal to ours, and now it will be a question of rivalry between men. That New Zealand should seek to bind itself to this sinking empire of commercialism is due to an utter lack of comprehension of what we might do under a system of national self-containedness. We have great areas of fertile land, immense mineral and timber resources. We have flocks and herds, unrivalled water-power for factories. Why should we not utilise all these things and our own labour for our own benefit? Why should we use our best endeavours in order

to sell products cheaper than can be sold by Argentinas, Canadians, Americans, Siberians? We can raise everything we require for ourselves under proper organization with a few hours work per day and an extra hour or two would give us

all the luxuries that are good for us. If we liked to accumulate wealth we can do so, not by cheapening the goods we sell, but by making for ourselves everything that counts for wealth or that wealth is used to purchase.



B. Wells,

Rata Nui, Carrington Road, Taranaki.

photo.

✕ MATES ✕

By CLAUDE L. JEWELL.



FOR a gumdigger, Jim Jackson was fairly respectable. He frequently paid the storekeeper for his rations, and had been known to come back to camp from Rangitawa in a reasonable state of sobriety. Hence, although Jim did these things, he was respected.

Jim had been on the arid stretches and ugly pipeclay country poking it with a spear for six months.

He had arrived one day, white-handed and short-cropped, wild-eyed and nervous-looking. He had awkwardly unburdened himself of a swag, said to the diggers with a bow: "How do you do?" which greeting he immediately altered to: "Good day, mates!" and had helplessly endeavoured to erect a six by eight tent.

The gumdiggers in camp sent telegraphic winks from eye to eye. They understood, bless you! Short hair? Gaol of course. White hands? Well, he might have been doing the gaol cooking. The innate sense of what it is kind to avoid in speaking to a fellow-unfortunate prevented the motley diggers from putting questions to Jim. They accepted him unconditionally.

As for Jim, after he had blundered with the tent, and been helped with its erection by experienced hands, he went to his hastily improvised bunk. Jim asked no questions, his mates gave him no advice.

The new chum gumdigger stole away at day-break and speared and dug. The point of the spear struck nothing the first day. Its user had

no eye for gum indications. He had been told by the labour agent in Auckland to poke about with the spear until it "gritted," and dig with the spade until he found gum. He poked about and dug accordingly.

"Ow d'yer get on mate?" This, a dissolute old reprobate, who had drunk as much alleged whisky as any man North of Whangarei, to Jim as late at night, having been temporarily "bushed," he wandered, footsore and gumless, into camp.

"I am grieved—that is—er—I ain't found nothin'," said Jim. Whereupon the said dissolute reprobate took Jim in hand.

Bill Brien, the reprobate, and Jim, the supposed gaol-bird, became mates.

In the ensuing six months Bill had fewer wild bursts of alcoholic sinfulness than for many years previously, which was good for Bill.

Once during the continuance of their mateship, Bill did "break out," on which occasion Bill's English was excellent. At all other times his vocabulary was limited and his alphabet innocent of an aspirate.

One might have scraped gum and cooked "doughboys" among less interesting surroundings than those of the diggers' camp. It was smiled on by picturesque bush. A great silvery waterfall lent distinction to the poor whares, and the tourist in search of beauty had been known to condescend so far as to ask questions of the gum-hunting derelicts.

One youthful aristocrat had, on one occasion, even overcome his

caste scruples, and had entered Bill's whare, sharing the meal of boiled rice and treacle with the "simple peasant," as he designated him mentally. The aristocrat in search of sensations was willing to pay for this, and he had tossed a half-sovereign on the corrugated tin table of the whare on leaving.

Bill had flushed redly, and seizing the gold, had pitched it into the near creek.

"I don't keep a' eating house," he had said tersely.

"What very quaint persons gum-diggers are!" the aristocrat had remarked on telling the story afterwards in an Auckland hotel.

* * * *

"Lady Lyndon is visiting the colony for the benefit of her health. She is staying at the Beverley Hotel, and leaves for the thermal district in a few days." Thus the daily paper.

Lady Lyndon certainly had intended "doing" Rotorua when she came to Auckland.

A photographer was the means in the hands of Providence of making her ladyship change her route. She would send some of the exquisite scenic photos she saw exhibited in the photographer's window to her friends in Gloucestershire. She turned over piles of pictures in the unheeding way of the satiated sight-seer. There were lakes and bits of bush, rivers and Maori belles, and—a waterfall.

It was a beautiful picture, the one showing the waterfall. Fern-fringed bush and glistening water and huts in the foreground, etherealised by the lens that tells but white lies. Lady Lyndon asked the photographer about the picture.

A gumdiggers' camp? If the lady would look she would see the gumdiggers standing in the foreground. Would she like a magnifying glass? It would enable her to see the detail more clearly.

Lady Alyce took the glass, and scanned the picture carelessly. Then

her eyes became fixed in a semi-fascinated way on the print.

"I will take these," she said without visible emotion, handing some photos, of which the waterfall picture was on top, to the photographer.

"It is very pretty, this first one. How could one reach this delightful spot?" she asked steadily.

She could take boat to Whangarei, and train, if agreeable, to Nghui-Nghui, and then by saddle-horse, or she could ride all the way from the town perhaps. It was simple; she could get a Maori guide.

The portrait of a gumdigger, backed by a waterfall, the whole embowered in bush, was the reason why Lady Alyce went aboard the s.s. Wellington next day.

* * * *

Gabrielle, Lady Lyndon's maid, was not well. The tiresomeness of New Zealand coastal steamship travelling had upset her. Behold her then left to her own devices in Whangarei. Her mistress would go to see the sights, would drink soda-water at Kamo, enjoy the beauty of its architecture, gloat on the art treasures of Hikurangi, and sketch a gumdiggers camp. Gabrielle did not object. Madame was mistress, as for Gabrielle, she would accept the loss of the sights calmly.

So Lady Lyndon, mounted, and accompanied by the quaintest groom guide she had known—a fourteen year old Maori boy—set out for Kamo—and elsewhere.

Her ladyship did not take the waters of Kamo, and Hikurangi and its limestone rocks interested her not at all. Although unaccustomed to the jog of the weedy hack that carried her, she did not murmur, and by the time the bare, scrubby hill of Nghui-Nghui was in sight she got reconciled to colonial equitation. The picture of a dun-garee-clad gumdigger, backed by a silvery waterfall, was ever on her mind, and urged her on:

* * * *

"What's that a comin' over the rise, George?" Thus a gumdigger in the waterfall camp to a mate.

"Looks like a woman and a man on 'orseback, don't it?" replied George, alert like all solitary men at the prospect of seeing something new and strange.

"Why, I do b'lieve it's a lady!" said George, vainly endeavouring to button a shirt neck that had been innocent of fastening any time during the past year.

Lady Lyndon rode up to the two men and bowed graciously. Both doffed their hats awkwardly.

"Does a gentle—a man named Morton Trevor live here?"

They didn't know, these gumdiggers. They knew "Tussocky Jack," "Kauri Bill," "Carrotty Ike," and so on, but surnames as a general things didn't worry them.

"Ye might try Jim Jackson's tent over there, Missus," ventured George. "He's doin' a bit of scrapin' to-day."

Lady Lyndon rode over to the indicated tent.

"Does Mr. Jackson live here?" she queried of that gentleman, who was sitting with his back to the tent entrance scraping gum.

Jim Jackson started violently, dropped his knife with a clatter, and jumped up in confusion. He hadn't heard a lady's voice for some time.

"Yes," he said, as he turned towards the questioner. "My God! Alyce?"

Lady Lyndon called Jim Jackson "Morton," gave him her hand, and dismounted.

Tata, the Maori boy, took the lady's horse, and for the first time since it was made, Jackson's tent had a lady visitor. Jim's face was white, and his grimy hands twitched.

"And how did you discover my wretched whereabouts?" he asked.

The lady produced the photo.

"And Lyndon, what of him?" continued Jim nervously.

Lady Lyndon shuddered. Here was her curate lover, the man who

had been flouted by her parents because he was poor. The man who has been told to go by a parent who desired a better marriage for his daughter, the man who had weakly gone, leaving the field open for a peer, who, it was hoped would repair the fortunes of the house of Templeton. She told him what he did not know of her story. She had married Lyndon by the command of her parents who were too proud to face poverty, but not too proud to barter their own blood for gold.

And the peer? He had given his name to the directorate of a swindling corporation whose doings roused all England to anger, he had become involved in a social scandal that made a section of the army and nobility reek with the shamefulness of it. He had squandered his patrimony. He had disappeared to America. His death had been cabled.

Lady Lyndon almost forgot Morton Trevor was a gumdigger here. A woman likes something to weep over at times.

"Hullo, Jim! Where are ye?"

It was Bill Brien's voice. Bill was not a quiet man. He liked people to know he was coming.

"My mate is coming," said Morton to Lady Lyndon. "He's an awfully rough chap, you know—but good as gold."

Jack bustled up and dropped his pikau outside the tent. Then he brushed the calico aside.

"Where are ye? — Alyce!"

The dissolute gumdigger gasped for breath. He clutched at his throat, the veins knotted on his forehead, and the red, coarse face became blue.

"Alyce! My God! The gumdigger staggered and fell. He had looked on Alyce's face for the last time.

"Lyndon is dead. The cable from America was a lie. He lied always. I have seen heart disease before, I cannot pretend to be sorry for this."

Morton, horror-stricken, gazed at the calm woman and his dead mate.

He rushed to Lord Lyndon and felt the breast under the rough shirt. ‘

“My poor mate!” he cried in his agony.

“And you are sorry?” she asked him.

“Yes; yes, God knows how sorry!”

Morton rose solemnly, and beckoned to Tata, the Maori boy.

“My mate is ill,” he said. “It is no sight for the lady. Guide her back to Whangarei.”

“And you, Morton, why do you

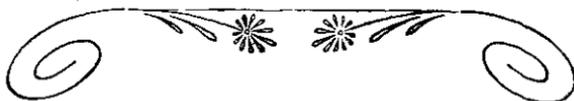
look at me like that? Will you not come too?”

“No; I am a gumdigger, and Bill Brien’s mate.”

“Wonder what’s broke the lady up?” asked George of his mate, as she rode out of the camp. They never really knew.

* * * *

Lord Lyndon is not buried in the family vault in Gloucestershire. Bill Brien’s tombstone at Nghui-Nghui bears only the name his mate knew him by.



Tauhara.

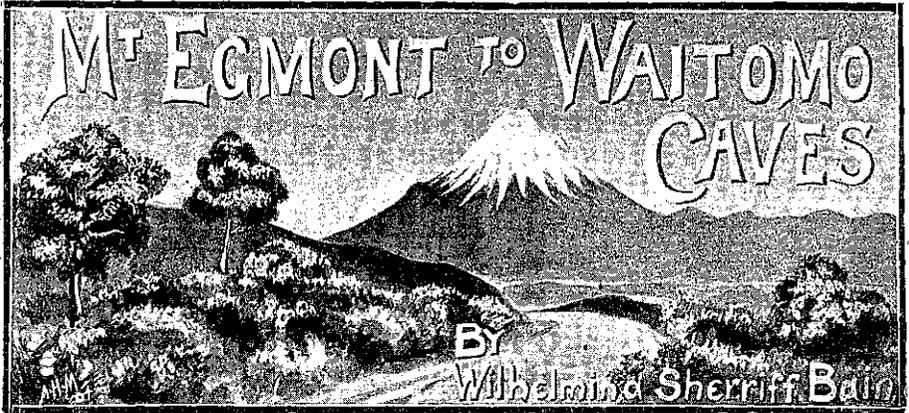
FROM THE BALCONY AT ROSS’S, TAUPO.

How like a lizard in the sun Tauhara’s lying;—
 Its basking sides look lurid as the fires
 Which with their prisoned neighbours vying,
 Until the breath of this hot world expires,
 Shall force these healing springs
 And nurse the fronding fern which clings
 Round rooted rock—like timid bride
 To a stern lover’s side.

O lazy janitor! O monster warding
 Fresh beauty at thy feet,
 Where flow’ring rills and tiny island-gardens
 Adorn thy treacherous seat,*
 Lie still, and guard the enchanted scene,
 Unique, exalted, and serene.

JOYCE JOCELYN.

* It has been said that Tauhara is likely to become the seat of an eruption



Photos by Collis.



FTEN and anxiously had the skies been interrogated, and many a tap had the "glass" received—so firm was the persuasion that everything depended on the weather. Eight would-be adventurers: We three, and They five; though One of Us said the weather did not really matter if only the days of actual departure and return might be fine. Of course it would not be nice to start in the rain or come back to Mt. Egmont in the rain; but anyhow, there would be some good days in a mid-summer fortnight.

Then, at last, the 24th of December dawned—cloudless! The buggy, the gig, and the two riders met in Inglewood; some after-thoughts of provender, etc., were secured; and "ready!" was the word.

"Oh, the music of the wheels!
Buggy wheels!
How it soothes, how it heals
The weariness of indoors! How it reels
Its appeals
To be blithe and debonair
In the banishment of care!
How it steals
The melodies of sky and woodland, till
one feels
They're all blended with the music of
the wheels,
Buggy wheels!"

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The roads were good, the fields were green, the sky was blue, and gladness prevailed. We were all keeping well together, when someone cried: "Mind that whirlwind!" It was but a baby; yet it careered across short cuts in a wavering zigzag, swooping up every small item in capital imitation of some big brother. For more than a mile our backward glances traced its curiously persistent course; then we began to realise that the morning was exceedingly warm, and our eyes sought the beautiful greenery of the home we were passing—Mr. McTaggart's—surely one of the most charming residences in Taranaki.

Just a brief halt in Waitara, then on through fine agricultural country, much of which appeared to be Maori property. Here and there we saw Maoris ploughing and cultivating, with first-rate teams and general equipment. "Merry Christmas!" was called on both sides; while a big, handsome fellow with the kindly open countenance of high caste, meeting us on horseback, wished us all: "Happy New Year and Merry Christmas!"

We boiled our first billy at Onaero: a pretty glen surrounded by bush-clad hills. One of us would have been glad to climb a seaward cliff rich in historic association;

but she was assured that there would be time on the return trip : that it was better to steer straight for "Te Kuiti," and loiter as we chose on the homeward journey.

Urenui was our next "town," and a pleasant site it has, surrounded by wooded knolls, and inhaling the freshness of Tasman Sea. More rich agricultural country, one especially attractive farm adjoining a really beautiful home being ticketed for sale. And so many home-less ones there be !

A long and winding descent took us into Mimi Valley. Ah, how pretty it must have been ! Even yet it possesses some upland forests of pristine charm ; but axe and slasher have been widely busy, and fire has scourged more widely still.

At a sharp turn of the river our first camp was prepared. Two roomy tents were pitched ; and heaps on heaps of pungas were placed within, covered with waterproofing, then with rugs galore. The horses were attended to, the evening repast was leisurely enjoyed, then We strolled about while They went afishing. They returned—fishless—and all retired early, meaning to mount betimes.

But—one precaution had been omitted, and the mosquitos gave us a terrible night. One of us slew thirty before she sank into a fitful slumber, and in her dreams was heard to state unto all whom it might concern that—this—was—Hades—and these were—the master fiends !

The multitudinous hateful drone was silenced in the raptures of a day-dawn oratorio. The chiming moko-moko, the melodious tui, and many other darlings of the bush sang Christmas matins—filling the forest cathedral with wondrous harmony—thrilling their human auditors with joy and gratitude—

"For earth's sublimest ecstasy
But faintly hints the vast To Be !"

The air was fresh but still, and mists hung low in the valley. When they suddenly dispersed, we dis-

cerned cow-farms on either side, and sometimes a human habitation far aloft. Again we would be enclosed, each time more transparently, for the sun gained strength (as we mortals say !) and promised a resplendent day. So, in a kind of enchantment, we sped along, till the twelve miles of lowland were accomplished, and we essayed the looping ascent of Mt. Messenger.

Now we beheld Zealandia's bush ! Our roadway (a proud achievement in engineering) afforded the only trace of man's visitation, and it caused no disfigurement. As it wound in and out and ever upward, it was visible on that loop only which was being traversed, and there was no naked scarping above and below, for Nature had embroidered and festooned with cunningest skill. Far beneath the mighty pines stood in solemn court, tier upon tier rose above them in every tinge of greenness and every variety of form, tree-ferns interspersed their opulent elegance, ratas flamed in a gorgeous frenzy—everywhere beauty absolute ! Never, never may vandalism insult the slopes of Mt. Messenger !

From the summit we turned to gaze on our own Mt. Egmont. Pure and clear it seemed to float in the crystalline azure, a vision of ethereal loveliness !

We came down the long descent to Tongapurutu in a maze of incredulity. Only nine ? Nine o'clock ! Why, it's surely eleven ! But it was nine ; for we had been on the way since half-past five, and yet it was difficult to realise that our happy Christmas day was still so young.

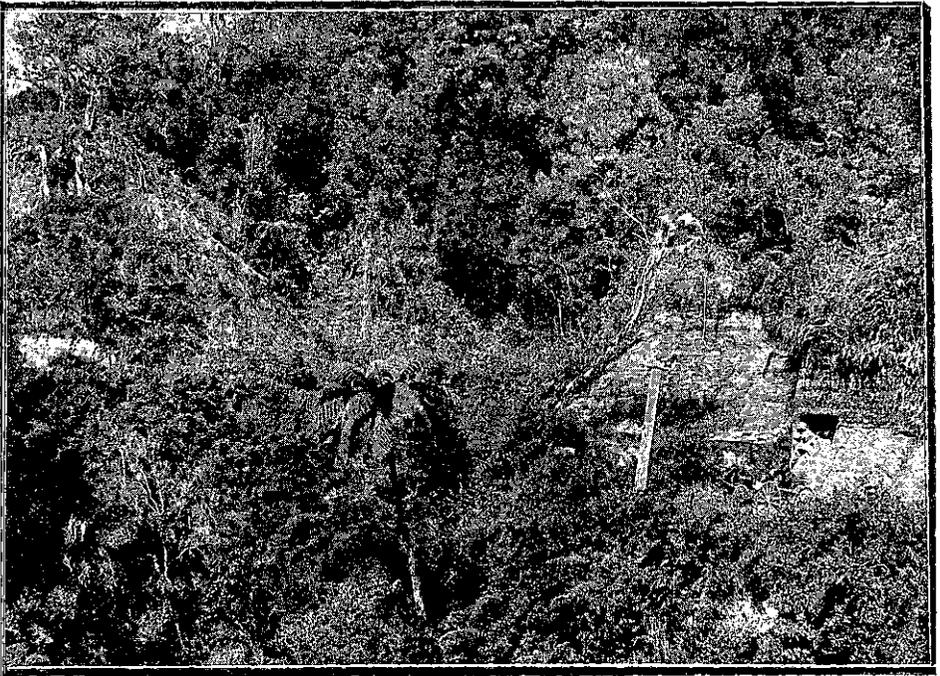
In Tongapurutu Bay They went fishing again ; while We strolled awhile on the prairie-like summits, and then beneath the trees of our Christmas dinner camp "loafed, and invited our souls," as Walt Whitman, the beloved, would have enjoined.

The afternoon drive took us along the seaboard, fine swelling downs stretching away on either hand. The road was excellent—somewhat

dusty now and then—and we travelled at a good pace till we reached the Mokau sands.

Sleeping Waters! well fared it with those men and women of six or seven centuries gone by when they stepped from their tempest-torn canoes upon your pleasant banks! Heroes and heroines of indomitable daring! Without chart or compass, in open craft constructed by implements of stone, they navigated thousands of miles of unknown sea; famishing to madness—and yet, invincible still!

monarch, in the heart-harrowing endeavour to enlist such monetary aid as his scheme required. Not one man would range himself with Columbus against the cohorts of civilisation; but Isabella gave to him everything she could, and he was enabled to prove his assertion of the earth's rotundity. We know something, too, of the sorrows that assailed illustrious discoverer and noble queen; sorrows so many and so keen that the news of Isabella's death caused the ingratitude-haunted Columbus to exclaim: "Praise



Roadway on Mt. Messenger.

Long before Columbus guided the "Santa Maria," the "Pinta," and the "Nina" across the Atlantic in search of India, some genius whose very name is lost, projected the steering of the "Tainui," the "Aotea," and the "Tokomaru" into the seemingly illimitable vastitude. The story of Columbus is familiar to us: Heedless of rabble scorn and courtly contempt, that inspired being wandered from country to country, from monarch to

God! She has quitted this weary world!" But of that genius in Hawaiki we know nothing. Let us hope that some day the rock inscriptions, the hieroglyphic carvings, and the emblematic paintings of Maoria may become decipherable, and may be found to reveal the history of a past splendid as any that the ages have engulfed.

And here we are at Mokau, mentally beholding the powerful picture in Auckland Art Gallery (by our

New Zealand artists, Steele and Goldie), and figuring for ourselves the rapture of those poor voyagers when *The First Sight of Land* loomed into general recognition.

We are cleverly ferried over, promising ourselves that on our return we shall explore the beautiful river; and, after walking up the rise—past the insanitary little pa on the river flat, and past the infant township with its well-named Tainui Accommodation House on the summit—we mount and away to the charming cove that leads down to Puri-puri Bay. With sensitive regard for mosquitos, abundant material for all-night fire is provided; and, every other creature comfort having been arranged for, We go gathering shells, and They go a-fishing.

No; not a fish was brought back! We didn't know anything about fishing, and They exerted themselves in so many clever and cheery little ways to soften the actualities of camp-life for us, that We could but render silent sympathy in their unspoken disappointments!

The smoke and heat were intolerable nuisances to the myriads of mosquitos in the little brook-side cove, and they proclaimed reluctant amnesty. Scouts and marauders made occasional attack, but were easily dealt with by the protecting hands that waved above the sleeping faces. It really was funny when hand encountered hand in this automatic defence, and Two of us would awaken each other—dozing off again very soon. We had been tired and we slept well.

Next morning we walked along the mile-and-a-half beach to the Awakino. At the river we purchased stores, then trended along the bank and up the winding valley to the sixteen-mile transit over the Tongatemaire ranges. We ascended slowly, chiefly walking, and had leisure to gaze upon the cliffs rising sheer above us in stratum upon stratum of extraordinary regularity and diversity. Sometimes the bands of red, blue, ochre, gray, seemed humanly devised—they were so defi-

nite and so distinct; sometimes the mind was smitten with sudden awe on beholding the fossilized shells of aeons past. A joyous waterfall was noticed far below; and, every now and then, some especially beautiful Nikau palm or rata blaze evoked an outburst of admiration.

When at last we reached the saddle, we discerned Tasman Sea, softly slumberous; and—yes! Egmont, ethereally lovely still! then as we stepped on, we looked away, upon Mahoenui the Fair.

The descent seemed very long; yet it was only noon when we boiled the billy in front of "Mackay's." Just then a swagger came upon us—said he was walking to Hawera—had no money—but supposed he would get there all right by New Year's Day. One glance at the fatuous, sodden countenance told its tale; and yet—the pity of it!

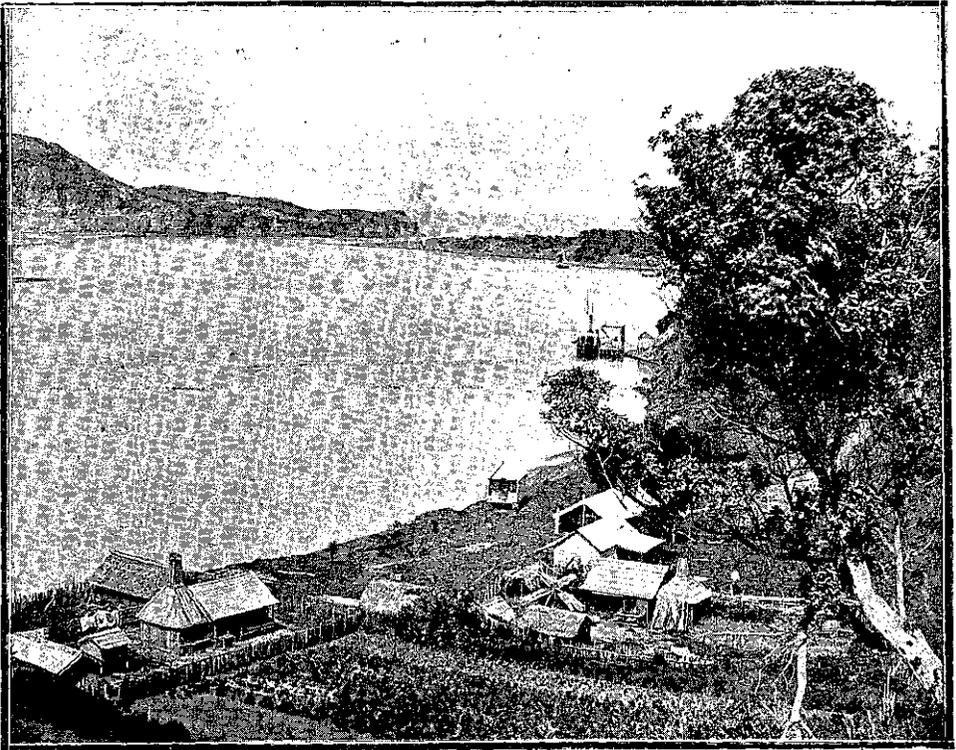
We had not finished with the Tongatemaire. Up again—more beautiful "bits" of scenery alternating with the devastations of man. This was limestone country, and we were told of tremendous caverns in the ground far below—to be explored ere long it may be hoped. Up and up, then a long, long way down, the road becoming rocky and difficult as we neared the bottom. We "got there," and took afternoon rest by the pretty little Rauroa. Then we explored a cave, evidently used by some fungus gatherer. About a sackful of the fungus—which China finds so delectable and which New Zealand cannot in any way for herself utilise—was deposited near the entrance, and some was drying on a high natural shelf. We believed there were many similar caves in the vicinity, but again we were off and away.

Mahoenui valley, or plain, was delightful to all. Our first incident was a sudden encounter with five or six Maori lads on horseback. They were selecting riding whips (as it appeared) from a natural hedge, and their mannerly salutations and high-bred aspect were a joy. One face was exquisite! Any woman

might be happy to be gifted with such perfect features, such rich colour, such winsome expression. One of us felt it to be the most beautiful young face she has ever seen (she has seen aged faces still more beautiful); while Another could not refrain from exclaiming: "How beautiful!"

The valley opened out and yielded an extensive view of farms, woodland, and sheltering ranges. Cattle, handsome and jolly, capered down

Within a large enclosure a long and wide marquee was erected; tents were pitched around the fence; buggies, brakes, and wagons were ranged outside; and horses were picketed away beyond. As we drove past at walking pace we thoroughly enjoyed the music—crisp and accurate. Nothing else seemed to be going on; but presently we met some immensely dignified personages—and the Maori can be dignified—also a pakeha clergyman.



Mokau Heads.

to look at us; then, plainly dissatisfied, tossed around and frolicked away. We recrossed the Awakino—fording, this time—and skimmed on till a large encampment gleamed ahead. When we approached, we disturbed some wahines washing garments and shampooing their thick bunchy hair in a stream that crosses the roadway. Then we heard the music of a brass band, and we knew that some important convention was in progress.

We possessed ourselves, knowing that we should hear things by the way.

Boxing Day was drawing in its afternoon as we ascended the sweeping curves that lead from Mahoenui to Mangaotaki ranges. Such long sweeping curves they were! and we wondered where our outriders had settled upon the night's camp. But, when we began the descent upon the other side, weariness was forgotten in the grandeur of the scene!

We were in the Mangaotaki Gorge. Far below, the crystal river raced and leaped over its rocky ledges—we could hear its melody, we could watch its foam—and nearly sheer from its banks rose the glorious crags, affluent in forest attire. Here and there the cliffs stood out in naked majesty: gigantic sphinxes they seemed, then they appeared the outposts of a mightier Stonehenge, and again they were castellations and gateways of a city prouder far than ever human hands have constructed. The road has been hewn into the base of these ramparts, and again we were constrained to admire the energy and the skill of man.

But alas! he lacks veneration. The roadmakers have spared the vegetation of the Gorge; as on Mt. Messenger, they have left no trace of fire behind them; their splendid work is in every respect a boon to the worshipper of the sublime.

Why should not such temples of the Most High remain undesecrated by the lust for—butter? Mangaotaki Gorge a farm! There are thousands of uncultivated acres on the plains and flats of our country. There are innumerable swamps only waiting to be drained ere they supply the richest pasture. There are bare hills many and wearisome to the eye that awaits the appropriate management which shall transform them into glebes of abundance. The New Zealand Government is sufficiently intelligent to rate the natural charms of our islands as an invaluable monetary asset. It advertises all the world over; and then it tells the visitors it has invited hither that Mangaotaki Gorge and other holy places which it has suffered to be irremediably defaced are—farms!

We crossed the substantial bridge at the foot of the decline, and found our couriers arranging for the night's repose in a workmen's hut ycleped (by legend over its doorway) "Toilers' Rest." We sat on benches, at a table, and a big fire blazed in a capacious fireplace. We

were allotted to the bunks, and They heaped bracken on the floor for their own accommodation. The tent-flies were suspended as partitions, and all augured an agreeable variety in our gypsy outing.

But fleas! Rampant they were, and loathly! In the morning, it was agreed that the tents were incomparably better than any hut, and that one experiment of the kind was enough.

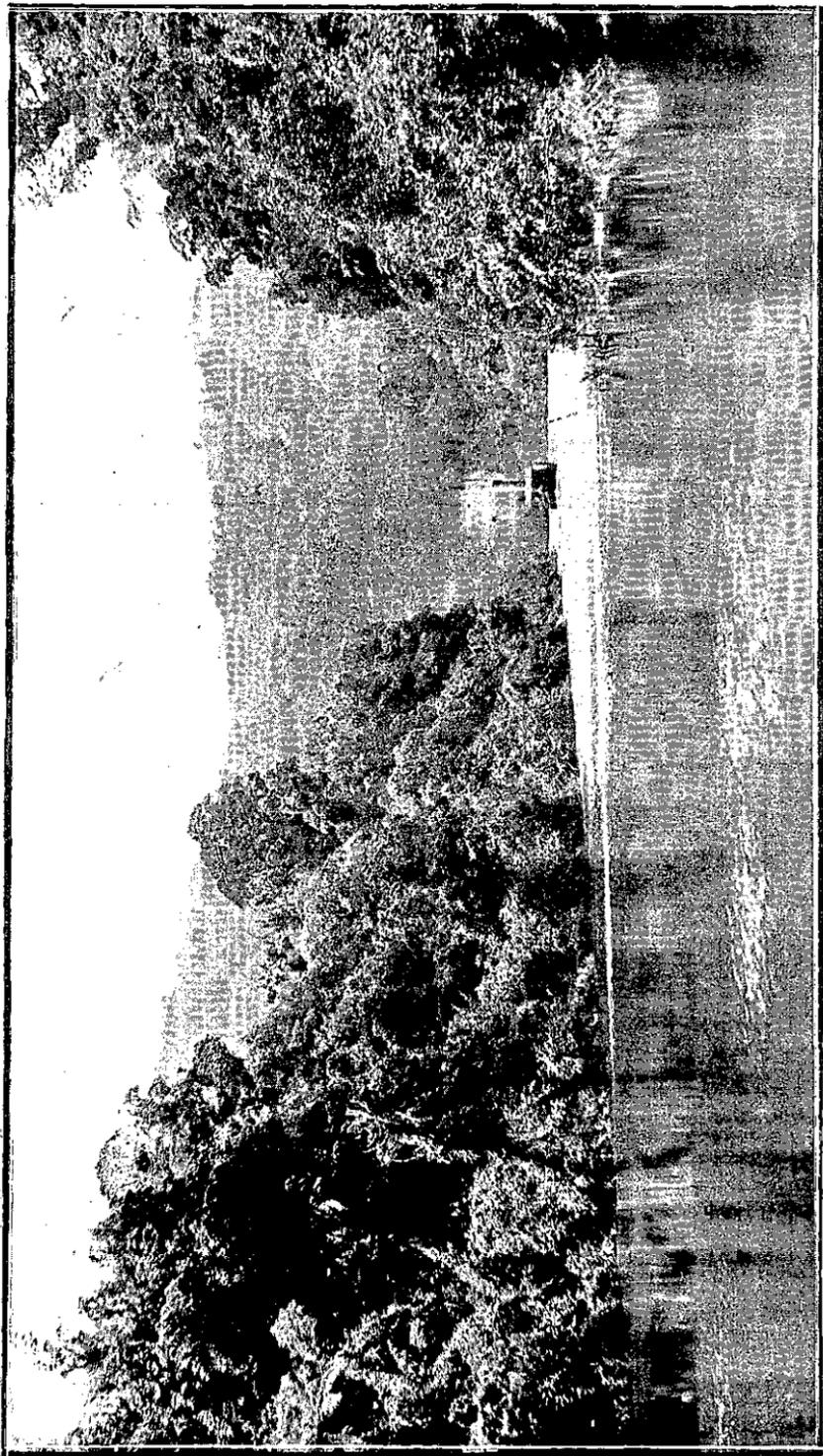
Gradually we wound upward, and then by long and devious descent we entered upon fern country. For miles on every side the rich umber-hued fronds upcurled in the gloating sunshine. It was a feast of colour, novel and suggestive. Surely this was the true Maoriland—this perfect harmony of lithe and lusty warmth and glow!

Sunday morning though it was, we were fortunately able to get the food we needed at Paemako: one nice-looking meeting-house on the right, one pretty verandah'd cottage and one tiniest of stores on the left, and farmhouses in the vicinity.

As we neared Pio Pio (a yet smaller townlet) our first and final accident occurred. Donna—the notability of our party—stumbled in a hole, and rolled over on her fallen master. It was fine to see the wave of relief which swept over the faces of a group of men standing in front of the accommodation house, when the two brothers came up, leading their horses, and George—smothered in dust and manifestly bruised—inquired nonchalantly: "See the somersault?"

The quips and cranks which, hitherto, had enlivened the way, ceased awhile, and silence and concern fell upon all of us. But, ere we halted for dinner, our brave lad was again trolling forth the most unexpected witticisms—and We forgave Donna.

After dinner, They found a deserted orchard, and We also should have liked to see the grapes that were swelling there; but it was too hot, and We contented ourselves by



Mokau River.

investigating a nearer discovery : a Maori eel-basket, which, however, contained nothing but a huge crab.

On we sped through those strangely beautiful Meorohua Plains. Still the bracken, eight or nine feet high, swayed its brown baby curls in the wooing warmth and light ; but now the landscape was diversified by ranks and groups of the stateliest kahikateas and by widespread patches of manuka scrub in full flower and fragrance. The contrasts of colour were truly exquisite. Here the golden bronze, there the witch-green of superbly symmetrical pines, all glorified by the magical sunlight.

By and by we came upon a swamp overgrown by a vivid-green circular fern, different from any we had yet beheld, and very pretty. Raupo swamps were becoming frequent again ; and, with their luxuriant and singularly cultivated aspect, they were always charming to gaze upon.

Then we met two Maoris : a man and a girl, riding similarly, as the Maoris so sensibly do. We halted together for a few minutes, and the man told us the Mahoenui meeting was attended by hundreds of Maoris—on account of public matters and some weddings—and he helped us to pronounce some of the names that were exercising us. He was educated and high caste ; for he spelled the words and syllabified them, slowly, in deep, liquid tones, his eyes shining as only Maori eyes can shine !

The sun was setting when we zig-zagged down towards Te Kuiti. His declining rays fell upon the long rolling billows of bracken extending to the right far below us, painting them in crimson and purple ; to the left a blue haze, delicate as a dream, stretched away and away and up and beyond the far-distant bush-covered ranges ; while, directly beneath the little town gleamed in snowy whiteness. A miracle of loveliness—transcending even the other glories of that supernal Sun Day !

When we dismounted at the Te Kuiti hostelry we were conscious of being very dusty indeed, and One of us—in the faintest of forlorn hopes—asked for a hot bath. A negative smile implied pity for the ignorance which could so expose itself in the King Country ; but indeed the house was so large and handsome and otherwise well-equipped that a comfortable bath-room would have been quite in keeping.

After a most enjoyable repast we sauntered outside ; and behold ! another miracle ! The entire scene was now enwrapped in a golden after-glow—so exquisite—so spiritual—that Terra herself appeared to have become emparadised !

We spent an hour in the sitting-room before we sought repose. The piano was an upright grand, from "Guelph, Canada." So strangely are the strands of humanity intertwined ! And there we played and sang, while two little Maori maidens—with eyes like wells of light—stayed fascinating and fascinated among us.

After Monday's breakfast in the hotel, a visit was paid to the native school. Walls tastefully covered with good illustrations ; desks and even the floor absolutely speckless ; piles of drawing and other exercise books testifying to the ability, industry, and neatness of the pupils—might well have challenged comparison with any school in New Zealand. It was shown that all Maori children learn to sew, and that the boys excel the girls in the delicacy of their needlework ! The handsome lads whom we had met near Rauroa proved on description to be pupils of this school, and it was an emphasised pleasure to hear that they were invariably well-behaved.

Yet, in the enjoyment of all these results, there remained a sense of dissatisfaction with a system upon which there is the final judgment that the Maori always reverts to Maoridom. Highly gifted as the Maori is, he is gifted in his own way : as an orator, a musician,

a colourist, extraordinarily executive in some directions, easily becoming adept with machinery, owning powers of observation and of memory far superior to those of the average white man. There is, moreover, a marked disparity between the Maori man and the Maori woman—excepting, of course, the rare instances which prove the magnificent possibilities of Maori womanhood. Are we right in trying to drive all Maori children

There was but little time to inspect the warehousings of Te Kuiti; and, without an interpreter, we were merely amazed by the coarseness of design and fineness of execution, which here, as everywhere, distinguish Maori art. Perhaps some other occasion of the kind may be more propitious to some of us in this respect.

11.15 a.m. Off, by train, to Hangatiki; then six miles, by brake, to Waitomo Caves.



Mokau. Upper Mines.

through the "standards" that the other boys and girls of the country have to "pass"—if they can—standards, too, which constantly need modification? Ought not we to remember that the Maori and the Pakeha are distinct: equal but different, and that truly educative processes draw out that which is inherent? The two races never will be forced into rigid similarity; in the blending of their noblest characteristics lies the promise of the future.

We lunched, on leaving the brake, *al fresco*, as our custom was, and then our guide was ready to conduct us—over a quarter-mile of rough, hard road—in and out through charming woodland—round a corner—and down mossy steps heavily fringed on either side with bush ferns—then, nothing but a little unpainted wooden door in the hillside!

A key was turned, and we passed within. All was darkness. Six candles were lighted, and our stock

of magnesium wire was examined. "Before we go on," said the guide, "I have to say that visitors to the Caves are always requested to refrain from even touching the crystals—that nothing whatever is allowed to be carried away." "Perfectly right," responded One of us, "so long as the rule has no exceptions." "It has no exceptions," the guide rejoined; and then he very cleverly substantiated his assertion by narrating the recent experience of a Personage. Such a guide is the right man in the right place!

"Walk carefully!" was the first warning; "we are passing the Well—a hole sixty feet deep. You will notice it for yourselves when we come out; your eyes will have become used to the darkness."

Down a long and very strong ladder we went, and by magnesium light beheld the Concert Hall, with its domed ceiling seventy feet high!

Then we were taken to the Grand Organ: a wonderful similitude of cabinet and pipes. With a pocket-knife the guide struck three "pipes" in succession, again and again, evoking a "do, re, mi" of real sweetness. The bass "pipes" were at the back of the instrument, and were caused to emit deep and sonorous tones.

In a corner, the Firebell was made to clang forth its impetuous summons. The imitation was perfect!

Suspended as if by a professional shopman hangs the Blanket. The resemblance is extraordinary. When a lighted candle is placed behind the massive yet most graceful crystallization, its folds falling cornerwise and its patterned border strike one with astonishment.

The Confectioner's Shop displays a large and skilfully iced and ornamented bridescake, and quantities of minor delicacies.

The Maori Land Court is amusingly absurd! There is the whare roofing—there are the rows of images facing each other in endless deliberation!

In some of the caves stalactite and stalagmite have met to form pillars

—smooth in pure austerity, or wreathed and ornamented arabesques—while pillars of the future may be seen in every stage of formation.

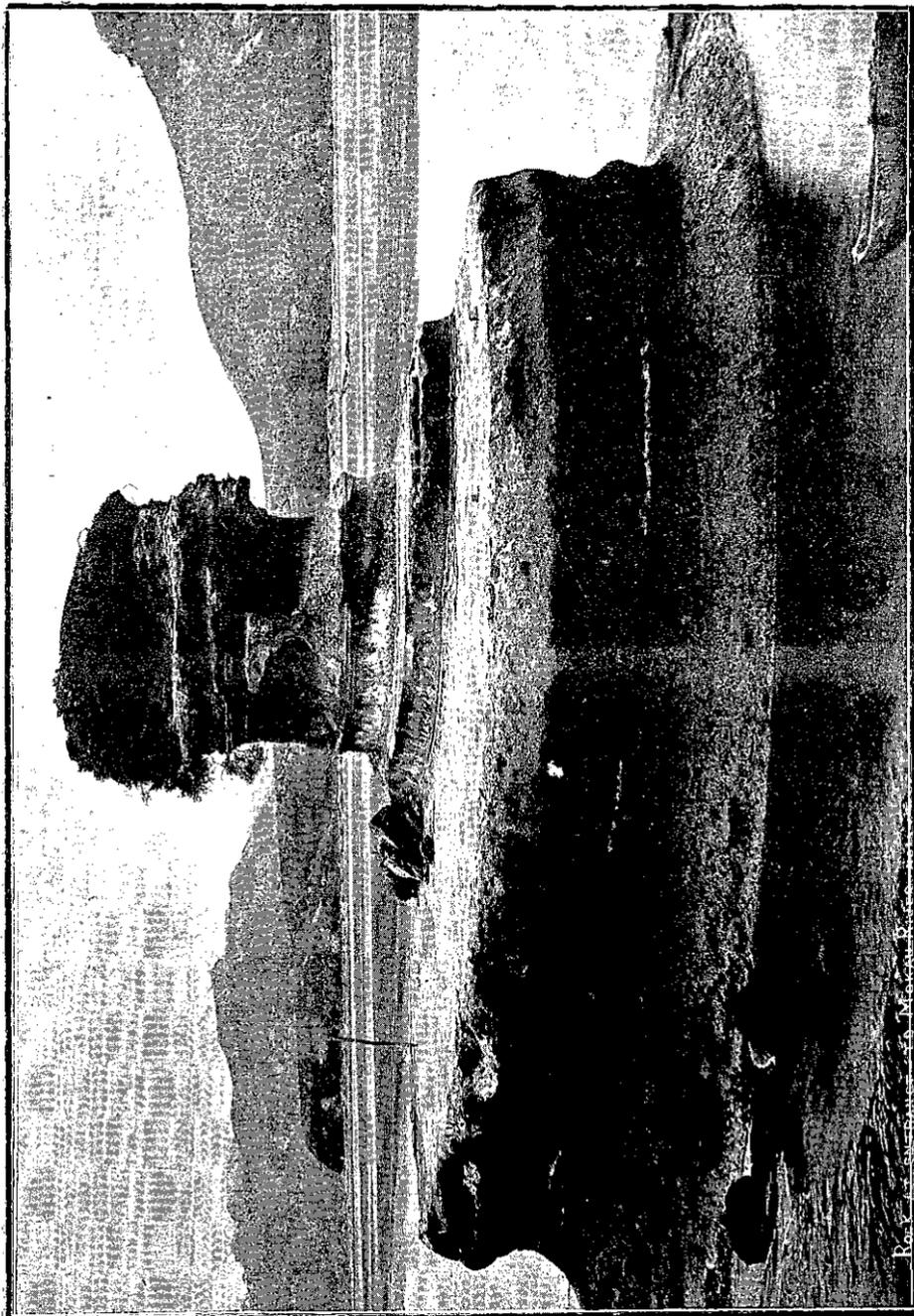
Down a second ladder we go, and tread very warily indeed, for here the Waitomo flows beneath the hill. When, at a safe distance, we have gazed upon its black and horrible surface, the guide tells everyone to extinguish candles and look upward. Ah! the transformation! The vaulted roof is alive with glow-worms, and they shine like the very stars of heaven! Singly, and in constellations, their light is reflected by the erstwhile Stygian stream, and it, too, has become a thing of wondrous beauty!

"Even thus with candles of rebellious fear
We pilgrims of mortality draw near
Thy river, Death! But, if we put away
The foolish tapers of our faltering clay,
And look above, then we shall recognise
Eternal Light; and oh, sublime surprise!
Gone every terror of abysmal night—
And Death's deep waters radiant in that
Light!"

We returned to the brilliant sunshine, and crossed the hill to look upon Waitomo (water entering in). Brave was the surveyor who rowed his little boat within that cavity, determined to cope with any dangers he might encounter, and disregarding his Maori friend's trembling outcry: "Taniwha! Taniwha!" Next Sunday he resumed exploration, and a tremendous task it must have been, without ladders, or any other assistance. Surely such heroism should be held in high esteem!

All too soon we turned southward again. More firmly than before were we persuaded that "everything depends on weather," for now we knew the ranges that had to be surmounted.

Monday night's camp was pitched in a pretty wayside glen, two miles south of Te Kuiti. Our desiderata were of course: good grass for the horses, running water, firewood, and bedding. Manuka was our fa-



Rock entrance to Mokau.

vourite mattress, springy and aromatic; bracken, too, we liked; pungas were very, very hard! After that first night we always kept the mosquitos at bay; sand-flies did not seem to mind the smoke, but they were in great force once only.

We were ascending the curves that would presently lead us down to Mangaotaki, when the advance guard of the Maoris returning from Mahoenui galloped by. The way was narrow, and our party had drawn aside for them. "Kia ora!" their leader shouted; "you stay half-an-hour, plenty more comin': buggies, brakes, plenty!" "Haere mai! haere mai!" shouted two or three of the next detachment to those behind them; and "Haere mai!" was sent far along the line.

How they trooped past! Men, women, children on horseback, all—excepting one haughty young chieftess on a side-saddle—riding in the same style: feet far in the stirrups, a sure but lurching seat, arms like wings every now and then. The buggies and other vehicles were the very best of their kind, and everything betokened that well-to-do-ness which is always pleasant to behold.

And how friendly they were! It was delightful to call "Kia ora!" to them, they gave it back with such goodwill. Orange, purple, scarlet, streamed by, and ever the pleasant, shining eyes and rich tones of salutation. "Kia ora! Kia ora! Kia ora! Kia ora!" one laughing chief greeted us four in the buggy, and the pretty girl beside him most musically tendered the same bright cheer.

Then a splendidly-built man shouted: "Kapai hurry up; no more now; plenty comin'; long way!" So Kapai! we hurried up, and met the stragglers at various parts of our onward route. One great wagon conveyed an enormous boiler and other arrangements that testified to a capable commissariat for even a very large meeting. Only the Maori dogs we pitied. They were

mongrels, and looked lean and weary.

We camped at Rauroa, and they went eeling. Eight ex-denzens of the Awakino were brought back, and deliciously cooked in frying-pans extemporised from enamelled plates spliced into long sticks.

Wednesday night we pitched in Puripuri Bay, and were enjoying our evening repast when two Maoris rode up from the sands. A little loitering showed us they wished to be sociable, so Mr. L. offered tea—the open sesame of the wayfarer. Only one of the two accepted the cup; but the other acted in the spirit which proffered it, and began to "tell us things."

Yes; he had been at Mahoenui. Big meeting. 500 Maoris, plenty talk, Maori Council. What the talk? Lots. You know monument Manaia? Pakeha put up after war. Ha; Maori put up monument all same to Maori. Te Kuiti, Mahoenui, somewhere. Plenty money all ready. All ready. Maori boy, he see name man. See name Maori man, gone! Yes; better now! Maori, Pakeha, all same! Good law! Friends!

The impressiveness of these utterances was truly wonderful. The eyes softened to tears, the voice fell in slow and solemn cadence. Taora (we had asked his name) was a very apostle of amity. It gave him manifest pleasure to recount the Pakeha contributions to Mahoenui kai: cherry pie, gooseberry pie—so many, so many. Pakeha gave. Pakeha to Maori. And Maori he give to Pakeha. All same. Maori and Pakeha, all same.

And yet. "Yes; I remember. Forty-three years. I was there!" There were dignity and sadness in the reminiscence; but no self-reproach or other reproach whatever. We shook hands all round when we said goodbye.

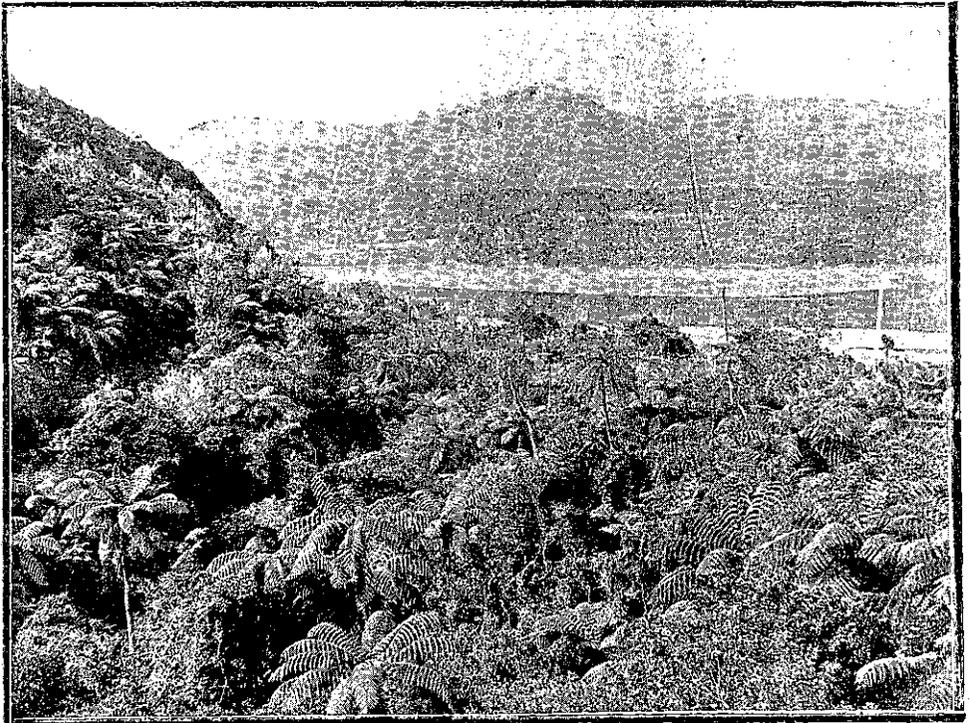
Thursday broke gloomily. Rain fell in showers of ever-increasing persistency, and we resigned ourselves to wait until the clouds should disperse, because the mud!

ahead was an unknown quantity. Fortunately, we were provided with pocket classics, and these were cards. Our three lads went to the mouth of the Awakino (they told us afterwards it was almost fine down there), and hours later returned with as many kawhai, schnapper and herring as they could carry.

New Year's Day was beautiful. But, alas! the Waitara steamer had gone up and down the Mokau on the previous day, and there would

After bowling along several miles of a lovely road we saw a Maori house and we saw Taora. He was hastening toward us, carrying something. As we came up, he lifted a snowy cloth and handed to the gig and to the buggy (our cavaliers were far ahead) a plateful of nicely-cooked potatoes and melons. "Taiwa?" he said; and, when we expressed thanks for the treat, he explained: "I tell—pakeha come—cook quick!"

As he stood there without his hat,



Tongaporutu Ferry.

be no chance for us who wished to look upon the river beauties that are said to rival those of Wanganui—no chance for another week.

At Kau-au Bay we halted to explore the tunnelled caverns and archways on the beach. Well pleased with our adventures we had just come up to our dinner camp when Taora rode along. Mr. L. and he had another chat, then our friend said he was nearly home and hurried away.

he was a much older-looking man than he had seemed on horseback. Intelligent, benign, courteous, from his gateway he waved a last goodbye. And, forty-three years ago, Taora's race and our race sought to extirpate each other!

Soon we crossed the Mohakitanu—then hey for Tongaporutu! On that beautiful riverside again we loafed and invited our souls; feeling that, if Christmas Day and New Year's Day were to be accepted as

harbingers, we might with joy and gratitude enter upon 1904.

Saturday night we camped, as had been promised, in Onaero glen. Early next morning some of us wended up through the luxuriant scrub and fern to the site of an old pa on the summit. We stood on the cliff from which one tribe thrust their women and children when overmasteringly surprised by another! We went to a bourgeoning pohukatawa which seemed to have been planted in commemoration of a mighty chief. Other relics there were in abundance—some of them more than gruesome!

And we came down to the level again, rejoicing in that evolutionary progression by which all things—all things—work out a Supreme purpose.

The old Maori days are gone for ever. Gone with them are infanticide, intertribal ferocities, and cannibalism. The Maori of to-day has learned much evil from us, but he has also learned much good. Side by side the Pakeha and the Maori stand: able, gallant, generous both! The failings of both are the failings of our human nature, and on each side there are inspired ones who strive to lead the many to higher levels.

The Maori is no more decadent than the Pakeha. Banish from Maori womanhood the poison-distilling pipe, train the young girls in hygiene and carefully imparted physiology, teach the youths as well as the maidens those watch-words: self-knowledge, self-control, and there will be a worthy continuance of the grand old race.

We had our last camp by the course where the whirlwind came into view on the morning of our setting forth. As we dined there, we felt a little bit sad and sorry; we had been so happy together.

About 2.30 that Sunday afternoon we returned to our home-

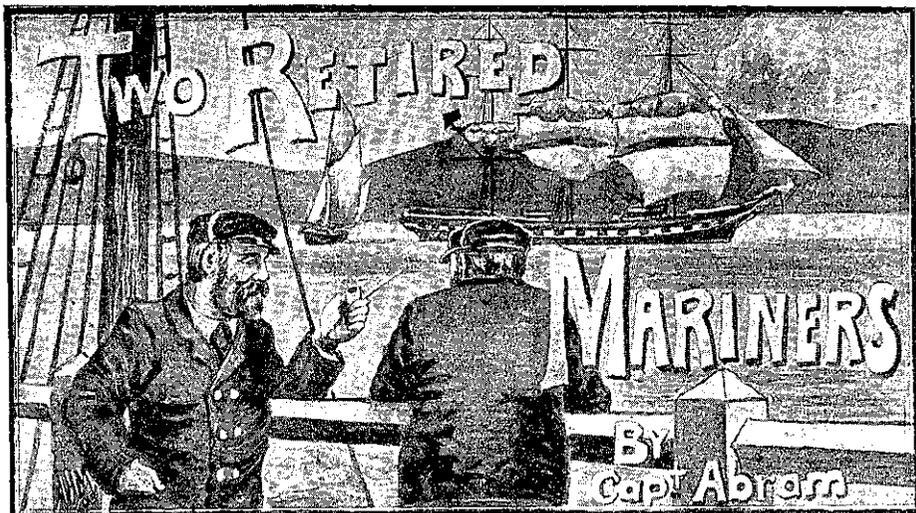
staying friends. Warm was their greeting, and great their amusement regarding our complexions! We had never criticised each other—the tan came on so gradually and so impartially—and now we were as amused as anyone else. Certainly we thought our friends very fair, and so nice and smooth-looking!

But we had our memories: memories of sea and river; bush and fern; waving toe-toe and long, shining, brown-tasseled grasses; of film and haze and colour; of towering cliff and subterranean chambers of grandeur and mystery; of sea shells beside the sea and sea shells beneath the forest-robed mountain; of every summits and faery dells, of the cuckoo's wistful cry and the tui's rapturous melody; of age-long relic and present-day achievement; memories of the brave, blithe, and beautiful Maori people; memories of new friendships—ever-to-be-treasured memories of our excursion into the King Country!



Mt. Egmont to Waitomo Caves.





(CONCLUDED.)

CHAPTER IV.



APTAIN GRAY spent most of the next morning wondering how James would receive the startling news of his engagement. He prepared himself for a growl, to be called an old barnacle and all the uncomplimentary names that his friend had in his comprehensive vocabulary. At two o'clock he made a start for the station in the buggy with Backstay.

"You stay where you are," said the skipper to the sailor as he stepped on to the platform.

Captain James jumped out of the train, and was cordially welcomed by his esteemed friend.

"Hullo! Who's that in the buggy?" enquired James as they walked towards the vehicle.

"Oh, that's one of my sailors that I had with me in the 'Anne and Jane.'"

"What! Have you shipped him as coachman?" asked James laughing.

"Something of the sort," answered Gray. "Backstay, this is my old friend, Captain James."

"Ow d'ye do, Captin'," said Backstay, pulling his forelock.

Captain James got into the buggy.

"I suppose, Gray, we'll have to sit in the bow and the A.B. aft, in this rigout?"

"Yes," laughed Gray. "I guess we shall."

Gray was to stay the evening with James, so Backstay took the vehicle home.

When they were comfortably seated over their grog and pipes, Gray knew that the dreaded time for his confession had arrived.

"What have you been doing with yourself during my absence?" asked James, as he blew clouds of blue smoke from his long clay pipe.

"Amusing myself."

"When did you ship Backstay?"

"A few days ago," replied Gray.

"Do you intend to keep him?"

"Yes, James. He'll be handy to help about my house."

"What house?" asked the astonished skipper, turning his eagle eye on his friend.

"The one I bought the other day."

"What on earth did you buy a house for?"

"To put my wife—"

"Your what?" yelled James,

jumping hurriedly up and breaking his favourite clay pipe. "You're not going to make a fool of yourself at your time of life by marrying a woman—are you?" he asked.

"In less than four weeks," answered Gray, smoking hard.

"Good Lord!" muttered James. "To think I should live to see my old friend do such a mad thing."

"Gently, gently!" said Gray. "Don't take it so rough. I'm marrying the girl—not you!"

"The girl!" muttered James in disgusted tones. "How old is she—twenty?"

"She was forty last birthday."

"And as ugly as sin, I suppose?" grunted James.

"Ugly! Not a bit of it! She's the finest-looking girl in the whole countryside, bar none!" retorted the skipper with heat. "Just let me describe her."

"No; for God's sake don't do that!" roared James.

"Well, come over with me, and I'll introduce you to her and her aunt."

"Oh!" exclaimed James, "there is an aunt—is there) And I suppose a father and mother and a dozen or so of country yokel brothers and sisters, and you will have to keep the lot. I can see through the whole business now, and I'm heartily sorry for you, Gray."

"Wrong again, you old heretic!" exclaimed Gray. "She hasn't a relative in England except her aunt!"

"Never mind! Take my advice, Gray, and leave this marrying business alone."

"I can't do that, James. Even if I could, I wouldn't think of such a thing for a moment. When you see her, I'm open to bet you'll fall in love with her yourself, or else with the aunt, for let me tell you, she's a grand old girl, and might suit you better."

"Gray, old man," said James, who had begun to cool down a little, "I'm very much afraid you're badly hit. I had a bump

that way once, and I had to suffer pretty sharply for it."

"You never told me about that," replied Gray, surprised.

"No, I know I didn't, for I've never uttered a word about it to anyone. It was like this. When I was a young man I got acquainted with a young lady, and, like you, Gray, was very bad about it. We became engaged, and were to be married on my return from China, whither I was bound. Just before leaving for my long journey, I received a loving epistle from her, swearing that she would be true to me for ever and a day." He stopped.

"And wasn't she?" asked Gray, indiscreetly.

"No," roared James. "When I got home, I found her married to a lobster."

"Poor old James," murmured Gray sympathetically. "And haven't you ever thought of loving another?"

"Not I!" replied James. "Once in a life-time is quite enough for me of that sort of business! I'm not to be had again! And I'm heartily sorry to see you laying yourself open to it."

"Er—well, old friend, I'm not an atom afraid of Miss Boyd playing me any such trick. She's honour itself."

"Rats!" grunted James, and the subject dropped.

The following morning Gray and his valet drove over for Captain James, and took him to see the new house.

James actually became interested when looking through the large rooms, and went so far as to suggest certain alterations that he thought would improve the place.

"Now that we've seen the cage, we'll go and see the bird," said Gray cheerfully. "You've suggested alterations in the house, so I'd like to know what you think of Miss Boyd."

James grunted some incoherent words about not wanting to be

mixed up in women's affairs, but he was eventually induced to go.

As they were walking to the door, Miss Boyd came running out, and to James's disgust, put her arms round Gray's neck, and greeted him very affectionately.

"This is your dear old friend, is it, Gerizam? How do you do, Captain James?" and she tendered him her soft white hand.

"I am very well, thank you, Miss Boyd," he said pleasantly.

The lady reeved her arm through Gray's, and asked them to step inside.

Backstay was sitting in the buggy pondering deeply on his chances of getting a similar invitation, when his master came out, and told him to tie up the horse and go round to the kitchen.

"Now, don't go making love to that pretty maid, or I'll discharge you straight away," said Gray with a chuckle.

The two mariners stayed to dinner. Captain James had to alter his opinion, and confess to himself that the ladies were very different to what he had anticipated, so much so, that before they had done dinner he had positively promised to take Mrs. Newton for a drive.

Meantime, Backstay was making good progress in the kitchen. He and May were getting on famously.

After lunch the two buggies were got ready for a start.

"Can you drive, Captain James?" enquired Mrs. Newton.

"If the horse is fairly quiet," laughed James.

"Oh, Bess is very quiet. The only trick she ever played was to jib with my niece a few days ago."

The two parties went different ways, for Miss Boyd wished to have another look over the house. She was by no means shy this time. Gray asked her to suggest any improvements she could think of.

"I would like some nice flower borders, Gerizam."

"You shall have anything you like, my dear, only let the happy day come when we can sign on."

"Oh, Gerizam, how can you be so impatient!"

As Captain Gray was leaving Mrs. Newton's about eight o'clock that night, Backstay wanted to know where the side-lights were. They had been forgotten. Mrs. Newton lent them her pair of carriage lamps, but Backstay was not satisfied with them.

"They ort ter be red an' green, sir," he said anxiously. "'Ow will any un know what tack we're on without the port an' starbud lights, eh, Capt'in?"

The skipper explained the landsman's rules of the road, and Backstay withdrew his objection.

For the next few days the two mariners and Backstay were busy about the new house. The sailor was in his glory when a flag-staff was ordered to be erected.

"Yer'll 'ave a good long top-mast, not furgettin' the cap an' cross-trees, sir. We'll show these land-lubbers 'ow ter rig up a flag-staff," he said to Gray. "An' yer 'avin' no objection, Capt'in, I'd like ter 'ave a bunk rigged up in me room, so as I can put in a donkey breakfast." (A sailor's bed made with shavings).

He was promised this luxury.

The flagstaff was rigged up, and signal halyards fixed ready to hoist the bunting for the skipper's wedding, which was now drawing near.

The evening before the great day the two skippers were invited to Mrs. Newton's for dinner. It was noticeable that Gray was somewhat nervous. But Backstay, who was in the kitchen, certainly was not.

"'Ow d'ye like me Capt'in's 'ouse, me darlin'?" he asked the maid.

"Very much; especially the flag-staff," she replied with a coy smile.

"Thank'e, me darlin'," said the happy sailor, getting up and emphasising his words with a warm hug. May pretended to be much offended, and called him some ugly names for daring to take such a liberty. Backstay, nothing daunted, repeated the offence.

As they were driving home after a

very pleasant evening, James remarked that Mrs. Newton was wonderfully sensible for a woman.

Gray smiled to himself. It looked as if his old friend was going to soften down about women.

"Yes," continued James, as if speaking to himself. "She is undoubtedly a very fine woman."

"You know, James, after all, I think I'm doing the best thing," said Gray.

"Well, Gray," answered his companion, "I must admit I've changed my mind, and I don't know but what you are."

"I'm very glad to hear you say so, James. If all goes well when we come back from our trip, we'll make you very comfortable. But I feel a bit funky about to-morrow's business. It's entirely new to me."

"Oh, you'll get through it all right," said James laughing, as he bid his brother skipper good-night.

Captain James called early next morning, and was surprised to see his friend in a terribly nervous state.

"Come man, pull yourself together! It'll soon be time to go to church."

"Oh dear! Oh dear!" groaned the poor bridegroom. "I'd sooner go through the exam. for extra master than this marriage ceremony. I feel sure that I'll make a mess of it."

It had been arranged that Captain James was to give away the bride, and some young lady friends of the bride would be her bridesmaids. Backstay was to drive his master.

"Well, how do I look, Backstay?" he asked his valet.

"Yer looks fur all the world like a tea clipper runnin' 'fore a ten-knot breeze—first-class," was the reply. "Yer would take the prize afore all comers."

"Well, get the buggy," ordered the bridegroom.

"Ay, ay, sir. All ready!" he answered, as Gray put the finishing touches to his rigout.

"Th'ole man is a bit funky," meditated Backstay. "Yet I've

seen 'im in gales on er lee-shore an' no sign o' fear, an' now 'e's funky erbout marryin' a bloomin' old gal. If that ther small craft in Mrs. Newton's pantry asked me ter marry 'er, an' she 'ad enuff cash ter pay damages, I'd do it in a moment."

"Backstay! Backstay! Are you there, Backstay?"

"Ay, ay, sir. Anything amiss?"

"I should just think there was! I've lost my wedding ring!" groaned Gray.

A thorough search was made. Drawers were emptied. Carpets were torn up, and the whole place turned upside down. Gray glanced at his pocket chronometer and saw that it was close on time for the ceremony. This made matters worse. Another hurried search with no result. What was to be done? As a last resource the Captain looked in his tobacco pouch, and there to his intense surprise he saw the lost ring. In his absence of mind he had forgotten that he had put it there for safety.

Gray and Backstay hurriedly got into the buggy and drove to the church at frantic speed, and it was with the greatest difficulty Gray pulled up at the Church door.

The crowd both inside and outside of the edifice testified to the popularity of the Captain and his bride, but in no wise lessened the worthy skipper's discomposure.

Backstay followed closely at the heels of his master as he entered the church. Everything was ready for the marriage ceremony to begin. James escorted the bride to the altar rails where the grey-headed parson was waiting. Bustling and perspiring, Gray rushed up the aisle as if his life depended on catching up to his bride. Then as he stood by her side and his admiring glance fell upon her, he could not refrain from uttering his thoughts in an audible whisper, his voice hoarse with emotion, and panting with his recent exertions. "My dear, you do look lovely in your new outfit." The spectators were convulsed.

The ceremony commenced. Everything was "in ship-shape order," as Backstay would have said had he dared.

As the parson, in what Gray thought a very sing-song way for so momentous an occasion, uttered the words, "Wilt thou have this woman—" the bridegroom's feelings were too much for him. "Rather!" he exclaimed in stentorian tones.

The reverend gentleman stopped abruptly, and looked at him severely.

"I knew I'd make a mess of it," murmured Gray under his breath.

"Wilt thou have this woman—" began the parson once more. The thought flashed through the impatient skipper's mind: "Can't I make the old, duffer understand?" and he was on the point of trying again, when Backstay interposed a timely hint.

"Stop a little, sir," he whispered boldly.

"To be your wedded wife," continued the parson, "and promise —"

"I'll promise anything," interrupted Gray.

The parson cast a freezing glance over his book, and finished his question with: "To love, honour and cherish until death do us part?"

"Now answer, sir," whispered the ever-ready Backstay.

"I will," replied Gray nervously, "honour, love, cherish and—" He stopped abruptly; he was stuck. He glanced pleadingly at his valet for assistance, and it was given him promptly.

"Protect from all weathers, sir," Backstay whispered audibly.

This was too much for the spectators, and to the parson's horror they tittered and laughed. The bride went through her part of the ceremony without any mishaps, and it was over.

Backstay had told Gray on their way to church that it was the usual custom for the best man to have the first kiss after the ceremony.

But this did not fall in with Gray's views. He took care to secure this privilege himself.

Whilst in the vestry Gray took the parson aside, thrust a good fee into his hand, and hoped that he would overlook any little mistakes he had made during the ceremony, as he was completely out of his latitude, and really had meant no offence whatever. The apology was accepted and the fee promptly pocketed.

Captain and Mrs. Gray, with their trusty coachman's help, jumped into the buggy and drove to Mrs. Newton's house, the rest of the party following in other conveyances.

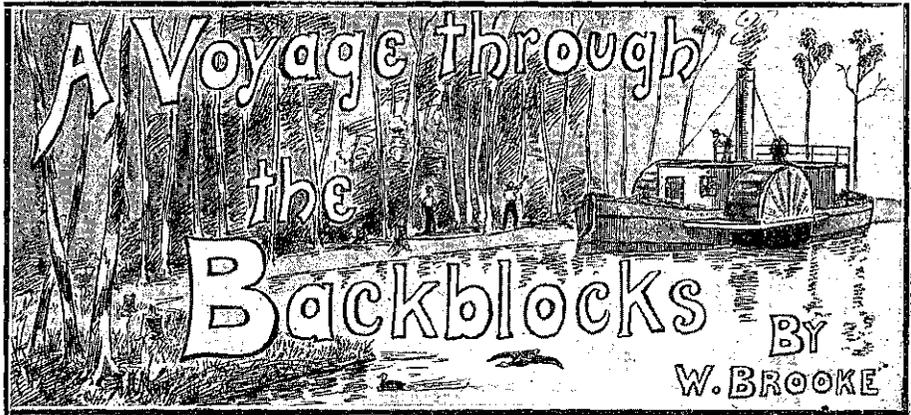
Here the wedding was celebrated in real old English style. The fun was fast and furious, especially when the time came to give the newly married couple a hearty send-off. A covered vehicle was engaged to take them to the station, for they had decided to go to London and Paris for the honeymoon. As Gray helped his well-dressed bride into the carriage, they received showers of rice. Backstay, as a special reminder of pea-soup days, varied the performance with a perfect hurricane of split peas.

The happy pair drove off with an old sea-boot lashed securely to a lady's slipper on the axle of their conveyance, an attention for which Backstay and May were considered responsible.

Captain James sorely missed his old chum, but made up for his loss by visiting Mrs. Newton frequently. Backstay was left under his command until his master returned.

There remains little more to be related about the Retired Mariners, but it is rumoured that the very day after Gray's marriage, James determined to sign articles with Mrs. Newton.

Backstay and May are great friends. He has given up drinking and smoking, and when Captain Gray asked him the reason, he said: "I'm a savin' me money, Captin, fur a futur' hevent."



“YES, gentlemen,” said the Custom House Officer, as we sat on the deck-rails and smoked, one fine evening in Sydney Harbour, while the crowded pleasure steamers passed and repassed on their journeys to Manly and Mosman’s Bay. “Yes ;

I’ve followed the sea myself for years before I got this job under the Commonwealth, and I’ve been in all classes of vessels from a Yankee brigantine to a P. and O. steamer, but the queerest craft I ever struck, was a Murray River steamer called the ‘Belle of Mildura.’ I happened to leave a ship at Adelaide, and from there I went up country for a spell, and worked on a sheep-station. However, I soon grew tired of that, so I shipped as deck-hand aboard the ‘Belle of Mildura.’

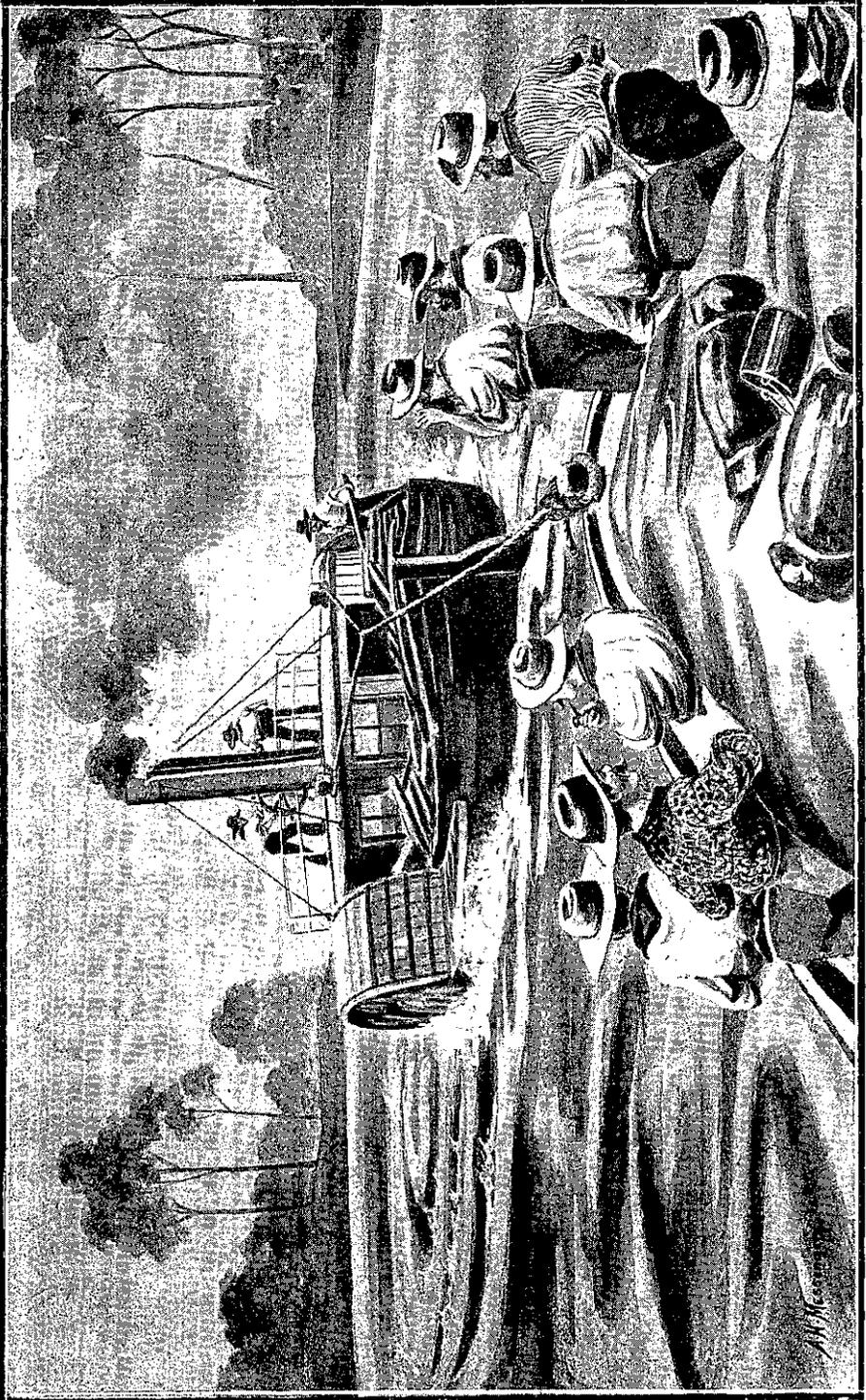
“The ‘Belle’ was just an old barge about ninety feet long. She had a bridge and deck-house built on to her, and her engines were just an ordinary threshing machine with an elongated shaft and two paddle-wheels affixed.”

“How did they get that engine over its dead centre ?” enquired the Chief Engineer.

“Well,” replied the Customs official, “after the engineer had turned on steam, and the moorings

were let go, all hands had to clap their weight on to the paddle-wheels, and heave round for half a turn. That’d get her started ; and unless the steam ran back, she’d seldom stick. But to proceed with the yarn. She carried six hands all told. Captain, engineer, two deck-hands, a stoker and a Chinese cook.

“I soon found that I hadn’t struck a very soft job. The pay I received as deck-hand was six pounds a month and tucker, and I guess I earned it all—every cent. We started away up the river with a cargo of barbed wire for Burke just after the heavy rains, when the current was running fairly strong. The utmost speed that we could get out of the ‘Belle’ was six knots an hour, and she was a demon to burn fuel. The furnace was fed with logs of gum, and every evening just before sunset our craft was tied up to the bank, while the skipper sent us all ashore to chop up dead gum trees. We then had to carry the logs aboard, and stack them near the furnace for the next day’s fuel. We used to make another start at sunrise, and during the day one man took the wheel while another passed logs to the stoker, and took frequent spells at the pump, because the heavy cargo of barbed wire had made the old tub leak. When the captain found out that I’d been a deep-water sailor, and held a second



The "Belle of Mildura."
"The 'Belle' entered the whirlpool with the barge in tow, and made a brave attempt to cross it."

mate's certificate, he treated me with some consideration—that is, he used to keep me at the wheel, and yarn to me about the ways of deep-water ships, to which he was a stranger, having been on the Murray River all his life.

“Now, this suited me down to the ground, because while I was at the wheel, I escaped the log-handling and pumping. So I told him strange and wonderful tales of sea-life, and kept him interested. In fact, one day after he had been hitting the whisky bottle pretty hard, he told me that when he took command of a new river steamer that was being built, I should be promoted to the command of the ‘Belle.’ Of course, I thanked him; but as her bottom might drop out at any time, this promise didn't amount to much. Occasionally we ran aground on a mud-bank, but got off again, and paddled steadily up the river as it wound through the long miles of salt-bush plain and forest land. As we approached Wilcania, a township on the Darling, we took a barge in tow, loaded with farming implements and a crowd of shearers going from one station to another. The old steamer towed the barge along at a good rate, but just below Wilcania a billabong was running into the river causing quite a whirlpool. Well: the ‘Belle’ entered the whirlpool with the barge in tow, and made a brave attempt to cross it, but her old engine hadn't power enough to give her steerage way. Three times the barge and steamer chased each other round the whirlpool; while the skipper stamped around the little bridge and swore till the air went blue, and the crowd of shearers on the barge laughed and jeered. Finally we came out of the whirlpool at the same place as we entered it. The skipper and engineer, however, were not disheartened. So after firing up afresh, we tried again.

“This time the engineer had her working under what he called forced draught—that is, he had knocked

down the planking on the fore side of the engine-house, and let the wind blow straight up under the furnace bars. The old steamer shook as the paddle-wheels revolved faster, and she coughed up blazing pieces of wood and sparks galore out of her smoke-stack, giving the shearers on the barge a lively time dodging them as they blew astern. This time, by keeping close to the bank, we managed to get past the whirlpool, and soon after we cast off the barge at its destination.

“Well, after all, the ‘Belle of Mildura’ finished her career in style. It happened this way. The only part of her worth anything was her steam syren or hooter. It had been salvaged from the wreck of an ocean liner, and the owner of the ‘Belle’ had bought it cheap at Adelaide.

“Just as we approached Burke we could see flags waving and heard bells ringing and guns being fired, which made us guess rightly that the news had just arrived by telegraph of the relief of Mafeking. Everyone ashore seemed to be jubilating, so we prepared to jubilate too. The skipper pulled back the syren-rope and made it fast to the bridge rail. Then we approached the landing stage with a prolonged deafening hoot which drowned the sound of bells and cheering ashore. This was all very well, but all the steam was going up through the whistle and the paddle-wheels ceased to revolve. The engineer came on the bridge and remonstrated, but the skipper, inflamed with whisky and patriotism, called him a cussed pro-Boer, and while they were shouting at each other the steamer lost steerage way. She drifted broadside on to the wharf piles, and her rotten side caved in like an egg-shell. We had just time to scramble on to the wharf before the old ‘Belle’ sank beneath the brown waters of the Darling River; and as she sank, her brazen syren screamed all it knew how in honour of the event that was sending a mighty Empire delirious with joy.”

The Winning of Nan.

By L. M. EASTGATE.



ABA was one of the largest plantations in Fiji, and undoubtedly one of the jolliest. It was a day's journey from Suva, the nearest township, and quite isolated as far as other plantations were concerned, but the inhabitants were a little colony in themselves.

Mr. Esdaile, the manager, was a genial host, and delighted in having his big house full of guests. There was a splendid tennis lawn and plenty of horses, and Mrs. Esdaile was a perfect genius at entertaining, consequently the townfolk were very ready to avail themselves of an invitation to Kaba.

It was Christmas and the house was overflowing. A large party had arrived from Suva the day before, and as Nan Esdaile said, it was going to be a record Christmas both for gaiety and heat. It was certainly hot, even for Fiji, but you would never have thought it, to see the energy with which tennis was being carried on.

The big ra-ra was gay with bright figures, and the air was filled with the sounds of merry talk and laughter.

Nan was among the most untiring, and seemed to enjoy her game and the company of her partner equally well. He was a sallow young man with a receding brow and chin. Nan appeared to like him immensely, but that was because she was very angry with Jim Oswald—the tall athletic young fellow in white flannels on the other side of the lawn. Jim had disapproved of something Nan had done, and in

his cool, downright fashion had told her so. Nan was very angry with him—very, very angry, and meant to punish him until, metaphorically speaking, he was willing to let her walk over him.

He looked very impenitent so far, and, after procuring tea for Mrs. Marshall, stood leaning against a tree with his hands in his pockets, talking and laughing in the most unconcerned fashion.

Nan suddenly felt an unreasonable dislike to the youth at her side. He had beckoned an Indian servant to bring them tea, and Nan noticed with disgust that he half filled his cup with sugar and seemed deeply interested in the cakes.

"No wonder he looks bilious," she thought, and then she shot a quick glance over at the clear tan of the face opposite. Jim never took afternoon tea, and certainly a man looked better smoking, she said to herself. Just then he raised his head and met her glance, and his blue eyes held hers for a moment before she turned angrily away. A half smile touched Jim's lips, for Nan's look when he first caught it had been anything but a disapproving one.

Strolling down a path at the back of the grounds an hour later, when most of the party had dispersed, Jim came suddenly upon Nan and stopped short, remembering that kindly glance.

"Nan, will you come for a ride to-morrow morning before breakfast?"

Nan also remembered that glance and felt exceedingly mortified over it, otherwise she might have said yes, for she and Jim had been some-

thing more than good comrades. Instead, she held her small head as high as she could, and answered perversely :

"Thank you, Mr. Oswald, I've promised to ride with Mr. Leigh to-morrow morning."

Jim's face hardened. Leigh was the sallow youth and a devoted admirer of Nan's, but hitherto she had only laughed at him. Also, Jim had fallen into the habit of thinking that to escort Nan in an early morning ride was his own especial right. The only other person she had ever gone with was her father, and the idea that she was going with "that young ass" caused Jim to feel decidedly savage. He recovered himself immediately, and raised his cap.

"Oh, certainly; I hope you'll have a pleasant ride," he remarked equably, albeit a trifle sarcastically, as he passed on.

Nan felt rather sorry then, and to judge by appearances was sorrier still the next morning, for she looked decidedly cross when she returned from her ride.

"I wish I hadn't gone out. It's so abominably hot," she said, throwing herself into a lounge as soon as she entered her room.

"Which argues that Mr. Leigh did not prove exhilarating, taken before breakfast," remarked Betty Stuart, who was sharing Nan's room. She was standing before the looking-glass completing her morning toilet and looked provokingly cool.

"What a lazy thing you are, Betty!" said Nan, choosing to ignore her friend's remark. "Do you mean to say that you're only just up?"

Betty laughed as she caught hold of a stray curl and carefully pinned it into place.

"I think early risers are the most exasperatingly self-satisfied people on the face of the earth. Behold, how virtuous we are when we come in from an early ride and find our slothful friend still in her room. No, my dear child, it would take a

very different man from Mr. Leigh to tempt me out at the hour you rose this morning—very different."

"Don't be silly, Betty," said Nan crossly, "Mr. Leigh is very pleasant."

"H'm," remarked Betty meditatively, "so he is, so is sugar if you don't have much of it. For daily food one requires something more wholesome. Now," with a little smile at herself in the glass and her back turned to Nan, "if Mr. Oswald asked me to go for a morning ride, it's just possible I might think it worth the exertion. He is quite charming, and his riding is perfection."

The colour deepened in Nan's cheeks, but she answered coolly :

"Why, so he shall. He'd be delighted, quite apart from the fact that you're a visitor, and he lives on the place, and therefore it's his bounden duty to entertain you."

Betty turned round like a flash.

"Just you dare, Miss Nan, and I'll make you sorry!" Then she laughed, and, coming over to the other girl's side, she laid her hands on her shoulders, and said softly : "Oh, you goose, you very silly little goose! I suppose you must buy it for yourself," and with this rather enigmatical speech she dropped a kiss on Nan's upturned face and left the room.

* * * *

"That is the hundred and twenty-first," said Nan, with a vicious slap at a mosquito on her white arm.

"Oh, you are slow, Nan," said another girl. "I reached two hundred long ago."

"I believe we girls get them all," said Nan, "except Betty, who, as usual, does not need to exert herself."

"Too hot," murmured Betty. "Mr. Seaforth is keeping the mosquitoes away from me beautifully with this fan."

"The penalty of greatness," said a voice in Nan's ear, and she turned with a start, and discovered that in

the darkness Jim Oswald had quietly taken a seat just behind her on the verandah where they were all sitting after dinner.

"Poor Seaforth is sitting by his Queen, but he's the only man among us who isn't smoking," he continued. "The fan absorbs all his energies."

"What deprivation," said Nan sarcastically. "You wouldn't give up your cigarette to fan anybody, Mr. Oswald."

"Yes, I will for you," he retorted promptly tossing it into the garden. "Now, wait until I get a fan——"

"Oh, please don't!" cried Nan. "I wasn't thinking of myself. It always makes me hotter to be fanned on these roasting nights."

"Who votes for a row on the river?" called out Jim.

The proposal was received with acclamation, and the whole party moved down to the landing-stage where the boats were moored.

"Miss Esdaile," said Leigh coming up to her, "you'll come in my boat, won't you?"

"Miss Esdaile is already engaged, Leigh. She's coming in my skiff," came Oswald's clear voice from where he was busily employed with the boats.

Nan looked up, petrified at the audacity of the speech. Across the landing their eyes met, the girl's startled—defiant, the man's compelling—dominating. Five minutes later Nan was in Jim's skiff out on the river.

"Why did you do that?" she asked coldly.

"Because I'd had just about as much as I could stand," said Jim quietly. "If I hadn't done that you would have been out in Leigh's boat now. You couldn't very well have helped yourself whether you liked it or not. I did not like it, and I thought it was about time I had my innings."

Nan flushed crimson and wished with all her heart that she could hate him. That everything about this masterful young giant com-

mended itself to her, made her all the angrier, and a very relentless purpose grew within her that, no matter what her feelings might be, he should learn very thoroughly that he could not do as he would with Mistress Nan.

There was a short silence. Nan amused herself like a child, trailing her hand through the water and watching the track it left turn to glittering silver in the brilliant moonlight.

They were out of sight of the other boats by this time, for Jim was the best oarsman among the men there, and his craft being very light he easily distanced them.

Nan presently noticed it and asked him very decidedly to let the others catch up to them. Jim complied with apparent meekness, knowing that the tide was with them, and that although the other boats had the same advantage, they were much heavier, and the rowers in them would most likely let them drift after a while. It was therefore, with a comfortable conviction that the distance he had purposely put between them was not likely to be lessened, that Jim drew in his oars.

"Have you forgiven me yet?" he said softly.

Nan shook her head without raising her eyes from the water.

Jim leaned over and took the little, wet, white fingers in his own.

"Nan," he said, almost roughly, "I've had to scheme and offend you to get you to myself for one hour. One little hour—when I want you for always with every fibre of my being. Do you know what I mean? Have you anything of the same sort of feeling for me?"

Nan looked up at the determined face, white now under the tan, the blue eyes almost black with repressed feeling. She shivered a little and tried to draw her hand away, but the clasp of the strong, brown fingers tightened. Her glance fell on the two hands. Just so would he take and hold her life. Nan had an inherent love of freedom. Not

yet—not yet! But she did not raise her eyes to his face as she said, with a coaxing inflection in her voice, “Ah! no. Just let us be friends. We are generally very good ones.”

“We are not,” he said steadily. “I will have nothing to do with any friendship of yours—I have been your lover always. Nan! Nan! I want you for my wife.”

Nan felt her courage ebbing away, but she took it in both hands.

“I don’t want to be anybody’s wife. Oh, Jim, don’t say any more. Take me home,” she replied desperately.

There was a sharp intake of his breath, and then he turned and rowed silently home.

* * * *

“I’m about sick of this, Oswald, and I’m jolly well sure you must be.”

Jack Graham was the speaker, the overseer in charge of the coolies on the Kaba plantation. He had been ill ever since Christmas, and it was now February.

“Well, to see you pitching about like that one would think you had the strength of Hercules,” remarked Jim drily, as he mixed some brandy with a basin of arrowroot and brought it over to the bedside. “I’ve only made that bed three times since I came in half-an-hour ago.” But the way he shook up the pillows and tended his sick chum was as deft and tender as a woman. “It’s no good getting sick of it, old man, until you are on your legs again,” he continued presently, throwing himself into a lounge-chair by the open French window.

“It’s a beastly business,” said Graham wearily. “Lying on one’s back all day with another fellow doing your work, and getting things all sixes and sevens.”

“Who told you that?” asked Jim quietly. “You didn’t hear it from me.”

“No,” replied the sick man, “but from what Len Esdaile says, Leigh

is continually rubbing the coolies up the wrong way. And last night when you were out, the Sirdar came up to see me. Of course, I didn’t let him say anything against Leigh—there’d be the devil to pay if I did—but I can see that they hate him like the deuce. Tell me the exact state of affairs, Oswald. Whatever it is, it can’t worry me more than this uncertainty.”

Jim smoked in silence for a few minutes before he replied.

“I’d much rather not, Graham. To tell the truth, I can’t look at the matter from an impersonal point of view—I can’t stand that fellow Leigh at any price!” A hard ring came into his voice which made Graham look at him quickly. “Besides, he lives here, I wish to Heaven he didn’t!”

“So do I, but Mr. Esdaile asked us to make room for him here until the other cottage was finished,” returned Jack. “Still, we’re not his hosts, so you needn’t feel sensitive on that point. As to the other, I can trust you to be fair. I’ve been bothering about it all day, and you’re the only person I can talk to freely, because I know Leigh’ll be safe in your hands.”

“Yes, I know what your feelings are about your beloved coolies, and I won’t be the means, direct or indirect, of getting Leigh into trouble.”

“If you understood Indian coolies as well as you do Fijians, old fellow,” said Jack drily, “you would know that the greatest kindness you could do Leigh would be to interfere with his present mode of dealing with them. I shall not report him to Mr. Esdaile, of course, but I sincerely hope the Sirdar will, although I couldn’t tell him so. It may save Leigh from something worse. Some of those fellows would think nothing of putting a knife into him.”

“Well, I don’t talk Hindustani very well,” said Jim reluctantly, “so I daresay I know less about it than Len, but I must say I’ve been sorry for those poor devils since you

got ill, and Esdaile put Leigh in charge of them. They are perpetually being fined and given extra tasks."

"One of the Sirdar's complaints yesterday was that they are kept so late in the field. It's a jolly shame," said Graham warmly. "But Len had some yarn about a woman that Mrs. Esdaile had sent for to go up to the big house to do washing. It can't be true that Leigh has ordered a woman to go whose caste forbids her!"

"I believe he gave her the order in ignorance as to her caste," said Jim slowly. "He was boasting in the office to-day that, caste or no caste, she'd have to obey now it was given, even though the Sirdar and her own husband kicked up the deuce's own row."

Jack gave a low whistle of dismay.

"The infernal young fool," he groaned. "Why on earth can't he give his orders to the Sirdar and leave him to use his own discretion? As a matter of fact, they break their caste when they leave India, but they cling to old ways, and the most sensible course is to humour them."

"Yes," said Jim decidedly, "and the best thing you can do is to look sharp and get well and get back to them, so just shut up now and go to sleep."

"All right, but mark my words, it strikes me very forcibly that Leigh won't keep a whole skin if he goes on like this much longer," said Jack languidly, as he turned over and closed his eyes.

Jim stayed by the window smoking and thinking for some time. The Indian boy who was his own and Jack's special servant came in and inquired whether the Sahibs would need him again that night. On Jim replying in the negative, he went off to the Indian quarters.

Jack was now fast asleep, and presently Jim rose, and, after noiselessly putting everything in order for the night, went to his own room

and to bed. He could not sleep, however, for thinking of Nan Esdaile. She was very seldom absent from his thoughts, for when a man of his stamp sets his heart on winning anything, he does not easily relinquish his hope of victory. He had hardly seen anything of Nan since the night on the river, one reason being that he had devoted all his spare time to nursing Jack Graham. He knew that Leigh was continually up at the big House, and he chafed at the thought.

That afternoon an incident had occurred which put the finishing touch to the sore-hearted feeling which had possessed him all the month.

Nan was waiting on horseback outside the office for her father, and Leigh was standing talking to her when Jim came in from the plantation. His heart leaped at the sight of her, but she merely gave him a constrained little bow, and turned her head aside to answer a question which Leigh purposely put to her at that instant. Jim passed on with an impassive face and a strong desire to put an end to Leigh's existence.

Now to tell the truth, Nan's behaviour was the outcome of an overwhelming shyness which had seized her at the sight of Jim. The look on his face and the grip of his hand when he told her he loved her had remained with her, and the weeks which had elapsed since she had seen him had taught her a good deal. Therefore, she behaved "like a stupid schoolgirl," as she said to herself indignantly that night when she realised the construction that Jim had put on her action. And Jim tossed wakefully on his bed and wondered whether it were possible that Nan could care for "that contemptible fellow Leigh." Then he heard Leigh come noisily in and go to his bed, and swore softly under his breath at the utter lack of consideration for the sick man next door.

At last every sound died away, and save for the ceaseless hum of

mosquitos, the house lay wrapped in utter stillness.

It was past midnight when Jim slipped quietly out of bed, for during Jack's illness, he had made a custom of going to his room two or three times through the night to see how he was. The bedrooms were all on one side of the house and opened on to the wide verandah by French windows, which were never closed at night on account of the heat.

Jim was in the act of stepping out of his room when something caused him to draw quickly back and watch for a moment. A dark shadow crossed the moonlit verandah and disappeared through the furthest window. The next instant Jim had noiselessly entered after it.

The room was flooded with moonlight, Leigh lay fast asleep, and by his bedside stood the dark figure of an Indian. Jim's quick eye caught the gleam of the knife in his hand. A crash woke Leigh and, half asleep, he gazed at the two struggling figures.

The coolie was perfectly naked and oiled from head to foot, and now his only desire was to get clear and escape detection.

Jim found that strength was of little use against this slippery, writhing form which eventually eluded his grasp, and instantly vanished through the window as swiftly and silently as it had come.

"I say, what on earth is the meaning of all this?" said Leigh's bewildered voice from the bed.

"The meaning is that some one else has had to pay for your confounded foolery," answered Jack Graham sternly, from the doorway.

"Jim, old man——"

"You young idiot, go back to bed at once. I——" Jim looked vaguely down at the sleeve of his sleeping jacket, and wondered why it was so warm and red. An icy-cold wave enveloped him from head to foot, and then thick darkness blotted out the world.

Nan was sitting on the side verandah waiting as usual to dispense the early morning tea. Her father was always the first, for he was generally out for a couple of hours before the ten o'clock breakfast.

This morning he was late, and she had just decided to take her mother's tea in, and scold him for being lazy, when the pretty little Indian boy whose duty it was to wait at table, came up the verandah with the toast.

"Don't bring that yet," said Nan. "The Sahib is not up."

"Sahib gone," said the boy.

Nan felt puzzled. She had risen half-an-hour earlier than usual for she had not slept well, and was restless. She had been on the verandah, and must have seen her father had he gone out during that time. Something unprecedented must have occurred to make him leave the house so very early and without a cup of tea.

"Are you sure?" she asked the boy, who replied glibly that it was true; a coolie had killed Oswald Sahib in the night, and Esdaile Sahib had been sent for. Oh, no, he had made no mistake, Oswald Sahib's boy had told him all about it early that morning.

Nan's heart gave one great sickening throb and then seemed to stand still. Everything seemed whirling round, and she pressed her little clenched hands against her lips as she fought down a hysterical desire to scream. Then with hands that shook she arranged some tea and toast on a tray and took it to her mother's room.

"Why has dad gone out so early, mother?" she said steadily, although her face was deadly white, but the blinds were down and her mother did not notice it.

"I'm afraid something terrible has happened," she answered. "Mr. Leigh came for your father at two o'clock this morning. He had just been for the doctor. Your father only told me that Mr. Oswald had been badly hurt by an Indian, and then hurried away."

Nan stood quite silent, but one hand was clenched tightly round the rail at the foot of the bed.

"I wish you would send Len over to find out what is really the matter, dear, I do feel so anxious," continued Mrs. Esdaile.

Nan quietly left the room, but she went straight to her own instead of Len's. As soon as she found herself alone she drew a long gasping breath, and put her hand up to her throat as if she felt suffocated.

"My poor boy, my poor boy! Oh! what shall I do?" she cried.

The next moment she heard her father's step and sprang into the verandah to meet him.

"What is it, dad?" she asked quickly.

He stooped to kiss her as he replied: "Not as bad as I thought, little woman; Oswald has been hurt in a struggle with a coolie who was on the point of attacking Leigh while the latter was asleep."

"Is he badly hurt?" asked Nan quietly.

"Not very. His arm is slashed open with the knife the Indian had in his hand. Oswald makes light of it, declares that it was half accident as the man was trying to get away. By Jove! he's a pluck fellow, and no mistake! He won't say much about it, but Graham says, and there is no doubt it is true, that, but for Oswald, Leigh would have been a dead man this morning."

"How did it happen?" asked Nan, her eyes kindling.

Mr. Esdaile gave her a brief account, winding up with: "Now I must go and tell your mother. I want her to go and see those boys; there's a pair of them sick now."

* * * *

Nan was out in the garden in the dusk picking roses—glorious red roses. Her lovely face was paler than usual, and faint shadows under her eyes told of the strain of the last twenty-four hours. She was thinking of her meeting with Jim

only the previous afternoon, though it seemed so long ago, thinking remorsefully of the look that had flashed into his eyes at the coldness of her greeting.

"These are to make up for it," she said to herself. "I wouldn't dare send them if he wasn't ill, but," with a wicked smile, "he can't get up out of bed to come here, and so—" she laid a sweet, half-blown bud against her lips for a moment before she added it to the bunch, and the warm blood ran up into her cheeks—"so he shall have the roses."

Jim looked up languidly as his boy entered the room with a bunch of roses, but the few words the boy spoke in Hindustani might have been a charm for the change they wrought in his expression. He took the flowers eagerly, and his eyes glowed as he drew from the very heart of the bunch a slip of paper on which was pencilled, "Roses, which at twilight I have culled."

The boy gazed at Jim in great astonishment as he sprang up and, sitting on the edge of the bed, told him to bring him clothes and help him to dress.

"Be quick!" he cried imperatively. "Flannels, they are easiest, and that loose blazer over there."

The boy slipped the sleeve over the bandaged arm very deftly, and shortly after Jim walked quietly into the moon-lit garden, hoping with all his heart that Nan had not yet gone in. Presently his keen eyes detected her sitting on a flight of steps that led up to the side verandah. Nan saw the white figure coming up the path and, thinking it must be Leigh, gave a little stamp of vexation.

"To think he should have the effrontery to come here to-night," she said. Then, as the tall figure came nearer she gave an incredulous gasp of dismay. "Oh! how could you come out? I thought you were in bed."

"So I was," he replied, smiling at her, "because your mother and the doctor worried me into it."

"Well, do go back! You'll make yourself ever so much worse."

"It's no use, Nan," said Jim quietly. "You won't get rid of me yet. This is Heaven after the day I've spent."

"Was the pain so bad?" asked the girl quickly.

"Not the pain of my arm," he answered, coming nearer. "Nan," with a thrill in his voice, "do red roses mean friendship?"

"That's as you please," said Nan demurely, and suddenly Jim's arm drew her close, and he bent his head and kissed her passionately.

"Oh!" cried Nan. "I thought you were badly hurt."

Jim laughed. "When I am too badly hurt to hold you, love," he retorted, "I shall be ready for my coffin." Then he drew her head back on his shoulder until he could look into her eyes.

"You little dainty thing," he murmured. "Mine—to have and to hold."

"Jim," asked Nan after a while, softly touching his wounded arm, "why did you do it? You never liked Mr. Leigh."

"No," he replied grimly, "I never liked him, and when you took to showing him favour and snubbing me, I sometimes felt like murdering him."

"Yet you risked your own life to prevent someone else hurting him, and it would have mattered far less——" She stopped short and turned ed crimson.

Jim laughed exultantly.

"Oh, that was a very different matter. So you like me better than Leigh, after all, Nan?" he asked teasingly.

Nan flashed him a look, and then remarked quite irrelevantly, "You've been out far too long. Do go in now and go to bed!"

"You're exceedingly kind and hospitable," was the sarcastic reply. "I have no intention of going at present, but I'll sit down on these steps if you like," and as he suited the action to the words, he caught her within his arm and drew her down on his knee, laughing at her mutinous face.

"You're more unmanageable than ever," said the girl.

"I don't know about that," he retorted, "but in any case I shall do as I like with you now, you little rebel. You've not answered me yet."

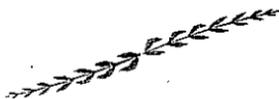
"Whether I like you better than Mr. Leigh?" said Nan musingly. "Well, no, I don't like you at all."

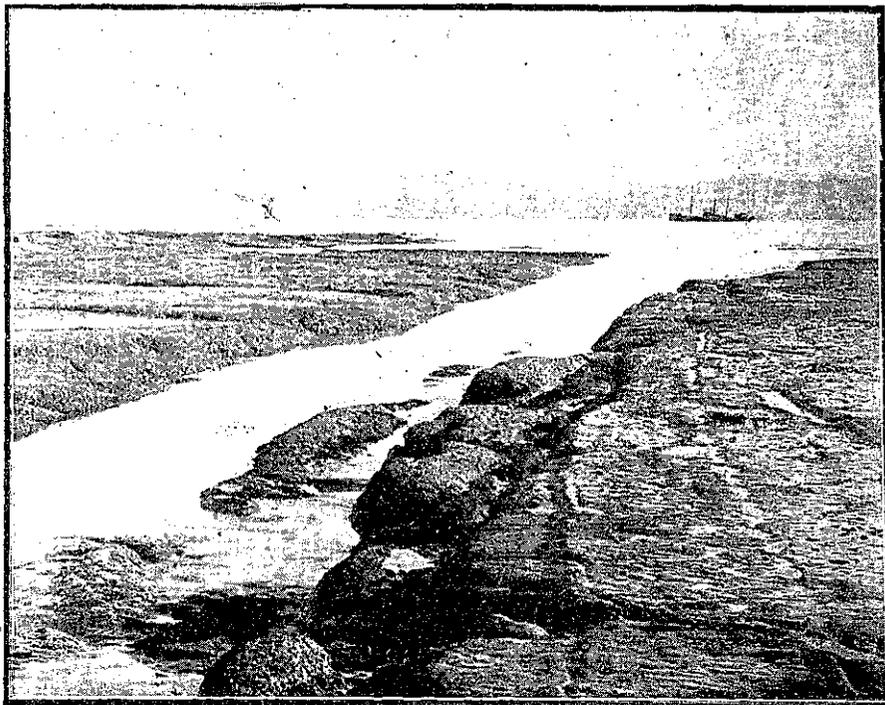
"I hope not," said Jim drily. "If you remember, I refused your liking once. This has been a very one-sided affair so far. Don't you believe in fair exchange?" Then, as she remained silent, "Nan—dear Nan."

Then she turned, and he saw that her eyes were full of tears. Slipping her arm round his neck she kissed his lips, then said, with a little sob in her voice:

"Oh! my dear boy, I did not really know how I loved you until this morning. Jim, do you know," with a shiver, "they told me that you were dead?"

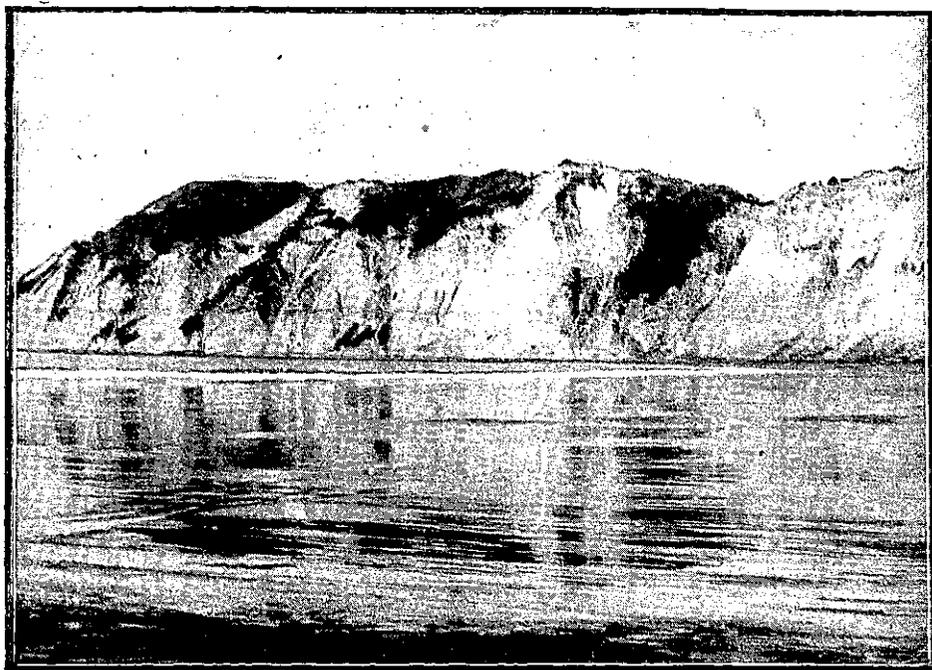
"Poor little girl," said Jim very softly, but with a sparkle in his eyes. "But, my love, I can't possibly be very sorry, because but for that, I might have had to wait very much longer for the red roses."





A. Sawyer, photo.

Captain Cook's first landing place in New Zealand (Gisborne). Cook came up this inlet with his boats.



A. Sawyer, photo.

Young Nick's Head. The first land sighted by Captain Cook when he discovered New Zealand. Situated at the Southern entrance of Poverty Bay.



An Afternoon with BORIS SARAFOFF

BY A. DARBY



DURING the course of the last year it was my good fortune to meet in society the very remarkable man who is the moving spirit of the Macedonian insurrection. I was at that time residing in a picturesque German city where notable characters have often crossed my path.

We met—not by any means “in a crowd,” for our party consisted of but five persons, representing, however, five nationalities—Austrian, Bulgarian, English, Servian and Swiss. I had been much struck by Sarafoff’s portrait on a Bulgarian post card—he had been for some time past a popular hero—also by what I had heard of him.

“If you want to meet the famous Macedonian leader, Boris Sarafoff,” said a Servian friend to me, “come to the Schloss Garten this afternoon at three o’clock, he will be there, but tell no one of this, for he is travelling strictly incognito. He has come here to consult with me on political matters. He would like one of the Royal Princes of this country to occupy the throne of Macedonia when that province shall have become a free and independent State.”

How romantic it all sounded! It is needless to say that I was punctual in joining the select international gathering in the Schloss Garten—waiting to greet a “maker of history.” The terror of the Sublime Porte and the cause of

anxiety to several crowned heads, appeared in the shape of a somewhat slightly built young man, not above the middle height, with a handsome face of a Slavonic type, a broad high forehead, thoughtful brows, delicate nose and mouth, and wearing no hair on his face except a small dark moustache. He speaks French fluently and his manners are gentle and agreeable.

Such then was Boris Sarafoff, the patriotic young soldier who had abandoned his military career in the regular army, and for some time past had been devoting himself to the task of freeing his native land from Turkish oppression. Wonderfully popular among his fellow-countrymen, he had come to be the hero of the struggle for independence, the hope and stay of “young Macedonia.”

Our afternoon’s interview was by no means that of the newspaper reporter, where the “interviewed” knows he is “en evidence” and speaks accordingly, but rather an informal meeting of good friends, where ideas could be interchanged without restraint. I was introduced to Sarafoff (not quite accurately) as a compatriot of Miss Stone, the American lady missionary, at that time held captive by Macedonian brigands. My Servian friend, who is fond of a joke, suggested that as I am wont to travel, I should betake myself to the wilds of Macedonia where Sarafoff’s adherents could capture and hold me to ransom, the sum paid by the

British Government as price of my liberation to be devoted to the patriotic cause. I suggested that a lady, who had been kidnapped by such a robber-band, should, on be-



A weighty question.

ing set free, undertake a European tour, lecturing in various cities on her life with the banditti, and being accompanied by Sarafoff in person to demonstrate that a Macedonian brigand-chieftain can also be a civilised gentleman.

Sarafoff has evidently, like most clever men, a strong sense of the humorous, and is pleasing in social intercourse. He made a most agreeable impression upon me. During the short time I was in his company I discovered that among his other qualities he possesses both ready sympathy and infinite tact. His is a striking personality, full of that power and charm which characterises every leader of men. He is also quick of observation. He noticed that I was alluded to as "God-mother" by a Servian child in the company, and repeated the familiar Bulgarian word "Kooma," used by the boy, in evident wonder at a heterodox Englishwoman standing in such close relationship to an orthodox Slav child. When we parted, Sarafoff thanked me warmly for the sympathy I had shown with

the cause he has so much at heart.

The German Prince did not accept the proffered throne of Macedonia. He prefers the security and comfort of his own Fatherland, where he devotes himself to the practice of medicine and surgery, and to the interpretation of Richard Wagner's music. Meanwhile, far away in the land of the wondrous rose-gardens—tinged, alas! with a deeper and fouler red than the fair blossoms could ever impart—there Boris Sarafoff holds councils of war and issues patriotic proclamations. I can scarcely realise that he is the same man who chatted with us on that quiet afternoon and played with my little godson, shewing him how to use his toy-pistol. "In trying to strike the target always aim low!" said Sarafoff.



"In trying to strike the target always aim low."

And what of his own striving? Is he taking good aim, will he hit the mark? Time will shew—and whether or no, his name will live in history, and his memory be ever dear to the people of Macedon.

My Lady's Bower.

BY ALMA.

Lady readers are invited to discuss current topics in these pages, suggest subjects for discussion, and also to contribute photographic studies on any subject of interest. Contributions should be addressed: "Editor My Lady's Bower, New Zealand Illustrated Magazine," and should arrive early in the month. In all cases where stamps are enclosed for the purpose photos will be returned.

PLATONIC PLEASURES.

I ALWAYS wonder why people speak and write of platonic friendship when all they wish to deal with is nothing more or less than a thin disguise of love, platonic love if you like, but still love of some kind or other. Well, as it is women who in these side paths gain or lose the more, let us discuss the subject. I am not, of course, able to throw any new light on the matter, but can perhaps give some tiny mental pabulum for others to digest or discard. Anyway, what do we women say or

think platonic love is? Something which may not, which cannot, which must not, end in the intimacy of marriage. Is that not it? Do we ever hear of young men and women, wholly untied, cultivating this platonism? They are either acquaintances or they are lovers, one or other or both of them, looking to marriage as the end and aim of their pleasant fooling.

The youth may kick over the traces and take to himself another "girl," or the girl may jilt the youth for some one else. And if there were anything in platonic,



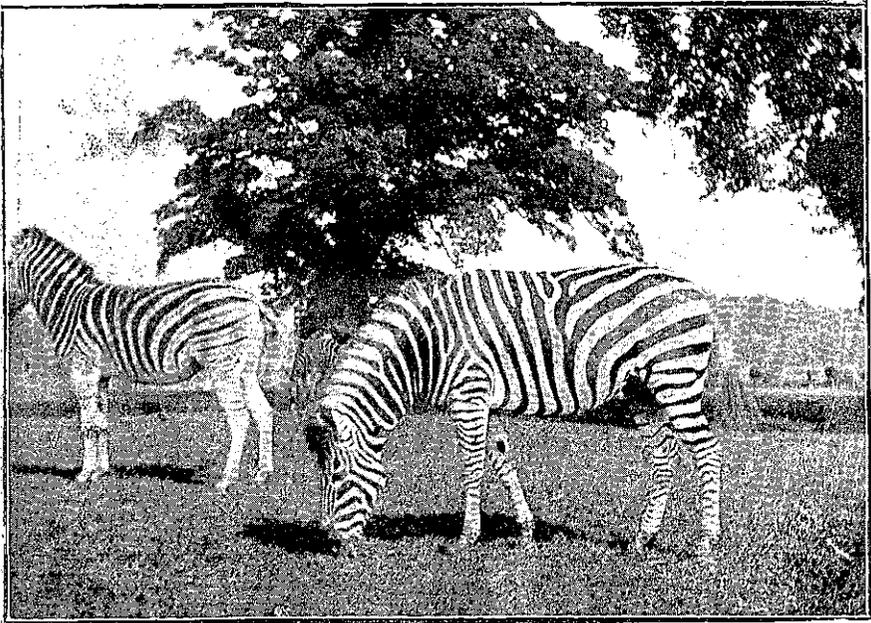
E. Nicolls, photo.

In the heat of the day.

the youth and the maid would, in spite of the third person, or the fourth, still go on as they went before. But do they? Not a bit of it. They break altogether, sometimes never speak again to each other, and the thing is done with. So it is, I think, evident that young people, with the natural instinct of attraction for some one of the other sex, either flirt or make love, and are ignorant of the science of platronics.

But a man who is already mar-

ried, anything is said, he can ask, in all innocence, what his share may be. He was only friendly with a pleasant girl, a friend of his wife. Curious, too, how these men regard their wives as people with no feelings in the matter. How can they have cause of complaint? What jealous women they must be to think of resenting! I may be wrong: but I think that the wife who does not object to her husband's fooling, or if I may coin, "friending" with any other wo-



E. Nicolls, photo.

Zebras in the Duke of Bedford's Park.

ried, finds congenial companionship with a woman not his wife, and instead of admitting to himself that this woman has for him an attraction that his wife has not, he salves his conscience and tells himself, tells her also sometimes, that they are friends, platonic friends. I always think it mean of the man. He can have all the fun he wants, or nearly all, without any of the disadvantages. He flatters the girl and keeps other men from looking at her, and from finding out the pleasure of her companionship; and when he tires, he can fall back on his wife. And if

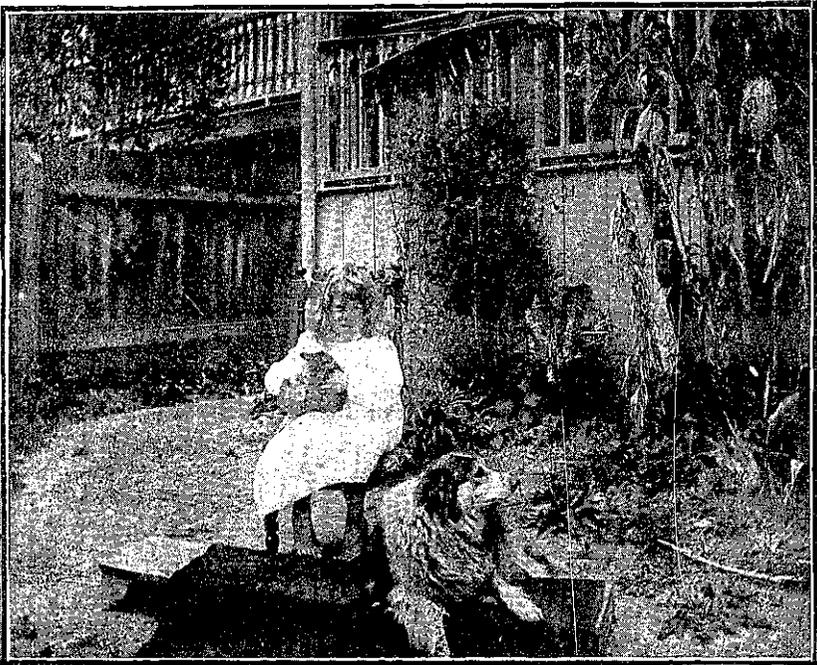
man, is not only a *rara avis* but an impossibility.

There are cases, too, of the husband of one woman platonising with the wife of another man. And, taken all round, it does not pay. The funny thing, from the woman's point of view, is the way men assume total and complete reciprocity of feeling. For my part, nothing will convince me that the man who makes a point of deepening his friendship with the outside woman, can keep his head. He falls inevitably. He tells the woman it is friendship, he tells his wife it is no-

thing : but it is nothing less than what is the usual result of propinquity—love or its cousin. And invariably, in these cases, I believe, the man is convinced that the woman is playing the same game. As for the woman, willing to be friendly, but not wishing to be anything more, she is inconceivable to the man. But, in all sincerity, I am of opinion that an average woman can and does keep her head in such cases where it is a physical impossibility for the man to do it. He cannot,

will recover easily. She knows that and ceases to worry.

Now again about the untied platonisers. One meets some people who to certain knowledge, have paid court till both are grey, and who are still free of marriage and still apparently courting. Perhaps these few—they are very few—are real examples of platonic friendship. Other people say, "Why on earth don't they marry?" But they go on, with no obvious reason, year after year. But does any woman believe



E. Nicolls, photo.

He shan't bite you, Pussy.

and, not being able himself, will never believe that she is keeping her course in strictness. She may like him, enjoy his company—and that is all. In these ways, woman is no longer the weaker vessel. He would move a good many obstacles to be near her, she would see him coming without removing a single obstacle from his path to help him forward. But it is of no use to tell him so. He'll never believe it. Therefore he must blunder on, and get hurt. He

that the woman in the case is to blame. I do not. I believe that the man shirks : and that, even if she is sixty, she would marry the man to-morrow if only he would ask her.

Not many women, and amongst married women, I think I may say, not any, have any faith in friendships with men who cannot be any more than friends. It is a mistake for the unmarried woman, she loses her chances—and you know com-



E. Niccolls, photo.

Not speaking just now.

petition is keen in these days—and for the married woman, well, she has no time for the cultivation of friendships of this kind. If she has, she is abnormal, and not of the type of woman we are writing about. For the good wife and mother has most of her time well

taken up with her own husband and children. That is as far as she wishes to go. And the man who thinks that she does not is deluding himself. So, as far as one woman's opinion counts then, I believe in love between the proper people, and failing that, nothing.

First Love.

YOUNG Love came stealing to my door one day,
 Laden with lilies, which he proffered me
 With pleading hauds, and sweet shy eyes that stay
 Still in my heart, a haunting memory.

Through all that day he stood, so patient, sweet,
 The faded lilies falling round his feet,
 His down-bent head radiant with ambient light,
 Until the darkening shadows brought the night.

And now I know I never more shall see
 The wondrous gift that once was offered me,
 Which carelessly I flung aside that day
 When I—oh, ingrate! turned Young Love away.

—JESSIE PHILLIPS.

Change of Fashion in Women's Ages.

By ALPHA.



IN fiction the vogue of the very young girl is over. "Sweet seventeen" used to be the ideal of novelist and poet. But the actual sweet seventeen of to-day is an undeveloped school-girl with short skirts and long hair, whom no one takes seriously. She has indeed more liberty than

her grandmother of the same age. From thirteen or fourteen till twenty, the modern young girl leads a happy, irresponsible existence, doing pretty much as she pleases. She has nearly all the privileges of her grown-up sisters; but is spared their responsibilities. Morally she is perfectly satisfied with heroes and the world in general. But if she be of a romantic turn of mind, she may feel it a grievance that she is not the heroine she would have been sixty years ago, when she would have worn a long dress, and been decorous and lady-like in every movement. She may now be hoydenish, careless about domestic duties, untrammelled in speech and action. Every one treats her with indulgence; she is "only a child," a "little girl," though she may be five feet ten, and may go to dances which differ only in name from those for really grown-up people.

Sixty years ago, a girl of fifteen or sixteen was "a young woman," and was expected to behave as such. She was far more in subjection to her parents than the modern girl in her teens, and her activities in general were more restricted. But she was a heroine of romance. She might be asked in marriage, probably she had admirers; and her parents would be planning for her early settlement.

Now, a girl in the middle classes rarely thinks of marriage before five and twenty; no one thinks it strange if she defers it till five and thirty. Then thirty was the dreaded turning point, after which an unmarried woman was indefinitely an "old maid." One hardly hears of old maids now; a woman may be a "girl" at forty if she so pleases.

The heroines of Scott, Miss Austen, Dickens, and other writers of the early nineteenth century, are seldom over twenty. Lately the age for heroines has crept steadily higher. Some of the most interesting heroines of recent novels are no longer young.

The change of feeling with regard to feminine years is amusingly illustrated in a recent criticism on Miss Austen's novels. The author—a very superior person evidently—finds fault with the small canvas and petty detail of Miss Austen's pictures of life. "We are asked to consider seriously," says he, "the doings of children of sixteen who have never been out of their native village." This criticism is rather a silly one, particularly if we consider that many of the most famed heroines of poetry and romance—Miranda, Perdita, and Juliet, for example—were sixteen or less. But it illustrates the modern assumption that a girl of sixteen is a mere bread and butter Miss, for whom the world of passion and of thought is as yet a mystery.

What is the cause, or rather what are the causes that have brought about this retardation of feminine maturity and decline? The retardation is genuine; girls of seventeen with all their liberty are more of children than in the days of Miss Austen; and the woman of forty is

practically a young woman, instead of being on the shelf. In "Sense and Sensibility," some mercenary persons, discussing the mother of the youthful heroines—a woman barely over forty—remark: "She is very stout and healthy; she may live many years yet." Some people in those days did, we know, live to eighty or ninety. But such observations illustrate that such a person over forty was looked on as advanced in life; verging at least on old age. Now no one hints of old age for either man or woman before the seventies are reached.

One cause operating to change the estimated limits of old age may be the fact that, owing to improved hygiene, more people do obtain length of years than formerly. Another more potent cause appears to be the changes in social conditions, owing to which entrance on the serious business of life, and the achievement of a career are deferred till later in life than used to be the case.

Consider the career of a statesman or a soldier. Now-a-days a politician scarcely expects to make a name for himself before he is fifty. Pitt died at forty-seven already an old man. Mr. Chamberlain appears young at sixty-seven. Lord Kitchener, at fifty-three, appears very young for his achievements. Young men find all the higher posts filled by older ones, who, under the improved conditions of modern life, continue in the field so long that the younger cannot supply their places till they are themselves far on in years. The same rule appears to hold good in most callings.

Meanwhile, the standard of comfort has been generally raised; and from economic motives men defer marriage. When they do marry, they usually choose older women than if they had married at the outset of their careers. Thus for women the age of marriage tends progressively to rise. The number of careers now open to women makes them consider marriage less. Thus it is an accepted fact that large

numbers of women shall be unmarried at thirty. And these, finding their condition is the rule, do not feel they have failed in life. Some still anticipate marriage, others are satisfied as they are. Their lives are interesting; and no one looks down on them as old maids. The freedom and varied interest of their lives, and their contentment with their condition, keep them youthful in spirit, and hence in body.

But the fact that women marry so much later now keeps young girls in the background. Mothers are willing to keep their children longer, and to let them have "a good time" as long as possible. Young girls, too, find a crowd of elders in possession of the social field. These, with their superior knowledge of the world, and ease of conversation, make their youthful sisters seem childish.

But I think the main cause why immaturity in women is no longer fashionable, is the change in opinion as to woman's position and powers. Where women are valued mainly for beauty and power of pleasing, youth will be highly esteemed. In the East, where woman is a slave and a toy, she is valued little after the first bloom of youth has worn off. Marriage in early girlhood is the rule. But where her intellect and character are considered, she may charm after physical beauty has faded. All factors raising the status of woman, make youth less essential to her sway, and indeed render the mature woman more fascinating than the unformed girl. And not only does high estimation of woman make beauty less essential; it also renders the natural attractiveness of women more varied and more permanent. Mental inertness and a dull, empty life soon destroy youth and charm. A rich, full life preserves youth; and thought and feeling lend attractiveness to the plainest features. Some of the beauties of girlhood must vanish with advancing years; the soft, rounded outlines and the delicate brilliance of colouring cannot last

indefinitely. The pretty woman has more to lose with her youth than the plain one; the pretty, but empty-headed one has the most of all to lose. Added dignity and expressiveness may make amends for lost roundness of contour and brilliance of colouring, and it sometimes happens that one who was plain, heavy and awkward at twenty, makes an attractive woman at forty.

Though the idea as to what constitutes youth has changed, it is still considered desirable, but less so than formerly. Even now, women like to be told they look younger than they are. Many a woman of eight and twenty would be flattered at being taken—really or professedly—for eighteen. A man would feel insulted at being taken for a boy ten years his junior. But it is chiefly the more frivolous women who wish to remain very young, and even they are pleased at being taken for young girls rather

because this seems to remove the period of declining charms to an indefinite distance, than because the young girl is more attractive than the woman. They know the reverse to be the rule. Most women now would consider the early thirties the best period of life at which to remain stationary, for at this age, under favourable conditions, the charms of girlhood have scarcely waned, while the mental powers are at their height, and experience is added.

A study of the heroines of our best novelists—Meredith, Hardy, Zangwill, Merriman, Gissing, Mrs. Humphrey Ward and others, will show well why the young girl is no longer queen either in romance or in real life. These heroines are of rich mental endowment, complex and subtle in character. They may sometimes be introduced as girls, and be charming then, but one feels that they will grow more interesting as they advance in life.



Autumn.

FROM out my chamber window
I see a picture fair,
The glorious tints of Autumn
Are showing everywhere.

They do not speak of sadness,
These colours, red and gold;
I read the hidden message
That these bright tints unfold.

In tones so soft and tender,
They touch the fount of tears,
Just whisp'ring in the twilight
Of life's declining years.

Here, written on the landscape,
For all to read and see,
I find this precious message
Given to you and me.

What though life's summer passes
Autumn may yet unfold
Its own bright scenes of beauty,
Its tints of brown and gold.

—M. L. B.



L. Tate, photo.

Tuahine Point, Gisborne.



B. Wells, photo., N. P.

A Bush Clearing.

➤ † MUSIC † ➤

By HORACE STEBBING.

HANDEL.



AMONGST the many celebrities of tonal art, no one has a greater claim to immortality than George Friedrich Handel.

As an operatic composer in his day, he had few if any equals, and so popular were his works that the public eagerly awaited the result of every new effort which he made to gratify their musical taste.

In almost every instance his operas achieved instantaneous success, and this fact led to his being engaged by a party of noblemen, headed by the Duke of Chandos, to write numerous operas for performance in connection with the Royal Academy of Music in London.

But we of this generation revere the memory of Handel more particularly because of the goodly heritage which he has bestowed upon us, by leaving for our edification, and the edification of those who are to follow, those magnificent oratorios which for beauty of conception and sublimity of purpose have never been equalled.

Even among the masses there are comparatively few who have not been able to recognise the potential influence for good that such works as the "Messiah" exercise, and that oratorio must ever be regarded as an inspiration.

George Friedrich Handel was born at Halle, in Lower Saxony, on the 23rd February, 1685. His father was a confidential valet-de-chambre to the Duke of Saxe-

Weissenfels, to which position he had raised himself from that of the more humble calling of a hair-dresser.

His ambitions led him to regard the law as the most dignified profession for his son, and with this decision firmly fixed in his mind, he did all in his power to prevent the cultivation of the musical propensities which the lad exhibited in a remarkable manner at a very early age.

Like Hadyn he would steal away to an attic unobserved, and there practice upon the clavichord. By the merest circumstance, however, his father's prejudice was soon to be overcome. When the young musician was barely seven years old, George Handel had occasion to visit Weissenfels. He had gone but a short distance along the road when he saw his little son endeavouring to overtake the conveyance in which he was driving to his destination. Not caring to send the boy home again, he took him along with him, and even went so far as to allow him to accompany him to the Palace. Once there, with childlike simplicity, the little lad made his tastes known. The Duke, hearing of the boy's intense love for music, induced the father to allow him to follow his natural bent. Consequently upon their return to Halle, Zachau, the renowned organist, was sought out, and arrangements were made for young Handel's immediate tuition. Within three years he mastered the organ and the harpsichord, and also acquired a knowledge of composition.

Proceeding afterwards to Berlin with the object of studying the Italian and German operatic masters, he there met Attilio Ariosti, an Italian who was frequently engaged as accompanist at the Court functions. Handel's new acquaintance after hearing the young musician, quickly recognised his ability, and soon brought him under the notice of the Princess Sophia Charlotte, a pupil of Stefani's, who found much pleasure in conducting private operatic performances and concerts in connection with the Court.

Handel's opportunity came one afternoon when he was invited to play before a large and fashionable assemblage at the Palace. His playing charmed everyone, and congratulations on his marvellous skill were showered upon him.

He had, however, aroused the jealousy of Buononcini, and the composer thought to spoil the lad's chances by putting before him a most difficult and elaborate piece to play at sight. He accomplished the allotted task with the utmost ease, his performance being productive of renewed compliments. This only increased Buononcini's bitterness, and he afterwards carried it to London, where he became Handel's greatest rival.

Amongst those who admired the beautiful playing of the youthful Handel was The Elector Frederick III. He offered to send him to Italy to study, but this was thankfully declined, and Handel continued his career in Berlin until 1702, when he decided to respect his father's former desire that he should follow the law. With this in view he entered the University at Halle as a student, but at the expiration of twelve months his passion for music became if anything more pronounced, and he saw that he could not suppress it. He therefore gave the whole of his time to music, and persevered until his power as an organist was only second to that of his abilities as a composer.

About 1703 he left his native

place, and settled in Hamburg, where he secured an engagement in connection with the opera house, and soon established his reputation as a conductor of consummate skill.

Here he met one John Mattheson, who was a man of considerable versatility. Mattheson was not only a fine organist, but was also a composer of some ability, and the possessor of an operatic tenor voice. Handel and he formed an acquaintance which developed into a close friendship. A vacancy occurred in Lubeck through the death of the famous organist, Buxtehude, and both Handel and Mattheson applied for the position, but on reaching Lubeck, they found that one of the conditions imposed made it imperative that the newly-appointed organist should marry the daughter of the late organist. Neither of the applicants would agree to this, so they returned again to Hamburg.

Here, shortly afterwards, Handel nearly lost his life in a duel with Mattheson. Mattheson had composed an opera, named "Cleopatra," and was singing the principal tenor part himself. It was arranged that Handel should conduct the orchestra. After Mattheson had sung in the first act, and was no longer required after the death scene, he made his way from the stage and attempted to depose Handel, who at once resisted. Hot words followed, and a meeting was arranged between the two after the performance. Rapiers were procured but Mattheson soon proved to be the more skilful of the two, and had it not been for a large brass-button on Handel's coat which turned the point of his opponent's weapon, the consequences would certainly have been fatal. The lunge, indeed, was so powerful that Mattheson's rapier snapped into several pieces. Friends of both duellists interposed and a reconciliation was brought about.

During the year 1705, Handel produced his first opera, "Almira," which was successful, but another opera, "Nero," which followed

quickly afterwards, did not please the people, the plot being of a cruel and unpalatable character.

In 1706 Handel, whose habits were thrifty, was enabled to pay a visit to Italy, where he commanded immediate success.

Four years later he was induced by Steffani, the Chapel-master of Venice, to go to Hanover. On arrival there he received the appointment of Chapel-master to the Elector, who afterwards became George I. of England. In 1710 the composer visited England, where he met with a most flattering reception. So great was his success that he was induced to prolong his stay. He, however, incurred the displeasure of the Elector, who had not been applied to for an extension of leave. Soon afterwards the Elector became the ruling sovereign of England, and Handel endeavoured to make amends for his bad behaviour by appearing at a fete, given by the King, with an orchestra who performed the composer's now famous "Water Music" in a barge which was in close proximity to that of His Majesty. The beautiful music and the kind influence of the Baron Killmanseck obtained for Handel a royal pardon, which was shortly followed by an annuity of £200 per annum.

From 1710 onwards, he had much to contend with through the jealousy of his rivals, and in 1737 George II. generously came to his assistance. Handel continued to please the nobility, and occupied many important musical positions in connection with the Court. He also spent a considerable portion of his time in composing, and the world has benefited largely by his labours.

In 1740 two of his finest oratorios were produced, viz., "Israel in Egypt" and "Saul." In 1741 came the glorious "Messiah," which is said to have been written in twenty-four days, and was first performed in Dublin, on 18th April, 1742.

So great was the success of "The Messiah," that Handel's enemies did all in their power to prevent a performance of it during the following Eastertide, in London, but their efforts were fruitless, and a still greater success was achieved.

Besides the oratorios mentioned, Handel also left for us "Samson," "Jephthah," "Solomon," "Esther," "Judas Maccabaeus," etc., also a number of operas, anthems, and other choice works.

Handel never married, but it must not be thought that he was a selfish man. On the contrary, he was most benevolent. During his lifetime he established a Foundling Hospital, and contributed a sum of two thousand pounds to the Society for the aid of Poor Musicians. For the widow of his old master, Zachau, he provided an annuity, so that she should be free from anxiety in her old age, and many other acts of kindness have been attributed to him.

Handel's music is always ennobling, and through his oratorios can be traced something more than a superficial religion. The writer has seen a vast audience almost moved to tears during the rendering of the beautifully expressive "He was Despised" from the "Messiah."

The composer had often expressed the wish that he might die on a Good Friday, and strangely enough this actually occurred in London on Good Friday, the 14th April, 1759.

His remains lie in Westminster Abbey.

MUSICAL NOTES.

It is always pleasant to hear of the success of New Zealanders in London. So many aspirants to musical fame journey to the great Metropolis with the hope of making names for themselves, but few indeed attain their object. Occasionally one hears of an exception to the rule.

Mr. George Clutsam, the accom-

plished pianist and composer, well-known in New Zealand, has through sheer perseverance pressed forward until he now takes place in the front rank of musicians. His compositions are, as a rule, of considerable merit and invariably become popular. One of Mr. Clutsam's most recent pianoforte pieces, "Bleus Papillon," has reached the Colony, and is on sale at the music sellers.

As a concert or drawing-room

solo it is sure to meet with the approval of connoisseurs.

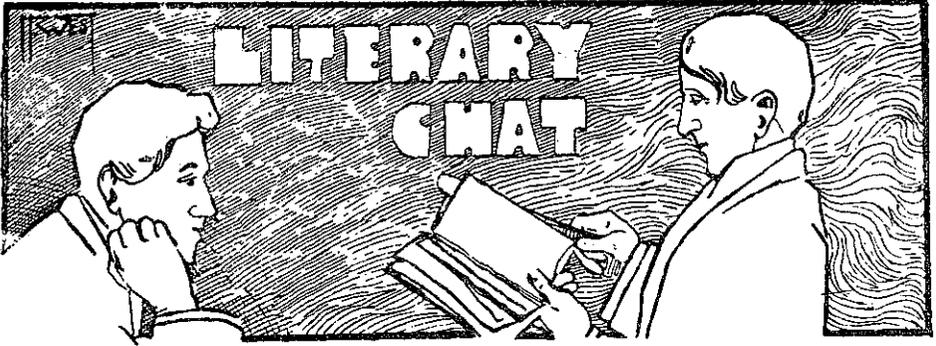
"By the Old Stile" is the title of a sweet little song by Ethel Wright, who is responsible for both words and music. It is of easy range, and should prove attractive.

Messrs. Eady and Co. are also the publishers of a caprice, "Apollo," the music of which is by Chas. Courtney. In construction it is bright, sparkling and melodious, and should command a good sale.



B. Wells, photo.

Nikau Palm.



By "THE SAGE."

Messrs. Wildman, Lyell and Arey forward from the publishers, Messrs. Methuen and Co., three very readable books this month; "Resurgam," by L. T. Meade; "Alarums and Excursions," by H. B. Marriott Watson; and "The Rose of Joy," by Mary Findlater.

Works from the pen of Mrs. L. T. Meade are always welcomed, and "Resurgam" will have the tendency to still further enhance the popularity of this prolific authoress. Joan Galbraith, a very emotional little paid companion to the stately and primly religious Lady Elizabeth du Quesne, is introduced to the reader at the Montenvers Hotel on the Alps. The great ambition of her life was about to be fulfilled. She had a few days holiday and was to spend it in climbing the great peak of the Grand Dru. The friends who were to accompany her failed her at the last moment, but she met at the dining-table Denis Waring, a literary man who was a great climber, he pitied her disappointment, and with no thought of the conventionalities, good-naturedly asked her to trust herself to his guidance. Her intense desire "to tread the summit and find herself on the Delectable Mountains" made her also forget what was due to Mrs. Grundy. They camped the first night with another party under a

rock to watch the sunrise, then with incredible exertions, which included swinging over a thirty-foot gap by the aid of a rope, they reached the summit. In the descent a dense cloud enveloped them, and nothing could be done but sit on the narrow ledge of rock in the piercing cold until daybreak, when the cloud lifted. There were two results of this adventure. One was that Joan found she had risen to fame as a lady climber; the other that she had fallen in love with her companion. On taking leave of her, he had asked one kiss as a memento of how they had faced death together, and she had given it. He admired her immensely, but really loved his cousin, Lotie Fraser, a noble-minded young woman. The "villain of the piece," an unscrupulous widow, determined to get Joan completely into her power, foreseeing certain advantages to herself. Professing great friendship, she horrified the innocent girl by exaggerating the view the world would take of her action, and recommended her on no account to tell Lady Elizabeth. For a time Joan kept her secret. Then Mrs. Penrose threatened to tell Lady Elizabeth herself unless Joan secured her a much-desired invitation from Lady Elizabeth for a long visit. Unable to bear any longer the widow's cruel threats, Joan her-



Mrs. L. T. Meade.

self told the story, and Lady Elizabeth packed her off without a character. After trying in vain for further employment, she had to write to Denis to ask his aid. He had asked her to come to him in any difficulty. He interviewed Lady Elizabeth, who told him coldly that he was the cause of Joan's trouble, and he was responsible for the rest of her life. He went to his cousin Lotie, and in a spirit of noble self-sacrifice she assured him it was his duty to marry Joan as the only reparation for being the cause of her

being cruelly maligned. They married, and Denis's literary labours took them to Crete. He made her a kind husband, but still corresponded with Lotie. Mrs. Penrose continued her persecutions, and Joan's jealousy was only too easily aroused. She took refuge from it during her husband's absence by slumming under the name of Catherine of the Slums, and being entirely fearless, went into places where even the evangelist under whose guidance she worked, durst not enter. She saved Meg Merrilees, the terror of

the neighbourhood from being burnt alive in a drunken fit, and eventually turned her into a decent servant. All difficulties are at last satisfactorily surmounted, and Joan who had strong religious tendencies found she has attained a greater height even than the Grand Bru.

“Alarums and Excursions” is the very appropriate title of H. B. Marriott Watson's new book, a collection of short stories of distinctly stirring adventure. A glance down the contents page at the titles of the stories gives one a good idea of their nature. They run as follows: “The Mohock,” “The Outlaw,” “Captain Sword,” “The Alarum Bell,” “The Tavern on the Moor,” “The Squire's Wager,” “The Cat-paw,” and “A Sense of Honour.” “The Mohock” is a story of gaming, duelling and intrigue. It describes that wayward intriguer, Lady Merioneth, then in the zenith of her beauty, and her tools, the most impressionable of the roystering young bloods of the age, and the manner in which she was outwitted in the object she had in view. “The Outlaw” gives an account of how he was enticed into a shuttered house, and accused of a murder committed there; his subsequent adventures in a thieves' den; his undertaking to carry away and dispose of the dead body of a girl's husband, whom she professed to have killed accidentally, and was to pack in a chest herself, and how he failed to get rid of it, and afterwards discovered, when he opened it, that it contained instead the girl's dead body; how he was well paid to assist in trapping a young girl into marriage with a scoundrel, and the manner in which he saved the girl, and was hunted afterwards by his baffled employer. “Captain Sword” gives a graphic account of the manner in which this gallant captain with his company of English soldiers and Spanish irregulars, led by a dancing girl, captured the town of Granava, and his adventures

at the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. “The Alarm Bell” shows how Captain Geoffrey Monk, and his troop of horse were sent to Holten Marshes to capture a clever band of smugglers, against which the local officers were powerless, and the measure of the success they obtained. A duel with the principal of the band, in which his daughter throws herself between the contestants at a critical moment, complicates matters. “The Squire's Wager” introduces the reader to Brooks's at the close of a night's play. Lord Marazion had lost some £20,000 to Squire Hilton at a sitting, and had drunk unlimited brandy and water. To win it back, in the reckless fashion of the day he offered the absurd wager of the only estate he had left against 20,000 guineas that he would marry the first maid or widow he met on his return home that night. The Squire, who coveted the estate, accepted the wager at once, but for the way in which the young lord won it, we must refer the reader to the book. The other stories are equally good and the author is to be congratulated. The choice of his subjects and the manner in which he has treated them, leaves nothing to be desired.

In “The Rose of Joy” Mary Findlater deals with English country life. Her first chapter announces the birth of her heroine in a more interesting manner than is usual when authors take this unnecessarily early period of life for such an introduction. Maurice Hamilton arrives at a country inn, he “had reached an unfortunate period in his romance; the lady had married another.” Three years had passed, and he visited the village in order to see the lady once more. But he had chosen an unfortunate time, the birth of her daughter Susan, the heroine, prevented him from having the desired interview. He does not venture again for nearly twenty years, and finds Susan an

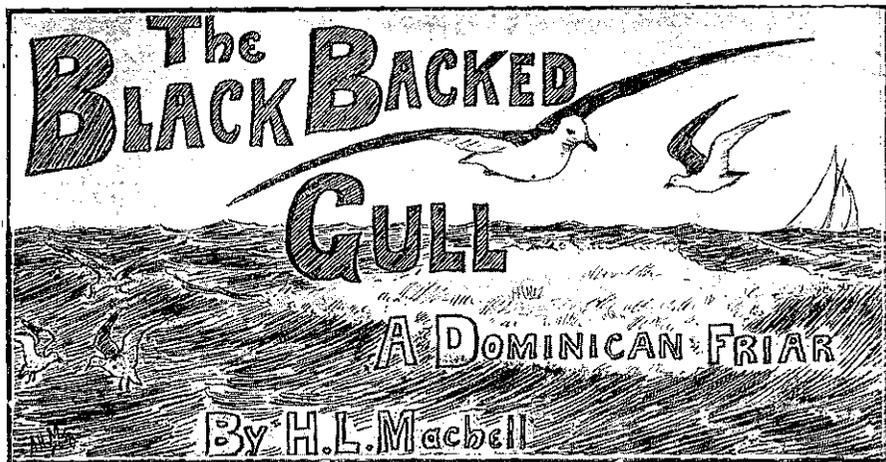
interesting young lady of nineteen, and her mother a most decidedly uninteresting, unintellectual, untidy widow with seven children. He has his nephew Archie with him, and as they have come to the neighbourhood to live they see a good deal of the family. The widow's household is managed in the most shiftless way, though Susan does her best to brighten up things. Susan has an admirer, Dally Stairs, an unprepossessing young man with red hair, whose family boast of their birth, and deplore with him the necessity of his going to work in his uncle's brewery. He has previously been in love with Juliet, the very pretty and fascinating niece of Maurice Hamilton, but she will have nothing to do with him. The uncle takes a great fancy to Susan, and promises his nephew a partnership if he marries her. The girl, though she does not really love him, feels it her duty to marry him, as her mother and relations wish it, and she has no decided objection. They get on very well indeed for a time. Then it is suddenly discovered that Dally in his college days had married his mother's laundry-maid. He had supposed her to be dead when he married Susan, but she unfortunately turned up. In order to keep her quiet, Dally had dipped into the partnership funds to the tune of £1000. His uncle on discovering this, packs him off to America with his first wife. Archie Hamilton then endeavours to persuade Susan to marry him, as he had loved her for a long time, but she refuses. She has always been a keen observer of nature, and, although untaught, has attained to some proficiency as an artist. So after all her troubles, "having looked in the face of Love, she turned away to follow after Art instead, aiming after Perfection

with an undivided purpose." There are many other characters in the book almost as uninteresting in themselves as Mrs. Crawford, but the author has succeeded in working them into a very readable story.

Dr. Fitchett's new Australian Magazine, "Life," has come to hand, and he is certainly to be congratulated on the production. Everyone knows and appreciates his reason for dissolving his connection with Mr. W. T. Stead, and there is little doubt that "Life" will be considerably more popular with Colonial readers than the Australasian edition of the "Review of Reviews." There is a larger proportion of lighter reading in it, and many features which appeal to the Colonial especially. There is, however, one point in which many will find it wanting, especially the young Australian aspirant to literary fame; viz., the limited space given to original matter, and the fact that what is admitted is from the pens of men who have already attained fame.

Many of the readers of the "New Zealand Illustrated Magazine" keep a book wherein they cajole the most talented of their friends to inscribe some sentiment in prose or verse as their tastes incline. Now and then a gem of particular brilliancy shines out amongst a number of very ordinary contributions. It has struck "The Sage" that a collection of these would make entertaining reading, he therefore asks those of his readers who keep such records to forward to the Editor a few of these which they consider show the most brilliancy or humour for publication in later issues.





IS it not significant that before human beings came to these islands modern ecclesiastical persons should have been so strikingly portrayed as they have been by the Tui in the Bush, which we may consider the more civilised parts; and by the Karoro, or Black-backed Gull, in the wild and dreary solitudes of the Ocean beach? The former was named "Parson-bird" from his striking resemblance to the modern clergyman in dress, appearance, manner and character; the latter *Larus Dominicanus* (Dominican Gull) from his likeness to the mendicant brothers of that order, who wear a white robe and hood or cowl, to which is added, outside, a black cloak, hence also known as "Black Friars."

The Tui preached, bowed, sang, lived a happy life of refinement and culture among his friends in the Bush, who all delighted in his sermons and songs, which if not containing much profound matter, were certainly beautifully delivered.

The Karoros on the other hand, were heavy, slow, of unmelodious voice, gluttons, shunning civilisation, and though gregarious, really monastic in habits and ways, sleep-

ing in lonely spots, often quite alone, like well-fed monks in their cells.

It was a lovely Sunday afternoon at Mooritai (or "the last surf"), that pretty suburb of Wellington which visitors will call "Mewritai" because it is spelt "Muritai"—the missionaries who invented the written Maori language having employed the Italian vowels to express the sounds. There was a luscious "Paua" or Mutton-fish decaying on the beach, a great screaming of hungry Dominicans overhead, a couple of yelping collies racing along the beach, rounding up children, gulls, stray goats, sparrows, and anything that took their fancy, for 'tis the collie's nature, not to harm, but to subjugate and control; a few "brothers," lay or otherwise, paddling up and down some distance from the shore just out of respect for the collies, but none daring to approach till the dogs had raced off to a gull or a child some half-mile away. Then those at sea paddled slowly in with one eye on the Paua and the other on the enemy, those above sailed cautiously down, and all watching each other, moved guardedly towards the dainty food, but only one at a time ventured to pick a bit. Presently there was a commotion among

them, the fat, full-plumaged brother who was feeding ran for all he was worth to the water's edge—you would hardly believe such a fat, solemn old bird could run so fast—the others scattered, and down swooped a great grey gull whom they all seemed to know and fear. He took undisputed possession of the mutton-fish at once, the others standing at a little distance, watching him sideways, as sheep do when separated by hurdles from friends feeding in a turnip field. If one bird approached too near, he just stretched out his beak, levelled his back, squeaked and "went for" the intruder. This curious squeak was the threat of a juvenile, a novice of the Dominicans who had not yet assumed the full dress of his order, but was posing for a year or two as a "friar of orders grey," and being a Colonial friar he had small respect for those of his elders who could not contend with him. But back come the collies! and they have small respect for friars of any order, so the whole party scatter, the doughty "koiro," as the young bird is called, being the last to go. Some made for the sea, others soared over the wooded hills at the back.

And as a full-blown Dominican looks down upon the Bush beneath, he screams harsh sounds, which being interpreted might be: "E Tui e! E Hoa koe!" ("Hullo! Tui! Hullo, you there! Friend!") Is he not calling to his brother ecclesiastic to know how things are going on in the civilised world? Upon which his Reverence would no doubt look piously upward and sweetly chant in his best Dog—Maori—Latin: "kia ora pro nobis," which might be interpreted: "Here's to us!" Then each would solemnly wink the other eye, and pass along just as the sacred augurs did upon the walls of Rome. For they alone know of the flight of birds, of the language of the lightning, of the secrets of the storms, the books of the Bush and the entrails of the Paua!—how to play upon weakness

and folly, while securing good things for themselves!

Not that this was the character of the great St. Dominic, for he by precept and example led men to lives of faith, obedience and chastity, dwelling poorly among the poor, and to devote their lives to preaching, good works and sound learning; but his followers did not keep it up, and now we see them in Wellington Harbour fighting for offal. There they collect in large numbers, not so much because they enjoy company as because there is plenty of food in the place. If one gets a nice piece of offal, all the others chase and peck him till he drops or swallows it, and in this way they keep healthy, everything they get must be actively sought and defended strenuously. So the full-fledged birds will follow steamers far out to sea for the sake of what can be got, but the younger ones do not venture far from the shore, yet are just as active and pugnacious over their food.

In like manner, good old vagabond Friar Tuck enjoyed a venison pasty with stoup of wine, and could sing:

"Ho! Jolly Jenkin, I spy a knave
drinking"

Yet he could fight bravely, and that with even so doughty a champion as King Richard, of England.

That the gull is a bit of a glutton, and that his "swallow" is enormous there is no doubt, for he has been seen to bolt a half-grown rat! He is strongly suspected, too, of killing young and weak lambs, he is a coarse feeder, and will eat anything; a great contrast to the Tui.

The flocks of Black-backs comprise both male and female, for there appears to be no distinction of sex out of the breeding-season. Some monks and nuns, believing themselves to be superior to distinctions of sex, attempted to live in this manner, but failed deplorably!

Sir W. Buller says that these birds are very fond of music—they would



Black-backed Gull's Nest, Cape Terawhiti.

They appear to select the most exposed situations to rear their hardy offspring.

not be friars if they were not. The tame ones that he kept showed great fondness for the piano and singing; and it is remarkable that this should be so as their note is so unmusical. But after all, modern music is only gratification of a feeling, a refined feeling no doubt; but it does not follow that because the music is what is called good that there is anything more in it than mere sounds. There may be, for instance, more real music in a wail for the honoured dead, a hymn of praise sung all out of tune by some cracked old voice, than in the most elaborated piece of orchestration of A.D. 1904. So it does not follow that because *Larus Dominicanus* loves music he is therefore saintly.

This gull is found all through the Southern Hemisphere, not being peculiar to any region, but classed as cosmopolitan, which is just what a Dominican should be.

The *Larus Marinus*, or great Black-backed Gull known in England, is a much larger bird, but otherwise very similar to the Southerner. They are all truly magnificent in appearance, the snowy white of their cowl and robe contrasting beautifully with the deep black of the cloak. The Northerner, however, is much fiercer, and there is no doubt about his killing lambs and even weakly ewes; he is also more solitary, getting away to the gloomy regions towards the

Pole, and not so common in England.

Perhaps one is tempted to romance a bit over natural history, but it is such a relief to get away from the study of that very artificial product "man," to the domain of nature proper, where things are what they seem, and beings may be understood, and their power for evil is limited, and they are not too clever, only commonly cunning! Yet even in this nature we find types of degenerate man, and we cannot ignore the significance of such as the Tui and Karoro.

We have noted the descent of our Dominican from heaven to earth, but we must not leave him in the depths, for there is an element of nobility in him, even as in the eagle, for he can soar—leaving things of earth (after having well-dined), he can climb to such heights that the eye hardly distinguishes him. And in the pure refined air of those regions he can revel in sunshine and that exhilaration of spirits which is such a strange and delightful experience to all who mount from the plains to the hills; there, one needs no "Malvoisie" for "a world of woe!" The dwellers in plains may mope, but the Swiss mountaineer "yodels."

So having watched *Larus Dominicanus* soar to the heights, let us conclude that he came thence, that it is his real home, and there take leave of him.



Comin' Back.



BACK-COUNTRY o' mine where the keen winds whine,
 An' the teeth o' the blizzard bites yer,
 You're callin' me out—you're callin' me back,
 An' I'm comin' with Death along the track—
 Comin', aye, but I'll have ter hurry,
 For he's so quick when he sights yer.

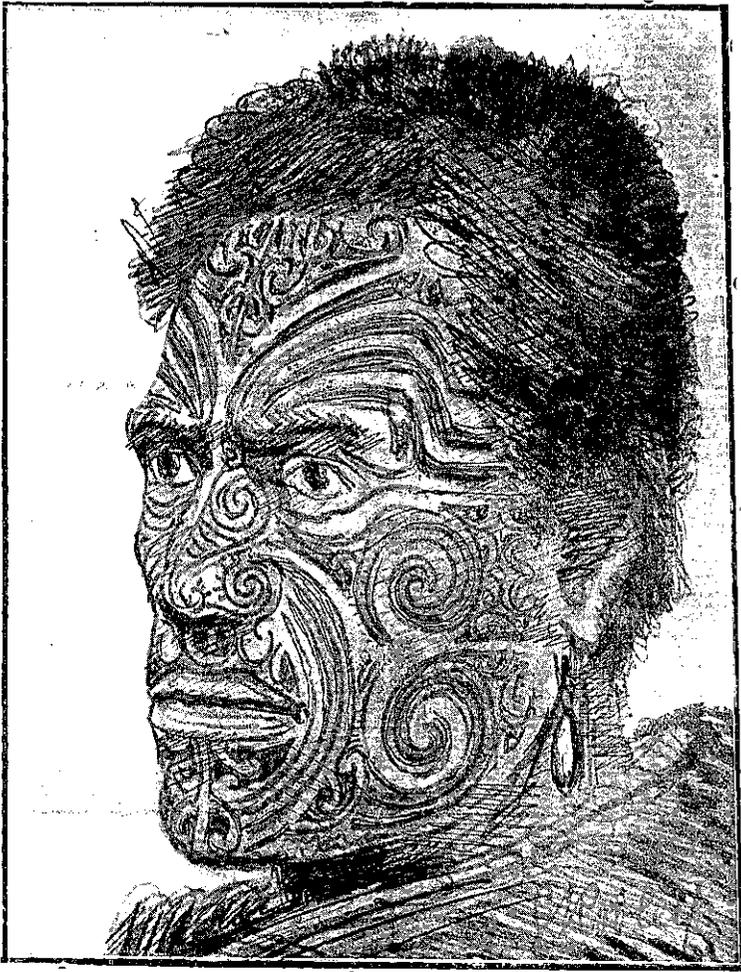
Old mate, it turns chill on the birch-bush hill,
 And the worst o' the graft's before us;
 But you're helpin' me home—you're givin' me rest,
 (For to sleep in the hills is always best),
 Sleepin'. That's what we dyin' ask for—
 Sleep in the land that bore us.

Dear stretch o' the downs, wi' your tussock crowns,
 An' your yellin' that beats sunsettin';
 You're smilin' the same at fut of the range—
 I was thinkin' o' you when ways was strange,
 Thinkin'? Yes, wi' my heart fair achin',
 For nothin' learns us forgettin'.

There's light o' the West on that limestone breast,
 An' the snow o' Ben Ard be'ind it;
 An' the cuttin's that score the fut-hills' slope;
 An' the black bush-gullies where shadders grope—
 Shadders! Aye; they are crawlin' roun' me,
 An' then?—Lord, I'm comin' ter find it.

I'm back to 'em all—the long down's fall,
 An' the rivers that slide between,
 An' the swamp where the wild duck rears her young,
 An' the livid scarps ter the sky upflung;
 Back to 'em—me; wi' my ears all dullin',
 An' eyes that leave half unseen.

Hills where I was bred, will yer take me, dead?
 You that know the end an' beginnin';
 Wi' your solemn foreheads where dawnin's glow.
 I'll be part o' you under the heat and snow—
 Take me. Holt me for everlastin';
 I'm done wi' all hope an' sinnin'.



THE above sketch of a tattooed Maori Head is by General Robley, who, it will be remembered, has made a most unique collection of well-preserved and elaborately tattooed Maori heads. It has been for some time his great desire that these heads should be purchased by the New Zealand Government, and thus kept in the country in which their owners dwelt, and from which they departed to Te Reinga. So

far, our Government has declined to purchase. The study of the ancient art of tattooing is an interesting one. The marvellous accuracy of design and execution, and the stoicism which enabled the patient to stand the long, drawn-out torture of the operation alike excite our wonder. A translation of "The Song of the Maori Tattooer," also forwarded by General Robley, may be given.

SONG OF THE MAORI TATOOER.

(Translation.)

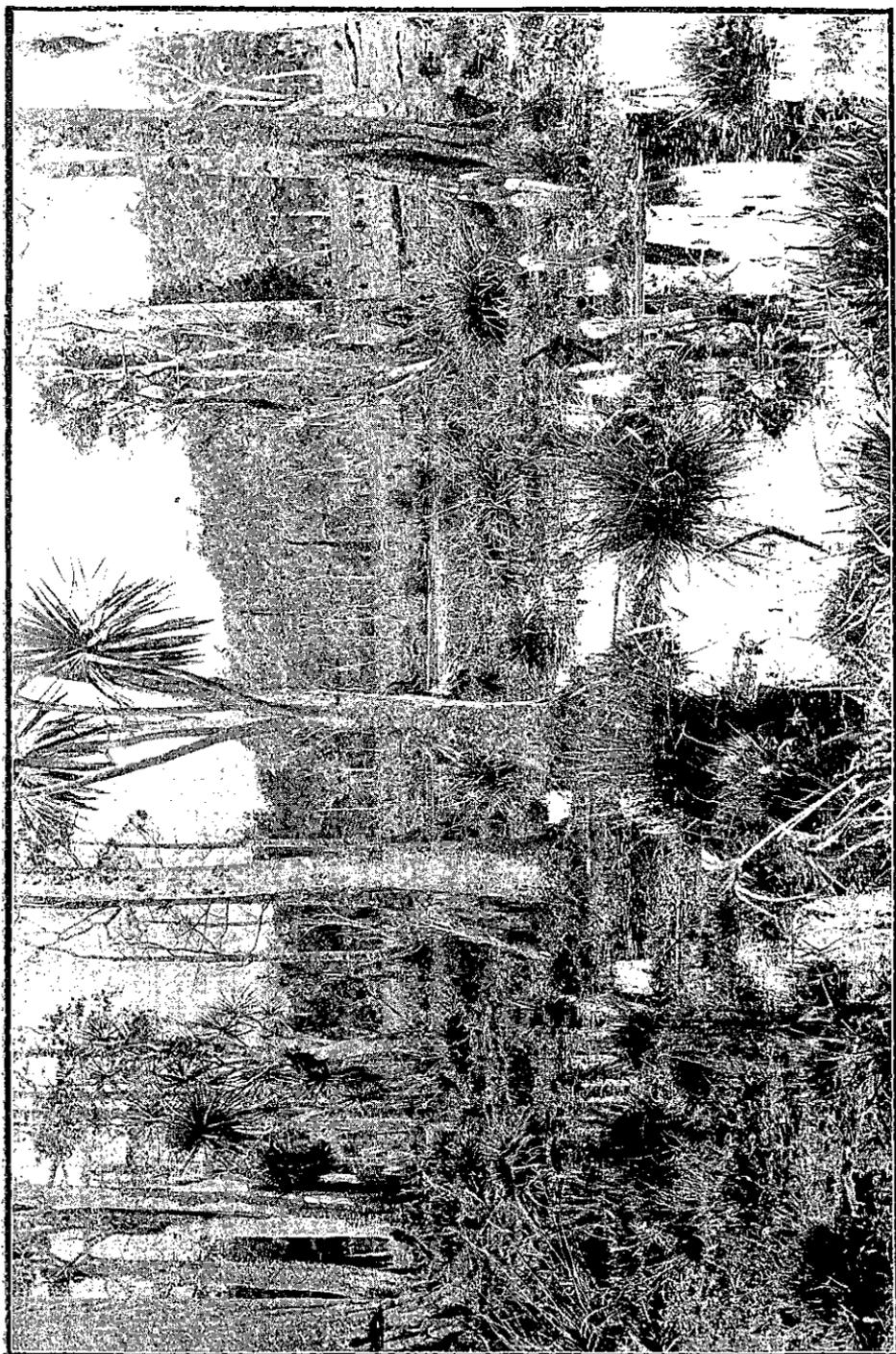
"HE who pays well let him
Be beautifully ornamented;
But he who forgets the operator,
Let him be done carelessly;
Be the lines far apart,
O Hiki Tangaroa!
O Hiki Tangaroa!

Strike that the chisel,
As it cuts along may sound,
O Hiki Tangaroa!
Men do not know the skill
Of the operator in driving his
Sounding chisel along,
O Hiki Tangaroa!"



Jonas, photo.

Nihotapu Creek.

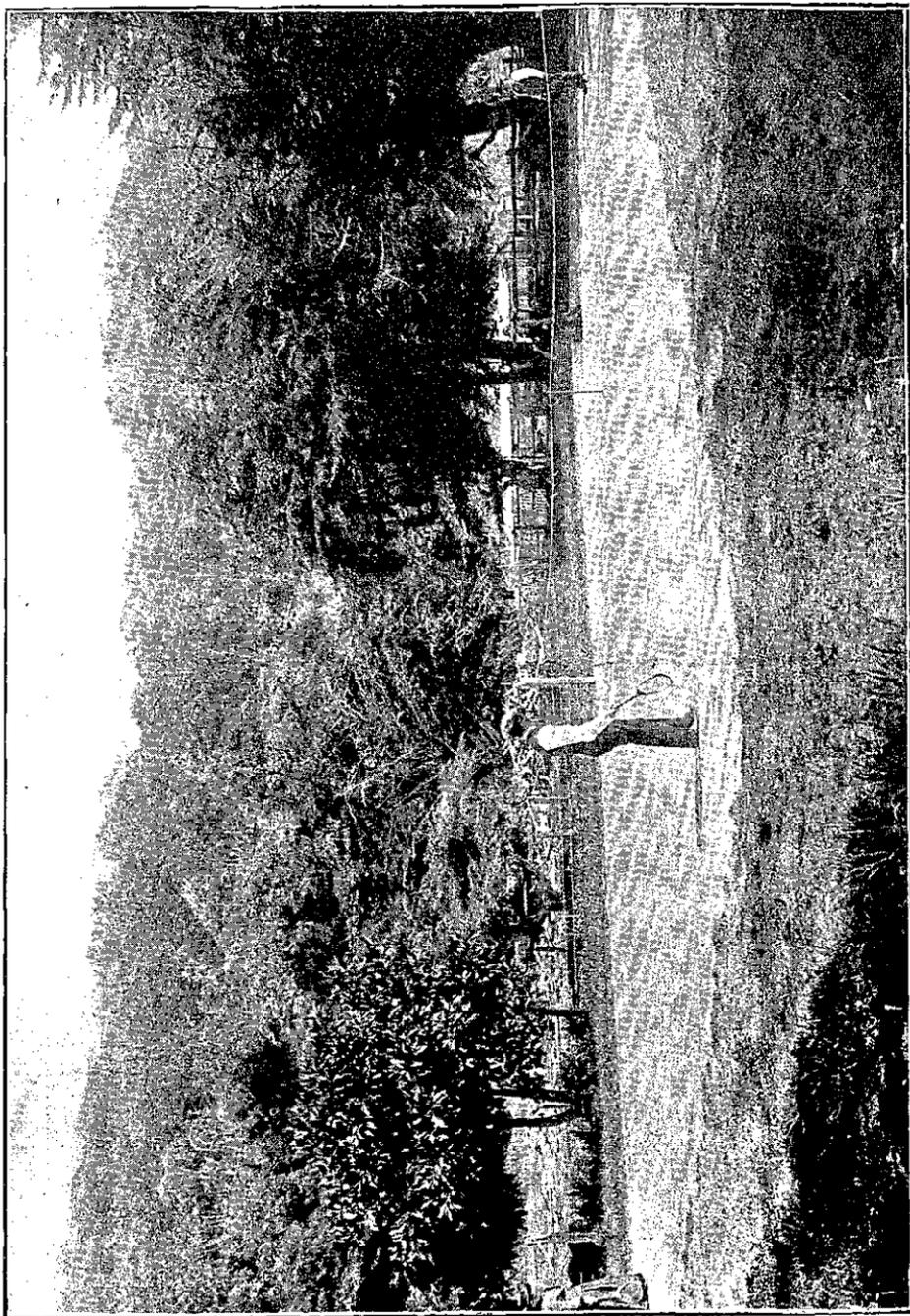


A Kahikatea Swamp.

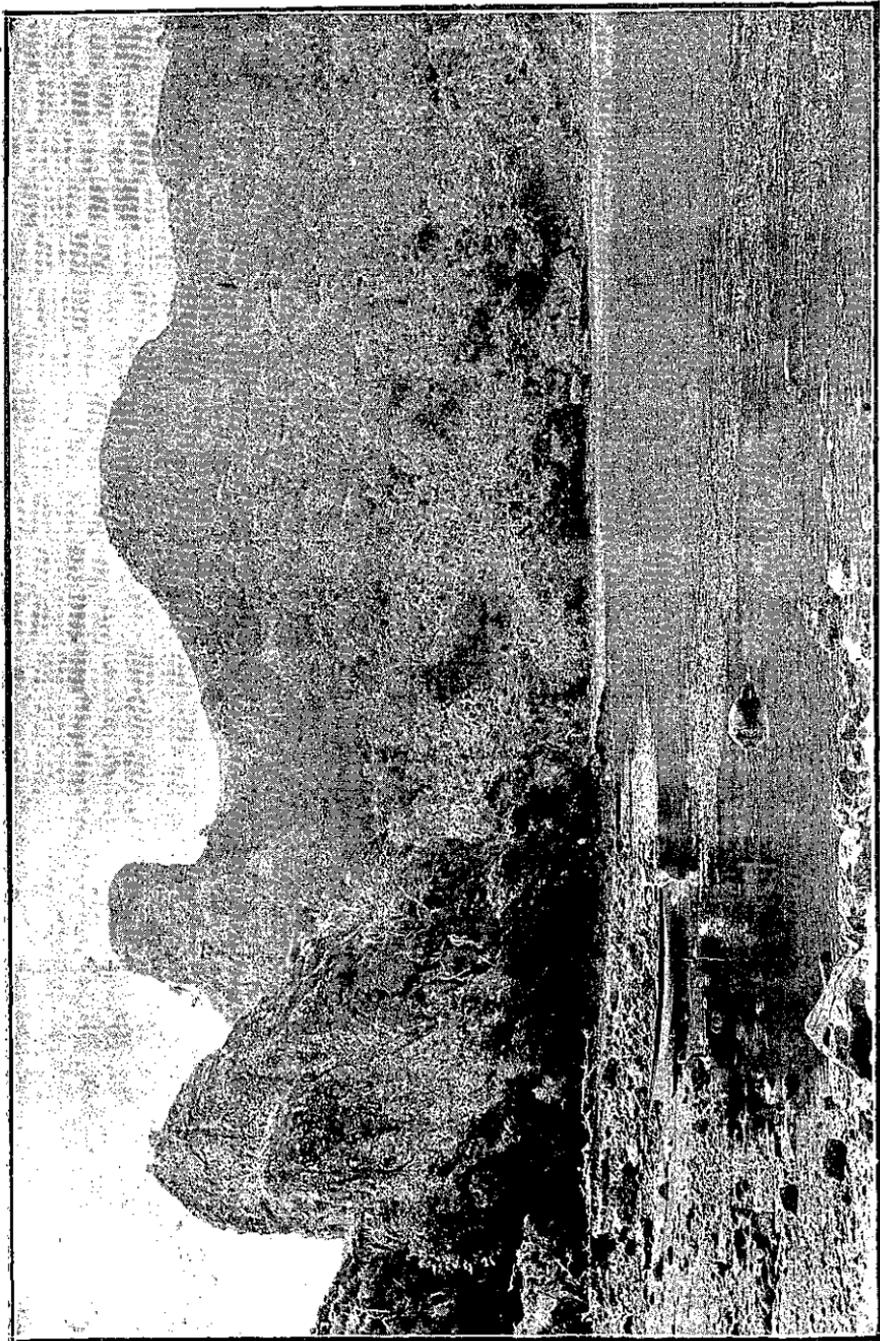
James, photo.



An Afghan Sacred Camel in North Queensland.



The Tennis Court at Waivzra.



Waiki Bay, Whangaroa Harbour.

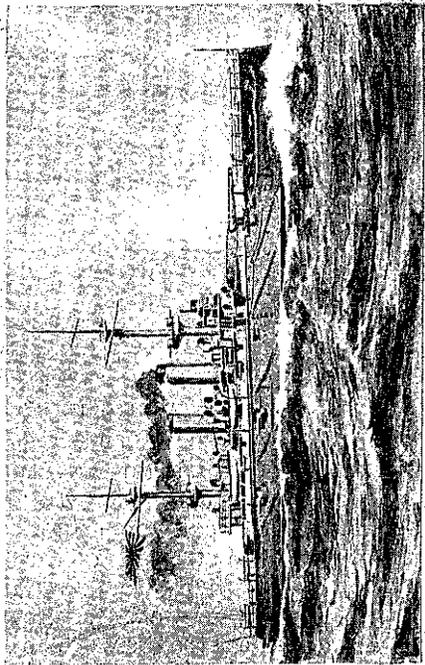


ROUND THE WORLD.

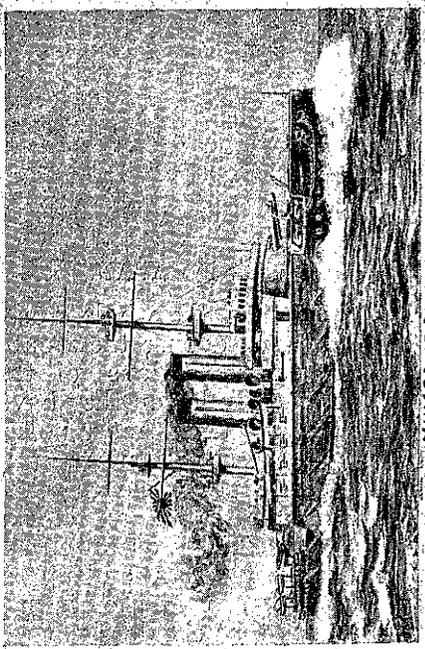
RUSSIA AND JAPAN.

The attention of the whole world has been turned during the month past on the smart actions of the little Japs, and the lesson they have already taught their more phlegmatic opponents. Even as this goes to press news comes that Russia has admitted in an official document, presumably as an excuse for her terrible reverses and unprecedented blunders, that she is not ready for war, that she does not expect land operations to commence for some time, and that much time is necessary in order to strike Japan a blow worthy of Russia's might and dignity! As if she expected Japan to wait with patience for that! Last month an opinion was expressed in these pages that Russia would not face a war when it came to the pinch. The wisdom of this opinion, although incorrect in one way, has been proved by the amazing admission quoted above and also by the fact that, at the time of writing, Japan has already made her wish she had not. This alert little nation, realising that smartness of attack and aptitude at seizing opportunity was infinitely more valuable than dignity in war, was quick to get in the first blow, and it was a heavy one. It is not easy to understand how an enemy with war impending could have been caught napping in the way Russia was when the Japs opened the ball. In commencing the Boer war Britain had much to blame herself for on the score of being unprepared,

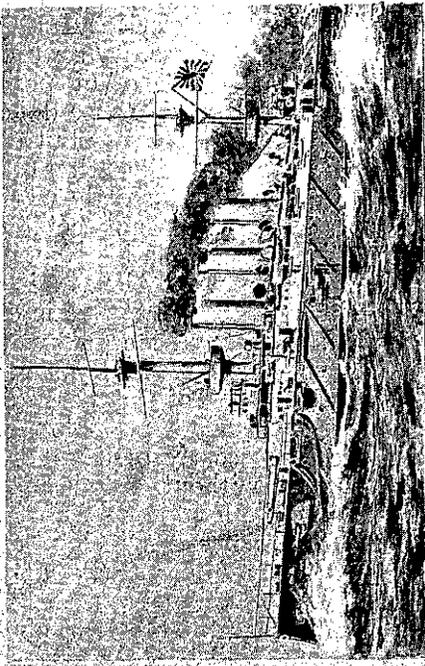
but her laxity and inefficiency was as nothing compared to that of Russia. One can scarcely conceive a nation which takes special pride in her navy having her fleet in such a position as to enable the enemy to gain so disastrous an advantage with so little inconvenience to herself. At practically one blow the balance of the strength of the two fleets is turned, and Japan's, once considerably the weaker, is now materially the stronger. The insignificant-looking torpedo-boats have done excellent service, and have proved their efficiency against armour-clad monsters. As we contemplate the millions of pounds worth of damage said to be done in so short a time, we cannot but marvel what the next invention of destructive nature in naval warfare will be. The most noticeable feature after the terrible blunder perpetrated by Admiral Alexeieff in the disposition of the fleet at his command and the total lack of watchfulness displayed, was the surprising incompetency of the men behind the guns. Of what possible avail can the most costly and best fitted warships be without good marksmen to handle her guns? We have already had some convincing proof of the Japanese superiority at sea, and it is more than probable that before this meets the eye of the reader they will have tried conclusions on land. To the most superficial observer it must be obvious, even without the experts' opinions, we constantly receive, that the Si-



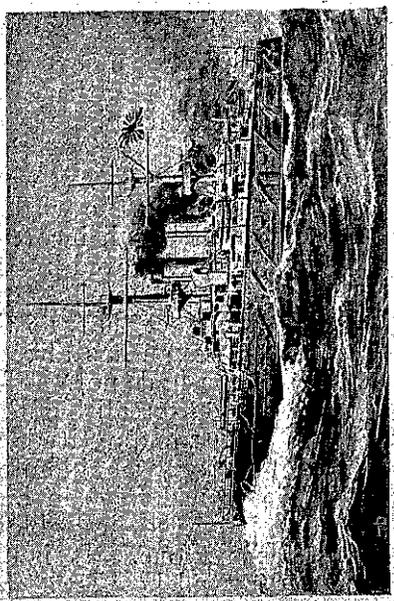
FUJI
12,500 Tons



MIKASA 15,200 Tons



YAKUMO
9,250 Tons



YASHIMA 12,300 Tons

berian railway is utterly unworthy of the trust Russia evidently imposes on it as a means of transport. We have so recently learnt from our own experience in the Transvaal that the most efficiently worked single line railway is totally inadequate for moving large masses of men and the stores needed for their support on the field. To this inefficiency must be added the ever-present danger of its destruction by the enemy, and the number of troops required to guard it and keep it open. It would appear now that the loss of Port Arthur and Vladivostok is only a matter of time, and with them Russia loses her power in the Pacific, and practically all she is fighting for. Before the war commenced there had risen in Russia seething discontent at the autocratic form of Government. The aggressive policy adopted with Japan naturally heightened this materially. What then must be the result should the war prove, as it has every probability of doing just now, a disastrous defeat attained at an appalling cost? The last state of that country will undoubtedly be infinitely worse than the first, and a general revolution ending in a democratic form of Government will be the most probable finale. Indications are not wanting that Germany would have liked to have slipped in to Russia's assistance, but that would have been under other and more favourable circumstances. The present outlook and Russia's own admissions, which amount to confessions of deplorable weakness, will have a wonderfully limiting effect on Germany's deeds

of sympathy if not her words. She knows better than to range herself with the weaker side against the victorious Japanese and their allies sworn to come to the rescue in such conditions. The Russian tactics would now appear to be to fortify Harbin, thus for the present, at all events, to practically leave Manchuria and Corea to the Japs. Having received such a disastrous check at sea their attention is turned to making the best stand they can on land. But what hope for success can be left them under the circumstances. They are to all intents and purposes already defeated, and the sooner they admit it the better for them in every way. The Jap is a born soldier, although he has in the past had but few opportunities of distinguishing himself. He is quick in foresight, leaving nothing to chance, accurate of aim, alert and ready for every emergency. For a Jap to die on a bed of sickness when there is an opportunity of giving up the ghost on a battlefield is regarded as a disgrace. Ever since Russia behaved in such a domineering fashion over Manchuria every Jap in his island home has longed to be at her throat. They have studied every point, secured a powerful ally, and prepared for every emergency, their country has been with them to the last man, and no one can say they do not well deserve the measure of success they have already obtained against a domineering race so infinitely outnumbering them, but so deplorably weakened by the terrible corruption of its administration and consequent dangerous state of discontent manifest in the masses of the people.



THE PUBLISHER'S DESK.

LIFE IN JAPAN.

All eyes are now turned on Japan, and matter dealing with this enterprising nation is naturally read with absorbing interest. We have pleasure, therefore, in announcing that we have made arrangements to publish in our next number a most interesting compilation of extracts from letters received by a New Zealander from friends in Japan.

"TO LONDON BEFORE THE MAST."

In the present number "Spindrift," a young New Zealander with the commendable desire to see something of the world, gives the first instalment of his experiences before the Mast, on a homeward bound sailing vessel, illustrated by photos.

"BAXTER OF RANIPUR."

In our next issue the opening chapter of a new serial will appear. It is, as the title—"Baxter of Ranipur"—implies, an Indian story. Baxter was regarded by every one on the station as a confirmed bachelor. Straker, the Ranipur oracle, had proclaimed that with such men "marriage was a plunge to be avoided." But Baxter thought otherwise, and the story describes his matrimonial experiences with a lady from England whom he had never seen. They had merely exchanged letters and photos, and he had sent her a cheque for her passage money.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

In response to an oft-repeated request from our readers, we have decided to publish each month an article under the heading, "Questions of the Day," our object being to encourage intelligent controversy on national subjects. We therefore invite original articles, or criticisms and replies to those appearing.

Articles on the following subjects will appear shortly:—

- WILD DUCK AND SWAN SHOOTING IN NEW ZEALAND.—By W. H. Bickerton.
- THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE MAORI.—By W. Shanaghan.
- YACHTING AT THE ANTIPODES.—By "Kotiri."
- FAKED SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS.—By Gilbert Anderson.
- TO LONDON BEFORE THE MAST. Chapter II.—By "Spindrift."
- OPEN DOORS TO GREAT COMPANY.—By Joyce Jocelyn.

Storiettes by the following Authors:—

- THE COWARDICE OF MOOKA-MEE.—By Racey Schlank.
- WHAT A RED HANKERCHIEF DID.—By Harold W. Black.
- TWO WHITE ROSES.—By William Hearne Thomas.