THE SUMMIT, MOUNT COOK.

UNDER "AORANGI."

(Mount Cook),

NEW ZEALAND.

Tales of the Golden West

TAH."

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The original publication details are as follows:

Title: Tales of the golden west: being reminiscences of Westland from its settlement by gold-seekers and traders

Author: Waratah

NLNZ Identifier: 431378

URI: http://natlib.govt.nz/records/21995763

Published: Whitcombe and Tombs, Christchurch, N.Z., 1906

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UNDER "AORANGI,"
NEW ZEALAND.

TALES OF THE GOLDEN WEST.

BY "WARATAH."
Hindmarsh

BEING REMINISCENCES OF WESTLAND FROM ITS SETTLEMENT BY GOLD-SEEKERS AND TRADERS.

Nineteen of these Tales, by the courtesy of the Editor, originally appeared in the columns of the *Grey River Argus* during the year 1905.

CHRISTCHURCH, WELLINGTON, DUNEDIN, MELBOURNE, LONDON:
WHITCOMBE AND TOMBS LIMITED.
1906

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The Premier and his Family.

On his Fiftieth Birthday.

1. The Hon. Richard John Seddon.
2. Mrs. Richard John Seddon.
3. Jane—now Mrs. Bean.
4. Phœbe Alicia.
5. Mary Stuart.
6. Ruby Jessie.
7. Thomas Edward Yaud.
8. Louisa Spotswood.
9. John Stuart.
10. Elizabeth May.
11. Richard John Spotswood.

To

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

Richard John Seddon, P.C.,

PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND,

Who, for over twenty-five years, has faithfully represented Kumara and Westland in Parliament, and who, for nearly thirteen years in succession, by the will of God and the voice of the people, has held the high office of Premier, wisely ruling the destinies of the fair Islands of our Southern Land of the Rising Sun,

This Book

(with permission), is respectfully dedicated by the Author,

"WARATAH."

REEFTON,
NEW ZEALAND.

January, 1906.

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13 JAN 1987

TALES OF THE GOLDEN WEST.

UNDER "AORANGI."

I.—THE LAND OF THE GREENSTONE.

Under southern skies, in that marvellous land of the rising sun, "New Zealand," between the parallels of 41 and 46 degrees of latitude, is a narrow strip of country, called by the Maoris "Te Wahi Punamu," the land of the Greenstone.

This wonder region, that knows no droughts, is o'er-shadowed by the snow crowned Southern Alps, which, like the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California, form the great divide between the East and West Coast of the Middle Island, the central peak, rising in majestic grandeur to an altitude of 12,349 feet, known to the Maoris as "Aorangi" or the cloud piercer, and named "Mount Cook" by the intrepid navigator,

> "Illustrious Cook—Columbus of our shore,
> To whom was left, this unknown world t'explore."

The summit of this mighty sentinel, "Aorangi,"—inviting Alpine tourists to scale its dizzy height—is not more than twenty miles from the coast line, and the melting snows and never ending rains, falling from the western watershed of the Southern Alps, form mountain torrents, flowing into numerous streams and rivers, bringing down alluvial sand, much of it, finding its way to the ocean bed of the Tasman Sea, which in course of ages was thrown up by the action of the tides on to the

great stretches of sea beaches, forming drifts and leads above high water mark.

The early inhabitants of "Te Wahi Punamu" were full-blooded Maoris, and fighters to a man. But in 1860, in Westland proper, they had dwindled down to a slender population of about a hundred souls, who after securing their daily bread in the shape of fish, wekas, and fern tops as vegetables, employed their leisure hours in the Greenstone industry, manufacturing meres and axes, and other implements of war, also ear pendants and the little grotesque representations of "Tiki," the Maori Adam, out of the greenstone deposits procurable in the Teremakau district.

These greenstone deposits were discovered ages ago, for it is related in Maori tradition that "Ngahue," a sort of Columbus or Captain Cook, in the year 1200 or so, landed at Tauranga with a contingent of colonists, and returning to his native land, Samoa, reported that Aotearoa, the ancient name for New Zealand, was a land without human inhabitants but abounding in the huge Moa, and the precious "Ponamu" (so spelt by Ngahue); and from the samples of greenstone he had secured at the West Coast and taken home, two meres, one tiki, and one pendant were subsequently made and held in great veneration, and the ear pendant was brought to New Zealand and was sacredly handed down from generation to generation, until it was held, in 1852 by a notable chief, who presented it to the Governor, the late Sir George Grey on his departure in 1853 for England.

The greenstone monopoly was conducted in what was known as the Arahura district, by a Native tribe of the name of "Ngatiwairenga," who disposed of the manufactured articles to the warriors of the northern and eastern tribes, who wore them as emblems of chieftainship, or adorned their Wahine or Maori maidens with

them. But it is sad to relate that the possession of this industry was the cause of interminable quarrels on the part of a Native tribe by the name of Ngaitahu, residing at Kaiapoi. A piece of greenstone, much polished, having been taken over to Kaiapoi, the Ngaitahu were much struck with its beauty, and finding out where it came from wanted to form a trust with the local owners, which was declined, the consequence being, that the Ngaitahu tribe raised a contingent of warriors, crossed the Alps, and like the Border clans of old, went for the resident tribe with the long name, exterminating all the male adults by feasting or otherwise, marrying, in their simple fashion the women and widows, adopting the orphans, and incorporating the lot into their tribe who carried on the business of manufacturing greenstone jewellery.

It may be noted that even now large parcels of greenstone are exported up north, and to the Australian States, being much sought after by working jewellers, and obtained without the fightings and feastings of long ago.

A remarkable thing occurred just lately in the greenstone district near Kumara. A cute storekeper of that well known town, passing a miner's hut near a dredge was attracted by a large stone lying near the hut, which he believed to be greenstone. On chipping a few pieces off the boulder, he found it to be pure greenstone, which on being weighed turned the scale at three tons; and as the commodity is worth 6d. to 2s. per pound, according to quality, the find was a valuable one. It was afterwards split in two and found to be of very good quality. For some time past the dredge had one of her mooring lines fastened to this stone, yet those on the dredge and others passing the stone day after day, never suspected that the barren looking boulder was of any value.

It reminds one of a somewhat similar incident in California, narrated by Mark Twain. Two miners used

to go to the neighbouring village in the afternoon and return every night with household supplies. Part of the distance they traversed a trail and nearly always sat down to rest on a great boulder that lay beside the path. In the course of thirteen years they had worn that boulder smooth by sitting on it. By and by two vagrant Mexicans came along and occupied the seat. They began to amuse themselves by chipping off flakes from the boulder with a sledge hammer. They examined one of the flakes and found it rich with gold. That boulder paid them 800 dollars (£160) afterwards. But the aggravating circumstance was that these "Greasers" knew that there must be more gold where that came from and so they went panning up the hill, and found what was probably the richest pocket that region has yet produced. It took three months to exhaust it, and yielded 120,000 dollars (£24,000). The two American miners who used to sit on the boulder are poor yet, and they take turn about in getting up early in the morning to curse those Mexicans; and when it comes down to pure ornamental cursing, the native American is gifted above the sons of men.

The West Coast was for a long time celebrated for its impenetrable forests, closely matted with thick undergrowth and bound together with supplejacks, popularly known as "bush lawyers," rendering it difficult for exploration; and the few Europeans who returned from the new-formed settlement of Nelson, to "spy the land" travelled down by the sea beaches and Maori tracks, and those who went inland were compelled to take to the river beaches and trudge and swag it as best they could.

It was a wild overgrown country, its evergreen hills, rich with mighty trees aflame in the summer time with crimson bloom of the rata, its low lying lands and pakihis, or open plains, thick with the verdant growth of

the flax, its long stalks shooting upwards, throwing out scarlet blossoms in the flowering seasons, attracting the beautiful Parson Bird, the "Tui," to gather supplies of honey. Inquisitive wekas, or woodhens, were plentiful in the land, and afforded some sport and much food for the resident Maoris; and at the mouth of each of the numerous rivers, fish of all sorts, was abundant, and in spring time of each year, the Inangahua, or whitebait, crossed the bars in great profusion, giving employment to the native fishermen, catching them wholesale in their flax nets, and drying them in the sun for winter use.

Early in 1770, our old friend, Captain Cook, during his first voyage round the world in the "Endeavour" sailed from Queen Charlotte's Sound down to the Bluff, and coming up the West Coast, sighted "Aorangi," naming it Mount Cook, and arriving at Cape Farewell on the 31st March, 1770, sailed direct for New Holland or Australia. He describes the Southern Island as called "Tovy Poenamo" and the West Coast in particular as "An inhospitable shore, unworthy of observation, except for its ridge of naked and barren rocks covered with snow. As far as the eye could reach, the prospect was wild, craggy, and desolate."

Later on, to this wild shore came Europeans on sealing expeditions, but these adventurers ran great risk from the ferocious Maoris who had very remarkable cannibalistic appetites in those days. It is recorded that in 1825, a wool-ship, of 400 tons, the "Rifleman," left Hobartown for England, and was never heard of afterwards. Two surveyors, Brunner and Heaphy, travelling down the coast in 1846, saw evidence of a wreck of about 400 tons at Cape Foulwind, just south of the Buller, and learned from the Maoris that bales of wool came ashore from the wreck, and that the whole of the crew were hunted down like wild beasts, and disposed of by the Maoris of that time.

On the 18th of March, 1846, Messrs. Brunner and Heaphy, surveyors, connected with the English Land Colonization Company, engineered by the Wakefield family, left Nelson and travelled down the coast as far as the Greenstone Country, and at the Teremakau, arrived at the chief Maori settlement of the Greenstone people, some forty souls in all, every man, woman and child indolently engaged in sawing, grinding, or polishing greenstone. The surveyors returned to Nelson, and reported that the country was unfavourable for settlement, and that the rivers were unfit for even coasting vessels to enter.

The same surveyors, accompanied by Mr. William Fox, the representative of the New Zealand Land Company (afterwards Sir William Fox and Premier) made the overland trip from Nelson to the sources of the Buller, and returned to Nelson. Mr. Brunner, with two natives, then started from Foxhill, and crossing the Hope Saddle, explored the sources of the Buller, following it down to the sea. Then travelling on to the mouth of the Grey, and passing up that river, he discovered the seam of coal on its north bank, now known as the "Brunner Coal Mine," and continuing his explorations up the Grey, crossed the Saddle into the Inangahua River, following it down to its junction with the Buller. Returning to Nelson by its upper reaches, he crossed the Saddle, and arrived home, after an absence of eighteen months, he and his two Maoris having been given up as lost. This marvellous journey was anything but a picnic, for the party suffered the greatest privations from the want of proper food. For his exploration services Mr. Thomas Brunner received the medal of the Royal Geological Society, and settled down as Chief Surveyor for the Province of Nelson, but, sad to say, died at the early age of 50 years, doubtless from the hardships he had endured on the Coast.

Among the staff of surveyors sent to the Coast to mark off the boundaries of provinces, survey Native reserves, and lay off townships, the name of John Rochfort, C.E., stands pre-eminently forth. He had gained much experience on the Australian gold fields, and in 1859 found his way to Nelson, and settled down at Motueka, in Blind Bay. During his surveys he discovered coal seams at Mount Rochfort, and remarkable as it may appear, he is reported as being the first to discover gold, the colour only, somewhere up the Buller River.

As an explorer of the land of the Greenstone, James Mackay, jun., will long be remembered by the resident Maoris with some amount of regret, but by the European inhabitants with much thankfulness. He was an energetic and intrepid bushman, able to hold his own with the Maoris, speaking their language fluently, and often called upon by the General Government to calm the Native disputes with Europeans at Collingwood, and to assist the settlers in their dealings with the turbulent warriors of the Waikato.

Mr. James Mackay, jun., arrived in the Nelson province in 1845 as a boy of 14, and in 1855 commenced his explorations in the mountainous country at the head waters of the Karamea (the Maori name for Mackay), and in 1857 with two Maoris came down by the sea coast from Karamea to the Kawatiri River, now called the Buller and, as the weather was fine, sounded the bar and reported it navigable for coasting vessels. Passing down the Coast he arrived at the Mawhera River, the Grey, for the first time, and for £10 was taken up the Grey in a canoe as far as the Ahaura, and with the Chief Tarapuhi, a brother of Werita Tainui, as a guide explored the sources of the Upper Grey and returning to the mouth of the Mawhera, was able to take soundings on

the bar in his canoe, and found that small craft could safely cross it. On his return to Nelson he reported the result of his visit to the Coast, exhibiting samples of coal from the seam discovered by Brunner, also reporting that the pakihis along the coast and especially in the Upper Grey district known as Mawheraite were suitable for pasturing and raising stock, with the result that Mr. S. M. Mackley, a settler in the Nelson province, took up land in 1861 in the Waipuna Plains of the Upper Grey, for a sheep and cattle station, and became the pioneer of the agricultural and pastoral interest of the Coast.

In 1858 Mr. Mackay was appointed Assistant Native Secretary, and early in 1859 went to the East Coast to conclude the purchase of land from Kaikoura Natives, and went on to Christchurch where he received instructions to proceed to the Mawhera Native Settlement, to negotiate the purchase of the country from Cape Farewell to Milford Haven.

It might be mentioned in passing, that the late Sir George Grey who as Governor, and Maori scholar, ruled the destinies of New Zealand in the early fifties, with great foresight urged the completion of the purchase of the West Coast Lands. Purchases of the Maori Lands on the East Coast had been settled for £7000, with ample Native reserves, but the West Coast chiefs refused to part with their land unless the district between the Grey and Hokitika rivers from their sources to the sea was specially reserved to the Maoris.

It must be remembered that this particular district was the very centre of the greenstone deposits and doubtless held in some way sacred, or under the influence of the peculiar laws of "Tapu," and according to the Maoris was not for sale, a difficult problem to solve by Mr. Mackay. However, he and his party left Christchurch and crossed on this occasion the Great Divide. At Lake

Sumner he found Rochfort with a survey party under contract to define provincial boundaries, and the sources of the Grey and Buller Rivers. The whole party passed over the Saddle into the Teremakau by the Otira Gorge, Rochfort passing on to Lake Brunner and the Grey, Mackay following the Teremakau to the sea and then on to the Mawhera Native settlement.

Negotiations were opened with the Maori Chieftains, but they were obdurate and very decided in the matter of the greenstone land being reserved for the Natives, offering to sell the balance of their estate for £200 cash. Mackay declined to sanction such an extensive reserve and negotiations failed; and in August 1859, accompanied by one Maori he attempted to return to Nelson by way of the Inangahua Saddle, but from stress of weather, and semi-starvation had to return to the Grey and proceeded to the Buller, where he was fortunate to find a cutter, the "Supply," on her trip to the Coast with Government provisions, and sailed in her to Nelson. Proceeding on to Auckland as quickly as he could he reported to the Governor, Col. Gore Browne, the result of his mission. The Governor instructed him to return to the West Coast, make 10,000 acres of reserve and give the Natives £300 or even £400 for the territory, informing them he could not allow the small number of Natives, 110 all told, to occupy such a reserve as they demanded, to the exclusion of European settlers who would improve their lands.

In February, 1860, Mackay, with 400 sovereigns in his swag, returned to the coast with three natives as a body guard. Starting from Nelson overland, he struck the Maruia Plains, afterwards Walker's station, then over into the source of the Grey, arriving at the Mawhera Native settlement after seven weeks of great hardships, living on wekas and fern roots most of the time, and

getting into the Grey sorely wounded from spear grass, and in a state of collapse. Mr. Mackley luckily was there waiting anxiously for his friend to arrive, and being something of an amateur doctor, acted the good Samaritan, and soon cured him of his wounds.

About the same time, Haast, with his geological party turned up at the Grey, after a rough trip overland from Christchurch, and fortunately the schooner "Gipsy" loaded with Government supplies, for Haast and Mackay, came sailing in over the Grey bar, in time to succour the distressed travellers, and a change of provisions soon restored them. The schooner "Gipsy" was the first sailing craft to cross the Grey bar, as the cutter "Supply," was the first to cross the Buller.

James Mackay with those golden sovereigns on hand, upon his recovery, reopened negotiations to purchase, and a meeting, or Tangi, was notified to the resident land holders, to be held at the Lagoon settlement near Okarito, and meant another long journey on foot of some 135 miles.

This gathering of the clans must have been a formidable affair. The procession started from the Grey, Messrs. Mackay, Mackley, and Burnett (one of Haast's surveyors), representing the Queen of England, with our old friend Werita Tainui and the whole of his family, men, women and children in close marching order. The processionists as they proceeded south, gathered in the various chiefs and their families at the different pas, travelling leisurely by the sea beach or along native tracks, crossing rivers and streams as best they could, not one, in that long procession, not even Mackay himself shod in his sandals of flax, having the faintest idea, that "Gold! yellow, glittering, precious gold!" of the value of millions and millions sterling, lay secreted beneath their weary tired feet, as they trudged upon their long, long journey.

On arriving at the settlement near Okarito, directly under the mighty sentinel, Mount "Aorangi," after the usual salutations, and the "Tangi" or Maori feastings to welcome 'Karamea' being concluded, negotiations were opened, the Governor's message communicated, and an offer of £300 cash down was made, which after much dignified palaver among the Maoris, was accepted. Some leading chiefs with Mackay and Mackley went as far as Bruce Bay, another walk of 40 miles, and then down to Jackson's Bay, about 60 miles further on, to fix the Native reserve at each place. At Bruce Bay some ancient Maori ladies interviewed the white men, the first they had ever seen, and the English made clothes took their fancy. On the return to Okarito the procession reformed and marched back, fixing Native reserves as they went along till the Grey was reached.

The most important part of the business was now to be transacted, viz., the signing of the Deed, on the site of land which was afterwards known as Greymouth and which may be historically considered, as things turned out, to have been of as great importance as the signing of the Magna Charta, as recorded in English history. This was cheerfully accomplished "under the shining sun"—so says the deed—of the 21st day of May, 1860. James Mackay jun., affixed his signature on behalf of Queen Victoria; and the finishing touches were made by some fourteen Maori chieftains each by his mark of a cross, upon which three hundred bright gold sovereigns were distributed among them to clinch the bargain. S. M. Mackley and James Burnett signed the Deed as witnesses, also some Collingwood Maoris, and all things considered, it was the neatest thing in the way of bursting up a big estate, worthy of the present day, and cheap at the price. The Deed conveyed seven and a half million acres of land (more or less), the less being

about 12,000 acres for Native reserves and for £300 cash.

On his return to Nelson, by way of the Buller, James Mackay, with his dispatch bag strapped to his back, containing the precious Deed, the field book of Native reserves, and £100 in sovereigns, was very nearly lost in crossing the Grey. His canoe with six Natives, capsized in deep water. He fortunately saved himself and his treasures, by sticking to the upturned canoe, finally landing in safety, on the shore where Cobden now stands.

The only reward obtained by Mackay for his valuable and arduous services in securing the best part of the "Land of Greenstone" was the answer of a good conscience, viz., 'I did my duty.' It might perhaps be conceded as an honour, that when Rochfort pegged out the city of Greymouth in the middle sixties, a back street was named after Mackay and part of its southern frontage in after years was adorned by an extensive and expensive Town Hall, subsidised by a millionaire.

If ever a man deserved a first-class up-to-date statue erected in some prominent place on the Coast, say in Greymouth, it is James Mackay, the intrepid and distinguished explorer of the "Land of the Greenstone."

II.—THE GENESIS OF ALLUVIAL GOLD.

"What is here?
Gold? yellow, glittering, precious gold!"
SHAKESPEARE.

In the beginning, or, to be more explicit, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the fairy godmother, gold, disclosed her secret treasure in California, "at which all the world wondered," creating great prosperity in that country; and, coming down to southern lands in Oceania, the mother colony of New South Wales, with her daughter colony of Victoria, at the touch of the golden staff, by leaps and bounds, jumped into notoriety, and then crossing the Tasman sea alighted in fair Zealandia, and waving her rod of enchantment over its pleasant isles, proclaimed the fact that "gold, yellow, glittering, precious gold" lay hidden in its mountains and valleys, and in its river beds and ocean beaches, only waiting to be won by the sons of toil.

The wonderful discovery of alluvial gold in the newly-formed state of California, under the stars and stripes, reads like one of the fairy tales familiar to our childhood, the narration of which may to many of the old gold seekers sound like a "twice told tale," but interesting for all that, and will be something new to the rising generation of the present age.

Once upon a time, within the memory of the oldest of old-age pensioners of New Zealand, in that land of enchantment, known as California — where eternal summer reigns, and flowers bloom all the year round in the fertile valley watered by many forks, or tributaries, rising in the snowclad ranges of the Sierra Nevada and

falling into the picturesque river, the Sacramento, serving to swell its navigable waters flowing from its source some 300 miles away to the north, till it meets the San Joaquin River coming from the south and joining hands passes with it into the great harbour of San Francisco—there stood in the year of grace 1848, on the point of the land where the American River or Fork flows into the Sacramento, a strongly built fort, mounted with 12 guns, and capable of containing a force of a thousand men, ready to stand any attack on the part of the wild Red Indians of that time.

This fort belonged to a Captain Sutter, a Swiss by birth, who was one of the captains of the famous Swiss Guards, and as a refugee, went to America and then to California, where he took up his abode on a magnificent tract of land (granted to him in 1840, by the Mexican Government) and employed many native Indians in the fur trade with much success.

In 1846 the flag of the United States was raised in California, that Government having bought from the Mexican Government the country of New Mexico and California, for twenty-five million dollars, equal to five million sterling English money, and from that time prosperity set in as if by magic. San Francisco from a village of two hundred inhabitants, grew in a few months into a thriving town with a population of two thousand. But a still greater source of wealth was near at hand, which, under the influence of the English speaking race, was to raise California to a pitch of greatness, and commercial prosperity.

Captain Sutter, a man of sound judgment, and whose good humour and amiable qualities endeared him to all with whom he came in contact, one afternoon in the early part of the month of June in 1848, at his residence in the Fort, after enjoying the usual siesta was engaged in

writing a letter to some relative in Europe, when he was interrupted by a Mr. Marshall, a business friend, bursting hurriedly into the sitting room, and from the unusual agitation in his manner the Captain imagined that something serious had occurred, and, as men involuntarily do in that part of the world, he at once glanced to see if his rifle was in the proper place.

The appearance of Marshall at that moment in the Fort was a matter of surprise, as he had but two days before left the Fort to make some alteration in a mill for sawing planks which he had just built for Captain Sutter some miles higher up the American River.

Marshall having recovered himself a little, said excitedly to Captain Sutter, "However great your surprise at my somewhat unexpected reappearance, it will be much greater when you hear the intelligence I have come to bring you, intelligence which, if properly profited by, will put both of us in possession of unheard of wealth, millions and millions of dollars in fact."

"I think you must be mad, Marshall, talking in that strain," replied the Captain.

For answer Marshall threw on the table a handful of scales of pure virgin gold. Captain Sutter was fairly thunderstruck and said: "Marshall, will you explain what all this means?" passing his hand through the glittering gold lying before him.

"Captain," replied Marshall, "according to your instructions I had the mill wheel thrown out of gear to let the water in the dam find a passage through the tail-race, which was previously too narrow to allow the water to run off in sufficient quantity; whereby the wheel was prevented from efficiently performing its work. By this alteration the narrow channel was considerably enlarged and a mass of sand and gravel carried off by the face of the current. Early next morning, I was walking along

the left bank of the stream when I perceived something which I first took for a piece of opal—a clear transparent stone very common here—glittering on one of the spots laid bare, by the sudden crumbling away of the bank. I paid no attention to this, but while I was giving directions to the workmen, I observed several similar glittering fragments, and my curiosity was so far excited that I stooped down and picked one of them up. Do you know, Captain, I positively debated within myself two or three times, whether I should take the trouble to bend my back to pick up one of the pieces, and had decided on not doing so, when further on another glittering morsel caught my eye (the largest of the pieces now before you). I condescended to pick it up, and, to my astonishment, found that it was a thin scale of what appears to be pure gold. I then gathered some twenty or thirty similar pieces, which, on examination, convinced me that my supposition was right. My first impression was that the gold must have been lost, or buried there by some early Indian tribe, but, on proceeding to examine the neighbouring soil, I discovered it was all more or less auriferous. This at once decided me. I mounted my horse, and rode down as fast as it would carry me to see you with the news."

At this narration of Marshall, the captain was for a time struck dumb with astonishment, and, when he had convinced himself, from the specimens on the table, that there was no exaggeration about it, he became as much excited as Marshall, and asked him,

"Have you shown the gold to the work-people at the mill?"

"No, I have not spoken to a single person about it," replied Marshall.

They agreed not to say anything of the discovery, and early next morning set out for the mill. On their arrival

just before sundown, they poked the sand about in various places, and succeeded in collecting between them more than an ounce of gold. The captain stopped at Marshall's that night, and next day went up the Fork and found gold in the bed of the main stream, and in every little dried up creek and ravine. In one place, with a small knife he picked out, from a dry gorge a little way up the mountain, a solid lump of gold which weighed nearly an ounce and a half.

On their return to the mill, the work people met them in a body, showing them small samples of gold, similar to what they had obtained. Their discovery had thus become public property, and the captain within two days had a party of fifty Indians fairly at work. The report soon spread, some of the gold was sent to San Francisco, and crowds of people rushed to the new diggings.

"What surprises me," said the captain, in talking it over with a friend, "is that this country should have been visited by so many scientific men, and not one of them should have stumbled upon the treasures. Scores of keen-eyed trappers have crossed this valley in every direction, and tribes of Indians have dwelt in it for centuries, and yet this gold has never been discovered. I myself have passed the very spot above a hundred times during the last ten years, but was just as blind as the rest of them. So I must not wonder at the discovery not having been made earlier."

The outcome of Marshall's discovery was that among the thousands who rushed to California were three men, who turned the discovery to some account, viz., Hargreaves for New South Wales, Esmond for Victoria, and Gabriel Read for New Zealand.

Hargreaves was a squatter near Bathurst, who, during the four years' depression and drought, between 1844 and 1848, had been close upon ruined, and so went to

the California rush to retrieve his fortune. The result of his digging was not a success, but, being a man of observation, he noticed a great similarity between the Californian drifts and the country familiar to him on his run over the Blue Mountains. He returned at once to Sydney, quietly prospected over his run, and in June, 1851, reported to the Imperial Government at Sydney the discovery of payable gold, producing several ounces of virgin gold in evidence.

A curious thing was occurring at the same time in the adjoining colony of Victoria. James Esmond, who had left his home in that colony for California, and, being struck with its gold drifts, as being similar to the country where he was living, returned to Buninyong, prospected the district, and reported to the Government his discovery of gold, with the result that, at the end of 1852, the yield of gold in Victoria alone reached the value of eleven million sterling.

In New Zealand, the beginning of the gold industry may be dated from 1857, in which year gold was won to the value of £40,422 from the Auckland, Nelson, and Marlborough provinces, though, in 1860, the returns from these provinces dwindled down to the value of £17,585.

In the year 1858, the easy-going settlers of New Zealand, represented by its half-dozen Provincial Parliaments started from their bucolic slumbers and began to think seriously that wool and wheat after all were subservient to the power of gold, and offered rewards for the discovery of payable gold fields.

The canny little village of Dunedin, not long founded, consisting of young identities from Scotland, began, in 1858, to realise that there must be some truth in the persistent reports from its surveyors, and from small prospecting parties furnishing samples, of the fact that

the province of Otago was auriferous, and this being followed by a petition from 138 inhabitants of the province praying that a "handsome bonus" be offered for the discovery of a payable goldfield in Otago, the Provincial Council deliberated, and, with that strict caution proverbial with Scotchmen, voted the munificent promise of a reward of £500.

It was not, however, till June, 1861 (what a lucky month June has been in all important gold discoveries), that the veteran California gold digger, Gabriel Read, fit companion to be classed on the roll of honour, with Marshall, Hargreaves, and Esmond, startled the Dunedinites by claiming the Otago stakes.

Soon after Marshall discovered those shining flakes at Sutter's Mill in California, Gabriel Read was on the spot, and worked there a few years, but, with the wandering instinct of the gold-seeker, had migrated from California; and his life since had been an eventful one, graduating through all the Australian diggings, eventually finding himself located in New Zealand, waiting, like our old friend Micawber, for something to turn up.

In reporting to the Superintendent of Otago (Major Richardson) under date June 4, 1861, Read gave the result of his prospecting tour in the vicinity of Tuapeka, now Lawrence, that in one place for ten hours' work with pan and a butcher's knife, he was able to collect about seven ounces of gold.

When the news was made public, a rush to the locality was the consequence, and men, women, and even children, abandoned their homes and farms for the search of gold, it being a melancholy fact that for a time some of the kirks on Sunday were only represented by the Minister and the Precentor. The seeking for gold was a pronounced success; for in August following the discovery by Read, the first escort came into Dunedin

with 5056 ounces of gold, and 7826 ounces were exported for that month.

In November, 1861, the Provincial Government at Dunedin, generously chartered the Tuapeka rush as "Gabriel's Gully," in honour of its discoverer (it didn't cost anything), and their Parliament in Council assembled. On a division six members voted that the reward to Read should be £1000, but seven voted against it, supporting the motion for £500 as promised in 1858. Canterbury and Southland were then offering £1000 each for a payable discovery in their provinces.

Of the component parts of the Council of that day, one may judge, from the following good story told of a young Scotch lassie, rushing into the Council chamber during one of its sittings about this time, and to the astonishment of the solemn individual who acted as sergeant-at-arms, frantically called to one of the councillors: "Faither, the mon's coom for his breeks." It is however pleasant to record that Gabriel Read got the other £500 in May, 1862, unanimously voted to him by the Council. The rewards obtained by the original discoverers may be classed as follows:—

Hargreaves from New South Wales £15,000.
Hargreaves from Victoria £5000.
Esmond from Victoria £1000.
Gabriel Read from New Zealand £1000.

The gold won at "Gabriel's Gully," caused much excitement in Australia, and diggers sold out their claims to Chinamen for as much as would pay their passage to New Zealand, and by the end of the year 1862 the population of Otago of about 12,000 was increased by the arrival of 18,000 gold seekers and settlers, who thoroughly prospected Otago, opening up rich country on the banks and tributaries of

the Clutha—a river which in the opinion of the late Sir Julius Vogel, one of New Zealand's famous statesmen, contains enough gold in it to pay off the national debt of England. The value of gold obtained in Otago from 1861 to 1863 was £4,774,985.

In 1864 and 1865 six thousand discontented diggers left Otago—the cold, cheerless, and woodless regions of Central Otago, evidently being too much for them and found their way to other fields, the majority crossing over the great Southern Alps to the West Coast, and becoming pioneers of the Golden West under "Aorangi," or Mount Cook."

III.—THE AUSTRALIAN INVASION.

A party of venturesome white people in 1860, numbering twenty, arrived at the Buller or the Kawatiri River, by a small sailing craft from Canterbury to prospect for gold, but with very poor results. Meeting James Mackay and his party on the occasion of his memorable return from the Grey, (with the deed of purchase of West Coast Native lands and a hundred sovereigns in his swag), they expressed their desire to return to civilization, and Mackay, after fixing up some Native Reserves at the Buller, agreed to shepherd them to Massacre Bay.

On the 29th January, 1862, the first steamer visited the Coast. It was the "Tasmanian Maid," from Nelson to the Buller, under the command of our old friend, Captain Whitwell, who for many years was on the Coast, and must have coined money over and over again for his employers. The steamer was laden with goods, and had sixty enterprising diggers on board. The boat steamed cautiously into the river, landed her cargo in the scrub, the fresh arrivals increasing the population to two hundred. Reuben Waite, an enterprising storekeeper from Collingwood, kept a store at this "port," and a man named Martin ran an hotel known as the "Kawatiri Hotel." In 1863, the town of Westport was surveyed, and in October of that year, at a land sale in Nelson, many allotments were secured for speculative purposes.

On the 22nd of July, 1864, the first steamer to cross the Grey Bar was the "Nelson," to the utter astonishment of the Maori women at the Pa, who could not tell what to make of it (the men were all away at the

Greenstone Diggings). The steamer was in charge of Captain Leech, afterwards Harbour Master at the Buller. Reuben Waite and Batty, with some 70 diggers, were passengers. Waite says: "We crossed the bar in first-rate style and steamed up to the landing, opposite to what is now known as Mawhera Quay, and my goods with which I commenced storekeeping on the Grey were landed on the river beach." The "Nelson" returned with twenty-seven tons of coal brought down by Batty in boats from the Brunner mine on account of the Nelson Government. The day following the arrival of the "Nelson" the schooner "Mary" sailed in with Mr. Blake and some diggers. Blake's goods were landed on the beach near the lagoon, and he opened a store at the place, which was afterwards known as "Blaketown."

On the 19th December, 1864, the "Nelson" was the first steamer to get into Okitika, piloted by Captain Leech, and she landed sixty passengers and a general cargo on the South Spit. Captain Whitwell followed the next day with the "Wallaby," and crossed the bar, which "was as smooth as a mill pond," and discharged his cargo near the lagoon.

The commencement of the Australian Invasion to the Coast must be dated from March, 1865. Our neighbours in Victoria tried to check it, and said it was only a "steamboat rush," which would turn out disastrous to the thousands of Victorian miners who were leaving a certainty on their own goldfields for an uncertainty in New Zealand, but all to no purpose. Great sea-going steamships, the "leviathans of the deep" in those days, with a fleet of smaller steamers, able to jump over the bars or perish in the attempt, with all sorts and conditions of sailing vessels, chartered and owned by the local West Coast merchants, were busily engaged in the conveyance of goods and passengers to the New Eldorado;

and Hokitika, as it was known afterwards, was honoured as the central port where one and all were dumped on shore from the big steamships tendered by local tugs, and drafted north and south and inland, as their friends or fancies led them. It was no uncommon thing at the first of the rush for the bar tenderers, such as the Bruce and the Yarra, to land 500 or 600 passengers a day at a pound or so ahead. It was indeed a rosy time for the shipping interest.

The population attracted to the Golden West under Mount Cook numbered at Christmas time, in 1864, some 830 souls. In April, 1865, by leaps and bounds it went up to 7,000, in September of the same year it reached 16,000, and by the end of 1866 it was estimated to have stood at 50,000.

At dawn on the morning of the 21st of February, 1867, the Captain of the steamer "Beautiful Star" having so far successfully navigated his good ship across the Tasman Sea freighted with goods and passengers (some of them Australian diggers) for the West Coast Eldorado, was enjoying a cup of black coffee with a passenger, brought to them by a thoughtful stewart as a stimulant for breakfast.

The Captain was waiting with some degree of impatience the lifting of the morning mist, hanging like a white shroud over the land hidden away to the east, to enable him to determine the position of the port of Hokitika.

As the day advanced and the sun strengthened, towering above a bank of clouds to a height of 12,349 feet above the sea, appeared by degrees the summit of the grand sentinel of the Southern Alps, "Aorangi," the cloud piercer or "Mount Cook," in its glittering garb of perpetual snow and ice, a sight entrancing all on board; and as the mist and clouds began to dissolve and melt

into thin air, the long coast line came into view, its low beaches washed with white curling waves, terraces upon terraces covered with luxuriant forest growth in all shades of green, hills and mountains heavily timbered to the snowline; and inland, running parallel with the coast, numberless peaks and domes crowned with ice and snow extended for miles north and south from the central cloud piercer, Aorangi, forming a wondrous panorama of the far-famed Southern Alps of New Zealand.

Our steamer was soon off the Port of Hokitika, a cluster of white habitations nestling on the beach, and and the tide serving, a tug boat crossed the bar (which appeared to have been on its best behaviour) and hailed us. Some of the passengers and diggers elected to tranship themselves and their belongings into the tug, and get to land once more as soon as possible, the consideration being some five shillings, which being arranged, we got on board the tug which came alongside for us, the sea being calm and the weather favourable; and saying goodbye to the "Beautiful Star," not forgetting the Captain, we made our way for the port, crossing the bar "in fine style," and steamed up the river, where quite a fleet of all kinds of sailing vessels and small steamers were moored alongside Gibson's Quay in various stages of discharging cargoes. Our tug got at last to the Quay, we scrambled on shore as best we could, and went round to admire the city of Hokitika.

The city was then in all its glory. Its inhabitants had settled down after a two years' battle with fortune, into a God-fearing and generous community, shutting up their business places on Sundays, and attending places of worship, attended by their families imported from other lands, building pleasant homes for them along the river's side, their young men and maidens given to

marriage, and religiously obeying the Divine command "increase and multiply" to the satisfaction of the coming law givers, who were prominent even in those times in Hokitika, and agitated for good schools.

Of course in the natural order of things with a fluctuating population of diggers "here to-day and away to-morrow" there was a necessity for hotels; two hundred of them might have been counted in Revell street alone, with billiard rooms, dancing saloons, a grand theatre, and all sorts of shops and stores then in good order and condition. Revell Street however, a mile in length spoilt the show; for it was narrow, some forty feet wide and was as crooked as a dog's hind leg, as the saying is, and gave a stranger the idea that a New Zealand earthquake had been about disturbing the alignment of its street frontages. The city was built on the sands of the sea and has not yet met its doom in spite of the rains and floods and the winds. It is all there, with the exception of a slice of the town to the south which went over the bar, buildings and all. Even now its main street is occasionally watered by the sad sea waves at spring tides leaving much foam and froth about. Still, as a city for its size, position and age, it has shown a marvellous growth. Its public buildings, churches, banks, hotels and Town Hall, freshly sand painted and looking like stone buildings, added greatly to its importance, and the condition of its streets did immense credit to its mayor, and councillors, the Town Clerk included.

As we were passing along Revell Street, in the main doorway of the Town Hall stood the Town Clerk, so someone said, watching the influx of population on our arrival. His shock of hair and lengthy nose and jolly appearance amused us new chums, and we learnt who he was, and that he had been imported as Town Clerk

from Adelaide; and one among the arrivals of that day, came to know him well in after years, and to love and honour him as a "Master in Israel."

It seems like a fairy tale to hear that at Christmas time in 1864 just two years ago, the site of the present city was a dense scrub called Okitika; but where the early residents picked up the aspirate "H" and tacked it on in front, was somewhat of a mystery, till it was solved during the present Premier's visit to the place, to celebrate his silver Jubilee as a politican. John Hudson and his partner Price, crossed the Southern Alps with pack horses and arrived after a perilous journey at Okitika and on the 1st of October, 1864, laid the foundation of the city, by erecting a calico store 12 x 20 which they stocked with goods procured from Reuben Waite at the Grey. They opened a branch store afterwards at Ross. It was not till the Christmas party arrived in the "Nelson" that the place was rushed for sections. The first marked out were those for Cassius and Comisky and the Bank of New Zealand. The goldfield's Warden (Mr. W. H. Revell) for the Canterbury Government, was kept busily employed in marking off sections, but not being anything of a surveyor, will account for Revell Street looking so crooked. John Rochfort was called on to finish the survey of the city afterwards and fix it up straight.

At the time of the arrival of the Australians by the "Beautiful Star," Mr. Commissioner Sale known as "King Sale" was the Canterbury Provincial Representative, and ruled over a kingdom which extended from Milford Sound to the Grey River.

Some of us new chums said we would go up north and see what Greymouth was like, and the fast and favourite screw steamer "Kennedy" getting up steam at the wharf that afternoon for the Grey, we, with many others,

obtained passenger tickets from the shipping office in Hokitika at a cost of 10s. each. We hastened on board with our swags, re-crossed the bar, and spent a pleasant afternoon at sea, watching the shifting scenery on land, and the playful porpoises following and racing our steamer till we reach the Grey late in the evening. After crossing the bar, which was well to the north, we got safely into the Mawhera "bright running waters" and steamed round the bend of the river from the bar, and saw the crescent city, Greymouth, illuminated by many lights, from stores and hotels facing Mawhera and Richmond Quays. We scrambled ashore on to the beach, which did duty for a wharf in those days, and climbing up the bank stood surveying the Quays right and left, made a dash across the roadway, put up ourselves and swags in the "Brian Boru," where the genial host and hostess very cordially welcomed us to Maoriland.

Greymouth, at the New Year of 1867, followed the circular bend of the river from the Gorge to the bar, and to new arrivals by sea had a rather substantial appearance, from its well built two storey buildings fronting the river all more or less sand painted to make them look like stone. There were the usual hotels, banks, drapery and good stores, and shops in profusion extending for about a mile along Mawhera Quay (being Maori leaseholds as far as Boundary street), and along Richmond Quay from Boundary street (being Canterbury freehold sections as far as the sea). Branching from Mawhera Quay was Tainui street running to the Tidal Creek behind Kennedy Brothers' store where an impenetrable jungle, stopped for some time the course of settlement to the south of the Maori township as far as Sawyers Creek boundary. A large wooden structure at the corner of Tainui and Hospital Streets did duty for a hospital (afterwards taken for Post and Telegraph offices), where

Dr. C. L. Morice superintended the patients, having a small surgery in Albert street. Churches were scarce, the Catholics had a building in Arney street, and the Wesleyans, one just over the Tidal Creek, the Anglicans using the Court House in Gresson street. Coate's Public Hall in Gresson street was used on Sundays for another denomination. The Tainui family lived in clover at the top of the town, above flood mark on the leasehold rents, realising between £3000 and £4000 per annum, necessitating the residence of a Native agent, Mr. John Greenwood.

Reuben Waite, storekeeper, must be credited with the honour of laying the foundation of the city of Greymouth, on July 22nd, 1864, by erecting the first store. In July, 1865, John Rochfort laid off a town on the Canterbury side of the Grey, and as he advanced along the survey lines, people followed and put in their pegs. There was a rush for business sites, close to Waite's store on the Maori Reserve, and the whole of the river frontages of 4000 feet were taken up; but the Maoris would only let the ground in small lots, charging a rental of £1 to £2 per foot per annum for three years, and 10s. per foot for the back allotments in Mackay Street. Frontages to Mawhera Quay fetched as high as £12 per foot. Some substantial buildings including large stores and two-storey hotels were quickly erected. On the 6th July, 1865, thirty-four freehold allotments on Richmond Quay were taken up and occupied for business purposes, two chains fronting the river being reserved for the Quay and wharves.

At the New Year of 1867 there was no Mayor or Town Clerk then in existence at Greymouth. Mr. W. H. Revell, as Resident Magistrate and Warden, was in charge of the Grey district for the Provincial Government of Canterbury, and Mr. T. A. S. Kynnersley was

Commissioner, Resident Magistrate, and Warden for the Nelson south-west goldfields, his official residence being at Cobden.

As a sequel to this story of "The Australian Invasion" under Aorangi in 1865, "To point a moral and adorn a tale," and for the especial information of English, American, and Australian tourists, the following "Record Alpine Climbing" under the Southern Cross in this present year of 1905 will be read with interest. To Hokitika belongs the credit of the Invasion of the Summit of Aorangi successfully reached by its townsman Dr. Teichelmann, with the Rev. Mr. Newton and Mr. Low, accompanied by guides J. Clark and Peter Graham on Friday, the 3rd of February, 1905, at 4.45 p.m. It is pleasing to know that Aorangi was on its best behaviour, and received the distinguished visitors in fine weather and under the glorious sunshine of departing day, displayed her surroundings in all their marvellous and wondrous beauty.

IV.—GOLD! "WHERE IT IS! THERE IT IS!"

Cornish saying.

The wild West Coast in the middle sixties, possessed many natural advantages that recommended it to the Australian digger. It was easy and inexpensive to get to, it had a temperate climate, and its rainfall, especially in the Hokitika district, with an average of 120 inches yearly, or ten feet, for which Clement Wragge blames "Aorangi" the cloud piercer, was all that could be desired by the alluvial miner, although it earned the name of the "Wet Coast" for all time, because in 1867 it was noted by some cheerful statistician, no doubt of prohibition tendencies, that it rained in Hokitika 300 out of 365 days of that year.

Another advantage was that the beach leads from the Okarito to Westport were easy to exploit, only a few feet stripping, generally very rich, and close by the natural highway of the sea beach at ebb tide, making travelling pleasant and healthy, and "tucker" easily procurable by means of pack horses. It has been estimated that in the years '65 and '66, the fluctuating population of many thousand gold seekers arriving at the "Golden West," by the new overland road, by ocean steamships, small steamers, and sailing vessels, exploited the beach leads for what they were worth, leaving very little, if any gold, for that patient "down-trodden" yet enterprising creature, "John Chinaman."

From that excellent monthly magazine, the "N.Z. Mines Record," issued by the Mining Bureau at Wellington, the following return of the output and value of gold from

the Golden West will be of interest. For 1864, 1,463 ozs., valued at £5,560, from 1865 to 1873, 2,951,399 ozs. valued at £11,665,489. The total from 1864 to 1903 was 6,320,488 ozs., valued at £25,136,378; and it is pleasing to know that the Golden West now takes premier position as a gold producer, in comparison with the Otago and Auckland goldfields.

The formation of the beach leads was somewhat remarkable. Claims in the Hokitika, Okarito, and Greymouth districts, were pegged out just above high water mark. The top sand would be stripped for a few feet, until a layer of black sand a few inches thick was reached, in which was the precious metal. A second lead would be obtained further back, and a third parallel with the others, and in line with the ocean beach, the gold getting coarser the further the leads went from the sea.

In the Westport district says Mr. Bird, a goldfield Warden, the beach leads which were exceptionally rich ran parallel with the ocean beach and a mountain range, the base of which was formerly washed by the ocean. Along the greater part of the Coast the land has made seawards until a narrow belt of country, varying in width from a chain to two or three miles was formed between the sea and the mountain. This belt of country is nearly level, and consists chiefly of pakihis, meaning low lying plains. In the terrace thus formed, and in the pakihis, leads were discovered, all running parallel with the present coast line. They may be described as layers of heavy sand containing gold, varying in length, breadth and depth, the result of the action of the waves. In process of time this resulted in the formation of layers or leads of the heaviest sediment, washed up by waves—viz., black sand, ruby-sand, and fine gold deposited parallel with the roll of the sea. Some of these terrace

leads were discovered close to the surface, while others had been so covered up by subsequent deposits, that tunnels many hundred feet were required in order to strike them. In some instances they were found with 30 or 40 feet of a deposit above them. The same process of formation has gone on to the present day on many of the beaches along the coast, where a number of miners called "beach combers," have made a fair living by working gold-bearing sand, just below high water mark, as soon as it is cast up by the waves, especially after heavy and stormy weather. The beach combers throughout the Buller district, combine agricultural and pastoral pursuits with gold mining. Comfortable homesteads and well stocked orchards and cleared cultivated land are no uncommon sight.

The question is often asked, "Whence comes all this gold in the ocean on this coast, which the waves have been for ages, and are still casting up?"

One Victorian digger ventured to remark that Victoria secured all the nuggety gold, and all the fine gold dust was blown over to New Zealand. Dr. Hector says, "The gold drifts of the West Coast in the majority of instances rest on the surface of the most recent Tertiary Rocks in New Zealand, having in fact been carried out from the mountains by the rivers, and deposited on a gradually changing coast line." Many shrewd practical miners who have watched and studied the ebb and flow of these golden sands, are of opinion that a portion of the gold must come from the quartz reefs which lie in the bed of the ocean, and that they are always in course of disintegration, being ultimately cast up in the shape of golden sands and washed on the beach.

It is quite rational to venture the opinion that in the shelving ocean bed, stretching away for many miles to seaward where the vessels in fine weather find safe

anchorage, waiting high tide to cross the bar into the harbours of the Coast, there remains in the black sand embedded below, sufficient gold to pay off the National Debt of England. And, as Longfellow says—

> "Would'st thou learn the secret of the sea,
> Only those who brave its dangers
> Comprehend its mystery."

Previous to the Australian invasion, some West Coast Maoris must be credited with being the first to procure gold in saleable quantities on the "Golden West." Some of them observing the method adopted by European miners at the first diggings at Massacre Bay, returned to the Coast and set to work at the place, now known as the "Old Diggings," some 20 miles up the Buller River, and in 1860 sold a parcel of gold at Collingwood. On the 27th January, 1864, the first lot of gold obtained at the Grey was purchased by the agent of the Canterbury Provincial Government (Mr. W. H. Revell), from a man named Hughes—viz., 1 oz. 16 dwt. 1 gr. at £3 10s. per oz. A week after Reuben Waite had started as storekeeper at the Grey, July, 1864, Werita Tainui and the male members of his family, came from the Greenstone Creek, (a memorable spot in the history of 'The Land of Greenstone'), and sold to Waite 50 ozs. of gold, "the finest parcel of gold," says Waite, "that I had ever seen."

From mining records kept by the different goldfields' Wardens, scattered about the coast in the early days, the following information, *re* gold, "Where it is, there it is," may be taken as authentic.

In the Blackball district up the Grey River, many nuggets were obtained in 1865. One weighing 22 oz. 17 dwt. was found in the Blackball Creek by a Maori, and nuggets of two and three ounces were quite common. In 1866 the Grey district became famous for its large nuggets obtained from the Moonlight Gully,

one weighing 79 oz. 18 dwt., and another 78 oz. 17 dwt. Out of one claim two nuggets were taken weighing 44 oz. and 47 oz. One was the size and shape of a man's fist, the gold of a rich deep colour, and small portions of quartz with which it was impregnated, were of a rose tint. In the Union Bank at Greymouth in 1867, the manager showed the writer, a large gold dish full of nuggets of all sizes and dark in colour, unearthed at the Moonlight, which reminded one of a dish of potatoes waiting to be peeled. The Moonlight was exceptionally rich. As much as eight tons of gold was obtained from the Gully, worked by 100 to 150 men.

From the three mile beach, south of Greymouth, which in 1866 carried a large population, heavy parcels of gold were procured. The original prospectors were reported to have lodged half-a-hundred weight of gold in the hands of a gold smelter at Hokitika to be melted. At the Auckland Beach Lead, nine miles north of Hokitika, some of the claims yielded as high as £100 per week per man, and from one of the richest 64 oz. were obtained in one day. At the Five Mile, south of Okarito, beach leads were wonderfully rich, and miners were getting gold by the pound weight. One party cleared out after two months work on the beach with £1700 a man.

A gold buyer (the well-known R. C. Reid, of Hokitika), went down to the Five Mile, Okarito, and accosted a party of four who were paddocking "washdirt." He asked, "Have you any gold to sell?"

"How much money have you got, mate?" said one of the party.

"As much as you require," replied the gold buyer.

On reaching the tent he was presented with a couple of billies, both brimful of the finest gold dust, which he was told was the result of six weeks' work. When

weighed, the buyer found he was £200 short, although he had with him £2000 in notes. Mr. Reid says that anyone who happened to alight on a gold claim at Okarito, made small fortunes. "I knew of one party, of four, who sent to Hokitika by the "Bruce," 1000 oz. of gold on their own account."

A discovery of importance has quite recently been reported from down south, right under "Aorangi," some three miles from the mouth of the Waiau River—where the beach leads were supposed to give out. It appears the gold bearing sands again occur, and that the sea still yields up its treasures with undiminished generosity. Six claims have been pegged out, which are expected to yield exceedingly good returns.

Notwithstanding the dictum of the Cornishman, "where it is, there it is," it is quite an unusual thing in these days to find gold in payable quantities in the main thoroughfare of a town; but this actually occurred at Hokitika, at that happy time of the year, the "New Year" of 1866, when she was at the height of her glory. On the 5th January, the *West Coast Times* reported that heavy gold had been discovered in the street, near "The Prince of Wales Hotel," on the outskirts of the town, and women and children were picking up gold in handfuls, and that a richer patch had not been struck on any Westland beach. This lead was about forty yards in length, and no width to speak of. One old lady resident close by, squatted bodily on the centre of the lead and published to all comers, she had pegged out her claim against all comers. The result of the find it was said was 108 oz. of gold in the course of a few minutes. Many after-comers realized 1 oz. to the dish, and the nearest waterholes were alive with many washing out the sand in the orthodox style, getting very good prospects.

It was a mystery! how, when and where, this gold deposit came to be there, and it was solved afterwards in a way. It appears that one of the banks, three months previously, had lost a bag of gold dust containing 230 oz. while under escort from the Waimea to Hokitika by pack horses, and although the road and bush track were closely searched by the police, no trace of the missing treasure could be discovered. The bag must have fallen from its pack saddle, and got broken up, and trampled into the sandy soil of the road, by the action of the numerous pack saddle horses passing to and fro over the spot.

Many old West Coasters, thinking over the past glories of Hokitika, even now indulge in a quiet laugh over this story of the "Golden West."

Many diggers, after a few months work on the beach leads, made their pile and went home to Australia. Those remaining, either from necessity or love of adventure, cast in their lot with those determined to open up the resources of the Coast, and passed up rivers and creeks and gullies, opening up fresh fields and small townships, notably Ross, Stafford-town, Kanieri, and afterwards Kumara, with Brunton, Ahaura and Reefton to follow. And the sound of the axe and the saw was heard in the land. Roads and tracks were carved out, through jungle and forests, thick with supplejacks and ferns, and great dams were built and a net work of water races were set running through the country; and as a result, rich nuggetty gold of better quality, was obtained by the hard working and intelligent miners of the Coast. The *West Coast Times* on its first anniversary (having started on the third of May, 1865) stated that the Westland Goldfields, with a population of 25,000 to 30,000 had a gold export which rivalled the Colony of Victoria, and there were indications of a permanent and prosperous future.

Following up the opening of the alluvial drifts on the beaches, and tunnelling for gold deposits inland, came prospecting for quartz. The Paparoa Ranges and Moonlight Hill above the rich finds of nuggets in '66, were prospected by old quartz miners, and all the country was quickly taken up on the strength of possibilities. Mining companies were floated and much business done, in Christchurch principally, in the buying and selling of scrip (a share of £2 running up to £56 when the "mania" was on); but unfortunately the gold was not there, and Moonlight ignominously collapsed.

At the commencement of the seventies the towns of Hokitika and Greymouth, with the cautious city of Dunedin, were stirred to their depths by the news that in the Inangahua and Lyell districts a quartz belt two miles in width and running with great regularity through the country north and south, was carrying rich quartz lodes. Mining speculators were soon on hand, and leases in small areas of sixteen acres pegged out for miles and miles: and companies, good, bad, and indifferent, were promoted, and directors, legal managers and sharebrokers became popular and notorious. Buying and selling shares came on with a rush, and shareholders went about with bits of quartz in their waistcoat pockets as samples, licking them every now and then to show their friends and others the gold that was in them.

Among the wonders of gold getting, none are more marvellous than quartz reefing and company promoting. The facility for extracting gold from the pockets or shoots in reefs or lodes, is only equalled by the extraction of gold from the pockets of call-paying shareholders in the hundred and one companies, more particularly described as "wild cats," which bring discredit on legitimate quartz mining.

The up-to-date returns from the Reefton quartz mines may be looked upon as encouraging. The output of

gold for the year 1903 was 58,840 ozs., valued at £195,468, and the total value of the gold output for the Inangahua district from 1872 up to 31st December, 1903, is £3,458,955.

The wonderful success during the past decade of many of the "Ironclad Mining Dredges" on the Clutha in Otago, caused the speculators of the "Golden West" to follow suit; and scattered over its flats and in its rivers, up-to-date gold steamships are employed dredging and turning over the drifts which the early miner had to abandon, owing to the influx of water; and these monster dredges are meeting with varying success, and in many instances paying good dividends, assisting in swelling the returns of the "Golden West" year by year, the record for 1904 being 28,691 ozs. of gold from dredging.

The total output of gold in New Zealand from 1857 to December 31st, 1904, if weighed like flour or coal would turn the scale at 693 tons, giving a money value of a little over sixty-five million sterling. The "Golden West" has contributed very nearly 300 tons of it.

V.—A RIDE TO POINT ELIZABETH.

A Reminiscence.

At the commencement of the seventies, not long after the Australian invasion, early in the morning of one of those delicious days of sunshine, none too often vouchsafed to the inhabitants of Greymouth, the West Coast generally being noted as an earthly paradise for alluvial miners, two horsemen might have been seen mounting their steeds, at the hostelry of mine host, the late Ned Ashton, celebrated as the father of the first boy born in Greymouth of European parents. After partaking of the usual stirrup cups, they cantered off Richmond Quay and up Mawhera Quay to the ferry, entrusting themselves and horses to the punt engineered by Dick Collins, and were slowly punted over the Grey River, and in due time landed on the banks of the Cobden township, so mapped on the Nelson Provincial charts, where a complete set of officials and police were in residence, and in evidence for the distribution of miners' rights and other privileges. For the Nelson Government having no connection with the Westland Provincial Government at Hokitika, the Grey River formed the boundary between the two conflicting parties in those days, much to the disgust of the gold miners who had to take out miners' rights for both sides of the Grey River.

Being well and favourably known to the police, the horsemen rode through the scattered town along an excellent road and reached the North Beach. As the tide was on the ebb, they decided to eschew the inside

track, the sandy beach below high water mark, fringed with drift wood and portions of old wreckage of early days, making a hard and delightful road to travel.

The horsemen were the member of Parliament for the Grey District, editor of the local paper in Greymouth, and the other was the Secretary of the Point Elizabeth Coal Syndicate. The object the secretary had in view was to post the honourable member as to the coal measures to the north and the advisability of Point Elizabeth as a harbour of refuge, and as a deep sea port to facilitate the export of coal from the valuable seams known to exist in the district.

After an enjoyable ride of four or five miles along the beach, passing numerous gold workings on Darkey's Terrace, they arrived at an ominous sign post supposed to warn pedestrians, packers, and others, to leave the beach and mount the provincial horse track, the beach round the point being long, rocky and dangerous. Ascending the horse track our equestrians crossed over the Point Elizabeth Peninsula for about a mile to join the Seven Mile Creek, which empties itself into the Point Elizabeth bay.

From the Grey Gorge the Cobden limestone hill forms a mountain range, running parallel to the coast line as far as the Island of Point Elizabeth. The mountain range, called by an unpronouncable Maori name, means 'The Twelve Apostles.' Its watershed to the east and south falls into Coal Creek and the Grey River, and to the north and east into the Seven Mile, its watershed to the west feeds a small lake (a great resort for picnickers), the overflow from which finds its way down to the ocean.

Halfway across, upon the summit of the range, our travellers passed through a clearing and signs of cultivation on a small scale, with the usual habitation, a sort of

bush hut or whare. They also learned that in the neighbourhood were limestone caves of much beauty, with many stalactites, in the form of icicles. Hurrying on, and descending the range on the other side, they obtained a charming view of the bay, lighted up beneath the summer sunshine, with Point Elizabeth Island and small rocks dotted about the bay, with headlands and bluffs stretching away along the coast line to the north, their feet bathed with the waters, of what is now known as the Tasman Sea, and gradually rising inland to join the Blackball ranges, having an altitude of 3500 feet.

As the travellers rested themselves and their horses on the road track above, before descending to the bay, they could not help being delighted at the West Coast scenery that spread itself out before them—the beautiful circular bay to their left towards the Point, with curling waves breaking on the sandy beach and the island rising out of the sea with its covering of green, reminding one of the wild and rocky coast of many parts of the Old Land; and they were loud in their praises of the view and the great possibilities of the bay being formed into a harbour and coal port, with the large island rock not unlike Nobbies at Newcastle, in N.S.W., connected by a breakwater to the main island, and a corresponding sea wall run out from the Nine Mile bluff, to connect the island rocks. Jutting up in the bay, it would protect the harbour from northerly gales—a harbour, which they pictured to themselves with many deep-sea vessels of heavy tonnage, with ironclads, too, loading up with black diamonds, and in course of ages supplying the southern hemisphere with the rich treasures of coal secreted within the bosom of yonder hills to the north and east, waiting for capital and the sons of labour combined to bring them to market.

As the travellers looked upon the scene and its suitability for a harbour, a suggestion was thrown out to the

member of Parliament: Why could not this peninsula of Point Elizabeth, which has just been crossed be utilised as a prison settlement, and the work of connecting the rocky island with the mainland set in hand at once by the colonial Government? It was pointed out that under the lee of that rock island, in the very early days of the coast, a whaleboat found shelter in safety till the westerly gale had blown itself out. And what was the reply of the hon. member? "Don't agitate that till the Greymouth harbour works are complete." So the matter was shelved, and what is the result after thirty years' experience? The Greymouth bar, instead of being a shifting one within the radius of a mile, as in the days of old, is now kept within bounds as predicted by Mr. Moriarty and Sir John Coode, the eminent engineers; but westerly gales choke its entrance even now, and still goes up the cry for an old-man flood to come to the rescue and clear away the sandbanks forming from time to time within its rock bound channel. Only a few weeks ago another editor of a local paper, bewailing the condition of the Greymouth harbour works after so many years, makes the pathetic statement, that "too many cooks (engineers) have spoiled the broth (bar)"; and he advocates the construction of a harbour at Point Elizabeth, ending up as follows:—"Under any circumstances it is the duty of the Government to get together some reliable data regarding Point Elizabeth and its possibilities as a harbour. If a harbour were made there Greymouth would at once become one of the busiest and most important towns in New Zealand. One hope of this construction is the fact that the State having taken over as a national undertaking the systematic working of the coal measures from Coal Creek northwards, there will be, in the natural order of things, a harbour and seaport at Point Elizabeth some day."

The hon. member and the secretary building castles in the air and indulging in day dreams, having rested themselves and their horses sufficiently, carefully descended the pack-track, and crossing the mouth of the Seven Mile Creek (at times dangerous from quicksands) regained the sea beach.

Geologists are of opinion that Point Elizabeth Bay was the original outlet of the Grey before the river, by some earthquake action, broke through the Greymouth and Cobden Gorge, and amused itself by finding its way to sea over shifting bars. As the tide was well out, the travellers elected to travel by the "sad sea waves" instead of mounting the road track over the bluff; and o'er shadowed by the perpendicular rocks washed at high tides by the "ever restless sea," they rode along the beach. One reason was to inspect the outcrop of the seam of coal in the face of the Nine Mile Bluff.

On reaching the bluff they noted that along the strata of rocks a fine coal seam over ten feet thick was plainly visible for some chains, and that a drive had been put in by some experienced miner and coal taken out of it, and no doubt packed away for the use of diggers and residents along the coast, no one paying even a royalty to the Government for it. It was reported to be a fine sample of hard marketable coal, suitable for steam and household purposes, and the extensive seam, by surveys, rising gradually with the hill inland made it valuable and easily worked, being "level free" and not requiring expensive winding shafts to work it. On rounding the bluff, at a certain part in the face of the hill a "fault" was visible, cutting off the coal seam, and probably causing a "downthrow." The travellers came to the Nine Mile Creek, a mountain torrent in rainy weather, but now a trickling stream; and crossing it, cantered on a nice hard beach forming a small bay, till they reached

the accommodation house known as Warren's. The house was perched on a rocky elevation above high water mark, and as the tide regularly ebbed and flowed twice in the twenty-four hours, it made things noisy and very lively all round. In a late number of the *Windsor*, Frederick Walworth in his beautiful lines on the birth of the tides at creation, says in one of his verses :—

So the tides were born, and never since the charge upon them lay
Have they faltered in the faithful rhythmic counting of each day;
And we say, "The tides are flowing"
Or "Behold the tides are going,"
But we think not on the charge they keep, at every shoal and bay.

To reach the accommodation house, the horsemen had to ascend by a roadway from the beach to join the principal pack track, and made for the house, where refreshments were to be had for man and beast. Dismounting they handed their nags to the care of Warren and his satellites, entered the hotel and made themselves at home, intending to spend a day or so in the neighbouring country to inspect the outcrops of coal.

The accommodation house was partly an ancient and partly a modern structure, like so many of the habitations and farmhouses of the early days of the colony. The kitchen, with its wide fireplace, fed with large logs, and pot and kettles hanging from iron bars above the fire, used to keep the pots boiling at all times, for the convenience of packers and swagmen, seeking refreshment by the way. The kitchen was large and acted as the general feeding room, and fronted the sea with its ever changing moods, to be seen from the open door and windows looking west. The sitting room and sleeping apartments were modern attachments to the ancient kitchen and its several outhouses. The surroundings on the hill outside evidenced some farming proclivities; there were fenced in paddocks clothed with verdure green, satisfying to the

horses browsing thereon; there were the usual patches of gardens with cabbages and potatoes and other vegetables showing much prolificacy and some ready for the pot. There were a good few cows and calves to match roaming about, and numerous members of the poultry persuasion, picking up a generous living, all evidently supplying the Warrens and their callers with milk and butter and plenty of fresh eggs.

The feeding arrangements in the hotel were rough and ready, but the host and hostess, together with the youngsters in all stages of ages, made things comfortable for their guests. The mid-day meal provided for the hon. member and the secretary was a repast fit for a lord (word had been previously passed along to Warren of their coming); and Mrs. Warren, as cook in charge, excelled herself, and the hungry travellers dined off boiled fowl and bacon, and trimmings to their hearts' content, washed down with liquor refreshments to the amusement of some of the younger members of the Warrens who looked on.

The afternoon was devoted to an inspection of an outcrop of coal up the Ten Mile Creek; and Warren, who knew every inch of the country, acted as guide, philosopher, and friend, armed for the occasion with a slasher. Leaving the hotel, three men and a dog, in Indian file, started up the track, from the top of which extensive seaviews were obtained; and suddenly descending by the pack track reached the bed of the Ten Mile Creek which ran very leisurely to join the waters of ocean a little further on. A provincial bridge crosses the creek and serves to connect the zig-zag track, leading to the top of the hills on the north bank.

Looking up the creek from the bridge, perpendicular cliffs rise to the sky-line on each side, forming an avenue some two or three hundred feet wide, and extending as a

wild mountain gorge, for some two or three miles inland, and looking as if a hill had been split asunder by some earthquake through which the clear waters of the creek find their way seaward.

Starting from the bridge the party plunged into the recesses of the south hill "beyant." Taking a bee line upwards, Warren slashed right and left to clear a way till he struck a disused water race. Creeping along it, closely followed by the others (the dog bringing up the rear) for a distance (so it seemed to the hon. member), of many miles, but in reality under half a mile, at length the guide took a rest for smoko. Waiting till the others came up in line, and, facing them north from this coign of vantage, he pointed to the cliffs of rock on the other side of the creek, standing sheer up, and showing for many chains the strata of the country. Running along this strata with much regularity, between parallel lines, was a formation of over ten feet in thickness of some hard black-looking substance or stone, like black marble. Warren said it was coal, and his statement was accepted as gospel truth by his hearers, for it was difficult, without a 100 ft. ladder, to get up to it to prove to the contrary.

The wayfarers (not forgetting the dog) descended from the old race to the bed of the creek,

"A shallow streamlet rippling o'er its bed,"

and decided to return by it, the guide being satisfied. After renewing their strength by means of a pocket flask, combined with the waters of the "shallow streamlet," they commenced their downward flight, jumping from rock to boulder from boulder to rock, plunging through this pool and leaping over that pool, till the party reached the bridge and rested. The hon. member, bearing up as well as could be expected under the circumstances,

nourished himself by a sip here and a sip there to counteract the effect of wet boots and stockings and other things, while Warren and his dog looked on and smiled.

Some few months after, the Secretary revisited the district, and the Ten Mile Creek in particular, and found that tons upon tons of rock had fallen from the mountain "beyant" into the creek below, just above the bridge, damming up its back waters into a lake, making it impossible for pedestrians to travel in the bed of the creek as of yore. The reason for this disturbance in Nature was that up, far up, on the top of the hill "beyant," a seam of coal 15 inches thick had caught fire; some prospector looking for gold, had lighted a fire alongside of it to boil his billy for afternoon tea and left the fire without putting it out, so that it spread and took possession of the seam, making a smoke that rose into the air like a young Vesuvius, visible to vessels passing seaward. In course of time part of the hill was undermined, and, without the sanction of the coal mine inspectors, came down with a noise like thunder, and with an avalanche of rocks choked up the creek below, developing an inland lake, navigable for a Rob Roy canoe.

Reaching the accommodation house on their return, tired and worn out with the day's work riding and walking, the travellers were rewarded by a sumptious supper, and at the same time by a glorious sunset bidding fair for a fine day for the morrow's work. After seeing to the welfare of their horses, the visitors retired to their bunks to sleep the sleep of the just; but it was just impossible for two reasons, the first was that the family of fleas born and bred on the Warren estate were numerous and savage, and the other was the murmuring of the "sad sea waves," rising by degrees to looming and

rearing against the foundations of the hotel, by the action of high tide, was at its full like a quartz battery of many heads in full swing. Oh! the monotony of it, and, when day dawned, the Secretary rose to the occasion, and found solace in giving vent to his feelings on the beach outside, and inspecting the hotel surroundings with a sea frontage.

Under a wide and spacious cave, wrought out in times past by the action of sea waves, resided cows waiting to be milked, and sundry hens making arrangements to lay eggs, attended by noisy roosters crowing their greetings to the morn. Passing this side show, the Secretary trudged along the beach till he came to the outlet of the Ten Mile Creek, a trickling stream of clear, greenish water, making its way to join hands with the sea, and lose itself in its immensity. Island rocks of all shapes, tufted with verdure, jutted up, in and around the mouth of the creek and to seaward. Seagulls waking up for the day's business were calling and chanting their hymn of praise in honour of creation. Following the creek from its mouth, the Secretary wandered inland as far as the bridge, and ascending the southern bank by the pack track, returned to the front entrance of the accommodation establishment, and, entering the saloon kitchen, found that he was in time for a good breakfast of bacon and eggs with other things, at which the hon. member was officiating as if he was hungry and had enjoyed a good night's rest.

After breakfast, with Warren as guide, accompanied by his faithful dog (who naturally thought this trip was to be a hunting expedition after wekas, and evidently disappointed at the result of yesterday's work), the party of three, not forgetting the dog, started north for more coal exploration. From the bridge crossing the Ten Mile, they ascended the precipitous track by means of

the zig-zag track leading to the top of the hill, having an altitude of some 1000 ft., the country rising inland by a succession of hills to an altitude of 3992 feet. The pack track extends for many miles along the coast bluffs, kept in splendid order by the Nelson Government. The provincial authorities, starting with Commissioner Kynnersley, who, in the early days of 1867, held a free hand, constructed these pleasant horse tracks for the benefit of the mining community, must be complimented on the good and useful work done. Along this track charming sea views are obtained. The ocean waves at high tide break against the feet of the great bluffs, notably the Fourteen Mile and the Seventeen Mile Bluffs, running parallel to the coasts as far as Brighton, making travelling along the beach dangerous at times.

At a given point, the guide took the visitors off the pleasant track, a garden path in fact, and plunged them into the intricacies of the New Zealand bush away to the right, leaving the others to follow as best they could. Immense hills rose in pinnacles "beyant," showing great faces of limestone and conglomerates bared by the action of heavy rains, and proving the existence of coal measures about. By degrees the guide brought the visitors to an outcrop of splendid coal of some feet in thickness showing in the creek named the Eleven Mile, that had evidently been worked a little, and the coal sent to market by pack horses. The visitors were able to inspect a coal mine to their heart's content, arranging with the guide to pack into Greymouth samples of this seam as well as from the others nearer Point Elizabeth.

The hon. member and Secretary returned to the accommodation house well satisfied with the result of their visit, and, refreshing the inner man by a substantial dinner, remounted their horses, accompanied by Warren to show them another outcrop, and returned

homeward, keeping to the track along the hills and bluffs. At a given point, turning to the east, and guided by Warren to a spot some short distance in, another outcrop was inspected, and good hard coal was to be seen in abundance, evidently connected with the face of the Nine Mile Bluff on the seashore. Returning to the track, the travellers bade good-bye to their excellent guide, and set their faces southward to Greymouth, crossed the Seven Mile and the peninsula of Point Elizabeth, after a longing look at its beautiful bay, and took the inside track under Darkey's Terrace, cantered through Cobden, and were ferried over by "Dick." The horses were duly returned to Ashton, and "as the shades of evening gathered in the west," the editor went for the recesses of his sanctum, and the Secretary to the bosom of his family, both elated with their two days' outing.

From the samples coal packed in, specimens were prepared and tabulated by the Secretary, and sent to the Hokitika Exhibition of 1873, and a certificate of merit with a silver medal was awarded as being the best exhibit of West Coast coal.

VI.—"LITTLE BIDDY," OF THE BULLER.

It was a party of three, two men and Biddy. They clubbed together upon communal principles, and for weal and woe worked the Buller River beaches for gold. It was a queer combination—"two company, three's none"—as the saying is, but the rule in this instance was a decided exception.

> For they lived and loved together
> Through many a changing year,

occupying the same hut, and having all things in common, and saw nothing wrong in it. "Little Biddy" was the name she was popularly known by, until age and infirmity warranted her being called "Old Biddy." The after part of her name was—but it doesn't matter—it was shrouded in mystery. It might have been her maiden name of long ago, or assumed, out of compliment to Mrs. Grundy, as representing her connection, with one or other of her male partners, but it is almost certain that she never went through the formality, as we understand it, of looking up the Registrar of Marriages, for his blue paper certificate, or interviewing the parson or his clerk for her marriage lines.

This party of three came overland from Nelson to the Golden West, somewhere in the middle sixties, and struck the head waters of the Buller, and fossicked for gold for many years, between Hope and Inangahua Junction, working like human dredging machines, scooping up, cradling, and panning off the golden sand from the river bed and its streams, with varying success. The party of three originally came over from the Victorian diggings to the Nelson district, and put in time at

the Collingwood and Tadmore rushes, bossed, all along the line by Little Biddy, who kept her first and second mate well in hand, and personally engineered the gold-seeking business.

Biddy was a little morsel of a woman, four feet nothing in height, under seven stone in weight, slight in figure, but well formed, looking from a distance as if she were but a child of fourteen; but face to face with her interviewer, the furrows and wrinkles on her sunburnt features, the colour of parchment, the iron grey hair, the washed out expression of her far away blue eyes, were evidence, so plainly visible, of the daily struggle for existence this little woman had passed through in the open, seeking for gold, precious gold, under circumstances of extraordinary hardships.

"She was a good genuine-hearted little soul, and would never see anyone want a meal, or a drink of tea, keeping herself and her hut always clean and tidy," says one of her admiring friends who, journeying to and fro, inspecting telegraph wires, often called to see Biddy when she was located in her hut at the Iron Bridge across the Buller, not far from the Lyell township.

Infirmities of age and other things attacked Biddy's first mate, and she brought him in to the hospital at Quartzopolis, where he died and was buried, and the little woman wept sorely at losing this rough companionship; and often, in later years, the memory of him, and his kindness, would bring the tears into her washed-out blue eyes. She returned to her hut at the Iron Bridge to live with and work for, her second mate "Old Bill," as she called him; but she was not so fulsome in her praise of him as she was of her first mate, for he began to loaf round, and let her do all the work of getting gold to pay for the daily tucker. "Old Bill," however, broke down at last, and poor little Biddy had to take him to the

hospital, where he soon crossed the border and followed the first mate to the cemetery.

The little woman was now bereft, and in a manner helpless: but her independence of character came to the front, and, declining to live "sumptuously every day" at the hospital, secured a two-roomed habitation in Quartzopolis, retired from gold-seeking business, and joined the noble army of martyrs, in that case made and provided by virtue of the "Old Age Pensions Act;" and Biddy, for some years, received the munificent sum of one shilling a day, and monthly expressed her thanks with many others, in the formula, "Seddon—and the Lord's name be praised."

Biddy took up her residence and lived by herself in the two-roomed tenement, the rent of which was guaranteed by the "Lady Chairman" of the benevolents, and the closing years of her long, long life, were made pleasant by the visitation of the local Anglican Vicar, or his curate, with a numerous assortment of lady friends who seldom came empty-handed; and when Biddy went to the Parish Church in fine weather she appeared in cast-off garments, cut down by some of the "lady benevolents," to suit her little figure, and it was noticeable that her garments and head gear were somewhat of a mixture of the fashions prevailing in days gone by.

It must be admitted that Biddy smoked—and strong tobacco at that—but in the presence of her pastor, or the lady chairman, she denied the soft impeachment that she smoked and always hid her pipe at their approach. But one young lady visitor, knowing little Biddy's infirmity, conveyed plugs of tobacco to her surreptitiously and under strict secrecy, and so her enjoyment of the fragrant weed was not stinted. It is a pity that the education of the little woman had been neglected as a child, for she

could have employed her hours of idleness in reading religious works, or some of the many books of fiction, procurable at the circulating library.

Biddy's confessions to her one and only lady confessor (the tobacco conspirator) were somewhat of a startling nature, and much of it given under the seal of secrecy must pass for ever into oblivion; although it is sincerely to be hoped that she has long since received absolution for the sins and errors of her life on earth.

Sitting by the open fireplace of her residence in Quartzopolis, her kettle singing merry tunes above the hot fire, which she always kept going to keep her old bones warm, Biddy confessed to some reminiscences of her past life, just prefacing her remarks with the request, "You wouldn't mind me smoking, Miss?" "Certainly not, I rather like it, Biddy," was the reply of the lady confessor.

Filling and lighting her pipe and blowing a cloud up the chimney, where it joined the smoke from the fire, ascending heavenwards by way of incense, Biddy, under the soothing influence of the fragrant weed, commenced the following general confession:—

"I was born in Ireland, Miss, but when and where I cannot say. My education as a child was neglected, for I can't read or write. I'm a believer in the Church of England, and I like the parson you've got in this place. He reads to me and does his best for me."

Here, Biddy, puffing at her pipe, and sending clouds up the chimney, became confidential as to her arrival in Australia, and continued:

"My first recollection of looking for gold was at Bendigo, and one night, Miss, there was a terrific storm, uprooting great trees, and in the morning, nuggets of gold were clinging to the roots of the trees, and I seen hundreds of people, men, women and even children

panning off the ground all round, as quickly as they could. It kept 'em at work for some time. It was wonderful, Miss!" ejaculated Biddy, with an extra draw or two at the pipe. Presently continuing her narrative: "I came over to New Zealand in the sixties, with my two mates, from Ballarat, and landed in Nelson, working at some diggings not far off, and then we tramped overland to the head of the Buller River, and commenced fossicking in the streams and river beds above the Hope Junction and the Murchison. I seen rich patches from time to time, and we worked at them, with pick, shovel, and cradle, coming down by degrees to the Junction of the Inangahua. This was before you, Miss, or Quartz-opolis was ever thought of."

Here Biddy took a rest, and a strong whiff at her pipe, so as to collect her thoughts.

"It was a hard, rough life for a woman," continued Biddy, "I seen us working all day long, up to our hips in water, Miss, and in all sorts of weather, but me and my mates stuck together, and we managed to make sufficient for tucker, and something over, and we would go to the Lyell, and sell our gold to the banker there."

"Were you able to put some of the money by for the future, Biddy?" timidly asks the lady confessor.

"Miss, I won't deceive you," replied Biddy, "after buying tucker, we knocked down the rest of the money in a long boose, and when it was all spent we would stir ourselves up a bit, swag our tucker on our backs, and return to our hut, and to our claim, and begin fossicking about for more gold. When my first man died in the hospital, I cried very much at losing him, and even now, when I think of him, the tears come to my eyes."

Here poor Biddy paused in her confessions, laid aside her pipe, and after a while wiped her eyes, relighted her

pipe, and drawing energetically at it regained courage, and went on.

"Old Bill"—he was my second mate, Miss—was quite another sort—hard to get on with, and had a funny complaint, for when he raised his head to look up, Miss, he would get giddy, fall over, and go out of his mind for a bit. I think prospecting and working on the beaches, and looking down so much for the gold, must have caused it. Our hut was near where the Iron Bridge crosses the Buller to go to the Lyell, and one day I seen "Old Bill" cutting down a small tree for firewood, and not looking up to see where it would fall; the top branches fell among the telegraph wires, and mixed 'em all up, and when the inspector found it out he came and frightened us, saying it was a case of going to jail. I asked him to let us off, as it wasn't done intentional, and told him of "Old Bill's" infirmity. The inspector let us off, saying he forgave us, and I got him a nice cup of tea."

Biddy took another rest, and then went on: "Old Bill" got sick and loafed round, so I had to go and fossick about for gold by myself, buying tucker, and humping it on my back from the Lyell to my hut till I got so bad with rheumatics, and "Old Bill" getting worse, we went to the hospital at Quartzopolis, where he died and was buried, and I wasn't sorry a bit, Miss, for I felt my days were numbered."

Here Biddy ended her confessions, and the young lady confessor, bidding her a cheery goodbye, left her to her pipe and to her thoughts of long ago.

On the occasion of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, Little Biddy was visited by many of her lady friends, bringing with them supplies of delicacies and creature comforts; and amongst the good things, a bottle of port wine, found it way into Biddy's larder, with strict

injunction to drink the Queen's health by two or three teaspoonfuls at a time. One young lady visitor, however, supplemented the gifts with a "wee-drap" of Scotch, of which Biddy was particularly fond, and so they left her to the full enjoyment of the banquet, in honour of Queen Victoria.

Later in the day, the parson made one of his usual visitations, first cutting and splitting up a good stock of firewood for poor Biddy. His reverence was an expert at the axe, and could wield it, with as much force and power, as he could a sermon. Not seeing Biddy about, he went inside the hut, and, to his dismay, found the poor creature in the last stages of passing away; hastily flying off on his bike, he brought the doctor to see poor Biddy, lying in her last extremity, and upon a close examination, the medico startled the parson by laughing heartily at the situation, for it turned out that Little Biddy was dead—drunk. They wrapped her up tenderly and left her to sleep it off, and on the morrow she was very penitent, but contributions of wine and whisky for "Old Biddy" were peremptorily stopped.

Two years after the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the end came that comes to us all, sooner or later; and Little Biddy of the Buller, after a sojourn of many years in this vale of tears, slept the sleep of death, and was laid to rest in the quiet graveyard of the new cemetery, there to await the consummation of all things.

The following is an extract from the very brief record in the register of deaths in the Parish Church, Quartzopolis:

No. 126.
BRIDGET GOODWIN.
Died 19-10-99.
Buried 20-10-99.
Age 86.

VII.—EXPERIMENTAL ENGINEERING.

"The best laid schemes of M.I.C.E. and men, etc."

The eccentricities of the bar harbours of the world were never better exemplified than by the bar harbours of the Golden West under Aorangi; and the struggle for supremacy between the combined engineers of New Zealand, New South Wales, and even England itself, of the one part, and Dame Nature in all her simplicity by means of raging storms lashing the ocean into fury, the melting of the snows on Southern Alps, and the opening of her floodgates in the clouds above, of the other part, resulted in much discomforture to the local engineers of the Government Board of Works, causing the general public to smile sorrowfully at so much money being virtually thrown into the sea.

Dame Nature in the early days seemed to carry on her work of destruction in a spirit of revenge, possibly, for the disturbance of her river banks, for cutting away her virgin forests, and for sinking holes and putting in drives to get at her secret treasures of gold and coal, and in consequence retaliated by bursting up what was thought to be the best laid schemes of Members of the Institute of Civil Engineers, to protect the townships of Hokitika, Greymouth, and Westport from being washed away by floods; but, unfortunately, these towns suffered considerably at the first, and large slices of land with houses and their contents went over the bar, as the result of experimental engineering in river protective works.

The Canterbury Provincial Government in 1867, having obtained some experience from floods slicing off

some of the river frontage at Hokitika, decided in its wisdom to start protective works at Greymouth. A contract for a £1000 was let to a Hokitika man skilled in the art of pile driving with a "derrick." It was started this side of the site of the present Cobden Bridge; the piles were nine feet, sheathed with planks and backed by shingle and rubbish to support it. It was facetiously styled the "Nine Pin Contract," and on the 5th November was waiting to be taken over.

It will be in the remembrance of many old residents of Greymouth, especially those who lived in the lower township, of their experiences of the "Old Man Flood," as it was named, that visited the place, and was at its height on the afternoon of the 5th November, 1867. Mr. Werita Tainui and family, no doubt from past experience of floods, were safely perched in their pa under the South Hill, and must have felt sorry at the innocence of the newly arrived Pakehas, building on the quays so near the river. The lower, or freehold township, was flooded some feet deep, and residents had to be rescued by boating parties under the police and placed on higher ground.

On Richmond Quay, opposite Ashton's Hotel, was a large tramway shed with verandah, filled with several tons of goods stacked up on a platform to be clear of flood mark. At noon that day the clerk, groom, and men employed retired from the building, now surrounded with water, by means of a horse and dray to dry land. An hour or so after, the flood, rising quickly, undermined the tramway building and lifting it off its piles carried it with the current over the bar, and not a vestige of shed or its contents was ever seen afterwards.

The "Nine Pin Contract" met the same fate as the tramway shed. The flood lifted the nine feet piles and planking and carried the whole structure bodily to sea.

The Hokitika contractor was paid in full without any trouble, fortunately, under the circumstances.

The same bad weather was experienced at the sister city of Hokitika. The following is taken from the *Tomahawk*: "The inroads of the Hokitika River below the wharf (Gibson's Quay) had become very serious; several acres of the north bank betwixt the wharf and the sea had been swept away, which so alarmed the merchants of south Revell Street that they subscribed a large sum of money to continue the river protection westward. A sum from the general revenue was also promised by Mr. Sale to assist in carrying out the necessary work; but he was informed by Mr. Red Tape of Christchurch that if he expended any money on that work he would be held accountable for the same, or, in other words, it would be deducted from his salary. What was the result? Nearly a thousand pounds' worth of this partly-finished work was swept away by the floods, and properties of some our wealthiest merchants (to the extent of many thousands) were washed into the surf; and the river now runs triumphantly over the place where not only costly buildings once stood but the happy homes of many industrious families."

Westport suffered severely from floods in the early days. The site of the town that was surveyed in 1863 and sold in Nelson at a land sale, and bought for speculative purposes, is passed over by ocean steamers at the present day. A well-known writer, the late R. C. Reid, pathetically describes the sad situation.

The visitor to the present flourishing "Coal City" will hear from some old resident that the channel up which he has just steamed marks the site of early Westport, that where the broad sand dunes spread out at low water, bush and scrub and verdant scrub once grew, and cottages nestled in bright gardens, and there in consecrated

ground the dead lay in peace. He will be shown where streets and wharves once stood, and busy commerce had habitation, and how not only once, but many times, the trouble came upon them, the pitiless breakers in front of them, the flooded river sapping away its crumbling bank. He will hear of habitations being carried bodily out to sea, of whole streets demolished with the swoop of one turbulent tide, of a long tussle with the elements. Westport has at least survived its troubles, and many of the earliest residents still cling steadfastly to the spot where they wrestled with misfortune.

It was not till June, 1868, that Greymouth started a municipality. Early in 1867, an improvement Committee looked after the town and its streets. Hokitika had a fine Town Hall and a municipality to match. Why not Greymouth? So the Improvement Committee merged into a Borough Council. The late Edward Masters was the first mayor for 1869, and the late J. A. Whall the first town clerk, with a goodly crew as councillors; and to carry on protective works, the sum of £5,000 on debentures was obtained from the "Doc." Long iron-bark piles were imported from Australia, planking was obtained from a local sawmill, and fascines from a bush contract for clearing Tainui Street south and Herbert Street east. Under the supervision of the Borough Engineer (Mr. R. J. Johnston) the sound of the derrick and monkey was heard in town, and work was carried on expeditiously, and looked as if it would be a success.

But, at the close of the year 1871 there was a fearful stormy night, and the elements went to war with one another with a deluge of rain from above, so that when day dawned, another "old man flood" had arrived, and was seen sweeping through Cobden Gorge: great trees and snags and many drowned sheep and cattle went floating

past the town, itself now submerged in the flood waters, the swift current taking all over the bar to the sea beyond.

The occupants on the higher ground above the town, saw that day with horror, houses after houses on Richmond Quay toppling over into the dreadful rush of water and passing out to sea, the ocean discoloured for miles by the current making its way north. When the water subsided to its usual limits it was found that a whole block of tenements, from Johnston street to Arney street, with the two chain frontage to Richmond Quay was completely obliterated, and that the borough protective works had been washed away, the river flowing where homes, shops, and hotels once stood.

Just after this calamity, it so happened that the then Premier of the Colony, the Hon. Sir William Fox, who was at the Buller, came to view the damage that was done; and seeing the necessity for immediate action,—gave orders without any *red-tape* about it, to start work at once facing the river, at the upper end of the town, with a stone embankment of masonry-work as far as Tainui street, at a cost of £4,000. This breakwater has prevented any further flood encroachments on that part of Mawhera Quay. It is there now, and may be seen any day.

The Secretary of the Relief Fund received a letter from the Premier, in reply to one asking him to give a lecture in aid, in which he expressed his sorrow at the calamity, and his inability to give an address, having to go to Westport, by way of Reefton (then a baby in arms). He enclosed a cheque for £10 10s. from himself and wife by way of sympathy. Old inhabitants of Greymouth even now express their thanks to the late Sir William Fox for his prompt action in saving the town by that stone embankment.

The "Golden West," besides being rich in gold, was also rich in coal, and the General Government being satisfied as to the extent and quality of its coal measures, legislated for railways to bring it to the port of Greymouth and Westport. The Brunner mine had been working in a spasmodic kind of way since Batty got that first lot of 27 tons for the Nelson Government in July, 1864. A Ballarat Company and a Melbourne party speculated with it, but failing to get out the quantity required, the Nelson Government took it over, and sold to boats at the pit's mouth, until Kennedy Bros. secured it, and in fact worked it out by means of the Brunner railway.

It was a memorable day, the 11th June, 1873, for Greymouth; for the "sod" of the first railway to Brunnerton was turned by the then sitting member for the Grey, Mr. W. H. Harrison, M.H.R. Great enthusiasm was displayed on the occasion, and the usual banquet followed. The eight miles of construction was speedily put through, and the line opened for coal and passenger traffic in April, 1876, with free rides and a banquet on the opening day. Fully six hundred bonnie, rosy-cheeked children—offspring of the Australian invaders—took part in the festivities on the racecourse.

This railway line had its peculiarities, and was called "The Serpentine Railway," from its numerous curves to evade many old man stumps on the way to Brunnerton, and to avoid the necessity of stumping. The line was afterwards straightened up by the well-known resident railway engineer, now head engineer at Wellington. Connected with this line was an expensive suspension bridge (value £4000), engineered by the Public Works Department in the seventies. It crossed the river at Brunnerton, to connect the coal mine with the railway station on the south side. Early one cold, frosty morning, Brunnerton was shaken to its foundations

by the collapse of the bridge, falling like a pack of cards into the river below. The noise made was tremendous, and was heard for miles round, even at Greymouth, and people thought of earthquakes. It turned out that "king frost" was responsible for the catastrophe, the anchors on the south side catching the supporting ropes of the bridge, had snapped in two like a carrot—as the saying is. The bridge was near its completion, and luckily the men employed on it had not turned to for work, and no lives were lost. The contractor, however, was paid in full, and people said "the anchors should have been buried in concrete to withstand the frost." It was, however, rescued and soon fixed up, and has since stood the test of thirty years' service.

The bar harbours in the late sixties and early seventies were every now and then specially unmanageable, and the number of vessels trying to cross them successfully made Greymouth and Hokitika very unpopular with the Marine Insurance Companies. The beaches of the two places, particularly Hokitika, were freely littered with wrecks, and in many instances there was sad loss of life. The local auctioneers and undertakers were kept busy, the one selling and the other burying—"on account of whom it might concern."

The records of deaths by drowning on the coast are very pitiful reading. Crossing the Westport Bar in the early days, a superintendent of the Nelson Province (Mr. John Percy Robinson), lost his life, and his body was never recovered. In the Greymouth cemetery the bodies of Whitcombe, Townshend and Mitchelmore lie together asleep in the arms of death. Tombstones erected by the Canterbury Provincial Government mark the spot. The first was drowned crossing near the Teremakau bar, the other two while crossing the Grey

bar in a whaleboat. The first funeral at Hokitika, described by an eye-witness, was very pathetic. In the early part of '65 a steamer, arriving off the bar, was tendered for passengers by a whaleboat, and in crossing the bar, capsized, and six out of thirteen were drowned, one of the number being a married man. A day or two after, the funeral took place; five bodies were placed on a dray, and that of the married man on another dray, his wife seated on a chair beside the body. The drays wended their way through the busy town to the cemetery, where the burial service was read by a layman. It was, said the *Spectator*, a melancholy sight.

The Greymouth bar, generally after a big flood, causing the river to take a straight run out to sea, would be workable for shipping for some weeks, but, as the channel got silted up with sand washed up from the ocean, the bar would work itself gradually northward. The Greymouth Borough Council, in view of railway works in hand, and the want of a proper coal port, undaunted by its failure in prosecuting protective works in 1871, pluckily authorised its Mayor in 1874 (the late W. S. Smith) to procure the services of the Government engineer of harbours and rivers in New South Wales, to inspect and report on the bar and harbour improvement of the Grey. From the report and plan forwarded by Mr. E. O. Moriarty, C.E., we got a lucid statement what to do, viz.—to construct a training wall of rubble on the south side of the river to sea line, and to carry out a breakwater with ten-ton blocks of stone backed with smaller blocks and rubble, procurable from the limestone hill south of the Gorge, to be curved in the form of a boomerang from Johnstone Street corner out into twelve feet water at low tide, to be some 5,400 feet in length. This would ensure the river being kept within bounds with a straight run out, and 15 feet or 16 feet at high water on the bar and at the wharves.

Mr. Moriarty pointed out that the North Beach as far as Point Elizabeth was composed mainly of boulders and large shingle brought down by the river, and after its ejection, thrown up on to the North Beach by the force of the northerly current; that the South Beach was composed of sand coming from the bed of the ocean, and that he was of opinion that the effect of the breakwater would be to protect the entrance of the port from the northerly trend of the sand, which would be retained at the base of the breakwater, and prevent the formation of a sandspit at the end of the breakwater. He further adds, "I would not propose at present any works on the north side of the entrance. They may not be required at all, but if they be, it would be better to defer them till the effect of those on the south side shall have been seen." The estimated cost was £94,998.

The General Government, aware of the valuable coal measures proved to exist in the Grey and Buller districts, decided to take charge of the construction of harbour works at Westport and Greymouth, having the sanction of Parliament; and that body known as the Public Works Department commenced work at Greymouth, its engineers adopting Moriarty's plan of the southern breakwater extension, but they ignored his opinion as to the north training wall not being required, and set to work on both sides of the river.

Five years after Moriarty had reported, an eminent English engineer (Sir John Coode) was asked to visit and report on the Westport and Greymouth harbour works then in progress of construction. He reported the estimated cost of harbour works at Westport to be £440,000, to produce 24 feet on their bar at high water spring tides, and the estimated cost of works at Greymouth, £162,040, to produce 21 feet at high water spring tides.

Sir John Coode in his report says: "From a plan furnished me when in the colony, I gather that the works proposed on the south side of the Grey were intended to follow practically the same lines as that laid down by Mr. Moriarty, the essential difference in the two proposals being, that Mr. Carruthers adopted as an integral part of his scheme a northern training all the way down from Cobden Gorge, nearly to the line of high water mark on the sea margin."

Sir John's estimate at the cost of the northern training wall was just up to £50,000, but he was careful not to express an opinion as to its merits.

Since 1884, the Public Works Department was relieved of its responsibilities (if it ever felt any), in respect of harbour construction works at Greymouth and Westport, and a harbour board at each place was appointed by the Government to carry on works. The harbour board at Greymouth at the present time appears to be suffering from the eccentricities of the bar, with its old complaint of sand spits, and also from some friction with the Government for asking, like "Oliver Twist," for "more" to carry on the north training wall.

As to the excellence of West Coast coal, or, as a matter of fact, the Westport coal, it is but fair to record the following instance of the virtue, strength, and steaming qualities of this well-known product of the "Golden West." Some tourists from far and wide, visiting the coal city of Westport, complained that this and that resident button-holed them with the question, "Did you hear about the 'Calliope?'" till it became monotonous. Hence one feels a delicacy in answering the question, and hesitates in giving the following historical fact.

Many years ago, when Samoa was under the triple supervision of steamships of war, under the flags of the British, German, and United States navies, a terrific

hurricane passed over the Samoan Group, and at Apia the various warships were wrecked and went ashore, crippled and destroyed—all save one, H.M.S. "Calliope," which vessel, clapping on all steam, edged her way by degrees out to sea in the teeth of the terrible storm, amid the cheers of the sailors of the German and United States steamers, still struggling unsuccessfully with the storm. The escape of the "Calliope" was marvellous, and when it came to be reported, it was found to be owing to the good steaming qualities of the New Zealand coal obtained at Westport. It was a grand advertisement for the West Coast, and the Admiralty of England has ever since been a good customer for Westport coal.

It will be interesting to know that up to 31st December, 1903, the output of Black Diamonds from the "Golden West" is as follows:—

			Tons.
Westport	...	...	5,281,318
Greymouth	...	...	3,498,323
Reefton ...	...	...	109,189
Total	...	...	8,888,830

VIII.—A GREY PASTORAL—THE WIDOW AND THE TAR.

In the early days of the Coast, there was naturally a superabundance of the representatives of Father Adam, (not counting the Maori race). A fine sturdy set of men, full of energy and in the prime of life, who had drifted from the summer regions of California to the Australian colonies, and found their way over the Tasman Sea to work the golden sands of Westland.

At the first there was of course a scarcity of the fair sex representing Mother Eve, and the few arrivals to this golden paradise who were eligible for the holy state of matrimony, proved somewhat "coy and hard to please." A kind Providence would have been quite justified on the line of long ago, to re-incarnate out of the proverbial rib, sufficient Eves to supply the demand, without going through the somewhat slow process of maternity to increase and multiply.

The floating population from this and that colony was undoubtedly easy to please, as far as the males were concerned; but the difficulty appeared to be in finding out their antecedents, for many of them, like the ubiquitous Jack Tar, may have had families in every port. The orthodox way of tying the nuptial knot on the Coast was very often disregarded. Jumping over the broom was very often substituted as in many Scotch marriages, till some good-hearted priests arrived and put things straight and legal by tying the knot in the good old fashioned way.

In one of the late sixties, in that charming and delightful spring time of the year, when nature puts forth

her best energies to make all things look beautiful and green, when running streams teaming with the delicious whitebait went rippling along sparkling in the sunlight to join the main waters of the Mawhera; when birds began to mate and build their nests, and went in for reproduction, and when the Adams and Eves of this coastal paradise went about in the full enjoyment of health and strength, assured of a good "wash up" of alluvial gold at the coming Christmas which would cheer the hearts of the bankers, storekeepers, publicans, and others, and make things pleasant and prosperous all round—in that bright and happy time of the year, the incidents connected with this story occurred.

Up one of the streams falling into the Mawhera, just above the gorge, stood a timber mill. This stream, even in those days, as it is now, was a delightful resort for boating parties and picnics in the pleasant summer time; and strong rowers, male and female in turns about, passed up its gently flowing current, under the grateful shadows, from the rich overhanging verdure on each bank where great monsters of the forest were waiting the bushman's axe, and the circular saws at the mill further up the stream, to convert them into planks and boards for the timber market.

Many of the sturdy pine trees were in the close embraces of the rata vine, or ironwood (all aglow at Christmas time with its flaming crimson blooms), and octopus-like throwing its long arms and tendrils round the parent stem, in course of time, sapping up its life-giving powers and absorbing its energies, eventually destroying it, and taking its place in the forest.

The stream has its source somewhere up the western watershed of the Paparoa Ranges; and the mill at the time of this story was busily employed with the two-fold object of clearing land for grazing purposes, and cutting

up great timber logs into marketable sizes. Barges were loaded at the mill, and, going down the stream to the harbour, discharged their cargoes on the river bank (there being no wharves then to speak of) which were then carted to the great timber yards and drying sheds in Boundary street.

The mill gave employment to many sawyers, bushmen, log-rollers, and boatmen; and in this sylvan retreat or paradise was a fair daughter of Eve, a widow-sister to the manager who engineered the mill, and she presided over the community with the sway of a goddess, and her charming personality endeared her to one and all—especially to one—as will be seen further on.

If this was not a story founded on fact, an author of fiction would here generalise and give a full description of the fair widow, her height, colour of her eyes, colour of her hair, her buxom appearance and so on; but enough has been written to convey the fact that

"She was a daughter of the Gods, Divinely fair."

The land about the mill, being gradually cleared of timber and the undergrowth and stumps burnt off, was sown with English grass seed, and became good grazing ground for cattle. A dairy farm was started which the fair widow superintended in connection with her poultry run, and household duties; and the disposal of her far famed pats of butter, and fresh eggs in the neighbouring town was a great success. For in those days, salt butter in firkins of a somewhat rancid flavour, and eggs of questionable freshness, were commodities imported to the Coast to feed hungry diggers. They might turn up their noses, but they had to eat and be satisfied. Consequently the butter and eggs of the widow, were much appreciated and in great demand by the "quality," and high prices ruled for such luxuries.

It was only natural in the ordinary course of things, that upon the quiet and happy community at the mill, the little cherub "Cupid" armed with his bow and arrows should alight from the seventh heaven, and play havoc among the hearts of the sawyers, bushmen, log-rollers, and boatmen, awaking the tender passion within their noble breasts for the one and only representative of Mother Eve, who went about in perfect ignorance of its existence, feeding her fowls and milking her cows, singing songs of tenderness and sweetness as she patted her favourite cow, whose great round eyes would flash back expressions of the inmost satisfaction.

There was one among the diggers in the vicinity of that busy mill, who was casting sheep's eyes or cow's eyes, if it is all the same, at the fair widow; and his cupidity was greatly accelerated by the fierce darts of that wicked little rascal 'Cupid.' But the little god of love conspicuously failed in his sharp shooting, as far as the widow was concerned, for her heart was as sound as a rock, and quite as impenetrable. Shakespeare says, "The course of true love never does run smooth," which was certainly the case with the party of the first part, herein called the "lover," but the party of the other part, herein called the "widow" turned her back on the lover of the first part, the result in the end proving disastrous to the lover of the first part.

The lover may, or may not, have been a seafaring man, but following the sensible advice of old Tony Weller to his son Sammy, to "beware of the widders," he should have seen how the land lay, squared his yards, and set sail to capture some other craft on the great sea of life. Instead of doing so he persisted in his amours, and the widow resisted almost to the death. This wooer lacked those charms of person and manliness sufficient to carry conviction to the heart of this daughter of Eve, and

she turned up her nose at the offer of his hand and heart; but he persistently declined to take no for an answer, and in various ways, known only to those who have themselves been head and ears in unrequited love, pushed his suit, and moonlight visits were much in evidence, until the brother and sister voted the affair a thorough nuisance.

The sawyers, the bushmen, the log-rollers, and the boatmen of that happy community, seeing that their charming goddess whom they worshipped from afar, was being worried to death, held a conference, discussed the situation, and decided upon a course of action. The business was kept dark, and a dark night was suitably fixed for the dark purpose. The lover, in one of his entrancing moments, was serenading the fair widow over a gate without fear of danger or even dogs, when suddenly he collapsed from behind, lost power of locomotion, and was conveyed to some dark spot near his hut, and went through the ordeal known as tar and feathers.

This remedy proved a perfect cure. The love sick swain stopped his vagaries of love-making under difficulties, and remained at home for repairs. The widow resumed her household and farm duties with some degree of comfort, thinking her sad experience was over, and that the wretched affair would now be buried in oblivion.

This story would never have been told but for the publicity given to it on the part of Romeo, as the sequel will show. It is said "revenge is sweet," and it appears to have rankled in his breast; for one day an emissary of the District Court in the person of an old friend, the bailiff, appeared at the mill with a broad smile, served a bit of blue paper on the fair widow, headed, "In the matter of So-and-so, plaintiff, against Mrs. So-and-so, defendant," wherein the

plaintiff seeks to recover substantial damages from the defendant, for pains and other things inflicted on his sacred person by the defendant, and so on.

The blue paper dropped like a bomb or a bolt from the blue into the midst of that once happy community at the mill, and the sawyers, the bushmen, the log-rollers and the boatmen, individually and collectively as one man, gave vent to their feelings, with an emphatic "Well, I'm d——," and proceeded to consign the plaintiff to the lowest depths of perdition in the realms of Satan.

From the mill, the scene changes to Her Majesty's Theatre Royal, the old Court House at the corner of Arney and Gresson Streets—whoever surveyed the lower township of Greymouth, had a great respect for judges; for he distinguished its streets by the names of celebrated Christchurch judges. What uses and abuses the old Court House has been put to from time to time! Besides the usual purposes for which a Court of Justice is supposed to be constructed—viz., the daily resort for the investigation of police charges and the dispatch of goldfields business by the Warden, it was on Sunday mornings opened for religious services by the Anglican persuasion, and on one or two occasions for a dance. And now, in these later days, since a new Court House was built elsewhere, the building is a home, devoted to the interests of the members of the Grey County, although, unfortunately, subject to floods.

A goodly number of the unemployed assembled outside the Court House on the day of hearing the "Tar and Feather" case; and when the doors were opened, a large audience entered and standing room was at a premium. Barristers attired in wig and gown with the plaintiff and defendant were accommodated with front seats. The entertainment commenced by his Honour the Judge in wig and gown, ascending the bench to the

cry of "order in court." There were giants in those days, and His Honour was one of them. Bowing with smiles to the gentlemen of the long robe standing to order below him, he took his seat, and looking round to see if all the windows were opened, for His Honour delighted in plenty of fresh air, the District Court was declared opened. After some preliminary business, the genial Clerk of the Court smilingly called the great case, echoed and re-echoed from the front door by the well-known and handsome looking sergeant; so that plenty of publicity was given to the case.

The barrister for the plaintiff circumstantially narrated the case, enlarging on the sufferings endured by his client. He put him in the witness box, where he gave evidence of the fact of tar and feathers being used to adorn his sacred person. The leader of the bar of that day, an eloquent little personage who appeared on behalf of the widow, cross examined the plaintiff at great length, and many smiles and much laughter were indulged in, which was solemnly checked from time to time by the smiling sergeant, demanding in a loud voice "silence in the court." The plaintiff's case concluded, the leader of the bar addressed the court on behalf of his client in a most pathetic and masterly speech, and placed the widow in the box. She went through the ordeal of examination and cross examination with much credit, which created a favourable impression upon the judge, and a decided feeling of sympathy for her on the part of everyone present, save and excepting the crest-fallen plaintiff, who by this time "was sorry he spoke." The brother and others gave their evidence in a straightforward manner, and the case closed, the barristers for and against addressed the Court, and His Honour summed up very much in favour of the widow; and, as the matter was a trial without jury, he gave his

decision straight away, which was for the defendant, and the case was dismissed. Public opinion endorsed the verdict of the Court by adding as a rider, in its mildest form, " and served plaintiff jolly well right."

The fair widow received the hearty congratulations of her many friends and admirers upon the successful issse of the trial, and she retired to the seclusion of the mill, to resume, unmolested, and with some degree of pleasure, the duties connected with her dairy and poultry farming.

IX.—WERITA TAINUI—MAORI CHIEF.

It was in '67 that I first had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Werita Tainui, more popularly known as "Old Tainui." Later on, having with another fellow camped with our families well up the south limestone hill, to avoid floods on the one hand and tidal waves on the other, I became in a manner next door neighbour, and from the hill above was able to take a "bird's eye view" of the Maori pa below.

Of course I was on speaking terms with the old chief as far as it was possible for us to understand each other, and on my part it was limited to the equivalent, attempted in Maori of "good-day" with a nod, which was returned by the old warrior with a smile, adding with much force of language, "too hot," which words were about all he knew or understood of English.

Tainui was a Maori chief of the highest aristocratic caste, a good-natured fellow, of medium height and weight, with a bright face showing the high caste Maori. His cheeks and chin were scored with the orthodox tattoo curve markings, he had an abundance of hair on his head, and his half-closed eyes had a merry twinkle in them. Anyone looking at him calmly, could not have associated him with any of the atrocities or orgies of a Maori warrior of the "bad old days." He resided in the bosom of his family under the hill at the top of the town of Greymouth, in whares with a central verandah cottage, provided by the Native Department. Of his numerous children my recollection centres round but one of the many wahines scattered about by name "Emma,"

a cheerful dark-haired maiden, who with Albert (doubtless called after Prince Albert, of pious memory), passed through the ordeal of Christian baptism, and received Christian names.

To Greymouth residents as they pass along their pleasant streets, the names of Tainui and his family become for all time, " familiar in their mouths as household words."

The same Werita Tainui, it will perhaps be remembered, was one of the signatories to that memorable deed, parting with his birth-right in 1860, for the mess of pottage, three hundred golden sovereigns, engineered by James Mackay, when old Tainui's signature was distinguished by a bold X, and witnessed as his " mark "—more particularly described in the tale " The Land of the Greenstone." It might be noted here that when the Native title was being enquired into, Tainui said, in his own funny way, that his title was incontestable, as he had eaten the former owner of the land.

His was a noble and warlike ancestry dating far back into the dark ages, and from father to son by means of the tohunga or priest the mystic ceremonies and poetical traditions of the Maori race have been religiously handed down for over five centuries. The name of Tainui is associated with the flotilla of six war canoes from Samoa, in 1350, carrying goods and passengers ; for one of them bore the family name of " Tainui," and this particular canoe, when the flotilla separated and landed at various places in Aotearoa, their name for New Zealand (meaning beautiful island), the Tainui reached Kawhia harbour (tradition says it was Hokitika). Its passengers built an altar for offerings to the gods, and this altar, it is said, may still be seen in the limestone rocks where they landed.

The Maori tradition has it that a century or so before the arrival of their first fleet, there was a forerunner from

Samoa accompanied by a small contingent, by the name of "Ngahue," a sort of Captain Cook who travelled round, and was the first to discover greenstone, and settled down at Arahura, opening up a greenstone quarry. Returning to his native country, he took with him a cargo of greenstone, and the jewellers there fashioned the stone into marvellous axes, meres, ear pendants and charms known as "tiki," the Maori first man, equivalent to our Adam—hence the following of the "First Fleet" on their voyage of discovery.

Talking of "tiki," it is curious to read this extract from a late Home paper: "Little greenstone gods modelled on the Maori tiki are commanding an extensive sale in London at present, amongst those who believe that Dame Fortune can be wooed. The statement by the winner of the last Derby that he carried one of these charms in his pocket during the race, at the recommendation of a friend, has caused many people to value the ugly little greenstone god." Doubtless, in connection with this charm may be quoted a late Wellington *Post* in February, 1905: A Maori woman named Maud, cross-examined in the Supreme Court, was pressed as to her means of subsistence. "I am the luckiest woman who ever went round the races" she declared.

The Maori character may be summed up as very superstitious, religious, but priest-ridden; wonderfully clever at artistic carving and tattooing; possessing unlimited courage as warriors, lovers of hospitality, very poetical, born actors; but excessively lazy.

From an ancient manuscript work, profusely illustrated, and published under the auspices of the "Greymouth Literary Association," established on the 15th August, 1868, and now in my possession, I am able to give the following interesting family history of the "Tainui Clan" as furnished by Mr. Werita Tainui and translated by the

then resident Native agent, Mr. John Greenwood, an accomplished Maori scholar. It runs as follows :—

"In old times long ago, the West Coast was thickly peopled from the Buller to Okarito, by the powerful tribe of Nga-tiwairanga. Now, it came to pass that being inspired with a thirst for glory, certain war parties crossed the mountains, and made descents on the settlements of the Ngaitahu, who dwelt about Port Cooper and the Canterbury Plains.

"When victorious, they enjoyed the fruits of conquest, after preparing the same in Maori ovens.

"The Ngaitahu were not slow in returning the compliment, and thus an interchange of visits across the mountains was kept up at the cost of much consumption of warriors; and many fights and great devastation ensued.

"In the long run, the Port Cooper Natives had the best of it, and the Nga-tiwairanga were abolished, the land being occupied by five divisions of the Ngaitahu tribe. The original possessors of the Grey district were all wiped out by a war party under the leadership of my father 'Tuhuru.' I was only a little boy then.

"There was a great pa at the Ahaura. We attacked it, and wasn't there a slaughter. Those who got away fled to that high mountain you see at the back, but bless you, they were soon hunted down and knocked on the head.*

"My father was something like a man. If we had been able to draw likenesses as you are, there would have been something for the pakehas to look at. He was square built and at least eight feet high—talk of Mr. Revell! Pooh! he's a baby to him. However, he died,

*[In the vicinity of the Hot Springs, not far from Reefton and near the sources of the Grey River, is the "Cannibal Gorge." I have heard several statements made by Pakehas to account for the name, but old Tainui's is about the most reliable. Note by Waratah].

and his bones are in that cave just above my house. My elder brother, Tarapuhi, is buried there also, and I live in my corner under the hill keeping watch over the bones of those great men, my ancestors, who are buried in the cave close by."

In answer to a question how the war parties got across the mountains, Tainui said, "As for tracks for the war parties, they did without them, but simply followed up the Mawhera or some other river to its source, and then popping over the saddle, followed a stream flowing the other way."

With reference to Tarapuhi, Mr. Revell in his diary of events makes the following obituary notice. "8th of April, 1864. An old Maori chief died, by name 'Tarapuhi.' He was a good friend to the Pakeha (white man), he would share his last morsel with him without payment, while the others would refuse. On the 11th, Tarapuhi was buried in an old cave, a short distance from the encampment, together with his clothes, blankets, stick—in short everything he had in his possession."

Missionary influence in 1834 and 1835 in the North Island found its way to the West Coast, with the result that the fierce and warlike man-eating Maoris settled down to peaceful pursuits. A surveyor in 1842 describes the Natives in Blind Bay thus: "They are very attentive to the observance of religion in which they have been initiated by the Missionaries."

In the *Nelson Examiner* for September 26, 1846, Mr. Heaphy, after his trip with Brunner to the Coast, tells of a native named Aperahama coming to his camp (near what is now Westport) with his son and daughter. They were travelling from Ahaura to Nelson to be baptized, having heard that there was a Church of England minister there. They had never before seen

a white man. They reported all the Natives at Ahaura professed Christianity, but their knowledge was very imperfect, having gained it solely from natives who had come over the ranges from Port Cooper (Lyttelton). A few days after, Mr. Heaphy met two more men and four boys who camped close by him, and kept him awake during the night by their chatter and devotional exercises. He says: "It is worthy of remark that these natives could read and write correctly, although the instructions they have received are such only as could be obtained from their occasional visitors from Massacre Bay and Port Cooper."

I am not aware if Tainui or any of his family ever went to church. It is certain that they were baptized, and adopted European garments, but I fancy Old Tainui at heart was half a tohunga. His father, when laid to rest in the old cave, was said to have died in the "odour of sanctity;" but his enemies asserted that he died from an overdose of dead sailor, saturated with the juice and odour of tobacco. Whichever way it was, Tainui, to show his gratitude to the Missionary, allotted a valuable block of land, in the centre of Greymouth for "Anglican Church purposes" on which, Church, parsonage and school buildings were erected, and it is somewhat curious that on the same block there is now a rising "Town Hall," with a Carnegie public library attached, perhaps after all a fitting home for the Greymouth Literary Association established on the 15th of August, 1868, whereby hangs another "tale."

Old Tainui was a splendid mimic, and it was very laughable to see him taking off the Government survey party, laying off the railway line in front of his pa. He would stick up two posts, some distance apart, and taking sight from one to the other, his hand motioning to change to right or left after the manner of

surveyors, always ending up the burlesque with the formula "Too hot! Too hot"!

It was also very amusing to see our old friend and his family squatting round on the public highway in front of their habitations, and setting up the most unearthly wailing and lamentation, which was their way of welcoming any visitors from a distance. While the music proceeded, the Arahura chiefs with their families in European costume would put in an appearance in all kinds of traps and conveyances, and on all sorts of horses and reaching *terra firma* would, according to ancient custom, insteading of kissing and shaking hands in the good old-fashioned style of Europeans, embrace one another and "rub noses."

The lady, "Priscilla," who does the society news in a Wellington paper, describing the arrival of the new Governor, Lord Plunket, noted the fear and trembling of the Governor's footman, when two Maori ladies insisted on fraternising with him, and says Priscilla, "He may be thankful they did not 'rub noses' with him." This manner of greeting must at times be very inconvenient, especially if any or either of the parties concerned have influenza on hand.

Old Tainui on one occasion very neighbourly presented my eldest wahine, in passing his residence, with a tin containing Maori grubs, obtained by some of his younger wahines from some old rotten tree, with the strong recommendation "kapai." The grubs were large, white and luscious looking, and are considered by the Maoris as much a delicacy as oysters are with Europeans. On being inspected by the home authorities up the hill, an inquest was held, and a verdict recorded, "Give 'em to the fowls," which was accordingly done. And it was noticeable that the eggs afterwards were much improved in flavour, so that it was quite within the

limits of truth, when Emma was informed that we enjoyed them so much, but were not anxious to have any more, and preferred wild pigeons or whitebait.

When the Government started the free, secular, and compulsory education, the young Tainuis went regularly to the Greymouth State School to learn the rudiments of the English language, and it is pleasing to record that one of the family known as the Thaia Tainui, in 1879 was returned an Honourable Member of the House of Representatives for the Southern district, which speaks well for our "brother the Maori" of the Golden West.

The construction of harbour works for Greymouth having been decided upon, and the limestone hill being required, the "native burial place" in the old cave was in jeopardy. Old Tainui was savage and went round shouting "Too hot!" "Too hot!" as the place was "tapu" or sacred. The Native Department got over the difficulty by sending a high class Maori priest from the land of enchantment in the North Island, who for a liberal consideration offered up the necessary incantations and performed certain ceremonies required to purge the "tapu" or sacredness of the burial place, and re-buried the bones of the Mawhera chiefs elsewhere. The ceremony of purification completed, the tohunga was rewarded for his valuable services according to ancient custom. Old Tainui was satisfied, and so also was the Public Works Department, for they began to storm the hill with tons of blasting powder, bringing down thousands of tons of limestone rock in blocks and rubble, which were conveyed down the quays and deposited in the river to face its banks with stone, instead of bush fascines.

Old Tainui looked on and wondered, and soon had to remove himself and his belongings out of range of the bombardment of rocks and the earthquake shocks they

were subjected to, making their pleasant homes, as Tainui went round expressing it in English, "Too hot! Too hot!" The fellows perched up on the hill found it "too hot" also, and had to shift their camp elsewhere, for a Government consideration.

By my compulsory removal from the hill and subsequent wanderings here and there on the Coast, I lost sight of my old friend and one time my next door neighbour, and have to thank a Greymouth lady for kindly furnishing me with the latest information of the Tainui family.

Werita Tainui, the subject of this character sketch, died more than twenty years ago, and was buried in the quarry under the limestone hill. His grave is fenced in and marked by an iron cross. The Maoris, after his death, removed from Greymouth to the Arahura settlement.

X.—HISTORIC KUMARA—BIRTHPLACE OF THE LIBERAL PARTY.

As one of the deputies of the Returning Officer at Greymouth, on the occasion of an election, I was appointed to take the poll at that memorable place known as the Greenstone. It was in the days when roads and tracks were few and far between in the Paroa Road Board district; and that Board, leaving much to private enterprise, by means of horse tramways as far as Marsden, extended tracks from that centre to the Eight Mile and Maori Creek (now known as Dunganville), but no track went to the Greenstone, and the old Maori trails up the Teremakau were by this time obliterated by undergrowth and impossible for horse riding.

How to get to the Greenstone was at last solved by taking a somewhat round-about horse ride. So the day before the election, I started on my Rosinante from Ashton's stables, in Boundary Street, and riding out of Greymouth by way of Arney Street, crossing Sefton Bridge at the mouth or Revell's Lagoon, got on to the road leading to the highway of the beach. After a pleasant ride to the Teremakau I took the ferry boat, swimming my horse at the stern, and landed safely on the other side. Re-saddling Rosinante, I cantered off along the beach till the Kapetea Creek pulled me up, which was running pretty deep and swiftly to sea. My horse and I carefully negotiated the stream, and we went on till abreast of the Chesterfield track, in the Arahura Road Board district, and following it inland, passing Larrikin's after a ride of five miles or so, struck the main road from Hokitika.

What a network of tracks, like garden pathways, diverge in all directions from its central point, Stafford Town; and the chairman of the Road Board must be complimented on the splendid work he initiated in constructing and maintaining such roads and tracks, an object lesson to the County Councils of the present day.

Reaching the Hokitika main road from the Chesterfield track, my horse and I turning north, soon passed over the site of the future town of Kumara, then thickly studded with heavy timber, waiting the axe and circular saw. Recrossing the Teremakau now some miles from where it flows into the sea, we went along a capital road for some five miles and reached the town of Pounamu, which being interpreted means "Greenstone," some twelve miles from Greymouth as the crow flies, and something like thirty miles, I think, by taking the roundabout trip by the Chesterfield track.

Some ten years after this, I had the pleasure of again revisiting the site of Kumara, by means of a pleasant ride to the Teremakau on a one-horse tramcar, changing into another similar car on the south side by means of a bird-cage to hold six, slung in mid air, with wheels running on an overhead double wire rope line and propelled to and fro by means of steam power, the Teremakau running below at its own sweet will whether calm or in flood on its way to the sea, without the slightest stoppage of tramway business. Passing for five miles along an avenue of immense trees and undergrowth, literally carved out for the tramway line, its wealth of splendid pine trees being utilised for rails and sleepers, the passengers were landed in a large tramway shed near the busy and important town of Kumara.

When the Kumara rush occurred, there was a rush between the Hokitika and Greymouth merchants to secure the trade. Hokitika had the main road, and

Greymouth, out of self defence, had to run a tramway to keep pace with Hokitika. This tramway was in every way successful until the railway from the Grey to Hokitika was opened some years after—engineered through the House by the member for Kumara, in spite of his detractors saying, "It wouldn't pay for axle grease."

Finding my way to Gilbert Stewart's hotel in Seddon Street—Gilbert was an old friend from Greymouth—I was heartily welcomed by him and Mrs. Stewart, and fixed up in the very best quarters in their establishment, where I spent a very pleasant and profitable fortnight in the capacity of a Government insurance agent, employing the time in looking up old and new friends, travelling about among the miners, and combining business with pleasure.

Kumara has a "past," and would have been "nowhere," but for an accidental discovery of the precious metal on the south bank of the beautiful but treacherous Teremakau River. On one side of its flats, says report, a party of non-prohibitionists, seeking in the wilds of its charming bush scenery for a quiet out-of-the-way place to start a whisky mill, found what they wanted, not far from the present site of Dillmanstown, put up their tents, and started preliminary work for the illicit manufacture of "chain lightning." But in digging out the foundation for their tubs, they struck rich gold, and, finding it could be got in payable quantities, the whisky venture was abandoned, and the party set to work at the safe and legitimate business of diggers, and for some time worked quietly without giving information to the proper authorities.

A prospector from the Waimea, no doubt equipped with the necessary "tucker" from Seddon's store at Stafford Town on joint account, lost his way in the bush,

and naturally made his way north to pick up the Teremakau, coming unexpectedly on the whisky party "washing up" at the river. Our prospector quietly taking his bearings got on to the main road, hastened to Stafford Town and reported progress to Seddon. The two entered into partnership on the spot, and pegged out at the new diggings.

Before long the news got round, and a proper 'rush' set in, and the silent forest of majestic trees and tangle of undergrowth were replaced by a mining township. Seddon being camped on the spot, took a leading part in the laying out of the town, and he tells how the founders took Melbourne with its wide streets and squares as their model for the new town.

It was thus that the important town of Kumara, like the proverbial mushroom, sprung into existence, "a city set upon a hill," with suitable sludge channels leading to the river and plenty of water laid on. Many hotels, stores, banks, theatres, and business stores started up as by magic, lining each side of Main Street (the old main road), as well as both sides of the fine broad street running at right angles to Main Street, towards the Dillmanstown road, and mapped as "Seddon Street," in honour of one of its founders; while churches, chapels, a stately State school, with many pleasant residences, were scattered about other streets, adding materially to the prosperous look of the town.

The township at its inception in 1877 was duly christened with the usual formalities by the Superintendent of Westland, the late Hon. J. A. Bonar, and was named Kumara, signifying "big (sweet) potato;" and to this historic place, Mr. and Mrs. Seddon, with their young family, removed from Stafford Town, and the popular head of the family, not quite 32, associated himself with it, as a general storekeeper and mining

advocate, identifying himself with every public movement for the benefit of the town and district, notably the sludge channel and water races. Hence in the natural order of things, when Kumara, owing to its population and prosperity, was incorporated in 1878 into a borough, it was only fit and proper that Richard John Seddon should be its first Mayor.

It was in May, 1879, that I visited Kumara in the interests of the Government Life Insurance Department, founded in 1870 by Sir Julius Vogel, Premier, and in virtue of my office as agent, I did myself the honour of interviewing His Worship the Mayor, at the Council Chambers in Seddon street. It was my first introduction to the well-known Hokitika man, and public character Mr. Seddon, and by no means the last. It is needless to describe the genial personality that stood before me; his commanding and portly figure with much width of girth, and his cheerful, healthy, and vigorous countenance so familiar now to every man, woman, and child throughout the "Golden West," was all there in the flesh, but in in much younger form.

After he had welcomed me warmly, I explained the object of my visit to his large and beautiful town, at which he laughed, and looking so pleased, I tried my level best to take his life on the spot—unsuccessfully. His Worship, much to my astonishment, expressed his surprise in very eloquent terms at the New Zealand Government undertaking such a "risky business" as "Life Insurance," adding by way of logic, "Why the Government will be feeding us next!"

I was somewhat startled by the very forcible remarks of His Worship, and have often thought since in recalling the interview that if I only had possessed the power of "second sight" and telling fortunes, I could have retaliated and startled him with the following "forecast:"

"I see your Worship, within four months from now, sitting on the Government benches under the wing of Sir George Grey, the first step up the political ladder. I see you on the Opposition by sheer perseverance and stonewalling as an advanced Liberal, rising step by step, till May Day, 1893, you reach the top as Premier of New Zealand. I see you feeding the aged, at the cost of the Government, of a shilling a day. I see you taking up the "risky business" of Fire Insurance. I see you opening up State coal mines, killing private enterprise. I see you marshalling contingents to go and fight for the Mother Country. I see you sympathetically controlling the Labour Unions. I see you worrying over the birth-rate of those "unborn millions," left you as a legacy by Sir George Grey. I see you and your good wife as honoured guests of Queen Victoria at her Diamond Jubilee, and of King Edward at his Coronation; and I see you at Hokitika in September, 1904, celebrating your silver jubilee as a politician, still on top as Premier, and likely to remain on top, as long as you and your health will stand the strain. I see you thoroughly appreciating the wish, springing from the very bottom of your heart, and finding voice at the Hokitika gathering, in the pathetic utterance, 'I want to die in harness, not to rust in idleness.'"

If I had only been able to furnish the Mayor of Kumara with this "forecast," I believe I would have had his life for a £1,000 at least. However, he very kindly furnished me with information and advice as to the eligible persons to look up for Life Insurance, and, thanking him, I retired, passing along Seddon Street, at the end of which, on the right hand side was the store of His Worship the Mayor. I went on to Dillmanstown, a suburb of Kumara, in the neighbourhood of which the bulk of the gold miners were at work, sluicing away

great terraces a hundred feet high; and overhead were numberless wide timber flumes, interlacing one another at different levels and angles supported by high timber trestles. All the flumes were running with the precious water for hydraulic sluicing, which employed many hundreds of miners in the pursuit of gold.

Kumara appeared to me to be a quiet sort of a place for a digging township, and unlike some I had been accustomed to on the Australian side, notably the "Lambing Flat" diggings; but this was accounted for by the fact that the mining community only came to town on Saturdays, and spent the evening in the happy-go-lucky style, usual among successful gold miners, of frequenting the various entertainments and dances got up for their special amusement. I was glad to notice that Sunday was generally observed as "the day of all days, the best" for a complete rest, hotel bars and business places being closed; and that the male residents from the Mayor downwards appeared to be a "God-fearing" community, and went to church or chapel with their wives and children.

At the hotel where I stopped there was a rather cosmopolitan attendance at the mid-day meal each day, boarders preferring "square meals" to going in for "baching." The conversation was of course elevating in the presence of two parsons, who were always on hand at the sound of the dinner-bells in Seddon street, although there was an undercurrent of fun and gossip going round the table. I recollect on one occasion one of the parsons, a Presbyterian, I think, starting a conversation in glowing terms of Scotland and her poets, when incidentally the name of "Bobbie Burns" came up. A young bank clerk lately allowed to land in New Zealand from the United States, sitting at the other end of the dinner table, in the long, drawling voice usual to a Yank, asked, "and

who is 'Bobbie Burns'? Was he a Frenchman?" The minister, looking daggers at the Chicagoan, treated the question with silent contempt, but a broad smile lighted up the faces of the other diners round the table.

The number of bonny rosy-looking children running about Kumara, was a cheering sight to any politician interested in the birth-rate; and among the products of the Golden West none are more valuable and prolific than the output of children. The Government scheme of free secular and compulsory education was started in 1877, and in 1879 was nowhere so popular, or as far reaching in its benefits as in Kumara, under the energetic rule of His Worship the Mayor, who, as a member of the Education Board, assisted in getting a splendid up-to-date school building erected on a commanding site; and as Chairman of the local committee, his connection with it was sufficient to ensure its efficiency as a purely national school.

It appears that Kumara, when founded, was built on an educational reserve of a 1000 acres, instead of our Crown land, and it was feared there would be the same difficulty as with the Native Reserve in Greymouth; but Mr. Seddon, then a believer in freehold tenure, on getting into Parliament soon fixed it up by an empowering act, enabling the inhabitants to purchase their sections from the School Commissioners with a freehold title.

For nearly fourteen days I spent a very enjoyable time in Kumara; and the rain, which in some parts of the Coast, like Hokitika for instance, "raineth every day" was conspicuous by its absence, and the weather was simply charming. Before making my way homeward to the Grey, I went one beautiful evening for a walk along the road to Dillmanstown and in the vicinity

of the first gold workings of the memorable "whisky party" I saw a vision of loveliness,

> "That still remains to memory dear."

It is said that to see the beauty of sunset, one should look to the east. Ten miles from Kumara, with the Teremakau flowing just below, at the southern end of that large and wide expanse of water known as Lake Brunner, rises the Hohonu mountain range to an altitude of 4277 feet; and these hills during my stroll eastward, were suddenly lighted up with the glorious crimson afterglow of the setting sun, which, lingering for some few minutes, gradually passed away, and the mountain range resumed its dark and sombre appearance in the landscape.

I left Kumara with one regret. I was somewhat of a liberal in politics and was sorry I had not the honour of being born there, and so could have hailed it in the future as my native town.

XI.—ROMANCE OF BUSHRANGING.

Robbery under arms has always been a successful theme for novel writers, and readers have been held fascinated with the adventures of their heroes. The old time stories of Claude Duval, the gallant highwayman, who on one occasion compelled a highborn lady to descend from her coach to dance a minuet with him on the road, and even Dick Turpin's ride to York on Black Bess, familiar to every school boy in the circus business, with the big horse pistol, or the antiquated blunderbuss at the present, accompanied with the well known formula "Stand and deliver,"—all sink into insignificance at the exploits of the Australian bushrangers, who with their battle-cry "Bail up," and armed with Colt's revolvers were, in the golden days of the fifties and sixties, the terror of coach travellers on the Bathurst and Goulburn roads of New South Wales.

The "Golden West" at the commencement of its era, was not without its experience of highway robberies. And bushranging, after a sort put in an appearance. But the want of good roads to secure retreat, and the difficulty of securing other peoples well-bred horses (no squatters being about), and the absence of sufficient cover behind gum trees—with the presence of many police veterans, imported from Australia, almost put a stop to the game of bushranging on the West Coast.

Good gold was being got in the early days in that bit of country the other side of the Arnold—that river as far as Lake Brunner, was then the boundary of the Nelson Province—and such well known places as the Twelve Mile, No Town, Red Jacks, with Hatters Terrace

up the Nelson Creek, fed by Lake Hochstetter, were pretty well rushed by about five thousand diggers. These diggings as far as the Ahaura, were some three or four miles inland from the south bank of the Grey River. The only way of getting to and from these places was by means of bush tracks or in the bed of the creeks, the country being nothing but a complete jungle of trees and undergrowth, tied together by supplejacks, familiarly known as "bush lawyers." Packers found their way about as best they could, carrying tucker to feed the hungry five thousand from the general depôt at the Twelve Mile, close to the Grey River, where a detachment of the Nelson police force had a camp of observation, and gathered in the fees for miners' rights and mining privileges.

Banks and bankers, with their headquarters at Hokitika, were distributed at the various centres of this new district, eager to buy gold and issue notes on the spot, sending their purchases to the Twelve Mile, and thence by cargo boats to the newly formed town of Greymouth.

It was in this particular district that the first and only case of a proper "sticking up" or "robbery under arms" occurred on the West Coast. It took place on the 3rd September, 1865, half way between No Town and the Twelve Mile, when an unlucky banker was interviewed by five armed men, and robbed of gold and notes to the value of £4000.

The well-known writer of "Banking under Difficulties" described the situation very graphically, and reports that the banker concerned, left No Town in the early part of the day, accompanied by a packer, the gold being divided between them, the packer having 800 ozs. and the banker 824 ozs. The road they travelled was down the bed of a creek, with thick bush on each side. When about half way, the banker was suddenly surrounded by

the robbers and pulled off his horse, before he could even make an attempt to use his revolver. The packer who was some yards ahead, and hidden from his view by the rounding of the creek, had a gun suddenly presented at him by one of the gang, who in presenting it stumbled and fell. The packer put spurs into his horse and galloped away and so saved the 800 ozs. of gold. The banker saw nothing of this, and rode into the midst of the gang who had him quickly off his horse, relieving him of his revolver, and taking possession of his treasure. On the banker turning round to have a look at them to see how they were dressed, so that he could recognize them again, two of their number drew revolvers which they placed at his head and swore that if he moved one inch they would blow his brains out.

The packer only saw one of the gang, and was not sure that the banker had been stuck up. When he arrived at the Twelve Mile he reported the affair at the camp. The police were quite unprepared for such an emergency and took fully an hour to get ready for the pursuit. Of course, such a start in so thickly bushed a country was all in favour of the gang. The banker rode to Hokitika the same night, reported to his manager, and the Inspector of Police was informed of the robbery. Within half an hour the Inspector with two detectives, the banker, and the manager, were on the road to the Grey which was reached soon after daylight. The party lost no time, and pushed on to the Twelve Mile. The Inspector and detectives visited the scene of the robbery and started in pursuit of the gang. They were out some days, and arrested four men on suspicion, but unfortunately the police could not bring the charge home to them.

This robbery determined the banks doing business at the Rush (No Town) to withdraw and close their offices;

and about three weeks after the robbery an escort arrived, and all left forming a strong party some seventeen in all, well armed, with van and rear guard. The escort proceeded to the Twelve Mile and went down the river in canoes to the Grey.

A very good story is told of a lambing-down case at the No Town Rush in its palmy days. A young fellow, a cornstalk, who came to the Coast with the 'Australian Invasion,' determined to try his luck, and colonial like, turned to at anything in the way of work, graduating through various phases of life on the diggings, till he found himself selling papers, and acting as a general postman between Greymouth and the diggings above the Arnold.

In a bookseller's shop in Greymouth, he enquired if the proprietor knew of anything that would suit him.

"There's a fortune to be made running papers at the diggings," replied the bookseller.

"I think I'll try it," said the applicant.

Purchasing a stock of newspapers, our young cornstalk strapped them on his back, and started up the Grey River on board a cargo boat, bound for the Twelve Mile. The whale boat was partly pulled and partly poled, and for some distance dragged by the crew, up to their waists in water, with tow ropes over their shoulders —they called it "tracking,"—and the poor fellows had to be supplied with rum to keep out the cold.

Says the paper-runner, "After landing at the Twelve Mile, I started on the track for No Town. There was no road, but a mere track cut in the bush, available for pack horses only. Once at the diggings, however, all previous discomforts was forgotten. "Paper!" I shouted—there was a regular rush.

"Here you are, lad, give me an *Australian*, how much?"

"Five bob old man."

"Give it here then."

"Have you a *Nation* there," asked another.

"One left, I want a pound for it."

"Too much. I'll give you fifteen bob."

"All right, collar," and paper and money changed hands.

"It was simply coining money. The regular price was five shillings for any of the Australian weeklies, but never less than ten shillings for any Home papers. Still, life on the diggings was simply awful. Food had to be carried on a man's back. Flour was 9d. to 1s. 6d. the pannikin full, and other things in proportion. Thus it will be seen that although I got 2s. 6d. for posting a letter and as much more for bringing one from the Greymouth Post-office, it was money hard earned. In a fortnight's trip I usually made from £40 to £50. With this, when I got to Greymouth, I made myself comfortable, and lived as a gentleman for a fortnight or three weeks.

"On one occasion whilst at Red Jacks, I heard of a short cut to No Town. I had nearly sold out, and was on my way to Greymouth. I had with me nearly £100 besides a few watches given to me to get repaired, as well as several letters to deliver. By this time my constant appearance at or near the stated time had invested me with all the privileges of a postman. Mails to the outlying districts, there were none.

To me came a digger, "You want to find the short track to No Town."

"I do," was the reply.

"Then we'll travel in company, for I am going there and know the way."

"Thanks! we had better start at once."

"It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the short track was some eight miles to walk. Of course,

there was the usual liquor up, in fact two or three, and my guide took some with him. After some steep climbing and having travelled some four miles we discovered several tracks about.

"Are you sure of the way," I asked my guide.

"Yes, I think so," was his reply.

We walked for another mile, when my mate exclaimed, "I believe we're wrong after all, anyway, No Town must be this way."

"The night closed in on us, and we were compelled to stop and wait for the dawn of day. Nothing was heard but the drop, drop, of the rain, and the melancholy cry of the weka. My mate had a bottle of rum. I had two small drinks of it and fell asleep. Next morning I woke. That grog must have been drugged, for I found my guide had decamped, having robbed me of all my cash and two of the most valuable watches entrusted to my charge. I started in the supposed direction for No Town, and got bushed, tired and hungry, and after two days wandering found myself on the banks of the Grey River. In about an hour, a boat came close to where I was lying. I hailed, and relating my story, was kindly taken to Greymouth, where I was attended to by some good Samaritans, and was right again in a fortnight.

"Having recovered, I got a stock of papers on credit, but it was my last run. During my absence, others had taken up my business. I may add that the diggers whose watches had been stolen, refused to accept any compensation. Of course, I informed the police, but the thief was never taken."

On the south bank of the Grey River, where the township of Dobson now stands may be seen from the railway train as it passes on to Brunnerton a large concrete slab placed on four concrete pillars, marking

the spot where a Canterbury Government engineer and surveyor, named Dobson, a Christchurch man, met a tragic death at the hands of four determined and diabolical bushrangers known as the Burgess, Kelly, Levy and Sullivan gang.

It appears (as afterwards confessed by Sullivan, who turned Queen's evidence at the trial for murder at Nelson) that the gang was on the watch for a storekeeper and gold buyer, named E. B. Fox, who they had been informed would be passing through the Brunner Gorge on a certain day, on his way from Maori Gully to Greymouth. They laid in ambush awaiting him. But unfortunately Mr. Dobson who had come down the Arnold River from Lake Brunner, and would have gone on to Greymouth by boat, but had to inspect the track from Brunnerton to the Grey, was, in passing, stopped by the gang, only to discover it was not the man they wanted; but on the principle that 'dead men tell no tales,' they strangled the poor fellow notwithstanding his appeals for mercy, and his promise of silence, and buried him just off the main track in the side of a small creek, the body only partially covered.

Mr. E. B. Fox, the man the gang were after, as luck would have it, instead of tramping along the Brunner track, came down the river with his gold in one of the cargo boats, returning from the Ahaura to Greymouth, and so providentially escaped the dreadful fate that awaited him.

The official record states that the Dobson tragedy took place on the 28th of May, 1866; and singular to say a few days after, the same gang of bushrangers were on the Nelson and Havelock road, sticking up and murdering people returning with gold to Nelson. The gang must have got away from Greymouth by steamer to Nelson, fearing that Dobson's body would be discovered.

On or about the 12th June, 1866, four men—two storekeepers, an hotelkeeper, and a digger—left the Deep Creek Diggings near Havelock, with the intention of proceeding to Nelson, and then on to the West Coast. That night they camped together at the Pelorus Bridge, and after breakfast on the following morning started for Nelson. Several persons met them on the road, and they were last seen a little way on the Nelson side of Franklyn Flat, where all traces of them ceased.

The arrival of this party of four had been anxiously awaited by two friends who had preceded them from Deep Creek, and their prolonged absence caused suspicion. A search party was formed and started on the 18th June. On the 19th a man named Levy was arrested on suspicion, and a short time after three others, viz., Burgess, Kelly, and Sullivan were also taken into custody. They had been selling gold to the different banks in Nelson.

The search party discovered only the dead body of a pack horse, shot through the head, together with the swags of the missing men. On the 28th June, Sullivan, availing himself of the offer of a free pardon to any but the actual murderers, confessed to his complicity in the deed, and gave information which led to the discovery of the bodies of the four missing men, as well as of a fifth, which they cruelly murdered on the 12th. The bodies were recovered on the 29th and brought in to Nelson ; an inquest was held, and a verdict returned of wilful murder. The funeral took place on the 1st July, and was attended by a large number of leading citizens. It says much for the credit of the Nelson police of that day, that they were cute enough to arrest the gang and bring them to justice.

Sullivan, in his confession, also gave information as to the murder of Dobson, and where the body was buried.

On the 5th July it was recovered from its dishonoured grave and buried on the 7th in the Greymouth Cemetery beside the grave of two public servants, Townshend and Whitcombe. The funeral service was read by the Bishop of Christchurch.

Burgess, Kelly and Levy were tried, convicted, and executed in Nelson. Sullivan received his pardon, but wherever he went the brand of Cain was upon him, and his movements were closely watched by the police. He went to England, then returned to Melbourne, and was pounced upon by the police, and kept in gaol for some months. His liberty was after a time given him, and he returned to his home in Victoria; but his people knew him not. After a time he made his way to New South Wales, and is reported to be dead.

The bushranging business on the Coast ceased to exist since the Burgess gang met their deserts. It was a wholesome object lesson to the fraternity inclined that way. It led, however, to a pardonable but expensive blunder on the part of the Canterbury Government.

On the 20th March, 1866, the splendid road across the Southern Alps to connect Canterbury with Westland at a cost of a million, was opened for coach traffic. Otago, like Victoria, had its gold escort, and Canterbury determined to have one, now the road was completed. Carriage builders were set to work, and wagons impervious to the shots of the bushrangers were built. A troop of smart young men were placed in charge of Inspector James (afterwards stationed at Greymouth—what a splendid black and white artist he was!), a small stud of good horses was purchased, and an experienced driver was engaged. Stables were erected at intervals along the road, and a constable stationed at each as a groom.

When the escort arrived at Hokitika after travelling a distance of 147 miles across the Great Divide, it created

some amusement. It started in September, 1866, on the return journey, but only made one trip to and fro, being then discontinued. The reason for this was that the gold obtained on the Coast was sent away by steamer, and was fully insured before leaving the port of departure, whilst the Canterbury Government declined to insure any gold that might be entrusted to the escort, for fear of bushrangers. The consequence was, says a Government official, that only three-quarters of an ounce of gold (15 dwts.) deposited with the Gold Receiver at Hokitika for transmission to Christchurch went over on the return trip of the escort.

The young gentlemen who composed the escort were afterwards drafted into the police force of the Coast.

XII.—THE RIGHT HON. THE PREMIER.

On the occasion of the Premier of New Zealand attaining the patriarchal age of three score years, it is but fitting that one and all in the colony, and on the West Coast in particular, should greet Mr. Seddon right heartily with the old-fashioned salutation of "Many happy returns of the day."

It is remarkable, and much to the credit of the Golden West, that three West Coasters of the early sixties have been worthy to sit in the seats of the mighty in Parliament, plucking some of the very best plums of office, viz., Reeves, Guinness, and Seddon—these three—but the greatest of these is Seddon, who has made history, and a proud name, favourably known throughout the Empire.

After all, it is an instance of the "survival of the fittest," notwithstanding political opponents, and the noble army of caricaturists with pen and pencil.

> Judge not !—the working of his brain
>   And of his heart thou canst not see—
> What looks to thy dim eyes, a stain,
>   In God's pure light may only be
> A scar, brought from some well won field,
> Where thou would'st only faint and yield.

Richard John Seddon, an Englishman by birth, and a West Coaster by adoption, was born on the twenty-second of June, 1845.

Another West Coaster lately visited the home of his childhood in old Scotia, and, taking the north of Ireland on his way, discovered that the name of Seddon was something to swear by, and, to his astonishment, found

that the Belfasters claimed Seddon as an Irishman, saying confidently that he was born in Ireland and bred in Lancashire.

That he was born an Englishman there is an abundance of proof, for, when he was in the Old Land, on the occasion of one of his Imperialistic tours, "by Royal Command," he was recognized and welcomed at the favoured place of his birth, known as Eccleston, near St. Helen's, fêted and banqueted right merrily by its citizens, and presented with the freedom of his native town.

An historian says that Mr. Seddon can look back on a long line of ancestors, belonging to the yeomanry class of England. His father and forefathers, for two centuries, were farmers in the parish of Bickerstaff, in Lancashire, and his mother hailed from Dumfrieshire, being connected with a family of border farmers. The father, however, forsook farming, and became a schoolmaster, and was head-master of the Eccleston Grammar School when young Seddon put in an appearance in 1845. In due time he was educated under parental care, going through the ordinary scholastic course of instruction till he reached the age of 12, when he commenced field work on his grandfather's farm.

As a Lancashire boy, there is no record that his parents or schoolfellows ever observed that he had the gift of oratory, or the great staying powers and fluency of a speaker developed in later years; but it is just possible he was then, as he is now, a good church goer and respecter of religious liberty, and never went fishing on a Sunday, whatever some of his reverend friends may preach to the contrary.

It is said that young Dick found farm work quite unsuitable to his ideas of getting on in the world ; so he was apprenticed to an engineering firm of iron workers

at St. Helen's, and, after serving his time, went to Liverpool, and worked at the Vauxhall Foundry. It was in that city he took the gold fever, induced by the glowing accounts from the Australian diggings. A chance occurring of a position as engineer on the steamship "Star of England," young Seddon, then 18, obtained a certificate from the Board of Trade, secured the billet, and, in 1861, landed in Melbourne, hopeful of the future, and, as his historian says, "with no other equipment than a stout heart, a clear head, and a pair of skilled hands."

In Melbourne he soon got work, but left it to try his luck at digging for gold. Failing, however, to secure a fortune, he returned to Melbourne, and obtained work under the Victorian Government, in the locomotive department. Years after, when at Melbourne as the Premier of New Zealand, the guest of the new Commonwealth, he paid a visit to the Government workshop where he had wrought as a young engineer, and renewed his acquaintance with the particular bench at which he worked, fraternising with the workers, who congregated round him, wishing them all the same good luck as he had obtained. A brass tablet, suitably inscribed and fixed to the bench, now marks the spot.

While working at that bench in 1866, Engineer Seddon had a relapse of the gold fever. The accounts from the "Golden West under Aorangi" of rich finds, induced him to throw down his tools; and obtaining leave of absence from the Government (careful from the first), he came over direct from Melbourne in the "Alhambra," McLean, commander (affectionately known as "Hell Fire Jack"). Landing at Hokitika, he set in at the Waimea diggings at the Six Mile, and, seeing it was right, sent in his resignation to the Victorian Government, and cast in his lot as a West Coaster of New Zealand.

It was at Stafford Town, as "Digger Dick," that Mr. Seddon again handled the pick and shovel in the search for gold with some success. Lately, when his medical advisers, in the attempt to reduce his weight to twelve stone, insisted upon him mortifying his flesh at every turn, he says, "I began to think it would be better for me to take to the pick and shovel again." At Stafford Town, he was the promoter of the water works scheme in connection with the Waimea Gold District. His general knowledge of mining laws, led to his becoming a mining advocate in the goldfield Courts, where he distinguished himself by winning many cases entrusted to him, and also led to his being an Associate of the American Institute of Mining Engineers.

A writer says that the secret of Mr. Seddon's success in life is undoubtedly owing to the wholesome influence of Home Rule. When he obtained leave of absence from the Victorian Government to see New Zealand, he also obtained leave of absence from a fair Victorian lady living in Williamstown, with whom, in 1866, he left his heart, to claim which he returned to Melbourne in 1869, cancelled his leave of absence, and married Louisa Jane, second daughter of Captain Spotswood, a shipowner trading out of Melbourne. Mrs. Seddon bravely left her comfortable home in Williamstown, to rough it with the man of her choice on the Westland gold diggings; and Mr. Seddon lovingly testifies to the great assistance he has received from his wife, in his business as a general storekeeper, without which he could not have continued useful in his public career. She has superintended his business all through, and has been a worthy helpmeet and loving wife and mother. Mrs. Seddon, besides her numerous household cares, and attending to the wants of her young family (eleven of them born on the West Coast, of whom nine survive), yet found time to act as a

"ministering angel" to many sick and injured miners; so that in Westland her popularity, it is said, is even greater than that of her husband.

In 1869, Mr. Seddon, at the age of 24, with his young bride, crossed the Tasman Sea on their honeymoon trip, and settled down at Stafford Town, to the rough and tumble of digging life, living there seven years, till historic Kumara burst forth into notoriety, to which place the young couple, with their little ones, removed and entered upon a larger sphere of action.

It was in the year of his marriage that Mr. Seddon took his first step into public life, when he was returned as a member for the Arahura Road Board, its head office being at Stafford Town. Being elected chairman, his first duty appears to have been "retrenchment;" for the unlucky clerk of the Board at that time, in receipt of the princely income of £5 a week, was reduced to ten shillings a week, and the saving effected put on the road in the shape of broken metal.

Says a reverend gentleman present at Mr. Seddon's silver jubilee last year (1904): "It was in Stafford Town in the early days that I was acquainted with Mr. Seddon, when he first stood for the Arahura Road Board. We were both young men then. Mr. Seddon took to the State and I took to the Church. Judging by appearances after 25 years, the State has been more kind to Mr. Seddon than the Church had been to me, in the matter of size. Mr. Seddon has gained his present position by hard work. I know the time when he sat up all night, when other people were in bed, studying *Hansard* and Blue Books."

On the 1st December, 1867, the young West Coasters, after much political agitation, declared their independence from the mother province of Canterbury, to commemorate which "Independence Day" has ever since been

annually observed as a day of rejoicing. The new province of Westland, endowed with provincial powers had its seat at Hokitika. Bonar as superintendent, stepped into the shoes of the Canterbury Boss, "King Sale," Conrad Hoos, and H. H. Lahman did the governing business, with dear old Lazar as Provincial Clerk. In this august assembly, or debating club, Mr. Seddon, in course of time, secured a seat as member for Arahura, matriculating in the science of parliamentary debating according to May's Practice, and preparing himself unconsciously for the higher duties in the Parliament at Wellington. In this Provincial Assembly at Hokitika, our young politician was Chairman of Committees, until the abolition of the Provinces in 1876, when the local government merged into a County Council, absorbing the various Road Boards of the district. Mr. Seddon was returned a member, and secured the position of County Chairman at £250 a year.

During Mr. Seddon's residence at Kumara he was fully occupied in official positions in the Westland District, especially as a mining advocate, and when the town was constituted a Borough in 1878, he was its first Mayor. The energy and ability displayed by him in the building up of the town was praised by one and all who visited the historic mining centre.

We now come to the turning point in Mr. Seddon's career as a parliamentary politician. Sir George Grey, Premier in 1879, having obtained a dissolution, appealed to the country, and Mr. Seddon was asked to stand as one of the members for Westland, that electorate returning two. Mr. Seddon consented to try again, having previously unsuccessfully wooed the fair smiles of the Westland electors; but this time, when the poll was taken of the five candidates who went through the ordeal of the ballot, Bob Reid and Dick Seddon came out on

top—Reid leading with 917 votes and Seddon following with 800.

On the 29th September, 1879, Richard John Seddon appeared at the Bar of the House at Wellington, was sworn in, and took his seat on the Government benches, under the wing of the Premier, Sir George Grey. For some time he felt his way cautiously by asking questions, he says, expressing his feelings on taking his seat as member for Westland. "I did not think much of the future for myself at the time, and often asked myself how I came to be in Parliament, and wondered what the result would be. I never forgot that I represented men who were manly, outspoken, and courageous, and endeavoured to act accordingly."

Sir George Grey, as Mr. Seddon's political sponsor and adviser, took every care of the young politician, age thirty-four, teaching him the forms of the House, and how to swim to the best advantage. When Seddon urged upon his Guardian Angel that the Liberal Party should take up "manhood suffrage, triennial Parliaments, and representation on a popular basis," Sir George Grey, thoroughly alarmed at the young democrat, replied, "That is asking too much, and you know, Mr. Seddon, you must always leave the people something to hope for, something to look forward to." Sir George Grey's Ministry, however, was but short lived, for on the 8th of October, 1879, he resigned, and the Hon. John Hall became Premier, Mr. Seddon leaving the Government benches for a seat on the Opposition, and becoming a free lance.

When Mr. Seddon entered Parliament he was laughed at by the Conservatives, who considered him "only a miner." Alfred Saunders, the Nestor of the House, considered him a "foeman worthy of his steel," but described him as "a young greyhound, fleet of foot, but

of questionable usefulness," although one departed Leader remarked, "that man will have to be reckoned with some day." This was after the delivery of his maiden speech, which occupied 20 columns of *Hansard*. Sir Frederick Whitaker referred to Seddon's speech as voluminous and discursive, sarcastically remarking that probably it was expected that the Government would put up the member for Geraldine to reply to him; but added Sir Frederick, "The Government knew better than to fire off a cannon to kill a mosquito." "That mosquito, after 25 years," said Mr. Seddon at his Silver Jubilee, "has become a whale."

From session to session Mr. Seddon steadily developed into a forcible debater taxing *Hansard* to its utmost. Some juvenile Independents of the present session, delight to rake up from musty *Hansards*, old sayings of Seddon's to worry him; but he meets them all with a smile and says, "Ah, I was in Opposition then" and the House laughs. It is recorded of him in his first session, while in opposition, that he was told off to assist in "stonewalling" the Representative Bill of 1881. The stonewall lasted continuously for 74 hours, and Mr. Seddon occupied the floor for many, many hours, relating the personal history one by one of the electors in his stronghold, historic Kumara, referring every now and then to the electoral roll, which he flourished in his hand to emphasize his flowing oratorical powers; and having gone through the roll from A to K, he called out, in that stentorian voice of his, which he could at all times command, "Having finished K we'll now go to H—L." The stonewallers on guard roared with laughter at the joke, and the Government members in charge, reclining at full length on their benches, fast asleep, suddenly woke up startled and alarmed at the terrible denunciation, thinking a Wellington earthquake

had arrived. It was a standing joke in the House for a long time after.

In 1891, Mr. Seddon had seen eight Premiers rise and fall in the space of twelve years. It was a game of ins and outs, scrambling for the loaves and fishes of office; and the constant changes of Government must have retarded New Zealand on her royal road to prosperity. When the Ballance Ministry was formed on the 28th January, Mr. Seddon commenced his career as a Minister of the Crown, by taking the portfolio for Mines; and upon the death of the Premier on the 27th April, 1893, Mr. Seddon on the May day following, was called to the Premiership, which office he has held continuously for over twelve years, with credit to himself, and with honour to New Zealand.

At the gathering of the Premiers with their wives, in London, on the occasion of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, as honoured guests of Victoria the Good, Mr. Seddon was present winning golden opinions for himself and Mrs. Seddon. He upheld the dignity and importance of New Zealand, as a possession of the Empire, advertising it as "God's own Country," even boasting that if ever England needed assistance against her enemies, New Zealanders would be to the front to help her. And singular to say, two years after making, what was thought an empty boast, the necessity occurred in the South African trouble, and he met it bravely and loyally, with men and money.

In a splendid picture of the gathering of the Premiers in London in 1897, the then Home Secretary for the Colonies (Joseph Chamberlain), forms the centre of a group of the eleven Colonial Premiers. And amongst them the Right Honourable R. J. Seddon occupies a prominent position, a man among men, in all his seventy inches, with a well balanced head, on a well formed

figure, a bold and fearless personality, who declined to accept honours freely offered him, preferring (like the Right Hon. G. H. Reid, new Federal Premier) the office of Privy Councillor and Commoner of the Empire.

The visit to the Home Land in 1897 was followed in 1902 by another visit, "By Command of the King," on the occasion of the Coronation, and our Premier was accompanied by Mrs. Seddon and some members of his family, and were the guests of the King. Their time was pleasantly spent in Great Britain and Ireland, in a sort of Royal progress. On their leaving to return to the Land of the Greenstone, they left with the hearty good wishes of one and all, especially from certain New Zealanders resident at Home, who presented the Premier with a very valuable token of their esteem and appreciation of his loyal action in raising contingents of New Zealanders to assist the Mother Country in her struggle in the South African War.

It is the sincere hope of his friends that Richard John Seddon, Premier by the grace of God and the voice of the people, may be spared to hold office for many years; that his surpluses and supporters may increase with leaps and bounds, and that his wish so pathetically expressed at his silver jubilee, may be fully realised, "I want to die in harness, not rust in idleness."

"You have no enemies, you say?
Alas! my friend, the boast is poor,—
He who has mingled with the fray
Of Duty, that the brave endure,
Must have made foes!"

XIII.—A BROTHERHOOD OF THREE.

Looking backwards as an "old timer," amongst the communities forming mining centres on the Coast, one is forcibly struck with some personality, rising head and shoulders above his surrounding, and becoming popular with his fellows. An instance of this in the thriving town at the mouth of the Mawhera, when in its infancy, is worthy of being rescued from oblivion. Three men, a Scotchman, a Londoner, and a Welshman, came to the surface, forming a friendship that was charming to witness; "and in their death they were not divided," for they sleep in "God's Acre" by the sea, waiting for the consummation of all things.

These fast friends were popularly known as "E.B.," his "Reverence," and the "Doc," and they did good by stealth, each reporting to the other cases requiring medical aid or spiritual attention, E.B. being told off as "avant courier" in such cases.

E. B. Fox, whose providential escape from the murderous gang of bushrangers as narrated in the "Romance of Bushranging," was a Scotchman to the backbone, his father being Provost of Musselburgh, where E.B. was born. He came to Victoria as a young man, and then went to Wellington, eventually finding his way down to the "Golden West." He was a good horseman, having in his youthful days belonged to the Midlothian Yeomanry Cavalry. He took a leading part in matters of public interest, and was Chairman of the first Road Board in the district, and for some time sat as member in the Provincial Council of Westland.

Many will remember E.B. as a fine upstanding fellow, of commanding figure and height, with full grown beard, wearing his straw hat with a blue veil round it, in the old Victorian style, his jaunty air and laughing eyes evidencing the Mark Tapley disposition, ever ready, even in times of depression, to sing "Come, let us be jolly," and by express desire, dance a highland fling, which he could do, as to the manner born.

Fortunately, E.B. was unencumbered with a wife and family, and, like a Scotchman, could live sparingly if needs be; but there was nothing of the loafer in his disposition. He was too much of a gentleman for that, and thoroughly independent in character. He spent much of his spare time, alternately, with his friends the "Doc." and "His Reverence."

"I've got a shilling," said E.B. to me one day, coming into my office and smiling all over. "All right," I said, and we adjourned to Gilmer's and partook of bar refreshments. This formula was of frequent occurrence when the Sun was over the foreyard, varied only by the change-about principle in paying.

On one occasion E.B. came into my office and solemnly asked, "Have you got a shilling?" The reply being satisfactory, he continued, "We'll go down to Whall's and have a drink. The fact is, I have taken nothing but 'soft stuff' lately, having sworn off the whisky." We went down to Whall's Hotel on Richmond Quay. (Whall at this time was Town Clerk, and was running a brewery in his backyard, doing a good business). E.B. said he would take bitters, and I took ale to keep him company. Some time after, in conversation with Whall on municipal matters, being auditor, he informed me that he had his doubts as to E.B.'s swearing off and taking to bitters in place of whisky. He had the curiosity of testing the alcoholic

strength of the bitters, and found the 'soft stuff' to be thirty over proof. We both laughed heartily over it and admired E.B.'s cuteness on 'soft stuff.'

A pamphlet printed and published by Kerr, Arnott and Co., entitled "The Nobbler," by Christopher Sly, revised and corrected by E. B. Fox, Esq., R.M., Q.Y.C., price one shilling, was placed on the market by E.B., and had a large sale. "Sly" was a mystery, and the flow of initials after E.B.'s name, another—unless referring to his early connection with the Midlothian Loyal Yeomanry Cavalry. The best of the fun was, that E.B. sold the pamphlet and pocketed the proceeds, so it was said, it being believed that E.B. was the "sly dog" himself.

I have treasured up one of the pamphlets among my literary curiosities. It is worth reading, and those of the present day, sitting on a rail with 'Moderation' on one side and 'Prohibition' on the other, may, after reading it, be induced to take the plunge into the cold waters of Prohibition and vote "No license." E.B. will then, not have lived in vain.

In the sixties, one of the Banks seized a small steamer at the wharf for some financial trouble on the part of its local owner. E.B. was put in possession as bailiff, and proceeded in her (not as captain, it might be mentioned) as far as Nelson, where she changed hands. On leaving the Grey wharf, E.B.'s friends rolled up to wish him a prosperous voyage. His Reverence and the Doc. affectionately saying "good-bye." The Doc. at the last moment, when the steamer was casting off her wharf ropes, shouted out to E.B. to send him a case of the best Nelson fruit procurable. A week after, the Doc. got a telegram from E.B. saying, "Just shipped you one hundred cases of fruit." The Doc., whose respect for the English language at any time was somewhat lax,

broke out into a higher and wider range of profanity, to the admiration of many and the horror of some. The Doc., however, got over the difficulty by going round to his numerous friends and disposing of a case here and there, till the ninety and nine were provided for; but when the shipment arrived there was only one case for the Doc., who resumed his profanity with double force, for he had to go round to his buyers and countermand the sale and delivery of the ninety and nine. E.B. on his return from Nelson after an enjoyable trip, smiled upon the Doc., and forced him to believe it was the mistake of some wretched telegraph official, inserting the word hundred in the telegram. The Doc. and his Reverence were satisfied with the explanation, and the friendly relations of the brotherhood, which for a time had been somewhat strained, were pleasantly resumed.

The Doc. and E.B. regularly every Sunday sat under His Reverence in the old church of the Trinity (blown down in the early eighties by a hurricane), and were liberal in giving to the offertory. In the winter month of July, 1875, usually a season of boisterous weather and heavy rains, E.B. went down on horseback to Hokitika on some Provincial business, going and returning by the beach highway, intending to be back for the Sunday evening service. He had presented to His Reverence a dozen copies of the new work, "Hymns, Ancient and Modern," for the use of the choir (the Mercer collection being then in use), and asked as a favour that the choir should practise "Hark! Hark! my soul," and sing it as the closing hymn at the evening service. At seven o'clock on the Saturday evening previously, on returning to the Grey he safely crossed the Teremakau, and arriving at the mouth of the New River, attempted the crossing, but was washed off his

horse and drowned, adding another name to the long list of persons drowned in the treacherous rivers of the Coast.

At the closing of the service the following Sunday evening, the reverend pastor feelingly announced the untimely death of his friend, and in giving out the new hymn, explained the reasons connected with it. The beautiful and appropriate hymn was very feelingly rendered by the choir, and many a silent tear was shed for poor E. B. Fox.

While this beautiful funeral hymn was being sung, the body of our departed friend was being carried by the ocean waves and currents to the north, and was recovered some weeks after. We carried his remains to the church he loved so well, where his old friend read the first portion of the burial service most pathetically, and then out to the cemetery by the sea, where we lowered him into the cold bosom of the grave, with Masonic honours, and there left him to sleep the sleep of death, to the mournful moaning of restless waves, ebbing and flowing unceasingly on the " wave beat shore " close by.

The Rev. George Thomas Nowell Watkins, known by his more immediate friends as " His Reverence," was a genial and cheerful personality, loved sincerely by those who came within the circle of his acquaintance, and who went about doing good, following in the footsteps of The Master. His Reverence was a direct importation from the English Parish Church at Deptford, to the order of Bishop Suter, of Nelson, on account of the Greymouth Anglican Church, and was on arrival, about 38 years of age, a man of considerable talent, of the highest principles, and thoroughly earnest as a worker. He replaced, in 1869, the London Missionary clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Beaumont, an energetic worker on the Coast in the sixties, who raised the means for building the first

church and parsonage on the block given by Tainui, and had resigned his charge, becoming Rural Dean at Gabriel's Gully.

On the arrival of Mr. Watkins at the Grey, and seeing the stamp of man he was, who, so willingly had cast in his lot with us "miserable sinners" of the Coast, severing his connection with Home ties and its social life, we welcomed him cordially, and figuratively received him with open arms. And for ten years he passed in and out amongst us, all things to all men, rejoicing with those that rejoiced, sorrowing with those that wept, winning golden opinions from all, in season and out of season labouring earnestly in the discharge of his duties as a Christian Minister.

His Reverence lives, even now after thirty years, in the hearts of those who knew him so well, and the good influences of his daily ministrations in the Grey district will long be felt. His companionship with E.B. and the Doc. was useful to him in many ways, for they were both, perhaps unconsciously, emissaries of his for the Christian life. The one would give him information of cases requiring spiritual aid and in the way of baptisms and marriages, while the other would keep him posted up with the names of the sick and needy requiring his special attention. So it came about that this trinity of friends were inseparable, although widely different in character; yet the connection was productive of much good.

The Rev. Mr. Watkins was of a cheery and happy disposition, very magnetic in temperament, and dearly loving a joke. Nothing was more enjoyable to hear him in conjunction with Charles Broad, the genial Warden of Reefton, and a past master in the art of punning, pouring forth sallies of wit and humour, and firing off jokes at one another, that would have frightened even the

proverbial Scotchman, who requires to undergo a surgical operation to see a joke.

One day His Reverence called at my office, and confidentially informed me that he had a lovely bit of mutton for dinner, and invited me to taste it. At one o'clock I turned up at the parsonage and found E.B. in attendance. We three thoroughly enjoyed the juicy leg of mutton, which was just done to a turn. When the ancient housekeeper removed the remains, His Reverence told her to keep it warm, and after her dinner was cut off it, to carry what was left to a poor widow for herself and children, who often were the recipients of his bounty. I ventured to ask Sarah, the housekeeper, how she was keeping. Shrugging up one shoulder, and then the other, her face full of wrinkles, replied that her rheumatics were that bad, and the Gorge wind was that keen, that she felt no better, and was recommended to try quinine, when His Reverence quickly retorted, "We don't want Quin-in just yet." (Quinn was the name of of the then local undertaker). We laughed at the joke to Sarah's surprise, who had not fathomed the depth of its meaning.

In June, 1869, His Reverence had decided upon taking a holiday to the Old Country, but was suddenly struck down by an illness that resulted in death, and on the 18th of June of that year, he "Passed to the Light." General sorrow was felt throughout the Coast at the loss of so dear a friend.

On the following Saturday, a glorious sunshine over all, the community of the Grey and many on the Coast, of all creeds, followed the remains from the old church of Trinity, Bishop Suter officiating, and passed slowly and sadly to the cemetery by the sea, where the casket that contained all that was mortal of our dear friend and pastor, was lowered into his narrow bed, near to his comrade, E. B.

Fox of former years. At the grave the Bishop feelingly concluded the burial service, followed by the District Grand Master, Brother John Bevan, who eloquently delivered the Masonic service for the dead, bringing tears to the eyes of all who heard him.

And so we left our reverend pastor, sorrowing much at the loss of one, with whom in our daily life we had held sweet counsel, and learned to love and honour; one who in his sacred work as a Christian Minister, drew all hearts towards him, and who displayed in his life the wisdom of faith, the strength of hope, and the beauty of charity.

His executors, J. G. Thomas and G. S. Smith have, in the new church of the Holy Trinity, placed a memorial window in the chancel to the memory of our dear friend; and with the money collected for a purse of sovereigns (over £100) to give to Mr. Watkins on starting for England, it was decided by the donors that the amount should be funded for all time, to provide annually a gold medal, to be called the "Watkins' Medal," to be competed for by the school children of the district; and the boy or girl obtaining the most marks for proficiency in school work should be the winner, and so keep up the remembrance of one who was beloved by all in the seventies.

The survivor of the brotherhood, the late Dr. Charles Lloyd Morice, affectionately called the 'Doc.' and latterly 'Old Doc.', from my own personal knowledge, felt the loss of his two comrades very keenly. Twenty-five years after, he followed them to that bourne whence no traveller returns.

It is not given to many to acquire financial success through the years of a long life, and at the same time, to win the affections and goodwill of less successful citizens. The 'Doc.' achieved these distinctions in a high degree, and could conscientiously ask the Recording Angel

"Write me down as one who loves his fellow man." In gauging his character one will find, he was a staunch unwavering friend, well skilled in the knowledge of his profession, joining in any movement for the good of the district; an energetic volunteer under Captain Hamilton, a good churchman, giving liberally when the hat went round. He was three parts of a sailor and one part a landsman, which accounted for his strong language, at times savouring much of the quarter-deck, and acquired among the sailors of the "Great Britain" when surgeon of that well remembered steamship of the fifties. To a stranger this forcible and high-class swearing was a revelation till you got used to it.

The 'Doc.' was pretty rough at times with male patients especially if they pleaded poverty, to escape payment of the Hospital fees, when they really had money on deposit; but with women and children, the dear 'old Doc.' was just the other way about—full of tenderness and pity for them, alleviating their sufferings with a gentle hand, with a kind of cheery smile for the youngsters that carried so much magnetic force and influence in his dealing with them that made him beloved all round.

The Doctor was born in Wales, and was a Welshman to his finger ends. He early became a medical student, walking hospitals and so on, till he joined as surgeon of the "Great Britain," in which he sailed six times round the world. In 1861 he left the sea for the Victoria diggings, practising his profession for nine months, and in 1862 was among the first to arrive at Dunedin with the Australian Invasion, opening a surgery in that little fishing village, till he was appointed House Surgeon at the Clyde Hospital, where he worked very successfully for four years. In 1866 he received the appointment of surgeon to the Grey Hospital, then located on the

present Post Office site, opening a surgery in Albert Street, and for thirty years held the position, until he retired in favour of his son, Dr. Charles Morice, a Greymouth boy, well and worthily known.

One can fully understand the nine months' experience the Doc. would gain on the Bendigo diggings. From a lucid description, once given by a medico hailing from a central Otago diggings, to an admiring circle of friends at a banquet, the following may be accepted as a fair report of it.

"The young doctor, the younger the better, of the type and disposition of Bob Sawyer, immortalised by Dickens, follows a rush, erects a temporary tent, hangs out a banner, 'so and so doctor,' his stock and trade consisting of pills, castor oil, and porous plasters, and awaits customers. Diggers suffering from the ills the flesh is heir to, roll up, and, one at a time, inside the tent, undergo a sharp and quick examination, not unlike a medical overhauling for life insurance. If the internal disturbance is below the belt, pills followed by half a bottle of castor oil in the morning, are prescribed. If above the belt, a porous plaster is at once clapped on the back, and a mustard poultice to be put on in front, when turning in at night, is recommended; and the thankful patient pays a stiff fee, retires, and makes room for another digger, and so the young doctor becomes popular and prosperous."

The 'Doc' dearly loved practical joking, and the 1st of April was quite a Saint's day in his calendar, and he generally made the most of it. The best on record was the following: A 'waif and stray,' May Thomas by name, was in the Hospital near the beach, and the Doc. sent out the local undertaker, contractor for paupers funerals, to measure Thomas for a coffin. May, scenting the fun, lay still as death while being measured off, and

when the coffin arrived in the afternoon, May was up and about, and like the dog in Old Mother Hubbard, 'was dying with laughing' to the astonishment of the undertaker, who only then realised it was the 1st of April.

Suspicious of a retaliation policy, the Doc. was generally on guard. Early on the morning of another 1st of April, the Court bailiff, living at the Warden's residence, called him up to attend a birth case. The Doc. declined to be had, unless the fee was paid on the spot. The bailiff, old Gourlay, retired to report progress, and as the Warden was up country Mrs Warden sent the fee, and before the day was over, a daughter arrived and the doctor was satisfied.

On one occasion (not a saint's day) the Doc. was off guard, and was had properly. The story is worth telling. Some young fellows were holding a séance in one of the upper parlours at Gilmer's, and a stranger, just arrived on the Coast, was present. The Doc. happened to be passing down the passage way, and went in to see the fun. The stranger was boasting that he would be able to read anything the Doctor would like to write down inside the room. The Doc. said it was impossible, and would give a guinea to the hospital if it was done. The stranger retired outside. A long sentence was written down by the Doc. and one of the insiders began to do the spirit rapping on the four walls of the parlour. When the stranger was brought in he wrote down correctly what the doctor had written. The astonishment of the Doc found expression in a hearty "Well I'm d——d." The spirit business was tried over and over again successfully, until the Doctor was called away to a surgical case, and he went away completely mystified. As soon as he was well out of hearing, there was a general burst of laughter. The stranger was a

Government auditor, and a proficient telegraphist, and read the spirit rapping very correctly, as given by an expert from the telegraph office. They went by the names of Olms and Uislett respectively. (N.B.—These names are purely fictitious). It is not on record if that guinea ever passed to the hospital funds.

On the 20th February, 1904, after a long and well spent life, Dr. Charles Lloyd Morice, passed over the Great Divide with general regret. His remains, followed by a long procession of friends, were laid to rest in the cemetery by the sea, near to his old comrades, Archdeacon York officiating at the grave; and those who stood around and heard the solemn words, "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," must have felt that, although lost to sight, the memory of his useful life and genial personality will remain for ever enshrined in the hearts of all who knew him.

"Sentinel! posted in glow of the West,
Give us your tidings e'er we to rest?
"A face shone in glory,
Might in his eye;
A soldier in harness
Went fearlessly by!"

Watcher! who waiteth the eastern glow—
Ward of the dawning, what saw you go?
"Face to the morning
Out of the night,
A wayfarer singing
Passed to the Light!"

Brother! who paceth Southward in ward,
What are your tidings, what of your guard?
"A touch on my wrist,
A whispered good-bye;
As friend greeteth friend,
A Brother went oy!"

D. A. R. TYNESIDE.

XIV.—QUARTZOPOLIS—CITY OF THE MIST.

Nestling in a valley, not unlike a saucer, or a basin if more euphonious, with corrugated green hills rising abruptly round the circle, some 600 feet up to the skyline, is "Quartzopolis," known personally and by wire to many mining speculators and others, as "Reefton," where in days gone by, fortunes were made and lost, and much hard cash was frittered away, in the hurried and unskilful crushing of its golden reefs which now-a-days at deeper levels allied with cyanide, are made reproductive and dividend paying.

Knowing how many have lost deeply in gold mining ventures in this field, by way of consolation I offer the following:—

First, from an anonymous poet.

> "The Wisdom, infinitely wise,
> That gives to human destinies
> Their fore-ordained necessity;
> Has made no law, more fixed below,
> Than the alternate ebb and flow
> Of Fortune and adversity."

Second, from Sir Robert Stout as Chief Justice who says:—"My long experience leads me to affirm that more men have been ruined by sheep-farming than by gold-mining."

Third, and lastly from a gazetter, who says:—"There are thousands of acres of country yet to be prospected. No doubt in the near future the whole district will be thoroughly and systematically opened up. Then Reefton will be a thriving and populous place."

After thirty-five years' experience, the Reefton of to-day has settled down quietly into a well conducted community of 2000 inhabitants, unencumbered by a Mayor and corporation — as yet. The Inangahua County Council, with its seat of government in the architectural chambers within the town, attends to its municipal affairs, the County Chairman doing the honours of receiving distinguished visitors, in the absence of a Mayor; and instead of the frenzied spurts of long ago, the inhabitants go in for the milder excitements of horse racing twice a year, with Labour Sports and carnival for the hospital thrown in, and held on the charming racecourse next the town boundary. The Volunteers and the School Cadets and the City Band make things lively in the pleasant summer season, and the business people are building up creditable establishments and fine residences, that would do honour to any city in New Zealand.

Reefton has rather pretty surroundings and is built in the centre of the quartz mining industry on a fine site, capacious enough for a good sized city, and has the advantage of never being worried by floods. It was laid out by Mr. Surveyor Woolley in 1872, with streets named after the discoverers of the reefs, and the first pioneers, with the exception of Church and Bridge streets, and Buller road, half as wide again as the others. The Buller Road going off at a tangent, made it difficult for Woolley to square the town at right angles, leaving little triangular sections here and there. The business street, where hotels and drapers are prolific, is called Broadway. It isn't a broad way at all, being a chain wide. Doubtless it was named after Charles Broad the genial first Warden, who dearly loved a joke. Probably owing to the dense bush about, no reserves were made of squares for recreation, excepting the so-called Camp

Reserve of twelve acres, where the Survey Office, the Court House and Post Office are located, the Police Camp and Hospital being quartered on sections in Broadway. God's Acre was fixed at the north boundary, but is now virtually closed, the County providing a new cemetery, a Sabbath's day journey out of town. The Strand Reserve of six acres along the river side was quite an afterthought not long gazetted, and will, when trees and shrubs mature, and the proposed pathways and level lawns are made, and the weeping willows along the bank come to perfection, make up for the want of other squares for recreation. The best sections in Reefton have all been secured, but some back sections up the hill side, may still be had for love, or money.

Itinerant photographers, and amateur snapshotters delight to mount the corrugated hills and terraces, and from all the points of the compass, secure the record view of Quartzopolis. The best taken, to my fancy, is one by an Auckland man obtained from the Butts Hill, and includes the pretty racecourse, a freehold, with its pretentious grandstand costing £1000, all out of debt. The town with its streets looks like a city in miniature. The Inangahua River may be seen issuing from the Gorge, after a journey of some forty miles from its source in the snow-clad Alpine Ranges inland, somewhere in the vicinity of the County Council's Hot Spring's Emporium (a coming success in the near future); and after feeding numerous water races for driving quartz batteries, and dynamos for electric lighting the town, meanders from the Gorge, passing at the foot of the southern hills, skirts round the town and joins the left hand branch, and with freshened energy, rushes on to join with the mighty Buller, and conjointly crosses the Westport bar, shaking hands and fraternising with the ocean waves of the Tasman Sea.

On a clear sunny day, the mountain known as the Paparoa Range, may be seen from Reefton some ten miles distant, its undulating forms extending for some distance, and appearing against the western skyline which in winter months encrusts itself in her garb of beautiful snow; and from the State Schools (a collection of small churches on the Buller Road) looking south, one catches a glimpse in the far distance of a pretty Peak, covered with snow in winter, rising upwards between the steep bluffs forming the Gorge through which the Inangahua flows; and often, when the weather is fine, it reflects the crimson rays of the setting sun, as it disappears in the west behind the Paparoa Range—a sure sign of a fine day on the morrow.

The City of the Quartz in winter months is often visited by snow storms, clothing it in a white mantle of purity to some three or four inches in depth, to the delight of the snowballers. Another visitant peculiar to the place is the so-called "Fog," a near relation to the "Barber" in Greymouth, both extremely cold, keen and sharp as a razor, though cutting in different ways. A Reefton lady, vouches for the healthiness of the Reefton sample, and says that the cold white misty vapours, born of the dews and frosts of night are taken up heavenward to meet the rising sun, which for a time obscures itself from the view of those beneath, its warm rays, making Reefton a veritable "Vale of Tears." It is a mistake in terms to call such a cold bath of vapour, a "fog," after an experience of a London fog that is poisonous to breathe, turns day into night, requiring link boys to light lost people about.

It is singular that when the mist is on hand there is always bright sunshine outside the circle of the saucer in which Reefton nestles, and to know it, is galling to residents, shivering under a heavy pressure of cold, wet

blankets, for such it really is to those who are compelled to be out in it. Sometimes you can catch a glimpse of the sun, like a full moon playing hide-and-go-seek up in the mist cloud. Then, upon the top of the hills that skirt the town, warm sunshine prevails.

The well known consoling adage, "Every cloud has its silver lining," is true in Reefton, and can be easily verified. The tourist on Alpine climbing bent, ascending the eastern terrace above the reservoir, rising to an altitude of 500 feet, may see this "silver lining." Emerging from the cold cloudy mist, he suddenly finds the sunshine about him, warm and satisfying; and rising to a flat above, he sees stretching out below him, curling in restless waves, and sparkling like silver under the sunshine, a white sea or cloud of floating mist, which takes the form a lake bounded by surrounding hills and the snow hills of the Paparoa, completely enveloping the City of the Plains beneath it. At noon, the sun reaching its zenith, with giant strength, assisted by gentle zephyrs, bursts asunder the waves of vapoury mist, by some process of evaporation, and the white mass by degrees mysteriously disperse, melting into thin air. And the entombed city emerges into view, warmed by the midday sun, its empty streets alive again with people, while youngsters run out to play, and sport in the waves of the sunbath. When the heaven-born mist comes to stay, instead of making a morning visit, it remains some days till the weather or the moon changes.

By taking a bee-line from Reefton to Brighton, by way of Mount Faraday, you can travel to the seaside in 24 miles; but people now-a-days prefer to go there by rail to Greymouth, 48 miles, or by coach to Westport, also 48 miles. But this mode of travelling is not always available, for in the early days, Brunner and James Mackay had to do the round trip by tramping it as best

they could. And when Reefton was in its infancy, coaches bumped it all the way from the Grey up beds of rivers and streams, for roads, there were none; and to feed the hungry inhabitants of Inangahua, whaleboats poled or pulled their way from Westport up the Buller and Inangahua as far as the Landing, transhipping to packhorses, who found their way somehow into Reefton. The return journey of the whaleboats to Westport with the current must have been a sort of pleasure trip, big floods at all times being especially excepted.

In the spacious and comfortable reading room of the Reefton Library, lately enriched by the munificent gift of £250 from Mr. David Ziman for books (who also liberally donated £250 to the Ladies' Benevolent Society, and £500 to the Hospital), there may be seen hung up on one of the walls, a curiosity, in the shape of an immense survey map, 13 ft. by 19 ft. (which was on show at the big Exhibition in Melbourne), giving the lines of reefs and claims in the Inangahua mining district, with Reefton in the centre surrounded by its satellites, Capleston, Black's Point and Crushington. The gold bearing quartz belt is some two miles wide, runs north and south for miles, and is supported on each side by coal measures.

The first quartz claim was taken up early in 1870 by one Westfield at Murray Creek. His application was opposed by one Kelly, to whom a large portion of this ground was awarded. The reef was named after Kelly, and a large number of claims were taken up along the line. In November, 1870, Sheils' line at Murray Creek was opened up, the prospecting claim being the old Ajax, which afterwards amalgamated with the Golden Fleece. This mine is still a splendid gold producer, under the management of Mr. E. W. Spencer, engineer for the English Company, promoted in 1896 by Mr. David

Ziman, known as the Consolidated Gold Fields of New Zealand. In the early seventies John Trennery, the local manager of Ajax, had a difficult job to get the heavy machinery and stamper boxes up from Greymouth, there being no roads to speak of in those days, and especially up the steep Ajax hill at Black's Point. Adam Smith's line started at Crushington with the Wealth of Nations as its prospecting area; this mine and the old Energetic mine alongside to the north, were acquired in 1896 by the Consolidated Company, and are rich in stone at low levels. The next door neighbour to the Wealth is the grand old mine of the Keep-it-Dark Company, registered in March, 1873. For over thirty years it has remained true and faithful to its original shareholders, some twenty, who applied for registration notwithstanding the allurements of the English capitalist and the ups and downs of the share market. This good old mine has already paid to its shareholders £141,416, in 160 dividends, or £7 1s. 9d. per share on a cash paid-up capital of £6,208, or 6s. 2½d. per share, and, from indications, is likely to pay regular dividends for years and years to come.

In January, 1872, a rich quartz reef came to the front up the Gorge of the Boatman's Creek, north of Reefton. Our old friend, P. Q. Caples, a well known prospector on the Golden West, who lately passed over the Great Divide, mourned sincerely by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance, was the first to prospect this part of the district, taking up his prospecting area; and such is the irony of fate, that when he marked off his choice of a working claim out of it, some six acres, calling it Eldorado, it turned out as good as a blank, and only yielded him some few ounces of gold to the value of £2,500, while his neighbours north and south of him, the well known Fiery Cross and Just-in-Time, procured for some years successful

yields of gold, together with the Welcome further along the the same line, paying handsome dividends to their lucky shareholders. At Larry's Creek, further north of Boatman's, some surface reefs were discovered, but did not live down, although the Caledonian mine in this place gave the highest yield of gold per ton in the Reefton field, obtaining from a crushing of 120 tons of quartz an average of 6 ozs. 8 dwts. 12 grs. to the ton.

To the south of Reefton in the Rainy Creek district, the well known prospector, Adams, opened up in 1872, reefs of quartz, perfect quarries of stone, but of poor grade. In the Devil's Creek district in 1882, the Globe reef was discovered and opened up by the Globe Company. In 1896 this mine, with the adjoining Progress mine, became the property of the Consolidated Company and by the introduction of English capital, through the influence of Mr. David Ziman, the Progress Mine Company has very successfully developed the reefs at deep levels, employing an up-to-date battery of 60 stampers, with large chlorination and cyanide works on the banks of the Inangahua, and paying handsome dividends to its English shareholders. On the usual monthly pay-day of the Consolidated, as much as £5000 in cash is paid away at their Reefton office to miners, for wages alone.

Visiting the Globe mine in the eighties, to have a look at the works in operation, accompanied by the mine manager, I went down the adjoining mine of the Progress Company, by means of a surface winze starting from alongside the County track. We went down 150 feet almost perpendicular, and along a drive to the workings of No. 1 level. The quartz had been taken out from between the hangings and foot walls, leaving a space of some 12 feet, and one could fancy oneself down in the hold of a ship, having a slight list to starboard.

Descending and ascending that winze, by means of a stepladder of 150 feet, was a caution for a novice, being my first experience—and last. I went down mines afterwards in a cage, or an incline truck worked by steam power.

Towards the close of 1873, and for a year or so after, mining matters in Reefton were at a low ebb. Some of the crushings at the batteries up Murray Creek did not come up to expectations, and shareholders became despondent. Scrip was unsaleable, calls were plentiful, and many shares forfeited. It is on record that a miserable shareholder in a gold mine (or rather a mine so-called) received a demand for payment of a call. In reply, he wrote, "Sorry I cannot pay the call, I am not an auriferous lode, you can crush me if you like, but the result will not be promising, and the assay will probably yield—gold nil, silver 3s., copper 4½d., total 3s. 4½d., from which deduct cost of crushing, say, £5 5s."

Good news at last came in from Boatman's, and local sharebrokers went about with eager faces, sending a shower of telegrams to their customers, reporting "First crushing, Just-in-Times, 1631 ozs. from 308 tons, averaging over 5 ozs. to the ton." Confidence in the field was restored. Local speculators, with Greymouth, Hokitika, and Dunedin wired into the game of Bears and Bulls, by "clawing" down shares to nothing, and then "tossing" them up sky high, calling it "speculation." An exchange, on the authority of Professor Jevons (another sort of a Joseph), reported that credit goes in cycles of ten years. There are three years of depressed trade, and three years of healthy trade, then two years of excited trade, one year of bubble, and one year of burst. In whatever way this kind of merry-go-round works, it is certain that, in 1878, the Reefton share market began its three years of healthy business, no

doubt the result of the first crushing of the Welcome Company of 700 tons, with an average of 3½ ozs. to the ton, and the Keep-it-Dark having got the reef in the low level from shaft. But it was not till the close of 1881 that the two years of excited business commenced, culminating in a big spurt or boom in mining shares, the like of which has never since been seen in Reefton.

Broadway was the arena or stock exchange, where buyers and sellers with their brokers, at all hours of the day and best part of the night, mostly congregated; and all sorts and conditions of mining interests, from tip-top stock, such as Welcome's at £6, and Dark's touching £5, down to the numerous Wildcats at 1s., eagerly changed hands under great excitement. Hundreds, aye, thousands, of telegrams passed daily to and from Dunedin, buying and selling largely, till 1883, when the year of bubble and the year of burst arrived, when the Bankruptcy Court became a refuge for the destitute, and there was a general clean up, and a fresh start made.

It will be interesting to note that the "Mines Record" reports the gold output from the Reefton quartz mines as follows, to December 31st, 1904: — Stone crushed, 1,196,180 tons for 778,402 ozs. of gold valued at £3,053,632, and dividends paid £911,207. By way of comparison, the following shows the twelve months' value of gold obtained on

March 31st, 1884	£64,553
March 31st, 1894	£73,752
December 31st, 1904 ...	£215,966

Besides the output of gold from crushing, a large quantity of alluvial gold was also obtained in the district.

Coal of excellent quality is obtained on the east side of the quartz belt, which, in the opinion of experts, is quite equal to the famous "cannel" coal of the Northumberland mines in England, so called by the

Geordies, as it lights easily at the flame of a candle. The output of Reefton coal mines to December 31st, 1903, is recorded at 109,189 tons.

There are indications in the district of the presence of stream tin, antimony, as well as other minerals.

Reefton, rich in minerals, was once rich enough in population to be able to send its own member to Parliament; but some years back the district was carved up, part to strengthen the Grey, the balance to Westport, virtually disfranchising Reefton electors. A story is told of one of the members for Reefton in the seventies, securing a great boon for the district in the shape of a costly bridge to replace the suspension one crossing the river from Ross Town. The voice of the people, by its County members, clamoured so effectively that a cheque for £100 was sent to the Hon. Member. But I will let him tell the yarn in his own way, as he gave it in the Lobby not long since. "In the early days I was poor; as I am now — nearly. I was a candidate for a constituency, and the expenses taxed my little all pretty heavily. So the dear people gathered together and raised a £100 to pay expenses. When I received the cheque, I was, as you may well believe, highly indignant, and told them so. However, there was the cheque. What was I to do? I quickly decided. To the Secretary I wrote, 'I have received your cheque for £100. As I am adverse to the principle of accepting it, I herewith send you my own cheque for a like amount. I have cashed your cheque, mine you cannot cash— Yours faithfully.'" The cheque still bears the mysterious initials N.S.F. on its turned up corner, and remains in hand as an asset, doubtful.

Many cheerful souls have lived in Reefton since it was carved out of the dense forest in 1871, who still delight to talk of it as their mountain home, and when absent

for a time are glad to get back, singing, "There's no place like home." Some in the course of Nature have joined the great majority; among them stand prominently forth as worthy pioneers, the honoured names of Patrick Brennan, John Trennery, (each one time County Chairman), and Henry Lucas, the genial clerk of the Court; and it is but lately that Reefton has had to mourn the passing away of a dear friend, in the person of Father Rolland, regretted by all classes and creeds scattered throughout the large district in which he ministered so faithfully. His was a cheerful personality, and he had a good word and a kind smile for one and all. I well remember on New Year's Day of 1903, meeting him near the County Chambers, and receiving his warm shake of the hand, and his kindly greeting for a happy year—a year that was to see him, in July, lay down the duties of his priestly office to receive the crown of rejoicing laid up for him in Heaven. Father Rolland will long be remembered as one of the heroes of New Zealand in the Maori war in August, 1868, as acting chaplain to the regiment of volunteers under Major Von Tempsky, who in his despatches says: "When the storm of bullets burst upon us, Father Rolland ran forward with the rest of us against the enemy's position. As soon as any man dropped he was by his side. He did not ask, 'Are you Catholic or Protestant?' but kindly kneeling prayed for his last words. Thrice noble conduct in a century of utilitarian tendencies."

As I write the closing lines of these memories of Reefton, word is brought me that on the 12th July, 1905, another pioneer has passed away—John Dawson—a well remembered name all over New Zealand, whose kindly disposition helped many a wayfarer on the hard road of existence, and who nobly performed his part as a man and his duty as a citizen during the thirty-three years he

lived in Broadway. On the 14th he was laid to rest in the peaceful God's Acre within the town, the Rev. T. F. Taylor, of Murchison, sympathetically reading the beautiful burial service at the Parish Church and at the grave, followed by the Masonic ritual eloquently delivered by the R.W. Bro. J. H. Harkness, Grand Superintendent N.Z.C., Past Master of the Robert Burns' Lodge, of which the deceased brother was an original member.

XV.—A MIMIC PARLIAMENT.

It may be news to many, and perhaps of interest to the rising generation and grown-ups, in the Greymouth of to-day, to hear what their ancestors did for them in founding the institution, known as the "Greymouth Literary Association," which, after a pilgrimage of nearly forty years—wandering to and fro from place to place and even passing through fire and much flood—has at last arrived safely with the ark, in view of the promised land—the Municipal Temple — championed by their energetic leader and secretary (another Joshua), the well known strong man of the committee, whose good work on similar lines in Quartzopolis, was the admiration of his fellows during his residence there. Under such a powerful management, and endowed with such a princely gift of £2,500 from Carnegie, the future of the old institution is practically assured for all time.

In the year of grace 1868, Provincialism, an off-shoot of Canterbury, made itself felt in Westland by starting its Mimic Parliament at Hokitika, the chosen site for the seat of Government. Greymouth was not pleased with the arrangement, for between the two capitals there existed a rivalry for supremacy, fostered by the Press of that day, the condition of the rivers and bars being the bone of contention, often leading to editorial conflicts and some bad language; but when Hokitika started its Parliamentary Debating Council, we of the Grey—crestfallen and humiliated—began to ask, "What shall we do to be saved?"

Half a dozen choice spirits met and discussed the situation, and one of them suggested a way out of the

difficulty, by starting a Parliamentary Debating Club on the lines of a successful society, which he with others, had promoted in the fifties at Sydney, and of which he was secretary for some time, the Rev. Dr. Lang being its President. The suggestion was agreed to, and it was decided to get sufficient members together to start the undertaking.

In connection with the Sydney society, I might say in passing, that I read with some interest in the first number of *Life* (the Melbourne magazine) issued January, 1904, an article written by the Right Hon. G. H. Reid, lately Federal Prime Minister, giving his experience of debating. He says: "I really addressed myself to the practice of speaking, when about fifteen years of age, and in order to get practice, I joined what was then known as the Sydney Literary Association. I was the youngest member, and most of the other members were very much my seniors—some, middle aged men. I was of course a mere germ, and they were a fine able lot of fellows, so I got most ruthlessly knocked about for the first six months. However, I stuck to it, and I regard those six months as the crisis of my career." The article is well worth reading, and will give encouragement to the young debaters of Greymouth. As a boy, Mr. G. H. Reid says he was determined to become in time the first man in Australia, and it has come to pass.

The Greymouth promoters gathered in sufficient joining members, and on the 15th of August, 1868, held their first meeting, the goldfields Warden, Mr. W. H. Revell, in the chair, who pathetically drew attention to our isolation on the Coast, in matters of intellectual and social improvements; and it was unanimously resolved to start a debating club on parliamentary lines, to be called the "Greymouth Literary Association." And thus it was, the Society now nearly forty years old, was successfully launched on its voyage of usefulness.

A small preliminary committee was told off to fix things up. The sitting member, Mr. W. H. Harrison, at Wellington, was implored at all hazards to send us a copy of the "Standing Orders of the House;" and with this in hand the committee formulated a constitution to suit our case. There was to be a "Speaker" elected quarterly, a Chairman of Committees, a Clerk of the House, and a Responsible Committee or Government, to consist of three members, one of whom was the leader, or Premier, who selected as colleagues the other two; and they were responsible for the conduct of business, for keeping the Order Paper supplied with subjects for debate (sectarian subjects being strictly excluded), and such other business as readings or recitations which the committee might decide upon for the intellectual improvement of its members. The leader and his colleagues were removable on a direct vote of censure or want of confidence being passed. The sittings of the quarterly sessions were fixed for each Saturday evening to suit up-country Wardens and lawyers in attendance on them, who generally came to Greymouth that evening for relaxation from their arduous duties. Members on admission were to go through the ballot, and the annual fee was fixed at £2 2s., a President, treasurer, and secretary, being elected annually to look after the receipts and expenditure of the society.

The Parliament assembled for its first session in the upstair room of the Albion Hotel, under Tonks and Hughes, and was furnished with Government, Opposition, and cross benches. Visitors (and they were numerous at times when there was a "special debate," and of both sexes), were accommodated outside the bar of the House. Each member, after the Speaker took the chair, complied with the usual forms of the House on entering, departing, or crossing the floor. The Clerk

of the House opened proceedings by producing the roll of members which each signed and took his seat (swearing was prohibited). He then called on the members to elect their Speaker, and the Warden, Mr. Revell, was on the voices declared elected, and took his seat, elevated above the rest. The leader, Mr. Edward Masters, then Mayor of Greymouth, and his colleagues were in their places, and Mr. Speaker opened the session with an inaugural address or Governor's speech. The officers of the House and committees were then elected, and other preliminary business occupied the first sitting of the session.

The Association for some months met at the Albion Hotel. There was some good debating and many members joining, it was found necessary to remove to larger quarters. The House then assembled in Gilmer's Hotel for its debates, and arrangements were made for a convenient apartment to be used by the members as their reading-room; and the leader of the day had to bring in a Money Bill to provide ways and means to purchase papers and magazines so as to supply the room. This was soon followed with a book club in connection with the reading-room, and books were procured from Mudie, of London, which formed the nucleus of the library.

The society increasing in numbers, arrangements were made for a large reading room in the Tramway Chambers at the back of the Union Hotel, and an apartment in that hotel was used on Saturday evenings for the sitting of the House.

The first anniversary in 1869, was celebrated by the members having a banquet at Gilmer's, and the after-dinner speeches given were of no mean order. On the second anniversary, a conversazione was held in the hall and chambers of the Union Hotel, and a numerous assembly of members, with their wives and

lady friends, attended the entertainment. There were special readings and recitations given by the members, and musical selections and songs by lady friends, a most enjoyable evening being the result.

In March, 1871, two years and a half from its inauguration, at the solicitation of the townspeople, the Association merged from a semi-private club into a public society, the balloting for members ceased and both sexes were admitted to the privileges of the reading room and library; but the old time 'Mimic Parliament' was knocked on the head. It had performed its functions and passed away with many pleasant memories of the good fellows and capital debaters one met among its hon. members.

The re-formed Association, some time after, passed from the Tramway Chambers to the two-storey building in Mackay Street belonging to mine host of the Melbourne Hotel (on the site of the present Midland Chambers). There, on an upper floor, the reading room and library found a habitation, to be removed soon after to the spacious and handsome quarters, specially provided for the Society by the Masonic Hall Company, in its building in Mackay Street, where for some years it was located, until the disastrous fire in the eighties destroyed the Masonic property and with it the valuable library of works and furniture belonging to the Association which I understand were uninsured. The Society, nothing daunted, still kept the flag flying, and found a haven of rest in the corrugated iron shanty in Tainui Street, built over the once Tidal Creek, where for twenty years or so it has carried on the intellectual work as best it could, opening its reading room to the public free, and supplying the subscribing members with books from its small library. The present secretary and committee are looking anxiously forward to the completion of the

Temple, where they will be able to find a final and suitable resting place for the Ark of the "Greymouth Literary Association," and a special reading room for the ladies.

An old Minute Book, No. 2, written up by the various clerks of the House, of the debates and proceedings of our one time "Mimic Parliament", from October, 1869, to March, 1871, lies before me as I write these words. (Some other fellow has the Book No. 1.) From the pages of No. 2, I cull my pleasant memories of the intellectual warfare they record, and the teller's lists of divisions on the questions debated, inform me how hon. members voted. I look with some amount of awe on names of well known men who have since made their mark at the Bar, on the Bench, and in the Senate. One, in full-buttoned wig and other things, sits in the seat of the mighty in Parliament as its presiding genius. One, in judicial robes occupies the Bench, as a Judge of the Supreme Court, and we only knew him in those days as a bank clerk. One who now sits in Parliament as its record "Silent member," proved himself the same with us, but is well remembered as a lover and collector of ferns; and so I could go on enumerating others from the teller's list. But standing between the living and the dead at the present time, I see but few remaining who are still engaged in the battle of life, but many, very many, who have fallen in the warfare and joined the great majority.

I turn over the leaves of the old Minute Book, and glean from them, a few subjects that were under discussion during the period it records. A one time leader of the House, Lawyer Perkins (afterwards a member of the Upper House in Tasmania), moved "That trial by jury is a greater bulwark of English liberty than the liberty of the press." A splendid discussion ensued,

but on a division a good majority declared in favour of the press. (A one time timber merchant and Mayor of Greymouth was among the ayes.)

Another good debate took place, led by the above lawyer, which will be of interest at the present time, especially to the members of the Grey School Committee, at loggerheads on the subject, on the motion "That the intellectual capacities of the sexes being equal, women are entitled to, and should be allowed equal rights with men." I am sorry to say that the House in its wisdom (?), thirty years ago, on a division, declared the 'noes' had it by a majority of four. I am pleased to note my name is recorded by the tellers on the 'Ayes' list, in company with the goldfields Wardens Revell and Whitefoord, and other sensible members. It might be well to note here that the New Zealand Parliament believed in the 'equal rights' of the sexes, and that on the 28th November, 1893, at a general election, women for the first time exercised the franchise with the men.

One more extract from the old Minute Book and I will pass on. The following motion was brought forward in October, 1870, a time of trouble in Europe, by a member now residing in historic Kumara, an earnest debater and often elected Speaker of the House. Having been a member of the Provincial Council of Canterbury, his experience was of much value to us. The motion was "That in view of the probability of England being involved in a continental war, it is desirable that measures be taken in this town (Greymouth) for resisting an invasion from the Queen's enemies." The discussion was somewhat warm, and an amendment was moved by a bank manager, (now an Inspector up Auckland way) as follows: That all the words after 'desirable' be struck out and the following words inserted: 'That the

inhabitants of the town make their escape as speedily as possible.' To the honour of the House, it indignantly refused the amendment, and loyally carried the original motion, on the voices, with much cheering. In connection with the business of the House, a sitting once a month was devoted to readings and recitations, and lady friends were specially invited to the function. They seemed to take quite as much interest in the business as the members themselves. The proceedings were always in committee of the whole House. The members, emboldened by their success in reading and recitations in committee, and in order to gather funds for supplying the library with new works, gave many excellent entertainments in Gilmer's Hotel, and some Shakespearian scenes and dramatic plays in the Volunteer Hall assisted by lady friends, which were well patronised by crowded houses. The programmes were carried out very efficiently under the splendid management of my old friend and colleague, Mr. Elmer, a prince of good fellows, a born actor, and a capital stage manager. I must also mention here the name of Mr. Harry Kenrick who was the life and soul of the Society from its start, an eloquent debater. He was afterwards goldfields Warden at the Thames till his death, and a son of his, a Greymouth boy, now worthily fills a similar appointment on the Golden West, a large portion of it being placed under his charge, incurring all the dangers of travelling by 'flood and field,' even including dynamite explosions.

Another memento of the Society is before me as I write, in the shape of a handsomely bound book, labelled in letters of gold as the *Greymouth Punch*—an illustrated journal in manuscript which was issued monthly, commencing June, 1869. Among the members of the club, the committee discovered artists in black and white, who

were given topics and set to work with good results. An army of contributors also supplied the editorial staff with "copy" that was overpowering; so much so, that the supervising lawyer (Mr. Perkins) was often at his wits' end, fearing any infringement of the law of libel. Four monthly numbers were issued, each with cartoons and other illustrations, and caused some pleasurable excitement among the members, as each number appeared in the Reading Room.

The issue of the September number was eagerly looked for. The central cartoon represented Hoos and Lahman as Pataloon and Columbine in some Government transformation scene at Hokitika. Some days after its appearance, it mysteriously disappeared, and, although a reward of £10 was advertised for its recovery, it never turned up. The consequence was *Punch* was discontinued, and a large number of local artists and ink-slingers were thrown out of employment. It was generally supposed that the missing number was sacrificed by fire, as from its ashes, rose phœnix-like, the well known paper the *Tomahawk*, printed and circulated in Hokitika.

The local Greymouth paper, the *Argus*, published at the time a poem on the lost *Punch*, and it shows the latent talent for poetry that was lying dormant in the editoral department of that paper in 1869, and is worthy of resurrection in this year of grace 1905.*

GREYMOUTH PUNCH.

It was recently mentioned in these columns that the September number of *Greymouth Punch* had been abstracted from the table of the Literary Society Reading Room. We are sorry to say that after the lapse of

* It is worthy of note that on the 14th November, 1905, the *Grey River Argus* celebrated their fortieth anniversary—having first started under a canvas tent in Gresson Street in 1865.

nearly a month, the number has not been returned, and, as it was entirely pen and ink work, it cannot be replaced. One who has taken the loss seriously to heart has sent us the following, which we publish, in the hope that it may cause the delinquent to see the enormity of his crime, and send back *Punch* :—

Of all the mean actions that lately I've heard on,
The meanest, most spiteful, and yet most absurd one,
Was the theft by some scoundrel, whose bones I could crunch,
Of the last, and, so far, the best number of *Punch*.

May his conscience so prick him that he may restore it,
By stealth to the table whence sometime he bore it;
Or else on his shoulders be there stuck a hunch,
To point out the blackguard that walked off with *Punch*.

Or if to the North his steps he should bend,
May he be taken in and robbed by his friend ;
And I hope that Te Kooti may eat up for lunch
The blackguardly scoundrel that walked off with *Punch*.

May his foes work their will, and his friends prove unkind,
Till they drive the poor beggar right out of his mind;
May his teeth tumble out till his grub he can't munch,
The rascally-scoundrel that walked off with *Punch*.

Or may he repent of the deed he has done,
For he's safe to be found out as sure as a gun;
And then of my fives I would fain thrust the bunch,
In the face of the blackguard that walked off with *Punch!*

XVI.—"CHESTNUTS" ROUND THE STOVE.

The first thing that strikes the eye of the tourist on arrival off the Port of Greymouth, preparatory to crossing the bar is the break in the limestone range of the Twelve Apostles, known as the Grey Gorge, through which the Mawhera finds its way to the sea; and a pretty peep is obtainable of the back country and its far away hills.

Through this gorge, in summer, land and sea breezes daily recur alternately with great regularity; but in winter they change to a cold land breeze, or gorge wind, facetiously called the "Barber."

Scientists account for the change by explaining that in winter the warmer temperature of the ocean attracts the cold air of the Grey Valley towards the narrow opening, or funnel-shaped mouth of the gorge, and draws it seaward with such force as to create the cutting and piercing gorge wind, not inaply called the Barber, it being as sharp as a razor, making the face of the man in the street feel its keenness. Those who are compelled to be out on business within the range of the gorge wind seek shelter with friendly pipes, round corners of streets, or get under the lee of the shed erections scattered about the quays; or, better still, indulge in something hot internally and the warmth of indoor fires externally, to be obtained at the various hotels along the River Parade.

Erected on Mawhera Quay in the winter of 1865 was the substantial two-storey building known as the Union Hotel. The Barber was then on duty, and the new comers had to get acclimatised to it. The proprietor had with great forethought placed in the centre of the bar

parlour of his hotel a capacious Canadian stove, with pipes leading round and through the wall to the outside. And about the stove—well charged and kept going with coal from the seam discovered by Brunner and worked by Batty—there naturally gathered a crowd of lodgers and outsiders, comfortably seated on forms placed round against the wall. Under the influence of the warmth engendered by the stove, or as the spirit (supplied from the bar) moved them, things were done and tales were told by those of the inner circle, which are briefly noted here on behalf of the Recording Angel.

* * * * *

Sitting at the back of the stove was a Canterbury man, a contractor for wharf extension at the upper end of the town of Greymouth, who lodged at the hotel during the progress of his contract, dubbed the Nine Pin Contract, the piles being nine feet long. To the astonishment of the circle, he removed from his neck a paper collar, very much the worse for wear, and solemnly rising, walked to the front of the stove, opened the furnace door, a red glow of light brightening up his face and figure, and ceremoniously committed the derelict to the flames within, saying in a sepulchral tone of voice, as the sacrifice crackled: "Four weeks ago I put that collar on, and it's seen some service."

Closing the furnace door with a bang, he retired to his seat, amidst the laughter and applause of all in the circle.

N.B.—This same contractor, soon after the collar incident, finished his contract, and was waiting the pleasure of the Canterbury Engineer to pass it and take it over; but instead an old man flood came along, and the nine pin contract was taken over—over the bar—and not a vestige remained even to mark the spot. The

contractor, later on, got his money in full, and went home to Hokitika rejoicing.

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A question was asked by a corner man (we had two corner men in our circle): "Who was the first European born on the Coast?" Some said one thing, and some said another, a Greymouthian claiming Grey A——n as the first man; but this was overruled by the chair, Tom H——n (a sort of Mr. Johnson) who stated definitely that Hokitika started the game. When the discussion was filtered down and panned off, it resulted as follows:—

In May, 1865, before Greymouth was thought of, a novel addition was made to the population of Hokitika: a Mrs. McCarthy, and a Mrs. Smith (grand old family names) gave birth to children during the month, and claim was set up by the respective mothers that her baby boy was the first born European on the "Golden West under Aorangi." The local paper, the *West Coast Times*, favoured the claim of the McCarthy, suggesting that Hokitika McCarthy would not sound at all bad, reminding the authorities that the first child born on the Dunstan was christened "Clutha."

As a matter of course, Hokitika became greatly excited until it was settled, and it developed into a case almost on all fours with the celebrated case recorded long ago, requiring King Solomon to adjust; but the Gordian knot in this instance was cut by Dr. Ryley, giving evidence on behalf of whom it might concern, and stating that the honour of the first birth must be awarded to Mrs. Smith's boy, born on Friday, the 21st day of May, 1865; whilst Mrs. McCarthy's boy did not put in an appearance till Monday, the 24th. Mrs. Smith was awarded the cake and other things, accompanied by the good wishes of the

Hokitika community that her son might have many happy returns of the day.

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The proprietor of the Canadian stove, Joseph Kilgour, affectionately called by his friends, "Kil," one time Mayor of Greymouth, was a man of indomitable energy. His name will long be remembered on the Coast for his enterprise in tramway construction and in Reefton mining ventures, and especially for his generous character and large heartedness of disposition. His death, not long since, from that fell disease, cancer, was deeply regretted by all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Amongst the enterprises he started, "Kil" had taken up the idea that payable gold could be got out of the sand on the ocean beach. He had bagged and brought into town some two or three tons of it from Lagoon Beach, near the cemetery, and the lot was waiting shipment by sailing vessel to Melbourne for treatment on his account.

One evening Kil joined the circle, with a sample of the sand in a wash-hand basin (in the absence of a prospector's dish) which he had reduced by washing to a fine sediment, placing the basin under the stove to dry, and left it, being called away by someone on a matter of business. The chairman (Mr. Johnson), well known at Kiandra, on the Sydney side, as "Fighting Tom," took the basin and scraped into it from his watch key a few brass filings, replacing the basin under the stove. It was the work of a moment, and the circle, who had been watching the prospect with great interest awaited developments. Kil returned, dried the prospect, and went out to blow it. He came in shortly after, with a rush, saying excitedly.

"By Jove, boys, I've got the colour!"

The result of the consignment was never published, and it was said that the black and grey sand went to improve the garden walks round the consignee's private residence outside of Melbourne.

* * * * *

There were a few solemn faces round the stove after the races, run on St. Patrick's Day in 1867 (the first event in Greymouth, I think). The owners of the faces were inwardly, by some mental process, counting up their losses and gains, striking a balance mostly on the wrong side. The newly fledged Jockey Club had secured for all time the flat at the Omotomoto Creek, up the river, laid out a course, and erected a contrivance that did duty for a grand stand. The same old flat has now been in use for nearly forty years as a racecourse, very much beautified by the Club, and easy to get to by rail or Shank's pony. It was the other way about in 1867, for there was no road, not even a track available for pedestrians; and to get to the course one had to go by boat up the river.

Fortunately the splendid fleet of 20 ton coal barges belonging to the old Ballarat Coal Company was available; and under the command of Captain Rugg and his merry men, the flotilla loaded up with passengers at the makeshift for a wharf at Greymouth. Each barge was poled and towed up the river by horse power, and discharged its passengers near the Creek, who made their way to the course by a track through the scrub.

For this occasion the Club had imported from Christchurch at great expense, one "Dicker" Hamilton to boss the races and engineer the whole show. Dicker appeared in grand form in the orthodox attire of an English gentleman hunter, to the admiration of the crowd of diggers off work for the holiday, and to the astonishment of Mr. and Mrs. Tainui and their olive

branches, who pronounced Dicker's turn out as "Kapai."

It need not be said that Greymouth residents interested in racing turned out to a man, not counting the women; and visitors and diggers from all parts attended to do honour to St. Patrick of pious memory, many sporting the little bit of green.

It was grand weather that year, and races were well run and must have been most profitable. The return home after the races in the extemporised 'gondolas' was most enjoyable; for we all came down the swift flowing river with the current, safely shooting the rapids near town, in charge of Captain Rugg and his crew, "experienced steersmen all."

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The Judge was round on circuit, and the circle was much amused at the following chestnut. His Honour was very partial to boiled eggs, and usually had a dozen or so for breakfast. To create a surprise to the gentle maiden who acted as waitress, and had temporarily retired, His Honour, after disposing of the eggs, threw the shells behind the fire and burnt them to ashes. The gentle maiden on removing things afterwards, to her astonishment missed the egg shells and reported to the kitchen authorities that His Honour had eaten his eggs, shells and all. The true solution of the affair was afterwards given by His Honour to a mutual friend as a good joke.

* * * * *

Another egg yarn went the round of the stove, being the experience of one of the inner circle and given by him, viva voce—"A general election for Parliament was on the board, and I was appointed Deputy Returning Officer to take the poll at the Courthouse at Ahaura. The little township on my arrival was doing a roaring

trade at the numerous hotels, owing to the influx of diggers coming in to vote, the candidate, Martin Kennedy, being the favourite horse. On the day of election, I, with my poll clerk, was kept pretty busy; for each digger at that time voted on his miner's right, which had to be stamped and signed to prove that the owner had recorded his vote.

"At the luncheon hour a gentlemanly hotelkeeper who had once trod the stage as a tragic actor, advanced to centre of the Courthouse and in a dramatic tone of voice, said: 'Mr. Returning Officer—Will you allow me to offer you a little refreshment?'

"I thanked him heartily and said I would gladly avail myself of his kind offer, and he retired to prepare it. Soon after I was engaged with a voter, a flaxen-haired, big bearded Scotchman, with a good-hearted smiling face that had seen many years service on his cattle ranch at the Haupiri, and rejoiced in possessing the name of one of the ancient clans of Old Scotia. Having deposited his ballot paper, my friendly hotelkeeper appeared on the scene with a tray of refreshments (a cup of tea and a pair of poached eggs on toast) which he deposited on the table before me.

"To my surprise, and the dramatic horror of the gentlemanly hotelkeeper, the cheerful Scotchman deliberately took up my poached eggs on toast, and opening his capacious mouth engulfed one after the other in two mouthfuls, bowing to me with a polite smile; and poking the hotelkeeper in the ribs, he made his exit from the Courthouse to the astonishment of the officials and the solitary constable on duty, and to the intense amusement of the voters waiting their turn. The friendly hotelkeeper, with a saddened face expressed regret at the occurrence, retired, and soon after returned with a second edition of eggs on toast.

"I have met the cheerful Scotchman several times since, and we had a hearty laugh over the transaction and the discomfiture of P——n.

"I might add that Martin Kennedy won the election hands down."

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Talking over some mistakes made in Court, there was some laughing in the inner circle at the expense of Inspector Broham, while conducting a charge against a man brought up for something or other, in the R. M. Court at Hokitika. Requiring a legal authority to assist him in the case, the Inspector turned round to one of the constables and told him to go for "Roscoe on Evidence." The constable not fully catching the meaning went out in search of Mr. Roscow, the proprietor of an hotel in Hokitika.

Finding him out he told the barman that Roscow was wanted at once to give evidence at the Police Court. The barman replied that he would find him at the barber's getting shaved. The constable went over and found his man half shaved. He told him that the Inspector wanted him to give evidence in court, asking him to come as he was; and, in obedience to the law, Mr. Roscow, with the lather still clinging to the fringe of his whiskers, went with the constable and soon reached the Court.

Upon putting in his appearance the Inspector smartly demanded of the constable if he had found Roscoe?

"Yes, sir, here he is," replied the man producing the worthy host of the Manchester Arms.

Report says the Inspector saw the mistake at once; so did the R.M.; so did the solicitors; so did all assembled in the body of the Court, with the result that a hearty laugh shook the walls of the Court. It was a grand mistake, but quite excusable.

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The circle round the stove could not allow Hokitika to take the cake without putting in a contra plea for Greymouth, and the following Court case was brought to the surface: In the R.M. Court, Greymouth, an action was brought to recover payment for damage to cargo delivered from a vessel belonging to defendant. In the course of argument on behalf of the plaintiff, his solicitor had occasion to refer to legal authorities on shipping, amongst them being Dickens on Torts. The shipowner, who was conducting his own defence, retorted that he had all Dickens's works on his library shelves at home.

There was likely to be a general outburst of laughter, but it was promptly nipped in the bud by the smiling constable demanding, in an injured tone of voice, "Silence in the Court."

* * * *

The following peculiar medical case was reported to one of the circle as occurring at the Lyell, and was fully discussed round the stove:—

At that remarkable township, clinging to a precipitous mountain, along the side of which the coach road winds its way upwards towards Nelson, and forms the one and only street of the town, where the inhabitants have built their nests on top of one another, and can easily converse with each other by means of neighbours' chimneys, there resided long ago a miner, known as Brandy Jack, who suffered the ills that flesh is heir to, owing to indigestion and other complaints too numerous to mention. His case becoming desperate, he was forced to consult a leading doctor of that day in Nelson, who strongly advised him, instead of physicking himself, to eat plenty of animal food. Our sufferer returned to his mountain home and went through a strict course of animal food for some months. Feeling no better, but, as a matter of

fact, worse, he again visited the worthy doctor, and fully explained that he had lived on nothing but bran, chaff, and a little oats, till nature couldn't stand it any longer.

The doctor, aghast at the misconstruction of his medical instructions, promptly ordered the sufferer to discontinue the bran and chaff diet and to eat plenty of beef and mutton for the future. The result was very encouraging, and a cure effected, to the surprise of Brandy Jack.

* * * *

The members of the circle discussed the following incident in all its bearings, and arrived at the opinion that Hokitika had scored again properly: In the rosy times of the Coast a strolling one-man entertainer introduced himself by placards and advertisements as the world-wide comic singer, Thatcher. Having done the coastal towns, Greymouth included, he alighted at Hokitika, where he was particularly successful with his impromptu comic songs, being somewhat severe on a well known Knight of the Hammer. From the *Tomahawk* journal of May, 1870, the following information is obtained: After narrating the style of Thatcher's business, and how his satire on the worthy Knight had provoked a spirit of revenge within his big manly breast, he, the Knight, with the assistance of a friend or two, resolved to repay these jokes and gibes with interest; and, as the songster was about to depart, it was thought a fitting opportunity to carry the plot into execution. Accordingly, a handsome spread was prepared and laid out, to which the minstrel was invited, together with a large number of the élite of Hokitika, to witness the presentation of a gold watch and appendages to the departing guest, in honour of his visit. A large assemblage was present; the viands were choice; the wines sparkled; the Royal toast was honoured, and

the health of the guest drunk with cheers. The gift for presentation lay incased in front of the chairman, who now rose, and in a dignified speech desired the guest to accept "this small token of esteem as a proof of the value at which they rated his flight of genius." Unopened, he received the proffered gift, expressing words of gratitude for this tribute to his humble abilities, which he would preserve as a memorial of the kindness he had so abundantly received in Hokitika. Retiring to his chair he proposed the health of the company present—but—the sounds of suppressed laughter caused him to open the splendid jewel case, and, to his horror and surprise, he discovered the trick played upon him. The gift was a child's toy, a mere bauble. The company broke up suddenly, and the hoax was attributed to the Knight of the Hammer, whose absence from the function was particularly noticed.

N.B. 1905. The whirligig of time has borne the worthy knight into one of the "seats of the mighty" in the Upper House at Wellington. Politicians are proverbially long lived, especially on a liberal diet of loaves and fishes.

* * * *

The old Canadian stove, round which we gossiped and cracked our "chestnuts" has become a thing of the past, probably sold to the foundry as scrap iron, and melted down, its atoms re-living in castings of some other form. In its place a structure of bricks and mortar has risen to comply with municipal regulations. Even the well known and pleasant hotel of other days, with its happy associations, has transformed itself into a business emporium, where hardware from a needle to an anchor may be obtained by those in search of such articles.

XVII.—A QUARTETTE OF WARDENS.

On the Sydney side, the ones I was acquainted with, went about the goldfields under the title of "Gold Commissioner," wore a sort of naval uniform and cap to match, often riding the high horse—in more senses than one—and attended by a body guard of mounted troopers. Open air Courts were held in which justice was served out while you waited, and all the cases were decided equitably on their merits without the "law's delay." One who had graduated in the "Queen's Navee," dealing with a case in which a mining advocate was engaged, and who had the temerity to refer to "Coke on Littelton," was at once silenced by the Commissioner, with "Coke upon Littelton be d——d; what did he know about Warden's Courts." It shows the rough and ready justice meted out to the Australian diggers of the fifties; and they loved to have it so, and were liberal in a matter of awards. It is recorded on one occasion at a Victorian Parliamentary election, one of their friends was successfully elected, and his enthusiastic supporters caused his horse on which he rode, to be shod with golden horseshoes, which were afterwards presented to the rider.

The Wardens of the Golden West I have been familiar with, never wore a uniform, nor rode a horse to my knowledge, nor were presented with golden horseshoes, preferring to ride in buggies or mail coaches, or to tramp it. Those who were in charge of the first of the rush of the Australian invaders in 1865, were purely and simply business men, with little or no legal experience, but possessing plenty of common sense, holding

their Courts scattered about mining centres, in little bits of Court-rooms, rain proof, and their decisions were cheerfully accepted by the disputants. The old Wardens of the past have by degrees been shunted, and replaced by younger men, in some instances born and bred on the Coast, who have passed their exams. in legal knowledge, and have practised as lawyers in other Courts. (It just occurs to me that a young Warden appointed to the Coast just lately, on his departure was presented by his Dunedin admirers with a handsome umbrella. The irony of it!)

The quartette of Wardens who ruled the destinies of the Golden West, from Collingwood to Milford Sound in the sixties, were under the thumb of Provincialism, the Grey River being the boundary line between the Canterbury and Nelson provinces. This division was the cause of much friction among the diggers, who had to pay for a miner's right (of £1 each) to work on both sides of the Grey. Customs and gold duties collected at Greymouth, and hospital maintenance, had to be adjusted between the two provinces periodically, and necessitated a double set of Wardens, and a double set of police officers and officials, stationed at Greymouth and Cobden, to keep a watch and guard over the extensive boundary line. Canterbury West succeeded in 1867 in cutting adrift from Canterbury East, and started its career as Westland; but the Grey river boundary remained until the abolition of provinces in 1876, which brought relief, not only to the diggers, but to Greymouth business people, and the inhabitants of the Grey Valley.

The first of the quartette was the intrepid West Coast explorer, Mr. James Mackay, of Collingwood, who was appointed in October, 1858, as the first Goldfields Warden in New Zealand. He had, in the month of February previously, been appointed Assistant Native

Secretary. These Government appointments at the age of twenty-seven altered the whole course of his life; his ambition was to be a successful run holder, but as he says, "Man proposes and God disposes;" and he heartily devoted himself as Warden and Assistant Native Secretary to the performance of the duties of his high position. His journey over the West Coast, and across the Great Divide in the late fifties, and his successful dealings with Tainui, and the other Maori chiefs in buying the whole of the West Coast lands in 1860 for three hundred sovereigns in bright gold, are recorded in the story entitled, "The Land of the Greenstone."

Mr. Mackay was born in Scotland on the 16th November, 1831, and at the age of thirteen emigrated with his father to New Zealand, arriving in January, 1845. On his father's place, near Nelson, James Mackay, junr., the name he was long known by on the Coast, spent seven years of his youth learning farming, and the mysteries of stock-raising, and he says pathetically, "No eight hours a day then." On coming of age in 1852, he took up land on his own account at Cape Farewell as a run, bought the freehold of 1,500 acres of land at 10s. per acre, having a frontage of four miles to Golden Bay, and went in with all the ardour of a young squatter for sheep and cattle.

The young Nelson identity made several trips up the high mountain ranges, having their watershed to Golden Bay; and explored the sources of the Karamea River. In January, 1857, he explored the country from Cape Farewell, to the Mawhera River, and went up that river for fifty miles inland, accompanied by two Maoris. On his return home in February he found Collingwood in full swing as a veritable goldfield, and naturally set in as an alluvial miner; and the practical experience he obtained stood him in good stead in after years. But

he says, "I soon found out I had a better claim in the sheep and cattle on my run at Cape Farewell." On the Collingwood diggings, in the middle of 1857, the mining population consisted of 1,300 Europeans and 600 Maoris, with a Resident Magistrate, a retired Indian Judge, who knew nothing of goldfield work; and the European diggers, finding out that young Mackay had a knowledge of the Maori language, referred all their disputes between the two races to him for arrangement; and he says, "I performed all the judicial functions of a Warden without the authority." In January, 1858, he determined to discontinue to act without authority; but at the representation of the R.M., the General Government, to his astonishment, appointed Mr. Mackay as Assistant Native Secretary, which he reluctantly accepted after much pressure, and commenced his duties in February, 1858, to arrange the disputes between Europeans and Natives at Collingwood. In October following, the first Goldfields Act was passed in New Zealand, and under its powers Mr. Mackay was appointed Warden (the first in the colony) for the Collingwood goldfield.

In 1860 the Taranaki war commenced, and in 1863 Mr. Mackay went to Auckland with Maori prisoners, and it resulted in his permanent location at Auckland during the war with the Waikato Maoris; and in 1867 he arranged with the Natives for the opening up of the Thames district for gold-mining, having acquired the status of a Maori chief for his services on their behalf. Mr. Mackay, at the ripe age of seventy-four, is now settled down at Paeroa, near the Thames.

I understand that Warden Mackay in 1879 renewed his acquaintance with Greymouth, in the capacity of Warden and R.M., for a short term, in the room of the late Warden, Charles Broad, who, in Greymouth joined

the great majority. Mr. Mackay acted as relieving Warden until the arrival of Warden Stratford from the Lake district in Otago.

On the discovery of gold in the Nelson S.W. district in the middle sixties, another Warden, better known as Commissioner Thomas A. Sneyd Kynnersley, was appointed to look after the interests of the Nelson Provincial Government, with full power to lay off townships, make roads and tracks, and other public works. He was a man of great enterprise and endurance, but the damp and discomforts of Coastal life in those days told upon his constitution, and he died in Melbourne some short time after resigning his Commissionership, a martyr to consumption. As Warden, he had to attend to the Courts from Westport to Cobden, and up the Grey Valley, and in travelling from place to place he was compelled to be absent for a fortnight at a time from his head quarters—Westport.

The manner in which justice was meted out at the first of the rushes in this part of the Nelson Province was somewhat of a farce. One man charged with stealing some shirts at Westport was run in by the draper; but their being no magistrate on hand, the sergeant remanded the prisoner from time to time. It becoming monotonous, the gentleman in custody questioned the sergeant's authority, whereon he admitted him to bail—again without authority—which he fixed at £40, and, curious to say, the draper provided the required sureties. Not only at Westport, but at Charleston and Brighton, justice was peculiarly dispensed in a somewhat primitive manner, reminding one of the early days of the rush to Otago, when Her Majesty's gaol at Dunedin was full to overflowing; and the gentlemen under detention were allowed out for the day, but cautioned to return in time at night, or else they would be locked out.

At Brighton, our old friend, the late James Payne, was Warden's clerk—he was County Clerk afterwards in Greymouth till his death—and, in the absence of the Warden, would carry on the business of the Court, and pass sentences as the spirit moved him. His jurisdiction became a recognized institution by an easy going public, and the best of it was, in the absence of lock-ups, he usually inflicted heavy fines instead of imprisonment, and the fines—paid willingly by men then flush of cash—went to the Greymouth hospital to swell its funds. Suitable and comfortable lock-ups were shortly afterwards provided by a generous Government, notably at Addison's Flat; for on one occasion, when the late Bishop Suter was on tour through that part of his diocese, finding there was no sleeping accommodation at any of the shanties about (there were no hotels then), His Lordship, with a very good grace, accepted the seclusion afforded by a newly erected lock-up kindly placed at his disposal by the police, and for that night slept the sleep of the just. At the end of 1869, Mr. Kynnersley resigned as Warden, and, on his way to Melbourne, an illuminated address by a local artist enclosed in a beautiful box of New Zealand woods, was presented to the ex-Warden, on the 'Gothenberg' in the roadstead, on behalf of the Greymouth and Grey Valley residents. From a photo of the address in my possession I notice among the 50 signatures some well known Greymouth names:—E. Masters, the Mayor, H. H. Lahman, M.L.C., W. H. Harrison, M.H.R., Dr. C. L. Morice, Kerr, Keogh and Co., Martin Kennedy, Harry Kenrick, Donald MacLean, Rev. G. P. Beaumont, R. Nancarrow, Daniel Sheedy, G. W. Moss, J. G. Thomas, and Gilbert King; also the names of Cobden and Grey Valley residents—Dennis Ryall, Dennis Carroll, Hamilton Gilmer, D. F. Buckley, Thomas Olsen, James McLoughlin, J. D. Pinkerton, and others.

In reply to this address, under date, Melbourne, January 20th, 1869, Mr. Kynnersley, after thanking his friends of the Grey for the address, says: "I am unable to express to you the pride and satisfaction which I feel in the possession of the testimonial, not only for its intrinsic value, as a very tastefully designed and skilfully executed work of art, but as a most gratifying testimony that, while acting in my late official capacity, I was fortunate enough to succeed in discharging the duties of my office in such a manner as not to meet with your disapprobation."

At Hokitika, where now stands the stately Town Hall, the Bank of New Zealand, the Union Bank and other buildings, the "camp" had its quarters in the rosy times commencing Christmas, 1864. There was no comfortable gaol in those flush times, only lock-ups, and Inspector Broham, with his thirty constables, was kept busy with one thing and another, for prisoners committed to gaol had to be escorted over to Christchurch to seek the necessary seclusion in stronger quarters; and it was owing to the immense influx of population into what was then called Canterbury West, that Mr. Warden George Samuel Sale (better known as Commissioner Sale, or better still as "King Sale,") appeared on the camp at Hokitika, and took charge of things on the 15th of April, 1865.

Warden Sale was transferred from a lucrative post in the Treasury at Christchurch, with unlimited powers to deal with all judicial and financial questions, re-organising every department under his charge, and carrying on the government very satisfactorily, assisted very ably by the police to preserve the peace and good order of the district.

Like Warden Kynnersley for Nelson, Warden Sale for Christchurch, under the comprehensive title of

commissioner (borrowed from Australia), was a sort of Deputy Superintendent as well as Treasurer, Magistrate (or R.M., now S.M., in contra distinction to the great unpaid—the J.P.), Warden, and other titles, all rolled into Commissioner; and so arduous were his duties that from early morn till late at night, except when he was on the bench for a rest, he was literally besieged by applicants for assistance or advice.

A change in the juvenile provincial government over the way at Canterbury East brought about a still greater change in the administration of affairs in Westland, and the break was put down on the Commissioner's power of action. All business had to pass through the Red Tape Department of the Circumlocution Office at Christchurch, with the result that general dissatisfaction existed on the Coast; and its inhabitants determined to appeal to Cæsar in the general assembly. A monster petition was sent to Stafford and Mr. John Hall (now Sir John); and to the energy of these two, Westland was indebted for her severance from a cruel stepmother, and for giving her a simple form of local government.

During all the time of negotiation, Warden Sale administered the affairs of the district as Commissioner and afterwards as County Secretary. He continued to hold office till an Amendment Act came into force, when by some oversight of the authors of the Bill, the post of County Secretary was omitted, and being invited to stand as a candidate for a seat in the new council, he consented, and was accordingly elected for the Borough of Hokitika.

Unfortunately for his constituents, business of importance called him to England, and his loss was severely felt; "for," says his historian, "a man of more business capabilities, purer disinterestedness, or sterner integrity, never trod the shores of Westland." He was a Yorkshire man by birth, and I have heard him sing a good song,

"The Leather Bottle." Mr. Sale was a man of high classical attainments, and in the eighties was Professor of Classics at the Otago University.

When King Sale abdicated on leaving the Golden Coast, his mantle of royalty fell on the broad shoulders of Richard John Seddon, who was called to the throne under the title of "King Dick"; and even now he reigns supreme under the title within the hearts of West Coasters.

The remaining Warden, William Horton Revell, last but not least of the quartette, on the 24th of January, 1864, landed on the river bank (where Greymouth now flourishes), as agent for the Provincial Government of Canterbury. Mackay was gazetted Warden in October, 1858, and Revell in March, 1865, and as pioneers under "Aorangi," were rewarded by a street in Greymouth being named after Mackay, and a street in Hokitika after Revell.

Expressing to a mutual friend in Reefton my intention of writing short character sketches of the four Wardens of the Golden West, he emphatically replied: "Mind you do justice to Revell." In endeavouring to obey this injunction, I undertake the task, but with some misgivings as to my ability to do credit to the memory of a just and upright man.

To describe the personality of Mr. Revell is a labour of love to one who knew him so well, and was his friend and companion for fifteen years, and associated with him in so many ways outside his official life. To those who di not understand him he appeared in his official capacity somewhat rough and overbearing in manner, and in his dealings with evil doers brought before him as R.M., he doubtless was a terror; but he had the courage of his opinions, and was stern and at times uncomplimentary to advocates defending them. I cannot better

exemplify this trait in his character than by giving the following parable :—

"Ascending a narrow pathway up one of the mountain passes of Switzerland, a traveller saw before him through the mist, which wonderfully magnifies distant objects, something resembling a monster in human form. His first impulse was to retreat, but, changing his mind, he walked on and found it to be a man, and on coming closer, he discovered him to be a brother."

Mr. Revell though somewhat of a 'monster' to many, owing to the mist of ignorance, was a thorough 'rough diamond'; but at heart, there was not a man so open to charitable emotions, so free from guile, so lovable in the companionship of his friends, so hospitable and domesticated in his home circle with his good wife, whom he married in Christchurch in 1867, and brought over to the Coast to spend the honeymoon: he was, in fact, a large-hearted child himself, with all an Irishman's love of humour, and brimful of the joyousness of a happy and healthy life.

Mr. Revell was born in the north of Ireland on the 11th September, 1829, and was a man of a commanding figure, being six feet in height, well and strongly built, and full of energy. He proved himself a capable officer of the Government, and was beloved by the officials under him.

Mr. W. H. Revell arrived at the Grey River on the 24th of January, 1864, by the schooner 'Mary' from Nelson, having when at Timaru as Inspector of Police, received the appointment of agent for the Canterbury Government on the West Coast, in place of Mr. C. Townshend, drowned with others while crossing the Grey bar. He was accompanied by his brother, Mr. John Revell as his assistant, and on landing erected a store and dwelling on the banks of the Grey just

below Tainui's pa. Mr. Revell, during the year 1864, travelled up and down the coast, twice crossing the Great Divide, by way of the Teremakau, to report progress at Christchurch. He says he underwent some severe hardships, wearing Maori sandals (like Mackay), making many a meal off Maori hens, carrying a swag, when travelling, of 30 lb. flour, besides blankets, tent gear, etc. He had received instructions to sell off his stores and return by September to Christchurch; but on his second trip overland in July, he took with him 16 ozs. of gold from the Greenstone and addressing a public meeting and producing the gold, the officials countermanded the order to sell off.

On his return to the Grey, Mr. Revell found parties of diggers had arrived to prospect the Coast and he was kept travelling so as to assist them, the favourite locality as a starting point being from historic Greenstone. In December, 1864, with a gold buyer (Mr. W. G. O. Preshaw) he went as far south as the Totara workings, about Ross, also visiting the Six Mile at the Waimea. At all these places the diggers were doing well, and sold large parcels of gold to the new banker, the man with the 'cabbage-tree hat.' On the 21st the steamer 'Nelson' crossed the Hokitika bar (the first to arrive), followed next day by the Wallaby, both full of cargo, storekeepers and diggers. The newcomers by the Nelson decided to locate a town on the north beach, and Mr. Revell, assisted by Sergeant Broham, marked off business sections which were eagerly taken up. A canvas town was soon erected on both sides of a narrow street named after Revell, and it was thus, in the merry Christmas time of 1864, that Hokitika was created.

On the 5th of March, 1865, Canterbury West was proclaimed a goldfield, and William Horton Revell gazetted Warden and R.M.; and on the 21st he opened the

Warden's office under a tent in Revell Street (then a mile long), and on the same date he issued the first Miner's Right on the Coast, to his brother Mr. Henry Revell. The new Warden was kept very busy hearing cases till he was relieved in April by Warden Sale, and then went back to the Grey where he opened his Warden's Court in June, 1865. Mr. Harry Kenrick, being transferred from Waimea, acted as his clerk of the Court.

When provincialism was abolished, the Wardens were shifted about to other districts, and Mr. Revell was removed in 1879 to the Westport and Reefton districts. Later on in the eighties, he was transferred to Lawrence in Otago (Gabriel's Gully), where he laboured some years as Warden and R.M. until he was seized with a paralytic stroke, and compelled to cease from labour. He was taken to Timaru, his old home, where on the 22nd September, 1893, at the age of sixty-four he ended a long and useful life, deeply regretted.

Charles Dickens, the great teacher of humanity, says: "Memory, however sad, is the best and purest link between this world and a better."

XVIII.—JIM—A TYPICAL WEST COASTER.

"Jim"—called Jimmy at times by his familiars—was a character in a way, who, during a period of over forty years, had stored up within the archives of a retentive memory a wonderful amount of reminiscences of West Coast life.

It seems peculiar to pioneer life on the gold-fields since the fifties, that the paternal name often becomes obscure. Diggers working together as mates, know one another as,—The Slogger, Brandy Jack, Ole Bill, Digger Dick, and so on; so that in course of time, the patronymic becomes forgotten, until it is hunted up by an undertaker, to adorn the name-plate of a coffin, or by a lawyer in search of a missing heir-at-law.

Jim was a gentleman born and well educated. Even now, after sixty years' pilgrimage, he is a healthy, sturdy, honest, hard working fellow, enjoying existence with a Mark Tapley's disposition—a cheerful optimist looking at the bright side of things, and tinged slightly with the Spiritualist's anticipation that his present prospecting ventures (he has two or three on hand), will undoubtedly come to the front, to enable him to return to the old home in Victoria, rich and independent.

Somehow or other—why he cannot explain—Jim, like many more West Coasters, never bothered himself with a wife, and so missed the chance of the true colonist to keep the "cradle full." The fact is, the only cradle he kept rocking, was long ago for gold saving—not for child saving.

I first had the pleasure of Jim's acquaintance on Broadway, in Quartzopolis—scrip dealing—some twenty-three years ago. In course of conversation with him, I

gleaned that we were both Australians, and that when he was born in Melbourne in 1843, I was running around the pleasant streets of the dear old town of Sydney, a small boy of seven. He was the son of one of the early Victorian squatters, since passed the border line, and his boyhood was spent in Kyneton, just outside of Melbourne, a splendid farming district even in those days. At eighteen, attracted by the glowing accounts from New Zealand of the gold discovered at "Gabriel's Gully," in July, 1861, he, like the Prodigal Son, persuaded his father (and his mother with much difficulty) to let him go into a "far country," with a party of Kyneton companions just starting for the rush; and with his pockets full of money, and the world all before him, a steamer in September, 1861, dumped his party, with others, on shore at Port Chalmers, and for three years, till his return home in 1864, he was all over Otago as a digger. The record of his life and experience there is full of interest, and may possibly be written by himself "some day" for the benefit of the coming generation.

Our hero's town residence is located in the centre of Quartzopolis, on a quarter acre section, surrounded by pleasant family mansions—a comfortable little dwelling, just room for one. The interior is spaced off for a sleeping apartment and a sitting room. A spacious open fireplace—bush fashion—occupies a gable, where large logs, when Jim is in residence, are daily sacrificed to supply the means of cooking and the blessing of warmth.

His country residence is under a tent, away up among the ranges out of town, where, as a prospector, he is following up indications of a gold-bearing reef, in some country as yet undeveloped. The place no man knoweth but Jim, and his friends in town offer up spiritual oblations for his success.

Seeing smoke ascending from the chimney of his domicile in town, a sure sign that Jim was "at home," I made an afternoon call upon him, and received a hearty welcome. He was a patient reader of my tales of the Golden West, and, knowing that he had a wealth of West Coast experience stored up, I asked him if he would supply me with some, in the character of a typical West Coaster. His answer in the affirmative was so generous that I started right away to question him, like an interviewer. "Whatever induced you to try your luck again in New Zealand?" "Well, it was this way," replied Jim, "in 1866, I had been out with my father, exploring for pastoral country in Northern Queensland, and on our return journey stopped at a camping place near Peak Downs, a gold-mining centre about 100 miles from Rockhampton, when some fellows came along with the news of the gold discoveries on the West Coast of New Zealand. I was recovering from an attack of fever and ague at the time, and for a change, I again caught the gold fever badly. I hastened to Sydney, but no direct steamer being laid on, I went to Melbourne, and myself, with others, induced a ship agent to lay on a direct steamer for Hokitika. After waiting impatiently for six weeks, the "Barwon," a coal steamer, was put on, and with about 200 passengers at £8 10s. a head, and a full cargo of goods, we left Melbourne, and after a splendid run across the Tasman Sea, arrived off Hokitika in the evening. After a lot of signalling, tho "Lyttelton," a small steamer, came out next morning, and transhipped our passengers, taking us safely over the bar—this was in Ausust, 1865. We landed on the north bank of the Hokitika River, camping on the ground where the Court House now stands."

"What was your impression of the town at this time?" I inquired. "It was nothing but a calico town," he

answered, "occupying both sides of Revell Street, a rough bush with dense undergrowth surrounding it."

"And where did you first start digging?" I asked.

"Well," said Jim, "I joined a mate who came over in the 'Barwon' by the name of Ryan, a six-foot Irishman from Tipperary, a fine, splendid fellow. He was from Kyneton, and left a good billet on the Mount Alexander Railway to come to New Zealand. Well, we crossed the river and swagged it along the beach to go to Jones's Rush, now Ross, but missed the track, and found ourselves at Donohue's; and, directed from there, we went along a leading range to get to Jones's, but on the top of the range bad weather set in, with a heavy fall of snow, and we sat down on our swags to rest awhile—the picture of misery—for we were both tired and hungry. The snow-flakes, as big as shillings, were coming down on us, and I said to Ryan, much to his astonishment, 'What a lovely picture! I wish I was an artist.' Night coming on, we camped on the spot, and next morning we dropped down the range to Jones's Rush. After prospecting for a fortnight without success, Ryan said: 'I've had enough o' this, Jim, I'm off back to Australia.'

"I came across another Kyneton man, called Sandy, who joined me as mate in room of Ryan, and we went prospecting over to Sailor's Gully, half a mile from Jones's. In passing we stopped to look at two diggers, working on a black wash. One of them said, 'Do you want to buy a claim, mate?' 'Depends what you want for it,' I said. 'You can have this and the sluice-box for a five pound note.' Sandy and I clinched the bargain, paid the money, and set to work on two men's ground, about eighty feet square.

"Sinking down some seven feet, we cleaned up on what we thought was a cement bottom. I moved a big boulder buried in the cement, and all around it, and

under it, we could see good gold; so we began sinking and paddocking the wash, and found we were making as much as £15 a week a man. We sold our gold to the Bank of New Zealand, Ross. Warden Aylmer was then stationed there. Miners' Rights were £1 each for the year. You recollect Jones, the lawyer, at Reefton; he was then at Ross working as a sawyer on the flat near the Court House, and making good wages.

"I found Sandy, my mate, very difficult to work with. We had a good claim—but when we went to town to sell our gold, he would knock down his share in high life. He, at last, sold out to a man called Alec, and went to the North Island, saying he would never do any good on a gold field. Alec and I continued to work the claim. We sunk a shaft, employing a wages man at £5 a week, and went down for sixty feet, all in good wash from 8 ft. to the top. Having had a difference of opinion with Alec, as to the safe working of the claim from the shaft, I sold out my interest to a man named Peterson for £100. He and Alec worked the ground between them employing other wages men, and it is said that the party took as much as £10,000 worth of gold out of it. Peterson went home to Denmark, started business there as a storekeeper, and is a wealthy man.

"Depositing my £100 in the Bank of New Zealand at Ross, I became acquainted with Colin Campbell, the agent at that time. I met him afterwards at Reefton, where we renewed our acquaintance. About this time, Cuthbert Campbell, a mate of mine in Otago, hearing I was in Ross wrote to me to come to Hokitika. He with a partner named Linton had opened as storekeepers, in Revell Street, and had a large stock of provisions, wines and spirits on hand. I made their store my home for a few days, and my old mate was very anxious that I should start storekeeping, on my own account on some part of

the diggings, dealing with their firm. But I considered I was too young to undertake the responsibility of it, especially not having sufficient capital of my own to put into it. When I left Hokitika, Cuthbert accompanied me along the beach highway, for some four miles north, and we parted somewhat sadly, after I had thanked him very heartily for his kindly hospitality."

(Note by "Waratah,"—The evening shadows deepen outside his residence, and Jim wandering off into some Otago recollections connected with Cuthbert, I adjourned my afternoon call, arranging for a meeting at my office the following day. Next afternoon Jim turned up, and continued his West Coast reminiscences).

"Where did you next settle down Jim?—after saying good-bye to your Otago mate on the beach" I added as a reminder.—"I went from the beach inland, to a place known as the Old Waimea," he replied, "and started a general store for a Mr. Beal, and managed it for him for some three or four months. Hearing of Hunt's Rush to Bruce Bay, I made up my mind to be off to it, intending to open a store there on my own account. Leaving the Waimea, I went to Hokitika to make my arrangements; but some time in May, 1866, the little steamer "Bruce," crossed the bar with returned diggers (including Warden Keogh) from the Rush, and one and all reported unfavourably of Bruce Bay. I therefore altered my mind, but was sorry I had left the Waimea, as I was getting £4 a week and my tucker."

"For a change I went into butchering, and opened a butcher's shop at Saltwater Creek, near Greymouth, for Boyd Thompson, a grand fellow; and when Saltwater was done, I removed to his butchering business at the Teremakau, and served the back leads till they were worked out."

"And what was your next venture Jim?" I asked.

"Sheep dealing on my own account," said Jim laughing, "and my money in the bank went into sheep. I would buy them at the Hokitika sale yards, drive them along the beach, selling a sheep here and there to the various diggers and residents living about, getting as much as forty-one shillings each for them; but I had to give it up—it was too risky—the losses in crossing creeks and rivers, and the care and expenses in shepherding them, were also too great.

"Fox's, or Brighton, coming into notoriety in the New Year of 1867, I found myself at the Rush, passed on to the Charleston, then on as far as the Mokihinui and returning, settled down at Addison's Flat, but I arrived too late at all these places to get a claim worth while; there was a population at Addison's alone of some eight thousand. To kill time, I went to work splitting laths for the claims at Addison's, putting in three or four months there."

"I suppose by this time, you gave the digger's life best?" I queried.

"By no means," answered Jim emphatically. "I returned to the Grey, and set to work with a party of six at Carriboo Creek near Marsden. We drove a long tunnel into a terrace, struck the wash, and opened up a claim, which paid us fair wages. It became poor at last and I sold out after some eighteen months work."

"I understand Jim, you're somewhat of a fighting man?" I interjected smiling. Jim acknowledged the soft impeachment with a laugh, and replied, "Well! you know it's this way: any one to hold his own among the digging fraternity, must know how to use his double fives, so as to be ready for any emergency. When I was a young fellow in Kyneton, I went in for a lot of training in the noble art of self-defence, especially fisticulture with the gloves. Now you mention it, I was in a

scrimmage during my time at the Carriboo. We had come into Marsden to sell our gold, and settle up with the storekeeper; and with other parties like ourselves, we began to drink a little too freely, with the result that we started quarrelling over some trivial thing. I was, somehow, drawn into the dispute, and found myself squaring up to a man much heavier than myself. A ring was formed to see fair play. I came out of it the best man. Another fighting man opposed me, and after some rounds I vanquished him too, unfortunately marking him for life by a blow on his cheek."

(N.B. Jim showed me the little finger of his right fives, which he said, had been broken in his second scrimmage).

"The fellows on the opposition," continued Jim, "put up a third opponent, who, to my astonishment, came boldly up to me, and instead of squaring for action, shook hands with me warmly, saying, 'I have no animosity against you, and I decline to fight with a brave man,' adding amid cheers, 'Come and let us have a drink on it.' The fighting was over for that day, and the Victorian was victorious anyway. The good wives in Marsden were very wroth over the affair, turning their quiet little village into an arena for fighting matches—but it wasn't my fault."

"When you sold out at Carriboo, what was the next move?" I asked.

"I went in," said Jim, "with a party of four, to ground sluice at German Gully, not far from Ahaura where Warden Whitefoord resided. We worked there over five years making good wages, and lived very comfortably in pretty little huts, surrounded with fine gardens. When the ground was worked out, my mates, Harry the Welshman, Tom Hobin, a Limerick man, and Schultz the German, scattered far and wide; two of

them went to South Africa before diamonds were thought of, and made their fortunes at quartz-reefing. Some of my acquaintances wanted me to go with them to South Africa—sorry now I didn't. I would have been another Cecil Rhodes by this time."

"I'm sorry for your sake" I added, "that you remained behind. It would have been a good place to go to for many of us, not mentioning names. But what was your next experience?" I asked.

"Falling and squaring timber for a change," said Jim. "I was still living at German Gully, when an old mate of mine in Central Otago, Alex. McDonald, now timber overseer on Railway Works near Reefton, sent for me and took me into his contract together with Jimmy McGilvery, now at Boatman's, for getting timber for culverts and bridges, on the Main Road from the Arnold to Nelson Creek. Jimmy looked with suspicion at my style of squaring logs. I was but a new chum at it, and I think he felt inclined to draw out, and cry go; but when he came to know me and my work better, he took more kindly to me; so much so, that when Alick's contract was up, McGilvery took me into the contract he got from Michael Drennan for culverts and bridges on the Main Road, from Nelson Creek to Ahaura, and my work was passed as satisfactory.

"The road contracts finished, I went to Greymouth, and for a time made Gilmer's my home. One day the proprietor, Sam Gilmer, introduced me to Mr. Foy, an eminent engineer in India for railway construction, who was engaged by the New Zealand Government to explore the country between the East and West Coast for a main trunk line in the Middle Island, one of the schemes of Sir Julius Vogel under his Public Works Policy. I was engaged by Mr. Foy, and we started from Ahaura in March, 1875, buying our horses and outfit for

the journey from Marshall, now M.L.C. I had charge of the pack horses. Our party of eight went up the Brown Grey River, explored the Amuri and Hopeful Saddles to Lake Sumner, went down to Ashburton, returning to the West Coast by the Christchurch Road to the Grey; from Greymouth I went on with the horses by steamer to Nelson. Starting from that place we went round the Tophouse, and by Hanmer Plains, visiting the stations near Blenheim; and after a three months' exploration, I returned to Gilmer's Hotel at Greymouth, and lifted a nice big cheque for my exploration tour."

"You must have enjoyed the excursion," I remarked, smiling. "Yes," said Jim laughing, "and it was a paying one. Well, after resting awhile at Gilmer's, I joined a party of four in a contract for erecting telegraph poles and wires, from Greymouth to Ahaura. McLean, now timber man at the Dark, Maynard, and Tom M'Kenzie and myself formed the party, under the lineman, C. B. King, and we made good wages at the job. The same party, on wages, was engaged by Mountford, the Postmaster, to run a single telegraph wire from Greymouth to the Lyell, which we finished in October, 1875."

Here, Jim suddenly broke off his narrative, and turning the tables on me as interviewer, asked me somewhat reverentially, "Are you a Spiritualist?" "I confess" said I, somewhat startled, "that my investigations into that sublime subject have not been sufficiently successful to answer 'Yes.' But why do you ask—Are you one?" "Yes," he replied, "I know for certain I am under the care or control of a Spirit Guide." "I will admit," I said, "the possibility of such being the case, in the form of a Guardian Angel, but can you explain it?" "Yes," he answered, "I have on some occasions escaped death in a marvellous manner. My successful

rescue of a drowning man in the flood waters of Waitahuna, in Otago, when I plunged in at the risk of my own life, was a case in point. Another, was in connection with the work for the Telegraph Department from the Grey to Lyell. We were stretching a wire across a long span at the 'Little Grey.' I was on top of an angle post some twenty-five feet above ground, binding the wire to insulators, it being stretched by means of a double clutch grip; but the strain caused the angle pole to snap off suddenly, just above ground, with the result that the pole with me on top fell over on one side. The sensation in falling, to me, was peculiar. I was in no fear—felt it rather pleasant than otherwise—the moving in mid-air, and falling gracefully to the ground, where I landed on my feet quite unharmed, taking my seat on an old stump that happened to be behind me. C. B. King and my mates rushed excitedly to the spot, thinking I was killed, but were truly delighted to see me safe and sound and smiling cheerfully. Thinking it over afterwards, I, in my own mind, attributed my escape to my 'Spirit Guide.' "It certainly was singular," I admitted, "but simply an instance of an over-ruling Providence; for I believe with Shakespeare,—

> There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will."

Pausing but a moment to see the effect of my quotation from Shakespeare, I closed the "séance" and started in again as interviewer, requesting Jim to concentrate his thoughts on the Coast, and to go on with the music.

"What's the next thing on the programme?" I asked. Jim, spitting copiously, using my register grate as a spittoon, leading me to think he was chewing a quid sailor fashion (I don't think he smoked), began consulting two ancient dilapidated pocket-books to refresh his

memory as to the sequence of dates, replied thoughtfully: "After finishing the wire-pulling to the Lyell I retreated to Greymouth for a spell, spending the Christmas holidays at Gilmer's. This was in 1875. About this time a friend of my people at Kyneton, Mr. Smith, of Griffen and Smith, looked me up about a letter he had received making enquiries about me. Seeing I was not on for going Home, he recommended me to try my luck at Quartzopolis. After the holidays, acting on his advice I went, and on arrival speculated in 250 Darks at 4s. 6d., and 100 Fiery Cross at 18s. (got 25s. for the Darks afterwards, and made £9 on the Fierys). In January, 1876, I joined the Survey Staff, under the District Surveyor, Mr. G. J. Woolley, and it was on his recommendation I secured my own section in June that year. For the four years I was on the staff, we traversed the sources of the Grey River and its tributaries to the Inangahua saddle. Heslop, now County Rate Collector, used to pack our tucker from the storekeeper. We also surveyed a lot of gold-mining leases, and finished in 1877, the survey of Reefton sections, then a dense bush, besides other surveys.

"When I left the Survey in 1880, I was storeman to Gallagher's at Cronadon; and the great Mining Boom starting in 1882, I left them to speculate in scrip on Broadway, Reefton, and did well while it lasted, and if I had realised then, could have retired on a competency."

Jim says pathetically, he got ill in June, 1892. He had five doctors on to him, but "Physicians were in vain."

"No wonder you were ill," I suggested. "What did you do?" "Beach, the sharebroker, advised me to go up North to the Hot Springs at Te Aroha," said Jim. "I went and bathed in very hot water, and drank a lot of effervescing drinks, and left—cured. I made some

pleasant friendships there and at Auckland. I returned to Reefton, and followed up speculation and doing commission business. I did a lot with you, if you recollect; but the district became poor, and I lost all I made, but kept as cheerful as possible under the circumstances."

My task as Jim's interviewer ended here, and I have obtained the following as up to date:—

Since the rosy days of the eighties, Jim has been located now in Reefton, and then in Lyell. In Reefton he took his part with the Volunteers, and proved a "crack shot." He made a good Deputy of the various Returning Officers at Elections. At the call for help from Brunnerton, on that sad day, 26th March, 1896, when the dreadful tragedy was enacted, by which sixty-seven coal miners met their death by the fearful explosion in the mine, Jim volunteered, and with others, went bravely into that part of the mine called "Coolgardie," and brought out the dead bodies of Edwards and his two sons. At the Lyell, Jim was employed for many months winding up the estate of a storekeeper who had crossed the border line; and it was here during the years 1897 and 1898, Jim employed his leisure hours in botanising among the hills, and became quite an enthusiast in this interesting science, with its jaw-breaking Latin terms, sending valuable specimens to Professor Kirk, of Wellington, with whom he corresponded until the Professor's death. Jim never met him personally; but he tells me that on the very day of his death he had a presentiment of the loss of his friend.

A bundle of letters from the Professor, very much prized by Jim, was placed in my hands to look over, and the following extracts under March, 1897, are worth noticing:—

"You must have many interesting plants of which botanists know but little or nothing in your district.—

To me it is exceedingly gratifying to realise that the prospect of learning something about the plants of the Lyell are so good. It is not often that one meets with a friend who combines the power of observation with good-will. I am much indebted to you for your goodness."

XIX.—AMONG THE FAUNA.

It was a marvellous achievement of anatomical science when, from a single thigh bone sent him from New Zealand in 1838, Professor Owen, the great naturalist, evolved a perfect skeleton of a gigantic bird that stood over twelve feet in height, and gave it a learned Latin name, "Dinornis Novæ-Zealandiæ." The oldest inhabitant among the Maoris of that day recognized the skeleton as the familiar bones of the long lost moa, that lived and flourished ages ago.

These remarkable wingless birds for centuries roamed about on both Islands of New Zealand, having a special fancy for the West Coast, where they enjoyed life, seeking in the limestone caves and in the alluvial drifts, a resting place for their bones when they gave up the ghost. The searchers after gold in the sixties, exhumed the remains of many of these birds in their workings, enabling those in charge of the East Coast museums to set up skeletons of the departed moa, and so verify the miracle performed by Professor Owen. Since then, a perfect moa's egg has been discovered measuring ten inches by seven. It is a matter of regret that one of the ancient Maori invaders of five centuries ago had not the forethought of the present Pakeha Premier, to secure at least a pair of moas, and send them to some ark of safety like the Little Barrier Island, and so protect them from complete extinction. It was the Maoris who were the real delinquents that caused their disappearance; for the bird provided them with abundance of sport and wholesome food, until Captain Cook came along with his special breed of porkers, as a substitute for human flesh.

From the moa to the kiwi (a wingless ungainly-looking little creature), is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous; but naturalists solemnly assert that the kiwi is "the diminutive living representative in New Zealand of the once gigantic moa." The kiwi is very plentiful on the Coast, is clothed with grey hairy feathers, and is blessed with a long beak with which at night it digs down for worms; it goes about whistling during the hours of night, retiring to rest at the dawn of day to some secret haunt or ground-nest. Here it curls itself up into a fluffy ball of feathers, its long beak and head tucked in, and is inclined to be very snappish if its sleep is in any way disturbed. A writer (Mr. W. Townson of Westport) says, "The egg is quite out of proportion to the size of the bird, and when laid, the male bird takes possession and hatches it."

We read somewhere, outside State school jurisdiction, "that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field" and was the cause of much friction in ancient Paradise. In this "God's own country" of New Zealand, especially on the Golden West, the "trail of the serpent" has not yet been discovered, notwithstanding that some of them have been hunting for it, like a "missing voucher." It is said, on good authority, that an ancient saint of pious memory named Patrick, drove the snakes out of Ireland, and possibly he may have included New Zealand in the extermination. So it is pleasant to be able to assure tourists that in these Islands, and on the West Coast in particular, there are no snakes, nor any animals at all likely to be at all dangerous; and on the authority of the much travelled "Vagabond," who visited us in 1883 as a journalist, I am proud to record what he said of West Coasters generally: "I am amongst a grand people now—open-hearted, hospitable, spontaneous." It is cheerful to know, that captains of

vessels are liable to a penalty of £50 for introducing snakes into this country from the Commonwealth, where they have a charming variety of all sorts and sizes—and dangerous ones too.

The Government have wisely introduced to the West Coast some American deer, and the ungainly-looking moose, the gift of a true friend to New Zealand, President Roosevelt, whose kindly interest in our unborn millions was evinced in the advice to "keep our cradles full." The deer and the moose are now at a large down in Westland South, under 'Aorangi,' the coming show place for tourists in the "sweet by and by." Some opposums brought over from Australia by Mr. Seddon, have also been liberated down south, and the latest news of them says that they like the country and the climate, but miss the gum trees of their "own native land." Some mountain goats peculiar to Switzerland and alpine regions, have been let loose on the other side of Aorangi; but some of them have indulged too freely in eating the tutu vegetation, with disastrous results.

Not long since, a young stag and doe were sent to a farm near Reefton to form the nucleus of a deer ranch, up the river Inangahua. They became quite at home on the farm, would feed out of the hand, and enjoyed depasturing with the cattle. As some bushmen getting mining timber, felled the trees in the vicinity of the farm, they noticed the deer would feed off the leaves of the topmost branches and were quite docile and harmless. A couple of youthful miners, passing along the main road one day, arrived near the farm, and meeting the deer unexpectedly, took fright at seeing, for the first time, an animal with a multiplicity of horns, and climbed up the nearest tree for safety. As soon as the deer retired they climbed down and reported to the police at Reefton that they had been attacked by a wild and

ferocious animal with horns. A constable with a shot-gun went up to the farm and stalked the young stag, keeping well under cover of trees till he was five yards distant, and shot down the poor and inoffensive stag; and 'tis said that venison hot and cold, in pie and otherwise was to be had at some of the hotels as a luxury. The stuffed head of the stag with its antlers adorns the hall-way of a Reefton hotel, and the poor doe left stagless may now be seen at the farm chumming and feeding with the farmer's cattle.

Bunny has not been a success on the West Coast. An effort was made in the late sixties by an enthusiastic member of the Acclimatisation Society to introduce rabbits; and a paddock not far from the Grey cemetery, used for resuscitating tired tramway horses, was the scene of the venture, and was well stocked at the commencement. But somehow bunny did not prosper, and was not such a success as on the open lands of Central Otago, where they have increased and multiplied to the exclusion of sheep farming. It is said the West Coast venture failed owing to wild cats, but more likely "rabbits hot and rabbits cold" might have been found in many a digger's stew-pot in close proximity to the tramway paddock.

The coming of English birds to the Golden West has been a signal success, many arriving in the first instance from Nelson and Canterbury. The twitting of the little scavengers, the sparrows, the joyous song of the skylark rising to Heaven's gate, the musical note of the blackbird perched on the tip-top summit of some fir tree, and the flute-like thrills of the linnets, compensates those who in the "Old Land" were accustomed to the charming music of the air.

Among the native fauna there is a varied assortment of birds on the Coast. I recollect in the late sixties, it

was reported that a white heron had arrived at the head of Revell's Lagoon, but, in spite of their being protected, some one had the audacity to shoot it, and the impudence to bring it to the late Dr. Morice, at Greymouth, and want to sell it. The "Doc.," to the man's astonishment, poured forth upon him such a flood of profanity that the shootist was glad to get away unharmed, leaving the beautiful white heron behind him, which was afterwards stuffed and presented to a museum on the East Coast.

I think the tui or the parson bird excels in charm and beauty all the other native birds in New Zealand. Its size is a little larger than the English blackbird; it has a remarkable tuft of two white feathers on its breast; its feathers, of dark green and black, flash like shot-silk in the sunlight, as it rises and falls in mid-air, and its joyous cheerful notes of delight as a sun-worshipper at dawn, makes one fall in love with it as one of Nature's grandest and most perfect productions.

In 1848, as a small boy of ten, journeying from Sydney to England in a vessel that called at the Great Barrier Island, in New Zealand, to await passengers from Auckland, among the odds-and-ends that came on board when resuming our journey was a wicker cage, containing a pair of tuis; and it was my delight in the cabin to watch them feeding, and sipping up honey with their long tongues, and to see them enjoying their daily bath in a saucer. We became great friends, but rounding Cape Horn my poor tuis succumbed to the severe cold, and left me sorrowing.

When the flax is in bloom the tui visits the swamps and hillsides to sip the honey from its flowers. They are very active and lively, and in the early morning sing a concert with shrill strains and joyous notes. They are clever mimics and learn to repeat sounds. A good story is told of a speaker (Sir Walter Buller) at a Maori meeting. It so happened that a tui's cage hung from the

rafters of the meeting house. When he had finished speaking, and before the old chiefh ad time to reply, the tui called out "Tito" (the Maori word for false). The Natives were greatly amused, and the old chief remarked: "Friend, your speech is good, but my tui is a very wise bird, and is not yet convinced."

Associated with the tui is another songster and sun-worshipper at early dawn—viz., the bell-bird (or makomako); and, like the tui, it belongs to the class of honey-eating birds, licking up insects and the nectar of flowers with its long tongue. Our old friend, Captain Cook, while the "Endeavour" lay at anchor in Poverty Bay, the morning after he first sighted New Zealand, in September, 1769, writes thus of the bell-bird:

"The ship lay at the distance of somewhat less than a quarter of a mile from the shore, and in the morning we were awakened by the singing of the birds. The number was incredible, and they seemed to strain their throats in emulation of each other. The wild melody was infinitely superior to anything of the same kind that we had ever heard. It seemed to be like small bells most exquisitely tuned, and perhaps the distance and the water between might be no small advantage to the sound."

Sir Walter Buller says of the bell-bird:—

"Its ordinary song is not unlike that of a tui, its notes though simple are various and sweetly chimed, and the morning anthem in which these sylvan choristers perform together, is a concert producing a wild but pleasing melody."

A West Coast writer (R. C. Reid) heard a morning concert of bell-birds and tuis at Bruce Bay, and says:—

"The tui sounds some smaller bell-notes, but fails to comprehend the solemnity of the situation when he whistles and chuckles in his own queer way, in expression of his own enjoyment."

It is much to be deplored, says Sir Walter Buller, that with the advance of civilization the bell-bird appears to be fast dying out, and that in some districts where a few years ago it was the commonest bird, it has now entirely vanished.

The weka, or Maori hen, at one time much hunted by the resident Maoris as an article of food, is still prolific on the Coast. The Maoris are more particular now, since they have become rich, and prefer butcher's meat. To the early explorers and prospecting parties, the weka was a perfect god-send, enabling them to keep the stew-pot-billy boiling ; for, although oily in flavour, it supplied a vacuum. In size it is like our home fowls, of the colour of the brown Leghorn breed. The male bird is a little larger than the hen, but with none of the showy feathers of the barn-door rooster. Its figure is slight, but it is unable to fly, although its wings are of ample size, which it flaps briskly to assist it, in its flight from the enemy. It is somewhat tame, hunts for its food in the evenings, is an inquisitive and enterprising collector of odds and ends, partial to anything bright and glistening, as a spoon, haircomb, even a watch, and such like, which are carried away and become lost for ever.

A young cockatoo farmer on the Inangahua, who takes some interest in the birds around him, tells me that a pair of wekas, male and female, with two fluffy little chicks, pay his hut a visit now and then for what they can pick up ; they are very tame and very inquisitive. A little while ago a weka hen after dark found her way into his hut through a hole cut in his door, for his cat to find its way in and out ; but catching sight of its natural enemy inside, instead of retreating by the hole it rushed madly right into the burning red hot logs in the bush fire-place, and met an untimely death, before the occupant had time to save it from destruction.

Many humorous tales are told of the eccentricities of the Maori wood hen. Mr. W. Townson, in his interesting "Notes from a Bird Collector" in the Dunedin *Triad*, relates: "I once shot a bell-bird on the bank of Lake Wanaka, and had placed it on the ground whilst I reloaded, and before I knew what he was about, a weka dodging round, picked up my specimen and darted into the scrub with the fruit of my labour, and needless to say I did not recover it." He also writes: "I heard of a tourist, who was making an 'al fresco' meal the other summer down Greymouth way, and placed a set of artificial teeth upon the bank whilst he stooped down to drink from the creek, and when his back was momentarily turned, a weka, attracted by the shining ivories, quietly annexed them, and made off at top speed with the owner in hot pursuit; but he never recovered them."

Visitors to the county Hot Springs at the Cannibal Gorge are surrounded by these wekas who pry about and remove all they can lay hold of. One lady visitor lost her dressing comb which must have taken the fancy of some enterprising weka. These remarkable birds, after they have satisfied their curiosity drop the spoil when they find it can not be eaten.

Some years ago, swarms of red-breasted parrots visited Reefton for some reason or other, and demolished all the available fruits about the place, being sweet on gooseberries just coming to perfection. I have never seen them in swarms since.

Another destructive bird is the kea, a mountain parrot living in the hill country down south, a large green bird the size of an Australian cockatoo, possessing a powerful beak with which it attacks sheep. Alighting on its back, it tears away wool and flesh, and gouges out with anatomical accuracy, the delicate dainty known as

kidney fat, causing the death of its victim, powerless to defend itself against such an enemy. Ascending Ben Lomond, near to Queenstown some twenty-five years ago as a tourist, and nearing the top of the mountain ziz-zag path, a large green parrot kept circling and wheeling round just above me, evidently with the intention of attacking me. I had the greatest difficulty, though armed with a stout walking stick, of keeping this warlike bird at a respectful distance. I found out on my return to Eichardt's hotel in Queenstown, that it was the "kea," much dreaded by the runholders in the lake district as a destroyer of their sheep for its kidney fat.

The little ground robin and the coquettish fantail were great favourites of mine, the robin especially, for he was a cheerful companion in my garden operations. He is a friendly little fellow, very tame, and employs all his time in looking for any upturned worms in digging ground and enjoys the repast greatly. I have always cautioned my youngsters never to harm them in any way. Once, however, some Greymouth boys of tender age, climbed a back hill for sport, one amongst them possessing that abomination, a "shanghai." An unoffending ground robin, or Bob Robin, as they called it, with its slender long legs, jumped from log to log and flew after them, following up the hill, chirruping its cheerful songnote in delight, anticipating worms. In an unlucky moment, the shanghai holder fired a shot at it. It fell over almost at his feet—dead! Down on his knees dropped the small boy, tears in his eyes, his hands in the attitude of prayer; and, surrounded by his sorrowing playmates, he recited aloud the Lord's Prayer, as a temporary relief to his sufferings. I do not think he has killed a little robin since, and appreciates now the pleasure of living and the wonderful mystery of life.

The beautiful white-breasted wood pigeon, the large parrot-like bird, the kaka, the small grey duck, and the paradise duck, afford good sport in the open season for those who possess guns and can afford the time to shoot; but with the increase of civilization on the Coast, there is a corresponding decrease year after year in all our native birds, notwithstanding the fact that they are supposed to be "protected."

It was a source of pleasure to me when residing in a coastal town to watch the manœuvring of white sea gulls, flying low over the surface of the river, seeking their daily food, and to notice the sharp-winged garnet in its quick and onward flight, drop suddenly to the river securing some delicacy; also the long-necked shag floating with the river current, diving, disappearing from sight, and rising some distance away, swallowing some delicious morsel. The shags are by degrees getting beautifully less, a price being put upon their heads for their wholesale destruction of young trout.

Talking of trout, the members of the Acclimatisation Society established for many years in Greymouth are deserving of all praise for their introduction into the streams and rivers of the Golden West, of the various species of trout, which has resulted in a great success, affording the lovers of fishing by rod and fly much genuine sport.

The following clever "Fishing Jingle" appeared in the *Grey River Argus* some two years ago, at the commencement of the fishing season, written by an anonymous poet:—

Said a small young fish to his old mamma,
"There's a man up there on the bank not far
From me.
He's a splendid, brand-new, long silk line,
And a pointed rod, and his turnout's fine
You see!

And he's heaps and heaps of tempting flies,
That he'll flash before my hungry eyes,
For fun.
He'll catch me, mother dear he will,
So, mother, shall I keep still
Or run?"
The old fish said, in tones so mild,
"Don't bother now at all my child,
For him;
But—if you see a small boy, with a little bent pin,
And a dozen little worms, in a dirty little tin,
Then swim."

XX.—GOLDEN DAYS IN FAIRYLAND.

Nature has been very lavish with her scenic beauties in "The Land of the Greenstone." Go where you will, in the golden days of sunshine, from mountain tops, from grassy plains, and from many a lake, from earth, sky, and water, rich and varied tints blend together to charm the eye of the beholder, raising one's physical, mental, and spiritual being above the sordid things of time.

The Hot Lakes of the North, and the Cold Lakes of the South vie with each other for pre-eminence, attracting many comers from all parts of the world; but the Golden West under "Aorangi" remains undiscovered in a measure as yet, but as its manifold wonders and scenic charms become better known, the voice of the tourist will be heard in the land to a greater extent than it is now.

Within a few years the great overland railway will link together the East and West Coasts in its iron grasp, and the old highway over the Southern Alps, with the far-famed teams of Cobb's coaches, and the exciting and dangerous trips across in all weathers, will be a thing of the past. Railway construction, even now, has lessened the distance of coach travelling considerably, and tourists will soon be able to do the journey between Christchurch and Greymouth within the day.

At the Christmas time of 1880, I passed along the great Alpine Road, opened for traffic in 1865, at a cost of a million, and one could understand the engineering difficulties met with in its construction, the surveyors in many places having to be lowered down precipices by ropes to enable them to obtain their surveys. Travelling this road, one could appreciate the care and control

exercised by the drivers of the splendid team of horses, belonging to Cassidy's Coach service, all thoroughly well trained—circus horses, in fact—for, in places, going down the steep gradients of the Otira, with fearful precipices on the one side, anything giving way, or the horses becoming unmanageable, meant certain death if hurled over the roadway into the yawning gulf of the Otira—or white waters—below.

It is pleasant to read what early travellers have written about the old coach journey, particularly from Arthur's Pass (the West Coast Boundary) to charming Hokitika. Says Thomas Bracken, Zealandia's Poet: "Here we have a land yet fresh from the hand of its Maker, formed in all the wild prodigality of natural beauty—a land of stupendous mountains, roaring cataracts, silver cascades, fantastic volcanic formations, magnificent landscapes, noble forests, and picturesque lakes."

Says the well known R. C. Reid, who travelled over the great road in all weathers: "The sublime picture presented in the summer and autumn months, when the rata is in full bloom, and the hills are crowned with luxuriant foliage, is not to be surpassed in variety and effect in any country under the sun. Likewise in mid-winter, when the Alpine Ranges are clad in their snow garments, and are crowned with thousands of fantastic spires, turrets, and battlements, towering above deep valleys filled with enormous glaciers, they carry in their wild magnificence a convincing proof of the omnipotence of the World's Great Architect."

Julian Thomas, better known as the "Vagabond," travelled this road in the mid-winter of 1883. Arriving at the saddle of Arthur's Pass, at an altitude of 3,200 feet, he writes: "None can say they know this country thoroughly till they have been down this drive to the

West Coast. The Otira is a rapid stream dashing over a rocky bed, whilst the mountains arise on each side of us, thousands of feet above us, clothed everywhere with foliage. The character of the flora is changed now that we are on the western slope—no longer the birch with its sombre green, but red and white pines, giant fuchsia trees, the rata and veronica—Nature has run riot here! The road is but a shelf along the ridge, mostly cut out of the solid rock. The driven snow has covered everything with virgin purity, every creeper trailing from the trees is a delicate festoon of snow. It is a supremely beautiful sight. It is fairyland itself!"

The other overland drive to the West Coast is from Nelson, by way of the Hope Saddle and the Hope River, to its junction with the Buller, and thence on to Westport or to Reefton from the Inangahua junction, the coach journey occupying two days.

Some few years ago, I thoroughly enjoyed the coach ride along this splendid highway, which for sublimity of river and mountain scenery has a charm peculiarly its own. The Buller is rightly named "The Rhine of New Zealand." The view from the narrow ridge of the Hope Saddle, before descending into the Buller watershed, is something to wonder at, for its magnificent distances of mountain ranges and its extensive evergreen forests; and as one rolls along the north bank of the mighty Buller, from the box seat of the well equipped Cobb's coach, under the careful Jehuship of one of the Newman Brothers, wide stretches of open country, forming pretty landscape pictures, pass like a moving panorama. Beautiful peeps up mountain gorges, notably the Owen, of far away hills capped with snow, are seen—glimpses of goldships busily at work dredging river flats for the precious metal, come into view; and here and there along the banks of the river are evidences of agricultural,

pastoral, and mining settlements, with pretty dwellings scattered along the road, and many accommodation houses for the refreshment of weary travellers by foot and bike.

But the charm of all is the entrancing coach drive between the Inangahua Junction and Westport. The Otira Gorge may excel in snow-clad hills and picturesque scenery, but, in the opinion of many, who have been charmed by both, the Buller Gorge surpasses the Otira for its wondrous scenic beauties.

Leaving the Junction, a bright sun overhead, and having secured a box-seat, our four-in-hand Cobb's coach was soon spinning along the excellent highway, on the south bank of the noble river. The exquisite scenery, with its beautiful change of tints derived from earth, sky, and water, is simply impossible to describe with full justice. Great hills rise abruptly from the water's edge. A shelf is hewn out of the solid rock, fifty feet above the stream, for the road formation. At Hawk's Craig the coach drives along a ledge under an overhanging roof of rock. In another place, the coach passes through an archway of rock, its walls adorned with many varieties of ferns and festooned with creepers and evergreens. Every turn of the road opens up fresh vistas of loveliness. The mighty river, terrible in flood, but now calm and beautiful, widens out as we journey west, reflecting the blue heaven above on its still and gentle waters below, thrown here and there into light and shade by the clear and pleasant afternoon sunshine. It was indeed fairyland, a thing of beauty, a joy for ever.

I well remember, in the early eighties (acting as secretary of the reception committee), the Premier of that day, Sir Robert Stout, arrived at Reefton from Westport, accompanied by the Hon. W. J. M. Larnach, as Minister of Mines, and the hon. member for Kumara

(then Mr. R. J. Seddon), their guide, philosopher, and friend through the Golden West. At the banquet held in honour of his visit, Sir Robert alluded in glowing terms to the Buller Gorge, through which he had passed that day for the first time; and was full of praise at its wonderful scenic charms, which had made a deep impression on his mind, adding, "Man does not live by bread alone."

In the late sixties, long before the mournful cry of "No License" was heard in the land, as members of the Licensing Commission of those days, we visited the outlying centres of the mining population, by means of a four-seated buggy, Mr. Revell, our Chairman, handling the ribbons. And in those golden days of sunshine we passed along pleasant road tracks, carved out of the luxuriant forest, and its thick foliage of undergrowth, by the Road Boards of that day; and we journeyed over hills and through little settlements, rich with orchards, scattered about here and there in fairyland. At Marsden, Dunganville, and all the way to ancient Greenstone, and along the Arnold to Maori Creek, and other places, we sat in judgment on the various publicans of that age, in the local miniature Court Houses, with constables to match, who reported, for or against, as the case might be, What a pleasant outing it was, and my knowledge of the flora of the Coast, especially ferns, was very much enlarged thereby.

Attending the Supreme Court at Hokitika, as a witness, on one occasion, and having to wait the law's delay in dispensing justice, an unusual day of sunshine was utilised with three other witnesses, by hiring on joint account a two-horse carriage for a drive to Ross. Crossing the long Kanieri Bridge, we went up and down hills, through grand scenery, and reached Ross—the site of the old Jones's Rush of 1865, and my farthest south in

Westland. We inspected things about town, fraternised with old friends, returned to Hokitika when the shadows were lengthening, and thus spent a thoroughly golden day in fairyland south.

Further down south, fifty miles from Ross, are a large assortment of glaciers, under "Aorangi." In the early part of 1872, a Premier of New Zealand, the Hon. William Fox, ventured down from Ross to the "Franz Josef" glacier (so named by Hochstetter after the present Emperor of Austria). Passing on to the glacier, one of the sources of the Cooks River, which was then and there christened "Fox Glacier," the Chief Surveyor of Westland of that day, Mr. Mueller, acting as parson. Mr. Fox took sketches (snapshot cameras being then unknown) of the magnificent scenery brightened by the rata then in full bloom.

Thirty-four years after, in the holiday time of the New year of 1906, another Premier, the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, accompanied by a large retinue of tourist friends of both sexes, visited the "Franz Josef" glacier—climbed on and over the frozen river, gathered the beautiful rata flowers, and many up-to-date snapshots were taken in honour of the visit.

Many fairy lakes are scattered about Westland, and especially in the vicinity of "Aorangi." The premier lake for size is named after Brunner, the early explorer, but is known to the Maoris as "Moana." A golden day of sunshine, spent on this beautiful lake fifteen years ago, comes to me as a pleasurable reminiscence. It was on the Prince of Wales' Birthday (now King Edward) in the pleasant month of the roses, and the attractions offered by the then English Midland Railway Company—a regatta on the lake being amongst them—were sufficient to induce a large number of excursionists, principally from Greymouth, at reduced fares, to avail themselves of

the advantage of seeing the charming lake, the regatta thrown in. It was one of those lovely days of sunshine given to West Coasters at times, when it is not raining, and the warm invigorating spring time of the year, made one feel that life, after all, was well worth living.

Provided with a well filled luncheon basket, and accompanied by a daughter, rejoicing in the name of Ethel, we found ourselves at noon stepping off the train with other excursionists at the railway station, branded in large letters "Moana"; and from the high embankment, the lake below spread itself out before us in its most attractive colours and tints of blue of all shades, its waves dancing and rippling under the noonday sun, and stretching away to the west for a clear distance of seven miles. Near at hand, upon its surface many boats were sailing and pulling about, testifying to the fact that a small breeze from the west was gradually rising, which might interfere with some of the races on the programme.

The excursionists were scattered about the margin of the lake below; fires were lighted from driftwood to boil the billies for tea, filled with clear water dipped from the lake, and Ethel and I joined in with a party of Greymouth friends, and the contents of our provision basket went into the common stock. It was very nice and friendly, and I noticed that at the end of the day our basket returned to us—full—like the widow's barrel of meal that wasted not.

The regatta was marred by the strong westerly breeze, rowing matches were postponed, and one lost all interest in the regatta. Even the sailing boats that started went across the lake, and were never seen again. I have seen regattas in my time, such as on Anniversary Day in Sydney Harbour, but this one seemed to me to be nowhere. As a relief to my feelings I ventured with Ethel on board the solitary steam launch, and with other

excursionists went round the lake. The skipper and engineer, rolled into one personality, made his ship do a lot of puffing, and for a few silver coins we were able to see the lake and the boundaries thereof.

Lake Brunner is said, by that unreliable person, "The man in the street" to be eight miles long by six miles wide. I have measured it on an authorised government map, and found it to be six miles by four miles. Evergreen forests surround it on all sides. The Hohonu Range of mountains to the south-west, near historic Kumara, keeps watch and ward over the lake, adding much beauty to its scenery. I have seen photos of the lake taken in its calmest moods, and the reflections upon its surface of distant hills tipped with snow form lovely pictures; but more so, when seen in its reality under the blue canopy of heaven, with stray fleecy clouds reflected on the calm waters of the lake. It is 281 feet above sea level, and its overflow finds its way into the River Arnold, thence by the Grey River and over its bar to seaward.

The Lake Moana resembles the sacred Lake Gennesaret, better known as the Sea of Galilee. Like the one of old, it is about the same dimension, and now teems with fish; like it, the winds from the mountains often come suddenly down with such force as to cause the waters to rise and fall in crested waves; and passing over it in our frail launch one could easily associate Lake Moana with the sacred waters or inland sea of Palestine, bringing up vividly before us the following incident recorded in the "sweet story of old."

"On a certain day when even was come, He said unto His disciples, 'Let us go over on to the other side of the lake,' and He went into a boat with them, and they launched forth. And as they sailed He fell asleep on a pillow in the afterpart of the boat. And there came down a storm of wind on the lake and the waves

beat into the boat, so that it was now full and they were in jeopardy. And His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, 'Master! Master! we perish.' Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, 'Peace be still.' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."

The launch returned safely to the eastern margin of the lake, and its passengers, one by one, stepped ashore delighted with the trip. We sought our particular basket of provisions left in charge of our Greymouth friends, and joined them at their afternoon tea; and the railway engine sounding the alarm, we gathered our belongings, climbed the embankment, boarded our train, and in the course of a few hours returned home to Reefton, enchanted with our holiday trip, but, a remarkable thing for the West Coast, very much sunburnt.

"Aorangi, King of Mountains,
Crowned with everlasting snow."*

Under whose inspiration these "Tales of the Golden West" have been written, I desire in saying "farewell," to place on record some words of admiration addressed by a few West Coasters to the "King of Mountains," as viewed from different aspects, and from various points of the compass.

That charming writer, whom I hail as a brother West Coaster, W. Townson of Westport, exploring the top of the Brunner Range, near the Lyell, from the summit of Boundary Peak, at an elevation of 4500 feet, and some 150 miles to the north, says, "The Grey Valley was spread out before me, backed up to the southward by the snow clad Southern Alps, Mount Cook standing out white and majestic, with its snowfields glittering in the sunlight."

On Mount Ben Lomond, at a distance of about 100 miles from the south-west, and at an elevation of 5747

* The Hon. W. J. Steward.

feet, I saw the wondrous cordillera of the Southern Alps, with 'Aorangi' and its satellites, filling me with a sense of awe and veneration. It was at the Easter time of 1880, accompanied by a tourist we ascended the mount, situated close to Queenstown on Lake Wakatipu, by the long zig-zag county track, and on reaching the summit were suddenly rewarded for our long tramp with the glorified vision of the magnificent panorama of wonderful ice fields, glaciers, and snow clad peaks, rising tier upon tier, stretching far away to the north, the central glory of all, 'Aorangi,' standing out so grand and beautiful, so white and clear, under the blue canopy of heaven."

And the glory of the sunshine
  Filled the warm and balmy air
And lovingly it lingered,
  On a scene surpassing fair.*

From the west, on the deck of the "Beautiful Star" in 1867 some thirty miles away at sea, at the dawn of a golden day I first saw Mighty Aorangi, in its character as the "Cloud Piercer" appearing high and majestic above a long bank of cloud mist, its topmost peak, reflecting back the rose tints of sunrise.

At charming Hokitika, from the high terrace on its northern town boundary under the bright sun at noon, and in the winter month of June, I obtained from a northerly aspect, another view of the cordillera of the Alps. The grand chain of peaks and hills in their mantle of winter snow, so white and pure, stretching for hundreds of miles to the north-east, with the sentinel "Aorangi" in command, rising high and sublime, as from out the Tasman Sea, formed a panorama, beautiful to look upon.

From charming Hokitika, many have looked upwards at "Aorangi" with longing eyes, anxious to scale its

* The Hon. W. J. Steward

topmost peak, and to gather a sprig from the Alpine flower the "Edelweiss," as a token of success. To one of its citizens was reserved the distinguished honour of accomplishing this wondrous achievement of alpine climbing, and the record is simply this :—

"February 3rd, 1905. Word has been received from Dr. Teichelmann that he, with the Rev. W. Newton and Mr. Low, accompanied by guides, J. Clark and Peter Graham, successfully reached the summit of Mount Cook in beautiful sunshine at 4.45 p.m."

Another old West Coaster, Mr. John Bevan, of Hokitika, some time ago, from Lake Pukaki, which receives the ice waters of the Tasman River, flowing from the Tasman Glacier, saw "the afterglow on Aorangi," and was so enchanted with its loveliness, that on his return home he wrote his impressions of its beauty. Lately he rescued a copy of them from oblivion, and kindly sent the copy to me for perusal. At my urgent request he allows me to print here for the first time his impressions of

THE AFTERGLOW ON AORANGI.

In the varied and beautiful aspects of Nature,
The golden afterglow, encircling the mountain tops,
Forms a sublime, marvellous, and truly magnificent
Phenomenon in the great laboratory of countless ages.

The Afterglow on Aorangi!
Requires more than mortal power—to describe it
In its grandeur and silent beauty—
Lit up by the glories of a dying day;
Influencing human thought, midst the majesty
Of its creation. It has a language
So deep, so pure, so captivating
In its revelations of sublime truths,

Ever appealing, to our higher and
Better natures, and drawing forth a grateful
Response, in harmony with its promptings.
For the voice of God is there! around the
Altar of its glory! and the heart yearns
To do homage to such a noble scene.
Truly! it is a great object lesson
To twine around the understanding—
A sermon, written up in letters of gold,
That all humanity may read and dwell upon—
Figuratively—"A Sermon on the Mount."

The foregoing are some of the impressions
With which I beheld, for the first time,
The Afterglow on Aorangi.
I was not alone, but in company
With a number of tourists from far and near,
All being spell-bound with the beauty of the scene,
Which we beheld from the hillsides, skirting
Lake Pukaki, the blue waters of which,
From our point of observation, appeared
To lave the base of the noble mountain.
The hillsides were covered with tall native
Tussock grass, which, like ripe corn, waved in the
Gentle summer breeze. The shore line of the lake
Was fringed with bright green undergrowth, and
The little island, not far from shore, clothed
In rich foliage, added further delight
To the peaceful surroundings.

There was lovely Aorangi!
The hoary monarch of countless ages,
Commanding the vast expanse of snow-clad heights
In their solitude, with their great glaciers,
Their death dealing crevasses, and yawning gulfs,

Their mighty avalanches, ever thundering forth,
In wild tumult, by night, and by day, and for ever,
Their ceaseless mandate of destruction.

And yet withal there was the golden light—
The gilder's gold—creeping up the face
Of the noble mountain, illuminating,
In like manner, the stray fleecy clouds
Floating on the clear evening sky, and
Adding a double glory to the scene.
Enraptured, we all gazed on the marvellous
Grandeur of that sublime picture; when gradually
The gold dissolved into roseate hues of
Rich bright crimson, which ultimately became
A delicate pink, then a light, refreshing blue,
And, finally, into the cold grey and black
Shadows of the night, leaving the world in darkness
Until the resurrection again in a
New born day.

The recurring light—"That tips the hills with gold"—
And breathes a life-spring of health, of joy, and hope
In the eternal future, inscribes a
Language of peace and rest around the heart,
And around the shrine of the great and unsolved
Mysteries of Creation.

JOHN BEVAN.

THE END.

Printed by
Whitcombe & Tombs Limited,
Christchurch.
1906

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