

land, and made for themselves comfortable homes. The good order which is everywhere maintained amid the temptations of so exciting a pursuit is above all praise.

7. Agriculture is fast progressing on the plains of Canterbury, and in the valleys and lowlands of Otago. Long-woolled sheep of several kinds, and the best breeds of cattle, have also been imported in large numbers, and thrive admirably. The hills and uplands of both Provinces are still occupied chiefly by flocks of the merino sheep, which find there a climate and country resembling, in many respects, their original home in Castile and Estremadura.

8. It is a journey of about two hundred and twenty (220) miles from Dunedin to the great inland lake of Wakatipu, which is fifty-two (52) miles long, with a breadth averaging from two to five miles. It is 1,070 feet above the sea level, and is surrounded by lofty mountain ranges capped with perpetual snow, and rising precipitately from the water. Lakes Wanaka and Hawea, and the other mountain lakes of Otago, are mostly similar in physical formation and in grandeur of scenery.

9. It is a remarkable fact that Lake Wakatipu was not known to the colonists at Dunedin and elsewhere on the sea coast of Otago before 1860. There was a tradition among the Maoris of the existence of a vast mysterious lake in the interior; but an enterprising settler (Mr. William Gilbert Rees) was the first European who reached its shores, in the January of the above-mentioned year. Already there are two flourishing townships (Queenstown and Kingston) on Lake Wakatipu, and steamers ply regularly on its waters. The mountains and lakes of this part of New Zealand are becoming the resort of an annually increasing number of tourists from the neighbouring Colonies. In fact, they will soon be for Australasia what Switzerland is for Europe.

10. After leaving Otago, I crossed the River Waitaki into Canterbury, and travelled to the foot of the glaciers on the western side of Mount Cook. The distance is about one hundred and ten (110) miles from the seaport town of Timaru; the first seventy (70) miles—that is, as far as Lake Tekapo—can be traversed in a carriage, and the remainder on horseback. We encamped for two days in a tent close to the great Tasman glacier, which Dr. Hochstetter* describes as “surpassing in magnitude by far those of the Himalayas and European Alps,” and which is said to be the largest in any temperate region of the world, with the exception of some glaciers recently discovered in Thibet. Moreover, the semi-tropical luxuriance of the foliage is another feature in which the Alps of New Zealand far surpass the mountain ranges of Europe.

11. A graphic and scientific description of the Southern Alps, explaining their geology and physical geography, will be found in the 21st chapter of Dr. Hochstetter’s work, which embodies the researches of Dr. Hector, Dr. Haast, and other explorers and naturalists.*

“The Southern Alps proper commence south of the saddle between the Teremakau and Hurunui Rivers, on the boundary between the Provinces of Nelson and Canterbury. Here in the middle of the Southern Island, the mountains attain their greatest height, and as far as Haast’s Pass on the boundary of the Province of Otago, leading from Lake Wanaka to the West Coast—a distance of two hundred (200) miles—they form in the direction from N.E. to S.W., a chain of towering mountains, which, as to the height of their summits, and as to the size and extent of their snow-fields and glaciers, rival the Pennine and Rhætian Alps. The first navigators on the coast of New Zealand looked already with wonder at those magnificent alpine heights clothed in perpetual snow, the giant summits of which now bear the names of Cook and Tasman. The wild forms of the huge rocky masses on the West Coast towering to the skies, and bidding defiance to the terrific breakers, were always an object of deep admiration to the sailors visiting these shores; but up to our times this mountain region remained a wilderness, untrudged by the foot of man. On the discovery of New Zealand it was uninhabited—for the Natives shunned this solitary mountain wilderness—and it has remained uninhabited to this very day;

* I would also refer to several able papers on the same subject, contributed by these and by other learned geologists to the Journals of the Geographical and Geological Societies of London. It is understood that Mr. Sealy, of Canterbury, is about to forward to the Geographical Society some excellent photographs of the glaciers and snowy peaks of that Province. Lastly, I annex (under separate cover) copies of seven of Dr. Haast’s reports (chiefly geological) to the Provincial Government of Canterbury.