

traditions, no ruined and ivy-covered monasteries, haunted ruins, or battlefields where brave men died for honour and the liberty we now possess. I may just say of Ophir that it possesses the generality of shops, hotels, churches, that gold has been and is being got in its vicinity, and that's about all. The trade of the town received a decided impetus from us, for butcher, baker, and grocer were each interviewed in turn, until we felt proof for some time against the demands of our remarkable appetite. Beyond the town we had to cross the Manuhirika River. We all got into the trap to ford it, and packed two bikes on top of the dog, who was lame and a passenger before we noticed him. However, 'Vic' lost no time in calling attention to the mistake. Then we stuck in the middle of the stream, but were disinclined to put our shoulders to the wheel, as per Hercules' advice, for the water was rather deep. Instead we all shouted, 'Hed-dup,' and 'Ged-dup,' and the horses pulled desperately, whether in their anxiety to get across or to escape from our noise I know not, but, at any rate, they pulled us over without any further hesitation.

At lunch time the grass at the roadside ignited from our fire, and the flame spread like wildfire. It was 'all hands to the pump,' or rather to the bucket and billies, for where the fire, if left alone, would have ended, goodness knows. As it was a great black patch of smoking tussocks was left as the result of our carelessness. Passing Beck's, and fording the Manuhirika for the second time, we pitched our tent close to Blackstone Hill station. The 'Driver and I' volunteered to get water and milk from the station. We came to a small house first, and looking through a window saw a collection of unkempt, unshaven individuals playing cards; but they were only the station hands enjoying the end of the week's rest, and not brigands and cut-throats as our imagination wanted to picture them. Getting water here, we went to the homestead for the milk. We knocked and shouted, but no response, though we could hear someone softly playing what, remarkable coincidence, was the hymn, 'Wait, Meekly Wait, and Murrmur Not.' We knocked till our hands were sore, and then called into requisition a bicycle wrench, and presently footsteps were heard approaching. To this day I cannot say what instinct made us look to see if the billy were presentable, but we did so, and to our horror found it contained remnants of the chops we had bought that afternoon, and frantically we endeavoured to get rid of them before the young lady answering our knock arrived, and it rejoices me to say we just succeeded.

'It will be a bad winter for the stock; feed is so scarce,' was the cry we had heard all along our journey, and the truth of this had been driven home to us by our having to pay pretty stiffly for the chaff for our horses. One paddock of oats we saw next day had been so dwarfed by the drought that the heads barely reached to the knife of the reaper that stood melancholically amongst them.

At Hill's Creek, said to be the highest township in Otago, we were taken by some people for itinerant photographers. 'I prefer that to "hawkers," anyhow,' said Amateur, looking somewhat consoled.

Wedderburn was the next township we came to, and a battered and indistinct finger post a little farther on indicated to us that Naseby was comparatively close at hand. We were into the latter place almost before we knew it. Perhaps I had better not tell too much as to our losing ourselves in the town, mistaking a blind road for the main one, of attempting to turn and retrace our steps, and the wheels of the van getting locked in the turning and refusing to budge. And all Naseby (it seemed to us) had assembled to witness our discomfiture. I wonder if they thought we had a waxworks show or a cyclorama inside the wagon? But we escaped at last and took refuge in a quiet little corner on the outskirts of the town, and far from the madding crowd.

Naseby is one of the largest of the inland towns of Otago. It is at an altitude of 1,900 feet, and already the mountains adjacent were beginning to assume their coats of white. To a person standing on one of the hills flanking it, the town appears to lie in the centre of a huge honeycomb, for on every side has the hand of the miner delved into the ground. The clouds were looming darkly over us and we set to work with right good will to pitch the tent and dig trenches around it, and when the rain fell, we were inside and happy and comfortable.

From Naseby to Kyeburn the road practically drops all the way, and Cook and I had a splendid spin of twelve miles. We two had got into the habit of riding ahead for several miles and then stretching ourselves on the warm tussocks, reading or dozing until the van overtook us, when we scorched ahead again. This day we were in front a good distance, when we espied a rocky basin into which a stream ran, and in a few minutes we had both stripped and were swimming and splashing about. But on going back to don our clothes, we found them dotted all over with ants, whose nest we had apparently

disturbed whilst undressing. Imagine some uncomfortable feeling, say that of a person on his way to a dentist to have a tooth pulled, and it may be realised how we felt as we pulled on the most necessary part of our costume, after which we removed a safe distance and completed our dressing, carefully examining and shaking each article before resuming it.

Leaving the Maniototo plain behind, we entered the hills, and by night had reached the head of the Shag Valley, down which we proceeded next day. Oh, what a different prospect now! We had left behind the blotted landscape and discoloured streams of the mining country. Nature assumed an altogether fresher garb. The hills were greener and the little streams clear as crystal as they rippled along bordering soft grassy plots, that invited us to stretch ourselves upon them. The soil was tilled, not wrecked, and fields of yellow corn and trim cosy farms greeted us. Then we came to Palmerston, with its cone-shaped Paketapu hill overtopping it, and here we turned our faces south towards Dunedin, and journeying on reached Waikouaiti at the sea-side. Both are fairly large towns on the main road from Dunedin. The latter place was a whaling station long before the capital city of Otago was thought of. We camped by the Waikouaiti river, and Cook, recognising that it would be his last opportunity to distinguish himself, bestowed a lot of pains on a rabbit stew which he would term an 'Irish' stew, though the bunnies were colonial without doubt. 'Och, and it's a broth of a stew,' said the Amateur, and a little bone forthwith got into his mouth and nearly broke a tooth.

For the last time we pitched our tent, spread out our blankets and folded our coats for pillows, feeling just a little sad as we thought that soon our gipsy life would be a matter of memory only. About daybreak in the morning a strong wind rose, and four pair of eyes gazed anxiously up at the ridgepole of the tent, which earlier in the night had cracked ominously. The owners of the said eyes were not left in doubt very long, for a stronger gust than usual snapped it in twain, and four heads dived under the blankets with marvellous rapidity to escape the broken pieces as the pole, and the tent with it, collapsed. There we were enveloped in a mass of tugging canvas, which threatened to pull out the pegs, blow away, leaving us exposed to the vulgar gaze. Somewhat ignominiously we had to rise, and two at a time held up the folds of the tent while the others dressed as best they could.

Continuing our homeward journey down the coast, we came to Merton, then climbed the steep Kilmoreg hill, the bane of many a cyclist. Cook and myself prudently walked down the steepest part of the opposite side, and not unwillingly, for the bush on either side was very pretty, to us doubly so after the treeless and barren interior. Just before we came to Waitati, a little township at the foot of Mount Cargill, which lay between us and Dunedin, it commenced to rain. Then more than ever did we appreciate our caravan. Packing the bicycles away, we all four jumped inside the wagon and comfortably ascended the hill, beguiling ourselves with song, story, and merry chat. Arrived at the top, we stayed to drink in the grand panoramic view of Port Chalmers, Otago Harbour and Peninsula, and Pacific Ocean that there presented itself. Truly people sometimes have at their own doors sights exceeding in beauty those they travel miles and miles to see. Then Dunedin hailed in sight, and rattling down the steep road, we were soon at our journey's end, and at home relating to sympathetic and interested ears our adventures in a three weeks' caravaning tour.

The ancients counted three kinds of kisses—Basis, that between friends and relatives; Oscula, the kiss of veneration; Suavia, the kiss proper—that between lovers. The monks of the Middle Ages—great theorists—divided the kiss into fifteen distinct and separate orders—1, the decorous, or modest kiss; 2, the diplomatic, or kiss of policy; 3, the spying kiss, to ascertain if a woman has drunken wine; 4, the slave kiss; 5, the kiss infamous—a church penance; 6, the slipper kiss, practised towards tyrants; 7, the judicial kiss; 8, the feudal kiss; 9, the religious kiss (kissing the cross); 10, the academical kiss (on joining a solemn brotherhood); 11, the hand kiss; 12, the Judas kiss; 13, the medical kiss—for the purpose of healing some sickness; 14, the kiss of etiquette; 15, the kiss of love—the only real kiss. Oliver Wendell Holmes calls a kiss 'a hissing consonant.' He might have added that it generally follows a vowel!

Jesters sometimes pay dearly for their jokes. One, at Home, who frightened a married woman into fits by telling her that her husband had been severely injured in a railroad accident has had to pay £100 for his fun.

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THE use of silk ribbons to tie up cigars originated in Cuba. The Spaniard's patriotism impelled him to choose the national colours of red and yellow, and at the present these two colours, separate or in combination, are still the favourites. The first ribbons were made in Barcelona, and were the rich crimson scarlet known as the Figaro, the vivid yellow of the Cabanas and Partigas, and the red and yellow of the Espanola. The first domestic ribbons made were of cotton, of pale yellow, with a brown stripe running down the centre, and this was speedily followed by a ribbon made wholly of silk. About thirty years ago, a cigar manufacturer in America conceived the idea of having his name printed on the silk ribbon, which had hitherto been plain, and also the shape of the cigar. This was at first done in black, then in colours, and eventually in silver and gold, with embossed work and coat of arms. Then the name was woven into the ribbon instead of being printed. Many of these ribbons are still in use on expensive goods. Woven ribbon is very valuable as a trade mark, since it is impossible to duplicate it in small quantities. The raw silk for the ribbons is imported direct from Japan and China. There are ninety-four styles of cigar-ribbons made, varying in width from one-eighth of an inch to an inch and a-half. Some years ago the general public was bitten by a cigar-ribbon fad, and many ribbons were sold by cigar dealers to make lambrequins and sofa cushions. Some of these are very handsome, and brought high prices when offered for sale. A cushion made by a cigar-manufacturing firm in America as a compliment to an actress, whose name was used as a trade mark, cost two hundred and fifty dollars simply for the needlework and time expended on it.

Cricket (says an American newspaper correspondent) is a good game for Englishmen and dead men, or any other phlegmatic and stoical people. There are eleven men a side and an umpire, and what the umpire says is law. Englishmen are not kickers. The first cricket umpire was probably a Saxon king, and anybody who objected to his decisions went home in the dead wagon. A bowler throws the ball at a little wooden gate, which stands just behind one of the batters. If the gate is knocked down the man is out; if the ball is caught on the fly he is out; and he may be put out in several other ways, including getting knocked by a clout with the ball. When he hits the ball he scoots up and down the track, and scores a run per scoot. Ten men must be put out to end an innings. This is why the game usually lasts the greater part of a century. In England, when there is a cricket match on deck, the men close up the shops, and take their meals and wives along to see the funeral fun.

In one of the London suburban districts during the winter months, dances are often given at the swimming baths, which are boarded over for the occasion, the big bath being used for dancing and a smaller one for supper. At a ball given there, the guests crowding in to supper were confronted by a placard on which was the startling announcement, 'No one allowed here without clothes.'

Professor Falb of Vienna predicts that on November 13th, 1899, the earth will collide with a comet. The earth will not suffer, but all living beings will be suffocated by poisonous gases.

A woman having passed an examination in veterinary surgery in England, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons refuses to grant her a certificate until the courts have decided that it is legal for women to be horse doctors. She is a Scotch woman and a graduate of a Scotch college.

A Danish scientist, Dr. Johannsson of the Agricultural High School at Copenhagen, has discovered that chloroform and ether have a wonderful power in awakening the vegetable kingdom; while they put the animal world asleep, a closed flower can be re-opened instantly by either of these agents.

A German surgeon is now healing wounded hearts. He is Herr Rehn of Frankfort-on-the-Main, and he told the surgical congress of Berlin that when a man stabbed through the heart was brought to his hospital not long ago he laid bare the organ and checked the hemorrhage by means of a suture. The patient was then exhibited to the congress alive and well. It is the doctor's belief that many cases of a like nature can be successfully coped with.