

ing sight on a rough day to see the waves dashing themselves against Scott's Point (or as a digger there spells it 'Skotch Poynt'), a huge conglomerate cliff at the northern extremity of the beach, but distance lends enchantment to the view. We were nearly washed away there once. We had just descended a nasty precipice on to some rocks for the purpose of fishing, when the other members of the party, who were on ahead, screamed out for me to stop where I was. It was lucky I did so, as an enormous wave just then came up close to me, and when it had passed I found my friends clinging to the rocks, drenched to the skin, and a kit containing our lunch, etc., floating in the sea. We adjourned to a safer place, but after we had been there some time, although the tide was going out, three huge breakers one after the other came over the boulder on which we stood, washing the balance of our belongings away, and they would have taken us also had it not been for the friendly projections of rock to which we hung. We took the hint and cleared, after having caught nothing but five stupid sharks.

THE GUMFIELDS.

The land for miles to the south of Parengarenga Harbour is dug for kauri gum, and in riding over it one continually comes upon diggers' camps of from two to fifty men. These diggers are mostly Austrians, who on account of their thrift and honesty, have almost superseded men of our own nationality. Their huts are made of sacks lined with canvas, and the chimney is built of huge sods. A couple of rude bunks are on one side of the interior, and on the other is a box doing duty for table and cupboard. Some diggers do a good deal of reading, but they are mostly ignorant men, especially the foreigners. They are, nevertheless, most hospitable, and always ready to offer you a huge mug of tea, half a tin of meat, and a junk of excellent bread. I read with amusement in an English periodical that a gumdigger dug on an average something over roolbs a day! At this rate he would be worth about a thousand a year in good times! At all events they are now more than content if they can average 14lbs of clean gum a day, and can then save money if they want to. Of course, a new chum might work for a week without 'striking a patch,' and it is hard work for all of them. The poor fellows who, in order to make a living, are exiled to an ugly desert away from all the comforts of home and civilization, are greatly to be pitied. Let us hope that gold-mining in this district will one day employ the men who are now searching for gum. There are certainly plenty of quartz reefs about, but it remains for some enterprising capitalist to thoroughly prospect the place.

A GUMDIGGERS' BALL.

Have you ever been to a real up-country dance? I rode twenty-four miles to attend one, but it will last me for the rest of my life. Having parted with our Colonial Robert, we passed into a rather mossy-looking room, full of Maoris and Austrians. The floor was coated with mud, and slippery enough to satisfy the most fanciful desires, while the walls were bedecked with fine tapestry made by workers with more industry and legs than myself. The whole was illuminated on a brilliant scale by means of two sticks nailed across one another with a candle on every point. Promptly to the first strains of the band (one accordion) the whole assembly of some thirty couples sprang to their feet, and there was a wild struggle for possession of the floor. The master of ceremonies soon appeared with a stick, and standing in the middle of the room, offered to hit anyone who came too close. This parody on dancing continued until daylight, when buckets of beer and pannikins were brought out, and I hope somebody helped those who helped themselves, for most of them were soon snoring, and the remainder fighting. Of course they all danced in heavy boots and many with spurs and gaiters, and after the ball was over it was interesting to see the fantastic designs in candle grease splashwork from the candles on the giddy revellers' hats. I am satisfied that once in a lifetime is often enough to witness an up-country dance.

SHEEP MUSTERING.

In February I had the pleasure of joining in the sheep mustering, and it was indeed a novel experience. At about 2.30 a.m., and apparently to the sleepy soul not five minutes after you had retired, you are ruthlessly awakened by the cracking of whips and the barking of dogs, and the Maoris singing out 'Eara! Eara!' 'Get up! Get up!' With a sigh you turned out, light your candle, and go into breakfast, after which the stable is visited. Here some eight or ten horses are loudly munching their food, while they are groomed and saddled in the candle light by half-a-dozen natives. It always reminds one of the knights of old having their chargers prepared for the fray. It is pleasant to see the sun rising as you ride along the cliffs and hill tops, and to hear the bleating of the sheep wafted towards you by the gentle sea breeze. The landscape gradually unfolds itself, and as the darkness disappears you can see further and further until the eye reaches the cliffs at Mongonui,

a hundred miles south. Sleepy townsfolk who never enjoy these things don't know what they miss.

One evening on the north coast we had a mob of about 3,000 sheep together, and as it was too late to drive them to the station, we decided to stay there all night. After tea we accordingly adjourned with our charge to a beautiful little valley where there was a paddock. The wild cattle, which were amusing themselves in this, soon disappeared over the fence, so we divided into parties, Mr Crane and I commanding the top of the paddock, and set to work. We gathered huge piles of firewood, and having erected breakwinds, made sumptuous beds of tit-tree and fern, standing our saddles on end at the top, and using our coats for pillows. What a pretty picture it was under the thicket of silver birches in the firelight and starlight! The horses were hobbled, and while some of us lounged round the fires talking or sleeping, others, with the aid of the dogs, looked after the sheep. I paid a call to the Maoris before turning in, and found them, as usual, playing games, until Mr Motur brought the proceedings to a termination by saying 'Tat's 'nough games for tis night' and making for bed. At 3 a.m. we struck camp, and started home after what had been to me a jolly camping party.

Mr Crane has charge of over 6,000 sheep, the increase among them last year being 90 per cent., and any one who sees their good, clean condition, and how round and comfortable the cattle are, will dispel the delusion that the extreme north is nothing but a worthless waste.

As regards the future of this estate, it seems to me eminently adapted for a large canning and direct exporting station for supplying foreign markets. It produces the very best mutton and beef, all kinds and any quantity of fish and oysters, game of many sorts, excellent pork, and the choicest fruits, to say nothing of a present average of about 100 cases of gum per week, besides wool, hides, etc. It is a little kingdom in itself.

COST OF LIVING IN THE TRANSVAAL.

At a recent sitting of the Industrial Commission in Johannesburg, one of the witnesses, a miner, gave the following table, showing the cost of living in the Transvaal as compared with the expenditure in England:—

	England.	Transvaal.
Milk .. .. .	2 4	0 15 0
Butter .. .. .	0 6 8	1 0 0
Meat .. .. .	1 4 0	2 10 0
Vegetables .. .. .	0 10 0	.. .. .
Bread .. .. .	1 1 0	2 0 0
Groceries .. .. .	1 2 0	10 0 0
Doctor's fees .. .. .	0 14 0	0 7 6
	£5 3 0	£20 12 6

'DETECTIVE DAY' AT HOLLOWAY.

In the June number of the *Windsor Magazine* Alfred Aylmer gives some interesting information concerning the various methods adopted by detectives for establishing the identity of criminals. 'It frequently happens that a man or woman who has got into trouble, and has been arrested for some small offence, is very much "wanted" for another, infinitely more heinous; or again, that the law-breaker proves to be someone "at large on license"—a ticket-of-leave man, making improper use of the freedom conceded to him on the express condition that he will keep out of harm. So great importance attaches to identification. Many methods are employed to compass this; but that which is by far the most interesting and perhaps the most efficacious up to the present time is the detectives' inspection made three times weekly at Holloway. There is a great cluster of plain-clothes policemen around the gates on the morning in question—thirty of them: twenty-two Metropolitan and six of the City police, with one superior officer, and an inspector from New Scotland Yard. They are mostly burly, well-built, straight-limbed fellows, with the square shoulders, erect bearing of men who have been drilled, and that peculiar firm foothold and rather slow-moving regulation gait of the constable on his beat. For one and all have been "uniformed," have learnt the rudiments of their profession in the common round of everyday police business in the streets. Their faces have also a sort of family likeness; all, with the usual variety of feature noticeable among any thirty different men, have observant eyes, set lips, and a general look of thoughtful reticence and reserve. In outward appearance, however, especially in costume, they offer strong contrasts. Each has pretty well followed his own taste in dress. They are in short, as mixed and medley a lot to look at as you would see in any crowd at a street corner, and this result is no doubt encouraged by the authorities, who wish their detectives to differ in no marked or distinctive way from the rest of the world. As watching, "shadowing," examination and inquiry form so large a part of their duties, there is wisdom in this rule. But I question whether our London detectives are not very generally recognizable, at least by those they pursue, and this very ceremony I am about to describe must, and this very ceremony I am about to describe is now ready in the great exercising-yard of the prison. It is a march past rather than a parade, for the whole body of prisoners slowly circle round and round the outer or widest circle of the stone-paved paths that are marked out from the grass—carefully regarded by the little group of reviewing or inspecting officers collected in one corner of the yard.'



AMONGST all kinds and conditions of men to-day the devotee of the fragrant weed is to be found, but it may be interesting to the English smokers to know some of the strange ways in which the narcotic weed is employed by other nations. This, then, shall be the writer's apology for the present article.

The Spaniards are probably the most clever smokers on the face of the earth. The Spaniard will take a long pull at his favourite cigarette, inhale the smoke, take up a wine bottle, pour half a pint down his throat, converse in a most easy and natural manner for several minutes, and then exhale the smoke in a steady cloud while a look of complacent delight illumines his dusky face.

In Paraguay the men smoke and the women chew tobacco. When a traveller enters a house there the host greets him first with a pipe of lighted tobacco—Indian fashion—which is smoked in silence. Then the lady of the house emerges from her boudoir, laden in silk and satin of the rainbow persuasion, with a huge plug of tobacco reposing inside her damask cheek. She greets the visitor with an ungainly bob, removes the very palpable plug from her mouth, and presents the latter to the startled visitor for a kiss, this being the cheerful custom of that charming clime. These preliminaries being over, the men resume their huge pipes, the lady her palpable plug, and all these things are lovely.

The mountaineers of the higher Himalayas have a very curious fashion of their own of enjoying the fragrant weed. They bore tiny tunnels in the frozen snow. At one end of the snow tunnel they place a heap of tobacco with a piece of smouldering charcoal, while at the opposite end they lie prone upon the ground with their mouths to the aperture, from which they inhale the smoke of the glowing narcotic until they roll over in a delicious stupor of semi-intoxication.

The Negritos of Tozon are most inveterate smokers. Strange to say, they reverse the usual order of things by placing the lighted end of the cigar in their mouths. They scarcely ever remove the cigar from their lips except to partake of a meal. Their passion for smoking is so strong that they will readily barter their wives for tobacco if the necessity presents itself.

The dusky inhabitants of Deschamps mix their tobacco with zatron, pepper and water, so as to make a kind of pudding. This they call 'buchs.' They take a piece of this incongruous mess and place it in their mouths to chew, and after having thus extracted some of the more potent elements the remainder is dried and smoked through a rude clay pipe.

As practical 'consumers' of the weed, in a literal and absolute sense, there are no people who can excel, or even equal, the hardy Esquimaux. These remarkable folk do not believe in wasting any portion of the weed, so they first smoke the tobacco, next devour the ashes and then actually drink the acrid nicotine deposit from their pipe, and they regard it as a luxury. A recent traveller in their frigid clime vouches for the truth of this statement, and tells how he was besieged by scores of Esquimaux, who begged him to give them his pipes to clean out that they might revel in the luxury of a draught of nicotine oil.

In striking contrast to the foregoing are the smokers of Japan, who are probably the most temperate and cleanly of all smokers. The rudest coolie or the coarsest farm labourer, equally with the lady of rank and the Minister of State, are content with the 'kisarai,' a small, neat pipe, the bowl of which is often smaller than a lady's thimble. Into this diminutive receptacle is placed a tin ball of the finest cut leaf tobacco, which is lighted with a piece of charcoal. From this the smoker will take only one or two long draws, after which the glowing ball is dug out of its bowl and thrown away, a fresh piece being inserted in its place.

The inhabitants of the Cook Peninsula, Australia, are passionate smokers. Their pipes are made of bamboo three feet in length and four inches in diameter. They are fond of forming smoking parties, at which they smoke after the manner of some of the Indian tribes. One huge pipe is used by the whole company, each of which takes a long pull and hands it to his neighbour.

Germany has passed a wise law to guard against poisoning. All drugs intended for internal use must in that country be put up in round bottles, and those which are only used externally must be placed in hexagonal bottles.