

# THE VICE-REGAL TOUR

## OVER THE ALPS WITH THE GOVERNOR.

### FROM CHRISTCHURCH TO THE WEST COAST.

(BY OUR SPECIAL ARTIST.—SEE ILLUSTRATIONS PAGES 252-253.)

#### LAKE WAKATIPU.

**W**E did not leave Pembroke till twelve o'clock, when we started for Queenstown, being driven by the well-known coach proprietor, Mr Craig. Shortly after leaving we entered the Cardrona Valley, down which the Cardrona River runs to join the waters of the Clutha near Pembroke. A pleasant drive up the valley which has been highly auriferous and is still so, judging by the number of alluvial mines to be seen at work, brings us to the saddle near the Crown Mount. The road is 3,500 feet above sea level, and the view from the summit looking towards Lake Wakatipu is of a most panoramic description. The waters of the lake at the Frankton arm environed with huge mountains sparkled most brilliantly in the sunlight. Away in the distance rise the Walter Peak and Hector Mountains, while nearer are the serrated peaks of the Remarkables. Below, on the rich alluvial flat, could be discerned the lovely homesteads and fields of ripe and ripening wheat, forming altogether a most pleasing and effective picture.

We now start the descent, and soon come in sight of Arrowtown, a prettily situated mining township on the Arrow river. A nice craggy drive winding round the mountain brings us into the town, where a deputation of the Miners' Association have an interview with the Hon. K. Seddon on some important mining matters. The interview being over, we start on for Queenstown, and after a pretty

drive from White's Point). Away in the distance could be seen the fantastic-shaped Cosmos Peaks, over 8,000 feet high, clothed with eternal snow and glaciers. Nearer on the right hand was the majestic giant Mount Earnslaw, towering 9,200 feet high, its huge glacier sparkling with dazzling purity in the morning sun, whilst on the left are the Humbolt Mountains, with the giant Mount Bonpland (8,100 feet) keeping sentry over them, as it were, with its glacier-crowned peaks rising almost sheer up from the little village of Kinloch. Following the Humbolt Range round the left, we come to the Tooth Peaks, a peculiar rugged formation running down into the valley of the Greenstone River. Glancing away to our right towers the Richardson Mountains, culminating in Stone Peak (7,224 feet high), whose summit of mica schist and snow shines with dazzling brilliancy, while to complete the picture the lovely Pigeon Island, Long Island, and Rabbit Island lie reflecting their respective forms on the placid lake.

The wool being all aboard, we start off again up the lake, admiring the whole time the wondrous scene before us, till at length a break between the ranges reveals another giant mountain, called Mount Aspiring, rising in a lovely cone to nearly 10,000 feet high, its summit, like that of Earnslaw, as yet untrodden by man. Passing along the wooded slopes of the Humbolts for a considerable distance, we come in sight of the pretty villages of Kinloch and Glenorchy, and soon arrive at Kinloch, where we disembark and stay at Bryant's Glacier Hotel, where accommodation is remarkably good, and attention all that can be desired.

Kinloch is the starting point for Lake Harris Saddle,

towering walls of Earnslaw and the other Cosmos Peaks. One thing noticeable was the predominance of bunny in these parts. As we galloped along the grassy paddocks of Mr Ludemann rabbits were rushing to and fro in hundreds, showing that they have a distinct loving for the English grasses in lieu of the native tussock.

Soon after leaving the pretty station we emerge into the lovely Roubertum Valley, and what a grand sight! In the foreground was a beautiful oasis of native grasses, fringed by lovely Veronica, above which towered the graceful foliage of the birch forest. Away behind the forest, in among the perpendicular heights, a huge waterfall was descending in two leaps, altogether about 700 feet, high, whilst to back up the enchanting scene the glaciers shone on the summits of the massive mountains.

We pass on, crossing and recrossing the Roubertum River, until we come to a steep bit, where we lead the horses up: in parts the slippery slate makes the foothold for the horses rather insecure. The river here now forms a series of lovely cascades, the deep blue shading of the deeper pools looking a most exquisite tone. To our left above the cascades rose a sheer precipice of about 1,500 feet, overhanging near the top and forming a grim weird wall of solid rock. The track leads now through lovely birch forest, and soon through lovely grass patches near the river-bed, till at length we reach the splendid grass flat near where the dilapidated hut stands, which has been erected for the accommodation of visitors, but now wrecked through a mountain torrent washing out the sides.

Leaving our horses grazing on the flat we start the ascent of the saddle, and a good track leads to near the top, where a huge mass of rock has to be scaled; then we come to a grassy flat and soon reach the summit, nearly 5,000 feet high, where a wondrous weird landscape can be gazed upon. Below is Lake Harris, a small sheet of water environed with beetling cliffs, almost devoid of any vegetation, but I may mention that the Alpine flora is most abundant here, the lovely Mount Cook lily growing in profusion. We look away to the westward at the rugged country between here and Milford Sound, which is only about ten or eleven miles away, at present not thoroughly explored on account of the frightful rough state of the country. Nearly opposite us lies Mount Christiana (8,500 feet high), and other equally grand peaks all covered with glaciers. In the deep-abyes below winds the Hollyford River, like a silver thread winding its way to the blue Pacific, which can be seen breaking on the sands beyond Martin's Bay and Lake McKerrow. Everywhere you look there is nothing but grandeur and glaciers, especially along the line of the Darran mountains and Mount Aspiring Range. It is with regret that we have to wend our way to the flat again to our horses, so as to get back early, for as a rule a stay of two days is necessary to



RIVER BEES AND MOUNT FORBES, LAKE WAKATIPU.



VIEW FROM QUEENSTOWN.

drive round Lake Hayes, a charming sheet of water, we are soon on the shores of Wakatipu. Skirting round the shores for some distance we arrive at Eichardt's Hotel, where we stay for the night.

Next morning it was decided to remain all day at Queenstown so as to have an easy day after the rapid rough travelling we had lately undergone, thus giving time for a quiet ramble round Queenstown and the Shotover Gorge, where so much gold was obtained in the early days, and hopes are now entertained that by dredging the bed of the Shotover river, untold wealth still remains to be extracted from among the shingly bottom of the river.

A stroll through the pretty Domain at Queenstown on a summer evening is a real treat. Selecting a nice grassy patch you can lie down just about sunset and watch the marvellous sunset glow on the Remarkables, whose rugged summits seem at times to be bathed in a most exquisite colouring of pink, violet, and purple, which gradually fade away with the setting sun till the whole scene is wrapped in a sombre grey. Another peculiarity is also the lovely twilight which exists in these southern climes. It is quite easy to read a newspaper at 9 o'clock at night. Well, after watching such a lovely scene fade away, it is time to return to the hotel.

Next morning we started for the head of the Lake, taking passage by the smart p.s. Mountaineer. We were soon cutting the placid surface of the lake, on whose bosom are reflected with striking distinctness all the peaks and glaciers which surround the shores. Steaming along the Northern Shore, pretty little strands here and there come into view, backed up with all kinds of native shrubs, the huge bracken-covered slopes of Ben Lomond mountain forming a sombre background. Away across the lake rise Mount Cecil (6,417 ft.), the Walter Peak (5,956 ft.), Afton Peak, Mount Nicholas, and other towering masses of rock, their summits clothed with snow. Still ploughing our way along the shore we pass the Five-mile and Wilson's Bay, then come to a pretty little bay called Bob's Cove, a favourite resort for Queenstown holiday-makers. A short distance further on, we round White's Point and steam across the lake to a sheep station, where we take on board a quantity of wool for shipment to Lake Kingston by rail.

While the steamer remains here it gives us time to look up the head of the lake, and what a grand imposing scene we contemplate! The lake was as smooth as glass (ruffled slightly by the thin line of wake the steamer made when crossing

Sylvan Lake, Rere Lake, the Valley of the Dart, and the Roubertum Valley, and in Mr Harry Bryant we found a conversant and reliable guide. The 'Bryant Glacier' is situated just behind the hotel and is easy of access, a splendid track having been cut through the bush by Mr Bryant. Having decided to visit the Lake Harris Saddle, we started early next morning in company with Mr H. Bryant as guide.

The distance to the Saddle is about eighteen miles through a most charming valley, where some of the grandest scenery in New Zealand is to be found. Following the old tram line and Martin's Bay track we come on to the Dart river, which, being pretty low, we were able to ride along the bed of it, and what magnificent grandeur we witnessed! Passing by Mounts Alfred and Bonpland, we arrive at the Roubertum crossing, after passing through lovely birch forests which come right down to the banks of the Dart. About six miles from Kinloch we pass the lovely little homestead of Mr Ludemann, which forms a pleasing change to the surrounding country. The waving corn, ripe and ripening, sheep, cattle, and horses, with no end of luxuriant English grasses, stand out in lovely prominence against the grim

do this trip thoroughly, but it can be accomplished by good horsemen and climbers in one day from Kinloch without the necessity of camping out. The great charm about the head of the lake is to see the sunset effect on the lofty mountains and glaciers, which sight alone is worth all the trouble and expense.

On our arrival from the Harris Saddle, which, by the way, was pretty early, we were surprised to find that Lady Onslow and the remainder of our party (Lady Gwendoline, Captain Guthrie, Mr and Mrs Hutherford), who had left in the morning to visit the lovely Rere lake by boat, had not as yet returned, and as evening wore on and no signs of the boat on the lake, we were getting anxious on account of the high wind blowing on the lake. Horses were got ready so as to go around the shores of the lake and bring the party back should the wind still continue to blow so strongly. Anyhow, after anxiously waiting till about 9 p.m., the boat and its occupants safely arrived after a lovely trip to the Rere Lake. The cause of the detention was the high sea which was raised on the lake, and progress by pulling was somewhat tedious.



KINGSTON.

Rere Lake is situated about eighteen miles from Kinloch, and is reached by boat down Lake Wakatipu (eight miles) to Elfin Bay, and from there a lovely track inland of about two miles brings you to Rere Lake, which is the most beautiful of all the small lakes around Wakatipu. The following day witnessed our departure from the lovely scenery around the head of the Lake, so embarking on board the s.s. Ben Lomond, after a very pleasant steam down the Lake we again reached Queenstown, where we stayed for the night. In the morning we were again underway on board the Ben Lomond bound for Kingston, the railway terminus. The trip from Queenstown to Kingston is not nearly so interesting as the trip to the head of the Lake. A lovely view is obtainable of Queenstown from the steamer shortly after leaving with Ben Lomond, 5,747 feet, rising just behind the town. On our right as we go down the lake the huge beetling mass of Mount Cecil (6,417 ft.) rises almost perpendicularly from the lake, and away across the lake the Hector Mountains or Remarkables stretch towards Kingston, the jagged double cone of the Remarkables (7,698 ft.) being a conspicuous object. The day being beautifully calm, we soon reached Kingston, where the train was in readiness to take us on as far as Lumsden.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)