The Lion and Sinbad Gully, Milford Sound.

Tourist Department, photo.

Tenting Amongst the Lyell Mountains.

By W. TOWNSON.

LYELL is a picturesque little digging township with its houses perched on the hill-side, where the Buller Road forms an elbow at the crossing of Lyell Creek. It is distant about thirty-five miles from Westport, and as you approach from that direction you cross a very fine iron bridge, supported on stone piers, spanning the Buller River where it narrows between two opposing bluffs. From the bridge it is but a short distance to "Murderer's Bluff," from which eminence you look down upon the slumbering hamlet across the creek.

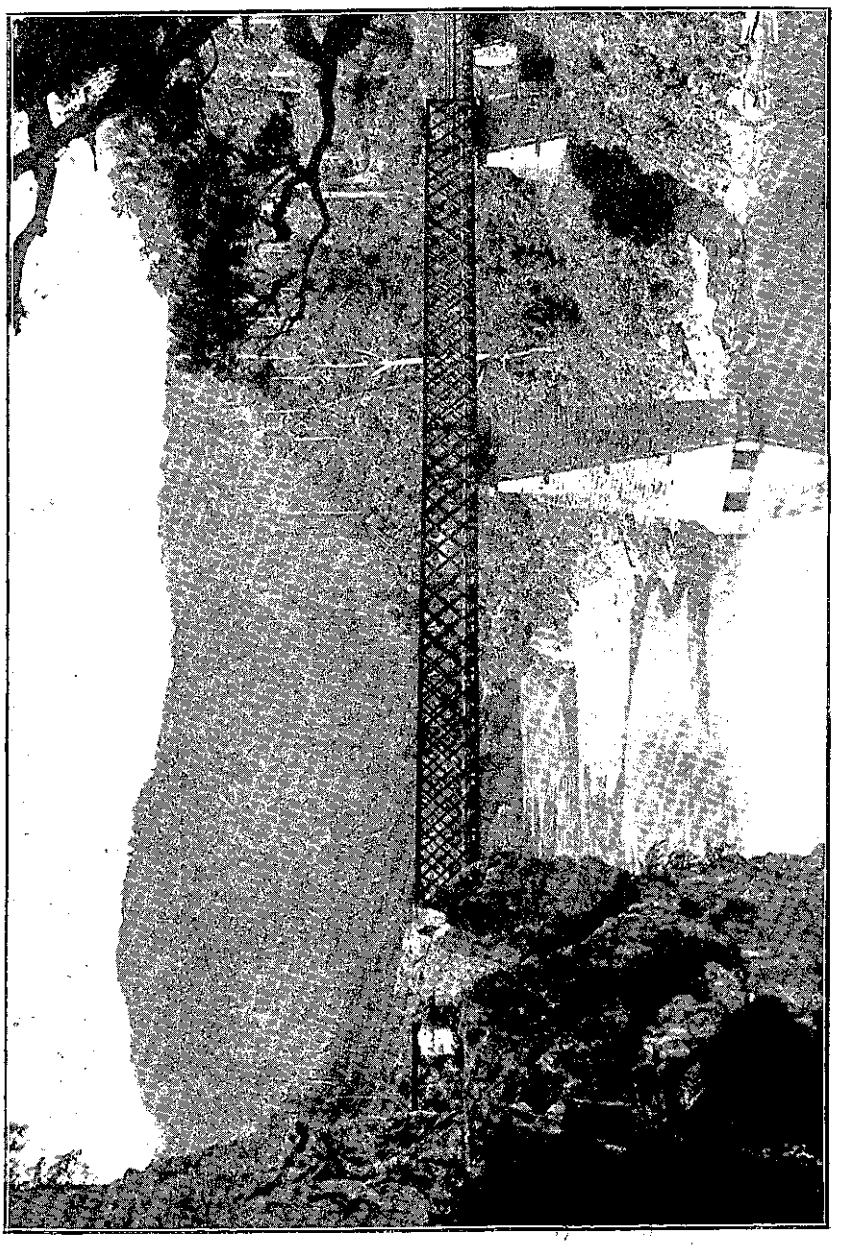
It is not a place in which to hurry yourself, repose is the dominant note, and the only excitements, the arrival and departure of the mail coach, and the influx of litigants and their legal advisers on Court day.

Mr. Boswell and I were bent on exploring the neighbouring mountains, having nearly a month at our disposal for the purpose, and with every prospect of spending a pleasant holiday. The country around was a "terra incognita" in a botanical sense, I had, therefore, an excellent chance of making a good collection of plants, as there was promise of the discovery of new species, and of new facts regarding plant distribution.

In order to work the ground to the best advantage, it was found necessary to camp out, and we were provided with tent and flies—kindly lent by the County Engineer—and camp-gear and stores, packed into the smallest possible compass, so as to make convenient loads for the pack-horses. Mr. Rasmussen attended to the transport of our outfit, and did his work well, and at his hotel we were hospitably entertained. We decided to pitch our first camp under the crown of Boundary Peak, and with this object we set out early the next morning, Rasmussen with the pack-horse in the lead, and my companion and I walking behind, loaded with cameras, rifle, butterfly-net and plant-presses, as any one of these necessary parts of our outfit might be called into requisition during the day's march.

Our route lay along the Buller road for some miles, and then we turned up the spur, following the prospecting track lately made over the Brunner Range. It is good travelling for pedestrians, but certainly not for a loaded horse, as the ground in some of the shady gullies is wet and yielding, and our guide anxiously watched his horse as it struggled and plunged through the soft mire. How quickly a horse scents danger. It was interesting to watch our pack-horse sniffing at a bad place, and looking out for the best means of negotiating it. Slowly we wended our way up the sinuous mountain track, stopping at intervals to admire the ever beautiful beech bush with its wealth of glossy foliage and undergrowth of creepers and ferns.

Our destination was reached just as the evening shadows were creeping over the mountain's side, for



Lyell Bridge over the Buller River.

we had attained an elevation of over 3000 feet, where the road-makers had formerly camped, at what is known as the five-mile, forty-chain peg. It was only needful to sling our tent and fly over the poles conveniently left standing, make fast the guy-ropes, cut firewood, and fresh birch tops for our bunks, and give it a good sweep out with a bush broom, to render it fit for occupation. It proved to be an excellent camp in every respect, and we made it our home for ten days.

At the back of the tent a spring of ice-cold water welled out of the bank, and we scooped out a shallow pool below, which did duty for a bath. Our fire-fly was made of oiled calico, and proved of great service during the next few days, as a nor'-easter set in, and tested its qualities thoroughly. Great raking birch-trees towered over us, providing some shelter from the storm, but as the gale increased they bent before the blast, and swayed to and fro, scattering showers of twigs and leaves around, and causing us no small feeling of insecurity in our little calico house at their base. However, on a mountain side the old patriarchs of the forest become inured to that sort of assault, and take a firmer grip of the ground after each trial of strength with the elements, and we soon gained full confidence in their winning the day, and became indifferent to the battle raging above. The drain cut around the camp was running a banker, and the rain squalls threshed the undergrowth, whilst great masses of vapour swept over us, and we had to pile the birch logs on the fire to keep up an appearance of cheerfulness as we dodged the clouds of pungent smoke.

Fortunately for us the storm abated on the third day, and we set out for a tramp over some of the peaks which constitute the Brunner Range. The track led us through the bush for half a mile, and then brought us out to the clear country, where finger-posts, planted five chains apart, indicate the line to take to strike the next section of the track.

We reached the summit of Boundary Peak at an elevation of 4500 feet, and found there a square mile or more of open country surrounding the mountain top, covered with stunted shrubs and native grasses, to which the County Engineer has given the name of "Flora-dale." An old billy inverted upon a finger-post marked the highest point.

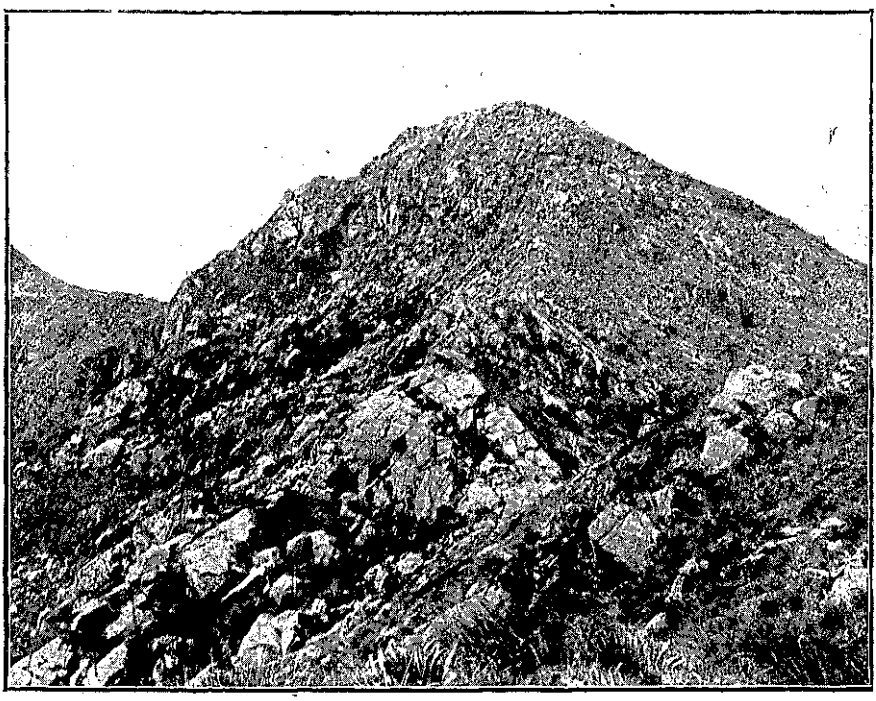
Flora-dale proved subsequently to be rich ground for the plant collector, and I secured many specimens which were new to me. Numerous little rills intersect the bare spurs, those on the north-east face ultimately run into tributaries of the Little Deep-dale creek. At the source of each rill there is a mountain bog, ankle-deep in soddon moss, amongst which many varieties of delicate Alpine flowers bloom. Descending 300 feet we reached the continuation of the track leading further down-hill to a saddle, where in places the birch-trees stood in such close rank that daylight could barely struggle through.

Nature is prodigal in situations where shelter and moisture encourage the growth of the more delicate forms of plant-life, and the whole hill-side was thickly carpeted with many varieties of delicate ferns and great cushions of emerald-green mosses, while the birch trunks were festooned with lichens and parasitic plants, and mosses of many hues hung pendent from their branches.

Bush wrens and creepers were busily prying amongst the lichens, and into the crevices of the bark in search of material for their morning meal; native canaries fluttered in the tree-tops, their clear call relieving the stillness of the forest; yellow-crowned paroquets were calling to us to "give them a bit of bread"; a pair of tomtits, clinging to a supplejack, seemed to enquire into the reason for our intrusion;

the bush warbler's sibilant, broken-off-short-song was also heard; and as I was pointing out some object to Mr. Boswell, a fan-tail lit with all confidence upon my walking stick which I was using as a pointer, and its mate took up its station upon the camera legs which Mr. Boswell was carrying. Altogether we counted seven varieties of birds in one patch of olearias and birch-trees.

After a stiff climb through the bush, we again emerged into the open, where spur after spur had to be patiently surmounted before the top of the next peak was gained, the height of which is 4800 feet.



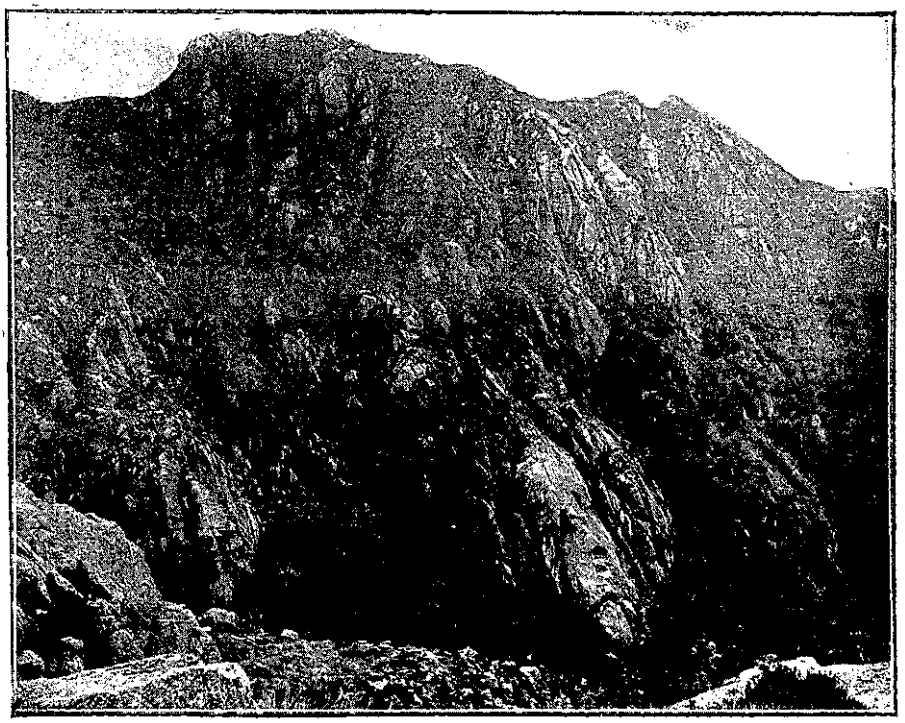
A typical Peak in Brunner Range.

On this first ascent the fog which had been hanging about all the morning, closed down upon us and compelled us to beat a retreat, and on our way home we had to be very careful after finding one finger-post not to lose it in our search for the next. Mr. Boswell stood by the last found whilst I made casts round looking for the next one, the finding of which was proclaimed by a "cooee," a signal which soon brought my companion up, and slowly but surely we worked our way back to the track. One of our troubles was the necessity of climbing over the top of Boundary Peak every day on our return to camp, tired and leg-weary, but there was no escape from it. As we looked through the tree-tops from our camp, Mt. Frederic faced us, and served as a good barometer, for if its top was not enveloped in a vapoury hood, we might safely conclude that our mountains were clear of fog also. When the wind was favourable, we could plainly hear the Denniston whistle, and we set our watches by it more than once. I had a bee alarm clock hanging from the ridge-pole of the tent, and its tick sounded quite homely in our mountain solitude.

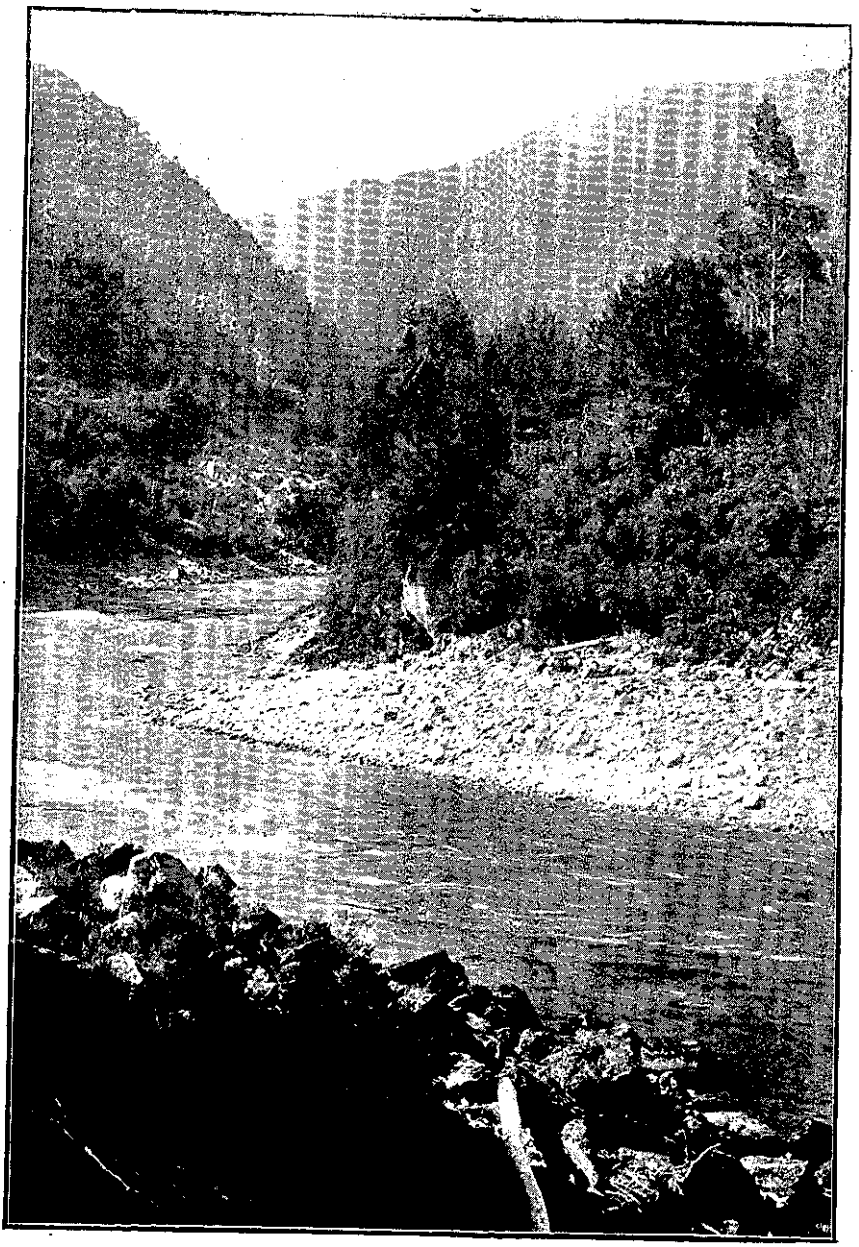
As the next morning proved fine, breakfast was prepared by starlight, and our eggs and bacon were discussed just as dawn was faintly

glimmering, and the kakas were heralding its approach with their harsh clamour. We set out on our climb in excellent spirits, and when we reached the point from where the Inangahua Valley could usually be seen, a strange view was presented to us. The whole valley was filled with billowy mist, out of which a few of the highest mountain-tops rose like islands in a vast sea. The fog-banks extended in wave-like succession far as the eye could reach, motionless, and enveloping all the lowlands as with a white woollen pall. By ten o'clock the sun had dispelled this accumulated vapour, and the morning became brilliantly clear. We travelled as far as the ten mile peg, crossing some rock-strewn bluffs, which so far are unsurveyed and nameless. The track has been made for twenty-two miles, and when finished will reach the Victoria Range, near Reefton.

Spear-grasses have to be reckoned with on this line of country, and the Government Botanist, in writing to me on the subject, expressed his surprise at the curious varieties growing on our West Coast mountains, which are quite unknown on the East. After crossing one high point, a narrow razor-backed saddle led us to the next, and on several occasions we climbed four or five peaks, ranging in height from between four and five thousand feet, before getting back to camp. It was all granite country, with stray patches of micaceous schist, and was well watered, although as we had struck the record summer for fine weather known to the coast, the mountain herbage was beginning to show signs of withering, and many of the springs were drying up. Large flowered mountain daisies starred the Alpine meadows, and what are popularly known as mountain primulas were in great



Bluff on Dividing Range.



Chair across the Buller, where we had to camp out.

profusion, and all the water-courses were decked with veronicas and white-flowered "Senecio Lyalli." One morning I took my Goerz binoculars up with me, and we seated ourselves upon a sunny slope, and had a grand opportunity of observing our surroundings.

McKay's hotel at the Junction was plainly seen, and we watched some cattle being driven along the Buller road. The windings of the Inangahua River could be followed almost to Reefton, but a range of low hills intercepted our view of the town. The Grey valley was spread out before us, backed up to the southward by the snow-clad Southern Alps, Mt. Cook standing out white and majestic with its snowfields glittering in the sunlight. To the west the Paparoa range was seen in its entire length, its rugged outline toothed and indented like the edge of an inverted cross-cut saw, the only glimpse of the sea being through the gap at the entrance to the Buller Gorge, near Westport. Seaward the mountain chain, commencing with Mt. Rochfort and running out beyond Mt. Glasgow, formed a continuous rampart between us and the coastline, while inland we could trace the well-known outlines of Mt. Arthur and Mt. Owen, with Mts. Newton and Mantell filling the middle distance between the Brunner range and the lofty St. Arnaud chain. Mt. Lyell was carefully studied in its every detail, as our next camp was to be pitched under its slopes.

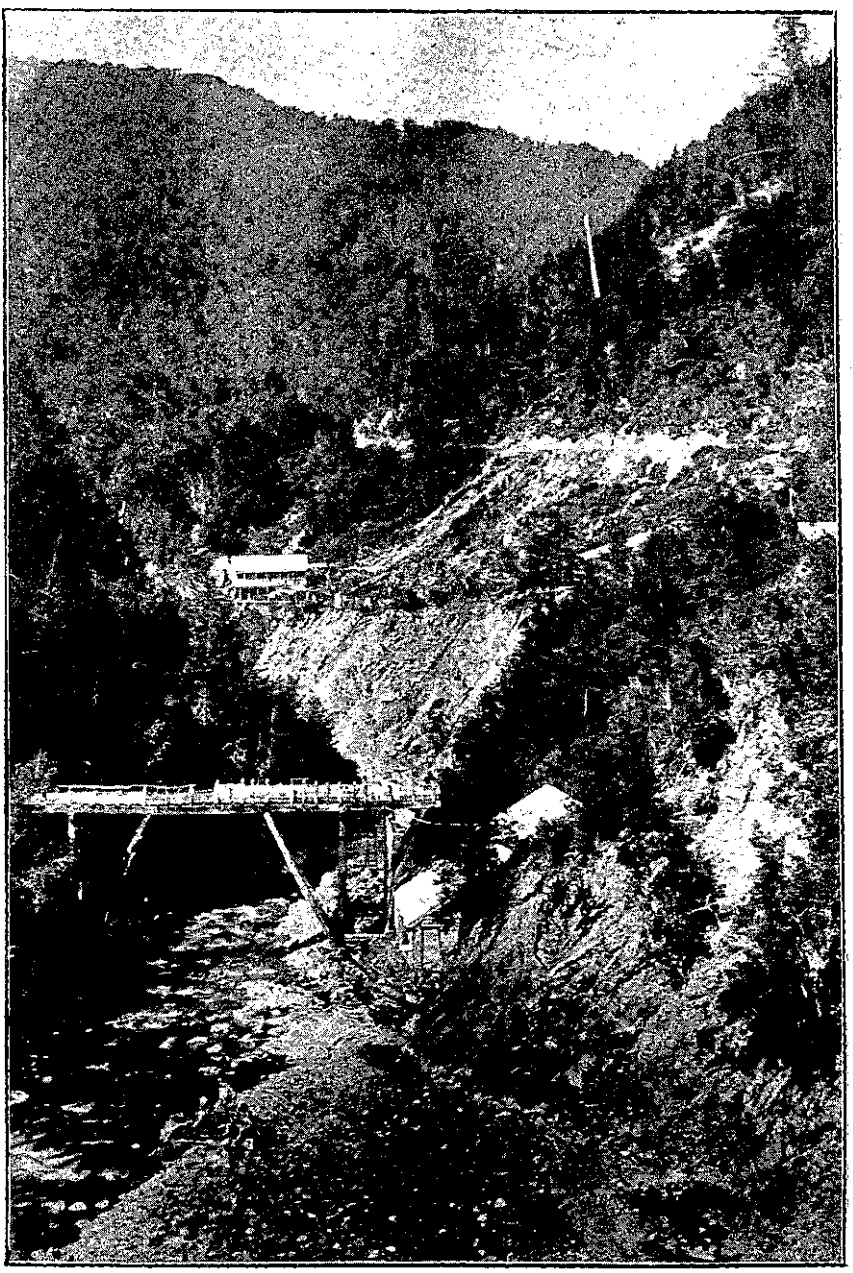
We spent one day on a diverging range which overlooks the Little Deepdale, and in the gully below there is a very fine waterfall, which was running dry during our visit. The crag-fronted bluff in the photograph was a prominent feature in this range, and its rugged scarps, and deeply-scarred face gave it a gloomy and forbidding aspect. I climbed over the top of it, carefully and deliberately, as on its narrow ridges the rocks were loosely piled, and a false step meant a fall of hundreds of feet. The height to which large timber grew on these mountains surprised us, as lofty trees were found at an altitude of over 3000 feet, whilst on the coast ranges they dwarf at a little more than half that elevation. When we reached camp in the evening, laden with spoil, our first consideration was a bath at the spring, then after lighting a fire, and hanging up our wet clothes to dry and smoke, preparations were made for dining sumptuously and well. That meal was invariably thoroughly enjoyed, and during its progress we discussed our plans for the morrow, after which, in the glow of the blazing logs, the aroma of tobacco rose like incense on the night air. The plants collected during the day had to be arranged in the presses before turning in, and the last to bed had to bank up the fire and tie up the door of the tent.

A weka caused us considerable amusement as he constituted himself scavenger-in-chief, and would allow no feathered intruders. He evidently considered that he had pegged out a special claim, and was ever on the watch to see that it wasn't jumped, and if another woodhen so much as peered into a meat tin, or laid beak to a crust of bread or mutton bone, he spread out his wings and sailed for the trespasser, chasing it far down the track, pecking and buffeting it vigorously as it fled. The little bush wrens often flitted about under our fire-fly, creeping familiarly about the tent-poles, emitting their sharp, squeaking notes.

After further excursions to Floradale, and spending a day with the camera in the higher mountains, we concluded that we would break camp and go down to Lyell by the short cut. We packed up our impedimenta ready for the pack-horses, shouldered our swags, and came down to the river-bank opposite the Lyell township. The river here is crossed by a chair, and as we pulled on the line to haul it

Mountain Daisies and Spear Grass.

up to the landing, the rope gave way on the opposite side, and went trailing down into the river, leaving us in rather an awkward predicament. It was too late in the evening to think of effecting repairs, and as there was no other means of crossing that night, we were obliged to camp out in the open, within a few chains of our hotel, but unfortunately on the wrong side of the river. We had brought no provisions with us, and were without blankets, but it was a fine night, and sleeping under the canopy of Heaven was no great hardship. We made a frugal supper of three blackberries and a drink of water, and our bed consisted of a narrow bit of scantling with a bad warp in it. We raised a fire by breaking up an old fence, but it did not suffice to drive away the mosquitoes which proved a nuisance. I do not remember ever having a better opportunity of studying the stars than on that occasion, and we were glad when daylight enabled us to see our way along the old Lyell track, bringing us, after a seven miles tramp, safely to our desired haven, and breakfast. We warned a Chinaman who was in the habit of using the chair, that the line was adrift, but that morning he disregarded our warning, and loosened the chair which we had made fast, got into it, and was hung up over



Road up Lyell Creek.

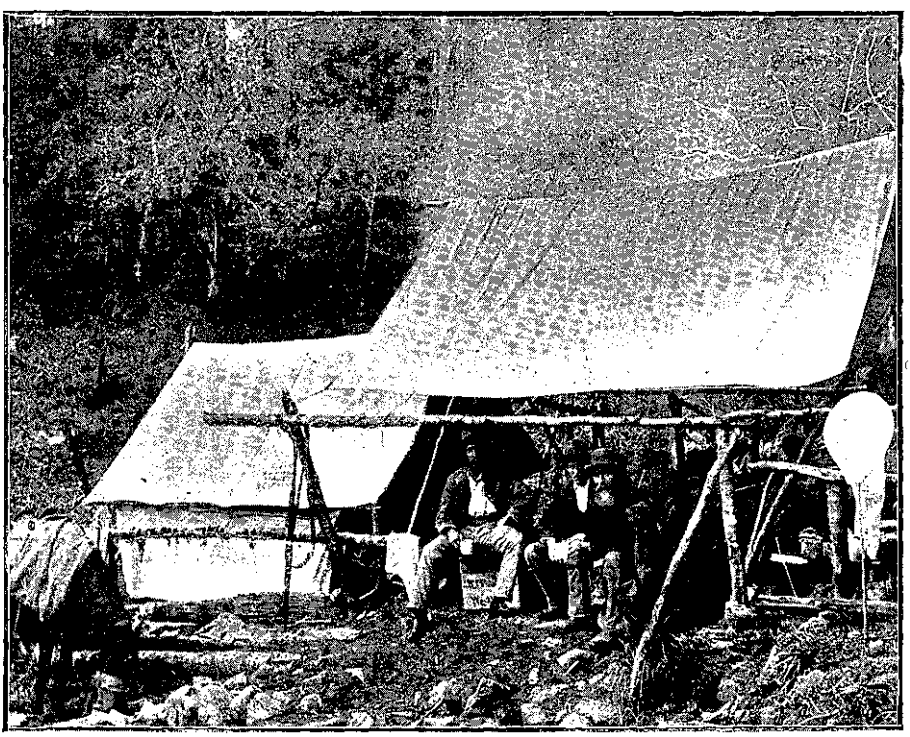
the middle of the stream. He was only rescued by being lassoed and thus hauled in.

After a day or two of rest, we set out with a pack load of stores for a camp already pitched under the spurs of Mt. Lyell. The road follows the Lyell Creek, zigzagging and winding up the side of the Lyell hill, and is very beautiful, parts of it reminding me of pictures which I have seen of passes amongst the Swiss mountains. We passed the Alpine Battery and the little settlement of Gibbstown, peopled by miners and their families.

Still upward our route lay, and I was pleased to find the mossy watercourses which we crossed beautified by mats of the native calceolaria, which adorned the wet rocks with its purple-spotted flowers. The same season Mr. Cockayne found it growing further south, and these are, so far, the only records of its being a native of the South Island. I also found a gentian growing higher up on the side of the track, which is new to the botanical authorities.

Our camp was reached about midday, and after parting with our packer, we were once more left to the solitude of the birch forest about ten miles from Lyell. We soon made our tent habitable, but it was not nearly as good a camp as the one we had left. Water had to be carried up out of a deep gully some chains away, and insects abounded in it. The presiding wood-hen was in this, as in our other camp, a good fighting bird, but could only boast of one feather in its tail, and as it erected this scanty appendage at every step, it presented a very ludicrous appearance.

A sheep-track led us to Mt. Lyell, and we met with no special difficulties in climbing up the western slopes. We had a short saddle to



Our Camp, with Packer having Tea.

cross, on one side of which a small stream was running towards Lyell Creek, and on the other was a tributary of the right-hand branch of the Mokihinui, the saddle being the dividing point of the two watersheds. The ridge of the mountain is semi-lunar, with a rocky face to the north, but clear spurs to the south, and the trig station is at an elevation of 4300 feet.

There is a lakelet near the summit, and one hot morning we made a dash for it, as we were terribly thirsty. We lay down on the grassy bank and buried our faces in its tepid water, drinking deep draughts quite regardless of multitudes of beetles which were sculling about in every direction, and an assorted lot of squirming and wriggling aquatic beasts right under our noses. When our thirst was assuaged we discussed the advisability of taking a dose of insect powder on reaching home.

While climbing up a steep, stony ridge, I found quite a distinct variety of spear-grass, and I have every hope that before long I shall hear that it is another new one. There is a magnificent view from the top of Mt. Lyell, and we made several ascents, but unfortunately there was a considerable amount of burning going on in the valleys, and the smoke obscured the view somewhat. Mt. Glasgow can be seen very distinctly, and its ragged ridges are very imposing. I decided at once that it should be the scene of my next climbing expedition, but that is another story.

On the last day of our stay in camp I went over the bush spur behind our tent, and crossed into New Creek to look at a quartz reef which was being opened up there. I was shown over the workings, and was very favourably impressed with its chances of proving a good property. The same afternoon we paid a visit to Zalatown, which was once a busy and populous digging township. It is situated on a hill-top not far from Gibbstown, and there is nothing now to mark the site but a few broken down dwellings, and a great many empty bottles, which I find constitute one of the main features of a decayed mining camp. Goats and wood-hens roamed unmolested through the rank grass with which the place was overgrown.

Holidays must come to an end. My companion's time was up, so we journeyed once more to Lyell, collected our traps, and reached town, very brown and thin, but well contented with our sojourn amongst the Lyell Mountains. Mr. Boswell returned to work, while I, having more leisure, selected another companion, and set out for Mokihinui and Mt. Glasgow.

Yuletide Observances.

By RACHEL DEE BROWNLOWE.

"Christmas, says Blount, was called the Feast of Lights in the Western or Latin Church, because they used many lights or candles at the feast; or rather, because Christ, the Light of all lights, that true light, then came into the world. Hence the Christmas candle and what was perhaps only a succeedaneum, the Yule-block, or clog, before candles were in general use."

(Brand's Popular Antiquities, by Sir Henry Ellis.)

WHATEVER may have been the original idea in instituting a Feast of Lights in celebration of Christmastide, it appears quite evident that the Yule-clog is a survival of some ancient practice associated with pagan worship. The origin of the name Yule is surrounded with much obscurity. Dr. Annandale gives us four languages in which it is found, in forms strongly resembling each other, namely, Anglo-Saxon, Icelandic, Danish and Swedish. Another authority assures us that all the Celtic peoples were addicted to the worship of the Sun. If we bear in mind the fact that it was not only the winter solstice which was celebrated by the lighting of great fires, but that the summer solstice also was celebrated by the lighting of fires in the open air, we shall see that there is strong reason to believe that the Yule-log has merely been withdrawn by the Christian Church from its heathen associations, and kept a-blazing on the bare merit of its hospitable warmth. The Yule-log, as we know it, or rather as we know of it, is all that properly concerns us. Yet, were we to investigate, the obscurity surrounding this institution is flashed upon at various points by suggestions which lend a lurid contrast to the blissful associations which cling about our Christmastide. Dr. Watson tells us that the worship of Baal extended as far west as the British Isles; and it has been thought that the popular Christmas dish of Furmity is a survival of the ancient Saturnalia. It seems abundantly likely that many of the quaint, and even grotesque practices which obtained in the British Isles in connection with the Christmas festivities were incorporated into the Christian festival from pagan heathenism. The size of the Yule-log was considerable. We are told of an incident which occurred during the Civil War, when one of the combatants burnt the house of an opponent by firing the Yule-log. A rather ironical joke!

Poets have loved to sing of the Yule-log; thus Tennyson:

"Again at Christmas did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth:
The silent snow possessed the earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas Eve."

"The Yule-log sparkled keen with frost."

Herrick, most descriptive of poets, sings:

"Come, bring with a noise,
My merry, merry boys,
The Christmas log to the firing,
While my good dame, she
Bids ye all be free,
And drink to your heart's desiring.

"With the last year's brand,
Light the new block, and
For good success in his spending,
On your psaltries play,
That sweet luck may
Come while the log is a-teending."

He goes on to mention the making of the mince-pie; but says nothing about Furmity, which he mentions in another piece called "The Hock Cart." Furmity is a very palatable dish. It is made of husked wheat boiled; and we know from experience that it goes very well with a great wood fire, in an open Colonial fireplace, even in Auckland, when the weather is cold. Truly, a wood fire is the perfection of a fire; but we must draw the line at a full-sized Yule-log in our wooden houses. Herrick refers to the pretty custom of decorating in his "Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve":

"Down with the rosemary and bays,
Down with the mistletoe;
Instead of holly now upraise
The greener box for show."

One of the most grotesque costoms was that of Going a-hodening. This obtained at Ramsgate, in Kent. It was the procession through the streets of a party of young people; the chief feature of the procession being the hoden, or wooden horse. This curious figure was contrived out of the head of a dead horse attached to a pole about four feet long; over this a horse-cloth was thrown, under which one of the young people was concealed. By means of a string attached to the lower jaw the concealed person kept opening and shutting the horse's mouth. The hideous noise thus produced was accompanied on the part of the others by the ringing of hand-bells. They went from house to house dressed in fancy costumes, singing songs and carols, and were entertained with refreshments, or offered money. The practice took its name doubtless from the hoden; and even after it was discontinued the practice of carol-singing was called going a-hodening.

In some of the northern parts of England the people used to observe a custom of crying "Ule, Ule," in church, when the sermon or service was concluded; and some ran about the streets singing:

"Ule, Ule, Ule, Ule,
Three puddings in a pule,
Crack nuts and cry Ule."

In Scotland it was considered lucky to be the first one to open the door to Ule. Some would place in the doorway a chair or table covered with a clean cloth and spread with bread and cheese "to Yole"; while first thing in the morning it was usual to set a new broom behind the outer door "to let in Yule." The practice of keeping a table spread all day, for all comers, was one which was not perhaps without its attendant disadvantages; for all comers were expected to partake, under penalty of ill-luck; a circumstance calculated, surely, to make calling on Christmas day a serious affair.

One of the most picturesque ways of celebrating the Christmas season was that of bringing in baskets of rosy apples and presenting them to the members of the congregation in Church. To add to the effect, and doubtless to supply some quaint fancy, there was a sprig of rosemary stuck in each apple. The recipients presented the singing-boys, who dispensed them, with twopence, fourpence, or sixpence, as they could afford, in return for an apple. This custom prevailed at Ripon. We are told that in the Isle of Man the servants used to stay up all night; and after the midnight ringing of the bells in the churches, when prayers were done, they would go and hunt the wren. When they had found one of these birds they would kill it, lay it on a bier and bring it to the church. Here, with mock solemnity, and the chanting of a dirge, in the Manx language, they would bury the unfortunate bird.

In Ireland also the custom of staying up to watch for Christmas

was indulged. He who first announced the crowing of the cock was rewarded with a cup of tea in which a glass of spirits was mixed. At Culdaff, in Ireland, it was usual for the working classes to raffle for mutton, when sufficient people could be got to subscribe and pay for a sheep. A favourite game in the Christmas holidays was the game of Kamuran. This was played with a ball, which was required to be sent in a certain course, while the opponent exerted himself to send it in another direction. A crooked stick was used to drive the ball.

The Welsh custom of assembling "in church at about three o'clock in the morning" taking part in a service, and then continuing "singing psalms and hymns with great devotion till daylight," is certainly fully in harmony with the true spirit of keeping Christmas Eve as a vigil. Even those who were unable, through age or other disability, to attend divine service at church, conducted the prayers and sang the carols at home.

In connection with the ancient custom of bringing in the boar's head at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, a good deal of ceremony was observed, and with telling effect no doubt. A blowing of bugles announced the approach of the dish. The cook, dressed in white, came in singing an old song printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1521 :

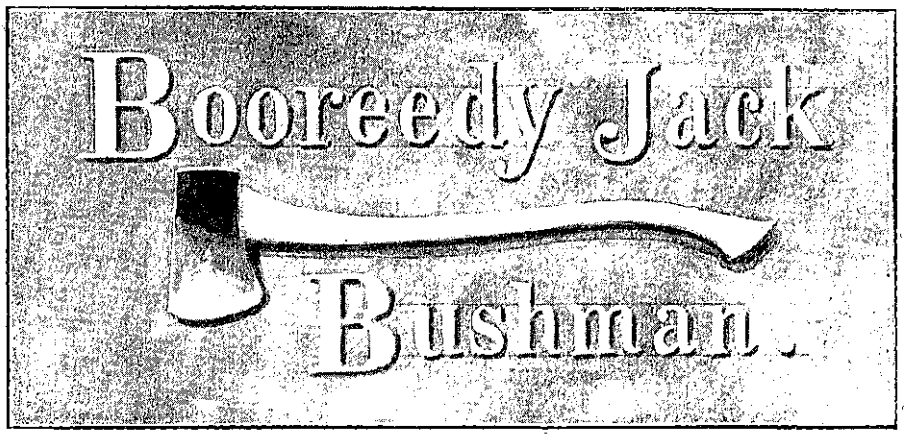
> "The bred heed in hande bringe I,
> With garlens gay and rosemarie;
> I pray you all synge merrilie."

The guests, each of whom had a copy of the words, joined in the chorus.

A similar custom prevailed at Queen's College, Oxford ; but here the ceremony is supposed to have had some reference to a curious experience of a scholar, who once being attacked by a boar, rammed his copy of Aristotle down the beast's throat, so choking him.

Many of the customs described are certainly curious, and no doubt wholly baffling in their origin. Some of them are entirely alien in their spirit from the spirit of the Christian religion ; and yet they have lived, with all the hardihood of superstition rooted in ignorance. Even Christianity does not always prevail over the human hunger for the fanciful ; and one authority tells us that "A superstitious notion prevails in the western parts of Devonshire, that at twelve o'clock at night on Christmas Eve the oxen in their stalls are always found on their knees, in the attitude of devotion." The dwellers in western Devonshire must be singularly innocent of any sense of the excruciatingly ridiculous !

How many of the more commendable and hospitable customs mentioned are still in one form or another in vogue, we do not know. That which, because of its connection with the "old order" seemed likeliest to last, is with the "old order" passing away. After all, only one thing signifies to us, keeping Christmastide in this our great open temple of Nature, where "everything saith glory," and that is, that the true Christmas Spirit shall prevail. That spirit will dictate its own expression ; and its language, the language of kindness, needs no interpreter.



By BRENACH

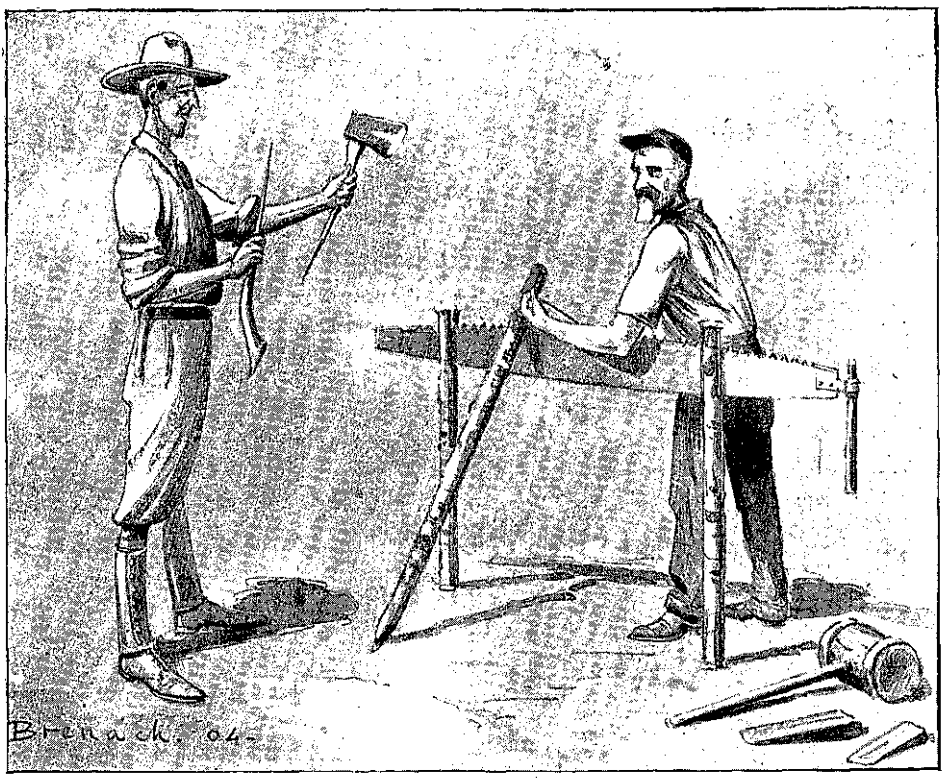
BOOREEDY JACK was a specimen of the old-time bushman, a type now long vanished from the scene. Twenty-five years of Colonial life—during which he had passed through every phase of experience that the Bush affords—kauri-cutting, timber-jacking, pit-sawing, rafting and mill-work, etc.—together with fights and sprees innumerable—had left him at the age of sixty still hale and hearty, though rather stiff in the joints for regular work among the kauri. The only colonial industry he had never tried was gum-digging. That, by the real old-timers was only considered fit for "Mories," new-chum brokers, or such incapable softies as had neither the pluck nor the savvy to tackle the genuine work of the Bush.

It was a fine summer's day, a good many years ago, that he passed through our settlement on a tramp between two distant timber-bushes. He had walked about thirty miles, and it would take forty or fifty more before he reached his destination; so he gladly accepted the invitation of one of our party to stop for the night. The settlement had been only recently formed, and we were all bursting with new-chum energy as we took our first steps in colonial life. With the exception of one or two who had "been out before," and who were able to give us a lead, most of us had learned the science of woodcraft from the pages of "Masterman Ready," or some similarly fascinating work which has lured the adventurous Briton to seek a home beyond the seas. It all looked delightfully simple—in the book—but when we came to tackle the thatching of a house, or the splitting of a refractory log, we found that "Masterman Ready" and Co. did not apply; and though we plunged hopefully on we did not make very satisfactory progress.

The advent of the experienced stranger seemed to offer a solution of the difficulty, and from the start everything went on greased wheels. He knew everything, and there was nothing either outside or inside the shanty that he could not turn his hand to. Whether it was the splitting of posts and rails, the rigging up of a Spanish windlass, the baking of a loaf, or the salting of a pig, old Jack was all there. But it was in the handling of puriri tim-

ber that he especially shone, and indeed by which he acquired the sobriquet of "Booreedy" (settlers' name for puriri), which stuck to him for many a year. It was a picture to see him opening a tough four-foot log. The wedges that our leading amateurs had tried in vain to enter—only to see them bound away into the scrub—seemed to draw like so many spike-nails. He never hurried the operation. "We'll sit down and have a smoke," he would say, "and let her do the work herself. Don't you hear her talkin' ?" as a gentle ticking would indicate that the act of partition had commenced. Then the wedges were "backed up," and a few solid blows from the heavy mauls would complete the operation.

He soon became a regular institution in the settlement. When he had finished with one homestead he would generally go on to another, with perhaps a brief interval for a visit to some of his old haunts. I can see him now as he came on the "Wallaby track." A tall, gaunt figure, slightly stooping from the hips, but still square in the shoulders—his dress a short-sleeved flannel shirt and a pair of moleskin trousers rather the worse for wear, with an old blue jumper tied by the sleeves round his neck. He moved lightly along with short, high steps—as a man does who has spent the best part of his life in the bush, and whose safety depends on how he places his feet. He carried his blankets Maori "pikau" fashion done up in a flour-bag, for in those days the blow-fly boomed through the land. His axe lay on his right shoulder, and in his left hand he carried a small black billy with the arm slightly kinked at the elbow, a habit he had got into from many years of carrying the "jack."



One or two who had been out before were able to give us a Lead.

He always came with a budget of news, and though he could neither read nor write he was fairly well informed even on matters outside the horizon of the Bush, while his observations on men and things were very shrewd and practical. He had been to every timber station in the province, and could hit off to a nicety the leading features in the character of every contractor or boss between Tairua and Mangonui. He worked cheerfully from daylight to dark, whether his employer were had taught the kitten to jump and set the dolly's broken leg.

It is hardly to be supposed that such a paragon should be without some flaw in his composition, and I grieve to relate that our friend was not free from one that was almost universal among the old-timers. He was all right so long as there was no grog about: but once he got the taste—or, I believe, even the smell—he became another man. He would purchase half a dozen bottles of rum to start with, and go on a regular

On the Wallaby Track.

present or not, and was not at all particular as to the nature of the job he was asked to undertake, as for instance, when one of the matrons of the community wanted to visit a distant part of the settlement it was not unusual to borrow the old man for the day to look after the house in her absence. On her return she would find the place all tidied up, a week's supply of firewood cut and stacked, and the dinner cooked to a turn, while the children would tell what a time they had had, and describe how Jack burst so long as he had a copper left. He went through all the stages: first, hilarious and playful, then gloomy and quarrelsome; generally ending up in a fight, in which, as might be expected under the circumstances, he usually got the worst of it. As soon as he had "suffered a recovery"—frequently a painful one—he was always ready to admit the particular kind of fool he had been, and was full of good resolutions for the future. But they never came to anything, and at greater or less intervals the old

game went on. The curious part of it was that these dissipations never appeared to affect his health. For the moment he was a wreck, but a few days work always set him right, and in a week or two he was as sound as ever.

We often wondered how he had drifted out to the colony. He was not at all the type of the "assisted emigrant." He could never have accumulated sufficient capital to pay for a passage even if he had desired to do so; and there was nothing in his style or appearance to suggest that he had been sent out "for his country's good." He used to tell interminable stories about his early home as a boy on a Yorkshire farm, and of his subsequent adventures on a canal-boat, which he said used to sail right up into Regent's Park. The various fragments of his colonial life, if carefully pieced together, would have covered a period reaching back to the coming of Captain Cook, but there was always a hiatus that was never filled up. It was a far cry from the Regent's Canal to the Kauri Bush, and we were naturally anxious to know how he had spent the interval. Of course, we might have asked the question, but, whatever it may be now, in those days it was considered an unpardonable breach of Bush etiquette to ask a man how he had come out. As Jack himself expressed it, "You might as well ask a fellow at once what he had been in for!"

We got a clue one day, however, in an unexpected manner. Our friend was returning from one of his periodical escapades in a condition of incomplete recovery, when he chanced to look in at a house where he found the old Major engaged in teaching his nephews the sword exercise with a pair of single-sticks. He stood watching the performance with great interest from the doorway, when at last—during a pause—he said, "Wot's that y'r tryin' to do, Major?" "Why, don't you see, you fool, I'm teaching the boys the cuts and points?" "Cuts and points!" he snorted, "that'll do for the Line. Gimme the stick, Jimmy." And with that he straddled his legs wide apart, and grasping an imaginary bridle in his left hand he swept the weapon round his head, as he shouted in a voice we had never heard before—"Circ'lar guard. Hengage!" In about a minute the Major was up in a corner, and as soon as he got his breath, he said: "Why, Jack, you old sinner, you've been there before, and you always said you couldn't ride!" This little episode, together with the fact that he had a very neatly tattooed figure of a field-piece on the upper part of his left arm, inclined us to think that some time or other he had got tired of the Royal Horse Artillery.

Of course, I had my turn with the rest. I had just burned off a large clearing, and was glad to obtain the services of an experienced bushman to help in the "logging up." This is hard work, and one which demands a good deal of skill, as anyone knows who has tried it, and one would suppose that eight hours spent in chopping, and rolling and piling among the flames and smoke would be enough to exhaust a man's energies for the day. It might have been with most men, but not with Booreedy Jack. In addition to his work in the clearing he did all sorts of odd jobs about the house. He was generally up before daylight, and he had a breakfast cooked by the time most hired labourers would have condescended to turn out. He was a light and dexterous hand with the frying-pan, and his "slap-jacks" were the envy of all the housekeepers in the settlement, while in regard to fried potatoes—well, I have occasionally eaten worse on the Boulevards, which is saying a good deal.

During the lengthening autumnal evenings—after we had done a good day's work on the clearing—we would sit and smoke our pipes by

the fire, and yarn and speculate on any and every subject that came into our heads. This was the time that the old man was in his glory: and he would interlard the narrative of his youth and colonial experience with theories of the age of the kauri, the formation of the gum and the spontaneous generation of the fern—with all the other unsolved problems that are threshed out every night in a Bush camp—or for himself in some sheltered spot far removed from the temptations of the mill-stations—there were no townships to speak of in those days—all he wanted was to get a start. Once that was done the rest would arrange itself. So far all he had to show for his twenty-five years of hard graft, was the suit of clothes that he stood in, with his axe and billy and a pair of worn blankets. But that did not matter. He could

A light and dexterous Hand with the Frying-pan.

which used to be before the bushmen had learned to read, and a weekly mail brought in the latest news of the sins and sorrows of the outer world.

He sometimes—though not often—dropped a metaphorical tear over the "might-have-been," but he was generally hopeful about the future. Like most old-time bushmen, he had a fixed idea that sooner or later he would make a little home tide over the first year by splitting posts and rails for the Forty-Acre men while he was making his clearing and his crops were maturing. There was plenty of wild pork in the bush, and that, with a sufficient supply of potatoes and pumpkins, was good enough for any man. He would manage to pick up a few fowls, and with the eggs and the surplus of his onion-bed he would procure what he wanted in the way

of groceries and tobacco, with an occasional addition to his wardrobe in the shape of a shirt or a pair of trousers.

The onion-bed was his main chance. He always came back to that: and many a half-hour I have listened to his calculations as we sat together in the "whare." They were as faultlessly perfect as the prospectus of a new joint-stock company. "'Tisn't every one as can grow honions," he would say. "It looks easy enough, and so does playin' the fiddle: but there's money in it, and it's a sure thing if you manage it properly. You see, a packet of seed only costs sixpence. The labour will cost nothing, as I'll do it myself, and all the manure you want is a few barrow-loads of hashes and a bit of lime that you can make by burning a couple of kitfuls of pipi-shells that you can hump up from the beach. Well, you see, a packet of seed will sow half a square chain"—I thought it must be a very large sixpennyworth, but that did not matter—and then he would estimate how many rows would cover the space, and the number of onions in each row at six inches apart. Taking half a pound as the average weight of a bulb—or a quarter to make sure—that made so many hundredweight, which, at fourpence a pound, or say threepence, would run up into quite an imposing figure.

Thus far his calculations were generally pretty uniform: but this was only the preamble. The real question was the investment of the capital thus acquired. Sometimes he inclined to a fowl-farm. "Hens is easy managed," he would say, "and they bring in a quick return: and besides, they eat up all the small spuds and things that you can't find a sale for." And then he would proceed to show how the stock would increase at a ratio to which geometrical progression was not in it. But his favourite spec was a calf. He would purchase a heifer calf for a pound or thirty shillings. In two or three years' time she would be a cow and be having calves of her own. Two of these he would train as working bullocks—he never had any doubt as to the sex of the coming progeny—and with this handy team he could undertake a larger cultivation, besides hiring them out to the settlers and taking contracts for hauling posts and rails and so forth. It all went on without a hitch. There never was any question of failure. "Why, so-and-so," and then he would mention some well-known capitalist, "didn't have half the start that I would have, and look at him now, smokin' cigars and drinkin' champagne. Why, he could buy up the whole of the River if he liked." But he never got any further, as soon as he got his cheque he would go off to the nearest place where he could get it cashed—generally in the neighbourhood of some bush pub—with the firm intention of limiting his expenses to the purchase of some necessary articles of clothing and investing the balance in the savings bank, but in two or three weeks he would turn up in a more or less battered condition, without even the sixpence for his preliminary outlay on the onion seed.

The winter had passed and the logging up had long been completed. The grass-seed, sown on the ashes, had sprouted, and already a fresh, green tinge was beginning to spread over the clearing. Strange to say, with the exception of one slight lapse, old Jack had kept perfectly sober all those months—a longer spell, he said, than ever he had had since he came to the colony. Still, I had an idea that this satisfactory state of things was not going to last. There was evidently something coming. The old man was getting restless, and though he did his work as well as ever, he seemed gradually to lose interest in the place. He got silent and gloomy. There were no more yarns

of his early adventures and Bush experience. And even the visions of the fowl-ranch and the onion-bed faded away. He commenced to turn in early, but he used to light his candle every hour or so and have a smoke. I guessed what was going to happen, but I was afraid of precipitating matters by making any remark. At length the end came. After a more than usually restless night he told me one morning that he wanted to go for a change, and asked me if I would mind settling up. I knew him well enough to be aware that there would be no use in arguing the point, so I gave him his cheque, and he took his axe and blankets and departed, and I never saw him from that day to this.

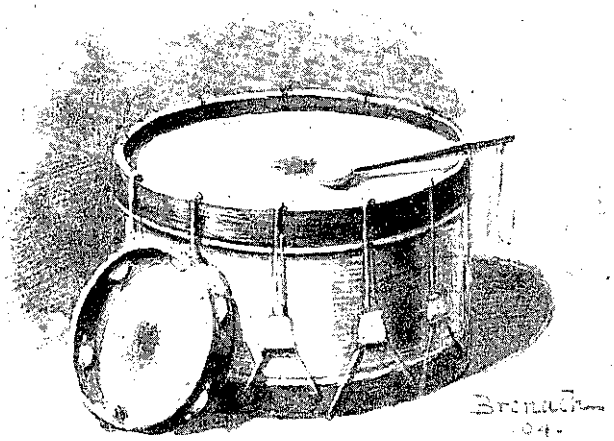
I left the settlement soon afterwards, but as I kept up a correspondence with my friends, I was posted up from time to time in the local news. I found that the old man had made up for his prolonged abstinence under my roof by a burst of more than usual magnitude. He had wandered into a sly grog-shanty, where he got drinking and playing cards with a lot of Maoris and gum-diggers. The card playing developed into a fight, and being in a minority, and with money to lose, he soon got the worst of it. Three days afterwards he crawled back to the settlement with a broken arm besides several cuts and bruises—all he had to show for his six months' wages. However, he soon recovered and went on as before. Sometimes he was gardening for the Major, sometimes taking a small contract of splitting puriri, but usually acting as general utility man for one or other of the settlers.

Eventually he disappeared from the district, and many and various were the speculations as to what had become of him. But as time passed on without bringing any news, the opinion was firmly adopted that he must be dead—probably drowned in a creek or perished in some trackless bush where his bones would be found many years afterwards when the land came to be cut up for settlement.

But old Jack was not to make his exit in so prosaic a manner. One of the settlers, on a visit to Auckland for the summer holidays, was passing down Queen Street on Christmas morning, when he was struck by a tall, upright figure marching with a military step behind the band of the Salvation Army, which in spite of the unfamiliar uniform bore a remarkable resemblance to Booreedy Jack. He looked so hale and hearty, and so well set up that the likeness might only have been an accidental one were it not for the peculiar kink in his left elbow that has already been remarked on. That was unmistakeable.

A Brand from the Burning.

Of course the news quickly went round, and many were the rejoicings over the brand plucked from the burning: and we were glad to hear afterwards that the reformation had not been a transitory one. Whether it was that he had at last found his true vocation in life, or that his new friends had succeeded in drawing out his better self, the fact remained that he continued for many years, not only a shining light, but a really useful member of that wonderful organisation.



Attar of Roses.

ABOVE the best of passing things we hold
Like miser's gold,
This slender vial, concrete of glad tears—
The gift of years.

More sweet than secret balms that priests would pour
In days of yore,
With calm contempt of cost, before the shrine
They held divine:

It holds for us the mem'ries of life's bliss—
A clasp—a kiss:
With that electric, vivifying thrill—
"Remembered still!"

And wordless moments when rent clouds have shown
Us not alone—
So that we fared content down devious ways
For many days.

O gift worth prizing even for this dower,
This subtle power!
Beyond the thrilling breath of all Cashmere
More fragrant, dear.

ROSLYN.

« OLD YORK. »

By H. L. MACHELL.

PART I.

WHEN Max O'Rell toured the Colonies, he was asked what he should do when he got back to Europe. "I shall go and look at some old wall with a bit of ivy on it," he replied.

This is how one feels on returning to York after years spent in New Zealand; there is a delightful sense of repose in these old-world towns; they have had their day—and a stormy one it has been;—now they slumber!

York is old—very old—York was old when Severus, Emperor of Rome held his court here A.D. 200, and the Roman galleys anchored in the river; nay! it seems to have been old when Agricola, the Roman General, completed the subjugation of North Britain in '85, after bloody battles with the tribe of Brigantes who then held the place.

It was Eburacum in those days, and a very important place commercially as well as politically; the largest vessels afloat could then sail right up to the Port.

The "Conquering Sixth" Legion from Germany, and the "Spanish Ninth" had their head-quarters here—the former for three hundred years; only a short time ago their cemetery was opened and all the tiled coffins and massive stone sarcophagi unearthed; the former stamped "LEG. VI. VIC.," or "LEG. IX. HISP.," as the case might be.

The letters "D.M." on many of the coffins and tombstones are a tribute to the goddess Mothers (Dea Matres), who were Romanised German deities, and presided over all that was homely and beautiful in life; this votive inscription shows how the hearts of the soldiers turned homewards to the "Vaterland" whence they had been torn.

In one of the sarcophagi was found a lead coffin containing the remains of a Roman lady embedded in gypsum, her auburn hair in excellent preservation, and pinned up with ornaments of Whitby jet; a pillow had evidently kept the head apart from the gypsum; this hair has been carefully combed out, recoiled as found, and now may be seen in the Museum.

In another, the skeleton's mouth contained a small coin, presumably for Charon's fare across the Styx—so the gloomy boatman is still waiting for his money!

The bones of two young girls reposed in another of the stone coffins, at the head of which lay two food-vessels of coarse pottery and two drinking-vessels, intended no doubt to symbolise care and thought for the departed. The so-called lachrymatories often found with the remains did not contain the mourners' tears, but unguents.

A quantity of beautiful Samian ware from the Roman potteries in Gaul and Germany has also been found; this is of a dark red colour, highly glazed, and either plain or ornamental with embossed and incised figures. Some rough imitations appear to have been produced

in Britain, but very inferior to the real thing; and in one case the British workman has forged the mark of the potter, Severianus, in order no doubt to palm off his ware on some "ignorant connoisseur"; a piece of genuine "Severianus" alongside shows up the forgery and inferior work.

Then we have the children's toys, the babies' feeding-bottles and the shells collected by families on their summer trips to the East Coast watering-places, Scarborough, Filey, Whitby; then again, all the ladies'

Roman Glass Unguent Bottle, 15 inches high, in York Museum.

scent-bottles, combs, pins, needles, hair-pins and jewelry. At the feet of one lady of rank lay her female slave with a box of scent or medicine-bottles, ready for use! In one large case are collected a number of most interesting relics, the bone circus-ticket, the gladiator's badge, and all the little things which speak of a wealthy, powerful nation at home.

Baths and beautiful mosaic floors have been unearthed, the foundations of the Roman City wall have been traced all round, but the lower part of the Multangular Tower, forming one angle and two other small portions of the wall, are all now left of undoubted Roman building above ground; yet, one living representative of that mighty Empire remains! the snails—descendants of those brought over by the Roman caterers are occasionally found even in York. They are also common South of the Thames.

Now for a little romance! Some 300 years ago, about a quarter of a mile to the west of York Wall, there was found a stone coffin with an inscription to the effect that M. Verec. Diogenes, an official of the Colony of Eburacum, had had it made for himself during his lifetime; but the plural "haec" was used—these coffins. Well, it was subsequently removed to Hull and used as a horse-trough outside an Inn for many years; but to-day all trace of it has disappeared.

However, the North-Eastern Railway Co., when recently excavating for their new railway station about a quarter of a mile to the west of the City wall, came upon a Roman cemetery of a square mile in area, and another stone coffin containing the skeleton of a tall woman, and bearing an inscription to the effect that within it were the remains of Julia Fortunata, the faithful wife of Verec. Diogenes!

It was in York that Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, was invested with the purple, and all the tributary kings of the Empire assembled to do homage, so the town must often have been a scene of great splendour. But the glory departed when Constantine moved his court to Byzantium, and the Legions no longer protected the city against its numerous enemies: first, the inhabitants drove out the Roman officials; then, down came the fierce Picts and Scots on plunder bent; on came the Saxons and Angles for the land; up the river came the pirates—the inhabitants were driven as chaff before the wind, and the unhappy city was reduced to a heap of ruins; thus ends the

four hundred years of Britain's occupation by the Romans.

It has been lately pointed out that the pure Romans were really a very small minority in the provinces of the Empire, and that if one had come down on Roman York on any one day it might well have been that no person would be found who had ever been in Italy or Rome; in fact, that the Empire had in course of time come to consist very largely, not of Romans, but of people who had been Romanised.

As an instance of this, the faithful Julia above-mentioned is described on her coffin as having been a native of Sardinia, and Diogenes, on his, as a citizen of Celtic Gaul. It seems hard that poor Julia's bones should not have been allowed to rest in the coffin; her skull is exhibited in case G. "To this favour she must come!"

But it was not from Britons or from Roman Colonists that England derived the qualities which made her a great nation, it was from those German and Scandanavian sea-kings, fierce and lawless, and perhaps also from the Normans who were originally "hardy Norsemen."

The name "York" is the English form of the Danish "Yorvick," and this is how, according to some historians, the Danes appeared on the scene:—Two rival kings of Northumbria each invited them to come over and help him thrash the other—so they came—but thrashed both kings and seized the kingdom! York was given over to the usual "atrocities," compared with which Bulgarian were mild; it is even said that one of the rival kings was skinned alive! A Danish officer, named Guthrum, was appointed governor of the town—hence the name of the street where he lived is still "Goodramgate."

The Site of the Roman Wall crosses the Street known as "The Shambles."

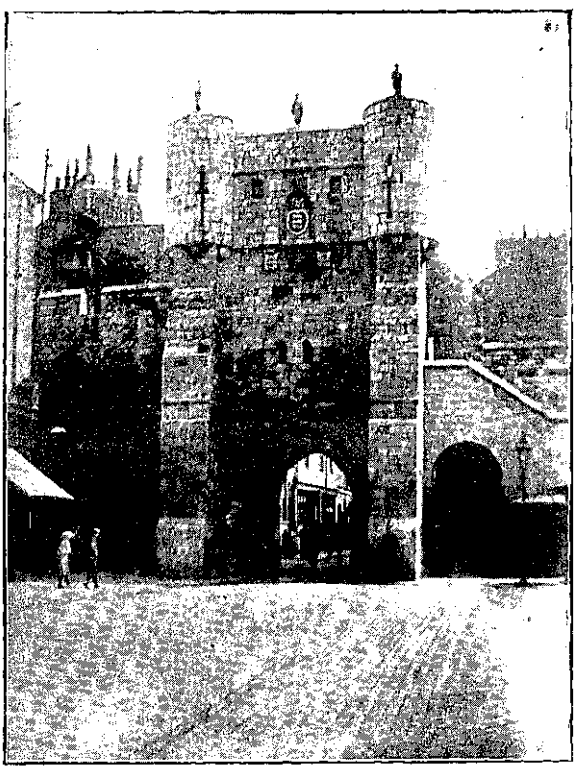
The Danish occupation of York extended from the ninth century to the eleventh, either as ruling England, or as subject to English kings. "Eoferwic" (the town on the Eure) was the name given by the Saxons who, or the Angles, had possession of York for 400 years, until their overthrow, and a mighty

one it was, by the Danes. Even to-day, the Yorkshire villages, East and North of the town, are full of Danish faces, and their language is rich in Danish words.

Caer Ebranc was the British name, taken from the Roman Eburacum; it stood at the head of the British cities, Caer Ceint (Canterbury) being second, and Caer Londene a long way down the list.

The legends of King Arthur's day tell us that he was then at the head of the British forces, and that it was in this city the first British Christmas was celebrated, the king and his people observing the festival, as the shocked historian relates, "in a spirit of heathenish revelry with feasting and mirth, in wantonness and many excesses!" Here's to him! But it is difficult to get any real facts of this period.

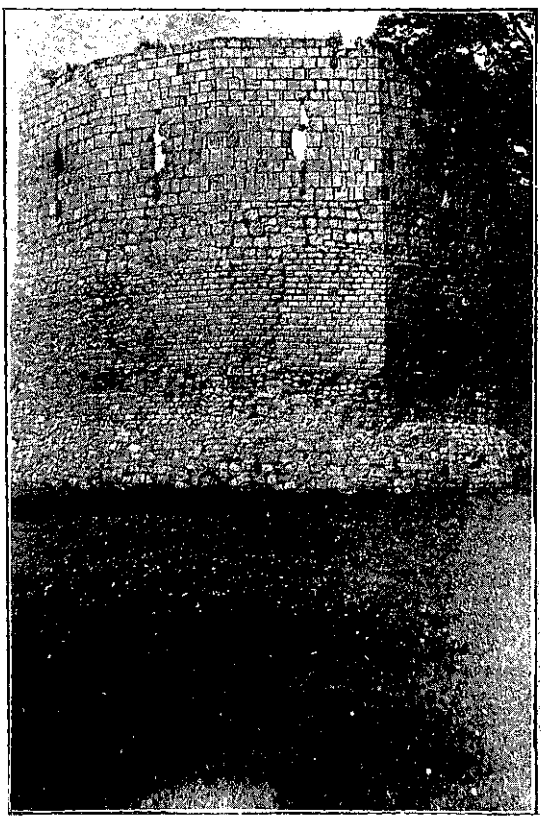
The Danes and Saxons have left but few relics to mark the period of their occupation, their chief pleasure seems to have been in destruction; but the glorious work of levelling the city with the ground was never so thoroughly and satisfactorily performed as by William the Conqueror. In his day the suburbs extended one mile outwards every way, and York was "fair as the City of Rome from the beauty and magnificence of its buildings"; but William was very thorough in all that he undertook, and by the time he had finished, there was not one inhabited house between Durham and York, and for nine years afterwards neither plough nor spade were put into the ground! Poor York, one need hardly say, was once more a heap of ruins, among which another jolly Christmas was celebrated by the hero and his friends, and it is from these gentlemen that everyone of importance now claims descent!



Footham Bar is on the Site of the principal Roman Gate.

Christianity had of course disappeared on the departure of the Romans, and the pagan Saxons made short work of any Christian buildings; but on their conversion a small wooden oratory was erected on the site of the present Minster; this was subsequently replaced by a handsome stone church, finally and satisfactorily levelled with the ground by William the Conqueror; 524 feet long by 250, and with stone vaulting 100 feet high, a magnificent specimen of pure Gothic architecture, light but massive, simple but grand.

Mr. F. Bond, in a recent lecture, points out that these cathedrals were not built merely for congregations to worship in, but as monuments to God, with something about them of the divine attributes



The lower portion of the Multangular Tower is Roman.

the building having been thus disposed of, there was of course no necessity for church revenues or clergy, so he seized the former and expelled the latter.

The Minster was, however, rebuilt, but burned down again in the great fire which destroyed also thirty-nine parish churches; and, as it now stands it is of thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth century work, built in the form of a cross, of eternity; builders were not hampered by notions of utility or considerations of expense — they built to last.

Many of the Parish Churches in York are interesting, but these are of a character quite distinct from the Cathedrals, they were built for practical purposes, and appeal in a less degree to the religious feelings. St. Michael-le-Belfry contains an entry in its Register of the Baptism

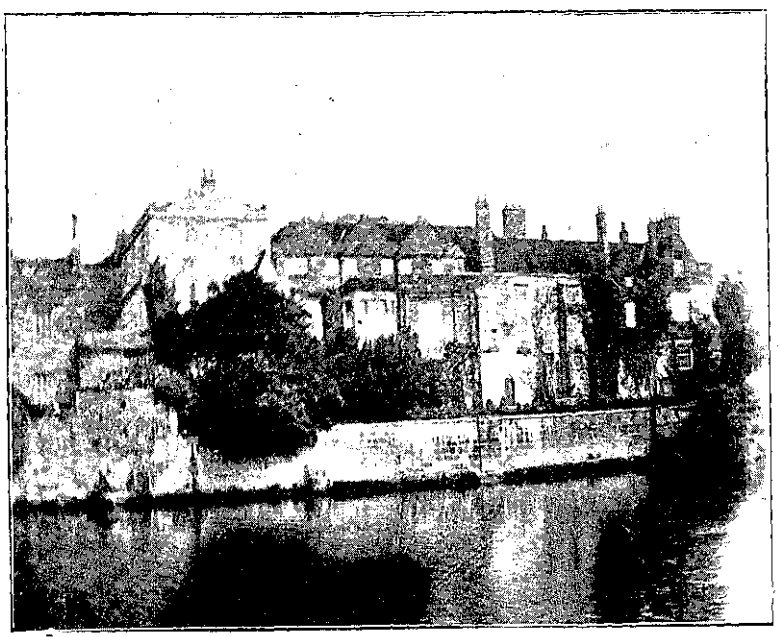
of the notorious "Guye Faux," in 1570.

The Archbishop's palace is a fine old mansion on the bank of the river in the village of Bishopthorpe. It was here that Archbishop Harcourt, grandfather of the distinguished statesman, Sir William Harcourt, resided; his Grace was very fond of sport, and used to repair to a corner of Knavesmire Common, where York race meetings are held, to get a quiet view from the other side of the fence of what was going on; the place is called

of all England," and takes precedence—also £15,000 a year, against York's £10,000.

The struggle for supremacy commenced in 601, and continued for 750 years, when the Pope effected a compromise resulting in one of those anomalies for which we are famous, but which work well in practice, illogical though they may seem.

In searching the old records of Episcopal "Visitations," some very curious entries are to be found, of which the following are specimens:



The Archbishop has a Palace and £10,000 a Year.

Archbishop Harcourt's corner to this day.

And it was in these fields that Archbishop Scrope was executed by Henry IV. (Bolingbroke), after sentence passed in the dining-room of the Palace—the property was purchased some 700 years ago by an Archbishop, who also paid the Pope £10,000 for his pall.

His Grace's jurisdiction is now limited to the Northern Province, although he is officially "Primate of England"; the Archbishop of Canterbury is, however, "Primate

"Henry Newstede for slepinge in servyce tyme is ordered to confess his falte in the parishe churche of Busshoppethorpe." The following shocking scandal also appears: "Tristram Tildesley is a prest and, notwithstanding, very immodestly upon Sondaies or hollidais hath daunced emongest light youthfull companie both men and women, and especially upon one Sondaie in dauncing, wantonly and dissolutely kissed a mayd or young woman: that the said Tristram very unsemelye did daunce skip and hoighe,

gallantly as he thought in his owne folishe conceipte," and so on—the result of the kissing being that " dyvers swordes were drawne."

Amongst quaint customs, the following may be mentioned :

On St. Nicholas day in every year a choir-boy was elected to assume bishop's vestments and functions, the rest of the boys being habited as priests, and together they discharged all the holy offices except Mass ; the boy-bishop used to go on " visitations " to mansions and monasteries with a considerable retinue and, in early days at all events, the thing was done in all seriousness, though with what good object it is hard to say ; any how, Henry VIII. stopped the practice on account of the scandalous abuses resulting.

How refreshing to turn from such a subject to the following : A custom used to prevail on board trading brigs passing the Palace to fire three guns, the signal being answered by a distribution of ale among the mariners by order of his Grace ; Archbishop Harcourt certainly used to observe and answer the signal ; but times are altered !

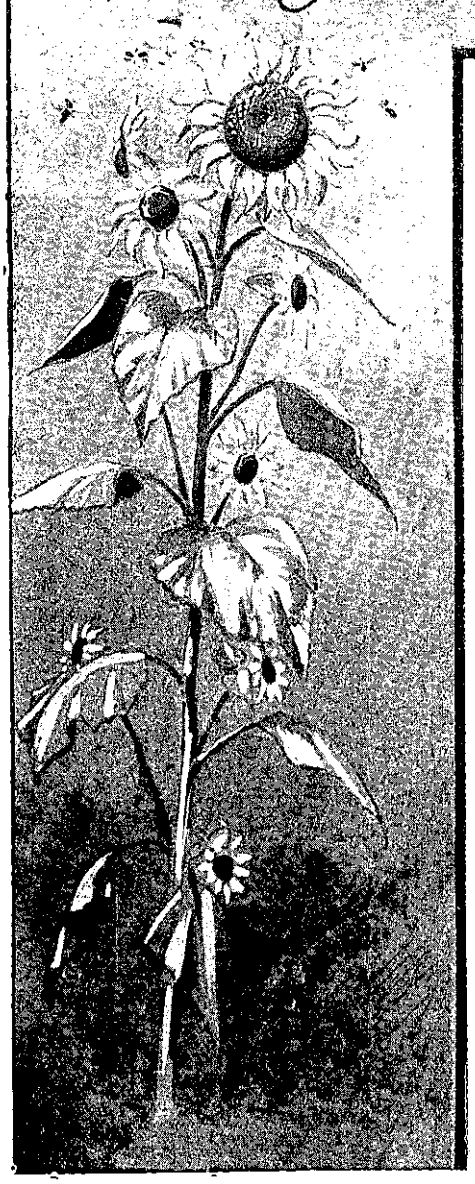
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

I. McAllister Photo.

Dawson's Falls, Mt. Egmont.

A Summer Song

By Brenach.



Summer is a' coming quick.
Loud sings the cheerful sparrow.
'Tis time to sow the Pumpkin seed
And Vegetable-marrow.

The days draw out—the nights draw in,
The mercury is rising,
The Equinox is past and gone,
In manner most surprising.

All insect life is on the hum,
And every blade is sprouting.
The birds, in varied plumage gay,
Are out upon an outing.

The locust crackles in the trees,
With sound of bacon frying.
The Bot-fly waltzes round the horse,
And lays its eggs while flying.

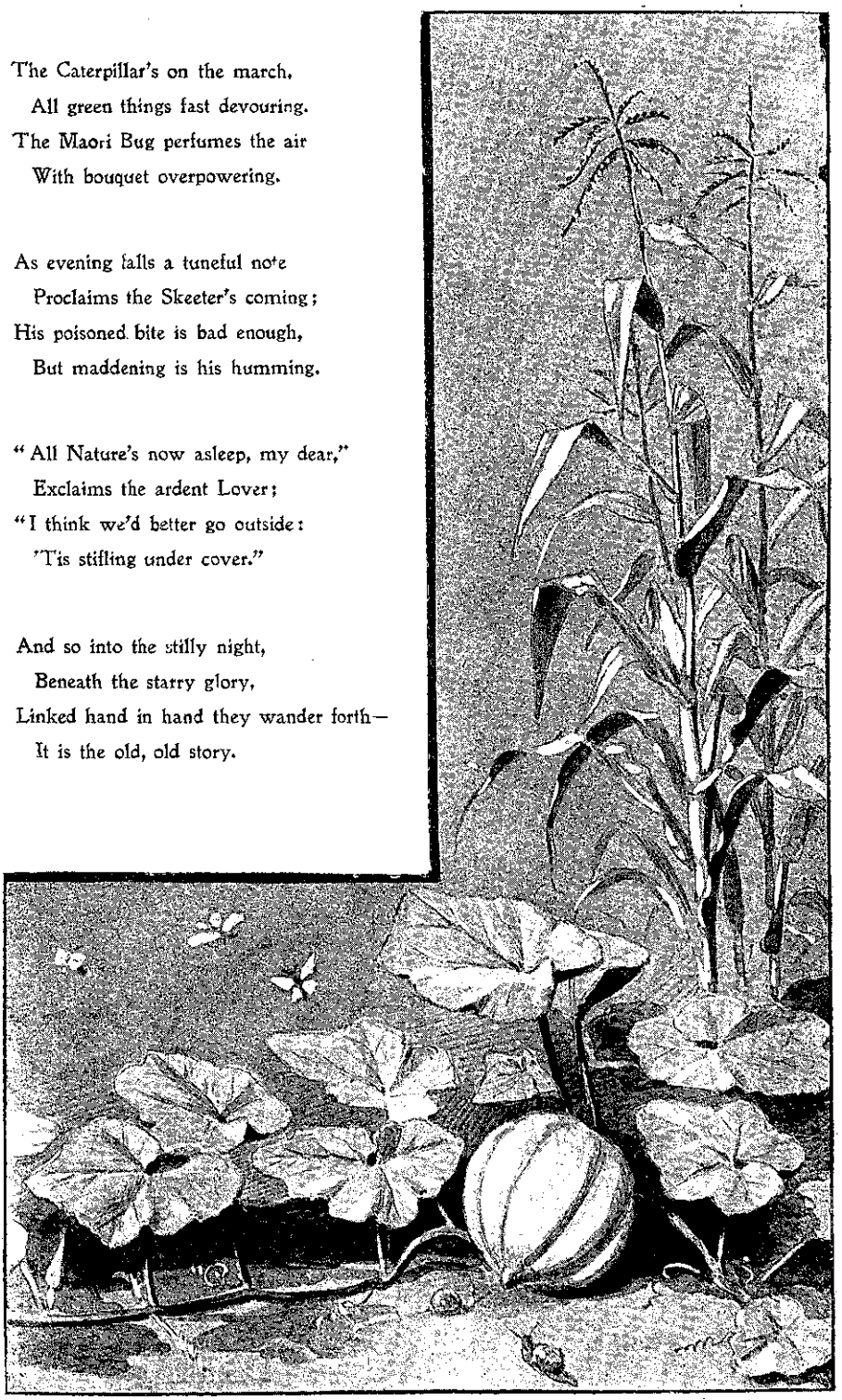
How doth the busy Mason-Bee
Improve each shining minute?
He builds his little house of clay,
And packs the spiders in it.

The Caterpillar's on the march,
All green things fast devouring.
The Maori Bug perfumes the air
With bouquet overpowering.

As evening falls a tuneful note
Proclaims the Skeeter's coming;
His poisoned bite is bad enough,
But maddening is his humming.

"All Nature's now asleep, my dear,"
Exclaims the ardent Lover;
"I think we'd better go outside:
'Tis stifling under cover."

And so into the stilly night,
Beneath the starry glory,
Linked hand in hand they wander forth—
It is the old, old story.



"WELL, if that isn't rotten luck," said Tony Lascelles. "When we've given that fool Peyton the Chimney, too!"

Walt growled his disgust in his throat, for it was over strong for selected words; and Peyton, whom Tony's hurried rising had trampled into the earth, fell out of the tent-opening less than half-clothed, and disconnectedly wrath.

"Stag," said Walt in curt answer. Peyton swept the universe with his glasses, picked up on the Chimney hill that which the other men watched bare-eyed, and purred in fat delight.

From their feet the snow-grass blew in ruddy ripples to the tail of a birch bush that stuck to the steep hill-side in black density. Topping the bush, splayed out lean spurs, and rounded gullies, and straight-edged ravines. Behind all, and crowning half the earth, notched ranges rose white to the flushing sky—all to make background for one stag of the fourth year. He stood, monstrous and tense with life, on the snub nose of a bluff, and belled out his challenge to the world and to the sun that was coming up to listen. The antlers showed like naked branches of a tree, and his coat was sleeked with the night's dew.

"It's my beat!" Peyton snatched his things from every-whither in blankest confusion. "You said last night I could have the Chimney. It's a royal, I tell you. It's a bub-bub-blessed fourteen-pointer. I counted—an' we've never got a sniff of more than a ten-tine before. I don't want any breakfast. Where's my——"

"Oh, go slow, for Heaven's sake!" said Tony in the wrath of a hunter. "You won't hit a hill unless it's the size of a mountain if you go losing your head that way. Keep cool, can't you, you silly owl? Of course it's your beat. Who said it wasn't? And don't you go shooting all over the shop, Peyton. A Mauser's too funny for that kind of thing."

It was Peyton's boast that he had shot eighteen men with the identical carbine that he was now scratching out of the case. That was in the Boer war, and no man on Mindoorie believed it. Peyton did not, himself. But to require of a man that he should make a story and believe it is rank ingratitude.

Peyton had turned up at Mindoorie some three months back, giving Lane to understand that they were of one blood, and might, with mutual happiness, be of one purse also. He stuck like a burr, and

when Walt and Tony Lascelles agreed to take their holiday together that they might shoot red deer in Otago Central, Peyton offered to go with them.

"C'n yer shoot?" demanded Walt then, with his teeth on an oiled rag. He was trying to sluice some of the rust off his old .303 with the broken leaf.

Peyton was really angry.

"Haven't I told you that I shot eighteen men——"

"But there's jest two on us." Walt shook his head gravely. "Not 'nuff meat fur yer ter feed on. Reckon Tony 'n me c'n do wi'out all that killin', too."

Then it was that Peyton sloughed his superiority, and gained grudging permission to help stalk some of the roughest deer country outside Scotland. Tony cherished his disgust, and gave the word in the whares that he would knock the eternal stuffing out of Peyton before he brought him back.

"Makes me sick," he said. "Always gassing about his Lyman sights, an' his range-finders, an' his drifts. I'll plunk a hole into him with my old girl one of these days, an' not whip the cat over it either."

But Peyton's mouth was filled with other words this morning in sight of the Chimney.

"'Wind's blowin' up to him, isn't it? From me off, isn't it? If I go straight ahead I'll land him, won't I? Not? Which way'd I better go, then? Nearly a mile off, isn't he?"

To the lay eye it might have been a mile as the crow flies. The two who had been that way before knew that it was a five-mile stalk over unkindly country, and that Peyton was not in condition to face it. But it was impossible to say so.

Walt jerked a thumb in the direction of a dimpled hollow at the bluff-foot. A half-score hinds and nobbers were moving in it.

"You look out they don't give the alarm. Come up out'n the bush careful. Great Scott, man; don't go off wi'out any tucker."

Peyton swept cold meat and damper into his pocket, scudded away through the burnt timber that began the bush, and dived out of sight like a scared rabbit.

"Fat lot o' heads he'll git"; Walt was fiddling with the fire. "He'll git blown in ten minits—'n then he'll git lost—'n then we'll hev ter take half the night nosin' him out. What'd we let him come fur, I wonner?"

"So's we could teach him—things," said Tony in direct-sent wisdom. "He's got to learn that he isn't blooming lord of everybody, and I'm going to teach him."

"How?" asked Walt, sceptically.

"Lots of ways. First of all—he'll never get that head. It's a sixteen-pointer, too, only he forgot the two little bottom ones that you can't see from a distance. You know it's a sixteen, Walt?"

"'Course. 'N the on'y one we're like ter see, by the look o' the last few days. Season's well enough advanced, too. Well?"

"Well, said Tony, eating damper rapidly. "He'll never sight it again. I'm going up to get the beggar myself. Peyton'll never know. An' I'll come back down that gully away to south'ard."

"Don't yer be a fool." Walt was cramming cartridges into the breast of his shirt, but he let a handful drop at his word. "Peyton'll be rakin' the landskip up ter two thousand. I know his breed. 'N he might hit yer 'cause he won't be aimin' at yer. Jest don't yer be so ratty, Tony."

"All serene." Tony collected necessaries, and loped off downwind, flinging back a caution. "Don't you give me away, Walt. And mind you rag Peyton when he doesn't bring in a head."

The tasselled snowgrass dripped with dew, and where the sun drew up the fresh, sharp breath of the earth Tony ran light as a hare,

with something like quicksilver in his veins.

"Good job for me I'm in such first-class nick," he murmured, cuddling his rifle in his arm-pit. "Peyton will be snorting like any grampus in that bush. Peyton, dear boy; I'm goin' round the end of it, and then I'll beat you hollow."

He took the bush where it thinned into dead tree-clumps knotted with clematis and supplejack and all other vines. Half-a-mile away, the tails of those vines were laying snares for Peyton, and catching him every time. But that was where the native nettle grew so thickly and so fiercely that it flayed Peyton whether he came to the ground or not.

The sun rode gorgeously over the eastern ranges; but a tui had sighted him first from the swaying top of a three-hundred-foot birch, and was already ringing his liquid notes down to the waking ferns by the brown creeks.

Tony trotted like a mustering dog up the ascent where it steepened in a scented muddle of burnt-out tree-boles made slippery with mosses and spongy with the soft peaty collection of years. Then it became necessary to sling the rifle and swing, hand over hand, up the vines that depended from rocky frontlets. The bush was muggy and hot, and once, when he lay flat on a scarp and waited for breath, a wild sheep burst through the undergrowth with a five-year fleece on it. It sprang away up-hill as a deer moves, and Tony cast hate at it in broken words. For—being a sheep, and therefore, the least sporting animal in the world—it was quite likely to run until it gave the alarm to the sixteen-pointer where he probably fed still on the bluff.

"Peyton'll be sweating all right," grunted Tony, shaking his dripping head. "My aunt! It'll be a snorter 'bout mid-day!"

He crashed out into the open, and found his feet among the dried tangle of burnt bush which makes the very nastiest stalking country in all the world. For in air that is absolutely clear and still, the snap of a stick under the boot rings like a rifle-shot on the flat.

Tony slid through the rubbish with cautious heels and toes. His heart thumped against his side, and his eyes were contracted to .22 calibre. For the salt-lick to rightward dazzled, and the flinty hog-back that sprung from it winked with a thousand gleams.

He had the whole beautiful young earth to himself up here in the wide clear morning; and it is only the man who serves another knows the added glory of riding to his own beat entirely, with no care for the remainder of the world.

Over a low seductive hill Tony fell with a clatter of shingle on a house-party of hinds and young stags that had lately shed their antlers. A big, moth-eaten mother of the herd sprang out of the ruck and began to cough at him. Tony called her names, and retreated crab-wise. But he made haste to climb the ridge beyond her—it was flint, and scarified his hands—for the fear that her anger should have disturbed her lord where he browsed.

It was from the top of the ridge that Tony saw him, and being somewhat exhausted, rolled off the sky-line, murmuring weakly:

"If Peyton comes along now, I'll lay him out."

The stag fed slowly down the bluff side, and the muscles rippled in sunlight over a massive shoulder and well-set ribs. His head was purely perfect. He raised it once, and Tony shuddered in soul-sick terror. But there was no alarm in the easy, powerful movements that brought him nearer—nearer.

Tony's rifle felt alive in his hand. Undoubtedly its spirit also strained with the lust of slaughter. Said Tony then, "He's mine! Mine!" and straightway trod on a dead stick. It snapped, and in less than

It was from the Top of the Ridge that Tony saw Him.

a breath the stag scoured up wind, carrying a bullet behind his off shoulder.

Tony slipped in another as he ran. He was cursing his clumsiness, and fully prepared to follow through Otago's heart and ribs to the Western Sea if the brute led there.

Tony had the lungs and legs of a musterer, and his second wind found him undistressed. He took knoll and sharp descent and hideous baulking ridge with firm-shut mouth and quivering nostrils.

"I hit! I'll swear I hit. By Jupiter! He's down! Oh, the rotten——" The beast came to his feet again with the hesitation of a new-fired bullet, and Tony put his whole mind-power into his legs.

"If he doesn't jump some beastly river-bed or other, I'm bound to drop him soon or late. A hare runs a half-mile after it's dead. I shouldn't——"

Then over a spur a full hundred chain nearer the stag rose Peyton, who fell on his knee and began pumping lead into the gully after the approved manner of a slayer of men.

The black figure on the knife-edge was like the devil who comes up through a trap-door in "Faust," and Tony cursed it while absolute despair shook him on his feet. For beyond all doubt, the Chimney and all pertaining to it were Peyton's while the pact of the night still held.

Peyton splintered a rock, and pushed in a new clip before he gave chase. But that did not matter. Death had charge of the stag, and when he took the life Peyton would unquestionably take the glory—and the head.

"I can prove it's mine," sobbed Tony, galloping through the shadeless glare. "Peyton uses soft-nosed bullets. I'll show him——" Then he remembered that by his honour he must not prove it.

Peyton had no wind, and Tony closed up rapidly. And the back view of labouring body was better to him than medicine.

The stag's pace slowed to an uneven trot; but he was four valleys away, making for the bush that led into the unknown.

Down a steep narrow gut Tony drew to the lead. But he ran in cover of matakuri and manuka that Peyton might not see. The quarry was his only if Peyton fell out. And this though he knew of a surety that Peyton had not hit.

Peyton roared up the next rise, and rolled down it. But the stag veered to drink at a crystal basin set in flax marsh below, and the action pricked him forward on an unsteady gait. And at this moment both men would have given all the days of their lives to sit on those mighty branching horns and saw them away from the gleaming neck.

"Plop, plop," went Peyton cheerfully. "Plop. Plop. Plop!"

"Always said those Lyman sights were no good for fast work." Tony was rapidly crawling nearer. "Either that or the fellow can't shoot worth a tinker's benediction. Poor brute! He's water-logged, sure enough. He'll croak 'fore long now."

The end came swiftly. A slip had scored a wide track out of the sheer bush some hundred yards to northward, and on the red clay breast of it the red deer's life left the body with a roar of defiance.

Peyton pawed up to give thanks over what remained, and Tony sat below, loathing all things created, and Peyton in particular. But presently curiosity over-rode pride, and he climbed up to locate the one good shot that had won the game for another.

Peyton was sickeningly bumptious, and so self-engrossed that he did not ask Tony's business on his beat. He put his finger in the little round hole behind the shoulder, and demanded praise.

"Only had two shots at him," he explained. "And this one that

nicked him was a clear thousand-yarder."

Tony grunted, aware that to men of Peyton's calibre such things as honour and truth carry no weight.

"Pity you haven't had the training I've had," ended Peyton. "Er—how d'you get the brute's head off?"

Tony showed, touching the beautiful thing lovingly; for, when all was said, it was still his by his right hand's cunning.

Peyton had not the instincts of a gentleman. He was purely and unrelievedly a bounder, and Tony's senses were raw to savageness before the head was off and set on Peyton's back that he might struggle campward with it.

The miles to be passed were many; the ground was incredibly rough; the fresh breeze of morning had forged the still heat of noonday.

Peyton's joints were loosed by exhaustion, and when he flagged and fell, Tony's tongue scourged him to the labour again. Tony was getting such small consolation out of this as the situation held, and he chuckled when Peyton grew a deep plum-colour and the veins of his neck swelled.

The burdened man stumbled, flung the stark thing from him, and grovelled.

"Tony—oh, I say! Do carry it a bit. Please. Just a mile—half, then. Till I get my second wind. Do, old chap!" He hesitated before Tony's expressionless face. "I'll pay you for it," he said.

"Oh, you almighty bounder!" cried Tony's heart, but his lips distilled cold scorn. "You say it's your kill? Well then; you'll lump it yourself. I've nothing to do with your beastly arrangements. Why didn't you drive him home first?"

Then Peyton, having an assortment of languages at command, applied them freely, until Tony's desire for direct blows shrunk him to a flabby penitence. At the pool in the flax-swamp they drank and fed. The halt sent the sun well to the westing, but it did not greatly refresh Peyton. The very marrow of the man had dripped from him; his knees shook, and he crowed in his breath.

A clipped quarter-mile further and the head pitched on its raw neck into the bracken. Tony's eyes flooded with a sudden glorious hope.

"Peyton, are you coming back for this to-morrow?"

Peyton staggered on blindly.

"Ne—never. Ne—never, I tell you."

"Peyton! Do you give up all claim to this head?"

"Y—yes. Don't talk of it. It makes me sick——"

"Then I'll take it home myself," said Tony in solemn joy.

It was a simple thing now. So simple that he wondered he had not foreseen it. The matter could wait until Peyton left, and then all Southland men should learn—breathing envy—that Tony Lascelles had shot a sixteen-pointer in Otago Central.

He heaved up the head and trudged forward.

"You bullock!" growled Peyton, stumbling after.

But Tony's cup of delight ran over. What though the raw skin flapped his neck, and the unhandiness of the burden taxed his muscles in many new-learned places. Those antlers were his. His very own. And moreover, Peyton had already borne the burden half the distance. This was a pleasure to be rolled on the tongue until Tony should be an old man.

His serenity was unbroken, and his limbs ached bitterly when they made the tent in the firelight. Tony cast himself down straightway, and his chest laboured like an ungreased crank.

Walt dropped on a knee in plain admiration, and Peyton, being partially recovered, pulled a hand from his trouser-pocket and held out silver to Tony.

"Thanks, Tony. Don't know how I'd have got the thing back by

myself. A good head, isn't it, Walt? Worth a decent tip, eh?"

Peyton had been assorting moves for the last hour. Tony was unprepared.

"You swine!" he shouted, and sent the handful spinning into the snow-grass. "What the devil——" It was Walt who put his arms round Tony, and forced the silence necessary for Peyton's explanation. This was simple.

"I offered to pay Tony for carrying it, and at first he said he wouldn't. But when I got done and chucked it he said he would. What's he making the row about? Didn't I offer him enough?"

"Yer'd better not go clean off yer head, Tony," observed Walt, sympathetically. "What yer got ter say, now?"

"It's mine—mine. He said he gave up all claim, confound him—"

"Great Scott, man! Haven't you a better idea of the ethics of sport than that? How could you set up a head shot by another man? I want it, and I'll go to law sooner than lose it. What were you doing on my beat, any way? We call that kind of thing poaching at Home."

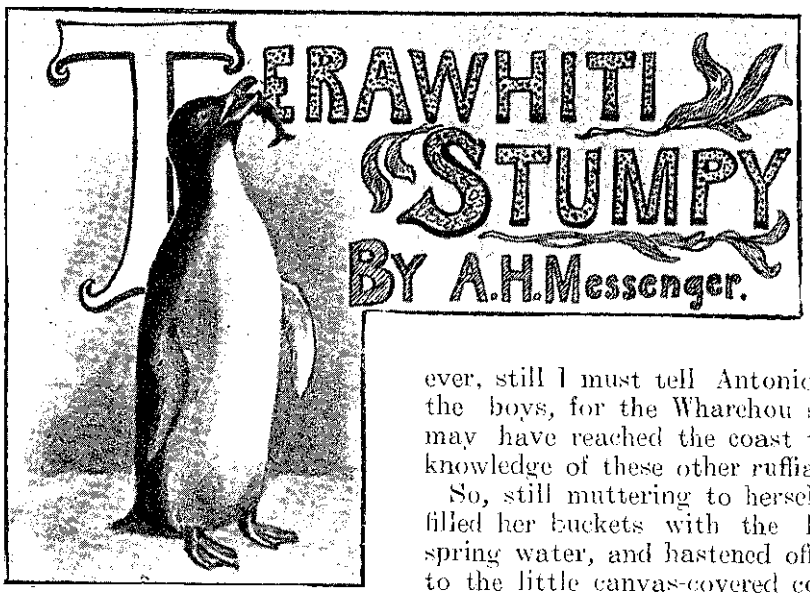
Tony looked at the four sides of this thing, and saw that he was beaten.

"You've as much right to it as to your eighteen men," he said. "You can put 'em all in one bag. Let me go, Walt. I'm not going to touch the pig. Wouldn't touch him with—without a disinfectant. Oh, shut up, can't you!"

"What was the way you was goin' ter teach Peyton, then?" enquired Walt afterwards.

But Tony Lascelles held his peace.

A Summer Afternoon.



FISHERMAN Davis and his mate, Louie, the Frenchman, caught the funny little chap one scorching hot day in early summer in the big cave at the cape. They had left Wharehou, that quaint, little settlement of French and Italian fishermen, in the "Pet," the finest smack on the coast, at daybreak, so that when old mother Bartolli went out to the village spring for water for the day, the big brown mainsail was just creeping round the point. The old Italian fishwife set down her buckets, and shielding her eyes from the first rays of the rising sun with one hand, gazed wonderingly out at the disappearing boat.

"By the saints," she mumbled to herself, "what takes this Englishman out so early this morning, the tides do not suit for the fishing-grounds for three hours at the least. They are mad, these English, to go sailing off before the day has begun for no purpose whatever, still I must tell Antonio and the boys, for the Wharehou shoals may have reached the coast to the knowledge of these other ruffianos."

So, still muttering to herself, she filled her buckets with the limpid spring water, and hastened off back to the little canvas-covered cottage standing on the shingle bank just out of reach of the spring tides. Meanwhile, the big smack, clearing the point, caught the first breath of the freshening sea breeze, and leaning before it, curtsied gracefully to the long blue Pacific rollers that swelled and sank slumberingly under her, like the slow breathing of some mighty storm whose rage has spent itself upon the coast.

Fisherman Davis, in half sea-boots, patched guernsey, and faded blue dungaree pants, sat on the hatch combing of the half-deck with one hand on the tiller, and smoked contentedly. His mate, Louie, the Frenchman, sat on the great heap of brown tanned nets amidships, baiting the bristling hooks of the deep-sea lines. In the east the sun, just risen clear of the ranges, was sending long shafts of brilliant sunlight through the gaps in the clouds, silvering the tops of the rollers, and making dazzling play upon the leaping breakers of the outer reefs.

In the wake of the smack three big black-backed gulls were flapping heavily along, and a little further

"They are mad, these English."

out to sea a whole colony of glossy-plumaged black and white shags were fishing diligently. From the long surf-fringed curve of the Tera-whiti coast line on the one hand, to the dim blue ranges of the South Island looming low on the western horizon, the scene was enchanting enough to stir the admiration of the most unimaginative mind, and Fisherman Davis, peering dreamily out from under the brim of his old felt hat, presently caught some of the glamour of the surroundings, and harking back to old seafaring days, struck up the opening bars of "Blow the man down," in a voice that sent the solemn black-backed gulls sheering off to either side in consternation.

Heading against the full sweep of the flowing tide, the smack made slow work of her eight-mile run to the fishing-ground at the cape, an occurrence which did not seem to worry her navigators in the least. Indeed, just before fetching abreast of Ohau Bay, the "Pet" was put about and headed in towards the coast, a complete divergence from the usual course laid by Cape-bound smacks. Louie also, as if to complete the unusual appearance of things, cast the lashings off the little flat-bottomed dinghy that was carried amidships, and made all ready for launching it over the side. As the smack ran on towards the cliffs, at the feet of which the breakers lashed themselves in a fury of leaping spray, a long, brown kelp-matted reef appeared to detach itself from the rest of the coast, and reach out its gleaming fangs towards her. Round close under the lee of this Davis steered his craft skilfully, while Louie hauled down the jib and lowered the peak of the great brown mainsail, then, as the helm was put hard over, the smack shot round the smooth sea-washed end of a towering rock pedestal, and ran into the placid water of a sheltered corner among the reefs. Here the anchor was dropped, and next moment the two fishermen were pulling shorewards along one of the narrow intricate lanes of water that marked the only passage in that direction. Under the shadow of the cliff they landed safely on the high shingle bank, and hauling the dinghy above the sweep of the breakers, made their way across the water-worn stones to where a narrow rift appeared in the smooth rocky face.

"Here we are, Louie," said Davis, pausing before it. "By George, the shingle has piled up with this last blow, there's only just room to crawl in now!"

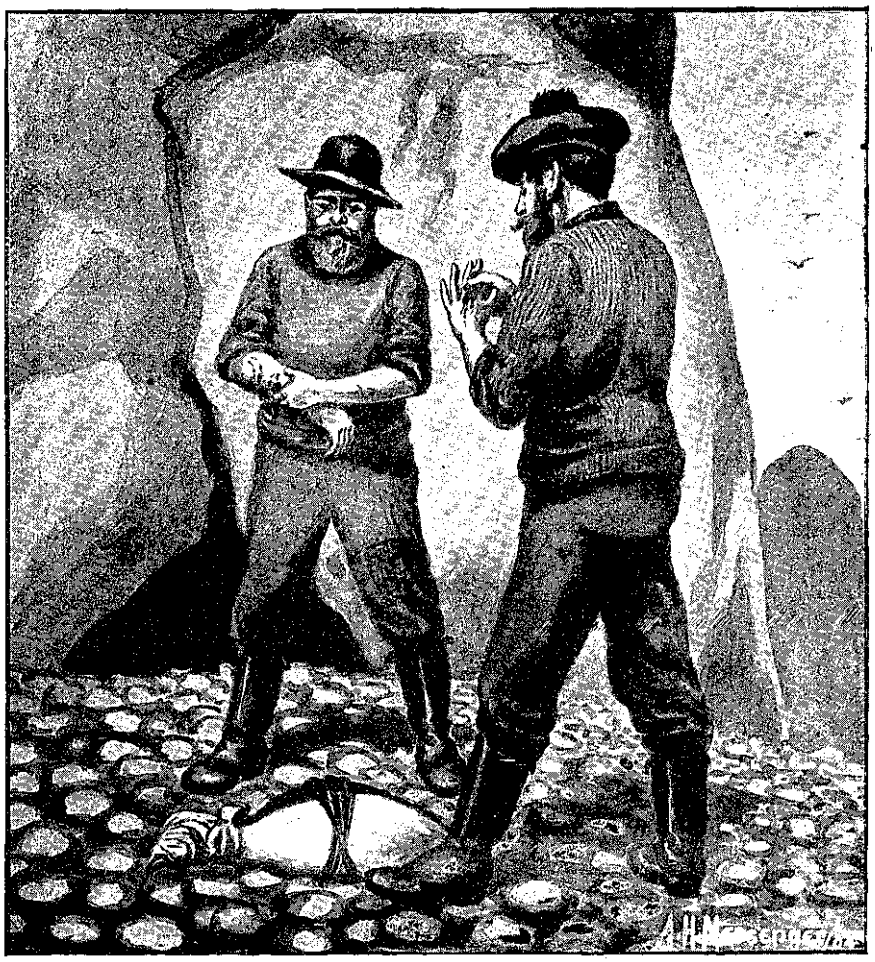
He went down on hands and knees as he spoke, and crept in through the aperture. Louie followed close at his heels, and the next moment the two found themselves in a sort of deep twilight on the sandy floor of a lofty cave. A faint glimmer of light penetrated through the rift by which they had entered, and ahead of them a round-shaped aperture at the further end of the cave admitted a second pale illumination which lit up the wash and play of heaving water. As they paused a moment so that their eyes might become used to the darkness, the two were startled by a curious croaking noise coming from somewhere in front of them.

"How ees that?" whispered Louie in an awed voice.

"Dashed if I know," answered his companion in a melodramatic undertone. "Looks as if someone has sprung our plant, don't it, mate?"

"Sacrrre!" muttered the Frenchman. "If eet ees that Italian crew, we have heem safe!"

Davis's only reply to this comment was a sudden rush into the gloom ahead, and the next instant there rose the sounds of a great scuffling and wild outbursts of lurid language. Louie ran forward hastily, and, striking a match, discovered his mate struggling on the sand with some curious looking monster that fought desperately against him, giving vent at the same time to strange guttural cries.



"My hand ees just to drop off."

"Quick, Louie," panted Davis, "bear a hand, mate; I've caught the devil himself this trip!"

The Frenchman reached out a hand which was instantly seized as though in a vice by some invisible grip.

"Nom de Dieu!" he howled, "he haf me, this devil! Yah! leggo—keel him, you Davis!"

"Hang on, man," grunted his mate in answer. "Ah-h-h, got him, now, Louie, quick—strike another match."

Cursing heartily in his native tongue, the Frenchman at last managed to strike a light with his disengaged hand, and by its feeble illumination the two discovered the author of all this disturbance to be a fine, full-plumaged penguin. With its formidable beak firmly closed upon the fingers of Louie's left hand, the game old bird lay spread-eagled upon the sand under Davis's hands and knees. It blinked fiercely as the light fell upon it, and then suddenly released its hold of the Frenchman's hand, and furiously pecked at its first antagonist.

Again the match flickered out and the struggle commenced anew. The bird croaked harshly and made lively play with its formidable bill. Davis cursed long and heartily, with a yell of pain whenever the penguin got in a good drive. Finally, however, he got a firm grip of the bird's

neck, and quickly throttled it into a state of submission. By the aid of another match the penguin was securely bound, feet and flappers; Davis's brilliantly coloured neckerchief was wound round its head regardless of the risk of suffocation, and the prisoner was carried out to the daylight for inspection. Out on the shingle bank the two gazed curiously at the bird now lying helpless between them.

"By Jingo, he did fight!" muttered Davis, nursing an arm that bore ample and bloodstained testimony to the fray. "If I could only ha' managed to reach my sheath-knife, I'd ha' goosed him, as sure as eggs!"

"Look at thees," said his companion; "my hand ees just to drop off in a minute! Oh, ze diable! he ees prisonair of war, we shall sell him, eh, Davis, to ze storekeeper for a bag of flour."

"Aye, that we shall, mate, or a pound or two of baccy," answered Davis. "But hold on, there might be some more of his breed in there yet."

"So, and how of ze cache?"

"Of course, I'd clean forgot all about that part of the trip, come on then!"

Leading the way, Davis once more re-entered the cave. A careful search resulted in the discovery and subsequent capture of a second and smaller penguin, hardly more than a chick. Then at one side of the cave the two, climbing half-way up its rugged wall, reached a long, deep shelf in the solid rock, upon which lay an irregular-looking heap securely covered with a tarpaulin.

"That's all right," said Davis in a tone of deep satisfaction. "It's all here, every stick of it, and now, mate, it's time we up mudhook and cleared out of this corner, or we'll have the whole dago fleet putting in here to see what we're doing."

Thus it was that Terawhiti Stumpy and his mother were captured and carried round after the day's fishing to the little village at Wharehou Bay. Here they were confined in a large upturned packing case, and before a week had elapsed, had become recognised members of the motley community of the place. From the very first, the young bird which Davis christened "Terawhiti Stumpy" on account of his short, fat body, throve wonderfully, and swallowed herring by the handful. On the other hand, the old bird did not take at all kindly to captivity, and moped so much that at last she was handed over to the storekeeper of the township some miles inland, in exchange for a pair of boots and a packet of candles. Meanwhile, Stumpy flourished exceedingly, and started making a name for himself by seizing little Antonio Valdez by the nose one morning when that young hopeful attempted to pull a feather out of his tail. Loud and terrible was the outcry that arose from within the packing-case upon this memorable occasion, and old mother Bartolli, who was sitting in her doorway, busy making a butterfish net, nearly took an apoplectic fit in her endeavour to hasten to the erring one's rescue. For the rest of that day the youthful Antonio wore a large bread poultice upon his injured nose, and carefully avoided the vicinity of the packing-case. Upon the following morning, Louie, who had been busily engaged stuffing Stumpy with stale herring, an apparently endless performance, rushed into Davis's cottage in a great state of excitement.

"Zat Stumpee," he cried, throwing up his arms, "he is eeat thirtee four beeg herring, every one right down!"

"The deuce he has," replied Davis, "then he's swallowed all our bait, I guess it's time we started him working for his tucker. Here, Louie," he continued, "fetch me that new five-fathom line from the stern of the dinghy, and we'll set young Stumpy to work."

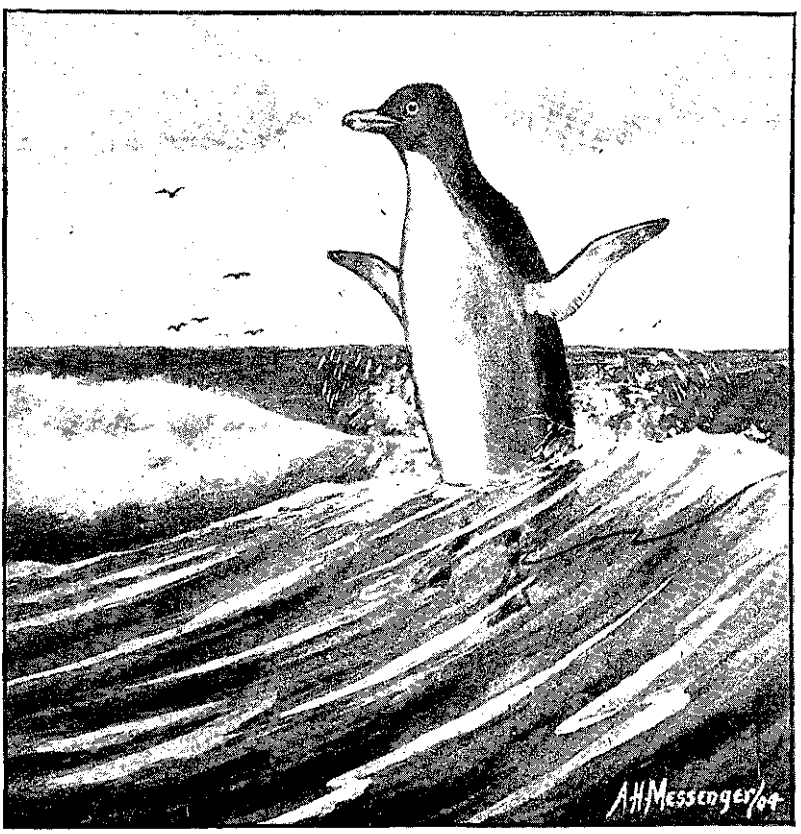
A few minutes later the bloated Stumpy was ignominiously made

captive by having a sugar bag dropped over his head. He was then carried down to the end of the reef inside of which the little fleet of dinghys bobbed at anchor, here under the curious eyes of the inhabitants of the village he was let loose, not a little to his own astonishment, and giving vent to a loud croak of delight, he dived neatly into the creaming water and disappeared. Securely tied to one leg, however, he carried the end of Davis's new five-fathom line, and for exactly two minutes after his disappearance the white cord whisked through its owner's hands steadily. Then it slackened suddenly, and far out on the blue-green heave of a shore-coming roller a white patch flashed out. A faint cheer arose from the onlookers as Stumpy, for it was he, stood upright on the crest of the wave and flapped his paddles in ecstasy.

"Voila, bravo, mon enfant Stumpee!" shouted Louie, waving his hat excitedly.

"Viva, Stumpee!" cried the Italians in chorus, and next instant Stumpy's tail was tipped skywards, and again the line slid seaward.

"By the mark five!" shouted Davis suddenly as the last lap of the line slid out, "and there she spouts, too!"



Stood upright on the Crest of the Wave and flapped his Paddles in Ecstasy.

Following the direction of his outstretched arm the spectators were just in time to see Stumpy once more bob up serenely out of the blue water. This time he held his head well up, and securely gripped in his beak was something that flashed like silver.

"A fish, a fish," cried Louie, hopping about in his excitement; "ze

little diable; see, he has himself caught a fish!"

For close on an hour Stumpy was allowed to revel in the deep blue waters of the bay, and twenty-two more herring, by careful calculation, were slipped into his capacious maw. Then as the freshening land breeze commenced tipping smoke plumes from the breaking rollers, Stumpy was slowly wound in, and again carried amid acclamations to the imprisoning walls of his packing-case. Within a fortnight Stumpy had become quite famous, and the inhabitants of the village vied with one another in their attentions to his welfare, so that at last he was in imminent danger of death through overfeeding.

From the first his appearance at the bay had been resented by Davis's old cat, Dinah, partly no doubt on account of his getting the pick of the fish scraps, which she regarded as her special perquisite. Dinah was old and staid, and her black and white fur shewed signs of thinning in patches here and there. She would sit at a distance as stiff and prim as any old maid, blinking solemnly whilst the whole village lavished attentions on the new arrival. Then, as soon as opportunity offered, she would steal shamefacedly up to the packing-case, hoping a stray herring might have been dropped unawares. At times she relieved her feelings by jumping on to the corner of the case, and displayed her disfavour by bristling her fur and spitting angrily at the solemn-faced Stumpy, whose gravity, however, was in no way disturbed.

"The beggar can't smile," said Davis one day in explanation of his pet's set countenance. "You see it's natural for these fellers to be down in the jaw, cos they're always hungry."

One day Dinah watched her chance, and becoming over-venturesome, reached down into the packing-case for a scrap of herring that Stumpy had somehow missed. He was busy at the other end of the case on a schnapper's head, and the chances are he would never have seen the old cat at all, had she not unfortunately overbalanced herself and fallen with a clatter, all bristles and claws into the box. In a flash Stumpy drew his little barrel of a body erect, heels together, flappers straight at his side, just for all the world like a soldier on parade. Then, right about turn—snap—grab—and in the twinkling of an eye he had Dinah's tail in an iron grip. What an uproar there was! Not that Stumpy said anything, for his mouth was too full for words; but Dinah used the most shocking language, and her wild cries for help soon brought every man, woman and child in the village rushing to the rescue. Try as they would, however, they could not induce Stumpy to slacken his hold, he simply set his sturdy little legs with their broad webbed feet, squarely against the side of the case and hung on with a determination that was inflexible. As a last resort the old and effective device of throttling was tried, and to this only Stumpy finally succumbed with a half-defiant croak. As for the injured Dinah, she fled up the village street, spitting and squalling blue murder, and never stopped until she had scaled the topmost branches of a tall Ngaio tree that grew halfway up the cliff. Here she spent the rest of the day nursing her offended dignity and sore tail.

One day as Davis and Louie were busily engaged patching their nets on the shingle bank in front of the village, their attention was called by old mother Bartolli to a small erect figure lurching along towards them down the dusty inland road.

"Sacrrre Bleu!" cried Louie in astonishment, "eet ees ze mothere of that infamous Stumpee!"

He was right, for as they hastened to the spot there she was, sure enough. At their approach she set her back against a rock and bravely showed fight. Poor, dust-grimed

bird, she was in no condition to resist any attack, her body had lost its former plumpness, and was thin and gaunt-looking, and one of her flappers hung limply at her side. The hearts of the rough fishermen were touched by the pathetic appearance of the waif, so they enveloped her in an old guernsey, for she pecked and struggled furiously at being captured, and bore her off tenderly to the village.

"Fourteen long, blessed miles," said Davis impressively to his companions, "this game little bird has come all on her own for a breath of old ocean, and if I know anything about it, she ain't going back to that storekeeper."

So Stumpy found his mother again, and under the kindly atmosphere of the wind-swept straits the old bird soon recovered some of her former condition and activity. In the morning swims, however, she was never a match for her more venturesome offspring, for her right hand flapper, injured doubtless in some fight during her long pilgrimage to the bay, healed badly, and left her partly crippled. All through the long summer months when the straits gleamed sapphire blue under cloudless skies, and the brown-sailed smacks leaned gently before the soft warm breezes that strayed across the ocean, Stumpy and his mother fared happily enough.

Whilst the smacks were away at the cape, little Antonio Valdez and his dark-eyed sister looked to the feeding of the village pets, and every morning as the sun rose bright and clear over the distant ranges in the east, Fisherman Davis and his partner took Stumpy and his mother to the reef end for their usual swim. Then one morning during a furious gale in early winter, in which two fine smacks were cast away on the rocks of the bay, and the great grey smoking seas ran far up above the usual high-water mark, Stumpy and his mother disappeared.

At daybreak, when Davis and Louie were awakened by the dash of the spent seas against the windward side of their cottage, they hastened out to save their pets from being washed away. They were too late, however, for in the backwash of the angry surf a few scattered planks and the limp body of Stumpy's mother, crushed and broken on the reef, were the only remaining evidences of what had happened. As for Stumpy himself, nothing definite was ever known concerning his fate, and at the bay it was considered highly probable that he weathered the gale all right, and may even now be once more fishing from the old cave at the Cape.

E. Bradbury Photo.

A Glimpse of the Buller River from the Coach Road.

A Book and Its Writer.

POE'S TALES OF THE GROTESQUE AND ARABESQUE.

By EDWARD KEMPE.

IN a handful of weird tales, a few pages of passionate verse, and the tradition of a singularly unhappy life, the name of Edgar Allan Poe has survived within a few years of the centenary of his birth.

"The evil that men do lives after them" in the world's memory. Every one who has read the "Raven and the Bells," the "Pit and the Pendulum," and the "Murders in the Rue Morgue," will have heard this much of their author—that he lived an intemperate and unhappy life and died of drink. What a biography for a man of genius, the popular epitome of a record of passionate effort in pursuit of the ideal, of the extremes of brilliant success and tragic failure, of such hopes and such disappointments as average men are incapable of realising. It is the human instinct to reduce everything to an epigram, and it is impossible to deny a certain rough justice to the world's summing up. Yet, any one who studies the life of Poe will be moved to pity at the hostility which dogged him through his life, and survived to blacken his memory.

To turn to the Tales which are the subject of this article. They are a collection of magazine stories, frankly sensational, written to take the popular taste, not remarkable for humour, pathos, characterisation, or the more human side of creative art. The tortures of the inquisition, the horrors of premature burial (which might be called Poe's ruling dread), of the grave, the charnel house and the sheeted ghost, murder in its ugliest forms, and the material terrors of the guilty conscience, the ocean regarded as the storehouse of supernatural secrets and weird happenings—this is the material of Poe's tales, together with a few grotesque fancies tinged with a humour of a rather ugly cast.

Here is sensation enough for the most hardened reader, but the curious critic asks, where are the qualities that have preserved the Tales against the lapse of time?

For though nothing is more popular than sensationalism, there is no form of literature less likely to endure. A shudder is a passing emotion. The generation which rejoiced in Monk Lewis or Mrs. Radcliffe have long laid them by, as a traveller skims the pages of a railway novel and leaves it behind him at his journey's end. Yet Poe's tales not only captivated his magazine readers but have survived the lapse of nearly three generations, and still possess the power of thrilling in new editions.

Of course, a tale may be sensational and something more. Hamlet and Lear, it has been pointed out, are as full of sensations as any police novel, but behind all the

alarums and excursions one feels the great volcanic forces at work in the souls of the men and women. The great artist makes you see through the terror of the incident into the still more appalling depths of human passion of which they are the outward expression.

But a purer sensationalist than Poe never wrote. He rarely attempts to lift his subject into tragedy. He is too much occupied with the horror of the incident to trace the shadow of fate in the background. Even the victims themselves concern us less than their experiences. We are disgusted or horrified, not moved to pity. And Poe himself frankly admitted that he aimed at nothing more than to "make your flesh creep." He was well pleased with the form of Victor Hugo's congratulatory criticism, "You have invented a new shudder."

That Poe could be something beside a sensation monger, his poems are sufficient evidence, but his prose works are our concern now, and it is undeniable that when the worst is said about them, the Tales in themselves do possess powerful elements of vitality, and are likely to hold their place in the world's literature. What singles out Poe's sensations from the mass, and gives them a lasting hold on the imagination is the extraordinary force and earnestness with which they are presented. In the hands of an ordinary magazine writer his subjects would often be not only incredible, but disagreeable, sometimes even ridiculous. But, like the Ancient Mariner, once Poe has caught your attention, his "glittering eye" holds you. The fearful exactness with which he builds up his terrors piece by piece impress you against your will. You may profess to be displeased, but you will never forget. This same intense earnestness is indeed an essential ingredient of what we call genius—the glowing conviction which carries writer and reader through all obstacles. It is the same quality, to compare smaller things with greater, which gives the note of realism to Dante's "Inferno," the realism that made the people of Florence point with awe at his sombre figure in the streets, as the man who had been in hell. Like Dante, too, Poe makes no use of the art of suggestion. His descriptions are always precise, his measurements exact. And at his height Poe is capable of a sublimity in description which is worthy of a great poet. Take the following passage from the "Descent into the Maelstrom," a sort of Hugoesque sea-vision in a style which Poe attempted too seldom. As a rule he could not resist staining his canvas with mere ugliness. The fisherman who tells the tale has been caught in the great whirlpool.

"Never shall I forget the sensations of awe, horror, and admiration with which I gazed about me. The boat appeared to be hanging, as if by magic, midway down, upon the interior surface of a funnel, vast in circumference, prodigious in depth, and whose perfectly smooth sides might have been mistaken for ebony, but for the bewildering rapidity with which they spun around, and for the gleaming and ghastly radiance they shot forth, as the rays of the full moon, from that circular rift amid the clouds which I have already described, streamed in a flood of golden glory along the black walls, and far down into the inmost recesses of the abyss. . . ."

". . . The rays of the moon seemed to search the very bottom of the profound gulf; but still I could make out nothing distinctly, on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped, and over which there hung a magnificent rainbow, like that narrow and tottering bridge which Mussulmen say is the only pathway between Time and Eternity. This mist, or spray, was no doubt occasioned by the clashing of the great walls of the funnel as they all met together at the bottom, but the yell that

went up to the heavens from out of that mist I dare not attempt to describe."

Although not in itself an evidence of literary merit, still it is a fair tribute to the earnestness of Poe's style, carrying conviction in the face of incredibility, that several of his most fanciful tales were commonly believed to be records of fact, and excited controversy on the point both in England and America. "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym" was one of these. It is the longest of Poe's imaginative works, indeed the only one to appear originally in book form—and is the detailed record of a voyage, beginning in tragedy and ending in a peculiarly suggestive and unsolved mystery—a catalogue raisonee of every kind of sea tragedy, mutiny, shipwreck and starvation. "Arthur Gordon Pym" is hardly so well known as some of Poe's shorter efforts, and it is not surprising considering the repulsive nature of some of its scenes. Yet there are few of Poe's writings which have more power to enchain the lover of adventure, and as an instance of the amazing vividness of conception and minute detail in which Poe's imagination revelled, it is unequalled.

But the most curious instance of Poe's convincing realism is the famous tale called "Facts in the case of M. Waldemar," a masterpiece in the region of nightmare. It is a scientific "statement" of the effect of mesmerism on a dying man, which is so far successful that though death takes place the mesmerised spirit still continues to communicate with the living through the agency of the dead body, and by the same unnatural influence the body is preserved from corruption until the necessary passes have been made by the mesmerist, when the catastrophe takes place. The tale gave rise to considerable controversy in the press, and at last a professional mesmerist, named Collyer, wrote to Poe, asking him to put an end to all doubt by proclaiming the incident as a fact—he, Collyer, having fought all his life on behalf of mesmerism, and come in contact with a similar case. Poe replied with some humour in the columns of his paper, the "Broadway Journal," that "the truth is there is a very small modicum of truth in the 'Case of M. Waldemar.' . . . If the Case was not true, however, it should have been, and perhaps Dr. Collyer may discover that it is true after all."

In naming Poe sensationalist and realist, one should not forget that he was a poet, and a poet of a high order. In his romantic tales—"Berenice," "Ligeia," "William Wilson," "The Domain of Arnheim," etc.—one finds the same glowing imagination and sensuous appreciation of beauty as in the poems, though here the gloomy realism of his prose style often strikes a discordant note (the "instruments of dental surgery" in Berenice are an almost ludicrous example). It was one of Poe's theories of art, expressed in a review of Longfellow's poems, that the sole end of poetry is the pursuit of Beauty, unhindered by any idea of "Truth or Duty." Poe's critical theories, elaborate as they are, often suggest ingenuity more than sincerity on the part of the writer, but here his own work certainly bears out his creed. And it is this very want of moral feeling that is the weakness of his poetry. Its passion is unchastened and morbid, its sense of beauty unrefined. It has no saving hopes or ideals. The grave yawns in the background. Sheeted ghosts and spectres are its only spiritual visitants. Its brilliant flowers have a hectic colour and lustre. The same may be said of his prose romances. There is the same striving to express a somewhat sensuous type of beauty, which becomes artificial. His women are actresses without soul, his landscapes are exquisite scene-paintings without nature.

A word must be said on the philosophic side of Poe's genius, which forms so strange a contrast to his florid imagination. As a thinker Poe is ingenious and versatile, if not profound. He was fond of speculation on such picturesque problems as the consciousness after death, the possibilities of mesmerism, the transmigration of souls, some of which form the text of his tales and prose poems. But perhaps the most curious side of Poe's scientific faculty is that which finds expression in the famous trilogy of detective tales, and extraordinary feats of cypher reading. Not only was Poe the inventor of the "detective formula," not only does its great modern exponent, Conan Doyle, admit that he has "covered its limits so completely that I fail to see how his followers can find any fresh ground which they can call their own. On this narrow path the writer must walk, and he sees the footmarks of Poe always in front of him." Not only this, but Poe himself proved that as an armchair detective he was the equal of Sherlock Holmes and his own Dupin. Whether his faculty was due to an extraordinary acuteness of analysis, or as he himself suggests, to a union of the qualities of poet and mathematician, enabling him to follow the process of reasoning in another man's mind by putting himself in his place, it is hard to say. At any rate there is no reason to doubt that in the second of his three famous tales, "The Mystery of Marie Roget," Poe simply recapitulated under assumed names the details of an untraced murder, which was agitating New York at the time, and that the imaginary conclusion to his tale which he evolved from the clues provided by the newspapers, was long afterwards proved by the confession of the murderer to be absolutely correct.

"And over all there hung a cloak of fear." Strong as was his love of the beautiful, as strong almost as that of his contemporary, Keats, keen as was his analytical faculty, they are overshadowed always by that obsession, or waking nightmare, in which his imagination, if not his mind, always seems to move. He might be called the chronicler of death. Not the "beautiful death" of the strong soul of Whitman, but that king of terrors, which haunted the superstitious minds of the Dark Ages, in the shape of the grisly skeleton of the dance of death. That a mind of Poe's rank should have submitted to this hateful tyranny is pitiable. It doubtless grew on him with the weakness for drugs, and to a healthy mind poisons much of his written remains.

Edgar Poe began his career a high-spirited, handsome, active boy, inheriting the hot blood of an old Southern family, which was dying out in poverty and misfortune. His father and mother, wandering actors, died in his infancy, and he was adopted by Mr Allan, a wealthy friend of his family. Thus Poe was unfortunate from the outset. Discipline was the prime need of his character, and he seems to have been alternately treated with lavish indulgence and unjust severity, the worst possible handling for a boy of high spirit and little self-control. He was educated rather irregularly at schools in England and Virginia, and at the age of seventeen went to the University of Virginia, where he seems to have taken his life into his own hands and began sowing his wild oats. Within a year he had left the University under a cloud of debt, quarrelled with his adoptive father, and published his first volume of poems. From this time his stormy independence begins. He went to Europe and disappeared for two years, then returned in the guise of the prodigal, and submitted to academic discipline once more at the famous West Point Military Col-

lege. A year's caging was all that this wild spirit could endure. He was only twenty-two, but he was a poet, a traveller, a man of the world. It is said he had fought for Greece during his wanderings; he had drunk the wine of youth and freedom. He deliberately qualified for dismissal from West Point by breaking some technical rules, had a last violent altercation with his foster father, which ended all hopes of allowances or legacies, and was again face to face with the world. Henceforth Poe's life is a long and sordid battle with poverty—a losing battle from the world's point of view, for he never achieved financial success, and finally he sank under the slavery of drink—the fire of his youth was beaten down, until it was only manifest in lurid and fitful outbreaks of genius and misdirected passion. It is a dreary record, little as we know of it, not merely because of his failures and misfortunes, but because he could never get a fair start. His mind and spirit were worthy of a large field, even for defeat; he would have leaped at the opportunity. But it was his fate always to struggle for a mere footing, and his pride often raised obstacles where a meaner spirit might have avoided them.

After the final quarrel, his friends for the second time lost all trace of him, but his second experience of Bohemia was no better than the first, and he again reappears in the prodigal's rags, but no home or father to carry his repentance to. A literary patron, Mr Kennedy, came to his assistance, and Poe soon made his debut as a prose writer by winning a hundred dollar prize with a collection of six romantic tales. This started him on his career. He became connected with a Southern paper, the "Literary Messenger," and was appointed editor within a year. Nowadays one would think that a young man who could rise so rapidly to the head of an editorial staff would have an assured future. Either Poe's capacities were extraordinary, and easily recognised, or newspaper proprietors have changed remarkably in three generations. Certainly the first is true. Within two years Poe had ended his connection with the paper, but during that time he had quadrupled its circulation, chiefly by the popularity of his own contributions. And yet his salary never exceeded a hundred guineas. This speaks more for the astuteness than the generosity of American publishers. And Poe's life is simply a repetition of the same experience. One newspaper proprietor after another jumped at the opportunity of engaging the brilliant hack, who came to them on the verge of destitution and was willing to accept starvation wage. For a time all would go well. Poe's tales never lost their popularity. He was willing to write half the magazine. His articles were fresh, original, provoking. His ideas excited controversy. Circulations went up. Then after a year or two trouble would arise. Then the hack would become restive, claim a higher salary, or a share in the paper, and something more than the orthodox three dollars a page for his creations. Or his criticism became too plain-spoken. He gave offence in quarters where flattery was the policy that paid. He abused popular favourites, and overthrew orthodox literary idols. So Poe would find himself penniless on the world again, hawking his stories round to the newspapers to keep the wolf from the door. Excepting the "Narrative of A. G. Pym," and the famous "Gold Bug," ancestor of innumerable cypher tales, which gained a hundred dollar (£20) prize, all his stories appeared in the manner described, and brought little or no profit to their author.

Perhaps the height of contrast was reached in the year '45, which saw the production of "The Raven," one of those rare poems which delight both the people and

the critic, and the publication of his tales and poems in a volume, which was popular on the Continent, and excited the admiration of Victor Hugo and Baudelaire. In this year Poe reached the summit of his fame. "The Raven" was read, recited, parodied everywhere. He was a society lion (whatever that is worth). He was invited to lecture by Historical and Literary Societies. Meanwhile the literary hero was earning scanty bread and butter at a desk in the office of one N. P. Willis, proprietor of the "Evening Mirror," who evidently had some hesitation in engaging a hack of Poe's unbroken character and doubtful reputation. But N. P. Willis soon found that the want of bread and butter will induce even a literary lion to pare his claws. "We were led by common report to expect a very capricious attention to his duties, and scenes of violence and difficulty. Time went on, however, and he was invariably punctual and industrious." He goes on to enlarge on the beauties of his tame genius in the true biographer's vein. "With his pale, beautiful and intellectual face as a reminder of what genius was in him, it was impossible of course not to treat him with deferential courtesy, and to our occasional request that he would not probe too deep in a criticism, or that he would erase a passage coloured too deeply with his resentment against society and mankind, he readily and courteously assented." Incredible blandness!

Through the dreary shifts and changes of Poe's life, two saving influences can be traced, his home life, and his ambition to found a literary magazine. At the age of twenty-seven he married his cousin, Virginia Clemm, a marriage of pure romance, for she was a girl of fourteen, and he, as usual, in financial straits, though at the time he was editing the "Southern Literary Messenger," and by the popularity of his weird tales and articles had raised its circulation from five to twenty thousand. For eleven years Poe, his wife, and his mother-in-law lived together in full confidence and affection, facing their poverty with united courage. The poet himself was passionate, erratic, and extravagant. The wife seems to have been a delicate, clinging girl; and her mother, Mrs. Clemm, a woman of strong, stern, practical mould (the very antithesis of the two young people she watched over), was the pillar of this strange family. Between Poe and herself there was a mutual affection which reminds one of the relations of Cowper and his nurse, Mary Unwin, for it lasted through all the storms in which Poe's life was ended. But for this steady current of domestic happiness, Poe's wild spirit would have beaten itself to destruction long before. As it was, the last few years of his wife's life were filled with suffering, and the strain on Poe's acutely sensitive nature was so great that there is no doubt his mind was seriously affected, and he gave way to those habits of drinking which have tarnished his good name. Improvident he certainly was, though his means were always narrow, and there were times when the sick girl was in want of sufficient food and covering, and Poe, who was out of employment, strove in vain to wring saleable copy from his tormented imagination. At the end friends had to come to their assistance, and a public collection was made, which even in those circumstances was a wound to Poe's pride. Yet, with all their troubles, it was in his cottage home, his girl-wife, and the strong, kind guardianship of his mother-in-law that Poe found the only true happiness of his life. Perhaps it is not surprising that his works contain few or no allusions to his wife, for they reflect almost solely the feverish and gloomy passions of his life, while she represented the sane and peaceful influence of a home.

Throughout his literary career Poe's heart was set upon one ob-

ject—to found a purely literary and critical magazine which should represent and direct American literature. That he failed was characteristic of the man and his time, and affords another instance of the rarity of that combination of ideas with practical ability, the want of which has wrecked men of genius in every department of life. He was a successful Editor, and most of his career was spent in the Editorial chair of various semi-literary journals—the "Southern Literary Messenger," the "Philadelphian Gentleman's Magazine," the "Broadway Journal," and others. But his success was largely due to the popularity of his own writings. Want of capital, or want of business instincts, or a combination of the two, checkmated him whenever he tried to carry his dreams into reality. He persevered to the end, indeed his death took place during a journey which he had undertaken with the view of raising funds to this end.

The journal of Poe's dreams was far more than a financial speculation. It was to be an organ, free from all influence, prejudice, or favour, by which he hoped to regenerate criticism and purify American literature. Now that literature has won a position of dignity and repute in America, it is not so easy to understand Poe's circumstances, but there is a certain parallel between American society of that time and our own. Except at Boston a literary profession, or a literary society did not exist, and with the Bostonians Poe had always a standing feud. The great lights of the middle century—Hawthorne, Emerson, Lowell, Whitman, etc., had scarcely begun to write. Literature as a profession meant starvation, for it was not wanted. Journalism was the only resource for the would-be writer, and contemporary accounts, both of English and native writers, do not speak highly of American journalism. Poe was essentially a poet and a literary artist with a keen sense of critical justice and the dignity of his art, and for the sake of his daily bread, it was his fate to support a profession whose want of principle offended him keenly.

We have said that there was no professional literary class, but there were plenty of amateur poets and prose-writers, and it was part of the business of the press, true to the principle of puffing everything American, to support these productions with a chorus of flattery. These false judgments, passing muster as honest coin, hurt acutely Poe's fine critical sense. With all his limitations as a critic he was scrupulously sincere, and clear if not deep in his judgments. He was one of the earliest to welcome the genius of Hawthorne, and, with some deserved criticism, that of Longfellow. With his love for and belief in pure literature, it was pain and grief to him to see criticism false to her duties. He never hesitated himself, and constantly attacked the weak sentimentalism which passed as talent (as Whitman was to do many years later). The result was that he made enemies and was constantly subject to counter attacks and even slander which did not cease with his death. Towards the end of his life, when his self-control was fast giving way before misfortune and drink, he was attacked by a poetaster, named English, for a severe criticism of him—one of a series of contemporary sketches or interviews, which Poe had published under the title of "The Literati." This man's retort took the form of a letter to the "Evening Mirror," of Philadelphia, in which he openly charged Poe with theft, forgery, drunkenness, cowardice, plagiarism and other offences. Poe lost his head, and responded in a similar strain, referring to "the family resemblance of Mr. English to that of the best-looking, but most unprincipled of Mr. Barnum's baboons," and introducing epithets such as "Blather-

skite," "bully," and "coward." Such an incident casts a strange light on the social refinement of the age, and is a melancholy example of the degradation of genius. Dickens' savage picture of the America of this period in "Martin Chuzzlewit"—boastful, insolent, and vulgar—may be caricature, but there is a germ of truth in it of which one has contemporary glimpses such as the foregoing. If the Bostonian school of Emerson, Thoreau, Whittier, and the enthusiasts of Brook farm did nothing else, at least they seem to have introduced a severer, saner tone into American letters, to have given literature an independent standing, and to have refused in spite of poverty to be contaminated by the influence of contemporary journalism.

Unfortunately, Poe stood aloof and alone—Pegasus in pound—beating his wings in a vain attempt to rise out of the mire, until his spirit was broken and his principles degraded. The last rally of his life was a strange one, in the year or two that succeeded his wife's death. In it he produced some of his most perfect poems—"Annabel Lee," and "For Annie"—some striking tales, and the extravagant, semi-scientific work, "Eureka," which he confidently believed was to confound Newton and re-establish the theory of the Universe on a new basis. On the other hand, his reason had never quite recovered its balance after his wife's death, and his passionate nature seemed to break beyond his control. He had always had a chivalrous admiration for women which once landed him in an undeserved scandal, and now he lost all restraint and surrendered himself to sentimentalism. He first pursued a literary widow, Mrs. Whitman, until against her judgment and really to save his reason, she consented to marry him. She had hardly done so when Poe broke out in one of his orgies of drug-drinking, and she immediately ended the affair. After this came a series of romantic attachments—friendships, according to Poe, but really a riot of sentiment and strong feeling which helped to exhaust his broken constitution. The end could not have been far off, but it came in a sudden and degrading form. He was found in the streets after a night of drink and exposure, and carried to a hospital, where he never regained consciousness and died among strangers.

Here ends the fitful fever-dream of his life and works. In all that Poe wrote there is a malarial taint, the delusive realism of fever, the lurid colouring, the half-belief, half-fear that it is true and the wish that it were not so. Other writers one associates with the moorland or the ocean, the breezy country or the cheerful haunts of men. But Poe has no place with healthy nature. In imagination one sees his lonely figure moving as in a nightmare, hag-ridden and melancholy, among the streets of cities, where the light flickers on blank walls, barred windows and endless pavements.

My Lady's Bower.

By Alma.

Lady readers are invited to discuss current topics in these pages, suggest subjects for discussion, and also to contribute photographic studies on any subject of interest. Contributions should be addressed: "Editor My Lady's Bower, New Zealand Illustrated Magazine," and should arrive early in the month. In all cases where stamps are enclosed for the purpose photos will be returned.

GARDENING FOR WOMEN.

QUITE a unique production is the "Woman's Agricultural Times," a Quarterly edited by Lady Warwick, and sold at a modest price. Its arrangement is business-like. So, too, is the scheme for company formation by which all women are invited to become shareholders. From its pages I make some extracts taken from an article entitled, "How to live in the Country," by M. Millard. This "Daughter of Ceres" gives a conversation held with a proud mother, who has been

Lady Plunket.

relating with pride the fact that her daughter "does not care a bit for town life—has so many country interests."

"My daughter is never dull. She gets lots of croquet in the summer and hockey in the winter, and she fills up her time with exercising the dogs and practising on her banjo. Then she has the flowers to arrange."

"I enquired no further," remarks the Daughter of Ceres. "It was a harmless existence, but entirely without a reasonable stimulus. She only followed the dreary round of nine girls out of ten. Yet numerous opportunities remain of leading busy, active lives at home in the country. The cleverest, most capable, girls of a family go, often without any decided talent, to study art or music merely as a vent for their active brains and bodies, and with no lasting satisfaction to themselves. And how many small country houses I know with neglected gardens.

"An educated person organising and assisting in the work of the garden will make all the difference in the world. Then, what untidy, ill-kept poultry-yards one meets with—because things, especially over-feeding, are left to the 'odd' man. The small dairy, too, could be managed better by the daughter of the house than by the cook in her spare time. Bee-keeping, too, is eminently suited for ladies. There is absolutely no heavy work, or even that which the most delicate girl need fear. The initial expenses need not exceed £5, and there is practically nothing more to pay, as the bees feed themselves. I have heard of £5 per hive being cleared by a clever manager in one season.

"I would advise beginners to avoid starting on too large a scale. Begin with a few hens or one hive, get everything good of its kind, stock or appliances. And strike out for yourself instead of migrating to the city, or else 'loafing' at home."

In the advertisement columns is notice of a lady's intention to retire. She desires a manager to have

E. Thorne Photo.

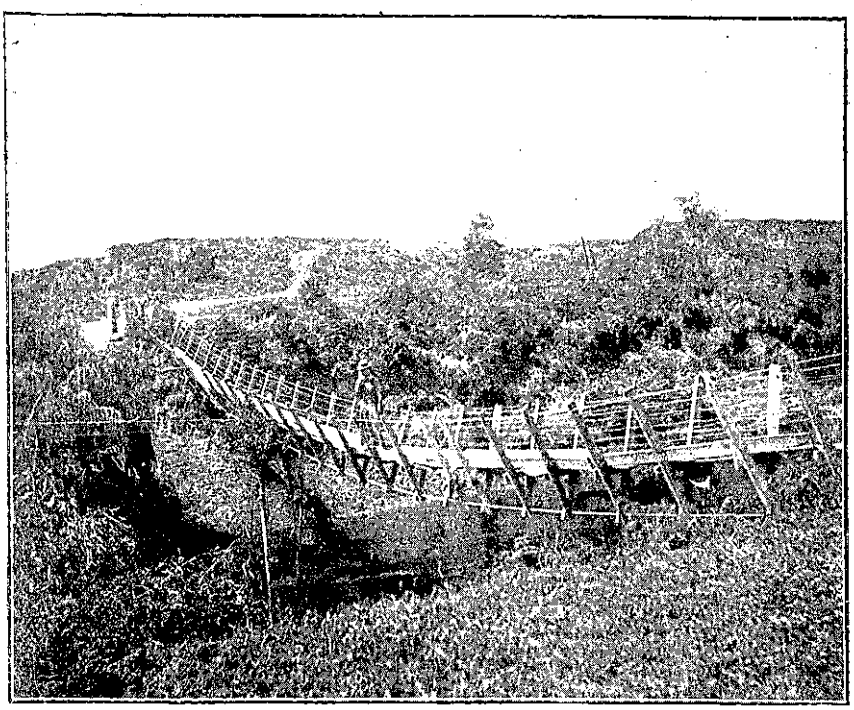
Fancy Dress. This young Lady looks equally well in either Costume.

whole profits from her poultry and garden farm. She charges thirty shillings per week for use, but the manager is to have all profits, board and residence, only supplying the table with fowls, eggs, fruit and flowers.

Again is a notice of a recent book in which the author states that woman is the "cause of pretty well all the misery in the world. She is not beautiful, she cannot manage house or servants, she does not know how to dress. She talks too much, shops too much, reads only vulgar or sentimental rubbish. If she writes she is an offence in the sight of Olympus, and men go down like flies before the temptation to supply the demand for rotten novels read by women. She is only fit for a bun-shop or a baby-linen counter. She cannot be happy without man." Needless to say, the article deals with the writer of the above in anything but a mild manner.

Yet another article quotes from an article written by a male authority on gardening, who warmly praises women's work in this direction.

And a most interesting account is given by the secretary of her first visit to the local produce auction sale. Interesting, too, is the advertisement of the formation of the Marmalade-Conserve Company, for which many ladies work, as also some details of life at Studley, where training and residence may be had for £80 a year.



E. Thorne, photo. A useful Footbridge.

But there is too much to dwell on, and I can only advise readers to see the production for themselves; and will be glad if I have interested any in the work of the women gardeners at Studley Castle.

And here, may I hint to women with a little capital to start it, that "Alma" knows of some land not far away whose owner might be induced to allow women to farm his property.

E. S. Dunnage Photo.

Donkeys on the Beach at Sumner.

SYNOD AT AUCKLAND.

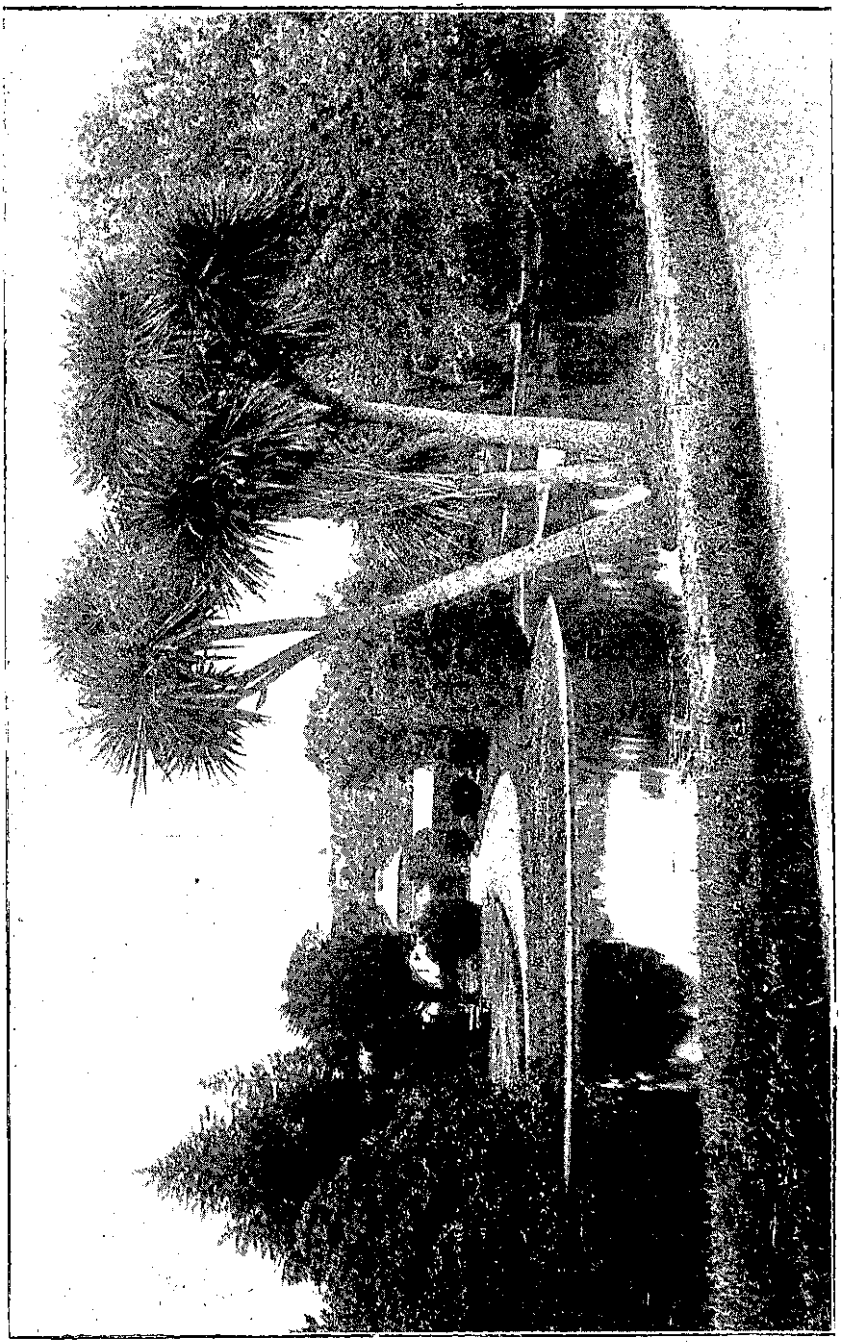
The Anglican Synod of the year exercised itself about giving Church franchise to women. To an uninterested one, it appears that if any one takes any interest in Church work, women certainly do. One need only look at the congregation any Sunday to believe it. Yet we let them vote in politics, and the Synod has excluded them from doing so. That the Synod may see more light!

Bishop Neligan remarks that "woman's suffrage in the Colony does not appear to have conferred the benefit anticipated, nor to have materially improved the position of women in the Colony."

St. Mary's Homes, at Otahuhu, as established under the present Bishop, are praised by him. His Church is "leading the van" both in rescue work and in training ladies for nurses. And great, too, is the gratification that a regular system was planned there before the Premier's issue of the memoranda relating to these branches of women's work. The Diocesan School for girls is likewise commended. But is it true that there is no room for the daughters of tradesmen? If so, one would think this an error of judgment, seeing that Auckland society is in so large a measure composed of tradespeople. One only hopes that rumour in this case, lies. For if it does not, the school will tremble financially for a very long time.

AT THE BAR.

Miss Ivy Williams is a lady who has passed seven law examinations at Oxford and London. But unlike our women, she will probably not be admitted to the Inner Temple. She speaks of appealing to Parliament if refused. This girl of twenty-six years has no wish to make money. She desires to practise, feeless, for the good of the poor.



The Botanical Gardens, Dunedin.

Morris, photo.

How Tommy Spent His Christmas.

By "ROLLINGSTONE."

"WHAT larks!" exclaimed Tommy, as he opened a letter from his old bachelor uncle, inviting him to spend his Christmas away up in the backblocks. A cheque was enclosed of what Tommy regarded as phenomenal fatness, and a postscript permitted him to bring up a couple of chums if he thought fit.

The invitation was not exactly a surprise. A similar one had arrived at this delectable period of several previous years, the memorable occasion on which Tommy shot a ruffianly old wild bull, will be remembered by constant readers of this Magazine. No, it was not exactly a surprise, but it was a great relief to get the letter, for this had been Tommy's last term at school. He felt himself a man now, and somehow he had a sort of notion that with his school-days, holidays also would vanish, and that his uncle might prefer asking younger lads up to the station. But this doubt dissolved, Tommy, with his mind relieved, hastily scribbled a reply. He hated letter-writing as a rule, and rightly guessed that his uncle would not care to wade through much of his lamentably illegible scrawl, so his note was brief and to the point. It began with a line from an old song inverted to suit the occasion. "Dear Uncle make room for your Tommy and two chums. Thanks for the tip. Glad to see wool is up." This was an inference drawn from the size of the cheque. Tommy rarely studied market reports. A few similar sentiments hastily scrawled and the note was promptly dispatched.

Then Tommy turned his attention to the selection of his associates. He felt prouder and more important than the Premier himself, when he happens to have vacancies on the Ministry to fill, for what sane lad would not infinitely prefer the patronage he had to dispense to a portfolio? The selection required much thought and consideration. The aspirants to what had hitherto proved a yearly honour were legions as Tommy's long list of prematurely sent Christmas presents abundantly testified. That Tommy placed some value on the perquisites attached to his present position goes without saying, for he ran the list of donors through his mind placing them in carefully graduated order of merit; but that he was not altogether mercenary, his final selection proved.

"Let's see, that purse-proud newchum fellow, Fitz, heads the list. I can't pass him, though he has only been with us one term. The beggar blows so infernally about hunting and shooting at home, and says everything here is so beastly colonial. He gave me the best present, there's no getting away from that. The beggar can well afford it. Besides, he'll give us some good sport, uncle will enjoy taking him down a bit. It won't be playing it too low down on Fitz either, for what he learns will be cheap at the price. Now about the other—let me see.

There's young Rhoddy, he's not on the list, but a right-down good chap, as poor as charity and not a home of any sort to go to. Parents dead, poor beggar, aunt paid his schooling, and now tells him he's got to look out for work of some kind. Well, he shall have a few weeks enjoyment anyhow, before he starts graft, and uncle might possibly give him a job, so that's settled."

Fitz accepted his invitation as if he were conferring a favour instead of receiving one, and was excessively surprised that Tommy had selected such a common fellow as Rhoddy for his other companion. Rhoddy, on the other hand, was exceedingly grateful to Tommy, and did not really care an atom who accompanied them, so long as he went.

The lads received a hearty welcome from the old gentleman when they arrived on the station. He was never happier than when he had young fellows round him. This partiality had gained for him the title of "Governor" amongst all the young fellows of his acquaintance. He made the strange lads feel at home at once, but much to the fastidious, studiously-dressed Mr. Fitz's astonishment, he paid more attention to the quiet lad in the well-worn clothes than he did to himself.

"So you're all three leaving school this term, lads, are you?" he remarked, as they sat that evening in the snug smoking-room quaintly ornamented with the stuffed heads of wild bulls and boars, a grinning Maori skeleton and other curiosities too numerous to mention.

"Tommy and I are," replied Fitz, ignoring Rhoddy as of no account.

"And what are you going to turn your hands to, my lad?" asked the Governor of Rhoddy.

"Anything I can get, sir. My parents are dead, but my aunt, who paid for my education, wanted me to try for a clerkship in town. I'd like to have pleased her, but it went too much against the grain. To tell the truth, had I not received Tommy's kind invitation from you, sir, I should have clapped a swag on my back and started off on the wallabi. I know something of farmwork, and I want to learn more. Father had a few acres when I was a little fellow."

Fitz shrugged his shoulders and looked up at the ceiling.

"Well done, lad, I like your pluck. I'll see what I can do for you. Glad you had the sense to keep out of a dirty office. Nothing like the country for a young fellow, though the work is harder. It's a wholesome, healthy life. I'll see if I can't fix you up with a job after Christmas."

"My governor wishes me to learn farming, sir," interposed Fitz grandly. "He's willing to pay a handsome premium to anyone capable of teaching me. Tommy was saying as we came up that you occasionally took agricultural pupils. It strikes me that station life is just the thing for a gentleman, plenty of sport and riding about, and all that sort of thing."

"Yes. I have taken cadets sometimes, and might again, but let me tell you, lad, though you may think it against my interests to do so, that Rhoddy's method of learning is far better than yours. Farming isn't all riding about and sport, and if that's your idea of it, I guess you'd be rather hard to teach. The man who succeeds best is the one who has done the work himself, and can show his men how to do it, when occasion arises. I'm open to bet by the look of you two that Rhoddy will beat you hands down in the long run."

"I don't see how you can compare us, sir, our positions in life are altogether different. Rhoddy's way wouldn't suit me at all."

"All right, my lad, I'll write to your father if you make a point of it; but we've talked enough about

work for the present, and it's about bedtime."

Tommy felt exceedingly envious of the other two when he noticed how pointedly his uncle had left him out of this discussion. His father's ambition was to see his son a prominent lawyer. Herein Tommy and his dad did not agree. He had been hoping against hope that his uncle would use his influence on his behalf, get possession of him, and make a farmer of him. But so far the Governor had showed no sign of so doing, merely muttering something about obedience to parents when Tommy had, on previous occasions, broached the subject.

But his envious mood changed abruptly to one of high exhilaration—even for him, for as the other lads retired the Governor called Tommy back for a private chat. When he joined Rhoddy in the room they were to share, a short time afterwards, the cause was made manifest.

"Look here, Rhoddy, my lad," he exclaimed, "I've just attained the height of my ambition. I'm to stop here with uncle and learn farming. The jolly old beggar had fixed it all up with dad, but ordered him to keep me in the dark because he wanted the pleasure of giving me a delightful surprise himself. And here have I been blaming the old boy all along for not taking my part! I deserve to be kicked, that's what I do! We'll have a grand time here together, old man, won't we?"

"Rather, Tommy. I'm delighted to hear it. But you must remember that you'll be an agricultural pupil, as Fitz calls it, and flying about with him, while I shall only be a rouseabout and have to earn my wages."

"That be hanged, Rhoddy! Look here, a brilliant idea struck me when uncle was saying yours was the best way of learning farming. We'll take contracts from uncle, and let Fitz have the flying about to himself. Right away back, in the big bush, there's a mob of wild cattle, some of uncle's that have strayed away, and they've never been able to get them in. I always said they never went the right way to work. He offered a pound a head last year, and the Macris had a try at it, but they only got a few calves and yearlings that they caught with their dogs, and tied up and starved till they got them quiet enough to lead out. Now my idea is to get well in behind the beggars and keep hustling them along day after day, till they find the bush too hot to hold them. It'll be a tough contract—we'll have to carry a blanket and tucker—we can catch a wild pig or two if we run short. We'll take old Jack, the cattle-dog, he'll trot along ahead of us and keep us on the right trail, we'll have to lie down on the track at night, and be up and after them again first thing in the morning, keeping them always on the move and weary the lives out of them. Are you game, Rhoddy? It'll be devilish hard work, I know, but it's to be done. There's no credit in tackling an easy job. If we've anything like the luck I expect, we'll make a thumping cheque out of it."

"Yes; I'm with you, Tommy. Nothing I'd like better," exclaimed Rhoddy.

They lay awake half the night discussing the details of the coming campaign. They decided to be very independent. They would get their own horses. Tommy's Christmas cheque could be expended that way. The amount necessary for Rhoddy's mount could be deducted from the result. A Maori boy was to be hired for a trifle to look after the nags and patrol the edge of the bush with a few quiet cows as a decoy, where the cattle were likely to break cover, so that the lads could mount and keep the wild mob from breaking back to the bush.

Next morning the two lads interviewed the Governor with an extremely business-like air. He thought the scheme an admirable one, and

said that he had always known it could be done, if only worked systematically and on the right lines. His only stipulation was that they were not to start work till after the New Year, they must enjoy a good holiday first. Both boys in their eagerness declared that they would ask no better holiday than this promised to be, but the old gentleman was inexorable.

"Look here, lads," he concluded, "as Tommy says, I offered a pound a head last year, but beef is up now, and the beasts are a year older and more valuable. I'll gladly double the figure. It'll pay me well to do so. I want to clear that mob right out; while they're there others are always joining them. And Rhoddy, mind one thing. I don't know much about you, but Tommy's a fine bushman, you'll never get lost if you stick to him, don't lose sight of him, whatever you do. He knows every inch of that bush, and understands every dodge of steering his way even better than I do, and that's saying a good deal.

The next few weeks of anticipation were glorious ones to both Tommy and Rhoddy. They felt that they were now men about to undertake a job which would task all their abilities to the utmost, and if successful give them ample return for their labour. They were realising the fact that money earned by one's own honest exertions is infinitely preferable to that which one receives from other sources, and the fact that it was their first experience in this line, gave it immeasurable added zest. Tommy already loved the great solitudes of the bush and all that they contained. To Rhoddy the bush was a vast, unexplored wonderland into which he longed to dive. The petty cares and small economies of his school-days were fast dropping from him in this great, free vista that was opening up before him.

Fitz, when first he heard of the cattle-hunting, declared he would join in the sport. But this was before he grasped the nature of it. He had understood cattle-hunting was always done on horseback. Tramping for days in the bush was too much like hard work for him.

The Governor did not at first approve of the lads buying their own horses, but Tommy explained that both he and Rhoddy would be far happier if they really owned the horses they rode. The old gentleman had not the heart to object to anything which had this end in view. Tommy bought a colt cheap from a cadet on a neighbouring station, which had defied all his owner's efforts to ride him. He had been christened "Firefly" by one of the many rough-riders who had taken him in hand and given him up as incurable.

Tommy surprised the animal intensely. He was prepared for another contest of brute force. He expected Tommy to mount him immediately and try severe measures forthwith. But the lad did nothing of the sort. He started to work as he would with an unbroken colt, put the breaking tackle on him, and let him stand about the yard for a few days, till Firefly wished he would hurry up and come to the point. Then he exchanged the tackle for a saddle and gave him another few days with that on. When he did condescend to mount and ride a few times round the yard it was without whip or spurs, and so quietly that Firefly, much to his surprise, could not possibly find it in his heart to object. There was something about Tommy's quiet but firm methods that utterly disarmed opposition, for after a few days he could ride the colt anywhere, and he would follow him like a dog.

Fitz pooh-poohed the idea that Firefly had ever been really rowdy, and laughed at Tommy's careful treatment and want of pluck to mount the animal earlier. Tommy could not stand this, he bet Fitz a new hat that he wouldn't sit

him for five consecutive minutes, even now.

Fitz took the bet readily, but brought out his own saddle that he had with him, a flapless, English hunting saddle, declaring he couldn't bear the beastly Colonial thing that Tommy used. Tommy won his bet, with quite four minutes and a half to spare. Tommy held the animal for Fitz to mount, but the moment Tommy let go of his head, and Firefly recognised that he had a stranger on his back, he tucked his head under his forelegs, and his tail under his hind ones, arched his back, gave one spasmodic bound, and Fitz was shot into the air like a pebble from a catapult. The ground was fairly soft where he fell, and his dignity received the severer hurt.

Rhoddy was bent on preventing Tommy from spending much on his mount. A Maori boy had a pony he wanted to sell. It was a ragged, weedy little rat of a thing, apparently constructed of wire and whalebone. The owner declared he had once won a Maori pony race. Rhoddy laughed at the idea, but tried him, and found he had a surprising amount of go in him. Rhoddy was a light-weight, so after getting Tommy's opinion on his soundness, three pounds changed hands, and Kiore (The Rat) was Rhoddy's.

Fitz was not to be outdone. He also must have a horse of his own, but of a superior class entirely. He met a young fellow riding a horse, named Fleetwing—a thoroughbred, sold out of a crack racing stable in town, but quite good enough to win the big events at little bush meetings, his owner declared. Fifty pounds was the price asked. Fitz said he was above haggling about a little matter like that, and at once drew on his father for the amount, declaring the horse dirt cheap at the price. Tommy's opinion was not asked on this occasion, but he gave it very unreservedly and entirely unfavourably. Fitz's retort was an offer to back Fleetwing against Tommy's Firefly for a fiver, which offer Tommy promptly accepted.

The Governor heard of it, and applauded. He was fond of a bit of sport of this description, and much to Fitz's surprise and scorn, insisted that Kiore should be in it too, the winner to draw the stakes. Rhoddy pleaded poverty, but the Governor insisted on putting down the fiver himself. Rhoddy felt that he could not offend his host by refusing, but felt sorry that he should lose his money, and said so.

"Money be hanged! It's the sport I look at," retorted the Governor gaily.

The course was once round a fine grass paddock, the Governor was appointed judge, and a station-hand, starter.

Fitz was cocksure of pulling off the prize, and Tommy no less so. Rhoddy, on the other hand, rode out in a discontented spirit. He did not see any fun in courting certain defeat, and felt annoyed with the Governor for his insistence.

Fleetwing sprang away with a good lead. He had been raced before. Fitz looked back with undisguised scorn at his competitors as the distance widened between them. Tommy was in no hurry to catch him, and Rhoddy, in the rear, was amazed to see that Kiore was not further behind. Half the course was run in this order, then Tommy noticed that Fleetwing was slackening his pace notwithstanding his rider's efforts to keep him going. Firefly required no urging. Round the third side of the paddock they flew. Kiore, to his rider's increasing surprise, kept close at Firefly's heels. He felt that he would not be so disgracefully beaten after all. Half way down the last side Firefly and Kiore flashed past Fleetwing, who was already in trouble. That was joy unspeakable to Tommy and Rhoddy. The wiry little Kiore was still going strong at Firefly's heels, and Rhoddy had not once touched him with whip or spur. Then it

suddenly seemed to occur to Rhoddy that he had a chance of winning after all, and like a flash the same impression seemed to strike Kiore, even before Rhoddy's whip was applied persuasively rather then forcibly. Tommy regarded the race as won as he tore up to the judge, but he was too confident, for with a fine spurt Kiore got his nose in front at the finish.

The Governor was delighted.

"Never saw a better finish ridden by a professional, my lad," he exclaimed, grasping Rhoddy's hand warmly.

"Ah! you cunning beggar, you caught me napping! If I hadn't been so cocksure, I could have won easily," was Tommy's outspoken comment.

"It doesn't matter a scrap how I caught you, Tommy, as long as I did it," said the jubilant Rhoddy, as he picked a handful of crisp fern and began carefully rubbing down the pony's dripping coat.

"Superior jockeyship, Tommy. You can't get away from that, so it's no good trying," said the old man. "You are pretty smart generally. Do you good to be taken down."

Seeing himself hopelessly beaten, Fitz had pulled up. As he rode leisurely up, he muttered something about the "beastly rough Colonial course. Only fit for Maori scrubbers, no wonder a decent horse couldn't run on it."

"You'll never be hanged for want of an excuse, Fitz," said the Governor, with a roar of laughter, in which the other lads joined. He added sotto voce, "but I wouldn't like to guarantee you total exemption."

As in duty bound the Governor handed the stakes over to Rhoddy. The lad objected.

"You put down the stake, sir, so the money's yours, I couldn't take it, really."

But at this the Governor waxed so wrath that Rhoddy took it meekly. "I wouldn't hurt the dear old chap's feelings on any consideration. I'd sooner hurt my own," he said to himself as he nimbly pocketed the prize.

Tommy and Rhoddy were enjoying their visit immensely, but Fitz was not. His feeling of superiority was constantly getting badly hurt. It did not matter what sport they tried, not only Tommy, but that detestable Rhoddy invariably got the better of him. He flattered himself that he was a splendid shot with a rifle, but when it came to a test, Tommy and Rhoddy both beat him rather badly.

On one occasion Tommy, whose reputation was an excellent one, broke all previous records. He took the hind legs off a spider at two hundred yards. This sounds tall, but it actually occurred. There was the spider for a witness on the edge of the bullet-hole on a fence post, minus his latter legs. There could be no possible mistake about that. The mistake was certainly the spider's, who, being country-bred and not used to dodging tram cars as our present-day citizens are, had been a little premature in crossing the bullet's track. Then Tommy jocularly boasted of the exploit, Fitz, thinking he was in earnest, exclaimed: "But you didn't see the spider." Tommy coolly replied: "There's no credit in hitting a thing you can see, any bally new chum with a good eye could do that."

On Christmas Eve the Governor and his guests were invited to a dance given by a neighbouring station-holder who had three daughters. The youngest was a budding little dark-eyed beauty, who took Fitz's fastidious fancy immensely. He regarded her as the only girl in the room who was not beastly colonial, and flattered himself that he would have a good time with her. But she evidently had the execrable bad taste to prefer that common brute Rhoddy, he couldn't possibly conceive what everyone saw in the cad. When he did get a dance with

her, and gave her his views on colonials and their colony, instead of taking them at their proper value as coming from one entirely unprejudiced, and therefore able to judge, she positively ridiculed them and him in the most atrocious manner. Poor Fitz, he was taken down at every turn.

With amusement of every variety, from pig-hunting to picnics with the girls from the neighbouring station, the holidays passed quickly. Fitz's father had been written to, but before negotiations were concluded, Fitz had come to the conclusion that the life would not suit him at all—it was too beastly colonial. The Governor was not disappointed, still, on bidding him adieu, he hospitably gave him a general invitation to come again whenever he felt inclined.

"I don't think Fitz had a very good time, lads," he remarked, as they watched him ride away, "but it's certainly been his own fault. We've done our best to entertain him, but he's never happy unless he's cock of the walk, and it'd take a very game bird to be that here, when fellows like you are about."

The lads started on their cattle-hunting expedition in high spirits. They carried a light blanket each, provisions and pannikins. A long day's tramp through a grand piece of bush brought them to the spot where Tommy thought they might find the cattle, but so far no recent tracks had been seen. About noon the next day old Jack, who had hitherto shown little interest in anything, pricked up his ears suddenly and looked sagaciously round at the lads. Rhoddy declared he winked. A few moments after Tommy, whose hearing like that of all good bushmen was very acute, declared he heard the cracking of branches, but not a hoof mark could be seen.

"They're just ahead of us. We'll have to creep round behind them," said Tommy.

They took a wide circuit, and came across their tracks. Creeping up very quietly, they could hardly suppress a shout of delight. Dotted about here and there—some lazily feeding on the succulent karaka boughs which they cleverly twisted off with their horns, others taking a noontide rest—were a number of magnificent cattle of all colours, rolling fat, with coats as sleek as a race-horse's from constant brushing through thick underscrub. As the sun sent shimmering rays down here and there through the dancing foliage, Rhoddy thought he had never seen a prettier sight. Safely yarded that mob would make any stock-owner's mouth water. But much skill and cunning must be exercised to get them yarded.

"A score at least, most of 'em grand four and five-year-old steers," pronounced Tommy. "By thunder, We're in luck!"

Before disturbing them the lads sat down and eat a hasty meal. Then they gradually made their presence known. In an instant the stillness of the bush was broken by an inconceivable rattle of horns against branches, snapping of supplejacks and underscrub, and thunder of hoofs, as with one accord the mob dashed off at speed. The lads followed smartly, old Jack keeping the trail in front, obedient to Tommy's instructions to restrain himself, but looking back ever and anon with impatient pity at his master, who, for all the boasted superiority of his race, seemed to him so infernally slow in his movements.

"Mustn't let him get at 'em, or they'd split up in twos and threes, and that wouldn't do at any price," grunted Tommy. "Besides, he's rouse 'em along so's they'd get too far ahead and have time to feed."

All that afternoon and evening, as long as they had light enough to follow the old dog, they stuck to the trail, every now and then catching up to the mob, and causing another stampede. As darkness fell, they cut fern-tree leaves, and laying them in the hollow between the

raised roots of a giant rata, they rolled themselves in their blankets after a refreshing tea, and slept the sleep they had so well earned.

At dawn Tommy woke. He felt the night had not been half long enough, but that was a mere detail. Rhoddy was roused, a hasty breakfast dispatched, and off they went again.

In a bush which stretched away indefinitely it was impossible to keep the cattle always in the right direction, but Tommy had a device which acted splendidly, and kept them in something approaching the way they should go. He had often amused his school-mates by fairly successful attempts at ventriloquism. He certainly had a gift that way. Each time they came up to the mob he exercised his lusty lungs sending his voice to the right or left as occasion demanded, and made that part of the bush hideous with unearthly discord. Rhoddy seized this opportunity of taking lessons, and was a fairly apt pupil. Old Jack swelled the chorus, though his strong point was time rather than tune. The instant they began he was on his haunches, looking heavenward, and emitting most dismal howls.

Towards the end of the second day, the cattle thinking anything preferable to this demon-infested bush, made for the open country, and joined the cows they saw grazing contentedly on the juicy young fern.

"There are the quiet cows, all right," exclaimed Rhoddy, "but that young scamp of a Maori isn't here with the horses, confound him!"

"I'll bet he isn't far away, he's not such a fool as to be in sight," replied Tommy.

The words were hardly out of his mouth before they heard a gentle cooee from a little clump of fern-trees, and in a few seconds they were mounted, whips in hand. The Maori of course had his own horse.

Not a moment too soon, for the wild mob, after a sniff or two at the decoys, did not approve of the odour of civilisation about them. With one accord they turned tail and made a break for the bush again, and the three lads had their work cut out for them to frustrate the attempt. With demonaical yells and sharp cracking of stockwhips, they tore hither and thither after the maddened cattle. Just as Rhoddy thought he was beaten by an enormous brindle brute, a girl dashed up at a wild gallop, and gave him the assistance he sorely wanted. It was the little belle of the ball. She was a splendid horsewoman, and her mount a perfect stockhorse. Twisting and turning about at full gallop, she performed evolutions which Rhoddy admitted put him completely in the shade, and baffled the onrush of the unruly brindle so effectually that he slunk back into the mob.

Safe at last in the yard, the Governor came to inspect.

"Twenty prime beef beasts, a splendid haul, my lads! Didn't expect you for a fortnight at least. A forty-pound cheque in three days. Good going, eh! There can't be more than a score or so of the brutes left; you'll finish the contract in a week at this rate. But you deserve all you get, my word you do, you young warriors!"

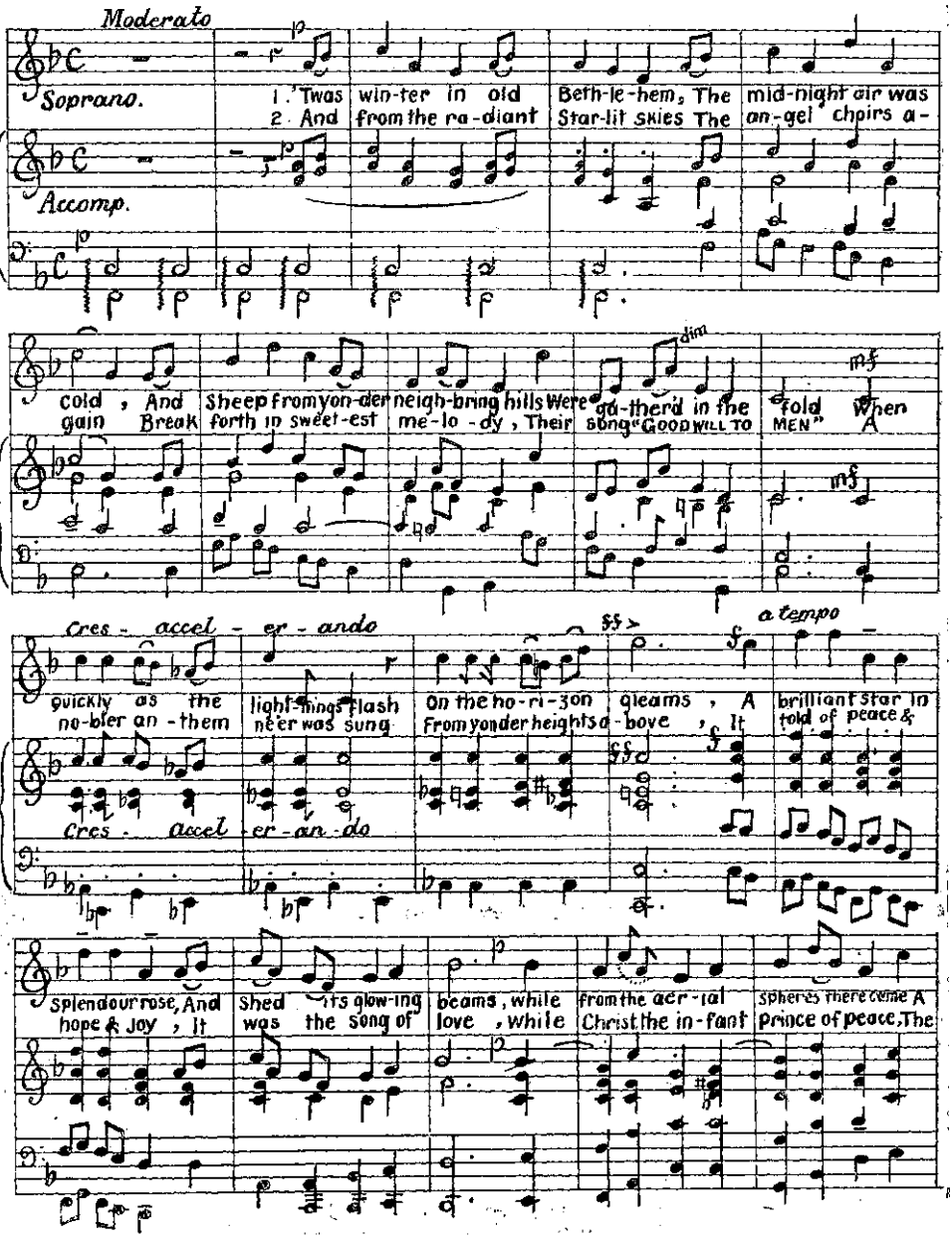
It took the lads considerably over the week, however, before all the stragglers were in, but they effectually cleared the bush before they gave up the job. They took a number of other contracts, embracing every description of work, from the Governor before they started in partnership in a small way on their own account.

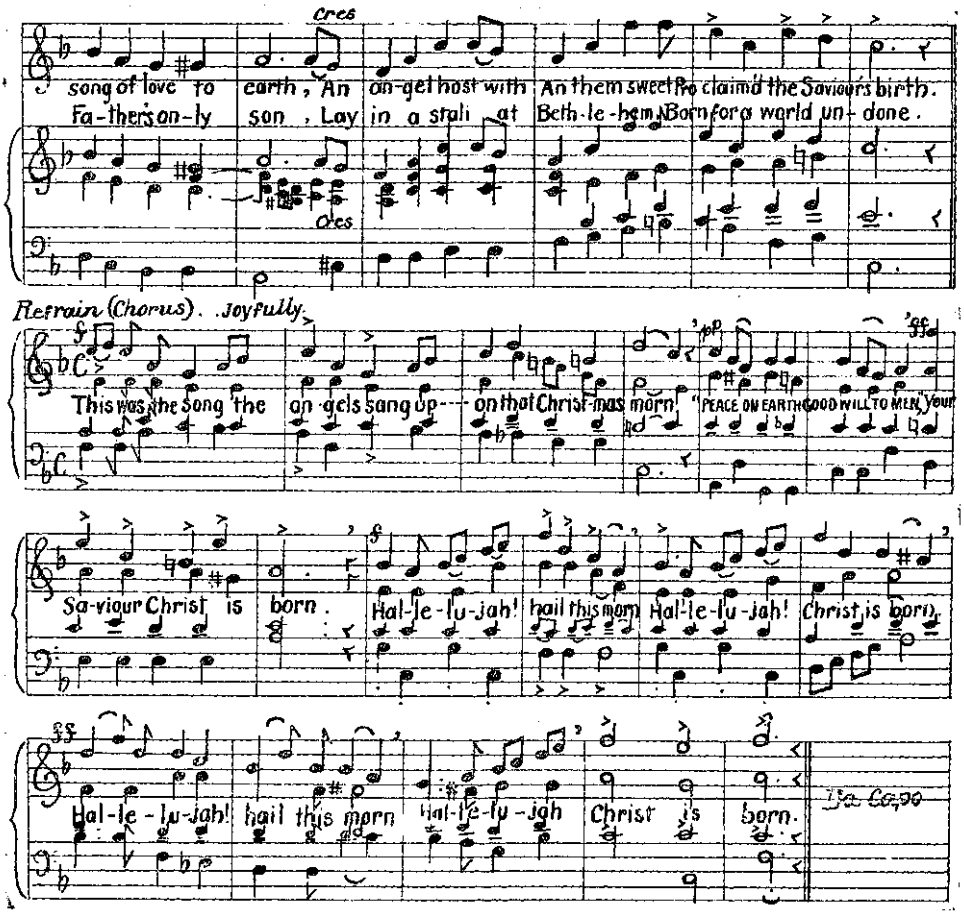
Rhoddy always felt that he never could be sufficiently thankful to Tommy for getting him that Christmas invitation, and often told him so. And Tommy invariably chimed in with, "Nor I, lad, that the idea struck me at the nick of time!"

The Angels' Song at Bethlehem.

CAROL.

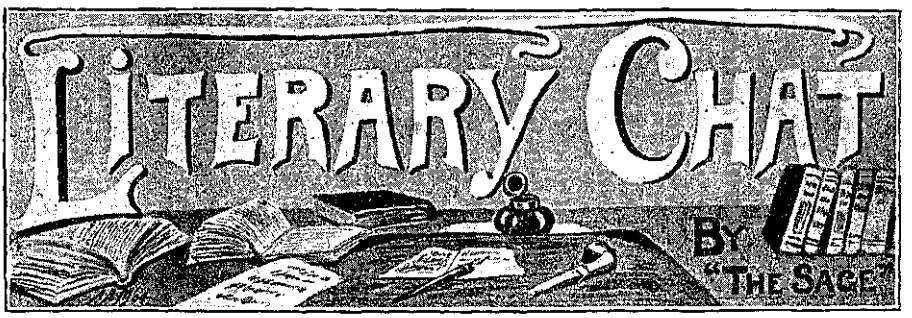
WORDS BY J. RYLAND HARROP. W. E. THOMAS, MUS. DOC., OXON.





Nov., 1904. Written and composed expressly for "The N.Z. Illustrated Magazine."

W. Sherlock, photo The Entrance to Buller Gorge.



"Sons o' Men" is a collection of clever stories by a New Zealand author, G. B. Lancaster, who has been a frequent contributor to this Magazine. It is published by Mr Andrew Melrose. The Sons o' Men are station hands, surveyors, bushmen, and et hoc genus omne, who are introduced to the reader in the first story, "The Backbone of the Country," as they are hustled out of the whare on the Mindoorie Sheep Station, in Southland, by the overseer, Walt, to save the sheep on the hills from a snowstorm. The author has a thorough grip of the subject selected, and describes in a vigorous and forcible style the storm and stress of life in the back-blocks of Southland. Here is a quotation: "The back-country is a stern mother to the sons she has borne. Time by time will she strain them, and burden them, and test them, until each separate spirit stands up confessed in strength, or goes under, passing out from her power. But those that are true men love her for the want of ease she gives them." In "Mates" the same characters are engaged in a rattling gallop after wild cattle. In "Without Proof" the effect of living a solitary life in a rabitter's hut is shown in the madness and death of Tommy Derolles. "The Story of Wi" takes another phase of life. Lane, the owner of Mindoorie, adopts the Maori child, Wi, and has him well educated. Wi wishes to go into the Church to improve his people, and enters a theological college, but breaks out at last on the ground that all white men are liars. That the pakeha had cheated his trust. He had given the bible and withheld the application. Wi has fallen in love with a white girl and can't get her. "Hell-for-Leather" describes how Tony sat a noted buck-jumper of that name. From "On Bassett's Camp" the following extract may be taken. "The bush breeds her workers for herself, she will have nothing to do with the rejects of other trades. And man by man the camp was of that powerful, swaggering, light-hearted type that will fight like bull-dogs, drink like dry sand, work like the demons of the pit, and play like children after school in the grave, gaunt bush wilderness that holds their lives." "Another Man's Liabilities" is a story of a survey-camp, which readers of this Magazine will remember. "Mother Macgregor" shows how a fine old bush woman nursed Harry Morrell when dying of drink, because he had won her heart by taking off his hat to her. He had been a gentleman some ten years before. There are a number of other stories on similar subjects. G. B. Lancaster is certainly to be congratulated in that "Sons o' Men" is one of the best collections

of Southern New Zealand stories yet written, and bears promise of even better work in the future. A little toning down of the style adopted would perhaps be an improvement. But this will, doubtless, come. The book, we understand, has been well received at Home, and will certainly be widely read here. Messrs. Wildman and Arey tell me they expect the Colonial Edition shortly.

"The Extraordinary Confessions of Diana Please, Here 'Englished' from the original shorthand notes in French of M. le Marquis de C——, a friend to whom she dictated them," is the voluminous title and description of another addition to Methuen's Colonial Library. It is by Bernard Capes, and was forwarded for review by Messrs. Wildman and Arey. In his introductory note the author states that "Madame de St. Croix was a 'passionist' as the French called Casanova; and, indeed, she had many points in common with that redoubtable adventurer; an unappeasable vagabondism; a love of letters; an ardent imagination; an incorruptible self-love; and lastly, what we may term, an exotic orthodoxy. If subscribing to the universal creed which makes man's soul his fetish, she worshipped an exacting god, she was at least always ready to sacrifice the world to gratify it, and now, no doubt, very logically sings among the angels. In the matter of her more notorious characteristics, M. de C——, lest her part on earth should suffer misconstruction by the censorious, is so good as to speak with some show of finality. 'I deny,' he says, 'the title of adventuress to my charming and accomplished friend. It is nothing if not misleading. Every day we venture something for love, for hunger, for ambition.'"

The lady herself commences her confessions thus: "I owe my mother the most whimsical of grudges, my existence. I will nickname her the Comtesse de l'Ombre, and so shall abuse no confidences in relating of my debt to her and to 'Lovelace,' her collaborator in the romance of which I am heroine. She was very beautiful; and he, an English cadet of distinction, was an aristocratic paragon." One of her earliest experiences was being abducted by a sweep and made to do duty as his chimney boy. Her name of Diana Please was given her after her escape from the sweep. Upon being asked her name she replied, "Diana, please," and the name adhered to her. Space forbids even outlining her adventures here, suffice it to say that they are distinctly worth the reading. The interest never flags from cover to cover.

"The Princess Passes" is the title of a new book by C. N. and A. M. Williamson, which is well worth reading. It was forwarded for review by Messrs Wildman and Arey, and was published by Methuen. The book begins with distinct promise—the opening sentence certainly whets the appetite, and arouses curiosity. "'To your happiness,' I said, lifting my glass and looking the girl in the eyes. She had the grace to blush, which was the least she could do; for a moment ago she had jilted me." Lord Lane, who himself tells the story, had met Helen Blantock, the success of the season in London, at Davos. He fell in love, and, as he says, Helen was kind. He was invited to a dinner at the Blantock's on his birthday, and during the meal Sir Horace Jerveyson, "the richest grocer in the world," whom Lane imagined to be in love with Lady Blantock, Helen's widowed mother, announced that he and Miss Blantock were going to Scotland together. Lady Blantock followed up this startling information by twittering nervously that Nell and Sir Horace had been engaged a whole day. It was at this point that Lane drank to Nell's

happiness. Two friends, Jack Winston and his charming little wife, Molly, took it into their heads to comfort the love-lorn Lane. They drove him off to their home in a motor-car. "Such a dear, darling of a girl gave her to me," she tells Lane, "a girl you would get on with splendidly." Molly prescribes a tour through Switzerland with a guide and mule, and the patient takes the advice. During the trip he meets a boy travelling with two pack donkeys, and a woman to look after them. The boy attracts him particularly, though he is much annoyed, on one occasion in a crowded inn, that he will not permit him to share his room. They travel together for some time, and Lane meets an old acquaintance, a lovely Contessa, who is much interested in the mysterious-looking lad, with the beautiful eyes. The lad eventually proves to be the "dear, darling girl," who gave Molly the motor-car, and the end can be easily guessed. The story is capitally written, and well illustrated.

The "Boston Literary World" has the following account of Mr. Dooley's career, which should be of interest just now.

"In 1898 happened two memorable affairs. One was the war with Spain, and the other was the appearance of 'Mr. Dooley.' Truly, the two heroes of '98 were Dewey and the philosopher of Arr-chey Road. And the philosopher has surpassed the soldier; he has remained constantly popular. When we have forgotten what ships took part in the battle of Manila Bay, we shall still delight in the pages of 'Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War.'

"In Chicago, in St. Patrick's parish, was Mr. Dunne born on July 10, 1867. As all good American boys do, he went to the public schools, and in 1885, at the age of eighteen, after his moderate schooling and some little knocking about, he entered the literary world by the side door of journalism. Of course he began as a reporter. Only the rich amateurs, or the lucky heirs to some newspaper property, begin as anything else. Many of the ablest newspaper men are reporters to the last.

"In 1891 he was made city editor of the Chicago 'Times'; and from that time till 1898 he occupied various positions on various newspapers, after the manner of Chicago journalists. In 1898, the year of his bound to fame, he was managing editor of the Chicago 'Journal'; and, like most other managing editors, he still found leisure moments for private practice. It is one of the principal duties of a managing editor to see that all the other members of the force work resolutely, dutifully. Many a bag of peanuts has been shelled in that autocrat's room.

"Soon after the beginning of the war the biting humour of Mr. Dooley found soft places in Washington, and particularly among the department of fops and fossils. Bombast, red tape, procrastination, incompetency, stupidity, overzealousness, jealously—all these flaws and foibles were exposed, laughably yet mercilessly, by the Chicago Irish-American. Especially funny and severe was he with the famous Board of Strategy. In fact, he brought that blundering body into national ridicule, and so thoroughly and inimitably that other writers, with a few inconsequential exceptions, granted him a monopoly, and the people at large enriched their common sense.

"Weekly the friends and foes of the war looked for Mr. Dooley's comments on the procession of events—looked as eagerly for those comments as for the despatches from Cuba and Porto Rico and the Philippines. And then the war ended; and then it was whispered in divers rural side-stations of literature that Mr. Dooley would end. But no. Simply his present vocation ended. His philosophy is not like an arc-light—one steady, con-

centrated blaze; it is more like the diamond, with its many-sided brilliancy. In plain words, Mr. Dooley proved that he could flash at every turn. 'Mr. Dooley in the Hearts of his Countrymen' proved to be as witty and as wise as had proved 'Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War.'"

In these days of public libraries we do not buy many books, but we can still realise the truth of this extract from the "Boston Literary World" on the subject:

"The buying of books is something like the making of friends; more often than not it is a haphazard business, delightful, precarious, fraught with great consequences, expensive, necessary, and sometimes most unfortunate. How many we must try before the one we really have been waiting for arrives! How eagerly we take the newcomer with high hopes for the joy it is to bring us! And how often we are disappointed! Then, too, how deceitful appearances are! The first glance, the name, the make-up, often repel us for a time, only to reveal at last hidden treasures of wise counsel and charming companionship which we would not have missed for the world. While the sudden acquaintance, picked up with so much enthusiasm, gradually discloses itself to be a vapid bore, or a sounding sentimentalist full of glitter and clap-trap. Or we may have known a book slightly for a long time, hearing its praises sung by our neighbours, remaining all the while incredulous to its belauded qualities, and come at last to realise its worth and take it to our heart for ever—the most treasured of possessions."

The following is an extract from an article in the "Literary News," dealing with the doubtful advance in literature:

"Thoughtful comparison between the novels of to-day and of fifty years ago shows for those of the present greatly increased numbers (hardly a matter for congratulation), more ingenuity in plot and a certain facility in style; yet the old-fashioned reader will look in vain for the high standards and single-minded purposes of those less complex days. Then right was right and wrong was wrong, and if the heroines portrayed in the novels of those past generations were less clever and self-dependent, they at least were pure-hearted, more really womanly, and the men were more honourable, brave and more chivalrous than the characters which crowd the pages of our latter-day problem stories. Advancing civilisation brings in its wake many counterbalancing evils, so may it not be possible that higher mental culture may mean a lowering of individual and national ideals? It would seem this result is mirrored in the plays and novels of the time!"

A recent number of the "Publishers' Weekly" gives the following examples of the boorishness of Schabelitz, a Zurich publisher, who was an extraordinary character, but "a shrewd man of business, an excellent linguist, and a versatile writer."

"When he accepted the famous memoirs of Count von Arnim, he wrote on the post card with the acceptance the proviso, 'I reserve the right to correct your infernally bad grammar.'

"To an aspiring poet who had submitted manuscript he answered by post card: 'I do not care to be disgraced by printing your doggerel. I don't return the copy, because you didn't enclose enough postage. If you will forward it, together with the money this card cost me, I will send it to you; but I don't think the stuff is worth the expense on your part.'

"One of his post cards to a novelist reads about as follows: 'For heaven's sake, come and take away

the unnameable mass of paper you left here for me to look at!' An ambitious historian was crushed by the following, written, like all of his correspondence, upon a post card: 'You are making the mistake of your life. You don't want to study history, you want to learn how to write.'"

Books of genuine humour are scarce enough to be highly appreciated; the following English review of "The Stone-Cutter of Memphis," by William Patrick Kelly, leads us to look forward to its early perusal:

"We can promise readers with a genuine sense of humour a rare treat in this volume. The scenes of the extraordinary adventures that befall Huni, the stone-cutter, are all laid in Egypt, in the seventeenth century before Christ, but they are pervaded by such a sense of modernity in combination with their classical lore as to be intensely ridiculous. Mr. Kelly has evidently all an Irishman's keen appreciation of the incongruous, and can turn an otherwise impressive situation into laughter with the best of his countrymen. The rollicking irresponsible disposition is markedly to the fore in his narrative. We owe him warm acknowledgement for much delightful merriment, and cheerfully pay our debt. His book can only be perused, except by the most dunderheaded, to a constant ripple of laughter. Mr. J. Ayton Symington's illustrations quite enter into the humour of the text."

A book by a new writer has received the following eulogistic notice from an English reviewer:

"'Broke of Covenden,' by J. C. Snaith. We should be very sorry if this remarkable book failed to receive the recognition it deserves. It came into our hands two months ago, and we have purposely kept it back in order to give it a second careful reading; this we have now done, and can heartily recommend it as an astonishingly able piece of work. Mr. Snaith is known to us by name only, and the present reviewer has not come across any of his earlier work; it is to be inferred, however, that 'Broke of Covenden' is the author's first real bid for fame, inasmuch as his previous stories are not acknowledged on the title-page. It is a fine study of an old English family holding out against the democratic tendencies of modern life, only to be finally bent and broken by the uncompromising attitude of its chief representative. Mr. Broke had six daughters and one son; he had trained them all to look upon themselves much as a mediaeval baron living in the eleventh century looked upon himself, the result being that his wife had constantly to request that he would 'forget your lance and poleaxe, and remember this is a civilised age'; his youngest daughter, however, summed it up more concisely by declaring that Don Quixote sometimes reminded her of her father. Mr. Broke received his first heavy blow when his son married a milliner; his youngest daughter being subsequently united to her tutor, the father begins to suspect that his house is falling about his ears. The subject Mr. Snaith has chosen has undoubted elements of both tragedy and comedy, but the comic elements are developed to the utmost, while the tragic are subordinated. The book is a long one, but (to use the inevitable 'cliche') there is not a single dull page in it. Mr. Snaith's style is occasionally reminiscent of Mr. Meredith, and the episode entitled 'The Nobleman of the Novelette' shows the influence of Dickens."

From the following review, here is a book which should be widely read, whether it is or not.

"'The Creed of a Modern Christian,' by Herbert E. Binstead. We have very great pleasure in wel-

coming this thoughtful work. Though confessedly written 'by a plain man for plain men,' it embodies and endorses many of the common objections to the faith of many Christians (e.g., the literal accuracy of the Bible, the Virgin birth of Jesus Christ), and yet embraces a Christian faith at once honest, sane, and manly. The attitude assumed by Mr. Binstead is very similar to that assumed by the great majority of thinking men today; that is to say, while differing on a great number of points from the orthodox belief, he still retains his love for and loyalty to the Church of Christ. It seems to us the book will do much good; it certainly deserves to be widely read and studied. We like its simplicity, its straightforwardness, its catholicity of spirit; above all, we like the modest and unassuming way in which the author advances his opinions."

Messrs. George Newnes, Ltd., have recently published a work on the great painter Raphael by Edgcumbe Staley:

"The most important part of this volume is made up of sixty-five full-page illustrations reproducing the more important works of the great painter. These are well done in black and white, some of them being really excellent; indeed, it is possible to form some adequate idea of the special nature of Raphael's genius by studying these careful reproductions of photographs. Mr. Staley's introductory study of the life and work of Raphael is thoroughly competent, and a list of the artist's chief works will prove useful for purposes of reference."

Dr. BARRACLOUGH'S SECOND ANNUAL

Natural Science Competition.

DR. H. BARRACLOUGH, of Wellington, offers through this Magazine a Prize of **Five Guineas** for the best Essay on any branch of Natural Science or special line of investigation connected therewith. The term Natural Science is used in its modern restricted sense as consisting of the Sciences of Geology, Zoology, and Botany.

This Competition is open to anyone residing in New Zealand who does not hold a scientific appointment. Dr. Barraclough wishes to call the attention of farmers who are naturalists or interested in agricultural science to the Competition. Essays should be on subjects of practical value. They must be original, that is, the observations must have been made by the Competitors themselves, and not be mere re-statements of other men's work.

Although not an absolute condition, it would be desirable, where possible, that illustrative photos. or sketches should be sent with the essays.

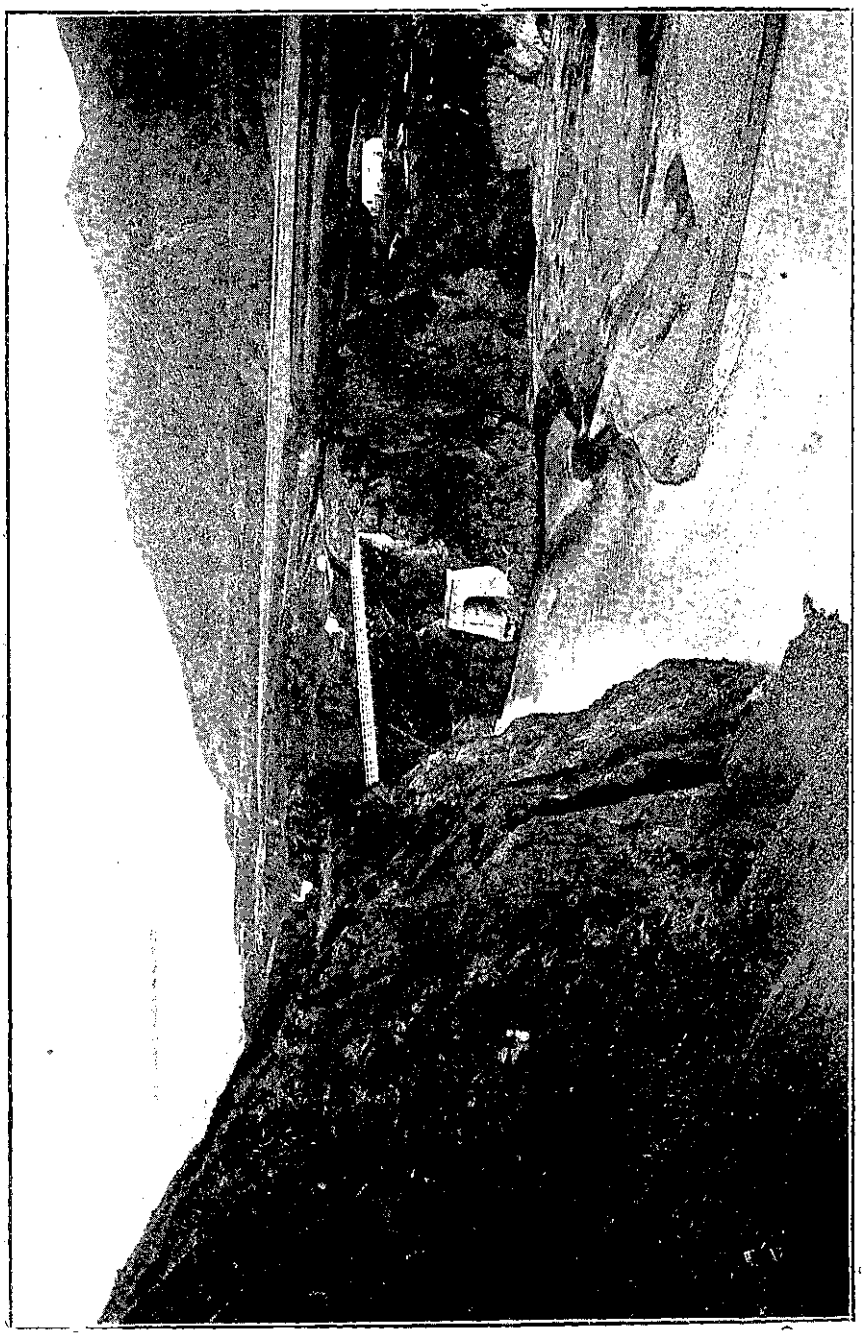
Contributions for this Competition must be forwarded, addressed Editor N.Z. Illustrated Magazine, Box 540, Auckland, not later than Jan. 31st, 1905.

The *nom de plume* of writer must appear under the title of the article, and the writer's name, *nom de plume*, and address must be enclosed in a separate envelope.

In no case will MSS. be returned unless stamps are sent for the purpose.

The Prize Winning Essay will be published in the "N.Z. Illustrated Magazine."

Selections from the unsuccessful essays will also be published, and paid for in the usual way.



Waiau Gorge and Bridge, on the Way to Hanmer Springs, Canterbury.

Photo. Wheeler

NOTES OF THE MONTH.

THE Dogger Bank incident has not led to war between Britain and Russia. When last month's notes were penned the situation was extremely grave. An outrage had been committed upon inoffensive fishermen while plying their calling, and the circumstances of the case pointed to either panic or vodka. But the Russian bureaucracy, instead of frankly disavowing the acts of the officers of the Baltic Fleet and making what reparation the occasion demanded, added insult to injury by declaring that the trawling fleet had been used as cover by torpedo boats belonging to Japan which had been sheltered in England. The public feeling in Great Britain was dangerously hot at first, and the tone of the Press was more hostile to Russia than it had been at any time since the Crimean War. At the same time the anger, though righteous, was not unreasoning, and there was a unanimous disposition in favour of permitting the Government to act unhampered. Even in Hull, which is the headquarters of the trawling fleet, counsels of calm wisdom prevailed, and it remained for sundry ultra-Imperial coteries in New Zealand to hold public indignation meetings, and to flood the newspapers with letters of angry denunciation. This, though somewhat comical, was characteristic, since the movement received its impulse from the Premier, who induced Parliament to pass a resolution in effect assuring the Home Country of the support of New Zealand. The Commonwealth followed, using milder language, and conveying slightly more attenuated guarantees of help. Fortunately, for several reasons, there seems to be little room to fear that we shall be again called upon to organise military contingents. The crisis was not dissipated in a day, but a "via media" was soon discovered. The proposal that the case should be remitted to a court of inquiry, in conformity with a provision of the Hague Convention, was accepted by Russia, and though it took time to adjust the details, the court has now virtually entered upon the task assigned to it, which is to determine who is to bear the blame of the unfortunate "incident." No nationality is specified, it being assumed, for the purpose of soothing the amour propre of Russia, that the whole business is shrouded in mystery. The court consists of two representatives each of Britain and Russia, with a fifth nominated by the Emperor of Austria. At first it was announced that the Baltic Fleet would be detained at Vigo pending the inquiry, but to this proposition Russia refused absolutely to assent, and as it was only possible to hold back Admiral Roshdestventski by means

of the big guns of the Channel and Mediterranean Fleets, he was permitted to proceed to the Far East, where Admiral Togo anxiously awaits him. It is likely that he will get all that the British public wish him without the expenditure of a drop of British blood or an ounce of British powder.

It is, perhaps, difficult to follow the course of events without experiencing a suspicion of humiliation. Even though we are assured that the magnanimity of Britain is appreciated at Washington, Paris, Vienna and Rome, it is irritating to be told by certain Russian journals that "whatever happens, England won't fight," the plain inference being that Russia should not accept any suggestions that we may offer, or take heed of any demands we may make. There is, however, one solid reason why we should be glad that the Imperial Government has, in spite of the sharpest temptation, kept its hands off Russia. To do other than has been done would have been to play directly into the hands of Germany. Germany alone would profit by the embroilment of Britain with the Tsar. It has been broadly asserted that the commander of the Baltic Fleet had received special warning from somebody at Berlin to beware of Japanese torpedo boats on the Dogger Bank, but whether the accusation is or is not susceptible of proof does not matter much. What it is of consequence to bear in mind is this, that it is Germany's interest (1) to create trouble between Russia and England, and (2) to re-instal the sentiment of distrust that has kept England and France assunder for so many centuries, and which has, to a great extent, been removed by recent intimate political intercourse. The Anglo-French Arbitration Treaty is fraught with consequences to Germany more important and more alarming than any liable to be induced by the agreement between France and Russia. It would suit the Kaiser's temporary purpose to get Britain into a scrape with anybody, but he would not trouble himself to make mischief between London and Petersburg simply with that object and nothing more. Germany has always felt safe with Russia. They are natural allies. Both are vitally interested in the maintenance of the autocratic principle in government, and heretofore their interests have not clashed to any appreciable extent in Europe, or in the East, or Far East. It is, of course, true that recent developments of the Kaiser's world-policy threaten to antagonise Russia. The friendship between Germany and the Porte and the railway and settlement schemes in Asia Minor, cannot be acceptable to Russia, which regards all Asia as coming within the sphere of her ultimate influence. But then we can never be sure of Germany's aim. Every particular manifestation of her acknowledged scheme of national expansion may be made, for all we can prove to the contrary, with the express sanction of the Tsar. All that Germany has done, or tried to do, in the extreme East of Europe, or in the Asiatic provinces of the Sultan, equally with her efforts in the Yellow Sea might conceivably form part of a combined plan by means of which Russia would be enabled to realise all Peter the Great's dreams of Asiatic domination, and Germany would materialise her ambitious projects in Africa, South America, and the Western Pacific. The Common Enemy, of course, is Britain. But Britain is not so essentially the enemy of Russia as she is of Germany. For Germany can do nothing of any consequence so long as we hold the dominion of the Ocean. If we assume that the Kaiser is trying to force the pace with Russia, we have the key to much that is otherwise inexplicable. The cautious policy of Britain, and the changing sentiment in France must, however, have

shown the Tsar that Germany has been setting her snare in the sight of the birds she wanted to trap, and Russia may see, what many accomplished publicists in England have long recognised, that there is room for a Russian-British rapprochement upon mutually beneficial terms. The destinies of the Far East are in the hands of no one Power. Whatever the result of the present war it is not likely that Russian influence will be totally eliminated from Manchuria. Nor, in spite of evil prognostications, mostly made in Germany, is there any likelihood that the Chinese Empire will fall under the political tutelage of the Mikado of Japan. The large interests that will, therefore, be left open must be regulated and safeguarded by the three Powers who are most profoundly concerned in the maintenance of peace in the Pacific, Japan, America and Britain. There does not seem to be any room for Germany there unless she forces herself in, and without the direct countenance of Russia it is difficult to know what sort of excuse she could manufacture. Her best argument would be a powerful fleet, and to the creation of this the Kaiser has been devoting his best energies for many years. A navy that, combined with that of Russia, and possibly France, would equal the seapower of any other two nations including England has been regarded, up to the present, as something worth striving for, and the Kaiser has succeeded in winning some of the most implacable enemies of Caesarism in Germany to his way of thinking. But the Anglo-French agreement has naturally upset these calculations. Furthermore, evidences are not wanting of a weakening of the Triple Alliance. Italy's incentive to union with the Teutonic Powers was distrust of France, and the ground for that distrust has been largely cut away by the French treatment of the Ultramontane pretensions as well as by the fact of the Anglo-French agreement. England is the traditional friend of Italian liberty and unity, and England's friends are Italy's. In concluding these necessarily brief and imperfect notes on German policy it has to be mentioned that almost at the moment of going to press, a cable message brings the news that a Russian war loan is to be subscribed in Germany, but upon the condition that Russia offers no opposition to the completion of the Baghdad railway by German capitalists. This may or may not be reconcileable with what has been written above. It is necessary, in this connection, to remember that at Germany's invitation Mr. Balfour's Government had almost committed itself to an active political and financial partnership in this work, and was only saved from taking the last fatal step by the violent opposition of the British people, who in this instance, as well as in the memorable Venezuelan case, have made it clear that they will have nothing to do with Germany.

The war has made little or no apparent progress. Port Arthur is proving a second Sebastopol, and readers of Tolstoy's intensely painful and realistic account will see in the story of the seige a repetition of the horrors of the Crimean fortress. The present aspect of Port Arthur is that of a ruined shambles. Deprived of nearly everything that makes life endurable, including hope, the garrison still retains that dogged courage which is characteristic of the race, in peace no less than in war. According to all the rules of the game the place should have fallen months ago, but now, after more than three-quarters of a year have elapsed, the date of the final act in the bloody drama is still uncertain. The main armies, facing each other in the vicinity of Mukden, have been inactive for some time, pausing like two wrestlers to negotiate for a better grip,

or, rather, like two chess-players, deeply studying every possible move. Both are strongly entrenched, and reinforcements are moving up from East and West. The battle when it comes will probably be decisive of the issue of the campaign. It will not close the war, that is certain. For both belligerents have gone too far to recede, and Russia has a great deal more at stake than Manchuria. But the Tsar, while determined to fight to a finish, is aware of the unpopularity of the war amongst the Russian people. The symptoms of national discontent, assuming in many places the proportions of open revolt, are too plain to be misunderstood. The Tsar has accepted the true import of the outburst. The necessity of the Government is the opportunity of the friends of liberty. Against the advice of his mother (who, daughter of Denmark as she is, and sister of our Queen, is yet first amongst the reactionaries), of Admiral Alexeioff, the genius who muddled the Manchurian affair, and of M. Pobiedonostzeff, Procurator of the Holy Synod, Jew-baiter and author of the tyrannical methods employed in Finland, the Emperor has permitted delegates from the Zemstvos, or rural and municipal councils, to meet in congress and to formulate their recommendations. It was a bold course to take, and lovers of freedom in every part of the world must hope that the grandson of the Tsar who freed the serfs will be courageous enough to grant his people constitutional liberty. The suggestions—they might indeed be termed the demands—of the Congress read like the famous document of the Chartists. They embrace a constitution, guarantees of freedom of speech and conscience and a free press, the right of public meeting, enfranchisement of the people with the right of legislating, primary education for the masses, and one or two other minor privileges. So much comes to us by cable, with the further intelligence that the Tsar has consented to receive a deputation from the Congress. The mere enumeration of the things asked for will sufficiently discover the nature of the tyranny under which the Russian people are ground down. They want nothing that the people of the British Empire and America have not possessed for more than two centuries, or what Frenchmen have not enjoyed for the greater part of a century. Their minds cannot conceive any privileges beyond those that we hold, though with them, as with us, there is a minority who will never be satisfied with any reform that falls short of the qualities of the Millenium. Theoretically the Tsar has the power to grant what the Zemstvos ask for. In practice it will be found that the decision rests with the evil geniuses that surround the Throne, including the persons named above, the host of Grand Dukes, and the leading members of the aristocracy. Such a combination has made and unmade rulers in the past, and may be trusted to act as it always has acted under certain given conditions. There has always been an unpleasant suspicion that the liberalising tendencies of the last two Alexanders was responsible for the manner of their death, the one by bomb and the other by poison.

The American Presidential Election resulted, as most people inside and outside the Republic expected, in the return of Mr. Roosevelt by an overwhelming majority of more than two to one. The majority would have been much greater but for the sentiment of loyalty that clings to the Democratic Party, whose great traditions belong to the time before the Civil War, and are surely fading. It is abundantly evident that the American people have determined to maintain the position of the States as a world power and an enrolled member of the civilised Concert. There will be

no further serious discussion of the Democratic proposal that America should withdraw from the Philippines, and her share in the solution of the grave problems in the Far East will be taken frankly and ungrudgingly. At the same time the interpretation of the Munroe Doctrine will be increased in rigidity, and the disposition of a certain Court to obtain a footing in South America will be frowned down even more effectively.

Though the Chinese must by this time have fairly got to work in the mines of the Rand, we have not heard that the sky has fallen on the Transvaal. A great deal of mischievous nonsense has been written upon this subject, not as affecting the abstract principle of employing yellow in preference to white labour, but about the alleged menace to civilisation involved in the Chinese immigration. The circumstances of the case are less favourable to the Chinese in South Africa than they were in California at any time, and Mr. H. H. Bancroft, the historian of the West, and an acknowledged authority upon Californian affairs, has shown conclusively that the apprehensions of the white population of that State, from the earliest days of the mining boom until now, have never been justified in the slightest degree by the facts. The very qualities that were imputed to the Chinese as faults are those which should have entitled them to benevolent toleration. They do not assimilate with the Europeans, do not ask for the franchise, and desire only to make so much money as will enable them to return to their native land with a competency that we would think exceedingly modest. In return they give labour worth to the community that employs them many times the value of the remuneration paid. The unionist labourer in Africa is not likely to be trained to appreciate the Chinaman, but the presence of the latter will not, we may safely conclude, provoke a rebellion.

The fiscal reform propaganda makes little or no appreciable progress in Great Britain. Mr. Chamberlain, apparently, has abated none of his zeal and energy in the cause, and he is seconded by many distinguished men, while he has the thinly-veiled support of Mr. Balfour and his Ministerial colleagues. But the opposing party-cry of "no increase in the price of the people's food," has produced the effect it was intended to have, and the sympathy of the working-classes has been largely diverted to the side of men who are not quite worthy of it. It cannot be to the ultimate advantage of any section of the British people, even supposing that some temporary benefit might be obtained, to transfer the helm of state to the hands of the Little Englanders. Our foreign policy is weak and vacillating enough in the care of the Marquis of Lansdowne, but what it would become under the guardian-angelship of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman we might well tremble to think. The alternative presented by the selection of Lord Rosebery for the post is not more encouraging, because in that case there would be the grave possibility of a breach with France. The attitude of the Commonwealth towards Mr. Chamberlain's scheme is somewhat curious. The Federal Government, which is, as we know, the creature of compromise, is virtually pledged to let the tariff dog lie, but the Labour Party, or at least some considerable part of it, including the leader, ex-Premier Watson, favours the principle of Preference. Labour in Australia has nearly always been Protectionist, but the problem of an Imperial tariff has never before been put before the Party in set terms. It will be interesting to watch the contest between the British Radicals and their counterparts on this side of the

world. It is not outside the bounds of probability that Mr. Watson's views will lead to the conversion of some of the English Labourites. But there is a great deal of ground yet to cover before it will be practicable to do so much as to lay the question before the Empire as a whole. The next general election, at Home, which is not far off and may be much nearer than we think, will settle some of the preliminaries, and clear away some misapprehensions, but a great deal will remain to be done after that.

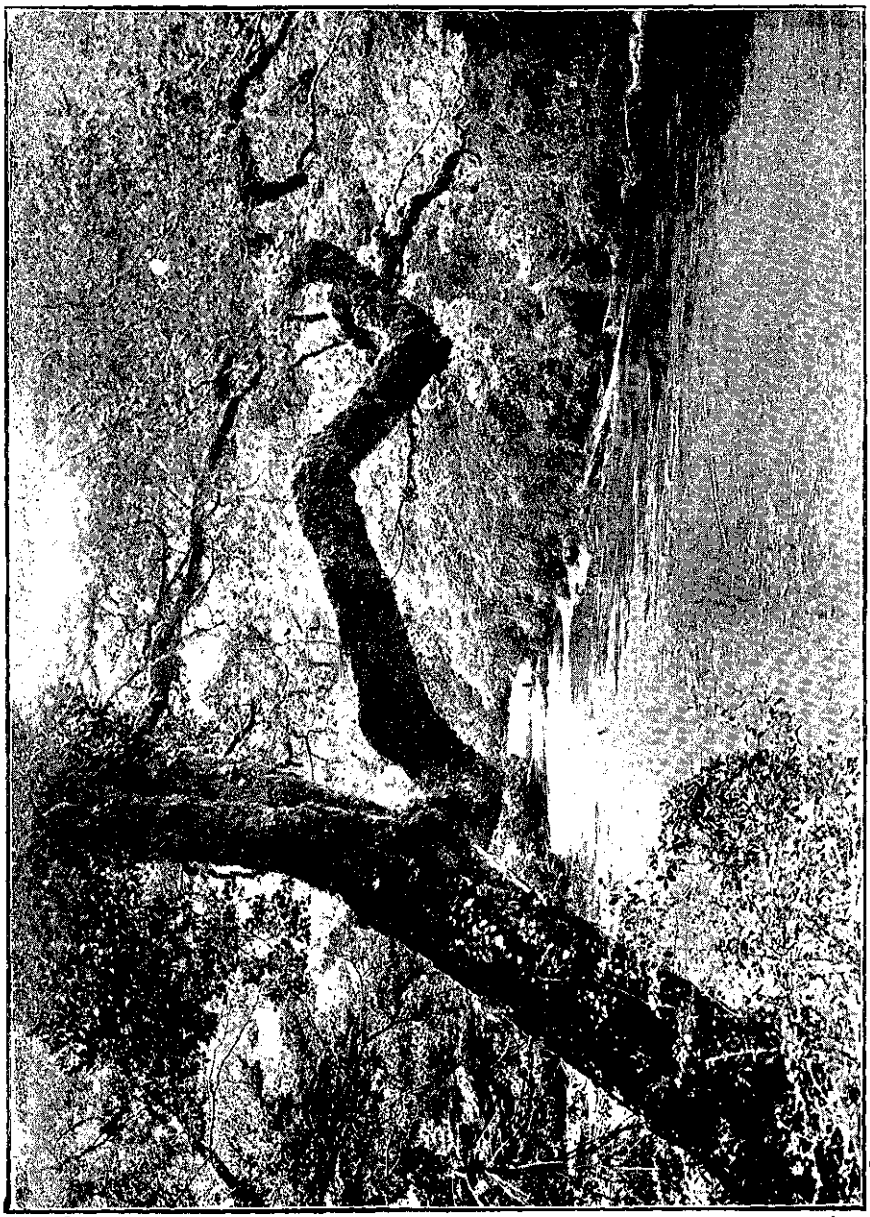
The session of the New Zealand Parliament would have ended without any particular notice early in the month, had it not been for the passage of the amazing Shops and Offices Bill. This measure, which does not appear to have been asked for by anybody in particular, since nobody comes forward to defend it, makes a direct attack upon our most elementary conceptions of justice. According to its terms all shops in which more than one person are employed are to be closed at six o'clock on all days except Saturday and that on which the half-holiday falls. The sole exceptions are restaurants and similar places of refreshment. Fruit and confectioner shops, which have always been exempted heretofore, are included, together with a number of other small businesses, such as tobacconists', that depend for their support mainly upon the evening trade. Tea-rooms and barber's shops may keep open provided they are not connected with retail places of business; if they are so connected they must close. The law, which is draconic in its character, would, if put into operation, affect a large class of deserving people most injuriously. As it is, the mere prospect of the Act in operation has produced much consternation and some needless suffering. More than one small tradesman, in order to make himself safe, has dispensed with all assistance, and in this way a number of persons have been thrown out of employment. This is an ironical commentary upon a law allegedly conceived in the interests of "Labour." Naturally enough, when the people grasped the significance of the new measure there was an outcry from all parts of the Colony, and some of the Members of Parliament deemed responsible have had a somewhat trying experience. But the truth is that no particular section of the House is to blame except the Government, who, despite repeated declarations of an intention to pause, still pursues the fatuous course of pandering to the labourites, who are never satisfied and never grateful. The emphatic protests arising in all quarters had the effect of "hanging up" the Act for a time, until the Government takes steps to test its "legality." The position is odd, almost ludicrous, but the feeling that the failure of the Act in a court of law would amount to a benefaction keeps the public from laughing. The Labour Department arranged for a test case, and this was heard before Dr. McArthur, the Wellington Stipendiary Magistrate, who decided that owing to the obscurity of the clause relating to "combined districts," by which term each of the four chief centres is described, the prosecution must fail. The Department has appealed, and meantime the "combined districts" will be duly gazetted. Pending the result the trade of the Colony will go on as before, and most people will hope that the result will be found not to interfere with existing arrangements.

Looking down Francis Joseph Glacier.

Tourist Department, photo.

Looking across Tasman Glacier.

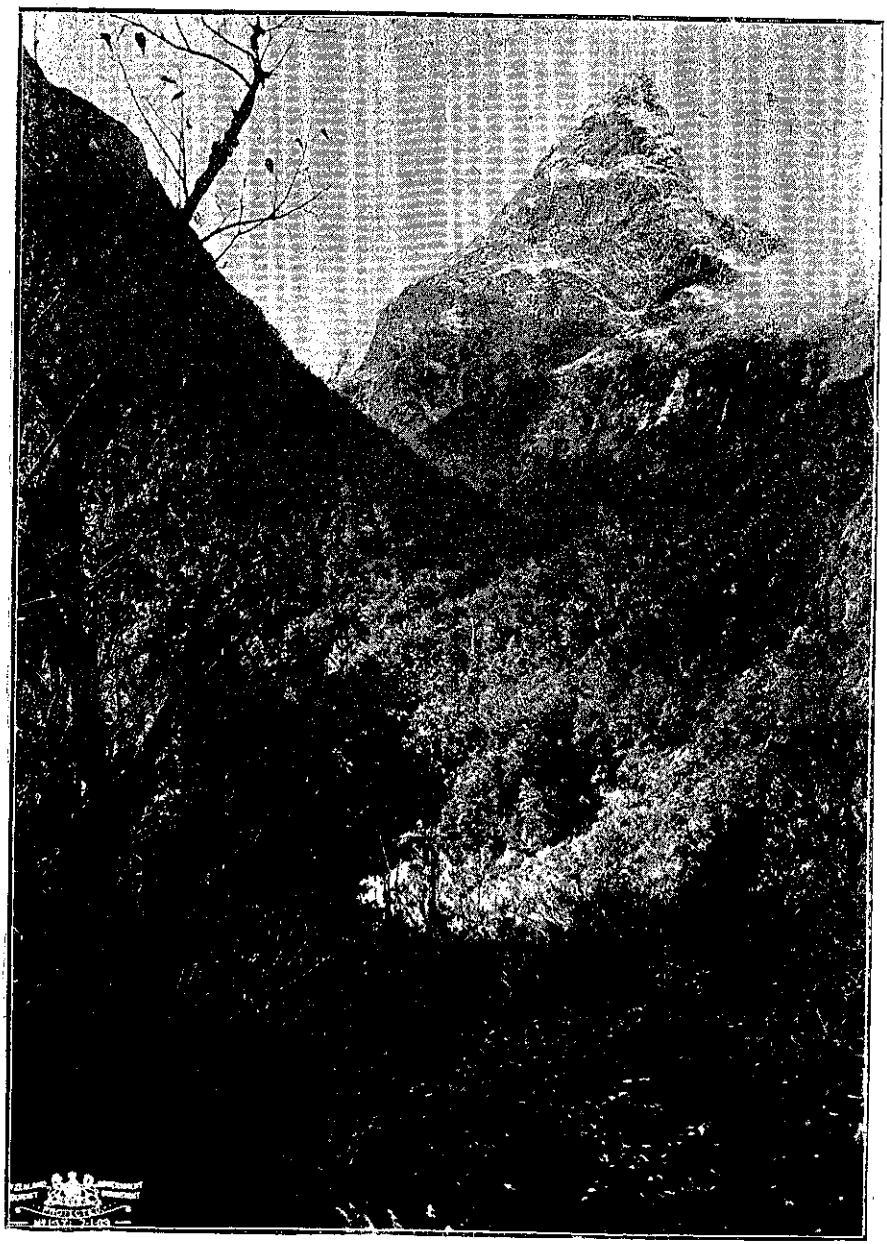
Tourist Department, photo.



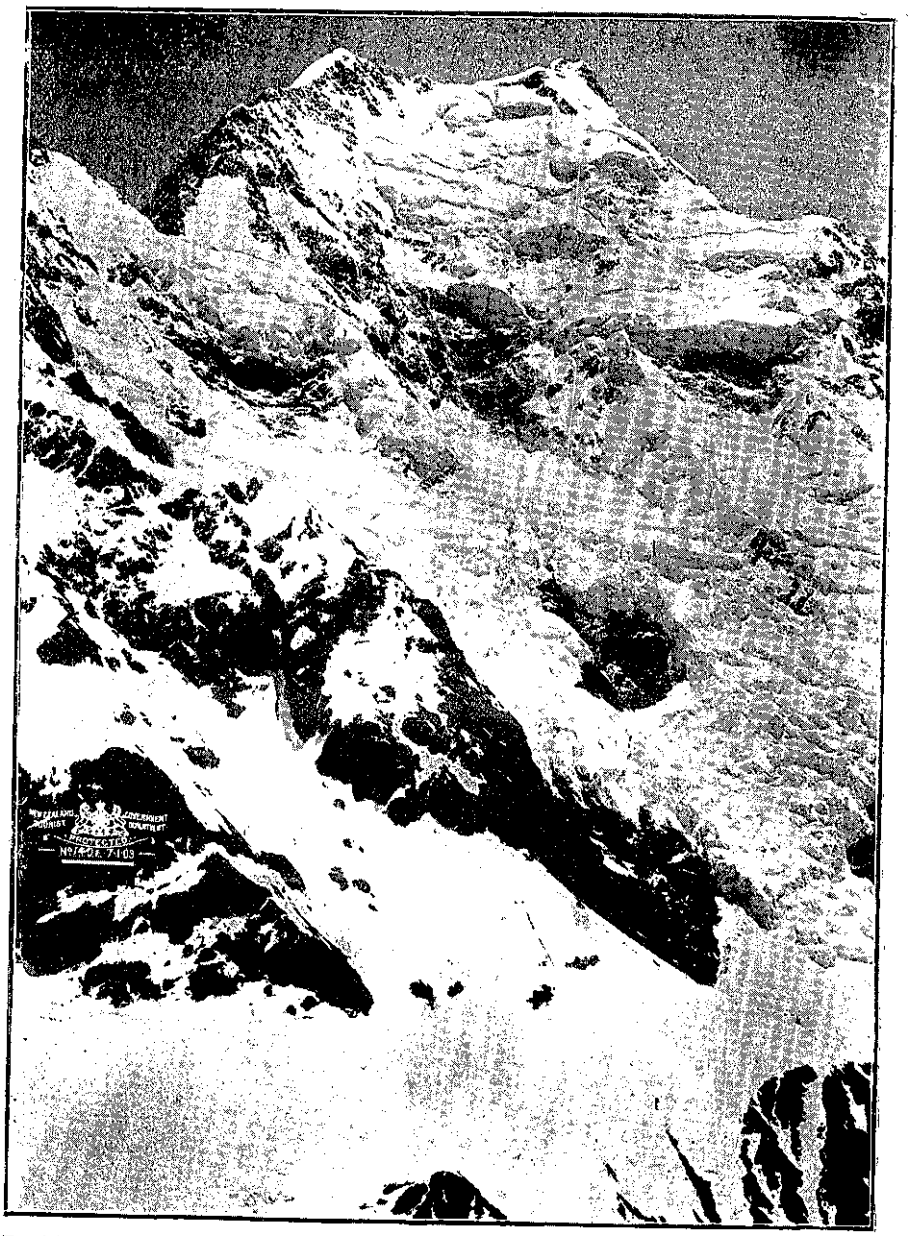
Clinton River, Milford Sound.

Tourist Department, photo.

Tourist Department, photo. Lyell Bridge, Buller Gorge.



Tourist Department, photo. Mt. Balloon, from Milford Track.



Tourist Department, photo. Mt. Cook, from Ball Pass.

SCRAPS.

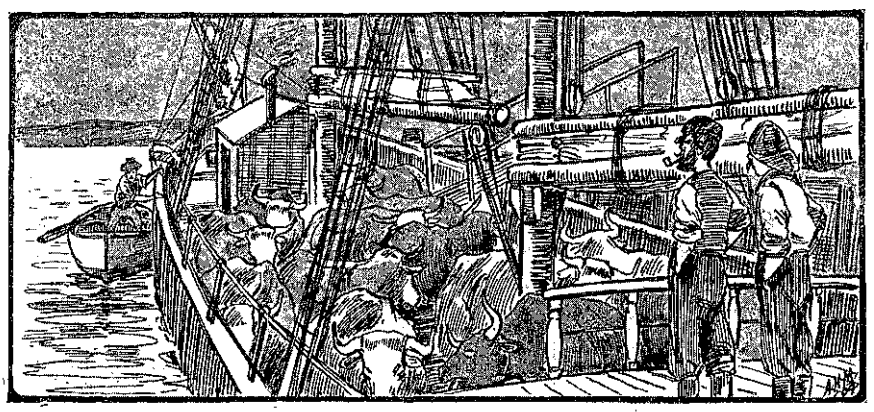
A POWERFUL PICK-ME-UP.

THE excitement at the wharf was intense. Sale day, Christmas week, and not a beast to be got for love or money. Butchers ramping. Suddenly the long-expected schooner "Albatross," with a deck-cargo of fifteen head from the Waimea River Station, swung alongside the wharf. Vociferous voices demanded they should be landed in double-quick time. Two hours after usual sale time, and the auctioneer and burly skipper. "Who ever heard o' cattle bein' taken this way afore? What's to be done now?"

"Give 'em a 'our or two spell, then they'll go ashore as fresh as paint," replied the mate.

"Hour or two!" snorted the skipper. "Why I bet Bill Jones a new hat I'd have 'em here in time for this ere sale, and the bell rung afore we come alongside!"

"Can't see no other way to fix it, any road!" said the philosophic mate, spitting thoughtfully over the rail.



his customers were equally impatient.

The gangway was run ashore, improvised pens knocked down, and everything ready but the cattle. The weather had been exceptionally rough, and to the consternation of the skipper not a beast could be got to rise from its recumbent position. One and all were in the last stage of sea-sickness, and everybody knows what that is.

"Darn my snout!" exclaimed the

Chorus of impatient butchers: "Look slippery, there! Haul 'em out! Should a been skinned by this time!"

"Well I'm jiggered!" groaned the skipper. "Fifteen lovely head o' cattle too sick to walk ashore! A pretty kettle o' fish as ever I see'd!"

Suddenly his face lit up, and he slapped his hand vigorously on his thigh.

"I've got it, Bill, darned if I

haven't ! Struck it in one act ! What these 'ere beasts wants is a pick-me-up ! It'll set 'em on their feet properly."

"But where are you goin' to get it, old man ?"

"I'll soon fix that," exclaimed the excited skipper. "Call a couple o' boys here to shift the lazarette hatch !"

No sooner said than done, and the skipper dived in and rummaged amongst the cargo, returning triumphantly with a case in his arms.

"Quick, rip her open, and we'll get to work !" he exclaimed.

The lid was wrenched off in the wink of an eyelid, disclosing rows of tightly-packed bottles, labelled "Painkiller."

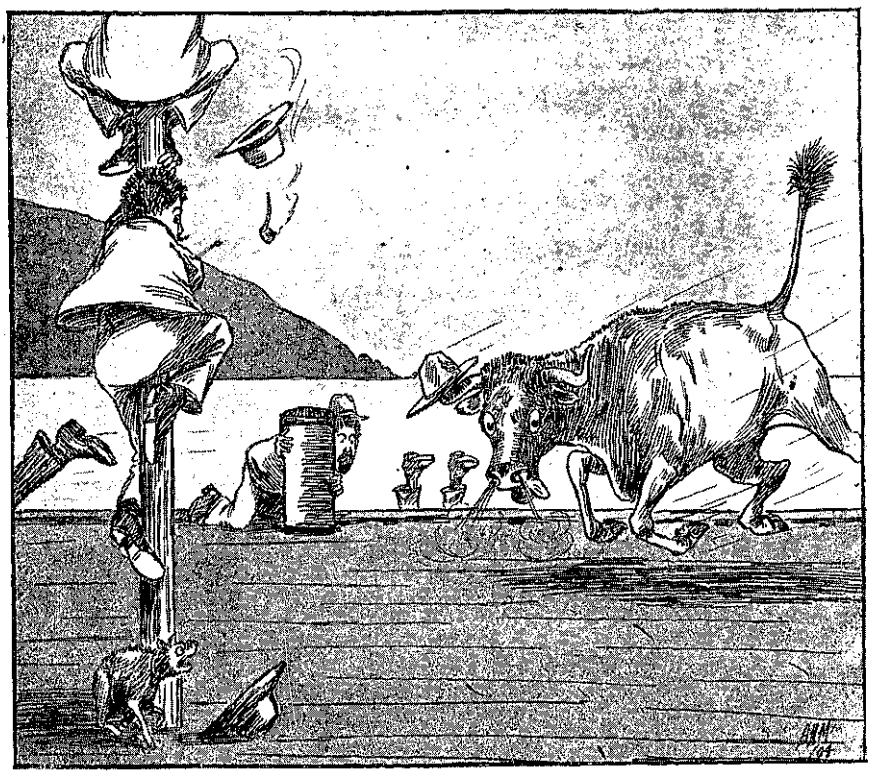
"Great snakes !" cried the mate, "you don't mean to——"

"You bet I do !" interposed the excited skipper. "You can't lick it ! A bottle each 'll make 'em skip ashore like kittens ! Blowed if it won't ! Bear a hand, lads !"

The men held the beasts' heads up in turn, and the skipper poured the painkiller down their throats. A cheer rose from the little group of spectators on the wharf.

"Bully for Capt'in Jack !" they cried as they craned their necks to watch the result.

Half the beasts had been dosed, and the skipper was lustily wrestling with an exceptionally severe case of prostration, when the first patient bounded to his feet with the snort of a fog-horn. A wild glare was in his bloodshot eyes, and painkiller-flecked foam flew from his open jaws. In two bounds he cleared the gangway, tail on end.



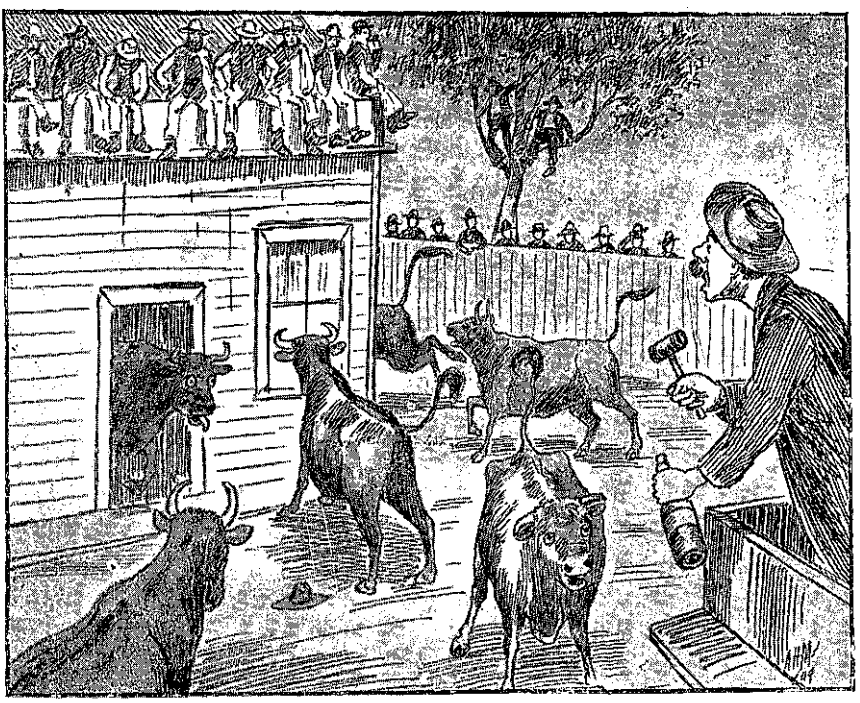
The spectators climbed two-deep up the lamp-posts, or took headers overboard in the unseemly haste of their departure.

Giving vent to a succession of awe-inspiring bellows, the beast

cracked on full sail and bore down like ten thousand bricks on the sale-yard, where the auctioneer was already selling a few stores.

In the twinkling of an eye the place was deserted. Buyers and sellers sprinted madly in all directions. Every roof was lined with panting figures, every tree was bending with their weight.

Suddenly another infuriated beast hove in sight, followed by the whole



fifteen, madly racing up and down the street in search of gore.

Apt at emergencies, the auctioneer made his appearance on the roof of the King's Arms with a bottle in one hand and his hammer in the other.

The excitement was at its highest. From tree-top and roof-ridge it rippled unceasingly.

"I'll sell 'em flying, gents!" exclaimed the auctioneer. "Look at their magnificent condition! Recognise their extraordinary agility! There's Christmas beef for you! They're out and out the smartest, the liveliest, the spryest lot of beef cattle ever seen in this port!"

It was undoubtedly the sale of his life. A perfect cyclone of bidding followed his appeal, and fabulous prices resulted.

As the last beast was knocked down, carried away by the excitement of the moment, the knight of the hammer, forgetting his unstable position, drained the bottle, and fell over with a crash into the back-yard. A fat old cook fortunately broke his fall and saved his neck.

That night the schooner "Albatross" set sail on her return voyage with the balance of the painkiller under hatches, and from the stirring sounds of revelry that arose, a few dozen of something yet more pick-me-uppish in the cabin.

THE PUBLISHER'S DESK.

OUR CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

The years roll quickly by. This is the sixth Christmas the NEW ZEALAND ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE has seen, and our readers never seem to tire of congratulating us on the excellence of the production. Contributions are constantly coming in from New Zealanders in all parts of the world who have had copies of the MAGAZINE sent them by friends here. Don't forget that the present number is especially adapted for this purpose.

A PRIZE COMPETITION.

We would call especial attention to the advertisement on page 257 of Dr. Barraclough's Second Annual Natural Science Competition. The object of this Competition, as set forth by Dr. Barraclough in his article on the subject, is an admirable one. The Prize of Five Guineas is worth an effort, and the announcement made that selections from the unsuccessful essays will be published and paid for at usual rates will no doubt be an extra incentive to those who are dubious of their ability to secure the Prize.

TO ADVERTISERS.

The increased circulation consequent on the reduction of the price of the NEW ZEALAND ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE to the popular price of sixpence makes it a still better medium for advertisers. Following on the lines which have made advertisements in the American magazines give such good results to enterprising advertisers, we desire to make pictorial advertisements a prominent feature. Our representative is now touring the colony to interview heads of firms. Special designs, humorous or otherwise, to suit any description of business will be supplied by our artist on application.

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Articles on the following subjects will appear shortly:—

ABOUT KEATS.—Joyce Jocelyl.
THE MARTYRS AND TROUBADOURS OF OLD PROVENCE.—By Jessie Mackay.
A CRUISE IN THE HISTORIC WATERS OF QUEEN CHARLOTTE SOUND.—By the O.C.
MYSTERIES, MIRACLE-PLAYS, AND MORALITIES.—By T. B. W.
THE MORIORI AND THE ALBATROSS.—By W. B. Te Kuiti.
HONOLULU.—By C. L. Harris.
BASSEIN.—By "Wihora."

Storiettes by the following Authors:—

MATES TOGETHER.—By Arch. M. McNicol.
BOB'S BILLETS. No. 1.—By "Rollingstone."
THE HEAD OF TE RANGIHOUHIRI.—By J. Cowan.
THE STORY OF THE SAN PIETRO.—By A. H. Messenger.
KIDNAPPED. A Tale of the Pacific.—By "Beachcomber."
TOM BOWLING.—By J. C.