

that," remarked Redhill. There is a block of forty acres adjoining mine that can be had for a hundred pounds. If you like to pay a deposit on it. I'll secure it for you, and if you must go away, I'll undertake to look after it for you. One advantage it possesses is that my shelter belts protect much of it from the sou'-west winds, and fruit trees could be planted on it right away."

I jumped at this chance eagerly. I closed with the offer there and then. Next morning Redhill persuaded me to go and see the land. He accompanied me over it, and I, whose whole experience of land values had been gained in England and Australia, could scarcely believe that such soil was purchasable at a little over two pounds per acre. Like Redhill's, it sloped in gentle undulations to the tidal creek.

"If," said Redhill, "it's like mine, you will get enough gum out of it when ploughing to pay for

the land, and something else besides. I gave two pounds an acre for my block, and I have taken twice that amount from it in gum, and you might easily get twice as much as I got, and then not get more than some people have done."

I was able to pay for the land, and did so; feeling a strange pride in possessing it. I engaged a man to clear a portion of it, and to erect the short run of fencing necessary to enclose it. The tidal creek and Redhill's boundaries nearly surrounded my block, so fencing was a small matter.

This business kept me Redhill's guest longer than I intended, and seemed to lead me more intimately into the family circle.

I tore myself away at last with deep regret, but I had more desire than ever to win a fortune for I had fallen most desperately in love with Miss Falconer, and as I had no prospects I must needs go prospecting.

(TO BE CONTINUED).



A. Robertson,

Scene in Public Gardens, Invercargill.

Invercargill.