

TOURIST AND TRAVELLER.

(Continued.)

In Ashburton at the present time shooting parties are receiving good remuneration for their bags of hares, export buyers going as high as 2s. 4d. a pair. Hares are very numerous, and the recent heavy falls of snow in the high country have driven them towards the seaboard. A good many young men are now engaged in hare shooting, which they find not only pleasurable, but also very profitable.

A story is told of a ranger not a hundred miles from South Canterbury, who, seeing a Maori with a gun and a bag, accosted him and asked where he had been. The Maori replied that he had been shooting. Had he met with any luck? Oh, yes, he had shot a few ducks. "May I see your bag," queried the ranger. "Certainly," replied the Maori. The ranger looked at the contents which he found to consist of a number of ducks with their heads and feathers off, and cleaned ready for the oven. "What sort of ducks are they?" the ranger asked. "Oh, you're the ranger; it's your business to know that," replied the Maori. It is understood that no prosecution is to follow.

In the higher Alps of the Bernese Oberland and the Canton of Grisons a curious dark yellow glow in the atmosphere was noticed during Easter week by many Alpinists, who could not account for the phenomenon, which, however, is explained by Dr. F. Sallis (the Berne correspondent of the "Standard" says). The scientist examined the yellow snow, and found that it was impregnated with fine sand from the Sahara blown across the Mediterranean and over Italy to the Alps by the sirocco. It is only when violent disturbances take place in the upper air that this phenomenon is experienced in Switzerland. The Alps, indeed, seem to attract aerial currents, for when Vesuvius and Stromboli are in eruption layers of ashes fall on the Alps several weeks later—hence it is reported that grey, red, or yellow snow fell in the Alps on such and such a date. However, the sirocco seldom reaches the Alps, being stopped by the Italian mountains.

The new premises of the Auckland Commercial Travellers' and Warehousemen's Association and Club were officially opened on June 6th. in the presence of a large gathering of members and invited guests. The president (Mr. D. W. McLean) presided, and the proceedings throughout were marked by great enthusiasm. Among those present were the Hon. W. H. Herries (Minister for Railways), Sir Joseph Ward, Bart. (Leader of the Opposition), Messrs. A. M. Myers, J. H. Bradney, and A. E. Glover, M.P.'s, and many other representative citizens. Apologies for absence were read from the Prime Minister (the Rt. Hon. W. F. Massey) and other members of the Ministry. Messages were also received from commercial travellers' associations in New Zealand and Australia, congratulating the Auckland Association on securing such up-to-date club buildings. The president extended a hearty welcome to the visitors. The president, gave a resume of the progress of the association. Formed in 1902, it had now been 13 years in existence, and from a small beginning the membership of the association now totalled 387, and that of the club 135, making a grand total of 522 members. The secretary reported that 51 new members were to be balloted for at the next meeting of the association. Of the roll of the

original members the following were still in active service:—Messrs. George Squirrel (chairman General Committee), E. F. Capper (chairman House Committee), J. F. Pullen (treasurer), A. G. Cooke, W. Sadler, A. D. Wilson, W. Boak, W. R. Goudie, H. J. Clifton, C. Takle (committeemen), and D. W. McLean (president).

After crossing the great lake, says a New Zealander travelling in Central Africa, one enters the kingdom of Uganda, which is quite distinct from the protectorate of Uganda, of which it forms a part. This kingdom has for centuries been governed by powerful kings, who have developed a highly complex feudal system. The British Government uses this system and governs the county through its king and the hereditary chiefs of the people. The country is in a very prosperous condition, and is developing rapidly. Cotton, coffee and cocoa are being planted in ever-increasing quantity, and many settlers are coming in and taking up land. But fertile and rich and beautiful as this country is I do not think it will ever be a white man's country, as the climate cannot be called healthy. There is room and opportunity for the settler who can employ labour, but not for the man who has only a small capital.

Of all the interesting features of the overland journey to Uganda, says a recent traveller, perhaps the most interesting, certainly that which lingers longest in my memory, is the scene which the camp presented at night. Round the camp fires, their black faces shining in the glow, the men are talking and singing, or listening to the notes of a Baganda stringed instrument. But gradually their talking ceases, and, after stirring up their fires, one by one they fall asleep. Near me is a large camp fire which will be kept burning all night, as lions are said to infest the region. In the circle of light cast by the fire is the grass hut in which are my bed and boxes; overhead are the branches of a great tree, black in the shadow, but lighted up where the firelight catches it. All around is darkness, and a silence which is broken only by the cry of some animal wandering in search of food. Such is the scene night after night on the overland route, but one that must be seen to be understood.

To the tyro in African affairs the southward march from Gondokoro, on the route to the head waters of the Nile, is of great interest. The scenery is not strikingly grand or beautiful, but the native population and the animal life one sees more than make up for any lack of interest in this direction. First the villages of the Bari people are seen scattered all over the country, the houses looking in the distance like so many overgrown beehives; then the Mardl tribe is met with, and later on are seen the villages of the Acholl. In all these villages the passing traveller sees the people employed at the various tasks which make up the African's day; the women cultivating or grinding corn, carrying water, and cooking food; the men smoking and "waiting for something to turn up." The African man prefers to spend about 90 per cent of his time at this waiting business; the rest of his day he uses for decorating himself. Here and there along the route, chiefly on the hilltops, Bari burying places are to be seen, their upright stone slabs reminding one of the graveyards of a more civilised land; only here, instead of a cross surmounting the grave there is merely a stone slab and a notched stick to ward off the evil spirits.

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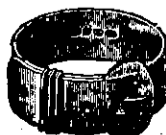
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