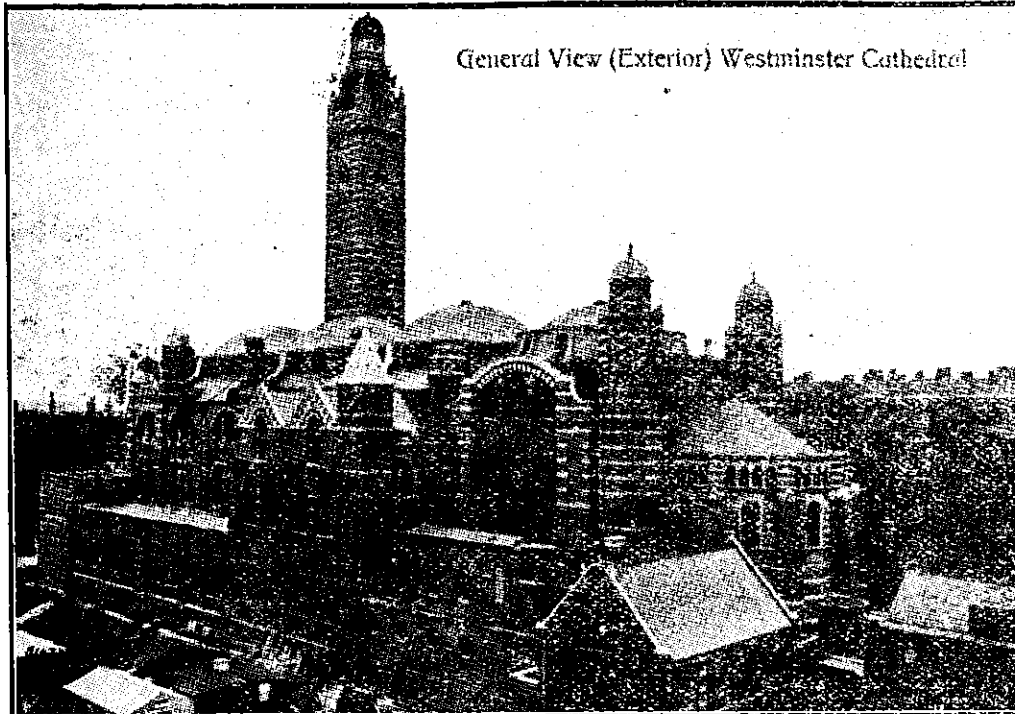


NOTES OF TRAVEL

III—A LONDON CHRISTMAS.

(By J.K.)



General View (Exterior) Westminster Cathedral

In the early hours of the morning of December 24 the Arava passed from the wild seas of the western Channel into the calm of Southampton water, and we came on deck at day-break to see a forest of masts through the haze on the water, while the towers and domes of Netley Hospital arose on the right (east) hand.

Then the bustle of getting mails and luggage on board the tender. Then the farewells to our friends of the voyage. Then the routine of the customs examination. And finally the London train and, after many years, fifty miles an hour and no more about it.

A visit to the Bank of New Zealand was imperative, as we wanted to get away to the Sunny South as quickly as possible. Dunedin people need not be told that we were received with great kindness by Mr. Mills, who had our financial affairs quickly adjusted for us.

Next to Cook's for tickets for dear old Rome. Here a hitch occurred. My passport was O.K., but through some mistake the fact that my two companions intended visiting France, Italy, etc., had been omitted, and we were forthwith held up until the passport office opened again after the Christmas holidays. However the weather was good, and after our long sea voyage we were happy anywhere provided we could have a walk. Besides, a London Christmas was a new experience, even for a seasoned old traveller like the Editor.

Seeing the City.

An ancient, homely, quiet hostel near the Strand received us, and having deposited our impedimenta we sallied forth to join the crowds in the streets. All the evening merry shoppers moved before the gaily lighted windows, and, for once, London was as cheery

as a Continental city. The shops had their best dresses on. The Strand, Oxford Street, Victoria Street, etc., were worth going a long way to see, and we could sympathise with many a male householder whom we saw stamping with impatience as his better-half lingered before some blazing window.

People told us we should find London much changed. Some alterations had taken place in the Strand, in Regent Street, and Piccadilly Circus. But the old village was still the same. The old restaurants we used to know in other days were still the same—only a little dearer, as a result of the war "for small nations." Gow's was as unpretentious and as satisfactory as ever. Simpson's showed no sign of senile decay. Gatti's flourished and kept its style. The Trocadero's success might be gauged by the prices its patrons were willing to pay. And the "corner houses" of Lyons had the popular vogue at the moment.

Perhaps some day New Zealand will have even one decent restaurant. But it will be a long day before she can hope to have one worthy of comparison with those of London and Paris, where one can select a luncheon



Miss E. T. McAteer DRESSMAKER and
COSTUMIERE
Guarantee Quality and Expert Needlework.

Cr. STAFFORD and WOOLCOMBE STS **Timaru**
Telephone 691.
Only Experienced Hands Employed.