

journal . . . You are doing evidently a great work among your boys . . . a born teacher, as I can see you are.¹⁵

At Canterbury his achievement as a Latin scholar placed him momentarily in a quandary. His professor of classics, F. W. Haslam, wrote later to the Nelson College Council of Governors:

I considered him as being one of the three best Latin scholars I had had during the sixteen years during which I had been Professor of Classics . . . I wished Mr Milner to go Home because I felt certain he would make his mark at the University or else pass high for the Indian Civil Service . . .¹⁶

The vistas opened up to his fervent mind were dazzling indeed. The lure of Arnold's Oxford or Milton's Cambridge then was absolute. And the vision of serving the cause in India, the brightest jewel in the Imperial Crown, fired his already forming idealistic faith in an Empire based on common bonds of kinship and the redeeming altruism of good works. At first opportunity he broke the great news to his mother, whose fourteen years of widowhood had sharpened the sense of responsibility in bringing up a family of seven. That Frank, her brilliantly clever and perhaps favourite son, should go off across the seas (Christchurch was remote enough) and assume the proconsular mantle somewhere in the wilds of Uttar Pradesh was beyond conception. His alert moral sense heeded the voice of family realism. But Haslam's offer, made to him when just 21, aroused feelings and aspirations that lingered on and were transformed into other shapes. More and more conscious of the Imperial framework within which he as a New Zealander lived, he sought to identify himself with the wider world of the United Kingdom and the Empire, both at Nelson College in embryonic ways and then at Waitaki, where that impressive and swelling beadroll of distinguished English and Imperial visitors, including representatives of the Royal Family, indicated the ardour of his faith and span of his ambition.

He began his nine years' career at Nelson College as a junior master in 1897. After five years he was appointed second assistant and classical master from 1 January 1902.¹⁷ His classroom teaching was from then on primarily English and Latin. Outside normal hours he voluntarily, and with signal success, coached senior pupils, as regulations then allowed, for 'terms' at university level and for B.A. in Latin, English, French, History and Political Economy, and for the first and second sections of the LL.B. in Jurisprudence, Constitutional History, Roman Law, Conflict of Laws and International Law. Quite apart from varied and time-consuming out-of-classroom activities as house-master and first assistant (in his last three years), such range of tuition points to