



CHAPTER VI.

South Australia—Adelaide—A Feast of Grapes—A Plague of Mosquitoes—The Country Towns.

ADELAIDE, the capital of South Australia, is 480 miles by sea from Melbourne. A substitute captain was in charge of the steamer in which we travelled, the regular skipper being down with the measles, a complaint then very prevalent in Melbourne and Ballarat. One of the passengers was a gentleman with florid face and light side whiskers. He grew exceedingly confidential after a while—told us he was the son of a prominent English lord, and knew all the members of the aristocracy. He thought that he might—yes, he was certain he would—be missed in the drawing-rooms of England, for he was very intimate with the Prince of Wales, and often took a chop with him. But he preferred a roving kind of life, and was travelling to amuse himself. He had just come down from Queensland, where he had been shooting fowl, but (confounded nuisance!) his man-servant had recently left him to get married, and that put an end to all his duck-hunting. Another passenger was a silver-haired, talkative, *blasé* "world-tourist." "I'm now on my usual annual tour," said he. "My town house is in Belgravia, London, where I've got ferns from all the mountains on the globe. The Himalayas are my principal rendezvous, and I occasionally spend a day or two in the Vale of Cashmere. Then there are Burmah, China, Japan, and Russia—all favourite touring grounds of mine. I've been all round Greece and Italy, too. I recruit myself sometimes on the shores of the Mediterranean, and, in fact, you may say I've done the Seven Churches of Asia!"

Adelaide has a population of 30,000. Its streets are wide and clean, and run at right angles like a gridiron. The post-office, town-hall, and one or two other buildings have elegant

towers—several have graceful Corinthian façades. The city stands on flat ground, and is backed at a distance of four or five miles by a fine mountain range. There are excellent public gardens and reserves; the Botanical Gardens are a favourite walk of the citizens on Sunday afternoons. Here, in addition to trees and plants of every kind, are monkeys, emus, Brahmin bulls, eagles, and some of the camels used in the explorations to the interior of Australia. Adelaide may be described as a snug, comfortable city. There is no poor quarter to speak of, and no poverty visible in the streets. The people seem well-off, intelligent, and not altogether swallowed up in their stores and offices; the oar occasionally rests in the stream. There are a great many Germans in Adelaide, and here is published the only German newspaper in the Colonies, which journal, by the way, gave a flattering notice of our concerts. There are one or two villages up country composed entirely of the Teutonic element.

Being the month of February, the weather was very hot. Our life during this season was as follows. Awaking in the morning from a not very refreshing night's rest, we took breakfast with what little appetite we had. Then walking slowly down the hot street, the white glare of which was very hurtful to the eyes, and explained why so many ladies wore coloured spectacles, my father, brothers, and I visited the city baths, where we had an enjoyable dip. Somewhat cooled down, we proceeded to the free public reading-room, where you find the principal newspapers and magazines of Great Britain. Then we returned to the hotel, where a feast of grapes was at once laid out. We bought them from an Irishman across the way who kept a little grocery shop, and who made a practice every evening of leaning against his door-post and playing reel-tunes on a tin whistle, with what he thought an admirable imitation of the bagpipes. Grapes in Adelaide are sold at the ludicrously low price of three-farthings a pound. You can get them for eight shillings a hundredweight, very often for £4 a ton. The market price scarcely covers the  
of pulling them. Our sitting-room frequently looked



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like some Roman banqueting-hall. Every now and again one of us would come in, like a Bacchus, with an armful of bunches of fat purple grapes, and one of my sisters, like the goddess Pomona, with apples and pears. We had a centre-dish on the table constantly running over with grapes. One of my brothers would make a large purchase, and shortly afterwards another would come in joyfully with seven or eight pounds more. Then a friend would call in and say the fruiterer had not served us at all well, which meant that in the course of the day a boy would call and deliver a large box of grapes, "with Mr. ——'s compliments." One family, with whom we became very intimate, lamented they could not present us with some fruit from their own vines, as one night their horse had broken loose in the backyard and devoured all the best bunches.

Long unquiet hours we spent at night lying awake and slapping at the mosquitoes, which here were more than commonly exasperating. The mosquito has a speckled body, long legs, and sharp, hollow proboscis. He settles, say, on your hand, and you watch him giving his tube a few flourishes at the start, like a carver's knife over a desirable roast; then you feel a slight sting, and know he has "struck ile." Down, down; you see his sucker going, the mosquito gradually getting on tiptoe, till he almost stands on his head. Then a "thin red line" is seen forming on his body, which swells till you fancy the insect is going to burst, when off he flies to roost on the bed-curtain or the wall. When you lay your head down to rest the mosquitoes sing about your ears in duet, trio, and chorus. Ping-ng-ng! Whack! you hit yourself a loud slap on the cheek. Ha! the monster is joined by another with a voice as sharp and incisive as the point of a needle. Ping-ng-ng! Whack! You miss him, for he snarls at you and flies back with increased vehemence. And so on—on—on for a whole night, till you never get a wink of sleep. By daylight you count the bites on your hands, wrists, and face—or perhaps ankle, if it has unfortunately protruded during the night. A friend presented us with a vial containing a

vegetable extract which would not only banish the mosquitoes, but at the same time drive them mad. It almost drove *us* mad! It was the vilest-smelling compound that ever was uncorked; the only fault it had as a mosquito-dispeller was that we preferred the mosquitoes.

We travelled for a month through the country districts, visiting sixteen towns. Our journeys were, of course, accomplished by coach, for the railway communication only included two suburban lines, and a line running something over a hundred miles north as far as the Burra Burra copper-mines. Most of the country is taken up with wheat-growing, Adelaide being the greatest centre of grain export in the Australias. Gawler is the principal inland town, and lies in the midst of a farming district. Strathalbyn is the most beautifully situated of the agricultural townships. Tanunda, which we passed through, is one of the German villages, and there we aired our stock of "Deutsch" phrases. Angaston was an exceedingly clean and pretty place, noteworthy for its grapes. South Australia, in addition to wheat, is famous for its wines, which are growing into favour year by year, and are said to be little inferior to those of Europe.

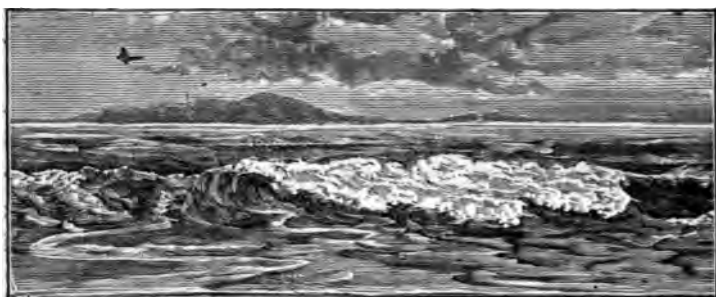
Copper is another great source of wealth to South Australia. At Burra Burra, Kadina, Port Wallaroo, and Moonta—the latter with a large population of Cornish miners—we saw the townships surrounded and intersected by ungainly wooden sheds, fuming chimneys, poppet-heads, and large hills of green ore, which latter gave a queer look to the scene. Kadina is situated on a plain. As we entered the town, an entire school turned out and gave us a vociferous "Hurrah!" We afterwards heard from the master, who was at one time a tutor of Helen and James, that he had aided and abetted the salute! Port Wallaroo lies on an arm of the sea, and the ore is shipped in vessels to Adelaide. The weather was fearfully stormy while we were here. It was strange to see, in the dusk of evening, the wild dark sky, the trailing smoke from the smelting furnaces, the glare of the fires reflected from the clouds, and hear the lash of the rain alternating with the roar of the sea. This port,



as well as Moonta, is situated on what is known as the Peninsula, a most wretched tract of country. There is nothing to be seen but dingy scrub—not a blade of green grass to refresh the weary eye. At most places, indeed, there is not even scrub, nothing but bare earth, and the prospect is unspeakably dreary. We asked some Wallaroo friends if they did not feel dull, but they answered—"Not a bit. We have croquet to amuse us in fine weather. There's pic-nics besides, so we're never lonely."

After that, we could believe in lawn tennis on the Desert of Sahara. The Peninsula is indeed a dry, barren wilderness. On the way from Wallaroo to Moonta we passed a public-house that advertised "Water for Sale," and all along the road we noticed tanks dug in the ground to catch the rain-water. We arrived in Moonta during a blinding down-pour. "It was the same last night," said a townsman—"hogsheads of water lost! the rain just pouring to waste down the streets!" From Moonta we returned to Adelaide in one day, a distance of 112 miles, arriving that night at eleven o'clock, after a toilsome ride of seventeen hours.

On the whole South Australia is an unpicturesque country—perhaps the least striking, in regard to scenery, of any of the colonies. In saying this, we do not forget a most pleasant day we spent with one or two friends at a pic-nic in Waterfall Gully, a few miles from Adelaide—a cool, sylvan glen watered by a sparkling rivulet, that fell trickling over a high green wall of rock. We also thought this colony boasted rather hot weather; but we did not experience the winter, which is said to be very enjoyable. South Australia, despite what may be considered its trying climate, will assuredly flourish on its great natural resources. With its wheat, wine, and copper, it will hold its own against any of the sister colonies.



## CHAPTER VII.

Voyage to New Zealand—Dunedin—The Water of Leith—A Tour through Otago  
—A Concert in a Barn—The Highlands of Otago.

AUSTRALIA and New Zealand! The two colonies link themselves together in one's mind, yet they are separated by a wide ocean. Melbourne is 1400 miles from Dunedin; Sydney, 1500 miles from Auckland, the passage at this time occupying six days.

We sailed to Dunedin in the "Albion" one Saturday afternoon. Gradually we steamed out into the Port Philip Bay, past the steamer "Gothenburg," which was arriving from the Port Darwin Gold Fields in the far north of Australia, its fore-deck, poop, and bulwarks densely thronged with returning European and Chinese diggers.

Next day (Sunday), a good sermon was delivered by a Presbyterian clergyman from Brisbane. The day was kept in an orderly manner, but during the afternoon some one was heard enthusiastically whistling sprightly melodies behind the deckhouse. "Impossible!" Cane in hand, with indignation in his looks, a zealous Sabbatarian strode round and—knocked his head against the cage of a whistling magpie!

The passage was rough, but not wearisome. Some of the passengers played rope-quoits, others shot albatrosses—the noble white bird, with its great wide wings, wallowing mortally wounded on the crests of the waves far behind. The captain



was genial; one of the mates was musical, and seemed to know as much of the Reverend Mr. Curwen as of Captain Maury. He was always humming over some tune or other—ordering the sailors to trim the yards with a do-re-mi-fa-sol! telling the helmsman to keep a straight wake with a fol-de-riddle-i-do! and taking his observations of the sun at mid-day with the full consciousness of knowing both the solar and the sol-fa systems.

Thursday morning at last, and the passengers gladdened by a grand view of the south-western shores of New Zealand. Lofty, sharp-pointed peaks towered away inland, their snow-clad summits blending with the sunny clouds that floated round them.

Soon there rose ahead a high, bare promontory—the Bluff! rounding which, we came into a spacious, well-protected harbour. The steamer lay at the wharf all night. Suddenly there was a cry of “Fire! fire! the ‘Wanganui’ is on fire!” The bells of both vessels rang continuously. The bowsprit of our steamer overhung the stern of the other vessel, and our sailors, in dread of sparks, set the pumps agoing and slushed the forecastle with water. One man excitedly tried to throw off one of the hawsers that held the “Albion” to the wharf, shouting at last for an axe to cut the rope through. The captain, pushing him away, darted on board the “Wanganui,” and was drenched head to foot with an unlucky pail of water. Sailors of both steamers were there—a noisy, jostling crowd. Two women, just awakened, their faces white with fear, each with a child in her arms, were hastily handed over the side of the vessel. “Hah! there were five children!” exclaimed one of the females, catching her breath, and counting the four youngsters which the sailors had gathered together—“There were five; there’s one amissing!” and she was in great distress till the little one, lost amid a multiplicity of deliverers, had been recovered. Buckets of water were swiftly passed on deck by a long line of bystanders. In an instant there flared up, higher than the funnel, a great red plume of flame, which flaunted amidst the smoke—then suddenly flickered and



"fuffed" out like an immense expiring candle. When immediate danger was over the passengers betook themselves to bed.

We left in the afternoon of next day, the remainder of the journey being along a bold precipitous coast that shone out grandly in the setting sun. Here and there were immense *sombre* caves, whose dark sides were lapped by the heavy rise and fall of the sea. The "Albion" was moored at Port Chalmers next morning. What? were we in Scotland? Every person on shore was talking Scotch. There were many calls for "Jock," numerous enquiries for "Sandy." The high mountains looking in the harbour were decidedly Scottish in character, and had the fresh greenness, the bright look of home-country scenery. Everything was redolent of Scotland. The waves seemed to ripple tartan, the wind to moan with a Scotch accent. "All in for Dunedin," cried the railway guard. The train plunged through the short tunnel piercing the hill upon which Port Chalmers is perched, and was rattling up to the capital, only some nine miles distant.

Through the Heads of Port Chalmers—part of the irregular shores of which harbour we were now outlining in a railway train—there sailed in 1848 the first body of the Otago settlers. An association of lay members of the Free Church, and co-operating with the powerful New Zealand Land Company, had bought from the Maoris the Otago Block of 400,000 acres. This was the first of the so-called "class settlements," Canterbury being founded shortly afterwards under the wing of the Church of England. Both settlements, however, have failed in carrying out their original plan of denominational exclusiveness, which is not to be regretted. The new community quietly progressed, till in 1861 gold was found at Gabriel's Gully. From that time Otago has advanced rapidly to a first place among the nine provinces that compose New Zealand.

The railway from Port Chalmers to the capital followed the windings of the harbour. We discovered fine scenery one moment, and lost it the next, till at length a hill-spur, like a





great green veil, drew off from the city and revealed it rising in an amphitheatre at the head of the harbour, with a picturesque lofty background of bush-crowned heights. The town seemed a great wave of streets washed up against the hills, with houses dispersed like spray among the wooded hollows all round.

The hour being still early, Dunedin was not yet awake. The shop shutters were up—the business-eye had not yet opened. Through the quiet streets, that seemed as silent as if daylight had suddenly been let on at midnight, we made our way to a quiet temperance hotel. We had breakfast in a high-roofed, large-windowed, warm-papered parlour. A dazzling white table-cover, radiant knives and spoons, rich creamy tea, thin crimp toast, delicious fresh butter, hissing ham and eggs, soon put us in the best of humour after shipboard discomforts.

This hotel was a few steps from Princes Street, the principal thoroughfare, named after the beautiful boulevard of Edinburgh. Many of the names on the signs were Scotch. Scotch names bristle in the "Dunedin Directory"—of Macs alone there are two hundred, to say nothing of the Mrs. Macs and the Macs Junior. Shopmen, shop girls, clerks, and labourers were hurrying along the pavements. The faces we saw bore the true Caledonian impress. The "honest men and bonnie lassies" we met at every step might have been transplanted from home but yesterday, so well had climate and colonial life dealt with them. The streets of Dunedin are named after the streets of Edinburgh, but with confused topography to one acquainted with the Modern Athens. We were struck with the manner in which Dunedin has corroded its way into the hills. Ziz-zaggy paths tack up to the ridges of the slopes—deep cuttings run back from the main streets, and steep thoroughfares rise to the heights above—the houses seeming to start simultaneously on a race to the higher ground, gradually to straggle, lose breath, and sift into mansions and cottages, till near the summit the goal is won by a number of handsome villas. At different places cuttings are vigorously going on, and the earth removed from these is conveyed down to the harbour, where it is thrown in for the reclamation of      Many acres have thus been



reclaimed from the sea, and houses are now built where the tide once ebbled and flowed.

On Sundays the church-goers of Dunedin form a well-dressed, most respectable crowd. There are no straw hats, no "puggarees" or hat scarfs, no sun-shades, no dust-coats, no secular tweed, as you sometimes see in Melbourne. Most of the men seem deacons or elders, dressed as they are in the blackest of broadcloth and the glossiest of glossy high hats. The New First Church or Grand Presbyterian Cathedral, with its lofty spire and elegant proportions, is the chief building of Dunedin. The foundation-stone was laid by the late Dr. Burns, the pioneer of the Presbyterian Church in Otago, and a nephew of Robert Burns the poet. The church was opened by Dr. Begg, in the presence of 1000 persons, upon his visit to New Zealand. We found the interior of the church to be spacious. The collection is taken up at the door, as in the old country. In Scotland, the average offerings are copper-coloured; here they are silver, which is mainly accounted for by the difference in money value. A person here puts in sixpence as he might put in a penny at home—a threepenny bit as he might a halfpenny. This may not be the exact relative value of the coins, but it is as far as church-collections go. In the heart of the town stands the University, a clock-towered, Grecian building, having in connection with it a considerable museum. Here, enclosed in glass cases, are specimens of moss and grass from the principal mountains of Scotland, and on a mantelpiece, in a gilt frame, a lock of Burns' hair, modicum of a larger lock owned by Jean Armour.

One day we were invited to a pic-nic up the Water of Leith, the water supply of Dunedin. The party was headed by one of the leading botanists, who did not air Latin phrases more than was agreeable to ignoramuses. We arrived at what bore some resemblance to Hawthornden, near Edinburgh. The path through the glen was knotty with concealed roots of trees, and wound about through ferns and creepers. Prickly bushes called "lawyers," or "stop-a-bit creepers," seemed in league to tear the clothes off our backs. On coming to the



clear running burnie, the ladies laid down their parasols, removed their bonnets, and otherwise made ready for an awkward journey. Overhead, about four feet from the water, was a thin covering of broad-fronded ferns, through which the sun shone with a softened light. We were in a long leafy tunnel. Once we came upon an abrupt rise, and each had to climb up as best he or she could. A little dog flung itself repeatedly at the dripping rock, but fell at last into the water, and howled lamentably, till one of us brought it like a wet sponge to the upper ground. Another time, we came to a huge interposing smooth tree-trunk, up which steps had to be hacked with the axe our leader carried in his belt. Stumbling, jumping, swinging by overarching limbs of trees—crawling under damp, bearded logs, we reached level ground, and there before us was the waterfall. It was forty feet high, and had been discovered by our friend the botanist only three years before. The company picturesquely grouped themselves on the rocks. Sundry bottles appeared from coat-tails; biscuits, buns, and short-bread were handed round. Some drank diluted gooseberry wine, others the water that ran past on every side. Finally, "Ye banks and braes" was sung by the whole of us, standing, and then we made our way back. When we arrived in Princes Street, it was dusk, which was lucky, considering our worn looks, fatigued walk, wet boots, and the amount of moss and mud still hanging to our clothes.

As regards matters social, political, and religious, Dunedin lives in a very turbulent atmosphere. There seems to be something chemically eruptive in the social composition of Dunedin. One theory is, that there must be too much of a Caledonian flavour in the community, and regarding Scotsmen as an essence, there may be some truth in the supposition. As far back as 1856, the Otago settlers were a controversial people, deep in religious disputes and newspaper broils. An English traveller, writing about that time, compared Dunedin to "an enclosure of wild cats, tearing out each other's eyes."

Dunedin has great vitality—nothing lack-lustre and debilitated about it, but a marked full-bloodedness. It is a sub-

stantial middle-class town, a town of labour and commerce. As to the working-classes, every man can clothe, feed, and educate his family, and have something to spare. Speaking roughly, there are no poor people in Otago. There is none of that poverty verging on starvation which is so painful to see and hear of at home. Food is cheap, clothing is not dear.

In our comfortable hotel in Rattray Street, we were next door to the stir of the small Babel. At midnight, or rather in the small hours of the morning, as we lay tranquilly snoozing, we would be rudely awakened—not by a crowd of late-arriving, sea-sick passengers—not by a noisy breaking-up of heated revellers—but by a large flock of white-neck-tied clergymen returning from the Synod. They had usually a lively talk, to which the thin partitions made us involuntary listeners, anent the introduction of instrumental music, the joining of the Presbyterian Churches in the North and South Islands, and the state of the finances generally. But in a short time debates and debaters went to rest; the organ question was followed by the smell of extinct candles; the union gave place to hard breathing; and stipends were lost in snores.

On Christmas Day we were invited to dinner at a house some two miles from town. It lay behind the hills which back Dunedin, so that we might have been a hundred miles from the stir of the city. The country was open, undulating, and covered with tufts of heath. Coming to a white gate in a hawthorn hedge, we passed up a gravel walk, till we approached a large lawn, in the middle of which rose a high flagstaff bearing a red banner. About forty of a company had assembled—grandfathers, grandmothers, grandchildren, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends of the family. There was a real Christmas dinner, with roast beef and plum-pudding as in the old land, and with as cheerful faces round them as ever were seen at any table either "here or far awa'."

On New Year's Day, the town was alive with holiday makers. The Caledonian Games, held at the Recreation Ground, in the midst of green hills and grassy uplands, were a



great feature. The crowd, with its mixture of kilts, tweeds, plaids, silks, and satins, was an enlivening spectacle. Tartans waved, bagpipes blew, flags flew. Every kind of booth was there, from the "Glasgow pie-shop" to the "Café de Paris." Pipers paraded in splendid garb, one man dressed in really elaborate costume, and with a ludicrously large blue bonnet. The chieftain was dragging behind him a little fellow dressed as Rob Roy, and choking over a sponge-cake. The competitors for the races assembled. The herald of the course was the town-crier, dressed in scarlet coat, who, after tooting on a trumpet, came round, bawling "'Pettitors! prepare to henter the harenar—make ready for the final 'eat!" The utter Cockney abandonment of the sentence, coming in the midst of intense Scotch dialect, was amusing in the extreme. Foot races, reels, strathspeys, sword dances, gymnastics, tossing the caber, and putting the stone, followed in quick succession. Then came some exciting wrestling between a tall Maori and a squat Cornishman, the brown-skinned fellow winning nearly every bout. In due course the sports came to an end, the Cockney trumpeter dropped his last H, and the crowd moved homeward to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne."

Our concerts lasted five weeks in Dunedin, from Boxing-Day to Burns' Birth-Day, 1873-4—a long-time, considering the size of the town. But one peculiarity of the colonies is, that entertainments run longer than they would in an equal population in the old country. When we arrived, the only available hall was the Volunteer Drill Shed, a plain spacious building, which by means of calico and banners we made somewhat presentable. Then we moved to the Masonic Hall, a smaller but neater place. Eight months afterwards, on our farewell visit, we sang in a fine new Temperance Hall. "Twa Hours at Hame," found great favour with the Dunedin folks, though it might have seemed like "taking coals to Newcastle" to bring Scottish sentiment and song and story into a community where the nationality was so pronounced.

We spent six weeks in travelling through Otago. Having contracted with a coach-proprietor for the tour, there came to the

hotel-door one Monday morning a coach with a staunch-looking team of four horses. The driver was a stout, whiskerless young man of twenty-one years of age. His name was Gideon, he said—or, as some called him, “Gid”—and others again, “Giddy.” The rain was blinding, and the wind boisterous. As the coach drove off, kind friends in waterproofs waved their umbrellas and cheered us with prophecies of finer weather.

Soon we were rolling along a smooth road. Through the heavy driving rain, lit up by fitful sunshine, we saw that we were travelling amid dark green hills, light green hills, yellow hills, distant purple hills, and that the landscape was treeless, save where blue-gums, like rows of nine-pins, had been planted as shade-trees round houses. The Australian tree flourishes well in its new home, and Government encourages its introduction as a means of attracting rain, giving as a bonus two acres of land for every acre of gum trees planted. All along the road were neat mile-stones, somewhat monumental in appearance—little white tombstones marking the expiry of a mile. Arriving at a wayside inn, we watered the horses, while our driver, in obedience to the iron law of custom, went in to have a sixpenny drink—“swig a tanner,” as he elegantly phrased it. As we drove through the Taieri Plains, a fine agricultural country, the sky cleared. We were soon in the highest spirits, and emerged from our husks of rugs and shawls. Gideon whistled, and the horses had to be held in from a canter. The hill-slopes—spotted with small “tussocks” or tufts of grass like miniature sheaves—swept quickly past. Along the banks of the Taieri River—past a small lake glittering in the sun—down the Waihola Gorge—and through the fertile Tokomairiro Plain, we reached by a long straight road the cheerful-looking township. We found that the hotel-man, who also owned the hall, had, in his zeal to procure a good audience, displayed a large banner in our honour, and covered the township with small bills bearing the lucid intimation, “*They* are coming !”

Tokomairiro, or Milton, as the Government name goes, or Toko as it is termed for shortness, or Tok as I have even heard it flippantly called, is perhaps the largest of the purely agricul-



tural towns of Otago. It consists of one long street. The one-storey houses and shops, had here an air of freshness, due to white paint. Though an exceedingly prosperous town, it was dull in appearance. There was nobody at the street corner—nobody near the bank—no one at the Council Chambers—no housewife shopping at the large general store. The draper was mechanically rolling and unrolling his cloth, selling and buying to himself. The barber, hiding his hands behind his back as if they were contraband goods, not to be seized even in friendship, alternately surveyed the pavement and his projecting rainbow-coloured pole. A solitary rider left the echoes of horse-hoofs lingering about the street long after he had gone. Milton may be called an epic town, most of the streets being named after poets. There is an Ossian Street and a Shakespeare Street—a Chaucer Street, a Spencer Street, and a Johnson Street—a Pope Street, a Dryden Street, and a Burns Street. There is a cone-shaped hill a little way out, which might have been called Parnassus ; to be sure, it is easy to climb !

We drove out with one or two friends to a bachelor's garden, some few miles from Milton. An uncouth wilderness met the view—gum trees, flax plants, and the poisonous "toot" plant, destructive to sheep and cattle. Through a maze of weeds and tall bracken, we were taken by the bachelor himself, coming latterly to a small gully, where one of us was severely stung by falling upon a hidden beehive. In Australia we would have been frightened for snakes ! But it seems there is not a hurtful reptile in New Zealand, which fact was once satisfactorily explained by a learned Irishmen :—"As all of yez know, New Zailand is the antipodes of Ould Ireland ; so when St. Patrick put his ban upon snakes in the ould counthry, begorra ! it went right through !" In the gully were bushes of luscious black currants, that hung in bunches like small grapes. Fruits, flowers, and vegetables seem to acquire extra vitality in Otago. You see cabbages and cauliflowers with giant heads, and fuchsias growing to be considerable trees. Crossing the gully we came to a hothouse filled with vines, and facing a large

flower garden. Here bouquets, bunches of grapes, bags of apples, and large branches of currants, were thrust into our hands. Unitedly thanking our kind host, we drove off—a moving horticultural show! Next morning we were to start for Tuapeka.

“It’s past eight o’clock!” cried Gideon the driver, laughing and squeezing his head through the partially-opened door of our bedroom—“the horses have had their oats, and your own breakfast’s a-waitin’!” My brothers and I jumped up, hurriedly swallowed our breakfast, hauled out our luggage to the door, loaded the roof of the coach with portmanteaus, packed the rack, ballasted inside with bundles, filled the boot with a choice assortment of parcels, and heaped up shawls and greatcoats on the box. Gideon came round leading the horses. “All right there?—in with them pole-straps, first hole—woa!—quick, fasten up the trace that side—back, steady, woa! hand up the reins—all aboard!—stand clear there—hi, lads, hi!—Blossom, Jack, Nelly, Wall-eye, hi!” Crack, jerk, jingle, and we were rattling down Tokomairiro’s quiet street at fully eight miles an hour.

At Tuapeka, or Gabriel’s Gully, there are a large number of cleanly, well-dressed Chinamen. At night they walk about with their fashionably-attired English wives. At our concerts they invariably occupied the very front of the front seats! Many of them are capital market-gardeners, and indeed a number of places would be destitute of vegetables but for the enterprise of these Pagans. They have their weak points like Europeans. One “heathen Chinese” had been in the habit of taking his gold to a certain buyer, who, on John’s departure, always found the precious dust to weigh unaccountably lighter. So one day he watched the Chinaman as he put his gold on the scales. “Welly good gold, welly good,” said John, while the buyer bent over the counter to adjust the weights. Glancing quickly up, the broker saw the Chinaman, with distended cheeks, blowing down silently upon the scale! Smothering an exclamation, he vaulted over the counter,





### *Balclutha.*

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seized the flying rogue by the pig-tail, and tarred and feathered him before a large crowd of the townsfolk.

We went south forty miles to Balclutha, a journey which our team performed in the wonderfully quick time of five hours. At a toll we were stopped by a portly, sunny-faced Scotch wife, who, finding we were Scotch also, thought it her bounden duty to ask for the "bawbees" in the broadest accent at her command. Father, in a moment of inspiration, putting his head out of the coach, gave it as his deliberate opinion that she was the "brawest wife" he had seen between that place and Dunedin. "My certie, that's true!" exclaimed the good woman, with a self-satisfied cast of her head—"there's no mony like me on the road—gude mornin' to ye!" And away we went, with many a laugh at the unexpected answer, so different from the bashful denial that had been anticipated. The road was lined each side by sweet-smelling hawthorn hedges, alternating with low sod-walls almost overgrown by dense gorse. At one place an English labourer, evidently a new arrival, was breaking stones in a listless kind of way, as if clods were more in his line. He had on the usual English smock, which looked a badge of servitude in such a country as this! We never saw another smock in the whole of New Zealand.

Balclutha was a pleasingly irregular cluster of houses, cheerful-looking under the enlivening sun. The township is looped in by the River Molyneux, a noble tortuous stream with sixteen times the volume of the Thames. Balclutha is the centre of prosperous agriculture. In fact, the whole country from Dunedin to Balclutha, a distance of fifty-four miles, is one long settlement. One meets with strange characters in some of these country places. For instance, in the hotel at Tokomairiro (spoken of in Scotch circles as Toakey-mirey) our boots were brushed by a fish-curer, who had just come out from London, and who regretted his luck in not getting work so soon as he expected. We happened to ask what induced him to come out. "Oh," said he, "I heard how the Otago folks were running mad after people at ten shillings a day and their board—

that's what did it!" We thought it a pity that, when affairs really have a bright, glowing aspect, people should persist in making them *too* rose-coloured; Otago could be a land of promise without being a paradise. At this same hotel the waiter was a banished Communist, who had fought and been wounded in the streets of Paris, and been exiled for ten years. He was a short, flaxen-moustached young man, with a wealth of politeness and gentleness. I may here remark that unsuitable people sometimes emigrate. One day a man was mourning the lack of employment, but he turned out to be a glass-eye maker!

We went on to Popotunoa, passing through much the same scenery as before. Popotunoa at this time was peopled only by a post-master, a blacksmith, a bricklayer, a butcher, a baker, two carpenters, and a hotel-keeper. A resident came up to us, gleefully rubbing his hands, and told us that he did not bake his own bread now, for to his great joy a baker had just opened shop in town! We had here the good fortune to be the guests of the Rev. Mr. Connor, formerly missionary in connection with Nicolson Street U.P. Church, Edinburgh. We were kindly entertained at the manse, a pretty, wooden house of two storeys. We were not to sleep under a private roof again for two years, not until we reached Napanee in Canada, where some of our relatives have settled. Here we met a Wick lady, who about three years before had come to New Zealand to be married. The wedding ceremony took place in Dunedin, and next morning the happy pair left for Balclutha. Sad to relate, on the way the coach upset and the husband was killed.

We had the honour of giving the first concert ever held in Popotunoa, the receipts going to help the young kirk. The "hall" was the barn of a neighbouring sheep-station. The seats were planks laid upon bags of grain, and an open loft, filled with sacks of chaff, served as gallery. The platform was a few boards covered with carpet. It was interesting to see the audience coming across the moorland—men, women, lads, lasses, mothers, children, shepherds, servants, and people



on horseback. Every shepherd brought his "collie" with him, so the barn swarmed with dogs. The horses were hitched-up to railings, posts, and the wheels of drays. The barn was not very brilliantly lighted—"chandeliers" being made of crossed pieces of wood, each with two holes, into which candles were placed. Perforated battens jutted out from the walls. At one end of the platform was a shaky door, leading to the shed which did duty as "side-room." In this door was a hole, and it so chanced that during my father's singing of "The Land o' the Leal" a poor dog jammed his head into the aperture, the melancholy howl that followed effectually banishing sentiment. Then the wooden chandeliers not being straight, the grease came dropping down. Icicles of grease hung on the walls—stearine stalactites drooped from the "candelabra." The lights guttered out one by one, till the concert concluded in the light of the dim globe-lamp.

When the audience went outside they found that the horses, alarmed either at the singing or the applause, had stampeded. Walking back in the gloom we were suddenly met by a party of riders, who had been on the search for the animals. "There's nine of them gone," said a man in a big flapping cloak—"clean gone, and into the ranges, I'll bet." We were really sorry for these poor fellows. The black sky—the moonbeams striking through the rents in the clouds, and sweeping round like so many aerial bull's-eyes—the strange shadows on the hills—the sound of the wind as it rustled the high grass—the sight of the dark range far away, where the horses were supposed to have strayed—increased our sympathy. Nothing ever impressed us with such a sense of hopeless search as this night-ride of those men. After plunging through some half-mile of tussocks and climbing six or seven fences, we reached the Manse, and next morning had the satisfaction of knowing that most of the horses had quietly cantered home to their respective stables.

We drove on to Mataura, passing through black grassy uplands. This was a place so small that the impetus of the coach almost took us past the township! We sang here in the

public hall, which is used as a court-house, a concert-room, a school-room, a church, and an assembly room for dancing. Even in this small hamlet, we had an audience of a hundred people. An old Highland couple, who kept a small grocery store near the hall, gave up all idea of the concert as the admission was too dear. When our manager heard of that, he rushed across to the little shop and bought "Twa pund's o' Scotch sweeties!" No sooner had he got back to the hall than the two "auld folks" appeared at the door and smilingly paid to hear the "sang's."

As we went from this place towards Invercargill we saw faint pencillings on the far horizon—the mountains of Otago. The road had a singularly anomalous appearance. On our left were fields of corn, protected by quickset hedges—on our right, rough tussocky country, enclosed by open fences. On one side, young English grasses, bordered by Australian gum-trees (successful immigrants from a sunny land)—on another, hoards of wild Scotch thistles invading the soil, and pushing their purple heads between the tough, green, broad-spreading leaves of the New Zealand flax-plant. Well did the national emblem symbolise the energy and colonising spirit of the national character!

Invercargill is a thriving town, and its streets are named after Scottish rivers—the Esk, the Dee, the Teviot, the Tay, the Forth, and several others. Our concerts were held in the Exchange Hall, which, like most of the buildings in town, was composed of wood and iron. It was formerly a church in St. Kilda, near Melbourne, and the cost of shipping it to New Zealand amounted to £1000. Invercargill has a railway twenty miles long, which runs down to the "Bluff," the port first touched at by the steamers from Melbourne. The railway to the Bluff, in its early days, had many features in common with the "Innocent Railway" that used to run between Edinburgh and Dalkeith. On board any of the New Zealand steamers, if you unfortunately start the subject of railways, a commercial traveller will inevitably, and with a premonitory chuckle, tell you a certain "comical old yarn about the Bluff



Railway," which narrative is, nine times out of ten, the same that you heard from a chuckling commercial on your last steamboat trip, and which you will assuredly be bored with by another on your next. We heard, for instance, a story of how, in those good old times, a mob of cattle would frequently get in the way of the train. This caused great trouble to the driver, who used at first to sound the whistle, hop from the engine, and chase the obstruction off with billets of wood. This of course grew tiresome, and the driver at last carried a collie dog on the front of the locomotive. The sagacious animal sprang off whenever cattle appeared, barked them some hundreds of yards up the line, and then resumed its warm place over the buffers. One day an old woman was driving her cow along the railway track. The morning express came puffing up at fully seven miles an hour. The ancient dame, adjusting her spectacles, looked behind at the approaching engine, and thinking that danger was perhaps imminent, gave the beast an extra poke with her stick. On shambled the cow—on jogged the old woman. "Get off the line!" roared the engine-driver. But the good dame tucked up her dress and kept stumping along. At last the buffer of the engine quietly impinged upon the "bustle" of the old woman's dress, or rather where a "bustle" would have been had there existed any such thing as "bustle" either in train or dress in those slow-going days. The driver, shutting off steam and shutting his eyes to the impending catastrophe, shrieked "Hi! Hi!" while the old lady, dodging the buffer, uttered those ever-memorable words: "Man, ye're surely in an awfu' hurry this mornin'!" So run the short and simple annals of the rail.

At Riverton, a small township north of Invercargill, we found the hall in a woeful state owing to the wet weather. It chanced that the roof was in process of being unshingled, and the pouring rain had drenched the building. The public had therefore to be seated down one side of the hall, the wet portion being covered up with carpets. The effect of this lopsided audience, as seen from the platform was somewhat funny.

We went next to Winton, another small to re we

got the use of the school-room by canvassing the majority of the inhabitants (who were on the school-board) and receiving their permission. From Winton we travelled up a long wide valley towards the "Elbow," named from a sudden turn of the Oreti River. About three in the afternoon, we arrived at the Elbow Inn—a wooden building standing on an open, low-grassed plain, at the entrance to the Highlands of Otago. Inside the house was a blazing log fire—a great luxury, the wood having to be brought a distance of fourteen miles from the nearest clump of bush. The teamsters carry small braziers under their waggons. They cannot find wood everywhere, so they burn charcoal, and coal when they can get it. The Australian waggoner is far more favoured, as he travels almost continually amongst firewood. The landlord had been twelve years at the Elbow—"I came out from the 'art of London." During the gold rush to Queenstown and the adjacent diggings, the hotel was in continual stir. "I made £300 a week then," said he, "and in a smaller house than this. Three years ago I went back to London, but I didn't care for it at all—everything was so changed—I like this spot better, lonely though it be." I may state that the landlord refused to take sixpence in coppers which we offered him. "Ha ha," he laughed, "we have no use for these here—who'd take them?" So we had to give him silver.

Next morning we overtook one by one a number of carriers. English waggons, with their arched roofs of white canvas, could be seen for miles across the broad level floor of the valley. Scarfs of vapour floated midway down the mountain slopes; one felt he could rend the mist by simply throwing a stone. On the higher peaks the clouds lay longer and heavier, but we watched them gradually dissolving in the sun, the white specks of snow twinkling through the thin edge of the mist. Some of the mountains, clothed in rich grass, had an air of grandeur and rudeness, mingled with verdure—Highland form and height, with Lowland snug warmth. The lonely vastness of the landscape seemed to affect the feeling of perspective. Where there were no comparative objects, the moun-



tains became knolls ; but when a solitary pill-box of a house rested at the base of one of these knolls, the knoll swelled into a mountain. We had breakfast at Athol, a small village. The hotel people did not give us milk to our tea, and we felt a good deal aggrieved ; but presently our driver Gideon glided in with an air of mystery, and quietly handed us a cup of the lacteal fluid. He had gone to the rear premises and surreptitiously milked the cow ! Then while the horses were having their oats we went across the road to have a talk with the blacksmith. This worthy possessed strong views on the land laws, had sledge-hammer opinions on squatters, talked of Athol farmers as being trodden under the iron heel of one man, worked himself into a white heat over local mismanagement, and blew a whole bellowsful of wrath against the Provincial Council. We had begun to feel interested in his clanging conversation, when Gideon was ready to start, and we had to say good-bye.

We drove towards Kingstown, the township at the south end of Lake Wakatip. The road lay through continuous chains of mountains. Along their base ran strange terraces or mounds, supposed to be the banks of some ancient lake. Now and then these struck out across the valley from each side, and met near the middle, leaving only a small opening for us to go through—like railway embankments with space for a stone bridge. Mountains rose round about us—crags with jutting slaty rocks that caught boldly the slanting rays of the sun—mountain slopes lined with watercourses converging into a central cavity, like the impress on top of a quartern loaf—and hills with soft-swelling, graceful slopes, whose harshness seemed to be concealed beneath the covering of grass, like the faintly-seen outlines of veiled sculpture. One chain was unspeakably grand, uplifting itself far above all around—a sloping range vertebrated with peaks, a twin peak here, another there, then a large molar peak, then another double fang—the range bursting into climax in the highest peak of all weighted with a mass of snow.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The Lake District—The Arrow River Diggings—Oamaru—Perilous Forging the Waitaki.


OTAGO, like England, Scotland, and Ireland, has its well defined lake district. The more important lakes are Hawke, 48 square miles in extent; Wanaka, 75; Wakatipu, 112; and Te Anau, 132. The scenery of this region is regarded by some travellers as scarcely second in grandeur to the Swiss lakes. We sailed up Lake Wakatipu from Kingstown to Queenstown, a distance of twenty-two miles, in a laughably small steamer. The pole of our coach had to project over the side like a studding-sail-boom. The lake seemed about thirty miles wide—a calm extent of water bounded at first by massive mountains that came abruptly down to the water edge. These could not have been less than three thousand feet high, and nearly all of equal height, walling in the water on both hands. On one side, the ranges were in deep shadow—on the other, flooded with sunshine. By-and-by the shadows of the mountains, which had previously lain concealed up the lake, crept stealthily up the sunny shore, quietly scaling up and gradually taking possession of the heights. Close to the summit of the range, the aggrandising shadows were met by a bright red glow, the rearguard of the retreating sun which seemed to linger and struggle for the small vantage ground till forced off by the overwhelming darkness that settled on the hills.

We had tea served on deck by the attentive captain. First the captain came struggling up with a large tin tea-pot holding two quarts. Then he recollected a knife was wanted, and down he clattered for that. Then he remembered the butter—then the tea-spoons—then the milk. Then cups were wanted, and at last of all, he came up puffing with a huge calico bag of sugar, telling us breathlessly to “be thankful for what we had, there



some poor fellows on shore here who don't get their meals quite so regularly." As he spoke, the steamer headed towards a point of land, behind which rose a column of blue smoke—a signal from those on shore, for there were men here, working in the bush, whose only communication with the outer world was by the boat. There appeared a hut, and a large fire, while on an extreme pinnacle of rock stood a man, towards whom a boat went off from the steamer with a well-stocked canvas bag of provisions. The man caught the sack, waved a hurried good-bye, and scrambled up the rocks. This scene was looked down upon by a most stupendous piece of scenery—a mountain of cliffs, one piled above another—mighty blocks of rock, cemented together with bush and brushwood, and towering in blackness to the giddy height of five thousand feet. This awe-inspiring sheer headland is one of the "sights" of Lake Wakatip. The scenery was on so large a scale that the steamer appeared to be motionless. The last place touched at was a gloomy little bay, where were to be taken in a number of pigs, owned by two Chinese passengers going up to hold their great New Year Jubilee at Queenstown. The boat was long in returning. "Hurry up with them grunters!" roared the captain. "All right!" exclaimed a voice on shore, "we're hard at work catchin' 'em!" Then followed a period of discord—soprano shrieks, counter-tenor screams, bass grunts—this porcine part-music occupying about twenty minutes, at the end of which a boat-load of pigs came alongside—the two Chinamen stroking the pigs fondly as they were deposited on deck. We reached Queenstown, which lay in a sombre basin of mountains, and appeared a cheerful community of street-lamps. Upon landing we were assailed by a score of lanterns, one lantern quarrelling with another over our effects, and a good-natured bull's-eye conducting us to the hotel, where we were ushered to our rooms by a civil and obliging candle. The house was kept by a German, and nearly every room was ornamented with a picture of the Emperor William.

Next morning was sunny and cloudless. Opening the glass



doors of the parlour, we stepped out on the balcony and beheld a view of striking beauty. On one side are the "Remarkables," the double peaks of a precipitous range 7,688 feet high, flecked with snow, and looking cold and distant, soaring as it were through rarefied air—a wall of granite scarred by torrents of melted snow—in form like some vast wrinkled iceberg drifted from lonely polar seas. All around are giants of 6,000, 7,000, and 8,000 feet, while the head of the lake is crowned with the glaciers of Mount Earnshaw, 9,200 feet high. The various moods of the lake this day were wonderful. At first there was absolute stillness, and so perfect was the reflection that the eye could scarce detect the rim of the beach. Bush, house, sail, boat, and mountain-side were all in perfect duplicate. A wedge of sky, that came down between the meeting spurs of the mountains, was reproduced as an outspread fan of light in the clear lake. Then a storm burst with massive clouds, high wind, and curling waves. Towards evening the scene was superb, for the setting sun filled the sky with crimson, shed a mellow pink hue upon the mountains, and transformed Lake Wakatip into a vermillion sea. Then at night, as the sky cleared, the stars shone bright on the lake like trickling drops of light, and the ranges stood in dark shadowy masses against the star-lit sky, mere silhouettes of their former selves, while a red raging bush-fire blazed far across the lake, and, with the help of one or two straggling clouds, feebly imitated the sunset of a few hours before.

Next day we ascended a spur of Ben Lomond, a mountain overlooking the town. We had to haul ourselves up, hand over hand, by tufts of grass and bracken, and after two hours' hard climbing attained the summit. Queenstown appeared below us, a cluster of microscopic houses peopled by black specks, with a white tortuous road winding behind it like a serpent about to enclose the town within its folds. Away to the left stretched a deep black gorge, gloomy, silent, and desolate, whose further extremity reached a faint silvery vision of snowy peaks; and wandering through it was the lonely track that led to the gold-diggings in the ice-bound fastnesses of the



Shotover River. The whole scene was indelibly photographed upon our minds.

The descent of this Ben Lomond spur was the hardest work of all. It took us an hour to reach town, and we did not waste time either. We slid, tumbled, and sprawled—botanized involuntarily over ferns—culled helplessly large bushes of bracken—were scratched by prickly “Wild Irishmen,” and tortured by spike-leaved plants. Down we came, each of us riding on an avalanche of earth. Two or three times we stopped ourselves on the very edge of steep rocks, some thirteen feet high, which we had to descend, holding on by the grass that grew in the fissures. One of us, luckily at a small rock, could not stop himself in time, and clutched at a rotten bush, but it came away with him and he shot over, gliding down in a halo of rubbish, somersaulting over some interlaced grass, and disappearing head foremost into a gully where we could hear his voice dolefully amongst the ferns. We hauled him out and found his scratches few and harmless. It is needless to say we followed no system in coming down. Every one shifted for himself, one very often beneath the other, which was sometimes dangerous. Once a loud cry came from my brother highest up, and a large slaty stone flew down revolving on its sharp edges. My brother below seeing it bounding directly towards him, rolled over and over to one side, lay flat and covered his ears with his hands till the stone crashed harmlessly past. With such-like adventures we got to the bottom of this really precipitous mountain-side.

At Queenstown we started on our tour through the gold-towns which lie in the great gorges of Otago. Driving to Arrowtown, we saw a solitary white spire crushed between half-a-dozen converging hill-spurs—then, as if by magic, a long row of iron roofs sprouted out of the earth, the houses blossoming by degrees into sight, till a full-blown street, with squat shops, big signs, and chaotic mining, developed into view. Arrowtown lies in a wild spot, where high cliffs descend sheer to the Arrow River, bearing traces of many a “fresh.” A rise in the river washes down auriferous deposits to Arrow-

town—the floods feed it with gold. Arriving at the hotel, we saw a cluster of men in the bar gazing rapturously at a large nugget which a lucky miner was holding in his hand. It weighed thirteen ounces, and was worth about £40. The owner handed it to us, telling us to feel its weight, while we congratulated him on his good fortune, and wished him “many happy gold returns.”

On the way to Cromwell the road wound along one side of the precipitous Kawarau Gorge, the first touch of real gorge scenery we had experienced. It was not altogether a time of pleasantness, for the road was without exception the dustiest we ever travelled. The wheels went down to the axles, while we got out and walked with invisible feet. The road wound through the gorge at a height of three hundred feet, and at the Arrow Bluff it was fully four hundred feet above the dark-green Kawarau river, which seemed to be sluggishly moving far below, though in reality foaming along a rocky cliff-locked channel. Rounding corners, we would abruptly come face to face with great shoulders of hills, apparently instinct with life, slowly sinking as we descended, gradually heightening as we rose, and suddenly steadying themselves as we turned and drove straight towards them. Not long before this, a coach and horses had fallen over into the abyss and they were never seen again. It is pleasant to add that the driver and passengers somehow managed to clamber off before the vehicle turned over.

We passed, during our drive, three mountain torrents of different characters, which the miners have shown by calling them the Weeping Lizzie, the Roaring Meg, and the Gentle Annie. You may miss seeing Lizzie or Annie but you cannot escape Meg—a rumbling, raging, scolding stream, her utterance half-choked by stones and boulders, which change her steady flow of eloquence into loud, foaming incoherence. At a steep “pinch” or hill my father got out and walked ahead of the coach. Turning a corner he was met by a man on horseback, who said “good morning” to him in an astonished tone, and then added, “Excuse me, but really it is *so* strange, *so very*



unusual to see a respectable person like you walking—very strange indeed.” But when the coach came in sight the stranger rode off quite relieved.

At our concert in Cromwell no less than a score of children in arms had to be refused admission, which gave rise to some grumbling. I may here state that our usual charges for admission were, 3s., 2s., and 1s. in the larger towns, but in the country, owing to the smallness of the halls and the cost of travel, the “popular bob” had to be dispensed with—the public never objected to this, in fact at Cromwell the “small prices” were more than once complained of. One miner went the length of telling us that “he felt quite insulted at the cheap prices of the show.” The hotel at Cromwell was infested with rats. In the early morning my father was awakened by the noise they made, and discovered a large rodent trying to drag one of his dress boots through a hole.

At Clyde the town clerk was in the thick of census taking. He called at the hotel. The printed form was very exhaustive, for there were regulations as to Maoris and half-castes, as to Chinamen and their wives, as to religious sects, education, sickness, infirmity, and other interesting matters. We were greatly amused on reading the schedule to see that one lodger in the hotel had put down his religious denomination as that of “boiler maker,” and that he was suffering from the infirmity of the “Free Church of Scotland.” The census-taker had to go into the queerest and remotest of places. “To-day” he said, “I intend to visit one family only; then it will take me two days to reach the next, just a quarter of a mile off as the crow flies; they’re so separated by creeks and mountains.” Census-taking is no enviable task here—through gorges instead of streets, and up hills instead of stairs!

Two or three miles from our next stage we observed on a rock, a flaming poster of our entertainment—a gleam of colour in the lonely landscape, though to be deprecated as a violation of the picturesque. The place was pitted with holes. These frequently form the grave of some unfortunate “hatter,” as a man who works alone and has all his property “under his hat”

is called. The earth "caves in" on the solitary digger—he is crushed to death—and the folks think he has left for some other place, till one day another "prospector" unearths a pick and a skeleton.

On the way to Otepopo we were overtaken by a man on a scrubby red horse. He had a fiddle by his side, and told us he had been out playing at a country dance the previous night. "I'm the boy for the Scotch reels," said he; "ay, an' I like a' kinds o' Scotch music; eh, man, my twa favourite Scotch tunes are Auld Robin Gray an' the Auld Hunder!" and with his old fiddle slung behind him like the harp of the Minstrel Boy, he put spurs to his shaggy steed and disappeared over a hill. We passed the village of Hampden, where harvest had put an end to education, the schoolmaster having gone off to help his brother to get in his crop.

The following day saw us at Oamaru, a sea-port town seventy-five miles north of Dunedin, and the chief town of Northern Otago. It is backed by the greatest wheat-growing district in New Zealand. The town is situated on an open roadstead. At the south side an arm of land stretches out with a headland at the end of it, to which they are at present building a long index-finger—the new breakwater of Oamaru. Ships have to discharge their cargo by means of surf-boats. We saw a schooner unloading in the roads. A long cable stretched from the vessel, and on this a surf-boat was threaded like a shuttle, the crew hauling themselves backward and forward. There was a great swell on, and the boat pitched fearfully, one time completely hidden, the next standing high against the sky.

The people here are very Scottish, as we found during our four concerts. On the Saturday night the town was full of harvesters, who came in large numbers to the hall. We met here a Scotsman who was a great admirer of reel-tunes, and who at various times treated us to a large number of songs set to Highland dance-music.

"The Waitaki is up!" was the news we received in Oamaru. This river had to be crossed on our journey northward into the province of Canterbury. Word came that it was barely ford-

ble, a hot wind having melted the snows on the Ranges, and swollen the mountain torrents. This river is 120 miles long, and has its source in the Southern Alps, not far from Mount Cook, 13,000 feet high, and the monarch of New Zealand mountains. The Waitaki is the boundary-line between Scotch Otago and English Canterbury, so that "Both sides of the Waitaki" may come to be as suggestive a phrase as "Baith sides o' the Tweed."

A drive of fourteen miles brought us to the river, where we waited three hours, watching through a glass one or two houses on the opposite shore, about a mile off. At length a boat approached. The head ferryman, who was trying to discover a ford for the coach, came slowly across on horseback. He was a Norwegian named Müller—a big-built giant of a man, with a long red beard, flannel shirt, and tweed trousers. By his orders the luggage was taken out of the coach and put into the boat. Then, after my father, my mother, and my two sisters had taken their places, they were safely rowed across.

The coach was not equally fortunate. Our driver, though sustained greatly by a dram he had taken at a cottage, was in great terror of the water, a brother of his having not long before been drowned whilst crossing an Otago river. Had it not been that my cousin and I went on the box as company, he would assuredly have thrown up the reins. It was certainly far from pleasant to see the grey current rolling past us at six knots an hour, and know that next minute we were to trust ourselves to its uncertain depths. The Norwegian was mounted on a bare-backed white horse, so as to be ready any moment for a swim. Gideon cracked his whip, and we splashed in, the rear being brought up by Robert and James on the saddle-horses. The coach gave a severe pitch, and a substantial wave came over the box-seat. The two on horseback had a bad time of it. James, who rode a black pony, was every moment expecting to be carried away; but he got at last under the lee of the large horse, and felt safer. Müller tied a rope to the leading horses, to guide us round places—a proceeding which kept us contin

for once or twice he turned us sharply on the "lock" of the coach, and we felt the vehicle lifting for an overturn in the river.

Another shingle-spit was gained, and Müller again peered about for a ford, but the bottom was lost a few feet from the edge. We drove in at random, the Norwegian keeping close alongside our leading horses. All at once his white horse sank to the belly, and in a second the coach had crashed down into the deep water. We had gone but a few yards farther when Müller suddenly threw up the leading-rope into the air, flung his hand back warningly, and sank with an ominous plunge, almost at our feet into an unknown depth of water. Horse and rider were swept before our terrified gaze away down the river. Clutching the bridle firmly in his left hand, the ferryman made a lunge with his right, caught the mane and held grimly on, while the horse swam strongly and brought him at last to a small point of land. The coach had been arrested on the brink of a hidden terrace. We trembled for the slightest movement of the horses; but luckily they stood like statues despite the water surging up violently against their sides. Müller made his appearance again, all dripping but hopeful, and got us out of our predicament by a sharp turn of the coach—telling us afterwards, in proof of the shifting nature of the channel, that he had crossed easily at this very place only the day before. When we arrived on the shore we found an hour had been occupied in fording, an experience that cost us thirty shillings. The Norwegian told us he had been ten years at this, had been swept off that same old white horse many and many a time, and had frequently to swim for his life. We would advise no one with weak nerves to ford a swollen river in New Zealand. A few days after, a number of passengers were fording this same Waitaki, when their coach upset and a "female magician" was drowned. We afterwards saw in the Christchurch cemetery, many graves of persons who had perished while crossing rivers. The inscriptions, which came home to us in all their force, included such texts as "A horse is counted but a vain thing to save a man."





CHAPTER IX.

The Canterbury Plains—Christchurch—A Waterloo Veteran—Wellington.

THIS adventure was succeeded by a journey of twelve miles through pastoral country. There are some large "runs" in this neighbourhood. A story is told of a squatter who, in a towering passion, ordered one of his men to leave—"Away off at once!" cried he; "get off my run this minute!" "What!" exclaimed the object of his wrath, calmly pulling out his watch,—this minute! Why, I couldn't do it if I were to rush at a break-neck pace for three hours on end!" We reached Waimate, our first experience of a Canterbury township—a collection of neat cottages, painted a light salmon-colour. Next day we travelled to Timaru, where we said good-bye to our genial driver Gideon. It subsequently transpired that he made "something handsome" out of his return journey to Dunedin, as he picked up a batch of Chinamen on the road and brought them into town—or rather to the outskirts; for, as he said, "I wasn't a-going to be seen drivin' home with a lot o' Chinees diggers!"

We prosecuted our journey to Christchurch by "Cobb's coach." Inside the vehicle was a young lady barnacled over with bundles. The other passenger was an elderly gentleman with a red face and grey moustache—to all appearance a Crimean officer—who was called "the Doctor" by everybody we met. A few miles out we came to a public-house. The driver handed the reins to the farmer, then slowly toiled into the bar. Three minutes elapsed. Out he came, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. "What'll you have, Jack?" said he to a man on the box "Oh, I don't know—I'll try a shandigaff." The Crimean gentleman emerged from the coach. "And what'll you take, Doctor?" "Oh, a sherry 'll do me, thank you." After a while the driver and the doctor, followed

by a foul-speeched swagman, returned from the bar. The driver goutily ascended to the box, rheumatically took the reins, serenely filled his pipe, nodded in a careless way to a friend at the door, and commenced an enthralling stable conversation. The military doctor crawled into the coach, and the swagman, uttering threats at some one in the public-house, reeled out, pitched his blankets inside the coach, and took his seat beside them. The mail slowly jogged off once more. We passed by plantations of gum trees, rows of bright yellow stacks, corn fields hedged with gorse, green meadows, and a wide level plain far beyond—the grey road extending away ahead, till the unclouded sky came down like a bright blue blade, and severed it at the horizon. In time we reached Temuka, where the same drinking programme was gone through.

Drinking here is fostered by the appearance and number of the "hotels." "Hotel" sounds more respectable than "public-house." The bars are opener, more numerous, and less clandestine-looking than at home. Colonial Bill, when he beckons his chum Tom to have a "nobbler" over the way, is only increasing his long-established fame for good-fellowship. The digger, when he leaves his lonely gully and comes down to civilisation, has a "blow-out" with his friends—so has the shepherd when he pockets his cheque for some months' work, and leaves for a while the solitude of a sheep-station. No company of average men assembles, but some one "shouts" or "stands" drinks all round. Mr. Black meets Mr. White, whom he has not seen for a whole week, and the consequence is a couple of "drinks." Jones has something particular to say to Robinson about the weather—they step "across the road." Smith settles an account with Brown, and "two nips of brandy" are immediately called for. "Nobblers" act as the receipt-stamps of business. It is but fair, however, to state that there is a considerable absence of staggering drunkenness. There is more of what we might call casual conviviality, but it cannot be said there is more intemperance in the colonies than in the mother-country.

We stayed two days at Temuka and then caught the next coach, which left at eight in the morning. The track lay through a continuous sea of grass. Some passengers in the front part of the coach became extraordinarily happy, taking at frequent intervals a bottle out of a black bag. The jolly company established a "dog-watch," which meant that every dog met in with was to be the signal for a drink all round. The first seen was a boundary-dog chained to a break in a fence to prevent sheep straying from one run to another. It was a fierce, leaping, howling brute, with teeth like tusks and brown matted hair that flapped in long ragged strips over its back and over its eyes. It was fastened to a wooden kennel, and within the radius of its tether were red fleshy bones of sheep, a skull and half-crunched ribs, which the dog dragged rattling around with its chain as it wheeled and bounded furiously at the coach. Poor boundary-dogs, what a life they lead!—no society, nothing but an occasional coach to remind them of the outside world. They are said even to bark at a passing shower by way of variety!

In the middle of the plains we drew up alongside a post on which was nailed what looked like a small writing-desk. The driver leant out, lifted the lid, took out a small leather bag and drove off. It was a bush post-office—a very private letter-box belonging to some sheep-station. Then the horses as if by mutual consent, took it into their heads to "bolt." With vigorous gallop they careered along the plain. The team was guided off the road, and the frantic animals swept round in an immense circle on the plain. All fear and anxiety gave place at last to curiosity. "How long would they keep it up?" For nearly a quarter of an hour they dragged the coach round and round; but at the end of that time they sobered down to a smart trot, and all steaming and sweating, they were headed back to the road. A passenger was picked up—an open-faced young Irishman. "Ach! this country is no good," said he, "the best of the land's all taken up, and you can't get work when you want it—and little enough wages, too." Cross-examining him, we learned that he had been five

harvesting and was £25 in pocket. "Troth, that's a fact," said he; "I cleared five pounds a week. You see I'm one of those chaps that's always grumbling, and don't know when they're well off." Leaving Ashburton, where we had dinner, we passed paddocks of green grass, marshalled round in military fashion with sentinel poplars, outside of which bristled like bayonets the fixed blades of the flax. Eighteen miles of dull plains, a thirty miles' night-ride on a railway, and we sighted the street-lamps of Christchurch.

We got into a real English cab. The driver was a stout, garrulous old man, who, ere we had driven thirty yards, said he was a Herefordshire man, and had struggled long in the province. "I've 'ad my ups and downs," said he, "an' worked 'ard in my time, but, (giving his horse a crack of the whip), I'm blowed if I ever 'ad such easy work as this!" The cab turned into a quiet part of the town, consisting of detached houses, walled gardens, and numerous white gateways, and presently landed us at a verandahed hotel, surrounded with trees. The waiters brought us the numbers of our rooms. Candle in hand, I walked down a long passage, looking for No. 36. No. 7, No. 8, No. 9—10, 11, 12—confound it!—17, 18, 19—no appearance of 36 here! Back again, and along another corridor, with a narrow channel, dangerous to navigate from the numerous reefs of boots lying on either hand—alas! here was the end of the passage—50, 51, 52. What was to be done? As a last resource I darted off to some rooms by themselves—70, 80, 81,—no use! Getting hold of the waiter, he exclaimed, as an idea seemed to flash on him—"Oh! I know where you've gone wrong! open the door of No. 12 bed-room, and that will show a long passage—go straight down that!" Doing all this, I came to Nos. 23, 26, 30, 35—  
—but no 36. Arriving at a small staircase, there at the bottom of it was the long-sought-for number! When I had shut the door, what was my surprise to see across the room another door. The apartment resembled those of old German inns, associated with robbery, murder, and ghost stories, where the door handle slowly turns, and a mysterious white figure



glides in upon the tenant of the room—Ha! the handle of this door really *did* begin to turn, and a man in a white glazed coat stepped suddenly into the floor—“What? are you 33 too?” demanded he, pointing to that number on *his* door. “No!” I exclaimed, pointing to *my* door—“I’m 36!” Tableau. We both laughed heartily, and each took one of the two beds that occupied the room.

Christchurch has about 10,000 of a population and is a fine mellow city. The streets are named after Church of England bishoprics, and the asphalt pavements are sheltered with glass-roofed verandahs. Small reserves of English elms delight the eye at frequent intervals, and every vista ends in clumps of willows. There is a freedom of style, an air of saying, “This is a street certainly—it cannot altogether be disguised—but everything has been done to make you believe otherwise.” In one quarter we came upon a cluster of flesh-coloured wooden houses, with high peaked gables, hanging eaves, and panelled fronts outlined in brown,—like theatrical cottages or old English hostleries—with attics, too, goggling out of the steep roof like staring eyes, as if the houses were in great wonder at the more modern buildings around.

The hotel was excellent—the charges moderate, as in most New Zealand hotels. Eight to ten shillings a day is the usual charge for a single person—boarders by the week pay two guineas. The servants were all English. Instead of the Bridget and Molly of Melbourne, or the Jessie and Maggie of Dunedin, we had Sarah, Susan and Mary Jane. The boarders were chiefly clerks, bank managers, families on visits, squatters and squatters’ sons. Some of the young gentlemen spent the day in playing billiards or hanging round the smoking-room; others in shooting, boating, and cricketing. Once a party of them came home in a lamentable, almost ludicrous plight—one run over by a waggonette, another with his arm in a sling, and a third fearfully lame from football. In a day or two however, they were all up and doing—nothing. A few steps from the hotel was the pretty little River Avon, its banks sheltered by heavy-plumed willows, that threw their dense

shadows upon the stream. Near here were the public gardens enclosed in a pear-shaped loop of this River Avon. The walks, dotted with rustic seats, were exquisite. A small park contained a number of deer so tame as to troop round and eat out of one's hand. In the centre of a grassy reserve forming part of the gardens stands the Museum, a spacious building under the directorship of the well-known Dr. Haast.

One day a Waterloo veteran called on us. He was a physical wonder—eighty-four years of age, yet straight as a poker, with a fine head and bold features. He launched at once into anecdote and reminiscence—telling us, in one continuous stream, the principal events of his life. He was born in Fife, but had Highland kinsfolk—enlisted early as a soldier, and lodged at the house of Mrs. Grant of Laggan—knew Jamie Hogg, and used to “blow up” Nathaniel Gow for his “new-fangled” arrangements of reels—went all through the Peninsular War, learned Gaelic from the Highlanders on the heights of Montmartre, plunged into the gaieties of Paris, fought at Waterloo, and had been on half-pay since 1817. We seemed to be shaking hands with the past. The veteran, however, was as full of the present as any one of the rising generation—explained the land laws of the colony, spoke of “ceevilisation” as “deevilisation,” and, with “kindling fury in his breast,” inveighed against the reigning follies of the day. Suddenly, like the great Alexander, his mood changed, for, seeing a fiddle lying on the table, he snatched it up, and dashed at once into a most inspiring strathspey. Then he took a breath, said something more about Nathaniel's bad arrangement of reels, picked up his stick, made a salute, and went towards the door; but abruptly stopped, wheeled round, and gave us the whole of the sword exercise in a most masterful style—then made another salute, went off in double-quick time, and strode erect, with martial step, down the gravel walk in front of the hotel. This vigorous old man was like a great gulp of mountain air in this placid city of Christchurch.

Being a Church of England settlement, you are apt to imagine this town more English than it really is. At one time, in-



deed, the Canterbury Pilgrims, as the early settlers were called, "ruled the roast" in social matters. Those who came out in the "first four ships" were looked up to by later arrivals. To have "come over with the Conqueror" bade fair to pale in face of having "come over in one of the first four ships." But the old worthies are dying out now ; and on great social occasions, or at public meetings, the "fifth and sixth ship" people have to be brought in to do the honours. Scotchmen have now become largely part and parcel of the community, and English people playfully introduce quaint Scotch words and phrases into their conversation. Even the French man-cook at the hotel, when we asked him how he was, burst out briskly with, "Ha! eem per-r-rawlee, zenk you for zbeeren!" We were told that of all the mayors who have held office in the city, two only have not been Scotch.

We left Port Lyttelton for Wellington in a steamship 286 tons. The passengers were chiefly commercial men, several folks on urgent business, one or two going to attend some meeting or market—in short, persons who had to travel, and could not help it. We did not see in New Zealand so many people on pleasure trips, or on friendly visits, as we would have observed in the old country. Steamboat accommodation was not in a very matured state on the New Zealand coast. The vessels were small, often over-crowded, and not very punctual.

In the course of the morning, after the steamer was fairly on its way, some of the passengers gathered into a group and amused each other with "yarns of the sea." One man related an incident that occurred to his friend Brown, when, upon arriving from England at Port Lyttelton, the passengers drank the health of the vessel. Brown, a water-drinker, being asked to partake, said, "No! I'm a teetotaler; but (with a jaunty air), I'll willingly drink success to the ship in the liquor she floats in!" His friend disappeared, and returned with a tumbler of water. After a complimentary mumble, Brown gulped it off at once, but immediately spluttered out, "Ugh!—ah—ow!—this is—ooh!—Epsom, Gregory—what—what the *materia medica* is this?" "That?" exclaimed his friend;

“why, you’ve drunk success to our noble ship in the identical liquor she floats in!” Of course there was a loud laugh at this story, which encouraged another man to burst out with “Ha, ha, ha—talking of drinking, the ship I came out in had a captain and mate who were continually quarrelling on the voyage. They fought it out in the log-book. The captain wrote down one evening, ‘Mate drunk to-day,’ which the mate no sooner saw next morning than he scribbled underneath, ‘Captain sober to-day!’ Had him there!” With stories like these the time passed pleasantly. The shores of the South Island became indistinct, and presently there was sighted the entrance to Port Nicholson, the harbour of Wellington—a rugged mouth, armed on the western shore by sharp rocky teeth, between which were sticking the bones of several vessels wrecked during a gale.

Port Nicholson is seven miles long and five miles broad. Wellington is built on a fringe of land, backed by hills like Dunedin. It is the capital of New Zealand, and has 10,675 inhabitants. Imagine a timber-built metropolis! Wellington, being subject to earthquakes, is constructed entirely of wood. Grand towers, steeples, balconies, and shop-fronts are seen at every turn—all wooden, but having quite an “imposing” look even when you are close to them. We lived at the Empire Hotel, a building formerly a theatre, so there was plenty of space everywhere. The water of the harbour came close to the hotel and lapped the stone foundations, putting us greatly in mind of the amphibious houses of Lerwick, in Shetland.

No one who intends making Wellington his home need be frightened at the earthquakes. The shocks at Wellington are as distinct from the earthquakes of South America as a breeze is from a typhoon. Wellington is the centre of atmospheric as well as terrestrial disturbances. The blasts blow over the harbour remorselessly. As a Dunedin man it is said, can be told by his stoop, as if climbing hills; so a Wellington man is known abroad by the mechanical way he screws up his eyes and claps his hand on his hat! Every night we saw about as queer a way of lighting street lamps as could well be imagined.





A rattle of hoofs was heard and a man cantered up on horse-back to a lamp-post. He drew bridle, rose up, stood on the saddle like a circus-rider, struck a match, lit the lamp, sank once more into the stirrups and galloped noisily off—the rapidly-increasing lights bearing testimony to the quickness of this novel system.

Here we saw Maories for the first time in any numbers. We met a native in velvet coat, light tweed trousers, and white hat, with silver-headed cane and heavy gold chain, and tattooed so that you could scarcely distinguish his eyes. He looked as if he owned thousands of acres, as perhaps he did, or as if he were a member of Parliament, as perhaps he was, for there are four Maories now in the Assembly—two on the Government benches, and two on the Opposition. Maories are worldly wise and take care of their broad acres, leasing them well or selling them at a goodly price. Many of the natives are rich, have large farms, and bring their crops to market as regularly as any of the settlers. The Maories are well-built fellows with brown skin, black straight hair, sharp eyes and high cheek-bones. The older natives bear the tatoo marks. As for the women when young they have a kind of comeliness, but they age fast and are inveterate smokers.

Two of the churches in Wellington are Presbyterian. One pulpit was filled by a clergyman from Ayrshire, from whom we heard a sound practical sermon on the text, "Look also on the things of others," in the course of which he urged his congregation "to go down to the wharf when a vessel appears, take notice of the numerous immigrants arriving on their shores, speak kindly to them, and shelter them if necessary, or at all events give them cordial welcome to this strange, new land." One should not miss seeing the Museum, which is worthy a visit, if only for the sake of the memorials of the Maori war. But even more interesting to us was the "Maori House," which has lately been added to the building. It was built in 1842 by the Ngatikaipoho tribe, as a monument to the memory of a departed chief. The walls were ornamented by thirty-two heads of celebrated Maories, carved out of totara

wood—hideous faces, carved and tattooed out of all trace of human lineaments, as if the originals had died from an eruption of filigree ornament. The big eye-sockets were filled in with green mother-of-pearl shells, which glistened horribly after us as we moved about the room. The heads are supposed to be true portraits of different individuals—to us they were all as like as two peas—but the Maories may have as much imagination as is required when we wander past the “long line of kings” in the Picture Gallery of Holyrood.

The Houses of Parliament are as grand as it is possible for wood to make them. We were taken over the buildings by Mr. M'Coll, the Government librarian, a warm-hearted Scotsman, who showed us repeated kindnesses during our stay. A large sum of money is to be spent on Parliament buildings; but uncertainty prevails about constructing them more substantially, as at any moment an earthquake might “make a motion” in the House. We were fortunate enough to be present at two sittings. Across the House from us sat two of the Maori members who find a place in the Assembly. One tattooed statesman rose, and spoke regarding “A Committee on Native Grievances”—gobbled in fiery Maori accents, while a prosaic interpreter coldly translated his clauses into English. Another night we heard Premier Vogel deliver his “Budget Speech.” One of the benches was occupied by our strange trio of the previous evening. One native leant over one end of the seat fast asleep, the other also snored full length, while on the limited space between them sat the interpreter, with folded arms and closed eyes. The cause of this somnolency no doubt lay in the fact that nothing more important than Immigration and the state of the Exchequer was on the tapis, to the exclusion of all Maori grievances!

One of our mornings was taken up by a gossip with a very old but well-preserved gentleman from the Hutt. Like the veteran we met in Christchurch, he was interested in events that had long passed into history. His conversation was musty—he seemed to be speaking in old-face type. He was a university-bred Edinburgh man—was acquainted with men



that were friends of Burns—knew “Chloris” and “Clarinda,” and spoke of the Potterow as quite a fashionable street. His antique gossip was interspersed with fragments of Scottish songs, but always the versions that have become almost obsolete. In bidding him good-bye, we felt like losing our hold on the link of a chain that stretched back into “auld lang syne.”

In the colonies a person's home-yearnings lie considerably in a culinary direction. An example came before us here of a courageous but inexperienced lady trying to please her Scottish husband by making a haggis! We had the thrilling story from her own lips. After prolonged research, the ingredients were all carefully collected and prepared. Then a female friend was called into consultation. Plump! went the globular mass into the pot. A mutual smile of triumph spread over the faces of the two ladies, but it was quickly changed to an expression of dismay as they saw the unlucky haggis floating on the top! Strenuous efforts were made to poke it down, but the national dish obstinately persisted in its attempts to prove itself light eating. The despairing operators latterly called in an experienced woman from next door, who counselled them to puncture the pudding with a fork. This done, to the joy of all concerned, the offending haggis “sank beneath the wave.” After some hours boiling, it was dished, but the result proved utter failure, for the haggis was unfit to eat, and was viewed with a distaste which not even a strong love of country could successfully overcome.

We had an interesting drive to the Hutt Valley in a cab, the glazed side-curtains of which had been blown to pieces a day or two before by a violent gale. At Ngahauranga we were shown where stood in former years the pah of Waripori, an influential Maori; but its strength and glory have long since decayed, and all that is seen on the hillside now is the monument to the great chief—his once formidable war-canoe, half buried, prow up, in the earth that covers his remains. The Hutt Valley is a quiet place, shaded by steep hills, and fertile—the scene of the first serious Maori outbreak—known to old

colonists as "Heke's War." During the few hours of our visit we met my father's aunt and some other distant relations ; met also a man who was the only surviving member of a large family murdered by the Maories. We went into a general store, the keeper of which had been thirty-four years here, and had led a peaceable life with the natives. He had not much to say against them ; they trusted him, or rather he "trusted" them. It would seem the only way to gain the confidence of a savage is to deal honourably by him. Of course there is another side to the picture. Before the war of 1846, some of the Maories had got largely into debt with the storekeeper, who had been just a little too trusting. After the fighting was over, he ventured to put in his little bill, but it was laughed to scorn. "No, no," said the Maories, "the war pay all!"

Crossing Cook's Straits to Nelson was a rough journey, the steamer encountering the usual gale that blows through what may be termed the "Channel passage" of New Zealand. The spray flew over the vessel ; one blast tore a sail into rags. Irishmen, Germans, Chinamen, and Maories filled the fore part of the small steamboat. About dusk we approached the lofty headlands of Queen Charlotte's Sound, up which we steamed to Picton, a port on the way to Nelson. The population is not large, but has swollen 300 during the last three years, owing, as a rival town has it, to a vessel having been wrecked here, and relieved of her passengers ! The steamer left Picton at four in the morning, and about breakfast-time neared the "French Pass," which separates an island from the mainland. The sail through the exceedingly contracted passage, with high cliffs on either hand, was very interesting. We could have thrown a biscuit on shore at one side. The steamer entered Blind Bay, and drew up gradually to Nelson. By-and-by we noticed that what we had taken for a long stretching shingle beach began to move past quicker than the coast-line. Of course we concluded that this "beach" was much nearer to us than the shore, and soon found it was the famous Boulder Bank, the natural breakwater to Nelson Harbour.



This strange formation runs for eight miles along the coast, and is supposed to have been washed down from a headland and gradually carried out by the tides.

The town rises on a gentle slope from the harbour. It is cradled amongst hills, and fanned to sleep by warm zephyrs, with its back turned to the winds and the tumult of the Straits. By universal consent it is called the "Garden of New Zealand." The streets of the town are roads—the houses principally peak-gabled wooden houses. From a hill we looked down upon a beautiful view. Nelson lay interspersed with trees. Round about were vineyards with yellow foliage, bright red bushes, elms, beeches, and willows. Little singing streams, crossed by hand-rail bridges, ran into gaps of hawthorn hedges; larks, which are numerous in the province, carolled above us. Blue-roofed cottages were perched on the hill-slopes, with a wealth of flowers in front of them, like baits for more sunshine. The river Matai flowed at our feet, dazzling with broken light, as if it had washed down diamonds and silted them up in its channel. Beyond the town lay the tranquil harbour, lined by the wonderful boulder bank; then farther off, the waters of Blind Bay, a sheet of blazing light. As background stood the first rising of the majestic Alps that occupy the interior of the South Island, with Mount Arthur, 8,000 feet high, towering through the purple mist.

"This is a delicious climate you have here," I happened to say to a Scotch acquaintance; "have you had many days of fine weather lately?" "Ou aye," says he, "it's been real gude for the last twa year!"

After seven performances we sailed for Auckland. The steamer left at 11 p.m., and next morning high land was seen on the horizon—Cape Egmont, the principal promontory on the west coast of the North Island. At last the base of Mount Egmont came in sight, the summit being invisible owing to heavy overhanging clouds. Anchor was dropped in the roadstead of Taranaki—a prettily situated town sloping up from the water's edge. The beach was dark-coloured with tons upon tons of iron-sand. The surf rolls heavily on

the beach, and there is sometimes so great risk in landing that the steamboats have to pass without calling in. We thought there was little chance of seeing the great peak, but in half-an-hour or so the wind had blown away the obscuring clouds. The summit towered before us far higher than where our eyes had been fixed. It seemed a mirage-mountain, so lofty, so removed was it from the detracting influences of other heights. Mount Egmont is 8270 feet high, an extinct volcano, and the most perfect cone in New Zealand. A long black band of cloud cut it in half, making it a kind of double mountain—the lower slopes shadowed by the cloud, the summit catching the full rays of the sun, and of a light tawny-brown colour. It came to a very sharp point, or double-lipped crater, containing a blob of snow, some of which had trickled out in small drifts at the narrow mouth of the peak. The steamer left Taranaki late in the afternoon. The dividing belt of cloud vanished, and the full contour of the mountain was displayed. The sun set, the strip of the town faded into the rising mists, and Mount Egmont, now a shadowy mass, was in time swallowed up in the darkness.

In the morning we near the Manukau Heads, the entrance to the western harbour of Auckland, but as the tide signals were against us, we dropped anchor outside. During the detention here, the time was spent in angling. Two or three "schnapper" were brought on board; then a "dog-fish," and afterwards a gurnard, an exquisitely coloured little fish. Lastly, a young man dropping his line over the stern, felt a powerful bite at the hook, and with a tug sufficient to have raised a small whale, he exposed to view a couple of red herring! The bewilderment of the angler provoked general mirth, the laughter even extending to a stiff old gentleman who was on his way to be cured of rheumatism at the Hot Springs of Rotomahana. By this time the tide-signals were in our favour.

Auckland has over 20,000 inhabitants, and occupies the best site of any town in New Zealand. Its principal street is one "e in length and merges into the long wharf that stretches



from the shore. The Waitemata harbour is large and well land-locked. The country round about is volcanic, and saved from being commonplace by its emerald grass, and its strange pink soil. The streets are paved with lava stone, and the sidewalks strewn with scoria, or volcanic ash, which crunches beneath your feet. Forming part of the background to Auckland is Mount Eden, a flat-topped, verdant volcanic hill, its slopes ridged with terraces, the remains of Maori earthworks thrown up during old tribal wars. Cartloads of Maori bones, the remnants of Maori feasts, have been dug out of Mount Eden—in reference to which a man gravely assured us that these were being secretly converted into flour, and that we in turn would unwittingly be committing cannibalism under a milder form!

As usual we formed several Scottish acquaintanceships. A man who had done well in the world once grumbled sorely to my father: "Ech," said he, "this colony is no fit for a Scotsman to live in." "How's that?" my father inquired. "Weel, the fac' is," said the pessimist, "I canna get my parritch made to please me!" We received a letter from old Mrs. Nicol, mother of the late Robert Nicol, the celebrated Perthshire poet. She is living 100 miles from Auckland, at Alexandra, in the Waikato district, surrounded by her great-grandchildren—seemingly a hale and hearty old lady, though she must be far advanced in years. We spent an evening at the house of an old Scotch lady, a widow, who had arrived at Auckland in 1841. As she truly said, "What times I've seen!" Her husband and she were tempted to emigrate by the representations of the Great Manukau Company, reaching Auckland only to find that the Company had broken up. The old lady and her husband, who were to have £300 worth of land, only received £80 in script. The ship, too, had been eleven months on the voyage, leaving in November 1840, and arriving October 1841!

In Auckland we saw crowds of Maories, most of them dressed in European clothes. The women were in many cases exceedingly showy. A few had on native shawls and mats, with their hair sticking out from the head like a large-sized

trip. I remember being a handsome little boy with golden, flowing, wavy, ringlet-like curls and long hair sweeping far down over *Grand Sœur*. On the opposite pavement squatted another little woman—sprawled up in a sorry position and wearing the marks of poverty—but in a state of cleanliness the *Saint Louis* hurriedly crossed the street and entered the *Flancon* smoking rooms with her and smoking there in the most comfortable manner. She then went to a restaurant called *L'Éclair* gave me what her address and begged that you see to it.

On the first day of the day we were to make our first appearance in *Madame's* costume of full ball and owing to inadequate sewers the water flooded the ball. Only after some four hours work was the building being drained and it was not through, they said, our first process. The hotel where we put up was one of the houses in most comfortable. The presiding gen. of the place was an old fossil water—his shoulders high two or three solemnly gait who were constantly eating bread and jam surreptitiously behind garden and bedroom doors and who always answered the call of the old-world waiter with the sound of a well-worn mouth. The housekeeper was a young damsel whose face in the morning was colourless and steady her hair hung down to her waist.

While she wore a common print dress and a very dirty apron. Later, she appeared in black with her hair pulled up and curled. In the afternoon a ribbon would creep round the *delicate* and colour settle on the cheeks; while at night, aha! she came forth in blue silk dress and dark velvet jacket, with lace collar, lace cuffs, a high convolution on the top of her head, and an immense pink bow over her ear. By gradual transformations she thus reached the butterfly climax, but each morning at breakfast she would sink once more into the grub state. We dined in a room where there was a kind of lift, made out of an old flap. The fireplace had folding doors, like a cupboard, and, when these were opened, you would behold your roast coming up on a tray, which was no sooner removed than, perhaps, a dish of vegetables would fly up the chimney to a





corresponding fireplace on the floor above. On Sunday a gale blew from morning till night. During the night I awoke and found that through leakage of rain and strength of wind, the paper on the ceiling and walls had come down and reduced the size of my bedroom to one-half. I was like the man tortured by the Inquisition in a gradually-narrowing cell, and felt as if doomed to be smothered in my sleep.

One night an open-air mass meeting was held to protest against an impending education-tax—the gathering being called together at the instigation of persons destitute of olive-branches, and unfavourable, as they said, to paying for the schooling of their neighbours' children. To support this trenchant argument, a noisy mob of two hundred men and boys clustered round the wooden framework of the fire-bell tower in Queen Street. Each speaker in turn stood on a crossbeam of the structure, and with one arm round a post, hung out over the rabble and poured forth his eloquence. The orators were pure Cockneys, and the first we heard on our arrival was dropping his H's like rain "upon the place beneath," exclaiming: "Look 'ere, now, if you submit to this poll-tax you'll submit to anythink! Is the rose, thistle, and shamrock to be trailed in the gutter? No, no, it ain't—and I ain't agoing to pay no tax. They'll take the limbs from my body fust! What have we come to this country for, eh? To make a livin'—and they won't let us—they want to keep us down. What did we leave Hingland for, eh?" "Sit down—get out of it!" shrieked the crowd, and the speaker drew in his head to make way for his successor. He did not appear for some time, at which the crowd grew so impatient that a boy, stationed on a high vantage-post, had to call out, by way of explanation—"Don't be in a hurry; he's a short man, and they're hysting him up!" The orator, a man of small stature, aided from below by friendly shoulders, scrambled up the trellis-work of the pillar, and breathlessly began his address—"Gentlemen, you're not intending to pay this, are you? I'll also, with my friend here, be torn limb from limb before I pay it. Britons, Britons—

I say Britons—never shall be slaves. No, the flag won't be pulled in the dust; I'll die fust! No, we ain't agoing to stand it. I don't go in for *feez-eekal* force, but in this case I—I'd—I'd resist this poll-tax. If you pay this you'll pay hanythink!" After the brilliant peroration the crowd howled in fearful chorus, one youth in particular making night hideous with his yells—hearing which, some one darted from behind, and, pointing with his finger, eagerly ejaculated, "Never mind that there boy—he ain't been heddicated!" This was the acknowledged hit of the evening, and was received with cheers and laughter—the chairman, in an ecstasy of anxiety to do something, rapping with his cane and shrilly crying out, "Order, gintlemin, order!" Other persons spoke amidst the tumult, a certain man urging loudly "a canvas from 'ouse to 'ouse," but after the great joke of the evening no one was heard with patience. The crowd soon after formed into procession, and advanced towards the Provincial Government Buildings, intending to awe the members. But when they arrived, lo! all was dark, and no one visible, to the intense disgust of the mob, who, after giving their opinion that the people's representatives had hidden themselves under the seats or gone frightened behind the doors, dispersed to their several homes.



CHAPTER X.

*En route* for the Hot Lakes—Waikato Valley—Rangariri Battlefield—A Military Outpost—A Weary Horse-Ride—A Night in a Maori House.

AT Auckland there took place a temporary disintegration of our forces. In the first place my mother sailed for the old country, to pay a visit to the younger members of the family, who had been left at home, and from whom we had now been absent some three years. My mother here drops out of the New Zealand narrative, but she rejoined us on our return to Melbourne. From Auckland my father and sisters went by sea to Napier, a sail of over 500 miles round the east coast in a little steamer. My cousin, my two brothers, and I travelled overland to the same place, passing through the volcanic country of the North Island, with its wonderful hot lakes, geysers, and terraces.

The first section of our trip lay through the Waikato district. I know of nothing so uncomfortable as rising in the early morning to go upon a coach-ride—to leave a snug, warm bed, to see the gas-lamps shining dimly into your room, to hear the far-off crowing of a cock, and to creep into the gloomy, cold, echoing streets. The four-horse coach toiled up Queen Street, and reaching the outskirts of the city sped along a level road. Daylight soon began to appear; the hills were suffused with red; while the sky was covered with graduated colours, blocks of white-peaked clouds standing on the glowing horizon like icebergs on a pink sea. The ground was littered with lava stones like petrified sponges. There was no grass to be seen; nothing but brown and dirty-green fern-covered country. In this part of New Zealand there is no grass; bushes and ferns have full occupation of the soil. The landscape would be common in the extreme, when a lofty grass-tree would step in with its graceful outline against the sky, as if saying, "There!" and the whole country would be transformed at once into a foreign-looking scene.

At Drury we had breakfast and a change of driver, the reins being now handled by a jolly, red-faced Nova Scotian. At Point Russel, or Mercer, we first beheld the Waikato, a noble-looking river, familiar as a household word by its association with the Maori wars. Shortly afterwards, while going up a steep muddy hill, there was a sudden stoppage, a hard kick, a loud crack, and away went the three leaders, dragging the reins out of the driver's hands. "After them, head them!" cried he to the passengers, who had all scrambled out at the first sound of danger, and off we plunged along the hill-side, up to the shoulders in damp, tangled fern—every now and then one of us tripping up and melting out of sight, like a snowflake amongst the billowy expanse of bracken. Latterly the horses were caught in a gully. The harness was repaired after considerable delay, and about an hour afterwards we approached Rangariri, the scene of one of the fiercest conflicts in the New Zealand war. We passed the rifle-pits and trenches of the Maories, but one is not impressed with the idea of a battle-field. On seeing the small earthen grass-grown fortifications, we thought the fight must have been utterly child's-play. But now there is a road where there was then no road, no bush where there was bush, so that it is difficult to realise the full details. The Maories had possession of two pahs, from which they were not dislodged till two hundred men fell, both sides inclusive. The natives were shelled and fired at from the gunboats on the river, and were assailed also from a strong redoubt, into the remains of which earthwork we climbed to eat our lunch.

During the afternoon we passed a group of armed navvies—men who are supposed to join themselves to the constabulary in case of an outbreak, and who were engaged making the Waikato railway, which will do as much to settle the native difficulties as troops of soldiers. There was also to be seen an encampment of the native contingent—Maories who are enrolled as militia at six shillings a day, and who look smart in their foraging caps and steel-buttoned jackets. This employment of the natives is a sop to the great Maori Cerberus.



Flour and blankets are also liberally distributed. The Government, as the saying is, "would rather feed the Maories than fight them." Night set in, and we rumbled alongside the Waikato. In front, the manuka bushes, like grey wraiths lit up by the strong lamps of the coach, glided past into the gloom. With a terrible amount of jolting and splashing we reached Ngaruawahia, which word is the shibboleth of all who aspire to be Maori scholars.

Next morning, after the usual bush-breakfast of sharp-edged coffee, mealy bread, and thick steak underlying a deposit of onions, we drove to Cambridge, 100 miles south-east of Auckland, and the furthest outpost of civilisation in the Waikato Valley. Two hotels, several new stores, and a few houses compose the township. A body of constabulary, a semi-military force, is here. Their redoubt, visible on the top of a hill ten miles distant, possessed a good deal of interest, standing as it does on the confines of the King country, the region of the disaffected Maories. The little village was lively with troopers, constabulary, settlers, and tattooed Maories. At dinner I sat opposite an old grisly native, who had weighty greenstone pendants dragging down the lobes of his ears, while a drunken fellow, feebly dropping his hands each side his chair, leaned his head on my left shoulder. On the other side of the table were two surveyors, the local doctor, and an Irish guide to the Hot Lakes, who spoke the Maori tongue with a rich brogue. We told him our route, and asked if he knew our first stage, Te Whetu. "Tay Fettoo!" he exclaimed—"troth an' I do know that place, for during the war I was captured there as a spy by the Moreys, and the brown daymons tied me to a tree to burn me; but the flax broke that they fastened me with, so I got away, gintlemin, an' that's how I rimimber Tay Fettoo!" We thought this an excellent item for Mayne Reid, and quite equal to Letts's Diary as a means of recollection!

At night, in the hotel parlour, cards were played under the supervision of an inebriated old Maori, who seemed expert at euchre. At the other end of the room a young gentleman played on the piano the "Shadow Dance" from *Dinorah*,

Then a major, with a deep bass voice, sang "I'll always think of thee!" at which the Maories cried "Kapai" (good), additional applause being kept up by a lot of fellows over tumblers of punch. They were all making merry when a "swell" with a comically paralytic eye-glass twitch in his left cheek, ejaculated: "Dooeit you know, give us, you at the piano—ah—a song with chorus, perhaps—say the Miserere from *Trovatore*, and I'll join in!" "Yes!" remarked a toper, raising his head sleepily off the table, "give us the Miseries! darn it, but I like a chorus! give us something with a chorus!" The pianist immediately broke forth into a comic song, which was refrained loudly by everybody, the Maories swinging their arms quite enthusiastically over it. During the height of this, the cook, a red-whiskered Highlander, put his head into the room and beckoned us out to a large armful of sandwiches, to see if these would be sufficient for our journey on the morrow. We had previously made arrangements with a Captain Owen to guide us to the Hot Lakes, and have the horses ready to start early in the morning.

Behold us, at nine o'clock in the morning, leaving Cambridge, in the most laughable of processions. First, the guide, Captain Owen, cantering ahead and dragging after him the grey pack-horse, which wobbled along under its load of tent-canvas, rugs, provisions, bags of oats, and tin-cans, with all the gait and appearance of a dromedary. Then we four adventurers in Indian file, each in his roughest clothes, mounted on the shaggiest of small "scrubbers," with a pannikin and a coil of rope dangling at his saddle-bow. Away we went into the wildness of the unsettled country. No vehicle of any kind had ever disturbed the primitiveness of nature with a wheel-mark. What cared we that the scenery was a dull extent of grassy undulations! The glassy blue sky shone overhead, and our hearts were elated with the excitement and novelty of the situation. On we went, now startling occasional pheasants, now breaking the silence with a song, to the accompaniment of rattling cans and pannikins. Presently we were accosted by a hospitable Maori, who urgently invited us



*Sliding Down a Precipice.*

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to rest at his hut, and who seemed disappointed when we had to refuse, owing to the length of our journey. Shortly after there overtook us two other Maories on horseback—one of them crouching in the saddle, with hollow eyes and hectic flush—very ill, as he told our guide, and on the way to his native village to die. The captain said that Maories have not much pluck when in bad health, and soon surrender themselves to an ailment.

There was now a change to wild, broken country. A grand limestone gorge lay beneath us, the precipitous side of which had to be descended by dragging our horses after us. We scrambled down, each followed by rattling stones dislodged by his horse's hoofs, and every now and then literally embraced from behind by the struggling animal's fore-legs. To see the pack-horse sliding down alone, sitting on its hunkers, with its front hoofs planted between its outspread hind-legs, its neck stretching out, the load of bundles swaying and jerking the poor animal from side to side of the descent, might have drawn laughter from a stone. We reached the bottom of an immense cleft, an amphitheatre of white cliffs circling round us, and our eyes overpowered by the glare of the reflected sunlight on the heights above. Winding for some distance along this wall-enclosed, high-ridged basin, we climbed out of it by another abrupt path. The country had at one time been a clear plateau, but by some convulsion of nature had been rent into long fissures.

About half-past one, after thirty miles, we heard the pleasant music of a creek, and it was unanimously agreed to camp. We poured out the oats into our greatcoats, which we had spread as a table-cloth for our hungry chargers. Captain Owen tore up a few handfuls of dry fern, and soon had a good fire burning. Unloading the pack-horse we found that the sugar had mixed itself with the tea, and this put us in a great quandary till we solved the difficulty, or rather dissolved it, by putting the unlucky mixture in one mass into the can! Betimes we reluctantly resumed the journey. Every muscle in our bodies was stiff, and the hard jog-trot of our jaded horses was far from a

joke. But twenty miles more had to be overcome. The Waikato, now a small stream, flowed on our right, every mile or so a little foaming fall. The landscape had quite a military look, what with the broken embattled heights of the table-land, with lower down a mound here, a parapet there, and the river running like a moat at the base of the high natural ramparts. No sign of man or beast, not even the flight of a bird across the blue sky, broke the weary solitudes. As the sun set, lengthening out our shadows up the rising hill-slopes before us, and casting the quaint shadows of peaks, crags, and fragments of rock, we thought ourselves on as lonely a part of the earth's surface as could well be conceived.

Fields of dirty grey manuka scrub, averaging five feet in height, stretched before us. As the horses rushed through this, our feet caught in the tough branches of the manuka, and our knees were violently wrenched. When night set in we laid the bridle on the horses' necks, letting the animals scent out the track as best they could. The darkness was so intense that on the lower ground you could not see the hand before your face. We began to despair of getting shelter that night. The poor horses tore along now without flogging, but their very liveliness seemed to have a touch of desperation about it. At times the party straggled out into a long line, so at intervals a halt was made till the whole of us had closed up. The misty outlines of our guide's white mackintosh would swell up before us like the figure of a magic-lantern, and we would know the captain had luckily paused on the edge of some dangerous declivity. Suddenly, as if to signalise our arrival at Maori-Land, there shot across the sky a brilliant meteor—a dullish red streak, that budded out into a clear blue flame. Weary and worn we arrived at the little hamlet of "Te Whetu," which name in English means "A Star."

Before us was a large wooden building with an immense expanse of roof, and a fenced-in porch. We saw afterwards that it had a very picturesque exterior—a broad front, with a verandah overhung with heavy eaves, which latter sloped down to within three feet of the ground, and were elaborately carved





with all manner of ornament—while, before the door, at a short distance, rose a long slanting pole surmounted by a nob like a flag-staff. The building was formerly a runanga, or meeting-house of the Hau-Hau rebels, but since the war it had been occupied by chance parties of Maories. A gleam of firelight came through the chinks of the door. Captain Owen, dismounting, commenced to parley with those inside, shouting “Pakeha!” (white man or stranger), and a harsh female voice replied, “Tena koe!” or “Salutations to you.” Then after long silence, undisturbed save by the moaning of the wind amongst the trees, the door, a heavy sliding panel of wood, was pushed to one side, and an interior disclosed, no whit less striking than that which greeted the eyes of Nicol Jarvie at the Clachan of Aberfoyle.

We stepped over the low fence. A fire was burning on the earthen floor, and dimly lighting the farther recesses of the spacious building, the roof of which was supported by a stout centre-pole. A middle-aged Maori woman was renewing the fire. In a far corner, amid a smoky twilight, crouched a tattered, wrinkled old woman, over one hundred years of age, as we were ungallantly told. She was huddled up like a bundle of rags, and muttered incoherently to herself. Two little boys, each clad in a blanket, went out and saw to the horses. They came back with chattering teeth, and were highly delighted with the present of some peppermint lozenges. A visitor now looked in to see us—a cheery-faced Maori woman, the mother of the two boys. These three were the only residents of the adjoining hamlet, which consisted of half-a-dozen rickety huts. The woman came in with a large tin dish of swimming potatoes, and after the manner of neighbour women, proceeded to help her friend in her stress of household work—a “touch of nature” that was very refreshing, and made us almost forget we were in presence of two uncivilised matrons of New Zealand. We had the potatoes to our tea. During our rough-and-ready meal the two women sat tittering, nudging, and comparing notes on the pakehas, to the great amusement of our guide, who burst into a hearty laugh, in which he was

soon joined by the two women and the boys. It was a strange spectacle that of four sober-faced young men calmly sipping tea amid this loud merriment and mysteriously jocular remarks. The fire roused the old beidame in the corner, who broke out into a rambling speech, principally, as the captain informed us, of events that happened long ago.

Presently the visitor, along with her two boys, said good-night, and our hostess stretched herself out on one side of the fire. We took up quarters on the other side, lying on the thin flax matting, and resting our heads between the flaps of our saddles. Though the hovel was filled with pungent smoke, and the old wife talked incessantly, we soon fell asleep. We awoke several times during the night, at one time finding the fire almost out, and the woman leaning upon her elbow, with her face down amongst the ashes, blowing on the feeble embers—the intermittent glow lighting up her harsh features like a red mask against the darkness, and casting her shadow over the dim high roof.

About four in the morning we awoke, partially refreshed, our heads aching from our hard pillows. The aged woman was still in the corner, raking up long-buried associations, while our hostess was busy preparing another meal of potatoes, assisted by the other woman and the boys, who had again paid us a visit. While we were at breakfast, one of the women engaged herself in making a flax-mat, as civilised ladies spend the passing hour in embroidery—the green flax being cut and its fibre scraped with a half-shell, and the strips dexterously plaited. Then we saddled up for our next stage of thirty-five miles. We took farewell of the two women who had been so kind to us—also of the grim old woman in the corner, who took no notice of us whatever, but mumbled more historical remarks—also of the two boys, who smiled and waved their hands as we rode off.

The morning was fresh, the sky still an unflecked blue. After leaving the big picturesque rununga, round which a dozen or so of black hogs were feeding, there was very little life to be seen—nothing but nature in the raw. One could imagine himself in some other planet, so strange was the landscape. For



*The Horo Horo Gorge.*

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instance, after descending a long rocky staircase, so narrow that each had to dismount to allow his horse room, the rider's legs being just that too much for the width of the passage, we landed in a plain encompassed by eccentric-looking hills—some square-topped, some with two or three peaks, some cone-shaped—while from the centre of the level rose, without any gradual slope, a perfect pyramid of a hill, its sides as regular as if they had been built of masonry and then turfed over. The contrast between this triangular hill and the mathematically-exact square ridges was very queer. We called the place "Euclid Valley." As usual, one had to get back to the tableland by a very steep climb. An hour later we descended into the Horo Horo Gorge—a wild valley, mounted by reddish walls or battlements; and in the back-ground the wonderful Horo Horo, a shaggy, hirsute table-mountain clothed with timber. We camped under the shadow of its wooded heights, and were presently joined by a Maori, who took lunch with us at the side of the creek. Resuming our journey, the Maori showed his horsemanship by galloping, and at the same time skilfully plaiting a flax thong for his whip—the feat being all the more wonderful as his horse was bare-backed. Our pack horse anon broke loose and made a bolt over the country, pursued by the guide, who had a steeple-chase of some miles before he brought the beast back. In the dusk of evening we neared Ohinemutu—saw Lake Rotorua, on which the village is situated, reflecting the last rays of daylight, and the country round dotted with little balloons of steam. Then, after a ride in the darkness through dense manuka scrub, with sulphurous smells and bubbling sounds of boiling mud-holes that lurked on either hand, we came to a slight rise, and saw dimly beneath us the huts of Ohinemutu.