ADVANCE AUSTRALASIA

FRANK T. BULLEN

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THE CRUISE OF THE *CACHALOT*
IDYLLS OF THE SEA
THE LOG OF A SEA WAIF
THE MEN OF THE MERCHANT SERVICE
WITH CHRIST AT SEA
A SACK OF SHAKINGS
A WHALEMAN'S WIFE
DEEP SEA PLUNDERINGS
THE APOSTLES OF THE SOUTH-EAST
SEA WRACK
SEA PURITANS
A SON OF THE SEA
CREATURES OF THE SEA
BACK TO SUNNY SEAS
SEA SPRAY
FRANK BROWN, SEA APPRENTICE
OUR HERITAGE, THE SEA

ADVANCE AUSTRALASIA

A DAY-TO-DAY RECORD OF A RECENT VISIT TO AUSTRALASIA

BY

FRANK T. BULLEN, F.R.G.S.

AUTHOR OF "THE CRUISE OF THE 'CACHALOT'," "WITH CHRIST AT SEA," ETC.

SECOND EDITION

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

LONDON MCMVII

PREFACE

UPON revising the last sheet of this small book for press I could not help feeling that some little explanation was needed of its appearance at all. For assuredly, when I accepted the commission of the Editor of the London *Standard* to write for him a series of articles giving my impressions of Australasia during my forthcoming lecturing tour, I had no idea or intention of subsequently publishing those articles in this form. The onerous nature of my lecture engagements and the rapidity of my passing from place to place precluded any idea of giving such careful attention to form, sequence, and detail that I believe a book demands.

But to my surprise and gratification, while the articles were appearing, always in a more or less abbreviated form according to the exigencies of space, the Editor wrote and informed me that there was a strong demand

that the articles should be published in book form. I demurred on several grounds, but principally because they were the slightest journalistic impressions, that they necessarily contained many repetitions as the same features struck me obtaining in various places, &c. These objections, and others which I would rather not quote, were overruled, however, and so the book is here. And I send it out without any misgivings, because even if the critics do feel it their duty to go for me, they have in all my seventeen previous books been so uniformly kind, fair, and generous that a reversal of the treatment may perhaps have a bracing effect, though, like the nigger, "I dreads de process."

F. T. BULLEN.

MELBOURN, CAMBRIDGESHIRE.
1907.

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I

THEN AND NOW!

THIRTY-FOUR years ago, in a fine American ship chartered by Messrs. Anderson Anderson & Co., I paid my first visit to Australia, and the only one I ever made thither direct from the United Kingdom. Those were the palmy days of sailing ships to the Australasian Colonies, and a splendid fleet of regular liners, whose names were household words, made wonderful passages for equally wonderful freights with full cargoes each way for the great firms of Green, Wigram, Devitt & Moore, George Thompson, Anderson Anderson, and many others of less note, but of quite equal stability and repute. Passengers were carried, of course, in great numbers, and were, generally speaking, fairly comfortable, especially in the first class, or cuddy, although, of course, many of the necessities of ocean travel to-day were

then its luxuries. It often happened, though, that through pressure of cargo or passengers, outside ships—that is, not owned by the regular lines—were chartered for a voyage, and passengers who had booked with a great firm upon the reputation of their ships for comfort and attention to the needs of the traveller, were sometimes badly disappointed. It was certainly so in the ship in which I paid my first visit. She was a splendid Boston-built vessel, but with very scanty accommodation for passengers. The captain was a very old Yankee, really past his work; but in one thing he was full of vigour, and that was in his hatred of and contempt for anything or anybody British; and he resented bitterly carrying British passengers in his saloon at all, telling them, as I well remember, upon an occasion when they approached him with a complaint, "I wish to have nothing to say to you. If I had been consulted, I would have paid big money rather than have carried you; but since you are here, make the best of it, and don't bring any complaints to me, for I won't hear you."

So, of course, they were none too comfortable, especially as they had to wait upon themselves entirely, and bribe the cook to prepare their food, which, as he was a perfect fraud of a cook—a most unusual thing in American ships

—did not help them very much. And unfortunately, however smart the old skipper may have been in his prime—and I cannot imagine a Yankee skipper not being smart—he was now, as I have said, quite past his work, and consequently we made a very long passage for so fine a ship. We commenced badly. Although the weather was beautifully fine, we took a Channel pilot—an almost unheard-of thing for an outward-bounder to do—and when we got well down off Plymouth, the captain forbade him to stand in for the English shore so that he might get a chance to land. So we carried him, fretting terribly and exhausting his vocabulary of abuse, half-way across the Bay of Biscay, where, meeting a homeward-bound steamer, the captain condescended to signal, heave-to and release the unlawful prisoner. His farewell was copious, involved, and highly decorated with flowers of sea-speech, at which I did not wonder.

The weather all the way out was exceedingly favourable, but the time taken to Melbourne was 137 days, the average passage for such ships as she was being about 95. The only people who really enjoyed the passage, and, I believe, could have wished it longer, were the fellows forward who commenced broaching the valuable general cargo before the ship was

out of the Channel, and lived always like the proverbial fighting-cocks, washing down their huge meals of various preserved foods, biscuits, &c., with copious draughts of all kinds of liquor from beer to champagne. The fact that to reach the spoil they often had to crawl amongst, over, and beneath a consignment of gun- and blasting-powder, amounting to over one hundred tons, and that with naked candles, never seemed to trouble them. Perhaps it is hardly necessary to add that they all deserted immediately upon the ship's arrival at Sandridge Pier, and, not to seem peculiar, I followed their example a day or two later.

The conditions obtaining on my present passage out present, I suppose, as complete a contrast to that long-ago journey as are possible at sea. The great steamship *Omrah* of the Orient Royal Mail Line, with a crew and passenger list of over seven hundred, gliding away from her berth in Tilbury Docks in majestic silence, and an utter absence of fuss or bother, the schedule of times of arrival and departure from each port called at on her twelve-thousand-mile journey calculated to the nearest hour, the minute attention paid to the comfort of each individual passenger of whatever class, and the extreme order and regularity of the working of the huge intricate machine—all these are commonplaces

of the regular ocean traveller to-day, who indeed has grown so to consider them as a part of the scheme of things that he or she, especially she, is prone to regard any irregularity, however caused, as an infringement of chartered right, and without any consideration of circumstances to resent it accordingly. So easily do we grow accustomed to what, only two or three decades ago, was looked upon as a series of miracles.

To me, however, this passage was of the highest interest, because in all my meanderings on many seas for so long a period I had never yet sampled the wonders of the Suez Canal, very inelegantly dubbed the "Ditch" by veteran Eastern travellers. I had heard fearsome stories of the iniquities of Port Said, of the discomfort of passing through that furrow in the desert of eighty-seven miles, and especially of the terrible heat of the Red Sea. Consequently I took little heed of Gib, of Marseilles, or of Naples, except to note that we left the latter port about midnight, the cone of Vesuvius glowing fiercely against a background of lowering sky, and wonder whether a similar fate to that of St. Pierre (which I visited in 1904) was imminent for the crowded villages of Torre del Greco, Torre dell' Annunziata and Ottignano. For the mountain looked furiously angry, and it has

ever been noted that this warning is given before a grand exhibition of Plutonic power. Stromboli, which we passed close to, lay basking in the glorious sunshine, an innocent-looking halo of light vapour crowning his august head, and evincing not the slightest sympathy with his fiery brother in the north. Etna, which was passed later, looked, if possible, even more peaceful, in that his vast flanks were robed in purest white almost to the summit, which, like Stromboli, had just a light wreath of vapour hovering about its lofty crest.

And then away under the same pleasant, placid conditions to the land of Egypt, not a cloud in the sky, hardly a ripple on the sea, and the climatic conditions as regards temperature nearly perfect. We arrived at Port Said in the early dawn, the weather being quite cool enough for an overcoat, picked up our pilot and steamed sedately in to the buoys off the town amidst an extraordinary hush, only broken presently by the hubbub of the coaling Arabs, who worked with an almost fiendish energy to get the six huge lighters of good Welsh fuel into the body of the ship through the side ports, thus producing the minimum of dust. To any one accustomed to disciplined work, the ways of these Arabs are mysterious beyond comprehension. Everybody seems to

be in command, and to issue orders in a high yell of which nobody appears to take the slightest notice. The most insignificant, ragged varlet, who has apparently been dozing upon the coal, will suddenly start up and rend the atmosphere with his raucous cries, taking command of the whole flotilla. But nothing happens, except that by and by all the barges are in position and the coal passing begins, every man, as he empties his basket into the shoot and descends the plank, making some mystic passes in front of his face with his left hand, and intoning a few weird words of Arabic, probably an invocation or thanksgiving to Allah.

The police arrangements at Port Said appear to be well-nigh perfect. The boatmen do not pester for hire, because the fare is fixed at threepence per passenger during the daytime and sixpence at night, and it is paid into an office on shore—a penny of *backsheesh* making the boatman quite happy. On shore it is warm undoubtedly, but other discomforts there are none. No almost savage importunities to buy or go here or there; and as for vice, the unparalleled viciousness for which Port Said has long been a byword—well, if it exists, which I very much doubt, at least to any great extent, it must be deliberately sought for, and that at considerable expense. Cer-

tainly as far as I have been able to ascertain, viciousness is not nearly as flagrant in Port Said *now* as it is in any large city at home or on the Continent. No doubt it was, as a cosmopolitan acquaintance of mine put it, "a gay place once, but these infernal hypocrites of English have made it as tame as a London suburb on a Sunday afternoon." At midday we cast off from the buoys and entered the Canal, having, during our stay, shipped an extension of the rudder and a huge searchlight over the bows, the former because the slow rate of speed admissible in the Canal (about four knots) does not allow the vessel to answer her ordinary rudder quick enough, and the second to permit of the navigation of the Canal by night. At first the scene was quite impressive, especially the amazing contrast between the gigantic dredgers, which lie by the banks and scoop up the bed of the Canal, pouring it out through a huge tube on to the desert beyond, and the nuggars, or Nile boats, of a type dating back two thousand years or more, with their upward-flaring bows and their huge lateen sails. The wind was right aft, so that we were in an almost perfect calm; yet it was cool in the shade, and only over the desert, where an occasional mirage showed itself, did it appear to be hot. As evening came on, the desert scenes

aroused strange memories, the unkempt encampments with their groups of couchant camels, the solitary figures engaged in prayer with their faces Mecca-wards, and then a sudden blaze of colour, a golden glory in the West, and the vivid day was done.

As in all such situations, night succeeds day with almost startling suddenness, but surely never did sweeter dark succeed glaring sunshine than now. There was no moon, and in the clear, deep violet of the heavens, from zenith to horizon, the stars glowed incandescently. The air was most invigoratingly cool—in fact, to the incautious ones coming up from the heated saloon after dinner in light evening dress, it was fraught with considerable danger. A solemn hush pervaded space—a silence which only seemed more profound for the gentle s-s-s-h of the returning water to the banks as we glided past—and the sense, hardly due to hearing, of the slow throb of the giant propellers below. Ahead the steep banks glowed white as snow from the touch of the 30,000 candle-power electric light at the bows; astern, a vast, dazzling eye showed where another ship was silently stealing along after us. Even the usual gay chat of passengers exchanging reminiscences was hushed as if by the mental burden of the countless centuries of history round

about them. For slowly we were stealing through the world-old desert, almost every grain of whose sands could tell, if vocal, wondrous tales of immemorial civilisations; and it needed no great stretch of imagination to people those solemn breadths with legions of ghostly watchers, whose sphinx-like faces expressed neither anger nor surprise, envy nor contempt, but only deep-browed contemplation of the splendid insolence of the modern engineer who had thus invaded their secret solitudes. And I could not help projecting my mind forward a few thousands of years, passing as swiftly as the space between us and the Ancient Egypt, and wondering whether the ephemera of that day would not class us as contemporary with Sesostris or Assur-banipal, even as we are apt to lose our historical perspective, and to look upon all the early civilisations as practically coeval.

We emerged from the Canal into the Gulf of Suez on one of the most glorious mornings conceivable, a fresh breeze ruffling the dark blue of the Gulf into a myriad sparkling wavelets, the air sweet, cool, and heady as new wine, while the distant mountains lay enfolded in sombre purple. But all this beauty was lost upon our commander, who was loud in his objurgations against the abominable neglect,

as he put it, of the authorities in allowing this roadstead at one end of the world's greatest highway to remain almost unnavigable for want of dredging, pointing, as he did so, to where our propellers were churning up the mud, and at the ship, which, by reason of her keel *smelling* the ground, was almost refusing to answer her helm. However, his annoyances were soon at an end, and in the splendid freshness of the new day, we sped joyously down the Gulf towards the much-dreaded and deeply historical Red Sea.

II

THE YOUNG GIANT

OF course the time of year—the middle of March—must be taken into account, otherwise I should ask, in utmost bewilderment, why all this wholesale vituperation of the Red Sea? I am quite prepared to believe also that we have been especially favoured this voyage, as we have never, since leaving London, had an unpleasant day at sea. But when all has been said I am perfectly certain that many other places of my acquaintance, notably the Spanish Main and the East African littoral, are quite equal, if not superior, to the Red Sea in its alleged bad eminence of torridity. No; it was not until we began to near Colombo that the heat waxed at all oppressive, and even then only so to people who persisted in worrying about it. In Colombo it was hot and coal-dusty, and generally unpleasant to the traveller eager

for sight-seeing, yet fresh from the coolth of home and even the Suez Canal. But it was over soon, and the latter half of the day was also tempered by a few tremendous tropical rain-showers, heralded by a thunder-clap out of a blue sky which sounded like the crack of doom and brought seriousness to many faces. I thought it was the report of a big gun fired close at hand, and looked vainly about for the smoke-wreath.

Away again at midnight, passing through the narrow way between the ends of the two magnificent breakwaters at nearly full speed, so confidently are these modern twin-screw ships handled, and the long stretch across the Indian Ocean to Fremantle lay before us, the last lap of the ocean passage. So we settled down to quiet enjoyment again, marred only by the digestion of the news heard about the outbreak of Vesuvius, fully justifying my fears when I saw his angry glow on the night of leaving Naples. Swiftly we passed into the realm of the faithful South-east Trades, meeting the world-old swell from the southward and listening half-pityingly, half-contemptuously to the querulous complaints of passengers at the ship's motion, after their unstinted praises of her steadiness before. I reserved most of my pity, however, for the skipper,

who had to meet these unwarranted aspersions upon the character of his fine ship, with explanations which his interlocutors did not understand, or, if they did, disbelieved, paid no heed to it, and went on grumbling.

At last, punctual to the appointed hour, in the perfect dawn of a pearly morning, we steamed into the snug harbour of Fremantle, and after a brief delay for turning the ship so that she should be ready to steam right out without delay, we gently glided alongside the wharf, arrived in Australia. It was my first visit to Western Australia, and from what I had heard of the Swan River I had pictured something very different indeed from a waterway, which, though narrow, was deep and secure as a dock, and lined with wharves alongside of which such a ship as the *Omrah*, drawing 26 feet of water and measuring nearly 9,000 tons, could be berthed with the greatest ease. As the light strengthened and it became possible to make out details, I was charmed at the finished look of everything, the absence of that squalor which, in American ports especially, seems inseparable from shipping quarters. There was nothing unkempt or untidy, and as the sun rose and the clear atmosphere shed its searching light upon every corner, this was most noticeable. One

other point, too, about this most modern port was the use of the motor for harbour work, the lighters even being brought alongside by a motor-tug, while two or three others were gliding about the river with that uncanny air of sentience and absence of fuss which is extremely characteristic of the motor-boat, if not of the motor-car.

Having met the inevitable interviewer who did *not* ask me how I liked Australia, but who did put me to considerable inconvenience by requesting (in about five minutes) my views on the result of the recent elections in Great Britain, and the consequences to the Empire of the sudden rise of the Labour Party, I entered the train at half-past eight and gat me unto Perth, about an hour's ride. We passed through many thriving-looking townships, glaringly new to all appearance in that all-revealing sun-glare, but still, to my delight, free from squalor. I saw no tumble-down hovels, neglected fences, weed-overgrown forecourts, unpainted houses with "don't care" posted in unmistakable characters all over them, such as may be seen in the suburban districts of Chicago, for instance, to say nothing of many less important American cities. And I take it that to the observant traveller there are few better criteria afforded of the character of a great city gene-

rally than the approaches to it by train, for by some strange series of coincidences a railway almost always runs through the worst part of a town or city's environs.

Therefore I was most pleasantly impressed by my journey to Perth—an impression which was deepened and confirmed upon leaving the train and entering the pretty little city itself, which I mentally compared with its ancient namesake in Bonnie Scotland. For its lovely surroundings old Perth can hardly be surpassed, but it is in itself a "dour auld toon," hard and grim, while new Perth, the capital of the young and strenuous giant, Western Australia, is bright and brisk and gay, humming with activity and yet solid and permanent-looking in its buildings, as if its citizens had faith in its capacity not merely to endure but to go on. To use an expressive if horrible Americanism, "there are no flies on" Perth. Its citizens are obviously full of go, and they have called to their aid all the most modern appliances for expediting communications either by road or rail. The electric trolley-car hums along the beautifully graded streets, alongside of which run a very forest of telegraph poles supporting a shimmering network of telegraph and telephone wires. I take off my hat metaphorically to those responsible for the roadways of Perth. To my

mind nothing more fitly stamps the character of those in charge of a city than the condition of its streets, and I bear witness that the streets of Perth put to utter shame the roadways of many far more pretentious and incomparably older towns and cities that I could name both in the Motherland and in the United States.

My stay in Perth on this occasion being limited to about two and a half hours, I could not waste time, so made haste to present my credentials to the Premier, Mr. Rason, and a leading citizen, Dr. Hackett, proprietor of the *West Australian*, and a gentleman of whom I heard nothing but praise. By both of them I was received with the greatest cordiality, but of course there was no time for any hospitality or investigation, and as I hoped to make a stay of a week or so on my return it was quite unnecessary to do more than exchange a few compliments and retire. But I confess that one thought has worried me. To judge from the newspapers which I have been devouring since they came on board this morning, the rulers of this Colony are mainly men whose time is principally devoted to the vituperation of one another and the promulgation of schemes of socialism, the difference between the ins and the outs being, as far as I can see, that between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. If, however, there

be any truth in this, how is it that the evidences of good government and prosperity are so abundant, so unmistakable on every hand? It is a conundrum the answer to which I hope to learn later on.

Back again to the ship in a great hurry, and punctually at the time appointed we steam out around Rottnest Island, and head for Cape Leeuwin, the "Horn" of Australia, where for the first time the sedate *Omrah* begins to manifest symptoms of levity, evoking plaintive protests from those passengers who, spoiled by the persistently calm and uneventful passage we have made from Britain, have grown to resent any additional movement of the ship as a breach of faith on the part of the Company or a lack of seamanship on the part of the captain. We have with us as passengers to Adelaide the members of an Interstate Commission on Shipping Freights—gentlemen who all bear the distinguishing badge of membership of a State Parliament, a gold emblem on the watch-chain entitling them to free transit throughout the Commonwealth. They form a select coterie, holding severely aloof from all meaner folk, sitting together at a table of their own, and not deigning to recognise the genial captain, whose withers are quite unwrung by the neglect. It is impossible to avoid hearing their

conversation in the smoking-room, for it is naturally of the aggressive order, one gentleman especially having a voice like a foghorn, with which he endeavours to drown any utterances of his colleagues. Yet—for the reflection will thus intrude itself—these are the men to whom, with their like, the destinies of this mighty continent are entrusted, and, judging by what I have already observed, with no small measure of success. Is it, I wonder, another proof of the dictum that man is better than his creeds, and that whatever irresponsibility may utter, responsibility will curb?

Now one thought dominates others—that I must leave this happy home of mine and launch into the vortex of shore life. Mentally I contrast this feeling with the time when I almost always hated the ship that I was in, and in any case was anxious to get ashore. But inevitably as fate the big ship breasts the mighty south-east swell, accompanied by a graceful cohort of albatrosses and mollymauks, until at daylight on Easter Monday she glides through Investigator Straits into the calm waters of St. Vincent Gulf, and punctually to the appointed minute lets go her anchor in Largs Bay off Port Adelaide.

As far as memory will serve me, there is nothing new in the appearance of the Port

from this distance since last I bade farewell to it twenty-six years ago as second mate of yonder fine sailing ship, the *Harbinger*, now under the Russian flag, which by a most strange coincidence is the first vessel to strike my eye on my return. That argues little, however, for the approach by sea to Adelaide is unimpressive to the last degree, the distant range of blue hills giving no promise of the beauties which lie between their slopes and the sandy levels of the sea-shore. And I cannot help being struck by the fact that here alone, of all the great ports of the Commonwealth, is it necessary for the mail steamer to lie out in a roadstead exposed to any weather which, indeed, might not mean any danger to herself but does often spell much misery and delay to outcoming and ingoing passengers. Not, I hasten to add, because there is no harbour for even such large ships as the *Omrah*, but because the snug berths up the Port River, as it is called, take up far too much valuable time in reaching and leaving. There should undoubtedly be an outer harbour or breakwater; and one was commenced, but the contractors failed, and it remains in that condition awaiting the time when the authorities can make up their mind to go on with it again. Fortunately the fates are kind to us to-day, the weather being beautifully fine, and we are soon

in the tender steaming for the Semaphore Pier, where a scene awaits us (it being Bank Holiday), which reminds us vividly of home. The spacious sands are studded with holiday-makers behaving after the manner of trippers at Margate or Southend, but, methought, a trifle more sedately and of course far fewer in number, while the long pier is thronged with anglers, but to my amazement there are no more signs of any fish being caught than are apparent on the piers of the before-named English watering-places.

But now comes the always unpleasant business of Customs examination—unpleasant, that is, to most people, but fortunately in my own experience invariably modified by the courtesy of the officials in every port which I have yet visited, with one isolated exception, Syracuse, Sicily. Even the much-abused Customs searchers at New York have invariably treated me as if I bore indelible signs about me of inability to attempt fraud upon a confiding Customs officer, and refused to examine my baggage at all. So that I was not at all surprised when, despite what I had been told of the drastic scrutiny to which all personal belongings entering the Commonwealth was subjected, the most cursory glance into my baggage sufficed to enfranchise me. But then I never do smuggle anything, not considering

it worth while, any more than it is worth while running the risk of detection involved in riding in a first-class carriage with a third-class ticket, to put the matter on no loftier plane. Then into the train, and away over the perfectly level country for Adelaide the beautiful. The same characteristics of neatness and apparent prosperity prevail here as on the road from Fremantle to Perth; but casting my memory back over the slight gap of twenty-six years, I am compelled to admit that I was unable to see very much development. Within a quarter of a century a dozen large cities of the size of Adelaide have been added to London, villages have grown into huge towns in this effete old land of ours, as it is contemptuously termed in America, but here in one of the fairest and richest countries under the sun the returning wanderer can note but little difference except in the erection of a few fine buildings in isolated spots. And I well remember that two of the finest of them, the Town Hall and Post Office, were in existence when I was here before.

Why is this? Has Australia deliberately chosen the motto, "Festina lente," and if so, is she in doing so wise or unwise? Far be it from me to offer an opinion upon so momentous a matter, or to say that the watchword of

"Australia for the Australians" is wrong. Fortunately I am not called upon to pass judgment, but only to record impressions, although I confess my grave doubts as to whether rapid gigantic growth of cities or of nations makes for the best of all things in the best of all possible worlds. However, here we are at the fine, spacious, and splendidly built railway terminus, opposite to which is the hotel to which I am conducted, and with a sense of having most comfortably and auspiciously begun my tour I sink into a cosy chair surrounded by friends, luxuriously content.

III

A LAND OF DELIGHT

HOTEL life, which for some people has a curious fascination, is to me a hateful necessity of travel, and few indeed are the hotels which I have sampled in my journeyings about the world where I have been able to feel even moderately comfortable, much less at home from home. The comfort of the old English inn, so fondly dwelt upon by Dickens, is a thing of the past, and the huge caravanserais of England, America, or the Continent, are places which to me are a positive nightmare. The extortion on every hand, the absolute lack of plain, homely cooked food which one can make a meal of, the almost unbearable and entirely uncomfortable magnificence on every side combine to make hotel life to me, and many others like-minded, a thing to be dreaded. Therefore I feel to-day that I am among the

favoured ones of mankind in that I have "struck" a hotel which is my ideal of what a hotel should be. The attendants are delightfully civil without a trace of servility, the food is not merely as good as any that I have ever eaten but it is plainly, carefully dressed, and not smothered with vile concoctions of sauce to disguise its natural savours (in most places this is done as a sort of compensation for the lack of savour in the fish, flesh, or fowl dealt with), there are six or seven different kinds of vegetables, beautifully fresh and homelike, and cooked as if they were worth attention, with luncheon and dinner, there is abundance of most delicious fruit, baths are free and available all day, and the inclusive rate is ten shillings per day or three guineas a week. Also there are no niggling paltry extras for attendance, even the matutinal cup of tea and newspaper at 7 a.m., and the cup of afternoon tea being supplied free. I begin to wonder first whether there was ever before a hotel like this as I sit in my spacious, airy room, and secondly how, in the name of common experience, can it pay? I feel it almost an obvious duty to my kind to mention the name of this paragon among hotels, but may not because of the inevitable misconstruction which would be put upon my doing so.

Now I promise that there shall be little or no further mention of hotels in what I have to say. The next morning I awoke and stepped out upon the wide verandah into an air that was as heady as wine and almost too chilly for a sleeping suit. A perfect day, the golden sun flooding the world with light, the purple background of hills lying in slumberous shadow, and that sweet breeze pouring in upon the awakening city from the shimmering bay, just visible in patches from this elevation. Can this be Australia? My recollections of all her coasts from Townsville to Adelaide are very vivid, but they all include baking heat, scorching winds laden with sand, never at any time such a morning as this. But I must not stay indoors; it seems a sin, unless compelled. So as soon as possible I emerge, to be astounded by every person I meet saying, "Very cold this morning, isn't it?" Cold! I gasp with amazement, for to me the climate seems as nearly perfection as climate can be on this side of Paradise. As a matter of actual fact the shade temperature is 52° at 8 a.m.

A stroll round the bright, cheerful, clean, magnificently paved streets brings me to the inevitable conclusion that such changes as have taken place in the last twenty-six years are hardly noticeable by me. The most pro-

minent edifices in the city, the Town Hall and Post Office, were then erected, but beyond that I feel certain that the city's growth has been so slow that its beauty remains absolutely unimpaired. I hope the citizens will not feel aggrieved at my saying this, especially as I fail entirely to see how the tremendously rapid growth of a London suburb, for instance, which in twenty years will add to its area of buildings and population two cities of the size of Adelaide, makes for that which we all profess most earnestly to desire—the greatest good of the greatest number. There is on this first walk of mine alone, and on observation bent, an utter absence of those great variations between blatant wealth and squalid poverty which are so painfully apparent at home and in America. And there is a generally diffused air of comfort prevailing among the people and in their dwellings that is to me most especially delightful to see. Even the ramshackle two-horse trams which bump along the road seem to say almost defiantly, "We're proud of being evidences of the absence of hustle. Our people can have the electric trolley-cars whenever they want them, but there is really not the least little bit of need for hurry in the world." And anyhow, all the roads in the city are just perfect to ride on either in buggy or motor, on a bicycle or to

walk on, so splendidly graded and beautifully kept is the asphalt of which they are composed. It is an object-lesson patent to the most casual eye of the character of the people, this wonderful care of the roads.

Of all the cities that I have ever seen Adelaide comes easily first in the perfect beauty of its situation and arrangement. Level it is certainly, yet not nearly so level as it appears from the hills, with a lavish width of roadway even in what would in other places be mean streets, and beyond all the magnificent belt of park-lands which environ it, set aside for the health and enjoyment of its citizens as long as it shall be a city by wise, far-seeing old Colonel Light, bitterly as he was reviled at the time for making such a selection of a site for the capital of the new Colony. But it is not until the visitor has been taken in hand by some hospitable citizen, and, seated in a motor-car, has been whirled away by winding roads through lovely scenery up the beautiful flanks of Mount Lofty, that he recognises what a wonderfully handsome and ideally situated city it is. And there is a quiet exultation about those same citizens as, mounting higher and higher, they again and again invite you to survey the panorama beneath you, that is most pleasant to witness. They do not brag, bid you—as they would if

they were Yankees—burst into unstinted panegyric, but they wait confidently and quietly for the expression of your honest opinion. And I do not think they are ever disappointed.

Each suburb that is passed on the upward journey is well groomed, and, moreover—a characteristic feature of this favoured land—looks as if the inhabitants had come to stay. There is no "I'm but a stranger here" appearance about the snug houses and well-kept lots, while the fruit-trees suggest a veritable garden of the Lord. All the home fruits grow here in rich profusion side by side with oranges, lemons, and grapes, grapes, grapes, until you cease to wonder how it is that the Adelaide hawkers can afford to stand all day selling grapes that are simply perfection for size, flavour, and variety at a uniform rate of a penny a pound. But gladly as I always welcome the view of an orchard or a vineyard, I confess that my attention was always more quickly arrested by the fat, black level land in the valleys, whereon was growing in most lavish profusion all the vegetables that we love at home—peas and beans, onions and potatoes, parsnip and beet, side by side with luxuriant tomatoes, huge melons, and many other tasty agricultural products of sub-tropical countries. A gentle

land, where frost is unknown, where temperate and sub-tropical fruits and vegetables grow side by side, and the only trouble is to find sufficient markets for the abounding crops garnered with the minimum of labour.

But what I think impresses all visitors to this favoured spot more than anything else are the vineyards, especially if he be conversant with Continental grape-growing districts. This strong, red soil, bearing evidences of abundance of iron on every hand, seems to be the natural home of the grape, and to be free, to an amazing degree, from those insect pests which have made the lot of the French and Italian vignerons such a weary one. Every variety of grape seems to flourish here in such wonderful luxuriance and fecundity, and withal in such healthfulness of foliage and fruit, that the eye wearies of admiring their prolific masses. Quite unintentionally it so happened that I was invited to go and visit one of the youngest of the vineyards and its "winery," as it is called, in company with two gentlemen, proprietor and editor of a great newspaper out here. And I must confess that I was amazed at everything I saw. The wagon-loads of tiny but rich-tasting, luscious grapes, coming in from the adjacent vineyards, where they were being picked by a merry troop of boys and girls, the

ceaseless elevator upon whose revolving shelves a burly, silent man hurled huge fork-loads of grapes, the drum above, in which those same grapes were separated from their stalks and crushed at the same time, the juice flowing one way, the stalks another, and the crushed skins another. All the swift process was mightily interesting, especially as contrasted with the old crude methods of the Continent, with their maximum of dirt. I thought of Macaulay's

> "This year the must shall foam
> 'Neath the white(?) feet of laughing girls,"

and felt that this method was infinitely preferable. Then down below to where the great square backs full of juice were bubbling and boiling in the throes of fermentation, and I elicited information about the hastening of that wonderful process by the addition of special cultures *à la* Pasteur, for your Australian wine-grower is nothing if not scientific. Here is a flood of claret, here one from the Sauvignon grape, here the Muscat, here port, but all busy, and none allowed to waste an unnecessary moment in the preliminary processes, however long they may have to lie and mature afterwards. And I was especially interested in seeing how the tint of the grape

was reproduced in the wine, so that a very slight acquaintance and a keen eye for colour would be sufficient to name the particular grape from which any given back-full had been crushed.

There was an air of absolute purity, of precise cleanliness everywhere which was exceedingly pleasant to notice, but there was also a curious solemnity, a brooding over everything, that was most impressive. Even on the top floor, where the machinery was in evidence, it made only a subdued hum, all being driven by an English-made petrol engine which I was proudly informed had run for four or five years, ever since it was put in, without any attention beyond an occasional wipe and the necessary feeding with petrol, and had never once given the slightest trouble. But as we descended into the vast cellars, amid vats and tuns of maturing wine varying in their contents from 500 to 2,500 gallons, the silence became positively oppressive, and I found myself involuntarily speaking in a whisper, as if in some stately fane. Again, anything more unlike the wine-cellars of the Old World that I have seen could not possibly be imagined. There, cobwebs, mildew, fungi, and a damp, earthy smell as of the tomb; here, not a spot of dirt or speck of dust to be seen anywhere,

as if scores of busy housemaids were all over the place every morning, which of course could not be the case.

There were very few men about. Labour is costly here, and consequently every labour-saving appliance that can be devised is employed. But I was glad to learn that all the bottles I saw being filled were of Australian, not Belgian or German, make; that these people had too much patriotism to let a home industry be filched from them by free importers who would buy nothing in return. And certainly these hocks and clarets and ports looked very beautiful in their neat bottles with attractive labels, especially when I remembered having watched the whole process as far as the human eye could follow it, that they were all absolutely the pure juice of the grape without any extraneous admixture whatever, although for that I will not claim any special virtue on the part of the vigneron, only pointing out that the pure article is cheaper to make than any adulterated one would be.

We then went into the still-house, where from the must, the crushed grape-skins, an absolutely pure brandy was being distilled, and I remember vividly the outcry at home because it was said to be impossible to get pure brandy.

I am assured, and I have no difficulty in believing, that it does not pay the Australian wine-grower to sophisticate his brandy. That it is infinitely superior to any foreign brandy on the market at double its price I can also well believe, and as far as a novice's taste may decide it certainly is more palatable than any French brandy I have ever tasted at any price. Why, then, is it not in its rightful place at home? Brandy is not a drunkard's drink; it is largely medicinal, and it is essential that it should be pure. And I believe that if the people who now pay large sums for inferior foreign brandy would only try the pure product of the Australian grape they would never purchase any other. The wine is said to be too strong, too alcoholic, and I can easily believe that to be the case, but as far as the brandy goes, it can only be described as the best obtainable because absolutely pure. I came away from the vineyard with a feeling of great pleasure, on the one hand that I had been privileged to witness so beautiful a process, and of intense sadness on the other that these splendid natural products of our own loyal kin should still be in the struggling stage, should still have to fight for a bare existence against far inferior Continental wines with nothing to recommend them but the prestige of the name.

Fortunately the Australians are loyal to their wines, and drink them themselves; if they did not I am afraid these lovely vineyards would have to revert to wilderness, which would be a crime against civilisation.

IV

A GOODLY HERITAGE

THE soil which grows the grape, the orange, the lemon, the apple and pear and peach in such wonderful profusion, also grows the olive, and would, I feel sure, comparing it with the uplands of Costa Rica, grow a splendid grade of coffee. But who of us at home ever heard of Australian olive oil? We all know into what disrepute the Continental olive oil has fallen owing to its gross adulteration and its exceedingly unpleasant taste—due, I believe, to the methods of its preparation. Well, candidly, I was never able to eat olives until I came here, but these are so different to any that I have tasted before that I am now almost craving for them. And the oil is so creamy, so bland and mellow, that I look back in wonder at my dislike of the flavour of the oil that I have had poured over my salad in restaurants in London. And I do not at all understand why

such an article of great utility and constant demand should not be in its rightful place in Britain, especially since, owing to the wonderful cheapness of ocean freights, the difference in its cost to the consumer from that of the very much inferior Italian oil would be practically nil.

Currants also grow in great profusion, but the difficulty of drying them in the sun is great, and I do not see how they are to compete with the produce of Greece. Still, I suppose they are prepared in sufficient quantity and quality to satisfy the local demands, which, after all, is one of the prime objects of every Australian citizen; and a very laudable object too, that we in England should entirely sympathise with, seeing how many things we could produce ourselves, and in so doing employ our own people, which now we import under such favourable conditions to the foreigner. I do wish that our so-called Free Traders could see how common-sense Protection works out here for themselves, instead of accepting the worn-out theories which, in defiance of all reason and the experience of all other countries, are thrust upon them by people who should know better.

The beauty of Adelaide is proverbial, but, curiously enough, it can only be realised from the landward side. The visitor who, on his

passage hither from overseas, has been duly plied with glowing eulogy of the Queen of the South by faithful South Australians, is—must be —intensely disappointed as he nears the port and surveys the flat, sandy shores, the level only broken by an occasional chimney shaft or masts of ships lying up the invisible river as if they had been carried inland by some necromancy. But when, after an hour's run in a motor-car over superb roads and through perfectly lovely scenery, you reach the upper slopes of Mount Lofty, and are suddenly bidden to turn and look down upon Adelaide, which lies basking in the golden sunshine, edged by the glittering sea, you recognise that you are in the presence of one of the fairest scenes that earth can afford. Around you, nestling amidst the luxuriant vegetation, may be discerned many a picturesque little township, all alike noticeable for their lack of squalor or any other appearance of poverty which so painfully disfigures the fairest and most romantic of our villages at home. And scattered about between the townships lie the homes of the well-to-do Adelaide folks. I had almost said wealthy folks, but I fear to convey a wrong impression. They may be wealthy, but there is none of that tremendous ostentation and aggressive swagger about them that is so offensive in older countries. Comfort, yes, and

even a certain amount of luxury, but the ostentatious note is entirely absent. Yet they are almost all self-made men, who are popularly supposed, at home at any rate, to be in their manners somewhat like the hero of one of Ouida's later books, "The Massarenes," who wipes his muddy boots upon a duchess's silk gown to show his authority over her.

The most beautiful of all these country homes to which I have been fortunate enough to have the *entrée* was one occupied by a very prominent K.C., Sir Josiah Symons. It occupies an ideal situation in the hills, and is, I should say, almost perfect in its surroundings and its climate. With most pardonable pride my host pointed out how it had grown up under his loving care from the smallest and most unpretentious beginnings until now it was what I saw it—a home as beautiful within and without as the heart of man could desire, a veritable abode of peace, and quiet, unostentatious luxury. This is an exceedingly pleasant feature of the life out here, the numbers of men who are now enjoying the fruits of a laborious life, and who look back upon their small beginnings with the greatest complacency and entire absence of that pomposity which at home, alas! so often marks the *nouveau riche*. These men, so far from being ashamed of the pit from which they were digged,

evince the greatest delight in fighting their early battles over again. And they are mostly distinguished for their intense loyalty to the Motherland, while at the same time they are desperately jealous of their neighbours, and until you understand them you would imagine that they actually hated the other States who go to make up the great Australian Commonwealth. I have had to learn quite a new nomenclature since I have been here. I find that the use of the words Colonies and Colonial is steadily discouraged. They talk now of the States, the Interstate communications, not Colonial. Only a trifle perhaps to us, but to these strenuous Australians nothing of that kind is trifling.

But, indeed, there is a curious confusion rampant just now in Australian political matters which is to a visitor from Britain fairly conversant with the State and aims of parties at home almost if not entirely incomprehensible. The Commonwealth leaders and the State leaders are not seldom at loggerheads, if one may judge by their public utterances, and the differences between Labour men, Socialists, and Conservatives, are very difficult to define. It is a veritable hornet's nest for an outsider to interfere with, but there is one comfort at any rate to a Briton that loves

the Empire, and that is the spirit of loyalty to the Crown which is manifested by all parties. It is a sort of common ground upon which all can meet, although a cynical observer would probably suggest that it had no real cohesive value. There is another thing, too, which I think gives hope for the future of this marvellous country, and that is the fact that all parties now seem to be fairly in accord upon the population question. They all seem to realise that it is nothing short of ridiculous to expect this vast country to hold its own with such a trifling population as it possesses. With an area much larger than that of the United States, and a population of only one-seventeenth roughly, of that of the great Republic, while the two great cities of Sydney and Melbourne between them absorb almost one-fourth of the entire population of Australasia, it must indeed be a hard task to avoid seeing what an enormous waste of opportunities for men to rise and hew out fortune and position is going on. It only remains for Australians to agree as to the method of peopling their country, to divert to themselves the streams of capable and energetic Anglo-Saxons who yearly flow into the United States. Very cordially do I endorse the determination of Australasian rulers to keep out wastrels, incapables, and work-shy men. There

is already far too great a number of these loafing about in the big towns for the industrious population to support, and, obviously, to import more of these anæmic parasites would be to waste the resources of the Australian States in an ever-increasing ratio.

But I am straying too far from beautiful Adelaide, where I now am, into generalities. When riding about these lovely hills and valleys, where all the fruits of the earth that grow in temperate and sub-tropical zones flourish with incredible luxuriance, I have often asked the question whether this splendid fertility and wide extent of cultivable land was confined to the neighbourhood of the city and diminished in both quality and quantity up-country. And I have been repeatedly assured that it was not so, that Nature was amazingly lavish all over the southern portions of the great Central State, that farms could be had at tiny rentals, or at amounts of purchase-money which to us at home seem like a joke, but the difficulty was to find a market. So small a population of consumers is so very easily supplied. That was to me effectually demonstrated by the prices at which grapes of all kinds, the most splendid apples and pears and peaches, &c., among fruit and vegetables of all kinds, were sold, while all the necessities of life, such as bread, meat, tea,

sugar, milk, &c., are equally cheap—so cheap that a mechanic or labourer can live well and be comfortably housed for the sum of 15s. per week; and to counterbalance this a journeyman mechanic's wages average 10s. a day of eight hours, while labourers' wages are 6s. per day. The case of the shop assistants and waiters, clerks, &c., is equally favourable, while certainly clothing and house-rent compare very favourably with prices obtaining in England for these necessities. Luxuries are undoubtedly more expensive than they are at home, especially spirits; wine, if the workman will drink the splendid produce of his own country, being marvellously cheap and good. But as with us, what eats the very heart out of the workman is so-called sport, and the inseparable gambling consequent thereupon. There is a great deal of leisure for enjoyment, which I feel sure is indulged in to the highest degree, and if it were not for the appalling waste of money in gambling would be of the highest benefit to the community at large.

What is so hard to understand about a country like this, where the working man is so strenuously in evidence in politics and shows such eager interest in what concerns himself politically, in the strongest possible contrast to our workers at home, who may be, and are, led

astray by the veriest claptrap as far removed from truth as it is possible to be, is, how he does not see that this gambling mania of his has raised up a vast horde of parasites who do nothing for their kind but fleece them, who are the scourge and pest of society, and to whose interest it is that the man who *earns* money shall part with it without value received. The old *tu quoque* argument about the Stock Exchange and the poor man being debarred from the pleasures of the rich can only appeal to the wilfully blind, for if my neighbour, in the exercise of his freedom to do what he will with his own, chooses to cut off his fingers and reduce himself to a helpless cripple, surely that is no reason why I, equally free, should go and do likewise.

However, as the simile is somewhat stale, and the argument has been also used almost threadbare, it is not over-profitable to pursue it too far, but freely admit that with all these factors taken into consideration the prosperity of the country is undeniable, and that prosperity would be amazingly intensified if only there were more people. The one great drawback and danger to this magnificent country is its lack of population—a statement which cannot be too often repeated—and the parochial views of its politicians. Quite rightly, they look upon the comfort and well-being of their own folks

as the primal consideration, before which all others fade into insignificance; but quite wrongly, and in purblind fashion, they fail to perceive that the maintenance of that comfort depends at present entirely upon the ability of Great Britain to protect them by her Navy. The total contribution of the Australasian States is at present £240,000 per annum, and it is voted grudgingly, as if the Old Country had no right to expect it. But no one in power seems to grasp the fact that the toiling millions in Britain are being taxed to maintain an expenditure of over forty millions upon the Navy, or an average of £1 per head of the population. If Australasia, whose need of protection from foreign aggression is just as great as ours, were taxed in the same proportion for the same purpose, its contribution to the upkeep of the Imperial Navy would be twenty times as much as it now is, or £4,000,000 per annum. And I dare say that it would not be any too great a price to pay for the security enjoyed. Australasia is building up a splendid Mercantile Marine of her own, she lays heavy burdens upon the Old Country shipowner as well as the foreigner who wishes to trade upon her coasts, for the benefit of her home-bred sailor-citizens; but as far as any ordinary eye can see she begrudges a penny for national insurance in case the Old

Country gets her hands full at any time, as she may most easily do.

However, let us hope that Australasia will be wise in time and recognise the possibility of the Labour party in England taking the same sort of view as the regnant party in Australasia. For if they do, and in refusing to vote supplies for the upkeep of a Navy to protect people who do not want, apparently, to be protected, or who are unable to see the absolute helplessness of their country unaided in the face of a hostile attack by a great foreign Power, they take a leaf out of the Australian politician's book, there will be wigs upon the green at once.

I feel very strongly tempted to dip into statistics, which are available to anybody at home who cares to know, but must refrain except in the most casual way. But if ever figures were fascinating, surely they are here. South Australia, or, as it should more rightly be called, Central Australia, since it extends from South to North right across the vast continent, possesses an area of 578,361,600 acres, with a population less than that of the borough of Islington, or, at the census of December, 1902, 365,791. The average private wealth per head is about £250, the value of production between ten and twelve millions a year, and the debt per head (mostly, however, for productive works) is

nearly £100. But this represents only a taxation of less than £2 per annum per head of the population. Best of all, as has been well said, the producer is king! The man who cultivates or mines, or breeds cattle and sheep, is the backbone of the community, and this, of course, in a new country, is as it should be. The manufacturer is daily growing in importance, his efforts carefully fostered so that the pauper labour of Europe shall not make those efforts nugatory, and the business man has a splendid field for his energies also.

Yes, it is a wonderful country, where Nature is ready to yield up to man's labour in most bounteous profusion her richest treasures, but where at present *men* are wanting. The great need of the country is labour—intelligent, willing, healthy labour. It is a white man's country, and white it should be and may remain if only white men are allowed to come in and settle there, as it appears at last they are being invited to do. But it will need some time to elapse before the object-lessons given to our workmen at home by the short-sighted political action of Labour leaders out here has died out of intending emigrants' memories, and the public interest at home is partly transferred from Canada, the astutest of all the Colonies, to Australasia, by far the richest of them all.

V

SANE SOCIALISM

ADELAIDE may well be described as a staid city where the religious and intellectual element is exceedingly prominent and there is a noticeable absence of haste and bustle. There are, for the size of the city and its environs, an enormous number of literary and musical societies which keep the younger members of the community together by providing them with centres of interest. I cannot honestly say that this tends to narrowness of mind or outlook either, because so many of the members of these societies, both male and female, have travelled, if not at Home—as I gratefully note the Motherland is still called—to India, to Japan, or throughout the Australasian States. In fact, extended travel prevails here to an extent which is amazing compared with that of people with the same incomes and of the same class at home.

A very large amount of the money which at home would be spent upon utterly valueless society functions and entertaining people who go away and make invidious comparisons, is here invested in travel; and so you shall find the daughters of a man whose income is only just over four figures telling you in the most casual way of their visits to the Temple of Shion-in, of the marvels of the Inland Sea, of the Taj, of Fiji, or of dear, wonderful, incomprehensible London.

And then so many of the young men were through the war in South Africa, with its wonderful effect upon the enlargement of their minds. And here comes a paradoxical state of affairs. Side by side with their utter contempt for most of the British officers as leaders of men blazes up their passionate love for the old land, and I have often wished that Messrs. C. B. & Co., with their foul "methods of barbarism" slanders and the like, could hear the opinion of alert young Australia upon them and their methods. Especially now, when there looms awfully before us, in the opinion of every one out here that I have had an opportunity of conversing with, the near prospect of another terrible South African war, directly due to the work of the present Government, aided by Messrs. Stead, Aked & Co. I say nothing upon hearing all

this, for I feel ashamed that such men should be allowed to play ducks and drakes with a great nation's interest. There is, however, another side to this, to which I will allude later on.

For the present the main thought in my mind is that I am due to leave Adelaide for Melbourne. I must return again on my way home and say farewell to all these splendid folks, who have carried on the best traditions of our true hospitality at home to me. But this morning I have had a great treat. I met by invitation Mr. Watson, a great leader of the Labour party, who has been Prime Minister, and will, if I am any judge, soon be so again. He addressed a meeting last night in the Exhibition Building, at which it is estimated that some four thousand persons were present, for, as I have before said, in this land of adult suffrage, both male and female, people take their politics seriously, and the politician, professional though he be, must lead the strenuous life. This gentleman, who calls himself a Socialist, presents a curious contrast to the so-called Socialists at home of the Keir Hardie type. He is sane and gentlemanly, and from his public utterances, as well as his private conversation, I cannot imagine him lending himself to the despicable spoliation of the lower middle class that is the direct outcome

of every Socialistic scheme of legislation at home. I find that Socialism here is of a very different type indeed to the brand that is presented to us in England. There are the usual cranks and Anarchists, who, bat-like, think that the remedy for all social ills is the disruption of society and the elevation of the noisy unfit to the position of equals to or masters of the quiet fit. But they are very small potatoes and few in the hill, and their meetings are farces which have to be protected by the police against the attacks of larrikins who regard them as fair game.

But then we have none of the conditions obtaining here which are so luridly described in Upton Sinclair's book upon Chicago, "The Jungle"—a book which should make the soul of every decent man everywhere to take fire, a book that shows the American magnate in his true colours, and in which the only gleam of hope is that he and his horrible class may be swept from the earth which they defile and destroy. I earnestly hope that this book may have an immense circulation in England, so that our people may really understand what is going on in the United States to-day. I have been accused of saying hard things about the United States, and with reason, but the worst I ever dreamed of after my personal acquaintance with

the people is eulogy compared with this frightful catalogue of horrors of which every page contains a nightmare. It has made me look with a most benevolent eye upon the legislation here in this country, which is popularly supposed at home to be in the grip of the enemies of all human progress, but which is at any rate entirely free from the truly damnable methods of the Chicago plutocrat.

Once more, before I face the train journey, let me record the absolute perfection of the weather ever since I have been here to a visitor from home. The air has been so pure, so bracing, even keen at times, yet with none of that congealing bite in it which is the terror of weaklings both young and old at home. Of course the South Australian calls it cold, and greets me always with the remark that it is very cold to-day, with the result that I have no difficulty in finding a fruitful topic of conversation, since to me it is as nearly perfect as it can be. And with the spectacle daily before me of oranges, olives, lemons, grapes, and figs flourishing luxuriantly in the open air, the remark "very cold" seems sarcastic. But then there can be no question of the great heat here in summer, although there is no need to believe the careless dictum of men whom I occasionally meet, that 120° Fahr. in the shade is a common summer temperature here.

That only shows the haziness of the average mind with regard to temperatures. With such heat as they do have here in summer, however, there is little wonder that the native-born or the acclimatised citizen does feel as very cold weather that which to us fresh from Britain is delightful beyond adjectives.

And now, at 4.30, I bid goodbye to beautiful Adelaide with its hospitable, genial citizens, and in a cosy compartment of the train watch the lovely landscape glide by as we ascend the hills on our way to Melbourne.

It is delightful travelling, especially as at stated stations there are refreshment-rooms where good and ample meals of well-cooked food are ready, and ample time is allowed for eating them. All prices in these restaurants are fixed by the Government, who own the railways and lease the catering to speculators under most stringent rules as to quality and prices. The result is the best railway meals that I have ever eaten in the world, and also by far the cheapest, indeed the prices are marvellous in their moderation as compared with Europe or America. The rate of travelling is not so rapid, but as the journey is mainly at night that matters little as long as the traveller reaches Melbourne in time to begin business as early as possible in the morning. We had, so I was informed, being

personally entirely unconscious of it, a breakdown during the night which delayed us an hour in arriving at Ballarat, some three hours' journey from Melbourne. But we were there at 7.30, and found a hot and copious breakfast awaiting us, of all those things which are peculiarly associated with that meal; the charge was one shilling, or the impecunious could have a huge cup of coffee and a roll and butter for sixpence—a much dearer bite than the full breakfast of sausages, or fish, or ham and eggs, or chops or steaks, with potatoes and bread for double the money. But then it is a lavish land in the matter of food. There are no niggling extras here.

We had only twenty minutes here, so that any extended observation of the flourishing town of about forty thousand inhabitants which stretched away on the level plain on either side of the railway line was impossible, but I looked eagerly around on the well-built houses and wide streets of the town which for its size has probably produced more gold than any other spot in the world. I thought of the wild days of the rush when Port Philip was congested with ships denuded of their crews, when Melbourne was merely a place through which the panting, fiercely eager crowds toiled on their way to the new Eldorado, or returned flushed with success to waste in most hideous debauchery and riot

what had cost them such terrible toil to win. All that frenzied fight for gold has gone now, except an occasional fit of madness on a Stock Exchange on the report of one of the companies having "struck it rich"—reports that I believe are sometimes engineered by interested parties for the purpose of unloading worthless shares upon that vast confiding amorphous body, the public.

No, the fat days of the individual gold miner have gone and the workers are now paid and employed in much the same way as they would be if the spoil they sought were coal or iron instead of gold. All the resources of science must be called in to make the business pay at the high price of labour, and the depths to which the burrowing men go in search of the thin veins of payable material is measured now by thousands of feet; and still they go deeper. But Ballarat and its sister gold-producing town, Bendigo, have long ago sowed their wild oats and are as quiet and church-going and generally respectable as any places in the Australian States. They look it too, and I have only to mention the fact that eleven o'clock is closing time for all public-houses (hotels the wise them call out here), and that the Sunday Closing Act is in full operation, to show that the purveyor of intoxicants has many hindrances placed upon

his liberty to do as he likes. Gambling is rife, of course, but alas! where is it not in this country eating the heart out of all classes, but especially, as at home, out of those who are least able to afford it, the mechanics? However, as this is the subject I must refer to continually because of its tremendous prominence and effect upon the people, I will leave it now as we are speeding along towards Melbourne through immense areas of level, rich land studded with stumps and supporting flocks of scattered sheep. The approach to Melbourne by rail is so level that almost before you have realised that you are near the city the masts of the huge sailing ships lying in the Yarra Docks are visible, to my utter confusion of locality, because in my recollection the place where such ships lay was Sandridge, Geelong, or Williamstown, the first-named and nearest being about four miles from the city and situated, like the other two, on the shores of Hobson's Bay. But as we draw nearer, and I see the towering buildings apparently grouping themselves about the ships, it occurs to me that I have heard of the deepening of Melbourne's little river until ships of almost any tonnage can come right up into the city itself and lie there as they do in London.

Even with the most cursory glance I can see how great have been the changes that have

taken place since I was here first, thirty-five years ago, which is tremendously apparent as compared with that observable in Adelaide. The train glides into the station, an interviewer confronts me, and telling me that it is only a couple of hundred yards to Menzies Hotel, and that my luggage needs no supervision from me, escorts me up a gently inclined street, putting one eager question after another, among which, however, I do *not* hear, "How do you like Melbourne?" I have not time to notice more than one palatial building—not of the sky-scraper order, but conforming more to the quiet dignity of similar piles at home, the newly finished offices of an Australasian insurance company—when I find myself in the hotel, with my indefatigable reporter still plying me with eager questions, for he represents the only evening newspaper in this city of nearly half a million inhabitants, and wants a story for this afternoon's issue. Fancy a monopoly like that! But I don't know why he should make me say that I considered the *Herald* to be the finest evening paper I had ever read in the world, since I did not know of its existence half an hour ago, and certainly have not yet read a line in it! But *que voulez vous* from a reporter?

VI

MIGHTY MELBOURNE

FROM my bedroom window this morning I look down upon the little river Yarra, with the big ships lying snugly alongside of the substantial wharves, and realise what a vast change, in that aspect of Melbourne at any rate, has been wrought since my last visit, when where what is now a splendid area of water accommodation for ships of great size up to a draught of 24 feet, and a most up-to-date congeries of warehouses, wharves, bridges, embankments, and factories, was an apparently hopeless muddle of quaint huts and swampy land, out of which it seemed impossible that order could ever emerge. In those days almost every one spoke contemptuously of the Yarra as an insignificant creek which it was folly to waste money upon in the attempt to make it navigable for vessels of any size,

and the pet project was a huge breakwater extending from Williamstown to Sandridge (now Port Melbourne) enclosing the whole of the bay between, including, of course, the embouchure of the Yarra. Around the whole of the coast of this bay was to run a line of deep-water wharfage, alongside of which ships of any tonnage might lie in perfect quiet as in a vast dock. This scheme was fully matured and presented in practical form to the existing Victorian Government by Sir John Coode, but its magnitude of conception, and, of course, its cost, staggered them. So they compromised on the Yarra improvements, with the result that the old piers are still used for the accommodation of the largest ships at Port Melbourne itself, and so they must lie at the piers in what is, owing to the great size of Hobson's Bay, quite an open and unprotected roadstead during certain winds.

But though Hobson's Bay is so noble in area it is not too well off in the matter of depth, and ships drawing over 25 feet have to be most carefully navigated within its limits. More than that, the great ships of the White Star Line which trade here from England around the Cape are terribly handicapped by the fact that if they were loaded to their full paying capacity they could not get out of

Hobson's Bay at all, owing to the want of depth at Port Phillip Heads. Strange, is it not, that at two such important points of ocean traffic as Suez and Port Phillip want of water should so long be allowed to hinder development, especially when it is remembered that there are no real engineering difficulties in the way? But of course it must never be forgotten that all really great public works in this country are heavily handicapped by the artificial restraints placed upon development by the restriction of population and consequently of revenue. All great schemes mean great expenditure, and with a population in the whole of this vast country of less than five millions this is impossible. Moreover, at present we have the grave spectacle of a declining birth-rate and an increasing emigration rate, a state of things which, in a country so full of natural wealth as this, is almost inexplicable. At present almost all politicians are agreed that the future of the country depends entirely upon her getting more population, but I do not see anything being done that will really tempt desirable immigrants who have no capital.

This, however, is a question which confronts the visitor at every turn, and so must be dealt with in small doses lest it become monotonous. At present I am anxious to get out and see

Melbourne itself, wondering whether I shall notice as great a change in the city as I do in the development of the Yarra. As I step out into the noble width of Bourke Street, in full enjoyment of the glorious crisp morning (for the weather is still perfect), the hotel porter greets me with, "Very cold this morning, sir," to which I only mumble unintelligibly in reply, for I really cannot say anything uncomplimentary to this lovely climate. A double tramcar without seats on top comes swiftly up the hill from the river-bank, and I jump on, noticing as I do that it is a cable-car. The pace is good, the road splendidly wide and straight, giving a view, when you are at its highest point, clear from one end to the other, a distance of about two miles. But I get a shock when I have to pay threepence for a ride of about half a mile; for there are no sections, as in most other places. Within certain limits of what may be called the metropolitan area the price is threepence any distance; but you may purchase eight tickets for a shilling, each of which will frank you for a threepenny ride.

I do not think, however, that the average man saves much in this way, since it is a very common form of hospitality, when acquaintances meet on a car, to say, as hands go groping in

pockets, "Oh, all right, I've got tickets!" and hand the conductor two. Outside the city limits these tickets are not available, but the fare remains the same. These very swift and comfortable cars are in the hands of private companies, who, I should think, must make a fine dividend, although it must be remembered that the wages are high and the service exceedingly good, commencing at 5.30 or 6 in the morning, and running most frequently until midnight. And as the city is built on the American square plan, with all the principal streets crossing one another at right angles, locomotion is very easy within the city limits.

My first trip was down Bourke Street, which I remembered thirty-five years ago as the principal, the finest street in Melbourne; and I confess that I was somewhat disappointed with its unequal appearance and the dearth of fine buildings, for I had expected, from what I had heard, much greater development. The Post Office is a fine building, but not so favourably situated as that at Adelaide, so that, notwithstanding its fine tower and *façade*, it will not look imposing. Moreover, it is obviously much too small for the requirements of Melbourne, for there is a mean-looking shed devoted to telephone work; and for parcel-post delivery of *poste restante* letters and money-order business

the customer must go a considerable distance round into little Bourke Street of unsavoury fame. Before leaving this part of the question, let me say that nothing, I should think, would strike the British new chum more forcibly than the immense congeries of telegraphic, telephone, and other wires carried on posts at the sides of all the principal streets of the Australian cities, in emulation of the way these things are done in the United States. In Perth and Fremantle there are, in addition to the other cobwebby arrangements overhead, electric-car wires, and I could not help wondering what would be the result if one of these enormously high-tension car wires were to get broken and flung into the midst of a lot of telegraph and telephone wires by its side, especially on a night when the streets were crowded, as they often are, with people.

Adelaide is, as I have said before, still in the thrall of the mediæval horse-car, wherein, if she did but know it, she is behind the smallest provincial town in England and some of the districts of London, so that at present she has nought to fear from so dire a catastrophe. Melbourne is served, as I have also said, with cable-cars, and for the life of me I cannot see why she should want anything better, especially as there is no question of linking up. I have been told that the cost of the upkeep of the

cables is much greater than that of electrical power, but when I humbly inquire what the cost of conversion will be I am met with vague generalities. A little bird has whispered to me that when I get to Sydney I shall know the reason, which is that Sydney has converted her cable-cars into trolley electrics, and Melbourne, feeling a back number on this question, is of course furious, and must ante-up. You remember in the "Naulahka" how cheerfully, whole-heartedly, and venomously the two rival cities, Rustler and Topaz, hated one another? Even so do the rival cities in Australia in like manner disobey the greatest commandment of all, and, remembering the misdirected affections of Liverpool and Manchester, I cannot throw any stones.

Let me return to a subject that I can unreservedly praise Melbourne for—the magnificent paving and grading of her main streets. It is, to my mind, a most effectual mark of high civilisation when the roads of a city are well laid and well cleansed, especially when, as in Melbourne, they are such noble thoroughfares. There is an immense traffic both on side-walks and in the roadway in Melbourne, but the condition of both *trottoir* and road is above reproach, even better than in Paris, which is, to those who know, high praise. It would

amuse our keen urchins who, in the City of London, dart about in the midst of the complications of the wheels and the clattering of hoofs with their exaggerated dustpans and hard brooms collecting the dung, to see their opposite numbers in Melbourne with a slightly bigger pan mounted on a pair of wheels and having a handle attached, doing the same work in a much more leisurely but effectual fashion. They would, however, say as I said, "That kind of contraption wouldn't work at all opposite the Mansion House." And, of course, they would deride the effort to make things easier, as men and boys always do.

I have, however, arrived at Elizabeth Street, which runs at right angles to Bourke Street and only stops at the Yarra Bank or Flinders Street, and I am at once convinced of the growth and splendour of Melbourne. The shops are superb, the buildings are beautifully and splendidly built, and the crowds of people are immense. But—there is always a but, somehow —I am saddened to see outside the numerous drink-shops or hotels a disfigurement of hurriedly printed telegrams from the racecourses, of the day's racing, the odds, and the results of all that infernal literature that saps the very soul of a nation. Tattersall's is a name apparently to conjure with, every foul-mouthed

dirty-handed filcher of other men's earnings calls himself a Tattersall's saloon or a Tattersall's bar, until I wonder what old Tatt, who was, I believe, a gentleman anyhow, would have said had he seen to what base uses his honoured name would be put. Forgive me for referring to this so frequently, but it is so thrust down your throat at every turn that it is impossible to avoid saying something about it, and sorrowing over its effect upon the people all around you.

I turned down Elizabeth Street toward the river, and was staggered at the density of the crowds. It was 11 a.m., and the people were thick as bees swarming; not loafing about, either, but moving as if they had business somewhere. And the shops, those sure indications of prosperity, were quite comparable with any that I have seen anywhere, especially those devoted to jewellery, photography, drapery, and books! This must be a reading community indeed, for I do not remember having seen anything anywhere like Cole's Book Arcade or the Straider Libraries, where people go to buy books, not to borrow them. But I thought pitifully of authors' royalties, which at home are 1s. 3d. or 1s. 6d. on a book which is sold for 4s. 6d., and out here are threepence or fourpence on the same book sold at 2s. 6d. or 3s. 6d. This,

however, being a matter only concerning those who write books, will not interest the general public, who appear to imagine that the author is fed and clothed and housed miraculously and ought not to expect payment for writing, but ought rather to carry about a ton or so of his books for glad distribution to every one that asks for them.

Yes, Elizabeth Street was an eye-opener to me, who remember it in the days of long thirty-five years ago. It is of course unequal, quite small and unpretentious buildings cheek by jowl with mighty erections, but no more so than Oxford Street, which indeed it much resembles at the river end, except for the permanent shelters over the wide pavements so that people shopping on foot are protected from the sun or the rain, and for the never-ending flight of the cable-cars. It is true that there are no emporia comparable to Marshall & Snelgrove's, D. H. Evans & Co., Waring's, or John Lewis's, but that is not to be expected, remembering that we are in a city with about the population of Islington. But turning the corner of Elizabeth Street into Collins Street you get a vista of commercial buildings that for solidity, beauty, and also architectural effect may safely challenge comparison with any town or city in the old country, with the added advantage of

having a splendidly wide and straight street of a couple of miles in length to show them off in. The only city at home that can compare advantageously with Melbourne as far as Collins, Elizabeth, and Swanston Streets are concerned, is Glasgow, and of course Glasgow has an immense advantage in point of size. On the other hand, Melbourne scores heavily in the matter of atmosphere and cleanliness. Yet, I do not know how it is, the great public buildings of Melbourne, with the exception of the Parliament Buildings, suffer greatly from their sites, which do not allow them to be seen as they should be. But there again we in London can say little, for some of our finest buildings have been hidden away so that they may hardly be seen to any advantage at all. And this, of course, is also the case in most of our great cities except in certain favoured spots, such as the view of the Houses of Parliament from the river, the Government offices of St. James's Park, St. George's Hall and its surroundings in Liverpool, &c., &c.

Yet when we get down to bed-rock facts it is perfectly certain that Collins Street, Melbourne, is a thoroughfare that no city even of ten times Melbourne's age need be ashamed of, and it is marvellous how with so small a population in the rest of the State it has been built and is

kept bustling. The site of the city is not beautiful, nor has it any lovely setting such as Adelaide possesses, but from the point of view of traffic it is splendid, as there are no hills anywhere to be negotiated, and consequently the railways and tramways can be most economically laid. In fact, so low is the whole plain upon which Melbourne and its great network of suburbs stand that I found myself asking several people if they ever had any trouble with abnormally high tides, if the Yarra never misbehaved itself. But they all said no, since the embankments have been built there does not appear to have been any trouble with floods. I can remember very well when much of what is now covered with beautiful houses and gardens was a barren waste of sand, to walk upon which in summer was torment. Indeed, I noticed even now that in the principal streets of some of the most prosperous suburbs around the bay there was an abundance of sea-sand, which certainly had not blown there. Of course, there is the comforting reflection that Melbourne is not on the sea, and that any great oceanic disturbance on the coast must spend itself against the protecting barrier of the Heads of Hobson's Bay, so that, failing any abnormal upheaval within the great bay itself, there is not much likelihood of any disastrous

flood, in spite of the low level of the ground. Of which I am heartily glad, for it is a noble city—a worthy monument to the energy and enterprise of our fellows across the sea.

VII

SOME FLEETING COMPARISONS

THIS is a paradoxical country in many ways. For instance, while wages are high in the cities and the cost of living is amazingly cheap, the prices of certain articles jump up and metaphorically knock you down. For instance, I was the other day admiring some magnificent lobsters (crawfish) in a fishmonger's window, freshly boiled and steaming, ticketed 1s. 6d. each. Such crustacea of equal size in London certainly could not be purchased for 5s. each, while for quality, flavour, and tenderness the English lobster is not within sight of the Australian variety. The prices of fruit and vegetables I have already alluded to in their phenomenal lowness, while the standard price of tea, the national beverage far more than with us, is 1s. 3d. per pound. If you wish for something very special you pay 1s. 6d., but few do. But walking away from those lobsters and

the announcement that a *table-d'hote* dinner of three courses might be purchased for sixpence, the price which has not varied apparently since I was here thirty-five years ago in respectable eating-houses, I bethought me that I needed a button-hook. And since I am exceedingly gifted at losing such small articles, I sought for a cheap one. I soon found one of the shops which are very common out here, a sort of variety store where you can purchase almost anything in the way of small non-perishable articles, and proffered my request. The attendant immediately produced one such as are sold on cards at home for six a penny. I took it and said it would do exactly. How much? "Sixpence," he responded promptly; whereupon I gasped, and then laughed heartily. He inquired rather anxiously what I was laughing at, and when I told him he was angry, and said he hadn't asked for my custom. Whereupon we parted.

On another occasion I went to one of the beautiful bays close to the Heads and hired a boat to go fishing. I was out for four hours by myself, and when I returned and asked what I had to pay I was told two shillings. Which I naturally compared with the two and sixpence an hour charge at our watering-places at home and wondered at consumedly.

There is a good deal of poverty, undoubtedly, of a certain kind, and must be more than I have had any opportunity of ascertaining within the working-class localities. But I do not think there is any hunger, provisions being so very plentiful and cheap. It is curious, however, to see the rough, unkempt, hard-bitten men and women who mix with the busy throng in the principal thoroughfares, and look wistfully around them as if seeking sympathy and companionship. They have fled from the loneliness of the back country, and in the great, bustling city have found a greater solitude than ever. Now and then may be met in Collins, Elizabeth, or Swanston Streets, a swagman, usually old and grey, with his ragged bluey or blanket-wrapped bundle slung at his back, and his battered, soot-encrusted billy (tin tea-can) in his hand; just as much out of place in that busy, bustling throng, as any unit of it would be in the great solitudes whose message of mystery seems to peer out of his eyes. Occasionally one of these men will camp in some doorway, and on being arrested will plead, with an air of innocent wonder, that he was not aware of wrongdoing, seeing that for the whole of his life he had lived and slept in the open, and had never been arrested for it before. But I should say that the majority of the swagmen

now, those at any rate who are found in the vicinity of the towns, are blood brothers of the hobo in the United States and the tramp in our country, nomads whose one characteristic is an utter aversion to work and whose one virtue is a love of the open. The old days when the honest splitter or shearer or farm-hand, the bushman of any kind, had perforce to hump his bluey and pad off on the wallaby track in search of work when his job was done, or he got tired of it, are practically gone except in the remote districts of this vast continent, whose denizens rarely see civilisation at all.

Neither in Adelaide or here in Melbourne have I seen any begging except by a couple of blind men, although there are a good many ragged, barefooted urchins running about in the vicinity of the railway stations selling evening newspapers. There is, however, an obvious overcrowding of the folks who ought to be in the country into the towns; and really it is not to be wondered at, seeing how many of those who come out here are entirely unused to and unfitted for a country life, and especially life in a new country. Which, of course, accounts for the lack of development of this amazing continent. The converse of this equally accounts for the advance of Canada, in that she welcomes those who have never known any-

thing but the hard and grinding life necessary for wresting from wild nature the wealth that she holds in trust for the children of men, and who learn with a surprise that it takes much time to mitigate, that their earnings will not be snatched from them by force and fraud—who have looked, indeed, for nothing else but just the barest means of existence as the result of their incessant, terrible labours. Australia will have none of these, and as a consequence that mighty land is as yet barely scratched. Of what use can it be to advertise for farmers with capital to come to Australia and take up rich lands at a low price, if the labour to till and develop those lands is not to be had except at a price that precludes any idea of profit?

I make these remarks in no carping spirit, but when I see that there is a general tendency in the Press to grumble at the fishing being in the hands of Italians, and gardening in the grip of the Chinese, while at the same time talking of the wondrous wealth of the country awaiting development, I am filled with wonder at the curious turn of mind that imagines that you can keep a vast continent in the hands of a few people and yet exploit its resources—a process which they know can only be accomplished by much manual labour. The results which have already been achieved by the few

are a sufficient proof of the amazing richness of the country, but with a sufficiency of the white labour which is craving for work and bread in the old countries what a mighty uprising of this great Commonwealth we should see! The cry now is all for population, but no provision is made for the obtaining of the proper kind of population—people that are willing to work, and are all unused to or demoralised by city life, but lack the means of crossing the immense distance which separates them from the starvation of the old land and the plenty of the new.

Moreover, this question of the white immigration is the only one of any importance before the Australasian politicians just now. The answer to it, free passages hither for white men willing to work on the land, British preferably, but white anyhow, is the only one that will satisfactorily meet the demand, never lost sight of, for a white Australia. A most desirable, an intensely reasonable demand, but one impossible of attainment unless white men of no means but their strong bodies can be assisted to get here as they are to Canada. No one wants to see a yellow Australia, but unless something is done speedily it will not be possible to avoid having a large part of Australia yellow within a very few years.

Indeed I have great and grave doubts whether it will be possible to avoid it at all; because there is not the slightest use in blinking the fact that an immense area of the extreme north of Australia is not a white man's country. He may own it, but he cannot work it; and of what use is land without labour? It is the whole question of the Transvaal and Rhodesia over again, but in a more acute and decided form. Those regions are of incalculable wealth, but they must have men to work them who can stand the climate.

Those men, the very men for the business, are clamouring to be allowed to come in, and it is a most serious question how much longer will the Commonwealth Government be able to keep them out. They are quite within reason in pointing out as they do that even the vast southern half or three-quarters of the continent where white men can both live and work, is practically unoccupied except in a few isolated spots, and to keep them out of land which they do not wish to possess but only to have the privilege of earning a living upon, is most dog-in-the-manger like. It may sound like an exaggeration to speak of Australia as being practically unoccupied save in a few isolated spots, but it is quite true. When we remember that Australia alone is immensely

larger than the United States, and that the whole of her population is not much more than that of the City of New York, we feel inclined to stand aghast at such a state of affairs.

What, however, has driven this home to me more than anything else has been the visit to Melbourne just now of the Japanese training squadron of three gunboats or third-class cruisers, the *Hashidate*, *Matsushima*, and *Itsushima*, under the command of Admiral Shimamura, who was Admiral Togo's chief of staff. Now it is entirely unnecessary for me to refer to the splendid behaviour of these men, who always win golden opinions wherever they go, or of the general courtesy of the officers, as you have had a visiting squadron at home at the same time. But I confess I was not prepared to find, as I did, so exceedingly hearty and spontaneous a welcome here extended to our allies as I have seen. At home it was impossible for it to be otherwise, remembering with what intense eagerness we had followed the fortunes of the Japanese, and how one and all felt interested in their success against the men who had committed the unatoned-for outrage of the Dogger Bank. Probably we have never had an alliance which has aroused such genuine, heartfelt enthusiasm

as this with the Japanese, nor have ever felt such deep admiration for people apparently possessed of all the old-fashioned virtues of fidelity, courage, patriotism, and indifference to death. Beyond all this the Japanese are not our near neighbours, and we have no room in England to tempt them if they were. And so we are hardly in a position to judge of the general feeling towards them in Australia, which lives in constant dread of having a flood of Asiatic labour poured into it, and knows full well what that would mean. This feeling of dread finds malignant expression in certain organs which have a very large sale. There the Japanese are invariably spoken of as monkeys and caricatured in most unlovely fashion. And knowing all this, I wondered much what sort of a reception the Japanese would have when they came here in their warships as official guests. Well, the city just went wild over them. They compelled admiration by their behaviour, as indeed they always do, and they practically monopolised public attention in the most favourable way. They went everywhere and saw everything, every hospitality that the city could show, both official and private, being showered upon them. I was literally amazed at the show of enthusiasm manifested by the people,

which perhaps reached its acme when some hundreds of the men, accompanied by a large detachment of our own bluejackets from the *Psyche* and *Cerberus*, marched through the principal streets on their way to a huge garden party at the Zoo. The streets were packed as thickly with shouting, excited people as would have been the case in London or Liverpool, and the air rang with Banzais. I was standing at one of the windows of the Vienna Café, whither I had been invited to lunch by Mr. Atlee Hunt to meet Mr. Alfred Deakin, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. At first I was alone, but Mr. Deakin joined me before the martial procession had passed, and as soon as the cheering had subsided he said, "Fine fellows, aren't they?" "Yes," I replied, "but what are you going to make of this portent? After your speech yesterday, when you most justly and truly praised them for the noble deeds by which they had won their high position among the nations, how are you going to deal with their application to be admitted into the Commonwealth on the same footing as other civilised people?" "Oh," he said, "we shall refuse them admission, of course, as before. This cannot affect that." "Ah," I retorted, "but how will you maintain that attitude? Suppose that they insist upon

being treated as white men and allies of Great Britain, how will you keep them out?" "We shall keep them out all right enough," he replied; "and besides, they have got their hands full in China and Korea for many years to come—much too full for them to worry about us."

I was fain to drop the subject then, but as may readily be supposed I was entirely unsatisfied with this method of disposing of a mighty issue which may be presented at any moment, and cannot but be precipitated by the language of the newspapers aforesaid.* Even the tiny squadron here present of third-class cruisers is armed and manned as if it were of battleships, and I fairly gasped with amazement to see that one of them carried a 12½-in. (66-ton) gun. I am almost ashamed to point out how absolutely defenceless this wonderful land is with practically all its portable wealth concentrated within easy reach of the sea, at the mercy of a modern fleet, and of the lamentable way in which defence is allowed to drift, in reliance unspoken, but

* When this paragraph reached Melbourne, some reporter interviewed Mr. Deakin on the subject and endeavoured to make a grievance out of it against the writer. But the Right Honourable gentleman refused to see the matter in that light, and behaved with his usual kindly courtsey; otherwise the passage should have been deleted, much as I feel its importance.

none the less definite for that, upon the immensely burdened Old Country for protection. It is inexplicable that from the point of view of self-preservation something is not done and done quickly. If only they would, as I have had several opportunities of telling them in public meetings, tax themselves to the same extent for the Navy alone as we are taxed at home, or to the extent of, say, 25s. per head of the population, they would have instead of the beggarly £200,000 per annum they now contribute, an income of £5,000,000 per annum which, in three or four years, would make either Germany or Japan think twice before attacking them, if the money were properly spent.

I am immensely grieved at the defenceless condition of this people in case of anything befalling the Mother Country in the shape of a European war. Their only hope in such a case of preserving their independence should disaster overtake the British Fleet (and we must face that possibility) would be to enlist the aid of the Japanese, whom they treat at present as savages unless they come with a fleet. It is an impossible position, and one that cannot much longer be maintained. It must be settled one way or the other, in spite of all the wrangling of professional politicians, and I can only hope that it will not be settled by force of arms,

because that could only be such a one-sided affair, could only be settled in the least desirable way by all English-speaking people.

I am leaving Melbourne much saddened. It is such a beautiful city. It represents so much of human energy and skill, and also such a vast amount of kindliness and courtesy, especially towards that country which the native-born still speaks of regretfully as Home. I was told by a great many people that I should find much of the offensive bumptiousness with which Americans speak of Britain out here. I have not found any of it. The people are, as is quite natural, fiercely resentful of criticism from anybody, and especially from the Mother Country. But they are also intensely loyal, as well as intensely self-critical. There has been quite a storm raised here just lately. The Exhibition building—State property—has been leased to a gambler, a speculator in other men's earnings, for the purposes of so-called sport, for a prize-fight. They called it a boxing competition, but we all know what that means. Several thousands of people crowded to see it, among them many prominent public men. In fact, if you can imagine the Albert Hall let for the same purpose to a prominent bookmaker for a boxing match and the leading members of both Houses of Parliament attend-

ing the show, you can imagine what it was like. There was a fierce controversy in the newspapers about it, in which all the old arguments about the manly sport were trotted out, but the result was that the speculator netted an enormous sum of money, and continues to defy the Government by keeping open gambling-houses where whosoever will may throw away his money on the possible result of a horse-race. Still, I have just read that the Government has decided that the Exhibition building shall not be used for such purposes again. That decision, however, may be rescinded to-morrow.

Now I go to Sydney, the Queen of the South. I have not said all I could say by a great deal, for there are some subjects too thorny to touch in print, but I hope all Melbourne folks will recognise how much I love their beautiful city, and how deeply I wish it well.

VIII

ON THE OLD TRACK

FORTUNATELY for me one of the fine ships of the Orient-Royal Mail Company was available at the time that I wished to leave for Sydney, so that I was able to travel in the pleasantest possible way according to my ideas, long train journeys having no charms for me. The *Ortona* was due to leave Port Melbourne railway pier at 8 in the evening, but owing to various hindrances of the usual character she did not get away until nearly midnight. But I looked my last upon the brilliant city at the time appointed, and having made myself comfortable on board did not care to go back again. Besides, I knew that I should have an opportunity of bidding a final farewell on my return journey, as it is inevitable that I pass this way, and there is always a day to spare. So that whatever points about it I have missed I shall be able to pick up in a later chapter.

At last the whole of the outward cargo is out, the last slingful has been lowered into the railway truck alongside, and immediately the clang of the engine-room gong "Stand by!" is heard. No matter what the size of the ship or the distance she may be going, her departure has no more of fuss in it than a man makes leaving his own front door for work in the morning. And in our service at any rate the tendency is to work ever more quietly, so that you shall see the whole vast fabric glide away seaward, and hear nothing save an occasional whistle or the clang of a telegraph gong. To-night, for instance; the *Ortona* is 9,000 tons, a huge monster lying stern to seaward, and secured to the wharf, alongside of which she towers, by sundry steel hawsers. One whistle and those hawsers are cast off, men on the wharf slipping their bights off the mooring-posts. A responsive whistle informs the bridge that she is free. There is a clang in the engine-room, and the great shadowy mass glides astern until clear of the pier. Then another clang orders the port propeller to go ahead, and the ship revolves almost upon her axis in ghostly fashion without the aid of the rudder. As soon as she is round far enough another message is sounded in the engine-room, "Ahead starboard!" and with both propellers

revolving the same way and the helm over to starboard she comes round to her course and is away in more than stately wise, but just as easily as a motor-car leaving a garage.

The superb management of the modern mail and passenger ocean steamers in all departments renders it possible for even the least experienced voyager to feel completely at home within an hour of the vessel's leaving the pier, even when she goes straight out to sea at once (sea-sickness, of course, always excepted); but your Australasian passenger around the coast is seldom inexperienced. The distances are great between the principal cities, but the fares are quite moderate, and the vessels are so comfortable that there is an immense and incessant passenger traffic, the percentage of travellers coastwise being at least twenty times what it is at home. And I do not see that the connecting up of the cities by railway, with its great saving of time, has lessened that percentage much—it has merely increased the numbers of those who desired to travel, but dreaded the sea journey. So, as usual, we had a large number of short-distance passengers ; in fact the *Ortona's* huge accommodation was rather severely taxed, and yet within, as I say, one hour from Port Melbourne nearly all of them were snugly in bed

and asleep, while the captain and pilot on the lofty bridge guided the big vessel through the mirk along the tortuous deep-water channel leading from Port Melbourne to Queenscliff, the Heads of Hobson's Bay, some fifty miles distant.

Daylight found a few of us kindred spirits on deck in pyjamas sniffing the keen ozone-laden air, and watching with awe and admiration the amazing miracle of the sunrise. And here let me say that while I have often experienced terrific weather in these waters, I know of no other part of the world where, when the weather is fine, a man can feel the zest of living more keenly than he can here even in summer if he be up early. But now, in what they call winter, it is delightful beyond expression. It is revivifying to the invalid who withers under a cold blast and languishes in the warm airs, but having the air exactly tempered to the happy medium cannot but feel the desire of life return, the malaise of feeble health passing away until existence puts on bright hues and the greyness of things disappears as do the morning mists before the conquering sun. We linger on and on, trying to pick out once familiar headlands from the blue outlines of the land far on our port beam, until the warning bugle sends us

scurrying below, etiquette demanding that all *déshabille* be *tabu* after 8 a.m. But only fools and ladies linger long over their toilet on board ship. Experience soon teaches the landsman to be like the sailor in that respect, and so most of us are on deck again in a few minutes, unwilling to miss the gorgeous panorama of Bass's Straits near Wilson's Promontory, which we are rapidly nearing. Here is that marvellous dome of rock rising sheer from the sea to a height of about 400 feet, and almost as symmetrical as St. Peter's, except that on the southern side a huge cavern, whose floor is 40 feet above high-water and whose roof is over 100 feet high, has been scooped out by the hand of Nature—a cave inaccessible save by the sea-birds, whom, however, I have never seen entering it: a place that impels the beholder to dare all dangers in order to investigate its mysteries, but even on a day like this, when the ocean is peaceful as the bosom of a sleeping child, the gigantic swell of the South thunders up against those sheer walls of rock, and says, in unmistakable language, that for any intruder it is the place of death.

But we glide rapidly past it at our sixteen miles an hour, round the much-dreaded Wilson's Promontory, which seems to be a gathering-point of storms, and along the picturesque

coast, passing on our way many inter-colonial steamers befouling the bright air with their black columns of smoke, the coal they burn being native, and not of a quality conducive to clean burning; that is reserved to the coal from Wales which we are still using, and in consequence showing but a misty feather from our twin funnels hardly discernible against the sky. This is the invaluable fuel which we are so eagerly selling to our enemies to be used against us in the near future. But, of course, when we give away our trade with both hands, when we send abroad our best bone and muscle, and employ wastrel alien labour instead, a little thing like selling our incomparable naval coal to the enemy is a mere detail. I was asked the other day why Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and his henchmen did not, while in power, make short work of their opportunities and invite the Germans to take possession of South Africa, tell the Colonies to look after themselves, and suggest that it was unchristian to keep Great Britain under British rule, since it was manifestly more righteous, according to Bannerman, Massingham, Stead & Co. that it should be run by Michael or Uncle Sam than by John Bull & Co. This question I could not answer, but it was a fair sample of what

every nation in the world thinks of us to-day. It is about the only thing they are agreed upon—that Britain is a sort of Jubilee Juggins, in the common slang, who stands in the market-place and invites the tricksters and the shysters of the world to come and divide between them not merely the contents of his pockets but his heritage. It is fast becoming difficult to avoid being ashamed to bear the name of Englishman.

But we are nearing Sydney and all my interest is at concert pitch, for with the exception of a couple of days, while on my passage South from Brisbane in '80, I have not been here for thirty-five years. Of course I know that the amazing beauties of Port Jackson cannot be altered by the hand of man, but I am very curious to see what the superficial changes are. In the glory of a perfect morning we draw near the Heads, so close in that I am able to pick out the track of the electric cars going to Bondi or Botany Bay, the only alteration that I can see. When to me comes a young gentleman with an awful (yes, I can't help the word) collar that almost decapitates him, and seizing me by the arm, exclaims with almost frenzied eagerness, "D'you see that gap there? That's where the *Dunbar* was lost, lemme see, ever so many years ago. Y'ore a stranger, come in

the smoke-room and have a drink, an' I'll tell you all about it." (At 7.30 a.m.!) I gaze upon him benignantly, allowing no facial sign to betray the fact that when lamp-trimmer of the old A.S.N. Co.'s boats out here thirty-five years ago I had made many grateful shillings and eke half-crowns retailing that yarn to wondering passengers. And he beams upon me through his gold-rimmed spectacles as he retails a mass of distorted fact, what time I cling to the rail and refuse to be drawn smoke-roomwards at any hazard, for I want, in the words of Wan Lung, "makee looksee go in." He finally concludes with the encomium, "Well, old chap, you're a good listener, anyhow. Come and dig me out, won't you? I room at so-and-so, and I'll show you Sydney, real; I was born here." I compose my features and accept his card, never once, thank goodness, losing command of my features; but I am equally grateful to say that I never saw him again, knowingly.

A swift pilot steamer ranges alongside, drops a boat as smartly as heart could wish, and (I timed it) in eight minutes from our "slow down" bell we were going full speed for the entrance and the boat was rehoisted on board the pilot steamer, she making frantic efforts to keep up with us as we swept grandly in

for the narrow entrance. And then came the old familiar thrill as, sweeping round the South Head with the helm almost hard a-starboard, we open the harbour, so cunningly hidden by nature that even our greatest navigator sailed past it and did not realise what lay within. The frowning scarp of the North Head towered above us in all its grim majesty, the wake made a perfect semicircle on the glassy sea, and, behold, the opening closed in behind us and all the lovely panorama of the most beautiful harbour in the world unfolded before us as we glided swiftly towards our goal. My longing eyes saw little change as yet. All was as it had been—a few dwellings dotted here and there as if haphazard among the wooded eminences, except that the trolley lines showed up here and there. A pause for the doctor, a merely perfunctory visit anyhow, and away we went again, turning a sudden corner which showed me what a splendid city Sydney has become. But a spasm of horror went through me as I noticed that the city was enshrouded in a pall of filthy smoke belching from a forest of chimneys and hiding its beauties most effectually. And I wondered mightily at the gall of Sydney folks whom I had met in London complaining about our atmosphere! However, that is a reflection that

will continually occur to the Londoner, abroad especially, after he has grown to accept it as unanswerable that London is the grimiest, gloomiest, and altogether most uninhabitable city in the world. I suppose it is a part of our national magnanimity to acquiesce in all the hard things that are said of us and the vaunts of our visitors, but I don't know whether the time has not arrived when we might with advantage talk back, in some directions at any rate.

It is now that the visitor, returning after the lapse of many years, realises for the first time what immense changes time has wrought in the appearance of a place once so familiar. Adelaide, and even Melbourne, do not impress one until close attention has been paid and improvements pointed out by residents, for in their general aspect they remain the same as they did a quarter of a century ago. But Sydney bursts upon the view, dominating its magnificent bay as the veritable Queen of the Waters, and when seen in the early dawn, before the aforesaid disfiguring pall of black smoke has been spread, beautiful and picturesque to the limit of expression. But it is in the aspect of the harbour itself that a seafarer will find the greatest change. When I came here first, thirty-five years ago, Sydney

was most noticeable for the magnificent fleets of noble sailing ships that lay reposing in all their stately beauty on the waters adjacent to the city, or were ranged all around the Circular Quay. All the grand old classic names which thrill the hearts of old sailors with memories of wonderful ocean races are associated with Sydney as with no other port in the world. The splendid fleets of Devitt and Moore, of George Thompson, the Duthies, Greens, Wigrams, represented by such flyers as the *Thermopylæ*, *Sobraon*, *Parramatta*, *Brilliant*, *Abergeldie*, *Superb*, and a host of others whose names leap to the memory, lay here as much at home as they were in London, and of course seen to much greater advantage. For Sydney lends itself so easily and naturally to maritime display, and its visitors were almost invariably of the aristocracy of the sea. No ship could hope to compete successfully for the immense valuable freightage of wool unless she were of the highest class and speed, and had also good passenger accommodation. And so the noble company of vessels which burst upon the beholder's gaze as his vessel rounded the quaint little island fort of Pinchgut impressed him mightily.

Steam was in those days only just beginning to make itself felt in shipping out here. The

P. & O. sent an infrequent ship, and a company had just crept into being which was endeavouring to institute a steam service from the Old Country with a few vessels of poor size and low power; but the dainty clippers ignored these grimy interlopers, looking down upon them as if with conscious pride in their own beauty from their splendid panoply of tophamper soaring into the skies. The Australasian coasting trade was beginning to be dominated by steamers which, however, in those days, were a collection of the quaintest freaks ever seen outside of a naval museum of antiquities. Yet such as they were they earned golden harvests for their owners in spite of their evil accommodation, their snail-like pace, and general unpunctuality. The food supplied was good and plentiful, if fairly rough in its preparation, and in any case the Colonial coasting passengers had not then learned to be fastidious. But these vessels used to sneak into Sydney and past the splendid host of sailing ships into their own out-of-the-way corner, as if ashamed of their ungainly hulls and their habit of befouling the bright air with the belching black clouds from their funnels—the result of burning native coal. They never dared to aspire to an honoured glance at the swagger curve of

Circular Quay or Sydney Cove; that was reserved for sailing ships alone. It is a beautifully-shaped indentation in the shores of the harbour, the bow of which comes into what might be called the heart of the city. Its waters are deep and uniform; in fact, it is a natural dock of the most perfect type and in the most suitable place. But in those days its shores were sloping and unembanked, so that the ships were moored as close to as they could get, and long, massive stages connected them with the bank, for it was so sheltered that this primitive arrangement was quite undisturbed by weather.

That is all altered now. There is as great a change as from the *Dido* and *Basilisk*, ancient men-of-war of the Australasian Squadron of those days to the *Powerful* and *Challenger* lying in Farm Cove adjacent, which we have just passed. The few sailing ships that are here now are anchored in out-of-the-way coves far from the city, and they look as if pitifully aware that they are only here on sufferance, that their day of pride and power has gone, never to return.

IX

THE QUEEN CITY OF THE SOUTH

CIRCULAR Quay, Sydney, is now embanked and faced in permanent and enduring fashion throughout its entire length of shore, and such splendid ships as the *Moldavia*, of the P. & O., the *Orontes*, of the Orient-Royal Mail, and the huge ships of the North German Lloyd's lie close alongside as if in dock, while all along the Circular Quay to the Darling Harbour Bridge there is splendid wharfage for the big steamships of Messrs. Howard Smith & Co., the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, and the A.U.S.N. Co., in whose hands are practically concentrated the Inter-colonial (or, as they prefer to call it, the Inter-state) trade. Here is to be found a most wonderful development of Australasian energy, and it is especially a credit to Sydney, which has always taken the lead in shipping matters out here, although

there is something very wonderful in the rise and progress in the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand. The vessels to be found lying at these wharves would be a credit to any country and any trade in the world for size, speed, and comfort of passengers. They are equipped not merely for coastal trade, but for a whole-world trade, some of them being far finer in every way than the liners from home were twenty years ago.

However, in spite of the development in the shipping trade and the rise in power of the shipping companies, there has been practically no falling-off in the status of the men who do the work. In this favoured land Jack is no inarticulate helot, doomed to spend his strength for the benefit of others, and take just what they choose to fling him contemptuously in return. The seafarers here are a highly organised body, able and willing to speak with the enemy in the gate, and the conditions under which they live are little, if any, inferior to any enjoyed by their fellow-workers ashore. The standard wages for seamen is £6 10s. per month, with, of course, an eight hours' day when in port, and a shilling per hour overtime, while firemen and trimmers get 30s. and 10s. per month more respectively. And the food is not merely good and plenti-

ful, it is excellent, and lavish in its profusion. It should be, of course, this being the land of plenty, especially in the matter of eatables. Altogether, I should be inclined to say positively that in no part of the world is the seafarer so well off in every respect as in Australasia, and certainly there is nowhere in the world where the seafarer has so much Parliamentary and Governmental influence at work for his benefit—influence which is energised by the fact that the men who use it are mostly men who have had practical experience of a seafaring life themselves.

I know I shall be confronted with a question as to whether I do not consider the position of the workers in vessels on the great American lakes superior to any others. Well, I know of those conditions, highly democratic as they are, and I unhesitatingly say that they are far inferior to those obtaining in Australasia. Assuming that the Lake business is seafaring at all and not ferrying on a fairly large scale, it must be remembered that, as in every other American institution, the men are the victims of corrupt combinations, that they cannot have good food because it does not exist—that is, according to our ideas of what constitutes good, wholesome food—and lastly, that while the wages are not higher, navigation is closed throughout

the long and terrible winter by ice. Then the prudent worker lives on his savings, the imprudent majority starve or join the ranks of the hoboes, or fight for charity, as do the other victims of that terrible city, Chicago, to which place the great majority of the vessels belong. No, there is no comparison between the two services possible.

And yet, in spite of these favourable conditions, there are always efforts being made for further improvements. I have just received a Parliamentary paper, the Report of the Royal Commission on the Navigation Bill for the Commonwealth of Australia, and its terms made me rub my eyes. Here are all the possible grievances, limitations, and disabilities of the seafarer set forth in judicial and impartial language by men who obviously know what they are talking about, and who have no fear of shipping papers, living upon shipowners' advertisements, attacking them, and defaming their characters, as some of the reptiles do who write for some of the shipping papers at home. Of course we hear the same story out here that always sounds so cynical to me, of shipowners being driven out of business by the incessant demands of the men for decent treatment, which it is impossible to grant and pay dividends, but we do not read

here, as we so often may at home, of these impoverished shipowners dying and leaving fortunes of hundreds of thousands of pounds.

In view of this satisfactory condition of things, I am extremely delighted to see that the Report already referred to contains a strong recommendation to the Government to reserve the coasting trade of Australasia to itself, excluding all oversea coming vessels of every other nation. One blot upon this sensible suggestion is, that it is proposed to treat British-owned vessels as foreigners, which is a blunder, especially in view of the tremendous fact that the British Navy constitutes the only defence against foreign aggression that Australasia possesses. And yet it is difficult to justify our claim to come upon the coast from England with our poorly paid men and much more cheaply run ships, which, after discharging their outward cargo, may go from port to port all around Australasia, carrying Inter-state freight and passengers in unfair competition with Australasian-owned vessels. But I feel sure that a compromise could be arrived at in our case —must be.* As for the Germans and French

* At the time of going to press with this book the Colonial Navigation Conference has met, and these questions have been settled, almost entirely in favour of the Colonies.

and Japanese and Americans, who so rigidly exclude all other nations from participating in what they call their coasting trade—from New York to the Philippines, for instance—they should not be allowed to carry an ounce of cargo or a single passenger from one Interstate port to another under any pretext. Germany, for instance, which pays the Nord-Deutscher Lloyd £115,000 a year subsidy for its line to Australia, on condition that it does not bring Australian produce to Germany! That is the sort of country that needs a lesson in retaliation—a lesson that I rejoice to see our Southern brethren have the wisdom to compile and the pluck to put into practice.

But all this time the *Ortona* is lying at anchor off Sydney Cove, for her meeting ship, the *Oroya*, is at her wharf, and so there must be a transhipment of passengers into a tender for conveyance ashore. This delay, which fills me with joy as affording ample opportunity for observing the changes of which I have been writing, seems to goad many of my unhappy fellow-passengers to madness, one especially who dressed himself with great care for going ashore at 7 a.m., and has ever since breakfast been carrying a case of golf-clubs and a small valise about, being specially incensed at the delay. I may say in

passing, that I arrived at my hotel at the same time as this gentleman, who, having seen his room, descended to the lounge and lolled there all the rest of the day—which thing is mysterious, but usual with fussy folks.

Every berth at Circular Quay was filled with a big steamship, and I noticed that, as in Liverpool, Prince's landing-stage is the exchange, as it were, from whence all the ferry steamers to the Cheshire shore radiate, so here at the head of Circular Quay are the same conditions in full force. Quite a fleet of fine fast boats run from the comfortable series of piers to the various points across the harbour, and for the same ridiculously small fares. The boats are naturally not so large as at Liverpool, but they are beautifully built, engined, and kept, and I noticed with great pleasure that they were almost without exception produced locally. As a very large number of Sydney's workers live in the beautiful suburbs across the bay, or bays, the morning and evening traffic is very great, as, of course, it is also at holiday-times; for your Sydney folks are not only intensely proud of their harbour, but they use it, enjoy it on every possible occasion. On landing I found another profound likeness to Liverpool, in that the great electric car system in that city centres upon the pier-

head, that is the landing-stage, so here I found a congeries of electric cars arriving from and departing to all parts, their common centre being Circular Quay. But the difference between Sydney and Melbourne is very great—greater indeed than can be described; it is to be felt immediately on landing. Sydney is a typically English city, with tortuous streets, not too wide, and wonderfully irregular buildings—a city which has grown up as our home cities have, and shows no sign of regular planning as do Melbourne and Adelaide, especially the former, which is as faultlessly regular as Philadelphia, only, of course, on a much smaller scale. And so, in spite of the long time which has elapsed since my last visit, fully twenty-six years ago, I feel at home at once but for one thing—those trolley-cars. What it is I cannot tell, but never before have I seen the overhead system so full of offence as it is here. The cars are of the American type, entered at the side and with no seats on top, and on routes where the traffic is heavy three of them will be linked together, in order to make them hold as many as one of our huge London conduit cars. But the nerve-wrenching, horrible uproar that they make, for some unexplained reason or another, is, in my

experience, at least, unparalleled. I thought it would be impossible for trolley-cars to make more row than those in Turin, but that was due to banging of the badly laid metals, and to the drivers' insane craving for performing on the huge gongs. But here the rails do not jump up and down, nor do the drivers abuse their privilege of gonging. They need not. The car itself makes a hideous combination of uproars that puts every other sound out of court in its vicinity. All conversation indoors and out must cease until it has passed, and even a brass band in full blast is silenced.

It appears as if, since the conversion of the trams into electrics, the City Fathers have not been able to agree upon the method of repaving the streets, so that the roadways, after the magnificent paving and grading of Melbourne's highways, give one a shock. They are frankly very bad, and the fact that the great main thoroughfares of Pitt and George Streets are only about half the width of Bourke and Collins Street in Melbourne, aggravates this objectionable feature. Really, the condition of Sydney thoroughfares is a great blot upon this beautiful city, which ought to be removed as speedily as possible, since, as I have often observed before, most people form their opinion

of the character of a newly visited city from the state of its roads. One point, however, I specially noticed in the management of the street-car lines which certainly puts us to shame at home. At converging and intersecting corners there will be found a small kiosk, in which sits a man whose duty it is to shift the points for cars going in different directions. This he does by moving a little lever no bigger than a man's finger, which at the same time shifts the points for a coming car and shows a light at the summit of the kiosk, as a signal that the road is clear. At home, as you all know, either the conductor or driver has got to get down and shift the points by a clumsy manipulation of a sliding knob of steel with a rod which he carries with him, or a boy who sits shivering on a stool at the roadside comes and does it, generally in imminent deadly peril of his life where the cars follow one another rapidly. In addition, there is the utter inhumanity of keeping these boys or men standing or sitting about in all the many weathers of our inclement climate for many hours, laying up for themselves an awful harvest of pain and misery by and by. The Sydney system shows how this can all be avoided and bettered, and there is absolutely no reason why it should not be followed at home.

X

SOME FRIENDLY CRITICISM

SYDNEY is a city that grows upon a visitor immensely. Not merely from its almost ideal situation as the commercial capital of a great and growing country, or from the reminders which greet you on every hand of the fight which its people have waged to make their city worthy of its splendid environment, but from its amazing likeness to our cities at home, and from the general air of *homeness*, if I may coin a word, which pervades it. This one may say without any suggestion of detriment or derogation of or to the other Australasian States, because it comes as a natural consequence, Sydney being the Mother City of them all. There is, I find, among Sydney-siders the same diffidence of self-assertion that we have at home, with one exception—their harbour. Don't, as you value

your happiness, say a word of dispraise of Port Jackson even in fun, it cannot be said in earnest. It will be taken most seriously, and will certainly be accounted unto the utterer for anything but righteousness. In other matters you may have your little joke and find your friends not at all thin-skinned, but please don't joke about the harbour.

Yet the citizens of Sydney need not fear comparison of their beloved city with any other in the world, except, as I have said, in the matter of the roads and the noise of the trolley-cars. The buildings are truly splendid, the two chief, the Post Office and the Town Hall, being certainly the finest in the whole of Australasia, and worthy to take rank with any similar buildings at home. Indeed, it is nothing short of marvellous how so comparatively small a population can manage to erect and maintain such splendid buildings as these, and many others which greet the eye on every hand. It has been said, and I believe with truth, that the vast majority of the Australasian population is to be found in the cities and towns on the seaboard, engaged in the work of distributing the imports and exports. But if this be true, what amazing energy must be manifested by the people "out back" who produce, and what would be the con-

dition of these cities if only they had a population behind them able to cope with the teeming wealth of the soil? Which raises again the eternal question of population of this vast country—a country which has as yet only been played with, but which has shown such immense productive capacity, that its possibilities fairly stagger calculation, supposing them to be dealt with intelligently.

That, however, seems past praying for—as yet, at any rate. Can you imagine anything more unutterably foolish, short-sighted—oh! the dictionary does not contain adjectives to fit the situation—than the action of the Government which has been presented to all the world this week? The Japanese squadron, of which I wrote in Melbourne, has arrived here, and has been received with a perfect tempest of acclamations, both by Press and people, with the sole exceptions of the *Bulletin*, which in its charmingly witty and brilliant manner persistently refers to the heroes of Port Arthur and Tsutshima as "monkeys," and one other newspaper, of which I can only say that its publication is a disgrace to New South Wales, and would be a disgrace to Paris, which is not squeamish. At ball and banquet and reception the Japanese were rightly received with immense enthusiasm —a reception they have earned by their deeds,

if ever men did. All honour to Australasia that, in spite of its intense dread of and antipathy to the yellow people, has thus recognised transcendent merit, both in civic and martial virtues. But while these festivities were going on, there happened to enter Port Jackson a certain steamship, the *Pacifique*, conveying six Japanese passengers to Japan. They were to be transferred to the *Kumanu Maru*, a fine mail steamer of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha, lying at the Circular Quay, but as their period of waiting extended over three days, they were naturally anxious to see the sights of Sydney and witness the reception accorded to their countrymen. They were not allowed to land! In spite of the fact that they were in transit, were clear of all suspicion of disease or anything of the sort, they were forbidden to set foot upon the sacred soil of Australia, where their naval heroes were being treated as demigods. Comment here is impertinence, but it may be pointed out that not one man in authority appeared to think that possibly a few of the 2,000 Japanese who were being thus *fêted* and made much of might be taking voluminous notes of this occurrence, and compiling a bill to be presented in the near future. I ventured to point this out to several influential people, who admitted that it savoured of idiocy on the part of the powers that be, but

also gave me to understand that it was none of my business, and that when the time came for that bill to be presented, they and the Australasian States might be trusted to—although they didn't use these exact words—muddle through it somehow. Which gave me quite a pang of home-sickness, for I recognise the speakers as veritable chips of the old block.

Of course I know that these remarks will be fiercely resented, because your Australasian (it will be noted that I no longer dare to say Colonial), while intensely eager to criticise all the rest of the world, is fully persuaded that no one has any right to criticise him, or at least the doings in his particular State. This, of course, implies that while you may in any one State criticise any other as severely as you choose, you may not criticise Australasia as a whole. This, equally, is very strange to an Englishman, who is so accustomed to having the shortcomings of his own country held up to scorn by all the rest of the world, and of calmly accepting the remarks made about her, that he is amazed when an expression of candid opinion by himself or his country's public men is taken as almost a personal insult.

The plain, unvarnished truth about the attitude of the Australasian Colonies generally towards the Mother-country is that they are

and will be intensely loyal to her as long as they may do as they like without any interference, which freewill they interpret to mean also that if the Mother-country does anything to which they object they may not only protest against it but repudiate it as not binding upon them. That they may treat Britain in the matter of trade no better than any foreign nation, while at the same time enjoying as of right all the protection that the British Empire is capable of affording them, for which they do not consider it incumbent upon them to give anything in return. I asked a prominent editor out here the other day, who was very strong in his remarks about the Old Country, what benefit he supposed she derived from the Australasian Colonies. His answer will live in my memory. He said, with an air of gracious condescension, "Why, we send you all our produce!" I was so amazed, as well as amused, that I could say nothing for a little while, and when I did it was merely to remark, "That is an advantage, certainly; but whether to you or Britain is another question."

Please let it be understood that in the foregoing I have been speaking throughout of the professional politician, whom I cannot profess to admire in whatever country he may happen to be, and not of the general public, which is

loyal, lovable, and level-headed. All the best traditions of our dear land are carried on here, and it is almost impossible for even the most nervous, morbidly sensitive man or woman to feel themselves strangers. And what strikes one as being quite touching is the way the Motherland is continually being spoken of affectionately, regretfully as "Home." You will hear it on the lips of grey-headed people who were born here (and it is surprising how many of them you meet), and have never been out of the Colony, "Ah! how I should like to go home for a trip." But the strangest of all is the way in which foreigners, such as Germans, Italians, citizens of the United States, &c., who have been domiciled out here for many years, will speak of Great Britain as home in the same way as do the Australasians.

A remarkable feature of Sydney, as of Melbourne, is the way in which the city has run over, so to speak, into suburbs; but there comparison ends between the two. For Melbourne suburbs, fine, prosperous-looking townships as most of them are, cannot be called beautiful, except where they are on the Bay, the country around being so very flat. But Sydney has every variety of scenery for which the heart could crave—hill and vale, rock and wood, while no residential suburb need be more than a few

minutes from either one of many of the beautiful bays which run into the country from the main harbour like the tentacles of some gigantic but beneficent octopus, or the shore of the mighty Pacific itself. And communication with all these places by steamer, electric car, or train is at once cheap, rapid, frequent, and easy. So that housing of Sydney folks is never likely to become a problem, and overcrowding (although there are still a few slums) is entirely unnecessary, and would not exist if a certain type of people did not insist upon violating all hygienic laws and crowding together as closely as they can get. There will always be overcrowding unless the most drastic laws are passed to prevent it, as may be seen in any English or Scotch village, where, goodness knows, there is room enough and to spare, but the villagers persist in huddling their cottages close enough together to step across the lane from the front door into another opposite.

Yes, Sydney has every scenic, natural, and healthful advantage that a city can be favoured with, while architecturally, it must be admitted, its citizens have done their duty as far as possible, remembering their limitations. Like us, they do not believe in defiling their cities with skyscrapers, but keep their buildings of a reasonable height, in accordance with the width

of the thoroughfares. Two buildings especially cannot fail to impress the most careless and casual observer—the Town Hall and General Post Office. I do no injustice to Melbourne, but only state the bare fact when I say that not only are these two really magnificent edifices far finer than the corresponding municipal erections in Melbourne, but in their position they are much more highly favoured, in spite of the fact that Melbourne's thoroughfares are so much wider and straighter than those of Sydney. But Sydney's Town Hall has what every civic structure should have, a vast open space in which to stand manifesting its glories—a position, in fact, like St. George's Hall, Liverpool, and the Town Halls of Glasgow, Manchester, and Leeds. Melbourne Town Hall, while undoubtedly a noble building, suffers much from its position at an angle of Collins and Swanston Streets, with other buildings crowding in behind it, so that from no point can more than a small portion of it be visible, and no view of it can be obtained from any farther away than across the street. And the same remarks apply exactly to Melbourne Post Office, which is at the corner of Bourke and Elizabeth Streets, and but for its grand tower would hardly be noticeable. Sydney Post Office is so magnificent in its

outlines that it entirely puts to shame the similar buildings in such great cities as Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, or Glasgow, which have nearly double Sydney's population. And its situation is a peculiarly advantageous one in that, although it is in the heart of the city and bounded on two sides by the comparatively narrow yet noble thoroughfares of Pitt and George Streets, it has an exceedingly wide space on its immense frontage which already has some grand companion buildings on the opposite side of it, and will doubtless soon be completely edified and in full keeping with the stately façade of the Post Office, which fills the entire front of the block between the two main thoroughfares of the city. A curious but pretty feature of the fine promenade along the front of the Post Office, the busiest part of the city during the day, is the number of flower-sellers (all men), who stand at the edge of the pavement with huge baskets of glorious blooms before them. These they vend in great bunches, tightly tied up and as large as a medium cabbage, at a uniform rate of sixpence each, which leads to the belief that everything which grows in this marvellous country is characterised by a uniformity of cheapness. And of course I was told that, being winter, the show was nothing compared with its summer beauty.

XI

THE KING OF NEW ZEALAND

TO-DAY I have had a veritable treat. By the courtesy of a few friends I was privileged to go and visit the *Sobraon*, that grand old flyer which, under Captain Elmslie, brought out from England to this Colony so many of her leading citizens. She is in her way almost as classic as the *Mayflower* or the *Argo*, although towering mightily above them in beauty, size, and comfort for those who sailed in her. And she has met a far happier fate than have the majority of the celebrated old clippers of the bygone days. It gives the old sailor's heart a severe pang when he occasionally comes across a ship which in her day of glory was an honour to command; to be her master conferred brevet rank and dignity which nothing could rob a man of, even though, as, alas! was often the case, he descended from her wreck to a beggared

old age; sold to the Norwegians, Italians, or even to some Indian coasting firm for a drudge and a byword. Some of these old flyers perished gloriously, but most of them were degraded into timber droghers or country-wallahs, without even the consolation that their shame was hidden under a change of name.

Not so the *Sobraon*. Trim and taut as ever she was in her prideful days as the premier ship *sailing* to Sydney from England, she now lies snugly moored in one of the most beautiful bays of that most splendid of all harbours. She belongs to the Government of New South Wales, and it is her grand mission to receive and deal with those waifs and strays who in this country, with its floating and polyglot population, have drifted or may readily drift into crime. She is at once a reformatory, an elevator, and a school of the best type. And the proof of her usefulness is found in the splendid results shown from most unpromising material. For not only are many of the boys here the result of the most curious miscegenation, Chinese, negroes, aborigines, and every European race being mingled and producing some extraordinary blends, but they have, by reason of neglect and freedom of the wild, often become literally young savages. Yet so wise is the rule and so excellent the training that from this queer raw material

there is turned out a really fine finished product. All the officers are enthusiasts. I protested against the boys being put through their facings to make a show for me, but I found that to refuse to witness what they could do would give not only the officers but the boys entirely unnecessary pangs of disappointment. So of course I yielded, and was exceedingly glad I did, for the spectacle I was treated to was an inspiring as well as an illuminating one. Also, the fates being propitious, during the exercises the Premier of the Colony, Mr. J. H. Carruthers, with the Japanese Admiral Shimamura and his staff, and a host of representative ladies and gentlemen, came alongside in a steamer and *assisted* at the function.

I have never seen anything better done, and as for the singing of the boys, well, there must be something in Australian air that makes for excellence of the vocal powers. I have never heard children sing as they sing here. I heard the children sing at rehearsal in the Town Hall for Empire Day, and was astounded at the purity and volume of their voices, and the same characteristics were noticeable here in the vocalisation of these whilom waifs. Be it remembered that they do not all become sailors; many of them go into other employments, for which they become eminently fitted here, being

taught trades in addition to the peculiarly salt-water training, which fits a man to help himself, to cook, wash, mend, and rise to the occasion whatever it may be.

The food is, as might be expected here, super-excellent and plentiful, but even then there are certain luxuries, such as boys love, which may be earned by good behaviour and diligence. There are other privileges, too, as well as rewards, which may be earned in the same way, and in consequence the percentage of punishments is so low that it savours of necromancy how such boys can so readily be brought under the wholesome standard of sea discipline. And to crown all, the *Sobraon* has now a tender called the *Dart*, which is rigged as a topsail schooner and has besides a set of engines and boilers, in which the boys who wish to go to sea are trained under actual sea conditions to become deck hands or firemen, as the case may be. To sum up, the institution is a great credit to Australia, not merely to New South Wales alone, for the practical way in which it deals with the waif problem, for the object-lesson in discipline and its value which it daily presents to a people never enamoured of discipline and continually growing more impatient of the slightest restraint, and for the excellent results it shows.

Of course they (the powers that be) have been exceptionally fortunate in securing so perfectly adapted a ship as the *Sobraon*, and also in their superintendent of this fine enterprise, Captain W. H. Mason, whose ability, energy, and enthusiasm for his work is beautiful to witness, while it is also very pleasant to hear him speak of the manner in which his efforts are aided and backed up by the Government, no matter of what political complexion it may happen to be at the time when supplies are being voted.

And now the time draws near when I must leave Sydney for that wonderland of the South, New Zealand—leave it, too, without having had more than the slightest opportunity of visiting the interior of the country. But to tell the truth, with the exception of a few points, such as the marvellous Jenolan Caves, I have little desire to do so, knowing full well the conditions that obtain and that everywhere I shall see the same problem presenting itself, the same reason why, with all this vast area of rich country, half of the population shall be gathered within the area of a few square miles on the shores of Port Jackson.

The dire want of tillers on the soil, the men to take advantage of all that bounteous Nature has provided, is manifest everywhere outside the

area of great cities like Melbourne and Sydney, while at home we have the endless cry for work, in order that those willing to work may live. It is intensely saddening to see, but there are not wanting signs that the people are awaking to what they are beginning to find is a deadly danger to their future in the coming great struggle for Empire. If only the politicians could or would cease their squabbling and hit upon some sensible plan in the working of which they could all agree! But as they very justly say, they get no object-lessons in political agreement or sensible adoption of workable plans for the removal of difficulties in the way of reform from Governments at home, pointing sarcastically to the Education Act imbroglio. And then the English visitor is fain to remain silent for very shame's sake.

Since coming to Australia, although I have met and conversed with active politicians of both parties, I have never heard a political speech until coming here. It is true that at a private official dinner tendered to Admiral Shimamura and his staff by the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, Mr. Alfred Deakin, I heard the latter make a speech, but it was scarcely political, nor was it for publication. It was a magnificent panegyric upon the prowess in war and virtues in peace of the

Japanese, delivered with great force and fluency and entirely extempore. Compared with the mumbling, halting, exasperating delivery of some of our principal legislators at home, it was a performance to fill one with envious admiration; but of course it could not be forgotten that the speech was not being reported, and that in any case the issues at stake were not in any sense momentous.

But I was invited to a banquet given in the Hotel Australia, where I was staying, by the New Zealanders in Australia to Mr. R. J. Seddon, who has just arrived here on a visit, and, curious to see the uncrowned King of New Zealand, I went. A massive man with a leonine head in front, but sloping curiously forward from the nape of the neck to the occiput, as if the back of the head had been sliced off diagonally. A hearty man who ate and drank vigorously and was almost boisterously jolly. The chairman of the banquet in his speech of welcome to their distinguished guest was in serious difficulties, being essentially a man of action rather than speech, and it was hard to say whether he suffered most in delivery or his hearers in listening. At the conclusion of the drinking of his health Mr. Seddon rose to reply, amid yells of "Kia ora! Haeremai! Ake, Ake," and other Maori salutations, and a perfect

hurricane of stamping and hand-clapping. He began to speak portentously, uttering the baldest platitudes with a force and gravity that almost compelled belief that these commonplaces were now being uttered for the first time, having sprung into being there and then from the mighty brain of the speaker. For an hour he went on thundering out nothings which were received with rapturous applause whenever he paused for breath, and dispensing grave personal advice to the bunglers at Government in Britain, who were personally responsible for all the grave social evils that abound, all of which might be removed by wise legislation such as the speaker had been so largely responsible for in New Zealand. At last he sat down amid frenzied plaudits, having literally hypnotised the bulk of his audience by his magnetic and powerful personality, while taking an hour to utter what could easily have been stated in five minutes.

That, however, was but the beginning of his labours. In proposing some healths and responding for others he made four more speeches of about a quarter of an hour each before the meeting broke up, and then descended to the winter garden, where a reception had been arranged, the guests to which had been waiting for over an hour for the great man's appear-

ance. He was greeted with rapturous applause again, and proceeded to make another long speech which I only heard the echoes of afar off, for I fled to a restful corner and meditated. But it lasted fully three-quarters of an hour. Yet I learn that he has come over here for a rest from his arduous official labours in order to avoid a breakdown! Curiously enough, this man on his vacation literally dominated the Australian politicians, talked to them as if they were well-meaning but ignorant beginners, and was *fêted* to the highest point. He got no rest, but that seemed to trouble him not at all. I was fain to ask some of his New Zealanders if they could tell me the secret of his power, and without exception their replies resolved themselves into this: that he never forgot a friend, however humble, and had a rare art of first browbeating and then conciliating his opponents; that he always had his ear to the ground to find out what the people wanted, and when he knew he bent his whole strength to give it to the party that was strong enough to demand it. This and his genius in being hail-fellow-well-met with even the raggedest loafer whom he had ever been friendly with, and that in any place, however public; gave him a popularity, in a land where men and women have adult suffrage, that nothing could shake.

And on top of it all he had, like Mr. Gladstone, a beautiful and sympathetic home-life, lived in the open air of public scrutiny. There were no skeletons in his family cupboards, and this feature has always been and will always be an immense factor in any public man's success in Britain or a British Colony.

I have said enough for the present about Mr. R. J. Seddon, although just now he seems to be the one force which counts out here, all the other political personages being but pigmies beside him, although the whole country which he rules so successfully has not nearly double the population of either Melbourne or Sydney. He certainly is a portent, a man whom even his bitterest opponents are bound to admire and respect for his many wonderful qualities, and perhaps most of all for his amazing vigour at a time of life—sixty-one—when, especially with his corpulent figure, he might reasonably be expected to slow down a bit. Instead of which he is making a triumphal tour of the Australasian States, being everywhere received with the honours usually accorded to a great potentate.

The day arrives when I am due to leave Sydney for Auckland, and reluctantly I tear myself away from all the delights of this most beautiful and hospitable spot; only to find that the fine steamer of the Huddart Parker Line,

which divides with the Union Company of New Zealand the monopoly of the Australasia-New Zealand trade, in which I was to sail, has been suddenly held back a day for no other reason obvious but the pleasure of the managers. Oh, they carry matters with a high hand out here, and if you object, well, you can so amuse yourself if you will, but it comes to nothing! I went down and had a look at the vessel though, and was filled with admiration at her fine proportions and splendid passenger accommodation. She is quite as large and far more finely fitted than the ocean liner of a quarter of a century ago, being nearly 3,000 tons register, and having all her appointments for the comfort of passengers up to date. But this business of Intercolonial shipping has grown to stupendous proportions and cannot be dealt with casually at the fag end of a chapter, so it must stand over.

XII

TOWARDS MAORILAND

AS I mentioned in a previous chapter, your Australasian is essentially a wanderer, and the huge distances involved have no terrors for him. Land travel, except where the railways run, is slow, painful, difficult, and often dangerous, although essentially romantic. But where business is concerned romance has little scope, and delay is to be avoided at all costs. Consequently, from the very earliest days of the Colonies there was an attempt made to satisfy the needs of the travelling public by making communication by sea as safe and easy as could be. The efforts of the pioneers in this direction met with great and well-deserved success, but side by side with their growth in power and wealth came the demands of the seamen and firemen to share. These demands were favoured by successive Colonial Governments, which have

always had the interests of the workers at heart, being usually composed of men who had been hand-workers themselves. Of course, in the result the workers always won, amid the plaints of the shipowners who predicted ruin to their enterprises if such wages and such food were made compulsory. But the lugubrious prophecies of evil have not been fulfilled, even in the remotest sense, for to-day the coastal trade of Australasia is without a parallel in the world.

Indeed it seems almost miraculous, remembering the paucity of the population, how so immense a fleet can be maintained. Take, for instance, the Union Company, which, when I was in New Zealand thirty-three years ago, was just a babe in swaddling clothes with four or five small steamers. To-day it has a fleet of fifty-five fine steamships, including a veritable ocean flyer, the turbine *Maheno*—a pioneer, really, in ocean navigation for this part of the world. The headquarters of this giant Company are at Dunedin, a city of less than 60,000 inhabitants or one-fifth of the population of the Borough of Camberwell, in London. Yet, great as this Company is and splendid as are the services it renders, it has not been able to keep the whole of the coasting trade of these islands, with their population of less than 900,000, in its own hands. It has to share the trade with another growing

firm, that of Huddart, Parker & Co., and smaller local firms like the Northern Steamship Company. Of course, the efforts of these firms are not alone confined to New Zealand. They maintain a constant communication between Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, and the Union Company sends its ships farther afield with great success to China, Japan, San Francisco, and Vancouver. It would not, I think, need a very great stretch of their energies for them to compete for the home trade (to Britain, I mean) with such giants as the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company, the New Zealand Shipping Company, and Messrs. Tyser & Co. But I do not think they will bother about that as yet, since the Intercolonial trade is in so prosperous a condition, in spite of the high wages and good conditions of life accorded to the sailors and firemen.

In Australia, while there is no such phenomenally large Company working as the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, we have wonderful evidences of the virility and enterprise of the seafaring element. Not only in the Australasian United Steam Navigation Company, and Howard Smith & Co., with several minor Companies to serve the coast, but there are such Companies as Messrs. Gibbs, Bright & Co. and Messrs. Currie & Co., who devote themselves

to trade with India, China, and Malaysia, and, of course, possess steamers capable of holding their own with any deep-water ships owned by any other nation. I only mention this to show how, in spite of the short-sightedness of the rulers of this wonderful country in keeping the population down, the breed holds true and the mercantile fleet of Australasia is, in proportion, far greater than that of Great Britain—in proportion, that is, to population; any other comparison would be manifestly unfair. It is really difficult to realise how, in a city with a population of less than 60,000 inhabitants Dunedin, not by any means the first, but the fourth, in point of population in a land that numbers less than 900,000 all told, there should be owned a fleet of steamships worthy to take its place with those of any great Company in the world.

It is, I think, a portent of considerable magnitude that these Antipodean States are reaching out so vigorously after the oversea trade, as distinguished from the Intercolonial business. Messrs. Archibald Currie & Co., of Melbourne, trade with India, and are building ever larger and larger steamers to sustain the bulk of their rapidly growing business. Messrs. Gibbs, Bright & Co., and Messrs. Burns, Philp & Co., reach out after the Polynesian trade and the immense

business that is being done in the Eastern Archipelago, Singapore, Malaysia, and China. The Union Company goes even farther afield, connecting the Northern Island up with Australasia *viâ* Vancouver, and straining every nerve to make the mail service in this direction as effective, despite the increased distance, as that carried on by the jerry-built ships of the American O.S.S. Company. By the utter short-sightedness and supineness of our rulers at home, the beautiful Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands became the property of the United States, who, in pursuance of their fixed policy, immediately declared them to be a portion of the United States coast, and excluded foreign —that is British—trade, between them and San Francisco or any other Yankee port. Is it any wonder that everybody out here grows restive at the unaccountable oscillations and vacillations of British policy, if the treatment of the Society Islands, Navigator Islands, New Hebrides, and New Guinea questions could be called a policy of anything else but drift and relinquish? It seems impossible for our rulers to realise that every port annexed by a foreign power means its being practically closed to British trade whether home or colonial. But these things are fully and practically realised here, and are bitterly resented.

At present, however, I am principally concerned with my departure from Sydney in this fine ship *Zealandia*, which is as perfect in her equipment, as up-to-date in every respect as any ocean liner, and, as I before mentioned, fully as large as the early ships of the Orient Line, such as the *Garonne*, *John Elder*, *Lusitania*, or *Cuzco*. As she slips away from her wharf and we glide quietly seawards, my mind flies back to the days of thirty-five years ago when I used to make the trip we are now on twice a month in a ship that, although only about one-third the size of this, was one of the finest coasters in the whole of Australasia, the *Wentworth*. I look somewhat wistfully at the beautiful panorama, wondering whether I shall ever behold it again, but thankful that I have once more been privileged to renew my acquaintance with one of the most beautiful spots on earth.

My almost invariable luck still holds, for the sea is like a mill-pond, this stretch of ocean between Australia and New Zealand not being a *Mare Serenitatis* by any means, as a rule. We have a fairly large number of passengers, many of whom belong to a theatrical company on tour, my first introduction to a travelling troupe. As there are only two classes in these ships, first and steerage, we have a curious gathering in saloon and smoke-room of scene-

shifters, actors, and all the rest of the extraordinary "push" that goes to make up a theatrical company. But it is a typical little democracy, the manager of the whole show being on the best and most intimate possible terms with every member of his company down to the least important. To my mind, however, the most remarkable feature of this business is that there is a company of thirty children, of ages ranging from eight to fourteen, who are a study in themselves. They are the most precocious small people I have ever met, and yet not offensively so, like that terror in miniature, the American child. They are evidently as happy as it is possible for children to be, and every grown-up member of the company without exception is devoted to them, although they really seem to be unspoilable. They have, of course, a matron and a doctor in attendance upon them, and I understand that when they are ashore they attend school every forenoon. Healthier, happier, brighter children I never saw, their very business being a supreme delight. But glad as one must feel at seeing a lot of small folks having such a manifestly good time, the thought would persistently obtrude itself—what about their future? This gadding about from place to place in the company of people who, however kind, are not

notable for a sense of responsibility, is most unsettling, and few indeed of these youngsters, either boys or girls, will be able to settle down again until middle age; while what is going to become of them during that awkward interregnum during which they are too old for their present business and not old enough, assuming they have the talent, for ordinary actors and actresses nobody seems to know or care. At present they are certainly living up to the letter of the Gospel injunction to take no thought for tomorrow, and, at any rate, they are having a splendid time.

In a blaze of golden sunset we sight the Three Kings, those outlying northern sentinels of New Zealand which will now always be remembered for the horrors attendant upon the wreck of the *Elingamite* only a few years ago. Curiously enough that terrible story—as it was so fully reiterated about the civilised world I need not now re-tell it—completely overlaid my early recollections of the Three Kings, all fortunately very pleasant. As a small boy in a Sydney steamer bound to Auckland I often saw them and always in fine weather, while again in a whaleship as a young man I have circled around their grim pinnacles, and never saw them veiled in the tempest spray which these stern seas can always raise upon the slightest provocation. Be sure I

was up early in the morning, for the view along the north-east coast of New Zealand if the weather is fine is not to be beaten anywhere, more especially as you near the Hauraki Gulf and begin to approach Auckland. The fine weather still held, and the sun, blazing out of a cloudless sky, illuminated every crag, islet, and beach as we sped up the splendid sound to where grim Rangitoto waits like a stern sentinel over the smiling harbour, whose entrance he guards. I suppose living constantly within sight of a volcano, whether it be active or extinct, as long as its activity is not pronounced, tends to oblivion of its potentialities. But I confess that in my youthful days I never entered or left Auckland without glancing fearfully upwards at the crater of Rangitoto, as do visitors to Naples at Vesuvius, and wondering whether some day or other the giant Enceladus would awake from his slumbers and involve all that busy, beautiful environment in one heap of smoking ruins, *Absit omen*, and yet remembering the gigantic upheaval which caused the ruin of the pink and white terraces a quarter of a century ago, and, as geologists tell us, was only prevented from overwhelming this beautiful town by an extraordinary barrier of strata beneath the soil which shed the earth tremors off as a breakwater sheds the waves, it is impossible for an

outsider who has been a frequent visitor to avoid having some such reflections as these. Fortunately for the progress of the world, the condition of mind of dwellers in seismic districts is closely akin to that of consumptives. It is a truism how a poor fellow in the last stages of phthisis will look commiseratingly upon a fellow-sufferer perhaps not nearly so far gone, and say, "Poor chap! he can't last long." When you anxiously inquire after the speaker's health he assures you, between bursts of coughing, that it is vastly improved, and really he has hardly ever felt better in his life. And so, in spite of St. Pierre, of Vesuvius, or of San Francisco, the volcano-encircled towns of the world go steadily on their way without apparently giving a thought to what may happen at any hour. Which, of course, is just how it should be, if our life is to be lived at all in decent fashion.

Ah! here we are in Auckland. But, dear me, I hardly know the place, and have to look back to Rangitoto to get my bearings. There is, of course, the same splendid land-locked harbour, but in my day there was one wharf with a "T" at its end, and the smaller fry of schooners and such-like, which in those early days Auckland was famous for building, had to be content with tiny jetties or an outer berth in the anchorage. And now the whole

water-front of the city is a labyrinth of wharves, which, being yet all too small, are being extended with the utmost energy. No docks are needed in this entirely peaceful and land-locked bay, but wharves, wharves, and ever more wharves, to accommodate the trade of the Britain of the South. It is a splendid object lesson in the maritime instincts of the British race that this city, whose total population is about one-fifth of a big London parish, should have an oversea trade of such enormous dimensions as to require the expenditure of millions on the wharfage accommodation!

XIII

THE PARADISE OF LABOUR

UPON landing from the steamer, and strolling up the pier towards the well-remembered Queen Street, I was puzzled to account for the fact that the pier seemed shorter than it used to be. But I set it down to my being so much younger then, and to having seen so many big things of late years. I could not, however, help feeling that the rows of big warehouses crowding along the front were much closer to the water's edge than any buildings had been in my time, and I seemed to remember also that the water used to come up into the town unhindered until it chose to retire. Now, however, its entry was severely restricted, and I was not at all surprised to learn that, along the whole water-front, over half a mile at least, one hundred yards in width of land had been reclaimed and built upon. It may be asked why, in a new country like this,

it should be worth while to spend money in reclaiming land from the sea when there is so much land unoccupied. But when you learn that the price of land in the city of Auckland ranges from £20 per foot frontage up to a figure which closely approximates to that in most parts of London, and that building land in even the remote suburbs of Auckland is fetching to-day £400 per acre, you will not be surprised, however much, like myself, you wonder at the reason for this state of things.

Nevertheless, Auckland as a city is disappointing—distinctly so. It has one fine street, a really splendid wide and straight thoroughfare, but in that street there are only two decent buildings, one of which is, appropriately enough, the Auckland Savings Bank; all the rest, though some of them are pretentious enough, are mean, and unworthy of the first city of New Zealand in point of population (and some say of wealth), being either jerry-built of brick and stuccoed over, or of wood. Now, of all mean shams that my soul abhors, it is the imitation stone-building of which the early Victorian era in London furnished so many hideous examples. Good honest brick-work, or even wood-work that looks what it is, I like, but stucco, hiding, as it always does, the most slovenly and unreliable brick-work, and showing

after a few weeks its misery in the shape of numberless cracks, and even crevasses (I saw one public building, before I had been five minutes ashore, which had to be propped up as if there had been an earthquake), is beneath contempt, and should never be encouraged by an independent and outspoken people. I know I shall be reminded of the lack of suitable building stone in this volcanic country, and the cost of getting stone here from other parts of New Zealand where it is abundant; but that is not to the point. There is plenty of brick—the best of brick—and abundance of the most beautiful timber the world grows, wherefore stucco, the sham of shams, should be anathema. Fortunately I shall be out of the country before the Plasterers' Union can be out after me, so I do not care.

Then there seems to be something lacking in so prosperous a city in that there are so many mean streets and only one really good thoroughfare. The city looks unkempt, dishevelled, as if it had not yet made up its mind whether to rise to the height of a metropolis or sink to the depth of a village. It looks fortuitous, and although it certainly does not fall to the level of the average American city of its size, it does not rise to the occasion like Perth, Western Australia, for instance, although

comparisons are odious; but I would like to know why! On every hand may be heard tales of the abounding prosperity of the country, and I have ever found that when business men are contented with the way things are going, and say so, the visitor, more especially if he be not one to whom something may be sold in order to get rid of it, may depend upon it that things are even better than they seem. Wages are high, food is plentiful and cheap, and, indeed, all the necessaries of life are cheap in comparison with the standard of wages. Only land seems dear out of all proportion to the prosperity of the country.

This is indeed the paradise of labour. Practically all legislation is shaped with an eye to what the worker with his hands will think of it, and men who at home are classed with the demagogues, and treated as dangerous subverters of law and order, here make the laws, administer them, and rule the roost generally. I have been introduced to several men whom I should at once have recognised anywhere as journeymen carpenters, masons, plasterers, &c., with horny hands and an utter absence of the graces or delicacies of speech, and told that they were J.P.'s., members of the House of Representatives, or leaders of societies wielding enormous power. It is not necessary, nay, it is almost impossible, for strikes to occur, since every

question of hours and wages is submitted to Courts of Arbitration having all the powers of legal tribunals. Strangely enough, the capitalists profess to like this state of affairs. I anxiously looked for some sign of insincerity in their remarks to me upon the subject, but could not detect any at all. So I was, and am, compelled to believe that they are at least contented to acquiesce in this condition of matters. Then it must also be remembered that many quite large employers of labour are themselves what we are pleased to call working men, that is, they still work at the bench with hammer and saw, lathe and file, among the men whom they employ, and their distance from employed to employer is not yet great enough for them to have lost touch with their men.

One splendid result of this close equality of capital with labour is that there is no room for the whining rascal who gets so much utterly undeserved sympathy and the lion's share of pauper-making doles at home, the workshy or unemployable. He could not exist here. I do not quite know what they would do with him, but I am perfectly sure that he could not live here for any length of time. It is a land of workers, not loafers; and while for the worker who is unfortunate in any way there is every help and encouragement, for the class for which

our sentimentalists who call themselves socialists at home are mainly responsible, there is nothing available but elimination, and that very swiftly. This goodly position of the worker is not confined to the outside workers only, the journeyman mechanic, labourer, &c., but it extends to the class which at home with us is so terribly handicapped in small business and in large wholesale houses, counter-salesmen and clerks. The majority of shops close at six, only a few refreshment-houses, tobacconists, &c., remaining open. No such spectacle is possible here as that which I have often seen at home at certain seasons of the year, when employees must work practically all night as a set-off to the fact that they get a fortnight's holiday in the year without pay. Or of the shops which, under the stress of competition, keep their pale slaves on their feet from eight in the morning until ten at night, and on Saturdays until twelve. Everything that can be done is done in the direction of early closing, even to the hotels (there are no public-houses here) whose bars are closed rigidly at ten o'clock, and on Sundays may not open at all. Nay, so far is this carried that, if you are staying in an hotel, you may not have a visitor to see you after ten, or on Sundays at all, lest you should be tempted to offer him fluid hospitality, and thus evade

the law which declares that no man may drink intoxicants during prohibited hours, except in the privacy of his own permanent or temporary home. Local Option is carried out to its fullest extent, and has some queer results where a district closed to the sale of liquor ranges with one that is open. But there is no gainsaying the fact that all that can or may be done by what we at home know by the opprobrious epithet of grandmotherly interference to discourage the consumption of strong drink, is done.

In many other ways what we call the liberty of the subject is interfered with, the distinct proviso being laid down that the law may punish any person for doing anything which is harmful to his neighbour. Which, of course, strikes at the root of monopolies, and of all those evils which usually accompany the building up of enormous fortunes out of the woes of the wage-earner. And yet, of course I suppose, there are evils attendant upon all this dry-nursing—evils which I have heard liberally descanted upon by citizens, but will not enlarge upon myself because, in the first place, I am not likely to come here to live, and next because I am too grateful for the removal of many of the horrible diseases of the body politic which are rampant at home, and can there, alas, only be cured now by drastic remedies involving

much suffering to innocent people. Of course you have heard all about the old-age pension system out here, which is now about to be extended to Australia. I am not sufficient of an actuary to know what it will eventually cost, but I do know that at present it is hailed with intense satisfaction by all classes, who pride themselves upon having solved a problem that has baffled all the civilised nations. More than that, a public-spirited citizen of Auckland has erected and endowed a really beautiful building in one of the most romantically picturesque suburbs of Auckland, which is called the "Costley" home for aged people, and is on the lines of what we at home should call an almshouse or set of almshouses. Here with their pensions the old folks can, and do, live most comfortably, having entire liberty to do what they please, just as if they had retired upon a competency of their own earning. And, indeed, they are led to regard the old-age pension in that very light. In such a practical community as this it is, perhaps, superfluous to add that every care is taken to exclude from the benefits of the pension scheme all those whose habits of drunkenness and laziness have made them unworthy of its provisions. It really does not put a premium upon wasteful debauchery.

When I was last in Auckland, thirty-five years

ago, I used to be much amused and interested in watching the Maories, both men and women, strolling about the streets with a lordly air of indifference to everything under the sun but their own ease and comfort. The idea of work of any kind seemed entirely foreign to their nature, and although they were gratefully taking to the white man's style of dress, it was very slowly, and the mixture of native and European costume produced some grotesque effects. It was very funny to see a Maori belle dressed from top to toe in what she had been led to consider was the height of European fashion, plump suddenly down on the nearest convenient spot and hastily remove the tight boots which had been making her hobble like a Chinese lady. Tying them together with a piece of string, she would sling them over her shoulder, then producing and lighting a short, black pipe, she would resume her leisurely way sublimely indifferent to what anybody thought of her carefree proceedings. And the older natives were often dressed in a complete native garb, save that they wore trousers. It helped one to realise how near to the native times of supremacy we were to see these calm-eyed Maories strolling along the streets gazing at the strange sights but never manifesting any surprise or even interest.

And now, so long after, I find almost as many natives about as I did then. You meet them everywhere, not now in native garb it is true, but wearing, with a curious alteration of set and cut, the ordinary European raiment. The women, too, hang skirts and jackets upon their stalwart bodies, but I did not see any more tight-fitting boots, most of the ladies wearing generous men's sizes and shapes for ease, while they also chose to wear, as being more comfortable and useful, men's wideawake hats secured with hatpins. The short pipe is still in constant evidence, also the tattooing on the chin which marks the married woman, while a child is often seen slung on her back in true native fashion all the world over. One thing excited my attention, in view of the statement made that this splendid race is slowly dying out—it is the magnificent build of many of the men. It is well known, of course, how fine a human animal the Maori half-breed makes, but I have seen many full-blooded Maories here whose physique was that of the Farnese Hercules, a splendour of trunk and limbs that even the slouching way in which their clothes are flung on them could not hide. But nothing will ever make the native take to the idea of steady, settled work—fixed hours for anything; it is unnatural to expect it, and, as far as I can

see, the ruling powers of New Zealand do not expect it. They educate the Maori, give him a goodly share in the Government, treat him with kindly respect, and do nothing to hinder him from retaining his ancient language, but they do not commit the blunder of supposing that he will become a European.

I have been for a drive to-day around the suburbs known as Mount Eden and One Tree Hill, from whence a peculiarly beautiful and comprehensive view of Auckland and its lovely environs can be obtained. But in spite of the beauty of the country and the luxuriance of the verdure, the air of prosperity manifest by the neat and sometimes handsome dwellings dotted about everywhere, and the wealth of flowers—the arum lily especially growing in masses by the waysides as if it were a noxious weed—one grim feature of the landscape would exclude every other consideration. Auckland is literally hemmed in on the landward side by a ring of craters of extinct volcanoes; nay, it would almost seem as if the whole region had once been one vast volcano, like Mauna Loa in the Sandwich Islands, having many vent-holes. Evidently the present quiet condition of things has lasted for many hundreds of years, and I fervently hope that no uneasy demon will arise to mar that ancient peace.

XIV

A UNIVERSAL SHOCK

THE pious aspiration with which I closed my last chapter has not been quite fulfilled. The earth mother is quiet, thank Heaven, but the minds of the people have been stirred as by some mighty disaster. On Monday, June 11th, the news was suddenly flashed across from Sydney to the whole of New Zealand that the *Oswestry Grange* had returned to Sydney, whence she had sailed on the preceding day, with R. J. Seddon dead. It is almost impossible to convey to you at home what a sensation this news made. We all love the King, but it is with an impersonal affection; we shout and cheer for the various political leaders of our party according to our tastes; but here it was as if the country had been smitten with an irretrievable disaster. The visitor forgot the smallness of the number of people affected as

he realised the extraordinary consternation this sudden death produced among all classes, even those who had been most violently opposed to him politically. I was staying at the time in an hotel kept by an amiable Hebrew, and in consequence largely frequented by gentlemen of that faith (who, by the way, are particularly numerous and influential in Auckland), and it was to me amazing to see the grief of all, the genuine sorrow manifested, and hear the sentiments of deep affectionate regret that were uttered by the landlord and his friends.

The secret of this amazing popularity seemed to be that first and foremost the deceased Premier, while he magnified his office and never failed to magnify New Zealand also, was essentially accessible to all, hail-fellow-well-met with Tom, Dick, and Harry. He never, so it was said, put on "side," unless he were dealing with magnates who endeavoured to put it on with him, when he would be aggressively, almost ferociously, self-assertive. It has been repeatedly stated that he was offered a peerage at home, but refused. This man, so essentially of the people, who, like so many other men in power in this new and thriving country, had toiled at many humble occupations in order to earn a living, and who, when he had obtained the summit of power out

here, lived in simplest style without a trace of ostentation, was wise enough and courageous enough to refuse such an honour as most men will toil and intrigue and spend fabulous sums in trying to obtain, because, so people here say, and I am fain to believe, he knew that as a peer he would have been a nonentity, but as plain Dick Seddon he was really the uncrowned King of New Zealand. Naturally his essentially Socialistic policy was fiercely assailed by those whose privileges and profits it curtailed, and nothing less than ruin was predicted for the country so subjected to political experiments of the most drastic order. But although it is for the present beside the mark to say that, so far from the country being ruined, it was never more prosperous than it is now, it is curious, almost pathetic, to note how all the voices of controversy are hushed, how all parties, all newspapers, unite in doing honour to the man whose proudest title was Digger Dick. There has been, as far as I have been able to hear, not one dissentient voice raised against the chorus of eulogy, and there certainly has been none of that indecent exultation so often painfully manifested at home on the death or downfall of one of our great men by the party opposed to him.

During the later years of his life Richard

John Seddon was exceptionally fortunate, over and above the position he earned by Titanic toil. But in nothing was he more fortunate than in the manner and time of his passing away. It must be remembered that he had just closed such a triumphal progress through the chief cities of the Commonwealth of Australia as a monarch, even the proudest, might have envied. He came to Australia as his own ambassador to endeavour to effect a closer union between the Commonwealth and New Zealand in matters of legislation, and especially in the direction of a reciprocal tariff. How far his self-imposed mission was a success it is as yet too early to say, but it is certain that he dominated the Australian politicians like a giant towering above pigmies. One would have thought that New Zealand was the great State and Australia the small to read the speeches made and the editorial comments thereupon. In fact Seddon seemed to hypnotise the politicians as he did the ordinary banqueters of whom I spoke in a previous chapter, so that even such a platitudinous and vulgar plagiarism from the arrogant Yankee as his frequently uttered allusion to New Zealand as "God's own country" was always rapturously applauded and received as the coinage of his own brain, a happy idea

such as no other mind would be capable of receiving. This description of New Zealand was especially pleasing to Seddon's warmest supporters, the Maories, who are all nominally Christian now, and who all firmly believe that he was the inventor of the epithet.

And then, when this triumphal progress culminated in Sydney and he had embarked for "God's own country," as his last telegram stated, he sat down to rest with his family around him, and suddenly laying his head upon his wife's shoulder, murmured "Oh, mother!" and died; instantly, peacefully, painlessly. Of course it was a terrible shock to his devoted partner and his no less devoted children, but as far as he was concerned it was a passing such as few great men are privileged to obtain. Even Nelson, whose end was similar in that he passed at the summit of his glory, had to endure long hours of agony, whereas Seddon's end was such as most of us, however humble, must crave for, but few obtain.

Business seems paralysed, and the newspapers can apparently print nothing else but pages about the deceased Premier; but of course, although the intense mourning and general *distrait* air will continue until the funeral at Wellington in about ten days, the

people will discover, as they have so often discovered before, that no man is irreplaceable, and that the sincerest tribute to a great man's memory is to carry on his work after his departure.

Perhaps I have devoted overmuch space to Mr. Seddon in a work like this, but really the event has caused so great a sensation out here that it seemed impossible to pass it over in a few casual words.

My stay in Auckland is drawing rapidly to a close, to my regret, although, as I am repeatedly assured, the country is not to be compared, as far as appearance goes, to what it is like in the summer. Which seems so strange to me, for, as I am never weary of repeating, the climate now seems to be almost ideal to a Briton: the air has just enough freshness in it to dispel languor, while the sun's heat at noon is tempered enough to make the genial warmth enjoyable and the wearing of even the lightest of overcoats an absurdity. This ideal climate condition makes me wonder why it is that so many of the flowering plants and shrubs do not bloom all the year round. The conditions are never even sub-tropical, being more like Cornwall than anything else, yet there is no approach to the wealth of bloom that may be seen in

our far western counties all the year round. And many of the trees, having shed their leaves, look absolutely dead, as if nothing could ever induce them to burgeon again. Even the verdure on the hills does not look fresh and green as it does in our southern counties during our much-maligned winter. But appearances are proverbially deceitful, and nowhere more so than here, for they tell me that the sheep find excellent pasturage all the year round, and are never in need of any special care, while the cool air induces the luxuriant growth of wool.

But I must bid farewell to Auckland. The *Tarawera* waits for me, and we are presently spinning southward down the Gulf towards Gisborne, my next halting-place. This is a coast to test seamanship. From Auckland round to Wellington there is no real shelter, and when the mighty Southern swell rolls up the steamers must either put out to sea and breast it, not daring to attempt a landing at any of the ports, or pass on with their disgruntled passengers to the shelter of one of the safe harbours aforesaid. As happened to the ship which passed us on her way North—for although the weather was not what a seaman would call bad—she had, owing to the enormous Pacific (?) swell breaking in on the coast, to give up all

idea of landing her passengers, to say nothing of her cargo, at Gisborne, and take them on to Auckland. When we passed East Cape the weather was sublime, the sea like oil, and the sky above cloudless, serene; but that terrible swell tossed us about like a cork in a mill-race. However, we came into Gisborne, Poverty Bay, on Sunday, and anchored quite close to what has been ironically termed the harbour, rolling and tumbling about there in strangely bewildering fashion. Presently I saw some small steam vessels making their way apparently through the land, but behaving as we were doing, that is, rolling and tumbling about with wonderful agility. They soon emerged from behind what I could then discern was the horn of a breakwater, and immediately became easier in their movements. When, however, the tender, a fine, stout-built steamer of about 200 tons, got alongside it was possible to see how great was the motion on this calm day and to imagine what an impossibility it would be to carry on any work if the wind was blowing into this unprotected bay instead of, as it was now, blowing out. The master of the tender being an old shipmate of mine invited me on the bridge to see the entrance to the harbour, for which I was very grateful, for it was a revelation to me.

This little community of less than 9,000 souls, being in possession of a magnificent sheep country and having built up for themselves the largest frozen meat export trade in New Zealand, felt themselves most severely and painfully handicapped by their want of a harbour. Not, be it understood, for vessels of any size—that they could hardly hope to effect—but one from which they might carry out their produce to ships at anchor in the bay. So they consulted Sir John Coode on the construction of a breakwater, behind which the small steamers might come down from the little river Waimata in safety and emerge into the bay. He gave his opinion, indicating the best position for, and the mode of construction of, the breakwater, which apparently did not coincide with their wishes. In the result they disregarded his advice and built the present breakwater, which, for a time, served fairly well, but alas! the channel behind it began to silt up from the scour of the river, which, as rivers are wont to do in all mountainous countries, occasionally ran in spate, overflowing its banks and bringing down enormous quantities of detritus. In the hope of obviating this the local authorities built a groyne running parallel with the breakwater and making a sort of canal running out into the harbour. But

unhappily they extended this groyne until it was equal in length to the breakwater. Then when the prevalent swell rolled in, it struck the end of the groyne, rebounding up the channel, and making such mighty turmoil that it was impossible to get in or out except at very great risk. On my journey up, as I said, the weather was exceptionally fine, but this tiny steamer required two men at the wheel, which was spun hard up and hard down continuously as the great swell rolling in after her swung her from side to side.

I need not labour this point, but may say briefly that it is one of those blunders easily made but most difficult to repair; and now this small, energetic community, having burdened itself with a debt of a quarter of a million in order to facilitate the shipment of its produce, finds itself in a rather worse position than before. It is, as may be imagined, a very sore point indeed with the townsfolk, who do not know who to blame, and who do not see what good blaming would do after all. Yet in spite of all this it is, by all accounts, the most prosperous in proportion to its size of any town in New Zealand. The ranges of hills hereabouts form, so I am told, ideal pasturage for sheep when they have been treated in the following fashion. The natural

surface growth is burned off and grass seed is sown among the ashes. This presently, under the beneficent skies of this beautiful country, clothes those heretofore barren ranges with living green of such succulent nutritiousness that it will "carry" two sheep to the acre—sheep who fatten and breed with scarcely any attention, in such fashion as we in England have had ample demonstration of, and who find within easy reach a ready market. I confess that it was difficult at first to realise the value of those lofty ranges of hills where cultivation is quite out of the question, but in the light of this expert information and of what I saw of the flocks of sheep streaming down to the freezing works to be presently dealt with in exhaustive fashion, I began to understand how and why it was that New Zealand ranked so very high among the countries of the world as regards her export trade, £9 per head as against £2 8s. from the United States by the admission of one of their own experts.

XV

MUTTON, THE MASTER

GISBORNE is, historically speaking, almost the most interesting place in the whole of New Zealand. Close to the site of the present town is where Captain Cook made his first landing in the country, and named it, on the spur of the moment, Poverty Bay—a name which it still holds, because the natives take a delight in the irony of the appellation in contrast to that of the Bay of Plenty, which, though only the next bay northward, has done nothing so far to justify its grand title. This little place was also the scene of the Poverty Bay massacre, wherein between thirty and forty whites were slaughtered by the Maories under the redoubtable Te Kooti, as a direct result of the inevitable, invariable blundering of the home authorities. It is not a little remarkable, however, that it should have taken so long for this place to

attain its present dimensions, even when the limitations of the harbour (?) have to be taken into consideration. But since that is a feature of every part of Australasia that I have revisited, I need not do more than allude to it in passing.

Like Auckland, Gisborne suffers from a want of good building stone, which prevents the erection of any really imposing buildings, since all builders are in a conspiracy to hide the brick-work, of which the best buildings are constructed, under stucco, a most futile and pernicious proceeding, directly conducive to bad work. The older buildings are of wood, which is honest at any rate, if flimsy in appearance. It is not so in reality, as New Zealand boasts some of the finest building timber in the world—so good, in fact, that it pays to import soft wood from America and Scandinavia, and export the native woods for other purposes. It is a beautifully laid-out little town, with wide, level streets, and as yet no imposing buildings in them—a town where everybody seems contented and prosperous, although there is an utter absence of swagger, such as usually accompanies the possession of considerable means in other countries. It would appear that here, at any rate, the Socialistic schemes of the New Zealand Government have resulted in a general levelling

of the people in point of comfort, a certain limitation of growth, and a great air of contentment, for I have heard no one as yet speak of hard times.

Viewed from the sea, Gisborne gives one the idea of consisting of only a small collection of houses clustered about the lower slopes of the encircling hills, and the stranger instinctively wonders where the town can be, the distance of those hills from the sea being so very deceptive. But once ashore it is seen that there is really an immense area of almost absolutely level land extending from the sea-shore to the ranges—beautiful land of the highest quality, and containing space enough for the erection of a mighty city if only the conditions warranted its growth. The contrast between the level of Gisborne and the inequalities of Auckland is very marked, but of course, while the position of the former is excellent from the point of view of transport, it does not make for picturesqueness. It much resembles the position of Adelaide, and, for the same reason, the deposit of alluvium at the foot of the hills by the age-long work of the rivers coming down to the sea and spreading out their detritus.

I was taken to see the principal freezing establishment, belonging to Messrs. Nelson & Co., and went with a great deal of curiosity,

after my reading of Upton Sinclair's awful book, "The Jungle," and my own experiences of Chicago. Of course, in point of size, there is no comparison, the whole output of New Zealand being but a trifle compared with the holocaust daily offered up in Chicago. But that was of no consequence; it was the system I wanted to see. First of all, our arrival (I was taken by a Government Stock Inspector) was unexpected by the people in charge, so that nothing could have been cleaned up or put out of sight for my sake. Work, indeed, was very slack, only a few bullocks being slaughtered and the sheep being discharged from the great refrigerators into specially built and equipped lighters for conveyance off to the *Niwaru*, one of Messrs. Tyser & Co.'s huge cargo steamers, which was lying in the bay. It gives rather a curious sensation to stand at the other end of the long chain of supply forged by man's inventive genius, which connects the sheep which I see on the hills yonder with the suburban butcher's shop in England with its sheeted carcases being chopped up for distribution at practically the same prices, and in practically the same condition, as they are sold to the consumer here.

Apart from the grim side of the business, the immense and continuous blood-shedding and the

suggestive crimson rivulet flowing steadily into the river beside the works, there was an air of great calm and peace over everything. There is nothing squalid or sordid or dirty about the place, from the rows of pretty workmen's dwellings to the immense cooling chambers crowded with freshly skinned and disembowelled carcases, depending from rails overhead and chilling off before commencing their journey towards the freezing chambers (Linde's Ammonia process), where the temperature rapidly converts those fresh, soft, pink and white bodies into no bad resemblance of a block of stone. As to the meat itself, like most householders, and without being anything of a butcher, I pride myself on knowing a bit of good meat when I see it, and better-looking meat than that mutton and beef I have never seen, even at Christmas-time at home, while its cleanliness was a striking contrast to the appearance of the carcases in many a West End butcher's that I wot of. The inspection is of the most rigid and searching kind, for the meat must be above suspicion. And should the examination of the lungs reveal the slightest taint of tuberculosis, the entire carcase is first drenched with kerosine and then cremated, every portion thereof except the hide, which of course has no part of it consumable by man.

But the percentage of carcases which it is necessary to destroy is ridiculously low. The conditions under which the cattle live and are brought to the abattoirs are so good and healthful that the inception and dissemination of disease is very rare.

Of course in this, as in so many other modern industries, the value of the by-products makes the business profitable, even though the main product be sold so cheaply. There is absolutely no waste, even the blood, except that portion which unavoidably stains the floors and walls of the abattoirs and is washed from the recently slain bodies of the beasts, being saved and converted into special manure of the strongest kind and of high value. The offal is similarly treated after the tallow is separated from it, and although this must be a disagreeable business, I testify that it is conducted without any offensiveness to either smell or sight. Then there is the great business of the hides, especially of the sheep, which are chemically treated, so that in a few hours the wool may be scraped off, uninjured itself, and leaving the pelt perfectly free from trace of wool as well as improved by the process.

Bearing in mind the conditions of labour in the land of the free and home of the brave, I was curious to see what manner of men these

were employed here. And I found that, as elsewhere in New Zealand, there was a great deal of equality between master and man, that labour knew its worth and was able to get that worth recognised in every needed way. No speeding up or working out here—the Unions and Government look after that. I cannot say that there was very much to learn about the simple process of slaughtering and freezing meat for the home market, but there was a very great object-lesson in the conditions under which it was performed and in the position of the works in which it was carried on: in the heart of the country and close to the sources of supply on one hand, while on the other there was the big ship almost alongside the works, so to speak, for which cause handling was reduced to a minimum—a desideratum always greatly to be desired for many reasons.

By great good fortune I had the opportunity offered me of visiting two places of very great interest to all who love the primitive races, and regret to see them dying out. Now the Maori is one of those aboriginals, exceedingly scarce, who seem able to absorb the civilisation of the Anglo-Saxon without dying out. I know that there is a conflict of opinion about this, but on the best authority I am

informed that there is a small increase among them, the only danger-signal being the preponderance of male births over females—a feature which the closest students of the Maori are unable to account for. At my lectures in Gisborne I had as part of my audience the students of the Maori Theological College, and by the courtesy of the principal, the Rev. Mr. Challoner, I was invited to the college itself, where one of the students, a stalwart youth of about twenty-one, gave me an extempore address of welcome in his own mellifluous language, the same being translated into fluent English by a fellow-student, clause by clause. It was intensely interesting, for these Maories are born orators, and although I know that our staid English cannot reproduce the flowers of native speech, yet I heard enough to show me what an amazing effort of diction it was.

Then another gentleman, the Rev. Herbert Williams, son of the Bishop of Napier, drove me out to the Maori Church of Te Aro, a building which was commenced by the Maories in the best style of native art, but, getting tired of it, the artists abandoned their self-imposed task; which was unfortunate, as they represented the last and the best of the fast dying-out school of native artificers. But

the missionary in charge decided that what had already been done must not be wasted, and a plan was formulated whereby the church should be constructed in European fashion, and the immense carved *rimu* and *totara* columns so lavishly adorned by the Maori artists should be incorporated in the building. This has been done, and the result is certainly most striking. Many of these columns, or pilasters as I suppose they should be more properly called, are trees cut in half longitudinally, and measure well over three feet across. They are carved from top to bottom, grotesquely, floridly; but undoubtedly in strict conformity with the canons of native art. They are undoubtedly of immense value as the last emblems of a primitive race, but unfortunately even the artists who designed and executed them have forgotten what the symbols signify. This is undoubtedly the case. They preserve an air of mystery as to the meaning of what they have designed, but the plain and obvious fact is that they do not know. The pattern has been slavishly followed, but the significance thereof has died out. And I suppose it only awaits some new Champollion to formulate a theory of derivation by means of which these grotesques may be linked on to the Maya and Egyptian works.

Which warns me that I had better leave them.

It happened—for in these matters we are the sport of the elements—that it was a perfectly propitious night when I was to leave Gisborne for Napier. There was quite a crowd of people down on the wharf ready to board the little steamer which was to take us off to the *Victoria*, one of the fine coasters of the Huddart, Parker Company, of nearly 3,000 tons register, and quite palatially fitted. To give you an idea of how the Colonial passenger is catered for, not only are you invited to enjoy a *chota hazri*, or little breakfast of porridge, tea or coffee and biscuits, in your bunk before rising, that is between 6 and 7 a.m., and the usual six meals a day of the ocean steamers besides, but the Company provide rugs and steamer chairs for the comfort of passengers on deck. Also the liquid refreshments dispensed from the bar are, despite the tariff, on a much more modest scale of prices than in the case of the deep-sea ships, sixpence being the standard price for practically all drinks that the ordinary man calls for. There was also everything that the most fastidious passenger could look for on board ship in the way of ladies' rooms, reading and smoking-rooms, &c., and altogether I doubt very much if any

vessels in the world can offer more comforts to travellers than do these splendid coasting steamers of Australia.

We got away at nine o'clock, and proceeded at fourteen knots down to the coast to Napier, which was reached at daylight, the navigation being of the simplest character along this steep-to coast. It struck me, though, that the service was an exceedingly arduous one for the officers, who, except at certain stated ports, do not get much rest, while the men, who undoubtedly work hard, have the intense satisfaction of knowing that their earnings are correspondingly good, since the eight hours' day holds good for sea-workers as well as land-workers when the vessel is in port, and overtime is paid for at one shilling per hour.

XVI

A HOMELIKE TOWN

NAPIER, Hawke's Bay, is apparently totally different from any other town that I have seen in Australasia. It has a character entirely its own, which indeed is not an unfamiliar feature of New Zealand towns, many of which still bear the impress of their pious founders. A fine breakwater and a good pier within its shelter awaits the steamer, which lies cosily alongside, although it was obvious from the magnitude of the mooring chains and girth of the rope springs by which the ship was secured, that there were occasionally some lively times here under certain conditions of wind and weather. But *the* feature which was most impressive was a precipitous cliff, which, only about fifty yards from the shore end of the pier, rose a sheer 300 feet into the air, as if defying all further ingress to

the country. A good road wound around the base of this cliff—as good a road, indeed, as any we can boast of at home—and I noticed presently that a low, concrete sea-wall had begun to skirt it. Then the side-walk of asphalt was planted at intervals of about six or seven yards with the beautiful Norfolk Island pine, a species of araucaria, but not nearly so grotesque as the "monkey puzzle" tree. As we walked on the cliff to shoreward sloped downward, and gave pretty views of houses perched here and there amid embowering foliage, until presently we turned a corner, and lo! I was in Tunbridge Wells, at the corner of the Pantiles looking towards the Pump Room. The illusion was almost perfect, in spite of the many wooden houses which alternate with the stucco-fronted ones here, as elsewhere in New Zealand. And then another peculiarity obtruded itself, the naming of the streets, which has been done upon an original plan, the main thoroughfares being called after celebrated Indian generals and administrators, to keep company with Lord Napier, Hastings, Clive, &c., while the streets which run at right angles to them commemorate great poets and authors—Tennyson, Browning, Milton, Shakespeare, Dickens, &c. And splendid streets

they are, as far as the roadways and footpaths are concerned, the buildings being all of the usual character in the other towns which I have mentioned. The town wears an air of solid prosperity, but is quite sedate and satisfied in its appearance, as if bustle and growth were neither looked for or, indeed, much desired. Of course it does grow, but very slowly, and I for one think of it as of other Antipodean towns, that if hurried growth means, as it too usually does, a large accession of the submerged tenth, then it is much better that it should hasten as slowly as it is doing.

But to my mind the chief glory of Napier is its frontage on the magnificent bay. From the landing-place an asphalted esplanade, fronted by the low sea-wall before mentioned, runs for over two miles in an almost perfectly straight line. Over the wall the foreshore of shingle slopes gently down to near the sea, where it is carpeted with fine sand, making it an ideal watering-place. There are houses of varying character, but none at all pretentious, on the shore side of this esplanade for nearly its whole length, facing the open Pacific and fully exposed to the winds from the east, which bring in at times an enormous swell from the widest ocean of all, there being

nothing in the nature of obstructing land between it and the west coast of South America. But of course the tremendous prevalent westerly gales which assail the west coast of New Zealand so furiously are not felt here, this being the sheltered side of the islands. Still, I could imagine that an amazing spectacle of assailing seas must be sometimes witnessed from the windows of those houses, and that the broad, smooth esplanade must at times be anything but a pleasant place for a promenade.

As I before noticed about Gisborne, Napier is built upon a level plain bounded by the ranges, so that whichever direction the eye travels along the straight, wide roads it meets with either the sea or the hills, an impression always being given of restricted area, of living on a ledge, as it were, beyond which exit could only be gained by climbing high hills or going out to sea. But it must be remembered, first, that the area is far less restricted than it seems, there being land enough for all the expansion there appears likely to be for many years to come, and next, that although New Zealand is undoubtedly a hilly country, it is only in the interior that the hills attain any great magnitude, and that, as I have before noted, those hills are of great value in the pasturage of sheep. As

in Gisborne, one may look in vain for any evidence of hustle, of determination to go ahead. A Sabbath calm even at noon of every day seems to pervade all the streets. Nobody is in a hurry, nobody seems to consider that haste in anything is necessary or desirable. And they are doubtless right; but it is curious that men who have lived in this calm atmosphere for thirty or forty years should be anxious to impress the visitor with what they have grown to believe is the fact—that the city is growing very fast. With all my admiration for New Zealand and her institutions, I must say that as far as growth is concerned she appears to me almost at a standstill, especially when compared with provincial towns at home which might be named by the score. I should not have mentioned this but that every one with whom I converse seems to be under the same curious misapprehension, based I suppose upon the fact that they have lived here so long, or have only travelled to similar or even smaller places that they know every brick and plank in the place, and watch the erection of each new edifice, however tiny, with an almost parental solicitude.

The railway runs from here to Wellington, but except for places *en route* is but little

patronised, owing to the fact that in the splendid steamers which call here and are replete with every modern comfort the traveller may leave Napier late in the afternoon and be alongside the wharf at Wellington early in the morning—a method of travel which in a country where the inhabitants are as peripatetic as they are here, is of course immensely favoured. But as yet the harbour is not sufficiently commodious or safe to invite ocean-going liners, and considering the enormous expense which the making of an harbour in an unprotected roadstead (for Napier is nothing more) entails upon a very small population, I doubt very much whether the present generation or even the next will see one completed. It is to me a really marvellous thing how these tiny communities do shoulder burdens of this kind though, and an almost tragical interest attaches to the way in which such a painful mass of expenditure is sometimes wasted entirely.

But I must bid farewell to pleasant, sunny Napier. It was Midwinter Day when I was there—the 21st of June—and the summits of the loftier ranges were lightly powdered with snow, but the air was mild and balmy, the sky cloudless, and the shade temperature at 9 a.m. 52°—a delightful day, which I was earnestly

assured was not at all exceptional, but rather the rule, in this sweet and equable land. I am extremely glad to have made Napier's acquaintance, but I feel that, in spite of its being in the most progressive land on earth, it is, like other places which I have visited lately, a spot where men take life easily, where nothing is strenuous except football and horse-racing—two sports which out here seem to constitute the chief business of life for the majority of the male population, speculation coming next, commerce next, and production last of all. If this judgment sound too severe, I have only to say that I have no prejudices at all, I merely record my impressions with an entirely unbiassed mind.

We left Napier in the afternoon of this lovely day, skirting the coast at thirteen knots, to be reduced later on so as not to arrive in Wellington before daylight. We steam closely along the land, which everywhere presents the same rugged, irregular appearance of wooded ranges of hills, some of which indeed are high enough to be dignified by the name of mountains, these latter being now capped with snow. But I am not again likely to make the mistake of supposing that these rugged lands have no value, since I have learned their possibilities in sheep and timber, for both of which products

New Zealand justly stands in the very front rank as regards quality. Nevertheless, I cannot help noticing that on this long stretch of coast between Napier and Wellington, there are only two tiny hamlets, there are scarcely any roads, nothing that could by any stretch of courtesy be called a harbour, and only a few little streams pouring their tribute into the Pacific Ocean. It is here, if anywhere, that the visitor realises the sparsity of the population, and by contrast the amount of energy that *must* be concentrated somewhere in order to have made New Zealand the much-discussed country that she is. It is worthy of note that with great wisdom the Government of New Zealand have established a tourist department under the charge of a Cabinet Minister, the Post-master-General, Sir Joseph Ward.* Under him, as general manager or agent, is Mr. Donne, who is given control of a very large sum for advertising purposes, in order to bring to the notice of the pleasure-seekers of the world generally the wonderful possibilities for sport and pleasure that New Zealand presents. Owing to wise precautions taken in stocking the country with game and fish, which have been, and are, most carefully protected, New Zealand is a thorough sportsman's paradise,

* Now (1907) Prime Minister.

red deer and fallow deer abounding, and trout of extraordinary size swarming in the lakes and rivers. There must be something amazingly congenial in the climate of this little wonderland to British game, whether fish, fur, or fowl. For the trout especially, which having been brought here from home or from Canada, in the form of ova, are now often caught up to a weight of 20 lbs., while other game is equally hearty and plentiful. The Government issues licences to shoot and fish at a very cheap rate, and the restrictions are only against indiscriminate slaughter or wanton destruction of any kind.

Then the natural beauties of the country—its fjords like those of Norway, its Alps like those of Switzerland, its geysers and hot springs like those of Yellowstone Park—are extremely fascinating, while an additional charm is lent by the fact that all these wonders are easy of access, are at no great distance from each other, and that the charges are everywhere extremely moderate and the accommodation is exceptionally good. As indeed it must be, for the hand of the Government is extended over all in paternal care, and ill would it fare with any hotelier's prospects who should by rapacity or neglect of his guests do anything to hinder their efforts to

make New Zealand a popular pleasure-ground. Then perhaps the greatest charm of all is the delightful climate. Even in midwinter, except in the extreme south, it can hardly be called cold, while in summer the climate is as nearly perfection as it can possibly be. The Union Steamship Company have also established a good service of steamers to the delightful South Sea Islands, with all their manifold charm, and Tonga, Fiji, or Samoa can be reached in a few days from Auckland through shining, slumberous seas and velvet nights, until, upon those Lethean shores, the peace of perfect rest descends to the wearied man or woman almost crushed out of existence by the mill-wheels of civilisation. Owing to the wise and fostering care of the Government of New Zealand of its oversea communications, it has, in spite of its Antipodean distance from the Old World; of its being, as it were, the very last outpost of civilisation on the confines of the globe, a splendid choice of routes thither, and by one of these routes, the dearest but certainly the most interesting, Auckland may be reached in well under a month from London. That is the route *viâ* New York, San Francisco, and Honolulu. For those who prefer to take the Australian Continent on their way and touch the East

also *en route*, there are the Orient-Royal Mail, P. & O., and other lines according to choice, but at practically the same rates, while to others who have plenty of time and no objection to a long sea journey, there is offered an economical route in magnificent ocean steamers of the largest size either direct by New Zealand Shipping Company or Shaw Savill and Albion Line, or *viâ* Australia by half a dozen lines running thither round the Cape. In the former case the journey is made in about six weeks—a sumptuous rest cure for those who are good sailors; in the latter of course another week must be added in order to reach New Zealand from either Melbourne or Sydney.

But I have said enough to indicate my belief that as a relief from the so-called pleasure-grounds of Europe with their terrible expensiveness and nerve-racking pleasures, it is a change of the most perfectly delightful and health-giving kind to pay our Antipodean brethren a visit, remembering that in these days of luxurious ocean travel the distance is, as Mr. Micawber said with less truth, merely imaginary.

XVII

THE CAPITAL OF WONDERLAND

AT daylight I came on deck to witness the steamer's arrival at Wellington. I have often heard many hard things about the capital of New Zealand. How, for instance, it was so subject to tremors of the unstable earth that no buildings could be erected save of the flimsiest character, how every day was evil, in that gales of wind were the rule and fine weather the rarest exceptions, while rain was almost a permanent feature of the atmospheric conditions. All of which statements were, of course, exaggerated, but still I felt must have a certain basis of truth; and I wondered why. This morning I know, and although I gladly admit the exaggeration, I feel fully persuaded that Wellington, despite its truly splendid harbour, is hardly used in the matter of climate. It lies at the foot of a closely investing range of high hills, the other

sides of which are exposed to the full fury of the brave westerly winds which sweep around the world, only just deflected slightly by two outlying points of the South Island, Cape Farewell and D'Urville Island. Consequently the immense amount of moisture brought across the mighty Southern Ocean finds a congenial arrestment by the hills on whose eastern slopes Wellington lies, and the fierce squalls which sweep through the streets are only what will always be experienced on the lee side of high lands. Then, too, Wellington lies in the direct line of the backbone of New Zealand, the mountain chain which, with hardly a break, extends through its whole length from north to south, or, more correctly, from NNE. to SSW. ; which, in view of the fact that this is essentially a volcanic country, will, I think, sufficiently account for Wellington's liability to seismic disturbance. At the same time it must be remembered that of late years these terrifying vibrations of the earth's crust have been so few and feeble here as to encourage the erection of substantial buildings, all of which, however, have been put up with the greatest possible attention to such details of structure as may be expected to minimise as much as possible any earthquake effects.

Fortunately my first view of Wellington was a favourable one. The weather was fine but overcast, still, although the sun was hidden, the air was clear, and I was able to take in the details of the grand land-locked harbour, the really splendid system of wharfage, and the imposing appearance of the buildings, which came right down to the wharves themselves. But I was, I remember, also impressed by the fact that Wellington looked cramped for room, and I was not at all surprised to hear, as I had been at Auckland, that an enormous amount of this crowded foreshore was reclaimed land, won back from the sea by an enormous expenditure of capital and labour, and returning a very high percentage upon the outlay. As in recent places which I have visited, but in a more restricted sense, Wellington appears from the bay like a town on sufferance, incapable of being extended in any direction save seaward, which extension has, of course, severe limits. But I learn without surprise that the surrounding hills are gradually being taken up for suburban residences, for the electric car takes little account of hills, and Wellington has a very fine system indeed, exactly like our own at home.

The business aspect of Wellington, especially

as regards its shipping, is so striking as to make it difficult indeed to realise that its population is less than 60,000, or a quarter less than that of Auckland. The wharves here have an enormous area, and such monster ships as those of the White Star Line and New Zealand Shipping Company, that is to say vessels up to 12,000 tons register, lie at these wharves and load quite comfortably, while the position is so easy of access and so sheltered that vessels may come and go at any time of the day or night. This is the great distributing centre for the whole of New Zealand, most advantageously placed, geographically speaking, and with its people most keenly alert to extend their trade in every conceivable direction. Here may first be realised what a gigantic concern the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand has grown into from its very small and tentative beginnings about thirty-five years ago. It has now a fleet of fifty-five vessels, speedy, efficient, and well kept up; from vessels of nearly 6,000 tons gross register and 6,000 horse-power, which carry the "all red" mails to Vancouver, and the scarcely less splendid steamers of the Intercolonial service, in one of which I shall presently be sailing—the *Manuka*, of 4,505 tons and 4,500 horse-

power twin screw—down to the few small vessels which act as feeders from the tiny outlying coast hamlets. This fleet, which is almost essentially a coastal one, has a total tonnage of 112,540 tons, which is not surpassed by any similar service in the world with the sole exception of the British India. And there the comparison is manifestly unfair, since quite a large proportion of the B.I. fleet are ocean liners in the fullest sense of the term. It is nothing short of marvellous how so small a country as regards population should have developed so splendid a fleet out of its coastal trade and communications with Australia.

I took a walk round the well-groomed, busy thoroughfares of Wellington as soon as I could get ashore, just for a casual glance in the few hours that I am to remain to-day. My next ship for a short and interesting trip to Picton and Nelson is the *Pateena*, of 1,212 tons and 2,000 horse-power, which is to sail at one o'clock; so that I must leave any detailed remarks about Wellington for my return here, when I hope to spend a few days. I note, in passing, that the city seems to be as yet completely dazed by the shock of Mr. Seddon's death, but that, I think, is because yesterday the public funeral was carried out,

and the remains of New Zealand's idol were laid away to their long rest.

Getting tired, I returned to the wharf and boarded my new ship to enjoy the spectacle of a couple of large steamers getting away in truly British fashion, that is without fuss or bawling, but as if the movements of the ship were directly controlled and regulated from the brain of the master. It was a beautiful sight, and it was hardly over before our ship also glided away from the wharf, and in a quarter of an hour was outside the harbour heading directly across Cook's Straits for the wonderful series of fjords which must be navigated in order to reach Picton. Then I became aware of one of the main difficulties of our modern navigation. Here is a man charged with the care of (on an average) 200 lives, to say nothing of property, who from week end to week end never gets more than three hours' continuous rest. By day the intricate navigation of these wonderful sounds and bays is severe; at night, in fogs, in gales, and pelting rain the strain is terrible. And it is incessant. Talk about business strain! Wherein does it compare with this? To the thinking man the spectacle of this overwrought son of the sea in such a position of authority, watching lynx-like each headland

as it looms like some glooming cloud upon his view, making mental combinations of the direction and force of the tides according to the time of day (or night, for people ashore do not understand that the maritime day counts twenty-four hours) taking into the hotchpot the age of the moon, and withal to combine these facts with the temporary contingencies of wind and weather, is fraught with deepest wonder that any man should be equal to it at all. Yet these men are, and by the universal rule that those who do the most get the least are always in what are subordinate positions. Although it must be admitted that compared with our coasting skippers at home such men are well paid. Yet no pay can compensate any man for such a wreckage of manhood as must result from the incessant strain of such a life. It is more than flesh and blood can stand.

I did not see the worst part of it going out, because at Picton I went fishing in the dark, and got so tired that I slept through the passage of the French Pass, in the anticipation, too, that I would see it on my return. So when I awoke in the morning the *Pateena* was stopped off what I find every one here imagines to be a phenomenon of unique quality, the Boulder Bank. It is a natural bank of pebbles nicely graduated from fine sand at the water's

edge up to the huge pebbles weighing a couple of hundredweight at the summit of the ridge and stretching parallel to the foreshore of the port of Nelson. It begins far beyond the limits of the port, having indeed a total length of eight miles or thereabouts, and has, hitherto, compelled all vessels of any size entering the port to wait for tide in order to get round its extremity and between a curious outlying rock perched upon a bunch of reefs of the most dangerous character. Now, however, the harbour board, greatly daring, have cut through the natural bank at a spot nearly opposite to the town and speak of having a channel deep enough to bring in ships like the *Athenic* and the *Corinthic* of 12,000 tons. *Nous verrons.* I hope their enterprise will bear fruit, for here, as elsewhere, the expense of such works falls with tremendous weight upon a population, all told, of some 9,000 souls.

Now comes the joke. This "Boulder Bank," as they call it, is an almost exact replica of the Chesil Beach, which extends from Portland to Weymouth, or *vice versâ*, according to which way you look at it. In the composition of the Bank itself there is absolutely no difference from that of Portland, but in direction and situation there is a great dissimilarity. Chesil Beach runs directly seaward from Weymouth in a

very slight curve, having at its Channel end the English Gibraltar, Portland Bill. As most people know at home, the naval haven of Portland has been constructed by running a massive breakwater from Portland to the western horn of Weymouth Bay, or to leeward of the Beach, with two small openings almost like dock entrances without gates thereto. In Nelson, as I have mentioned, the beach runs parallel with the shores of the port, and the authorities have cut through the beach itself at a point nearer to the wharves already built, in order to bring the big oversea ships in for such modicums of cargo as there are to give them.

Nelson is a typical New Zealand coast town. Its streets are wide, its buildings humble, and the ranges shut it in to its little foothold on a foreshore. Its growth is imperceptible. It seems hardly credible that, remembering the natural advantages of Nelson that after over half a century of enjoyment of these natural privileges it should still remain so small and feeble in point of population. Yet the fact remains, and it is due to the same causes to which I have so often adverted, that I hardly dare to recur to them again, the determination not to have anybody come here who has only his labour to sell. That is beginning to change, but in spite of the progressive legislation in

labour questions, for which New Zealand is famous the world over, the Labour member and the labourer already established in a comfortable position looks sourly upon any proposition to introduce a competing element whether of his own blood or alien. And as far as I can see it will ever be thus with Socialistic schemes, so called, because they never seem to realise the *individual* factor. And until they do every form of legislation adopted is bound to be a failure, as all such schemes must fail which run in opposition to the fixed laws of nature.

One feature of all these New Zealand and Australian towns always strikes a stranger from England at once—the number of huge telegraph posts through the streets, laden with telegraph and telephone wires. No matter how small the town may be, these great mast-like posts bear their complex burden, for the telephone is a necessary of life here as it is in America. Indeed this particular feature reminds a visitor who knows both countries, of the United States, except that out here the people show their British love for order and neatness by having the posts neatly squared or rounded and painted, while the Americans, even in quite large cities, are content to have the rough tree with just the bark off, and sometimes not even that. Nelson, small

and sleepy as it seems to be, is no exception to the general rule, but it has puzzled me more than a little to understand what use can possibly be made of all this network of wires. There does not seem business enough done to employ the half of them. Perhaps what business is done requires a much more liberal use of the telephone than is the case with us.

XVIII

A NATURAL MARVEL

MANY things might doubtless be written about Nelson which would be intensely interesting to people who live there, some indeed who, in spite of the absence of bustle and general air of ease, have managed to make comfortable fortunes there. Of its glorious climate I can unfortunately say nothing, having been favoured during my stay of five days with exceptionally cold and very wet weather, which you are always told in such places is something unknown, even to the oldest inhabitant. But I have no doubt from its beautiful sheltered position that Nelson must for most of the year enjoy a climate almost ideally perfect, and a strong proof of this is to be found in the establishment there of several higher grade schools or colleges for both sexes, to which I am told parents send their children from all over New

Zealand. It has, however, one eminently undesirable feature, such as I have noticed nowhere else in New Zealand, a vast foreshore of unpleasant mud flats which are laid bare at low water, looking and smelling most unpleasantly. Of course, the daily lavation by the tides makes even this of no effect upon the health of the town, but it is curious, to say the least of it, that in a coast where steep-to shores are the rule—and it is quite common to get a depth of 50 fathoms almost touching the rocks—that this long stretch of shallows should have been formed. I put it down to the influence of the Boulder Bank; and perhaps some day when Nelson has grown, that mud flat will be reclaimed, as at Auckland and Wellington, and be worth much money for building upon.

As the steamer in which I am to return to Wellington is fixed to leave in the middle of the day, I am looking forward with a great deal of interest to the return journey, because of the opportunity of witnessing the intricate navigation between here and Picton. For a slow steamer, unless under very favourable conditions, and for sailing vessels at all times, this route through the French Pass from Tasman Bay into Pelorus Sound is impossible. The passage is between D'Urville Island and the main South

Island of New Zealand, which here forms a series of fjords and bays of great depth of water and wonderful picturesqueness. There is very little cultivable land, but as on the rest of the ranges I have hitherto mentioned, there is splendid pasture for sheep, which may be seen quietly grazing all over those desolate-looking hills. Many of the settlers' houses, nay, most of them in this locality, are right down on the foreshores of sheltered little bays, and the people find easy and swift communication with each other by water owing to the amazing spread of motor-boat industry. It is no exaggeration to say that the petrol motor for boats has caused a perfect revolution in travelling by water out here, there being hundreds of these neat, swift, and handy little vessels all round the coasts. Of course the great petroleum companies are largely responsible for this, in the same manner as the gas companies at home by introducing the penny-in-the-slot meter and free fittings have enormously extended the use of gas among the poorer of the people. These companies have made the acquisition of a petrol motor, which can be fitted to any ordinary boat at a very trifling expense, most simple, easy, and cheap, trusting to the increased sale of petrol for their profits. Again and again I have been compelled to notice the spread of

the use of motor-boats throughout Australasia, especially for fishing purposes, but nowhere is this so marked as in New Zealand, for which country, with its deeply indented coast-lines and rugged land surface, this form of locomotion by water is particularly suitable. It is also found most useful for schooners and other small sailing craft, which by its aid are independent of towage in and out of harbour, and also on the failure of the wind at sea can, by starting the motor, make from three to five knots through the water in a dead calm.

Viewed from a distance, the French Pass did not look particularly formidable; I judged it to be about two miles wide. But as we came nearer the captain pointed out to me that the actual passage was reduced to less than a quarter of a mile by the upheaving of rocky obstacles until at last the deep-water channel was limited, as I have said. On the two extremities of the reefs which form the "heads" of the pass there are erected beacons, on one of which there is a light of about four candle-power, I should think; at any rate, as the captain said, it looked as if you needed another light to see it by. The tide, coming in from the vast open Pacific, fretted and foamed and boiled through the narrow pass and over the adjacent rocks, the vessel being hurled forward over the

ground at the rate of twenty knots an hour, her own speed being about fourteen. A fool could see how bad a place it would be for a slow ship or an ill-steering one, such having often been swept right round against the helm, perfectly unmanageable. And I shudder to think what this passage must be like with a westerly gale blowing, an enormous breaking sea on, and darkness over all. Yet it is done, and twice in twenty-four hours, too, by men who from week to week never have their clothes off except for a bath. Personally, I feel that it is utterly unfair to subject any man to such nerve-wrecking strain as that, especially when he has hundreds of lives depending upon his coolness, courage, and skill. Promotion to a long-distance clear run must seem to these sorely tried men like a change to Paradise.

We had hardly dashed through the foaming, whirling pass into the smooth waters beyond when a motor-boat, or oil launch as they always call them here, darted out from behind a headland to intercept us. The engines were stopped, the visitor swung alongside, and in five minutes had cast off again, having hove half a ton of potatoes and some fish into us for the Wellington market, due to arrive there soon after daylight in the morning. Away we went again, the forecastle now being crowded with passengers

to see what, I believe, is the most interesting and extraordinary sight in the world connected with natural history—the visit of Pelorus Jack. Prior to my coming here I had heard numberless stories about this strange sea-monster's ways (he is usually spoken of as a fish), but although I could not refuse to believe altogether, I confess I made many mental reservations until I should see for myself. Fortunately the day was fine, the sea smooth, and the light good, it being about four in the afternoon. And as we passed the point off which he is expected and nearly always seen, he joined us, taking up his station on the starboard bow, right alongside of the stem. The first sight of him was sufficient to determine what he was—*Grampus griseus*, one of the smaller whales of the *Orca* species, whose colour is usually chocolate-brown, this one, however, being piebald, brown and grey in patches, which show him almost white when he is just beneath the surface of the sea. Now the ship was going fourteen and a half knots, yet that grampus maintained his position by her side with the utmost ease, only the slightest quiver of his tail being noticeable. Occasionally he changed his position from starboard to port, pausing for a few moments right ahead of the swiftly moving ship, then, dropping astern a few feet, he would

cuddle up lovingly against her side, turning over as he did so, as if he enjoyed feeling her chafe against his body. When thus engaged he rolled over sideways, presenting his back to the ship's side, but never once exhibiting any energy, as does the porpoise when accompanying a ship. It was an amazing instance of power in locomotion, and I could not help feeling that if he had chosen to exert himself he could have made rings round the vessel, *i.e.*, travelled at the rate of about thirty knots an hour.

Now there are some facts recorded about this wonderful sea mammal that are of keenest interest. No other creature of his kind has ever been seen in these waters. He is of so quaint an appearance that the many thousands who have observed and snapshotted him—including, of course, mariners from every sea—all say that they have never seen his like before. That is, of course, in colour and habits. I have seen rorquals come and chafe the barnacles off their huge bodies against a ship lying becalmed, but never come near a ship in swift motion. And there are men who have been on this coast for half a century who aver that they always have seen him; he seems to be a permanent institution. Nay, more stories are told by the Maories, as well authenticated as such stories can ever

be, that he has been known as long as their verbatim history extends. I do not profess to believe that he is immortal, but as we know nothing practically of the longevity of whales, it does not do to be too sceptical. What I do know I have told, and it is, I think, sufficiently marvellous to be entirely disbelieved by the average person as savouring of a sea yarn. I can only add that he remains with the vessel for the space of twenty minutes or half an hour, during the whole of which time, by day or night, he is in plain sight of any who choose to look over the bows. At the conclusion of his visit he departs, as he came, in a straight line for the shore. It is said that he was once injured by one of the regular steamers, or by some one on board of her, and that since then he has never been near that particular ship. This may be true, and I confess it does not seem to be a more wonderful instance of animal instinct than what I have myself witnessed, but it is not necessary to believe it in order to appreciate fully the strangeness of this natural history phenomenon. There are several photographs of him on sale in the form of post-cards, and on them it is stated that he is the only "fish" in the world that is protected by Act of Parliament. That, I find, is an accretion of imagination. There is a resolution of the

New Zealand Parliament on record to the effect that he ought not to be molested by any one, but no special legislation exists. His dimensions are about fourteen feet long by six feet in girth at the thickest part of the body, behind the pectoral fins or forearms.

As the shades closed down upon us we skirted closely the bold and rugged headlands of that picturesque coast and entered Queen Charlotte Sound, a deep fjord or indentation at the innermost point of which lies Picton, a tiny town of about 1,000 inhabitants, connected by railway with Blenheim, another similar place. Not having been privileged to see it, on either of my visits, in daylight, I can say nothing about its appearance except that there is a fine substantial wharf, and that as far as its accessibility by water and shelter for vessels is concerned, it may safely challenge comparison with the whole world. But it has no growth, does not appear likely to have, for reasons which I did not care to go into, but which I shrewdly suspect are much like those applying to other stationary towns out here—dearth of population and consequent paucity of production and utilisation of the great natural resources of the land. In this connection I may note that I have just seen, with intense surprise, that the New Zealand Government are advertising extensively in the

United States for English-speaking farmers to come here and take up land; and I wonder why this should be so, in face of the oft-repeated assertions of love for the Mother-country which has so many of her citizens unemployed and eager to make their homes in new lands under the old flag. It is on a par, I suppose, with a series of paragraphs which I saw here in one of the papers the other day upon the discovery of oil in New Zealand. There had apparently been inquiries on the part of the agents of the American octopus, Rockefeller, and some people were indignant at the idea of "Standard Oil" getting a footing in a free country like New Zealand. But the editor of the paper in question suggested that it would be a very good thing for the stock-holders, and, anyhow, whether they liked it or not, the Standard Oil Company could compel them to sell their property or prevent them from selling their oil! Unpleasant reading that for free people of the British race!

Daylight saw the *Pateena* steaming up Wellington Harbour again to her snug berth at one of the fine wharves, and there, opposite to her, lay the splendid steamship *Manuka*, twin screw, 6,000 tons gross, looking more like some grand ocean liner than any coasting vessel. I was glad to find that I had been able to catch her,

and thus travel in her down to Dunedin, although it reduced my stay to a few hours only, as before. Nevertheless, I was able to get about a bit and note some of the more obvious improvements in the city. It was rather ominous, however, to note, as I did in the case of one large building in course of erection, the structural precautions necessitated by the extreme possibilities of earthquake shock. I feel that nothing could induce me to settle comfortably in any spot, however beautiful otherwise, where at any hour I might find my own abode and the adjacent buildings tumbling about like houses of cards before a strong breath. Yet in how many parts of the world is this indifference to one of the most terrible calamities that can befall humanity to be witnessed! It is a curious phase of the influence of hope upon man.

XIX

NEW ZEALAND SHIPPING

WELLINGTON has certainly, as far as my experience of it goes, been grossly maligned for its weather. To-day is again as nearly perfect as possible, and that, I remember, in midwinter out here. I have had another pottering day such as I love about the city and its environs, and among my experiences has been a visit to the suburbs *viâ* a sort of funicular railway, a cable-car running up the side of a steep hill starting from a tunnel, the entrance to which is in a back street only to be found by the initiated. The service is frequent and swift, and the journey to the summit and back well worth the taking, if only for the beauty and comprehensiveness of the view. It compels me to admit that beautiful as other parts of New Zealand undoubtedly are, the capital has charms peculiarly its own,

especially now that the ingenuity of man has overcome the difficulties of transit.

Looking down from the great height to which the cable-car has carried us, the panorama spread out before our eyes is full of beauty, and without going back one word on what I have said of the glories of Sydney and Auckland Harbours, I gladly admit that Wellington has no reason to be ashamed. She has a harbour that the proudest nation in the world might well envy for its capital. It is, as I have before had reason to say, immensely difficult to realise, looking down upon that splendid series of wharves, with its thronging ships of the largest size, that I am in a city of less than 60,000 inhabitants, the capital of a country whose total population is less than that of three of our London boroughs. It is, of course, only to be accounted for by remembering that here we have a selected population whereof every adult unit is of account. There are neither unemployed nor unemployable paupers or pauperising agencies. Intensely Socialistic as is the legislation, it must be accounted unto them for righteousness that they do not tolerate the loafer, the workshy, and the unfit. They do not make the mistake which our Socialists do at home, of fostering and coddling the parasites of the proletariat

at the expense of their fellows who *will* work, and scorn to accept doles from anybody while able so to do. It is impossible to imagine out here the spectacle of able-bodied men being driven to pauperism because they see so clearly that it pays better than work.

Now the *Manuka* is ready to start, and I am charmed by the manner in which this huge steamer is manipulated in truly British fashion —*sans bruit*, as the admiring Frenchman says. Hardly a sound is heard as she slips away from the wharf, and in a space little larger than herself is turned around and headed for the open sea. A delightful discovery has dawned upon me since travelling upon this coast, which is that the fine fleet of the Union Company and Messrs. Huddart, Parker & Co. are largely, if not entirely, officered and engineered by the native-born : if not exactly native-born, then brought out here so young that they are to all intents and purposes New Zealanders. Is this not as it should be? and should it not teach us a lesson at home, if we could learn a lesson, which seems doubtful as far as the Merchant Service is concerned, how good and useful and profitable a thing it is to have our most important trade in the hands of our own people? If only our clamorous so-called Free Traders at home could be brought to see the

extent of the evil they are permitting in allowing the enemy—that is, the foreigner—to get his molluscan grip upon all our industries while our own best blood is being driven out of the country! No such mistake is being made here, although, of course, plenty of other mistakes are made, which is only natural.

I have wandered about this beautiful ship until I feel quite happily familiar with her, and I have finished up with a tour of her engine-room under the guidance of a chief engineer, a native of Port Chalmers, Otago. She is up-to-date in every detail, possessing everything in the nature of machinery to enable her to take a position in any ocean line whatever. In fact, she exemplifies the peculiar genius of the Scotch who, while keen to economise to the ultimate baubee, never begrudge the most lavish outlay which makes for efficiency and durability. I am quite proud to be a passenger by such a coasting steamer, and yet I am assured that the new ones now being built for the same trade are far ahead of her in every way. But then I learn that this Company, far away at the under side of the world, have in several matters of shipowning been pioneers, owning the first steel steamer, the *Rotomahana*, whose experiences on a reef of rocks showed how vastly superior

steel was to iron for shipbuilding, owning the first ocean-going turbine steamship, the *Loongana*, of twenty knots, presently flying between Melbourne and Launceston, Tasmania, and running their ships at present with 95 per cent. of British crews, while aiming steadily at their ideal, which is to have them all British.

It was an evil night, cold and drizzling rain with strong landward gale, so I did not stay on deck late, but retired to my spacious cabin, feeling certainly that I should be awakened at Lyttleton. And it was even so. When the steward brought my tea and fruit at 6.30 he informed me that she was alongside—a fact of which my senses had before apprised me. The weather was still coarse and blustering, the high hills which hem in the deep bay of Port Cooper, at the inward end of which has been formed the snug and secure harbour of Port Lyttleton, being covered with dense mist, and everything being especially cold and cheerless. When I was here before the majority of the ships lay out in the bay, in a somewhat exposed position, with a gale from the eastward. But even then they did their discharging and loading on the inner side of the infant breakwater, where they were perfectly sheltered and served by the railway which ran along the breakwater, but they were only usable by small

vessels, such as the coasting steamers of the Union Company then were. Now I saw, with some considerable surprise, that not only has the original breakwater been nearly doubled in length, curving round in front of the town, but another arm has been extended from the opposite shore, so that the two now embrace a deep-water area as secure as a dock, within which great wharves and piers have been erected capable of accommodating vessels of the largest size. Close to us, at wharves where in my day only vessels of 400 or 500 tons could lie, were the *Oswestry Grange* and *Turakina*, two 10,000-ton steamers of the Federal and New Zealand Shipping Company lines respectively. There were five or six of the Union Company's steamers and one or two small sailing craft, but not one representative of the old sailing ships that used to be such a feature of the port thirty years ago.

The feature that I have so frequently noted as characteristic of most New Zealand ports, viz., that of nestling at the foot of the ranges on a little ledge of foreshore, is especially noticeable at Lyttleton, which town looks so absolutely cramped for room that the houses in many cases seem to be clinging to the sides of the encompassing hills. The latter, too, look higher than usual, but that perhaps is because

of their nearness to the bay. But long ago the energetic colonists of the province of Canterbury took the bold step of tunnelling through that lofty range and connecting Port Lyttleton with the great area of level country beyond, the far-famed Canterbury Plains upon which the city of Christchurch is built. In certain parts of the city on a clear day I have been bidden to look away off at the ranges eighty miles away over a level plain no part of which was ten feet above high-water mark, and yet it was not boggy or swampy. So I should say that Christchurch was probably more favourably situated than any other New Zealand town when all the requirements of a town are taken into consideration.

As to the appearance of Christchurch architecturally, I confess I was disappointed. Of course I know that the day was vile as regards its weather, and no place will look well in drizzling rain and driving gale. But still, I saw that the usual mean wooden buildings, interspersed with pretentious edifices of stucco-covered brick, were here, as in Wellington and Auckland, the regular style, and I was disappointed, because I had great hopes of Christchurch developing into a fine modern city when I was here before, and it seems to me (I hope its citizens will forgive me for say-

ing so, but I don't suppose they will) to have become somewhat slipshod and down-at-heel in appearance. But, as I say, I had no fair opportunity of viewing it as a whole, and what I did see was a bird's-eye view at the best, my visit only lasting a few hours *en route* to Dunedin.

We left the harbour at about five o'clock in the usual quiet, easeful fashion, despite the weather, I being mightily struck by the manner in which this 6,000-ton steamship was turned round in a space less than twice her own length without the aid of a single spring or warp, or a sound being heard save the occasional clang of an engine-room gong, and the deep sob of the propellers. It was a fine piece of ship-handling, and when she pointed out between the closely confronted ends of the breakwater and sped seaward, I retired below, glad I had witnessed it but conscious that I had gotten chilled through by the inclement weather while thus deeply interested. So I went early to bunk, knowing that at daylight again she would be off the well-remembered Taiaroa Heads, the entrance to Port Chalmers Harbour, and felt that I must be on deck to see her going in round the spit. Surely at dawn the next morning I came on deck to face a wind bitter as any North-easter at home—a searching,

cutting blast, sending the spume flying high over the long sand-bank that blocks the entrance to Port Chalmers Harbour, all but a narrow, curving channel of deep water close under the high land of the Heads, which seems terribly restricted for such vessels as do negotiate it. To enter it is necessary to make a complete half-circle, and keep within very narrowly restricted limits—almost as narrow, indeed, as when entering a dock, but under far severer conditions as regards ship-handling. Bor! but it *was* cold. I used to pride myself upon my indifference to cold, but this morning has searched me out so that I could hardly endure to stay on deck while the big ship ploughed steadily up the harbour and around the end of the sand-spit across the front of the pretty little port where thirty-two years ago the fine, big sailing-ships of Patrick Henderson & Co., New Zealand Shipping Company, and Shaw, Savill, used to lie thickly during the season. It looked so deserted now, so lonely, for since then the narrow and almost unnavigable channel up to Dunedin has been dredged and buoyed so that ships of almost any size can be brought up to the city wharves. But without a pause she swung round Flagstaff Hill, and held her way steadily onward until we reached the city front with its great

extent of wharfage, and a big Shaw, Savill liner, the *Karamea*, was lying cosily alongside her berth, and was secured at once, while just a few carriers and cabmen asked for hire, without, however, any bustle or fuss, because it was Sunday morning. I walked ashore, and just glancing around at the many alterations in the front of the city that have been effected since last I saw this place, made my way up to where I had elected to put up during my stay.

It was a most pleasant change from all my late experiences in this thriving Antipodean Colony. I always have borne kindly recollections of Dunedin, as of all the Australasian ports I used to know seemed to fill the requirements of the mind as carrying on the traditions of the Mother-country; and verily there was no disillusionment. It was as it had been, only more so. No sham buildings here. Massive stone edifices of a fine type of architecture, and where brick had been used, as in the General Post Office, it was honest, good work, not at all pretentious or hiding itself under a flimsy veil of cracked stucco, but reminding me forcibly of the sturdy fashion of the Midland Railway Company's buildings at home, good red brick, well-pointed, with white stone facings and parapets, not needing to be ashamed by comparison with any other erections around.

In that comprehensive glance, I saw that Dunedin had maintained her high promise in youth as regards her buildings, and whatever had been done since was surely in keeping. The streets were beautifully paved; there were many well-laid electric-car lines, and I noticed that up the sides of the steep, encircling hills there were cable-car lines running, enabling the citizens who lived in the suburbs to gain their homes with great ease and little expense. I saw that Dunedin was a city of which none of her citizens need be ashamed, and I was very glad. Moreover, although this southern part of New Zealand has an unenviable reputation as regards weather at this time of the year, the drizzle cleared away, and the sun came out, showing up the grand buildings clearly and pleasantly.

XX

SOME POLITICAL REFLECTIONS

HERE, as elsewhere in New Zealand, I am astounded at the paucity of the population when looking around upon what has been done. It seems impossible that this beautiful city with its environs has less than 60,000 inhabitants. According to appearance it should have been 200,000; but there are the figures, and no amount of manipulation can alter them. I am told that the bulk of the trade of Wellington is carried on by Dunedin merchants, and certainly, judging by the names I saw over the principal mercantile buildings in Wellington, there would appear to be much truth in the assertion. That, however, will not explain why this wonderful little city still deserves the diminutive. It is, as I have elsewhere noted, the headquarters of the most compact and go-ahead coasting Steamship Company in the world

—a Company, too, that is launching out now in directions that will make it anything but a coasting concern. Of course everybody (to use a colloquialism) knows that Otago is pre-eminently a Scotch Colony, but if the visitor did not know that, and had been an observant globe-trotter, he would at once perceive on arrival here that the Scotch passion for solidity and permanence of buildings so manifest in all Scotch towns, is abundantly in evidence here.

But perhaps I have said enough to show that the small southern city of Dunedin, hidden away in the far, mysterious South, has no need, as far as her experience and institutions are concerned, to be ashamed of her origin. She has indeed kept the flag flying. There is, however, one matter that is of great importance, and may, indeed, have had considerable influence in delaying her growth. She possesses a splendid harbour in appearance, but its navigability is of a very low order. The entrance at Taiaroa Heads is so tortuous and narrow that it is an exceedingly difficult matter to get these modern big steamships in or out. Also the channels available for such vessels within the harbour are so restricted, and have such sharp curves, that the risk of taking huge ships through them are exceedingly great even up to Port Chalmers, one-half the distance from the city. The enter-

prise of the citizens has succeeded in so deepening the remaining portion of the harbour up to the city from Port Chalmers that vessels of 8,000 tons may and do get up there, but it is an arduous task, and when they do arrive they see confronting them a low beach separating that part of the harbour from the Pacific; which leads even the most casual observer to the conclusion that a very short cutting, far less expensive than the incessant dredging of the present channel, should suffice to admit the largest ships to the city wharves direct from the sea without danger or delay.

Here, again, we see the disabling, deterrent effects of a small population upon such improvements as this would be. Engineers make light of difficulties, which only exist in order to be overcome, but money in abundance must be had, and a small community must be taxed beyond bearing for a local improvement, which, when carried out, does not show an adequate return for so many years that the generation which achieved it may as well look upon it as money lost. You see it all comes back to the same starting-point —want of population. It is the crux of all questions out here, and to all appearance will still remain so. Very well; if the Colonists still are content to have it so, if the working class, which undoubtedly rules New Zealand now, is

convinced that this condition is the best for them, I suppose it will so remain, and as to that they would probably say it is nobody's business but theirs. And there the visitor is compelled to leave it as long as he can; but it is ever present with him.

There is another aspect of these thriving Colonies that will not be thrust aside. How utterly, abjectly, defenceless they are, if the protection of the Imperial Navy is withdrawn. Here we see a city as beautiful as a dream. Her foreshores are crowded with stately buildings of stone which would do credit to any country, however old. The romantic heights which embosom the city are dotted with pretty homes to which the citizens ascend by means of the cable-cars, and right away down to the verge of the Pacific on the level ground cast up for ages by the sea lie in hundreds the comfortable dwellings of the workers. It gives a patriot a thrill of horror to contemplate the fate of such communities as this in the easily imaginable event of the Motherland being so hardly bestead as to need every warship she possesses for, not merely the defence of her own shores, but the safe convoy of food to Great Britain. Should one swift cruiser of the enemy succeed in eluding the pursuit of the home defending squadrons, and get out here,

it would be an easy and, alas! a congenial task, judging from what we are compelled to read in the organs of public opinion in Germany, for such a vessel to reduce these smiling centres of industry to heaps of smoking ruins without incurring the slightest risk. In the face of this awful and, I am bound to believe, imminent danger, what are the Colonies doing? Paying a subsidy to the support of the Imperial Navy which is nothing less than a puerile insult—£240,000 all told, of which amount New Zealand, with her amazing prosperity, contributes £40,000. It does not seem to occur to these Labour members, these devisers of Socialistic plans for the benefit of their own class, that it is of little use to make a list of ideal conditions of life if they take no steps to protect the people who enjoy that life. The plain fact is that the whole of the Australasian Colonies are living in a fool's paradise in regard to this matter, and pay no heed whatever to the spectacle of the anticipating Teuton licking his lips as he thinks of the fat prizes that will presently fall to his prowess and the results of his forethought. As I have ventured to point out to them again, if only they would tax themselves in the same measure as we at home do, say at the rate of £1 5s. per head per annum towards the acquirement and upkeep of a Navy it would mean a sum of at

least £5,000,000 per annum, or in three years enough to account satisfactorily for any hostile European squadron that should dare to venture into these waters on piratical purposes intent.

I do not care whether they acquire a purely Australasian Navy or subsidise a sufficiently powerful squadron of the Imperial Navy for Australasian defence. The thing is to prepare for the defence of this wonderful group of cities set on the borders of the Southern Seas, reared by men of our own race, Anglo-Saxon to the core, without more than a trace of that extraordinary mixture of breeds which is seen in the United States, making it the most polyglot population on earth, and filling the mind of the observer with intensest amazement at the interested cry of "hands across the sea" or of blood being thicker than water.

There is something about Dunedin that appeals very strongly to the visitor fresh from home, and I think that something may be summed up in the word "weather." During the winter at any rate Dunedin can compete successfully with us in Britain in the matter of atmospheric uncertainty of conditions and disagreeableness. It is no uncommon thing to get five or six different samples of weather in almost the same number of hours, each vieing with the other which shall be most unpleasant.

It is a strenuous climate, and it breeds strenuous folk as it always did, and therefore it is that Dunedin strikes the visitors from Britain as being homely. And when you take a trip by train, as I did, across the level plains of the Taieri bounded by snow-crowned hills, and watch the sheep standing in the sodden turnip rows stolidly munching away with their backs to the bitter blast and driving snow, you find it hard to realise that you are not journeying North from Euston or King's Cross to Scotland in midwinter, until you come upon a farmsteading and note that it is built of wood, or miss the hedgerows and walls that bound the tiny fields of home.

There is another thing which I am bound to note in these impressions, and that is the apparent absence of rabbits in this country, which I have always been led to believe suffered from a veritable plague of these voracious prolific rodents. I pride myself upon missing nothing of consequence that passes within view as the train flits by, but I hereby solemnly declare that I have not yet seen a whole rabbit in this country. By which I mean that I have often eaten rabbit but have never seen a living one. I could not travel one-tenth of the distance in England that I have travelled here without seeing many rabbits and hares scampering across the well-tilled fields, and I have naturally

felt very curious. Questioning such folks as I thought might know, I have received various answers such as that "You won't see them near the railway line" (why?) and "They don't show much in the daytime" (again why?); but the substance of it all seems to be that the rabbit-catching and exporting industries have been able to cope with what once was a pest so successfully that there is now a fear among a certain section of the up-country population that "rabbiting" will soon cease to be a lucrative employment. At any rate it appears certain that, without the importation of snakes or the inoculation by disease or any of the quaint schemes which were mooted in the legislative assemblies out here, the rabbit problem has been solved and does not now stand in the way of the South Island farmer raising lucrative crops.

Here (between Christchurch and Invercargill) may be seen a wonderful stretch of agricultural land almost as level as a table, in many places forty miles wide, two or three hundred miles long. Often it extends to the sea from the snow-capped ranges of mountains which decorate the sky-line inland many miles away, again it assumes the nature of a wide valley bounded on either side by ranges of hills. It is beautiful land, and in many places it is well cultivated, but an enormous amount of it is still only used

for feeding sheep, which seems a waste when the uncultivable ranges are so eminently fitted for that purpose. In other places the rivers which seek the sea from the mountains having so large a space of perfectly flat country to pass over have meandered sluggishly over very wide areas, creating deltas of barrenness by reason of the detritus they bring down with them. These great spaces, over which the railway passes on low trestles, just present a perfectly desert surface of grey gravel and pebbles where not a blade of anything green is growing, which seems unnatural, remembering the extremely fertile character of most riverine country. And I could not help thinking that if some steps were taken to confine these wandering streams to a single deep channel for each, that many great benefits would result to the land itself, which would soon become cultivable, and also a means of communication with the interior by water would be created. Such an improvement, however, seems as yet a very long way off.

I am debarred at this present time from writing of Invercargill, the southernmost city of all British possessions, for I have not been able to get farther south than Gore, which, with a population of a small village, or about 2,000 souls, gives itself, with a sublime air of importance, the proud title of the "Chicago of

the South." It would be ludicrous if it were not said in such deadly earnest, and yet when the visitor sees the energy and the up-to-date methods manifested by this tiny community, he is bound to take off his hat to its citizens. It is most brilliantly illuminated by electric light on tall standards, which would not shame any city in the world; nearly every house is also lit electrically and has its telephone; the streets are generously wide and mathematically straight; and the houses, although mainly of wood, are beautifully designed and most substantially built. Moreover Gore, like several other similar towns in the South Island, has decided by a majority of its citizens that it will not allow the sale of any intoxicant, and consequently there are no liquor saloons. Whoever feels that he needs stimulant of this kind may import it and keep it in his house, or give it away, but he may not sell it under a first penalty of £50, and on a second offence, three months' imprisonment without the option of a fine. Gore has just entered upon a second period of three years of "no licence," so presumably the citizens find it work satisfactorily, and undoubtedly the system is spreading. The visitor will be wise to offer no opinion upon the subject, seeing that it is a matter of purely local concern to a self-governing community.

XXI

NORTH AGAIN

I AM glad to have seen Gore and met its genial, hospitable citizens, but I am not sorry to get away, since during my stay a blizzard of great virulence has been raging. A tantalising kind of weather indeed. For occasionally there would be a burst of brilliant sunshine and the sky would look serene. Then with amazing celerity a black mass of cloud would arise from behind the ranges, overspread the sky, and burst upon us in a perfect hurricane of biting blast and blinding snow. But upon entering the train and starting for the north it was wonderful to see how rapidly we ran out of it into balmy, summer weather, until when we reached Dunedin we seemed to have entered another season altogether than winter, as fine a day indeed as heart could desire.

I might just remark here that the New Zealand Government Railway rolling stock is all

American, but the cars are of mixed type, some being like our corridor cars at home, only with the corridor wired at the side instead of being perfectly closed in like ours, and others of the open American type, seats on each side with a middle aisle. They are fairly comfortable, but the speed is slow, even on the express trains the pace is only about twenty-five miles an hour. The line is usually single and laid American fashion, that is, the rails are spiked down to the sleepers with hold-fast nails in a fashion that to us at home seems quite casual and temporary. The officials are genial, but being Government servants, which always seems to mean something different to public servants, they do not waste any time in superfluous civility, and they come down upon any hapless passenger who unwittingly infringes a bye-law with draconian severity. But with all that they are courtesy and gentleness personified when compared with the autocrats on the American railways, who actually resent savagely being spoken to civilly, and proceed to insult a passenger who is accustomed to speak to those whom he pays to serve him as he would like to be spoken to himself. Our Colonial brethren do not make that grim mistake, though quick to resent any needless assumption of superiority.

It has been a great pleasure to renew my

acquaintance with Dunedin, and to note the development of its shipping facilities, as well as the way in which the high character of the city architecturally and structurally has been maintained and developed, although the latter phase is much less important than I was prepared to find it. But principally I was interested in Port Chalmers, that idyllic spot for beauty of situation which has been left stranded, as it were, in its little nook by the passing of the traffic up the tortuous estuary to Dunedin. It is almost as it was when I last saw it, thirty-one years ago, in a state of arrested development. With the exception of three of the Union Company's steamers, which were lying there coaling, the port was deserted, instead of having quite a fleet of fine sailing ships such as used to lie at its wharves in my day. Such traffic as it has now is confined to the large steamers of Messrs. Shaw Savill, the New Zealand Shipping Company, and others which do manage to get up as far as this, but seldom venture up to Dunedin, as being too risky and involving besides too much loss of time. I really experienced all that sense of everything being dwarfed and mean, such as so often strikes a boy upon revisiting the scenes of his youth in some sleepy village or some small town after being away in the great world for years.

The only change of any importance noticeable was that a fine new dry dock was being dug, which, I have no doubt, will be a very great boon to the big ships which call here, but I should think will be mainly used by the fine vessels of the Union Company. So I bade farewell to the pretty little old-fashioned place, with its lovely views over land and sea, and sped on over the railway towards Christchurch (it was being commenced when I was here thirty-two years ago) past the picturesque place where I once essayed farming—Purakanui—and catching occasional glimpses of beautiful bays, all silted up and worthless for navigation or shelter except by the smallest craft, to the thriving towns of Waitati, Oamaru, and Timaru. This is the unsheltered coast-line known as the ninety-mile beach, where the communication with the land depends upon the weather, but the richness and fertility of the great plain extending inland assures the prosperity of the towns studded along the harbourless shore.

It is pleasant travelling, especially on a day like this, for the train although slow is very comfortable, and there is an excellent dining-car with good and plentiful food at a low rate compared with what is to be found in any other country in the Old World or America. And here I think it only just to say that wherever I have

travelled out here I have found the same thing —the very best of food, plainly but excellently cooked and nicely served at a very low cost. I know that my ideas in the matter of food are considered to be old-fashioned and heterodox, but I cannot help that; my deliberate opinion is that in the matter of food which is honest and good without being ambitiously messy and ostentatiously disguised, the Antipodes can challenge the world. As far as food is concerned, it is like travelling from one home to another.

The extent and fertility of this great plain, bounded on one side by the sea and on the other, far inland, by snow-capped ranges of mountains, is very impressive, and when occasionally the train pulls up at a thriving, bright town like Ashburton, and the traveller notes the neatness of the roads and comfortable appearance of the buildings, and the utter absence of squalor and grinding poverty, such as are, alas! too noticeable at way stations in America and in our own country, he feels a glow of satisfaction at being permitted to pass through such a land of plenty and of peace. And so we roll on into the thriving city of Christchurch, which is built entirely on the flat and is consequently not so picturesque or imposing as Auckland, Wellington, or Dunedin, but gives an impression of solid prosperity as well as of great extent, remembering always the number of its population.

But I am *en route* for Wellington, and my train is timed to catch the ferry-boat *Mararoa*, a 3,000-ton steamship of fifteen knots an hour, that, leaving Lyttleton (the port of Christchurch) at 5.30 p.m., is timed to be in Wellington at daylight, or, say, about 6.30 a.m., having in the meantime covered a distance of over 170 miles. She is a beautiful vessel, fit for any service in the world, but with the modesty generally attendant upon all such undertakings out here, the voyages which she and her sister ship, the *Rotomahana*, make on alternate days, are called the Wellington-Lyttleton ferry service. The only similar service that I can think of at present for distance and speed is the Fall River Line from Fall River to New York. But there is really no comparison possible. Those great top-heavy, gorgeously decorated vessels are obviously designed for service in sheltered waters, and are entirely unfit for a sea-voyage, while, for all their gingerbread decorations, I think meanly of the comfort they give for the money that is paid. However, as one is almost a lake service and the other must needs be prepared to encounter some of the worst weather in the world, it is, as I said, impossible to compare them.

The train, halting a very brief space at Christchurch, speeds on through smiling sub-

urbs until it enters the great tunnel under the mountain which shuts off Christchurch from the fine harbour of Port Cooper. It stops for a few minutes at Lyttleton town nestling on the foreshore, then runs right down alongside of the ship so that the passengers have merely to step from the railway car to the gangway of the fine steamer, which will presently slip out to sea, and, in the face of any weather, land them at the wharf at Wellington as soon as they have rubbed the sleep out of their eyes and got ready for business.

And so with the rest I find myself at the capital city again, which, in strong contrast to the stormy South which I left the day before yesterday, lies bathed in golden sunshine, the air balmy as our summer, and the green, encircling hills with their cosy homes peeping out from the rich verdure, giving no hint that this is the winter-time. Truly a goodly land, well-favoured by nature, and in the hands of a people determined to keep its blessings as far as may be under their own control, unable to see any sense in following the example so persistently set them by the purblind people at home, of handing over its choicest benefits to the unthankful alien or the sneering inimical foreigner. It is of no use looking here for any specimens of that great and influential class at

home who are the friends of every country but their own, and who, while professing to labour for the good of the people, persistently encourage the efforts of those without, who hate Britain and all her works, leaving no stone unturned to undermine her position in the world and reduce her to a dependency of their own.

The work of the Wellingtonians in developing their city has been astounding. On my previous visit I noted the extension of the residential quarters of the city to the slopes of the encircling hills, but I did not dream of the extent to which this has been carried. It came as a positive shock to me to learn that land in this rugged country, which is really as picturesquely uneven as Switzerland, without, of course, the enormously high mountains closely guarding it, has increased in value within the last generation from almost nothing to a thousand pounds an acre! Of course, engineering science in getting cable and electric cars running up the precipitous slopes of these hills is largely responsible for this inflation of land values, but comparing these values with those obtaining at home within easy reach of our great business centres, I am filled with astonishment at the price of land in New Zealand. I am strongly inclined to think that there is something arti-

ficial and temporary in such prices, especially when you remember that upon such enormously expensive land buildings are erected that, although beautiful to look at and entirely in accordance with their romantic environment, are practically all of wood. Still wooden house building has reached a high level of excellence in Wellington. If you can shut your eyes to the material, you will find nothing to gird at in the quality of the houses or their interior finish. In a word, they are beautiful and comfortable as well.

It is not often given to the citizens of an important city to be able to get from their offices in a few minutes to homes that occupy exquisitely beautiful points of advantage as regards scenery, and at the same time commanding an outlook of immense area over the sea and the harbour of their city. This is essentially the case in Wellington, and it is an advantage that is fully appreciated, judging from the extraordinary development that has taken place within the last few years. The amount of land available for the erection of business premises near the wharves was very little, but that has been rectified by reclamation, more evident here than anywhere else in New Zealand, where the extension of foreshores and their conversion into busy business thoroughfares is carried to

a greater extent than anywhere else in the world. Here are to be seen splendid avenues of traffic, bounded on both sides by grand buildings, where a generation ago the sullen sea beat incessantly upon long, barren, shallow beaches. The aggregate cost of these great works has been enormous—phenomenal, when it is remembered how small are the numbers of the population that have achieved so great a result; but the returns from this enterprise have undoubtedly justified the keen foresight and business aptitude which has energised them as well as prompted the outlay. It is with no ordinary feeling of satisfaction that I here bear my tribute to the go-ahead qualities and the enduring work of these makers of the Britain of the South.

XXII

THE HEART OF THE NORTH ISLAND

AND now for a brief spell I have been privileged to go into the interior of the country, although, be it noted, the traveller never gets very far from the sea. I am to-day paying a visit to a town of which I have heard a great deal more than would at first sight seem to be warranted by the official numbers of its population. Palmerston North is on the great central plain, which is, equally with the South Island, a feature of the formation of New Zealand. There are two ways of getting there from Wellington. One direct by the privately owned Manawatu Railway, and the other circuitously by the State Line. And as travellers usually do not care to waste time, however much they may have on their hands, it follows that the privately owned line is extensively patronised. Its chief station in Wellington is

not, to say the least of it, at all imposing, being only a collection of humble wooden buildings. But then all these Antipodean railways have followed the example set them by the Yankees in that they do not believe in spending overmuch money upon stations or permanent way, although, to do them justice, they are not nearly so casual in their arrangements as are the Americans, who seem to regard, in railway matters especially, expenditure such as we at home deem a necessity, sheer improvident extravagance. Another thing which I was sorry to see was that the rolling stock was exclusively American, with all the temporary features that implies. But this is, of course, purely a domestic matter in which a visitor from home has no right to interfere.

I confess, however, that I was not prepared for the question put to me in the train to-day by a middle-aged gentleman who was the editor of a newspaper devoted to the farming interest. In all seriousness he asked me whether we had any dining-cars on the railways at home! I was compelled to ask him whether he was joking, but it appeared that he was quite sincere in his ignorance, and it then appeared in further conversation that he had a fixed idea that all our catering arrangements in England on the railways had been taught us by the Colonies.

Now it is quite true that there was a good dining-car on this train, wherein was served a comfortable, well-cooked meal, but in all its appointments it was very far behind what we get upon any of the long-distance lines at home. And when I endeavoured to explain the difference between the train in which we were then travelling and a Great Northern or Midland express, he said, "Oh yes, but then you have the advantage of the broad gauge!" It was impossible to pursue the conversation at any length, because I could see that he did not believe a word I was saying, so I relapsed into a book.

Now no one would dream of comparing the railways in a settled old country like Great Britain, where safety, permanence, and comfort of travelling are the main considerations and high speed is a necessity, with the first tentative efforts at railway communication in a new country where people are quite satisfied with an average speed of about fifteen miles an hour, and where, the line being single, it is necessary to wait at certain stations until the train bound in the opposite direction has passed. I am very glad indeed to say that the railways in New Zealand are well managed, the stations generally quite adequate and easy of access, and the refreshment business, on the prohibition

principle, well attended to. But when I am calmly asked whether we know anything about railway management at home, I find it difficult to keep from making sarcastic remarks, as I do when I am told that agriculture in Britain is still generally conducted on the lines of reaping-hook or sickle and flail.

Ah well, I suppose this curious state of mind will continually be found among those who have been bred or born in a new country, and I do not know that it does much harm. They are so inordinately proud of the progress they see that they cannot imagine anything being more up-to-date or go-ahead.

The distance from Wellington to Palmerston North is about forty miles, and leaving there—Wellington—at 8 a.m. we arrive at 11.40, this being an express train, the next train leaving at 10.10 arrives at 4 p.m. The journey was not in any way remarkable, except for the occasional glimpses of great stretches of down land, literally covered with fallen, bleached trees, in many places so thick that they covered the whole ground. This is where the fire has been run through them, and is the preliminary process of making grazing land. But I could not help thinking that it was a sinful waste of timber, either for firewood or paper-making, and no attempt was being made to clear the land or to expedite

in any way the process of its conversion into pasture. I ventured to ask several times whether nothing could be done with all that wood. I always received the same answer, "that it did not pay to cart it away for firewood, and as for dealing with it in any other way, well, labour was too dear." So it remained an eyesore and an hindrance. Occasionally, where the fallen trees were fewer in number, cattle were to be seen grazing between the trunks and apparently doing very well indeed. Where the land was quite clear, as on our Wiltshire and Sussex downs, there were plenty of sheep, all looking in splendid condition, so that the pasture must be of a very high quality. Here and there the sheep were feeding in fields of turnips, being specially fattened I suppose, but these were few and far between.

One curious feature of the land to me was its extremes. It was either very flat or very hilly; no gently undulating country such as we have so much of at home; but all of it worth money, and big money at that, mostly for grazing purposes. Every little town that we passed through wore a delightful air of quiet comfort, while both men and women looked fairly well-to-do, although they let their children run about barefooted in a way that is disconcerting to an Englishman. That, however, is probably

only a fad, since the kiddies looked anything but poor in other respects.

Palmerston North came really as a surprise. Owing to the fact that it lies upon a perfectly level plain it is not nor can it be picturesque; indeed it might, only the word sounds unkind, be called straggling. It certainly does cover a very large area for its population, and those responsible for its laying-out have been most generous in the matter of streets. Also wherever there are any public buildings they are as usual in the North Island of the prevailing construction, stucco-covered brick. I have often wondered what could have become of all the plasterers when stucco went out in England. I know now: they came to New Zealand, and here they revel in their favourite medium, imitating stone to their hearts' content.

There is a spaciousness about Palmerston that is delightful. It fills one with the idea that it must some day be a great city, although the railway running along through the main street for its whole length bordered by grassy breadths upon which may be seen feeding the casual horse or cow, does not inspire much hope that it ever will be. Nevertheless, there is a great hotel a-building which would not be unworthy of a town ten times the size, and so I feel that there must be some basis for all this

confidence. Here let me say with all the emphasis at my command, that my first impressions of hotel life in Australasia given you in my second chapter have been deepened and confirmed by every fresh one that I have stayed in, until I am fully prepared to swear that of all the countries I have ever travelled in Australasia is easily first in the matter of hotels. The food is always excellent, well-cooked, and abundant; the accommodation is invariably comfortable, the attendance all that could be wished, and the prices on an average about one-half of what they are anywhere else. Sorrowfully do I confess that I have never stayed in any British hotel that was nearly as good, as far as personal comfort is concerned, as the worst hotel I have sampled out here. These hotels are less pretentious in appearance, but they have no irritating extras, baths are not considered a luxury for which you must pay a high price, but are free at any time; a cup of tea at early morn in bed, and a newspaper is brought you and not charged for, afternoon tea is also free, and—whisper it gently!—if you are meanly inclined, you need not tip anybody. I would rather stay in the smallest way back hotel in Australia or New Zealand that I have visited than the most swagger hotel in London, while as for America—but there, to stay in any

American hotel is to suffer penance for sin unrepented of—and the punishment is fully adequate.

Palmerston also boasts the finest opera house (so they say) in the Southern Hemisphere. I am inclined to take this sweeping statement with a considerable grain of salt when I remember Buenos Ayres, for instance, but there is no doubt that this opera house, built by the municipality, is a splendid building, worthy of Melbourne or Sydney as far as its appointments, size, and appearance is concerned. Of course it is decorated with stucco on an exceedingly ambitious scale, and therein, to the visitor accustomed to the stone erections of other cities more favourably situated for durable building material, is to some extent discounted. Moreover, it is a debatable point whether any municipality has a right to burden its citizens with such a heavy debt as this has entailed for such a purpose; but as this is a purely domestic question it may safely be left.

Its public buildings are dignified and stately, the Post Office especially being ten times finer and a much larger building than the Post Office in Auckland, which has nearly ten times the population of Palmerston. Yes, it is a bright, breezy, ambitious place, whose citizens

manifest the most robust faith in its future, although, of course, there are many pessimists among them who talk dolefully about outrunning the constable, &c. It is the centre of a large dairying district, and from hence comes a great quantity of the splendid butter and cheese which is largely consumed at home. It is indeed an ideal country for such a purpose, owing to the richness of its pastures and the mild, equable climate which it enjoys. And I have been told that if only the farmers would manifest a little more energy the yield might be largely augmented with but slight increase of outlay.

I went on from here to Wanganui, on the beautiful river of the same name, through a most beautifully diversified country, the level plain gradually narrowing as we went north, although there were occasional stretches of rich-looking valley land. A change has to be made at Aramoho Junction for Wanganui, the train from Palmerston going on direct to New Plymouth, Taranaki, where it connects with the steamer for Auckland. Wanganui is only two miles from the junction, and when reached comes as a great surprise. It is still more difficult here than elsewhere in New Zealand to believe that so beautiful and imposing a town, with

such fine public and private buildings, can be run by a population of under 10,000 all told. The hotel in which I stayed was, in every detail of its appointments—in everything, in fact, that a hotel should be—worthy of any town or city in the world, while its charges were simply ridiculous.

Here I came in contact for the first time to any extent with the civilised Maori. He and she pervaded the streets of Wanganui in almost equal numbers with the white folk, and I learned that there were more natives in evidence here than in any other town in New Zealand. But it is not fair to begin this subject at the fag end of a chapter and so I will deal with it in the next.

XXIII

THE MAORI

LIKE all other primeval races the Maori does not bear the transition to civilisation at all well. The noble savage in his native state is a picturesque and romantic figure, with of course many customs that we pale children of modern days cannot away with. Now the Maori has unquestionably many noble qualities, but he shares with all other native races an intense and invincible repugnance to settled employment. As long as he can get his few primitive needs supplied he will not work. In his native wilds this reposeful languor is graceful and correct; it fits in with his environment. But in a town the Maori, with the garments of civilisation hanging awkwardly upon him, lounging at the street corners apparently indifferent to the flight of time, or indeed anything under

the sun, will not appear to the visitor as anything else but an exceedingly unprepossessing loafer. It is necessary, in order to keep back the feeling of repugnance that will arise at sight of these groups of huge, seedy-looking men, to remember that they are the descendants of the original owners of the soil, and that they are now existing peacefully upon the rents of their lands leased to the energetic white settlers.

In Auckland I noticed a good many Maori men and women about the town, all the latter and most of the former looking curiously slouchy and ungainly. But they were, after all, an exceedingly small item in the thronging population, although they were usually found on the street corners in the busiest part of the city at all hours of the day, looking as if nothing that ever happened could possibly concern them. Here in Wanganui, however, every street corner has its knot of lounging Maories looking curiously out of place in the midst of civilisation. They are all, men and women alike, of splendid physique, but of course too fat, owing to the lounging habit, all equally, of course, are clad in European clothing, and all without exception strike the visitor as being exceedingly undesirable and unornamental. For they have, with but rare

exceptions, a peculiarly unprepossessing cast of countenance, and withal an expression of languid contempt for the *pakeha* (white man) who goes bustling by that is not good to look upon.

Now I know that this is very harsh-sounding, but it expresses my feelings exactly. I grant the Maori exceptional ability, especially as an orator; I know that he is the original owner of the soil for which he fought so doughtily that his enemies conceived a great respect for him. I am sure that he is fully entitled to all that he receives by way of rent for his lands and to the reservation which no white man may interfere with; but I do wish he and his *wahine* would not get into shabby European clothing and hang about street corners in the towns. If they want civilisation, let them by all means become civilised and fit in with their surroundings; but if not, why! oh why do they not stay in their native encampments and loaf to their heart's content where loafing looks natural, dignified, and proper?

In order that I may not be misunderstood, I hasten to say that in the colleges and in certain Government positions are to be found some most admirable specimens of the Maori race, rising to a height of intelligence and responsible feeling such as a negro seldom

or never attains to, and with an admixture of white blood, whether half or quarter breed, many splendid specimens of manhood, both physically and intellectually, are developed. The Hon. James Carroll, Minister for Native Affairs, is a fine specimen of these last, and a gentleman whom it is pleasant to know.

Unfortunately time did not admit of my going up what is here termed the New Zealand Rhine, the Wanganui River. But even if I had, I could hardly have ventured to describe its beauties after the flood of purple writing on this and kindred scenic delights of the country which has been poured forth from the Government printing works, under the auspices of the Government Tourist Department. For, wisely enough, New Zealand rulers, being thoroughly alive to the fact that their country is the little wonderland of the world, spare neither pains nor expense to make the fact known in order to attract, not so much settlers as visitors. I am afraid to mention the huge sum which this small community spends every year on advertising New Zealand as a playground and health resort. It was told me by the gentleman who "runs" the great business under the Minister in whose department it is, but he assured me that, large as it was, the assessable returns fully warranted it. An ever-

increasing number of tourists come here from America and Great Britain, come prepared to be disillusioned, but go away enchanted, full of wonder that one small group of islands could possibly contain so much to be marvelled at, to look upon in speechless admiration.

Also under the fostering care of the Tourist Department, game, fish, fur, and feather is increasing, making the country a sportsman's paradise, as well as a wonderland for tourists. There are no game laws as we understand them; during the season appointed any one may shoot or fish on payment of a small fee for the season—ten shillings. And out of the season no one, however highly placed he may be, can either shoot or fish, for here, as perhaps nowhere else on earth, the law is no respecter of persons; if it is ever biassed at all, it is against those who have in favour of those who have not. A curious feature of the fauna is that creatures indigenous to other temperate countries on being brought here thrive amazingly, although the native fauna was, even when the islands were discovered, contemptible in variety and number, there being practically no native game but the rat. Only on the coasts and in the bays might be found overwhelming abundance of the finest fish in the world. Now the lakes and rivers are stocked with trout and

other foreign fish, the woods with game of all kinds, while domestic animals, such as sheep and cattle, are amazingly prolific and splendid in quality. To complete the present brief sketch of New Zealand's advantages, there are no noxious animals or reptiles, and very few unpleasant insects, what there are being mostly imported and easily dealt with.

I really feel sorry to say goodbye to Wanganui, for it is essentially a place that invites to pleasure in the midst of all that can charm the eye and comfort the body. Sea, river, lake, mountain, forest, and fertile plain. I can quite enter into the feelings of a man whom I met the other day, who, having been a confirmed globe-trotter, came here for a week and stayed two years, only leaving then because he was compelled to. And I feel thus having only seen it in the winter; I find myself wondering what I should feel if I saw it in the summer! But the call to leave was imperative, and I was carried back to Palmerston North, through the golden sunshine and balmy airs of this midwinter's day, feeling glad that the dwellers in New Zealand were thus highly favoured. But as we crossed the Wanganui River I noticed that it was in spate, and I wondered if these beautiful, fat, level lands were ever flooded. There was no one at hand

of whom I could ask the question, so I turned to my newspaper—for be it known unto you that each of these small towns will support a morning and evening newspaper—and there I read of the sorrows of Gisborne, the thriving town on the shores of Poverty Bay of which I wrote some time back. It has been the prey of a devastating flood which has overflowed those fertile levels and done enormous damage.

At the hearing of which I feel very grieved, for I learned to know and like much many of the people there. Moreover I read also that the communications have been greatly interrupted, and steamers have been unable to call, or if they had the state of the sea between the two breakwaters would effectually prevent the tender from going out.

The calamity, however, was purely local, for the smiling country through which I was now passing showed nothing of flood, although it looked as if it might be particularly liable to such visitations, being so flat and surrounded by hills. We swung into Palmerston again, and, so rapidly does one make acquaintances in a new country, I found myself welcomed like an old friend. I am not likely to forget that night at the cosy "gentlemen's club," as it was quaintly termed to me, but which I accepted as merely plain statement of fact. Song and

story, and, executed by my own blood-kin, a *haka*, or Maori dance, fearsome in leapings and boundings and yellings, and concluded with fiendish grinning, the mouth gaping wide as possible, so as to show the teeth, and the tongue protruding to the roots. Savage indeed, and I felt that it should certainly be introduced at Adelphi Terrace.

Late though the hour was when I reached my hotel, and sinfully early as the train departed next morning—6.55—there were brave and genial souls awaiting to speed the parting guest. Leave-taking was after our own fashion, entirely undemonstrative, but I felt sad, as I always do on these hurried journeys, knowing that, pleasant as the meeting has been, it is unlikely to be renewed, except by purest chance, in the centre of things, London, whither all roads seem to lead. I am afraid some of my untravelled friends that night thought that I was poking fun at them when I told them of strange meetings, foregatherings from the ends of the earth in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly, and more so than ever when I expressed my conviction that I should probably meet every one of them again in the vicinity of that classic region.

Back again in what the New Zealanders proudly call the Empire City, oblivious entirely

of the misnomer. It is a beautiful little city, a well-groomed and orderly city fully worthy of its position and is prospering in a very high degree. But to call it the Empire City is to ape the flapdoodle of the United States citizens, who, like the average users of forceful adjectives, see nothing incongruous or ridiculous in calling a collection of shacks a city, and cannot call a magnificent aggregation like New York or Philadelphia anything else. I would not, for a great deal, say anything that could even seem derogatory of Wellington. It is a place worthy of the utmost love and admiration of its citizens. In its surroundings it is peculiarly happy. They are romantic, picturesque in the extreme, which qualities, in days not so far distant, constituted a serious drawback to the city's expansion. Now, thanks to the electric and cable car service, those encircling hills have become easily accessible to all, and the citizens may and do enjoy, not merely the most delightful of panoramic views over sea and land that can well be imagined, but can pass to and fro between home and business swiftly, easily, and cheaply. True, this case of communication has brought in its train enhanced expenditure, land, on these erstwhile unsaleable hilltops, now fetching fabulous prices; but then these are the conditions

which must always obtain whenever art and science step in to assist people to enjoy nature.

And now the time approaches when I must leave Wellington for good.

Therefore it is only just to put on record that all the reports I ever heard of its weather before I came here were base and malignant inventions as far as my personal experience goes. While it is quite true that occasionally the city experiences three days' steady rain without a break, it is false to say that dirty or windy weather is anything like normal—in fact, it would be far truer to say that such climatic conditions are abnormal. Earthquakes do occur undoubtedly, but so infrequently and of such slight importance that they are practically ignored. The old *régime* of wooden buildings which I had often been assured were the only ones which would stand Wellington's insecure foundations has vanished, and splendidly ornate edifices of great height and imposing size are in evidence throughout the business district, and are also being rapidly added to. The streets of the city proper are beautifully level, paved like a billiard-table and well kept, while the roads up the hills, with all their winding and steep gradients are wonderfully well made. Indeed, taken alto-

gether, Wellington, apart from the delightful character of its citizens, is one of the most desirable places to live in that is to be found in the whole world, in my opinion.

XXIV

AUSTRALASIAN JOURNALISM

IN this the final chapter of this series of impressions I feel first of all compelled to regret my inability to visit many Australian towns of great interest, more especially in Queensland and the northern part of New South Wales, several of which I knew well, such as Newcastle, Grafton, Brisbane, Rockhampton, Gladstone, and Maryborough. Also that I had neither time nor opportunity to see many of the inland towns of Australia such as I have had in New Zealand, although in their case it certainly would not have been a revisit. Neither have I been able to visit beautiful Tasmania. But in the course of my six months' tour I have been unable to get much more than a passing glance at the country, and also, by meeting all sorts and conditions of men, to get a fairly comprehensive idea of the conditions of things generally. Passing

all these matters in review for a general summary, the first thing that I would like to notice is the high level of excellence and independence maintained by the Press. The newspapers of Australasia, with but two or three exceptions, are the equals of any of our newspapers at home, and in some respects their superiors, as, for instance, in political controversy. I gratefully miss that virulence of attack upon prominent men which is so painfully evident in many of our home journals, more especially so, strange to say, in those which profess to maintain a high religious standard.

That form of argumentative abuse and reckless slander is out here left to certain lewd journals of the baser sort—which indeed would seem to be their obvious place.

Daily Journalism is, as I say, of a very high order, and this applies not merely to the matter but to the paper and format also. And while the Colonial news is very full in detail and interest, home and foreign affairs are most comprehensively dealt with, and widely disseminated in the form of cablegrams and occasional London letters. In bulk, of course, these journals do not rank with the American newspapers, that hideous agglomeration known as the Sunday Edition being

unknown here, but in quality the Colonial newspapers are so immeasurably superior that no comparison is possible, with such notable exceptions as the *Tribune*, *Outlook*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and a few others out of the many thousands of newspapers with which the great Republic is afflicted.

But the most marvellous feature of Australasian journalism is its illustrated weekly Press. Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, all turn out splendidly written and illustrated journals, in which, except in the small matter of paper, the original pictures may safely challenge the world. A special feature of these fine papers, without exception, is the enormous amount of good reading matter which they contain for sixpence. I have just taken up one haphazard. It contains eighty pages of reading matter exclusive of advertisements. Fully half of this great space (the pages are *Graphic* size but the printing is closer) is taken up with matter of intense interest to Colonials, such as the state of the markets for their produce, the conditions of agriculture, mining, manufactures, employment, sport, education, art, and science. Politics are fully dealt with, not merely Colonial, but world-wide.

There are twelve pages of illustrations, four serial stories by well-known authors, twelve short stories, and about fifty storyettes. The only thing you may search its pages for in vain is anything objectionable or suggestive. This holds true of all, and it is indeed a high standard. Such papers as these are a sweet boon to dwellers up-country, who are thus kept in full communion with the great outside world in the pleasantest way. What I have said may seem too eulogistic, but I know that I have barely done the great Australasian illustrated Press justice, and have besides left uncatalogued a number of minor but most interesting items.

There are also a number of magazines which, in defiance of scanty circulation because of the small populations, persist in appearing and flourishing, such as the *Review of Reviews*, *Life*, the *Red Funnel*, &c. These offer a fair and welcome field for the development of budding Colonial literary talent such as has already thrown up several writers of a very high class, notably Louis Becke, John Arthur Barry, Henry Lawson, "Banjo" Paterson, Mrs. Campbell Praed, and others. I hope no idea of invidious selection will be attributed to me in mentioning these names, I do but give them as they occur to me.

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The very delicate question of political matters must of course be dealt with, but circumspectly as becomes a casual visitor from the Home-land. The one thing which strikes me most forcibly is the daring way in which these new communities deal with what are burning and most difficult questions at home. I am afraid that they are often much too apt to forget, in their enviable position of writing upon an almost clean slate, the difficulties of dealing with home problems. This lack of perspective often leads politicians out here into intolerance of British slowness, as they term it, in handling such fundamental questions as those of dealing with the land, and the unemployed, for instance. They do not realise what it means to have the dead drag of past centuries, nor the paralysing effect upon the Old Country of free imports, both of cheap labour and manufactures. Securely entrenched behind their own prohibitive laws, they cannot see, nor can they understand, why Britain has so many paupers, nor how it is that we cannot do as they do—look after their own people first, and afterwards—a very long way—consider the foreigner. The Socialism which at home is so real a danger because it ever tends in the direction of more making of paupers and the survival of the unfit, in contravention of

Nature's most obvious laws, assumes quite a different character here. As nearly as I can make out Socialism out here means the inalienable, incontrovertible right of every man to live and enjoy life, providing that he can justify his claim to be fit to live. At home, as far as I have yet been able to understand the pronouncements made by Socialists, every human being born has a right to live whether he will work or not, and if he beget children he may be as selfish, as improvident as he will, he has a right to have his offspring educated and maintained at the expense of the State, that is, being translated, at the expense of those who are striving with all their might to do their duty to their own families and to the State of which they are components.

In consequence of this difference Labour legislation, or even Socialism, does not strike me out here as presenting any dangerous features. It is, of course, strange and pleasant to see labour meeting capital upon a purely equal basis, and to see the working of the Arbitration Courts where capital has no power beyond what the judge deems to be for the greatest good of the greatest number. But stranger still it is to see how men of wealth and position will concede that it is not all bad that the men they employ

shall be placed, by the law, upon an entirely equal footing with themselves as regards questions of abstract justice. These things give furiously to think, but always there lies behind the knowledge that what is not merely possible but practicable in a new country, is both impossible and impracticable in an old one.

One thing that must give a sincere patriot grave qualms upon visiting a new country like this is the terrible effects of that canker known as *sport*—save the mark!—upon the people. It is, as we all know, the curse of our own country; not real sport, but that foul business which, in its gambling outcome, keeps the best of our workers poor, and has raised an immense body of utterly worthless parasites to prey upon the community. This abominable thing flourishes here as ill weeds do, especially in new countries. Its worst form is, as usual, horse-racing, which always attracts the very worst elements of the people, and occasionally results in some such scene as that recently witnessed on the Flemington Racecourse, where one of the harpies was kicked to death. This paralysing mania pervades every class, takes precedence of business, of religion, of morality, and is responsible for a whole host of minor evils. It is simply incomprehensible how so many otherwise sensible people can be led, apparently help-

lessly, from all that makes life worth living into this vile vortex, which defies all law, all order, and creates a class of beasts of prey, all the more dangerous because human and intelligent.

The development of these wonderful countries is sure but slow. What it would be but for "sport," even with the present ridiculously inadequate population, I cannot imagine, seeing what it already is, but one thing stands out most prominently, and that is the large margin left for any careful workman between his earnings and his necessary expenditure. No one here in the possession of brains and vigour need hawk them round fruitlessly for hire, nor having let them to an employer need he despair of ever being able to raise himself from the position of a hired man. Education is not merely free, it is of very high order, and ever tending more and more in the direction of common-sense inculcation of those things that are useful, while the ornamental is certainly not neglected. In consequence it is quite usual to meet men, while travelling, whose appearance is—well, shabby, according to Old World ideas—that is, they are in ordinary working clothes—who will talk most intelligently upon many subjects, and will not interlard their conversation with senseless expletives. These men, and they are a very large class indeed, form the backbone of the

country, and will, in due time, a good many of them, develop into its rulers.

What tends more to the dissemination of ideas and breadth of thought out here than anything else, I think, is the amount of travelling that is done. There are very few people that I have met on my journeyings to and fro who do not know these Colonies personally, very well, in spite of the immense distances. This, of course, is one of the causes as well as one of the results, of the great, the truly marvellous development of the Australasian Mercantile Marine. Another is that so large a proportion of the men have either been sailors or have never quite got over the effect of their long passage out from the Old Country. The spirit of the seafarer, his self-helpfulness, his adaptability to whatever circumstances he may find himself in and his indomitable optimism is over all. Which also accounts for a great many things otherwise mysterious and hard to understand.

But I am told that there is another factor largely in evidence to account for the really slow development of this vast area of habitable and valuable land besides their invincible repugnance of being flooded with cheap labour. It is the spirit of content. I give this for what it is worth, and it was told to me by many. When a

man who has known what it is to toil hopelessly at home with only the prospect of the poor-house before him, comes out here and finds that half the amount of labour will provide him with a comfortable living and a nest-egg for the slope of age, he is very apt to say, "Why should I strive for wealth? I am quite comfortable, and can now earn all I need or wish for with a slight expenditure of energy, while, should misfortune overtake me through no fault of my own, the State will support me without pauperising me." This feeling, it is said, robs a man of the burning desire to get on which makes a country possessing such men great in the sense of being wealthy. "People are too jolly comfortable to work hard out here," said a working man to me the other day, and I had nothing to say about the matter at all. It is a problem for far wiser heads than mine. But it is based upon the root idea that the possession of more than a man feels that he wants, brings not happiness, but misery. The cynic may say that there are few men who possess more than they feel that they want, but I can assure him that they are a far larger class than he wots of, especially out here.

Well, there are many things which leap to the pen, especially at the close of a book like this, but they must wait more fitting oppor-

tunity. What must not be omitted is mention of the deep and abiding feeling of the love for and the loyalty to the dear old land manifested by everybody, affection which coexists most comfortably with an almost passionate devotion to the new land which is, indeed, their own. No other passport to their hearts is needed than the fact that the visitor comes from the Homeland and loves it, he only is disliked and discredited who is ready to decry and belittle Britain in all things after the fashion of many curiously-minded folks at home. My best love and best wishes for Australasia. Root and branch, may she flourish for ever!

UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, THE GRESHAM PRESS, WOKING AND LONDON.