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FARING SOUTH

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MEMOIRS OF A PIONEER FAMILY

Including

GOLD MINING IN NEW ZEALAND

and THE KOKOPU

By

J. H. LYON

WELLINGTON

A. H. & A. W. REED

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This book is affectionately
dedicated to my wife,
RHODA MARY LYON

CONTENTS

Preface by G. H. Scholefield, C.M.G., O.B.E., D.Sc. 11

FARING SOUTH

North Lancashire 13
Aunt Faby's Fettling Up 21
Injustices of '55 23
The Packman 28
Heigh ho, Come to the Fair 32
Matrimony 36
Advent of a Grandson 38
A New Hand 40
Rosy Hopes 43
Embarkation and Voyage 50
Bella's Landing and Early Struggles 63
Re-union 68
Early Medicine 73
Old Wellington 76
Dark Days 81
Tricker 85
New Dawn 89
Cheery Optimism 93
Memories 97
Halcyon Days of 1872 100
A Visit to the Macks 107
Amusements of Seventy Years Ago 111

Contents continued

Neighbours 116
Retrospect 122
Food in the Seventies 127
Relics and Customs 133
Different Creeds 136
Old Rangitikei 142
Growth of a Family 146

GOLD MINING IN NEW ZEALAND

Early Reefing 152
Ordinary Usages 156
Early Conditions 165
Gold Dredging 168
Hut Fever 172

THE KOKOPU

Bush Farming 176
Bush Craft 181
The Burn 184
Budding Ownership 186
Shearing Methods 194
And, at Last 195

ILLUSTRATIONS

Parents of Bella Lyon	facing page 44
Robert Lyon	45
Bella Lyon and the two oldest boys	45
Lyon cottage, Aro Street, Wellington	60
Coley family, Hopper Street, Wellington	60
Upper Rangitikei River	61
The author	108
Rev. T. H. Lyon	108
Lyon family gathering	109
Totara on the author's farm	124
The author sawing battens	125

PREFACE

THE life stories of individual men and women, however unexciting they may be, are the warp and weft of our national history. When I first saw Mr. Lyon's manuscript I was struck by its simplicity and its obvious authenticity. The author in his long life succeeded in the most strenuous pioneering occupations —contracting, goldmining, bushfelling and bushfarming. He remembers his experiences clearly and describes them as a master.

A deeply religious man, Mr. Lyon is also an observant lover of nature, and the devastating phase in which he played his part did not leave him unmoved. On the completion of one bush contract he reflects:

> Alas for our vandalism! We had to live and the bush had to die, so away with regrets; early next year would see its site covered by sheep pasturing on the best potash-fed grass.

He is frankly happy that, having taken a man's part in destroying the bush, he has lived to see it renewed by a later generation.

The book is a handsome expression of gratitude to the parents who set its author's feet in New Zealand. Bella and Bob Lyon had no endowment of education or means, and after landing here they experienced many years of misfortune and ill health. Yet they never neglected the education of their children. And now their son shows that the halcyon period of their life was after 1870, when their industry, integrity and fortitude were rewarded, and they saw their children gaining headway in life. It is a well-told story, instinct with life and good nature.

G. H. SCHOLEFIELD

Wellington

NORTH LANCASHIRE

My story takes us in heart of winter to the central farming district of Ashton-under-Lyne, in Lancashire, about one hundred years ago, say in the year 1855. Farmers would recall the cutting up of half rotten stacks to ship and feed the starving horses on the Crimean Peninsula. Lincoln was soon to be waging a series of heady battles and was to be the victim of the assassin. They were stirring times, and in Lancashire itself the American Civil War had a disastrous effect on the cotton industry. Few blockade runners escaped the northern investment, with the result that far-spread ruin overtook owners of mills and those who were out of work were "clemming," as the Lancashire people termed starvation.

At this time four persons sat before the fire in the kitchen of a stone farmhouse round whose walls a fierce gale was raging. Deep snow rendered all work, except that of feeding the stock, quite out of the question. The room afforded a rough comfort. All furniture was of oak and though heavy and black with age, was carved—even to the chests, settles, chairs and general furnishings. The cupboards bore piles of plates and crockery and even some old specimens of china and glassware. The floor of large stone slabs was matched by a ceiling resting on beams hewn from oak limbs with the knots trimmed level, overlaid by oak laths laid crosswise, trenailed to the heavier timber like beams of a ship. These again supported a slate roof. Even the water butts standing outside the main kitchen entrance were long barrels of oak. Three hundred years had gone by since the first copyhold tenant of the Earl of Stamford and Warrington had laid the solid foundations of the house at a time when a foray or attack called for a semi-fortress.

It was not hard to pick the elderly, broad-built man as the master of the house. He was a man of kindly impulses. His favourite cat on the arm of the settle purred affectionately at his shoulder. "Thou'rt a marred cat, Flirt," quoth the old man, and then as though this had broken the silence he said, "This weather would clem anybody. How long since the cattle have left the shippon to water in the yard?"

Bob, the only son, a splendid specimen of English youth,

answered slowly. "Cousin Billy and I have not got them outside the shippon for three weeks. They won't face the storm and Billy and myself have had to carry them water." The slightly built young fellow Billy was a nephew of the old man, who took him as an orphan and brought him up as his own son. Deep affection existed between the powerfully built Bob and Billy.

The lady of the quartette, Bob's stepmother, was, in the words of the old song, "not very handsome, and not very young" and was called Hannah, according to the custom of rarely using a surname. In fact in their own locality Bob passed as "Young Bob of Big Bob's." His mother, a Quakeress from a family of cotton spinners, died when he was eight years of age. The second marriage was not a very happy venture for the old man, and long years afterwards as a dying woman, his wife begged Bob's forgiveness for grave wrong done to him in the settlement of his father's affairs. The old man was fond of his stalwart big-chested son, who was not without attractions, if popularity with the local fair sex counted for anything.

The old man reached into a recess and took out a long churchwarden clay pipe, charged and lighted up and smoked with placid enjoyment.

"What didst do to the colliers to stir them up this afternoon, Dad?"

A flicker of amusement passed over the old man's placid face. "Why, Bob, did they seem a bit out of flunter?"

"Ay, they did, and I seed thee whip the mare out of shafts and bolt stable door after thee."

"But for the door tha might ha' seen me on t'other side wi' a pitch-fork i' my hand. I wur joggin' home with towd mare in the dray when a lot of drunken colliers came out of the Silent Woman* and said they would ride in'th dray whether I liked it or not. I told 'em they were not welcome and they had better get down. They damned me for an old fool, so I drove above the old chalk pit, whipped the old mare round, pushed the kecker bar and shot 'em all down into thowd chalk pit; it's no small drop and I doubt whether I haven't given owd Billy the bone setter a job or two."

"They will try to kill thee, Dad," said young Bob, trying to hide his approval of his sire's action.

* "Silent Woman"—a local inn whose sign showed a woman carrying her head under her arm.

"Ah, threatened men live long," said the old man returning to his pipe and paper.

Sturdy independence and fearless action were the foremost traits of character of the North Lancashire farmer, or for that matter, his town dwelling neighbour; indeed it was not customary to thank the person who handed him his wages—he maintained he had earned it and no thanks were due. Owd Bob's invariable answer to "It's a fine day, Mr. Lyon" was, "You've your share ont."

It may be that the conditions of life nurtured only the hardy and the strong, but one fears the weak succumbed in early years. My father has told me they had to rise to shake from the bed coverings the snow which had sifted through the roof slates.

Already people were listening eagerly to lectures and reading leaflets which offered glowing prospects to those willing to adventure to the Antipodes—a voyage of three to five months on a sailing ship under very hard conditions and discomfort with too often a shortage of food and water. If this long voyage tried the fortitude of the men, the condition of the women and children, often battened down in a foul, bilge-smelling between-decks for weeks at a time, was worse. It naturally followed that the early settlers to New Zealand were self-reliant, sturdy characters and most had means enough to buy tools and the necessaries required to wrest sustenance from virgin soil or from the dense forest.

To return to our group at the fireside. The old man, whose eyes often fell on his stalwart son, observed his absorption in a small booklet he was perusing. "What art reading, lad?" he queried after a while.

Bob looked up. "Why Dad, someone gave this to cousin Mally (Maud) when she was up at Manchester. It's about colonists wanted by the New Zealand Land Company and a Colonel Wakefield is the head with a number of titled men on the board of directors. It looks very tempting to me."

"Why Bob, thow'st never thinking of leaving the old homestead where thy forbears have lived over three hundred years? We've been very fond of this owd house and thy grandfather never spent two nights from under his own roof, and he died in his ninetieth year. Thow'st never turning radical Bob, art lad?"

Bob, turning thoughtfully to face his father, spoke in a low

conversational tone. "Why Dad, you know that only one life remains in the copyhold lease and the factor of the Earl will not renew the lease; more than that, when the Earl of Stamford and Warrington died, the title went in favour of one of the family who had years before gone to South Africa and married a native woman. Lady Jane, the heiress, is a half-bred African and she allows the factor full powers, and it is quite evident he has his own ideas and does not intend to renew the lease. I am stronger than cousin Billy, and he can stay with thee and I can tackle British Columbia or New Zealand. I am tired of this England, there's nowt but a bare living on leased land and more often clean clemming for men and families willing to work. Overseas offers a brighter prospect and less hardship for the coming generation."

The old man had listened attentively to his son's unusually long speech with occasional "ayes" and nods.

"I'll no deny thee, Bob, but the state of England needs fettling up, but whether emigration will make it any better is doubtful. I'd rather see our own colonies take our own people if it can be done."

Gazing into the fire for a few minutes the old man seemed to be lost in thought, but by an effort came back to the subject and continued: "By what my old dad told me as a boy, he had to hold the oven door and slam it shut as soon as his mother flung the dough into the oven. That was a year of sprouted wheat and a wet harvest. The suffering of the common people was terrible and many died. Then the Irish potato famines in 1731, 1831 to 1842 were bad enough, but in one of later date one million, seven hundred thousand Irish perished of hunger. I canna gainsay thee Bob, for as tha knows thy Grandad gave us all a good education; may I be forgiven for making a poor use of mine. I have read the prints and I have read many books to thy Grandad in his later years. If tha wants to go I'd like thee to stay till after I am gone if tha wilta, lad."

Visibly affected by the appeal, young Bob said: "Think no more about it Dad, I'll not leave England in thy lifetime."

"Thou has thy life to live lad, and I canna say I am not pleased thou'rt willing to try a new country. Youth must be served, and I haven'a any doubt that new possessions peopled with English stock will make good backing when the old country needs help. Sithee lad, couldst get Hensha's son, the school

master, to step over and talk to me about the new colonies. Hensha went to school with thy grandfather. He was a doctor, tha knows, and wur always asking thy Grandfather why he never gave him a job. Thowd man wur nearin' ninety, but he always said, 'Sithee Hensha (Henshaw) if I canna dee without thy help, I winna dee at all.' Well, it's nearly bedtime. Good-neet to thee, lad."

Rising slowly he ascended the stairs, and as his heavy tread overhead died away young Bob sat for some time, his gaze bent on the dying fire, as he built air castles peopled and animated by the fiery fancies of youthful imagination.

The following evening saw an addition to the circle, for "young Henshaw," a man of about fifty or so, had joined them, and if the old man felt any depression after last night's disclosure he carefully hid its presence.

The recently enacted repeal of the Corn Laws was a ready theme of ordinary conversation and still a subject of heated discussion, but it was noticeable that from about this period the expansion of Lancashire as a manufacturing county, and later her prominence as a machinery producer, and later still the fame of her mechanics as the best in the world, were in equal ratio to the development of steam and its many uses. Indeed, it is not too much to say that from the Corn Law repeal efforts of Cobden and others came the industrial urge which brought England to the fore as an exporter of machinery and goods and, thirty years after cheap food became available, she had gained a place in the world, not as a farming nation, but as the premier exporter of goods and a heavy importer of foodstuffs and raw materials. At the date when our story opens, gangs of skilled mechanics were induced to apply their knowledge to the erection of mills of all kinds, even as distant as the country of the Czars.

From this digression let us return to the fire and conversation.

"Sithee, Hensha," said the old farmer with no preliminary, "Young Bob's got a notion of going overseas to one of these new colonies; what dost think ont?"

"Why Robert, I think it quite natural that any young fellow with a bit of pluck and grit would inevitably want scope for courage and enterprise and, to be candid, there does not seem to be much inducement to stay in a country so densely populated as this old Britain of ours. Since the repeal of the Corn

Laws and the cheaper food from outside countries such as Southern Russia, Canada and the American States, England has become a nation of manufacturers, as is evidenced by the cotton mills of Lancashire and the woollen ones of Yorkshire. Our shipping growing to meet the needs of transport of goods and loaded with foodstuffs by return, has also created large shipbuilding centres at Belfast, at Clyde and at various ports of the British Isles, and the demand for our machinery from all parts of the world has led to an enormous demand on skilled labour in our foundries, mills and workshops. What can indicate more clearly that the British farmer will be hard put to it to produce food at a rate comparable with distant countries having the advantage of cheap land, cheap labour and more genial climate? Whereas in times past we were dependent on the United States of America, we now are drawing raw cotton from Egypt and other Eastern sources, and the threat of another cotton famine as a result of war between the American States no longer stands as a bugbear to the English mill owner and his operatives."

The school master paused, and the old man, gazing thoughtfully at the glowing fire said, "Thou'st put it very well, Hensha, and I'll not try to argue with thee. Things are not as I would like them i' Lancashire myself. Tenant farming offers only a bare living, and even the owners of mills had their set-back during the Civil War. Bob's mother was one of a Quaker family who had gingham mills, and the cutting off of the raw cotton ruined them. I agree with thee that when cheap food enabled the cotton operative or the machinery maker to obtain cheap bread, and he got fair wages for his skill and ability, it meant a full belly against an empty one under the old high and protected rates ruling for wheat and other foodstuffs which came in. Potatoes are largely grown now and are on every table, taking the place of bread. The Corn Laws, the last in '46, may have made cheaper bread for England, but the rent roll of the landed gentry has been reduced by half—the tenants cannot pay. My rental having only two lives to run, was paid in advance in a lump sum for three lives on a copyhold lease. Young Bob is the last life, and if he goes overseas, three hundred years and over on the one farm finish with my life. My old Dad lived to ninety and he loved the old farm."

Henshaw had smoked quietly and listened attentively till the long pause indicated the old farmer had said all that was in

his mind. Taking a reflective pull at his pewter, the school master said, "All you have said, Robert, goes to prove that young Bob has weighed up the situation and has chosen wisely. If a life overseas offers free opportunities, a better climate, and ultimate affluence, a sea voyage is not like to daunt him; after all, he will still be a Briton and in a British Colony. It is not, I admit, a desirable and fitting sight to see our best blood leave these shores, but what would you? Sentiment is a poor substitute for the hard struggle to live in a country which denies the needy the right to work or to earn enough to keep body and soul together. Great inducements are being offered by all the British Colonies and by the United States of America. A bit ago I heard a white-bearded old man with a harp singing a song called 'To the West,' where a man's industry could be trusted to ensure that his children would be blessings and his efforts would earn him the 'fruits of the soil.' Then leaflets are being circulated offering plots of land in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and British Columbia, and let me tell thee, Robert, many of our best men and their sons are afloat or are preparing to go overseas. Many have gone and have written glowing accounts of the new lands. Joined to this, gold has been discovered in the Southern Island of New Zealand in considerable quantities. I'd let the lad go, Robert."

The old man looked across the hearth. With an audible sigh the old man said, "I'm afraid Hensha I've nowt to urge against it, but I'd like the lad to stay till I am happed up in the churchyard."

As though unwilling to obtrude any longer where family affection was evident, the school master reached for his lantern, and bidding the others goodnight was convoyed by Bob to the gate.

Young Bob thoughtfully watched the dying embers of the fire and when the old man made a move to go bedward, his son came forward, placed his stick in his hands, and raised him by a strong hand under the oxter*, grasping hands as the old man turned with a "Goodneet, lad," leaving his son with a strange moistness of the eyes, for this was a show of feeling rarely exhibited, and then only under great stress of emotion.

Common events moved along much in the same old way for a year or two. Young Bob developed well. His chest and limbs

* Armpit.

were such that he scarcely looked his five feet ten in height, and was considered the strongest lad of his neighbourhood; and this led to rather a foolish wager by his father when mellowed by ale mugs. He undertook that young Bob should carry two sacks of wheat lashed together up the farmhouse stairs. The two weighed 480 pounds, being eight bushels of 60 lbs. each. To ascend the stairs required stooping under the gabled gutter on account of the size of the load. The two sacks were taken from the kitchen table and were safely carried out, and the wager won with no ill-effects.

The old man liked young Bob to swallow a fair amount of ale and held similar views to Bob Sawyer on its consumption: "It's a poor stomach that can't warm a quart of ale."

Young Bob found congenial company amongst the local wrestlers, and was frequently a star performer. In one bout his shoulder was dislocated and he visited the local bone setter who would do nothing till the bout was described to him. Then he reset the shoulder with a skilful twist, and to the "ouch" of young Bob said, "Ay, didst say that when it were done."

Bob's wife delighted to tell how she was crying over some disappointment of missing a wakes or the like, when her mother drew her to the window where a young man of twenty-one was lurching up the road, a Glengarry cap with the tails over one ear, a piece of bread in one hand, and a piece of cheese in the other, biting a piece from each as he pursued his unsteady way homewards.

"Sithee, Bella, don't cry, here's a husband for thee."

"That chap, I would be in bad need of a husband to take a chap like yon."

"Well," quoth her mother, "that's young Bob Lyon and all the girls are breaking their necks after him."

"They can have him for me," was the girl's reply.

The Ashton fair and wakes were due not very long after this, and Bella was fated to see more of the young man.

AUNT FABY'S FETTLING UP

THE OLD FARMER relaxed after his spree and pick-me-up, and in great content, with his long churchwarden pipe in full blast, played through the bars of his settle with his furry companion. The remains of his ale and bacon with oatcake still stood on the table, for this was the usual restorative after a drinking bout. The old chap "reached down" a collop of fat bacon from the side of a "twenty score" pig, threw it on the coals, and, taking an oat cake from the overhead rack, made a trip to the cellar with a quart jug. The scorched bacon collop was rescued and owd Bob Lyon made his repast. His son, young Bob, averred that so innocuous was the ale of that day that the old man could, after a couple of weeks' spree, sit down and write a hand like copper plate.

Shortly after he had settled comfortably in an armchair before the blaze of a generous coal fire, a hand pulled the door sneck* and a small tornado came whirling in.

"Why Aunt Faby (Phoebe), what maggot has bitten thee?" said the old man, with a flicker of amusement on his face and the tolerant air of a very large dog toward a tiny poodle.

"Maggot enough," said Aunt Faby, "as thou art going to know when I have done with thee."

Then one noticed that the tiny energetic person had very white hair and short-sighted eyes, which, where they were visible appeared to be pink; in fact, Aunt Faby was said to be an albino.

"Ay," quoth the small bundle of energy before him, "I want to know why you try to ruin little Bob. Thou great chowter yed. Thou art nowt but a great slummocking foo'."

The old man looked puzzled. "What dost mean, Faby?"

"Mean!" quoth Faby. "Dost forget thou wagered in thy drunken foolishness that young Bob would carry two four bushel sacks of wheat upstairs, and dost think that a lad of eighteen, a gradely fine lad too, might be lammed** for life!"

"The lad's none the worse," said the old man, "though I am fain to say that Bob had to stoop under the gables on the stairs and it was no easy lift."

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* Latch. ** Lamed.

Aunt Faby was about to reply when two strong hands took her round the waist and a vigorous young voice said, "Why Aunt Faby, art giving Dad a fair redding up? I'll say thou art not looking half thy age, and if thou were not Aunt Faby, I'd marry thee tomorrow."

Lifting her up by the waist, he declared he must kiss her, which he did very heartily. It was easy to see that the rollicking young nephew with his splendid frame and handsome features was a first favourite with the old lady, and her face broke into smiles, and shortly afterward Aunt Faby departed as abruptly as she had come.

"Bob lad, thou hast saved me a long lecture, and thou hast certainly a way with the women-folk that gives me a bit of disquiet. Art none the worse for thy carrying the wheat upstairs, lad? I doubt but I set the a fool's task, and I would never forgive mysel' if I ruined thee."

"Nay, there's nowt amiss wi' me," quoth young Bob. "Dinna fash yersel' Dad, I'm none the waur o' that bit of a lift; though," he said with a laugh, "that dip of the roof with the high load took some scraping under to stoop and get straightened again."

The old man sighed, and after a long scrutiny again turned to the fire, saying in a low tone: "If only thy mother had lived, lad, she would have been fain and glad to see thee grown up."

The writer has seen Bob, at over sixty years of age, get under a load of four squared piles for bridges, and lift them into the centre of his own waggon—a feat the driver of the team could not equal.

Said one Kentishman to Bob in his late years, "You know Mr. Lyon, we grow hops in my country," to be met with the reply, "Ay, and we grow men in my country."

INJUSTICES OF '55

THE OLD MAN, Big Bob Lyon, was feeling his own company a little irksome. It had been a day of drifting snow and sleet. The herd of neat, as the Saxons termed them, had been fed, milked and bedded down in the bulky shippon which held live-stock and their sustenance in its wide bowels, and only the means to water the animals was required from outside. But at the last, the final work of the day ended, all sought the solid stone kitchen and its warm promise of the evening meal.

Henshaw, or "Hensha" as owd Bob persisted in calling him, had become, since young Bob had opened up the subject of emigration to New Zealand, very much in evidence as a visitor, and afforded the old man, who was by no means a fool, keen delight and much food for thought. In addition to an observant eye and extensive reading, the lame dominie had acquired the art of culling interesting points from the subjects of his study of the books he read, being one of those who, lacking academic degrees, possess the power of imparting their knowledge simply and in an effective manner.

Tonight, when when he glanced through the window and saw the familiar figure with the stick and unlighted lantern, the old farmer seemed gratified, and at the first knock at the door cried, "Come in with thee, Hensha, thou wilt clem in this snell weather."

Hensha lifted the latch and walked in, greeting the old man with: "Well, Robert, art in good fettle?"

"Ay, lad, I've nowt to complain of, and sithee Hensha, I have had much time to think of Bob and his notion of going overseas and the condition of our own country, and dosta know, happen if I had been born forty years later I might have gone myself. I'll nobbut deny there are many things in this England of ours want a lot of fettling at this present time. Dost know that the Church near the corner of this farm has been closed this twenty year because the vicar had some conflict with the churchwardens and shut it up? By all accounts the Vicar was a younger son of some noble house and was given the living, worth £800 a year, and paid a curate about £100 a year to fill the pulpits while he filled and drew a salary from another living as well. He was a rake, as is well known, and spent

most of his time following the hounds, cock-fighting and drinking. That is no example to the people, Hensha, and while the common folk follow Wesley, Bourne and others, they are still liable to pay ten per cent in tithes. There is little regard for the hardship of the lower classes and it must be within thy recollection that the Pudlow martyrs were transported to Australia for life because a small body of them asked for more wages as farm labourers. They were decent religious men, local preachers, blameless in their lives; in fact, guilty of nothing more than of asking enough to give their children a full belly. The farmers who sent them overseas were the men supporting the Corn Laws and making bread dear."

Said Hensha soberly, "If that was only one instance of injustice to be taken, it would not be so bad, but the callous disregard of human suffering and persistent suppression of the pleas for justice, has led me to believe that up to 1840 when deportation ceased after fifty-three years, 82,250 convicts, at a cost of £400,000 a year for transport and military, has been sent to Tasmania and to Australia. I recently read a book called *For the Term of His Natural Life,* and I tell thee, Robert, the tales, well authenticated, make a Briton's heart sick. I have often speculated whether a natural collusion between hard men and the desire to rid the old land of dangerous men suffering numerous and repeated injustices, were behind the harsh sentences given to these poor creatures, presenting as they did, a ready threat of punishment to any expression of desire for the rights of man. The French Revolution was simply the result of fiendish cruelty and want. I have too the idea that John Wesley taught patience and resignation and reliance in extreme mental and bodily distress in the Grace of Almighty God."

The old farmer smoked on steadily, his eyes fixed on the fire. At last he said, "Thou art well posted, Hensha, and thou hast read more largely than most; there must be more than the ordinary in thy reading to work on thy sympathy to the length thou hast just spoken."

After a time the old man, who had evidently sought some answer to the other's utterances, said, "And yet, Hensha, the British law was perhaps a little better than those countries across the channel which had little or none at all. The law would not allow a doctor or a butcher to sit on a jury on the grounds that, being used to bloodshed, they would be unable to give a proper verdict. Also, in this very country, they would

hang a man for the theft of a mare, but not for the theft of a gelding. The reason given was that the mare, producing a colt which sold, provided most of a tenant farmer's rental, and was a part of his living, and the theft of the mare took away the chief source of his livelihood."

To which Hensha, after a reflective pull at his beer mug, said, "Ay, there may have been some good provisions for justice, but as I said before, a common dread of the hungry and oppressed, and a desire to suppress by force any symptom of revolt, often over-ran any system of justice or mercy. Add to this the desire for labour for development of virgin country by assigning the convicts to those applying for them meant nothing more than slavery, though it was never called by that name; still they only received enough coarse food to keep them serviceable, and cast-off clothing of their masters or mistress.

"We had a clear instance of this in the case of Mary Haydock. Thou hast spoken of stealing horses, but this thirteen-year-old girl only rode a horse without permission, and was prosecuted for it and sentenced to death. Her sentence, two years later, was mercifully commuted to transportation for life, and she shared all the horrors of an over-crowded floating hell of a convict ship during seventeen weeks' voyage, for that was the length of the *Royal Admiral's* passage. At the end of the passage both men and women were assigned to work for the Government as first pick, then the military element had the next pick. Any left over were assigned to the civilians to improve the farms. Fortunately, a young officer of the *Royal Admiral* fell in love with Mary Haydock, and though twenty-five and Mary only fifteen, they made a very happy match, though Lieutenant Raeby had to resign and sacrifice his career as a semi-naval officer in the East India Service. All this was rendered possible by Governor Phillip who favoured the marriage of young convicts with a pardon and some assistance in establishment on the land.

. "That young girl, Robert, was a member of an old and respected Lancashire family and her tale of Australia came from herself when, after her husband's death, she, with two grown-up daughters, visited her birthplace in 1820, being then forty-four years of age, and after twenty-nine years' residence in Australia. Her husband's death from sunstroke left her with seven children, the eldest a son, Thomas, of fifteen years. Mary Raeby received many visitors during her stay here and had many

callers, and among her visitors and relatives there was no memory of her childish tragedy, and she enjoyed her visit. She had, with her husband, acquired farms and they also traded as merchants, Raeby commanding his own ship, while his able wife, assisted by assigned women convicts, cared for the shore interests. Prior to her return to England a valuation of her trading assets, farms, etc., showed her to be a comparatively wealthy woman, worth over £20,000. Partly filling the ship taking her back to Australia with merchandise, Mary Raeby returned and died at the age of seventy-eight. Her later life was spent in promoting education as one of the Governors of the Free Grammar School of Sydney, and other activities, notably the granting of civil rights to those who had been convicts. Mary was laid beside her husband in Devonshire Street Cemetery, Sydney.

"Hers, Robert, is but one instance of the effect of harsh and cruel results, but not all could equal the results of courage and natural ability achieved by Mary Raeby."

"Ay, Hensha, I've been fair gloppened* by thy tale; I have some slight recollection of the lass thou hast been telling about, but I have some doubts but thou wilt turn me radical if I listen to thee much longer."

Seeing the school master take up his lantern, the old man, with native courtesy, motioned Bob to see him home, and at parting said, "I thank thee, Hensha, for coming to see us and for thy trouble in giving us thy gatherings from books. If thou canst come I would be glad to see thee again."

Long after his visitor's departure, the old man gazed at the fire, deep in thought, and at last he murmured to himself: "Has Britain outlived herself? Hath this clemming and heavy penalties on those who steal food to live made the folk with brains and foresight set on going overseas? I canna say I blame the lad. The landed gentry and those from whom they draw their rents have all been impoverished by the repeal of the Corn Laws; Bob is the last of his race to occupy thowd house and I canna say I feel easy in my crop to let him go, but after all youth mun be served."

Just here we may remark that Owd Bob had put his finger on the root causes of unrest and desire for overseas—the severe struggle to live and the inability to obtain work, the rank injustice toward the lower classes, and the hopeless and never-

* Fascinated.

ending struggle to rise, were the strongest colonizing factors to those who, while feeling the keenest attachment to the old land, were being driven oversas.

The writer has used the term gloppened, which is used in Lancashire to denote fascination, bewitched or charmed. The writer also believes most strongly that, while the Englishman is not so ready with praise and affectionate reference so readily voiced by Scottish and Irish, and is more or less devoid of the art of expressing his inner feeling, his love of his birthplace is deep, strong, and lasting.

THE PACKMAN

BREATHLESS, the old packman entered the farm kitchen, worn out by his buffeting by a gale which presaged snow. The heavy door closed behind him, a ready pair of young hands eased his straps and lowered his pack. Turning, the old man said with short gasps of returning energy, "Thank thee, Bob lad, it's a snell day; right enough there's nowt i' the way of betterment in North Country weather or happen I'm gettin' too owd for my job."

"Sithee, Billy, hasta ever thought of giving a chance to someone less nicket i' the horn than thysel'? It's time to ease up, lad, at thy time of life," said the farmer from his seat on the settle.

Bob had taken a pewter mug to the cellar which joined the kitchen end, and with the tongs dropped a live cinder in the ale to take off the chill.

The packman seated on the settle before the fire, took it silently and after a first draft began to be, as he put it, "a bit loosened" or relaxed. The liquor disposed of and again replenished, the old farmer reached up and pulled down a long clay pipe and tobacco jar from the mantelshelf, but the pedler, refusing the new pipe, produced a well coloured short clay of his own which, having filled from the jar, he was soon puffing in great contentment.

Presently an ample meal was set before the packman, and only when he had been fed and rested, was any move made to open up his store of fabrics, needles, pins, ribbons, cutlery and all things in common use. Bob, who had eagerly watched the opening up of the packman's treasures, espied some small booklets which the packman perceiving said, "Tha can take them lad," and added, "for nowt, they cost me nowt, and I'm charging thee same price."

"How didst get 'em for nowt?" inquired the farmer.

"Why, when I was in Manchester getting two-thri goods for the pack they were giving away these little books by a bellman and I geet some given me."

"Ay," quoth the old farmer, "read one out, Bob."

"*Colonization in New Zealand,*" read Bob, "by Edward Gibbon Wakefield." It was an appeal to young men with

families to go overseas. In Devon and Cornwall there were agents and posters everywhere, but at this date only Scotland and the South of England had been actively canvassed. As Robin read of the claims of the New Zealand Association, formed some years earlier, that this colony was likely to prove a Britain of the South Seas, the old farmer drew at intervals long whiffs of his pipe and listened intently, the only sounds the fall of a coal from the fire and the boy's schoolboy effort on the longer words of the pamphlets.

"Sithee, Bob," said the old man, "it's time thee and Cousin Billy wur at shippon. The neat must be fed and watered and bedded down. Billy the packman will bide the night, and thee and Billy thy cousin can take another look at the little books after supper."

After the departure of the boys the old man, between intervals of desultory talk with the pedlar, scanned the pamphlets and finally delivered himself of a long speech. "There's a good deal of truth," he said, "in what's printed in the little booklets. England holds nowt to attract the young. I'm too owd myself, for it's ill to uproot an owd stick like me. What has England to offer but rent paying and tithes on leasehold land? We are nowt very sure about lease ayther. My forbears built this house, shippon and barns over three hundred year syne, and what has Robin to look for after I am happed up by the sods? Thast heard that the heiress has mixed blood? I seed her t'other day and she's coffee coloured. Nobbut that she may be a good woman in spite of her skin," he added. "I'd say nowt against the Countess Jane, but the factor has no notion of the old yerls and the bond between tenant and lord. He has refused to renew the copyhold and after Robin's death the old furniture and livestock must be sowd* and a stranger live in the house the family built about 1538. We are a hard-bitten race but the old homestead is all we have known."

The old pedlar had been a quiet and attentive listener, nodding a mute attention or punctuating some item with the stem of his clay pipe. He said, "I noticed a date on the wall, 1538, but I nobbut thought the place as owd as that. What made them build it so solid? The walls are heavy stone, the floors are laid with gradely flat slabs, and the beams are limbs of oak; bearers are laid with heavy slate; even the long water butts are

* Sold.

oak and the furniture and chests are carved oak, black with age. The shippon and barn are built for a siege."

"Ay," said the old farmer, "by all accounts when the Highlandmen and the Borderers came down, all stock were indoors and men with firearms were on watch. Dost forget that in the Jacobite times of Prince Charlie they came down as far as Derby, two days' march from London? Robert Bruce burnt Preston in 1323 and Cromwell defeated the Old Pretender at Preston in 1648. The Young Pretender, or as the Jacobites called him, Prince Charlie, over-ran the North and down to Preston and stole everything his men could carry, and drove the live-stock over the border—my certes, they had need of solid men, and buildings too! It is handed down that the Lyon family came down before this house was built, from the borders, and made a settlement at Lyonedge in Cheshire and my forbears broke back North and settled here. I've nowt to show they were any better than they should be, and three centuries of intermarriages may have worked out the Scots strain, but I fear me they are rough Christians still. It's dry work, talking, wilt fill up thy mug, lad?"

Nothing loth, the pedlar, with a full pewter and his short clay pipe in full blast, and now fully thawed in the genial rays of heat from a generous coal fire, was disposed to be a good listener.

The old man went on with his tale, and reverting to old days, continued, "I was told by my forbears that the Asshetons were a very powerful and old race, attested by monuments and stone castles, with punishments and even the power of life and death in their hands. One lord, Walter Assheton, was reputed to have ruled with harshness and great cruelty."

Just then, a tap, and the pulling of the sneck admitted the school master.

When he had taken a seat on the settle and been served with the customary ale and pipe Owd Bob said, "I wur tellin' the pedlar here of the owd Assheton family, but thou hast read many books and church deeds or documents, so see what tha can do."

Hensha said, "What thou canst tell from thy forbears, Robert, must be much more worth while than anything I can say, for thy forbears were for nearly fifty years riding at the back of the Asshetons and wearing the Red Rose in the Wars of the Roses —a very flowery name for a ghastly and bloody war.

"The French have a name for that style of combat—a *guerre a outsance*—or to the limit, since they burnt homesteads and took life indiscriminately and very freely. The winning side for the time being were not so badly off, but the plight of the vanquished was indescribable."

"Ay," commented the old farmer, "I've just said they wur rough lads, those forbears of mine, but nowt is clearer than that the overlord was fairly good in a hardish way with his followings, and allotted them land, such as this holding, at a low rental, to ensure having a backing in his wars, but I canna help thinking it bred harsh and hard men too. With big horses wearing a steel plate on their chests, and the riders in steel corselet and cap, I haven't any doubt they would take a good deal of hard pike thrust and sword cuts to stop them—those hard-riding Red Rose yeomen."

The schoolmaster, lame from youth, had said nothing for some time, but now, preparing to leave, said, "Ay, Robert, those were the days when sheer bulk and strength carried the day, though now a weak man with a firearm levels all men, but it is the powerful and active man who appeals to me in what the Psalms describe as 'The sprightly man and warlike horse'."

Owd Bob said, "Come again lad, good-neet to thee lad."

HEIGH HO, COME TO THE FAIR

AN UNUSUAL STIR existed in the village. The shop*, as the operatives called it, was silent—no whistles were blown and no wheel turned. In fact, it was Fair Day, when all anticipated a merry time and when the lads bought fairings for the lasses; when the boisterous fun of some was no bar to the tender glances of lovers, when "eyes looked love to eyes that looked love back again." Poor souls, who would deny the joys of love's dawning to these virtuous and simple couples of a self-denying and lasting affection, to hearten and to soothe the privations and hardship that even the most optimistic knew lay ahead of them. They merely asked that they might tread the rough and the smooth hand-in-hand and together.

Nothing sinister or of a sombre nature was allowed to spoil this day of bliss long deferred, and the subject of many speculative remarks amid the whirring of the machines; and surely the girl of eighteen who looked from a window of Bolton Tom's house was typical of the fun-loving spirit of the day. Slim, a little above medium height, her eyes of deepest black, lit up with the sparkle of merry fun, were worthy of the abundant brown hair, peach complexion, even teeth, broad forehead, small mouth and straight small nose. Combined with a willowy faultless figure, Isabella Harwood was the veriest example of the old saying: "A Lancashire girl for style and beauty." To these charms add the merry music of her voice and a laugh that seemed to be infectious, and the girl of the cotton mill became a queen in her own small sphere.

Breakfast over, the dress for the day was donned with its voluminous crinoline and leghorn hat, and instructions to stay close to the elder brother, Edmund, demurely listened to. Mother was kissed affectionately and a fairing promised her. A last application of a damp handkerchief was applied to dull the shining face—for Dame Harwood had her own notions of the proprieties, and a shining face was not one of them. "They'll say thou art nowt," was her comment.

Escorted by her brother, Edmund, to whom she was fondly attached, and with whom in late years she corresponded across thousands of miles of intervening seas, Bella was the recipient

* Cotton factory.

of many and varied fairings and rides on the rampant horses of the merry-go-round. Her gifts were so numerous that her mother, Betty, said, "I'm sure Bella, thou'rt nowt to have so many fairin's given thee!"

The final gift forced her to appeal to her brother Edmund to carry her offerings. A lad she knew handed her a weighty package from a spotted handkerchief, generally called a dog fighter handkerchief and usually worn round the neck. On opening the parcel the poor simple lad said, "I thowt I'd bring thee something useful Bella, it's a biled cow's heel."

It is to the credit of Bella's inborn kindliness that she thanked the poor simple fellow and vowed he could not have chosen a more suitable present, though in after years she bubbled over with merriment at the recital of Sluthering Jack's fairin' gift.

Laughing happily, Bella suddenly frowned as she saw the young farmer her mother had shown her through the window. If he was at all vinous now it was very slight, and to his "Sithee, lass, I'll buy thee a fairin'," she looked into his frankly admiring eyes with cold disdain, replying in blunt Lancashire: "I want none of thy fairin's, keep them for some other lass." But her eyes strayed back to his handsome face and figure, and his dark grey eyes seemed to meet hers at every opportunity. At the end of the day it seemed as though young Lyon could not tear himself from the fair till Bella herself and her escort set forth homeward, and he appeared to be in the Lancashire parlance gloppened, or bewitched. He afterward admitted he had been in love at one time for ten minutes, and added if it had lasted fifteen it would have been his finish.

The fair over, all were returning to their homes in groups. Some sang the old well-known ballads, others called to each other in lovely badinage, and not a few couples came slowly, lost to all but the companion beside them.

Bob's first overtures toward marriage met with poor success. Bella, for all her levity, could be described in the local diction as nobody's fool, and her reply to his advances left no doubt as to her thoughts.

"Sithee lad," said she, in that soft pure Saxon tongue, which though pleasant to hear, can leave no doubt of its meaning. "Sithee lad, dost think I have'nt seen enough in a drunken feyther to get me a drunken husband? Why lad, by all tales, thy feyther has been a heavy drinker, and while he perhaps wur never as bad and brutal as mine, I've seen enough to warn

me against a drunkard. I want to get out of my feyther's clutches, but not to marry a drunken husband, and if a man canna stay sober before he marries, there's little chance of doing it after.

"I know," she added, "from thy own tale thy mother, a Quakeress, died when thou wert only eight, and thou hast had a hard loveless life with thy stepmother, but lad, thou must owter a good deal before thou courts me. I've nowt against thee lad, but thou mun owter thy ways."

Bob, the picture of dejection, listened to the slim dark-eyed girl, and was silent for a time. "I canna gainsay thee, lass. What thou hast said is true, but I love thee dearer than life. Thow'rt the loveliest lass i' Lancashire and I canna live without thee. Lucy Holt, my mother, was a Quakeress and when she died I thought she came to comfort me telling me not to cry. I have no real pleasure in drinking or loose ways. Perhaps she or her spirit broods over me still; after a spree, I have pulled myself together and asked myself: 'Bob, where the devil are you going to end up?' "

This speech was not lost on Bella, and a moisture of eye and softer speech betokened he had not injured his suit.

"Well, lad, I raythe pity thee, but dosta think if thou hast any thought of me as tha sayest, thou could pull up and be a man a wife could look up to; for no woman, Bob, ever respected a man who set liquor above her love."

It is not to be supposed that Bella had heard that pity is akin to love, but by some subtle feminine trait of character, she was on the brink of a great affection.

Bob continued to visit the home of the Harwoods, and if his charmer gave him little encouragement, he afterwards said he walked some distance to see the chimney of the house sheltering Bella and derived great consolation thereby.

By some tacit agreement Tom and Betty Harwood accepted Bob as their daughter's suitor, the former because the father of Bob was reputed well-to-do, and Bella's mother because the old lady, taken by his clean straightforward personality and superb figure, was still imbued with the idea of true love and romance. Possibly Dame Betty had heard of the hard nature of his stepmother from common gossip, and the welcome extended him gave Bob a glimpse of a home he would fain make permanent if he could win the home fairy and procure her wand to transform his life as a loving companion.

His courtship was of tardy growth, but Bob noticeably shook off his old company and became less inclined to persist in following his old mode of life. He was always, to the end of his life, fairly abstemious, and in great dread, in even hard-drinking times, of being seen affected by liquor.

MATRIMONY

BETTY, abetted no doubt by her husband, decreed that Bella should go to rest at nine, and Owd Tom, though deserving of much criticism, was adamant on strict behaviour on the part of his children. Some busy person told old Tom that Bob's father, by his hard drinking, had dissipated the whole, or a large part of his means. Bolton Tom lost no time in showing his desire to end the courtship, but Bella, sensing this opposition, began to lean toward her ardent swain.

After a time, Bob obtained a definite "Ay lad," and was the happiest man living. Bella really loved for the first time in her life, though she always averred she married, as she phrased it, "to get out of my feyther's clutches." Be this as it may, fifty years of life together, and many hardships, left undimmed the affection declared after Whitsuntide Fair.

Bob pressed for an early union, and leaving his father's farm, obtained a much coveted job as man in charge of a dairy herd owned by a gentleman farmer, as these well-to-do men who farmed for a hobby were called. Bella's father knew Bob had obtained a marriage licence and set a watch on his would-be son-in-law's movements.

Bob, his cottage furnished, planned to walk about three miles to church, and one morning set out to meet bride and bridesmaid, accompanied by his best man. He was bravely attired. His waistcoat, preserved by his family over fifty years, was a product of a Jacquelin loom—a Huguenot invention which wove silk rosebuds and sprays of forget-me-nots of deep blue on a background of silk or satin. In later days we children would try it on, and though fairly big, we could not at any time fill the huge garment.

When the parties met, Bella was attired in a Paisley shawl as a top garment. Suddenly Bob turned to his bride. "Hast any money, Bella?"

Bella then explained her mother had pressed eighteen pence into her hand.

Bob said, "I'll never have my wife reminding me of the money she browt me." Forthwith they called at an inn and mother's fortune, so she averred, was spent on hot ale and gin, consumed by the wedding party.

The ceremony went well, till the clergyman demanded if Bob took Bella for his wedded wife, to be met by the condition "Wilta clean my boots?" And Bella laughingly said, "Ay lad, I'll clean thy boots." After twenty-five years Bella said her contract was ended and others could, and did do her job, but Bob, the inexorable, said the marriage, by reason of the broken contract, was dissolved.

Bob said later in life that so much was spent on the wedding that he had to borrow a half sovereign from the best man to start housekeeping. Bob and his bride were probably the most happy pair it would be possible to meet, and worth a second glance. Bob was proud of the sparkle and merry laugh of his mate, but her father had very different ideas. Whether Bella, secure in her new-found happiness and liberty, deliberately provoked Bolton Tom, I do not know, but on one occasion he said, "Sithee Bob, if thou dost not thrash thy wife, I'll thrash my dowter."

Bob, with a good-natured smile, said, "Thou had better think twice, Tom, and leave my wife alone."

Settled in their own little cottage, there were the usual differences of opinion, and on one of these rare occasions Bella went home and complained of Bob's hot temper, and said she would leave him. Old Betty listened quietly and then asked: "Does he starve thee, Bella?" When answered in the negative, she again asked: "Does he beat thee, Bella?"

"He wouldn't dare to beat me," said Bella with a fiery eye.

Old Betty, wise by hard lessons, eyed her younger daughter, and in level tones said, "Sithee Bella, thou'rt married now. Go home and learn each other's tempers."

In after years Bella often commended her mother's homely wisdom.

The birth of Bella's first child brought soberness and a fine sense of responsibility previously absent in the young mother; a wider charity and love which showed itself in more mature judgment and trust in the affection and clean life of her spouse —a trust, by the way, she frankly showed to me when, as a young man, she had mentioned a former neighbour whose propensities as a Don Juan were rather notorious. "Thy father," she said, "was never a lustful man."

ADVENT OF A GRANDSON AND DEATH OF THE FORBEAR

TIME WENT ON and Bella lost much of her vivacity and the soft languor of coming maternity was not unnoticed by the youthful husband, and he showed a tenderness and consideration for his lovely young wife in even the worst vagaries of a pregnant woman.

When the fateful hour of delivery came, the young mother was delivered by the crude instruments and poor medical knowledge of the day. Bob, utterly cast down and wretched, saw his young wife struggle for two days before she came back to consciousness, and though weak for some time, a clean constitution and affectionate nursing won the struggle, but the head of her first born son bore bruises from the cruel instrument used in former surgery. Indeed, in later life she ascribed the headaches of her elder son to the callous use of the medical clamps.

A complete change in the mother was noticeable, and she became graver and more sedate, though never losing her merry laugh and lively wit. Bolton Tom, her father, developed a loving and unaccountable interest in his grandson, and though the second boy was given his name, so determined was Robert's father that the boy should be called Robert that he and his wife Hannah carried the baby a very considerable distance to a chapel and there named him Robert, but omitted all else, and he went through life with one name while the brothers and sister had two.

Here let the writer remark that Bella conveyed more information of the farm inhabitants and home life than Bob. Whether the love of his birthplace and his leaving the home of his father's people, so long planted on the old farm, left an old heartache, the writer is unable to judge. It is certain that only odd incidents of his boyhood were touched on at rare intervals, and then very briefly. He had an uncle living nearby who was something of a ne'er-do-well, but apparently there was not a great deal in common between the families as they grew up.

As old Robert Lyon grew older he pleaded with his son to drop his job and live with his wife and son in the old farmhouse. Though Bella disliked Bob's stepmother, she consented,

and probably the old man, of whom she grew fond, enjoyed a greater peace and content in his later life than he had ever experienced.

Soon after Bob's taking charge of the farm it became evident the old farmer was failing, and a seizure showed that apoplexy was apparent. The old man had sustained a bone injury to his leg and one day drew Bella's attention to the fact that the usual moisture, or weeping, had stopped, and she exclaimed: "What a good thing, Daddy."

The old man remarked gravely, "I am not so sure of that, lass."

A month or two later the old man, walking across the kitchen, was felled by what they called a stroke, and lay helpless, but quite conscious, following the movements of his son and his wife and baby boy with pathetic gaze. He said, in little above a whisper, "Ther'll be plenty for thee Bob, when I am gone."

Another stroke and Bob sorrowfully realised that life had ended and the big generous soul had fled.

After the funeral, Bob set about his intention of going overseas. By the terms of copyhold the farm became his own, and Bob, calling a sale, turned stock and furniture into money. Carved oak beds with valances or canopies, were so solidly built in the rooms themselves as to require sawing through the posts to move them out of the massive doors. The copyhold lease still had one life and Bob presented the unexpired lease to a cousin, then in America.

The sale of stock and household stuff realised all too small a sum after his stepmother had received her share. Later, confession of wrong done to her stepson and his forgiveness sought by letter across the twelve thousand miles of ocean, seem to indicate the loss of securities or stock. Bella had seen Hannah give a bulky umbrella to a niece with instructions to take it to her own home, and suspected that valuable papers were concealed in it.

However, the loss of what should have been a legacy did not deter Bob from his purpose of sailing overseas, though reducing his capital very perceptibly. It was arranged that Bella, now expecting her second child, should rejoin him when he sent for her from New Zealand.

A NEW LAND

THE PARTING between Bob and his young wife was a sad one but Bella, whom we have before portrayed as a person of a very decided mind, thought it a bad time for showing anything of a vacillating spirit, and so, far from "bubbling and crying" as she termed it, spoke of the time when the birth of her second child should free her and allow her to embark with her two children. None knew that over two years must elapse before the young mother would sail, and nine months after that date before the pair should be united.

Bob, with a light travelling kit of bedding and clothing, was to set out and leave the young mother to pack those cavernous wooden trunks fitted with locks, hinges and a grummet or rope loop in each end for the shifting of the weighty chests. These chests, with the name of the passenger and destination painted in white letters with the direction, "Not wanted on the voyage," were usually put down in the hold, while those for cabin use were so inscribed, being usually shallow enough to go beneath the bunks and so save space. In the writer's youth few indeed of the settlers' houses lacked these trunks, and many survived the grown-up stage of the children of early settlers. Many of the early immigrants had, or pretended to rely on, the belief that after a four years' interval they would return with a pile, as they called it, from the New Zealand goldfields. Whether in many cases this was a pious fiction to keep up their own hearts and the courage of those left behind, I do not know. At all events, Bella, on her departure, assured her family she would return in four years. Whether Bella's well-meant assertion carried any comfort, it is sober fact that she never saw any of her family in this life again.

As the day drew near to the vessel's departure, Bob and his young wife discussed the new country overseas, the prospect of their early meeting, and sought to see a cheerful outlook where obviously little cheer existed, for each knew the grave perils of their party. Old Betty's wise speech and the wide outlook of one who had seen many vicissitudes, were listened to by the young couple. She bade Bob not to distress himself about his wife's welfare, assuring him that his mate should lack no loving

affection or any efforts for her well-being, adding "as long as I am wick."*

With eyes very close to tears, the last good-byes were said, the last fond kiss bestowed, and Bob set forth in the small, deep-laden brig, the *Athene,* a vessel of two masts, to cross the twelve thousand miles of ocean. She proved to be a bluff-bowed, slow-sailing ship, British and oak built, with poor passenger accommodation, but Bob later often felt thankful for her stout oak frames, when in the gales they encountered, the railway iron cargo thrashed about, seeming to be in a fair way to thrust itself through her sturdy bilge. The nature of the voyage was not one of luxury or ease—the food only medium and chiefly salt beef or pork, with little variety, and with no port of call. Little wonder many of the writer's friends have, in after life, suffered in sight and general health from the scourge of scurvy. Lime juice, served to combat this disease, gave the name Limejuicers, as applied to the old, long-voyage sailing ships.

On his arrival at Melbourne, Bob found a poor choice of vessels sailing to New Zealand, running from sailing craft of small tonnage to steamers and paddle wheel craft loaded to the rails with gold seekers hailing from all parts of the world, and swelled by seamen who had skipped their ship and left them tied up impotently awaiting a crew. Bob shipped aboard a small vessel, the *Omeo,* a paddle steamer, and after about a week found himself in the newly colonised Scottish settlement of Otago, landing at Port Chalmers, a short distance from the newly surveyed town of Dunedin, on his 25th birthday. He might have been forgiven if he felt some slight qualms of dismay, for the sight of slightly framed shacks of two rooms, built of "Van Diemen's Land" palings, was naturally a vivid contrast to the stone and solid houses of England. Anthony Trollope, the novelist, has put on record, however, that the early colonists were kindly and helpful to each other, and no doubt Bob, by his clean and handsome personality, made ready friends. Trollope, as a case in point, offered some payment to a maid of the inn, to be repulsed by the reply: "Take money is it for a little thing like that; I'd be disgraced if anyone heard of it!"

Bob found it was one thing to land near the goldfields and another, lacking experience and money, to become an active

* Alive.

gold-seeker. Many imagine that gold with such fabulous deposits at Bendigo and Ballarat, was first discovered in Australia, but, as a matter of fact gold was first discovered in New Zealand, by a Californian digger, Charles Ring, who was struck by the similarity in strata, found the gold deposits in Coromandel which drew thousands of men from all parts of the world. A digger named Gabriel Read had, with a dish and a sheath knife, obtained many ounces of gold in a few hours in 1861. The spot was named Gabriel's Gully, and a heavy rush set in.

On landing, Bob obtained a job, with others, at 6/- per day, removing a hill called Bell Hill in the town of Dunedin, which consisted at that date of tents and shacks of Van Diemen's Land palings split from some hard and durable native wood. They were transported from Tasmania, as we call it now, by small sailing ships, which also brought two varieties of potatoes, Derwents and Circular Heads. The same ships also carried jams and other foods. I can remember Peacock's Jams when I was a boy. Among other exports from Tasmania were numbers of very fine Clydesdale horses and these, besides forming the nucleus of New Zealand's famous studs, also horsed the numerous waggons supplying stores to the goldfields. As time went on and faster ships came into the trade, the Scottish settlers imported Clydesdale sires to mate with the Tasmanian mares and built up what were possibly the finest studs then existent. Prices were naturally high, running well over three figures.

ROSY HOPES

It was in a cheerful spirit that Bob, tempted by reports of high wages on the Christchurch road to the Coast goldfields, hoisted his swag and fared forth for the Canterbury Plains, whose fame had spread to the South.

The reader must always bear in mind that at this time the land laws of New Zealand favoured the large owner. Capital was required to ship sheep and cattle long distances, and it also demanded a long purse to sustain the large run owner, as the two sole exportable products were wool and tallow. It was only when such men as John McKenzie, Rolleston, Ballance, Seddon and others, arose as champions of the small holding farmer, and the advent of the freezing process, that New Zealand showed progress, and the industry of the small owner gave new life to the adventurous and enterprising elements of the community.

During his stay on the goldfields, and during his employment on the road, Bob had ample opportunity to observe the type of horse and the drivers of the waggon teams plying to the goldfields with stores at a cartage rate of two shillings a pound. With improved roads, the freight rates eased, but while the heydey lasted the owners of teams led a merry life. True, the horses were from Tasmania and New South Wales, and Bob, no mean judge of heavy horses, often said he had seen no finer animals or better drivers than the Scottish teamsters. The horses had no reins and were driven by voice, only a short coupling joining each pair of the six-horse team. They were fitted with the high peaked collar, whose wide and high housing protected the horse's wither and collar from wet and galled shoulders. The collar was solid with no straps, and was pushed upside down over the horse's head, and then turned right side up. It took strength to accomplish this feat, but the general effect was rather a pleasing one. Bob, in later days, owning teams of his own, often regretted the passing of the old hooded collar.

The drunken habits of the waggoners were, as a rule, taken for granted, and too often the horses, under God's providence and their own intelligence, steered the team while the driver indulged in a drunken sleep. When working on the roads, Bob

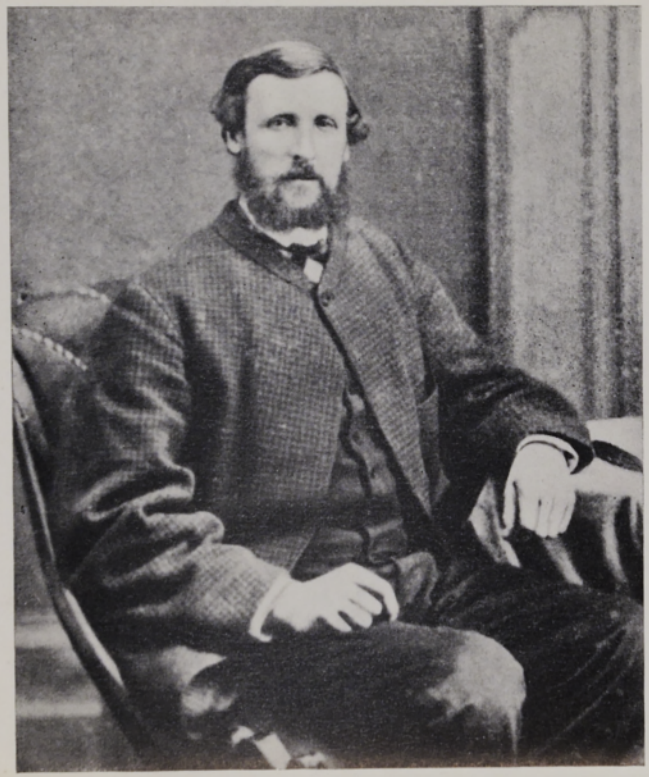
frequently heard the wail: "Eh, Jock, I'm coppit," repeated in a rising crescendo, but, a very tired man, he left them to right the "coppit" waggon for themselves.

The biddableness, as Bob termed these horses' ready response to the voice of their owners, had to be seen to be believed. Nearly sixty years ago, the writer saw an old Dunstan waggoner and his son carting green flax to a mill in the Rangitikei district, with not a shred of harness, but open bridles, collars and chains, and has seen them obey the spoken words of their drivers among the swamps, sandhills and pig rooting, and they rarely had a mishap or were bogged. Indeed, the driver could drive them within inches of his object. The writer noticed too that all members of these teams had a wide sagacious space between the eyes. They may have been chosen for their tractability, and were very kindly treated by men who adored their charges, and were for the most part incapable of talking on any subject other than that of their huge servants.

A very different arrangement of teams obtained on the road to the West Coast goldfields, where teams of twelve horses plied some sixty odd years ago, and all these had a rein on each horse. The reins more often than not were fastened to the shaft of the long lever brake, the driver putting strain on the reins required. To accommodate the general pace to the slowest horse of the team, and thus ensure that each horse put his weight into the collar, the team crawled along so slowly that, riding behind, no movement could be detected in the huge white tilt, which often covered many tons of perishable goods. The teams seldom travelled more than sixteen miles a day. The horses were fed at canvas troughs stretched across the double shafts, and were allowed to wander down the road at night.

On one occasion, as a boy of sixteen, I essayed to ride from Owen Reefs to Nelson, a distance of eighty miles, and took the saddle at two in the morning. I had ridden about four hours, and was nearing the present termination of the railway, then called Hope River, when I overtook a dog driving a number of horses. When I came abreast the waggon camp the drivers were filling the feed troughs and preparing breakfast over a huge fire before harnessing up. The dog must have brought the horses many miles in the dark. When snow was falling a rider had to carry a piece of tallow and alight fairly often to dislodge the balled up hoofs and grease the sole of the hoof to prevent the horse falling or wrenching his fetlock.

The parents of Bella Lyon.



Robert Lyon, aged 35.

Bella Lyon and the two oldest boys

It may be of interest to mention that the coach driver ran six days a week, a distance of nearly a hundred miles a day, from Nelson to Longford and back next day. His day extended from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and in winter both terminals were driven in darkness. Snow on the higher saddles was not infrequent, and the unbridged creeks had to be taken at a sharp pace. At Larry's Creek the coach was more than once washed downstream.

They were modest men, those old drivers. One named Hall, who afterwards managed Wellington's horse tramways, found in his earlier days that the punt on the Manawatu River had no rails put up. He was driving a coach with a full load of passengers, and about four hundred yards of deep water between himself and the opposite shore. Hall pulled his team together and applied his whip to such purpose as to keep his polers from the leaders' traces. The body of the coach was buoyant and watertight, and after a strenuous swim the five horses dragged the coach up the opposite bank, though a baby was found washing about under the seats. In a day of hardy men, they must have had hardy children. The baby recovered and Hall lived to a good age.

The reader may, if he chooses to listen to the old timers, learn of horsemanship fully excelling the most vivid Wild West tales, and acquire more truth than is usually found in the Yankee version. While the South Island held the finest draught horses for many years, the settlers of the North Island bred by far the finest coach horses in New Zealand, and many were used in Melbourne and Sydney.

Bob had no money to obtain a claim, or in fact, to do anything but work for wages. When he tramped to the Dunstan goldfields he saw flour sold from the tail of a waggon at three and sixpence a pannikin, which was said to equal a pound of flour. A trooper was there to see that none bought more than their share. Bob was shown a camp oven loaf of bread of very moderate size which cost a pound. Timber for use in water-races and the riffles of the same, cost an enormous sum, and only those "on the gold," or having reserve capital to some extent, were able to engage in actual gold seeking. True, there were the fossickers whose pick shovel and tin dish were their stock-in-trade. Add to these the rigorous winters of a sub-alpine climate, and you have part of the problems faced by the newcomer or the new chum, as he was usually termed.

For a time Bob worked at axe work and pick and shovel, and in the summer on the farms, where his skill as a scythesman stood him in good stead. One of his bush-clearing jobs nearly ended his career. Like most unskilful bushmen he had hung one severed tree in the branches of another. In chopping the tree in which the other lodged, the pressure of the one became more strong as the front tree yielded, and the cracking of the falling timber warned Bob, who was directly in its track, to do something, and that very quickly. He darted to a fallen tree and had just lain behind it when the trunk of the felled tree trailed over his log shelter, barely clearing him, but tearing his tartan shirt from his body, and leaving him with scratches and bruises as a reminder of the danger of the work.

The writer, in younger days, and from a similar cause, had to draw a mate from under a large tawa tree, where only the lower part of his legs were showing. An old hollow caused by the rooting of numerous wild pigs saved his life, but one arm was badly injured. In this case the sweeping fall of the trees, and their moderate size "saved his bacon".

Bob worked for a time for a large contractor who was known as Big-headed Mackenzie. Mackenzie may have had a large head, but he also had some grey matter in it. Bob's account of the manner and style of the man, and his ability to throw dust in the eyes of Government road engineers, was entertaining. Driving up with the engineer in a handsome pair-horse buggy, if any defect was detected Mackenzie would profess to be very wroth with the navvies and would repeat, "I'll sack you, I'll sack you," but they simply winked the other eye and went on with their job, strangely unperturbed. Though the broken and inclement weather often whittled down the men's paysheets, Bob managed to send money to his young wife for her sustenance and as a layby for the coming voyage.

About six months after he had embarked, he was apprised by letter that a second boy had been born to them, and the urge to see his bonny young wife and the two children grew strongly. It was, however, nearly two years before Bob, having acquired a two-roomed shanty, was ready to receive his wife when she and the children arrived. He was obliged to leave the choice of ship and passage to those in England.

The writer must, by deduction and the dates at his disposal,

make the best of his facts and assume that with his moderate dwelling and some money, Bob, before going North, had entrusted the meeting of his wife and children and their settlement to either the Presbyterian or the newly-arrived Methodist Minister. There was at this time a well-established society of the new Scottish settlement for the purpose of meeting and giving help to those voyage-worn people so sadly in need of comfort. Anthony Trollope, in his very interesting book of early travel in New Zealand, lays stress on the helpful natures of the poorer class, and their reluctance to take any reward for a kindly action.

Resuming our narrative at the point of Bob's journey toward the newly discovered West Coast gold rushes, we find him working his way till he took the goldfields road. The inclement climate, and the new chum's lack of adaptability in making himself comfortable and drying his blankets and clothing, joined forces to make him a very sick man, with bronchial trouble. The male immigrant often failed to adapt himself to circumstances. He had no difficulty in hiring a female housekeeper in England, but left to shift for himself in the wet climate of New Zealand, made but a poor job of it. One saw a colonial youth in sustained heavy rain set about getting a fire. He "prospected," as he termed it, with an axe to find a dry underpart of a fallen tree and, getting a quantity of semi-dry wood, would as a last resource rip out the dry inner lining of his coat and, setting a light to it, would feed the tiny flame with wood whittled in shavings by his knife until he had a body of flame, which later grew into a fire so formidable as to make it advisable to keep a safe distance. In younger days the writer has saved a night in the bush by obtaining torches of manuka or of totara bark to light the trackless and precipitous way through a bad gorge, eventually reaching grassland at nearly midnight.

About this time some stir was made by a bush-ranger named Garret, and one night Bob was awakened by a trooper who thrust his head in the tent flaps and warned him that should Garret seek food or shelter, he was to give him no sustenance. Bob secretly resolved that should Garret poke a pistol into the tent he would not argue the point, but allow him to help himself. Garret stuck up a number of diggers, and kept them in a part of a winding gully, warning them that fatal results would occur if they stirred or gave the alarm to prevent his getaway. Garret planned his hold-ups very well, and did not injure or

maim his victims nor take life. He succeeded in escaping for a time, but was later seen looking in the window of a London shop and apprehended. He got only a few years' sentence, and later faded out of public notice.

It is recorded that when the New Zealand police department was formed, they borrowed a nucleus of police from Victoria under Mr. St. John Branigan, an able Irishman, who some few years later succumbed, while yet a young man, to sunstroke. These police carefully watched the Australian passengers and turned back for re-shipment as many as thirty bad characters in one vessel. This care, and the voluntary stoppage of liquor on the goldfields by the diggers themselves, no doubt had a great deal to do with the absence of crime on the goldfields, though later there were some ghastly instances of crime, including murder by Australian desperadoes, notably Burgess, Kelly, Levy (Jnr.) and Sullivan, in the Nelson and West Coast goldfields.

The cost of food cartage led to some surprising methods of transport. Even the humble wheelbarrow came into use, and one huge Highlander made money by carrying a 200 pound sack of flour secured by straps like a swag, or as the Maori called it, a pikau. I do not know how long the human packhorse kept it going, but I knew of an ex-policeman, a Cornishman, who carried a sack of kauri gum some miles and returned with two hundred pounds of flour at Northern Wairoa. Later he converted a young bullock into a pack animal. He died at Whangarei at over ninety years of age. One may, in the words of Scott, repeat:

"And elders mourn on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day."

Much might be written of hardships suffered in the pursuit of gold. In the Upper Buller district an old digger told me they worked in heavy woollen drawers converted to trousers, and gold was so plentiful that store purchases were paid for in virgin gold by weight. This was at a place called Maruia, nearly one hundred miles from Nelson.

There were many tragedies in this life. An old Yankee digger on a creek still called Doughboy, which enters the Buller near the Matakitaki below Hampden, had died. The rats had disfigured his face, but the sinister fact was disclosed that Doughboy's small hoard of gold had disappeared. When I last saw this locality thirty Chinese under a headman were systematically

taking the river beaches on a face, probably obtaining a good return from the hastily washed gravel—the gold left by English diggers forty years previously. It was not an uncommon thing to lever out a three ounce nugget, generally on Sunday, from the old tail races.

Some old diggers would give a very fair estimate of the weight of a nugget. One man hefted the little yellow piece of water-worn metal on his tongue. By the same means ivory turners tested a billiard ball for a correct finish of their work. That their peculiar work and isolation led to startling results is undoubted. One very isolated part of the Upper Matakitaki was reputed to contain a portion of the lost tribe of Scripture, and was always referred to by that name. Abundant gold and heavy drinking, aided by the process called lambing down, marked this particular part as peculiar. This locality was transformed by the great earthquake.

EMBARKATION AND VOYAGE

BELLA was a skilled loom worker and capable of earning over thirty shillings per week. After the birth of her second son, she returned to the "shop" and donned her shawl and clogs, and to her mother's protests offered the argument that she wanted to pay for her own and the children's upkeep, saving her money for the voyage and later. Under these conditions Bella's mother cared for the children during the day.

One fateful morning Owd Tom, in the worst of liverish humours, had given his wife a blow. Bella had just suckled her baby and she ran out and gave a very candid piece of tongue to her father, and added abuse he had never listened to before. When her father sought to grasp her, she eluded him and rushed from the house. Her day finished, Bella went homeward, but naturally hesitated to enter. Nature, however, provided the requisite courage by the torture of her over-supply of milk. As she put it simply, "My bresses wur hurtin' me," when relating the incident afterwards. Grasping her dinner bowl under her shawl she entered and stood before her sire, resolved, if he proved hostile, "to whirl the bowl at him." What Tom did say, however, was: "Come in with tha for thou art a devil," and so the incident closed, but whether Owd Tom realised he had met an equal, or whether he recognised a chip off the old block, the writer knows not, but certain it is that Bella's fearless attitude made for more tolerant treatment.

He was never again so aggressive in his manner to Bella, and when he took her to Glasgow with her babies, she said that at parting his lip wackered, a term for strong emotion. When the older boy Bobbie was a toddler, he and Owd Tom were inseparable. Bobbie, mounted on the Herculean shoulders, and later perched on the bar, would say: "Pot's empty, Grandad."

"Knock again, Bob," the old man would respond, and he blamed little Bobbie for "tempting him to drink"; though few would give old Tom any credit for rejecting liquor. The way home was often a wavering one. The child perched high would say: "You'll be down, dijectly, Grand-dad," to which Owd Tom would reply in vinous tones: "Sorright, Bobbie boy, sorright."

At all events the pair never came to grief and Owd Tom

developed a mellowness of deportment, in vivid contrast to his former nature. Tom, the second boy, was a slight little chap, so very girlish with his tiny mouth, curls, and features like those of his mother, as to bring to his father's lips when he saw him at Dunedin: "Why Bella, tha told me it was a boy!" He was, however, in his contrast with his elder brother's placidity, termed a limb, but later he became a devoted clergyman.

Bob wrote letters at intervals, but they were often six months and more old before they reached her. In the meantime, Bella with her children, was not altogether unhappy, and her mother too, seemed content to delay the departure. Bella comforted her with the promise of return in four years, but though her parents lived to nearly ninety, they never saw one another again. I frequently posted letters with post office orders and I remember the postage was sixpence each letter. These remittances continued to the death of my mother's father, though Betty died a few years earlier. As Owd Tom had reached nearly ninety at his death, one is forced to the conclusion that the liquor of those days had less of a "forty rod" quality, or that its consumers possessed iron throats.

It may be stated here that no postal means of sending money by post existed until about the early part of 1864. The writer fixed this date after inquiry from the post office records.

At last, almost two years after Bob had left, came the call to join him, the passage being booked by a sailing ship, the *Andrew Jackson,* scheduled to sail from Glasgow for Port Chalmers on 14th April, 1864, laden with wines, spirits, slates, salt and corrugated iron from Liverpool. A Northern States vessel, she was, for her protection chartered to a British firm, Potter, Wilson & Company, though it is very doubtful if that fact would have saved her from destruction had the South States destroyer *Alabama* sighted her. From the fact that after loading at Liverpool she sailed north to Glasgow while the *Alabama* was busy south, shows clearly why the captain, McCallum, deemed it prudent to hover after his departure from Glasgow for ten days off the North of Ireland where he could run into a neutral port, and he had doubtless during those ten days received through his agents precise news of the *Alabama's* whereabouts.

Once well clear of the land the *Andrew Jackson* steered a southerly course, avoiding all trade routes till she crossed the Equator and reached the Antarctic regions, where all seasoned

skippers expected steady winds. These Yankee ships were well found, and as a rule their commanders, while often brutal, were conceded to be superb seamen. The vessel ran to Port Chalmers in ninety days, and the following year ran to Auckland in the same time.

(The *Andrew Jackson* was nearing New Zealand when disaster overtook the *Alabama* in the shape of a Northern American vessel, the *Kearsage,* which had been made into an iron-clad by sheathing her above the water line with chain cable. Thus equipped, she engaged the *Alabama* off the French port of Cherbourg and after a long engagement sent her to the bottom after her consorts *Georgia* and *Florida,* which were sunk a couple of months previously.)

At Bob's call, the work of packing the cabin cases and those marked "Not wanted on the voyage" went forward. Owd Tom produced three bottles of rum, and these went into the cabin trunks and were to have a different use later. Many loving farewells were exchanged, and at last the packet boat plying from Liverpool to Glasgow made fast at the docks, only to find that the ship *Andrew Jackson* was not sailing for some time. By some means the address of a single girls' hostel was found, and Bella and her children were installed, and Bolton Tom set forth homeward with a downcast air. Owd Tom was more shaken at parting with his younger daughter and her babies than he would like to admit.

In later years Bella frequently said she had never seen such poverty in England as that of Glasgow. Quite respectable young women out of work removed their only dress to wash and launder it with the facilities provided by the hostel. The rental charges were low and the inmates kindly to the young mother. Bella laid in a stock of soap, brushes, and a small tub or luggie, as it was called, and found them indispensable on the voyage.

At last Bella received word to go aboard, as the vessel would sail next day, and a carrier took her boxes and two small boys and herself to the docks, where her next effort was to hire a boatman to row the trio and their small belongings to the ship. At the ship's side were many wherries, but a capable third mate and bosun sorted the passengers, assigning them to the various numbers of their cabins from a list which they consulted from time to time.

Bella found herself assigned to a double cabin, having as

companions a Peter Mack and his wife Sarah (a Northumberland woman), who proved not merely fellow passengers, but life-long friends. Mack was by trade a ship's carpenter, and a skilful and clever man at his trade. He was also a well-informed man and with his wife a good second, one who assumed a general oversight and protection to the lonely and inexperienced young mother. The Macks had three small children, and the prospect of several months together on shipboard lost some of its terrors.

It was Mack who voiced some of their fears, gained from utterances by some of the crew. It appeared that the captain was of the type who had, from years of life in the States, developed into a Yankee Irishman, and with a chosen first mate, was always hazing the crew. Many of the crew had been hocussed and shanghaied on board and were a rather poor and unhappy lot. The third mate, a young man of pleasant manners and happy nature, was a general favourite, and happened to be the captain's brother-in-law.

With a fiddler seated on the capstan head, the men tramped round, pushing their capstan bars to the time of a chanty intoned by the hoarse shouts of the men. The anchor was broken out and with the sails rapidly cast loose from the yards, the vessel was, with the aid of an ebbing tide, and fair steerage way, among the maze of shipping and soon clear of the Clyde.

If the passengers were in any doubt about the character of the ship on which they had embarked, they were not long in finding out. They saw men struck for trivial mistakes. A Mr. Eady, also a passenger, who later established a music warehouse in Auckland with his son, informed the writer that his father had told him of the extreme severity of the officers toward the men. It would be scouted, in many cases, as an idle tale but for the legal cases which ensued and which gained full publicity at the time. The officers, or afterguard, as they were termed, were always heeled, and the first move on a voyage was to parade the crew and cut off the points of their knives, after which file or grindstone were forbidden them.

The writer remembers a case in which the mate of a Yankee overseas ship was charged with firing at a man swimming between two tees of a Wellington wharf. He admitted that in an an altercation the sailor had knocked him down and, threatened by the firearm, had dived over the ship's rail.

The *Andrew Jackson* cleared the Clyde and headed for the

North of Ireland, hovering about the coast for ten days. By some mysterious grape-vine telegraph the passengers knew that the dreaded commerce destroyer *Alabama* was near. No doubt the captain knew that once the fast steam-driven cruiser sighted his ship, the charter to a British firm and the flying of British colours, would avail him nothing and his ship would join the three millions' worth already sunk, and for which Britain had eventually to pay. However, on the tenth day the passengers woke to find the ship, with all sails set, and with a spanking breeze, making the most of her fast sailing qualities. No sails were reefed and the Line was passed, but still the ship bore southward until the air betokened the approach to the icefields.

The passengers were not long left in doubt that they were on the worst type of hell ship, when the third mate developed a form of malaria, and was lowered over the stern by the captain's orders and towed by the rope round his armpits behind the ship. The captain averred the mate was mad, despite the sick man's cry: "I am not mad, you are driving me mad!" He was hauled in when the brutal master of the ship gave the word, and died next day.

Much has been said about the drinking habits of sea captains of the sixties. Cases have been cited of masters so drunk during the whole voyage as to leave the navigation and safety of the ship to the mates. One captain on the Australian coast, disgusted at her lack of speed, deliberately ran a new ship ashore on her maiden voyage. If any doubt, let them peruse Basil Lubbock's *Blackwall Clippers* and other similar books. My mother saw the captain of the *Andrew Jackson* chase his sister from the poop with a smoking pistol in each hand.

Bella's final clash of wills with the captain would seem to show that her sire's dictum "up wit fist and knock him down" had, perhaps, left just a trace of fighting quality in his daughter. One morning, the tenth of May, about four weeks after sailing, matters which had been simmering came to the boil. The crew had civilly approached the captain, who knocked the spokesman down with a marlinspike, the chief mate also knocking down a man. Then, on the order of the captain, all members of the watch were lashed by the wrists, some to the poop rail, some to the mast, and some to the mizen rigging with, in some cases, the toes of the men barely touching the deck. Three or four showing bruised faces were bleeding, and in addition

bore leg irons—a chain the ends of which were locked round each ankle, a ring in the centre being passed through a belt round the waist. This occurred in the tropics, and hours in a tropic sun swelled the tongues of the men and produced the most cruel torments of extreme thirst.

Bella's eyes, after her first shock and amazement, filled with tears, and she murmured "What awful cruelity"—she always put in the extra "i" in the word cruelty. Her mind was soon made up—to do the right and reck nothing of the consequences. She thought of her father's present of three bottles of rum and scouring a wooden bucket, or luggie, she procured enough fresh water from the ship's water butt, where, having only sailed four weeks before, there was no scarcity. To the water she added the rum, the mixture being a weak form of grog. Watching till the captain went down for lunch, the bucket was borne along the lines of helpless men, and Bella lifted a large mug to the parched lips and swollen tongues.

All the men served and her pail empty, Bella returned to her cabin. Later, when returning to the deck with her babies clasping her hands, she was met by the captain who was possessed by an uncontrolled fury. To his question as to whether she had given them a drink, she fearlessly said she had, and would, if need be, relieve their thirst again. Completely losing control of himself, the master of the ship spoke of broken discipline, and said he would put Bella in irons too. Holding a child by each hand, Bella heard him to a finish and then in clear and silvery Saxon she said: "I dunna fear thy threats, thou cruel man. Thou hast no power to punish me or to put me in irons. I have paid my passage and I am an Englishwoman. Thy threats may be used in a slavery state, but they have no weight here. Dost na fear the vengeance of God who will surely punish thee for thy cruel treatment of these helpless men? It is not I who need fear punishment, but thee, thou heartless man."

The Captain turned on his heel and went below, and two hours later the men were cut down and confined to the lazarette.

Bella had exhausted her stock of soap, and with much misgivings had given half a crown to the steward with the request that the captain would sell her a bar of soap. Back came the steward with a bar of soap and the half crown, and a verbal message that the soap was a present from the captain, and also saying that the two children were the best kept and cleanest and a credit to the ship.

I had heard it said that the crew of the *Andrew Jackson* were largely Dagoes or Dutchmen, the latter term embracing German, Danish or Norwegian, but from the names of the heads of the protesting seamen, the names Kennedy, Weir, and Kilpatrick, it would appear that the master of the ship had probably purchased men shanghaied by the crimps of Glasgow. These men, be it said, in addition to being hocussed or drugged with knock out drops, were without clothing, and had to purchase from the ship's slops chest absolute necessities at high prices. The sum total deducted from their wages might well take months to defray.

How much this life of poor and scanty food had to do with men already enfeebled with scurvy, may be left to speculation, but certain it is that most sailor men saved their lives by jumping the ship, leaving behind arrears of pay. The writer does not remember seeing any strong or old men who had consistently followed a sea life.

One item alone is stressed by the less glamorous sea scribes, that of broken sleep. Only three and a half hours could be expected at most by the tired seamen and, often in a gale and with decks awash, the cry of "All hands on deck" roused the sleeping hands to battle with stiff and frozen sails, whose handling bereft them of finger nails as they hung on for dear life. It is recorded that the clipper *Cutty Sark* drowned six men by rolling yards under in a gale. This was not in the time of her old master Woodget.

Like many of her age, Bella had formed the habit of prayer taught in the Sunday Schools originally founded by Robert Raikes. They did great service by taking children off the streets, teaching them to read, and to adopt a new way of life. Bella, in after life, never missed a Sunday School anniversary, and to see the school's parade once a year, or as she put it "see the scholars walk," was one of her chief delights. In their day people of the common sort had few joys, many times of scarce food and clothing, and many griefs. They believed that they would be punished in this life for sinning, or lose their hope of eternal peace by their own sin. If a young fellow had prospects of work at increased wages in a city, his mother would say: "But happen he may lose his soul!"

Bred in these beliefs and her saintly mother's teachings, we find Bella teaching her children to lisp their prayers at her knee on the tossing ship, afterward commending herself and her far

distant young husband to the care of Almighty God. She felt comforted, and relying on her deep faith, encouraged and unafraid. These simple exercises gave great courage in times of trouble and an endurance of distress and sorrow beyond human belief.

The seamen, to whom Bella was a person held in grateful respect, always had a word for the two tiny boys, and in their rough way, would often put out a saving hand when the little feet were, by the vessel's swaying deck, propelled toward the scuppers. As land drew nearer the men would point to birds which they named noddies and other sea terms, as indicating the ship's nearness to land. As the vessel worked south, the men showed the boys a spout of water which indicated the presence of whales. The swift passage of partly submerged porpoise and the rare shower of silvery flying fish also added to their wonderment, and as Bella knew as little about them as the children themselves, their queries often were referred to an old sail-maker who, with great patience, satisfied the children's eager thirst for knowledge.

Bella was never at a loss in employing her hands, and frequently employed herself "weshing" as she termed it, "for the childer." She also devoted some time to helping other emigrants and their children, for many were full of regrets which Bella in her hearty forceful example affected to deplore, though one fears her heart needed cheering also. A frequent term was that it was no use "bubbling and crying," and that work was the most to be commended as an anodyne for bodily and mental distress. Her bright outlook and services helped in great measure to hearten and encourage her cabin mates, and to those who really were under the weather she was a dark-eyed slip of a girl who radiated sympathy and sunshine.

It is not too much to say that adversity and trial had the effect of sweetening an already sweet nature in Bella and, in mature years, had the quality of a human loadstone, which drew to her breast those who cried unrestrainedly, full of trouble. She did not fail to tell them when the fault lay with themselves, and to counsel them to forgive and also seek a tardy reconciliation with their husbands. She, no doubt, had a clear picture of when her mother had, in plain but affectionate terms, advised her to go home and make her peace with the now far-distant young husband, then so many miles away. Bella fully understood the ripe wisdom of her mother's counsel, which

averted a breach with her spouse, too often the result of the inexplicable whim of a young expectant mother. The deplorable results of family interference were often referred to in later conversations by Bella herself.

The thoughts of the young mother were very naturally taken up by the expected delight of the boys in seeing their Daddy who had preceded them in another ship, and who daily drew closer to them.

Apart from their questionable treatment of the crew, it must be conceded that the American captain, and even the bucko mates had nothing to learn in seamanship. The grave practice of allowing the captains of English vessels to make profit by issuing poor or insufficient food to the men, was responsible for the curse of scurvy, which I have seen so frequently. Asked why they shipped on Yankee vessels, well knowing the hazing of bucko captain and mates, the poor Englishmen, while awake to the work of the crimps, said it was on account of the better and more liberal diet of the American ships.

The wages, what were left after the crimp had received his heavy percentage, were, after all, a pitiful amount—three pounds per month for going aloft in all weathers to furl sail, and at the will and caprice of a brutal tyrant who had the deck for the time being. "Six days shalt thou labour as hard as thou art able. On the seventh thou shalt holystone the deck and scrape the cable."

When the vessels reached Port Chalmers, the incident is related in full from *The Otago Mail* of the 16th July, 1864, as follows:

"At the Police Court, Port Chalmers, yesterday, thirteen of the articled seamen and an officer of the ship *Andrew Jackson,* lately from Glasgow, were brought up before T. A. Mansford, Esq., R.M., charged with a breach of the 243rd clause of the Merchant Shipping Act, on or about the 10th of May last. It appears that one of the watches had refused to wash decks before 6 a.m. Several were on that occasion put in irons. The remainder refused duty until the others were liberated. For the defence, the prisoners stated that several of the men had been strung up to the rigging by their wrists with spun-yarn or marline for eight hours, their toes not touching the deck. After that period they were cut down and confined in the lazarette; also, that the mate had threatened the lives of several; in fact, by the evidence of the defence, it would appear that

they were treated with great cruelty and severity during the passage. The case was remanded till Monday next with the view of bringing the evidence of doctor and passengers before the Bench. The prisoners were yesterday conveyed to Dunedin jail, there not being sufficient room in the Port Chalmers lock-up. It seems strange that although the Government has gone to great expense in fitting up the *Thomas and Henry* as a prison hulk, that they could not be confined there, and their labour applied to the Government Works of Port Chalmers. Probably the arrangements necessary have not been made yet for the carrying out of the intention of the Government, in having a prison hulk for refractory seamen stationed in Port Chalmers. We imagine it will be a considerable expense to the Government to forward these men to Dunedin and then to convey them back again for Monday's examination, and then probably convey them back again. We are informed that the crew intend, at the earliest opportunity, to bring an action against the Master and Chief Officer for cruelty and ill-usage they have received during the voyage from Glasgow."

—From *The Otago Mail,* Saturday. 16th July, 1864 (Supplement).

"The American built clipper ship *Andrew Jackson*, 1,253 tons register, McCallum master, from Glasgow, arrived on the 11th instant, having left Glasgow on the 14th April last; and although detained some ten days on the coast of Ireland, has made the quickest passage of any of the vessels lately from Home. The *Andrew Jackson* is a truly noble looking vessel, belonging to Messrs. Potter, Wilson & Co. She brings a large cargo, consisting principally of wines, spirits, slates, corrugated iron, and salt from Liverpool. Her passengers—of whom there are 74 statute adults assisted emigrants, including 13 females, 10 cabin passengers, four families of which have relatives in Port Chalmers, and the rest steerage, amounting in the whole to 163, all healthy. Some disturbance took place on the passengers leaving the ship; the crew having refused duty, the passengers were compelled to discharge their own luggage."

—From *The Otago Mail*, Saturday, 16th July, 1864.

"We have been requested to state that in the case of the master of the ship *Andrew Jackson* v. the Crew, that on the first examination there was not actual evidence brought forward to prove that the Captain used such cruelty or severity to the men. He acknowledged in Court on Friday, having tied

the men up by the wrist, but not in such manner as to give them pain, and he maintains that it was necessary from the class of men he had to deal with; four of them having been taken out of jail but two days before sailing, and their conduct during the whole voyage most mutinous. Also, that both master and mate were bound to be strict, for the sake of the passengers and ship. The fact of the whole work of the ship being at a standstill, and the vessel thereby left in an unsafe position, was sufficient to justify the master in his position, to use rigorous means for enforcing duty. Whether the crew were treated in the manner stated by them on the examination of Thursday will be better ascertained on Monday by evidence of the passengers. It would appear from our report in the case, that the captain and chief officer had used the crew with great cruelty and severity, but we were of course referring only to the statement of the men, which there has been no actual evidence to prove."

From *The Otago Mail*, Tuesday, July 19, 1864.

"At the Resident Magistrate's Court, Port Chalmers, yesterday, the case that was remanded from Thursday last was finally settled, the Crew v. the Master of the ship *Andrew Jackson*, two of the crew having laid information of assault against Captain McCallum, on the 6th of May last. Mr. Wilson, barrister, appeared for the crew. It appears that some disturbance took place on or about the date mentioned, relative to the removal of some barrier placed on the deck, for the purpose, we presume, of separating the male portion of the passengers from the females. Some inclination being shewn on the part of the crew to be mutinous, the master got angry, and the unity that had prevailed previously was entirely broken up, and they assumed the appearance of becoming mutinous; and on the morning of the 6th May, orders were given to wash the decks, but there appeared to be some dissent on the part of the men, as it was before the usual time. This resulted in some of starboard watch going aft to relate their grievances of the treatment they had received from the mate. Captain McCallum, thinking that the crew intended mutiny, questioned the spokesman, and not receiving as the thought a proper answer, struck the man Kirkpatrick, and immediately ordered them to be put in irons. The others then refused duty, and another assault on one Peter Kennedy was committed, and he was also placed in irons. The mate had also an assault on one of them, and he, like the rest, was put in irons. From the evidence of the

The Lyon Cottage, Aro Street, Wellington.

The Coley family, Hopper Street, Wellington.

The Upper Rangitikei River near Utiku, where the author farmed for many years.

men, it would appear as before reported, that they all refused duty until the others were taken out of irons; that all had been strung up by the wrists, some to the poop rail, some to the mast, and some to the mizen rigging, and from their statement it would appear, with their toes barely touching the deck. This, we imagine, was slightly exaggerated by the crew's account, as some of the passengers swore, that with one exception and that only for a short time, there was not a man's heels off the deck. Several of the crew having been sworn they all repeated the same story. Captain McCallum, who was without a legal adviser, raised an objection to the witnesses being present while the examination was taking place, that he had made entries on his official log book which was read to them. His Worship remarked that as he had not raised the objection before, it was almost too late to commence now. Captain McCallum regretted that the Doctor of the ship had not been subpoenaed; that he was quite unprepared to defend the cases against him. The subpoena had been issued by the crew's counsel for the doctor, but the police had not been able to find him. After some of the witnesses on the part of the Captain had been sworn, and evidence much to the same effect that they had been compelled to assist during the time the punishment was going on, and the working of the ship, it being squally weather at the time, the assaults in two instances were fully proved.

"His Worship in giving his judgment remarked that the Merchant Shipping Act gave masters of ships great control and power over the men, but discretion how to use it was necessary; he would fine Captain McCallum £5 in each case with costs. After which the Court was adjourned for half an hour. A charge of assault of Robert Weir, one of the crew, against the Chief Officer, was next called, when the mate asked for an adjournment of the case, which was accordingly adjourned until Thursday next. In the case of the Master v. the Crew for refusal of duty, His Worship remarked that after the evidence of the cases heard in the morning, he should certainly dismiss them from further punishment."

From *The Otago Mail*, Friday, July 22, 1864.

"The adjourned cases wherein several of the seamen of the *Andrew Jackson* summoned the mate of that vessel for assaults were heard, and several fines inflicted, the cases being fully proved. The men concerned applied for their discharge, through their solicitor, Mr. W. W. Wilson. It was ordered to be given,

and wages to be paid to them in full up to the time of the vessel's arrival in port."

From *The Otago Mail*, Wednesday, July 27, 1864.

"At the Police Court, Port Chalmers, yesterday, the remaining portion of the crew of the *Andrew Jackson* applied for their discharge from the ship, under the same plea as the former portion. Mr. Wilson again appeared on the part of the crew, and the case was briefly compromised, a suggestion having been made that the crew should return to their work until the ship had discharged her cargo. It was agreed to by them, under the promise of being then paid off and discharged."

The author is greatly indebted to the secretary of Otago Early Settlers Association for a copy of the above report.

BELLA'S LANDING AND EARLY STRUGGLES

ALAS, when Dunedin was reached, no Daddy was there, though a stranger met them and told them that money and a rough house built of split Tasmanian hardwood had been bought by the absent Bob. The writer is unable to give full particulars of this part of the narrative. It is probable that Bob, seeking better wages on the West Coast goldfields had, after securing passages for his wife and children, gone beyond the Canterbury plains, hoping to be back before a vessel could arrive. However, he did not calculate on the quick passage, nor his subsequent detention in the Christchurch hospital—though he no doubt had left money in safe hands, possibly those of Rev. Thomas Burns, or some member of the Scottish Society.

I have taken much trouble to ascertain the mode of transit of money, and I find the system of money orders and of registration of money by letter, only came in about the time of my mother's arrival. Letters containing money, except by a sure hand, had every chance of being pilfered. I have discarded the idea that Bob and Bella met when the ship arrived, because Bob, who had never seen his youngest boy, did not know him when he saw him on Christmas Eve, six months later. I am unable to believe that a father would forget the appearance of his children.

One can readily imagine that, though letters and money awaited her, the rough shanty of two rooms, with its earthen floor and lack of furniture, would require a Mark Tapley or even the stout heart of Bella herself, to discover anything cheerful in her surroundings. Letters awaiting her would no doubt apprise her that her young husband was well and that she would see him at no great length of time. These were of some comfort but, though she never told me so, I can well imagine her heart was very troubled and her courage was tried severely.

Her whole furnishing was supplied by those large oblong boxes, and for the rest her furniture at that time, and years afterward, was indebted to boxes, which, draped in a pinky glaze and covered by a gaudy light fabric, served as dressing table, kitchen dresser, and even as a table. There were many who had just the same poor material wherewith to eke out their resources,

who later looked back on those days of shortage as being quite happy and contented ones in which love transformed the dwelling to one of delight.

It needed courage of a high order to face the long months; Bella reflected that nearly two years had passed since the date of Bob's sailing in the brig *Athene*.

It should be mentioned that Bella, having from youth carried water on her head, had acquired a good style of upright walking that never left her and added a distinction of deportment rarely seen nowadays. Bolton Tom, her father, was a master blacksmith employing a "shop" of men and had followed railway works as a piecework contractor, which took him to out-of-the-way parts of the country, where in some cases the women or girls carried spring water on their heads for considerable distances. This isolation had one bad effect; it effectually barred any facilities for education, and while Bella acquired an upright carriage, she lost an education. She used to say plaintively: "There wur no schools when I wur a girl." We were all agreed that had mother had an education she would have been a very able woman indeed.

It is a moot point, however, whether education does not destroy the natural ability and memory. Many instances may be given of phenomenal memories in persons of little or no education. Bella also developed in later life a power of second-sight, and would tell us of incidents about to happen. Her only reason when asked how she knew was: "Summat tells me." I do know, however, that as a little chap she knew my elder brother was on a vessel arriving from Sydney when she said: "Something tells me Bob is coming home tonight." This steamer must at that time, have been seventy miles from Wellington Heads.

Among Bella's first helpers was the housekeeper of an elderly Jewish merchant named Lazarus, who was reputed to own the largest sawn timber house in Dunedin. As her employer did some entertaining on a fairly large scale, Bella, leaving her children with a neighbour, not only brought clothing home to be laundered, but also assisted to prepare the dinners for which the merchant had become famous. She could have been happy and content but for anxiety about her young husband of whom she found no trace till his return six months after her landing, and which we will take in our stride as horsemen say, later on.

A school mistress came to Bella one day leading a girl of

eight or nine, tearful and much damaged about the shins. She averred Bella's son had made a fiendish attack on the girl. Bella pointed to Tom and said, with ready conviction, that if anyone had done the damage it was this tiny small boy, with the curls and baby face. Little Tom's version was that the girl had clouted him and he had rammed her into a wall with his head in her stomach, and "punced her", as they say in Lancashire, with his clogs. The thing was so ridiculous that after another look at "that little boy" the mistress turned away laughing.

It was noticeable that as the second boy grew up, he was frequently involved in fisticuffs, and though no one gave him tuition he outfought boys much beyond his own age and weight. His father, seeing battle marks, sometimes gave him some crippling thrashings. Bob was a man of quick and explosive temper, and would never tolerate talk about or insolence to a neighbour—an admirable trait of character I have observed in Englishmen of the old school.

It must not be assumed that Bella, in her unprotected state, escaped annoyance. To reach the stream supplying the huts with water Bella, in her work of washing and laundering, had to carry water from the creek, a bucket in each hand. An insolent waster sat himself down in the narrow track, forcing Bella to take the steep unformed slopes above. As she passed the man each time, he said: "Wash my face," and repeated the request each time she went up the steep track.

At last forbearance and patience were replaced by swift resolution. With two full buckets of water Bella stood above him saying: "Ay, I will wash thy face for thee," and he received both buckets of ice-cold water in one big douche. The man sprang up, breathing threats and slaughter, but just then a neighbour vaulted the wall of his garden, saying: "You filthy blackguard; I have watched you annoying this respectable woman at her work. Now take what's coming to you."

Another incident, even less desirable, befell Bella when Bob, writing from Wellington, said he had secured a job as foreman with a general contractor, and he instructed her to sell the paling cottage and join him in the north. Accordingly, the For Sale shingle was nailed up. It was the general practice to house the axe and firewood in the kitchen, for the very simple reason that they had a habit of disappearing overnight. A man came, saying he wanted a house, but Bella did not like

his looks. The man asked which was the bedroom and Bella, extending her hand to point out the inner room, was caught by the wrist and drawn toward the bedroom. As she was whirled round, her hand came in contact with the axe handle, and she swung it with such force as just to miss his head and drive it into the wall. Her assailant lost no time in getting out of sight.

It must be kept in mind that the influx of some nearly seventy thousand men in quest of gold included many ruffians of doubtful antecedents, but on the whole Bella and her two little boys received much courtesy and kindness from a rough and ready and very mixed lot of seamen and diggers. It was noticeable that well-kept unspoiled children found their way to the rough hearts very quickly.

About this time a man called Scotch Jock made a considerable figure, being a large importer of horses and cattle from Tasmania and Australia, and was in a large way of business, and considered a very shrewd judge of stock. At one time he saw there was a scarcity of milk and promptly went to Australia and bought all the nanny goats he could procure to make up a shipload, which he disposed of readily in Dunedin and the goldfields at a great profit. One wishes that Scotch Jock lived happily ever afterwards, but it would not be quite true. Supplanted in the affections of a lady by a younger and more attractive swain, Jock went at night to a large stable and hamstrung the horse of his rival. Unfortunately, he mutilated the wrong horse, and in the commotion which ensued Jock thought it wise to disappear and was never heard of in New Zealand again.

The discovery of gold was, by the average Scottish settler, looked on with an intolerant eye and scant approval. It was considered by many that the lure of gold would attract a mixed class of men, and would destroy the essentially spiritual trend of the Presbyterian community. When it is remembered that their pastor, a nephew of Robert Burns, had walked out of a comfortable home to join the protesting body of clergy, it may be realised to what extent the following of such outstanding men would carry their religious views. At all events, this Society, with the large-framed Mr. Burns in his Geneva cap, and the shorter stocky Mr. Cargill with his Tam-o-shanter with a prominent red toorie, was a fine, kindly, and understanding body of men, If they exhibited acerbity of temper occasionally,

well that was just another Scottish trait and was easily tolerated.

Diligent enquiry through all channels available to Bella failed to disclose any trace of her missing husband. So many disappeared in those remote days; some were drowned essaying to cross rapid rivers, the swags they were carrying often proving too heavy a handicap and when they lost their footing with none to help, their plight was hopeless. Where a number of men forded a stream a long sapling or rope was procured, and those entering last were pulled to safety by the stronger and heavier men of the line.

RE-UNION

Bob's bronchial trouble worsened, and as the nearest haven was the Christchurch Hospital, the ordeal of transport had to be faced. Bob's mates, seeing his flushed face and bloodshot eyes, inability to eat, and restless tossing, took counsel together in undertones, and finally halted a passing teamster while one or two rolled his swag, drew his few wages and added a "bob or two in" with the never-failing kindliness show by the labouring class to a man down on his luck, and instructed the teamster to get him to Christchurch Hospital by a faster vehicle if possible, "because, ye ken," said one Scotsman, "yon chield is far through, mon."

The jolting slow journey at last ended at the door of a little Irish doctor who, though ridden by an irascible temper and biting speech, was as tender as a woman with the stricken man. "Hospital for you," said he briefly, removing his stethoscope, "and quick at that."

"But I've no money to pay, bare enough for your fee," said Bob.

"Who said anything about a fee," he snorted. "Fee be damned; take me for an Irish Jew?"

And so Bob found himself again in the luxury of sheets, but with an attack of bronchitis which, aggravated by long exposure and delay, threatened a hard struggle for life and slow recovery. Always in the mind of the sufferer were his young wife and two little boys, of whom he had not heard, and to whom it seemed impossible to write an account of himself.

Some diversion was afforded him as his ailment abated, from the conversation of his ward mates in his near locality. One man was known to be an old malingerer who had pains in various parts of his anatomy which were of rather nomadic nature and had now, he said, gone to his legs. A rather waggish occupant of a nearby bed suggested he had better get them lifted. "They will chase them out of your toes," he said, "and by crikey, you'll be out on the road before you know where you are."

One other patient in a bed nearby was evidently a serious case, and in the mysterious way patients have of knowing, it was freely said, in undertones, he could not recover. Anxious

to reach the West Coast goldfields, the poor fellow had loaded himself with a heavy swag of food and the tools and the pressure of the crossed swag straps had crushed the arch of his chest. Only one relief came to him—the angel of death.

Lively interludes between doctor and matron were not infrequent, the former attacking the lady's sobriety, despite her rather maudlin protests. Said the little Irish medico, "Ye're as drunk as David's sow."

"I'm not, doctor," came in vinous protest and denial.

"Begob and ye are, and on the patients' wine too," said the irate little man.

After a long interval, kindly treatment and clean youth gradually overcame the malady and Bob was discharged with his swag and a small sum in silver, to walk the two hundred and thirty miles to Dunedin. A shadow of his former self, palpably shrunk within boots and clothing, with drawn cheeks and sunken eyes, even the small swag seemed to be a burden to the enfeebled frame, and soon the heavy boots took their toll of blisters on the softened feet of the limping man, who had by this time obtained a stout korari stick from a neighbouring swamp. The korari, by the way, is the flowering stalk of the *Phormium tenax,* or native flax, and may be seen, at seasons, as a thicket, and is used largely for bunks or as a light firewood, though one has to devote one's whole time to stoking the fire to get any culinary results. The flax in flower presents a gorgeous mass of bloom and is a great attraction for the makomako and the tui. The former is about the size of a lark, russety green in the main, with darker tones about head and wings, and quite a browny red with the pollen of the flowers. The tui, with his metallic blue plumage, with a white knot of feathers on the throat, and some fine white spiral feathers at the back of the neck, is, or was, one of the commonest birds in New Zealand, and grew so fat on his honey diet and so numerous that the old settlers shot them in numbers with lightly loaded charges of fine shot and with little powder from double barrelled muzzle loading shotguns. For a few cheap shots the ingredients of a succulent pie could be procured. The writer has picked them up dead, so gorged with nectar that the bird resembled a round ball.

The whirring of wings and song of the tuis and shorter note of the makomako, were lost on our limping traveller. The dazed semi-stupor of weakness and painful travel was broken only by

a spell to boil the billy to make tea, and to eat food bought in the last village. Sometimes a cheery call from a fellow swagger to "come and 'ave a drink o' tea" broke the long monotony, and then on again, along that never-ending stretch of road, which by now had left the plains and showed more hilly country as the south grew perceptibly nearer to the traveller, who recognised landmarks he had seen months before on his northbound journey. But what a difference to his hopeful eagerness when, in full bodily strength, he sought the lure of the golden coast where every day finds of new creeks and and even of gold-bearing sea beaches, were told by waggoners, mounted police and other returning men. There were many disappointed men too, due no doubt to want of gold-winning knowledge and conditions of living totally unknown to them previously. Also, there were many "Mr. Fainthearts" whose forbears had figured in Bunyan's book.

Well, reflected our swagger, the West Coast was no place for a chesty man, and a job nearer town would suit him for a while. Added to his bodily weakness and spells of pain, was the poignant thought of what had become of his girl wife and children in his absence, for this colony in the sixties was a hard land.

The bare-legged Scotch lassies working among the cattle in the byres near the road offered him draughts of warm milk which felt grateful to his tender throat, and so from day to day, moving steadily on, the miles trailed out behind him, but, oh! how desperately slowly they seemed to recede. That headland under whose brow the road wound was not much nearer than two hours agone, and yet he had plodded on; surely his brain had lost perception; surely he must get abreast of it in time. Then, as he turned half round to shift his swag strap to the other shoulder, he glanced back to see that the marks he had passed in the morning were obscure. Rain blew up in squalls and still the traveller kept moving. The weather was at least warm, for the third week in December was nearly finished, and when the landmarks near Dunedin came into view his trek of over a fortnight neared an end. With the westering sun still high, he trod the thoroughfares of a great city in the making.

Slowly and wearily the man passed along till a little curly headed boy of three or so, with small girlish face, rosebud mouth, and a fine dark eye, rivetted his attention, and he asked his name.

"Captain . . .," said the boy. It was a name the sailors had taught him on the voyage, and quite unprintable.

"Where do you live?" again asked the man.

"I'll show you," and the tiny cicerone trotted ahead.

He saw his wife before she lifted her head from some task she was bending over, and his one word "Bella!" brought her swiftly to him, and with arms wound round his neck, she sobbed: "Art come at last, lad. My own man; I have prayed for thee day and night and God has been good to me, eh Bob." She lapsed into the dialect: "Tha looks clemmed; where hasta been lad, eh? But Bob I am a happy woman now I've got thee and the children."

"Poor lass, surely thou hast not a great deal beside," he replied.

Then the two boys were held up to receive his kiss and with Tom, his erstwhile guide on his knee, and Bob standing by the other knee holding on to his mother's skirt, the tales of their separation period were briefly related till Bella suddenly said: "I'm a thowtless woman, tha looks badly lad," and busied herself with his swag straps, lifted it off, and then unlaced and removed his boots. It was a wife's hands which worked busily as they talked, and her sympathetic touch rolled up his trousres, drew off his socks and drew the pain out of his feet with grateful hot water. She removed his coat and waistcoat and bathed his hands and face, and even brushed his hair. "Why lad, when I get my scissors to work on thee, I'll be finding my man once more." Busy while she talked, she set a meal before him, and as he ate told him of the long, long period with no letter, of her want of money, of friends she would aver God in answer to her prayers had found her, and how by honest work she had been able to feed and clothe the children and send them to a dame school. Bob, she said, was a good little boy and gave her no trouble, but Tom she described as a limb who got out of one trouble, or as his father later described it a "depredation," to fall into another. Tom became a parson and died at the age of eighty.

After the evening meal the boys were bathed and later kneeled at their mother's knee, and repeated after her low reverent tones the Lord's Prayer, and invoked in their childish tones, from her dictation, the blessing of the most High on their parents and those left behind overseas, together with a prayer on their own behalf to "make them good little boys."

"Sithee, Bob, dost know it's Christmas Eve?" said Bella after a while. "We'll go down and buy something for the childers' stockings. Tom wanted to hang up mine, he thowt it would hold more. I don't know what to make of that lad."

Bella paused as Bob produced one copper coin, and his face began to work. "That's all I've browt the lass, and dost think I'm going to spend my wife's earnings."

The man, overwrought and bodily weak, flung his arms on the table and pressed his face in his hands, and long sobs shook his frame. In a moment Bella was crooning over him like a comforting mother, her voice broken and the tears coursing down her cheeks. "Ah dunna lad, dunna, thou'lt break my heart, and I was the happiest woman in Dunedin when thou came. We are together, lad, and we have the childer; we will win out, dinna tha fear. I know it's a hard country, but I didna come twelve thousand miles over rough seas to find the comforts of the old country. Dunna lose heart, Bob, or you'll break mine. Forget the bygone troubles and live for me and the childer, lad, my own owd love."

It is not good to see a strong man break down. With his wife's hand pressing his head to her breast, and her soothing touch in his hair, with her sweet murmured assurance of better times in store for the childer and themselves, the nerves of the overwrought man calmed down and he expressed himself as ashamed of his weak lapse, but one thing cut short his contrition —it was a wife's hand on his lips and her entreaty not to break her heart.

Finally they sallied forth, the wife in a dress covered with a worn Paisley shawl, her husband in a suit abstracted from the cavernous cabin trunk. The shops were small and dimly lit by oil lamps. Their produce was largely drawn from Tasmania, then known commonly as Van Diemen's Land. The general method was to make four walls and those of the partitions of upright thin hardwood, split to a thickness of about half an inch, but of great strength and of a very durable hard timber, no doubt one of the eucalypti. Nailed on, and another paling to cover the cracks, the roof of the same material was put on by overlapping shingles of the same timber, but of shorter lengths. In the absence of any sawn timber, nearly all the floors were of hard rammed clay, giving nearly the service of ordinary concrete of today. Dunedin at this date boasted few sawn houses.

EARLY MEDICINE

Much might be written of the old type of medico. To be a popular doctor in those days often meant dying of overwork. One greatly loved doctor, named Harding, was a general favourite; full of Irish kindness, and of a jovial manner, he adapted himself to all conditions of men. On one occasion he entered my mother's house and said he could smell a mouse, to which she replied there were no mice there and that he must have brought it himself. A search revealed a mouse in the lining of his heavy top coat. The doctor had the reputation of never refusing a call. One old chap near what was called Taitville, one night heard a voice in the gully below and, when nearing the stream, he recognised the tones of the doctor, who implored to be told why, if women would have these happenings, why they could not have them in daylight? When he died, in his early fifties, the cortege testified to the warm affection in which he was held, for all felt they had lost an irreplaceable friend.

A doctor at the Hutt, a forerunner of Doctor Harding, was reputed to have known, as a student, rather more of the Burke and Hair practices than was healthy, and had migrated to the colony where he practised till his death.

One had only to listen to the speech of the older members of the community to hear the dread tale of neglect and lives condemned to great pain or thrown away. There was a tolerant verdict for men of intemperant habits, a general comment being: "A fine doctor, if you get him half tight," but one fears many were maimed, or lost their lives from defective ministrations. As a boy, I heard a hopelessly crippled man in Nelson Hospital tell of a dislocated hip, and of a drunken doctor placing a strain on his limb with a block and tackle, with the result that his leg was hopelessly wrung and the sinews drawn. The man was likely to be a cripple all his life,

One medico of my own day in Lower Rangitikei, not far from Marton, had a rooted aversion to riding at night, though those requiring his services were obliged to bring a saddled horse for his transport to and from the patient; but in a country reputed to contain the finest light horses in New Zealand, this presented no great problem. One fine old man of great decision

of character told the writer of knocking up Dr. C. only to be told he would not go as he was at variance with the father of the sick girl. My old friend replied it was no concern of his as to what their differences might be, but there was a very sick girl wanting his services and he would have to come, which, after some demur he did, mounting the horse with his case of instruments and drugs.

Dr. C. met his match with one settler who rode up one night seeking aid for a wife in dangerous child-birth, but the doctor, speaking from an open window, refused to come. Said the caller: "If you won't come, you old ——, I'll burn you out. Five minutes and I will put a match in the thatch." Dr. C. heard the man strike a match on his tight riding breeches, and seeing the flames of the lighted thatch yelled: "I'll come," and the flame was dashed out.

The old man had considerable means, and his run up the Rangitikei River still bore the name of Dr. C.'s Clearing. One uncanny incident was told me of Dr. C. by an old friend of austere and religious bent, one not likely to pass on anything of an apochryphal nature. A young woman consulted Dr. C and he could not diagnose any organic trouble. Whether he had by skilful questions elicited some information as to her state of mind, I know not, but this old man of the world startled his patient by saying: "I cannot help you; what you want is the Lord Jesus." The patient then admitted that the old doctor was right, made her peace with God, and recovered.

I have seen a valley in the backblocks in which three doctors committed suicide. All were heavy drinkers and when the liquor ran out they took to drugs drawn from the poppy. The writer remembers another medical drug addict who told him very seriously that anyone taking morphine or other narcotics could not afterwards tell the truth.

In the early years of this century I had something to do with procuring a doctor, and eventually obtained one from Scotland. Previously I had formed one of a guarantee committee who deposited £5 each and a doctor came from the Shetlands, a fine able young man, and we were very satisfied. Our guarantees were returned to us, less a small percentage for clerical expenses, the doctor's takings exceeding in six months the annual salary we had guaranteed.

The writer has, with deep sorrow, seen the downhill trend of many doctors, and one, the son of a country schoolmaster,

told me it cost his father two thousand pounds to put him through his studies. One doctor of my acquaintance always attributed a love of liquor to the influence of students who had formed the habit at medical colleges.

FROM their re-union to the date of the family's resolve to ship to the North Island as holding better prospects of work, must have been a year, or possibly more. Wages in the North Island were always on a higher scale than those of the South. Bella had found many friends who had shown her many kindnesses and she held them in a high regard in her warm and generous nature, and often spoke of them with affectionate respect.

When the small steamer, on which Bob was a passenger from Port Chalmers, reached Wellington, he found a different atmosphere to that which he had left a few days before. For one thing Otago had few Maoris, and these were friendly and lived amicably with their white neighbours, but in Wellington he found very numerous tribal clans of a belligerent and offensive type. Sir George Grey, the Kawana, had adopted what we of the present day call an appeasement policy, and which was as futile as the Munich talks of Chamberlain and Hitler. The policy of that date was called the "Flour and Blanket policy" and the wily savage, finding the pakeha hesitant and vacillating, did not fail to exhibit a spirit of aggression.

Sir Duncan Cameron, commander of the Imperial forces, called off by Grey at a time when he had the natives cornered, notably in the ranges between New Plymouth and Opunake, eventually resigned his command. Bishop Selwyn too, added his weight in the Maori side of the scale and grew so unpopular as to be hooted in New Plymouth. It was a crime to assault a Maori, and Bob related how a row of Maoris would push him off the paths of Wellington's main streets, and with many insulting gestures, tell him to go to Taranaki, where they said he would be pukaru or finished. Bob felt the insults very keenly, but he dared not strike one of them. There was no fine allowed, and a gaol sentence was the only punishment to be faced.

Bob arrived some time after the mana of Rauparaha or Robulla, as Bob and other settlers commonly called him, had been broken by his seizure by men-o-war's men south of Waikanae. His relative, Rangihaeata, was in appearance a much finer man, but totally incomparable in brain power to his re-

lative of the long upper lip, slight form and scheming brain. Bob's arrival was within a few years of the bloody surprise assault on a body of Imperial troops at the Upper Hutt, engineered by Rangihaeata, and he was told of the night attack of the numerous Maoris and of the fearless boy bugler who sounded the alarm. He blew the first notes and his arm was slashed by the native tomahawk. Catching the falling bugle the boy completed his message, and the same tomahawk silenced his bravery for ever. Probably no youth of fourteen achieved so much, and died so great a hero. It is, of course, obvious that, lacking the warning, the fight at Boulcott's farm would have proved a massacre.

Another chief of that remote date, a contemporary of Rauparaha named Wharepouri, was interred near Kaiwharawhara or Ngahauranga, and in my youth I used to see a canoe, placed upright in the ground as a monument, close beside the main Hutt Road. The rocks leading to Houghton Bay and Terawhiti were a hunting ground for haliotis, or paua shellfish, a large black and uninviting shellfish. I have, as a child, seen a bullock waggon loaded with the shells of these fish in crates, which had doubtless been gathered where the Maoris had formerly stripped them from the rocks.

At this period the natives drew a large part of their sustenance from the coast. The soil near Wellington never appeared capable of sustaining a large population. Apart from the promise of fertile areas in the Hutt Valley and odd patches, edible seaweeds, shellfish and fish were the major part of their diet. The area around Mana and Kapiti Islands was esteemed as a vast fishing ground where many varieties of fish abounded. Many school fish, such as the wharehou and the moki had their set seasons which the Maoris knew by a study of the planets and certain growths of vegetation.

The native was not above a mild theft of a bullock, one of which occurs to me as being well authenticated. Bishop Hadfield of Otaki and Archdeacon Williams of Te Aute had some of the finest Shorthorn cattle in New Zealand in their day. It was common for these heavy beasts to be bogged in the swamps of Waikanae, and the overseer of the Hadfield farm, seeing a bullock evidently dead, well into the heart of the swamp, was about to ride on when something in the pose of the beast struck him as out of the common. Alighting, he worked his way by tussocks till he reached the beast, which was really only the skin

and head artistically pegged out in the swamp to pass a distant scrutiny.

It is worth mentioning that this region was, after the forming of the Manawatu railway, the source of enormous crops, notably of onions. One portion called Opiki yielded two-thirds of the Dominion's onion supply. As a result of drainage, the swamps are always sinking and one homestead found a large stump pushed up through the drawing room floor. When I first came up from the Manawatu Heads by steamer, I saw more ducks than I had ever seen before. The sand banks about a half mile from the steamer were black with many thousands of ducks, whose loud quacking could be heard on the steamer, of which they evidenced no alarm. On an estate in Lower Waikato and the nearby lagoons and lakes, it was said an Auckland doctor shot six hundred and fifty duck. One resident told me that, favoured by a fog, he once killed seven duck at one discharge of his gun. In pre-Pakeha days the Maori must have drawn on an undiminished food supply.

Rauparaha went every year to Marlborough to catch the half-fledged ducks, and on one ocasion ran into Tuhawaiki and had a narrow escape from the southern warrior. The northern chief made no secret of the fact that man for man, and in single combat, the fighting men of Bloody Jack, as the whalers called Tuhawaiki, were just one too many for his own men.

One point seems to show that the Maori was a natural conservator of game and fish. No bird might be speared, snared or captured till a certain date when it was fat—till then it was tapu, a very sure deterrent to the poacher. The same restriction applied to fish; whitebait, hapuka and moki had their season, and none might make light of a tohunga's ban, just as the kumera had its set season of planting. As a youth I noticed the regularity attending the planting of the taiwa or rewi, as they called their potato. It was something, too, to see the varicoloured flowers of different varieties, of which they had about seven. The rows were always kept in faultless condition, the women always busy pulling weeds and gathering the earth about the roots. The rows were often planted five at a time by a woman going backward.

Reverting to the Opiki district, an old friend who owned a part of the swamp told me that so far from incurring heavy labour costs in weeding the crop, it really cost them nothing. A mob of lambs turned into the growing onions left the rows

clear of weeds, and the fresh feed also gave pep and succulent fattening grazing to the lambs. Another friend told me he was motoring from Wellington and never saw such a remarkable sight as Opiki's lines of onions and other crops running at right angles to the road, fifty-eight chains long, and as straight as though planted by a garden line.

These old swamps were incredibly rich and a part of the Kairanga block south of Palmerston North was a notable one. The land was so rich in one part called Jacky Town that an old Scot said: "I ran nine sheep to the acre and some years later I could not run one." The stock made such foul pasture that they died like flies. Later, when this land was ploughed, it grew mangolds so large as to be "like digging post holes," as one man expressed it, At the northern end of this block of land, extending nearly to the town of Feilding, was a block of land known as the Kopane, of which the Maoris said: "Drive a horse in at one end, he will be fat when he comes out." I have seen young Hereford cattle from this area which might easily be taken for cattle at least a year older.

A good number of the houses in Wellington were of a cheap construction. One builder built rows of cottages in Aro Street, and also in Webb Street, of a very rough character, lacking any sanitary disposal of sewage and supply of water, and so insecure in their under parts, being built on excavated soil, as to subside. The writer remembers some cottages in Webb Street from which the tenants fled in alarm when the flood-water took away the back piles and left a cavernous hole exposed. These cottages were not favoured, and housed only a poor and migratory type of tenant.

The only farm I knew in my youth was owned by Granny Leach, who must have been seventy when I first remember her, and as my next brother was nine years older than myself and was serving his apprenticeship, I saw little of either brother except on very rare holidays. I was thus thrown on the grandson and grand-daughter of old Mrs. Leach, and was always free to climb the hay-filled loft to get apples, or to wade up the clear gully stream in pursuit of the small koura, or crayfish, and any native trout or kokopu we could spear, or guddle. The very moderate sized crayfish were transferred to a Tasmanian Jam tin and boiled, and what very delectable pink little chaps we esteemed them!

By the way, a very old friend of my youth, Mr. D. Sinclair

of Wainui-o-mata, told me that about that time he had visited the Pink and White Terraces and had seen large dishes of the pink koura served on the table of McRea's Hotel. These were caught in trusses of fern lowered into the lake, and afterward raised and shaken into a canoe. This practice still exists at Ohinemutu, Rotorua.

The writer, looking from the mail train window when mounting to the Johnsonville Station and beyond, has always had a vision of a bare-legged boy ascending the rock-bound streams and lifting stones to capture the denizens of the creeks, The old pa of Epuni, a signatory chief of the Treaty of Waitangi, once stood at the junction of Epuni and Wordsworth Streets and was covered by a large clump of gorse of great height; this patch evidently covered the old refuse of shells from the pa. The pipi and cockles had been brought from Te Aro by the kuias or old women, whom in my youth I often saw bent double by long flax kits carried at least two, if not more, miles. It says much for their love of shellfish that this huge midden of not less than seven feet in depth had been brought by pikau on the backs of old Maori women who gathered the pipis laboriously every day at Te Aro, now a dense part of Wellington's city.

Of the earlier days of Wellington, much might be told. The lure of gold possibly attracted a very mixed population, comprising many of a reckless gambling spirit. Among notable writers was a man of German-Jewish extraction, though claiming to be born in London. Possessing a huge head and large ability, Julius Vogel was a journalist who first came to notice on the goldfields of Otago. Later he entered politics, and with Sir Robert Stout formed the Stout-Vogel Government.

DARK DAYS

Bob took on the position of foreman of a gang of workers who were taking spoil from behind Lambton Quay to put on the reclaimed land. One fateful day, at a time when Bob was working behind Lambton Quay, his eye detected a movement in the face of the hill, and his warning shout saved the men but allowed him no time to extricate himself, with the result that when excavated, his left leg was dreadfully injured. Bella's first intimation of the accident was the rather unusual appearance of a cab whose driver bore a note apprising her of the accident, and requiring her attendance at hospital. She was in the cab in very short order, the cab's sober six miles an hour being all too slow for her anxious heart.

She found Bob very white and in great pain. At her tearful face her husband managed a smile, and said, "Sithee owd lass, it's nowt much and no bones broken."

While the tears flowed freely, Bella found speech. "Eh, lad! What hast done to thysel'?"

The injury proved to be a severe crushing of the legs, and the blood vessels had been badly injured by the weight of earth, made worse by the influx of people off Lambton Quay who persisted in dancing excitedly on the earth above the injured man and impeding the workmen who were releasing him. The writer has seen many cases where the public act in a similar way when excited.

This set-back of months of hospital, followed by many months on crutches, transformed the once powerful, well set-up man to a bowed-shouldered shadow of his former self. The medical men all agreed he should have one leg removed, but this was strongly opposed by Bella and the patient himself.

With a crippled and broken husband, Bella at last found herself faced with the most sombre crisis of her life. Bishop Abraham, who came to see Bob at frequent intervals, urged him to take the charity of the parish, but both husband and wife turned the proposal down. Bob said he could sell his watch, but Bella, who knew how the watch was valued, would not hear of the sacrifice. The standard English lever watch had one value—ten pounds. Dad's timepiece is before me and the milling and escutchion are worn smooth. It never occurred

to Bob and Bella to cease paying the 5/- a week for the two boys' school fees. The kindly old Bishop would bring some new or choice viand with the remark that "Mrs. Abraham and himself had appreciated the novelty and he thought Mr. Lyon might enjoy some too." No patronage or hint of obligation, but, as a clergyman, a little attempt to lessen the hard lines of a fellow man.

Bella's earnings were totally out of proportion to the amount of labour expended, and there was no doubt that in many cases the labour of washing and "charing," as it was termed, was often callously exploited. At this particular period the family had but one source of income—Bella herself. The boys' "schoolin' " took five shillings per week, the rent and Bob's medical bill had to be paid, and their simple cost of living took the rest. The writer does not know, at this interval of eighty years, what led to the climax, but Christmas Eve found Bella at the grocer's shop in Upper Cuba Street, the partners in which business were Danes. The elder one was Jansen, the other, who afterward kept a store at Sanson, was called Andersen. With much hesitation, and some tears, Bella requested credit, and was told by the elder partner to have no fears; she could he said, have the whole shop. For many years she and her husband bought their requirements there, and there was always a deep and kindly gratitude expressed by the couple when the hard days were over.

One memorable day, when Bob was slowly getting about on his crutches, a wraith of his former self, he saw a figure he knew well, riding a well-groomed horse in the stiff Armed Constabulary style. The rider stopped at the gate, and with reins looped over his arm, made toward Bob, disclosing himself as Inspector Aitcheson, Inspector of Police. Generally a rather hard-looking man, he hailed Bob by name. "Lyon," he said, coming at once to business, "are you looking for a job?"

"Well," Bob replied, "I don't look much like facing the batter* now, Inspector."

"Well, the job I am offering you may put you into the face, but won't entail much work in the shovelling line. I want someone to take charge of the prisoners behind Lambton Quay and set out the earthwork for them. They will be marched

* Face of a road cutting.

down under guard at eight in the morning, and will leave for the gaol again at four in the afternoon. The wages are three guineas a week."

Bob's throat was rather full, but he managed to say, "I'd jump at the chance Inspector. My wife has washed and chared and we have had lean times and a hard struggle to keep our heads above water."

"Say no more, Lyon, say no more. We know something of the bad time you have gone through; this may be the end of your lean times."

The wise Inspector had seen human emotion too often, and he did not relish the break-down of the gaunt and stricken man before him. After a few kindly and well-chosen words, he remounted his horse, after arranging details of starting time for work, and rode off—reputedly a hard man, but a veritable visitor of hope to the stricken household.

When Bella returned and heard the glad news Bob had to communicate, she took it very calmly, saying: "The Lord knew we were at the far end of our struggles, and has given us relief in his own way." And then this notable woman who had borne her troubles so bravely, in a broken voice, with tears very near the surface said simply, "I thank thee, O Lord. Thou hast heard my prayers."

From that date Bob might have been seen making his way on crutches down Willis Street to where, a short time after, the double line of prisoners were brought through the narrow defile, where a cart road tapped the quarry and horse drays drew the spoil to reclaim the sea-front, Lambton Quay, which at that date ran up to the shops lining the Terrace and backing on to it.

Bella insisted on working while the two boys were pupils at Finnemore's School. Finnemore, the master, kept school in the front room of his house in Ghuznee Street. He wore a wig, he took snuff, and he was addicted to frequent lapses from sobriety. This snuff-taking had the effect of making the master's speech like that of a person with a cold in the head, and he prefaced his utterances with "Do you dow." It was common, Tom said, to see the old man with a full cargo go to sleep in his chair; as his head nodded the wig would be dislodged and gradually slip to the floor. When he showed signs of awakening a boy would dart forward and retrieve the wig and present it with a respectful: "Your wig, sir." The old

chap would put it on with the back over one ear and to make up for former laxity, grasp his cane and lam every boy on the principle that if they had not deserved a hiding they soon would. His old half-witted wife, hearing the howls and uproar, would emerge from the back regions and take the cane away from her fuddled husband, and peace for a while reigned and knowledge was diffused. Chief Justice C. J. Skerrett, or Joe Skerrett, was a pupil of Finnemore when the two boys attended his school.

An old friend remarked to me the very different and frequent use of punishment by schoolmasters, and even the English parents in the days of his youth, compared with his grandchildren. I am afraid my mother spoiled us, and yet we loved her very fondly. Her saying "Don't beat the children, the world will beat them enough," adorns a fragrant memory.

TRICKER

As a schoolboy I have watched a long double line of prisoners from the Terrace Gaol being marched back from work on the hill at the back of Lambton Quay. Many of them had manacles round the ankle, connected by a chain with a link in the centre through which a leather belt was passed to take the weight and relieve the movements. I do know, of course, that many old lags* were among the populace, but I never heard they were addicted to crime. One old chap who, curiously, bore the name of Marcus Clarke's character Rufus Dawes, was, as a boy, transported because he was in the company of companions of his own age who wrenched off door knockers.

I do not think I ever heard of the escape of a prisoner of those days, and let it be said there were felons of a desperate character among the gangs. In a civilian position my father had much to do with the labour gang as supervisor and instructor, and has told me much about them. Among the tragedies which came to his notice, and later on, about forty years later, was the following.

The case of Tricker was productive of a great deal of excitement at the time. At that period a large part of land, and particularly that bordering what was known as Barney Rhodes' run Otakipo, was still in its virgin state of flax, swamp, and tall manuka. In this large area of perhaps forty thousand acres, cattle bred unmolested, and it was the custom of early settlers to shoot a clearskin or unbranded young animal for meat. Tricker, as well as many others, had lost cattle which joined the semi-wild ones, and a very old settler told me you might hear them feeding in the thick cover of the swamps, but a slight noise or the scent of a person up wind would make silence among the cattle, which would be sustained for a long time. Tricker sighted a two-year heifer near the edge of the swamp, and by a lucky shot dropped her dead. When he came to examine her carcass he found the brand of a neighbour, Raynor, on the rump. Raynor, too, had heard the shot and came on the slain beast in a few minutes. He would listen to no offers of payment, laid an information, and at a subsequent trial, Tricker

* Convicts from Australia.

got a two years' sentence. A passionate man, Tricker made the threats against Raynor which later led to his undoing, for about three years later Raynor was shot at his own door, and his body buried.

About this time a half-caste and a Maori, former servants of Raynor, after acting in a very furtive manner and throwing suspicion on Tricker, disappeared into the little known inland Patea or Taupo district. Tricker was arrested and charged with wilful murder and, coupling his threat with the murder of Raynor, Judge Johnston summed up against the prisoner. Counsel urged that the accused was, an hour before the shots were heard, at Scott's Ferry at the mouth of the Rangitikei River, a distance of over twelve miles from the scene of the murder. It was demonstrated by first-class horsemen that seasoned horses could not make the distance in an hour, and it must be remembered all short cuts were barred by flood water. However, Tricker was condemned to death. This roused the country, and prominent men, notably Archdeacon Stock of St. Peter's, circulated a largely signed petition which at last won a tardy recognition, and the prisoner was reprieved and his sentence commuted to life imprisonment.

Tricker told my father that the Governor of Wellington Gaol treated him with great callousness. When he voiced his anxiety as to the struggle ahead of his wife and little children, the gaoler said, "Let her go to work at the wash tub." Tricker also told my father that the gaoler shook him by the shoulder when asleep and shouted, "What did you do it for?" in an endeavour to startle a confession from him.

Tricker's friends, under that fine old man, Archdeacon Arthur Stock, did not cease working, and eventually procured his enlargement, and later he was presented with a free pardon at the Bulls Town Hall at the hands of Sir James Wilson. Tears streamed down Tricker's face as he received the pardon, and the ready handshakes of his old neighbours, as he repeatedly said, "I never did it." I was in Bulls at the time, and I well remember the large number of vehicles and horsemen who witnessed the end of a life-long tragedy and tardy justice done to a much injured man.

To take the lighter side of Wellington life, the majority of early settlers were a music loving people, and comedy also appealed to them. Various singers were, at intervals, visitors to the capital city. Among those in the front rank were Ilma De

Murska, Madame Carandini, Madame Trebelli, or Dolores, and others. That Hollywood "had nothing" on these artists of seventy years ago, it may be mentioned that one prima donna was reputed to have two husbands living and two under the sod.

A Scottish family named Black charmed New Zealand audiences with music. They were singers of great merit, but a disastrous fire in the Octagon, Dunedin, destroyed some members of the family, and they could not carry on.

Perhaps one of the most popular stage entertainers was an Englishman named Thatcher, who came to Otago in 1862. He improvised and wrote songs of a topical nature, though some had a quite useful moral attached. Thus one, "Give the boys a good education," and others, were largely burlesque and local hits, very popular with those who were not the butts of the song. One or two songs stand out. "Johnny Jones's Claim on Waitahuna" described the "jumping" of Johnny's claim by men who, when told to leave, as "putting their thumbs into their nose and spreading their fingers out," saying, "Johnny Jones will you never go home."

An occasion occurred when the Governor was expected in Dunedin. It was agreed that if he arrived at night, the firing of a cannon should summon the volunteers to the wharf to form a guard of honour. Alas! in the early hours of the morning someone applied a linstock to the touch hole. The roar of the gun brought volunteers on the run, dressing as they went, and much to their disgust the Governor landed about ten o'clock the next morning. This was too good an opportunity to miss, and Thatcher's next song was: "Will No One Tell Who Fired that Gun?"

Possibly two of the foremost monologue entertainers were McCabe, a ventriloquist, and more or less a singer and comedy artist, who revisited New Zealand again as a very old man, An entertainer of quite a different style was the Rev. Charles Clarke, who gave selections from the works of Charles Dickens. So wrapt were the members of his audiences that my elder brother told me two hours passed as a few minutes.

In later years, about 1890, a troupe of negro singers who were gathering funds for the Fisk Jubilee University, visited New Zealand. There were many of them, aged negros and negresses who had wonderful voices. The Negro Spirituals, as they were called, were, in book form, often used in concerts.

Other offshoots of the original team later came to New Zealand, but lacked the talent and voices of the original troupe.

Other talented men who visited the Colonies were George Augustus Sala, Anthony Trollope, novelist, and as a young man, one called Robert Cecil, later known as Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister of England. Cecil was at that time, 1886, a journalist and was related to the family of Major Gascoigne, whose wife, by the way, was born at the castle which stands on an island and which was famed as the main scene in Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*.

I have heard it stated that old families with reduced incomes came out in early days to escape the cost of educating their children to the standard ruling at the period. This seems feasible, as the colony at an early date sheltered many families whose capital, partly depleted, was still enough to exist where expensive living and entertaining were not required.

NEW DAWN

AFTER WORKING at his job with the prison gang for some time, the family finances of Bob were on a much better footing. Bella still insisted on earning money to establish the small store of savings to meet the inevitable rainy day. The acquirement of a home of their own seemed, by the joy of possession, to stimulate effort, and no time was lost that might be employed in steady industry.

As Bob's injured limb grew stronger, dawn found him in his garden, trenching and deeply working the soil for his flower and vegetable garden, for he, like all old English farmers, believed in the soil culture, whose chief advocate at that time was Jethro Tull. Bob also used Peruvian guano, which was then sold in paper bags of a few pounds each. This guano must have been powerful stuff, actually gathered on the Peruvian and Chilian coasts. Soaked and dissolved in water, it was applied to the plants and I never remember finer flowers, chiefly roses and hyacinths, than the result of Bob's efforts. These years following the early struggles of the pair, were looked on as particularly happy ones.

A time came when inclement weather was the finish of the prisoners' outside labours, and here again Bob's old friend, Inspector Aitcheson, proved a good fairy by his thoughtful influence. Bob was offered, and readily accepted, a position as messenger in the winter sittings of Parliament, and in his broadcloth suit, with wide shirt front and bow tie, he was rather a handsome figure with his broad chest and fine physique. The pay was good and the duties light, and Bob recovered rapidly of his injuries, having discarded the crutches some time before; though his wife said he always had a stoop and slightly bowed shoulders as a result of many months of the use of crutches.

The procedure of Parliament and the vagaries of many of its members were sources of merriment. One old member could not be ruffled by interjection, or direct attack, but continued serenely with his speech. Another, a choleric Anglo-Indian, who was known as "Nabob" Wilson, having played a brave and prominent part in the Indian Mutiny, had chartered a ship to transport his family, Indian servants and livestock to Canterbury. He owned the Cashmere Hills estate, and was a for-

bear of a very distinguished lady member of the House, who sat in Parliament in 1942-43.

Even the sedate and dignified Nabob Wilson was not immune from horseplay and practical jokes, and on one occasion Bob was called on to find the coat, top hat and boots of the irate member. They were not found, and Nabob Wilson had to walk home in heavy rain, clad only in slippers and a skull cap, giving his opinion of the transgressors in forceful language.

One inveterate joker was known as "Knickerbocker Ingles," but there were others who took their legislative duties equally lightly. One favourite prank was to transport the papers of a Government member to the desk of one of the Opposition. Having "caught the Speaker's eye" the member called on would launch out on his speech, but when confronted with a strange paper, become flustered, and eventually sat down amid broad grins from those who had planned his discomfiture.

Amongst the wittiest members of the House was a Scotsman, Scobie Mackenzie, who, I believed, represented an Otago constituency. A labour member named Earnshaw, having by a speech raised the ire of the then Minister of Lands, Hon. John McKenzie, was called in Gaelic "a little black devil." Interpretation of the term led to a "wigging" by the Speaker. Scobie Mackenzie, a red-haired man, in a semi-apologetic speech, said that the "Black Mackenzies" were really the original wild type of Highlander, and though the Red Mackenzies had from time to time tried to eliminate the Black Mackenzies' wild tendencies, they had never quite succeeded, and the present deplorable lapse emphasised the failure of their efforts.

In Bob's day indulgence in liquor was very common and quite well-known politicians were victims. One well-known son of an earlier colonizer, on an order from the Speaker, would be carried out by messengers, quite helpless and described as "unwell."

Members of that day embraced statesmen of great ability, such as Wm. Rolleston, whose land settlement policy led to the small farm schemes; the Hon. John McKenzie, Minister of Lands, was an able seconder to Rolleston. There were colourful and very able speakers in the Parliaments of the past, but the two parties most clear-cut at that date were the Liberal and Conservative, or squatters' party, who were accused of gridironing blocks of land, excluding or blanketing the small farmer, and adding by devious means to their already extensive

acreage. They were also accused of "wire pulling" or "log rolling."

It was said that at that date the present route of the Wairarapa railway was placed to give access to the lands of prominent members of the Legislature. There existed a level route marked at its entrance by a brass plate in the rock, marked "Rochfort and Riley's Survey." Rochfort it was who planned the present Spiral route used to raise the Main Trunk line to the level of National Park. Much ado has been made of a rail route to Featherston by later politicians, which, as a survey and a plan, existed seventy years ago. To provide a level and short route to the interior the State acquired what was known as the "Company's Line" from the shareholders of the Manawatu Railway Company, paying a first-class price to provide a heavy traffic route for the northern traffic. This line finally took over all freight trains running to the town of Palmerston North.

When Bob resigned his Parliamentary work, he acquired some horses and found the ballasting of ships a very profitable job. All vessels, whether sail or steam, required a soil or gravel lining of the lower holds to make them stable and seaworthy. It was more or less a rush job, and the spoil was carted from behind Lambton Quay. Having now recovered from his leg injury, Bob was capable of wielding a long-handled shovel very efficiently. Like most lucrative jobs, however, competition and lower rates of pay decided Bob to sell his horses and drop the ballasting.

Hearing reports of Gisborne, then recovering from the Hauhau scare, he set out to see for himself and, boarding one of the steamers then running, was landed at Napier and later, by a smaller vessel, at Gisborne, where he saw and heard much of the Hauhau and his gentle methods. He was shown a hill on which a Maori was standing when, from a distance of over four hundred yards, an English Colonial scout took a snap shot from one of the old Enfield long-barrelled rifles and brought him down with a bullet through the body.

Landing at Napier, Bob saw an elderly man who was evidently too poor to afford a cab, and was carrying one carpet bag at a time for a distance, and returning for the other. Bob shouldered one bag and the two walked on to the town. He recognised the owner of the bags as Tollemache De Tollemache, a qualified solicitor and money-lender, and reputed to be one of the wealthiest men in the Colony. His passion for money led him-

self and his wife to live a simple and inexpensive life, and he always went on foot. He had no children, but was obsessed with the idea of mending the broken family finances. When one refers to high rates of interest one may state that, up to the end of last century rates of interest ranged from ten to twelve per cent.; indeed, the early bush settlers never paid less than seven.

I knew a bank manager who, as a sideline on his own private capital, lent money at twenty per cent.; but this was nearly sixty years ago, and a relative of mine was the victim. It was common knowledge that one of the early milk vendors of Wellington paid twelve per cent. for loan accommodation. Only regard for the descendants forbids use of names; but a later generation either reduced the usury or paid it off altogether. In any case bank advances came into general use. In this connection the Bank of New Zealand, by financing large runs, got into a parlous state, which later became so desperate that the Seddon Government came to the rescue and acquired a controlling share in the Bank, though it is cold fact that many were ruined by foreclosure and the collapse of the Bank dubbed "the Pawnshop."

CHEERY OPTIMISM

FROM THE DATE of his appointment in charge of the prisoners, Bob and his wife never looked back, though improved circumstances were not allowed as any pretext for slackening of effort, but rather, using a Greek term, they "filled their days with industry." The two boys leaving school, took jobs. Tom, the younger, ever full of enterprise, got a job as telegraph messenger at fifteen shillings a week, and later turned it over to Bob and began an apprenticeship with Greenfield and Stewart, an old established firm whose accountant and later partner was Deanie Lyon, but who, with his brother Horace, were no connection with our particular family. I believe they belonged to a well-known printing and bookselling firm.

Bella and her husband acquired a native lease property, including their own dwelling, and gradually bought three cottages joining, and built others as their means increased, till eventually the lease embraced eight houses. Bella's deep satisfaction was evident when the first cow was purchased from Death's herd at the Hutt and led home attached to the back of a buggy. All cattle seemed to be broken to leading by a rope round the horns. This animal, on which Bella lavished great affection, was followed by six others. They were grazed on land further up the gully and were largely hand-fed with bran and other foods and hay saved by Bob himself, who had few peers as a mower. One large source of cow fodder was the "grains" from a brewery, which, still warm, were carted from a town malt-house.

The milk of the cows had a ready sale at about sixpence a quart, and the two elder boys delivered the still warm milk from cans to the immediate neighbours. This milk vending went on for some years, and only ended when the advent of a second family of three children led to Bob deciding to take his share as a contractor, and earn about eighty pounds a month during the boom caused by the borrowing of the Stout-Vogel Government. True, many feared a period of sober repayment and barren and meagre times, but the bulk of the colonists paid little heed to jeremiads and took their share of easy money with a carefree optimism of fairly brief duration. There were many of sober reflection who argued that the simple export of tallow

and wool could not compass the interest on ten million pounds (about fifty thousand a year). The importations from the source of borrowed money, such as horses, cattle, sheep and swine, were all to the good and improved and diffused new blood generally. The pigs of that day were chiefly Poland-China, a very tubby little black and white pig with little room for daylight below his chubby, easily fattened carcass. I was destined to see fair numbers of this breed of pigs among the natives of Lakes Roto-aira and Taupo, when shooting there in the winter of 1898.

The wages paid in the North of Auckland and Thames were noticeably lower than elsewhere; a South Island West Coast miner received ten shillings a shift compared with 8/- a shift at the Thames. The men in timber, and particularly kauri, only obtained eight shillings per day for very strenuous and dangerous work. The timber was logged and put into a creek bed at whose lower end a dam of heavy logs was built. Winter rains filled the dam so full that when the key log was tripped, the whole body of logs moved seaward in such volume that no water was visible. Men rolled any logs tending to strand with levers, and the whole body of timber was steered into bays or behind booms. A photo of such a huge body of timber shows one near Dargaville on the Wairoa River, where the logs were so numerous as to render it an easy task to cross a long distance on foot. Very often, as at Whangaroa, the sawmill was at the head of a quay or wharf; the log was drawn up on skids, sawn into planks, and put on a ship or scow and delivered to its building site to be re-sawn and seasoned. It may seem incredible that heart of kauri of finest quality was delivered by ship after sailing round the North Cape at a price of seven shillings and sixpence per hundred feet. Yet this was the average price for the kauri delivered to construct the Government Buildings in Wellington. So plentiful was rimu, matai and other timbers in Taranaki, that the royalty was as low as fourpence and the building timber was about 8/- per hundred at the mill.

For a time all went merry as a marriage bell, but later it began to be whispered that the borrowed capital was exhausted and the depleted exchequer led to the fall of the German Jew-Shetland schoolmaster couple, and they were followed by a grim economy practised by Major Atkinson and his followers —able men determined to save the financial stability of the

colony, but termed by those who set their own private interests first the "Skinflint Government," during the term of which it may be said the colony passed through the deepest distress ever experienced, and aggravated by the interest to be found for the largely unproductive ten millions of money borrowed. That the men comprising this Government were sincere is shown by the fact that many took a reduced honorarium or refused it altogether. As a matter of fact, New Zealand did not recover her former stability till the advent of frozen mutton and beef, at first on sailing ships, and later, together with dairy produce, on steam-driven vessels.

At this date it is hard to realise the severity of an absolutely moneyless slump during which people literally starved. I remember seeing a very pretty pearl-handled pen knife in the hands of a relative. He said a young man asked him to buy the knife for sixpence, and then rushed into a sixpenny restaurant in Auckland to obtain a meal.

To illustrate the dearth of money, on one occasion the Bank of New Zealand called on the late Newton King to pay an overdraft of not over £20,000. King eventually told the bank he could not do so, and suggested the bank might have a try, but he added: "There are not £20,000 in Taranaki." Yet, today, with the advent of refrigeration and dairy products, one hears of a farmer paying £1,350 for his new car.

One old dame said they never knew sugar. A swarm of bees, caught and housed in a red Geneva Gin case, or honey from a hollow tree in the native bush, was all the sweets they consumed. Of course the townspeople, having none of these foods available, suffered pretty badly, though food was cheap —a leg of mutton was sold by hawkers for sixpence or one shilling, possibly ewe mutton cut from a boiling down carcass. It was not the best or comparable to two-tooth wether mutton but, when cooked carefully, was always a well-appreciated food.

Perhaps no act of the missionaries bore such good results as the introduction of the brown or German bee before mentioned, and their dispersal was very wide; in fact, it was impossible to find any wooded or rocky spot to which they had not penetrated, and in cleaning bush we frequently felled a tall pine to see a swarm of bees rising from the broken trunk, which naturally broke at the spot where the bees' nest had been concealed in the hive cavity. The natives, with their quick and keen eyes, by following the flight of the laden bees, easily de-

tected the hive, and a half-caste neighbour of my own knew the locality of forty-eight hives.

After sixty-five years the writer has a vivid memory of the stagnation of trade, low wages and rigid economy and small spending powers. The timber trade and gumfields of Auckland Province absorbed a fair amount of labour, and the gold mining of Thames and locality also provided a living for a fair population. The tales of a successful quartz miner's extravagance at a crisis like the foregoing were received as something almost incredible. It is still told how a successful gold seeker drove a four-horse coach through the city, the most remarkable part of the performance being that each shoe on the horses was forged out of pure gold. So plentiful was the precious metal that in the battery of the famous Caledonian mine, it burst the gratings or coarse sieves through which the crushed metal passed. One of the most notable of early shareholders of the Caledonian mine was a Dr. P. . . . He was so obsessed with the gold mania that, unable to sleep, he walked his room crying: "Crush away, keep on crushing," till a fellow medico gave him the blunt choice of selling his shares or lunacy. He sold his shares and gradually won back a calmer frame of mind.

MEMORIES

IN THE EARLY SIXTIES, a foot traveller pursuing his way along Lambton Quay or Willis Street would have met a notable pedestrian, no less than a bearded old man in frock coat and topper, who bore a board on his breast inscribed: "Lost, a pair of gold spectacles," and making enquiry would have found that the old gentleman, so far from being indigent, was really possessed of landed property in Wairarapa and in Manawatu, and that his name was, shall we say, Farjeon.

It was related of him that when the rabbit scourge in the Wairarapa was at its height, the settlers conceived the idea of loosing cats to stem the plague. Cats were advertised for at 5/- each, cash on delivery. The above old gentleman promptly bagged the family cat, but on the way to the cat depot his business called him into a bank. He called a boy nearby and promised him a sixpence to take temporary charge of pussy. When the owner departed the boy found what was, by sounds and signs, the nature of his charge, with the result that when the owner emerged he found boy and cat both missing, and too late, found the boy had turned the cat into five shillings cash.

The old man had a heavy blow when a number of his grandchildren were killed in the wreckage from a train being blown over the summit on the Featherston line. They were returning from school in Wellington. The old man became rather weak mentally, and on one general election day he proceeded to put into practice the old jocular saying "Vote early and vote often," by calling at all election booths from Te Aro to Thorndon, recording a vote at each. I believe the offence was put down to age, and the old man never lived till another election.

To the present-day person the dress of both men and women, as evidenced by old photos of seventy or eighty years ago, is regarded with curiosity.

We have the dress of Bob and his two boys, usually a quiet pattern of dark plaid in material, the suit being austerity itself. The coat might have been of Quaker cut and possessed no collar and only one button. The latter was said to be due to a shortage of buttons, which depended on the importation of supplies from England. The waistcoat, however, was furnished with buttons which ran well up the vest. The trousers were more or less

roomy and fell over boots which might be what were called elastic-sided, or "prunella" as in women's boots—a closely woven cotton fabric. Boys' boots were often copper-toed, having a piece of copper embedded in front of the sole, which turned up and protected the precious upper from stones or sharp surfaces.

The headgear of men and boys was often a peaked cap, termed a cheese cutter, the head part being usually a soft dark material and lined with scarlet and white silk. Later came the "hard hitter" or "bowler" as I believe they call them now. The diggers brought into general use the soft felt of various shapes, the larger of which were termed the "ten gallon" or "eight horse" hats. One type of garment much affected by the working class was a loose, pocketed, shapeless knitted coat they termed a Garibaldi. These were in general use by miners and diggers.

Of ladies' dresses the variety was more varied, and as one would expect, more ornate. In the days when there were few sewing machines, it was amazing that so much work went into the flounces, tucks, and polonaise. A silk dress was not cheap, possibly eighteen to thirty guineas, but it was the dress of a lifetime and like the gold watch to the elder son, the stiff rustling silk descended to the oldest daughter. Such dresses were bought in the piece, and contained heavy silk only eighteen inches wide. This purchased, it was delivered to one of the large dressmaking establishments, such as Kirkcaldie and Stains, who did all fittings and finishing touches. Make no mistake, nothing was done without all small details being discussed at great length with the fortunate owner of the garments. Skirt, jacket and polonaise, or overshirt, had to be considered, but I may easily fall into error and so leave detail alone and avoid being trapped by expert female knowledge.

Decked out in such a dress, with white lace at wrists and throat, and invariably a cameo or intaglio brooch of varying size, our lady of the period looked dressed and the *froufrou* of her garments attested the fact.

Bob, our hero, when reproached by his wife on his extravagance, had only one comment: "It looks better on thy back, Bella, than on the back of a barmaid." Truth to tell, Bob saw no one to vie with his wife in grace and loveliness and averred, in later life, that she was the handsomest woman in Wellington.

In the ordinary way, for the silks were only for gala days, the

women wore cotton prints, often of lovely weave and design. Some specimens of the product of the Jacquard or Jacquilin loom, with its coloured flowers raised above the weave, were worn, but their cost was beyond the ordinary purse. The sun-bonnet, called by the Scotswomen a mutch, was fairly constant in wear, and the Leghorn straw hat was reasonable in price and commonly worn. Ordinary calico, unbleached, was much in use for under-garments.

It is told of one old settler that, visiting town and having a family of two boys and no less than ten girls, he would call out: "Do you want anything from town, Susan?" to which she would reply: "Yes, Jim, bring some caliker." On one occasion, Jim in mutinous mood, was heard to mutter: "Oh damn that caliker!"

Meticulous care of the more expensive dresses was exercised. I have often seen an elderly dame pin up her dress after leaving the main streets, and walk home in her black underskirt. The dress was doffed and placed between layers of paper, well fortified against moths, and was regularly inspected, brushed and freshly relaid. Ah me, one can still in memory recall the mild pride and vanity of the feminine mind of that day, and the scent of lavender brings back the cadences of merry comments of a family sitting in judgment of new garments.

In children's garments, what a wealth of detail was expended over the various styles of dress, the tedious hand-sewn tucks, and the hot and unhealthy fumes of a charcoal heated iron, following the intricacies of tuck and flounce—surely a work of self-sacrifice!

HALCYON DAYS OF 1872

Possibly the years following 1872 were the most serene and happy ones of the Lyon family. A son, born in the beginning of 1872, was the first of three born in New Zealand; a girl followed three years later, and a boy came a few years later. Our mother often referred to our coming in later years, and averred that her happiest days were those when one rooftree covered us and the younger children clustered round her, repeated their evening prayer with faces nestled against her knee, and the final good-night kiss and the tucking in our cots as a last act of her busy day.

Bella, too, had a system of dates all her own. Such as "It happened when our Jack was born," or "When Cissie was a baby;" or "Billy was four years old at the time." Surely none will cavil at such instances of maternal love, a mother so immersed in affection as to have no thought or care but of those to whom she gave her love and self-sacrifice.

Bella's husband, too, "filled his days with industry." He had a passionate love of flowers, and today I seem to scent the perfume of varied carnations, hyacinths and roses, which grew in profusion; the latter grew on the southern side of the garden protected by a fence of Tasmanian palings from the southerlies, as the gales were called, and contained among its numbers such roses as "Black Prince," "Gloire de Dijon," the golden and heavy-scented "Marechal Niel," and many others, such as "Cloth of Gold"—a glorious rose which I remember a very old settler had trained on the rough adzed unsawn wall of his house, transforming an ugly unpainted surface to a mass of grace and beauty. Very early morning found Bob delving deeply in his garden, then breakfast, and also a considerable walk to work. Truly a happy life when, wearied with the day's exertions, he was met by a smiling wife, an ample meal, and the final look at the daily paper before he sought his pillow.

As the years passed the energetic and powerful man blossomed into a busy and successful contractor. At this time Bob, much to Bella's grief, decided to sell the cows which had been so slowly and painfully acquired by their joint savings. Bob argued that, with the birth of a second family and the two elder boys tied down to trades, the brunt of the work entailed

by dairying would fall on the mother, and as he himself was often employed on contracts many miles away, his help would be very occasional or absent altogether. So the cattle were dispensed with, and only the empty shed was left to remind us of the ponderous Shorthorn cows with their huge udders and glossy coats. These cattle, derived from those reared in English pastures, were of gigantic size, but were docile and even affectionate when treated with ordinary kindness.

Bella had grown much attached to the small herd, and the huge Shorthorn cows, all from imported dams, seemed to respond to her soft voice and gentle touch. These cattle were not expensive, allowing for their costly origin, being from fourteen to twenty pounds to purchase. Nearly all these milch cattle were broken to lead and except at calving and in defence of their calves, they were extremely docile. A fair sprinkling of Devon cattle were favoured, and the writer, some thirty years afterward, surprised seventeen in the bed of a Manawatu creek, all dark red, of good size, and beautiful condition; the offspring of cattle escaped from homesteads. The back farmers were rather helpless, and had a poor sense of locality.

There was in Upper Rangitikei a family named Signal, some of whom the writer knew, who were much in request, bringing out mobs of cattle from miles away to the home yards. One of these men, on a beef hunt, could head straight for the camp and get there by the shortest route over steep ridges and gullies. I am unable to give any reason why these men were so gifted, but everyone was quite willing to follow the lead given. One old bushman, no fool in the bush himself, used to say, 'I always followed Billy Signal, and we always took a bee-line to the camp."

I may mention that the Pohangina River was a mass of white clover on the large alluvial flats up to sixty years ago, and this extended for many miles to Coal Creek. This clover was accounted for by the mobs of wild cattle pasturing there, and one man was said to have packed to Palmerston North no less than two thousand hides from cattle he had shot.

One effect of the sale of the cows was that Bella, with the two elder boys to take charge, found time to accompany Bob to far distant jobs, and to the intense delight of a city-bred woman, every creek with its tiny frond-like ferns, and their giant tree variety was, with the native bush and its feathered

songsters, a source of wonderment and charm to the town dwellers.

One notable camp to which one of these excursions extended was near Featherston, and close to the Wairarapa Lake. Here Bob was the supervisor of a bridge across the Tauherenikau River, still in use over forty years later when the writer crossed with squads of men in 1917. Here Bella desired grey ducks, then in season, and Bob arranged with the mailman to leave a pair weekly. This duck, perhaps the finest in the world, lost by its frequency its savour, and Bella somehow got the idea that duck were out of season. In later life the duck incident was productive of much hilarity. In those days and for long after, water fowl were very plentiful and ducks, when disturbed, rose in many hundreds from creek and lagoon; indeed when the writer was in his teens, it was rare to see water without duck and pukeko.

As my father's camps always boasted a cook, Bella busied herself airing the blankets, bedding and clothing, washing and mending for Bob, and later for the two elder boys, who, for a few years of the depression period, worked with their father, the elder taking any timber or adze work, and the second assisting with the accounts and general work. As one of them said, "Dad did not spare us; the son of the boss got no special treatment."

To this spartan mode of life may be attributed the long illness of the elder son—a baffling ailment, later diagnosed as being the result of extreme muscular development of the body, having outpaced or overgrown the heart and lungs. Be that as it may, the extreme solicitude of Bella for her first-born displayed all the mother-love of one already endowed with a great maternal passion for her children.

Though camp visits were few and at years' intervals, to Bella they were a delight, unspoiled by process of time. Each clinging mass of starry white clematis; the flowers of the rewarewa; the flight and song of birds ranging from the kereru or wild pigeon to the kaka in his noisy chattering flight; the babel of birds, chiefly the tui or the mako-mako with his pollen-stained head from recent probing into the numerous flowers. It is no mere exaggeration to say that at that date New Zealand possessed more birds than could be heard in later years. Beside wild canaries in their flocks, only excelled in number by two varieties of parrakeets—one with a yellow head and a larger one

with a red top—there were the native robin, a bird about the size of a thrush but with a dingy white breast and rusty black plumage, which when hidden in the undergrowth was the most superb singer of the chorus; fantails and wrens, and in the summer the shining and long-tailed cuckoo. Captain Cook describes how the songs of the birds could be plainly heard by the ships moored off shore in the Queen Charlotte Sound. Camped between Captain Cook's anchorage and Nelson, the native bush was so densely frequented by birds as to render it difficult of speech when all the chorus was involved in a free-throated concert in mid-afternoon.

Alas! the felling and burning of the dense New Zealand bush, and the imported rat, ferret, and stoat, and later the Australian opossum, have decimated the bird life of New Zealand. Even the weka or wood hen, as the colonists dubbed him, with his brown plumage, hazel eye and jackdaw habits, has disappeared, and the pukeko or swamp hen has almost followed suit.

Of ducks, the most numerous was the grey duck, parera; the blue or whistling duck (whiowhio), the grey and black teal, the widgeon and the brilliant chestnut, white and black of the shovel bill duck with divers, and the giant black swan—the latter a native of South Australia origin—were always in evidence.

I remember an old friend, a stockman, telling me that, with the Hon. Wm. Rolleston, later the author of New Zealand's land settlement policy, after delivering a mob of cattle on the Golden West Coast, they found themselves with a very great shortage in the commissiariat, only relieved by my friend's stone-throwing. The weka, so secured, was the chief item for dinner; and it happened to be Christmas Day!

The destruction of ground birds by dogs owned by roadmen, diggers, and others, naturally was very serious among the wingless section—weka, kiwi, kakapo and even the whiowhio, or blue duck—and a great many were used as food. I knew a man of French parentage whose dog, an Irish Setter, always had from seven kiwi, weka or blue duck laid out at the door of the whare. His was no idle boast that, possessing a dog like that, he would never starve in the bush; indeed, I have known hatters or gully rakers, as men fossicking up back creeks were called, who relied very largely on the result of their dogs' hunting success.

With numerous eels in the streams, it may be assumed a large

part of the food supply was of bush origin. It may be well imagined that Bella found in the birdlife and the never-failing variety of the bush, much to enchant a mind whose powers of observation had been more or less lost in a city life, and she now found a new and wonderful entertainment in novel scenes of the wild life of the bush.

The so-called "bush" or forest with its lofty trees, was, by the old settlers, given an English name; thus the rimu became a red pine; the matai a black pine, the kahikatea the white pine. The miro, which fattened the pigeons with its vivid crop of scarlet berries, and the totara, and rata with its scarlet canopy of flaming red, were usually given their short Maori names. The trees were so tall that with the black powder it took a very good gun to dislodge a pigeon where he sat in a dry pine on the edge of a clearing. Later, the advent of smokeless powder rendered the shot surer and of much longer range, though many old-timers looked askance at the new explosive. A medical friend counselled the writer to use only black powder, saying: "This smokeless powder will burst your gun and blow your hand off." The majority of settlers waited till mid-winter, when the miro berry was plentiful, and the pigeons showed by their heavy low flight that they had attained the requisite degree of fatness before despatch. So very fat were the kereru at this stage that if they struck a root in falling the bird burst at the side of the breast. A very old settler told me seventy years ago that the old colonists shot the tui when a ball of fat from a honey diet, each shot producing the contents of a pie.

One source of food supply was derived from the all-pervading kihikihi, or as the settlers called it, the gigi. The fruit, white, and something the shape of the centre of an arum lily bloom, was very sweet and the Maoris congregated in large groups to gather the fruit from considerable heights, chiefly from the trunks of white pine of which the kihikihi was a parasite. In days before the native bush was felled, temporary camps of natives intent on gathering the fruit existed near what is now called Ohakea Aerodrome. The fruit was called tawha, and was a favourite Maori delicacy.

Another product of the native bush was the fungus growing on the prone trunks of the mahoe and other soft timbers. This uninviting looking commodity first acquired a value when a Chinese merchant offered threepence a pound for the dried fungus. It took a lot of work to gather the pendulous jelly-

like fungus, and to sun-dry it. Some enlisted the heat of a large wood fire. but the bulk was sun-dried. At a date when money was very scarce the "fungus money" was very acceptable, and both Maori and white children could be seen on a year-old bush clearing in a long line, filling their sacks from the undersides of rotting logs. Not nearly now so plentiful, Chinese advertise for fungus, offering half a crown a pound for it.

Bird nest soup, fungus, shark fins and trepang, or sea slugs, must be only in reach of the very wealthy Celestials. About the turn of the century, and before English birds became too numerous, New Zealand was uniformly a producer of small fruits, as well as the orchard and tree variety. It was a common sight to see a bushman's whare in an enclosed fence with gooseberries, raspberries and currants, and with a large patch of strawberries, all immune from blight or the ravages of birds. In the wilds one stumbled on groves of cherries and of peaches, which seventy years ago grew in profusion and to a large size. This was due largely to the missionaries who taught the natives to propagate by stone and seeds the fruits at their disposal.

I remember on one occasion in Nelson a teamster, who carted stores to my father's camp, inviting me to climb a cherry tree at his door, and today I still remember the mass of glossy red fruit of a French variety of cherry growing in the open and quite unmarred by the bird pests, against which we have to net them today.

Among bush foods, honey was perhaps the most plentiful. The bees were of the black German variety and introduced by the missionaries, and, spreading among the hollow trees, produced more honey than the early settlers could cope with. Many caught wild swarms which, covered by a red gin case, were like their bush brethren the victims of sulphur vapour. A peculiar fatality in wild honey was a poisonous quality in the honey itself. In the Bay of Plenty three or four Maoris died at one time after eating wild honey. Whether the honey had not been sealed, or the immoderate quantity eaten tended to this result, I know not. The natives blame a small yellow flower growing on the banks of streams in the King Country, which they call whariki, but whether this is so I cannot say. Over a long term of years I never knew the pakeha to suffer any after-effects from the use of bush honey, and I have felled many bee trees.

I have written with a very willing hand of Bella and her hus-

band under their changed conditions and cheerful outlook. Beyond minor mishaps and illnesses of short duration, Bob and his wife led a healthy and joyous existence. The industrious years passed on swiftly and the younger children, to Bella's great grief, were the only ones left to her care. The elder boys had been through their seven years' apprenticeship, and as nine years between the first born in New Zealand and those born in England constituted a long interval, Bella had to content herself with seeing them at fairly long periods. The second son found employment in Auckland as an accountant, and was considered to have an uncanny bent for figures. The elder boy, Bob, served his seven years as apprentice to a worthy old wheelwright and decided he would visit Sydney to finish his trade. It is worthy of remark that in New Zealand at that date, about seventy years ago, only eight hours per day were worked and four on Saturday. In New South Wales ten hours was the regular day. The heat, and possibly the then unsuspected anopheles mosquito, produced an attack of malaria with such dire results that his mates took him to Sydney and placed him on the New Zealand steamer.

After a long convalescence the younger Bob crossed the Strait and worked in the various road and bridge jobs and never went back to the smell of the paint.

In these strenuous days the two elder lads for some years worked on their father's contracts, and later the elder became a partner and, of a studious nature, he studied drawing under a very able old teacher. So proficient did he become that, when his father retired, he submitted plans and estimates to local bodies and large land-holders and erected many suspension bridges across rivers and gorges, and at the time of his death, had acquired a vocation which lasted for many years, and which from the high skill required, admitted of little or no competition.

As time went on, and there appeared little hope of any revival of work in the North Island, motherly affection became dominant and Bella clamoured for "her lads." The houses were put in the care of a Shetlander tenant, and from that date the family lived in a rented house. Later, the Wellington property was sold and a return to the North Island was made to Manawatu and the purchase of a small farm, to which eventually the elder man retired.

A VISIT TO THE MACKS

ONE MORNING Bob proposed that the two boys could look after things while they had a day or two in the country where he was going to pay his men. He planned to drop his wife and baby at the Macks, old ship-mates of Bella's, and whom she had only seen on very occasional visits to the city. Bella fell in with the proposal with delight, and began to plan dress and other details, and also to prepare cakes and other dainties for the benefit of the little Macks, and also some bedding, that she might not embarrass Sarah Mack in her very straitened household means. New settlements did not lend themselves to any surplus or luxury. Bob undertook to send a note advising the Macks of the impending visit.

The eventful day dawned. Bella, full of pleasurable excitement, was up at dawn and Bob went to the livery stable for the buggy and, with provender for the horses under the seat, drove up to pick up his wife and child. The buggy of those days had a step between the two wheels and when the horse was turned to the right it disclosed the step, and the passenger, laying hold of two hand rails, lifted herself by means of the step and a ready hand from the driver. The voluminous skirts of the period took some management in ascending and alighting, and a polonaise or overskirt and the packet-like dolman also added to the handicap.

Dressed in a light print of small floral design, and with a Leghorn hat trimmed with forget-me-nots and tied with ribbons beneath the chin, Bob might be forgiven some natural pride in his lovely wife, animated now by holiday elation as, with a sparkling eye and rising colour, her chat and merry laugh enlivened the drive. Her eyes rested with approval on her grey-clad husband, in his grey felt hat, setting off broad shoulders and splendidly powerful frame. In late years she always declared her husband never looked better than when dressed in grey.

The buggy pair, in their silver-mounted harness, trotted along bravely; indeed, horsemen declared a pair of horses would travel in company further and in less time than the single horse. They also averred that it was a safer team, as a horse terrified by any unusual object would shy, or cannon against his mate,

and the one not being startled held his mate upon the road.

Be it remembered Bella had not seen timbered country, and her visit was full of novel incident. The birds were a continual source of delight; a tui on a limb above the road caused her to lay her hand on her husband's rein hand and halt the team, as she saw this shining bird of flashing, iridescent sheeny black and white pour forth his song in liquid ever-changing cadences, the while the bird seemed to be filled with ecstacy and to assume a size twice that of the natural bird. Bob watched his wife as, with slightly parted lips her eyes fastened on the bird intently till the song ended and the bird, with a rustle of wings flew to a new source of nectar in the flax blossoms nearby.

Then he restarted his team and Bella spoke in a hushed whisper. "Thank thee, Bob. I never dreamt of such a bird."

"They are common," said Bob. "They shoot them to eat."

"Never, surely!" said Bella; "they wouldna destroy such a bird!"

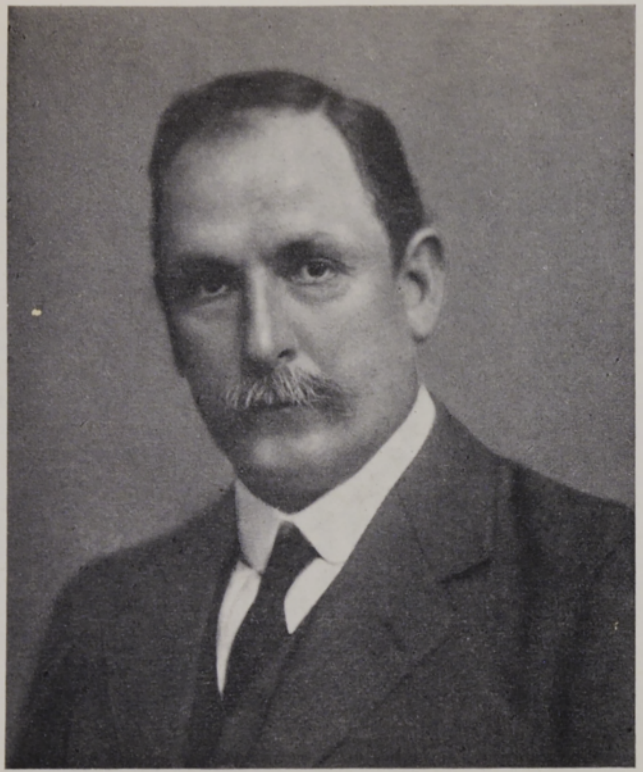
"Won't they," said Bob. "Old settlers tell me they were glad of the birds. I'll show thee birds at Cudby's Hotel at Lower Hutt, our next stop to water the horses, more wonderful than the tui."

Presently Cudby's Hotel hove in sight, and Bob led his wife into the dining room where the whole of the end of the room was netted off and the sole occupants of the aviary were two black birds, slightly larger than the tui. They were busy on some rotting logs supplied them, and were extracting the large native grub, called huhu. The male bird, with his strong straight beak, pecked the holes to a larger diameter, and the female, with a long curved ivory-coloured beak, much longer than the male bird's, probed in and drew forth the grub which both shared.

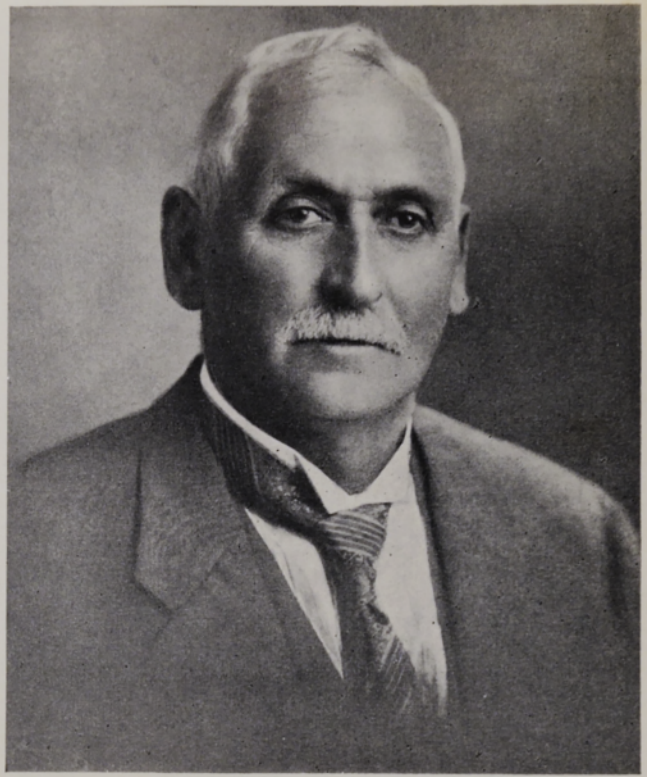
"They are a model couple," said Bob gravely. "One canna live without the other. The white tipped tail feathers of both birds are valued as an hair ornament by the Maoris and are supposed to be tapu to anyone but chiefs, or those of ariki descent."

"Surely, Bob, that is the most lovely thing thou has shown me. Can anything be more full of emblems of true love than those blue, wattled birds?"

"Ay," said Bob, "they are peculiar enough and have a value to the taxidermist who pays half a crown each for the dead birds."



The author.



Rev. T. H. Lyon.

A Lyon family gathering, about 1900.

"What a burning shame," said Bella, "to murder those lovely birds for money. Life would not mean much to thee or me, Bob, if we were parted."

"No," said Bob, thoughtfully, "but we must finish our meal and get on the road again."

The roads were much worse as they proceeded, but before nightfall the Mack's homestead was reached, and the family were at the roadside; and in no time Bella was in Sarah Mack's ready arms, while Tom Mack and Bob clasped hands, tactfully turning their backs on their overwrought partners. Somehow in the old days, the women, long-separated and isolated ,seemed much relaxed and happier for "a good cry."

Bob, mindful of the money he was carrying in his pay sack, refused to delay, though Sarah Mack, good soul, had tea with camp oven scones spread in a jiffy, and Bob was soon jogging along, feeling very lonely and with his thoughts continually reverting to the huias and their loving example.

Bella found the Macks living in a bush shanty of split timber which was adzed to shape, and comfortable in a rude way, while not far away was a saw pit built of logs and with a fly—a large square of stout calico—where Tom Mack and the boys on wet days were cutting the timber for a sawn house. The saw was a long heavy affair with a tiller or cross handles, which the top man brought down with some force, the man in the pit grasping a short pair of handles on a wooden block termed a box. This was tapped to release it from the saw, which was then restarted to cut down another of the lines previously marked by a line soaked with charcoal which, drawn taut and released in the centre, gave a guide on the plumbed log. The lower man in the pit wore a veil of mosquito net to protect his eyes from the sawdust. Two men would cut about three hundred board feet per day, and that the rolling up of logs by lever and a rope purchase was arduous was attested to by the number of men who were afflicted with blindness from the strain.

Bella was very interested in all the self-made appliances of the homestead. Washing tubs cut out of white pine logs by axe, augur and adze; even the bread trough was a product of fine axework on an even grained length of white pink trunk. A larger trough, again a tree section, did duty at the back door, fed by a small "V" shaped runnel from a crystal spring at the foot of the garden. The latter seemed to have a great variety

of vegetables and small fruits, singularly free at that date from bird ravage and insect pests.

As may be expected, there was little lag in the conversation. Old days on shipboard were recalled. There were some repinings, but an optimistic note over all. The possession of a small herd of cows, the pig pen and its denizens, and all the small beginnings of a poultry run were related, and the time seemed all too short before the returning buggy team halted again before the door.

With a last hug from Sarah, Bella climbed up beside her mate and the buggy soon left the lonely homestead far behind. As Bella slipped her arm under her husband's, she said, "I wur lippenen* on thee, lad; hast missed thy owd lass?"

* Listening.

AMUSEMENTS OF SEVENTY YEARS AGO

PERHAPS one of the unique possessions of early Wellington was its hermit at Island Bay. There has been a slight mistake in locality, as the real position of his cave was Houghton Bay. My father had the contract to form the road past the hermit's cave, and in the process had to use explosives to blow off the face of the cave.

I remember about seventy years ago the venerable bearded old man, sitting beneath a smoke-stained calico awning, his fire and smoke ascending to the blackened rock about twelve feet above his head. The diameter of the cave would vary from eight to ten feet wide, and possibly about fifteen feet long. His bedding was rolled up and appeared to be scanty enough, and was kept dry by the smoke-stained fly. A slight trickle of water from the rock was caught in a powder keg which in those days made a very handy little barrel, and from this the hermit drew his drinking water. I heard him telling my brother that he had led a very dissolute life in Glasgow and was cruel in his cups to his old mother. A sudden explosion of molten steel had driven burning fragments through his hands, completely searing the sinews and making them useless. He said that when his time of penance expired he would again seek his native Scotland.

The hermit would not receive money, but would accept bread or the commonest articles of food, and was also eager for religious books or periodicals, The Italian fisherman, who had a large open boat moored fore and aft nearby, no doubt gave him fish, and he could also fish from the rocks. There were abundant shell fish on the rocks, and I remember that live paua shells adhered to the underside of the rocks, and there were the dark coloured koura or crayfish, crawling about on the bottom of rock basins ten to twenty feet deep. Butterfish were netted in the passages of the rocks. A photo of the hermit I once saw was spurious and totally unlike the one I saw in early life.

After the departure of the original hermit, which no one witnessed, a spurious hermit took his place, supposedly by the agency of mine host of the Island Bay Hotel, who found the former hermit a great attraction to visitors and naturally a

draw for trade. The new occupant of the cave, however, was no ascetic, but liked company and stimulants and frequently left his cave to look after itself, and sought bibulous company. I never heard of his end, as I went to school in the South Island soon after I saw the original hermit.

Shortly before this time a writer began to supply a public journal, under the sobriquet of "Silver Pen," with most trenchant articles, much, I believe, on the style of the "Letters of Junius." I was too young to be interested in such matters, but it is evident that the letters were exceedingly well written and clever, and by deduction, ascribed to a woman. The secret was well kept and no proof of the identity of "Silver Pen" was ever disclosed.

One who was popularly known as "The Whiffler," but whose name was John Smith Harris, contributed, by his witty and novel utterances to the gaiety of both Islands. Reputed to be one of the cleverest accountants who visited the colonies, Harris originally came to Wellington as representing the firm of Greatrex and Company. He was continually arguing with the police about making a street blockage, and occasionally was before the "Beak" charged with causing a crowd to collect.

On these occasions his witty answers and explanations convulsed the Court and were duly reported in the press. He referred in Court to a "whiffler" and was promptly asked to define the term. He explained that a "whiffler" was a term used in pigeon match shooting to a young pigeon of weak flight which flew far enough over the boundary line to preclude its inclusion in the winning score. Harris from that date was dubbed "The Whiffler" and was never named as Harris.

One of his most notorious exploits was to set a rumour about that an enormous whale had come ashore at Island Bay. Its length and bulk were by all accounts abnormal. Wellington residents journeyed out by tram and on foot, and reaching the beach saw a prominent board inscribed: "This is where the whale ought to be." Then it dawned on them that it was the first day of April. Those who had been duped, meeting fresh arrivals en route, were determined to add as many "fools" as possible to the list, and extolled the size and bulk awaiting the newcomers, and it was said half Wellington was hilarious and cherished no hard feeling against the one man responsible—"The Whiffler."

In baiting the police, "The Whiffler" had no peer. He crossed

to Nelson where he was a serious thorn in the side of a Sergeant Nash. With a violin, accordion and a tin whistle, on all of which he was no mean performer, his first overture would be a masterly tune on the violin, when the Sergeant would gruffly order him to get going and not collect a crowd.

"Now, Sergeant," he would say, "let me give you a turn on the accordion."

"I've told you wance and if you don't move on I run yez in."

"Don't be hard, Sergeant, and let me give you a little of the tin whistle, or the mouth organ."

I never heard that he did get "run in," but if he had, the mirthful and crowded court would have paid the fine. I never heard the final of "The Whiffler"—harmless and witty, the poor chap was one who added to the gaiety of the common people as well as the keen enjoyment of all.

One striking contrast of the late seventies to the present time was the severity of punishment of crime. I remember a young Karori man who, for rape, received ten years and a flogging, and, unlike our present day, he got his sentence in full measure.

No picture of ancient customs or of English home-life could be complete if the usage of collective singing was omitted. Said one old settler, who if living would have long passed the century: "I never heard anything like the ready unison at any gathering where everyone sang very heartily and all joined in faultless time and hearty vocal effort."

When I say that the speaker at eight years of age herded sheep on the site of Christchurch my readers may know that he left his English home with his parents at the edge of the Forest of Dean at a very early date. As a child I can well remember the spontaneous and hearty singing of my elders and odd solos by some members. One bearded ex-man-o-war's man, Jack Blake, always chose very tender love ditties and roared out a chorus of "A Starry Night for a Ramble thro' many a Flowery Dell" to his own deep satisfaction, and a female voice may have contributed at intervals, but when a popular refrain was given its first opening by a local precentor, all joined very lustily. Beyond a violin or the English concertina, no music, as far as I saw, was used and the day of general use of the piano had not dawned. At many of these gatherings port wine and other spirits were freely available, but either their use was not favoured or it was generally understood they were not to be used except frugally and with care. It was also the

general custom on returning from evening Church on Sunday for neighbours to gather and sing the old hymn tunes, or those of Moody and Sankey, and one heard those who, poor souls, had little in their outlook on life to cheer, singing "Beulah Land," "Galilee," or the "Land of Corn and Wine." I have in mind those who were sinned against most grievously, singing very earnestly and with carefree abandon, forgetting for a time the biting cares of life. If "on the wings of song" our people of the humble early times could lift themselves from the cares of life, it meant very much more than a passing relief—indeed, it remained a bright and indelible memory.

My earliest years and recollections embrace the tuneful efforts of Gilbert and Sullivan. The youngsters whistled more or less melodiously, but generally in perfect tune, the gems of "Pinafore," "The Mikado," and the "Pirates of Penzance." On one occasion I was waiting overnight at a small town, and hearing the familiar catchy tune of Gilbert and Sullivan, I asked a companion what the pianist was rendering so acceptably. He replied it was "When I first put this Uniform on," from the "Pirates of Penzance."

The Gilbert and Sullivan operas were preceded by those of Balfe, notably "The Bohemian Girl" and others of most lovely airs. These, though I knew not their origin, I heard my mother sing at early morn when rinsing her washing in the stream across the road, or to the whirring of the hand-driven sewing machine. Said an old school friend now long dead: "When I heard your mother singing, Jack, as a boy I thought what a prima donna she would have made." A happy loving nature, combined with a carefree industry, no doubt added to the happy lilt and abandon of the song. Among others I remember she sang "She Wandered by the Fountain" and "We Never Speak as We Pass By." It runs in my mind that one old opera was called "The Maid of the Mountain."

The age of classical opera was superseded by a much more coarse style, introduced by an American troupe, "The Carrie Swain Opera Company," and about this time, 1884, a notable concert group called the "Fisk Jubilee Singers" had a very successful season in New Zealand. They were grey-haired and elderly people as a whole. One elderly negress, Mrs. Simmons, had, I think, the most powerful voice I have ever listened to. As a boy I remember it cost me two shillings admission. The advent of these and similar companions gave a vogue to what

we now call Negro Spirituals, but whether the change benefited the musical worl is a moot point.

At intervals the colony received visits from Madame Carandini, De Murska, and other singers. Among the number was one, Madame Trebelli, who formerly shone as one of three famous prima donnas in the world of song. A family quarrel over jewels led to her partial eclipse and a visit to New Zealand, and some years afterward, as Madame Dolores, I heard her about 1917 and she appeared then to be a very old woman. The long voyage by sailing ships did not deter these artists from visiting a sparsely settled and new country and the response had to be fairly general to make it profitable.

NEIGHBOURS

ONE OF THE outstanding traits of the female character of the olden days was the ready willingness to help each other in times of sickness or stress. A woman, having calls of husband and family, would arrange with neighbours, even those fairly distant, to co-operate in the care of a sick neighbour or even a person of no means. A constant marvel to my youthful eyes was the fresh appearance of those who had sat up with a stricken person of either sex. After bathing hands and face and using a vinegar sponging, these women tackled a long day's housework or milked their cows, and I doubt if you made it a matter of praise or mentioned "the salt of the earth," whether they would claim any credit for their sacrifice or apply it to themselves. Bella was always ready to answer any appeal and was soon on her way with a parcel containing apron, lint or other family requirements.

I remember that when fairly late in life she induced a younger married woman to help her to lay out a poor woman some distance away who had left a large family. The old woman nurse who had taken wages refused to prepare the dead woman for burial, as she had died of a cancerous trouble and the odour was bad. Bella appealed to a neighbour thus: "Sithee, Mrs. Beard, we canna let that poor soul go to her coffin unwashed." The two of them, with vinegar cloths covering nose and mouth, performed the last service as faithfully as those who washed and prepared the body of the Christ they loved. Of the friendships of those old-time women, the writer has often seen evidence of lasting and indestructible love.

When Bella lay dying, two old friends of her own age journeyed many miles to again see one they had loved for almost forty-five years. Said one of them to the writer: "Ah, Johnny, there never was such friends as the three of us—Mrs. Archer, myself and your mother."

I have frequently heard my mother speak of seeing the husband of one of these women riding up Hopper Street very drunk. She knew from his wife's lips that he carried eighty pounds, and she also knew what straits for money his wife and children were in. A loose liver, he stopped his horse before a house of doubtful repute. When the horse stopped, C. fell over

his head and two harpies began to drag the inert man into their gate. Bella well knew what would happen to his money, and hurried forward. At her approach the two women withdrew, not without some abuse. Bella, seeing a local lad coming along, asked him to help her to carry him home. This the lad did, and Bella, with her burden on her back, carried him to his own house. When she laid him down his irate wife used her feet so vigorously as to bring blood from ears, mouth and nose.

"Thoult kill him!" said the horrified Bella.

"I don't care," said the outraged woman. "I don't care." But at last, tired out, she desisted and possessed herself of the eighty pounds.

A while after that Bella went to live at Polhill's Gully, still in Wellington, and there the writer was born. Rebecca C., above mentioned, kept in touch with my mother. Hearing that things were not going well, this handsome little woman was at the bedside as fast as her little twinkling feet could bring her. The sight which met her eyes was pretty bad. The baby was in convulsions, due the doctor said later to gin, given by either "Sairey Gamp" or "Betty Prig," and Bella was in very bad shape; in fact she said afterward that she and the baby were to quit life together. The volcanic Rebecca C., however, lost no time with those she termed "drunken bitches," and her invective, aided by those willing little feet well applied, soon cleared the house. Her vigorous action and the arrival of the doctor brought about a steady relief, but Bella never referred to this incident except in terms of deep gratitude, and when Rebecca C. and her family left for Manawatu, letters passed at fairly regular intervals.

It may be doubted whether drunken nurses of the "Betty Prig" type existed, but the writer has seen and suffered at their hands, and of this class in later life and from reports of friends, he was no orphan in his experience. There were, however, good and faithful women who did their duty and, in conjunction with a good old family doctor, rendered child-birth as safe as their limited means allowed.

The writer has frequently heard Bella say: "I never had a bad neighbour," and no doubt her loving and amiable nature refused at any time to allow any resentment or ill feeling to lodge, and no doubt she was often imposed on by opportunists of both sexes. To the remonstrances of husband and children

at flagrant instances where her warm and sympathetic heart had been misled by a specious and studied tale, Bella had but one answer: "Ah well, love, the sin's not mine."

She was not, however, quite correct when she classed her neighbours as all good ones. Notable among the neighbours was one that even a Maori would have classed as not tika or correct. There lived, at about the age when Bob Junior and correct. At about the age when Bob Junior and Tom reached fourteen or so, a man named R., with five sons of varying ages, lived in Polhill's Gully. His hand, like that of Esau, was against everyone. Bob had a rooted dislike to being drawn into a quarrel with neighbours and was very strict, never allowing any comment on their conduct from his two boys. The R. boys, who afterward earned notoriety in the criminal court, made a practice of hurling stones at the Lyon boys, much to the detriment of their milk cans and their own comfort. Despite his girlish features, Tom was evidently a natural fighter. Whether it was a little of his grandfather Bolton Tom coming to the surface, with his dictum "up wit fist and knock him down," the writer does not profess to know.

Tom, after an affray when the R. team by reason of weight of numbers had routed him, took his chance when he met one of much greater size and gave him a sound hiding on the lines of the poem that Kipling was later to write—"The ill ye do by two and two, ye must pay for one by one."—R. was so ill advised as to come down and lodge a complaint that Tom, without any provocation, had beaten up his inoffensive offspring. When Tom, amazed at the farrago of lies from R., said it was not true, Bob, the elder, took a leg-rope and larruped him so severely as to put him in bed for some days, remarking he would not allow the contradiction of a neighbour. No doubt he was a sorry man afterward, the more so that Bella, her mother love outraged, could be relied on to give him a very candid opinion of himself.

If Bob, senior, had any doubt about his policy in dealing with the R. family, subsequent events would have convinced him otherwise. The annoyance and stone-throwing became worse. One day, when in company with two sons of a nearby bank manager named Miller, the boys ran into an ambush and a fusillade of stones which bashed the milk delivery cans, and worse still, cut the face of Bob junior in a place endangering the eye. As the four boys entered the yard, Bella needed no one to tell her how it had come about. R. senior was entering the yard, knot-

ting a rope as he came. To the question of Bella, "What dost thou want?" he said he was going to thrash the Miller brothers. Never more deceptive was Bella's soft Saxon speech of interrogation, but it gave evidence of growing rage. Any injustice, or, as she termed "cruelity" to children or animals roused in this gentle woman a very furnace of fiery indignation. Remembrance of the ordeal Tom had suffered, and the sight of her first-born and his bloody face, were a culmination of injury. Very suddenly R. was being shaken like a rat and Bella was saying between the jerks which snapped his head here and there: "Thou cowardly Irishman, thrash me and leave the childer alone."

R.'s hat and knotted rope fell to earth and he quavered: "Mrs. Lyon, I never thought you would act like this."

The only response was that Bella, possessed of the rope, made toward him, but R. fled, and what is more, gave a wide berth afterward to the scene of his humiliation.

Perhaps one of the most notable denizens of the Gully was Sally Leach, or as she was often called by her maiden name, Sally Slarks, wife of Joe James, an only son of Grannie Leach, though why he took his grandmother's name I do not know. Sally wore a short skirt, heavy boots, always wore a handkerchief tied over her head, and was always smoking a very rank tobacco of quite amazing pungency. Her complexion was a deep tan, from either smoke or sun, or both, but curiously enough she was a very good washer, and despite her appearance appeared to keep her linen in fine order. Indeed, she used to say that when she launched on an occasional spree, during which she qualified by her careless language for fourteen days' detention, that they only "ran her in" when the gaol governor's washing was in arrear.

On one occasion Sally's husband came down to beg Bella's services in a family event, a request that was never refused in those days. She found Sally in bed and as usual puffing with a short black clay pipe which, when the usual spells of pain came, she removed to indulge in very hearty profanity. Mother and babe washed, and Sally still drawing steadily on the clay "dudeen," Bella returned home, but Sally never forgot the kindness received.

As a small youngster I had occasion to be indebted to Sally. There was a half-grown lout who haunted the Gully, and who was always ready to torture something, be it boy, bird, or

animal. He went under the name of Sovereign, and on one occasion caught me and held a live match under my chin, leaving a most painful blister. On the second occasion he caught me and tortured my ears by pulling them till blood came. My yells reached Sally, who was in her garden plying a long-handled shovel. She loosed a pig dog and came running, using most frightful language, and Sovereign took up the face of the quarry, with Sally urging on the pig dog in hot pursuit. The hunt was abandoned at the back of Moxham's farm, but my torturer never came to the locality again, though a playful trick of cutting ducks open and allowing them to walk on their intestines earned Sovereign a gaol sentence later on.

One fine old chap, for many years in charge of the Karori dam and water supply, earned universal admiration and respect. His wife dying while her two boys were in infancy, the father was in all respects like a mother to them and cooked, washed and sewed, and made pattern boys of the pair. He gave both a good education. The elder met a sudden and tragic death, but the younger entered a Government department and, I believe, did very well, but when I visited the father in 1900 he was very hurt by a remark of the son that "all the men in his office claimed gentlemen as their fathers." The old man responded that it was no fault of his that he had not been a gentleman. I remember how sorry I felt for the old man after his self-sacrifice and self-effacement.

As a youngster I remember how, at a place known in the Gully as Baker's Hill, just below Taitville, so called after the Tait family, there existed a drive which was put in to test or search for a gold reef, but beyond a very wet and unexplored dark tunnel, nothing remained. It was alleged a duck which swam in the Gully stream had, in preparation for the oven, been found to contain in its crop a small gold nugget, hence the mining activity. At that date, too, the Terawhiti reefs beyond Makara claimed attention, but no payable quantity of gold was found there. It must be remembered that these efforts took place when the very sensational yields of gold were reported from the Thames goldfields, and quite rational persons in all localities were on the lookout for gold. From the hard slate bottoms of the creeks, no gold could be expected, as all gold-bearing localities in the writer's ken were invariably found in regions of a blue pug nature or a quartz veined type of rock, neither of which exist in the southern part of the North Island.

Polhill's Gully was named after a Cornishman in the Lands and Survey service, and its entrance from Upper Willis Street was between the rather pretentious homes of Morrah, bank manager, on one side, and that of Blundell, owner of the *Evening Post*. The entrance from Willis Street was called Aro Street to the turn of the road by a large clump of bluegums known as Seeds, and the continuance was called Wordsworth Street, which continued on past Epuni Street to Taitville, where it diverged to the left and, following the stream, served a number of houses. A road ascended the hill at Fitchett's workshops and passing by a sideling road over a saddle, passed what is now Brooklyn on the left, and proceeded down Happy Valley, or Ohariu Valley, to the sea near Houghton Bay, where in earlier times the *Sirius*, *Wellington* and other ships were wrecked within a short space of time. The houses of the Gully were mostly of the four-roomed variety and housed a working class of people.

RETROSPECT

IN THESE DAYS, when the farmer invokes the aid of American or English mowers, and the use of power-driven rakes, headers and various contraptions for stacking, a large area can be handled and stacked by a handful of men.

As a child in early Wellington, I remember the bustling commotion of the hay season. One saw the line of mowers with trousers strapped below the knee, and a conical leather pouch to carry the stone for honing the blade. If grass were to be mown, a stout piece of round iron, much more in diameter than a No. 7 wire, was fastened through the butt of the blade and a hole on the upper end was set to contain an ordinary screw into the wooden snaith. This gave stiffness to the blade and also gathered the cut grass in its sweep toward the winrow for the wooden rakes in the hands of the sun-bonneted women who followed. The stay was termed a grass nail.

If oats or other grain was to be mown, the grass nail was removed and a strong flexible withe of wood was substituted. This was called a cradle and had the effect of leaving behind a skilled mower small sheaves which reduced the gathering and binding of the crop, though this latter job was usually performed by the men. The rhythmic stroke of the scythes had an effortless swing, very entrancing to watch, as the line of mowers swung across the field, stopping at intervals to whet their blades, for which they usually planted the small end of the snaith in the ground and pulled the sandstone across the blade, and in this action great skill was required. The man who had not acquired the proper skill in sharpening his blade often made quite a lot of unnecessary work for himself.

Some of the old country farmers supplied beer with the food, but as a general rule, excesses led to tea or water from soaked oatmeal, called burgoo, as being more suitable.

I saw few stacks in my youth; the small owners usually forked the hay into drays fitted with frames, and from the dray into a loft or shed. Where stacks were made, men, as a winter's job, cut the stacks up into trusses with a hayknife and banded them with flax. The bales were cut to a uniform measurement and sold in the Haymarket as the load rested on the wheels, the vendor taking his load and discharging direct to

the stables of the purchaser. A shrewd Cornishman of Wellington of my youth made a good business out of buying country stacks for a lump sum and cutting them up. He had a very clear notion of the true contents of a stack, and later became a leading corn merchant, and a son living to nearly ninety carried on successfully till his death.

While on the subject of grain, it may not be generally known that the late Henry Redwood, known as the father of racing, had, in addition to his large racing stable, quite a large area of land under grain, chiefly malting barley. He was in all things a sportsman, a fine shot. My informant of sixty years ago said Redwood would take an old type doublebarrel gun, lay it at his feet, throw two pennies in the air, pick up the gun, cock it, and hit both pennies. In his heyday Redwood had a large crop and acreage of barley and was bound for Melbourne with a string of horses, including the mare Lurline. In Wellington he was accosted by his brother, the Archbishop, who demanded £50 toward a new cathedral he was building. Harry, however, could not be induced to give more than ten pounds. This being refused, he made his offer—£10 or nothing.

At last the prelate said: "You had better give me the £50, Harry, or your crops will fail and your horses will do no good."

"Ten pounds or nothing," repeated Harry.

The horses won all events in which they competed, and returning home Harry sold his barley at 10/- per bushel. Unrepentant, Harry was heard to say: "I wish my brother would curse me every year."

One of the highlights of Wellington events was the arrival of the warship *Galatea,* with the second son of Queen Victoria, the Duke of Edinburgh aboard. The man-o-war's men created great fun. Chartering a waggon with a wheelbarrow lashed behind and crammed full of very full tars, a passenger would fall off the vehicle. "Man overboard" would halt the "ship," the wheelbarrow brought into service, and the prostrate sailor loaded therein was run up to the waiting "'ship." After lifting the "drowning" sailor aboard and again lashing the "dinghy" to the tail of the ship, orders would be given to sail, and the merry crowd moved on.

One well-known doctor came out from a visit to find his stout hack missing. After a long wait, he espied his horse with one sailor on the pommel of the saddle, another in the seat, and one at the back. The man amidships gave the orders. "Star-

board" brought the sailor in front, a rein in each hand, into action, while his mate at the stern pushed the tail over in the correct move for steering. To the Irish flow of abuse and threats the three sailors coolly replied: "He should think himself damned lucky he had got his horse back at all."

The civil authorities turned a blind eye to the fun of men who led a hard life, little pay, and the strict discipline, including flogging, of the navy at that date. They could be very ugly too; a policeman attempting to arrest some man-o-war's men at the St. George's Hall in Dunedin was thrown over the balcony into the pit and very seriously injured.

Many men who were marked D.D. were employed among the kauri forests. It was said that about this date a well-known run owner in the Wellington Province was in the habit of employing runaway sailors on his holdings. When, after several months' work they suggested some wages, this man would bluster and speak about arrest for desertion. In most cases the helpless men, on the wrong side of the law, made a second hasty move, being brazenly sharped out of their small wages.

This particular owner, whom the Maoris called "King," met his Waterloo. Attempting to coerce a casual hand at fisticuffs, he found he had met a formidable bruiser, and dashed for a stockwhip, to be met by his employee, who, doubtless, had been warned of what to expect, with a similar weapon. So finished a man with the whip was the employee that he outclassed the redoubtable "King" and finished by flogging his late employer off his feet and leaving him prostrate.

Our circus ground, though not in frequent use, was known as "Johnnie Martin's paddock," in the upper part of Cuba Street. Martin afterward became a land owner in the Wairarapa and gave his name to Martinborough. He later went to England, sought out the owner, and bought the "paddock" from which he had drawn rentals for a long period.

Rapid rise to affluence was the fortune of a man who drove a single horse cart, and wore what was called a sleeved waistcoast, but who was supposed to have stumbled on a "plant" of sovereigns, the plunder of a former bank robbery. He was credited with shovelling the bullion into his cart and burying the same with sand. He became a contractor and in the construction of the railway from Wanganui to Castlecliff, where the soil was of a light or sandy nature, he forbade the navvies to lever off the knee, with the result that broken men were leav-

A totara on the author's Utiku farm. The trunk was nine feet in diameter.

The author, facing camera, sawing battens with a neighbour at Matiere, King Country.

ing every day, to be replaced, by steady advertisement, with newcomers. It was said of this man that a former workmate said to him: "I knew you, Joe S., when you worked on the waterfront in Wellington." To which Joe replied: "Yes, and if I had had as big a head as you and as little in it, I would have been working there yet."

As one reads old records, it is abundantly clear that the old-timers were not spoiled by any excess of what we would now treat as ordinary necessities. Thus we are told that in Taranaki in the thirties to the sixties, settlers actually lived, like Solomon, from the field. We hear of one man who offered seventy-two pounds of butter for a pair of boots, and of another who offered a sack of potatoes for a loaf of bread, which at that date sold at 10 pence per two-pound loaf. Yet at this date visiting prima donnas toured the colony, and one wonders how the populace raised enough funds to pay for admittance. It is related that Madame Carandini sang in New Plymouth at the age of thirty, and her daughter was born in an adjoining building to that in which her mother sang the previous night in Devon Street, New Plymouth. The building stood till recent years, and the daughter shared the stage with her mother, who died thirty years after her birth, at the age of sixty.

That the early colonists managed to raise enough financial inducement to procure the visits of top-notch singers, says much for the music lovers of eighty years ago, who had little financial surplus. One family of the old days sent the family piano to England to be tuned—a six months' voyage—and the writer has seen in a backblocks homestead a sturdy little oaken-cased piano, formerly used by the children for tuition and practice lessons. To the writer, such an instrument opens up much speculation of what became of its youthful players who diffused in far-flung backblocks the fragrance and refinement of their early environs. One is sure they played a worthy part in the path of life trodden by their steps.

I have seen instances of the sagacity of the dogs of the old settlers, and their faithful quality would be hard to believe nowadays. When felling bush beyond Taihape, I received from an old friend near Wanganui a tiny pup, and one morning it went missing. When we neared the tools and billy on a ridge over a mile from camp, a growl greeted us and our small pup was there looking after our gear. The pup had travelled back in the night to this spot about a mile and a half away.

On one occasion, years later, I was beating out cocksfoot seed with a flail when rain came on. My doggie was missing, but stayed two days beside an old coat I had left by the threshing sheet. I have seen an old dog in the King Country, a son of the foregoing, watch the two younger children going through the flax swamp to a neighbours, and the old dog, at a discreet distance, following them, waiting till they turned homeward and convoying them safely. No one trained these collies; it seemed to be natural to them. A well-trained dog would lead a horse on occasion, and Mr. Kinross White of Hawkes Bay described how his dog led his horse around a swamp, while he traversed the drains where a horse could not go. The dog met him at the head of the swamp.

FOOD IN THE SEVENTIES

OF THE FOOD of the colony seventy years ago, the chief recommendation was its plenitude and incredible cheapness. This was probably because there was no outlet overseas for any surplus of meat and dairy produce, and only a limited one for grain, hops, jams, etc. The livestock of the colony had increased enormously, and only one method of dealing with surplus sheep was left to the grazier, and that was boiling down the carcasses for tallow. The hindquarters of mutton, perfectly flayed and dressed, were hawked about at ninepence apiece. They were not perhaps the best, but the merino cross, darker in colour, were a delectable and nourishing food. Beef, too, was a drug, and an old settler of South Auckland who combined his farming with dressing his own beef, told the writer he packed his meat by rough tracks to bush and roadmaking camps at twopence half-penny a pound "all round" as the term ran. In some cases this meant a selection of steak, roasts and choicer cuts, with those of the forequarter, whose joints embraced boiling pieces, and those for the pickling tubs used as a standby.

The writer's memory goes back to the description given by a Waipu man of the early logging and bush felling days of North Auckland. A superb man of six feet five, whose parents came with the Nova Scotians to the settlement near Whangarei, he said they drove bullocks to the camp and shot and dressed the best of the mob, and it was computed that each man consumed twenty odd pounds of beef per week. The meat, after the hide was sold, did not cost twopence per pound. This state of glut was, in the Wellington Province, relieved by a man who started by carrying small goods such as trotters and pies on his shoulder round Wellington, but later ran a large butcher's business in Wellington, and with added capital started at Petone the first export meat company in Wellington. "Jimmy Gear," aided by his first wife, must, though lacking education, have had great natural ability. Later he acquired some of the best fattening land on the coast at Te Horo, near Otaki. The works, always known as "Gear's," were at Petone, where the dressing of the meat was carried out, and were at the shore end of a long wharf along which ran a steel tram. Moored to the wharf was the hulk of a sea-going ship, the *Jubilee,* on board of which

were the freezing chambers, and in which the newly killed meat was stored. To receive the meat an engine and freezing chambers were provided on well-found and fast-sailing ships, such as the *St. Leonard's, Crusader, Lady Jocelyn, Pleiades* and others. When a ship was ready to sail, laden with wool and tallow, the *Jubilee* was towed to Wellington, and, with a minimum of expense, her cargo was transferred to the sea-going ship. I believe that early ships of this trade had sailed before this date from Timaru, sponsored and financed by the same progressive man, a manager of Edendale, who later started the export of butter.

I can remember the Hebberlys, stalwart half-caste Maoris, who killed the beef at Gear's, and I also remember the Jewish Rabbi who moved along the mutton butcher's board, crying: "Save de wedders, boys; save the wedders," and later marked the "Kosher" wether carcasses after careful inspection. In those days the selected kosher bullocks were killed by the Rabbi in person.

Of these days of the seventies, a lady, since dead at one hundred and three years, Mrs. Neilsen of Auckland, relates that she and her husband ran an hotel at Coromandel, then a productive goldfield, and the charge for board was seventeen shillings per week. She also said that food was very cheap and plentiful. Fruit and vegetables were in ready and cheap supply. Five large snapper could be bought for a shilling and, as before stated, meat was only a few pence per pound.

The wages of that date were incredibly low. A lady of the writer's earlier days told him that her father's wage was only four shillings per day in a Howick tannery, and to use her own description: "There were eight children and we never wanted for a meal and were as happy as possible, though we had little money." The life of the early settlers was, for all the lack of money, a serene and happy one, and lack of the root of all evil had not a large effect on their general outlook on life.

The surplus production of the farms was not very well rewarded by the prices received. The cream, by the old process of skimming with a perforated circular disc from large dishes, or crocks as they were called, was swept off into crockery jars on which the lactic acid of the milk had no effect. The cream was left, after periodic stirring with a wooden spoon, till the ripeness showed it was at the churning stage, and then lowered down the well or placed in a spring overnight. At

early dawn in summer, the cream was transferred to a wooden churn and the writer still remembers the relief when the cream broke or granulated and was ready to have the salt added. Then came the washing of the butter and the extraction by white moist cloths to absorb the buttermilk. The butter, which was patted into moulds with a floral design, was then ready for market, often carried for miles in front of a boy on horseback. All this exertion, not to mention the cowyard work and milking, was often paid for at fourpence per pound, and taken out in stores, whose price depended on the honesty of the storekeeper.

In the same way I have seen eggs comprising turkey, guinea fowl, ducks and hens in cases of one gross sent to the goldfields for which the vendors received fourpence per dozen, again on a "take out" basis.

The writer has frequently seen a tall Chinese in younger days, known as Chew Chong, who started the first butter factory at Eltham, and in addition bought fungus at threepence per pound to export to China. Poor old chap, he bought the milk by the gallon prior to the advent of the Babcock tester. Quaintly, the old Chinaman, who well knew the amount of good spring water used, said: "The cows of Taranaki gave a wonderful amount of milk in those days." The sale of dry fungus gave a very welcome clothing allowance to the bush farmer's family. When dairy factories became general, a monthly cheque of twenty pounds rendered them passing rich and with a golden future ahead of them. It is safe to say that the whole New Zealand financial outlook was affected by the art of refrigeration. I remember seeing a man taking a hare from the *Jubilee* hulk at Petone, and how marvellous it seemed, that he carried it like a dry stick over his shoulder.

My father sold a Tasmanian mare for £70, which had been foundered by my childish agency. I mixed oats with wheat and my elder brother, going to the bin in the dark, fed the mare, and though my father worked all night on her, a slight founder or inability to lift the forefeet resulted, and her value lay chiefly as a brood mare.

The lighter horses came chiefly from Australia, that is New South Wales and South Australia, but many of the early colonists brought out some favourite and very fine animals under their own care and supervision, but they were costly and very precious for a period of years.

It seemed to me that the horses of my youth were possessed of great substance and stamina. I have personally ridden and seen horses capable of covering eighty to ninety miles in a day. One outstanding case of a West Coaster occurs to me. To reach a brother critically ill in Nelson, this man rode from Westport to Foxhill, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles. The mare came near to death, or was greatly injured. The later advents of light-boned thoroughbreds and of round-boned American trotting horses, did much to ruin the bottom and stamina of the old English breed of harness and saddle horses. One theory held by the old-timers was that the native grasses, combined with the fact that up to five years they worked him but lightly and gave the young horse time to mature, were factors in the development of a strong hardy animal.

In cattle, too, large sums were expended on the best Shorthorn blood; many of these had not enough milk to feed their own calf, and the food supply was often supplemented by a foster mother.

Native fruits were few; the purapura, tawha and karaka are the only ones that occur to me. With the advent of the missionaries, however, all English fruits became common, and peaches were sold at 6d a large Maori flax kit (kete).

In this connection, where a plentiful supply of finest fruit was available to the early colonists at from sixpence (hikapeni), or a shilling (herena), the natives acquired a couple of bullocks and a dray and established a kind of depot, one at the junction of Willis and Wordsworth Streets. An old tatooed Maori came to the door, duly received his shilling, and taking little Tom by the hand, led him to the road to deliver the kit of peaches. Bella, the mother, looked out, saw nothing of her boy, and ran to the gate where she saw the Maori a good way down the road still leading little Tom. Bella flew after him and came up to him just as they reached his dray load of peaches. The Maori explained he could not pikau the kits, but was in fact, with Maori astuteness, taking money for the fruit and saving exertion to himself.

The peaches, like the bees, had their day and gradually died out, and from being a food for pigs, became somewhat scarce. The colder climate, as a result of the bush being destroyed by settlement, was submitted as one cause, but other blights or forces at work may have helped in the general destruction.

The absence of imported birds allowed great crops of small

fruits, and I remember sixty-five years ago no restraint on birds was necessary, and cherries flourished out in the open orchard—the Black Heart and Biggareau were cultivated, but the Kentish cherry could be gathered from horseback in the hedgerows.

The streams contained few fish, except eels, lampreys, inanga, whitebait, and the kokopu, or native trout. The latter was a bluish colour when cooked, and was full of fine bones. The koura, or fresh-water crayfish, was, of course, plentiful, particularly in lakes.

Each year the waters of Wairarapa Lake were released and huge eels captured in the drain. One of my earliest recollections is the barrows loaded with eels in Wellington, which sold readily in the streets. Wild grey duck at 2/- a pair, pigeons and kaka in season, were fairly plentiful and almost any lake or stream had its quota of feathered game.

The chief item in the budget of early settlers was not the cost of living, but cost of food and the filling of their stomachs. Looking backward, one marvels how the old people made ends meet. Wages were so very meagre compared to the cost of essential foods, and only on the coastal districts was the problem eased by direct access to coasts yielding ready supplies of cheap fish. The class of fish varied with the locality—in the north the tamure or snapper, and the patiki or flounder, were the most common. In early Dunedin large shoals of barracouta were easily caught and sold at sixpence or less for a fish, yielding eight pounds or more of edible flesh. The writer cannot say from experience that they were the best of fish, but salted and smoked, or as fresh fish, they did provide a change of diet and healthful food. No wonder the old Dunedinite of a former generation referred to them, those wide-jawed and projecting toothed long fish, as "Old Identities." In the vicinity of Wellington a fish large enough for a family meal, the whario, was, at certain seasons, very plentiful, and was hawked well inland at "a bob a head." These fish were about ten or twelve pounds in weight, and resembled a large mullet.

At one period no meat was available, and the early settlers were fain to obtain beef from the harness casks of visiting timber ships. There were, however, pigs to be obtained from Maori owners. Large amounts of herring were easily caught and thrifty mothers set the children to work and salted and

hung the fish on string suspended in the huge wooden chimney, to be used in times of scarcity.

I have drifted well away from our main topic. Flour was, for a time, very much of a scarcity in Otago, except at extreme prices. The chief supply came from Australia, and even after the local grain became common, the Australian States were drawn on to blend the harder wheat, richer in gluten than the New Zealand wheat, for bread purposes. Flour was later drawn from the Chilean coast and the market eased. Our sugar came from the West Indies and was known as Demerara sugar, but later sailing barques loaded sugar from Mauritius and Isle of France, and delivered their entire cargo at one port. Sixty-four years ago a sailing barque named the *Swiftsure* came annually to Nelson, loaded to the deck with sugar, at that time in 70 lb. mats.

Other comestibles such as jam, potatoes, onions, apples, etc., were for a time almost wholly of Tasmanian loading, as well as a large quantity of Van Diemen's Land shingles and palings which, split by probably the best axemen in the world and shipped in small sailing craft, were landed at a very cheap rate, and filled a very big part in the building efforts of the period, till the kauri forests of the North, being transported by water from forest to ship, later provided a splendid timber very cheaply.

In those days inspectors took their duties very seriously, and every piece of timber was heart wood, without a flaw. Of course, in country bridges one saw timber with flaws which would not be tolerated in a nearer town job, but in these cases it was usually a case of poor supply or a little of what was known as "palm grease." Many bridges and buildings gave evidence after use of seventy years to the rigid seasoning and choice of the fine timber used in their construction. Some of the early bridges near New Plymouth were piled with puriri, a well-known northern wood, but which had a southern limit to the coast of Taranaki. I have seen furniture veneers cut from old bridge timber still sound and carrying a handsome polish.

RELICS AND CUSTOMS

As a little chap I well remember seeing the *Daphne*,* a large white schooner, anchored in Wellington harbour, and was told the vessel's rails and deck carried cutlass scars and all the marks of a bloody conflict with islanders, who made an attack in an attempt to cut out or take the vessel. The vessel was a blackbirder designed to carry the islanders whom the crew, by most infamous and treacherous methods, tried to inveigle aboard. Few ever came back from the Queensland sugar fields. Change of food and climate and general living conditions were a fruitful cause of chest diseases, with the result that many of the islands were almost bereft of population, and became the last resort of a few natives who, by reason of age or disease, had no money value. Such an island was Aoba, which had acquired some fame for the personal physique and beauty of its denizens, but repeated raids had stolen its people till none were left.

Possibly no greater blot on the British escutcheon ever existed than these raids by armed desperadoes, who made it their trade to enslave these inoffensive islanders. One favourite scheme of the wily blackbirder was to pretend the vessel was a missionary ship and to dress their leaders in clerical garb. An invitation on board was followed by the closing of the hatches and men, women and children were captured. The women and children were reserved for a dreadful fate, and the men for unaccustomed labour and early death. This, in most people's opinion, led to the murder of Bishop Patteson, a friend of Bishop Selwyn, and also of John Williams at Erromanga, an early missionary, as reprisals for the carrying away of their fellow tribesmen.

One of the most notable villains was a man named Bully Hayes with whom Louis Becke served as super cargo, but parted with over his callous treatment of the natives. Becke's portrayal of the life of the islanders, with their artless and affectionate nature and mode of life, enchanted me as a boy, but had Becke, in modern phrase, chosen to "spill the beans" from his wide experience of life, what a revealing narrative it would have been.

I was too young to remember anything but the white

* Not to be confused with brig whose crew were destroyed in 1827.

schooner's cargo of bananas, which must have been the first, or nearly so, at that time offered, and seventy years ago they were very cheap and were sold at about 2/- per branch, and much later the shops sold them at a few pence per dozen.

I have referred to Bully Hayes, who was reputed to have acquired a brig called the *Leonora* by very questionable means. He was described to me by a Danish seaman as of powerful physique and lacking one ear, who came into the town of Riverton and during a meal at one of the hotels, kept a wary outlook and a loaded revolver by his plate. Under the pretext of selling island fruit, he hung about the port on the West Coast, from which the bulk of gold derived from the West Coast fields was shipped. When an armed boat went to question his reasons, he sailed for the open sea, but it was thought he was waylaying the gold steamer to make a theft of her precious lading. It was afterward reported that he had an altercation with the mate, who got on deck first and met Hayes with a crushing blow of a tiller handle and then tipped him overboard, making a suitable finish to the captain.

The frequency with which one met with bullock dray tracks in the hills round Wellington showed the extent of the firewood industry among the early colonists, though the trade was never a quick cut to a competence. One outstanding instance occurs to me. A Mr. Stephen Lancaster, my father told me, was in the habit of milking his cows on his Karori holding and cutting a load of firewood which he delivered in Wellington, returning to milk his cows at night. His sons, now I think long dead, were given farms of first-class quality in the Upper Manawatu, and were prominent breeders of Jersey stock. The original price of this fine land was one pound per acre, and I believe the area was one thousand acres.

Many of the old settlers, having small holdings, trekked up by the beach to Foxton and beyond, and my father said how peculiar it appeared to him to see drays loaded with household goods and generally a plough. In some cases even the patient cows were yoked up in steep pinches or river crossings, on the generally expressed idea that they could "pull a pound." The writer knew many of these settlers over twenty years later and they seemed to have done well. The land cost very little in the first stages, and indeed, some sixty years ago a sale of York Farm sub-divisions by the Hammond family, roaded and with a railway a mile away, fetched only eight pounds per acre, and

this was flat and, well ploughed, fenced and grassed. It must be remembered, however, that wool, meat and grain were low —wheat three shillings, and oats eighteen pence per bushel. My father's horses ate a great many bushels of the latter at seventeen pence a bushel. The expenses were small and the settlers' requirements were never very extensive.

I have been greatly struck with the love of old settlers for portions of the old china and of pieces of furniture, many of rare and remarkable beauty. As a youth I remarked on the prevalence in the crockery shelves of a certain pattern of rare quality in the china. I was told that a Marton merchant imported one of those large barrels of china so much in use at that day. No invoice accompanied the china and the shopkeeper put the usual figure on his goods. They disappeared quite rapidly. What should have aroused his suspicions was that it was Scottish housewives who were the purchasers. As one old lady told me: "Mrs. Fergusson had a dizen and Mrs. Scott a dizen," and so on. When no china remained and the true invoice came, it was found that by mistake a china of super-fine quality had been shipped. I never heard who eventually paid the reckoning.

One very fine piece of furniture known to be two hundred and twenty years old, shown me by a neighbour, was of a black wood in the form of a writing desk at which the person writing stood. It was polished to a soft sheen, produced, I believe, by friction of the palm of the human hand unaided by any polishing aid. The desk, which stood about four feet high, was furnished with numerous drawers, but when one drawer was drawn out completely and the arm inserted to the elbow, a spring was touched which shot a drawer out from an apparently clear surface in which documents could be held secure. The space was about fifteen inches in length by nine in breadth and with a depth of four inches.

I have seen many of the old Grandfather clocks, some of great beauty. Snuff boxes, shoe buckles and silver were all treasures holding a high place in the minds of those severed from their land of origin by many leagues of sea. One reverts to memories of youth, when at night-tide, when all was quiet but for the falling embers of the grate, the parents recalled the days and customs of their youth, and one felt in this quiet subdued recital the strength of association with the land which few, if any, of the speakers would ever see again.

DIFFERENT CREEDS

OF THE VARIOUS religious sects of the earlier period of Bella's transference from Otago to Wellington, the most outstanding feature was the easy tolerance of each other's opinions, and the deep sincerity and piety of the larger number of the early residents. While there may have been, and no doubt were, among the English Church as it was then termed, a proportion of high church or ritualist members, the majority were a body of men who faithfully discharged their tasks as leaders of the people, notably as educationists. The first free school was that conducted behind St. Peter's Church by a Richard Holmes, and which some sixty-seven years ago was succeeded by the Mount Cook and later by Te Aro and Thorndon schools. Free and secular education became a political rallying cry in all elections.

Bob found Bishop Abraham a constant visitor whilst he was in hospital and later in his very humble home. If Bishop Abraham was a man to respect, Archdeacon Arthur Stock of St. Peter's Church was also a man. Plain spoken to a degree, he was not slow to rebuke any slackness in his parishioners. Thus to a neighbour of our own in the Gully he said: "Mr. J., if there is a man I detest, it is a street angel and a home devil." The writer asked his mother why, as a Methodist, she had asked the Archdeacon to christen me. She replied that the Church was the only source of record, and had a register of births. The writer has still the tattered blue square of paper of nearly eighty years, signed by Arthur Stock.

Many of these old-time clergymen were skilled in effective and sound surgery which, failing better skilled help, was much availed of when the visit of our church leader came due. I have personally seen bad axe cuts which had been sewn by a visiting canon, Rev. Mr. Gould, who died many years ago. It is told of this large-hearted churchman that, having sixteen children of his own, he adopted another, making seventeen, a number enough to furnish eight families at the present time. It is told that one member of the clergy riding on a northern bush land road was appealed to by a settler's wife in her dire extremity, and on the return of the husband he found a coatless, elderly man stirring gruel over the fire, and his wife and

new-born child washed and warm in bed. I have also heard of an aged Salvationist Envoy, now over ninety, who also succoured a woman deep in the pangs of child-birth.

As a little boy in Wellington, I was familiar with Father Petit-Jean and also Father Garin of Nelson, both very old men habited in the French soutane and shovel hat of their nation, and I think two of the last of Bishop Pompallier's companions. Of Father Petit-Jean it was well-known he could not be trusted with money. A doleful tale from a Magdalene was enough to empty the old priest's pocket, and his appeal, "You must do better, my daughter," if it did not effect contrition, at least it is to be hoped did a little good.

The Wesleyans, as they were called, also started a school on the site of the Taranaki Street Church of today, and my elder brothers, after leaving Finnimore's school, attended for a time till they took up trades. An offshoot of the Wesleyans, or Methodists, calling themselves Primitive Methodists, whose church was opposite the Hopper Street junction with Webb Street, was the favoured place of worship of Bella and her family. Their warmth and piety, and the absence of formalism, appealed to Bella, who described the Wesleyans as "a cowd lot." The Webb Street Church produced many fine, sincere and devout families, notably the Luke family of iron founders, who as a child I knew quite well, and who visited my parents. This fine family of burly and intellectual men all wore full beards and were sincere people of blameless life and piety, but they had apparently the curse of pthisis in that, as they grew to early manhood and womanhood, they were slain by the "dwine" as the Scotch term it. There were about nine children. Two were knighted after distinguished careers, John and Charlie, and most of them found time to serve the city and country. One lovable member, Samuel, was in physique a giant, manipulating castings of half a ton single-handed. The firm of Luke & Son built a steamer, the *Maitai,* at their yards near the foot of Cuba Street. Sir Charles Luke (Charlie to his friends) was the last to die, at a very advanced age.

Other members of the Webb Street Church took a prominent part in building early Wellington. This small, but well distributed sect, was spread over New Zealand, and produced among others Members of Parliament, doctors, clergymen, and at least one world-famous artist. Their form of worship was simple and their sincerity and way of life impeccable. Looking

back over the years, it has made apparent to me the method of rule in the Prims, as they were called, approximated very much to a family wherein the elders by admonishment and mildly affectionate advice, joined to their own pure and clean lives of unselfish effort, were said to "nurse" the younger converts to their faith. The Minister, not too well paid, visited the well as also the sick, and prayed with both, and where the Scriptures were not available, produced a small volume of his own. They had class leaders and stewards, and where any were in sickness or passing through times of stress they were visited by the elders, prayed with and comforted, and though the members were anything but wealthy, their monetary cares were relieved, though it is very doubtful whether the "calm and heavenly frame" they had acquired did not transcend the value of monetary relief.

There were a few fellows of the baser sort who gave some disquiet to the members, but the general saintly life of members acted as a deterrent and check to the less serious minority.

In those days, when no pensions or even active relief of hardship existed, every indigent person made for the parson's house where the poor man, from his very inadequate salary "chid their wanderings but relieved their pain," to quote Goldsmith's well-known poem. However, the Minister could at the end of his own slender store of money, call on members of his flock for assistance. Many of them responded readily, as the first principle of Methodism as practised by Wesley himself, was the "methodical" relief afforded by their savings and self-sacrifice. Thus, my own saintly brother set aside ten per cent. of his very considerable earnings as a bridge builder to the above purposes.

The systematic giving of a set portion of their income was practised by many, and the writer has certain knowledge that this "methodistic" rule ceased only with their lives. An account of Winston Churchill illustrates the habits of prayer: "and young Churchill fell to prayer and was guided to knock at the only friendly door of a Boer town able to succour him in his supreme and urgent need." From my early memories it seemed to me that all bereavements, sickness or perplexity, were occasions when resort to spiritual resources brought relief, comfort, or a sense of security. The writer remembers the great stress laid on the term "Rich toward God," and such beliefs tended to reveal in no uncertain terms the mutual attitude of the members toward each other; indeed some of the English leaders of the

"Society," as they at first termed themselves, practised this belief. The great strength of the "Prims" was the loyal and cheerful service of local preachers. As might be expected, there were many earnest and partly illiterate men, or even an occasional female preacher, and if the vanity or ambition of odd members caused a ripple of amusement, the earnestness of a speaker with tears staining his face could give no cause for merriment.

One of the most prominent I knew was Mr. Wright, an ex-mayor of Wellington, and for many years a member of Parliament. In the same class was John Lomas, a former miner on the Westport coal fields in the first great strike. He became a marked man, and losing his chance of employment, he was really gathering, in Mr. Seddon's company, an insight into miners' hardships. One of the most lovable men the writer remembers, he gave me a quiet relation of the kindly heart of Dick Seddon. Somewhere on their travels they listened to cases of hardship; one man who was so full of his troubles as to break down and cry was taken by the arm by the Prime Minister who said: "Come in here, my man," and led him into another room where none might see his discomfiture. After hearing his tale Dick said: "We must do something for this poor chap." Lomas said that was really the start of the rise of the labour department. Good old John Lomas told me that he objected to being told by union officials what his future policy was to be. He had the courage to claim that having reported an incident, it was his own judgment as to whether the breach reported warranted a prosecution. As chairman and member on local bodies, I have often had to deplore the evil done by the agitator and loud-mouthed demagogue in direct contrast to the sweet reasonableness of men like John Lomas, a prince among men, having no prejudice to mar or obscure his keener perceptions.

The Gully had evidently had a fair native population. E Puni, who consistently favoured the Pakeha to the end of a long life, has many years since died in his nineties somewhere on the Petone side of Wellington, and the writer remembers the old canoe, or part of one, which commemorated the passing of the compeer of E Puni, the chief Wharepouri. The latter, by his act in selling a part of the site of Wellington, raised the ire of Rauparaha, and perhaps led to the friction between the races preceding the Wairau Massacre. He complained: "I received

none of the blankets and I smoked none of the tobacco received by Wharepouri."

As a little chap I recall that, leaving the site of the pa on my left and pushing back into the hills in the general direction of Cape Terawhiti, where MacMenamin had a large sheep-run, one came on wind-swept and high ridges which, from their heavy stocking with sheep, grew mushrooms. From my experience I would say the pastures were foul or sheep-sick, and the grasses were more or less native danthonias of poor grazing value. The winds, chiefly northerly, were of considerable strength, so that with the light body of a boy of ten, I was fain to work my way across ridges on my stomach. Even back in these gale-rifted solitudes, one came on the remains of "wattle and dab" homesteads which marked the abortive attempt of some early settler.

Looking back after a long farming life in various parts of the North Island, I would, without hesitation, class the hill country round Wellington as being very poor and unsuited to small or close settlement. It was not till the lands of Manawatu and Rangitikei became accessible that any volume of production was discernible. The contrast between the heavy alluvial flats of the Manawatu, or the black soil grain cropping lands of Sandon, Marton and the like, to the arid danthonia rugged hills near the city, was very marked even to the novice. The enterprise of a body of business men in pushing the Manawatu railway opened up a farming El Dorado never fully realised by early colonists.

Following the Methodist connections came another sect. A friend of the Lyon family related that she had, prior to 1865, seen in Liverpool large hoardings with startling announcements, such as "Blood and Fire" and "We will drive the Devil out." They wore a semi-military uniform, chief of which was a red body garment, and the wearers were very eccentric, waving their arms and praying in the streets of the city.

It was less than a year before members of the new sect opened branches in New Zealand, and so rapidly did the movement grow that by 1895, after a period of thirty years, the Salvation Army had become a power in the world, with 600,000 adherents and with missions in thirty-five countries. Its semi-military form of organisation was not adopted till 1878. In essence it was a protest against the conventional methods of propagating the older forms of the Christian religion. The

new sect seemed to minister to a need among the hearts of the people, but a much greater force was the real spiritual devotion and self-sacrifice of its members. As a body they reached out to those outside the churches, and the writer, though very young, could not fail to hear comment on the changed lives of those who came under their influence, and when later the Army through their founders, William Booth and his sainted wife, published a book, *Darkest England and the Way Out*, outlining various philanthropic schemes of daring magnitude, world-wide financial support was offered.

It was to be expected that enemies of the movement did not fail to show extreme ill-feeling, largely engineered by the liquor trade. Various factions such as "The Skeleton Army" with a banner depicting the skull and crossbones, and others, annoyed the early efforts of the new sect. That there were very insincere adherents was inevitable, and many became eccentric in their behaviour, but the quiet purpose and totally changed mode of life of the main body of the new movement, their invasion of the haunts of vice and sin, appealed to those of the submerged section and stirred their spiritual nature, with the happiest results.

OLD RANGITIKEI

PROBABLY no part of New Zealand possessed settlers of greater variety or more striking characteristics than those of Wellington. They were largely Scottish, with a fair leaven of English and a few other races thrown in. From a very old settler of the Hutt and Wairarapa who died when I was twenty, I learned much of the early settlers, their trials and cheery optimism. When the Salvation Army made its advent about sixty odd years ago, an old settler hailing from the "land o' cakes" was astonished at their display of "corybantic" exercises. The leaping, walking backward, and general exertion with the band and flags left him speechless for a time, but at last he said: "If that's the way ye praise your Maker, it's a gey uproarious way."

Another old lady, who with her spouse had passed the struggling years and at that date had become passing rich, was accosted by a friend of long-standing in his old style of greeting: "Weel, Elspeth, and hoos all wi' ye?"

She turned a frosty eye on the bluff old man. "It's Mistress Scott to ye, Mr. Fraser."

"Hoots, what nonsense, Elspeth, I knew you when David and yoursel' had but one pair of boots between ye, and when David went to toon ye had to stay at hame."

It has often been the general impression that a Scot was prone to be a great hoarder of bawbees, but this I found from long experience to be entirely wrong. I rode to many places in cattle dealing, and while I found the Scot in business a hard man, nothing could exceed his love of dispensing hospitality. "Better turn your horse loose," was the equivalent of an invitation to stay the night, and from these grave men, who by the way were endowed with a pawky wit, I have learned much of farming, as a result of their quiet observation and experience.

I remember a builder working for me who had been doing a job up the Turakina Valley, a few miles from Marton. They had been housed in the men's whare, a comfortable cottage, and drew their meals from the farm kitchen. A swagger came into the whare and latter began to commend his hosts. "They are all good-hearted, but Alex is the softest. I told him my feet were sore and he gave me his Sunday boots."

On one well-known run in the Akitio district, it was the

custom to present every swagger with a new pair of boots from the station stores, and such clothing or blankets as he stood in need of. I knew this family and some members in Rangitikei and I knew well an old couple named Linton, who took into their house the sick and the indigent and tended them with the utmost care.

Among outstanding and generous land holders, unobtrusive in their gifts and kindliness, may be cited the elder Campbell, father of H. M. Campbell, M.P. Claiming to be indebted in the old days to the swaggers for his supply of labour, the old man provided in his will that a comfortable cottage should be maintained for all time with a supply of firewood and stores and meat issued to the wayfarers. The sundowner, as he was often called, is a very different man to the one who, carrying a heavy swag with tent and fly complete, could turn his hand to everything and make a good job of fencing, splitting timber, draining and general work. The present use of newspaper advertisements and easy access by train, etc., have cleared the roads of the real old-time swagger.

One of the most rugged personalities I have known was John McKelvie, whose son built the homestead on the farm now known as Flock House. A man clad in the meanest of garments and blucher boots, riding an old pony, anyone meeting him on the run would have taken him for a station rouseabout or a pensioner of the owner. A long grey beard, battered felt hat, and general out-of-elbow appearance, concealed a well and deeply read man, reputed to be the owner of a quarter of a million pounds. He had a thin sallow face with keen blue eyes, and a tremendous voice, like, as one expressed it, "a gale in a hollow hinau." When I knew the old man he owned the tract of land on the southern bank of the Rangitikei River in a strip about four miles wide, running south along the beach towards Foxton, and consisting of lakes, sandhills and scrub, and he also had about three thousand acres on the Bulls side of the river. It was said that McKelvie came across from Australia before the blocks of land were put up for public auction. Because of his poor dress, many of the settlers who intended buying the blocks talked freely of their intentions and the block they wished to buy in front of him. John McKelvie was listening quietly and had, before the sale, formed a picture in his own mind of the most desirable blocks, their area, water, timber and other facilities, and had also given them a careful scrutiny.

As a result, as each block of land was offered, the final bid was "John McKelvie—cash," and the upshot was McKelvie, the swagger, became the largest owner of land in the locality. McKelvie bred an outstanding type of Clydesdale horse, but later bred a half-draught of very nondescript type designed to supply power for the horse trams of Wellington and other cities. These, and a form of cobby Carlyle pony, formed his horse herds, of which I have seen over four hundred in one mob.

The old man was always to the fore in any yarding work, and might have been seen busily trimming sheep, docking lambs, and other seasonal work. He had a very fine man whom I knew well, who told me of an amusing incident at the yards. An Irishman, lately out from "The Ould Sod," was deputed to boil the billy for tea. A coffee tin of dry tea was at hand, and the new chum tipped in the whole tin. When McKelvie dipped his mug into the tea he said: "Did you put all the tea into the billy?"

"Yes, Sorr," said Pat.

"You'll ruin me," said McKelvie, using his usual protest against waste.

"Sure you can well afford it, Sorr."

McKelvie's girls, as they grew up, wanted a piano and having bought one at last, they sought to appease the old man.

"It was only eighty guineas," they said. To which the irate old shepherd replied: "Eighty guineas! eighty guineas!" he reiterated. "Eighty guineas for a b—— kist o' whistles!"

In later life he spent little on improvement of the land and invested his surplus in hotel property and gilt-edged securities. Among his hotels was the Duke of Edinburgh on Willis and Manners Streets, Wellington. At his death McKelvie left his children liberal legacies and to his wife, at least forty years his junior, he left £1,000 a year during her widowhood, and £300 per annum if she married, which she did a few months afterward and later died up the Wanganui River.

An old-timer and cattleman related a story much relished at the time. McKelvie, with an old crony named Alexander, was soberly jogging along the beach south of the Rangitikei River, after delivering a mob of fat cattle at Wellington. Alexander, by the way, was the partner of Robt. Peat, and their P. & A. brand of cattle ran most of the coast, extending north to Hawera, and they made much money supplying beef to the Imperial troops during the Maori fighting against Titokowaru

and others. John McKelvie, having with Scottish foresight obtained a bottle of whisky, was jogging along beside the sea, and from the frequent applications of himself and his crony Alexander to the bottle, excited the concern and envy of the younger members of the party, who had been racing up and down in great excess of spirits but lacking the liquid sort enjoyed by their elders. Said one of them: "Let's gallop past the old man and spill him and collar the bottle." No sooner said than done—the old man's mount, startled by the jostling riders, left McKelvie seated on the sand.

"Did you spill the whisky, Sir?" they asked in solicitous tones.

"No, Sir, I kept my thumb in the neck of the bottle."

While they galloped to head off his mount, McKelvie and his friend finished the whisky. It was said that, although his sprees were not frequent, McKelvie on a brew of whisky and milk would descant on theology for many hours together.

Two traders of old Wanganui, Taylor and Watt, also owned extensive cattle runs north of Wanganui. Watt was the shopkeeper and Capt. Taylor, an old salt, was reputed to be the brains of the pair. Said their head stockman, T. U. McKenzie, who by the way reared twenty-one children: "If you want to sell half a ton of sugar to the Maoris, get Tommy Watt, but if you want to move a mountain, get Captain Taylor, Sir."

The captain lost his life helping to furl a jibsail in Cook Strait. All agreed that for tact, ability and brains, he had no peer in New Zealand.

GROWTH OF A FAMILY

Bob and his wife added three to their family in the years before 1880—two boys and a girl—and Bella always referred to these as the happiest years of her life when, as she expressed it, "I had all the childer round me." They were years not unmarked by sorrow. The two boys were regularly indentured for trades, an apprenticeship lasting seven years. When Tom, the second boy, was in his early years of apprenticeship, he was brought home bereft of half his left hand by a circular bench saw. Nothing was left for him but an office job. His neglect of his early school facilities and the popular schoolboy practice of playing the wag were now very apparent to him. However, he set to work manfully to "restore the years which the locusts had eaten." He set out, copied and worked on figures, writing with firm purpose till two in the morning, and was at the office at nine o'clock. He became a very able shorthand writer, and had a natural gift for figures, and filled an accountant's job till a change came over his outlook, and he studied for a clergyman with some brilliancy, and died at eighty in full possession of his faculties. For a time, the accident caused a very deep depression to Bella, but later she showed her old cheery optimism, and her younger children absorbed her attention.

Bob, the elder boy, was what Bella termed "good inclined," and he led an unbroken life of work and devotion. His father, in later years, used to say he had two sons and one was a parson, but always added "the other was the better man."

A fairly uneventful flow of years followed. Bob, the elder boy, just out of his time, crossed to Sydney and entered Cobb & Company's workshop in Bathurst, but after working in the heat of a ten-hour day, in contrast to the eight-hour day of New Zealand, together with a form of malaria, was taken to Sydney by his mates and placed aboard a steamer sailing for Wellington, and was a long time getting back to his former health. When he reached home his father had taken a large contract of heavy rock formation leading from Nelson to Blenheim, and it was decided young Bob should try the open air life and desert the paint and indoor workshop life for a time, and he never went back.

The school which stood behind St. Peter's Church was directed

by Mr. Richard Holmes as headmaster, and was my second school, the first being a dame school in Hopper Street near the Webb Street Methodist Church. Here I spent quite a portion of my time lined up against the wall as a penalty for being late, and as I was only five years old I do not think I quite realized the dimensions of my errors or showed the requisite repentance. In fact, once loose in the breezy precincts of the Gully, school and its restrictions troubled me not at all.

At the mature age of six or seven, I was duly entered at St. Peter's, but whether my parents paid a weekly fee I do not know. What took my youthful interest was that on the jangle of a very old and inadequate bell, we all trooped in to face the bearded master who, with spectacles on his nose, held a tuning fork of bright steel and struck sharply on the desk, the fork emitted a tang of noise from which the master selected his note and led off a well-known hymn tune, all the pupils chanting lustily in more or less unison. A reading of Scripture followed, and then the pupils dispersed to the various classes for lessons, where a fair amount of the cane seemed to us quite usual. A hymn and prayer were always the final of lessons or the beginning of new ones at noon and the final dispersal of school.

The times were very patriotic, the school boasting a body of cadets. They were dressed in a uniform of dark cloth, the trouser seams and cuffs being piped with scarlet and a peaked cap of black cloth shaped much like a police helmet. Added to this, the elder daughter of the master was dressed as a Vivandiere and marched with the column of boys on the extreme flank. Add to the effect that each boy, having a cavalry Snider carbine on his shoulder, they formed, in the opinion of the small boys too young for this distinction, "a fine body of men." The master, dressed in a frock coat, liberally frogged, and with a very martial sword, gave the drill orders in a loud voice, and altogether "it was a wondrous sight to see." One nearly forgot to say that the Vivandiere, a strapping blonde, bore on her left shoulder a very neat little wooden barrel suspended on a stout leather strap.

At that day no very complicated lessons were given, though great stress was laid on writing and arithmetic. The sloping style of writing called "Vere Foster" was in vogue, and I have been able to detect this in the calligraphy of grown-up folk in later years.

The elder son, though a fine tradesman, never resumed his

bench, though offered very good wages. Later he worked as equal partner with his father, but they were bad years, and this noble fellow often worked at a great pressure, claiming little or no share, preferring to ease those very bad years and contribute to the upkeep and education of the younger end of the family. He also acquired, through an able but aged tutor, the art of drawing, which stood him in good stead later when he drew plans and costs for the erection of suspension bridges for local bodies and large runholders confronted by almost impassable gorges. He gave ten per cent. of his income yearly and, a meticulous keeper of accounts, made up his gifts to church or to charity at the end of March. In some ways he was like General Gordon, and his men knew when the tent flaps were down that he must not be disturbed at his devotions. One other trait of character, joined to strict Sunday observance, was that he would not sue for a debt. He did very well till a bad accident while placing an anchor pile of a suspension bridge led to a year's critical and agonizing illness, to be followed five years later by his death from the injuries received. It is typical of his honesty that, knowing the doctor had reduced his account from compassion for his poverty, two years later he travelled thirty miles beyond Wanganui and insisted on paying the account in full.

When the second son took an accountant's job in Auckland, the Wellington property was sold, but after various jobs, such as construction of roads and water supply, bridges and a gold-fields water race and many other works, the family migrated to the Manawatu, shipping horses and plant from Nelson to Foxton. Cartage jobs were plentiful and the teams made big money on contract cartage till the fall in flax fibre (with the advent of tropical sisal) drove Bob and his son back to the road formation, macadam, and to bridges for some years, till Bob retired to a small farm and the elder boy abandoned earth work and retained only a waggon team. The elder man found some dairy anomalies. Many of the styles of testing, notably one called the drip test, were, in effect, a bald swindle.

As time went on the cows proved too exacting, and it was decided to sell the little homestead, and later a city dwelling was purchased in Palmerston North, which was retained till the death of Bella, who passed away at her married daughter's home surrounded by the affection of her son-in-law. A man of great natural affection, Joe was Bella's chief stay; indeed, it

would be difficult to find two natures so much in tune to self-sacrifice and pure good nature. The sudden death of her first-born at forty-four was perhaps the heaviest blow Bella was called on to bear. In the words of David at the bier of Absolom, she could truly have used the words "Would that I had died for thee."

Five years after the death of her son Robert, there fell a major blow. A friend was staying with the old people and, attracted by something in a well-known pork shop, took some back to her hosts. Sixty-eight persons partook of the dainty, and in some cases with fatal results. Many were seriously affected, Bella among them, and the medical man watched the following attack of jaundice, followed by symptoms of a deeper and more sinister nature which he diagnosed as cancer.

The family were well aware of the secret dread Bella had of this dreadful disease. In her services to poor and stricken neighbours she told of revolting cases where, by herself or with a neighbour's help, they laid out the remains of a fatally stricken neighbour. Later in life she became silent when the disease was mentioned, and one was led to wonder whether she had read and applied to her own case that passage from the book of Job: "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me."

The family thought Bella did not know the nature of her disease, but we found later that she had asked a younger son who slept near in the silent watches, if she had cancer, and he told her the truth. It is a fact that at no time did she disclose her knowledge, and for their sakes bore her ordeal bravely to lessen their grief. In hours when her pain was most severe she turned to her son-in-law, whose affectionate nature was a counterpart of her own, and with tears stealing down his cheeks he frequently lifted her, and her murmured gratitude, "Thou art a good lad," was his reward.

One very touching incident occurred when Bella desired to see her old mate, and as he sat with bowed silvery head, she said, "I am bound to leave thee, Bob," and his quietly uttered "Arta Bella?"

Then she said, "We have been wedded almost fifty years and thou hast been a good owd lad. Thou never gave me a push in anger in all our married life. I want thee to be patient, lad; all the childer love thee and are willed to do anything for thee, so be as little trouble as thou can."

The medical man said Bella would probably not require us for some time, and as all the grand-children had seen her, we went back to our homes—one as far distant as Auckland—and awaited the final telegram. One day Bella said: "Send for the lads." That Saturday at noon my elder boy rode down to where I was deep in a drain and said: "Grandma wants you." I dressed, caught a horse and was on my way to the railway, twenty miles distant, and boarded a "wild cat," as they called a night-freight train. It was very cold and mid-winter and our train pulled in at a station under Mt. Ruapehu, leaving us no train till Monday morning. However, at three in the morning we found some log fires where we camped till the local boarding houses opened. A brother was on the mail train. When we reached our mother's bedside she named us, but frequently lapsed into delirium till the end.

Bob never seemed to settle, and he too died about a year and a half later. Sleeping together twelve thousand miles from their birthplace, it was fitting that lives so full of incident should close in an adopted land wherein their children were rooted.

I think we missed our mother most, her great love and sacrifice, her cheerful courage and strong spiritual influence, recalling those lines of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*—

> And in these ears till memory dies
> One soft sweet bell will seem to toll,
> The passing of the sweetest soul
> That ever look'd from human eyes.

My tale is finished. I am well on in years, and I hope my end may be attended by the calm courage of my parents.

GOLD MINING IN NEW ZEALAND

EARLY REEFING

IN THE EARLY SIXTIES perhaps no happening so shaped the destiny of early New Zealand colonisation as the discovery of gold in the two main islands. Eighteen hundred and fifty-two and the discovery of gold at Coromandel by Charles Ring was the first of a dazzling sequence, and nearby, or about thirty miles along the beach, Hunt and party of four discovered gold in prodigal quantities at the Shotover near Thames. While the gold was not of such fine quality as the South Island's alluvial gold, it was in such huge quantities as to impugn the narrator's veracity when he related that the gold, beaten and pelted together by the action of the stampers, was so solid as to burst the gratings designed to filter the crushed stone on to the blankets and mercurial plates used for its catchment.

The reports from the Caledonian and other claims at Thames sent shareholders nearly, or quite, off their mental balance, and in the case of a Captain Palmer, his medical man gave him the choice of a sale of his shares or a cell in a mental hospital. Unheard of extravagances by successful miners were in the public prints; thus Hunt, who with three companions was piloted by a Maori to the Shotover near Thames, made a large and rapid fortune of about fifty thousand pounds. Hunt drove a four-in-hand through the streets of Auckland and the horses were shod with pure gold, newly mined. We have no record of how long they remained shod, but a shrewd suspicion exists that those shoes were not long in reaching the bank scales.

It was said that the miners of the Caledonian did quite a little in a clandestine way to increase their legitimate earnings by carrying home choice specimens heavily charged with gold, and by the use of a hand berdan—a large iron half-cylinder fitted with a heavy iron shoe, which was chained and a fixture, crushed all stone from the gold as the berdan beneath revolved on its cogs. It was said that some of the men going home boasted they had up to ten thousand pounds each. This mine was manned and "captained" entirely by Cornishmen. Whether the old wreckings and smuggling and easy money ethics of the past had any part to play in this display of quickly won wealth may be left to the reader's decision.

Naturally, many wildcat claims were pegged out by sharps

whose sole concern was the leverage of money from the possession of trusting persons whose thoughts had been captured by the golden lure, and the frequent reports of heavily successful mining features. While the quartz discoveries demanded large and expensive plants with some reserve money to work them, the news that alluvial gold—requiring only tools and a timber race to win—had been discovered, produced intense excitement and a large inrush of Californians and men from the Bendigo and other fields of Australia. A party of sawyers in the Collingwood bush saw glittering fragments in the creek when dipping water and mentioned their find to a townsman named Lightband. He, being an old miner, at once went with a mate across what is now called Golden Bay, and verified his suspicion of gold and in fair quantities, and with great fairness explained to the sawyers his belief that gold lay there in payable quantities, but they disclaimed any intention to follow up their discovery and only asked that they should have the sawing of the timber for the fluming and boxes required. This was all they got. One of the claim holders found the nucleus of a fortune and established one of the largest leather industries in New Zealand.

In my youth old diggers put in the winter at this spot and at Mt. Arthur nearby, and always got a bit of gold. Even in late years men under an assisted scheme were getting a little gold. In bewildering succession the discoveries followed each other. In May, 1861, Gabriel Read found gold in quantity at the spot called Gabriel's Gully in his honour. In August, 1862, Hartley and Simmons placed 87 pounds of gold in the Treasury, refusing all information as to its source, but later Hartley and Riley gave information of payable gold in the bed of the Molyneux River and a reward of £2,000 was given to the finders on the discovery of over 16,000 ounces.

From this period on, successive gold discoveries caused a surge of population to one field after another. On June 8th, 1861, a month after the Gabriel's Gully rush, gold was found at Waitahuna and at Tuapeka; Waipori added to the gold rushes in the Christmas week of 1861, and was closely followed by Wakatipu ten days later, and Captain McKenzie's run, Mount Balfrey, at about the same time. One of the first police escorts came in with 500 ounces of gold, and shortly after the ship *Chariot of Fame* sailed for England with 16,000 ounces as part of her manifest. Nokomai, whose discoverer was James Lamb,

was next a point of interest, and Mt. Benger field was the scene of the next feverish rush.

On the West Coast of the South Island discoveries of easily won gold were made in the last days of June, 1864, and a smaller rush set in to Wakamarina near the Pelorus Sounds a short time before the West Coast discovery. From then on perhaps the main attraction was in the rivers south of Westport.

Every means of transport was employed. Diggers came on foot or with pack horses, and many by sea, and the owner of a few steamers sailing from Nelson made a huge and rapid fortune as merchant and ship owner. Fares and freights were at the owner's discretion, though one fears the charges were those known as ceiling prices." One person of my youth told of a freight of stores to open up at the Fox's. The owner of the craft demanded freight and also the value of the vessel in addition. This was paid, but many small craft met their fate with all hands in the many traps for wind-driven vessels. All gold discoveries did not bear the hallmark of genuine gold rushes, but were reputed to be worked by designing storekeepers. Nemesis came on swift wings and irate diggers rushed the store, looted flour, bacon and every tool and even dug butter from the kegs with a long-handled shovel in prodigal shares all round. Where rum or spirits were in the stock one fears there were few followers of Sir Wilfred Lawson.

During these years it would be almost impossible to describe the unrest and feverish pursuit of the golden treasure so readily accessible in so many diverse localities. The rivers on the West Coast were nearly all gold producers, and in one year one thousand men per day came from Australia or overseas, and production of alluvial gold reached ten thousand ounces daily, while 250,000 ounces were won in nine months. From a tally of sales to the banks must be added many who preferred to carry the gold away in its native state, as washed in the boxes for later sale. While not many did this, it is a notable fact that many were handicapped by their gold belts when the ship *Royal Sovereign* went ashore on the Cornish coast, and divers tell us that the force of the gale and water drove nuggets into the crevices and plating of the iron ship.

In quartz mining, too, the yield of gold was unbelievable. The yield from the Thames mines ran into tons, and later the lower grade stone was treated by cyanide or potassium. While not strictly within the dates and history of our story, it is worth

recording that with chemical treatment and processes the quartz of a low gold content yielded, in the case of the Waihi mine, over a period of 35 years on a capital originally of only £22,500, gold worth fourteen million pounds, of which five millions were paid the shareholders in dividends. So careful were the directors of this mine to maintain a steady return to the holders of their scrip, as shares were then called, that from the various leaders and quartz faces of the mine two tests per day were made by the staff of assaying chemists. Any face showing poor stone was mixed with a proportion of better quartz from another drive. This, with the addition of gold ingots, kept in reserve from former rich crushings, ensured a steady dividend and so constant were the returns as to raise the shares to a high value and a steady source of income. Later, with surplus capital, the company established the Kuala Lumpur Tin Dredging Company in Malaya.

ORDINARY USAGES

To get back to our Otago and West Coast alluvial fields, it is worth mentioning that these, under the eager search of many thousands of men more or less experienced after years in the quest, became difficult and laborious. Hydraulic sluicings took the place of the old pick and shovel, and the flume with its false bottom of augur holes and riffles.

Men drifted back to farming, milling, and less strenuous pursuits, and the colony as a whole soberly sought less easy fortune, adopting a life routine more in common with that of the old country. Food became appreciably cheaper. Flour at one time was £150 a ton on the goldfields, and the waggon teams then plying to the Dunstan charged £120 a ton for freight. My father saw flour on the goldfields sold at 3/6d a pannikin, that is one pound, and a trooper stood at the tail of the waggon to see that no more than sufficed for present needs was issued. No one seemed to mind the high prices; it was a common thing for diggers to produce pannikins of gold when visited by the banks' buyers.

It may be mentioned that beyond quartz mining near or about Thames, there was no gold deposit found further north, nor in Hawke's or Poverty Bays, in Wellington or Taranaki. There were some rumours, but it was shrewdly suspected that any gold found in the rock had been shot there by a handy shotgun or else someone lied most wickedly.

The resource and fearlessness of the goldseekers was unlimited. They linked themselves together by holding a long, slim pole in crossing swift rivers, so that while the middle men were in deep water, the others drew them ashore. As a youth I was shown a cliff at least eighty feet high at a place called Maruia, and was told that some adventurous spirits swam the Buller River and from the bush plaited two cables of the karewa or, as we call it, supplejack vine. These they attached at intervals so that one hung a few feet above the other, and on this precarious suspension bridge crossed with their swags, using one as a foothold and leaning across the top one, for several hundred feet, stepping sideways and rising to the incline of the cliffs. But gold was there, and they paid for their provisions in unminted gold.

Their dress was a flannel shirt, a woollen pair of drawers, boots and socks. When sluicing they wore a new blanket cut with a form of cape known as a poncho, which diverted the rain clear of the arms, and fastened up to the neck with small thongs. The man at the flume always wore this costume and nearly all the others dressed the same. For waterwork they wore a neat leather knee-boot of United States manufacture, branded across the lower knee in gold letters Nugget Boot, but later, to the disgust of the diggers, the boot was put under an import duty to protect a much inferior one of local make.

In the period around 1861 to 1864, the population of Otago was increased from twelve to forty thousand, but in 1864 to 1865 6,000 left the cold and uninviting district of Central Otago for other northerly goldfields. From 1861 to 1863, the gold obtained in the Otago fields amounted to £4,774,985 sterling. Most of the migrants crossed the Southern Alps to become trail breakers to the rivers of the Golden West Coast. The hardships endured by these forerunners were almost incredible. The eels from the rivers and the abundant bird life of the North Island were, except on the bush side of the West Coast, lacking. Rats and rain took heavy toll of stores carried for days on the owner's back. An occasional meal might be obtained by the muzzle-loader gun of duck, pigeon, or kaka, with an odd weka, kakapo or kiwi. Beyond potatoes, vegetables were totally absent, if we except a little rauriki or the inner part of the nikau palm which, divested of its many envelopes and boiled, made a feeble substitute for cabbage. Scurvy was rife. For medicine chest the digger had no great variety. Pain-killer would, when swallowed in any quantity, pretty well kill a vodka addict. Cockle's pills, Holloway's ditto, with a pot of ointment and a liniment or two with adhesive plaster and Friar's Balsam, constituted his whole stock of remedies.

Generally, every considerable rush had its medical man of sorts, but the fine physique of the diggers defied anything short of an epidemic. They were always ready to see the comic aspect of a situation, and the ready and good-humoured laughter was ever present. Of their hospitable generosity one could write a book. Food might, and did, cost a very large sum in money and effort, but a refusal to accept the proffered meat, tea and damper would give great offence. Tobacco, matches, or any liquor available, were all at the disposal of the caller, and if

he carried a home paper or two the visitor was on a level with an angel.

The writer's experience of some years on a goldfield in the eighties showed that, failing a quantity of reading, the diggers would quote history and argue good-humoredly on world topics. Characters from Dickens, Thackeray, Jerrold and others were a matter of frequent and common quotation. Generally clean of speech, they were chivalrous to women and remarkably kind and indulgent to children of all ages—in fact they fell into disfavour with mothers who accused them of spoiling the youngsters. As a result, young New Zealanders grew up somewhat rude and precocious in character, and many would sally out with an old sheath knife and iron dish to pry out small nuggets and dust from fissures of the rocks. Gabriel Read, the discoverer of Gabriel's Gully, an old Californian digger, attested that to claim the Government reward he had, with a sheath knife and a dish, obtained seven ounces of gold in ten hours at Tuapeka.

On all goldfields the hatter, the fossicker and the gully raker were a feature. The former might have an isolated claim which he worked without a mate; he was generally shy of any social contact and tended to develop a mild form of lunacy and reluctance to mix with his fellows. The two latter were generally to be found in out-of-the-way creeks and gullies where they often obtained a fair amount of gold and even a few nuggets. Their chief quest was a pot hole which might be described as much like a Maori rua or potato pit. A soft seam of rock played on by the tumbling waters and some stones always on the grind and move, wore down and sideways till the top was smaller than the bottom and an arched roof was the result, and a small opening at the top received through the ages particles of gold. The heavy swirl and pressure of water was unable to twist the gold contents out of the pot hole, and so a store of gold collected in the bottom and might contain nuggets as well as dust.

As a youth on the fields, the writer knew an old husk of a man with red whiskers fringing a cadaverous face, a real type of a drinker of hard tack, as they called the fearful brand of whisky in vogue. Jack Shannon had the choice of a fall of rock or a jump of nearly two hundred feet into the Buller River. He jumped. All his limbs were broken, and he showed me the ridges of the knitted fractures on his arms and legs. He told

me that he came on a pot hole while fossicking, containing about a wheelbarrow full of gravel and with his dish washed 68 ounces in about an hour or so.

The moss, too, on the rocks of the upper Buller caught the gold, and in one winter of abnormal and frequent frosts the river got so low that the diggers chopped out dug-outs of white pine, tore the moss from the rocks, and washing it in the canoes, made quite a big strike of gold till spring rains again put the water on the old level.

Occasionally a fossicker came on something worth while. On the Lyell Creek, mid-Buller, a coloured fossicker stood off the track to let a packhorse train go by. He struck his pick into the creek bed and when resuming his journey found he had considerable weight on the point of his pick, which turned out to be a nugget of about 265 ounces (from memory)—at least he cashed in at the bank at once and invested the thousand pounds in as many shares in the Alpine gold mine, which for a long period paid him 1/- per share dividend, or £50 monthly. In shrewd thrift the negro could give most of his neighbours points.

In the locality of which I have been speaking, a romance and tragedy were blended. A few Italians discovered gold near the Lyell township and at great physical exertion, and over very broken country, conveyed a small battery of stampers to the spot. The crushing proved to the partners they had a mild bonanza which, after yielding a substantial amount of gold, they sold for a big sum to a company. Each partner had a quite substantial sum, running toward £20,000, and one elected to return to Italy, where he put up at one of the better hotels in Naples, and was found dead next morning. The plug of the wash basin had been left loose and the sewer gas rising from the city drainage had slain him in his sleep.

One fears that the early notions of gold winning were of rather an easy order. Our pictures showed the digger clad in a flannel shirt and a red sash round his waist and knee boots, more in place as the wear of a steeplechase rider than a washer of gravel and wielder of the pick and shovel. This style would have excited from the real digger the terse comment "Dirty Flash." The diggers I saw 'humping bluey" wore white or coloured moleskin trousers, a leather belt and small leather straps below the knee to take the slack weight of the lower ends and reduce friction in work and in walking. Usually woollen

flannels and underpants were worn with an ordinary coat or jumper, and a Crimean shirt; waistcoats were not generally used. For head gear a tall-crowned black or grey felt hat was in vogue, the top knocked in and usually a strap for hat band. Such a hat had many purposes. The brim often served to dip or catch falling water without disturbing the swag.

One fears that among the old type of digger there were few who totally abstained from ardent liquors, though as a rule except for a spree, the majority never hung round after it. Many tales were told in the days of my youth having the freshness and charm of fairly recent events. I have heard my father tell of one case among others which, for sheer ingenuity, deserves record. The waggoners to the Dunstan as a whole liked their liquor, and had just as strong a dislike of paying for it when it could be filched from the storekeeper to whom it was consigned. Outside the crude one of boring a hole in the casks, was one in which the cask was put on an even bottom, end up, and boiling water applied which drew through the wood of the cask a very respectable type of grog. One Jewish storekeeper was something of a snag however. He weighed his casks and tested the liquor for alcoholic content. This was a poser for the thirsty waggoners, until they brought a stable bucket of black sand. By careful manipulation of the cask, a bung was sprung, a bucketful of rum was extracted and replaced by the bucket of black sand. The bibulous ones had their spree and the Jewish consignee, applying his tests found full strength and, what may have puzzled him, an overweight due to the denser weight of the sand, and paid up accordingly.

I heard one old digger telling of a store in which the man in charge opened up a keg of two gallons of rum, and, being a pretty thirsty lad himself, helped in its consumption. With morning came the distressing fact that the rum was finished and he had nothing to show his employers in money received. Forthwith he opened up a list of possible subscribers who may, from his muddled ideas, have been partners in the drink. So he began: Ben Minifie, £2.

"But," protested Ben, "I wasn't there."

"Well, you oughta been there," and the item stood. All disclaimers were treated in the same way, and with a laugh all paid up.

In the later days of alluvial minings the easily won gold was more or less exhausted, and many of the smaller claims were

worked by old and feeble men who were but shadows of the vigorous figures they had been in the golden past. For all this, quite stirring finds of gold at comparatively shallow depths were found, notably in the upper Buller. The writer visited one at the Little Doughboy—a creek entering the Buller a mile or two below where the Matakitaki joined the main stream. Though this stream had been prospected for many years, two men named Glen and Cairns found payable gold at about eleven feet below the surface which was covered by heavy forest. No big fortunes were made, but the easily worked ground gave fair returns and steady work to a number of men.

The Matakitaki was perhaps one of the richest rivers on the Coast. The main body of diggers were noted as a very hard-drinking group, and had possibly one of the most notorious "lambers-down" existent to help them in their folly. It was commonly said that Phil, as he was called, had a private quick cut track through the bush, and if a man keyed up with good resolutions passed his shanty, Phil would be sitting on a log and genially invite the returning digger to a parting pull at the bottle he could always produce. The result was always the same, and the guileless one went back to be duly lambed down which, in common parlance, meant he was allowed to shout for all hands, was soon moneyless and found himself on the verge, if not quite in the delirium tremens stage, a possible prey to any deep hole in the river.

The deep knowledge of the old digger in gold lore was to me as a youngster a matter of amazement; show him a parcel of shotty gold or tiny nuggets, he would say: "Blue Duck gold" from a river of that name which joins the river Buller at the Mangles; other types of gold showing no difference to the ordinary man would be accurately placed as to locality. An old digger told me the same thing obtained at Bendigo, Ballarat, and other Australian fields in a marked degree, and with a more diverse and numerous range of metals. One form I never heard of in New Zealand was cube gold, in which the gold forms in the reef the shape of tiny cubes or a brick of Lilliputian dimensions.

A man who called himself a Slav, but was totally unlike the Yugoslav we see here in that he was fair, tall, and blue-eyed and was named Luca Fantello, and whom we called Luke, told of an experience he had on a night shift in a Bendigo deep level drive. Working on wages, he placed a shot on the night

shift, and after its explosion was dazzled by the spectacle of the cube gold with quartz still adhering and held in place by the gold vein "Lika schooler's* shop" as Luke expressed it. Luke was a ready example of the ups and downs of mining life, and when I knew him was procuring mining timber piecework and, I believe, with his fine physique, doing two men's work and getting big returns. He had in former days been well-to-do and very successful in quartz mining, but put his all into a mine called the Ajax in the Reefton district. He was given a private warning to sell his shares, as a trial crushing had been bad, but refused, saying that if he as a large owner sold, it would precipitate a crash and ruin the others, which it very promptly did, leaving Luke as poor as his co-shareholders. He always dated time from "when the Ajax's went crookit." Luca, after getting a wad of money together, took his departure for a silver field at Zeehan, Tasmania, got bilked of his money in Wellington, and passed from my ken.

To repeat many of the stories told me by diggers of the feverish days of gold rushes and production may tire the reader and still further tatter the already frayed cloak of veracity, but it is worth recording the astonishing growth of population at the various fields, and more particularly those of the West Coast in 1864 and 1865. Small steamers were anchored some distance from the jetties to avoid the heavy rush of would-be passengers, and the passage money was extortionate. Nobody complained, however. Food was prohibitive in price and no wonder! A Wanganui dealer, now long since dead, told me that they bought pigs—rough and mostly hair and hide—to ship by little steamers for Westport and Hokitika, and received enormous prices. Cattle of better quality were also shipped, the drovers endeavouring to class those from one locality to ensure a quiet passage and no damage to the pens and ship. They were glorious days all round. Fantastic names were given to different localities and for various reasons. Candlelight, once a fairly large community, acquired its name because of an unusual incident. A late-moving resident happened to look down into the creek and in the gravel, and by his feeble candle flame, he saw glittering particles of gold. This locality, which included Charleston, was at one time carrying a population of 20,000, but is now almost utterly deserted.

Another tale concerns the export of gold battery slimes to Ger-

* Jeweller's.

many, which at that period was supposed to have exclusively the process by which the suspended gold could be extracted. These slimes were bagged and sold to German agents at £70 a ton, but just prior to the 1914 war an analysis showed we were presenting our later foe with a fortune in each shipment so that, as far as Germany was concerned, the cow ran dry. The bright white quartz or, as later they called it, scheelite, which was rejected at the mine, proved later very profitable, and I saw it bagged and exported from an old mine in the Nelson area at £105 per ton for use in tempering steel, as also manganese, which was surface dug at Waiheke Island for the same purpose.

Thomson was a working miner before he attained to the ownership of a row of working class cottages, and it happened in this wise. Thomson happened to be on the face by himself when he broke down the hanging wall of the face of the drive and found he had struck a large and very rich leader, heavily impregnated with gold. After the first surprise had left him, Thomson began to plan matters, and the first thing occurring to him was how to acquire shares in the company. On reaching the surface he said he had "a bellyache" and was excused from work, changed his clothes on reaching home, obtained a cash advance on his house and other property, a small advance on overdraft, and with his savings, added with sundry small loans from friends, Thomson began to buy in small parcels from brokers, being careful in no case to buy enough to create suspicion. The shares were then of only a nominal value, and by evening Thomson had spent all he had as well as buying on a deposit fairly large parcels of shares for delayed delivery.

When the new lead was opened up, prices of shares began to rise and a little later a mild boom set in, succeeded by a rush for shares. I do not know whether Thomson shared in the first dividends or whether he sold at once, but the risen value of the shares represented a life competence and Thomson, as a safe and steady source of income, built a row of cottages for renting to workers. As long as he lived, however, he was known as "Bellyache" Thomson and his houses "Bellyache Cottages" to the mining population.

Suppose we take literally the lines of Bishop Heber, "Where Afric's sunny fountains roll down their golden sands," and we produce from the rivers of New Zealand those same golden sands brought down to accumulate on our shores where heavy

storms deposit fresh supplies of gold in prodigal quantities. Some years ago an observant person working the ridges of black sand left by the tides after storm, found that tiny particles of gold, or colours as they are termed by the diggers, were left in the dish after the lighter particles had been ejected. Further experiments led to the discovery that the foreshores contained quantities of fine gold mixed with the black sand, which was shovelled into cradles. These were a form of gold-mining machine, designed to use little water in washing the sand from the fine gold contained in the storm-driven black sand.

This process of winning gold expanded. The plant was simple, home-made and inexpensive, and the wash apparently inexhaustible. There can be no doubt that the rapid rivers of the West Coast had been for many centuries sweeping its golden gravel into the sea, where it rested under a body of water less turbulent than those of its origin. The nuggets washed from where they lay in the rocks, were at last rolled on their way to the estuary, being pounded by boulders and the gold ground to the fineness of flour would, with every flood, rise in the swirling waters on its way to the ocean.

How great a quantity of gold lies on the West Coast foreshore may not be known till some form of dredge worked from the shore may draw into its clutes greater treasure undreamed of at the present time. No doubt the turbulent surf and all the other setbacks will later be countered by man's ingenuity.

The above discovery coming at a time when the easily-won gold was more or less worked out, the beach gold in its black sand envelope attracted many diggers who, waiting till heavy storms had again deposited ripples of a skin of surface wash, worked busily with their cradles and, in most cases, obtained considerable weights of very fine flour-like gold dust.

EARLY CONDITIONS

MOST OF THE alluvial goldfields, if we except the lower Buller and portions of Thames and Coromandel districts in the North Island, were placed in the most broken and inaccessible places, where bleak and sub-alpine conditions combined to make the winning of gold difficult. In many cases they were so isolated as to make the search and working of the precious metal arduous for even strong and vigorous men.

Facing cold, the digger of old times made himself as warm and comfortable as natural resources and material would admit. The bulk of the huts were built of crib log, to the preparation of which a plentiful supply of ten-inch diameter birch lent itself. These spars ran to a fair height, and were cut to about two feet beyond the length of the tent and fly which covered them, to allow for the scarf cut into the logs on both sides, so that they lay on similarly cut logs, bringing the surfaces as close together as possible, after trimming any knots or rough points to procure an even fit and surface. In some cases the inner walls were surfaced by an axe, preferably the fifteen-inch bladed broad axe. When the chinks had been caulked with moss and clay, the whole made a wind and weather-proof hut, with one end taken up by a door and a wide wooden chimney whose lower portion was heavily plugged with clay to a height of three feet or so, and a rack to dry the birch firewood which, at best, was a poor firewood and only satisfactory when a large amount of live embers were fed from wood pulled frequently from the rack above the fire. The silver birch was a little more combustible, but was in small proportion to the all-prevailing black variety. Farthest from chimney and door was the table, with each side wall supporting a home-made bunk of saplings and light twigs. The birch forest clinging to bare rock had often two or three feet of moss covering its roots and had to be trodden very cautiously; a severely strained leg or even a fracture might be the penalty of reckless movement.

Light in the huts was generally a slush lamp or small tin wall lamp with glass shade and bright tin reflector which, with the firelight, made a very cheery and bright interior. The camp oven always had its place at the edge of the fire or hung on

the pot-rack over the fire. It was used to bake, roast, or even to boil the daily fare, and was also used largely in raising and baking leaven or yeast bread. The leaven bread was a sweetish and close bread made largely from sugar, which on the day of baking was dissolved in warm water and mixed in the flour, allowed to rise, again knocked down and set to rise in the camp oven, and again allowed to rise partially. The baking itself completed the rise and finish of the loaf. The ordinary yeast is, however, more reliable, as leaven is liable to sour. Great care was taken to keep the camp oven near the fire, as a frost on a warm oven would burst it into splinters, as the oven and lid were of cast iron. One other use of the camp oven was that of storage of cold meat and butter.

The "crockery" was, in addition to tin billies, a few pots made of enamelware with plates and mugs of the same. Larger cooking utensils were a bucket or kerosene tin, both of many uses. In most cases a baking or salting trough was cut out of a small log and finished by a finely ground axe. These were wonderfully smooth inside, and were nicely finished throughout.

The digger's fare, outside of beef, mutton, potatoes, onions, bread, butter and cheese, included an occasional duff or pudding, and a current or raisin cake risen with soda and acid, which was usually the full width of the camp oven and termed a brownie. An occasional kaka was met with, but very rarely a native pigeon in the greater heights, as no berries existed in the birch forest. Every few years the rata bloom flared on the hillsides and the kakas, attracted by the honey of the flowers, became easy prey to the shotgun of the digger. While eels often furnished a meal in warmer waters, I never saw or heard of them in the higher and colder snow-fed streams.

It may be asked what successful diggers did with their lucky strikes. I have known some who were akin to the wise virgins, but I am afraid the foolish ones were in a heavy majority. I know of cases of men who went into farming and a competence, and of odd ones who amassed huge fortunes; one who had a large number of boot stores and factories was reputed to be nearly a millionaire, and another who started an aerated water plant on the West Coast later came to Wellington and died at the age of about ninety, the owner of one of the largest brewing firms in New Zealand. This old man, married to a young woman, left £1,000 a year to be settled on his widow's second husband. The greater part of his means went to found

a large orphanage. Both the foregoing, however, were traders and not actual diggers.

I have known a few in my youth who held their gold winnings, but they were in the minority. Some took a hotel, but usually a taste for keeping racehorses and a mild thirst of their own landed them back in the labour ranks.

It is notorious that the old age pensions were designed and launched to relieve the Westland counties of the numerous old and indigent men who had become too great a burden on the hospital and charitable aid funds. Some years ago it was computed that so scarce and poor did the returns of gold become that the gold won cost £8 per ounce. Its sale price in my youth was £3/17/6, and Thames gold £1 less.

GOLD DREDGING

IT OCCURRED to a practical Chinese digger named Sew Hoy that if the gold-bearing gravel of the banks and shallows contained much gold, the gravel under the stream bed would also hold as much, if not more gold than the banks contained. A punt carrying a steam winch was evolved which, with buckets on an endless belt, took the place of the shovel under water, and lifted the wash gravel on to flumes, where it was washed in the usual way but on a gigantic scale compared with the hand process, of which it was simply an adaptation. This dredge was a steady dividend producer, and from the Molyneux the process spread to the Buller and rivers of the West Coast, with continuous patents and improvements. Finally, river flats, much of them gold soil, were prospected and worked by dredges, in some cases for many years paying steady dividends but leaving behind them a useless field of boulders and rubble, a sight to horrify the farmer.

In many cases an excavation, or dam, was made away from the river itself and the pontoon carrying the dredge machinery was drawn forward by a steam winch, and as its huge iron buckets bit into the gravel a continuous strain on the anchor kept the bow of the dredge against the wash-dirt, and this, elevated by the buckets and irrigated by pumps, went through the flumes. Later mercury was used to catch the fine gold and form the amalgam, smelted in a bulb-shaped retort which precipitated the mercury fumes in water and left the retorted gold in the bottom of the crucible. One would expect the molten gold to be a dazzling thing of beauty, but I was disappointed to see only a bowl-shaped lump much like lead, except for a dull yellow gleam of colour. I understand dredges are now used for baser metals such as tin, and are in vogue in Malaya and the East.

As the quartz mines began to decline in output and could no longer pay a large wage sheet, it became the custom to let them on tribute, by which parties of men were given the right to mine and raise quartz from the resultant crushing, of which a proportionate share of the gold went to the company. This system might also apply to old workings of mines in actual work, but in most of these cases the tributors followed a thin

but valuable lead, which might not be much thicker than a finger, but so rich as to be worth tunnelling or working as a tribute, in which the golden lead was pursued on an upward slope. It used to be rather shrewdly suspected that tributors were not "working on the blind" but had as former employees of the company marked a lead and covered the same by a piece of mine timber or rubble till a later date gave them the chance to profit by their knowledge. Many of the tributors did exceedingly well; they had nothing except their labour to lose, and the company got some profit on a good lead, and so "where's the harm?"

I was greatly interested as a boy to listen to the old diggers and, remembering that many of that remote date were old diggers of California, Victoria and New South Wales, and later of Coolgardie and Western Australia, it was very enthralling to young ears and imagination. Let me say here I do not think the old-time digger went beyond facts or, as a rule, exaggerated his experiences. The quiet tone, the steady eye, and the fact that some of his hearers would throw in a few comments backing his statement, carried the genuine mark. Since I have grown older, I have been struck with the calm philosophy which rendered them utterly oblivious to loss or misfortune and the inevitable disappointments of their calling. Many had substantial fortunes at one time or another, but they did not allow the fact to spoil the joy of living or mar their jovial camaraderie.

While New Zealand, apart from coal and gold, is not very prolific in other metals, I am reminded of a mild attempt to raise a boom about fifty-seven years ago on the upper reaches of the Buller, to wit the Owen River. Large sums of shareholders' money were sunk in quartz mines along the Owen River and beneath the shadow of Mount Owen.

The quartz from which Nelson shareholders expected much yielded less than sevenpenny-weights to the ton. The stone was in about 400-ton blocks and then pinched out with no lead to show where to pick it up again. No doubt gold was in the locality, as the Alpine at Lyell and the Reefton mines, notably Keep it Dark, Big River and a number of others paid steady dividends for many years under careful management. Several mines were for a year or two in vogue at Owen Reef, two large batteries were built and worked, but the purse and patience of the shareholders after about a quarter of a million had been expended, gave out, and the plant was only worth junk prices.

Some little alluvial gold was won in odd creek beds, but a ray of hope was seen in the findings of bodies of galena—an ore of a glittering black substance, very heavy, and said to contain silver, lead, and a small portion of yield of gold. Two samples of stone the writer sent to the School of Mines, Thames, assayed 98 and 106 ounces of silver to the ton, with a large quantity of lead, and a very light proportion of gold. The price of silver, due to world over-production, had sunk to a little over half a crown per ounce. Half a ton of ore which I assisted in carrying down the mountain for shipping to Swansea, Wales, was despatched, but I left for the North Island and never heard the result. However, the silver lode, about three chains wide, of great height and unknown depth, still rests quietly beneath the summit of snowy Mt. Owen above the bush line, and in winter with a considerable depth of snow shrouding the lode. Nearby is a natural tunnel said to pierce the peak of the mountain. I had never the time to explore this place, which always seemed to be to bear an uncanny air. Rocks falling cut clean swathes in the native bush hundreds of feet below, and snow-filled crevices, intersected by towering cliffs, did not augur well for any lone climber who suffered an injury.

Galena was found near the riverside down stream several miles from the above lode, on what was known as the Left-hand Branch, and claims were pegged out and sold to newly established companies of poor or weak financial backing. I remember being wakened by some noise and seeing a string of men with bottle lanterns walking the four miles of rough track to reach the site of the new field, where pegs were squared and trenches dug with the selector's name and miner's right number written thereon. Some of the persons who pegged out the claims sold out for a few hundreds and the purchasers uncovered part of the reef, which seemed to me ridiculously small compared with the huge face of mineral under the snow line of hoary old Mt. Owen.

When I read Mark Twain's description of a mine as "a hole in the ground and the owner of the hole a liar," I am reminded of the old Warden's Court days when there were many unblushing relatives of Ananias who cheerfully foreswore themselves in every court they entered. There was none of the formality of a court of today; the courtroom was more often than not the parlour of a goldfield's pub. Outside disputes as

to supply of water, incorrect peggings and the like were settled, and the warden also inflicted fines on any of the lads who had staged public thumping matches or shown any red-blooded evidence of a desire to take matters in hand for themselves. Such little weaknesses, to my knowledge, ran the culprit into the loss of a tenner. I have seen the constable "Charlie the Larrikin" ushering in witnesses, affecting to ignore the amused glances very thinly concealed at his lovely black eye obtained at the preceding evening's spree. Leaving much warning and many admonitions behind him, the warden and his clerk, the policeman, the newspaper man, and one or two legal advisers, took to horse and journeyed toward the coast.

Copper in the Nelson district figured largely in public interest about sixty years ago, and large sums of English money were expended by companies; but these were preceded by a state of speculation which ran a tramway up to the upper Dun Mountain with five large dwellings for the men. The chrome and copper proved deficient in quantity and ore value, and it suffered the fate of the later activities at Aniseed Valley further south on the same range of mountainous hills, which were broken by cliffs and rocky defiles forming a barrier between Nelson and Upper Wairau.

Perhaps one of the most picturesque mining ventures was that of the English company, which even landed bricks from England for the smelting furnaces to treat the quicksilver and cinnabar deposits of the Ngawha, and the Puhipuhi kauri forest some miles away. These were later abandoned as being incapable of profitable development. The Ngawha hot springs are charged with mercury, and small globules form on the edges of the water and the rushes. The natives use the springs largely for skin ailments, notably the akeake, or Maori itch. The writer can vouch for the virtue of the springs for throat and ear ailments.

HUT FEVER

I HAD OFTEN HEARD of men who, living together and close pals for many years, suddenly develop a distaste for each other and even hate the sound of each other's voices. I had read the works of Bret Harte and other American writers, with frequent reference to the distaste and even hate which was dubbed "Hut Fever," and I actually knew one of such a party.

The diggers had another term for a man who elected to work by himself. He was known as a "hatter," from the mental effect of living by himself and working in a lonely back gully. The term is used in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland,* where the Mad Hatter is a prominent character. There was, too, the Gully Raker, perhaps not so confirmed in his aversion to the society of his fellows, but all the same confirming the saying of King Solomon that it "was not good for man to live alone." Hut fever was the result of the same mode of life, the monotony of work, and a general fed-upness which stressed the mental powers and asserted itself in erratic behaviour.

I knew of a case of this on the upper Buller River goldfields, but knew only one of two brothers intimately. As they are dead for half a century, I will use their full names, and as neither had married there are no offspring to offend.

Elijah and Ephraim Green were tallish, spare, sallow men, very like each other, and they spoke a South of England dialect. At the time I knew them, both had passed the late fifties. Elijah was one of those uneducated men gifted with a phenomenal memory. Thus, if interrupted in the relation of some incident, and meeting you a month or two later, he would resume his narrative thus: "As I was a-tellin' you," and go on from the break in his former conversation.

At the time of the rupture between the two brothers and when they separated, they were both wages men at the Alpine Mine at the Lyell goldfield. This mine, like many semi-payable claims on the West Coast reefing area, had a habit of pinching out, which meant the payable block of stone or running reef vanished without warning and it was found that the only course possible was to drive into the mountain at a much lower altitude to endeavour to cut the reef on a payable lead. Naturally, the monthly calls on shares became pretty irksome; and many, look-

ing on the ultimate regeneration of the mine as a gamble, sold their shares for very little money—in some cases at one shilling each.

It was at one of these periods that Elijah Green bought a parcel of shares and cheerfully set himself to pay a call of one shilling each per month till things looked up, which they eventually did, the shares rising and paying a shilling per month each on the new output of gold. It was at this time Elijah Green became obsessed with the idea of owning an accommodation house. Paying only twelve pounds a year for a licence, they found board and meals for travellers, and to all intents and purposes were catering for more thirsts than the ordinary public house. Elijah elected to run the kitchen and hired a barman to dispense the liquids, but alas! while Elijah was busy with his culinary duties, credit was being given lavishly in the bar, with the inevitable ending: Elijah found himself hard up, but he expressed no regrets for the end of his flutter, though he did say: "Billy So-and-So was a lousy thief—he stole a box of matches."

It was after the foregoing incident that Elijah and Ephraim occupied a crib log hut on the hillside leading to the mine in which they worked. In very inclement and cold weather these huts were rendered draught and weather-proof by filling the chinks in the logs with clay and moss, and with a plentiful supply of birch firewood were very warm and comfortable. With wages at 10/- per day, the two brothers lived quite a carefree life. For the distance they were waggoned, 120 miles from Nelson, stores were not unreasonable in price. Tobacco, I remember, was about seven shillings a pound, and the meat produced in the district was not dear—the mountain merino mutton was of small carcass but splendid flavour.

One day, however, after a difference, Ephraim collected his personal belongings and betook himself to the township, taking up his abode near a miners' cook house but continuing to work in the same mine as his brother. He had left behind an ordinary American clock which Elijah carefully kept in motion, but would accost passing miners to ask the time. Ephraim, on his part, took a break-neck track on the ridge and avoided the well-formed track used by the miners which passed the hut occupied by his brother.

This went on for years, till one Christmas when all miners took a month off to visit Nelson or West Coast towns, the two

brothers sighted each other in the main street and, heartily sick of their folly but "having no daysman between them," walked up and down past each other, eyeing each other in a sidelong style till, coming abreast after a few more passes one exclaimed: "Be you Ephraim?" and the other "Be you 'Lijah?"

They clasped hands in an ecstacy of delight, each patted each other's shoulders with the free hand, and the last seen of them was Elijah piloting Ephraim into the Coach and Horses hotel.

THE KOKOPU

BUSH FARMING

IN LOOKING BACK to 1890, when I first acquired a piece of hilly bush land—not a State block by the way, but part of the Wanganui Harbour Board Endowment—it is perhaps admissable after a lapse of over sixty years to trace this very vital phase of New Zealand's development.

When the open coastal lands of the North Island and most of those of the extreme south of Invercargill and Southern Otago—a mixed class of land—are deleted, the whole of the available and easily worked bush land was contained over the full length of the North Island. The growth of settlement was largely governed by the ease of access and the class of timber encountered; that of Poverty Bay was of a light character, chiefly tawa and light, easily felled timber. The heaviest timber was that of a belt extending from about forty miles north of Wellington along the banks of the Manawatu and extending to Norsewood, Dannevirke and beyond. These later mentioned localities were largely producers of milling timber before being finally felled, burnt, and sown in pasture. The same description might appy to the unbelievable wealth and gigantic growth of timber of upper Rangitikei watershed and those forests of the Wanganui River, excluding, of course, the kauri forests of the extreme north as being only a small contributory factor in production of meat, wool and produce. The writer's experience has chiefly been with the bush lands of North Rangitikei, extending to the inland King Country.

The demand for land for settlement gradually pushed settlement into semi-alpine foothills by small farm homestead association. These, composed of members of town districts, were not always wholly successful, as for instance the settlements on the mountain slopes of Mt. Ruapehu. The writer remembers quite well, when travelling a mob of cattle some forty-five years ago, the depressing effect of deserted farmsteads whose selectors had, from its sub-alpine nature, isolation and inclement climate, been forced to abandon the land on which they had lavished a large amount of work and the whole of their small capital.

In most cases the bush farming suited the man of small capital, as being adaptable in gradual improvements to the state of his finance. The rest could be left to his own industry

and courage. One of his chief assets was the easy supply of wild cattle and pigs. The early stages of bush farming demanded a stout heart, a strong physique and reasonable intelligence.

As the trend of bush farming became more general, the skill of the bushman became more in evidence. He evolved a rapid method of felling by the use of jiggers and driving—two advanced modes of dealing with the standing bush never dreamed of by his forerunners. Anyone looking at the stumps after a new burn would be puzzled as to what use the axe cavities on a heavily flanged tree such as pukatea, rata and the like might mean. These were the jigger marks, and enabled the tree to be cut at a much less diameter than nearer the ground. A jigger was simply a slab of white pine or rimu, axe-trimmed to a diameter of about six inches by three inches deep, and slightly thinner toward the extremity. On the end nearest the tree was bolted a forked piece of steel made by a blacksmith, which had a point or boss on the upper side. This was secured to the board by small bolts and covered with sacking. The bushman commonly cut a neat hole in the tree about level with his breast, or even higher. Into this little chamber the bushman pushed the steel head of the jigger, elevating the tail and striking his axe into the trunk, and aided by vines climbed up till he stood upright on the jigger, whose boss, or spike, pushed into the upper part of the axe cavity, made a springy and secure chopping platform. An expert man would easily cut his stance and attach his jigger in three minutes—a very much quicker method than the old style of collecting tree fern trunks and building a platform. Often the bushman would borrow his mate's jigger and cut from the first jigger another and higher niche. When necessary to shift his chopping platform, the axeman placed his axe inside the newly cut scarf in the tree and, leaning his weight on the edge of the scarf and placing a boot toe under the jigger, the short board was worked right or left to give access across a tree often four feet or more in diameter. Quite often a more vigorous shove than usual dislodged the jigger toe, which clattered down, leaving the bushman clinging on to a vine till he gained the upper side of the tree and safety. One mate of the writer was not so fortunate and fell a fair distance on to some newly cut tree fern stumps. Beyond some bruises and a severe shaking, he was able to ply the toki or axe after a short interval.

When felling, the jigger was always thrown up the slope to await use on a large tree, and it was a common sight to see the axeman with one hand holding the jigger on his shoulder and his axe in the other, walking over a gully on a small felled tree, with a step and balance as sure as a person on a track, though a fall from that height might have had serious effects.

One usage much in vogue with old bushmen was a system of search for strain in hill-grown timber for a weak root, particularly in the heavy hinau or maire. Most of the bushmen tapped the black roots with a keen axe, and where it seemed to cut freely, the axe sank into the clinging roots. Often a large-butted tree would succumb in a few minutes. Again, a tough old rata or hinau often had a tall pine felled and lodged in its branches, with the result that the weight of the driver and the lower tree were too much for the supporting one, and a few cautious axe strokes completed the job. One went very cautiously at this job, however, as any roots rising behind the bushman were likely to take him downhill in a general melee.

In later years the saw took the place of the axe, and had many points in its favour, notably the lessened jar of the axe and the fact that it saved taking down a chip, and also any tree with a slight lean gave to the saw, which bit fiercely with the weight of timber pulling, and it fell in a few minutes. Later, the old peg tooth was displaced by the band saw—a long, narrow saw of about five inches in depth and six to eight feet long. In expert hands it did good work, but in inexpert hands the result was a horror. The narrow blade "ran", as they called it, and one saw tree stumps whose contour resembled the seat of a saddle. In good hands, and with bushmen who suited each other's hands, the saw cut was level and much easier on the eye.

One advantage of the band saw was that its shallow depth allowed the use of wedges, and the saw itself had less thickness at the back of the saw than on the cutting edge.

A later saw was of Canadian origin and was dubbed Razor Steel, and was certainly a great advance in cutting hard timber, such as rata, and was decidedly fast, but very hard to file and gauge the teeth correctly. The sett had to be put on by gauge and was an expert's job. The cost of such a saw was nearly ten shillings per foot.

Today, various makes of saws driven by a motor on the blade will tear through a log in very quick time, but as their cost

runs to about £200 apiece, only bush contractors and sawmills can buy them and their hire runs to twelve pounds a day. Alas! we who drove the old-time saws are beyond a day's work, and most old-timers are resting from their labours.

As settlement absorbed the open and ploughable lands of the colony, the colonists turned their energies to the felling and burning off of the bush or forest lands, of which there appeared to be great and illimitable areas between the main mountain ranges and the sea. In its genesis this naturally was very crude. The scrub, as the undergrowth was called, was formerly cut about four feet above the ground and at the root, and left a clear view between the trees, but later a less expensive method cut only at the ground level.

The slashers used were a style of long-handled bill hook. Later, a country blacksmith near Feilding began to work up cart springs into the shape resembling a Gurkha kukri, which he handled with kowhai timber from the Orua riverbed. These slashers became very popular and were later made in a factory from special steel.

The axes, too, were a crude heavy type with a long unhandy blade, made by Sharpe or Mann. They often weighed seven pounds, whereas later a broader and lighter blade weighed only four and a half pounds, with a thin face, taking much less grinding.

Gradually the cross-cut saw took the place of the axe. The bushmen developed an expert knowledge of driving, or directing one tree against another, or a body of trees, which swept a great weight in one irresistible drive of crashing and thunderous timber. The work was dangerous and accidents were frequent, though with later experience some immunity from mishap was enjoyed—though it was only bought at the cost of vigilance and care.

The felled bush was usually finished by Christmas, and allowed about ten weeks to dry in the hot sun. Favoured by a wind in the right quarter, the bush was fired and, in a dry season, left a seed bed of ashes on which mixed grass seed and clovers were surface sown by hand. Stimulated by the potash the burn would in a few days show an array of needle points of green.

In a very few weeks the whole of the blackened surface was obscured by the luxurious growth, in which mustard and turnip also showed. It became a common saying that stock on a new

burn could not go wrong. In other words, the sheep or cattle throve mightily and few, if any, died. The next move was the ring fencing of the felled portion, generally a fence of seven wires, the posts and battens for which came from the numerous trunks still on the burn, split, and often in steep country transported to the fencing site on the shoulders of the bush farmers themselves.

One advantage of this style of farming was that it gave the man of small capital a chance, and he could, under the easy tenures and his own tireless energy, make a competence after a few years' effort. The three chief tenures were, first Deferred Payment, by which the purchase price of 15/- to 30/- per acre was spread over ten years; the second was Optional Right of Purchase, by which the tenant held the land on a rental based on five per cent. of its capital value, and at the end of ten years was allowed to pay off his debt to the Crown in ten succeeding yearly instalments; the third mode of lease was the result of labour pressure. The lease, known as Lease in Perpetuity, was for 999 years with a fixed rental at four per cent. on capital value, but with no power to borrow money or acquire the freehold. It was generally conceded that the Socialists had really over-reached themselves, the Crown having only a nominal ownership. Later, on a varied term, it was possible by paying the extra one per cent. in a lump sum, to level the purchase terms with the two previously quoted.

One phase of the bushman's life was the ready way he adapted himself in dress to the demands of his new calling. He declined the large-brimmed hat, holding that the brim often rendered a broken, hanging limb, broken by another in its fall, from being sighted, and many wore a round cap, or no hat at all. His boots, too, instead of being sewn outside the cap were always overlapped by the toe piece, so that no stitched portion showed a seam, which was readily dislodged by the bevelled cut tops of scrub, offering no portion to be caught by the small stumps. His socks were often replaced by a long strip of calico bound from the toe upwards to a few inches above the boot top. These strips of calico were usually termed Prince Alberts. Another innovation was the driving of rough, triangular spikes into the soles of the boots. These were reputed to give a firm grip when walking on logs or crossing on tree trunks over a gorge. It was quite novel to see with what assurance the bushman retained a foothold laden with axe, jigger or saw.

BUSH CRAFT

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT that bushmen of no mean ability were produced by the problems common to a life in the wooded localities, and the dexterity exhibited was largely indebted to styles of work; thus, the old style of a flat based scarf in felling, gave way to a V shaped one used by the visiting Tasmanian axemen, who competed at sports where the prizes were very substantial. The New Zealand men saw very soon that the Tasmanian style was fast, as the up and down stroke loosened the chip, and the broader axe used by the overseas men tended to ease the cut for the next stroke. Coming from over eighty years of timber activities, the Tasmanian trained in harder woods had no peer in accurate and even splitting of timber, as witness the continuous shipments of Van Diemen's Land palings so largely used for sheds, fences and dwelling houses by the early settlers of New Zealand.

From the foregoing it is not surprising that the New Zealand bushman became a superb axeman. The writer has noted the habit of using spiked footwear by axemen. If we watch a bushman's mode of work, we find his first essential was a fairly large grindstone of not less than two feet in surface, and with a square hole of one and a half inches in the centre. The bushman procured a three-foot piece of black maire which he split and shaped into two bearers, using the axe only. These two bearers were neatly halved into four posts, sunk firmly in the ground. The two horizontal pieces of maire were then bored in one level with an augur, and a spindle, also of black maire, was passed through the augur holes after being shaved to a smooth circular shape, where it came in contact with the bearers. In some cases a wrought iron handle from the nearest smithy was used, but if one was not handy, the ready axe trimmed a curved stick from the bush. Providing a steady squirt or two of oil was available, these spindles and axles took on a lacquer that reduced all friction to a minimum. Many sawmills for this reason had discarded brass and used the maire bearing.

It was said that black maire, used for machinery in England, had a sale at ninepence a pound. It is regrettable that the growing maire was attacked by a large borer, which discounted its value. The old fallen maire had not this defect, a

brother informed me, but later he had to use Australian hardwood to replace the maire for straining blocks and chocks in the chords of bridges. The hardness of the maire was very destructive on a fine axe; we usually kept a thick axe, dubbed "the bully," to deal with the wood, or more often a saw. Great care in grinding had to be used; too thick a shoulder on one side of the axe blade often led to an axe glancing off and a bad accident. Armed with a carefully ground axe, whose edge was finished on an oil stone, the bushman could be trusted to use his tool most expertly. To use such an axe on rimu stone veins, as they were termed, on maire, or on certain hard timbers, meant many hours' grinding, and to "knock a shilling" out of the face of an axe brought one to the soft core which, bending from loss of temper as the core of soft steel which formed the bulk of the tool was exposed, became no longer a reliable tool, and was the cause of much vexation and delay.

The old bushman rarely used the jigger I have previously mentioned, but made his own in a few minutes for each large tree from a sapling, generally of tawa. A few strokes of the axe reduced the stick to a spar about six feet long, and upended, was trimmed to a level bearing for the feet. The end was squared roughly, a neat square hole was cut into the tree about six feet from ground level, and the squared sapling inserted into the squared hole. After cutting the creepers and vines below his jigger, the bushman drove his axe into the tree at a height of a few feet and, assisted by its handle and a nearby vine, clambered into a standing position quite secure on his perch which, gripped by his spiked boots and the easy poise of body, enabled him to chop in easy comfort. In large timber where a saw was used, each handle of the saw was worked by the men on the footing I have described. Great care was taken where trees lodged against another tree. When felling the driver or main tree, every minute butt of cut scrub was chipped to ground level, and one man watched the lofty tops against the skyline and adjacent tree. A slight opening in the tops was noted by the watcher, and a warning cry was followed by the lightning discharge of the axe head-on, sideways, and the drop of the axeman from his perch and speedy exit along the prepared track, where a neglected root might lead to a fatal stumble.

One very frequent source of accident or near shave has been caused by the vines, chiefly Hukarata, pulling faulty rooted trees

such as hinau after them, in which case the bushman had to step very lively indeed. The writer on one occasion was in a gully finishing the felling of a heavy white pine (Kahikatea), and with the tree well on the topple, was retreating uphill when the yells of his mates alarmed him and he put on pace, thinking one of the driven trees was coming back. It proved, however, to be a huge hinau, drawn by the last tree chopped directly on to my safety run, and which lashed me with the ends of its limbs.

In the inland Patea, near the Ruanui estate, I was putting in the final scarf in a gale when I detected a movement in the body of the drive, and, throwing my axe, I climbed off the jigger none too soon. The falling tree hit my last chopped tree and lay squarely across my stump, and to my great sorrow, with no smith nearer than Taihape, I was bereft of my prized jigger iron, lost in the heavy snow-bound scrub.

Whether it was the result of pure air, of clean hard life and perfect health, the bushman, though taking big risks, was a jocular and lovable character, generous and hearty and a fine mate. They, of course, had minor accidents of which they made little. A very serious axe cut was bound together with a piece of calico and, with a gay laugh, forgotten. Such cuts healed, as the surgeons term it, "by first intention."

The felling of bush was paid for on a contract basis, which might be for light bush about 25/- to 33/- per acre. Much depended on the dexterity and working ability of the contracting parties, but in most cases a good gang made good money. After Christmas, when felling ceased, the bushmen were absorbed in shearing, fencing and cutting grass seed, or in some cases, road work. A workman of repute never lacked a job and, in general, simply applied to a former employer for one. The writer has known of many employers who gave easy facilities to workmen to acquire small farms from their surplus land, or through State settlements, and in many cases supplied them with good stock as the nucleus of a thriving flock or dairy herd.

The bush is now a thing of the past, or such as remains is now found on hilltops and broken country. The tawhero land is very steep and yields poor results, and is seldom exploited in these present times. The old bushman is now an octogenarian or has passed on—"The most of them have passed the flood, and part are passing now."

THE BURN

WE HAD BEEN DOING the odd jobs which accumulate on a bush farm during the latter end of the felling season, and now we were finishing the felling of large rimu and other trees which, killed by last year's fire, stood along the ridges bordering the newly felled bush, before tackling the cutting and threshing of the crop of cocksfoot grass-seed, now nearly ripe and waving like a field of barley in the January sunshine. Had we any surplus flesh, and as strenuous working "bush cockatoos" we were as scant of spare adipose as of spare money, this "punching," as we called it, of hard dry corky rimu in the blazing sun with no green bush as shade, was the last thing needed to complete a Spartan training. It was with the greatest sense of relief that my partner Danny and myself saw the last flying fragments of branches settle as we gathered saw and wedges after we had thrown our last tree into the shattered mass of stumps, grotesque limbs and smaller branches which had once been the component parts of that variegated foliage and beauty —the New Zealand native bush. Alas for our vandalism! we had to live and the bush had to die, so away with regrets— early next year would see its site covered by sheep pasturing on the lush potash-fed grasses.

Gathering the tools together, we sat beside the tea billy for a last snack and drink, a final look round, and a casual word or two in the slowly uttered speech which those, interested in their work and in contact with nature, seem to adopt. The tranquility of the scene below us, and the feeling that accompanies a well-earned smoke, seemed to put us on good terms with ourselves and the world in general, but my attention, drawn by a quick movement of my mate, was centred on a single flake of black fern-leaf which had silently fallen between us.

"Fire somewhere," quoth Dan, as he scrambled to his feet, instinctively turning his face full on to the wind, whose murmur had become a steady breeze. Other darkened fragments fell at intervals, and, no longer in doubt, we watched to see whether the fire's progress was in our direction.

Presently we heard a distant quiet murmur quite different from that of the wind. The smoke became more dense, and

from a hazy screen became a spreading canopy whose sinister shadow hushed the song birds of the nearby bush and left us in a state of vague uncertainty—but not for long. A dull roar, and from the far side of a ridge not far away, a fiery meteor shot up in the air followed by a numerous retinue. The wind had increased to a gale, the winged fire balls not merely igniting the close-at-hand tinder-like moss and wood, but leaping whole gullies and extending the conflagration to long distant points.

"Fire draws fire," said Dan in an undertone; for our voices were muted in presence of this wild destructive force so suddenly wakened into activity.

The numerous fires seemed to merge into each other till the whole of the felled bush became an inferno—a modern Phlegethon whose streams were living fire. As the flames drove on, the hollow dead trees still standing were converted into giant chimneys, the roaring furnace behind its forced draught of heated air carrying sparks and fragments of burning bark and timber to ignite the few patches remaining of unburnt timber. At short intervals a crash, and thousands of ascending sparks and fiery particles rose like a swarm of golden bees from where a dry giant, undermined by corrosive heat, fell prone. Frequently we heard heavy reports where some hollow trees whose faulty end faced the wind, blew into fragments, the incredible weight of heated gaseous air proving too powerful for its woody container. Long waves of flame twisted sinuously, and one could well understand how men firing bush had been caught by a swirling fiery tongue; indeed, we saw a family of wild pigs perish, as they raced for the green bush. Faced with this destructive grandeur of glowing, leaping fire, the roar and crash, with the inky sky over all, the sun obscured and our light the furnace of hundreds of acres of flame, a strange awe possessed us, and there rose to one's lips half forgotten phrases—"A consuming fire"; "Chariots of fire," or "Consumed by fervent heat." We had not noticed the flight of time, and only Dan's "What about camp?" recalled us to the fact that the fire had died down after its final effort, and also that our throats were dry, our faces slightly scorched, and our eyes tingling with the smoke.

"What's the chance of a burn, Dan?" I queried of my mate.

"A white burn," he replied, "the ash will be like snow when the fire dies down."

BUDDING OWNERSHIP

WE HAD PREVIOUSLY buried all inflammable material such as tents and tools, and now we were ready to tackle the grass seeding. Such grasses as meadow foxtail, the earliest, and Italian rye, were finished, but cocksfoot, the main stay, still stood, and Timothy, the very latest to harvest, was still fairly green. With our clovers, red and white, alsyke, and also white mustard for the lambs, we bought also a small amount of soft turnip seed to suit the teeth of the young lambs when in the loose stage and transition to the two-tooth.

At all events, Danny's aim was to catch the coach en route to Hawke's Bay, while mine lay in the Wanganui direction. A hurried shave, a wash, and the eagerly awaited Christmas spell was now in view—a carefree and well-earned holiday. Danny, with a hearty good-bye, had gone, and I was turning toward the main road when I was struck by one regret; I was leaving a pet, a cold fushionless one—the kokopu or native trout.

We had been in the habit of getting water for the billy tea at a little waterfall above a mountain pool, in which there swam a lordly and outsize kokopu, a little more than a foot long. Each morning I had seen him devoid of motion, except for a slight wave of the tail. His gold-rimmed eye and a body like waved silk, always delighted me, and I could not bear the thought that the first rains would, in the wash of the hills, bring down enough caustic lye from the potash to kill him and all his tribe.

I lost no time in dipping out the little fish and putting him in a kerosene tin, and with a few ferns to shield him from the sun, I set forth with a light swag, no less happy than before, with the thought that I had saved my kokopu. I had reached the main road and was tramping steadily along, a small swag on my back and my coat tied to the swag, when I became aware of a buggy drawn by two horses slowing up and stopping beside me.

With a hail from the driver, a middle-aged man: "Do ye want a lift, laddie?" I turned and saw the farmer was not alone; a couple of girls were in the back seat, and were peering over to examine me and my burden of swag and can.

I told him I could not bother him with a can of water, but

the old chap enquired what I carried so carefully and demanded a look, so I moved toward the buggy and drew aside the fern so that the occupants could peer down at my kokopu.

Looking up, I was looking into the most glorious eyes I had ever seen, framed by a wealth of fair hair and rosy cheeks with just a trace of freckles to heighten the smooth fairness. Perhaps I stared too long, and was awakened by the farmer's next query: "And why, laddie, are ye taking a fushionless fish like the native trout in a can? I've tried to eat them and they are a mass of bones with blue flesh forbye, and nae use at a'."

I explained that I was going to liberate the fish at a creek not affected by the ash of the new burn I had just left. The old chap seemed to be cogitating, and kept his team at walking pace till we reached a suitable pool where I liberated my burden. Twisting the buggy to disclose the step between the wheels, the old chap said tersely: "Hop oop," which I did. I felt shy enough, and my companions had little to say.

The farmer and his wife on the front seat gave a lead to the conversation: "Ye'll be one of the Rangatatau settlers I'm jalousin'," to which I assented. Ours was a new block in its second year of settlement, and no doubt he had heard a great deal of its progress, and had also recognised the general sinewy appearance of a bushman. One easily saw the pale skin of a man working in green bush as contrasted with that of his more sunburned brother, in what we were in the habit of referring to as the open country.

At last, after a few miles of a quiet jog trot, the horses turned down a side road where, about a quarter of a mile further on, standing on a slight rise, stood a pioneer homestead, built, I should think, within twenty years or so. At the gate, which I opened, I reached up for my swag, but was arrested by the mildly shocked farmer and his spouse. The former said in a very hearty tone: "Ye'll be biding the night, lad, and ye have'na a horse ta turn loose, so get up again, laddie buck. What were ye bent on?" continued the old farmer.

To this I said, "I am going to Wanganui for a spell and a holiday."

"Well, ye will be none the waur of a soft bed and fair meals for a day or two."

I was nothing loth, to tell the truth. This hearty friendliness and warmhearted treatment was joined to the wish to see more of my golden-haired divinity of the buggy ride. I am afraid

I did not need further pressing, and not long afterward I found myself with my legs under a well-laden table and a greater variety of well-cooked food than that which usually emerged from our humble camp oven.

"Once the land improvement grips ye, there's nothing left for frivolity," said my host. "The land's a good bank and for many years there's no withdrawal slips."

I said somewhat ruefully I had already found that out for myself, but I now wanted to buy into a line of ewes or lambs to stock the new burn when grass seed had been sown.

The old man pulled reflectively at his old briar and after a time he said, "But why put all your siller into buying sheep? Ye can get plenty of five-year ewes on shares; that is, the owner of cast off ewes will share in the first crop of lambs and wool, and the ewes and half the lambs are your own at the end of the season, and if you arrange it so, ewe lambs for your later flock sheep should be your share. On the owner's part, the ewes would probably be worth only five shillings each, and half the lambs and wool cheque will run out a much better return than selling the ewes for boiling down."

I had never considered this aspect before, and I was so taken with the novelty of the idea I was silent, and was aware the old farmer was still speaking.

"Ye mentioned your funds from your mother's estate. Hoo much hae ye left?"

I told him the residue left would be about a thousand pounds after sowing the burn.

He nodded approvingly. "Why man," he said, "you have capital enough to get three thousand ewes and a couple of thousand lambs if you work it well, and could lease enough of the newly grassed lands of your nearby settlers in the block. Many have no fencing to hold sheep and would readily let you have the pieces of grass at a reasonable rate. If ye can induce the settlers to let you the different acreages of grass ye will handle something like a fortune in a twelve month. I can let ye have about twal' hundred ewes and I can get ye another four thousan' from men I am acquainted wi' a few miles away. Ye will need one hundred rams and over, but full mouth rams are cheap; maybe will cost you fifty pound the lot. Man," he said, warming to his subject, "ye can't go wrong, nothing but improvement happens to sheep or cattle on a new burn. The growth is unbelievable, ye simply can't overstock, and ye scarcely

ever ha'e a fatality, bar accident. Man, I've seen lambs ye had to carry into a new burn and ye would hardly know them again for size and a bucket of dags for'bye."

I said I would think it over, and the good wife coming in the room said, "Noo, David, I hope ye are not making a hard bargin wi' the laddie, ye ken he is ower tender to deal wi' an Aberdonian."

"Na na, lass, I'm just by way of putting a fortune in his way."

Notwithstanding a sceptical sniff, I assured the old man's spouse that her husband had put quite new ideas into my head that I thought might be turned to ready cash later on.

The old farmer pressed me to stay a week or two till Danny returned from Hawke's Bay, as he said shearing had put him behind with the sheep work, drafting and dipping being the most important, with the cocksfoot seed in want of immediate attention. To be truthful I was very willing to stay. Their elder son had gone overseas and had not returned, and though it was from small indications a great sorrow, they very sensibly looked on it as no more than the sacrifice made by relatives and neighbours in the cause of liberty and justice.

The days passed very quickly, and if I was not badly in love with twenty-year-old Jean I was perilously near the same, and sometimes I had the idea she was not indifferent to me. I seemed to be much happier in her company and in sight of her lissom figure, joined to the witchcraft of her voice, which one had to be near to hear—so low-pitched and musical to me as to entrance me and envelop my waking thoughts with her sweet presence. Whether the wise old mother saw any sign of my admiration I know not, and she said nothing. I was too much in awe of a lovely lass to dream that she would consider sharing my life; I still had the pleasure of her company and the delight of seeing her. Some day, I resolved, when I could offer her a home worthy of her acceptance, I would ask her the gift of her affection, but, alas for good resolutions, nature takes a hand and a premature declaration emerges totally against former plans and cool judgment.

I wrote to the different owners of adjoining property, and finally I had agreed to lease for one year the grazing of their properties, the different blocks totalling about fourteen hundred acres. This amount with a fair take of grass should carry, with the mustard and softer turnips, the equivalent of five ewes to

the acre, but this number would need all the lamb increase to keep the feed anywhere near ordinary grazing level.

After a day of varied work at the old homestead, which embraced cleaning up the sheep for dipping, dosing the lambs for worms with what they then called an anthelmentic, I was sitting by the fireside and old Mr. Fraser became more "looseneed up," as he called the easy feeling of leisure and a pipe drawing well.

"I'm not sure Chairlie that we couldn'a improve on the terms and save ye a hantle of siller. Ye see by your own tell, all your neighbours are what we call absentees. The Land Board does'na like an absent holder on a Crown Lease, but for a year or two they are easy on the man of limited means. All your neighbours but yourself will hae to buy grass seed, and ye hae this in your favour, that ye are cutting a patch of your own cocksfoot and nae doot ye can buy much more for cash from your neighbours' surplus. Rough cleaned, it willna cost you much more at the thrashing sheet than threepence a pound, and ye will need a wheen timothy, foxtail and about a pound each per acre of alsyke, white clover and cow grass. Ye may get other seeds, but they are not necessary; ye will hae a good mixture an' a serviceable one. Outside that for'bye, ye will need half a pound o' mustard and the same of a quick growth turnip to the acre to take the brunt till your grass is ready to graze. Now laddie, a telegram to Poverty Bay will gi'e ye the price of rye seed, and there is no better in New Zealand."

The telegram despatched, a reply came a few hours later offering "off the machine, five and six a bushel," which the old farmer commented was low, even on a thousand bushel quote. "Noo, if ye will take your pencil and tot up the quantities and cost, ye will make the cost per acre about eleven shillings, and to that ye may add track makings, packing and sowing the burn. For a lump sum of a hundred pounds or so, the Maoris will pack and put the seed on for you. They like a quick job and then, too, if you give them a few fat ewes to kill for themselves and promise a sack of tamuri (snapper) for a quick job, ye'll hae the whole job over in a fortnight. Noo, I'm putting a notion to you that, instead of paying oot good siller, ye offer to sow the different burns at six shillings an acre, grazing thrown in, which will I think, suit them better than paying out so much cash. Ye can try it and do nae harm."

I did try it, and all the land owners fell in with the new

arrangement. Mr. Fraser and I hitched up the buggy pair and we jogged off to see the Maoris some seven miles away. Old Rupino (Reuben), the head man, greeted us cordially, and after listening intently, called some of the older men. After a korero or talk, they expressed themselves as satisfied if we found pack saddles to take the seed from the waggons. This relieved us of any further troubles. All sacks were to be shaken inside out and neatly packed for the returning waggons. They received the fat sheep, also the bonus of a sack of sea fish, and we parted amicably over a job well and faithfully done.

I had been as busy, as the phrase runs, as a "one-armed paperhanger with the itch." The rye seed and the cocksfoot, the latter machine dressed, were, by machinery blended and bagged to facilitate handling, and no one sack was different to another; an honest spread of seed is vital to a good sward.

And now began the serious matter of the stock. I had arranged that if short of cash I could raise a wool lien, but did not care for this as it led to the Loan Gazette and undue publicity. Subsequently, I managed to sell the dry hoggets after shearing, and the wool kept me floating till the ewes were shorn and the lambs later marketed, working on what they termed a current account, whereon it was easy to draw for current expenses. Soon small spear points of grass followed the Maoris' efforts, and then the turnips and mustard, but as rains came the warm earth gave promise of an early bite, and I had arranged that April should be the delivery month after the sheep were dipped.

In the meantime much required doing; a fair-sized yard was required, but Danny and I, with some help, put up a fair yard of split stuff in about ten days. Through these yards I drafted the weaker ewes and lambs. This sifting of the sheep was very necessary, as we were able to run the weaker sheep on to the easier hills and clearer burnt portions where we could shepherd them and give them closer attention.

It is a remarkable thing about sheep that once run on a particular portion they will stop on that spot, and an attentive and experienced shepherd will point out by well-marked points any particular sheep. It is a mistake to suppose sheep are all alike—an old sheep man sees many differences in his charges. Old man Fraser was as good as his word, and on the whole the ewes he arranged for were, when the paint brand was applied, bar a little foot rot—soon cured among the potash—quite a

good lot. I overheard the old man remonstrating with the owner of one lot of ewes. "Hoots mon, ye surely are no go'en to give the laddie some of thae sheep, why man they wad die on him; ye'll put in they crocks as dog meat and gie the laddie anither five per cent."

As the season advanced, there was every prospect of a good lambing, and some care had to be taken to relieve any stuck in the cleft of a log. The hoggets, numbering upward of a thousand, were designed to sell early and in the wool, and provide a little ready cash for wages, etc. I had leased Danny's portion of our joint holding and, afterwards, I bought him out. I also pushed on by contract work the ring fencing of my own holding and that of Danny to hold selected sheep when I sold out and cashed in on my venture.

As time went on, the ewes and lambs became what Danny called bouncing sheep. We took them in mobs, and with some help from neighbours with dogs, and crutched the ewes some three months before the lambs were due, giving them quite a natty appearance and also producing a fair sum for crutchings—not large, but very acceptable. With all preparations now complete, we awaited the coming lambing season.

As time progressed, we were kept busy with the ewes as they produced their lambs, and I was gratified to see many twins. The ewes seemed to produce their lambs naturally and with little effort, and to have ample supplies of milk on which the lambs throve mightily. To the young farmer I think no single item affords such pleasure as the advent of young stock, and one understands the reference to "fruitful" returns of fields or herds. The production is not only the result of much care, but a generous return for industry.

After the lambing in August, the lambs bought (by this time called hoggets or two-tooth wethers) were drafted, cleaned up, and put in the sale. They were very fine sheep in condition, and bar the charcoal in the wool, carrying a good fleece. My profit on these, which were quite suitable for butchers, amounted to about eight shillings per head, and as losses were practically nothing I found myself with a very handy four hundred pounds' profit. From the ewes after shearing I might, even in a low market, expect nearly nine hundred pounds, with possibly some seven hundred as a wool return.

No wonder I felt opulent and in a fit frame of mind to ask a question of Jean, and later of her parents, should the answer

be 'Yes." True, I had neglected to see the family when so immersed in my sheep work, but I resolved to see Jean and "enquire at her own mouth" and become later reinforced by new courage. My fears had raised up considerable barriers, which melted before my eager wooing, and when I spiered at Jean she trustfully placed her hand in mine with a simple, "I think I loved you when I saw you with the kokopu," and as she was in my arms, she asked: 'Do you think, Charlie, you will find anything to take the place of your fish?" Again she said, "I think, Charlie, I would like something of a more warm affection than you had for that wee trout."

Old David, when I thanked him for his many good services, said: "Hoots mon, ye have done well for yourself, it's no me but yourself deserves the credit."

I then told him I wanted a more precious gift from him, and Jean and I could not be happy except when married, and to my surprise he said, "You are a good lad, and I would rather trust my child to a man compassionate enough to save a wee fish than see her marry money in a loveless match. Betty," he called, and when the good wife appeared, he said, "This lad wants oor lass." The dame said nothing, but passing her arm round my neck gave me a motherly kiss, forerunner of many and a warm love of a life duration. Then she said, "I am a happy woman, and there is na lad I would rather trust my lass and her future to than thee, though you have a queer taste in fishy pets, but we have a good heart lad, and I am fair and proud this day."

The old man said tersely, "Aye, that's well said. Fetch the whisky lass."

And this does not end the story of the kokopu—a golden-haired tiny Jean still shows a large trout in a special cistern as the kokopu.

SHEARING METHODS

THE OLD MAN smoked silently for some time before he spoke, though by this time I had always remarked the old chap had a habit of ruminating prior to divulging his train of thought. "Ye'll be mayhap wondering why I haena shorn my lambs along wi' the lave*," he said. "I'll tell ye why I canna fash mysel" by shearing lambs. First comes the fact that ye shorten next season's length of staple, as the wool agents call it, but the worst effect is the habit of vicious shearers in dumping a lamb when on the board. Ye will have noticed, too, a shorn lamb of any cross of Lincoln blood seems to open up the spine to direct chill in bleak weather, as the wool falls each side and leaves the vital backbone exposed. The dumping is the most ruinous as far as the sheep is concerned, and many a fine gimmer or ewe hogget as you English call it, has been ruined when shorn as a lamb by the vicious practice I mentioned When shearers are striving for a tally, or a big output of shorn sheep, dumping is the act of pushing the lamb's head downward when seated on the boards, in such a way that the lamb's lungs are pushed down on his diaphragm causing great agony and often fatal injury to the young animal. The idea is that by dumping the sides of the lamb are flattened and permit a larger flat surface of fleece to be exposed to the shears.

"Old Kenneth McKenzie, now long dead, would never have his lambs shorn and his gimmers ruined. I am no match for old Kenneth in sheep knowledge, but I do know that many a fine flock ewe dies without apparent cause, or becomes unthrifty from some obscure cause. Aye, ye may urge that the growing gimmer unshorn is hard to keep clean, but in these days of machines the wool produced by crutching is considerable, and the dagging of sheep reduced to a very easy task."

From my own observation I had remarked the immunity of an unshorn lamb to climatic changes, and the longer staple and heavy fleece much superior in many ways to the shorn animal. Another anomaly, not in my opinion backed by common sense, was the shearing of lambs about two months later than adult sheep, when one imagined they should enter the winter warm and with a good fleece.

* Rest.

AND, AT LAST

THE EWES had been dipped and the mobs of lambs were also dipped and dosed before coming on to the place. Things had gone very much according to schedule, but one fly remained in my ointment—the wild pigs were now returning from their bush fastnesses whence the fire had driven them.

The younger pigs did little harm, except to graze on raoriki, which the Maori boils and as "puha" uses as cabbage and holds in repute as a blood purifier. Grazing and the berries of the hinau and miro were innocuous enough, but once the old sows and old boars tasted blood, they were absolute murderers of sheep. Once they got the taste of young dead lambs, the pigs followed up lambing ewes and tore the newly born lamb to pieces, and often tore to pieces the ewe herself.

In my youth, at a place where the Awawhau Block lay at the foot of the Ruahine range, so bad was the pig menace that the settlers could hardly attain a lamb percentage of forty per cent.

Well, here again, my friends, the Maoris came to the rescue, hunting with the dog pack and a Snider carbine. The captured quarry was treated to a bed of burning leaves, and when put on the pack horses the job was so clean as to show the bullet hole quite clearly. These regular forays not only supplied the natives with their favourite food, but kept the cunning killers in complete check.

After docking the lambs and shearing the ewes and the lambs later on, work among the sheep became quite an easy job, and I began to erect a ring fence to hold my own stock when surplus stock had been sold and the respective lease lands returned to their owners again. I began to think I was quite opulent, and the idea of building a house obsessed me. I had grown rather fond of my old farmer friend, and many a "pawky" bit of wisdom was worth listening to.

I called at a mill midway to our trading centre and arranged that such timber as would be required for a modest home and sheds should be ready to load any waggons coming out for wool. An old builder furnished me with a list of the timber required, and a rough sketch drawn by a carpenter's pencil was, if crude, a good guide to the sizes, and precluded waste in

that direction. I also arranged the timber should be filletted or stacked with lathes between and left to dry, so reducing handling and cartage.

I omitted to mention Danny had picked up a notion in Hawke's Bay—a so-called dagging shed with a sawn floor. His example had a corrugated iron roof, lean-to shaped, but I turned this down as being too hot in summer, and there being free-running rimu and white pine handy, we cut blocks about sixteen inches long which, split into billets of six inches thick, were stored under an awning of roofing iron and provided a wet day job in front of a fire. The tool used was a blade like a narrow chopper with a thick back and a loop placed at the end of the blade to hold a handle was then used as a lever to wrench the split open. Each billet of wood was placed on a block and split down the centre. The pieces were halved in a similar way and the result was a shingle of about half an inch thick. The rafters were also split timber. The shingle knife, as our tool was called, could be bought at hardware shops, but any handy smith could beat out one on his anvil, and we had at least three in use.

Our shed frame being erected on eight foot split cantlings was the nucleus of our shearing shed, and with a cheap second-hand two stand shearing plant did good service for many years for shearing, cleaning up, and dosing the sheep, but I considered it more handy to shear in a well-appointed shed with a regular gang of shearers, rouseabouts, pressers and a cook, as being faster and less of a yard ordeal to the sheep. In this connection I find that it is a fact never doubted by successful men that sheep harassed by frequent yardings, rough dogs and tedious spells in the yards, do more to waste the flock than anything else. Given their own time, it is amazing how far sheep, grazing quietly and driven by men who know their job, will travel, but if bustled great damage may be caused to a mob in the aggregate of great value, or, as one old shepherd put it, "the sheep fret."

Well, things seemed to be running smoothly; perhaps I kept more men than some would deem necessary, but I found that the rough dining hall and cookhouse were centres of cheery laughter, the men's whares exuded good humour and hilarious badinage. In splitting fences, making tracks with a cross-cut saw, and even some bushfelling, there was no lack of jobs or overlapping. The nucleus of a future garden was also in

evidence, all refuse from the shears and dagging floor was pushed through into the garden enclosure where they were put in trenches to produce peas more like the pictures of a seed catalogue than any real ones I have seen. The growth of nectarines and their heavy load of fruit in a piece of new country had to be seen to be believed.

As matters progressed, the sheep presented a very different aspect from that of their arrival, but of course they were log-stained, which detracted from the wool's value. Many of the sheep, too, being what they called "the old Romney," were liable to lose patches of wool on the belly, neck and over the tail. This was not noticeable in any sheep having a coarse and definite lock wool, as the Lincoln, Cotswold and others. The so-called "improved Romney" of sixty years ago was strongly suspected of Lincoln origin. I read about that time of a well-known breeder who said he had in one year added seven pounds in weight to the average ram fleece. Hard sheep men shrewdly suspected there had been a light locked Lincoln somewhere handy. The "old Romney" had the bad defect in "killing yellow," which detracted from its flesh value.

I had no intention of keeping the full mouth ewes after weaning the lambs in February. Today one sees lamb fairs in early January, but we kept our lambs as long as the ewe could supply milk, though the ewes tended to dry off after shearing, but much depended on the treatment of the ewe in shed and yards, and management was needed to pass the sheep quickly through this ordeal. If sheep to be shorn were yarded in small lots, they could often be returned to their lambs at nightfall and a fresh lot of woollies were put into the night-pens in readiness for an early start before the breakfast spell-ho. It was not the best policy to keep an old ewe too long, as she lost her ability to fatten and became what the Maori shearers termed a hipi kuia—an old woman sheep, called by the pakeha a crock. Such a sheep, from the wear of rearing lambs, became emaciated and bony and very light and thin in her covering of wool. Such a sheep was only a boiler for her carcass, or, worse still, was worked off as tinned mutton. I had resolved early to retain only lambs later to be hoggets or two-tooth.

Stocked with young and vigorous sheep on my own holding, after disposing of my main surplus, one could view with some composure the vagaries of the sheep market, as for some four years it was not necessary to venture on sales to dispose of sur-

plus or elderly ewes. The shearing, with fresh lots of woollies every day and the drovers taking a return lot of shorn sheep, was put through in about a week. The baled wool was smartly cleared each day by the waggons and became, with insurance, a ready asset in my farm economy.

True, the shearing and droving bulked fairly largely as a wages bill, but it has always been considered that where weather conditions are a factor speed is the essence of the contract. Once my wool was off the sheep and safely in store, I felt a relief and lessening of anxiety, with yard work as a simple wind-up in drafting—first the fat lambs, later the ewes for market. Not many lambs, and those only wethers, fell to my share to market. The original owners of the ewes were given the agreed lambs and wool. As the percentage of lambs was slightly over 100 per cent., one lamb to every ewe was allowed and the sheep men gave me the surplus, expressing themselves well satisfied by their return and the value of half the nett returns from the ewe and wool payment. The ewes when weaned off their lambs, sold quite well, being in very good order and attracting the notice of fattening low-country farmers.

Thus, the end of February found me in a financial position I had never hoped to attain. After retaining some thousand odd ewe lambs and selling all inferior female and wether sheep, I still had more than my original capital, plus a new house, a ring fenced farm, yards, wool shed, etc. I retained a couple of grazing leases from the owners, who expressed themselves as well pleased with their treatment, and I gave Danny, who had helped me so loyally, not only the purchase money, but a liberal bonus toward his own start.

And now two persons were quite agreed nothing stood in the way of joint housekeeping. Sundry feminine conclaves, from which the men were barred, finally fixed detail and procedure, and the narrator of these chronicles found himself facing a clergyman in the front parlour of the old homestead, and the transfer of the most precious person in the whole world from her parents' care to mine.

As time went on, Danny became my brother-in-law, and the old folk retired to make room for the young pair. A golden-haired little girl and a lusty boy filled my heart with joy, and the old man and his wife were frequent visitors. The old man would drive over, hitch up his buggy horse and saunter in with

the inquiry: "An' hoo are ye the day, mistress, and whaur's Chairlie?"

To which Jean would reply, "Did ye come to spier after Chairlie, Daddy, and neglect yer ain dawty and yer ain grand-child!"

Whereon the old chap with no protest at all, found himself in an armchair with a cup of tea at his elbow, the little girl at his knee, and a vociferous young tyrant making frantic dives at his beard, and seemingly a very happy grandad indeed. Later, with a long-haired small guide, he suffered himself to be led to a rocky basin wherein a lordly and aged kokopu floated with a golden-eyed insouciance, apparently filling the Maori description "like lazy kokopu, asleep." The little girl invariably called it the "Tokkapoo," but grand-daddy referred to it as a "fushionless fish."

Those who have had the patience to read this story will agree that the kokopu was more or less a fish of happy augury, if not one of equally joyful destiny.

FARING SOUTH

★

LYON

REED