

THE CALL OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS

*being
Impressions of a Tour
in
Australia and New Zealand*

BY

A. S. WADIA, M.A.

*Sometime Professor of English and History, Elphinstone College,
Bombay; Dakshina Fellow in Natural Science*

"One feels indeed that this is no ordinary book of travel, but a very intimate, inclusive and natural account of personal experiences impersonally described by one possessed of the highest gifts of literary excellence and vision combined with a rare poetry of feeling and a loving love of truth."—*Mazdaznan*.

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**THE CALL OF
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The Three Sisters, Blue Mountains, N.S.W.

THE CALL
OF THE
SOUTHERN CROSS

Being Impressions
of a Four Months' Tour
in Australia and New Zealand

BY
ARDASER SORABJEE N. WADIA, M.A.

*Sometime Professor of English and History, Elphinstone
College, Bombay; Dakshina Fellow in Natural Science.*

*"The Southern Cross sent word across the Seas that said:
'The House is finished and the doors are wide,
Come, follow in my Wake, and enter in.
A stately House it is, with tables spread,
Where men in liberty and love abide
With souls afire and hearts akin.'"*

After Roderic Quinn.

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“For them a Continent undreamed of, peerless—
A Realm for happier sons of theirs to be,
One spot preserved, unspotted, bloodless, tearless,
Beyond the Rim of an Enchanted Sea
Lay folded in the soft compelling langour
Of warm South Airs, as an Awaiting Bride,
While strife and hate, and culminating anger
Raged through the far-off nations battle-dyed.”

John Farrell.



“Remote compatriots, wheresoe'er ye dwell,
By your prompt voices ringing clear and true
I know that with you all is not quite well;
Young as you are, your world-task just begun!
All of the Empire know, as I know by you
Our Veins are Million but our Heart is One.”

After J. G. Findlay.

EPISTLE DEDICATORY
TO
MY FRIENDS
IN
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

**“In Each Other’s faces,
Looked We like the Pioneers;
Drank the Wine of Courage,
And parted like Friends of Years.”**

After Jessie Mackay.

EPISTLE DEDICATORY

DEAR FRIENDS,

It was that intrepid and rather erratic French explorer, Louis de Rougemont, who first kindled my interest in Australia. I remember as a boy buying the very first issue of the *Wide World Magazine* in which commenced the Adventures of de Rougemont. So thrilled was I by the story of his daring and exciting exploits in the Wilds of Australia that each month I waited impatiently for the next issue: and I still remember that it was with a heavy heart I put down the number in which they came to an end. Though most of his Adventures time has well-nigh wiped out of my mind, and de Rougemont himself is little more than a memory to me now, I can yet recall to mind two things of which he spoke. Of his great devotion and love for his Black companion, Yamba, and of his riding the sea astride the back of a giant tortoise. Rougemont, however, had merely excited my curiosity about Australia. It was Disraeli,

that one great statesman of creative imagination and Imperial vision England produced in the Nineteenth Century, who made Australia a matter of more than curious interest to me. "Think Imperially," said Disraeli in a moment of rare prescience fifty years ago, and that Imperial slogan has ever since so impressed itself upon my mind and coloured my thought and political outlook that I could not and can never even to this day think of my own country, India, except in terms of the Empire. But, thinking imperially and merely enthusing about the Empire did not for long satisfy me. A larger desire took possession of my soul of "Seeing the Empire" and of knowing my Imperial fellow-citizens in their own countries and among their own home surroundings. To carry out that desire of mine, I started with "the brightest Jewel in the Imperial Diadem," and saw my own country from north to south, and from east to west. Then, after a time, I went to the heart and centre of the Empire and lived in England and moved among the English people and, as the roving fancy led me, travelled through the rest of the British Isles. On my next visit to England I crossed over to Canada and saw it from end to end, that is, from Montreal in

Quebec to Victoria in British Columbia. In further fulfilment of that same desire three years ago I sailed down South to your fine countries, covered vast tracts of the two Dominions by car, rail, and aeroplane, and brought back with me a rich store of valuable experience and the priceless memory of a few dear human souls, of all of which I speak in the following pages. Not having kept a diary of the facts and incidents narrated in this volume, I have had to rely solely upon my memory in describing them. If, in spite of my endeavours to be scrupulously fair and accurate in my descriptions and narration of events, you, my dear friends, detect certain misstatements of facts, you will, I am sure, attribute them to those inevitable and insuperable human limitations of which we all feel conscious at times, and pass on.

Aseveryours,

A. S. W.

MACDALA HOUSE, POONA,
Empire Day, 1932.

SOUTHWARD.

“What opiate sealed thine eyes, O South, till others
Grew tired and faint in East and West and North?
Why didst thou dream until thy joyful brothers
Found where thou wert, and led thee smiling forth?
Why didst thou mask the radiant smile thou wearest?
Why wert thou veiled from all the eager eyes?
Why left so long, O first of lands and fairest,
Beneath thy tent of un conjectured skies?”

John Farrell.

CHAPTER I

SOUTHWARD

IN travelling, as in all other affairs of life, the great thing is to get started. It took me four years to perform this simple feat and move Southward. In 1925 I had made up my mind to go to Australia and New Zealand. When my travelling arrangements were well-nigh completed a distressing and most disconcerting motor-accident, resulting in irreparable injury to two of my near and dear ones, made me on the instant give up all idea of leaving home, at all events for the time being. It was not till the October of 1929 that circumstances so adjusted themselves as to make it possible for me to start on my long-deferred voyage to the Southern Climes. But once set a-going, I completed my extended tour of some twenty-five thousand miles exactly as I had planned it, and returned home on the day and almost at the hour I had fixed before leaving.

It was a well-nigh empty P. & O. boat that

I boarded, for of the passengers of the good old sixteen-thousand-ton *Naldera*, a large number had left her at Bombay. Of those still on board, a great many were, as might be expected, Australians returning home from their sojourn in Europe. Yet in this limited number there were a few notable personalities, chief among them being the returning Governor of Victoria with his staff and the wife of the Commander-in-Chief in India. Though a peer of ancient lineage, His Excellency was perhaps the most democratically-minded person on board, for he mixed freely, talked, and danced with all. Curiously enough, it was his staff which formed that eminent species of humanity—so peculiar to the British Isles and known all over the world as *snobs*—without a coterie of which no P. & O. liner passenger-list could ever be complete. But the strangest and most amusing part of it all was that the only two clergymen we had on the vessel, belonging to the two great divisions of Christianity, got mixed up with this set; and, in consequence, took to the ways, manners, and mode of speech of the delectable creatures that composed that set. One takes a certain pathological interest in the ordinary society snob and treats him

with the silent contempt he merits. But what was one to think of and how was one to treat his clerical analogue? A snobbish ecclesiastic seems almost a contradiction in terms: and yet, strange to say, we carried two genuine specimens of the species with us. A story went the rounds about the Anglican prelate. One Sunday the reverend gentleman took the usual morning service and chose for the text of his sermon: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness." After the service a set of four young men were seen seated outside the saloon-bar with a glass of something stronger than ginger-ale before each. The church dignitary happened to pass by and, seeing the glasses filled to the brim, jestingly remarked: "You fellows are *thirsty*." "You bet, padre, we are. That's thirst *after* Righteousness," chuckled one of the young bloods, to the general merriment of his light-hearted companions and the good-natured laughter of the padre himself.

We touched at Colombo and did the usual round of sights and shops, and some of us formed a party and motored along the beautiful ocean-bound sweep of Galle Face on to the pretty headland of Mount Lavinia. There

under the waving coconut palms we sat sipping our tea, whilst across the sea gently blew the breeze laden with the perfumes of "Araby the Blest." It was a charming spot, where one felt one could spend hours merely watching the ocean-waves roll up the palm-fringed coast with a fleet of native fishing-boats riding gaily on them in the distance. But the steamer was leaving early that evening: in consequence the guide came and collected us and rushed us away in the waiting cars just as the sun dipped down on the far-off horizon.

The next morning when I came up on the hurricane-deck for my early morning constitutional, there was nothing in view except a beautifully cut circle of tossing, foaming blue waters following one's eyes, turn them where one would. The magic circle of blue waters seemed to have cast a spell on the *Naldera* for she moved not from its dead centre even by an inch for seven long days. The tedium of this long, landless voyage of three thousand miles would have told on our nerves and spirits, had it not been relieved by deck-games and sweepstakes, bridge-parties, and dancing in the evening after dinner. I, however, in order to prepare myself for a keener apprecia-

tion of what was worth seeing in the two dominions I was about to visit, and to form more than a passing acquaintance with the many social and political problems that faced them, employed most of my time reading up books on Australia and New Zealand. But the time I most longingly awaited each day on that endless expanse of watery waste was the hour before turning-in for the night, when on my secluded boat-deck I lay stretched in my deck-chair idly gazing at the myriad eyes of heaven as they twinkled in the mistless vault of blue above. What a sight of ineffable beauty and baffling mystery the stars make on the high seas! How mean and paltry all earthly things appear in comparison, how absurd and insignificant we ourselves feel beside the calm, unruffled majesty of heavenly bodies! And yet, and yet, absurd and insignificant as we may individually and collectively feel beside the crowded immensities of heaven—there is something in the meanest and paltriest of the human fold that lifts him above the gathered force and majestic calm of the entire Universe. For the gathered force is cold and passionless and that majestic calm dead and soulless, while a single human being of the commonest clay and meanest

mould has within him a spark of that indefinable, unquenchable fire which can make him feel and will, seek and strive, struggle and suffer, fail and fall and die, leaving a legacy of something attempted, something achieved a thousand times worthier, yea, a million times nobler, than all the pointless movement and soulless regularity of a hundred million stars combined. Each morning light, alas! brought the imagination flopping down from those serene heights of star speculation to the arid reality of day-to-day existence and excitement on board an ocean liner, where men and women born to strive and struggle and put the stars to shame were content to pass the live-long day, week after week, in striving to excel at deck-quoits and struggling to kill time at bridge.

The magic circle of tossing, foaming waters that seemed to bind our boat day after day, and night after night, was at last broken one afternoon by a series of peaks fitfully emerging on the extreme south-east horizon, and early next morning when the ocean mist had lifted, a long line of houses suddenly appeared on the far-end of a projecting tongue of land. Soon there was noise and bustle on board, for we were within a mile or two of the harbour

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

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of Fremantle, the Immigration Officials were already on board with the pilot, and before long the steamer was tied up to the pier and I landed on the renowned *Terra Australia del Espiritu Santo* of De Quiros and De Torres.

AUSTRALIA

IN WEST AUSTRALIA

**“There, where the silver arrows of the day
Smote slope and spire, they halted on their way.
Behind them were the conquered hills—they faced
The Vast Green West, with glad strange beauty graced,
And every tone of every cave and tree
Was as a voice of splendid prophecy.”**

Henry Kendall.

CHAPTER II

IN WEST AUSTRALIA

ONE of the charms of travelling, as all who have travelled know, is the happening of the unexpected. And I had an immediate experience of it, and a pleasant one at that. I had read in newspapers and in books on Australia that an Australian was too independent-minded ever "to touch his cap," and far too democratically-inclined to address any one as "Sir," no matter what position he held in society or what influence he commanded in life. Before leaving home I had, therefore, wisely put away all ideas of expecting in the Colonies anything in the nature of old-world graces and courtesies of life and had, in consequence, prepared myself not only to do without them but also to get along good-humouredly with the rude habits and crude ways, the brusque manners and rough-and-ready speech of raw, immature humanity. Imagine, therefore, my surprise to find Cook's man, the first Australian to address me,

doing both those highly undemocratic things which I had been led to believe no self-respecting Australian would demean himself to do. That, however, was no solitary incident, but the first of a series of systematic experiences I underwent throughout my long-extended tour of both the Southern Dominions.

It was this man from Cook's who arranged for a motor-trip to Perth from Fremantle; and it proved a twenty-five-mile drive of sheer delight. Being penned up in a boat for well-nigh eight days with nothing but sea and sky to see, the first morning out motoring in a new land, presenting new sights and new sounds, with the Australian sun shining bright and clear, was an experience never to be forgotten. Scarcely had we left the precincts of Fremantle when we came upon a row of newly built cottages with its front and side hedges and backyard all filled with geranium climbers. We of the Northern Hemisphere see the geranium grow only in pots or beds, but here it ran wild everywhere, and grew in all shades of red and pink and white, and in such profusion that it left not a foot of bare patch anywhere. Yet wild as the geranium grew, it was nevertheless a cultivated flower. But what shall I say

about the wild flowers of Australia? Scarcely had we left the cottages and entered the wide spaces of the open country when fields after fields of wild flowers ran past us on either side of the road till they burst into one culminating grandeur as we entered King's Park. With justifiable pride a West Australian remarked to me that there was no prettier landscape under the Southern Cross than that of their great National Park. Here a thousand acres of virgin woodland have been reserved for all time for the free use and enjoyment of the people of Australia. For two miles the Park overlooks the blue waters of the Swan and Canning Rivers, presenting a dazzling panorama of Perth and its suburbs with the hazy grey outline of the Darling Ranges in the far distance. Except in Switzerland and Kashmir, such wild flowers and in such variety and profusion I had not seen anywhere. But the wild flowers here were of a species totally unknown in the Northern Hemisphere, and went under such strange names as *pig-face*, *donkey-orchid*, *smoke*, and that pride of West Australia—the *Kangaroo-paw*. In her *Travels in Western Australia*, May Vivienne goes to the extent of calling it “the most wonderful flower of the Southern Hemi-

sphere." I do not know much about its wonders, but it was certainly the quaintest wild flower I had ever seen: in colour dark green, tipped with deep crimson, and shaped exactly like the foot of that Australian marsupial after which it takes its name. As I wished to have a few *Kangaroo-paws* to press and send home and to my friends in England, the taxi-driver risked a fine of £10 to let me have my wish in the matter. For King's Park is under the protection of a special law that suffers no wanton, spoliating hands to be laid on the floral treasures of the national reserves: a fine of ten pounds has often been imposed for the picking of a single wild flower. Besides the floral feast and scenic grandeur of King's Park, there was another feature that struck me as unique and worth imitating in every other part of the Empire. It was the Heroes' Avenue. A long line of hardy trees at regular intervals has been planted on either side of a well-made road with a brass tablet at the base of each tree bearing the name of a West Australian soldier who fell in the Great War and to whose memory that particular tree is dedicated. The Avenue, though planted but recently, yet makes a most impressive, I.

might almost say, a solemn sight. Anyway it must have particularly struck the imagination of the worthy Councillors of Perth Corporation, for one afternoon they assembled in solemn conclave in their City Hall and passed a resolution with becoming gravity that their own memorable services to the City of Perth should likewise be perpetuated in the form of a circle along with those of the heroes who had laid down their lives for the Empire and civilization. When I walked through the Heroes' Avenue and came on the central promenade of the Park I found this notable Councillors' Circle, with trees duly selected and solemnly planted by each Councillor, and brass tablet firmly fixed at the base with his own hands proclaiming to generations yet unborn their long and meritorious services to the city of their birth and fame.

This Councillors' Circle came as a comic relief to all the serious thoughts the Heroes' Avenue had awakened in my taxi-driver's mind, and in that happy, jesting mood we trundled down the hill on which the Park is situated. We passed Claremont and through Peppermint Grove, in which are situated "the red-roofed houses of Perth's fashionable suburbia," as a local guide-book proudly

proclaims them. The houses without doubt make a very attractive sight with well-laid-out gardens in front and well-timbered heights in the background. We motored by this fashionable quarter lying along the river-bank to the city itself. Here again another surprise awaited me, for being told that Perth was the youngest of the Australian cities and built within the memory of the oldest of its citizens, I had pictured it to be, after the manner of its suburbia, composed of wooden structures. Imagine, therefore, my surprise when I entered its famous St. George's Terrace and found it lined on either side with buildings of solid stone masonry, soaring high and of pleasing design, with broad concrete roads filled with constantly moving motor traffic and tram-cars, while people, modishly attired, strolled up its pavements and down its shopping side-streets. But for the clear, bright golden sunshine and the wide-brimmed colonial hats of some of the men, I could have fancied myself walking in one of the shop-lined streets of London. That evening when I returned to my boat, I brought back with me such a strong and vivid impression of Australia, of her men and modes, of her scenic ambitions and architectural aspira-

tions, that I found later on that all my many weeks of touring in her vast domain was but a filling-in and an elaboration of the picture my mind had limned of it that bright, sunny day in Perth and Fremantle.

IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

“South Australia!
Thou art not yet; but he whose ear
Thrills to that finer atmosphere
Where foot-falls of appointed things,
Reverberant of days to be,
Are heard in forecast echoings,
Like wave-beats from a viewless sea—
Hears in the voiceful tremors of the sky
Auroral Heralds whispering, ‘She is nigh.’”

After J. B. Stephens.

CHAPTER III

IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

No sooner were we on board than the *Naldera* left for the next Australian port, Adelaide. That meant four days and nights of steady steaming through one of the worst stretches of water to be found on the face of the globe. Not being much of a sailor, the prospect of confinement to my cabin while crossing the ominous Bight of Australia was not exactly pleasant to contemplate. But two maxims of life which I had laid to heart in my school-days came to my assistance: "Take no thought for the morrow," and "Never cross the bridge till you come to it." So the night passed, and the next day found me up as usual at five taking my matutinal constitutional on deck. The stars were shining in all their brilliance and the Bight was as calm and smooth as a mill pond; there was

not a soul astir on board and I felt as I ran round the deck as if I were exercising myself on my own private yacht. Not only that morning did the Bight belie itself, but for the next four days it completely failed to live up to its reputation, and so on a fine Saturday morning we placidly sailed up the beautiful Gulf of St. Vincent into the Outer Harbour of Adelaide. Hardly had we tied up at the pier and the gangway been lowered, when up came two Mazdaznan friends who had driven out thirty miles to meet me on board to facilitate my first landing in Australia. But before I had exchanged half a dozen sentences with my friends, two representatives of that ubiquitous brotherhood which has spread its tentacles into the remotest corners of the world came up to me and wanted me to tell them all about myself, my work, the situation in India, current Literature, and lastly my opinion of Australia and the Australians. On my betraying diffidence, and hesitating to answer to their satisfaction such a formidable array of questions, they shot me with their Kodak after bombarding me with a dozen other questions. The result of all this quick-shooting and relentless bombarding I noticed that same afternoon, as I was moving about

the streets of Adelaide, on one of the placards hanging in a newspaper stall:

“NOTHING PERMANENT”

Author on Modern Writers

PROF. WADIA ARRIVES

Adelaide only strengthened and elaborated the first impression I had formed at Perth of a typical Australian city. It is well designed and well built, with wide thoroughfares and extensive parks, and situated as it is in a rich, fertile plain with the Mount Lofty Ranges forming an appropriate background, it well deserves the name the proud Adelaidians have given it—“the Garden City of Australia.” Besides being proud of the natural and structural beauty of their city, they regard it as the artistic and intellectual centre of Australia, and it was Lord Bryce who once said that the beauties and charms of Adelaide “reminded him much of his own beloved Oxford.” Such a comparison may tickle the vanity of intellectual Adelaidians but it does not do credit to his lordship’s powers of observation nor justice to his own beloved city. The great charm about Oxford is its atmosphere. In this particular no two cities

could be more unlike than Oxford and Adelaide. When one enters Oxford and visits its centuries-old colleges, one seems to see ghosts of old Oxonians stepping out of the age-worn quads; and though the college-backs look wonderfully fresh and green with well-kept lawns and beds full of flowers, they yet breathe of ancient, unhurried days and ways. And Oxford succeeds in sustaining this charming illusion, wherever one turns one's eyes, by its many hoary haunts and time-scarred walls. When one saunters through Addison Walk, one has an uncanny feeling as if the shade of Addison were walking beside one or following close on one's heels. Then there is the incomparable Cherwell with its sloping banks of greensward, shaded by trees of variegated foliage, with quaintly-designed bridges spanning its peaceful waters; and in the near distance is Father Thames, old and gaunt, ever ready to receive on his manly bosom the tug and strain of many a pair of brawny youthful arms. To cap all, there are the soft, seductive charms of melting distances which are such a special feature of English landscape. Dear new Adelaide has assuredly many new and fine features of her own, but not one to remind one of the old-world charms of Oxford.

The Educational Block on North Terrace, with its line of well-designed and solidly-built stone edifices, presents, it is true, to an uneducated eye certain superficial resemblance to an English university city, but that illusion is soon dispelled when one notices the broad boulevard in front of the Block and its fresh, clean stone masonry almost staring at one in the glare and brightness of the Australian sun. Comparisons are always odious, I know: and I would have certainly avoided them, but for Lord Bryce's ill-chosen one.

During the few days I was in Adelaide I made several day-excursions, but of these only two stand out prominently enough in my mind to need description here: the one to Victor Harbour and the other to Mount Lofty. My Mazdaznan friends arranged the extensive trip to the Mount in their car. So perfectly bright was the day, so bracing the air, and so varied and extensive were the views presented as the car went up and down and round the endless curves of the road that I thought the trip fully justified the unstinted tribute which the great humorist of America—Mark Twain—pays it in his *More Tramps Abroad*:

“Our excursion to Mount Lofty was of an hour or two, but the charm of it all could not be overstated.

The road wound round through gaps and gorges and offered all variety of scenery and prospect—mountains, crags, country-houses, gardens, forests—colour, colour, colour everywhere, and the air fine and fresh, the skies blue, and not a shred of cloud to mar the downpour of the brilliant sunshine. And, finally, the mountain gateway opened, and the immense plain lay spread out below and stretching away into the dim distances on every hand, soft and delicate, dainty and beautiful.”

I am not so certain if Nature by herself, entrancingly beautiful as she undoubtedly was in this instance, could have made on me an impression as deep and lasting as she did, had I not been accompanied by my four dear friends, whose enjoyment seemed to consist in seeing me enjoy myself. The longer I live and the more I travel, the more I find that the beauties of nature—as in fact all the joys of life, art, and literature—come with double force and are enjoyed tenfold, if shared with another fellow-being of a congenial disposition—no matter to what race, creed, or country that fellow-being may belong. This was soon confirmed by the next trip I took, to Victor Harbour. That trip of nearly a hundred miles lay through very pretty cultivated country, and when we came to the Harbour itself it opened up attractive views of a long-extending

sun-bathed sea-shore with roaring blue waves dashing in mad impetuosity on its distant rocky headlands. All that appeared very fine and truly enjoyable, but I did not really enjoy it in the full sense of the term, till chance threw across my path another solitary soul whose lively presence and congenial company seemed to add life and colour to the whole bright scene around me for the three hours I was in Victor Harbour.

But memorable as the trips to Victor Harbour and Mount Lofty were, Adelaide at this distance of time is chiefly remembered by a sight I saw in its Botanical Gardens. And this was the prospect which its Roses presented. I have been a keen observer and ardent lover of roses and seen the best of them in the Great Summer Rose Show of the National Rose Society of England and in public gardens in different parts of the world; but those that I saw in Adelaide were a thing apart. Roses of such size, in such countless varieties, and growing in such wild luxuriance I have never seen anywhere else. A portion of the extensive Gardens was set apart for them, and an expert in rose-culture was specially engaged to look after them. Meeting him by chance, I told him what a joy it was to

me to see his wonderful collection and what my sisters, who were themselves keen rose-growers, would not give to have in our distant home a few of his varieties. To which he replied that he had five thousand rose-plants and considerably over a thousand varieties. And I could well believe him, for the roses ranged from the subtlest tints of cream and lemon to the deepest shades of pure unmixed gold and saffron, and from the palest shell-pink to the most vivid crimson and ruby-red, and hundreds of other varieties in pure white and mixed colours. The Botanical Garden was not the only place in Adelaide where this wonderful display of roses was to be seen, but the same story was repeated in front of large houses and meanest cottages, so that during the week I was in South Australia, Adelaide was "Roses, roses all the way." One is tempted to modernize Shakespeare and say:

"To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the Roses of Adelaide,—
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess."

And yet the Australian rose-culturist, like the born artist, believes in such a "wasteful and

ridiculous excess," for his soul is not satisfied with the mere culture of existing varieties of roses but sighs for the creation of new ones. I was told of a famous rose-culturist in Sydney who created each year at least a dozen new varieties.

While on board the *Naldera* I happened to read Lord and Lady Apsley's *Amateur Settlers*, in which was very simply and graphically described their first-hand experience of the Australian Bush, and the spell—"tender, intimate, and spiritual"—which the Bush weaves round the life of those who live with it for any length of time, and so come to love it. In the short, hurried tour I was taking, it was, of course, idle to expect the Bush to cast its traditional spell on me: still, I thought I would not go away from Australia without getting at all events a passing glimpse of "the Land of the Never-Never, away Behind the Back of Beyond"—a primitive land, endless and friendless except for two companions who, it was said, never left one wherever one went, Dire Want and Staring Death. To carry out this idea, I arranged while at Adelaide for a flying visit to Renmark. Going there, I was told I would see not only a bit of the Bush on my way, but

also one of the most notable enterprises of the Australians in the form of a fruit-colony. Accordingly, I left Adelaide early one morning in a service-car and had a first-hand experience of the Australian countryside and of the rough-and-tumble life people live there. For the first forty miles it was all smooth going as we bowled along a newly-tarred trunk-road; but, once having branched off from it, we seemed suddenly to have taken a leap into a wavy, rolling country with roads to match its uneven contour. In fact, there was no regular, level road anywhere, but merely an open strip of land between two endless lines of wooden stakes marking off lands belonging to private individuals. And so it ran till luncheon-time, after which we entered a strange region. Up to then we had on either side of us cultivated fields and pasture lands with homesteads at fairly regular intervals, but after luncheon we seemed of a sudden to have left all signs of human habitations and, in fact, of civilization behind, and plunged into a wild stretch of desiccated land covered over with short, thick leafless trees the branches of which stood out at places bare and gaunt against the open, cloudless sky, and more frequently interlaced

each other in one endless succession, leaving only a narrow, straggling space—a mere glorified track—which ran in and out in crazy curves round the sharp, pointed stumps of dead or partly dead trees. This then was the great Australian Bush, the “Land of the Never-Never”; where, I was told, home is a bitter memory, the future a despair, and life scarcely worth the trouble of prolonging it. But this feeling overtakes one only at the beginning: once the Bush casts its un-failing spell over the bushman, there comes into his life a strange peace and contentedness, leading eventually to pure, unalloyed joy, which is the earthly inheritance of those who come near to Primitive Nature, live with her, and learn of her the first lesson of love and regard for the despised and discarded things of life. It was on that narrow, straggling open space between the hideous confusion of the misbegotten arboreal vegetation of the Bush that we made our way during the long afternoon towards the fruit-colony of Renmark. Only once was the chequered monotony of half-dead interlacing branches relieved by the sight of a human habitation. It was a typical Bush homestead such as I had so often seen in pictures, composed of

a large wooden structure, roofed over with corrugated iron sheets, surrounded by shacks and shanties, a few patches of cultivated land with an apology for a garden in front and, above all, that peculiarly Australian arrangement for collecting and storing up rain-water, consisting of a large barrel-shaped cistern with pipes projecting into it from the roof of the main building. The moment we left this lost-in-the-wilderness sort of habitation, the dreary Bush-track once more stretched its weary sinuosity in front of us; and as the afternoon advanced, the overpowering heat and unrelieved monotony of the scene told on me and I sat dozing on the front seat of the car, I do not know how long, till at a bend of the road, the car taking a sharp turn, threw me on my side and made me half-open my sleep-laden eyelids, when, lo and behold, the whole scene had changed, as if the good fairy had waved her wand in front of my eyes and brought about on the instant the magic transformation. For there lay before my enchanted gaze field upon field of evenly-planted fruit-trees as far as the eye could reach, and before long we were speeding along between two endless rows of orchards right up to Renmark, which

is very prettily situated on one of the well-wooded, flower-laden bends of the River Murray.

The Government Tourist Bureau of Adelaide having previously informed the Mayor of Renmark of my approaching visit, he was awaiting my arrival with his Chief Officer. He told me he had made the necessary arrangements to show me in a day all that was worth seeing in Renmark. Accordingly, the following day I was taken round the place and shown its most interesting features. Renmark Fruit Colony is as fine an instance as one could give of Australian enterprise and capacity for organization, its grit and perseverance. It is now a commonplace of scientific agriculture that the soil of arid countries is chemically richer by far than that of humid lands and that rain by itself is a poor substitute for a well-planned system of irrigation. Only forty years ago Renmark was a stark, staring desert with the Murray silently and uselessly flowing through its rich, sandy soil. The idea of damming up the waters of the Murray at regular intervals and utilizing them for farming purposes by a widely ramifying system of irrigation-canals then struck two unknown brothers, and no

sooner did they suggest such a scheme than it was taken up with characteristic Australian vigour and determination, with the result that in less than half a century the desert was veritably made to blossom as the rose, and now nearly fifteen thousand settlers and their families make a secure and comfortable living from this finely-conceived and splendidly-organized Murray River Irrigation Scheme.

The following day I had yet another example of Australian enterprise and of its spirit of forging ahead. Eminently diverting and full of new experience as was the journey by road from Adelaide to Renmark, it was nevertheless tiresomely long and dusty, and would have certainly proved unbearably monotonous and fatiguing had I chosen to return to Adelaide the way I came. On relating my predicament to the good Mayor, he immediately solved my difficulty by suggesting that I should go back by air. That a comparatively small, unimportant place like Renmark should have air-connections with the rest of Australia seemed at first unbelievable; but it had a regular bi-weekly air-service with Adelaide, and what was more the air route fare was only a few shillings above that of

the service-car. I therefore left Renmark late in the morning by a service biplane and was in Adelaide long before noon, having flown across a wide expanse of rough Australian country and right over the soaring range of Mount Lofty. Herein lies the chief charm of Australia—that the most primitive things of existence jostle cheek by jowl with the most modern inventions of scientific research. What could be more primitive than the native Australian Bush, what more modern than a commodious six-seater biplane?

I was barely a day in Adelaide when I started on my Transcontinental Tour in a service-car. Going by service-car is an ideal way of seeing a country. In a railway train one rushes through and sees a country by bits with little or no chance of coming into intimate contact with its people. But in a good service-automobile one feels as if one were touring in one's own private car, there being no difference whatever except that one has two or three other companions unknown to one to travel with. To a solitary tourist like myself that was really more of an advantage than a drawback. For besides getting someone to talk to and bear one company, one comes to

know fairly well in the three or four days one is on the road some people, truly representative of their country, living under different conditions and following various callings in life. Nor is it in any way more expensive, for the service-cars are run in competition with the railways: consequently, they have to keep down their rates to compete with railway fares, and whatever extra sum one pays ordinarily covers the hotel-charges for the three or four nights one is on the journey. But what is best about the service-car is that it saves one all the bother and pother of keeping train-times, of going in expensive taxis to the stations, and of paying their prohibitive portorage. The taxi-fares in Australia are a scandal. Never in all my travels in various parts of the world have I had to pay taxi-fares so absurdly high as in Australia. It costs one half-a-crown for the first third of a mile and sixpence extra for every additional third. And one daren't tip a porter less than a shilling even when travelling light with only a couple of small suit-cases. That being so, throughout my extended tour of the Australian Mainland, I systematically took the service-car and never so much as stepped into a railway carriage.

One fine morning in a large touring-car in the company of some very agreeable people I left Adelaide for Melbourne. The distance being about five hundred miles, it took us three days to reach our destination. We did most of it by the famous Prince's Highway, though occasionally we left the grand trunk-road and took to what looked like a bush-track, and once we actually motored more than ten miles on the hard sandy shore of a sea-creek. So hard, straight, and perfectly even was the shore that to a layman's eye it seemed as if it could have challenged the finest speed-track in the world, and one felt that Campbell and Seagrave might, to the greater comfort of their patriotic conscience, have tried to break the mile speed-record on it rather than on the shore of Daytona. The first night we stopped at a very prettily situated seaside place, called Robe, and the next evening we reached the famous health-resort of Mount Gambier. On the way to it we saw the Narracoorte Caves known all over Australia for their stalactite and stalagmite formations of varied colours and of the most fantastic shapes. But it isn't the wonderful colouring of the stalactites nor the grotesque shapes of the stalagmites

that have left such an enduring impression on my mind as a passing incident of a few seconds' duration which happened while we were in one of the caves, called Victoria. The entrance to this cave is in the shape of a circular shaft, through which a wooden ladder of some thirty feet is dropped almost perpendicularly. To go down such a ladder, for ladies in particular, was obviously dangerous, since the missing of a single step might end fatally on the hard, flinty bottom of the cave. I remember remarking to the guide that one day they would have a serious accident unless the gradient of the ladder was made easier and safer. However, to come to the story, the two ladies who were in our party of six went down the ladder without any hitch and we followed them in perfect safety. After we had seen all that was worth seeing in Victoria Cave, we leisurely made our way back to the foot of the ladder. The ladies began to go up it and I, who was immediately behind them, intended waiting at the bottom till they had both reached the top. When one had almost reached the top and the other was half-way up, the first one screamed and shouted that she had missed a step. I instantly looked up and saw her tumbling

down. Taking a complete somersault over the head of the other, she was coming down at a terrific pace with her feet up and head down. Few inches more and her head would have assuredly dashed on the hard flinty floor of the cave. But my hands instantly, and I might almost say mechanically, shot out and caught her by the shoulders as she whizzed past. The next moment she was firmly clasped in my arms and perfectly safe. So dazed was she by her awful experience that in spite of my assuring her that nothing was really the matter with her, she rested her face on my shoulders and went on weeping. But shortly afterwards she recovered sufficiently to burst out laughing, with tears still glistening in her eyes. We then cautiously took her up between us and joined our waiting car and were soon speeding away towards Mount Gambier. Now comes the queerest part of the whole story. The lady stayed in the same hotel as I did and was in fact with us till the next afternoon. But during all that time she never once alluded to her all too recent misadventure nor even remembered to say a word in acknowledgment of the rather active part Fate had designed me to play in her life-drama. Ordinarily we thank

a man for offering us a glass of water or letting us have a match to light our pipe or cigarette with, but for helping a fellow human being out of an awful predicament, not to hear a word in acknowledgment was a unique experience not likely to be repeated in my own life or, for that matter, in that of any of my readers.

Mount Gambier being beautifully situated and having some fine lakes, I stayed there two days and made various excursions in the neighbourhood. Of the lakes the beautiful Blue Lake, lying in the hollow of an old crater and very thickly wooded all round, made a particularly attractive sight, not less so the rugged sea-shore near Point Northumberland. But of all the excursions the one which appealed to me most was to Dingly Dell, once the home of that Byron of Australia—Adam Gordon Lindsay. He is to this day a great literary figure in Australia: at all events, the charm of his name seems to hold even after a century a strange fascination over the Australian mind. I have delved a bit in his *Bush Ballads* and galloped right through his famous *Galloping Rhymes*, but for all my strenuous exertion I was not left half so breathless by them as by the romantic story

of his robust manhood and daring love-adventures. He was, indeed, as Henry Kendall wrote of him:

“A shining soul with syllables of fire
Who sang the first great songs these lands may claim
To be their own. . . .
The bard, the scholar, and the man he lived,
That frank, that open-hearted life which keeps
The splendid fire of English chivalry
From dying out.”

IN VICTORIA

“Victoria!
Not as the songs of other lands
Your song shall be,
Where dim your purple shore-line stands
Above the sea!
As erst you stood, you stand alone,
Your inspiration is your own.”

After Essex Evans.

CHAPTER IV

IN VICTORIA

FROM Mount Gambier to Melbourne is a distance of well over two hundred miles, but as we had a fine Packhard for our service-car, we did it all comfortably in the course of a day, not omitting to see the famous city of Ballarat on the way. The next day at Melbourne I met one of my Mazdaznan friends, who showed me round the city. Of the various sights we saw, two—or rather one sight and one incident—have firmly fixed themselves in my mind. The sight was that of St. Kilda Avenue. An Australian friend on board had waxed so eloquent over its beauty that he thought there was no avenue in the whole wide world to be compared with it. As it happens, I am not unacquainted with the famous avenues of the world. I have driven several times through the Unter den Linden

of Berlin and the Bois de Boulogne of Paris, and once right through the famous Commonwealth Avenue of Boston in Massachusetts: consequently, when we entered St. Kilda Avenue I had my eyes, so to say, all about me to make a mental note of all its striking features. And five miles of it made an unforgettable sight with its two central avenues of well-selected, evenly-trimmed trees and lined on either side by well-designed, gaily-painted houses with well-kept, flower-laden gardens in front: all combining to make St. Kilda Avenue a magnificent spectacle, and, consequently, it is by far the most beautiful avenue in Australasia. But for all that to put it above the famous centuries-old avenues in other parts of the world or even to compare it with them is to court disaster and betray one's limitations and lack of the elementary knowledge of æsthetics.

Coming to the incident, it is strange how at times Fate works in the affairs of men and brings into our lives profound sorrow or, as in this case, deepest joy in spite of our working against it. My Mazdaznan friend did not want me to leave Melbourne without seeing the magnificent reading-room of its Free Library. Having seen so many magnificent

rooms, reading and otherwise, on my world-wide travels, I really could not afford to waste my limited time in Melbourne seeing one more room no matter what its size or its magnificence might be. But my friend insisted that I should—and she gave me the additional inducement of showing me at the same time its next-door neighbour, the Art Gallery, containing the finest collection of typically Australian art that is to be seen anywhere. As I was desirous of seeing the best side of Australian art, I fell in with her idea, and so we first went and saw the Art Gallery and then walked across to the famous reading-room. As expected, the room, in spite of its gargantuan proportions, did not in the least strike my eye or imagination, and I was walking through it with my friend rather disappointed, when I saw an assistant issuing books to various readers. Out of pure, idle curiosity, I walked up to him and asked him if the library contained the works of an Indian author, by name Wadia. "Wadia, Wadia," he repeated, trying to recollect the name, and then said: "No, I don't think I have ever heard that name before. The only Indian author's works we have in the library are Tagore's. Still if you care to step up

to the card-index bureau, I'll ascertain that for you in a minute." So we went to an alphabetically arranged series of drawers, one of which he drew out and after running his fingers across the top of the closely-packed cards, he pulled out four of them, each bearing the name of one of my books. He brought me *Fate and Free Will* which was lying handy, and to my surprise I found it re-bound in half-morocco with its pages all marked and annotated from cover to cover.

The lay reader can have no idea what the sight of that book meant to me! Except for the few well-known writers, one of the minor tragedies of an author's life is that he does not know and never can know who reads him and to what purpose. If his books sell to any appreciable extent, he at least has the consolation that there are some readers somewhere who think it worth while to buy his books and who spare time to read them. But those others like myself who can make no such claim always wonder where the few copies of their books that are sold each year find their way. Consequently, when for once and a wonder such a type of author comes across an assured testimony that at least in one remote corner of the world he is not

only known but even read and read to advantage, his joy can be more imagined than described. Anyway that day was the red-letter day of my tour, so overjoyed was I at the unexpected discovery which to others may mean nothing in particular yet to me was everything that my heart could have desired for that eventful afternoon. It must be remembered that an author, worthy of being so called, is at heart an artist: as such he lives in and for his work and his work only. In other words, his work is the one absorbing passion of his existence, in comparison with which all other desires and pursuits of life are of little or no account to him. The joy of home, wife, and children, and the pursuit of wealth, fame, and happiness which mean, and rightly mean, so much to most people, the author would readily and gladly forego, if they singly or jointly came in the way of his fully and freely relieving his mind of the burden of his song or message of passing or everlasting interest which he believes he is charged to deliver to his fellow-kind. The reader can, therefore, understand what the sight of that single book of mine meant to me! This, however, was not a solitary experience, as it was

repeated later on at Sydney, Auckland, Christchurch, and at Adelaide on my way back: but none of these later findings gave me anything like the thrill of the first discovery.

While in Melbourne I took a few day-excursions, but of these only one has left a lasting impression on me and that was to a lake called Maroondah by way of Healsville and Dandenong Range. Such magnificent forests of giant eucalyptus-trees and such romantic gullies of tree-ferns of unbelievable size and beauty I had never come across in all my tour of the Southern Continent. But a strange fact about these national trees of Australia I noticed was that on their own native soil they never attained that beauty and symmetry of growth which they did at the famous hill station of Ootacamund in my own country. At Ootacamund the trees were originally grown from seeds brought from Australia, and yet there they grow to such perfection, with their outline so symmetrical and their foliage so luxuriant, that the first sight of their scraggy, unsymmetrical Australian parent-trees was somewhat of a disappointment to me. There is, however, a feature about the Australian

eucalyptus which its Ooty progeny wholly lacks, and that is they do not flower, while there in Australia they do flower, and in such brilliance and variety of colours that some of the eucalypt-avenues in summer-time are a thing of sheer joy and beauty such as one can see nowhere else in the whole world.

Before I had been a day in Melbourne, I began to make arrangements for taking an extensive motor-tour in Tasmania. An all-inclusive tour was arranged and in the afternoon of the Armistice Day I sailed for "the pendent isle of Australia." However, I snatched an hour in the morning from my other engagements to attend the Parade in connection with the Day. And it made a soul-stirring sight: though, if number counted for anything, I should have called it a poor show. Fortunately, a friend of mine, who happened to be the head of a consular service, had secured for me a good position on the steps of the Parliament House within a few paces of the saluting-base. In India thousands of troops are brought together on Armistice Day and parade on the open field in the presence of the Governor and the officer commanding the presidency. Consequently,

I expected a concentration of a large number of Australian troops in the once capital city of the Commonwealth on a day of such deep world-wide significance. Imagine, therefore, my astonishment on finding not a hundred, not even half a hundred, but just twenty men with two junior officers in command gathered for that great representative ceremony of the whole Commonwealth. But as is often the case, it is the spirit and not the number that counts; for those twenty big, bronzed men in their rough khaki tunics and red-banded felt hats presented a sight which thrilled me infinitely more than that of those thousands of spic-and-span sepoy and soldiers that are paraded each year in immaculate uniform for that great day in my own country. Every one of the twenty-two officers and men was an Anzac: consequently, all of them belonged to that glorious band of men which took part in the historic landing at Gallipoli on the treacherous shores of Suvla Bay and made the name of Australia and New Zealand immortal in the military history of the world. The whole ceremony took barely fifteen minutes, but in those few minutes the long, chequered history of the Empire, the ideals it has stood for, the tradi-

tions it has built up, and the sacrifices it had recently made in life and substance in the cause of civilization and humanity at large all seemed to pass symbolically before my mind's eye as I stood abstractedly looking at the immobile features of that strong and stolid band of khaki figures lined up before me. In those few fleeting moments of pride and elation which one unconsciously felt at the fact of belonging to an empire of such memorable past and long-treasured traditions, the ugly side of the Imperial story had no place. But that there is an ugly side, and a very ugly side at that, no true lover of the Empire, who has its long and honourable continuance at heart, can ever forget or gloss over. That it has been by turns a slave-driver, an opium-runner, an economic exploiter, and, last but not least, a law-and-order maniac, its history, past and present, only too plainly and irrefutably bears out. To put it in more explicit terms, in its unhallowed love of money it has traded in human flesh and blood, in its unrighteous greed of gold it has forced a most ruinous drug by a solemn treaty on a helpless people once the most civilized in the world, in its furious pursuit of industrial expansion it has thought

nothing of bringing about the economic ruination of a great nation with an equally long civilization behind it, and finally in its recent righteous zeal for law and order in that same great nation treated the fundamental rights of thousands of its most loyal citizens as so much dirt under its feet.¹ In a complex, disunited, political aggregation such as India is, there must be strict Law and Order, else there is disorder, leading inevitably to disruption and dissolution. Likewise there must be firm Rule, else there is anarchy. All this is true and unexceptional. But it should not be forgotten that law and order are only means to an end, and what tragic results follow when they are made an end in themselves, the recent events in India have made all too evident. The aim and ideal of the Empire in its sanest and most exalted moments have ever been and should always be Justice and Humanity. These have been the watchwords of the Imperial History at its best and these should be its battle-cries blazoned forth in letters of gold on the Imperial Standard, if the Empire on which the sun never sets is to be spared the fate of its past compeers. It is time we gave up the "frantic boast

¹ See Appendix A.

and foolish word” of *The Recessional*, and put up instead a prayer to the “Lord God of Hosts” in the immortal words of H. T. Miller:—

“O Lord,
Give us men to match our mountains,
Give us men to match our plains,
Men with Empires in their purpose,
And New Eras in their brains.”

IN TASMANIA

“But the Past is past—with all its pride—
And its ways are not our ways:
We watch the Flow of a Fresher Tide,
And the Dawn of Newer Days.

Sing us the Isle of the Southern Sea—
The land we have called our own;
Tell us what harvest there shall be
From the seed that we have sown.”

M. H. Foot.

CHAPTER V

IN TASMANIA

OF the many interesting and well-illustrated tourist's folders which Cook's Office in Adelaide gave me was one on Tasmania. It called the island "the Tourists' Paradise," sang of its "unsurpassed climate and wonderful natural beauties," and ended by suggesting a particular trip: "The East Coast Road provides a veritable scenic feast, which will be difficult indeed to excel. Broad estuaries and land-locked harbours, rugged rocks, and golden shores—every feature for which one might look is there." I thought I would have a look at these "rugged rocks" and bask on the "golden shores" of old Tassie, and so arranged a week's tour round the island. I left Melbourne one afternoon and after a rough crossing entered the lovely Tamar the following morning, and it was one long stretch of smooth sailing between two strips of highly cultivated, well-wooded land as green as one could wish to see, with patches of colour splashed here and there by flowering

trees and cottage-gardens and, best of all, hawthorn hedgerows running all up and down and across the sloping banks, which brought back to me one of the treasured memories of dear old England. Launceston soon came in view with its rows of houses crowding up the incline of the hills on both sides of the river and presenting indeed an aspect as unusual as attractive. The steamer was delayed half an hour with the result that I missed the connecting service-car. The itinerary was so arranged that the missing of a single connection would have upset the whole tour. As often happens in difficulties of this nature, an unknown friend came to the rescue and offered to rush me to the next stopping-point of the service-car in his private motor. The offer was no sooner made than accepted and the next moment we threw in the bags, jumped to our seats, and rushed off in pursuit of the service-car. Mile after mile we sped but there was no sign of it till we reached its first halting-station, and there we caught it just as it was moving off. That was a piece of good fortune—which then followed me throughout the tour.

The road to Scottsdale threaded through thick forests and fern gullies and wound round

and over a series of lofty hills, commanding a broad panorama of countless miles of forests with clearings here and there through which one got glimpses of Bass Strait and Flinder's Island in the far distance. Eventually it ran down towards the sea and came right on it at the charmingly situated and beautifully avened St. Helens, where we stopped for the night. The next day the journey was continued through the popular seaside town of Falmouth and the wild-flowered suburb of St. Marys, then over the hills by the Elephant Pass to Bechno by the ocean-shore. The road ran down the Pass for miles, in and out of the thick woods of the mountain-side which receded in grand sweeps down to the sunlit ocean away in the far distance: the whole presented a view the most extensive and entrancingly beautiful of all I had seen in my entire tour. Fifteen miles more of the glistening, sun-washed beaches and we reach the wooded precincts of Swansea, where we pass the night. The following morning we continue our tour through Orford, Buckland, and Sorell on to the old-world penal settlement of Port Arthur. Here a guide took us round the prison-chambers and led us into the dark underground cells and

then, on coming up, told us tales of the old convict days, how boys of fourteen and sixteen were sentenced to transportation for life for trifling offences. He pointed out a small isle, called Suicide Island, from which many of these high-spirited, erring lads smothered the anguish and unrelieved monotony of their young existence in the cool, unquestioning waters of the Bay. All these sights brought me vividly and instantly into living touch with the stern, pitiless psychology of the past century and made me realize as I had never done before how much we had liberalized our ideas and humanized our laws in the matter of crime and punishment. By a strange coincidence, it was at the time I was touring Tasmania that the now famous prize-novel of Katherine Susannah Prichard—*The Pioneers*—came out. It very graphically describes the condition of things and the mentality of men of the period when Port Arthur was a going concern. Incidentally we are told in it what daring and enterprise the old Australian Pioneers possessed and of what sturdy stuff they were made. Indeed, the pioneers in all lands, whether in Africa, in America, or in Australia, make a fine study in superior manhood of unwearable toughness

and indomitable will, of untiring patience and reckless courage. With Wilfred Campbell well might

“We ponder on their daring, their vast hope,
That compassed a planet in its dream.
We marvel at that stern defiance, where
A single man, in a degenerate age,
Would throw the gauntlet down against a world,
Defying narrow custom, small beliefs,
Strangled in lies; and staking all on one
Swift certainty of reason, based on thought
Which read from Nature, not from childish tomes
Of baseless superstition, and dared all,
Left the kind land behind, and ventured out
On what men deemed a hideous demon waste,
An endless vortex, wherein poor souls caught
Were swept to vastness, gulped, and swallowed down.
We wonder at this greatness, yet we know
That thus for ever shall human greatness be,
Man’s only truth in life to *Stand Alone*;
Invincible power the spirit’s solitude.”

The careers of Australian Pioneers may not possess the imaginative grandeur nor the romantic attractiveness of the pioneers of other lands, but in steady, straight-eyed purposefulness, in sheer manly sturdiness they stand in a class all their own. One has only to glance through Jose’s *Builders and Pioneers of Australia* and follow the

rich and varied life-careers of men like Macquarie, Wentworth, Parkes, and Deakin to realize for oneself what men of inflexible purpose, robust faith, and prophetic vision Australia has produced on her native, sun-drenched soil, nurtured in her dreary, God-forsaken Bush, and matured in the free, humanizing atmosphere of her early city-life!

From Port Arthur I drove one afternoon to the capital-city of Hobart and stayed there a day and saw the magnificent views which Mount Wellington and Mount Nelson present of its extended harbour, open sea, and distant high hills. Hobart is perhaps the handsomest and certainly the most charmingly situated town not only in Tasmania, but I would venture to say in the whole of Australia, or for the matter of that in Australasia, not excluding Sydney, Auckland, and Wellington. But now that I sit to write about it, it is not so much its two famous Mounts nor its lovely harbour nor, indeed, its unsurpassed seascapes that come before my mind's eye as the two simple human beings of winsome ways and unsophisticated speech that chanced to cross my path that last moonlit evening in Tasmania. Knowing them, I know now what

Ethel Castilia meant when she sang of *An Australian Girl* and said:

“She has a beauty of her own,
A beauty of a paler tone
Than English belles;
Yet Southern sun and Southern air
Have kissed her cheeks until they wear
The dainty tints that oft appear
On rosy shells.

Her frank clear eyes bespeak a mind
Old-world traditions fail to bind.

She is not shy
Or bold, but simply self-possessed;
Her independence adds a zest
Unto her speech, her piquant jest,
Her quaint reply.”

The memory of their bright company and still brighter presence is now ineffaceably associated not only with Hobart but with my entire Tasmanian tour—such an unchallenged superiority does Human Spirit, when simple and unsophisticated, possess over the staid and soulless beauty of Nature.

IN NEW SOUTH WALES

“High headlands all jealously hide thee,
O fairest New South Wales!

Not to be conquered by these headlong days,
But to stand free; to keep the mind at brood
On life’s deep meaning, Nature’s attitude
Of loveliness, and Time’s mysterious ways.”

After Archibald Lampman.

CHAPTER VI

IN NEW SOUTH WALES

As I had, before leaving for Tasmania, arranged my seven-hundred-mile motor-tour to Sydney, I started on it immediately on my return to Melbourne. It was designed to take me over the Prince's Highway all along the coast. The Highway ran now through open country, then through highly cultivated lands; now through flourishing towns, then through old half-dilapidated hamlets; now by the open sea, then through dense forests. It had, therefore, varied interest, though perhaps it was not so attractive as the trip from Adelaide to Melbourne. Our driver was the owner of the car, and as he did this particular trip almost fortnightly, he knew, so to say, every turn and culvert of the whole stretch of the Highway. For instance, he pulled up the car one afternoon while we were in the thick of a wood and asked us to listen quietly. Hardly had he done so when

to our great surprise the tinkling of silver bells seemed to float down to us from neighbouring tree-tops. For a while he watched our raptly listening faces and then in a casual tone said: "The Bell Bird." Another day he stopped the car near a winding brook and asked us again to listen. We sat listening, but could hear nothing. When our patience was tried long enough we heard, or seemed to hear, the distant cracking of a bushman's whip coming through the thicket. Then another and yet another. We looked at each other puzzled, but the driver simply started the car and laconically dropped the words: "The Whip Bird." It was but natural that on a hurried tour like mine I should miss certain things I most specially wanted to see or hear. The Kookaburra was one such thing. He is the national bird of Australia. I never got a chance of hearing him in life, though I had often heard him in the talkies and I have with me, in fact, a gramophone record of his voice. He is commonly known as the laughing jackass and no name could be more appropriate, for when he commences his matutinal song he pours forth some of the funniest notes imaginable. Hearing them one would imagine that a lunatic was abroad,

convulsed in a mad fit of laughter, so crude and wildly hilarious are his notes.

We did the whole journey of seven hundred miles in four easy stages. On the first day, after going through the attractive township of Bairnsdale we came at the end of the day to a charming waterside place called Lakes Entrance. The following day, after passing through a well-wooded country intersected here by rushing rivers and there by lazily-meandering brooks, the banks of which made a fine display of wild flowers and tree-ferns, we reached Eden at the head of Twofold Bay. We left Eden early on the third morning and late in the afternoon reached the pretty precincts of Narooma, which possesses according to some Australian authorities "a seascape unsurpassed in New South Wales." On the last day as soon as we left Narooma we plunged into dense bushland, and then coming out of it we passed through varied scenery, flat and hilly, till at luncheon-time we reached the important-looking town of Wollongong. From here we leisurely started on our last lap to Sydney through the famous Bulli Pass. We stopped and leisurely looked at the famous view of miles and miles of sea-coast and open sea from Sublime Point: then turned off from the

trunk road to pass through the National Park. It was while doing this last lap that I sat discussing with the driver, who seemed to possess a lot of sound common sense and wide practical experience, the problem of Australian Labour and its ultra-democratic ideals.

All the many weeks I was touring in Australia, I was a keen and critical observer of the varied phases of Australian labour on the roads and in the fields, in docks and in factories, in offices and shops, in restaurants and hotels. If I were to collate my varied observations and draw a general conclusion therefrom, I could not say that I noticed any special skill or smartness nor any extra speed or efficiency in the Australian workmen in the doing of their various jobs. On the contrary, I found on comparison with what I had noticed in England a certain amount of avoidable slackness and want of discipline wherever I went. When I narrated my personal experience to my friend at the wheel, he replied: "The curse of the land is the slogan of 'Go Slow.' That is at the bottom of all the labour trouble we have in Australia." "To me," I said, "the creed of 'Go Slow' seems obviously incompatible with the Australian ideal of high

wages. No employer of labour anywhere in the world could afford to pay an increasing high wage with a decreasing amount of work turned out." That, he affirmed, was exactly the one problem of Australia, the effective solution of which has vainly taxed the political acumen and sagacity of Australian statesmen. Later on I discussed the same problem with a prosperous squatter who owned many hundreds of acres of land in New South Wales. He told me the real cause of all their trouble was the wrong economic policy of supporting by means of subsidies, high tariff, and embargo non-paying secondary industries at the cost of paying primary ones. The result was that primary industries once so secure and so thriving had got into such a precarious state that they in their turn had to be propped up by the very means by which their own ruination had been brought about. In support of his contention he gave me a pamphlet issued by the *Argus* of Melbourne on "The Economic Outlook," written by the well-known Senator, Sir Hall Colebatch. The pamphlet is barely thirty pages, but it is a mine of information and gives the whole economic situation of Australia in a nutshell. Reading it, one finds no difficulty in understanding why Australian economics

are in a bad way and politics in a hopeless muddle. To give a sample of Australian economics, Sir Hall takes the case of the butter industry. Australian butter sells in England for about sixpence less than what it fetches in the country of its produce. To make this economic feat possible the Australian Economic Committee has had £3,000,000 placed at the disposal of the butter trade each year. In other words, every Australian has to pay ten shillings extra in taxation a year to keep the country's dairy industry going. For the same reason, to maintain the embargo on sugar, the Australians have to pay £6,000,000 a year more for buying their home-made sugar than they would have to do if they imported the sugar they needed. In other words, each man and woman in Australia has to spend twenty shillings extra on his or her annual consumption of sugar just to keep the sugar industry of Queensland going. If a business firm sold goods for sixpence less than cost, it would have before long to put up its shutters and become insolvent. Is it then a matter of wonder that the Australian Government at present is said to be not in a solvent state and finds difficulty in meeting its foreign monetary obligations?

But once we move away from their faulty politics and crazy economics, as well as their penchant for "high wages and sturdy independence" and come to examine their sociological ideals and ambitions, we find that no people in the world could claim to be in possession of saner ideals or worthier ambitions than those which the Australians possess. The cardinal principle of Australian sociological thought is:

"THAT THIS WORLD OWES TO ALL SOME HAPPINESS, AND SOCIETY TO EACH SINGLE MAN THE FULL MEASURE OF HAPPINESS WHICH HIS OWN ENERGY EARNS."

I ask if there is or could there be in the world a nobler democratic ideal or a political principle worthier of being followed to its full logical sequence than this. To implement this fundamental principle of Australian politics, the people of Australia have determined upon

"A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WHICH SHALL TAKE *no* ACCOUNT OF SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS, BUT SHALL AIM IN THE FIRST AND THE LAST PLACE AT SECURING THE BEST POSSIBLE CONDITIONS OF LIVING FOR THE GREAT MASS OF THE PEOPLE."

In other words, all Australian ideals are national, social, and progressive. The vision that Australia has ever set before her mind's

eye is—of a Nation free and unstained by social evils which mar the old-world civilization of Europe and America. Her cities are to have no slums. No Unemployed are to tramp her streets. Work for all. Leisure for all. A living wage for all. These are her battle-cries. To this end she has developed, or it would be truer to say she hopes to develop, a socio-political system whereby the formation of anything in the nature of trusts after the American pattern and the consequent exploitation of the working masses by the employing classes would be an impossibility. Of course, as all human institutions go, the Australian Government *de facto* is anything but ideal. But that is due not so much to want of sufficient energy in her people or of patriotism in her politicians as to their lack of sufficient education and requisite experience. These latter are bound to come with time. The great thing is that the Australians as a nation have got hold of an unimpeachable political principle and, what is more, they firmly believe in it. Consequently, no matter what difficulties they may for the present encounter in realizing it, they will eventually overcome these and, working the principle out in their own national politics, give a definite lead to

the world at large in labour legislation and democratic idealism.

From the above it is evident that the Soul of Australia is at present seized of a bold Experiment in Democracy. As the Australian nation is not burdened with time-worn traditions, much less weighed down by clogging conventions, as every other nation is, no people in the world stand so good a chance or are constitutionally so well fitted for carrying out such a momentous experiment as the people of Australia. The price of experimenting will have to be paid and paid in full: but they need not, on that account, shirk the pain and penalty of launching a new and high ideal in the world. Other nations like France, England, and America have paid such price in the past. This was why I told my Australian friends, who were inclined to be pessimistic about their future, that there was much apparent cause but no real ground for pessimism. On the contrary, they should rejoice like artists that they have within them the conscious sense of creative energy, the feeling that they are building up something such as history has never yet recorded in the politics of men, the birth of a new era of social justice and fair dealing in which—

to put it in the words of the Colonial poet, Alexander McLachlan,—

“No one moils and strains and toils,
That Snobs may thrive the faster,
But all are free, as men should be,
To be of their own souls the master.”

On the fourth afternoon after leaving Melbourne, we reached the holiday city of Australia—Sydney. Scarcely had I been there an hour when I went and arranged for my voyage across the Tasman Sea to New Zealand. Once that was fixed up, I leisurely did the sights of Sydney. Of these the most remarkable was the bathing-beach. Even in my distant Eastern home I had heard of the fame of Manly, Coogee, and Bondi, and so when one hot Saturday afternoon my friends came out in their car and took me to see them, I saw a sight I am not likely to forget for a long time. The beaches were literally packed with men and women in all varieties of bathing suits, from plain single-piece to elaborately designed, gorgeously tinted, jazzy costumes. So crowded, indeed, was the seashore that one could barely pick one's way to the water without the risk of treading on the toes and fingers of the thousands who lay stretched on the sands sun-bathing or

idly gossiping. What a fine display Manly made that afternoon of the bronzed, muscular manhood and of the slim, beautifully moulded womanhood! But these beaches were more than a mere exhibition of fine, sturdy manhood and fair white womanhood of the world. They were emblematic of the ideal, nay, of the very Spirit of Australia: that ideal which avers that human existence should be absolutely free and untrammelled and that spirit which goes in search of open, outdoor life and regards every moment spent indoors as so much life wasted. These care-free, nature-loving, happy-go-lucky people seek every possible pretext "to take a holiday." All over the Empire the King's Birthday is kept as a holiday; but these sunny souls of the South must needs keep the Prince's, besides such fantastic anniversary holidays as "Eight Hours' Day" and "Labour Day." The result of all this holiday-taking and merry-making, added to their inordinate fondness for the open air, is that the Australian is fast becoming more of a healthy animal than a thinking being. And this, as is to be expected, is reflected in the higher pursuits of his soul; namely, in his Art and Literature. I had a chance of studying all that was worth seeing

in the art-galleries of Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney. The assistant curator in each case very considerably took me round and pointed out to me the works of the artists who had made a name for themselves in Australia. When one considers that eighty years ago there were, so to say, no artists in Australia, the array of Australian Art displayed in the art galleries is indeed remarkable, and almost unbelievable. But once we forget this fact and consider Australian Art purely from the standpoint of Art, much of our admiration suffers and most of our enthusiasm evaporates. Fred McCubbin, Walter Withers, Julian Ashton, Tom Roberts, George Lambert, Arthur Streeton, and, above all, Hans Heysen, are names to conjure with in the Art-Circles of Australia. Lionel Lindsay may compare Streeton to Constable and call Hans Heysen the greatest landscape artist Australia has ever produced; nevertheless, I fear the works of any and all of them would barely be noticed in the great art-centres of Europe. This is perhaps not a fair way of judging Australia's Art. In a case like hers, the only test-question to be put is: Does it reflect the life and ideal of Australia? If it does, then it is on the right track, no matter

what little progress it may have made from a purely artistic standpoint up to now. As far as pictorial art is concerned, and especially landscape-painting, the answer is most decidedly in the affirmative. When, however, we turn to other forms of art, such as sculpture and architecture, the answer is not only less decisive, but even doubtful. Though I saw some remarkable pieces of sculpture and fine specimens of architecture, I cannot say I saw anything very original or especially Australian about them. On the contrary, they appeared a mere variant, and at times a bad variant, of what one saw in the older lands of the world. When we turn to the Literature, the story is different: one notices a distinct local colour and a strong vein of national aspirations in all Australia's prose and poetry. If the literature of a nation can be built up on such simple lines of being true to its own physical environment and faithful to its own national ideals, then Australia certainly possesses a literature of her own. If, on the other hand, literature means something more than that: if literature is a full and free expression of the hidden workings in the abysmal depths of the Soul of Man in response to stimuli provided by the outward phase of things,

then Australian Literature falls short of this ideal. The reason is simple and could be told in a sentence. The outlook of life which the broad, open, windswept, sun-saturated spaces of Australia produces does not induce a man to delve into his own soul and be introspective. And introspection is the very breath of literature. When a people has found its soul, that soul has always found voice in its literature. Until Australia is in full possession of her soul, her Literature can be at best only a variety, as Scottish and Welsh Literatures are in the ultimate analysis only varieties of the great English Literature. Of course there are exceptions, and notable exceptions at that: as, for instance, Marcus Clarke's *For the Term of his Natural Life*, or Rolf Boldrewood's *Robbery under Arms*, or that brilliant *Creative Effort* of Norman Lindsay's. But these are exceptions that prove the general mediocrity of Australian Literature.

All through my tour I was anxious to see and know something of the Aborigines, as the Australian Blacks are known there. But try as I would, they never came my way. It was only on the morning previous to my leaving Sydney that a friend came to my hotel

with his car and proposed to take me for a drive wherever I wished to go. I seized the opportunity and suggested La Perouse, where for many years past the Government of Australia has formed a small Reservation for their Aborigines. He consenting, we drove out some fifteen miles and reached the historic spot which was the scene of Captain Cook's first landing in Australia. There I saw a number of Blacks, chiefly employed in cutting out their famous boomerang from curved pieces of wood. From the short conversation I had with them, I was surprised to note the quickness with which they grasped and the intelligent way they answered the series of questions I put to them regarding their mode of living and their varied pursuits and ambitions in life. Of course, one saw at a glance the vast gulf that lies between the aboriginal Black and the new-comer White which no system of education or good intentions or exertions on the part of any Government can bridge over. Mentally, the Aboriginal in his native surroundings is quick-witted and self-reliant, capable of enduring privations and extreme fatigue, but under the stress of civilization he seems to crumple up, loses his grip on life, becomes helpless, and develops

instability of character to such an extent as to unfit him for any kind of steady, continuous manual work such as the whites are used to. Herein lies one of the saddest tragedies of modern civilization. There is apparently no room in it for those races of men which, having outlived their age of usefulness, have now become merely unsightly anachronisms living on the sufferance and charity of their more fortunate fellow-men. I have read enough of Rolf Boldrewood's *Old Melbourne Memories* to know how persistently and ruthlessly the Blacks were hunted down in the early days of Australian history. But whatever might be the treatment meted out to them in the past, the way the Whites conduct themselves towards them at present left nothing to be desired. Everything possible was done to make the best of them and get the best out of them. But the handicap which Nature herself had placed upon them seemed to be grossly unfair and all too insupportable: consequently, the Aborigines have to rest content with leading a kind of half-primitive, half-civilized backwoods life. That the Australian Natives are of a race that has had a higher degree of mental development than what their descendants can lay claim to at present is

evidenced by their possession to this day of an instrument which is at once an embodiment of mechanical ingenuity and dynamic force. The original Australian native who first invented the boomerang deserves a place in the annals of human progress and achievement, for the flight of a boomerang in the air and its return is a problem in dynamics, and displays on the part of its originator an advanced knowledge of the laws of curvature and of the latent forces of nature. The whole secret of the boomerang is that its surface is not planed flat but is raised up at a slight angle on one side. It is this raised-angle surface which impinges on the air and causes that lifting action, as if a strong wind were blowing upwards against it. In other words, the boomerang spinning through the air produces just the same lifting effect as a whirlwind would, were it let loose under a flying-machine. Although the boomerang reminds one of the myth about Thor's hammer, Mjolner, which likewise returned to the hands of the thrower, and though we know that a kind of curved throwing-stick was used by the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians and that a so-called boomerang is still in use among the jungle-people living in the south-east of India, no

other race outside of Australia possesses at present this particular type of boomerang. It was once believed that the Australian Aboriginal alone knew the art of throwing a boomerang, but that could hardly be a fact, for I can throw it myself in an open space under certain favourable conditions of wind and bring it back almost to my feet. I learnt in five minutes the art of throwing it from an old Aboriginal at La Perouse, of whom I bought the boomerang which is in front of me as I write these lines.

Besides its beaches there are two sights for which Sydney is famous, and those are its Inner Harbour and the Blue Mountains. By using the city air-service I closely followed the configuration of the Inner Harbour, and noted its many points of beauty by taking trips in its ferry steamers: but from whatever point of view I looked at Sydney Harbour, it left me cold and unimpressed. The Blue Mountains had not a better tale to tell. I visited them both by car and rail. By either mode of travelling, the way lay through wild wooded country mostly over the summit of hills. I saw the whole mountain range from the highest peak, Mount Piddington, and from various other coigns of vantage, especially

the famous "Three Sisters," soaring in all their sororial serenity and maidenly beauty above a deep, thickly-wooded valley with a background of distant hills, mist-laden, as the reader can see for himself by turning to the frontispiece. But go to what height I would or to what coign of vantage I might, there was nothing to make me even passingly enthusiastic about the Blue Mountains—as most "Sidney-Siders" were apt to be whenever and wherever I met them.

NEW ZEALAND

IN NORTH ISLAND

“Yesterday you had a song
I could not choose but hear;
’Twas, ‘Oh, to be in England,
Now that April ’s there!
But I have found a new refrain
I cannot choose but sing;
’Tis, ‘Oh, to be in New Zealand,
Now summer ’s on the wing!’”

Percival Gibbon.

CHAPTER VII

IN NORTH ISLAND

RATHER disappointed, I left Sydney one warm summer afternoon by the R.M.S. *Maunganui* for that young England of the Southern Seas, inhabited by people "more English than the English"—New Zealand. The voyage lay across the Tasman Sea, which has acquired quite a reputation among the seas of the world for being consistently inconsiderate and often ill-tempered. For the first two days it quite lived up to its reputation, but on the third day the Tasman relaxed a bit, became calm, and was for the rest of the voyage in the best of humours. We were a mixed crowd of some three hundred men and women, among us being two girls of exotic looks and bearing. On being introduced to them, I was told that they hailed from Samoa and had been training in a college at Sydney, and were returning to their native island, having completed their education. They were Eton-cropped and short-skirted, wore their college

blazers, and talked English fluently, though with a typical Australian accent. But what appealed to me most was that they were living witnesses of what our far-flung Empire stands for and what the English language means to the countless polyglot races which go to form it. Who could have imagined, for instance, that a descendant of Ancient Persians with an Indian dialect for his mother-tongue, could exchange his inmost thoughts and dance the latest dances with Samoan belles who but a generation ago might have been seen gathering shell-fish, half-naked in their grass-skirts, on the shores of their native island? Such magic our grand old Empire performs unknown to us each day of the week in every nook and corner of the world. It were well if we occasionally stayed to ponder on the worth and value of the Empire, and ceased speaking lightly of its one day breaking up and taking the Way of all Empires.

Early on the fourth morning we steamed into the beautiful harbour of Auckland and, after the usual formal examination by the Immigration Department, were allowed to land on its quay. Hardly had I left my bags in my hotel, when I made straight for the Government Tourist Bureau and had them

arrange for me a most comprehensive four weeks' tour of both the North and the South Islands. Later on I took a long day's local excursion and saw most of the attractive sights round about beautiful Auckland, especially that unique panorama of the whole city from Mount Eden, with the outlying hills and encircling harbour where meet the waters of two oceans covering half the world. And beautiful it was, incomparably more so than Sydney or any of the Australian cities, with the single exception of Hobart. Though Hobart, in the matter of height of its surrounding hills and the beauty of their outline stands head and shoulders above Auckland, in pure beauty of colouring and fine laying-out of the city itself Auckland scores over its Tasmanian rival. But more than its natural beauty, even more than the human interest it kindled in me later on, Auckland has secured a permanent place in my heart and mind by the literary interest it provided me with in the form of a *Letter* which Rupert Brooke wrote when in Auckland in the early days of the War before that young "Apollo, golden-haired" sailed for Tahiti and England and met with a warrior's death and found, just as he had predicted, a classic grave in "some corner

of a foreign field that is for ever England.”

The following day I started betimes on my twenty-five-hundred-mile motor-tour. Once we left the city suburbs, the road ran along the well-wooded banks of the Waikato River and later on right through the heart of a native bush of giant ferns and forest-trees till we reached the thermal wonderland of New Zealand, the world-famous Rotorua. There I stayed three days watching closely the strange sights of volcanic eruption, taking down notes about the new forest industry, and mostly gathering first-hand information about and getting intimately acquainted with those most interesting people of New Zealand—the Maoris. Frankly speaking, the thermal wonders of boiling springs and ever-bubbling mud-pools excited but my passing curiosity, nor would the rising forest-industries have enlisted more than my passing interest, had not the very enterprising forestry gentry taken a voyage of seven thousand miles to my native land and managed by holding out high hopes of a hundred per cent profit each year¹ to dispose of an enormous quantity

¹ “Each Rs. 300 cash invested with **** Company will give a return of at least from Rs. 3,500 to Rs. 4,500 every twelve to fifteen years, or Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 7,000 every twenty to twenty-five years.”

of their bonds, mainly to a class of small investors who could ill afford to risk their hard-earned savings in any venture that had not a sound commercial basis. A well-known English stockbroker of Bombay, realizing his obligations to the investing public, issued to his clients a series of reports in which he attempted to prove, and not unsuccessfully, that the hopes held out by certain New Zealand forestry companies to their bondholders were so wildly extravagant that they would in no circumstances be able to fulfil them. As a consequence, one of the companies concerned sued the stockbroker in the Bombay High Court, and the judge, while awarding on purely legal grounds contemptuous damages of a farthing to the Company, observed that in his opinion the defendant had generally justified his remark that the Company was not conducting honestly its business in India—an observation which reflected no credit on the New Zealand forestry business in general. While at Rotorua I was within fifty miles of the planting-fields of by far the largest forestry company in New Zealand and, as the Company's agent in India had previously made arrangements for me to see their plantations, I went one morning to

Putaruru by train and spent the day investigating the whole problem for myself. The general manager came out to the station in his two-seater and motored me round the most important parts of the Company's plantations, through which it had made its own private roads. When we had leisurely driven all up and down and round the winding roads for some fifty miles, we reached a look-out station. Climbing up its tall watch-tower, I saw miles and miles of hills and dales all covered with well and evenly planted *pinus insignis* of three, four, and five years' growth. I stood watching and admiring this vast panorama of millions of trees which seemed to creep up and down in serried ranks wherever I happened to turn my eyes. To have converted vast tracts of the waste land of a country into young woods which in their turn in years to come would grow up into rich forests was a work worthy of support and encouragement in any country. I have no manner of doubt that these serried ranks of young trees will in the course of the next fifteen or twenty years be magnificent forests and will then be a very valuable national asset to New Zealand and its people, irrespective of the advantage or otherwise to the

foreign bondholder. If the hopes held out to the bondholder depended for their fulfilment solely on the possession of fully-grown forests, the companies without doubt would make good their promises in the next twenty years. But it is one thing to have forests as a good national asset, it is quite another to have them as a good business proposition. I, therefore, throughout my extended tour of the two Islands took to inquiring about the commercial possibilities of the forests. A local promoter of one of the companies had got out the story that as every man, woman, and child in New Zealand held a forest-bond, they had to come out to India to sell their surplus stock of bonds. Imagine, therefore, my surprise to find that the hundreds of New Zealanders I came across on my tour not only held no bonds of any company whatever, but there was not the least enthusiasm about the forestry business among the people at large. On the contrary they argued that owing to the prevalent high wages in New Zealand the charges for cutting, milling, land-carriage, and water-transportation would be so prohibitive that they would practically absorb all the possible profits of the business. "Even were it otherwise and

the business as profitable a proposition as your companies make it out to be, I cannot understand," I argued, "the short-sighted policy of your Government which allows foreign capital to come into the country and drain off the profits of its natural resources. One of the standing arguments of the Indian Nationalists against British Connection is England's systematic exploitation of the natural wealth and resources of India with British capital. Why then does your Government commit a similar folly?" Surely, the New Zealand Government can any day borrow money at five or six per cent and by employing it in growing forests can make a cent per cent profit over it, as the forestry Companies light-heartedly promise to their bondholders. If the forestry calculations were correct and the New Zealand Government had vision and enterprise to take advantage of them, what a relief a national investment in forestry business on a country-wide scale would in years to come give to the harried, overburdened general taxpayer of New Zealand!

More than its forestry affairs, more than its sickly stretches of boiling mud-holes and steaming pumice, the thing that really interested me in Rotorua was the new type of

humanity I came across there. Scarcely had I been an hour in Rotorua, when I took the tram to one of the neighbouring Maori villages. In the car were several brown-skinned, flat-featured, corpulently-inclined, normally dressed men and women who sat talking noisily or laughing light-heartedly. Only one girl, rather tall and slim, wearing a pleasant smile on her not unpleasant face, was dressed in her native costume and head-band. She left her seat, came and sat next to me, and said if I wished to see a Maori village she would take me round it. I readily accepted her suggestion, and discovered before long that she was Guide Rangī, famous all over New Zealand. When we finally arrived at her village, she took me inside a Maori home, pointing out all its arrangements; then conducted me to a natural oven formed in the hollow of a rock over steaming pumice, in which they did all their cooking. Later on Rangī showed me round a fantastically carved tribal-house, and then took me to her own home. It consisted of two separate buildings, a smaller one patterned after the other Maori houses and a bigger one designed and furnished in the ordinary Western style and intended only for receiving *pakeha*, their white fellow

New Zealander. Before I left the village, she promised to go in the evening to a public dance-hall with me and appointed a certain place near my hotel where we were to meet. Accordingly, after dinner I went to the appointed spot and looked round for Rangi, but could not find her or for the matter of that any Maori man or woman. Instead I saw standing at the end of the pavement, a very smartly dressed and hatted European girl idly swinging a vanity-bag. As I was passing by her without taking any notice, she swung round and remarked: "Don't you recognize me?" "What, Rangi?" I exclaimed. "That is a surprise!" Really I could never have recognized her, had she not spoken to me, so completely transformed was she in her new attire. Then we went to the dance-hall, and so wonderfully well and light-footedly did she dance that I could not bring myself to believe that this was the same Maori girl whom I had met but two hours ago in her primitive skirt and bandeau of flax-fibre. Next evening she took me to the special Maori Concert she herself had organized for the foreign visitors to Rotorua, consisting of various Maori dances and action-songs. The famous war-dance of *Haka* ending in weird

battle-cries was sung, as well as the equally celebrated *waiata-poi* and *waiata-hoehoe-waka* or canoe-paddling chant. The outstanding feature of the concert, however, was the singing of a Maori girl, named Ano Hato. Hers was a lovely mezzo-soprano, so full and rich and of such compass and withal so sweet that were it trained for a couple of years in Milan or Paris under the guidance of a noted *impresario* there, she would assuredly make a name for herself in the music-world of Europe.

The more I got acquainted with these interesting people, the more I liked them. The stories I was told of their ancient chivalry only added to my esteem of them. One story in particular appealed to me strongly. It is recorded as one of the authentic incidents of the last Maori War that when a beleaguered British garrison ran short of water and ammunition, the besieging Maori force, with magnanimity worthy of the gallant knight of La Mancha, sent it half of their own supply, so as to have, to put it in their own words, "a fair fight." No wonder that such chivalrous and generous-hearted people should touch the imagination of their white fellow-countrymen and be treated by them on terms of absolute equality. They possess full social and political

rights: in fact, their possession under special agrarian law of seven million acres of tribal land makes them have property rights far superior to those of their white fellow-citizens. Throughout my tour of the two Islands I found that the ordinary New Zealander spoke of the Maoris with evident pride and unfeigned enthusiasm, and encouraged them in every way to avail themselves of the wide and varied opportunities which their well-beloved homeland gave them. When I expressed surprise to my New Zealand friends at the admirable way they treated their brown compatriots, they invariably replied that they did not understand why I should feel surprised. Was not New Zealand, they argued, the native land of the Maoris? By conquering it, did they not take possession of a land that really belonged to other people? It was, therefore, only natural that they should treat the Maoris as they did. Likewise, I contended, the whites in India, America, and Africa have thrust themselves into lands originally belonging to other people, but there they have never recognized the elementary fact of their being interlopers, much less shown a disposition to treat their coloured fellow-countrymen with any real measure of fairness

or equality. Take, for instance, I continued, my own country. The English Officials for the last century and a half have habitually lorded it over Indians as a class. Though the national awakening in India has made the continuance of that practice impossible now, yet the Officials have never betrayed any special liking, much less manifested cordial feelings, for their fellow-citizens in India. Whenever in a fit of magnanimity or through sheer necessity they have let us step on the holy ground of their clubs and other social institutions, we have been made to feel as if we were tolerated intruders there, allowed to poach on their last preserves in India, because the exigencies of the political situation imperatively demanded that they should mix with us or at least make a pretence of mixing with us whenever and wherever possible, whether they liked it or not. "That 's a real disgrace!" exclaimed my friend. "I wonder why you people put up with such nonsense! If any white man anywhere in New Zealand dared to conduct himself with the Maoris after the manner of your Officials, and it came out in the papers, there would be such a commotion in the country that the poor man would live to regret his conduct for the rest of his life."

In spite of all the fine effort of the Maori to adapt himself to the Western modes and methods of life and the equally genuine desire of his white compeer to educate him up to the European standard of life and thought, at heart the modern Maori remains very much the old Polynesian that he was before the advent of the whites. When I gave expression to these deductions of mine derived from my own systematic observations and personal contact, the white New Zealander, in all his real and unbounded enthusiasm for the Maori, stoutly denied the validity of my conclusions. I readily admit that there are brilliant exceptions in whose case, but for the cast of their features and the colour of their skin, it would be difficult to trace any difference whatever in the manner of living and thinking of the two races. But taking the generality of Maoris their Westernism was only skin-deep, and would, if the whites by any chance left their Islands one year, strip off like a veneer, and the old indolent, easy-going, irresponsible mode of primitive life would come back with a rebound. Superficial as may be the Western acquirements of the Maoris, this great, high-souled experiment of the white New Zealanders to make their brown fellow-

countrymen keep pace with the necessities of an exacting, machine age which will allow no people, primitive or otherwise, to remain for long in its old easy-going condition of life, furnishes a splendid example and gives a noble lead to the rest of the Empire in the matter of the just and equitable treatment of its non-white element. The greatest problem that faces the Empire at present is that of the Coloured Races, which number more than five-sixths of its entire population, and which starting from rank and untamable savages and passing through various grades of civilization ultimately attain the high-water mark of culture and wisdom in the matter of art and letters, philosophy and research. Surely all these peoples in various stages of civilization could not be lumped together as Coloured Races and dumped down to a segregated existence away from the vital stream which nourishes the throbbing life of the Empire. Somehow it must be made possible for the Coloured People not only to find their proper place and perform their allotted function in the grand Imperial Scheme of Things, but also have in the counsels of the Empire their due weight and voice in the determination of the

Imperial policy and goal. Though I fear the Maoris are not especially designed by nature to help the Empire in laying down the lines along which it is to proceed in the future conduct of its affairs, the white New Zealanders by their sound state policy and genuine good will for the Maoris have set a shining example to the rest of the Empire of how the white and non-white races of the Imperial fold can, without blending together or losing their individualities, live side by side, confide in one another, and fulfil their joint Imperial destiny in happy harmony and good fellowship. In poet O'Dowd's words, let each

"share what all men sow,
That Colour, Caste's a lie:
That Man is God, however low—
Is man, however high."

I left Rotorua one morning for Wairakei and saw some more of the thermal treasures of New Zealand, and was more impressed by the bizarre names given to the playing geysers and boiling mud-holes than by the weird sight of the infernal substances themselves. Early the following morning I left Wairakei for my long motor-journey to Napier. On the way I passed along the lovely blue shore of the famous Lake Taupo, which, I was told, is "a

veritable fisherman's paradise." In most rivers in England a three-pound trout is a sort of thing a fisherman wants to go and tell his friends about, and there are streams, I believe, where a half-pound trout would be considered a prize. At Lake Taupo, where rainbow trout was introduced barely fifteen years ago, a catch of under ten pounds a good fisherman would scarcely deign to look at, and trout of eighteen and twenty pounds are not of rare occurrence. From Taupo we gradually entered into the hilly regions and before long into the mountainous district of Motuhora Ranges. The road now ran merrily down the mountain-side, then nervously up and over great mountain ridges. On one side the giant trees and tangled undergrowth appeared to rise to the sky, while on the other a deep ravine seemed to drop down into a rushing, foaming stream. This went on for hour after hour till late in the afternoon we got the first glimpse of distant Hawke's Bay and later on of sunny Napier with the long-extending and beautifully tinted sweep of its ocean-beach. Little did I then dream that this lovely ocean-beach with its imposing promenade, as well as the Masonic Hotel, in which I stayed for the night, would be in

stark, staring ruins in little over a year by one of the freaks of nature. Such, alas, is the strange and unaccountable working of Fate in the affairs of men, rendering nugatory in a trice their prodigious labour and consummate art, their deep thought and realized ideals of decades and centuries! From ill-fated Napier I motored next day two hundred miles to reach the city of wind and dust—Wellington. As there is great rivalry and jealousy between Sydney and Melbourne in Australia, so likewise is there in New Zealand between Auckland and Wellington. The Aucklanders believe that he has the finest harbour in the world and the Wellingtonians that his city possesses the finest harbour-view in the world. Each harbour has distinctive charms and beauties of its own, so it would be futile to say which of the two scores over the other: still, were I asked to adjudicate the claims of the rival cities, I would say that Wellington Harbour by the soaring grandeur of its surrounding hills impresses one's mind and imagination, while the sweeping curves and melting distances of Auckland Harbour make a strong appeal to one's æsthetic sense.

IN SOUTH ISLAND

**“Delightful Isle in wildness e’en benign,
The glorious past is ours, the future thine!
As in a cradled Hercules we trace
The lines of Empire in thine infant face.”**

Thomas Campbell

CHAPTER VIII

IN SOUTH ISLAND

AFTER staying three days in the capital-city of New Zealand, taking a few half-day motor-trips in the neighbourhood, and meeting a few more of my Mazdaznan friends, I sailed one afternoon across Cook Strait for Picton, vainly looking as I crossed the Strait for old Pelorus Jack, of whose chivalrous act in going to the rescue of beautiful *Hinepoupou* I had read in my schooldays. When we left Cook Strait and entered Picton Sound between two ranges of hills I felt as if I were suddenly transported to Norway and was cruising once again after twenty years through one of its fjords. And the illusion was complete when we reached Picton and I beheld from an upper-story window of my hotel the extended view of Picton Harbour in the repose of the evening with the hills and water bathed in the luminous haze of the after-glow. So perfect was the setting, so opalescent the light, and of such unearthly grandeur the whole scene, that I stood

enchanted at the window till the dinner-bell sounded and roused me with a start from my prolonged reverie. Early next morning, when I reluctantly left this scene of unspeakable beauty and charm, I cast many a long and lingering glance behind as my car slowly moved away towards Christchurch. That day I had perhaps the longest motor-drive of my tour. We started at eight in the morning and did not reach Christchurch till well-nigh seven in the evening. But it was not a bit tiresome, as the road wound now round and over the hills and then ran down them and sped along the open ocean-beach with high hills standing sentinel on one side.

Christchurch prides itself on being the most English-looking of all New Zealand towns. And so perhaps it is, with its public buildings of early Gothic architecture and avenues of old English trees, both of which together lend it something of the peculiar air of an old English cathedral town. But when one moved out to its residential quarters and saw rows of wooden bungalows of the typical Colonial pattern with verandas in front and the horrible corrugated-iron roofs above, the illusion was soon and cruelly dispelled. The glory of Christchurch, however, lies in its

possession of a gently-flowing, tree-lined river, appropriately named the Avon. The weeping willows which line the two banks strongly reminded me of the original at Stratford, so much so that I fancied I saw Ophelia floating down its glistening, translucent, flower-laden surface as I once did looking at the English Avon.

After staying a day at Christchurch, I left for the famous Mount Cook in the heart of the New Zealand Alps. This was another long motor-drive, and it was most tedious in parts. The first part up to Timaru was fairly enjoyable, but thereafter we entered bare, brown country till we approached the snow region. This bare, brown country with bare, brown hills stretching out for miles and miles was as much a revelation as a disappointment to me. From travel-books and picture-magazines I had imagined New Zealand to be one endless stretch of lovely green country, thickly wooded and highly cultivated, where smiled eternal spring from year's end to year's end. Instead, I found undulating plains and high rolling downs covered with short, stubby, dried grass, the eye-tiring monotony of which would have got on my nerves were it not relieved here by a cluster of cottages and there by a

clump of trees. Especially was this the case in the South Island, where again and again I felt as if I were carried on a magic carpet back to my native land of India, so very brown and parched the country looked at times. But this short, stubby grass that makes great parts of New Zealand so unattractive, provides an ideal food for sheep which, like us men, thrive best on simple diet and rigorous climate. When taken to the more fertile parts of the country and put on the richer diet of green pasture-lands, the sheep soon lose their fine tone, become flabby, and their wool in consequence, coarsens.

Travelling, like life, is often a study in contrast. When we reached Mount Cook late that evening, we realized the truth of that saying. For barely an hour before we were rolling up and down the dreary brown monotony, and now as if by magic we were transported right into the midst of a glistening white world with snowy ranges towering above us wherever we turned our eyes. The Hermitage Hotel was an acme of comfort and forethought. The Mount Cook Motor Company, which runs it, has set itself an ideal of hotel-keeping which is worthy of being followed in all other parts of the world. Its primary objective was not

merely to look after the comfort of its guests, as is the case with most hotels in the world, but to bring them together and entertain them so as not to have a dull moment hanging on their hands from the time they came down to breakfast in the morning till they retired pleasantly tired at night. This ideal of hotel-management is indispensable in snowland, where one's activities depend entirely on the moods of nature. If it was a bright day and one was strenuously inclined, there were men-guides ready to take one up the snow-peaks within a day's distance of the Hermitage: if one wanted to take things easy and desired only a leisurely climb up a neighbouring hill in pleasant company, there were women-guides waiting in rough corduroy breeches and puttees to accompany one wherever one wished to go. If the day turned out wet with that horrible drip-drip, morning, noon, and afternoon, and one was, in consequence, compelled to keep indoors and yet wanted exercise of some kind, there was a radio-gramophone with men and women dancers ready at hand to give one all the exercise one needed: if one were lazily inclined and yet wanted one's mind pleasantly occupied, there were bridge and billiards players waiting to

be called up. In other words, at the Hermitage things were so carefully thought out as to make it fully live up to its ambitious slogan of being "A Thousand Feet above Worry Level."

Of the many attractive day-excursions at Mount Cook, the most popular is the one to Tasman Glacier. Part of it is done by car and the rest on foot. After leaving the car, the scenery became so uninteresting that the tramp of four miles up to the Ball Hut would have been a mere prolonged trudge, had we not had among our party of six a young damsel from Auckland whose engaging presence and lively company occupied my mind and charmed away the dreariness of those four miles. She was dressed, as the occasion demanded, in khaki breeches and rough hose with a bright, canary-coloured woolly and a beret to match—composing a picture of youth and beauty as attractive as unforgettable. After having a simple luncheon at the hut we started on the principal part of our day's excursion. For a mile the path lay over debris of sharp-edged stones, but once we stepped on the ice-moraine the whole scene changed, and when we came to the end of our excursion and were almost on the first ledge of the Glacier, a most magnifi-

cent panorama opened out to our enchanted gaze. All around us and above us were

“the Alps,
The palaces of nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnaced in clouds their snowy scalps,
And thron'd Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity where forms and falls
The avalanche, the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven,—
Yet leave vain man below.”

These lines of Byron, conned in my college-days, came to my mind as I stood and watched “the icy halls and palaces of Nature.” But it was of short duration, for the clouds soon rolled up; it darkened and thundered, and before long the rain came down in heavy showers drenching me to the skin. As I had nothing on except a shirt and pants of cotton khaki, the guide insisted on my having his warm pullover; but I said I was so used to extremes of heat and cold and wet that they did not affect me in the least so long as I kept moving. Yet at the end I was beginning to feel uncomfortable in my soaking wet clothes: but, when we returned to the hut, a couple of cups of steaming hot tea set matters

right. The trudge back to the car was again livened up by our fair companion, and when, later on in the evening, she walked into the dance-hall and glided along the glazed floor with me to the soft, seductive strains of a Strauss waltz, I felt as if I held in my arm a fairy creature draped in modern evening gown, so light was she on her feet, and such a glow, subtle and indescribable had the day's exertions in the snow spread over her faultless face.

The next item on my programme was Queenstown, overlooking Lake Wakatipu. It was a long drive from the Hermitage, the last part of which lay over and down a chain of hills. As we leisurely drove down, a vast panorama of hills and clouds lay before me, with the famous lake shining in the glow of the setting sun in the far distance, as the reader can see for himself from the picture reproduced here from a snapshot I took of it. When I finally reached Queenstown, the sun had already gone to rest and the beautiful Wakatipu lay bathed in the pearly twilight amid a setting of majestic hills. The two famous day-excursions—Skipper's Drive and to a place called Paradise—were made during the following two days. The first lay along a narrow ledge cut in the crumbling, rocky



Sunset near Queenstown, N.Z.

hill-side, overlooking a deep ravine. The road was so narrow and the curves were so sharp at times that a single error of judgment in taking them would have hurled the car and all of us down the gaping precipice. The other excursion was to a little wooded spot lying charmingly amid encircling hills. But why this pretty little spot, the like of which one could see by the hundred in the rest of New Zealand was known by the grandiloquent name of Paradise, I could never ascertain from our guide nor from my friends.

The morning I left for Dunedin, Queenstown was wrapped in a mantle of white, owing to a heavy fall of snow overnight. As it was midsummer the unseasonable snow perplexed one, still it could not have fallen at a more auspicious time, for the following day was Christmas Day, and White Christmas to the New Zealanders was a thing to be read of only in English novels and seen only on Christmas cards. It was in "Edinburgh of the South," as the old Scotch settlers patriotically named their beloved town of Dunedin, that I passed my Christmas Day and had my Christmas dinner of roast turkey and flaming hot plum-pudding. There was a lot of high-spirited jubilation and lots more of adulatory speech-

making at the end of the sumptuous dinner. One toast in particular was tumultuously received and lustily drunk; namely, of the Byrd South Pole Expedition. A group of the returned heroes of that Expedition were dining with us that evening, intending to take a night off before plunging once more into the cold, white dreariness of the Antarctic.

From Dunedin I travelled back to Christchurch and spent a very happy day with my friends at the Rectory and then took the overnight boat for Wellington, and from Wellington the next morning caught the Daylight Express to Auckland, breaking the journey at Te Kiuti to see the world-famous glow-worm cave of Waitomo. As a glow-worm cave of this type is not to be found anywhere else, the New Zealanders consider it almost in the light of the Eighth Wonder of the World. A party from our hotel motored down to the entrance of the Cave, whence a guide led us inside in batches of six. There were at first the usual stalactite and stalagmite formations to be seen, brilliantly lighted up till we came to what looked like a subterranean river in which were a couple of boats tied up. Our batch of six was made to sit in one of them and, before the boat was untied, we

were instructed what to do when we entered the Cave proper. We were to keep absolutely still and silent, as the slightest sound made the glow-worms withdraw their lights within them, sometimes for hours together. The guide, after assuring himself that we had properly understood his instructions, let go the rope, and the boat slowly moved down and round the bend of the Cave, and a minute later we were plunged into total darkness save for points of phosphorescent light studing the entire vault of the cavern. The pitch darkness of the cavern itself, added to the intense silence, made the constellation of light-points a sight most weird to behold. We sat with bated breath in our boat, not daring even to move a hand lest that little movement should break the spell and we might be plunged into complete darkness with nothing to light our way back to the entrance. Indeed, Waitomo was wonderful! After seeing it, one realized why New Zealanders spoke with pride and enthusiasm of this national possession of theirs.

The next day at noon I took the car, did the last lap of my two thousand five hundred miles of motor-trip in New Zealand, and reached Auckland to the minute exactly

as I had planned it four weeks before. It was the racing season and Auckland was crowded. In my hotel I found many old friends of the *Maunganui*, among them was a fine young woman of extraordinary vitality and, I might almost say, sobriety. She was tossing down a full peg of whisky when I met her, and on my jestingly congratulating her on the remarkable celerity and neatness with which she disposed of her drink, she replied: "Yes, sir, this is my sixth peg, and I have had a dozen glasses of wine besides; but I am not drunk and look quite sober, don't I?" And, most extraordinary to relate, she not only looked sober, but walked quite steadily and talked sanely and most vivaciously. That same evening I taxied down to the pier and went on the R.M.S. *Aorangi* on my way back to Sydney. After seeing that my bags were put in my cabin, I came up and was leisurely strolling up and down the promenade-deck, when who should appear but the erstwhile fair devotee of Bacchus. When I walked up to her, she told me she had come with her brother and a friend to see me off. I replied I was glad she had and then took her and her two companions to the smoking-saloon and asked them to have a drink with me. They

consenting, I rang for the steward and told him to get our drinks. "Sorry, sir, but you can't have whisky or any liquor now," he replied. "Why not?" I inquired. "We are in the harbour and the bar is locked up. But, if you like, sir, I could get you some coffee and sandwiches." As I hesitated for a moment or two, my fair companion took the occasion to speak for me: "What's wrong with coffee? Coffee is as good as wine to me." And those were no empty words uttered to put me at my ease, for she drank coffee with just as much relish and zest as I saw her drink wine and whisky. Truth, they say, is stranger than fiction. Had someone narrated an incident of this nature to me, I would have been inclined to take it with the proverbial grain of salt.

HOMeward

**“Though Earth holds many splendours,
Where'er I may roam or die,
I know to which Brown Country
My Homing Thoughts will fly.”**

Dorothea Mackellar.

CHAPTER IX

HOMeward

THOUGH the *Aorangi* was luxuriously fitted up and there were on board some really nice people, I did not enjoy the voyage coming back half as much as I did going over. The treacherous Tasman was in one of his less attractive moods, wore a scowl on his watery face most of the voyage, and at times became so rough and boisterous that poor *Aorangi*, in spite of her gross weight of twenty thousand tons, was tossed about helplessly like a piece of driftwood on the surging waves.

Sydney Harbour was, however, reached one glorious morning, and within an hour of my landing I was busy meeting and saying farewells to my various friends. The most memorable of these meetings, and one of which I have the vividest recollection, was with the Grand Old Man of Australia, the ex-Premier Hughes. My friends arranged for the meeting, and Mr. Hughes came one

afternoon with his daughter and had tea with me in my hotel. Being quite deaf, he brought a listening-box with him and spoke most brilliantly for an hour on various topics. During the course of his conversation he betrayed a knowledge of India and its intricate problems that took me by surprise. Wide as his knowledge might be, it was, naturally, one-sided, the outcome of our Governmental propaganda and of the ill-informed Australian papers. For instance, he could see nothing in Gandhism except a bare-faced pandering to false nationalism and in its cult of the Khaddar an uneconomic reversion to stark and naked primitiveness. When I told him of the real secret of the Khaddar Cult and how it, when fully developed as cottage-industry in the seven hundred thousand villages of India, would mean a little more food and a little more clothing to two hundred million semi-starved, half naked peasants, he leaned forward, and to my great surprise said: "But Sastri never told me that." What, however, surprised me most in the ex-Premier was the bitterness of tone in which he spoke of England and of the way she dealt with Australia. He said when her economic interests were involved,

England had never shown any special disposition to be really friendly or even ordinarily just to them. I replied I was not surprised to hear that, for it was India's standing grievance against England that where her economic interests clashed with ours, ours, of course, had to go by the board. The notorious instance, I continued, was the way she supported for decades the export of Manchester piece-goods to India by compelling the Indian Government to levy excise-duty on Indian-made piece-goods, which no other country in the world had ever done before—namely, taxed its own indigenous industry to support a foreign one.

Having tea with the ex-Premier was one of the last things I did in Sydney; the following forenoon I took a taxi to the harbour and got on the P. & O. *Mooltan* for the voyage home. I had with me eight packages, of which seven were of such size and weight as could be easily carried in the hand. The taxi pulled up alongside the steamer, and the porter, who brought a hand-trolley to take up the bags to my cabin, charged me for his five minutes' service four shillings. On my objecting to pay such an exorbitant charge, the porter produced a tariff-sheet in support of his

unholy exactions. If this is the way Australian Labour exacts wages from a long-suffering public, no wonder most Australian industries prove a failure economically and a burden on the general taxpayer. As the *Mooltan* moved out of the harbour, it passed underneath the enormous span of the Sydney Suspension Bridge which had not then been completed. But unfinished as it was, it stood there as the world's greatest monument to Human Brain and its supreme mastery and complete control over the titanic forces of Nature. There up on the top edge of the unfinished span I saw a gang of men working. At that enormous height they looked little more than a cluster of maggots from the deck of the twenty-thousand-ton *Mooltan*. And yet in the brain of one such maggot the idea of the Bridge was originally conceived and thereafter carried out by implements designed by a few other contemptible-looking animalcules of the same species. As if to complete one's pride in the doings and achievements of one's kind, there flew over the projecting span the *Southern Cloud*, doing one of its daily round-trips over the city and harbour. Soon we had left the harbour and were out in the open sea. We reached Melbourne in less than

two days, but stopped there taking freight for five days more. This gave me a splendid opportunity of looking up my several friends and taking short day-excursions with them. In two days more we reached Adelaide, and from there we entered the capricious Bight and rolled and pitched on its tossing waters for four long days before we sighted Fremantle, where we stopped for the day. As the day advanced a strange heaviness seemed to take possession of my heart and spirits. The reason was obvious. Just as the sun was dipping down on the far horizon, the *Mooltan* weighed anchor and slowly moved out of the harbour. I stood leaning against the deck-rail, my gaze riveted to the Land that was slowly receding in the haze of the distance—the Land that had in the short space of a few weeks so endeared itself to me, given me such a fresh outlook on things, and brought into my life such rich experiences and such a galaxy of sunny souls—the Land of the Southern Cross.

APPENDIX A

I extract the following from *The Free Press Journal* of April 26, 1932:

ASSAULT ON FALLEN VOLUNTEERS

No Protest Meetings Allowed
No Enquiry Conducted

By

PETER FREEMAN

(Formerly Member of Parliament for Brecon
and Radnor)

I WAS going along Mount Road (the main street of Madras) about four o'clock in the afternoon, when I saw on the other side of the road about a dozen Indians, walking quietly along, one of their number carrying a flag. On enquiry I was informed that they were members of the Congress. Such action is illegal in India to-day. A policeman whom they passed on their route snatched the flag out of the hands of the man carrying it and

without further ado the police officer started hitting him repeatedly with a heavy lathi as hard as he could hit, on every part of his body, including many blows on his head. The man was knocked down, and became unconscious after a short time, but the rain of blows continued, even while he was lying maimed and helpless on the ground. By this time, a car-load of about twenty additional police had arrived, all armed with heavy lathis. Other members of the little group were then attacked and beaten mercilessly. There was no retaliation of any kind from the Congressmen. In one case the man's nerve failed him, and he attempted to run away, but he was chased by four or five of the police officers and hit ruthlessly on every part of the body, including the head. How he was able to stand the heavy blows without losing consciousness I do not know, though he attempted to ward off the blows with his bare arms, but with little effect. Eventually he was able to escape and made his way amongst the crowd.

No aggressive attitude had been shown by any of the members of the little procession, and no kind of counter-attack was made. No crowd had collected. No enquiry was

made and no attempt to arrest these men was made at the time, though other members of the group were subsequently arrested. No threats were made to the police, and there was no danger of any kind of attack, as every member of the group was unarmed and walked quietly and peacefully along until stopped.

To their shame, four English sergeants were present and encouraged this deliberate and brutal treatment of untried, harmless citizens.

If they had committed an illegal act, they could have been arrested, tried, and, if guilty, whatever punishment was necessary could have been administered by the proper authority. But for the police to take the law into their own hands and use such cruel and brutal methods, is a denial of every sense of justice and fair play which is the backbone of English traditions and humanity. Posterity will class such brutalities as worse than the Black Hole of Calcutta, or the burning of Joan of Arc.

Even in warfare, no one would attack an unarmed, defenceless man in cold blood, and beat him on the ground while in a state of unconsciousness, as I saw done by the police on this occasion. Even the most abject

criminal can claim protection by the police force until the law inflicts its punishment. What justification is there, then, for the brutal attacks on our fellow-citizens?

Ordinances and regulations prevent fair report of such cases in any newspaper. No chance of a just trial is possible. No permission is granted to hold protest meetings. No public enquiry is allowed to be conducted. Such suppression of a nation has alienated British feeling entirely throughout India. Let Great Britain cease brutality and open up negotiations for a mutual and amicable settlement of India's just claims with those who can speak in the name of India before it is much too late and India follows America and claims her complete independence and severs her connection with the British Empire.

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