HENRY WILLIAM HARPER

LETTERS FROM NEW ZEALAND, 1857-1911

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PREFACE.

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THESE letters may be of interest to those who, like myself, have taken part in the colonization of New Zealand. My own share in it was limited to the South Island, the Province of Canterbury, with its Goldfields, in the Diocese of Christchurch. There may be also others who have friends and relatives in New Zealand, or who are generally mterested in the great progress which the country has made in late years, to whom these letters may give useful information.

They are chiefly personal, perhaps none the less readable for that. Incidentally, they touch on problems of great importance which the Church in New Zealand has had to meet. Questions of Church Government and discipline; the position of the Laity; their proper share in a self-governing Church, which has never been established; their responsibility for the management of Church Finance, and the maintenance of the Ministry,—such questions as arise naturally in a Free Church in a Free State. Questions, too, which at some future date may have to be tackled by the Mother Church at Home. The organization of the Church in New Zealand is now fairly complete. It governs itself by means of General and Diocesan Synods. It is in close spiritual communion with the Mother Church, but in all matters of good government it has to look to itself.

Apart from these larger matters, I trust that these letters will find a welcome amongst the numerous friends and

fellow-workers with whom I have spent so many happy years in New Zealand. A country not nearly the size of many of the Dominions of our Empire, but in climate, natural resources, and especially in the character of its people, second to none, whether for material prosperity, or general happuiess of the conditions of life.

To have had the opportunity of pioneer work, with others, in such a country, with so great a future before it, is a privilege I cannot over-estimate, as I look back upon the last fifty years.

HENRY W. HARPER.

London, 1914.

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I.

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Christmas Day, 1856,

CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND.

MY DEAR ST. JOHN,

Here I am in the Ultima Thule of the Southern Seas, New Zealand, in the South Island, at Christchurch, the principal town of the Settlement of Canterbury, which has not yet completed its first decade of existence. As you may imagine it is the antipodes of all our old experience at Eton and Oxford.

Let me give you an example from the manner of my Christmas Eve yesterday. About 2 p.m. I was on the top of the pass through which a rough bridle track runs across the hills which separate Christchurch from Lyttelton harbour, affording the only means of communication by land between the harbour and the Canterbury plains, very steep, and about 1,200 feet in height. I was sittmg there on a convenient rock, contemplating a magnificent view on either side: Lyttelton harbour to the east, a long and rather narrow inlet, indented with bays, encircled with a tumbled mass of

hills of bold and broken outline, touching some 3,000 feet at their highest point. These hills, of tertiary volcanic origin, form an extensive peninsula connected with the Canterbury Plains by only a few miles of low ground. It was on this peninsula a century ago that Captain Cook landed, and with him the well known botanist, Sir Joseph Banks, whose name it bears,—"Banks' Peninsula." Captain Cook seems to have been content with a distant view of the Canterbury country, and I am told that in his chart he describes the Peninsula as an island.

Sitting there and looking down on this grand view I could not but notice how widely it differed from what I have seen in the hill country of Scotland and Wales; the general colouring of vegetation and grass, and the effect of the brilliant atmosphere over all is so different. This may be due to the absence of the humidity of climate which is characteristic of the old country. Sunshine clear and steely bright lights up every nook and crevice of the hills; you can see distinctly at a far greater distance than at home; but it robs the scenery of the depth and varied tones of colour, the charm and mystery of the neighbourhood of Snowdon or the Trossachs, or the softer scenery of the Westmoreland Lake country. In among the rocks and on the steep shelving sides of sheltered valleys there are shrubs and plants unknown to me, besides various kinds of Veronica, white and purple, tall palm trees, locally termed Cabbage trees,[1] masses of New Zealand flax, Phormium tenax, with glossy green spear-shaped leaves, some of them ten feet in length, and brown-red stalks, from which hang scarlet blossoms in tiers; also fuchsia trees with twisted trunks and branches. I

could see plenty of moss, for springs are abundant in this well-watered country; a land of brooks and fountains which water the hills, and a variety of ferns. In the distance in the deep mountain valleys and on the hill sides are extensive forests of what I take to be pines. I think if you tried to sketch it in water colours you would have to have first a general wash of yellowish brown, with indigo rather than blue for all green foliage; and you would find in the clear hard quallty of the atmosphere an absence of the soft purple and blue shadows which lend such beauty to our home scenery.

Now for the western view from my rocky seat, different in contour but not in general colouring; a vast expanse of plain forming the northern end of the Canterbury plains, ending on the North-east in the Pacific Ocean. It seems absolutely flat, but I believe it rises a good deal as it approaches the outlying flanks of the Southern Alps which form the great western "Divide" of the Canterbury province; their snow-capped peaks cannot be less than seventy miles from where I was sitting, but in this clear atmosphere they scarcely seemed half that distance. Imagine, as a foreground, a sort of yellowish brown carpet of tussock grass, here and there lit up with ribbons of waterways sparkling in the sunlight; at its North-eastern edge a curve of fifty miles of sand, fringed with breaking foam, losing itself in the distance against the great rocky headland of the "Kaikoura" mountains. The Kaikouras are over 5,000 feet in height, a splendid bulwark meeting the waves of the Pacific, known in the Maori tongue as the "Lookers on." On the plain, some eight miles away, I could make out a few scattered houses which so far form

the town of Christchurch; here and there evidences of cultivation, a few tracks and roads, some slender spires of smoke, and now and then there came the faint echo of voices of cattle and sheep, but otherwise a great silence brooded over this new land. The panorama of the Southern Alps is beyond my powers of description; very strange it seemed that there should be such an amount of snow in midsummer, but I am told that the level of perpetual snow in the South Island is much lower than in Switzerland; so that an ascent of Mt. Cook, which reaches an altitude of 12,300 feet, whenever attempted, will be found as difficult as that of Mt. Blanc with its 15,000 feet.

Well, I have kept you a long time in this rocky pass, and have not explained how I came to be there alone. Not far from where I sat were two horses, good sturdy animals, tethered and grazing on the tussock grass; they had roomy saddles with plenty of rings for straps, and near them lay a quantity of miscellaneous baggage in bundles of blankets and rugs. Let me explain. The ship *Egmont* had but just arrived in Lyttelton Harbour, bringing my Father and Mother, and several of our family, including myself. In the harbour lay the *Southern Cross*, Bishop Selwyn's yacht, and soon the Bishop came in his boat to welcome us,—a notable personality, moderately tall, of great physical strength, and the bearing of a man born to command. He and my Father began their friendship at Eton, Selwyn as a private tutor after his Cambridge career, my Father, after his time at Oxford, as Conduct of Eton Chapel, and in charge of Eton parish. It was due to my Father's influence that Selwyn took Holy Orders instead of going to the Bar, as his family

wished. I was born at Eton, and as a little chap of five years of age I can remember Selwyn well. He was a great organizer then and did much at Eton amongst the Masters and the boys at a time when a new order of things was introducing salutary reforms in the College. He set an example of a high ideal of personal Christian life, not exactly ascetic, but such as gladly endures hardship, and regards bodily training and moderate living as potent allies of success in good work. Amongst other matters he induced the authorities to institute examinations in swimming for all the School. Of course you remember how keen we were, having passed our examination, to erase our names from the list of the "Non Nant," hung up in every schoolroom, and proud of obtaining our freedom of the river. He got together an eight oar of Eton Masters which could hold its own with any crew on the river. He persuaded many of the masters to bathe every morning of the year, and I recollect how he loved to come early in the morning to my Father's house and fling up pebbles at his bedroom window to get him to come for his swim. Sometimes I was allowed to go, and I have a vivid recollection of squatting between the knees of the coxswain of the Eight, looking at Selwyn at Stroke, and my Father at seven, and the crew's special caps of black and red, shaped like sailors' nightcaps; the boat of the old style, well built and hght, but only slightly outrigged at stroke and bow. At Athens all would bathe, and many a time Selwyn took me on his shoulders, swimming across the river and back whilst I held on to his hair.

As my Father left Eton in 1840 to go to Stratfield Mortimer, a College living, I never saw Selwyn again until he

came on board the *Egmont.* His influence, this time, had persuaded my Father to come out to New Zealand as first Bishop of Christchurch in the Canterbury Settlement. Hitherto Selwyn's Diocese had included the whole of New Zealand.

As you may imagine, he was deeply touched when welcoming his old friend, and my Mother, who had known him so long. After much talk various arrangements were made for our landing, and for the journey to Christchurch eight miles across the hills. There was to be a public breakfast on board ship, at which representative guests from Christchurch were to be present; then on landing a thanksgiving service in the Church at Lyttelton, and a journey on foot to the top of the pass, where horses would be ready to convey us to Christchurch. After dinner on board Bishop Selwyn singled me out, and said, "I know all about you, and I am sure you can handle a boat; now, there are a lot of things in your cabins which must be taken to Christchurch to-morrow, the remaining baggage will have to go by water, up the river Avon; I want you to undertake the management of all this for your Father, and I have thought out a plan for it. I am going to give you charge of one of my whaleboats, with a crew, so that you can make a depot of my yacht and stow there all the things which won't be needed to-morrow, and so clear out your cabins. You can then transport to shore all that must go to Christchurch to-morrow, and be ready for the journey across the hills. The boat and crew will be entirely at your disposal for the next week, I shall not need them as I have other boats, so I leave

the matter entirely in your hands." He then called the boatswain, and gave him his orders.

Accordingly I arranged with the men to come early in the morning, so that we could get some loads of stuff to the yacht before breakfast. I had already completed two trips to the yacht, and was leaving the ship's side for a third, when Bishop Selwyn looked over the bulwarks and called down to me: "Stay at the yacht till I send for you." As we pushed off I said to the men, "What does the Bishop mean?" They replied that they could not understand his order, as he needed neither them or the boat, so being certain there was some mistake, when we got to the yacht, I bade the men get their breakfast and then row me back to the ship. Meanwhile, noticing the perfect order of everything on board the yacht, I said to an old man-o'-war's-man. one of the crew, that I thought the vessel looked as trim and neat as a Navy boat. His reply was characteristic: "Do you know our Bishop, sir?" 'Yes," I said, "a little." "Well," said he, "in my opinion he's just thrown away, ought to be a Captain of a fust-rate frigate, he ought. Why, sir, if he come on deck and seen so much as a rope's end out of place, he'd as soon chuck me overboard as look at me; thrown away he is, in my opinion." Feeling certain there was more to come, I put a note of interrogation in my eye: "Why, sir, not long ago, over them hills yonder, we went with the yacht into Akaroa harbour, a fine bit o' water, landlocked, but not much good to the New Settlement, being a how 'tis shut off from the mainland by the hills. There was several whaling vessels there at anchor, two Frenchies. and one Yankee, and an English vessel from Hobarton; we knowed the place, as we

had bin there before, and the Bishop, he wanted to visit the wife of a settler, that wasn't well. So we rowed him to the beach, and waited with the boat, while he went up a little way to a house and went in. We was a-sitting there yarning, when presently we saw the door of the house bang open, and out came, flat on his face all along the ground, a big slab-sided Yankee, and after him the Bishop's foot and leg. The chap picked himself up, shook his fist at the door, and came down to the beach with his mouth full o' bad words, and off he goes to his own boat. Fact was, he had been insulting the woman, and the Bishop he just kicked him out of the house. You see, sir, he warn't accustomed to a Bishop like ours."

Well, when the men were ready, we rowed back to the ship for the public breakfast at nine o'clock. Climbing up the rope ladder to the gangway, I noticed numbers of visitors on the deck, come to greet their new Bishop, and there at the head of the ladder stood Bishop Selwyn, looking down at me with stern glance: "I thought I told you to stay at the yacht until I sent for you."

"Yes, my Lord, you did," I replied, "but yesterday you told me to do what I thought best, and that you did not need either boat or men, so I came back, as I have to take our things to Lyttelton as soon as possible, and I want my breakfast." He turned on his heel and said no more. I confess I was rather put out by this, especially in the presence of so many strangers, but as the Bishop made no reply I came to the conclusion that perhaps it was "his way" of commanding obedience without vouchsafing any explanation, and that he might have made a mistake.

Breakfast over, we all rowed to Lyttelton to take part in a most hearty and happy service of thanksgiving in the Church, which is a curious, but very church-like structure; all its material imported from England, consisting of stout wooden framework, with bricks to fill in the walls, and the requisite furniture, including some handsome old woodwork. All the clergy of the diocese, seven in number, were there. Six years ago, when the first settlers arrived, a Bishop designate came with the clergy, but not liking the look of things in a new country, and apparently not having counted the cost of pioneer work, he returned to England; and until now the clergy have been imder the supervision of Bishop Selwyn, so far as he was able to visit them at rare intervals. I need not say they were rejoiced to welcome a Bishop of their own.

After the service we had our first experience of what life in a new country means. It was necessary to climb the steep bridle path above Lyttelton, and take with us all our impedimenta. Two handcarts were obtained, duly loaded, and drawn by sailors with ropes, the two Bishops, with their coats off, helping to shove the carts up the rough steep track. We should have stuck by the way had not a friendly settler, who was hauling firewood on the hill side with a bullock and chain come to the rescue. Arrived at the top of the pass, where I was sitting, we found some Christchurch people with horses to convey us to Christchurch, and a most acceptable surprise. With his usual hospitality the Bishop had provided bread and cheese and beer for all hands.

Luncheon over, they all departed down the hill, and were to receive a kindly welcome at a settler's house, dine, and

rest awhile before proceeding to Christchurch. Meanwhile there I was with the responsible duty of packing those two horses with the baggage, and getting them down the hill. I can ride but had never tried my prentice hand at the problem of packing a horse, and a most irritating affair it proved to be; angular parcels and round bundles refused any sort of alliance, straps slipped, and the whole cargo at times threatened to capsize. However, at last I got all in shipshape order, and down the hill I went, leading the two nags with a long rein, in and out of big chunks of rock, over slippery tussock grass, and places with a nasty foothold. The horses stumbled and I slithered, now and then straps loosened, and things came tumbling to the ground. Presently, as I neared the bottom of the hill, I saw an episcopal figure emerge from the door of the house where all the rest of the party were; it was Bishop Selwyn. He came up to me and said, "You will do, I've been watching you for some time, you will do"; and then, as there happened to be at the foot of the hill a little wooden shanty, where refreshments were on sale, he added, "Come in here and have a glass of ginger-beer. I've told them to keep some diimer for you at the house." It was his way of making up for his abnipt words in the morning, and I feel I ought to be proud of such an estimate of character from such a man, to say nothing of the fact that the first person in New Zealand to "shout" for me, which here means to ask you into a house of call and stand treat, should be the great Bishop! At the settler's house I found a real dinner, and, after ship's fare, I shall not readily forget the roast lamb, and black currant pudding with lots of cream.

We arrived in Christchurch yesterday; it is in its first stage as a town, some slight semblance of streets, scattered wooden houses and huts; the flat plain, in its primæval state of tussock grass, forms its suburbs. Through the site of the town the river Avon, so called from the river at Christchurch, Hampshire, winds in picturesque curves, shut in by thickets of flax, and to a great extent choked with masses of watercress, which in many places touches the bottom with its roots, at a depth of ten feet. The cress was brought out by the first settlers who little thought that they were importing a most expensive weed, which quite spoils the fair waterway of their pretty river.

This morning a delightful Christmas service in St. Michael's Church, a low wooden building, well furnished, and very well attended; the old familiar hymns, but, instead of holly and ivy, flowers and fruit; I wonder if I shall ever get accustomed to the topsy-turvey arrangement of December as June, and Midsummer as Christmas. My Father was duly enthroned, if I may use that phrase of a Glastonbury chair; his Royal Letters Patent were read out, defining the limits of his Diocese, now separated from the rest of New Zealand, which remains as Bishop Selwyn's Diocese. The Letters Patent declared Christchurch to be a "City," as the seat of the Bishopric, and are couched in just the same terms as similar Letters at home, but I fancy there must be some uncertainty as to their real scope. New Zealand is not a Crown Colony, such as the West Indies, but has its own constitution, its Governor, two Houses of Legislature, and within some broad limits complete power of self-government. The Church here is not established in the

sense of Establishment at home, and I suppose must look to itself, not only for its maintenance, but for its government, and is, it would seem, outside the legal control of the State, either at home, or in the Colony, in matters that are purely ecclesiastical; though, of course, subject to the Civil Law in all other respects. Bishop Selwyn preached, and nearly the whole congregation remained for Holy Communion.

Coming out of church I noticed, what is, no doubt, quite familiar to Colonists, horses and vehicles of sorts tied up to fences, awaiting their owners, who had come some distance to church. Bishop Selwyn came out, and happening to say that he wanted to go a few miles to dine with a settler, the owner of a well-bred horse offered to lend it to him. The Bishop, as all know, is a well qualified sailor, who can navigate his own vessel, but scarcely as good in the saddle. Off he went, with a loose seat, at a gallop over rough ground, whilst the owner of the horse said ruefully, "If I had known how he rides, I don't think I would have lent him my horse."

I have been thinking much this evening of the great contrast between the Old Country and this, and of the wide difference, in all probability, of your future life and mine. How often at Oxford we have discussed the future; you may remember, not long ago, one of those delightful summer breakfasts which the Tutors at Merton used to give us in the College gardens, under the old City wall, with strawberries and cream, and cider cup crowned with "borage for courage"; and how J. Eaton, to whom we both owe so much, wanted me to stand for the Indian Civil Service. But, as you know, for some time past my thoughts have been directed

to Ordination, though I may tell you that my Father has never distinctly put any pressure on my choice, but has left me to decide for myself; and now I feel sure that in casting in my lot with him, and his work in New Zealand, I have done right. I think you were somewhat against my decision, for New Zealand seems to be quite out of the stream of old world life, a sort of exile from all that one looks forward to, after the best education which England can give. Well, you will probably get your fellowship, and that means Oxford for some years, then a College living, or a good deal of successful literary work. Perhaps I might have succeeded, as I feel sure you will, for I could always run a good second to you, but I don't repent of my decision; it will be no doubt out here a "day of small things" for me in many ways, but I have always had a strong inclination for work and adventure in a new land; and that will probably help me much in the rough work which I must tackle here. Not that I can lay claim to any keen missionary spirit; circumstances, as well as a strong sense of duty, have brought me here, and I am glad of it. I can't help feeling that in this small community of enterprising men and women, who have left their old English homes to found a new state in this promising land, there is an atmosphere of romance and adventure, and I may add, of determination and courage, in which we may be well proud to take a share. I have deferred my ordination until next year, when I hope to seek it at my Father's hands.

For the first year of his work here I think I can aid him best as a layman; he will soon have to explore his vast diocese, which stretches southward five hundred miles, only inhabited by a few isolated sheep-farmers and settlers, at

great distance from each other, and in the district of Otago the little settlement and town of Dunedin.

Bishop Selwyn tells me that, being lately in Dunedin, he bought a good Australian-bred horse for my Father, but that someone must go there to fetch it. I shall go myself, and make a preliminary journey to spy out the land, and bring the horse back to Christchurch. It will be a new experience; the country is roadless, and, save in certain directions, trackless, traversed by numerous rivers and streams, which must be forded, and in many places interspersed with swamps difficult to cross, and, unless I have the good luck to fall in with some fellow-traveller, I may have to do what I can by myself.

In my next letter I will tell you how I fared.

Meanwhile I am,

Yours ever,

H. W. H.

1. ↑ Ti-Ti palm.

II.

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CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND,

Sept. 1*st*, 1857.

MY DEAR ST. JOHN,

According to promise, here follows the story of my first journey Southward, in search of the horse mentioned in my former letter.

I made the acquaintance of two Devonshire men, J. B. Acland and C. Tripp, who have come to Canterbury to try their luck at sheepfarming. Both are barristers, but having some capital and no liking for law, they have ventured, with perhaps the courage of ignorance, and have made an excellent start. Sheepfarmers are the mainstay of this Settlement, occupying extensive tracts of wild country, leased from Government at a very low rental. Merino sheep, imported from Australia, require very little shepherding, and thrive best when left to themselves, provided they have the run of plenty of country; they produce fine and valuable wool. This means that the labour and cost of maintaining a sheep-run, even with large flocks, is small; but it also means for the sheep farmer a comparatively isolated life, and a very simple one, especially marked in the case of so many of the settlers here who have been accustomed to the resources and pleasures of a civilized life at home. There can be no doubt that, if this Canterbury Settlement realizes the sanguine expectations of its founders, and becomes one of the great offshoots of the Mother Country, its success will

be largely due to these adventurous pioneers, who are subduing the wilderness, and preparing the way for the settlement of a large population.

Hitherto this venture has generally been limited to the plains and lowlands, but Tripp and Acland have acquired a lease of 50,000 acres in mountain country, eighty miles south of Christchurch, and have invited me to visit their "station" on my journey southward. Acland has lent me a horse which, amongst other good points, can swim well,—a matter of no small importance in a country where rivers abound, but no bridges. My outfit is intended for a journey of several weeks: a roomy saddle, with convenient saddle-bags, a light tether rope, and a waterproof roll, containing change of clothing,—locally known as a "swag," and also a very necessary companion, a pocket compass.

A few miles from Christchurch the scanty signs of cultivation disappear, and before me a great plain of tussock grass spreads out till it is lost in the south in blue haze, but is bounded, westwards, at a great distance, by the Southern Alps. One's first impression is that of strange loneliness, unlike the solitude of mountain country. Not a companionable rock or tree, or even a hummock of earth, to break the monotonous expanse of yellow brown grass; and a still silence, for there is no sound of insect or bird life, no rustle of any ground game, no trace of any wild animal. It seems that New Zealanrl is almost unique in this respect, for with the exception of pigs brought by Captain Cook and running wild, there is no animal life in the country, no reptiles, no snakes, no fish in the rivers, except eels in backwaters, no bees, wasps, frogs or toads; though in the

forests there are a variety of parrots, pigeons, and other native birds, and on the coast line wild duck, I noticed occasionally a sort of lark rising from the grass, like an English lark, but songless, and here and there a big hawk—a kite, I think,—hovering about, and I am told there is a small brown rat to be found on the plains in burrows. Otherwise the brooding silence is that of a land unoccupied by man or beast.

After thirty-five miles at a leisurely pace, I saw on the horizon some dots of dark colour which proved to be small buildings, on the bank of the river Selwyn. There I found what is known as an accommodation house, which provided me with bed and supper, whilst, after the manner of the country, I attended to my horse, tethering him in good grass. The Selwyn river is one of the smaller rivers of Canterbury, a sparkling stream with wide riverbed, wandering here and there between islands of sand, at times liable to heavy floods. I cannot help thinking it would have been better to have retained the old names given by the natives. There are but a few of them in the South Island. With poetical instinct, characteristic of their race, they have named rivers, headlands, lakes and hills. The Native name is *Wai-ani-wa-aniwa*, i.e. the water of the rambow, and if, perhaps, a trifle long for our curt fashion of speech, it seems to make even the great name of Selwyn prosaic.

At supper I met an Australian who had been a little while in the country, intending to settle somewhere, and he promised to pilot me, on his way south across the river Rakaia. This river, twelve miles from the Selwyn, is one of the big glacier and snow-fed streams running eastward from

the mountains; we reached it early next morning; away to the west I could see in the mountain ranges a pass where the river cuts its way towards the plain, through a gorge which I am told is of great depth; in front of us lay the riverbed, some two miles wide, intersected by numerous streams of rapid water, icy cold, and in time of freshes uniting in a formidable torrent of more than a mile in width. However, we were fortunate in finding the water comparatively low; my guide threaded his way with caution through backwaters and shallow streams, keeping well above rapids, and sandy places, which arc often dangerously "quick." It took us nearly an hour to reach the further bank, the water never rising higher than the saddle-girths, but running with such force that any slip on the part of the horse might be dangerous, as swimming in such a stream would be difficult. I had been warned not to look down on the water for fear of giddiness, but to keep my eyes on the further shore. Well, "the river past," I did not act on the Spanish proverb, "the Saint forgotten," but uttered, without words, my thanksgiving. At night we reached an accommodation house, on the Ashburton river, in the Maori tongue, *Hakatere*, and the next morning, crossing it easily, my guide left me, as his way lay southward, and mine westward.

There I had to leave the track which we had hitherto kept, steering for the principal peak of the Mount Peel range, and for some distance found myself in difficult country. The plains here are swampy, traversed by rivulets locally known as "creeks," deep, narrow, and bordered by treacherous ground, in which a horse may easily be bogged;

thickets also of cabbage trees, toi-toi grass, and flax; and when clear of these for many miles a long stretch of grass, yet practically paved with stones. The going was slow and evening was coming on apace as I approached Mt. Peel, to all appearance rising right out of the plain. Then, suddenly, I found myself on the edge of what looked like a gigantic railway cutting, so steep that descent seemed impossible, and down below the river Rangitata running through a beautiful valley; on its further side the mountain rose to a height of 5,000 feet, buttressed by spurs and terraces, forest-clad, Ht up by the evening sun, in all the glory of primaeval vegetation untouched by the hand of man. Up-stream I saw some huts and a few men at work, and discovering a place where I could lead my horse down, met a fine specimen of a Yorkshire man, lately settled, with a few sheep, and a newly made home. His wife, baby in arms, was with him. "Come in," he said, "we are only too glad to have a visitor." His house deserves description: a smgle room, built of rough slabs of wood, worked with an adze, allowing plenty of ventilation, covered with thatch; a hardened clay floor, no ceihng, furniture homemade; a wide slab-built fireplace, one or two "easy" chairs made out of barrels cut down to serve as a back with arms; and, across a part of the room, blankets fastened to a rafter forming the bedroom of my host and hostess. After a comfortable meal he took me to his shearing shed, where they had just finished work. Shearers here stand to it, holding the sheep between knees and feet, and shearing far more rapidly than at home; indeed an expert hand will accomplish his eighty sheep per day. Then came the question of bed, a problem I was

seriously considering, but my hospitable host made light of it, thus—

"We will have a walk and look at the stars while my wife goes to bed, and then, when I am in bed, I will give you a signal; you will find blankets and a pillow on the settee." So after the signal aforesaid I went in, and was beginning to make myself comfortable when, from behind the blanket screen, came a voice: "Oh, I forgot to tell you, I've had no time to make a door; please fasten up a blanket in the doorway; there are no nails, but you can do it with forks."

Morning came, and viith it an incursion of fowls, pushing their way under the blanket in search of food. Got up to do my share of housework, tidied up, built and lit a fire, and set the table for breakfast, when my host called out: "Would you mind taking baby with you for a stroll whilst we dress?" Fortunately the child took kindly to me and was quite content. Mr. Moorhouse, my host, I find, is a duly qualified medical man who has taken to sheep farming, doing also occasional practice with neighbours. After breakfast he guided me on horseback to the only available ford in the Rangitata, "the river of coming day,"—an appropriate name, as it issues from a mysterious mountain gorge, guarded on either side by snow-clad peaks, and rushes down seaward over rocks and boulders, sparkling in the sunlight, bright and clear. He could not come with me, but showed me where to enter and make for the landing-place, a good way up stream. "Let your horse pick his way; don't hurry him; don't look at the water." Acting on his advice, with some trepidation, I reached the other side, and found C. Tripp watching my progress. He has established quite a

comfortable home under the flanks of Mt. Peel, with a considerable number of sheep, and several men in his employ, shepherds, sawyers, fencers, and a married couple who keep house for him. Stayed with him some days to see the working of the run, a mountain tract of 40,000 acres, scarcely trodden as yet by foot of man. One day we went on an expedition into the mountain valleys to "burn country," a process adopted here for the improvement of pasture. We led our horses up a stream, crossed it so as to secure ourselves from fire, set alight the grass, and in a short time there was such a blaze, not to mention smoke, that we had to beat a retreat. The fire spread up the hill-sides, fanned by a strong wind, and soon covered a large extent of country, burning for several days, and lighting up the neighbourhood by night.

Sunday came. I found that Tripp had already begun regular Sunday services for all hands, a very characteristic lot; a head shepherd with his wife, from Devonshire; next, a rough powerful Australian bushman, *i.e.* sawyer and axeman, who had been an English navvy; a splendidly-built half-caste Maori, his father a whaler, his mother a native, the best hand with shears and horses, and a great wrestler; another, an Australian black, of very low type, but gifted with strange instincts, quite incapable of book-learning, delighting like a child in highly-coloured children's pictures, but able to track man or sheep in the roughest country. "Andy, you find me if I go off whole day before you?" "Yes, sar, me find you anywhere, me follow, find you, up mountain there, on plain, find your track if you no go fast on horse." He would go great distances at a dog-trot to carry a

message, with a handful of rice and sugar in his pocket. Tripp asked me to take the services, and in the evening one of the men asked me, "Ain't you a parson?" "No," said I, "but I hope to be." "Well, we all think you're just the sort of fellow to suit us." I acknowledged the compliment, and, talking and practically living with them, soon discovered that the free and easy way in this country in which all meet together would probably help me much in my future work.

Before I left Tripp suggested that we should build a boat, and try to establish a ferry over the deeper part of the ford. With the aid of a carpenter I did my share, especially in shaping oars from likely saplings. We then launched our craft, flat-bottomed and rather clumsy, Tripp steering, and I rowed, with Smith the head-shepherd behind me. I had pared down the oars too finely, in my zeal to turn out a pair such as one uses on the Thames, and midstream Smith's oar broke off short at the rowlock. He couldn't swim and, losing his head, in the swirl of the rushing water, put up his hands, and began to pray. "Smith, Smith," cried Tripp. "stop praying; there's a spare oar, take it!" He did so, just in time to save us from going down a dangerous rocky rapid;—the experiment of a ferry proved a failure in such a stream.

Leaving Mt. Peel, I travelled southward across rich plain country, very well watered, one night finding shelter with a settler in his hut, another camping down amongst the shelter of flax bushes, fording some considerable streams, and arriving at the "Levels" Station, where a Mr. G. Rhodes, from Australia, has an extensive sheep-run. He was the first man to venture down and settle in this part of Canterbury. In the morning I was able to do him a little job in return for his