

Bird's-Eye View of New Zealand

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WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Dec. 27, 1900.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—During the coming year Australasia is to be one of the world's chief news centers. The Australian colonies have already gone into federation, New Zealand is preparing to join to its government those of the Tonga and Fiji Islands and we may soon have several independent republics away down here in the South Pacific ocean, far below the equator, and almost on the other side of the world. So far the people manifest no intention of breaking away from old England, but the ropes which bind them to it are little more than ropes of sand and the control of the queen is nominal rather than real. Each colony has a sort of a wooden governor, to whom it pays from \$25,000 upward to act as a figurehead. Each maintains a separate tariff against the old country and none will tolerate the least interference by the queen in its domestic affairs. The people, in fact, are running this part of the world. Australia and New Zealand



IN THE SWITZERLAND OF NEW ZEALAND.

may be called the workingman's continent. They are the Edward Bellamy lands of the present, the center of all sorts of new experiments as to government control in society and labor. During the past year I have traveled quite extensively through them and everywhere I find the eight-hour law and the weekly half holiday. Everywhere in Australia the workmen are to some extent the balance of power, but in New Zealand they boast they own the country and that they will eventually down the capitalists. They really have control of the government and are formulating all sorts of new schemes to tax the rich and reduce them to the level of the poor. The governments own the railroads, the telegraphs and telephones and there are those who hope they will eventually become the owners of the coal mines, gold mines and factories.

Trip to New Zealand.

But first let me tell you something about New Zealand. To most of you it is a dead land in a dead part of the globe. To one on the ground it is much alive and moving along on the lightning express of our so-called civilization.

The country is not so far away, after all. It is now only eighteen days from San Francisco, only about forty days from London and it has lines of steamers connecting it with all parts of the globe. It has regular vessels which go to London by the Cape of Good Hope, others which steam there by the Suez canal and others still which make the trip via South America, passing through the Straits of Magellan. You can go on the Peninsular & Oriental line from Wellington to London, taking the Union steamship line to Sydney, for \$200 and upward, or there and back for \$350. The trip is around the bottom of Australia, thence to Ceylon, Aden, the Suez canal and across the Mediterranean to Gibraltar and on to London.

Via South America the cost is about the same, and you will call at Punta Arenas on the Straits of Magellan, Montevideo and Rio de Janeiro, and you can, if you will, extend your journey from London on around the world by crossing the Atlantic to New York, thence to San Francisco and thence to New Zealand. This whole trip costs \$625.

The Messageries and the North German Lloyd have many large ships running from Australia to Europe, and, in fact, you can get a steamer almost any day. As to trips about the wild New Zealand coast, the service is excellent. There are scores of steamers which move from port to port, and you can go almost any week to the Tongas, the Fijis and other islands of the South seas.

Stormy South Pacific Ocean.

On the map New Zealand looks like the little half-sister of Australia. It is not. It is entirely independent and is 1,200 miles away. I came from Australia to Wellington on the Mokolai of the Union steamship line, a vessel of about 3,000 tons, as well furnished, as well kept and as well managed as any which steams up our Great Lakes.

The voyage, however, was not as smooth as that of the Great Lakes. This southern Pacific is very much like the northern Atlantic. It is wild and stormy at times.

The latitude of Wellington is just about that of New York, and your surroundings are often dreary and somber. I found it a great change from the smooth seas of the tropics, in which I had been traveling. The clear skies and their golden stars seemed to have been plated with lead and the heavy clouds which hung down from them were angry and full of wind.

How the steamer rolled! We had ladder-like racks on the table to hold the dishes at every meal and had to lift our soup plates to our chins, balancing the steaming liquid to the movement of the boat. One night a buxom young woman, who was strikingly décolleté, sat opposite me at the table. The ship gave a sudden lurch and her soup went down—outside. Another girl lost her coffee in my lap. My pajamas swung to and fro from the hooks in my cabin, so that it made me almost seasick to watch them. As I walked the deck I had to bend this way and that to keep my balance, and when I sat the deck steward tied me to the rail outside the saloon wall

to keep me from sliding down to the edge of the boat. The spray dashed over everything, and, as a New Zealand girl said, "It was real na-asty!"

Still, the southern ocean is grand. Stand with me on the Mokolai and take a look at it off the coast of New Zealand in the midst of a storm. The sea, green from its shallow depth, is rolling in vast waves to and fro. It is a seething, foaming mass. There are white caps everywhere. We are mounting and falling upon sea green hills spotted with foam and in places blanketed with white. Great billows are chasing one another like race horses over the roads of the sea. They roar as they run with a noise like the falling of many waters. The thunder is that of a thousand Niagaras.

Now the waves meet and the foam dashes up in a spray which catches the sun and turns it to rainbows. The sun is low and the rainbows extend at right angles out from the ship. They are so close that you can almost wash your fingers in them. They come and they go, a hundred different rainbows in as many minutes. They dance in and dance out. They ride, as it were, on the crests of the waters, only to shine, disappear and give place to others. How the ship struggles and pants! The foghorn blows continually. We are hours in making a few miles and are tossed about all night by the storm. In the morning it clears and we soon find ourselves at anchor in the Bay of Wellington, with the capital of New Zealand before us.

Bird's-Eye View of New Zealand.
Wellington is a good place from which to take a bird's-eye view of New Zealand. It is in about the center of the country on Cook strait, at the southern end of the North Island.

New Zealand is made up of three islands. As they lie on the map they make altogether a great boot turned upside down with its toe toward Australia and with a break at the instep in Cook strait. The North Island, in which Auckland and Wellington are, forms the foot, the Middle Island, which contains the highest mountains and the best agricultural land, is the leg, and Stewart Island, the little patch at the bottom, is the loop at the end of the strap by which the boot is pulled on.

The country looks much like Italy turned upside down and it is not far different in size, climate and natural conditions. It is about 1,000 miles long, a little longer than from New York to Chicago, and about as wide at its broadest part as from New York to Boston. The North Island is a little bigger than Ohio and the Middle Island larger than the combined areas of New York and Massachusetts, or bigger than England and Wales. Stewart Island is about half the size of Rhode Island. It is very mountainous, and, although it supports a few sheep, it is chiefly a summer resort.

The New Zealand climate is warmer than that of England. It is moist and rainy. January and February are the hottest months and July and August the coldest, when the ground is frequently covered with snow.

Land of Volcanoes and Hot Springs.
The New Zealand that we know consists of the North Island and the Middle Island.

THE ILLUSTRATED BEE.

They contain all the cities and almost all the people, and everything that makes New Zealand the live, wide-awake, prosperous country that it is today.

The North Island is about as long as from New York to Pittsburg, but a large part of it is hilly and it has some plains which are covered with pumice sand and thereby unfitted for tillage or pasturage. It is largely volcanic. One part of it has hot springs and geysers somewhat like those of Yellowstone park. It has several active volcanoes and within the last five years there have been serious eruptions. The mountain of Tongariro has three craters, each of which vomit forth steam and vapor charged with gas and acids. The Ruapehu is 5,000 feet high, ending in a crater lake, which is often coated with steam.

Mount Egmont is a volcano which reminds me much of the Fujiyama of Japan. It is a perfect cone, about 2,000 feet higher than Mount Washington. It is thirty miles in diameter at the base and it rises out of one of the most fertile districts of New Zealand. At its base lies New Plymouth, a town of about 5,000 people. The land is cultivated close up to the mountain. The soil is a rich loam, so good for grass raising that it easily commands \$100 per acre and upward. It is used for dairying, the butter made being exported to Europe and the Philippines. Last year 200,000 cans were sent away and the New Plymouth people tell me the product will increase right along.

The New Zealanders call their country the Switzerland of the South Pacific. It is an evergreen land, a land of trees, flowers, palms and of wonderful natural beauties. In the center of the North Island is Lake Taupo, as large as Lake Geneva, surrounded by mountains clad with perpetual snow. New Plymouth has a bay whose approaches are as beautiful as those of the harbor of Rio de Janeiro. One of the striking features of the Rio bay is the Sugar Loaf at the entrance, a bald gray rock, 1,200 feet high, rising almost straight up from the water. The bay of Plymouth has three sugar loafs, which stand as sentinels in the ocean before it; they are great cones of earth and rock. You sail between the outer two in coming in and rest under the shadow of the third at the wooden wharves as your boat lies at anchor.

New Zealand Alps.

The Middle Island is even more picturesque than the country north of Cook strait. Here are the famous New Zealand Alps, which intersect the island, reaching a height of more than 12,000 feet in Mount Cook. The snow line is lower than in Switzerland, and the scenery is said to surpass in beauty that of the Alps. Many of the New Zealand peaks are covered with perpetual snow, and there are great glaciers on both sides, the range descending in places to within a few feet of sea level. They come out of the snows right down into the evergreen forests and can be easily



THE TASMAN GLACIER—EIGHTEEN MILES LONG, 200 FEET THICK AND A MILE WIDE.

scaled. Many of the peaks are untraced by man and many glaciers are yet unnamed. Some are of enormous extent. The Tasman glacier is eighteen miles long, 200 feet thick, and, on the average, more than a mile wide. It covers an area of 13,000 acres. The Murchison glacier and the Godley glacier are each ten miles in length and each has an area of more than 5,000 acres.

In the summer these New Zealand mountains are full of travelers and explorers. The tourist agents of Europe send parties to New Zealand, and the people of Australia come to this Switzerland of the South seas just as we go to the Switzerland of Europe. The government itself is the chief excursion agent. It prints illustrated guide books and sells them at cost. You can get a guide to almost any part of New Zealand for a sixpence. The government is making roads and bridges through the most picturesque parts of the island and Parliament recently voted \$250,000 for this purpose alone. It is now opening up the western coast of the Middle Island, a region which has sounds and fjords like those of Norway. Long waterways walled by giant mountains, clothed with foliage to the snow line, extend into the land and you sail under waterfalls, glaciers and snow fields amid some of the grandest of scenery.

An Evergreen Land.

I have spoken of New Zealand as an evergreen land. It is so. It has the same green you see in England and Ireland. The fences about the houses are often hedges cut in curious shapes and of a varnished green. The leaves are on most of the trees all the year round. There are many varieties of green plants, such as the holly. There are scrub palms and the New Zealand palm illy



GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, WELLINGTON—LARGEST WOODEN BUILDING IN THE WORLD.

is to be seen everywhere. This is a tree which reaches a height of twenty feet. It goes straight up without a branch to the top, where it blossoms out in green tassels like a palm. The people call it the cabbage tree.

And then the ferns! New Zealand has enough to establish ferneries for all creation. You find places where there are acres of them, miles of them. Some of the deep glens and gorges are walled with them. They are of all kinds, some great trees and others as fine as a maiden's hair. There is one fern which is used by the natives for bedding and another which is half fern, half vine. It climbs the loftiest tree, coiling its wire-like stems about the branches. The stems are tough enough for ropes. They maintain their coil after being pulled off and it is said that some of the people have used them for making spring mattresses. Think of sleeping on fern beds, upon fern springs, and you have one of the possibilities of New Zealand!

Farms, Factories and Mines.

I don't want to discuss industrial New Zealand in this letter. It is enough to say that both islands have much good land. I saw a piece of the Canterbury plains which a good authority told me produced ninety bushels of wheat to the acre and I have traveled through sections where thirty, forty and fifty bushels are not uncommon. Some of the land produces 100 bushels of oats to the acre and much of it turns up the ton. It has millions of acres sown with English grasses and it is, on the whole, as near a garden as any temperate country south of the equator. It is a land of coal mines and gold mines, as well as of factories

ning round the harbor, some of them built upon land reclaimed from the sea. Its chief buildings are of wood and it has the distinction of having one government building which is said to be the largest wooden structure in the world. Its wharves are of wood, but they are big enough to accommodate the largest steam vessels.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.



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