NEW HOMES IN SOUTHERN SEAS.*

When Bishop Berkeley, about to set out on his romantic mission to Rhode Island, pointed to America as "Time's noblest offspring and its last," he little thought that a fifth continent then lay all but undiscovered which should dispute the palm with America as the noblest and last offspring of Time. We do not enter here on comparisons, but accepting the phrase Austral-Asia as descriptive of this fifth continent, we may, at least, apply to it one of good Bishop Berkeley's expressions, "The fifth shall close the drama with the day." It would seem that the future of this vast group of islands, the largest of which is a continent little less than the whole of Europe, is so grand, that it has been reserved by Providence as the closing scene of the world's history. If we may use the term, the author of history has kept these reserves of territory on which to play out the last act of the world's drama. America may be destined to be the outlet into the region of world's history. If we may use the term, the author of history has kept these reserves of territory on which to play out the last act of the world's drama. America may be destined to be the outlet into the region of world's history.

Mr. Stanford, the well-known map publisher, has for some time had in preparation a series of works which are based on Hellwald's encyclopedic work, "Die Erde und ihre Völker." Hellwald, who is the Ritter of his day, has massed together a body of descriptive information which leaves little to be desired, and yet so rapid is the growth of our dependencies in the South Pacific, that much of Hellwald's account of Australia and New Zealand would, to the English reader, seem meagre and out of date. The department of Australasia was, therefore, put into Mr. Wallace's hands to revise, and this revision has been so extensive, that it amounts to rewriting the work. As he tells us in the preface, with every wish to utilise the translation of Hellwald's book as far as possible, he has been able to do so only to the extent of little more than one-tenth of the present volume. A list of authorities quoted plainly proves this. It would be strange, indeed, if Englishmen have fallen back on a German geographer for materials with which to write a description of our own possessions. As a matter of fact the explorers have been all Englishmen, and the authorities are writers on the colonies, whether missionaries like Taylor, or travellers like Stuart and Wills, or popular writers like Trollope, Dilke, and others too numerous to mention.

A little to the south of the tropic of Capricorn, piled almost wholly cease in the Central Pacific; but, going westward, we meet with the important on too freely, and the unfortunate emigrant, who, unless he means to take a leap in the dark, should know where he is going to, what is the climate, soil, and productions, and what special advantages each particular colony holds out. On this matter let us add he cannot be too careful what guide he selects. Unless he is omnivorous, and able to devour all that has been written by everybody, and then to make a digest for himself, he must be careful not to trust himself to any official directory, however carefully compiled. Official handbooks to the colonies are sadly one-sided; the colours are laid on too freely, and the unfortunate emigrant has only to learn the drawbacks when the first rush of home sickness is on him, and when he is on the disappointed stage. Hence it is that so many return home to spread evil reports of the colonies, which are only counteracted, if at all, by the more favourable reports of travellers like Mr. Barry or Mr. Clayden, whose
letters to the Daily News, afterwards collected into a pamphlet, we cannot speak too highly of.

At present then, when there is quite a rush to the colonies, and when at all the colonial agencies in Victoria-street the reply is the same, that their lists are full and no more free passages can be given, we can see that such a work as this is particularly opportune. It deserves to be widely read, and since a guinea book is beyond the means of the majority of intending emigrants, we should desire that a cooperative effort of the friends of the emigrant, whether in the description of the Archipelago and those islands outside the field of emigration, were prepared for the use of those who are thinking of settling either in Australia or New Zealand.

As our remarks are chiefly intended for this class, we shall limit our notice of Mr. Wallace's work to those observations which will be useful to readers who have the thought of a new home before them. Such may feel satisfied that they are in the hands of an experienced guide who will not mislead them by the glowing reports of a mere emigration agent. In the first place it is a noteworthy fact that, although visited first by French navigators, later on by the Dutch and Spanish, and last of all by the English, this nation alone has established itself in Australia, and claims undoubted possession of all the mainland. On this subject Mr. Wallace makes an acute remark, to the effect that other less far-seeing peoples felt little inclination to make permanent settlements in a country which produced neither marketable slaves, nor spices, nor apparently any of the precious metals; nothing, in fact, but rich pasturages. Hence, while gold was here actually discovered in 1851, drawing universal attention to this region, as it had to California a short time previously, other nationalities found that it was too late to form independent settlements anywhere on this continent, which had already been either permanently settled by the enterprising Anglo-Saxon race, or else formally declared to be attached to the Crown of England. This is very true, but it omits the most important particular, a loan accident for which we deserve no great credit, and but for which Australia never would have been settled at all. It was as late as 1788 that Botany Bay was selected as a convict station, and it may take hours or days to recover them. Again, for hundreds of miles is found the dreaded spinifex, or porcupine grass, which renders it impossible to depend on the accounts of previous explorers in the same district. Where three colonists succeeded in passing a stretch the sandy undulations are covered with alternate stretches of sand and the dreaded spinifex—a thorny grass which cut the feet like a knife—we come to the fatal expedition of Burke and Wills in 1861. The establishment of numerous stations along this line enable the people, and such supplies as could be obtained, offered a temptable base for new explorers. We may now give the general result of these explorations in Mr. Wallace's words:—

**The Interior of Australia.**

The western half of Australia has thus been traversed in three nearly parallel lines about 300 miles apart. With the exception of a few localities which have made large portions of the intermediate country. The southern and northern coasts are relatively well known; and we are forced to conclude that nearly half of the continent is still unknown. Australia is uninhabitable by Europeans. Nowhere, perhaps, on the globe do we meet with the strange phenomenon of a dense vegetation and a burnt-up desert. The lake described by one explorer to a marshy tract, which was passed grandeur, and it possesses a waterfall of the same name. The river flows for a quarter of a century from 1851 to 1876 amounts to the enormous sum of £23,000,000. With regard to the scenery of New South Wales, the following bird sketch will suffice:

**Scenery of New South Wales.**

The scenery of New South Wales cannot, a the whole, be termed beautiful, owing to the monotony of the vegetation, the vastness of the plains, and the frequent aridity of extensive areas. But it is well known, and certain features of remnant beauty. First among these stands Port Jackson, the harbour of Sydney, which, for variety, extent, and picturesque combination, rivals, if it does not surpass, the celebrated harbour of Rio de Janeiro. Mr. Anthony Trollope—a man not given to enthusiastic praise—speaks of it as "so inex-pressively lovely that it makes a man ask himself whether it is worth his while to move his household gods to the eastern coast of Australia, in order that he might look on it as long as he can look at anything." Some of the estates in the eastern counties, Mr. Giles tells us that horses dread the spinifex, like a mole, underground. Then come acacia trees, which add the annoyance of sharp prickles to those of the other kinds. For the traveller, the country is worse than even the Saharan. For hundreds of miles at a stretch the sandy undulations are covered with the dreaded spinifex, or porcupine grass, which renders it impossible to walk without painful precaution. Again, for hundreds of miles is found the dense scrub of dwarf eucalyptus, covering the ground like the roots of an osier bed, ten or twelve feet beneath the surface of the country, thus rendering it necessary literally to bore one's way, like a mole, underground. Then come acacia scrubs, which add the annoyance of sharp prickles to those of the other kinds. For the traveller, the country is worse than even the Saharan. For hundreds of miles at a stretch the sandy undulations are covered with the dreaded spinifex, or porcupine grass, which renders it impossible to walk without painful precaution. Again, for hundreds of miles is found the dense scrub of dwarf eucalyptus, covering the ground like the roots of an osier bed, ten or twelve feet beneath the surface of the country, thus rendering it necessary literally to bore one's way, like a mole, underground. Then come acacia scrubs, which add the annoyance of sharp prickles to those of the other kinds. For the traveller, the country is worse than even the Saharan. For hundreds of miles at a stretch the sandy undulations are covered with the dreaded spinifex, or porcupine grass, which renders it impossible to walk without painful precaution. Again, for hundreds of miles is found the dense scrub of dwarf eucalyptus, covering the ground like the roots of an osier bed, ten or twelve feet beneath the surface of the country, thus rendering it necessary literally to bore one's way, like a mole, underground. Then come acacia scrubs, which add the annoyance of sharp prickles to those of the other kinds. For the traveller, the country is worse than even the Saharan. For hundreds of miles at a stretch the sandy undulations are covered with the dreaded spinifex, or porcupine grass, which renders it impossible to walk without painful precaution. Again, for hundreds of miles is found the dense scrub of dwarf eucalyptus, covering the ground like the roots of an osier bed, ten or twelve feet beneath the surface of the country, thus rendering it necessary literally to bore one's way, like a mole, underground. Then come acacia scrubs, which add the annoyance of sharp prickles to those of the other kinds.
progress by leaps and bounds. The colonisation of these islands was only attempted on a small scale as late as 1839, when a first batch of emigrants arrived under Colonel William Wakefield, who had authority to purchase land and select a site for the first settlement. Wellington was selected as the first spot, and 1,200 emigrants arrived before the end of the year. In 1843 the population was 13,000; in 1854, 32,500; in 1860, 80,000; in 1865, 190,000; in 1871 it had risen to nearly 267,000, and in 1877 it amounted to about 300,000. The drawback to New Zealand at present is that it is divided into nine provinces which have long maintained a local independence similar to that of the separate states of the American Union, but since 1875 these local governments have been merged in one united colony, and the nine provinces are now termed provincial districts, and are divided into 63 counties for purposes of local government. We may sum up the present position of New Zealand under the following description, which is taken from the latest and most accurate statistics —

Present Position of New Zealand.

New Zealand possesses a constitutional government similar to that of some of the Australian colonies. It consists of a Governor appointed by the Crown, an Executive Ministry, and a Parliament or Legislative Council. The Legislative Council consists of 45 members appointed by the Crown for life. The House of Representatives consists of 86 members — 32 for the North Island, 52 for the South Island, and 4 Maori members — the term of office being five years, and the members being paid £157 10s. each session for expenses. The qualification, both for voters and candidates, is a £5 country or a £10 town rental, or a freehold worth £50, so that it amounts practically to household suffrage.

Education is admirably provided for in this colony. By an Education Bill, just passed, public schools are provided, a capitation fee of ten shillings per child being paid, or £2 for a family. State aid is also given to national and denominational schools. The higher education is of a superior kind, and most liberally endowed. There is a university, with a royal charter, whose ministers are registered, so that they may legally perform the marriage ceremony. The Church of England is the most numerous in adherents, having 172 churches. It has six bishops, residing at Auckland, Napier, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, and Dunedin. The Presbyterians rank next in order, having 125 churches. Then follow Roman Catholics, Wesleyans, and in very much smaller numbers almost all the other sects and religions professed by civilised people. Dividing the population into Protestants and Roman Catholics, which together include the great majority, the former number 243,761, the latter, including the Greek Church, 40,412, while Chinese and other pagans amount to 4,764. The numbers are according to the census of 1874, and have since materially increased.

Such a tale as this has only to be known to decide many wavering to make the final plunge and exchange the old country for the new. Here we are crowded out, and all classes, from the agricultural labourer upward, find themselves beaten out of time in the struggle to live, and, in many cases, sinking in the social scale. There is only one way to ease the pressure and reduce the competition. The Malthusian doctrine of discouraging early marriages which even Dr. Chalmers did not disapprove of, and the later attempt of Trade Unions to restrict the output, and so artificially keep up wages, have equally failed. We have only, then, emigration to fall back on, and the signs of the times seem to point to this as the only relief from the state of congested capital and chronic pauperism into which we are fast subsiding. The relief is in our own hands if we have the good sense to apply it, and seeing that there is "no right but ignorance," works of this kind are specially acceptable at present. They help to familiarise us with our own possessions, and teach us that for some generations to come there are outlets for our surplus population if we have only the sense and spirit to avail ourselves of them.

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