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NEW HOMES IN SOUTHERN SEAS.*

When Bishop Berkeley, about to set out on his romantic mission to Rhode Island, pointed to America as "the fifth continent 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 offpring of Time. We do not enter here on comparisons, but accepting the phrase Australian-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, America may be destined to be the outlet into which the overflow of Europe is to pour itself, but this archipelago, lying off the coast of Asia, and reached, as it were, by regular stepping stones from China to New Zealand, evidently points to some great purpose in the future, such a bringing together, for instance, of the civilisation of the extreme East and West as we have only a dim conception of at present. Sir Charles D'Arcy has already familiarised us with the term, "Greater Britain." We are accustomed now to think of Australia and New Zealand as something more than colonies, and much more than mere possessions or dependencies. They are reserves, as we have said, where the English race is to plant itself, and having first given its own stamp to these regions, open its gates at last to welcome in other races, such as the Chinese, which we cannot mix with at present, lest the baster should deteriorate the nobler race. It is a true instinct which sets the English working on at present, whether in California or Queensland, to oppose a large immigration of Chinese labour. If the law of selection of the fittest means anything, it is especially applicable to colonisation. Was Beaumont thinking of this when he spoke of our land as...
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 the publishers to give it, if possible, a wider 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 recluse or of a tyro; a guide who, with firmness and accuracy, for the sake of the cause, can not only point out the ways of the wilderness, but warn the inexperienced to avoid the dangers and refute the misrepresentations of those who have no interest whatever to mislead or be unkind. It renders it impossible to depend on the accounts of previous explorers in the same district. When water is at one time abundant and herbage luxuriant, there may be found a year or two later a burnt-up desert. The lake described by one traveller may be found an expance of baked mud by his successor; where, on one hand, one may be stopped by a region of dense scrubs, which, opposite 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 dependent on the Crown of the Continent. On this subject Mr. Wallace declares to be attached to the Crown of England. This is very true, but it omits that Botany Bay was selected as a convict station, that it was only in 1813 when a summer of severe drought made it very important to discover new pastures, that three colonists succeeded in passing the Blue Mountains, and reached the valley of the Tisk River and the fertile Bathurst Plains. Soon after the Macquarie River, flowing to the north east, led its explorers to a marshy tract, which was supposed to confirm the theory of an inland sea; that, on the contrary, the journeys of Hume, Sturt, and Mitchell, the Danes, and explorations through a region which was made up of alternate stretches of sand and the dreaded spinifex—a thorny grass which cut the feet like a knife—we come to the fatal expeditions of Burke and Wills in 1861. The loss of these gallant explorers has been a gain to Australian discovery, as so many expeditions were sent out for South-East and West Australia, either to bring them relief if alive, or to bring back their remains if dead. That circumstance more than any other has led to the opening up of the whole interior, and, at last, to the establishment of a chain of telegraph-posts right across the continent from Adelaide to Port Darwin. The establishment of numerous stations along this line has been of immense service and upon the completion of its work that has been already done in so inexpressible a country and so trying a climate is less than marvellous; and the story of Australian exploration, with its episodes of heroism and martyrdom, affords a convincing proof of the unbounded energies of our countrymen in their southern home.

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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. The Legislative Council consists of 45 members appointed by the Crown for life. The House of Representatives consists of 88 members—32 for the North Island, 32 for the South Island, and 24 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 freedom 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 revenues amount to about £20,000 yearly. At Dunedin there are a university, or more properly a college, on which 200,000 acres of land have been settled, while the buildings have already cost £30,000. There is also a school of art, a boys' and girls' high school, and district grammar schools, besides Athenaeums and public libraries in almost all the country towns and villages. In the provinces of New Zealand, Nelson, and Auckland, there are also colleges affiliated to the University of New Zealand, with ample provision for elementary instruction. The general dissemination of knowledge will assuredly produce good fruits in a people able to conduct their own affairs with skill and discretion, and gives promise of a bright future for what has well been termed the Great Britain of the south.

Religion in New Zealand is altogether free and independent of State control, except that all 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 243,701, 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 approve 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.