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LITERATURE AND AUTHORSHIP IN NEW ZEALAND

Alan Mulgan

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by

ALAN MULGAN

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A sea-wind for freshness, a sea-wave for brightness,
A sea-sunrise for beauty, a strong sea for strength,
Here she stands, Maui's Fish, here she shines, a new land from the Ocean,
Alive, mid the ever-live Sea.

.....

Offspring of Maui! recall the experience of Maui.
A dead fish he did not receive it? No, No!
He endured, he adventured, he went forth, he experimented,
He found and he fetched it, alive.

—B. E. BAUGHAN, "New Zealand."

Contents

CHAPTER I

An Historical Survey.*

It might be said that New Zealand was born twice, once in a whaling ship and once in a library. That is to say there were, roughly speaking, two lines of activity that went to her making. There were the adventurers of the sealing and whaling and trading worlds, the Guards, Barretts, and Hemplemans, and the adventurers of ideas—explorers, missionaries and systematic colony planters from Cook to Marsden and Edward Gibbon Wakefield. It might be said of all the greater special settlements that they were born and cradled in libraries. Men of education got together in England and Scotland to organise them. The philosophical Radicals had a considerable hand in the formation of the settlements of the New Zealand Company, which provided the first organised settlements.

A system of higher education was planned for Otago before the settlers left England, and the chief town of the Canterbury settlement was named after an Oxford College. Every settlement had a strong leaven of educated men and women, who brought with them and kept alight, amid all the difficulties of pioneering, a love of books and learning.

This gave New Zealand society a certain stamp. The tradition of English letters was imported together with ploughs and livestock and family furniture, and a result of this is seen in the number of capably-written books and well-turned speeches that have come down to us from the early days. Most of the

* A part of this historical survey appeared in the Centennial Number of the "Evening Post," Wellington. Permission to republish is gratefully acknowledged.

men in public life had had a good education. Some of them, following the fashion of the day, could turn verse competently. Such is the force of exception, however, that one of the two or three outstanding books of the first fifty years of our national life was written by a man very different in type from cultured colonisers like Fox or Bowen or FitzGerald. F. E. Maning, a born adventurer, wrote well, not because he had been taught on the right lines, but because he was made that way. The outstanding merits of his "Old New Zealand" spring from his exceptional zest for life, his keen observation, and his strong sympathy for the native race whose society he entered. "Old New Zealand" is an indubitable classic, as fresh to-day as when it was written. Of Alfred Domett's "Ranolf and Amohia" one might say that it is revered but not read. Domett was Browning's friend ("What's become of Waring?"), sailed to New Zealand in 1842, spent nearly thirty years in the colony, and was Premier for fifteen months. One of his short poems lives, "A Christmas Hymn."

"Ranolf and Amohia" is an astonishing work. This long epic of Anglo-Maori life is packed with lively description and philosophical discussion, varied in metre and salted with humour, but as a story, save in patches, it won't do. A story-teller who breaks off in the middle of his heroine's swim from Mokoia Island to the mainland, to lead us into a maze of philosophy, doesn't know his job. The corresponding Maori tale of Hinemoa shows in its economy how the thing should be done. "Ranolf and Amohia" will always be an interesting curiosity and a mine of quotation; it contains some of the best description of New Zealand scenery in verse. If we add Sir George Grey's "Polynesian Mythology," and perhaps Edward Jerningham Wakefield's "Adventure in New Zealand," we about complete the list of literary peaks in the first

period of colonisation. By bringing this Maori lore to the notice of Europeans, Grey gave a lasting impulse to the study of the subject and thereby greatly influenced relations between the races.

The period of, say, the first fifty years was one of deep preoccupation with pioneering. During those fifty years New Zealanders made much colourful history without realising to any great degree its value as material for art. They explored; they broke in rough country; they drove into wildernesses in search of gold; and they fought some of the Maori tribes. They were too close to the experience to see it as a basis for romance; even to-day there is insufficient appreciation of the riches that lie in our pioneering records and the story of our struggles with a brave and resourceful native race. Mr. James Cowan, who has done more than anyone to give vivid life to those days of nation-making, opens his history of the Maori wars with the following passage:—

> The story of New Zealand is rich beyond that of most young countries in episodes of adventure and romance. Australia's pioneering work was of a different quality from ours, mainly because the nation-makers of our neighbour encountered no powerful military race of indigenes to dispute the right of way. The student of New Zealand history seeking for foreign parallels and analogies must turn to the story of the white conquest in America for the record of human endeavour that most closely approaches the early annals of these Islands. There certainly is a remarkable similarity, in all but landscape, between the old frontier life in British North America and the United States and the broad features of the violent contact between European and Maori in our country. The New England backwoodsman and the far-out plainsman were faced with many of the life-and-death problems which confronted our New Zealand settlers on the Taranaki and Waikato and East Coast

borders. In reading such fascinating books as "The Conspiracy of Pontiac," "French Pioneers in the New World," or "The Winning of the West," the family likeness of the adventures of the pathfinder and the forest fighter to the New Zealand life of the "sixties" is irresistibly forced upon the mind. There was the same dual combat with wild nature and with untamed man; there was the necessity in each land for soldierly skill; the same display of all grades of human courage; much of the same tale of raid and foray, siege, trail-hunting and ambuscade. There was as wide a difference in frontier and forest fighting-ability between the Imperial troops of the "forties" and early "sixties" and the soldier-settlers who scoured the bush after Titokowaru and Te Kooti, as there was between General Braddock's unfortunate regular troops of 1755 and the provincial scouts and hunters who learned how to beat the Red Indian at his own game, and later to defy the British armies. It is to the pages of Francis Parkman, Theodore Roosevelt, and Henry Cabot Lodge that the New Zealander must turn for historic parallels in the story of the nations, rather than to those of Macaulay, Green or Freeman.

It must be pointed out, however, that only the North Island of New Zealand, and by no means all of that, experienced war. Save for the tragedy of an hour in the very early days of colonisation, the South Island knew no clash between European and Maori. The South Island, however, had its own ardours and endurances of settlement and exploration. In the North Island settlement was largely an epic of the bush, as the New Zealander calls his forest. In the South Island it was mostly an adventure in open spaces, which, over great areas, took easily the sheep on which the prosperity of the country was to be built. The advance of sheep-raising over the Canterbury Plains into the foothills and valleys of the Alps, and the invasion of the high country in Marlborough and Otago, were

an achievement as rich in human interest as in economic. The covered waggon of the United States had its counterpart in the bullock dray of the squatter, which, carrying his wife and children and household goods, moved slowly west until the adventure took root in the shadow of alpine peaks and by the sides of rivers that had not run far from their glacier sources. In Samuel Butler's " A First Year in Canterbury Settlement " one finds lively descriptions of high-country sheep farming in those early spacious days. In publications and exhibitions of our centennial year enough material was presented from pioneering times in both islands to suffice for a hundred novels.

The whole South Island was back-boned by a great mountain system, rich in peaks, glaciers, lakes and fiords. On the West the Alps sloped to a narrow strip of heavily forested country cut by rushing rivers and pounded by hundreds of miles of open-ocean surf. The exploration of these regions, or of the interior of the North Island, never made a stir in the outside world. The scenes of operations were very remote and relatively small, and there were no sensational discoveries. But the work, especially in the South Island, was difficult and often dangerous, and some of the men who opened up these territories were true figures of romance. There was Donald Sutherland, for example, pioneer of the famous Milford Sound. Sutherland, a native of Wick, had been sailor, soldier—he fought in more than forty engagements with the Maoris—and gold-digger, before he settled down by himself in what to most men would have been the terrifying grandeur and appalling loneliness of the Sound. Then there were the rushes for gold. In a preface to his " Hero Tales of New Zealand," an indicative title, Mr. Cowan says that those who went into the forested wilderness of Westland after gold " carried their swags through

icy torrents and over snowy mountains in a wilder land than California."

Such enterprises, however, had little effect on native literature. There were too few people, and the few were scattered and too busy. The diggings of Westland were as colourful as California, but no Bret Harte appeared to write about them. Bert Harte had the communities of the more cultivated eastern States to write for, and a public on the other side of the Atlantic that was far more aware of the United States than it was of New Zealand. This country was small and most remote.

So in those days there was little leisure for the pursuit of letters, and if anyone so engaged himself, the public he could appeal to was very small. The prospects of local publication are restricted enough to-day. Then, newspapers, not over prosperous, generally confined to four pages, and intensely interested in politics, had little encouragement to give creative work. One notable exception was the appearance of the germ of Samuel Butler's " Erewhon " in the Christchurch " Press." A good many poems were witten, some of which survive, but it may be doubted whether any substantial body of verse of arresting quality was written before 1890. All honour to those who achieved something; literature must have its beginnings. Thomas Bracken, who was born in Ireland in 1843, came to New Zealand in 1869, and died in 1898, was a conspicuous figure in the latter part of this period. A warm-hearted bohemian, he is more interesting historically than æsthetically. He represented in a sense the frontier element in New Zealand poetry, the people who were disposed to applaud verse that had a strong dash of sentiment and was heavily coloured with the red shirt and high boots of the miner or some other picturesque and rugged type with a heart of gold. The digger gets a paper from home:—

He sat in the dell where the lilac was swinging;
The thrush and the blackbird were warbling above;
A raven-haired girl to his bosom was clinging;
Their eyes exchanged draughts from the fountain of love.
Ah! where is the fond one that used to adore him?
A black cloud crept o'er the ethereal dome,
A crystal pearl dropped on the journal before him,
And down on the ground dropped the paper from home.

Bracken is often called New Zealand's national and even greatest poet, generally, one suspects, by people who have not read him. He wrote one very popular lyric, "Not Understood," beloved of reciters and spread round the world by a popular entertainer, Mel. B. Spurr.

Not understood. We move along asunder,
Our paths grow wider as the seasons creep
Along the years; we marvel and we wonder
Why life is life? and then we fall asleep,
Not understood.

Bracken also lives by a competent national anthem (as national anthems go), "God Defend New Zealand," and by the title of another of his poems, "God's Own Country." At his best he has facility, a little felicity, and a touch of force. If at his worst he is very bad—below Ella Wheeler Wilcox—he was capable of the strength found in "The March of Te Rauparaha":—

Moan the waves,
Moan the waves,
Moan the waves as they wash Tainui,
Moan the waves of dark Kawhia,
Moan the winds as they sweep the gorges,
Wafting the sad laments and wailings
Of the spirits that haunt the mountains—

Warrior souls, whose skeletons slumber
Down in the caverns, lonely and dreary,
Under the feet of the fierce volcano,
Under the slopes of the Awaroa!
Moan the winds,
Moan the winds,
Moan the winds, and waves, and waters,
Moan they over the ages vanished. . . .

It may be mentioned here that New Zealand has not produced anything like the popular country-life ballad of Australia. We have no "Clancy of the Overflow," no "Waltzing Matilda."

It must be borne in mind that all this time New Zealand was going through the slow process of finding itself. Most of the older generation of colonists were born overseas, and though they settled down happily enough in their new home, they were at heart English, Scottish, Welsh or Irish. It is significant that the first New Zealand-born Prime Minister did not take office until 1925, eighty-five years after the foundation of the colony. These generations of colonists naturally saw things through the eyes of their homeland. They thought in terms of April spring and snow Christmases, or robins and hedgerows. Indeed, as the late Herbert Guthrie-Smith says, some of them deliberately tried to turn New Zealand into another Britain: what was native was inferior.

> In the seventies a species of insanity would seem to have permeated New Zealand; the country was apparently no longer to be New Zealand at all. God's work in the South Pacific was not good enough. The Dominion was to be transformed into a sixth rate Britain; our own native plants and native birds were unworthy of us. It was given out and widely accepted that the former were of no great beauty, that inevitably the latter must perish. The

very Maori race was represented as doomed. Our forests were undervalued, their yearly growth underestimated, their hardihood denied.

—(" Birds of the Water, Wood and Waste.")

The literary attitude towards New Zealand was objective, not subjective. Chesterton draws attention to the juxtaposition in the " Golden Treasury " of two poems on the same subject, Goldsmith's " When Lovely Woman Stoops to Folly " and Burns's " Banks and Braes." The difference is profound. The first, written from the outside, is a dispassionate study; the other, written from the inside, is the cry of a broken heart. A similar difference may be noted between the treatment the older New Zealand poets gave to New Zealand subjects and the work of New Zealand-born writers like Jessie Mackay and Eileen Duggan. The native writers carry the sights and sounds of New Zealand in their blood. To them a tui (a native bird of the bush with striking appearance and song) is not a curiosity, but something vital.

The turn may be said to have been taken in the period of the eighties and nineties. William Pember Reeves, journalist, poet, historian, economist and statesman, the most distinguished of our men of letters, though not the most original of our writers, struck a definite New Zealand note. It is a little difficult to place him as a poet: he lacked the ultimate magic, but he wrote with a distinction that falls just short of that. His was the vivid, forceful verse of one who was stamped in literature and at the same time a man of affairs. " The White Convolvulus " and " The Passing of the Forest " deserve to live.

Gone are the forest tracks where oft we rode
  Under the silvery fern fronds, climbing slow
Through long green tunnels, while hot noontide glowed
  And glittered on the tree-tops far below.

There in the stillness of the mountain road
We just could hear the valley river flow
With dreamy murmur through the slumbering day,
Lulling the dark-browed woods now passed away.

As a prose writer Reeves is easily the best of our essayist-historian writers. His prose is marked by a lively and graceful style; he had a wit and range of allusion rare in New Zealand letters and rarer in public life. "The Long White Cloud" is still the best all-round book about New Zealand, though it should be read to-day in the light of fuller knowledge and more leisurely sifting of facts. The British Government of the thirties, in its opposition to Wakefield's scheme of colonisation in New Zealand, was not so stupid as Reeves makes out. In the forbiddingly titled "State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand" there are descriptions and pen-portraits of grace and charm.

The following passage from "The Long White Cloud" illustrates Reeves's style as a historian. It is part of his estimate of Sir George Grey.

> I have known those who thought Grey a nobler Gracchus and a more practical Gordon; and I have known those who thought him a mean copy of Dryden's Achitophel. His island-retreat, where Froude described him as a kind of evangelical Cincinnatus, seemed to others merely the convenient lurking-place of a political rogue-elephant. The viceroy whose hated household the Adelaide tradesmen would not deal with in 1844, and the statesman whose visit to Adelaide in 1891 was a triumphal progress, the public servant whom the Duke of Edinburgh insulted in 1868, and the empire-builder whom the Queen delighted to honour in 1894, were one and the same man. So were the Governor against whom New Zealanders inveighed as an arch-despot in 1848, and the popular leader denounced as arch-demagogue by some of the same New Zealanders thirty years afterwards. In a long life of bustle and change

his strong but mixed character changed and moulded circumstances, and circumstances also changed and moulded him. The ignorant injustice of some of his Downing Street masters might well have warped his disposition even more than it did. The many honest and acute men who did not keep step with Grey, who were disappointed in him, or repelled by and embittered against him, were not always wrong. Some of his eulogists have been silly. But the student of his peculiar nature must be an odd analyst who does not in the end conclude that Grey was on the whole more akin to the Christian hero painted by Froude and Olive Schreiner than to the malevolent political chess-player of innumerable colonial leader-writers.

Here is an example of his style in a lighter vein. Reeves is explaining in "State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand" the difficulties of legislating for shops.

> The country storekeeper is not over-much troubled by having to watch the shop vigilantly through all the hours of the day and evening, in fear of having his business snapped up by some more wide-awake neighbour. His life is not one of whirling hurry. In the out-of-the-way townships of the Australian interior, or the quiet New Zealand valleys, the advent of a customer is an agreeable break in the monotony of store life. The storekeeper, who probably has a pipe in his mouth and is in his shirt-sleeves, greets the visitor cheerfully and serves him leisurely; they are more than likely to be old acquaintances, and as articles are handed over and parcels made up, the pair exchange the news of the countryside. When it is the farmer's wife who drives up to the store to make household purchases, and the storekeeper's wife or daughter who attends to her, the gossip is not shorter, though it does not end, as it often does with the men, in a stroll to the bar-room of the neighbouring public-house. To apply elaborate early closing laws to rough-and-ready methods and free-and-easy manners of this primitive kind would be too ridiculous. At

the same time something has had to be done, even with country shops. All rural districts are not equally rough and thinly populated; all townships are not sleepy hollows. There are many stages of transition from the city "emporium" of several stories to the long, low, shingle-store with its broad verandah and miscellaneous contents, and its mingled odours of cheese, American apples, moleskins, bacon, brown sugar and boots. Where was the line to be drawn?

("American apples" needs a foot-note. The reference dates Reeves's book to the days before New Zealand developed her apple-growing industry to such an extent that she was able to export millions of cases.)

Jessie Mackay, who came forward about the same time to strike a national note, shared Reeves's radicalism, but whereas he had his cultural roots in English tradition, she drew much of her inspiration from Scotland and Ireland. Her writing was touched by magic. Jessie Mackay looked back to the remote past and yet called upon her generation, and especially the women, to throw its strength into the making of a better present and future. In her "Burial of Sir John McKenzie," one of the finest of New Zealand's occasional poems, she expresses her Liberal creed. McKenzie was the son of a Ross-shire farmer, and became a radical Minister of Lands at the other side of the world.

The clan went on with the pipes before,
All the way, all the way;
A wider clan than ever he knew
Followed him home that dowie day.
And who were they of the wider clan?—
The landless man and the No Man's man,
The man that lacked and the man unlearned,
The man that lived but as he earned;
And the clan went mourning all the way.

—Jessie Mackay.

(It is significant that her most thrilling experience when she visited the Old World was her visit to the ruins of Tintagel, but she had a deep love for her native land.)

Land of the morning, Kiwa's golden daughter,
Land of the fleet-foot mist and running water.

So she addressed her own country, New Zealand.

The running rings of fire on the Canterbury hills,—
Running, ringing, dying at the border of the snow:—
Mad, young, seeking as a young thing wills,
The ever, ever living, ever buried long ago!

The soft running fire on the Canterbury hills;
Swinging low the censer of a tender heathenesse
To the dim earth goddesses that quicken all the thrills
When the heart's wine of August is dripping from the press.

This was of the part of New Zealand where she was born.

Light is good for the living!
Long light for the lover!
Long light for the maiden!
For us the black cover!
Farewell the light!

Night for the warrior!
Night for the watching!
Dark jewels of Rangi
Lean low for the snatching:—
Hither O Night!

These verses are from one of her poems about New Zealand's native race, a "Maori War Song."

Like Cato, Jessie Mackay was moved towards the conquered. Her heart went out to exiles, such as the victims of the Appin clearance in the eighteenth century, and little people under the rod.

We hear nae earthly singing
But it sets " Lochaber " ringing.
An' we'll never smile again
I' the sunlight or the rain
Till our feet are on the long lost trail—
The siller road to Appin,—
East awa' to Appin,—
The siller road to Appin, rinning' a' the way to God!

Perhaps the finest poem she wrote—it was her own favourite—was " The Carol of Kossovo," written in sympathy with the Serbians at Christmas, 1915.

It is the eve of Christ the King
(One God, one grave at Kossovo!)
The living tongue it cannot sing;
The living foot it cannot go:
Lord, if Thou wilt have carolling,
Cry up, cry up the dead to sing,
And make a temple of the snow,
And a choir of the winds at Kossovo!

Thy little Son had a manger bed
(Sing low, sing loud at Kossovo!)
But ours were bedded in the sleet,
With neither fire nor winding sheet.
Clave Heaven over Mary's head,
The gentle kine about her feet;
But Hell came up to our overthrow,
Mothers and men at Kossovo!

Twice has Serbia died her death
(What shall we offer at Kossovo?)—
A full five hundred years ago,
A yestere'en in the cruel snow!
Bread and wine and life and breath
Are not in Serbia more, and lo!
The red wine dripped into the snow
From Serbia's heart at Kossovo!

And we were grounden for Thy wheat
(The mills of the pit at Kossovo!)
Dead carollers, come we to Thy feet,
A little Christ of the long ago!—
Dead and done with earth, we trow!
Good Christian men, but ye were slow!
Now quicker to our burying go
Who hear the carol of Kossovo!

Jessie Mackay could cast over subjects something of a witchery of Druid twilight, but she could draw with the clarity of an etcher and hit with the force of a boxer. Her fame went abroad, and in her later years she was recognised by New Zealand writers as the queen of their little court. In her memory the New Zealand Centre of the P.E.N. has instituted an annual prize for poetry, founded by public subscription.

After these two native-born writers came a good many others. In the period between the nineties and the post-war time there was Arthur Adams, a graceful poet and a competent novelist, who spent his later years in Australia. He was a poet of arresting phrases: "This foamy sea of fripperies" (Bond Street); "the loping leagues of sea" (the Tasman); "this haggard continent" (Australia in comparison with New Zealand). Blanche Baughan and Arnold Wall are both English in origin, and both have a strong vein of originality. Miss Baughan, who has been silent for a long while, is a poet of ideas who has essayed the vernacular style, and Professor Wall, who is still busy after a writing life of some forty years, has a strong philosophical bent. Coming to New Zealand to take the Chair of English at Canterbury College, Arnold Wall has steeped himself in the New Zealand scene. Christchurch, the City of the Plains, will be fortunate if in the next hundred years she evokes a simile as appropriate and beautiful as

Each of her streets is closed with shining Alps,
Like Heaven at the end of long plain lives.

And those mountains have inspired no finer poetry than " The Old Botanist's Farewell to the Alps ":—

No more shall I climb in the pale dawn with passion,
The dew from the snow-grass with eager feet shaking,
And hear the nor'-west wind come charging and crashing,
And break on the sharp rocks with tumult and quaking.

No more shall I see on a day of still weather
Far range upon range to infinity dwindle,
Snow-crowned and ice-girdled, all slumbering together,
Erebus and Arrowsmith and d'Archaic and Tyndall.

No more shall you charm me, dear dainty Ourisia,
You broad fields of mountain-musk starred with white blossom,
Euphrasia, Raouulia, Phyllachne, Celmisia,
No more shall you strike the deep chord in my bosom.

Fiction was slow to develop, and for one very good reason, that the population was too small to support a native literature of this kind. It is comparatively easy to publish a slim volume of verse, but more difficult to put a novel into print. Pioneers in the New Zealand novel included " Alien," whose stories were rather of the " Family Herald " type, and Edith Searle Grossman, who combined remarkable intellectual gifts with a passionate zeal for the cause of women. " Hermione " has something of the intensity of " The Story of an African Farm." H. B. Marriott-Watson, who sought his literary future successfully in London, wrote in " The Web of the Spider " an excellent yarn of adventure in the New Zealand bush. One of the best novels of colonial political life (the action of which might easily have taken place in New Zealand) was written in the nineties by a man who had never been overseas—" Half a

Hero," by Anthony Hope. Politics are a phase of New Zealand society that has been much neglected by our writers.

In 1902 there appeared the first New Zealand book of an author who may be ultimately regarded as the most important of our pre-war novelists. This was William Satchell, an Englishman who emigrated to New Zealand in the eighties, and spent some time in North Auckland, then largely bush and gum-fields country. In 1902 Mr. Satchell published "The Land of the Lost"; in 1905 "The Toll of the Bush"; in 1907 "The Elixir of Life"; and in 1914 "The Greenstone Door." Of the four stories, three are laid in New Zealand, and the fourth in a liner bound for this country. They attracted little attention in New Zealand, which at that time had not acquired the habit of reading books about itself. Besides, "The Greenstone Door," which Mr. Satchell had worked on hard for a while, appeared in July, 1914, and was among the inanimate casualties of the war. Mr. Satchell was so disappointed at the failure of a book on which he had counted for so much, that he gave up writing. Years passed, and the book appeared to be forgotten. However, it was being talked about here and there, and at length there was an organised movement among his admirers to have it published. This was done in 1935, and the response in New Zealand was immediate. Seven impressions were issued in a few years, and the story is still selling. It is recognised as the most ambitious and probably the best story of Anglo-Maori relations. "The Land of the Lost," his first novel, was re-issued in 1938, and the two others may follow. "The Land of the Lost" is a tale of gum-digging, that queer industry in North Auckland which used to attract wanderers from all classes. The novel is Victorian in its conventions and dialogue, but though one feels that people never talked as these people do, they have intensity, vitality and

there is a remarkable presentation of landscape as an integral part of the action. The scene seems to dominate the characters, as it does in Hardy's "The Return of the Native."

The war of 1914-18 stimulated New Zealand literature by deepening our consciousness of nationality. Moreover, a generation had arisen that was naturally more disposed to look at scenery and ideas from a New Zealand point of view. Its fathers and grandfathers always had at the back of their minds April springs and white Christmases, but it was perfectly natural to their descendants to "breathe in April autumns," sun-bathe in long December-January holidays, and think as New Zealanders. In both prose and verse the development since 1914-18 war has been remarkable. Katherine Mansfield, the one international figure in literature that this country has produced, published her first book in 1911, but the work by which she is best known was issued after the war. It was inevitable that she should leave New Zealand and seek the encouraging atmosphere of the larger world; her kind of genius needed the nourishment of older and more cultivated societies. She did not, however, lack encouragement before she left; there is a good deal of New Zealand in her stories; and she always loved her native country. The influence she exerted throughout the literary world has borne fruit in New Zealand. One can see it in the greater pains taken with mental states and the minutiæ of life. She has helped to make New Zealand letters more sophisticated. A writer whose work has had a similar effect is Jane Mander. Her "Story of a New Zealand River," a tale of North Auckland, is considered by some to be the best New Zealand novel. At first it was rather too strong meat for many New Zealanders, but mild compared with Jean Devanny's "The Butcher Shop."

We have noted that there used to be but a small demand in

New Zealand for New Zealand stories. Probably this was because familiar streets of this small community did not offer a sufficiently attractive escape from reality. Rosemary Rees did something to break down this indifference, but the most successful assault has been made by Nelle Scanlan with her "Pencarrow" series, which began in 1932. These have sold in tens of thousands, and novelists who came after benefit by Miss Scanlan's conquest. Bright, breezy and spacious, the Pencarrow novels are a chronicle of New Zealand life from the earliest days of the colony to the present time. "John Guthrie" has had many readers for his two novels, "The Little Country" and "So They Began," stories without much plot, but marked by humour and keen observation. In "Promenade," "G. B. Lancaster" has done for New Zealand what in "Pageant" she did for Tasmania. Mary Scott, essayist and novelist (she has written under the name of "Marten Stuart" as well as her own), has a place of her own as a lively interpreter of country life. C. R. Allen, besides being a poet, has written a string of stories in which New Zealand life before the war of 1914 is carefully drawn. He is also one of several writers who have published short plays.

We are in a different world in the work of "Robin Hyde" and John A. Lee. "Robin Hyde" (Iris Wilkinson), whose death in 1939 was a serious loss to New Zealand literature, tried to do too much, but a good deal of what she wrote was fine in quality. She was good enough as a poet to get into a contemporary series published by a famous London house. She gave New Zealand a new kind of novel in "Check to Your King," a study of Baron de Thierry, the Anglo-French kingdom-seeker, in which imagination played upon a great deal of research. She exposed the realism of war in "Passport to Hell," and in "The Godwits Fly" depicted with re-

markable skill the everyday life of a Wellington family. Her last book, the result of her courageous visit to China during its war with Japan, contains first-class work. John A. Lee, M.P., is a realist who is a poet at heart. His "Children of the Poor," a study of life in Dunedin, is one of the most original contributions New Zealand literature has received. A champion of the underdog, he might be called the Jack London of this country.

Two young native-born writers of fiction have attracted much attention by the indigenous realism and sympathetic detachment of their work. John Mulgan's "Man Alone" tells of an Englishman who is caught up in the depression of the thirties, and the historian of New Zealand literature, E. H. McCormick, says "the broad social theme is not imposed upon the novel, but arises imperceptibly from the telling in clear-cut idiomatic prose of a highly dramatic story." Frank Sargeson's collection of short stories, "A Man and His Wife," one of which was bracketed first in the Government's Centennial competitions, has been hailed in New Zealand and Australia as a literary event. Mr. Sargeson attempts, says Mr. McCormick, "to mould the language and the rhythm of everyday New Zealand speech—the speech of the street, the government office, the hotel bar, the middle-class household—into a literary form quite new in this country." These and others among our younger writers show the influence of "Moderns" in Britain and America, notably Ernest Hemingway.* A writer who has succeeded brilliantly in the specialised field of detective fiction is Ngaio Marsh. Miss Marsh has a large public in Britain and the United States, has been translated into foreign

* Those who wish for more information on the history of New Zealand literature are directed to Mr. McCormick's book "Letters and Art in New Zealand," published in the Government's series of Centennial Surveys.

languages, and is ranked by critics with the most accomplished masters of the craft.

That many of our young writers and scholars seek the larger world, like Katherine Mansfield, is not surprising. Lack of population is a pressing problem and affects our life at all points. Harold Williams, famous as a journalist (he ended as Foreign Editor of "The Times"), the story of whose career is told in "Cheerful Giver," was one of these migrants. Hector Bolitho is another. He has exceptional gifts as a biographer, and it is a remarkable achievement for a young colonial writer to succeed as he has done in the field of Royal "Lives." Hector Bolitho is also a novelist and has made a name as a writer of short stories. A writer who has divided his living and work between New Zealand and England is W. D'arcy Cresswell, one of the characters of our literary world. Poet and commentator, with a curiously patterned prose style, Mr. Cresswell is a man of original mind and most uncompromising views. It must take some courage to denounce "the modern or Copernican Universe" as "that disordered and licentious conception of Nature," fabricated by reason. Mr. Cresswell's "Poet's Progress" impressed literary England.

After 1914-18 poetry blossomed well. There arose a new school of poets. They were definitely New Zealanders, with the spiritual marks of the New Zealander, born and bred. They did not apologise for New Zealand, but accepted it as their life. Not that they expressed a narrow nationalism; on the contrary their outlook was wider than their predecessors'. Their art sought broader fields; it was surer of itself; it had come of age. Some of these New Zealand poets, like their contemporaries in Britain, broke sharply with the ideas and technique of Victorian poetry. They tried new themes and measure, sometimes with startling effect. There were social

and political rebels among them, bold questioners of concepts and institutions. Hitherto, with hardly an exception, our poets had not gone beyond radicalism. Now we saw the banner of revolt and revolution. Some of these rebels were victims of the depression that began in the late twenties and went on into the thirties. They were bitter and disillusioned.

> Backblocks camps for the outcast, the superfluous,
> reading back-date magazines, rolling cheap cigarettes,
> not mated;
> witnesses to the constriction of life essential
> to the maintenance of the rate of profit
> as distinct from the gross increment of wealth.

Some of their protests were poetry; others were not better than shrill and sometimes cheap invective. In an able analysis of these moods Mr. M. H. Holcroft, who himself was affected by the depression, remarks on a preoccupation of writers "with ideas that have been borrowed from overseas and related in merely superficial ways to local conditions. There are writers who are unable to see an urchin barefooted in the streets without exclaiming angrily against The System."* But wherever the ideas come from the preoccupation with them has to be reckoned with.

The most original of the revolt school is R. A. K. Mason. His classical scholarship is revealed in his very exceptional terseness. He reminds one of A. E. Housman, but it is the tragedy of the economic system rather than of human nature that moves him.

* "The Deepening Stream : Cultural Influences in New Zealand," by M. H. Holcroft (Caxton Press, Christchurch). This was the winning entry in the essay section of the New Zealand Centennial Literary Competition, 1940. Like Mr. McCormick's survey of our literature, this is a leading document in the study of our culture.

This short straight sword
I got in Rome
when Gaul's new lord
came tramping home:

It did that grim
old rake to a T——.
If it did him,
well, it does me.

Leave the thing of pearls
with silken tassels
to priests and girls
and currish vassals:

Here's no fine cluster
on the hilt, this drab
blade lacks lustre—
but it can stab.

A. R. D. Fairburn is another poet with a fine lyrical gift and an economic crusade in his heart. The poet who wrote "Old Woman":

The years have stolen
all her loveliness,
her days are fallen
in the long wet grass
like petals broken
from the lilac blossom,
when the winds have shaken
its tangled bosom.

Her youth like a dim
cathedral lies
under the seas
of her life's long dream,
yet she hears still
in her heart, sometimes,
the far, sweet chimes
of a sunken bell.

also wrote:

> Smith is an English immigrant:
> Consider the curious fate
> of the English immigrant:
> his wages were taken from him
> and exported to the colonies;
> sated with abstinence, gorged on deprivation,
> he followed them; to be confronted on arrival
> with the ghost of his back wages, a load of debt:
> the bond of kinship, the heritage of Empire.

and this:

> Oh, wouldn't you laugh at the top of your voice
> if ever it came to pass,
> That Christ came by in his big Rolls-Royce,
> and the Bishop went on his ass!

Arnold Cork has made original poetry out of two basic New Zealand industries, timber-getting and dairying: "Timber Mill" and "Domino" (Domino is a cow) are rich in authentic sights and sounds of New Zealand..

> First a hesitating .. . CHUG . . .
> then an intermittent . . . CHUG . . . CHUG . . .
> then a regulated . . . CHUG . . . CHUG . . . CHUG . . .
> CHUG. . . .
> Lo, the drum beats of the Mill
> flood the deafened stage until,
> hill on hill re-echoing,
> earth and sky all cease to sing
> and flute and clarinet and string
> die in this cacophoning;
> and Nature's nerves embrace the shock
> of shouting voices, hissing steam,
> of flapping belts and rattling beam,
> of rolling trolley, creaking block,
> of tearing timber's rasping scream,
> of boards articulating . . . WHOCK.

Toll, O feathered innocence,
Grieve, O green indifference.

J. C. Beaglehole is a poet with a strong intellectual-æsthetic content. His noble "Considerations of Certain Music by J. S. Bach" would grace any company of poems about music and musicians.

I, Johann Sebastian Bach, musician,
cantor of St. Thomas' School in Leipzig,
being near my end praise God for his mercies;
for although I am blind so I was not
always, for the Lord gave me great power
among all men to sing unto His greatness:
witness my works which I leave behind me.
For I strove long in anguish of spirit,
with my soul I battled long with the Lord's
angels, knowing it was to His glory.
Though I was in darkness, yet I saw Him.
Though I am in darkness, yet I see Him.
In music I saw Him, I walked with Him
before the gates of Paradise, the smooth
and glowing pearl, they fled apart, I walked
within and heard the music of His courts
echoing, twining before Him in divine
subtle-ordered canon. In my striving
with His angels too I heard songs of Zion;
these I have sung; with deep notes of organ
and organ's sweetness I have adored Him,
with choir and strings and trumpets I have praised
Him greatly, and with tenderness of oboe
mourned for Him. All men know me and no man;
for I went alone before Him, and strove
alone. Now, Lord, take me for I am blind,
I am blind yet the eyes of my spirit
see; the ears of my spirit hear the songs
of Zion no man else heard; now take me, Lord,
Bach, cantor of Thomas' School, at my end.

This is one of the sections; the poem ends with a magnificent description of music in Heaven.

There is "Evelyn Hayes" (Ursula Bethell), whose verses, "From a Garden in the Antipodes," breathe the fragrance of flowers and the philosophy of a quiet and humorous mind, and whose more ambitious verses in "Time and Place" present the New Zealand landscape in lovely detail. The slow music and deep meditation of her verse is illustrated in this extract from "The Long Harbour," or Akaroa, which was colonised by a party of French settlers in the first days of New Zealand as a colony.

I have walked here with my love in the early spring-time,
and under the summer-dark walnut-avenues,
and played with the children, and waited with the aged
by the quayside, and listened alone where manukas
sighing, windswept, and sea-answering pine-groves
garrison the burial-ground.

It should be very easy to lie down and sleep there
in that sequestered hillside ossuary,
underneath a billowy, sun-caressed grass-knoll,
beside those dauntless, tempest-braving ancestresses
who pillowed there so gladly, gnarled hands folded,
their tired afore-translated bones.

It would not be a hard thing to wake up one morning
to the sound of bird-song in scarce-stirring willow-trees,
waves lapping, oars splashing, chains running slowly,
and faint voices calling across the harbour;
to embark at dawn, following the old forefathers,
to put forth at daybreak for some lovelier,
still undiscovered shore.

The contemporary poet who has won most fame abroad is Eileen Duggan, and it is noteworthy that in form as well as

philosophy she is a strong traditionalist. Eileen Duggan has published two volumes abroad: "Poems," in England and America, and "New Zealand Poems" in England. The first carried a very appreciative introductory essay by Walter de la Mare. The reception of these by critics in Britain and America was something new in laurels for New Zealand. "Springing with the positive assertion of pure poetry." "The whole book is one delightful procession of astonishment." "It is undoubtedly one of the poetic events of the year." "A reassurance that real poetry continues to be written and published." "Eileen Duggan's is one of the very few authentic lyric voices of our time." Miss Duggan is a Catholic, and a New Zealander through and through. She works upon the Catholic heritage, and colours it with the conditions of her own land, as when, in "A New Zealand Christmas," she imagines Christ born here:

> The sky would be a tumble of summer constellations,
> Our own, alas, hidden, that cluster of loss,
> Exiled from sight by some great thoughtful angel,
> Lest He, too soon, should look upon a cross.

It is part of her shining achievement that she has written with such natural ease of New Zealand subjects, and made them live to people who perhaps had never heard of this country save as a geographical expression. She has given universality to the local, which is the mark of high literature. Eileen Duggan keeps close to accepted form. Her verse is compact, and she is seldom or never obscure.

> Once on a dewy morning,
> With the bright sky blowing apart,
> Each bud broke on my eyelids,
> Each bird flew through my heart.

I prayed for the faith of a starling
Under the tawny trees,
A child or a holy woman—
What could be greater than these?

But now on a heavy morning
With the dull sky blowing apart,
When no flower blesses my eyelids,
And no wing brushes my heart,
I, made surer by sorrow,
Beg what seems more to me,
The faith of a willow in winter,
Or a blind hound nosing the knee.

This is the loveliest lyric written in this country, and it has power to move hearts from Inverness to Valparaiso.

It is impossible to list here all who have written verse of distinction, but because of the originality of his recent work, Douglas Stewart should be mentioned. A lyrical poet of some achievement, who has had a volume published in London, and was the first winner of the Jessie Mackay Memorial Prize for Poetry, Douglas Stewart has become a playwright in a new medium—new at least in these parts of the world. "The Fire on the Snow," which made a deep impression when it was broadcast in Australia, tells in play form the story of the Scott expedition's march to the South Pole, its return journey, and its final tragedy. As a background to this tale of heroic endeavour and acceptance of fate, there is comment in poetry after the manner of Hardy's "supernatural spectators of the terrestrial action" in "The Dynasts." The drama is a fine effort in sustained imagination. Mr. Stewart has followed this with a play on the Kelly Gang of bushrangers in Australia, also in mingled prose and poetry. He may go a long way.

There are quite a number of writers worthy of mention in a class one may call miscellaneous. New Zealand has been

strong in essayists, historians, and writers on sociological and scientific subjects. Herbert Guthrie-Smith's "Tutira," the story of his East Coast sheep station, has been described by one good judge as the best book written in New Zealand. "Tutira" is a unique mixture of geology, natural history, the daily life of pioneering, and the farmer's struggle with his enemies, who range from noxious weeds to creditors. Herbert Guthrie-Smith was an acute observer, a passionate lover of nature, a scholar, and a humanist, and his style is admirably adapted to the setting down of his many interests. He watches the making of sheep-paths and sleeping-shelves; records the coming of birds and plants; and tells us what station finance was like in hard times. If we had to take one New Zealand book to a remote island, an admirable choice would be "Tutira." This is how Guthrie-Smith finishes his chapter on "The Lure of Improvements":

> Here we can conveniently close our chapter—sufficient matter has been given to show the normal daily life of a station in the making. I know it has been prosaic; I know it has been heavy. I cannot but be aware that its stolidity must have even veiled and obscured the glories, the delights, the ecstasies of improvements, for there is no fascination in life like that of the amelioration of the surface of the earth. For a young man what an ideal existence!—to make a fortune by the delightful labour of your hands—to drain your swamps, to cut tracks over your hills, to fence, to split, to build, to sow seed, to watch your flock increase—to note a countryside change under your hands from a wilderness, to read its history in your merino's eyes. How pastoral! How Arcadian! I declare that in those times to think of an improvement to the station was to be in love. A thousand anticipations of happiness rushed upon the mind—the emerald sward that was to paint the alluvial flats, the graded tracks up which the pack team was to climb

easily, the spurs over which the fencing was to run its shining wire, its mighty strainers; the homestead of the future, the spacious wool-shed, the glory of the grace that was to be.

It was a joy to wake, to spring out of your bunk half dressed already—there wasn't a night-shirt north of Napier then—to glance through the whare's open door at the clear, innumerable hosts of stars, in the huge fireplace to open up the warm cone of soft grey ash piled carefully overnight, to push into its heart of glowing red the dry kindling, to see the brief smoke ascend, to hear the crackle of the rapid flames. Oh, those were happy days, with no cares, no fears for the future, no burden of personal possession, when every thought was for the run, when every penny that could be scraped together was to be spent on the adornment of that heavenly mistress.

We have a goodly company of historians. T. Lindsay Buick, Member of Parliament, journalist and historian, published the first of several historical works in 1900 and the last in 1937. He was the historian of two districts, Marlborough and Manawatu, of the Treaty of Waitangi, of the French settlement of Akaroa, of one of the greatest figures in Maori history, Te Rauparaha, and of the huge and extinct wingless bird, the moa. James Cowan, with a rare equipment of scholarship and literary grace, has covered a great range of Maori history and legend. His official history of the Maori wars is an outstanding example of accurate details woven into a fascinating narrative.

Let us picture something of the aspect of Kororareka Beach in the war-brewing "forties." This straggling town, its single street fitting itself closely to the rim of the gravelly beach, is a mingling of pakeha and Maori architecture. One and two-storied weather-board stores and public-houses have for close neighbours thatched whares of slab and fern, tree-trunk and raupo. Near the southern end of the

beach is a Maori village enclosed by a palisade of split trees and manuka stakes. There is no jetty; the boats of men-o'-war, whalers, and trading craft alike are hauled up on the beach. Over in the north cove by Waipara Spring two boats' crews from an American whaleship are towing off a string of water-casks roped together. Out in the bay lie half a dozen deep-sea vessels, most of them New Bedford whale-hunters; nearer the beach sundry fore-and-afters, schooner or cutter rigged, swing to an anchor; one or two of these are sailed by Maoris, for the East Coast native is not only a first-rate sailor, but is beginning to taste the pleasures and profits of ship-owning. Natives in their blankets and mats lounge on the beach-edge, dozing, smoking, or arguing in the vociferous manner of the Maori. Ngapuhi girls, barefooted and bareheaded, well plumped-out of figure, swing up and down the roadway, flaunting the print gowns and the brightly-coloured "roundabouts" and the glittering ear-rings bought with the dollars of the sailormen. Some of them are lately from the mission stations, maybe, but the temptations of Kororareka and the whaleships are irresistible. Many a native wears a little metal cross or a crucifix about his neck, or a figure of the Virgin hung by a black ribbon or tape from one ear, balancing a shark's tooth or a greenstone in the other—for the Catholic religion, newly come to the Bay, is highly popular, and Bishop Pompallier numbers his converts by the hundred. Most of the able-bodied men, tall athletes with tattooed faces, are armed. You see a party of young bloods spring ashore from a canoe, in from one of Pomare's, Heke's or Kawiti's *pas* up the harbour, and observe that every man has his short-handled tomahawk, brightly polished of blade, thrust through his flax girdle just over the hip or at the small of the back; he would no more stir from home without it than a Far West plainsman of the old days would move abroad without his six-shooter. Many also carry their flint-lock guns, which they call ngutu-parera ("duck-bill"—from the shape of the

hammer); and note, too, the new percussion-cap gun, double-barrelled, which the Maori is able to obtain from Sydney trading craft, while his antagonist soon-to-be, the British soldier, must for some years yet be content with the ancient musket.

In his biography of our first Governor, Captain Hobson, Dr. G. H. Scholefield has done justice to a man who was much in our thoughts in Centennial year. Dr. Scholefield is also editor of the largest single item in the Government's Centennial publications, "A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography."

A recent arrival in the field of historians is Eric Ramsden, who has made conscientious and well documented studies of Marsden and more recently James Busby, both of whom were big figures in the early history of New Zealand.

Dr. J. C. Beaglehole, one of the younger school, is an imaginative and epigrammatic historian as well as a fine poet. Biography is closely connected with history, and so is the study of the Maori. Dr. A. J. Harrop, historian of our relations with Britain in the period of annexation and during the Maori wars is also a biographer of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. The standard of biography has been raised by the Hon. W. Downie Stewart's Lives of Sir Francis Bell and William Rolleston, and now that Mr. Stewart is out of politics we may expect more books of the kind from this statesman-philosopher. Among authorities on the Maori, Elsdon Best takes high place. He was one of the most noted of our ethnologists, and his monographs on Maori ways are a mine for students. Johannes Andersen, another of our poets, among other researches, has investigated Maori music, native bird-song, and Maori place-names. Dr. Peter Buck, a distinguished representative of the Maori race, who is now Director of the Bishop Museum, Honolulu, and Professor of Anthropology at Yale, has written a good deal on anthropological subjects.

" Cheerful Yesterdays," by the late Mr. Justice Alpers, written on his death-bed, is not only the best autobiography this country has produced, but in its observation, humour and style, it takes high rank in any country. In another member of the Supreme Court Bench, Sir John Salmond, New Zealand had a jurist whose lucidity and intellectual grasp gave him an international reputation. Text books by Salmond have become standard works. The most interesting sociological work written in this country is H. C. D. Somerset's " Littledene," a very human study of a rural community in Canterbury. Edith Howes has made a name for herself abroad as well as in New Zealand by her books on popular science. A London house recently published in one year three volumes of essays by New Zealand writers.

In Sir James Elliott we have a doctor-author. Sir James has written his own reminiscences, the biography of Firth of Wellington College, perhaps our greatest headmaster, and a Centennial novel, " The Hundred Years." Major C. A. L. Treadwell wrote a book on his adventures in the last war, and as he has been on service in this one, may be expected to write another. A. W. Reed has not only published but written important books of New Zealand interest. Pat Lawlor is the author of " Confessions of a Journalist," and " The House of Templemore " (a novel). Eric Bradwell's plays have been published and acted. F. W. Reed is noted as a collector, bibliographer, and translator of Alexandre Dumas. That a man working in a New Zealand country town should have made one of the best collections of the kind in the world, and gained international standing, shows what well-directed enthusiasm can do.

Editors of anthologies deserve mention. They have done much to preserve our struggling literature, and spread know-

ledge of it. "New Zealand Verse" and its successor, "A Treasury of New Zealand Verse," edited by A. E. Currie and W. F. Alexander, and "Kowhai Gold," edited by Quentin Pope, are indispensable anthologies of verse. C. R. Allen has made a collection of New Zealand short stories. For some years C. A. Marris has collected for us the "Best Poems" of the year.

Finally, if you wish to know what the New Zealander is like you cannot do better than read Oliver Duff's "New Zealand Now," in the series of Centennial Surveys.

NOTE.—As president of the New Zealand Centre of the P.E.N., Mr. Mulgan has done his work faithfully and well except in one respect. He has not disclosed that in essays, verse, fiction and even in history he himself has done work of such high standing that we are glad to hail him as our dean of letters. Without saying that these are the best I would list one from each category: "First with the Sun," "Golden Wedding," "Spur of Morning" and "The City of the Strait."

G. H. SCHOLEFIELD,
Past-President.

CHAPTER II

THE POSITION OF THE AUTHOR IN NEW ZEALAND

AUTHORS in New Zealand work in a small community that is emerging from the pioneering stage. It has been claimed with authority by New Zealanders that they are the greatest readers in the world, that is to say, in proportion to population, they read more books than any other people, at any rate in English-speaking countries. Even if we make full

allowance for the only partial reliability of statistics in such a matter, it will be conceded that New Zealanders read a good deal. Illiteracy is unknown, and the average level of intelligence is high. There are excellent bookshops and many libraries. But in every community the number of non-readers, or what may be described as non-serious or non-regular readers, is large, and it must be borne in mind that the population of New Zealand is only 1,600,000, only half as big again as Glasgow's. It follows that the New Zealand market for books is relatively very limited.

Publication in Britain is publication for the British Commonwealth and perhaps the United States as well. New Zealand bookshops are full of books published in Britain. A book published in New Zealand, however, has virtually no market outside New Zealand. A few copies may be sold in Australia, that is all. A New Zealand publisher has estimated that an author cannot reasonably look for a greater sale than 500 copies in his own country. Some books exceed that, but others fall below it. The New Zealand writer is therefore disposed to write for the wider market. If he can get publication in London, he may sell in thousands. This tempts him to write with one eye on the British public, which is not much interested in New Zealand, and not perhaps as he would write if he had a better market in his own country. What then is the position of the New Zealand writer? There are very few persons in New Zealand, men or women, who live entirely by literature, even in the wide sense of the term. This writer can think of only one. Seeing that there are comparatively few who do so in Britain, this need not surprise us. New Zealand writers, like so many of their cousins in Britain, have other means of support. Many of them are journalists in regular employment, or free-lances, and others are professional men and women who

write in their spare time. Writers in the employment of newspapers nearly always write anonymously and surrender their copyright; permission to publish in book form, however, is given cheerfully.

The lot of the free-lance is hardest in ordinary times, and it has become much harder since the war of 1939 began, for newspapers have had to cut down their space and contributed articles have been reduced in number or left out altogether. A monthly journal that gave writers a great deal of encouragement, and paid them well according to New Zealand standards, " The Railways Magazine " (edited by G. G. Stewart), has ceased publication. Another publication, now no more, was " The New Zealand Artists' Annual " (edited by Pat Lawlor). It did much to help the free lance writer and attracted the favourable attention of overseas reviewers. In normal times a contributor has not a great choice of journals. With a few exceptions, perhaps, it is only the metropolitans among newspapers that pay for articles and stories. There are only eight of these papers, and they vary in their requirements. Some of them accept little or nothing from outside. Some take articles regularly and pay for book reviews. In some metropolitan newspapers, and in one or two provincial ones, books are given a considerable space once a week (one still speaks of normal times), and the level of reviewing is sometimes high. At least one metropolitan paper conducts regular competitions for short stories, and at Christmas time there is a pretty wide market for stories of the season. There are also weekly papers that accept contributions, but naturally, in a small community, journals that devote themselves to literature and art have a very difficult time. Here again we must bear in mind conditions in Britain, where, despite the size of the population, the mortality among literary journals is notorious. Even the " London Mer-

cury," with an appeal to the English-speaking world, could not keep going.

The main demand in New Zealand is for pleasant, topical articles. These are paid for at a rate ranging up from a pound a column of a thousand or twelve hundred words. New Zealand, like all other young countries, had to live down a period in which the distinction of publication was deemed to be sufficient reward for the writer. That the labourer was worthy of his hire was a principle admitted but slowly, and with few exceptions rates of pay have remained low. A New Zealand writer would consider two guineas a thousand words good pay, and three guineas exceptionally good. In a short story he might get up to five guineas, but this would be in a competition. Two or three guineas would be nearer the usual rate. The responsibility for this low rate of pay does not lie wholly with editors. It lies also with proprietors, in most cases directors of newspaper companies, whose control of their journals has become closer in recent years. These are usually men who have succeeded in business but have little appreciation of the arts, and little knowledge of the amount of work involved in writing and the special gifts required. They will cheerfully pay large fees for other professional services, which perhaps are more easily secured than good writing. It seems to be impossible to root out the idea that writing is an easy job which requires no special qualification or training.

It is only fair to the New Zealand press to say that while the rate of pay has often been shockingly low, the standard of writing has often been high. The literary level of the New Zealand press has often been commented on favourably by visitors. Quite an impressive number of books are reprints of contributions to newspapers. It has been mentioned that in a recent year a London house issued three volumes of New Zea-

land essays. The contents of these had appeared wholly or in part in the columns of New Zealand daily newspapers.

The New Zealand press must also be given credit for helping the poet. It is true the remuneration has not been high—one newspaper that has presented nearly all the leading New Zealand poets of the last generation used to pay 7s. 6d. for a short poem—but the encouragement has been there. New Zealand has produced an impressive crop of poets in this period, several of whom have been published abroad, and it is noteworthy that in volume after volume acknowledgments to New Zealand daily newspapers appear. Special mention should be made of the one regular journal of size devoted wholly to Art and Literature, "Art in New Zealand." It is pretty obvious that "Art in New Zealand" is run at a loss.

But the worst enemy of New Zealand contributors has probably been the regular conveyance of articles and stories from overseas papers and journals to New Zealand publications. That papers shall live on each other is a recognised rule of the newspaper world; indeed newspapers would be less interesting and less useful if they did not do so. Actually how far this dependence should go has never been settled. Strictly speaking, every newspaper at some time or another breaks the copyright law. In earlier days New Zealand newspapers were compelled to draw largely on the overseas press for their reading matter, and the habit has persisted. Some New Zealand newspapers spend a substantial amount of money on overseas services. They subscribe to syndicates that deal in world affairs and employ correspondents in London and other places. But they all from time to time—some more than others—lift articles and sometimes stories. They would not take an item marked "Copyright—all right reserved," but it is possible that it does not often occur to editors and sub-editors that by

reprinting articles from other papers without permission or payment they are infringing the law of copyright. It must be conceded that the public has benefited by this. It has been given to read admirable articles by leading authors on all sorts of subjects. " The Times," the " Manchester Guardian " and the " New York Times " are among the newspapers that have been drawn upon. Unfortunately for the local writer, it is so much easier and cheaper to fill columns with this lifted matter than to reserve them for local writers—and sometimes more profitable. Local writers have to admit that sometimes they cannot compete, either in style or knowledge, with men and women who have made good in the greater world of journalism and letters. The practice, however, does press hard on local writers. If an overseas writer asks payment for an article so lifted, the newspaper is apt to feel aggrieved. When a New Zealand writer established in the Old World made such a demand, there was a suggestion that he was a pushing fellow who wasn't quite playing the game by his native country and its press.

The lot of the novelist who seeks serialisation is particularly hard. For a few pounds a New Zealand newspaper can take its pick of a number of stories offered by an English syndicate. For this trifling sum it may get something by a writer with a name. The editor knows that whatever he buys will be of suitable size, and cut nearly into proper lengths with the right notes of suspense at the end of chapters, whereas a locally written story may have to be worked over. In this respect, as in others, New Zealand writers suffer from inexperience.

Despite this handicap of population, however, there is and has been a good deal of publishing in New Zealand. That is, publishing in the wide sense of the word. Of pure publishing there has been a good deal less. A large proportion of books

issued in New Zealand are still printed at the expense of the author or his backers, and often the author has to distribute his book. Publishing is one of the oldest New Zealand industries; it began before New Zealand became a British colony. During more than a hundred years books have been issued from presses owned by missionaries, newspapers, printing houses and regular publishers. All these classes should be remembered for their services to literature, whether they were publishers in the full sense of the word, or printers (and whether or not they had payment guaranteed for the job), and especially for what they did in earlier days when writers and printers catered for a community of a few hundred thousand people, largely absorbed in pioneering, and strung out over a long country in which communication was difficult. Authors in New Zealand, like authors elsewhere, have complaints to make against publishers, but as a class they should be grateful to newspaper proprietors, printing houses, and regular publishers for the enterprise these have shown in putting out books.

The publishing house that is much the largest to-day published its first book more than fifty years ago, and in the interval has issued an impressive collection of books in every department of literature and many branches of education and technology. To-day there are a few firms that specialise in book production. Text books, guide books, historical works, and reminiscences are more common than fiction. In the last ten or twenty years New Zealanders have begun to take a real interest in books written by New Zealanders about New Zealand, and the local publishing trade has benefited. It happened that the leading publishing house is also the leading bookselling house, and while in one respect this may be good for authors, it may not be good in another. A certain amount of friction between publisher and bookseller is inevitable, and it is not diminished

by this dual function. More competition among publishers would benefit writers, but the size of the population is the obstacle. If there were more publishers there would be more writers, but is there room for many more publishers? If there were more writers, there might be more publishers, and writers would have a stronger sense of their rights. This is a field in which the P.E.N. can do good work. It should also be mentioned that the Government printer is one of the largest publishers in the country.

If the New Zealand author publishes in London, he has to face difficulties of distribution in his home market. New Zealand booksellers are often criticised for not keeping a wider range of important books, but it may be doubted if their critics appreciate the peculiar conditions in which the bookselling trade is conducted. New Zealand is the most distant Dominion, and in normal times it takes five or six weeks for a shipment of books from London to reach the shop. Some English houses have representatives in the Dominion; some send representatives at intervals; others rely on correspondence. Few of them hold stocks. It follows that if stocks run short in the shop, ordering has to be done over a distance of 12,000 miles—unless the Australian market is tapped—and weeks pass before the shortage is made good. The English bookseller, on the other hand, can replenish his stock of a book in a day or two; the London bookseller, in an hour or so. The English retailer is, therefore, not obliged to stock heavily. If the New Zealand bookseller feels that a book is going to be a success he has to back his feeling by ordering a quantity, and run the risk of having dead stock of his shelves. This accounts in large part for what dissatisfied authors and book-lovers sometimes describe as the timidity of the New Zealand bookseller.

It has been said by a New Zealand writer that it takes

almost as much time and energy to sell a book in New Zealand as to write it. He had in mind the amount of work to be done in seeing or writing to booksellers, putting the position before his publishers, and taking care that press notices do not appear until stocks are in the shops. Every wise author watches the connection between reviews and stocks. Review copies come by post from London, and the book may be reviewed before the cargo consignments to the trade arrive. The result may be enquiries by readers in the shops, disappointment, and loss of interest. English publishers would do well to watch this part of the business. The writer of this survey once gave a special article-review of a novel published by a famous London house, and received a complaint from a reader that there were no copies in the shops. He wrote to the publishers about it, but got no acknowledgment. The handling of the New Zealand market from London is not always competent. What is the use of sending out circulars containing an offer that closes, say, in a fortnight, when it takes two or three months—or four or five weeks by air—to get a reply from New Zealand? The choice of review books for the New Zealand market is sometimes a mystery. The strangest that has come under the writer's notice was a book called "The Art of Change Ringing." This was taken at first to be a treatise on a form of fraud, colloquially known as ringing the changes, but it was found to be book about bell-ringing. At that time there were two sets of such bells in New Zealand.

The New Zealand writer is, therefore, well advised to busy himself actively on the sale of his book. How many copies should a bookseller order from the other side of the world? The author, of course, will press for the maximum, but the bookseller, more than once bitten, may be shy. In one case, one hundred and twenty copies were sent out from England in

a first order for four large shops. One of them could have sold two hundred copies in the first week or two, but there was a delay of weeks while stocks were being replenished. The author may be asked to consider the proposition of "buying the market." That is, a retailer agrees to buy a large quantity of the book on condition that he has the monopoly of the New Zealand market. This is attractive to the author, because it gives him certainty of sales, but he has to consider that other booksellers who will have to buy from the monopolist may not like the idea.

This brings us to the question of author's rewards. The New Zealander is not alone in holding wrong notions about the returns from writing, but he might be even more surprised at the truth than his English cousins. For sometimes a thousand copies sold in New Zealand means much less to the author than a thousand copies sold in England. The reason is that the English publishing house in some cases grants special rates to overseas booksellers, and in respect to these overseas sales the author gets his royalty, not on the original published price, but on this lower price. However, the position is more complicated than it may seem even to the author. The English publisher makes very little profit on overseas sales, and, in fact, especially with new authors, may lose substantially on such sales. He does, however, have the advantage of a lower cost per copy spread over the whole edition, by being able to print a larger edition than might be warranted for English sales alone. These special terms take the place of the old colonial edition. Nowadays, high freight and exchange costs, added to war risk insurance, tend to confuse the issue. The position can be stated more clearly by referring to the time before the rate of exchange was raised. A new novel would be published at 7s. 6d. in England, and if supplied at the usual bookseller's

terms would have sold in New Zealand at 9s. 6d. The publisher, however, supplied it at a special price to a New Zealand bookseller, who was enabled then to sell it at less than the English price, at 6s. per copy, and although the author's return was considerably reduced, there was probably a financial gain to him in having a very much larger sale at 6s. than he could have hoped for at 9s. 6d. The same principle is still in operation to-day, although added charges do not make the benefit so apparent.

Until recently the quality of book production was open to a good deal of criticism, though excellent work was put out and not only by the regular houses. The improvement that has been noticeable has been due to the adoption of better methods by publishing houses, and the influence of authors, some of whom have made a study of typography. Publications issued by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, which have set a particularly high standard, were supervised by Dr. C. E. Beeby, now Director of Education, who had assistance from Dr. J. C. Beaglehole, Lecturer in History at Victoria University College and an author of distinction. It is noteworthy that when the New Zealand Government planned its series of Centennial publications, Dr. Beaglehole was appointed to supervise their typography.

These Centennial publications, sponsored by the Government, are by far the most important of the kind in our history. The Labour Government, which assumed office in 1935, has shown a keener interest in letters than its predecessors. It may be admitted that the Government was fortunate in being in office in our Centennial year (1940), but it is to the Government's credit that it took such full advantage of this opportunity. Before that it had taken another step of particular importance to writers. It had not been in office long when it

granted the first literary pensions in New Zealand. The recipients were two writers of established reputation both in their own country and abroad, who needed financial help. A third pension has since been granted to another writer of standing.

The Centennial books were planned as follows: a series of pictorial surveys, each of about thirty pages, in which there were to be a brief letterpress and copious illustrations; a series of book surveys, each of about thirty thousand words; a Dictionary of New Zealand Biography in two large volumes; and an Historical Atlas. The intention was that the first two series should be within reach of all. The pictorial surveys are sold at a shilling, and the book surveys at five shillings. These publications, and the Dictionary of Biography, are notable for their fine printing as well as for their literary quality (the printing was done in commercial establishments). Moreover, the rate paid for the writing was well above the average in New Zealand. The Government also conducted literary competitions to mark the Centennial, and subsidised local Centennial histories, of which there has been a large crop. Centennial year was a bumper period for local writers.

A word may be said about freedom in writing. In so small a community as this the writer is naturally more cramped than he would be in a larger society. His position is rather like that of a person who lives in a small garden suburb without the possession of a hedge, so that many people know what he is doing. Criticism is apt to be resented, and attacks on institutions and personages may raise storms from which it is not easy to find shelter. In normal times, however, there is little or no censorship of opinion. A man may print what the law allows him to print, and the law in the Dominion is much the same as it is in England. So long as he is not flagrantly in-

decent or blasphemous or does not advocate violence, he is safe. For some years before this war the Customs Department, with the assistance of an advisory committee, kept an eye on imported books for indecent or seditious matter, but there were few complaints about stoppages, and it would appear that this control was exercised more liberally than in Australia. Books of the Left were freely sold and read. The Government has applied this principle to its Centennial publications, the authors of which, subject to the supervision of a general editor, have been left free to write what they like.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FUTURE

THE future of letters in New Zealand is part of the future of the country itself, and that will depend on what sort of a world comes out of this war. Even before the war began it was becoming apparent to many New Zealanders that a new age was being born, an age in which the easy exchange of New Zealand farm produce for British manufactures and British loans, which had come to be regarded as almost a law of nature, might be much more difficult. The world after the war is to be a planned world, and New Zealand's place in that world may be a good deal different from what it has been. For one thing, we shall have to do more internal planning, and that will involve disciplined restraint in the use of our resources. There will have to be more real farming and less mining of the land. We shall have to think harder, and pay more attention to ideas.

Economic and political conditions may affect letters. What

will certainly affect letters is population. We need more people for the cultivation of literature as well as for other things, and the quality as well as the numbers of that increment will be important. We also need more people to keep more of our best talent at home. At present too much of this has to seek a distant field.

We have not done badly in a hundred years. We have produced one writer of international standing, and several others who have attracted attention abroad. It may be claimed that we have gone as far as, perhaps further than, the United States at the end of the eighteenth century, 180 years after the Pilgrim Fathers landed, though in saying so one must bear in mind that the tempo of the world has grown much faster since then. The enormous acceleration of that tempo in the last twenty-five years must affect New Zealand's outlook, and New Zealand culture. In the early days it took the greater part of a year to get a reply from England to a letter from this country. Steamer or steamer and train reduced this cross-world communication to five weeks or less. Before this war we were sending out letters to England regularly by air, a matter of some eighteen days. Men and women fly across oceans and continents and think nothing of it. The first world-war deepened our sense of nationhood. Who could have predicted that soldiers from this remote Dominion in the South Pacific would one day fight almost within sight of the ruins of Troy? The second world war saw New Zealanders fighting in the Pass of Thermopylæ. Air transit and radio have brought us closer to the rest of the world. New Zealand cities and farmhouses hear war news as soon as their kinsfolk in England, and listen to the voices of their King and the leaders of the British war effort. Moreover New Zealanders have been brought directly under the protection of the United States.

This increased tempo and these new influences impinging on our society will help to shape and colour our cultural life. It is a commonplace that we are the most English, or perhaps I should say the most British, of the Dominions. This does not arise wholly from the fact that we were settled by English, Scots, Irish and Welsh, and remain overwhelmingly British in race origin. The very geographical position, the configuration and climate of the country, despite marked differences, such as the presence of Alpine ranges, resemble those of Britain. If you walk by the Avon of Canterbury's Christchurch, you may imagine yourself by the Cam in England's Cambridge. The remoteness of the islands, and the smallness of the population, have fostered the sense of dependence on Britain. We have always realised we could not protect ourselves, and the fact that our produce has been carried twelve thousand miles across the world has helped us to appreciate the vital importance of sea-power. Our institutions are British, and so is our culture. Britain, and especially England, has always been our spiritual home. Indeed we habitually call England, or Britain, "Home," and it has seemed quite natural to us to do so.

The younger generation, however, is not satisfied with this attitude. It objects less to "Home" than to a frame of mind this seems to signify, a sort of mother-worship not compatible with vigorous and healthy growth. Indeed both by visitors and New Zealanders themselves, we have been roundly charged with this mother-worship, with still living in a Victorian atmosphere, with tolerating a serious time-lag in the reception and development of ideas. There is a good deal of ground for the charge. We are inclined to be over-imitative, and, like all young communities, we alternate between self-satisfaction and self-depreciation. For fifty years we have been wont to boast that we led the world in social legislation, but we allowed

Britain to get ahead of us in the election of women to Parliament and provision of insurance against sickness and unemployment. In his Centennial Survey, " New Zealand Now," Oliver Duff says that " we follow our instincts, trust our emotions, mistrust theory, so we mistrust, and even fear, men who march to strange music."

Mr. Duff notes also the force of Puritanism in New Zealand. The nation was " established in the fear of God. Five out of six of its first generation were reared on the Bible. Even where belief has gone tradition remains. . . ." Further on, " we are not Puritan enough to take our pleasures sadly, but we take them very seriously, and are not naturally gay. We have little wit, and we have produced few public or private humorists. It is one of the paradoxes of nature that a climate so sunny as ours is by comparison with Britain's, has put less brightness into our speech than has been produced by the smoke and overcrowding of London and Manchester." Our silence " is marked enough to suggest that we are æsthetically inarticulate."

The Puritan view of art is widely held. Art is pictures. A good deal of money has been given for and to art galleries. On the other hand, despite a remarkable growth in the repertory theatre movement, which is presenting much good drama from Shakespeare to Shaw and beyond, there are few properly equipped little theatres. The people who are enthusiastic for drama are not rich; the rich are not enthusiastic. In New Zealand's largest city, where quite a number of societies were producing plays, a canvass for capital to build a little theatre raised £100. It is the English tradition. The British Government has spent large sums in adding to the nation's already splendid collections of Old Masters, but it is unsympathetic to the art of drama.

It follows from all this, I think, that a creative writer trying

to depict New Zealand's life is faced with certain special difficulties. There is so much resemblance between English and New Zealand conditions that it is not easy for him to present as a novelty something that will impress people beyond the seas, and these, bear in mind, are his larger market. It is true we have spring in September, Christmas in summer, and cities where a garden for every house is the rule. We have more sunshine and more room out of doors. Distribution of wealth is much more equal, and there are no squires. But both countries are islands in the temperate zones, and a garden in New Zealand is very like a garden in England. Moreover we have brought with our colonisation English ways of thought (or British if you prefer it) and English conventions. Our social life, much freer though it is, remains based on English custom. The fact that Christmas falls in summer does not prevent us from eating plum pudding and dressing up a winter Santa Claus in the toy shops. We keep Guy Fawkes Day, drink enormous quantities of tea, and put hedges round our gardens to preserve our privacy.

By contrast Australia is a continent, steeped in a hotter sun, its great deserts enshrouding mystery, peril, and the lure of wealth. Canada stretches from ocean to ocean and up into the Arctic Circle. The French Canadian is French in language and culture; the prairies flow away to the Rockies; the trooper of the Canadian Mounted Police gets his man. In South Africa, from Vasco da Gama to Cecil Rhodes and Jan Christian Smuts, the spirit of history broods over another land of great distances. Dutch and English; Zulu and Kaffir and Bushman; the rise and fall of the Dutch republics; Isandlwana, Rorke's Drift, Majuba Hill, Colenso and Paardeburg; the vast riches won from Kimberley and the Rand—these are elements of romance which all the world recognises, and from Olive

Schreiner through Rider Haggard to Sarah Millin a company of novelists have successfully exploited the South African scene. We are a smaller, and despite the wealth of endeavour in our annals, a tamer land, and we are very far away. We lack the thrilling cinema-like variety of American life, its startling exuberances, its often violent contrasts, its yeasty restlessness. We have our Babbitts, but they are pale beside George F. of Zenith. All this is unfortunate for the New Zealand writer, but it may in the end be good for his art. Lacking the spectacular material of the kinds I have mentioned, he will be forced to pay more attention to character-drawing and style.

But while the predominating influence on New Zealand has been British from the Homeland, and especially English, there have been others. One has come from New Zealand's nearest neighbour, Australia. Owing to the differences between the two countries, this has not been so potent as might have been expected, but it should not be left out of account. You identify an Australian rather easily, but not a New Zealander, whom you probably place by a process of elimination. He is not an Australian, a Canadian, or a South African; therefore he is a New Zealander. The Australian carries his nationality with assurance. The wider opportunities of Australia have offered careers to many New Zealanders. It is well known that the newspapers and journals of the Commonwealth have employed numbers of New Zealanders. Some, like Arthur Adams, have wooed literature there; others, like Hector Bolitho, have made Australia a stepping-stone to the literary world of England. Australia has taught New Zealand something of the national spirit in letters, taught them to look in their streets for material, and cultivate a dialogue that is racy of the soil and not a pale imitation of English novelists' English. The Sydney "Bulletin," the most original and powerful journal in Australia, has

always had many readers and contributors in New Zealand, and a number of New Zealanders have worked on its staff.

Another influence, and the most powerful outside Britain, is the United States. I have cited James Cowan's comparison between the frontier life of the United States and this country. The natural sympathies between the small Dominion and the great Republic are wider and deeper. Strong as is our attachment to the Mother Country, deep as it goes to the roots of our life, it does not and cannot exclude affinity with the United States in certain directions. A young, comparatively classless society like ours finds something to admire in the freedom of social life in America. Though as a people we are introverts and Americans are extroverts, we get on with them easily. We like their frankness, affability, and readiness of approach. We find their freshness of idiom stimulating.

One of the most original of New Zealand essays in criticism was written in 1934 for "Art in New Zealand," by A. R. D. Fairburn, who has been mentioned as one of the best of our poets. Mr. Fairburn is one of those who hold that we suffer from mother-worship, and that "we need other influences than that which arises from the natural bond with the homeland, if we are to escape mother-fixation."

> Here I venture to make the suggestion, hateful to many people, no doubt, that American literature may have a better influence on us than English, especially when we are considering contemporary writers. I know of no living English writer whose work I can read as a New Zealander. On the other hand there are several Americans who make me feel that I should be quite at home in the society they deal with: I should hate it but I should understand it. English life makes a more pleasant object for our contemplation than American; but however much we lay to our souls the flattering unction that we are more English than the English, we really understand, and get inside, certain

aspects of American life more readily, and it is understanding, and not comfort, that we are seeking.

New Zealand, continues Mr. Fairburn, is concerned with the native American tradition, which, he says, can be traced in a straight line from Mark Twain to Ernest Hemingway. "I believe that, from the point of view of the New Zealand writer, 'Huckleberry Finn' is the most important novel ever written. The easy-going, casual, gum-chewing attitude towards life of the true colonial is something that concerns us very directly. It is something we know and understand, and can deal with, whether we regard it with satisfaction or not. We understand Huck, the true colonial, where we can only pretend to understand Tom Brown, the English public school-boy." This was written seven years before the United States became an ally of Britain in war for the second time, but under very different conditions. In this war the Pacific has become a main battle area, and the United States have taken New Zealand under their wing. We quite frankly look to the United States, as well as to the mother-land, for protection. War contacts are bound to increase contacts of culture.

I would close upon a note of achievement and hope. We have made amazing material progress in a hundred years. There are people living who still call the main street of our capital "The Beach," because that is what it was within their memory. As I have attempted to show, our cultural progress has not been negligible. We have certain assets of very great price. We come of very good stock, for the act of migration across the world was in itself—especially in the early days—a process of selection. In its climate and the beauty and variety of its landscape, our country is magnificently endowed. It has everything save desert. And we have done a good deal to provide equality of opportunity. Education is good and cheap.

The New Zealander is not only a capable person, but a dependable one. His conditions of life have left him to do many things for himself which are done by others for English boys of the upper and middle classes. A New Zealand doctor who had become a teacher of surgery in London told me with pride of the reputation young New Zealand doctors had won there. When men were chosen for junior appointments on hospital staffs, it was common for some such remarks to be made as: "I see so-and-so's a New Zealander. We have always found New Zealanders good men." This surgeon said with emphasis that it wasn't enough for a surgeon to be brilliant in his operating; he must "look after his dressings." I am sure he had this reliability in mind when he spoke so warmly of his countrymen in the profession.

Indeed the record of New Zealanders abroad is striking. The smallness of our population forces a large number of our ablest young men and women to seek their fortunes elsewhere, and this has already been given as one of the reasons why we must attract more people to our land. Two New Zealanders of world-fame—Katherine Mansfield and David Low—have been mentioned. There is, of course, another—Ernest Rutherford, one of the greatest physicists in the history of science. A fourth name may be put forward. The work of Truby King in the saving of infant life is known in many countries, and he may be placed in the front rank of doctors who have not only made important discoveries in preventive medicine but have carried their knowledge in a crusade through the community.

New Zealanders are to be found in every field of activity and in all parts of the world. Many of the students who go abroad do well. The record of the New Zealand Rhodes scholars in the Oxford schools is excellent. The National Broadcasting Service marked New Zealand's Centennial year with a series of

talks entitled " New Zealand Brains Abroad." The series ran to ten talks, and it was not exhaustive. Listeners must have been surprised at the wealth and variety of the achievement that had been collected. As has been noted, New Zealand furnished a Foreign Editor for " The Times," Harold Williams, who was a leading authority on Russia, and knew some twenty languages. It was a New Zealander, Richard Maclaurin, who gave the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, its present position in the educational world of America. Sir William Marris rose high in the Indian Civil Service (he was a member of the Council of India), and became Principal of Armstrong College, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Sir William is also known for his translations of the classics. A New Zealand doctor, Sir Harold Gillies, came to the very front as a plastic surgeon in and after the war of 1914-18. Dr. Joseph Mellor, one of the greatest chemists of the age (he wrote, among other things, a treatise on inorganic and theoretical chemistry in eighteen volumes), came to New Zealand when he was ten, and was a clicker in a boot factory in Dunedin when he entered Otago University. In Dr. L. J. Comrie we furnished an editor of the " Nautical Almanac," and a mathematician who is now using his extraordinary gifts in a scientific computing service, which has been much used by the British Government in this war. Mr. Kenneth Sisam, a New Zealand Rhodes scholar, is secretary of the Clarendon Press, Oxford, and a Fellow of the British Academy. In exploration and adventure we have Commander Frank Worsley, associate of Shackleton, an Elizabethan in his thirst for danger and zest for life, and Jean Batten, one of the foremost of women aviators. It was the Nairn Brothers, two New Zealanders, who pioneered the motor service from Damascus to Bagdad. Another New Zealander, Rewi Alley, helped to make history by organising for Marshal Chiang Kai

Shek the industrial co-operative movement that has taken the place of industries in districts over-run by the Japanese.

In art we have Miss Frances Hodgkins, a name held in high repute in London. One year two New Zealanders, A. D. Connell and B. R. Ward, who had worked their passage to England as stokers, were placed first and second for the Rome Prize in architecture, and they are now partners in a leading London office. We have sent professors, lecturers, scientists and engineers all over the world. These include Sir Stanton Hicks, Professor of Physiology, Adelaide; Professor Allan Fisher, Professor of International Economics at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London; Dr. Jenness, Chief of the Anthropological Section under the Canadian Government; Professor D. B. Copland, one of the economic advisers to Australian Governments; Dr. Peter Buck (in Maori, Te Rangi Hiroa), who went to the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, and was appointed Professor of Anthropology at Yale; Dr. Sydney Smith, chemist's assistant in a small New Zealand town, who became Regius Professor of Forensic Medicine and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, in Edinburgh; Professor J. B. Condliffe, of the League of Nations staff, and later professor in London and California; Ronald Syme, who carried off Latin and Greek prizes at Oxford and is now a don at Trinity.

The energy, initiative, and intellectual capacity that are implied in these achievements promise well for the future of letters. The three chief obstacles to progress are our isolation, the smallness of our population, and the materialism that affects every society, but in a special degree one that is still busy breaking-in a country. The effect of our physical environment upon our culture may upset some current ideas. Mr. Holcroft discusses it in his essay, " The Deepening Stream." Mr. Holcroft doubts whether New Zealanders love the bush proper as much

as is generally supposed. He thinks what they love is "the distances, the sunlight, and the clean winds," the pleasant life of camping, and the sound of mountain streams in the night. "But the bush is in the background, and I believe that must have already had some effect on the nation's mind." Later on, he repeats this. The pioneer, Mr. Holcroft suggests, saw the bush only as an impediment to be removed, and had no time to brood on its mystery, with a consequent loss of spiritual life in the people. "Yet I sometimes wonder if the influence of the forest is still secretly in the nation's mind, if it were absorbed inadvertently by the generations that thought only of practical ends, and if some day it might become an unexpected source of power in an adventure of the spirit."

To this the suggestion may be added that there may be peril in the very beauty of our land. We have so much beauty about us—sea and land, mountain and plain, forest and glacier, fiord and lake—all packed into a relatively small country, and therefore frequently and even daily before our eyes—that our æsthetic sense may be satiated. It is a mistaken idea that wonderful scenery must produce art. Is literature produced in Switzerland or the Highlands of Scotland in proportion to the beauty or grandeur of the scenery? New Zealand is far grander and more varied in landscape than Norfolk, which produced Constable and Old Crome, or Warwickshire, which fathered Shakespeare. The Dutch school of painting flourished in one of the flattest of countries. New Zealanders may be too prone to find the beauty for which they crave in the visible things about them, and not strive to create beauty for themselves in their own minds. Satisfaction of the outward eye may kill the inward vision.

This, however, is but a suggestion put forward as a warn-

ing. "Beauty," said Emerson, "will not come at the call of a legislator, nor will it repeat in England or America its history in Greece. It will come as always unannounced, and spring up between the feet of brave and earnest men."

We may close with a speculation of Froude's written when the country was much younger. "If it lies written in the book of destiny that the English nation has still within it great men who will take a place among the demi-gods, I can well believe that it will be in the unexhausted soil and spiritual capabilities of New Zealand that the great English poets, artists, philosophers, statesmen, soldiers of the future will be born and nurtured." Froude may have expected too much, but his words are an encouragement.

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