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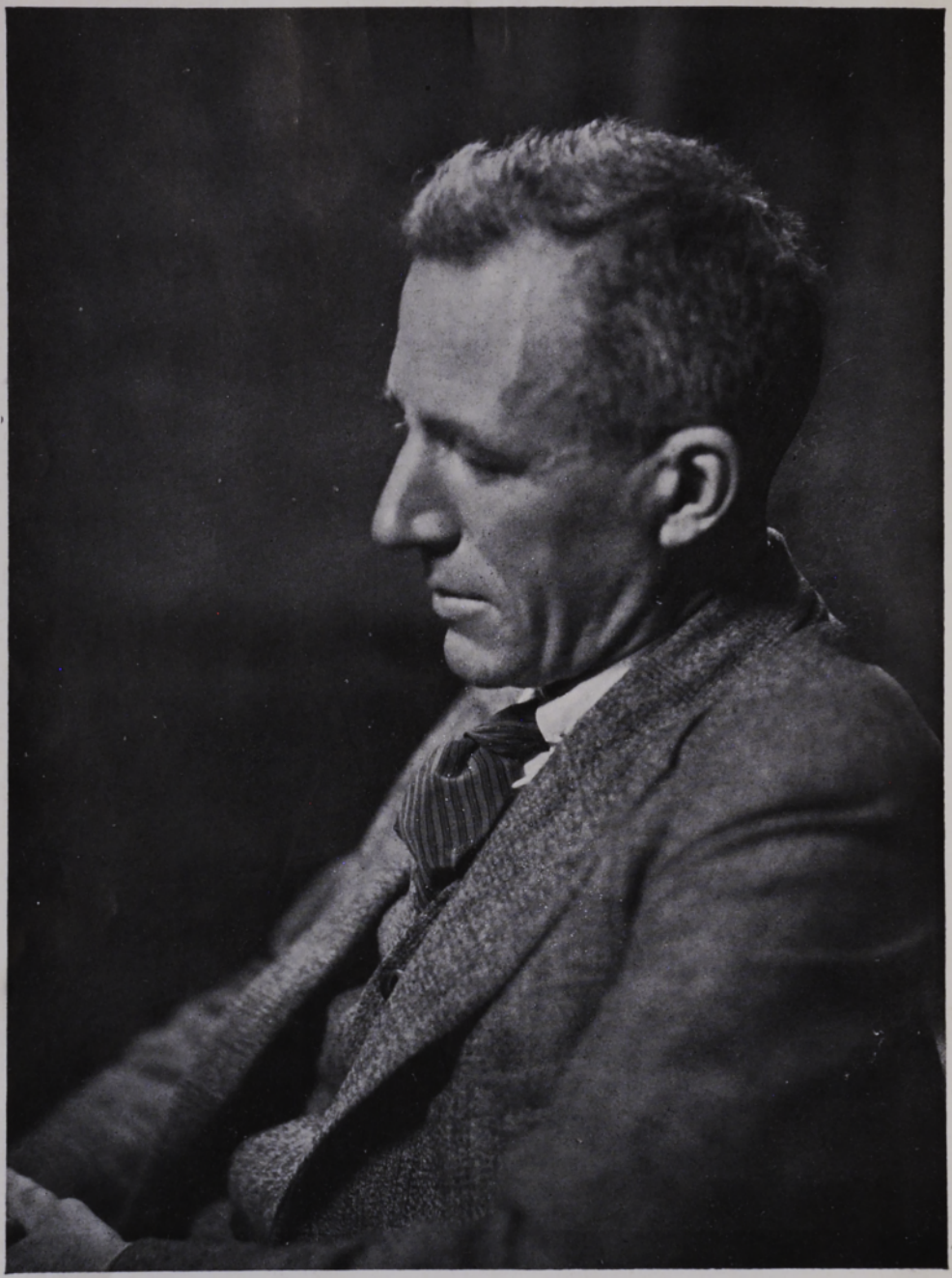

(From a photograph by Elizabeth Greenwood, Wellington, 1932.)

ESMOND ATKINSON

ARTIST AND BOTANIST

THE LIFE AND WORK OF

ESMOND ATKINSON

Edited by

JOHN L. MOORE

NEW ZEALAND
A. H. and A. W. REED
WELLINGTON

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ARTIST AND BOTANIST

By H. M. W. ATKINSON

MY brother was born at Wellington in 1888, the eldest of a family of four. Both parents were New Zealanders by birth, and children of pioneers whose names are still remembered for public service. He was a grandson of Sir Harry Atkinson, and, on his mother's side, of the Hon. J. C. Richmond.

His first home was on the Wadestown hills overlooking town and harbour, and commanding a majestic view of the ranges beyond, with glimpses of the Straits. Here he spent his early childhood, and here, no doubt—if not directly, then indirectly through his parents—he drank deep of the surrounding beauty.

I have been searching in old boxes for photographs, and have found two of this period—of a robust, wavy-haired cherub of about three in a sailor suit with striped dicky. One is as grave as the other gay, but this twin-mood is quite in character—both are unmistakably the young Esmond.

Childhood can be a wintertime for what develops later as vocation—a time when talent has no encouragement. In Esmond's case it was, I think, a springtime. He had devoted parents. His mother, a scholar and linguist, loved for her spontaneity and insight, and wit without cynicism, had travelled when young, and had been to school in other lands. From one of her pilgrimages she and her sister (Miss D. K. Richmond, later the artist) had returned to New Zealand as "Aesthetics," or converts to "Pre-Raphaelitism"—to the horror of conventional folk. With shortened hair and simpler form of dress, they had in fact—in a most innocent manner—anticipated the fashions of the next century.

His father, Tudor Atkinson, was a virile, idealistic and magnetic man, known more for his splendid failures as company promoter than for his success as lawyer. He was among the few—incredible as it now sounds—who, half a century ago, saw that the New Zealand timber forests were of immense value, deserving of a radically more frugal and methodical development. In a country too small for such ventures he launched a series of big schemes, most of which came to grief on the rocks of capitalistic greed, of which he himself, as even his enemies admitted, was strikingly free. He died, after a long struggle, a ruined but indomitable man.

A child that chooses unconventional parents runs of course special risks; and that perhaps is why one who in later life performs some valuable service, often prefers a "wintry" childhood, where his talents can at any rate lie dormant, to one where they will be artificially forced—say in the hothouse of some cult or doctrine. I have called my brother's childhood a "springtime"; but the surrounding atmosphere was, spiritually speaking, so vigorous and free, there was little danger from its warmth—warmth which, sooner or later, in one way or another, talent must have, if it is to germinate. All men have a spark of genius in them—if you dig deep enough; a spark, that is, which is *not* the child of parent or environment but of *itself;* and it is interesting to note how, in this case, an atmosphere charged with distinctly "advanced" and prophetic elements did not draw out a "Futurist" or even a "Modern," at any rate in the technical sense.

His mother used to say that Esmond was a thoughtful, unselfish child, always responsive to certain kinds of beauty, including moral beauty. He had a passion for the colour blue—an enduring one; and when, to gratify it, the fairies one night transformed his little chair—with human co-workers and a tin of enamel—into the colour of the sky, his joy knew no bounds. He and his cousin Jim, who had been called in for the occasion, were rendered speechless by the miracle. The first to become articulate was Esmond.

"Jim," he said, glowing with generous feeling; "shall 'Esamunner' give *you* a blue chair?"

"Yes," gasped Jim, some six months more a man of the world, and usually very much the senior dictator, "Yes, Esmond."

"*So will I!*"

This princely offer was, as a matter of fact, not carried out —a frequent fate of offers which are too high-flown; both parties remaining entirely satisfied with the non-transaction. But there is something endearing in the little fellow's longing to translate his own joy into an act of love; a longing, I think, an artist must have as a constant life-mood if he is to be creative. Esmond in later life liked quoting Beethoven's remark, "I feel I have written only a few notes," as an example, taken from genius, of how longing continues to outweigh fulfilment.

Esmond was not brought up in any orthodox religion. His parents were "*free believers*" rather than what is usually meant by "free thinkers". His mother had some bonds with Unitarianism, and his father, as a young man, had studied Theosophy.

In those days the battle between Science and Religion thundered like the artillery duel of a World War, and his parents moved in the thick of it. The idea of Evolution they had embraced with enthusiasm; and, in certain external aspects of the controversy, would not have ranged themselves "on the side of the angels". But the shallow materialism which had allied itself with science repelled them; the Bible, and the deep heart-language of myth and saga, and the deeds of holy men were also unshakably real to them.

It was their principle with children not to water down the strength of great works of art; so Esmond at an early age heard the Bible in its full grandeur read aloud to him by those who loved it. From his cradle he heard only good music; for his mother played the piano well. She found in her children a warm audience, and her love of music deepened with theirs.

This principle was applied in other spheres. When quite young he was given a set of real tools—with only one recorded case, strange to say, of damage to private property, as the result. He rushed into the house one day, and having intimated that domestic catastrophe was imminent, earnestly recommended the immediate removal of all valuables. When the puzzled grown-ups followed him out, Esmond pointed to a microscopic nick in one of the house piles. He had done it with his little saw, but had suddenly been overpowered by the moral aspect of the experiment.

There was another colouring to this early background. His father would take him to the waterfront for a close view of the ships and the awe-inspiring steamers; or to places where he could watch the railway engines shunting, or the trains labouring up the incline beyond Thorndon, and vanishing, dragon-like, into the hillside amid billowing steam. It was easier then than now—much easier—to dream that the world too, moved upward and onward in an unbroken line of progress; for those were the palmy Victorian days. The triumph of technology, the romance of engineering—when seen, say, from the Wadestown hills—were enchantments without shadow—without ominous shadow at any rate. That was before erosion, for instance, had become a problem; or before Science had driven a wedge into the atom. Engineers and technicians, it was understood, were a race of gentlemen, a band of modern knights.

In one of his many theological conversations with his mother, on this occasion the choice of occupation in Heaven, Esmond asked, "Will there be doctors there?"

"I don't think so," she replied and gave her reasons.

"I see—only sailors and engineers I suppose." He did *not* say "artists and botanists", and there is little evidence to show that his leanings were in any one direction. He drew and painted much, especially ships. Once—long before children usually are conscious of such things—he painted a steamer's funnel (I think it was) properly shaded to appear round; but his astonished elders were never sure whether or not it was a genuine perception on his part. He composed—orally—a "prose ode", to his baby sister—a superlatively luscious affair in which similes from the flower world, the same kingdom as that which botanists study in a more dispassionate way, abounded.

He seems to have been, in these early childhood days, a thoroughly active, loving, playful little chap, trying his hand at everything without undue repression on the part of his elders, yet always of an earnest and poetical nature.

I have heard that the manners of this young family were at times peculiar—a good-mannered way of saying they were often terrible. In justice to his parents' ideas on freedom it is pleasant to be able to state here that these manners did in the course of time improve.

At the age of seven a change occurred in his outer life. Having moved twice—and been burnt out once—his family left Wellington for a new, carefully planned home near the mouth of the Otaki river—a sort of "back to nature" movement on the part of his parents.

When you read of Goethe's childhood you are amazed by the wealth of talent which surrounded him. In Esmond's new environment there was wealth of a different kind. He was now turned loose in a remnant of unspoiled nature, virgin New Zealand teeming with variety and wonder. Here he ran wild for several years, and I think the place harmonised with his own nature.

Behind his house was a creek fringed with flax and rushes, beyond which the pasture lands of civilisation began. During spring tides the water brimmed over into the ditches and natural hollows—where at low tide you would see the land crabs scuttling—and changed the place into a Venice—rather too much of a Venice if, at the same time, the Otaki happened to be in high flood; for then you could row a bath-tub up to the front door. At the top of the tide you could sometimes see the all-but-transparent whitebait, and the young sea herring exploring the submerged carpets of grass and starry Remuremu.

Esmond was soon a swimmer and a boatman. He had as a companion now a sister; and he must have been a trustworthy boy to have been allowed, by a mother who was inclined to be nervous, to take, as his second-in-command, this imaginative young person who firmly believed that a witch lurked in every flax-bush and a dragon behind every log.

If you rowed up-stream, under and past "the Bridge" you came to "the Lake", a round expanse with a deep middle, into which you often saw a flounder dart from his basking-ground in the shallows, leaving behind a muddy smoke-screen. As the boat moved over the deepest part you tried *not* to imagine what such unfathomable darkness might harbour. Round the lakeside the vegetation was taller and more luxuriant—golden kowhai, manuka, toetoe, and a bay of raupo, where a pair of bittern, whose booming you had already heard, took off as you approached. From an overhanging branch your movements had, of course, been closely scrutinised by the inevitable kingfisher. The air hummed—red dragon-flies as well as the big black-and-yellow kind; moths and butterflies, including the little purple variety; incheumon-flies, red, black and variegated; and the rest of the insect orchestra. There was a spider which, having studied the law of surface tension, made it his trade to walk on the water with unwavering faith, and another which lived *below* it, diver-fashion, in his own air-bubble, and appeared to be doing well.

If, having pushed through reeds and rushes to where you could land, you followed a swampy track—disturbing perhaps a pukeko—you came to "the Mahoe" growing on a knoll. It seemed an enormous tree with its grotesque trunk and spread of leaves and branches, in which the birds held parliament—run, judging by the noise, on democratic principles. It shaded an old Maori burial ground, and the soil was *tapu*.

Beyond "the Lake" the creek changed by degrees to a tideless rill which was barely navigable. In the water-weed you could see large, furtive crawlers—for they seem to flourish here—and, embedded in the sandy bottom, fresh-water mussels. The land to your left grew hilly. If you had time you abandoned the water and ran some half a mile over rushes and tussock to "the Sand-hill"—a high, steep torrent of sand with unblemished contours, gushing out over the turf, the first of the sand-dune country next to the sea. This was a perfect playground. You could enjoy a leap into the abyss, or a roll from top to bottom, without the usual disadvantage of breaking your neck. Close by were other dunes washed by the upper reaches of the creek. Here you could send an avalanche into the water and watch it cut through the obstruction—as rivers cut through mountains.

During this period of Esmond's life, the roots of artist and botanist undoubtedly struck, deep into the spirit of New Zealand nature. The beauty of her flora—often so subdued, so exquisitely modest—can easily be missed when, so to speak, the after-images of other forms of beauty, perhaps more dazzling, obscure the vision. But in this kindergarten set apart, this child's paradise hedged from exotic influences, Nature herself was teacher, and drew out of him—perhaps for *her* sake—his own peculiar fineness of perception. An old note book shows this germination clearly. He had begun to sketch and to describe what he had seen.

The sand-hill belt which followed the coast—"The Forty Mile Beach"—with its own plants and birds—and a small grey native rat—was perhaps even more of his spelling-book and primer than the creek-side just described. In its hollows were the loveliest copses, mainly of manuka, into which you ran to look for birds' nests, or for scented clematis, or for a rest in the cool on a "Vi-spring" Pohuehue bush.

Other children of nature had loved this place in days of yore; for there were pipi-shell middens, red oven-stones, chips of greenstone and black obsidian, and, if you were fortunate enough to find them, as Esmond was, whole adze-heads.

On the sand-hills, where the air was hot and shimmering, grew sweet-smelling heath, whose fruit was edible; wiry Coprosma with blue-tinged berries, also edible; trumpet-flowered convolvulus; tufted pingao grass dyed orange; and silvery rolling-grass, whose seeds scurried over the sand with alarming likeness to huge spiders when you turned them loose in a wind. The only serpent in this Eden was the katipo; but Esmond soon learned to know where that old black lady, with her self-advertising slash of scarlet, or her small green harmless husband, was to be found.

For miles inland you could hear the sound of breakers. Then, over the last ridge, quite suddenly perhaps, lay the wide flat beach fading north and south into the distance, and in front of you—the sight could take your breath away—the blue unbounded sea. To the south, near the old mast, still standing upright in a buried wreck, was the river mouth. This was no place for unescorted children, as the current was swift and deep, and where the waters married, the undertow was treacherous. But inland at no great distance was a lagoon, linked with the river, where you could paddle or bathe in safety.

Friends were not slow in responding to "Rangiuru-by-the-Sea" as it was called; and Esmond's home was, therefore, socially speaking, no desert island.

His father continued to practise law in the township some two miles inland, whither Esmond and his sister went to Miss Swainson's school—by milk cart. But country-bred himself, and always a man of enterprise, he was soon at work with schemes for making Rangiuru, by farming and other developments, self-supporting. There was a two storied barn—a useful annexe—housing a powerful windmill with a look-out balcony in the tower, which pumped water, ground meal, and sawed up driftwood for the kitchen range. There were sheep, cattle and poultry, including pet kiwis, and a benign horse for the use of nervous folk, whose only vice, acquired presumably from a previous owner, was his positive refusal to pass a public house without drawing up opposite the bar. There was a sand-yacht for the beach—partially successful. Among the happenings was the arrival in sections, and the re-erection on a site near the river, of an old hotel building acquired from "up the line". In due course it was opened as a guest-house.

Esmond's little world had with the big world other links. You could hear the musical cord-whistles of the old Manawatu railway engines announcing, as they skirted the foot-hills of the Tararuas, that things were on the move. Or you might see, in the opposite direction, a passing ship—the *S.S. Queen of the South* for instance, under sail and steam, taking the inshore passage between Kapiti and the mainland—to remind you that men still do business on great waters. And on one memorable occasion during a westerly gale, the whole family became the anxious watchers of a sailing vessel in distress just managing to claw off the line of breakers. The beach brought its devotees, Maori and Pakeha, to bathe, or picnic, or gather driftwood, or dig for pipis, or fish with lines swung out into the surf, or sift the foam with a drag-net for its gold and silver quarry, and baser metal in the shape of sting-ray—of whose presence, in the bathing zone some would have preferred to remain in ignorance. When the atmosphere was very clear, the cone of Mount Egmont, a hundred miles away, peeped over the western horizon like a far-off island—or like a heavenly body remote from earthly grossness.

I have described the old Otaki home at some length because I believe it coloured Esmond's life as no other period did. He was here five years, till he was twelve.

This paradise has vanished—all but the bare bones of it. Fire, flood, and the march of civilisation, to which he himself belonged, have wrought a change as sudden, viewed historically, as the magic of Alladin's Genie—and perhaps as doubtful.

A poetical nature—despite all reassurance—takes things to heart; and I can see this high-spirited boy in blue blouse and shorts, and stockings above the knee, as he wanders over the hills for flowers, or searches the shingle beds for sea birds' eggs hidden by "colour-protection"; or, when the smoke of bush fires fills the air, observes the swollen aspect of the sun and the strange reds and yellows of the evening sky; I can see him as he helps his father oil the windmill, or grinds up shells for the

fowls, or builds a dovecote, or plants a wind-break of exotic pine; or watches him direct the clearing of new ground or the draining of a swamp; or rides with him to visit neighbours or talk business with a client; or, with the family, drives up "the Gorge" to picnic in the standing bush—which will soon be no longer standing; I can see him also *brooding on what is dying.* I can see him in his home at night, in the lamplight and yellow flicker of the driftwood fire, listening lovingly to his parents' conversation, not only to what they say—which is never trivial or unimaginative—but, in inner loneliness, to what they do *not* say—to their doubts and fears expressed in tone and gesture. And then I seem to hear him vow: "I will gather all I can of the beauty and the wonder of this land. Though I and my kind bring to it death, I will distill from it a living essence for the sake of those unborn, and for the mind of man."

EDITOR'S BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

It is now only necessary to present a short summary of the rest of his life to enable the reader, (equipped with the foregoing description of his early surroundings,) to picture for himself the sort of person who was engaged in the various activities mentioned.

After leaving Otaki, he went to the Terrace School in Wellington, then to Wanganui College, and later, as a day-boy, to Wellington College. Soon after leaving school, on the failure of his father's business, Esmond immediately took a position in the Biological Section of the Department of Agriculture, in order to tide his family over this difficult time. At the same time he studied for a B.Sc. degree at Victoria College, but did not complete the course after the war.

In 1913 he became engaged—the culmination of a youthful friendship—to Alison Burnett, whose grand-parents were early New Zealand settlers and friends of the Atkinsons and Richmonds.

His family responsibilities prevented his serving in the war till 1916, when he worked his passage to England and enlisted in the R.N.V.R., serving as a de-coding officer, first in a sea-plane carrier, and later in a light cruiser. He was married in London soon after his arrival, the Burnett family having gone to England earlier to do war work.

On his return to New Zealand in May, 1919, he rejoined the Biological Section, but when that was moved to Palmerston North, he transferred to the Museum as official artist. He was retired in 1932, owing to increasing ill-health, an unusual kind of epilepsy, which began and gradually developed after the war; but there were still many periods when he was well enough for tramping and painting expeditions with his wife and their two sons, and when he did some of his best work.

In 1935 he and his wife went to England for a year as the guests of Mrs. Wilson, (widow of Dr. Wilson of the Antarctic) who hoped to find a doctor there who could help him. The Exhibition of Chinese art in London, and a month of Spring in Switzerland were two vivid and inspiring experiences.

They returned to live at York Bay, till, in 1941, he died from an accident resulting from his illness.

HIS ART

By JOHN L. MOORE

IN Esmond Hurworth Atkinson, New Zealand had a passionate devotee. He never painted an introduced tree or flower, and hardly cared to work in any other country.

The combination of artist and botanist gave to his work a quality present in that of few other men. The fact that in landscape he could dispense with photopraphic representation, and in botanical drawings achieve accuracy of detail, argues a mind capable of great mobility.

In the landscapes we see the vigorous individual expression of his feeling for nature, painted broadly and with apt personal style (he declared himself an egotist); in the pen drawings for the Journal of Agriculture there is a selfless reverence for nature's plant structure which can be compared with Durer's studies of weeds; but in the paintings of New Zealand flowers, something emerges which is a fusion of these extremes, and he struggled with these more than with anything else, trying various versions and making studies of separate flowers till his feelings were satisfied. He never began one till the sight of the flower growing wild gave him the 'idea'.

When a person who is not indifferent looks at a flower, he experiences an emotional reaction. He likes or dislikes it—thinks it beautiful or ugly. When Esmond Atkinson saw a New Zealand flower in its natural habitat, his enthusiasm and botanical knowledge gave rise to feelings in him which were a reflection of the very nature of the plant itself, and these feelings were expressed by his manner of painting it. This aptness of treatment is particularly evident in the painting of the shy Green Dragon Orchid (Plate XIII), hardly visible among its green companions—in the karaka berries, which tumble down the side of the tree in thick bunches, just as in the painting (Plate XVI)—and in the stately white Buttercup, so large that he feels that it will hardly go on to paper (Plate XII). But an artist's feelings are not to be described, his painting either speaks or fails to speak directly to the beholder, in a soul-language of which nearly everyone knows the rudiments, but which not so many are able to interpret fully.

These flower paintings were to have been part of a book, "New Zealand Flowers and Fruits," which he had planned to write; and each painting was to have been accompanied by a pen drawing of the whole plant or tree in its natural setting.

In the pen and ink work for the Department of Agriculture, he was not free to devote himself entirely to the New Zealand Flora. Weeds had to be illustrated so that farmers could easily distinguish them. They were all drawn in a lively line technique, minutely accurate in detail, but not placed on the paper without regard for composition, and they are still in use by the Department. None of them have that artificial look, with which we are familiar in scientific illustrations—that prim regularity of petals and leaves which divorces the drawing at once from living reality. In Nature each flower is individual, irregular, often untidy. It shows in its detail Her incapacity for exact repetition, while at the same time She conforms to the broad characteristics of the species. In the work of a creative artist there is something akin to the forces of growth in Nature, so that his drawings never look like weary repetitions.

Esmond Atkinson's botany at Victoria College was said to be nearly perfect. It was a failure in mathematics which prevented his taking his degree. Familiar himself with the scientific names of plants, he was impatient at the uninspired zeal of botanists whose interests were centred too much in systematic classification, and who see new plant variations in the manner of a postage stamp collector. He tried rather to feel his way into a vegetable kingdom of living creatures, almost personalities, and to understand the great natural causes of their habits and distribution—a botanical mystic in fact.

His devotion to the New Zealand Flora did not prevent his appreciation of exotic flowers. The curious green Ixia viridiflora, the various wild roses, especially the lovely white Moss Rose, and the giant Californian Poppy (Romneya Coulteri) with its casual, flopping white petals of crumpled tissue paper, and its great yellow pom-pom

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Plate I. Water-colour.

"*HUTT RIVER MOUTH FROM ABOVE YORK BAY*"

Painted in 1913 from the hills above York Bay, looking towards Point Howard, Petone, Belmont hill. This shows how soon he had developed a strong sense of composition. It might well be a study for an etching. The decoratively treated trees are dark grey-green, the water, palest grey, and Point Howard and the distant Belmont hills, mauves painted over a foundation of pale greens and greys.

Plate II. Water-colour, 1913.

"*THE HUKA FALLS*" *(Huka means foam)*

This was painted from where the service-cars now stop for a view of the falls. The pumice terrace above is brown, the falls are white at the sides, and the darker part in the middle where the water is smoother, is ice-blue. Part of the rock channel through which the river dashes, can be seen at the top of the fall, and there is also a glimpse of the blue calm river above. The seething pool below is blue-green except near the foot of the fall.

Plate I. Water-colour.

Plate II. Water-colour, 1913.

Plate III. Water-colour.

"PALLISER BAY"

Painted in 1912 in Palliser Bay. The sea and upper part of the sky are painted with Cerulean blue, a colour much used then, which the dictionary calls Sea-green. The groves of karaka are dull green, the foreground, an earthy yellow, and the hills mauve, with greenish shadows on them. The plate shows beautifully the already well-developed sense of composition.

centres; all these he especially loved. The huge productions of horticulturists, beloved of prize-winners at flower shows, roused only his pity for the flowers, or disgust at such distortions.

Among his books on plants was Reginald Farrer's *On the Eaves of the World*, full of vivid descriptions of the people and plants of North-West China—of the thrill of seeing far away an unfamiliar colour—the dash up the the hillside to it—the excitement of finding it to be a newly discovered flower, and the glowing description of it. It was in this spirit that Esmond Atkinson seized every opportunity to tramp and camp where he could see the native Flora, and occasionally he did find something new. He often went to paint and botanise in the Tararuas, to Arthur's Pass, and to Lake Taupo, and occasionally to Ruapehu, Mt. Egmont, and Kapiti Island, the bird sanctuary. It was at Mt. Peel, near Nelson, that he saw the fine Celmisia Traversii, and from the top of the mountain saw Mt. Egmont in the North; and by merely turning round, Mt. Cook in the South! But most often he worked near Wellington, and in his own sixty acres of bush above York Bay, overlooking Wellington Harbour. This bush was a constant delight, and during his illness it was a never failing solace when he needed to be alone.

With some exceptions such as Kowhai and the varieties of Rata, New Zealand flowers are not showy. The herbaceous plants are in the mountains, and are mostly white or yellow. The bush is sombre. Its great variety of low-toned colour is confined within a narrow range. There are no brilliantly coloured Alpine flower fields, or hedges and ditches bright with flowers. Visitors from overseas, and even many New Zealanders, wonder why it excites anyone's enthusiasm. To use Esmond's own phrase, "It is a case where character overrides beauty." It is unique. Few countries have so many plants that are not found elsewhere. The austere, chaste, and aloof Alpines must be sought out and courted before they reveal their charm. The bush seems to some people very, very old, and rather frightening. It stands there in its aged indifference to human beings, and they do not love it till they begin to feel its power and vitality invigorating them. But acquaintance gradually reveals this special New Zealandness which bushmen and trampers come to know and love, and in fact, feel to be part of themselves in some mysterious way. It gripped such men as Dr. Cockayne, whose *Wild Hybrids of Nothafagus* was illustrated by Esmond Atkinson with exquisite pen drawings of the leaves, for it is the leaf variations which alone distinguish the various hybrids (Page 39).

His scientific "Testament of Faith" is best revealed in his review of Dr. Cockaynes's *Vegetation of New Zealand*, reprinted here by permission of *the Journal of Agriculture*.

THE LANDSCAPES

The landscapes are all painted in water-colours (he never used oils) and are exclusively of subjects characteristic of New Zealand before man interfered with it. All introduced trees are felled with the brush, all buildings ignored, and grass lands are pictorially replanted with their original growth of tussock and native grasses.

His art came naturally to him. A little help from his aunt, Miss D. K. Richmond, and from Miss Frances Hodgkins was all he needed. The obvious relation of his work to Miss Richmond's was only in part due to her influence. It was because

their atitude to Nature was similar—they observed accurately and painted their impressions broadly. In flower painting their approach was from opposite extremes. She regarded flowers as lovely shapes and colours to be used in arranging a still-life group; he saw them as personal friends whose portraits he wanted to paint. He was almost unteachable. She had only to touch a spring which released the store of thought and feeling in him. It was as though he came into the world with capacities already developed, his task being to express what he had rather than to develop anything new. As it turned out, his innate capacities were never fully expressed. His death at fifty-three put an end to many plans for painting and illustrating.

His technique, sometimes refreshingly clear and direct, never suffered from the bright cleanliness of the exhibitions of to-day. It was never like a beautifully arranged "front room," which is seldom used. There was usually the rugged evidence of a struggle to express deep feelings—feelings which were fertilised, as it were, with the character of the country he was painting, feelings which persist in remaining "just round the corner," eluding capture and embodiment in art. He did occasionally feel that he had succeeded. He liked both the lovely calm simple Taupo (Plate XXIII), and York Bay Sunset (Plate IV). But the many half-finished sketches speak of attempts which he thought it fruitless to continue.

Though rooted in realism, his landscapes seldom approach photographic representation. There is acute observation of the broad characteristics of the country, recorded in rough washes and blots.

Once when I was camping with him he painted what seemed to me to contain neither the character nor the facts of what was before him; but when we got home, a friend who seldom liked pictures said he could live with that one! Confronted with his pictures, you are not overwhelmed, as with the dashing skill of a J. S. Sargent, who opens for you a vivid window on the outer world; you are surprised at all the rubbings out, and blobs of paint, and rough charcoal lines, until it suddenly dawns upon you that among these paintings there are some you will not forget, and will learn to love. In the meantime you idealise them, till on seeing them again, you suffer the same crestfallen surprise at their roughness; and you wonder that you thought about them so much when they were not before you, but you now know that they are beautiful in the deepest sense.

I was often puzzled at his antipathy to green, except the blue-greens in water. Turner had the same. It is certainly a colour which will not stand competition. It must dominate the picture or be left out. John Sell Cotman's famous water-colours of the Greta woods in Yorkshire are examples of satisfactory green pictures. The green tolerates a few touches of browns and greys, but if reds, yellows or blues are introduced it is disastrous. Esmond may have felt that green belonged to the external aspect of nature, and he seldom painted that. His feelings were attuned to the *forces* of Nature—dynamic and static—usually the former. Waterfalls—swirling rivers—surging sea waves—the buoyancy of clouds—the formation of hills and mountains—the stillness and depth of lakes—all this stimulated him to paint. No wonder his work was rough and impressive.

He was often quite topographical when it came to a special hill or mountain. I think he regarded these as Nature's sculptures; not to be remodelled; but the foreground, if necessary, to be made to bow to them in the picture, if they didn't already in nature.

Plate IV. Water-colour.

"YORK BAY SUNSET"

Painted from near his home. A gold light from the sunset shines on the York Bay, Howard Point and Belmont hills.

Plate V. Water-colour, 1920.

Reprinted from *Art in New Zealand*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 27.

"MARGARET'S TARN, ARTHUR'S PASS"

Camping by the Bealey River with his wife, he went up to the tarn before dawn, and painted in the early, cold, grey light.

Plate VI. Water-colour, 1928.

"THE WAIMAKARIRI RIVER"

Near where the river leaves the mountains to cross the Canterbury Plains. This is one of his finest compositions in colour and rhythmic forms, but it is more a plain statement of facts than the ethereal "Lake Brunner."

Plate VII. Water-colour, 1929.

"THE ARATIATIA RAPIDS"

At this place, near the top of the rapids, the river rushes down a narrow, straight race rather like the one above the Huka Falls a few miles further up the river.

Plate VIII.

Clematis (Clematis Indivisa). Male flowers, natural size. *Description on page 41.*

Plate IX.

Large White Mountain Avens (Geum uniflorum). Natural size. Description on page 41.

Plate X.

Fairies' Cups (Forstera Bidwillii var. densifolia). Mountain Bluebell (Wahlenbergia albomarginata). Natural size. Description on page 42.

Plate XI.

Pohutukawa, or Christmas Tree (*Metrosideros tomentosa*). *Natural size. Description on page 42.*

He did not always work out of doors. From time to time he painted in his studio unconventionally large water-colours on "Double Elephant" sheets of paper. These brewed in his imagination for months, or even years, and then suddenly emerged, and were painted under high pressure, probably just in time for an exhibition. Sometimes they were large versions of small water-colours painted on the spot, and sometimes he painted them from pencil sketches and notes.

The Wellington Academy acquired one for its permanent collection, but not without a protest in the paper from a faithful disciple of the school of photographic representation. "York Bay Sunset" is one of these (Plate IV).

Once I accompanied him on a walking tour from Waiouru to the Aratiatia Rapids. It was one of the few occasions when his wife was not with him.

He was a delightful tramping companion, bubbling over with humour, and always ready to see the comical side of any annoying incident. His was the *Punch* sort of humour—a little far fetched sometimes—but always witty. It was never that over-intellectual kind which loses its ludicrousness in its cleverness.

During a spell of fairly good health when he was forty-two he got leave from the Biological Department and left by the New Plymouth express for Marton. I took the Napier-Wellington train the same day and joined his at Palmerston North. At Marton we changed into a slow train due to arrive at Waiouru towards evening. Having had enticing glimpses of a snowy peak above the yellow tussock, as the train wound its way up the valley from Hihitahi, we were greeted at Waiouru with a full view of Mt. Ruapehu in the pink evening light, sweeping up majestically from the brown plains.

We slept the night at the old Peters' boarding house, a relic of the coaching days, and started early with our heavy packs along the Desert Road. Ruapehu was shy and hid its head under clouds, but about midday, at the top of a hill, we had a fine view of a dark purple Mt. Ngauruhoe under heavy grey clouds, with a foreground of yellow and brown tussock. Tired as we were, we simultaneously decided that it must be painted, and sat down leaning against our packs, but far enough apart to be able to work independently. My sketch was a sinister affair, and his looked as though the dark clouds were being erupted by every hill in the neighbourhood to keep Ngauruhoe company.

He was an adept at leaving his painting companion alone, never venturing the least comment or asking to see his work, in case he might impose his ideas on his friend, but if asked to criticise, he would say exactly what he thought, even at the risk of hurting the other's feelings.

Towards evening we reached the little red half-way house where the horses used to be changed, and finding it occupied by roadmen, we pitched our tent under the manuka and boiled our billy at their fire.

The next day was showery, but we managed to make a start with a dry tent, and walked steadily without much to look at, the mountains being covered with clouds. In the afternoon we walked in the pouring rain with waterproof capes over ourselves and our packs, and our trousers rolled up to keep them dry. It was here that we saw a smart car approaching and both noticed a lady's purse on the running board, projecting well over the edge. We shouted and gesticulated, but the occupants were not to be insulted by two tramps, and to our intense amusement, passed haughtily

by. Then, just as the rain stopped, we came to a view of the upper Waikato River rounding a bend—tiredness forgotten—his waterproof thrown off—painting gear quickly got out—and in no time he had made a vivid sketch of a blue-green pool, a rocky bank, and a group of trees above it, painted in the bronze-greenish yellows he loved to use for the brush.

That evening, stiff and tired, we reached Tokaanu at the south end of Lake Taupo. A kindly lorry driver had picked us up for the last few miles, and had offered to take us to Taupo township in the north, where the Waikato River leaves the Lake, as he was to take a load of timber there the next day, so we booked rooms at the hotel, and went to the hot spring to relax our stiff muscles.

After breakfast we met our friend at the local garage, and as there was not room for us in the cab, we climbed on to the back of the lorry. Bumping about on top of the huge load of timber, we were swept along the dusty pumice road round the east side of the Lake, which was once a volcano. We lurched round high promontories, and looked down into the clear water, and on to the tops of the grey-green kowhai trees which fringe the Lake, but unfortunately they were not in flower. From our high perch we could see clearly right across the Lake into West Bay (Plate XXIII).

Reaching Taupo about the middle of the day, we decided to walk on to the Huka Falls, about three miles down the Waikato river from where it leaves the Lake at the township. The weather was fine when we got there, and it was getting late, so instead of putting up our tent we just lay down in a grassy space in the manuka, quite near the long, straight artificial-looking cut in the rock, which the river has made, and down which it dashes before plunging over the fall at the end (Plate II). All night the ground seemed to vibrate with the terrible force of the rapids and the falls, and the roar kept us awake for a long time. We both felt rats run over us in the night, and some of our bread was eaten, in mistake, no doubt, for the remains of tourists' lunches; but there were plenty of ripe blackberries, so we sat on the rocks above the awful rapid and ate them.

Esmond loved this place. It had a sort of terrifying fascination for him, just as the Aratiatia Rapids had. He was painting the falls at dawn, with spray tinged with pink from the glow in the sky, and during the day he made more sketches of the fall, the swirling pool below, and the calm river above.

The next day we started for the Aratiatia Rapids, looking forward to a good meal at the Wairakei Hotel on the way, but we looked so disreputable that we were turned away from the dining room, and told we might have a meal in the kitchen! He thought it a great joke and we dined very well at half the price, in the friendly company of the staff.

The rapids are about five miles further on, and we got there well on in the afternoon, in time to put up our tent under the manuka near where the river flows calmly but swiftly towards them, little knowing what awaits it. There was just time for a hasty glimpse at the most exciting places, before we turned in ready for a good sleep. We must have slept soundly, for in the morning there were the glistening tracks of huge purplish grey slugs all over us, even in our hair! He was naturally fastidious, and was disgusted for a moment, but we could only laugh at ourselves and wash it off in the river. These rapids threw him into ecstacies and he loved one place near the beginning where, in a cleft in the rock, he could crouch down and actually be below the level of the water in the middle of the rapid, which seemed

to be piled up by the force behind it (Plate VII). The weather remained fine, and we made a good many sketches. From the pumice terrace overlooking the rapids he painted Mt. Tauhara, inky blue under grey clouds, below it the brown plains reaching to the edge of the opposite terrace, and below that again, glimpses of bottle green water and white foam seen through the stems of the groves of tree-manuka which then adorned the banks, but which have since been mostly destroyed by fires. We saw here the scout-plants of the advancing army of broom, and together with impotent fury we uprooted them. This plant, lovely in itself, is spreading over the whole country and destroying its original character for ever just as the pine trees are doing. Esmond never put either of these into a picture, in fact he took savage delight in ignoring the intruders.

The next day we walked back to Taupo, stayed the night in a vacant tent in the Post Office garden (my friends the Stotts then being in charge) and from there, took the service car straight through to National Park railway station to catch the afternoon slow train through the magnificent bush and gorge scenery to Ohakune.

Staying the night at a hotel near the station, we took a morning train back as far as Horopito to see the finest of the bush again, and to paint Mt. Ruapehu from the west with a foreground of bush.

Near the Horopito station a small house had been burnt down, and the chimney, though still standing, was leaning over at a dangerous angle. "Anyhow we've seen the leaning tower of Horo-Pisa!" said Esmond.

This ended our tour and we returned by train from Ohakune next day.

Among the two hundred or more watercolours still in his studio, there is one of Wellington Harbour painted in 1906 when he was eighteen. The technique is quite messy and the colours ugly, but it is interesting in being an attempt at an objective study of Nature. He did not begin by doing highly imaginative drawings, but by forgetting himself in an effort to comprehend the world in which he found himself. The feeling for composition is already beginning. Black tree stems, far too black, make a sort of frame for the harbour and hills.

By 1908 there were more carefully drawn and more delicately coloured studies, as well as some dark ominous bush and tree-trunk compositions.

By 1911, when he was twenty-three, a Turnerian stage began, of misty evening lights and nocturnes. Then, by 1913, he was painting blue water, brown hills and bush; still Turnerian.

He now had the great advantage of having Turner to look up to and reverence. Let the apostles of "individual expression" remember that the humility born of this reverent attitude is a veritable breeding ground for the faculty of assimilation which must precede the more positive phase of creative activity.

Between 1913-16, just before he went to the War, the sense of balance in the arrangement of the pictures (Plates I and II) and the feeling for rhythmic lines in the composition all began to develop, and more and more rough and vital hill and river pictures began to appear, painted in misty greys, browns and blues. He was at the same time doing detailed botanical drawings for the Department of Agriculture.

It was not till after his return from the war in 1918 that his methods of watercolour technique became simpler, cleaner, fresher, and stronger in colour. But he never painted in brilliant colours, and was always accused of being colour-shy.

He always held to his early anchorage in outer nature, although later simplifictions and personal mannerisms made his work rather an acquired taste, but when his "language" is understood, his work leads us straight to the spirit of primitive New Zealand.

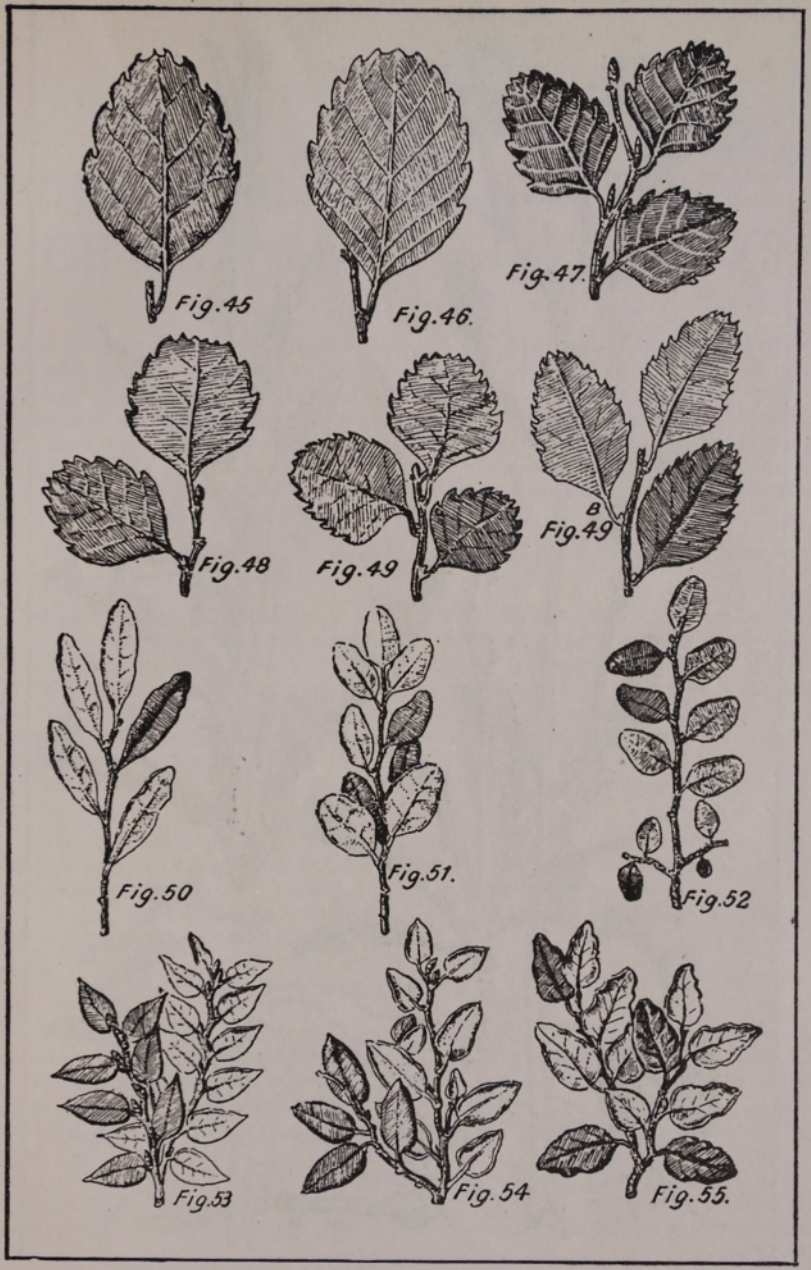
I have tried to say here what Esmond Atkinson could not have said of himself, but his own writings which follow convey his conscious ideas better than anything else could. His wife to whom he was devoted has helped me with everything in this book, and so also has Mrs. Hal Atkinson. The "appreciation" of the art of Mr. J. C. Richmond (his grandfather) which Esmond contributed to the *Evening Post,* is largely his own artistic convictions; the review of Dr. Cockayne's *Vegetation of New Zealand* expresses his attitude to Science; and the vivid and poetic diary letters reveal as nothing else could the moral and artistic idealism; the friendliness, humour, observation, and tolerance, which characterised him then and for the rest of his life.

Wineberry. *Rubus phoenicolasius.* *Pen drawing for the* N.Z. Journal of Agriculture, 1922. *Introduced into New Zealand, native of Japan.*

Water Fern. Histiopteris incisa (formerly Pteris incisa). Pen drawing for the N.Z. Journal of Agriculture, *1922. A luscious apple green fern growing in damp places throughout the country.*

Hard Fern. Paesia scaberula (formerly Pteris scaberula). Pen drawing for the N.Z. Journal of Agriculture, 1922. *Native of New Zealand and abundant throughout the country, often making pale green patches on dry clay hillsides.*

New Zealand Flax. Phormium tenax. Pen drawing for the N.Z. Journal of Agriculture, 1921. *His scientific work on this plant was published in a separate pamphlet.*



Pen drawings of N.Z. Beech leaves. From The New Zealand Wild Hybrids of Nothofagus, *by Dr. L. Cockayne and illustrated by Esmond Atkinson.*

Perennial, or Corn Sow-thistle. Sonchus arvensis. Pen drawing for the N.Z. Journal of Agriculture, *1920. Introduced into New Zealand. Native of the British Isles, Europe and Asia.*

THE TWELVE COLOUR PLATES OF NEW ZEALAND FLOWERS

MR. ATKINSON having painted some of the flowers, and there seeming to be no possibility of doing the book, *New Zealand Flowers and Fruits,* which he had hoped to do, my sister, Evelyn Moore, thought that a beginning might be made by having several reproduced in colour and used as Christmas presents. Accordingly these were printed, and mounted in folders by H. H. Tombs, publisher of *Art in New Zealand*. From year to year new ones were done, but though they sold only in sufficient quantities to cover the cost of the blocks, without these blocks, the present volume would not have been financially possible.

The painting of Kowhai was reproduced after his death, Mr. B. C. Aston kindly contributing the letterpress for it.

Had Mr. Atkinson been alive, I think he might have commented on his choice of such a pale yellow one, and on the fact that he painted a general impression of the crowded clusters of flowers, and not a study of the botanical structure. He liked the painting himself, and must have felt that his aim had been at least in some degree achieved. The colours of Kowhai vary from pale greenish lemon through strong golden yellows to something verging on apricot, but the less common pale one was chosen, perhaps a little wilfully, for his illustration. I think he felt that the other yellow occurred in many familiar flowers, but that the pale one was peculiar to Kowhai.

The comments which follow were written by Esmond Atkinson, and faced the corresponding colour plate in each folder. It has not been possible for the bookbinders to arrange for the comments to face their plates in this volume, but they have contrived to place the poem which he wrote on the Ranunculus Lyallii (page 46) opposite the appropriate illustration.

PLATE VIII. (Page 27).

CLEMATIS. *(Clematis indivisa.)* Maori name, *Puawhananga*. This is one of the most widely-spread of New Zealand plants, and is found from the North Cape to Stewart Island, in bush and scrub of all kinds, even in those half-destroyed remnants still to be seen near many of the towns. It is not its abundance but its beauty that makes this Clematis so great a favourite, and when its masses of clear white show themselves—visible often several miles away—it is a sure sign that spring has come. Many people who do not know that there are two kinds of flowers—male and female—which grow on different plants, often look in vain for the silver green plumes of the fruit—where the showier but ephemeral male flowers have been spread.

—E. H. A.

PLATE IX. (PAGE 28).

LARGE WHITE MOUNTAIN AVENS. *(Geum uniflorum.)* There are about forty species of *Geum* altogether—to be found in temperate parts of both hemispheres: in Europe, Asia and America in the north, and in South America and New Zealand in the south. The genus is here decidedly a subalpine one. Hooker's "Handbook of the N. Z. Flora"—a summing-up of all the great systematic botanist's work in this country, appeared in 1864, and was the inspiration which led to the discovery—particularly in the mountains—of many plants which had hitherto been passed by unnoticed. *Geum uniflorum* was described by Buchanan in Vol. II (1870) of the Transactions of the N.Z. Institute, and other species with showy flowers—some with white and some with yellow—have been found since in high country in the South Island.

There is no mistaking this one, with its creeping, woody rootstock, clusters of leaves stained with many kinds of red, and delicate pure white flowers, each carried separately on a stalk several inches long.

In his "New Zealand Plants and Their Story" Cockayne says of the habitat of this *Geum*: ". . . Throughout the high mountains of the west of the South Island, in deep pockets of peaty soil in rocky ground . . ."—E.H.A.

PLATE X. (PAGE 29).

FAIRIES' CUPS *(Forstera Bidwillii var. densifolia.)* MOUNTAIN BLUE BELL. *(Wahlenbergia albomarginata.)* These two mountain flowers were painted as they were growing together at an altitude of 6,000 ft. or so on Mt. Egmont, the extinct volcanic cone 8,260 ft. high, which is perhaps the most famous natural feature in New Zealand.

The first-named flower—the pink and white one of the illustration—belongs to a family found only in the Southern Hemisphere, and chiefly in Australia. The bluebell is a New Zealand representative of the family which includes the wild harebells and the campanulas of gardens.—E.H.A.

PLATE XI. (PAGE 30).

POHUTUKAWA, or CHRISTMAS TREE. *(Mestrosideros tomentosa.)* The genus *Metrosideros,* to which the pohutukawa and different kinds of rata belong, and which certainly includes our most brilliant-flowered trees and climbers, is one of the family *Myrtaceae* represented here also by such plants as the rama-rama *(Myrtus bullata)* and the manuka *(Leptospermum scoparium)* in its countless forms. The pohutukawa, though it will flourish in gardens much further south, is decidedly a northerner in the wild state, Cheeseman giving its range on the coast—the main habitat of the tree—as from the Three Kings Islands, to Taranaki and Poverty Bay, while occasionally it is to be found inland on the shores of some of the larger lakes with a southern limit on the cliffs of Taupo.

In habit of growth it has been compared to the oak: the trunk is very short, but there are great wide-spreading branches often forming a most stately tree.

At Christmas in a good season every branchlet carries at its tip a head of flaming crimson flowers—no tree quite the same in colour as its neighbour. The drawing shows flowers of a rather more rosy crimson than is usual. As with many of the plants of this family it is the stamens and not the petals that form the really showy part of the flower—E. H. A.

PLATE XII. (PAGE 47).

GREAT WHITE BUTTERCUP, or "MOUNTAIN LILY." *(Ranunculus Lyallii.)* For description see page 46 facing the illustration.

PLATE XIII. (PAGE 48).

GREEN DRAGON ORCHID. *(Pterostylis Banksii.)* To many people the name "orchid" stands for some gorgeous flower to be met with only in the tropics or in hothouses. Here is a creature of quite a different kind, though it belongs to the same great family of plants. The genus *Pterostylis* contains about fifty species, mostly Australian, but there are more than a dozen found only in New Zealand, of which the one shown here is much the largest, as well as the most abundant. It may be looked for throughout both islands up to 4,000 ft. altitude in places where there is a certain amount of shade, as on the edges of bush or scrub. With their flowers striped green and white in patterns so suggestive of the filtering of sunlight on to leaves, these orchids may easily be passed by even after hard searching, until perhaps the eye suddenly gains what one might call a "green dragon focus" when the ground will be seen to be thickly colonised with them where before there seemed to be nothing but seedlings or ferns.—E.H.A.

PLATE XIV. (PAGE 49).

MAKOMAKO, or WINEBERRY. *(Aristotelia serrata.)* The wineberry, as it is generally called—the makomako of the Maori—is perhaps as well known as any of the shrubs or small trees that belong to the real bush country. It does not grow in the deep shade of the big trees, but where it is more open, in the company of such plants as kotukutuku *(Fuchsia excorticata)* and ramarama *(Myrtus bullata.)* They may often be seen in the bottoms of the gullies long after the main bush has gone from the ridges. A striking fact about wineberry is the quickness of its appearance after bush has been burnt, the graceful reddish stems springing up everywhere among the blackened stumps and logs. The leaves are pale green above, the younger ones seen against the sky might be called a warm translucent purple. The flowers, small in themselves but in large clusters among the topmost leaves, seem like a very symbol of the coming in of spring: the buds are of the palest green or yellow at first, then, as the fringed petals open, a faint rosy glow creeps in which deepens to an intense crimson at the fall of the flower. The fruit is a small shining dark red or black berry.

—E. H. A.

PLATE XV. (PAGE 50).

AUTUMN-FLOWERING SWEET-SCENTED ORCHID. *(Earina autumnalis.)* From the point of view of the ecologist—that is of one who thinks of the *vegetation* of the country (the adjustment of each plant to its neighbours and to its surroundings generally) orchids in New Zealand are of two kinds: ground orchids and epiphytes.

Earina, of which there are three species here and a few others in the Pacific Islands, is a genus of epiphytic or perching orchids forming large masses with creeping rootstocks and matted fibrous roots of water-absorbing tissue. The fact that they are equally at home on living or dead trees, or on rocks, should make it clear that these epiphytes are quite different in their nature from parasites (the mistletoes are true parasites) and obtain nothing beyond support in the light, and shelter. It may be in-

teresting at this point to compare the present plant with one of the other great class—the ground orchids—which are much the most abundant kind in temperate countries in general. The "Green Dragon Orchid," *Pterostylis Banksii* (No. 6 in this series) is a typical example of these.

In the "Manual," Cheesman, in giving the distribution of *E. autumnalis*, says: ". . . Not uncommon in lowland forests from the North Cape southwards." There is only one plant with which this might be confused, and sometimes *is*, by those who have not seen both species—*E. mucronata*, which is much more slender and with smaller pale yellow flowers appearing in summer. *E. autumnalis* is well named, for it is from March-June that its masses of waxy-white flowers fill the air with their almond scent.—E. H. A.

PLATE XVI. (PAGE 51).

KARAKA. *(Corynocarpus laevigata.)* As the Maori name "karaka" is the only one there is in everyday use (the Moriori name "kopi" takes its place in the Chatham Islands) its beauty claims that we should remember it as having three even syllables and the softest of vowel sounds, of which but little idea is given by the English word "cracker"—the one generally used.

The karaka is a common lowland tree in many parts of the country, particularly in the North Island, and the nearer to the sea it is, the more completely it seems at home. Seen *from* the sea, those little groves of bush with one kind of very dark coloured tree —often the dominating one—are unmistakable.

The karaka may be described as a round-headed evergreen tree up to 50 ft. in height, with a smooth greyish trunk, leaves laurel-like, dark glossy green, 3-7 in. long. Flowers very small, greenish, in large bunches carried at tips of branches above leaves. Fruit an inch or more long, polished, in colour passing through various greens and yellows to bright orange when it is fully ripe.

Little peculiarities of distribution might be explained when it was remembered that the karaka supplied the Maoris with a most valuable food obtained from its fruits, and was largely cultivated by them. Legend says that they brought it with them from their original home in the Pacific—the "Hawaiki" of tradition. No trace has been found of it, though, outside the New Zealand botanical region, but long after the karaka became well known, two further species of *Corynocarpus* were discovered in parts of Melanesia!

These fruits of the karaka—for all their value—contain a most dangerous poison, and the Maoris who prepared them for immediate use or for storage, needed—and possessed—much skill in carrying out their work.

Each fruit (technically called a drupe) consists of a single hard central part surrounded by a pulpy covering. The former it was, after various processes of steaming or steeping in salt water, that afforded the main food supply.—E. H. A.

PLATE XVII. (PAGE 52).

GIANT BUTTERCUP *(Ranunculus insignis)*. The acknowledged queen of all species of *Ranunculus* is the so-called *Mt. Cook Lily (R. Lyallii)*, but its crests of snow suggest no thought of the word "buttercup." Surely the plant illustrated here must be the most magnificent of all that can be truly called by that name, though

there are others to be found in the South Island mountains which are no less beautiful, but from their rarity, seldom to be seen. This one grows (at an altitude of 2,500-5,000 ft.) on Mts. Hikurangi and Ruapehu, thence along the great central chain of North Island mountains as far south as the high country of Nelson and Marlborough. Nowhere is it more accessible in all its summer splendour than near Wellington, on Mt. Hector, the highest peak of the Tararua Range.—E. H. A.

PLATE XVIII. (PAGE 53).

KOWHAI. *(Sophora (Edwardsia) species.)* The kowhai belongs to the family of pod-bearing plants *(Leguminosae)*, second only in importance to the grain-bearers *(Gramineae)* in the service of man. Trees grow up to 50 feet in height and the timber is valuable and durable, the bark and wood yield chemical compounds, which may be useful in medicine.

In China a Sophora, the "Pagoda-Tree," with creamy flowers, gives by the dyers' art the imperial yellow to silk. Kowhai flowers yield a like beauty to wool. The greatest value of kowhai is as a beautiful tree to the community. It was introduced into England by Banks, of Cook's Voyage, and has been cultivated there since. Plants are easily raised from seed and there was a society in Fielding for distributing seed. Plants take years to reach maturity, but it is worth waiting for.

Kowhai occurs on river terraces and hillsides from North Cape to Southland, and flourishes in the cold central districts of the North Island and Otago, up to 2,500 feet above sea level.

The kowhai, known by no other popular name, is a general favourite. From the distinct character, the graceful habit, the form and colour of the abundant golden flowers, and the wide distribution in this Dominion, the kowhai is so fitted to become the National Flower that it now appears on the coinage of New Zealand, a flowering branch supporting the sweet-tongued tui.—B. C. Aston.

PLATE XIX. (PAGE 54).

MANUKA or TEA-TREE. *(Leptospermum scoparium.)* Perhaps no New Zealand plant is more widely spread than the manuka, and in saying this a good deal more is meant than is implied in the mere statement that it is found through the North and South Islands, and from sea level to nearly 5,000 ft. altitude.

The power of manuka to adapt itself in the way best suited to its environment—"plastic" is the word used of such species—is most clearly described by Dr. Cockayne in his classic, "New Zealand Plants and Their Story." He shows that under one botanical name are included countless forms, it may be a small tree of 30 ft. or a creeping matted shrub, or a seedling a few inches high covered with flowers. Its possibilities as a garden plant have never before been so well realised. The most famous as well as the most distinct among the kinds actually in cultivation is the crimson manuka *(L. Scoparium* var. *Nicholsii,)* but anyone who cares to make his way through a good patch of the scrub in the height of summer, will find it hard to match the flowers of any two individuals: dark-brown-eyed or green-eyed they may be, with petals white, or striped and flushed with pink.

The drawing was made from three types that were growing side by side with their branches crossing one another.—E. H. A.

PLATE XII

GREAT WHITE BUTTERCUP, or "MOUNTAIN LILY." *(Ranunculus Lyallii.)* There are over forty species of Ranunculus in New Zealand and among them are the grandest on earth, but these are only to be seen in the mountain. *R. Lyallii*, where deer have not reached it, grows with masses of its great dark green shield-shaped leaves as a background to the flowers held high above them. Words will not tell what such a plant looks like, but may give some idea of what is felt by one who sees it in its true setting:

What is this painted frieze over the quivering plains
Splashed with blue from the sky's depths and with white paler than its clouds?
Will it survive our passionate searching or fade as we draw near?
Fade! No dream is this, rising from earth's very foundations
Rising tier above tier with fearful strength,
Its heights daring to lift their shoulders
To where they may carry for ever unquestioned
The snowy gown of their attainment.
But what is the end of all this mightiness?
Behold the rocks crumble, the snows dissolve!
Is not this death?
Yes—but a death that is a birth too,
For out of the humility of this melting
Arise these surging waves of cooling green,
Their buoyant crests breaking into a light beyond the snow's clarity,
The brightness of snow redeemed
Where the incalculable magic of love has crept in
To loose from those crystalline prisons
This white flame of freedom.

—E. H. A.

Plate XII.

Great White Buttercup or Mountain Lily (Ranunculus Lyallii). Natural size. Description and poem opposite.

Plate XIII.

Green Dragon Orchid (Pherostylis Banksii). Natural size. Description on page 43.

Plate XIV.

Makomako or Wineberry (Aristotelia serrata). Natural size. Description on page 43.

Plate XV.

Autumn-flowering Sweet-scented Orchid (Earina autumnalis). *Description on page 43.*

Plate XVI.

Karaka (Corynocarpus laevigata). Natural size. Description on page 44.

Plate XVII.

Giant Buttercup (Ranunculus Insignis). Natural size. Description on page 45.

Plate XVIII.

Kowhai (Sophora (Edwardsia) species). Natural size. Description on page 45.

Plate XIX.

Manuka or Tea-tree (Leptospermum scoparium). *Description on page 45.*

"The VEGETATION of NEW ZEALAND"

A review in the N.Z. *Journal of Agriculture* by Esmond Atkinson.

A STUDY of the botanical literature of New Zealand affords convincing proof that the science, in the course of its devolpment in this country, has been singularly fortunate in its exponents. Such men as Banks and Solander and Hooker—to mention but three whose names dominate the earlier period—and the vigorous school of local botanists who followed and were inspired by them, have built a splendid monument in systematic botany, while in none of the younger countries was there a quicker recognition of the profound changes which began to take place in botanical thought in Europe towards the end of last century. The new branch of the science which then arose, to which the name "plant ecology" has been given, and which concerns itself with the living plant in its relation to its surroundings, made such rapid strides in this country that when in 1904 the editors of the great German publication "Die Vegetation der Erde"* sought in New Zealand a contributor to the series, they did not look in vain. In "The Vegetation of New Zealand" "Die Vegetation der Erde" , Vol, xiv, Engelmann, Leipzig), by L. Cockayne, Ph.D., F.R.S., F.N.Z. Inst., the long-recognised leader of New Zealand ecologists has concentrated the results of a quarter of a century's study of the country's vegetation.

As no book in the history of botany in this country in any way closely resembles the present one—the same author's "New Zealand Plants and their Story" being the only work at all comparable to it—it will not be out of place to give a very brief outline of its arrangement. The book is divided into four main sections, the first containing a sketch of the physical geography and climate, the third and fourth dealing respectively with the distribution and history of the flora, while the second, which makes up the bulk of the book, is devoted to a description of the plant-covering of the New Zealand area from the Kermadecs to the subantarctic islands. The reader who turns over the pages for the first time cannot but wonder at the wealth of biological detail with which nearly every one is filled, nor will his wonder be lessened when it becomes plain to him how much of it is the work of one man. To say this is in no way to depreciate the help given by any of those whose assistance is in all cases generously acknowledged, but a glance at the illustrations, which cover an extremely wide range of types of vegetation, and which are nearly all by the author himself, is evidence enough that the important plant-associations which he has not seen with his own eyes must be few indeed.

It is perhaps not generally recognised how considerable a part the personal element plays in a matter apparently so little involving the emotions as the observing and recording of physical facts. No two of a hundred observers would, for instance, describe the growth-form of a plant in quite the same way, and no skill in compilation can reduce to the same value data collected from many various workers. The advantage of having before him a series of pictures of the different types of vege-

* The Vegetation of the World.

tation all illuminated from the same angle is one which every botanist who studies the book critically will appreciate. If "The Vegetation of New Zealand" possesses this advantage to a striking degree it is due less to the comparatively small area with which it deals than to the untiring energy of its author.

The majority of readers of the *Journal* will no doubt be interested in the book chiefly from the point of view of its relation to agricultural development in New Zealand. In the chapters dealing with the effects of settlement on the plant-covering a vivid picture is given of the changes which man, intentionally or unintentionally, has brought about since his advent, but the real contribution which the work makes to agricultural science is of far profounder significance than any presentation of facts could be. It has only recently begun to be realised how largely the methods employed in this country in the utilisation of its natural resources have been those of chance. Surely such a question, for example, as to whether this or that great forest area is to be kept intact for water conservation, used as a source of timber-supply, or opened for settlement is one upon which the voice of science, which utters facts rather than mere opinions, should be heard. The plant ecologist, who is guided not only by the teachings of botany, but can correlate them with those of such sciences as geology, meteorology, and chemistry, must be the man qualified above all others to deal with problems which are of nothing less than national importance. Nor does his usefulness end there: wherever the process of replacing one type of vegetation with another is employed in agricultural development—the conversion of forest into pasture is the instance most familiar to New Zealanders—the application of the principles of his science must have far-reaching effects. Chemistry by itself has failed to show all that it seemed at one time to promise of the relation of a plant to the soil in which it is growing. It is possible to know accurately all the constituents of a soil and still to be ignorant as to what will flourish there and what will not; but the living plant is an indicator infinitely more sensitive than anything devised by man, and already the ecologist, from a knowledge of the present plant-covering of a soil, is able to foretell, with an accuracy hitherto unprecedented, what its capabilities will be. Dr. Cockayne is not primarily concerned in his book with the economic aspects of plant ecology, but no serious student of any of the branches of agricultural science can read the work without feeling that a new power of vision has been acquired by him—that the different plant communities with which he has to deal—pasture, field-crop, or forest—are subject to laws of infinite variety and subtlety, and that even the partial elucidation of some of these laws will confer on agriculture gifts as yet undreamed of. The flood of scientific literature that has been poured upon the world of late years makes it plain enough that the power to observe and record facts accurately is a far from uncommon one, and that it is one which to a large extent can be transmitted from teacher to pupil, its great development at the present day being doubtless due to the spread of university education and the endowment of research. What cannot be transmitted, and what the book under review shows its author beyond question to possess, is that intuition which sees the essential unity that binds together all facts, however apparently isolated, and can catch a glimpse of the laws which they illustrate. It is the possession of this true philosophic spirit which at once lifts the work far above the level of those that are merely descriptive, and which will, we venture to think, in years to come give it the name of a classic. The style, almost without exception, is simple and lucid, while there are not infrequently hints of a rarer quality: scattered throughout the book are passages, often only a line or so in length, where, in response to the

beauty to which he is obviously so sensitive, the man of science forgets himself and something of the poet stands revealed.

It is impossible in conclusion, to refrain from quoting the stirring words with which the book ends:—

" . . . Finally came man: first the Maori, or it may be his predecessor; but their influence on the vegetation was but slight. Then arrived the European. It is rather more than a hundred years since he began to occupy the land, but how great the change his operations have wrought has already been told. We who now live in this wonderful country, and love its marvellous vegetation, have set aside sanctuary after sanctuary where the palætropic, subantarctic, Australian, and palæozelandic plants, the survivors of that bitter strife with nature that commenced millions of years ago, can still pursue their destinies unmolested by their human enemies and the horde of foreign plants and animals he has let loose. Will our descendants prize this unique heritage from the dim past and preserve these sanctuaries intact?"

—E.H.A.

THE ART OF THE LATE HON. J. C. RICHMOND

An Appreciation by Esmond Atkinson.
(Contributed to the *Evening Post*, Wellington.)

THERE is at present on view at the Art Gallery, Whitmore Street, a collection of watercolours and pencil drawings by the late Hon. J. C. Richmond. It is the object of this notice—by giving some idea of the nature of his achievement—to induce those who know little or nothing of his work to visit the gallery during the few remaining days of the exhibition.

Most people seeing these drawings for the first time will probably feel that they are characterised to an extraordinary degree by what is generally called "truth to Nature," but they may well feel, too, that this rather vague phrase leaves their greatest charm unexplained.

In speaking of Nature in relation to a landscape painter's work we cannot use the word as meaning merely the external world. What the painter does is to record that image of the external which, whether he knows it or not, has been transmitted by his own thoughts and feelings into something which should belong to him alone, and which is the "nature" that he sees, but his work will ring true only so far as he is true to himself.

No one can look long at any drawing of Mr. Richmond's without feeling that its very essence is sincerity—that there was in him a complete absence of any thought of fame or emulation of others. He was great enough to forget everything but his one passionate desire to record in the simplest possible way the beauty that he felt, and in thus forgetting himself he has allowed all the noblest qualities of his mind to be seen. Whoever will take the trouble to enter into the spirit of these drawings will find the truest of friends awaiting him.

Perhaps it is by looking at the collection as a whole that this human message is most easily received, but drawing after drawing claims attention for its individual beauty. Of those in pencil, which are shown by themselves on a small screen, some are bold, some of a delicacy that defies analysis. The watercolours are arranged to a certain extent chronologically, the two chief groups hung in this way being the series of Arran drawings, solemn in feeling, and those made on the West Coast in 1862, which are all of a quite unassailable beauty.

It is impossible to realise the full range of the painter's strength without studying the wonderful series of drawings that he made from time to time among the mountains and lakes of the South Island. Those who know most of the mountains will look on these, "not with wonder but with awe," when they see what can be made to live on a few square inches of paper.

In some ways the two most majestic watercolours in the whole collection are the "Milford Sound"—slight, but painted by a conqueror—and the earlier one of Paritutu—a noble epitaph to what commercial greed has now destroyed for ever.

It is hoped some day to build a gallery where these watercolours and many of their fellows will be permanently on view, but even in the short time of a week enough can be seen for us to realise that a master has lived and worked amongst us.—E.H.A.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY LETTERS

Urged by a friend to hunt for some of her husband's letters, because they would give an idea of his character better than anything else, Mrs. Atkinson turned out some boxes of papers, and found the nineteeen little note books which he had filled and sent periodically to her to send on to his father and sisters in New Zealand, when he was serving in the 1914-18 War.

That he was "Artist and Botanist" is as plain in these as it is in his paintings and drawings. He saw beauty where others saw only things. Nobody else returned to the ship with bunches of flowers; nobody else bothered to climb Table Mountain; probably nobody else wrote such vivid descriptions of it all.

Unfortunately there is not room here for all the letters. In the first ones, as far as the visit to Albany, nothing is omitted. Crossing the Indian Ocean was uneventful and is left out, but the arrival at Cape Town and the climb up Table Mountain is unaltered. From here onwards only extracts which seemed characteristic could be put in, until in the description of the Mediterranean cruise nothing is left out.

Some of what he has written is not connected with the subject of this book, and some refers only to family jokes. In the first and last parts I have included it all because it gives a more complete picture of him. He enjoyed humanity and did not just loftily observe sunsets and hills and make notes about them. He enjoyed the life about him, and quite naturally wrote poetically and with a gift for touching lightly on deeper feelings, when he wanted to share his experiences with his family.

These letters describe:— first, working his passage to England as a storeman in H.M. Transport *Pakeha;* then, leave in England from H.M.S. *Riviera;* and lastly, the cruise to the Mediterranean.

H.M. Transport *Pakeha,*
26th September, 1916.

Dear Family,

I must make a start of some sort with this, or I shall wake up and find it all a dream which you would not like to hear at breakfast.

I suppose you saw us leave at about eight on Sunday—well we did anyhow—and I for one was thankful when the little bit of hill that I could see began to move away, because there was a rumour that we were to wait in the stream for the *Devon,* which would have been altogether too much of a good thing. I was at work with the stores when we started, but before we cleared the heads I was hard at it in a kind of improvised washing up place with two soldiers, who evidently decided that work and saloon tucker were more to be desired than freedom and soldier's tucker.

I should like you all to have seen our super-futurist system of washing and drying a cataract of plates etc. that poured in upon us ceaselessly for well over an hour—the water like thick soup, and the drying cloths wetter than the plates. We had as a background a square of racing peacock-blue and white sea, and the "pure and holy hills"—the Kaikouras—the strangest kind of contrast to our mucky little human goings on.

I used to think that story of the potatoes that had to be mashed was far fetched, or a little so, but now I think it only a literal record of a quite ordinary everyday sort of happening. Oh, Lord, some of these stewards! Well, I shall either be absolutely cured for ever of all worrying about the history of the things I eat, or else I shall come back to New Zealand with tins of biscuits for my sole food on the voyage, and then stay on shore for the rest of my life.

It was quite calm through the straits—soldiers swarming everywhere, and the piano on their mess deck was in great demand—music of all sorts from hymns to really Brangwynian ragtime that would have excited Mary to fever pitch.

In the evening I stayed watching the solemn and deliberate winking of the Cape Farewell light—the last of New Zealand for some time—then having seen that the soldiers were mustering well for washing up, I slid away before somebody came and found some other job for me, and made my way down into the engine room to see the two great tireless giants at their work. I could live with them for the whole voyage and meditate with them—here is something which man had made which is more honourable than the hair oil and cheapness of the stewards' pantry. Then I burrowed along right aft to the end of the port shaft tunnel—the awful silent strength of the spinning shafts almost the most amazing sight of all in the engine room, and there is a faint echo of the thundering *Niagara* outside—

20th, 6 p.m.

You see that was rather a sudden ending last night—it's a staccato sort of life here—I can't remember what I was going to tell you about. I sleep with my small friend, the second steward and storekeeper, in a newly built two-berth cabin, very large and clean and airy, so I am jolly well off in that way. I think we shall be having a soldier with us—he slept here last night—he is helping with the stores and seems a very good sort of fellow, so that's all right. We get up at 5.30—or do you prefer three bells?—and get to work in the store room issuing stores to the soldiers, the saloon, baker, butcher, candlestick maker, engineers' mess, and I don't know how many other departments. Little Bradbury, being Second Steward as well as storekeeper has to supervise the three main meals of the day and so has a pretty strenuous time of it, but we have been getting the stores in order, and after this things should be much easier. If I can manage to avoid washing up and so on, I shall have a very easy time of it—even as it is I have far more freedom than any of the others, thanks to my shilling a month I suppose, and certainly the rather dragonish Chief Steward has been extremely polite.

I told you that Sunday was calm and so was Monday really too, but we began to curtsey to a long swell which soon became "too buch for be." I could have stood it all right if I had had air to breathe, but the atmosphere of the storeroom was kaleidoscopic—a perfect chromatic outrage of smells—cheese, oranges, bad vegetables, and I don't know what else.

Today came with a beam sea and a decided roll which has made things rather unpleasant again in the store room. It's a gay life down there—all the time a crk-crk crk-crk from the piles of boxes, then he-e-e-ave—crash—bang and tumbled heap of tins, eggs, pig's feet, and men; and overhead the muffled roar of an avalanche of sol-

diers careering across the decks. We've got things well shored up now, and everything is ship-shape below, but these have been strenuous days while they lasted.

I wish I was working where I could see more of this great and wonderful living creature around us—it's very different out here from a mere shore view where after all one is looking at a beaten monster, however terrible it may still be, but there is something utterly untamed even in this quite moderate sea—it's like looking at a tiger in his native jungle. Yesterday the sea was inky, breaking into a cold and dreary white, but in spite of this embroidered with exquisitely delicate and frail-looking birds—petrels of some kind I suppose—flickering backwards and forwards with their quivering wings an inch or two from the water.

The albatrosses are magnificent—they seem like planets wheeling in their orbits, in their strength and tirelessness. Today the sea has been Prussian blue—and there's a good deal of Prussian militarism in it too—breaking into an astounding emerald fire as pure as the shadows in a glacier, and so vivid that the rising clouds of spray seem dyed with it.

We are now in the Bight which has forgotten how to be rough apparently, for except for the throbbing of the engines and a gentle lift now and then, one might imagine the ship at anchor. On Thursday night we passed a lonely looking tramp just at sunset, and at the same time dim and distant hills showed up on the port bow —Tasmania—and then to starboard Wilson's promontory or thereabouts. Yesterday morning, quite clear and close, lay the Victorian coast—low tawny hills and great sheets of drift sand, and in the distance blue hills fringed with bush. It was the queerest kind of feeling to me to look at this new country so like New Zealand, and to know that even from the ship—with a telescope—I should be able to see that the bush was not our bush or the flowers our flowers. As we passed a low headland with a lighthouse on it, up came a big two funnelled liner inshore of us—a proud P & O outward bound, but with not much paint and brasswork sparkling, so perhaps she was a transport—a grand lady in the disguise of a charwoman.

October 1st.

I'm in our cabin again with my mate and three soldiers—one a little terror of a Cockney—and the others New Zealanders.

The soldiers are a fine lot—a most marvellously fanciful crowd—Mary would be in ecstasies over them. They seem to be allowed to wear almost any costumes they like, but most of them have thrown all their souls into their coiffures—short hair is the thing, but with all sorts of patterns made with the clippers—fancy partings, clover leaves, thistles, and some have their initials and the number of the Reinforcement. One or two I've seen with a little plaited tail of hair three or four inches long right down the middle of their foreheads. One man has a large notice elaborately printed on the back of his coat "GO TO HELEN BE HAPPY". They don't seem to have very much drill—there's mighty little room anyhow, and now in this glorious weather they are everywhere on deck—playing quoits, or reading, or writing. I'm gradually evolving a sort of high stepping ragtime, which is the only way of getting for'ard on a dark night with a bit of a roll on, over a deck as littered with soldiers as a river-bed is with shingle.

I haven't made any close acquaintances, except with the soldier who shares our cabin, and with Jack Bradbury the Second Steward and storeman. He said at the beginning of the voyage: "You'll be much better bunking with me than with those boys. They're not your sort. I swear a bit myself at times but I don't drag no dirt in, nothink vulgar."

He is very neat and particular about his clothes, and washes himself with great care in a wooden bucket we have, after first cleaning his teeth into it. I think he would have been mildly surprised at anyone being shy of using the same water after him.

It's some time since I wrote anything as it's now the night of October 3rd, and we have just left Albany and are said to be on our way to Freemantle but I don't know if that's true or not, I'm sure.

Yesterday my mate, poor Bradbury, was seized with violent appendicitis and was this morning taken on shore to the Albany hospital, and was to have been operated on this afternoon. He should be all right in three weeks, and may not be in England much later than we are.

Well, I will begin to tell you of the events of today—

I was on deck at four bells this morning and there was land again on the starboard beam quite close—curious rounded hills with sudden breaks into steep rocks. We steamed past this sort of thing for an hour or so, then the land began to close in to port and we slowed and signalled for a pilot—see "Manual of Seamanship"—who came skimming along presently in a motor boat. The water was a curious bottle green, quite unlike the deep Prussian blue of the days at sea. The channel narrowed till it was like a river, and to port we passed an astonishing peninsula—only it seemed like an island—which looked just like a huge sea monster that had just come up to breathe, and that some magician had turned to stone —no perhaps it is Perseus and Andromeda's one, though I don't know if that works geographically—long smooth rock sides sloping gently for 50 yards into the sea—a natural water shute—the upper part covered with sheets of brown scrub, wonderfully like our subalpine scrub from this distance of a few hundred yards or so.

I'm too hot and sleepy, I must turn in . . .

October 4th, 6.30 p.m. or so—That was a very sudden stop last night and I daresay tonight's may be nearly as sudden. It's a pretty dirty night and the ship is feeling it too. I can hear the seas smacking the decks overhead, though there's nothing green so far. I've just been having dinner in the sanitary store which reeks of Jeyes' etc.—pork chops, Bartlett pears and cream, and icing sugar—all except the first, removed this afternoon from the saloon stores (a bob a month must get even somehow!) so you see that if my moral sense is failing, my sea legs are coming on.

Well, I didn't mean to talk about this, but about Albany and what I saw there.

At first I was afraid there would be no leave for us though all the soldiers marched off as soon as we were alongside the long narrow wharf. However, there was

nothing much to do on the ship, so I got a permit from the chief steward—all the crew had to have permits before they were allowed to land by the guard at the gangway—walked off the wharf and stepped onto Australian soil.

Albany itself is about a mile from the wharf and you reach it along a sandy road cut through the wild untouched vegetation. I found that the wharf and the road were swaying merrily—a most exhilarating sensation (I hope I shall not take to drink) and this made a fitting start for the dream that was to follow. Right up to the edges of the road and even in the midst of it—unblushingly unretiring, are the flowers—first yellow sheets of capeweed, and then, a few yards from the wharf, the natives take complete possession. I walked along gasping and saying to myself "When am I going to wake up? When am I going to wake up?" Yellow, orange, scarlet; crimson, magenta, purple; and blue, blue, blue . . . as if all the blue of all the skies were condensed into one little flower.

The air was full of the sounds of curious chirpings and crakings, and every now and then, under the shrubs, I could hear ominous rustlings. Little swallow-like birds on the telegraph wires, and a kind of slender long beaked silver-eye flickering in and out of the crimson bottle brushes, and sampling the honey. I found quite a number of old friends among the flowers (that I had met in Ernest's collection)—pink Boronias and their relations—pink Pimelias, very like ours—outrageously blue Dampieras of several kinds, and countless pea flowers of colours that should have been fighting for their lives with one another, but which the white-hot glamour of my dream blended into perfect harmonies; the maddest yellow acacias and dream-manukas, and here and there masses of Australian Iris—Patersonia—the fragile flowers floating in the air over the clumps of leaves like fragile butterflies.

The harbour is a most interesting one—landlocked by low brown hills dotted with extraordinary bubbles of rock which rise up unexpectedly through the vegetation 5, 10, 20 feet—smooth and round like great barrels lying about. The town wanders about casually up and down the hills and to the water's edge. There are only three or four thousand people, I suppose, so it's hardly one of the great cities of the Earth. Many of the buildings are made of a warm mellow stone which takes away from the cheapness of the place and gives it a kind of solidity. My storekeeper friend, Corporal M. (who by the way now shares my cabin, a very satisfactory arrangement) was not much struck by Albany and said that he hoped it was not to be taken as a *meridian* of the other Australian towns!

I wandered about the town—went to the P.O. to see if there were any letters—I thougth you might have caught something quicker than the *Pakeha,* but found none—bought a watch glass—I had smashed mine a few days ago—and went to the hospital to enquire after Bradbury, and then to lunch at a 15th rate restaurant where they charged be two shillings for a plate of ham and eggs and two bottles of ginger ale. Like Eliza's husband in Calais, I was pleased to find that English was spoken, and English money accepted (no doubt about the last part!)

You may be very sure I didn't tarry in the town with this new land to be explored all around. I struck out first along a road running right into the heart of the country through low spreading gum trees—I at once remembered Mother's perfect simile—they ARE just like coloured clouds in their grace and bouyancy, and though

these were only quite small trees they were a delight to look upon, and the rustling song of the wind in their leaves was different from anything I had heard before. The colour is altogether lovely, and at a little distance there is a kind of blue dimness about them as in our manuka.

I only went a few hundred yards along this road, though I could have wandered on for hours, but the time was getting short and there was a promising looking hill between the town and the wharf where the ship was, that I had decided must be climbed. The town reservoir is on the lower part of it, just above the last of the houses and I had soon passed these and was ploughing through grass and low scrub. I thought a little about snakes (if I were one I should make a home on this hill) but decided it was no good worrying and went ahead. Then suddenly just in front there was a violent reptilian sort of rustle and out darted—not a snake—but a large lizard two or three feet long. It was not an iguana but a kind of heavily armoured Tuatara —a regular dreadnought of a fellow. He got under a big piece of rock which I lifted gingerly, and out he came and looked at me with a cold critical yellow eye. This was bad enough but I nearly fell off my perch when he suddenly lifted his squat diamond-shaped head and shot out a long bright blue arrow-shaped tongue and barked at me!

The flowers were everywhere again and many that I had not seen in the morning— Tyrian purple peas of unbelievable richness (Hoveas I think) "Food of the Gods" sundews, just like our little pink one only white, and five times the size. Banksias and their friends like clusters of drunken red and yellow spiders, and right at the top of the hill, lovely yellow orchids low on the ground. Even if there had been no flowers, the view was worth the climb: the little town and the blue harbour, with the good ship *Pakeha* and two lean Australian destroyers, and beyond, the open sea; and on the other side, mile upon mile—countless miles—of infinite distance with here and there a faint and craggy mountain range.

I was due back at the ship at three, and it was about two by this time, so I came down to the town again via a zigzag I hadn't noticed going up, and ran across my friend the corporal who was thinking of making for the ship; so we started toward her—grabbing right and left at all the flowers I could see, so I arrived at the ship with a hatful and almost an armful as well. Most I have pressed—quite a hopeless business—one might as well try to carry a rainbow away—but two or three of the biggest are now in a tin in our cabin—a brilliant red bottlebrush, and a very stylish thing in the Waratah line, with leaves rather like oak leaves surrounding a silvery cone with twelve or thirteen vertical rows of scarlet hair pins—no lady should be without them.

These four short hours at Albany were certainly among the most exciting in their way that I can remember. I should call the whole thing a dream if it were not for the flowers beside me, but all the time running through my head were the lines:—

Unto each his mother beach
Bird and bloom and land!

And never before did they ring so true—for all that symphonic splendour I would not change the quiet purity of our Clematis "In its uncontested queenliness . . . wholly without similitude." So I am still a New Zealander.

October 21st.

Land Ho! . . .

Hurrah for Africa! . . .

Yesterday was the great day really, when the hungry eyes of 1,400 Columbuses, or Columbi, were straining to see the faint outline, only one degree more substantial than the clouds.

This morning though, there was no kind of doubt about it—wild rugged hills that warmed my heart (I suppose when all is said and done it is the hills that hit me hardest) and dazzling white sand-drifts relieved against the background like the white horses of a gigantic sea. The breeze stiffened this morning and swung round till it was almost dead ahead, to everyone's disgust, as it probably meant no shore leave to-night. Up got the sea in a twinkling, and the old ship began to pound into it in great style. It was grand to watch the wicked seas tearing past us with the fury of springing lions with arched backs and wild-flung manes.

We were running at 85 revolutions last night—said to be our maximum, or thereabouts, and equivalent to 15 knots or so, but she had to be eased down to 75 this morning, and as it was, a green sea or two came over the fo'c'sle head. Up, up, up, came her bows; then down, down, down . . . boo-m; and then a splendid burst of white water blotting out everything, and the long quivering lash of the spray along the decks, and the mingled curses and laughter (mostly the latter) of drenched soldiers. The wind blew stronger and stronger until the whole sea was a welter of torn water and spray, and sea and sky melted together a few hundred yards away—quite like some of our Wellington performances, only on a larger scale by far.

We slowly overtook and passed, at about midday, a largish steamer making very heavy weather of it—every now and then almost completely disappearing, and then rising out of the cauldron again with a sort of half disgusted shake, and a snort, like a bather who has swallowed a mouthful.

After an hour or so of this extreme violence things calmed down quickly and it was possible to stay on deck for a few minutes without getting wet through, and very soon there was something very well worth staying up to watch, wet or no wet, and that was the wonderful coast—no less than the Cape of Good Hope itself.

What an amazing place!

Huge castles built of reddish stone—the horizontal strata running for miles and towering tier above tier high above the sea, their stern grandeur softened and mellowed with perfect art by the brown-green of the vegetation. Behind all this, frowning under the misty clouds, were the tremendous outlines of mountains innumerable—huge blocks split apart with Titan wedges, great tusks of fighting monsters turned to stone. Towards sunset Turner began to get to work with broad washes of salmon coloured light, drifting sheets of rain-filled violet mists, and then as if that were not enough (but you know what a lavish old scoundrel he is), a most astonishing rainbow—a perfect arch, jewel-clear—and then feeling the want of a horizontal line he flung along the coast the snow-white mine-explosions of the surf. I had to go below for some little time, and when I came on deck again we were almost opposite Capetown. The sunset sky was primrose and in the South steel-blue—and dark and solemn, with the

twinkling town at its base, and rising high—wonderfully high—amongst the stars, was the great brooding presence of Table Mountain. If Schumann had been here there would have been a "Mountain as Prophet" written tonight.*

24 Hours Later.

We anchored last night, and came into the docks this morning. I was up in record time after being called—I wanted to see if the magic of the night before had vanished with the daylight—no such thing! What a friend to have with one is this great mountain—"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my strength". I never know how literally that is meant to be taken, but it CAN be taken literally and lose nothing. What a gloriously daring and simple piece of architecture—simple in the mass yet full of delicate detail—it hangs over the town like a wave about to break, yet there is none of the restlessness that implies, for the strong-knit precipices are buttressed with wide flung foundations full of repose and solidity.

The Royal Victoria Basin—I think that is the name—where we are, is crowded with interesting shipping—English, Dutch, Italian and Portuguese steamers, and a little dismantled barque said to have been a world record breaker, so one of the A.B's. told me. I wish I could remember her name. The green water was dotted today with seagulls and silly little submarines in the shape of penguins, and last but by no means least, by an innumerable multitude of black shags which I thought at first were ducks. I have never seen so many birds on the water—they were more like the masses of kelp flies that we see at the Bay. When they are startled, several hundred will rise at once, breaking the water into symmetrical patterns of foam so that the whole thing looks like a gigantic chess board.

We had not been alongside more than half an hour before a big steel barge deeply laden with coal was towed up, and a little later the Kaffirs came swarming on, and all day long the winches have been roaring and rumbling, and the coal pouring in. The Kaffirs are great chaps with their gleaming eyes and teeth—the only things to escape the coal dust which settles all over their bodies like the bloom on a plum. The noise and yelling and general confusion are terrific—you think at first that there is a complete absence of system when you see them flinging themselves furiously on the heaps of coal bags, tumbling over one another, shouting and waving their hands in their excitement (though they seem full of fun and good nature). Still I suppose there is some kind of system as the level of coal in the barge sinks with great rapidity, though how much finally reaches the bunkers it would be rather rash to say. I have never seen such a wierd collection of trousers—most of them more like the Irishmen's net than anything else, "a lot of holes tied together with pieces of string". How they survive for five minutes in this turmoil is a mystery to me.

23rd October, 1916.

I am now in my bunk after having walked over most of Africa—at least if weary legs are a criterion.

I had better begin and tell you something of it while impressions are still fresh, not that they are really likely to fade.

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*He wrote "The Bird as Prophet."—Ed.

I went on shore yesterday for about an hour—just time to get to the heart of the town and back again to give out stores. Mac took yesterday on shore, and of course two such important men could not be absent long from the ship, or she would certainly have sunk or blown up.

I got my permit early this morning and after breakfast cleared out before I could be waylaid, leaving Mac in the storeroom. The first thing I did was to buy a watch-glass (they and our ports of call are "synonymous," you will notice) then to the gardens where are the Museum and Art Gallery, the latter very small and disappointing, to tell you the truth—not a patch on ours. The most interesting things were a girl peeling apples—a green purple and creamy colour scheme—J. Shannon, and a Moffat Lindner watercolour. What astonishes me is that South Africa has not produced a great landscape painter—That question comes to me when I look at Table Mountain, and I have done little else all day—but I should remember that Maiden Lane* had no Table Mountain near it. Well, where do you guess I steered for next? Quite right—I thought you would hit the nail on the head. The country begins to rise before you leave the town behind—the Giant who lifts his head so high must be able to spread his feet afar. There have evidently been pretty big fires on the lower slopes which are now covered with groves of oaks, and higher up, of pines—I do not know which kind, but an admirable grey green. There is one steep avenue of these beautiful pines with the tram line in the middle. I wandered along this avenue till it ended abruptly in the oaks and pines. I remembered that Mother talked about the squirrels, and again and again I have wished that I had read her Capetown diary before I left. It was at the Rhodes Monument that she and Father saw them, wasn't it? I wanted to go there, but one can't do everything in six hours, but I did see some squirrels in the de Waal Park just below this pine avenue—little twinkling grey creatures as elusive and unsubstantial as the dancing shadow of some cluster of leaves far above in the trees. One chap had his arms full of something, whether for board or lodging I couldn't see, but it made him most amusingly topheavy so that he could hardly climb his tree—the most enchanting people!

I wandered on and on, and up and up, every now and then coming to open places which made me long to paint—groups of the grey pines, and above them, hundreds upon hundreds of feet of blue grey precipices trembling in the heat and distance against the palest blue of the sky. This blue-grey seems to be the subtone of all the Cape colour schemes, and now it began to appear at my feet in the flowers. There were Babianas (like a spiraxis), a beautiful shrubby sort of Canterbury bell, Salvias, brooms, and a multitude of aster-like daisies of many different kinds, all these flowers of a delicate lavender grey, or a few semitones to the red or blue side of it. Our Hulkeana would have been quite at home in this company. I was out in the open by this time, and amongst huge blocks of stone which must have dropped off the precipices above—though what stopped them from going till they had reached the bottom of Table Bay, I don't know. It was here that I saw a snake—two or three feet long, I suppose, though hardly thicker than my thumb, and mottled grey and black. He slid away through the grass, swift and silent as spilt mercury. Huge blue and black bumble-bees bumbled noisily among the flowers, and here and there were masses of large locusts or grass-hoppers in black and brilliant yellow-green uniforms.

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*The street in London where Turner was born.—Ed.

By this time I had reached a well-graded broad track that runs round the flanks of the mountain, which I followed along, and soon had a drink from a tumbling mountain stream, the first real water I have had since York Bay. I soon found a zig-zag to the right leading up to a high saddle between Devil's Peak and Table Mountain itself. I thought that this was perhaps the best I could do in the time (if I had had an hour or two more I should have aimed for the top of the big mountain, and if I had had a few more hours still I believe I should have started off for the Zambesi!) I thought longingly of Disa Grandiflora, which is called the most gorgeous ground orchid in the World, and which must have been within a mile or so of where I was, however I decided that they certainly would not be in flower, and regrets were barred, and set off at full steam for the saddle. My word it was hot, and I was hardly rigged out for strenuous walking.

Far below in the depths of this giant's amphitheatre lay the town and the docks with their tiny ships, and beyond, the great blue bay—then huge splashes of dazzling white from enormous sand-drifts, and at last in the vibrating distance, grand wild mountains tossing their shaggy heads. All this was framed with the plunging precipices all around, splashed with broad luminous shadows, and the nearer ones with the local colour of the flowers. As I got higher the natives began to assert themselves, especially shrubs. One's first impression is: "Well you wouldn't think they would go to the trouble of planting all these garden flowers here." Big clumps of Pelargoniums almost rowdy in colour, charming pink and white gladiolus, sheets of large grey and blue sage, and half a dozen kinds of big fat rustling heaths—pink, white, yellow and scarlet—and most of all, arum lilies, not nearly as good as our York Bay one, but the genuine article for all that.

Notices in Dutch and English were here and there by the paths. I read through the Dutch which did not seem to forbid anything, and as for the English. " 'I'm damned if I see it' he said," so I soon had my pockets well filled, and my hat too, and there are now the flowers of two continents decorating our cabin. I saw some large sort of Guinea pig, only he was too shy for closer study—and then a little later a slender Springbok-like creature bouncing through the bushes and over the rocks like an india-rubber ball.

I found another tremendous outlook waiting for me when I got to the top of the saddle; miles of flat country, some with townships and cultivation, then the long curve of False Bay, and the limitless high country beyond it that we had passed in the ship and looked at from the other side two days before.

Unfortunately I could not stay long to enjoy this and was soon slipping and sliding down the main track again—my boots were like polished glass underneath—then I skirted along till I was well under Devil's Peak, and came down one of its spurs into the town. I wandered a little about the streets, then had some lunch and went to the G.P.O. hoping for English letters, but the last mail had got in a fortnight ago so *that* was no good.

I have not told you anything about the town—I did not linger in it long and really saw very little of it. The psychic atmosphere is strangely different from anything else that I know of, and somehow it leaves an unpleasant taste in the mouth—I suppose it is the mixed races. The real brown and black or cafe noir people are all

right—it is when there is a good deal of milk with the coffee that one begins to feel that something is the matter.

The little brown ladies with huge bundles on their heads are a good sight, and I saw one admirable group in the gardens with small brown fuzzy-haired children—three or four of them, each carrying what I thought was a doll, but which turned out to be an incredibly small baby with hair so tightly fuzzy that it looked like dull black beads. Even the people one thinks most English-looking are, many of them, a surprise when they speak, and one hears Dutch or a very foreign sounding sort of English. Of course I did not spend much time wandering about trying to find out what was the most commonly spoken language, and I don't suppose the proportion of English is nearly as small as I seem to have made out. You must be rather tired by this time of hearing about Table Mountain, but nowhere—I am glad to say—even in the thick of the town can one escape from him, for again and again in the midst of all the bustle and roar of traffic far above the narrow streets and over the tops of the tallest buildings where nothing but sky should be, he lifts his head—the grey crest of a great frozen wave. He made me think of Beethoven: do you know how in the middle of those tremendous epics when he seems to sound the whole gamut of human emotions, suddenly all this melts away and there creeps in a few bars of intense calm and quietness, entirely above human passions and human limitations. This mountain has quickly found a permanent place in my heart—I don't mean to say I think it is the most beautiful I have seen—Mt. Egmont far outsoars it, but I should never regret having to live in a city where I could be sure of so kind and constant a friend.

Later:

THIS afternoon I heard sounds on deck which made me think something interesting must be in sight, so up I went to see a "Harbour of England" sky, a tumbling green sea with several distant steamers and a destroyer dancing wildly in it and then right ahead . . . a dark belt of land—England, Oh England! Never fear, I am still a New Zealander to the core, but in spite of that, or is it because of it? I found this little drab strip of land blurring before my eyes as I looked at it. I went down below again quickly from the crowded decks, to where there was no one to wonder what the matter was . . .

It was as black as black can be when I turned out this morning. Of the things I saw when the light came creeping in, I cannot tell you very much—I should feel like the little trippers who carve their names on the Pyramids.

In New Zealand, what I have loved and what I feel I shall love all my life more deeply and faithfully than anything else in the world, is no work of man's but the lyric beauty which is the result of countless natural laws working in perfect harmony. Where man *has* been at work there, he has up to the present only made discords for he has not yet found the true key. We know that he *will* and that is why I suppose we look ahead for our great art and great architecture, which may take centuries for their growth. But here is the perfect wedding of man's work and Nature's, like the dove-tailing of a storm-defying lighthouse into the rock. There is a kind of extraordinary sweetness of line in the smooth slopes crowded with their ranks of gentle, russet trees. The trees melt into the slopes and the slopes into the grand old grey stone of the buildings.

Yes, and across these grey stone walls have passed the shadows of Drake's ships!

Do you wonder if, after the clear single note of the lyric beauty I have lived with, I stood amazed and bewildered before the ringing chorus of this epic?

What a change in one short week, from the softness of the luscious hothouse, Dakar, sprung up like mushrooms in the night, to this grand, gnarled, grey old England, with its roots spreading far, and anchored deep in the centuries. What if some of its branches are decayed—one feels it is sound at heart still. Good heavens I don't know where all this wild array of mixed metaphors and Philosophy came from —it looks rather as if the tripper were trying to carve his name after all.

With dusk many of the ships—*Pakeha* included—weighed and steamed slowly further up the Channel to Dover or I think perhaps it was Deal.

Later:

In the morning the wind had freshened to a gale, two steamers lay ashore on the Goodwins helpless and smothered in the smoke of the spray, while all the rest of us more fortunate ones tugged at our anchors, the small boats almost flinging themselves out of the water like a hooked fish on the end of a line.

This day was Monday and all day long we hung here stamping with impatience which was not lessened when in the afternoon we weighed anchor again but only to steam round in a circle and anchor nearer the shore to make more certain of a pilot. He came at sunset—a scarlet Turner (the sunset not the pilot) blazing over the dark cliffs and gentle hills where stood several windmills solemnly waving their arms.

The pilot stayed on board all night and it was not until 11 next morning that we heard the sweet music of the cable in the hawseholes, and we set off for Gravesend which we reached at dark. There has been no anti-climax for me on this voyage and there had been nothing so wonderful as the end of it. I had plenty of work to do but I left it all as the land crept in to port and starboard and we steamed—leaving a broad oily wake up the great river—past the brown-sailed barges curtesying one by one to our waves. A dim greyness melted everything together—a greyness with a copper coloured light through it. Amazing enough in itself is this old Thames but its wonder lies in what it suggests—like the opening lines in Hamlet which instantly close round one's heart with a grip of steel, for one feels that the tremendous drama has begun its irresistable march.

My knees turned to putty under me, and I found myself howling unrestrainedly. If this seems impossibly sentimental I ask you to remember that I had been working at top till 3 in the morning so you can put it partly down to that. Aeroplanes sang above us circling and swaying with something of the grace of a perfect dancer and against the light hung a bloated huhu-like airship. Fortunately the darkness came soon or I don't know what would have happened—and we lay at anchor in the fog—our bell going almost continuously. Next morning came the last little stage of our voyage up to the Royal Albert Docks past a million tugs swelling like the bullfrog in the fable, past ships of every conceivable degree of fancifulness—and finally with a snail-like advance through the lock into the basin and alongside. This was at about noon but it was after 3 before I got away finally from the ship—I think the after events merit a new book. So long.

Plate XX.

ESMOND ATKINSON (aged 28)

From a photograph taken in London in 1917 while on leave from H.M.S. Riviera.

Plate XXI. Water-colour, 1921.

"RAPIDS ON THE WAIKATO RIVER AT HORAHORA"

A composition in yellow-brown vegetation, blue water, and white foam. Spray drifts across in front of the kowhai trees, and by a kind of brush-drawing he has indicated the boiling, heaving surface of the rapid as it swirls out of the picture on the right.

Plate XXII. Water-colour, 1928

"CORA LYNN"

Cora Lynn, where he and his wife were camping on their way up to Arthur's Pass, a few miles further on. Brownish-yellow tussock country with greenish-grey dark patches on the hills where they are bush-covered, and pale blue sky and grey clouds above.

Plate XXIII. Water-colour, 1929.

"LAKE TAUPO"

Lake Taupo, looking towards West Bay from the Tokaanu-Taupo road. Pohutukawa Bluff (Tuhunatara) is on the extreme right, then comes Whakaipo Bay, and then its other headland, Te Tuhi Whakaroa. The rock on the left is grey and so are the little clouds, but the whole of the rest of the picture is lovely gradations of blue. He could paint calmness as well as dynamic forces. It was painted in 1929 while on a walking tour with his wife, and it was one of the few he himself liked.

Plate XXIV. Water-colour, 1933.

"MOUNT EGMONT FROM NEAR HAWERA"

A painting which he seemed inspired to stop before finishing the foreground, and neither signed nor dated it. It was probably from the Wainongoro River. A curve of blue water appears on the right of the picture. The mountain is a clear blue, and the plains below are the colour of dry grass stalks.

Plate XXV. Water-colour, 1937.

"WELLINGTON HARBOUR"

One of the many views of Wellington harbour which he painted from the hills above York Bay, looking straight across to the city which lies at the foot of the distant hills. There is a pale yellow light on the water, the distant hills are grey-blue, and the foreground is dark brown and grey.

Plate XXVI. Water-colour, 1934.

"RATA ON THE HILLS ABOVE YORK BAY"

A group of rata on the hills above York Bay. A much later work. In the foreground are greenish-brown trees with blue-black shadows under them. The hills are a pinkish brown with grey shadows. He often scrambled about on these hills which were within walking distance of his home at York Bay.

Plate XXVII. Water-colour, 1921.

"*ARAPUNI GORGE, WAIKATO RIVER*"

A bank of grey rock on the right, a brown cliff with greenish vegetation on it on the left, and the water a bluish green. The more distant cliffs across the river are in warm sunlight. Painted while staying with one of the engineers at the hydro-electric power station.

36 Sinclair Road,
Kensington.

December 17th.

Here I am—a married man of over a fortnight's standing (a fortnight's lying down more like) in bed with the remains of influenza also of a fortnight's standing.

My brain reels when I think of what there is to tell you all—I must just go back three weeks that's all and try to remember a few of the things.

On November 18th we went to the National Gallery straight to the basement—and you go down to the badly lit room and there are the few dozen little water-colours that are all they will show you. Changed on January 1st alas and hurrah! Everyone (not you, Father) seemed so anxious to tell me I should be disappointed and that the originals are faded to nothing. Disappeared?—The best reproductions that ever have been made are only pressed flowers.

And the giant who made these things seems to be there as you look at them and to hold out his hand almost shyly to you. I knew quite well nearly all the drawings; one or two of the harbours of England and a number of the grey paper Rivers of France. Before these last I stood thunderstruck by the superhuman skill and cunning of the hand and brain that made them. Then come the final Swiss and Venetian drawings, when he left the earth and soared free from all its limitations, and when one looks at them there is no thought of skill or cunning for "he is showing not his hand or his head, but his heart" and what R.L.S. calls " a kind of sweetness" comes over one. They are so tremendously intimate—these last and greatest drawings. But the most wonderful thing of all to me in them is their artlessness. They might almost have been made by some child-genius who had no thought of what people would say of them, who even had no thought of anyone's seeing them at all—and that Turner, after all his years of rivalry and striving after fame (for I think part of him did this) should at seventy have come to this supreme simplicity and humility, seems to me the final proof of his entire greatness. One could sit with these miracle-drawings for hours, but closing time came, so we wrung out our handkerchiefs and came down to earth again.

Next day, Friday, I can't remember at all, but in the afternoon we went to see a show of Brangwyn drawings (the originals of his illustrations for a book on Belgium) in Bond Street. The drawings—mostly black and white or with a little colour—are tremendous in their dramatic power, but after the Turners I was almost "binged" in the eye by Brangwyn's self-consciousness—I do not feel as if he ever forgot about the people who would see the drawings. I think O.M. said this. I do not mean that these wonderful things made me think less of Brangwyn than before—his versatility astonishes me but beside Turner he is a pigmy. I think Brangwyn is perhaps a greater *painter* but I am thinking of Turner the artist and the man, and I use these words almost as synonyms.

What a life! Quintessence of Bovril—Marie Motto was the little evening's entertainment to follow this!

There she was at her door just the same as ever, and what more can one ask for?

There never was an artist who carried art so completely into every department of life as Marie does. Phyllis, Marie and a nice lady friend and Alison and I went down to the kitchen to tea on the glowing holystoned table. One could not call what she spread before us a meal, it was nothing less than a composition with every note in harmony—butter from Brittany, grapes from Spain on a plate from Portugal, Alpine strawberry jam from Heaven, or near it, and Marie hovering about in one of her ecstasies of alternate joy and woe. "Oh, Phyllis we *can't* help the salad except with the horn spoon!" "Oh oh oh! he is eating green grapes on that plate, oh! how awful —that only does for purple ones!" "Sssh stop talking everyone, Esmond's tasting the strawberry jam." We were all in the wildest hysterics before the affair was over and we were ready for the music. Then Marie and Phyllis gave us of their best in the Brahms D minor—never was the sonata so tremendous and never was the Strad. so tremendous—caressing as a ray of light and then a flaming sword. I was able to tell Marie what I felt—that this alone was worth a 13,000 mile journey. To begin the evening with such a masterpiece seems courting disaster in the way of anti-climax, but somehow it was not so, and one thing followed another till we were almost at bursting point. An enormous evening!

. . . Another day we caught a train from Liverpool Street—what magnificent Brangwyns these great stations are—after two hours of mist and snowy landscape—in some places more abominably Xmas Cardy than anything I have imagined—arrived at Cambridge at about 12.

We went straight to the Fitzwilliam Musuem, half afraid we might find it shut, as Cambridge is very popular with the Zeppelins. However it was all right and the doors were open wide.

Two third returns cost us £1/7/-! (Fares are up here by leaps and bounds) —Perhaps you think this is pretty hot with only 25 Turners to balance it. However we knew that there were many things to see even if the Museum were closed and we felt like a little bust too. I had quite determined to keep old J.M.W. out of this, but I *cannot* keep him out. These 25 drawings are not on show all the time (a jolly good thing too as they live in the dark and should last forever) but an official quickly got them out and spread them around for us when we asked for them. What is delightful here is a series of notes—quite short but very interesting—by Ruskin on the drawings and there is his manuscript in a case near by.

It is a silly thing to say but some of these watercolours seem almost more wonderful than any National Gallery ones I have seen. There is "Richmond, Yorkshire" which you, Aunt D. will remember in Modern Painters, with the girl putting her bonnet on the dog in the foreground, and it is perfection . . .

Then on to others where the daring of his flight has carried him to some height which is somehow past the solid peak perfection. There is "Schaffhausen" the colour of honey and of wine and of palest lavender—the most melting loveliness of colour, but beneath this loveliness a strength and sanity like tempered steel.

Then "Fluelen"—aquamarine and the opposite pole in colour to the "Schaffhausen", but of an equal beauty. Then—and I mention none after this though some of the others are lovelier—what Ruskin might have called (though he does not—he only says "a consumate work of the third period—unique") the "supremest drawing yet made by man," "Venice: Storm at Sunset". Certainly I can imagine nothing more

bewildering or unerring in swiftness of design or with a more magnificent or Napoleonic marshalling of all the colours of the spectrum—it is like an army mad with the excitement of battle but each man under the most complete discipline and knowing exactly what to do . . .

This museum will be one of the first places that I shall take you to. These Turners do what I have known no other pictures to do—they sing in one's head like music.

13th . . . Yes, they do and now after two days their melodies come creeping in bit by bit and join together just as a song reconstructs itself after a concert.

3.4.17

I wonder if Alison told you of the Admiralty's presto con fuoco way of doing things. One might almost say that a bomb was dropped on our diggings—flung me from Portsmouth to London in the middle of the night.

It was hardly less violent than that when, at about ten—after we had gone to bed—a message arrived post haste from the Island telling me to report there immediately and that I had to catch a train leaving in two hours and join my ship forthwith.*

Well, there was no getting away from that, and off I had to dash, leaving poor A. to pack my suitcase.

The R.N.R. Commander wanted to know how it was I had not left my address on the Island, I do not quite know how they succeeded in picking me out with 249,999 other people to choose from in Portsmouth—but everything considered he was surprisingly mellow. I could not make out why till I saw a very large tumbler with almost nothing in it standing on his table. No one knew anything much about my ship except that I had to go to her at Dover, and at once, so I had to bolt off again and catch a midnight train to town. It was pretty tough on Alison and I did not feel more reconciled to it when I got to the ship and found that they knew nothing about me and were flabbergasted at my sudden appearance.

29.4.17

I am in the train on my way to town for forty eight hours again. I wish they would make it forty eight days if they would be like this, for it is altogether lovely—I think perhaps the loveliest I have seen in England. Yes, this country is beautiful and no mistake.

Everywhere spring has been working overtime to make amends for her late arrival. We have just passed a group of horse-chestnuts—each branch carrying an exquisite green torch, and wonder of wonders, in the cuttings—primroses beyond counting, and where they have left an inch or so a great splash of pale violets—a taste in colour schemes quite beyond criticism.

The silver-gold smoke of the goat willows is hard to beat to my mind, and almost best of all, under the shade of the trees an innumerable multitude of "wooden enemies"—single stars of every magnitude, and groups forming rich constellations—as far as the eye can reach.

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* H.M.S. Riviera, a 'plane carrier, and a converted cross-channel steamer.—Ed.

. . . I don't think I told you of how some time ago one of the wireless people suddenly popped into my cabin with a mysterious message in code which was beyond his powers of interpretation and asked me to decode it for him. I couldn't make head or tail of it so passed it on in my turn—fortunately the captain was away so there was less panic than there might have been. There were about four of us on it finally. It seemed as if it must be something of terrific urgency and importance. Perhaps an order to attack the whole German fleet immediately and at any cost.

We turned the whole ship pretty nearly inside out in our wild strivings. At last we hit on the key to the problem and all waited breathlessly as it was read out word for word: "Regret no potatoes, will swedes and carrots do instead"

22.7.17

. . . I told you of the primroses didn't I?—They were the best—sheets and sheets of them all along the railway cuttings when I went to town at the end of April. They seem the very essence of spring here just as our clematis does at home. There is something primeval about them both—the real first flowers—not just of the year, but the very first that dared to show themselves on earth . . . as if one had never looked on a flower before.

It is curious that I should have to come thirteen thousand miles to realise it, but I think that is what I have always felt about our clematis, though I have never analysed it before. The primroses seemed only to last a few short days—with their companions the violets and wood anemones—a wonderfully quick performance for this sober old England—hardly to be outdone in the tropics, I should think. There was no dawdling allowed—as soon as the flowering was finished, or often before, the poor plants were hustled off to make room for the newcomers—a large family late for breakfast and a very small bathroom—I am afraid my metaphors are getting very mixed—well, it can't be helped now.

The next great display was from the bluebells—I think wood-hyacinth suits them better though—One of Ruskin's "two supreme English wild flowers" (I think what he called the "wild rose" was the other). What an "owdacious old villiun" he was to go and make a statement like that—rather like his uncle Esmond in some ways, what? This part of the world must be one of the strongholds of these blue people I think. It seemed only a day or two from the time when I noticed masses of leaves that squeaked as one trod on them, hiding tiny green cones of buds—to the time of their fullest recklessness of colour. I thought it would be a matter of weeks, but as I say—when I passed by a day or two later, there they were in great waves of dim blue running down under the oak woods and splashing through the hedges—and even making pools by the roadsides. They seem to have that strange quality of making not just a blue colour but a blue light.

15.12.17

After seeing more Turners we went to a Matthew Maris exhibition—and here is another thing about T., go and see any of the smaller men after him, and such is the gentleness of his greatness that he makes what they have to say more interesting and not less interesting. Maris does not seem to me in the first rank, for everything is in a minor key, and no pessimism *can* live—but he is exquisite in his way. Most of what we saw is in the special Studio Number, and it gives you a very good idea of him I think. I expect you, Aunt Dolla, have seen a good deal of his

things, haven't you, and James's too—I should like to see them together for they are in a way complementary. Nothing like a lot while you are at it, so next we went to Augustus John who seems to be generally talked of now as the greatest of living English painters! Well I don't quite know what I think about him—there is a good notice on his show in the Times, which I cut out and will send to you if I can find it. There was certainly no lack of variety from portraits to what seemed to A. and me the dullest of landscapes. Several of the portraits are really first rate. Old Admiral Fisher is terrific and puts the wind across me badly—I fairly shake in my shoes when I see him glaring at me and demanding the most abject of salutes. Then there is a head of a very attractive and wicked looking little boy, which Alison immediately pounced on and said was just like Robin—which is the very name that he gives it. It is extraordinarily vital—a masterpiece in its way I think, and so does someone else, who bought it to give to the Nation, so that is a good thing. Then "A philosopher in contemplation", G.B.S. with his eyes shut, and it makes you open your's I can tell you. Then he goes off and makes dozens of pictures of ladies with no backs or tops to their heads—A. and I seemed to be the only people who objected to them—and some awful entirely chinless men with complexions the colour of lilac buds, and pale orange drooping moustaches—I don't know—I give it up—

12th March, 1918.

I wish I could remember how much Mother and Father saw of Edinborough—we were pretty hurried of course and did not see a great many things that we should have—not the inside of the Castle of Holyrood for instance. We found a good hotel—the Palace, at the corner of Princes Street and Castle Street, and our room looked right out to the Castle itself. The hotel was absolutely stiff with clergymen—I am *afraid* not *very* broad-minded—in fact I believe it was considered to be hovering on the brink (the objection was not on patriotic grounds), for us to take sugar on our porridge.

Just fancy having an actual bowl of white sugar on the breakfast table with no sentry or anything guarding it—why I almost believe I should have taken it with tomatoes, and you know my taste in these matters.

First—our only disappointment—I knew there was a fine collection of drawings at the Scottish National Gallery by a fellow of the name of Turner—the Vaughan collection—but we found on enquiring that they were only shown in January of each year—a condition of the bequest—I had known of some such thing but thought they could be seen on application, but though I even asked the director himself there was nothing doing—they were all packed away. The very names were tantalising "Shaffhausen by Moonlight" for instance. I do not think, by the way, I ever mentioned a drawing of South Shields—I think it is—with the moon rising. It is in the National Gallery in London—a coloured post card in the very worst possible taste—to find parallel one must go to old Shakespeare—they make a good pair all right. Hal and I have discussed this question (as indeed all others) and decided that there lies the secret of the greatness of these two gentlemen. It is the same principle in Well's description of the village in "Marriage" where a chestnut tree "with that delightful disregard of triteness, common to all villages, overshadowed the village smithy . . ."

The Raeburns certainly console one for a lot. They are splendid, I do not wonder R.L.S. loved them so—they are no portraits but the real people and no mistake about that.

We went up Carlton Hill one afternoon, and though it was not clear it was a fine sight and we were glad we had gone. The Castle and the other craggy hills break here and there with sudden unexpectedness through the sea of houses like great sealions coming up to breathe, and rather to the scandal I think of prim old maidish Edinborough who sits with folded hands, or with perhaps a little knitting, but nothing more strenuous. This does not sound very kind to Edinborough but I really think she is very beautiful and I only wish we had seen her in sunshine.

The trouble about Edinborough is that it needs to be visited at least twice a year —once in January for J.M.W.T. and once in May or June for the rock garden— Did I say elsewhere in the current issue that I was going to have nothing but pots for alpines?—Perish the thought! Deinacrida Megalomaniacal rock gardens for me every time. I cannot remember when Mother and Father were there, and how much they saw of this garden, which is a far grander affair than the Kew one, and must be magnificent in the Summer and late Spring.

On Thursday, we had a letter saying that I had another day, so we did not have to leave for town on Friday but said "Dod aye we'll gang awa tae Glesgie the morrn's morrn." So off we went next morning. It is about an hour's run and braw are the burrns and bonnie is the soond o' the haggis and the sporran . . . perhaps it it not in the best taste to speak in languages you people are not acquainted with so I shall make an effort—it will be difficult—to keep to the King's English.

Of course the great thing we went to Glasgow to see was the Gallery, and we steered straight for it when we arrived in the middle of the huge bustling town— a very different place from Edinborough—with its rushing red and green and yellow trams. Edinborough's are cable trams and go at a maximum speed of two miles an hour with a soothing sort of lullaby, "clickety, clickety, bump, bump, clickety, clickety, bump,bump, . . . " I think they probably inspired Fred. Chopin Esq. with his "Berceuse." I expect he visited the city, and I am sure they were running then— though that is hardly the word to use.

The Glasgow Gallery is a huge and very ugly place, designed by some of the successful city merchants I should say—assisted by a few elders of the Kirk—but who cares? Who cares? The proof of the pudding is in the inside, as Father might have (and probably has) said. The walls the pictures hang on are a dull sage green—just right . . . I was going to say they might have hung them better, but I don't know, for as it is, just when one is expecting nothing, one is so often most gloriously surprised. We had our first one early in the day. Let me here confess what Alison and I each confessed (for the first time) to the other afterwards—that none of the Italian pictures we had seen in London (remember please that the Bacchus and Ariadne is invisible) had stirred us as much as we had felt they ought to have done. But here we came on, one after the other, a most beautiful little Titian, then a Raphael even better, then an indescribably smiling Correggio—a head—purple—gold—cream —I do not know which—flesh then hair, eyes, and everything, varying only in semi-tone either way to warmth or coolness, and then next to it, and right away in a corner, though it is quite big, something that just melted our stony hearts for ever and ever —a Botticelli—and when you look at it you feel as if you never could be unhappy again—it makes you want to laugh for joy. It is a round picture like the Madonna della Sedia and called Virgin and Child with St. John, I think.

Perhaps you can find a faint echo of it in our Botticelli book. I am sure we shall one of these days come across Botticelli himself, for it cannot have been painted more than a few months ago. The whole thing is like a flower in the tenderness and purity of its colour, and he, all unsuspecting I am sure, gives his character away, for no one but a man full of truth and gentleness could have made such a thing—I remember how Mother always talked of the blue dress of "Judith"—I don't wonder.

There are plenty of dull pictures to be seen—no doubt of that—but I would not have had it otherwise: in one room there is a wall full of Scotch landscapes by various people that I am sure must have been excellent citizens, and in the middle of all this one comes on something that was painted by a person who was not in all ways a model citizen—"painted"—I call it but the old magician was not thinking of paint when he enticed this blue and amber fire down here and held it by enchantment—like the Pied Piper I think, with his " . . . three notes, such sweet soft notes, as yet musician's cunning never gave the enraptured air". And this picture is not like the Boticelli, for it doesn't make you *laugh*—it comes with a too desperate suddenness for one thing—as if one were all at once to hear a mako at dawn in the middle of the midday roar of Oxford street. "Modern Italy" he calls it, though it doesn't matter what he or anyone else *calls* it. Perhaps I ought to have told you of the others first, and kept these two till the last, for there is nothing else that reigns for us in such unchallenged supremacy, but there were a dozen others that seem to me in the first rank in their way. Though I seem rather to have hinted at their rank, when one looks at the Boticelli and Turners one doesn't think of such a thing, and criticism halts abashed . . .

There is a room full of French and modern Dutch things—some Corots and a splendid James Maris—a watercolour of Amsterdam—then two Mauves in rather a minor key, one tiny one of two cows and a girl—simply not to be beaten in its complete unity, and in the serenity of its workmanship. There is a painter in New Zealand who could make things like this—a woman—Miss . . . Miss . . . it begins with "R" . . . Miss Richmond that's it—yes she could draw like this. If you should see her you might tell her I am greatly looking forward to seeing a collection of super Mauves from her wistful brush . . .

Then there are three Boosboms or Bosbooms—which I covet violently for our gallery at home—Aunt D. you know him—the inside of churches and barns—the colour of chamois—only I must write it shammy-leather, tremendously good. In another room some more Raeburns—splendid!—of some most fanciful old ladies of his day—and of every other day too—for they gaily chuck Time under the chin—In another room again a big early Brangwyn "Buried at Sea" very fine—all greys—full of reserve and the promise of strength. Then in another room still, and would you believe it, stuck in a corner again, and worse still, badly skied, a most gorgeous Arthur Melville (just think of Arthur Melville skied in Glasgow!) "The Captured Spy" reproduced in the Studio but not in colour and therefore practically not at all. He was a great psychic, for it is full of what must be the innermost essence of the country and its people, and he was, too, a most brilliant sort of pianist in his handling of things. For sheer daring to the point of audaciousness I have never seen anything to hold a candle to this.

That nasty old Thos. Carlyle is afraid of bombs and has retired to the cellar, which would have been a disappointment if anything on this day could have put us out.

What a lot of talk! and I have told you so little. Never mind—we shall all see it together one of these days. Back in Edinborough again and pretty pleased with ourselves and with one more thing to see before going back by the Saturday midday train to London—the Forth Bridge. We went out to North Queens Ferry early on Saturday and across this Titan of Titans—a bridge? Now if you had said the Himalayas! it is hardly a work of man, there is something elemental about it, and it makes you very weak in the knees to look at it.

Through the great arms of Atlas you can see the waiting ships below—and such ships (I wish I could tell you about them) but here they are just models to float in a duck pond . . . And here is the end of this book—as it is you see I have had to gum in another sheet—I wish there was a Forth Bridge out to New Zealand and I believe A. and I and Hal and a few others would set out to walk home this minute.

The Bay and the people that live in it are the best after all.

H.M.S. "Riviera",
At Sea.

1/5/18

IT IS ten days now since we left England, and it is about time I began to write down something in the way of a diary of the events of these ten days which—by the way—is in defiance of many regulations, so I shall probably finish by eating this to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy. First, Avonmouth to Miford Haven on Thursday 18th April, 1918—a one night's run down the Bristol Channel—a good preliminary canter for the ship before the longest voyage of her life, with a lot of the mud and rubbish of the docks clinging to her after her refit. A fine long harbour is Milford—but we only wanted to get away and be done with it.

This we did at last on Saturday evening 20th April 1918, at about 6.30. I have always wanted to tell you of the proper Navy way of leaving harbour, which is grounded on the best *Pinnafore* principles and has little or no connection with winning the war.

Our upper bridge—"Monkey Island" is the proper name—is large enough for four or five people to move about on comfortably without getting in one another's way, but if you could see it on one of these momentous occasions you would find there:—The Captain, Navigator, Officer of the Watch, Junior Officer of the Watch, Senior Air Service Officer, me (chiefly useful as a moral support for I do little else as a rule

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Plate XXVIII. Water-colour with charcoal. Summer of 1915-16.

"*THE KILMARNOCK FALLS*"

He and his brother followed up the Waimakariri River, and then up its branch the White, till they came to these falls below Mt. Davie. He has painted two pictures in one—the falls and the mountains above, and the pool and rocks below—but who will blame him? Reaching such an exciting place, how tempting it would be to put it all in, and what a splendid over-statement it is.

Plate XXVIII. Water-colour with charcoal. Summer of 1915-16.

Plate XXIX. Water-colour, 1922.

"*THE CLARENCE RIVER IN FLOOD*"

The mountains are blue-grey, and the tussock-covered hills are brown. The flooded river, pale mud-coloured, makes a lovely pattern across its dark grey bed. Painted in VTBB *on a camping expedition to Arthur's Pass via Kaikoura. One of his strongest and most vivid compositions in lights and darks.*

Plate XXX. Water-colour, 1930.

"THE RAKAIA RIVER"

The Rakaia River near where it leaves the mountains. The distant hills pale blue; the bluff jutting out into the middle of the picture, greenish grey; and the river, that milky jade-green characteristic of glacier-fed rivers.

Plate XXXI. Water-colour, 1913.

"*LOOKING TOWARDS THE MOUNTAINS FROM LAKE BRUNNER*"

Chalky-blue mountains are reflected in the water, and the nearer hills, trees, and beach are greenish-grey. Absorbed in painting it, he did not notice the time, and missed the last train to Greymouth. He and his wife had to ride the twenty-seven miles on borrowed bicycles to get back. They arrived tired and late, but he had done good work.

but join in the choruses which are loud and frequent), Yeoman of Signals, and two or even three other Signalmen, one rating at the engine room telegraph, one at the voice pipe, and the quartermaster on the lower bridge, generally a sprinkling of other ratings with frantic messages from different parts of the ship. The general noise of orders—often repeated in chorus by the entire strength of the company—and counter orders and cursings and telegraph gongs and leadsmen's cries (you always have the chains manned even if you know there are 100 fathoms of water) is quite symphonic in its richness, and besides the noise there are generally hoists of flags and pennants winding round people's heads and knocking their caps off, and such a waving of megaphones and telescopes and arms—if you have got nothing better to wave you can always wave your arms—and frenzied flapping in the wind of huge charts, and flying overboard of most secret signals, as you never did see in your life. I often think of old Nelson and wonder what he would have said of all this with his "Never mind manoeuvres—go for them!" but I must say that after all, the ship *does* get out of harbour successfully enough in spite of everything . . .

* * * *

We left Valetta for Taranto on Tuesday, May 7th in the afternoon—a choppy sea in Malta Channel, and a nasty kick to the ship. Faint Sicily to port at dusk, and then, next morning, Italy with the divinely glittering silver of far away snow mountains. We ran up the Gulf in good time and entered the Mare Grande—the outer harbour of Taranto—at about 3 p.m.

The country round is flattish—low hills covered with olives and gradually rising in the distance. Taranto itself, from the sea, is a mile or two of solid looking town, and slap into the middle of this you steam, till a canal with a swing bridge across it (which opens for traffic twice a day) suddenly appears ahead, just when you think you are going to pile the ship up on the beach. The town turns into a mere fringe of buildings only a few streets deep; rather a come down after such valiant promises. But as you steam through the canal with the whole population—naval, military and civil—gazing a yard or so away on either side, there is no thought of disappointment—far from it—for there suddenly appear two big cake-like harbours joined by a narrow neck like an hour-glass, and in it are basking all the great ships of Italy's navy—huge they are and very pale in their greys which makes them look their full size. Good names they have too—*Giulio Cesare*—*Dane Alighieri Andrea Doria*—don't they ring well? In the midst of some of the biggest, rises a low curving shape like a sandbank and this is the "*Leonardo da Vinci*", sunk by explosion a year or so ago, but they are raising her. I wonder when we shall rise to the enlightenment of knowing which our greatest men are and having a "Joseph Mallord William Turner!" Imagine the old gentleman's delight at such a thing, but I believe he would quit the port o' heaven and insist on the letters, R.A. and P.P. being added to complete the title. Tut Tut . . . Turner again—this bird must be destroyed . . . They gave us a billet away off in the innermost harbour so that it took our motor boat half an hour to reach the British flagship—*Queen*—when the captain and I went to see what was what, and try to learn something of the whereabouts of our mails—everyone delightfully vague as usual and no mails. I was on watch the next day, Thursday 9th, but on Friday went ashore with old Pay—the *Huzzar* having arrived at about the same time as we did. He knew Taranto pretty well, and he took me through the town—first across the bridge to the old town, and then back through the newer part and out towards the country abreast of where the ship was lying.

The town is dirty beyond all description, and the side streets, bogs pure and simple—you jump precariously from shallow to shallow—but you may see Raphael's Maddonas and Children in the doors—mud or no mud. Then we went on by a country road to an olive orchard—do you call them orchards?—under the trees tall barley with its first gold coming into it, splashed with the most vivid of poppies, and in daring contrast, deep violet viper's bugloss, and blue love-in-the-mist, waves of them —breaking in spray against the low stone wall. We sat on it and talked with our feet dangling in this enchanted sea. These particular olives are evidently very old trees, for their trunks were very big and often only a shell—as to their colour—well, they might almost be New Zealanders and that is good enough for me. (By the way what, out of a thousand guesses, do you think is the commonest tree round Valetta? our ngaio—and didn't he make one homesick—I think he was too, in that heat and white dust). Pay has been having a few lessons in Italian and it was amusing to hear him airing it—He says he fills up any gaps with musical words and tells the cabmen to drive "*allergo ma non troppo*" (you would realise the need for this last part if you could see the streets and roads) and so on, with great success.

We couldn't stay long as Pay was dining with some friend on the beach, and I had to get back to the ship, and the clouds began to pile up into the most portentious of blue-black precipices. We just managed to get out to the *Hussar*, he to change, and I to wait for my boat, when down it came—the whole bottom of the sky fell out, and in a few minutes there was nothing left to fall. Then by magic, the clouds rose and melted, leaving a horizon, amber coloured and clear as the water of a mountain stream, and below it, hills past all painting in the blueness (I accept your challenge though, Taranto, we shall see!) and the harbour that had been a seething fury, sank back into deepest quiet in what seemed a few moments only. And as we went back to the ship, there was the whole fleet hung, by some enchantment, in front of the hills, between the sky and the no less ethereal water. I knew with this to look at what I have missed (without altogether knowing it) in England, something that to me is beyond all loveliness of mist and soft distances—the piercing music of that absolute clearness of light that we see at home—in its supremacy perhaps only once a year and I daresay no oftener here . . . We got all our machines safely landed by Friday and on Saturday the 11th, left again for Malta threading our way through the fleet once more, and sounding the "still" as we passed each ship—always an impressive business this is, but I don't know that the playing of "Beer glorious beer" by the Italian flagship band (though full of a far more appropriate humour than they knew of) added to the impressiveness.

We came out of the boom gate with several French transports full of troops but soon left them behind. There was a fine sunset and very persistent afterglow and I stayed for a long time on the quarter deck (a bad place at full speed from the ceaseless rain of clinkers) watching it—a clear rosy sky over the jagged purple flame of mountains, with the newest of new moons (a mere shining wisp) floating in it and in the foreground, against the silhouettes of the two 12 pounders, the writhing tumult of our wake, green and phosphorescent and stained red from the sky. We reached Valetta without adventure except for mistaking a large sleeping turtle for a floating mine, and firing two furious rounds from a 12 pounder at what the gunmen thought was a submarine making for us, but which was really an innocent lighthouse five miles off on the Sicilian coast.

We had all understood pretty definitely, before we left for Taranto—that we were to return to England for magazine alterations almost immediately, so everyone felt rather disgusted when, after we had been lying in the Grand Harbour for a few days, we got a signal saying that the ship was to proceed to Marga Scirocco (at the south end of Malta), ship seaplanes from the air station there, and then await further orders. We went round next morning—only half an hours run—and anchored in the little bay, in water so clear that we could see the bottom as plainly as could be, forty or fifty feet down, but the water was not green, as it would be at home in a place like this, but of such super Prussian blueness, that to dip one's hand in and to find it not actually dyed, was astonishing to me.

In this sea were fish that could have lived nowhere else—greenstone in colour and eyed with rows of peacock blue spots—as gaily painted as butterflies. Well, after a day or so of delay we were told we were to proceed to Syracuse, to carry out patrols from there, till the Admiralty orders about us had been received. This looked better than we had imagined, and everyone was quite pleased at the idea of a week or so in Sicily, and then a return to England. I had great visions of climbing Etna, and other enterprises not connected to any alarming extent with the war perhaps.

We left on Saturday, May 18th at about 11 p.m. expecting some fun, as Fritz had just bagged five ships in the very route we were to take. We had got out about five miles or so, when up dashes on to the bridge, in a panic hurry, one of the W/T. men with a message from the C.M.C. "Stop—do not proceed" so round we went again, and felt our way back in the pitch dark to our moorings. We thought this was to do with Fritz, this sudden recall, and it was the end of Sicily for us—went round to Valetta next day and on the Tuesday (21st) left for Gibraltar.

. . . We are now under the wing of Gibralter on our way back (temporarily) to England—it is the 25th today, Saturday, and we left Malta on Tuesday, 21st; this time by ourselves and unencumbered with neighbours. An uneventful voyage again—no Fritzes. We landed most of our Air Force officers at Malta to their great disgust—for which I do not in the least blame them—but as we are bringing home several officers on leave, the wardroom mess remains about the same size as before. Yesterday all the Mediterranean blueness went out of the sea, leaving it a lovely kind of aquamarine—I cannot understand what it is that governs all these colour changes. We passed Alboran Island with its lighthouse at about 8 p.m. yesterday, and knew that we shouldn't arrive till two in the morning, so I turned in—in my clothes—at about 11 and told them to call me when Gib. was sighted, but I woke up at twelve of my own accord and found it would be two hours more at least. The captain and paymaster and senior flying officer were about, besides the navigator and O.O.W., and we had an awful orgie of sardines—four very big tins—and huge quantities of bread and butter and beer, though I did not get as far as this last myself, and all round us, and in the sardines and butter and beer, was more coal dust than I have ever seen before—not as generally distributed through the ship as when we are coaling, but far more concentrated in the wardroom, and from all the cracks of its snowy walls were long tongues of black dust blown from the leaky and almost empty bunkers by the forced draught fans. The captain who has been in oil-burning (and therefore dustless) destroyers for years, nearly had an apoplectic fit and at the end of our next long run—when we arrive in England—is going to have it left as it is, so that he can rub some of the dockyard people's noses in it, and persuade them to do something

to stop it. Then they called us up, for the Gib. lights had been sighted—it was full moon or nearly so—a very blue and clear moonlight, and it was a half hour of magic beauty this approach to the old giant—very mysterious and elusive he was—with great veils of purple shadow thrown over his shoulders. You will be amused to hear, after my vigorous assertions earlier in the book, that I succumbed, and next day made a small drawing, the second I have done since I left New Zealand. As a matter of fact I half thought, when I was writing that the other day, that it might prove to be the prelude to a little more painting. It is Tuesday the 28th today and we were supposed to have been leaving with a convoy (as an escort this time) tomorrow morning, but there has been trouble with leaky tubes in one of the boilers, and now we shall probably not get away till Saturday. Where do you think I went yesterday? To Spain! and I wish I could have had you all there. Of course to go in uniform is out of the question, one would be promptly interned.

An order from the Admiral, not from Spain, came out a few days ago stopping all NOs. from going even in mufti, but as we hadn't received it officially in the ship we decided not to worry about it, and succeded in borrowing three coats and three caps and hats from a sergeants' mess ashore. The other two besides me were old Doc. and Rhys the R.A.F. engineer officer—a quiet Welshman that I often go for walks with.

Doc. had not had mufti on since the beginning of the war and I felt very queer getting into it again. We certainly looked a pretty rascally trio and I wonder the Spanish authorities did not arrest us as undesirable aliens, quite apart from our being belligerents—Cook's tourists nearer the mark!

We went across the bay in an absurb little paddle steamer to Algeciras, a run of about three miles directly opposite the Rock. I have always thought longingly of Spain somehow—I suppose this is not what most people would call the real essence of Spain at all, but it made me feel very sure that it is a country one could spend months in. Algeciras is quite small and quite surprisingly clean compared with Gibraltar even, which is not by any means a dirty place. The houses are all whitewashed and re-whitewashed once more and over again, so that they are dazzingly brilliant, almost impossible to look at in the sun, and through little arched doorways you may look into tiny courtyards—with most delightful small brown people in them—and all splashed with the colours of gay flowers, and overhead with the pale green of the vine leaves. I wanted to go straight up to the hills, and would have if I had been alone, but the others thought that too strenuous, and said we must have tea first—so we did. Doc. pointed down his throat, saying "we want tea . . . gateau—you savvy?" which they did more or less, only I think we must have spent ten minutes trying to turn shillings into the equivalent number of pesetas—I find mathematics quite difficult enough in English and was soon utterly at sea, but old Doc. tackles all problems with glorious light heartedness and we got off at last—though I think they did better out of us than they should. Then off we went by a back street and suddenly came on a biggish stream where all the ladies of Algeciras were hard at work washing. Over their heads was the beautiful old Moorish aqueduct. (I think there is a picture of Alfred East's of this in his book) full of strength and grace—I shall want to make bridges like this in the bush. I dragged the others on because the ground was rising into a quite respectable hill and I wanted to get up it to see the view and to see what the purple haze all over the ground meant. When I got to it I found it was

field upon field of all the flowers in Spain, come I'm sure for my especial benefit, and just at their zenith. I have seen more gorgeous meadows (of poppies) but there were all the colours under the sun here—the loveliest of mosaics—petal beside petal as far as one could see—waving thistles—real amethyst they were—shell pink mallows, and little convolvuluses cut out with a pair of scissors from the sky I think—only the purest material used—and clumps of anchusa, deliriously blue—the sea here must look to its laurels—and a flower like a comfrey with most extraordinary steel-blue backs, quite unlike any other colour—it is foolish really to try to describe a sight like this—and the flowers I have mentioned were only a few out of dozens, and every inch of ground was enamelled with tiny things between the larger ones. I always become quite cracked over this kind of display and pick far more than I can manage to deal with. Even Doc. who cares not a hang for anyone said: "Look here Atkey, if you think I am going to walk through Gib. in uniform with you carrying those things beside me, you are damn well mistaken." He did as a matter of fact, and we met the captain and the whole crowd of them parading the streets, and there was a perfect howl of merriment when they saw what I had got. There are now five tins of flowers in my cabin, and as there were already—besides the usual furniture—three large safes of confidential books, navigation is beset with difficulties, as you may imagine.

I drug myself with these gay beauties. I enjoy them in a kind of feverish way, but when I think of those great ice-pure buttercups in our own hills (I have got a photograph of them here beside me) or any of the others for that matter, these butterfly-like creatures become as unsubstantial as the image in a dream . . . I did not tell you of the swallows and their nests in Algeciras—little mud nests fastened very cleverly onto the white walls under the eaves—the doors are on the small side, so that a great amount of wriggling and twisting is necessary before the owners can get in.

The little swallows themselves are delightful—much more brightly glittering in colour than I had thought, and the little trills and grace notes of their flights are incredible—a kind of ecstacy of nimbleness.

Later . . . in fact June 2nd and once more at sea on our way back to England at last after many delays. We are with an impossibly slow convoy—seven knots—and are zig-zagging in front of them at about ten, a terribly dreary process, while another escort does the same astern of the convoy to keep old Fritz from walking in the back door so to speak.

We had to leave our slow convoy somewhere about the middle of the Bay of Biscay owing to a serious shortage of coal, we should hardly have been able to get to England if we had kept on zig-zagging ahead of them for the rest of the way. It was decided to make for Devonport and we arrived there on Friday without adventure except for an amusing meeting with a French sloop. We sighted her on Thursday afternoon—somewhere off Ushant I suppose it must have been—made the usual challenges and replies, and then about ten minutes later a signalman came down to the captain in the wardroom. "From the navigator Sir, the French sloop is chasing us at full speed." Sure enough when we got up—there she was astern digging in for all she was worth but she could not overhaul us and stopped and began signalling us by searchlight, asking our distinguishing number. We gave it to her, but she still seemed to be unsatisfied, and to want something more, so round we came

and back four or five miles (more of our precious coal gone), and steamed right round her as she lay there with no way on and absolutely asking to be torpedoed. She was crowded with her crew, all of them blown out with an extraordinary variety of lifebelts and looking like Tweedledum and Tweedledee (I should have felt safer with a stone tied round my neck). What do you think her important communication was? "We wish you a happy voyage"! ! The old man was furious but had the grace to say "Thank you." If he said something rude I should never have been able to lift up my head again. I think the French are superb, don't you?

A Devonport destroyer met us that night and escorted us in.

Friday morning was a regular West Country day, driving mist and rain, but it was good to see old Eddystone once more and the extraordinarily sweet and temperate lines of the hills. I think perhaps Plymouth Sound and country round it are the loveliest of all the England I know, partly no doubt (and I wouldn't have it otherwise) with the afterglow of the wonderful glamour of that first arrival of mine in the *Pakeha,* only eighteen months ago! We took in a hundred tons or so of coal, and sailed again for Chatham on Saturday evening in a fairy sea like lilac silk (a horrible comparison but true). A good run up Channel—Sheerness on Sunday morning—and on Monday morning up to the dockyards at Chatham. The ship is paying off on next Monday morning—17th—I shall probably go to Whale Island again and then I don't know where—so this finishes my acquaintance with the old *Riviera.* I came up to town last night and I never saw anything so superlatively English as the country between Chatham and London. There is a kind of static contentment in its soft lush blue-green. After that cataract of rock out there in the Straits I somehow rebel against this, beautiful as it is, and if I had to live in England, which heaven forbid, it would be in the West.

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17.5.47	Tauranga	13.5.48	D476
14.6.47	D139	18.6.48	AP.
22.8.47	D454	23.7.48	D1626
27.9.47	D364.	14.8.48	D1551
8.11.47	Rathkati	4.9.48	D1409
18.1.48	D151	1.10.48	D452
26.2.48	D1500	7.11.48	D811
R5	23.3.48	19Mar'51 HQ	McCormick WIn:W
R5	5.4.48	NaP	

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