

Even at the present time hundreds visit the island during the summer months, notwithstanding the inadequate means of transport over Foveaux Strait, and the available accommodation is taxed to excess. Boating, excellent fishing, bathing, picnics under the most delightful surroundings, scenery of the highest character, walks through unspoiled forest full of ferns, with glimpses of sea (Photo No. 42) or mountain through the greenery, and, for the more ambitious, mountain-climbs or yachting on the actual ocean—these are amongst the attractions at present offered. Within a mile's radius of Half-moon Bay as a centre a dozen easy walks may be taken, each different, and all equally delightful (see Frontispiece). The beautiful islet of Ulva is distant by boat some half-hour; a good path traverses it from end to end, and the visitor passes through a perfect piece of virgin forest (Photo No. 34).

And this brings me to that feature which gives the island its special and perhaps some day unique value. The face of the earth is changing so rapidly that soon, in temperate regions at any rate, there will be little of primitive Nature left. In the Old World it is practically gone for ever. Here, then, is Stewart Island's prime advantage, and one hard to overestimate. *It is an actual piece of the primeval world.*

(b.) *The Scenery of Stewart Island (Rakiura, the Land of Heavenly Glows).* (See Photo No. 42.)

It is hard to speak of the scenery of Stewart Island without using a superabundance of superlatives. There is, indeed, no part but is delightful, and in many spots it is unsurpassed by the best that New Zealand as a whole can offer. Paterson Inlet and Port Pegasus, with their numerous wooded islets (Photos Nos. 40 and 41), deep or shallow indentations, and hidden nooks, present ever-changing pictures. Caerhowel Arm, piercing almost to the centre of the island, is wonderfully beautiful. At first a couple of miles or less in width, the hills on either side rising steeply for 1,000 ft., and covered with a close forest of varied greens, it gradually narrows as its head is approached, the mountains increasing in height. Then the calm waters of the Rakiwhia River are gained, which, winding through the forest, unfold new beauties at each bend, the banks adorned with tall shrubs of many kinds, their leaves glittering in the sunshine, while forest, shrubbery, and the neighbouring mountains are perfectly mirrored in the dark waters, unruffled save where the dainty little teal swims quite fearless of the intruder.

The scenery of Port Pegasus and that of the southern part of the island generally is of a sterner character (see Photo No. 39). This is the veritable "land's end," where naked granite cones pierce the heavens for 1,000 ft., rising from a bleak and barren moorland framed by the evergreen New Zealand forest, here at its most southern outpost, unless we include its grotesque subantarctic continuation on the inhospitable Aucklands.

What variety do the waters themselves show! See them just before sunrise on a calm day—a glistening sheet of slaty blue, bounded by distant hills, indigo in hue, the summits masked by smoke-like cloud. View them in the glowing noontide—the myriad tiny waves aflame with gold. Or watch them lashed in white fury by the western gale.

In contradistinction to the inlets and sheltered bays of the east is Mason Bay, on the west. Here is a fine semicircular sweep of some ten miles of firm sand, terminating at either end in cliffs, and backed by sandhills more than 400 ft. in height. The beauty of the bay is increased by a rugged island in the north, dark in colour, and two islets draped with sage-green foliage close inshore at the southern boundary. But the glory of Mason Bay are the great foam-crested rollers that day after day break upon its strand, for here the southern ocean, unchecked for thousands of miles, strikes from the west with the full power of its might. Nor come the waters altogether empty-handed. Many strange offerings lie upon the glistening sands—the precious and perfume-bearing ambergris, pumice from the volcanic region of the north, curious shells and trees, too, not of Stewart Island. Many sea-birds congregate on this desolate shore, or fly overhead uttering harsh cries (Cockayne, 21).

Space forbids an account of the views from the summits of Mounts Anglem or Rakiwhia (the former of great extent), or from the more easily gained Pryce's Peak (reached by boat from Golden Bay in an hour, with another hour or so to the summit),* the scene from which is both extensive and charming.

(c.) *Protection of the Fauna and Flora.*

It has been shown that the future of Stewart Island does not depend upon its agricultural capabilities, but upon its value as a pleasure resort, this value arising, indeed, from the general uselessness of the plant-covering as food for stock and the slight value of much of the forests for timber purposes. It has also been shown what a splendid asset to Stewart Island and to the Dominion is the possession of a primeval plant-covering, with its accompanying bird-life, and how this virgin state of the island increases infinitely its value as an attraction to visitors.

The lesson to be learnt therefrom, and which is illustrated by almost every page of this report, is that *the plant-covering should, as far as possible, be kept intact*; that, in fact, the forest as it is and the other plant-associations as they are, are far more valuable from the monetary point of view to the Dominion than if they were destroyed and turned into farms, the value of which would be at best very problematical. This fact the Government has recognised by the gazetting of those parts of the island shown on the map as, on the one hand, scenic reserves, and, on the other, reserves for preservation of the fauna and flora.

It now remains to see that these reserves are kept sacred. No bird should be destroyed within their precincts, no trees should be felled, and fires should be carefully guarded against. On the preserving of these reserves inviolate the prosperity of Stewart Island depends. Certain sanctuaries for plants and animals have now been in existence for several years in New Zealand, but in order to protect them *no one is allowed to visit them.* This gazetting of the large areas in Stewart Island has

* I would strongly recommend that a track be cut to the summit of this hill. The expense would be slight, and a delightful excursion be put easily within reach of every visitor to the island.