

#### THE ECONOMIC STANDPOINT.

Travelling over the level lands in the south-bound train from Christchurch on a summer's day, wheat, fence high, and golden in the sun; the grey green of oats in ear; the darker green of well-tilled root crops, interspersed with clumps and lines of English and Australian trees, make relieving splashes of colour against the purple haze of the foothills, and indicate a fertile soil. At intervals we rumble over the long bridge of some snow-fed river, with its great shingle flats and islands, and its opalescent water forming many interlacing streams, and we realize that the work done in the giant laboratory of the Frost King, in the heart of the Alps, is here finding its full fruition, and we know also that the planing glacier, the eroding torrent, and the crumbling moraine are still at work. They are the Mills of the Gods, slowly grinding, and though they grind exceedingly small, they have made, in time, through the agency of these great snow-fed rivers, a land that is of a verity flowing with milk and honey—a land that is already the granary of the islands. Thus the Southern Alps have an important bearing upon the economic possibilities of the country. Their never-failing rivers, by means of irrigation, will make possible a still more intense cultivation on the plains of Canterbury and Otago. But beyond all this there are possibilities almost undreamt of in the enormous power from lake and river now running to waste. In short, the Southern Alps may one day make New Zealand not only the playground of Australasia, but its manufactory as well. A return recently compiled, giving the more important available water powers in both islands shows an average of 3,817,180 horse power and 2,854,470 kilowatts. A considerable number of these powers are suitable for general industrial development, but the largest ones, being mainly in the unsettled portions of the Middle Island, and near the deep water sounds, are particularly suitable for utilization in connexion with electric-chemical or electric-metallurgical industries. Finally, the Southern Alps must not be despised from the tourist point of view. They already bring many visitors to New Zealand from all parts of the world; and, in years to come, when torrid Australia and the sweltering Pacific number their population by many millions, this splendid mountain chain both in summer and in winter will have become the playground of the new nations under the Southern Cross.

#### EFFECT ON CHARACTER AND PHYSIQUE.

But apart altogether from the physical aspect and the economic aspect, a splendid Alpine chain, such as forms the backbone of the Middle Island of New Zealand, is almost certain to have some influence upon the character and physique of the nation, but more especially upon the character and physique of a nation endowed with those qualities of hardihood and adventure that are such predominant features of the Anglo-Saxon race. In a rather remarkable article on "Mountaineering as a Sport for Soldiers," published in *The Times* in 1907, the writer pointed out that "there can be few better tests of the essential qualities of leadership than a really critical moment on a mountain. The man who can retain his judgment and confidence, and keep up the spirits of his party, when the way has already been lost, when all the rocks are coated with new verglas, when fingers are numb with cold, and when the guides begin to lose their heads and jabber furiously in incomprehensible *patois*—he is the man who is no less certain to keep his nerve and sustain his subordinates when casualties are heaviest and the hope of support faintest." Where there are mountains and where there are British people there will, of a surety, be climbing, and the sport develops character and brings out qualities that are of

first importance in the affairs of everyday life as well as in warfare. From this point of view, therefore, as well as from the others mentioned, New Zealand has a valuable asset in her mountains. It is an asset, too, that is already being developed to some purpose.

#### THE CONQUEST OF THE GREAT PEAKS.

The splendid mountain chain that forms the backbone of the Middle Island was, during the early period of colonization, a *terra incognita* to all but a few New Zealanders, and it is only within recent years that the sons of those bold pioneers, who travelled over so many leagues of ocean to build themselves new homes and to lay the foundation of a new and sturdy nation, have ventured into the heart of the Southern Alps to wrest the secrets of the higher snows. The age of conquest has been long delayed, but once started, the conquerors have marched to victory with even greater vigour than did their forefathers in the European Alps. It took some little time to gain the necessary experience, for the Antipodean climbers had not only to learn the craft taught by others, but they had to be their own guides, their own step-cutters, and even their own porters. With the first taste of victory came the lust for other conquests, and, one by one, the great peaks have fallen, till now there is not one first-class mountain left unconquered, and already "traverses" and new routes up old peaks are becoming the fashion. Though the New Zealanders have won for themselves most of the higher summits, there are a number of the peaks that have fallen before climbers from the Motherland. The New Zealanders, however, did their work without assistance, and it says much for the courage, for the endurance, and for the resource of the race that the sons of the pioneers have accomplished this remarkable record without a single fatal accident, and indeed without serious misadventure of any kind.

To an Englishman, and a member of the Alpine Club, the Rev. William Spotswood Green, belongs the credit of having initiated Alpine climbing in this, the furthest part of our Outer Empire. Previously the old pioneers had done some preliminary exploratory and geological work. Many of these have now passed away. Mr. Howitt lost his life in Lake Brunner in 1863, and Mr. G. Dobson was murdered on the West Coast in 1866. Dr. Sinclair was drowned in one of the branches of the Rangitata River. He was buried at a place called Mesopotamia, in the words of his friend, Dr. von Haast, "near the banks of the river just where it emerges from the Alps, with their perpetual snowfields glistening in the sun. Amidst veronicas, senecios, and covered with celmias, and gentians, there lies his lonely grave." But it was Green's work in the Southern Alps that fired the imagination of that hardy band of young Colonial pioneers who, like their forefathers in the Alps of Switzerland, were destined to lead the way in Alpine conquest. Green came with two experienced Swiss climbers—Emil Boss and Ulrich Kaufmann—and though he was not successful in reaching the actual summit of Mount Cook, he did some splendid work under great difficulties. The story of his adventures is simply and graphically told in his book, which must ever remain a classic in New Zealand mountaineering literature.

The season of 1893-4 will ever be memorable in the annals of New Zealand mountaineering, for that was the season in which the first of the great peaks fell. On March 7, 1895, Fyfe, by himself, made the first ascent of that splendid rock peak Malte Brun (10,241ft.); with Jack Clark and Dr. Franz Kronecker (a tourist from Germany) he climbed Mount Darwin (9,700ft.); and with George Graham he ascended Mount de la Beche (10,040ft.) and the Footstool (9,073ft.). It was a fine performance for the young New Zealanders, who had by this time acquired not only the craft of climbing, but also of route-finding.

#### MOUNT COOK.

Meantime there had been no further serious attempt upon Mount Cook, but early in the season 1894-5 Malcolm and Kenneth Ross and Marmaduke Dixon, three New Zealanders, arranged an expedition with a view to making the first ascent of the mountain. The story of

their struggles under most adverse conditions forms a graphic page in the annals of New Zealand mountaineering. Owing to bad weather and a series of defeats, the composition of the expedition was altered from time to time. In addition to those named, T. C. Fyfe, George Graham, J. Clark, and Dr. Cox were concerned in various assaults upon the peak, till, finally, the effort of the first three—who had abandoned Green's route *via* the Linda Glacier in favour of a rock route on the Hooker, or Western side—were crowned with success. It was 1.30 p.m. on Christmas Day, 1894, when these three stepped on to the highest pinnacle of the Southern Alps, and won for New Zealand the honour of the conquest of New Zealand's highest mountain. That same season, Mr. E. A. Fitzgerald, a member of the English Alpine Club, arrived with the famous guide Zurbriggen to climb Mount Cook and other peaks. The visitors spent some time in Christchurch and on their way to the theatre of operations they met the victorious New Zealanders returning from their conquest. Fitzgerald, however, continued his expedition, and did some remarkably fine work, including the first ascents of Mount Tasman (11,467ft.), Mount Sefton (10,350ft.), Mount Haidinger (10,063ft.), and Mount Sealy (8,651ft.). To Mr. Fitzgerald also belongs the honour of having discovered an easy pass from the vicinity of Mount Cook to the

West Coast—a pass that other explorers had been seeking for some time, but had failed to find. There was no further serious climbing for a few years till Malcolm Ross and T. C. Fyfe made a first ascent of Haidinger by the eastern face, and the first ascent of the Minarets (10,058ft.). They also made an adventurous crossing by a new pass at the head of the great Tasman Glacier through some unexplored country down the Whymper Glacier and the left branch of the Wataroa River to the West Coast, a climb that has not been again attempted. There was now an interval in big climbing till 1905, when the first traverse of Mount Cook was made by a party consisting of S. Turner, T. C. Fyfe, and Malcolm Ross with Peter Graham as guide. The remarkable feature of this climb—of which an account appeared in *The Times*—was the descent of the mountain on the western side under exceedingly adverse conditions. The rocks from top to bottom were ice-glazed, and the snow-slopes were frozen hard. The party had to climb through the night to get to a place of safety, and they were altogether 36 hours on the march from the bivouac on the eastern side till they reached the Hermitage on the other side of the mountain. The descent produced some thrilling experiences. Next season the west coast climbers Dr. Teichelman and the Rev. Mr. Newton, with Mr. R. S. Low, a Scottish climber, and guide Alex. Graham, came into prominence. They commenced a series of ascents from the western side of the range, on which the scenery is more varied and even more imposing than it is on the eastern side. Some fine work was also accomplished that season by Mr. H. Sillem, a Dutchman, in company with the New Zealand guides Clark and Graham. He ascended Mount Cook, Malte Brun, the Footstool, and Sealy, and succeeded in making the first ascent of Elie de Beaumont (10,200ft.) and the Southern Peak of Mount Cook (11,844ft.). In 1907 Dr. Teichelman and the Rev. Mr. Newton, with Alex. Graham, made the first ascent of Mount Douglas (10,107ft.) and of Torris Peak (10,576ft.). Mounts Haast, Lendenfelt, Conway, and Glacier Peak (all over 10,000ft.) also fell to them. There were no high ascents made in 1908; but in the 1909 season the guides were kept busy. Mr. Claude McDonald, a member of the Alpine Club, made the first traverse of Malte Brun (10,421ft.), and Mr. L. M. Earle, also a member of the Alpine Club, with three guides, ascended Mount Cook by a new route from the Hooker Valley. The climb was mostly on good rocks, and is probably the easiest and shortest way to the summit of the mountain. Several first ascents of second-class peaks were made.

#### A LADY'S ACHIEVEMENT.

Mummery in his delightful book about his climbs in the Alps and Caucasus says, humorously, that a mountain passes through three phases, "An inaccessible peak," "The most difficult climb in the Alps," and "An easy day for a lady." His classification has been proved true in regard to the New Zealand as well as the European Alps, and Mount Cook, which baffled Green and his Swiss experts and the early New Zealand climbers, has now been climbed by two women. Miss Du Faur, a Sydney girl, in 1911 made the ascent by the Hooker rock route in company with the two guides Peter and Alex. Graham, while Mrs. Lindon, an Englishwoman resident in Australia, a year later with Peter Graham and D. Thomson, made the first ascent of Mount Cook by Green's route. The conditions for both ascents were perfect. Miss Du Faur has also climbed Mount Tasman (11,475ft.), Mount Dampier (11,323ft.)—a first ascent—and several other peaks. This season 1912-13, in company with Graham and Thomson, she has succeeded in making a traverse of the three peaks of Mount Cook from a high bivouac on the Hooker side to the bivouac on the Tasman side—a remarkable feat. On this trip the climbers were favoured with glorious weather, and the conditions were also good; otherwise the climb would have been almost hopeless. The writer has looked down the long icy knife edge that, with its bends and steep slopes and cornices, joins the three peaks together, and has realized the almost insuperable difficulties in the way of success, except under ideal conditions. All honour then to the two New Zealand guides and the young Australian girl who have accomplished such a daring feat.

Looking back over this series of victories, won without a single fatal accident, one would fain ask, What of the future? It is true the great peaks have all been conquered; but every year there is an increasing number of climbers eager to climb them again, and the modern mountaineer, looking north and south along the splendid mountain chain, realizes that there are still hundreds of untrdden peaks that will give work for generations of climbers yet unborn.

*The Times* Sat May 24 1913.

#### THE MAORI.

#### THEIR HISTORY AND PRESENT STATUS.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

The Maori race is one which has come into the daylight of the civilized world within quite a recent period. So far as history concerns itself with this race, an offshoot of the great Polynesian stock, it has to content itself with its deeds and doings in New Zealand. The best tradition speaks in a hesitating way about the race that inhabited that country previous to the Maori. They do not know from what stock they sprung, but it is more than probable that the newcomers were picked men of superior physique and the more capable fighting men. Time and opportunity were alone wanting, and in the course of a hundred years, perhaps even less, the original population would be absorbed by the usual process of the destruction of the males and the absorption of the females. The newcomers found a land which developed and possibly improved the physical characteristics of the mixed race. Food was plentiful and could be grown in plenty, but it required a considerable amount of labour and skill to obtain it. Under the stress of these circumstances agriculture was developed to a relatively high level and hunting in its various branches be-