William Ledingham Christie

A REMARKABLE NEW ZEALAND DOCTOR

Ron Easthope

Introduction

A first generation New Zealander born of Scottish immigrant parents, William Ledingham Christie was largely self-educated as a teenager. He had a distinguished record during his medical undergraduate years and in 1887 he became New Zealand's first medical graduate. He set up practice in Otago but suffered the tragic early death of his wife. In 1892, he headed to Britain for postgraduate surgical training with the intention of returning but for reasons that will become clear, he never did set foot back in the country of his birth. Taking a job as house surgeon at a Bristol hospital would lead to a remarkable series of events and during the next 17years he embarked on a crusade to improve the lot of the children of impoverished Bristol families. In 1911 he went to the Far East to embark on a radically different career and, apart from the WW1 years, he would remain there until 1920.

Included as appendices are four more or less first-hand accounts by Christie which give some insight into the nature of this extraordinary man, and to the times in which he lived.

I am grateful to a number of people for helping me with my search for source material. These include extended family members Lesley Fursdon, Michael Foster, Kerry Christie, Susan Taliaferro and Ken McAdam. Newspaper archives have proved to be a rich source of information - in New Zealand the Papers Past site and in the UK, the British Newspaper Archive. Thanks go to Richard German, Medical Librarian in Dunedin, Gary Ross of the South Otago Museum and Neil Gamble of Outram Archives. Most of all I am grateful to Kate Guthrie of Hocken Archives and to Kerry Christie for providing access to letters written by Ethel Christie.

Ron Easthope : last updated 31 October, 2014

CHAPTER 1

Family background

William and Mary Christie arrived in Port Chalmers, Otago on 8 May, 1857. Along with their 1yr-old daughter Jessie, they had sailed from London on the "SS Nourmahal", traveling steerage.[1] William and Mary were from Aberdeenshire. The Dunedin that became their initial home was a young town, population around 1,700. William was a blacksmith by trade but initially found other work in Port Chalmers followed by a spell as a cattleman on a Maniatoto station.[2,3]

William Ledingham Christie was born in Dunedin on 26th March,1860 and by then his father was working as a blacksmith.[4]

The discovery of gold in Gabriel's Gully in 1861 led to a huge increase in the population of Dunedin, rising to nearly 15,000 inhabitants by the end of the 1860s. William, along with thousands of other prospectors went to Gabriel's Gully where he had some success in finding gold.[5]

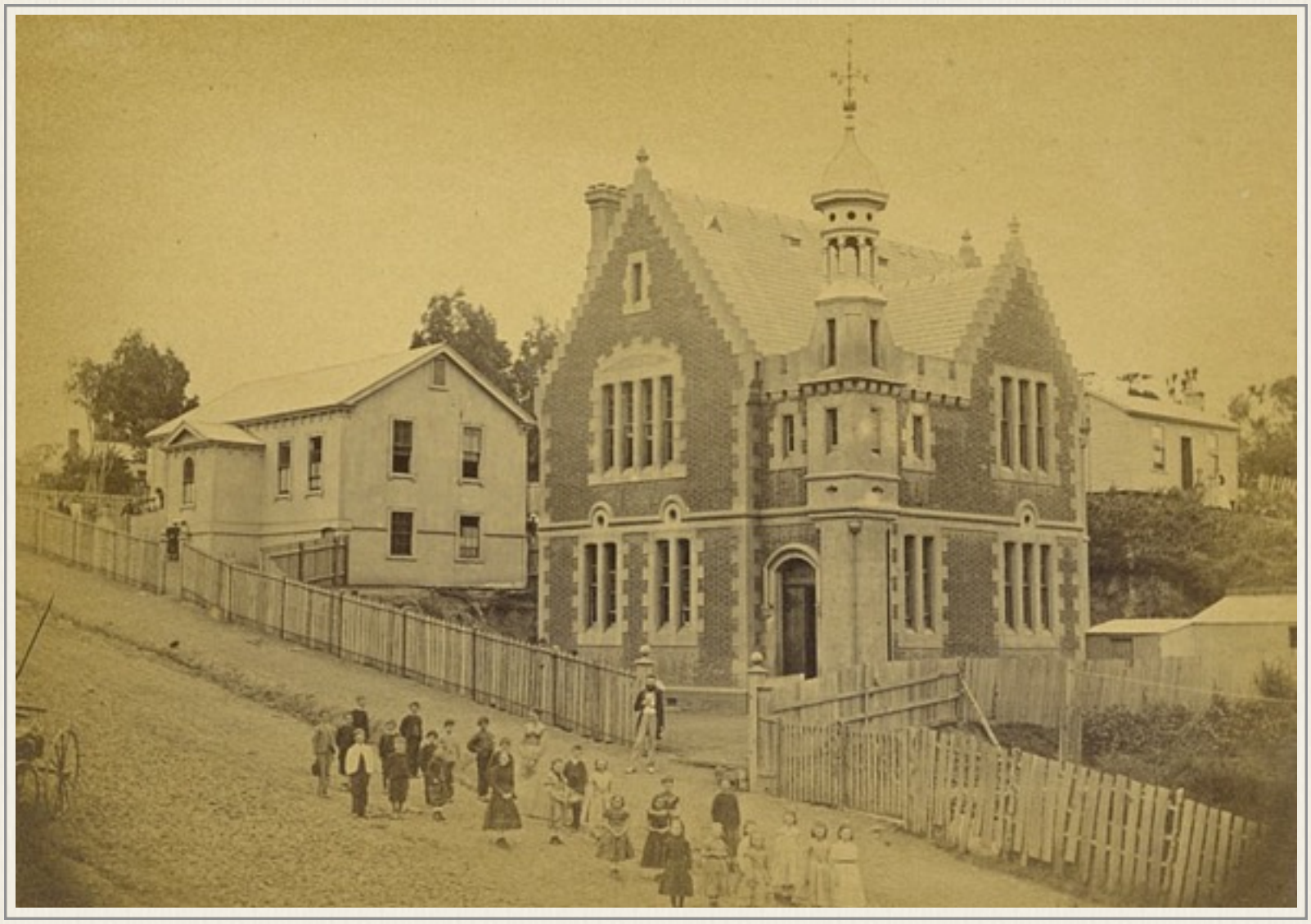
Returning to Dunedin, he built the Caledonian Hotel on the corner of Walker and Hope Streets, in partnership with Alex Ledingham. This was a good time to get into the hotel business given the burgeoning population. William was the licensee from 1862 – 1869 and he also ran a grocery store next to the hotel from 1865.[6,7]

William Ledingham Christie had been given his mother's maiden name as his second christian name to distinguish him from his father.[8] Ledingham had a brother James who was two years his junior and eventually the family grew to include two more sisters Jeanie and Elcena Agnes and another brother John. Their mother Mary persuaded her husband that the hotel was not the best environment in which to bring up their children and so the Caledonian Hotel was sold in 1869. The Christie family then set off for Warepa, a little west of Balclutha where William and Mary had acquired some land two years earlier. The journey of some sixty miles took three days and was recalled by Ledingham's brother James in 1909.[9] The dray on which they travelled frequently became stuck in deep mud and eventually Mary and her children had to complete the final miles in the dark on foot.

William and Mary set about establishing a mixed crop and livestock farm which they named 'Keithmore' after Mary's home town Keith situated in the Moray council area in north east Scotland.[10] In time William Christie, an innovative farmer, became a prominent figure in the local community, being on the Warepa School Committee and other local body committees.[11]

CHAPTER 2

Early life and education



In Dunedin Ledingham and his brother James attended the South District School ("Park's School") where the schoolmaster was John Brown Park.[1] By all accounts he was a remarkable teacher and it is very probable that the boys' subsequent enthusiasm for learning was inspired by Park. This school was one of just three in Dunedin at that time.[2] In Warepa all the Christie children attended the Warepa Primary School. The solo schoolmaster, Thomas Meeking, was there from 1869 - 1877.[3]

It is known that the two older brothers at least were required to help on the farm. At the age of ten, Ledingham was driving home a bull belonging to his father when the animal suddenly rushed him and pinned him to the ground by driving his horn through the fleshy part of his arm, tearing his ear and severely

Dr Henry Manning

lacerating the side of his head and neck. Fortunately he was able to make his way home, was attended by Dr Manning, and in due course made a full recovery.[4] Dr Henry Manning practiced in Warepa from 1855 until his death in 1884.[5] He had an extensive library and it is known that he made this available to at least one of the Christie children, James.[6] It is very likely that Ledingham had similar access to a wide range of books.

Certainly he and his brother James developed an early passion for English literature. In their teens, they were known to relieve the tedium of hoeing rows of turnips by reciting the argument between Brutus (Ledingham) and Cassius (James) from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar.[7] They would go on to repeat such literary arguments at the fortnightly local community musical and literary entertainment evenings.[8]

Years later, when addressing the Bruce Literary and Dramatic Society, Ledingham recalled the early life of Robert Burns:-[9]

"And yet I am tempted to add Burns would never have been heard of if he had not had energy enough to improve his natural ability by study. Let us think of him as the farm lad swinging the leading scythe all the long summer day with his heart full of unspoken love for the lassie gathering sheaves behind him. Imagine him also at the plough or flail all the cold winter day, and remember that he was yet able to learn in his leisure moments much of English, French and mathematics. It is true that later on the sines of trigonometry were replaced by signs of a more tender interest, but nevertheless Burns educated himself so that he could hold his own with the best in Edinburgh, and have time besides for social hours and voluminous correspondence."

It seems very likely that Ledingham also had "energy enough to improve his natural ability by study" (although there is no evidence that he found love on the farm!).

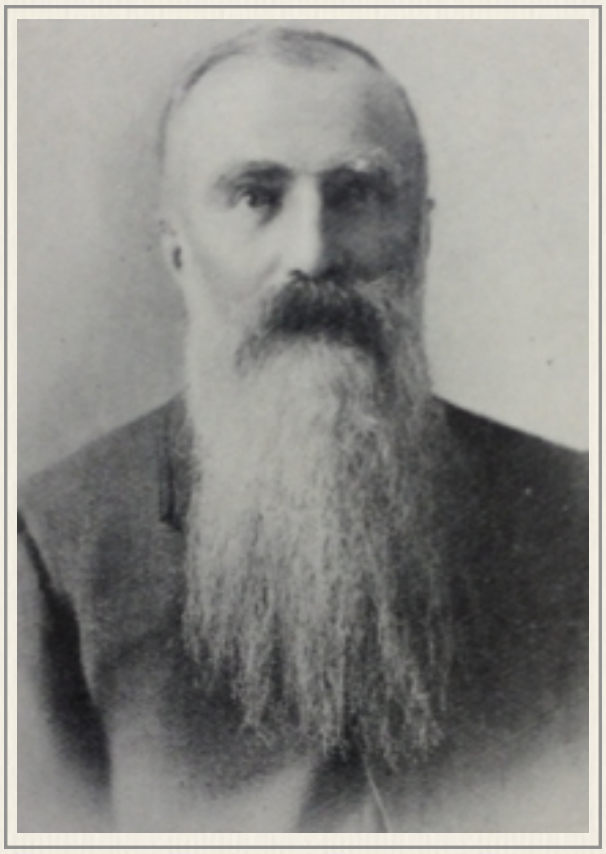
The complete address given by Ledingham, illustrating well his command of and love for English literature, appears in appendix 1

CHAPTER 3

A young teacher

In October 1877, the Hillend School (now to be known as Stony Creek School) re-opened with the appointment of 17yr old Ledingham as its teacher. The Clutha Leader described him as a "most industrious and painstaking lad".[1]

By March 1878, when examinations were held at the school, Ledingham was congratulated – "the pupils showed very satisfactory progress, and fully testified to the ability and zeal of the teacher, Mr Christie."[2]

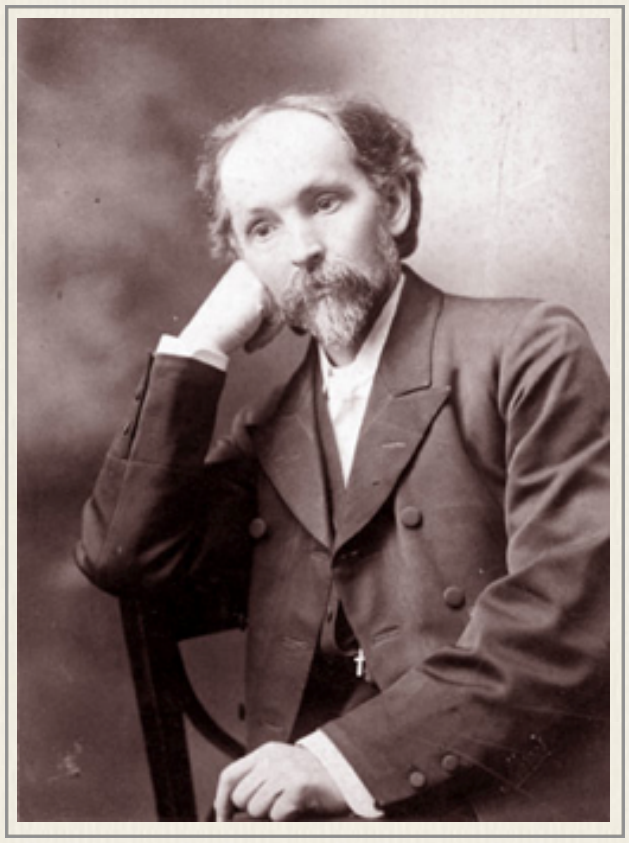


Mr M Malcolm

Whilst teaching at Stony Creek School, he found time to be tutored by Mr W Malcolm, Rector of Tokomairiro Grammar School in nearby Milton.[3]

In October 1879, Ledingham passed the elementary science examination for teachers.[4]

From early 1880, he was tutored by Dr Rutherford Waddell, an Irish Presbyterian minister and classical scholar newly arrived in Dunedin. From him he learned Latin, History and more.[5]



Rev. Dr Rutherford Waddell

Ledingham in ~1880
photo courtesy Michael Foster

In June 1880, Ledingham was appointed assistant master at Tapanui School and remained there until April 1882.[6,7] A month earlier he had passed the matriculation examination.[8]

CHAPTER 4

Medical student years

He then proceeded to Otago University determined to complete a medical degree. Up until this time, students studying medicine at Otago typically spent the first two years in Dunedin before proceeding to Edinburgh or another UK medical school to complete their degree. Ledingham did not have the financial resources to follow this path. In Dunedin he took a small room which was sparsely furnished. It is unlikely that his parents had much spare cash to support him. They were however able to help in other ways. He learned to take with a good grace the smiles and jokes of his fellow students who met him when carrying to his lodging a side of bacon or other offering from the farm.[1]

By the end of 1882 he had passed Chemistry (junior laboratory), Anatomy (second class honours), Biology (second class honours) and Practical Biology (first class honours).[2]

The following year, 1883, he completed Mental Science (second class honours), Anatomy - senior division (first class honours and recipient of prize) and Surgery (second class honours).[3]

Ledingham was forced to take a break from medical studies in 1884 because key staff had yet to be appointed to the medical school. He therefore took up the post of headmaster, Dipton School in Southland.[4] In October 1884 he took six weeks leave from the Dipton School role to study for and successfully pass the First Professional Examination in Medicine.[5,6]

He returned to full-time medical studies during 1885. In August of that year he was asked to be locum house surgeon at Dunedin Hospital, to cover Dr William Roberts who was unwell.[7] This posting lasted 3 weeks. (Dr Roberts, an

English graduate had been the sole RMO at the hospital since 1879, would later become Professor of Pathology at the Medical School.)[8]

In December 1885, Ledingham passed the second professional examination. During the year he passed Materia Medica (first class honours), Pathology (first class honours), Physiology (second class honours) and Practice of Medicine (first class honours).[9] He would go on in 1886 to complete his studies with a further first class honours in Medicine and he scored 80% in Medical Jurisprudence, gaining a first class certificate.[10]

As a medical student he was involved in a number of non-medical activities. He was a member of the University Debating Society. At one of the Debating Society's meetings an essay by Ledingham on Oliver Wendall Holmes' novel "Elsie Venner" was the subject for the debate.[11]

The New Zealand University Senate awarded Ledingham the degree of MB in March 1887 and he was formally capped with due ceremony as New Zealand University's first medical graduate in October.[12,13]

CHAPTER 5

Medical practice in New Zealand

From early 1887, he established a practice in Outram. In August he was gazetted as honorary surgeon to the West Taeri Rifles.[1] During his time in Outram he dealt with two cases of puerperal septicaemia successfully treated by manual swabbing of the uterus. He wrote these up in the very first issue of the New Zealand Medical Journal.[2]

On the 9th June, 1887 he married Alice Hope McAdam, the ceremony being conducted by Rev. Rutherford Waddell in Dunedin.[3]

In February 1888 he moved his practice to Milton.[4] From there he set up visits to Waihola and Henley every Tuesday and Friday and to Berwick and Otakia when necessary.[5] He settled into the community life in Milton, and was appointed to the School Committee of the Tokomairiro High School.[6] He gave public lectures under the auspices of the Tokomairiro Mutual Improvement Society, such as one on "The Blood – its History and Mystery".[7]

A daughter, Alice Hope Christie was born to William and Alice on 25th June, 1888 but sadly his wife Alice died of puerperal sepsis one week later.[8,9]

He continued to practice medicine in Milton and involved himself in a variety of community activities. He was a founder member of the Milton Shakespearian Club[10], and was founding president of the Bruce Literary and Dramatic Society.[11]

During 1889 he commenced work on a project leading to an MD. He decided to make a study of the toxicity of the tutu berry. Toward this end he conducted observations of the effects of tutu berry extract on cats, roosters, and rabbits. Rather bravely, Ledingham himself ingested an extract of collected tutu berries and with the help of a medical student, Kenneth McAdam (his brother-in-law) the effects were documented. Gastrointestinal and neurological symptoms resulted and he did not return to full health until one month later.

The University Senate conferred upon Ledingham the MD in March 1890, this being the first time that degree had been awarded to a NZ medical graduate.[12] The MD thesis "On the Physiological Action of Coriaria Ruscifolia, the Tutu Poison of New Zealand", was published in the New Zealand Medical Journal.[13]

Tutu berries

Ledingham's involvement in community affairs extended to playing tennis for the Milton Club, though this was one rare area where he did not shine. In 1890 his club hosted visitors from the Carisbrook Club. In the singles match, Ledingham was beaten 9 - 0, and in the doubles, he and his partner lost 6-0, 6-0, 6-0!![14]

CHAPTER 6

To England for postgraduate training

In 1892 he set out for England with the aim of obtaining the FRCS. He arranged for a locum, Dr J A Newell to look after his practice.[1] It was his intention at this stage to return to New Zealand once he had obtained his Fellowship. He set sail on 13th March, his four year old daughter Alice Hope Christie being left in the care of her maternal grandmother.[2]

Once settled in London, he attended the London Hospital and soon passed the MRCS examination.[3]

By May 1894 he had successfully acquired the FRCS, the first New Zealand born medical graduate to do so.[4] He had scant funds, a situation not helped by the fact that the locum he had arranged to look after his practice back home had soon departed. So he obtained locum positions in Salisbury and in Lancashire for a time before accepting the position of house surgeon at the Bristol Hospital for Sick Children and Women.[5]

CHAPTER 7

The Bristol years

Soon after arriving in Bristol, Ledingham was also appointed Lecturer in Artistic Anatomy at the Bristol branch of the Kensington Government School of Science and Art.[1]

The Bristol Hospital for Sick Children and Women was founded in 1866 by the Liberal politician Mark Whitwell, who laid down the principle that any child, no matter how poor, would be admitted provided there was room. Originally located in a house, it quickly became too small and local fund-raising enabled a move to a larger house. Within 20 years the hospital was treating 900 women and 2000 children each year. In 1885 another move occurred, this time to a purpose built hospital with 88 beds and cots and 7 beds for women.[2] It was to this handsome establishment that Ledingham became house surgeon in October 1894.

Bristol Hospital for Sick Children and Women

Unfortunately the splendid appearance of the hospital belied the standard of care offered to the patients. He soon discovered that the Matron was not fully qualified and was not in full control of the ward sisters. One sister on night duty

in the tracheotomy ward used to lock the ward preventing access to dangerously ill children. He frequently came into collision with the visiting medical staff, especially the surgeons whose standard of care was, in Ledingham's opinion, outright dangerous.[3] In time he found it impossible to continue as house surgeon and laid a formal complaint before resigning in November 1895.[4] It is of note that Ledingham held higher qualifications than any of the three visiting surgeons and the single surgical registrar, being the only person holding a surgical Fellowship.

An official inquiry eventually took place in 1898.

Ledingham's extraordinarily damning charges were:

1. That the medical and surgical treatment of children by the staff was conducted with cruelty, neglect, ignorance and incompetence, as evidenced by certain flagrant cases, some of which in consequence resulted in death.
2. That the nursing of children in the hospital was characterised by cruelty, neglect and incompetence.
3. That the management of the hospital was badly and improperly conducted, and that the regulations were defective.
4. That the President and Committee of the hospital acted dishonestly by systematically hoodwinking the public, and burking inquiry as to the state of affairs, and knowing they were making false representations.
5. That notes have been falsified and tampered with by the Committee or persons employed by them.

He personally presented to the inquiry evidence in support of his claims, all of which was rebutted by hospital officials. Sensing that the inquiry was not going his way, Ledingham requested an adjournment of 14 days so that he could engage the services of legal counsel. His request was declined, so he then withdrew from the proceedings.

After prolonged deliberation the board of inquiry concluded:[5]

1. That the first charge was untrue and not justified as fair and proper criticism upon any acts done or performed by any of the persons charged.
2. The second charge was declared to have been withdrawn, and admitted to be a mistake.

3. With regard to the third, that there was no evidence of bad or improper management, except in so far that the hospital authorities did not dismiss or effect the resignation of Dr Christie at an earlier date.

4. That the fourth charge was untrue and not justified.

5. That the fifth charge was untrue and not justified, and that the charges of forgery were absolutely and entirely without foundation.

It is noteworthy that although Ledingham's charges were all officially thrown out,

1. new outpatient and inpatient staff were appointed (including new surgeons),

2. a new matron and new nurses were appointed, and new regulations were introduced governing the staff including the house surgeon.[6]

It might be expected that following such a negative result for Ledingham he might have decided to get as far away from Bristol as possible. But this couldn't be further from the truth. Not only did he remain in Bristol but he set about pioneering a revolution in the care of children, particularly in the poorer areas.

Ledingham first met Ethel Brown in around 1897 and they were married on 8th November 1900 at St Mary Radcliffe Church, Bristol.[7]

Ethel Mary Christie

Ethel was involved in all his professional work and I can do no better than quote from a letter written by Ethel years later, describing Ledingham's activities in Bristol.[8]

"Whilst at the hospital he had been deeply impressed with the need for health visitors to teach mothers how to carry out the instructions given to them in the out-patient department, and still more impressed by the high mortality in the first year of life. Also by the acute suffering of those infants involved in that high mortality,

which sometimes is lost sight of. He had the idea of teaching ladies of some leisure so that they might do voluntary work among poor mothers, and so came into being the Nursery Aid Society.

The succeeding years were devoted largely to these aims & it may be said that it needed a New Zealander with his uncompromising disregard for convention to attain them. He opened a clinic in the Bedminster area of Bristol & in the first year over 1200 babies were treated & visited and their mothers instructed. It soon became evident that work of this kind and extent could not depend on ladies with leisure, it interfered too much with their own family life for it to be a permanent service. Some of them caught scarlet fever, measles & the like on their rounds and there was also vermin to be reckoned with. Gradually a change was made & suitable women were given district training in monthly nursing and midwifery. In return for their training & in the course of it they visited and taught simple and practical methods of maintaining infant well-being. The home of the clinic was a large house, a former mayoral residence, with many rooms, which he later called "Bristol Cottage Hospital" - and to which many very sick babies were admitted. The amount of work that he could get through in a day would be a shock to some people, but of course his staff of nurses were a considerable help. He was an excellent teacher and inspired others with his own enthusiasm. He was easily the best known man in the city and became almost legendary, not by any seeking of his own but by a natural consequence of his collisions with "vested interests" in the attainment of such aims as clean milk, decent houses, regular work, efficient hospitals & higher education. He was no means the only person striving after these good things but he threw tremendous energy into it. It being generally known that he was living amongst and working for the "under-dogs" his opinion, born of experience, was received with respect.

The difficulty was to persuade people – even the kind hearted – to go and look for themselves at the conditions that produced these ill-clad, often bare-foot undernourished children. He therefore reversed the process & led the children to the people in the prosperous areas. On one occasion, after due notice, he led 2000 of them through the main thoroughfares up to Clifton Down where a space had been enclosed for them to have tea. Several outings for the children to the seaside were

organised and paid for by subscriptions in answer to an appeal from him in the local newspapers.

His active opponents were few but noisy & by their virulence brought more publicity to the defects that he complained of. He was urged to stand for election to the Board of Guardians for the Poor, & later to the Bristol City Council. On both occasions he was elected by an overwhelming majority."

He was a member of the Hospitals Committee of the Board of Guardians, and of the Education, Health, Diseases of Animals, Small Holdings and Allotments, Local Pensions, and Housing of the Working Classes committees of the City Council from 1908 – 1911"

Ledingham in Bristol City Council robes

Ledingham's daughter, 14yr-old Alice Hope Christie, travelled from New Zealand to be with her father in 1902 and after completing her schooling, became involved in the medical practice.[9,10] She went on to marry James Donald Hughes, a local real estate agent on 26 July, 1911.[11]

By 1911 it was becoming evident that the Bristol City Health Department was ready to take up the care of disadvantaged children and Ledingham was able to ease up on what had been a long, physically and financially demanding workload.[12] With his daughter married Ledingham considered moving his practice to London, but an opportunity arose which would see him travel much further afield.

CHAPTER 8

The Far East - 1

Ledingham had received a proposal to take up the position of Medical Officer to the Borneo Company in British North Borneo (Sarawak) and he and Ethel set sail on 25th November, 1911 aboard the Japanese steamer SS Tango Maru, which reached Singapore on December 27th.[1]

In a letter written by Ethel in 1957 she describes their time in Sarawak.[2]

"Dr Christie might have chosen a place less isolated than Sarawak, for at that time communication with the outer world consisted almost entirely of one steamer a week from Singapore. There were no cables and of course neither air service nor radio. He was perhaps attracted by its seeming drawbacks and arrived there in January 1912 at the height of the rainy season. His interest in bacteriology and his patience in research fitted him for this environment. Arriving via the Malay States he had taken the opportunity of visiting hospitals and laboratories of Kuala Lumpur & Singapore & a large leper camp.

In Sarawak a very fine bungalow in a rubber estate four miles from the main hospital had been built for him, but this would not do. He objected to the distance from his patients, four miles of jungle track or double that length of a winding river. A new bungalow was put up close to the main hospital at Sejijak. He found plenty to do and plenty to interest him. The patients were mainly Javanese from the rubber estates, Chinese from the gold mine, Sikhs, Tamils, Dejaks and Malays. The dressers or nurses were males, principally Chinese, educated at the S.P.G. school in Kuching or at the Roman Catholic mission school. Patients were of both sexes, males predominating. There was a considerable call for surgery and there gradually developed a steady flow of Chinese patients who were in no way connected with the Borneo Company, but who demanded treatment. They were of the shopkeeper class, able to maintain themselves and as some members of their family accompanied them, they could also look after themselves. They were

not accommodated at the hospital but in “leaf atap” houses dotted about in the grounds, near enough for the dressers’ convenience. The Borneo Company no doubt realised that Dr Christie needed all the scope available in the country & as these patients did not put them to expense nor the hospital to inconvenience, no objection was raised. It considerably widened the experience of the dressers, the complaints were usually severe, their origin obscure and often long-standing.

The laboratory was the scene of great daily activity. Each patient, whatever his complaint, was put through not one test but several. The morning round began at 7 o’clock, the evening round at 5 o’clock, but except for the hottest part of the afternoon there was always something doing. There were calls to a distance, journeys by launch, trolley, rickshaw & sampan, visits to estate hospitals and coolie lines.”

CHAPTER 9

WW1

Ethel's 1957 letter continues:[1]

"Life continued to repeat itself day by day but by no means uneventfully – until August 1914, when a boat arriving in Kuching from North Borneo brought the news of the outbreak of war. A rush of young planters to Kuching was the immediate response to this and they were with difficulty persuaded to return to their jobs until more was known. In any case, they had to wait for transport.

Dr Christie had now been nearly three years in Sarawak and was due for leave or for termination of his engagement. When the mail arrived there was already news of a shortage of medical officers. This decided him and he gave the necessary six months notice to the Company. He was eventually replaced by an American. In the meantime the War Office had replied that there was no shortage!

He decided to travel home through China and Russia, with a half-idea of volunteering for the Russian Red Cross.

In St Petersburg Ledingham had found a recent Daily Mail containing a call for doctors in the British Army. After that, he could not travel back to England fast enough."

Ledingham and Ethel's journey 'home' commenced in April 1915[2] and was later well-described in the Auckland Star of 13th November, 1916. *See Appendix 4*

Passed as fit, Ledingham was initially sent to Tidworth on the Salisbury Plain, later transferring to Harwich, where the Great Eastern Hotel had been fitted up as a hospital with fifty surgical beds. He remained there as operating surgeon until the autumn of 1918 when he was retired owing to ill-health consequent upon influenza. He had enjoyed his works for the troops and was extremely popular with the rank and file.[3]

At the end of the war, Ledingham was urgently entreated by a friend, a woman eye surgeon in Singapore, to go there to relieve her whilst she returned to the USA for surgery. He had wanted to return to the Far East and hadn't been looking forward to facing another English winter. So Ledingham and Ethel sailed to San Francisco via New York, and then via Japan, Shanghai, Manila and Hong Kong to Singapore.[4, 5]

CHAPTER 10

The Far East - 2

The Ophthalmologist who he was replacing was also in charge of a private hospital for a Dutch shipping company. Ledingham spent six months there and took care of patients with a wide variety of conditions.

Ethel Christie writes:[1]

"On her return, he immediately left for Kelantan for the Duff Development Company and took up residence at Kuala Debir, where their main hospital was situated at the junction of two rivers. It was 86 miles by river from Kota Bharu, the capital. The hospital buildings had been neglected during the war & the discipline of the Chinese and Tamil staff severely undermined. The native population had become intrusive and disrespectful.

The patients in the hospital were all extremely ill. After a few days, things began to clear up. The dressers – really very decent young men – pulled themselves together when they found that they had someone who took pains to teach them and who would not stir from a bedside until he had made a thorough enquiry into the case. The laboratory equipment was modest and the dressers had not been trained in its use. Their confidence in themselves was, however, unbounded, and nothing but demonstration sufficed to prove them their ignorance. Day by day they were led along the path of enlightenment and gradually became imbued with a sense of responsibility, in the end becoming faithful, even affectionate friends. Kelantan had a bad reputation, it was considered to be extremely unhealthy, and it was difficult to persuade trained Chinese domestics to take service there. The Duff Company had the same trouble to recruit good workers for their estates, and their Chinese agents in Singapore sent up the most unlikely persons. It was alleged that they recruited prisoners as they emerged from the jail and patients as they were discharged from hospital. Be this as it may, there were patients in hospital who never had been & never would be fit for any work for the Company & who had perforce been put into hospital

on arrival. Many of them were in advanced stages of tuberculosis with complications of old venereal disease, amoebic dysentery, ankylostomiasis etc etc. They were far from any home that they had ever had and were completely friendless except for the shelter & care they were getting from the Duff Company, for whom they were a very bad disappointment. Too ill to be discharged, they lay there, patient and resigned until their release came. There were others however for whom there was a chance of recovery, patients with abscess of the liver, enlarged spleens, heart disease, pneumonia etc. At times a woman would be hurried in with some complications of childbirth, one had a kyphotic pelvis & without skilled attention must have died. There were accidents too in plenty. One small Tamil boy sat down on a boiling pot of curry & almost died of shock. Fights to the death or almost were not infrequent and made acute problems for the surgeon, weapons varying from tree trunks used as battering rams to knives used from a crouching position to enter the abdomen from below upwards thus inflicting the maximum of injury.

Malaria was very prevalent. The young wife of a planter miscarried at the 5th month & produced a baby girl weighing 1.75 pounds, which lived contrary to expectations. At 9 months old she weighed 14 pounds and was extremely active. The climate was suitable for such an infant.

After one strenuous but not unhappy year, Dr Christie's health began to fail and he had to make up his mind to give up his beloved work and retire before the rainy season."

CHAPTER 11

The final journey

The journey home was via Burma, Ceylon & the Red Sea. Ledingham's condition became much worse and he died on-board ship near Suez on 22nd July 1920. He was buried at sea. The burial service was read by a planter, an old friend of Sarawak days who chanced to be in the same ship, and the funeral was entirely carried out by a group of ex-Navy men who had been most attentive and helpful during his illness.[1]

Ledingham's wife Ethel subsequently made a donation to the Otago Medical School in Dunedin to fund the William Ledingham Christie prize in Applied Anatomy.[2] Photographs of the medal awarded to W. G. Davidson in 1939 appear below, courtesy the Davidson family and the W. D. Trotter Anatomy Museum.

Ethel Christie also presented the Otago Medical School Library with the portrait of Ledingham so that all future medical students would become aware of the first medical graduate.[3]

Pictured is Lesley Fursdon, a great niece of Ledingham, admiring the portrait in the Medical Library.[4]

Family background

1. Otago Witness 8/5/1858 p6

2. Clutha Leader 23/2/1894 p5

3. Otago Witness 15/1/1881 p6

4. https://www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz Registration # 1860/11573

5. Clutha Leader 23/2/1894 p5

6. Otago Daily Times 8 May 1862 p5

7. Otago Witness 18/5/1865

8. personal communication Michael Foster

9. Clutha Leader 29/1/1909 p2

10. personal communication Michael Foster

11.Clutha Leader 23/2/1894 p5

Early life and education

1. Clutha Leader 29/1/1909 p2

2. Park's-High Street School diamond jubilee, 1864-1924; Otago Daily Times and Witness Newspapers Company, 1924

3. Souvenir historical sketch of the Warepa School, 1858-1928 : and report of the seventieth anniversary celebrations, April 7th, 8th and 9th, 1928 / By Mitchell, G. Hunter

4. North Otago Times 18/1/1870 p2

5. Clutha Leader 18/12/1885 p6

6. Bruce Herald 22/1/1909 p2

7. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

8. Clutha Leader 8/6/1877 p5

9. Clutha Leader 24/7/1891 p6

A young teacher

1. Clutha Leader 26/10/1877 p5

2. Bruce Herald 6/11/1877 p5

3. Otago Witness 24/11/1909 p66

4. Clutha Leader 24/10/1879 p6

5. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

6. Otago Witness 19/6/1880 p9

7. Clutha Leader 28/4/1882 p2

8. Clutha Leader 10/3/1882 p5

Medical student years

1. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

2. Clutha Leader 17/11/1882 p6

3. Clutha Leader 16/11/1883 p6

4. Southland Times 5/1/1884 p2

5. Southland Times 4/10/1884 p4

6. Otago Daily Times 4/12/1884 p3

7. Clutha Leader 21/8/1885 p5

8. Rex Wright-St Clair: Medical Practitioners in New Zealand 1840 – 1930

9. Otago Daily Times 21/12/1885 p2

10. Otago Daily Times 15/11/1886 p3

11. Otago Witness 29/8/1885 p8

12. Otago Daily Times 4/3/1887 p2

13. Otago Daily Times 20/8/1887 p2

Medical practice in New Zealand

1. Otago Witness 19/8/1887 p11

2. NZMJ v. 1 1887

3. Otago Daily Times 15/6/1887 p6

4. Bruce Herald 3/2/1888 p3

5. Bruce Herald 14/2/1888 p2

6. Bruce Herald 24/4/1888 p3

7. Bruce Herald 25/5/1888 p3

8. Otago Daily Times 11/6/1888 p2

9. Bruce Herald 3/7/1888 p2

10. Bruce Herald 11/6/1889 p3

11.Bruce Herald 7/7/1891

12.Otago Daily Times 4/3/1890 p2

13.New Zealand Medical Journal July 1890

14. Otago Witness 23/1/1890 p32

To England for postgraduate training

1. Bruce Herald 23/2/1892 p2

2. Bruce Herald 29/7/1892 p3

3. Otago Daily Times 15/3/1893 p2

4. Otago Daily Times 13/7/1894 p3

5. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

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2. http://prezi.com/fzyo-rwehnyj/bristol-royal-hospital-for-children/

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4. Bristol Times and Mirror 21/10/1897

5. BMJ 26/3/1898 p848

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7. Ethel Christie 1958 : Christie MS-1643-007. Hocken Library

8. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

The Far East - 1

1. Straits Times 27/12/1911

2. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

WW1

1. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

2. Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser 28/4/1915 p10

3. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

4. Shipping List: SS Adriatic dep. Liverpool 1/12/1918

5. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

The Far East - 2

1. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

The final journey

1. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-008. Hocken Library

2. Evening Post 20/1/1921 p7

3. Ethel Christie 1957 : Christie MS-1643-007. Hocken Library

4. courtesy Lesley Fursdon

Inaugural address given by William Ledingham Christie, foundation President, to the Bruce Literary and Dramatic Society in July, 1891 - *Bruce Herald 24/7/1891 p6*

Following is the address delivered by the President, Dr W. L. Christie, at the inaugural meeting of the Bruce Literary and Dramatic Society last week:—

Ladies and Gentlemen, - In making my bow to you to-night as President of the Bruce Literary and Dramatic Society, I confess I do so with extreme misgivings as to my fitness for the position. It is one that requires such a ready flow of language, such a fund of literary information, and such delicate tact that I feel very inadequate to fulfill to your satisfaction the necessary duties. However, I again thank the members for unanimously electing me, and I will give what time, experience, and energy I have at disposal to work with and for the members, if I should not be able at all times to lead them. We are fortunate in securing Mr Graham as leader of the dramatic talent, and in having Mr Maitland as secretary. The presence of ladies such as Misses Marryatt and Carruthers on the committee is a decided advantage, and should help us considerably in our deliberations. The history of the Society is brief. I, with others, regretted that the Shakespearean Readings inaugurated by Mr Mahoney were not carried on to another session, and finding that there was a lack of literary activity and a desire for social and mental enjoyment, a meeting was called, and the present Society inaugurated. So long, therefore, as my colleagues and I can work for it, and secure the cooperation of the public, there shall be a literary club in Milton, and I trust that we will all work together cheerfully to cultivate gentle courtesies, literary attainments, and general good fellowship, or esprit de corps, among the members. By so doing mutual friction will, we hope, wear off our ruder asperities, teach us to command our tempers, provoke flashes of occasional wit or merriment, and generally polish us up and teach us that as we hold our own with each other in this little world, we shall be able to hold it in the big world outside. The Club or Society being now formed, let me define its objects as they at present appear to me. We wish all those who have an interest in books,

and who are respectable and order-loving to join us, and unite in the study of subjects recommended by the Club. Authors will be chosen by vote, and read in the manner decided on by the members. Plays will be selected, and those best fitted will be picked to act them. Dialogues, recitations, and readings will be cultivated. Lectures, or the delivery of papers will be, I hope, a part of our programme. If any original poets or writers develop we shall hope to encourage them. From the most unpromising, flinty individual often-the brightest responsive sparks of intelligence may be struck to inflame the tinder of others, and no one can tell what he or she can do till after hard study and frequent trials. The social element will not be forgotten for, after some work has been done by the intellect the feelings will have a chance of tasting the social joys of music, dance and song. Those who do not wish to work can take a ticket, come, listen and learn. Too much must not be expected at first, and time will be required to develop our resources The dramatic side may offend some whose ideas are crystallised from a solution of ancient prejudices, but all that I need say is, that emperors, kings, princes, bishops, clergymen and saints have patronised and approved the drama, which simply represents scenes from real life, portrayed as in a mirror of nature, to emphasise the teachings and genius of the author. The management will be sufficient guarantee against folly and impropriety. With these few preliminary remarks I will now sketch some of the advantages of a study of books, take in fact a bird's-eye view of an imaginary session's work, giving seconds to subjects which may well occupy weeks of study. Let us call to our aid our old friends such as Shakespeare, Tennyson, Burns, Byron, Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Holmes, Longfellow, and the endless band of ancient and modern writers who educate us day by day and who try to show us a life above the region of sense, and a world of which our globe is but a symbolic shadow, or a reflection from the unseen. To understand what books are to a trained student let us think of Oliver Wendell Holmes, the eminent American scholar. He says "an invisible nerve seems to connect him with each book in his library; a feeling of friendship, fellowship, and love surrounds each favourite author." With a library of good books one need never weary when he has no friends to converse with, him. He can commune with the great teachers of old or if that fails, take up the latest sensation fresh from the mighty press. These friendly guides will not bore us, but help us to forget our crosses and cares, soothe our

passions, teach us how to live and how to die. The Sir John Lubbock, whose book on the “Pleasures of Life” I recommend all to read, has collected many good examples of the pleasures of reading. I shall choose Macaulay's experience

as given by his biographer, who shows how his “debt to books was incalculable—how they guided him to truth, how they filled his mind with noble and graceful images, how they stood by him in all vicissitudes, comforters in sorrow, nurses in sickness, companions in solitude, the old friends who are never seen with new faces, who are the same in wealth and in poverty, in glory and in obscurity." Great, however, as were the honours Macaulay acquired by his pen, all who knew him were well aware that the titles and rewards which he gained by his own works were as nothing in the balance compared with the pleasure he derived from the works of others. “There was no society in London so agreeable that Macaulay would not have preferred it at breakfast or at dinner to the company of Sterne, or Fielding, Horace Walpole or Boswell." If this is the case with men like Macaulay what should it not be with us who know so little. Let it be granted therefore that we here assembled, from the poorest in mind to the richest in learning will uphold the proper combination of exercise or labour with a devotion to the charms and powers of literature. Following the old English song:-

Oa, for a booke and a shadie nooke
Eyether in doore or out,
With the grene leaves whispering overhead
Or the streete cryes all about,
Where I maie reade all at my ease
Bothe of the new and old,
For a jollie good booke whereon to look
Is better to me than gold.

But these are mere generalisations. Let us take a brief peep at a few authors and their teachings. How beautiful is the quality of manly purity brought out by the contrast pourtrayed in the ‘Idylls of the King.' Many knights tried to see the Holy Grail, but none were pure enough to have the blessed privilege but Galahad, whose “strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure." On the

other hand, the weakness of the guilty Queen wrecks her husband's ideals, a noble cause, and her own happiness, and she finds too late that

"We needs must love the highest when we see it,
Not Launcelot nor another."

Again, to one who has lost a dear friend what sympathy the lines of “In Memoriam” bring:-

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust.
Thou madest man he knows not why
He thinks he was not made to die,
And thou hast made him, thou art just,
Thou seemest human and divine,-
The highest, holiest manhood thou;
Our wills are ours we know not how
Our wills are ours to make them thine."

If, however, First Love be the theme read Maud (a perfect love poem):-

"Maud with her exquisite face
And wild voice pealing up in the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green.

Maud in the light of her youth and her grace."

Later on, when a cold breeze of jealousy strikes the lover, we hear him say,

Ah, what shall I be at fifty,
Should Nature keep me alive,
If I find the world so bitter
When I am but twenty five?
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seemed,
And her smile were all that I dreamed,
Then the would were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

After awhile the tune is changed.

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat night has flown
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone.
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.
Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done –
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one.
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers and be their sun.

Again, what a picture of pure married bliss in the “Miller's Daughter” It is the miller's daughter,

And she has grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel that sparkles in her ear,
There, hid in ringlets day and night
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.
There's somewhat flows to us in life,
But more is taken quite away,
Pray, Alice, pray my darling wife,
That we may die the selfsame day.
Have I not found a happy earth?
I least should breathe a thought of pain
Would God renew me from my birth
I'd almost have my life again
So sweet it seems with thee to walk
And once again to woo thee mine.
Look through mine eyes with thine, true wife,
Round my true heart thine arms entwine,
My other dearer life in life!

Look through my very soul with thine.
Untouched with any shade of years
May those kind eyes for ever dwell.
They have not shed a many tears,
Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

As a contrast to this, read the “First Quarrel." The wife is jealous, and lets her husband go over sea to seek work without a kiss or a good bye.

And then he sent me a letter -
I've gotten work to do.
You wouldn't kiss me, lass,
And I never loved any but you.
I am sorry for all the quarrel,
And sorry for what she wrote.
I have six weeks' work in Jersey,
And go tonight by the boat.
An' the wind began to rise,
An' I thought of him out at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame
He was always kind to me.
Wait a little, my lass,
I am sure it will all come right—
An' the boat went down that night,
The boat went down that night.

A good writer has said that poetical and emotional literature is best for the reading of everyday life, and it would doubtless be well for those worried with business or deeply engaged in worldly schemes to occasionally take a draught from such a spring. It is, however, I think those who have suffered who most keenly appreciate the poet's sympathy, and in this department, as I need hardly say to those who hail from North of the Tweed, their own Burns, though no titled peer, is able to stand beside Tennyson in his feeling for and description of all that is in sympathy with the human heart.

Holmes says of him,

The lark of Scotia's morning sky,
Whose voice may sing his praises?
With Heaven's own sunlight in his eye
He walked among the daisies,
Till through the cloud of fortunes wrong
He soared to fields of glory,
But left his land her sweetest song,
And earth her saddest story.

And again:-

We loved him not for sweetest song,
Tho' never tone so tender
We love him even in his wrong,
His wasteful self surrender.
We praise him not for gifts divine,
His muse was born of woman
His manhood breathes in every line
Was ever heart more human
We love him, praise him just for this
In every form and feature.
Through wealth and want, through woe and bliss,
He saw his fellow creature.

And yet I am tempted to add Burns would never have been heard of if he had not had energy enough to improve his natural ability by study. Let us think of him as the farm lad swinging the leading scythe all the long summer day with his heart full of unspoken love for the lassie gathering sheaves behind him. Imagine him also at the plough or flail all the cold winter day, and remember that he was yet able to learn in his leisure moments much of English, French and mathematics. It is true that later on the sines of trigonometry were replaced by signs of a more tender interest, but nevertheless Burns educated himself so that he could hold his own with the best in Edinburgh, and have time besides for social hours and volumi-

nous correspondence. And yet this strong nature which thundered “Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled” could sigh over a buried daisy, and lament the wounds of a hapless hare.

Having soared from England to Scotland, we might cross St. George's Channel to look at Tom Moore, the genial poet of Ireland, and revel in his Irish melodies and picturesque Lalla Rookh," but time is brief, and America claims our attention, because it is, like New Zealand, a young country with associations of a somewhat similar kind. Here O. W. Holmes stands out as a healthy, happy, pious, punning, laughing, quaffing, sparkling, scientific philosopher, poet, and practitioner. Though he jokes with us at the festive board, he can point us to the stars till we almost hear the music of the spheres, and feel that the Power behind it all is kind, and even in sympathy with the efforts of those straining eyes which through doubt and difficulty try to read their hidden mysteries.

“Is man's the only throbbing heart that hides
The silent spring that feeds its whispering tides?
Speak from thy caverns mystery-breeding Earth
Tell the half-hinted story of thy birth,
And calm the noisy champions who have thrown
The book of types against the book of stone.
Have ye not secrets, ye refulgent spheres.
No sleepless listener of the starlight hears
In vain the sweeping equatorial pries
Through every world-sown corner of the skies,
To the far orb that so remotely strays,
Our midnight darkness is its noonday blaze
In vain the climbing soul of creeping man
Metes out the heavenly concave with a span
Tracks into space the long lost meteor's tail,
And weighs an unseen planet in the scale."

Again, religious longings and desires are expressed in “Worship, Manhood, Truths," and other of the more serious pieces, but mirth and fun are seen in many a ballad too numerous to mention. More cognate to New Zealand associations however is Longfellow whose “Hiawatha” makes us think of our own stories of Hinemoa and our poet Bracken's “Ruaparah” and other native chants. While noting, however, the native influence of the American scenery and surroundings we can enjoy the same old story in the courtship of Miles Standish, and hear how John Allan tried to woo Priscilla for his gruff but good old captain.

But as he warmed and glowed in his simple and eloquent language,
Quite forgetful of self and full of praise of his rival.
Archly the maiden smiled, and with eyes overrunning with laughter,
Said in a tremulous voice, “Why don't you speak for yourself, John?”

Let us also follow Evangeline in her weary search for the vanished lover, or, with the hero of “Excelsior” let us determine to try at least to reach the purest platform of mental life, or die with senses tamed or victory attempted.

However, some of you may not care for poetry or romance, so let us turn to prose and city life. You all know Becky Sharp, I dare say, If not, let us go into Thackeray's “Vanity Fair," and see something of the fashionable and giddy world. Another and perhaps more enjoyable pen is that of Dickens, who can still move us to laughter or to tears. You are fond of gentle sweetness and filial piety -cultivate Little Dorrit's acquaintance, or trace, if curious, the fortunes of poor Joe, or enjoy a Christmas dinner with Tiny Tim.

There are many who are averse to having a nauseous, if not necessary drug administered in a sugar-coated pill, but many a tale can be enjoyed and its effects produced without one being aware of the moral or scientific teaching of the author. Who that has read of Tom Thurnal in “Two Tears Ago” has not loved him as in his professional labor he visited the cholera- stricken village homes. But the story was no doubt intended as a blow at the defective health arrangements of the day. And so with Wilkie Collins and other writers whom I cannot recall.

Science is often terribly misrepresented by these writers, but, nevertheless, the subject is popularised, and people learn to think and act in accordance with newer

ideas. Literature, again, has its advantages from the purely scientific aspect. If we are worried with small jealousies and petty grievances, Herschell takes us to the stars, and we can lose ourselves in the bewildering infinitude of space and its countless worlds and systems of worlds. If not content, with space and the civilised globe, we can follow Stanley through the Great Forest, and wonder at the faith, endurance, and pluck of those men who starved and suffered and died for enterprise and science. We can see how selfish ease was spurned, and the body by iron will forced to carry out a stern purpose. No poor voluptuary was here, great in his own conceit, and content to swill those draughts of enervating pleasure which corrupt the will and render a man a miserable, moral deformity. Let us look at Mackay, with his life in his hand, working at his anvil under the tropical sun of Africa that cruelty and degradation might become happiness and nobility. And we all know of Gordon's work. Here was the power of purity. He could say “My strength is as the strength of ten because my heart is pure." Or if not content to dwell among primeval forests, we can wander to courts and the historic scenes of Europe with Childe Harold, and stand by, while in grandest numbers he sings the boundless ocean. By novels so called we can go touring to Scotland with Black and meet the Princess of Thule in Stornoway or, sailing on those beautiful Scottish lakes, immersed in love and the excitement of the salmon fishing, enjoy, as if in reality, the spirit of the scenes with Meenie Douglas, the doctor's daughter, and her silent lover. Besant, on the other hand, can take us into the London sewing rooms and show us the hard grinding life of the girls and toilers there. He can by his genius improve their condition and extract from the pockets of the benevolent a People's Palace for them to meet and enjoy for a time the pleasure of dance and song, or self-improving study. George Eliot can work the science of morals and mental philosophy so into her works that we see only the grand results; those contrasts of good and evil in the men and women of her stories as, for example, in Adam Bede, the carpenter, Daniel Deronda, the Jew, and Romola, the beautiful and true. Bellamy can weave socialism into a story and make his prophetic utterances entertaining as well as profitable. Time fails me, however, to further expand this theme, and if I have failed to mention some authors who ought to be mentioned, it is not because of want of appreciation but space to continue. In conclusion we may say that the story book of to-day, or novel as it is called, must be regarded as one of our greatest teachers,

moulding the conduct of a large section of the people. The cheap sensational love-sick and criminal garbage which is too common must therefore have a demoralising effect on those who do not know enough to be able to avoid it. Our society, therefore, if it can help to foster a taste for the more instructive and refining books of the day will do a noble work. If at the same time it can raise some money for a weak cause or charitable object, the studies of the members will not be in vain either for themselves or for the public. And, lastly, if all will agree to work together for the general good, sinking personal feelings and selfish interests, an esprit de corps will be formed, and associations will be established which may have a whole life influence on the members. Let us then be prepared, individually and collectively, to sacrifice something, that Bruce may be famous for its Bruce-like hearts, and that we shall all ever try to work, not for mere show or éclat but

For the cause that needs assistance,
For the wrong that needs resistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that we can do.

A Trip to the Old Country

letter dated 25/4/1892 from Dr Christie aboard ship off the Portuguese coast
Bruce Herald 29/7/1892

"The screw having been stopped for an hour or two I will, while we lazily lie drifting to the south'ard, try to give you an account of our voyage, so far as we have gone. At 2.30, March 13, on a lovely Sabbath afternoon we drew off amid the rattle of chains, creaking of cables, puffing of engines, splashing of screw, and waving of handkerchiefs. As New Zealand at last definitely seemed to desert us, our hearts felt full, and a young lad bound for Germany burst into tears as he saw his mother's figure lessen in the distance. All went merrily as a sail on a summer sea till the heave and swell outside the Heads began, and then we began to heave as well. One by one we went below, till old New Zealand sank from sight at 1 p.m., unnoticed amid the overwhelming emotions of mal de mer. Next day there was a stiffish breeze, and I was sick again a little. The ladies lay on their lounges, and sadness was on the faces of the afflicted. The vessel rolled and the wind blew cold astern, but every sail was set and we bounded on, till on Tuesday the 15th we crossed the meridian of Greenwich amid high foaming billows washing over the decks. Next day was also Tuesday, and soon maddening discussions began about time, some kept New Zealand time, and others ship's time, and the brain ached over the discussions and arguments on the subject. We had to keep putting our watches on half an hour a day, and sometimes it seemed as if Time and Space had overwhelmed us, for we lay a speck in a boundless waste cheating Time of his running sands. On Wednesday the 16th the sun shone out, sickness was non est, and the ladies got once more on deck; quoits and whist passed away the time, books were raked up, studies and work began, and we all settled down to study each other and be sociable. One of the passengers was a gentleman who had been several times round the world, and he was full of "moving incidents by flood and field" told with literary and dramatic talent. Him we constituted story-teller in chief, and round the saloon fire in the lower latitudes we heard his adventures. A new interest was excited by the fear of icebergs, and the desire to see one at a safe

distance. We were at length gratified on Saturday the 19th by the sight of two or three. One was like an immense cathedral with a lighthouse, and when lit up by the sun looked like a mass of sparkling crystal studded with diamonds, and bordered with snowy wreaths of pearls. The romance was not so pleasant when we nearly ran into a block of floating ice later on in the day. These floating masses are more dangerous than bergs, because they are level with the water, and though apparently small go deep down and do heavy damage to any vessel striking them. We heard the mate on the bridge abuse the look-out at the bows for not spotting the mass, and the vessel was turned from her course just in time to avert a nasty bump. Next day was Sunday, according to the ship's time, and as icebergs were reported early, every enthusiast was up betimes to see them. At 11 a.m. Dr Copland conducted service, discoursing briefly on the Christian's Anchor of Hope; and at 11 p.m. a gale blew away our topsails, and we sped before the storm in the darkness expecting icebergs every moment. Captain Coull was, however, on the watch, and no temptations would keep him from the bridge in darkness and in ice regions. He and his men strode about with their great sea boots on, watching and caring for everything. Next day the masts were caked with snow, and some snowballing was indulged in. The wind which had been favourable, now began to chop about, but at last it settled down to westerly, and we bowled along, with wind and steam both helping us. Thursday the 24th was still cold, with snowy, westerly winds, and we now all look forward with joy to the rounding of the Horn for the cabins are getting damp, and amusements dull. We have, however, been bowling along at a grand old pace, sometimes as much as 280 miles a day. We have plenty of power too, as the freezing machines are not both required in this cold weather, so that our coal and steam are economised. At length we reach the vicinity of the Horn, and stay up till 2 a.m. on Sunday the 27th to see the Diego Ramirez Islands, which lie near the Cape. Next morning early we are sleepily aware that the Horn is in sight, and begin to enthuse accordingly. It is a bleak- looking rocky peak about 1391 feet high, and a series of rocks extend from it out to sea. We are all clad in warm woollen clothing, and our Mosgiel rugs are found very useful. This point marks an era in our voyage for we have been 17 days out of sight of land. In the afternoon we pass Statin Island, a mountainous bleak-looking shore 40 miles long. Some land birds were blown to us, and one, a Patagonian lark was caught. It,

however, died of grief, and as it was not considered gay enough to stuff, we refrained from our original intention of preserving it in the refrigerating chamber. Very soon after turning the Horn the temperature grew warmer, and on the 9th of April tennis flannels were donned, the lat. being 37" south. We have since getting into the great highway of traffic on the seas passed several barque, and tedious times some of them must have had, especially the outward bound. On Sunday the 10th, or 80th day out, we spoke the Camelo of Glasgow, 70 days from Swan River, all well, bound for Loudon. She was tacking against the N. E. trades, and would have to run over towards the American Coast before making for the Channel. It was a lovely tropical moonlight night when another vessel with every sail set, glided past us in silent ghost y beauty within a biscuit's throw of our desk. Sometimes like great swans, the barques would glide by in the sunlight, and beautiful they appeared with their white sails; but in the moonlight they flash past like a spirit with outspread wings, silent and shadowy in their flight. We are, however, on the eve of crossing the line, and rumours are afloat that the Doctor must be shaved. There are, however, no less than three or four New Zealanders on board who are as yet uninitiated in Neptune's ceremonies, but we compromise the matter by a few bottles of grog distributed among the sailors, as we glide imperceptibly into the northern latitudes. The great feature in the Tropics seems to be the glorious sunrise and sunset. I rose betimes to view a grand picture. The whole east was aglow with golden and rosy tints, and the sun rose out of the water like a magnificent god dispensing smiles of radiance, and turning to gold everything those smiles could reach. In the glow a steamer stood on her homeward journey, and she shared the glory of the rising sun, making a picture of sea, sky, cloud and colour which one will not readily forget. On Saturday the 10th we found ourselves in lat. 1-1, and the steady N.E. trades, though cool and pleasant, are dead against our progress We, however, begin to encounter life again, for at the equator there is not much visible. Now, however, shoals of flying fish are found, and some reach the deck and are secured as curios. The Captain, who seemed to be in a continual state of anxiety, is now a domestic man. He makes balls and kites for the little children, and sets swings for them. The chief engineer finds work for idle hands in the carving of picture-frames which he designs, The whist table finds its devotees, and the student studies his books. The headwind, however, blackens everything aft

with coal dust, in spite of the awning over our heads, and sorrow rises in our hearts as speed is slackened from 60 strokes of the screw per minute to 51, in order that coal may be economised till we reach our first port, Las Palmas. On Sunday, 17th April, we have an Easter sermon from our worthy honorary chaplain, Dr Copland, and not long down below do we remain, you may be sure, with about 99 deg. F. in the shade and 102 deg. in the sun. On Wednesday, 20th April, or 10 days out, we arrived at the Puerto de la Luz, or Port of the Grand Canary Island, and after getting practice late in the evening, we prepare to go ashore. The deck was soon crowded with swarthy Spaniards, blackened by coal dust, who prepared to coal the vessel, and this they did by busily toiling all night, crying what sounded like "Veeda" when they wished the winches to go, and "Arreah" when they wanted them to stop. All were barefooted, and some were clad in colours — blue trousers and red shirts— making a picturesque appearance. Boys worked the winches, and they seemed as much amused with us as we were with them. Sleepy, cold and dull, however, they looked in the dewy morning light, when still the cries of "Veeda" and "Arreah" went on. Some pedlars came on board with tobacco and cigarettes, which gained a rapid sale. Several of us are anxious to go ashore, and see the Spanish town at night. I did not succeed, however, as it was too late to get a boat. Next day we made an early start and reached the port. The homeliest thing on the quay was a lame dog, that saluted us with a real bullterrier sort of bark. On the stone steps sat ragged women and children, all barefoot, and the heads of the former were covered only with the national mantilla or head-cloth. We made straight for the conveyances or "dros kijs," drawn by little creatures of mules and small horses. The question was whether we should go up in the steam tram to the city of Las Palmas. or take the mules. None of us knew Spanish, and very little English did the muleteers know, but we arranged to go out for a shilling each, and have the use of the cab for three hours if required. This was only accomplished by much gesticulation, and after our terms had been refused once by a fat, well-off looking young driver, who subsequently made a good bargain with the second boatload of passengers, who then passed us on the road with much hilarious rivalry. The drive of three mules was full of interest. We were struck with the flat-roofed houses, and the barefooted women taking home the day's water supply on their heads, in a large globular earthenware vessel from the village pump. The

daily breakfast was apparently just over, and small charcoal stoves like vases were being placed outside to await another cooking period. The women, it seems, fan up the hot coals of their furnaces, cook their simple meals, and then put their fire, pots and pans outside, aid thus are no longer troubled with the heat and smoke in their kitchen — a considerable advantage in a hot climate. Few of the women we passed had any pretensions to beauty, but some good-naturedly smiled and kissed their hands to us. Little Spaniards of tender years, mere toddlers, struggled along, looking as eager for pennies as the bold little scamps who ran after our trap. Soon we passed a pile of masonry, old and deserted, situated close to the water's edge. This is the old fort of Santa Catalina, used in olden days for the defence of the coast. In the distance over the city we saw also the Citadel, a fort powerfully situated on the hill. We passed several very clumsy and very long carts drawn by small mules. One of these conveyances was stuck in a hole, and the mule was jibbing, so to save its energy the driver released the animal and drove on. These natives would have been much benefitted by the sight of a few teams such as the Toko boys drive, but I suppose it is difficult to grow oats, and the Spaniards seem content to follow the slow and ancient method of their followers. I saw a man ploughing with a yoke of oxen, and his plough was like that of Abraham, a curved stick pointed to rake up the ground in front, and with one hurdle to steady it behind. While I am writing this we are nearing England, and as there is much of interest to see on deck, I must stop writing. When you hear from me next I shall have more interesting descriptions to give you, as I shall then be in London."

The Shades and Glories of the East

Extracts of a letter from Dr Christie to Mr J H Howell (Bristol) dated 9/5/1912

"We had a very pleasant trip, free from storm and undue heat. It was pleasant in the Suez Canal by moonlight and dawn. One sight was pleasant, and that was a camel Corps of Kitchener's hard-bitten British troops. We did not see the Union Jack even in Egypt, but here sun-browned, bare-legged men in khaki, with camels resting on the desert and a lonely hut far off in the brown sand and a company of jolly Englishmen sitting on the bank waiting to cross, was some obvious sign that we are there all the same. An officer wore the V.C. ribbon. The men called to us for news from England, for although we were on a Japanese boat they could see and hear us. I need not describe to you our feelings about Port Said where we first came in contact with the glowing East. Naked Arabs, robed priests and officials, a tiny tramway of the municipality drawn by a mule with a rope along the side of motor-cars, smartly dressed Europeans beside beggars and naked coolies, and the blazing sun over all. The busy boatmen fighting for a place near our vessel, and the vast variety of races in all kinds of boats, sampans, catamarans, etc, we saw here, and at Colombo made one think what a confusion and bloodshed there would be if the Pax Britannica were not quietly ruling over all.

At Colombo we arrived at the same time as the Duke of Teck, and the sight on the jetty was characteristic. The khaki-clad Indian troops with fixed bayonets, the band very commanding with their huge turban, the bare-footed Saices with their wisks, the Cingalese officials with combs in their hair and the City Council members and officials of unmilitary appearance and the smart, well-cut uniforms or white dress of the Europeans all made up a glowing picture of our power in the East. There was no cheer for the Duke save mine – it is not the custom. The cannon boomed, and 'God save the King' came from the band, and soon they drove off to the Governor's Palace.

I took Mr Palliser Martin's letter to the president of the Chamber of Commerce and was able to see his secretary only, as Mr Cook was busy. He is chairman of

the Strait's Trading Company, which extract with others 70% of the world's tin from F.M.S. Having to wait for the boat a week, I left Singapore, a fine busy harbour, full of the world's shipping, to visit Kuala Lumpur, to see the research laboratories, the hospitals, and some rubber estates. The train was furnished with every luxury and the hotel was like an Eastern potentate's palace with domes and minarets. The F.M.S. railways and hotel belong to the Government, and they have more revenue than they know what to do with. The country is very rich, and the forests are being rapidly felled and burnt for rubber and other plantations. The patient Chinaman, as usual, does most of the labour. Malays were officials on the trains, and Sikhs were the police and the watchmen."

POCKET-MONEY FOR LEPROUS GAMBLERS

"The chief medical officer at Singapore had given me letters, and I went to the General Hospital, where Dr Bruce Low showed me heaps of cases of beri-beri, malaria, etc, etc. At the District Hospital Dr Smith, late of Wales, showed me 200 cases of leprosy in all stages. They did not seem so unhappy as you could expect; they seemed glad to see a visitor. They are allowed to smoke opium and gamble, and to do anything to be "comfy". Some pocket money is given to gamble with - it is a national habit. I saw malaria germs galore and beri-beri, etc, 'till I felt quite adept. At the research laboratory where the planters at last realised that the patient scholar could do more to save money in rubber and life than all the rule-of-thumb methods, I saw a lot. Dr Fraser believes beri-beri to be due to rice being deprived of its phosphatic elements, hence the argument for Standard Bread.

I found at the European Hospital a Dr Morgan, trained at Bristol. I have never lost touch with Bristol, for 'Three Castles' can be got on the Japanese boat, in the F.M.S., and even in a small Chinese shop in the heart of Sarawak. By the way, the Poi lighthouse that guided us into the river came from Lysaght's recently and many West of England men have been and are here as resident officials, etc. I got back to Singapore on New Year's day, and no Scotchmen, although the place was full of them, could be found at work. Races, regattas, etc and sports were the order of the day.

There are so many green islands. We had a bit of a roll in a small steamer, 8,000 tons, for 48 hours, to Kuching. The river is wide, well wooded, with cocoanut palms, sago, banana, pepper, etc in plenty. The fort fired a gun to announce the arrival of the boat – The Raja of Sarawak. The Aetana or Palace of the Raja was soon seen, a place with a palm-leaf roof, commodious, with fine lawns etc. Chinese are the chief shopkeepers and workers. Mr Douglas, the acting president, had an aunt once in Canynge Rd, Clifton, and knows the place.

The scene in the evening was lovely. We stayed in the palatial bungalow of the manager of the Borneo Company Ltd, and looking down on the river, winding between deep green wooded banks. There is quite a civilization here. Everybody dresses in spotless white for dinner, orchids and beautiful flowers are on the table, and music is discoursed. The Rajah has a band, which plays every evening; there are tennis, races and sports. Science is represented by many naturalists and a big museum. Most people collect, and the Europeans are all above the working class. There is no room here for any but well-bred men, whom the natives respect. The rough work is done by Chinese and Malays, who are very respectful and intelligent. Even the Aborigines, the Dyaks are civilised, and thoroughly appreciate the peace and rest from murderers and robbery that the Rajah has given them. Everybody has a boy or two, and every want is anticipated. Our cook, a Chinese, runs us for one dollar 60 a day each. He buys and provides everything. The wife is not even to look in at the kitchen. We pay him 14 dollars a month. We have a boy at 11 dollars, and a 'Kechil', or assistant boy at 9 dollars. They make the bed – an easy matter, one sheet. They sweep and tidy, and one goes with us when we dine out, and waits. There are no fireplaces, no carpets; almost no walls to the house – open air is in full sway. The blatts can be let down if wind or rain comes."

A WET CLIMATE

"We need a blanket after midnight, although we are under the Equator nearly. It feels quite chilly if only 78 degrees F., which it usually is at 7am. At noon it is about 80 to 82 degrees. There are mostly clouds and a daily shower. It is a very moist country – 150 to 160 inches of rain yearly; 45 inches in the last two months

with two floods, 7 inches in one night last week. It is warm and with rain-coats one goes about all the same.

Matang, a mountain 3,000 feet near us, makes a varied scene; it is wooded to the summit, and has the Rajah's tea and coffee gardens in it. The sea is near and we get a cool breeze. I have not felt hot yet, you can get a good sweat after a sharp walk and it does one a tremendous lot of good. There is practically no malaria here unless it is introduced. I have found only the Culex mosquito so far. The Borneo Company Ltd seem to be the only enterprising people on a large scale. It is true the Yankees came to teach them how to get rubber without planting, but their company, the United Malaysian, speaks of giving up a million of its capital. They bought Jaluteng and manufactured it, but they more they bought the dearer it got; so planting is the best after all. You can get a grant of land free if you agree to plant, and lose it if neglected for five years. Here in Sungei Tingah 3,500 acres have been cleared, and 336,000 trees are growing well. Seven years ago it was jungle and swamp. The Chinese do it by contract, and work very hard, seven days a week. As they need no clothes nor boots, and can live on fruit and rice, they manage to save when they get only 25 – 40 cents per day – 7d to 1s per day. No rent, no taxes, no workmen's compensation, no insurance, no Lloyd George. Blacksmiths and carpenters get a dollar and a half a day, and are very skillful. The company get a lot of their money back by supplying things direct, but a good deal is done through a Chinese shop on the estate. The coolies get a 'ransome' of rice, about a pillowslip full, once a fortnight. The result of this cheap labour is that from the jungle a magnificent and richly-producing estate, with good roads and drains.

The B.C.L. have the sole mining rights for all Sarawak. They have also vast teak forests in Siam on lease, where 600 elephants take part, and Konatins, Calmuka, and malays labour cheaply to produce the wealth. These vast fertile regions are open to concessionaires, and are wonderfully healthy considering. Not even tigers hinder the work, and natives think nothing of them, but the Hindus fear to work there. If a dozen young men could raise a few thousands, they could come out and do likewise. The clearing of the jungle by Chinese, and drains, paths etc, would cost £30 per acre to bring the estate to full production, but that

does not need to be done all at once. The Rajah rather pets his Dyaks (who do nothing) and says he is holding the country for them; but in spite of this it is the Chinaman who will inherit the earth here, because he works. There must soon be a change, a when a rush begins it will be like that to Canada.

My wife grieves over her violin, which the climate causes to fall to pieces. Things get mouldy or damp very easily, but with drying boxes and the sun, when it does shine, they soon recover. I only wish I had seen all the estates before I put my little bit into rubber. The real thing is rich – this one pays about 36 per cent. The Kent estates of the Kuala Lumpur are magnificent, and they pay still more.

I have had lots of operations already, as there are over a thousand men and women on these three estates. I have a hospital at each, and a central one for the worst cases at Sejijak, eight miles above Kuching. They are very different from English hospitals, but they suit the climate and the natives. These lie on a bare board, or at most a mat under them, one blanket when required, and sort of block or hollow wooden drum for a pillow. The sides are open, the floors concrete, and a top or palm leaf roof, as it is coolest. The patients, if children, have the mother or father and the cat with them, and make themselves at home. There are no female nurses. At first men and women and children – married and single – all slept in the same room, the same as in their coolie lines, save that each bed can be curtained off. I have now got women and children separate, and I am asking for a native woman as head nurse. They all brighten up and show rows of white teeth when I come in. ”

Travel in War-Time
From Borneo to Britain

Auckland Star 13/11/1916 p9

"Captain W. L. Christie, R.A.M.C., who hails from the Clutha district, is now in the Great Eastern Military Hospital at Harwich. To Dr. Christie, belongs the distinction of being the first to take the M.D. of New Zealand University. After graduating he came to London, where, after some time at the London Hospital, he became an F.R.C.S. He practiced in Bristol for some years, but gave that up to go East to study tropical diseases. He took up his headquarters at Sarawak, Borneo, and on the outbreak of war he and Mrs. Christie came to England, where, on volunteering, Dr. Christie was appointed operating surgeon at Harwich.

In the journey Mrs. Christie and he moved all the time through war disturbances. The interference with food supplies had already put the troops of the White Rajah of Sarawak, Sir Charles Brooke, on the alert. The Singapore mutiny was being judged while they were in that city. It was a sight, Captain Christie says, to see our Chinese drilling there, and to note the readiness with which men past military age rushed for rifles and brought in prisoners. The details are tragic, as women were shot at close range, and quiet golfers fired upon had to relinquish their clubs for rifles at very short notice. Dr. and Mrs. Christie went on to Hong Kong, where, he says, the British eye was comforted by the sight of long guns on the surrounding hills, and willing citizens drilling on the squares of the city. After visiting Canton, Swato, Amoy, and Foochow they reached Shanghai. En route the tension in China was everywhere evident.

Shanghai is largely British, but there are French and other Concessions. Germans were seen everywhere, having come from Tsingtau and other places, but their influence was being neutralised. The travellers visited Nankin, where heaps of stones told of buildings battered by guns from a hill near by, and took steamer up the Yang-tse-Kiang to Hankow, where Japanese were guarding the Hang-yang iron mines. The mighty river is impressive. The vast plain around it consists of the silt deposited from its waters, making a rich plain stretching, as far as the eye could

reach. For many thousands of years this inexhaustible soil has given rich crops. The heaps of earth every few yards apart are graves, and the people decorate them and talk to their ancestors with the firm belief in the reality of their ever-present spirits. The doctor and his wife took train to Pekin, which no one but Chinese could preserve from being buried in sand. They fertilise and make gardens of what another less arduous people would have to be their sandy shroud. The place where Boxers once lay shooting into our Legation is now a street of the grandest, with marble dragons and modern improvements alongside of much that is effete. There are fallen Buddhas in the midst of the debris of their temples and near by the modern and grand War Office, which the Chinese, with characteristic incongruity, built before they set up their army. Some troops are to be seen doing the goose-step, and the Ancient Palace of the Emperors is guarded by Chinese in "pikelhaube" helmets – a comical sight. It is typical of China, herself ever greedy for modern education, rising out of ancient superstition to find her strength, which would be mighty were there but one great leader who could mobilise these resources and use them aright.

The journey was continued via Manchuria, where our voyagers saw the great Wall of China, and met in with a man hurrying Home from Newchwang to a wife, who had unhappily been in Germany when the war came. He said the money he had sent to her had been kept by the Germans. She had almost lost her reason, from stress of financial and other worry, till the American Embassy had rescued her. The Trans-Siberian railway, with its endless forests of pine on each side, was of course crowded with trainloads of troops, all happily, singing as they rushed to save their Motherland. Petrograd, with its vast palaces, now hospitals, and with its great Cathedral full of pious worshippers, charmed the travellers. They were attended in the hotel by men who wore every kind of uniform known to Russia, and heard one band play "Tipperary" to unresponsive ears.

In Finland, for the first time on their journey, they got food at reasonable prices. Mounted guards escorted them over a frozen river into Sweden, where tall soldiers guarding the frontier received them with fixed bayonets and scrutinised them. In many places in Sweden men were to be seen drilling. After visiting Stockholm and Christiania, they embarked at Bergen for Newcastle, where they just missed the submarine that sank the Wilhelmina."