

FRANCES. A. WELLS  
Come to Western  
AUSTRALIA.  
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*Dr. Ian Keith Mc. Gill*



are disturbed from their cover among the reeds. Two or three graceful cinnamon brown birds with long legs and curved beaks skim over the water, a white bittern wheels round, dipping occasionally into the surface, and many sleek ungainly cormorants with outstretched necks and elongated bodies fly rapidly away down the stream. Ugly fish-eagles, their black bodies surmounted by white heads and square white bibs, watch by the riverside for their prey, solemnly established on the highest limb of a gaunt dead tree as if to accentuate the eeriness of their appearance.

North of the Kafue, as far as Broken Hill, the country is thickly wooded, with intermediate stretches of open grass-land. If one keeps a sharp look-out from the train, game is almost sure to be seen. Small buck spring away over the veldt, or herds of sable antelope feed peacefully under the trees. At early dawn one morning I saw a magnificent roan antelope, silhouetted against the rosy sky, standing upon a grassy knoll and viewing with vague suspicion the great steam monster encroaching upon his preserves.

It is fascinating hour after hour to watch this remote country pierced by a single line of railway, and as the train travels only about twelve miles an hour on this remote section there is ample opportunity to observe everything. The growth of many of the trees is attractive and very peculiar. The stunted Mahobahoba tree, with its large shiny evergreen leaves grows side by side with the Mpani, a handsome tree valuable for its wood which has a hard centre, and an occasional Baobab with its gigantic bottle-shaped trunk appears as a monster among the smaller trees. Many of the trunks or stems are twisted like corkscrews, others take strange angles, and the Gusie tree spreads its topmost branches in the form of an umbrella. This strange growth, combined with the vivid spring tints I have already described, suggest strongly the weird trees so cleverly drawn by Japanese artists on screens and china.

Broken Hill is reached at last, and the railway penetrates no further. The two last rails look forlorn and neglected, as they lie with uneven ends and bufferless, pointing northwards. They suggest that they can go no further, for they are faced only a few yards away by a dense wood of trees and undergrowth, as yet undisturbed by platelayer or engineer. Close at hand, however, stands the contractor's store, with machinery and implements laid by, containing neat stacks of sleepers and little piles of spare rails, all in readiness when the word is given to take their part in the continuation of the great line from the Cape to Cairo.

ELEANOR WILSON FOX.



## COME TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## THE LAND OF GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES\*

BY FRANCES A. WELLS

"I AM surprised to hear that you like Western Australia," wrote an old friend of mine in England not so very long ago. "I have always understood that Australia as a whole is so hot and dry that fruit trees will not grow there—*except in the capital Tasmania—the garden of Australia.*" (The italics are my own.) Another English friend, now resident in the western State, told me, that when he left England he set out on his travels with the knowledge, gleaned in his college days, that Western Australia was noted only for diseased wheat and poison plant, which destroyed the sheep. Needless to say, he knows very different now. But what I am wondering is whether these mistaken impressions about Australia, and more particularly about Western Australia, have quite disappeared in the Old Country.

Certain it is that Australians are not likely to grow conceited at what they hear about themselves through the newspapers. According to some writers, we are a people bristling like porcupines with all sorts of objectionable ideas that we want to let loose on the world for the purpose of reforming everything according to our standpoint. Distance has probably something to do with this notion. If only more of our own folk would bridge the "gap," come and see us as we are, and better still, take up some of our unoccupied land and live with us, they would find that we are very like themselves after all. Descendants of purely British people, it would be strange if we were not. As a writer has said of another country, "The past has not laid its venerable hand upon us in consecration," but we have had our battles to fight. Many gallant lives have been laid down, and countless acts of heroism performed, in the cause of settlement.

\* Intending emigrants should apply for free advice and information to THE CENTRAL EMIGRATION BOARD, Cromwell House, Surrey Street, Strand, London, W.C. Address "The Secretary" and enclose stamp for reply. For further particulars see page viii. of current issue.



Our sun-tanned knights have not gone forth in gay apparel and to the sound of many trumpets to conquer the wilderness, but their works proclaim the worth of their services. The wheat-fields, vineyards, orchards, sheep and cattle runs, gold mines, cities and towns, offer the best evidence of their courage and abounding energy. But much remains to be done. This bright, beautiful land has immense resources, and we are going "right on" with its development. While not forgetting the best traditions of our race, we have our ideals. And one thing we desire to see is that all who live within our shores shall enjoy a share of the good things of life, and be something more than mere machines.

Western Australia offers special opportunities for land selection and settlement. Young men, middle-aged men, and even those men who have borne the burden and heat of the day in other lands, but whose energies are not yet spent, possessed of a little capital, determination and common-sense, cannot do better than come here, where, as a prominent member of the Government said the other day, we have only touched the fringe of settlement. In agricultural areas the rainfall is assured. We have liberal land laws and cheap land; a climate that will grow anything, and in which it is possible to work all the year round. The Government are building light railways wherever settlement demands, and generally doing all they can to aid the farmer. One thing must be borne in mind though—and it is important—"The land that lies like a giant asleep" is not all ready for the plough. It is well timbered and has to be cleared—sometimes a costly business, for the trees are magnificent. But soil that will grow good timber will also grow good crops, grass, fruit and flowers, and once cleared, the rest is easy, though it is necessary to have a little capital on which to rely while the clearing, ploughing, sowing and growing are going on. Of course the cost of clearing varies. In some parts the timber is easily removed. In others, it is more difficult, because the trees have had a long start and their hold on the earth is strong. Cleared land can be bought, but it is more expensive.

Let the reader imagine himself a passenger on one of the great liners that bring the mails to Australia each week and that he is entering the fine harbour of Fremantle—the front door of the State. If he arrives in the height of summer he will probably find the heat trying, and within half an hour of landing will have developed an overwhelming desire to swallow everything liquid he sets eyes on, that is, in the way of lemon-squash and the like. If he comes in the depths of winter, when heavy rains and cold winds are playing a duet, he will probably say unpleasant things and want to drink all the same—though not lemon-squash.



But if he arrives in normal weather and has an eye for colour, he will revel in golden sunlight, in the marvellous blue of "that inverted bowl we call the sky," the blue of the water all about him, and the deeper blue of distant shore-lines and hills.

Then, if he be an enthusiastic tourist, he will immediately want to inspect the capital city—Perth. There are two ways of getting there, by rail and by river. The Swan river flows into the sea at Fremantle, and fine steamers ply constantly between the port and capital. The way by rail is not unpleasant, affording as it does a glimpse of towns in the making all along the line, and stretches of country covered with trees—the trees that grew by themselves, and the fine Agricultural Show grounds—where, last October, 30,000 people assembled to see West Australia's products. But, unfortunately, as Perth is approached, this route also affords a view of backyards. On the other hand, the route by river gives twelve miles of beautiful scenery to look at. On either side are high timber-covered banks; houses with red roofs showing at intervals with picturesque effect through the soft green of the trees; curves, inlets, and miles of blue water ahead on which the sunbeams dance and flash like diamonds.

Perth is built on the banks of the Swan, and on leaving the steamer one is almost in the heart of the town where, if the visitor is observant, he will notice that the people there are just ordinary civilised folk going about their daily business, as if they meant—business. Some of our visitors exclaim at the "Englishness" of everything they see in this far-away land. Others say, "Why don't we hear more about you?" And the Anglo-Indian says, "After so many black faces it is a treat to be where there are only white, and British people too." And here let me say, the climate of Western Australia is particularly suitable for the Anglo-Indian, a sort of halfway house between the cold of his native land and the intense heat of India.

Perth is growing rapidly. Just now we are having a mild civil war over the new Town Hall that is to be. One half of our citizens are trying to impress upon the other half the fact that we are not standing still—that we must build for Perth twenty years hence. The other half insist that twenty years hence we shall be able to build another Town Hall—if we want to; which, if one can judge by the progress made during the last five years, will be true enough. The Progressives are likely to carry the point. But this is digression. I must go back to my imaginary tourist, who has by this time been seized by a watchful cabby and borne off in triumph to see King's Park; embracing a miniature mountain called Mount Eliza from which there is a magnificent view; a fine river frontage; and acres of original bush land, 1000 in all, stretching away in the back-



ground. This glorious recreation place was secured for the people through the wisdom of Sir John Forrest, Western Australia's great statesman; and for this act alone he will probably be canonised as the years go on. Imagine what it means, to have all these acres of forest land with a river frontage, within a stone's throw of the city! Where it is possible to escape from shrieking train whistles, electric tramcar bells, and the hundred and one noises of a busy town, to absolute peace. I sometimes think that King's Park will be responsible for the first real West Australian poet. Go there when you will, there is inspiration enough to stir the coldest soul and set an imaginative one on fire.

In the spring the ground is a carpet of wild flowers of wonderful colour and form, and the voices of birds echo from every tree; the low carol of the magpie warbling to his mate, the soft liquid notes of the ground lark, and in deep contrast, the Kookaburra's merry peal of almost human laughter. In the summer, the hum of myriad insects fill the air and the scent of drying grass rises like incense from the earth. In the autumn, "Silence and sunshine creep with soft caress, on mountain, plain and wilderness." And in the winter the west wind blows fiercely through the big gums, tears off long strips of their brown bark, beats the rain heavily on to their pendant leaves, and roars as if the Storm Fiend had come forth with all his legions to join in the wild frolic. Then when the storm is spent,

Far and near, o'er each, o'er all,  
Hangs the great silence like a pall  
Softer than snow.

And nature sleeps.

All along the river-side of the Park there is a fine drive, called "May" Drive, after the Princess of Wales, who opened it. This is planted on both sides with different varieties of the scarlet flowering-gum (eucalyptus). Fine trees now, and during January and February, when in full bloom, are a magnificent sight, the blossoms of no two trees being alike, but shading off from the most vivid cardinal to a delicate rose pink. At intervals, wedged in between the masses of brilliant colour, there is another species of gum with blossoms of creamy white, which the bees love for the honey that they contain. Beyond the trees again and on both sides of the drive, lawns have been made, flower-beds laid out, which are generally a mass of bright blooms, and ornamental trees from other lands are grown. This strip of cultivation lends an additional picturesqueness to the native forest which it adjoins.

Close to the Park entrance gates a handsome bronze statue



has been erected to the memory of the West Australian soldiers who were killed in the South African war. On one day in every year since that troublous time the people of Perth have assembled there to do honour to the memory of the men who lost their lives in the service of the Empire. The Bishop of Perth conducts a short service, the Last Post is sounded, and wreaths of flowers are laid round and on the statue.

Further up the drive, in a position that commands a view of the bright river below the Mount, the entire city on its banks, and the range of purple hills beyond, stands a marble statue of our late beloved Queen. This was presented to the people of Perth by an Englishman who has large interests here. The statue stands on a granite pedestal on which is inscribed: "Victoria Queen and Empress 1837-1901." During her reign Australia was colonised and federated. Four field guns, dated 1843 and 1815 guard the corners of the little square on which the statue stands. Right behind the pedestal, the purple bougainvillea creeper has completely covered the trunk of a dead tree, from which long arms of green are thrown out, screen-like, on either side, and in the spring its blossoms of imperial hue form a fitting background for the white figure of the Royal Lady standing there. Immediately behind the creeper again is a flagstaff, on which, on State occasions, the Union Jack is run up, and very bonnie the historic colours look waving over the green tops of the surrounding trees.

There is food for much reflection in these two scenes alone. They symbolise the fact that, to her bright southern daughter, the Motherland is a great deal more than name. And one cannot help feeling that if the quiet statue of Queen Victoria, who lived so long in the hearts of her subjects, and whose memory is precious still, could stir to life, and vision come into the sightless eyes, she would rejoice to see the great spaces waiting to be filled, and to know that beyond the hills that encircle the city of the Golden West, there is room on the land for thousands who may be crowded out in the old country; room for the courageous and enterprising, and for all who desire to help build and maintain a greater Britain under the Southern Cross.

And perhaps the time is not far off when, with palatial steamers and quick transit, it will be possible for the reigning Monarch to visit his over-sea subjects, where a right royal welcome awaits him. Here, in this bright sunny land, beautiful boys and girls are growing up; eager, intelligent, and brave, and to them the future belongs; but the present is ours, and it is for us to hold and strengthen the threads of Empire in order that the years may not loosen them so that they will break at a touch.



Meanwhile, the drive, broad and firm for motoring, cycling,  
walking or driving, winds on through the forest where :

The gnarled knotted trunks Eucalyptian,  
Seem carved like weird columns Egyptian,  
With curious device, quaint inscription  
And hieroglyph strange.

until the 1000 acres are exhausted and a comfortable tea kiosk  
awaits the traveller at the exit gates.

FRANCES A. WELLS.

PERTH.



## AMONG THE MAROONS

By COLONEL LOSCOMBE

### I.

#### HISTORICAL SKETCH.

I CAN quite imagine that many of my readers, when they see the title of this article will exclaim, "But who are the Maroons?" It may be well therefore, before describing my visit to one of their villages, to give a short historical sketch of the people themselves.

On the conquest of Jamaica by the English in 1655, fifteen hundred or more of the Spaniards' slaves, some pure Africans, others of mixed African and Indian blood, took to the mountains, and refused to surrender to the English. From time to time these people were joined by runaway slaves from the English plantations, and very soon the combined band became a formidable source of danger to the British settlers. Some idea of the terror the Maroons,\* as they were called, inspired may be gathered from the fact that in the space of forty years no less than forty-four Acts of Assembly were passed, and nearly a quarter of a million sterling spent, in endeavouring to suppress them.

It was not till 1734 that the Maroons received any definite check. In that year Captain Stoddart attacked Nanny Town—so called from a Maroon chief—their stronghold in the heart of the Blue Mountains. Numbers of the marauders were killed, others threw themselves over the precipices to escape capture, and the stronghold was utterly destroyed. The place to this day has a bad name, and few negroes will venture near it, while on account of its inaccessibility scarcely any whites have visited the spot. But Captain Stoddart's success, complete as it was, appears to have been only local, as two years later, under another

\* The word "Maroon" is a corruption of the Spanish word *Cimarron* (derived from *Cima*, a mountain top), meaning a dweller on the tops of the mountains.







