

# **When The New Zealander Comes**

Prof. Blyde Muddersnook, P.O.Z.A.S.

# Table of Contents

<u>When The New Zealander Comes</u> .....	1
<u>Prof. Blyde Muddersnook, P.O.Z.A.S.</u> .....	1

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'...When some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.' Macaulay.

For some years past the extraordinary finds of the Dr. Slovak-Bagster of Patagonia had aroused the deepest interest in ancient London archaeology. Certain objects which had been acquired by the Auckland National Museum—one believed to be an effigy of an English warrior, Arthur Duke (of Wellington), circa anno 1850 of the Christian era, and a portion of a curious metal chariot or mota-car with a legend, D-468—have been inspected by thousands of Zealanders. Recollecting that this half-mythical city of Lundun, or Londinium, was once the capital of our race, funds to the extent of forty thousand pundas were speedily granted by the Zealand National Council for the purpose of dispatching a scientific party to England to undertake special work of excavation of the site of Lun-dun and the Cockni region in the vicinity of the River Thames.

To begin with, it may be stated that our party consisted of Colonel Binns Smoodle, P.D., S.R., Dr. Tite Opkins, R.O. (the distinguished architect-draughtsman, who has already been engaged in excavations at Paris—otherwise the Gace City, believed to be the headquarters of the Gaces—and Berlin, notable as the home of the Germs or Sheenies), Fellow Mustard Snip (the solarist, whose solar prints of ancient Chicago have won him several radium medals), and myself.

We left Auckland fully equipped on the ninth of Thermoso, s.c. 5607, and five days later alighted at Lloydville, on the southern coast of the island of Wallia, formerly Britain, or Angleland. From thence we made our way northward through the Wallish forests until, after many hardships and difficulties, which it is not necessary to recount, we reached the ancient village of Suthuk, which is on the edge of the river-bed of the Thames, most of which is now reclaimed land planted with cabbages, the export of which forms the principal staple of the country.

Two of the most enlightened of the inhabitants, who, it is regrettable to know, have sunk very low in the scale of intelligence, undertook to guide us to the principal spots customarily visited by travellers. Our first destination was the vestiges of the once famous Lun-dun Bridge, mentioned in many ancient accounts and in one folk-lore ballad which has come down to us beginning, "Lun-dun Bridge is falling down". Several arches of this structure now span the intervening space between the village of Suthuk and the extremely picturesque ruins which are visible on the summit of an opposite eminence.

These ruins are now all that is left of the once famous Cockni cathedral of St. Paul's. It was a superb day in early autumn when we halted to survey the scene, and my talented friend, Dr. Tite Opkins, took up his post on one of the shattered arches, in order to make a sketch of the r These ruins are now all that is left of the once famous Cockni cathedral of St. Paul's. It was a superb day in early autumn when we halted to survey the scene, and my talented friend, Dr. Tite Opkins, took up his post on one of the shattered arches, in order to make a sketch of the ruins. Another colleague, Mr. Mustard Snip, proceeded to make some solar prints of the immediate neighbourhood, which is one much haunted by bitterns.

After a brief delay, leaving Dr. Opkins engaged in his congenial task, the rest of the party pressed forward and began to make an investigation of the remains of this once populous and opulent city at closer quarters. It is

## When The New Zealander Comes

difficult for me to describe vividly the general ruin and desolation which now pervade this celebrated spot.

Several benighted peasants, who, we are told, claim to be the last survivors of the tribe of the Cocknies, now began to gather around us, and to offer for barter certain objects which they had dug up at various times in the vicinity. I will not undertake to enumerate all these objects, many of which possess considerable archeological interest. Amongst them was a curious and complicated instrument, concerning whose use we are not agreed, but which corresponds in many particulars to the description which has come down to us of an ancient English machine, in which certain characters were impressed upon sheets of paper, called a write-typer. Another was a large brass horn, which Colonel Smoodle thought might be the trumpet commonly in use for calling members of the Radical or Tory tribes together, but which Dr. Opkins believes to be the megaphone attached to an ancient gramophone. Several wheels, with dozens of slender spokes, thought to belong to an old English machine known as the bicycle, were also brought to us, together with curious warped staves tipped with brass and steel, used by the players of the long extinct game of golf.

We made our way by degrees into the ruins of the cathedral, which now afford a singular aspect of picturesque solitude.

Having got together a set of workmen, we commenced the labour of excavation in the most likely spot, and daily awaited the results with eagerness. After digging down a depth of twenty-nine feet, the pickaxe struck a metal substance, which proved to be a bronze statue in an excellent state of preservation. This evidently was part of a sarcophagus, which probably enclosed the remains of a hero hitherto supposed to have been legendary, an Oriental warrior known in fable as Chinese Gordon. The remains of other statues were unearthed, including the head of a statue believed to be that of Joshua Reynolds, or Reynolds Joshua, who, it will be remembered, commanded the sun to pause in his flight, in order that he might paint it. We also came across vestiges of a huge musical instrument, very much esteemed three or four thousand years ago, and known as the organ. This particular specimen — as Dr. Schmutz, in his monograph of Ancient England, has shown — was considered one of the finest in Great Britain, being divided into two parts, one on each side of the choir, with connecting mechanism under the choir flooring. It emitted strange vibrating sounds, sometimes resembling the tones of the human voice and other times of thunder.

In the course of the next three months a most astonishing collection of fragments of statues and of mural decoration rewarded our efforts. One in particular we were desirous of exhuming, in order to confirm the passage from the old English chronicler, Macaulay, quoted in Schmutz's monumental work, before the Wallish fog and rainy season known as winter set in. I am glad to be able to report that the tablet in memory of Christophorus Wren, the builder of the cathedral, with the inscription containing the words, "Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice," was brought to light, and has been shipped to old Zealand.

It is impossible to convey an idea of the horrors of the Wallish climate at this season of the year. It rendered it impossible for us to continue our labours. Indeed, it is no wonder that this island became gradually depopulated in the course of centuries, when its inhabitants had to endure such climatic hardships. Indeed, to one accustomed to the climates of old Zealand, Australis, Krugerland, Mapleland, Dai-Nippon, and other parts of the world, not to mention Mars and the moon, it is hard to realize how any intelligent race of men would consent to continue existence in such a bleak island.

When we eventually resumed our excavations at St. Paul's, we were rewarded by coming across what is undoubtedly the once famous lantern formerly above the dome. On the top of the lantern once rested a ball, surmounted by a cross, both together weighing three thousand four hundred and sixty-two mullia — or, in the system of weights then believed to be in vogue, eight thousand nine hundred and sixty pounds. The ball was six feet in diameter, and could hold ten or twelve persons within. Judge, therefore, what must have been the majesty of this structure three thousand years ago! Its height was four hundred and eighty peda, or three hundred and sixty-four English feet — the scale of measurement being derived from the size of the human foot, which was much larger amongst the English people than it is at present.

Meanwhile, other workmen were busily engaged in investigations, under our direction, in the immediate neighbourhood. One of these was on the site of a building which at one time must have borne the legend in gilt letters 'Lyons,' probably one of those temples mentioned by Dr. Schmutz, frequented by the population of all classes for the consumption of a beverage known as tea, or tay. In the foundation-stone of this building was made a memorable discovery, and what has hitherto hardly been believed to exist — namely, copies of the daily

## When The New Zealander Comes

journals of Lun–dun in the Christian year 1912. This find created the utmost excitement amongst scholars throughout the civilized world. It was comparable to the fabled discovery by the antique demi–god Napoleon of the so–called Rosetta Stone, which unlocked as if by magic the repository of the secrets of the Egyptian past. The key to the whole of these journals or newspapers has not yet been found, but learned men are engaged upon them, and no doubt much of great interest will be revealed. One of these printed documents (or newspapers, as they were called) bore the title of the Daily Telegraph. The telegraph was, it will be remembered, the instrument for conveying messages from one place to another by means of electrical currents passing along wires. Why the newspaper bore this name has not yet been elucidated. The whole document, however, is a mine of great philological value, and contains many rare words and phrases not to be found elsewhere. Another document, superscribed Daily Yarn, is an even greater curiosity. It contains references to events which the learned Dr. Schmutz, Professor Zammer, and others declare could not possibly ever have happened, and is therefore supposed to have been the joint composition of talented fabulists, whose little tales appear to have enjoyed a wide popularity three thousand years ago. A specimen of the picture papers of the period was also found, exhibiting on either side of the leaf bizarre reproductions in black ink of current episodes, some of them very instructive and entertaining, although difficult to connect with human life at any period of the world's history.

Not far distant from St. Paul's are the ruins of the ancient fortress and gloomy State prison of Lun–dun, once held to be historically the most interesting spot in Angleland. It was called the Tower, and was built by one William, surnamed the Conqueror. The chapel of St. John, which was once situated on the second floor of the structure, had long disappeared; but at a depth of fifty feet its massive pillars and cubical capitols, its wide triforium, its apse, its ruined arches, and its barrel–vaulted ceiling were unearthed by the excavators. A great deal of armour was also found — that is, a kind of steel clothing — which is supposed to have been worn by the famous personages of Angleland's mightiest period — Asquith, Lloyd George, Churchill, and others — to protect them effectually against the assaults of their enemies.

From the Tower we eventually proceeded along the banks of the river to a temple of even greater renown, no less than the Westminster Abbey of English legend. This famous structure, to which the name of Walhalla has been applied, stands on low ground on the left bank, overgrown with thorns and surrounded by a marsh. The Abbey formerly contained numerous Royal burial vaults and a long series of monuments to celebrated men. Interment within these walls was held to the last and greatest honour which the nation could bestow on the most illustrious of her sons. It was also the place where the English Kings and Queens were crowned, with great pomp. Alas, what is left of this glory to–day? A picturesque and venerable ruin which the piety of one of the Cockni tribes, after great labour, exposed over a century ago to the light. It is with feelings almost too deep for words that we pass the site of the nave, chancel, and cloister, and remember the scenes doubtless enacted here thousands of years ago. At first, we encountered some difficulty in commencing our operations, owing to the prejudice of some of the natives, but when our intentions were finally explained to them and several had been sufficiently bribed, we were allowed to continue the work. After removing some six million cubic peds of rubbish, which was carted away, we came across a marble effigy, which has been identified as that of the statesman William Pitt, in the company of two other figures, one representing History listening to his words, and the other Anarchy in chains. These highly interesting specimens of the sculpture of old Angleland in its prime have been presented by our Government to the President of Siberia.

One of the conclusions resulting from our excavations at Westminster was the exposure of the fallacy that only great men were buried in the Abbey, for we came across numerous vaults of persons not mentioned in Schmutz's lists. Several of them have since been shown to be persons of small consequence: John Blow, who played the organ at one time; Elizabeth Warren, widow of a Bishop William Thynne; John Ernest Grabb; Thomas Shadwell, the poet; Peter Brown, aged seven years; Esme Stuart, aged ten; Aphra Behn, a lady who wrote shilling shockers (as certain light romances were then called); Suzanna Davidson, daughter of a rich merchant of Rotterdam, and other celebrities of that stamp.

We succeeded in exhuming large fragments of a most extraordinary piece of sculpture, which at first we supposed must be that of some great monarch, statesman, or warrior. It represented Death emerging from a tomb and launching his dart at a lady in the act of dying, while her husband tries to ward off the attack. This striking work was, however, shown to commemorate the memory of a Mr. and Mrs. Bird, of whom nothing is known except that they conducted a very successful drapery establishment somewhere near the Via Oxford.

## When The New Zealander Comes

We left a large party at work busily restoring Westminster Abbey, so that it yet may present some notion of its former greatness. But at present funds are sorely lacking for the purpose, inasmuch as the municipality of Lloydville has failed to grant the money we had hoped for.

Closely adjacent to the Abbey are the imposing ruins of the Gothic temple of Parliament, which was dedicated to St. Stephen. Here was where the statesmen, orators, and politicians assembled by hundreds daily, thousands of years ago. Fragments of their debates may be read in Schmutz, and excite in us now the utmost astonishment that the affairs of a great nation should have been conducted in such a manner. Excavations on this site have yielded many finds of antiquarian interest, amongst them being a small iron box, upon which the initials 'F.E.S.' are still visible. When this box was broken open several sheets of paper were found, still in a state of good preservation. One of these sheets was headed, 'Mems for the Day. Give Winston beans. No warrant for barriers. Disgraceful arrogance of power,' etc., the exact significance of which has so far escaped our scholiasts.

But, great as was the interest which these magnificent ruins aroused in us, there were some who were filled with a greater fervour at the thought of bringing to light some relics of that world-famous library and archaeological collection known as the British Museum.

Making our way thither, across fields covered with undergrowth and small timber, with occasional woodmen's cottages, we came to the northern side of what was once the road running between Lun-dun and Oxford, and the relics of a once stately pile. This building is said to date back to the first half of the nineteenth century of the Christian era, and was built by two brothers named Smirke. Within it was gathered an enormous collection of printed books, manuscripts, prints, and drawings, antiquities, coins, and medals. What is now left of all this wealth? Bats and swallows now circle about what was once the great reading room, and moss and ivy cover a great part of the ruins. It is said that pigeons once resorted here in large numbers, and tales are related which seem to us now incredible.

Several highly interesting finds were made in this vicinity. It must be remembered that the average difference of level between the ancient site of Lun-dun and the modern village is seventy-two feet. This corresponds to the difference of level which was found between the ancient and later Rome, as recorded in phonograph discs dating about the year 2000. For instance, we are told that a pedestal inscribed with the name of Naeratus Cerialis, formerly in the inner courtyard in the House of Vestals in the Forum, was found perpendicular and intact at this depth. At a depth of nearly eighty feet we came across portions of the inscription which formerly ran around the top of the reading-room, inscribed with such names as 'Tennyson,' 'Wordsworth,' and 'Milton,' who are believed to have been poets of that period, but whose writings have not come down to us.

We are told that in the reign of the fifth George the Courts of Law were regarded as one of the most imposing structures of the capital. Here foregathered all the professors of that mysterious system called Law in ancient times — Chief justices, judges, barristers, solicitors, and other of the strange hierarchy long since obsolete. The halls in which they plied their calling have almost disappeared, and only a couple of venerable towers remain. Beneath the tons of stone, brick, and other debris it is believed much of archaeological interest is buried, which persistent excavation will bring to light.

Altogether the impression made upon us was one of admiration mingled with awe and wonder at these monuments of a past civilization. No doubt it seemed to the inhabitants of ancient Angleland and their mighty city of Lun-dun, whose ardent and enterprising spirits roamed through the world, founding colonies and establishing an opulent empire, that they would escape the fate which had overtaken Assyria, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, that the solidity of their structures would baffle the tooth of Time. But, although they have thus passed away and left nothing but these relics to attest their former magnificence and glory, yet the English people doubtless played their part in hastening on the ultimate civilization and beautification of the world and adjacent planets which we to-day witness.

As a result of the unofficial reports made by our party and widely circulated by the news-cylinders throughout Zealand, large numbers of tourists instantly began to flock to Wallia. From Lloydville they proceeded with guides to the site of Lun-dun, where all the ruins I have here enumerated were pointed out to their admiring eyes. Indeed, there are few places which promise greater attractions for a summer holiday than the ruins of ancient Lun-dun, although the Zealand public should be warned against purchasing relics offered to them by unscrupulous persons. Only the other day the hilt of a sword (which, we may point out, was an implement once actually used for shedding human blood) was sold at a high price, on the ground of its having once been possessed

## When The New Zealander Comes

by one Kitchener, a renowned English soldyar of the latter part of the second Christian millenary. As Dr. Schmutz has clearly proved, this Kitchener was a wholly mythical personage, who figures in the Victorian fables, and is mentioned together with another legendary hero, Bobs, in the epic verse of the English bard, Kip-Ling.