

## OURSELVES

This Owen Merton number of *Art in New Zealand* may prove more timely than we imagined . . . it may assist a sick man toward health again. Mr. Merton is laid aside in London, incapacitated from the practice of his art. In the circumstances, some impatience with Life and flickerings of *heimweh* are bound to come upon occasionally. The tribute we have striven (with the help of good friends) to pay to Owen Merton's reputation at Home and abroad may mean a breath of keen, sweet New Zealand air blowing about his hospital room.

Whatever of worth there is in the Merton feature has been possible substantially by the co-operation of those to whom acknowledgment is made in the appropriate place. It has always been so . . . to the enhanced appreciation of our clients and the furtherance of the purpose which brought the quarterly into being. We have remarked this before, but it is a truth that will bear repetition. Another encouraging factor is the stimulus imparted by kindly words for the magazine from beyond the confines of this country. Prominent among such messages is that of Mr. John Duncan, librarian of the Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh. By letter, Mr. Duncan says in part: "We beg to thank you for your kindness in sending us the December number of your magazine, *Art in New Zealand*. Speaking for myself, I am very impressed by the thoughtful and sincere tone . . ." Mr. Duncan adds: "Maori art is so unfamiliar to me that I am at the stage where it seems to me to resemble that of ancient South America. There is no doubt as to its splendidly decorative character, and I could imagine a modern artist, steering clear of its more savage elements, achieving a fine style on its basis. . ." The writer concludes with "cordial thanks and good wishes for the success of your artistic adventure." From a connoisseur on Sydney-side this (referring to the Meryon number): "It interested me tremendously . . . colour-plates, black and whites, and the text . . . So far you have contrived to do so nobly that I am half apprehensive you may not be able to maintain the pace . . ." To that we reply in the words of the classic Asquith: Wait and see! We leave this aspect with the glad tidings that the *Australasian*, Australia's greatest news weekly, of a strong æsthetic flavour, very highly commended our Meryon.

And now for the future—September, to begin with. That issue will see Van der Velden starring in colour, half-tone and the printed word.

Mr. L. H. Booth, of Christchurch, will provide the necessary monograph. We can promise subscribers a collection in every reasonable way thoroughly representative of our subject. Another attraction definitely in prospect—we cannot be specific, since New York is not situated just across the Straits—is a disquisition from the pen of K. M. Ballantyne, an ex-New Zealand artist, whose researches and methods are outlined in this number. Mr. Ballantyne proposes to discuss Maori art, with illustrations to match. The announcement conjures up intriguing possibilities. The exile is no mere realist. He pursues Truth after his own earnest fashion, is downright in exposition, and is uncompromisingly the enemy of the humbugs. That article will be well worth waiting for.

And lastly. For the September we have planned, too, a specially commissioned critique of the art exhibition in Auckland, and amongst other literary reading, a series of reviews of *belles lettres*, including "Yesterdays in Maoriland," by Andrew Reischek. The author was an Austrian naturalist, a "beloved vagabond," with a "passion for science and wanderings."