THE HARTZ MOUNTAINS

I am glad I have been asked by the committee to show you the scenery of the Hartz Mountains, and say something about them, because this locality is of especial interest to me, for I was the first man who ever used a camera there, and the first to practically introduce the very beautiful scenery to the Tasmanian public,—at once creating an interest which has grown in intensity as the years have gone by, and the place has become better known and talked about. I have said those mountains have an especial interest to me;—yes, apart from what I have just stated they have afforded me very, very much pleasure, and yet again much sorrow, for I lost one of my best and most intimate friends—the best bushman in the Huon—on the inhospitable wilds of its bleak plains, during a howling, whirling, snow blizzard. He dropped down in the snow and died, no one could save him, and his companion had to flee to save their own lives which were also in imminent jeopardy, and today, up yonder amidst the stunted foliage of that great storm-swept plain, there is a simply inscribed marble slab, let into a big rough rock, marking the spot where Arthur Geeves died on that awful day.

One can hardly realize how, within 12 miles of a temperate climate there can exist contemparaneously such wild and
dangerously intemperate conditions, for during the awful state of the weather on the mountains on that dreadful day, away down on the plains at Geeveston—3000 feet below—there were no signs of unrest or disturbance! I fear this uncertainty, this fickleness of climate on our highlands, is going to be a serious impediment in the paths of our Tourist Associations in their endeavours to make those spots reasonably accessible and safe for our general tourist.

Still, I feel that this very uncertainty may have a charm for many, always provided of course, that at the journeys end there is a good fire and a comfortable bed—that's half the battle in bush travelling.

But I must hurry on! Let me then, first of all, deal with the routes leading to the Hartz Mountains from Hobart, so that you may gain some acquaintance with the character of their scenery, and be thus able the better to judge of their merits.

There are two routes—one by water and the other by road.

The water route is by way of D'Entrecasteaux Channel and the Huon River to Shipwrights Point, 112 miles; the other by way of the Huon Road skirting the slopes of Mount Wellington, crossing the Huon River at Huonville, 21 miles from Hobart.
and then continuing along the banks of the river
as far as Algypool—half a mile past Shipwrights Point
—where there is a balance of 3 miles of bush road which
lands you at Geeveston, a total distance of 36½ miles from
Hobart. We will glance, then, at a few of the views along the
beautiful waterway of D'Entrecasteaux Channel.

2. View from Bonnet Hill—showing Chain

3. Pearson's Point from Denne's Point

4. Coast at Denne's Point, look toward Pearson's

5. Barnes' Bay

6. Adventure Bay

7. Fluted Cape.

8. Kettering

9. At Flower Pot, showing Channel Cook N.E.

10. " " " S. X

11. Pumpana Channel from Middleton.

12. Gordon Looking N.

13. " " S.

14. Channel & Adam's Peak near Arch Pt

15. Huon R. Showing from Miller's Reef

16. " " " Tha Kereel

17. Hospital Bay, Huon Riv.
These views will suffice as examples of the Houn water way. Now, we will return to Hobart and notice the scenery of the overland route.—

18. Hobart from the Huon Road
19. Huon Road & Mt. Wellington
20. The Reservoirs
21. Fern Tree Hotel & Reserve Track (summer)
22. — (winter)
23. Fern Tree Reserve in Winter
24. Huon Road at Watchorn's Hill
25. "High Peak" residence of Eric Grant
26. On the Huon Road
27. "The Huon Belle" from Bullock Hill
28. — near Thros浦e
29. Huon River Bridge at
30. Huon River above Bridge
31. Mosquito Point Huon River
32. Huon River from Mosquito Point
33. Huon River "Port Elysia" Road
34. " " Franklin Road
35. Franklin from North
36. " " South Road below
37. View from Franklin looking to Shipwright Po
We are now four miles from Geelong, and on the threshold of the Hartz Track which branches off from the main road to the mountains, some 8 miles distant. The views, both by land and water, which we have just noticed, cannot but be an immense attraction to the tourist, who, indeed, may feel well repaid for the journey by them alone. The steamer and coach services are excellent. One coach per day, with the usual quantity of an efficient water service as usual, and a daily steamer, make the journey exceedingly enjoyable and convenient.

This track to the mountains owes its existence, in very large measure to the energy of Senator Dobson, who has always been so active in promoting anything that will stimulate the Tourist traffic in our state.
It was opened in 1893, and improved much afterwards, and an accommodation house erected at its termination on the mountain plain, near the summit, which proves a great boon to travellers, being so much more comfortable than a tent. The track was surveyed by Mr Osborne Geeves and his sons, and was cut out by his son Arthur, who subsequently will be remembered, lost his life on the mountain. The 8 miles of this track, from South Creek to the Accommodation Hut is one continual unfoldment of almost the whole of Tasmania store of botanical treasures, and lovers of nature cannot but admire and enjoy the endless bush pictures displayed so lavishly on either hand—of changing forest trees, beautiful foliage, and graceful fern. The Kermandie River is crossed several times during the first mile or so of the track, and at two miles, furnishes rather a picturesque waterfall which is worthy of notice.

51. Kermandie Falls.  
This river takes its rise from a button-rush plain of about 300 acres, at an altitude of about 1300 feet—and is crossed by the track at about 4 miles from South Creek. From one part of this little plain rather a pretty peep of the head of Mount Hartz is got.

52. View from Kermandie Plains.
From the Kermandie Plains one begins to enter the alpine zone and the foliage assumes much richness and beauty.

The track is very hilly in parts, but the rises, although in places steep, are short, and glimpses of the hills, and occasionally of the mountains in the distance, are reliefs to monotony.

The Accommodation House, shown on the screen, although by no means an ideal structure, is yet, nevertheless, a valuable adjunct to the mountains. It is snugly situated on the Hartz Plain, by a good creek on the fringe of a dense myrtle bush which shelters it from the prevailing winds. It measures 32 x 12 feet and is divided into 3 compartments, a central room 12 x 12 forming the general or sitting room, and two rooms on either side fitted with bunks, serve as sleeping rooms for ladies and gentlemen. There are no fireplaces in the sleeping rooms, and the wooden bunks are so hard!

From this Accommodation Hut, tracks—hardly definite enough however for the general visitor—branch off to the different
lakes and the mountain top. The view on the screen, showing the mountain plain, will now afford me an oppor-
tunity for a brief description of the 'locale' of the sight and of the Hartz Range itself.

The rugged basaltic formation of the summit of the range stands up finely and precipitately from this plain, rising to about a thousand feet, trending roughly N.W. and S.E. for 8 miles or so,—the southern aspect terminating in two fine, and bold pyramidal bluffs, which join the Adamsons Peak group while the northern end peters out in a series of jagged, sharp wedge shaped rocks, called The Pinnacles.

This plain, shown on the screen, stretches along the base of this rugged mountain crest, its width averaging, I should think about 1½ miles, seeming to be formed of slight terraces, whose slopes are usually clad with dense fringes of timber. The altitude of this plain is about 3000 feet above sea level, and it is quite free from button rush—those who have had experi-
ence of button grass travelling would appreciate the 'going' on the Hartz Plain—and in lieu of this abominable grass, there is a soft, tufty, mountain artichoke, which is very pleasant and safe to walk upon.

(\textit{Astelia Alpina})

There are seven lakes in all on the mountains—all lying under the rugged shelter of the crest of the range...
being on the East side of the range, none of them being large, but all most picturesque, seeming to be like pockets on the sides of the range, their drainage outlets strange to state, are all situate at their southern ends.

Most of them have been stocked with Loch Leven trout, and in the large lake the trout have been seen of fair size, but are reported to be difficult to catch in the orthodox way. Personally I doubt if they will be a permanent success, on account of paucity of food, still that remains to be proved, and although much in evidence now in the lake, fish have been fairly hooked. If fishing can be successfully maintained it will mean a tremendous additional attraction for the locality.

We will now notice the lakes and scenery at the northern end of the range which lie most convenient to the Accommodation House. The first one—about ½ of a mile distant

57. Lake Osborne

is a lake of about 500 x 200 yards, of an oval shape, and has been named after the discoverer of these mountain beauties, the veteran explorer of the Huon, Mr Osborne Geeves. — Quite close to this lake is another, named

58. Lake Perry

after the man who accompanied Mr Geeves when he made the discoveries.
This view is got from the high northern embankment of the lake, and from this position a very good view of the northern trend of the Hartz Range is obtained, called

59 - The Pinnacles.

Between the Pinnacles and Lake Perry is an open saddle called 'The Gap'. From here a magnificent view presents itself.

The Gap dips precipitately into the great valley of the Picton River, and immediately beyond the river, Mount Picton, from which the river takes its name, rises up abruptly and majestically, and presents a spectacle which, however, can only be truly represented by the artist's brush--

60. Mt. Picton from the Gap.

The photograph on the screen is really a caricature of the actual scene. Glimpses of the grander mountain ranges beyond are obtained, but they will be more particularly dealt with when we show the scenery of Mt Hartz proper, where they are seen to better advantage.

In this beautiful Picton valley we have the most extensive stringy bark forests in the state—very heavily timbered. Across the Gap, down into the Picton River and beyond, skirting the southern slopes of Mt Picton, is a track running into the Arthur Plains towards Port Davey. This track taps mineral country 'en route' but although it shows.
but although several good 'shows' have been located, nothing tangible has resulted, and indeed I fail to see how anything tangible can result, the place being absolutely inaccessible at present.

The outfall of the two lakes we have just noticed (Osborne and Perry) is about 3/4 of a mile below on the plain. The junction forming the River Arve, one of the many tributaries of the Buon River, and at about a 1/4 of a mile further their combined waters tumble down a steep gorge making a series of fine waterfalls which I shall now show you.

61. The Upper Arve Fall
62. " " " " (another aspect) 
63. " Lower Arve Fall "
64. " INTERVAL " (another aspect)
65. Kutz Plain showing track to mountains

Returning to the Accommodation Hut we will now visit the series of lakes lying at the Southern quarter of the range. The general character of the track being shown by the photograph on the screen, running over open, tussocky country for about 2 miles to the range. It was in this locality that in 1896 the very sad accident happened to the members of the Geeves family—two of their number succumbing in the midst of a fearful blizzard. The circumstance caused
a profound sensation throughout the Huon District. and evoked a wave of sympathy such as I have never known before. A memorial, in the form of a marble slab was erected by subscription on the Hartz Plain, not far from where the deaths took place.

66. The Memorial Tablet.
On this plain we meet with pretty little tarns surrounded by beautiful foliage.

67. A mountain Yarn
the view on the screen being an example.

68. Lake Esperance from North
This view brings us now to the southern lakes, of which there are four lying on the east side of the range, the fifth lake being on the other, or western side of the range. The lake shown on the screen I named Lake Esperance, as from it the Esperance River takes its rise, the other three eastern lakes contributing their waters to the same river.

69. Lake Esperance from South.

70. "Elija"
71. " (and a waif)
72. "Arthur"
73. "Emily"
74. "
75. "Lake Elija"
We will now climb the range, and I shall endeavour
to describe the panorama spread out before the
visitor as best I can without the aid of photographs, for I
have to confess, with much regret, that I have never been for-
tunate enough to strike a clear day suitable for successful
photographic work, during the many visits I have made to the
mountains. The top of the mountain range is very sharp,
and when one comes up and is suddenly confronted by the im-
pressive western panorama beyond, it simply takes what rem-
of breath you may have left after your climb with a rush! I
remember asking my old friend the late Mr J. B. Walker what
were his impressions when he first sighted this panorama.
"Why", he replied, "I just stood and shouted".
Another told me he felt like breaking out into a song of
thanksgiving to Him whose Hand so indelibly im-
dressed upon all around—-it was so indescribably soul-
inspiring, he said:— and so it is, every bit of it!
Sweeping round from East to North the panorama embraces the
Quieter settled portions of Tasmania—Bruny Island,
D'Entrecasteaux Channel, The Huon Valley, and away beyond, the
Wellington Range, with The Huon Belle, &c &c— the extreme north
west showing the trend of the Hartz Range with the lakes be-
-low-looking like little pools. and away in the dim distance the masses of the Humboldt Range and the mountains of the Gordon River. Coming round west the massive magnificent form of Mt Anne, with the closely towering Mt Picton, are beautiful sights, but the Grandest of all is the Arthur Range, that solitary, rugged, mountain chain rising abruptly from the button rush plain and running for 20 miles north and south—an awe inspiring grandly picturesque from end to end.

To the south-west the rugged mountains about the Port Davey coast—the Bathurst Ranges—are seen, and to the South the masses of La Perouze and Adamsons Peak.

There is no other place in Tasmania where such an effective panorama of some of the most impressive of our western mountain scenery can be obtained, and at so little sacrifice in exertion, time, and expense.

Lake Wart, the largest of the lake group, lies 500 feet below the saddle from which these panoramic views are obtainable, surrounded by fine foliage with an artistic background of the mountain itself.
It is shaped somewhat like the letter D. and I would roughly estimate its area at about 1000 by 500 yards. It discharges its overflow into the Picton River some five miles distant and at about 18 miles from the junction of that river with the Huon.

80. Heather Lagoon.

This is a beautiful adjunct of the lake—a shallow lagoons—which the Geeves have named after my humble self.

81. Camping at Lake Hartz.

This is an account of one of the most delightful reminiscences of the Hartz Mountains—our camp by Lake Hartz which included Mr Osborne Geeves, his son Arthur (who afterwards was killed on the mountain) and one or two lady relatives. It was delightfully warm, calm summer weather, the beautiful foliage on the lake margin making an ideal camping ground. I shall never forget the camp fire chat of that night lasting right up till midnight—when Arthur and I crawled under our light, little tent fly, one end blocked up with grass tree leaves, the other with our own big feet. He confessed to me it had done him good!

82. Southern End of Lake Hartz.

The precipices of the southern part of Mt Hartz stand out
finely from the outfall of the lake, as shown on the screen, and in this direction the blazed track which leads to the Picton River runs, which we will now follow.

It passes through magnificent foliage, and fine timber country, and when within a mile and a half of the Picton a great break in the mountain side occurs many hundreds of feet in height, over which the Hartz Lake waters pour in a series of two waterfalls which, effective enough under ordinary conditions, must be exceedingly grand during heavy rainfalls, but owing to their confined situations, this latter condition would make them quite unapproachable for photographic purposes.

83. Upper Hartz Falls.

84. Lower " "

The Picton River, distant about 1 mile from the Falls, is an ideal fishing stream.

85. Upper Picton River

It takes its rise from the La Peruse Range, some 30 miles distant from its terminal—its junction with the Huon River, and for some 20 miles its average width is about 100 feet. Here was a great pine country in earlier days, and the Huon Pine getters frequented it much, but all the pine has been
worked out, although fairly large patches are still to be found away up the creeks which flow into the river, but they cannot be got near enough to a water-way of sufficient volume to wash them down into the big river where they could be rafted to the settlements.

86. The Picton River.

Fishermen will recognise the attractive appearance of the Picton as a fishing stream, yet strange to say, there is a marked absence in its waters of any but native fish. This is rather extraordinary considering how well stocked the Huon River is with the Salmonide, and that no impediment whatever occurs in the Picton from its junction with the Huon to its upper waters, to hinder the passage of the fish.

87. The Picton River at Pine Creek

At this part of the river the rough cut Port Davey track crosses, the river being fairly fordable. This track, passing, as we previously noticed, the Hartz Accommodation Hut on the mountain plain, lends additional value to the Hartz Trip, because it affords the hardy climber the means of seeing all that the Hartz can offer, those tracks forming a complete loop round the range, the total distance being about 14 miles.
Those adventurous spirits can plunge into the very thick of Tasmania's typical bush country, and I have always thought it is worth a little exertion to obtain this experience. The fisherman, too, who may not be satisfied with the quiet and the imported trout of the beautiful lakes on the mountain, can dip down into the Picton where he can have miles of an ideal stream at his disposal, and although it may be difficult to hook a wayward salmon from the Huon, yet he can catch the native article—which some people say is the best after all.

I would by no means, however, advise anyone but experienced bush climbers to do this trip. Last time when I passed through in very hot weather I had over 60 Lbs. weight on my back and they told me I had walked when half way up the steep Port Davey Track, on the way back to the Hut. I just remember, I was exceedingly pleased when I reached the Hut again. This is the first time I have made confession of this weakness, but it was only the natural result of misbehaviour; I had been drinking too much water during the march.

88. Junction of Picton and Huon Rivers
89. Sunset on the Huon River
90. Breaking Waves—Bruny Coast
Ladies and Gentlemen. I fear I have overstepped limits of my share of this evening's entertainment, and I will now very briefly conclude by offering a few remarks marks on some aspects of the trip I have had the honour and also the great pleasure of unfolding to you.

As regards the value of the Hartz Mountains as a Tourist Resort, that is thoroughly assured, the beauty of the scenery all along the line is so patent to all to admit of any doubt on that score—still much remains to be done yet to make the trip an easy and comfortable one for the ordinary tourist of both sexes. This latter observation applies equally to nearly all of our highland tourist resorts—they are all fairly approachable, and have all shelter of some sort, but what about the comfort, so essentially necessary to make them pleasant, inviting, and worth staying at? I don't know of a place where ladies or even gentlemen not used to roughing it will be decently comfortable. The Great Lake, Interlaken

This must be remedied—and I suppose it will be in time—but by whom? Well, I don't quite think that our Tourist Associations, in their present financial situations, can do it, or should be asked to do it. I have felt it a monstrous thing that a mere handful of individuals in our two cities, who form the real mainstay of our Northern and Southern
Associations should have to be repeatedly putting their hands into their pockets to further the interests of practically the greater part of our State. Patriotic sentiment is right enough and is worthy of every encouragement, but our tourist business, it seems to me, cannot be run successfully on sentimental lines alone, but must largely be regarded as a purely business speculation. Let the Government make the Tourist Traffic a serious part of its policy, and if it would be found unwise to create a Tourist Department, let there be active and generous support and cooperation given to the two associations, north and south, who have done and are doing so much good work in the interests of Tasmania, and who, with increased State facilities could speedily make our beautiful island accessible and comfortable to all classes of our visitors.