

# Alexander Bouick's Account of His Journey from Arbroath, Scotland to San Francisco 1877-1881

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**San Francisco  
January 1881**

## **"A Red Lightie Abroad"**

Having been a member of your society a few years ago, & still having an interest in its welfare, it is with pleasure that I now, at the request of a worthy member, give you a short account of my somewhat varied experiences since I left the region of the Round O. In writing this, I will do it as I would a letter to an old friend & I hope you will all receive it as such. Like many more young men while at home, I was dissatisfied with the quiet & unromantic life I lived there & wanted to see some of the new country I had read & heard so much about. Being influenced by the good reports which came from the Australian colonies, I made up my mind to try my fortune in that country. Having found a suitable companion and a toursman of my own, we purposed to go out & share fortunes with each other. Seeing an advertisement that a new line of steamers had commenced to run between London & these colonies, who purposed making the trip in forty days, we both thought it preferable to a three or four month voyage in a sailing vessel. We accordingly embarked on the S. S. Britannia of Dundee for London, from the deck of which, we got the last look of our native town looming in the distance.

Having arrived in London a few days previous to the sailing of our steamer, while there I made the most of my time in visiting the different places of interest, among which, were Westminster Abbey, St. Pauls Cathedral, Houses of Parliament, Zoological Gardens. Of course, I can merely say that I have seen them, as there is so much to interest a stranger. It would take a month or two to see them all to advantage.

After procuring the requisition for such a voyage, I got on board the S.S. Cuzco of the Grecian line, a magnificent vessel of 3800 tons burden. We left Gravesend with nearly 300 passengers on board. While passing through the straits of Dover, we got a fine view of the chalk cliffs & Dover castle, calling at Plymouth to take on board a fresh supply of provisions & another 40 or 50 passengers, after which we bade farewell to the British Isles. The first day, after losing sight of land, a great many of the passengers could be seen leaning over the vessels side feeding the fishes against their will. However, in a day or two they all got bravely over it & were able to take part in the sports & amusements, which I think necessary to enliven the monotony of sea life.

On the Fifth day out, we sailed close under the island of Madeira & got a fine

view of it. We could see the trees and houses quite distinctly. Then in another three days we arrived off the Island of St. Vincent to take on coal. We dropped anchor at 7 P. M. & in less than half an hour, we had half a dozen barges alongside & the deck swarmed with natives. After getting a look at them & satisfying myself that they intended no harm although they looked a fierce looking crowd. I went below to the bunk, intending to get up early next morning to have a survey of the island. However, there was very little sleep for us that night, for with the noise of steam winches & the chattering of the natives, a fellow might as well have tried to sleep in a boiler room shop in full swing. About 6 A.M. next morning on getting up on deck, I found it almost covered with fruit which the natives had brought on board to sell. Then on looking over the ship's side I saw about a dozen or two young natives swimming round the ship, and getting the passengers who had any spare coins to throw them into the water for which they dived & brought up.

After breakfast, several of us bargained with one of the natives to take us ashore at a shilling per head. On landing at the pier we saw thirty bullocks being put into barges for our ship. I had never seen cattle handed in such a manner before. They put a rope round their horns & pulled them up by a crane. I was told that they had all been worked. They looked like it & I now believe it. I think it was an act of mercy to end their life. Their look seemed to say so. I might also mention here that we passengers were very glad when we saw the last of them served at table, for one might as soon have tried to digest a piece of a blacksmith's apron, as some of the parts of them that were set before us. (False teeth would have had no show with it.) After getting into the town, the first thing that struck me as a strange was to be saluted by about half a dozen naked children begging for money. All the grown up people are dressed more or less, but appear to be very indolent, as I could see none of them at work. I also noticed that the women smoked.

While ashore, my friend and I took the opportunity of a sea bath, which we enjoyed immensely. The water was quite warm. After investing some money on fruit, we were on our way back to the ship when we met the body of one of our passengers who had died at sea being carried by four of the sailors. They had made a coffin for him & had it wound in the Union Jack. We followed the body to the cemetery which I was told was only for white people. The natives are not considered worthy of a grave, but are, I was told, thrown into the sea as food for the sharks which abound there. While at the cemetery, I saw a number of English names on the head stones. The Island of St. Vincent is very rocky and barren & appeared to have little or no vegetation. I was told that the fruit they sell grows on an island about seven miles off. The principle buildings in the place are the church, school & barracks. The common houses are built of mud & rock & have no windows. Only a hole left in the wall. The natives are a mixture of Portuguese & Negro. After taking on board 500 tons of coal, we again got underway leaving in my mind pleasant memories of a few hours spent on the Island of St. Vincent.

We had then little or no excitement until we were about half way between the Cape of Good Hope & Australia where I experienced my first storm. One day

after dinner I was reading below when I heard a great noise on deck. I made my way up on deck and had just got to the top of the hatchway when one of the yards snapped in two & the sail flew in ribbons. It came on very unexpectedly as a few minutes before we were flying along with all sail set. I had not been five minutes on deck when another sail broke loose. It was then blowing a regular hurricane & the sea washing over her. However, I was glad that it did not last long, as I had got all I wanted of it.

There is nothing else of interest on the voyage that I need mention here.

"A Red Lightie Abroad" continued.

We arrived off Adelaide on the 7th Nov. 1877 having made the trip from England to Australia, a distance of 12,000 miles in forty days seven hours, the second fastest passage that had then been made. Not having been ashore on Adelaide, I cannot say what like a place it is, but from what I saw of the coast it looked very fertile. We could see the sheep & cattle grazing on the farms.

After getting the passengers for South Australia ashore, we again weighed anchor & steered round the coast for the City of Melbourne which we reached in two days. Sailing up Hobsons Bay, we got a fine view of the shipping. We saw two war vessels, one a turret, the other a gunboat. Williamstown & Sandridge are the two ports for the large vessels, while the smaller craft sail up the river Yarra Yarra into the city. We arrived at Sandridge pier about noon when I was glad to set foot on terra firma once more. After getting on board the train, in less than half an hour I was landed in the heart of the metropolis of the Australian continent. The first thing that took my eye on getting to the street was to see the men attired in white silk coats & sun helmets under a scorching sun & a cloudless sky in the month of November which I thought rather strange. Although Melbourne is only what we might term a city of a day, having but a little over thirty years ago been composed of only a few scattered huts. Today with its suburbs it has a population numbering nearly a quarter of a million. Most of the streets are very wide & have a fine airy appearance on account of the houses being all painted light colors. Another great advantage is that most of the streets are all running at right angles to each other which makes it very easy for a stranger to find his way around. A number of them have trees planted on each side which throws a nice cool shade on the sidewalk. Among the principal buildings in the city are the new Exhibition buildings, Houses of Parliament, Treasury, Government Offices, Law Offices, New Market &&. Melbourne can also boast of having one of the finest & largest public library to be found anywhere. In the same building there is an industrial museum & picture gallery where anyone can spend an hour or two free of charge.

The city is also well supplied with benevolent institutions, prominent among which are the Melbourne Hospital Benevolent Asylum & Immigrants Home. In a speech made by the Marquis of Normandy, Governor of Victoria, he said that Venice had been called the City of Palaces, but he thought Melbourne might well be called the City of Town Halls there being no less than five or six. The reason why there is this number is that most of the suburbs have a municipal government of their own with heir mayor and councilors. They are all large & beautiful buildings. The one belonging to Melbourne proper has a

large spacious audience hall in which is a very powerful organ. This hall is let for special meeting or concerts.

Another thing that took my fancy in Melbourne is the eight hour system which is almost universal among the trades people there. There is also ample provision made in the many parks & gardens. I don't know of any city, either at home or abroad, in proportion to its size which is so well supplied. In the heart of the city, there is no less than five large gardens which are laid out in beautiful walks & flower beds. In them can be seen flowers in bloom all year round. In the Royal Park there is a zoological garden, to which anyone is admitted free of charge. The climate of Melbourne is to my idea first rate, although in the midday of the summer they get a few days with hot winds & lots of dust which makes it very disagreeable. But on the whole, I think there are few climates like it. For a well designed & clean kept city (to use an expression common here) Melbourne "takes the cake." The only place that I have seen that could compare with it is the new town of Edinburgh.

During my stay in Australia, I had a short experience of bush life which I will relate here in brief. Being in want of a situation & seeing an advertisement in one of the newspapers for a machinist to go to Hay, a small township in New South Wales about 300 miles in the interior from Melbourne. I applied and was successful. As the railway only runs about 200 miles north, I had to do the rest of the journey by stage. There were eleven of us in the coach, besides seven or eight mail bags, so that we had to pack ourselves like so many sardines. I have heard of a song entitled "It's a Rocky Road to Dublin" but as a Yankee would say, "I would bet my bottom dollar" that it can't compare for roughness with the road between Deniliquin & Hay. There are no made roads there. Each driver just takes the track which he finds easiest. Add to this extreme heat & lots of dust & you will have a slight idea of staging in Australian bush in the month of December. Some parts of the journey just reminded me of being at sea as we could not see anything as far as the eye could reach. Not even a tree. It is all plains in that part of the country. It is mostly for pasturage during the spring before the hot weather comes on. As there had been a great drought that year, there was not a blade of grass to be seen, everything burned up. Every few miles, we could see the white bones of dead sheep, which had died for want of water, lying bleaching in the sun. I also saw a few emus and kangaroos running about. After 15 hours rough usage, I arrived at Hay, which I should think, is about the size of Inverkeilor.

The first thing I did was to find out my future boss and inquire about my duties and when I was to start work. I had engaged with his agent in Melbourne as engineer in a brewery. While getting my duties explained, amongst the first thing I was told was that I would be expected to work on the Sabbath. I told him however that I had taken the situation on the understanding that there would be no Sabbath work. I had learned while in Melbourne that a great many people back in the bush worked the Sabbath, same as another day. He then told me that I would be of no use to him unless I could work on Sunday. I told him I was prepared to go right back to Melbourne. But as it would be almost a week before Sunday came around, I thought it better to work up to that time to find out if no arrangement could be made to avoid Sunday work.

During my leisure hours, I strolled amongst the few shops and stores in the place. While perusing some of them, I was surprised to see two or three bales of canvas stamped

"Larson Brothers Arbroath." I stood gazing at them, I daresay, nearly half an hour. The sight of them did me nearly as much good as though I had met an old friend. I was quite proud to see the staple product of auld "St. Lam" exposed for sale in that out of the way corner of the globe. The use for canvas in that place was quite obvious, as on looking around, I could see dozens of tents throughout the village. I also noticed that it was used for a peculiar purpose, viz for making water pitchers which are hung up under the verandahs. I found on drinking the water from them was much cooler than water kept in tanks or cisterns. I can assure you, a cup of cold water was very acceptable in that place which you will readily understand when I tell you that during the whole time I was there the thermometer averaged 114° in the shade. It was so hot that I could not sleep in the house some nights, but was glad to get out to the verandah.

While up there I spent my first new year away from home. I then thought it rather strange, that while I was being almost cooked with heat, my friends at home would be glad to get around the fire.

As I could come to no arrangement with my employer regarding the Sabbath work, I packed my traps and cleared out. I may mention that I was not at all sorry to get away from such a place. On my way with the stagecoach, stopping at one of the stations where they changed horses, I went to get a flask filled with water. Seeing an iron tank, I asked one of the men if I could fill my flask. He told me to be very careful with it as he had to cart it 11-1/2 miles. On drinking the water, I found it unfit for use.

After getting back to Melbourne, I worked there for some time again but I soon found out that if I were to stay there very long I would have a lot of idle time. I may mention that while in Melbourne I found this to be a great disadvantage that the working man in Melbourne had to contend with namely a scarcity of work. I think it is a great pity for the home government to continue sending out free immigrants to that country as they could get all the men they want to pay their own passage money if there was work for them when they landed. The class of immigrant they need out there is men with some capital and not poor laboring men as the supply of them is far more than the demand. I know from my own experience while I was there, that for one situation that was advertised, there were ten to twenty men after it.

While in Melbourne my friend received a letter from the Sandwich Islands offering him a situation in the iron works there. The inducement being good, he accepted it and in less than six months, I had a letter from him telling me that there was a similar job awaiting me if I cared to go. I accordingly made up my mind to try my fortune on these islands, although, I had heard before going, that the natives were at one time very fond of a little cold missionary for breakfast.

Leaving Melbourne Nov. 1878, having been there just twelve months, I embarked at Sandridge pier on board the S. S. City of Sydney of the Pacific Mail Co., a fine vessel of 3,400 tons, registered and Yankee built. In 42 hours after leaving Port Philip Head, we landed in Lavender Bay, Sydney. I had often heard the beauty of Sydney Harbor described before seeing it, but as all of you, I have no doubt, have read or heard a better description than I could give, I will content myself by saying that it is almost, if not, the most beautiful piece of scenery I have seen in all my travels. Having a day or two to stay in Sydney, I had an opportunity of seeing the city. Although it is many years older than

Melbourne, it is not as large, neither has its streets the modern-like appearance of Melbourne, as they are generally narrow and crooked. Sydney, like Melbourne, can boast of fine public buildings, among which are the Post Office, Town Hall and Cathedral. But, taking the city as a whole, it does not seem to be as go-ahead as Melbourne.

In four an a half days after leaving Sydney, we anchored in the Bay of Auckland, New Zealand. As we had four or five hours to stay, I took a hurried ramble through it. It appeared to me about the same size as Arbroath, & like the other two colonial towns I had been in, it had some very nice buildings. While there, I saw several Maoris, tattooed, walking the streets.

Leaving Auckland, I saw nothing to interest me until I arrived at the Sandwich Islands. The view of Honolulu, on approaching it from the sea, has been variously described. Some having expressed disappointment, while others have gone into raptures over the scene. For myself, I must say that I was greatly charmed with the view of Honolulu & its surrounding greenery as seen from the deck of our vessel. Honolulu has been termed "a city in a grove," which I think is very appropriate. The houses and stores are almost covered with rich green foliage. Only the tops of the higher buildings can be prominent amongst the trees, which are principally the palm, with its large fan shaped leaves. Then about three miles east of the town is a large grove of cocoanut trees, which gives the place a tropical appearance. Immediately behind the town is a range of mountains, rising to a height of between two and tree thousand feet, and on one of them called "Punch Bowl," an active volcano, is a battery of guns.

Landing at the wharf, which is a large and substantial one, having accommodation for the largest merchant vessel afloat, I at once saw signs of the commercial activity of the place, there being no less than seven hundred tons of sugar, besides five or six hundred bunches of bananas waiting shipment. Having paid the two dollars, which is a tax put on everyone landing there, I then got my luggage cleared by customs officers. Outside the shed, I found quite a crowd of vehicles, with their Kanakas drivers looking for a fare. Having hired one, I & my luggage were quickly transported to a nice little cottage in Hotel St., which my friend had rented. For a few days after landing, I felt like a fish out of water as everything was so strange & romantic to me.

However, having started to work on the third day I soon found out that there was nothing romantic about plying the hammer and chisel for nine hours per day in a tropical climate. Until I picked up a few sentences of the native language, I found it rather awkward to get along with the helpers, who were nearly all natives. It was sometimes amusing & laughable to see the way some of them interpreted English. As an instance, I would ask one to bring me a hammer, or such like, and he would come running with a log of wood, quite confident that he had brought what was asked for. The Honolulu Iron Works is the largest establishment in the place. They employed nearly two hundred men. The principal work was building sugar mills.

When I had been there a short time, I, along with the rest of my shopmates, was invited to a party by a sugar planter, the occasion being the starting of a new sugar plant which had been made in our shop. As the plantation was about ten miles from the town, and there being no railways on the island, I had to get initiated into the art of horse riding, which is the popular means of convenience there. Having hired a Hawaiian mustang from a

Chinese hostler, over a dozen of us set out about 5 P.M. I had only got outside the town, when my horse began to play off-on with me. I do not know whether it knew I was a greenhorn or whether it was tired out but at any rate, I could not get more than a walk out of him, and in consequence, was left behind. Being provided with spurs, the points of which were half an inch long, I dug them into his sides most unmercifully, but to no avail. Had I been in Arbroath, I would have been brought up for cruelty to animals. However, under the circumstances, I think I was to be excused, as I was left all alone not knowing the road. I was almost on the point of turning home, when two of the party, who had been late in starting, came galloping up, at the sight of which, my horse picked up courage, and kept up along with them, until we reached the Pali or "mountain pass," which is 1,200 feet above the level of the sea. I may mention that the view from this place in daylight is lovely in the extreme. On the right and left are towering peaks of bare rocks, while at the bottom of the precipice, is a beautiful plain, covered with sugar and rice fields, dotted here & there, are the white homesteads of the planters. The road down the Pali takes the shape of a winding staircase and is a little wider than an ordinary sidewalk. Here we had to dismount & lead our horses as it was dark by this time. I felt rather scared, as I thought that every step I took, the horse would be on top of me. However, we managed to get down all safe and landed at our destination about 8 P.M. I then felt more like going to bed, rather than commencing a night of jollity, as I was "all broke up" with my ten mile ride. While there, I had an opportunity of seeing a sugar plantation and mill in working order, and had the process of sugar making described to me.

After spending a few hours there, & enjoying the hospitality of the planter, we again betook ourselves to our noble steeds for the homeward journey. But, as I was not as all keen to undergo another ride like I experienced coming over, my friend and I changed horses. I thought I could get along better with it, seeing it had behaved itself credibly so far. I got along with it very well so far, until within a short distance from the bottom of the Pali where it stood still and would not move. Seeing a Kanaka coming along on horseback, I hitched a rope around my horses neck and tied the other end to his saddle, and in this way pulled him along until I met up with my friend, when I again got back on my own horse. I then made the rest of my way up the Pali dragging my horse behind me. After sitting at the top for nearly half an hour hollering to my friend, I began to get anxious about him, and was on my way down to look for him when I saw him coming up without his horse. He had been trying to persuade it to come up, but seeing it was no use, he left it standing on the trail half way up. We then both mounted my horse, thinking he would drag us along. But he could not see it, so we had to give that up and try turn about. Latter, he would not carry any of us, but stood still like the other one. There was nothing left for us now, but to work our passage home. One of went in front pulling while the other applied a stick from behind. Such were my first experiences in horse riding. I then felt like making a vow that I would never mount a horse again. However, I am glad that I did not, as I afterward enjoyed many a good horse ride while on the island of Oahu.

Among the other pastimes I enjoyed while there was fruit gathering, which is there in great variety and quantity. The first new years day I spent there was on an excursion of this kind. I took a sack along with me, which I filled with mangos and oranges. Back in the valleys, anyone can have all the mangos, limes, guavas, mountain apples and oranges that one cares to carry, as they grow wild. I noticed that very few people avail themselves of this privilege, as they considered it too much trouble.

Getting home from my work in the evening, I had a fine opportunity of studying animal life of the insect species, in the form of cockroaches, mosquitoes, scorpions and centipedes. The mosquito generally received the most attention, being the most numerous. They are the most bloodthirsty creatures that I have had anything to do with. The only way I could get clear of their tormenting sting, while sitting around in the evening, was by keeping myself enveloped in a cloud of smoke, which apparently is the only thing they can't digest.

After I had lived there six or eight months there & all the romance gone, I found life to be very monotonous as they only receive news from the outside world once a month. Mail day is quite an event there. The editor of the Arbroath Guide has said, and I think said truly, that wherever Arbroath men go, there will be found the Arbroath Guide. This I have found to be true, at least in my own experience. Many a time my friend and I while sitting under the Banyan tree at our cottage door, enjoyed a discussion as to the merit of Abbey green improvement, Spink Street crossing etc. We would almost as soon have missed a letter from home as miss the Guide, for in it we would always find out what our friends were about.

The Hawaiian Kingdom is composed of eight islands, the principal ones being Oahu, Hawaii, Maui, and Molokai, the largest of which is Hawaii where the celebrated Captain Cook was killed on this island. There is a large volcano called Kilauea which is always in action. The next in size is Maui, on which there is a mountain 10,000 feet high, the top of which is covered with snow all year round. On this island is the largest volcano in the world, being 17 miles in circumference. A visitor describing the scene, says of it, it is like a bird's eye view of a dead city, half hidden in ashes and carved out of cold gray lava. The island of Oahu, although nearly the smallest, is the most important of the group, being the only one which has a good harbour. On it is situated the town of Honolulu which has a population on over 1,400 inhabitants. The principle buildings in the town are the Kings Palace, Government Offices, Hospital and prison. The streets are, as a general rule, very narrow and crooked, and during the rainy season are very muddy.

Most of the wholesale stores are owned by American or European people, while the retail stores are monopolized by Chinamen. Very few of the natives are engaged in any enterprise. They are naturally very indolent and seem to care for nothing, so long as they get their poi and raw fish, which is their diet. They never use tea or coffee. The poi is made from the taro root, which after being washed, is cooked in the following manner. A round hole is dug in the ground about three feet deep, at the bottom of which is placed a layer of stones, then a layer of dry wood, then again on top of this is placed another layer of stones. The fire being lighted, it heats the stones until they are almost red hot. Damp green leaves are then put on the heated stones. The taro is piled upon them. On the top of the taro is placed more green leaves, bags, sacking, or anything else that is at hand. This will serve to keep in the steam. After being cooked in this manner about an hour and a half, the covering is removed and the taro is put into a bucket of water and washed clean. It is then handed over to the men, who place it on a plank about six feet long, which is hollowed out in the shape of a huge tray. They then pound it with a large stone and add water until it is of the consistency of butter, then it is then put into a large calabash and kept for two days, when it is then fit for use. Having described the cooking of the national dish, I will now explain the method of its consumption. At meal time the family gather

around the calabash. Seated on the floor on one side, they have a plate containing onions and salt, and when available vinegar. On the other side, is a dish of raw fish, which to the Kanaka is the greatest of delicacies. Each takes a piece of fish in his hand, and dips it among the pickles. He then helps himself to poi from the family calabash with his fingers. They never use a spoon. The poi is so glutinous, that it sticks readily to the fingers. In this way, one continues to eat about a quart of poi at a sitting, together with about a pound of raw fish. The meal over, they wash their hands and sit down to have a good smoke, all the family smoking from the one pipe, turn about. The children, three or four years of age, are allowed, by their parents to smoke. The present generation of natives conform to civilized modes of dress, and have accepted many foreign customs. For myself, I think they have adopted most of the white man's vices, but few of his virtues. They are very fond of intoxicating liquor. By law they are prohibited from the use of it. Anyone found selling it to them are under a penalty of \$500.00 fine. They have a drink called ava which they make themselves, but to see it made, is enough to sicken anyone, let alone drink it. It is made from a root which grows on the islands. About a dozen of them sit around in a circle with a pitcher in the center. They then start chewing the root, spitting the juice into the pitcher. When the pitcher is filled, the contents are left to ferment, until it is fit for use. In drinking it, it affects them in somewhat the same way as opium does a Chinaman, giving them pleasant dreams.

As most of the natives are very poor, their houses are generally wretched hovels. A great many of them still inhabit old fashioned grass huts, which are constructed with a framework of bamboo and covered with native grass. In most cases, furniture is very scanty, often consisting only of a platform about a foot from the ground covered with two or three layers of matting, which is all the bed they have. The rules of etiquette are not by any means observed, as all the family sleep huddled together in one corner.

One very sad feature about the natives of these islands is the fact that the most loathsome of all diseases, namely leprosy, is very prevalent among them, there being 720 cases up to last January. An officer is employed by the government to report cases, and after they are found, the poor unfortunates are at once removed to the neighboring island of Molokai on which a settlement has been established for their accommodation and seclusion. I think one of the saddest sights I have ever seen was seeing about half a dozen of them being removed from the station house to the vessel which was to carry them to the island. They were followed by a crowd of friends and relatives, who kept up the most dismal wail I have ever heard. They knew it was the last time that they would see them on this earth, unless they also took the disease. Some of the lepers looked very repulsive, their faces being sadly disfigured. The disease, I believe, has been brought on, by their filthy habits, although some of it has been imported by the Chinamen. There are two characteristics, however, about the natives which I think is highly commendable, namely, their hospitality and honesty. White men traveling in the country are always made welcome to the best they can afford, and they do not grudge to put themselves to a good deal of trouble. Then as to their honesty, I may say, that as general rule nobody locks their doors. Although, my friend and I were away at work all day, and our Kanaka washer man coming and going as it suited him. We never missed an article. No doubt, they are partly scared into honesty, as the law is very strictly enforced and there is no chance of escape, the island being so small. You can see from the one side to the other when up on the mountains. As the Kanaka is so lazy, he would feel punishment very keenly, as all the prisoners are kept hard at work, repairing the streets etc. Any of them inclined to be

fractious, are kindly accommodated with a heavy chain and ball attached to their ankle. The police force is composed of natives who are as lazy as their inmates. I have seen them carrying a box along with them to squat down on in any convenient corner.

At nearly every street corner are to be seen about a dozen women sitting on the sidewalk making flower wreaths, which are worn by both sexes round their neck.

I may mention that it is quite a picturesque sight to see a party of native women on horseback, with their queer riding habits. They are mounted astride and are splendid riders. They stick to the horse as though they were part and parcel of it.

The governmenting of the islands was at one time divided among several chiefs. But since the days of the great Kamehameha I, they have all been governed by one king. The present King is Kalakaua who is a full bred native. He is, at present, on a tour around the world. I had the honor to be invited to a party at which Kalakaua was a guest. I found him to be a jovial fellow and good company. He does not stand on his dignity to any extent.

I was going to say, that I had the pleasure, but will say the satisfaction, of witnessing the hula-hula, or native dance, which to the natives is considered a necessary part of their education, although now forbidden. Twenty or thirty men and women were fantastically dressed with scarves bound around their waist and crowned with garlands of flowers. Their wrists and ankles were also covered with flowers. The dancers formed a circle, each holding a small calabash ornamented with feathers and seeds inside which they use as a tambourine or rattle. They then made some of the most frantic movements I ever saw. There is a certain glamour or novelty about it, and one may be excused for lingering in such uncivilized scenes, as they are such rare events in life. But for my own part, I should say, that it is enough to have seen it once. Amongst the dancers were several Samoan islanders who do not seem to be so well up in civilization as their Kanaka cousins. I noticed nearly all the men had large holes cut in their ears in which they carry their smoking pipes. But on this occasion they had a bouquet of flowers in them. As a commercial kingdom, the islands are going ahead fast, a proof of which is that last year there was exported from the different islands over 2100 tons of sugar, 2138 tons of rice, and 12,369 bunches of bananas, which are the staple product.

One existing evil that the inhabitants of Honolulu have to contend with is the want of drainage, which makes the town very unhealthy, making malaria fever very common.

After being there about fourteen months, I got tired of the monotonous life, besides I found the climate did not agree with me. Accordingly, I made up my mind to try California. Having paid a dollar for a passport, which is necessary before leaving the Islands, I embarked on board the S.S. Zealandia of the Pacific Mail Co. & after an uninteresting passage of nine days, I landed (in what I have heard termed) "The City of the Golden Gate and Land of the Setting Sun." The Golden Gate is the name given to the entrance to the bay from the sea.

The first thing that strikes a stranger on landing in San Francisco is the cosmopolitan nature of its inhabitants. I believe every nation under the sun is represented here. In walking a single block on any of the leading thoroughfares, one can hear three or four different languages spoken. Of the foreign population, I think Irish and German are

predominant. The much hated Chinaman also form an important section of the population. They have here, what is termed Chinatown, as mostly all of them live in the same part of the city. For the Chinaman himself I have no hatred, but I do detest his filth and dirt. In walking near the surroundings of Chinatown, one can smell it two or three blocks away. A dozen of them will occupy one room, which would accommodate only two or three Americans or Europeans.

The city of San Francisco is about the same size and has about the same population as Melbourne, Australia. I also believe they are about the same age. But for public buildings, and in fact the general aspect of the City, to my mind, it is far behind Melbourne. There is only one public park that I am aware of for the entire City and it is about four miles from the center of town. But the fact of the matter is there is very little time here for the working man to recreate himself, as in most cases, he has to work ten hours per day, Saturday included. San Francisco is the terminus for the Pacific coast, and in consequence has always a great number of travelers. To meet their wants they have some first class hotels in the city. As Melbourne might be called "the City of Town Halls," San Francisco might well be called "the City of Hotels." The Palace Hotel, which is said to be the grandest in the world, occupies an entire block and is seven stories high and is fitted up with all the latest improvements. The inner court is lit up by two electric lights. Throughout the building are three or four elevators, worked by hydraulic power, for carrying up guests and luggage so they don't need to climb stairs.

Another thing worthy of mention in this city, is the cable tramway, which I think, are away ahead of anything I have seen in that line. They are worked by wire ropes, which are laid underground and driven by a stationary engine. One of the lines here is about four miles long. I think there is less danger of accident with them than the type of locomotion which is in use at home. As to the social and moral aspect of the City, I think it is away below par. The Sabbath does not seem to be recognized by the majority of the people here, as all the theatres, saloons and shops, etc, are open as on other days. As to law and order, there is plenty of it here, but very little justice. Since I came here, there has been five or six murders committed, but somehow or other the murderers, have all managed to get clear.

Since I came to San Francisco, I have come across a great many Scotchmen, and not a few Arbroathians. A good number of them hold positions of trust especially in the engineering business. In the Risdon Iron Works where I am employed, which by the way is the largest in the City, employing about 500 men. The head draughtsman McDickie and head foreman McDerward are both Red Lighters, besides four or five others.

But as I know you will all be getting weary with this, as I have already taken up too much time, I will now close by wishing your society every success.

Yours truly,  
An Old Member