

Australian Letters

I.

Comrades of the Road.

Dear Mr. Editor:—

I have seen it at last! Like "stout Cortez," if I may quote Keats' little historical blunder, I have "stared at the Pacific!" But what a Pacific!—cold, and dark, and oily, as I crossed the bay, not far from midnight, on a ferry from Oakland to San Francisco. The waters might well have been those of another "Bay," not far from your office, Mr. Editor. "Such stuff our dreams are made of." A disappointment? Perhaps. But afterwards I was to watch it unfold its infinite spaces of blue, and see its "islands lift their froned palms in air." You mustn't judge by beginnings, but ends. Life's greatest boons often make their first bow in the guise of most unwelcome tramps.

But this is to anticipate, and I must begin at the beginning. Of course you have read Dr. Law's sermon, "The Grand Adventure." Now, if I start out to go half way round the world alone, I always feel that, in a supremely mild kind of way, I am starting on "a grand adventure." The