

Five Years under the Southern Cross

lessness, and it belongs to a certain stage in the evolution of a country's life. Yet it need not be in Australia. Politeness does not cost much—a little more polish would make the street Australian one of the best men in existence. His natural qualities are excellent; he needs only, on the social side, a little more consideration for the feelings of others. Nothing is more necessary for this young country than the inculcation of the spirit of respect.

My earlier impression of the new type of British life which is being evolved under the Southern Cross has been abundantly confirmed during the last five years. There can be no question that the Australian type of Briton is wholly different from the English type. For this difference the climate is chiefly responsible. Close observation has revealed the fact that the third generation of Australians—that is, the generation which owns for its parents an Australian-born father and mother—tends towards the Italian, Sicilian, or Spanish type rather than the English, having jet black hair and dark eyes. This is particularly noticeable in Sydney and in Queensland. Life there is largely Neapolitan in character.

A Neapolitan climate is producing a Neapolitan type of men and women. The atmosphere of Puritanism, which has lingered over England even until this day, is wholly absent from Australia. The break between the two ways of life is complete, and the distance between them seems destined to become wider. The British prejudice against the theatre, for example, does not exist out here. Great numbers of