

**OUR KIN  
ACROSS THE SEA**

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Our kin across the sea by J. C. Firth

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**J. C. FIRTH**

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# OUR KIN ACROSS THE SEA

BY

J. C. FIRTH

WITH A PREFACE BY J. A. FROUDE



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## P R E F A C E.



THIS LITTLE BOOK is its own sufficient recommendation, and to those who read it will need no other. The author, however, being a stranger in England, has desired me to say in a few words who he is, and what claims he possesses on the attention of his fellow-countrymen.

Mr. Firth is one of the oldest and one of the most distinguished of the New Zealand colonists. He settled in the North Island of New Zealand between thirty and forty years ago. By steady industry and by unblemished integrity of conduct he rose into wealth and influence. While he discharged his duty as a citizen, he has never meddled with professional politics. He has kept clear of speculation, attending steadily to his own business.

He has been a merchant. He has developed mines and railroads. He became a large landowner, and when I was in New Zealand he was trying on his estate with marked success the American methods of farm management. But he has opposed always the system of land monopoly from which the colony has suffered so seriously. He has desired to see, and to the best of his ability has promoted, the dispersion of the people over the country, that each family might live in independence on property of their own. Like every well-informed and really patriotic colonist, he has watched with regret and alarm the overgrowth of the towns by the crowding of the workmen into them under the temptation of high wages and town amusements. In private life he is known as a gentleman and a man of honour. In public he has thrown the weight of his high character always on the side of measures best calculated to further the moral improvement of the population.

How earnestly he desires to see the bonds strengthened which unite the mother country and

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the colonics, will be seen in his own words. Whether the means which he would wish to see adopted are at present available, is a matter on which there will be differences of opinion. They are economic heresies, as political economy now stands. But science in human affairs yields under pressure to other considerations. Mr. Firth has read much, and has thought and observed more, and what he says deserves and will receive respectful attention. He is not a man of letters. He makes no attempts at style or literary ornament. His object is merely to set down in the plainest possible language his own observations and reflections. In the work before us he describes a tour through the United States; and hackneyed and threadbare as the subject has become, Mr. Firth brings to it a new mind, and he has studied his American cousins from an original point of view. We have had impressions of the Great Republic from Englishmen, from Irishmen, from French and Germans; but we have here, I believe for the first time, the impressions of a colonist; and from the similarity of