The Book of the Bush eBook

The Book of the Bush

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

Illustration 1.
“Joey’s out.”

Illustration 2.
“I’ll show you who is master aboard this ship.”

Illustration 3.
“You stockman, Frank, come off that horse.”

Illustration 4.
“The biggest bully apropriated the belle of the ball.”

* * *

“The best article in the March (1893) number of the ‘Austral Light’ is a pen picture by Mr. George Dunderdale of the famous Ninety-Mile Beach, the vast stretch of white and lonely sea-sands, which forms the sea-barrier of Gippsland.”—’Review of Reviews’, March, 1893.

* * *

“The most interesting article in ‘Austral Light’ is one on Gippsland pioneers, by George Dunderdale.”—’Review of Reviews’, March, 1895.

* * *

“In ‘Austral Light’ for September Mr. George Dunderdale contributes, under the title of ‘Gippsland under the Law,’ one of those realistic sketches of early colonial life which only he can write.”—’Review of Reviews’, September, 1895.

* * *

THE BOOK OF THE BUSH.

PURGING OUT THE OLD LEAVEN.

While the world was young, nations could be founded peaceably. There was plenty of unoccupied country, and when two neighbouring patriarchs found their flocks were

becoming too numerous for the pasture, one said to the other: “Let there be no quarrel, I pray, between thee and me; the whole earth is between us, and the land is watered as the garden of Paradise. If thou wilt go to the east, I will go to the west; or if thou wilt go to the west, I will go to the east.” So they parted in peace.

But when the human flood covered the whole earth, the surplus population was disposed of by war, famine, or pestilence. Death is the effectual remedy for over-population. Heroes arose who had no conscientious scruples. They skinned their natives alive, or crucified them. They were then adored as demi-gods, and placed among the stars.

Pious Aeneas was the pattern of a good emigrant in the early times, but with all his piety he did some things that ought to have made his favouring deities blush, if possible.

America, when discovered for the last of many times, was assigned by the Pope to the Spaniards and Portuguese. The natives were not consulted; but they were not exterminated; their descendants occupy the land to the present day.

England claimed a share in the new continent, and it was parcelled out to merchant adventurers by royal charter. The adventures of these merchants were various, but they held on to the land.

New England was given to the Puritans by no earthly potentate, their title came direct from heaven. Increase Mather said: “The Lord God has given us for a rightful possession the land of the Heathen People amongst whom we dwell;” and where are the Heathen People now?

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Australia was not given to us either by the Pope or by the Lord. We took this land, as we have taken many other lands, for our own benefit, without asking leave of either heaven or earth. A continent, with its adjacent islands, was practically vacant, inhabited only by that unearthly animal the kangaroo, and by black savages, who had not even invented the bow and arrow, never built a hut or cultivated a yard of land. Such people could show no valid claim to land or life, so we confiscated both. The British Islands were infested with criminals from the earliest times. Our ancestors were all pirates, and we have inherited from them a lurking taint in our blood, which is continually impelling us to steal something or kill somebody. How to get rid of this taint was a problem which our statesmen found it difficult to solve. In times of war they mitigated the evil by filling the ranks of our armies from the gaols, and manning our navies by the help of the press-gang, but in times of peace the scum of society was always increasing.

At last a great idea arose in the mind of England. Little was known of New Holland, except that it was large enough to harbour all the criminals of Great Britain and the rest of the population if necessary. Why not transport all convicts, separate the chaff from the wheat, and purge out the old leaven? By expelling all the wicked, England would become the model of virtue to all nations.

So the system was established. Old ships were chartered and filled with the contents of the gaols. If the ships were not quite seaworthy it did not matter much. The voyage was sure to be a success; the passengers might never reach land, but in any case they would never return. On the vessels conveying male convicts, some soldiers and officers were embarked to keep order and put down mutiny. Order was kept with the lash, and mutiny was put down with the musket. On the ships conveying women there were no soldiers, but an extra half-crew was engaged. These men were called “Shilling-a-month” men, because they had agreed to work for one shilling a month for the privilege of being allowed to remain in Sydney. If the voyage lasted twelve months they would thus have the sum of twelve shillings with which to commence making their fortunes in the Southern Hemisphere. But the “Shilling-a-month” man, as a matter of fact, was not worth one cent the day after he landed, and he had to begin life once more barefoot, like a new-born babe.

The seamen’s food on board these transports was bad and scanty, consisting of live biscuit, salt horse, Yankee pork, and Scotch coffee. The Scotch coffee was made by steeping burnt biscuit in boiling water to make it strong. The convicts’ breakfast consisted of oatmeal porridge, and the hungry seamen used to crowd round the galley every morning to steal some of it. It would be impossible for a nation ever to become virtuous and rich if its seamen and convicts were reared in luxury and encouraged in habits of extravagance.

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When the transport cast anchor in the beautiful harbour of Port Jackson, the ship's blacksmith was called out of his bunk at midnight. It was his duty to rivet chains on the legs of the second-sentence men—the twice convicted. They had been told on the voyage that they would have an island all to themselves, where they would not be annoyed by the contemptuous looks and bitter jibes of better men. All night long the blacksmith plied his hammer and made the ship resound with the rattling chains and ringing manacles, as he fastened them well on the legs of the prisoners. At dawn of day, chained together in pairs, they were landed on Goat Island; that was the bright little isle—their promised land. Every morning they were taken over in boats to the town of Sydney, where they had to work as scavengers and road-makers until four o'clock in the afternoon. They turned out their toes, and shuffled their feet along the ground, dragging their chains after them. The police could always identify a man who had been a chain-gang prisoner during the rest of his life by the way he dragged his feet after him.

In their leisure hours these convicts were allowed to make cabbage-tree hats. They sold them for about a shilling each, and the shop-keepers resold them for a dollar. They were the best hats ever worn in the Sunny South, and were nearly indestructible; one hat would last a lifetime, but for that reason they were bad for trade, and became unfashionable.

The rest of the transported were assigned as servants to those willing to give them food and clothing without wages. The free men were thus enabled to grow rich by the labours of the bondmen—vice was punished and virtue rewarded.

Until all the passengers had been disposed of, sentinels were posted on the deck of the transport with orders to shoot anyone who attempted to escape. But when all the convicts were gone, Jack was sorely tempted to follow the shilling-a-month men. He quietly slipped ashore, hurried off to Botany Bay, and lived in retirement until his ship had left Port Jackson. He then returned to Sydney, penniless and barefoot, and began to look for a berth. At the Rum Puncheon wharf he found a shilling-a-month man already installed as cook on a colonial schooner. He was invited to breakfast, and was astonished and delighted with the luxuries lavished on the colonial seaman. He had fresh beef, fresh bread, good biscuit, tea, coffee, and vegetables, and three pounds a month wages. There was a vacancy on the schooner for an able seaman, and Jack filled it. He then registered a solemn oath that he would "never go back to England no more," and kept it.

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Some kind of Government was necessary, and, as the first inhabitants were criminals, the colony was ruled like a gaol, the Governor being head gaoler. His officers were mostly men who had been trained in the army and navy. They were all poor and needy, for no gentleman of wealth and position would ever have taken office in such a community. They came to make a living, and when free immigrants arrived and trade began to flourish, it was found that the one really valuable commodity was rum, and by rum the officers grew rich. In course of time the country was divided into districts, about thirty or thirty-five in number, over each of which an officer presided as police magistrate, with a clerk and staff of constables, one of whom was official flogger, always a convict promoted to the billet for merit and good behaviour.

New Holland soon became an organised pandemonium, such as the world had never known since Sodom and Gomorrah disappeared in the Dead Sea, and the details of its history cannot be written. To mitigate its horrors the worst of the criminals were transported to Norfolk Island. The Governor there had not the power to inflict capital punishment, and the convicts began to murder one another in order to obtain a brief change of misery, and the pleasure of a sea voyage before they could be tried and hanged in Sydney. A branch pandemonium was also established in Van Diemen's Land. This system was upheld by England for about fifty years.

The 'Britannia', a convict ship, the property of Messrs. Enderby & Sons, arrived at Sydney on October 14th, 1791, and reported that vast numbers of sperm whales were seen after doubling the south-west cape of Van Diemen's Land. Whaling vessels were fitted out in Sydney, and it was found that money could be made by oil and whalebone as well as by rum. Sealing was also pursued in small vessels, which were often lost, and sealers lie buried in all the islands of the southern seas, many of them having a story to tell, but no story-teller.

Whalers, runaway seamen, shilling-a-month men, and escaped convicts were the earliest settlers in New Zealand, and were the first to make peaceful intercourse with the Maoris possible. They built themselves houses with wooden frames, covered with reeds and rushes, learned to converse in the native language, and became family men. They were most of them English and Americans, with a few Frenchmen. They loved freedom, and preferred Maori customs, and the risk of being eaten, to the odious supervision of the English Government. The individual white man in those days was always welcome, especially if he brought with him guns, ammunition, tomahawks, and hoes. It was by these articles that he first won the respect and admiration of the native. If the visitor was a "pakeha tutua," a poor European, he might receive hospitality for a time, in the hope that some profit might be made out of him. But the Maori was a poor man also, with a great appetite, and when it became evident that the guest was no better than a pauper, and could not otherwise pay for his board, the Maori sat on the ground, meditating and watching, until his teeth watered, and at last he attached the body and baked it.

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In 1814 the Church Missionary Society sent labourers to the distant vineyard to introduce Christianity, and to instruct the natives in the rights of property. The first native protector of Christianity and letters was Hongi Hika, a great warrior of the Ngapuhi nation, in the North Island. He was born in 1777, and voyaging to Sydney in 1814, he became the guest of the Rev. Mr. Marsden. In 1819 the rev. gentleman bought his settlement at Kerikeri from Hongi Hika, the price being forty-eight axes. The area of the settlement was thirteen thousand acres. The land was excellent, well watered, in a fine situation, and near a good harbour. Hongi next went to England with the Rev. Mr. Kendall to see King George, who was at that time in matrimonial trouble. Hongi was surprised to hear that the King had to ask permission of anyone to dispose of his wife Caroline. He said he had five wives at home, and he could clear off the whole of them if he liked without troubling anybody. He received valuable presents in London, which he brought back to Sydney, and sold for three hundred muskets and ammunition. The year 1822 was the most glorious time of his life. He raised an army of one thousand men, three hundred of whom had been taught the use of his muskets. The neighbouring tribes had no guns. He went up the Tamar, and at Totara slew five hundred men, and baked and ate three hundred of them. On the Waipa he killed fourteen hundred warriors out of a garrison of four thousand, and then returned home with crowds of slaves. The other tribes began to buy guns from the traders as fast as they were able to pay for them with flax; and in 1827, at Wangaroa, a bullet went through Hongi's lungs, leaving a hole in his back through which he used to whistle to entertain his friends; but he died of the wound fifteen months afterwards.

Other men, both clerical and lay, followed the lead of the Rev. Mr. Marsden. In 1821 Mr. Fairbairn bought four hundred acres for ten pounds worth of trade. Baron de Thierry bought forty thousand acres on the Hokianga River for thirty-six axes. From 1825 to 1829 one million acres were bought by settlers and merchants. Twenty-five thousand acres were bought at the Bay of Islands and Hokianga in five years, seventeen thousand of which belonged to the missionaries. In 1835 the Rev. Henry Williams made a bold offer for the unsold country. He forwarded a deed of trust to the governor of New South Wales, requesting that the missionaries should be appointed trustees for the natives for the remainder of their lands, "to preserve them from the intrigues of designing men." Before the year 1839, twenty millions of acres had been purchased by the clergy and laity for a few guns, axes, and other trifles, and the Maoris were fast wasting their inheritance. But the titles were often imperfect. When a man had bought a few hundreds of acres for six axes and a gun, and had paid the price agreed on to the owner, another owner would come and claim the land because his grandfather had been killed on it. He sat down before the settler's house and waited for payment, and whether he got any or not he came at regular intervals during the rest of his life and sat down before the door with his spear and mere* by his side waiting for more purchase money.

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[Footnote] *Axe made of greenstone.*

Some honest people in England heard of the good things to be had in New Zealand, formed a company, and landed near the mouth of the Hokianga River to form a settlement. The natives happened to be at war, and were performing a war dance. The new company looked on while the natives danced, and then all desire for land in New Zealand faded from their hearts. They returned on board their ship and sailed away, having wasted twenty thousand pounds. Such people should remain in their native country. Your true rover, lay or clerical, comes for something or other, and stays to get it, or dies.

After twenty years of labour, and an expenditure of two hundred thousand pounds, the missionaries claimed only two thousand converts, and these were Christians merely in name. In 1825 the Rev. Henry Williams said the natives were as insensible to redemption as brutes, and in 1829 the Methodists in England contemplated withdrawing their establishment for want of success.

The Catholic Bishop Pompallier, with two priests, landed at Hokianga on January 10th, 1838, and took up his residence at the house of an Irish Catholic named Poynton, who was engaged in the timber trade. Poynton was a truly religious man, who had been living for some time among the Maoris. He was desirous of marrying the daughter of a chief, but he wished that she should be a Christian, and, as there was no Catholic priest nearer than Sydney, he sailed to that port with the chief and his daughter, called on Bishop Polding, and informed him of the object of his visit. A course of instruction was given to the father and daughter, Poynton acting as interpreter; they were baptised, and the marriage took place. After the lapse of sixty years their descendents were found to have retained the faith, and were living as good practical Catholics.

Bishop Pompallier celebrated his first Mass on January 13th, 1838, and the news of his arrival was soon noised abroad and discussed. The Methodist missionaries considered the action of the bishop as an unwarrantable intrusion on their domain, and, being Protestants, they resolved to protest. This they did through the medium of thirty native warriors, who appeared before Poynton's house early in the morning of January 22nd, when the bishop was preparing to say Mass. The chief made a speech. He said the bishop and his priests were enemies to the Maoris. They were not traders, for they had brought no guns, no axes. They had been sent by a foreign chief (the Pope) to deprive the Maoris of their land, and make them change their old customs. Therefore he and his warriors had come to break the crucifix, and the ornaments of the altar, and to take the bishop and his priests to the river.

The bishop replied that, although he was not a trader, he had come as a friend, and did not wish to deprive them of their country or anything belonging to them. He asked them to wait a while, and if they could find him doing the least injury to anyone they could take him to the river. The warriors agreed to wait, and went away.

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Next day the bishop went further up the river to Wherinaki, where Laming, a pakeha Maori, resided. Laming was an Irish-Protestant who had great influence with his tribe, which was numerous and warlike. He was admired by the natives for his strength and courage. He was six feet three inches in height, as nimble and spry as a cat, and as long-winded as a coyote. His father-in-law was a famous warrior named Lizard Skin. His religion was that of the Church of England, and he persuaded his tribe to profess it. He told them that the Protestant God was stronger than the Catholic God worshipped by his fellow countryman, Poynton. In after years, when his converts made cartridges of their Bibles and rejected Christianity, he was forced to confess that their religion was of this world only. They prayed that they might be brave in battle, and that their enemies might be filled with fear.

Laming's Christian zeal did not induce him to forget the duties of hospitality. He received the bishop as a friend, and the Europeans round Tatura and other places came regularly to Mass. During the first six years of the mission, twenty thousand Maoris either had been baptised or were being prepared for baptism.

Previous to the year 1828 some flax had been brought to Sydney from New Zealand, and manufactured into every species of cordage except cables, and it was found to be stronger than Baltic hemp. On account of the ferocious character of the Maoris, the Sydney Government sent several vessels to open communication with the tribes before permitting private individuals to embark in the trade. The ferocity attributed to the natives was not so much a part of their personal character as the result of their habits and beliefs. They were remarkable for great energy of mind and body, foresight, and self-denial. Their average height was about five feet six inches, but men from six feet to six feet six inches were not uncommon. Their point of honour was revenge, and a man who remained quiet while the manes of his friend or relation were unappeased by the blood of the enemy, would be dishonoured among his tribe.

The Maoris were in reality loath to fight, and war was never begun until after long talk. Their object was to exterminate or enslave their enemies, and they ate the slain.

Before commencing hostilities, the warriors endeavoured to put fear into the hearts of their opponents by enumerating the names of the fathers, uncles, or brothers of those in the hostile tribe whom they had slain and eaten in former battles. When a fight was progressing the women looked on from the rear. They were naked to the waist, and wore skirts of matting made from flax. As soon as a head was cut off they ran forward, and brought it away, leaving the body on the ground. If many were slain it was sometimes difficult to discover to what body each head had belonged, whether it was that of a friend or a foe, and it was lawful to bake the bodies of enemies only.

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Notwithstanding their peculiar customs, one who knew the Maoris well described them as the most patient, equable, forgiving people in the world, but full of superstitious ideas, which foreigners could not understand.

They believed that everything found on their coast was sent to them by the sea god, Taniwa, and they therefore endeavoured to take possession of the blessings conferred on them by seizing the first ships that anchored in their rivers and harbours. This led to misunderstandings and fights with their officers and crews, who had no knowledge of the sea god, Taniwa. It was found necessary to put netting all round the vessels as high as the tops to prevent surprise, and when trade began it was the rule to admit no more than five Maoris on board at once.

The flax was found growing spontaneously in fields of inexhaustible extent along the more southerly shores of the islands. The fibre was separated by the females, who held the top of the leaf between their toes, and drew a shell through the whole length of the leaf. It took a good cleaner to scrape fifteen pounds weight of it in a day; the average was about ten pounds, for which the traders gave a fig of tobacco and a pipe, two sheets of cartridge paper, or one pound of lead. The price at which the flax was sold in Sydney varied from 20 pounds to 45 pounds per ton, according to quality, so there was a large margin of profit to the trader. In 1828 sixty tons of flax valued at 2,600 pounds, were exported from Sydney to England.

The results of trading with the foreigners were fatal to the natives. At first the trade was in axes, knives, and other edge-tools, beads, and ornaments, but in 1832 the Maoris would scarcely take anything but arms and ammunition, red woollen shirts, and tobacco. Every man in a native hapu had to procure a musket, or die. If the warriors of the hapu had no guns they would soon be all killed by some tribe that had them. The price of one gun, together with the requisite powder, was one ton of cleaned flax, prepared by the women and slaves in the sickly swamps. In the meantime the food crops were neglected, hunger and hard labour killed many, some fell victims to diseases introduced by the white men, and the children nearly all died.

And the Maoris are still dying out of the land, blighted by our civilization. They were willing to learn and to be taught, and they began to work with the white men. In 1853 I saw nearly one hundred of them, naked to the waist, sinking shafts for gold on Bendigo, and no Cousin Jacks worked harder. We could not, of course, make them Englishmen —the true Briton is born, not made; but could we not have kept them alive if we had used reasonable means to do so? Or is it true that in our inmost souls we wanted them to die, that we might possess their land in peace?

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Besides flax, it was found that New Zealand produced most excellent timber—the kauri pine. The first visitors saw sea-going canoes beautifully carved by rude tools of stone, which had been hollowed out, each from a single tree, and so large that they were manned by one hundred warriors. The gum trees of New Holland are extremely hard, and their wood is so heavy that it sinks in water like iron. But the kauri, with a leaf like that of the gum tree, is the toughest of pines, though soft and easily worked—suitable for shipbuilding, and for masts and spars. In 1830 twenty-eight vessels made fifty-six voyages from Sydney to New Zealand, chiefly for flax; but they also left parties of men to prosecute the whale and seal fisheries, and to cut kauri pine logs. Two vessels were built by English mechanics, one of 140 tons, and the other of 370 tons burden, and the natives began to assist the new-comers in all their labours.

At this time most of the villages had at least one European resident called a Pakeha Maori, under the protection of a chief of rank and influence, and married to a relative of his, either legally or by native custom. It was through the resident that all the trading of the tribe was carried on. He bought and paid for the flax, and employed men to cut the pine logs and float them down the rivers to the ships.

Every whaling and trading vessel that returned to Sydney or Van Diemen's Land brought back accounts of the wonderful prospects which the islands afforded to men of enterprise, and New Zealand became the favourite refuge for criminals, runaway prisoners, and other lovers of freedom. When, therefore the crew of the schooner 'Industry' threw Captain Blogg overboard, it was a great comfort to them to know that they were going to an island in which there was no Government.

Captain Blogg had arrived from England with a bad character. He had been tried for murder. He had been ordered to pay five hundred pounds as damages to his mate, whom he had imprisoned at sea in a hencoop, and left to pick up his food with the fowls. He had been out-lawed, and forbidden to sail as officer in any British ship. These were facts made known to, and discussed by, all the whalers who entered the Tamar, when the whaling season was over in the year 1835. And yet the notorious Blogg found no difficulty in buying the schooner 'Industry', taking in a cargo, and obtaining a clearance for Hokianga, in New Zealand. He had shipped a crew consisting of a mate, four seamen, and a cook.

Black Ned Tomlins, Jim Parrish, and a few other friends interviewed the crew when the 'Industry' was getting ready for sea. Black Ned was a half-breed native of Kangaroo Island, and was looked upon as the best whaler in the colonies, and the smartest man ever seen in a boat. He was the principal speaker. He put the case to the crew in a friendly way, and asked them if they did not feel themselves to be a set of fools, to think of going to sea with a murdering villain like Blogg?

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Dick Secker replied mildly but firmly. He reckoned the crew were, in a general way, able to take care of themselves. They could do their duty, whatever it was; and they were not afraid of sailing with any man that ever trod a deck.

After a few days at sea they were able to form a correct estimate of their master mariner. He never came on deck absolutely drunk, but he was saturated with rum to the very marrow of his bones. A devil of cruelty, hate, and murder glared from his eyes, and his blasphemies could come from no other place but the lowest depths of the bottomless pit. The mate was comparatively a gentle and inoffensive lamb. He did not curse and swear more than was considered decent and proper on board ship, did his duty, and avoided quarrels.

One day Blogg was rating the cook in his usual style when the latter made some reply, and the captain knocked him down. He then called the mate, and with his help stripped the cook to the waist and triced him up to the mast on the weather side. This gave the captain the advantage of a position in which he could deliver his blows downward with full effect. Then he selected a rope's end and began to flog the cook. At every blow he made a spring on his feet, swung the rope over his head, and brought it down on the bare back with the utmost force. It was evident that he was no 'prentice hand at the business, but a good master flogger. The cook writhed and screamed, as every stroke raised bloody ridges on his back; but Blogg enjoyed it. He was in no hurry. He was like a boy who had found a sweet morsel, and was turning it over in his mouth to enjoy it the longer. After each blow he looked at the three seamen standing near, and at the man at the helm, and made little speeches at them. "I'll show you who is master aboard this ship." Whack! "That's what every man Jack of you will get if you give me any of your jaw." Whack! "Maybe you'd like to mutiny, wouldn't you?" Whack! The blows came down with deliberate regularity; the cook's back was blue, black, and bleeding, but the captain showed no sign of any intention to stay his hand. The suffering victim's cries seemed to inflame his cruelty. He was a wild beast in the semblance of a man. At last, in his extreme agony, the cook made a piteous appeal to the seamen:

[*Illustration* 2]

"Mates, are you men? Are you going to stand there all day, and watch me being flogged to death for nothing?"

Before the next stroke fell the three men had seized the captain; but he fought with so much strength and fury that they found it difficult to hold him. The helmsman steadied the tiller with two turns of the rope and ran forward to assist them. They laid Blogg flat on the deck, but he kept struggling, cursing, threatening, and calling on the mate to help him; but that officer took fright, ran to his cabin in the deckhouse, and began to barricade the door.

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Then a difficulty arose. What was to be done with the prisoner? He was like a raving maniac. If they allowed him his liberty, he was sure to kill one or more of them. If they bound him he would get loose in some way—probably through the mate—and after what had occurred, it would be safer to turn loose a Bengal tiger on deck then the infuriated captain. There was but one way out of the trouble, and they all knew it. They looked at one another; nothing was wanting but the word, and it soon came. Secker had sailed from the Cove of Cork, and being an Irishman, he was by nature eloquent, first in speech, and first in action. He reflected afterwards, when he had leisure to do so.

"Short work is the best," he said, "over he goes; lift the devil." Each man seized an arm or leg, and Blogg was carried round the mast to the lee side. The men worked together from training and habit. They swung the body athwart the deck like a pendulum, and with a "one! two! three!" it cleared the bulwark, and the devil went head foremost into the deep sea. The cook, looking on from behind the mast, gave a deep sigh of relief.

Thus it was that a great breach of the peace was committed on the Pacific Ocean; and it was done, too, on a beautiful summer's evening, when the sun was low, a gentle breeze barely filled the sails, and everybody should have been happy and comfortable.

Captain Blogg rose to the surface directly and swam after his schooner. The fury of his soul did not abate all at once. He roared to the mate to bring the schooner to, but there was no responsive "Aye, aye, sir." He was now outside of his jurisdiction, and his power was gone. He swam with all his strength, and his bloated face still looked red as the foam passed by it. The helmsman had resumed his place, and steadied the tiller, keeping her full, while the other men looked over the stern. Secker said: "The old man will have a long swim."

But the "old man" swam a losing race. His vessel was gliding away from him: his face grew pale, and in an agony of fear and despair, he called to the men for God's sake to take him on board and he would forgive everything.

But his call came too late; he could find no sureties for his good behaviour in the future; he had never in his life shown any love for God or pity for man, and he found in his utmost need neither mercy nor pity now. He strained his eyes in vain over the crests of the restless billows, calling for the help that did not come. The receding sails never shivered; no land was near, no vessel in sight. The sun went down, and the hopeless sinner was left struggling alone on the black waste of waters.

The men released the cook and held a consultation about a troublesome point of law. Had they committed mutiny and murder, or only justifiable homicide? They felt that the point was a very important one to them—a matter of life and death—and they stood in a group near the tiller to discuss the difficulty, speaking low, while the cook was shivering in the forecastle, trying to ease the pain.

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The conclusion of the seamen was, that they had done what was right, both in law and conscience. They had thrown Blogg overboard to prevent him from murdering the cook, and also for their own safety. After they had done their duty by seizing him, he would have killed them if he could. He was a drunken sweep. He was an outlaw, and the law would not protect him. Anybody could kill an outlaw without fear of consequences, so they had heard. But still there was some doubt about it, and there was nobody there to put the case for the captain. The law was, at that time, a terrible thing, especially in Van Diemen's Land, under Colonel Arthur. He governed by the gallows, to make everything orderly and peaceable, and men were peaceable enough after they were hanged.

So Secker and his mates decided that, although they had done nothing but what was right in throwing Blogg over the side, it would be extremely imprudent to trust their innocence to the uncertainty of the law and to the impartiality of Colonel Arthur.

Their first idea was to take the vessel to South America, but after some further discussion, they decided to continue the voyage to Hokianga, and to settle among the Maoris. Nobody had actually seen them throw Blogg overboard except the cook, and him they looked upon as a friend, because they had saved him from being flogged to death. They had some doubts about the best course to take with the mate, but as he was the only man on board who was able to take the schooner to port, they were obliged to make use of his services for the present, and at the end of the voyage they could deal with him in any way prudence might require, and they did not mean to run any unnecessary risks.

They went to the house on deck, and Secker called the mate, informing him that the captain had lost his balance, and had fallen overboard, and that it was his duty to take charge of the 'Industry', and navigate her to Hokianga. But the mate had been thoroughly frightened, and was loth to leave his entrenchment. He could not tell what might happen if he opened his cabin door: he might find himself in the sea in another minute. The men who had thrown the master overboard would not have much scruple about sending an inferior officer after him. If the mate resolved to show fight, it would be necessary for him to kill every man on board, even the cook, before he could feel safe; and then he would be left alone in mid-ocean with nobody to help him to navigate the vessel—a master and crew under one hat, at the mercy of the winds and the waves, with six murdered men on his conscience; and he had a conscience, too, as was soon to be proved.

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The seamen swore most solemnly that they did not intend to do him the least harm, and at last the mate opened his door. While in his cabin, he had been spending what he believed to be the last minutes of his life in preparing for death; he did his best to make peace with heaven, and tried to pray. But his mouth was dry with fear, his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, his memory of sacred things failed him, and he could not pray for want of practice. He could remember only one short prayer, and he was unable to utter even that audibly. And how could a prayer ever reach heaven in time to be of any use to him, when he could not make it heard outside the deck-house? In his desperate straits he took a piece of chalk and began to write it; so when at last he opened the door of his cabin, the four seamen observed that he had nearly covered the boards with writing. It looked like a litany, but it was a litany of only three words—"Lord, have mercy"—which were repeated in lines one above the other.

That litany was never erased or touched by any man who subsequently sailed on board the 'Industry'. She was the first vessel that was piloted up the channel to Port Albert in Gippsland, to take in a cargo of fat cattle, and when she arrived there on August 3rd, 1842, the litany of the mate was still distinctly legible.

Nothing exalts a man so quickly in the estimation of his fellow creatures as killing them. Emperors and kings court the alliance of the conquering hero returning from fields of slaughter. Ladies in Melbourne forgot for a time the demands of fashion in their struggles to obtain an ecstatic glimpse of our modern Bluebeard, Deeming; and no one was prouder than the belle of the ball when she danced down the middle with the man who shot Sandy M'Gee.

And the reverence of the mate for his murdering crew was unfathomable. Their lightest word was a law to him. He wrote up the log in their presence, stating that Captain Blogg had been washed into the sea in a sudden squall on a dark night; vessel hove to, boat lowered, searched for captain all night, could see nothing of him; mate took charge, and bore away for Hokianga next morning. When these untruthful particulars had been entered and read over to the four seamen, they were satisfied for the present. They would settle among the Maoris, and lead a free and happy life. They could do what they liked with the schooner and her cargo, having disposed of the master and owner; and as for the mate, they would dispose of him, too, if he made himself in any way troublesome. What a wonderful piece of good luck it was that they were going to a new country in which there was no government!

The 'Industry' arrived off the bar at Hokianga on November 30th, 1835, and was boarded by a Captain Young, who had settled seven miles up the estuary, at One Tree Point, and acted as pilot of the nascent port. He inquired how much water the schooner drew, noted the state of the tide, and said he would remain on board all night, and go over the bar next morning with the first flood.

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The mate had a secret and wanted to get rid of it. While looking round at the shore, and apparently talking about indifferent subjects, he said to the pilot: "Don't look at the men, and don't take any notice of them. They threw Blogg, the master, overboard, when he was flogging the cook, and they would murder me, too, if they knew I told you; so you must pretend not to take any notice of them. What their plans may be, I don't know; but you may be sure they won't go back to the Tamar, if they can help it."

If the pilot felt any surprise, he did not show it. After a short pause he said: "You go about your business, and don't speak to me again, except when the men can hear you. I will think about what is best to be done."

During the night Captain Young thought about it to some purpose. Being a master mariner himself he could imagine no circumstances which would justify a crew in throwing a master mariner overboard. It was the one crime which could not be pardoned either afloat or ashore. Next day he took the vessel up the estuary, and anchored her within two hundred yards of the shore, opposite the residence of Captain McDonnell.

It is true there was no government at that time at Hokianga, nor anywhere else in New Zealand; there were no judges, no magistrates, no courts, and no police. But the British Angel of Annexation was already hovering over the land, although she had not as yet alighted on it.

At this time the shores of New Zealand were infested with captains. There was a Captain Busby, who was called British Resident, and, unfortunately for our seamen, Captain McDonnell had been appointed Additional British Resident at Hokianga a few weeks previously. So far he had been officially idle; there was no business to do, no chance of his displaying his zeal and patriotism. Moreover, he had no pay, and apparently no power and no duties. He was neither a Governor nor a Government, but a kind of forerunner of approaching empire—one of those harmless and far-reaching tentacles which the British octopus extends into the recesses of ocean, searching for prey to satisfy the demands of her imperial appetite.

McDonnell was a naval lieutenant; had served under the East India Company; had smuggled opium to China; had explored the coasts of New Zealand; and on March 31st, 1831, had arrived at Hokianga from Sydney in the 'Sir George Murray', a vessel which he had purchased for 1,300 pounds. He brought with him his wife, two children, and a servant, but took them back on the return voyage. He was now engaged in the flax and kauri pine trade.

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The ‘Industry’ had scarcely dropped her anchor before the Additional Resident boarded her. The pilot spoke to him and in a few words informed him that Blogg, the master, had been pitched into the sea, and explained in what manner he proposed to arrest the four seamen. McDonnell understood, and agreed to the plan at once. He called to the mate in a loud voice, and said: “I am sorry to hear that you have lost the master of this vessel. I live at that house you see on the rising ground, and I keep a list in a book of all vessels that come into the river, and the names of the crews. It is a mere formality, and won’t take more than five minutes. So you will oblige me, mate, by coming ashore with your men at once, as I am in a hurry, and have other business to attend to.” He then went ashore in his boat. The mate and seamen followed in the ship’s boat, and waited in front of the Additional Resident’s house. He had a visitor that morning, the Pakeha Maori, Laming.

The men had not to wait long, as it was not advisable to give them much time to think and grow suspicious. McDonnell came to the front door and called the mate, who went inside, signed his name, re-appeared directly, called Secker, and entered the house with him. The Additional Resident was sitting at a table with the signature book before him. He rose from the chair, told Secker to sit down, gave him a pen, and pointed out the place where his name was to be signed. Laming was sitting near the table. While Secker was signing his name McDonnell suddenly put a twisted handkerchief under his chin and tightened it round his neck. Laming presented a horse-pistol and said he would blow his brains out if he uttered a word, and the mate slipped a pair of handcuffs on his wrists. He was then bundled out at the back door and put into a bullet-proof building at the rear. The other three seamen were then called in one after the other, garrotted, handcuffed, and imprisoned in the same way. The little formality of signing names was finished in a few minutes, according to promise.

If such things could be done in New Zealand, where there was neither law nor government, what might happen in Van Diemen’s Land, where one man was both law and government, and that man was Colonel Arthur? The prisoners had plenty of time to make a forecast of their fate, while the mate engaged a fresh crew and took in a cargo of flax and timber. When he was ready to sail, he reshipped his old crew in irons, returned with them to the Tamar, and delivered them to the police to be dealt with according to law. For a long time the law was in a state of chaos. Major Abbott was sent from England in 1814 as the first judge. The proceedings in his court were conducted in the style of a drum-head court martial, the accusation, sentences, and execution following one another with military precision and rapidity.

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He adjudicated in petty sessions as a magistrate, and dealt in a summary manner with capital offences, which were very numerous. To imprison a man who was already a prisoner for life was no punishment; the major's powers were, therefore, limited to the cat and the gallows. And as the first gallows had been built to carry only eight passengers, his daily death sentences were also limited to that number. For twenty years torture was used to extort confession— even women were flogged if they refused to give evidence, and an order of the Governor was held to be equal to law. Major Abbott died in 1832.

In 1835 the court consisted of the judge-advocate and two of the inhabitants selected by the Governor, Colonel Arthur, who came out in the year 1824, and had been for eleven years a terror to evil-doers. His rule was as despotic as he could possibly make it. If any officer appointed by the Home Government disagreed with his policy he suspended him from his office, and left him to seek redress from his friends in England—a tedious process, which lasted for years. Disagreeable common people he suspended also—by the neck. If a farmer, squatter, or merchant was insubordinate, he stopped his supply of convict labour, and cruelly left him to do his own work. He brooked no discussion of his measures by any pestilent editor. He filled all places of profit with his friends, relatives, and dependents. Everything was referred to his royal will and pleasure. His manners were stiff and formal, his tastes moral, his habits on Sundays religious, and his temper vindictive. Next to the articles of war, the thirty-nine Articles claimed his obedience. When his term of office was drawing to a close he went to church on a certain Sunday to receive the Lord's Supper. While studying his prayer book he observed that it was his duty if his brother had anything against him to seek a reconciliation before offering his gift. The ex-Attorney-General, Gellibrand, was present, a brother Christian who had had many things against him for many years. He had other enemies, some living and some dead, but they were absent. To be reconciled to all of them was an impossibility. He could not ask the minister to suspend the service while he went round Hobart Town looking for his enemies, and shaking hands with them. But he did what was possible. He rose from his knees, marched over to Gellibrand, and held out his hand. Gellibrand was puzzled; he looked at the hand and could see nothing in it. By way of explanation Colonel Arthur pointed out the passage in the prayer-book which had troubled his sensitive conscience. Gellibrand read it, and then shook hands. With a soul washed whiter than snow, the colonel approached the table.

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Amongst the convicts every grade of society was represented, from King Jorgensen to the beggar. One Governor had a convict private secretary. Officers of the army and navy, merchants, doctors, and clergymen consorted with costermongers, poachers, and pickpockets. The law, it is sad to relate, had even sent out lawyers, who practised their profession under a cloud, and sometimes pleaded by permission of the court. But their ancient pride had been trodden in the dust; the aureole which once encircled their wigs was gone, and they were often snubbed and silenced by ignorant justices. The punishment for being found out is life-long and terrible. Their clients paid the fees partly in small change and partly in rum.

The defence of the seamen accused of murdering Captain Blogg was undertaken by Mr. Nicholas. He had formerly been employed by the firm of eminent solicitors in London who conducted the defence of Queen Caroline, when the “first gentleman in Europe” tried to get rid of her, and he told me that his misfortunes (forgeries) had deprived him of the honour of sharing with Lord Brougham the credit of her acquittal.

Many years had passed since that celebrated trial when I made the acquaintance of Nicholas. He had by this time lost all social distinction. He had grown old and very shabby, and was so mean that even his old friends, the convicts who had crossed the straits, looked down on him with contempt. He came to me for an elector’s right, as a vote in our electorate—the Four Counties—was sometimes worth as much as forty shillings, besides unlimited grog. We were Conservatives then, true patriots, and we imitated—feebly, it is true, but earnestly—the time-honoured customs of old England.

Mr. Nicholas had been a man of many employments, and of many religions. He was never troubled with scruples of conscience, but guided his conduct wholly by enlightened self-interest. He was a Broad Churchman, very broad. As tutor in various families, he had instructed his pupils in the tenets of the Church of England, of the Catholics, of the Presbyterians, and of the Baptists. He always professed the religion of his employer for the time being, and he found that four religions were sufficient for his spiritual and temporal wants. There were many other sects, but the labour of learning all their peculiar views would not pay, so he neglected them. The Wesleyans were at one time all-powerful in our road district, and Nicholas, foreseeing a chance of filling an office of profit under the Board, threw away all his sins, and obtained grace and a billet as toll-collector or pikeman. In England the pike-man was always a surly brute, who collected his fees with the help of a bludgeon and a bulldog, but Nicholas performed his duties in the disguise of a saint. He waited for passengers in his little wooden office, sitting at a table, with a huge Bible before him, absorbed in spiritual reading. He wore spectacles on

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his Roman nose, had a long grey beard, quoted Scripture to chance passengers, and was very earnest for their salvation. He was atoning for the sins of his youth by leading the life of a hermit by praying and cheating. He has had many followers. He made mistakes in his cash, which for a while were overlooked in so good a man, but they became at length so serious that he lost his billet. He had for some time been spoken of by his friends and admirers as “Mr. Nicholas,” but after his last mistakes had been discovered, he began to be known merely as “Old Nick the Lawyer,” or “Old Nick the Liar,” which some ignorant people look upon as convertible terms. I think Lizard Skin, the cannibal, was a better Christian than old Nick the lawyer, as he was brave and honest, and scorned to tell a lie.

The convict counsel for the four seamen defended them at a great expenditure of learning and lies. He argued at great length:— “That there was no evidence that a master mariner named Blogg ever existed; that he was an outlaw, and, as such, every British subject had an inchoate right to kill him at sight, and, therefore, that the seamen, supposing for the sake of argument that they did kill him, acted strictly within their legal rights; that Blogg drowned himself in a fit of delirium tremens, after being drunk on rum three days and nights consecutively; that he fell overboard accidentally and was drowned; that the cook and mate threw him overboard, and then laid the blame on the innocent seamen; that Blogg swam ashore, and was now living on an unchartered island; that if he was murdered, his body had not been found: there could be no murder without a corpse; and finally, he would respectfully submit to that honourable court, that the case bristled with ineradicable difficulties.”

The seamen would have been sent to the gallows in any case, but Nicholas’ speech made their fate inevitable. The court brushed aside the legal bristles, and hanged the four seamen on the evidence of the mate and the cook.

The tragedy of the gallows was followed by a short afterpiece. Jim Parrish, Ned Tomlins, and every whaler and foremast man in Hobart Town and on the Tamar, discussed the evidence both drunk and sober, and the opinion was universal that the cook ought to have sworn an oath strong enough to go through a three-inch slab of hardwood that he had seen Captain Blogg carried up to heaven by angels, instead of swearing away the lives of men who had taken his part when he was triced up to the mast. The cook was in this manner tried by his peers and condemned to die, and he knew it. He tried to escape by shipping on board a schooner bound to Portland Bay with whalers. The captain took on board a keg of rum, holding fifteen gallons, usually called a “Big Pup,” and invited the mate to share the liquor with him. The result was that the two officers soon became incapable of rational navigation. Off King’s Island the schooner was hove to in a gale of wind, and for

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fourteen days stood off and on—five or six hours one way, and five or six hours the other—while the master and mate were down below, “nursing the Big Pup.” The seamen were all strangers to the coast, and did not know any cove into which they could run for refuge. The cook was pitched overboard one dark night during that gale off King’s Island, and his loss was a piece of ancient history by the time the master and mate had consumed the rum, and were able to enter up the log.

Ex-Attorney-General Gellibrand sailed to Port Philip to look for country in Australia Felix, and he found it. He was last seen on a rounded hill, gazing over the rich and beautiful land which borders Lake Colac; land which he was not fated to occupy, for he wandered away and was lost, and his bones lay unburied by the stream which now bears his name.

When Colonel Arthur’s term of office expired he departed with the utmost ceremony. The 21st Fusiliers escorted him to the wharf. As he entered his barge his friends cheered, and his enemies groaned, and then went home and illuminated the town, to testify their joy at getting rid of a tyrant. He was the model Governor of a Crown colony, and the Crown rewarded him for his services. He was made a baronet, appointed Governor of Canada and of Bombay, was a member of Her Majesty’s Privy Council, a colonel of the Queen’s Own regiment, and he died on September 19th, 1854, full of years and honours, and worth 70,000 pounds.

Laming was left an orphan by the death of Lizard Skin. The chief had grown old and sick, and he sat every day for two years on a fallen puriri near the white man’s pah, but he never entered it. His spear was always sticking up beside him. He had a gun, but was never known to use it. He was often humming some ditty about old times before the white man brought guns and powder, but he spoke to no one. He was pondering over the future of his tribe, but the problem was too much for him. The white men were strong and were overrunning his land. His last injunction to his warriors was, that they should listen to the words of his Pakeha, and that they should be brave that they might live.

When the British Government took possession of New Zealand without paying for it, they established a Land Court to investigate the titles to lands formerly bought from the natives, and it was decided in most cases that a few axes and hoes were an insufficient price to pay for the pick of the country; the purchases were swindles. Laming had possession of three or four hundred acres, and to the surprise of the Court it was found that he had paid a fair price for them, and his title was allowed. Moreover, his knowledge of the language and customs of the Maoris was found to be so useful that he was appointed a Judge of the Land Court.

The men who laid the foundations of empire in the Great South Land were men of action. They did not stand idle in the shade, waiting for someone to come and hire them. They dug a vineyard and planted it. The vines now bring forth fruit, the winepress is full, the must is fermenting. When the wine has been drawn off from the lees, and time has matured it, of what kind will it be? And will the Lord of the Vineyard commend it?

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FIRST SETTLERS.

The first white settler in Victoria was the escaped convict Buckley; but he did not cultivate the country, nor civilise the natives. The natives, on the contrary, uncivilised him. When white men saw him again, he had forgotten even his mother tongue, and could give them little information. For more than thirty years he had managed to live—to live like a savage; but for any good he had ever done he might as well have died with the other convicts who ran away with him. He never gave any clear account of his companions, and many people were of opinion that he kept himself alive by eating them, until he was found and fed by the blacks, who thought he was one of their dead friends, and had “jumped up a white fellow.”

While Buckley was still living with the blacks about Corio Bay, in 1827, Gellibrand and Batman applied for a grant of land at Western Port, where the whalers used to strip wattle bark when whales were out of season; but they did not get it.

Englishmen have no business to live anywhere without being governed, and Colonel Arthur had no money to spend in governing a settlement at Western Port. So Australia Felix was unsettled for eight years longer.

Griffiths & Co., of Launceston, were trading with Sydney in 1833. Their cargo outward was principally wheat, the price of which varied very much; sometimes it was 2s. 6d. a bushel in Launceston, and 18s. in Sydney. The return cargo from Port Jackson was principally coal, freestone, and cedar.

Griffiths & Co. were engaged in whaling in Portland Bay. They sent there two schooners, the ‘Henry’ and the ‘Elizabeth’, in June, 1834. They erected huts on shore for the whalers. The ‘Henry’ was wrecked; but the whales were plentiful, and yielded more oil than the casks would hold, so the men dug clay pits on shore, and poured the oil into them. The oil from forty-five whales was put into the pits, but the clay absorbed every spoonful of it, and nothing but bones was gained from so much slaughter. Before the ‘Elizabeth’ left Portland Bay, the Hentys, the first permanent settlers in Victoria, arrived in the schooner ‘Thistle’, on November 4th, 1834.

When the whalers of the ‘Elizabeth’ had been paid off, and had spent their money, they were engaged to strip wattle bark at Western Port, and were taken across in the schooner, with provisions, tools, six bullocks and a dray. During that season they stripped three hundred tons of bark and chopped it ready for bagging. John Toms went over to weigh and ship the bark, and brought it back, together with the men, in the barque ‘Andrew Mack’.

WRECK OF THE CONVICT SHIP “NEVA,” ON KING’S ISLAND.

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She sailed from Cork on January 8th, 1835, B. H. Peck, master; Dr. Stevenson, R.N., surgeon. She had on board 150 female prisoners and thirty-three of their children, nine free women and their twenty-two children, and a crew of twenty-six. Several ships had been wrecked on King's Island, and when a vessel approached it the mate of the watch warned his men to keep a bright look out. He said, "King's Island is inhabited by anthropophagi, the bloodiest man eaters ever known; and, if you don't want to go to pot, you had better keep your eyes skinned." So the look-out man did not go to sleep.

Nevertheless, the 'Neva' went ashore on the Harbinger reef, on May 13th unshipped her rudder and parted into four pieces. Only nine men and thirteen women reached the island; they were nearly naked and had nothing to eat, and they wandered along the beach during the night, searching amongst the wreckage. At last they found a puncheon of rum, upended it, stove in the head, and drank. The thirteen women then lay down on the sand close together, and slept. The night was very cold, and Robinson, an apprentice, covered the women as well as he could with some pieces of sail and blankets soaked with salt water. The men walked about the beach all night to keep themselves warm, being afraid to go inland for fear of the cannibal blackfellows. In the morning they went to rouse the women, and found that seven of the thirteen were dead.

The surviving men were the master, B. H. Peck, Joseph Bennet, Thomas Sharp, John Watson, Edward Calthorp, Thomas Hines, Robert Ballard, John Robinson, and William Kinderey. The women were Ellen Galvin, Mary Stating, Ann Cullen, Rosa Heland, Rose Dunn, and Margaret Drury.

For three weeks these people lived almost entirely on shellfish. They threw up a barricade on the shore, above high water mark, to protect themselves against the cannibals. The only chest that came ashore unbroken was that of Robinson the apprentice, and in it there was a canister of powder. A flint musket was also found among the wreckage, and with the flint and steel they struck a light and made a fire. When they went down to the beach in search of shellfish, one man kept guard at the barricade, and looked out for the blackfellows; his musket was loaded with powder and pebbles.

Three weeks passed away before any of the natives appeared, but at last they were seen approaching along the shore from the south. At the first alarm all the ship-wrecked people ran to the barricade for shelter, and the men armed themselves with anything in the shape of weapons they could find. But their main hope of victory was the musket. They could not expect to kill many cannibals with one shot, but the flash and report would be sure to strike them with terror, and put them to flight.

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By this time their diet of shellfish had left them all weak and emaciated, skeletons only just alive; the anthropophagi would have nothing but bones to pick; still, the little life left in them was precious, and they resolved to sell it as dear as they could. They watched the savages approaching; at length they could count their number. They were only eleven all told, and were advancing slowly. Now they saw that seven of the eleven were small, only picaninnies. When they came nearer three out of the other four were seen to be lubras, and the eleventh individual then resolved himself into a white savage, who roared out, “Mates ahoy!”

The white man was Scott, the sealer, who had taken up is abode on the island with his harem, three Tasmanian gins and seven children.

They were the only permanent inhabitants; the cannibal blacks had disappeared, and continued to exist only in the fancies of the mariners. Scott’s residence was opposite New Year’s Island not far from the shore; there he had built a hut and planted a garden with potatoes and other vegetables. Flesh meat he obtained from the kangaroos and seals. Their skins he took to Launceston in his boat, and in it he brought back supplies of flour and groceries. He had observed dead bodies of women and men, and pieces of a wrecked vessel cast up by the sea, and had travelled along the shore with his family, looking for anything useful or valuable which the wreck might yield. After hearing the story, and seeing the miserable plight of the castaways, he invited them to his home. On arriving at the hut Scott and his lubras prepared for their guests a beautiful meal of kangaroo and potatoes. This was their only food as long as they remained on King’s Island, for Scott’s only boat had got adrift, and his flour, tea, and sugar had been all consumed. But kangaroo beef and potatoes seemed a most luxurious diet to the men and women who had been kept alive for three weeks on nothing but shellfish.

Scott and his hounds hunted the kangaroo, and supplied the colony with meat. The liver of the kangaroo when boiled and left to grow cold is a dry substance, which, with the help of hunger and a little imagination, is said to be as good as bread.

In the month of July, 1835, heavy gales were blowing over King’s Island. For fourteen days the schooner ‘Elizabeth’, with whalers for Port Fairy, was hove to off the coast, standing off and on, six hours one way and six hours the other. Akers, the captain, and his mate got drunk on rum and water daily. The cook of the ‘Industry’ was on board the ‘Elizabeth’, the man whom Captain Blogg was flogging when his crew seized him and threw him overboard. The cook also was now pitched overboard for having given evidence against the four men who had saved him from further flogging.

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At this time also Captain Friend, of the whaling cutter ‘Sarah Ann’, took shelter under the lee of New Year’s Island, and he pulled ashore to visit Scott the sealer. There he found the shipwrecked men and women whom he took on board his cutter, and conveyed to Launceston, except one woman and two men. It was then too late in the season to take the whalers to Port Fairy. Captain Friend was appointed chief District Constable at Launceston; all the constables under him were prisoners of the Crown, receiving half a dollar a day. He was afterwards Collector of Customs at the Mersey.

In November, 1835 the schooner ‘Elizabeth’ returned to Launceston with 270 tuns of oil. The share of the crew of a whaling vessel was one-fiftieth of the value of the oil and bone. The boat-steerer received one-thirtieth, and of the headmen some had one-twenty-fifth, others one-fifteenth. In this same year, 1835, Batman went to Port Phillip with a few friends and seven Sydney blackfellows. On June 14th he returned to Van Diemen’s Land, and by the 25th of the same month he had compiled a report of his expedition, which he sent to Governor Arthur, together with a copy of the grant of land executed by the black chiefs. He had obtained three copies of the grant signed by three brothers Jagga-Jagga, by Bungaree, Yan-Yan, Moorwhip, and Marmarallar. The area of the land bought by Batman was not surveyed with precision, but it was of great extent, like infinite space, whose centre is everywhere, and circumference nowhere. And in addition he took up a small patch of one hundred thousand acres between the bay and the Barwon, including the insignificant site of Geelong, a place of small account even to this day. Batman was a long-limbed Sydney native, and he bestrode his real estate like a Colossus, but King William was a bigger Colossus than Batman—he claimed both the land and the blacks, and ignored the Crown grant.

Next, John Fawkner and his friends chartered the schooner ‘Enterprise’ for a voyage across the Straits to Australia Felix. He afterwards claimed to be the founder of Melbourne. He could write and talk everlastingly, but he had not the ‘robur’ and ‘as triplex’ suitable for a sea-robber. Sea-sickness nearly killed him, so he stayed behind while the other adventurers went and laid the foundation. They first examined the shores of Western Port, then went to Port Philip Bay and entered the River Yarra. They disembarked on its banks, ploughed some land, sowed maize and wheat, and planted two thousand fruit trees. They were not so grasping as Batman, and each man pegged out a farm of only one hundred acres. These farms were very valuable in the days of the late boom, and are called the city of Melbourne. Batman wanted to oust the newcomers; he claimed the farms under his grant from the Jagga-Jaggas. He squatted on Batman’s Hill, and looked down with evil eyes on the rival immigrants. He saw them clearing away the scrub along Flinders Street,

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and splitting posts and rails all over the city from Spencer Street to Spring Street, regardless of the fact that the ground under their feet would be, in the days of their grandchildren, worth 3,000 pounds per foot. Their bullock-drays were often bogged in Elizabeth Street, and they made a corduroy crossing over it with red gum logs. Some of these logs were dislodged quite sound fifty years afterwards by the Tramway Company's workmen.

DISCOVERY OF THE RIVER HOPKINS.

"Know ye not that lovely river?
Know ye not that smiling river?
Whose gentle flood, by cliff and wood,
With 'wildering sound goes winding ever."

In January, 1836, Captain Smith, who was in charge of the whaling station at Port Fairy, went with two men, named Wilson and Gibbs, in a whale boat to the islands near Warrnambool, to look for seal. They could find no seal, and then they went across the bay, and found the mouth of the river Hopkins. In trying to land there, their boat capsized in the surf, and Smith was drowned. The other two men succeeded in reaching the shore naked, and they travelled back along the coast to Port Fairy, carrying sticks on their shoulders to look like guns, in order to frighten away the natives, who were very numerous on that part of the coast. On this journey they found the wreck of a vessel, supposed to be a Spanish one, which has since been covered by the drifting sand. When Captain Mills was afterwards harbour master at Belfast, he took the bearings of it, and reported them to the Harbour Department in Melbourne. Vain search was made for it many years afterwards in the hope that it was a Spanish galleon laden with doubloons.

Davy was in the Sydney trade in the 'Elizabeth' until March, 1836; he then left her and joined the cutter 'Sarah Ann', under J. B. Mills, to go whaling at Port Fairy. In the month of May, Captain Mills was short of boats, and went to the Hopkins to look for the boat lost by Smith. He took with him two boats with all their whaling gear, in case he should see a whale. David Fermaner was in one of the boats, which carried a supply of provisions for the two crews; in the other boat there was only what was styled a nosebag, or snack—a mouthful for each man.

On arriving off the Hopkins, they found a nasty sea on, and Captain Mills said it would be dangerous to attempt to land; but his brother Charles said he would try, and in doing so his boat capsized in the breakers. All the men clung to the boat, but the off-sea prevented them from getting on shore. When Captain Mills saw what had happened, he at once pushed on his boat through the surf and succeeded in reaching the shore inside

the point on the eastern side of the entrance. He then walked round towards the other boat with a lance warp, waded out in the water as far as he could, and then threw the warp to the men, who hauled on it until their boat came ashore, and they were able to land.

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All the provisions were lost. The water was baled out of the boat that had been capsized, and she was taken over to the west head. All the food for twelve men was in the nosebag, and it was very little; each man had a mere nibble for supper. In those days wombats were plentiful near the river, but the men could not catch or kill one of them. Captain Mills had a gun in his boat which happened to be loaded, and he gave it to Davy to try if he could shoot anything for breakfast next morning. There was only one charge, all the rest of the ammunition having been lost in the breakers. Davy walked up the banks of the river early in the morning, and saw plenty of ducks, but they were so wild he could not get near them. At last he was so fortunate as to shoot a musk duck, which he brought back to the camp, stuck up before the fire, and roasted. He then divided it into twelve portions, and gave one portion to each of the twelve men for breakfast; but it was a mockery of a meal, as unsubstantial as an echo—smell, and nothing else.

The two boats were launched, and an attempt was made to pass out to sea through the surf, but the wind was far down south, and the men had to return and beach the boats. The sails were taken ashore and used as tents. In the evening they again endeavoured to catch a wombat, but failed.

On the next day they tried again to get out of the river, but the surf half filled the boats with water, and they were glad to reach the camp again.

Captain Mills was a native of Australia, and a good bushman; he told the men that sow thistles were good to eat, so they went about looking for them, and having found a quantity ate them. On the third day they tried once more to get out of the river, but without success.

On the fourth day Mills decided to carry the boats and whaling gear overland to a bight in the bay to the west. The gear was divided into lots among the men, and consisted of ten oars, two steer-oars, two tubs of whale line each 120 fathoms in length, two fifty-pound anchors, four harpoons, six lances, six lance warps, two tomahawks, two water kegs, two piggins for balers, two sheath knives, and two oil-stones for touching up the lances when they became dull. These were carried for about a quarter of a mile, and then put down for a rest, and the men went back to the camp. The boats were much lighter than the gear, being made of only half-inch plank. One boat was capsized bottom up, and the men took it on their shoulders, six on each side, the tallest men being placed in the middle on account of the shear of the boat, and it was carried about half a mile past the gear. They then returned for the other boat, and in this way brought everything to the bight close to the spot where the bathing house at Warrnambool has since been erected. There they launched the boats, and got out to sea, pulling against a strong westerly breeze.

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The men were very weak, having had nothing to eat for four days but some sow thistles and a musk duck, and the pull to Port Fairy was hard and long. They landed about four o'clock in the afternoon, and Captain Mills told them not to eat anything, saying he would give them something better. At that time there was a liquor called "black strap," brought out in the convict ships for the use of the prisoners, and it was sold with the ships' surplus stores in Sydney and Hobarton. Mills had some of it at Port Fairy. He now put a kettle full of it on the fire, and when it was warmed gave each man a half a pint to begin with. He then told them to go and get supper, and afterwards he gave each of them another half pint.

Rum was in those days a very profitable article of commerce, and the trade in it was monopolised by the Government officers, civil and military. Like flour in the back settlements of the United States, it was reckoned "ekal to cash," and was made to do the office of the pagoda tree in India, which rained dollars at every shake.

The boat that was lost by Smith at the Hopkins was found in good condition, half filled with sand. Joe Wilson went for it afterwards, and brought it back to Port Fairy. He was a native of Sydney, and nephew of Raibey of Launceston, and was murdered not long afterwards at the White Hills. He was sent by Raibey on horseback to Hobarton to buy the revenue cutter 'Charlotte', which had been advertised for sale. He was shot by a man who was waiting for him behind a tree. He fell from his horse, and although he begged hard for his life, the man beat out his brains with the gun. The murderer took all the money Wilson had, which was only one five-pound note, the number of which Raibey knew. A woman tried to pass it in Launceston, and her statements led to the discovery and conviction of the murderer, who was hanged in chains at the White Hills, and the gibbet remained there for many years.

WHALING.

"I wish I were in Portland Bay,
Oh, yes, Oh!
Harpooning whales on a thirtieth lay,
A hundred years ago."

In the year 1837, J. B. Mills had charge of the Portland Fishery, and Davy went with him in the 'Thistle' schooner as mate and navigator, and they were over a month on the passage. Charles Mills was second in command at the station at Portland, and Peter Coakley, an Irishman, was third; the remainder of the crew required for whaling was on board the 'Thistle'. Among them was one named McCann, a Sydney native, a stonemason by trade, and father of the McCann who was afterwards member of Parliament for Geelong. During a westerly gale the schooner ran to Western Port for shelter. In sailing through the Rip, McCann, who was acting as steward, while going aft

to the cabin, had to cross over a colonial sofa which was lashed on deck. Instead of stepping over it gently, he made a jump, and the vessel lurching

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at the same time, he went clean overboard. Davy, who was standing by the man at the helm, told him to put the helm down and let the vessel come to. He then ran forward and got a steer-oar from underneath the boots, and threw it overboard. McCann, being an expert swimmer, swam to the oar, a boat was launched, four men got into it, picked him up, and brought him aboard again none the worse. There was too much sea on to hoist in the boat, as there were no davits, and while she was being towed in she ran ahead of the vessel, which went over her and filled her with water. On arriving in Western Port the boat was found to have been not much damaged. There was on board the 'Thistle' an apprentice whom Davy had stolen in Sydney after he had served four years of his time to a boat-builder named Green. This apprentice repaired the boat, which afterwards proved to be the fastest out of forty-one boats that went out whaling in Portland Bay every morning.

There were in 1837 eight parties of whalers in Portland Bay, and so many whales were killed that the business from that year declined and became unprofitable. Mills' party in the 'Thistle' schooner, of which Davy was mate and navigator, or nurse to Mills, who was not a trained seaman, had their station at Single Corner; Kelly's party was stationed at the neck of land where the breakwater has been constructed. Then there were Dutton's party, with the barque 'African'; Nicholson's, with the barque 'Cheviot', from Hobarton; Chamberlain's, with the barque 'William the Fourth', of Hobarton; the 'Hope' barque, and a brig, both from Sydney. The Hentys also had a whaling station at Double Corner, and by offering to supply their men with fresh meat three times a week, obtained the pick of the whalers. Their head men were Johnny Brennan, John Moles, and Jim Long, natives of Sydney or Tasmania, and all three good whalers.

When the 'Thistle' arrived at Portland Bay every other party had got nearly one hundred tuns of oil each, and Mills' party had none. He started out next morning, choosing the boat which had picked up McCann at Western Port, and killed one whale, which turned out six tuns of oil. He did not get any more for three weeks, being very unlucky. After getting the schooner ready for cutting in, Davy went to steer the boat for Charles Mills, and always got in a mess among the whales, being either capsized or stove in among so many boats. At the end of three weeks Captain Mills got a whale off the second river, halfway round towards Port Fairy. She was taken in tow with the three boats, and after two days' towing, she was anchored within half-a-mile of the schooner in Portland Bay, and the men went ashore. During the night a gale of wind came on from the south-west, and the whale, being a bit stale and high out of the water, drove ashore at the Bluff, a little way past Henty's house.

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In the morning Mills said he would go and see what he could get from her on the beach, and ordered his brother, Charles Mills, and Coakley to go out looking for whales. All the boats used to go out before daylight, and dodge one another round the Bay for miles. It was cold work sitting in the boats. The men stayed out until ten or eleven o'clock, and went ashore that day on the Convincing Ground, which was so-called because the whalers used to go down there to fight, and convince one another who was the best man.

In the afternoon, about two o'clock, it was Davy's turn to go up a tree to look for whales. In looking round the Bay towards the Bluff, he saw a boat with a whiff on. He jumped down, and told Charles Mills, who said: "Come on." there was a great rush of all the boats, but Mills' boat kept well forward of the lot. When they arrived off the Bluff they found Captain Mills had fastened to a whale, two other loose whales being near. They pulled up alongside him, and he pointed out a loose whale, to which they fastened. Mansfield, of the Hobarton party, fastened to the third whale. Davy came aft to the steer-oar, and Charles Mills went forward to kill his whale. He had hardly got the lance in his hand when the whale threw herself right athwart the nose of the boat. He then sent the lance right into her and killed her stone dead. Mansfield, in hauling up his whale got on top of Captain Mills' whale, which stove in Mansfield's boat, and sent all his men flying in the air. There was a rush then to pick up the men. Charles Mills, finding his whale dead, struck a whiff in the lance-hole he had made when he killed her, cut the line that was fast to her, and bent it on to another spare iron. Mansfield's whale then milled round and came right on to Charles Mills' boat, and he fastened to her. This gave him a claim of one half of her, so that Mills and his men got two and a half out of the three whales. The men were all picked up. Mills' whales were anchored about half-a-mile from the schooner, and the boats went out next morning and took them in tow.

The whales tow very easily when fresh killed, but if they are allowed to get stiff their fins stand out and hinder the towing. When the two whales were brought alongside the schooner, the boats of Kelly's party were seen fast to a whale off Black Nose Point. Charles Mills pulled over, and when he arrived he found a loose whale, Mansfield and Chase being fast to two other whales. Mills fastened to the loose whale, and then the three whales fouled the three lines, and rolled them all together like a warp, which made it difficult to kill them. After the men had pulled up on them for some time with the oars, two of them began spouting blood and sickened, and Chase's boat got on to them and capsized. Then the whales took to running, and Mansfield cut his line to pick up Chase and his crew. Mansfield's whale being sick, went in a flurry and died. Mills' whale and Chase's worked together until Mills killed his whale; he then whiffed her and fastened to Chase's whale, which gave him a claim for half, and he killed her; so that his party got one and a-half out of the three whales. Chase and his crew were all picked up.

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From that day the luck of Mills and his party turned, and they could not try out fast enough. In four months from the time the 'Thistle' left Launceston she had on board two hundred and forty tuns of oil.

In the year 1836, the Hentys had a few cattle running behind the Bluff when Major Mitchell arrived overland from Sydney, and reported good country to the north. They then brought over more cattle from Launceston, and stocked a station.

The first beast killed by the Hentys for their whalers was a heifer, and the carcase, divided into two parts, was suspended from the flagstaff at their house. It could be seen from afar by the men who were pulling across the bay in their boats, and they knew that Henty's men were going to feed on fresh meat, while all the rest were eating such awful stuff as Yankee pork and salt horse. The very sight of the two sides of the heifer suspended at the flagstaff was an unendurable insult and mockery to the carnivorous whalers, and an incitement to larceny. Davy Fermaner was steering one of the boats, and he exclaimed: "There, they are flashing the fresh meat to us. They would look foolish if they lost it to-night."

There was feasting and revelry that night at Single Corner. Hungry men were sharpening their sheath-knives with steel, and cutting up a side of beef. A large fire was burning, and on the glowing coals, and in every frying-pan rich steaks were fizzing and hissing. It was like a feast of heroes, and lasted long through the night. They sang responsively, like gentle shepherds—shepherds of the ocean fields whose flocks were mighty whales:

"Mother, the butcher's brought the meat,
What shall I do with it?
Fry the flesh, and broil the bones,
And make a pudding of the su-et."

Next morning the Hentys looked for the missing beef up the flagstaff, and along the shore of the ever-sounding ocean, but their search was vain. They suspected that the men of Kelly's party were the thieves, but these all looked as stupid, ignorant, and innocent as the adverse circumstances would permit. There was no evidence against them to be found; the beef was eaten and the bones were burned and buried. Mills' men were the beef lifters, and some of Kelly's men helped them to eat it.

The whales killed at the Portland fishery were of two kinds, the right or black whale, and the sperm whale. The right whale has an immense tongue, and lives by suction, the food being a kind of small shrimp. When in a flurry—that is, when she has received her death-stroke with the lance—she goes round in a circle, working with her head and flukes. The sperm whales feed on squid, which they bite, and when in a flurry they work with the head and flukes, and with the mouth open, and often crush the boats.

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After the crew of the ‘Thistle’ had spent their money, they were taken back to Port Fairy for the purpose of stripping bark, a large quantity of wattle trees having been found in the neighbouring country. Sheep were also taken there in charge of Mr. J. Murphy, who intended to form a station. John Griffiths also sent over his father, Jonathan, who had been a carpenter on board the first man-of-war that had arrived at Port Jackson, three old men who had been prisoners, four bullocks, a plough, and some seed potatoes. A cargo of the previous season’s bark was put into the ‘Thistle’, and on her return to Launceston, was transferred to the ‘Rhoda’ brig, Captain Rolls, bound for London. More sheep and provisions were then taken in the ‘Thistle’, and after they were landed at Port Fairy, another cargo of bark was put on board. For three days there was no wind, and a tremendous sea setting in from the south-east, the schooner could not leave the bay. On the night of December 24th a gale of wind came on from the south-east; one chain parted, and after riding until three o’clock in the morning of Christmas Day, the other chain also parted. The vessel drew eight feet, and was lying in between three and four fathoms of water. As soon as the second chain broke, Davy went up on the fore-yard and cut the gaskets of the foresail. The schooner grounded in the trough of sea, but when she rose the foresail was down, and she paid off before the wind. The shore was about a mile, or a mile and a half distant, and she took the beach right abreast of a sheep yard, where her wreck now lies. The men got ashore in safety, but all the cargo was lost.

A tent was pitched on shore near the wreck, but as there was no vessel in the bay by which they could return to Launceston, the four men, Captain Mills, D. Fermaner, Charles Ferris, and Richard Jennings, on December 31st, 1837, set sail in a whaleboat for Port Philip. Davy had stolen Jennings from the ‘Rhoda’ brig at Launceston, when seamen were scarce. He was afterwards a pilot at Port Philip, and was buried at Williamstown.

The whaleboat reached Port Philip on January 3rd, 1838, having got through the Rip on the night of the 2nd. Ferris was the only man of the crew who had been in before, he having gone in with Batman, in the ‘Rebecca’ cutter, Captain Baldwin. Baldwin was afterwards before the mast in the ‘Elizabeth’ schooner; he was a clever man, but fond of drink.

The whaleboat anchored off Portsea, but the men did not land for fear of the blacks.

At daylight Davy landed to look for water, but could not find any; and there were only three pints in the water-bag. The wind being from the north, the boat was pulled over to Mud Island, and the men went ashore to make tea with the three pints of water. Davy walked about the island, and found a rookery of small mackerel-gulls and a great quantity of their eggs in the sand. He broke a number of them, and found that the light-coloured eggs were good, and that the dark ones had birds in them. He took off his shirt, tied the sleeves together, bagged a lot of the eggs, and carried them back to the

camp. Mills broke the best of them into the great pot, and the eggs and water mixed together and boiled made about a quart for each man.

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After breakfast the wind shifted to the southward, and the ‘Henry’ brig, from Launceston, Captain Whiting, ran in, bound to Point Henry with sheep; but before Mills and his men could get away from Mud Island the brig had passed. They pulled and sailed after her, but did not overtake her until she arrived off the point where Batman first settled, now called Port Arlington; at that time they called the place Indented Heads.

When the whaleboat came near the brig to ask for water, two or three muskets were levelled at the men over the bulwarks, and they were told to keep off, or they would be shot. At that time a boat’s crew of prisoners had escaped from Melbourne in a whale boat, and the ship-wrecked men were suspected as the runaways. But one of the crew of the ‘Henry’, named Jack Macdonald, looked over the side, and seeing Davy in the boat, asked him what they had done with the schooner ‘Thistle’, and they told him they had lost her at Port Fairy.

Captain Whiting asked Macdonald if he knew them, and on being informed that they were the captain and crew of the schooner ‘Thistle’, he invited them on board and supplied them with a good dinner. They went on to Point Henry in the brig, and assisted in landing the sheep.

Batman was at that time in Melbourne. Davy had seen him before in Launceston. After discharging the sheep the brig proceeded to Gellibrand’s Point, and as Captain Whiting wanted to go up to Melbourne, the men pulled him up the Yarra in their whaleboat. Fawkner’s Hotel at that time was above the site of the present customs House, and was built with broad paling. Mills and Whiting stayed there that night, Davy and the other two men being invited to a small public-house kept by a man named Burke, a little way down Little Flinders Street, where they were made very comfortable.

Next day they went back to the brig ‘Henry’, and started for Launceston.

In May, 1838, Davy was made master of the schooner ‘Elizabeth’, and took in her a cargo of sheep, and landed them at Port Fairy. The three old convicts whom Griffiths had sent there along with his father Jonathan, had planted four or five acres of potatoes at a place called Goose Lagoon, about two miles behind the township. The crop was a very large one, from fifteen to twenty tons to the acre, and Davy had received orders to take in fifty tons of the potatoes, and to sell them in South Australia. He did so, and after four days’ passage went ashore at the port, offered the potatoes for sale, and sold twenty tons at 22 pounds 10 shillings per ton. On going ashore again next morning, he was offered 20 pounds per ton for the remainder, and he sold them at that price.

On the same day the ‘Nelson’ brig, from Hobarton, arrived with one hundred tons of potatoes, but she could not sell them, as Davy had fully stocked the market. He was paid for the potatoes in gold by the two men who bought them.

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He went up to the new city of Adelaide. All the buildings were of the earliest style of architecture, and were made of tea-tree and sods, or of reeds dabbed together with mud. The hotels had no signboards, but it was easy to find them by the heaps of bottles outside. Kangaroo flesh was 1s. 6d. a pound, but grog was cheap. Davy was looking for a shipmate named Richard Ralph, who was then the principal architect and builder in the city. He found him erecting homes for the immigrants out of reeds and mud. He was paid 10 pounds or 12 pounds for each building. He was also hunting kangaroo and selling meat. He was married to a lady immigrant, and on the whole appeared to be very comfortable and prosperous. Davy gave the lady a five-shilling piece to go and fetch a bottle of gin, and was surprised when she came back bringing two bottles of gin and 3s. change. In the settlement the necessaries of life were dear, but the luxuries were cheap. If a man could not afford to buy kangaroo beef and potatoes, he could live sumptuously on gin. Davy walked back to the port the same evening, and next day took in ballast, which was mud dug out among the mangroves.

He arrived at Launceston in four days, and then went as coasting pilot of the barque ‘Belinda’, bound to Port Fairy to take in oil for London. The barque took in 100 head of cattle, the first that were landed at Port Fairy. He then went to Port Philip, and was employed in lightering cargo up the Yarra, and in ferrying between Williamstown and the beach now called Port Melbourne. He took out the first boatman’s licence issued, and has the brass badge, No. 1, still. Vessels at that time had to be warped up the Yarra from below Humbug Reach, as no wind could get at the topsails, on account of the high tea-tree on the banks.

OUT WEST IN 1849.

I did not travel as a capitalist, far from it. I went up the Mississippi as a deck passenger, sleeping at night sometimes on planks, at other times on bags of oats piled on the deck about six feet high. The mate of a Mississippi boat is always a bully and every now and then he came along with a deck-hand carrying a lamp, and requested us to come down. He said it was “agen the rules of the boat to sleep on oats”; but we kept on breaking the rules as much as possible.

Above the mouth of the Ohio the river bank on the Missouri side is high, rocky, and picturesque. I longed to be the owner of a farm up there, and of a modest cottage overlooking the Father of Waters. I said, “If there’s peace and plenty to be had in this world, the heart that is humble might hope for it here,” and then the very first village visible was called “Vide Poche.” It is now a suburb of St. Louis.

I took a passage on another boat up the Illinois river. There was a very lordly man on the lower deck who was frequently “trailing his coat.” He had, in fact, no coat at all, only a grey flannel shirt and nankeen trousers, but he was remarkably in want of a fight, and anxious to find a man willing to be licked. He was a desperado of the great river. We

had heard and read of such men, of their reckless daring and deadly fights; but we were peaceful people; we had come out west to make a living, and therefore did not want to be killed. When the desperado came near we looked the other way.

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There was a party of five immigrant Englishmen sitting on their luggage. One of them was very strongly built, a likely match for the bully, and a deck-hand pointing to him said:

“Jack, do you know what that Englishman says about you?”

“No, what does he say?”

“He says he don’t think you are of much account with all your brag. Reckons he could lick you in a couple of minutes.”

Uttering imprecations, Jack approached the Englishman, and dancing about the deck, cleared the ring for the coming combat.

“Come on, you green-horn, and take your gruel. Here’s the best man on the river for you. You’ll find him real grit.”

The stranger sat still, said he was not a fighting man, and did not want to quarrel with anybody.

Jack grew more ferocious than ever, and aimed a blow at the peaceful man to persuade him to come on. He came on suddenly. The two men were soon writhing together on the guard deck, and I was pleased to observe the desperado was undermost. The Englishman was full of fear, and was fighting for his life. He was doing it with great earnestness. He was grasping the throat of his enemy tightly with both hands, and pressing his thumbs on the wind-pipe. We could see he was going to win in his own simple way, without any recourse to science, and he would have done so very soon had he not been interrupted. But as Jack was growing black in the face, the other Englishmen began to pull at their mate, and tried to unlock his grip on Jack’s throat. It was not easy to do so. He held on to his man to the very last, crying out: “Leave me alone till I do for him. Man alive, don’t you know the villain wants to murder me?”

The desperado lay for a while gulping and gasping on his bed of glory, unable to rise. I observed patches of bloody skin hanging loose on both sides of his neck when he staggered along the deck towards the starboard sponson.

There was peace for a quarter of an hour. Then Jack’s voice was heard again. He had lost prestige, and was coming to recover it with a bowie knife. He said:

“Where’s that Britisher? I am going to cut his liver out.”

The Englishman heard the threat, and said to him mates:

“I told you so! He means to murder me. Why didn’t you leave me alone when I had the fine holt of him?”

He then hurried away and ran upstairs to the saloon.

Jack followed to the foot of the ladder, and one wild-eyed young lady said:

“Look at the Englishman [he was sitting on a chair a few feet distance]. Ain’t he pale? Oh! the coward!”

She wanted to witness a real lively fight, and was disappointed. The smell of blood seems grateful to the nostrils of both ladies and gentlemen in the States. A butcher from St. Louis explained it thus:

“It’s in the liver. Nine out of ten of the beasts I kill have liver complaint. I am morally sartin I’d find the human livers just the same if I examined them in any considerable quantity.”

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The captain came to the head of the stairs and descended to the deck. He was tall and lanky and mild of speech. He said:

“Now, Jack, what are you going to do with that knife?”

“I am waiting to cut the liver out of that Englishman. Send him down, Captain, till I finish the job.”

“Yes, I see. He has been peeling your neck pretty bad, ain’t he? Powerful claws, I reckon. Jack, you’ll be getting into trouble some day with your weepons.” He took a small knife out of his pocket. “Look here, Jack. I’ve been going up and down the river more’n twenty years, and never carried a weepon bigg’n that, and never had a muss with nobody. A man who draws his bowie sometimes gets shot. Let’s look at your knife.”

He examined it closely, deciphered the brand, drew his thumb over the edge, and observed:

“Why, blame me, if it ain’t one of them British bowies—a Free-trade Brummagen. I reckon you can’t carve anyone with a thing like this.” He made a dig at the hand-rail with the point, and it actually curled up like the ring in a hog’s snout. “You see, Jack, a knife like that is mean, unbecoming a gentleman, and a disgrace to a respectable boat.” He pitched the British article into the river and went up into the saloon.

As Jack had not yet recovered his prestige, he went away, and returned with a dinner knife in one hand and a shingling hammer in the other. He waited for his adversary until the sun was low and the deck passengers were preparing their evening meal. Two of the Englishmen came along towards the stairs and ascended to the saloon. Presently they began to descend with their mate in the middle. Jack looked at them, and for some reason or other he did not want any more prestige. He sauntered away along the guard deck, and remained in retirement during the rest of the voyage. He was not, after all, a very desperate desperado.

During the next night our boat was racing with a rival craft, and one of her engines was damaged. She had then to hop on one leg, as it were, as far as Peoria. The Illinois river had here spread out into a broad lake; the bank was low, there were no buildings of any kind near the water; some of the passengers landed, and nobody came to offer them welcome.

I stood near an English immigrant who had just brought his luggage ashore, and was sitting on it with his wife and three children. They looked around at the low land and wide water, and became full of misery. The wife said:

“What are we boun’ to do now, Samiul? Wheer are me and the childer to go in this miserable lookin’ place?”

Samiul: “I’m sure, Betsy, I don’t know. I’ve nobbut hafe a dollar left of o’ my money. They said Peoria was a good place for us to stop at, but I don’t see any signs o’ farmin’ about here, and if I go away to look for a job, where am I to put thee and the childer, and the luggage and the bedding?”

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“Oh!” said Betsy, beginning to cry; “I’m sorry we ever left owd England. But thou would come, Samiul, thou knows, and this is the end on it. Here we are in this wild country without house or home, and wi’ nothin’ to eat. I allus thowt tha wor a fool, Samiul, and now I’m sure and sartin on it.”

Samiul could not deny it. His spirit was completely broken; he hung down his head, and tears began to trickle down his eyes. The three children—two sturdy little boys and a fair-haired little girl— seeing their dad and ma shedding tears, thought the whole world must be coming to an end, and they began howling out aloud without any reserve. It was the best thing they could have done, as it called public attention to their misery, and drew a crowd around them. A tall stranger came near looked at the group, and said:

“My good man, what in thunder are you crying for?”

“I was told Peoria was a good place for farmin’,” Samuel said, “and now I don’t know where to go, and I have got no money.”

“Well, you are a soft ’un,” replied the stranger. “Just dry up and wait here till I come back.”

He walked away with long strides. Peoria was then a dreary-looking city, of which we could see nothing but the end of a broad road, a few frame buildings, two or three waggons, and some horses hitched to the posts of the piazzas.

The stranger soon returned with a farmer in a waggon drawn by two fine upstanding horses, fit for a royal carriage. The farmer at once hired the immigrant at ten dollars a month with board for himself and family. He put the luggage into his waggon, patted the boys on the head and told them to be men; kissed the little girl as he lifted her into the waggon, and said:

“Now, Sissy, you are a nice little lady, and you are to come along with me, and we’ll be good friends.”

Never was sorrow so quickly turned into joy. The man, his wife, and children, actually began smiling before the tears on their cheeks were dry.

Men on every western prairie were preparing their waggons for the great rush to California; new hands were wanted on the lands, and the immigrants who were then arriving in thousands, took the place of the other thousands who went westward across the plains. There was employment for everybody, and during my three years’ residence on the prairies I only saw one beggar. He was an Italian patriot, who said he had fought for Italy; he was now begging for it in English, badly-broken, so I said:

“You are a strong, healthy man; why don’t you go to work? You could earn eight or ten dollars a month, with board, anywhere in these parts.”

But the Italian patriot was a high-class beggar; he was collecting funds, and had no idea of wasting his time in hard work. He gave me to understand that I had insulted him.

Besides this patriot, there were a few horse-thieves and hog duffers on the prairies, but these, when identified, were either stretched under a tree or sent to Texas.

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In those days the prairie farmers were all gentlemen, high-minded, truthful, honourable, and hospitable. There were no poor houses, no asylums. All orphans were adopted and treated as members of some family in the neighbourhood.

I am informed that things are quite different now. The march of empire has been rapid; many men have grown rich, to use a novel expression, beyond the dreams of avarice, and ten times as many have grown poor and discontented.

The great question for statesmen now is, “What is to be done for the relief of the masses?” and the answer to it is as difficult to find as ever.

But I have to proceed up the Illinois river.

The steamboat stopped at Lasalle, the head of navigation, and we had then to travel on the Illinois and Michigan canal. We went on board a narrow passenger boat towed by two horses, and followed by two freight barges. We did not go at a breakneck pace, and had plenty of time for conversation, and to look at the scenery, which consisted of prairies, sloughs, woods, and rivers. The picture lacked background, as there is nothing in Illinois deserving the name of hill. But we passed an ancient monument, a tall pillar, rising out of the bed of the Illinois river. It is called “Starved Rock.” Once a number of Indian warriors, pursued by white men, climbed up the almost perpendicular sides of the pillar. They had no food, and though the stream was flowing beneath them, they could not obtain a drink of water without danger of death from rifle bullets. The white men instituted a blockade of the pillar, and the red men all perished of starvation on the top of it.

The conversation was conducted by the captain of the canal boat, as he walked on the deck to and fro. He was full of information. He said he was a native of Kentucky; had come down the Ohio river from Louisville; was taking freight to Chicago; reckoned he was bound to rake in the dollars on the canal; was no dog-gonned Abolitionist; niggers were made to work for white folks; they had no souls any more than a horse; he’d like to see the man who would argue the point.

Mrs. Beecher Stowe was then writing “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” at too great a distance to hear the challenge, but a greenhorn ventured to argue the point.

“What about the mulatto? Half black, half white. His father being a white man had a whole soul; his mother being black had no soul. Has the mulatto a whole soul, half a soul, or no soul at all?”

The captain paused in his walk, with both hands in his pockets, gazed at the argumentative greenhorn, turned his quid, spat across the canal, went away whistling “Old Dan Tucker,” and left the question of the mulatto’s soul unsolved.

When I arrived at Joliet there was a land boom at Chicago. The canal company had cut up their alternate sections, and were offering them at the usual alarming sacrifice. A land boom is a dream of celestial bliss. While it lasts, the wisest men and the greatest fools walk with ecstatic steps through the golden streets of a New Jerusalem. I have been there three times. It is dreadful to wake up and to find that all the gold in the street is nothing but moonshine.

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I proceeded to the Lake City to lay the foundation of my fortune by buying town lots. I laid the foundation on a five-acre block in West Joliet, but had to borrow seven dollars from my nearest friend to pay the first deposit. Chicago was then a small but busy wooden town, with slushy streets, plank sidewalks, verandahs full of rats, and bedrooms humming with mosquitoes. I left it penniless but proud, an owner of real estate.

While returning to Joliet on the canal boat my nearest friend, from whom I had borrowed the seven dollars, kindly gave me his views on the subject of “greenhorns.” (The Australian equivalent of “greenhorn” is “new chum.” I had the advantage of serving my time in both capacities). “No greenhorn,” he observed, “ever begins to get along in the States until he has parted with his bottom dollar. That puts a keen edge on his mind, and he grows smart in business. A smart man don’t strain his back with hard work for any considerable time. He takes out a patent for something—a mowing machine, or one for sowing corn and pumpkins, a new churn or wash-tub, pills for the shakes, or, best of all, a new religion—anything, in fact, that will catch on and fetch the public.”

I had parted with my bottom dollar, was also in debt, and therefore in the best position for getting along; but I could not all at once think of anything to patent, and had to earn my daily bread some way or other. I began to do it by hammering sheets of iron into the proper curves for an undershot water-wheel. After I had worked two days my boss suggested that I should seek other employment—in a school, for instance; a new teacher was wanted in the common school of West Joliet.

I said I should prefer something higher; a teacher was of no more earthly account than a tailor.

The boss said: “That might be so in benighted Britain, but in the Great United States our prominent citizens begin life as teachers in the common schools, and gradually rise to the highest positions in the Republic.”

I concluded to rise, but a certificate of competency was required, and I presented myself for examination to the proper official, the editor and proprietor of ‘The True Democrat’ whose office was across the bridge, nearly opposite Matheson’s woollen factory. I found the editor and his compositor labouring over the next edition of the paper.

The editor began the examination with the alphabet. I said in England we used twenty-six letters, and I named all of them correctly except the last. I called it “zed,” but the editor said it was “zee,” and I did not argue the point.

He then asked me to pick out the vowels, the consonants, the flats, the sharps, the aspirates, the labials, the palatals, the dentals, and the mutes. I was struck dumb; I could feel the very foundation of all learning sinking beneath me, and had to confess that I did not know my letters.

Then he went on to spelling and writing. My writing was barely passable, and my spelling was quite out of date. I used superfluous letters which had been very properly abolished by Webster's dictionary.

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At last the editor remarked, with becoming modesty, that he was himself of no account at figures, but Mr. Sims would put me through the arithmetic. Mr. Sims was the compositor, and an Englishman; he put me through tenderly.

When the examination was finished, I felt like a convicted impostor, and was prepared to resume work on the undershot water-wheel, but the two professors took pity on me, and certified in writing that I was qualified to keep school.

Then the editor remarked that the retiring teacher, Mr. Randal, had advertised in the 'True Democrat' his ability to teach the Latin language; but, unfortunately, Father Ingoldsby had offered himself as a first pupil; Mr. Randal never got another, and all his Latin oozed out. On this timely hint I advertised my ability to teach the citizens of Joliet not only Latin, but Greek, French, Spanish, and Portuguese. My advertisement will be found among the files of the 'True Democrat' of the year 1849 by anyone taking the trouble to look for it. I had carelessly omitted to mention the English language, but we sometimes get what we don't ask for, and no less than sixteen Germans came to night school to study our tongue. They were all masons and quarrymen engaged in exporting steps and window sills to the rising city of Chicago.

When Goldsmith tried to earn his bread by teaching English in Holland, he overlooked the fact that it was first necessary for him to learn Low Dutch. I overlooked the same fact, but it gave me no trouble whatever. There was no united Germany then, and my pupils disagreed continually about the pronunciation of their own language, which seemed, like that of Babel, intelligible to nobody. I composed their quarrels by confining their minds to English solely, and harmony was restored each night by song.

The school-house was a one-storey frame building on the second plateau in West Joliet, and was attended by about one hundred scholars. In the rear was a shallow lagoon, fenced on one side by a wall of loose rocks, infested with snakes. The track to the cemetery was near, and it soon began to be in very frequent use. One day during recess the boys had a snake hunt, and they tied their game in one bunch by the heads with string, and suspended them by the wayside. I counted them, and there were twenty-seven snakes in the bunch.

The year '49 was the 'annus mirabilis' of the great rush for gold across the plains, and it was also an 'annus miserabilis' on account of the cholera. In three weeks fourteen hundred waggons bound for California crossed one of the bridges over the canal. I was desirous of joining the rush, but was, as usual, short of cash, and I had to stay at Joliet to earn my salary. I met the editor of the 'True Democrat' nearly every day carrying home a bucket of water from the Aux Plaines river. He did his own chores. He sent two young men who wished to become teachers to my school to graduate. One was named O'Reilly, lately

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from Ireland; I gave him his degree in a few weeks, and he kept school somewhere out on the prairie. The other did not graduate before the cholera came. He was a native of Vermont, and he played the clarionet in our church choir. The instrumental music came from the clarionet, from a violin, and a flute. The choir came from France and Germany, Old England and New England, Ireland, Alsace, and Belgium. It was divided into two hostile camps, and the party which first took possession of the gallery took precedence in the music for that day only. There was a want of harmony. One morning when the priest was chanting the first words of the Gloria, the head of a little French bugler appeared at the top of the gallery stairs, and at once started a plaint chant, Gloria, we had never rehearsed or heard before. He sang his solo to the end. He was thirsting for glory, and he took a full draught.

I don't think there was ever a choir like ours but one, and that was conducted by a butcher from Dolphinholm in the Anglican Church at Garstang. One Sunday he started a hymn with a new tune. Three times his men broke down, and three times they were heard by the whole congregation whispering ferociously at one another. At length the parson tried to proceed with the service, and said: "Let us pray." But the bold butcher retorted: "Pray be hanged. Let us try again, lads; I know we can do it." He then started the hymn for the fourth time, and they did it. After the service the parson demanded satisfaction of the butcher, and got it in a neighbouring pasture.

The cholera came, and we soon grew very serious. The young man from Vermont walked with me after school hours, and we tried to be cheerful, but it was of no use. Our talk always reverted to the plague, and the best way to cure it or to avoid it. The doctors disagreed. Every theory was soon contradicted by facts; all kinds of people were attacked and died; the young and the old, the weak and the strong, the drunken and the sober. Every man adopted a special diet or a favourite liquor—brandy, whiskey, bitters, cherry-bounce, sarsaparilla. My own particular preventive was hot tea, sweetened with molasses and seasoned with cayenne pepper. I survived, but that does not prove anything in particular.

The two papers, the 'Joliet Signal' and the 'True Democrat', scarcely ever mentioned the cholera. It would have been bad policy, tending to scare away the citizens and to injure trade.

Many men suddenly found that they had urgent business to look after elsewhere, and sneaked away, leaving their wives and families behind them.

On Sunday Father Ingoldsby advised his people to prepare their souls for the visit of the Angel of Death, who was every night knocking at their doors. There were many, he said, whose faces he had never seen at the rails since he came to Joliet; and what answer would they give to the summons which called them to appear without delay

before the judgment seat of God? What doom could they expect but that of damnation and eternal death?

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The sermon needed no translation for the men of many nations who were present. Irishmen and Englishmen, Highlanders and Belgians, French and Germans, Mexicans and Canadians, could interpret the meaning of the flashing eye which roamed to every corner of the church, singling out each miserable sinner; the fierce frown, the threatening gesture, the finger first pointing to the heaven above, and then down to the depths of hell.

Some stayed to pray and to confess their sins; others hardened their hearts and went home unrepentant. Michael Mangan went to Belz's grocery near the canal. He said he felt pains in his interior, and drank a jigger of whisky. Then he bought half-a-gallon of the same remedy to take home with him. It was a cheap prescription, costing only twelve and a half cents, but it proved very effective. Old Belz put the stuff into an earthenware bottle, which he corked with a corncob. Michael started for home by the zigzag path which led up the steep limestone bluff, but his steps were slow and unsteady; he sat down on a rock, and took another dose out of his bottle. He never went any further of his own motion, and we buried him next day. We were of different opinions about the cause of his death; some thought it was the cholera, others the pangs of conscience, some the whisky, and others a mixture of all three; at any rate, he died without speaking to the priest.

Next day another neighbour died, Mr. Harrigan. He had lost one arm, but with the other he wrote a good hand, and registered deeds in the County Court. I called to see him. He was in bed lying on his back, his one arm outside the coverlet, his heaving chest was bare, and his face was ghastly pale. There were six men in the room, one of whom said:

"Do you know me, Mr. Harrigan?"

"Sure, divil a dog in Lockport but knows you, Barney," said the dying man.

Barney lived in Lockport, and in an audible whisper said to us: "Ain't he getting on finely? He'll be all right again to-morrow, please God."

"And didn't the doctor say I'd be dead before twelve this day?" asked Harrigan.

I looked at the clock on the mantelshelf. It was past ten. He died an hour later.

One day the young man from Vermont rose from his seat and looked at me across the schoolroom. I thought he was going to say something. He took down his hat, went to the door, turned and looked at me again, but he did not speak or make any sign. Next morning his place was vacant, and I asked one of the boys if he had seen the young man. The boy said:

“He ain’t a-coming to school no more, I calkilate. He was buried this morning before school hours.”

That year, ’49 was a dismal year in Joliet.

Mr. Rogers, one of the school managers, came and sat on a bench near the door. He was a New Englander, a carpenter, round-shouldered, tall and bony. He said:

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“I called in to tell you that I can’t vote for appinting you to this school next term. Fact is the ladies are dead against you; don’t see you at meeting on the Sabbath; say you go to the Catholic Church with the Irish and Dutch. I a’n’t a word to say agen you myself. This is a free country; every man can go, for aught I care, whichever way he darn chooses—to heaven, or hell, or any other place. But I want to be peaceable, and I can’t get no peace about voting for you next term, so I thought I’d let you know, that you mightn’t be disappointed.”

In that way Mr. Rogers washed his hands of me. I said I was sorry I did not please the ladies, but I liked to hear a man who spoke his mind freely.

Soon afterwards the Germans brought me word that the Yankees were calling a meeting about me. I was aware by this time that when a special gathering of citizens takes place to discuss the demerits of any individual, it is advisable for that individual to be absent if possible; but curiosity was strong within me; hitherto I had never been honoured with any public notice whatever, and I attended the meeting uninvited.

The Yankees are excellent orators; they are born without bashfulness; they are taught to speak pieces in school from their childhood; they pronounce each word distinctly; they use correctly the rising inflection and the falling inflection. Moreover, they are always in deadly earnest; there is another miserable world awaiting their arrival. Their humorists are the most unhappy of men. You may smile when you read their jokes, but when you see the jokers you are more inclined to weep. With pain and sorrow they grind, like Samson, at the jokers’ mill all the days of their lives.

The meeting was held in the new two-storey school-house.

Deacon Beaumont took the chair—my chair—and Mr Curtis was appointed secretary. I began to hate Deacon Beaumont, as also Mr. Curtis, who was the only other teacher present; it was evident they were going to put him in my place.

Each speaker on rising put his left hand in the side pocket of his pants. I was not mentioned by name, but nevertheless I was given clearly to understand that I had been reared in a land whose people are under the dominion of a tyrannical monarch and a bloated aristocracy; that therefore I had never breathed the pure air of freedom, and was unfitted to teach the children of the Great Republic.

Mr. Tucker, an influential citizen, moved finally that the school managers be instructed to engage a Mr. Sellars, of Dresden, as teacher at the West Joliet School. He said Mr. Sellars was a young man from New England who had been teaching for a term at Dresden, and had given great satisfaction. He had the best testimony to the character and ability of the young man from his own daughter, Miss Priscilla Tucker, who had been school marm in the same school, and was now home on a visit. She could give, from her own personal knowledge, any information the managers might require.

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Mr. Tucker's motion was seconded. There was no amendment proposed, and all in favour of the motion were requested by Deacon Beaumont to stand up. The Yankees all rose to their feet, the others sat still, all but old Gorges, a Prussian, who, with his two sons, had come to vote for me. But the old man did not understand English. His son John pulled him down, but Deacon Beaumont had counted his vote, and the motion was carried by a majority of one. So I was, in fact, put out of the school by my best friend, old Gorges.

I went away in a dudgeon and marked off a cellar on my real estate, 30 feet by 18 feet, on the top of the bluff, near the edge of the western prairie. The ground was a mixture of stiff clay and limestone rock, and I dug at it all through the month of September. Curious people came along and made various remarks; some said nothing, but went away whistling. One day Mr. Jackson and Paul Duffendorff were passing by, and I wanted them to pass, but they stopped like the rest. Mr. Jackson was reckoned one of the smartest men in Will county. He had a large farm, well stocked, but he was never known to do any work except with his brains. He was one of those men who increased the income of the State of Illinois by ability. Duffendorf was a huge Dutchman, nearly seven feet in height. He was a great friend of mine, great every way, but very stupid; he had no sense of refinement. He said:

"Ve gates, schoolmeister? Py golly! Here, Mr. Shackson, is our schoolmeister a vurkin mit spade and bick. How vas you like dat kind of vurk, Mr. Shackson?"

"Never could be such a darned fool; sooner steal," answered Jackson.

Duffendorf laughed until he nearly fell into the cellar. Now this talk was very offensive. I knew Mr. Jackson was defendant in a case then pending. He had been charged with conspiring to defraud; with having stolen three horses; with illegally detaining seventy-five dollars; and on other counts which I cannot remember just now. The thing was originally very simple, even Duffendorff could understand it.

Mr. Jackson was in want of some ready money, so he directed his hired man to steal three of his horses in the dead of night, take them to Chicago, sell them to the highest bidder, find out where the highest bidder lived, and then return with the cash to Joliet. The hired man did his part of the business faithfully, returned and reported to his employer. Then Mr. Jackson set out in search of his stolen horses, found them, and brought them home. The man expected to receive half the profits of the enterprise. The boss demurred, and only offered one-third, and said if that was not satisfactory he would bring a charge of horse-stealing. The case went into court, and under the treatment of learned counsel grew very complicated. It was remarkable as being the only one on record in Will county in which a man had made money by stealing his own horses. It is, I fancy, still 'sub judice'.

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Both the old school and the new school remained closed even after the cholera ceased to thin out the citizens, but I felt no further interest in the education of youth. When winter came I tramped three miles into the forest, and began to fell trees and split rails in order to fence in my suburban estate. For some time I carried a rifle, and besides various small game I shot two deer, but neither of them would wait for me to come up with them even after I had shot them; they took my two bullets away with them, and left me only a few drops of blood on the snow; then I left the rifle at home. For about four months the ground was covered with snow, and the cold was intense, but I continued splitting until the snakes came out to bask in the sun and warm themselves. I saw near a dead log eight coiled together, and I killed them all. The juice of the sugar maples began to run. I cut notches in the bark in the shape of a broad arrow, bored a hole at the point, inserted a short spout of bark, and on sunny mornings the juice flowed in a regular stream, clear and sparkling; on cloudy days it only dropped.

One evening as I was plodding my weary way homeward, I looked up and saw in the distance a man inspecting my cellar. I said, “Here’s another disgusting fool who ain’t seen it before.” It certainly was a peculiar cellar, but not worth looking at so much. I hated the sight of it. It had no building over it, never was roofed in, and was sometimes full of snow.

The other fool proved to be Mr. Curtis, the teacher who had written the resolution of the meeting which voted me out of the school. He held out his hand, and I took it, but reluctantly, and under secret protest. I thought to myself, “This mine enemy has an axe to grind, or he would not be here. I’ll be on my guard.”

“I have been waiting for you some time,” said Mr. Curtis. “I was told you were splitting rails in the forest, and would be home about sundown. I wanted to see you about opening school again. Mr. Rogers won’t have anything to say to it, but the other two managers, Mr. Strong and Mr. Demmond, want to engage you and me, one to teach in the upper storey of the school, the other down below, and I came up to ask you to see them about it.”

“How does it happen that Mr. Sellars has not come over from Dresden?” I said.

“Joliet is about the last place on this earth that Mr. Sellars will come to. Didn’t you hear about him and Priscilla?” asked Mr. Curtis.

“No, I heard nothing since that meeting; only saw the school doors were closed every time I passed that way.”

“Well, I am surprised. I thought everybody knew by this time, though we did not like to say much about it.”

I began to feel interested. Mr. Curtis had something pleasant to tell me about the misfortunes of my enemies, so I listened attentively.

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It was a tale of western love, and its course was no smoother in Illinois than in any less enlightened country of old Europe. Miss Priscilla reckoned she could hoe her own row. She and Mr. Sellars conducted the Common School at Dresden with great success and harmony. All went merry as a marriage bell, and the marriage was to come off by-and-by—so hoped Miss Priscilla. During the recess she took the teacher's arm, and they walked to and fro lovingly. All Dresden said it was to be a match, but at the end of the term Miss Priscilla returned to Joliet—the match was not yet made.

It was at this time that the dissatisfaction with the new British teacher became extreme; Miss Priscilla fanned the flame of discontent. She did not "let concealment like a worm i' th' bud feed on her damask cheek," but boldly proposed that Mr. Sellars—a true-born native of New England, a good young man, always seen at meetings on the Sabbath—-should be requested to take charge of the West Joliet school. So the meeting was held: I was voted out, Mr. Sellars was voted in, and the daughters of the Puritans triumphed.

Miss Priscilla wrote to Dresden, announcing to her beloved the success of her diplomacy, requesting him to come to Joliet without delay, and assume direction of the new school. This letter fell into the hands of another lady who had just arrived at Dresden from New England in search of her husband, who happened to be Mr. Sellars. The letter which that other lady wrote to Miss Priscilla I did not see, but it was said to be a masterpiece of composition, and it emptied two schools. Mr. Tucker went over to Dresden and looked around for Mr. Sellars, but that gentleman had gone out west, and was never heard of again. The west was a very wide unfenced space, without railways.

"The fact is," said Mr. Curtis, "we were all kinder shamed the way things turned out, and we just let 'em rip. But people are now stirring about the school being closed so long, so Mr. Strong and Mr. Demmond have concluded to engage you and me to conduct the school."

We were engaged that night, and I went rail-splitting no more. But I fenced my estate; and while running the line on the western boundary I found the grave of Highland Mary. It was in the middle of a grove of oak and hickory saplings, and was nearly hidden by hazel bushes. The tombstone was a slab about two feet high, roughly hewn. Her epitaph was, "Mary Campbell, aged 7. 1827." That was all. Poor little Mary.

The Common Schools of Illinois were maintained principally from the revenue derived from grants of land. When the country was first surveyed, one section of 640 acres in each township of six miles square was reserved for school purposes. There was a State law on education, but the management was entirely local, and was in the hands of a treasurer and three directors, elected biennally by the citizens of each school district. The revenue derived from the

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school section was sometimes not sufficient to defray the salary of the teacher, and then the deficiency was supplied by the parents of the children who had attended at the school; those citizens whose children did not attend were not taxed by the State for the Common Schools; they did not pay for that which they did not receive. In some instances only one school was maintained by the revenue of two school sections. When the attendance in the school was numerous, a young lady, called the “school-marm,” assisted in the teaching. Sometimes, as in the case of Miss Priscilla, she fell into trouble.

The books were provided by the enterprise of private citizens, and an occasional change of “Readers” was agreeable both to teachers and scholars. The best of old stories grow tiresome when repeated too often. One day a traveller from Cincinnati brought me samples of a new series of “Readers,” offering on my approval, to substitute next day a new volume for every old one produced. I approved, and he presented each scholar with copies of the new series for nothing.

The teaching was secular, but certain virtues were inculcated either directly or indirectly. Truth and patriotism were recommended by the example of George Washington, who never told a lie, and who won with his sword the freedom of his country. There were lessons on history, in which the tyranny of the English Government was denounced; Kings, Lords and Bishops, especially Bishop Laud, were held up to eternal abhorrence; as was also England’s greed of gain, her intolerance, bigotry, taxation; her penal and navigation laws. The glorious War of Independence was related at length. The children of the Puritans, of the Irish and the Germans, did not in those days imbibe much prejudice in favour of England or her institutions, and the English teacher desirous of arriving at the truth, had the advantage of having heard both sides of many historical questions; of listening, as it were, to the scream of the American eagle, as well as to the roar of the British lion.

Mr. Curtis was a good teacher, systematic, patient, persevering, and ingenious. I ceased to hate him; Miss Priscilla’s downfall cemented our friendship. We kept order in the school by moral suasion, but the task was sometimes difficult. My private feelings were in favour of the occasional use of the hickory stick, the American substitute for the rod of Solomon, and the birch of England.

The geography we taught was principally that of the United States and her territories, spacious maps of which were suspended round the school, continually reminding the scholars of their glorious inheritance. It was then full of vacant lots, over which roamed the Indian and the buffalo, species of animals now nearly extinct. We did not pay much attention to the rest of the world.

Elocution was inculcated assiduously, and at regular intervals each boy and girl had to come forth and “speak a piece” in the presence of the scholars, teachers, and visitors.

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Mental arithmetic and the use of fractions were taught daily. The use of the decimal in the American coinage is of great advantage; it is easier and more intelligible to children than the clumsy old system of pounds, shillings, pence, and farthings. It is a system which would no doubt have been long ago adopted by England, if it had not been humiliating to our national pride to take even a good thing from rebellious Yankees, and inferior Latin races. We cling fondly to absurdities because they are our own. In Australia wild rabbits are vermin, in England they are private property; and if one of the three millions of her miserable paupers is found with a rabbit in each of his coat pockets, he is fined 10s. or sent to gaol. Pope Gregory XIII. demonstrated the error of the calendar then in use, and all Catholic nations adopted his correction. But when the adoption of the calendar was proposed in Parliament, John Bull put his big foot down at once; he would receive no truth, not even a mathematical one, from the Pope of Rome, and it was only after the lapse of nearly 200 years, when the memory of Gregory and his calendar had almost faded away from the sensitive mind of Protestantism, that an Act was passed, “equalising the style in Great Britain and Ireland with that used in other countries of Europe.”

A fugitive slave with his wife and daughter came to Joliet. One day he was seized by three slave-hunters, who took him towards the canal. A number of abolitionists assembled to rescue the slave, but the three men drew their revolvers, and no abolitionist had the courage to fire the first shot. The slave was put in a canal boat and went south; his wife remained in Joliet and earned her bread by weaving drugget; the daughter came to my school; she was of pure negro blood, but was taught with the white girls.

The abolitionists were increasing in number, and during the war with the South the slaves were freed. They are now like Israel in Egypt, they increase too rapidly. If father Abraham had sent them back to Africa when they were only four millions, he would have earned the gratitude of his country. Now they number more than eight millions; the Sunny South agrees with their constitution; they work as little and steal as much as possible. In the days of their bondage they were addicted to petty larceny; now they have votes, and when they achieve place and power they are addicted to grand larceny, and they loot the public treasury as unblushingly as the white politicians.

The nigger question has doubled in magnitude during the last thirty years, and there will have to be another abolition campaign of some kind. The blacks are incapable of ruling the whites; no time was given to educate them for their new duties, if teaching them was possible; the Declaration of Independence was in their case a mockery from the beginning. When all the old abolitionists and slave-holders are dead, another generation of men grown wiser by the failure of the policy of their forefathers may solve the black problem.

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Complaint is made that the American education of to-day is in a chaotic condition, due to the want of any definite idea of what education is aiming at. There is evidence that the ancients of New England used to birch their boys, but after independence had been fought for and won, higher aims prevailed. The Puritan then believed that his children were born to a destiny far grander than that of any other children on the face of the earth; the treatment accorded to them was therefore to be different. The fundamental idea of American life was to be "Freedom," and the definition of "Freedom" by a learned American is, "The power which necessarily belongs to the self-conscious being of determining his actions in view of the highest, the universal good, and thereby of gradually realising in himself the eternal divine perfection." The definition seems a little hazy, but the workings of great minds are often unintelligible to common people. "The American citizen must be morally autonomous, regarding all institutions as servants, not as masters. So far man has been for the most part a thrall. The true American must worship the inner God recognised as his own deepest and eternal self, not an outer God regarded as something different from himself."

Lucifer is said to have entertained a similar idea. He would not be a thrall, and the result as described by the republican Milton was truly disastrous:

"Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong
down
to bottomless perdition
Region of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell."

The manner in which the American citizen is to be made "morally autonomous, and placed beyond the control of current opinion," will require much money; his parents must therefore be rich; they must already have inherited wealth, or have obtained it by ability or labour. The course of training to be given to youth includes travelling for six years in foreign countries under private tutors, studying human history, ethnic, social, political, industrial, aesthetic, religious; gems of poetry; the elements of geometry; mechanics; art, plastic, and graphic; reading Confucius, Sakya-muni, Themistocles, Socrates, Julius Caesar, Paul, Mahommed, Charlemagne, Alfred, Gregory VII., St. Bernard, St. Francis, Savonarola, Luther, Queen Elizabeth, Columbus, Washington, Lincoln, Homer, Virgil, Dante, Tennyson, and Lowell.

The boys on the prairies had to earn their bread; they could not spend six years travelling around and studying all the writers above mentioned, making themselves morally autonomous, and worshipping their own deepest and eternal selves. The best men America has produced were reared at home, and did chores out of school hours.

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When I was expelled from school by the Yankees, Mr. McEvoy, the leading Irish politician, called me aside and said: “Whisper, you just hang round until next election, and we’ll turn out the Yankee managers, and put you in the school again.” The Germans were slow in acquiring political knowledge as well as in learning the English language; but language, politics, and law itself are the birthright of the Irish. By force of circumstances, and through the otherwise deplorable failure of Miss Priscilla, I resumed work in the school before the election, but Mr. McEvoy, true to his promise, organised the opposition—it is always the opposition—and ejected the Yankee managers, but in the fall of 1850 I resigned, and went a long way south.

When I returned, Joliet was a city, and Mr. Rendel, one of my German night scholars, was city marshal. I met him walking the streets, and carrying his staff of office with great dignity. I took up my abode in an upper apartment of the gaol, then in charge of Sheriff Cunningham, who had a farm in West Joliet, near a plank road, leading on to the prairie. I had known the Sheriff two years before, but did not see much of him at this time, though I was in daily communication with his son, Silas, the Deputy Sheriff. It was under these favourable circumstancesthat I was enabled to witness a General Gaol Delivery of all the prisoners in Joliet. One, charged with killing his third man, was out on bail. I saw him in Matheson’s boarding-house making love to one of the hired girls, and she seemed quite pleased with his polite attentions. Matheson was elected Governor of the State of Illinois, and became a millionaire by dealing in railways. He was a native of Missouri, and a man of ability; In ’49 I saw him at work in a machine shop.

The prisoners did not regain their freedom all at once, but in the space of three weeks they trickled out one by one. The Deputy Sheriff, Silas, had been one of my pupils; he was now about seventeen years of age, and a model son of the prairies. His features were exceedingly thin, his eyes keen, his speech and movements slow, his mind cool and calculating. He never injured his constitution by any violent exertion; in fact, he seemed to have taken leave of active life and all its worries, and to have settled down to an existence of ease and contemplation. If he had any anxiety about the safe custody of his prisoners he never showed it. He had finished his education, so I did not attempt to control him by moral suasion, or by anything else, but by degrees I succeeded in eliciting from him all the particulars he could impart about the criminals under his care. There was no fence around the gaol, and Silas kept two of them always locked in. He “calkilated they wer kinder unsafe.” They belonged to a society of horse thieves whose members were distributed at regular intervals along the prairies, and who forwarded their stolen animals by night to Chicago. The two gentlemen in gaol were of an untrustworthy character, and would be likely to slip away. About a week after my arrival I met Silas coming out of the gaol, and he said:

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“They’re gone, be gosh.” Silas never wasted words.

“Who is gone?” I inquired.

“Why, them two horse thieves. Just look here.”

We went round to the east side of the gaol, and there was a hole about two feet deep, and just wide enough to let a man through. The ground underneath the wall was rocky, but the two prisoners had been industrious, had picked a hole under the wall and had gone through.

“Where’s the Sheriff?” I asked. “Won’t Mr. Cunningham go after the men?”

“He’s away at Bourbonnais’ Grove, about suthin’ or other, among the Bluenoses; can’t say when he’ll be back; it don’t matter anyhow. He might just as well try to go to hell backwards as catch them two horse thieves now.”

Silas had still two other prisoners under his care, and he let them go outside as usual to enjoy the fresh air. They had both been committed for murder, but their crime was reckoned a respectable one compared to the mean one of horse stealing, so Silas gave them honourable treatment.

One of the prisoners was a widow lady who had killed another lady with an axe, at a hut near the canal on the road to Lockport. She seemed crazy, and when outside the gaol walked here and there in a helpless kind of way, muttering to herself; but sometimes an idea seemed to strike her that she had something to do Lockport way, and she started in that direction, forgetting very likely that she had done it already; but whenever Silas called her back, she returned without giving any trouble. One day, however, when Silas was asleep she went clean out of sight, and I did not see her any more. The Sheriff was still absent among the Bluenoses.

The fourth prisoner was an Englishman named Wilkins who owned a farm on the prairie, in the direction of Bourbonnais’ Grove. A few weeks before, returning home from Joliet with his waggon and team of horses, he halted for a short time at a distillery, situated at the foot of the low bluff which bounded the bottom, through which ran the Aux Plaines River. It was a place at which the farmers often called to discuss politics, the prices of produce, and other matters, and also, if so disposed, to take in a supply of liquor. The corn whisky of Illinois was an article of commerce which found its way to many markets. Although it was sold at a low price at home, it became much more valuable after it had been exported to England or France, and had undergone scientific treatment by men of ability. The corn used in its manufacture was exceedingly cheap, as may be imagined when corn-fed pork was, in the winter of ’49, offered for sale in Joliet at one cent per pound. After the poison of the prairies had been exported to

Europe, a new flavour was imparted to it, and it became Cognac, or the best Irish or Scotch whisky.

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Wilkins halted his team and went into the whisky-mill, where the owner, Robinson, was throwing charcoal into the furnace under his boiler with a long-handled shovel. He was an enterprising Englishman who was wooing the smiles of fortune with better prospects of success than the slow, hard-working farmer. I had seen him first in West Joliet in ’49, when he was travelling around buying corn for his distillery. He was a handsome man, about thirty years of age, five feet ten inches in height, had been well educated, was quite able to hold his own among the men of the West, and accommodated himself to their manners and habits.

There were three other farmers present, and their talk drifted from one thing to another until it at last settled on the question of the relative advantages of life in England and the States. Robinson took the part of England, Wilkins stuck to the States; he said:

“A poor man has no chance at home; he is kept down by landlords, and can never get a farm of his own. In Illinois I am a free man, and have no one to lord it over me. If I had lived and slaved in England for a hundred years I should never have been any better off, and now I have a farm as good as any in Will County, and am just as good a man as e’er another in it.”

Now Wilkins was only a small man, shorter by four inches than Robinson, who towered above him, and at once resented the claim to equality. He said:

“You as good as any other man, are you? Why there ain’t a more miserable little skunk within twenty miles round Joliet.”

Robinson was forgetting the etiquette of the West. No man—except, perhaps, in speaking to a nigger—ever assumed a tone of insolent superiority to any other man; if he did so, it was at the risk of sudden death; even a hired man was habitually treated with civility. The titles of colonel, judge, major, captain, and squire were in constant use both in public and private; there was plenty of humorous “chaff,” but not insult. Colonels, judges, majors, captains, and squires were civil, both to each other and to the rest of the citizens. Robinson, in speaking to his fellow countryman, forgot for a moment that he was not in dear old England, where he could settle a little difference with his fists. But little Wilkins did not forget, and he was not the kind of man to be pounded with impunity. He had in his pocket a hunting knife, with which he could kill a hog—or a man. When Robinson called him a skunk he felt in his pocket for the knife, and put his thumb on the spring at the back of the buckhorn handle, playing with it gently. It was not a British Brummagem article, made for the foreign or colonial market, but a genuine weapon that could be relied on at a pinch.

“Oh, I dare say you were a great man at home, weren’t you?” he said. “A lord maybe, or a landlord. But we don’t have sich great men here, and I am as good a man as you any day, skunk though I be.”

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Robinson had just thrown another shovelful of charcoal into the furnace under his boiler, and he held up his shovel as if ready to strike Williams, but it was never known whether he really intended to strike or not.

The three other men standing near were quite amused with the dispute of the two Englishmen, and were smiling pleasantly at their foolishness. But little Wilkins did not smile, nor did he wait for the shovel to come down on his head; he darted under it with his open knife in the same manner as the Roman soldier went underneath the dense spears of the Pyrrhic phalanx, and set to work. Robinson tried to parry the blows with the handle of the shovel, but he made only a poor fight; the knife was driven to the hilt into his body seven times, then he threw down his shovel, and tried to save himself behind the boiler, but it was too late; the dispute about England and the States was settled.

Wilkins took his team home, then returned to Joliet and gave himself into the custody of the squire, Hoosier Smith. At the inquest he was committed to take his trial for murder, and did not get bail. His wife left the farm, and with her two little boys lived in an old log hut near the gaol. She brought with her two cows, which Wilkins milked each morning as soon as Silas let him out of prison. I could see him every day from the window of my room, and I often passed by the hut when he was doing chores, chopping wood, or fetching water, but I never spoke to him. He did not look happy or sociable, and I could not think of anything pleasant to say by way of making his acquaintance. After much observation and thought I came to the conclusion that Sheriff Cunningham wanted his prisoner to go away; he would not like to hang the man; the citizens would not take Wilkins off his hands; if two fools chose to get up a little difficulty and one was killed, it was their own look-out; and anyway they were only foreigners. The fact was Wilkins was waiting for someone to purchase his farm.

The court-house for Will County was within view of the gaol, at the other side of the street, and one day I went over to look at it. The judge was hearing a civil case, and I sat down to listen to the proceedings. A learned counsel was addressing the jury. He talked at great length in a nasal tone, slowly and deliberately; he had one foot on a form, one hand in a pocket of his pants, and the other hand rested gracefully on a volume of the statutes of the State of Illinois. He had much to say about various horses running on the prairie, and particularly about one animal which he called the “Skemelhorne horse.” I tried to follow his argument, but the “Skemelhorne horse” was so mixed up with the other horses that I could not spot him.

Semicircular seats of unpainted pine for the accommodation of the public rose tier above tier, but most of them were empty. There were present several gentlemen of the legal profession, but they kept silence, and never interrupted the counsel’s address. Nor did the judge utter a word; he sat at his desk sideways, with his boots resting on a chair. He wore neither wig nor gown, and had not even put on his Sunday go-to-

meeting clothes. Neither had the lawyers. If there was a court crier or constable present he was indistinguishable from the rest of the audience.

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Near the judge's desk there was a bucket of water and three tumblers on a small table. It was a hot day. The counsel paused in his speech, went to the table, and took a drink; a juryman left the box and drank. The judge also came down from his seat, dipped a tumbler in the bucket and quenched his thirst; one spectator after another went to the bucket. There was equality and fraternity in the court of law; the speech about the Skemelhorne horse went on with the utmost gravity and decorum, until the nasal drawl of the learned counsel put me to sleep.

On awakening, I went into another hall, in which dealings in real estate were registered. Shelves fixed against the walls held huge volumes lettered on the back. One of these volumes was on a table in the centre of the hall, and in it the registrar was copying a deed. Before him lay a pile of deeds with a lead weight on the top. A farmer came in with a paper, on which the registrar endorsed a number and placed at the bottom of the pile. There was no parchment used; each document was a half-sheet foolscap size, party printed and partly written. Another farmer came in, took up the pile and examined the numbers to see how soon his deed was likely to be copied, and if it was in its proper place according to the number endorsed. The registrar was not fenced off from the public by a wide counter; he was the servant of the citizens, and had to satisfy those who paid him for his labours. His pay was a fixed number of cents per folio, not dollars, nor pounds.

When I went back to gaol I found it deserted. Wilkins had sold his farm and disappeared. His wife remained in the hut. Sheriff Cunningham was still away among the Bluenoses, and Silas was 'functus officio', having accomplished a general gaol delivery. He did not pine away on account of the loss of his prisoners, nor grow any thinner—that was impossible. I remained four days longer, expecting something would happen; but nothing did happen, then I left the gaol.

I wrote out two notices informing the public that I was willing to sell my real estate; one of these I pasted up at the Post Office, the other on the bridge over the Aux Plaines River. Next day a German from Chicago agreed to pay the price asked, and we called on Colonel Smith, the Squire. The Colonel filled in a brief form of transfer, witnessed the payment of the money—which was in twenty-dollar gold pieces, and he charged one dollar as his fee. The German would have to pay about 35 cents for its registration. If the deed was lost or stolen, he would insert in a local journal a notice of his intention to apply for a copy, which would make the original of as little value to anybody as a Provincial and Suburban bank note.

In Illinois, transfers of land were registered in each county town. To buy or sell a farm was as easy as horse-stealing, and safer. Usually, no legal help was necessary for either transaction.

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By this time California had a rival; gold had been found in Australia. I was fond of gold; I jingled the twenty dollar gold pieces in my pocket, and resolved to look for more at the fountainhead, by way of my native land. A railway from Chicago had just reached Joliet, and had been opened three days before. It was an invitation to start, and I accepted it.

Nobody ever loved his native land better than I do when I am away from it. I can call to mind its innumerable beauties, and in fancy saunter once more through the summer woods, among the bracken, the bluebells, and the foxglove. I can wander by the banks of the Brock, where the sullen trout hide in the clear depths of the pools. I can walk along the path—the path to Paradise—still lined with the blue-eyed speedwell and red campion; I know where the copse is carpeted with the bluebell and ragged robin, where grow the alders, and the hazels rich with brown nuts, the beeches and the oaks; where the flower of the yellow broom blazes like gold in the noontide sun; where the stockdove coos overhead in the ivy; where the kingfisher darts past like a shaft of sapphire, and the water ouzel flies up stream; where the pheasant glides out from his home in the wood to feed on the headland of the wheat field; where the partridge broods in the dust with her young; where the green lane is bordered by the guelder-rose or wayfaring tree, the raspberry, strawberry, and cherry, the wild garlic of starlike flowers, the woodruff, fragrant as new-mown hay; the yellow pimpernel on the hedge side. I see in the fields and meadows the bird's foot trefoil, the oxeye daisy, the lady smocks, sweet hemlock, butterbur, the stitchwort, and the orchis, the "long purpled" of Shakespeare. By the margin of the pond the yellow iris hangs out its golden banners over which the dragon fly skims. The hedgerows are gay with the full-blown dog-roses, the bells of the bilberries droop down along the wood-side, and the red-hipped bumble bees hum over them. Out of the woodland and up Snaperake Lane I rise to the moorland, and then the sea coast comes in sight, and the longing to know what lies beyond it.

I have been twice to see what lies beyond it, and when I return once more my own land does not know me. There is another sea coast in sight now, and when I sail away from it I hope to land on some one of the Isles of the Blest.

I called on my oldest living love; she looked, I thought, even younger than when we last parted. She was sitting before the fire alone, pale and calm, but she gave me no greeting; she had forgotten me. I took a chair, sat down beside her, and waited. A strange lass with a fair face and strong bare arms came in and stared at me steadily for a minute or two, but went away without saying a word. I looked around the old house room that I knew so well, with its floor of flags from Buckley Delph, scoured white with sandstone. There stood, large and solid, the mealark of black oak, with the date, 1644,

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carved just below the heavy lid, more than 200 years old, and as sound as ever. The sloping mirror over the chest of drawers was still supported by the four seasons, one at each corner. Above it was Queen Caroline, with the crown on her head, and the sceptre in her hand, seated in a magnificent Roman chariot, drawn by the lion and the unicorn. That team had tortured my young soul for years. I could never understand why that savage lion had not long ago devoured both the Queen and the unicorn.

My old love was looking at me, and at last she put one hand on my knee, and said:

“It’s George.”

“Yes,” I said, “it’s George.”

She gazed a while into the fire and said:

“Alice is dead.”

“Yes, Alice is dead.”

“And Jenny is dead.”

“Yes, and Jenny. They are at the bottom of the sea.”

In that way she counted a long list of the dead, which she closed by saying:

“They are all gone but Joe.”

She had been a widow more than twenty-five years. She was a young woman, tall and strong, before Bonaparte, Wellington, the United States, or Australia, had ever been heard of in Lancashire, and from the top of a stile she had counted every windmill and chimney in Preston before it was covered with the black pall of smoke from the cotton-mills.

AMONG THE DIGGERS IN 1853.

I.

I lost a summer in 1853, and had two winters instead, one in England, the other in Australia.

It was cold in the month of May as we neared Bendigo. We were a mixed party of English, Irish, and Scotch, twelve in number, and accompanied by three horse-teams,

carrying tubs, tents, and provisions. We also had plenty of arms wherewith to fight the bush-rangers, but I did not carry any myself; I left the fighting department to my mate, Philip, and to the others who were fond of war. Philip was by nature and training as gentle and amiable as a lamb, but he was a Young Irelander, and therefore a fighter on principle. O'Connell had tried moral suasion on the English Government long enough, and to no purpose, so Philip and his fiery young friends were prepared to have recourse to arms. The arms he was now carrying consisted of a gleaming bowie knife, and two pistols stuck in his belt. The pistols were good ones; Philip had tried them on a friend in the Phoenix Park the morning after a ball at the Rotunda, and had pinked his man—-shot him in the arm. It is needless to say that there was a young lady in the case; I don't know what became of her, but during the rest of her life she could boast of having been the fair demoiselle on whose account the very last duel was fought in Ireland. Then the age of chivalry went out. The bowie knife was the British article bought in Liverpool. It would neither kill a man nor cut a beef-steak, as was proved by experience.

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We met parties of men from Bendigo—unlucky diggers, who offered to sell their thirty-shilling licenses. By this time my cash was low; my twenty-dollar gold pieces were all consumed. While voyaging to the new Ophir, where gold was growing underfoot, I could not see any sound sense in being niggardly. But when I saw a regular stream of disappointed men with empty pockets offering their monthly licenses for five shillings each within sight of the goldfield, I had misgivings, and I bought a license that had three weeks to run from William Matthews. Ten other men bought licenses, but William Patterson, a canny Scotchman, said he would chance it.

It was about midday when we halted near Bendigo Creek, opposite a refreshment tent. Standing in front of it was a man who had passed us on the road, and lit his pipe at our fire. When he stooped to pick up a firestick I saw the barrel of a revolver under his coat. He was accompanied by a lady on horseback, wearing a black riding habit. Our teamsters called him Captain Sullivan. He was even then a man well known to the convicts and the police, and was supposed to be doing a thriving business as keeper of a sly grog shop, but in course of time it was discovered that his main source of profit was murder and robbery. He was afterwards known as “The New Zealand Murderer,” who turned Queen’s evidence, sent his mates to the gallows, but himself died unhanged.

While we stood in the track, gazing hopelessly over the endless heaps of clay and gravel covering the flat, a little man came up and spoke to Philip, in whom he recognised a fellow countryman. He said:

“You want a place to camp on, don’t you?”

“Yes,” replied Philip, “we have only just come up from Melbourne.”

“Well, come along with me,” said the stranger.

He was a civil fellow, and said his name was Jack Moore. We went with him in the direction of the first White Hill, but before reaching it we turned to the left up a low bluff, and halted in a gully where many men were at work puddling clay in tubs.

After we had put up our tent, Philip went down the gully to study the art of gold digging. He watched the men at work; some were digging holes, some were dissolving clay in tubs of water by stirring it rapidly with spades, and a few were stooping at the edge of water-holes, washing off the sand mixed with the gold in milk pans.

Philip tried to enter into conversation with the diggers. He stopped near one man, and said:

“Good day, mate. How are you getting along?”

The man gazed at him steadily, and replied “Go you to hell,” so Philip moved on. The next man he addressed sent him in the same direction, adding a few blessings; the third man was panning off, and there was a little gold visible in his pan. He was gray, grim, and hairy. Philip said:

“Not very lucky to-day, mate?”

The hairy man stood up, straightened his back, and looked at Philip from head to foot.

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“Lucky be blowed. I wish I’d never seen this blasted place. Here have I been sinking holes and puddling for five months, and hav’n’t made enough to pay my tucker and the Government license, thirty bob a month. I am a mason, and I threw up twenty-eight bob a day to come to this miserable hole. Wherever you come from, young man, I advise you to go back there again. There’s twenty thousand men on Bendigo, and I don’t believe nineteen thousand of ’em are earning their grub.”

“I can’t well go back fifteen thousand miles, even if I had money to take me back,” answered Philip.

“Well, you might walk as far as Melbourne,” said the hairy man, “and then you could get fourteen bob a day as a hodman; or you might take a job at stone breaking; the Government are giving 7s. 6d. a yard for road metal. Ain’t you got any trade to work at?”

“No, I never learned a trade, I am only a gentleman.” He felt mean enough to cry.

“Well, that’s bad. If you are a scholar, you might keep school, but I don’t believe there’s half-a-dozen kids on the diggin’s. They’d be of no mortal use except to tumble down shafts. Fact is, if you are really hard up, you can be a peeler. Up at the camp they’ll take on any useless loafer wot’s able to carry a carbine, and they’ll give you tucker, and you can keep your shirt clean. But, mind, if you do join the Joeys, I hope you’ll be shot. I’d shoot the hull blessed lot of ’em if I had my way. They are nothin’ but a pack of robbers.” The hairy man knew something of current history and statistics, but he had not a pleasant way of imparting his knowledge.

Picaninny Gully ended in a flat, thinly timbered, where there were only a few diggers. Turning to the left, Philip found two men near a waterhole hard at work puddling. When he bade them good-day, they did not swear at him, which was some comfort. They were brothers, and were willing to talk, but they did not stop work for a minute. They had a large pile of dirt, and were making hay while the sun shone—that is, washing their dirt as fast as they could while the water lasted. During the preceding summer they had carted their wash-dirt from the gully until rain came and filled the waterhole. They said they had not found any rich ground, but they could now make at least a pound a day each by constant work. Philip thought they were making more, as they seemed inclined to sing small; in those days to brag of your good luck might be the death of you.

While Philip was away interviewing the diggers, Jack showed me where he had worked his first claim, and had made 400 pounds in a few days. “You might mark off a claim here and try it,” he said. “I think I took out the best gold, but there may be a little left still hereabout.” I pegged off two claims, one for Philip, and one for myself, and stuck a pick in the centre of each. Then we sat down on a log. Six men came up the gully carrying their swags, one of them was unusually tall. Jack said: “Do you see that big fellow there? His name is McKean. He comes from my part of Ireland. He is a lawyer; the

last time I saw him he was in a court defending a prisoner, and now the whole six feet seven of him is nothing but a dirty digger."

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“What made you leave Ireland, Jack?” I asked.

“I left it, I guess, same as you did, because I couldn’t live in it. My father was a fisherman, and he was drowned. Mother was left with eight children, and we were as poor as church mice. I was the oldest, so I went to Belfast and got a billet on board ship as cabin boy. I made three voyages from Liverpool to America, and was boxed about pretty badly, but I learned to handle the ropes. My last port there was Boston, and I ran away and lived with a Yankee farmer named Small. He was a nigger driver, he was, working the soul out of him early and late. He had a boat, and I used to take farm produce in it across the bay to Boston, where the old man’s eldest son kept a boarding-house. There was a daughter at home, a regular high-flier. She used to talk to me as if I was a nigger. One day when we were having dinner, she was asking me questions about Ireland, and about my mother, sisters, and brothers. Then I got mad, thinking how poor they were, and I could not help them. ‘Miss Small,’ I said, ’my mother is forty years old, and she has eight children, and she looks younger than you do, and has not lost a tooth.’

“Miss Small, although quite young, was nearly toothless, so she was mad enough to kill me; but her brother Jonathan was at table, and he took my part, saying, ‘Sarves you right, Sue;’ why can’t you leave Jack alone?’

“But Sue made things most unpleasant, and I told Jonathan I couldn’t stay on the farm, and would rather go to sea again. Jonathan said he, too, was tired of farming, and he would go with me. He could manage a boat across Boston Harbour, but he had never been to sea. Next time there was farm stuff to go to Boston he went with me; we left the boat with his brother, and shipped in a whaler bound for the South Seas. I used to show him how to handle the ropes, to knot and splice, and he soon became a pretty good hand, though he was not smart aloft when reefing. His name was Small, but he was not a small man; he was six feet two, and the strongest man on board, and he didn’t allow any man to thrash me, because I was little. After eighteen months’ whaling he persuaded me to run away from the ship at Hobarton; he said he was tired of the greasy old tub; so one night we bundled up our swags, dropped into a boat, and took the road to Launceston, where we expected to find a vessel going to Melbourne. When we were half-way across the island, we called just before sundown at a farmhouse to see if we could get something to eat, and lodging for the night. We found two women cooking supper in the kitchen, and Jonathan said to the younger one, ’Is the old man at home?’ She replied quite pertly:

“’Captain Massey is at home, if that’s what you mean by ‘old man.’

“‘Well, my dear,’ said Jonathan, ’will you just tell him that we are two seamen on our way to Launceston, and we’d like to have a word with him.’

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"'I am not your dear,' she replied, tossing her head, and went out. After a while she returned, and said: 'Captain Massey wanted to speak to the little man first.' That was me.

"I went into the house, and was shown into the parlour, where the captain was standing behind a table. There was a gun close to his hand in a corner, two horse pistols on a shelf, and a sword hanging over them. He said: 'Who are you, where from, and whither bound?' to which I replied:

"'My name is John Moore; me and my mate have left our ship, a whaler, at Hobarton, and we are bound for Launceston.'

"'Oh, you are a runaway foremast hand are you? Then you know something about work on board ship.' He then put questions to me about the work of a seaman, making sail, and reefing, about masts, yards, and rigging, and finished by telling me to box a compass. I passed my examination pretty well, and he told me to send in the other fellow. He put Jonathan through his sea-catechism in the same way, and then said we could have supper and a shake-down for the night.

"After supper the young lady sat near the kitchen fire sewing, and Jonathan took a chair near her and began a conversation. He said:

"I must beg pardon for having ventured to address you as 'my dear,' on so short an acquaintance, but I hope you will forgive my boldness. Fact is, I felt quite attached to you at first sight.' And so on. If there was one thing that Jonathan could do better than another it was talking. The lady was at first very prim and reserved; but she soon began to listen, smiled, and even tittered. A little boy about two years old came in and stood near the fire. Having nothing else to do, I took him on my knee, and set him prattling until we were very good friends. Then an idea came into my head. I said:

"'I guess, Jonathan, this little kid is about the same age as your youngest boy in Boston, ain't he?'

"Of course, Jonathan had no boy and was not married, but the sudden change that came over that young lady was remarkable. She gave Jonathan a look of fury, jumped up from her seat, snatched up her sewing, and bounced out of the kitchen. The old man came in, and told us to come along, and he would show us our bunks. We thought he was a little queer, but he seemed uncommonly kind and anxious to make us comfortable for the night. He took us to a hut very strongly built with heavy slabs, left us a lighted candle, and bade us good-night. After he closed the door we heard him put a padlock on it; he was a kindly old chap, and did not want anybody to disturb us during the night, and we soon fell fast asleep. Next morning he came early and called us to breakfast. He stayed with us all the time, and when we had eaten, said:

“‘Well, have you had a good breakfast?’

“Jonathan spoke:

“‘Yes, old man, we have. You are a gentleman; you have done yourself proud, and we are thankful, ain’t we, Jack? You are the best and kindest old man we’ve met since we sailed from Boston. And now I think it’s time we made tracks for Launceston. By-bye, Captain. Come along, Jack.’

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“‘No you won’t, my fine coves,’ replied the captain. ’You’ll go back to Hobarton, and join your ship if you have one, which I don’t believe. You can’t humbug an old salt like me. You are a pair of runaway convicts, and I’ll give you in charge as sich. Here, constables, put the darbies on ’em, and take ’em back to Hobarton.’

“Two men who had been awaiting orders outside the door now entered, armed with carbines, produced each a pair of handcuffs, and came towards us. But Jonathan drew back a step or two, clenched his big fists, and said:

“’No, you don’t. If this is your little game, captain, all I have to say is, you are the darndest double-faced old cuss on this side of perdition. You can shoot me if you like, but neither you nor the four best men in Van Diemen’s Land can put them irons on me. I am a free citizen of the Great United States, and a free man I’ll be or die. I’ll walk back to Hobarton, if you like, with these men, for I guess that greasy old whaler has gone to sea again by this time, and we’ll get another ship there as well as at Launceston.’

“Captain Massey did not like to venture on shooting us off-hand, so at last he told the constables to put up their handcuffs and start with us for Hobarton.

“After we had travelled awhile Jonathan cooled down and began to talk to the constables. He asked them how they liked the island, how long they had been in it, if it was a good country for farming, how they were getting along, and what pay they got for being constables. One of them said: ’The island is pretty good in parts, but it’s too mountaynyus; we ain’t getting along at all, and we won’t have much chance to do any good until our time is out.’

“’What on airth do you mean by saying “until you time is out?” Ain’t your time your own?’ asked Jonathan.

“’No, indeed. I see you don’t understand. We are Government men, and we ain’t done our time. We were sent out from England.’

“’Oh! you were sent out, were you? Now, I see, that means you are penitentiary men, and ought to be in gaol. Jack, look here. This kind of thing will never do. You and me are two honest citizens of the United States, and here we are, piloted through Van Diemen’s Land by two convicts, and Britishers at that. This team has got to be changed right away.’

“He seized both carbines and handed them to me; then he handcuffed the constables, who were so taken aback they never said a word. Then Jonathan said, ‘This is training day. Now, march.’

“The constables walked in front, me and Jonathan behind, shouldering the guns. In this way we marched until we sighted Hobarton, but the two convicts were terribly afraid to

enter the city as prisoners; they said they were sure to be punished, would most likely be sent into a chain gang, and would soon be strangled in the barracks at night for having been policemen. We could see they were really afraid, so we took off the handcuffs and gave them back the carbines.

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“Before entering the city we found that the whaler had left the harbour, and felt sure we would not be detained long, as nothing could be proved against us. When we were brought before the beak Jonathan told our story, and showed several letters he had received from Boston, so he was discharged. But I had nothing to show; they knew I was an Irishman, and the police asked for a remand to prove that I was a runaway convict. I was kept three weeks in gaol, and every time I was brought to court Jonathan was there. He said he would not go away without me. The police could find out nothing against me, so, at last, they let me go. We went aboard the first vessel bound for Melbourne, and, when sail was made, I went up to the cross-trees and cursed Van Diemen’s Land as long as I could see it. Jonathan took ship for the States, but I went shepherding, and grew so lazy that if my stick dropped to the ground I wouldn’t bend my back to pick it up. But when I heard of the diggings, I woke up, humped my swag, and ran away—I was always man enough for that— and I don’t intend to shepherd again.”

When Philip returned from his excursion down the gully, he gave me a detailed report of the results and said, “Gold mining is remarkable for two things, one certain, the other uncertain. The certain thing is labour, the uncertain thing is gold.” This information staggered me, so I replied, “Those two things will have to wait till morning. Let us boil the billy.” Our spirits were not very high when we began work next day.

We slept under our small calico tent, and our cooking had to be done outside. Sometimes it rained, and then we had to kindle a fire with stringy bark under an umbrella The umbrella was mine—the only one I ever saw on the diggings. Some men who thought they were witty made observations about it, but I stuck to it all the same. No man could ever laugh me out of a valuable property.

We lived principally on beef steak, tea, and damper. Philip cut his bread and beef with his bowie knife as long as it lasted. Every man passing by could see that we were formidable, and ready to defend our gold to the death—when we got it. But the bowie was soon useless; it got a kink in the middle, and a curl at the point, and had no edge anywhere. It was good for nothing but trade.

A number of our shipmates had put up tents in the neighbourhood, and at night we all gathered round the camp fire to talk and smoke away our misery. One, whose name I forget, was a journalist, correspondent for the ‘Nonconformist’. Scott was an artist, Harrison a mechanical engineer. Doran a commercial traveller, Moran an ex-policeman, Beswick a tailor, Bernie a clogger. The first lucky digger we saw, after Picaninny Jack, came among us one dark night; he came suddenly, head foremost, into our fire, and plunged his hands into the embers. We pulled him out, and then two other men came up. They apologised for the abrupt entry of their mate.

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They said he was a lucky digger, and they were his friends and fellow-countrymen. A lucky digger could find friends anywhere, from any country, without looking for them, especially if he was drunk, as was this stranger. They said he had travelled from Melbourne with a pack horse, and, near Mount Alexander, he saw a woman picking up something or other on the side of a hill. She might be gathering flowers, but he could not see any. He stopped and watched her for a while and then went nearer. She did not take any notice of him, so he thought the poor thing had been lost in the bush, and had gone cranky. He pitied her, and said:

“My good woman, have you lost anything? Could I help you to look for it?”

“I am not your good woman, and I have not lost anything; so I don’t want anybody to help me to look for it.”

He was now quite sure she was cranky. She stooped and picked up something, but he could not see what it was. He began to look on the ground, and presently he found a bright little nugget of gold. Then he knew what kind of flowers the woman was gathering. Without a word he took his horse to the foot of the hill, hobbled it, and took off his swag. He went up the hill again, filled his pan with earth, and washed it off at the nearest waterhole. He had struck it rich; the hill-side was sprinkled with gold, either on the surface or just below it. For two weeks there were only two parties at work on that hill, parties of one, but they did not form a partnership. The woman came every day, picking and scratching like an old hen, and went away at sundown.

When the man went away he took with him more than a hundredweight of gold. He was worth looking at, so we put more wood on the fire, and made a good blaze. Yes, he was a lucky digger, and he was enjoying his luck. He was blazing drunk, was in evening dress, wore a black bell-topper, and kid gloves. The gloves had saved his hands from being burned when he thrust them into the fire. There could be no doubt that he was enjoying himself. He came suddenly out of the black night, and staggered away into it again with his two friends.

One forenoon, about ten o’clock, while we were busy, peacefully digging and puddling, we heard a sound like the rumbling of distant thunder from the direction of Bendigo flat. The thunder grew louder until it became like the bellowing of ten thousand bulls. It was the welcome accorded by the diggers to our “trusty and well-beloved” Government when it came forth on a digger hunt. It was swelled by the roars, and cooeys, and curses of every man above ground and below, in the shafts and drives on the flats, and in the tunnels of the White Hills, from Golden Gully and Sheep’s Head, to Job’s Gully and Eaglehawk, until the warning that “Joey’s out” had reached to the utmost bounds of the goldfield.

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There was a strong feeling amongst the diggers that the license fee of thirty shillings per month was excessive, and this feeling was intensified by the report that it was the intention of the Government to double the amount. As a matter of fact, by far the larger number of claims yielded no gold at all, or not enough to pay the fee. The hatred of the hunted diggers made it quite unsafe to send out a small number of police and soldiers, so there came forth at irregular intervals a formidable body of horse and foot, armed with carbines, swords, and pistols.

This morning they marched rapidly along the track towards the White Hills, but wheeling to the left up the bluff they suddenly appeared at the head of Picaninny Gully. Mounted men rode down each side of the gully as fast as the nature of the ground would permit, for it was then honeycombed with holes, and encumbered with the trunks and stumps of trees, especially on the eastern side. They thus managed to hem us in like prisoners of war, and they also overtook some stragglers hurrying away to right and left. Some of these had licenses in their pockets, and refused to stop or show them until they were actually arrested. It was a ruse of war. They ran away as far as possible among the holes and logs, in order to draw off the cavalry, make them break their ranks, and thus to give a chance to the unlicensed to escape or to hide themselves. The police on foot, armed with carbines and accompanied by officers, next came down the centre of the gully, and every digger was asked to show his license. I showed that of William Matthews.

It was not that the policy of William Patterson was tried and found wanting. He was at work on his claim a little below mine, and knowing he had no license, I looked at him to see how he would behave in the face of the enemy. He had stopped working, and was walking in the direction of his tent, with head bowed down as ifin search of something he had lost. He disappeared in his tent, which was a large one, and had, near the opening, a chimney built up with ironstone boulders and clay. But the police had seen him; he was followed, found hiding in the corner of his chimney, arrested, and placed among the prisoners who were then halted near my tub. Immediately behind Patterson, and carrying a carbine on his shoulder, stood a well-known shipmate named Joynt, whom poverty had compelled to join the enemy. He would willingly have allowed his friend and prisoner to escape, but no chance of doing so occurred, and long after dark Patterson approached our camp fire, a free man, but hungry, tired, and full of bitterness. He had been forced to march along the whole day like a convicted felon, with an ever-increasing crowd of prisoners, had been taken to the camp at nightfall and made to pay 6 pounds 10s.—viz., a fine of 5 pounds and 1 pound 10s. for a license.

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The feelings of William Patterson, and of thousands of other diggers, were outraged, and they burned for revenge. A roll-up was called, and three public meetings were held on three successive Saturday afternoons, on a slight eminence near the Government camp. The speakers addressed the diggers from a wagon. Some advocated armed resistance. It was well known that many men, French, German, and even English, were on the diggings who had taken part in the revolutionary outbreak of ’48, and that they were eager to have recourse to arms once more in the cause of liberty. But the majority advocated the trial of a policy of peace, at least to begin with. A final resolution was passed by acclamation that a fee of ten shillings a month should be offered, and if not accepted, no fee whatever was to be paid.

It was argued that if the diggers stood firm, it would be impossible for the few hundreds of soldiers and police to arrest and keep in custody nearly twenty thousand men. If an attempt was made to take us all to gaol, digger-hunting would have to be suspended, the revenue would dwindle to nothing, and Government would be starved out. It was, in fact, no Government at all; it was a mere assemblage of armed men sent to rob us, not to protect us; each digger had to do that for himself.

Next day, Sunday, I walked through the diggings, and observed the words “No License Here” pinned or pasted outside every tent, and during the next month only about three hundred licenses were taken out, instead of the fourteen or fifteen thousand previously issued, the digger-hunting was stopped, and a license-fee of forty shillings for three months was substituted for that of thirty shillings per month.

II.

As no man who had a good claim would be willing to run the risk of losing it, the number of licenses taken out after the last meeting would probably represent the number of really lucky diggers then at work on Bendigo, *viz*., three hundred more or less, and of the three hundred I don’t think our gully could boast of one. All were finding a little gold, but even the most fortunate were not making more than “tucker.” By puddling eight tubs of washdirt I found that we could obtain about one pound’s worth of gold each per day; but this was hardly enough to keep hope alive. The golden hours flew over us, but they did not send down any golden showers. I put the little that fell to my share into a wooden match-box, which I carried in my pocket. I knew it would hold twelve ounces—-if I could get so much —and looked into it daily and shook the gold about to see if I were growing rich.

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It was impossible to feel jolly, and I could see that Philip was discontented. He had never been accustomed to manual labour; he did not like being exposed to the cold winds, to the frost or rain, with no shelter except that afforded by our small tent. While at work we were always dirty, and often wet; and after we had passed a miserable night, daylight found us shivering, until warmth came with hard work. One morning Philip lost his temper; his only hat was soaked with rain, and his trousers, shirt, and boots were stiff with clay. He put a woollen comforter on his head in lieu of the hat. The comforter was of gaudy colours, and soon attracted public attention. A man down the gully said:

“I obsarved yesterday we had young Ireland puddling up here, and I persave this morning we have an Italian bandit or a Sallee rover at work among us.”

Every digger looked at Philip, and he fell into a sudden fury; you might have heard him at the first White Hill.

“Yesterday I heard a donkey braying down the gully, and this morning he is braying again.”

“Oh! I see,” replied the Donkey. “We are in a bad temper this morning.”

Father Backhaus was often seen walking with long strides among the holes and hillocks on Bendigo Flat or up and down the gullies, on a visit to some dying digger, for Death would not wait until we had all made our pile. His messengers were going around all the time; dysentery, scurvy, or fever; and the priest hurried after them. Sometimes he was too late; Death had entered the tent before him.

He celebrated Mass every Sunday in a tent made of drugget, and covered with a calico fly. His presbytery, sacristy, confessional, and school were all of similar materials, and of small dimensions. There was not room in the church for more than thirty or forty persons; there were no pews, benches, or chairs. Part of the congregation consisted of soldiers from the camp, who had come up from Melbourne to shoot us if occasion required. Six days of the week we hated them and called “Joey” after them, but on the seventh day we merely glared at them, and let them pass in silence. They were sleek and clean, and we were gaunt as wolves, with scarcely a clean shirt among us. Philip, especially hated them as enemies of his country, and the more so because they were his countrymen, all but one, who was a black man.

The people in and around the church were not all Catholics. I saw a man kneeling near me reading the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England; there was also a strict Presbyterian, to whom I spoke after Mass. He said the priest did not preach with as much energy as the ministers in Scotland. And yet I thought Father Backhaus’ sermon had that day been “powerful,” as the Yankees would say. He preached from the top of a packing case in front of the tent. The audience was very numerous, standing in close order to the distance of twenty-five or thirty yards under a large gum tree.

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The preacher spoke with a German accent, but his meaning was plain.

He said:

“My dear brethren’ ‘Beatus ille qui post aurum non abiit’. Blessed is the man who has not gone after gold, nor put his trust in money or treasures. You will never earn that blessing, my dear brethren. Why are you here? You have come from every corner of the world to look for gold. You think it is a blessing, but when you get it, it is often a curse. You go what you call ‘on the spree’; you find the ‘sly grog’; you get drunk and are robbed of your gold; sometimes you are murdered; or you fall into a hole and are killed, and you go to hell dead drunk. Patrick Doyle was here at Mass last Sunday; he was then a poor digger. Next day he found gold, ‘struck it rich,’ as you say; then he found the grog also and brought it to his tent. Yesterday he was found dead at the bottom of his golden shaft, and he was buried in the graveyard over there near the Government camp.”

My conscience was quite easy when the sermon was finished. It would be time enough for me to take warning from the fate of Paddy Doyle when I had made my pile. Let the lucky diggers beware! I was not one of them.

After we had been at work a few weeks, Father Backhaus, before stepping down from the packing-case, said:

“I want someone to teach in a school; if there is anyone here willing to do so, I should like to see him after Mass.”

I was looking round for Philip among the crowd when he came up, eager and excited.

“I am thinking of going in to speak to the priest about that school,” he said. “Would you have any objection? You know we are doing no good in the gully, but I won’t leave itif you think I had better not.”

Philip was honourable; he would not dissolve our short partnership, and leave me alone unless I was quite willing to let him go.

“Have you ever kept school before?”

“No, never. But I don’t think the teaching will give me much trouble. There can’t be many children around here, and I can surely teach them A B C and the Catechism.”

Although I thought he had not given fortune a fair chance to bless us, he looked so wistful and anxious that I had not the heart to say no. Philip went into the tent, spoke to the priest, and became a schoolmaster. I was then a solitary “hatter.”

Next day a man came up the gully with a sack on his back with something in it which he had found in a shaft. He thought the shaft had not been dug down to the bedrock, and he would bottom it. He bottomed on a corpse. The claim had been worked during the previous summer by two men. One morning there was only one man on it; he said his mate had gone to Melbourne, but he had in fact killed him during the night, and dropped him down the hole. The police never hunted out that murderer; they were too busy hunting us.

I was not long alone. A beggarly looking young man came a few days later, and said:

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“I hear you have lost your mate Philip, and my mates have all gone away and taken the tent with them; so I want to ask you to let me stay in your tent until I can look round a bit.”

This young man’s name was David Beswick, but he was known simply as “Bez.” He was a harmonious tailor from Manchester; he played the violoncello, also the violin; had a good tenor voice, and a talent for the drama. He, and a man named Santley from Liverpool, had taken leading parts in our plays and concerts on shipboard. Scott, the artist, admired Bez; he said he had the head, the features, and the talent of a Shakespeare. He had a sketch of Bez in his portfolio, which he was filling with crooked trees, common diggers, and ugly blackamoors. I could see no Shakespeare in Bez; he was nothing but a dissipated tailor who had come out in the steerage, while I had voyaged in the house on deck. I was, therefore, a superior person, and looked down on the young man, who was seated on a log near the fire, one leg crossed over the other, and slowly stroking his Elizabethan beard. I said:

“Yes, Philip has left me, but I don’t want any partner. I understand you are a tailor by trade, and I don’t think much of a tailor.”

“Well,” replied Bez, “I don’t think much of him myself, so I have dropped the business. I am now a sailor. You know yourself I sailed from Liverpool to Melbourne, and, anyhow, there’s only the difference of a letter between a tailor and a sailor.”

There was a flaw somewhere in the argument, but I only said, “’Valeat quantum valere potest.’” Bez looked solemn; a little Latin goes a long way with some people. He was an object of charity, and I made him feel it.

“In the first place this tent is teetotal. No grog is to come inside it. There is to be no mining partnership. You can keep all the gold you get, and I shall do the same. You must keep all trade secrets, and never confess you are a tailor. I could never hold up my head among the diggers if they should discover that my mate was only the ninth part of a man. You must carry to the tent a quantity of clay and rocks sufficient to build a chimney, of which I shall be the architect. You will also pay for your own tucker, chop wood, make the fire, fetch water, and boil the billy.” Bez promised solemnly to abide by these conditions, and then I allowed him to deposit his swag in the tent.

The chimney was built in three days, and we could then defy the weather, and dispense with the umbrella. Bez performed his part of the contract well. He adopted a rolling gait and the frown of a pirate; he swore naval oaths strong enough to still a hurricane. Among his digging outfit was a huge pick; it was a two-man pick, and he carried it on his shoulder to suggest his enormous strength. He threw tailordom to the winds; when a rent appeared in his trousers he closed it with pins, disdaining the use of the needle, until he became so ragged that I ordered him into dock for repairs.

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One day in passing Philip's school I peeped in at the flap of the tent. He had already acquired the awe-inspiring look of the schoolmaster. He was teaching a class of little boys, whose wandering eyes were soon fixed on my face, and then Philip saw me. He smiled and blushed, and came outside. He said he was getting along capitally, and did not want to try digging any more. He had obtained a small treatise called "The Twelve Virtues of a Good Master," and he was studying it daily in order to qualify himself for his new calling. He had undertaken to demonstrate one of Euclid's propositions every night by way of exercising his reasoning faculties. He was also making new acquaintances amongst men who were not diggers—doctors, storekeepers, and the useful blacksmiths who pointed our picks with steel. He had also two or three friends at the Governmnt camp, and I felt inclined to look upon him as a traitor to the diggers' cause but although he had been a member of the party of Young Irelanders, he was the most innocent traitor and the poorest conspirator I ever heard of. He could keep nothing from me. If he had been a member of some secret society, he would have burst up the secret, or the secret would have burst him.

He had some friends among the diggers. The big gum tree in front of the church tent soon became a kind of trysting place on Sundays, at which men could meet with old acquaintances and shipmates, and convicts could find old pals. Amongst the crowd one Sunday were five men belonging to a party of six from Nyalong; the sixth man was at home guarding the tent. Four of the six were Irish Catholics, and they came regularly to Mass every Sunday; the other two were Englishmen, both convicts, of no particular religion, but they had married Catholic immigrants, and sometimes went to church, but more out of pastime than piety. One of these men, known as John Barton— he had another name in the indents—stood under the gum tree, but not praying; I don't think he ever thought of praying except the need of it was extreme. He was of medium height, had a broad face, snub nose, stood erect like a soldier, and was strongly built. His small ferrety eyes were glancing quickly among the faces around him until they were arrested by another pair of eyes at a short distance. The owner of the second pair of eyes nudged two other men standing by, and then three pairs of eyes were fixed on Barton. He was not a coward, but something in the expression of the three men cowed him completely. He turned his head and lowered it, and began to push his way among the crowd to hide himself. After Mass, Philip found him in his tent, and suspecting that he was a thief put his hand on a medium-sized Colt's revolver, which he had exchanged for his duelling pistols, and said:

"Well, my friend, and what are you doing here?"

"For God's sake speak low," whispered Barton. "I came in here to hide. There are three men outside who want to kill me."

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“Three men who want to kill you, eh? Do you expect me to believe that anybody among the crowd there would murder you in broad daylight? My impression is, my friend, that you are a sneaking thief, and that you came here to look for gold. I’ll send a man to the police to come and fetch you, and if you stir a step I’ll shoot you.”

“For goodness’ sake, mate, keep quiet. I am not a burglar, not now at any rate. I’ll tell you the truth. I was a Government flagellator, a flogger, you know, on the Sydney side, and I flogged those three men. Couldn’t help it, it was my business to do it. I know they are looking for me, and they will follow me and take the first chance to murder me. They are most desperate characters. One of them was insubordinate when he was assigned servant to a squatter, and the squatter, who was on horseback, gave him a cut with his stockwhip. Then this man jumped at his master, pulled him off his horse, dragged him to the wood-heap, held his head on the block, seized the axe, and was just going to chop his master’s head off, when another man stopped him. That is what I had to flog him for, and then he was sent back to Sydney. So you can just think what a man like that would do. When my time was up I went as a trooper to the Nyalong district under Captain Foster, the Commissioner, and after a while I settled down and married an immigrant woman from Tipperary, a Catholic. That’s the way I happened to be here at Mass with my mates, who are Catholics; but I’ll never do it again; it’s as much as my life is worth. I daresay there are lots of men about Bendigo whom I flogged while I was in the business, and every single man-jack of them would kill me if he got the chance. And so for goodness’ sake let me stay here till dark. I suppose you are an honest man; you look like it anyway, and you would not want to see me murdered, now, would you?”

Barton was, in fact, as great a liar and rogue as you would meet with anywhere, but in extreme cases he would tell the truth, and the present case was an extreme one. Philip was merciful; he allowed Barton to remain in his tent all day, and gave him his dinner. When darkness came he escorted him to the tent of the men from Nyalong, and was introduced to them by his new friend. Their names were Gleeson, Poynton, Lyons, and two brothers McCarthy. One of these men was brother-in-law to Barton, and had been a fellow-trooper with him under Captain Foster. Barton had entered into family relations as an honest man; he could give himself any character he chose until he was found out. He was too frightened to stay another night on Bendigo, and he began at once to bundle up his swag. Gleeson and Poynton accompanied him for some distance beyond the pillar of white quartz on Specimen Hill, and then he left the track and struck into the bush. Fear winged his feet’ he arrived safely at Nyalong, and never went to another rush. The other five then stayed on Bendigo for several weeks longer, and when they returned home their gold was sufficient for a dividend of 700 pounds for each man. Four of them bought farms, one kept a store, and Barton rented some land. Philip met them again when he was promoted to the school at Nyalong, and they were his firm friends as long as he lived there.

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I went to various rushes to improve my circumstances. Once I was nearly shot. A bullet whizzed past my head, and lodged in the trunk of a stringy bark a little further on. That was the only time in my life I was under fire, and I got from under it as quickly as possible. Once I went to a rush of Maoris, near Job's Gully, and Scott came along with his portfolio, a small pick, pan, and shovel. He did not dig any, but got the ugliest Maori he could find to sit on a pile of dirt while he took his portrait and sketched the tattoos. That spoiled the rush; every man, black and white, crowded around Scott while he was at work with his pencil, and then every single savage shook hands with him, and made signs to have his tattoos taken, they were so proud of their ugliness. They were all naked to the waist.

Near the head of Sheep's Head Gully, Jack Moore and I found the cap of a quartz reef with visible gold in it. We broke up some of it, but could not make it pay, having no quartz-crushing machinery. Golden Gully was already nearly worked out, but I got a little gold in it which was flaky, and sticking on edge in the pipeclay bottom. I found some gold also in Sheep's Head, and then we heard of a rush on the Goulburn River. Next day we offered our spare mining plant for sale on the roadside opposite Specimen Hill, placing the tubs, cradles, picks and spades all in a row. Bez was the auctioneer. He called out aloud, and soon gathered a crowd, which he fascinated by his eloquence. The bidding was spirited, and every article was sold, even Bez's own two-man pick, which would break the heart of a Samson to wield it.

When we left Bendigo, Bez, Birnie, Dan, Scott, and Moses were of the party, and a one-horse cart carried our baggage. When we came to a swamp we carried the baggage over it on our backs, and then helped the horse to draw the empty cart along. Our party increased in number by the way, especially after we met with a dray carrying kegs of rum.

Before reaching the new rush, afterwards known as Waranga, we prospected some country about twenty miles from the Goulburn river. Here Scott left us. Before starting he called me aside, and told me he was going to the Melbourne Hospital to undergo an operation. He had a tumour on one leg above the knee, for which he had been treated in Dublin, and had been advised to come to Australia, in the hope that a change of climate and occupation might be of benefit, but he had already walked once from Bendigo to Melbourne, and now he was obliged to go again. He did not like to start without letting someone know his reason for leaving us. I felt full of pity for Scott, for I thought he was going to his death alone in the bush, and I asked him if he felt sure that he could find his way. He showed me his pocket compass and a map, and said he could make a straight course for Melbourne. He had always lived and worked alone, but whenever we moved he accompanied us not wishing to be quite lost amongst strangers. He arrived at the hospital, but he never came out of it alive.

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Dan gave me his money to take care of while he and Bez were living on rum from the dray, and I gave out as little cash as possible in order to promote peace and sobriety. One night Dan set fire to my tent in order to rouse his banker. I dragged Bez outside the tent and extinguished the fire. There was bloodshed afterwards—from Dan's nose—and his account was closed. After a while some policemen in plain clothes came along and examined the dray. They found fourteen kegs of rum in it, which they seized, together with four horses and the dray.

I worked for seven months in various parts of the Ovens district until I had acquired the value in gold of my vanished twenty-dollar pieces; that was all my luck. During this time some of us paid the L2 license fee for three months. We were not hunted by the military. Four or five troopers and officials rode slowly about the diggings and the cry of "Joey" was never raised, while a single unarmed constable on foot went amongst the claims to inspect licenses. He stayed with us awhile, talking about digging matters. He said the police were not allowed to carry carbines now, because a digger had been accidentally shot. He was a very civil fellow, and his price, if I remember rightly was half-a-crown. Yet the digger hunting was continued at Ballarat until it ended in the massacre of December 3rd 1854.

At that time I was at Colac, and while Dr. Ignatius was absent, I had the charge of his household, which consisted of one old convict known as "Specs," who acted in the capacity of generally useless, received orders most respectfully, but forgot them as much as possible. He was a man of education who had gone astray in London, and had fallen on evil days in Queensland and Sydney. When alone in the kitchen he consoled himself with curses. I could hear his voice from the other side of the slabs. He cursed me, he cursed the Doctor, he cursed the horses, the cat, the dog, and the whole world and everything in it. It was impossible to feel anything but pity for the man, for his life was ruined, and he had ruined it himself. I had also under my care a vegetable garden, a paddock of Cape barley, two horses, some guinea fowls, and a potato patch. One night the potatoes had been bandicooted. To all the early settlers in the bush the bandicoot is well known. It is a marsupial quadruped which lives on bulbs, and ravages potato patches. It is about eighteen inches in length from the origin of its tail to the point of its nose. It has the habits of a pickpocket. It inserts its delicate fore paws under the stalks of the potato, and pulls out the tubers. That morning I had endeavoured to dig some potatoes; the stalks were there, but the potatoes were gone. I stopped to think, and examined the ground. I soon discovered tracks of the bandicoot, but they had taken the shape of a small human foot. We had no small human feet about our premises, but at the other side of the fence there was a bark hut full of them. I turned toward the hut suspiciously, and saw the bandicoot sitting on a top-rail, watching me, and dangling her feet to and fro. She wore towzled red hair, a short print frock, and a look of defiance. I went nearer to inspect her bandicoot feet. Then she openly defied me, and said:

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“You need not look so fierce, mister. I have as much right to sit on this rail as you have.”

“Lilias,” I replied, “you won’t sit there long. You bandicooted my potatoes last night, and you’ve left the marks of your dirty feet on the ground. The police are coming to measure your feet, and then they will take you to the lock-up.”

I gazed across the barley paddock for the police, and Lilias looked as well. There was a strange man approaching rapidly, and the bandicoot’s courage collapsed. She slid from the fence, took to flight, and disappeared among the tussocks near the creek.

The stranger did not go to the garden gate, but stood looking over the fence. He said: “Is Dr. Ignatius at home?”

“No, he is away somewhere about Fiery Creek, and I don’t think he’ll return until Saturday.”

The stranger hung down his head and was silent. He was a young man of small frame, well dressed for those days, but he had o luggage. He looked so miserable that I pitied him. He was like a hunted animal. I said:

“Are you a friend of Dr. Ignatius?”

“Yes, he knows me well. My name is Carr; I have come from Ballarat.”

“I knew various men had left Ballarat. One had arrived in Geelong on December 4th, and had consulted Dr. Walshe about a bullet between his knuckles, another was hiding in a house at Chilwell.* He had lost one arm, and the Government were offering 400 pounds for him, so he took outdoor exercise only by night, disguised in an Inverness cape.

“There was a chance for me to hear exciting news from the lips of a warrior fresh from the field of battle, so I said:

“If you would like to stay here until the doctor returns you will be welcome.”

[Footnote] Peter Lalor.

He was my guest for four days. He said that he went out with the military on the morning of December 3rd, and was the first surgeon who entered the Eureka Stockade after the fight was over. He found twelve men dead in it, and twelve more mortally wounded. This was about all the information he vouchsafed to give me. I was anxious for particulars. I wanted to know what arms he carried to the fray, whether he touched up his sword on the grind-stone before sallying forth, how many men or women he had called upon to stand in the name of her gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, how many skulls he had cloven, how many diggers he had “slewed,” and how many peaceful

prisoners he had brought back to the Government camp. On all these points he was silent, and during his stay with me he spoke as little as possible, neither reading, writing, nor walking about. But there was something to be learned from the papers. He had been a witness at the inquest on Scobie, killed by Bentley and two others, and principally on his evidence Bentley was discharged, but was afterwards re-arrested and condemned to three years' imprisonment. Dr. Carr was regarded as a "colluding associate" with Bentley and Dewes, the magistrate, and the official condemnation of Dewes confirmed the popular denunciation of them. At a dinner given to Mr. Tarleton, the American Consul, Dr. Otway, the Chairman said:

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“While I and my fellow-colonists are thoroughly loyal to our Sovereign Lady, the Queen, we do not, and will not, respect her men servants, her maid servants, her oxen, or her asses.”

A Commission was coming to Ballarat to report on wrong doings there, and they were looking for witnesses. On Friday, December 8th, the camp surgeon and Dr. Carr had a narrow escape from being shot. While the former gentleman was entering the hospital he was fired at by one of the sentries. The ball passed close to the shoulder of Dr. Carr, who was reading inside, went through the lid of the open medicine chest, and some splinters struck him on the side. There were in the hospital at that time seven diggers seriously wounded and six soldiers, including the drummer boy. Troubles were coming in crowds, and the bullet, the splinters, and the Commission put the little doctor to flight. He left the seven diggers, the five soldiers, and the drummer boy in the hospital, and made straight for Colac. Fear dogged his footsteps wherever he went, and the mere sight of him had sent the impudent thief Lilias to hide behind the tussocks.

I always hate a man who won’t talk to me and tell me things, and the doctor was so silent and unsociable, that, by way of revenge, I left him to the care and curses of old “Specs.”

After four days he departed, and he appeared again at Ballarat on January 15th, giving evidence at an inquest on one Hardy, killed by a gunshot wound. In the meantime a total change had taken place among the occupants of the Government camp. Commissioner Rede had retired, Dr. Williams, the coroner, and the district surgeons had received notice to quit in twenty-four hours, and they left behind them twenty-four patients in and around the camp hospital.

Dr. Carr left the colony, and the next report about him was from Manchester, where he made a wild and incoherent speech to the crowd at the Exchange. His last public appearance was in a police-court on a charge of lunacy. He was taken away by his friends, and what became of him afterwards is not recorded.

Doctors, when there is a dearth of patients, sometimes take to war, and thus succeed in creating a “practice.” Occasionally they meet with disaster, of which we can easily call to mind instances, both ancient and modern.

III.

Diggers do not often turn their eyes heavenwards; their treasure does not lie in that direction. But one night I saw Bez star-gazing.

“Do you know the names of any of the stars in this part of the roof?” I asked.

“I can’t make out many of the Manchester stars,” he replied. “I knew a few when I was a boy, but there was a good deal of fog and smoke, and latterly I have not looked up that way much; but I can spot a few of them yet, I think.”

Bez was a rather prosy poet, and his eye was not in a fine frenzy rolling.

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“Let me see,” he said; “that’s the north; Charles’ Wain and the North Pole ought to be there, but they have gone down somewhere. There are the Seven Stars—I never could make ’em seven; if there ever were that number one of ’em has dropped out. And there’s Orion; he has somehow slipped up to the north, and is standing on his head, heels uppermost. There are the two stars in his heels, two on his shoulders, three in his belt, and three in his sword. There is the Southern Cross; we could never see that in our part of England, nor those two silvery clouds, nor the two black holes. They look curious, don’t they? I suppose the two clouds are the Gates of Heaven, and the two black spots the Gates of Hell, the doors of eternity. Which way shall we go? That’s the question.”

The old adage is still quite true—’coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt’. When a young gentleman in England takes to idleness and grog, and disgraces his family, he is provided with a passage to Australia, in order that he may become a reformed prodigal; but the change of climate does not effect a reform; it requires something else.

Dan in Glasgow and Bez in Manchester had both been given to drink too much. They came to Victoria to acquire the virtue of temperance, and they were sober enough when they had no money.

Dan told me that when he awoke after his first week at sea, he sat every day on the topgallant forecastle thinking over his past wickedness, watching the foam go by, and continually tempted to plunge into it.

After the rum, the dray, and the four horses were seized by the police. Dan and Bez grew sober, and went to Reid’s Creek, passing me at work on Spring Creek. They came back as separate items. Dan called at my tent, and I gave him a meal of damper, tea, and jam. He ate the whole of the jam, which cost me 2s. 6d. per pound. He then humped his swag and started for Melbourne. On his way through the township, since named Beechworth, he took a drink of liquor which disabled him, and he lay down by the roadside using an ant-hill for a pillow. He awoke at daylight covered with ants, which were stinging and eating him alive.

Some days later Bez came along, passed my tent for a mile, and then came back. He said he was ashamed of himself. I gave him also a feed of damper, tea, and jam limited. Dan had made me cautious in the matter of lavish hospitality. The Earl of Lonsdale lately spent fifty thousand pounds in entertaining the Emperor of Germany, but it was money thrown away. The next time the Kaiser comes to Westmoreland he will have to pay for his board and buy his preserves. Bez made a start for Melbourne, met an old convict, and with him took a job at foot-rotting sheep on a station owned by a widow lady. Here he passed as an engraver in reduced circumstances. He told lies so well, that the convict was filled with admiration, and said, “I’m sure, mate, you’re a flash covey wot’s done his time in the island.”

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The two chums foot-rotted until they had earned thirty shillings each, then they went away and got drunk at a roadside shanty; at least, Bez did, and when the convict picked his pockets, he kindly put back three shillings and sixpence, saying, “That will give him another start on the wallaby track.”

Bez at last arrived at Flagstaff Hill, which was then bare, with a sand-hole on one side of it. He had had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours, and had only one shilling and sixpence in his pocket, which he was loath to spend for fear of arriving in Melbourne a complete beggar. He lay down famishing and weary on the top of the hill near Flagstaff, and surveyed the city, the bay, and the shipping. He had hoped by this time to have been ready to take a passage in one of those ships to Liverpool, and to return home a lucky digger. But he had only eighteen pence, so he said, “I am afraid, Bez, you will never see Manchester again.”

There was at that time a small frame building at the west end of Flinders Street, with a hill behind it, on which goats were browsing; the railway viaduct runs now over the exact spot. Many parties of hopeful diggers from England and California had slept there on the floor the night before they started for Ballarat, Mount Alexander, or Bendigo. We called it a house of refuge, and Bez now looked for refuge in it. There he met Dan and Moran, who had both found employment in the city, and they fed the hungry Bez. Dan was labouring at his trade in the building business, and he set Bez to work roofing houses with corrugated iron. They soon earned more money than they had ever earned by digging for gold, but on Saturday nights and Sundays they took their pleasure in the old style, and so they went to the dogs. I don’t know how Dan’s life ended (his real name was Donald Fraser), but Bez died suddenly in the bar of a public-house, and he was honoured with an inquest and a short paragraph in the papers.

Moran had saved a hundred pounds by digging in Picaninny Gully, and he was soon afterwards admitted to serve Her Majesty again in the police department. On the Sunday after Price was murdered by the convicts at Williamstown I met Moran after Mass in the middle of Lonsdale Street. I reproached him for his baseness in deserting to the enemy—Her Majesty, no less—and in self-defence he nearly argued my head off. At last I threatened to denounce him as a “Joey” —he was in plain clothes—and have him killed by the crowd in the street. Nothing but death could silence Moran. The rest of his history is engraved on a monument in the Melbourne Cemetery; he, his wife, and all his children died many years ago.—R.I.P. He was really a good man, with only one defect—most of us have many—he was always trying to divide a hair ’twixt West and South-West side.

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I met Santley after thirty years, sitting on a bench in front of the “Travellers’ Rest” at Alberton, in Gippsland. He had a wrinkled old face, and did not recognise my beautiful countenance until he heard my name. He had half-a-dozen little boys and girls around him—his grandchildren, I believe—and was as happy as a king teaching them to sing hymns. I don’t think Santley had grown rich, but he always carried a fortune about with him wherever he went, *viz*., a kind heart and a cheerful disposition. Nobody could ever think of quarrelling with Santlay any more than with George Coppin, or with that benevolent bandmaster, Herr Plock. He told me that he was now related to the highest family in the world, his daughter having married the Chinese giant, whose brothers and sisters were all of the race of Anak.

My mate, Philip, was so successful with his little school in the tent that he was promoted to another at the Rocky Waterholes, and then he went to the township at Lake Nyalong. Philip had never travelled as far as Lake Nyalong, but Picaninny Jack told him that he had once been there, and that it was a beautiful country. He tried to find it at another time, but got bushed on the wrong side of the lake; now he believed there was a regular track that way if Philip could only find it. The settlers and other inhabitants ought to be well off; if not, it was their own fault, for they had the best land in the whole of Australia.

Philip felt sure that he would find at least one friend at Nyalong— *viz*., Mr. Barton, whom he had harboured in his tent at Bendigo, and had sheltered from the pursuit of the three bloodthirsty convicts. Some people might be too proud to look forward to the friendship of a flagellator, but in those days we could not pick and choose our chums; Barton might not be clubable, but he might be useful, and the social ladder requires a first step.

Thanks to such men as Dan and Bez, in Melbourne, and to other enterprising builders in various places, habitable dwellings of wood, brick, and bluestone began to be used, instead of the handy but uncomfortable tent, and, at the Rocky Waterholes, Philip had for some time been lodging in a weatherboard house with the respectable Mrs. Martin. Before going to look for Nyalong he introduced his successor to her, and also to the scholars. Her name was Miss Edgeworth.

The first virtue of a good master is gravity, and Philip had begun at the beginning. He was now graver even than usual while he briefly addressed his youthful auditors.

“My dear children,” he said, “I am going away, and have to leave you in the care of this young lady, Miss Edgeworth. I am sure you will find her to be a better teacher than myself, because she has been trained in the schools of the great city of Dublin, and I, unfortunately, had no training at all; she is highly educated, and will be, I doubt not, a perfect blessing to the rising generation of the Rocky Waterholes. I hope you will be diligent, obedient, and respectful to her. Good-bye, and God bless you all.”

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These words were spoken in the tone of a judge passing sentence of death on a criminal, and Miss Edgeworth was in doubt whether it would be becoming under the circumstances to laugh or to cry, so she made no speech in reply. She said afterwards to Mrs. Martin, “Mr. Philip must have been a most severe master; I can see sternness on his brow.” Moreover, she was secretly aware that she did not deserve his compliments, and that her learning was limited, especially in arithmetic; she had often to blame the figures for not adding up correctly. For this reason she had a horror of examinations, and every time the inspector came round she was in a state of mortal fear. His name was Bonwick. He was a little man, but he was so learned that the teachers looked forward to his visits with awe. A happy idea came into Miss Edgeworth’s mind. She was, it is true, not very learned, nor was she perfect in the practice of the twelve virtues, but she had some instinctive knowledge of the weakness of the male man. Mr. Bonwick was an author, a learned author who had written books —among others a school treatise on geography. Miss Edgeworth bought two copies of this work, and took care to place them on her table in the school every morning with the name of the author in full view. On his next visit Mr. Bonwick’s searching eyes soon detected the presence of his little treatise, and he took it up with a pleased smile. This was Miss Edgeworth’s opportunity; she said, in her opinion, the work was a must excellent one, and extremely well adapted for the use of schools.

The inspector was more than satisfied; a young lady of so much judgment and discrimination was a peerless teacher, and Miss Edgeworth’s work was henceforward beyond all question.

There were no coaches running to Nyalong, and, as Philip’s poverty did not permit him to purchase a horse, and he had scruples about stealing one, he packed up his swag and set out on foot. It may be mentioned as bearing on nothing in particular that, after Philip had taken leave of Miss Edgeworth, she stood at a window, flattened her little nose against one of the panes, and watched him trudging away as long as he was in sight. Then she said to Mrs. Martin:

“Ain’t it a pity that so respectable a young man should be tramping through the bush like a pedlar with a pack?”

“No, indeed, miss, not a bit of it,” replied Mrs. Martin; “nearly every man in the country has had to travel with his swag one time or another. We are all used to it; and it ain’t no use of your looking after him that way, for most likely you’ll never see him again.” But she did.

About two miles from the Waterholes Philip overtook another swagman, a man of middle age, who was going to Nyalong to look for work. He had tried the diggings, and left them for want of luck, and Philip, having himself been an unlucky digger, had a fellow feeling for the stranger. He was an old soldier named Summers.

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“I am three and fifty years old,” he said, “and I ’listed when I was twenty. I was in all the wars in India for nineteen years, and never was hit but once, and that was on the top of my head. Look here,” he took off his hat and pointed to a ridge made by the track of a bullet, “if I had been an inch taller I shouldn’t be here now. And maybe it would have been all the better. I have been too long at the fighting to learn another trade now. When I ’listed I was told my pay would be a shilling a day and everything found. A shilling a day is seven shillings a week, and I thought I should live like a fighting cock, plenty to eat and a shilling a day for drink or sport. But I found out the difference when it was too late. They kept a strict account against every man; it was full of what they called deductions, and we had to pay for so many things out of that shilling that sometimes for months together I hadn’t the price of a pint o’ threepenny with a trop o’ porter through it.”

“What was the biggest battle you ever were in?” enquired Philip.

“Well, I had some close shaves, but the worst was when we took a stockade from the Burmans. My regiment was the 47th, and one company of ours, sixty-five, rank and file, and two companies from other regiments were ordered to attack it. Our officers were all shot down before we reached the stockade, but we got in, and went at the Burmans with the bayonet. But such a crowd came at us from the rear of the stockade that we had to go out again, and we ran down the hill. Our ranks were broken, and we had no time to rally before a lot of horsemen were among us. My bayonet was broken, and I had nothing but my empty musket to fight with. I warded off the sabre cuts with it right and left, so, dodging among the horses, and I was not once wounded. It was all over in a hot minute or two, but, when the supports came up, and we were afterwards mustered, only five men of our company answered the roll-call. Of course I was one of them, and the barrel of my musket was notched like a saw by all the strokes I had parried with it.” The last time Philip saw Summers he was hammering bluestone by the roadside. The pomp and circumstance of glorious war had left him in hisold age little better than a beggar.

Philip found Nyalong without much trouble, and renewed the acquaintance begun at Bendigo with Mr. Barton and the other diggers. To all appearance his promotion was not worth much; he might as well have stayed at the Waterholes. Mr. McCarthy acted as school director —an honorary office—and he showed Philip the school. He said:

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“It is not of much account, I must acknowledge; we were short of funds, and had to put it up cheap. Most of the wall, you see, is only half a brick thick, and, during the sudden gusts that come across the lake, the north side bulges inward a good deal; so, when you hear the wind coming you had better send the children outside until the gale is over. That is what Mr. Foy, the last teacher did. And, I must tell you also this school has gone to the dogs; there are some very bad boys here—the Boyles and the Blakes. When they saw Mr. Foy was going to use his cane on them they would dart out of the school, the master after them. Then there was a regular steeplechase across the paddocks, and every boy and girl came outside to watch it, screaming and yelling. It was great fun, but it was not school-teaching. I am afraid you will never manage the Boyles and the Blakes. Mr. McLaggan, the minister, once found six of them sitting at the foot of a gum tree, drinking a bottle of rum. He spoke to them, told them that they were young reprobates, and were going straight to hell. Hugh Boyle held out the bottle, and said, ‘Here, Mr. McLaggan, wouldn’t you like a nip yourself?’ The minister was on horseback, and always carried a whip with a heavy lash, and it was a beautiful sight the way he laid the lash on those Boyles and Blakes. I really think you had better turn them out of the school, Mr. Philip, or else they will turn you out.”

Mr. Philip’s lips closed with a snap. He said, “It is my duty to educate them; turning them out of school is not education. We will see what can be done.”

As everyone knows, the twelve virtues of a good master are Gravity, Silence, Humility, Prudence, Wisdom, Patience, Discretion, Meekness, Zeal, Vigilance, Piety, and Generosity. I don’t suppose any teacher was ever quite perfect in the practice of them, but a sincere endeavour is often useful. On reflection, Philip thought it best to add two other virtues to the catalogue—viz., Firmness, and a Strap of Sole-Leather.

There was a full attendance of scholars the first morning, and when all the names had been entered on the roll, Philip observed that the Boyles and the Blakes were all there; they were expecting some new kind of fun with the new master. In order that the fun might be inside the school and not all over the paddocks, Philip placed his chair near the door, and locked it. Then education began; the scholars were all repeating their lessons, talking to one another aloud and quarrelling.

“Please, sir, Josh Blake’s a-pinching me.” “Please, sir, Hugh Boyle is a-scroodgin.” “Please, sir, Nancy Toomey is making faces at me.”

It was a pandemonium of little devils, to be changed, if possible, into little angels. The master rose from the chair, put up one hand, and said: “Silence!”

Every eye was on him, every tongue was silent, and every ear was listening, “Joseph Blake and Hugh Boyle, come this way.” They did so.

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“No one here is to shout or talk, or read in a loud voice. If any of you want to speak to me you must hold up your hand, so. When I nod you can come to me. If you don’t do everything I tell you, you will be slapped on the hand, or somewhere else, with this strap.”

He held it up to view. It was eighteen inches long, three inches broad, heavy, and pliant. The sight of it made Tommy Traddles and many other little boys and girls good all at once; but Joseph and Hugh went back to their seats grinning at one another. Mr. Foy had often talked that way, but it always came to nothing.

Hugh was the hero of the school, or rather the leading villain. In about two minutes he called out, “Please, sir, Josh Blake is a-shoving me with his elbow.”

“Hugh Boyle, come this way.” He came.

“Now, Hugh, I told you that there must be no speaking or reading aloud. Of course you forgot what I said; you should have put up your hand.”

In the course of the day Hugh received two slaps, then three, then four. He began to fear the strap as well as to feel it. That was the beginning of wisdom.

Nancy Toomey was naughty, and was sent into a corner. She was sulky and rebellious when told to return to her seat. She said, in the hearing of Tommy Traddles, “The master is a carroty-headed crawler.”

It is as well to remark that Philip’s hair was red; a man with red hair is apt to be of a hasty temper, and, as a matter of fact, I had seen Philip’s fist fly out very rapidly on several occasions before he began to practise the twelve virtues.

Tommy put up his hand, and, at a nod, went up to the master.

“Well, Tommy, what is the matter?”

“Please, sir, Nancy Toomey has been calling you a carroty-headed crawler.”

Tommy’s eyebrows were raised, his eyes and mouth wide open. Philip looked over his head at Nancy, whose face was on fire. He slowly repeated:

“Nancy Toomey has been calling me a carroty-headed crawler, has she?”

“Yes, sir. That’s what she called you. I heard her.”

“Well, Tommy, go to your seat like a good boy. Nancy won’t call names any more.”

In a little more than a week perfect discipline and good order prevailed in the school.

A BUSH HERMIT.

It is not good for man to be alone, but Philip became a hermit. Half a mile from the school and the main road there was an empty slab hut roofed with shingles. It was on the top of a long sloping hill, which afforded a beautiful view over the lake and the distant hills. Half an acre of garden ground was fenced in with the hut, and it was part of the farm of a man from Hampshire, England, who lived with his wife near the main road. A man from Hampshire is an Englishman, and should speak English; but, when Philip tried to make a bargain about the hut, he could not understand the Hampshire language,

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and the farmer's wife had to interpret. And that farmer lived to the age of eighty years, and never learned to speak English. He was not a fool by any means; knew all about farming; worked twelve or fourteen hours a day all the year round, having never heard of the eight hours system; but he talked, and prayed, and swore all his life in the Hampshire dialect. Whenever he spoke to the neighbours a look of pain and misery came over them. Sometimes he went to meetings, and made a speech, but he was told to go and fetch a Chinaman to interpret.

Philip entered into possession of the hut. It had two rooms, and the furniture did not cost much. At Adams' store he bought a camp oven, an earthenware stew-pot, a milk pan, a billy, two pannikins, two spoons, a whittle, and a fork. The extra pannikin and spoon were for the use of visitors, for Philip's idea was that a hermit, if not holy, should be at least hospitable. With an axe and saw he made his own furniture—viz., two hardwood stools, one of which would seat two men; for a table he sawed off the butt end of a messmate, rolled it inside the hut, and nailed on the top of it a piece of a pine packing case. His bedstead was a frame of saplings, with strong canvas nailed over it, and his mattress was a sheet of stringy bark, which soon curled up at the sides and fitted him like a coffin. His pillow was a linen bag filled with spare shirts and socks, and under it he placed his revolver, in case he might want it for unwelcome visitors.

Patrick Duggan's wife did the laundry work, and refused to take payment in cash. But she made a curious bargain about it. A priest visited Nyalong only once a month; he lived fifty miles away; when Mrs. Duggan was in her last sickness he might be unable to administer to her the rites of the church. So her bargain was, that in case the priest should be absent, the schoolmaster, as next best man, was to read prayers over her grave. Philip thought there was something strange, perhaps simoniacal, about the bargain. Twice Mrs. Duggan, thinking she was on the point of death, sent a messenger to remind him of his duty; and when at last she did die, he was present at the funeral, and read the prayers for the dead over her grave.

Avarice is a vice so base that I never heard of any man who would confess that he had ever been guilty of it. Philip was my best friend, and I was always loath to think unkindly of him, but at this time I really think he began to be rather penurious—not avaricious, certainly not. But he was not a hermit of the holiest kind. He began to save money and acquire stock. He had not been long on the hill before he owned a horse, two dogs, a cat, a native bear, a magpie, and a parrot, and he paid nothing for any of them except the horse. One day he met Mr. McCarthy talking to Bob Atkins, a station hand, who had a horse to sell—a filly, rising three. McCarthy was a good judge of horses, and after inspecting the filly, he said: "She will just suit you, Mr. Philip, you ought to buy her." So the bargain was made; the price was ten pounds, Bob giving in the saddle, bridle, a pair of hobbles, and a tether rope. He was proud of his deal.

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Two years afterwards, when Philip was riding through the bush, Bob rode up alongside, and after a while said:

“Well, Mister, how do you like that filly I sold you?”

“Very well indeed. She is a capital roadster and stockhorse.”

“Does she ever throw you?”

“Never. What makes you ask?”

“Well, that’s queer. The fact is I sold her to you because I could not ride her. Every time I mounted, she slung me a buster.”

“I see, Bob, you meant well, didn’t you? But she never yet slung me a buster; she is quieter than a lamb, and she will come to me whenever I whistle, and follow me like a dog.”

Philip’s first dog was named Sam. He was half collie and half bull dog, and was therefore both brave and full of sagacity. He guarded the hut and the other domestics during school hours, and when he saw Philip coming up the hill, he ran to meet him, smiling and wagging his tail, and reported all well. The other dog was only a small pup, a Skye terrier, like a bunch of tow, a present from Tommy Traddles. Pup’s early days were made very miserable by Maggie, the magpie. That wicked bird used to strut around Philip while he was digging in the garden, and after filling her crop with worms and grubs, she flapped away on one wing and went round the hut looking for amusement. She jumped on Pup’s back, scratched him with her claws, pecked at his skull, and pulled locks of wool out of it, the poor innocent all the while yelping and howling for mercy. Sam never helped Pup, or drove Maggie away; he was actually afraid of her, and believed she was a dangerous witch. Sometimes she pecked at his tail, and he dared not say a word, but sneaked away, looking sideways at her, hanging down his ears, and afraid to say his tail was his own. Joey, the parrot, watched all that was going on from his cage, which was hung on a hook outside the hut door. Philip tried to teach Joey to whistle a tune: “There is na luck aboot the hoose, There is na luck at a’,” but the parrot had so many things to attend to that he never had time to finish the tune. He was, indeed, very vain and flighty, sidling along his perch and saying: “Sweet pretty Joey, who are you, who are you? Ha! Ha! Ha!” wanting everybody to take notice and admire him. When Maggie first attacked poor Pup, scratched his back, pecked at his head, and tore locks of wool out of him, and Pup screamed pitifully to all the world for help, Joey poked his head between the wires of his cage, turned one eye downwards, listened to the language, and watched the new performance with silent ecstacy. He had never heard or seen anything like it in the whole course of his life. Philip used to drive Maggie away, take up poor Pup and stroke him, while Maggie, the villain, hopped around, flapping her wings and giving the greatest impudence.

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It really gave Philip a great deal of trouble to keep order among his domestics. One day, while hoeing in the garden, he heard the Pup screaming miserably. He said, "There's that villain, Maggie, at him again," and he ran up to the hut to drive her away. But when he reached it there was neither Pup nor Maggie to be seen, only Joey in his cage, and he was bobbing his head up and down, yelping exactly like the Pup, and then he began laughing at Philip ready to burst, "Ha! Ha! Ha! Who are you? Who are you? There is no luck aboot the hoose, There is na luck at a'."

The native bear resided in a packing case, nailed on the top of a stump nearly opposite the hut door. He had a strap round his waist, and was fastened to the stump by a piece of clothes line. The boys called him a monkey-bear, but though his face was like that of a bear he was neither a monkey nor a bear. He was in fact a sloth; his legs were not made for walking, but for climbing, and although he had strong claws and a very muscular forearm, he was always slow in his movements. He was very silent and unsociable, never joined in the amusements of the other domestics, and when Philip brought him a bunch of tender young gum-tree shoots for his breakfast in the morning, he did not even say "thanks" or smile, or show the least gratitude. He never spoke except at dead of night, when he was exchanging compliments with some other bear up a gum tree in the forty-acre paddock. And such compliments! Their voices were frightful, something between a roar and a groan, and although Philip was a great linguist he was never quite sure what they were saying. But the bear was always scheming to get away; he was like the Boers, and could not abide British rule. Philip would not have kept him at all, but as he had taken him into the family circle when a cub he did not like to be cruel and turn him out along in a heartless world. Twice Bruin managed to untie the clothes line and started for the forty-acre. He crawled along very slowly, and when he saw Philip coming after him, he stopped, looked behind him, and said, "Hoo," showing his disgust. Then Philip took hold of the end of the clothes line and brought him back, scolding all the time.

"You miserable Bruin, you don't know what's good for you; you can't tell a light-wood from a gum-tree, and you'll die of starvation, or else the boys will find you, and they will kill you, thinking you are a wild bush bear, for you don't show any signs of good education, after all the trouble I have taken to teach you manners. I am afraid you will come to a bad end."

And so he did. The third time Bruin loosed the clothes line he had a six hours' start before he was missed, and sure enough he hid himself in a lightwood for want of sense, and that very night the boys saw him by the light of the moon, and Hugh Boyle climbed up the tree and knocked him down with a waddy.

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Pussy, Philip's sixth domestic, had attained her majority; she had never gone after snakes in her youth, and had always avoided bad company. She did her duty in the house as a good mouser, and when mice grew scarce she went hunting for game; she had a hole under the eaves near the chimney, through which she could enter the hut at any time of the night or day. While Philip was musing after tea on the "Pons Asinorum" by the light of a tallow candle, Pussy was out poaching for quail, and as soon as she caught one she brought it home, dropped it on the floor, rubbed her side against Philip's boot, and said, "I have brought a little game for breakfast." Then Philip stroked her along the back, after which she lay down before the fire, tucked in her paws and fell asleep, with a good conscience.

But many bush cats come to an unhappy and untimely end by giving way to the vice of curiosity. When Dinah, the vain kitten, takes her first walk abroad in spring time, she observes something smooth and shiny gliding gently along. She pricks up her ears, and gazes at the interesting stranger; then she goes a little nearer, softly lifting first one paw and then another.

The stranger is more intelligent than Dinah. He says to himself, "I know her sort well, the silly thing. Saw her ages ago in the Garden. She wants mice and frogs and such things—takes the bread out of my mouth. Native industry must be protected." so the stranger brings his head round under the grass and waits for Dinah, who is watching his tail. The tail moves a little and then a little more. Dinah says, "It will be gone if I don't mind," and she jumps for it. At that instant the snake strikes her on the nose with his fangs. Dinah's fur rises on end with sudden fright, she shakes her head, and the snake drops off. She turns away, and says, "This is frightful; what a deceitful world! Life is not worth living." Her head feels queer, and being sleepy she lies down, and is soon a dead cat.

That summer was very hot at Nyalong, one hundred and ten degrees in the shade. Philip began to find his bed of stringy bark very hard, and as it grew older it curled together so much that he could scarcely turn in it from one side to the other. So he made a mattress which he stuffed with straw, and he found it much softer than the stringy bark. But after a while the mattress grew flat, and the stuffing lumpy. Sometimes on hot days he took out his bed, and after shaking it, he laid it down on the grass; his blankets he hung on the fence for many reasons which he wanted to get rid of.

The water in the forty-acre to the south was all dried up. An old black snake with a streak of orange along his ribs grew thirsty. His last meal was a mouse, and he said, "That was a dry mouthful, and wants something to wash it down." He knew his way to the water-hole at the end of the garden, but he had to pass the hut, which when he travelled that way the summer before was unoccupied.

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After creeping under the bottom rail of the fence, he raised his head a little, and looked round. He said, “I see there’s another tenant here”—Bruin was then alive and was sitting on the top of his stump eating gum leaves—“I never saw that fellow so low down in the world before; I wonder what he is doing here; been lagged, I suppose for something or other. He is a stupid, anyway, and won’t take any notice even if he sees me.”

Sam and Puss were both blinking their eyes in the shade of the lightwood, and whisking the flies from their ears. Maggie was walking about with beak open, showing her parched tongue; the heat made her low-spirited.

The snake had crept as far as Philip’s mattress, which was lying on the grass, when Maggie saw him. She instantly gave the alarm, “A snake, a snake!” for she knew he was a bad character. Sam and Puss jumped up and began to bark; Joey said, “There is na luck aboot the hoose.” Bruin was too stupid to say anything. The snake said, “Here is a terrible row all at once, I must make for a hole.” He had a keen eye for a hole, and he soon saw one. It was a small one, in Philip’s mattress, almost hidden by the seam, and had been made most likely by a splinter or a nail. The snake put his head in it, saying, “Any port in a storm,” then drew in his whole length, and settled himself comfortably among the straw.

Beasts and birds have instincts, and a certain amount of will and understanding, but no memory worth mentioning. For that reason the domestics never told Philip about the snake in his mattress, they had forgotten all about it. If Sam had buried a bone, he would have remembered it a week afterwards, if he was hungry; but as for snakes, it was, “out of sight, out of mind.”

Philip took in his mattress and blanket before sundown and made his bed. The snake was still in the straw; he had been badly scared, and thought it would be best to keep quiet until he saw a chance to creep out, and continue his journey down the garden. But it was awfully dark inside the mattress, and although he went round and round amongst the straw he could not find any way out of it, so at last he said: “I must wait till morning,” and went to sleep.

When Philip went to bed the snake was disturbed, and woke up. There was so heavy a weight on him that he could scarcely move, and he was almost suffocated. He said: “This is dreadful; I have been in many a tight place in my time, but never in one so tight as this. Whatever am I to do? I shall be squeezed to death if I don’t get away from this horrid monster on top of me.”

Philip fell asleep as usual, and by-and-by the snake began to flatten his ribs, and draw himself from under the load, until at last he was clear of it; then, heaving a deep sigh of

relief he lay quiet for awhile to recover his breath. He knew there was a hole somewhere if he could only find it and he kept poking his nose here and there against the mattress.

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After sleeping an hour or two, Philip turned on his other side, and the snake had to move out of the way in a hurry for fear of being squeezed to death. There was a noise as of something rustling in the straw, and after listening awhile, Philip said: "I suppose it's a mouse," and soon fell fast asleep again, because he was not afraid of mice even when they ran across his nose.

In the morning he took his blankets out again, and hung them on the fence, shook up his mattress and pillow, and then spread the sheets over them, tucking them in all round, and then he got ready his breakfast.

The whole of that day was spent by the snake in trying to find a way out. The sheets being tucked in he was still in the dark, and he kept going round and round, feeling for the hole with his nose until he went completely out of his mind, just as a man does when he is lost in the bush. So the day wore on, night and bedtime came again, and Philip lay down to rest once more right over the imprisoned snake. Then that snake went raving mad, lost all control of himself, and rolled about recklessly. Philip sat up in bed, and a cold sweat began to trickle down his face, and his hair stood on end. He whispered to himself as if afraid the snake might hear him. "The Lord preserve us, that's no mouse; it's a snake right under me. What shall I do?"

The first thing to do was to strike a light; the matches and candle were on a box at his bedside, and he slowly put out his hand to reach them, expecting every moment to feel the fangs in his wrist. But he found the match-box, struck a light, carefully examined the floor as far as he could see it, jumped out of bed at one bound, and took refuge in the other room. There he looked in every corner, and along every rafter for the other snake, for he knew that at this season snakes are often found in pairs, but he could not see the mate of the one he had left in bed.

There was no sleep for Philip that night, and, by the light of the candle, he sat waiting for the coming day, and planning dire vengeance. At sunrise he examined closely every hole, and crevice, and corner, and crack in both rooms, floor and floor, slabs, rafters, and shingles. He said, at last: "I think there is only one snake, and he is in the bed."

Then he went outside, and cut a stick about five feet long, one end of which he pointed with his knife. Returning to the bedroom, he lifted up with the point of his stick the sheets, blankets, and pillows, took them outside, and hung them on the fence. Next he turned over the mattress slowly, but there was nothing to be seen under it. He poked the mattress with the blunt end of his stick here and there, and he soon saw that something was moving inside. "Ah!" he said, "there you are, my friend." The thought of having slept two nights on a live snake made him shudder a little, but he was bent on vengeance. He took hold of one end of the mattress with one hand, and holding

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the stick in the other, he carried it outside and laid it on the grass. Looking carefully at every side of the mattress he discovered the hole through which the snake had entered. It was so small that he could scarcely believe that a snake had gone through it, but no other hole was anywhere visible. Philip said, “If the beast comes out it shall be through fire,” so he picked up a few pieces of bark which he placed over the hole, and set on fire. The straw inside was soon in a blaze, and the snake was lively. His situation was desperate, and his movements could be traced by the rising and falling of the ticking. Philip said, “My friend, you are looking for a hole, but when you find it it will be a hot one.” The snake at last made a dash for life through the fire, and actually came out into the open air. But he was dazed and blinded, and his skin was wet and shining with oil, or perspiration, or something.

Philip gave him a finishing stroke with his stick, and tossed him back into the fire. Of course a new mattress was necessary, and a keen eye for snakes ever afterwards.

The teaching in the school went on with regularity and success. There was, however, an occasional interruption. Once a furious squall came over the lake, and shook the frail building so much that Philip threw open the door and sent out all the children, the little ones and girls first, and then the boys, remaining himself to the last like the captain of a sinking ship; but he was not so much of a fool to stay inside and brave destruction; he went out to a safe distance until the squall was over.

Sometimes a visitor interfered with the work of the school, and Philip for that reason hated visitors; but it was his duty to be civil and patient. Two inspectors called on two different occasions to examine the scholars. One of them was scarcely sober, and he behaved in a manner so eccentric that the master had a strong temptation to kick him out. However, he at last succeeded in seeing the inspector outside the door peaceably, and soon afterwards the department dispensed with that gentleman’s services.

He had obtained his office by favour of a minister at home for services rendered at an election. His salary was 900 pounds per annum. The next inspector received the same salary. He was brother or brother-in-law to a bishop, and had many ancestors and relatives of high degree. Philip foolishly showed him a few nuggets which he had picked up in Picaninny Gully, and the inspector showed Philip the letter by which he had obtained his appointment and 900 pounds a year. It was only a couple of lines written and signed by a certain lord in London, but it was equivalent to an order for a billet on the government of Victoria. Then the inspector said he would feel extremely obliged to Philip if he would give him one of his little nuggets that he might send it to my lord as a present, and Philip at once handed over his biggest nugget. Little amenities of this kind make life so pleasant. My lord would be pleased to receive the nugget, the inspector was pleased to send it, and Philip said “it cannot be bribery and corruption, but this

inspector being a gentleman will be friendly. When he mentions me and my school in his report he cannot possibly forget the nugget."

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Barney, the boozer, one day visited the school. He opened the door and stood on the threshold. His eyes seemed close together, and there was a long red scar on his bare neck, where he had on a former occasion cut his throat. All the scholars were afraid of Barney, and the girls climbed up on the benches and began to scream.

Philip went up to the Boozer and said:

“Well, my friend, what do you want here?”

“The devil knows,” replied Barney.

“Very likely, but he is not here, he has gone down the road.”

Then taking Barney by the arm he turned him round and guided him to the road. Barney went about twenty yards until he came to a pool of water. He stepped on to the fence and sat on the top rail gazing into the pool. At last he threw his hat into it, then his boots, coat, shirt, and trousers. When he was quite naked, he stamped on his clothes until they were thoroughly soaked and buried in mud. Barney then resumed his search for the devil, swinging his arms to and fro in a free and defiant manner.

The school was also visited by a bishop, a priest, a squatter, and a judge. The dress and demeanour of the judge were very impressive at so great a distance from any centre of civilization, for he wore a tall beaver hat, a suit of black broadcloth, and a white necktie. Philip received him with reverence, thinking he could not be anything less than a lord spiritual, such is the power of broadcloth and fine linen. Nosey, the shepherd, was then living at Nyalong, having murdered the other shepherd, Baldy, about six months before, and this judge sent Nosey to the gallows seventeen years afterwards; but neither Nosey nor the judge knew what was to happen after seventeen years. This is the story of Nosey and Baldy.

THE TWO SHEPHERDS.

By the men on the run they were known as Nosey and Baldy, but in a former stage of their existence, in the days of the Emperor Augustus Caesar, they were known as Naso and Balbus. They were then rivals in love and song, and accused each other of doing things that were mean. And now, after undergoing for their sins various transmigrations into the forms of inferior animals, during two thousand years, as soon as shepherds are required in Australia Felix, they appear once more following their flocks and herds. But they are entirely forgetful of all Greek and Roman civilization; their morals have not improved, and their quarrels are more bitter than ever. In the old times they tootled on the tuneful reed, and sang in purest Latin the sweetest ditties ever heard, in praise of Galatea and Amyntas, Delia and Iolla. But they never tootle now, and never sing, and when they speak, their tongue is that of the unmusical barbarians. In their pagan days

they stained their rustic altars with the blood of a kid, a sacrifice to Jupiter, and poured out libations of generous wine; but they offer up neither prayer nor sacrifice now, and they pour libations of gin down their throats.

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The Italian rustic is yet musical, and the Roman citizen has not lost the genius of his race. He is still unrivalled in sculpture and architecture, in painting, in poetry, and philosophy; and in every handicraft his fingers are as deft as ever. But empire has slipped from his grasp, and empire once lost, like time, never returns. Who can rebuild Ninevah or Babylon, put new life into the mummies of the Pharoahs, and recrown them; raise armies from the dust of the warriors of Sesostris, and send them forth once more to victory and slaughter? Julian the Apostate tried to rebuild the Holy City and Temple of Israel, to make prophecy void—apparently a small enterprise for a Roman Emperor—but all his labours were vain. Modern Julians have been trying to resuscitate old Rome, and to found for her a new empire, and have only made Italy another Ireland, with a starving people and a bankrupt government. 'Nos patriae fines, nos dulcia linquimus arva'. The Italians are emigrating year after year to avoid starvation in the Garden of Europe. In every city of the great empire on which the sun never sets they wander through the streets, clad in faded garments of olive green—the toga long since discarded and forgotten—making sweet music from the harp and violin, their melancholy eyes wandering after the passing crowd, hoping for the pitiful penny that is so seldom given.

The two shepherds were employed on a station north of Lake Nyalong. It is a country full of dead volcanoes, whose craters have been turned into salt lakes, and their rolling floods of lava have been stiffened into barriers of black rocks; where the ashes belched forth in fiery blasts from the deep furnaces of a burning world have covered the hills and plains with perennial fertility.

Baldy had been entrusted with a fattening flock, and Nosey had in his care a lambing flock. From time to time the sheep were counted, and it was found that the fattening flock was decreasing in numbers. The squatter wanted to know what had become of his missing sheep, but Baldy could give no account of them. His suspicions, however, soon fell on Nosey. The latter was his nearest neighbour, and although he had only the same wages—viz., thirty pounds a year and rations— he seemed to be unaccountably prosperous, and was the owner of a wife and two horses. He had been transported for larceny when he was only fifteen years of age, and at twenty-eight he was suspected of being still a thief. Girls of the same age were sent from Great Britain to Botany Bay and Van Diemen's Land for stealing one bit of finery, worth a shilling, and became the consorts of criminals of the deepest dye. You may read their names in the Indents to this day, together with their height, age, complexion, birthplace, and other important particulars.

Baldy went over to Nosey's hut one evening when the blue smoke was curling over the chimney, and the long shadows of the Wombat Hills were creeping over the Stoney Rises. Julia was boiling the billy for tea, and her husband was chopping firewood outside.

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“Good evening, Julia,” said Baldy; “fine evening.”

“Same to you, Baldy. Any news to-day?” asked Julia.

“Well, there is,” said Baldy, “and it’s bad news for me; there’s ten more of my fatteners missing” (Nosey stopped chopping and listened) “and the master says I’ll have to hump my swag if I can’t find out what has become of them. I say, Nosey, you don’t happen to have seen any dingoes or blacks about here lately?”

“I ain’t seen e’er a one, neither dingo nor blackfellow. But, you know, if they were after mischief they’d take care not to make a show. There might be stacks of them about and we never to see one of them.”

Nosey was proud of his cunning.

“Well,” said Baldy, “I can hear of nobody having seen any strangers about the Rises, nor dingoes, nor black fellows. And the dingoes, anyhow, would have left some of the carcases behind; but the thieves, whoever they are, have not left me as much as a lock of the wool of my sheep. I have been talking about ’em with old Sharp; he is the longest here of any shepherd in the country, and knows all the blacks, and he says it’s his opinion the man who took the sheep is not far away from the flock now. What do you think about it, Nosey?”

“What the——should I know about your sheep?” said Nosey. “Do you mean to insinivate that I took ’em? I’ll tell you what it is, Baldy; it’ll be just as well for you to keep your blasted tongue quiet about your sheep, for if I hear any more about ’em, I’ll see you for it; do you hear?”

“Oh, yes, I hear. All right, Nosey, we’ll see about it,” said Baldy.

There would have been a fight perhaps, but Baldy was a smaller man than the other and was growing old, while Nosey was in the prime of life.

Baldy went to Nyalong next day. His rations did not include gin, and he wanted some badly, the more so because he was in trouble about his lost sheep. Gin, known then as “Old Tom,” was his favourite remedy for all ailments, both of mind and body. If he could not find out what had become of his sheep, his master might dismiss him without a character. There was not much good character running to waste on the stations, but still no squatter would like to entrust a flock to a shepherd who was suspected of having stolen and sold his last master’s sheep.

Baldy walked to Nyalong along the banks of the lake. The country was then all open, unfenced, except the paddocks at the home stations. The boundary between two of the runs was merely marked by a ploughed furrow, not very straight, which started near the lake, and went eastward along the plains. In the Rises no plough could make a line

through the rocks, and the boundaries there were imaginary. Stray cattle were roaming over the country, eating the grass, and the main resource of the squatters was the Pounds Act. Hay was then sold at 80 pounds per ton at Bendigo; a draft of fat bullocks was worth a mine

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of gold at Ballarat, and, therefore, grass was everywhere precious. No wonder if the hardy bullock-driver became a cattle lifter after his team had been impounded by the station stockman when found only four hundred yards from the bush track. Money, in the shape of fat stock, was running loose, as it were, on every run, and why should not the sagacious Nosey do a little business when Baldy's fat sheep were tempting him, and a market for mutton could be found no farther away than the Nyalong butcher's shop.

Baldy left the township happier than usual, carrying under his arm two bottles of Old Tom. He was seen by a man who knew him entering the Rises, and going away in the direction of Nosey's hut, and then for fifteen years he was a lost shepherd. In course of time it was ascertained that he had called at Nosey's hut on his way home. He had the lost sheep on his mind, and he could not resist the impulse to have another word or two with Nosey about them. He put down the two bottles of gin outside the door of the hut, near an axe whose handle leaned against the wall. Nosey and his wife, Julia, were inside, and he bade them good evening. Then he took a piece of tobacco out of his pocket, and began cutting it with his knife. He always carried his knife tied to his belt by a string which went through a hole bored in the handle. It was a generally useful knife, and with it he foot-rotted sheep, stirred the tea in his billy, and cut beef and damper, sticks, and tobacco.

"I have been to Nyalong," he said, "and I heern something about my sheep; they went to the township all right, strayed away, you know, followed one another's tails, and never came back, the O. K. bullocks go just the same way. Curious, isn't it?"

Nosey listened with keen interest. "Well, Baldy," he said, "and what did you hear? Did you find out who took 'em?"

"Oh, yes," said Baldy; "I know pretty well all about 'em now, both sheep and bullocks. Old Sharp was right about the sheep, anyway. The thief is not far from the flock, and it's not me." Baldy was brewing mischief for himself, but he did not know how much.

"Did you tell the police about 'em?" asked Nosey.

"Oh, no, not to-day!" answered Baldy. "Time enough yet. I ain't in no hurry to be an informer."

Nosey eyed him with unusual savagery, and said:

"Now didn't I tell you to say no more about your blasted sheep, or I'd see you for it? and here you are again, and you can't leave 'em alone. You are no better than a fool."

“Maybe I am a fool, Nosey. Just wait till I get a light, and I’ll leave your hut and trouble you no more.”

He was standing in the middle of the floor cutting his tobacco, and rubbing it between the palms of his hands, shaking his head, and eyeing the floor with a look of great sagacity.

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Nosey went outside, and began walking to and fro, thinking and whispering to himself. It was a habit he had acquired while slowly sauntering after his sheep. He seemed to have another self, an invisible companion with whom he discussed whatever was uppermost in his mind. If he had then consulted his other self, Julia, he might have saved himself a world of trouble; but he did not think of her. He said to himself: "Now, Nosey, if you don't mind, you are going to be in a hole. That old fool inside has found out something or other about the sheep, and the peelers will have you, if you don't look out, and they'll give you another seven years and maybe ten. You've done your time once, Nosey, and how would you like to do it again? Why couldn't you leave the cursed sheep alone and keep out of mischief just when you were settling down in life comfortable, and might have a chance to do better. Baldy will be telling the peelers to-morrow all he knows about the sheep you stole, and then they'll fetch you, sure. There's only one thing to stop the old fool's jaw, and you are not game to do it, Nosey; you never done a man yet, and you are not game to do it now, and you'll be damned if you do it, and the devil will have you, and you'll be hanged first maybe. And if you don't do him you'll be lagged again for the sheep, and in my opinion, Nosey, you are not game. Yes, by the powers, you are, Nosey, damned if you ain't. Who's afeered? And you'll do it quick —do it quick. Now or never's your time."

While talking thus to himself, Nosey was pacing to and fro, and he glanced at the axe every time he passed the door. The weapon was ready to his hand, and seemed to be inviting him to use it.

"Baldy is going to light his pipe, and while he is stooping to get a firestick, I'll do him with the axe."

When Baldy turned towards the fire, Nosey grasped the axe and held it behind him. He waited a moment, and then entered the hut; but Baldy either heard his step, or had some suspicion of danger, for he looked around before takingup a firestick. At that instant the blow, intended for the back of the head, struck him on the jaw, and he fell forward among the embers. For one brief moment of horror he must have realised that he was being murdered, and then another blow behind the head left him senseless.

Nosey dragged the body out of the fireplace into the middle of the floor, intending, while he was doing a man, to do him well. He raised the axe to finish his work with a third blow, but Julia gave a scream so piercing that his attention was diverted to her.

"Oh, Nosey," she said, "what are you doing to poor Baldy? You are murdering him."

Nosey turned to his wife with upraised axe.

"Hold your jaw, woman, and keep quiet, or I'll do as much for you."

She said no more. She was tall and stout, had small, sharp, roving eyes; and Nosey was a thick-set man, with a thin, prominent nose, sunken eyes, and overhanging brows. He never had a prepossessing appearance, and now his look and attitude were so ugly and fierce that the big woman was completely cowed. The pair stood still for some time, watching the last convulsive movements of the murdered Baldy.

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Nosey could now pride himself on having been “game to do his man,” but he could not feel much glory in his work just yet. He had done it without sufficient forethought, and his mind was soon full of trouble.

Murder was worse than sheep stealing, and the consequences of his new venture in crime began to crowd on his mind with frightful rapidity. He had not even thought of any plan for hiding away the corpse. He had no grave ready, and could not dig one anywhere in the neighbourhood. The whole of the country round his hut was rocky—little hills of bare bluestone boulders, and grassy hollows covered with only a few inches of soil—rocks everywhere, above ground and below. He could burn the body, but it would take a long time to do it well; somebody might come while he was at the work, and even the ashes might betray his secret. There were shallow lakes and swamps, but he could not put the corpse into any of them with safety: search would be made wherever there was water, on the supposition that Baldy had been drowned after drinking too freely of the gin he had brought from Nyalong, and if the body was found, the appearance of the skull would show that death had been caused, not by drowning, but by the blows of that cursed axe. Nosey began to lay all the blame on the axe, and said, “If it had not stood up so handy near the door, I wouldn’t have killed the man.”

It was the axe that tempted him. Excuses of that sort are of a very ancient date.

Luckily Nosey owned two horses, one of which was old and quiet. He told Julia to fasten the door, and to open it on no account whatever, while he went for the horse, which was feeding in the Rises hobbled, and with a bell tied round his neck. When he returned he saddled the animal, and Julia held the bridle while he went into the hut for the body. He observed Baldy’s pipe on the floor near the fire-place, and he replaced it in the pocket in which it had been usually kept, as it might not be safe to leave anything in the hut belonging to the murdered man. There was a little blood on the floor, but he would scrape that off by daylight, and he would then also look at the axe and put away the two bottles of gin somewhere; he could do all that next morning before Baldy was missed. But the corpse must be taken away at once, for he felt that every minute of delay might endanger his neck. He dragged the body outside, and with Julia’s help lifted it up and placed it across the saddle. Then he tried to steady his load with his right hand, and to guide the horse by the bridle with his left, but he soon found that a dead man was a bad rider; Baldy kept slipping towards the near side or the off side with every stride of the horse, and soon fell to the ground.

Nosey was in a furious hurry, he was anxious to get away; he cursed Baldy for giving him so much trouble; he could have killed him over again for being so awkward and stubborn, and he begun to feel that the old shepherd was more dangerous dead than alive. At last he mounted his horse, and called to Julia to come and help him.

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“Here, Julia, lift him up till I catch hold of his collar, and I’ll pull him up in front of me on the saddle, and hold him that way.”

Julia, with many stifled moans, raised the body from the ground, Nosey reached down and grasped the shirt collar, and thus the two managed to place the swag across the saddle. Then Nosey made a second start, carefully balancing the body, and keeping it from falling with his right hand, while he held the bridle with his left.

The funeral procession slowly wound its way in a westerly direction among the black rocks over the softest and smoothest ground to avoid making any noise. There was no telling what stockman or cattle-stealer the devil might send at any moment to meet the murderer among the lonely Rises, and even in the darkness his horrible burden would betray him. Nosey was disturbed by the very echo of his horse’s steps; it seemed as if somebody was following him at a little distance; perhaps Julia, full of woman’s curiosity; and he kept peering round and looking back into the darkness. In this way he travelled about a mile and a half, and then dismounting, lowered the body to the ground, and began to look for some suitable hiding place. He chose one among a confused heap of rocks, and by lifting some of them aside he made a shallow grave, to which he dragged the body, and covered it by piling boulders over and around it. He struck several matches to enable him to examine his work carefully, and closed up every crevice through which his buried treasure might be visible.

The next morning Nosey was astir early. He had an important part to act, and he was anxious to do it well. He first examined the axe and cleaned it well, carefully burning a few of Baldy’s grey hairs which he found on it. Then he searched the floor for drops of blood, which he carefully scraped with a knife, and washed until no red spot was visible. Then he walked to Baldy’s and pretended to himself that he was surprised to find it empty. What had happened the previous night was only a dream, an ugly dream. He met an acquaintance and told him that Baldy was neither in his hut nor with his sheep.

The two men called at old Sharp’s hut to make enquiries. The latter said, “I seen Baldy’s sheep yesterday going about in mobs, and nobody to look after them.” Then the three men went to the deserted hut. Everything in it seemed undisturbed. The dog was watching at the door, and they told him to seek Baldy. He pricked up his ears, wagged his tail, and looked wistfully in the direction of Nosey’s hut, evidently expecting his master to come in sight that way.

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The men went to the nearest magistrate and informed him that the shepherd was missing. A messenger went to the head station. Enquiries were made at the township, and it was found that Baldy had been to Nyalong the previous day, and had left in the evening carrying two bottles of gin. This circumstance seemed to account for his absence; he had taken too much of the liquor, was lying asleep somewhere, and would reappear in the course of the day. Men both on foot and on horseback roamed through the Rises, examining the hollows and the flats, the margins of the shallow lakes, and peering into every wombat hole as they passed. They never thought of turning over any of the boulders; a drunken man would never make his bed and blanket of rocks; he would be found lying on the top if he had stumbled amongst them. One by one as night approached the searchers returned to the hut. They had discovered nothing, and the only conclusion they could come to was, that Baldy was taking a very long sleep somewhere—which was true enough.

Next day every man from the neighbouring stations, and some from Nyalong, joined in the search. The chief constable was there, and as became a professed detector of crime, he examined everything minutely inside and outside the two huts, but he could not find anything suspicious about either of them. He entered into conversation with Julia, but the eye of her husband was on her, and she had little to say. Nosey, on the contrary, was full of suggestions as to what might have happened to Baldy, and he helped to look for him eagerly and actively in every direction but the right one.

For many days the Rises were peopled with prospectors, but one by one they dropped away. The chief constable was loath to leave the riddle unsolved; he had the instinct of the sleuth-hound on the scent of blood. He had been a pursuer of bad works amongst the convicts for a long time, both in Van Diemen's Land and in Victoria, and had helped to bring many men to the gallows or the chain-gang. He had once been shot in the back by a horse thief who lay concealed behind the door of a shepherd's hut, but he secured the horse thief. He was a man without nerves, of medium height, strongly built, had a broad face, massive ears, wide, firm mouth, and strong jaws.

One night after the searchers had departed to their various homes, the chief remained alone in the Rises, and leaving his horse hobbled at a distance, cautiously approached Nosey's hut. He placed his ear to the outside of the weatherboards, and listened for some time to the conversation of Nosey and his wife, expecting to obtain by chance some information about the disappearance of the other shepherd. Nosey was in a bad temper, swearing and finding fault with everything. Julia was prudent and said little; it was best not to say too much to a man who was so handy with the family axe. But at last she made use of one expression which seemed to mean something.

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She said, “Oh, Nosey, you murdering villain, you know you ought to be hanged.” There was a prophetic ring in these words which delighted the chief constable, and he glued his great ear to the weatherboards, eagerly listening for more; but the wrangling pair were very disappointing; they would not keep to the point. At last he walked round the hut, suddenly opened the door, and entered. Nosey was struck dumb at once. His first thought was that his plan had been sprung, and that the murder was out. The chief addressed Julia in a tone of authority, imitating the counsel for the crown when examining a prevaricating witness.

“Now, missus, remember you will be put on your oath. You said just now, ’Oh, Nosey, you murdering villain, you know you ought to be hanged.’ Those were your very words. Now what did you mean? On your oath, mind; out with it at once.”

But Julia was not to be caught so easily. She replied:

“Oh, bad luck to him, he is always angry. I don’t know what to do with him. I did not mean anything.”

“You did not mean anything about Baldy, I suppose, did you, now?” queried the constable, shamefully leading the witness, and looking hard at Nosey.

Julia parried the question by heaving a deep sigh, and saying: “Hi, ho, Harry, if I were a maid, I never would marry;” and then she began singing a silly old song.

The constable was disgusted, and said:

“My good woman, you’ll find there will be nothing to laugh at in this job, when I see you again.”

As he left the hut, he turned at the door and gave one more look at Nosey, who had stood all the time rivetted to the ground, expecting every moment that the constable would produce the handcuffs. Soon afterwards Julia went outside, walked round the hut, and stayed awhile, listening and looking in every direction. When she returned, Nosey said, in a hoarse whisper:

“Is he gan yet?”

“I think,” replied Julia, “he won’t be coming again to-night. He has thrown away his trouble this time, anyhow; but ye must hould your tongue, Nosey, if ye want to save your neck; he means to have you if he can.”

Nosey stayed on the run some weeks longer, following his sheep. It would not be advisable to go away suddenly, and, moreover, he recollected that what the eye could

not see might some time be discovered by another of the senses. So he waited patiently, standing guard as it were over the dead, until his curiosity induced him to pay a farewell visit by daylight to the place where Baldy was buried.

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There had been hot weather since the body had been deposited in the shallow grave, and the crevices among the piles of bluestones had been filled by the wind with the yellow stalks of decayed grass. Nosey walked round his own particular pile, and inspected it closely. He was pleased to find that it showed no signs of having been touched since he raised it. It was just like any of the other heaps of rocks around it. He had, at any rate, given Baldy as good a funeral as circumstances would permit, better than that of many a man who had perished of hunger, heat, and thirst, in the shelterless wastes of the Never-Never Land, “beyond Moneygrub’s farthest run.” Nosey and the weather had done their work so well that for the next fifteen years no shepherd, stockman, or squatter ever gave a second look at that unknown grave. The black snake coiled itself beneath the decaying skeleton, and spent the winter in secure repose. The native cat tore away bits of Baldy’s clothing, and with them and the yellow grass made, year after year, a nest for its young among the whitening bones.

Everything, so far, had turned out quite as satisfactorily as any murderer could expect. Nosey had been game to do his man, and he had done him well. Julia was prudent enough to hold her tongue for her own sake; it was unlikely that any further search would be made for the lost shepherd; he had been safely put out of sight, and not even Julia knew where he was buried.

Nosey began to have a better opinion of himself than ever. Neither the police nor the law could touch him. He would never be called to account for putting away his brother shepherd, in this world at any rate; and as for the next, why it was a long way off, and there was time enough to think about it. The day of reckoning was distant, but it came at last, as it always does to every sinner of us all.

Nosey resigned his billet, and went to Nyalong. He lived in a hut in the eastern part of the township, not far from the lake, and near the corner of the road coming down from the Bald Hill. Here had been laid the foundation of a great inland city by a bush publican, two storekeepers, a wheelwright, and a blacksmith. Another city had been started at the western side of Wandong Creek, but its existence was ignored by the eastern pioneers.

The shepherd soon began to forget or despise the advice of his wife, Julia; his tongue grew loose again, and at the bar of the inn of the crossroads his voice was often heard loud and abusive. He felt that he had become a person of importance, as the possessor of a secret which nobody could discover. What he said and what he did was discussed about the township, and the chief constable listened to every report, expecting that some valuable information would accidentally leak out.

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One day a man wearing a blue jumper and an old hat came down the road, stepped on to the verandah of the inn, and threw down his swag. Nosey was there, holding forth to Bill the Butcher, Dick Smalley, Frank Barton, Bob Atkins, Charley Goodall, and George Brown the Liar. A dispute occurred, in which the presumptuous stranger joined, and Nosey promptly knocked him off the verandah into the gutter. A valid claim to satisfaction was thus established, and the swagman showed a disposition to enforce it. He did not attempt to regain his position on the boards, but took his stand on the broad stone of honour in the middle of the road. He threw up his hat into the air, and began walking rapidly to and fro, clenched his fists, stiffened his sinews, and at every turn in his walk said:

“You’ll find me as good a man as ever you met in your life.”

This man’s action promised real sport, and true Britons as we all were we were delighted to see him. Nosey stood on the verandah for a minute or two, watching the motions of the swagman; he did not seem to recollect all at once what the code of honour required, until Bill the Butcher remarked, “He wants you, Nosey,” then Nosey went.

The two men met in the middle of the road, and put up their hands. They appeared well-matched in size and weight. The swagman said:

“You’ll find me as good a man as ever you met in your life.”

Nosey began the battle by striking out with his right and left, but his blows did not seem to reach home, or to have much effect.

The swagman dodged and parried, and soon put in a swinging blow on the left temple. Nosey fell to the ground, and the stranger resumed his walk as before, uttering his war cry:

“You’ll find me as good a man as ever you met in your life.”

There were no seconds, but the rules of chivalry were strictly observed; the stranger was a true gentleman, and did not use his boots.

In the second round Nosey showed more caution, but the result was the same, and it was brought about by another hard blow on the temple. The third round finished the fight. Nosey lay on the ground so long that Bill, the Butcher, went over to look at him, and then he threw up the sponge—metaphorically—as there was no sponge, nor any need of one.

The defeated Nosey staggered towards his hut, and his temper was afterwards so bad that Julia declined to stay with him any longer; she loosed the marriage bonds without recourse to law, and disappeared. Her husband went away westward, but he did not

stay long. He returned to Nyalong and lived awhile alone in his hut there, but he was restless and dissatisfied. Everybody looked at him so curiously. Even the women and children stood still as he passed by them, and began whispering to one another, and he guessed well enough why they were looking at him and what they were saying—“That’s Nosey the murderer; he killed Baldy and hid him away somewhere; his wife said he ought to be hanged, and she has run away and left him.”

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When the hungry hawk comes circling over the grove of crookedy gum in which two magpies are feeding their callow young, the bush is soon filled with cries of alarm. The plump quail hides himself in the depths of a thick tussock; the bronze-winged pigeon dives into the shelter of the nearest scrub, while all the noisiest scolds of the air gather round the intruder. Every magpie, minah, and wattle-bird within a mile joins in the clamour. They dart at the hawk as he flies from tree to tree. When he alights on a limb they give him no peace; they flap their wings in his face, and call him the worst of names. Even the Derwent Jackass, the hypocrite with the shining black coat and piercing whistle, joins in the public outcry, and his character is worse than that of the hawk himself, for he has been caught in the act of kidnapping and devouring the unfledged young of his nearest neighbour. The distracted hawk has at length to retreat dinnerless to the swampy margin of the river where the tallest tea-trees wave their feathery tops in the wind.

In like manner the human hawk was driven from the township. He descended in the scale of crime, stole a horse, and departed by night.

Bill, the butcher, said next day: “Nosey has gone for good this time. He will ride that horse to death and then steal another.”

At this time I rode through the Rises and called at the two huts; I found them occupied by two shepherds not unlike the former tenants, who knew little and cared less what had become of their predecessors. Time empties thrones and huts impartially, and the king feels no pride in his monument of marble, nor the shepherd any shame beneath the shapeless cairn which hides his bones.

At this time the old races both of men and animals were dying out around Lake Nyalong, and others were taking their places. The last black child ever seen in the township was brought by its mother to the hut of a white woman. It was naked and very dirty, and she laid it down on the clay floor. The white woman’s heart was moved with pity at the sight of the miserable little bairn. She took it up, washed it with warm water and soap, wrapped it in flannel, and gave it back to the mother. But the lubra was loath to receive it. She said, “Black picaninny all die. No good; white picaninny live.”

The kangaroo, wombat, and dingo were fast dying out, as well a the blackfellow. We could all see well enough how the change was brought about. Millions of years ago, new species may have been evolved out of the old species, but nothing of the kind happens now. The white men of Australia were not evolved out of the black men. There are no family ties, and never will be, between the kangaroo, the wombat and wallaby, and their successors, the cattle, the sheep, and the goats. We can kill species, but we can’t create any.

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The rabbit, destined to bring Nosey to the gallows, was a favoured animal on Austin's station at the Barwon. It was a privilege to shoot him—in small quantities—he was so precious. But he soon became, as the grammar says, a noun of multitude. He swarmed on the plains, hopped over the hills, burrowed among the rocks in the Rises, and nursed his multitudinous progeny in every hollow log of the forest. Neither mountain, lake, or river ever barred his passage. He ate up all the grass and starved the pedigree cattle, the well-born dukes and duchesses, and on tens of thousands of fertile acres left no food to keep the nibbling sheep alive. Every hole and crevice of the rocks was full of him. An uninvited guest, he dropped down the funnel-shaped entrance to the den of the wombat, and made himself at home with the wild cat and snake. He clothed the hills with a creeping robe of fur, and turned the Garden of the West into a wilderness. Science may find a theory to account for the beginning of all things, but among all her triumphs she has been unable to put an end to the rabbit. War has been made upon them by fire, dynamite, phosphorus, and all deadly poisons; by dogs, cats, weasels, foxes, and ferrets, but he still marches over the land triumphantly.

For fifteen years Nosey roamed from station to station under various names, between Queensland and the Murray, but wherever he went, the memory of his crime never left him. He had been taught in his boyhood that murder was one of the four sins crying to heaven for vengeance, and he knew that sooner or later the cry would be heard. Sometimes he longed to unburden his mind to a priest, but he seldom saw or heard of one. The men with whom he worked and wandered were all like himself—lost souls who had taken the wrong turn in the beginning of their days, the failures of all trades and professions; thieves, drunkards, and gamblers; criminals who had fled from justice; men of pleasure and, therefore, of misery; youths of good family exported from England, Ireland, and Scotland to mend their morals, to study wool, and become rich squatters. All these men get colonial experience, but it does not make them saintly or rich. Here and there, all over the endless plains, they at last lie down and die, the dingoes hold inquests over them, and, literally, they go to the dogs, because they took the wrong turn in life and would not come back.

In 1868 Nosey and his two mates were approaching a station on the Lachlan. Since sunrise they had travelled ten miles without breakfast, and were both hungry and weary. They put down their swags in the shade of a small grove of timber within sight of the station buildings. Bob Castles said:

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“I was shearing in them sheds in ’52 when old Shenty owned the run. He was a rum old miser, he was, would skin two devils for one hide; believe he has gone to hell; hope so, at any rate. He couldn’t read nor write much, but he could make money better’n any man I ever heard of. Bought two runs on the Murray, and paid 180,000 pounds for ’em in one cheque. He kept a lame schoolmaster to write his cheques and teach his children, gave him 40 pounds a year, the same as a shepherd. Lived mostly on mutton all the year round; never killed no beef for the station, but now and then an old bullock past work, salted him down in the round swamp for a change o’ grub. Never grew no cabbage or wegetables, only a paddock of potatoes. Didn’t want no visitors, ’cos he was afraid they’d want to select some of his run. Wanted everything to look as poor and miserable as possible. He put on a clean shirt once a week, on Sabbath to keep it holy, and by way of being religious. Kept no fine furniture in the house, only a big hardwood table, some stools, and candle boxes. After supper old Mother Shenty scraped the potato skins off the table into her apron —she always boiled the potatoes in their jackets —and then Shenty lay down on it and smoked his pipe till bedtime, thinking of the best way to keep down expenses. A parson came along one day lifting a subscription for a church, or school, or something. He didn’t get anything out of old Shenty, only a pannikin of tea and some damper and mutton. The old cove said: ’Church nor school never gave me nothing, nor do me no good, and I could buy up a heap o’ parsons and schoolmasters if I wanted to, and they were worth buying. Us squatters is the harrystockrisy out here. The lords at home sends out their good-for-nothing sons to us, to get rich and be out of the way, and much good they does. Why don’t you parsons make money by your eddication if it’s any good, instead of goin’ round beggin’? You are all after the filthy lucre, wantin’ to live on other folks.’ I was holdin’ the parson’s horse, and when he got into the saddle, he turns to old Shenty, and says: ’From rottenness you sprung, and to rottenness you’ll go. Your money will drag you down to hell; you’ll want to throw it away, but it will burn into your soul for all eternity.’

“I am mortal hungry,” continued Bob, “and they don’t give no rations until about sundown, and we’ll have to wait six hours. It’s hard lines. I see there’s an orchard there now, and most likely a wegtable garden—and cabbages. I’d like some boiled beef and cabbage. It wouldn’t be no harm to try and get somethin’ to eat, anyhow. What do you say, Ned? You was a swell cove once, and knows how to talk to the quality. Go and try ’em.”

Ned went and talked to the “quality” so well that he brought back rations for three.

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Towards the end of the year Nosey arrived at Piney Station, about forty miles from the Murray, and obtained employment. Baldy's bones had been lying under the rocks for nearly fifteen years. It was absurd to suppose they could ever be discovered now, or if they were, that any evidence could be got out of them. Nosey felt sure that all danger for himself was passed, but still the murder was frequently in his mind. The squatter was often lonely, and his new man was garrulous, and one day Nosey, while at work, began to relate many particulars of life in the old country, in Van Diemen's Land, and in the other colonies, and he could not refrain from mentioning the greatest of his exploits.

"I once done a man in Victoria," he said, "when I was shepherding; he found me out taking his fat sheep, and was going to inform on me, so I done him with an axe, and put him away so as nobody could ever find him."

The squatter thought that Nosey's story was mostly blowing, especially that part of it referring to the murder. No man who had really done such a deed, would be so foolish as to confess it to a stranger.

Another man was engaged to work at the station. As soon as he saw Nosey he exclaimed, "Hello, Nosey, is that you?"

"My name is not Nosey."

"All right; a name is nothing. We are old chums, anyway."

That night the two men had a long talk about old times. They had both served their time in the island, and were, moreover, "townies," natives of the same town at home. Nosey began the conversation by saying to his old friend, "I've been a bad boy since I saw you last —I done a man in Victoria"; and then he gave the full particulars of his crime, as already related. But the old chum could not believe the narrative, any more than did the squatter.

"Well, Nosey," he said, "you can tell that tale to the marines."

In the meantime the runs around Lake Nyalong had been surveyed by the government and sold. In the Rises the land was being subdivided and fenced with stone walls, and there was a chance that Baldy's grave might be discovered if one of the surveyed lines ran near it, for the stonewallers picked up the rocks as near as possible to the wall they were building, and usually to about the distance of one chain on each side of it.

A man who had a contract for the erection of one of these walls took with him his stepson to assist in the work. In the month of August, 1869, they were on their way to their work accompanied by a dog which chased a rabbit into a pile of rocks. The boy began to remove the rocks in order to find the rabbit, and in doing so uncovered part of

a human skeleton. He beckoned to his stepfather, who was rather deaf, to come and look at what he had found. The man came, took up the skull, and examined it.

“I’ll be bound this skull once belonged to Baldy,” he said. “There is a hole here behind; and, yes, one jaw has been broken. That’s Nosey’s work for sure’ I wonder where he is now.”

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No work was done at the wall that day, but information was given to the police.

Mounted constable Kerry came over to the Rises. The skeleton was found to be nearly entire; one jaw-bone was broken, and there was a hole in the back of the skull. The feet were still encased in a pair of boots laced high above the ankles. There were portions of a blue-striped shirt, and of a black silk necktie with reddish stripes. There was also the brim of an oiled sou'wester' hat, a pipe, and a knife. The chin was very prominent, and the first molar teeth on the lower jaw were missing. The remains were carefully taken up and conveyed to Nyalong; they were identified as those of Baldy; an inquest was held, and a verdict of wilful murder was returned against Nosey and his wife.

After the inquest mounted constable Kerry packed up the skeleton in a parcel with every small article found with it, placed it in a sack, put it under his bed, slept over it every night, and patiently waited for some tidings of the murderer. In those days news travelled slowly, and the constable guarded his ghastly treasure for eighteen months.

Nemesis was all the time on her way to Piney station, but her steps were slow, and she did not arrive until the seventeenth anniversary of the disapppearance of Baldy.

On that day she came under the guise of constable, who produced a warrant, and said:

"Cornelius Naso, alias Nosey, alias Pye, I arrest you under this warrant, charging you with having murdered a shepherd, named Thomas Balbus, alias Baldy, at Nyalong, in the colony of Victoria, on the 28th day of February, 1854. You need not say anything unless you like, but if you do say anything I shall take it down in writing, and it will be used as evidence against you at your trial."

Nosey had nothing to say, except, "I deny the charge"; he had said too much already.

He was handcuffed and taken to the police station at Albury. In one of his pockets a letter was found purporting to be written by Julia, and disclosing her place of residence.

Soon afterwards Nosey and his wife met in captivity after their long separation, but their meeting was not a happy one; they had no word of welcome for each other.

The preliminary examination was held in the court house at Nyalong, and there was a large gathering of spectators when the proceedings commenced. On a form below the witness box there was something covered with a white sheet. Men craned their necks and looked at it over one another's shoulders. The two prisoners eyed it intently. It was guarded by constable Kerry, who allowed no one to approach it, but with an authoritative wave of the hand kept back all impertinent intruders. That day was the proudest in all his professional career. He had prepared his evidence and his exhibits with the utmost care. At the proper moment he carefully removed the white sheet, and the skeleton was exposed to view, with everything replaced in the position in which it

had been found under the rocks in the Rises. Nosey's face grew livid as he eyed the evidence of his handiwork; Julia threw up both hands, and exclaimed:

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“Oh! there’s poor Baldy that you murdered!”

Nosey felt that this uncalled-for statement would damage his chance of escape, so, turning to the bench, he said:

“Don’t mind what the woman says, your lordship; she is not in her right senses, and always was weak-minded.”

The constable being sworn, related how, on information received, he had gone to the Stoney Rises, and had uncovered a skeleton which was lying on a broad flat stone. The bones of the legs from the knees downward were covered with stones. The boots were attached to the feet, and were pointing in such a direction as to show that the body must have rested on the right side. Large stones, but such as one man could lift, had been placed over the feet and the legs. The other bones were together, but had been disturbed. With them he found the brim of an oiled sou’-westr’ hat, a clay tobacco pipe, a rusty clasp-knife with a hole bored through the handle, fragments of a blue shirt; also pieces of a striped silk neckerchief, marked D. S. over 3; the marks had been sewn in with a needle. There was a hole in the back of the skull, and the left jaw was broken.

Just at this time a funeral procession, with a few attendants, passed the court-house on its way to the cemetery. Julia’s father was going to his grave. He had come over the sea lately to spend the rest of his days in peace and comfort in the home of his daughter, and he found her in gaol under the charge of murder. There was nothing more to live for, so he went out and died.

The two prisoners were committed, but they remained in gaol for more than seven months longer, on account of the difficulty of securing the attendance of witnesses from New South Wales.

But when the evidence was given it was overwhelming. Every man who had known Baldy seemed to have been kept alive on purpose to give evidence against the murderer. Every scrap of clothing which the wild cats had left was identified, together with the knife, the pipe, the hat brim, and the boots; and the prisoner’s own confession was repeated. Julia also took the side of the prosecution. When asked if she had any questions to put, she said, “My husband killed the man, and forced me to help him to put the body on his horse.”

The jury retired to consider their verdict, and spent two hours over it. In the meantime the two prisoners sat in the dock as far apart as possible. They had never spoken to each other during the trial, and Nosey now said in a low voice:

“You had no call, Julia, to turn on me the way you did. What good could it do you? Sure you might at least have said nothing against me.”

The pent-up bitterness of seventeen years burst forth. The constable standing near tried to stop the torrent, but he might as well have tried to turn back a south-east gale with a feather.

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“I was to say nothing, indeed, was I? And what call had I to say nothing? Is that what you ask? Was I to stand here all day and say never a word for myself until they were ready to hang me? Tell me now, did I murder poor Baldy or did you? Was it not you who struck him down with the axe without saying as much as ‘by your leave,’ either to me or to him? Did you say a word to me until you finished your bloody work? And then you threatened to cut me down, too, with the axe, if I didn’t hold my tongue, and help you to lift the man on to your horse. It is this day you should have remembered before you began that night’s work. Sorrow’s the day I ever met you at all, with the miserable life you led me; and you know I was always the good wife to you until you gave yourself entirely to the devil with your wicked ways. Wasn’t I always on the watch for you every evening looking for you, and the chop on the fire, and the hot tea, and everything comfortable? And is it to hang me now you want to pay me back for the trouble I took for you and all the misery I suffered these long years? And the death of my poor father, who found me in gaol, is at your door too, for he would have been alive and well this day but for the deed you done, which broke his poor old heart; the Lord have mercy on him. And who is to blame but your own self for being in this place at all? You not only done the man to death, but you must go about the bush bragging of it to strangers, and twisting the halter for your own neck like a born idiot; and that’s what you are, in spite of your roguery and cunning.”

And so on for two hours of hell until the jury came back. They acquitted Julia and found her husband guilty. She left the court without once looking back, and he faced the jury alone.

Judge Pohlman had never before sent a man to the gallows. He made the usual little moral speech, and bewailed his own misfortune in having to perform so disagreeable a duty. Then he put on the black cap and passed sentence. At the concluding words, “May the Lord have mercy on your soul,” the condemned man responded with a fervent “Amen,” adding, “And that’s the last of poor Nosey.” He seemed greatly relieved when the ceremony was over, but it was not quite the last, there was another to follow.

For ten days he remained in his cell, and no one visited him except the priest. His examination of conscience was not difficult, for he had often rehearsed it, and much of it had been done for him in public.

He made his last journey between two priests, joining fervently in their prayers for the dying. His step was firm, and he showed neither fear nor bravado. The hangman quickly drew down the cap, but he seemed more flurried than his victim. The sheriff, without speaking, motioned him to place the knot in the correct position under the ear. Then the bolt was drawn and the story of “The Two Shepherds” was finished.

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The man whom Philip met at Bendigo had farms in the country thinly timbered. North, south, east, and west the land was held under squatting licenses; with the exception of the home paddocks it was unfenced, and the stock was looked after by boundary riders and shepherds. To the south, between Nyalong and the sea—a distance of fifty or sixty miles—the country was not occupied by either the white or the black men. It consisted of ranges of hills heavily timbered, furrowed by deep valleys, through which flowed innumerable streams, winding their way to the river of the plains. Sometimes the solitary bushman or prospector, looking across a deep valley, saw, nestled amongst the opposite hills, a beautiful meadow of grass. But when he had crossed the intervening creek and scrubby valley, and continued his journey to the up-land, he found that the deceitful meadow was only a barren plain, covered, not with grass, but with the useless grass-tree. There is a little saccharine matter in the roots of the grass-tree, and a hopeful man from Corio once built a sugar-mill near the stream, and took possession of the plain as a sugar plantation. There was much labour, but very little sugar.

In the dense forest, cattle had run wild, and were sometimes seen feeding in the thinly-timbered grass land outside; but whenever a horseman approached they dashed headlong into the scrub where no horseman could follow them. Wild boars and their progeny also rooted among the tall tussocks in the marshes by the banks of the river, where it emerged from the ranges into the plains.

Blackfish and eels were plentiful in the river, but they were of a perverse disposition, and would not bite in the day-time. The bend nearest to Nyalong was twelve miles distant, and Philip once spent a night there with Gleeson and McCarthy. A fire was kindled and some fish were caught, but Philip took none home. Gleeson and McCarthy reserved their catches for their wives and families, and Philip's fish were all cooked on the fire at sunrise, and eaten for breakfast. Fishing was sport, certainly, but it was not profitable, nor exciting, except to the temper. Sometimes an eel took the bait, and then twisted himself round the limb of a tree at the bottom of the river. He then pulled all he was able until either the line or the hook was broken, or his jaw was torn into strips.

After midnight Philip was drowsy, and leaned his back against a tree to woo sweet sleep. But there were mosquitos in millions, bandicoots hopping close to the fire, and monkey-bears, night hawks, owls, 'possums and dingoes, holding a corroboree hideous enough to break the sleep of the dead.

After breakfast the horses were saddled for home. Philip carried his revolver in his belt, and Gleeson had a shot-gun. A kangaroo was seen feeding about a hundred yards distant, and Gleeson dismounted and shot at it, but it hopped away unharmed. A few minutes afterwards, as the men were riding along at an easy walk, three other horsemen suddenly came past them at a gallop, wheeled about, and faced the fishermen. One was Burridge, a station manager, the other two were his stockmen. The six men looked at one another for a few moments without speaking. Both Gleeson and McCarthy had the Tipperary temper, and it did not remain idle long.

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“Well,” asked Gleeson, “is anything the matter?”

“I dinna ken yet,” said Burridge. “Did na ye hear a gunshot just now?”

“Yes, I fired at a kangaroo.”

“A kangaroo, eh? Are you sure it was a kangaroo?”

“Yes, it was a kangaroo. What of that? Oh, I see, you think we are after shooting your cattle. Is that it? Speak out like a man.”

“Sometimes a beast is shot about here, and I’d like to find out who does it.”

“Oh, indeed! you’d like to know who does it, would you? I can tell you, anyway, who is the biggest cattle duffer round here, if you’d like to know!” Gleeson touched one flank of his horse with his heel, and rode close up to Burridge with the gun in his right hand. “His name is Burridge, and that’s yourself. Everybody knows you, you old Scotch hound. You have as many cattle on the run with your brand on them as your master has. There is not a bigger cattle thief than old Burridge within a hundred miles, and you’ll be taken off the run in irons yet. Get out of my way, or I’ll be tempted to send you to blazes before your time.”

Burridge did not go off the run in irons; he left it honourably for another run which he took up, and stocked with cattle bearing no brand but his own. Evil tongues might tattle, but no man could prove that Burridge ever broke the law.

One fishing excursion to the bend was enough for Philip, but a pig hunt was organised, and he joined it. The party consisted of Gleeson, McCarthy, Bill the Butcher, Bob Atkins, and George Brown the Liar, who brought a rope-net and a cart in which all the game caught was to be carried home. Five dogs accompanied the party, *viz*., Lion and Tiger, crossbred bull and mastiffs, experienced pig fighters, Sam as a reserve, and three mongrels as light skirmishers.

The first animal met with was a huge old boar, the hero of a hundred fights, the great-grandfather of pigs. He stood at bay among the tussocks, the dogs barking furiously around him. Bill the Butcher said, “Keep back, you men, or he’ll rip the guts out of your horses. I know him well. He has only one tusk, but it’s a boomer. Look out sharp till the dogs tackle him, he might make a rush at some of us.”

The boar was a frightful-looking beast, long, tall, and slab-sided, in perfect condition for fight, all bone, muscle, and bristles, with not an ounce of lard in his lean body. He stood still and stiff as a rock watching the dogs, his one white tusk, long and keen sticking out above his upper lip. The loss of the other tusk left him at a disadvantage, as he could only strike effectively on one side. Lion and Tiger had fought him before, and he had earned their respect. They were wary and cautious, and with good reason. Their best

hold was by the ears, and these had been chewed away in former wars, till nothing was left of them but the ragged roots. Bill the Butcher dismounted, dropped his bridle, and cheered on the dogs at a prudent distance, “Good dogs; seek him Lion; hold him Tiger.”

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The dogs went nearer and nearer, jumping away whenever the boar made an attack. At last they seized him by the roots of his ears, one on each side, and held on. Bob Atkins and Bill approached the combatants, carrying some strong cord, of New Zealand flax. A running noose was secured round the hind legs of the boar; he was then thrown on his side, and his forelegs were tied together.

Lion and Tiger stood near panting, with blood dripping from their open jaws. Philip could not imagine why Bill did not butcher the beast at once; it seemed impossible that a leathery old savage like that could ever be transformed into tender pork. For the present he was left prone on the field of battle, and the pig hunt proceeded. There was soon much squealing of pigs, and barking of dogs among the tussocks. Gleenson's dog pinned a young boar, and after its legs were tied Philip agreed to stand by and guard it, while Gleeson fetched the cart. But the boar soon slipped the cord from his legs, and at once attacked his nearest enemy, rushing at Philip and trying to rip open his boots. Philip's first impulse was to take out his revolver, and shoot; but he was always conscientious, and it occurred to him that he would be committing a breach of trust, as he had undertaken to guard the game alive until Gleeson came back with the cart. So he tried to fight the pig with his boots, kicking him on the jaws right and left. But the pig proved a stubborn fighter, and kept coming up to the scratch again and again, until Philip felt he had got into a serious difficulty. He began to think as well as to kick quickly.

"If I could only throw the animal to the ground I could hold him down."

The dogs had shown him that the proper mode of seizing a hog was by the ears, so at the next round he seized both ears and held them. There was a pause in the fight, and Philip took advantage of it to address his enemy after the manner of the Greeks and Trojans.

"I have got you at last, my friend, and the curse of Cromwell on you, I'd like to murder you without mercy; and if Gleeson don't come soon he'll find here nothing but dead pig. I must try to throw you somehow." After examining the pig narrowly he continued, "It will be done by the hind legs."

He let go one ear and seized a hind leg instead, taking the enemy, as it were, both in front and rear. For some time there was much kicking and squealing, until one scientific kick and a sudden twist of the hind quarters brought the quarry to earth.

Philip knelt on the ribs of his foe, still holding one ear and one hind leg. Then he proceeded with his speech, gasping for breath:

"And this is what happens to a poor man in Australia! Here have I been fighting a wild beast of a pig for half an hour, just to keep him alive, and all to oblige a cockatoo farmer,

and small thanks to me for that same. May all the curses—the Lord preserve us and give us patience; I am forgetting the twelve virtues entirely."

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Gleeson came at last with the cart and George Brown the Liar; the pig's legs were again tied together, he was lifted into the cart and covered with the rope net. Four other pigs were caught, and then the hunters and dogs returned to the place in which the old boar had been left. But he had broken or slipped his bonds, and had gone away. He was tracked to the river, which was narrow but deep, so he had saved his bacon for another day.

At the division of the game Philip declined to take any share. He said:

"Thanks, I have had pig enough for the present."

So there were exactly five pigs for the other five men.

Having been satiated with the pleasures of fishing and pig-hunting, Philip was next invited to try the pursuit of the kangaroo. The first meet of men and hounds took place at Gleeson's farm. McCarthy brought his dogs, and Philip brought Sam, his revolver, and a club. Barton was too proud to join in the sport; he despised inferior game. It might amuse new chums, but it was below the notice of the old trooper, whose business had been for many years to hunt and shoot bushrangers and black-fellows, not to mention his regular duty as flagellator.

Gleeson that morning was cutting up his pumpkin plants with an axe.

"Good morning, Mr. Gleeson," said Philip. "Is anything the matter? Is it a snake you are killing?"

Gleeson began to laugh, a little ashamed of himself, and said, "Look at these cursed pumpkins. I think they are bewitched. Every morning I come to see if the fruit is growing, but this is what they do. As soon as they get as big as a small potato, they begin to wither and turn yellow, and not a bit more will they grow. So I'm cutting the blessed things to pieces."

Philip saw that about half the runners had been already destroyed. He said, "Don't chop any more, Gleeson, and I'll show you how to make pumpkins grow."

He picked up a feather in the fowl-yard, and went inside the garden.

"Now look at these flowers closely; they are not all alike. This flower will never turn into a pumpkin, but this one will if it gets a little of the dust from the first flower. The bees or other insects usually take the dust from one flower to the other, but I suppose there are no bees about here just now?"

Philip then dusted every flower that was open and said: "Now, my friend, put away the axe, and you will have fruit here yet." And the pumpkins grew and ripened.

The two men then went towards the house, and Philip observed the fragments of a clock scattered about the ground in front of the verandah.

“What happened to the clock?” said Philip.

“Why,” replied Gleeson, “the thing wasn’t going right at all, so I took it to pieces just to examine it, and to oil the wheels, and when I tried to put it together again, the fingers were all awry, and the pins wouldn’t fit in their places, and the pendulum swung crooked, and the whole thing bothered me so that I just laid it on the floor of the verandah, and gave it one big kick that sent it to smithereens. But don’t mind me or the clock at all, master; just come inside, and we’ll have a bit o’ dinner before we start.”

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Gleeson was the kindest man in the world; all he wanted was a little patience.

The kangaroo gave better sport than either the fish or the pig, and Philip enjoyed it. His mare proved swift, but sometimes shied at the start, when the kangaroos were in full view. She seemed to think that there was a kangaroo behind every tree, so she jumped aside from the trunks. That was to kill Philip at last, but he had not the least idea what was to happen, and was as happy as hermits usually are, and they have their troubles and accidents just like other people.

The kangaroos when disturbed made for the thick timber, and the half-grown ones, called “Flying Joeys,” always escaped; they were so swift, and they could jump to such a distance that I won’t mention it, as some ignorant people might call me a liar. Those killed were mostly does with young, or old men. Any horse of good speed could round up a heavy old man, and then he made for the nearest gum tree, and stood at bay with his back to it. It was dangerous for man or dog to attack him in front, for with his long hind claws he could cut like a knife.

Philip’s family began to desert him. Bruin, as already stated, sneaked away and was killed by Hugh Boyle. Joey opened his cage-door, and flew up a gum tree. When Philip came home from the school, and saw the empty cage, he called aloud, “Joey, Joey, sweet pretty Joey,” and whistled. The bird descended as far as the lightwood, but would not be coaxed to come any nearer. He actually mocked his master, and said, “Ha, ha, ha! who are you? Who are you? There is na luck aboot the hoose,” which soon proved true, for the next bird Pussy brought into the house was Joey himself.

Pup led a miserable life, and died early. The coroner suspected that he had been murdered by Maggie, but there was no absolute proof.

Maggie had really no conscience. She began to gad about the bush. In her girlish days she wore short frocks, as it were, having had her wings clipped, but the next spring she went into society, was a debutante, wore a dress of black and white satin which shone in the sun, and she grew so vain and flighty, and strutted about so, that it was really ridiculous to watch her. She began also to stay out late in the evening, which was very improper, and before going to bed Philip would go under the lightwood with a lighted candle, and look for her amongst the leaves, saying, “Maggie, are you there?” She was generally fast asleep, and all she could do was to blink her eyes, and say, “Peet, peet,” and fall asleep again. But one night she never answered at all. She was absent all next day, and many a day after that. October came, when all the scrub, the lightwood, and wattle were in full bloom, and the air everywhere was full of sweetness. Philip was digging his first boiling of new potatoes, when all at once Maggie swooped down into the garden, and began strutting about, and picking up the worms and grubs from the soil newly turned up.

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“Oh, you impudent hussy!” he said. “Where have you been all this time?” He stooped, and tried to stroke her head as usual with his forefinger, but Maggie stuck her bill in the ground, turned a complete somersault, and caught the finger with both claws, which were very sharp. She held on for a short time, then dropped nimbly to her feet, and said, “There, now, that will teach you to behave yourself.”

“Why, Maggie,” said Philip, “what on earth is the matter with you?”

“Oh, there’s nothing the matter with me, I assure you. I suppose you didn’t hear the news, you are such an old stick-in-the-mud. It was in the papers, though—no cards—-and all the best society ladies knew it of course.”

“Why, Maggie, you don’t mean to say you have got a mate?”

“Of course I have, you horrid man, you are so vulgar. We were married ages ago. I didn’t invite you of course, because I knew you would make yourself disagreeable—-forbid the banns, or something, and scare away all the ladies and gentlemen, for you are a most awful fright, with your red hair and freckles, so I thought it best to say nothing about the engagement until the ceremony was over. It was performed by the Rev. Sinister Cornix, and it was a very select affair, I assure you, and the dresses were so lovely. There were six bridesmaids—the Misses Mudlark. The Mudlarks, you know, have a good pedigree, they are come of the younger branch of our family. We were united in the bonds under a cherry tree. Oh! it was a lovely time, it was indeed, I assure you.”

“And where are you living now, Maggie?”

“Oh, I am not going to tell you; you are too inquisitive. But our mansion is on the top of a gum tree. It is among the leaves at the end of a slender branch. If Hugh Boyle tries to kidnap my babies, the branch will snap, and he will fall and break his neck, the wretch. Oh, I assure you we thought of everything beforehand; for I know you keep a lot of boys bad enough to steal anything.”

“And what sort of a mate—husband, I mean—have you got?”

“Oh, he is a perfect gentleman, and so attentive to me. Latterly he has been a little crusty, I must admit; but you must not say a word against him. If you do, I’ll peck your eyes out. A family, you know, is so troublesome, and it takes all your time to feed them. There are two of them, the duckiest little fluffy darlings you ever saw. They were very hungry this morning, so when I saw you digging I knew you wouldn’t begrudge them a breakfast, and I just flew down here for it. But bless my soul, the little darlings will be screaming their hearts out with hunger while I am talking to you, and himself will be swearing like a Derviner. So, by-by.”

Philip found Maggie's mansion easily enough; for, in spite of all her chatter, she had no depth of mind. The tallest gum-tree was on Barlow's farm which adjoined the forty-acre on the east. Barlow had been a stockman for several years on Calvert's run, and had saved money. He invested his money in the Bank of Love, and the bank broke. It happened in this way.

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A new shepherd from the other side was living with his wife and daughter near the Rises, and one day when Barlow was riding over the run, he heard some strange sounds, and stopped his horse to listen. There was nobody in sight in any direction, and Barlow said, “There’s something the matter at the new shepherd’s hut,” and he rode swiftly towards it. As he approached the hut, he heard the screams of women and the voice of a blackfellow, who was hammering on the door with his waddy. He was a tame blackfellow who had been educated at the Missionary Station. He could write English, say prayers, sing hymns, read the Bible, and was therefore named Parson Bedford by the Derviners, after the Tasmanian Missionary. He could box and wrestle so well that few white men could throw him. He could also drink rum; so whenever he got any white money he knew how to spend it. He was the best thief and the worst bully of all the blacks about Nyalong, because he had been so well educated. I knew him well, and attended his funeral, walking in the procession with the doctor and twenty blackfellows. He had a white man’s funeral, but there was no live parson present, so king Coco Quine made an oration, waving his hands over the coffin, “All same as whitefellow parson,” then we all threw clods on the lid.

So much noise was made by the women screaming and the Parson hammering, that the stockman was able to launch one crack of his stock-whip on the Parson’s back before his arrival was observed. The Parson sprang up into the air like a shot deer, and then took to his heels. He did not run towards the open plains, but made a straight line for the nearest part of the Rises. As he ran, Frank followed at an easy canter, and over and over again he landed his lash with a crack like a pistol on the behind of the black, who sprang among the rough rocks which the horse could not cross, and where the lash could not reach him.

[*Illustration* 3.]

Then there was a parley. The Parson was smarting and furious. He had learned the colonial art of blowing along with the language. He threw down his waddy and said:

“You stockman, Frank, come off that horse, drop your whip, and I’ll fight you fair, same as whitefellow. I am as good a man as you any day.”

“Do you take me for a blooming fool, Parson? No fear. If ever I see you at that hut again, or anywhere on the run, I’ll cut the shirt off your back. I shall tell Mr. Calvert what you have been after, and you’ll soon find yourself in chokey with a rope round your neck.”

The Parson left Nyalong, and when he returned he was dying of rum and rheumatism.

Frank rode back to the hut. The mother and daughter had stood at the door watching him flog the Parson. He was in their eyes a hero; he had scourged their savage enemy, and had driven him to the rocks. They were weeping beauties—at least the daughter

was a beauty in Frank's eyes—but now they wiped away their tears, smoothed their hair, and thanked their gallant knight over and over again. Two at a time they repeated their story, how they saw the blackfellow coming, how they bolted the door, and how he battered it with his club, threatening to kill them if they did not open it.

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Frank had never before been so much praised and flattered, at least not since his mother weaned him; but he pretended not to care. He said:

“Tut, tut, it’s not worth mentioning. Say no more about it. I would of course have done as much for anybody.”

Of course he could not leave the ladies again to the mercy of the Parson, so he waited until the shepherd returned with his flock.

Then Frank rode away with a new sensation, a something as near akin to love as a rough stockman could be expected to feel.

Neddy, the shepherd, asked Mr. Calvert for the loan of arms, and he taught his wife and daughter the use of old Tower muskets. He said, “If ever that Parson comes to the hut again, put a couple of bullets through him.”

After that Frank called at the hut nearly every day, enquiring if the Parson had been seen anywhere abroad.

“No,” said Cecily, “we haven’t seen him any more;” and she smiled so sweetly, and lowered her eyes, and spoke low, with a bewitching Tasmanian accent.

Frank was in the mud, and sinking daily deeper and deeper. At last he resolved to turn farmer and leave the run, so he rented the land adjoining Philip’s garden and the forty-acre. There was on it a four-roomed, weather-board house and outbuildings, quite a bush palace. Farming was then profitable. Frank ploughed a large paddock and sowed it with wheat and oats. Then while the grain was ripening he resolved to ask Cecily a very important question. One Sunday he rode to the hut with a spare horse and side saddle. Both horses were well groomed, the side saddle was new, the bits, buckles, and stirrup-irons were like burnished silver. Cecily could ride well even without a saddle, but had never owned one. She yielded to temptation, but with becoming coyness and modesty. Frank put one hand on his knee, holding the bridle with the other; then Cicely raised one of her little feet, was lifted lightly on to the saddle, and the happy pair cantered gaily over the plain to their future home.

Frank showed his bride-elect the land and the crops, the cows and the horses, the garden and the house. Cecily looked at everything, but said next to nothing. “She is shy,” Frank thought, “and I must treat her gently.” But the opportunity must not be thrown away, and on their way over the plains Frank told his tale of love. I don’t know precisely what he said or how he said it, not having been present, but he did not hook his fish that day, and he took home with him the bait, the horse, and the empty side-saddle. But he persevered with his suit, and before the wheat was ripe, Cecily consented to be his bride.

He was so overjoyed with his success that instead of waiting for the happy day when he had to say “With this ring I thee wed, with all my worldly goods I thee endow,” he gave Cecily the worldly goods beforehand—the horse, with the beautiful new side saddle and bridle—and nearly all his cash, reserving only sufficient to purchase the magic ring and a few other necessaries.

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The evening before the happy day the pair were seen walking together before sundown on a vacant lot in the township, discussing, it was supposed, the arrangements for the morrow.

It was the time of the harvest, and Philip had been engaged to measure the work of the reapers on a number of farms. I am aware that he asked and received 1 pound for each paddock, irrespective of area. On the bridal morn he walked over Frank's farm with his chain and began the measurement, the reapers, most of them broken down diggers, following him and watching him. Old Jimmy Gillon took one end of the chain; he said he had been a chainman when the railway mania first broke out in Scotland, so he knew all about land surveying. Frank was absent, but he returned while Philip was calculating the wages payable to each reaper, and he said: "Here's the money, master; pay the men what's coming to 'em and send 'em away."

Frank looked very sulky, and Philip was puzzled. He knew the blissful ceremony was to take place that day, but there was no sign of it, nor of any bliss whatever; no wedding garments, no parson, no bride.

The bare matter of fact was, the bride had eloped during the night.

"For young Lochinvar had come out of the West, And an underbred, fine-spoken fellow was he."

He was a bullock-driver of superior manners and attractive personality, and was the only man in Australia who waxed and curled his moustaches. Cecily had for some time been listening to Lochinvar, who was known to have been endeavouring to "cut out" Frank. She was staying in the township with her mother preparing for matrimony, and her horse was in the stable at Howell's Hotel.

When Frank rode away to his farm on that fateful evening, Lochinvar was watching him. He saw Cecily going home to her mother for the last night, and while he was looking after her wistfully, and the pangs of despairing love were in his heart, Bill the Butcher came up and said:

"Well, Lock, what are you going to do?"

"Why, what can I do? She is going to marry Frank in the morning."

"I don't believe it: not if you are half the man you ought to be."

"But how can I help it?"

"Help it? Just go and take her. Saddle your horse and her own, take 'em up to the cottage, and ask her just to come outside for a minute. And if you don't persuade her in five minutes to ride away with you to Ballarat, I'll eat my head off. I know she don't want

to marry Frank; all she wants is an excuse not to, and it will be excuse enough when she has married you."

These two worthy men went to the Hotel and talked the matter over with Howell. The jolly landlord slapped his knee and laughed. He said: "You are right, Bill. She'll go, I'll bet a fiver, and here it is, Lock; you take it to help you along."

This base conspiracy was successful, and that was the reason Frank was so sulky on that harvest morning.

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He was meditating vengeance. Love and hate, matrimony and murder, are sometimes not far asunder, but Frank was not by nature vengeful; he had that “foolish hanging of the nether lip which shows a lack of decision.”

I would not advise any man to seek in a law court a sovereign remedy for the wounds inflicted by the shafts of Cupid; but Frank tried it. During his examination in chief his mien was gloomy and his answers brief.

Then Mr. Aspinall rose and said: “I appear for the defendant, your Honour, but from press of other engagements I have been unable to give that attention to the legal aspects of this case which its importance demands, and I have to request that your Honour will be good enough to adjourn the court for a quarter of an hour.”

The court was adjourned for half an hour, and Mr. Aspinall and his solicitor retired to a room for a legal consultation. It began thus:

“I say, Lane, fetch me a nobbler of brandy; a stiffener, mind.”

Lane fetched the stiffener in a soda-water bottle, and it cleared the legal atmosphere.

When the court resumed business, Frank took his stand in the witness box, and a voice said: “Now, Mr. Barlow, look at me.”

Frank had been called many names in his time, but never “Mr. Barlow” before now. He looked and saw the figure of a little man with a large head, whose voice came through a full-grown nose like the blast of a trumpet.

“You say you gave Cecily some money, a horse, saddle, and bridle?”

“I did.”

“And you bought a wedding ring?”

“I’ve got it in my pocket.”

“I see. Your Honour will be glad to hear that the ring, at any rate, is not lost. It will be ready for another Cecily, won’t it, Mr. Barlow?”

Barlow, looking down on the floor of the court and shaking his head slowly from side to side, said:

“No, it won’t No fear. There ’ull be no more Cecilies for me.”

There was laughter in the court, and when Frank raised his eyes, and saw a broad grin on every face, he, too, burst into a fit of laughter.

I saw Mr. Aspinall and Dr. Macadam walking together arm-in-arm from the court. The long doctor and the little lawyer were a strange pair. Everybody knew that they were sliding down the easy slope to their tragic end, but they seemed never to think of it.

Frank returned to Nyalong, happier than either. He related the particulars of the trial to his friends with the utmost cheerfulness. Whether he recovered all the worldly goods with which he had endowed Cecily is doubtful, but he faithfully kept his promise that "There 'ull be no more Cecilies for me."

There was a demon of mischief at work on Philip's hill at both sides of the dividing fence. Sam was poisoned by a villainous butcher; Bruin had been killed by Hugh Boyle; Maggie had eloped with a wild native to a gum-tree; Joey had been eaten by Pussy; Barlow had been crossed in love, and then the crowning misfortune befell the hermit.

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Mrs. Chisholm was a lady who gave early tokens of her vocation. At the age of seven she began to form benevolent plans for the colonies of Great Britain. She built ships of broad beans, filled them with poor families of Couchwood, sent them to sea in a wash-basin, landed them in a bed-quilt, and started them growing wheat. Then she loaded her fleet with a return cargo for the British pauper, one grain of wheat in each ship, and navigated it safely to Old England. She made many prosperous voyages, but once a storm arose which sent all her ships to the bottom of the sea. She sent a Wesleyan minister and a Catholic priest to Botany Bay in the same cabin, strictly enjoining them not to quarrel during the voyage. At the age of twenty she married Captain Chisholm, and went with him to Madras. There she established a School of Industry for Girls, and her husband seconded her in all her good works.

Mr. Chamier, the secretary, took a great interest in her school; Sir Frederick Adams subscribed 20 pounds, and officers and gentlemen in Madras contributed in five days 2,000 rupees. The school became an extensive orphanage.

Mrs. and Captain Chisholm came to Australia in 1838 for the benefit of his health, and they landed at Sydney. They saw Highland immigrants who could not speak English, and they gave them tools and wheelbarrows wherewith to cut and sell firewood.

Captain Chisholm returned to India in 1840, but the health of her young family required Mrs. Chisholm to remain in Sydney.

Female immigrants arriving in Sydney were regularly hired on board ship, and lured into a vicious course of life. Mrs. Chisholm went on board each ship, and made it her business to protect and advise them, and begged the captain and agent to act with humanity. Some place of residence was required in which the new arrivals could be sheltered, until respectable situations could be found for them, and in January, 1841, she applied to Lady Gipps for help. A committee of ladies was formed, and Mrs. Chisholm at length obtained a personal audience from the Governor, Sir George Gipps. He believed she was labouring under an amiable delusion. He wrote to a friend:

“I expected to have seen an old lady in a white cap and spectacles, who would have talked to me about my soul. I was amazed when my aide introduced a handsome, stately young woman, who proceeded to reason the question as if she thought her reason, and experience too, worth as much as mine.”

Sir George at last consented to allow her the use of a Government building, a low wooden one. Her room was seven feet by seven feet. Rats ran about in it in all directions, and then alighted on her shoulders. But she outgeneraled the rats. She gave them bread and water the first night, lit two candles, and sat up in bed reading “Abercrombie.” There came never less than seven nor more than thirteen rats eating at the same time. The next night she gave them another feast seasoned with arsenic.

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The home for the immigrants given her by Sir George had four rooms, and in it at one time she kept ninety girls who had no other shelter. About six hundred females were then wandering about Sydney unprovided for. Some slept in the recesses of the rocks on the Government domain. She received from the ships in the harbour sixty-four girls, and all the money they had was fourteen shillings and three half-pence.

She took them to the country, travelling with a covered cart to sleep in. She left married families at different stations, and then sent out decent lasses who should be married.

In those days the dead bodies of the poor were taken to the cemetery in a common rubbish-cart.

By speeches and letters both public and private, and by interviews with influential men, Mrs. Chisholm sought help for the emigrants both in Sydney and England, where she opened an office in 1846.

In the year 1856 Major Chisholm took a house at Nyalong, near Philip's school. Two of the best scholars were John and David. When David lost his place in the class he burst into tears, and the Blakes and the Boyles laughed. The Major spoke to the boys and girls whenever he met them. He asked John to tell him how many weatherboards he would have to buy to cover the walls of his house, which contained six rooms and a lean-to, and was built of slabs. John measured the walls and solved the problem promptly. The Major then sent his three young children to the school, and made the acquaintance of the master.

Mrs. Chisholm never went to Nyalong, but the Major must have given her much information about it, for one day he read a portion of one of her letters which completely destroyed Philip's peace of mind. It was to the effect that he was to open a school for boarders at Nyalong, and, as a preliminary, marry a wife. The Major said that if Philip had no suitable young lady in view, Mrs. Chisholm, he was sure, would undertake to produce one at a very short notice. She had the whole matter already planned, and was actually canvassing for
pupils among the wealthiest families in the colony. The Major
smiled benevolently, and said it was of no use for Philip to think of resisting Mrs. Chisholm; when she had once made up her mind, everybody had to give way, and the thing was settled. Philip, too, smiled faintly, and tried to look pleased, dissembling his outraged feelings, but he went away in a state of indignation. He actually made an attack on the twelve virtues, which seemed all at once to have conspired against his happiness. He said: "If I had not kept school so conscientiously, this thing would never have happened. I don't want boarders, and I don't want anybody to send me a wife to Nyalong. I am not, thank God, one of the royal family, and not even Queen Victoria shall order me a wife."

In that way the lonely hermit put his foot down and began a countermine, working as silently as possible.

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During the Christmas holidays, after his neighbour Frank had been jilted by Cecily, he rode away, and returned after a week's absence. The Major informed him that Mrs. Chisholm had met with an accident and would be unable to visit Nyalong for some time. Philip was secretly pleased to hear the news, outwardly he expressed sorrow and sympathy, and nobody but himself suspected how mean and deceitful he was.

At Easter he rode away again and returned in less than a week. Next day he called at McCarthy's farm and dined with the family. He said he had been married the previous morning before he had started for Nyalong, and had left his wife at the Waterholes. McCarthy began to suspect that Philip was a little wrong in his head; it was a kind of action that contradicted all previous experience. He could remember various lovers running away together before marriage, but he could not call to mind a single instance in which they ran away from one another immediately after marriage. But he said to himself, "It will all be explained by-and-by," and he refrained from asking any impertinent questions merely to gratify curiosity.

After dinner Gleeson, Philip, and McCarthy rode into the bush with the hounds. A large and heavy "old man" was sighted; and the dogs stuck him up with his back to a tree. While they were growling and barking around the tree Gleeson dismounted, and, going behind the tree, seized the "old man" by the tail. The kangaroo kept springing upwards and at the dogs, dragging Gleeson after him, who was jerking the tail this way and that to bring his game to the ground, for the "old man" was so tall that the dogs could not reach his throat while he stood upright. Philip gave his horse to McCarthy and approached the "old man" with his club.

"Shoot him with your revolver," said Gleeson. "If I let go his tail, he'll be ripping you with his toe."

"I might shoot you instead," said Philip; "better to club him. Hold on another moment."

Philip's first blow was dodged by the kangaroo, but the second fell fairly on the skull; he fell down, and Ossian, a big and powerful hound, seized him instantly by the throat and held on. The three men mounted their horses and rode away, but Philip's mare was, as usual, shying at every tree. As he came near one which had a large branch, growing horizontally from the trunk, his mare spring aside, carried him under the limb, which struck his head, and threw him to the ground. He never spoke again.

After the funeral, McCarthy rode over to the Rocky Waterholes to make some enquiries. He called at Mrs. Martin's residence, and he said:

"Mr. Philip told us he was married the day before the accident, but it seemed so strange, we could not believe it; so I thought I would just ride over and enquire about it, for, of course, if he had a wife, she will be entitled to whatever little property he left behind him."

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“Yes, it’s quite true,” said Mrs. Martin. “They were married sure enough. He called here at Christmas, and said he would like to see Miss Edgeworth; but she was away on a visit to some friends. I asked him if he had any message to leave for her, but he said, ’Oh, no; only I thought I should like to see how she is getting along. That’s all, thank you. I might call again at Easter.’ So he went away. On last Easter Monday he came again. Of course I had told Miss Edgeworth, about his calling at Christmas and enquiring about her, and it made me rather suspicious when he came again. As you may suppose, I could not help taking notice; but for two days, nor, in fact, for the whole week, was there the slightest sign of anything like lovemaking between them. No private conversation, no walking out together, nothing but commonplace talk and solemn looks. I said to myself, ’If there is anything between them, they keep it mighty close to be sure.’ On the Tuesday evening, however, he spoke to me. He said:

“’I hope you won’t mention it, Mrs. Martin, but I would like to have a little advice from you, if you would be so kind as to give it. Miss Edgeworth has been living with you for some time, and you must be well acquainted with her. I am thinking of making a proposal, but our intercourse has been so slight, that I should be pleased first to have your opinion on the matter.’

“‘Mr. Philip,’ I said, ’you really must not ask me to say anything one way or the other, for or against. I have my own sentiments, of course; but nobody shall ever say that I either made a match or marred one.’

“Nothing happened until the next day. In the afternoon Miss Edgeworth was alone in this room, when I heard Mr. Philip walking down the passage, and stopping at the door, which was half open. I peeped out, and then put off my slippers, and stepped a little nearer, until through the little opening between the door and the door-post, I could both see and hear them. He was sitting on the table, dangling his boots to and fro just above the floor, and she was sitting on a low rocking-chair about six feet distant. He did not beat about the bush, as the saying is; did not say, ‘My dear,’ or ‘by your leave, Miss,’ or ‘excuse me,’ or anything nice, as one would expect from a gentleman on a delicate occasion of the kind, but he said, quite abruptly:

“‘How would you like to live at Nyalong, Miss Edgeworth?’

“She was looking on the floor, and her fingers were playing with a bit of ribbon, and she was so nice and winsome, and well dressed, you couldn’t have helped giving her a kiss. She never raised her eyes to his face, but I think she just looked as high as his boots, which were stained and dusty. The silly man was waiting for her to say something; but she hung down her head, and said nothing. At last he said:

“‘I suppose you know what I mean, Miss Edgeworth?’

“‘Yes,’ she said, in a low voice. ‘I know what you mean, thank you.’

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“Then there was silence for I don’t know how long; it was really dreadful, and I couldn’t think how it was going to end. At last he heaved a big sigh, and said:

“’Well, Miss Edgeworth, there is no need to hurry; take time to think about it. I am going to ride out, and perhaps you will be good enough to let me know your mind when I come back.’

“Then he just shook her hand, and I hurried away from the door. It was rather mean of me to be listening to them, but I took as much interest in Miss Edgeworth as if she were my own daughter.

“’There is no need to hurry,’ he had said, but in my opinion there was too much hurry, for they were married on the Saturday, and he rode away the same morning having to open school again on Monday.

“Of course, Miss Edgeworth was a good deal put about when we heard what had happened, through the papers, but I comforted her as much as possible. I said, ’as for myself, I had never liked the look of the poor man with his red hair and freckles. I am sure he had a bad temper at bottom, for red-haired men are always hasty; and then he had a high, thin nose, and men of that kind are always close and stingy, and the stingiest man I ever knew was a Dublin man. Then his manners, you must remember, were anything but nice; he didn’t wasteany compliments on you before you married him, so you may just fancy what kind of compliments you would have had to put up with afterwards. And perhaps you have forgotten what you said yourself about him at Bendigo. You were sure he was a severe master, you could see sternness on his brow. And however you could have consented to go to the altar with such a man I cannot understand to this day. I am sure it was a very bad match, and by-and-by you will thank your stars that you are well out of it.’

“I must acknowledge that Miss Edgeworth did not take what I said to comfort her very kindly, and she ‘gave me fits,’ as the saying is; but bless your soul, she’ll soon get over it, and will do better next time.”

Soon after the death of Philip, Major Chisholm and his family left Nyalong, and I was appointed Clerk to the Justices at Colac. I sat under them for twelve years, and during that time I wrote a great quantity of criminal literature. When a convict of good conduct in Pentridge was entitled to a ticket-of-leave, he usually chose the Western district as the scene of his future labours, so that the country was peopled with old Jack Bartons and young ones. Some of the young ones had been Philip’s scholars—viz., the Boyles and the Blakes. They were friends of the Bartons, and Old John, the ex-flogger, trained them in the art of cattle-lifting. His teaching was far more successful than that of Philip’s, and when in course of time Hugh Boyle appeared in the dock on a charge of horse-stealing, I was pained but not surprised. Barton, to whose farm the stolen horse

had been brought by Hugh, was summoned as witness for the Crown, but he organised the evidence for the defence so well that the prisoner was discharged.

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On the next occasion both Hugh and his brother James were charged with stealing a team of bullocks, but this time the assistance of Barton was not available. The evidence against the young men was overwhelming, and we committed them for trial. I could not help pitying them for having gone astray so early in life. They were both tall and strong, intelligent and alert, good stockmen, and quite able to earn an honest living in the bush. They had been taught their duty well by Philip, but bad example and bad company out of school had led them astray. The owner of the bullocks, an honest young boor named Cowderoy, was sworn and gave his evidence clearly. Hugh and James knew him well. They had no lawyer to defend them, and when the Crown Prosecutor sat down, there seemed no loophole left for the escape of the accused, and I mentally sentenced them to seven years on the roads, the invariable penalty for their offence.

But now the advantages of a good moral education were brilliantly exemplified.

“Have you any questions to put to this witness?” asked the Judge of the prisoners.

“Yes, your Honour,” said Hugh. Then turning to Cowderoy, he said: “Do you know the nature of an oath?”

The witness looked helplessly at Hugh, then at the Judge and Crown Prosecutor; stood first on one leg, then on the other; leaned down with his elbows on the edge of the witness-box apparently staggering under the weight of his own ignorance.

“Why don’t you answer the question?” asked the Judge sharply. “Do you know the nature of an oath?”

Silence.

Mr. Armstrong saw his case was in danger of collapse, so he said: “I beg to submit, your Honour, that this question comes too late and should have been put to the witness before he was sworn. He has already taken the oath and given his evidence.”

“The question is a perfectly fair one, Mr. Armstrong,” said the Judge: and turning to the witness he repeated: “Do you know the nature of an oath?”

“No,” said Cowderoy.

The prisoners were discharged, thanks to their good education.

A VALIANT POLICE-SERGEANT.

Sergeant Hyde came to my office and asked me to accompany him as far as Murray Street. He said there was a most extraordinary dispute between a white woman and a black lubra about the ownership of a girl, and he had some doubts whether it was a

case within the jurisdiction of a police-court, but thought we might issue a summons for illegal detention of property. He wanted me to advise him, and give my opinion on the matter, and as by this time my vast experience of Justices' law entitled me to give an opinion on any imaginable subject, I very naturally complied with his request. He was, moreover, a man so remarkable that a request by him for advice was of itself an honour. In his youth he had been complimented on the possession of a nose exactly resembling that

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of the great Duke of Wellington, and ever since that time he had made the great man the guiding star of his voyage over the ocean of life, the only saint in his calendar; and he had, as far as human infirmity would permit, modelled his conduct and demeanour in imitation of those of the immortal hero. He spoke briefly, and in a tone of decision. The expression of his face was fierce and defiant, his bearing erect, his stride measured with soldierly regularity. He was not a large man, weighing probably about nine stone; but that only enhanced his dignity, as it is a great historical fact that the most famous generals have been nearly all small men.

When he came into my office, he always brought with him an odour of peppermint, which experience had taught me to associate with the proximity of brandy or whisky. I have never heard or read that the Iron Duke took pepperment lozenges in the morning, but still it might have been his custom to do so. The sergeant was a Londoner, and knew more about the private habits of his Grace than I did. If he had been honoured with the command of a numerous army, he would, no doubt, have led it onward, or sent it forward to victory. His forces, unfortunately, consisted of only one trooper, but the way in which he ordered and manoeuvred that single horseman proved what glory he would have won if he had been placed over many squadrons. By a general order he made him parade outside the gate of the station every morning at ten o'clock. He then marched from the front door with a majestic mien and inspected the horse, the rider, and accoutrements. He walked slowly round, examining with eagle eye the saddle, the bridle, the bits, the girth, the sword, pistols, spurs, and buckles. If he could find no fault with anything, he gave in brief the word of command, "Patrol the forest road," or any other road on which an enemy might be likely to appear. I never saw the sergeant himself on horseback. He might have been a gay cavalier in the days of his fiery youth, but he was not one now.

As we passed the "Crook and Plaid Hotel," on our return to the court-house, after investigating the dispute in Murray Street, I observed a stranger standing near the door, who said:

"Hello, Hyde! is that you?"

He was evidently addressing the sergeant, but the latter merely gave him a slight glance, and went away with his noble nose in the air.

The stranger looked after him and laughed. He said:

"That policeman was once a shepherd of mine up in Riverina, but I see he don't know me now—has grown too big for his boots. Cuts me dead, don't he? Ha! ha! ha! Well I never!"

The stranger’s name was Robinson; he had been selling some cattle to a neighbouring squatter, and was now on his way home. He explained how he had, just before the discovery of gold, hired Hyde as a shepherd, and had given him charge of a flock of sheep.

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There were still a few native blacks about the run, but by this time they were harmless enough: never killed shepherds, or took mutton without leave. They were somewhat addicted to petty larceny, but felony had been frightened out of their souls long ago. They knew all the station hands, and the station hands knew them. They soon spotted a new chum, and found out the soft side of him; and were generally able to coax or frighten him to give them tobacco, some piece of clothing, or white money.

When the new shepherd had been following his flock for a few days, Mr. Robinson, while looking out from the verandah of his house over the plains, observed a strange object approaching at some distance. He said to himself, “That is not a horseman, nor an emu, nor a native companion, nor a swagman, nor a kangaroo.” He could not make it out; so he fetched his binocular, and then perceived that it was a human being, stark naked. His first impression was that some unfortunate traveller had lost his way in the wide wilderness, or a station hand had gone mad with drink, or that a sundowner had become insane with hunger, thirst, and despair.

He took a blanket and went to meet the man, in order that he might cover him decently before he arrived too near the house. It was Hyde, the new shepherd, who said he had been stripped by the blacks.

From information afterwards elicited by Robinson it appeared that the blacks had approached Hyde in silence while his back was turned to them. The sight of them gave a sudden shock to his system. He was totally unprepared for such an emergency. If he had had time to recall to memory some historical examples, he might have summoned up his sinking courage, and have done a deed worthy of record. There was David, the youthful shepherd of Israel, who slew a lion and a bear, and killed Goliath, the gigantic champion of the Philistines. There were the Shepherd Kings, who ruled the land of Egypt. there was one-eyed Polyphemus, moving among his flocks on the mountain tops of Sicily; a monster, dreadful, vast, and hideous; able to roast and eat these three blackfellows at one meal. And nearer our own time was the youth whose immortal speech begins, “My name is Norval; on the Grampian Hills my father fed his flocks.” Our shepherd had a stick in his hand and a collie dog at his command. Now was the time for him to display “London Assurance” to some purpose; and now was the time for the example of the ever-victorious Duke to work a miracle of valour. But the crisis had come on too quickly, and there was no time to pump up bravery from the deep well of history. The unearthly ugliness of the savages, their thick lips, prominent cheek bones, scowling and overhanging brows, broad snub noses, matted black hair, and above all the keen, steady, and ferocious scrutiny of their deep-set eyes, extinguished the last spark of courage in the heart of Hyde. He did not look fierce and defiant any more. He felt inclined to be very civil, so he smiled a sickly smile and tried to say something, but his chin wobbled, and his tongue would not move.

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The blacks came nearer, and one of them said, “Gib fig tobacker, mate?” Here was a gleam of hope, a chance of postponing his final doom. When a foe cannot be conquered, it is lawful to pay him to be merciful; to give him an indemnity for his trouble in not kicking you. The shepherd instantly pulled out his tobacco, his pipe, his tobacco-knife, and matches, and handed them over. A second blackfellow, seeing him so ready to give, took the loan of his tin billy, with some tea and sugar in it, and some boiled mutton and damper. These children of the plains now saw that they had come upon a mine of wealth, and they worked it down to the bed rock. One after another, and with the willing help of the owner, they took possession of his hat, coat, shirt, boots, socks, trousers, and drawers, until the Hyde was completely bare, as naked, and, it is to be hoped, as innocent, as a new-born babe. His vanity, which was the major part of his personality, had vanished with his garments, and the remnant left of body and soul was very insignificant.

Having now delivered up everything but his life, he had some hope that his enemies might at least spare him that. They were jabbering to one another at a great rate, trying on, putting off, and exchanging first one article and then another of the spoils they had won. They did not appear to think that the new chum was worth looking after any longer. So he began slinking away slowly towards his flock of sheep, trying to look as if nothing in particular was the matter; but he soon turned in the direction of the home station. He tried to run, and for a short time fear winged his feet; but the ground was hard and rough, and his feet were tender; and though he believed that death and three devils were behind him, he could go but slowly. A solitary eaglehawk sat on the top branch of a dead gum-tree, watching him with evil eyes; a chorus of laughing jackasses cackled after him in derision from a grove of young timber; a magpie, the joy of the morning, and most mirthful of birds, whistled for him sweet notes of hope and good cheer; then a number of carrion crows beheld him, and approached with their long-drawn, ill-omened “croank, croank,” the most dismal note ever uttered by any living thing. They murder sick sheep, and pick out the eyes of stray lambs. They made short straggling flights, alighting on the ground in front of the miserable man, inspecting his condition, and calculating how soon he would be ready to be eaten. They are impatient gluttons, and often begin tearing their prey before it is dead.

Mr. Robinson clothed the naked, and then mounted his horse and went for the blacks. In a short time he returned with them to the station, and made them disgorge the stolen property, all but the tea, sugar, mutton, and damper, which were not returnable. He gave them some stirring advice with his stockwhip, and ordered them to start for a warmer climate. He then directed Hyde to return to his sheep, and

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not let those blank blacks humbug him out of clothes any more. But nothing would induce the shepherd to remain another day; he forswore pastoral pursuits for the rest of his life. His courage had been tried and found wanting; he had been covered—or, rather, uncovered—with disgrace; and his dignity—at least in Riverina —was gone for ever. In other scenes, and under happier auspices, he might recover it, but on Robinson's station he would be subjected to the derision of the station hands as long as he stayed.

How he lived for some time afterwards is unknown; but in 1853 he was a policeman at Bendigo diggings. At that time any man able to carry a carbine was admitted into the force without question. It was then the refuge of the penniless, of broken-down vagabonds, and unlucky diggers. Lords and lags were equally welcomed without characters or references from their former employers, the Masters' and Servants' Act having become a dead letter. Hyde entered the Government service, and had the good sense to stay there. His military bearing and noble mien proclaimed him fit to be a leader of men, and soon secured his promotion. He was made a sergeant, and in a few years was transferred to the Western District, far away, as he thought, from the scene of his early adventure.

He lived for several years after meeting with and cutting his old employer, Robinson, and died at last of dyspepsia and peppermints, the disease and the remedy combined.

WHITE SLAVES.

Many men who had been prisoners of the Crown, or seamen, lived on the islands in Bass' Straits, as well as on islands in the Pacific Ocean, fishing, sealing, or hunting, and sometimes cultivating patches of ground. The freedom of this kind of life was pleasing to those who had spent years under restraint in ships, in gaols, in chain-gangs, or as slaves to settlers in the bush, for the lot of the assigned servant was often worse than that of a slave, as he had to give his labour for nothing but food and clothing, and was liable to be flogged on any charge of disobedience, insolence, or insubordination which his master might choose to bring against him. Moreover, the black slave might be sold for cash, for five hundred to a thousand dollars, according to the quality of the article and the state of the market, so that it was for the enlightened self-interest of the owner to keep him in saleable condition. But the white slave was unsaleable, and his life of no account. When he died another could be obtained for nothing from the cargo of the next convict ship.

Some masters treated their men well according to their deserts; but with regard to others, the exercise of despotic authority drew forth all the evil passions of their souls, and made them callous to the sufferings of their servants.

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The daily fear of the lash produced in the prisoners a peculiar expression of countenance, and a cowed and slinking gait, which I have never seen in any other men, white or black. And that gait and expression, like that of a dog crouching at the heels of a cruel master in fear of the whip, remained still after the prisoners had served the time of their sentences, and had recovered their freedom. They never smiled, and could never regain the feelings and bearing of free men; they appeared to feel on their faces the brand of Cain, by which they were known to all men, and the scars left on their backs by the cruel lash could never be smoothed away. Whenever they met, even on a lonely bush track, a man who, by his appearance might be a magistrate or a Government officer, they raised a hand to the forehead in a humble salute by mere force of habit. There were some, it is true, whose spirits were never completely broken —who fought against fate to the last, and became bushrangers or murderers; but sooner or later they were shot, or they were arrested and hanged. The gallows-tree on the virgin soil of Australia flourished and bore fruit in abundance.

The trial of a convict charged with disobedience or insubordination was of summary jurisdiction. Joe Kermode, a teamster, chanced to be present at one of these trials. It was about ten o'clock in the morning when he saw near a house on the roadside a little knot of men at an open window. He halted his team to see what was the matter, and found that a police magistrate, sitting inside a room, was holding a Court of Petty Sessions at the window. It was an open court, to which the public were admitted according to law; a very open court, the roof of which was blue—the blue sky of a summer's morning. A witness was giving evidence against an assigned servant, charged with some offence against his master. His majesty, the magistrate, yawned—-this kind of thing was tiresome. Presently a lady came into the room, walked to the open window, clasped her hands together, and laid them affectionately on the shoulder of the court. After listening for a few moments to the evidence she became impatient, and said, "Oh, William, give him three dozen and come to breakfast." So William gave the man three dozen and went to breakfast—with a good conscience; having performed the ordinary duty of the day extraordinarily well, he was on the high road to perfection.

The sentence of the court was carried out by a scourger, sometimes called flagellator, or flogger. The office of scourger was usually held by a convict; it meant promotion in the Government service, and although there was some danger connected with it, there was always a sufficient number of candidates to fill vacancies. In New South Wales the number of officers in the cat-o'-nine tails department was about thirty. The danger attached to the office consisted in the certainty of the scourger being murdered by the scourgee, if ever the opportunity was given.

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Joe Kermode had once been a hutkeeper on a station. The hut was erected about forty yards from the stockyard, to which the sheep were brought every evening, to protect them from attack by dingoes or blackfellows. If the dingoes and blackfellows had been content with one sheep at a time to allay the pangs of hunger, they could not have been blamed very much; but after killing one they went on killing as many more as they could, and thus wasted much mutton to gratify their thirst for blood.

Joe and the shepherd were each provided with a musket and bayonet for self-defence.

The hut was built of slabs, and was divided by a partition into two rooms, and Joe always kept his musket ready loaded, night and day, just inside the doorway of the inner room. Two or three blacks would sometimes call, and ask for flour, sugar, tobacco, or a firestick. If they attempted to come inside the hut, Joe ordered them off, backing at the same time towards the inner door, and he always kept a sharp look-out for any movement they made; for they were very treacherous, and he knew they would take any chance they could get to kill him, for the sake of stealing the flour, sugar, and tobacco. Two of them once came inside the hut and refused to go out, until Joe seized his musket, and tickled them in the rear with his bayonet, under the “move on” clause in the Police Offences Statute.

Early one morning there was a noise as of some disturbance in the stockyard, and Joe, on opening the door of his hut, saw several blacks spearing the sheep. He seized his musket and shouted, warning them to go away. One of them, who was sitting on the top rail with his back towards the hut, seemed to think that he was out of range of the musket, for he made most unseemly gestures, and yelled back at Joe in a defiant and contemptuous manner. Joe’s gun was charged with shot, and he fired and hit his mark, for the blackfellow dropped suddenly from the top rail, and ran away, putting his hands behind him, and trying to pick out the pellets.

One day a white stockman came galloping on his horse up to the door of the hut, his face, hands, shirt and trousers being smeared and saturated with blood. Joe took him inside the hut, and found that he had two severe wounds on the left shoulder. After the bleeding had been stanched and the wounds bandaged, the stranger related that as he was riding he met a blackfellow carrying a fire-stick. He thought it was a good opportunity of lighting his pipe, lucifer matches being then unknown in the bush; so he dismounted, took out his knife, and began cutting tobacco. The blackfellow asked for a fig of tobacco, and, after filling his pipe, the stockman gave him the remainder of the fig he had been cutting, and held out his hand for the firestick. The blackfellow seemed disappointed; very likely expecting to receive a whole fig of tobacco—and, instead of handing him the firestick he threw it on the ground. At the first moment the stockman

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did not suspect any treachery, as he had seen no weapon in possession of the blackfellow. He stooped to pick up the firestick; but just as he was touching it, he saw the black man's feet moving nearer, and becoming suddenly suspicious, he quickly moved his head to one side and stood upright. At the same instant he received a blow from a tomahawk on his left shoulder. This blow, intended for his head, was followed by another, which inflicted a second wound; but the stockman succeeded in grasping the wrist of his enemy. Then began a wrestling match between the two men, the stakes two lives, no umpire, no timekeeper, no backers, and no bets. The only spectator was the horse, whose bridle was hanging on the ground. But he seemed to take no interest in the struggle, and continued nibbling the grass until it was over.

The black man, who had now dropped his rug, was as agile and nimble as a beast of prey, and exerted all his skill and strength to free his hand. But the white man felt that to loose his hold would be to lose his life, and he held on to his grip of the blackfellow's wrist with desperate resolution. The tomahawk fell to the ground, but just then neither of the men could spare a hand to pick it up. At length, by superior strength, the stockman brought his enemy to the ground. He then grasped the thick, matted hair with one hand, and thus holding the black's head close to the ground, he reached with the other hand for the tomahawk, and with one fierce blow buried the blade in the savage's brain. Even then he did not feel quite sure of his safety. He had an idea that it was very difficult to kill blackfellows outright, that theywere like American 'possums, and were apt to come to life again after they had been killed, and ought to be dead. So to finish his work well, he hacked at the neck with the tomahawk until he had severed the head completely from the body; then taking the head by the hair, he threw it as far as he could to the other side of the track. By this time he began to feel faint from loss of blood, so he mounted his horse and galloped to Joe Kermode's hut.

When Joe had performed his duties of a good Samaritan to the stranger he mounted his horse, and rode to the field of battle. He found the headless body of the black man, the head at the other side of the track, the tomahawk, the piece of tobacco, the rug, and the firestick. Joe and the shepherd buried the body; the white man survived.

THE GOVERNMENT STROKE.

"The Government Stroke" is a term often used in the colonies, and indicates a lazy and inefficient manner of performing any kind of labour. It originated with the convicts. When a man is forced to work through fear of the lash, and receives no wages, it is quite natural and reasonable that he should exert himself as little as possible. If you were to reason with him, and urge him to work harder at, for instance, breaking road metal, in order

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that the public might have good roads to travel on, and show him what a great satisfaction it should be to know that his labours would confer a lasting benefit on his fellow creatures; that, though it might appear a little hard on him individually, he should raise his thoughts to a higher level, and labour for the good of humanity in general, he would very likely say, “Do you take me for a fool?” But if you gave him three dozen lashes for his laziness he will see, or at least feel, that your argument has some force in it. As a matter of fact men work for some present or future benefit for themselves. The saint who sells all he has to give to the poor, does so with the hope of obtaining a reward exceedingly great in the life to come. And even if there were no life to come, his present life is happier far than that of the man who grabs at all the wealth he can get until he drops into the grave. The man who works “all for love and nothing for reward” is a being incomprehensible to us ordinary mortals; he is an angel, and if ever he was a candidate for a seat in Parliament he was not elected. Even love—“which rules the court, the camp, the grove”—is given only with the hope of a return of love; for hopeless love is nothing but hopeless misery.

I once hired an old convict as gardener at five shillings a day. He began to work in the morning with a great show of diligence while I was looking on. But on my return home in the evening it was wonderful to find how little work he had contrived to get through during the day; so I began to watch him. His systematic way of doing nothing would have been very amusing if it cost nothing. He pressed his spade into the ground with his boot as slowly as possible, lifted the sod very gently, and turned it over. Then he straightened his back, looked at the ground to the right, then to the left, then in front of him, and then cast his eyes along the garden fence. Having satisfied himself that nothing particular was happening anywhere within view, he gazed awhile at the sod he had turned over, and then shaved the top off with his spade. Having straightened his back once more, he began a survey of the superficial area of the next sod, and at length proceeded to cut it in the same deliberate manner, performing the same succeeding ceremonies. If he saw me, or heard me approaching, he became at once very alert and diligent until I spoke to him, then he stopped work at once. It was quite impossible for him both to labour and to listen; nobody can do two things well at the same time. But his greatest relief was in talking; he would talk with anybody all day long if possible, and do nothing else; his wages, of course, still running on. There is very little talk worth paying for. I would rather give some of my best friends a fee to be silent, than pay for anything they have to tell me. My gardener was a most unprofitable servant; the only good I got out of him was a clear knowledge

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of what the Government stroke meant, and the knowledge was not worth the expense. He was in other respects harmless and useless, and, although he had been transported for stealing, I could never find that he stole anything from me. The disease of larceny seemed somehow to have been worked out of his system; though he used to describe with great pleasure how his misfortunes began by stealing wall-fruit when he was a boy; and although it was to him like the fruit

"Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste Brought death into the world, and all our woe."

it was so sweet that, while telling me about it sixty years afterwards, he smiled and smacked his lips, renewing as it were the delight of its delicious taste.

He always avoided, as much as possible, the danger of dying of hard work, so he is living yet, and is eighty-six years old. Whenever I see him he gives me his blessing, and says he never worked for any man he liked so well. A great philosopher says, in order to be happy it is necessary to be beloved, but in order to be beloved we must know how to please, and we can only please by ministering to the happiness of others. I ministered to the old convict's happiness by letting him work so lazily, and so I was beloved and happy.

He had formerly been an assigned servant to Mr. Gellibrand, Attorney-General of Tasmania, before that gentleman went with Mr. Hesse on that voyage to Australia Felix from which he never returned. Some portions of a skeleton were found on the banks of a river, which were supposed to belong to the lost explorer, and that river, and Mount Gellibrand, on which he and Hesse parted company, were named after him.

There was a blackfellow living for many years afterwards in the Colac district who was said to have killed and eaten the lost white man; the first settlers therefore call him Gellibrand, as they considered he had made out a good claim to the name by devouring the flesh. This blackfellow's face was made up of hollows and protuberances ugly beyond all aboriginal ugliness. I was present at an interview between him and senior-constable Hooley, who nearly rivalled the savage in lack of beauty. Hooley had been a soldier in the Fifth Fusiliers, and had been convicted of the crime of manslaughter, having killed a coloured man near Port Louis, in the Mauritius. He was sentenced to penal servitude for the offence, and had passed two years of his time in Tasmania. This incident had produced in his mind an interest in blackfellows generally, and on seeing Gellibrand outside the Colac courthouse, he walked up to him, and looked him steadily in the face, without saying a word or moving a muscle of his countenance. I never saw a more lovely pair. The black fellow returned the gaze unflinchingly, his deep-set eyes fixed fiercely on those of the Irishman, his nostrils dilated, and his frowning forehead wrinkled and hard, as if cast in iron. The two men looked like

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two wild beasts preparing for a deadly fight. At length, Hooley moved his face nearer to that of the savage, until their noses almost met, and between his teeth he slowly ejaculated: "You eat white man? You eat me? Eh?" Then the deep frown on Gellibrand's face began slowly to relax, his thick lips parted by degrees, and displayed, ready for business, his sharp and shining teeth, white as snow and hard as steel. A smile, which might be likened to that of a humorous tiger, spread over his spacious features, and so the interview ended without a fight. I was very much disappointed, as I hoped the two man-slayers were going to eat each other for the public good, and I was ready to back both of them without fear, favour, or affection.

There is no doubt that the blacks ate human flesh, not as an article of regular diet, but occasionally, when the fortune of war, or accident, favoured them with a supply. When Mr. Hugh Murray set out from Geelong to look for country to the westward, he took with him several natives belonging to the Barrabool tribe. When they arrived near Lake Colac they found the banks of the Barongarook Creek covered with scrub, and on approaching the spot where the bridge now spans the watercourse, they saw a blackfellow with his lubra and a little boy, running towards the scrub. The Barrabool blacks gave chase, and the little boy was caught by one of them before he could find shelter, and was instantly killed with a club. That night the picaninny was roasted at the camp fire, and eaten.

And yet these blacks had human feelings and affections. I once saw a tribe travelling from one part of the district to another in search of food, as was their custom. One of the men was dying of consumption, and was too weak to follow the rest. He looked like a living skeleton, but he was not left behind to die. He was sitting on the shoulders of his brother, his hands grasping for support the hair on the head, and his wasted legs dangling in front of the other's ribs. These people were sometimes hunted as if they were wolves, but two brother wolves would not have been so kind to each other.

Before the white men came the blacks never buried their dead; they had no spades and could not dig graves. Sometimes their dead were dropped into the hollow trunks of trees, and sometimes they were burned. There was once a knoll on the banks of the Barongarook Creek, below the court-house, the soil of which looked black and rich. When I was trenching the ground near my house for vines and fruit trees, making another garden of paradise in lieu of the one I had lost, I obtained cart loads of bones from the slaughter yards and other places, and placed them in trenches; and in order to fertilize one corner of the garden, I spread over it several loads of the rich-looking black loam taken from the knoll near the creek. After a few years the vines and trees yielded great quantities of grapes and fruit, and I made wine from my vineyard.

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But the land on which I had spread the black loam was almost barren, and yet I had seen fragments of bones mixed with it, and amongst them a lower jaw with perfect teeth, most likely the jaw of a young lubra. On mentioning the circumstance to one of the early settlers, he said my loam had been taken from the spot on which the blacks used to burn their dead. Soon after he arrived at Colac he saw there a solitary blackfellow crouching before a fire in which bones were visible. So, pointing to them, he asked what was in the fire, and the blackfellow replied with one word “lubra.” He was consuming the remains of his dead wife, and large tears were coursing down his cheeks. Day and night he sat there until the bones had been nearly all burned and covered with ashes. This accounted for the fragments of bones in my black loam; why it was not fertile, I know, but I don’t know how to express the reason well.

While the trenching of my vineyard was going on, Billy Nicholls looked over the fence, and gave his opinion about it. He held his pipe between his thumb and forefinger, and stopped smoking in stupid astonishment. He said—“That ground is ruined, never will grow nothing no more; all the good soil is buried; nothing but gravel and stuff on top; born fool.”

Old Billy was a bullock driver, my neighbour and enemy, and lived, with his numerous progeny, in a hut in the paddock next to mine. In the rainy seasons the water flowed through my ground on to his, and he had dug a drain which led the water past his hut, instead of allowing it to go by the natural fall across his paddock. The floods washed his drain into a deep gully near his hut, which was sometimes nearly surrounded with the roaring waters. He then tried to dam the water back on to my ground, but I made a gap in his dam with a long-handled shovel, and let the flood go through. Nature and the shovel were too much for Billy. He came out of his hut, and stood watching the torrent, holding his dirty old pipe a few inches from his mouth, and uttered a loud soliloquy:—-“Here I am—on a miserable island—fenced in with water—going to be washed away —-by that Lord Donahoo, son of a barber’s clerk—wants to drown me and my kids—don’t he—I’ll break his head wi’ a paling—blowed if I don’t.” He then put his pipe in his mouth, and gazed in silence on the rushing waters.

I planted my ground with vines of fourteen different varieties, but, in a few years, finding that the climate was unsuitable for most of them, I reduced the number to about five. These yielded an unfailing abundance of grapes every year, and as there was no profitable market, I made wine. I pruned and disbudded the vines myself, and also crushed and pressed the grapes. The digging and hoeing of the ground cost about 10 pounds each year. When the wine had been in the casks about twelve months I bottled it; in two years more it was fit for consumption, and I was very proud of the article. But I cannot boast that I ever made much profit out of it—that is, in cash— as I found that the public taste for wine required to be educated, and it took so long to do it that I had to

drink most of the wine myself. The best testimony to its excellence is the fact that I am still alive.

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The colonial taste for good liquor was spoiled from the very beginning, first by black strap and rum, condensed from the steam of hell, then by Old Tom and British brandy, fortified with tobacco— this liquor was the nectar with which the ambrosial station hands were lambed down by the publicans—and in these latter days by colonial beer, the washiest drink a nation was ever drenched with. the origin of bad beer dates from the repeal of the sugar duty in England; before that time beer was brewed from malt and hops, and that we had “jolly good ale and old,” and sour pie.

A great festival was impending at Colac, to consist of a regatta on the lake, the first we ever celebrated, and a picnic on its banks. All the people far and near invited themselves to the feast, from the most extensive of squatters to the oldest of old hands. The blackfellows were there, too—what was left of them. Billy Leura walked all the way from Camperdown, and on the day before the regatta came to my house with a couple of black ducks in his hand. Sissy, six years old, was present; she inspected the blackfellow and the ducks, and listened. Leura said he wanted to sell me the ducks, but not for money; he would take old clothes for them. He was wearing nothing but a shirt and trousers, both badly out of repair, and was anxious to adorn his person with gay attire on the morrow. So I traded off a pair of old cords and took the ducks.

Next day we had two guests, a Miss Sheppard, from Geelong, and another lady, and as my house was near the lake, we did our picnicking inside. We put on as much style as possible to suit the occasion, including, of course, my best native wine, and the two ducks roasted. Sissy sat at the table next to Miss Sheppard, and felt it her duty to lead the conversation in the best society style. She said:

“You see dose two ducks, Miss Sheppard?”

“Yes, dear; very fine ones.”

“Well, papa bought ’em from a black man yesterday. De man said dey was black ducks, but dey was’nt black, dey was brown. De fedders are in de yard, and dey are brown fedders.”

“Yes, I know, dear; they call them black ducks, but they are brown— dark brown.”

“Well, you see, de blackfellow want to sell de ducks to papa, but papa has no money, so he went into de house and bring out a pair of his old lowsers, and de blackfellow give him de ducks for de lowsers, and dems de ducks you see.”

“Yes, dear; I see,” said Miss Sheppard, blushing terribly.

We all blushed.

“You naughty girl,” said mamma; “hold your tongue, or I’ll send you to the kitchen.”

“But mamma, you know its quite true,” said Sissy. “Didn’t I show you de black man just now, Miss Sheppard, when he was going to de lake? I said dere’s de blackfellow, and he’s got papa’s lowsers on, didn’t I now?”

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The times seemed prosperous with us, but it was only a deceptive gleam of sunshine before the coming storm of adversity. I built an addition to my dwelling; and when it was completed I employed a paperhanger from London named Taylor, to beautify the old rooms. He was of a talkative disposition; when he had nobody else to listen he talked to himself, and when he was tired of that he began singing. The weather was hot, and the heat, together with his talking and singing, made him thirsty; so one day he complained to me that his work was very dry. I saw at once an opportunity of obtaining an independent and reliable judgment on the quality of my wine; so I went for a bottle, drew the cork, and offered him a tumblerful, telling him it was wine which I had made from my own grapes. As Taylor was a native of London, the greatest city in the world, he must have had a wide experience in many things, was certain to know the difference between good and bad liquor, and I was anxious to obtain a favourable verdict on my Australian product. He held up the glass to the light, and eyed the contents critically; then he tasted a small quantity, and paused awhile to feel the effect. He then took another taste, and remarked, “It’s sourish.” He put the tumbler to his mouth a third time, and emptied it quickly. Then he placed one hand on his stomach, said “Oh, my,” and ran away to the water tap outside to rinse his mouth and get rid of the unpleasant flavour. His verdict was adverse, and very unflattering.

Next day, while I was inspecting his work, he gave me to understand that he felt dry again. I asked him what he would like, a drink of water or a cup of tea? He said, “Well, I think I’ll just try another glass of that wine of yours.” He seemed very irrational in the matter of drink, but I fetched another bottle. This time he emptied the first tumbler without hesitation, regardless of consequences. He puckered his lips and curled his nose, and said it was rather sourish; but in hot weather it was not so bad as cold water, and was safer for the stomach. He then drew the back of his hand across his mouth, looked at the paper which he had been putting on the wall, and said, “I don’t like that pattern a bit; too many crosses on it.”

“Indeed,” I said, “I never observed the crosses before, but I don’t see any harm in them. Why don’t you like them?”

“Oh, it looks too like the Catholics, don’t you see? too popish. I hate them crosses.”

“Really,” I replied. “I am sorry to hear that. I am a Catholic myself.”

“Oh, lor! Are you, indeed? I always thought you were a Scotchman.”

Taylor finished that bottle of wine during the afternoon, and next day he wanted another. He wanted more every day, until he rose to be a three-bottle man. He became reconciled to the crosses on the wall-paper, forgave me for not being a Scotchman, and I believe the run of my cellar would have made him a sincere convert to popery— as long as the wine lasted.

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Soon after this memorable incident, the Minister and Secretary made an official pleasure excursion through the Western District. They visited the court and inspected it, and me, and the books, and the furniture. They found everything correct, and were afterwards so sociable that I expected they would, on returning to Melbourne, speedily promote me, probably to the Bench. But they forgot me, and promoted themselves instead. I have seen them since sitting nearly as high as Haman in those expensive Law courts in Lonsdale Street, while I was a despicable jury-man serving the Crown for ten shillings a day. That is the way of this world; the wicked are well-paid and exalted, while the virtuous are ill-paid and trodden down. At a week's notice I was ordered to leave my Garden of Eden, and I let it to a tenant, the very child of the Evil One. He pruned the vines with goats and fed his cattle on the fruit trees. Then he wrote to inquire why the vines bore no grapes and the fruit trees no fruit, and wanted me to lower the rent, to repair the vineyard and the house, and to move the front gate to the corner of the fence. That man deserved nothing but death, and he died.

In the summer of 1853, the last survivor of the Barrabool tribe came to Colac, and joined the remnant of the Colac blacks, but one night he was killed by them at their camp, near the site of the present hospital. A shallow hole was dug about forty or fifty yards from the south-east corner of the allotment on which the Presbyterian manse was built, and the Colac tribe buried his body there, and stuck branches of trees around his grave. About six months afterwards a Government officer, the head of a department, arrived at Colac, and I rode with him about the township and neighbouring country showing him the antiquities and the monuments, among others the mausoleum of the last of the Barrabools. The leaves had by this time fallen from the dead branches around the sepulchre, and the small twigs on them were decaying. The cattle and goats would soon tread them down and scatter them, and the very site of the grave would soon be unknown.

The officer was a man of culture and of scientific tendencies, and he asked me to dig up the skull of the murdered blackfellow, and sent it to his address in Melbourne. He was desirous of exercising his culture on it, and wished to ascertain whether the skull was bracchy-cephalous, dolichophalous, or polycephalous. I think that was the way he expressed it. I said there was very likely a hole in it, and it would be spoiled; but he said the hole would make no difference. I would do almost anything for science and money, but he did not offer me any, and I did not think a six months' mummy was old enough to steal; it was too fresh. If that scientist would borrow a spade and dig up the corpse himself, I would go away to a sufficient distance and close my eyes and nose until he had deposited the relic in his carpet bag. But I was too conscientious to be accessory to the crime of body-snatching, and he had not courage enough to do the foul deed. That land is now fenced in, and people dwell there. The bones of the last of the Barrabools still rest under somebody's house, or fertilise a few feet of a garden plot.

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ON THE NINETY-MILE.

A *home by* A REMOTER *sea*.

The Ninety-Mile, washed by the Pacific, is the sea shore of Gippsland. It has been formed by the mills of two oceans, which for countless ages have been slowly grinding into meal the rocks on the southern coast of Australia; and every swirling tide and howling gale has helped to build up the beach. The hot winds of summer scorch the dry sand, and spin it into smooth, conical hills. Amongst these, low shrubs with grey-green leaves take root, and thrive and flourish under the salt sea spray where other trees would die. Strange plants, with pulpy leaves and brilliant flowers, send forth long green lines, having no visible beginning or end, which cling to the sand and weave over it a network of vegetation, binding together the billowy dunes.

The beach is broken in places by narrow channels, through which the tide rushes, and wanders in many currents among low mudbanks studded with shellfish—the feeding grounds of ducks, and gulls, and swans; and around a thousand islands whose soil has been woven together by the roots of the spiky mangrove, or stunted tea-tree. Upon the muddy flats, scarcely above the level of the water, the black swans build their great circular nests, with long grass and roots compacted with slime. Salt marshes and swamps, dotted with bunches of rough grass, stretch away behind the hummocks. Here, towards the end of the summer, the blacks used to reap their harvest of fat eels, which they drew forth from the soft mud under the roots of the tussocks.

The country between the sea and the mountains was the happy-hunting-ground of the natives before the arrival of the ill-omened white-fellow. The inlets teemed with flathead, mullet, perch, schnapper, oysters, and sharks, and also with innumerable water-fowl. The rivers yielded eels and blackfish. The sandy shores of the islands were honey-combed with the holes in which millions of mutton-birds deposited their eggs in the last days of November in each year. Along many tracks in the scrub the black wallabiesand paddy-melons hopped low. In the open glades among the great gum-trees marched the stately emu, and tall kangaroos, seven feet high, stood erect on their monstrous hind-legs, their little fore-paws hanging in front, and their small faces looking as innocent as sheep.

Every hollow gum-tree harboured two or more fat opossums, which, when roasted, made a rich and savoury meal. Parrots of the most brilliant plumage, like winged flowers, flew in flocks from tree to tree, so tame that you could kill them with a stick, and so beautiful that it seemed a sin to destroy them. Black cockatoos, screaming harshly the while, tore long strips of bark from the messmate, searching for the savoury grub. Bronzed-winged pigeons, gleaming in the sun, rose from the scrub, and flocks of white cockatoos, perched high on the bare limbs of the dead trees, seemed to have made them burst into miraculous bloom like Aaron’s rod.

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The great white pelican stood on one leg on a sand-bank, gazing along its huge beak at the receding tide, hour after hour, solemn and solitary, meditating on the mysteries of Nature.

But on the mountains both birds and beasts were scarce, as many a famishing white man has found to his sorrow. In the heat of summer the sea-breeze grows faint, and dies before it reaches the ranges. Long ropes of bark, curled with the hot sun, hang motionless from the black-butts and blue gums; a few birds may be seen sitting on the limbs of the trees, with their wings extended, their beaks open, panting for breath, unable to utter a sound from their parched throats.

“When all food fails then welcome haws” is a saying that does not apply to Australia, which yields no haws or fruit of any kind that can long sustain life. A starving man may try to allay the pangs of hunger with the wild raspberries, or with the cherries which wear their seeds outside, but the longer he eats them, the more hungry he grows. One resource of the lost white man, if he has a gun and ammunition, is the native bear, sometimes called monkey bear. Its flesh is strong and muscular, and its eucalyptic odour is stronger still. A dog will eat opossum with pleasure, but he must be very hungry before he will eat bear; and how lost to all delicacy of taste, and sense of refinement, must the epicure be who will make the attempt! The last quadruped on which a meal can be made is the dingo, and the last winged creature is the owl, whose scanty flesh is viler even than that of the hawk or carrion crow, and yet a white man has partaken of all these and survived. Some men have tried roasted snake, but I never heard of anyone who could keep it on his stomach. The blacks, with their keen scent, knew when a snake was near by the odour it emitted, but they avoided the reptile whether alive or dead.

Before any white man had made his abode in Gippsland, a schooner sailed from Sydney chartered by a new settler who had taken up a station in the Port Phillip district. His wife and family were on board, and he had shipped a large quantity of stores, suitable for commencing life in a new land. It was afterwards remembered that the deck of the vessel was encumbered with cargo of various kinds, including a bullock dray, and that the deck hamper would unfit her to encounter bad weather. As she did not arrive at Port Phillip within a reasonable time, a cutter was sent along the coast in search of her; and her long boat was found ashore near the Lakes Entrance, but nothing else belonging to her was ever seen.

When the report arose in 1843 that a white woman had been seen with the blacks, it was supposed that she was one of the passengers of the missing schooner, and parties of horsemen went out to search for her among the natives, but the only white woman ever found was a wooden one—the figure-head of a ship.

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Some time afterwards, when Gippsland had been settled by white men, a tree was discovered on Woodside station near the beach, in the bark of which letters had been cut, and it was said they would correspond with the initials of the names of some of the passengers and crew of the lost schooner, and by their appearance they must have been carved many years previously. This tree was cut down, and the part of the trunk containing the letters was sawn off and sent to Melbourne. There is little doubt that the letters on the tree had been cut by one of the survivors of that ill-fated schooner, who had landed in the long boat near the Lakes, and had made their way along the Ninety-Mile beach to Woodside. They were far from the usual track of coasting vessels, and had little chance of attracting attention by signals or fires. Even if they had plenty of food, it was impossible for them to travel in safety through that unknown country to Port Phillip, crossing the inlets, creeks, and swamps, in daily danger of losing their lives by the spears of the wild natives. They must have wandered along the ninety-mile as far as they could go, and then, weary and worn out for want of food, reluctant to die the death of the unhonoured dead, one of them had carved the letters on the tree, as a last despairing message to their friends, before they were killed by the savages, or succumbed to starvation.

“For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e’er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?”

GIPPSLAND PIONEERS.

At the old port.

Most of them were Highlanders, and the news of the discovery of Gippsland must often have been imparted in Gaelic, for many of the children of the mist could speak no English when they landed.

Year after year settlers had advanced farther from Sydney along the coastal ranges, until stations were occupied to the westward of Twofold Bay. In that rugged country, where no wheeled vehicle could travel, bullocks were trained to carry produce to the bay, and to bring back stores imported from Sydney. Each train was in charge of a white man, with several native drivers. But rumours of better lands towards the south were rife, and Captain Macalister, of the border police, equipped a party of men under McMillan to go in search of them. Armed and provisioned, they journeyed over the mountains, under the guidance of the faithful native Friday, and at length from the top of a new Mount Pisgah beheld a fair land, watered throughout as the Paradise of the Lord. Descending into the plains, McMillan selected a site for a station, left some of his men to build huts and stockyards, and returned to report his discovery to Macalister.

Slabs were split with which walls were erected, but before a roof was put on them the blacks suddenly appeared and began to throw their spears at the intruders; one spear of seasoned hardwood actually penetrated through a slab. The men, all but one, who shall be nameless, seized their guns and fired at the blacks, who soon disappeared. The white men also disappeared over the mountains; the rout was mutual.

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But the country was too good to be occupied solely by savages, and when McMillan returned with reinforcements he made some arrangements, the exact particulars of which he would never disclose. He brought cattle to his run, and they quickly grew fat; but civilised man does not live by fat cattle alone, and a market had to be sought. Twofold Bay was too far away, and young Melbourne was somewhere beyond impassable mountains. McMillan built a small boat, which he launched on the river, and pulled down to the lakes in search of an outlet. He found it, but the current was so strong that it carried him out to sea. He had to land on the outer beach, and to drag his boat back over the sands to the inner waters.

He next rode westward with his man Friday to look for a port at Corner Inlet, and he blazed a track to the Albert River. Friday was an inland black. He gazed at the river, which was flowing towards the mountains, and said:

"What for stupid yallock* yan along a bulga**?"

[* Footnote: *Yallock, river.* *Bulga, mountain.]

McMillan tried to explain the theory of the tides.

"One big yallock down there push him along, come back by-and-by." And Friday saw the water come back by-and-by.

They reached the mouth of the river on February 1st, 1841, saw a broad expense of salt water, and McMillan concluded that he had found a port for Gippsland.

Ten months afterwards Jack Shay arrived at the port. He had first come to Twofold Bay from Van Diemen's Land, and nothing was known about his former life. "That's nothing to nobody," he said. He was a bushman, rough and weather-beaten, with only one peculiarity. The quart pot which he slung to his belt would hold half a gallon of tea, while other pots only held a quart, and that was the reason why he was known all the way from Monaroo to Adelaide as "Jack of the Quart Pot."

He had arrived rather late on the previous evening, and this morning, as he sat on a log contemplating the scenery, his first conclusion was that the port was not flourishing. There was not a ship within sight. The mouth of the Albert River was visible on his right, and the inlet was spread out before him shining in the morning sun. About a mile away on the western shore was One Tree Hill. Towards the south were mud banks and mangrove islands, through which the channel zigzagged like a figure of eight, and then the view was closed by the scrub on Sunday Island. There was a boat at anchor in the channel about a mile distant, in which two men were fishing for their breakfast, for there was famine in the settlement, and the few pioneers left in it were kept alive on a diet of roast flathead. On the beach three boats were drawn up out of reach of the tide, and looking behind him Jack counted twelve huts and one store of wattle-and-dab. The

store had been built to hold the goods of the Port Albert Company. It was in charge of John Campbell, and

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contained a quantity of axes, tomahawks, saddles and bridles, a grindstone, some shot and powder, two double-barrelled guns, nails and hammers, and a few other articles, but there was nothing eatable to be seen in it. If there was any flour, tea, or sugar left, it was carefully concealed from any of the famishing settlers who might by chance peep in at the door. Outside the hut was a nine-pounder gun on wheels, which had been landed by the company for use in time of war; but until this day there had been no hostilities between the natives and the settlers. From time to time numbers of black faces had been seen among the scrub, but so far no spear had been thrown nor hostile gun fired. The members of the company were Turnbull, McLeod, Rankin, Brodribb, Hornden, and Orr. Soon after they landed they cleared a semi-circular piece of ground behind their tents, to prevent the blacks from sneaking up to them unseen. Near the beach stood two she-oak trees, marked, one with the letters M. M., 1 Feb., 1841, the other 2 Mar., 1841, and the initials of the members of the Port Albert Company. Behind the huts three hobbled horses were feeding, two of which had been brought by Jack Shay. A gaunt deerhound, with a shaggy coat, lame and lean, was lying in the sun. There was also an old cart in front of one of the huts, out of which two boys came and began to gather wood and to kindle a fire. They were ragged and hungry, and looked shyly at Jack Shay. One was Bill Clancy, and the other had been printer's devil to Hardy, of the 'Gazette', and was therefore known as Dick the Devil. They had been picked up in Melbourne by Captain Davy, who had brought them to Port Albert in his whaleboat. Their ambition had been for "a life on the ocean wave, and a home on the rolling deep," as heroic young pirates; but at present they lived on shore, and their home was George Scutt's old cart.

A man emerged from one of the huts carrying a candle-box, which he laid on the ground before the fire. Jack observed that the box was full of eggs, on the top of which lay two teaspoons. The man was Captain David, usually known as Davy. He said:

"I am going to ask you to breakfast, Jack; but you have been a long time coming, and provisions are scarce in these parts."

"Don't you make no trouble whatsomever about me," said Jack. "Many's the time I've hadshort rations, and I can take pot-luck with any man."

"You'll find pot-luck here is but poor luck," replied Davy. "I've got neither grub nor grog, no meat, no flour, no tea, no sugar— nothing but eggs; but, thank God, I've got plenty of them. There are five more boxes full of them in my hut, so we may as well set to at once."

Davy drew some hot ashes from the fire, and thrust the eggs into them, one by one. When they were sufficiently cooked, he handed one and a teaspoon to Jack and took

another himself, saying, “We shall have to eat them just as they are; there is plenty of salt water, but I haven’t even a pinch of salt.”

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“Why, Davy, there’s plenty of salt right before your face. Did you never try ashes? Mix a spoonful with your egg this way, and you’ll find you don’t want no better salt.”

“Right you are, Jack; it goes down grand,” said Davy, after seasoning and eating one egg. Then to the boys, “Here you kids, take some eggs and roast ’em and salt ’em with ashes, and then take your sticks and try if you can knock down a few parrots or wattle birds for dinner. But don’t you go far from the camp, and keep a sharp look-out for the blacks; for you can never trust ’em, and they might poke their spears through you.”

“But, Davy,” asked Jack, “where is the port and the shipping, and where are all the settlers? There don’t seem to be many people stirring about here this morning.”

“Port and shipping be blessed,” said Davy; “and as for the settlers, there are only about half-a-dozen left, with these two boys and my wife, and Hannah Scutt. We don’t keep no regular watch, and meal-times is of little use unless there’s something to eat. I landed here from that whale-boat on the 30th of last May, and I have been waiting for you ever since. In a few weeks we had about a hundred and fifty people camped here. They came mostly in cutters from Melbourne, looking for work or looking for runs. They said men were working for half-a-crown a day without rations on the road between Liardet’s beach and the town. But there was no work for them here; and, as their provisions soon ran short, they had to go away or starve. I stopped here, and have been starving most of the time. Some went back in the cutters and some overland.

“Brodribb and Hobson came here over the mountains with four Port Phillip blacks, and they decided to look for a better way by the coast. I landed them and their four blacks at the head of Corner Inlet. They were attacked by the Western Port blacks near the River Tarwin, but they frightened them away by firing their guns. The four Port Phillip blacks who were carrying the ammunition and provisions ran away too; and the two white men had nothing to eat for two or three days until they made Massey and Anderson’s station on the Bass, where they found their runaway blacks.

“William Pearson and his party were the next who left the Port. They took the road over the mountains, and lived on monkey bears until they reached Massey and Anderson’s.

“McClure, Scott, Montgomery, and several other men started next. They had very little of their provisions left when I landed them one morning at One Tree Hill there over the water. They were fourteen days tramping over the mountains, and were so starved that they ate their own dogs. They came back in a schooner, but I think some of them will never get over that journey. I tell you, Jack, it’s hard to make a start in a new country with no money, no food, and no live stock, except Scott’s old horse and that lame deerhound. Poor Ossian was a good dog, and used to run down

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an old man kangaroo for us, until one of them gave him a terrible rip with his claw, and he has been lame ever since. For eight weeks we were living on roast flat-head, and I grew tired of it, so on the 17th of last month I started down the inlet in my whaleboat, and went to Lady Bay to take in some firewood. I knew the mutton-birds would be coming to the islands on the 23rd or 24th, but I landed on one of them on the 19th, four or five days too soon, and began to look for something to eat. There were some pig-faces, but they were only in flower, no fruit on 'em. I could find nothing but penguin's eggs and I put some of those in a pot over the fire. But they would never get hard if I boiled them all day. There is something oily inside of them, and how it gets there I never could tell. You might as well try to live on rancid butter and nothing else. However, on November 23rd the mutton-birds began to come in thousands, and then I was soon living in clover. I had any quantity of hard-boiled eggs and roast fowl, for I could knock down the birds with a stick.

"But, Jack, what have you been doing since I met you the year before last? You had a train of pack bullocks and a mob of cattle, looking for a run about Mount Buninyong. Did you start a station there for Imlay?"

"No, I didn't. I found a piece of good country, but Pettit and the Coghills hunted me out of it, so Imlay sold the cattle, and went back to Twofold Bay. Then Charles Lynot offered me a job. He was taking a mob of cattle to Adelaide, but he heard there was no price for them there, so he took up a station at the Pyrenees, seventeen miles beyond Parson Irvine's run at the Amphitheatre. I was there about twelve months. My hut was not far from a deep waterhole, and the milking yard was about two hundred yards from the hut. The wild blacks were very troublesome; they killed three white men at Murdering Creek, and me and Francis, Clarke's manager, hunted them off the station two or three times. The blacks were more afraid of Francis than of anybody else, as besides his gun he always carried pistols, and they never could tell how many he had in his pockets. Cockatoo Bill's tribe drove away a lot of Parson Irvine's sheep, and broke a leg of each sheep to keep them from going back. The Parson and Francis went after them, and one of our stockmen named Walker, and another, a big fellow whose name I forget. They shot some of the blacks, but the sheep were spoiled.

"There was a tame blackfellow we called Alick, and two gins, living about our station, and he had a daughter we called picaninny Charlotte, ten or eleven years old, who was very quick and smart, and spoke English very well. One morning, when I was in the milking yard, she came to me and said, 'You look out. Cockatoo Bill got your axe under his rug—sitting among a lot of lubras. Chop you down when you bring up milk in buckets.'

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“I had no gun with me, so I crept out of the yard, and sneaked through the scrub to get into the hut through the back door, keeping out of sight of Bill and the lubras, who were all sitting on the ground in front of the hut. We had plenty of arms, and I always kept my double-barrelled gun loaded, and hanging over the fireplace. I crept inside the hut, reached down for the gun, and peeped out of the front door, looking for Bill. The lubras began yabbering, and in an instant Bill dropped his rug and the axe, leaped over the heads of the women, and was off like a deer. I took a flying shot at him with both barrels. His lubra went about afterwards among the stations complaining that Jack Quart Pot shot Cockatoo Bill, and Parker (the Government Protector) made enquiries about him. I saw him coming towards my hut, and I said to piccaninny Charlotte, ’No talk, no English, no nothing;’ and when Parker asked her if she knew anything about Cockatoo Bill she shammed stupid, and he couldn’t get a word out of her. Who is that cove with the spyglass?”

“That’s John Campbell, the company’s storeman. He is looking for a schooner every day. He would have gone long ago like the rest, but he does not like to leave the stores behind. Here, Mr. Campbell, wouldn’t you like to take a roast egg or two for breakfast? There’s plenty for the whole camp.”

“I will, Davy, and thank you. Who are the men in the boat down the channel?”

“They are George Scutt and Pately Jim fishing for their breakfast. They were hungry, I reckon, and went away before I brought out the eggs, or they might have had a feed.”

While the men were roasting their eggs, their eyes wandered over everything within view, far and near. On land and sea their lives had often depended on their watchfulness. The sun was growing warm, and there was a quivering haze over the waters. While glancing down the channel, Davy observed some dark objects appearing near a mangrove island. He pointed them out to Campbell, and said:

“What kind of birds are they? Do you think they are swans?”

“I can’t think what else they can be,” said Campbell; “but they have not got the shape of birds, and they don’t swim smoothly like swans, but go jerking along like big coots. Take a look through the glass, Davy, and see if you can make them out.”

Davy took a long and steady look, and said: “I am blowed if they ain’t blackfellows in their canoes. They are poleing them along towards the channel, one, two, three—-there’s a dozen of ’em or more. I can see their long spears sticking out, and they are after some mischief. The tide is on the ebb, and they are going to drop down with it, and spear those two men in the boat; and they are both landlubbers, and haven’t even got a gun with them. We must bear a hand and help them. Get your guns and we’ll launch the whaleboat.”

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John Campbell steered, and Shay and Davy pulled as hard as they could towards the canoes, which were already drifting down with the current. The two fishermen were busy with their lines, every now and then pulling out a fish and baiting their hooks with a fresh piece of shark. They never looked up the channel, nor guessed the danger that was every moment coming nearer, for the blacks as yet had not made the least noise. At last Campbell saw several of them seizing their spears and making ready to throw them, so he fired one of his barrels; and Davy stood up in the boat and gave a cooee that might have been heard at Sunday Island, for when anything excited him on the water he could be heard shouting and swearing at an incredible distance. He yelled at the fishermen, “Boat ahoy! up anchor, you lubbers, and scatter. Don’t you see the blacks after you?”

The natives began paddling away as fast as they could towards the nearest land, and Davy and Shay pulled after them; but the blacks soon reached the shore, and, taking their spears, ran into the nearest scrub. When the whaleboat grounded, there was not one of them to be seen. Davy said:

“They are watching us not far off. You two keep a sharp look-out, and if you see a black face fire at it. I am going to cut out the fleet.”

He rolled up his trousers, took a fishing line, waded out to the canoes, and tied them together, one behind another, leaving a little slack line between each of them. He then fastened one end of the line to the whaleboat, shoved off, and sprang inside. The blacks came out of the scrub, yelling and brandishing their spears, a few of which they threw at the boat, but it was soon out of their reach. Thus a great naval victory had been gained, and the whole of the enemy’s fleet captured without the loss of a man. Nothing like it had been achieved since the days of the great Gulliver.

The two fishermen had taken no part in the naval operations, and when the whaleboat returned with its train of canoes like the tail of a kite, Davy administered a sharp reprimand.

“Why didn’t you two lubbers keep your eyes skinned. I suppose you were asleep, eh? You ought to have up anchor and pulled away, and then the devils could never got near you. Look here!” holding up a piece of bark, “that’s all they’ve got to paddle with in deep water, and in the shallows they can only pole along with sticks.”

Pately Jim had been a prize runner in Yorkshire, and trifles never took away his breath. He replied calmly:

“Yo’re o’reet, Davy. We wor a bit sleepy, but we’re quite wakken noo. Keep yor shirt on, and we’ll do better next time.”

When the canoes, which were built entirely with sheets of bark, were drawn up on the beach, nothing was found in them but a few sticks, bark paddles, and a gown—a lilac cotton gown.

“That goon,” said Campbell, “has belonged to some white woman thae deevils have murdered. There is no settler nearer than Jamieson, and they maun ha brocht the goon a’ the way frae the Bass.”

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But Campbell was mistaken. There had been another white woman in Gippsland.

THE ISLE OF BLASTED HOPES.

There is a large island where the Ninety-Mile Beach ends in a wilderness of roaring breakers. It is the Isle of Blasted Hopes. Its enchanting landscape has allured many a landsman to his ruin, and its beacon, seen through the haze of a south-east gale, has guided many a watchful mariner to shipwreck and death.

After the discovery of Gippsland, Pearson and Black first occupied the island under a grazing license, and they put eleven thousand sheep on it, with some horses, bullocks, and pigs. The sheep began to die, so they sold them to Captain Cole at ten shillings a head, giving in the other stock. They were of the opinion that they had made an excellent bargain, but when the muster was made nine thousand six hundred of the sheep were missing. The pigs ran wild, but multiplied. When the last sheep had perished, Cole sold his license to a man named Thomas, who put on more sheep, and afterwards exchanged as many as he could find with John King for cattle and horses. Morrison next occupied the island until he was starved out. Then another man named Thomas took the fatal grazing license, but he did not live on the land. He placed his brother in charge of it, to be out of the way of temptation, as he was too fond of liquor. The brother was not allowed the use of a boat; he, with his wife and family, was virtually a prisoner, condemned to sobriety. But by this time a lighthouse had been erected, and Watts the keeper of it had a boat, and was, moreover, fond of liquor. The two men soon became firm friends, and often found it necessary to make voyages to Port Albert for flour, or tea, or sugar. The last time they sailed together the barometer was low, and a gale was brewing. When they left the wharf they had taken on board all the stores they required, and more; they were happy and glorious. Next day the masthead of their boat was seen sticking out of the water near Sunday Island. The pilot schooner went down and hauled the boat to the surface, but nothing was found in her except the sand-ballast and a bottle of rum. Her sheet was made fast, and when the squall struck her she had gone down like a stone. The Isle of Blasted Hopes was useless even as an asylum for inebriates.

The ‘Ecliptic’ was carrying coals from Newcastle. The time was midnight, the sky was misty, and the gale was from the south-east, when the watch reported a light ahead. The cabin boy was standing on deck near the captain, when he held a consultation with his mate, who was also his son. Father and son agreed; they said the light ahead was the one on Kent’s Group, and then the vessel grounded amongst the breakers. The seamen stripped off their heavy clothing, and went overboard; the captain and his son plunged in together and swam out of sight. There were nine men in the water, while

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the cabin boy stood shivering on deck. He, too, had thrown away his clothes, all but the wrist-bands of his shirt, which in his flurry he could not unbutton. He could not make up his mind to jump overboard. He heard the men in the water shouting to one another, “Make for the light.” That course led them away from the nearest land, which they could not see. At length a great sea swept the boy among the breakers, but his good angel pushed a piece of timber within reach, and he held on to it until he could feel the ground with his feet; he then let the timber go, and scrambled out of reach of the angry surge; but when he came to the dry sand he fainted and fell down. When he recovered his senses he began to look for shelter; there was a signal station not far off, but he could not see it. He went away from the pitiless sea through an opening between low conical hills, covered with dark scrub, over a pathway composed of drift sand and broken shells. He found an old hut without a door. There was no one in it; he went inside, and lay down shivering.

At daybreak a boy, the son of Ratcliff, the signal man, started out to look for his goats, and as they sometimes passed the night in the old fowlhouse, he looked in for them. But instead of the goats, he saw the naked cabin boy. “Who are you?” he said, “and what are you doing here, and where did you come from?”

“I have been shipwrecked,” replied the cabin boy; and then he sat up and began to cry.

Young Ratcliff ran off to tell his father what he had found; and the boy was brought to the cottage, put to bed, and supplied with food and drink. The signal for a wreck was hoisted at the flagstaff, but when the signallman went to look for a wreck he could not find one. He searched along the shore and found the dead body of the captain, and a piece of splintered spar seven or eight feet long, on which the cabin boy had come ashore. The ‘Ecliptic’, with her cargo and crew, had completely disappeared, while the signalman, near at hand, slept peacefully, undisturbed by her crashing timbers, or the shouts of the drowning seamen. Ratcliff was not a seer, and had no mystical lore. He was a runaway sailor, who had, in the forties, travelled daily over the Egerton run, unconscious of the tons of gold beneath his feet.

There was a fair wind and a smooth sea when the ‘Clonmel’ went ashore at three o’clock in the morning of the second day of January, 1841. Eighteen hours before she had taken a fresh departure from Ram’s Head to Wilson’s Promontory. The anchors were let go, she swung to wind, and at the fall of the tide she bedded herself securely in the sand, her hull, machinery, and cargo uninjured. The seventy-five passengers and crew were safely landed; sails, lumber, and provisions were taken ashore in the whaleboats and quarter-boats; tents were erected; the food supplies were stowed away under a capsized boat, and a guard set over them by Captain Tollervey.

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Next morning seven volunteers launched one of the whaleboats, boarded the steamer, took in provisions, made a lug out of a piece of canvas, hoisted the Union Jack to the mainmast upside down, and pulled safely away from the ‘Clonmel’ against a head wind. They hoisted the lug and ran for one of the Seal Islands, where they found a snug little cove, ate a hearty meal, and rested for three hours. They then pulled for the mainland, and reached Sealer’s Cove about midnight, where they landed, cooked supper, and passed the rest of the night in the boat for fear of the blacks.

Next morning three men went ashore for water and filled the breaker, when they saw three blacks coming down towards them; so they hurried on board, and the anchor was hauled up.

As the wind was coming from the east, they had to pull for four hours before they weathered the southern point of the cove; they then hoisted sail and ran for Wilson’s Promentory, which they rounded at ten o’clock a.m. At eight o’clock in the evening they brought up in a small bay at the eastern extremity of Western Port, glad to get ashore and stretch their weary limbs. After a night’s refreshing repose on the sandy beach, they started at break of day, sailing along very fast with a strong and steady breeze from the east, although they were in danger of being swamped, as the sea broke over the boat repeatedly. At two o’clock p.m. they were abreast of Port Philip Heads; but they found a strong ebb tide, with such a ripple and broken water that they did not consider it prudent to run over it. They therefore put the boat’s head to windward and waited for four hours, when they saw a cutter bearing down on them, which proved to be ‘The Sisters’, Captain Mulholland, who took the boat in tow and landed them at Williamstown at eleven o’clock p.m., sixty-three hours from the time they left the ‘Clonmel’.

Captain Lewis, the harbour master, went to rescue the crew and passengers and brought them all to Melbourne, together with the mails, which had been landed on the island since known by the name of the ‘Clonmel’.

For fifty-two years the black boilers of the ‘Clonmel’ have lain half buried in the sandspit, and they may still be seen among the breakers from the deck of every vessel sailing up the channel to Port Albert.

The ‘Clonmel’, with her valuable cargo, was sold in Sydney, and the purchaser, Mr. Grose, set about the business of making his fortune out of her. He sent a party of wreckers who pitched their camps on Snake Island, where they had plenty of grass, scrub, and timber. The work of taking out the cargo was continued under various captains for six years, and then Mr. Grose lost a schooner and was himself landed in the Court of Insolvency.

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While the pioneers at the Old Port were on the verge of starvation, the ‘Clonmel’ men were living in luxury. They had all the blessings both of land and sea—corned beef, salt pork, potatoes, plum-duff, tea, sugar, coffee, wine, beer, spirits, and tobacco from the cargo of the ‘Clonmel’, and oysters without end from a neighbouring lagoon. They constructed a large square punt, which they filled with cargo daily, wind and weather permitting; at other times they rested from their labours, or roamed about the island shooting birds or hunting kangaroo. They saw no other inhabitants, and believed that no black lucifer had as yet entered their island garden; but, though unseen, he was watching them and all their works.

One morning the wreckers had gone to the wreck; a man named Kennedy was left in charge of the camp; Sambo, the black cook, was attending to his duties at the fire; and Mrs. Kennedy, the only lady of the party, was at the water hole washing clothes. Her husband had left the camp with his gun in the hope of shooting some wattle birds, which were then fat with feeding on the sweet blossoms of the honeysuckle. He was sitting on a log near the water-hole talking to his wife, who had just laid out to dry on the bushes three coloured shirts and a lilac dress. She stood with her hands on her hips, pensively contemplating the garments. She had her troubles, and was turning them over in her mind, while her husband was thinking of something else quite different. It is, I believe, a thing that often happens.

“I am thinking, Flora,” he said, “that this would be a grand island to live on—far better than Skye, because it has no rocks on it. I would like to haf it for a station. I could put sheep and cattle on it, and they could not go away nor be lifted, because there is deep water all round it; and we would haf plenty of beef, and mutton, and wool, and game, and fish, and oysters. We could make a garden and haf plenty of kail, and potatoes, and apples.”

“It’s all ferry well, Donald,” she replied, “for you to be talking about sheep, and cattle, and apples; but I’d like to know wherefer we would be getting the money to buy the sheep and cattle? And who would like to live here for efer a thousand miles from decent neebors? And that’s my best goon, and it’s getting fery shabby; and wherefer I’m to get another goon in a country like this I’m thinking I don’t know.”

Donald thought his wife was troubling herself about mere trifles, but before he had time to say so, a blackfellow snatched his gun from across his knees, another hit him on the head with a waddy, and a third did the same to Flora and the unfortunate couple lay senseless on the ground. Their hopes and troubles had come to a sudden end.

This onslaught had been made by four blacks, who now made a bundle of the clothes, and carried them and the gun away, going towards the camp in search of more plunder. The tents occupied by the wreckers had been enclosed in a thick hedge of scrub to protect them from the drifting sand. There was only one opening in the hedge, through which the blacks could see Sambo cooking the wreckers’ dinner before a fire. His head

was bare, and he was enjoying the genial heat of early summer, singing snatches of the melodies of Old Virginny.

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The hearing of the Australian aboriginal is acute, and his talent for mimicry astonishing; he can imitate the notes of every bird and the call of every animal with perfect accuracy.

Sambo's senseless song enchanted the four blacks. It was first heard with tremendous applause in New Orleans, it was received with enthusiasm by every audience in the Great Republic, and it had been the delight of every theatre in the British Empire. It may be said that "jim Crow" buried the legitimate drama and danced on its grave. It really seemed to justify the severe judgment passed on us by the sage of Chelsea, that we were "sixteen millions, mostly fools." No air was ever at the same time so silly and so successful as "Jim Crow." But there was life in it, and it certainly prolonged that of Sambo, for as the four savages crouched behind the hedge listening to the

"Turn about and wheel about, and do just so, And ebery time I turn about I jump Jim Crow,"

they forgot their murderous errand.

At last there was an echo of the closing words which seemed to come from a large gum tree beyond the tents, against which a ladder had been reared to the forks, used for the purpose of a look-out by Captain Leebrace.

Sambo paused, looked up to the gum tree, and said, "By golly, who's dere?" The echo was repeated, and then he wheeled about in real earnest, transfixed with horror, unable to move a limb. The blacks were close to him now, but even their colour could not restore his courage. They were cannibals, and were preparing to kill and eat him. But first they examined their game critically, poking their fingers about him, pinching him in various parts of the body, stroking his broad nose and ample lips with evident admiration, and trying to pull out the curls on his woolly head.

Sambo was usually proud of his personal appearance, but just now fear prevented him from enjoying the applause of the strangers.

At length he recovered his presence of mind sufficiently to make an effort to avert his impending doom. If the blacks could be induced to eat the dinner he was cooking their attention to himself might be diverted, and their appetites appeased, so he pointed towards the pots, saying, "Plenty beef, pork, plum duff."

The blacks seemed to understand his meaning, and they began to inspect the dinner; so instead of taking the food like sensible men, they upset all the pots with their waddies, and scattered the beef, pork, plum duff and potatoes, so that they were covered with sand and completely spoiled.

Two of the blacks next peered into the nearest tent, and seeing some knives and forks, took possession of them. But there was a sound of voices from the waterhole, and they

quickly gathered together their stolen goods and disappeared. In a few minutes Captain Leebrace and the wreckers arrived at the camp, bringing with them Kennedy and his wife, who had recovered their senses, and were able to tell what had happened.

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“Black debbils been heah, cappen, done spoil all de dinner, and run away wid de knives and forks,” Sambo said.

Captain Leebrace soon resolved on a course of reprisals. He went up the ladder to the forks of the gum tree with his telescope, and soon obtained a view of the retreating thieves, appearing occasionally and disappearing among the long grass and timber; and after observing the course they were taking he came down the ladder. He selected two of his most trustworthy men, and armed them and himself with double-barrelled guns, one barrel being smooth bore and the other rifled, weapons suitable for game both large and small. During the pursuit the captain every now and then, from behind a tree, searched for the enemy with his telescope, until at last he could see that they had halted, and had joined a number of their tribe. He judged that the blacks, if they suspected that the white men would follow them, would direct their looks principally towards the tents, so he made a wide circuit to the left. Then he and his men crept slowly along the ground until they arrived within short range of the natives.

Three of the blacks were wearing the stolen shirts, a fourth had put on the lilac dress, and they were strutting around to display their brave apparel just like white folks. The savage man retains all finery for his own personal adornment, and never wastes any of it on his despicable wife, but still Captain Leebrace had some doubt in the matter. He whispered to his men, “I don’t like to shoot at a gown; there may be a lubra in it, but I’ll take the middle fellow in the shirt, and you take the other two, one to the right, the other to the left; when I say one, two, three, fire.”

The order was obeyed and when the smoke cleared away the print dress was gone, but all the rest of the plunder was recovered on the spot. The shirts were stripped off the bodies of the blacks; and after they had been rinsed in a water-hole, they were found to have been not much damaged, each shirt having only a small bullet hole in it. It was in this way that the lilac dress escaped, and was found in the canoe at the Old Port; the blackfellow who wore it had taken it off and put it under his knees in the bottom of his canoe, and when the white men’s boat came after him, he was in so great a hurry to hide himself in the scrub that he left the dress behind.

Next day there was a sudden alarm in the camp at the Old Port. Clancy and Dick the Devil came running toward the beach, full of fear and excitement, screaming, “The blacks, the blacks, they are coming, hundreds of them, and they are all naked, and daubed over white, and they have long spears.”

The men who had guns—Campbell, Shay, and Davy—fetched them out of their huts and stood ready to receive the enemy; even McClure, although very weak, left his bed and came outside to assist in the fight. The fringe of the scrub was dotted with the piebald bodies of the blacks, dancing about, brandishing their spears, and shouting defiance at the white men. They were not in hundreds, as the boys imagined, their number apparently not exceeding forty; but it was evident that they were threatening

death and destruction to the invaders of their territory. None, however, but the very bravest ventured far into the cleared space, and they showed no disposition to make a rush or anything like a concerted attack.

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Campbell, after watching the enemy's movements for some time, said, "I think it will be better to give them a taste of the nine-pounder. Keep a look-out while I load her."

He went into his store to get the charge ready. He tied some powder tightly in a piece of calico and rammed it home. On this he put a nine-pound shot; but, reflecting that the aim at the dancing savages would be uncertain, he put in a double charge, consisting of some broken glass and a handful of nails.

He then thrust a wooden skewer down the touch-hole into the powder bag below, primed and directed the piece towards the scrub, giving it, as he judged, sufficient elevation to send the charge among the thickest of the foe. As this was the first time the gun had been brought into action, and there was no telling for certain which way it would act, Campbell thought it best to be cautious; so he ordered all his men to take shelter behind the store. He then selected a long piece of bark, which he lighted at the fire, and, standing behind an angle of the building, he applied the light to the touch-hole. Every man was watching the scrub to see the effect of the discharge. There was a fearful explosion, succeeded by shrieks of horror and fear from the blacks, as the ball and nails and broken glass went whistling over their heads through the trees. Then there was a moment of complete silence. Campbell, like a skilful general, ordered his men to pursue at once the flying foe, in order to reap to the full the fruits of victory, and they ran across the open ground to deliver a volley; but on arriving at the scrub no foe was to be seen, either dead or alive. The elevation of the artillery had been too great, and the missiles had passed overhead; but the result was all that could be hoped for, for two months afterwards not a single native was visible.

Two victories had been gained by the pioneers, and it was felt that they deserved some commemoration. At night there was a feast around the camp fire; it was of necessity a frugal one, but each member of the small community contributed to it as much as he was able. Campbell produced flour enough for a large damper, a luxury unseen for the last eight weeks; McClure gave tea and sugar; Davy brought out a box full of eggs and a dozen mutton birds; Scutt and Pateley furnished a course of roast flathead; Clancy and Dick the Devil, the poor pirates, gave all the game they had that day killed, *viz*., two parrots and a wattle bird. The twelve canoes, the spoils of victory, were of little value; they were placed on the camp fire one after another, and reduced to ashes.

The warriors sat around on logs and boxes enjoying the good things provided and talking cheerfully, but they made no set speeches. Dinner oratory is full of emptiness and they had plenty of that every day. They dipped pannikins of tea out of the iron pot.

When Burke and Wills were starving at Cooper's Creek on a diet of nardoo, the latter recorded in his diary that what the food wanted was sugar; he believed that nardoo and sugar would keep him alive. The pioneers at the Old Port were convinced that their great want was fat; with that their supper would have been perfect.

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McClure was dying of consumption as everybody knew but himself; he could not believe that he had come so far from home only to die, and he joined the revellers at the camp fire. He said to kindly enquirers that he felt quite well, and would soon regain his strength. Before that terrible journey over the mountains he had been the life and soul of the Port. He could play on the violin, on the bagpipes—both Scotch and Irish—and he was always so pleasant and cheerful, looking as innocent as a child, that no one could be long dispirited in his company, and the most impatient growler became ashamed of himself.

McClure was persuaded to bring out his violin once more—it had been long silent—and he began playing the liveliest of tunes, strathspeys, jigs, and reels, until some of the men could hardly keep their heels still, but it is hard to dance on loose sand, and they had to be contented with expressing their feelings in song. Davy sang “Ye Mariners of England,” and other songs of the sea; and Pateley Jim gave the “Angel’s Whisper,” followed by an old ballad of the days of Robin Hood called “The Wedding of Aythur O’Braidley,” the violin accompanying the airs and putting the very soul of music into every song.

But by degrees the musician grew weary, and began to play odds and ends of old tunes, sacred and profane. He dwelt some time on an ancient “Kyrie Eleeson,” and at last glided, unconsciously as it were, into the “Land o’ the Leal.”

I’m wearin’ away, Jean,
Like snaw wreaths in thaw, Jean,
I’m wearin’ awa, Jean,
To the Land o’ the Leal.

There’s nae sorrow there, Jean,
There’s nae caul or care, Jean,
The days aye fair, Jean,
I’ the Land of the Leal.

At last McClure rose from his seat, and said, “I’ll pit awa the fiddle, and bid ye a good nicht. I think I’ll be going hame to my mither the morn.”

He went into his tent. It was high tide, and there was a gentle swish of long low waves lapping the sandy beach. The night wind sighed a soothing lullaby through the spines of the she-oak, and his spirit passed peacefully away with the ebb. He was the first man who died at the Old Port, and he was buried on the bank of the river where Friday first saw its waters flowing towards the mountain.

Thirty years afterwards I saw two old men, Campbell and Montgomery, pulling up the long grass which had covered his neglected grave.

GLENGARRY IN GIPPSLAND.

Jack Shay was not sorry to leave the Old Port. The nocturnal feast made to celebrate the repulse of the blackfellows could not conceal the state of famine which prevailed, and he was pleased to remember that he had brought plenty of flour, tea, and sugar as far as the Thomson river. Davy had no saddle, but John Campbell lent him one for the journey, and also sold him shot and powder on credit. So early in the morning the two men took a “tightener”

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of roast eggs, and commenced their journey on McMillan's track, each man carrying his double-barrelled gun, ready loaded, in his hand. By this time the sight of a gun was a sufficient warning to the blackfellows to keep at a safe distance; the discharge of the nine-pounder had proved to them that the white man possessed mysterious powers of mischief, and it was a long time before they could recover courage enough to approach within view of the camp at the Old Port. On the second day of their journey Davy and Shay arrived at the Thomson, and found the mob of cattle and the men all safe. They built a hut, erected a stockyard, and roughly fixed the boundaries of the station by blazed trees, the bank of the river, and other natural marks.

There were three brothers Imlay in the Twofold Bay district—John, Alexander, and George—the latter residing at the Bay, where he received stores from Sydney, and shipped return cargoes of station produce and fat cattle for Hobarton. Two stations on the mountains were managed by the other two brothers, and their brand was III., usually called "the Bible brand." When the station on the Thomson was put in working order, the Imlays exchanged it for one owned by P. P. King, which was situated between their two stations in the Monaro district. The Gippsland station was named Fulham, and was managed by John King. Jack Shay returned to the mountains, and Davy to the Old Port.

Soon afterwards the steamer 'Corsair' arrived from Melbourne, bringing many passengers, one of whom was John Reeve, who took up a station at Snake Ridge, and purchased the block of land known as Reeve's Survey. The new settlers also brought a number of horses, and Norman McLeod had twenty bullocks on board. The steamer could not reach the port, and brought-to abreast of the Midge Channel. The cattle and horses were slung and put into the water, four at a time, and swam to land, but all the bullocks disappeared soon afterwards and fled to the mountains.

Next the brig 'Bruthen' arrived from Sydney, chartered by the Highland chief Macdonnell, of Glengarry. In the days of King William III. a sum of 20,000 pounds was voted for the purpose of purchasing the allegiance of the Glengarry of that day, and of that of several other powerful chiefs. On taking the oath of loyalty to the new dynasty, they were to receive not more than 2,000 pounds each; or, if they preferred dignity to cash, they could have any title of nobility they pleased below that of earl. Most of them took the oath and the cash. It is not recorded that any chief preferred a title, but the Macdonnell of 1842 was Lord Glengarry to all the new settlers in Gippsland. His father, Colonel Alexander Ronaldson Macdonnell, was the last genuine specimen of a Highland chief, and he was the Fergus McIvor of Walter Scott's "Waverley." He always wore the dress of his ancestors, and kept sentinels posted at his doors. He perished in the year 1828, while attempting to escape from a steamer which had gone ashore. His estate was heavily encumbered, and his son was compelled to sell it to the Marquis of Huntly.

In 1840 it was sold to the Earl of Dudley for 91,000 pounds, and in 1860 to Edward Ellice for 120,000 pounds.

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The landless young chief resolved to transfer his broken fortunes to Australia. He brought with him a number of men and women, chiefly Highlanders, who were landed by Davy in his whaleboat. For this service Glengarry gave a cheque on a Sydney bank for five pounds, which was entrusted to Captain Gaunson of the schooner 'Coquette' to purchase groceries. On arriving in Sydney the Gaunsons went on a pleasure excursion about the harbour, the 'Coquette' was capsized in a squall, one or two of the family perished, and Davy's cheque went down with the vessel. But when the schooner was raised and the water pumped out, the cheque was found, and the groceries on the next voyage arrived safely at the Old Port.

Glengarry's head man and manager of the enterprise was a poor gentleman from Tipperary named Dancer, and his chief stockman was Sandy Fraser.

By the regulations then in force in New South Wales, Glengarry was entitled, for a fee of 10 pounds per annum, to hold under a depasturing license an area of twenty square miles, on which he might place 500 head of cattle or 4,000 sheep. He selected a site for his head station and residence on the banks of the Tarra. The house was built, huts and stockyards were erected, 500 dairy cows were bought at 10 pounds each, and the business of dairy farming commenced.

But the young chief and his men were unused to the management of a station in the new country; they had everything to learn, and at a ruinous cost.

A number of young men bailed up the cows each morning, and put on the leg ropes; then they sat on the top rails of the stockyard fence and waited while the maids drew the milk. Dancer superintended the labours of the men and the milkmaids. He sat in his office in a corner of the stockyard, entering in his books the number of cattle milked, and examining the state of their brands, which were daubed on the hides with paint and brush. Some cheese was made, but it was not of much account, and all the milk and butter were consumed on the station.

At this time the blacks had quite recovered from the fright occasioned by the discharge of the nine-pounder gun, and were again often seen from the huts at the Old Port. Donald Macalister was sent by his uncle, Lachlan Macalister, of Nuntin, to make arrangements for shipping some cattle and sheep. The day before their arrival Donald saw some blacks at a distance in the scrub, and without any provocation fired at them with an old Tower musket, charged with shot. The next day the drovers and shepherds arrived with the stock, and drove them over Glengarry's bridge to a place between the Tarra and Albert rivers, called the Coal Hole, afterwards occupied by Parson Bean. there was no yard there, and the animals would require watching at night; so Donald decided to send them back to Glengarry's yards. Then he and the drovers and shepherds would have a pleasant time; there would be songs and whisky, the piper would play,

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and the men and maids would dance. The arrangement suited everybody. The drovers started back with the cattle, Donald helped the shepherds to gather the sheep, and put them on the way, and then he rode after the cattle. The track led him past a grove of dense ti-tree, on the land now known as the Brewery Paddock, and about a hundred yards ahead a single blackfellow came out of the grove, and began capering about and waving a waddy. Donald pulled up his horse and looked at the black. He had a pair of pistols in the holsters of his saddle, but he did not draw them: there was no danger from a blackfellow a hundred yards off. But there was another behind him and much nearer, who came silently out of the ti-tree and thrust a spear through Donald's neck. The horse galloped away towards Glengarry's bridge.

When the drovers saw the riderless horse, they supposed that Macalister had been accidentally thrown, and they sent Friday to look for him. He found him dead. The blacks had done their work quickly. They had stripped Donald of everything but his trousers and boots, had mutilated him in their usual fashion, and had disappeared. A messenger was sent to old Macalister, and the young man was buried on the bank of the river near McClure's grave. The new cemetery now contained three graves, the second being that of Tinker Ned, who shot himself accidentally when pulling out his gun from beneath a tarpaulin.

Lachlan Macalister had had a long experience in dealing with blackfellows and bushrangers; he had been a captain in the army, and an officer of the border police. The murder of his nephew gave him both a professional and a family interest in chastising the criminals, and he soon organised a party to look for them. It was, of course, impossible to identify any blackfellow concerned in the outrage, and therefore atonement must be made by the tribe. The blacks were found encamped near a waterhole at Gammon Creek, and those who were shot were thrown into it, to the number, it was said, of about sixty, men, women, and children; but this was probably an exaggeration. At any rate, the black who capered about to attract young Macalister's attention escaped, and he often afterwards described and imitated the part he took in what he evidently considered a glorious act of revenge. The gun used by old Macalister was a double-barrelled Purdy, a beautiful and reliable weapon, which in its time had done great execution.

The dairy business at Greenmount was carried on at a continual loss, and Glengarry resolved to return to Scotland. He sold his cows and their increase to Thacker and Mason, of Sydney, for twenty-seven shillings and sixpence per head; his house was bought by John Campbell. On the eve of his departure for Sydney in the schooner 'Coquette' (Captain Gaunson), a farewell dinner was given by the Highlanders at the Old Port, and Long Mason, who had come from Sydney to take delivery of the cows on behalf

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of Thacker and Mason, was one of the guests. But there was more of gloom than of gaiety around the festive board. All wished well to the young chief, but the very best of his friends could think of nothing cheerful to say to him. His enterprise had been a complete failure; the family tree of Clanranald the Dauntless had refused to take root in a strange land the glory had gone from it for ever, and there was nothing to celebrate in song or story.

Other men from the Highlands failed to win the smiles of fortune in Gippsland. At home, notwithstanding their tribal feuds, they held their own for two thousand years against the Roman and Saxon, the Dane and the Norman. Only one hundred and fifty years ago (it seems now almost incredible) they nearly scared the Hanoverian dynasty from the throne of England, and even yet, though scattered throughout the British Empire, they are neither a fallen nor a falling race.

Glengarry returned to his tent early, and then the buying and selling of the five hundred cows became the subject of conversation; the whisky circulated, and Long Mason observed that unfriendly looks began to be directed towards himself. He was an Englishman, a Southron, and it was a foul shame and dishonour that such as he should pay a Highland chief only twenty-seven shillings and sixpence for beasts that had cost ten pounds each. That was not the way in the good old days when the hardy men of the north descended from the mountains with broadsword and shield, lifted the cattle of the Saxon, and drove them to their homes in the glens.

The fervid temper of the Gael grew hotter at the thought of the rank injustice which had been done, and it was decided that Long Mason should be drowned in the inlet. He protested against the decision with vigour, and apparently with reason. He said:

“I did not buy the cattle at all. Glengarry sold them to Thacker and my brother in Sydney, and I only came over to take delivery of them. What wrong have I done?”

But the reasoning of the prosaic Englishman was thrown to the winds:

“Ye’ve done everything wrong. Ye should hae gin ten pund sterling apiece for the coos, and not twenty-sen and saxpence. It’s a pity yer brither, and Thacker, and MacFarlane are no here the nicht, and we’d droon them, too.”

Four strong men, shouting in Gaelic the war-cry of Sheriffmuir, “Revenge, revenge, revenge to-day, mourning to-morrow!” seized the long limbs of the unfortunate Mason, and in spite of his struggles bore him towards the beach. The water near the margin was shallow, so they waded in until it was deep enough for their purpose. There was a piercing cry, “Help! murder! murder!” John Campbell heard it, but it was not safe for a Campbell to stand between a Macdonnell and his revenge. However, Captain Davy and

Pateley Jim came out of their huts to see what was the matter, and they waded after the Highlanders. Each seized a man by the collar and downhauled. There was a sudden whirlpool, a splashing and a spluttering, as all the five men went under and drank the brine.

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“I think,” said Pateley, “that will cool ’em a bit,” and it did.

Long Mason was a university man, educated for the church, but before his ordination to the priesthood he had many other adventures and misfortunes. After being nearly drowned by the Highlanders he was placed in charge of Woodside station by his elder brother; he tried to mitigate the miseries of solitude with drink, but he did so too much and was turned adrift. He then made his way to New Zealand, and fought as a common soldier through the Heki war. Captain Patterson, of the schooner ‘Eagle’, met him at a New Zealand port. He was wearing a long, ragged old coat, such as soldiers wore, was out of employment, and in a state of starvation. The captain took pity on him, brought him back to Port Albert, and he became a shepherd on a station near Bairnsdale. While he was fighting the Maoris his brother had gone home, and had sent to Sydney money to pay his passage to England. But he could not be found, and the money was returned to London. At length Captain Bentley found out where he was, took him to Sydney, gave him an outfit, and paid his passage to England. Long Mason, honest man that he was, sent back the passage money, was ordained priest, obtained a living near London, and roamed no more.

He had a younger brother named Leonard Mason, who lived with Coady Buckley at Prospect, near the Ninety-Mile, and became a good bushman. In 1844 Leonard took up a station in North Gippsland adjoining the McLeod’s run, but the Highlanders tried to drive him away by taking his cattle a long distance to a pound which had been established at Stratford. The McLeods and their men were too many for Leonard. He went to Melbourne to try if the law or the Government would give him any redress, but he could obtain no satisfaction. The continued impounding of his cattle meant ruin to him, and when he returned to Gippsland he found his hut burned down and his cattle gone on the way to the pound. He took a double-barrelled gun and went after them. He found them at Providence Ponds, which was a stopping place for drovers. Next morning he rose early, went to the stockyard with his gun, and waited till McDougall, who was manager for the McLeods, came out with his stockmen. When they approached the yard he said:

“I shall shoot the first man who touches those rails to take my cattle out.”

McDougall laughed, and ordered one of his men to take down the slip-rails, but the man hesitated; he did not like the looks of Mason. Then McDougall dismounted from his horse and went to the slip-rails, but as soon as he touched them Mason shot him.

Coady Buckley spared neither trouble nor expense in obtaining the best counsel for Mason’s defence at the trial in Melbourne. He was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to nine years’ imprisonment, but after a time was released on the condition of leaving Victoria, and when last heard of was a drover beyond the Murray.

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After the departure of Glengarry, Dancer could find no profitable employment in Gippsland, and lived in a state of indigence. At last he borrowed sufficient money on a promissory note to pay his passage to Ireland. In Tipperary he became a baronet and a sheriff, and lived to a good old age.

WANTED, A CATTLE MARKET.

It seemed incredible to the first settlers in North Gippsland that their new Punjaub, the land of the five rivers, which emptied their waters into immense lakes, should communicate with the sea by no channel suitable for ships, and an expedition was organised to endeavour to find an outlet. McMillan had two boats at his station at Bushy Park, but he had no sails, so he engaged Davy as sailmaker and chief navigator on the intended voyage. The two men rode together from the Old Port up the track over Tom's Cap, and shot two pigeons by the way, which was fortunate, for when they arrived at Kilmany Park William Pearson was absent, and his men were found to be living under a discipline so strict that his stock-keeper, Jimmy Rentoul, had no meat, and dared not kill any without orders; so McMillan and Davy fried the pigeons, and ate one each for supper. Next morning they shot some ducks for breakfast, and then proceeded on their journey. They called at Mewburn Park, arrived at Bushy Park (McMillan's own station), and Davy began making the sails the same evening. Next morning he crossed the river in a canoe, made out of a hollow log, to Boisdale, Lachlan Macalister's station, and went to the milking yard. The management was similar to that of Dancer at Greenmount. Eleven men and women were milking about one hundred and fifty cows, superintended by nine Highlanders, who were sitting on the toprails discoursing in Gaelic. One of them was Jock Macdonald, who was over eighteen stone in weight, too heavy for any ordinary horse to carry; the rest were Macalisters, Gillies, and Thomsons. The stockmen were convicts, and they lived with the Highlanders in a big building like the barracks for soldiers. Every man seemed to do just what he liked, to kill what he liked, and to eat what he liked, and it was astonishing to see so little discipline on a station owned by a gentleman who had seen service both in the army and in the border police.

The blacks were at this time very troublesome about the new stations. They began to be fond of beef, and in order to get it they drove fat cattle into the morasses and speared them. This proceeding produced strained relations between the two races, and the only effectual remedy was the gun. But many of the settlers had scruples about shooting blackfellows except in self-defence, and it could hardly be called self-defence to shoot one or more of the natives because a beast had been speared by some person or persons unknown. John Campbell, at Glencoe, tried a dog, a savage deerhound, which he trained to chase

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the human game. This dog acquired great skill in seizing a blackfellow by the heel, throwing him, and worrying him until Campbell came up on his horse. When the dog had thus expelled the natives from Glencoe, Campbell agreed to lend him to little Curlewis for three months in order to clear Holey Plains Station. Curlewis paid ten heifers for the loan of the dog, and Campbell himself went to give him a start in the hunt, as the animal would not own any other man as master. But the blacks soon learned that Campbell and his dog had left Glencoe unprotected, and the second night after his departure they boldly entered the potato patch near his hut, and bandicooted the whole of his potatoes.

When the sails were made, the two boats were provisioned with tea, sugar, flour, and a keg of whisky; the meat was carried in the shape of two live sheep, to be killed when required. The party consisted of eight men, and each man was armed with a double-barrelled gun. McMillan, McLennan, Loughnan, and Davy went in one boat, and in the other boat were William Pearson, John Reeve, Captain Orr, and Sheridan, who was manager for Raymond at Stratford. Sheridan was a musical man, and took his flute with him. When everything was ready they dropped down the river to Lake Wellington, and took note of the soundings during the whole of the voyage as they went along. Wherever they approached either shore, they saw natives or found traces of them. Every beach was strewn with the feathers of the ducks, swans, and other birds they had killed, and it was difficult to find sufficient dead wood near the water to make a fire, the blacks having used so much of it at their numerous camping places.

The gins had an ingenious system of capturing the ducks. They moved along under water, leaving nothing but their nostrils visible above the surface, and they were thus able to approach the unsuspecting birds. As opportunity offered they seized them by the legs, drew them quickly under water, and held them until they were drowned. When they had secured as many as they could hold in one hand they returned to land.

One of the explorers always kept guard while the others slept, the first watch of each night being assigned to Davy, who baked the damper for the next day. One of the sheep was killed soon after the voyage commenced; and the duty of taking ashore, tethering, and guarding the other sheep at each landing place was taken in turn by Pearson and Loughnan. At the lower end of the lakes the water was found to be brackish, so they went ashore at several places to look for fresh water. They landed on a flat at Reeve's River, and Davy found an old well of the natives, but it required cleaning out, so he went back to the boat for a spade. It was Loughnan's turn that day to tether the sheep on some grassy spot, and to look after it; the animal by this time had become quite a pet, and was called Jimmy. On coming near the boats Davy looked about for Jimmy, but could not see him and asked Loughnan where he was.

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“Oh, he is all right,” said Loughnan, “I did not tether him, but he is over there eating the reeds.”

“Then he’s gone,” replied Davy.

Every man became seriously alarmed and ran down to the reeds, for Jimmy carried their whole supply of meat. They found his tracks at the edge of the water, and followed them to the foot of a high bluff, which they ascended, calling as they went repeatedly for Jimmy. They looked in every direction, scanning especially the tops of the reeds to see if Jimmy was moving amongst them, but they could see no sign of the sheep that was lost. The view of land and river, mountain and sea, was very beautiful, but they were too full of sorrow for Jimmy to enjoy it. On going away they agreed to call the bluff Jimmy’s point, but other voyagers came afterwards who knew nothing of Jimmy, and they named it Kalimna, The Beautiful. Near the shore a number of sandpipers were shot, and stewed for dinner in the large iron pot which was half full of mutton fat. Then the party pulled down to the entrance of the lakes at Reeve’s River, went ashore, and camped for the night.

Next day they found an outlet to the ocean, and sounded it as they went along, finding six feet of water on the bar at low tide. But the channel proved afterwards to be a shifting one; the strong current round Cape Howe, and the southerly gales, often filled it with sand, and it was not until many years had passed, and much money had been expended, that a permanent entrance was formed. In the meantime all the trade of Gippsland was carried on first through the Old Port, and then through the new Port Albert. For ten years all vessels were piloted without buoy or beacon; in one year one hundred and forty having been entered inwards and outwards.

The party now started on the return voyage. In going up the lakes a number of blacks were observed on the port beach, and the boats were pulled towards the land until they grounded, and some of the men went ashore. The natives were standing behind a small sand hummock calling out to the visitors. One of them had lost an eye, and another looked somewhat like a white man browned with the sun and weather, but only the upper part of his body could be seen above the sand. One of the men on shore said, “Look at that white-fellow.” That was the origin of the rumour which was soon spread through the country that the blacks had a white woman living with them, the result being that for a long time the blackfellows were hunted and harassed continually by parties of armed men. When the natives behind the sand hummock saw that the white men had no arms, they began to approach them without their spears. Sheridan took up his flute, and they ran back to the scrub, but after he had played a while they came nearer again and listened to the music.

After pulling two or three miles, another party of natives was seen running along the sands, and the explorers went ashore again at a point of land where seven or eight men had appeared, but not one was now visible. Davy climbed up a honeysuckle tree, and

then he could see them hiding in the scrub. Several of them were seized and held by the white men, who gave them some sugar and then let them go.

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The boats then sailed away with a nice easterly breeze, and in McLennan's Straits hundreds of blackfellows were seen up in the trees shouting and shaking their spears; but the boats were kept away in mid-stream, out of reach of the weapons.

That night the camp was made at Boney Point, near the mouth of the River Avon; the name was given to it on account of the large quantity of human bones found there. No watch was kept, as it was believed that all the blacks had been left behind in McLennan's Straits. There was still some whisky left in the keg; and, before going to sleep, Orr, Loughnan, and Sheridan sang and drank alternately until the vessel was empty. At daylight they pulled up the Avon and landed at Clydebank, which was at that time one of Macalister's stations, but afterwards belonged to Thomson and Cunningham. After breakfast they walked to Raymond's station at Stratford, and then to McMillan's at Bushy Park.

The cattle brought over the mountains into Gippsland soon grew fat, and the first settlers sold some of them to other men who came to search for runs; but the local demand was soon supplied. In two years and a half all the best land was occupied. An intending settler, who had driven a herd of cattle seven hundred miles, had some bitter complaints to make about the country in June, 1843. He said: "The whole length of Gippsland, from the bore of the mountains in which the road comes, is 110 miles, and the breadth about fifteen miles, the whole area 1650 square miles, one-third of which is useless through scrub and morass, which leaves only 1,100 square miles come-at-able at all, and nearly a third of this is useless. On this 1,100 square miles of land there are 45,000 sheep, 1,500 cattle, and 300 horses. Other herds of cattle and about 2,000 sheep are expected daily. The blacks are continuing their outrages, robbing huts and gardens and slaughtering cattle wholesale, Messrs. Pearson and Cunningham being the latest sufferers by the cannibals. Sheep shearing is nearly completed, after paying a most exorbitant price to the shearers.* The wool is much lighter than in any other part of the colony, and the skins much thicker than in hotter climates;" and lastly, "A collection has been made for the support of a minister." But the minister was not supported long, and he had to shake the dust of Gippsland off his feet. From Dan to Beersheba—from the bore in the mountains to the shores of Corner Inlet, all was barren to this disappointed drover.

[Footnote] *In the season of 1844 the average price per 100 for sheep-shearing was 8s.; the highest price asked, 8s. 6d.*

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And the squatters, in order to keep a foothold in the country, had to seek markets for their stock over the sea. The first to export cattle was James McFarlane of Heyfield. He chartered the schooner ‘Waterwitch’ for 100 pounds a month for six months, and found her in everything. She arrived on March 2nd, 1842, but could not come up to the Port being too sharp in the bottom, and drawing (when loaded with cattle) thirteen feet six inches, so she lay down at the Oyster Beds. McFarlane borrowed the square punt from the ‘Clonmel’ wreckers, a weak stockyard of tea tree was erected, and the punt was moored alongside. A block was made fast to the bottom of the punt, and a rope rove through it to a bullock’s head, and the men hauled on the rope. Sometimes a beast would not jump, and had to be levered and bundled into the punt neck and crop. Then the men got into a boat, and reached over to make the rope fast from the head of the bullock to one of the eyebolts which were fixed round the punt, and even then the bullock would sometimes go overboard. It took a week to load twenty fat bullocks and twenty cows with their calves. The schooner set sail for New Zealand on April 2nd, 1842, and at Port Nicholson the bullocks were sold for fifteen and the cows for twelve pounds each, cash. The ‘Waterwitch’ returned to Port Albert on April 29th, and took in another cargo of breeding cattle, which had to be sold on bills, the cash at Port Nicholson being exhausted. McFarlane next sought for a market at Hobarton, which was then supplied with beef from Twofold Bay. Forty bullocks were put on board the ‘Waterwitch’ in five days, and in forty-eight hours they were offered for sale in Hobarton, and fetched fourteen pounds ten shillings a head—all but one, a snail-horned brute, which was very wild. When he landed, a number of soldiers were at drill in the paddock, and he charged the redcoats at once. They prepared to receive cavalry, but he broke through the ranks, scattered the citizens the whole length of Liverpool Street, and reached the open country. Guisden, the auctioneer, sold the chance of him for eleven pounds.

At this time, nobody in Hobarton had heard of such a place as Gippsland; but the fat cattle, which were far superior to those imported from Twofold Bay, soon made the new territory well known, and many enterprising men of various characters found their way to it from the island.

McFarlane sent over another cargo of forty bullocks, thirty-seven of which averaged fourteen pounds; one was lost, and two belonging to Macalister, heavy weights, were sold for forty pounds ten shillings.

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McMillan took over the ‘Waterwitch’ for the next trip, and also chartered the schooners ‘Industry’ and ‘Scotia’, which were the first vessels brought up to the shipping place at Port Albert on August, 3rd, 1842. Each of these vessels took two cargoes to Hobarton, which sold well, and then Macalister chartered the brig ‘Pateena’, which would hold sixty bullocks. The ‘Clonmel’ punt was now dispensed with; the cattle were roped, put in the water, and made to swim between the vessel and a boat. A piece of small ratline was fixed to the slings, with the handlead made fast to it so that it would sink. The mate had the slings, and a man in the boat held the other end of the line, and with it he hauled the slings under the bullocks, which were then made fast, and the animal was hoisted up. In this way forty bullocks were shipped in three hours.

Oysters were obtained in great abundance at Clonmel, Snake Island, and in other parts of the inlets, and the cattle vessels, after receiving their loading, took bags of oysters on board for sale at Hobarton. In June, 1843, the cutter ‘Lucy’ took 700 dozen to Melbourne, and in July another 700 dozen. In August the ‘Mary Jane’ took 500 dozen, and the cutter ‘Domain’ 400 dozen. The oyster beds were soon destroyed, and when in course of a few years I was appointed inspector of fisheries at Port Albert I could never find a single dozen oysters to inspect, although I was informed that a certain reverend poacher near the Caledonian Canal could obtain a bucket full of them when so disposed.

Gippsland enjoyed one year of prosperity, followed by seven years of adversity. The price of stock declined so rapidly that in April, 1843, the very best beasts only realized 6 pounds per head, and soon afterwards it was estimated that there were in New South Wales 50,000 fat bullocks which nobody would buy. Moreover, the government was grievously in want of money, and in addition to the fees for depasturing licenses, exacted half-yearly assessments on the unsaleable flocks and herds. But the law exacted payment on live cattle only, so the squatters in their dire distress resolved to kill their stock and boil them, the hides and the resulting tallow being of some value. The Hentys, in the Portland district, commenced boiling their sheep in January, 1844, and on every station in New South Wales the paddocks still called the “boiling down” were devoted to the destruction of sheep and cattle and to the production of tallow. It was found that one hundred average sheep would yield one ton of tallow, and ten average bullocks also one ton, the price in London ranging from 35 pounds to 42 pounds per ton. By this device of boiling-down some of the pioneers were enabled to retain their runs until the discovery of gold.

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The squatters were assisted in their endeavours to diminish the numbers of their live stock by their neighbours, both black and white. It is absurd to blame the aborigines for killing sheep and cattle. You might as well say it is immoral for a cat to catch mice. Hunting was their living; the land and every animal thereon was theirs; and after we had conferred on them, as usual, the names of savages and cannibals, they were still human beings; they were our neighbours, to be treated with mercy; and to seize their lands by force and to kill them was robbery and murder. The State is a mere abstraction, has neither body nor soul, and an abstraction cannot be sent either to heaven or hell. But each individual man will be rewarded according to his works, which will follow him. Because the State erected a flag on a bluff overlooking the sea, Sandy McBean was not justified in shooting every blackfellow or gin he met with on his run, as I know he did on the testimony of an eye-witness. This is the age of whitewash. There is scarcely a villain of note on whose character a new coat has not been laboriously daubed by somebody, and then we are asked to take a new view of it. It does not matter very much now, but I should prefer to whitewash the aboriginals.

J. P. Fawkner wrote: "The military were not long here before the Melbourne district was stained with the blood of the aborigines, yet I can safely say that in the year in which there was neither governor, magistrate, soldier, nor policemen, not one black was shot or killed in the Melbourne district, except amongst or by the blacks themselves. Can as much be said of any year since? I think not."

In the year 1844 Mr. Latrobe was required to send to the Council in Sydney a return of all blacks and whites killed in the Port Phillip district since its first settlement. He said forty whites had been killed by the blacks, and one hundred and thirteen blacks had been reported as killed by the whites; but he added, "the return must not be looked upon as correct with respect to the number of aborigines killed." The reason is plain. When a white man murdered a few blacks it was not likely that he would put his neck into the hangman's noose by making a formal report of his exploit to Mr. Latrobe. All the surviving blackfellow could say was: "Quamby dead —long time—white-fellow—plenty —shoot 'em."

He related in eight words the decline and fall of his race more truly than the white man could do it in eight volumes.

It is not so easy a task to justify the white men who assisted the squatters to diminish the numbers of their stock. They were principally convicts who had served their sentences, or part of them, in the island, and had come over to Gippsland in cattle vessels. Some of them lived honestly, about one hundred of them disappeared when the Commissioner of Crown Lands arrived with his black and white police, and a few of the most enterprising spirits adopted the calling of cattle stealers, for which business they found special facilities in the two special surveys.

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TWO SPECIAL SURVEYS.

A notice dated March 4th, 1841, was gazetted in Sydney to the following effect:

“Any Holder of a Land Receipt to the extent of not less than five thousand one hundred and twenty acres may, if he think fit, demand a special survey of any land not hereinafter excepted, within the district of Port Philip, whether such Land Receipt be obtained in the manner pointed out in the ‘Government Gazette’ of the 21st January last, or granted by the Land and Emigration Commissioners in London.

“Not more than one mile of frontage to any river, watercourse, or lake to be allowed to every four square miles of area; the other boundaries to be straight lines running north and south, east and west.

“No land to be taken up within five miles of the towns of Melbourne, Geelong, Williamstown, or Portland.

“The right of opening roads through any part of the land to be reserved for the Crown, but no other reservation whatever to be inserted in the Deeds of Grant.”

The Port Albert Company took up land, under the above conditions, between the Albert and Tarra rivers. It was in Orr’s name, and is still known as Orr’s Special Survey. A surveyor was appointed to mark and plan the boundaries; he delegated the work to another surveyor. Next a re-survey was made, then a sub-divisional survey, and then other surveys went on for fifty years, with ever-varying results. It is now a well-established fact that Orr’s Special Survey is subject to an alternate expansion and contraction of area, which from time to time vitiates the labour of every surveyor, and has caused much professional animosity. Old men with one foot in the grave, in this year 1895, are still accusing each other of embezzling acres of it; the devil of Discord, and Mercury the god of thieves, encamped upon it; the Port Albert Company fell into its Slough of Despond, which in the Court of Equity was known as “Kemmis v. Orr,” and there all the members perished.

Mr. John Reeve had a land receipt, and wanted land. After he had taken up the station known as Snake Ridge he looked about for a good Special Survey. He engaged Davy and his whaleboat for a cruise in Port Albert waters and McMillan, Sheridan, and Loughnan were of the party. They went up the narrow channel called the Caledonian Canal, examined the bluffs, shores, and islands of Shallow Inlet, and at night encamped on St. Margaret’s Island. When shelter was required, Davy usually put up the mainsail

of his boat for a tent; but that night was so fine and warm that it was decided to avoid the trouble of bringing the sail ashore and putting it up. After supper the men lay around the fire, and one by one fell asleep; but about midnight heavy rain began to fall, the sail was brought ashore, and they all crept under it to keep themselves as dry as possible.

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The next morning was fair. On leaving the port it had been the intention of the party to return the same evening, and the boat was victualled for one day only. There was now nothing for breakfast but a little tea and sugar and a piece of damper: no flesh, fish, or fowl. Davy was anxious to entertain his passengers to the best of his ability, especially Mr. Reeve, who, though not of delicate health, was a gentleman of refined tastes, and liked to have his meals prepared and served in the best style. Fresh water was of the first necessity, and, after so much rain, should have been plentiful, but not a spoonful could anywhere be found: the soil of the island was sandy, and all the rain had soaked into it and disappeared. The damper having been exposed to the weather was saturated with water. There was in the boat a large three-legged iron pot, half filled with fat, a hard and compact dainty not liable to be spilled or wasted, and in it had been stewed many a savoury meal of sandpipers, parrots, rats, and quail. This pot had been fortunately left upright and uncoveredduring the night, and the abundant rain had filled it with fresh water. Davy, with the intuition of artistic genius, at once saw the means of producing a repast fit for the gods. He poured the water which covered the fat from the iron pot into the kettle, which he placed on the fire for the purpose of making tea. He cut the sodden damper into substantial slices, put them into the pot, and cooked them in the fat over the fire. When well done they tasted like fried bread, and gave entire satisfaction; Mr. Reeve observing, when the feast was finished, that he had never in all his life eaten a better breakfast.

A start was made for the port, but the wind came dead ahead, and the men had to pull the whole way across the inlet, through the Caledonian Canal, and as far as Long Point. There they went ashore for a rest, and Mr. Reeve asked Davy if he could find the mouth of the Tarra River. Davy said he had never been there, but he had no doubt that he could find it, as he had seen the river when he was duck-shooting. It was then high water, and the wind still blowing strongly from the west, so a reef was taken in the lug, and the boat ran right into the Tarra as far as the site of the present court-house. There the party landed, and after looking at the country Mr. Reeve decided to take up his special survey there. It was partly open forest, but it contained, also, a considerable area of rich flats covered with luxuriant tea tree and myrtle scrub, which in course of time became mingled with imported blackberry bushes, whins, sweetbriar, and thistles. Any quantity of labour might be spent on it with advantage to the owner, so the following advertisement appeared in the public journals:

To capitalists and the industrious labouring class.

Gippsland—port Albert.

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An accurate plan of Mr. Reeve's Special Survey of Tarra Vale having been completed, notice is hereby given that farms of various sizes are now open for sale or lease. The proprietor chiefly desires the establishment of a Respectable Tenantry, and will let these farms at the moderate rent of one bushel of wheat per acre. The estate consists of 5,120 acres of rich alluvial flats; no part of the estate is more than two miles from the freshwater stream of Tarra. Many families already occupy purchased allotments in the immediate vicinity of the landing place and Tarra Ville. There is a licensed hotel, good stores and various tradesmen, likewise dray roads from Maneroo and Port Philip. Apply to F. Taylor, Tarra Ville, or John Brown, Melbourne.

There were several doubtful statements in this notice, but, as the law says, "Buyer, beware."

Joshua Dayton was not a capitalist, but he belonged to the Industrious Labouring Class, and he offered himself, and was accepted as a Respectable Tenant, at the rental of a bushel of wheat to the acre. He was a thief on principle, but simple Mr. Taylor, of Tarraville, put his trust in him, because it would be necessary to fence and improve the land in order to produce the bushel of wheat. The fee simple, at any rate, would be safe with Mr. Reeve; but we live and learn—learn that there are men ingenious enough to steal even the fee simple, and transmit it by will to their innocent children.

The farm comprised a beautiful and rich bend of the Tarra, forming a spacious peninsula. Joshua erected a fence across the isthmus, leaving the rest of his land open to the trespass of cattle, which were, therefore, liable to be driven away. But he did not drive them away; he impounded them within his bend, and at his leisure selected the fattest for slaughter, thus living literally on the fat of the land. He formed his boiling-down establishment in a retired glade, surrounded with tea-tree, tall and dense, far from the prying eyes and busy haunts of men. His hut stood on a gentle rise above the highest flood mark, and in close proximity to the slip rails, which were jealously guarded by his Cerberus, Neddy, a needy immigrant of a plastic nature, whose mind succumbed under the strong logic of his employer.

Neddy had so far led an honest life, and did not fall into habits of thievery without some feelings of compunction. When Joshua first drove cattle into the bend, he did not tell Neddy that he had stolen them. Oh, no! He said:

"Here are a few beasts I have had running about for some time, and I think I'll kill one or two of the fattest and make tallow of them. Beef is worth next to nothing, and we must make a living somehow. And I know you would like a little fresh beef, Neddy; a change of diet is good for the health."

But Neddy was not so much of a fool as to be able to shut his eyes to the nature of the boiling-down business. The brands were too various, and Joshua claimed them all. Neddy said one night:

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“Don’t you think, Joshua, this game of yours is rather dangerous? Why, it’s nothing better than cattle stealing; and I’ve heern folks say at one time it was a hanging matter. You may be found out some day by an unlucky chance, and then what will you do?”

“You mustn’t call it cattle stealing, Neddy; that doesn’t sound well,” said Joshua. “I call it back pay for work and labour done. I have good reasons for it. I was sent out for stealing a horse, which I never did steal; I only bought it cheap for a couple of pounds. They sent me to the island, and I worked seven years for a settler for nothing. Now I put it to you, Neddy, as an honest and sensible man, Am I to get no pay for that seven years’ work? And how am I to get it if I don’t take it myself? The Government will give me no pay; they’d give me another seven years if they could. But you see, there are no peelers here, no beaks, and no blooming courts, so I intend to make hay while the sun shines, which means tallow in these times. All these settlers gets as much work out of Government men as they can get for nothing, and if you says two words to ’em they’ll have you flogged. So while I does my seven years I says nothing, but I thinks, and I makes up my mind to have it out of ’em when my time comes. And I say it’s fair and honest to get your back wages the best way you can. These settlers are all tarred with the same brush; they make poor coves like us work for ’em, and flog us like bullocks, and then they pretend they are honest men. I say be blowed to such honesty.”

“But if you are caught, Joshua, what then?”

“Well, we must be careful. I don’t think they’ll catch me in a hurry. You see, I does my business quick: cuts out the brand and burns it first thing, and always turns out beasts I don’t want directly.”

Other men followed the example of Joshua, so that between troubles with the black men, troubles with the white men, and the want of a market for his stock, the settler’s days were full of anxiety and misery. And, in addition, the Government in Sydney was threatening him with a roaming taxgatherer under the name of a Commissioner of Crown Lands, to whom was entrusted the power of increasing or diminishing assessments at his own will and pleasure. The settler therefore bowed down before the lordly tax-gatherer, and entertained him in his hut with all available hospitality, with welcome on his lips, smiles on his face, and hatred in his heart.

The fees and fines collected by the Commissioners all over New South Wales had fallen off in one year to the extent of sixty-five per cent; more revenue was therefore required, and was it not just that those who occupied Crown lands should support the dignity of the Crown? Then the blacks had to be protected, or otherwise dealt with. They could not pay taxes, as the Crown had already appropriated all they were worth, *viz*., their country. But they were made amenable to British law; and in that celebrated case, “Regina v. Jacky Jacky,” it was solemnly decided by the judge that the aborigines were subjects of the Queen, and that judge went to church on the Sabbath and said his prayers in his robes of office, wig and all.

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Jacky Jacky was charged with aiding and abetting Long Bill to murder little Tommy. He said:

“Another one blackfellow killed him, baal me shoot him.”

The court received his statement as equivalent to a plea of “Not guilty.”

Witness Billy, an aboriginal, said:

“I was born about twenty miles from Sydney. If I don’t tell stories, I shall go to Heaven; if I do, I shall go down below. I don’t say any prayers. It is the best place to go up to Heaven. I learnt about heaven and hell about three years ago at Yass plains when driving a team there. Can’t say what’s in that book; can’t read. If I go below, I shall be burned with fire.”

Billy was sworn, and said:

“I knew Jacky Jacky and Cosgrove, the bullock driver. I know Fyans Ford. I know Manifolds. I went from Fyans Ford with Cosgrove, a drove of cattle, and a dray for Manifolds. I knew Little Tommy at Port Fairy. He is dead. I saw him dying. When driving the team, I fell in with a lot of blacks. They asked me what black boy Tommy was; told them my brother. They kept following us two miles and a half. Jacky Jacky said; ’Billy, I must kill that black boy in spite of you.’”

Jacky Jacky said sharply, “Borack.”

“Jacky Jacky, who was the king, got on the dray, and Little Tommy got down; a blackfellow threw a spear at him, and hit him in the side; the king also threw a spear, and wounded him; a lot of blacks also speared him. Long Bill came up and shot him with a ball. Jacky Jacky said to Cosgrove: ‘Plenty gammon; I must kill that black boy.’ Little Tommy belonged to the Port Fairy tribe, which had always been fighting with Jacky Jacky’s tribe.”

“It’s all gammon,” said Jacky Jacky, “borack me, its another blackfellow.”

“Jacky Jacky, when with the dray, spoke his own language which I did not understand. I was not a friend of Little Tommy. I was not afraid of the Port Fairy tribe. I am sometimes friend with Jacky Jacky’s tribe. If I met him at Yass I can’t say whether I should spear him or not; they would kill him at the Goulburn River if he went there. Blackfellow not let man live who committed murder.”

Are the aboriginals amenable to British law? Question argued by learned counsel, Messrs. Stawell and Barry.

His Honor the Resident Judge said: “The aboriginals are amenable to British law, and it is a mercy to them to be under that control, instead of being left to seek vengeance in the death of each other; it is a mercy to them to be under the protection of British law, instead of slaughtering each other.”

Jacky Jacky was found guilty of “aiding and abetting.” The principals in the murder were not prosecuted, probably could not be found. Before leaving the court, he turned to the judge and said, “You hang me this time?”

He only knew two maxims of British law applicable to his race, and these he had learned by experience. One maxim was “Shoot ’em” and the other was “Hang him.”

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There is abundant evidence to prove that an aboriginal legal maxim was, “The stranger is an enemy, kill him.” It was for that reason Jacky Jacky killed Little Tommy, who was a stranger, belonging to the hostile Port Fairy tribe.

Joshua and Neddy carried on the boiling down business successfully for some time, regularly shipping tallow to Melbourne in casks, until some busybody began to insinuate that their tallow was contraband. Then Joshua took to carrying goods up the country, and Neddy took to drink. He died at the first party given by Mother Murden at her celebrated hostelry.

There were at this time about two hundred men, women, and children scattered about the neighbourhood of New Leith (afterwards called Port Albert), the Old Port, the New Alberton and Tarra Vale. Alberton, by the way, was gazetted as a township before the “village” of St. Kilda was founded. There were no licenses issued for the various houses of entertainment, vulgarly called “sly grog shops.” There was no church, no school, no minister, and no music, until Mother Murden imported some. It was hidden in the recesses of a barrel organ; and, in order to introduce the new instrument to the notice of her patrons and friends, Mother Murden posted on her premises a manuscript invitation to a grand ball. She was anxious that everything should be carried out in the best style, and that the festive time should commence at least without intoxication. She therefore had one drunken man carried into the “dead room,” another to an outside shed. Neddy, the third, had become one of her best customers, and therefore she treated him kindly. He was unsteady on his legs, and she piloted him with her own hands to the front door, expecting that he would find a place for himself somewhere or other. She gave him a gentle shove, said “Good night, Neddy,” and closed the door. She then cleared a space for the dancers in her largest room, placed the barrel-organ on a small table in one corner, and made her toilet.

The guests began to arrive, and Mother Murden received them in her best gown at the front door. Neddy was lying across the threshold.

“It’s only Neddy,” she said apologetically; “he has been taking a little nobbler, and it always runs to his head. He’ll be all right by-and-by. Come in my dears, and take your things off. You’ll find a looking-glass in the room behind the bar.”

The gentlemen stepped over Neddy, politely gave their hands to the ladies, and helped them over the human obstacle.

When everything was ready, Mother Murden sat down by the barrel-organ, took hold of the handle, and addressed her guests:

“Now boys, choose your girls.”

[*Illustration* 4]

The biggest bully, a “conditional pardon” man of the year 1839, acted as master of the ceremonies, and called out the figures. He also appropriated the belle of the ball as his partner.

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The dancing began with great spirit, but as the night wore on the music grew monotonous. There were only six tunes in the organ, and not all the skill and energy of Mother Murden could grind one more out of it.

Neddy lay across the doorway, and was never disturbed. He did not wake in time to take any part in the festive scene, being dead. Now and then a few of the dancers stepped over him, and remarked, “Neddy is having a good rest.” In the cool night air they walked to and fro, then, returning to the ball-room, they took a little refreshment, and danced to the same old tunes, until they were tired.

Mother Murden’s first ball was a grand success for all but Neddy.

“No sleep till morn when youth and pleasure meet, To chase the glowing hours with flying feet.”

But morn reveals unsuspected truths, and wrinkled invisible in the light of tallow candles. The first rays of the rising sun fell on Neddy’s ghastly face, and the “conditional pardon” man said, “Why, he’s dead and cold.”

Mother Murden came to the door with a tumbler in her hand, containing a morning nip for Neddy, “to kill the worm,” as the Latins say; but the worm was dead already. The merry-makers stood around; the men looked serious and the ladies shivered. They said the air felt chilly, so they bade one another good morning and hurried home.

It is hard to say why one sinner is taken and the other left. Joshua’s time did not arrive until many years afterwards, when we had acquitted him at the General Sessions; but that is another story.

HOW GOVERNMENT CAME TO GIPPSLAND.

At this time there was no visible government in Gippsland. The authorities in Sydney and Melbourne must have heard of the existence of the country and of its settlement, but they were content for a time with the receipt of the money paid into the Treasury for depasturing licenses and for assessments on stock.

In 1840 the Land Fund received in New South Wales amounted to 316,000 pounds; in 1841 it was only 90,000 pounds; and in 1842 Sir George Gipps, in his address to the Council severely reprimanded the colonists for the reckless spirit of speculation and overtrading in which they had indulged during the two preceding years. This general reprimand had a more particular application to Mr. Benjamin Boyd, the champion boomer of those days.

Labourers out of employment were numerous, and contractors were informed by ‘Gazette’ notice that the services of one hundred prisoners were available for purposes

of public utility, such as making roads, dams, breakwaters, harbours, bridges, watchhouses, and police buildings. Assignees of convicts were warned that if they wished to return them to the custody of the Government, they must pay the expense of their conveyance to Sydney, otherwise all their servants would be withdrawn, and they would become ineligible as assignees of prisoners in future.

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Between the first of July, 1840, and the first of November, 1841, 26,556 bounty immigrants had been received in Sydney. The bounty orders were suspended in the autumn of the latter year, but in 1842 Lord Stanley was of opinion that the colony could beneficially receive ten thousand more immigrants during the current year.

Many married labourers could find no work in Sydney, and in November, 1843, the Government requested persons sending wool-drays to the city to take families to inland districts gratis.

A regular stream of half-pay officers also poured into the colony, and made Sir George's life a burden. They all wanted billets, and if he made the mistake of appointing a civilian to some office, Captain Smith, with war in his eye and fury in his heart, demanded an interview at once. He said:

"I see by this morning's 'Gazette' that some fellow of the name of Jones has been made a police superintendent, and here am I, an imperial officer, used to command and discipline, left out in the cold, while that counter-jumper steps over my head. I can't understand your policy, Sir George. What will my friends of the club in London say, when they hear of it, but that the service is going to the dogs?"

So Captain Smith obtained his appointment as superintendent of police, and with a free sergeant and six convict constables, taken, as it were, out of bond, was turned loose in the bush. He had been for twenty years in the preventive service, but had never captured a prize more valuable than a bottle of whisky. He knew nothing whatever about horses, and rode like a beer barrel, but he nevertheless lectured his troopers about their horses and accoutrements. The sergeant was an old stockrider, and he one day so far forgot the rules of discipline as to indulge in a mutinous smile, and say:

"Well, captain, you may know something about a ship, but I'll be blowed if you know anything about a horse."

That observation was not entered in any report, but the sergeant was fined 2 pounds for "insolence and insubordination." The sum of 60,899 pounds was voted for police services in 1844, and Captain Smith was paid out of it. All the revenue went to Sydney, and very little of it found its way to Melbourne, so that Mr. Latrobe's Government was sometimes deprived of the necessaries of life.

Alberton was gazetted as a place for holding Courts of Petty Sessions, and Messrs. John Reeve and John King were appointed Justices of the Peace for the new district.

Then Michael Shannon met James Reading on the Port Albert Road, robbed him of two orders for money and a certificate of freedom, and made his way to Melbourne. There he was arrested, and remanded by the bench to the new court at Alberton. But there

was no court there, no lock-up, and no police; and Mr. Latrobe, with tears in his eyes, said he had no cash whatever to spend on Michael Shannon.

The public journals denounced Gippsland, and said it was full of irregularities. Therefore, on September 13th, 1843, Charles J. Tyers was appointed Commissioner of Crown Lands for the district. He endeavoured to make his way overland to the scene of his future labours, but the mountains were discharging the accumulated waters of the winter and spring rainfall, every watercourse was full, and the marshes were impassable.

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The commissioner waited, and then made a fresh start with six men and four baggage horses. Midway between Dandenong and the Bunyip he passed the hut of Big Mat, a new settler from Melbourne, and obtained from him some information about the best route to follow. It began to rain heavily, and it was difficult to ford the swollen creeks before arriving at the Big Hill. At Shady Creek there was nothing for the horses to eat, and beyond it the ground became treacherous and full of crabholes. At the Moe the backwater was found to be fully a quarter of a mile wide, encumbered with dead logs and scrub, and no safe place for crossing the creek could be found. During the night the famishing horses tore open with their teeth the packages containing the provisions, and before morning all that was left of the flour, tea, and sugar was trodden into the muddy soil and hopelessly lost; not an ounce of food could be collected. There was no game to be seen; every bird and beast seemed to have fled from the desolate ranges. Mr. Tyers had been for many years a naval instructor on board a man-of-war, understood navigation and surveying, and, it is to be presumed, knew the distance he had travelled and the course to be followed in returning to Port Philip; but there were valleys filled with impenetrable scrub, creeks often too deep to ford, and boundless morasses, so that the journey was made crooked with continual deviations. If a black boy like McMillan's Friday had accompanied the expedition, his native instinct would, at such a time, have been worth all the science in the world.

The seven men, breakfastless, turned their backs to Gippsland. The horses were already weak and nearly useless, so they and all the tents and camp equipage were abandoned. Each man carried nothing but his gun and ammunition. All day long they plodded wearily through the bush—wading the streams, climbing over the logs, and pushing their way through the scrub. Only two or three small birds were shot, which did not give, when roasted, a mouthful to each man.

At night a large fire was made, and the hungry travellers lay around it. Next morning they renewed their journey, Mr. Tyers keeping the men from straggling as much as he could, and cheering them with the hope of soon arriving at some station. No game was shot all that day; no man had a morsel of food; the guns and ammunition seemed heavy and useless, and one by one they were dropped. It rained at intervals, the clothing became soaked and heavy, and some of the men threw away their coats. A large fire was again made at night, but no one could sleep, shivering with cold and hunger.

Next morning one man refused to go any further, saying he might as well die where he was. He was a convict accustomed to life in the bush, and Mr. Tyers was surprised that he should be the first man to give way to despair, and partly by force and partly by persuasion he was induced to proceed. About midday smoke was seen in the distance, and the hope of soon obtaining food put new life into the wayfarers. But they soon made a long straggling line of march; the strongest in the front, the weakest in the rear.

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The smoke issued from the chimney of the hut occupied by Big Mat. He was away looking after his cattle, but his wife Norah was inside, busy with her household duties, while the baby was asleep in the corner. There was a small garden planted with vegetables in front of the hut, and Norah, happening to look out of the window during the afternoon, saw a strange man pulling off the pea pods and devouring them. The strange man was Mr. Tyers. Some other men were also coming near.

“They are bushrangers,” she said running to the door and bolting it, “and they’ll rob the hut and maybe they’ll murder me and the baby.”

That last thought made her fierce. She seized an old Tower musket, which was always kept loaded ready for use, and watched the men through the window. They came into the garden one after another, and at once began snatching the peas and eating them. There was something fearfully wild and strange in the demeanour of the men, but Norah observed that they appeared to have no firearms and very little clothing. They never spoke, and seemed to take no notice of anything but the peas.

“The Lord preserve us,” said Norah, “I wish Mat would come.”

Her prayer was heard, for Mat came riding up to the garden fence with two cattle dogs, which began barking at the strangers. Mat said:

“Hello, you coves, is it robbing my garden ye are?”

Mr. Tyers looked towards Mat and spoke, but his voice was weak, his mouth full of peas, and Mat could not tell what he was saying. He dismounted, hung the bridle on to a post, and came into the garden. He looked at the men, and soon guessed what was the matter with them; he had often seen their complaint in Ireland.

“Poor craythurs,” he said, “it’s hungry ye are, and hunger’s a killing disorder. Stop ating they pays to wonst, or they’ll kill ye, and come into the house, and we’ll give ye something better.”

The men muttered, but kept snatching off the peas. Norah had unbolted the door, and was standing with the musket in her hand.

“Take away the gun, Norah, and put the big billy on the fire, and we’ll give ’em something warm. The craythurs are starving. I suppose they are runaway prisoners, and small blame to ’em for that same, but we can’t let ’em die of hunger.”

The strangers had become quite idiotic, and wou’d not leave the peas, until Mat lost all patience, bundled them one by one by main force into his hut, and shut the door.

He had taken the pledge from Father Mathew before he left Ireland, and had kept it faithfully; but he was not strait-laced. He had a gallon of rum in the hut, to be used in

case of snake-bite and in other emergencies, and he now gave each man a little rum and water, and a small piece of damper.

Rum was a curse to the convicts, immigrants, and natives. Its average price was then about 4s. 3d. per gallon. The daily ration of a soldier consisted of one pound of bread, one pound of fresh meat, and one-seventh of a quart of rum. But on this day, to Mr. Tyers and his men, the liquor was a perfect blessing. He was sitting on the floor with his back to the slabs.

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“You don’t know me, Mat?”

“Know ye, is it? Sure I never clapped eyes on ye before, that I know of. Are ye runaway Government men? Tell the truth, now, for I am not the man to turn informer agin misfortunate craythurs like yourselves.”

“My name is Tyers. I passed this way, you may remember, not very long ago.”

“What! Mr. Tyers, the commissioner? Sure I didn’t know you from Adam. So ye never went to Gippsland at all?”

“Our horses got at the provisions and spoiled them; so we had to come back, and we have had nothing to eat for three days. There is one man somewhere behind yet; I am afraid he will lie down and die. Do you think you could find him?”

“For the love of mercy, I’ll try, anyway. Norah, dear, take care of the poor fellows while I go and look for the other man; and mind, only to give ’em a little food and drink at a time, or they’ll kill their wake stomachs with greediness; and see you all do just as Norah tells you while I’m away, for you are no better than childer.”

Mat galloped away to look for the last man, while his wife watched over the welfare of her guests. She said:

“The Lord save us, and be betune us and harm, but when I seen you in the garden I thought ye were bushrangers, and I took up the ould gun to shoot ye.”

Mat soon found the last man, put him on his horse, and brought him to the hut. Next morning he yoked his bullocks, put all his guests into the dray, and started for Dandenong. On December 23rd, 1843, Mr. Tyers and his men arrived in Melbourne, and he reported to Mr. Latrobe the failure of his second attempt to reach Gippsland.

While the commissioner and his men were vainly endeavouring to reach the new country, seven other men were suffering famine and extreme hardships to get away from it. They had arrived at the Old Port by sea, having been engaged to strip bark by Mr. P. W. Walsh, usually known in Melbourne as Paddy Walsh. He had been chief constable in Launceston. Many years before Batman or Fawkner landed in Port Philip, parties of whalers were sent each year to strip wattle bark at Western Port. Griffiths and Co. had found the business profitable, and Paddy Walsh came to the conclusion that there was money to be made out of bark in Gippsland. He therefore engaged seven men and shipped them by schooner, writing to a storekeeper at the Old Port to receive the bark, ship it to Melbourne, and supply the strippers with the requisite stores.

The seven men landed at the Old Port and talked to the pioneers. They listened to their dismal accounts of starvation on roast flathead and mutton-birds’ eggs, of the ferocity of the blacks, of the murder of Macalister, of the misfortunes of Glengarry. The nine-

pounder gun still stood at the corner of the company's store, pointed towards the scrub, a silent warning to the new men of the dangers in store for them. They took their guns and went

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about the bush looking for wattle trees, but they could not find in any place a sufficient quantity to make the business profitable. There was no regular employment to be had, but fortunately the schooner 'Scotia', chartered by John King, went ashore in a gale, and four of the barkers, all Irishmen obtained a few days' work in taking out her mud ballast. But no permanent livelihood could be expected from shipwrecks, and the seven strippers resolved, if possible, to return to Melbourne. They wanted to see Paddy Walsh once more, but they had no money, and the storekeeper refused to pay their fare by sea. After much negotiation, they obtained a week's rations, and gave all the tools they had brought with them to Captain Davy in payment for his trouble in landing them at One Tree Hill. They were informed that Brodribb and Hobson had made Western Port in four days on foot, and of course they could do the same. Four of the men were named Crow, Sparrow, Fox, and Macnamara; of the other three two were Englishmen, Smith and Brown; the third, a native of London, named Spiller, installed himself in the office of captain on account of his superior knowledge. He guaranteed to lead the party in a straight line to Western Port. He said he could box the compass; he had not one about him, but that made no difference. He would lay out their course every morning; they had to travel westward; the sun rose in the east, everybody knew as much as that; so all he had to do was to turn his back to the rising sun, and march straight on to Western Port which was situated in the west. The men agreed that Spiller's theory was a very good one; they could not think of any objection to it.

Each man carried his blanket and rations, his gun and ammunition. Every morning Spiller pointed out the course to be taken and led the way. From time to time, with a look of extreme wisdom, he took observations of the position of the sun, and studied the direction of his own shadow on the ground. For five days the men followed him with great confidence, and then they found that their rations were all consumed, and there was no sign of Western Port or any settlement. They began to grumble, and to mistrust their captain; they said he must have been leading them astray, otherwise they would have seen some sign of the country being inhabited, and they formed a plan for putting Spiller's knowledge of inland navigation to the test.

A start was made next morning, the cockney as usual, taking the lead. One man followed him, but kept losing ground purposely, merely keeping the leader in sight; the others did the same. Before the last man had lost sight of the camp, he could see Spiller in the distance walking towards it. He then uttered a long coo-ee, which was answered by every man of the party. They thought some valuable discovery had been made. One by one they followed the call and were soon assembled at the still burning embers they had lately left.

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“A nice navigator you are, ain’t you, Spiller? Do you know where you are now?” asked Brown.

“Well, I must say there seems to be some mistake,” said Spiller. “I came along when I heard the coo-ee, and found myself here. It is most unaccountable. Here is where we camped last night, sure enough. It is most surprising.”

“Yes, it is surprising,” said Smith. “You know the compass, don’t you, you conceited little beggar. You can box it and make a bee-line for Western Port, can’t you? Here you have been circussing us round the country, nobody knows where, until we have not a morsel of food left; but if I am to be starved to death through you, you miserable little hound, I am not going to leave you alive. What do you say, mates? Let us kill him and eat him. I’ll do the job myself if nobody else likes it. I say nothing could be fairer.”

Sparrow, one of the Irishmen, spoke. He was a spare man, six feet high, had a long thin face, a prominent nose, sloping shoulders, mild blue eyes, and a most gentle voice. I knew him after he returned to Gippsland and settled there. He was averse to quarrelling and fighting; and, to enable him to lead a peaceable life, he carried a short riding whip with a hammer handle, and kept the lash twisted round his hand. He was a conscientious man too, and had a strong moral objection to the proposal of killing and eating Spiller; but he did not want to offend the company, and he made his refusal as mild as possible.

“It’s a think I wouldn’t like to quarrel about with no man,” he said, “and the Lord knows I am as hungry as any of you; and if we die through this misleading little chap I couldn’t say but he would be guilty of murdering us, and we might be justified in making use of what little there is of him. But for my part I couldn’t take my share of the meat—not to-day at any rate, because you may disremember it’s Friday, and it’s agen the laws of the Church to ate meat this day. So I’d propose that we wait till to-morrow, and if we grow very wake with the hunger, we can make use of the dog to stay our stomachs a little while longer, and something better may turn up in the meantime.”

“Is it to cook my dog Watch you mean?” asked Crow. (Here Watch went to his master, and lay down at his feet, looking up in his face and patting the ground with his tail.) “I tell you what it is, Sparrow, you are not going to ate my dog. What has the poor fellow done to you, I’d like to know? You may cook Spiller if you like, to-day or to-morrow, it’s all the same to me—and I grant he well deserves it —but if you meddle with Watch you’ll have to deal with me.”

“It’s no use going on this way, mates,” said Brown. “We might as well be moving while we have strength enough to do so. Come along.”

The men began to rise to their feet. Macnamara suddenly snatched Spiller's gun, and fired off both barrels; he then said, "Now hand over your shot and powder." Spiller, half scared to death, handed them over.

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“Now,” said Macnamara, “you are my prisoner. I am going to take care of you until you are wanted; and if I see you so much as wink the wrong way I’ll blow your brains out, if you have any. Here’s your empty gun. Now march.”

All the men followed. The country was full of scrub, and they walked through it in Indian file. Not a bird or beast was killed that day or the next. A consultation was held at night, and it was agreed to kill Watch in the morning if nothing else turned up, Crow by this time being too hungry to say another word in favour of his dog. But at daylight an eaglehawk was watching them from a tree, and Brown shot it. It was soon put in the ashes, and when cooked was divided among the seven.

On the eighth day Macnamara said, “I can smell the ocean.” His name means “sons of the sea,” and he was born and reared on the shore of the Atlantic. Sand hummocks were soon seen, and the roar of the breakers beyond could be heard. Two redbills were shot and eaten, and Spiller and Watch were kept for future use. On the ninth day they shot a native bear, which afforded a sumptuous repast, and gave them strength to travel two days longer. When they camped at night a tribe of blacks made a huge fire within a short distance, howling their war songs, and brandishing their weapons. It was impossible to sleep or to pass a peaceful night with such neighbours, so they crawled nearer to the savages and fired a volley at them. Then there was silence, which lasted all night. Next morning they found a number of spears and other weapons which the blacks had left on the ground; these they threw into the fire, and then resumed their miserable journey. On this day cattle tracks were visible, and at last, completely worn out, they arrived at Chisholm’s station, eleven days after leaving One Tree Hill. They still carried their guns, and had no trouble in obtaining food during the rest of their journey to Melbourne.

At the same time that Mr. Tyers reported his failure to reach Gippsland, the seven men reported to Walsh their return from it. The particulars of these interviews may be imagined, but they were never printed, Mr. John Fawkner, with unusual brevity, remarking that “Gippsland appears to be sinking into obscurity.”

Some time afterwards it was stated that “a warrant had been issued for Mr P. Walsh, formerly one of our leading merchants, on a charge of fraud committed in 1843. Warrant returned ‘non est inventus’; but whether he has left the colony, or is merely rusticating, does not appear. Being an uncertificated bankrupt, it would be a rather dangerous experiment, punishable by law with transportation for fifteen years.”

But Mr. Tyers could not afford to allow Gippsland to sink into obscurity; his official life and salary depended on his finding it. A detachment of border and native police had arrived from Sydney by the ‘Shamrock’, and some of them were intended as a reinforcement for Gippsland, “to strengthen the hands of the commissioner in putting down irregularities that at present exist there.”

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Dr. Holmes was sending a mob of cattle over the mountains, and Mr. Tyers ordered his troopers to travel with them, arranging to meet them at the head of the Glengarry river. He avoided this time all the obstacles he had formerly encountered by making a sea voyage, and he landed at Port Albert on the 13th day of January, 1844.

GIPPSLAND UNDER THE LAW.

As soon as it was known at the Old Port that a Commissioner of Crown Lands had arrived, Davy, the pilot, hoisted a flag on his signal staff, and welcomed the representative of law and order with one discharge from the nine-pounder. He wanted to be patriotic, as became a free-born Briton. But he was very sorry afterwards; he said he had made a mistake. The proper course would have been to hoist the flag at half-mast, and to fire minute guns, in token of the grief of the pioneers for the death of freedom.

Mr. Tyers rode away with a guide, found his troopers at the head of the Glengarry, and returned with them over Tom's Cap. He camped on the Tarra, near the present Brewery Bridge, and his black men at night caught a number of blackfish, which were found to be most excellent.

Next day the commissioner entered on his official duties, and began to put down irregularities. He rode to the Old Port, and halted his men in front of the company's store. All the inhabitants soon gathered around him. He said to the storekeeper:

"My name is Tyers. I am the Commissioner of Crown Lands. I want to see your license for this store."

"This store belongs to the Port Albert Company," replied John Campbell. "We have no license, and never knew one was required in such a place as this."

"You are, then, in illegal occupation of Crown lands, and unless you pay me twenty pounds for a license I am sorry to say it will be my duty to destroy your store," said Mr. Tyers.

There were two other stores, and a similar demand was made at each of them for the 20 pounds license fee, which was paid after some demur, and the licenses were signed and handed to the storekeepers.

Davy's hut was the next visited.

"Who owns this building?" asked Mr. Tyers.

"I do," said Davy. "I put it up myself."

“Have you a license?”

“No, I have not. Never was asked for one since I came here, and I don’t see why I should be asked for one now.”

“Well, I ask you now. You are in illegal occupation of Crown lands, and you must pay me twenty pounds, or I shall have to destroy your hut.”

“I hav’nt got the twenty pounds,” Davy said: “never had as much money in my life; and I wouldn’t pay it to you if I had it. I would like to know what right the Government, or anybody else, has to ask me for twenty pounds for putting up a hut on this sandbank? I have been here with my family pretty nigh on to three years; sometimes nearly starved to death, living a good deal

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of the time on birds, and 'possums, and roast flathead; and what right, in the name of common sense, has the Government to send you here to make me pay twenty pounds? What has the Government done for me or anybody else in Gippsland? They have already taken every penny they could get out of the settlers, and, as far as I know, have not spent one farthing on this side of the mountains. They did not even know there was such a country till McMillan found it. It belonged to the blacks. There was nobody else here when we came, and if we pay anybody it should be the blackfellows. Besides, if I had had stock, and money enough to take up a run, I could have had the pick of Gippsland, twenty square miles, for ten pounds; and because I am a poor man you want me to pay twenty pounds for occupying a few yards of sand. Where is the sense of that, I'd like to know? If you are an honest Englishman, you ought to be ashamed of yourself for coming here with your troopers and carbines and pistols on such a business, sticking up a poor man for twenty pounds in the name of the Government. Why, no bushrangers could do worse than that."

"You are insolent, my man. If you don't pay the money at once I'll give you just ten minutes to clear out, and then I shall order my men to burn down your hut. You will find that you can't defy the Government with impunity."

"Burn away, if you like, and much good may it do you." Pointing to his whaleboat on the beach, "There's the ship I came here in from Melbourne, and that's the ship I shall go back in, and you daren't hinder me."

Mr. Reeve was present, watching the proceedings and listening. He had influential friends in Sydney, had a station at Snake Ridge, a special survey on the Tarra, and he felt that it would be advisable to pour oil on the troubled waters. He said:

"I must beg of you, Mr. Tyers, to excuse Davy. He is our pilot, and there is no man in Gippsland better qualified for that post, nor one whose services have been so useful to the settlers both here and at the lakes. We have already requested the Government to appoint him pilot at the port; we are expecting a reply shortly, and it will be only reasonable that he should be allowed a site for his hut."

"You see, Mr. Reeve, I must do my duty," said Mr. Tyers, "and treat all alike. I cannot allow one man to remain in illegal occupation, while I expel the others."

"The settlers cannot afford to lose their pilot, and I will give you my cheque for the twenty pounds," said Mr. Reeve.

"Twelve months afterwards the cheque was sent back from Sydney, and Mr. Reeve made a present of it to Davy.

“At this time the public journals used very strong language in their comments on the action of Governors and Government officials, and complaint was made in the House of Commons that the colonial press was accustomed to use “a coarseness of vituperation and harshness of expression towards all who were placed in authority.” But gentlemen were still civil to one another, except on rare occasions, and then their language was a strong as that of the journals, *e.g.*:

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“I, Arthur Huffington, surgeon, residing at the station of Mr. W. Bowman, on the Ovens River, do hereby publicly proclaim George Faithful, settler on the King River, to be a malicious liar and a coward.

“Ovens River, March 6th, 1844.

“You will find a copy of the above posted at every public-house between the Ovens and Melbourne, and at the corner of every street in the town.”

This defiance could not escape the notice of the lawyers, and they soon got the matter into their own hands.

Huffington brought an action of trespass on the case for libel against Faithful, damages 2,000 pounds.

It was all about branding a female calf; “duffing it” was the vulgar term, and to call a settler “duffer” was more offensive than if you called him a murderer.

Mr. Stawell opened the pleadings, brushing up the fur of the two tiger cats thus:

“Here you have Mr. Faithful—the son of his father—the pink of superintendents—the champion of Crown Lands Commissioners—the fighting man of the plains of Goulburn—the fastidious Beau Brummel of the Ovens River,”—and so on. Arthur and George were soon sorry they had not taken a shot at each other in a paddock.

The calf was a very valuable animal—to the learned counsel. On January 30th, 1844, Davy became himself an officer of the Government he had denounced so fiercely, being appointed pilot at Port Albert by Sir George Gipps, who graciously allowed him to continue the receipt of the fee already charged, *viz*., three pounds for each vessel inwards and outwards.

There were eight other huts on the sandbank, but as not one of the occupants was able to pay twenty pounds, their names are not worth mentioning. After making a formal demand for the money, and giving the trespassers ten minutes to take their goods away, Mr. Tyers ordered his men to set the buildings on fire, and in a short time they were reduced to ashes. The commissioner then rode back to his camp with the eighty pounds, and wrote a report to the Government of the successful inauguration of law and order within his jurisdiction, and of the energetic manner in which he had commenced to put down the irregularities prevalent in Gippsland.

The next duty undertaken by the commissioner was to settle disputes about the boundaries of runs, and he commenced with those of Captain Macalister, who complained of encroachments. To survey each run with precision would take up much time and labour, so a new mode of settlement was adopted. By the regulations in force no single station was to consist of more than twenty square miles of area, unless the

commissioner certified that more was required for stock possessed by applicant. This regulation virtually left everything to the goodwill and pleasure of the commissioner, who first decided what number of square miles he would allot to a settler, then mounted his horse, to whose paces he was accustomed, and taking

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his compass with him, he was able to calculate distances by the rate of speed of his horse almost as accurately as if he had measured them with a chain. These distances he committed to paper, and he gave to every squatter whose run he thus surveyed a description of his boundaries, together with a tracing from a chart of the district, which he began to make. He allotted to Captain Macalister all the country which he claimed, and a dispute between Mr. William Pearson and Mr. John King was decided in favour of the latter.

It was reported in Sydney that Mr. Tyers was rather difficult of access, but it was believed he had given satisfaction to all and everyone with whom he had come in contact, except those expelled from the Old Port, and a few squatters who did not get as much land as they wanted. There were also about a hundred escaped prisoners in the country, but these never complained that the commissioner was difficult of access.

The blacks were still troublesome, and I heard Mr. Tyers relate the measures taken by himself and his native police to suppress their irregularities. He was informed that some cattle had been speared, and he rode away with his force to investigate the complaint. He inspected the cattle killed or wounded, and then directed his black troopers to search for tracks, and this they did willingly and well. Traces of natives were soon discovered, and their probable hiding-place in the scrub was pointed out to Mr. Tyers. He therefore dismounted, and directing two of his black troopers armed with carbines to accompany him, he held a pistol in each hand and walked cautiously into the scrub. The two black troopers discharged their carbines. The commissioner had seen nothing to shoot at, but his blacks soon showed him two of the natives a few yards in front, both mortally wounded. Mr. Tyers sent a report of the affair to the Government, and that was the end of it.

This manner of dealing with the native difficulty was adopted in the early days, and is still used under the name of “punitive expeditions.” That judge who prayed to heaven in his wig and robes of office, said that the aborigines were subjects of the Queen, and that it was a mercy to them to be under her protection. The mercy accorded to them was less than Jedburgh justice: they were shot first, and not even tried afterwards.

The settlers expelled from the sandbank at the Old Port required some spot on which they could put up their huts without giving offence to the superior powers. The Port Albert Company excised a township from their special survey, and called it Victoria; Mr. Robert Turnbull bought 160 acres, the present Port Albert, at 1 pound per acre, and offered sites for huts to the homeless at the rate of 1 pound per annum, on the condition that they carried on no business. The stores were removed from the Old Port to the new one, and the first settlement in Gippsland was soon again overgrown with scrub and ferns. Mr.

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Reeve offered farms to the industrious at the rental of one bushel of wheat to the acre. For some time the township of Tarraville was a favourite place of residence, because the swamps which surrounded Port Albert were impassable for drays during the winter months; the roads to Maneroo and Melbourne mentioned in Mr. Reeve's advertisement were as yet in the clouds. Captain Moore came from Sydney in the revenue cutter 'Prince George' to look for smugglers, but he did not find any. He was afterwards appointed collector for Gippsland, and he came down again from Sydney with a boat's crew of six prisoners, a free coxswain, and a portable house, in which he sate for the receipt of Customs.

For a time the commissioner resided at Tarraville, and then he went to the lakes and surveyed a township at Flooding Creek, now called Sale. His black troopers were in some cases useful, in others they were troublesome; they indulged in irregularities; there was no doubt that they drank rum procured in some inexplicable manner. They could not be confined in barracks, or remain continually under the eye of their chief, and it was not always possible to discover in what manner they spent their leisure hours. But occasionally some evidence of their exploits came to light, and Mr. Tyers became aware that his black police considered themselves as living among hostile tribes, in respect of whom they had a double duty to perform, *viz*., to track cattle spearers at the order of their chief, and on their own account to shoot as many of their enemies as they could conveniently approach.

There were now ladies as well as gentlemen in Gippsland, and one day the commissioner sailed away in his boat with a select party. After enjoying the scenery and the summer breezes for a few hours, he cast his eyes along the shore in search of some romantic spot on which to land. Dead wood and dry sticks were extremely scarce, as the blacks used all they could find at their numerous camps. He was at length so fortunate as to observe a brown pile of decayed branches, and he said, "I think we had better land over there; that deadwood will make a good fire"; and the boat was steered towards it. But when it neared the land the air was filled with a stench so horrible that Mr. Tyers at once put the boat about, and went away in another direction. Next day he visited the spot with his police, and he found that the dead wood covered a large pile of corpses of the natives shot by his own black troopers, and he directed them to make it a holocaust.

The white men brought with them three blessings for the natives— rum, bullets, and blankets. The blankets were a free gift by the Government, and proved to the eyes of all men that our rule was kind and charitable. The country was rightfully ours; that was decided by the Supreme Court; we were not obliged to pay anything for it, but out of pure benignity we gave the lubras old gowns, and the black men old coats and trousers; the Government added an annual blanket, and thus we had good reason to feel virtuous.

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We also appointed a protector of the aborigines, Mr. G. A. Robinson, at a salary of 500 pounds per annum. He took up his residence on the then sweet banks of the Yarra, and made excursions in various directions, compiling a dictionary. He started on a tour in the month of April, 1844, making Alberton his first halting-place, and intending to reach Twofold Bay by way of Omeo. But he found the country very difficult to travel; he had to swim his horse over many rivers, and finally he returned to Melbourne by way of Yass, having added no less than 8,000 words to his vocabulary of the native languages. But the public journals spoke of his labours and his dictionary with contempt and derision. They said, “Pshaw! a few mounted police, well armed, would effect more good among the aborigines in one month than the whole preaching mob of protectors in ten years.”

When a race of men is exterminated somebody ought to bear the blame, and the easiest way is to lay the fault at the door of the dead; they never reply.

When every blackfellow in South Gippsland, except old Darriman, was dead, Mr. Tyers explained his experience with the Government blankets. They were now no longer required, as Darriman could obtain plenty of old clothes from charitable white men. It had been the commissioner’s duty to give one blanket annually to each live native, and thus that garment became to him the Queen’s livery, and an emblem of civilisation; it raised the savage in the scale of humanity and encouraged him to take the first step in the march of progress. His second step was into the grave. The result of the gift of blankets was that the natives who received them ceased to clothe themselves with the skins of the kangaroo, the bear or opossum. The rugs which they had been used to make for themselves would keep out the rain, and in them they could pass the wettest night or day in their mia-mias, warm and dry. But the blankets we kindly gave them by way of saving our souls were manufactured for the colonial market, and would no more resist the rain than an old clothes-basket. The consequence was that when the weather was cold and wet, the blackfellow and his blanket were also cold and wet, and he began to shiver; inflammation attacked his lungs, and rheumatism his limbs, and he soon went to that land where neither blankets nor rugs are required. Mr. Tyers was of opinion that more blacks were killed by the blankets than by rum and bullets.

Government in Gippsland was advancing. There were two justices of the peace, the commissioner, black and white police, a collector of customs, a pilot, and last of all, a parson—parson Bean—who quarrelled with his flock on the question of education. The sheep refused to feed the shepherd; he had to shake the dust off his feet, and the salvation of souls was, as usual, postponed to a more convenient season. At length Mr. Latrobe himself undertook to pay a visit to Gippsland. He was a splendid horseman, had long limbs like King Edward Longshanks, and was in the habit of making dashing excursions with a couple of troopers to take cursory views of the country. He set out in the month of May, 1844, and was introduced to the settlers in the following letter by “a brother squatter”:

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“Gentlemen, look out. The jackal of your oppressor has started on a tour. For what purpose? To see the isolated and miserable domiciles you occupy and the hard fare on which you subsist? No! but to see if the oppressor can further apply the screw with success and impunity. You have located yourselves upon lands at the risk of life and property, paying to the Government in license and assessment fees for protection which you have never received, and your quiesence under such a system of robbery has stimulated your oppressor to levy on you a still greater amount of taxation, not to advance your interests, but to replenish his exhausted treasury. Should you strain your impoverished exchequer to entertain your (in a family sense) worthy superintendent, depend upon it he will recommend a more severe application of the screw. Give him, therefore, your ordinary fare, salt junk and damper, or scabby mutton, with a pot of Jack the Painter’s tea, in a black pot stirred with a greasy knife.”

Mr. Latrobe and Sir George bore all the weight of public abuse, and it was heavy. Now it is divided among many Ministers, each of whom carries his share with much patience, while our Governor’s days in the “Sunny South” are “days of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace.”

No gentleman could accept hospitality like that suggested by “a brother squatter,” and Mr. Latrobe sought refuge at the Port Albert Hotel, Glengarry’s imported house. Messrs. Tyers, Raymond, McMillan, Macalister, and Reeve were pitching quoits at the rear of the building under the lee of the ti-tree scrub. Davy, the pilot, was standing near on duty, looking for shipping with one eye and at the game with the other. The gentlemen paused to watch the approaching horsemen. Mr. Latrobe had the royal gift of remembering faces once seen; and he soon recognised all those present, even the pilot whom he had seen when he first arrived in Melbourne. He shook hands with everyone, and enquired of Davy how he was getting on with the piloting. He said: “Now gentlemen, go on with your game. I like quoits myself and I should be sorry to interrupt you.” Then he went into the hotel and stayed there until morning. He no doubt obtained some information from Mr. Tyers and his friends, but he went no further into the country. Next morning he started with his two troopers on his return to Melbourne, and the other gentlemen mounted their horses to accompany him; but the “worthy superintendent” rode so fast that he left everyone behind and was soon out of sight, so his intended escort returned to port. Mr. Latrobe’s view of Gippsland was very cursory.

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Rabbit Island was stocked with rabbits in 1839 by Captain Wishart, the whaler. In 1840 he anchored his barque, the 'Wallaby', in Lady's Bay, and lanced his last whale off Horn Point. A great, grey shark happened to be cruising about the whaling ground, the taste of blood was on the sea, and he followed the wounded whale; until, going round in her flurry, she ran her nose against Wishart's boat and upset it. Then the shark saw strange animals in the water which he had never seen before. He swam under them and sniffed at their tarry trousers, until they landed on the rocks: all but one, Olav Pedersen, a strong man but a slow swimmer. A fin arose above the water between Olav and the shore. He knew what that meant, and his heart failed him. Three times he called for help and Wishart threw off his wet clothes and plunged into the sea. The shark was attracted to the naked captain, and he bit a piece out of one leg. Both bodies were recovered; that of Wishart was taken to Hobarton, and Olav was buried on the shore at the foot of a gum tree. His epitaph was painted on a board nailed to the tree, and was seen by one of the pioneers on his first voyage to the Old Port in 1841.

Before Gippsland was brought under the law, Rabbit Island was colonised by two whalers named Page and Yankee Jim, and Page's wife and baby. They built a bark hut, fenced in a garden with a rabbit-proof fence, and planted it with potatoes. Their base of supplies for groceries was at the Old Port.

They were monarchs of all they surveyed,
From the centre all round to the sea.

They paid no rent and no taxes. Sometimes they fished, or went to the seal islands and brought back seal skins. In the time of the potato harvest, and when that of the mutton birds drew near, there were signs of trouble coming from the mainland. Fires were visible on the shore at night, and smoke by day; and Page suspected that the natives were preparing to invade the island. At length canoes appeared bobbing up and down on the waves, but a shot from the rifle sent them back to the shore. For three days and nights no fire or smoke was seen, and the two whalers ceased to keep watch. But early next morning voices were heard from the beach below the hut; the blacks were trying to launch the boat. Page and Jim shouted at them and went down the cliff; then the blacks ran away up the rocks, and were quickly out of sight. Presently Mrs. page came running out of the hut half dressed, and carrying her baby; she said she heard the blacks jabbering in the garden. In a short time the hut was in a blaze, and was soon burned to the ground. The two men then launched their boat and went to the Port. Davy shipped a crew of six men, and started in his whaleboat for the island; but the wind was blowing hard from the west, and they did not arrive at the island until next day. The blacks had then all disappeared; and, as the men wanted something to eat, Davy told them to dig up some potatoes, while he went and shot six rabbits. When he returned with his game, the men said they could not find any potatoes. He said, "That's all nonsense," and went himself to the garden; but he could not find one potato. The blackfellows had shipped the whole crop in their canoes, so that there was nothing but rabbit for breakfast.

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In this manner the reign of the Page dynasty came to an abrupt termination. The baby heir-apparent grew up to man's estate as a private citizen, and became a fisherman at Williamstown.

UNTIL THE GOLDEN DAWN.

After Mr. Latrobe's short visit to Port Albert, Gippsland was for many years ruled by Mr. Tyers with an authority almost royal. Davy, after his first rebellious outburst at the burning of the huts, and his subsequent appointment as pilot, retired to the new Port Albert and avoided as much as possible the haunts of the commissioner. On the salt water he was almost as powerful and imperious as was his rival by land. He ruled over all ships and shipwrecks, and allowed no man to say him nay.

Long Mason, the first overseer of Woodside Station, took over a cargo of fat cattle to Hobarton for his brother. After receiving the cash for the cattle he proceeded to enjoy himself after the fashion of the day. The shepherd knocked down his cheque at the nearest groggery and then returned to his sheep full of misery. Long Mason had nearly 300 pounds, and he acted the part of the prodigal brother. He soon made troops of friends, dear brethren and sisters, on whom he lavished his coin; he hired a band of wandering minstrels to play his favourite music, and invited the beauty an chivalry of the convict capital to join him in his revels. When his money was expended he was put on board a schooner bound for Port Albert, on which Davis (of Yarram) and his family were passengers. For two days he lay in his bunk sick and suffering. As the vessel approached the shore his misery was intense. He demanded drink, but no one would give him any. He began to search his pockets for coin, but of the 300 pounds only one solitary sixpence was left. With this he tried to bribe the cabin boy to find for him one last taste of rum; but the boy said, "All the grog is locked up, and the captain would welt me if I gave you a single drop."

So Long Mason landed at the Port with his sixpence, was dismissed by his brother from Woodside Station, and became a wandering swagman.

The next overseer for Woodside voyaged to Port Albert in the brig 'Isabella' in the month of June, 1844. This vessel had been employed in taking prisoners to Macquarie Harbour and Port Arthur until the government built a barque called the 'Lady Franklin'; then Captain Taylor bought the brig for the cattle trade. On this voyage he was anxious to cross the bar for shelter from a south-east gale, and he did not wait for the pilot, although the vessel was deeply laden; there was not water enough for her on the old bar; she struck on it, and the heavy easterly sea threw her on the west bank. It was some time before the pilot and his two men could get aboard, as they had to fight their way through the breakers to leeward. There was too much sea for the boat to remain in safety near the ship,

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and Davy asked the captain to lend him a hand to steer the boat back to Sunday Island. The second mate went in her, but she was capsized directly. The ship's boat was hanging on the weather davits, and it was no use letting her down to windward on account of the heavy sea. Davy ran out to the end of the jibboom with a lead line. He could see the second mate hanging on to the keel of the capsized boat, and his two men in the water. The ebb sea kept washing them out, and the heavy sea threw them back again, and whenever they could get their heads above water they shouted for help. Davy threw the lead towards them from the end of the jibboom, but they were too far away for the line to reach them. At length the ship's boat was launched to leeward, four men and the mate got into her, but by this time the two boatmen were drowned. While the ship's boat was running through the breakers past the pilot boat, the first mate grabbed the second mate by the collar, held on to him until they were in smooth water, and then hauled him in. It was too dangerous for the seamen to face the breakers again, so the pilot sang out to them to go to Snake Island.

About two o'clock in the afternoon the vessel lay pretty quiet on the ebb tide; a fire was lighted in the galley, and all hands had something to eat. There was not much water in the cabin; but, as darkness set in, and the flood tide made, the seas began to come aboard. There was a heavy general cargo in the hold, six steerage passengers, four men and two women (one of whom had a baby), and one cabin passenger, who was going to manage Woodside Station in place of Long Mason, dismissed.

The sea began to roll over the bulwarks, and the brig was fast filling with water. For some time the pumps were kept going, but the water gained on them, and all hands had to take to the rigging. The two women and the baby were first helped up to the foretop; then the pilot, counting the men, found one missing.

"Captain," he said, "what has become of the new manager?"

"Oh, he is lying in his bunk half-drunk."

"Then," replied Davy, "he'll be drowned!"

He descended into the cabin and found the man asleep, with the water already on a level with his berth.

"Why the blazes don't you get up and come out of this rat-hole?" he said. "Don't you see you are going to be drowned?"

The manager looked up and smiled.

"Please, don't be so unkind, my dear man," he replied. "Let me sleep a little longer, and then I'll go on deck."

Davy standing with the water up to his belt, grew mad.

“Come out of that, you confounded fool,” he said.

He dragged him out of his bunk into the water, and hauled him up the companion ladder, and with the help of the men took him up the rigging, and lashed him there out of reach of the breakers.

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All the rest of the men went aloft, and remained there during the night. Their clothing was soaked with water, and the weather was frosty and bitterly cold. Just before daylight, when the tide had ebbed, and the sea had gone down, the two women and the baby were brought below from the foretop, and all hands descended to the deck. They wanted to make a fire, but everything was wet, and they had to cut up some of the standing rigging which had been out of reach of the surf before they could find anything that would burn. With that a fire was made in the galley, and the women and baby were put inside. At sunrise it was found that the sea had washed up a ridge of sand near the ship, and, not wishing to pass another tide on board, all the crew and passengers went over the side, and waded through the shallow water until they came to a dry sand-pit. They were eleven in number, including the women and baby, and they waited until the boat came over from Snake Island and took them to the port. A little of the cargo was taken out of the 'Isabella', but in a few days she went to pieces.

Captain Taylor went to Hobarton, and bought from the insurers the schooner 'Sylvanus' which had belonged to him, and having been wrecked was then lying ashore on the coast. He succeeded in floating her off without much damage, and he ran her in the cattle trade for some time. He then sold her to Boys & Hall, of Hobarton, went to Sydney, bought the schooner 'Alert', and sailed her in the same trade until the discovery of gold. All the white seamen went off to the diggings, and he hired four Kanakas to man his craft.

On his last trip to Port Albert the pilot was on board, waiting for the tide. The pilot boat had been sent back to Sunday Island, the ship's boat was in the water, and was supposed to have been made fast astern by the crew. At break of day the pilot came on deck, and on taking a look round, he saw that the longboat had got away and was drifting towards Rabbit Island. He roared down the companion to Captain Taylor, "Your longboat's got adrift, and is off to Rabbit Island."

In another minute Captain Taylor was on deck. He gazed at his distant longboat and swore terribly. Then he took a rope and went for his four Kanakas; but they did not wait for him; they all plunged into the sea and deserted. The captain and pilot stood on deck watching them as they swam away, hand over hand, leaving foaming wakes behind like vessels in full sail. They were making straight for the longboat, and Davy said, "They will go away in her and leave us here in the lurch." But the captain said, "I think not." He was right. The Kanakas brought back the boat within hail of the schooner, and after being assured by the captain that he would not ropes-end them, they climbed aboard.

On returning to Hobarton Captain Taylor was seized with the gold fever. He laid up the 'Alert', went with his four men to Bendigo, and was a lucky digger. Then he went to New Zealand, bought a farm, and ploughed the waves no more.

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In January, 1851, some buoys were sent to Port Albert and laid down in the channel. The account for the work was duly sent to the chief harbour master at Williamstown, but he took no notice of it, nor made any reply to several letters requesting payment. There was something wrong at headquarters, and Davy resolved to see for himself what it was. Moreover, he had not seen Melbourne for ten years, and he yearned for a change. So, without asking leave of anyone, he left Port Albert and its shipping "to the sweet little cherub that sits up aloft, and takes care of the life of Poor Jack," and went in his boat to Yanakie Landing. Mrs. Bennison lent him a pony, and told him to steer for two bald hills on the Hoddle Ranges; he could not see the hills for the fog, and kept too much to port, but at last he found a track. He camped out that night, and next morning had breakfast at Hobson's Station. He stayed one night at Kilcunda, and another at Lyle's station, near the bay. He then followed a track which Septimus Martin had cut through the tea-tree, and his pony became lame by treading on the sharp stumps, so that he had to push it or drag it along until he arrived at Dandenong, where he left it at an inn kept by a man named Hooks. He hired a horse from Hooks at five shillings a day. The only house between Dandenong and Melbourne was once called the South Yarra Pound, kept by Mrs. Atkinson. It was near Caulfield, on the Melbourne side of "No-good-damper swamp." Some blackfellows had been poisoned there by a settler who wanted to get rid of them. He gave them a damper with arsenic in it, and when dying they said, "No good, damper."

Davy landed in Melbourne on June 17th, 1851, put his horse in Kirk's bazaar, and stayed at the Queen's Head in Queen Street, where Sir William Clarke's office is now. The landlady was Mrs. Coulson, a widow. Next morning he was at the wharf before daylight, and went down the Yarra in the first steamer for Williamstown. He found that Captain Bunbury, the chief harbour-master, had gone away in the buoy-boat, a small schooner called the 'Apollo', so he hired a whale-boat, and overtook the schooner off the Red Bluff. When he went on board he spoke to Ruffles, master of the schooner, and said:

"Is the harbour-master aboard? I want to see him."

"Yes, but don't speak so loud, or you'll wake him up," replied Ruffles. "He is asleep down below."

Davy roared out, "I want to wake him up. I have come two hundred miles on purpose to do it. I want to get a settlement about those buoys at Port Albert. I am tired of writing about them."

This woke up Bunbury, who sang out:

"What's the matter, Ruffles? What's all that noise about?"

"It's the pilot from Port Albert. He wants to see you, sir, about the buoys."

“Tell him to come down below.” Davy went.

Bunbury was a one-armed naval lieutenant, the head of the harbour department, and drew the salary. He had subordinate officers. A clerk at Williamstown did his clerical work, and old Ruffles navigated the ‘Apollo’ for him through the roaring waters of Port Philip Bay, while he lay in his bunk meditating on something. He said:

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“Oh, is that you, Pilot? Well, about those buoys, eh? That’s all right. All you have to do is go to my office in Williamstown, tell my clerk to fill in a form for you, take it to the Treasury, and you will get your money.”

Davy went back to the office at Williamstown, had the form made out by the clerk, and took it to Melbourne in the steamer, the last trip she made that day. By this time the Treasury was closed. It was situated in William Street, where the vast Law Courts are now; and Davy was at the door when it was opened next morning, the first claimant for money. A clerk took his paper, looked over it, smiled, and said it was of no use whatever without Bunbury’s signature. Davy started for Williamstown again in the second boat, found that Bunbury had gone away again in the ‘Apollo’, followed him in a whale boat, overtook him off St. Kilda, obtained his signature, and returned to the Treasury. Captain Lonsdale was there, but he said it was too late to pay money that day, and also that the form should be signed by someone at the Public Works office.

Then Davy’s patience was gone, and he spoke the loud language of the sea. The frail building shook as with an earthquake. Mr. Latrobe was in a back room writing one of those gubernatorial despatches which are so painful to read. He had to suspend the pangs of composition, and he came into the front room to see what was the matter. Davy told him what was the matter in very unofficial words. Mr. Latrobe listened patiently and then directed Captain Lonsdale to keep the Treasury open until the account was paid. He also said the schooner ‘Agenoria’ had been wrecked on the day that Davy left Port Albert, and requested him to return to duty as soon as possible, lest other vessels might be wrecked for want of a pilot. “The sweet little cherub that sits up aloft” could not be depended on to pilot vessels over the bar.

Davy took his paper to the Public Works office in Queen Street. Here he found another officer bursting with dignity, who said: “There is already one signature too many on this account.”

“Can’t you scratch it out, then?” said Davy.

“We don’t keep hens to scratch in this office,” replied the dignified one, who took a ruler, and having drawn a line through the superfluous name, signed his own. When Davy went again to the Treasury with his account, Captain Lonsdale said he had not cash on hand to pay it, and deducted twenty pounds, which he sent to Port Albert afterwards, when the Government had recovered its solvency. His Honour the Superintendent might have assumed the classical motto, “Custos sum pauperis horti.”

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Davy put the money in his pocket, went to the Queen's Head, and, as it was already dark, he hired a man for ten shillings to show him the road through the wet wilderness of Caulfield and round No-good-damper Swamp. It was half-past eleven when he arrived at Hook's Hotel, and, as his pony was still too lame to travel, he bought the horse he had hired, and set out with the Sale mailman. At the Moe he found Angus McMillan, William Montgomery, and their stockmen, afraid to cross the creek on account of the flood, and they had eaten all their provisions. Before dark a black gin came over in a canoe from the accommodation hut on the other side of the creek, having heard the travellers cooeying. They told her they wanted something to eat, but it was too dangerous for her to cross the water again that night. A good fire was kept burning but it was a wretched time. It rained heavily, a gale of wind was blowing, and trees kept falling down in all directions. Scott, the hut-keeper, sent the gin over in the canoe next morning with a big damper, tea, sugar, and meat, which made a very welcome breakfast for the hungry travellers.

They stayed there two days and two nights, and as the flood was still rising, they resolved to try to cross the creek at all risks, preferring to face the danger of death by drowning rather than to die slowly of starvation. Each man took off his clothes, all but his flannel shirt and drawers, strapped them to the pommel of his saddle, threw the stirrup irons over the saddle, and stopped them with a string under the horse's belly to keep them from getting foul in the trees and scrub. In some places the horses had to climb over logs under water, sometimes they had to swim, but in the end they all arrived safely at the hut. They were very cold, and ravenously hungry; and while their clothes were drying before a blazing fire, they drank hot tea and ate up every scrap of food, so that Scott was obliged to accompany them to the next station for rations. He left the gin behind, having no anxiety about her. While he was away she could feed sumptuously on grubs, crabs, and opossums.

In March, 1852, when everybody was seized with the gold fever, Davy took it in the natural way. He again left Port Albert without a pilot and went to Melbourne to resign his office. But Mr. Latrobe promised to give him a salary of 500 pounds a year and a boat's crew of five men and a coxswain. The men were to have twelve-and-six a day and the coxswain fifteen shillings.

By this time the gold fever had penetrated to the remotest parts of Gippsland, and from every squatting station and every lonely hut on the plains and mountains men gathered in troops. They were leaving plenty of gold behind them at Walhalla and other places. The first party Davy met had a dray and bullocks. They were slowly cutting a road through the scrub, and their team was the first that made its way over the mountains from Gippsland to Melbourne. Their

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captain was a lady of unbounded bravery and great strength—a model pioneeress, with a talent for governing the opposite sex.* When at home on her station she did the work of a man and a woman too. She was the one in a thousand so seldom found. She not only did the cooking and housework, but she also rode after stock, drove a team, killed fat beasts, chopped wood, stripped bark, and fenced. She did not hanker after woman's rights, nor rail against the male sex. She was not cultured, nor scientific, nor artistic, nor aesthetic. She despised all the ologies. All great men respected her, and if the little ones were insolent she boxed their ears and twisted their necks. She conquered all the blackfellows around her land with her own right arm. At first she had been kind to them, but they soon became troublesome, wanted too much flour, sugar, and beef, and refused to go away when she ordered them to do so. Without another word she took down her stockwhip, went to the stable, and saddled her horse. Then she rounded up the blackfellows like a mob of cattle and started them. If they tried to break away, or to hide themselves among the scrub, or behind tussocks, she cut pieces out of their hides with her whip. Then she headed them for the Ninety-mile Beach, and landed them in the Pacific without the loss of a man. In that way she settled the native difficulty. The Neills, with a bullock team, the Buckleys and Moores, with horse teams, followed the track of the leading lady. The station-owners stayed at home and watched their fat stock, which soon became valuable, and was no longer boiled.

[Footnote] *Mrs. Buntine; died 1896.*

On December 31st, 1851, there were in Tasmania twenty thousand and sixty-nine convicts. Six months afterwards more than ten thousand had left the island, and in three years forty-five thousand eight hundred and eighty-four persons, principally men, had left for the diggings. It was evident that Sir Wm. Denison would soon have nobody to govern but old women and children, a circumstance derogatory to his dignity, so he wrote to England for more convicts and immigrants, and he pathetically exclaimed, "To whom but convicts could colonists look to cultivate their lands, to tend their flocks, to reap their harvests?" In the month of May, 1853, Sir William wrote that "the discovery of gold had turned him topsy-turvy altogether," and he rejoiced that no gold had been discovered in his island. Then the Legislature perversely offered a reward of five thousand pounds to any man who would discover a gold field in Tasmania, but, as a high-toned historian observes, "for many years they were so fortunate as not to find it."

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The convicts stole boats at Launceston, and landed at various places about Corner Inlet. Some were arrested by the police and sent back to Tasmania. Many called at Yanakie Station for free rations. Mr. Bennison applied for police protection, and Old Joe, armed with a carbine, was sent from Alberton as a garrison. Soon afterwards a cutter of about fifteen tons burden arrived at Corner Inlet manned by four convicts, who took the mainsail ashore and used it as a tent. They then allowed the cutter to drift on the rocks under Mount Singapore, and she went to pieces directly. While trying to find a road to Melbourne, they came to Yanakie Station, and they found nobody at the house except Joe, Mrs. Bennison, and an old hand. It was now Joe's duty to overawe and arrest the men, but they, although unarmed, overawed and arrested Joe. He became exceedingly civil, and after Mrs. Bennison had supplied them with provisions he showed them the road to Melbourne. They were arrested a few days afterwards at Dandenong and sent back to the island prison.

A NEW RUSH.

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"And there was gathering in hot haste."

When gold was first discovered at Stockyard Creek, Griffiths, one of the prospectors, came to me with the intention of registering the claim, under the impression that I was Mining Registrar. He showed me a very good sample of gold. As I had not then been appointed registrar, he had to travel sixty miles further before he could comply with the necessary legal formalities. Then the rush began. Old diggers came from all parts of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and New Zealand; also men who had never dug before, and many who did not intend to dig—pickpockets, horse thieves, and jumpers. The prospectors' claim proved the richest, and the jumpers and the lawyers paid particular attention to it. The trail of the old serpent is over everything. The desire of the jumpers was to obtain possession of the rich claim, or of some part of it; and the lawyers longed for costs, and they got them. The prospectors paid, and it was a long time before they could extricate their claim from the clutches of the law. They found the goldfield, and they also soon found an unprofitable crop of lawsuits growing on it. They were called upon to show cause before the warden and the Court of Mines why they should not be deprived of the fruit of their labours. The fact of their having discovered gold, and of having pegged out and registered their claim, could not be denied; but then it was argued by counsel most learned in mining law that they had done something which they should have omitted to do, or had omitted to do something else which they should have done, frail human beings as they were, and therefore their claim should be declared to belong to some Ballarat jumper. I had to sit and listen to such like legal logic until it made me sick, and ashamed of my species. Of course, justice was never mentioned, that was out of the question; if law and justice don't agree, so much the worse for justice.

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Gold was next found at Turton's Creek, which proved one of the richest little gullies ever worked by diggers. It was discovered by some prospectors who followed the tracks which Mr. Turton had cut over the scrubby mountains, and so they gratefully gave his name to the gully, but I never heard that they gave him any of the gold which they found in it. A narrow track from Foster was cut between high walls of impenetrable scrub, and it soon became like a ditch full of mud, deep and dangerous. If the diggers had been assured that they would find heaven at the other end of it, they would never have tried to go, the prospect of eternal happiness having a much less attraction for them than the prospect of gold; but the sacred thirst made them tramp bravely through the slough. The sun and wind never dried the mud, because it was shut in and overshadowed by the dense growth of the bush. All tools and provisions were carried through it on the backs of horses, whose legs soon became caked with mud, and the hair was taken off them as clean as if they had been shaved with a razor. Most of them had a short life and a hard one.

The digging was quite shallow, and the gully was soon rifled of the gold. At this time there was a mining registrar at Foster, as the new diggings at Stockyard Creek were named, and some men, after pegging out their claim at Turton's Creek, went back down the ditch to register them at Foster. It was a great mistake. It was neither the time nor the place for legal forms or ceremony. Time was of the essence of the contract, and they wasted the essence. Other and wiser men stepped on to their ground while they were absent, commenced at once to work vigorously, and the original peggers, when they returned, were unable to dislodge them. Peter Wilson pegged out a claim, and then rode away to register it. He returned next day and found two men on it who had already nearly worked it out.

"This claim is mine, mates," said Peter; "I pegged it out yesterday, and I have registered it. You will have to come out."

One of the men looked up at Peter and said, "Oh! your name is Peter, isn't it? I hear you are a fighting man. Well, you just come down off that bare-legged horse, and I'll kill you in a couple of minutes, while I take a spell."

"It's no use your talking that way; you'll see I'll have the law on you, and you'll have to pay for it," replied Peter.

"You can go, Peter, and fetch the law as soon as you like. I don't care a tinker's curse for you or the law; all I want is the profits, and I'm going to have them."

This profane outlaw and his mate got the profits, cleared all the gold out of Peter's claim, and took it away with them.

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It was reported in Melbourne that there was no law or order at Turton's Creek; that the diggers were treating the mining statutes and regulations with contempt; that the gold went to the strong, and the weakest went to the wall. Therefore, six of the biggest policemen in Melbourne were selected, stretched out, and measured in Russell Street barracks, and were then ordered to proceed to Turton's Creek and vindicate the majesty of the law. They landed from the steamer on the wharf at Port Albert, and, being armed with carbines and revolvers, looked very formidable. They proceeded on their journey in the direction of Foster, and it was afterwards reported that they arrived at Turton's Creek, and finding everybody quiet and peaceable, they came back again, bringing with them neither jumpers nor criminals. It was said, however, that they never went any further than the commencement of the ditch. They would naturally, on viewing it, turn aside and camp, to recruit their energies and discuss the situation. Although they were big constables, it did not follow they were big fools. They said the Government ought to have asphalted the ditch for them. It was unreasonable to expect men, each six foot four inches in height, carrying arms and accoutrements, which they were bound by the regulations to keep clean and in good order, to plunge into that river of mud, and to spoil all their clothes.

Turton's Creek was soon worked out, and before any professional jumpers or lawyers could put their fingers in the pie, the plums were all gone. The gully was prospected from top to bottom, and the hills on both sides were tunnelled, but no more gold, and no reefs were found. There was much speculation by geologists, mining experts, and old duffers as to the manner in which the gold had contrived to get into the creek, and where it came from; where it went to, the diggers who carried it away in their pockets knew well enough.

The diggers dispersed; some went to Melbourne to enjoy their wealth; some stayed at Foster to try to get more; some died from the extreme enjoyment of riches suddenly acquired, and a few went mad. One of the latter was brought to Palmerston, and remained there a day or two on his way to the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum. Having an inborn thirst for facts, I conversed with him from the wooden platform which overlooks the gaol yard. He was walking to and fro, and talking very cheerfully to himself, and to the world in general. He spoke well, and had evidently been well educated, but his ideas were all in pieces as it were, and lacked connection. He spoke very disrespectfully of men in high places, both in England and the Colonies; and remarked that Members of Parliament were the greatest rascals on the face of the earth. No man of sound mind would ever use such language as that.

Some years afterwards, while I was Collector of Customs at Port Albert, I received a letter from Melbourne to the following purport:

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“Yarra Bend Asylum,
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“Strictly private and confidential

“Sir,—You are hereby ordered to take possession of and detain every vessel arriving at Port Albert. You will immediately proceed on board each of them, and place the broad arrow abaft the foremast six feet above the deck. You will thus cut off all communication with the British Empire. I may state that I am the lawful heir to the title and estates of a Scottish dukedom, and am deprived of the possession and enjoyment of my rightful station and wealth by the machinations of a band of conspirators, who have found means to detain me in this prison in order to enjoy my patrimony. You will particularly observe that you are to hold no communication whatever with the Governor of this colony, as he is the paid agent of the conspirators, and will endeavour to frustrate all efforts to obtain my rights. You will also be most careful to withhold all information from the Duke of Dunsinane, who is a member of the junior branch of my family, and at the head of the conspiracy. You will proceed as soon as possible to enrol a body of men for the purpose of effecting my deliverance by force of arms. As these men will require payment for their services, you will enter the Bank of Victoria at Port Albert, and seize all the money you will find there, the amount of which I estimate at ten thousand pounds, which will be sufficient for preliminary expenses. You will give, in my name, to the manager of the bank, a guarantee in writing for repayment of the money, with current rate of interest added, when I recover the dukedom and estates. Be careful to explain to him that you take the money only as a loan, and that will prevent the bank from laying any criminal charge against you. Should anything of the kind be in contemplation, you will be good enough to report progress to me as soon as possible, and I will give you all necessary instructions as to your future proceedings.

“I may mention that in seeking to obtain my title and estates, I am influenced by no mean or mercenary considerations; my sole desire is to benefit the human race. I have been employing all my leisure hours during the last nine years in perfecting a system of philosophy entirely new, and applicable to all times, to all nations, and to all individuals. I have discovered the true foundation for it, which, like all great inventions, is so simple that it will surprise the world it was never thought of before. It is this: “Posito impossibili sequitur quidlibet.” My philosophy is founded on the firm basis of the Impossible; on that you can build anything and everything. My great work is methodical, divided into sections and chapters, perfect in style, and so lucid in argument that he who runs may read and be enlightened. I have counted the words, and they number so far seven hundred and two thousand five hundred and seventy-eight (702,578). Five years more will be required to complete the

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work; I shall then cause it to be translated into every language of the world, and shipped at the lowest rate of tonnage for universal distribution gratis. This will ensure its acceptance and its own beauty and intrinsic merits will secure its adoption by all nations, and the result will be human happiness. It will supersede all the baseless theories of science, religion, and morality which have hitherto confounded the human intellect.

“Extract from my Magnum Opus.

“We may reasonably suppose that matter is primordially self-existent, and that it imbued itself with the potentiality of life. It therefore produced germs. A pair of germs coalesced, and formed a somewhat discordant combination, the movements in which tended towards divergence. They attracted and enclosed other atoms, and, progressing through sleep and wakefulness, at last arrived at complete satisfaction, or perfect harmonic combination. This harmonic combination is death. We may say then, in brief, that growth is simply discordant currents progressing towards harmony. One question may be briefly noticed. It has been asked, when did life first appear on the earth? We shall understand now that the question is unnecessary. Life first appeared on the earth when the earth first appeared as an unsatisfied atom seeking combination. The question is rather, when did the inanimate first appear? It appeared when the first harmonic combination was effected. The earth is indeed to be considered as having grown up through the life that is inherent in it. Man is the most concentrated and differentiated outgrowth of that life. Mankind is, so to speak, the brain of the earth, and is progressing towards the conscious guidance of all its processes.”

“Dunsinane.”

It was not clear on what ground this noble duke based his authority over me; but I had been so long accustomed to fulfil the behests of lunatics of low degree that I was able to receive those of an afflicted lord with perfect equanimity. But as I could not see that my obedience would be rewarded with anything except death or Pentridge, I refrained from action. I did not place the broad arrow abaft of anything or anybody, nor did I make a levy on the cash in the Bank of Victoria.

GIPPSLAND AFTER THIRTY YEARS.

“A pleasing land of drowsihed it was,
And dreams that wave before the half-shut eye.”

For twelve years I did the Government stroke in Her Majesty’s Court at Colac, then I was ordered to make my way to Gippsland.

The sun of wisdom shone on a new ministry. They observed that many of their officers were destitute of energy, and they resolved to infuse new life into the service, by moving its members continually from place to place. But officials live long, and the most robust ministry dies early, and the wisdom of one cabinet is foolishness to the next.

I took root so deeply in the soil of Gippsland that I became immoveable. Twice the Government tried to uproot me, but I remained there to the end of my official days.

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Little reliable information about the country or its inhabitants was to be had, so I fondly imagined that in such a land, secured from contamination by the wicked world outside, I should find a people of primeval innocence and simplicity, and the long-forgotten lines returned to my memory:

“Beatus ille qui procul negotils,
Ut prisca gens mortalium.”

It was summer time, and the weather was serene and beautiful, when in the grey dusk of the evening we sailed through the Rip at Port Philip Heads. Then began the troubles of the heaving ocean, and the log of the voyage was cut short. It ran thus:

“The ship went up, and the ship went down; and then we fell down, and then we was sick; and then we fell asleep; and then we was at Port Albert; and that’s all I knows about it.”

I walked along the one street past the custom house, the post-office, and the bank, about three hundred yards and saw nothing beyond but tea-tree and swamps, through which ran a roughly-metalled road, leading apparently to the distant mountains. There was nothing but stagnation; it was the deadest seaport ever seen or heard of. There were some old stores, empty and falling to pieces, which the owners had not been enterprising enough to burn for the insurance money; the ribs of a wrecked schooner were sticking out of the mud near the channel; a stockyard, once used for shipping cattle, was rotting slowly away, and a fisherman’s net was hanging from the top rails to dry. Three or four drays filled with pigs were drawn up near the wharf; these animals were to form part of the steamer’s return cargo, one half of her deck space being allotted to pigs, and the other half to passengers. In case of foul weather, the deck hamper, pigs and passengers, was impartially washed overboard.

An old man in a dirty buggy was coming along the road, and all the inhabitants and dogs turned out to look and bark at him, just as they do in a small village in England, when the man with the donkey-cart comes in sight. To allay my astonishment on observing so much agitation and excitement, the Principal Inhabitant introduced himself, and informed me that it was a busy day at the Port, a kind of market day, on account of the arrival of the steamer.

I began sorrowfully to examine my official conscience to discover for which of my unatoned-for sins I had been exiled to this dreary land.

Many a time in after years did I see a stranger leave the steamer, walk, as I had done, to the utmost extremity of the seaport, and stand at the corner of the butcher’s shop, gazing on the swamps, the tea-tree, and the far-away wooded hills, the Strelezcki ranges. The dismal look of hopeless misery thatstole over his countenance was pitiful to behold. After recovering the power of speech, his first question was, “How is it

possible that any man could ever consent to live in a hole like this?” Here the Principal Inhabitant intervened, and poured balm

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on the wounded spirit of the stranger. He gently reminded him that first impressions are not always to be relied on; and assured him that if he would condescend to take up his abode with us for two or three years, he would never want to live anywhere else. The climate was delicious, the best in the world; it induced a feeling of repose, and bliss, and sweet contentment. We had no ice or snow, or piercing blasts in winter; and the heat of summer was tempered by the cool breezes of the Pacific Ocean, which gently lapped our lovely shores. The land, when cleared, was as rich and fertile as the farmer's heart could wish, yielding abundant pasturage both in summer and winter. The mountains sent down to us unfailing supplies of the purest water; we wanted no schemes of irrigation, for

"Green are our fields and fair our flowers, Our fountains never drumlie."

We had no plagues of locust, no animal or insect pests to destroy our crops or herbage. Rabbits had been introduced and turned loose at various times, but, instead of multiplying until they had become as numerous as the sand on the seashore, as had been the case in other parts of Australia, in Gippsland they invariably died; and it had been abundantly proved that rabbits had no more chance of living there than snakes in Ireland. And with regard to the salubrity of the climate, the first settlers lived so long that they were absolutely tired of life. Let him look at the cemetery, if he could find it. After thirty years of settlement it was almost uninhabited —neglected and overgrown with tussocks and scrub for want of use.

It will be gathered from this statement of the Principal Inhabitant that Gippsland had really been discovered and settled about thirty years before; but mountains and sea divided it from the outside world, and, on account of the intense drowsiness and inactivity which the delicious air and even temperature of the climate produced, the land and its inhabitants had been forgotten and unnoticed until it had been rediscovered, and its praises sung by the enterprising Minister of the Crown before mentioned.

Following the example of the cautious cat when introduced into a strange house, I investigated every corner of the district as far as the nature of the country would permit; and I found that it contained three principal corners or villages about three miles apart, at each of which the police magistrate and clerk had to attend on certain days, business or no business, generally the latter. It was, of course, beneath the dignity of a court to walk officially so far through the scrub; so the police magistrate was allowed sixty pounds per annum in addition to his salary, and the clerk whom I relieved fifty pounds, to defray the expense of keeping their horses.

"Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig."

I bought a waggonette, and then began to look for a horse to draw it. As soon as my want became known it was pleasing to find so many of my neighbours willing to supply it. Cox, the gaoler, said he knew of a horse that would just suit me. It belonged to Binns, an ex-constable, who was spending a month in gaol on account of a little trouble that had come upon him. Cox invited me into his office, and brought Binns out of his cell.

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“Yes,” said Binns “I have a horse, and there’s not another like him on the island,” (these men always meant Van Diemen’s Land when they said “the island,” forgetting occasionally that they had crossed the straits, and were in a land of freedom) “as good a goer as ever carried a saddle, or wore a collar. I wouldn’t sell him on no account, only you see I’m hard up just now.”

“What is his age?” I enquired.

“Well, he’s just rising ten. He has been used a bit hard, but you won’t overwork him, and he’ll do all the law business you want as easy as winking. He’s the best trotter on the island, and has won many a stake for me. When I took Johnny-come-lately to gaol in Melbourne for stealing him, he brought me back in less time than any horse ever did the distance before or since. And you can have him dirt cheap. I’ll take ten pounds for him, and he’s worth twenty pounds of any man’s money.”

Lovers’ vows and horsedealers’ oaths are never literally true; it is safer to receive them as lies. I thought it would be prudent to try this trotter before buying him, so Binns signed an order, in a very shaky hand, to the man in charge of his farm, to let me have the horse on trial. When I harnessed and put him in between the shafts he was very quiet indeed. I took a whip, not for the purpose of using it, but merely for show; a horse that had won so many races would, of course, go without the lash.

When I was seated and requested him to start, he began walking very slowly, as if he had a load of two tons weight behind him, and I never weighed so much as that. I had to use the whip, and at last after a good deal of reflection he began to trot, but not with any speed; he did not want to win anything that day. I remarked that his ears looked dead; no sound or sight of any kind disturbed the peace of his mind. He evidently knew this world well and despised it; nothing in it could excite his feelings any more.

Halfway up the Water Road I met Bill Mills, a carrier. He stopped his team and looked at mine.

“Have you bought that horse, Mister?” he said.

“Not yet; I am only trying him,” I replied. “Do you know him?”

“Know him? I should think I did. That’s old Punch. I broke him into harness when he was three off. He nearly killed me; ran away with me and my dog-cart among the scrub at the racecourse swamp, and smashed it against a honeysuckle.”

“Is that long ago?” I enquired.

“Long ago? Let me see. That horse is twenty year old if he’s a day. He’ll not run away with you now; no fear; he’s quite safe. Good-day, Mister. Come on, Star;” and Bill touched his leader with his whip.

When I arrived at the court-house, I made a search in the cause list book, and found that Johnny-come-lately had been sent to gaol just sixteen years before for stealing Old Punch, so I restored that venerable trotter to its owner.

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I had soon more horses offered to me for trial, every old screw within twenty miles being brought to me for inspection. The next animal I harnessed belonged to Andrew Jackson, and was brought by Andrew Jackson, junior, who said his father could let me have it for a month on trial. Jackson, junior, was anxious to go away without the horse, but I told him to wait a bit while I put on the harness. The animal was of a mouse colour, very tall, something like a giraffe; and by the time I got him between the shafts, I could see that he was possessed by a devil of some kind. It might be a winged one who would fly away with me; so, in order to have a clear course, I led him through the gateway into the middle of the road, and while Jackson, junior, held his head, I mounted carefully into the trap. I held the lines ready for a start, and after some hesitation the giraffe did start, but he went tail foremost. I tried to reverse the engine, but it would only work in one direction. He backed me into the ditch, and then across it on to the side path, then against the fence, bucking at it, and trying to go through and put me in the Tarra. I told Andrew, junior, to take the giraffe home to his parent, and relate what he had seen.

My next horse was a black one from Sale, and he also was possessed of a devil, but one of a different species. He was named Gilpin, and the very name ought to have been a warning to me if I had had sense enough to profit by it. Just as I sat down, and took the reins, and was going to observe what he would do, he suddenly went away at full gallop. I tried to pull him in, but he put his chin against his chest, and the harder I pulled the faster he flew. The road was full of ruts, and I was bumped up and down very badly. My hat went away, but, for the present, my head kept its place. I managed to steer safely as far as the bridge across the Tarra but, in going over it, the horse's hoofs and whirling wheels sounded like thunder, and brought out the whole population of Tarraville to look at me. It was on a Sunday afternoon; some good people were singing hymns in the local chapel, and as I passed the turn of the road, they left the anxious benches, came outside in a body, and gazed at me, a bare-headed and miserable Sabbath-breaker going swiftly to perdition. I also was on a very anxious bench. But now there was a long stretch of good road before me, and I made good use of it. Instead of pulling the horse in, I let him go, and encouraged him with the whip to go faster, being determined to let him gallop until either he or the sun went down. Then the despicable wretch slackened his pace, and wanted to come to terms. So I wheeled him round and whipped him without mercy, making him gallop all the way home again. I did not buy him.

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But the next horse I tried was comparatively blameless, so I bought him, and at the end of the first month sent in a claim to the Law Department for the usual allowance. I was curtly informed that the amount had been reduced from fifty pounds to ten pounds for my horse, although sixty pounds was still allowed to the other horse for travelling the same distance, the calculation evidently being based on the supposition that the police magistrate's horse would eat six times as much as mine. Remonstrance was vain, and I found I had burdened myself with an animal, possessing no social or political influence whatever. I knew already that the world was governed without wisdom, and I now felt that it was also ruled with extreme meanness.

And even after my horse was condemned to starve on ten pounds per annum, the cost of justice was still extravagant. Without reckoning the expense incurred in erecting and maintaining three court houses, and three police stations, and paying three policemen for doing next to nothing, I ascertained from the cause lists that it cost the Government fourteen pounds sterling every time we fined Terry, the cobbler, five shillings for being drunk; and Terry did not always pay the fines. What ails British law is dignity, and the insufferable expense attending it. The disease will never be cured until a strong-minded Chief Justice shall be found, who has sense enough to sit on the bench in his native hair, and to take off his coat when the thermometer rises to eighty degrees. It was in that manner Judge Winstanley kept court at Waterloo in Illinois, and we had there quicker justice, cheaper laws, and better manners than those which this southern hemisphere yet exhibits. As to the lawyers, if we did not like them, we could lynch them, so they were sociable and civil. Moreover, Prairie de Long was discovered and settled nearly twenty years before Australia Felix was heard of.

The three villages had a life-long feud with, and a consuming jealousy of, each other. Until my arrival I was not aware that there were three such places as Palmerston, Alberton, and Tarraville, claiming separate and rival existences. I had a notion that they were merely straggling suburbs of the great city and seaport, Port Albert. But it was a grievous mistake. I asked a tall young lady at the hotel, who brought in some very salt fish that took the skin off the roof of my mouth, if she could recommend the society of these villages, and if she would favour me with her opinion as to which would be the best place to select as a residence, and she said, "The people there are an 'orrid lot." This was very discouraging; but, on making further enquiries, I found she only expressed the opinion which the inhabitants of these centres of population held of each other; and it was evident that I should have to demean myself with prudence, and show no particular affection for one place more than for another, or trouble would ensue. Therefore,

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as soon as occasion offered, I took a house and paddock within easy distance of all the three corners, so that when the Government allowance had reduced my horse to a skeleton, I might give him a spell on grass, and travel to the courts on foot. The house was on a gentle rise, overlooking a rich river flat. It had been built by a retainer of Lord Glengarry, who had declined to follow any further the fortunes of his chief when he had closed his dairying operations at Greenmount. A tragedy had been enacted in it some years before, and a ghost had often since been seen flitting about the house and grounds on moonlight nights. This gave an aristocratic distinction to the property, which was very pleasing, as it is well known that ghosts never haunted any mansions or castles except such as have belonged to ancient families of noble race. I bought the estate on very reasonable terms, no special charge being made for the ghost.

The paddock had been without a tenant for some time, but I found it was not unoccupied. A friendly neighbour had introduced his flock of sheep into it, and he was fattening them cheaply. I said, “Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fayi, be good enough to round up your sheep and travel.” Tityrus said that would be all right; he would take them away as soon as they were ready for the butcher. It would be no inconvenience to me, as my horse would not be able to eat all the grass. The idea of paying anything did not occur to him; he was doing me a favour. He was one of the simple natives. As I did not like to take favours from an entire stranger, the sheep and the shepherd sought other pastures beyond the winding Tarra.

The dense tea-tree which bordered the banks of the river was the home of wild hogs, which spent the nights in rooting up the soil and destroying the grass. I therefore armed myself with a gun charged with buckshot, and went to meet the animals by moonlight. I lay in ambush among the tussocks. One shot was enough for each hog; after receiving it he retired hastily into the tea-tree and never came out again.

After I had cleared my land from sheep and pigs, the grass began to grow in abundance; and passing travellers, looking pensively over the fence, were full of pity for me because I had not stock enough to eat the grass. One man had a team of bullocks which he was willing to put in; another had six calves ready to be weaned; and a third friend had a horse which he could spare for a spell. All these were willing to put in their stock, and they would not charge me anything. They were three more of the simple natives.

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I would rather buy forty cows than one horse, because, even allowing for the cow's horns, the horse has so many more points. I wanted a good cow, a quiet milker, and a farmer named Ruffy offered to sell me one. He was very rough indeed, both in words and work. He showed me the cow, and put her in the bail with a big stick; said she was as quiet as a lamb, and would stand to be milked anywhere without a leg-rope. "Here Tom," he roared to his son, "bring a bucket, and come and milk Daisy without the rope, and show the gentleman what a quiet beast she is." Tom brought a bucket, placed the stool near the cow, sat down, and grasped one of the teats. Daisy did not give any milk, but she gave instead three rapid kicks, which scattered Tom, the bucket, and the stool all over the stockyard. I could not think of anything that it would be safe to say under the circumstances, so I went away while the farmer was picking up the fragments.

GOVERNMENT OFFICERS IN THE BUSH.

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

Although I had to attend at three courts on three days of each week, my duties were very light, and quite insufficient to keep me out of mischief; it was therefore a matter of very great importance for me to find something else to do. In bush townships the art of killing time was attained in various ways. Mr. A. went on the street with a handball, and coaxed some stray idler to join him in a game. He was a young man of exceptional innocence, and died early, beloved of the gods. Mr. B. kept a pair of sticks under his desk in the court house, and made a fencing school of the space allotted to the public. Some of the police had been soldiers, and were quite pleased to prove their skill in arms, and show how fields were won. As a result there were more breaches of the peace inside the court than outside. Mr. C. tried to while away his lonely hours by learning to play on a violin, which he kept concealed in a corner between a press and the wall of his office. He executed music, and doubled the terrors of the law. Intending litigants stood transfixed with horror when they approached the open door of his office, and listened to the wails and long-drawn screeches which filled the interior of the building; and every passing dog sat down on its tail, and howled in sympathetic agony with the maddening sounds.

But the majority of the officials condemned to live in the dreary townships tried to alleviate their misery by drinking and gambling. The Police Magistrate, the Surveyor, the Solicitor, the Receiver of Revenue, the Police Inspector, and the Clerk of Courts, together with one or two settlers, formed a little society for the promotion of poker, euchre, and other little games, interspersed with whiskies. It is sad to recall to mind the untimely end at which most of them arrived. Mr. D. was found dead on the main

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road; Mr. E. shot himself through the head; Mr. F. fell asleep in the bush and never woke; and Mr. G. was drowned in a waterhole. One officer was not quite so unfortunate as some of his friends. His score at the Crook and Plaid became so long that he began to pass that hotel without calling. Polly, the venerable landlady, took offence at such conduct, and was daily on the watch for him. When she saw him passing, which he always did at a rapid pace, she hobbled to the door, and called after him, “Hey, hey!” Then the gentleman twirled his cane, whistled a lively tune, looked up, first to the sky, and then to the right and left, but never stopped, or looked back to Polly behind him. At last his creditors became so troublesome, and his accounts so inexplicable, that he deserted the public service, and took refuge across the Murray.

Mr. H. fell into the habit of borrowing his collections to pay his gambling debts. He was allowed a certain number of days at the beginning of each month to complete his returns, and send in his cash. So he made use of the money collected during the days of grace to repay any sums he had borrowed from the public cash during the preceding month. But the cards were against him. One morning an Inspector of Accounts from Melbourne appeared unexpectedly in his office.

In those days there were no railways and no telegraphs. Their introduction was an offensive nuisance to us. The good old times will never come again, when we could regulate our own hours of attendance, take unlimited leave of absence, and relieve distress by having recourse to the Government cash. When Grimes was Auditor-General every officer was a gentleman and a man of honour. In the bush no bank account was kept, as there was no bank within fifty or a hundred miles; and it was an implied insult to expect a gentleman to produce his cash balance out of his pocket. As a matter of courtesy he expected to be informed by letter two or three weeks beforehand when it was intended to make an official inspection of his books, in order that he might not be absent, nor taken unawares.

When the Inspector appeared, Mr. H. did not lose his presence of mind, or show any signs of embarrassment. He said he was glad to see him (which was a lie), hoped he had had a pleasant journey through the bush; asked how things were going on in Melbourne, and made enquiries about old friends there. But all the while he was calculating chances. He had acquired the valuable habit of the gambler and speculator, of talking about one thing while he was thinking about another. His thoughts ran on in this style: “This fellow (he could not think of him as a gentleman) wants to see my cash; haven’t got any; must be near five hundred pounds short by this time; can’t borrow it’ no time to go round’ couldn’t get it if I did’ deuced awkward; shall be given in charge; charged with larceny or embezzlement or something; can’t help it’ better quit till I think about it.” So apologising for his absence for a few minutes on urgent business, he went out, mounted his horse, and rode away to the mountains.

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The inspector waited five minutes, ten minutes, twenty minutes. He made enquiries, and finding that Mr. H. had gone away, he examined the books and vouchers, and concluded that there should be a cash balance of more than four hundred pounds payable to revenue. He looked about the office for the cash, but did not find any. Then the police began to look for Mr. H., but week after week passed by, and Mr. H. was neither seen nor heard of.

There were only two ways of leaving South Gippsland that could be considered safe; one was by sea from Port Albert, the other by the road over the mountains. If anyone ventured to desert the beaten track, and tried to escape unseen through the forest, he was likely to be lost, and to be starved to death. The only man ever known to escape was an eccentric farmer, a “wandering outlaw of his own dark mind,” as Byron so darkly expressed it. He deserted his wife one morning in a most systematic manner, taking with him his horse and cart, a supply of provisions, and all the money he was worth. A warrant for his arrest was issued, and the police were on the look-out for him at all the stations from Port Albert to Melbourne, but they never found him. Many weeks passed by without any tidings of the man or his team, when one day he drove up to his own gate, unhitched his horse, and went to work as usual. On enquiry it was found that he had gone all the way to Sydney overland, on a visit to an old friend living not far from that city. It was supposed that he had some reason for his visit when he started, but if so, he lost it by the way, for when he arrived he had nothing particular to say. After a few days’ rest he commenced his return journey to South Gippsland, and travelled the whole distance without being observed by the watchful police. When asked about his travels, his only remark was, “Splendid horse; there he is between the shafts; walked twelve hundred miles; never turned a hair; splendid horse; there he is.”

But Mr. H. lacked the intellect or the courage to perform a similar fool’s errand successfully. He rode up to the police station at Alberton, and finding from the officer in charge that he was wanted on a warrant, he supplied that want. He stated that he had been on a visit, for the benefit of his health, to a friend in the mountains, a rail-splitter, who had given him accommodation in his hut on reasonable terms. He had lived in strict retirement. For a time he was in daily and nightly fear of the appearance of the police coming to arrest him; every sound disturbed him. In about ten days he began to feel lonely and disappointed because the police did not come; neither they or anybody else seemed to be looking for him, or to care anything about him. Heroic self-denial was not his virtue, and he felt no call to live the life of a hermit. He was treated with undeserved neglect, and at the end of four weeks he resolved that, as the police would not come to him, he would go to the police.

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He unburdened his mind, and made a confession to the officer who had him in charge. He explained how he had taken the money, how he had lost it, and who had won it. It relieved his mind, and the policeman kept the secret of confession until after the trial. Then he broke the seal, and related to me confidentially the story of his penitent, showing that he was quite as unfit for the sacerdotal office as myself.

Mr. H. on his trial was found not guilty, but the department did not feel inclined to entrust him with the collection or custody of any more cash. In succeeding years he again served the Government as State school teacher, having received his appointment from a minister of merciful principles. A reclaimed poacher makes an excellent gamekeeper, and a repentant thief may be a better teacher of youth than a sanctimonious hypocrite.

SEAL ISLANDS AND SEALERS.

“Am I my brother’s keeper?”

The islands in Bass’ Straits, Hogan’s Group, Kent’s Group, the Answers, the Judgment Rocks, and others, are visited at certain seasons of the year by seals of three different kinds—viz., the hair seals, which are not of much value except for their oil; the grey seals, whose skins are valuable; and the black seals, whose furs always command the highest price. When these animals have not been disturbed in their resorts for some years they are comparatively tame, and it is not difficult to approach them. Great numbers of the young ones are sometimes found on the rocks, and if pushed into the water they will presently come out again, scramble back on to the rocks, and begin crying for their dams. But the old seals, when frequently disturbed, become shy, and, on the first alarm, take to the water. The flesh of the young seals is good to eat, and seamen who have been cast away on the islands have been sometimes saved from starvation by eating it.

I once made the acquaintance of an old sealer. He had formerly been very sensitive on the point of honour; would resent an insult as promptly as any knight-errant; but by making an idol of his honour his life had been a grievous burden to him. And he was not even a gentleman, and never had been one. He was known only as “Jack.”

It was in the year 1854, when I had been cast ashore in Corio Bay by a gale of hostile fortune, and had taken refuge for a while at the Buck’s Head Hotel, then kept by a man named McKenzie. One evening after tea I was talking to a carpenter at the back door, who was lamenting his want of timber. He had not brought a sufficient supply from Geelong to complete his contract, which was to construct some benches for a Presbyterian Church. Jack was standing near listening to the conversation.

“What kind of timber do you want?” he said. “There is a lot of planks down there in the yard, and if you’ll be outside about eleven o’clock, I’ll chuck over as many as you want.”

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The contractor hesitated. “Whose planks are they?” he asked.

“I don’t know whose they are, and I don’t care,” replied Jack. “Say the word, and you can have them, if you like.”

The contractor made no reply, at least in words, to this generous offer. It is not every man that has a friend like Jack; many men will steal from you, but very few will steal for you, and when such a one is found he deserves his reward.

We adjourned to the bar parlour, and Jack had a glass of brandy, for which he did not pay. There was among the company a man from Adelaide, a learned mineralogist, who commenced a dissertation on the origin of gold. He was most insufferable; would talk about nothing but science. Darwin wrote a book about “The Origin of Species,” and it has been observed that the origin of species is precisely what is not in the book. So we argued about the origin of gold, but we could get nowhere near it.

When the rest of the company had retired, Jack observed to me: “You put down that Adelaide chap gradely; he had not a leg to stand on.”

I was pleased to find that Jack knew a good argument when he heard it, so I rewarded his intelligence with another glass of brandy, and asked him if he had been long in the colonies. He said:

“My name’s not Jack; that’s what they call me, but it doesn’t matter what my name is. I was brought up in Liverpool, but I wasn’t born there; that doesn’t matter either. I used to work at the docks, was living quite respectable, was married and had a little son about five years old. One night after I had had supper and washed myself, I said to th’ missus, ‘There’s a peep-show i’ Tithebarn Street, and if you’ll wash Bobby’s face I’ll tek him there; its nobbut a penny.’ You know it was one o’ them shows where they hev pictures behind a piece o’ calico, Paul Pry with his umbrella, Daniel i’ th’ lions’ den, ducks swimming across a river, a giantess who was a man shaved and dressed in women’s clothes, a dog wi’ five legs, and a stuffed mermaid—just what little lads would like. There was a man, besides, who played on a flute, and another singing funny songs. When I went outside into the street there was little Billy Yates, as used to play with Bobby, so I says, ’Come along, Billy, and I’ll tek thee to the show.’ When we got there we set down on a bench, and, just as they began to show th’ pictures, three black-fellows came in and set down on th’ bench before us. They thowt they were big swells, and had on black coats, white shirts, stiff collars up to their ears, red and green neck-handkerchers, and bell-topper hats; so I just touched one of em on th’ showder and said: ’Would you please tek your hats off to let th’ lads see th’ pictures?’ Well, the nigger just turned his head half-round, and looked at me impudent like, but he kept his hat on. So I asked him again quite civil, and he called me a low fellow, towld me to mind my own business, and

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the other two niggers grinned. Well, you know, I could not stand that. I knew well enough what they were. They were stewards on the liners running between New York and Liverpool, and they were going round trying to pass for swells in a penny peep-show. I didn't want to make a row just then and spoil the show, so I said to th' lads, we mun go hooum, and I took 'em hooum, and then come back to th' show and waited at th' door. When the niggers come out I pitched into th' one as had given me cheek; but we couldn't have it out for th' crowd, and we were all shoved into th' street. I went away a bit, thinking no more about it, and met a man I knew and we went into a public house and had a quart o' fourpenny. We were in a room by ourselves, when the varra same three niggers come in and stood a bit inside the door. So I took my tumbler and threw it at th' head of th' man I wanted, and then went at him. But I couldn't lick him gradely because th' landlord come in and stopped us; so after a while I went hooum. Next morning I was going along Dale Street towards the docks to work, when who should I see but that varra same blackfellow: it looked as if th' devil was in it. He was by hisself this time, coming along at th' other side of th' street. So I crossed over and met him, and went close up to him and said, 'Well, what have you to say for yoursel' now?' and I gav him a lick under th' ear. He fell down on th' kerbstone and wouldn't get up— turned sulky like. There was soon a crowd about, and they tried to wakken him up; but he wouldn't help hisself a bit—just sulked and wouldn't stir. I don't believe he'd ha' died but for that, because I nobbut give him but one hit. I thowt I'd better make mysel' scarce for a while, so I left Liverpool and went to Preston. Were you ever in Preston?" I said I was. "Well then, you'll remember Melling, the fish-monger, a varra big, fat man. I worked for him for about six months, and then come back to Liverpool, thinking there'd be no more bother about the blackfellow. But they took me up, and gev me fourteen year for it; and if it had been a white man I wouldn't ha' got more than twelve months, and I was sent out to Van Diemen's Land and ruined for ever, just for nowt else but giving a chance lick to a blackfellow. And now I hear they're going to war wi' Russia, and— England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales—I hope they'll all get blooming well licked. It don't mend a man much to transport him, nor a woman either for that matter: they all grow worse than ever. When I got my ticket I sometimes went working in th' bush, sometimes whaling and sealing, and sometimes stripping bark at Western Port and Portland Bay, before there was such a place as Melbourne. I was in a whaler for two years about Wilson's Promontory, until the whales were all killed or driven away. I never saved any money until nine years back; we always went on th' spree and spent every penny directly we were paid off. At that time I went

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with a man from Port Albert to the Seal Islands in a boat. I knew of a place where there was a cave, a big hollow under the rocks, where th' seals used to go to sleep, and a blow hole coming out of it to th' top of the island. We hired a boat and went there, and made a kind of a door which we could drop down with a rope to shut up the mouth of th' cave and catch the seals inside. We killed so many that we couldn't take th' skins away all at once in the boat to Port Albert; we had to come back again. I thowt to myself I'd be richer than ever I was in my life; th' skins were worth hundreds of pounds. I had agreed to go halves with th' Port Albert man, but, you see, he'd ha' never gotten a penny but for me, because he knew nothing whatever about sealing. It didn't look quite fair to give him half; and then I thowt what a lucky thing it would be for me if he were drowned; and he was drowned, but mind you, I didn't do it. It was this way. When we got back to th' blow-hole th' weather was bad. One o' them sou'east gales set in, and th' big waves dashed agen the rocks, roaring and sending spray right across th' island. We had packed away all th' seal-skins snug in th' boat and pulled th' door up from th' bottom of th' chimney before th' gale started. When we were taking down the rope and tackle and th' shears, th' water began to come boiling up th' blow hole and sinking down again. There was a big rush of wind, first up and then down sucking you in like. It was a ticklish time, and just as we were going to lower th' shears, th' Port Albert man made a kind of slip, and was sucked in with the wind, and went head first into the boiling water and out of sight. I took hold of the slack of a rope, thinking I'd throw it to him; he might get hold of it, and then I could pull him out. In about half a minute he was thrown up again by th' next wave right to the top of th' chimney. I could see his face within four feet of me. He threw up his hands for something to catch at and looked at me, and then gave a fearful scream. I didn't throw him the rope; something stopped me. He might not have got hold of it, you know, anyhow. He went down again among th' white water, and I never saw him no more—only when I am dreaming. I always dream about him. I can see his face come up above the boiling water, and when he screams I wake up. I can never get clear of him out of my head; and yet, mind you, I didn't drown him; he fell in of his self, and I just missed throwing him th' rope, that's all; and I wasn't bound to do it, was I?

"As for the money I got for the seal skins, I could have lived comfortably on it all my life, but it never did me no good. I started drinking, trying to forget that Port Albert man, but it was no use. Every shilling was soon gone, and eversince I've been doing odd jobs and loafing about the publics. I've never done no good and never shall. Let's have just another nobbler afore we turn in."

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A HAPPY CONVICT.

“Thrice did I receive forty stripes, save one.”

It was court day at Palmerston, and there was an unusual amount of business that morning. A constable brought in a prisoner, and charged him with being a vagrant—having no lawful visible means of support. I entered the charge in the cause list, “Police v. John Smithers, vagrancy,” and then looked at the vagrant. He was growing aged, was dressed in old clothes, faded, dirty, and ill-fitting; he had not been measured for them. His face was very dark, and his hair and beard were long and rough, showing that he had not been in gaol lately. His eyes wandered about the court in a helpless and vacant manner. Two boys about eight or nine years old entered the court, and, with colonial presumption, sat in the jury box. There were no other spectators, so I left them there to represent the public. They stared at the prisoner, whispered to each other, and smiled. The prisoner could not see anything to laugh at, and frowned at them. Then the magistrate came in, rubbing one of his hands over the other, glanced at the prisoner as he passed, and withered him with a look of virtuous severity. He was our Black Wednesday magistrate, and was death on criminals. When he had taken his seat on the bench, I opened the court, and called the first and only case. It was not often we had a man to sit on, and we sat heavily on this one. I put on my sternest look, and said “John Smithers”—here the prisoner instantly put one hand to his forehead and stood at “attention”— “you are charged by the police with vagrancy, having no lawful visible means of support. What have you to say to that charge?”

“I am a blacksmith looking for work,” said the prisoner; “I ain’t done nothing, your worship, and I don’t want nothing.”

“But you should do something,” replied the magistrate; “we don’t want idle vagabonds like you wandering about the country. You will be sent to gaol for three months.”

I stood up and reminded the justice respectfully that there was as yet no evidence against the prisoner, so, as a matter of form, he condescended to hear the constable, who went into the witness-box and proved his case to the hilt. He had found the man at nightfall sitting under the shelter of some tea-tree sticks before a fire; asked him what he was doing there; said he was camping out; had come from Melbourne looking for work; was a blacksmith; took him in charge as a vagrant, and locked him up; all his property was the clothes he wore, an old blanket, a tin billy, a clasp knife, a few crusts of bread, and old pipe, and half a fig of tobacco; could find no money about him.

That last fact settled the matter. A man travelling about the bush without money is a deep-dyed criminal. I had done it myself, and so was able to measure the extent of such wickedness. I never felt really virtuous unless I had some money in my pocket.

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“You are sentenced to imprisonment for three months in Melbourne gaol,” said the magistrate; “and mind you don’t come here again.”

“I ain’t done nothing, your worship,” replied the prisoner; “and I don’t want nothing.”

“Take him away, constable.”

Seven years afterwards, as I was riding home about sundown through Tarraville, I observed a solitary swagman sitting before a fire, among the ruins of an old public house, like Marius meditating among the ruins of Carthage. There was a crumbling chimney built of bricks not worth carting away—the early bricks in South Gippsland were very bad, and the mortar had no visible lime in it—the ground was strewn with brick-bats, bottles, sardine tins, hoop iron, and other articles, the usual refuse of a bush shanty. It had been, in the early times, a place reeking with crime and debauchery. Men had gone out of it mad with drinking the poisonous liquor, had stumbled down the steep bank, and had ended their lives and crimes in the black Tarra river below. Here the rising generation had taken their first lessons in vice from the old hands who made the house their favourite resort. Here was planned the murder of Jimmy the Snob by Prettyboy and his mates, whose hut was near the end of the bridge across the river, and for which murder Prettyboy was hanged in Melbourne.

In the dusk I mistook the swagman for a stray aboriginal who had survived the destruction of his tribe, but on approaching nearer, I found that he was, or at least once had been, a white man. He had gathered a few sticks, which he was breaking and putting on the fire. I did not recognise him, did not think I had ever seen him before, and I rode away.

During the next twenty-four hours he had advanced about half-a-mile on his journey, and in the evening was making his fire in the Church paddock, near a small water-hole opposite my house. I could see him from the verandah, and I sent Jim to offer him shelter in an outbuilding. Jim was one of the two boys who had represented the public in the jury box at the Palmerston court seven years before. He came back, and said the man declined the offer of shelter; never slept under a roof winter or summer, if he could help it; had lived in the open air for twelve years, and never stayed a night in any building, except for three months, when he was in Melbourne gaol. He had been arrested by a constable near Palmerston seven years before, although he had done nothing, and a fool of a beak, with a long grey beard, had given him three months, while two puppies of boys were sitting in the jury box laughing at him.

He also gave some paternal advice to the youth, which, like a great deal of other paternal advice, was rejected as of no value.

“Never you go to Melbourne, young man,” he said, “and if you do, never stop in any boarding-house, or public. They are full of vermin, brought in by bad characters, mostly

Government officers and bank clerks, who have been in Pentridge. Don’t you never go near ’em.”

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This advice did not sound very respectful; however, I overlooked it for the present, as it was not unlikely I might have the advantage of seeing him again in custody, and I sent to him across the road some hot tea, bread, butter, and beef. This softened the heart and loosed the tongue of the old swagman. It appeared from his account of himself that he was not much of a blacksmith. He was ostensibly going about the colony looking for work, but as long as he could get food for nothing he did not want any work, and he always avoided a blacksmith's shop; as soon as he found himself near one he ceased to be a blacksmith.

When asked about his former life, he said a gentleman had once advised him to write the particulars of it, and had promised him half-a-crown if he would do so. He had written some of them, but had never seen the gentleman again, so he did not get the half-crown; and now he would take sixpence for the copyright of his work. I gave him sixpence, and he drew out a manuscript from an inside pocket of his coat, and handed it to me. It was composed of small sheets of whitey-brown wrapping paper sewn together. He had ruled lines on it, and had written his biography with lead pencil. On looking over it I observed that, although he was deficient in some of the inferior qualifications of a great historian, such as spelling, grammar, and a command of words of seven syllables, yet he had the true instincts of a faithful chronicler. He had carefully recorded the names of all the eminent bad men he had met, of the constable who had first arrested him, of the magistrate who had committed him for trial, of the judge who had sentenced him, of the gaolers and warders who had kept him in prison, of the captain, doctor, and officers of the ship which conveyed him to Sydney, of the squatters who had forced him to work for them, and of the scourgers who had scourged him for not working enough. The names of all these celebrated men, together with the wicked deeds for which they were admired, were given in detail, after the true historic method. We all take a great interestin reading every particular relating to the lives of notorious tyrants and great sinners; we like to know what clothes they wore, and how they swore. But the lives of great and good men and women are very uninteresting; some young ladies even, when travelling by train, prefer, as I observe, French novels inspired by Cloacina to the "Lives of the Saints."

Some people in the colonies are said to have had no grandfathers; but John Smithers was even more deficient in pedigree, for he had neither father nor mother, as far as he could recollect. He commenced life as a stable boy and general drudge in England, at a village inn owned and conducted by a widow named Cobbledick. This widow had a daughter named Jemima. The mischief wrought in this world by women, from Eve to Jemima downwards, is incalculable, and Smithers averred that it was this female, Jemima, who brought

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on his sorrow, grief, and woe. She was very advanced in wordly science, as young ladies are apt to be when they are educated in the retail liquor trade. When Smithers had been several years at the inn, and Jemima was already in her teens, she thought the world went slowly; she had no lover, there was nobody coming to marry her, nobody coming to woo. But at length she was determined to find a remedy for this state of things. She had never read the history of the loves of the great Catherine of Russia, nor of those of our own virgin Queen Elizabeth, but by an inborn royal instinct she was impelled to follow their high example. If lovers did not offer their adoration to her charms spontaneously, there was at any rate one whose homage she could command. One Sunday afternoon, while her mother was absent, she went to the stable and ordered Smithers to come and take a walk with her, directing him first to polish his shoes and put on his best clothes. She brought out a bottle of scented oil to sweeten him, and told him to rub it well into his hair, and stroke his head with his hands until it was sleek and shiny. She had put on her Sunday dress and best bonnet; she had four ringlets at each side of her face; and to crown her charms, had ventured to borrow her mother's gold watch and chain. Being now a perfect princess in stateliness and beauty, she took Jack by the arm—she called him Jack—and made him march away with her. He was rather abashed at the new duty imposed upon him, but he had been so well kicked and cuffed all his life that he never thought of disobeying orders. Love fooled the gods, and it gave him little trouble to fool so sorry a pair as Jack and his Jemima. They walked along Perkins' Lane where many of the neighbours were likely to see them, for Jemima was anxious that all the other girls, her dearest friends, should be filled with spite and envy at her good fortune in having secured a lover.

When the happy youth and maid were returning with wandering steps and slow, Jemima saw her mother pass the end of the lane on her way homewards, much sooner than she had expected. The golden hours on angel wings had flown away too quickly for the lovers. Miss Cobbledick was filled with sudden alarm, and her brief day of glory was clouded. It was now impossible to reach home in time to avoid trouble. Her mother would be certain to miss the watch, and what was she to do with it? What with Jack, and what with herself? Self-preservation being the first law of nature, Jemima resolved to sacrifice Jack in order to shield herself from her mother's rage. He was not of much account in any respect; so she gave him the watch and chain, telling him to keep them safely till she asked for them, and to hurry round by the yard gate into the stable. This gave great relief to her conscience, and enabled her to meet her mother with a face of untroubled innocence.

Jack had not a lively imagination; but during the night he had a clear and blissful vision of his future destiny, the only dream of fortune his life was ever blessed with. He was to be the landlord of the hotel, when Mrs. Cobbledick had gone to bliss, and Jemima was to be his bride, and the landlady.

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But early next morning there was trouble in the house. The watch was missing, and nobody knew anything about it. Jemima helped her mother to look for it, and could not find it. A constable was sent for, and he questioned everyone in and about the house, and searched everywhere without result. Last of all Jack was asked if he knew anything of the missing watch. He was faithful and true. How could he betray Jemima, his future partner in life? He said he "had never seen no watch, and didn't know nothing whatsomever about no watch," and the next instant the constable pulled the watch out of Jack's pocket.

At his trial he was asked what he had to say in his defence, and then he told the truth, and said Jemima gave him the watch to keep until she should ask for it. But there is a time for all things; and Jack could never learn the proper time for telling the truth, or for telling a lie; he was always in the wrong. The judge, in passing sentence, said he had aggravated his crime by endeavouring to implicate an innocent young lady in his villany, and gave him seven years.

He was taken on board a hulk, where he found two or three hundred other boys imprisoned. On the evening of his arrival a report was circulated among them that they were all to be sent to another ship, which was bound for Botany Bay, and that they would never see England again. They would have to work and sleep in chains; they would be yoked together, and whipped like bullocks; and if they escaped into the bush the blacks would kill and eat them. As this dismal tale went round, some of the boys, who were quite young and small, began to cry, and to call for their mothers to come and help them; and then the others began to scream and should and yell. The warders came below and tried to silence them, but the more they tried the louder grew the uproar, and it continued for many hours during the night.

"Britons rarely swerve
From law, however stern, which tends their strength to serve."

Discipline must be maintained; so next morning the poor little beggars were brought up on deck in batches, stripped, triced up, and severely flogged. Jack, and a number of other boys, said they had not cried at all, but the officer in charge thought it was better that a few of the innocent should suffer rather than that one of the guilty should escape, so they were all flogged alike, and soon after they were shipped for New South Wales.

On his arrival n Sydney, Jack was assigned as a servant to a squatter, and taken into the bush a long way to the west. The weather had been very hot for a long time, all the grass had withered to dust, and the cattle were starving. The first work which he was ordered to do was to climb trees and cut off the branches, in order that the cattle might keep themselves alive by eating the leaves and twigs. Jack had never been used to handle an axe or tomahawk, so he found the labour of chopping very hard. He did his best, but that was not good enough for the squatter, who took him to a magistrate, and had him flogged by the official scourger.

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While serving his sentence of seven years he was flogged four times; three of the times he said he had “done nothing,” and for the fourth flogging he confessed to me that he had “done something,” but he did not say what the “something” was. In those days it seems that “doing nothing” and “doing something” were crimes equally meriting the lash.

And now after a long life of labour the old convict had achieved independence at last. I don’t think I ever met a richer man; he was richer than the whole family of the Rothschilds; he wanted scarcely anything. Food and clothing he obtained for the asking for them, and he was not particular as to their quality of the quantity was sufficient. Property to him was something despicable; he did not want any, and would not live inside of a house if he had one; he preferred the outside. He was free from family cares —never had father or mother, sister or brother, wife or children. No poor relatives ever claimed his hospitality; no intimate friends wanted to borrow half-a-crown; no one ever asked him to buy suburban lots, or to take shares in a limited liability company. He was perfectly indifferent to all danger from bush-rangers, burglars, pickpockets, or cattle stealers; he did not even own a dog, so the dogman never asked him for the dog tax. He never enquired about the state of the money market, nor bothered himself about the prices of land or cattle, wood, wine, or wheat. Every bank, and brewery, and building society in the world might go into liquidation at once for aught he cared. He had retired from the Government service, had superannuated himself on a pension of nothing per annum, and to draw it he required no voucher.

And yet, notwithstanding all these advantages, I don’t think there are many men who would voluntarily choose his lot. I watched him from the end of the verandah, and began speculating about him. What was he thinking about during his solitary watches in the night or while he tramped alone through the bush year after year in heat and cold, wind and rain? Did he ever think of anything—of his past life, or of his future lot? Did he believe in or hope for a heaven? or had he any fear of hell and eternal punishment? Surely he had been punished enough; in this life he had endured evil things in plenty, and might at least hope for eternal rest in the next.

He was sitting with his back against a gum tree, and his feet towards the fire. From time to time he threw a few more sticks on the embers, and a fitful blaze lit up his dark weatherbeaten face.

Then to my surprise he began to sing, and to sing well. His voice was strong, clear, and mellow, and its tones rose and fell in the silent night air with a pathetic and wonderful sweetness. The burden of his song was “We may be happy yet.”

“Oh, smile as thou wert wont to smile,
Before a weight of care
Had crushed thine heart, and yet awhile

Left only sorrow there;
We may be happy yet.”

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He sang three stanzas, and was silent. Then someone said: “Poor old fellow; I hope he may be happy yet.”

Next morning he was sitting with his back against the gum tree. His fire had gone out, and he seemed to be late in awaking, and in no hurry to resume his journey. But his travels were finished; he never awoke. His body was quite cold, and he must have died soon after he had sung the last note of his song. He had only sixpence in his pocket—-the sixpence I had given him for his biography. The police took him in charge once more and put him in his last prison, where he will remain until we shall all be called together by the dread blast of the Archangel’s trumpet on the Judgment Day.