



Life in the bush

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BUSH LIFE IN 1839.

In the late eighteen-forties, before leaving England to come to Australia, the late J. W. Banfield, of Ararat, bought a copy of "Chambers's Miscellany" containing a descriptive article on Life in the Bush, written "by a lady" who spent four years on one of the earliest sheep runs established west of the site of Ballarat. The lady, with her husband and infant daughter and her two brothers, Robert and James, left the old country to emigrate to Port Phillip in 1838. They were accompanied by a shepherd and his wife, and reached Hobart Town in October, 1838. In January, 1839, they landed at Point Henry, about eight miles from Corio, bringing a dray and bullocks, horses, sheep, goats, flour, &c., from Launceston. Mr. Yuille, who had left home only a few months previously, came to the vessel, but "Indeed," she writes, "I scarcely recognised him; he was such a strange figure. He had allowed his beard to grow a great length; he wore very rough-looking clothes, and a broad black leather belt around his waist, with a brace of pistols stuck in it." The vessel could not get nearer the land than a quarter of a mile, and she watched the work of swimming the sheep and bullocks to the shore with evident interest. "I was carried out by my husband, and all our goods had to be brought ashore in the same way," she says. "We looked like a party thrown on a desert island; the shore was so barren, and not a trace of human habitation to be seen, or any of the works of man."

The run was in the "inland parts of Port Phillip," 120 miles from the settlement. The fair writer confesses to feeling uncomfortable on account of the natives, but notes with satisfaction—"Messrs. Donald and Hamilton and the Messrs. Baillie and their drays were with us, so we made up a strong party. I got into a spring cart borrowed for me from Mr. Fisher. At my feet were four little dogs of Mr. Baillie's, also three cats, some cocks and hens and a pair of rabbits; and at our backs were three pigs and some geese and ducks. We were a noisy party. The spring cart went first, then came the five drays and all the gentlemen, with either pistols at their sides or guns in their hands, walking along with the dogs running beside them. Nanny followed behind accompanied by Billy."

The first night they stayed at Mr. Fisher's station, near Geelong, which "consisted of three buildings, all of them stores, where everything was sold at most extravagant prices." Travelling another 30 miles, they quartered for the night at Mr. Sutherland's station. The bullocks had to be rested, so next day they walked over to Mr. Russell's station, about three miles distant, where about 100 natives were assembled, and gave a "corrobory." Camping at night in the bush, travelling for 40 miles through a forest on fire, meeting the Scotch clergyman from Melbourne on the road, and staying a night at Mr. Anderson's hut, are further incidents recorded of the journey inland.

For six weeks the wife remained at Mr. Yuille's station. "I was glad," she says, "when my husband came to take us to our own country, which was about 30 miles farther up country. Part of the country I passed through was the most beautiful I ever saw, while other portions were very cold and bleak. We passed an immense salt lake, which is gradually drying up; its circumference is forty miles. We were now at the end of a large plain or marsh; I looked up and saw our pretty little hut peeping through a cluster of trees. My brother Robert came running to meet me, to my great joy; we found my brother James busy making a bed." The hut had three rooms, and a short way behind it was a little turf hut for Mary and her husband, the shepherd, and it was also used as a kitchen. A little garden was enclosed and planted with seeds brought from England and from Van Dieman's Land. The nearest neighbors were Messrs. Donald and Hamilton, four miles off, and the Messrs. Baillie were eight miles on the other side. The new settlers had plenty to keep them employed, but they all enjoyed good health and were happy and contented. The present of a quart pot full of butter from another settler, Mr. Neven, is recorded as a great treat. Luxuries were few, but wild duck, wild geese, turkeys and swans were a change from the "everlasting mutton." "Buying and selling," the journal goes on, "are favorite amusements in the bush, more particularly if a new settler arrives. Everyone wants to buy something off him. No one keeps any money in the bush; so a bill is generally given on some store in town for whatever is bought."

Eight months later the lady made her first journey to Melbourne in a dray covered with a tarpaulin. "We received much kindness," she says "at every station we were at. We remained two days at Mr. Wright's hut, as both I and the bullocks needed rest. At this time his hut was full of company. One room was prepared for us, and about twelve gentlemen slept in the other. Here they learned that the rivers were flooded, and some of the gentlemen went with them to help them across. "We crossed one river," the lady writes, "without much difficulty, though the water was so deep that both the horses and the bullocks had to swim; but when we came to the next river, the Marable, it was so deep that we were at a loss how to get over. It was thought dangerous for me to remain in the dray while it was crossing. At last a tree was found lying across the river covered with moss, and set about 20 feet above water; notches were cut in it for me to walk over. I walked over holding Mr. Wright's hand; my husband was too nervous to lead me across."

Adventures were taken lightly in those days, and the writer calmly continues, "In Melbourne I stayed with Mrs. Scott, who was a particular friend of my husband's at home. I was really delighted to see her; I had not seen a lady for eight months. The next day being Sunday I went to church—at least to the room where the congregation met, as no church was yet built in Melbourne. The ladies of Melbourne seemed to consider me a kind of curiosity for living so far up the country. I spent Monday evening at Mrs. Denny's, a Glasgow lady. My little boy was born four days after I came to Melbourne." Mr. Clow christened the baby out of a basin which at one time belonged to the Barony church in Glasgow.

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The author of "Life in the Bush"

SPWV

Mrs Kirkland nee Mary Hamilton

Pseudonym Mrs Thompson.

Kenneth W. Kirkland, James M^{rs} Greer Hamilton and
Robert Hamilton Partners in Squatting lease N^o: 115 P.B.
Known as "Trawalla" and lease N^o: 273 P.B called M.T. Erna.

Robert Hamilton on behalf of partnership took out the
leases in October 1838.

"Our friend William Hamilton" is W. Bogel Hamilton
of Donalds & Hamilton "Lungi Kal Kal."

Robert Hamilton in April 1846 in partnership with
Lady Mary Baillie & Thomas Baillie 4th son of Sir William Baillie Brit.
of Polkemmet had lease N^o: 11. W. called Polkemmet, up till
1848.

Hector Orams
Melbourne 1938.

1st Store built in Geelong.

M^r Strachan 1858

2nd M^r Rucker "

3rd M^r Champion "



LIFE IN THE BUSH.

BY A LADY.

INTRODUCTION—GOING TO SETTLEMENT.

THE wilds of Australia present at this time some strange scenes. Persons of all characters, and every variety of previous habits, are there planting themselves as sheep-farmers, each family being generally placed in some rude hut in the centre of its "run," or sheep-walk, rarely at less than five miles' distance from another. Thus transferred all at once from parlour life in this country, perhaps from some learned or elegant profession, into a primeval solitude, and left to their own resources, a change of life and occupation is induced such as we have no experience of in civilised climes. Young men who once figured here in quadrille parties, are there seen driving cars and drays, or milking cows; while ladies, who once presided over a refined hospitality in some better part of a British city, are, in "the bush," fain to cook victuals for their husband and his shepherds. Occasional adventures with the savage aborigines streak the homeliness of the picture with something like the hues of romance. But all is not hardship and vexation. Labour and exposure in that country are attended with an excitement which prevents anything like low spirits, and, joined to the fine climate, tend to keep up a tone of health which few in civilised life ever enjoy. Then there is no eye of fashionable neighbour to look pityingly or quizzingly on the mean details of the mud-house and the life which passes within it. Above all, the star of hope is present, instructing how to bear with the present for the sake of the future. It is readily to be supposed that a picture of this strange

kind of life, drawn on the spot, must possess some interest, and such we have now to introduce to the notice of our readers. A married pair of our acquaintance, in the bloom of life, emigrated a few years ago to Australia, taking with them their infant daughter, a shepherd, his wife, and a female servant. They were accompanied by two brothers of the lady, who were associated with the husband in his proposed new course of life. They were upwards of two years upon a "run" in the inland parts of the Port Philip settlement, where they realised, without mitigation of any kind, the whole hardships, difficulties, and troubles, and also the whole of the pleasures, of bush life. The lady lately returned to her native country, and has communicated to us a journal, in which we find a remarkably interesting account of this wild kind of existence. In presenting some portions of it to our readers, we only deem it necessary to remark, that the name is, for obvious reasons, fictitious; and that, from our recollections of the amiable writer, we could scarcely suppose any one of her sex less prepared by education and habits for bush life than she must have been at the time when her husband emigrated.

The family arrived at Hobart Town in October 1838, and her husband and brother soon after proceeded to Port Philip, in order to secure a sheep-farm. They obtained one which was considered of a highly advantageous nature, except that it was a hundred and twenty miles back from the settlement. Meanwhile, at a farm near Launceston, Mrs Thomson gained some insight into dairy management and other branches of rural economy. Having purchased at Launceston a dray and bullocks, also some horses, goats, pigs, geese, ducks, hens, rabbits, tubs, buckets, and a number of small tin utensils of various kinds, together with some flour and other provisions, they sailed for Port Philip, which they were eleven days in reaching. It is pleasant to hear of neighbourly kindnesses exercised in that remote part of the world. Mrs Thomson mentions that, at her departure from Launceston, she had presents of poultry from various persons; and one lady, whom she had only seen once, made her several large jars of preserves. While lying off George Town, a lady, hearing that one of her own sex with a young child was on board, sent her a box of eggs for the child—a very useful present. "I was fortunate," says Mrs T., "in meeting with kind friends wherever I went." It may here be mentioned, that Mrs T. left her female servant at Hobart Town, so that the only female now with her was the shepherd's wife.

We landed [January 1839] at Point Henry, about eight miles from Corio, which is intended to be a town some future day. I did not go on shore the first day, as my husband, as soon as possible, got the mare and bullocks landed, which he took to Mr Fisher's station, near Geelong. The poor bullocks looked miserably thin, but the mare looked very well, and we were glad they were alive. It took a long time to land all the stock in the

vessel. Some of the bullocks made a great noise; but no wonder; they were all down in the hold during the voyage, and when about to be landed, a broad belt was passed round their body, and they were hoisted up high in the air by a pulley, so as to clear the vessel. They were then lowered into the water near a small boat, in which some men were waiting to catch the animal by the horns, and the others rowed quickly to shore, singing as they went. The poor sheep were not so troublesome; they were just thrown overboard, and allowed to make the best of their way to shore. While my husband was away with the large animals, I remained to look after the small stock. Next morning he came back to the vessel, and my brother James with him, also Mr Yuille, who had left home only a few months before us; but, indeed, I scarcely recognised him, he was such a strange figure. He had allowed his beard to grow to a great length; he wore very rough-looking clothes, and a broad black leather belt round his waist, with a brace of pistols stuck in it. I afterwards found out that the settlers pride themselves in dressing and looking as rough as possible. Our vessel could not get nearer the land than a quarter of a mile, consequently we went out in a small boat; but even in that we could not get near the shore, on account of the water being so shallow. I was carried out by my husband, and all our goods had to be brought ashore in the same way; but every one helped, and we seemed rather to like the *ploy*.

When landed, we looked like a party thrown on a desert island, the shore was so barren, and not a trace of human habitation to be seen, or any of the works of man. All was in a state of nature; and I kept looking round, expecting every moment to see some of the dreaded savages rushing upon us. I did not feel comfortable on account of the natives, I had heard such accounts of them in Van Diemen's Land.

When all our luggage and animals were landed, we began to pack our own and Messrs Donald and Hamilton's dray. This took us a long time. The Messrs Baillie were also with us with their drays, so we made up a strong party. When all were ready to start, I got into a spring-cart which Mr Thomson had borrowed from Mr Fisher for me; but indeed my share of it was very small. It was already so well filled that I could scarcely find a seat. Our shepherd's wife, who was no light weight, took up more than her share of the seat; she carried Agnes [the infant] on her knee. I took possession of the other seat. At my feet were four little dogs of Mr Baillie's, also three cats, some cocks and hens, and a pair of rabbits; at our back were three pigs, and some geese and ducks. We were a noisy party; for at times our road was very rough, and some of our animals were rather inclined to be quarrelsome. The spring-cart went first, then came the five drays, and all the gentlemen walking alongside, with the dogs running beside them. Most of the gentlemen had either pistols at their sides or a gun in their hands. Little

Nanny followed behind, accompanied by old Billy, who had a wonderfully long beard. The country seemed very scrubby and barren, and the trees so dark and ugly, that I was disappointed in the appearance of them. I expected to see beautiful large trees, but I saw none to compare with the trees of my own country. My husband told me to have patience till I went farther up the country; but, after being three years in it, I am still of the same opinion.

We got to Mrs Fisher's about seven o'clock; she received us very cordially. We found tea awaiting us, and I there tasted *dumper* for the first time. I liked it very much: it is like bread, but closer and heavier. I said to Mrs Fisher that she must think we had taken a great liberty in coming in such force upon her; but she did not at all seem to think so. She said she was quite accustomed to have many gentlemen visitors, but she never had had a lady before. I could not at all fancy how she would manage in regard to giving us beds; however, she soon disposed of us very easily. A bed was made up for me, little Agnes, and her maid, on the parlour floor, and all the gentlemen were sent to the wool-shed, to sleep as they best could: fifteen slept in it that night. A few of them had blankets or rugs, but most of them had nothing.

In the morning I asked my husband how he had slept; he said, never better. We remained a week here. Next day we saw some of the natives; they are very ugly and dirty. Some of them wore skins sewed together, and thrown over their shoulders; a few of them had some old clothes given them by the settlers; and some were naked. They kept peeping in at the windows to see us, and were always hanging about the huts. Mrs Fisher called them *civilised* natives, and said they were always about the place. One day I went out to walk with little Agnes in the bush. I was keeping a good look-out for snakes, and was just stepping over what I fancied, by a slight glance, to be a burnt log of wood, but a second look showed me my mistake; it was a native lying on the grass, grinning in my face with his large white teeth. I was rather afraid, but he looked very good-tempered, and laughed. He seemed too lazy to move, so I gave him a nod, and walked on, well pleased he did not think it necessary to accompany me home. My servant Mary was very much afraid of the natives. She would scarcely move out of the hut, and was always crying and wishing herself at home. She said she was determined to make her husband send her home with the first money he made. She wondered why I did not think as she did. She would take comfort from no one, and was quite sure she would be killed by the wild natives when she got up the country.

The township of Geelong consisted of three buildings, all of them stores, where everything was sold at a most extravagant profit. On Sunday, we went to church in Mr Fisher's wool-

shed, and had a sermon from a Wesleyan missionary. His wife commenced the psalm tunes.

We had fixed to begin our journey up the country, and the gentlemen had gone to Geelong to load the drays. I waited for them in Mr Fisher's hut, when in a moment it got quite dark, and the wind roared most tremendously. It was the most awful sight I ever witnessed: we were afraid to move. The storm passed over in about ten minutes; but many a tree had been torn up by the roots during that time. When the gentlemen came with the drays, they were so covered with dust, that I could scarcely tell one from the other. Some of them had been knocked down by the tornado, and one of the drays blown over. It was now too late for us to begin our journey, so we remained another night at Mr Fisher's, and started early in the morning. On this occasion we had much difficulty in getting the horses to start: they were ill broken in, and many times they stopped on the road, so that we had often to take some of the bullocks out of the other drays to pull them on again. We travelled the first day thirty miles, quartering for the night at Mr Sutherland's hut, which he kindly gave up for our accommodation. Next day we had to rest the bullocks, so we walked over to Mr Russell's station, about three miles distant, and remained there a night. In the evening we went to see a meeting of the natives, or a *corobery*, as they call it. About a hundred natives were assembled. They had about twenty large fires lighted, around which were seated the women and children. The men had painted themselves, according to their own fancy, with red and white earth. They had bones, and bits of stones, and emu's feathers, tied on their hair, and branches of trees tied on their ankles, which made a rushing noise when they danced. Their appearance was very wild, and when they danced, their gestures and attitudes were equally so. One old man stood before the dancers, and kept repeating some words very fast in a kind of time, whilst he beat together two sticks. The women never dance; their employment is to keep the fires burning bright; and some of them were beating sticks, and declaiming in concert with the old man. The natives, when done with their corobery, were very anxious that we white people would show them how we coroberied; so we persuaded Mr Yuille to dance for them, which he did, and also recited a piece of poetry, using a great many gestures. The natives watched him most attentively, and seemed highly pleased. After giving the natives some white money, and bidding them good night, we returned to Mr Russell's hut.

Next morning our bullocks were lost—a very common occurrence, it being impossible to tie them, as in that case they would not feed; and unless one has a very good bullock-driver who will watch them, it generally takes several hours to find them in the morning. Numbers of natives came this forenoon to see us. They examined my dress very attentively, and asked the name of

everything, which they tried to repeat after me. They were much amused with my little Agnes, and she was as much pleased with them. I wondered what her grandmamma would have thought, could she have seen her in the midst of a group of savages, and the life of the party. Whenever Agnes spoke, they all laughed aloud, and tried to imitate her voice; and the *pickuninny leubra's* dress was well examined. I put a little night-cap on a native baby, with which its mother was much pleased, and many a little black head was thrust out for one also.

I now began to be a little disgusted and astonished at the dirty and uncomfortable way in which the settlers lived. They seemed quite at the mercy of their hut-keepers, eating what was placed before them out of dirty tin plates, and using a knife and fork if one could be found. Sometimes the hut-keepers would cook the mutton in no way but as chops; some of them would only boil it, and some roast it, just as they liked; and although the masters were constantly complaining of the sameness, still it never seemed to enter their heads to make their servants change the manner of cooking; but the truth was, they were afraid to speak, in case the hut-keeper would be offended and run away. The principal drink of the settlers is tea, which they take at every meal, and indeed all the day. In many huts the tea-pot is always at the fire; and if a stranger come in, the first thing he does is to help himself to a panikin of tea. We had neither milk nor butter at any station we were at; nothing but mutton, tea, and damper, three times a-day. Every meal was alike from one week to another, and from year's end to year's end. I was so sick of it, I could scarcely eat anything.

Next day we had our bullocks ready in good time, as we had a long journey before us; at least we hoped to get on a good way. The heat this day was very intense, and we had no shade. I could scarcely bear it; and before evening we had drunk all the water we had brought with us. I thought I should have died of thirst; and we were all suffering alike. Poor little Agnes cried much; at last we got her to sleep and forget her wants. My husband was driving one of the drays, and was so thirsty, that when we came to a muddy hole of water on the path, which the dray had passed through, he lay down on the ground and drank heartily. One of our party, who knew something of the roads, told us we were near water-holes, which raised our spirits. At last we came to them, and both people and animals took many a long drink, although the water was bad, and quite bitter from the reeds which grew in it. We filled our cask, and continued our journey a few miles farther, to a place where we were to sleep in the bush. When we got out of the dray, one of the little kittens could not be seen; but on a nearer inspection, it was found squeezed flat on the seat where our servant Mary had sat: it looked as if it had gone through a mangle. Poor Mary

was much distressed and annoyed by the gentlemen telling her she must be an awful weight.

We had soon lighted a fire at the foot of a tree, and put on a huge pot of water to boil: when it did boil, two or three handfuls of tea were put into it, and some sugar. One of the men made some thick cakes of flour and water, and fried them in grease. We had also some chops cooked, which we all enjoyed, as we had not stopped to eat anything on the road. The tea was not poured out; every one dipped his panikin into the pot, and helped himself. Mary, Agnes, and I, had a bed made with some blankets under the dray, and all the others slept round the fire, taking by turn the duty of watching the bullocks. Before going to rest, the bullock-driver made a large damper, which he fired in the ashes, for our provision next day.

We got up at daybreak, had breakfast, and went on again, and travelled through a forest on fire for forty miles. I was often afraid the burning trees would fall upon us; and we had sometimes to make a new path for ourselves, from the old tracks being blocked up by fallen timber. The fires in the bush are often the work of the natives, to frighten away the white men; and sometimes of the shepherds, to make the grass sprout afresh. A conflagration not unfrequently happens from some one shaking out a tobacco-pipe (for every one smokes); and at this season the grass is so dry that it soon catches fire.

We rested for two hours and cooked some dinner, chiefly that our bullocks might feed and rest during the heat of the day. Mr Yuille and I made some fritters of flour and water. I thought them the best things I had ever ate. The Scotch clergyman from Melbourne passed us on the road. He rebuked our bullock-driver for swearing at his bullocks; but the man told him that no one ever yet drove bullocks without swearing; it was the only way to make them go. We lost a very fine kangaroo dog by one of the drays falling back upon it.

This night we slept at Mr Anderson's hut. He was from home, but had an old woman as hut-keeper, who made us as comfortable as she could; but it was a cold night, and the wind whistled very keenly through a door made of rushes. This was one of the most neatly-kept huts I saw, and the owner of it one of the few gentlemen who kept himself always neat and clean in the bush.

Next day we went over to Mr Yuille's station, where I remained six weeks, until our own hut was put up: the gentlemen kindly gave up their sleeping apartment to me. While at Mr Yuille's station, I gathered a great many mushrooms, the finest I ever saw. I had fortunately a bundle of spices in my trunk, and I made a good supply of ketchup, both for Mr Yuille, and to take to our own station.

I felt distressed to see so much waste and extravagance amongst the servants. Many a large piece of mutton I have seen thrown from the hut door that might have served a large family

for dinner: and unfortunately there is no remedy for this. If the masters were to take notice of it, it would only make them worse, or else they would run away, or, as they call it, *bolt*. I saw plainly that there would be neither comfort nor economy to the masters so long as the country was so ill provided with servants; *they* were the masters; they had the impudence always to keep in their own hut the best pieces of the meat, and send into their masters the inferior bits. I was sorry my servant Mary should have so bad an example, but hoped that she had too much good sense to follow it, as she appeared as much shocked at it as myself.

I was glad when my husband came to take us to our own station, which was about thirty miles farther up the country. Part of the country we passed through was the most beautiful I ever saw, while other portions were very cold and bleak. We stopped at one or two huts, and had mutton, tea, and damper at each of them. We passed an immense salt lake, which is gradually drying up: its circumference is forty miles. Many lakes, both salt and fresh, have dried up lately. The natives say it is the white people coming that drives away the water: they say, "Plenty mobeek long time, combarley white fellow, mobeek gigot"—in English, "Plenty water for a long time, but when the white people come, the water goes away." The natives have some strange ideas of death: they think, when they die, they go to Van Diemen's Land, and come back white fellows. I know a young man who receives many a maternal embrace from an old black woman. She fancies he is her son, who died some time before: she saw him come back, and she calls him always by her son's name. They also believe in a good and evil spirit, and that fire will keep away the bad spirit; consequently, at night, when urgent business prompts them to move about, they always carry a fire-stick; but they do not like moving in the dark.

When we passed the salt lake, the country began to improve. I thought we should never come to our own station, the bullocks travel so very slowly. At last Mr Thomson told me to look forward as far as I could see: we were now at the end of a large plain or marsh. I looked, and saw our pretty little hut peeping through a cluster of trees. I cannot say how it was, but my heart beat with delight the first time I saw that place. I took it for a presentiment of good fortune; and Mary, who had now got over her fear of the natives, seemed to participate in my feelings, for she said, "It's a bonny place, and my heart warms to it."

COMMENCEMENT OF BUSH LIFE—JAUNT TO MELBOURNE.

I now hoped that my travels were ended for some time. As we approached the hut, my brother Robert came running to meet us, to my great joy, for I had not seen him for nearly two

months. When we arrived, we found my other brother busy making himself a bedstead. Our house was not nearly finished, as it had neither doors nor windows; nor could we get these luxuries for some months, as many things more immediately necessary were yet to be done; but I did not mind it much—I was getting inured to these little inconveniences. We had plenty of daylight in our hut, as it was built of slabs, or split boards, and every slab was about an inch apart from the next. We passed the winter in this way; but it was never very cold except in the mornings and evenings: we were more annoyed by the rain coming down the chimney and putting out our fire than by anything else. Our hut consisted of three apartments—a water-closet, our bedroom, and a store in the middle, which was afterwards converted into a bedroom for my brother; at first he slept in the sitting-room, until we built a detached store. Mary and her husband had a little turf hut, built a short way behind our hut, which was also used as a kitchen.

It may seem strange, but I now felt very happy and contented. Although we had not many luxuries, we all enjoyed good health, and had plenty to keep us employed: we had no time to weary: the gentlemen were always busy building huts or fences. The first two years of a settler's life are very busy ones, so much is to be done in settling on a spot where the foot of a white man had never been before. I was the first white woman who had ever been so far up the country. I found Mary very ignorant in cooking; however, in a short time she managed pretty well: she was always delighted when I taught her any new dish out of "Meg Dods." I did not know much of cooking myself, but necessity makes one learn many things. We had many visitors, who seemed often to enjoy any little new dish we had: it was a change from that everlasting mutton and damper, and many a receipt I gave away; and to my great delight I got Mary to do as *I* liked, not as *she* liked. Sandy, our shepherd, generally came home in the evening loaded with wild ducks; they were exceedingly good. We also sometimes got wild geese, turkeys, and swans—all good eating: they were a great saving to us, as well as very delightful food. In Melbourne, wild ducks sell at twenty shillings a-pair, and we sometimes had thirty in a week. We had no milk or butter, which I missed at first, but we hoped some time soon to have a few cows: it is very difficult to drive cattle so far up, and we could get none near us. Our nearest neighbours were Messrs Donalds and Hamilton; they were within four miles, and were pleasant neighbours: we often saw them. The Baillies were eight miles on our other side; we also saw them often, and liked them much.

When we had been in our hut about a week, a number of settlers happened to come from different parts of the country. Before it was dark, eight had assembled with the determination

of remaining all night of course. I felt much anxiety about giving them beds; but that was impossible, as we had only one spare mattress. I think they guessed my thoughts, for they told me never to think on giving them anything to sleep on; that no one in this country ever thought of beds for visitors, and that they would manage for themselves. However, I collected all the blankets, pea-jackets, and cloaks I could find, and they all slept on the floor: I heard them very merry while making up their beds. Every settler, when riding through the bush, carries either a kangaroo rug or a blanket fastened before him on his horse, so that, wherever he goes, he is provided with his bed; and as it is not an uncommon circumstance for one to lose himself in the bush, and be obliged to sleep at the root of a tree, he then finds his rug or blanket very useful. William Hamilton lost himself in the bush one night. It became dark, and he gave up hopes of reaching any station that night, as he had not the least idea where he was. He fastened his horse, and lay down at the root of a tree, far from being comfortable, as he had unfortunately no blanket, and, still worse, no tobacco, or the means of lighting a fire. It was a very cold night, and when daylight came, he got up covered with frost: he heard some dogs bark, and soon found out that he was not more than half a mile from Mr Baillie's hut, where he might have passed a much more comfortable night; but he was glad he had not to look long for a breakfast and a fire: no one seems ever to catch cold from sleeping out at night.

We were rather unfortunate in frequently losing our bullocks, which kept back all the buildings. Our bullock-driver was very careless; his only work seemed to be finding his bullocks one day, and losing them the next: he was a melancholy-looking little man, and went by the name of "Dismal Jamie." Mary told me she was sure he had been a great man at home, he read so beautifully, and knew so much; but certainly he knew little about bullock-driving. At this time our dray was often a month away upon a journey to and from the settlement. "Dismal Jamie" broke the neck of a beautiful bullock when he was yoking it up, and next trip he drowned another in a water-hole; but new settlers always meet with a few such accidents. Although bullocks often disappear, and wander far from home, I never heard of any one losing a bullock entirely: they are always found some time, though it may be months after they are missed, having in general gone back to the run they were first put upon.

Buying and selling are favourite amusements in the bush, more particularly if a new settler arrives. Every one wants to buy something of him; and, in general, all bring so many more clothes, &c. than they require, that they are glad to dispose of them. I have seen some rather amusing scenes in this way. No one keeps any money in the bush; so a bill is

generally given on some store in town for whatever is bought. The old settlers would give an enormous price for good firearms; indeed I used to think they would buy anything.

It is a beautiful sight to see a number of emus running across a plain; they run so quickly that a horse can scarcely overtake them. I saw seven one day run across our marsh; but we could get none of them, as we had no horse at hand. Sometimes the natives run like the emu, to deceive the white people; and they imitate them so well, that it is difficult, at a distance, to know them from a flock of emus. Occasionally they take a fancy to stand in such an attitude that you cannot, at a little distance, tell them from the burnt stump of a tree. I used often, when walking in the bush, to fancy a burnt stump was a native, and made myself believe I saw him move. Mr Neven came one evening to our station; he was in search of a new run, his old one at Boning Yong being too small for his increasing stock: he had his dray along with him, carrying provisions, so we gladly exchanged with him mutton for beef: it was a mutual benefit, as we had always mutton, and he had always beef. His bullock-driver uniformly took his little son with him, as he was as good as a native in finding the bullocks for him in the morning. The little boy was about seven years old. Little Agnes was in the servants' hut when he arrived, and she came running to tell me to "come and see the *wee wee man* in Mary's hut;" she had been so long separated from children, that I suppose she thought there were none but herself in the world. The little boy was very ill pleased with Agnes, as she kept walking round him to examine him, asking him many questions, to which he made no reply; till at last she said, "Can no peak any?" when he answered—"Yes," and then sat down to take his supper, accompanied by his tormentor, who was most hospitable in pressing the *wee man* to eat heartily. I got a present of a quart-potful of butter from Mr Neven, which was a great treat to us, as we had seen none since we came up the country: it made us long to have some cows. We had now enclosed a little garden, and Mr Thomson and James tasked themselves to dig up a little bit every day. The ground was very hard, being dug for the first time. We put in many seeds which we had brought from home, also some from Van Diemen's Land, as we were told the home seeds seldom grew.

In the month of September I had to proceed to Melbourne, as I expected to be confined, and we were too far up to ask a medical man to come. I was much grieved at leaving my little girl; but Mary promised faithfully to take great care of her. The weather was very unsettled and rainy, and the roads very bad. I was in a dray, covered by a tarpauline, which made it very comfortable; it was like a covered wagon; and when we could not get to a station at which to sleep, I slept in the dray. My husband was with me, and read to me very often; but we

had often to come out of the dray, to allow it to be pulled out of a hole. I have seen the bullocks pull it through a marsh when they were sinking to the knees every moment: we were often in dread of the pole breaking. We received much kindness at every station we were at. We remained at Mr Reid's hut two days, as both I and the bullocks required rest. We always met with much kindness from Mr Reid: he is a most hospitable person; and as he is much liked, his hut is generally well filled, although off the main track. At this time his hut was full of company; but one room was prepared for us, and about twelve gentlemen slept in the other.

I here met our friend Mr William Hamilton. As he came from the settlement, he brought all the news; but he gave us a sad account of the state of the rivers. He said he was sure we could not cross them—it was difficult for him to cross them three days before, and it had rained ever since. Mr Reid sent off a man on horseback to see the river: he did not bring back a favourable account; but I was determined to try it. Mr Reid and several gentlemen went with us to help us over our difficulty. We crossed one river without much difficulty, though the water was so deep that both bullocks and horses had to swim; but when we came to the next river, the "Marable," it was so deep that we were at a loss how to get over. It was thought decidedly dangerous for me to remain in the dray while it was crossing. Many plans were talked of: at last it was fixed to fell a tree and lay it across, that I might walk over. But in looking about for one of a proper size and position, one was found lying across, which, from appearance, seemed to have been there for years: it was covered with green moss, and stood about twenty feet above the water: notches were cut in it for me to climb up and give me a firm footing, and I walked over, holding Mr Reid's hand. On landing, I received three cheers. Many thanks to Mr Reid and others for their kindness to me on that journey. My husband was too nervous to help me across—he thought his foot might slip. The gentlemen then went to see the dray across, while little Robert Scott and I lighted a fire at the root of a large tree, which we had in a cheerful blaze before the gentlemen came. We then had tea in the usual bush fashion, in a large kettle: it did not rain, and we had a very merry tea-party. I retired to the dray soon after tea. The gentlemen continued chatting round the fire for some time, and then laid themselves down to sleep, with their saddles at their heads, and their feet to the fire.

We breakfasted at daybreak, and started again after taking leave of the gentlemen, except Mr Anderson, who was going to Melbourne: he rode on before to the settlement, to tell Mrs Scott (who expected us at her house) that we were coming. Mrs Scott was a particular friend of my husband at home: she came out to meet us, and I really felt delighted to see her. I had not

seen a lady for eight months. Mrs Scott was exceedingly kind to me, and would not allow me to go to lodgings, as I had intended. Next day being Sunday, I went to church—at least to the room where the congregation met, as no church was yet built in Melbourne. The ladies in Melbourne seemed to consider me a kind of curiosity, from living so far up the country, and all seemed to have a great dread of leading such a life, and were surprised when I said I liked it. I spent Monday evening at Mrs Denny's, a Glasgow lady; but I really felt at a loss upon what subjects to converse with ladies, as I had been so long accustomed only to gentlemen's society; and in the bush, had heard little spoken of but sheep or cattle, horses, or of building huts.

My little boy was born four days after I came to Melbourne; but my husband did not get down from the station for two months, as it was sheep-shearing time—a very busy time for the settlers. He came down with the wool in our own and Mr Scott's dray. Mr Clow christened our baby out of a basin which at one time belonged to the Barony church in Glasgow: it belonged to Mr Scott, whose grandfather had been minister of that church, and he had got the old basin when the church was repaired and a new one substituted. I met with much kindness and attention from the people in Melbourne, particularly Mrs Clow. Our dray was again covered with saplings and tarpauline, and Mrs Scott and her family went along with us as far as their own station. I could not persuade Mrs Scott to go on to our station to remain with us till her own hut was put up: she lived for many months in a tent. We were again much detained on the roads on account of rain, which had rendered them extremely soft; but we got well over the rivers. We had to remain for two days and nights in the bush, for it rained so heavy that the bullocks could not travel: but by this time our party was increased by two drays belonging to another settler, and we had often to join all the bullocks to pull each dray through the marshes and up the hilly ground. We had, at one time, ten pairs of bullocks in the heavy dray with luggage and provisions, and we were in constant dread of the poles breaking. At last one of Mr Elm's drays broke down, and had to be left in the bush, with a man to watch it, till a new pole could be got. I believe the man did not watch it long; he ran off to Melbourne, and left it to its fate. Mrs Scott, her little daughter and servant, and myself and baby, always slept in the dray, and Mr Scott and my husband under it. One morning I got into a little hut with the roof half off; it was empty, and I thought I could wash and dress my baby more comfortably than in the dray. I had not been long in the hut when we were surrounded by natives, all anxious to see what we were about. One or two of the women came into the hut, and touched the *pichaninny cooley*, as they called it: they seemed much amused at his different pieces of

dress, and all the little black pickaninnies tried to cry like him. I seldom ever heard a black baby cry, and when it does so, the mother has little patience with it, but gives it a good blow with her elbow to make it quiet. The women carry their children at their backs in a basket or bag; and when they suckle them, they generally put their breast under their arm; and I have seen them put it over their shoulder. The natives whom we met here knew me. They said they had seen me before, when I went up the country with a *pickaninny leubra*; though I did not recollect any of their faces. When a black woman has a second child before the first can run about and take care of itself, it is said they eat the second one. I have been told this several times; but am not certain if it is really the case, it is so very unnatural; but it is well known they are cannibals, and I know they will not submit to anything that troubles them. They are very lazy, particularly the men. They make their leubras go about all day to dig for maranong, or find other kinds of food for them, while they amuse themselves by hanging about idle. In the evening they meet at their *mi-mi*; the men eat first, and whatever they choose to leave, the leubras and pickaninnies may eat afterward. Sometimes a very affectionate cooley may now and then, while he is eating, throw a bit to his leubra, as we should do to a dog, for which kindness she is very grateful. Maranong is a root found in the ground: it is white, and shaped like a carrot, but the taste is more like a turnip. The leubras dig for it with long pointed sticks, which they always carry in their hands. I have often eaten maranong; it is very good; and I have put it in soup for want of better vegetables, before we had a garden. Vegetables of all kinds now grow here most luxuriantly. We could have peas all the year round, except in June.

When we were within six miles of Mr Scott's station, our pole broke: we got a dray from Mr Neven's station, a few miles off, and went in it to Mr Scott's station, where my husband and I remained two days: we then took our leave, and went on to Mr Baillie's station. Five miles from his hut, our dray broke down again in crossing a creek. I had no alternative but to walk to Mr Baillie's, which I did not much like, as I was far from being strong: we left the dray in charge of our bullock-driver. My husband took out the bullocks, and drove them on to bring back Mr Baillie's dray to carry our goods and drag the dray. I carried the baby, and the way did not seem so long as I expected. We could see Mr Baillie's huts for nearly a mile before we came to them; so I begged my husband to go on quickly, to send the bullocks for our dray before it got quite dark. I felt myself quite safe when in sight of the huts; but before I got to them I had a sad fright: four or five great kangaroo dogs attacked me, almost pulled my baby out of my arms, and tore my dress to pieces: my cries were heard at the hut, and my husband and two or three others soon came to my assistance. I was told the dogs were

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only in fun, and would not bite; that they seldom saw a woman, which made them tear my clothes. I thought it was rather rough fun; but I received no harm from them except a torn dress. My long walk had given me an appetite, and I enjoyed my supper very much, and was amused by some of Mr G. Yuille's eccentricities. We got home to our own station next day, after being eleven days on the road. My baby and myself were both very delicate when we left the settlement, and I dreaded much either of us being ill on the road; but we never had a complaint from the day we entered the dray, although the weather was very bad, and our dray sometimes wet through. Such a journey in Scotland would, I am sure, almost kill a strong person; but in Port Philip, so far from killing one, a little delicate baby of two months old could stand it, and gained more strength during that rough journey than he did during a month before with every comfort. I often thought of the words of Sterne—"God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." I found little Agnes at the hut in high health. Mary, in her over-zeal, had fed her, and made her so fat that I scarcely knew her. I suppose she thought the fatter Agnes was the more I should be pleased.

RETURN TO THE STATION—DAIRY MANAGEMENT—ANECDOTES OF THE COUNTRY.

During my absence at Melbourne, everything had gone on well at the station; but I soon found that Mary had been managing as she chose too long to like being again under my control. I found her almost totally changed. No one dared to find fault with her; and so far from being of any assistance to me, she became a great torment. The first act of rebellion was her refusal to wash my baby's clothes, on the plea that she was not engaged to do it; so I had to do it myself: the next was, she would not wash any one's clothes unless I cooked for two days. I wondered what her next demand would be; but what could I do?—it would have been very difficult to get another woman-servant. I had so far to humour her, that I cooked one day in the week when she had to wash. She never helped me at all with the children; although, as we had lately got a herd of cattle, I had taken the management of the dairy upon myself—except, of course, milking the cows, which is done by men; but my time was fully employed, and I often envied Mary sitting quietly in her own hut and sewing her own work. I knew well why she behaved in this manner; she wanted me to retain her as a nursery-maid only, and get a man as hut-keeper; but wages were too high for us to do that at this time. We could not get a man under £40 a-year and his rations besides; and provisions were now exorbitant in price. Flour could not be purchased under £80 per ton (formerly we got it for £25), and every other thing

was in proportion. This advance of prices pressed very hard upon the settlers, so that we determined to have no unnecessary expense at the station; and I really liked managing the dairy, although it was sometimes too much for me. If my baby would not sleep when I wanted him, I sometimes laid him on the grass and let him roll about while I was in the dairy; and when he tired of that, I put him in a basket and hung him at my side, as I had seen the native women do.

We were now milking twenty cows, and we sent a great deal both of butter and cheese to market: for the butter we got 2s. 2d. per pound, and for the cheese 1s. 8d. Our cheese was the best that had gone to market, but there was no great demand for it; but if so, a cheese dairy would pay well, even at a shilling per pound; and I should suppose that, as the population increases, there will be a greater demand. We had a ready sale for butter, and contracted with a person to give him butter all the year at 2s. 2d. per pound. With much persuasion I got my brother to bring home some pigs. He seemed to have a great dislike to them; but I could not bear to pour out so much skim milk on the ground every day. Our pigs got on well, and fattened on the milk and whey, and made an agreeable change in our diet. In very hot weather I made cheese when I could get rennet, as the milk did not keep well: our dairy was too small, and not cool enough. In thundery weather I had occasionally to give all to the pigs. I have seen, when a sheep was killed in thundery weather, the whole carcass get quite black in a few hours, and become useless: we found it very difficult to keep meat in any way in summer. We had it killed always after sunset, and then cut up and salted early next morning, and put into a cask under ground. I had made a good supply of mutton hams, which were found useful in hot weather; and our dairy was a great comfort and saving to us, as we could use the milk, prepared in many ways, instead of meat. The shepherds were also fond of it. We gave them no butter except on the churning day, on which occasion I sent them some for tea, which was a great treat.

Bad servants were now our chief annoyance; and it seemed of no use being at the expense of bringing good ones from home, for they soon get corrupted: but I must make an exception in favour of Mrs Clerk, the servant of Messrs Donald and Hamilton, who was the best servant I ever saw: she was always neat herself, and kept everything neat and comfortable about the hut, and never grudged hard work: she was invaluable to her masters. We all went over one day to dine at Messrs Donald and Hamilton's; it was the only visit I ever paid in the bush, although I had many invitations. I of course took the children with me: we enjoyed ourselves very much, and remained all next day. Mrs Clerk joined her persuasions for us to do so, and told us we had not seen half the good things she could make: she spared no pains to make us comfortable, and went through her work both

quickly and well, besides nursing my little boy. After this visit, I had many invitations to visit the neighbours round; which I should have liked very well, but I had too much to detain me at home.

At this time we had a very troublesome old shepherd, who was continually letting his sheep go astray. One morning, when my brother was counting them over, ninety-two were missing. The shepherd could give no account of them, but that the day before the flock had divided, and he fancied he had collected them all again. My brother James took a hurried breakfast, and went with two of our men on horseback to endeavour to track them: they returned in the evening without having seen anything of them: but James determined to go off again early next morning, and, if necessary, remain out several days. One of the men returned in two days, and brought us intelligence that they had found the sheep-track beyond Mr Campbell's station, which was fifteen miles distant. The man returned to try and get a fresh horse from some of the neighbours, but we could not get one for two days. He brought home an emu across his horse, which he had run down. He told us that my brother was out with several gentlemen, and they had a native boy with them who was famous for tracking, but who seemed sadly afraid of going among a hostile tribe of natives, and therefore was of little use. Our own man Sandy, whom we had brought from home, was a good tracker, and could see a mark when no one else could: he had tracked the sheep for nearly a mile on his hands and knees, the marks being too faint to be seen when walking or riding. Mr Alexander and Mr Colin Campbell were exceedingly kind in their assistance to my brother, and were out with him for several days. At last, after fourteen days' riding, the sheep were found a hundred and forty miles from our station. My brother and his friends had almost given up thoughts of looking any longer for them; but they rode on about a mile farther, when they saw them in a hollow, surrounded by about a hundred natives. The men had all hid themselves, having seen the party coming, and left the women and children, who ran about chattering and hiding behind the rocks. The party rode down among them, and a singular scene met their view. The ground was strewn with heads of sheep and bits of mutton, and some of the sheep were as well cut up as if done by an English butcher; the skins were pegged out on the ground, and the fat collected in little twine bags, which the women make of the bark of a tree. Fifty live sheep were enclosed within a brush fence (James said it was the best brush fence he had seen in the country), but they were very thin, the natives being too lazy to take them out to feed. They were killing and eating them up as fast as they could. The gentlemen lighted a good fire by which to watch the sheep all night; but they durst not sit within the glare of it, for fear of the natives taking aim at them, as they knew they were among

the rocks, and very likely watching them, although they did not show themselves. The party slept little that night; they cooked and ate some of the mutton; and the little native boy they had to track for them, although in great fear of the other natives, devoured nearly a whole leg. They started early next morning, driving the sheep before them, and loaded with spears, tomahawks, waddies, and baskets which they had taken from the natives. The native boy mounted a horse, saying he would not walk a step; but as he mounted, he slipped off again, and the horse started on; the little fellow caught hold of the tail, and allowed himself to be dragged on till he got a good firm hold, and then sprung on the horse's back. James said he never saw a cleverer piece of agility in a circus. On their way home they killed an emu; but they could not carry it with them, being already well loaded. When James and our shepherd Sandy came near our hut, they fired off their pistols to let us know they had found the sheep; but we did not understand the signal, and I was very much frightened. We at home had been living in great anxiety while my brother was away. I was at the station with only Mary and the children through the day, and our comfort was not much increased at night by knowing that the two old shepherds were at home. We had seen, two days before, seven wild natives run past our hut at a little distance, all naked, which gave us a great fright; I thought Mary was going into a fit. I got my pistol, which I had hanging in my room, loaded; Mary then went for hers, and we walked up and down before the hut for about an hour. My husband was at the settlement during all the anxious time we had had at the station, and he heard nothing of our loss of sheep until his return home.

Besides the occasional frights of this kind from natives, with whom it was no easy matter to be on good terms, we were at times troubled with wild dogs, which proved a very serious annoyance. These animals generally discovered themselves when they came by setting up a most piteous howl, which was the signal for sallying out in pursuit of them; for, if let alone, they would make no small havoc with the live stock. They seldom escaped. One of our sheep dogs had a most inveterate hatred to them, and he always tracked them, and often killed one of them without assistance, although they are very tenacious of life. They are more like a fox than a dog; are of a reddish-brown, and have a very thick bushy tail. When one is killed, the tail is cut off as a trophy, and hung up in the hut; the shepherds generally get five shillings from their master for every wild dog they kill. My husband saw a wild dog which was supposed to be dead; its tail was cut off, and in a few minutes it got up and began to fight again with the dogs; but it was soon overcome.

Australia, as is well known, possesses many beautiful birds, and of these we seldom wanted visitors, particularly parrots and cockatoos; but I never heard any sweet-singing bird, such as the

larks and blackbirds of Scotland, and this I thought a great drawback on their elegance of plumage. Some of the birds uttered very strange sounds, as if speaking. I heard one every morning say—"Eight o'clock," and "Get up, get up:" another used to call out—"All fat, all fat:" and another was continually saying—"Potato, potato," which always put us in mind of our loss in having none, nor any other vegetables at all. Parrots are very good eating; many a parrot-pie we had. The white parrots are, I think, the best; next, the white cockatoo.

I now come to the year 1840. Provisions at this time became very high in price. Flour, as I have mentioned, was £80 a ton, and it was scarcely to be had in a good condition; tea, £16 a chest; sugar, 6d. a pound; meat, butter, and cheese, were, unfortunately for the farmers, the only things which fell in price. We could now get only 1s. 10d. for butter, and 1s. for cheese.

Our station had now a great look of comfort about it. We had plastered the outside of our hut with mud, which made it quite close: we had windows and good doors, and a little flower-garden enclosed in front: we had built a good hut for our servants, a new store, a large dairy under ground, a new wool-shed, and had two large paddocks for wheat, potatoes, &c. and we had now plenty of vegetables. We had also put up a larger stack-yard, as our cattle were increasing, and a large covered shed for the calves at night; also to milk in. About five miles from the home station, we had formed an out-station for the sheep, which secured to us a large tract of land, as no new settler can come within three miles of a station. Every one thought highly of our station; and we were well off for water, having several large *water holes* (as they are always called here, but at home we should call them lakes or large ponds); and when the rains come on, these ponds are joined together in a river, which comes down very rapidly. We often had a river running past our huts, where a few minutes before I had walked over on dry land. An immense number of ducks and geese came down with the water: I have seen our man Sandy kill seven or eight at a shot just opposite the huts. We had had a good many visits from the natives lately. They were much encouraged at Mr Baillie's station, and we began not to turn them away so quickly as we used to do; but we never allowed them to sleep at the station, except one big boy, "Tom," whom we had determined to keep if he would remain, thinking he might be useful in finding stray cattle or sheep. Tom was very lazy; but he was always obliged to chop wood or do some work, else he got nothing to eat; which we found to be the only way to make the natives active.

In some of the fresh-water ponds there are found immense quantities of mussels, which the native women dive for. We often saw numbers of shells lying in heaps where the blacks had been eating them. They are also fond of a large grub found generally in the cherry and honeysuckle tree: they can tell, by

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knocking the tree with a stick, if any grubs are in it. When they knock the tree, they put their ear close to listen, and they open it with a tomahawk at the very spot the grubs are to be found. It is a large white grub, with a black head. I know a gentleman who was tempted to taste them from seeing the natives enjoy them so much, and he said they were very good, and often ate them afterwards. Manna falls very abundantly from the gum-trees at certain seasons of the year. I think it was in March I gathered some. It is very good, and tastes like almond biscuits. It is only to be procured early in the morning, as it disappears soon after sunrise. We sometimes got some skins of the opossum and flying-squirrel, or tuan, from the natives. It was a good excuse for them to come to the station. I paid them with a piece of dress, and they were very fond of getting a red pocket handkerchief to tie round their necks.

MODE OF LIVING—REMOVAL TO MELBOURNE.

We were visited one day by a very large party of natives; I am sure there were a hundred of them. I happened to be alone in the hut. Some of the men came into it, and examined all they saw very attentively, especially the pictures we had hanging on the walls. They were much taken with a likeness of my mother, and laughed heartily at some black profiles; they said they were "black leubras." I told them to leave the hut, but they would not; and one, a very tall fellow, took the liberty of sitting down beside me on the sofa. I did not much like being alone with these gentry, so I rose to go to the door to call some one, but my tall friend took hold of my arm and made me sit down again; on which I cried out sufficiently loud to alarm my husband, who was building a hut behind. He came in and turned them all out; but they still kept hanging about the station for some time. My husband took his gun and shot some white parrots, which were flying in an immense flock overhead. Some of the natives ran and picked them up, and thrust them into some hot ashes, where they had lighted a fire, without even taking the feathers off. They were soon cooked in this way, and I believe ate very well. I had often seen black Tom cook parrots and cockatoos in this manner. The natives will eat anything that comes in their way. I saw a woman take a piece of sheep-skin, singe the wool off, and then begin to eat it, giving her baby a piece of it also. Much to my surprise, they actually ate a large piece of the skin. All these natives left us before sun-down, and went to Mr Baillie's, where they were always allowed to remain as long as they chose. He was too kind to them, and gave them great encouragement in his own hut. We always expected to hear of some mischief there. At last one of them threw a spear at the groom, which stuck in his arm; it gave him great pain, and he went to the settlement to consult a doctor. In many instances the undue

severities of the settlers lead to reprisals from the natives, who are apt to inflict vengeance in a very indiscriminate manner.

At this time I had a pleasant visit from Mrs Gibson and her brother; they were on their way to a new station about fifteen miles beyond us. I was delighted to have the privilege of talking to a lady again: it was more than a year since I had seen one; and my little girl had not words to express her delight and astonishment. The sight of a "white leubra," as she called her, seemed for a time to take away her speech; but she soon began to question her very closely as to where she came from, and whether there were any more like her in her country. I am sure Agnes dreamed of her all night, for she often spoke of the beautiful lady in her sleep; and the moment she was dressed in the morning, she went to look again at her. Mrs Gibson was much amused at Agnes's admiration. I did all I could to persuade her to remain some time with us, and allow her brother to go on, and have some place comfortable for her to go to; but she would not. Some time after this Mrs Gibson's courage was well tried. She had occasion to go a journey on horseback, and not knowing the road, she took a native with her as guide. When they were at some distance from home, the man wanted her to dismount, and indeed tried to pull her off her horse. He did not know she had a pistol with her; but she pulled out one and presented it at him, telling him that unless he walked on before the horse, and showed her the proper way to go, she would shoot him. Had she appeared at all afraid, most likely he would have killed her; but her courage saved her, and she arrived safely at her journey's end.

When all the gentlemen were from home, one of the shepherds came to my hut door to tell me that, in counting over his sheep, as they came out of the yard, he missed twenty-five. He was a stupid old man, so I asked the stock-keeper to get his horse and ride over the run; but he proposed driving the sheep over the same ground they had gone the previous day, in hope that the lost ones might join the flock. This was done; and when the sheep were again put into the yard, they were found all right. We had many alarms about losing sheep; but, except the time they were taken by the natives, we always found them. One night it had become dark, and there was no appearance of the sheep coming home. At last the shepherd arrived in a great fright, and said he had lost all the sheep—he could tell nothing about them. Every one, except Agnes and I, went out immediately to look for them in different directions. It came on a dreadful night of rain, thunder, and lightning, and was very dark: the men returned one by one, and no sheep were to be seen. I was sitting in no very comfortable state in the hut, and taking a look at the door every five minutes, although it was so dark that I could not see a yard before me. Little Agnes was in bed, as I thought fast asleep; but she called to me, and said, if I

would allow her to stand at the window, she would tell me when they were coming. I put her on a seat at the window, where she had not stood long, listening very attentively, till she told me they would soon be here, for she heard them far away. I thought she was talking nonsense, as I could hear nothing, neither could any of the men; but Agnes still said she heard them coming; and she was right, for in a few minutes my husband sent to tell me they were all safe in the yards. He and one of the men had found them in a hollow about a mile from home; but our next alarm was for James, who was still absent. My husband fired off several pistols, that he might know all were found if he was still looking for them; and we put a light in the window to guide him. He came in about twelve o'clock; but would scarcely own he had lost himself, although we knew very well he had; however, we all enjoyed our supper and a good blazing log-fire, and were very thankful we had the sheep safe.

We often killed kangaroos; they are very palatable, particularly the tail, which makes excellent soup, much like what is called hare-soup. My friend Willy Hamilton declared he never ate better soup at any dinner-party at home. I sometimes made cakes, which were much admired by the visitors at our hut; and it was a fixed rule always to have a large pudding on Sunday, as we were sure to have some of our neighbours with us to dinner. We had an old man who made so good a pudding, that we had it every Sunday for six months; and many came to eat of this mess, the fame of which had spread far and wide. We often gave the receipt for it; but no one made it so well as old Williams.

My husband or my brother read a sermon on Sunday; indeed we kept up the form of a religious service as near as we could. Generally all our servants joined us; but if they did not feel inclined of themselves to come, it was in vain to try to persuade them. I have sometimes seen our neighbours' servants come in also. We had many letters from home, which were a great pleasure to us. We had also received a large box, containing a spinning-wheel, and many very useful things, from my mother. She would certainly have been pleased had she seen us unpacking it, and examining everything in it; it made me think of days gone by, when we were children, at the opening of a New-Year's box. I am sure we were quite as happy. We received soon after this a box of preserves, and some other articles, from the same kind hand, and they were highly valued, as we could get nothing of that kind at Port Philip. Little or no fruit was yet to be met with in the colony; but in our garden we had some young gooseberry, currant, and raspberry bushes, from which we hoped soon to have some produce. We had also a row or two of strawberry plants.

On New-Year's day 1841, some of our neighbours came to dine with us. I was very anxious to have either a wild goose

or turkey, but none of the shepherds could see one to shoot for me, so I had determined to have a parrot-pie instead: but on New-Year's morning, while we were at breakfast, two turkeys were seen flying over our hut, one of which was immediately brought down. I must describe our New-Year's dinner, to show what good things we had in the bush. We had kangaroo-soup, roasted turkey well stuffed, a boiled leg of mutton, a parrot-pie, potatoes, and green peas; next, a plum-pudding and strawberry-tart, with plenty of cream. We dined at two o'clock, a late dinner for us, as twelve is the general hour; and at supper or tea we had currant-bun, and a large bowl of curds and cream. We spent a very happy day, although it was exceedingly hot: the thermometer was nearly 100 in the shade. Our friends rode home to their own stations that evening: it is very pleasant riding at night after a hot day.

All the stations near us commenced their poultry-yards from our stock. We got 12s. and 15s. a-pair for hens, which was the Melbourne price. Had we been nearer town, we might have made a great deal by our poultry. Eggs are also very dear in town, sometimes 8s. and 10s. a-dozen. I was much annoyed by the hawks carrying off the young chickens. We lost a great many in this way, as we had not a proper house to put them into; but the gentlemen always promised to build one when they had nothing of more importance to do. They rather slighted the poultry, although they were very glad to get the eggs to breakfast, as well as a nice fat fowl to dinner. We never fed the poultry; they picked up for themselves, except when I now and then threw them a little corn to keep them about the huts. They roosted on a large tree behind our hut. I was astonished to see how soon the hen begins to teach her chickens to roost. I have seen one take her chickens up to roost in the tree when they were little bigger than sparrows, and scarcely a feather in their wings. I used often to admire the hen's patience in teaching her family to mount the tree: it took her a long time every evening to get them all up, for many a tumble they had, and many times she flew up and down for their instruction; but she seemed very happy and satisfied when she got them all under her on the branch.

A melancholy accident happened at a station near us. A young gentleman who had lately arrived in the colony went to pay a visit there. He jumped into a water-hole to bathe; the hole was small but deep. He was well warned of this; but nothing would dissuade him from going in, and he was drowned before any assistance could be rendered. His body was not found for several days, although the hole was dragged with chains; but some natives were set to dive for it, and one of them brought the body up immediately, which was buried next day in a wood near the hut. The funeral was attended by several settlers in the neighbourhood, and the service for the dead was

read by the gentleman whose guest the deceased had been. A funeral in the bush is a very rare and a very impressive occurrence. I only know of one other spot where a white man is buried; it is the grave of a shepherd who was speared by the natives some time ago, and the valley where he now lies is called the Murderer's Valley. I never passed through it without feeling a kind of horror. The grave is fenced in by a rough paling.

In the bush no one is ever allowed to go from a hut without eating, or remaining all night, although an entire stranger. We were once sadly deceived by a man who walked into our hut, and introduced himself as a new settler who had come to our neighbourhood. None of us were acquainted with him; but we very soon saw he had not the manners of a gentleman, although he was perfectly at ease, spoke much of his large herds of cattle, and the difficulty he had in bringing his sheep up the country so as to avoid the different stations, as there is a heavy fine for any one driving scabby sheep through a settler's run, except during one month in the year. This pretended gentleman also talked as if on intimate terms with one of the settlers we knew, and told us much news, some of which astonished us not a little. He dined with us, and begged to know how the pudding was made. I offered to write him the receipt, which I did, although I am sure he could not read it. In a few days we heard he was a hut-keeper, and an old prisoner, who had been sent by his master to tell us he had some young bullocks to sell, as he knew we wanted to purchase some; but this message was delivered to us as a piece of news. I was rather annoyed at being deceived in this way; but in the bush it is no easy task to tell who are gentlemen and who are not from their dress, or even manners, as a few of them pride themselves in being as rough as possible.

We began to think that there were too many masters at one station; and my husband's relations at home had expressed their surprise that he did not leave the young men to manage the station, and find something to do near a town. The situation of his family induced my husband to think seriously of this proposal; but the only happiness I had in the idea of leaving the station was, that I should be able to pay more attention to Agnes, who was now four years old, and almost running wild. In short, for one reason and another, it was resolved that we should seek a new home; and for that purpose my husband proceeded to Melbourne to make the necessary inquiries. After an absence of three weeks he returned, having taken a farm in the neighbourhood of Melbourne, to which we were immediately to proceed. This proved a fatal step, and the beginning of many misfortunes; but I shall not anticipate. My husband brought with him our old friend Mrs Scott, who had come to see us before we left the station, and she remained till the day of our departure, accompanying us on the journey.

Accommodated in a spring-cart, which was provided with a few necessaries for our use, we departed from the station on the first morning of sheep-shearing, and certainly not without a degree of regret; for, all things considered, we had enjoyed at it a happy bush-life, to which I now look back with pleasure. It was early morning when we set out, and the first place at which we stopped was the station of Messrs Donald and Hamilton, where we breakfasted, and found a hearty welcome. From this we proceeded to the station of my brother Robert. Fortunately we found him at home, but quite alone; not even the hut-keeper was with him, as he had taken the place of a shepherd who had run away. The two little huts were perched on the top of a steep bank or craggy rock, at the bottom of which was a deep water-hole. It had the strangest appearance possible; at a little distance it looked not unlike a crow's nest, and must have been a very dismal place to be left alone in for such a length of time as my brother occasionally was. I was very sorry for him, and did not wonder at his complaining of being dull sometimes. I told him we had come to lunch with him, but he said he hoped we had brought the lunch with us, as he had nothing to give us but damper. The rations were done, and more had not come from the home station. We were well provided in the spring-cart; so Robert and I laid out a lunch, and he took a damper he had made out of the ashes. We could not remain with him very long, as the day was pretty far advanced, and we wished to get to Mr Anderson's station, where my husband had promised to remain a short time, as Mr Anderson was ill at Geelong.

Before we had got above four miles from my brother's, the wheel of our cart, in going through a creek, got into a hole, and the vehicle was upset. We were all thrown into the water, but were not hurt, and our greatest difficulty was getting the cart up again. We had to take out the horses, and get into the water and lift it up, as it lay quite on its side. It took all the party's united strength to lift it. We were quite wet already, so we did not mind standing in the water to do this duty; it was rather refreshing, the day had been so hot. I undressed my infant, and rolled him in my cloak; but all the rest of us had to sit in wet clothes: we were so much pleased, however, at getting up the cart, that we did not think much of it, and were congratulating ourselves on our good fortune, when, in going up a very stony hill, down it went again. I felt much stunned, as I was thrown with my head on a stone; but I was not insensible. The thought of my infant was uppermost; he was thrown several yards out of my arms; but the cloak saved him. He was creeping off on hands and knees out of it, quite in good humour, as if nothing had happened. Agnes was also unhurt, except a bruised cheek; but she was much concerned about a kitten she had got from her uncle Robert, which was squeezed

under a carpet-bag. The most unfortunate of our party was poor Mrs Scott, who was thrown violently on the ground, and lay seriously stunned. On inquiring into her condition, she said that her leg was broken, and in great pain. This was terrible news in such a place as we were; but on examination, the case was not so bad: the knee was out of joint, and her ankle already much swollen from a very bad sprain. By her own directions I pulled her leg till the knee-joint went into its place. She had been thrown with her head down the hill, and she suffered so much pain, that she could not allow us to move her; but we propped her up with stones and a carpet-bag, and what more to do we could not tell.

We were far from help: it was already nearly dark, very cold, and we had nothing to light a fire; in a word, we were in a miserable state. My husband at length remembered an out-station of Mr Learmonth's, not above half a mile from us. He immediately went there for help, and two mounted police happened fortunately to be at hand. One of them rode back for my brother Robert to come to us, and the other assisted my husband to carry Mrs Scott on a hurdle to the shepherd's hut, while I went on before with the children, to try to get a bed ready for her. The walk put my baby fast asleep, so I laid him down in a corner of the hut wrapped in my cloak, while Agnes went to the fire to dry her clothes, not looking very contented. The shepherds were very kind, and gave up their hut to us at once; and the old hut-keeper begged me to let the poor sick lady have the best bed. I looked at the beds, but it was really difficult to say which was best, as one was an old sheep-skin, and the other a very dirty blanket, spread on some boards. I chose the sheep-skin for Mrs Scott, and my husband carried her into the hut and laid her on it. By this time my brother Robert had arrived with a bottle of Scotch whisky, which my husband had left with him. Mrs Scott took a little of it, which appeared to revive her, for she seemed in great agony from being moved. Her knee was continually going out of joint when she moved, so I split up the lid of an old tea-box I saw in the corner of the hut, and bound the pieces round her knee with a bandage made of a part of my dress; and I succeeded better than I expected, as it did not again come out of its place. I never saw any one bear pain with more composure and cheerfulness than my poor friend. My brother rode on to tell Mr Scott, and to get a doctor from Geelong. I bathed Mrs Scott's ankle often during the night with some hot water in which meat had been boiled; it was the only thing I could get. It relieved her for a little; but we passed a sad night, as we had no dry clothes. My husband was also much bruised, and the horse had trod on his foot, which was very painful; but he said nothing about it till next day, when he could scarcely put it to the ground.

The hut to which our misfortunes had thus conducted us was a

miserable place, and I was afraid to try to sleep, there were so many rats running about, and jumping on the beams across the roof. I was, however, very tired, and unconsciously fell asleep for a little; but when I awoke, three rats were fighting on the middle of the floor for a candle I had lighted and placed there stuck in a bottle, there being no candlestick. I rose and separated the combatants. Poor Mrs Scott had never slept: she said a rat had been watching her all night from the roof. The rats here are very tame and impudent, and not easily frightened, but are not so disgusting in appearance as the rats in England; they are larger, and their skin is a beautiful light-gray. I shall ever remember this dismal night, which seemed protracted to an unusual length. Day at last dawned, and allowed those who were able to move about and render assistance as far as circumstances would permit. With the help of the shepherd I prepared breakfast, and afterwards dinner, for the party. We were much afraid, when the afternoon arrived, that we should have to pass another night in the hut; but at four o'clock, greatly to our delight, Mr Scott made his appearance, and soon after a dray, in which a bed was placed for Mrs Scott. It was with difficulty she was lifted into it. I sat beside her with the children, and my husband sat on the other side to keep her steady. Mr Scott was on horseback. In this way we arrived at Mr Anderson's station late at night, as we were obliged to travel very slowly on account of our unfortunate patient.

We found Mr Anderson's hut locked up, and the keys were at Mr Yuille's, three miles off. However, my husband opened the window with little difficulty, as it had no fastening; so it seemed of little use having the door locked. We soon got a fire lighted by his woman-servant, and had tea and nice comfortable beds, which we indeed much required. Mrs Scott was taken home next day; but many months elapsed before she could walk about. We remained at Mr Anderson's station a short time. While there, we went over to dine with Mr Yuille. I saw many improvements about his station; but his own hut was still without windows. I expressed my astonishment at this; but he said that he had been so long without them, that he would still continue so, and he did not see the use of them. We ate some of the largest lettuces here I ever saw. Mr Yuille takes great pleasure in his garden, and keeps it in order entirely himself.

We were now in the Boning Yong district, which takes its name from a very high mountain, on the top of which is a large hole filled with water. It is quite round, as if made by man, and there are fish and mussels in it. Boning Yong is a native name, and means *big mountain*. I like the native names very much: I think it a great pity to change them for English ones, as is often done. Station Peak is also a peculiar-looking mountain, and is the boundary between the Melbourne and Geelong districts.

We spent several days at Mr Scott's station, which is for cattle

LIFE IN THE BUSH.

and dairy-husbandry. He had some of the finest cows I had seen in the country; and the dairy was well managed by a young woman whom the family had brought from home; and they fortunately did not require to keep many servants, the children were so useful, and never idle. His two little boys managed the cattle as well as any stock-keeper could do, and everything seemed in a fair way of prospering at the station. A large family in these colonies is a blessing and fortune to their parents, if well-doing.

In travelling down to Melbourne we did not require to sleep in the bush, as there are now several public-houses on the road. The first we came to was not at all comfortable; and the keeper performed the paltry trick of hiding our bullocks, thereby compelling us to remain at his house till they were found, which was not accomplished until we offered a reward for them. We heard many complaints of "planting" bullocks (the colonial expression) at this house. We were more fortunate in the next we arrived at, in which we slept one night, and were exceedingly comfortable. It is kept by a Dr Grieve. On leaving next morning, Mrs Grieve gave me a nice currant loaf for the children to eat in the dray.

I was astonished, when I visited Geelong on our way down, to see the progress made in building. I had not seen it since we first landed in the country, at which time three stores were all the buildings in the township. Now, it is a large and thriving place. Such is the rapid way that towns get up in this new and enterprising colony.

FARM NEAR MELBOURNE—CONCLUSION.

Our unfortunate journey from the bush station was at length brought to a close. After remaining two days in Melbourne, to purchase provisions and some articles of furniture, we proceeded to the farm which we had reason to expect would be our future home. I liked its appearance very much; it was agricultural, with ten acres already in crop, and about thirty cleared. The soil was rich and productive, and immediately we got a garden fenced in, and soon had a supply of vegetables. To complete the establishment, we procured some cows from the station, these animals being reckoned my private property. The chief drawback to our comfort was the want of a house, and we were compelled to live in a tent till one could be prepared for our reception. I was assisted in the domestic arrangements by an aged but willing and active woman, whom we had engaged as servant. Our neighbours round called upon us; but all were men, and I saw no ladies while at the farm for a period of eight months.

All went on well with us till the month of February, when the heat became almost insupportable, the thermometer in our tent being at 110 degrees almost every day, and sometimes 120. It was like living in an oven. All around the country was parched up to a degree which I am unable to describe. Everything was

as dry as tinder; and while in this state, some shepherds, either heedlessly or maliciously, set the grass on fire a few miles from our farm, and it came down upon us in a tremendous flame, several miles in breadth. Long before I could see it from the tents, I heard the crackling and falling of trees. My husband was in town, also our ploughman with the dray; and we had only one man at the farm, as little work could be done at this season. This man told me he had seen the fire, and that it was coming down as fast as he could walk, and would be upon us in half an hour, when all our tents, &c. would be burned. For a moment I stood in despair, not knowing what to do. I then thought our only chance of safety would be to burn a circle round the tents. I sent the children to the next farm with old Mrs Douglas, our ploughman's wife. Nanny Douglas, a strong active girl, was with us; so we lighted a circle round the tent I occupied, which was the most valuable. We procured branches, and kept beating the flames, to keep them from burning more than a space several yards broad, that the flames might not pass over; but before we had finished the burning, Nanny, who was naturally anxious about her own property, began to burn round her own tent. The fire was too strong for her to keep it down alone, so I saw her tent catch fire at the back, while she was busy beating out the flames in front. I ran to help her to pull down the tent, which she and I did in a few minutes. The tent was nearly all burned, but nothing of consequence was lost inside. Nanny was in a sad state, knowing that her father had several pounds of gunpowder in a basket under his bed. In trying to save this tent I nearly lost my own, which caught fire; but Nanny, with great activity, ran with a bucket of water she was carrying to throw on the burning tent we had pulled down. She threw it over the part that had caught fire, while I beat with my branch; and we had only a hole about three yards square burned in our tent, and part of our bed which was next that side. We had now got the circle burned, and sat down to rest and contemplate the mischief we had done. We soon found that our exertions might have been spared; for, by the intervention of our ploughed land and a bend in the creek, the fire was divided before it reached us, and went burning and crashing down on each side, several hundred yards from us. It was an awful sight, and I shall never forget it. As it unfortunately happened in the heat of the day, Nanny and I were quite knocked up, and we lay on the ground to rest outside the tent for nearly an hour. Mrs Douglas came home with the children, and began to arrange the beds, &c. in the third tent we had for cooking in.

One of our neighbours, who lived several miles from us, knowing the fire must be near our farm, and my husband not at home, kindly rode over to see if he could assist us. I was glad to see him, as I felt very anxious about my husband, not knowing what might befall him upon his return, as it was now near sun-down,

and the fire very near the road he had to travel. Our kind neighbour offered to go to meet him if I could give him a horse, which we soon did, as I had had them tied in a safe place on the other side of the creek. He fortunately met the dray not very far off, and pointed out a road by which they might still get home ere the fire reached it. Had they been ten minutes later, they could not have got home that night, the fire burned so fiercely, and the horses were afraid of it. My husband and the men sat up all night watching the fire in the woods, which, owing to the darkness, was a most splendid sight, looking like a large town highly illuminated. Next day the conflagration returned upon us in another direction; but we were better prepared for it, and it was kept back by beating it out with branches. All the gentlemen and servants from our farm, and our neighbours, were employed nearly all day in beating it out, and it was again watched all night.

This fire did much damage to several farms in our neighbourhood, in burning down crops and fences. It burned for nearly a week, and keeping it down was very fatiguing work, owing to the extreme heat of the weather. But, fortunately for the country, we had some very heavy rain, otherwise I am sure we should have had no food left for our cattle, the pasture being nearly all burned. It was astonishing how soon the country looked green again. After two nights of heavy rain, the grass began to spring afresh.

This fire was our crowning misfortune; for though it did little damage to the property, it led to personal illness, against which it was not easy to bear up. I caught a violent cold from being overheated while putting out the fire round our tent; Nanny also was ill, and unable to do any work for three weeks. Notwithstanding all my care, I could not get rid of my complaint, as the rains had set in, and our tents, clothes, and beds, were constantly wet. To increase my distress, I was seized one night with asthma, which increased every day. In this exigency my husband had a temporary hut put up for me, which would keep out the wet. It was put up in a week; and although not quite dry, we were very glad to get into it. It was made of young trees or saplings, sunk about a foot in the ground, and nailed at the top to a frame of wood. The saplings were placed quite close, and the walls were then plastered outside and in with mud, and washed over with lime. The roof was of broad paling, and we were very comfortable. Our hut was twenty feet by twelve; but I had a division of canvass put up in the middle for a sick daughter of Mrs Douglas, who had come to try if country air would benefit her. After being three weeks with us, she was advised by our medical attendant to return to the town, where she died in a few days.

I was now very ill, and could not lie in bed with asthma and cough, and my husband was also suffering severely from the

effects of cold. Things were now in such a state, that it was found impossible to go on with the farm, which we therefore let; and my husband being so fortunate as to get an office under government, we removed to Melbourne. At first we could not find a house in Melbourne except a new one, and we were afraid to live in it. We were obliged to go to an inn, intending to look about for another house; but I was laid up there for three weeks with a very severe attack, from which I was not expected to recover.

We were exceedingly anxious now to send the children home to my mother, as I was told if I had many such attacks I could not live. I felt this myself; but we could not make up our minds about parting with the children, although we knew that Port Philip was a sad place for children to be left without a mother to watch over them; but as I got stronger, I could not bear the idea of parting with them, and determined to take great care of myself. We removed to our new house because we could not find another; but it was very damp. I had a threatening of my old complaint, and my husband insisted on my leaving it immediately. He found another, a very comfortable one, and I continued pretty well in it for two months. I had only a few slight illnesses; but I durst not go out if the weather was at all damp. I had great difficulty in getting a servant when we came to town; indeed I was without one for some weeks. At last I got a little girl of twelve years of age, till I could hear of a woman-servant. This little girl would not come for less than seven shillings a-week; and instead of being any assistance to me, was a great plague. She was always leading the children into mischief; and whenever I wanted my servant to work, I had to go and bring her home from a game of romps with some neighbouring children. I sent her home at the end of the week with her seven shillings, well pleased to get quit of her; and that very day an Irishwoman came to the door asking me if I required a servant. She had landed from an emigrant ship three days before. I was delighted to see her, and bade her come in and I would try her. She turned out an honest well-behaved girl, but very slow and very dirty; her wages were twenty pounds a-year. Several ships arrived soon after this with emigrants, and servants began to find great difficulty in getting situations; they were to be seen going about the streets inquiring of every one if they wanted servants. Of course the wages came quickly down: men were now to be hired for twenty and twenty-five pounds a-year, and women from twelve to fifteen. One man I knew, who a month before would not hire under seventy pounds, said he would now be glad of a situation at twenty-five; which he could not get. The servants seemed astonished at the sudden change of things, for which they were not at all prepared.

From compassion, we allowed a number of female emigrants to live in a detached kitchen we had, until they could find situa-

tions as servants. They had little money, and lodgings were very high in price. These girls had come out with most magnificent notions, and were sadly disappointed when they found that situations were so difficult to be procured. Affairs, generally, were beginning to wear a threatening aspect; yet, in this country there is a lightness in the air which seems to prevent one feeling misfortunes so deeply as in England.

Most people like Port Philip after giving it a fair trial, as the delightful and healthful climate compensates for many disagreeables which one has not been accustomed to. The great thing is to get over the first feeling of surprise and disgust. Many find it impossible to do so, and return home to disgust others with their story; but I never yet met one who said, after being in the colony two years, that he would wish to leave it to return home, except for a visit. And this, certainly, notwithstanding what I suffered, is my own feeling towards the country.

To conclude these rough notes: I now commenced a school in Melbourne, and had great encouragement to go on with it, having been offered a number of boarders, indeed more than I could have taken charge of. After a short trial, I was unpleasantly reminded that my health was too uncertain to attempt carrying my plans into execution, otherwise all would have been well. Misfortunes did not fall singly. We had received at this time a severe and unexpected pecuniary disappointment from home, which, I am ashamed to say, notwithstanding the fine light air of Port Philip, made me very ill. My husband insisted on my going home to my mother with the children until his affairs were arranged, and I may consider myself very happy in having such a home to go to. Had I not been leaving my husband behind me in bad health, I could almost have considered our misfortunes a blessing, as it gave me the unspeakable delight of again seeing my mother—a happiness I had for some time ceased to hope I should ever enjoy, and which had been my only serious regret after leaving home.

I left Melbourne on the 10th September 1841, with the intention of returning; but that must be determined by my health and other circumstances.



A TALE OF NORFOLK ISLAND.



FAR distant from the many other islands with which the Southern Pacific Ocean is studded, one stands alone, rich in natural beauty, and with a climate almost unrivalled. Constantly fanned by cool breezes from the sea, its green hills and deep ravines abound in graceful pines and shady fern-trees. The wild jasmine and convolvuli climb the stems, and reach from tree to tree, forming bowers and walls of exquisite beauty. The rich soil maintains a perpetually luxuriant vegetation, and birds of brightest plumage rejoice in groves of the abundant guava, or amid the delicate blossoms of the golden lemon.

This lovely island was visited by Captain Cook in 1774, and named by him Norfolk Island; it was then uninhabited, and the party who landed were probably the first human beings who had ever set foot on it. Neither the vegetable nor the animal world had been disturbed. For about two hundred yards from the shore, the ground was covered so thickly with shrubs and plants as scarcely to be penetrable farther inland. The sea-fowl bred unmolested on the shores and cliffs. The account given by Cook led to an attempt at settlement on Norfolk Island; but this was attended with difficulty. The island is small, being only about six miles in length by four in breadth; and was therefore unavailable for a large or increasing population. Lying nine hundred miles from Port Jackson, in Australia, it was inconveniently remote from that country; and, worst of all, its clifly and rocky shores presented serious dangers to mariners attempting a landing. There are, indeed, only three places at which boats can effect a safe landing, and at these only with certain winds, and never in gales, which are frequent in this part of the globe. Its general unsuitableness, however, for ordinary colonisation was considered to adapt it as a penal settlement, subordinate to New South Wales, and to which convicts could be sent who merited fresh punishment while in course of servitude. Thus, one of the loveliest of earthly paradises was doomed to be a receptacle for the very worst—or shall we call them the most unfortunate and most wretched—of malefactors. It might be imagined that the beauty of Norfolk Island, and the fineness of its climate, would greatly tend to soothe the depraved minds of its unhappy tenants, and reconcile them, if anything could, to compulsory expatriation. That such effects may be produced by considerate treatment, is not improbable; but hitherto, or at least till a late period, one sentiment has overruled all others in the minds of the Norfolk Island convicts, and that has been a

desire for restoration to liberty. Impatient of control, and regardless of all consequences, they eagerly seize upon every opportunity of making their escape—with what fatal consequences let the following narrative bear witness. Written by a gentleman for some time resident in Norfolk Island, and handed to us for publication, as a warning to “those who go astray,” the whole may be relied upon as a true relation of facts.

“On the northern side of Norfolk Island the cliffs rise high, and are crowned by woods, in which the elegant whitewood and gigantic pine predominate. A slight indentation of the land affords a somewhat sheltered anchorage ground, and an opening in the cliffs has supplied a way to the beach by a winding road at the foot of the dividing hills. A stream of water, collected from many ravines, finds its way by a similar opening to a ledge of rock in the neighbourhood, and, falling over in feathery spray, has given the name of Cascade to this part of the island. Off this bay, on the morning of the 21st of June 1842, the brig *Governor Philip* was sailing, having brought stores for the use of the penal establishment. It was one of those bright mornings which this hemisphere alone knows, when the air is so elastic that its buoyancy is irresistibly communicated to the spirits. At the foot of the cliff, near a group of huge fragments of rock fallen from the overhanging cliffs, a prisoner was sitting close to the sea preparing food for his companions, who had gone off to the brig the previous evening with ballast, and who were expected to return at daylight with a load of stores. The surface of the sea was smooth, and the brig slowly moved on upon its soft blue waters. Everything was calm and still, when suddenly a sharp but distant sound as of a gun was heard. The man, who was stooping over the fire, started on his feet, and looked above and around him, unable to distinguish the quarter from whence the report came. Almost immediately he heard the sound repeated, and then distinctly perceived smoke curling from the vessel’s side. His fears were at once excited. Again he listened; but all was hushed, and the brig still stood steadily in towards the shore. Nearer and nearer she approached; until, alarmed for her safety, the man ran to summon the nearest officer. By the time they returned, the vessel had wore, and was standing off from the land; but while they remained in anxious speculation as to the cause of all this, the firing was renewed on board, and it was evident that some deadly fray was going on. At length a boat was seen to put off from the brig, and upon its reaching the shore, the worst fears of the party were realised. The misguided prisoners on board had attempted to seize the vessel. They were but twelve in number, unarmed, and guarded by twelve soldiers and a crew of eighteen men; yet they had succeeded in gaining possession of the vessel, had held it for a time, but had been finally overpowered, and immediate help was required for the wounded and dying.

June 21, 1842.—My duty as a clergyman called me to the scene of blood. When I arrived on the deck of the brig, it exhibited a frightful spectacle. One man, whose head was blown to atoms, was lying near the fore-castle. Close by his side a body was stretched, the face of which was covered by a cloth, as if a sight too ghastly to be looked upon; for the upper half of the head had been blown off. Not far from these, a man badly wounded was lying on the deck, with others securely handcuffed. Forward, by the companion-hatch, one of the mutineers was placed, bleeding most profusely from a wound which had shattered his thigh; yet his look was more dreadful than all—hate, passion, and disappointed rage rioted in his breast, and were deeply marked in his countenance. I turned away from the wretched man, and my eye shrunk from the sight which again met it. Lying on his back in a pool of blood, the muscular frame of a man whom I well knew was stretched, horribly mutilated. A ball had entered his mouth, and passing through his skull, had scattered his brains around. My heart sickened at the extent of carnage, and I was almost sinking with the faintness it produced, when I was roused by a groan so full of anguish and pain, that for a long time afterwards its echo seemed to reach me. I found that it came from a man lying farther forward, on whose face the death-dew was standing, yet I could perceive no wound. Upon questioning him, he moved his hand from his breast, and I then perceived that a ball had pierced his chest, and could distinctly hear the air rushing from his lungs through the orifice it had left. I tore away the shirt, and endeavoured to hold together the edges of the wound until it was bandaged. I spoke to him of prayer, but he soon grew insensible, and within a short time died in frightful agony. In every part of the vessel evidences of the attempt which had ended so fatally presented themselves, and the passions of the combatants were still warm. After attending those who required immediate assistance, I received the following account of the affair:—

The prisoners had slept the previous night in a part of the vessel appropriated for this purpose; but it was without fastening, or other means of securing them below. Two sentries were, however, placed over the hatchway. The prisoners occasionally came on deck during the night, for their launch was towing astern, and the brig was standing off and on until the morning. Between six and seven o'clock in the morning the men were called to work. Two of them were up some time before the rest. They were struck by the air of negligence which was evident on deck, and instantly communicated the fact to one or two others. The possibility of capturing the brig had often been discussed by the prisoners, among their many other wild plans for escaping from the island, and recently had been often proposed by them. The thought was told by their looks, and

soon spread from man to man. A few moments were enough; one or two were roused from sleep, and the intention was hurriedly communicated to them. It was variously received. One of them distrusted the leader, and intreated his companions to desist from so mad an attempt. It was useless; the frenzied thirst for liberty had seized them, and they were maddened by it. Within a few minutes they were all on deck; and one of the leaders rushing at the sentry nearest to him, endeavoured to wrest from him his pistols, one of which had flashed in the pan as he rapidly presented it, and threw him overboard; but he was subsequently saved. The arms of the other sentry were demanded, and obtained from him without resistance. A scuffle now took place with two other soldiers who were also on the deck, but not on duty, during which one of them jumped over the vessel's side, and remained for some time in the main chains; but upon the launch being brought alongside, he went down into it. The other endeavoured to swim ashore (for by this time the vessel was within a gun-shot of the rocks); but, encumbered by his greatcoat, he was seen, when within a few strokes of the rock, to raise his hands, and uttering a faint cry to Heaven for mercy, he instantly sunk. In the meanwhile, the sergeant in charge of the guard hearing the scuffling overhead, ran upon deck, and seeing some of the mutineers struggling with the sentry, shot the nearest of them dead on the spot. He had no sooner done so than he received a blow on the head, which rendered him for some time insensible. Little or no resistance was offered by the sailors; they ran into the fore-castle, and the vessel was in the hands of the mutineers. All the hatches were instantly fastened down, and every available thing at hand piled upon them. But now, having secured their opponents, the mutineers were unable to work the brig; they therefore summoned two of the sailors from below, and placed one of them at the wheel, while the other was directed to assist in getting the vessel off. The coxswain, a free man in charge of the prisoners, had at the first onset taken to the rigging, and remained in the maintop with one of the men who refused to join in the attack. At this moment a soldier who had gone overboard, and endeavoured to reach the shore, had turned back, and was seen swimming near the vessel. Woolfe, one of the convicts, immediately jumped into the boat alongside, and saved him. Whilst this was the state of things above, the soldiers had forced their way into the captain's cabin, and continued to fire through the gratings overhead as often as any of the mutineers passed. In this manner several of them received wounds. To prevent a continuance of this, a kettle of hot water was poured from above, and shortly afterwards a proposal was made to the captain from the prisoners to leave the vessel in the launch, provided he handed up to them the necessary supplies. This he refused, and then all the sailors were ordered from below into the launch, with the intention of

sending them ashore. Continuing to watch for the ringleaders, the captain caught a glimpse of one of them standing aft, and, as he supposed, out of reach. He mounted the cabin table, and almost at a venture fired through the woodwork in the direction he supposed the man to be standing. The shot was fatal; the ball struck him in the mouth, and passed through his brain. Terrified at the death of their comrades, the remainder were panic-struck, and instantly ran below. One of the leaders sprang over the taffarel, and eventually reached the launch. The sailor at the wheel, now seeing the deck almost cleared, beckoned up the captain, and without an effort the vessel was again in their possession. In the confusion, a soldier who had been in the boat, and was at this moment with the sailors returning on deck, was mistaken for one of the mutineers, and shot by the sergeant. The prisoners were now summoned from their place of concealment. They begged hard for mercy; and upon condition of their quietly surrendering, it was promised to them. As the first of them, in reliance upon this assurance, was gaining the deck, by some unhappy error he received a ball in his thigh, and fell back again. The rest refused to stir; but after a few moments' hesitation, another of them ventured up, was taken aft by the captain, and secured. A third followed, and as he came up, he extended his arms, and cried, 'I surrender; spare me.' Either this motion was mistaken by the soldiers, or some of them were unable to restrain their passion, for at this instant the man's head was literally blown off. The captain hastened to the spot and received the others, who were secured without further injury.

When we reached the vessel, the dying, dead, and wounded were lying in every direction. In the launch astern, we saw the body of one wretched man who had leaped over the taffarel, and reached the boat badly wounded; he was seen lying in it when the deck was regained, and was then pierced through with many balls. Nothing could be more horrible than his appearance; the distortion of every feature, his clenched hands, and the limbs which had stiffened in the forms of agony into which pain had twisted them, were appalling. The countenance of every man on board bore evidence of the nature of the deadly conflict in which he had been engaged. In some, sullenness had succeeded to reckless daring, and exultation to alarm in others.

Nothing could have been more desperate than such an attempt to seize the vessel. The most culpable neglect could alone have encouraged it; and it is difficult to conceive how it could have succeeded, if anything like a proper stand had been made by those in charge of her when it commenced.

The wounded were immediately landed, and conveyed to the hospital, and the dead bodies were afterwards brought on shore.

The burial-ground is close to the beach. A heavy surf rolls mournfully over the reef. The moon had just risen, when, in

deep and solemn silence, the bodies of these misguided men were lowered into the graves prepared for them. Away from home and country, they had found a fearful termination of a miserable existence. Perhaps ties had still bound them to the world; friends whom they loved were looking for their return, and prodigals though they had been, would have blessed them, and forgiven their offences. Perhaps even at that sad moment mothers were praying for their lost ones, whom in all their infamy they had still fondly loved. Such thoughts filled my mind; and when a few drops of rain at that moment descended, I could not help thinking that they fell as tears from heaven over the guilt and misery of its children.

On the morning following the fatal occurrence, I visited the jail in which the mutineers were confined. The cells are small, but clean and light. In the first of them I found George Beavers, Nicholas Lewis, and Henry Sears. Beavers was crouching in one corner of the cell, and looking sullen, and in despair. Lewis, who was walking the scanty space of the cell, seemed to glory in the rattle of his heavy chains; while Sears was stretched apparently asleep upon a grass mat. They were all heavily ironed, and every precaution had evidently been taken to prevent escape.

The jail is small, and by no means a secure one. It was once a public-house; and notwithstanding every effort to adapt it to its present purpose, it is not a safe or proper place of confinement. It is little calculated to resist any attempt to rescue the men, whose daring conduct was the subject of high encomium among their fellow-prisoners, by whom any attempt to escape is considered a meritorious act. In the other cell I found Woolfe and Barry, the latter in much agony from an old wound in the leg, the pain of which had been aggravated by the heavy irons which galled it. All the prisoners, except Barry and Woolfe, readily acknowledged their participation in the attempt to seize the brig; but most solemnly denied any knowledge of a preconcerted plan to take her; or that they, at least, had attempted to throw the soldiers overboard. They were unwilling to be interrupted, and inveighed in the bitterest manner against some of their companions who had, they seemed to think, betrayed them, or at least had led them on, and at the moment of danger had flinched.

The names of the surviving mutineers were John Jones, Nicholas Lewis, Henry Sears, George Beavers, James Woolfe, Thomas Whelan, and Patrick Barry.

The depositions against them having been taken, all the men I have mentioned, with the exception of Jones and Whelan, who were wounded, were brought out to hear them read. They listened with calm attention, but none of them appeared to be much excited. Once only during the reading, Beavers passionately denied the statements made by one of the witnesses present, and was with difficulty silenced. His countenance at that

moment was terribly agitated; every bad feeling seemed to mingle in its passionate expression. They were all young, powerful, and, with one or two exceptions, not at all ill-looking men.

From the jail I proceeded to the hospital, where the wounded men were lying. They had each received severe wounds in the thigh, and were in great agony. The violence of Jones was excessive. Weakened in some degree by an immense loss of blood, the bitterness of his spirit, nevertheless, exhibited itself in passionate bursts of impatience. He was occasionally convulsed with excessive pain; for the nerves of the thigh had been much lacerated, and the bone terribly shattered. His features were distorted with pain and anger, and occasionally bitter curses broke from his lips; yet there was something about his appearance which powerfully arrested my attention—an evident marking of intellect and character, repulsive in its present development, yet in many respects remarkable. His history had been a melancholy one, and, as illustrative of many thousand others, I give it as I afterwards received it from his lips.

At eleven years of age he was employed in a warehouse in Liverpool as an errand-boy. While following this occupation, from which by good conduct he might have risen to something better, he was met in the street one day by the lad whom he had succeeded in this employment, and was told by him how he might obtain money by robbing the warehouse, and then go with him to the theatre. He accordingly took an opportunity of stealing some articles which had been pointed out, and gave them to his companion, who, in disposing of them, was detected, and of course criminated Jones. After remaining some weeks in jail, Jones was tried and acquitted; but his character being now gone, he became reckless, and commenced a regular career of depredation. In attempting another warehouse robbery, he was detected, and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment. By the time he was released from this, he was well tutored in crime, and believed that he could now adroitly perform the same robbery in which he had previously failed. He made the attempt the very night of his release from jail, and with temporary success. Subsequently, however, he was detected, and received sentence of transportation for seven years. He underwent this sentence, and an additional one in Van Diemen's Land, chiefly at Port Arthur, the most severe of the penal stations there. From this place he, with Lewis, Moss (who was shot on board the brig), and Woolfe, having seized a whale-boat, effected their escape. During three months they underwent the most extreme hardships from hunger and exposure. Once they had been without food for several days, and their last hook was over the boat's side; they were anxiously watching for a fish. A small blue shark took the bait, and in despair one of them dashed over the boat's side to seize the fish; his leg was caught by one

of the others, and they succeeded in saving both man and hook. They eventually reached Twofold Bay, on the coast of New South Wales, and were then apprehended, conveyed to Sydney, and thence sent back to Van Diemen's Land; tried, and received sentence of death; but this was subsequently commuted to transportation for life to Norfolk Island.

Jones often described to me the intense misery he had undergone during his career. He had never known what freedom was, and yet incessantly longed for it. All alike confessed the unhappiness of their career. Having made the first false step into crime, they acknowledged that their minds became polluted by the associations they formed during imprisonment. Then they were further demoralised by thinking of the *glory*—such miserable glory!—attending a trial; and the hulks and the voyage out gave them a finished criminal training. The extent of punishment many of them have undergone during the period of transportation is almost incredible. I have known men whose original sentence of seven years has been extended over three times that period, and who, in addition to other punishment, have received five thousand or six thousand lashes!

After many solemn interviews with the mutineers, I found them gradually softening. They became more communicative, and extremely anxious to receive instruction. I think I shall never forget one of the earliest of these visits to them. I first saw Sears, Beavers, and Jones. After a long and interesting conversation with them, we joined in that touching confession of sin with which the liturgy of the Church of England commences. As we knelt together, I heard them repeat with great earnestness—'We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep,' &c. When we arose, I perceived that each of them had been shedding tears. It was the first time I had seen them betray any such emotion, and I cannot tell how glad I felt; but when I proceeded afterwards to read to them the first chapter of Isaiah, I had scarcely uttered that most exquisite passage in the second verse—'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me'—when the claims of God, and *their* violation and rejection of them; His forbearance, and *their* ingratitude, appeared to overwhelm them; they sobbed aloud, and were thoroughly overpowered.

For a considerable time we talked together of the past, the wretched years they had endured, the punishments, and the crimes which had led to them, until they seemed to feel most keenly the folly of their sad career. We passed on to contrast the manner in which their lives had been spent, with what God and society required from them; their miserable perversion of God's gifts, with the design for which He gave them, until we were led on to speak of hope and of faith; of Him who 'willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live;' and then the Saviour's remonstrance

seemed to arrest them—'Ye will not come to me that ye might have life;' until at length the influences of the Holy Spirit were supplicated with earnestness and solemnity. These instructions, and such conversation, were daily repeated; and henceforth each time I saw them I perceived a gradual but distinct unfolding of the affections and the understanding.

August.—The wounded men are much recovered, and the whole of the mutineers are now confined together in a large ward of the jail. They have long received extreme kindness from the commandant, and are literally bewildered at finding that even this last act has not diminished the exercise of his benevolence. That anybody should care for them, or take such pains about them after their violent conduct, excited surprise—at first almost amounting to suspicion; but this at length gave place to the warmest gratitude. They were, in fact, subdued by it. They read very much, are extremely submissive, and carefully avoid the slightest infringement of the prison regulations. At first, all this was confined to the three men I have mentioned; but their steady consistency of conduct, and the strange transformation of character so evident in them, gradually arrested the attention of the others, and eventually led to a similar result.

They will be detained here until the case has been decided by the authorities in Sydney. They will probably be tried by a commission sent from thence to the island for the purpose. Formerly, however, prisoners charged with capital offences here were sent up for trial; but (it is a horrible fact) this was found to lead to so much crime, that, at much inconvenience and expense, it was found absolutely necessary to send down a judicial commission on each important occasion, in order to prevent it. The mere excitement of a voyage, with the chances connected with it, nay, merely a wish to get off the island even for a time, led many men to commit crimes of the deepest dye in order to be sent to Sydney for trial.

Two months, therefore, at least must intervene between the perpetration of the offence and their trial; and this interval is usually employed in similar cases in arranging a defence but too commonly supported by perjury. In the present instance, I found not the slightest attempt to follow such a course. They declare that they expect death, and will gladly welcome it. Of their life, which has been a course of almost constant warfare with society, ending in remorseful feelings, they are all thoroughly weary, although only one of them exceeds thirty years of age.

In addition to the ordinary services, Captain Maconochie each Sunday afternoon has read prayers to them, and has given permission to a few of their friends to be present. Singular good has resulted from it, both to the men and those who join in their devotions. At the conclusion of one of these services Sears stood up, and with his heart so full as scarcely to allow

him utterance, to the surprise of every person there he addressed most impressively the men who were present. 'Perhaps,' said he, 'the words of one of yourselves, unhappily circumstanced as I am, may have some weight with you. You all know the life I have led; it has, believe me, been a most unhappy one; and I have, I hope not too late, discovered the cause of this. I solemnly tell you that it is because I have broken God's laws. I am almost ashamed to speak, but I dare not be silent. I am going to tell you a strange thing. I never before was happy; I begin now, for the first time in my life, to *hope*. I am an ignorant man, or at least I was so; but I thank God I begin to see things in their right light now. I have been unhappily placed from my childhood, and have endured many hardships. I do not mention this to excuse my errors; yet if I had years since received the kindness I have done here, it might have been otherwise. My poor fellows, do turn over a new leaf; try to serve God, and you, too, will be happier for it.' The effect was most thrilling; there was a death-like silence; tears rolled down many cheeks, which I verily believe never before felt them; and without a word more, all slowly withdrew.

This man's story is also a common, but painful one. At fifteen years of age he was transported for life as an accomplice in an assault and alleged robbery, of which, from circumstances which have since transpired, I have little doubt he was entirely innocent. During a long imprisonment in Horsham jail, he received an initiation in crime, which was finished during the outward voyage. Upon his arrival in New South Wales, he was assigned to a settler in the interior, a notoriously hard and severe man, who gave him but a scanty supply of food and clothing, and whose aim seemed to be to take the utmost out of him at the least possible expense. Driven at length to desperation, he, with three fellow-servants, absconded; and when taken, made a complaint to the magistrate before whom they were brought almost without clothes. Their statements were found to be literally correct; but for absconding they were sent to Newcastle, one of the penal stations of New South Wales, where Sears remained nearly two years. At the expiration of that time he was again assigned, but unfortunately to a man, if possible, worse than his former employer, and again absconded. For this offence he was sent to Moreton Bay, another penal settlement, and endured three years of horrible severity, starvation, and misery of every kind. His temper was by this time much soured; and, roused by the conduct of the overseers, he became brutalised by constant punishment for resisting them. After this he was sent to Sydney, as one of the crew in the police-boat, of which he was soon made assistant coxswain. For not reporting a theft committed by one of the men under his charge, he was sentenced to a road party; and attempting to escape from it, he was apprehended, and again ordered to Moreton Bay for

four years more. There he was again repeatedly flogged for disobedience and resistance of overseers, as well as attempting to escape; but having most courageously rendered assistance to a vessel wrecked off the harbour, he attracted the attention of the commandant, who afterwards showed him a little favour. This was the first approach to kindness he had known since when, years before, he had left his home; and it had its usual influence. He never was again in a scrape there. His good conduct induced the commandant to recommend him for a mitigation of sentence, which he received, and he was again employed in the police-boat. The free coxswain of the boat was, however, a drunkard, and intrusted much to Sears. Oftentimes he roused the men by his violence, but Sears contrived to subdue his passion. At length, one night returning to the hut drunk, the man struck at one of the crew with his cutlass, and the rest resisted and disarmed him. But the morning came; the case was heard; their story was disbelieved; and upon the charge and evidence of the aggressor, they were sent to an ironed gang, to work on the public roads. When Sears again became eligible for assignment, a person whom he had known in Sydney applied for him. The man must be removed within a fixed period after the authority is given. In this case, application was made a day beyond the prescribed time, and churlishly refused. The disappointment roused a spirit so untutored as his, and once again he absconded; was of course apprehended, tried, and being found with a man who had committed a robbery, and had a musket in his possession, was sent to Norfolk Island for life. This sentence has, however, for meritorious conduct, been reduced to fourteen years; and his ready assistance during a fire which recently broke out in the military garrison here, might possibly have helped to obtain a still further reduction. He never, during those abscondings, was absent for any long period, and never committed any act of violence. His constant attempt seems to have been to reach Sydney, in order to effect his escape from the scene of so much misery.

For some time past I have noticed his quiet and orderly conduct, and was really sorry when I found him concerned in this unhappy affair. His desire for freedom was, however, most ardent, and a chance of obtaining it was almost irresistible. He has since told me that a few words kindly spoken to himself and others by Captain Maconochie when they landed, sounded so pleasantly to him—such are his own words—that he determined from that moment he would endeavour to do well. He assures me that he was perfectly unconscious of a design to take the brig, until awoke from his sleep a few minutes before the attack commenced; that he then remonstrated with the men; but finding it useless, he considered it a point of honour not to fail them. His anxiety for instruction is intense; he listens like a child; and his gratitude is most touching. He, together with

Jones, Woolfe, and Barry, were chosen by the commandant as a police-boat's crew; and had, up to this period, acted with great steadiness and fidelity in the discharge of the duties required from them. Nor do I think they would even now, tempting as the occasion was, have thought of seizing it, had it not been currently reported that they were shortly to be placed under a system of severity such as they had already suffered so much from.

Woolfe's story of himself is most affecting. He entered upon evil courses when very young; was concerned in burglaries when only eleven years of age. Yet this was from no natural love of crime. Enticed from his home by boys older than himself, he soon wearied of the life he led, and longed to return to his home and his kind mother. Oftentimes he lingered near the street she lived in. Once he had been very unhappy, for he had seen his brother and sister that day pass near him, and it had rekindled all his love for them. They appeared happy in their innocence; he was miserable in his crime. He now determined to go home and pray to be forgiven. The evening was dark and wet, and as he entered the court in which his friends lived, his heart failed him, and he turned back; but, unable to resist the impulse, he again returned, and stole under the window of the room. A rent in the narrow curtain enabled him to see within. His mother sat by the fire, and her countenance was so sad, that he was sure she thought of him; but the room looked so comfortable, and the whole scene was so unlike the place in which he had lately lived, that he could no longer hesitate. He approached the door; the latch was almost in his hand, when shame and fear, and a thousand other vile and foolish notions, held him back; and the boy who in another moment might have been happy—*was lost*. He turned away, and I believe has never seen them since. Going on in crime, he in due course of time was transported for robbery. His term of seven years expired in Van Diemen's Land. Released from forced servitude, he went a whaling voyage, and was free nearly two years. Unhappily, he was then charged with aiding in a robbery, and again received a sentence of transportation. He was sent to Port Arthur, there employed as one of the boat's crew, and crossing the bay one day with a commissariat officer, the boat was capsized by a sudden squall. In attempting to save the life of the officer, he was seized by his dying grasp, and almost perished with him; but extricating himself, he swam back to the boat. Seeing the drowning man exhausted, and sinking, he dashed forward again, diving after him, and happily succeeded in saving his life. For this honourable act he would have received a remission of sentence; but ere it could arrive, he and five others made their escape. He had engaged with these men in the plan to seize the boat, and although sure of the success of the application in his favour, he could not now draw back. The result I have already shown. There were two more men concerned in

the mutiny, who, with those I have mentioned, and those killed on board the brig, made up the number of the boat's crew. But neither of these men came under my charge, being both Roman Catholics.

At length the brig, which had been despatched with an account of the affair, returned, and brought the decision of the governor of New South Wales. He had found it extremely difficult, almost impossible, to obtain fitting members for the commission, who would be willing to accept the terms proposed by the government, or trust themselves in this dreadful place, and therefore he had determined that the prisoners should be sent up for trial. The men were sadly disappointed at this arrangement. They wished much to end their days here, and they dreaded both the voyage and the distracting effect of new scenes. They cling, too, with grateful attachment to the commandant's family, and the persons who, during their long imprisonment, had taken so strong an interest in their welfare. I determined to accompany them, and watch for their perseverance in well-doing, that I might counsel and strengthen them under the fearful ordeal I could not doubt they would have to pass.

The same steady consistency marked the conduct of these men to the moment of their embarkation. There was a total absence of all excitement; one deep serious feeling appeared to possess them, and its solemnity was communicated to all of us. They spoke and acted as men standing on the confines of the unseen world, and who not only thought of its wonders, but, better still, who seemed to have caught something of its spirit and purity.

November.—The voyage up was a weary, and, to the prisoners, a very trying one. In a prison on the lower deck of a brig of one hundred and eighty-two tons, fifty-two men were confined. The place itself was about twenty feet square, of course low, and badly ventilated. The men were all ironed, and fastened to a heavy chain rove through iron rings let into the deck, so that they were unable, for any purpose, to move from the spot they occupied; scarcely, indeed, to lie down. The weather was also unfavourable. The vessel tossed and pitched most fearfully during a succession of violent squalls, accompanied by thunder and lightning. I cannot describe the wretchedness of these unhappy convicts: sick, and surrounded by filth, they were huddled together in the most disgusting manner. The heat was at times unbearable. There were men of sixty—quiet and inoffensive old men—placed with others who were as accomplished villains as the world could produce. These were either proceeding to Sydney, their sentences on the island having expired, or as witnesses in another case (a bold and wicked murder) sent there also for trial. The sailors on board the brig were for the most part the cowardly fellows who had so disgracefully allowed the brig to be taken from them; and they, as well as the soldiers on guard (some of them formed a part of the former one), had no very kindly feel-

ing towards the mutineers. It may be imagined, therefore, that such feelings occasioned no alleviation of their condition. In truth, although there was no actual cruelty exhibited, they suffered many oppressive annoyances; yet I never saw more patient endurance. It was hard to bear, but their better principles prevailed. Upon the arrival of the vessel in Sydney, we learned that the case had excited an unusual interest. Crowds assembled to catch a glimpse of the men as they landed; and while some applauded their daring, the great majority very loudly expressed their horror at the crime of which they stood accused.

I do not think it necessary to describe the trial, which took place in a few days after landing. All were arraigned except Barry. The prisoners' counsel addressed the jurors with powerful eloquence; but it was in vain: the crime was substantiated; and the jury returned a verdict of guilty against all the prisoners, recommending Woolfe to mercy.

During the whole trial, the prisoners' conduct was admirable; so much so, indeed, as to excite the astonishment of the immense crowd collected by curiosity to see men who had made so mad an attempt for liberty. They scarcely spoke, except once to request that the wounded man, who yet suffered much pain, might be allowed to sit down. Judgment was deferred until the following day. When they were then placed at the bar, the judge, in the usual manner, asked whether they had any reason to urge why sentence should not be pronounced upon them? It was a moment of deep solemnity; every breath was held; and the eyes of the whole court were directed towards the dock. Jones spoke in a deep clear voice, and in a deliberate harangue pointed out some defects in the evidence, though without the slightest hope, he said, of mitigating the sentence now to be pronounced on himself and fellows. Three of the others also spoke. Whelan said, 'that he was not one of the men properly belonging to the boat's crew, but had been called upon to fill the place of another man, and had no knowledge of any intention to take the vessel, and the part he took on board was forced upon him. He was compelled to act as he had done; he had used no violence, nor was he in any way a participator in any that had been committed.' At the conclusion of the address to them, Jones, amidst the deep silence of the court, pronounced a most emphatic prayer for mercy on his own soul and those of his fellow-prisoners, for the judge and jury, and finally for the witnesses. Sentence of death was then solemnly pronounced upon them all; but the judge informed Woolfe that he might hold out to him expectations that his life would be spared. They were then removed from the bar, and sent back to the condemned cells.

I cannot say how much I dreaded my interview with them that day; for although I had all along endeavoured to prepare their minds for the worst result, and they had themselves never for a moment appeared to expect any other than this, I feared

that the realisation of their sad expectation would break them down. Hitherto there might have been some secret hope sustaining them. The convulsive clinging to life, so common to all of us, would now perhaps be more palpably exhibited.

Entering their cells, I found them, as I feared, stunned by the blow which had now fallen on them, and almost overpowered by mental and bodily exhaustion. A few remarks about the trial were at length made by them; and from that moment I never heard them refer to it again. There was no bitterness of spirit against the witnesses, no expression of hostility towards the soldiers, no equivocation in any explanation they gave. They solemnly denied many of the statements made against them; but, nevertheless, the broad fact remained, that they were guilty of an attempt to violently seize the vessel, and it was useless debating on minor considerations.

In the meantime, without their knowledge, petitions were prepared and forwarded to the judges, the governor, and executive council. In them were stated various mitigatory facts in their favour; and the meliorated character of the criminal code at home was also strongly urged. Every attention was paid to these addresses, following each other to the last moment. But all was in vain. The council sat, and determined that five of the men should be hanged on the following Tuesday. Whelan, who could have no previous knowledge of a plan to seize the vessel, together with Woolfe, was spared. The remaining four were to suffer. The painful office of communicating this final intelligence to these men was intrusted to me, and they listened to the announcement not without deep feeling, but still with composure.

It would be very painful for me to dwell on the closing scene. The unhappy and guilty men were attended by the zealous chaplain of the jail, whose earnest exhortations and instructions they most gratefully received. The light of truth shone clearly on the past, and they felt that their manifold lapses from the path of virtue had been the original cause of the complicated misery they had endured. They intreated forgiveness of all against whom they had offended, and in the last words to their friends were uttered grateful remembrances to Captain Macnochie, his family, and others. At the place of execution, they behaved with fortitude and a composure befitting the solemnity of the occasion. Having retired from attendance upon them in their last moments, I was startled from the painful stupor which succeeded in my own mind, by the loud and heavy bound of the drop as it fell, and told me that their spirits had gone to God who gave them."

Our reverend informant, in closing his narrative, adds some reflections on the painful nature of the tragedy in which he was called to lend his professional assistance. He laments the

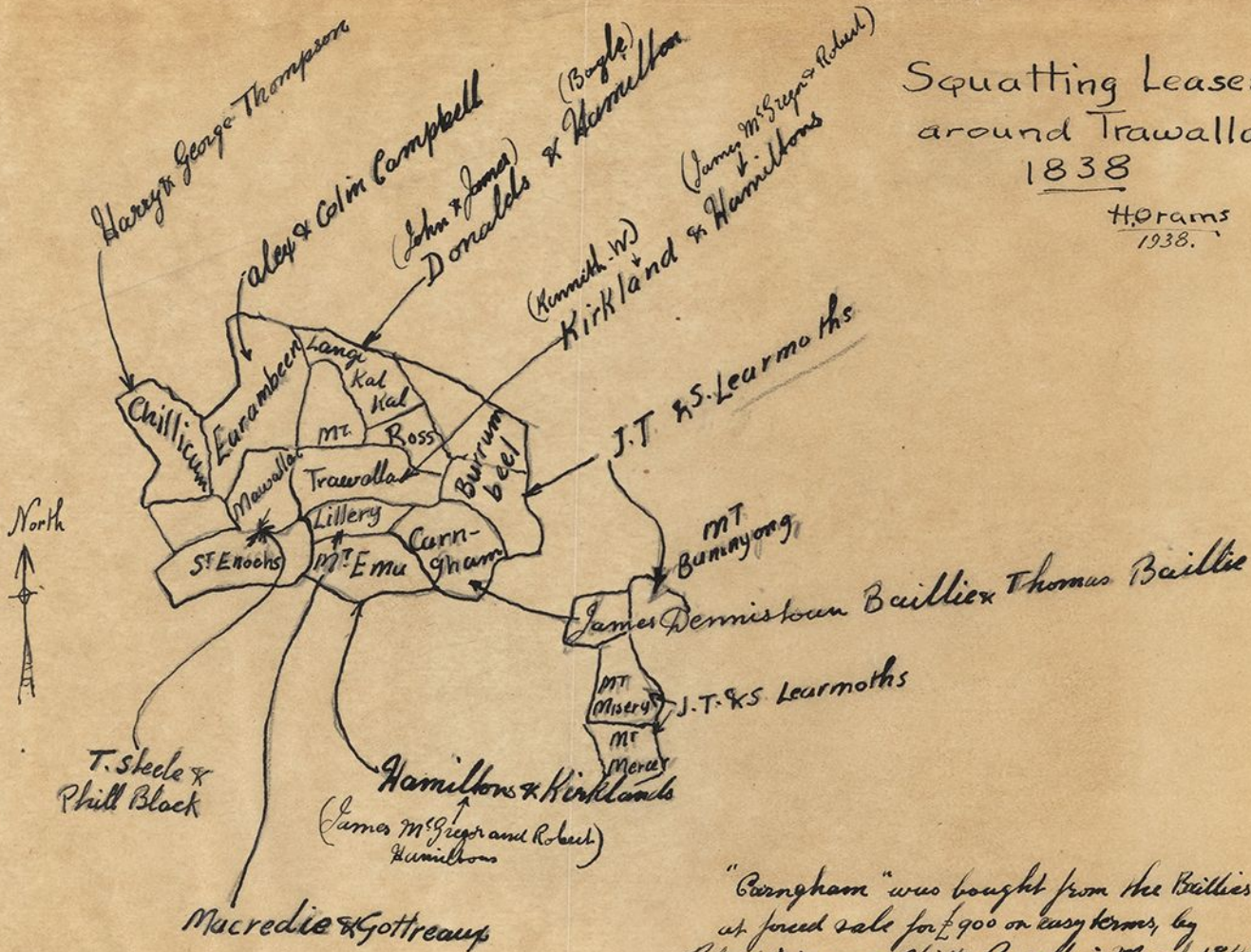
general harshness of penal discipline, and attributes the last fatal crime of these men to the recent arrival of orders which shut out all hope of any improvement being effected in their circumstances, however well they might behave. Previously, he says, while hope was permitted to them, they had conducted themselves well. While agreeing in his humane views, we would, at the same time, avoid appearing as the apologists of crime under any circumstances. Our main object in laying the foregoing narrative before the world in its present shape, is to impress those who may be tottering on the verge of crime with the danger of their situation—to show them that a course of error is a course of misery, ending in consequences the most afflicting.

It may be seen from the history of the unhappy men before us, that transportation is at the best equivalent to going into slavery—that the convict loses, for the time, his civil rights. Torn from his family, his home, and his country, he is placed at the disposal of the crown and its functionaries; can be put to any kind of labour, however repugnant to his feelings; dressed in the most degrading apparel; chained like a wild beast if refractory; and on the commission of any new offence while in this state of servitude, he is liable to fresh punishment by transportation to such penal settlements as Norfolk Island. It might almost be said that no man in his senses would voluntarily commit crimes which would expose him to the risk of so terrible an infliction as that of transportation even for the limited period of seven years. But, alas! men who have entered on a course of error, forgetful of every duty which they owe to themselves and society, can scarcely be said to be in possession of a sound mind; and they go on floundering from one degree of vice to another, till brought into the condition of transported and personally enslaved convicts. Should the present narrative fall accidentally into the hands of individuals who are in danger of falling into a course of vice, we would hope that it will help to restrain them. The unfortunate men whose death has been recorded were once as they are: they went over the golden line of honour and duty—and behold the consequences; a short life of hardship, misery, and a violent and ignominious death.



Squatting Leases
around Trawalla
1838

H. Orams
1938.



"Bingham" was bought from the Baillies at forced sale for £900 on easy terms, by Robert Dimeson & Phillip Russell in March 1843.

The age
Nov. 27. 1937

Books of the Day.

(Continued from Page 1).

Founder of Geelong.

The founder of Geelong was Dr. Alexander Thomson, who in 1836 selected as a sheep station the land on which the city now stands. He built his homestead on the right bank of the Barwon, and named it Kardinia, and he lived there from 1837 until his death in 1866. The story of this pioneer is told in an interesting volume, "Dr. Alexander Thomson" (Robertson and Mullens Ltd., Melbourne). The personal and historical data was collected by Dr. R. R. Wettenhall, of Toorak (whose wife was a great-granddaughter of Dr. Thomson), and the text is the work of the well-known Australian writer Mr. R. H. Croll.

Alexander Thomson was born in Aberdeen in 1800, and on obtaining his medical degree he accepted a post as surgeon in a convict ship bound for Van Diemen's Land. He brought his wife and daughter to Australia in 1831, and five years later he settled in Melbourne, which was then only a few months old, and consisted of a few huts. He took a very active part in the early development of Victoria. In 1839 he helped to establish the Port Phillip and Melbourne Bank, and in the following year he was associated with the launching of the Port Phillip Steam Navigation Co., the Melbourne Auction Co. and the Pastoral and Agricultural Society of Australia Felix. He held pastoral properties in several districts of Victoria; he took a leading part in the campaign for the separation of Victoria from New South Wales, and he was a member of the first Legislative Council of Victoria. He was one of the promoters of the railway connecting Melbourne and Geelong, built by a private company with a capital of £350,000, on which the Government guaranteed 5 per cent. interest. This history of one of the earliest and most active pioneers of Victoria makes entertaining reading.

