Adventures of a Colonist

or Godfrey Arabin the Settler

McCombie, Thomas (1819-1869)

A digital text sponsored by
Australian Cooperative Digitisation Project 1840-1845

University of Sydney Library

Sydney

1997
http://setis.library.usyd.edu.au/ozlit/
© University of Sydney Library, State Library of NSW, National Library of Australia and Monash University Library.The texts and images are not to be used for commercial purposes without permission
This text has been digitised as part of the **Australian Cooperative Digitisation Project 1840-1845**, an initiative funded by the Australian Research Council.The Project is a collaboration between the University of Sydney Library, the State Library of NSW, the National Library of Australia and Monash University Library.

Source Text:

Prepared from the print edition published by JOHN and DANIEL A. DARLING, LONDON BISHOPSGATE STREET 1845

All quotation marks retained as data
All unambiguous end-of-line hyphens have been removed, and the trailing part of a word has been joined to the preceding line.

Images exist as archived TIFF images, one or more GIF images for general use.

First Published: 1845

Australian Etexts novels 1840-1869 prose fiction

28th October 1997
Creagh Cole Coordinator
Final Checking and Parsing

Adventures of a Colonist

or Godfrey Arabin the Settler

London

JOHN and DANIEL A. DARLING

1845

CONTENTS

Chapter I ...... Introduction — a Character
II........ Colonial Politics
III ...... An Eclaircissement
IV .... A Night in the Australian Bush
V .... The Abode of a Settler
VI .... A Patient — More Adventures
VII ...... Internal Struggles
VIII.... A pathetic Scene
IX .... An Australian Hotel — a Journey by Daylight
X .... The Arrival — Bush Hospitality — the Escape
XI .... An Australian Merchant
XII...... A dangerous Interview
XIII..... A general Record
XIV..... A Chapter on Love
XV...... A Colonial Inn
XVI ..... The Wedding Morning — an unbidden Guest
XVII .... Descriptive and general
XVIII ... A Catastrophe
XIX..... A Family Party — an Eclaircissement
XX ...... A Bush Party — the Outlandish Settler's Tale
XXI ..... Conclusion
An Essay on the Aborigines of Australia

ARABIN; OR, THE ADVENTURES OF A COLONIST.

CHAPTER I. THE INTRODUCTION — A CHARACTER.

THE distinguished American writer, Washington Irving, in his introduction to "The Sketch Book," has depicted his ardent longing, when young, for travel; in recording his own experience, he has described the feelings of the young of Britain and America. We observe, it is true, many young men, educated within the influence of strict commercial discipline, who sink prematurely into the starched neckcloths and saturnine countenances of their forefathers, while their anxious faces little accord with their extreme youth, and their mock anxiety is a caricature upon the profession. We are happy to think the majority of our young men, especially those who have been born free from the influence of commercial circles, are more or less addicted to poetry and literary pursuits; many rear Utopian schemes in early life, while a few — a favoured few — go beyond this, and end by becoming enthusiasts. Out of this latter class, our intellectual great have sprung — our beautiful prose writers and sublime poets, our finest painters and most celebrated sculptors, our brave commanders, and most distinguished circumnavigators and travellers. Indeed, were it our object to write an essay on enthusiasm, we would draw a distinct line of demarcation between practical and speculative enthusiasm; but this is not our purpose, and we merely wish to introduce a young man of enthusiastic temperament to our readers.

Godfrey Arabin was the third son of a respectable trader in a county-town in England. At the early age of eight he was sent to the care of a relative in the south of Scotland, and went to a school of repute in the neighbourhood of his retation's dwelling. He attended the school regularly; his relation was a bachelor, and he was allowed to follow the bent of his wild fancy. He mixed with the country-people, and acquired much information — for, as a people, the Scotch stand pre-eminent for intellectual ability, and many of the lower orders are passionately attached to the literature of their country. The country-people are rather fond of fictitious and speculative literature, and the schoolboy would often spend the winter evenings with some one who would talk over the adventures of Ivanhoe. When he did not meet with agreeable company, he used to wander among the mountains, thinking on the warriors and people of the long-forgotten past, until he would inspire the dull landscape with imaginary beings. He stood in fancy at the head of an array of warriors, while on the opposite side was the enemy's camp. He unsheathed his

sword, gave his war-cry, and led to the attack, — the opposing forces are scattered as chaff before the wind. He remembered, when with his mother he went to view one of England's "old cathedrals," and gazing with astonishment upon the tombs of the Crusaders, his impression of that strange order was vague and mazy, something like that we might derive from the description of Coeur de Lion, Ivanhoe, and Conrad of Montserrat, in the novel of "Ivanhoe." He would brood over the battles and sieges of the Crusades until his heart throbbed and his cheek flushed. He was often overpowered by an intense melancholy, which he however kept concealed, yet at times the most trifling incidents would chill his heart. He commonly took refuge in pious exercises, which he would perform fervently for two or three weeks, when, we regret to add, some new fancy would occupy his mind, or his attention would be captivated by some one of the many fictitious works then emanating from both the London and Edinburgh press.

When he had attained the age of fifteen, he was removed to Edinburgh to finish his education at the University: he was unwilling to leave his acquaintances, but at the same time was glad that he should have opportunities of seeing life and procuring books. He was no sooner established in a lodging-house, than he began to feast upon the contents of the circulating libraries. Hitherto he had merely fallen in with works of fiction by chance, and with the exception of one or two of Sir Walter Scott's novels, they had been romances of the old school — emanations of the Minerva Press, as it has been designated; but now he revelled among the works of fiction which then almost daily issued from the press. The great change in the quality of the fictitious literature of the country was a leading feature of the time. The vulgarity, crudeness, and mawkishness which had marked the former school of fashionable romances was no longer to be observed; the works of Miss Edgeworth were the first which marked a new school, and soon after Sir Walter Scott was hailed as the head of a renovated style of fictitious literature, for as before the most improbable tales had been dished up with a seasoning of satyrs, hobgoblins, &c., Sir Walter Scott's tales on the contrary were rounded upon the more permanent basis of history, and being moreover executed in a style which almost placed imitation at defiance, they were not only favourably received, but the author acquired, perhaps, a more enduring fame than any former prose writer in our literature. The young scholar often neglected his lessons to indulge in his passion for novel-reading; he made little distinction between the good and the bad; indeed, he devoured everything in the shape of a romance which came within his reach. Here we may remark, that many may observe in Arabin some resemblance to

the character of Waverly; we firmly assert, however, that we have not copied from the great work of the "Wizard of the North"; indeed, it is because the character is rounded upon truth and *permanent* that it *must* resemble. The future career of Arabin will have no affinity with "the fortunes of Waverley," for, from the peculiar constitution of society in the present day, there are many Waverleys and Arabins.

In his humble sleeping-room Arabin lived in a fictitious world; from the occasional neglect of his studies, he was regarded by his teachers as a boy of slender abilities; nay, he often feigned bad health to escape the irksome restraints of a public school. At certain periods, however, the meanness of such conduct would break upon his mind, and then he would decline the practice, and pay more attention to his lessons.

He had attained the age of eighteen before his teachers considered he had a sufficient knowledge of languages. About this time he determined to devote his attention to the science of medicine. The medical college of Edinburgh is justly celebrated; and as the young scholar had a taste for medical studies, his advances in the science astonished many of his former friends, who had regarded him as a dull boy. Even at this period the same feature of melancholy marked his character; the translations from the German writers, which were just then becoming the rage, were eagerly devoured by him, and their dreary metaphysics pleased him, and increased the flame of melancholy which glowed in his heart, engendered by solitary habits and the Byronian style of fictitious literature. This morbid misanthropy bid fair at one time to nip the flower in the morning of life, for he would crouch about without enjoying the pleasures of nature. Then, again, he would fancy himself a character of romance, and to keep up the deception would wander among the ancient churches, and transport himself centuries into the past. What magic exists in the *past* for novelist, poet, and enthusiast! — how can we expect any admiration for our poor labours, which are to be devoted to the present, and perhaps even towards the future? In plain words, Arabin was a melancholy enthusiast. Have we overdrawn the character? or, on the contrary, might it not be found to assimilate with that of many young men of the present day, even among the classes known as tradesmen? We have observed in the world too great an anxiety to ape the misanthropy in which the Byron school of poets have so completely enveloped their heroes.

Arabin passed the usual examinations, and having received his diploma, left the metropolis of Scotland for his native land. His father died, and he found himself possessed of £500, with the world before him. He ruminated upon the course which he was called upon to pursue, and being unable to come to a determination, went over to the Continent, and

travelled in France and Spain for some months. He then decided upon returning to England, and on his arrival in London tried to establish himself as a surgeon in one or two parts of that vast metropolis without success. He returned to his native city rather disconcerted; he had squandered a considerable portion of his small patrimony, and the want of success which had attended his efforts paralysed his energies and nourished the melancholy which preyed upon his heart. His mind gave way, and reeled under the wild fancies of which it had become the arena. The most horrible ideas would at times suggest themselves, a constant dread of future calamity weighed down his spirits, he bade fair to become a wreck at the age of twenty-one.

Arabin was decidedly an intellectual person, and as it has often been noticed that the persons who have possessed the finest minds have had to endure a large amount of mental anguish, it may not be out of the way to give our opinion on the cause. The finest intellects are the most grasping and the most restless; this very restlessness, however, frequently becomes a curse, because it suggests fears and whims which an inferior mind cannot perceive. Fine minds are from home in the tame course of every-day life; common things appear "flat, stale, and unprofitable." Few around can appreciate the peculiarities of genius, and it has to retire within itself and create an ideal world peopled by beings of a more remote character than the rotaries of the desk and shop-table. They have a charm more potent than ever a witch possessed — they wave their wand, and, as Sir Walter Scott has written,

> "From haunted spring and grassy ring,
> Troop goblin, elf and fairy" —

Or, who does not remember the finest poem which Mrs. Hemans has left upon record, on the funeral day of Sir Walter Scott? The following lines are very beautiful : —

> And he is silent! he whose flexile lips
> Were but unsealed, and lo! a thousand forms
> From every pastoral glen and fern-clad height,
> In glowing life upsprang — vassal and chief,
> Rider and steed, with shout and bugle-peal
> Fast rushing through the brightly-troubled air,
> Like the wild huntsman's band.

Mrs. Hemans was a kindred poet, who could bring a thousand forms

rushing through the brightly troubled air at a beck; let her memory be hallowed, for hers was a noble gift.

There was another very marked trait in the character of Arabin — his independent spirit. He scorned to crouch or cringe to any person; his manners, too, were abrupt, and he had but slender prospects at home. The medical man of modern times must have studied politeness as well as medicine — how to tie his cravat and dress; as well as how to amputate a limb — and, above all, the art of pleasing, whether he knows the art of healing or not. Now all this indispensable knowledge Arabin regarded as contemptible, yet he knew without them he could not succeed; he however cared not. "I have enough for the present," he would say; "and if I cannot provide for the wants of this poor body in future, why, I shall make quick work, for dependent I never shall be." To the genuine man of the world, without mind or character, these feelings may appear absurd; be that as it may, we are writing of a bird of a different tribe, with whom they can have little in common, except to hear his history.

There was another marked feature in the character of Arabin at this time; he would rush heedlessly into the most absurd speculations, and without even affording them a fair trial, he would throw up one after another and get out of them at any sacrifice of property. He found his small capital dwindling away rapidly; no means of recovering it presented themselves to his eager mind, and he began to consider his case almost hopeless, — that he was destined to be *unfortunate*. We must add, that he was very bashful; he could not endure the sight of those whom he knew; he was afraid lest they should penetrate into his mind, and become masters of his secret thoughts — that they should pity him, which he could not endure. He was mistaken; his friends never regarded him as possessing either a mind or feelings; they looked sour because he was eccentric, which they misunderstood, and set him down as wild; he was not of their class, and they did not know what to think of him. He determined to return to London, and disappeared nearly as suddenly as he had reappeared. "London again!" he exclaimed, as he found himself one foggy November evening entering the dreary regions of Wapping, having left a steam-boat the moment before; "London again!" he said, as the faint traces of scenes he well knew broke upon his sight. "There is no city like thee! but to me all your princely mansions and magnificent marts of business form but a desert — it will not afford me bread." What magic is there in the very name of London to the young! — how many have longed to reach it, — how many have panted to try "their luck" in a city so vast in extent, so dazzling in splendour, so rich in trade! Thousands throng there: some are awed by the very extension of the field, and depart without endeavouring

to find an opening; others, bolder, endeavour by every art to push forward, but they are lost in the crowd, thrust hither and thither, and give over the attempt in despair. Still young men swarm towards the mistress of the world, and perhaps a few, a very few, may succeed; and after a life of toil behind the shop table, towards its close find themselves worth a little heap of gold. If the acquirement of this be success, they have, we allow, succeeded.

Arabin once again endeavoured to push forward into business, without any better success. He resolved therefore, as a last and desperate measure, to go abroad, and he fixed upon the Australian Colonies as the scene of future attempts; in fact, he determined to emigrate with the crowd rushing towards the East. He soon found an opportunity, and sailed in a vessel bound for the Australian shores.

The detail of the long dull voyage would not interest the general reader, and as it has been so often described, we pass it over.

CHAPTER II. COLONIAL POLITICS.

WE have introduced Dr. Arabin to our readers, but before we proceed with his history we are compelled to offer a few preliminary remarks on the Colonial policy of our Government. Reader, you have heard doubtless of the Colonies of Britain; you are, however, peculiarly fortunate if you happen to know the mighty interests comprehended under the name. The Secretary of State for the Colonies enters upon the duties of his office without perhaps having been aware of the existence of one-half of the Colonies of Britain; yet the dictum of such a person is the law which the oppressed Colonists must obey. We believe that many ministers have discharged the functions of this onerous office with great ability and energy; but, however anxious the Secretary of State for the time may be to govern the Colonies impartially, and how noted soever he may be for the possession of sagacity and energy, he must act in the twilight, for it is a moral impossibility that any stranger could legislate for so many conflicting interests. We must observe, moreover, that too much confidence is placed in Governors. The Secretary of State is very frequently misled by "Their Excellencies," who, altogether, are far from being so honourable a class as might be at first expected. Many of these "*excellent*" men are adventurers of rather a high grade. It is far from uncommon to hear of Governors purchasing or reselling land, while others are landowners and stockowners, and perhaps speculators in Colonial trade. What more certain than that a large holder of land should desire his land to be enhanced in value? and any Governor who raises the Crown lands is certain to be popular with the landowners for the time being, though the measure might entail the most ruinous consequences on the Colony. Again, the majority of the Governors have too much in view the favour of the Home Government. To prevent unnecessary trouble, every complaint is studiously concealed; the real feelings of the Colonists are kept in the background, and the most arbitrary measures are carried into effect without any regard to the feelings of the suffering Colonists. Many of them, too, are paltry in their style of living, and instead of spending their salaries in the scene from which they have been wrung, they speculate and save every farthing: indeed, I could find many Governors with £3000 a year who do not spend beyond £500 per annum. This is unfair: the Colonial Secretary of State ought to know these persons, and prevent them from obtaining other appointments. A well meaning, generous-hearted man of average ability will govern a Colony better (if he do not mix too much in Colonial politics) than a keen, active

man of parsimonious habits, although the latter may possess abilities of a high order.

There is but one opinion as to the abilities of Sir George Gipps, — they are very good. Yet, strange to reflect upon, the Colony has retrograded from prosperity to adversity during the time that he has discharged the functions of Governor, and the causes of this singular revolution we are now to detect and describe.

A race of English economists has been at great pains to inculcate doctrines connected with Colonial policy, who happened at the same time to know nothing about either the Colonies, or the development of their resources. Edward Gibbon Wakefield ranks at the head of these fireside economists. In an evil hour the Home Government adopted the new-fangled principles; and since that time everything has gone wrong with our Colonies in the East. These principles, as we could show, are absurd: our limits, however, compel us to proceed. It is clearly impossible that Governors or Parliaments should affix a certain value to waste lands, and compel men to purchase; whatever the exchangeable value of land may be, it is evident that its intrinsic value is exactly in a ratio with the profits it can be made to yield. Speculation may advance it beyond this price, but legitimate demand never.

The price of land in Australia was originally the same as in our British American Colonies; in an evil hour it was advanced to 12s. an acre — then the large landowners rejoiced, because they considered that their property was doubled in value. South Australian land was settled at 20s. an acre, upon the principles enunciated by Gibbon Wakefield; and the Governor of New South Wales and the Bishop of Australia represented to the Government, that land in New South Wales was worth as much as land in South Australia, and the price of Crown land was immediately settled at 20s. an acre in New South Wales. To show that the measure had a contrary effect to what was intended, we may state, that in a few years afterwards there were no buyers at any price; land was when pressed into the market knocked down at anything, frequently as low as 1s. 6d. an acre. In British America land is sold at about 6s. an acre, and the price is determined by the Colonial Legislature; in no respect is Australian land more valuable than Canadian, except from the brighter skies of the former. The land in Canada is moist, and the crops luxurious. Australia is frequently visited by droughts, and, in some seasons, by myriads of destructive animalculae; therefore, the greater portion of the country can only be occupied as grazing stations. The rich *"bottoms"* — the deposits of alluvial soil, usually yield, however, luxuriant crops: in many parts of the country 25 or 30 bushels may be grown upon an acre. In general, however, want of

moisture is the great drawback to agricultural pursuits. Of course we do not include the rich soil of Australia Felix, where droughts are almost unknown, and where anything may be produced.

When we take a retrospect of the policy of the Home Government towards the Colony, we are almost inclined to curse the ignorance and neglect which could have consigned a land so noble to almost premature decay; we are positive that, but for the invention of steaming down sheep for tallow, which affixed a minimum price to the surplus flocks of the Colony, the whole of the Colonial interest would have been ruined. View this in any way, it is a grand invention — tallow even at the low price of 41s. in the London market, will make ordinary sheep worth about 5s., and cattle £3; but the Government did not foresee this, and it deserves no credit on account of it. Does not the insolvency of nearly every man of note, in the length and breadth of the land, demonstrate more powerfully than our feeble pen can, the ignorance and baseness of our Colonial despots? more cruel and rapacious from their personal insignificance, while the supreme power in Downing Street knows nothing about the matter. What is there to encourage capitalists to come here? Let the land be reduced to 5s. and prosperity will once more dawn on our Australian settlers — an order little known, but which deserves respect from the indomitable perseverance, moral courage, untiring energy, and rough honesty of its members. They may be poor, for the race is not to the swift, but at any rate let them have bare justice: we should wish them to have fixity of tenure. At the present moment, the Australian settler may be deprived of his run of stock at the caprice of a Government pimp, called a land commissioner. The authority of these officials is supreme: there is no appeal from it, but to the land commissioner of a neighbouring district, who, as a matter of course, confirms the decision of his cotemporary; for, as the Scotch proverb goes, "one corbie will not pluck out another corbie's een." These commissioners travel about the country to settle the limits of the runs of the different settlers; in all disputes they take part with those who happen to be favourites, and those who are injured are afraid to take any notice, because the commissioner might ruin them; they are idle fellows withal, and commonly to be found in the town, instead of attending to public business in their districts. We, therefore, hold that no settler will be comfortable while such persons are allowed to oppress him. The land should be given to the settler at so much per acre, with time to pay the money, or the stations ought to be leased for nineteen years at a certain annual rent. Were this effected, let us look on the probable result. The settlers now live in huts, hardly fit for the beasts of the field; their food is of the poorest quality, from negligence in preparing it; their minds

have been tainted — and some, we regret to add, have sunk into immoral and dissipated courses; their independence is gone, for they feel they must be dependent upon the Government understrappers; they do not cultivate the soil, because any person might go to the Government Office, and request that the station should be put up to auction, and either purchase it, or purchase it for one year, as the case might be. On the contrary, however, if the Australian settler had fixity of tenure, he would conjoin agricultural and pastoral pursuits; he would build a comfortable house, and eat his food independently of the land commissioners. We except those whose souls have rusted from neglect, and who scorn the habits of civilisation; they are already independent, because they can go out into any part of the wilderness with their flocks. Government influence preponderates too much in Australia; the Governors can create their own tools magistrates, and extend their influence. The respectable settlers know but too well that no other door is open to preferment, but the door which the Governor can open or shut at his pleasure. The young of Australia know also that they must favour and flatter His Excellency before they can become rich or great; and this tends to check the development of that independent spirit which is so much to be wished.

If land were reduced to 5s. an acre, many small capitalists would hither emigrate; a demand would necessarily arise for stock and farming implements, and both production and consumption would increase. Instead of exporting £400,000 per annum in specie for wheat, as hitherto, the Colony would export wheat in large quantities.

The political economist, it is true, may here argue that the Colony imported grain at a cheaper rate than it could produce it; but we only answer — Then you must prove first, that the Colonists were more profitably employed — they were employed either in buying and selling land worth nothing, or in rearing stock; the last was as unprofitable as the first, because there did not exist a market for surplus stock; and thus any argument against our position must crumble down, for we are positive that before this splendid country can arrive at prosperity, the occupiers of stations must have a vested interest in the land, or they must have fixity of tenure. The next question would be, what is land worth for sheep farming? We answer, that it might be worth 2s. an acre, or it might be worth 40s. an acre. For sheep farming it is, in our opinion, worth 5s. an acre, payable by annual instalments for ten years. An acre is worth much more for agricultural purposes; but, of course, it would sell by auction at what it might be thought to be worth for either. The Home Government must bear in mind, that the Australian Colonies deserve attention, because each Colonist consumes more than twice the value of British

manufactures that the Colonists of British America or the West Indies do.

We must not blame the high rate of land alone for the large amount of distress, because other causes have co-operated. These we must notice without comment: the sudden want of cheap labour when the assignment system ceased, at the very moment that land advanced, and the withdrawal of the Commissariat expenditure, the fall in the price of wool, and the advance in the price of labour; the extravagant credit afforded by the banks to land speculators, principally on the Government deposits, which were withdrawn for emigration purposes, in 1840; the ruin of both banks and speculators in consequence, the breaking up of all the Colonial companies, including banks, and perhaps the failure of the crops, in 1839 and 1840. We allow that much distress has arisen from over-speculation and the decay of commerce, and stoppage of emigration; but had the farming and grazing interests been in a healthy state, it would not have extended beyond the social conventions of the towns. Of late years, too, the Colonial shipping interest has suffered, especially that portion of it embarked in the whaling trade.

The Insolvent Law, which was framed by His Honour Mr. Justice Burton (and which has been facetiously termed "Burton's purge"), came into operation in 1842, and was just in time for the crash. Many availed themselves of the opportunity to clear accounts with their creditors by going through the Insolvent Court, who had no occasion to adopt any such course. The restraints which had bound society to honesty and plain dealing broken down, men turned round upon their creditors at pleasure. It was exactly the same as American repudiation. Those who would not pay, often could have paid. Upon the same principle that the bricks in a house hang by and support one another, are the members of our commercial societies dependent: the one pulled down the other, and the insolvency appeared nearly universal.

The storm has blown over: all the large speculators have been thrown out of the commercial circles; the business is now in the hands of safe men — the Colonial property is in the hands of real owners. It wants but some reform, to be the most prosperous Colony in the world. The settlers must, however, be protected in some way or other by the Home Government.

CHAPTER III. AN ECLAIRCISSEMENT.

WE now proceed to open the first scene, not in Britain, but in Australia. It was a beautiful day in January, about midday, that two persons walked to and fro in a small garden which was laid out in front of a white cottage. The one was a young lady of surpassing beauty; the other, a man who appeared hardly more than twenty-five, but his features were unnaturally worn, and his eye gave a quick, unsteady glance, which altogether put it beyond the power of an observer to hazard anything like an accurate guess of what his age might be. The day was not oppressively hot, the air was pleasant, and the too powerful rays of the sun were intercepted by the thick forest. The casements of the house were open, the front rooms appeared to contain no unwelcome listeners, and the two paced along without any dread of being interrupted.

The first surmise of a concealed observer would most probably have been, that they were lovers. A rather more attentive inspection of their manners and features would have occasioned a change in their opinion. The face of the young settler, for such he seemed, betrayed anxiety and mental irritation, while his lovely companion struggled hard to repel the uneasiness she felt at her position. Her timid eye wandered about, and her ear was on the stretch watching for some friendly intruder to break the *tête-á-tête*, which every moment became more irksome. The young man gazed earnestly in her face once or twice, and seemed as if he was anxious to address her upon some powerfully exciting topic; but his courage failed, and he turned off with some common place remark, like a soldier who would fain attempt a daring deed, but whose valour fails at the critical moment. He seemed aware of his weakness, and at last made a desperate effort — his breath almost stopped, and his brain reeled, as he uttered, “Miss Waller, there is something I wished to say to you.”

The young woman looked as if the worst had occurred; but she did not jump, or start, or scream, or blush, — nay, she did not either faint or go into “hysterics.” She replied quietly, that she should be happy to hear anything which Mr. Willis could have to say to her.

“You must know,” gasped the person addressed as Mr. Willis, “that I am — in — love with you, — that is — that — I would — wish — to — to — to — marry you. I have not got very much property, it is true; but what I have will maintain us in a humble sphere of life. You will have to cast in your lot with one who has few friends, but who is the more likely to love you upon that account. I hope you will favour my addresses. I am not, it is true, very much in the habit of speaking to ladies — or I have not

been for some time past; but if I express myself in a clownish fashion, you must excuse my manner on account of my earnestness."

His companion had listened to his passionate address in silence. He ventured to take her hand, and clasped it with something like ecstatic fervour. A severe inward struggle had kept the young lady silent; but when he took her hand, she answered —

"Mr. Willis, I am sorry to be placed in this disagreeable position; you know that it must give me infinite pain to refuse your offer. My affections are still disengaged; and even were it otherwise, I would not marry without the consent of my relations — and their consent I do not think you would get."

"Well," interrupted the settler, "will you let me ask it? Your sister would not refuse me; Butler might, as he has no favour for me, but he is only your brother-in-law."

"It would be of no service," replied she; "I cannot — in fact, it is better to be plain and not deceive you, I am sorry I can never think of accepting your offer. I wish you well and happy. I must go inside to my sister."

"Stay but one moment, lady," said Mr. Willis, almost choking with emotion. "Might not time effect some change in your feelings? Do not deny me in a rash or harsh manner."

"Mr. Willis," replied the girl in a tone of severe dignity, "I have heard of women who took time to consider offers, and battered their hand for a certain specified amount of comfort and fine furniture; but I despise them. I will not take a day to consider the offer — nor an hour, nor a minute. Although I am an Australian, I am not mercenary; I am not, thank God, tainted with the too common vice of my countrymen — and, alas! countrywomen too. It may suit the old worn-out cockney flirts whom I occasionally see here, to weigh the advantages or disadvantages of offers, but it suits not me. I am sorry to repeat that I cannot entertain your offer."

It was but too plain, even to the excited young man, that she was resolute and determined. In a moment after, she excused herself and entered the house. The settler remained standing in the same position; who shall describe the reflections which tortured his mind? To be refused by a mercenary woman who will weigh you in the scale with the property you possess, is a lucky escape; but to be refused by one who is worth possessing, is exquisite torture. The settler partially recovered himself, and without re-entering, he left the garden and tore himself from the spot. "What an *éclaircissement!*" he said mentally. "I was an ass, a tom-fool, a spooney, to put it in the power of any person to slight me. I was positive that she loved me, and how eminently I was mistaken! — Loved me! — bah! what a contemptible dolt! what a sentimental love-sick puppy! what

a noodle! what a silly-billy! A man of the world, too, like me, who has played his part in many a gay and noble scene, to be slighted by a native '*cornstalk!*' I cannot yet believe it, — it must be but a dream and a lie. — But how I loved the girl, too! She is not to blame; no, hang it! I must not censure the girl, only I mistook her glances. I was a conceited idiot, and fancied, because she looked upon me, that she loved me: I deserved it all. And then she will tell her sister, and that puppy Butler, who will laugh in his sleeve at me, and think me an inferior. Well, I wish them all well, — I am compelled to do that; however bitter my heart is, I cannot curse them; but I curse myself! I curse the country! I curse my station! I curse my agent! I curse my lawyer! I curse my barber!" He threw himself on the ground, and tore his hair with rage.

CHAPTER IV. A NIGHT IN THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH.

UPON one of those sultry afternoons which occur so often during summer, a horseman was wending his way across the —— Plains. The day had been oppressive; a hot wind had blazed fiercely during the forenoon; whilst towards evening the wind died away, but the heat still increased. Everything around was parched and withered, the dust on the roads was pulverised, the scorched ground seemed actually to pant for rain. As night approached, the sky changed, and the clouds which were gathering in the east warned the experienced Bushman that a thunder storm was brewing. In the west, however, the sky was unstained, and the traveller's face being towards the setting sun, he was too intently engaged in admiring its gorgeous splendour to heed the danger in his rear. He was apparently about twenty-three; but a close observer of mankind might have traced in the lines of his dark countenance marks of sorrow — the sorrow which communion with a vain and selfish world brings; or, shall we designate it by the term of warm feelings turned into gall?

The vast plains which the young man was traversing lie adjacent to the town of B———, which is indeed on one side of the range. They extend thirty miles from east to west, and twenty miles from north to south; but the view towards the north is bounded by Mount M———, the towering summit of which stands in solitary magnificence, as a bold relief to the monotonous plains. Lofty ranges may be seen far away in the south; no other object is visible but the wide stony range, the solitude perhaps occasionally partially interrupted by a stunted shrub or tree, just well calculated to make the desolation of the landscape more complete. Far as the eye can wander, it rests on the silent, boundless plains; neither house nor living thing is visible, not even a bird: the traveller might be buried in the bosom of an African desert, There is, however, a grandeur present in the scene — a magnificence derived from its vast proportions: compared with it, the scenery of Britain is tame; its tiny parks and its petty forests, its mimic mountains and brawling rivulets, are all insignificant. In an Australian scene you have Nature in her grandest aspect and most gigantic proportions; you gaze around, and the heart thrills, because you feel you are nothing when alone with your Maker.

To return, however, to the traveller. It was already late in the afternoon, and as he had been detained crossing a punt, he pressed his horse to its utmost speed. In two hours or less it would be dark, and he had many miles to ride across the dreary plain. He looked frequently in the rear, and

observed the thick drapery of dark clouds rising and beginning to stretch across the horizon towards the west. Soon after, the wind changed, and began to moan, and cross the plain in fitful gusts, the certain indications of a thunder-storm in Australia. The horseman was not indifferent to these symptoms, and he urged his jaded steed; the animal, thoroughly ragged, only answered the spur by a shuffling attempt to run away. So long as he had maintained the old cart-track, dignified with the name of the road, the nag had kept gallantly along; he had, however, diverged into the wide plain, and then the beast, to the no little chagrin of the traveller, gave pretty plain indications of its intentions not to proceed very much further unless it were allowed to select its pace. After one or two vain essays, the horseman shrugged his shoulders, and giving the attempt over, was soon buried in deep thought.

We must put our readers out of pain, and acknowledge— that we are following the adventures of Arabin. Two years had passed since we took leave of him in Britain; in that short time he had entered upon a new sphere. He had emigrated to the Australian Colonies and settled in the adjoining town. When he arrived, although he did not possess much money, he would not deliver the few letters of introduction which he had brought with him. He was shy, because he was perfectly aware that he was poor; and he despised those who, superior, perhaps, in wealth, were very inferior in mind. He scorned their patronage, and positively determined to depend, in the struggle to get forward, on his own exertions. He had been more than twelve months settled in Australia, and, like most nervous men, had been unsuccessful; he had no quality to recommend him — he was timid and independent. If sent for professionally, he would perform his duty anxiously and faithfully; but then he would not wait and hear the characters of half the town torn to shreds — he could not sit an evening and make himself agreeable, and therefore did not get on: indeed he was regarded as a self-conceited person, and made himself very disagreeable. He had very little to do. There were two other surgeons in the town: one was a dapper personage, who would bow and scrape for half an hour, and who knew more scandal than any other man in the place; he was ever riding about, touching his well brushed hat to everybody, and a ready companion for either a lady or a gentleman: of course they employed this surgeon. He was not popular with the lower orders; their favourite was the other surgeon: he was a rough, vulgar man, and rather addicted to dissipated and rakish courses; he might be observed at night in a tap, dressed in a faded shooting-jacket, smoking an old black pipe, and keeping the inmates laughing almost constantly, for he possessed a great deal of humour; the lower orders would have no other attendant when he

could be had. The practice was pretty fairly divided between these two, and Arabin therefore came in for the poorest share. But he cared little about it, for he had hitherto managed to earn a precarious existence, and did not envy his professional brethren for having been more successful than him-self, because he was perfectly aware of the reasons. He was careless too in matters of account, and seldom would accept money from the wretched, although there are few poor in Australia. For his kindness he received little recompense: indeed his brethren laughed at him for attending the poor as regularly as the rich, and not charging them.

Arabin had been sent for, about a week before, to visit a young settler or grazier: he had attended, was requested to repeat the visit within the week, and was now on his way to perform his professional duties. The visit was not likely to be pleasant, as the settler had been labouting under mental derangement. He had now arrived at a deep ravine which intercepted his progress. The banks being steep and rocky, he could not perform the passage without some danger, and therefore retraced his way along the banks until he reached the cart-track. A road wended down the bank by many a fold, and another zigzag path enabled him at last to reach the open plains beyond. The first thing he did, after he had emerged from the dangerous ravine, was to take a survey of the wide plain. A conical hill was just visible, far, far away, across the plain: this was the desired land-mark, and taking a course parallel with it, and keeping the frowning masses of Mount M——— to the right, he recommenced his journey across the wide, dreary level. It would have been a bold act for an experienced Bushman to cross the plain with night approaching — and such a night! Dr. Arabin was insensible to the danger, and, not accustomed to calculate distances on extensive ranges, he supposed the conical mount to be little more than eight miles from where he then was; the real distance was about twenty miles, and on a fine evening he could hardly have reached it by the light of day, and would even then, most probably, have gone astray in the darkness.

It was far from agreeable on the plain, when the air became cold and the evening to fall. He once more endeavoured to push forward, but his horse was tired and would not increase its pace. The threatening clouds which now canopied the heavens, and the sudden gusts of wind which from time to time crossed the plains, at length brought conviction to the mind of the traveller. He was frightened at the thoughts of a night on the plain, and made a last desperate endeavour to cross the dreary intervening waste and reach the land-mark already noticed by daylight. Twenty miles is a long journey to ride across stony ridges; before he had passed half the distance it was almost dark, the rain began to fall slowly, it increased, it rained in

torrents, and the lightning played with awful sublimity; then came the slow muffled thunder, distant at first, each successive peal sounded nearer, — it was crossing the plain, and would pass directly overhead. It approached; Arabin was brave, but the lurid blue flames of the electric fluid as it whirled past like a thought, and the deafening peal of the thunder, almost daunted him. He hesitated — should he attempt to cross the plain? — a shiver ran through his frame, — he decided that he would proceed, but now he could not find any land-mark to indicate the direction. He therefore determined, as the forlorn hope, to make the best of his way back to the road, and endearour to get under cover in some hut until morning.

Dr. Arabin was not exactly afraid, — perhaps startled would be the proper expression; he repented of his temerity in attempting to traverse the plains so late in the day, and stared wildly at the fast-flashing lightning. To those in Europe who glance at these pages, the terror of Arabin must appear childish; but perhaps, having never been more than a few miles from the abodes of men, they have but an imperfect conception of the utter desolation of the boundless plains of Australia. The solitude is too awful for a creature formed for social intercourse to bear; his littleness and his feebleness become apparent. Then, when the Maker of all speaks in His thunders, it is time to reflect upon former courses. To the reflecting mind He speaks as powerfully in the majesty of nature, — the calm blue sky, the murmuring or brawling stream, the luxuriant vegetation of the mimosa and casuarina, the silent heave of the perpetual ocean. In courts and cities the denizens may forget Him — here they scarcely can.

Still the rain fell in torrents; the attending obscurity rendered objects invisible at a very limited distance. Dr. Arabin could not regain the road; he lost confidence, and wavered in his course. At last he came to a dead stop; he was bewildered, and reflected on the course he should adopt. Oh, heavens ! what an awful shock! a thunderbolt struck a stone within a few yards of where he was (within two paces of his horse's legs) and shattered it to atoms; the animal reared and fell heavily with its rider on the ground, and at the same moment the thunder broke overhead with a crash so horrible that he almost thought nature laboured under a convulsion. He shook from head to foot, and put his hands to his head almost instinctively to deaden the sound; the earth shook palpably — it was awful. A moment, and it was over; he arose from his watery pillow, for the whole plains were flooded by this time; his face was wild and fearfully pale, — it was more fitted for the charnel-house than the living earth. Shall we confess that he cried? We may add, that he was proud of his manifold acquirements and of his knowledge. How soon can conscience

tell home! Arabin knew that he had not placed his strength where alone men can rely. At length the impression had partially vanished, and he looked after his horse; the poor animal was in nearly as bad a plight as his master. Arabin laid hold of the bridle, but for some moments he could not prevail upon the animal to move. At last he proceeded, disconsolately leading the trembling horse by the bridle. He looked now anxiously for the pathway; for a long time he made but little progress. He recollected that as he rode along the plains, the wind blew on his left cheek; had he taken advantage of this, he might have pioneered his way across the whole plain. He was now too much bewildered to take advantage of any favourable circumstance. There was, however, good cause; for even a person acquainted with the country might be in the vicinity of a station without knowing it, and pass within a few hundred yards of a hut, or even a dozen huts, unless dogs happened to be about, and be ignorant of their vicinity.

But night was at hand, and what was he to do? If he could not reach the pathway, he had no prospect but a wet couch on the plains. It was now intensely cold, which is nearly always the case after a thunder-storm. The poor traveller looked in a disconsolate mood on the weary waste of waters which now lay about; the darkness began to shroud the dreary prospect. He mounted his horse with difficulty, for his limbs had become torpid, and once more endeavoured to pass along the plains. The animal received every admonition of the heel with total indifference — move it would not, and at length he was glad to allow it to crawl along splashing and slipping at nearly every step. The lightning at times illumined the wide plain from end to end, yet he could not perceive his exact position; the thunder was grand as it pealed overhead, but it was moving away to the east, yet it was so loud as to make the traveller shudder.

"It is a terrible night!" exclaimed Arabin aloud; "would to Heaven I could obtain the shelter of some friendly roof! I wish to be cheered by the presence of one human being, for solitude in such a place as this, and in such a night, is horrible. Many human beings have, I dare say, been lost in the wide forest ranges in such storms, or have perished from hunger and cold; many a brave Stockman, or even Bushman, has had to lie in the forest. I pity all who are abroad to-night!"

It rained incessantly — not a drizzling rain, but a steady fall: the pelt, pelt of the drops, as they rebounded from the water, sounded like sea-music. He thought he perceived a range of forest in the east (as, although he had gone round about several times, he still considered that he knew his position); a swarthy shadow dimly perceived in that quarter indicated that shelter might be found. He hastened thitherward; perhaps a station might be nigh, which, if upon the borders of a creek, was far from unlikely; at

any rate, the shelter of the forest was not to be despised. It was now night; the darkness veiled every object in impenetrable gloom. He dismounted, and led his horse by the bridle; he reached the much-coveted shelter, and penetrated among the trees. He could not discover indications of the proximity of any habitation; at times he found his progress opposed by the dense brushwood and the closeness of the trees, then again wandering among clumps of trees with the open plain between. He searched in vain for a creek; he listened attentively for the sound of human voices, or the barking of dogs. No other sound could be distinguished but the apparently eternal pelt, pelt of rain among the branches of the trees. At length he relinquished the attempt, and fastening his horse to a tree, seated himself beneath a gigantic gum-tree; in this forlorn situation he ruminated on things past and present, in no enviable frame of mind.

He had never been abroad in a night so dismal. The forest afforded no shelter from the cold; and, wet, tired, and hungry, he stretched himself on the soaked grass, shivering in every limb. He thought of the comforts which the meanest hut in the country afforded, and the very comparison caused him to smile in derision. Then he was naturally of a delicate constitution, and the inclemency of the weather preyed upon his mind. He thought of his cigar-case, and inserted his benumbed hands into every pocket to procure a cheroot; but, to his no little disappointment, he discovered that he had lost everything in scrambling about in the Bush. He lay for some time on the ground, and, as it waxed later, became frightened, and would start to his legs and move about. He was often misled by faint flickerings of light at a great distance: these phosphoric lights occasionally presented the appearance of a huge fire. Arabin would frequently mount, and proceed in the direction where they appeared; but, thrice disappointed, he determined to relinquish the chase after meteors, as their transitory appearance proved them to be. More dispirited than before, he stretched himself again on the wet ground in all the agony of desperation.

And he lay for long hours listening to the rain; at length it ceased almost as suddenly as it had come; but yet the dark chillness of the atmosphere was almost worse than the rain. Sometimes he thought he heard something moving close to where he lay, or creeping along by stealth: once he was almost sensible of a clammy hand stretched out towards his face; then again he fancied that, something breathed close to where he lay.

The reader who amuses himself by criticising this adventure, and who lolls in luxurious ease in an arm chair with elastic seats, or, what is more likely, on air cushions or on a downy couch, may consider the timidity of

Arabin to have been effeminate. Alas! they know little of the awful desolation which the plains of Australia present. Some of them may have read a description of the gorge of Cordilleras in the Andes. Lieutenant Charles Brand, in his work on Peru, published in 1828, describes a scene amongst the mighty and all but-impassable valleys of these mountains. One passage I will transcribe: "As we sat shivering in the *casucha*, the mountains, from being so close to us, appeared a wall of snow, their tops joining, as it were, in one mass, with the clouds of snow lying around us. In vain did I look for a dark spot to rest my painful eyes upon, tracing the mountains all round from the base to the summits, pondering again over heaven and earth; — all —all appeared a world of snow picturing desolation itself, the miserable casucha alone standing in the middle of it." We can fancy the desolation here pictured as complete; the desolation of a wide plain in Australia upon such a night is no less perfect — it is "a waste of waters picturing desolation." The poor, unfortunate traveller, who happens to be overtaken by night and a thunderstorm, has no chance but to sleep under the canopy of heaven, exposed to the severest weather; saturated with the rain-water, which soaks through the strongest garments in a few minutes. His only guide is the wind; if an experienced person knew exactly the direction, he might make a station by keeping the wind blowing upon the same part of the face. This is a useful hint.

Arabin at length closed his eyes —

> "He slept in calmest seeming — for his breath
> Was hush'd so deep."

The visions which chased one another across his too active mind were tenfold more oppressive than even his waking phantasies. Every one must be conscious of the vividness with which dreams are pictured forth when a traveller is overtaken by sleep in a coach or sitting on the ground. Many hideous and vapoury figures flitted before him, acting strange characters as if in mockery of man and human happiness. For a short time these visions disappeared. Again he found himself at home preparing for a long journey; his panting horse stood at the door; he mounted and was spurring swift as the winds across the very ranges of plains upon which his dormant body was stretched. He even descried the place where he longed to be — "a green spot of the past," where one whose memory he yet cherished was wont to dwell; often had he longed to revisit it, and now his wishes seemed about to be gratified. Then by some strange fatality he became impotent — some strong but invisible power had dried up the veins and muscles in his legs, and they shook under him as if sense and animation were alike gone. The heavens once more grew dark; the streams of light

illuminated the plains, and the wild thunder trembled overhead. He still mentally urged his horse on; he could see the windows of the house, he reflected upon the happy faces which would there welcome him, and his heart warmed once more; the next moment every object was shrouded in total darkness, and he gnashed his teeth in mental agony.

Once more he enjoyed a short respite: then visions of other years crossed before his mind in quick succession; he appeared then conscious that he was but dreaming, and laboured hard to shake off some incubus from his chest and start up. He thought he was sensible; but, alas! he slumbered on.

A female figure of commanding presence, clothed in black, with her face concealed from his view by a black veil, stood nigh. He was strangely agitated, and gazed upon her for a moment; at last he spoke, and asked her — "Who art thou?"

"The spirit of the absent," she answered.

What thoughts crowded through his brain! what pictures were vividly before him of olden times! —pictures which had long been erased even from his memory. "The absent!" what a term! does not the heart chill even in sleep at its utterance?

For some minutes he was silent, then he spake again—

"Can you inform me of C——— ?"

"No, she is beyond my reach."

"How?"

"Ask again."

"Her mother, then, — can you inform me of her?"

"She is mourning for the dead," said the figure, in a cold unnatural tone.

He started from his position, but fell heavily on the ground again: he was now wide awake, — he was positive that he had heard truth even in his slumber — that one he doted upon was gone, that the beautiful of life had departed. Could he bring his mind to think that her fine spirit had been hovering near him, he could have reconciled himself to the loss; there was a strange joy in the reflection that her spirit mingled with his, and watched him in his midnight agonies.

The night was dark, although one or two stars twinkled overhead; the rain had long ceased to fall, the dampness had even disappeared. Nature had flung off the load which oppressed life; the arrowy lightnings and dark thunders had passed, the atmosphere had been purified, human nature was invigorated, and life would be a pleasure.

Australia is frequently visited in the summer season with hot winds, which are succeeded by violent thunder-storms. For two or three days before, the sky will glow as if on fire; at other times it presents a slaty or glazed appearance, of a mixed dingy hue, between dull copper and half-

hot iron. Never, however, has the country been visited by earthquakes, like other lands subject to intense droughts; we ascribe this to the level country and the absence of mountainous districts of a stony and cavernous formation. There are in Australia lofty mountains, but they are scattered over the wide country. In no district, so far as I am aware, has stone, slate, or marble been met with to any extent; although coal, copper, and lead ore are found in great profusion.

Arabin was not disposed to sleep; indeed, he preferred to wander about, especially as his limbs were benumbed with the cold. He arose with great difficulty, for the rheumatism already gnawed his body, and having unfastened his horse from the tree, he once more resumed his wanderings in a most wretched condition. He might have wandered on through the trees for several miles, when his ears were welcomed by the sound of dogs barking at no great distance. Never did the softest music fall more sweetly upon the sense; he mounted, and, regardless of every obstacle, galloped towards the spot. He might have travelled a mile, when the horse came to a dead stop, and upon dismounting he found he had reached the banks of a deep river or ravine; the bank was rocky and precipitous, and unfortunately took a sharp turn at this very spot. He could hardly distinguish objects, but he clearly perceived that he must return by the way he had arrived or cross at this particular bend of the stream. He ruminated for some moments upon the particular course which it would be most prudent for him to adopt, when, to his no little gratification, the nocturnal watchman began to howl once more. The sound appeared quite near, and, pretty well acquainted with Bush customs, he placed his hands to his mouth to form a natural trumpet, and uttered a loud “cooie.”

“Cooie,” answered a voice at no distance.

“I am a stranger,” said Arabin, “who have lost my way.”

No answer was returned; he remained for about a quarter of an hour expecting that some person would come to his assistance; nothing, however, moved, — the very dogs were quiet. He was startled once by a wild dog which ran against his legs in the darkness, but which scoured away with a terrible howl when it found the vicinity of man.

He cooied again.

“Cooie!” said the voice.

“Can you render me any assistance?” shouted he.

No answer was returned; he tried again.

“What do you want?” exclaimed a voice.

“I want assistance,” replied he.

“Then come along here,” replied the invisible.

“I am afraid of the river,” replied he.

"There is no river, it is only a ravine," replied the voice.

Dr. Arabin was determined to reach the place, and, no longer afraid of the water, he spurred his horse down a frightful descent. When he had reached the bottom of the ravine, he could perceive the flicker of a light at some distance amongst the trees. He shouted again to the hut, to ask if it was safe to come on.

"Come straight to the hut," shouted the voice.

Thus advised, he spurred his horse; but the animal would not move from the spot. He tried hard to push him on, but it had no effect. At last he fastened him to a tree, and proceeded towards the spot; but he had not gone five paces, when he plunged over head into water. He had been rushing through the thick brushwood which bordered the river, and had not observed the water. The first intimation he had of it came too late to save him; he would have perished but for the assistance of the branch of a mimosa, which he seized, and kept himself above water. Still he expected every moment that it would break off, and looked upon himself as lost. He gradually assumed more courage, and at last raised himself to the bank, and went on his knees to thank his Maker for having rescued him from, his perilous situation.

"Where are you now?" once more shouted the voice.

"I have just escaped from the river," replied Dr. Arabin, almost involuntarily.

"Then what are you doing in the river?" shouted the voice.

"You told me to come on, that it was all a flat," replied he.

There was no answer returned, and Dr. Arabin stood wet and ashamed for a few moments. He, however, was determined to find out what sort of a person could have so coolly advised him to jump into the river, and therefore began to explore the river-side for some means whereby he might cross over.

Chance enabled him to discover the secret. The dog which had first indicated the presence of civilisation came across and began smelling at his heels. On examining the place where he came over, Arabin discovered a tree laid down, and upon a closer inspection he thought he might venture to cross; he crawled along on his hands and knees, and at length reached the opposite side, and was within a few paces of the hut. At the door stood a person half undressed, who had not a very inviting aspect; his face was nearly covered with red hair, which seemed to defy soap and steel; his eye was bloodshot and sinister. Notwithstanding his extreme vulgarity, there was an affectation of smartness which proved he belonged to the unfortunate order who are sent into the country to expiate former crimes by a certain period of bondage. A grim smile played about the features of

this enchanting individual. Arabin, however, entered the hut, which from its mean appearance was evidently the residence of those engaged in tending some flocks of sheep, or what is termed "an out-station." The floor was a sheet of water. The only other person in this miserable hut lay upon a bed formed of a few pieces of wood laid upon two supporters at the ends. The person who had been standing outside re-entered, and having lighted a pipe, placed himself upon a bed of a similar character in another corner. Neither of these two worthies of the woods took the least notice of the wet and weary traveller who stood before the fire not a little disheartened at the cold reception he was receiving.

At last he extracted from them the information that the station belonged to a person whose name he had never heard — a Mr. Butler; that he was five miles from the place which he was to have visited. He asked if it was far to the home-station of his master.

"Not very far," replied the shepherd.

"Will the gentleman have retired?" inquired Dr. Arabin.

"Let me see — will the cove have gone to bed, Jim?"

"Yes, I think it is certain he has gone to bed."

He reflected for a few moments — he could not stop well in this comfortless abode; he would be certain of being politely received at the home-station when he told his misfortunes. At last, he offered the person who had given him the information a guinea if he would take him to the residence of the master. At this offer the person jumped up, and proceeded to envelop his body in a large thick coat. A cat of enormous size which had been lying on the bed also began to prepare for a journey. "You ain't a-coming with me," said the fellow, "so go back." The cat, however, began to mew and dance about, and at last he was softened by these marks of affection, and Tom was allowed passively to follow, his owner merely declaring "that he would pelt or quilt him on the first convenient opportunity."

The sky once more threatened a tempest. The shepherd informed the traveller that it would be impossible to get the horse over, and that he must allow him to remain there until morning. He promised to see to him the first thing, and as he was in the bend of the river, there was little danger of his straying.

The rain again fell heavily, and the darkness was terrific: the road was broken, and the two fell into quagmires, and frequently tumbled against stones and stumps of trees. The shepherd hurt his knee against a fragment of rock, and this accident elicited a volley of the most violent imprecations — he raved and swore, until Dr. Arabin became terrified lest he might do him some bodily injury during the heat of his passion. In a few minutes

after he became quiet, as the sharp pangs abated in violence, and he led the way in dogged silence.

Dr. Arabin already repented for many reasons that he had left the shelter of the hut. The darkness made it impossible for the man to find the way; he had to crawl along the extreme edge of the river-bank. There was no contemptible danger in following this course, as either of them by a false step might be precipitated many hundred yards into the river. It now rained in torrents; the heavens seemed to have opened; they could only find one another by speaking (cooing). At length, after overcoming many obstacles, the travellers arrived at a fence; they entered the paddock; it was, however, so dark, that although the house stood within a few hundred yards of where they stood, they could not see it.

"We must make a noise and have the dogs on us, or we shall have to sleep in the open air, perhaps," said the guide. "We have got sticks to keep them off."

They began to speak aloud, and in a few minutes two curs were upon them, yelping most outrageously. Still they could not make out the house, and were stumbling about at some distance, when a voice exclaimed — "Who's there?"

"Is that you, Long Bob?" replied the guide; "where are you?"

"In my bed. What brings you here? Have the sheep been rushed?"

"No; open!"

All this time the two had been groping about for the hut in the direction indicated by the voice of Long Bob. At length, the head of Dr. Arabin gave a sharp tap against a wall, and both were sensible that they were in the rear of a small hut. The next moment the door was opened, and the two travellers entered. Bob having scraped amongst the embers, managed to light a fire, and demanded of the hut-keeper, for such his guide was, "what cove it was he brought on such a night?"

The other replied, that he was a gentleman who had lost his way, and that he had been under the necessity of bringing him to the cove's hut. "Is he gone to bed?"

"He has been in bed two hours," replied Bob, "and I dare not call him up, as missus would be terrified for Bushrangers."

"Well, never mind," replied Arabin; "I can sit by the fire."

The others here interchanged a few words, in a low tone. Bob informed Dr. Arabin that he could have his bed, as he was wet, and he would sit up. The weary traveller was but too happy to accept the offer; he gave his guide the promised reward, and requested him once more to look after his horse. Arabin next divested himself of his wet clothes, and took refuge from all his woes in Long Bob's bed.

The fire was lighted with about half the fuss which an English servant would make; both placed themselves before it upon logs. Tobacco was produced and pipes filled, and afterwards they sat comfortably enjoying themselves with every symptom of satisfaction, but in almost total silence. Both glanced occasionally at the bed; and at length its inmate, anticipating either amusement or information from the conversation of two such originals, pretended to be fast asleep.

The guide winked to his companion, rose as if to go, and said aloud — "Shall I bring the horse here in the morning, sir?" Receiving no reply, he remarked to his companion, that the cove was asleep. — "I may tell the truth now."

"Go on," said the other.

"Well, you sees, the spoony left his horse the other side — as he thinks, because he does not know of the great bend. So he comes into my hut and offers me this here money to take him to the station; so I bringed him all the way round, and not straight across, because I must earn my money, you know!"

"That is coming up! the cove might have come up to the other side of the puddock."

"Yes; but look you, the hanimal, he is not a-goin to have the 'oss at furst — we must plant him, you know!" whispered the faithful guide.

"But," replied Bob, "suppose our cove finds it out, he will give us pepper."

"He find it out! he is as hinnocent as a child! We can find the horse down the river to-morrow night; and when a reward is offered, the next station people can hand him out, and we will divide the spile: it's only taking money from our enemies, you knows. Have you any lush? I want a ball considerable, after this lark."

"I have," replied Bob; "for the last time the cove got a keg of rum out with the dray, I took out half a gallon and filled it up with water. Let me see — the cove in the bed is asleep."

He arose, unlocked his box, and produced a case bottle; a cracked tea-cup was by, and the worthy couple helped themselves to a liberal portion of the spirit it contained. The owner replaced his treasure, not without some appearance of trepidation and very frequent glances both towards the bed and the door, which caused a smile to wrinkle the mouth of the attentive guide, who exclaimed —

"I suppose the cove seldom looks into your box ?"

"I almost forgot the key this blessed day, and the cove or missus might have looked into the box and found the rum."

"But, I say, what book is that ? Is it the cove's?"

"Yes," replied Bob; "and there is such a regular fine story in it about an Irishman."

The two began to spell through the story, which was contained in a volume of "Chambers's Edinburgh Journal." The hero was Paddy O'Reardon, or some such name, who did many excellent things in a trip which he made to France. Neither of the characters could read, — the tale was so exactly to their taste, that they spelled it through, waiting occasionally to enjoy fits of inward mirth.

"I say, Bob," said the guide, "who wrote that? Was it Shakspeare?"

"Poh!" replied his companion. "Do you think Shakespeare could write anything like that? Walter Scott wrote it in the 'Edinburgh Journal' to be sure!"

"He was a clever cove," remarked the other, sagaciously."But I declare I must be off."

The two exchanged glances, and began to whisper. Dr. Arabin thought he heard mention of the horse, and below the huts.

After the door had closed on his companion, the trusty guide, Bob, sat with his face on his knees, most likely cogitating over some sage axiom; he next stretched his legs to their full length, and rested him self on the box which contained the precious balls. In ten minutes he was asleep.

Dr. Arabin passed the greater part of the morning in restless endeavours after repose; towards daybreak he fell into a sound slumber, and dreamed of the guide and his other adventures of the previous night.

CHAPTER V. THE ABODE OF A SETTLER.

"CAN you tell us anything of the life the Australian settlers lead?" we think we hear a hundred young men ask. "Would a settler do?" sighs a lone fair one, who remembers well the parting look of a lover, whom she now learns is a settler or squatter in the wild plains of Australia. We must give a short description of the order, in answer to such queries. Do not be alarmed; we are not inclined to write hyperbolically of the genus, to deceive the world by paradoxes at violence with truth — to paint our grazing friends as unblemished — to abuse them without foundation. We have but one wish, — to edify all with the picture of a new order of beings, whose peculiarities were unknown to the world until our own humble efforts brought them forward.

We are aware that a few have complained loudly of the author's sketch of the settlers[1] in "Tait's Magazine." The character boldly drawn in it as the "outlandish settler" is less frequently to be met with than formerly. It is, nevertheless, formed on the solid basis of truth; at the present time it is the exception, and the settlers of the old school are nearly extinct.

No.1 of the Australian Sketches.

The term "settler" is peculiar to the Colonies. We have heard it used in the African Colonies, and understand it is used in British America. In the United States, "squatter" is the term most frequently used; it is also frequently used in Australia, especially in the Middle or Sydney District.

In every one of the Australian Colonies, the settlers constitute the most opulent and the most respectable class. In New South Wales, the industry of the squatting (grazing) interest has forced the Colony to advance, notwithstanding the neglect which is chargeable to the ignorance and obstinacy of our rulers — the contemptible shuffling and robbing system of many of the merchants — the mismanagement of the Colonial Banking establishments — the Utopian systems of Wakefield, and others of the same stamp, who propagate opinions repugnant to common sense and experience. Great must the resources of a poor country be which could make head-way against such seas of trouble. The Colonists, it is true, complain; yet their grievances are unredressed — the evil system is continued, their prayers are slighted, their remonstrances treated with contempt; Government is positive that its policy is correct, and we blame it as erring more from ignorance than design. Let it then take advice from such as are competent to give it. The extent of the squatting interest may

be conceived by the following table of the stock in the Colony of New South Wales.

Horses	. . . 56,585
Horned Cattle	. . . 897,219
Pigs	. . . 46,086
Sheep	. . . 4,804,946

This stock is all depasturing on Crown lands; the stock upon purchased land is not included. The owners of it are "the settlers;" the owners of it are under the surveillance of Crown Land Commissioners; each is obliged to pay £10 for a licence to depasture stock, and an assignment is levied upon their stock of so much per head; but after July 1845, the owners of stock will be under the necessity of paying in accordance with the new depasturing licences' regulations, which issued from the Colonial Secretary's office on the 2nd of April, 1844, and which directs that after that date, a separate licence must be taken out, and a fee of £10 paid for each station or run; that every station at a greater distance than seven miles from any other occupied by the same party shall be deemed a separate station, even although the area occupied may not exceed twenty square miles; that no one licence shall cover a station capable of depasturing more than 4000 sheep, or 500 head of cattle, or a mixed herd of sheep or cattle equal to either 4000 sheep or 500 cattle. The large stockholders would not sit tamely by and allow the Government to tax them; the instant the Government Gazette containing these regulations appeared, the most violent expressions of dissatisfaction were used against His Excellency. Public meetings were held in every part of the country. A society was formed under the name of the Pastoral Association, including amongst its members the whole of the extensive stockowners. The Committee framed a petition to the Houses of Parliament, which was signed by the majority of the stockholders.

This document reflects great credit upon them as a class; it is worded with caution, and respect for Government, while it sets forth in temperate language the evils with which they are encompassed, their remonstrances against increased taxation, and the grievances they wish redressed.

We have been witnesses of the sad effects which have attended upon the present licence system, and the established high minimum price of Crown lands, and we are glad to witness the influence of the great grazing-land classes embattled against them.

If the author of the Australian Sketches said anything in "The Settler" which would offend one of that respectable order, he is sorry, very sorry, knowing that their indomitable perseverance has overcome many difficulties, and that their eccentricities are the effects of the precarious

tenure by which they hold their leases. Fixity of tenure and a moderate rent are all that the roamers of the Australian plains sue for. The absence of the farmer has created more human misery than, perhaps, any other grievance connected with the Colonies. We find young men who have been reared in affluence, and educated in universities, and who grew to manhood in the society of the great and wealthy, — in Australia ruined, beggars, and prostrated in both physical and moral dissipation, their minds contaminated by ghastly, loathsome vice. We often find them revelling in low haunts of profligacy, associating with the abandoned of both sexes; and why is it that such is the fact? It is because they have no home — no heart — no society. Their independence is fled — their spirit broken — their worldly prospects blasted. They are sensible of their condition. Obliged to cringe to and fawn upon contemptible Government officials, or lose their home and their all, is it any wonder that they are often unable to bear up against circumstances so infelicitous? Had these men their stations at an equitable rent, with permament leases; were they at liberty to bring home partners, without the risk of being turned upon the world without a farthing but their stock, at any time; how different a picture might we have to draw, of virtuous parents, brave sons, and chaste daughters!

Australia is a fine country; it has great natural advantages of climate and soil; it possesses food for stock to an almost unlimited extent. Why, then, shall man do his best to render these advantages of "none effect?"

There is one thing, however, certain: the excitement which these new regulations have created — the strong and determined spirit of opposition which they have aroused, must be productive of a vast amount of good or evil. Either the petition of the pastoral Colonists will open the eyes of the Government, and force it to ameliorate the condition of the petitioners, or a crisis will be hastened on which we fear to contemplate. If the petition be treated with contempt or indifference, and the grievances be unredressed, the Colony may be placed in inextricable confusion.

Government has had fair warning; let no person connected with it be blind to the probable consequences. The crisis now over has brought many to total ruin; not a few have, as already described, sunk into habits of intemperance. Yet they look with hatred at the Government which has spread ruin over the length and breadth of the land. Should the well-affected settlers chime in with these malcontents, what chance could any Government have against their united power?

It appears very unfair that in a free country every office of honour or emolument should be bestowed by the Government officers. We find that even this circumstance breaks the spirit of many persons of good families.

The Governors of the different Colonies have the sole power to nominate the magistrates and members of Council; and every one of the public situations is in the gift of the Colonial or the Home Government. The Governor for the time may appoint men to be magistrates who have no claim to expect such an honour at his hands, and he may deeply wound the feelings of others who have every reason to expect such a mark of approbation. From the very constitution of Colonial society, also, such an omission is likely to wound more fatally than in England; its elements are ever unsettled. Some men ascend the ladder of fortune with gigantic strides; others are precipitated from it, and disappear altogether, or appear in a far different guise. The Colonists are much deceived by empty sounds, and a J. P. is in their eyes an aristocratic distinction. Here they are to blame: they are too prone to worship rank and wealth; they are not cognisant of Burns's sentiments:

> "The king can mak' a belted knight,
> A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
> But an honest man's aboon his might —"

We see no reason why the Government appointments should not, in nearly every instance, be bestowed upon Colonists. Were this the case, emulation would incite to mental exertion, and there would be always a superior class. If the present system remain unaltered, there is too good reason to dread that our future Colonial society will degenerate into mere automaton farmers and sheep-owners.

To return from this political disquisition to the Australian settler. We have already stated the extent of the stock which is vested in this class in New South Wales alone; it is scattered over the face of the country, both within and without the various counties which are denominated the bounds of location. It may be interesting to state the districts without the boundaries: — they are Bligh, Clarence River, Darling Downs, Lachlan, Liverpool Plains, Mc Leay River, Maneroo, Moreton Bay, Murrumbadgee, New England, Wellington, in the Middle District. In the Port Phillip District, there are the Western Port and Portland Bay Districts. These districts, with the twenty-four counties, contain the stock, which is much larger than that depasturing upon purchased land. Besides the licence, they pay an assessment of 1/2d. a head for sheep, 11/2d. for cattle, and 3d. for horses. The money is expended in maintaining the expenses of a Border Police. All fines go towards the same purpose.

The expense of the Border Police, commencing with 1839 and ending

with 1843, for five years, is stated at £71,010 15s. 8d. Theproceeds of the assessment and fines for the same period were £69,607 6s. 6d.

A few of the settlers are married. The majority of them are young men, who live mostly upon their stations; the reckless class, who were nearly always in the towns, have, with few exceptions, gone through the Insolvent Court within the last two years. A few have been able to retain their stock, and manage upon their station for their creditors; but it has been a total wreck with the majority.

It is really a pity to see so many fine young men who are lost, we fear, for life. Those who recover steady habits, may get a start again; but we hardly think that many who have had their names blazoned in the Insolvent Court will do much good in the same sphere of action. It is like American repudiation; those who once find so ready a way to pay their debts may never take the trouble to be honest. But we are glad to say, that many have nobly withstood the shock, and if the Government give them a chancel they will very soon be independent.

Experience has been bought at a dear rate; but there is nothing like experience, after all. Those who have maintained both their good name and a moderate share of their property may be regarded, taking every consideration of their position into view, as fortunate individuals.

A very large proportion of the settlers, or squatters, within the boundaries of location, are married. Some have large families; they ought, therefore, to be protected and fostered by Government.

There is a pretty extensive assortment of sons of the soil amongst this class. They have never been out of their native country; and their ideas of townlife are acquired from an occasional visit to an Australian town, and it may be looked upon as a remarkable fact that very few of them express any anxiety to see Europe. A few wish to go out whaling, and this appears to them the most daring achievement they can accomplish.

Yet there are several exceptions. Mr. Wentworth, Member for Sydney, a native of Norfolk Island, was educated in England. This gentleman possesses considerable proficiency in classical literature, and has occasionally made a very good figure as a debater. Several other gentlemen who claim Australia for their native country were returned for the first popular Assembly. We know several Australians now, hardly more remarkable for ability than for sound sense and moral courage. Many of them, however, are peculiarly ignorant of life. They know about cattle and land, and they cultivate the latter with care, but allow their minds to run to seed.

We must, however, return to our friend Dr. Arabin, whom we left about to introduce himself into the dwelling-house of the “settler.”

About twenty yards from the hut where Arabin had passed the night, was a large, and, for the Bush, respectable-looking cottage. Entering at the back, he passed through a narrow passage, and entered the front parlour. He perceived that he was in the dwelling of a settler of respectability.

The walls of the room were plastered; the floor was covered with matting: the furniture was of mahogany; a formidable array of weapons were arranged about, which showed that the Australian settler is occasionally visited by Bushrangers. The taste of well-cultivated feminine hands was also to be observed in the elegant ornamental trifles which adorned the mantelpiece. The piano and music-stool formed a singular contrast to the fire-arms which were ranged alongside.

He had just made these observations, when a tall gentleman, dressed in a shooting-jacket and girded by a large belt, arose and gave him a kind welcome.

"I am sorry," he said, "that I had not the pleasure of knowing of your arrival last night; but the fact is, we were once terrified by Bushrangers, and my poor wife has hardly yet recovered from the effects of the frightful visitation we had about three months ago from these horrid Bushrangers, and I suppose Bob was afraid to alarm the house."

As he finished, a tall elegant-looking woman, attired in a light morning dress, entered from the side apartment, which communicated with the parlour by a door.

This lady appeared to be confused at the sudden appearance of a stranger. The settler again rose, and said,

"My dear, this is a gentleman who has lost his way, and who has taken refuge at our station. Give him a kind welcome."

Like most reserved men, Dr. Arabin had a correct knowledge of human nature and human feeling. He looked on the countenance of the settler's wife, and observing a warm glow of satisfaction to diffuse itself across her face— where female purity was pourtrayed — he was satisfied that he had not come into contact with a niggard, but with a kind warm-hearted woman. It is the keenest pleasure to one disgusted with the selfishness and apathy of "the world."

"You must be very hungry," exclaimed the settler. "You know we have not very many comforts in the Bush; but you are welcome, and a warm welcome must excuse everything."

"My kind sir," replied Dr. Arabin, "few care so little for sumptuous fare as myself. I would not exchange a crust of bread with kind faces and a hearty welcome, for a luxurious feast accompanied by the freezing etiquette of fashionable life."

“You and the women will suit each other,” replied the settler, smoking. “Come, Marie, prepare the breakfast; and call up your sister — or, stay, I will call her myself.”

He opened the door, and walked into the passage; here he knocked at a door, saying in a loud tone, “Come out, Martha; you will be too late for breakfast.”

A low voice replied, “It is very cold. Did you hear any Bushrangers last night, Master B.?”

“Yes,” replied the settler; “the men caught one. Come out, and you shall have a sight of him.”

The fair inmate laughed; but the settler protested he spoke the truth. In a few minutes a young lady emerged from the back apartment, and entered the parlour. The settler laid hold of her arm, and drawing her towards the stranger, exclaimed, “We have caught a Bushranger.”

We must admit that Dr. Arabin was not the most elegant figure in the range of a young lady's imagination, for his coat was torn and his face was scratched. He cared not for personal attractions — or, at any rate, he supposed that he did not. He was not a little astonished when he beheld the young lady scrutinise his countenance in some such fashion as a London dame would examine an Iroquois hunter or an ourang-outang. He was degraded in his own estimation — he felt a blush of shame tinge his cheek at being mistaken for a Bushranger; he vowed that he would not go rambling in the forest even professionally in future, but keep in his humble home.

The young lady observed the blush, and appreciated its meaning; for there exists a freemasonry among the young which is altogether overlooked by the old and worldly. She replied to the jest of the settler, in an angry tone,

“How can you be so cruel with your joking?”

“Well, well, it was but a trick, Martha. I only wished to have breakfast, as I am very hungry. You must really forgive me.”

And the young lady laughed and forgave him; and, will it be believed? Dr. Arabin was gratified. What a singular anomaly is the mind of even persons of the first intellect! Dr. Arabin was many degrees advanced in his own estimation at being recognised as a gentleman in soiled clothes; and yet had any person said that he cared two straws about his personal appearance, he would not have believed them, — that is, unless he had instituted a rigid search into his own feelings; and even then, it is a question if he would have detected the joy he experienced. The most intellectual are not above the feelings common to humanity, and they too often share the vicious propensities of other men. The late William Hazlitt

(if we mistake not) justly remarks, that "the mind soars to the lofty, and is at home in the low, the grovelling, and the mean."

And we must say that Martha Waller was a young lady whose good opinion most men would wish to possess. In appearance she seemed tall and rather slender; her white dress was relieved by her rich dark hair, "clasping a neck" which rivalled the snow for purity and whiteness. These luxuriant tresses indeed added a dignity to her appearance, which might else have been considered too delicate. Young, frank, and without art, her presence appeared to cast a gladness around, like the flowers in full bloom, which change even sterility into beauty. We must not proceed: Dr. Arabin had seen the jewelled nobility — the proud and fashionable dames of England — the more polished and gay female society of the Continent; but, he avowed, a more complete model of beauty bordering upon the ideal, he had never beheld. It seemed to him that a sincere lover of beauty might bend to her as akin to perfection; and yet he had loved before, but never told or breathed it.

The breakfast-table now withdrew his attention, and invited him to recruit his strength; he had not even tasted food for twenty-four hours. The shade which had darkened the fair countenance of the youngest female had disappeared; the whole party assembled at the breakfast-table were agreeable. Arabin was astonished to find himself placed in so pleasant a party, and rallied his spirits. He could not but reflect upon the strange admixture of good and bad which human nature is, and that selfishness might possibly lurk beneath all the frankness which distinguished the settler's family. "How very few are above it!" muttered he.

The breakfast passed over, in course of conversation the settler inquired how long he had been in the country ?

"I have not been in it two years," replied he: "it is a short period, and yet I can almost fancy it a lifetime — a dull, uninteresting lifetime."

"Then you do not like the country, I suppose?"

"I might say I do, and I do not," replied Dr. Arabin. "It is a lovely, romantic country; but the Colonists are too much of a sheep-farming, matter-of-fact, pounds-shillings-and-pence class, for my taste. I have never remained very long in any place, and am almost inclined to be a second Robinson Crusoe, and wander up and down the world for the remaining portion of my life."

"I cannot agree with you," replied the settler; "it is very fine to move about, but very miserable, I am positive. Give me a comfortable home, plenty of money, and allow me to live comfortably."

"That was never my disposition," said Arabin. "When a schoolboy, I frequently wandered miles from home, and sometimes would beg my way,

to visit some antique ruin — a memento of former greatness. I would wander about an old, deserted castle for days, and dream of its past magnificence. I remember, when returning from a school in Scotland, how I left the coach at a posting-town in Yorkshire, and walked on, on foot and alone, to visit the city of York, and visit its far-famed Minster. I entered its sacred precincts, and paced up and down its majestic aisles, breathing the subdued majesty of the hallowed past. An old gentleman adopted me as his companion for the hour, and we examined the monuments. Amongst the first was one erected in memory of a Knight of Malta. I can almost feel now the thrill which rushed through my veins: thoughts of bands of Crusaders, horses and riders, started into living forms; warriors were animate, brandishing sword and lance. First came a band of Crusaders, in antique armour, fighting under the banner of him whose ashes rested here beneath the pavement where we trod. Then another scene: I thought I beheld the gallant knight, borne down by numbers, fighting in a cause which to him seemed the most sacred. We next ascended to the highest tower in the noble cathedral: we endeavoured to acquire some fame by carving out the shape of our feet upon the lead, and placing our initials in the middle of the outlines. — But I am afraid my long tale tires you."

"We are very much interested," exclaimed all his listeners.

"I returned that evening to my humble lodgings in the Skeldergate. I was astonished when my landlady informed me that she had never been to the top of the cathedral, although she had lived in York all her days. She was very kind, however. She inquired my motive for visiting York, and chided me for not returning home; when I informed her of my little secret, I recollect now that she would hardly accept any recompense for the trouble I had given her, and that she placed me under the charge of a Leeds waggoner, who saw me on the coach for the South."

"I think," replied the settler, "the author of the 'Sketch-Book' has expressed the same feelings, and his anxiety to go far away with the outward-bound vessels."

"I can assure you," said Dr. Arabin, "I have often experienced the same feeling; and when a boy, I had an intense love for the sea-side. I would lie for hours engaged in watching the vessels tossing about, and long anxiously to partake the hardships of the mariners. When I had a few shillings to spare, I frequently posted on board some vessel, and bribed the seamen to give me a ship-biscuit, and allow me to remain and fancy myself a sailor for a day. The feeling I have never been able to totally subdue: the sight of a vessel always makes me uncomfortable, and to wish to be off. The freedom of the sea suits me: I would wish no purer liberty

than to wander on the billowy foam, or to soar, like the eagle —

> "Higher still, and higher,
> From the earth thou springest;
> Like a cloud of fire,
> The deep-blue thou wingest."

But I fear I tire you. You must think me foolish; but I have lately lived in almost solitary confinement, without any companion but my own thoughts, and my thoughts rush out almost spontaneously."

"Do not mention anything of the kind," said the settler; "I am certain my wife and Martha have had the same feelings, although perhaps unable to give them expression by language. I confess, once upon a time, I had nearly the same thoughts myself; but scabby sheep, and old convicts for servants, have changed the current of my thoughts. You know, men with families must look out for the 'crumbs'; and that diverts much of their attention from mental improvement, and also wears down the high sentimental sensibility of youth."

"Have you travelled much?" the young lady ventured to ask.

"No," replied he; "I have been in one or two foreign countries, but my travels have been nothing: the more I have gone about, however, the more anxious I have become to see more of the great world. I made one voyage down the Baltic, and I have been on the Continent of Europe, and now I have seen this strange new world also. I am very anxious to see India and South America. Indeed, if I could gratify my own taste, I should commence wandering over the globe: I would not rest until I had looked upon every country it contains, and mixed with lower orders, and caught something of their habits and notions. When death arrived, I should lie down contented at the nearest human habitation — or by the way-side, contented to be canopied by the pure sky."

"It would be a cold death," said the settler, "and you would require a large sum of money to gratify your singular inclinations."

"Poverty is the very reason," sighed Dr. Arabin, "which ties me to this or to any other country, and prevents me from following my inclinations. I should not desire to increase my means by any intercourse with those whom I inwardly despise."

"You owe the world no undue partiality," continued the settler.

"And have I ever received any favour at its hands?" replied Dr. Arabin, a little hurt at the cold tone in which the settler spoke; "have I not found my fellow men, without almost an exception, churlish, and mean, and selfish? No, I owe it no favour; I despise it and its metallic-seeking inhabitants."

"Do you despise us women?" inquired the lady of the settler, in rather an offended tone.

"Do we cheat and act the bear too?" archly inquired the young lady.

"You take me aback," replied Dr. Arabin. "I know I have been speaking too free to mere strangers, — but I hardly ever meet a kind face and warm welcome, and I hope this will plead my excuse. I have often attempted to subdue my singular disposition, but to little purpose. I know it has seriously injured my prospects, which is no serious matter with me; still I would not exchange my independence for the wealth of a prince."

"But," retorted the settler's ladies, "the question?"

"I have never received anything but kindness from woman, and respect and admire the sex," replied Dr. Arabin.

The breakfast had by this time been finished, and Arabin inquired the nearest road to the hut where he had left his horse the evening before. This elicited an explanation of the circumstances under which he arrived, and the cause of his journey. The settler was far from pleased with his convict servant; but he was, notwithstanding, exquisitely amused at the recital of his adventures, especially the council between the two in the hut.

Arabin wished to visit the neighbouring station to see his patient; but before he took leave of the ladies, he promised either to return by their house, or visit them at an early opportunity. He proceeded in company with the settler to look after his horse.

It is nothing uncommon in Australia to have a lovely morning after a tempestuous night: the convulsions exhausted, disappear with the darkness —beauty returns with the dawn of day. They ascended the bank of a river, and Arabin was overpowered with the change — the morning was indeed lovely. He was on the bank of a river, high, but not precipitous; along its sloping outline were ranges of casuarina, its wiry branches waving gently in the morning breeze. Nearer the river bloomed a line of mimosa, gorgeously decked out in yellow flowers. Nor were there other trees wanting, — a laurel or myrtle might be observed spreading a soft perfume, and a glorious flower of scarlet. Towards the edge of the river, the wood became dense; indeed it was often a work of some difficulty to pass, and in some places it was impossible for either man or beast to penetrate the thick brushwood, where the thorn and fern grew to the height of two or three feet. In many parts of the Bush, the dense brushwood impedes the progress of the traveller; indeed, an experienced Bushman would rather walk three miles on open ground, than one mile through it. The eye looked away for miles over the plain, bounded by clear blue mountains, rearing their towering summits, just seen like a morning haze; or, in other places, their glorious blue tints relieved the lighter sky. At

times the sunbeams would glance among the peaks, lighting up many miles of intervening country; then, in an instant, mountain, glen, and plain would be darkened by the cold shade.

Arabin reflected for some moments on the singular beauty of the sunbeams gladdening the earth, and could not but think of the beautiful Scripture allegory, where the Almighty is represented as a sun diffusing light over worlds and myriads of animated things. “How beautiful are the sunbeams wantoning on the mountain-tops!” muttered he. “I can remember, when a boy, that I had gone to Scotland on a visit, and lying on the far-famed Benahee, and observed the shades which the sun cast upon a long range of yellow cornfields: like the perpetual roll of the water in the Pacific Ocean, shadow after shadow came in quick succession. I was young then, and the joy which soothed my breast is not to be described — it was beauty, the very spirit of beauty.

“Again, in this strange world the sun shines unequally; he is like a capricious coquette, first smiling on one favourite, then upon another; and yet the melancholy beauty of the shade breathes sentiment.

“This is a strange new world! How mighty is the silence of these woods! even like ‘the great empire of silence.’ The notes of the bellbird break upon the ear; or the coachman's crack, warning that snakes are in the vicinity; or the drowsy hum of the flies, careering along.

“It is a lovely scene!” continued Arabin, but now speaking aloud; “and if I make up my mind to live and die in one portion of the globe, it would be in such a spot as this.”

“With a few thousand scabby sheep,” replied the settler, whose name was Butler.

“Most certainly not, Mr. Butler,” replied Arabin. “Rather than follow flocks of sheep, I would wander the country with an erratic tribe of black men, and see one spot to-day, another to-morrow, and be untrammelled by the artificial rules of society.”

“And make love to the black *lubras*,” interrupted the settler. “But you will like sheep better if you continue long there.”

Arabin continued, without noticing his companion — “Sheep-herding might have been a delightful occupation to the ancients in the days of Virgil; but I neither like it, nor, in candour, his Pastorals. Yet it is a lovely scene! Where could I have been last evening?”

The settler turned his face towards another part of the scene. Arabin had not looked in that direction, and he started at the contrast between the view which now met his eye, and the scene which it had lingered on before. He saw only a long stony plain; the earth had been scorched by a recent Bush fire,[2] with a miserable —looking Mount beyond destitute of herbage. This

dreary sterility was by no means relieved by the clump of miserable stunted trees which were visible at some distance. The two gazed at one another, and Arabin exclaimed, “It is miserable!”

In the dry weather, the long withered grass on the plains will often ignite, and blaze away for many miles. Houses, hurdles, flocks of sheep, and sometimes human beings, perish in the flames; and where they approach crops of any kind, it is almost impossible to save them.

“You are right — it is named Mount Misery,” replied the settler.

“So called, I suppose, after Mount Misery in St. Christopher's,” said Arabin, “where a poor man who attempted to climb its precipice fell back and was killed. A similar story is related of a person named Ross, who went to the rock on the summit of Lochnagar in Aberdeenshire, immortalised by Lord Byron. This unfortunate man ventured too near the edge, and his foot slipped: I believe his blood is still on the rock.”

“Well,” replied the settler, “this Mount has also its tale of horror. There is not, I rejoice to say, anything like superstition in this country; yet, although we do not believe in hobgoblins, few care to be nigh Mount Misery at night; even the aborigines say the ‘Dible, Dible quambies there,’ and avoid it. Near it, five *lubras* were murdered; and the bodies were concealed in the woods. The real perpetrators of the crime escaped.”

“In what manner were they murdered?” inquired Arabin.

“Some young men came up the river on a frolic: they had brandy in their boat, of which they drank large quantities. They became testy, and quarrelled. Then the smoke of the encampment of blacks at this Mount was perceived: the excited youths agreed to come on; mad with drink, they came up, where a party of five lubras and a coolie were seated round their miami, and shot them dead.They concealed the bodies, and soon after departed.

“Next morning they recovered their senses, and of course remorse began to prey on their minds; they had dyed their hands in human blood, and troubled consciences and terror for the consequences would not allow them to rest in peace. With one exception, they left the Colony. Some went to Van Diemen's Land, and from thence to England; one went to India, another to South America. The only one who remained had a situation under Government.

“After some time, the facts of the case were disclosed. The one who remained in the country, ended his days in a mad-house; and although there was no sentence recorded against any of the party, it has been remarked that they either fell,

> ‘The shameless hand foully crimson'd o'er
> With blood of its own lord,’

or by violent deaths have gone down to the grave, and,

> ———————— ‘Like a storm that's spent,
> Lie hush'd, and meanly sneak behind the covert —
> Vain thought! — to hide them from the general scorn: ’

which I remember Blair uses, in his *Grave,* as ‘fit for tyrants and oppressors.’ ”

“No wonder,” replied Arabin, “that the blacks are unwilling to approach the spot, and no wonder that I was afraid last night to be nigh it.”

The river here took a quick bend, and Arabin could perceive the out-station at a very short distance. The trick which had been played upon him was now apparent; the person who conducted him had evidently gone round the bend, instead of having taken him fair across,

In a few minutes afterwards they began to walk towards the out-station; the towering summits of the mountain ranges were visible, and Arabin had an agreeable occupation for his mental faculties in reflecting on the former state of the strange country. A very few years back, and the existence of this mountain was unknown, except perhaps to a few uncivilised aborigines. Now it rests in solitary grandeur, as if proud of its position; the long range is broken into several crags or peaks; the breeze seems almost to bring a rich perfume from the luxuriant shrubs which grow on the sides in irregular clumps.

One projecting summit lies beetling over, more favoured by the sun than the others, which appear more retiring; these are divided by chasms, and stern in their outline.[3] What pleasure has it afforded the exiles of the North to gaze upon this range! which, by its extent and magnificence, must bring to their memory the mountains of their own land. Everything around seems to reflect the feeling of gladness on the heart.

We believe that one of the most beautiful mountains is Mount Macedon (spoken of by Richard Howitt) in Australia Felix. The long, open, undulating plains before it are peculiar to the Australasiatic continent. The writer lately spent a summer day upon this mountain, and was much pleased with the scene which lay spread before him. In front were the Wireby plains, the salt water river winding along its uneven and circuitous course. Further to the left, the Yarra Yarra and the town of Melbourne were visible. The Plenty ranges were likewise visible, and a huge cleft through which the river of the same name flows. The Bay of Port Phillip was just seen, its mild relucent waters contrasting with the forests which environ it. The

effects of the sunshine are not exaggerated in this work; at times the sun exercises a miraculous influence upon the scene. Upon this occasion the earth would occasionally appear veiled in mourning; then he would break forth like a minister of gladness, even like a day-dream of childhood. The dull earth seemed transformed into realms of enchantment. The Plenty ranges, with irregular craggy peaks, reflect the brilliant gleams from rock and shrub, and flower and tree; the sun silvers the level line of the horizon. The rivers gleamed from among the luxuriant foliage which lined the banks. Anon all was in deep shade.

"It is rather singular, is it not," remarked the settler, "that so many have left their homes in Britain, and wander so far from home and friends?"

"No," returned Arabin; "we love change, and from the prince to the peasant a desire to travel seems paramount. Mountains, oceans, accidents, love, and even dread of imprisonment or death, are not impediments; every other feeling is subdued by the anxiety to behold strange lands, and what is termed 'the world'. The feeling may not animate every breast; yet it will be found in the majority. It is that which peoples our Colonies with strong, healthy emigrants; and, combined with cupidity, it also brings capitalists. If men were to live and die upon their cabbage-gardens, colonisation and improvement would be things unknown, and might be expelled from our vernacular languages."

"You are an enthusiastic young man," the settler retorted; "and certainly, although I am a more everyday character, I admire the feeling you display. I wish I had never come from Old England: not but that I love the beauty of the wilderness, and my wife, who is a rose of the desert; but it never can be to me like my native land."

"It is a beautiful wilderness," replied Arabin; "a man might live in it with no friend but nature."

"You should have known Shelley," said the settler.

"And do I not know him?" broke out Arabin.

"Have I not communed in spirit with him for days — hours — years ? It is a sad pity he was an unbeliever, for he has a power of thought which almost places him at the head of our English poets. He becomes indeed often too plaintive — too melancholy. Shelley's poetry is like the wind moaning wildly over a dark sea."

"I cannot admire your description of his poetry," said the settler. "He is a writer of ability; at times, however, he becomes absurd, ridiculous, and unintelligible: but, in justice, I must add, that he has a power of sarcasm which has never been excelled."

The two now turned their faces towards the out station, and began to pursue their journey with all speed. They soon arrived at the out-station. Arabin, however, did not at first recognise it as the same which he had

visited on the preceding evening. Three fellows were seated upon rude logs around the fire, all smoking short black pipes. Arabin recognised his guide of the previous night, and inquired how and when he reached his hut.

"Very well," replied the hut-keeper. "I made a great *infort,* and managed to keep the road without a comin' round the bend."

Dr. Arabin observed that he had a great wish to use better language than usual, and that he mispronounced every third word.

"You had not much difficulty," replied the settler sharply.

"I had great diffinculty, I insure you," pertly remarked the man.

"Where did you put my horse?" inquired Doctor Arabin.

"I could not find him when I comed round the river," replied the man. "Where did you leave him ?"

"I tied him to a tree, just at the spot I wished to have crossed at," replied Dr. Arabin.

"I looked all the bend for him, I insure you," said the man; "he must have broken away and incamped down theriver."

The conversation between this worthy and Bob, on the previous evening, now rushed into the mind of Arabin, and he called the settler aside and informed him of it, and inquired if he thought his men would steal or conceal the horse.

"I have little doubt," replied the settler, "but they would plant him; the rogues are capable of doing anything. But I must outwit them, if possible."

He called upon one of the men, and after they had walked a few paces, he demanded of him abruptly if he knew where the gentleman's horse was to be found. The man seemed confused, but denied stoutly that he had planted the horse.

The settler re-entered the hut, and looking at the man whom he suspected, said, in an angry tone,

"How dare you plant any gentleman's horse?"

"I did not plant him," retorted the man hoarsely.

"It is of no use denying it, because we see him standing in the Bush; so turn him up at once."

"Then George must have pointed him out to you," replied the man.

"You planted him, and I will repay you, for your tricks, one of those days," said the settler. "What I wish you now to do is to bring him out; if not, I will turn you into the chain-gang."

"It is of no use, I suppose; so you'd better call George to turn him up."

"No," said the settler; "I shall do no such thing, because I wish him to go upon another errand. Go yourself, and go immediately."

Thus admonished, the man rose, with every symptom of fatigue. He went out into the forest, and in about ten minutes returned, leading the identical animal by the bridle — and in sad plight he was!

The long period which had elapsed since Dr. Arabin left him, he had passed tied to a tree by the bridle, and without food or water. The settler recommended milk and-water mixed with oatmeal, and they had to return to the home-station to procure this. After he had taken it, the saddle-belts were unbuckled, and he was allowed to go free. In a moment he commenced rolling on the grass; then he stretched himself once or twice, and was then refreshed and ready for the journey. Soon after Dr. Arabin departed on his mission.

CHAPTER VI. A PATIENT. — MORE ADVENTURES.

WE have hitherto said nothing of the person whom Dr. Arabin had been sent for to visit, because he knew nothing about him farther than that he was in a state of mental excitement approaching almost to insanity. Dr. Arabin had just mentioned his name to the settler, but he only sighed and shook his head. We must confess that he was not a little anxious to see this person; many a surgeon or physician, when called in to visit a patient, thinks only of the fees he is likely to pay; but Arabin speculated on the nature of his complaint, and the manner in which he should heal him, for medical opinion rushes into opposite extremes on this disease.

Is humanity responsible in every instance for its actions? Has the human mind an innate faculty which prevents it from willing actions at violence with what is right? Has the reason sway over desire and action? In short, is insanity, in any case, responsible? A man may acquire a great sway over his passions, and be possibly sane; the same man, by resigning his reason and allowing his passions to overcome and trample upon every other feeling, may commit the maddest acts and the most awful crimes; in a word, such persons are led by passion — they are intellectually insane. They are responsible, both to an earthly and a heavenly tribunal, because they have voluntarily nursed the passions which in the end have overmastered them and scorched their souls. How many, for example, will be found who have disordered their intellectual faculties by indulging in intoxicating drinks! — then they have the power of volition without the power of reason to coerce their acts; yet who shall say that the drunkard is not responsible? We do not confine the principle to drunkards — those moral ruins that walk about the world to warn the young and the good of danger — we include those who resign their calm reason to intoxicating passions. If a man perpetrates a crime in consciousness, no violence of passion can be brought forward to palliate his guilt.

Dr. Arabin soon reached the station which he wished to visit. It differed very much from that which he had just left. The hut was about the same size, only there was no back hut, — nor was it required, as the kitchen was in the back. The owner was a bachelor; the servants were all men, because it appeared females of good character would not reside upon the station. Perhaps it was in consequence of this that the place had a dreary look. Man makes but a bad attendant upon the sick; his presence there is intrusion — the presence of a woman in the sick chamber is music.

> "She moves upon this earth a shape of brightness;
> A power that from its objects scarcely drew
> One impulse of her being — in her lightness
> Most like some radiant cloud of morning dew,
> Which wanders through the waste air's pathless blue,
> To nourish some far desert."

The eye of beauty in the sick chamber nourishes the poor sufferer; her presence is a blessing like the beaming sun; her voice is earnest, and sweet, and entreating. Meet her in early life, her ethereal form is poetry; the blush of purity mantles her cheek; tenderness and beauty of thought are expressed in her eye; worlds of feeling, fancy, sentiment, are unsealed by her glance. Is she not a noble creature?

Arabin had disliked the prospect of the hut on his first visit, and now he was disgusted with it altogether. His patient, the master of the house, was labouring under fits of insanity, occasioned by too frequent indulgence in intoxicating liquors. Dr. Arabin knew little of him — his character was far from good, or, at least, he was regarded as a young man of wild, extravagant, and reckless habits. He did not appear to be in the receipt of any considerable income; yet he spent more than any person in the neighbourhood could afford. He was often in town, his drays were always on the road; wherever the money came from, there was no want of it; indeed, he spent profusely when in town, which was very often. When Dr. Arabin first saw him, he was almost insane from the effects of brandy, and he had not taken very much notice. He came in and found him better, although still in a very peculiar state. Upon the former occasion he was insensible, but now he found him able to converse upon general topics. The patient was a tall young man, of peculiarly dark complexion, with wild, unsettled eyes; and there was a mystery in his air and address, which was by no means prepossessing.

There was something also mysterious in the house. The servants were a black man, a native of India, who acted as indoor servant, assisted by the bullock-driver, a tall, taciturn man, with a very equivocal cast of countenance. Dr. Arabin soon became uneasy, and informed the settler that there was no danger if he did not recommence his intemperate habits; but that if he did, the consequences would be serious: he then took his leave. At parting, the settler asked the amount of his demand, which having reluctantly wrung from him, he wrote out an order for the amount. Arabin then took leave, politely declining the invitation of the settler to wait for dinner. It was about one o'clock, and the plains had to be crossed. He was fortunate enough to reach home before the evening, without any

adventure worthy to be recorded.

The dwelling-house occupied by Arabin stood in a quiet street in the country town already mentioned. The passenger might perceive a neat cottage, with two French casements in front, upon one of which was a brass plate with his name and profession in large letters. This building contained four rooms of rather limited dimensions; the parlour and bedroom were towards the street; the kitchen and surgery were in the rear. The parlour was the correct size for a gentleman's study or library, and furnished very much after the fashion of such apartments. In one of the recesses between the fire-place and the wall, books were arranged upon shelves. Dr. Arabin had a small, but a select library, containing not only works of science, but likewise the most approved works in English literature, and a few German prose works. In other parts of the room were natural curiosities and native weapons, waddies, leanguils, &c.; in the other recess stood a table, upon which were ranged his surgical instruments, and a case of beautiful pistols. The room was neatly, although plainly furnished, and a large chair by the fire spoke of the comforts of a bachelor's life.

It was a wet evening — one of those dull, rainy nights which usher in the Australian winter. Dr. Arabin sat writing, occasionally raising his head to glance at the cheerful fire which blazed in the hearth; a smile of pleasure would curl about his mouth as he contrasted the comfortable room with the storm which raged outside, and which made the comforts of home thrice welcome.

There is not a word within the circle of language which finds so quick a response in the human breast as “Home!” How different, in almost every respect, are the homes of the rich and the noble from the homes of the poor! yet, oh! how alike the language to the heart! The poor man, indeed, has reason to love his humble abode more passionately than even his superior in rank; for it is there alone that he finds solace for poverty, and neglect, and contempt.

It is fanciful to wander through strange and distant countries, and find their cities so very much alike — streets are the same, houses are the same, with various alterations to suit the architectural taste of the inhabitants; there is the neat window-curtain peeping from the well-cleaned window, the lady or gentleman raising it and dropping it when observed: and may not all these be seen in England, Scotland, Ireland, on the Continent, in the United States — in Asia, Africa, and in Australasia?

We do not think that the great and noble possess the felicity of a happy home. Such persons live an artificial life; they are too much in the world: their souls are too much engrossed with ambitious thoughts; their minds

are too full of pleasure — envy —vanity. The indigent do not enjoy home; they are often hard worked and half-starved, and too often ruin themselves altogether by indulging in intoxicating liquors. No; it is but seldom that either the wretched abode of squalid poverty, or the stately mansion of the great, possesses that indescribable aspect of comfort which all have observed, but which we cannot picture. On the contrary, does not the former disgust, and the latter repel? The houses of the great wear the cold isolated magnificence which we admire, but cannot love. The aristocratic exclusiveness of their noble owners speaks in their stern and frowning bastions and turrets. Surely their rank and great riches ought rather to be regarded as misfortunes than blessings. Real comfort can only be found in middle life: it is to be seen in the plain mansion of the merchant, in the neat cottage of his hard-working clerk — in the farm or manor-house. The neat parterre of flowers, the well-arranged garden, the snug parlour, the comfortable glass of wine, are all peculiar to the middle rank of life. We hope many in it are aware of the advantages incidental to their station, and that their unpretending homes are preferable to a palace.

"I shall not continue my essay," muttered Arabin. "How unfortunate! I have to go abroad. It is a poor woman, it is true; but I think she is in imminent danger, and I must not neglect her, as that fawning fool Dr.—————— did. The heat in this room is too great; it almost engenders sleep. It rains hard; but I have been abroad in more boisterous nights."

He had now enveloped his person in a great-coat, and he opened the casement and walked into the street. It was not so very bad a night as he had expected, and he trudged on and quickly reached the residence of his patient. It was much later than he was aware of, and the houses were quiet and the shops were closed. He returned by another street. As he reached the corner where the lamp suspended above a licensed house shed a flickering light around, he heard a voice in earnest discourse. He waited for some moments, and at length observed a person stretched upon the ground close to the wall of the house: several persons smiled and passed by, but Dr. Arabin stopped to listen to the intoxicated person, as he supposed him to be, and advise him to go home.

"I don't know," said the man, louder; "I don't think it's any great sin either; at least, not half so bad as cheating and swindling; but my conscience is not easy upon the matter. Strange, I can never derive benefit from the preaching of the Episcopal clergyman — I don't like him, somehow. The Scotch minister is better, but he uses the paper too much. Oh! that nasty Highland accent — it spoils all the good I would derive from his sermons. Well, I hope the devil will not get me just yet, if there be such a spirit. Oh! yes, there is! hold — away!"

"My good man," interrupted Dr. Arabin, "what is the meaning of this?"

The man was silent for some time; then he replied, faintly, "That is not a fair question to ask."

"Well, but, my good man," said Dr. Arabin, "you are lying in a very uncomfortable position there, and you had better go home."

"Home!" laughed the man, now turning round; "I am afraid my home will be the churchyard — no, the burying-ground. Dear me! it is dark, and a bad nighttoo"

The person who was speaking had turned round, and Arabin recognised his patient, the insane settler. He did not make any observation, but allowed him to continue his incoherent remarks.

"It is a fearful thing to dwell with the shadows of night — the dark, dismal night, when the morning will never break."

Dr. Arabin knew that he lodged in the Royal HoteI, and began to coax him to rise; he made no resistance, and they walked down the street. The young man still continued: "It was no sin; hundreds made their money in the illicit trade. What if I am found out? Let them hang me! Who would shed a tear for me ————? Did you hear about it?" said he, stopping suddenly, and staring Dr. Arabin full in the face.

"Hear of what?"

"The men I killed last night, and the wild animals. Wait — hush! they are up my trousers!" He shook his trousers very roughly with his hand; at last, he imagined something came out, for he stamped with his foot as if bruising a serpent, "It is all right now; I have done for it."

They soon reached the hotel. Dr. Arabin prevailed upon him to enter, not without difficulty, and had him conveyed to his bedroom. He could not do much for him; his frame was shattered by the dissipated course of life he had been leading, which acting upon a natural irritability, or a tendency towards insanity, had evidently been making a convulsion in his mental faculties. Dr. Arabin did not like his symptoms all the time he saw him in the country, but he expected much from rest and retirement. We need hardly state that he was chagrined to meet him under such circumstances. He saw that his mental faculties were reeling, and he dreaded permanent derangement. All that he could do to alleviate the disease he carefully performed, and gave warning to the landlord of the house that he was very ill, leaving strict injunctions to have him carefully attended upon.

Dr. Arabin returned to his home. He had taken rather more exercise than he usually did, and retired to bed. He did not sleep well, and towards the middle of the night he awoke from a dream, where he saw the settler lying ghastly as the grave; as he awoke, he fancied something cried: he could not be positive — it might have been his imagination. He arose, and

lighting a candle, looked out; but not a sound could be heard; silence reigned in the town. Again he stretched himself upon the bed, for about ten minutes all was still; he was just about to extinguish the light, when he heard a footstep, and in another instant a sharp knock at the door: he opened it, and a young man rushed in with perturbation depicted in his countenance, and inquired for Dr. Arabin.

"My name is Arabin," replied he.

"Then come, for God's sake, immediately! The poor young man you saw at our house is ill — he is very ill. Come away!"

"What is the matter?" said Dr. Arabin.

"Oh ! come away!"replied the man, "he has been attempting to shoot himself; but it is all right. Come away!"

The man almost dragged Dr. Arabin with him. When he entered the bedroom where the settler lay, he found two individuals supporting him: he was pale, and a few streaks of blood marked his face; a slight wound was visible on his forehead, which had been caused by the bullet from a pistol. It had been intended for the brain; but some lucky accident had occasioned the pistol to drop, and the awful crime was not committed. The ball had touched the flesh as it slanted off, but Dr. Arabin immediately pronounced it to be of a trifling character; he removed the long black curls which clung to the brow of the evidently agonised settler, and washed the wound. The poor fellow was quiet, and once as Arabin raised his head, he observed a tear drop on the pillow; he looked, and the dark, unsettled eye of the patient was immediately withdrawn, and neither by word nor sign did he afterwards indicate that he was conscious of his presence. He waited some time in the room, and took a deliberate survey of the sufferer; he acknowledged that he had an air about him different from common individuals: he had the appearance of a retired genius — a deep and powerful thinker; but there was also something displeasing in the profile of his countenance, which almost repelled sympathy; his eye was brilliant and intellectual, but roving and shy; in a word, he seemed one of the most intellectual of the species who had degenerated into mental and moral depravity. He observed also that his dress was finer in quality than squatters commonly use, and that the various garments were fashionably made. Before he left the house, he gave the landlord strict charge to watch the poor youth carefully. The landlord appeared considerably affected, and in answer to the questions of Dr. Arabin, allowed that the young man had lately been indulging in habits which had caused these occasional aberrations of mind. Before, he had been a well-behaved young man, although even then something seemed to be weighing down his spirits; and he appeared by far too often in town,

although he had his pockets filled with money, which he squandered without discrimination. Some days now he was well enough; but not being under restraint, he generally injured his mental faculties, and derangement was the consequence. He had seen him ill, very ill, before, but never so bad as upon this occasion.

This information agreed exactly with what Arabin knew of the young settler, Mr. Willis; and wishing the sporting landlord good night, he once more wended his way towards his home.

He seated himself in the parlour, and began to ruminate upon the strange fate of the young settler whom he had been called upon so unexpectedly to visit. He had apparently no relation or friend in the country. The landlord thought only of his bill, that had always been settled, and he was sorry for his inmate, and afraid of being deprived of a remunerating customer.

Dr. Arabin once or twice thought there was some connexion between Willis and the family of the settler already introduced. The only cause which incited this thought was, that the settler and his lady exchanged looks when he said he was about to visit Willis, and he thought he observed the young lady change colour. "But why," thought Arabin, "should I give myself a thought about this crack-brained youth, or the family of the settler? I am a poor surgeon; and, perhaps, the settler and his lady never once thought of me after my departure, and I may resume my legitimate avocations and forget them. And this stranger, why should I trouble my head about him? — he is nothing to me. I may never see him above once or twice again."

The reader is aware that Dr. Arabin was but a light sleeper. He retired; but every effort to compose himself, or to woo repose, was of no avail. He lay in bed tossing to and fro, thinking of the settler's family and of Willis; sometimes he would sleep lightly, when some idea would play upon his imagination, and he would start once more awake. Sleep came at last — heavy, but not sweet; indeed, feverish watchfulness was nearly as unpleasant as the disturbed phantasms which flitted around his imagination. He was once more at home — the home of early years. His father — mother — sisters were around him. The scene shifted imperceptibly to Scotland, and he looked upon mountains which he had never expected to behold again; but then his mind was laden with anxiety, he had to return to Australia; he sailed down a stream which passed the door of the school where he had studied; he was among the dashing and foaming billows — in the very vortex of the tempest's wrath; he was sensibly conscious of

"The heavy-rolling surge! the rocking mast!
The hollow dash of waves! the ceaseless roar!”

Again the scene changed, and his inflamed fancy presented the features of the deranged settler — the face paled, until it resembled the leaden hue of the grave. He saw the house where he had been so kindly entertained by the settler and his family, and he struggled to reach it and to obtain relief from his troubles. He entered. It was cold and empty; mire and filth were coagulated upon the walls; snakes made a feast upon the floor; already he was grasping the vipers, and plucking them from his throat, when he awoke.

“These dreams are more frightful than my waking melancholy,” he muttered. “I must have a light.”

He started, and groped about for the candle. He was not able to find the box of matches which commonly lay on the toilet-table, and he did not wish to trouble or alarm his servant. He sat down rather disappointed. The cold, raw atmosphere of the morning caused him to shiver, and compelled him to take refuge in bed. In an hour afterwards he became calm, and slept tranquilly.

It was late the following morning before he awoke. He was angry with himself for wasting time in bed; for he held, that every hour which rational beings abstracted from the pursuit of knowledge or of business was a loss which could never be repaired. He was soon dressed, and enveloped in a rich dressing—gown, the parting gift of a dear friend, which he prized perhaps more than any article in his possession. He opened the door which communicated with the parlour already described, and entered. The table was covered, and, as usual, breakfast appurtenances were arranged in the usual form; but he started with unfeigned surprise to find a stranger seated in the room, — and that stranger his patient of the preceding evening, Mr. Willis the settler. He was perusing a volume of Shakspeare's dramas, as much at home as if he had been domesticated in the house a twelvemonth.

When Willis observed him, he rose; and Arabin was very much astonished at the change in his appearance. His dress had not only been properly arranged, but the deadly hue on his countenance had been succeeded by a slight flush which could hardly be natural — it was like hectic fever. He bowed, and expressed his fears “that he would be looked upon as an intruder. He wished, however, to call and express his gratification at the kindness which had prompted Dr. Arabin to take care of him on the preceding evening; he further hoped that Dr. Arabin would

overlook the unhappy circumstances — indeed he was almost ashamed to see him — but the truth was, he was driven to it; indeed, he had been terribly abused, and if he knew everything he would pity him."

As he concluded, he glanced behind him; and although Arabin had before really been of opinion that he was better, yet when he observed his restless glance, he became convinced that the disease had only slightly changed its character.

Dr. Arabin answered him in the kindest manner possible, and, without noticing the conclusion of his speech, asked him to be seated, and stated the pleasure he experienced in his company; he hinted also that what was past should be buried in oblivion. He solicited the honour of Mr. Willis's company at breakfast. With this request he gladly complied; with a single effort he appeared to forget everything, and he folded back the collar of his coat, smiled sweetly upon his entertainer, and bowed assent to his proposal.

Breakfast was now served up, and both gentlemen did justice to the plain fare which was placed before them. The guest endeavoured to gain the good opinion of his entertainer, and to a certain extent he succeeded. Dr. Arabin had never before seen him to advantage, and was obliged to confess that he was a gentleman in his manners. His information, also, was rather extensive; but he displayed an overweening regard for favourite opinions, and a peevish irritability when opposed, which was far from agreeable. Once or twice, when Dr. Arabin opposed him, his eye burned like coal, and he glared upon him; but the steady gaze of his entertainer quieted him. He felt some anxiety to know a little of the former history of the unfortunate youth, but he was above showing this curiosity. He still wondered if the settler's family already mentioned could in any way be connected with Willis, and took advantage of some remark which was passed upon the portrait of a young lady which adorned the wall of the parlour, to inquire after the settler and his beautiful ladies.

Either the subject was unwelcome to him, or it turned the current of his thoughts into a disagreeable channel. He gave a quick glance, and his face became livid. His eye closed, his face became ghastly, his lips lurid. He drew his hand forth, as Dr. Arabin thought, to lay hold of something, but it grasped at empty space; he began to work his hands and draw up his face; he would have fallen from his chair, had not Arabin caught him in his arms. For several minutes he continued in this state; his hands were clenched, his teeth grated upon each other, his face convulsed. When spoken to, he would not reply. He talked incoherently; sometimes he seemed addressing a lady in fond language; the tone of his voice breathed tenderness — then it changed from this melancholy sighing into genuine

passion, as he continued in altercation with some relative. He was at sea and sinking — oh, how the storm raged! he was pursued by a pack of hell-hounds with coffins; how they tried to get him within their grasp! he shouted as he rushed along.

Dr. Arabin, although not surprised, was annoyed; he was anxious to have his patient put to rest without any delay, and he did not like to transport him to his hotel in his present melancholy condition: on the other hand, he had objections to keeping him in his house. His kindness of heart, however, conquered all these doubts, and he had him laid upon his own bed. In a few hours he was calm, and spoke of himself as a man who had been grievously ill-used. He further complained that men had been dogging him with coffins, and go where he would they were certain to follow. "There they stand, just by the window — the wretches! — let me get from them!" he shouted violently; "they want my blood — they will put me in their coffins! — I must resist — there, did you see me kill that hideous reptile and smash his coffin?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Arabin, coaxingly; "you did it very well."

"Yes," continued the maniac, "I have been chased for days on the plains, by these men with coffins tied on by black snakes. I ran along — ran for my life — passed miles upon miles, fleet as the wind; I knew well enough that they wanted to kill me, and bury me in their coffins, and torture me; but I escaped them all, and laugh and spit at them. " He became calmer, and Arabin expected that the paroxysm had abated; in a few minutes afterwards he glanced round the room, and observing Arabin, glared upon him with eyes fit for a Roman gladiator, and demanded "what he wanted, or if he had any coffins, or why he was waiting watching him."

Dr. Arabin endeavoured to recall the scene of the morning. Soon afterwards the fit abated, and the lunatic recognised him, and chatted sensibly enough upon ordinary matters; but on the subject of the coffins he seemed the same. "What a shocking thing that was of the coffins!" he said; "I murdered the wretch who entered the room with them — did I not, sir?"

"He had but one coffin," replied Dr. Arabin, determined to humour this wild phantasy.

"He had two," screamed Mr. Willis.

"Had he, indeed!" replied Arabin; "I only saw one."

"You're a liar, you ugly rascal!" screamed the other; "you saw me throw out two."

"Well, then," continued Arabin, in a soothing tone, "there are no coffins now."

"They had better keep away; they will not catch me asleep."

He now became calmer, and continued quiet for some time; indeed, he talked rationally, and evinced no little acuteness in maintaining a favourite principle. If Arabin had not been acquainted with the intermittent character of the disease, he would have been at a loss to believe that the person with whom he was in conversation was a fit person to inhabit a lunatic asylum. He was eager to find out if he now gave credence to his narratives about the men and coffins, and he hazarded a question which would perhaps allow him some insight into his state of mind —" Shall I open the door?"

"Oh, no!" replied Mr. Willis; "you will have the diabolical wretches with the coffins upon us. If they can lay hands on me, I am a dead man, especially having killed that slave this morning. Are you certain you buried him, sir?"

"Oh! yes; quite certain," replied Dr. Arabin.

"Was he quite dead?" inquired he.

"No, not quite dead," replied Arabin, with an internal shiver.

"You wretch! — why did you not kill him dead?" screamed the invalid. "What! — ho! — Bragantia! conspiracy here! Slaves, rescue your leader from the men and coffins."

He uttered these exciting exclamations with real melodramatic effect. In about an hour, however, he fell into a soothing slumber. It was necessary that Dr. Arabin should visit a patient: he called his servant, and directed him to look sharply after the invalid during his absence, and that if he should make any violent efforts to break out, assistance was to be procured.

Dr. Arabin was delayed for about two hours, and when at last he arrived at home, was not a little disappointed to find that Willis had escaped. The bedclothes were folded down, and a clumsy attempt made to arrange the bed; the casement was not open, but on examining it closely he found that the fastenings were withdrawn: not a trace of his unwelcome visitor remained. His servant averred that he looked in frequently, and found the invalid in a sound sleep; he had not heard any noise since then, and had been unwilling to disturb the "young gentleman:" in fact, he had sat in the parlour during the time his master was out, listening to hear any sound which might indicate that he was awake. He seemed very much surprised when informed that the stranger was not in the bedroom. There was no other information that he could give.

"Poor wretched being!" thought Arabin, "I pity you. How lightly man esteems the blessings of Providence! indeed, he only knows their value when deprived of them. Superior to every favour which has been

bestowed upon us, is reason. What are riches — rank — fame, to a man whose mind is darkened by insanity, and racked by its own fire? What would it advantage any of those outcasts from the social circles and the amenities of life to receive the fortune of a prince, or even to be crowned the king of countless cities, to have his name pass from continent to continent, carried by the breath of fame, while his reasoning faculties are under an eclipse?”

We may here remark, that the cunning and agility which he had displayed in making his escape induced Dr. Arabin to think more unfavourably of the disease than he before had done.

CHAPTER VII. INTERNAL STRUGGLES.

IT is necessary, for the information of our readers, that we delay our narrative to glance for a moment at the prospects of Arabin. We have said that he was unacquainted with the inhabitants of the town in which he resided; the society was not good enough for him, and he was not good enough for it. In plain language, there exists in the Colonies but one aristocracy, and that is of wealth: rank and talent are nothing in the scales. The Colonists worship no god but Plutus: rank is not of much account; talent is respected abstractedly, but it commands almost no respect for individuals.

In some of our Eastern Colonies, attempts have been made to form an exclusive circle by the more aristocratic emigrants; but in every instance these attempts have turned out failures. For a time it is all very well; but fine gentlemen are the most unfortunate set of Colonists, and the more plebeian class soon acquire the money which they expend. Without money, they sink beneath the very classes they had treated with contempt. In fact, society must not be formed by emigrants, whatever their pretensions; it must be first decomposed, and the successful Colonists raise themselves into a superior rank by their industry and good name.

There has been a spirit of reckless speculation abroad in the Australian Colonies, which has brought many of the apparently wealthy to insolvency. The majority of them will do no good in future; we think that when once a person is insolvent, he has no chance of getting forward in business afterwards — at any rate, where he is known. It is true, there are exceptions; there are honest as well as dishonest insolvents: the former may succeed, the latter will not. Fraud is bad policy; indeed, it is better (and we advise every person) to act honestly, and have a clear conscience. This advice may seem singular to many from a person who has evidently sojourned in New South Wales, especially to such as remember Elia's letter to B. F. at Sydney, New South Wales. There is a remnant, however, even in that tainted country, untainted with crime.

Dr. Arabin had received no attention from any class, because he was poor! Out upon the vile, disgraceful practice of adoring men for their means, in a ratio with the amount of gold which they can command! Alas! very few are above this practice. Men, in the confined sphere in which he moved, “a solitary being,” knew him not. He possessed no money, and there was nothing to be gained by his acquaintance; he was distant in his manners, and therefore an unpleasant medical adviser where gossip is the order of the day. During the time he had resided in the

country, he had not been on intimate terms with any person; the few cases where his services were required had not remunerated him; indeed, he was occasionally rather anxious for the future.

About this time he received a small legacy which had been bequeathed to him two years before by a relation in India. It was unexpected. The English lawyers had but little hopes of being able to recover it; it was lying in a banking-house, but as the will was informal, it could not be come at. Another party had claimed it, and it was thrown into the Court of Chancery. At the time Arabin sailed, there was no prospect of a speedy termination to the case, and he had no idea of recovering the money. His lawyer, however, had received instructions how to act, and he recovered the money, and sent it in the form of a banker's bill payable in London.

It was when negotiating this document that it transpired that he was in possession of money. He was hardly aware of the cause which had created the change in the tone of his fellow-townsmen when addressing him; but it was evident that his society was more courted than before. It is impossible to deny but that he was pleased with this reaction in his favour — for who does not like to be caressed and courted ?

For the whole period that he had resided in Australia, he had been inclined to return to England, or proceed to India or New Zealand. We may here say, that we have frequently known Colonists living in this state of suspense from day to day, and from year to year. The labouring classes too, although better fed, clothed, and paid than in Europe, are invariably grumbling about the country, and threatening to leave it and return. Dr. Arabin had lodged his money in the bank, and at the very moment when he saw Willis lying in the street, was canvassing the propriety of remaining longer in the Colony, and the advantages of returning home.

To the natives of Australia there is perhaps no boon in the world which would compensate for absence from their sunny clime. The Colonist, however, cannot forget the ties which bind him towards his own land, and we find very few fully reconciled to remaining in Australia for life. But, again, those who have been in it for any length of time almost invariably return to it — so contradictory are human feelings.

Dr. Arabin was rather better pleased with the country: he was anxious to see the world, but he also had anxieties about his prospects, and was eager to catch at any chance which presented hopes of profit. The report had gone abroad that he was wealthy; it spread — swelled, and it would have astonished ultimately even the first promulgator to hear the town talk. He was now looked up to as a person of some little consequence, and spoken of in the most respectful manner. His practice also increased.

An extensive auctioneer and agent had occasion for medical advice; he

sent for Dr. Arabin. It is true that he talked much, during the visit, of the enormous sacrifices which he would be obliged to make of various fine properties, &c., and a man of the world might have been apt to regard him as a bargain-maker even in his domestic arrangements. Dr. Arabin, however, never suspected that all this battery of eloquence was directed against his own small deposit in the Bank of —— : he had no suspicion it could accomplish such extensive purchases. In fact, had the auctioneer openly requested Dr. Arabin to purchase any of his first-rate bargains, it is more than probable that it would have frightened him, and caused him to determine upon returning to England.

We are surprised that ordinary minds take so kindly to the "New World" at first. It is a scene where the incidents, scenery, and "dramatis personae" are new and strange. The fancy, too, frequently recurs to old times and other scenes. Gradually the Colonists become inwardly reconciled to the change, but they are outwardly grumblers for life.

Dr. Arabin's case was similar to most others. He came out partly from anxiety to see the world, and partly from the wish to escape poverty at home and to accumulate money. When he arrived, he found that a fortune was not easily acquired. He wished to love the beautiful wilderness in which his lot had been cast, but he longed also for the high civilisation of Britain; his heart did not take kindly with the pastoral life — he thought of the beautiful lines of Horace —

> "Ludit herboso pecus omne campo
> Cum tibi nonae redeunt Decembris;
> Festus in pratis vacat otio suo
> Cum bove pagus."

But the flocks did not appear to sport joyously; nor did the December feast pass lightly off, as it was wont on the Tiber in the days of the famous lyric poet. On the contrary, it appeared to Arabin, for some time after his arrival, that he had retrograded in life, in leaving a highly-cultivated and civilised country, and locating himself in a semi-barbarous Colony, hardly even explored. He loved to find books and music and rational amusement at hand, when he was inclined to be amused: he had never known the want of them before, it is true, and perhaps the craving after them now was but imaginary; but one half the discontents of the world arise, after all, merely from ideal causes. He was aware that the country had many advantages. The climate cannot be equalled in any part of the globe; food must be cheap where stock is abundant; wages are high, and the working classes are independent; grazing and agriculture will ultimately be very

profitable speculations, but the Government must grant the squatter's right to the soil upon moderate terms. We hope that refinement will then supplant vulgarity, and that a taste for literature will advance the Australians in the eyes of the world. How eagerly we hope this, we cannot express.

We have wandered from our narrative in describing the struggle which agitated the breast of Arabin on this, to him, momentous subject. “Should he remain?” was a far more important question than “Should he leave his native land?” If he decided upon remaining, he severed the last link from the chain which bound him to his native country — the hills which looked so fragrant, the fields which looked so green; then came the question — “Was it likely he would succeed in his profession in Britain?” He was compelled to admit that the chances were fearfully against this, while, on the contrary, he might succeed in Australia. He was an enthusiast, but he had also an independent spirit. The certainty of maintaining himself in a respectable manner was overcoming the repugnance which, at first, he had entertained for the country. He speculated now occasionally upon the manner in which he ought to invest his small capital. House property, until within the last year or two, has been about the best investment; and even now it will yield a large annual return where it can be procured in first-rate situations for business; it would be dear at the cost of the bricks and mortar in bad situations. In former times, in the Australian Colonies, every kind of property was at a fictitious value.

The Government had large deposits in every one of the Colonial Banks; about three years ago these were drawn out and exported to pay for the large bounty emigration of 1840, 1841, and 1842. About this very period the land-mania was at an almost unparalleled height. In the year 1840, the coin in the whole of the Banks of New South Wales was £309,529 15s., and the land-sales were £316,626 7s. 5d.; allowing for a small balance in the Colonial Treasury and the military chest, it is evident that all the real money in circulation had been used in purchasing land from Government.

Then, when we examine the magnitude of the private transactions in land, and the speculations in stock, shipping, grain, merchandize, houses, machinery, &c., and are sensible that at this very period the coin was being paid away for the bounty emigrants, we can perceive that the late panic was inevitable.

The circulation of all the Banks for 1840 was £215,720. In 1837, the Government had £237,000 in the Treasury, and £127,000 in the Banks. In 1840 it had but £39,000 in the vault, and £188,000 in the Banks. In September and in October, it had £281,000 in the Banks. The reader will bear in mind that this was when land speculation was at the extreme

height.

Mr. Riddell, the Colonial Treasurer, says, that when the Government kept this large capital in the Banks, the Banks distributed it in the way of discounts, and afforded facilities to many to purchase land, and produced that wild spirit of speculation which ruined all the merchants, and many of the graziers. Between 1840 and 1841, the Government drew out in all £260,000, leaving but a trifling balance in each of them. The Banks were curtailing — the merchants and traders were alarmed — a panic was the consequence, and a depreciation in the exchangeable value of property which the most disastrous panic in Europe cannot perhaps parallel.

However small the town in which Dr. Arabin was, it supported a company of strolling players. There was no theatre, but the saloon of a large hotel afforded the lovers of the drama an opportunity of seeing both tragedy and comedy performed. Arabin strolled into this building upon the evening of the day in which Willis had escaped in a clandestine manner from his house, for the express purpose of observing if he should attend. The performances of the evening had commenced; the room, although large, was densely thronged: he looked in vain for the fugitive among the dark figures which met his gaze. He took little interest in the *operetta*, but he found no ordinary gratification in examining the numerous samples of the "squatter" species who crowded about the room. They were all young men; some indeed, in Britain, would have been regarded merely as boys. Their apparel was of coarse material, and shaped after the most approved sporting fashions. Long hair, which many a fashionable *belle* would have envied, was covered, for the most part, with "cabbage-tree hats," set independently on "three hairs." In their manners they were boisterous and abrupt; they assimilated pretty closely to the young squires of Osbaldiston — Messrs. Thorncliff, Richard, John, and Wilfred 0sbaldiston, although the eye wandered in vain for a Die Vernon to brighten the picture. Not even a figure met his eye which bore the least resemblance to his old favourite Archer Fairservice, and to look for the Baillie in Australia would have been too absurd.

At last he had the excellent fortune to procure a seat. Before him were two settlers who, instead of enjoying the performance, had been engaged in a little private pastime; he could not but hear the conversation which was passing.

"He is the most consummate story-teller in the country. Don't you remember how he spread a report that Dicky Wood offered to back his horse for fifty pounds, and it all turned out fudge? I would not believe him on his oath."

"Yes," continued the other, coaxingly, "but I heard it from another

quarter — Joe Johnston told me." "He be —— !"

"Come, then, it is of little use to quarrel over it," replied the other. "Is it true, by-the-bye, that Captain Thomson is going away, and is offering his sheep?"

"Possiblytrue."

"He has fine stock — I wonder what price he wants?" inquired the other settler.

"I don't know, but there are not sheep in the Colony I would give more for, and his station is capital."

"I wish I had the money," said the settler; "but I am as poor as a water-rat: a few thousand sheep now will scarcely support a squatter at a good inn. I see none better off than myself, except that lucky dog Willis, who has gold always at his command: he must steal it. Poor devil! I hear he is out of his mind."

"Yes, so the waiters at my hotel tell me: there is something not above-board there. There is a move which I am not up to — and I know most of the queer moves too in this enchanting and particularly honest country."

"Well! well!" replied the person addressed, "time will show, I suppose. We cannot deny that Willis is a liberal fellow, and we must not inquire too strictly into the means by which he acquires the money."

"Of course not; but I am tired of this playing farce. I shall go; come along."

The two young men extricated themselves from the crowd and disappeared. Arabin sat for some time cogitating upon what he had heard fall from them. Captain Thomson he knew, and had frequently heard that his stock was of a very superior breed, and, what was more, the station was very fine, and capable of running the increase of many years. It was true, Captain Thomson had a great number; and his means, again, were very limited. From every old Colonist, however, he learned that stock was the best speculation, and he had some little anxiety to invest his money in the "golden fleece," in hopes of being able to arrive at independence through this aid. Captain Thomson's station adjoined, and was about fifteen miles from the station of his patient Willis; and so great was his anxiety about the poor lunatic, that Arabin determined to ride out on the following morning, and, if possible, extend his ride to Captain Thomson's. No sooner had he arrived at this resolution, than all the former perplexities disturbed his mind; at the time he resolved upon the journey, his mind was settled. The idea of remaining in the country brought a relapse of his disease — melancholy. The thoughts of dependence at home, and blighted hopes and no prospect but genteel starvation, incited him to remain and try to better his condition.

We assure you, reader, that we are not prone to exaggerate; these are genuine human feelings. Those who have been reared amidst the conventionalisms of highly-civilised countries are loth to settle down in very *new* lands. Australia is a beautiful clime: its society, however, wants tone; its alluvial lands want labour, properly applied; its manufactures, commerce, and fisheries want capital. Give it but these elements of success, and no country can compete with it.

CHAPTER VIII. A PATHETIC SCENE.

ABOUT mid-day, a young man fantastically dressed, with his clothes soiled and torn, rushed up the little desolate mount known as Mount Misery, and glanced about on the surrounding landscape. After a few minutes he started off once more in the direction of the settler's residence, with which our readers are already intimate. He soon arrived at the bank, where he stood for some time, then quickly descended, and calmly approached the garden, which was directly in front of the dwelling-house.

To put our readers out of pain, we may as well state that this person was the lunatic who had escaped from Dr. Arabin's bedroom the previous morning. He reached the garden already noticed, and glanced cautiously about as if afraid of being discovered. The front casement was open, and a voice was heard singing plaintively —

"She wore a wreath of roses, the night when first we met;
Her lovely face was smiling beneath her curls of jet;
Her footsteps had the lightness, her voice the joyous tone,
The token of a youthful heart, where sorrow is unknown.
I saw her but a moment, yet methinks I see her now,
With a wreath of summer flowers upon her snowy brow.

"A wreath of orange blossom, when next we met, she wore;
The expression of her features was more thoughtful than
before."—

The deep swell of the pianoforte died away as the lady finished with a full sweep o'er the "ivory keys:" the tones of the performer's voice were no longer audible, and yet the traveller stood entranced. Once again the singer allowed her fingers to wanton among the keys of the instrument; she then closed it, and began to walk about the room, and pet a bird which had been drinking in the tones of the music as if it had passions to be moved.

"Poor little Dick! are you a lady-bird? You feel your captivity, poor little fellow! would you like better to fly about the woods than to be pent up in cage? You would nestle among the leaves, and talk love to some other bird, and caress a mate. Poor Dick! I would give you the liberty you seem to covet — only I should feel your loss, and pine away for my own lady-bird. "Poor Dick!"

As she uttered these words, she reached the door, and seeing a stranger with disordered dress, and intoxication and insanity depicted in his countenance screamed aloud.

"Do not alarm yourself, lady," said the stranger; "there is not the least cause for alarm: it is but your poor heart-broken friend Willis."

"Is it indeed you, Mr. Willis?" replied she mournfully. "I have not seen you for such a long time, I was almost afraid you had gone away without wishing me good-bye. How have you been for a long time?"

"How can you ask me?" replied the young man with a downcast look — "how can you ask me, when you know my feelings?"

"Do not recur to such unwelcome topics," replied the young lady. "How did you come? where is your horse?"

"I came from the town of —," screamed the young man. "I have been days on the road, chased by men with coffins, who wished to murder me, and bury me in their coffins; but I escaped. I hope you will not allow any of them to enter your house, Miss Martha," said the young man, with a shiver and a glance in which both fear and imbecility were depicted.

The young lady listened to him surprised and terrified. There could be no uncertainty; the wild eye, the incoherent talk, the disordered dress, all indicated but too truly a mind diseased. She was inexpressibly sorry, well aware of the probable cause; and to an unconcerned observer, it was heart-breaking to see manhood overcome and sunk so low. She did not answer his question, but asked if she might order in something to eat. The current of the lunatic's ideas changed; he smiled graciously, and replied that "he was so happy — only he was afraid it would be giving Miss Martha trouble — but he certainly was rather hungry."

"Then," continued the lady, "perhaps you will excuse me,"

She had hardly got the door closed behind her, when she burst into tears. She astonished her sister, who, busy in the kitchen superintending her domestic arrangements, had not been aware of Willis's arrival. She inquired tenderly of her sister if anything had occurred, or if she were ill?

"Oh! sister, I have been so terrified! There is Willis in the parlour, and he is mad and talking such absurdities! I become afraid; what can we do with him — especially as Butler is from home?"

"Well, Martha," replied the elder sister, "you must not cry; we must do our best. Surely poor Willis, however mad, will not hurt two unprotected women. Do not cry; for we will go to him, and speak to him kindly — and who is not overcome by kindness?"

The two sisters entered the parlour bearing preparations for dinner. They found Willis seated at the pianoforte; his head was almost resting on the instrument, and his attention was occupied with the song which the young lady had just been singing. He raised his head as the door opened, and they observed a tear drop from his eyelid. He started, and politely bowed to the eldest, who had advanced to shake his hand, but declined the

proffered honour. “Miss Martha had not given him her hand, and he was positive they did not wish for his company, and he should retire, he would never remain where he was not welcome.”

“How can you say that?” replied the younger sister. “You know that you are welcome to shake my hand: here, Willis, take it.”

“I wish,” continued he, taking her hand, “you could love me as you love your pretty bird; I would requite it better. Perhaps some cold chill or frost might cut him off, or some strange cur might steal in and kill him, or he might wander back into the woods; while you would find me ever the same kind, devoted, and passionately fond.”

“Where we cannot give our love, Willis,” answered the young woman mournfully, “we ought not to barter it. Love should not be bought and sold like an article of merchandise. If I could have given you my love, Willis, I would, and you had my respect before you commenced your eccentric pranks; but love cannot be bestowed with the wishes of parents or guardians, or even with one's own wishes: it is a hallowed — a heavenly feeling. The heart which for years has been cold and overshadowed by deep pride, will thaw at the smile of beauty or of manhood. A new light, a combination of music and beauty, breaks upon a mind hard as marble; an animation of delight bears the mind above every-day life; the two leave father and mother, and almost instinctively cleave to each other,

> ‘And what unto them is the world beside,
> With all its changes of time and tide?
> Its living things — its earth and sky —
> Are nothing to their mind and eye.
> And heedless as the dead are they
> Of aught around, above, beneath —
> As if all else had pass'd away,
> They only for each other breathe.’

“Alas! I regret that Byron was a licentious man; the beauty and power which break out everywhere fascinate the mind. To return to the subject — this is true love. The love of the fashionable world is as artificial as the society in which it prevails; it is, in fact, a part of a drama in a play, where the company are acting such characters as may best push them forward.”

The young man hung his head and listened to the speaker. Her words appeared to fall on his ear like deep music, sweet as the fabled strains of the AEolian harp. When she ended, he raised his face, and the ladies were almost terrified at the intense anguish depicted in it. He answered not, but walked to and fro across the room for some time in silence. The table was

covered, and preparations were being made for dinner; and in reply to the question of Mrs. Butler whether he would have tea or brandy for dinner, he replied, “Let me have brandy, by all means.”

Mrs. Butler was by no means anxious to give him brandy; but she thought it might afford him temporary relief. A decanter was placed on the table, and he helped himself with no sparing hand. The ladies took their places, and requested him to do the honours of the table. It may be unnecessary to remark, that they had met him before; but never, even in his best days, had he behaved more properly. He supplied their wants in the most regular manner; nay, he was polite. They observed, however, with alarm, that he paid by far too many visits to the decanter which contained the brandy, and trembled for the effects upon his mind. Mrs. Butler then remarked that Bob, the hut-keeper, would require to be rewarded with a glass of brandy for his obliging behaviour; and she took the decanter, and asked her sister expressively to take him one, in a tone which was meant to convey a very different meaning.

Her motions were scrutinised by the young man; but by the time she returned, the current of his thoughts appeared to have changed — he was detailing his imaginary troubles.

“You must have had a hard struggle;” remarked the lady.

“Yes, you may well say so,” he replied; “the men with coffins chased me for days across those long, burning plains; but I was too swift for them. They tried hard to get me down, but I knew better; I fled hundreds of miles, and they ran behind me grinding their teeth for sheer vexation. But at last, I could endure it no longer; but, about a mile from Mount Misery, I turned upon one and buried him in his own coffin.”

“You buried him, did you?” said the young lady.

“Oh, yes! I buried him: he was not quite dead, you know, but I buried him.”

“Then,” replied the young lady, “you need not be afraid of his giving you any further disturbance, if you buried him.”

“Oh! but mind,” exclaimed Willis; “he was not dead, you know — he might rise and chase me in his coffin. You see these two gentlemen,” he said, pointing expressively to two large flies which had settled upon his face. “Now, what do you think they say?”

As a matter of course, the ladies expressed their total ignorance.

“This nobleman,” continued he, pointing to the largest, “is a Puseyite, and is from Oxford; the other is a doctor, who teaches water-cures — he says he is named the Hippodame. Then this little one says he is a Methodist parson, and starved to death.”

The ladies hardly understood if he really thought that the flies were

speaking to him, or if he intended it as a joke. It soon became evident, however, that he believed himself in close conversation with the gentlemen flies. He put several questions to the Puseyite on polemical subjects; and of the Hippodame he inquired about the town he had just left, and likewise how he liked the Australian country. The ladies were aware that contradiction would but increase his malady, and perhaps make their unwelcome guest frantic, and they allowed him to continue his conversation with the flies without comment. They were anxious for Mr. Butler's arrival, as it was just dark. Both feared the night. It is true, there were menservants upon the station; but, still, to have charge of him was a responsibility from which they shrank. An internal shiver crossed the frame of the elder, as she reflected on the emotion of her sister when she first observed Willis's frame of mind.

They were surprised by the near approach of a horseman; each of the ladies started, hoping to see the settler enter. At length the horse stopped, and ---- but we must not mention the name of the intruder at present.

CHAPTER IX. AN AUSTRALIAN HOTEL. — A JOURNEY BY DAYLIGHT.

WE have stated that Arabin had determined upon visiting Captain Thomson, and calling at Willis's station on his road. On his way home from the theatre, he resolved to look in at the hotel where he had visited him upon one or two previous occasions, and inquire of the landlord, whom he knew, if any tidings of him had been received.

The house formed a pretty fair specimen of an Australian hotel, and therefore we shall describe it. It had two doors — one into the tap-room, and another into the house. The first-named apartment was probably the most profitable, and was crowded every hour of the day with carters, bullock-drivers, and tradesmen. The landlord attended here, and shone like a brilliant star among the lesser satellites, as much as ever did prime minister or monarch in the midst of an admiring host of courtiers and lesser dignitaries. He was an excellent manager, too, and could reduce his spirits so as to make one glass run out two. He had a quick eye "after the crumbs," as he termed it, and never lost the chance of making a penny. There was one foible which interfered with this desire to accumulate — he had a peculiar taste for everything connected with the turf; he loved every jockey in the place, and would often treat them to grog; indeed, he might rather be regarded as a great jockey than anything else. This partiality was extended towards those who were proficient in the noble science of defence; he would himself strike if insulted, and his idea of a good fellow was, that he was "game." This was a *sine quâ non* with him; a man might be rich, clever, anything, — but unless he was "game," he was nobody. He was happy idling away his time in the front bar or tap, listening to the conversation of the fancy men who commonly frequented it; and we need scarcely say that the topics under discussion were commonly the ring and the turf. The conversation of the stockmen and bullock-drivers who frequented his tap afforded him no ordinary gratification: the whole delight of such worthies is centred in the tap; they have no satisfaction beyond drinking rum, and, when their money is exhausted, in asking the landlord out of bravado "if they owe him anything?" What pen could describe their self-importance when the landlord would smile upon them benignantly and declare they had paid him like gentlemen? Then to see them hardly able to understand the landlord's request not to get drunk — what singular advice to men so tipsy that they are scarcely able to walk! See them staggering, hardly able to light a short black pipe. What consequence! what is the Emperor of Russia in their estimation? they are

greater than he, — they are drunk, and owe nothing. Alas! we regret that this is a true picture of the lowest class in Australia, and, we fear, in many other countries. They glory in their shame: they enjoy getting drunk; when sober, they are miserable. Would that taste and knowledge would spread in the country, and usurp the place now held by ignorance and dissipation!

In the front also was the parlour. Here the settlers congregated from morning till night. It was a mimic Tattersall's in the day, while during the night the drinking and fun were at times maintained until the landlord gave positive orders that the lights should be put out which, by the way, was not often. In the morning, one or two would be found asleep under the table, who had been too drunk or too poor to procure beds.

We have given our readers a brief sketch of the hotel and its worthy head, and we must follow the motions of Arabin as he entered the bar and asked for the landlord.

He was not there, but his *locum tenens* informed Dr. Arabin that he had not been gone above five minutes.

Arabin was retreating, when a rather dissipated— looking man, who stood by, offered to take him to the house were the landlord was.

Arabin stared at the interruption, but the man continued, "You need not stare; there are no flies about me — what I say I mean to do."

Dr. Arabin was inclined to be angry with the fellow for his impertinence; but as he looked a *character*, he thought there might be fun to be picked out of him, so he answered that he would accompany him.

"That's blessed right," replied the man; "there's no gammon in me, so stir your stumps and crawl along, you cripple."

Passing along the street for some hundred yards, the two entered a narrow lane. It was dark, and the inhabitants had retired. There was however at least one exception, for the sound of dancing, blended with music, met the ear. The person who acted as conductor halted at the door of the house of festivity, and knocked. The door was opened, and Arabin was in the house before he had time to retreat. The person they wished to see was conspicuous, and the guide called him, by the name of "Jeremiah" to come out.

"Come in," replied the landlord, putting his hand extended to his nose, in the fashion which is vulgarly called "a lunar."— "Come in, Doctor," said he, when he observed Arabin. "I did not think you had been accustomed to cruise about at night."

"I am sorry," replied the person addressed, coldly, "that I have interrupted you; but the fact is, I am leaving town to-morrow, and want to ask you if you know anything about the young settler whom I was called

in to attend the other night?”

“I will go with you presently,” said the landlord, in a more serious tone; “I wish to wait here a few minutes longer to witness these pugilists. This is Larry O'Brien, as we call him, the great Irish champion; and the other is the Australian Cornstalk, who is open to fight any man in the Colonies. We are to have a *mill* at the race-course in a few days, and I came down to see how the Cornstalk is, as I have backed him for thirty ‘old shirts’ (pounds), and I should not like to lose.”

“No, that would not do for Larry,” remarked the tall man sarcastically.

At this remark, the whole company laughed and shouted and screamed with mirth.

“No, indeed,” replied the landlord, “it would not do for Larry.”

“Ah, no,” replied the dark man;

“The furst thing I saw was a man without a head —
‘By my faith, then,’ said I, ‘and you'd better been in bed,
With your hauling, and your bawling, and your fighting, and Larry.’
Och! blood and thunder was the game that they did carry.
But that will never do for Larry O'Brien.”

“You are a nice youth, Larry,” remarked the landlord, “only you are such a horrid rogue.”

“There is no flies there,” remarked another.

“Hold your tongue, Thunder-and-Turk!” replied Larry, “or I will bung up your eye.”

Arabin had often heard the names of these renowned Colonial “bruisers,” and he examined their appearance with no little attention. The "Cornstalk" was a powerful man, with a good-natured countenance, and very fair. The Hibernian, nicknamed “Larry O'Brien,” from the famous Irish song, was a tall man, very active, but his frame by no means indicated the great strength for which he was famous. The individual who has been already noticed as “Thunder-and-Turk,” was a short, stout seaman of about thirty, dressed in blue jacket and white trousers. Two or three settlers were in the room, and a tipsy old man, whose charge it was to give them music from a fiddle, sat behind the door. It seems that bets had been made, as to which champion could dance longest: the landlord informed him they had danced for two hours, and had stopped, thinking it was impracticable to tire out either, from the extraordinary lungs they possessed.

“We all thought Larry was not game to dance with the Cornstalk,” said Thunder-and-Turk; “but he's nearly put the breath out of his precious body

already.”

“You lie,” said the Cornstalk.

“Come on, then,” said Larry; and he jumped about the room, turning his fingers into castanets. “You ain't game!”

“He ain't game!” repeated Thunder-and-Turk, Larry O'Brien, and all the others, tauntingly.

“He ain't ga-ga-ga-game,” said the tipsy fiddler.

“He ain't game !” said the whole, in a simultaneous shout of disappointed hope.

“He's sick,” said Thunder-and-Turk.

“He's dead knocked-up,” said the landlord in a passion.

“Let the sickness go up the chimley,” said the tipsy fiddler.

“Go and catch flies," you greenhorns! Look and see how many paving-stones you can see in my eyes. Go on, you fool!” cried the Cornstalk. “I'll dance you for five pounds.”

“Hurrah!” shouted the company and the landlord, and once again the fiddler struck up the favourite tune of Larry O'Brien, and the two champions began to caper and dance at a rate that would soon have knocked up ordinary mortals. Larry capered about the room, and turned his face into the most grotesque shapes, to the great astonishment of Dr. Arabin and the intense amusement of the company; his fingers were busy too, and he went through many singular evolutions. The Cornstalk continued to dance in the quietest manner possible; the exertion appeared to have no more effect on him than any ordinary exertion of his muscular powers.

The landlord was now once more called out by Dr. Arabin; and he followed him, although most unwillingly. Not one of the company noticed their exit, so entirely was their attention engrossed by the motions of the dancers.

“Now, old fellow,” said the landlord as they emerged from the lane — “I beg your pardon, I mean young gentleman. You say you wished to hear about flash Jack Willis. You see, he is mad, and ran away this morning, and I have heard nothing of him since.”

“And did you not think it necessary to inquire after him ?”

“Not I,” said the landlord: “he has paid me, and that is what I look to. If he comes back, I shall be glad; and if not, I have lost a good customer. He can follow the bent of his own inclinations, or follow his nose, as they say in Aberdeen.”

“And do you not think it necessary even to ask after him?” inquired Dr. Arabin.

“Not I,” replied the landlord. “If I were to run up a bill in hunting him

up, who would pay me?”

“Yes, my good man, but a human creature is not to be left to perish by a death at once cruel and unnatural. You must inquire after the young man, or I will expose your heartlessness.”

“You had much better attend to your pill-polishing, for I do not want to have anything to do with such characters.”

“And I,” replied Dr. Arabin, “beg to add, that you are a calculating, selfish villain: and as for your impertinence to myself individually, I could knock it out of you.”

The landlord was rather surprised at the sharp answer, and reflected a little upon whether it were better to pass it off as a joke, or take it as a downright insult. He arrived at the latter determination, and throwing himself into a fencing attitude, came close to the Doctor, and made a feint, crying out, “Come on! — I will soon send you spinning.”

Arabin was very much excited, and seizing the fellow by the middle, he hurled him like a child to a considerable distance before he had power to move a muscle. He was over him in an instant, and said, “You vulgar dog! how dare you take advantage of our station and insult a gentleman?”

The innkeeper rose very sulky, although it was evident he had a far better opinion of his companion than before, and asked him “what he wanted?”

“Do you think I took you by surprise?” replied Arabin; “and shall we fight it out?”

“It is of no consequence,” said the other. “Perhaps I was rude to you, and you have punished me.”

“Where, then, do you think Willis is?” asked Dr. Arabin.

“He may have gone home — or he may be in town — or very likely he has drowned himself,” replied the landlord.

“What a strange category of events! — If he be in town, where might he be?”

“In one of the billiard-rooms,” replied the landlord. “These form his haunts when in ordinary health. I have seen him lose ten pounds in a night at the billliard-table.”

“Indeed!” replied Dr. Arabin. “He must have a long purse, then. Where has he the money?”

“He never has money, that ever I saw," replied the landlord.

“You said, then, he had paid you your bill?”

“I have no doubt of it ,” replied the landlord; “but if he had, he did not pay me in money. But that is my business. — Will you accompany me to the billlard-room?”

Dr. Arabin was by no means partial to appearing in such places with

public men, but made no objection, and they directed their steps to the billiard-room to search for the unfortunate. All this was attended with unprofitable result; they were unable to hear any tidings of him from the *dare-devil* young men who were assembled in the room.

A billiard-room in Australia presents rather an extraordinary scene. Some settlers who figure there appear not merely to have lost the proper taste for the refinement of civilisation, but also all desire for communion with well-bred men. The freedom of the woods and plains of Australia were depicted in their roving eyes; they could hardly brook the glance of fashionable society, even of Australian cities. Several were half-frantic with brandy, and betting with some knowing hand of the town, who of course gained it at every turn.

Dr. Arabin, unable to learn tidings of Willis, made a hasty retreat. He was occupied in reflecting upon the chances that he had returned to his station. Many thoughts crossed his mind Could the poor young man really have injured himself? The river — the cord — the knife — the many ways by which a suicide may meet his doom. But then, what was it to him? He knew almost nothing of him. "I must see Butler tomorrow," said he, "and find out all the particulars of his history." There was not a little mystery about him; the landlord said he squandered money, while he contradicted himself and asserted that he had no money — that he had never paid him a farthing in money. The only manner to reconcile this discrepancy was to suppose that Willis paid him in stock.

It was later in the day than he had anticipated, that Arabin started once more across the almost boundless plains; it was a beautiful day, and the senses were soothed and gratified by the sweet repose in which the landscape rested. He crossed a creek, and his horse drank from the placid waters, which seemed to smile with actual delight. The infinite varieties of foliage — the whispering wiry casuarina, the gigantic eucalyptus with its frowning branches, the lonely mimosa, the wild geranium — every leaf and blade appeared to be reposing, dreaming in the wanton sunshine. The harmony of nature and the expressive silence of the woods had some effect upon the traveller; for the heart must be hard as the "nether mill-stone," which would not expand at the sensible delights of nature, — at recognising a real feeling, a new life in blade, and flower, and plant. When he emerged fairly upon the open plain, the beautiful day formed a strange contrast with the stormy night he had so lately passed on the same plain; but the change in the features of nature was not more striking than that in his own feelings. Then the soul was downcast, enveloped in a shadow — the world was a mockery of happiness; now his spirits were light, and hope beat high. And have we not all been subject to these lights

and shades? We are bound to nature by mysterious and invisible sympathies; we know of agencies which we cannot comprehend — we see a few links, but the chain eludes the grasp. Not a leaf falls, or a cloud shadows the heavens, not a shade crosses the landscape — not a wind howls, or a vapour rises, but must elicit pangs from the soul of the sensitive observer. There is a hidden world of melancholy, into which every human mind occasionally is driven by gloomy whispers and by surrounding mementoes; but the sunshine soon dispels these vapours. Such moments of mental anguish are not sent without a specific object. If the world were ever fair, if the sun always shone and the flowers never quenched their lustre, then men would be too happy to think. Suffering brings strange reflections and startling thoughts. Nay, we are compelled to allow that the economy of Omnipotence is the most salutary, after all.

We believe that poets have ever endured much mental anguish. Many of the poets of modern times have groaned beneath loads of suffering; and all this sensitiveness and irritation of mind, all these clouds which render life oppressive, are the effects of melancholy. Life with them is disrobed of the colouring with which the inferior orders of the human species have invested it; imagination, the mainspring of human activity, has no power to withdraw their minds from the cold, stern, gloomy truth; rank, riches, fame, feeling, passion, have no longer sway —

> "The tree of knowledge has been plucked ! all's known."

Cowper, Kirke White, Keats, Shelley, Landon, Hemans, and Byron, had all plucked fruit from the tree of knowledge. The latter has pictured too truly in *Manfred* the sufferings of genius — of a heart scorched:

> —— "Many a night on the earth,
> On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,
> And strew'd my head with ashes: I have known
> The fulness of humiliation, for
> I sank before my vain despair, and knelt
> To my own desolation."

Dr. Arabin passed along the plains, which presented a very different aspect from that of the night so often referred to. The grass was long, but white and dead; occasionally a stony ridge would intersect them, or a clump of dwarfish trees break the monotony without embellishing the scene. Dr. Arabin remarked that the distances deceived the eye, especially as the scene was on a large scale. He had travelled for about eight miles

on the plains, when all at once they appeared transformed into vast lakes of burnished silver: the eye was pained by the radiating and dazzling prospect. He rubbed his eyes, and gazed again; he almost fancied himself in fairy-land, and looked for the gorgeous palace — the mosque, with its golden minarets, and the imaum praying with his face to Mecca — the pompous mausoleum — and, in a word, splendid cities, with spire and cupola. He never was more astonished; he could not believe that the waters of the living, rolling, speaking ocean were not spread out; indeed, had he not seen the plain some minutes before, he would not have believed other than that the eternal sea was lying before him in the calm of a tropical latitude, and canopied by the clarified, ethereal, beautiful sky of Australia. He was not accustomed to travel in the Bush, or he would have been aware that the plains often deceive the traveller with the appearance of water, and after going miles in quest of it, he finds its plains in a state of desiccation.

Dr. Arabin drew bridle, and stood many minutes absorbed in admiring the .magnificent illusion. Not a thing moved upon the illuminated plains; not a beast or bird immerged into the glittering lakes — it was, in fact, a phenomenon singular and solitary.

It is a remarkable and instructive fact, that inhabiting a country where Nature is found in her grandest proportions, the natives of Australia seem insensible to poetic emotion. Nearly all of the species known as "currency" are matter-of-fact men, with very few elements of originality in their composition, and ignorant of the pleasure to be derived from the fine arts. It is true, they are commonly handsome and active; in their characters, straightforward selfishness is the most prominent feature. There is considerable talent in the Colony, but it is of the multi-utilitarian kind, and knowledge of Colonial history and politics is confused with the price of wood and the breed of cattle. The press, that index of public opinion, although ably, and, for the most part, respectably conducted, yet partakes of the same character. The talent of the Colony is not perhaps of the first order of talent, but it is about the best of its kind. There are many who can speak or write about equal to an average M.P. or political economist in England; there are a few who might make no contemptible figure in St. Stephen's.

There is a primitive character which is perhaps inseparable from the occupations of Colonists, and which peculiarly characterises the pastoral class of the Australian Colonies. Byron and other writers of the ultra-sentimental caste only take in highly-civilised society: the majority of Colonists have little taste for that which the more refined and polished long for, because their mode of life is rough, and their education but

limited.

Many of the settlers, however, have emigrated, and are excellent scholars. Indeed, we have heard it asserted, and with some show of truth, that more talent is centred in the flockmasters than belongs to any other *trade* in the world, in proportion to the number engaged in it. These have but arrived in the country, and their influence must effect a radical change in the mental standard of the native Colonists, and, we firmly hope, overcome the pernicious influence which wealthy emancipists and uneducated dealers have hitherto exercised upon the minds of the rising generation, and who, being in many instances only concealed rogues, masked their want of principle, and mingled with the more reputable class, which tended to undermine the whole moral fabric, and to sink the mental tone of the whole race of Colonists. The wheat is separating from the chaff; the emancipists have no organ now to hurl fetid fulminations throughout the length and breadth of the land; society will be regenerated, unless, which Heaven forbid! British convicts are once more sent to the Australian shores.

We left Arabin gazing on the imaginary sheets of water; he had not witnessed a scene so romantic before, and he was in poetic raptures: time, place, and circumstance were forgotten, and he remained for about an hour absorbed in an ideal world, or, in the language of Milton,

> "His eyes he closed, but open left the cell of fancy."

And, in the expression of Cornwall,

> "He dreamt, and o'er his enchanted vision pass'd
> Shapes of the elder time — beautiful things
> That men have died for — as they stood on earth,
> But more ethereal, and each forehead bore
> The stamp and character of the starry skies."

Dr. Arabin was susceptible of the sublimest emotions of poetry, but the feeling was now almost a stranger. In youth his life was a day-dream; — "he lived in an ideal world;" he was "a thing of dark imaginings:" his mind was naturally melancholy, and he fed it with the misanthropy of Lord Byron's poems and the metaphysical fictions of Shelley. But this was wearing off; communion with the world, like the tide constantly breaking upon a reek, insensibly wore down the barrier, and the feelings of the outer world oozed in. There were times when the poetic fire would resume all its potency, when he would be more enthusiastic even than in

his youth. We need hardly add, that the above was one of these occasions. He had determined to call at Mr. Buttler's, and when he was satisfied with surveying the prospect, he turned towards the valley where his house was concealed, and made the best of his way towards it.

CHAPTER X. THE ARRIVAL. — BUSH HOSPITALITY. — THE ESCAPE.

WE may safely affirm, that never was man welcomed more cordially than Dr. Arabin when he entered the dwelling-house of Mr. Butler. The ladies had been unwilling to remain with their visitor alone, especially as they expected the violence of his disorder would increase with the wane of the evening. He had several times talked violently and frightened both, and it was lucky that our old acquaintance Bob was in the outer hut. They had looked for Mr. Butler's return, but, to their great disappointment, he had not come. By a fortunate turn of the conversation, they managed to engage his attention.

He was asked some question which caused him to speak of home — of the home of his early days; his mind was abstracted from the present to the "long forgotten past;" the tears started as they heard him recall one whom he had loved and reverenced before he came to wander, but she was dead.

And here we cannot help remarking, that the tie which links the mind of man so firmly to his birthplace appears to us more extraordinary than the ties of consanguinity or love. What can withdraw the human heart from the love it cherishes for the home of early years? Demand of the rover by land or on the sea — the wanderer of the desert — the exile who has acquired honour, fame, wealth, power abroad, if they ever met a spot they loved half so well as that on which they first looked upon life — the home where they were affectionately loved and cherished by care which only a parent could bestow. The scene may be rugged and barren, the habitation mean and destitute, the parents ground in the dust by poverty and wasting disease; but from the softest skies and the brightest scenes — from the highest pinnacles of power and the most gorgeous abodes, the mind will unconsciously wander to the season of infancy and the home of early years. Years, changes, distance, cease to be impediments, and but serve to impress the past more indelibly — the past dim, yet how vivid! Other times and other things may be forgotten, — the persons we associated with yesterday — two years ago, — but those rotting in the "pest house" we never can forget. The mind is, when disengaged or in deep sleep, once more in the scenes long past. Even an outcast like this could think of home.

Dr. Arabin's entrance had the effect of recalling the singular illusion which haunted his mind, and he asked him sharply if there were any men with coffins coming? Arabin found him sensible upon every other subject as on a former occasion, and he began to consider his disease might be

monomania. He could direct his attention from the morbid delusion which oppressed it for some time, but in the end he was almost certain to return to the same subject, and discourse incoherently about the man he had buried in the coffin. But his glance showed evident insanity.

"He was not quite dead," he would say with a glance of terror; "do you think he will recover?"

"Oh, no," they replied; "he must have been quite dead."

"I covered him over," continued Mr. Willis, "but I assure you he was not quite dead."

He would talk quietly and sensibly for some time; then he would start, and his countenance would cloud, and looks of withering agony would cross it. "The coffins!" he would shout; "there they come!" During these fits the ladies were terrified, but they soon found out that the best remedy was to withdraw his attention as soon as possible.

It is unnecessary to say, that the opportune arrival of Dr. Arabin afforded ease to the minds of the ladies, who did not suspect he had followed the lunatic; indeed, they conceived his coming was the result of accident. He soon informed them that he was on his way to Captain Thomson's station, and inquired how far off it was.

"It's twenty miles from here," replied Willis — "from this house, and you have gone out of the way."

"I am not sorry," replied Dr. Arabin, "since it has afforded me the pleasure of seeing you."

"Do you see them?" whispered Willis, with the manner of Macbeth when the ghost of Banquo rose, and he said —

> "Ne'er shake thy gory locks at me.
> Thou canst not say I did it !"

"Do you see them, man?" he continued, with a glance of terror; "they want to run me on the plains again." He then recounted to Arabin once more how he had been chased by men with coffins, and likewise how effectually he had done up one of his pursuers. He concluded with once more expressing his fears that he was not dead, but alive, and would return and kill him.

Dr. Arabin had seen, the moment he entered, that the ladies were alarmed. He began to think that it was monomania or temporary insanity under which the young settler laboured, and that a few days' rest might soothe and perhaps lead to his speedy recovery. The married lady took Dr. Arabin out during the time the servant was arranging the multifarious

contents of the side-board. It was agreed that Willis should be under the espionage of Arabin for the night, and that he should take him home if practicable on the following morning. The ladies were particularly anxious to have him removed.

The evening passed, and the party were more comfortable than had been expected by any of them. The ladies played on the piano, and sang their favourite songs.

It is a strange contrast to listen to the voice of an accomplished woman in a Bush cottage; the comforts of England rush to the mind, oceans all but interminable are traversed at a thought. The imaginative may fancy that they are in London, in the heart of Lancasshire, or in the metropolis of Scotland or Ireland. They may wait to hear the deep clang of the church bell, warning the thousands of those Christian lands to their devotions, or the quiet muffled toll, ascending from the ivy-grey country church, speaking in soothing tones of consolation to the careworn heart. But once beyond the confines of the room, and the wilderness of Australia, or rather “the Bush,” dissipates such flights of imagination.

The settler's dwelling was in a valley already described, which bordered the plains. The vast ranges were thinly timbered in one or two places, and on one side the deep dark forest stretched away upon the banks of the river, the rocky ranges hardly perceptible in the distance, and the glorious cloudless azure sky above.

The evening passed off tolerably well. The ladies retired early, and Dr. Arabin was left alone with the lunatic. Their bedroom was situated in the rear of the house; the furniture was home]y, for few travellers intruded upon the worthy settler's hospitality.

Arabin was uneasy, and had no inclination to sleep; he therefore resolved to return to the parlour, and read for an hour or two. The other was in bed, and quiet; he locked the back door and put the key in his pocket, and left the door of the parlour and the door of the bedroom ajar, so that the slightest motion might be heard.

Dr. Arabin was excited, and wished to recover his usual tone by reading and reflection. It was a singular trait in his character, that with a mind of considerable and increasing power, he had for some time back had no great relish for reading. He had fixed his intellect upon particular studies, which range he pursued with avidity, and to the neglect of every comfort. His favourite speculations were, that knowledge would be progressive; that discoveries hitherto without parallel would be effected; that air, ocean, and land would be navigated by electricity; that the various nations of the earth would be amalgamated by communication almost instantaneous; that population would be equalised, and the beautiful

wilderness and fruitful valley peopled in every part. of the known globe. The very plain over which he had travelled might, he considered, be fertilised; and during his journey across, he sketched a plan for irrigating the landscape, by cutting canals to convey the water to all parts, by means of which the country might be flooded, and the soil, instead of being hard and scorched, would be moist and fruitful. He thought of India, and its tanks and rice-fields; of Egypt, the riches of which depended upon the inundation of the Nile, even in the days of Pharoah, the oppressor, and Moses, the deliverer of the Israelites, as in the first chapters of the Bible, where it is upon record that when Abraham was driven into Egypt, he found that it was a land of plenty, for he departed from it

"very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." (Genesis xiii. 2.)

The most distinguished writers of Greece — Herodotus, the first writer of profane history — Diodorus Siculus, the universal historian, and a host of others, record the astonishing wealth of the first seat of the arts, caused solely by the rise of the famous Egyptian river once a year. It is a sad pity that no proper attempt has hitherto been made to irrigate the soil upon the banks of the great Australian rivers: instead of being a pastoral country alone, the small Colony of South Australia, or the yet more fertile district of Australia Felix, might export many thousand bushels of wheat to the English market. The Australian Colonies have but one fault, the want of inland communication to convey the produce of the interior to market.

Dr. Arabin turned over the books on the side table. He made a running commentary upon their authors as he proceeded. “Shakspeare, the greatest *man* that ever lived, for intellectual power. ‘Falconer's Shipwreck,’ don't know him. Bulwer, a dandified author, but a writer of considerable repute. Shelley, my favourite, is not here. Pope, a fine versifier out of fashion. Byron, a powerful writer, but a little man. Virgil, pooh! ‘Hume and Smollett's History of England,’ a valuable work of reference. ‘Moroe's Works,’ a thing of tinsel, a peacock in the most gorgeous feathers; gay nonsense, which has nevertheless acquired for the author an ill-merited reputation.”He opened work with a sneer, and chaunted from it

“Beautiful are the maids that glide,
On summer eves, through Yeman's dales;
And bright the summer locks they hide
Beneath their litter's roseate veils;
And brides as delicate and fair
As the white jasmine flowers they wear,
Hath Yemen in her blissful clime," &c.

"Fee-fa-la-de ! there is not a thought worth retaining in a cart-load of such poetry; one thought from Burns or Bunyan is worth the whole work, to a real judge of poetry. If I might guess the manner in which it was composed, I should say it was with a dictionary open before the poet, that he might extract fine, sweet sounding words, and that these words were put down as ideas by mistake. I would sooner have Geoffrey Chaucer's original vulgarity, and that he had said the maids were 'softer than the wolle is of a wether,' or

"Winsing she was as is a jolly colt,
Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.
He shoon were laced on hire legges hie;
She was a primerole, a piggesnie,
For any lord to liggen in his bedde,
Or yet for any good yemen to wedde."

A goggling in the inner room startled him, and he returned the work to the table, and hastened to see what was wrong. The young man screamed as he entered — "Keep away!" he shouted; "I am down, but I will resist to the last."

Dr. Arabin saw him sitting upright, glaring at something; so hideous was the apparition, that he shrunk back appalled. He conquered this feeling, and entered the apartment. The eye of the maniac was firmly fixed on the window. The blind was not exactly long enough, and a small crevice remained at the foot uncovered. At this opening he fancied men and coffins were entering. "Look at them!" he screamed; "they enter;" and he gibbered and contorted his countenance, until he could almost fancy he looked upon a demon. For a minute he continued in a state of terror, but reflection enabled him to overcome it. He came near, and the maniac directed his eye towards him; he started up, and before Arabin was conscious of his movement he had him by the throat, and, with a strength almost supernatural, dashed him on the floor against the corner of the room. The maniac yelled frightfully, and rushed through the front room into the garden, and from thence up the road and into the plains.

So terrified had the two ladies been at the yells of the madman as he rushed from the house, that it was an hour before either would leave their room. At last they found heart to peep out first into the outer room, next into the inner apartment, where they found Dr. Arabin lying in a state of insensibility. His face was covered with blood, his coat and vest were torn in front. They called up the servant, Long Bob. This functionary soon appeared, and carried the sufferer into the parlour and stretched him on the sofa. Long Bob had seen many skirmishes with Bush-rangers, and was in

no degree frightened at the blood. He assured the ladies that there was no danger, only "all was as bad when they got a knock-me-down blow in the eyes, or a heavy fall." He washed the blood from his face, which had proceeded from the nose or the teeth, and applied powerful stimulants, which were of little use. At last, he opened his eyes and looked round the apartment, which was strange to him; next his eye rested on those who waited upon him, whom he did not recognise. He soon began to be sensible of pain, and the circumstances which preceded the accident flashed upon his mind.

The two ladies were more perplexed than before. That the young settler had escaped was evident, and that something had occurred, although there was a mystery to be brought to light in the affray between him and Dr. Arabin. Some means ought to be immediately adopted to recover the maniac if possible; but there was only one male in the house, and he was engaged in attending upon Arabin, and neither of the ladies was disposed to remain to watch by the stranger, and the unfortunate was left to his fate until morning.

Dr. Arabin had fallen heavily upon his head, and been stunned. He soon recovered, and the ladies were agreeably surprised to find him much better in the morning. They were all anxious about the lunatic, and Long Tom was despatched to his station to warn the servants of his situation, and to give them instructions to spare no trouble in their endeavours to recover him.

Captain Thomson's station was in a different direction, and Arabin determined to pursue his journey, and look for the lunatic in the way up, and send out Captain Thomson's men to search the country.

CHAPTER XI. AN AUSTRALIAN MERCHANT.

WE must now introduce another character to our readers. We are certain in the following portrait of Captain Thomson; our readers will at once recognise one of the Australian speculators of the former times, whose name was Legion.

Captain Thomson said he was a merchant, but he had never had a store or an office. He did not import merchandise from any part of the world, nor did he speculate much in any article with the exception of wheat and sugar. He had no account books, his transactions were only recorded in memoranda which he had in his pocket-book. At different periods he had been a sugar speculator, a land-jobber, a farmer, a grazier, a houseowner; he had been always changing about and trying to accumulate a fortune by some lucky chance. He commonly resided in the town; but since the times had altered the prospects of the innumerable tribes of speculators that hovered about the Australian towns, he had been compelled to reside upon his station, which, more fortunate than many, he had managed to save from the crash.

He was at the door superintending the manufacture of ropes from cow-hides; and as Dr. Arabin rode up, he advanced and welcomed him to the Bush. We must say this for the squatters or settlers of the Colony, that whatever their faults are, their hospitality ought to cover them. The majority of them are delighted at the sight of a stranger; the solitude of the Bush is seldom enlivened with a stray traveller, and in many parts it is a momentous occurrence.

There exist a large tribe of unfortunate young men that have been in business for themselves — or, as the saying is, have seen better days. Having no occupation, they lead a peculiar life, wandering about the country, depending solely upon the hospitality of the settlers. So firmly are these erratic habits grounded, that it is next to impossible to eradicate them. Many, after exhausting the hospitality of the settler, will cast in their lot with the wandering tribes of aborigines, and degenerate into total barbarism. It is surprising to observe the latent talent which is in the Australian wilds: many keepers of cattle and bullock drivers have emigrated with property and sunk from inexperience; a few years hence they get a little money, commence in a small way, and creep up by slow and painful gradation to independence.

Captain Thomson received Dr. Arabin as a friend, and entertained him with the utmost kindness. A messenger was despatched to Willis's station to find out if the owner had returned. The saddle was taken from his

horse's back, and the animal was turned out into the paddock; the spirits were brought out, an unusual thing in the Bush, and a dinner was got up in the very best Bush style. The messenger returned with the pleasing information that Willis had been found that forenoon, and was at home and much better. Captain Thomson insisted that the traveller should partake of his hospitality for that evening, and as he wished for much information, he agreed to this at once.

The usual plentiful Australian meal passed over, the rum-bottle and the tea-kettle were at hand, and the captain, who was an excellent compounder of punch, set to work.

"I have had many engagements with the teetotallers, but nothing they can urge shall ever prevent me from taking my comfortable glass of grog."

"I am not partial to it," replied Arabin.

"You certainly will join me in this decanter of punch, which I can assure you is compounded upon the real West Indian principle."

"I will take a single glass with you," replied Arabin.

After the first was finished, he was prevailed upon to take one more. Beyond this he would not go, and sat attentively watching the gallant soldier, who swallowed glass after glass without being the worse. He related many adventures, which Arabin relished. From the way in which he spoke, it was evident that his life had been chequered with hard vicissitudes, and also by singular turns of good luck. Since he arrived in Australia he had been in good repute as a speculator, and soon after he lost all but the solitary station which he had lately made his home. He talked ambiguously of something which he had planned, and from which he expected to become more independent than he had ever been. Dr. Arabin, thinking this a favourable opportunity, suggested to him the probability of his becoming a purchaser of stock. The captain pricked up his ears at this intelligence, and began to expatiate on the superiority of his own stock.

"I must give you the history of these flocks, which I now mean to sell. About five years ago, I was in possession of a considerable sum of money, all of which had been accumulated by lucky speculations. I saw that money was abundant and property scarce, and I had little doubt but that money would be scarce in a few years and property plentiful. If I had sold everything off then, I should have acted right. I had doubts and fears at the moment, and determined to buy three hundred ewes, with lambs by their sides, of the finest breed in the Colony. I looked long before I could see anything to suit me, but at last I made a good purchase and put them upon this very station. Time passed on; I appeared to be accumulating, but all I had was invested in property; money became very scarce, and property declined. Most thought this was but a temporary depression, that it would

wear away in a month or two. Property became unsaleable, and as speculators failed one after another, every kind of business was brought to a stand-still. I was involved, and lost all I had, with the exception of the little flock of sheep, which had by that time increased to seven hundred and fifty. I retired to this spot, thankful, in such fearful times, to have a house above my head, and more fortunate than many whom I had known in affluence. My creditors took my property, and allowed me to keep this little station, because it would have sold for almost nothing then. I have attended to them punctually, and now I have more than two thousand, the produce of the three hundred ewes. There is no question but that sheep are the best stock in the Colony. When wool is high, money can be made; and even when low, they are a good livelihood. I have always found the wool pay the expenses, while the increase is certain profit."

"Then," said Arabin, "you purpose selling your station?"

"I do," replied the other: "I have been anxious to sell for some time, as I see a plan by which I might soon be made more independent than ever I have been hitherto."

"And what do you want for them?"

"I want a long price, but the stock is fine. I ask fifteen shillings a-head for the sheep, and three pounds for one hundred cattle; but I would sell either separately."

"That is far beyond my mark," replied Dr. Arabin. "I have not so much money as would pay for them."

"Well, to be plain with you," said the Captain, "if you tell me about how much you have, I would be better able to advise."

"The utmost I could muster," replied Dr. Arabin, "would be a thousand pounds."

"Now I will be frank with you," said the Captain: "that sum would suit me. If I succeed, I shall want no more; if I fail, I ought to have something to fall back upon; and if you will allow three hundred maiden ewes to remain upon the station for me, and keep them and their increase for three years without any charge, I will give you the station for the sum you have; and I assure you it is the best bargain which has been given for a long time."

Dr. Arabin soon found out that he had some scheme in view which required both money and immediate attendance, and as it is very difficult in dull times to sell stock, or in fact any property, so he contrived to make a most excellent purchase of him. Captain Thomson was in high spirits, and after the bargain was fairly settled informed his guest of the undertaking he had in prospect. "A person has just been discovered in the Colony who is the lawful heir to a very extensive property in England; his

father had been transported to New South Wales for forgery, and although of good family no notice had been taken of him, in consequence of a false report of his death having been circulated by a younger brother, who thus acquired his property by the dishonest deception. All the family having died, the property was thrown into Chancery, and the nearest of kin advertised for. By a singular chance the news reached the lawful heir in this Colony, who is a labouring man, and every inquiry has been made, and it appears that he may have the property by going home and putting the case in the hands of a good lawyer. I knew the man long ago, and he has offered to give me a third of the whole if I go home and recover it for him. The property is large, in fact it is nearly incredible, and if he recovers it I shall be a man of fortune and shall never return to claim the stock I leave with you. I have little doubt but we shall succeed, and many have offered to subscribe money upon condition that he repays them with a handsome present when he recovers his property. I have had great difficulty to subdue his impatience to be off for the last three months; indeed, I was afraid he might put himself under the protection of some other individual, and that I should lose the only good thing which ever fell in my way. You are now fully aware of the circumstances of my case, which have put me in the hands of almost any person of respectability with money. The sheep will be a sure income to you, if you keep them clean and manage them well. I think I shall give my small herd of cattle out on halves to some person, or take them down the country and sell them by auction. The sooner I can get away the better, as there is some danger of the property being claimed by other parties."

Before the two retired to rest, the bargain was finally concluded. The settler prevailed upon his guest to partake of another glass of his punch, and he entertained him with many tales of Colonial characters, which were exquisitely amusing. At length a substantial supper made its appearance, which, however, was only required by the settler; the other was of too abstemious habits to eat at so late an hour, and soon after they took possession of sofas for the night. In the morning the settler had his inmate up at daybreak, and they went to see the sheep counted out to the different shepherds. We may remark, that the sheep are folded every night in hurdles, and that the hut-keepers watch them both summer and winter. There is commonly a watch-box, which resembles a bed to shut up, and so contrived that it can be moved with the hurdles. Even when the hut-keepers are married, they sleep in these machines with their wives, and often two or three children. It is necessary that the sheep should be watched, to prevent the depredations of the wild dogs. These scourges will attack the flocks at night, and often rush on them, and take several off

before the hut-keeper can arrive on the scene of action. The hurdles are frequently shifted to keep the sheep healthy.

Dr. Arabin, although no judge of stock, was yet aware that Captain Thomson's little flock was of a very superior breed. The Captain showed him the fineness of the wool, and also informed him that wool marked with his brand of [illegible] was in more demand and fetched a higher price than any other in the district. He then showed him the run, which was very fine. No scrubs or stony ground were visible. The soil appeared good, the grass luxuriant, and the country thinly wooded. The river ran the whole length of the run, and therefore no fear could be entertained of a scarcity of water. The huts were very comfortable, and a paddock, which was cultivated, added to the apparent comfort of the residence. After breakfast, Arabin was amused for several hours in looking over the run, and having partaken of an early dinner, he started for town, in the direction of Willis's station, where he intended to call.

CHAPTER XII. A DANGEROUS INTERVIEW.

DR. ARABIN had not an intimate acquaintance with the country; and although the distance from Captain Thomson's station to that of the poor insane settler was but trifling, yet it was wearing late before he reached it. The Bush is bewildering to strangers: only experienced hands can thread its intricacies without straying from the route. The scene is upon such an extensive scale, that unless the traveller understands the country, and can guide his progress by the sun or some prominent landmark, it is impossible to march on a correct line. The moment the traveller in these solitary regions is at a stand-still, he is certain to go wrong, because the country everywhere around presents almost the same aspect and proportions. We have frequently known strangers go forward for ten or twenty miles — diverge — change again — and ultimately turn round, and towards night approach the very station from which they had started in the morning. These bewildered travellers are unwilling to credit their senses; it requires not merely the sight of the station, but also the sight of the faces connected with it, to convince them. It is very fortunate for poor wanderers in the Bush that a liberal hospitality is exercised by the settlers, with very few exceptions. It is true, there are exceptions; we have known weary and hungry travellers turned away without a kind look or word. We cannot too severely censure such conduct, especially in the wilderness, where houses for the accommodation of travellers are rarely to be met with, and where inhospitality is a crime of the most atrocious character.

To return to our narrative. Dr. Arabin had been directed to Willis's station by Captain Thomson, and, as it was but fifteen miles off, it appeared next to impossible that he should mistake the route. At first, he pursued his journey devoid of hesitation or fear. He then reached a thinly-wooded ravine, over which it was necessary to pass. There was no water visible, but the stones in the bed of the deep rut marked where winter torrents had thundered along. The banks were steep and shelving, and wooded with a thick scrub, into which the horse appeared unwilling to enter. Arabin, by means of his spurs, forced him about ten yards into this dense brushwood, where he came to a dead halt, and refused both the admonitions of the spur and whip with dogged indifference. In another moment an enormous black snake raised itself from the thick wiry grass, and darted its hissing mouth and tongue at his legs; the horse wheeled round in an instant, and rushed out of the brushwood.

Dr. Arabin was unable to extricate his legs from the brushwood, and one

of them having been entangled, was seriously injured: the pain was severe, and he repented his temerity in rushing through the scrub, instead of searching for a pathway across. We may remark, that the black snake is the largest of the species to be met with in Australia. They are of a dusky colour, and generally lie coiled in the long grass, or in haystacks or about dwelling-houses. In the cold weather they retire to holes in the ground; they are rather unwieldy in their motions, and not so dangerous as others of smaller proportions. The best remedy for the bite of these venomous reptiles is a quantity of warm Madeira wine taken internally, with an outward application of eau-de-luce to the punctures.

Arabin was rather angry with himself that he had not struck the reptile with his whip, and turned to kill it, but it had escaped. The pain of the injured limb made him more anxious than before to get home if possible, and he commenced a strict scrutiny for a passage over the ravine.

He passed several miles up the bank, and at length was gratified by finding a bank almost without a tree or a blade of herbage. When he reached the opposite side, he found himself at fault: the ravine had a strange curve at this particular spot, and it was difficult for a total stranger to discover the direction in which Willis's station lay. We assure European readers that they can have but a faint conception of the difficulties frequently experienced in finding places out in the wilderness. We knew a settler's house which was concealed in a ravine so effectively, that a person might have lived for years within a few hundred yards of it and not been aware of its existence; nay, the very owner was at times puzzled to find it in broad daylight.

Arabin retreated some distance down the bank, to consider the country attentively. Unfortunately, the most prominent landmarks were not visible, and as he stood upon rather a flat spot, the country appeared nearly all the same. He caught a glimpse of the spot where Captain Thomson's station lay, as he thought; he once more studied the direction, and proceeded towards the point where Willis's station was situated. He had lost time by this hesitation, and the sun was already sinking towards the west. He saw this with some concern, as he was perfectly aware that to a stranger it was awkward to commence a journey towards nightfall in the Bush: it was probable, also, that he might be detained some time at Willis's station.

"A good fire!" he muttered, as he observed a thick smoke issuing from the kitchen chimney of the hut. He saw no one about the house, and he dismounted and entered. Not a person was in the front apartment, although the expiring embers proved that a fire had been burning in the morning. He then walked into the kitchen, and was surprised to find no one there. He had observed, as he approached, a large volume of smoke

issuing from the chimney; and now upon entering the apartment he could not discover any cause for this phenomenon, because the fireplace was cold and empty. He looked through the house, but not a creature did he see. He walked to the door, and was positive that he heard the sound of voices. It was by no means pleasing to have to wait and night approaching, yet he could not well pass on without inquiring after his patient. He shouted at the top of his voice, and in a short time he was surprised at the appearance of Willis himself.

He was not prepared for this. As a matter of course, he expected to find him under proper restraint; but the only attendant was the black servant. The terrible scene in the bedroom flashed on his mind, and he wished himself a hundred miles from the spot. He had not time to retreat, for the settler entered and welcomed him in his usual manner. He seemed better; but Arabin did not like his eyes' "wild radiance," and inwardly resolved to be off as soon as possible.

The settler had no intention of parting with him, and insisted upon his waiting for tea. He would not take as an excuse that night was approaching, and that his visitor had far to travel over a country with which he was but partially acquainted. Dr. Arabin exceeded the bounds of politeness in endeavouring to get away, without effect; and at length he agreed to remain and partake of a Bush tea, upon condition that it should be prepared without delay. This he did with a very bad grace; he had no wish to contradict the settler, and bring on a violent fit of the slumbering disease. The delay would put it out of his power to reach town, and he determined to ride over to Mr. Butler's for the night.

The black servant was so long in preparing tea, that he cursed his good-nature in remaining. The shadows of evening began to fall before it was placed before them. By the time it was finished, the room was so dark that candles were necessary. When the tea-things were removed, the settler insisted upon his taking a parting glass; and the spirit decanter having been placed upon the table, he was asked to help himself.

"You must excuse me, Willis," replied Dr. Arabin, "I never drink; I think that spirits are very injurious to you in your present delicate state of health, and I must deter you from using them."

"You must take a 'doch-an'-dorris,' as they say in Scotland, before you start."

"I shall not," said Dr. Arabin.

Willis here rose, and walking across the room, turned the key of the door, which he put in his pocket; the other door was shut, so that Arabin had not a very comfortable prospect before him.

"I am determined," continued Willis, "that you shall take a glass with

me, and you do not leave the room before you swallow it."

Dr. Arabin, upon mature reflection, saw that it was no use to reason with a madman, and therefore agreed to follow his advice and partake of a glass with him before he left.

The tea-kettle was upon the fire, and the singular companions mixed a glass of spirits and water each, and sipped it. Even this would not please Willis, who now insisted that Arabin should drink all that was upon the table. This he positively refused to do. He saw that his companion was becoming violent, and he determined to look out for his own safety. The only way to get out was to coax or overawe the lunatic. He tried frequently to catch his eye, as he had heard that a stern look fixed upon any one labouring under mental derangement would have an instantaneous effect. It was impossible to catch the eye of his companion, who seemed to guess his intention and purposely to avoid meeting his glance. He would not allow him to leave the room, and kept the keys of both doors in his pocket. He ordered him once or twice to drink the spirits on the table, and on his continued refusal became very angry.

Arabin repented of his rash visit. It was now late, and he determined upon a strenuous resistance if any violence should be offered. The only other person in the house was the black servant, and he appeared to be ignorant of the state in which his master was. The evening wore on; the lunatic walked to and fro across the room without speaking or looking towards the other. At length a fit of utter madness seized him, and he raved about the men in coffins, and about the horned devils and murders, nearly as incoherently as when Dr. Arabin had last seen him. He then noticed Arabin, and grinding his teeth at him, absolutely foamed at the mouth in impotent passion. Arabin expected he would have attempted his life, but he did not lay hands upon him; he only called to the black servant to bring his gun, and this command the poor fellow was compelled to obey. He then procured his flask and shot-belt, loaded his gun with the greatest attention, and turned round and spoke as follows: — "Dr. Arabin, I know you to be my bitter enemy: you have taken away my lady-love and blasted my hopes; you have come here to find out my secrets to take to the Government, and you want to make me out mad and have me put into the lunatic asylum. You are in league with the men in coffins to ruin me, and you die. I have tasted bread with you, and must not dip my hands in your blood until after twelve o'clock; when the new day commences I am free. Prepare for death, and do not think of escape. Every effort is fruitless, so be prepared." As he finished, he put a cap on his piece, and walked to and fro across the room in great pomp.

Arabin was taken rather aback at the turn of affairs. He cursed his

stupidity, and vowed that if he were once well off the station, he would have Willis sent to a madhouse without further delicacy. It did not seem probable that he should get away; it was little use to try to overpower the madman, who, at times, appeared to possess superhuman strength; it was impossible to coax him into a more lenient frame of mind; — in a word, Arabin was very uneasy; he hardly knew what means to adopt to avert the horrible calamity with which he was threatened.

The lunatic suspended his watch by a silk guard to a nail in the wall; and continued to walk up and down the room, gun in hand. It was about eight o'clock, and the only chance in favour of Arabin seemed to be that an accident might prevent Willis from carrying his threat into execution. Time passed; at length the other got tired of walking about the room, and calling in the black servant from the kitchen, locked the door of communication; he ordered his servant to watch Arabin closely, and to prevent him from moving or speaking, while he went and rested himself for half an hour. He then retired to the inner room, the door of which he left open, and extended himself upon a rude bed.

Dr. Arabin observed this movement with inward satisfaction, and turned his glance at once towards the window. It was very small, yet it appeared practicable to get through, and at any rate he resolved to make the attempt. The black servant who had charge of him appeared to commiserate his condition in so far as his confined intellect permitted him to understand it, and Arabin now tried to open a communication with him, so that he might find out how he was disposed. It was becoming rather cool, and Arabin asked him to "blow up the fire;" this he attempted to do, when Willis screamed out, "Hillo! is the prisoner safe? What noise is that, Mango?"

"All right, sir," replied the black.

While he was speaking to the servant, Arabin had managed to get his hand upon a piece of paper, and taking a pencil from his pocket, he wrote, "Does your master mean to murder me?" and handed it over to the black. He shook his head, and returned it without any reply.

Foiled in this attempt, he almost lost hope; yet, before he reconciled himself to a death terrible and sudden, he resolved to escape if any chance should offer.

The black man appeared willing to assist him, but he was terrified at the violence of his master; once or twice he tried to get him into conversation, but the instant a murmur disturbed the utter silence of the night, the terrible voice from the inner room screamed out, "Is the prisoner safe, Mango?" About eleven o'clock he rose, and entered the room gun in hand. Arabin expected he would despatch him. This was not, however, his

intention. The wild, haggard air of the poor fellow reminded him of the description of a mountain bandit in "Italy:"

> “ 'Tis a wild life, fearful and full of change —
> The mountain robber's. On the watch he lies,
> Levelling his carbine at the passenger.
> *****
> Tasso approaches — he whose song beguiles
> The day of half its hours, whose sorcery
> Dazzles the sense, turning our forest glades
> To lists that blaze with gorgeous armoury.
> ‘Hence, nor descend till he and his are gone;
> Let him fear nothing.’ ”

“I love these banditti, and their captain Marce di Sciarra,” thought Arabin, “for the respect they showed to the talented and unfortunate Tasso. I have now to deal with a person who has no noble feelings to work upon — or, rather, whose feelings are obliterated by insanity.”

Willis walked across the room and looked at the watch; it was but eleven, and his fearful resolve could not be executed before twelve o'clock. Once or twice he handled his gun and glanced towards his prisoner; the resolution was present in his mind, and he lowered the piece and once more returned to the room.

Arabin had no time to lose. He pointed towards the room, and then towards his throat, and by signs gave the black servant to understand that unless he escaped, his master would murder him. The black understood him, and whispered, “The window is your only chance.” Arabin made signs to indicate that if he attempted to escape, the other would shoot him. The black man shook his head, as much as to say there was no hope. Dr. Arabin reflected for a moment, and inquired of the black servant where he slept. He pointed with his finger towards the bedroom; the door was ajar, and Arabin observed that it fastened on his side. He drew a couple of guineas from his pocket, and placed them in the hands of the black. “Now, Mango,” he whispered, “you go into bed, and I will shut the door.” Mango reflected for a few minutes, and at length signified his consent to this. Arabin placed himself in such a position that he could draw the bolt the moment Mango entered. This aroused the suspicion of the lunatic, who cried, “Mango, is the prisoner safe?” Mango made a rush into the bedroom crying, “Oh, yes! massa, him all right — quiet, massa. — D——n,” he shouted, as Arabin slammed the door in his face — “d——n the prisoner!” This was said with such well—feigned astonishment, that his betrayed employer had no suspicion of his

treachery. Arabin rushed to the window, which was small and difficult to push up. He was gifted with supernatural strength; he forced it up, shot out, and unfortunately stuck — the window being very difficult to push open.

While he lay sprawling in the window, unable either to get out or in, the lunatic was sensible by the noise that he was endeavouring to escape. He thundered in a frantic manner at the door, and shouted that unless he opened it, he would blow out his brains. The black man also thought it necessary to make a noise, which increased the tumult. At length Arabin made one effort more potent than the others, for the window flew up just as the united strength of the lunatic and his servant burst the door. Arabin made an enormous spring, turned the corner, and ran just as he heard the lunatic scream, "The prisoner has escaped. Mango! — follow — shoot him! What, ho! Signor Braganza, ho!" It may well be supposed that Arabin lost no time in making off, sore as his leg was. He was destined to meet another interruption of this eventful evening. He had just reached the corner of the paddock, when a fellow interrupted him, and asked him to wait a moment. Not taking much notice, the other admonished him rather quickly, by throwing a stout walking-stick between his legs. As he was walking rather smartly, he ploughed the ground with his nose before he was conscious of the interruption.

When he was able to stand upon his legs, he found himself surrounded by three men: the person who had stopped him once more addressed him "Now, my young beauty, where might you be running to?"

"Who are you?" sternly demanded Arabin.

"I am the inspector of distilleries, and have my commission in my pocket. What may your name be?"

"Dr. Arabin, a person with whom you can have nothing to do."

"You don't know that; my commission is very general, and I would stop the Governor himself if it was necessary."

"Well, I wait your commands," said Arabin.

"Can you inform us where Mr. Willis is usually to be found?" inquired the leader.

"I think he is generally at home; I parted with him only this minute."

"And why were you running so fast?"

"Because Mr. Willis is insane and wished to murder me," replied Arabin. "May I ask you what you want here?"

"Suppose I was on the look-out for an illicit still?"

"I advise you," replied Arabin, "not to approach the house at the present moment: Willis is insane, and has a gun, with which he would have shot me had I not escaped."

"Never mind," said the officer; "we shall see him presently. You will wait a few moments?"

"Forward," said the officer.

The whole party now approached the house. Willis had been looking out, and saw them approaching. He did not seem to care much who they were, but fired his piece at random, and ran into the house. Before he could close the door, the whole party had made a rush and were in the house.

"Lay hands on him!" shouted the leader. "Knock him down!" he cried, as he saw him preparing to fight. He rushed forward, and giving a quick jump, his stick descended with violence on the head of the lunatic, and he fell sprawling on the ground.

The officers now commenced their search. Arabin expected they would find a still, for the circumstance of the smoke issuing from the kitchen-chimney when there was no fire on the hearth recurred to him just then. It was no business of his, and he did not say a word. They looked into every hole and upon every shelf in the house, in the garden and the outhouses, but not a single indication could they discover of an illicit still.

"This is certainly singular," said the officer, who was a fierce man in half uniform: "we are positive there is a still at work upon this station, and yet we cannot find out where it is."

"It must be under-ground," replied a constable, who had the character "vagabond" branded on his countenance in indelible characters.

The party again looked over the house and in the garden with no better success; the officer was about to give up the attempt to discover the still, when the constable inquired if he would allow him any part of the reward if he made the discovery.

"Five pounds and a pardon, you convict ragamuffin!" said the officer.

It appeared that this fellow had considered the premises, and concluded that if there really was a still, it must be in some subterranean place, and that the smoke from thence would be emitted by means of the chimney. This was a happy thought. The fellow procured a spade, and with great exertion cut a trench along the end of the house, close to the wall. His ingenuity was rewarded with success. He came upon a large iron pipe, which conducted the smoke into the kitchen-chimney. He had now only to follow the direction of this pipe: this was rather difficult, as it was deeply imbedded in the earth. After great trouble, they traced it some distance in the direction in which the stable was situated. The party returned to examine it even more attentively than upon the previous occasion. Each article was carried out, and the convict already mentioned searched every corner. At last, in one of the mangers he discovered a rent, and on trying

the board it shifted in his hand. He next attempted to take it out, which he accomplished without very great difficulty. Beneath, there seemed a cellar or vault. No one of the party would venture down, as the candle seemed inclined to go out. At last the officer discovered that the depth was not more than six feet; and he laughed at the convict, and said he would not get the reward unless he discovered the still. The reward incited the fellow to renewed exertion: and without another word he leaped into the den. He found the candle burned below, and he was at once followed by the officer and the other constable.

The apartment was about eight feet by six, and contained a still, with all the necessary appurtenances for distilling: there were also two kegs filled with whiskey, and about twenty bushels of malt. There was no person in the distillery, and the operation seemed to have been left off in haste. The officer was happy at the idea of pocketing his half of the penalty, and the convict was glad that he had earned his five pounds. Each of them tried the spirit, and pronounced it capital.

"It is run down partly from molasses," remarked the convict.

"You know the way to make it, I suppose?" observed his companion.

"Yes I do; many a good gallon of spirits I have made."

The spirits were seized, and the usual mark having been placed upon the casks, the whole party left. Arabin went and had Willis undressed and put to bed, where he continued insensible for some time, and then, mounting his horse, rode to the out station to procure assistance. It was becoming evident to him that the proper course was to confine him. He had apparently no relations in the Colony, and it was a difficult and delicate thing to place him under restraint and put his property into the hands of mercenary individuals. He resolved, however, to take the advice of one or two gentlemen, and if they should approve of the measure, to have a commission *de lunatico inquirendo*, as to the sanity of the belligerent settler.

He found two shepherds on the out-station, who accompanied him with a very bad grace to the house. Willis still remained in a stupor, but he occasionally started and opened his eyes.; he appeared writhing with pain, for a few minutes conscious, and then he went off as before. Dr. Arabin gave the shepherds strict charge to watch him attentively until assistance arrived.

He now remounted his horse, and rode off in the direction in which Mr. Butler's house was situated. The grey dawn was usurping the place of the darkness, and every object had a singular aspect viewed in the twilight. He had a very correct knowledge of the spot from the bearings of the different mountains, and yet it was not without some difficulty and

several hours' unnecessary delay that he reached it.

The settler had only been home about four hours, and was fatigued. It was, of course, unpleasant to start upon another journey, and he grumbled at first, but at last consented. Arabin joined the family at the breakfast-table; and did excellent justice to the fare which was placed before him. He conversed for some time upon the proper course to pursue with regard to the lunatic, and the settler agreed with his views, and advised him to apply to the Coroner, or the Police Magistrate, and have a commission issued as soon as possible. The difficulty, however, was this: — who should make the application? what business had they with his affairs, which did not concern them? On the other side, it was evidently a matter not to be neglected. Mr. Willis would do himself, or some other person, serious injury unless instantly confined: this reason prevented them from abandoning the idea.

CHAPTER XIII. A GENERAL RECORD.

ON the following day a summons was sent to Willis's station, requiring that person to answer an information filed by the Inspector of Distilleries, according to a certain section of a certain act, on which he was charged with having twenty gallons of illicit spirits on his premises. As Arabin had not returned, and as the lunatic seemed in a convalescent state, the officer prevailed upon him to start for town. The strangers present did not oppose this, but, on the contrary, sent a letter by the officers of the law to warn Dr. Arabin of the circumstance.

He was out of town that evening, and did not reach home until the succeeding morning: before he opened the letter it was too late to afford assistance, and he walked to the Police Office just in time to hear the case called on. The Office was crowded with settlers, for Willis had long been a favourite amongst them; and the long-talked-of mystery was now cleared up, for it was evident that Willis had been able to live in good style for a length of time by means of the illicit traffic which he had thus carried on.

The case had just been called on, and the magistrates were examining the act on which the information was laid. The Inspector of Distilleries came forward: the information was read; it contained no fewer than eight counts, but the first count was the one selected upon which to take the evidence. It appeared that the magistrates had no favour for the pert official; the Bench inquired his name, and he replied, “Francis Augustus————, Esquire.” “Esquire!” said the clerk with a sneer; “where of?” “Where of?” demanded the Bench. “Why,” replied the officer with the utmost *sang-froid*, “of nowhere in particular.” This reply excited the mirth of the bystanders, and the Inspector turned sharp round and glanced magnificently upon the assembled throng. The worthies on the bench, who indeed seemed about as fit to act as bishops as magistrates, thought this display of feeling as *infra dig.* and ordered silence; this created another laugh, and the magistrates looked tenfold more fierce than before.

The case was now proceeded with, and as there seemed no question of the guilt of the party implicated, he was fined in the full penalty of one hundred pounds, or in default to twelve months' imprisonment. Dr. Arabin came forward and explained, that as he was the medical attendant of the defendant, he considered it his duty to mention that he was not in a sound state of mind. The Inspector of Distilleries here interfered, and suggested that it was of no consequence, that the act did not regard the state of mind in which the defendant on a summons for illicit distillation might be; and

the Bench, after a long conversation, agreed with him.

The Court looked for the defendant, but he was nowhere to be found. At the moment when the Court was attending to Arabin's communication, he had disappeared. He was under no restraint; and the Bench thought it was very probable he had gone to try and raise the money.

Arabin left the Police Office, and walked home rather sharply. It was possible the lunatic might have wandered thitherward; he glanced around the streets as he passed along, but there was no person of his appearance to be met with: on his arrival he was disappointed to find that he had not been there. He was about to depart again, when he observed Captain Thomson approaching. This was a welcome arrival, and he was immediately put in possession of what had occurred, and his advice requested.

"Poor fellow!" he said, "I was aware many months ago that he had the concealed still, but, of course, never informed one human being of the fact. I liked him, although he was a madcap, and am really sorry for him."

"Then, where do you think he may be found?" inquired Arabin.

"It is almost impossible to tell. He may have gone home, or up the country with some erratic tribe of blacks; or he may have proceeded to some of his old haunts. If he is on his way home, we might overtake him on the plains."

"An excellent thought !" replied Arabin. "We will set out, the moment my horse is ready. We must keep a respectable distance, however, for I nearly met a violent death at his hands."

"He is particularly violent when in his mad fits," said Captain Thomson. "Indeed, for some time, not one of the servants, with the exception of the black boy Mango, would approach the house where he resided. I believe he commonly paraded the house with loaded fire-arms the livelong night, and threatened to shoot any person who dared to enter."

"I wonder, then," continued Arabin, "that he was not put under the charge of proper keepers a long time ago."

"He had no friends," said Captain Thomson; "and no person would interfere. What surprises me most is, that none of his servants informed upon him before. But when pretty well, he was very kind and generous, and always allowed them to have their own way, and I suppose he was too good a master to ruin."

Dr. Arabin now mounted his horse, and the two rode off towards the plains. They took a wide circuit and looked carefully for the wanderer, but no trace of him could they discover. They returned to town and looked everywhere for him, but the search was of no avail. He had escaped to some hiding-place which they were unable to discover.

Captain Thomson had come into town to settle the bargain with Arabin, because he was very anxious to depart, and business withdrew their attention for a time from the poor sufferer. It was not difficult to make a final arrangement with Captain Thomson; he was usually a hard person to deal with, but upon this occasion every moment was precious, which forced him to be generous. Arabin purchased his stock, with the exception of the few maiden ewes he had reserved for himself. The money was paid, and all that now remained was to take possession. The following day was spent in vain endeavours to discover the retreat of Mr. Willis; but upon the next they both started at daylight for the station.

In another week Arabin was fairly established in his new possession. The squatters of Australia now had him amongst their number. Who has not heard of these strange beings endenizened in the wilderness, and who live so solitary a life? Arabin was not disgusted now with the trade of a settler; it had attractions of which he had not dreamed; his flocks pleased him. He did not, however, throw up his own profession, but still continued to practise in town, while the station remained under the charge of an overseer. Every week the owner found time to visit it, and see how things were going on; indeed, he was very much surprised at the turn which his feelings had taken, and at the interest which he began to feel in the affairs of the station when he found it would pay.[4]

We are not aware that any stock in the Colony is equal to sheep. They have been a fortune to those who have contrived to keep them free from disease. When wool was as low as 1s. a pound in the English market, sheep were a fortune; the wool paid more than the expenses, and the increase was profit. When wool advanced to 1s. 6d. a pound, settlers were accumulating very fast; and they are accumulating now at the present moment. The boiling-down of stock for tallow established a minimum price of 5s. 6d. a-head for sheep, and £2 for cattle, below which they never can remain for any length of time. This has made stock in Australia always worth a certain amount, and always saleable at a price.

CHAPTER XIV. A CHAPTER ON LOVE.

LOVE is an old threadbare subject in print; but it is ever present, ever fresh, ever beautiful in real life. It in fact forms a part of the vast unfathomable depths of poetry. Poetry, who can afford a legitimate definition of what it means? Poetry itself is old in books, but ever varied, ever new, ever present in the world. Some have regarded poetry as an idle art; many men have written books of rhyme, who might have been better engaged in acquiring useful knowledge; yet that cannot be urged against poetry which is genuine, and often devotional feeling. The intense reverence which the uneducated peasant feels for his Maker is poetry of the most beautiful description. "The ladder which Jacob saw in his dream" says Richard Howitt in a letter published in the *Port Phillip Gazette*, "was poetry," and indeed he might have added that the whole of the Bible records sparkle with the most sublime, the most brilliant poetical effusions. Milton copied but from the Bible, and he has been placed in the temple of Apollo first — no mean honour. We find, then, that poetry and love are human feelings, and that wherever human beings are they will love.

It is true that love is a more ardent, potent, refined, and hallowed feeling among the highly civilised and the educated than among the vulgar or semi-barbarous. Poetry sheds an illusory colouring over the loved one; happiness is present only where that one is; we cannot trace the feeling any farther than to poetry, for all genuine feeling is poetry. Have any of our readers — our young readers — at any time dreamed of some one they loved, and enjoyed a pleasure such as the dull world, with all its learning, grandeur, and pleasures, cannot grant? Richard Howitt has named this feeling in “Sleep's Phantasy.”He says—

“I had a deep and pleasant sleep,
And such a dream of joy I dreamt;
If I such mood awake could keep,
My life would be from care exempt,
And this dull world of dreary hours”

We introduce a chapter on love with this apology. However diffident, we must proceed with our history.

“What signifies the life of man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses, oh?”

So writes Burns, a natural poet, and a person who possessed

considerable literary attainments; and we ask the young reader, what would be the use of writing a biography unless a true account be given of the loves of the person we are endeavouring to crown with immortality? Without this, it would be but a dry record; when it is found, the dry bones are reanimated; it is like the comparison of Shelley's lovely woman —

> "There was a lady beautiful as morning,
> Sitting beneath rocks upon the sand
> Of the waste sea — fair as one flower adorning
> An icy wilderness."

The many journeys which Arabin had to perform from town to his station were very convenient for cementing the friendship accidentally formed with Mr. Butler and his family. When he was upon his own station, he was dull, with not a creature to speak to. He had often tried to devote the evenings to study, but he could not bring his mind into the proper frame out of his own little parlour where he was accustomed to read and write. He could not smoke or drink, and he would soon have become half insane but for the kind neighbours. He often tried to spend the evening with them; and indeed he began insensibly to be unhappy every hour in the day when absent. Time stole on, and his visits were more frequent. At last he was unable to disguise the truth even from himself — he was in love.

We have already mentioned the young lady, but done scanty justice to her merits. We shall not even attempt to enter into their detail. For some time after she was introduced to the "Bushranger" — for our readers must remember that he was introduced to her as a professional of that character — she did not look upon him in the light of a lover, but soon

> "She knew,
> For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
> Was darken'd with her shadow."

And she did not discover this with indifference. We must tell the truth, that she had already a sincere regard for him, and at every visit she found out new beauties in his mind. As his character had never been tainted with the breath of slander, her sister and her sister's husband favoured him. Everything went forward prosperously, and Arabin had so far changed his opinion that he now said he should be well contented to remain in Australia during the remainder of his existence, if — he did not finish the sentence, and we can only guess at the qualification.

We must bring this chapter to a conclusion. We beg to give the history of Arabin's first love as he recited it one evening, when alone with Mr. Butler, in his most humorous style.

"The first person I fell in love with was the sister of the wife of an old friend; rather singular, by-the-bye. She was an old, young lady, with all the prim airs of a fine woman, which took with me most astonishingly; in the same manner that Miss Cecilia Stubbs captivated the heir of Waverley Honor, did the superannuated beauty cast her spells over me. I can remember to this hour her well-worn black silk dress and dingy straw bonnet, and how she paraded in an old cap adorned with blue ribands in the drawing-room. I was mad with love. It is of little purpose to add whether the *belle* returned the passion; I believe she did at first, because I bad been misrepresented as a rich young doctor and a great catch. She sighed, and returned my amorous looks. I wrote her amorous songs, after the fashion of Barry Cornwall's pieces of poetry: one compared her to the flower of Arabia, which flattered her exceedingly. At last my passion could no longer be controlled; I tried once or twice to speak it, but I could only think it, for my face grew pale and the words died on my lips. At last I was unable to eat or live, and I determined to write my sentiments, being unable to screw my courage to the sticking-point. The letter I still have; I retained it as a literary curiosity — in its way it most decidedly is one. I have it in my pocket; I shall read it — let it speak for itself.

'DEAR MADAM,

'As I have often wished to speak to you on a subject nearest my heart, but not having the power, I write you this line. I love you, and if you like to cast in your lot with me, I have no doubt we shall be happy for life. I have little but my profession and an unimpeached character, but think there is little doubt we shall be happy in our little way. Please give me an answer as soon as convenient, and we will talk over our little arrangements. If you should not incline to my suit, please return me this note.

'I am, Madam,

'Yours for ever and ever,

'ARABIN'

"Well, my lady-love read this letter, and went to her sister. That worthy lady came as a delegate from her to me, and expressed her general approval of the match, and cross-examined me about the means I had to support her when we were married. I seemed to take this in good part; I however would not reply then, but gave her an evasive answer. I promised to make a full explanation of the money I had, and my future prospects, after, and the matter stood over. They waited patiently for a week or two, but I was silent, for, in truth, I had become sick of them; my lady-love became suspicious, and, to be beforehand with me, returned my note and declined my offer — the offer she had conditionally accepted before. How it must have stuck in her throat! I took a curious mode to revenge myself. I called once, and only once, again, and made them believe I had just received my uncle's fortune, who was in India, and very rich. I left them bursting with jealousy, which they vainly endeavoured to conceal under an air of indifference. I was young then, and had but little experience of the world: I have to thank my lucky stars that I escaped the worst at that time. I think many have been ruined by marrying when very young. There is a noble ambition in the young, which wears down after marriage; although it is impossible to dispute that it is an honourable state. I should not allow any child of mine, with brilliant abilities, either to marry or go into the Colonies. There is much of enthusiasm in genius which should be fostered, and marriage injures the poetic fire, which ought to be studiously preserved, because there is frequently only a shade of difference between a genius and an enthusiast."

CHAPTER XV. A COLONIAL INN.

THERE is not perhaps a class of individuals who have accumulated more money than the tavern-keepers of the Eastern Colonies. The large hotels have frequently been the means by which fortunes might be accumulated. The inferior order of taverns have ever been profitable. The wild riots which daily occur in the taps of these houses would disgust in detail, and, in fact, are a disgrace to the Colony. The country inns are conducted upon a different principle: every article has acquired a fictitious value within their precincts. The landlords are in fact monopolists; they know too well that you require their accommodation, and that you are at their mercy — but mercy they have none. There is no competition in the Bush. Many hardy travellers make the vault of heaven a karavanserai, and sleep in a blanket, or in a hollow tree, rather than incur such extravagant expenses; but the majority have a salutary dread of cold and rheumatism, inciting them to occupy a comfortable shelter. The most profitable part of their trade is supplying the wants of the settlers' servants, who frequently adjourn to a Bush tavern to spend their wages. This class are more independent, and far more extravagant, than their masters. At times they become unmanageable, and as no police are near, they insult every person they can see.

We have to introduce our readers into the bar of one of these houses of public entertainment. The landlord, however, was not by any means a good specimen of Bush publicans. He had just bought the house, and started in the trade, attracted by the great profits realised. He was a respectable man, with a quiet, handsome wife; and the pair appeared about as comfortable in their new calling, as a dissenting clergyman in a theatre. The coarse language used by the ruffianly barbarous Bushmen sent the blood of the hostess almost cold; while the landlord was almost as much shocked, and quite unable to exert his authority and maintain order. The two bemoaned the unlucky fate that had sent them to a line of business for which they were unfit. These severe remarks refer to the low roamers about the Bush.

It was drawing towards night, and the tap-room was filled with bullock-drivers, and the usual classes of Bush travellers. A young man entered of more respectable appearance; although his clothes were torn and soiled. A straw hat, worn in the Bush by almost every person, was drawn down over his brow, and the collar of his coat was fastened around his throat to protect him from the cold, so that his features were almost concealed. He seated himself at some distance from the others, and ordering a glass of

brandy, for which he threw down half-a-crown, tasted it, and sat a silent spectator of the scene.

About half-a-dozen men were very agreeably employed in making an aborigine tipsy, and in disputing amongst themselves. The savage evinced the partiality to exciting liquor which has ever been the character of all uncivilised men. He was slim, yet an active-looking fellow; his eye was wild and rambling, his gait upright, and his step proud and easy. He was dressed in an old cast-off coat and straw hat, but he did not use trousers. His companions talked to him in a kind of broken English mixed with the native words; and to make themselves intelligible, they had recourse very often to motioning with the hand. It would be almost impossible to make sense of this conversation, from the unsteady countenances and wavering eyes, as well as from the loud husky voices, of every one of them; it seemed certain that they must have been there the greater part of the afternoon. They were becoming very quarrelsome, and the black fellow, too, was in a state of no ordinary excitement. The entrance of the young man as already described was observed only by the black man, who was looking towards the door, at the moment, (where his lubra was seated, huddled up in her sheep skin rug,) and caught his eye. He looked once or twice towards him, and at length walked up with the freedom of a savage, and stared him full in the face. The stranger looked at him, and the black laughed with great satisfaction, and said in tolerably good English,

"Ah ha, Mr. Willis! me not seen you plenty long time."

"Well, Dermott," replied the other, "how are you? where you quambie now?"

"Me quambie here, small bit — plenty corroborie," replied the aborigine.

"You got many black fellows at your corroborie?" inquired the stranger.

"Not many black fellows. Plenty hungry now, — him belly's plenty sore."

"You not steal sheep?"

"Wah! Plenty kill black fellow. One black fellow kill sheep, white fellow plenty take him, and him plenty killed. How you been long, long time? Me not seen you."

"Me been very well. How you been? How you lubra and picaninnies?"

"Them quite well. You know them white fellows?" (pointing with his finger towards those who had been treating him.) "Plenty big rogues them."

His former companions now found he had gone, and they called him back, rather abruptly. At first he seemed very much inclined to treat them with contempt; but his prudence prevailed, and he walked back towards

them. They did not seem inclined to pardon the affront he had put upon their party, and began to abuse him. Dermott, however, was able to give them word for word, and cursed and roared with the best of them. The landlord appeared very much shocked at the riot, and looked in the most deploring manner at the party; but it is needless to say, that his looks were never even thought of by these ruffians. At length they attempted to turn Dermott out, but were kept at bay by the waddie which he held in his hand, and which was too deadly a weapon to encounter, especially in the experienced hands of Dermott. At last Dermott whispered to the stranger, and, after exchanging a few more angry words with the Bushmen, he joined his lubra at the door and departed.

The Bushmen soon after had a quarrel with the quiet landlord. They had expended their money — they were as drunk as possible — and the landlord, under these circumstances, considered it high time that they should be moving. Not one of them, however, agreed with him, and they evinced no inclination to start, but, on the contrary, seemed determined to remain. They were also resolved to have more drink, notwithstanding the reiterated replies of the landlord that he never gave credit. The inevitable consequence of this difference in opinion was a quarrel. One of the most insolent put his fingers into the inkstand and drew them suddenly across the face of the publican, when the whole party set up a shout of satisfaction. The publican bore the insult with more patience than could have been expected; he turned very pale, and asked the person to leave the house. He retaliated by placing himself in a fencing attitude, and taunted the landlord, if he were a man, to come forward and box with him. To this challenge the landlord would not reply, and his antagonist informed him he was not game to attack him. Many similar hostile demonstrations were made without the least effect, for fight the landlord would not, as he thought, with General Cope, that "it was best to sleep in a whole skin."

We may remark, that the landlord was peculiar in this respect; for the majority of hosts are what is termed flash or sporting characters, and prize-fighters by profession. So far from not fighting, a Colonial landlord would have kicked the fellow out at the door upon the least hostile demonstration. An old "hand," however, would have known their manners too well, and would have joked and tasted with them, or even perhaps gone the length of singing a song; and when their money was all gone, would have flattered them off the premises. Such characters are fit for their business; but to a person possessing the slightest delicacy of feeling, the attempt to make money by grog-dealing would be altogether absurd.

It was well for the landlord that the attention of his adversaries was attracted by internal quarrels. The most violent was for taking the bar by

storm, as the landlord was not able to defend it; one of his companions objected to this, which he designated as "breach of promise," his doctrine being "that every cove as sold liquor should be protected."

The other person remarked that "he was no magistrate, and need not cheek up so precious fast."

"How do you know I am not a Colonial 'Justass of the East?' — my brother is one in England, and who knows but the Governor may make me a Justass?"

"Ah, you are coming too ———— clever, now; but you know I remember you working in a chain gang, and I have heard that you were lagged for stealing ten pennorth of hay."

"It is a lie!" screamed the insulted convict; "I was lagged by the Duke of Wellington for being one of Napoleon Bonaparte's generals. I am a gentleman, you snotty beggar, and don't care that for you!" snapping his fingers at the same instant.

"You are cramming us," replied the other. "I know you were lagged for stealing ten-pennorth of hay; don't you mind you told us in the Kangaroo Inn, once when you were drunk, that you was lagged for stealing the hay, and that your wife who comed to see you in gaol used to say, as the coves with the big wigs could not lag you, as they could not stand to it —don't you mind now, and what's the use of *stringing* so precious fast about Wellington and Bonaparte?"

The man was apparently unable to answer this question, for he had recourse to blows, and putting himself in a fencing attitude, hit his opponent a sharp smack on the face. He was upon him in an instant and the two closed and worried each other like two bull-dogs. After exercising themselves in this manner for some time, they got tired, and again had recourse to a war of words, which continued for a quarter of an hour. At length, finding it impossible to extort drink from the landlord, they shuffled off, but not before they had each abused the man in power in their best style. Just at the moment they made their exit, another party entered. One was a bullock-driver; the next was a little man, who seemed a hut-keeper or shepherd; while their companion was evidently of superior education, although it seemed more than probable that his necessities had compelled him to accept some such menial occupation. It appeared that the stranger already mentioned had no intention of making their acquaintance, for he drew his hat lower over his face, and turned round to escape observation. The person last mentioned now smiled upon the landlord, and addressing him by the quaint title of "my learned friend," ordered three noblers of rum.

The liquor had a perceptible effect in opening the heart of this worthy

triumvirate, if we can be allowed the expression, and their tongues soon were heard.

"I say, Porcupine," commenced the person who had been standing treat, "how have you been getting on this eternal long time?"

"Aisy like," replied the bullock-driver. "You know that my old master went out of his mind, and I had to look for another situation. He was a good cove to serve, was that old Willis, although a bit cranky at times."

"What!" exclaimed the other, with excellent feigned astonishment, "and is old Willis gone wrong in his mind? I was the most intimate friend he had. Many a good bottle have we cracked. Poor old fellow, I am sorry for him. Where is he?"

The solitary stranger gave his shoulders a shrug, and changed his position.

"Ay, that's it," said the bullock-driver; "where is he? I wish I knew where he was, for he was a good master."

"Well, I must tell you all the story. You see, he was quick; he would have the year's clip of wool spent long before it had grown on the backs of the sheep, and as he was wild he soon became short of money, and took to making whiskey. Not a creature knew of this but me and Mango the black man, and many a fine keg I have carried in. We used to pack it in rice bags, and leave it at an old canting, cheating grocer's in the town. Maister began to be bad and made strange kick-up; but we liked him, and never informed mortal of what was going on. I forgot to say, that the cove wanted a gal as lives with Mr. Butler, but who was frightened of his going insenti, as the doctors calls it, and killing her before she could have him sent to a asylum. This put him wrong, and then everything went wrong: the grocer was discovered, and he imposed the cove; the Expector of Distilleries came out and took the still away, and master too, who was clean mad, and had just before nearly killed Dr. Arabin, and Mango the black man. He was had before the Bench, and was to be put in chokey; the cove ran for it, and has never since been heard of."

"Has no accounts of him arrived?" inquired the young man."

"Some," replied the bullock-driver, "say that he has left the Colony, and some say he is residing with the blacks and turned chief, and some that he is a Bushranger. I wish him well, for he was a good master, and liked me for his bullock-driver."

"And how were you turned away from the station?" inquired the other.

"The cove called Harobin and old Butler were put to manage it — and they are a pair of low blackguards. They said I was too long on the station, and paid me off. The scamp Harobin is to be married in a few days to the young lady that the cove was arter."

"You don't say that!" remarked the young man, who, by his own account, was such an intimate friend of Mr. Willis the settler.

"I do, indeed" replied the bullock-driver. "They turned me away, and I would go up to my knees in blood to see them disappointed: that Harobin is a snotty, broken-down swell, who has got as many fine ways with him as a stage-playactoring missus."

"Then, what are you going to do?" inquired the other.

"Me and this other person," replied the passionate bullock-driver, "are to start a consarn in the wood line, you see, as wood is in request about the towns, and we only wants a chay and bullocks to start in the trade. We have money enough to start a chay, and we are looking for bullocks."

"And do you expect to get them?" inquired the young man.

"No," replied the bullock-driver; "but we may *find some in the woods.*"

"Take care, though," said the other, "that the police do not find out your place."

"Oh, never mind, we will risk that," replied the worthy bullock-fancier; "I wish my old master was alive now, and I should not want bullocks. I hear there is great writins come, and talk that he is to be a nobleman; and yil see, I should like to meet the cove; and, mayhap, if he wos a-comin it very strong, the gal might not have the snobby swell after all. I a'heard on it in town, that the postmaster had a letter to him from the King of Hingland. The cove would not give it up to any person but himself."

In such conversation the time passed; the bullock driver stood treat, and then the companion of his adventure, and, by all accounts, his co-partner in the wood speculation — who was a little miserable creature, in an old jacket and trousers, and a straw hat with enormous rim — insisted upon giving them another ball of rum. They were becoming as troublesome as the former party, and to every appearance a similar scene would be enacted when the money was all spent.

We must, however, leave them, and follow the stranger so often mentioned, who, as the reader will have understood from the expressions of the black, already introduced as Dermott, was in fact Willis himself.

His eye had turned several times wistfully towards the glass of brandy which remained untasted: he reflected, — "What a singular power lies concealed in that cursed liquor! I feel well now — quite well, but were I to drink this glass, the mind would stagger and I could not end with it. Another would follow, and then another, until I should be worse than these poor ignorant fellows. They have not got that inward gnawing which high mental power and education always bring. The gifted — those who have genius and greatness combined, are often more to be pitied than the clods who have no existence but in the gratification of their animal

passions — for those persons whom I have noticed here this night have no mental appetite to gratify or surfeit. When they are tipsy, they fight or sing, and drink on till stupified. I, again, belong to that class, the members of which 'do become old in their youth, and die ere middle age.' At this moment I am well; but were I to renew the course I had at one time been following, I should again be mad. How inviting it looks! I would try the one tumbler, but for the state of excitement into which it might plunge me."

He had sat reflecting, during the time that the bullock driver was relating his misfortunes, without betraying emotion; he was not angry with Arabin or his intended, then; he was calm; he did not say anything; he did not think much about what he had heard until the man who had formerly been his servant stated that the postmaster had news for him of the utmost importance; then he certainly did look a little anxious; his eye rested on the glass again, his hand itched to seize it, and his throat was parched with a burning thirst. He was upon this occasion the conqueror, for he rose and walked out of the room. Had not the old bullock-driver been tipsy, he would have recognised him; but his senses were blunted by the effects of the liquor. The other young man who had been upon such intimate terms with the drover he did not know, and he appeared to have no knowledge of Willis. He was safe with him.

He walked sharply along the road when he had once fairly escaped from the inn; he was thankful that he had overcome the temptation of drink, yet the cold air and the desolation of darkness had a singular impression on his mind. He found his heart sink, and gloomy clouds of melancholy depressed his spirits. In such moments the heart pants for home, for the home where something that is dear is to be found. But he had no home to flee to: he was disheartened, without that beacon light to indicate the fatal reefs of Despondency, and the calm waters of Resignation Bay, just beyond Point Hope: all before him was stormy waters, with reefs and breakers on every side. To how many have the lines which our great poet Shakspeare has put into the mouth of Hamlet come home when labouring under the same malady! —

> "To be, or not to be ? that is the question: —
> Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
> The stings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
> And, by opposing, end them?"

The hearts of the great and gifted have often breathed similar

sentiments. We wonder if the majestic Bonaparte ever found his heart sink when chained to that lonely rock of the ocean on which he ended his days. How glorious the early career of this great general! — how sad to reflect that it was afterwards sullied by cruelty and bloodshed, and the most appalling crimes! Did he ever, we wonder, in the wane of his fortunes, think of these lines? — did his heart not speak their truth? It is a melancholy thing to see a portion of the English press lauding the late Emperor of France. As a tyrant, he deserved a worse treatment than he received.

To return to Willis. He felt the sting without knowing the antidote. If he knew it, he was too proud and too hardened to apply it: he bore the withering chill without a murmur. He once indeed appeared to contemplate re-entering the temple of intoxication; but his anxiety to discover the extent to which the bullock driver had spoken truth, incited him to proceed.

It was a raw, cold night, for the winter season is frequently excessively severe in Australia: the wind howled dismally among the high trees; their branches creaked and moaned like the furies of the tempest; and still the poor solitary pushed forward. The night wore on, and the rain increased to a storm; he was unable to cope with it longer, and crouched into the shelter which a hollow tree afforded, listening to the mournful howling of the blast, which lulled and returned with fitful starts. At length, having turned his face in a contrary direction, his eye met a red glare of light, the reflection of a huge fire at some distance in the Bush. He was not confident about venturing towards it: if it should prove a black camp, he would ask shelter; but if whites were around the fire, which was far from unlikely, he determined to pass on and not solicit their hospitality. He started up and bent his steps in the direction where the light burned. When within a short distance, he stooped down and reconnoitred. The miamis were visible, and Willis, who knew their ways, gave a loud co-oie. This signal aroused a storm of howling from the bands of lean, lanky brutes of dogs which swarm about the black camps. The blacks were asleep, exhausted with the corroborie which they had just finished, but many started up when the noise was audible. He now walked up, and was well received by his old friend Dermott, who appeared in some authority amongst them. There was nothing for him to eat: he had the shelter of a miami, which is formed by placing an upright stick in the ground, with a forked end up, near to a tree; another plank, or rather thick branch, is placed in this, with the other end fastened into the tree; against this are placed bark and branches of trees to protect the blacks from the inclemency of the weather; and they sleep with their feet spread out

towards the large fires.

Willis slept a short time, and spent the night far more comfortable than he had expected. In the morning he thanked Dermott for his hospitality, and then departed for town.

It is singular how much good there exists in the mental composition of persons outwardly abandoned. Behold the squalid prostitute, lurid with debauchery, and in her drunken revel breathing blasphemous and indecent language, and allow that human nature never could descend beyond this phase of crime; that the once noble and beautiful, the warm and interesting, the gay and lively, has changed into the bold, polluted, guilty, indecent thing which humanity shudders to contemplate; — in a word, the thing of life and soul is changed into a loathsome corpse. Now look on another picture, and blame not too rashly. That same woman was once the *belle* of the circle in which she moved, and loved by all for her humble accomplishments. She attended her father with untiring assiduity in his last illness; she was poor, but struggled against poverty and neglect. Her beauty attracted admirers. She loved; her fine feelings and ignorance of the world induced her to listen to the picture of felicity which the deceiver painted, and she was ruined. For this she was repaid with scorn, contempt, and neglect. She was spurned by her own sex, and her self-respect was gone for ever. She wept tears of blood; then she was eagerly seized upon by the vile and abandoned of her own sex, and soothed her misery in forgetfulness. Lower and lower she descended through the frightful abyss, and now she has become the dregs, the offal of humanity, without a spark of feeling or a blush of shame. And was she altogether to blame? No; it was society, which ejected her from its bosom upon the first fault appearing, which is to blame, after the spoiler had crushed the blooming flower. Yet how many days has she pined after her lost fame, and sobbed at the thought of former times and virtuous friends! But she had lost her equilibrium, and could not recover. She was in the position of one hurled from a high pinnacle and east into a deep chasm. It is to be regretted that so much licentious literature has emanated from the English Press for some years back, which has had the most pernicious effect upon the minds of the romantic and sensitive. We hope that it will recover its tone, and that the literature of the age may be distinguished alike for intellectual power and moral beauty.

In Willis's mind there was strangely blended many great, noble, and poetic feelings, with debauched habits and licentious sentiments. At times he was passionately fond of reading; he would study the history of Hannibal, the great Carthagenian general, and weep tears of joy over his brilliant career and the greatness of his genius; he would feel for his

reverses in later life as strongly as if he were his dear friend, and yet the very next day would drown his melancholy in drunken revels, and make himself more stupid than the beasts of the field, or bring on insanity. He could not live without excitement.

The morning on which he left the blacks was very beautiful; for in Australia, as has already been noticed, this is no uncommon event after a stormy night, when the tempest has vented its fury. The sun burst out encircled with a cloud of glory, brightening glade, and dale, and plain; the grass, the trees, the flowers were fresh and brilliant with dew-drops, which sparkled in the sunshine like diamonds or pearls; and Willis was alive to this beauty as he sauntered along the Bush. Even in the wilds of Australia the Spirit of Beauty unfolds herself to the lover of nature, and breathes a freshness, a light over all creation. She is present in the utter stillness of the sleeping forest, and in the magnificent lustre the summer sun throws over its dusky ranges,

——— "as he chequers the forest dun
Into light and shade"

in the still, smooth-flowing river edged by the most luxurious display of forest beauty — in her vaulted skies which are heavenly and more beautiful than those of Italy — in her solitary and inaccessible mountain ranges — in her wild flowers of the brightest hues opening their petals in tenderness, but

"———— born to blush unseen,
And waste their sweetness on the desert air."

Nay, there is poetry in the vast weary plains from their utter desolation; the traveller is like the last man — neither life nor living thing meets his eye. But although there is much of the grand and beautiful in nature to be found, man has subdued and overcome it. The Colonies are the regions of stern reality; romance in the Colonies would not be tolerated; plain matter of-fact is what the majority look to — something about the squatting interest, about sheep or cattle, or money, is their *summum bonum*. Wealth is very well, but it is not to be compared with mental culture, and it is our earnest desire that the taste of the public mind in the Colonies should refine and improve. The Press might do much towards this, and a decided improvement has certainly been made manifest during the last years in some of the Colonies; but a system of slander and vulgar recrimination and scandal mongering is still continued in others. The various editors

ought to reflect upon the consequences, and for the sake of society adopt a better system. We hope they will soon be devoting their energies towards the cause of literature and science. The Eastern Colonies are peculiarly situated at the antipodes of Europe, the mistress of civilisation; in this isolated situation they form, as it were, a little world within themselves. They have arrived at no contemptible greatness within the last few years, in consequence of their own resources. They have prospered against adverse fortunes, and in spite of distance and neglect. And would it not be a pity that these fine new countries should descend in the scale of civilisation? — Heaven forbid!

To return from this digression. Mr. Willis was pleased with the beauty of the morning, and wandered onwards through the forest. The birds warbled sweetly in the trees; — what a relief, what a contrast from the dismal shadows of night, which chilled him and flightened him! He walked forward for twenty-five miles, and at last stopped at the first human habitation he had met with to solicit a drink of tea and a slice of bread. It was an humble abode, being only an out station, but what there was to give was soon brought forth. The poor traveller partook rather sparingly of even this humble fare, and having recruited his strength, he again set forward and walked about twenty miles further. He might have remained at a station during the night, but he preferred to sleep in the air, although the cold was excessive.In his present mood, he was averse to mix with men. We take leave of him for the present at about fifteen miles' distance from the town; he wished to get within such a distance, that he might reach it before breakfast on the following morning.

CHAPTER XVI. THE WEDDING MORNING. — AN UNBIDDEN GUEST.

ALL things looked gay and bright in the valley where Mr. Butler's dwelling-house lay; it was morning, one of the gayest of even Australian mornings: it was a joyful morning to two beings, for it was to consummate their happiness. At twelve, the ceremony which would unite our old friend Dr. Arabin with Miss Martha was to be performed.

Arabin was in town. He was expected to arrive with the clergyman and one friend at twelve o'clock; at one the clergyman would do the duties of his office, and at two an early dinner was ordered. If a fine afternoon, they had agreed to ride into town immediately afterwards; but if the weather seemed unsettled, the whole party would spend the night at the station.

We need hardly add, that the bride did not sleep much the night before, and that she was up early. Before a single soul in the house had moved, she crept from her bed-chamber, opened the lattice, and jumped lightly into the little garden. The flowers were more beautiful than before, and appeared to invite her caresses. She was sad. The little plants, and the tender flowers she used so often to care for, were weeping for her loss; the sun was rising, and his warmth revived them. The dew dropped from their petals, and they laughed again in the morning lustre. She could not wait here, and she wandered down the beautiful valley in which the settler's house was situated: the bell-birds tuned their little throats, and warbled beautifully. Morning in Australia is more agreeable than any other season of the day, and the heart of the young lady was sensible of balm which floated on the glistening dew-bright earth. But thoughts of her own prospects were first in her heart — the change so long looked forward to, as the door to future bliss was now nigh at hand, and she loved — yes! even in the Colonies there has been a case of love. She had never had but two lovers: one was kind and gentle, and everything she could look for; and the other was wild and daring, and she could not love him — she would have been afraid to have loved him, he was so untameable and so like a madman. Yet she was interested about him, very sad and anxious about him; she wondered where he could have gone to, and whether her refusal could have driven his mind wrong and unhinged his fine faculties; and there was even a tenderness in this feeling, which she would hardly allow in her own mind. From these thoughts her attention was called to a rustling at her side; and on looking up, she perceived Willis close by — the person whom she had been thinking about, the person of all others whom she least wished to see. She did not lose her

presence of mind; she was not afraid, for what had she to fear? the blush of female delicacy and purity was in her cheek, and she had a higher opinion of Willis than to think that he would harm aught so lovely, so pure.

He very soon gave her the opportunity to judge of his intentions. At first he seemed a little startled; but he advanced boldly, and addressed her.

"Have you," he said, "a heart as tender as your angelic countenance would indicate? Look upon one who is the victim of your displeasure, who wanders about the world hating the light of the day, and say if you do not compassionate me, and deeply feel for the evil you have wrought. I have been wandering the country communing but with uneducated savages, and loathing nourishment. My heart is scorched and blighted, and you have done all this; do you not pity me?"

"You must not speak this way to a young and unprotected female," replied the bride. "This day I am to be married to a most deserving young man. I have before told you that your suit was vain, and you ought not to presume so much on my good nature as to surprise me in this manner."

"And you are to be married, then!" said Willis rather sharply. "You have determined at last to cast me on the wide world without hope; and you are to be married to a canting, whining hypocrite — a ravenous professional, without honour or honesty!"

"Stop," almost screamed she; "I am a bride, and will not hear a word against the honour of the man I have resolved to wed."

"Hear me out," replied the settler. "When I crouched at your feet a poor suppliant, you regarded me as a ruined flock-owner — as a man involved in endless schemes and mysteries. I humbled myself then, because I loved you; but you thought you would not be safe with such a character — that I would neither keep you from the chills and colds of winter, nor shade you from the sweltering sun of summer. But I can alter all this. My future prospects you never knew, because I wished to wed you as an outcast. Now know that my father is, or was rather, a nobleman; although I am but his youngest son, I can mingle with the peers of the land. Circumstances gave me a distaste to home; I quarrelled with my father, and he struck me, when I fled an exile to these Colonies, where I have lived for years unknown. I saw you, and loved you; but when in this valley I asked you, you despised me — perhaps not despised, but slighted my suit. I laughed then in my agony; I gnashed my teeth to think that I, who might marry with the noblest and the fairest of Britain's daughters, should have been unable to win the heart of an unsophisticated maiden in the Bush of Australia. I never believed in the possibility of such an event; and so deeply, so bitterly, so poignantly did it sting, that it finished what

dissipation had commenced, — it unsettled my reason. It was a sad event for me. For many weeks I wandered among the natives, and subsisted upon their scanty hospitality. Chance drew me into town a few days ago, where I found that my concealment had been discovered. My brother was dead, and I was the only son now remaining to succeed to either the titles or the estates. My wildness has departed; I am calm now: what I may have been is of little consequence — I am henceforward to redeem my character. I determined to see you once more before you threw yourself away upon that wolf in sheep's clothing, to offer you wealth, rank, power, admiration, love. Do not think I mock you; I have the documents now with me to prove that my statement is correct. You have but to say the word, and we shall leave this country and enter upon a new sphere of action. Whatever may be urged against the character of Willis, the Australian Bushman, will be forgotten when he is metamorphised into the great and powerful English Milord."

"I have heard you, Mr. Willis," said the lady; "not that I wished, but that it was beyond my power to stop you. I do not doubt that all you say is true, but wealth and rank are worthless in my eyes. For your good fortune I am glad — I sincerely rejoice that you are to reform your course of life, and turn towards some nobler course of action; but I cannot express myself farther. My sentiments towards you are unaltered. I have promised to marry Arabin, and for weal or woe I *will* keep my word."

"I see that you think I have condescended to a trick to gain my point," replied Willis, "but I assure you solemnly that it is a mistake. I swear to you that these documents are not fictitious; that, on the contrary, they are real. Examine them with your own eyes — read them, and you will find that I am not a villain. I may have been rash and tricky in some transactions, but am incapable of doing aught mean towards you."

"I believe it from my heart," replied the lady; "I really and truly believe it from my heart."

"You speak earnest]y," said the young man; "you seem as if your heart inclined towards me. Oh! then harden it not. If you decide against me, I am but a wretched being for life; my honours and riches are but a mockery."

He seized her hand as he finished, and held it. The tears gushed from the eyes of the bride. It was a fearful moment; and she had a hard struggle. She spoke not, but disengaging her hand with dignity, she said, "I have already answered you, Willis, and it is cruel of you to ask me farther. Let me depart in peace, or I will call; I am not far from the house, and it may be worse for you."

"I have no desire to detain you against your wish; but is it thus we are to

part?”

“I cannot, will not, ought not to remain longer; I shall be glad to see you with my friends, but I ought not to continue any longer alone with you; therefore I return.”

“Then you will not listen to what I have got to say?” the young settler replied.

“I have given you my answer,” she replied, “and must return, for I ought not to remain longer alone with you.”

Once more the rage of the young settler outweighed his love; he actually foamed with suppressed passion. His horse was concealed in a thicket close by, and he had half a mind to lay hold of the girl and ride off with her. His sense of honour and right prevailed. She was a young, artless girl, and it would be a shame to show her any disrespect; he would be a villain who could have heart to stain the unsullied reputation of one so innocent, and the thought was spurned. Unconscious of her danger, the young woman walked towards the house. The distance was not very far, not more than half a mile; she did not increase her pace, because she deemed it unseemly. She had no fear, for she never considered Willis in his wildest moods capable of doing her any serious injury. At the same time, it afforded her no ordinary satisfaction that he did not follow her, and pester her with his importunities. She felt for him; she regarded him as a relation almost; but scenes such as she had just trembled under, must in future be avoided for her own sake, and for her own peace.

She entered the house, and now that she was safe beneath the shelter of her sister's roof, her forced composure forsook her; she burst into tears, and surprised her sister, by rushing into her room in a state of feverish excitement.

“What is the matter, Martha?” inquired her more matronly sister, in a tone of mingled kindness and tenderness. “What is the matter, my own dear sister? Why, this is a bad omen; it is your wedding morning, my own little Martha — tell me all about it.”

“I just walked out there,” replied Martha, “and I met Willis.”

“Met Willis!” said Mrs. Butler, very much startled. “How, where did you meet him?”

Martha explained how and where the meeting took place, and what passed.

“Well, now, my dear sister, you must not let your spirits down about this. Willis was civil, and although I wish the event had not occurred, yet I am thankful nothing worse happened. I do not like Willis — he is a very bad young man in some respects, although he is generous, and I believe kind; but he is a *lunatic*, or at least he is liable to periodical fits of

insanity, and we never would have allowed you to marry him. I wonder Butler did not see you, for he has but just gone to see the sheep counted out and looked after."

"I wish, sister, I had not met him," said the young lady, sobbing.

"Oh, you must cheer up, as it is your wedding day; forget all about it, my good girl; it will be a bad thing for any person to see you crying on the morning of your marriage."

Her sister endeavoured to compose the poor timid girl, and after some time she succeeded. Mr. Butler now returned, and having heard the story, commenced firing off his batteries of raillery against the bride. This had a perceptible effect, and after breakfast was over, she dressed herself in better spirits than any of them had expected. She resolved, however, that so long as Willis remained, she would not go out without protection.

The eager bridegroom and the clergyman were there before the appointed hour. It was the wish of the young lady and all connected with her, and the bridegroom had expressed the same opinion, that the marriage should be solemnised without display. The Bush soon wears down the desire for finery, as well as for splendour of any kind. A plain but substantial meal was served up early, almost immediately after the conclusion of the marriage ceremony, and the party was ready to start for town.

And shall we notice the feelings of either the bride or bridegroom? A new world had been opened to them. They no longer lived for their own pleasure, they had another to look to. It was a hard struggle for the young lady to take leave of her only sister, who had protected and cherished her, and of the house where so many days had passed pleasantly by.

> "She look'd on the vine at her father's door,
> Like one who is leaving his native shore —
> She hung on the myrtle once call'd her own.
> * * * * * *
> She wept — yet laid her hand awhile
> In *his*, that waited her dawning smile;
> She lifted her graceful head at last —
> The choking swell of her heart was past."

What need of farther description? She was happy, and likely to be happy, but naturally loath to throw off the kind feelings which had chained her to the home where all she loved was. That anchor was now raised. A home of her own would invite her; the domestic ties of her wedded life

would endear her humble home, wherever it might happen to be.

They started early in the day, to allow them time on the road; it was not oppressively hot, and the ride was agreeable. They cantered across the plains, and at last struck into the road. When about five miles from town, they came up with two men walking along. It may not be uninteresting to know that these men were the two persons we took a hasty leave of in the public-house, when Willis walked away; and who, our readers may remember, were wandering about in quest of bullocks, to start a timber-dray. The big man, whose eye was never at ease, detected the party many miles off, and informed his more stupid companion and co-partner in the timber speculation, that "he seed a mob o' men a-comin, and it was a mercy they had nothin that was not their own, or they would have had to go and look for someweres to plant themselves." By and by, he could discover them plainly, and he pronounced them as "a set of snobby swells from the cove's old station. By — ! there is a lady. Oh! I'm a-blessed, but the precious cove's been a-marrying the gal! — whew!" They soon overtook this worthy couple, and the tall man gave them a most ferocious scowl as they passed. Had they spoken, he was determined to insult them; but they rode onwards without taking any notice.

"I think that fellow looked at us in a most impertinent manner," remarked the clergyman.

"I know the scamp," said Arabin. "When I was put in charge of Willis's station, I found that fellow comfortably settled down as master of the station. He had all the men in a state of mutiny, and I was compelled to discharge him, very much against my inclination."

"There they go, Jim!" said the bullock-driver, "and may they drown themselves in the river before they get home! I hate that cove; he deserves to have his hide well tanned. I wish old Willis would come back; he *was* a brick, that feller, with all his temper. You see, when the fit of passion had blown over, he would let you take your own way. But this other cove is always civil; and he said to me in the perlitest way possible, says he, 'You may go, and here is your wages.' Who would stand that from a stupid man who would not know a fat bullock from a two-year old steer? I say, Jim, ain't he an hugly one? — he's no treat, is he?"

"Don't know — can't say," said Jim. "When shall we have a ball of rum?"

"You are always a-thinking about rum," replied the other, testily.

"And what is there else to think about?" inquired the other, simply.

"Why, ain't there bullocks, man?" said the more knowing one; "and ain't there sheep?"

"That there is," replied the other.

“And ain't there baccy?”

“Ay.”

“And grog?”

“Faith, ay.”

“I wish we could find a lot of bullocks without any brand upon 'em, or a brand as could be done up; it's a sin as two old-stagers can't find no bullocks.”

“We must be quiet, or we may have a chain-gang again for a treat,” replied the other.

“Ah, never mind; the best are subject to misfortunes. I have a mind, as the cove's out, to go back to the old place and bring two bullocks away at night. I know two as would follow me like dogs.”

The two came to a halt and held a council of war on this point. At length they agreed to proceed towards the old station, and pick up any stray cattle they might see.

CHAPTER XVII. DESCRIPTIVE AND GENERAL.

WILLIS seemed perfectly recovered. He took possession of his station, paid off the fine which had been levied upon him, and prepared to leave the Colony. Although he appeared well in the eyes of the world, he was not even convalescent. His black servant could have told strange tales regarding him; for, with a cunning peculiar to those in his state, he would only keep this person in the house, who was of so taciturn a disposition, that a bench of judges or a bar of counsellors would have been fairly at a loss, and unable to extract a single sentence from him. He had been a long time in his service, and looked upon his eccentricities as matters of course. With the world Willis mixed little, and exercised due precaution when compelled to go out. Could he have made up his mind to live on low diet, and abstain altogether from ardent spirits, we have every reason to believe that he would have recovered. Then what was there for a young man like him to do all alone in the country? — it might be agreeable to those who had their families with them, but what was he to do? There is something worth noticing in this. Every emigrant who can land in Australia with £500, and who is contented to lead the life of a farmer of stock, ought to bring a wife with him. He is safe in ordinary times, and so long as sheep are low, in coming out with that sum clear: when sheep are high, more would be required. The only thing he has to dread is disease amongst the flocks; and with proper care this, too, might be avoided.

To live in town until a vessel was ready to sail, Willis considered would be worse, because he knew he should very soon fall into his old habits; thus he continued upon his station.

Dr. Arabin continued in the town. His practice was now extensive, and although not remunerative, was yet sufficient for his wants. The station was more profitable than he had expected; and indeed it appeared evident that Captain Thomson had thrown it away, in his anxiety to go home and settle up the other person's business. He had the stock some time, and found when he sent his wool to market that it fetched, as Captain Thomson had said, the highest price. He saw that in an ordinary year he could pay his men and have at least a couple of hundred pounds to himself from the wool, with the capital doubling every two years, and he was for the first time cheered by the prospect of plenty and to spare.

The long struggle had ended; he no longer wished to leave the country and wander about the world. The comfortable had charms for him, as well as the beautiful and the sentimental. For weal or woe he had cast his lot among the sheep-farmers and merchants of Australia, and he must be

contented to remain. He had been well repaid for this; for he had an amiable and accomplished woman, who was not however above work when necessity demanded exertion. He had a comfortable home — he had all his real wants satisfied, and if at times he sighed after adventure, or after literary and civilised Europe, that wish never formed itself into language, but died away unuttered and almost unnoticed. He had the comforts and even the luxuries of life; he could procure the latest works without much trouble, Colonial and Home newspapers, and, in a word, everything that a country gentleman in England could have got. Then the climate was the finest perhaps in the world. In the summer months the heat is oppressive at certain seasons, and when the wind blows from the north. These hot winds seldom continue beyond a week, very often not longer than two or three days; for nine months in the year the weather cannot be equalled. Occasionally a week of rain breaks it up in winter, but for months upon a stretch the days will be beyond measure beautiful.

And his lady, our reader's old acquaintance, and we hope favourite, Martha Waller, was happier than the majority of her sex: she respected her husband, and she also respected herself; she was comfortable in circumstances, and near her sister; she had all her old favourite books to read, and a little flower-garden to cultivate. At times a sensation of dread would pervade her delicate frame, as she thought of Willis and remembered that he was still near her. He was often present in her mind, always as a dark phantom, such a figure as Salvator Rosa would have delighted to paint. It was a singular trait in his character, that he obstinately remained in the Colony. There was no question but that he was the person he had described himself to Martha on the morning of her marriage. He appeared at one time eager to be off, but, with an inconsistency inseparable from a lunatic, he changed his mind and quarrelled suddenly with the person who was in treaty with him for his station. He did not attempt to sell it after this; very few knew what he was about, and for some days he would be invisible even to his own shepherds. The only person who seemed in his confidence was the Asiatic servant. Dr. Arabin was peremptorily forbidden, and he had experienced too good a sample of his hospitality ever to press his services upon him. Mr. Butler was also disliked by him. Thus his two nearest neighbours were on bad terms with him, and the others did not care anything about the matter.

It is an excellent thing for young men to experience misfortunes in early life. The man who has been so tried acquires both caution and experience. It is bad for those who have to push forward in life, to have been reared in the lap of luxury; they seldom make good adventurers in new Colonies.

They fear nothing, and regard nothing: so long as they have money in their hands to spend, they will spend it; and when it is gone, they are left to have recourse to mean expedients. Willis was reared in affluence, and had mixed with the nobles of England: a family quarrel was the reason of his forced exile, and his own unfortunate temper, which preyed upon itself and scorched up the purer affections. It is more than likely, it was a family complaint, that he had an hereditary taint. The melancholy which preyed upon his mind obliged him to mix promiscuously with the young settlers of the wildest class, and squander money in extravagant living. The little he had was soon gone, and he was now worse off than ever. He was nobody with the settlers unless he drank and revelled with them, and money must be had. He had recourse to disgraceful expedients — he carried on his illegitimate still for years, and kept his pockets filled with money. It is also strange, that although he was a severe and eccentric master, yet neither of his servants would betray him. Latterly he indulged in dissipation at home, and from time to time his mind was clouded; he could often keep well for weeks, especially when anything excited him, and with kind and proper treatment he might have been reformed, and perhaps the seeds of the disease been eradicated. Providence had willed it otherwise. The shadows of night fell very fast upon the young man. In a few weeks he would have been lost beyond redemption; but even this brief career was not afforded him: the short span of his existence was snapped asunder by an accident which we shall relate in due time.

Let us now, in contradistinction, look for a single instant at the character of Arabin. He was of humble parentage, and born to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. In his youth he had been severely tried, and well was it for him that such had been his fate. He entertained the most scrupulous regard for his honour; he would not have descended to conduct such as Willis had been guilty of, although the latter had received a superior education, and was before him in many respects. Dr. Arabin could not have willingly hurt the feelings of any man, or wronged any person of a farthing. He would not have mixed with the class we have described; he would not have been seen in the company of any one who belonged to it. The deep vein of sentiment which mingled with his thoughts and actions was a beautiful trait in his character: it might lead him to commit many eccentric acts at which the worldly-wise would sneer, but it was also a certain guarantee for the probity and honesty of his actions. He succeeded well in life, but not one whit better than his perseverance and probity deserved; and we affirm, without fear of contradiction, that all who act like him, either in the Colonies or in Europe, must sooner or later be successful.

CHAPTER XVIII. A CATASTROPHE.

NEWS had spread that Willis had received an enormous sum of money, and many even thought he had it upon his station. His strange conduct was very much calculated to give some colour to these reports. At one time he used always to be wandering about; but now he never left home, and would not see any person at his house. The majority of the neighbours believed that Willis had treasure concealed in the dwelling, and this impression proved very unfortunate for him, as the sequel will demonstrate.

The tall bullock-driver and his partner had got bullocks and started a team, but the speculation turned out unfortunate. They were wandering about the country like two spirits of evil, open to any adventure, ready to perpetrate any crime. The bullock-driver was well acquainted with Willis's house, and when he heard the rumours of the concealed treasure, the idea started into his mind at once to plunder the hut during the time its inmates were asleep. It is true that with the bullock-driver Willis had formerly been a favourite; but since then he had refused him a favour, and he now threatened him with retaliation. True, when the bullock-driver was in his employment he would not inform on him; he was too confirmed a scoundrel to think of informing, and he was paid for his secrecy; but now he was at his wit's end, and his temper had been ruffled by some words that Willis had said to him in one of the violent fits to which that gentleman was so prone. He would not hurt him more than the babe unborn; he would steal in gently and go to the box where he knew the money was deposited, and steal off with it, and what worse off would he be? he would have sheep and cattle in abundance afterwards, and the money only would be gone.

The bullock-driver had long entertained this project, and had been prevented from putting it in execution by various obstacles. At length all was prepared, and the eventful die was to be cast.

At the last moment his courage failed him, and he was compelled to defer it for that night. Willis was known to be a desperate man, and hardy as the ruffian was, he shrank from coming into single combat or the chance of it with him. In this emergency he called in another ruffian to his aid, who, attracted by the rich booty, agreed to join him in the attempt.

It was on a dull wet night that these worthies crossed the plains intent upon carrying out their criminal scheme. The rain fell almost incessantly; the plain in many parts was flooded, and the road was heavy, and in some places almost impassable. The two, for the little man had lost courage and

remained in town, pushed forward in dogged silence, looking neither to one side nor the other. The dull day had a perceptible effect even upon their spirits, and a strange feeling stole over each of them. Darkness began to fall. The Bush looked solitary, wild, dreary, melancholy, in the almost sepulchral twilight; the sun went down, and the dim glare was superseded by the thick shadows of darkness. They were now within about four miles of the settler's huts, but it required the utmost exertion on the part of the bullock-driver to find them, notwithstanding his knowledge of localities. They were three hours in searching for them, and only came upon the paddock fence by chance, after all.

The bullock-driver now knew his way, and, followed by his companion, crouched down and crept along towards the main hut. Not a creature moved about the place. They came in front of the hut; the blind was drawn, and although a light burned in the room, it was impossible to perceive objects within it. The stillness of night was over everything within, as well as over outward objects.

The worthy pair made a precipitate retreat, and took shelter in an empty hut at some distance, waiting, as the Scripture has very beautifully described it, "like a thief in the night," to steal unawares upon the devoted place. The rain pelted incessantly throughout the evening; it was such just a night as those who possess a comfortable home would enjoy it, and those who required it, would long the more eagerly to possess it.

Within lay Willis stretched upon the bed; he was no better — his malady was gaining ground. His life was but a continual state of misery. The partial insanity under which he was labouring was tenfold worse than the total wreck of the mental faculties. Then sense is gone, but in his state sensitiveness remained to goad him with a whip of scorpions. Truly it is a dreadful punishment which the drunkard often suffers. We have seen several dying from the effects of intoxication, and we can only compare their state of mind to those who are shut out from hope or pardon. Shall we draw this picture of human misery in more indelible characters? It is almost needless. We rnight deepen the sympathy of our readers by the aid of groans and cries, but would it be in good taste? No! The mind would reel; we should be unequal to the task.

Towards midnight the two ruffians advanced towards the building, prepared to carry out their scheme. As had been anticipated by the leader, the window was unfastened, and he endeavoured to raise it without noise. This was rather difficult, because it was but of limited proportions, and because it was stiff, having extended in the frame. At length it was accomplished, and the window being raised, the bullock driver entered cautiously into the parlour. The noise disturbed Willis, who was not

asleep, and he struck a light. and rushed out without a moment's delay. The only weapon he had in his hand, either of offence or defence, was a leanguil or waddie, a deadly kind of weapon used by the blacks. He saw and recognised the bullock-driver on the instant, and aimed a blow at his head, which would have settled his accounts for ever, had he not evaded it by springing to one side: before he could steady himself, the bullock-driver drew a pistol with a bayonet attached from his pocket; the bayonet sprang open by a touch of the finger, and in a moment it was buried in the heart of the unfortunate settler.

He did not die unrevenged: for the black servant so often mentioned had been sleeping in the back room, and, for the mutual safety of himself and his master, he had stolen his gun, which was loaded. Hearing the noise, he had unlocked the door, and seeing the danger, he took aim at the bullock-driver's head and fired. At first the ruffian did not fall; and the black man was looking about for some other weapon. The fellow then moved slowly back, and fell with a shock on the floor. His companion did not wait to see the result, but fled as if the avenger of blood was behind him.

This was the end of an unfortunate man, who had every advantage in respect to birth and education. Instead of having his remains interred in some noble vault, with a magnificent mausoleum in some public place to his memory, he rests in the wilderness. He died unhonoured, and, unless by one family, unlamented.

We cannot end this chapter without pointing a moral to young men who intend expatriating themselves to the Colonies or British Possessions abroad. The vast Colonies of Britain present an exhaustless field for capital and skill. It is towards them that Britain must took for future support. They are her offspring, and they will protect her, and extend her commerce, and literally renew her youth. The super abundant population of Britain cannot remain at home starving — *they must go to the Colonies:* ultimately, therefore, these new countries will in almost everything resemble the provincial parts of the United Kingdom.

The Australian Colonies present an almost unlimited field for Iabourers, or young men of education, with some capital, who are willing to work at first. At times there may be a superabundance of labour, but the resources of these new Colonies soon absorb it. Government, therefore, should lose no time in making arrangements to colonise upon a general *system*. Misery stares them in the face; thousands are starving in the streets; confidence is totally lost. Colonisation only can save the country — they must go out.

Now the young adventurer may draw a moral from these pages.

A Colonist must land with a determination to pursue an even, steady course; he must resolve that no temptation shall ever wean him from habits of industry. His aim must be to get a fair start. For two or three years he may have to toil hard, and fare indifferently; but if at the end of that time he can get a fair start, he may think himself fortunate. The life which Colonists in the old-established districts lead resembles that of farmers in Britain. But perhaps the emigrant may not find it convenient to settle in the established districts; if his means are limited, he would be nobody among the old rich Colonists. The new districts often present a better field; he may settle there, and grow up to wealth in a ratio with the advance of the country. Then in time the district becomes thickly populated, and, like his neighbours, he will become wealthy and independent.

He may then enjoy all the comforts, and many of the luxuries of life, including even good and reputable society. Thus, in the lapse of years, the settlers are independent, the country is full, and new districts or Colonies have to be opened up — Colonisation thus extends itself in every direction.

The evil is here: — Many young men are sent out totally inexperienced, who have a small sum to invest, and yet do not know how to invest it properly. They waste their time in looking about and sojourning in the towns. They must be looked upon as great men just at once; they .spend their money in the towns, and do nothing, or embark in some foolish undertaking. They acquire habits of intoxication, and too frequently sink to the level of the dregs of even Colonial society. Now how easily might they procure information! Let them ride into the country, and mix with the practical and working Colonists. There is not a remote chance of their being misled by them. It is true, one might have sheep, cattle, or land to sell; but it would be impossible for all to be so situated, and the inquirer would only need to receive cautiously statements from parties who seem to be interested, especially who are sellers of any kind of Colonial property.

CHAPTER XIX. A FAMILY PARTY. — AN ECLAIRCISSEMENT.

IT was about six weeks after the sad catastrophe detailed in the last chapter, that Arabin sat down to dinner with his wife, her sister, and Mr. Butler. Ever since the melancholy event, he had been labouring under severe indisposition; for some time indeed he was in danger, but "there were more days for him,"[5] and he was now once more restored to health. His wife had watched over him in his illness with tenderness and affection. She had her own little troubles too, for she could not forget that Willis had been a devoted admirer, and although unfortunate, he was a talented gentleman. His very misfortunes and his violent end excited her pity. We cannot attempt to deny that Martha Waller did entertain some little tender regard for the deceased. Before the mists of insanity began to cloud his intellect, he possessed good, or rather fascinating manners. She did not love him then; she did not perhaps know what the term expressed; but she was partial to him. She sincerely wished his success; she feared his dark, untameable spirit. Had his disposition been kind and gentle, like that of Arabin, she very likely would have loved him.

A beautiful Scotch saying.

Man in his natural state, when uninfluenced by religion, is a singular and an incongruous compound of good and evil; he will change his temper as often as the chameleon its colour. At one moment his heart seems to overflow with meekness and generosity, and love towards all created beings. He treads the wilderness, and feels his heart bound in unison with the grand and beautiful in nature. He gazes upon the summer sunset, and admires the gorgeous blazonry of the ever-changing sky, until he is in reality a poet, an enthusiast. He turns towards the perpetual sea, and finds its holy beauty bring balm to the soul. Then, in a few hours, or weeks, or days, we find the same person pursuing a course of the most debasing intoxication, or acting a mean and shuffling part. We once knew a notorious thief and drunkard, who was a writer of poetry of a high quality: in his writings he breathed the loftiest sentiments; in private life he was a mean swindler, and a bloated debauchee. Lord Byron, too, was a melancholy instance: he possessed the finest feelings of our nature, with a brilliant genius, a fertile imagination, and a depth of feeling almost beyond humanity; and yet he possessed the most debasing in common with the most exalting virtues. Woman is very different, and singular in

her feelings. She will love strongly, and conceal it from every eye; yea, even from the person who inspired the passion. Many never allow that they love; the secret is buried in their bosoms for ever. How many have gone away sorrowing from the presence of those they loved, who, had they dreamed that it was reciprocated, would never have departed! Woman, in addition to her tenderness of disposition, has that equanimity of character, the want of which is so remarkable in man. There are among the sex monsters who, naturally vain and ignorant, cannot resist the insatiable desire for admiration and for flattery, and who would wish to receive this impure and poisonous incense from the whole world. Such women are a libel upon their sex: possessing the outward form of woman, they lack every noble feeling which would gain them respect or esteem.

To return to our reeord. Mr. Butler had had a decided antipathy to Willis; he could never see anything in his melancholy, misanthropic character to approve. This was the first time they had assembled since his sad end, and the conversation naturally turned to that event, and he could not agree with Dr. Arabin in the discussion which ensued. We may just mention, that there was a mental superiority in the character of the latter, which Mr. Butler did not like to allow, although he was inwardly sensible of it; and the fact was rather galling. He despised this superiority in the person before him, but he admired it in the abstract. This caused him frequently to be more positive in his opinions than he would otherwise have been; but he really was partial to his new connexion, and very fond of his pretty sister-in-law.

The dinner passed without a single word being uttered by any person at table; the settler inquired of Dr. Arabin if he thought it would be prudent to drink a glass of wine?

"No" replied Arabin; "I am certainly very much better, but I should be mad to drink wine: I have had a narrow escape, and I must take great care of myself."

"You are all well again," replied the settler.

"There is only one thing which forces me to wish to live," said Dr. Arabin: "for *her sake* (pointing to his wife) I rejoice that I am likely to recover."

"Nonsense," replied Mr. Butler: "you are young, and have had too little trouble, and not knowing real difficulties, you brew for yourself artificial annoyances. You should go into the world and mix with society; I do not mean with any or all men, but with a select few. You should learn to make a calculation of the value of sheep-farming, and write a letter to the editor of one of the papers on '*squatting*,' that all important Colonial topic of conversation, and you will become a Colonial character. If you could

descend to truckle to the Executive, you would be a J. P.; but I think that is a questionable honour. I once had a spice of sentiment myself, and would sigh for hours after a fine *belle*; but it has all worn off now."

Arabin smiled faintly, but made no reply. The conversation then turned upon Willis, and every countenance was overcast with gloom. How indebted men are to the circumstances of the moment for happiness! the mere mention of the name of an unfortunate will cloud the faces of a hundred.

"I think, for my part," said the settler, "that he met exactly the fate he deserved. I never could bear him myself, and think those who allowed him to go at large incurred a fearful responsibility. The worst trait in his character, however, was his duplicity and dishonesty."

"Poor Willis!" replied Arabin; "even from the first time I saw him, I was interested; he was an eccentric character, but latterly his vagaries assumed a darker aspect, and it was not difficult to decide what his fate would be. I think, however, he possessed fine abilities awfully misapplied. Under better auspices, he might have been a splendid character. It is melancholy to find a person born to wealth and rank end his days in the Australian Bush without a friend, and by a violent death."

"It is melancholy," said the settler; "but it was the man's own fault. He would come out here without informing his friends, and he would not go back. His obstinacy was the cause of all his misfortunes, and I must say he deserved them."

"I think he deserves your pity," remarked Dr. Arabin. "If he erred, his inward sufferings were a fearful retribution."

"We will not quarrel about it, then," said the settler. "Have you sent in your bill against him?"

"No, I do not intend to do so; he only owes me a trifle — he used to pay me regularly while attending him."

"If he owes you anything, you ought to get it; he has died intestate, and no heir will appear, because the name is assumed. His real name was Lord Mount Albion, and he was heir to the Marquis of C————, who has a fine property in the West of England. I saw the papers, which arrived some time ago, — for it appears they had discovered his retreat, after the death of two elder brothers, — and from the abridged copy of a letter found in his desk, it would appear that he had replied he would return immediately, and I suppose they still expect him."

"I suppose his station and stock will be forthwith sold?" said Dr. Arabin.

"It is advertised. I would not give much for it. The station is not a very fine one, and what stock he had was spoiled and neglected, although originally very good indeed."

They were here interrupted by the servant, who carried a letter which the postman had just left. It was addressed to Dr. Arabin.

"Who can this be from?" inquired he. "Why, as I live, it is from Captain Thomson! Has he had time to be home? — Yes, he has."

He opened the letter, and its contents amused and surprised him. He gave it to Mr. Butler, who read it aloud.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad to say that my health is still good, although nothing but vexation seems to be my lot. I never was so humbugged in all my born days. I hope, though, that my 300 ewes are in good health, for I shall have to fall back upon them at last. I do believe that before I reach the old country, I shall be as poor as a church-mouse; but am very glad that I have the sheep and their increase, and my few cattle, to fall back upon, else I should not have known where to cover myself or what to be at in my old age, for I was never so humbugged in all my born days. — But to begin at the beginning. I went, the very moment I received the money from you, and made arrangements with the great person, the lawful heir of so much money and property, for going to England and securing it as fast as possible. The person who knew the case, and who was acquainted with the property, and where the documents were situated, we were obliged to take with us: for our passage and other expenses I paid about £300. We had a long and a rough voyage, and I landed with my two *protêgès* quite confident of success. We took up our abode at an inn near Blackfriars' Bridge, and after going about for two or three days like noblemen, we thought it but proper that we should see to business. I went with him to an attorney in Red Lion Square, and told him to commence proceedings, and offered to pay him before, if he doubted our inability to take up the case.

"I can't take up the case," replied the gentleman, "unless you show me that you have a case. How do you know that your friend is the heir to this property?"

"His father used to say that he ought to have had a large property," I replied.

"Is that all the grounds you have for an action?" replied the lawyer.

"No; there is a young man who knows the property: I think he states that Lord H———— has unlawful possession of it now."

"Very well," replied the lawyer. "Call with this young man to-morrow."

On the following morning we called, and the attorney examined him at some length. He was clear about the property — that it had been for many years in Chancery, that Lord H———— had got it; but that he had always heard it reported that he was in unlawful possession, and that the real heir was in New South Wales in poor circumstances. After this, his evidence became confused, nor could he trace the property by any link to the person in whose success we were interested. The solicitor inquired, rather sarcastically, if I had any other evidence; but I was at a loss. I had heard many in the Colonies say that he was positively the heir to an enormous property, and that he would be one day the wealthiest commoner in England, but I could not trace the report further. In fact, I had been so positive of the thing, that I had never displayed any great curiosity, for fear that my selfishness would appear. The case seemed already to me most likely to tumble down; however, I put a good face on the matter, and resolved to wait until the solicitor should make the necessary inquiries. We still lived in the hotel like gentlemen, and went about town spending money in very fine style. At last we ventured to return and receive the solicitor's answer. When we entered, he peered at us rather sharply, and said — "I have made every inquiry and find that such a case as you mention never was in Chancery; therefore, you have no *case* that I can discover."

We stood like so many statues; such a disappointment never was before experienced: we paid his costs and departed. I, for one, cried with vexation. To have been made a fool of was too bad; but, in addition, to have been taken away sixteen thousand miles from home and totally ruined, was a horrible misfortune. When too late, I discovered my error. Who then was to blame? Of course I was, for rushing rashly into a thing about which I knew nothing certain, nothing except by hearsay, and these vague reports could not be traced to anything after all. But the disappointment was perhaps not one whit the less severe upon me, that I was the author of it — the very shame of having been so green was enough; and I know the settlers about you will laugh at old Thornson's misfortunes, and ascribe them all to his being so cunning in his own estimation. I must just let them laugh, and you can spread it over the country, that the laugh may have died away before I return to it.

There is no business to be done here; everything appears overstocked — hardly bread-and-cheese to be got with severe bodily and mental

exertion; so I shall just go out again, and gather the wreck of my fortune together, and make a fresh start somewhere, with my few cattle and sheep. I shall be better off now than when I first went upon the fine station I sold you, and which cannot be equalled in Australia. You may always depend upon the wool; it is of beautiful quality. Give my respects to Mr. Butler and his lady, and Miss Waller, (I compliment you on your taste,) and to the wild devil Willis, if he be still alive; and I am, my dear friend,

Your unfortunate acquaintance,

J. VALLENTINE THOMSON,

The Knight of the Rueful Countenance

When the letter was finished, Butler laughed and said it served him well right for his cupidity, and that he was very glad he had been deceived. Arabin, on the other hand, was sorry for his misfortunes, and thought he deserved pity rather than ridicule.

"You do not know his temper," continued Mr. Butler: "he will bring back five hundred pounds with him, as he could not have spent more than four hundred when he found out the falsehood of the case, and he will come back in the intermediate cabin of some trader. When he comes out again, he has about seven hundred sheep with you, and his cattle are on thirds upon another station. With five hundred pounds expended properly — and he will know the value of ready money now — he will sit down comfortable for life in the Bush. So had he been totally ruined, I would have pitied him; but now I shall laugh and roast him about his voyage to England."

"I see," replied Dr. Arabin, "that he will be comfortable after all, if he reserves the sum you state, which I think is the most probable conjecture. Yet he has suffered much inconvenience and loss, and deserves some commiseration."

The conversation here ended, and the ladies were allowed to commence playing.

CHAPTER XX. A BUSH PARTY. — THE OUTLANDISH SETTLER'S TALE.

IN this work it has been our object to give as many striking Colonial scenes as it was possible within the confined limits we have allotted ourselves. Without egotism, we may safely say, that not a single line has been written which will not afford the reader both amusement and instruction. We are afraid that the refined and intellectual reader may observe a dissonance in the variety of scenery introduced, in the abrupt changes of characters and scenery. Should any critic observe this fault, we beg him to reflect upon our materials, and upon our object. Our materials are far from luxuriant, unless of character, which in the Colonies is rich, originaI, glowing. We are liable to be coerced at every turn by our plain matter-of-fact Colonists, who carry dates in their waistcoat pockets. Our object is to instruct as well as to amuse — to bring forward the Colonies and Colonisation, confident that the future greatness of England must be from her children's power and wealth. Our desire has been to show that the interest of England is clearly to foster, protect, and reform her Colonies.

After Dr. Arabin had so far recovered from his illness that he could be moved with safety, he was taken to Mr. Butler's station. He was still weak, but the country air had a wonderful effect upon his constitution. The summer was now almost at an end, and the weather had already broken — the days were cool and agreeable, and Dr. Arabin was pleased with the Bush, for its solitary sublimity was in keeping with his feelings. Sickness has a perceptible effect upon reflective minds, and frequently turns out a blessing instead of a misfortune.

Dr. Arabin had, fortunately, not endured racking, excruciating agony; his strength had been prostrated by a low fever, which would not depart for several weeks, and the mind was a little diseased. At first he was irritable, untameable; but towards the end, he became reconciled to his temporary affliction, and determined to endure it with patience and fortitude. Upon his arrival at Mr. Butler's house, he was more disposed for calm reflection and contemplation than he had ever been before. He loved to wander alone or in the company of his wife in the solitary Bush, in the romantic valley in which the house was situated, or upon the wild plains, and admire the beauties which nature everywhere presented. There is a lovely, melancholy magnificence in the Australian Bush, which requires to be seen to be appreciated. It was now the season to see the country in all its beauty and luxuriance of scenery. In the summer months desiccation had

given it a barren appearance: autumn, however, changes the outward appearance of nature;

> "The sap rushes from its cells,
> And clothes them in fresh robes of green."

In these moments of calm reflection, Dr. Arabin perceived much to censure in his former dissatisfaction. The Bible but promises bread and water, while he had every comfort which he could desire. Then he asked himself why he should long for travel and adventure, and in his melancholy moments for death? He decided that it was nothing more nor less than tempting his Maker with unworthy repinings. A resolution was formed to fulfil his duties as a respectable member of society, and to be thankful to Providence, which had caused his "lines to fall in pleasant places."

In Australia there is a great want of objects calculated to cheer the human soul, with the outward picture of comfort they present. The sociable, comfortable, and jovial farmers of England, which class has been regarded as the happiest on earth, are confined to their own parks and meadows. In Australia no scenes of happy comfort are to be .met with; the wild, lonely grandeur of the untrodden wilderness is, however, some recompense. Dr. Arabin had never had so much time to admire and reflect. He daily discovered new beauties blushing in the face of Nature — new voices speaking home to the heart in the sublimity of the silent forest. There was a harmony even in these wild scenes, the sense of which broke upon the mind by imperceptible degrees. The tender, devoted, undivided attention which he received from his young wife, was also gratifying to him: he formed the centre of her cares and wishes; who could be insensible to these attentions from one so young and so beautiful? Dr. Arabin certainly was not; things were seen by him in another prospect than before. He was now contented with his lot; he might have done better and been more advanced in the world, but he might have been in far worse circumstances.

The weather changed, and one of those floods of rain peculiar to the winter season fell. It was impossible to stir out now; he was unhappy at the loss of his lone walks in the Australian forest. He had the society of his devoted wife to console him, and Mr. Butler and his lady were very kind and attentive to their sickly visitor. He had books too, to wile away a leisure hour, and altogether he did pretty well.

The prospect out-of-doors was now dreary enough. The river, which in

warm weather had been dry in many places, and which could have been crossed by a leap at any place, was swollen into a great stream of water. It thundered along now a foaming torrent, which no power could stem or stay. It was utterly impossible to cross it, and travellers were brought upon its banks.

One day, while Mr. Butler and his lady, with their visitors, were seated at dinner, a queer figure suddenly entered, dressed in a blue flannel shirt, and cord inexpressibles, with an old jacket, and part of a hat, minus the brim. The ladies started, as this charming figure entered, and screamed "Bushrangers!" They were mistaken. He proved to be an outlandish settler from the interior, who had not been to town for ten years before; he had been upon intimate terms with Butler at some period, and therefore made himself perfectly at home. One or two stray travellers also took refuge at his house; they were waiting to cross the river, and it was impossible to refuse them the shelter of the roof. There was now a regular Bush party; and Dr. Arabin, who had never been in contact with so many squatters before, had the opportunity to see and hear without mixing much in the conversation, for he was excused on the plea of ill health. The persons assembled were all settlers or squatters, and excellent specimens of the squatting interest. There was the outlandish settler, a rough, half-civilised (in manner) kind of fellow. There was a more dandified settler, whose station was just across the river; and a stock owner and jobber, who had stations in different parts of the country. The staple of the conversation was about stock. The next topic of importance was Colonial politics. Town and country news formed also part of their discourse, and occasionally they wandered as far as England and Europe. Dr. Arabin was at times very much gratified with the conversation of these children of the woods, which displayed singular practical knowledge and shrewdness, on whatever subject they discoursed. Did time permit, we would give some of the conversations that passed, or at any rate give their ideas upon Colonial affairs. Our space is limited, and we shall conclude the chapter with a story which the outlandish settler told them while sitting by the fire on a rainy evening.

THE BUSHRANGERS.

I was not surprised that you took me for a Bushranger, in my worn clothes. These gentry are becoming scarce. When I first came into these Colonies, we used to fight with them every year; but now the majority of the Colonists are free, and Bushranging will soon be out of date. In Van Diemen's Land it is still carried on to a frightful extent. In my opinion, the Press is to blame for recording the exploits of these Bush gentry; indeed, I am positive that more turn Bushrangers to acquire a little temporary fame,

than from any other motive.

But the Bushrangers of the old days were of a more ferocious character. They had no pity. Woman was not safe; they violated maid and matron before the eyes of their husbands and relatives. They were refined at torture. Many a cruel story I know of them, but I shall relate but one.

I emigrated first to Van Diemen's Land, and had a farm not far from Pitt Water for two years. The country at that time was infested with Bushrangers. My neighbours were generally frightened at them, and I cannot say but that I was a little timid at first; however, like everything else, you get used to it by degrees. I was very partial to one of my neighbours, named Parker. He was a fine, jolly, middle-aged farmer from Lincoln; and his wife was a stout, comely person, an excellent specimen of an English farmer's wife, who had received a good education. They had a pretty little farm, and were well in. I had frequently received little favours from them, and I was always partial to them.

Well, one night, about midnight, four armed Bushrangers broke into their bedroom while they slept; and it may be necessary to say that Mrs. Parker expected to be a mother in a few months. These Bushrangers got a light, dragged the poor fellow out of bed, and tied him hand and foot, telling him if he stirred they would plaster his brains to the wall. The woman was wakened with the noise, and the inhuman brutes abused her before the eyes of the husband. How his feelings must have been agonised at the sight! how he must have suffered at this excruciating torture! The leader of the Bushrangers was one of the most ferocious ruffians in the profession, but none ever displayed such unrelenting cruelty. He had twice escaped from Port Arthur, and was in fact a double-distilled villain. After he had violated the person of the poor woman, whose situation would have called for pity from any one but a demon, he seized a child by the hair, and was just on the point of dashing it against the wall, when the heroic conduct of the woman changed the aspect of affairs. Like all settlers of those days, there were fire-arms in the house; a brace of pistols were in the bed, ready loaded; and if the ruffians had not got in by stealth, they would have met a determined resistance. In the excitement of despair, the woman caught one of the weapons — they were ready, and she took a slow aim at the ruffian, who was unconscious of his danger; he fell, pierced to the brain by the bullet: another weapon remained, and another Bushranger bit the dust. Still her fury was not by any means assuaged. She attacked the remaining two with the courage of a lioness: after a determined resistance, they fled. They had not well left the house, when the noble-spirited woman who had so bravely revenged her own injuries was seized with the pains of premature labour. The husband was

too confused to be of any assistance; she untied the cords with which he was bound, but his legs refused their office. Servant there was none; their sole helper was in Hobart Town with the dray. The poor woman was now in the extreme of misery; but she regarded not — she wished for death, there was nothing to live for that could compensate her for what she had lost. In the morning she was still alive, and the husband was now well enough to get assistance. A surgeon was procured; but the aid he was able to afford could not save the noble-hearted woman. she would none of his aid;he could not

> "———— minister to a mind diseased,
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow."

Her time was come; and when we take every circumstance of the case in prospect, we cannot but think she was better in that place

> "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

The ruffians who had been spectators of the cruel act did not escape. They crossed the country, and plundered one or two unprotected stations. They next approached a small town, where they were not known, and gave out that they were constables from Hobart Town in pursuit of a gang of Bushrangers. The landlord was an experienced Colonist, and knew pretty well "the cut of their jib." He did not betray any distrust at first, until he had armed one or two of the neighbours, whom he walked into the room where they were seated. As they could not give any evidence that they were in the constabulary, he took them prisoners, and sent for the police. They were marched to Hobart Town, and recognised as the remnant of the cruel band who had robbed Parker's station. In a fortnight after, they were executed. I have seen a few Bushrangers in New South Wales, but they were gentlemen compared with these ruffians. I have no doubt but that Bushranging will be altogether discontinued here in future. The free population have gained such an ascendancy, that I can foresee a radical change for the better already; and, what is yet more singular, the descendants of the convicts are commonly virtuous and honest. We hope the guilt of the parents may never be a reproach to the children.

We cannot help here making the remark, that we agree with the settler who recited the foregoing adventure with Bushrangers. We hope in a few years the population of New South Wales will be virtuous and principled. We think we see the change gradually working; we think at the present moment society is in a state of transitionfrom ignorance and crime to

knowledge and virtue.

We observe here also, that we long for an improvement in the better order of Colonial society. Hitherto only a favoured few of our young Colonists have had the advantage of a good education. There were not schools in the country, and it was both expensive and troublesome to send their children to England to be educated. Now over the length and breadth of the inhabited districts we observe temples of instruction rearing their heads. In the metropolis there are several most excellent schools, not to notice the Sydney College, which has improved very much within the last two years. We may therefore look for the fruit in the mental character of the ensuing generation; we may reasonably expect that these schools will send forth some men of genius and mental power, whose fame may mark the country and the age. We are ever prone to charge the Colonists with being a matter-of-fact class, who are only fit to follow sheep and cattle; but we do not know, but that with the advantages of education, men of brilliant abilities and gifted with unconquerable enthusiasm may not start up and shed a lustre over their names and country; we look and long for such men. There is too much of stern reality in the Colonies; they have been regarded hitherto as only a refuge for the destitute; and it has been considered that those only emigrate whose chance of success at home is desperate, who would rather go to the Colonies than to prison. But now, young men of capital and of respectable connexions are desirous of embarking for the Colonies, and we look to a radical change.

The weather broke up, and the settlers could now pursue their journey. The river was still dangerous, but their horses were accustomed to swim, and they took the water famously. It was capital fun to see them cross. One only was a little timid, the others were quite at home in the matter. The horses one after another plunged into the turbid stream, and breasted the waves in gallant style. All crossed over in safety, and forming in regular order on the opposite banks of the stream, gave a loud huzza; they then pursued their way, no doubt very glad to have got across without accident.

Arabin was very happy to see them depart; the bustle and noise consequent on so large a party confined in so small a house had excited him, and he required rest and fine weather to recruit his exhausted frame.

The days were now beautiful, neither too hot nor too cold. It was fortunate for the invalid that the weather broke just then; had it continued much longer wet, his health might have been irreparably injured. The interval of wet weather had sharpened his zest for the pleasures of the country, and he began to ramble the country again. He would rise with the lark, and admire the beauty of the mornings. We think we have remarked

elsewhere that the mornings are very beautiful in Australia. It is healthy to be abroad at this season of the day; there is a freshness visible in nature, which has its effect upon the dullest heart. The sluggard in this climate is not a sensible person. The fine weather revived our hero — he recovered his health rapidly; every day that passed brought him an accession of strength, and saw him in better spirits.

CHAPTER XXI. CONCLUSION.

THE last chapter of the work has now to be written, and it shall be short. Arabin recovered, and was soon able to ride about as well as before; his affairs prospered, and he was as comfortable as he could have expected. He was again residing in town.

About three months after the letter had arrived from Captain Thomson, his servant entered to say that a person waited to speak to him.

"Who may it be, Mary?" he inquired.

"I can't say, sir," replied the girl, attempting to conceal a laugh. "He winked at me sir, and told me to excuse his game eye. I think he must be a sailor."

"Show him in," said Dr. Arabin sharply.

A person dressed in a Jim Crow cap and pea-jacket here rolled into the room. Arabin bowed with forced politeness, his usual practice towards strangers, and said, "What can I do for you, sir?"

"I am troubled with a consumption," said the man.

Arabin stared; the person was the picture of robust health. His round mottled countenance had an expression of roguery, as he added, "It is a consumption of the finances, though."

Dr. Arabin recognised in this sickly patient his former friend Captain Thomson, and he welcomed him back with great pleasure. After the usual compliments had passed, the Captain began to unburthen himself of his many mishaps.

"You see I was an ass to leave this here Colony upon any such scheme as trying to recover the property, without first finding out that it was to be recovered, and I have suffered for it by the loss of a great part of my property. The scamp, too, turned right round upon me, because I would not pay his passage back in the cabin. That's what one gets for being kind and obliging. Nothing like number one after all. But when I saw that I was wrong, I determined to make the most of what I had remaining. So you see it struck me that wool-bags would run high this year, and I invested my money in them. I knew I could not lose, as they are always saleable. I took my passage out in the steerage. When I arrived in Sydney, woolpacks happened to be scarce, and every person asked if any woolpacks had come. Mine was the only lot in the vessel, and all wished to buy. I sold to the best account possible, at 100 per cent premium. I had £500 invested, and just got my £1000 back, which I never expected to see. I don't care a fig now for any mortal man. I have had a voyage for nothing, but that is all over, and I will look before I leap next time."

"I think" said Arabin, "you have managed to get very cleverly out of a scrape."

"Yes, I am no Johnny Raw," replied the other. "There are no paving-stones about my eyes."

"And what are you going to do with the money?" inquired Arabin.

"I hardly yet know; I must do the best I can with it: a thousand pounds will go some way in this Colony even now."

The worthy old fellow remained to dinner, and amused all of them with accounts of his misfortunes and his adventures. He did not like England; his heart had been set upon coming out extensively when the money was recovered, and he could not brook the idea of remaining idle there. He allowed the Colonies were now the only field upon which he should figure, and that the profession at which he would amuse himself would be sheep-farming.

It happened that the station which had belonged to Willis was still in the market; to it the attention of Captain Thomson was directed. He found it might be made to answer his purpose, and he purchased it a very great bargain from the officers of the crown, who have the charge of intestate estates. Thus, after all his wanderings, he found himself once more comfortably settled within a few miles of his former station.

We do not know whether the example set him by Dr. Arabin was contagious, but in a few months afterwards he disappeared rather mysteriously for some weeks. When he returned, he was not single: he had grown tired of celibacy, and the hardships he had experienced in his voyage had imbued him with a desire for comfort. A nice little woman, whom he had wooed and won, graced his fireside. As neighbours, this couple were liked, notwithstanding some of the Captain's eccentric whims. The Butlers, the Arabins, and the Thomsons were upon the best and most intimate terms, and contributed not a little towards the happiness of each other.

And now our history is at an end. We take leave of all our friends who have figured in these pages. To enter into a detail of their domestic felicity would be but to tire our readers. We could not endure to be deemed tedious, and we bring our tale here to a conclusion, without any further apology.

AN ESSAY ON THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA.

SEVERAL causes — the most prominent, the effects of communion with civilised man, which has enervated the constitution of the race; the deplorable custom of murdering the new-born infant, or exciting abortion; the inroads of the white man, and the enforcing of the laws of Great Britain, (although why the blacks of Australia can be subjected to such laws, without their own consent, I cannot dearly perceive) — have tended to thin the various tribes of Australian aborigines; nay, more, to create fears of their speedy extirpation. I would preserve every trace of this peculiar race. In appearance the native Australian stands about five feet and a half; his complexion is not darker than that of the American Indian, although the former has been named the black, and the other the red man. Their complexions are similar. The American Indian is not so very superior in natural parts to the Australian savage as has commonly been supposed; in cunning at least he is equal. The roamer of the forests of the "far west" excels in hunting, fishing, and in predatory warfare; the black aborigine of Australia, so far as he has field for exertion, is both an experienced hunter and fish-catcher, and no mean enemy at the "spear, boomerang, or waddie."

It is a mistake to suppose an Australian black man simple; in every art with which he could possibly have become acquainted he is perfect. To throw the spear, boomerang, or waddie, seems almost "a second nature." Place a gun in the hands of a black, he shames the best shots of sporting nations in Europe. Set him on horseback, he is a splendid rider. The young men of a warlike tribe will follow a hostile tribe for days to cut off some enemy, or do some other daring act. The parties sent out with this object commonly skulk to the river or water-hole, where they conceal their bodies in water, leaving their heads occasionally above, to imbibe the necessary amount of air. The person for whom they have watched at length approaches; he is dealt with in the most summary manner, for a blow of the cranguil or waddie, planted on some part of the head, sends him beyond the reach of foeman's hatred.

When at a tender age, the Australian aborigine is active and stately; there is nothing in his features expressive of sordidness or deceit. The mind appears active, and the spirits buoyant; sport and intrigue are anxiously pursued; but kindness, hospitality, and generosity seem to glisten in the sharp, jovial features. As years pass on, however, the whole character changes: the native becomes withered and disgusting; selfishness and deceit are depicted in the wrinkled, withered features; low-cunning

gleams concealed in the fading, glistening eye; and instead of the bounding footstep, the foot now falls upon the grass with a cat-like, stealthy motion. In fact, as age creeps upon a savage, so he loses the fire of youth, and having no mental treasure to withdraw to for comfort, the natural organs of acquisitiveness and secretiveness become more prominently developed; and instead of becoming a quiet sharper, open thief, or penurious trader, he changes into a cunning savage, an adept at petty theft or sheep-stealing; and such characters are peculiarly dangerous, from the influence age gives them in the tribe to which they belong. Few or none are long livers; at thirty they look old and ugly, while at forty they seem almost supernaturally aged. Many, however, die in youth. Wars are not uncommon between the different tribes; and even the members of a tribe occasionally quarrel and fight, and slay their own friends. Polygamy is allowed: an elder generally happens to possess himself of the finest young women in the tribe for his own bed; the young man (or Coolie) is compelled to content himself with one lubra (or gin) to cook in his miam; and it is no uncommon occurrence for this single woman to be old and ugly. It may hence be easily supposed that infidelity is not uncommon. Intrigues are of every-day occurrence; and when the elder discovers that one of his lubras has been guilty of intriguing with some younger member of the tribe, he punishes her, and not unfrequently both, in the severest manner possible. It has been asserted by some writers who have laid claim to an acquaintance with the customs of the aborigines of the continent of New Holland, that there exists a rite of marriage amongst the various tribes. I have given some little attention to the subject, and have come to the conclusion that no such rite ever did exist. It appears to me that every member of the tribe takes as many females under his protection as he can, from the extent of influence he possesses in the tribe, lay hold of. The younger men intrigue with the females, and thus the intercourse between the sexes is almost promiscuous. The grand error, however, rests here — the system which allows the old to lay violent hands upon the flower of the tribe is iniquitous; we can scarce wonder that the young lubras violate the bed of these withered old chiefs, and that daily feuds ensue in consequence of the jealousy of the old blacks.

The natural colour of the Australian aborigine is copper-colour or tawny-red.The hair is naturally fine, dark, and very long.They are habitually addicted to the use of paints of a dark colour, by which the complexion appears unnaturally swarthy. It is therefore a mistake to term them blacks, and the American natives Red Indians. Their natural complexions are alike. The head of the Australian is not flat; in general it is round and oval, with a rather low forehead, but not by any means

remarkably low or flat, such as the natives of Southern Africa, where I have travelled. From the large acquaintance I have had with the tribes in the districts of Australia Felix, I am inclined to think that the aborigines possess average abilities. Their minds resemble rather a treasure which has been hermetically sealed *ab initio*, than a vacuum where all is void. At painting rude figures, and drawing likenesses, they display exquisite powers of imitation: in examining a picture with a young black, you cannot but be startled at his clever observations; not a trace or an outline escapes him. They display likewise some ability in vocal music, of which I shall speak more fully shortly. Their quickness in detecting game also deserves to be noticed. In following a kangaroo they often creep for a mile; when the eye of the animal is towards them, they remain fixed as so many statues — the trees around are not to all appearance more devoid of volition; by slow progress they come up to the animal, and, secured behind some favourable tree, the hunter takes deadly aim with the kangaroo spear, and lays the monarch of the Australian forest low. I have often hunted with the tribes on the Goulburn, Ex, and Yarra, and been astonished to remark their accurate aim with the boomerang. This singular weapon is thrown one way and returns straight upon the object in view when the aim was taken. With the light spear they are excellent marksmen. It is thrown by a long handle into which the spear is fixed, and again ejected by a sudden motion of the hand. The handle is commonly termed a namera. With this weapon they will strike a man at a hundred yards to a certainty; but although he may be killed outright, the chance is he only receives a wound in the side or back, for the blacks commonly throw at a person when his back is turned; and indeed it must be allowed they are rather too prone to this cowardly game. I have long wished to reconcile an apparent contradiction in their characters. They are in general bold and warlike, yet when a tribe is attacked by a few men the whole will generally scamper off; if they can get an advantage, they will fire from behind any object in the way, and even maintain their situation in a very gallant manner. I can only reconcile these discrepancies in this way, — the blacks of Australia are naturally cowards, but on the contrary are ferocious and far from devoid of brute courage. It is the want of a perception of general discipline which renders them cowards. Each man looks rather upon the personal danger he incurs than upon the aggregate strength of the tribe. He reflects upon his own chance of being shot, and says, "This must not be; I am not going to be shot for the good of the tribe;" and thus he is prone to take to his heels at a sharp contest when not protected by any cover. Did the poor savage reflect upon the numerical strength of the tribe as opposed to the assailing foe, and upon the

necessity of each fighting for the safety of the tribe, the general result of engagements with whites would be very different.

I have now to give my opinion with regard to the health of the Australian aboriginal tribes. Few of the blacks I have seen are healthy, and the idea which civilised men generally entertain that all savages are hardy and healthy is a mistake. The constitution of the black man is peculiarly fragile; he shoots up to manhood like a reed, his form is very light and elastic, but although he could run for some time with remarkable velocity, yet he is soon tired out, and compelled to halt and draw his breath. While yet in the very bloom of youth, his form changes; he becomes stiff, withered, and frightfully ugly. The constitution, therefore, of the aborigine appears peculiarly delicate; and few either young or old enjoy good health. Cutaneous disease prevails to a great extent; and among many tribes, not a single member is free from it. Venereal is likewise common, and as they are unable to treat it by art, or administer medical relief, it not unfrequently undermines the constitution, engenders loathsome disease, or kills the patient outright. Low fever is often to be met with, especially in the hot weather; this the natives cannot understand. They remove the patient to a distance from the camp, where no aid is afforded him, except a drink of cold water; there he is in a blazing sun and scorching hot wind, in the most excruciating agony: few recover it. Inflammatory complaints are far from uncommon; and I have an idea that pulmonary consumption is not altogether unknown, although I could never clearly ascertain the fact. Rheumatism and rheumatic fever are prevalent; few aborigines are without this complaint, and many suffer extreme pain. The only remedy they know of or care to use is, stripping bark from the trees, and knotting it tight over the part affected; when they can procure cord, or any other kind of bandage, they use it instead.

I come now to the mental capacity of the aborigines, and may state that in general it is far superior to preconceived opinion. The race are habitually indolent; there is little or nothing to excite them in their general routine of living; to hunt a few hours a day for food, then to lie stretched on the ground by their miams (*vulgo* myamy) for days and nights with sullen indifference, is not a life calculated to excite their minds to any kind of mental exertion. The mind of a savage is the picture of the life he leads; it is one complete vacuum. He appears to have nothing to do, nothing to think about, nothing to care about. His wants are few, unless where converse with civilised men has created a craving for the artificial luxuries of civilisation, such as tea, tobacco, or spirits; then the whole nature of the savage changes, and he will take any trouble, and descend to the meanest artifices, to gratify the insatiable cravings of sense. Before, however, his

wants are easily supplied, although at times a tribe will be in great destitution when food is scarce. There are no objects to excite their mental capacities, nothing to draw forth exertion; they know no better than to follow their erratic mode of life, wandering from one part of a district to another in quest of game or food, and they are set down as possessed of no mind superior to the brutes which perish; they have been prejudiced, and I shall speak of this again when I come to the Protectorate system. To display their habits as fully as lies in my power, I shall here give the description of an Indian camp.

It is situated in the heart of some vast range of forest. The miams of the blacks stretch over a space of ten or twenty acres, or perhaps twice as many. A miam (or myamy) is a very primitive structure. Two saplings are placed upright, having forked ends; another is placed at right angles; a triangular space thus marked out, sticks are fastened into the forks of the uprights, and against this barrier, sticks, bark, and leaves of trees are placed; and this forms a miam, which affords no despicable shelter when, as is generally the case, the shelter is from the weather. However, we suppose it is a warm day, and the aborigines all out of their miams, sitting or sleeping under the shelter of the large Eucalyptus, in parties of from five to twenty. Before each miam is the spear of the owner planted upright in the ground, a warning to all intruders. Small parties occasionally leave the camp in quest of food, while a few may be seen now and again returning from the chase. You pass group after group, and find them sunk in the very depth of *ennui* and indolence. Most of them lie on the ground enveloped in blankets or opossum rugs; all you observe is the shape, for every inch of the body is invisible to the eye. Sometimes one fellow looks up, gives a broad stare, and then sinks once more into his former quiescent state. Beside them lie their weapons and bags containing their meagre supply of provisions, with a few half starved dogs keeping watch over this valuable property. Around some fires may be seen those who are awake, sitting round a fire in a complete circle, and devouring what food they happen to possess with great voracity.

Here and there a man may be observed forming rude implements of war, or turning opossum skins to form them into rugs; this is the only useful occupation which you can notice. The day wears away, and towards evening the men begin to rise, and some may be seen painting their faces and persons for the corroborie. The various hunting and shooting parties now begin to return; the men are loaded with kangaroo and opossum, and having lighted their fires, they cook their meal and devour it in haste. Large fires are lighted, and at dusk the corroborie dance commences.

A man commonly sits on a rug with two hard sticks, and a number of

women sit round him with their opossum rugs tied into bundles. The man beats with the sticks, and the women keep time with the palm of the hand upon the rugs. To this rude music several chaunt some of their low monotonous songs, which are but an endless repetition of the same sounds, and at the same time the corroborie dance is progressing. The blacks commonly dance in a line; they strike their toes and heels alternately on the ground, bending their bodies, and turning out the knees: by these short leaps, they go a considerable distance, keeping correct time to the music. Some of them dance throwing the arms about, and making many kinds of wild gesticulations; there is commonly one who acts the clown, and excites considerable mirth by his frolics. The whole has an harmonious and pleasing effect — the beat of the song, the sticks, rugs, and dance, all keeping time.

This is the life of an Indian rover of the Australian wilderness; and whatever their mental powers naturally are, they have little field for their development. I cannot, however, say that their rude manner of life would lead any to suppose them capable of thinking.

Their means of living is however very precarious; they have to travel over great tracts of country when game is not to be found; what use therefore for them to erect better huts, when they seldom continue longer than three or four days in a place? From these erratic habits nothing can wean them.

Lady Darling educated a number of females in a school near Sydney; but ultimately they all returned, if not to a barbarous life, at least to erratic habits, for they wander to and fro about the country from station to station, and all the kindness of the whites is unable to keep them in any fixed situation for any length of time. I believe, however, that these girls displayed considerable ability and aptitude for acquiring education; and upon a close inspection of the heads of the aborigines, we find them commonly fine, with deep elevated eyebrows. I hold that it is not proved that the blacks are inferior in mental capacity, and am prepared to bring forward several instances to prove how easily they might be reclaimed.

About the year 1836, upon the recommendation of Captain Maconachie, superintendent of Norfolk Island, and Captain Longsdale, police magistrate, Melbourne, a native police force was established, and the command entrusted to M. de Villiers. It was, however, unsuccessful; it was again attempted in 1841, and the command of the corps given to M. Dana. Few expected it would succeed, but it did succeed. The troop now numbers twenty fine young aborigines: they possess the requisite intelligence for soldiers; education has improved their minds, and discipline has informed them of their united strength, and inspired them

with courage. These soldiers are faithful, although in several instances, when sent against some tribe to seize a malefactor, one of the troop has betrayed the secret, and allowed the aboriginal offender against the laws to escape.

In many engagements with the native tribes these men have displayed the most indomitable courage. There cannot be a doubt but they have been reclaimed within the pale of civilisation; and no soldiers have ever given more convincing proofs of sagacity.

The Buntingdale station, Geelong, next deserves to be noticed, where the Rev. Francis Tuckfield has reclaimed fifty-two persons. This gentleman confined his labours to one tribe, and having placed it upon an isolated situation upon this reserved station, and kept every other tribe at a respectful distance, by the assistance of the police, he has succeeded in exterminating the darkening passions of the savage from their breasts, and brought each of the number to a clear understanding of his state, and to a firm belief in Divine truth. Mr. Tuckfield has taught them to read the Scriptures, to attend upon the ordinances of religion, and to seek for the salvation of their souls, and all this within the short space of twelve months. He finds them employment upon the station in cultivating the soil, while some of them have learned to make clothes and shoes. Mr. Tuckfield has a decided advantage over many, inasmuch as he possesses an intimate acquaintance with their language, habits, and customs. The success of his undertaking at the Buntingdale station demonstrates that the aborigine naturally possesses some degree of intellectual power.

I would not wish, however, to confound the present state of the savage of the Australian Continent with what it might be. I am sorry to say, that many tribes at the present moment are not only barbarous in their habits, but also in mind unrelenting, obstinate in cruelty, and ferocious: in fact, the character of the race is anomalous. Some white men have been tortured and murdered by them, while others have been saved from death through their interference. Nay, one black man has been faithful to one white and treacherous to another, as in the case of the man Bob, executed at Port Phillip in 1842 for murder. This man had been many years with Mr. Robertson, Chief Protector of Aborigines, to whom he was sincerely attached. He left Mr. Robertson, and performed two overland journeys with Mr. Langhorn, and saved his life in a severe conflict he had on the Murray with a tribe of wild natives. He left his employment, and was soon after guilty of the most treacherous and barbarous murder upon record.

The tribes in the Sydney and Port Phillip Districts are now pretty well accustomed to the whites, and seldom attack them: formerly, however, the

settlers in the latter district were frequently cut off by the aborigines; in fact, at one period the Port Phillip tribe attempted to surprise the town, and, but for the merest accident in the world, would have cut off every one of the original settlers. Many settlers in the interior were surprised and cut off by the tribes; and, to this day, upon the banks of the Murray, no settler can regard his person or property altogether secure from the wandering aborigines. In the neighbourhood of Adelaide, the natives appear to give no trouble; but to the north of Sydney, on the Clarence River, and at Moreton Bay, neither good treatment nor coercion can tame them. All the way north, from such accounts as I have been able to find (for I have never travelled that country), the aborigines are a fierce, untameable race, debased by the grossest superstitions and vices, and addicted to cannibalism. They are not, however, of the same character at Port Essington; for several gentlemen who have explored that country have informed me that the natives are, in some situations, rather ignorant than sanguinary in character. Where the character changes, it would be almost impossible to say, as many crews of vessels wrecked in Torres' Straits on landing have been massacred by the natives. In fact, it is dangerous to approach this shore, or any island in the South Seas, unless the crew be fully armed, as many whalers have been cut off by these barbarian islanders.

The aborigines of Australia wander about; but each tribe possesses a certain acknowledged territory, and any inroad from another tribe is considered a gross insult, and treated accordingly. Properly speaking, there is no supreme authority in a tribe, although some person of repute as a warrior, statesman, and hunter, is looked upon as the leader, and very frequently assumes the empty title of king, or chief, of a tribe. There is a great chief on the Goulburn, in Australia Felix, named Billy Hamilton: he, however, has to hunt, fish, and provide for his belly the same as the meanest man in the tribe; and the influence he possesses is very limited indeed, and altogether of a *political* character (if I may use the word). The tribe is constantly moving about in quest of game. The men go hunting in parties of ten or twelve at a time, perhaps singly or in pairs. At certain seasons, they find fish and game in abundance, and live right royally, in one round of feasting and corrobories; but at other seasons they are more than half-starved. The kangaroo is the particular animal they generally hunt. They observe him grazing in the Bush, and proach him with extreme caution. The weapon used for this purpose is the kangaroo spear — a long spear pointed with glass; this they hurl with unerring aim when they approach within a respectable distance. Of opossums they are also particularly fond: they frequently find out the concealment of this animal

by knocking on the trees; and where they find a hollow sound, they cut the tree and lay hold of the opossum. Turkeys, pigeons, parrots, &c., are occasionally killed by the boomerang, which they throw very well. The fish are speared for: they seem to entertain no idea of taking anything by line and hook. Some kind of snakes they regard as good food and eat eagerly, as also magpies, crows, hawks, &c. When very hungry, they pull the bark from the trees, and pick out the vermin, which they devour with singular and disgusting eagerness. They look for a particular kind of grass and several vegetable roots, which they eat. When very hungry, they boil the leaves of trees and fill their bellies.

Although not generally, so far as I have observed, prone to sheep-stealing or robbery, yet, when very hungry, any tribe in the country will resort to it, the general method being, upon such occasions, to attack an out-station, or a single flock under the charge of one individual. Sometimes the blacks take the whole flock; but upon other occasions they only take a few of the best, and tell the shepherd to keep the others until they return for them. They break the legs of the sheep when interrupted, and very commonly escape, although a good number may chance to fall by the rifle of some furious settler. Upon other occasions the blacks show fight, and the settlers either recover their flocks with loss, or are worsted. It commonly happens that the blacks are most in want of food in wet weather; the country is then flooded so that horses cannot be brought into play against them. The long, dark nights, and at times the hazy atmosphere, are also advantages of which they take good care to avail themselves — and they have a considerable advantage over the settler, and generally escape with a great booty. In many districts, however, the aborigines keep up a constant warfare with the settlers, attacking their huts and attempting to steal the flour or sheep without any cloak or attempt at concealment. When an attack is contemplated, the natives are abroad by break of day and surround the hut. When the first straggler opens the door and walks abroad, he is met by half-a-dozen spears, and a rush is made on the hut. If the person has presence of mind enough to shut the door, the chances are that the aborigines are repulsed. Should he fall, or forget to shut the door, the blacks rush into the hut and massacre the inhabitants. When laying siege to a settler's hut, they are brave; if once fairly repulsed, they retreat without endeavouring to take the place. In some districts they have the in human practice of setting the hut on fire, and thus compelling the family to come forth, when they spear them without mercy.

The Australian savages entertain but very dark and confused ideas of another world. They are afraid of the "dibble dibble," or Spirit of Evil, and

propitiate him by offerings; but of a Supreme Being of Good they entertain no belief. They however hold that the blacks, when they die, go to Van Diemen's Land, or some other island, and return as white men and women. In this manner do they account for the arrival of the whites among them.

Few, indeed, have ever been brought to the truth; yet a very few have, by the exertions of some missionaries, been brought within the pale of Christianity, and anxious to procure their salvation. Others, however, after being instructed by godly men, have fallen away, and casting in their lot with some wild tribe, have turned tenfold more dangerous to the whites from their mental superiority; and all they remember of the Holy Scriptures they turn into a jest. I might enlarge on this subject, but to no purpose, as I have already said everything which those who know the blacks intimately could say with regard to their religious feelings.

I now arrive at a very important question — not merely important as far as regards the blacks personally, but important as regards civilisation and colonisation. This question is, — Has the Government of England a right to take possession of the country, and, without any consent from the original proprietors, sell the land, and make them amenable to the laws of Britain, of which they know nothing, and very likely could not be brought to believe that such a country was, or ever existed? Has it a right, in short, to declare them — ignorant and superstitious as they must necessarily be, from their savage mode of life — to be subjects of Britain, and compel them to become so nolens votens? Has it authority to do this?

I leave this question unanswered. But whether England did or did not possess the power to act in this manner is little to the purpose: the aborigines have had their country taken from them; — and, after this robbery, the blacks are informed that trey are British subjects. Nay, even as if they were liege subjects to the Crown of the United Kingdom, they are compelled to fulfil the code of laws which has been administered to Englishmen. And there is another question — Even did England possess the power to take possession of the country, has it authority to administer its own laws to the original owners, without any discrimination?

It is unfortunate that no two statesmen or public writers can agree about the treatment which the aborigines ought to receive, and in no two Colonies have the tribes been treated alike. Some wish a system of rigid coercion, and even urge that unless the children are taken from their parents at a very early age, there is not the least chance of their imbibing the element of civilisation, “habits of industry.” This class advocate a system something like that described already as adopted by the Rev. W. Tuckfield at Buntingdale station, Geelong, and argue that the various

tribes should be separated, and confined within the Reserves appointed for them; that the children ought to be separated at an early age from their parents, and placed out as apprentices to tradesmen in the town. That the blacks may to a certain extent be civilised, is quite apparent from the abilities the troopers of the native police have displayed. These men are distinguished for intelligence and fidelity. To their captain they have ever showed respect and love, and have fought and bled, even against their own people, at his side. They show none of the passion of the wild, uncouth native, but their conduct is uniformly marked by sagacity and firm forbearance. Rigid discipline has been the cause of much good in this corps. But we regret to record our firm belief, that were this troop dis banded, each member would return to savage life, and become a leader, cruel and sanguinary in purpose. Such has ever been the case, and there are instances upon record without number which prove it; and this is the argument urged, by the party who wish coercion, on the public mind.

The other party hold, that the aborigines have peculiar claims upon the Government, and, therefore, that their whims ought, in some degree, to be studied, and their lives and liberties protected. Government were partly of the same opinion; and, for the object described, the Protectorate Establishment was formed in the Port Phillip District. We are compelled to say, that these men who were appointed to the offices of Protectors managed so miserably, that, after spending a great deal of money — as much as £15,000 a-year — the system proved a total failure. The Protectors, instead of learning the language of the blacks, as instructed by Lord Glenelg, or attempting to instruct them in the grand truths of religion, went about the country hunting, with or without the natives — for, by their instructions, they were ordered to follow the movements of the natives. When any depredation was committed by the aborigines under their protection, they attempted to screen the offender from justice by a tissue of fraud. The most common method to defeat the ends of justice, was for the native, when placed at the bar, to pretend either that he was imbecile, or that he could not understand the language when asked to plead. It was the Protector's business to interpret for him; but even if the prisoner could understand him, he would ever make it appear he could not. Thus the public were led to believe, that aboriginal men and women were ignorant and imbecile creatures which, for my part, I regard as a perfect error. The Protectors likewise gave great offence to the settlers. A murder was committed at Muston's Creek, we believe on the 23rd of February, 1842. A native woman, named Conger, was barbarously murdered in a tea-tree scrub. Three settlers, Richard Gumeas Hill, John Beswick, and Joseph Betts, were indicted for the murder, and tried before

Mr. Justice Jeffcot, at Port Phillip, on the 31st July, 1848. It was evident a murder had been committed, and several even thought that the prisoners were the murderers; but opinion was divided, and the evidence being contradictory, the men were found "Not guilty." So far well — the men were tried before a jury, and they had a chance, and it would have been cruel to deprive them of their chance. The Protectors thought otherwise: they spoke of the jury in terms which would disgust my readers; and there were even mysterious hints abroad of unfair play — as, certainly, a man named McGuiness, the principal witness against the three prisoners, received a present of fifty pounds from the Government or the Protectorate.

The eyes of the Government were then opened, and the perfect failure of the system became but too evident. Much blame attaches to the Protectors, inasmuch as having it in their power to work a large amount of good, they allowed the opportunity to pass. They were men with hearts set upon the comforts and luxuries of life; they had no curiosity to acquire a correct knowledge of the language, history, and manners of the aborigines. The only intelligent person, in the Protectorate was Dr. Bailie, a medical gentleman attached to the Goulburn Protectorate station; and even his information, to my certain knowledge, is superficial, and little to be relied upon.

The Protectorate having proved a failure, the Government resolved to abolish it and dismiss the whole *posse* of Protectors. It comes therefore to be considered, what the ultimate fate of the blacks is to be. As civilisation extends into the backwoods and almost boundless plains of the Australian Continent, it is evident that instead of the kangaroo, the sheep and ox will be found, and that the poor blacks will have no resource but to depend upon the chary charity of the settlers for a miserable existence, or to turn Bushrangers and take with the strong hand. The seeds of disease are already deeply sown in their constitutions, famine and punishment for the crime of theft will do their work, and within a century the race will be nearly extinct. This seems almost their inevitable fate, and we cannot but deplore it. A fate nearly similar occurred to the natives of Van Diemen's Land about eight years ago. When the country became settled, the natives were found troublesome. At last the inhabitants rose and captured the miserable remnants, and had them sent in vessels from Hobart Town to Flinder's Island, in Bass's Straits, where a few still linger; but, alas! what a contrast to the tribes which inhabited Van Diemen's Land only twenty-five years before! The ultimate fate of the Australian aboriginal tribes will be similar.

I intended to have entered into a full explanation of the language; but as

it would require an essay to do the subject anything like justice, I shall confine my observations, and draw this essay to a conclusion.

The language is guttural, and the natives speak with no ordinary volubility. It is, however, full of music, and permanent in its rules of construction. From Port Phillip to Port Essington, on the Gulf of Carpentaria, the language is the same in reality, although it varies with different tribes in particular words and idioms. The great peculiarity is, the double pronunciation in nouns, especially in proper names, such as Jacky Jacky, Billy Billy, the Yarra Yarra, &c. The songs are monotonous, and commonly a few lines frequently repeated. The tone is generally a deep "*bumming*," very peculiar; and they appear to derive extravagant pleasure from the exercise. I have heard a black, at this exercise, repeat one verse for four or six hours without hardly waiting even to draw breath. In the corrobories, as afore mentioned, they dance to the music, and a man keeps time with two hard sticks, and the women beat on their opossum skin rugs.

A few of their words are very much in vogue with the lower orders in Australia. So generally are they used, that in all probability they will be incorporated with the vernacular language of Australia. As it would be impossible to enter into a consideration of the structure of the language, I must conclude with a list of words used in the Colonies, which have been extracted from the aboriginal dialect:

Bulgano,	Meat.
Bulgally,	A sheep.
Gego,	To walk.
Merry gig,	Good, or me good.
Borack,	Gammon, nonsense.
Combollie,	Come here.
Combie,	A hut.
Myamy, or Miami,	A sleeping—place or hut.
Coolie,	A man.
Lubra,	A female.
Gin,	A wife or mother.
Picaninny,	A child.
A leap,	A long walk or day's journey.
Corroborie,	A dance.
Gimbolock,	A fool.

The native weapons are, the spear (or geraor), which they throw by means of the wamera (or ulma) to an immense distance; — the waddie (gorgeran, or largon), which is of many different shapes, is a deadly weapon; — the boomerang, or curved weapon, and the neram, formed from the leg-bone of the emu, and a stout cord; — the shield (geraniem) is

a large thick piece of wood, finely cut and carved.

THE END.

London: Printed by H. I. Stevens, 8, Philpot Lane.

NEW WORKS PUBLISHED BY SIMMONDS & WARD, 18, CORNHILL, LONDON.

Will be ready in a few days, One Vol. demy 8vo. NEW ZEALAND AND ITS AFFAIRS; Forming a Complete History of the Colony. BY DR. MARTIN, Late a member of the Legislative Council, and Magistrate of the Colony. This day is published, One Vol. post 8vo. Price 8s. AGRICOLA'S LETTERS ON SUGAR FARMING IN JAMAICA. BY W. F. WHITEHOUSE, ESQ. Preparing for early publication, with a map of the Province and plates, Price 10s. 6d. A HISTORY OF NEW BRUNSWICK; WITH NOTES FOR EMIGRANTS. BY ABRAHAM GESNER, ESQ., F.G.S., &c., Author of "Remarks on the Geology and Mineralogy of Nova Scotia." THE EGYPTIAN TRAVELLING COMPANION, FOR OVERLAND PASSENGERS TO INDIA. BY E. NOLDEN. Price 4s. NEWWORKS PUBLISHED BY SIMMONDS & WARD. SIMMONDS'S COLONIAL MAGAZINE AND FOREIGN MISCELLANY Published monthly, Price 2s. 6d. Vols. I. to IV. half-bound, are now ready, price 12s. each. ROSAS, And some of the ATROCITIES of his Dictatorship in the RIVER PLATE; In a Letter to the RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF ABERDEEN, &c. By a British Gentlemen resident in Monte Video. Price 1s. 6d. THE PRESENT STATE OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY QUESTION IN TUNIS AND ALGIERS; By a Correspondent of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Price 1s. Price One Shilling and Sixpence. PRODROMUS TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY INTO THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS OF THE NEGRO. BY E. BINNS, M.D., Author of "The Anatomy of Sleep," etc. JOURNAL OF THE AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA FOR 1842-43. Price 5s. A valuable work of reference, serving to show the Progress and Resources of the Colony, its Agricultural Statistics, with a Chronological Register of Occurrences from the Foundation of the Colony.

Price One Shilling. THE BOOK OF THE TOILET, Or the Secret of Beauty