



The Governor's Man

J. H. M. Abbott



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THE GOVERNOR'S MAN



I accompanied the Governor wherever he went.

[See page 81]

THE GOVERNOR'S MAN

BY
J. H. M. ABBOTT



Illustrations by JIM HANNAN



MELBOURNE
THE BOOKSTALL COMPANY PTY. LTD.
7a ELIZABETH STREET

Dedicated to
My Sincere Friend,
Norman Lindsay.

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PREFACE.

This little sketch of a remarkable event in early Australian history does not pretend to be anything more. The Bligh Rebellion was only an interlude in the beginnings of the development of Australia; in some respects rather a sordid interlude. But it was a picturesque and interesting happening, and was the first manifestation of the keen sense of politics which has since possessed Australia. We do not now, when we feel that we have had enough of them, make prisoners of the members of a Government—though frequently they deserve such treatment—but we still display the party bitterness and rancour which distinguished the actions of either side in 1808. Of the characters of the historical personages—such as Bligh, Macarthur, Johnston, and the others—it may be said that they are mostly guess-work. The records are fairly complete, but at this distance, it is not altogether easy to understand the motives of dead men, and the author does not sit in judgment on them. He only claims that he has tried to be fair in his reading of Australian history.

His thanks are due to the Editor and Proprietors of "The World's News," of Sydney, in whose journal it first appeared serially, for permission to publish in book form this tale. It was written, for the most part, in that admirable institution, the Mitchell Library.

J. H. M. A.

Sydney, 1919.



CHAPTER I.

At the Cock Tavern.

I am getting to be an old, old man in these days, having well attained the Psalmist's span of human existence—with a year or two to boot—and because life is to me now only to be enjoyed in the memory of the past, I am setting myself to the task of living some of it over again, so that my children and my grandchildren, and those who come after them, may know what manner of man their first ancestor was. For so do I regard myself in this new and wonderful land, where Britain has been born again. Already I can see that, here in Australia, we have begun to breed another race from the old stock (just as they did in the Americas), and as they may do again at the Pole, for aught that I can prophesy to the contrary. The year one, to us Australians, commenced on the 26th of January, 1788; and my own beginning, as a living man, I date from that sunny morning in the winter of 1806, when I stepped ashore, a prisoner, from a ship's boat in Sydney Cove.

It may seem contrary to the due sense of shame which should hold possession of any man in the recollection of his own disgrace and ignominy, when I recall the fact, and seem to emphasise it, that I came to this country in a state of bondage. Who should know better than I, who have lived through the period of Australia's development from a prison camp into the commencement and realisation of free nationhood; how shudderingly we look back to the gloomy and horrible birth-pangs which accompanied our entry into being? Who should know better what the term "Emancipist" means—all the scorn, the

bitterness that can be conveyed in its application? Who should more readily realise the desirability of obliterating the felon taint, of forgetting it, repudiating it, and denying it unhesitatingly with the whitest of white lies? There are many whom I see about me—prosperous, honoured, happy, and worthy of the respect of all good men—who would almost do murder, in their resentment of a suspicion of having had a penal career in New South Wales, despite the fact that their origin was truly such. And their children are even more studiously forgetful of it. It never does, in this year of grace, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-eight, to remind any young man that you shared some of his father's early vicissitudes—however manfully the parent may have made good, and however valuable and blessed his life, as a whole, may have been to the country of his enforced adoption. A man of my years would seldom earn popularity amongst his juniors by claiming early acquaintance with their parents. We do not now speak of those days.

But I am going to dare greatly, and to set down, in black and white, the principal events of my early career. That is because I am not ashamed, but am justly proud of it—proud that I came through it, that I survived where so many succumbed, and that my name will be remembered here as that of a just man, rather than of a felon. I have no fear that any of my children will reproach me for what I am about to do. They have been taught differently. They could not have had such a mother as they have had, and remained snobs. I could not have lived with such a woman for all these years and remained a bad man. Mind, I do not admit that I ever was one. A little smug self-satisfaction about that, if you like, but there it is. It is quite true.

As I have said, I regard my life as having begun on the day when I came on shore in Sydney in August, 1806. But as every life is more or less affected by prenatal influences, I must give some little account of those which had to do with mine. That is to say, of the immediate

events which led up to my being transported to Botany Bay, as all Australia used to be vaguely known in the early days, whether it was Van Diemen's Land or Carpentaria, or the vast province in between the two.

To begin with, I was born on Harrow Weald, in the year 1786, and, on an evening nineteen years later, I was in the Cock Tavern in Fleet Street, very foolishly, riotously, and boyishly drunk. I have not time or inclination to write of my father's house near Stanmore, or of my school days at Harrow-on-the-Hill, but will make a beginning with that disastrous evening in London. It was the immediate occasioning of my coming to Australia, and so it is fitting that this Australian narrative should start then.

It was a foggy evening in November—one of those London evenings which are no different in appearance or sensation to any other part of the twenty-four hours. The shades of night are not any more sombre than the shades of day have been. Lamps and candlelights, twinkling into cheerful being, do not signal the changing of daylight into darkness, for there has been no day to change. A thin drizzle damps the atmosphere. Thick brown fog, that causes the eyes to smart, hangs in the streets, and penetrates within doors. The noises of the town are hushed, because the rush of traffic has ceased, and all that there is of movement is slow and groping, and cautiously silent. There is nothing to be seen, save a vast brown opaqueness, through which only such illumination as is close at hand is dimly apparent. There is nothing to do, save remain indoors, in the pursuit of such occupation as may be at hand, congenial or otherwise.

Now the occupation which young Mr. John Hawkins Carnford found to his hand was not, in any sense, congenial. I know that, for I am old Mr. Carnford, and that night has never lost its memories for me in all these years. Every minute of it—though there was some time whose happenings had to be pieced together afterwards—is ac-

countable to me. I have never in my life been able to put that momentous evening out of my mind. It has been with me always, and in my last hour of consciousness it will still be with me. It is indelibly imprinted upon my mind, as it may well be, for in those hours of that foggy November night all my life and destiny was shaped. I am not one of those who are forever dwelling upon the contingencies of "It Might Have Been," with a sort of comforting, gloomy dissatisfaction, but, even if I could do so, I should never be able to put out of my mind that strange turning point of my whole career.

I lived in Chambers, in Paper Buildings in the Temple; two small rooms, which I occupied alone. My father was a wealthy city merchant, an alderman, who had long since amassed a comfortable fortune, and retired to the rural delights of the peaceful countryside, near the village of Stanmore. Twice a week, on Wednesday and on Saturday, he visited his business establishment in St. Paul's Churchyard, so as to keep in touch with his affairs, but their general direction he left to his manager, Mr. Isaac Palfrey, whose situation I was destined one day to fill, when I should have acquired a thorough knowledge of the business.

The process of acquiring this knowledge was, as my father conceived it, a very thorough one. It was also sound and sensible, although I did not find it an agreeable one. I had to start at the very bottom—almost indeed as a doorkeeper. The only difference in my case from the position of the humblest underling in the firm's service was one of pay. But my pay was not shown on the books of the business. I was given an allowance that was amply sufficient for my needs, even generous to a degree, and was provided with comfortable quarters. Each week-end I spent at home. It was only in a strict insistence upon my hours of attendance at the counting-house that my father disciplined me. I had to be upon my stool at eight o'clock, summer and winter, and it was seven in the evening before I was my

own master. There were three-quarters of an hour for a mid-day meal.

This evening, in a somewhat dissatisfied frame of mind, I had groped my way down Ludgate Hill, and up Fleet Street. The last hours of the long, bleak day had seemed an eternity that would never end. Indoors, on desks and tables about the big clerks' room, there was gloom but faintly dispelled by the guttering tallow candles, that gleamed dully through a brown haze. Outside, the fog was so thick and dense that even the great cathedral was obliterated by it. I came out into a black void that shrouded all the lights of streets and shops. It was only by groping slowly along the walls of the houses that I was able to make my way homewards to my lodging. At Ludgate Circus I spent easily a good half-hour in finding my way across, before I succeeded in reaching Fleet Street. I had made two false turnings into the Blackfriars Road, and into Farringdon Street, and it was only when I walked into Temple Bar itself that I knew I was close to my destination. It was the thickest fog I had even seen in London, and its melancholy atmosphere had tinged my thoughts sadly.

It was only then, having lighted my candles, and being about to turn into my bedroom to wash my hands, that I remembered my appointment for the evening. Hastily making my toilet, I again put on my overcoat, and having extinguished the light, closed the outer door of my chambers behind me, and rapped with my stick on the lintel of the door across the narrow landing, opposite to my room.

A cheerful voice within bade me enter.

"Come in, Jack, me bold blood. 'Tis late ye are, ye scaramouch! Can ye not tear yourself away from ye're money grubbin' pershuits in toime t' kape a gintleman from wearin' out his vocabulary a-cursin'? Yes? What have ye to say for yourself, ye dawdler?"

I found Brian McMahon all ready to go out.

"Now, give an account of y'silf, Jack Carnford. What philanderin' little game have ye bin up to now, me bould

boy—kapin' me waiting like this, an' our dinner gettin' cowl'd this very minute?"

"What is it this evening, Mac?" I asked him. "The fog bothered me. I thought I'd never find Temple Bar."

"A foine excuse! Never moind—stir your stumps now, an' we'll get round to the Cock. 'Tis a great honor I'm doin' ye this evening. 'Tis a proud lad ye'll be when ye come rowlin' home."

As he stooped to blow out the candle, he grinned all over his jolly red face. Brian McMahon's appearance was all redness. He had flaming hair, a red, sun-tanned face, and great red-looking hands, and he was the strongest man I have ever met, though, like myself, he was then only a boy.

"Why—who's the celebrity this time?" I asked him, as we felt our way down the dark and narrow stairs.

"'Tis royalty, no less, Johnny boy. Royalty—wan of an ancient line. 'Tis the O'Toole."

"The O'Toole?"

"Yes. O'Toole of Ballyhinchy—the only O'Toole. But wait till ye mate him. He's unaque. 'Tis th' great man he is. I can promise ye entertainment such as ye've niver had before. But hurry now—he'll be waitin', an' 'tis not good for the O'Toole to wait."

We groped our way out of the Temple, guided ourselves across the street by Temple Bar, and presently, in the snug and cosy coffee-room of the Cock, I was introduced to the O'Toole. Would that I had never met him! But I don't know about that. Certainly the worst that has befallen me would not have happened—but then neither would the best. I'd never have met my Addie if it hadn't been for the O'Toole.

He was a great, shabby Irishman. If he was an inch in height, he was six feet three, and I'll swear he must have measured a good four feet about the shoulders. A shock head of black hair, and a shaggy beard, gave him the appearance of a savage giant. In the low-ceiled rooms of the old Cock, he appeared almost to crouch, and, from the looks of the servitors and pot-boys, he

seemed to have been impressing himself upon the establishment—one would say forcibly, rather than favourably. We heard his roaring voice whilst we were still outside the doorway of the coffee-room.

With his great legs apart, and his hands behind him, he stood before the old carved fire-place, and denounced the tavern, the head-waiter, England, the weather, and Brian McMahon for keeping him from his dinner. On the mantelpiece beside him stood a half-empty bottle of rum and a glass, and he smoked a short black pipe of the sort that coal-heavers and bargees affect. As soon as we came in he bellowed at us.

"Och, Brian—ye son of th' divil—'tis th' poor host ye are, ye blaggard. Shure—I've bin a-hangin' round this God-forsaken shebeen awaiting ye for hours. 'Tis wake wid stharvation I am this minute—an' this little leprechaun here (pointing contemptuously to the plump and alarmed head-waiter Henry), this little somehow of a mahn, wouldn't give me bite or sup until ye should put in an appearance. Bedad, I'm thinkin' he'd have thrun me out into th' fog, if he'd bin big enough. But what have ye to say for y'silf, ye onmannerly dog, ye!"

"A thousand pardons, O'Toole," laughed Brian. "'Twas th' fog kep' me friend Carnford here—or, at laste, he says 'twas th' fog, an' knowin' no different, I suppose we'll have to take his word for it. Jack, me boyo, let me presint ye to Mr. Shamus O'Toole—the greatest man out of Oireland. O'Toole, this is one of our merchant princes, or he will be one day whin he comes into his own."

"Glad to meet ye, Mr. Carnford," boomed the giant. "Brian, me lad, for th' love of Hiven let us be atin'. Sure I'm faint wid th' hunger."

We seated ourselves in one of the curtained boxes, Mr. O'Toole expressing his disapproval of the narrow bench. Brain and I sat opposite to him, his great bulk seeming to fill his side of the table. Henry stood meekly by, awaiting our orders.

"Bring me a porterhouse steak, ye little snivvlin' divil,

and some praties, an' pass down that bottle of rum over there. There's just an appaytiser left in it, Brain me boy, we'll drink good luck to Mr. Carnford, even if he is one of th' foes of Oireland, an Englishman. Och, 'tis a cursed country it is, wid its fogs, and th' dampness av it. Shure, a mahn does be nadin' all the spirits he can hould for to kape the cowl'd out av his bones."

We emptied the bottle, and presently fell to upon our dinners. Brain and I drank wine, but the huge Irishman would have none of it, and called loudly for another bottle of rum.

CHAPTER II.

A Hanging Matter.

The room, since it was past the usual dining hour that then obtained in London, was but sparsely filled; nevertheless a few parties sat over their wine in the little wooden compartments, smoking long church-warden pipes. A roaring fire blazed in the big curved grate, and it was a comforting thing to gaze upon, when one remembered the fog outside.

The O'Toole's bellowing tones attracted an attention of which he was quite sensible. His wild appearance alone would have done that, even without the roar of his great voice. It is doubtful whether so strange looking a guest had dined at the Cock for many years. I felt a little ashamed of the attention we were attracting, but Brian McMahon obviously enjoyed the uncouth deportment of his hero.

"Sure, a grand man," he whispered to me, whilst the giant had turned round to stare insolently about him at the other guests. "Wan of the Kings of Ireland! He's indade that, if he had his rights. 'Tis not every day such a man comes to London. He'll astonish the natives, before he goes home—or I don't know him."

I thought he was doing so now, but said nothing. To my friend Brian, who hung upon and applauded his loud words, he was obviously a person of notability. He drank glass for glass with him, toasting all manner of Irish fancies—though, like myself, he drank port, whilst the wild man literally poured raw spirits down his brawny throat—and laughed loudly at his own sallies of coarse wit, which were mainly directed against England and the English.

"Luk at thim!" he shouted. "Here's a roomful of men for ye! Whoi! Oi'd take ivry mahn Jack av thim, altogether or singly, an' bate the lot av thim."

The other diners did not seem to take such outbursts particularly amiss, and had, indeed, a collective air of regarding our brawny companion rather in the light of a diversion, or entertainment, than as one who was to be taken seriously. As for me, I was at first disgusted, but after the consumption of sundry glasses of wine, the humour of the situation appealed to me. No one could possibly hold me responsible for this savage, however much Brian might take pride in his existence.

"'Tis a heart of gold!" he said to me, in an aside, whilst the O'Toole was intent upon swallowing a great draught of rum. "Whin ye know the mahn, Jack, ye'll love him as I do. This is the soort of mahn we ought to have ruling over us in Ireland."

"Oh, he's vastly amusing," I answered, and indeed the unexpectedness of the fellow's manifestations were diverting enough.

He called for some toasted cheese, and Henry, the waiter, brought him the usual little flat tinful of the delicacy. Immediately on its being set before him, he sprang to his feet, so that his shaggy head almost touched the beams above, and, stretching out a great arm, grasped the astonished Henry by the coat collar, lifting him off his feet, until the little man's startled face was on a level with his own. He held him ridiculously suspended there, shaking the forefinger of his other hand at him, whilst he admonished him.

"Ye little fat cock sparrow, ye! Do Oi look loike a mahn that wud be satisfied wid such a tootful as that. Maybe 'twould be a wake's provision for ye, me little crumb peckin' birdie. Go, bring me half a cheese, or Oi'll put ye t'rough th' flure above, so I will."

The gasping Henry staggered away, and presently the proprietor of the Tavern, fat John Haileybury, tip-toed cautiously up the room, took a swift glance at the monster from behind, and tip-toed noiselessly away,

evidently presuming that discretion was the better part of valour. But a great dishful of toasted cheese was presently brought up by the white-aproned cook himself, who apparently was desirous of beholding such an appreciative eater.

"Good for ye, ould barrel-belly," roared O'Toole at him. "Shure, ye can cook chase, so ye can. Tell th' little fellie to bring me a point of porter for to wash it down. Skip along now, ould lad—or Oi'll be compelled for to hurry ye up a bit."

The cheese and the porter being finished, he called for pipes, tobacco, and a bowl of punch, and announced his intention of favouring the company with a little music. In a terrific voice he did so, roaring out drunken hunting songs, and ribald low ballads.

The fearful hullabaloo gradually emptied the room. All save a group of four, two of whom were naval officers in uniform, who sat at the end of the apartment overlooking the street, one by one took down hats and cloaks from the pegs, and went out.

The wines, which I had drunk of freely, had brought me successively through the stages of distaste, toleration, appreciation, and enthusiasm for this descendant of kings. By the time that the first bowl of punch was consumed, his roughness and uncouthness had become to me only the manifestation of a hearty good fellowship, his roarings and bellowings were really jovial songs, and his blackguardly observations and insolent behaviour were the soul of wit. I felt grateful to Brian McMahon for having shared his unique fellow countryman with me.

As for Brian, he was fast becoming roaring drunk, and endeavoured to emulate all the wild man's extravagances. He howled the choruses of his savage songs, applauded his coarse jests, and backed up his insulting remarks about the English, and particularly those who were in the Cock that evening.

Some time before the arrival of the punch, I had noted the entry of a later guest than ourselves. He was a tall man, clean shaven, except for closely cropped side

whiskers, and having an air of strength and determination about him that it is hard to define. He was booted and mud-bespattered, and looked as if he had just arrived from a journey. He stood for a moment in the doorway, quietly surveying the room, and when his eyes rested upon the O'Toole it almost seemed to me that they flashed a little. The barbarian, sitting with his back to the door, did not see him. The stranger quietly seated himself in the box next to ours, and ordered his meal.

From that time onward, until the terrible event took place which was to affect all three of us so tremendously, I have but a confused and dreamy recollection. It is one of having been in a condition in which the strangest and most extraordinary things seemed to be accountable enough, in which the extravagant rioting of the huge Irishman, and on the part of my friend Brian, the enthusiastic seconding of his efforts at diversion, seemed to be quite right and proper. I felt foolishly pleased with myself, pleased with Brian's red face, and pleased with the damnable performances of O'Toole. That he should march up the room with the punch-bowl and ladle, and solemnly fill the wine glasses of the four at the far table—the which impertinence they good-humouredly tolerated—at the same time inviting them to drink their own healths, seemed to be the merriest of jests. Brian yelled with delight, and I thumped my joy upon the table top. Coming back, the madman let out a whoop, lifted the bowl above his head, and drenched himself with the remainder of the punch. By way of drawing attention to the fact that we required a fresh jorum, he sent the bowl, and the ladle after it, crashing down the room.

"Whiroo-o-o!" he howled. "O'Toole foriver, an' good luck to his uncle, the Divil!" Fetch another bowl av it, Hinry, me beauty—another bowl."

How long this sort of thing went on I do not know—but it must have been for a couple of hours. O'Toole became noisier and more outrageous than ever. I have

a dim remembrance that two other strange men came into the room—powerful, rough looking fellows, with closely buttoned coats, and great sticks or bludgeons in their hands, and sat down in the same box with the traveller. The four gentlemen at the end of the room, evidently anxious as to how the whole business was to end, sat on and on. Perhaps they hoped to be favoured spectators of the Irishman's dealings with the watch, when it should be necessary to call in the questionable assistance of those inefficient guardians of the peace.

After a period in which I think I must have been asleep, I suddenly became conscious of a sense of silence. I looked up.

Beside me, Brian McMahon was sprawled out over the table, his head resting on his folded arms. Opposite, the O'Toole, a huge grin on his face, and his eyes staring over my head, leant back against the partition. I looked up, and looked round.

The tall traveller, with the two rough men behind him, stood at my shoulder. They were in their shirt sleeves, and each of them grasped his great stick firmly in his right hand. By their crimson waistcoats I knew them for Bow Street runners, but what they had to do with us, I was too fuddled even to wonder. The one thing that did impress its meaning upon me was that the side-whiskered stranger was presenting a pistol at the O'Toole, who continued to sit still, grinning up into the round hole in the end of its barrel. In his left hand he held a folded document.

"Shamus O'Toole!" he said in a rich brogue, "I want ye. Ye'd best come wid me quiet. I've a warrant here for ye're arrist, an' I'm to take ye back to Dublin to stand yer thrial. Will ye come quiet?"

Slowly, the sprawling giant lifted his great hands from the table. I saw the stranger's forefinger tighten on the trigger, and I think O'Toole saw it too, for he merely put his hands behind his head and clasped them together. I was more sober now, and could note these things. Brian still slumbered, snoring loudly.

"An' phwat is it, Patsy Hanrahan, me bould sheriff's officer, that ye want wid me?" asked the O'Toole, almost pleasantly.

"The man ye bate so badly in Con Regan's place is dead, O'Toole," said the other in an even tone. "He doied t'ree days since, an' I set out afther ye to Liverpool post haste, wid this paper here. D'ye want that I should read it to ye?"

"Ye may spare y'r breath, Patsy. I'll take y'r worruld fer it. But how did ye come to trace me to this place? I thought I was afther lavin' no worruld behind me av where I was goin' in the' woide worruld."

The faintest smile loosened the other's tight lips. "Sure, 'tis no har-rd task to trace you, O'Toole. There's not so many like ye that thim that's seen ye wance would be afther forgetting ye. Ivery shtep av th' road, ivery inn where ye had bite or sup—aven in this Fleet Shtrate here—ye've been remarked an' noticed. 'Tis an uncommon man ye are, O'Toole. Ye're not aisy dishguised, so y'r not."

"An' what wud ye do wi me this noight, Patsy Hanrahan?"

The great savage was extraordinarily cool and sober, considering the depth of his potations, and the wild uproar of but a short time before. But there was a glint in his dark eyes.

"To-night ye must lodge in th' Bridewell, O'Toole. To-morrow we'll shtart back for Dublin Town. Are ye comin' quiet?"

Just at this moment Brian must wake up. He raised his head from his arms, dropped it down again, and slowly lifted it once more. Then he stared dazedly at the pistol, then at the man who presented it, and at the two Bow Street men beside him. Then he sprang to his feet with a yell, reached over my head, and smote the sheriff's officer in the jaw.

Instantly the pistol exploded, and the bullet must have missed O'Toole by a hair's breadth. Then the fight began. I heard the stranger call loudly to the

four who had jumped to their feet at the other end of the room.

"In the King's name, I call on you, gentlemen, to help me secure this man."

I saw them come running down the room. Without knowing why, I plunged into the fray, and grappled with one of the Bow Street runners. The giant was roaring like a lion, and dealing mighty blows and kicks all round. I caught a glimpse of Brian's red face, distorted with rage, and was conscious that we waged war with the whole company.

I saw O'Toole's great hands close about the throat of the man Hanrahan, saw him lift him struggling from the ground, felt a great blazing light flash and roar in my skull, and then opened my eyes—it must have been many minutes after—to realise a strange quietness, and to hear a voice that said, loudly and distinctly—

"He's dead—quite dead. His neck's broken. 'Tis a hanging matter!"

CHAPTER III.

The Shadow of the Gallows.

Of the hideous nightmare of the days and weeks that followed, I can only now write with an effort. It was a terrible time, so terrible, in its abiding horror, that I doubt whether any of the things I went through afterwards could compare with it. It was the suddenness of it all, the amazing and incredible fact that it could ever possibly have happened, that dazed and overwhelmed me.

That two boys of scarce twenty years, instead of spending an hour or two in the stocks as a punishment for drunkenness, should stand in the dock of the Old Bailey to answer to a charge of murder, seemed such a preposterous thing as to be unbelievable. That I, who would not harm a night-screaching cat, and Brian McMahon, the kindest soul on earth, should be deemed to have assisted in the slaying of a fellow creature with whom we had no quarrel, whose very existence had been known to us for only a few minutes, was ridiculous. And yet it was fearfully true, and fearfully true also that we might have to answer with our lives for our evening's folly.

As for the barbarous O'Toole, he but stood in his proper place. He was a double murderer—truly, not by deliberate intention, but as the outcome of his uncontrolled and uncontrollable savagery. In any civilised community, such a fate as was about to overtake him, would have inevitably done so sooner or later. Twice he had slain, and although, in a sense, he had slain by

accident, that was no excuse in the eyes of the law. There was no doubt, from the moment when he had been overpowered in the Cock Tavern, as to O'Toole's final destination to the gallows. It was as sure as that the sun would rise on the morrow.

We learned from the officers of the Bridewell in Whitefriars, whither we were taken from the Cock, of the reason why poor Hanrahan, the Sheriff's officer from Dublin, had sought to effect the arrest of the giant. It seemed that, in a similar outburst of wild drunkenness as he, to our sorrow, had indulged in in London, he had broken the back of a man who, in some Dublin coffee-house, had not appreciated his pleasantries. The man had shown signs of dying, and, in fear of arrest, O'Toole had fled to England. He had scarcely been in London a fortnight when Hanrahan, with the warrant for his arrest, which he had shown him at the Cock, had arrived on his trail. It was our misfortune, and his own, that he should have traced him to the place on that night, and should have planned his arrest while he was mad with drink. Far better to have fallen upon him when he was sleeping off his potations, than in the height of his fury.

They told us of the desperate struggle that had taken place. One of the Bow Street runners had stunned me by a blow from his bludgeon. Brian had been separated from O'Toole, and finally borne down by numbers, but the Irish giant had maintained the battle fiercely for nearly an hour. When it was over, the coffee room of the Cock was a wreck. Tables and chairs were smashed, the compartments splintered and broken down, and the sawdust was as blood-soaked as the sawdust of a prize-ring. One of the naval officers had a broken leg, the other was damaged in the ribs. A Bow Street man had his collarbone fractured, and there was not one of them but was hurt and mauled in some more or less serious fashion. The unfortunate Mr. Hanrahan had sustained a broken neck. One of the witnesses at the trial said that O'Toole had taken the man's head between

his great hands, and simply wrung his neck, as he might have done a fowl's.

For three weeks we lay in Newgate awaiting trial. There was some little doubt as to whether Brian and I would be brought forward, but the Grand Jury decided against us, and we were duly presented at the Bar of the Old Bailey, on a charge of having aided and abetted in the murder of Patrick Hanrahan.

To me, who had never before been even a spectator at a trial, it was a solemn and awe inspiring scene. The great room with its tall, arched windows; the square dock in which we sat, and whence we looked down on to the well of the Court with its wigged counsel—the grey hair of my poor father—seemed too large for us. It was like a pen for the herding of animals. The densely packed body of the court, and the galleries, where tiers of white faces, that seemed to gloat over us, rose one above the other, gave me a sense of being beset by a mob which clamoured for our death. And there was something stern and unbending about the crimson-robed Judge—with Sheriff and chaplain upon either hand, and a nose-gay, resting on the bench before him—to counteract the stench of the crowd. He was seated under his heavy canopy, as the unflinching arbiter of our fate.

They had loaded the O'Toole with chains, so that he could hardly move, and there were two turnkeys in attendance upon him. They seemed to fear him as a wild beast—as which indeed the Judge, when he was passing sentence, described him, and he looked to be one. His hair and beard had grown longer and shaggier in prison, and his great frame had become gaunt. His own clothing had been torn off him in the struggle of his captors, and the clothes that they had given him in Newgate were too small. Neither coat nor shirt would meet about his neck, and his great hairy torso was bare and exposed. Brian and I must have contrasted curiously with him, for we were well and carefully dressed in sober and decorous costumes, with some idea on the part of

our counsel of impressing the jury with our extreme respectability.

The fate of the O'Toole was, of course, a foregone conclusion, but it was not so certain as to Brian and myself. Our counsel pleaded our youth and inexperience, the fact that we had been accidentally involved in a drunken brawl, and that our participation in it had nothing to do with the death of Patrick Hanrahan. However, his eloquence was wasted.

Little fat Henry, the head-waiter at the Cock, was the means of our conviction. He related how he had seen me assail one of the Bow Street men with great violence, and how the blow upon the head which the man's comrade had dealt me had been the sole means of rescuing the unfortunate man from my fury. As to Brian, who had had a much longer career in the battle than I, he was similarly explicit.

And so the verdict of the jury, without any very long deliberation, was "Guilty."

Thereupon, the Judge sentenced us to death in the usual fashion—perhaps in a fashion that is happily unusual, for he went far out of his way to abuse us for drunken and dissolute young blackguards. The O'Toole was "a savage wild beast, unfit to live, whose death would be a benefit to humanity."

It was Thursday afternoon. I asked a turnkey, as we were conducted back into Newgate through the dim corridor, how long a period usually elapsed between sentence and execution. His pleasant and humorous reply was—

"Eight o'clock Monday mornin', young gentleman, an' ye'll be a couple of inches longer nor wot ye are now. It stretches the neck, does gettin' hanged."

It was not a long career to look forward to. Three days and a few hours, that was all—and then there would be no more Counting House, no more London, no more of the pleasant Weald of Harrow, no more of anything at all. Heigh-ho! And there had been so little.

In the prison I found waiting me my poor father. He was stunned by the sentence, and the situation I was in, and seemed half-dazed with misery.

"Jack, Jack—my poor boy!" was all he could murmur, over and over again. He stayed with me until late into the night—praying, and weeping, and lamenting. I asked him of my mother once, and with that he broke down hopelessly, and I also. We clung to one another in an abandonment of miserable grief. When it was time for him to go, I begged him to say farewell to me then, and not to come again. He could not speak, and wringing my hand in a mute agony he suffered them to lead him from the prison. As he stumbled away from the door of my cell I could hear his deep sobs. A kindly turnkey kept saying,

"Now doan't 'ee take on zo, zur—doant 'ee take on zo!"

On the Saturday afternoon my cell door opened, and poor Brian was ushered in. I had begged that we might be allowed an interview.

When he came to me, the poor fellow, his brick red face blanched to an unhealthy pinkness, and his flaming hair all tossed and dishevelled, fell upon his knees, and seized my hands in both of his.

"Oh, Jack," he cried, "'tis all my fault, all my fault entirety. 'Tis Oi who've brought ye to this, so it is. Can ye forgive me, Jack?"

I tried my best to cheer him, and he to do the same for me. But it was little use. The shadow of the gallows was upon us, and we could not comfort one another.

All his people were in Kerry, and he would be dead before they could come to him. He had not communicated with them since that fatal evening.

"'Tis better not, he said. "Oi'll lave a letter—and 'twill be over thin. Annyway, me father's a har'rd mahn, an' me mother's in heaven, so it's best lave it as it is. Faith, they would put me to the law, an' now th'

law's goin' to have me for kapes." He smiled faintly as he said this.

Sunday came, and they took us to the prison chapel, where we sat in a square pen together with a coffin, and listened to the sermon of the Ordinary—the prison chaplain—which was all about hell and damnation. There were actually curious visitors to the place, who, as we cowered there in our terrible situation, sat and watched us. They seemed to me to have come for no other purpose than to gloat over us morbidly. Under his breath, Brian cursed them indignantly.

"'Tis a fine show they're havin', the bastes!" he whispered.

All through that last night, we were disturbed and tortured by one who, at every hour, rang a hand-bell in the street without, and cried out, in a loud voice, what o'clock it was, and how many hours we had yet to live, and how we should prepare to meet our Maker. I asked the turnkey who sat in the cell with me what might be the reason of this strange litany? He told me that many years before, some city man who lay buried in St. Sepulchre's Church opposite, had left a sum of money for the purpose of feeing a crier, who was to commit this outrage all through the night before any were to suffer death. He walked up and down beneath the quarter of the prison, where the doomed men lay, and chanted his dreadful psalm each time that St. Sepulchre's bell boomed out the hour.

And so at last the hour arrived, and the Governor of Newgate, with the sheriff and other officials, came for us, to lead us to the place of execution. I was in mortal terror, but sought not to show it, and to bear myself as bravely as I might be able. But it was hard to face—that shameful, miserable death. Brian and I were in cells adjacent to one another, and I found him in the corridor when my door was opened. I remarked that we were not bound in any way. One of the turnkeys,

who had kept watch over me, had seemed to delight in rehearsing, for my instruction, each act of the dreadful drama in which I was to play such a leading part, and he had given me to understand that we would be pinioned before we left our cells. However, I paid no attention to the circumstance, and only sought to listen, with as much grace as might be in me, to the exhortations of the clergyman, who walked at my right hand.

They marched us, with our irons clanking dully, across the prison, to a large room where a bright fire burned, and a number of people were assembled. And here we met for the first time the wild creature who was the cause of our unhappy plight. He was bound hand and foot, and stood scowling at the assemblage, now and again breaking forth into loud curses and profanities. He would bare his teeth, and snarl like a savage dog, whenever the priest who attended him endeavoured to minister to his spiritual needs.

"To hell wid ye all!" he roared as we came in. "To hell wid ye. An' if me hands was free Oi'd sind some of ye there, so Oi wud!"

Close to the fire, beside an iron block, a smith stood ready, with hammer and chisel, to cut loose our irons. Brian was attended to first, and then my turn came. I took it that this was a preliminary to being bound hand and foot in readiness for the hangman, who stood by waiting for us. But it was not so. When my limbs had been freed from the shackles, a gentleman stepped forward with papers in his hand, and uttered our names.

"John Hawkins Carnford?"

I turned my head.

"Brian McMahon?"

My friend nodded nervously. It was one of the sheriffs who was speaking.

"I have to inform you that His Majesty has been graciously pleased, in consideration of the youth of both of you, to extend his pardon to you. You are not to suffer death. His Majesty has been pleased to order

that you both be transported to New South Wales for the period of fourteen years. Shamus O'Toole, you must suffer your sentence."

I looked up in a dazed fashion, and saw Brian gaping with his mouth open. And then I swooned, and when I came to, I was in another part of Newgate. But it was not in the condemned cell, and a faint gleam of wintry sunlight was shining through the bars of the little window, high up in the wall.

CHAPTER IV.

Surgeon Collingwood, R.N.

It may be supposed that my having swooned on hearing the announcement of our reprieve would betoken an element of weakness in my character, but, if you would put yourself in my place, I almost think you would come to a conclusion that you might easily have done likewise. I had hardly tasted food since sentence of death had been passed upon us four days before, and was in as miserably nervous and feeble a condition as I well could be. It was simply the revulsion of feeling that had caused my momentary weakness, and nothing more.

From Newgate, in the course of a week or so, we were conveyed to the Hulks. Those floating prisons were moored in the lower reaches of the Thames, and at this time were largely used as depots for the accommodation of convicted prisoners who had been sentenced to transportation. They remained aboard them, until the ships which were to convey them to New South Wales, were ready for sea.

I will pass over the weary two months which we spent in one of these sombre hells, with the single observation that, barring the terrible three days under sentence of death, it was my worst period of the whole of my penal experience. Convict transports are not usually regarded as luxuriously appointed yachts, but, in comparison with the *Prince Frederick* hulk, His Majesty's transport *Olga* seemed indeed, to us, to be something of the sort.

Brian McMahon and I were not separated, for which I was more than thankful. The cheery optimism which was natural to him was an antidote to my more melancholy temperament, and he kept me from falling into a state of brooding despondency that could have hardly had any other end but suicide or madness.

In the hulks we were confined in narrow cells, scarcely seven feet long, by three wide. Stout oaken partitions separated us from one another, and we lay outwards from each side of the ship. It was always dark down there, and cold and damp. Fortunately for us, our good conduct obtained us lodging above the water line, and we had the advantage of tiny scuttles in the side, which might remain open if the weather was favourable. What must have been the condition of the unhappy wretches on the deck below, I shudder to think. They would lie in almost total darkness; the only light that pierced their gloomy prison coming from a horn lantern that hung from a beam 'tween decks. Once in the twenty-four hours we were taken on to the upper deck for a breathing space of an hour only. We then followed one another in a weary procession, round and round, between poop and foc'sle. The high bulwarks prevented us from seeing anything of the shores of the river. These outings, from the section of cells in which we were confined, always took place about midday.

One morning, after our meagre breakfast of skilly had been served and consumed, amidst a great unbolting of doors all over the ship, we were suddenly told to turn out. In a few moments we were formed into a miserable parade along both sides of the upper deck—our division on the port, and the blinking crew from below us on the starboard side.

With the Superintendent of the hulk was a stranger, to whom the former seemed to pay considerable respect. He was a man of about thirty-five years of age, of medium height, well built and active, with a shrewd yet kindly face, and twinkling grey eyes that seemed to see quickly and completely all that he wanted to know about a man.

"I will speak to them, Mr. Hales," he said to the Superintendent. "Will you be so good as to get your books and papers ready? I want to complete the business this morning, if possible, and to move the men down to the *Olga* before dinner time."

Before he addressed us, he carefully walked along each division, examining every one of us minutely. He stopped before Brian and me, and stared at us interestedly.

"Now, where have I seen you two?" he said to Brian. "I seem to remember your faces, and yet I don't think you've ever sailed with me, have you?"

"No, sorr," said Brian, raising his hand to his flaming locks. "Maybe 'twas at the Ould Bailey?"

"Ah, by Jove, so it was. And at the Cock Tavern, also. I was there, but had gone before your worst outbreak. I remember you both now, and that fierce Irishman. So they didn't hang you! Well, I'm glad of that. You would have been wasted on Jack Ketch."

Then he examined the lower deck's prisoners—evidently with disapproval, for, as he walked along their pallid and feeble ranks, he shook his head and frowned. We were bad enough, but some of them looked like nothing but exhumed corpses. At length he turned, under the poop, and addressed us all.

"Now, my lads," he spoke sharply and cheerfully. "I'm here to clear some of you out of this good ship—and I don't suspect that those whom I choose will grumble very much at leaving her. Some of you look as though you were badly in need of a change, and the worst of it is that those are the men that I'm not going to take. I'll introduce myself to you. I'm Peter Collingwood, Surgeon of the transport *Olga*, and because, in several voyages to Australia, out of some hundreds of prisoners whom I have conducted thither, I have had the good fortune to lose no one by death, the Government is kind enough to allow me first pick of the hulks, when it comes to selection of passengers for the voyage. So you'll understand that I am not going to chance losing my record by taking any of you who look as if you might

be likely to give me the slip on the way out. You will all be going, sooner or later, but those whom I select this morning will be somewhat sooner. I want you all to go to the port side of the deck, and as I call out each man's name I wish him to step up to me, and let me have a look at him."

The lower deck shuffled across to our side of the ship, and, with a list in his hand, the Doctor began his choice. Those whom, after a careful scrutiny, and some questioning as to health matters, he selected for his ship, he sent across to starboard, and when he shook his head at a man, the latter fell back into the mob.

As soon as he had called our names and had identified us, he chose Brian and me at once, motioning with his hand for us to cross the deck.

The Surgeon was very businesslike, and he had soon picked out some forty of us, whilst our less fortunate shipmates were driven below to their cells. We were told to wait where we were. They went down the hatchway sullenly muttering curses, and casting envious glances at us who were chosen. It was something of itself to be envied—the remaining on deck in the open air, whilst they were crowded back into their foetid and insanitary dungeons.

"We're in luck," an old hand whispered to me. "I've heered tell of this covey, this here Peter Collingwood. They say he treats his pris'ners well—tho' he aint to be put upon, so they say."

In a little while, some bales of clothing were brought up from the storeroom, and we were required to doff the garments which we had been wearing, and were served out with complete outfits of jacket, trousers, shirt, and cap. Each of us was given two pairs of trousers, three shirts, and a couple of pairs of socks, besides new shoes, and a cloth cap. The clothing was rough and unsightly, and plentifully ornamented with broad arrows, but it was warm and serviceable, and there were not a few of our motley company who had never been so well tailored before. We made bundles of what we did not wear.

After various formalities, having to do with the handing over of our precious persons, four soldiers, with muskets loaded and bayonets fixed, came up the gangway, and formed up on deck facing us.

"Now, my lads," the Doctor cried cheerily. "We're all ready. Down the ladder, and into the boats with ye—in single file. And mind now—if any of you are so foolish as to jump into the river, either in the hope of escaping or of destroying himself, the guards have orders to fire. And I assure you they are all picked shots. Come now—march!"

We went through the gangway, and down the ladder into a barge, in which there were eight more soldiers under a sergeant. Another boat, rowed by sailors, came and took us in tow, and we went off down the stream.

After we had proceeded for about a mile, "There's your future home for some months, my lads," said the Doctor.

He pointed with outstretched arm, and I turned to look. The *Olga* was a barque of some 500 tons or so, and, by her depth in the water, had evidently taken in all her stores and cargo, and was ready to go to sea at an early date.

"Now, I want you to understand this," went on Mr. Collingwood. "For the next four or five, or maybe six, months I am going to be your father and mother, and your judge and your doctor, all in one. I may tell you that I take a pride in landing my men in good condition, and fit for a new life in the new country. If you treat me well, you'll be well treated. But if there is any nonsense, you'll find I can be as bad as the next man. I know prisoners' ways, and though some of you may get to windward of me for a time, be quite sure that the 'vantage will be with me in the long run, and the sorry feeling with you. Play fair, and you'll get fair treatment. Be insubordinate, or mutinous, or dishonest—and you will find that you have what—ahem—some of you term a 'leery cove' to deal with. Now, you'll all get a good chance. You're going to a new

country, and it's a good one—one of the best I have seen, and I've been about the world. Do your best with it. That's all I've got to say to you—unofficially."

Somehow this manly little speech put me in good heart. We had, at anyrate, a man to wield authority over us—and, unless I was mistaken, a gentleman, too. So much could not be said of every naval surgeon of the period.

"Sure, he talks fair, so he does," whispered Brian to me, as we drew near the *Olga*.

But before we reached the ship we were to learn that Dr. Collingwood could act, as well as talk.

She was lying close into the shore, not being more than some hundred and fifty yards, or thereabouts, from the Kentish bank of the river. As we drew near to her, a sudden commotion in the forepart of the barge arrested our attention.

"Let me go," cried a shrill voice, and I turned my head just in time to catch sight of a slim boyish figure that sprang with one foot on to the gunwale, paused a moment, and then took a header into the yellow stream. The splash of his dive drenched us where we sat.

"Sit still, men!" sharply and peremptorily cried out the Surgeon. I turned my face to him, and saw him rise to his feet in the stern sheets. "Stop rowing," he shouted to the crew of the boat that towed us, and they lay upon their oars. As he called to them, the surgeon grasped a musket from the hands of the nearest soldier. He stood waiting the reappearance of the prisoner.

"Come back!" he called sharply, as the head and shoulders of the man appeared above the tide. "Come back instantly—or I'll fire!"

The man gasped in a hasty breath, and dived below the surface again. We waited anxiously. Dr. Collingwood slowly raised the musket to his shoulder and waited, with its barrel pointed towards where the rash fellow had gone under. In a few seconds—that seemed an age to me—the man's head broke through the surface of the stream, five or six yards further away towards the bank.

Instantly, there was the crack of the piece, and the white smoke floated away across the waters.

The fellow threw his arms above his head, uttered a scream that was smothered by the waters closing over him, and sank with a choking, gurgling noise.

"Give way!" called the Doctor, handing the musket back to the soldier from whom he had snatched it. "Alongside the ship!" he commanded.

So we drew beside the *Olga*, having no doubt in our hearts as to the manner of man to whose keeping our souls and our bodies were committed.

CHAPTER V.

H.M. Transport Olga.

The boat that had towed us was sent away to try and recover the body of the unfortunate youth who had so foolishly disregarded the Doctor's warning. In the course of the afternoon it was recovered, and it was found that the bullet had gone clean through his head. The incident made a deep impression on us, but I heard no one blame Mr. Collingwood for the prompt way in which he had carried out his duty.

"The —— young fool was told, fair enough. He got what he was seeking," was the verdict of his companions in misfortune.

It was customary, we learned, to iron all convicts prior to removing them from the hulks, and to keep them ironed throughout the long voyage to New South Wales. Dr. Collingwood, however, had long protested against this procedure, and, on account of his success in the difficult business of the transport service, being in high favour with the authorities, had at length prevailed upon them to discontinue it in the case of the ship of which he had charge. What a mercy it was to us in our confined circumstances, you may easily imagine.

Such dark tales have been told of the horrors and miseries of convict ships—and often with truth enough—that I am tempted here to write at some length concerning the arrangements and routine on the *Olga* during our voyage. They will go to show that it was possible, when

the ship was in charge of such a man as we had over us, to conduct the service decently.

Down in the 'tween decks were the prison quarters. Two rows of sleeping berths, one above the other, extended on each side of the ship, each berth being six feet square, and designed to contain four sleepers. That meant eighteen inches of space per man—and it was certainly not too bountiful an allowance, when some of the bed-fellows were sea-sick—but, after all, it was not much closer crowding than soldiers sleeping in tents have to put up with—though, to be sure, they have a more liberal supply of air than we enjoyed.

In the forepart of the ship the hospital was situated. A bulkhead separated it from the prison. The boys were accommodated apart from the men—an arrangement which saved them from contamination for as long as possible, and operated against their education in more advanced criminality. Strong wooden stanchions, thickly studded with nails, were fixed round the fore and main hatchings, on the 'tween decks, in each of which was a door with three padlocks, to allow of ingress and egress, and to secure the prisoners at night. A ladder, which was pulled up at dark each night, being placed in each hatchway to go up and down by. The prisoners had no access to the hold through the prison.

Scuttles, or port-holes, were cut along the ship's sides. A large stove, with a funnel leading through the deck above, provided for warmth and ventilation 'tween decks. There were small portable stoves also, to carry into damp corners. Everything that was possible to provide health and proper comfort for us during the voyage, was done. We had a bed, pillow, and thick rug given to each of us. Bibles and prayer-books were issued to each man.

The rations were as good as we could expect—in fact, a good deal better than we had been led to expect from their quality and quantity on the *Prince Frederick*. Three-quarters of a pound of biscuits were allowed to each man per diem, and for dinner, meat, pork and plum pudding, with pea soup four times a week, and a pot of gruel,

with sugar or butter in it, every morning. Vinegar was issued to us weekly, and, after we had been three weeks at sea, as a preventive of scurvy, we were served daily with an ounce of lime-juice and an ounce of sugar. There were also three or four issues of a gill of wine each week, and our daily allowance of water was three quarts.

We were divided into messes, which corresponded to our sleeping arrangements, and two delegates, chosen in rotation from each, superintended daily the weighing out of the provisions.

Our berths were numbered, and any article of bedding and clothing allotted to us bore a corresponding number. In such a collection of thieves and super-thieves as we were, this was a very necessary precaution.

Mr. Collingwood had a way of his own of policing his kingdom. So as to see to the due carrying out of orders, and to enforce discipline, the most trustworthy of the prisoners were appointed a species of petty officers. These were called "captains of the deck" and were six in number. Two officiated on deck, and four in the prison. They were afforded little privileges, such as an extra allotment of wine, and an issue of rum every day, besides two pounds of tobacco for the voyage. To our delight, Brian and I were selected for duty on deck in this capacity—by far the best job on the ship.

Each mess had a "captain" also, who was responsible for its cleanliness and good order. Various individuals were told off for small domestic duties, for attendance upon the hospital, and for sanitary arrangements.

Every day the upper and lower decks were cleaned very thoroughly under the superintendence of the captains of the deck. They were scrubbed, swabbed, scraped, or dry holystoned, according to the state of the weather, and, until the prison was thoroughly dry, all hands were kept on deck.

Three sets of rules, having been read out and explained to the convicts on the commencement of the voyage, were displayed in 'tween decks, one contained the duties of the "captains of the deck," "captains" of messes, and dele-

gates for attending the ration issues. The second dealt with rules and regulations regarding Divine service, the cleaning of the deck, the cutting up and cooking of the meat ration, the washing days, musters, schools, and so on. The third set out a sort of criminal code, in which almost every possible offence against the ship's laws were laid down, and the punishments detailed.

We were allowed a change of clothing weekly, and were shaved twice a week. One shirt and a pair of trousers were marked with the letter A above the numeral, and the others with a B, and a man wore A shirt and trousers one week, and B shirt and trousers the next. Every evening we were mustered in the prison, with shoes and stockings off, and trousers rolled up, to see that we washed adequately. Every second day, in the warm weather, we bathed upon deck.

Our guard was composed of thirty-three soldiers, under the command of a commissioned officer. They did duty in three watches, and provided sentries for the prison and gangways. When we were on deck the guard was always under arms.

Such were the general arrangements in H.M. Transport *Olga*. I understand that they differed materially from those in vogue on other ships, and that our condition under Dr. Collingwood was very much easier than it would have been under many others of the Surgeon-Superintendents. But there was no slackness in discipline. He ruled us with an iron hand. The slightest shortcoming met with its allotted punishment, and it was very seldom that punishment did not inevitably follow crime. The Doctor was quite conversant with the ways of convicts, and they found him to be indeed—as he had put it in the boat when we were coming to the *Olga* from the *Prince Frederick*, a “leery cove.”

And now I may get on with my narrative.

On the second day after our joining the ship, she was warped out into the stream, and anchored in readiness for our final departure, as soon as the last orders and the mails should have come on board. That afternoon we

were all mustered on deck, and for the purpose of bidding farewell to friends and relatives, a few favoured visitors to certain of the prisoners were admitted to the vessel.

My poor father was amongst those who made the dismal pilgrimage to Sheerness to see the last of us. I was called out to speak to him, and we were permitted to converse within the hearing of an armed sentry on the quarterdeck.

"Jack, my boy," he said, as he gripped my hand—and it seemed to me that he had grown younger again since I had seen him in Newgate—"keep up your courage. You are not a criminal, and have only had a misfortune. The blood of that unfortunate man, Hanrahan, is no more upon your head than upon mine. You are very young, and I do not despair of seeing you back again long before your sentence has expired. Now listen to me, in this particularly. We have an agent in Sydney, a Mr. George Blundell, through whom we do a fair amount of business. I have written to him a full account of your trouble, and have asked him to try and have you assigned to his service. It is very likely that you will be able to secure his interest for your friend McMahon also. I have mentioned him to Blundell in my letter. So you will never be in want, I have also instructed him to advance you money up to a certain amount. They have told me at the Colonial Office that if your conduct is good you will, in all probability, be granted a conditional pardon in a few years, and it is my idea, when that happens, and provided I have a good account of you from Mr. Blundell, that Hawkins and Carnford may establish a branch of the business in Sydney, with yourself as manager. I don't know that I may not make the voyage out myself, one of these days, to see what the prospects of a business, such as mine might be in the colony. So there you are. Three months ago you were to be hanged—to-day you are the advance agent of the firm's extension. Do your best, my dear Jack, and you will make your mother and my-

self happier than we are now. Good-bye, my boy, and God bless you!"

I watched his boat, as it made for the shore, with a full heart—you may well believe with a full heart, and an honest determination to endeavour, by any means in my power, to counter the cruel blow that Fortune had dealt me, and to turn it to good account.

I was still gazing after him when I heard my name called, and, turning, saw the Surgeon coming towards me. I saluted, as was laid down in the rules, and stood at attention.

"Carnford—was that your father whom I just saw speaking with you?" he asked me, in a kindly fashion.

"Yes, sir. He had come to wish me farewell."

"Ah—I wish I had spoken to him. I have heard my father speak of his firm—Hawkins and Carnford, isn't it? But I'll do myself the honor of writing him a line before we sail, and will tell him that I will keep an eye on you. You ought not to be here, any more than McMahan should, to my thinking—but, since you are, you must needs play your part. Now I'm going to give you and the red fellow some sort of official status—only on good behaviour, mark you! But I hope you are sensible fellows, who will see how the land lies, and where your own interests lie in it, and do as well as I expect you to. If you treat me honestly, I'll do the same thing by you. Keep that in mind—and don't be despondent. Your life is before you."

I thanked him for the kindly words, and begged him to take care of a few guineas which my father had left with me.

"Willingly!" he said, and laughed. "You're very wise, Carnford. If you had retained it on your person, I doubt if some of those experts in your company below deck would not soon have relieved you of all anxiety as to its safe keeping. I will give you a receipt for it later on."

He told the sergeant of the guard that Brian and I, and a dozen others from whom he meant to select his

"Captains" were to remain on deck, and that the other prisoners should be sent below, since the passengers were coming off directly.

I found Brian a little down in the dumps.

"Sure, Jack," he said, "I do think some on thim moight have come across to see the last of me. Bad luck to thim! Ye'd suppose they thought I'd killed Patsy Hanrahan and the O'Toole both, the way they treat me. Damme if me brother haven't the impudence to write to me about th' disgrace I've brought on thim—an' him th' drunkenest, tearing'est rapsallion of a squireen in all County Kerry! Ye'd think, t'see his letter, that he was the rale immaculate potato, so ye wud!"

I cheered him a little by telling him what my father had done, and made it plain to him that he would share equally in any better fortune that might come my way. It had a good effect upon him, and he brightened up considerably.

"Begorra," he said. "Whom have we here? Be th' houly piper, Johnnyboy, cast y'er eye to th' gangway. Did ye iver in y'r life see such a beauty! 'Tis a sin to trust such a jool aboard amongst this collection of divilry, so it is."

I turned to look. A very stately gentleman, dressed in the height of fashion, was handing to the deck the loveliest creature I have ever set eyes upon. The Captain of the ship came forward to meet them, and a lady's maid, I took her to be, followed after. They were evidently our passengers.

From the moment I saw that divine creature I knew that I knew myself. Can you guess who she was, my children?

CHAPTER VI.

The Beast and the Beauty.

The last of England that I saw was five days later, when we lay at anchor in the Downs, awaiting our convoy of men-o'-war. It was customary in those days of the Napoleonic struggle for all ships proceeding to India, or the Cape, or to New South Wales, to sail in company down the Channel, under a strong escort of warships. These saw them far out into the Atlantic, as a protection against enemy cruisers and privateers—though since the immortal victory of the great Lord Nelson at Trafalgar, when the command of the sea had definitely fallen to the lot of Britain, the danger of attack had been greatly lessened.

On that day, for the first time since the *Olga* had dropped down the river, we had been allowed upon deck. And a merciful relief it was, for though we had grown accustomed to confinement in 'tween decks of the hulk *Prince Frederick*, we had not, however wretched our situation may otherwise have been, in that unsavoury floating prison, been subjected to the miseries of sea-sickness. On the short run round to the Downs and while we lay at anchor there, most of us had experienced all the terrors of the brief but horrible malady which affects landmen on making their first acquaintance with Father Neptune. Nor did the jeers and ribald pleasantries of those of the prisoners who had been seamen add to our enjoyment of the process of acquiring our sea-legs.

We were allowed on deck in three batches, and the one to which Brian and I belonged was the first to be accorded the privilege of a breath of fresh air. It was a pale-faced and sickly collection of humanity that crawled painfully up the companionway in the main-hatch, and stood shivering on the deck behind the stout barricade that divided the prison portion of the ship from the quarter-deck and poop.

A sentry with a drawn cutlass marched up and down upon the other side of the timber wall, and below the poop the guard was drawn up under arms, with muskets loaded and bayonets fixed. The escort of soldiers who accompanied us to Sydney consisted of thirty-three rank and file, with a commissioned officer in charge. They divided their duties into three watches, and one of the most rigorous rules which Dr. Collingwood insisted upon was that there should be no communication between soldiers and prisoners. Like all prison rules, however, this one was frequently evaded.

Ensign Keating, the officer in charge of our little garrison, was as choice a young blackguard as might exist anywhere. As an alternative to leaving the army, he had exchanged from his own regiment into the New South Wales Corps. A red-faced, bull-necked, cursing, gambling, drinking, cockfighting young blood. In Sydney, after our arrival, he soon made a name for himself. I shall have more to say of him later on. But my first acquaintance with him did not do much to prepossess me in his favour.

When we came up, in company with the master of the ship, Captain John Colman—a bluff old sea-dog, and a good man, he was walking up and down across the quarterdeck. He grinned, as he caught sight of us standing uncertainly about the deck, behind the barricade.

"Aha, Mr. Colman," he exclaimed loudly. "Here they are! A d——d pretty lot of fellows, too. Come—let us have a closer look at them."

He advanced to the barricade, the Captain following him, a little unwillingly, so it seemed to me.

"Well, my beauties," he jeered at us across the rails. "You're a nice lot of gallows-birds, aren't ye! Mr. Colman," turning to the Captain, "how do you like your cargo? Was you ever in the slave trade? I'll engage, if ye was, that you never carried so many ugly mugs as this lot, even if they *were* black ones."

"I was never in the slave trade, Mr. Keating," replied the Captain—"nor do I wish to be. But the looks of these poor fellows is not my affair. The navigation of the ship to Sydney is my only concern."

There was a note of disapproval in the old sailor's tone, but it was lost on the gallant officer, who stood scowling and grinning alternately at us. I could see Brian flush to the roots of his close cropped hair, but, fearing an outbreak of his hasty Irish temper, I trod on his foot to check him. At that moment, Dr. Collingwood came out of the cabin, with some papers in his hand. He was frowning slightly. He could not but hear the blatant voice of his military colleague. The latter went on.

"See here, ye Houndsditch scum—I'm here to look after ye. D'ye understand that? So no hanky-panky, or you'll find Jack Keating a d——d tough nut to crack, d'ye see! I'll look after ye well enough—trust me for that, and I've some good men behind me, who can easily deal with such a crew of hangdog ruffians as you are. I'll look after ye."

"Mr. Keating!"

It was the Doctor who had spoken, quietly and a little coldly. He had taken a few steps up the deck, whilst the officer was roaring his overbearing gibes. The latter turned.

"At your service, Doctor," said he, saluting.

"Mr. Keating, I have just overheard your remarks to my prisoners. I think that there may be a little misapprehension on your part as to the situation of affairs upon the *Olga*. If you will favour me by stepping to my cabin, I will read you my commission as Surgeon-Superintendent of this ship. I beg that you will do so,

when it is convenient, and I shall be most happy to show you my instructions. I think that you will then agree with me that it is I, rather than yourself, who will look after these prisoners. I may have to call upon you for assistance, but until I have to do so I flatter myself that I am quite capable of discharging my duties. Would you wish to see the document now?"

As he heard a slight titter amongst the convicts, the Ensign's face became almost purple. He spluttered as he spoke.

"Oh, damme, not at all, Dr. Collingwood. I know that my detachment is here to enforce the authority of the civil power. I have my own orders. Not at all. I know how we stand. I was but just letting these fellows know it. That was all."

We could see that he was furiously angry.

"That is very well then, Mr. Keating. We understand the matter."

The officer turned away, and walked aft. The Captain had taken his telescope from under his arm and was busily engaged in examining the shipping that lay all about. Dr. Collingwood studied his papers once more. Presently he looked up, and scanned our faces across the barricade.

"John Carnford," he called. "I want you out here. Sentry, permit this man to pass through the gate."

The soldier took a big key from his pocket, and unlocked the padlock that secured the single narrow gate in the barricade. Wonderingly, I stepped forward and passed through. The sentry secured the gate behind me. I stood and waited in front of the Surgeon. Before he spoke he eyed me keenly for a moment or two.

"Prisoner," he said—and I winced at the name—"You have forgotten something."

He spoke quietly. I continued to gaze at him, not knowing what he meant.

"You have forgotten to salute," said he. "You must remember that we have discipline here." He did not speak unkindly.

"I beg your pardon, sir," I stammered in confusion, touching my cloth cap. There was something so likeable about the man, something so just and honest in his face, that I felt ashamed in a personal way, rather than because I had committed a breach of discipline—and I have seen men flogged for less. I mumbled something about being unused to it.

"That's all right," he said. "I want you in my cabin. Follow me, please."

He was always like that—kind, and firm, and just, and intently insistent upon duty. Long afterwards, I learned the heart of the man. The shooting of that boy who had tried to escape was a tragedy that he never forgot all his life. And yet, when they seemed to him to be his duty, he never hesitated to do such things. If any man ever deserved the much abused title of "gentleman," it was Peter Collingwood.

With me following, he turned towards the cabin entrance. As we came to the door, he stepped aside, and, taking off his hat, bowed to someone whom I could not see from where I was.

"Welcome to the deck, Miss Nutting. I had begun to fear that you had gone overboard. This is your first appearance, is it not?"

There was a musical laugh within the alleyway, and then she, smiling at the Doctor, and casting a sweet, shy, pitying glance upon the poor prisoner behind him, stepped out upon the deck. Somehow, the poor prisoner thrilled with a sort of hope that life was not altogether an evil thing. There was that in those brave, tender eyes that always so moved him.

She was very beautiful, and very young, and carried herself with a sort of grace, and a quiet, calm dignity that seemed to me what the carriage of a young queen would be. So soon as she came on deck she seemed to cast the spell of her presence over all who were there—soldiers, sailors, and convicts.

"Oh, Doctor," she cried, "I have been a sad sailor.



"Oh, Doctor," she cried, "I have been a sad sailor."

But not so bad as poor Anne, my maid. And I think not as bad as poor papa. Have you seen him this morning? He is still very unhappy."

"No, I have not had time to visit your father as yet this morning, Miss Nutting. But I'll do so presently. Have no fears for him—he'll soon be himself. Once out of the Downs, with a fair wind behind us, he'll pick up amazingly. This preliminary run to the Downs, and our rolling at anchor here for a day or so, is just the thing to introduce us all to our long voyage. I'll stake my reputation he'll be well to-morrow."

"Oh, I hope so," she laughed. "When papa is ill he is under no illusion as to how very ill he is. He believes that he has never been so ill in his life before, and never will be well again. That is a bit of Deal over there, isn't it? And so this is our last look at England, is it?"

"Yes—for a while. But here is the Captain come to say good-morning. Will you excuse me, Miss Nutting? I have business to attend to."

As she turned towards Mr. Colman, who offered her his arm, in a gallant old sea-dog fashion, to assist her up the poop-ladder, she smiled and nodded. Again her eyes rested on me for a moment, and I felt the gentle pity of her glance.

Beckoning me, the Surgeon led the way in to the main cabin, where the steward was busily clearing away the breakfast things. Upon the port side of the ship we went into a smaller one, which was evidently an office, sleeping place, and surgery. The walls had shelves fitted round them, some of which held books, but for the most part they were filled with bottles containing drugs and medicines.

"Carnford," he said, seating himself. "How old are you?"

"But just turned twenty, sir," I answered him, wondering why he had brought me here, and what he might want of me. I stood fumbling with my cap, whilst he eyed me meditatively. For a little while he said nothing.

Then he stood up, and taking a step towards me placed his right hand upon my shoulder. There was great kindness in his eyes as he spoke.

"My poor boy," he said, "I have bad news for you. You must brace yourself well to bear it. It is from your family."

I felt my heart check for a moment.

"My mother!"

"No—your poor father. He had but just returned to London, it seems, after seeing you in the Thames the other day, when he dropped dead in his counting house in St. Paul's Churchyard. There, there—my lad—bear up. Sit ye down here. I will leave you for awhile. I have your word—you will not leave the cabin?"

"Yes, sir," I muttered—too stunned to say more, as I sat heavily down upon the edge of his cot.

"There is more to tell you, but it will keep awhile. It is good news of a sort, and affects your future strongly. But stay here, and I will return in an hour."

He went out and closed the door, leaving me to my grief.

But I was not too unhappy to appreciate the goodness of the Surgeon-Superintendent of His Majesty's transport *Olga*.

CHAPTER VII.

Fortune's Plaything.

That evening, with a fair wind behind us, we sailed from the Downs, and in less than a week were well clear of the Channel and the Bay of Biscay, which, as we crossed its usually stormy bosom, smiled for us. By the end of the week, the monotonous routine of our five month's voyage had been well established, and all in the ship—passengers, crew, sailors, and prisoners—had settled down into the regular and unvarying life—which was to be endured, with but brief intermission at the three ports we touched, until we should anchor in Port Jackson.

Nothing that is worth recording in any detail happened on that long sailing round the world, except one thing, that had a great influence upon my whole life. We carried out our daily tasks and duties in a regular and well ordered fashion—cleaned the prison, decks, and hospital, aired our bedding, drew our rations and ate them, took our daily two hours of fresh air behind the barricade on the upper deck, counted the time by the ship's bells and the changing of the guard. And so day after day and week after week the routine went on, until it seemed to me that I had always lived this sort of life, and was destined never to live any other.

We called at Teneriffe, at Rio de Janiero, and the Cape of Good Hope—none of which places we saw anything of, for we were kept below deck the whole time

we remained in port. These intervals were unspeakably miserable, but as our longest stay was only for a day or so over a fortnight, at the Cape, they did not seriously affect the health of the prisoners as a whole. But we were none of us sorry when the pitching and rolling of the ship indicated to us that we were once more upon our voyage.

A few days after our final departure from England, Mr. Collingwood again summoned me to his cabin.

"Sit down, Carnford," he said, as I saluted. "Wait a few minutes until I have finished these returns. I have something further to tell you."

I seated myself wonderingly, and presently, having signed the last of his papers, he turned round in his chair and spoke to me.

"The other day," he began, "when I acquainted you with the melancholy tidings of your father's death, I mentioned that there was something else to tell you, Carnford. I did not inform you of your good fortune then, because it hardly seemed decent to do so in the same breath that had uttered such unhappy news to you. But there is no reason why you should not know it now."

"Good fortune, sir!"

Could it be that I was to receive a free pardon on our arrival at Sydney? I could think of nothing better or more desirable than that I might be permitted to return at once from exile. He smiled a little at my look of astonishment.

"Yes—the best of good fortune. The only pity of it is that your present situation discounts it a little. What would you say were I to inform you that you were the richest man in the ship—that, in fact, you could quite easily afford to buy the ship?"

"You're joking, sir!"

"No, indeed I'm not. To be brief, your father left over one hundred thousand pounds sterling. Forty thousand go to your mother, and the balance of the fortune is left to you—in trust with Mr. Isaac Palfrey, your late father's manager. Besides that, there is the business,

which is to be carried on until you have reached the age of twenty-five. So there you are. You might buy the *Olga*, cargo and all—though I think you'd have a pretty bad bargain with the bulk of the cargo," he laughed.

The news stunned me. I knew that my father was well off, for the firm of Hawkins & Carnford had been a prosperous one for many years. But I had no notion that he was such a rich man as his death had discovered him to be. Why, I had little doubt that I would be one of the wealthiest men in New South Wales when I should reach there. But a convict!

My face must have expressed my thoughts. Mr. Col-lingwood laid a hand upon my arm.

"I know what troubles you, Carnford. It would trouble any man. I don't think I have ever heard of such an ironical stroke of ill-fortune as has fallen upon you. You are, indeed, Fortune's plaything. To have become involved in the death of that unfortunate Sheriff's officer, through no fault but a little too much wine; and then to have escaped the gallows by a very narrow margin, and to find yourself a convict transported for fourteen years; and to be overwhelmed with grief at the moment of sailing by the loss of a good parent; and now to learn that you are a rich man, and at the same time to be a prisoner of the Crown, condemned to penal servitude for so long a period! Well, it is rough—it is a little rough, to be sure."

"What use is it to me, sir? Better if it had all gone to my mother—or to some charity. It can do me no good," I said, gloomily.

"Don't be so sure. A man would need to be in a very bad situation to whom sixty thousand pounds could not be of some advantage. Let me tell you what I see in it for you. I'm not at all sure that, getting this inheritance in the way you are, it is not likely to be of much more benefit to you, in the long run, than if you had come into it in all your youth and inexperience, as a free man in London."

"How so, sir?" I asked doubtfully.

"Well, let us suppose that everything goes for you, from now on, as it may reasonably be expected to go. You land in Sydney with a good character from the *Olga*. I think I can safely predict as much as that," he laughed. "In Sydney you will be paraded for inspection by the Governor, and, as a good conduct prisoner, will probably be selected immediately by some colonist in want of labour. In your case that is a certainty. Your father's agent, Mr. George Blundell, whom I know slightly, will apply for your services, and I've no doubt he will get them without question. Then you are as good as free. In a few years, if you conduct yourself well, I am certain that a conditional emancipation may be had for the asking. The very fact of your fortune will tell in your favour with the authorities. But even if you had to serve your whole sentence, fourteen years do not constitute an eternity. And in that time you will have become a man. You will not have been spared from temptations of even a worse sort than you would meet with at home—but you won't have your fortune to waste on them. You will be going through a mill that will find you out as either of one of two things—a good colonist and a man, or a hopeless wastrel. I have no fear of the latter result. You haven't got the makings of a good criminal in you—even if you were going to the chain-gangs. And then you can go home again, or—what I sincerely hope—can take up a share in the development of this new country, which is, I am sure of it, destined to be one of the best in the world. We do not know it yet—we are only perched upon its doorstep. I would like to see it a century hence. Now, go below again, and think over your situation. You'll find it is a brighter one, in its future, than most of your shipmates, myself included, may congratulate themselves upon. You are the luckiest transport I've ever known."

It may be well supposed that this interview gave me a good deal to think over in the months that followed. It was a good thing for me that Mr. Collingwood had spoken to me as he did, for, if it did nothing else, it con-

vinced me that there was, after all, something in my situation that might well excite the envy of others. It certainly did that, as I was destined to realise in a bitter enough fashion before many years were gone by.

The incident to which I referred, a few pages back, as being the only thing noteworthy of record during our uneventful voyage was this.

One afternoon, some ten days after we had sailed out of Table Bay at the Cape of Good Hope, I was on deck with the rest of the division of prisoners to which I belonged for "air and exercise" parades. It was a splendid day, and the ship, with all her canvas straining and bellying overhead was plunging her bluff bows, in a kind of joyous frolic with the waves, through the white-crested, deeply blue waters—at least, so it seemed to me.

You may imagine how beautiful the brilliant sunlight and the dancing waters, and the flying sheets of spray, that hissed and splashed to port and starboard as we rushed on our heaving, rolling course, were, after twenty-four hours in the dimly lighted 'tween decks. It was like a draught of wine to me—to come up from the reeking bowels of the ship, where there was an atmosphere of tar, bilge-water, and the odour of sweating human bodies, into the fresh wholesomeness of the winds of the sea and the light of the sun. Down below, in the ribald companionship of London thieves, and the dullness of poor yokels, one might well brood on the blackness of the present and the future, or dwell miserably on the mistakes and foolishness of the past. But, to any unhappy soul amongst us, the first glimpse of the sunlit sails, and the clear blue of the sky and the wide sweep of the encircling horizon, was a never failing tonic. Every second of the two hours was precious to me, and when the weather was bad, as it often was whilst we made our southing—the two or three days confinement below the battened hatches was nearly as terrible as those dreadful weeks in the hulk *Prince Frederick* had been.

Forward of the quarterdeck, behind our well guarded

barrier, some fifty of us walked or sat in our yellow liveries. Fifteen or twenty of us—Brian and myself included—"followed our leader" round and round outside of the deck, between barricade and foc'sle, in a sharp run. Dr. Collingwood himself had instituted this diversion, and the exercise was indeed a blessing. Towards the stern, the white deck stretched to the poop, under the break of which the red-coated guard stood at ease, with bayonets fixed and muskets loaded. Just forward of the main mast, a small brass howitzer was cleated to the deck. It was loaded with grapeshot, and was pointed so as to cover the entrance to our playground.

Further aft, on the poop, existed a little world that was miles away from ours. Here, under a canvas awning, was Freedom located. To look across the intervening space of quarterdeck, and over the heads and gleaming bayonets of the soldiers, was like peering into another world. We could see the upper circumference of the wheel, and the head and shoulders of the steersman. With regular stride, the officer of the watch, his dark blue figure seeming almost to be moved by clockwork, save when he paused for a moment to look at the binnacle, or to address a remark to the man at the wheel, paced up and down the weather side of the poop. Sometimes the Captain, the passengers, the surgeon, and Ensign Keating formed a little group in chairs, drinking tea and gossiping, about the cabin skylight.

I had dropped out of the leadership of the runners, and was getting my breath, just forward of the barricade, when something suddenly happened that was so quick in its happening I had not time to think of it, until I found myself battling with the water in the wake of the ship.

The breeze that came in over the stern wafted a merry peal of laughter down to us, and I saw the beautiful girl, Miss Nutting, suddenly run to the lee rail and seat herself upon it. I saw the crimson jacket of Ensign Keating flash into the sunlight towards her—and then

the ship gave a lurch. There was the quick gleam of her muslin dress as she lost her hold and fell into the sea. I was upon the top of the barricade, in a jump, and over into the seething waters. They told me afterwards that the sentry fired his musket at me as I jumped. But I did not hear it. I did not even know that I had jumped, until the cold shock of the sea sent the swift thoughts racing through my head.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Rescue.

The dark chill of the hissing waters closed over me, and as they bore me away, their roar and rush seemed like a mill race. When I came to the surface, the heaving stern of the ship—with its cabin windows gleaming and sparkling in the afternoon sun, and the water cascading and dripping from her wet counter—was many yards from me. But already I could see, in one swift glance that I took from the crest of a surge, that the officer of the watch was taking steps to heave her to. I turned and struck out along her wake, away from her, straining my eyes for a glimpse of Miss Nutting.

There was not much sea, but each time that I sank down into a trough of it I seemed to be hidden in a wide valley between towering hills of dark blue and green. It was not until I had been swung up to a crest some three or four times that I caught a momentary glimpse of her face and head, and a white, bare arm that waved appealingly, some thirty or forty yards away. Falling from the poop she had had a start of me, but my actions had been quick, and I had reached the water not many seconds after she had done so.

It was fortunate that she was a good swimmer, and that her courage and endurance equalled her skill. When I reached her, I found her actually swimming towards me, and she greeted me with the greatest coolness, even laughing, as she grasped one of my hands.

"Thank you so much!" she spluttered, and because of a curling crest that slapped me in the face, my polite depreciation of her praise was lost. I put my arm

about her, and we paddled gently towards the ship, which by this time had been brought to, but was a long distance from us. However, as we were heaved up on to the crests, we could see the boat that had left her side, and was making slowly towards us. A man at the mast-head of the *Olga* kept us in view, and made signals to the officer in charge of the boat.

It was strange how small and desolate an object our floating world looked from our point of view, out there in the vast wilderness of the seas. Aboard, we seemed to be a large and densely populated community—it was about three hundred souls, in all—but from the tops of the waves the ship looked like a toy. Not, however, when we drew close alongside her. Then her vast hulk seemed to dominate the ocean. Even the boat, as it drew closer to us, took on an unnatural appearance of immensity.

As I had swum towards her I had been making up my mind as to what I should do when I should reach her, should she lose her head and struggle. I had resolved on the heroic course of stunning her with a blow from my fist. But her courage and coolness made me feel like a fool, for having so misjudged her. Positively, she seemed to be enjoying the adventure.

"Isn't it jolly!" she laughed, her long hair streaming darkly out in the water, and her face rosy and glowing with excitement. Her splendid eyes shone with the sheer joy of it. Such a creature was worth saving. But I could hardly call myself her saviour. She had done as much for herself as I had.

Each time we were lifted up we could see that the boat was making steady progress towards us, though pulling against the wind rendered it a slow business.

"What is your name?" she cried to me, as we sank into a hollow.

"John Carnford," I called back, as we lifted over the next wave.

"You are one of the soldiers, I suppose?"

I had taken my yellow jacket off before joining in the

running game on deck, and she could not see my convict uniform. I was silent for a little while. But I reflected that she'd know soon enough, and might as well hear it from me now as find out for herself, when we should be pulled into the boat.

"No," I called shamefacedly, "one of the convicts."

"A prisoner!" she gasped. "Oh, I am sorry for you. I'll never forget your bravery in jumping in after me. Papa will do something for you. I know he will."

I was about to say something of a bitter sort, to the effect that it was out of the power of anyone to do anything for me—when we were swung up again to a watery summit and saw the boat only a few yards from us. In the short vision which I had of her, I could see that they had lost sight of us, and did not realise that in the next few moments they would be upon us. I yelled loudly as we sank into the trough again—and the next instant had a hasty sight of the white prow of the boat poised above us for a quiet second or so. Then down it came, plunging upon us, with a hissing curl of foam breaking under the stem. With all my might I shoved the girl away, out of the track of the deadly keel, and tried to dive, but I was too late. I knew of a crash, and the taste of salt water on my tongue, and of a vague sense of being driven down and down, into black darkness. And the next that I knew was that the pink sails of the ship, as they caught the last rays of the setting sun, looked very dazzling against the clear blue of the sky. After that, I had a faint view of Dr. Collingwood's face, as he bent over me, and heard him saying, as if it were from a distance—

"He'll do now. Here, pick him up, a couple of you, and help him down to the hospital. But drink this first, Carnford. You'll be all right in the morning. Only a bit of a crack on the nut. You're not done yet." The Doctor held a glass of brandy to my lips.

"He'll live to be hung yet," remarked a disagreeable voice behind me. I recognised it for the military officer's.

As two of the guard assisted me to my feet, I saw her, with her wet hair hanging about her shoulders, over the seaman's pea jacket in which they had wrapped her in the boat. Her beautiful face was flushed with anger, and she stamped her foot upon the deck in vexation.

"He is a good man," she said. "Men like that don't get hung. I'm ashamed of you, sir, for saying such a thing."

"Now, Miss Adelaide," said her maid soothingly. "Do come down to your cabin, and change your wet things. You said you would, as soon as he had recovered."

She suffered herself to be led away—not, however, before she had thanked me in front of them all.

"You are a brave man," she said, taking my hand for a moment. "I thank you with all my heart, Mr. Carnford. When the boat came down upon us, you saved my life, almost at the expense of your own. I do thank you—indeed I do."

Ensign Keating scowled, but said nothing, and walked away. They took me below, and put me into a berth in the prison hospital, between warm blankets. One of the convict attendants was feeding me with gruel, when we heard voices outside the door. One was Dr. Collingwood's, but the other I did not recognise.

"Damme! My dear Doctor," it was saying. "Positively luxurious! Splendid! I had no ideah. Most interesting. Really excellent."

A subdued titter came from the prison, as the hospital door was opened, and the Surgeon, with the passenger whom I only knew as Miss Nutting's father came in.

"Well, Carnford, and how are you now?" the Doctor asked me cheerily, as he felt my pulse. "Here's Mr. Nutting, the young lady's father, come to see you. He wants to thank you, too. Indeed, we all must do that. I don't know what we would have done if we'd lost our little angel. Here he is, Mr. Nutting—nothing much the worse for it."

I looked up, and in the dim light of the lantern hang-

ing from the beam in the middle of the hospital, inspected at close quarters the figure of the exquisitely attired gentleman whom we beheld daily on the poop from behind our prison barricade.

He was, indeed, in notable contrast with his surroundings. Picture one of the bucks of the Regency in the dark 'tween decks of a convict vessel, and you will realise how much so. He was dressed as he might have been in Pall Mall on a spring afternoon—beaver top hat, silken stock, ruffled shirt, blue cloth coat with gold buttons, white buckskin breeches, and tasselled patent leather boots reaching half way up his shins. He peered at me through a single eyeglass, which was mounted upon a little ebony stick.

"Haw, my good man," he addressed me in a high pitched, rather effeminate voice, with a somewhat affected drawl. "I am glad to see you are not much the worse for your bath. A brave action, damme, quite a brave action. I am immensely obliged to you, my good fellow. I will make it my business to speak to the Governor in your favour when we reach Sydney. Damme, so I will."

"That will do you no harm, Carnford," said Dr. Collingwood. "Mr. Nutting goes out with very strong letters of recommendation to Governor Bligh, who is on his way out to the Settlement, and should reach Port Jackson a little before we do. We were to have sailed in his company had we not been delayed. I daresay Mr. Nutting won't be unwilling to do what he can for you."

"Damme, no, Doctor. I'm vastly indebted to the good fellow—vastly indebted. Do anything I can—to be sure."

He fumbled in his pocket and pulled out a guinea, which he held out towards me.

"Haw—a little something for you my man—a little sum for refreshment, or tobacco. Take it, I beg of you."

I shook my head. The Doctor roared with laughter.

"My dear Nutting," he said. "It's a case of 'coals to Newcastle.' Do you know, this young man could

buy and sell us all. 'This is the man I was speaking of the other evening at dinner—the man whom I had to acquaint with the fact that he'd come into a fortune.'

"Damme, is that so? Most interesting, very curious indeed," said Mr. Nutting, regarding me with increased respect, I thought. "Damme, the fellow might tip me, by George—that he might. Oh, well, you have my thanks—my good man, my earnest thanks."

To do Mr. George Mainwaring Nutting justice, he never forgot that I had gone into the water after his daughter. He was a strange character, but in all the years I knew him he was never anything but good and friendly to me.

But I never spoke to either him or his daughter again, until we had arrived at the end of our voyage.

CHAPTER IX.

Sydney Town.

It was sometime in the night when we made the Heads of Port Jackson, and Captain Colman stood off and on until daylight, before attempting the entrance to the harbour. In order to assist the men in various duties incidental to our making port, a half-dozen or so of us were summoned upon deck by Dr. Collingwood. The sun was well up when we came up the hatchway, and we were beating against a westerly breeze, into what seemed to be a fairly large bay, but nothing very wonderful, considering all that we had heard concerning the extent and beauty of Port Jackson. The Heads looked like the pillars of a narrow gateway in a great wall of yellow sandstone, and opposite to them was another high bluff of rock—Middle Head—that seemed to me, at first, to limit the navigation of the harbour. I was a little surprised to see no shipping, and no town upon the heights of the South Head, nor any indication of a settlement save the flagstaff and a white hut at its foot.

But what a revelation when we were once inside the Heads, and began to open up the glorious beauties of that magnificent sheet of water—really a land-locked lake of almost indescribable splendour!

Many a hundred times since that morning, half a century ago, have I sailed into Port Jackson, in fair weather and in foul, and I have never tired of contemplating its marvellous beauties. Coming from my station on the Hunter River—Ludgate Hill—both in the old trad-

ing schooners that used to ply between Sydney and Newcastle, and latterly in the splendid steam vessels that can do the voyage from Morpeth, easily, in the twelve hours, I have never missed, in daytime or at night, being upon deck as we came through the Heads. The charm of Port Jackson never fails. But on that first morning, in August, 1806, its aspect almost bewildered me. Never had I imagined that there could be anything so beautiful in the way of natural scenery. Some of the sailors said that the harbour of Rio de Janiero was finer, but as we had been confined below deck all the time we were there, we had no means of comparing the two ports. If it is finer than Sydney, it must be something very wonderful.

We were all the morning working up the harbour against the westerly, which, as you know, is the prevailing wind of winter upon the coast of New South Wales. There was little sign of the town in those days, until you came right up to Sydney Cove. Its furthest outposts were about Woolloomooloo, and the heights which were afterwards called Darlinghurst. There were one or two country houses between them and the coast, belonging to officers of the garrison and well-to-do merchants, but they lay in a wild inhospitable desert of scrub and forest, and were as far removed from Sydney as are farms upon the Nepean and George's Rivers to-day.

With every half mile we opened up some new vista. All the points and promontories were thickly wooded down to the water's edge, and here and there, in curving bays, white beaches gleamed between the dark foliage of the primeval forest and the blue water that lapped them gently. It was a brilliant forenoon, and we could hardly credit the fact that it was a winter's day. The islands were covered with scrub and timber also. One of the prettiest of them all—the little one opposite Farm Cove, on which the hideous Port Denison has lately been erected, and which bore the elegant name of Pinchgut—the natives called it *Mattewai*—was ornamented with a

gibbet, on which hung in chains the remains of some unfortunate wretch, who I afterwards learned, had been detected in robbing the Commissariat Stores. It was a grim sign post pointing the way to Sydney, and reminding us that, although we were coming to a new land, yet, after all, we were but entering the gates of a prison, New South Wales was nothing else until, in good Governor Macquarie's time, the barrier of the mountains to the westward had been scaled, and Australia began to be regarded as being intended as much for the freeman as for the felon.

Just before noon, we dropped our anchor within the mouth of the little bay round which the town of Sydney clustered—a primitive, quaint little place it was then, straggling up the valley of the Tank Stream, and upon the low hills to east and west of it, for about a mile inland. There were a few public buildings, a fairly large military barrack, a gaol, and Government House. Some of the officers of the New South Wales Corps had fine residences, and up on the "Rocks," to the west of the Cove, there were one or two really pretentious dwellings, but for the most part the houses were small two- or three-roomed cottages, with tiny vegetable gardens in front of them, and with little claim to architectural adornment of any sort. They were very often the primitive wattle-and-daub structures which had been built in the opening years of the Settlement. And yet, considering that the place had only been occupied by the English for eighteen years, Sydney in 1806 was no discredit to the British genius for colonisation.

So soon as we had brought up to our moorings, boats put off to the ship, but the sentries warned them off, and nobody was allowed to come aboard before the Naval Officer—the Harbour Master—had visited us. He came off within the hour of our arrival, and Dr. Collingwood received him at the gangway, and conducted him aft to the cabin. I heard him remark to the surgeon, as they passed into the poop—

"The Governor is coming off to you this afternoon, Dr. Collingwood. Be prepared for him. He never lets us forget that he's a post-captain in the Royal Navy. Be sure and see to it that your military officer has the guard under arms, and all ready to accord him his salute. He's rather a stickler for that sort of thing, is His Excellency."

It was a little after two o'clock when the Governor's boat was observed to be putting off from the little jetty below Government House. We were immediately ordered to form up in a double rank in the waist of the ship, and along the port side, and the whole of the detachment, with Mr. Keating in command, of soldiers, fell in upon the quarterdeck. They were more spick and span than we had even seen them, and every button shone, while their belts were pipe-clayed to a snowy whiteness. Everybody in the ship wore the best clothes that they had. Captain Colman's blue cloth coat had never been used before, and was in imminent danger of splitting at the seams, since our good commander had put on flesh during the voyage. The most splendid looking personage in the ship's company, however, was Mr. Nutting. He might almost have been going to call on the Prince of Wales, or Mr. Brummell—he was so gorgeously arrayed.

The boat came alongside the ship in man-o'-war fashion, the crew tossing their oars, as the bow man hooked on to the side ladder. Dr. Collingwood and Captain Colman stood at the gangway to receive him, and, with the soldiers presenting arms, and us prisoners taking off our caps, His Excellency, Captain William Bligh, R.N., Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief in and over His Majesty's Territory of New South Wales, stepped aboard the *Olga*, and immediately said,

"Damme, sir, your decks are not very clean."

Now the decks had been washed down before the mid-day meal, and, indeed, were in very good order, but they were not snow white as a man-o'-war's would have been.



The most splendid looking personage in the ship's company
was Mr. Nutting.

However, it was characteristic of His Excellency to judge anything and everybody by the standards of the service to which he belonged.

He inspected the guard, and Mr. Keating was introduced to him. To our great delight, he found fault with that gentleman, because a flint was missing from one of the soldier's muskets.

"See to it that the man is punished, sir," he said pointing at the unlucky private with his cane. "Give the —— a dozen, sir. 'Twill teach him better."

Incredible as it may seem, the man was actually flogged in the barracks on the following day, and the mean-souled and vindictive Ensign Keating saw to it that he got *two* dozen.

And then our turn came.

The Governor, eyeing us keenly, walked along our ranks. Every now and again he would mutter, half to himself—

"A damned ill-looking crew," or "What —— scoundrels!"

It was little wonder that William Bligh could get himself hated more bitterly than most men can. And yet he had a power of winning the respect and admiration of many of his fellow men, that can only be ascribed to his real possession of the most sterling qualities. To this day—though I have never been blind to his faults—I am glad to testify to the love and respect I bore Governor Bligh. He was a brave and an honest man—but he had the temper of a devil, and the perversity of a mule.

His Excellency addressed us in a short and characteristic quarter-deck oration, remarkable for the forcibleness of its diction rather than for the uplifting moral sentiments it might have been expected to convey.

"And let me tell ye this," it concluded. "Ye have to look to yourselves for whatever is coming to ye in the future. Be patient, submit to discipline, be industrious, sober, and well behaved—and ye'll have good chances. But if ye are mutinous, idle, or drunken ye'll have h——l

knocked out of ye. Mind yourselves, d——n ye, mind yourselves. That's all I want to say to ye."

Before we were dismissed to complete our preparations for disembarkation, the Governor and Dr. Collingwood conversed together in low tones that were inaudible to me. They seemed to be considering something that had to do with us, for they eyed us constantly, and once or twice Captain Bligh pointed to men in our ranks, and appeared to be questioning the Surgeon about them. At last Dr. Collingwood caught my eye, and beckoned to me.

"Come forward, Carnford," he said. "His Excellency desires to speak to you."

Wondering how I had attracted such august attention, I stepped out of the ranks, and, saluting, halted before the Surgeon and the Governor. The latter looked me up and down, searchingly, before he spoke. He turned to Dr. Collingwood.

"Seems to be a likely fellow, Doctor. Strong, active, young—and not so infernally ugly as some of these other villians. What's he here for! For what was he transported?"

"Well, your Excellency—I am very sorry to say that he was sentenced to death for murder, and the death penalty was commuted to transportation for fourteen years. But I would say this——"

"Murder!" interrupted the Governor. "So ye're a d——d assassin, are ye, my lad? We'll cure you of that, I promise ye."

"He was an unfortunate accessory, your Excellency," said Dr. Collingwood. "He has a most exemplary character. I have trusted him fully during the voyage, and found him entirely worthy of such confidence. Indeed, your Excellency could not do better than choose, out of those we have aboard, this young man. I will answer for it that you will have little fault to find with him. I think he would answer your purpose admirably."

"Oh, won't I!" grunted Bligh. "Let me tell you, Dr. Collingwood, there are d——d few people I can't find

fault with. I have not been a naval officer all these years for nothing, I can tell you. However, if you vouch for him, I'll take him. My experience leads me to believe that a murderer is generally more useful and desirable, as a servant, than a thief or a forger. You get your traps together, and come ashore in my boat. I'm going to take you into my service, so mind your d——d p's and q's. I'll flog the guts out of ye, if ye disappoint me—or make a liar of the Doctor."

Dr. Collingwood signed me to be off, and I saluted and went below, to get my few possessions together. I was stooping over my berth when I experienced a slap on the back. I looked round, and saw Brian McMahon, his red face full of concern.

"What's this, Jack! Are ye going off wid that little pepper-box of a Governor, an' lavin' me be me lonesome? Sure I thought better of ye than that, so I did."

"I've no choice, Brian, old boy," I replied. "Captain Bligh has given me my orders, and you can see he's not the sort of man to question with. But I know Dr. Collingwood intends to look after us both, and I'm sure he'll see to it that you get something better than falls to the lot of the rest of this mob."

"I suppose so, Johnnyboy," sighed my friend resignedly. "Well, good-bye for the present. We'll stick to one another, Jack, won't we?"

"Of course we will, old boy. I'll——"

But our farewell was cut short by the insistent bellowing of the sentry down the hatchway for "John Carnford." Hastily making a bundle of my belongings, I ran up the ladder, and saw the Governor talking to Dr. Collingwood at the gangway.

"Come along, d——n ye!" he roared at me. "Ye'll need to step more lively, blast ye, if you come into my service, my man."

He ran down the ladder, and I followed him into his boat. As I passed Dr. Collingwood, he whispered hastily.

"It's all right, Carnford—you're in luck. I'll attend to your affairs, and look after Mr. Blundell, your agent. I'll see you in a day or two."

As we rowed from the ship to the shore, I caught a glimpse of Miss Nutting, standing on the poop with her father. It may have been fancy, but I thought she nodded and smiled to me as we passed under the *Olga's* stern.

CHAPTER X.

The Governor's Man.

I propose to carry my story on, with only the briefest reference to the time that elapsed between my landing at Sydney, in August, 1806, and the beginning of the year 1808. After all, its main interest lies in the events which I witnessed and took part in during this stormy period of the Colony's history. That is to say the period preceding and subsequent to the deposition of Governor Bligh, and the usurpation of Government by the officers and friends of the New South Wales Corps. It is the one historic event of Australian life with which I am thoroughly familiar, and is, indeed, the event which had most to do with the shaping of my destiny.

The position for which, at the recommendation of Dr. Collingwood, I was selected by Governor Bligh, was a curious one. I hardly know whether he regarded me as a valet, a bodyguard, a sort of assistant-secretary, a groom, a policeman, or a confidential agent. At some time or another I was one or more of these—not infrequently several of them simultaneously. What I understood from him in the beginning, was that he needed the services of someone whom he could trust implicitly, and who would be ready for any work that was required of him at any time.

"I want you to 'stand by,' Carnford," he said to me. "D——n your soul, I want ye to be always standing by."

So I "stood by," and a queer variety of experiences fell to my lot. I almost lost my identity, because of my

association with his Excellency. I was far better known as "The Governor's Man," than I was as John Carnford.

I knew afterwards that Dr. Collingwood had made it his business to inform the Governor concerning me as wholly as he was able. He had told him of the peculiar ill fortune which had involved Brian McMahon and myself in the death of Patrick Hanrahan, of the death of my father, and of my inheritance of a large fortune. He related to me, years afterwards, the fashion in which His Excellency had received the latter information. The Doctor, being entitled to put the magic letters "R.N." after his name, was in high favour at Government House, and it was when he was dining here, a few nights after our arrival in Sydney, that he told Captain Bligh all about me.

The Governor looked at him curiously after he had finished the story, and said nothing for a little time. Then he banged his fist on the table, and said—there were no ladies present, fortunately—

"D——n his soul, Dr. Collingwood, does he suppose his sixty thousand pounds is going to buy him my favour? Do you suppose it is? Then let me tell you it will do nothing of the kind. He must serve his sentence. Whatever amelioration of circumstances may come his way, will depend altogether upon himself. I am a just man—though some say I am a hard one—and I will not favour this fellow because he is wealthy. In our service, Dr. Collingwood—you know it as well as I know it—there are many young gentlemen who are highly connected, and who have considerable private means of their own. Does that ever save them from dirty work, from dangerous work, from hard work, or from the masthead when they deserve it? No, sir. D——n my soul, no. A midshipman, to me, is a midshipman—and a convict is a convict. In both cases it is only diligence and good conduct that weighs favourably. If this young man is diligent and well conducted, I shall

take notice of it. If he is idle, dissolute, or lazy, he will suffer. It rests with himself, d——n him, it rests with himself."

I know, however, that the Governor always took an interest in me, and I know that he came to think well of me, and to trust me. But his manner to me was often as rough and tyrannical as it might have been to any soldier, or any soldier's officer. He had a peculiar prejudice against and antipathy to soldiers, which he never hesitated to make evident. Nor did they fail to reciprocate such sentiments.

My father's agent, Mr. George Blundell, had come aboard the *Olga* the day after I left her to enter the Governor's establishment. Dr. Collingwood had seen him, and, in reply to his request that I should be assigned to him, had informed him of the Governor's having selected me for his own service. Mr. Blundell had agreed that it would be as well not to attempt to interfere with that arrangement. But Dr. Collingwood had strongly recommended Brian, and Mr. Blundell had agreed to apply for him. His application was successful, and it was a great consolation to me that my friend had come into such good hands.

Mr. Blundell was one of the first of the merchant traders of the new colony. He had been a stock-broker in London with a good connection, but, having married a lady who proved to be not only no better, but a great deal worse than she ought to have been, had come to ruin over her, through killing in a duel another man whom he had found with her in circumstances that admitted of no compromise. Like myself, he had been sentenced to death, and his sentence had been commuted to transportation. He had come to the colony in Governor Hunter's time, and had almost immediately received a conditional pardon, which permitted him entire freedom in Australia, but did not allow him to return to England. So he had made the best of a bad business, had invested his capital in a trading venture in

Sydney, had been eminently successful in it, and at this time was one of the leading business men of the place. He was an old friend of my father's, and to his goodness and kindness I owe more than I say. It is ten years since he died at Parramatta, and when I visit the place I always walk into St. John's Cemetery to stand for a few minutes beside the grave of my old friend and benefactor.

Of Mr. Nutting and his daughter, I saw very little in those two years. That exquisite gentleman, having a considerable sum of money to invest in its improvement and development, had received an extensive grant of land from the Government, at Emu Plains, and, after six months in Sydney, had gone to reside on his estate, taking Miss Adelaide with him. It was a rough and unusual life for a young girl fresh from home, but she was a girl of rare spirit and courage, and adapted herself to her new conditions after the brave and resolute fashion which so many of our pioneer women of Australia displayed. I think, with the exception of one occasion, I only caught sight of her some two or three times during this period, but it was not long before our lives came to be so strongly interwoven as you will see they were in the story which I am writing for you. And, you Carnfords who read it may bless your good fortune that they were so interwoven. If there is any good in any of you, you got it from her.

I accompanied the Governor wherever he went. He had fitted me out in a semi-military uniform—somewhat against his liking, I think, but it was the only sort of rig which was available in the stores. He would have preferred a naval dress, and, indeed, from force of habit, I suppose, he often addressed me as "coxswain." I discharged many of the duties which fell to the lot of a captain's coxswain in the Royal Navy. Sometimes we journeyed to the Green Hills, as the main settlement on the Hawkesbury was called—it was afterwards named Windsor by Governor Macquarie. Sometimes we went and resided at Parramatta for several weeks. We made

several expeditions by sea to Broken Bay, and once we sailed to the Coal River, now called Newcastle, of which I was before very long to have so bitter an experience.

I have a vivid remembrance of one occasion when I was in attendance upon His Excellency. Since it was an incident that well may serve to illustrate Bligh's character and bearing, I will relate it here. I could easily understand from it why the men of H.M.S. *Bounty* had found him so intolerable in his behaviour towards them.

He summoned me one morning to accompany him on a walk into the town. I found him awaiting me, in a very bad temper, on the grand drive before the verandah of Government House.

"Damn ye, Carnford, where have ye been! Am I to await ye all day, ye blasted lubber?"

"I was copying those returns you gave me last night, your Excellency," I excused myself—though I had come instantly, only waiting to buckle on the belt containing the brace of pistols which I always had to carry, as well as a cutlass or hanger.

"Damn the returns!" he roared. "Follow me!"—and he strode down to the gate, grudgingly acknowledging, by a wave of his stick that was almost minatory, the presented arms of the sentry.

We went down the hill, and across the bridge that spanned the Tank Stream—where Pitt and Bridge Streets intersect to-day. Up the other slope of the valley, he led the way into George Street. Everybody we passed—officers, soldiers, convicts, and civilians, manifested by their bearing the wholesome awe which His Excellency inspired. He returned their salutes in a manner that might almost have been regarded as a curse in pantomime. Outside the gaol, the sight of a gang of prisoners in chains, lazily carrying out a road mending task, excited his ire. He halted, and called the overseer to him. The poor man approached, in fear and trembling.

"Hello, you! Come here, I say, — ye! What do

ye call this, hey? What do ye call this? Are these —'s amusing themselves, or what, pray?"

"If ye please y'r Honour—they be a'mending the roa-ad," answered their taskmaster, touching his cap.

"Mending the road! Damme, they're only playing with the work." The prisoners had become energetically industrious when they saw who their critic was. He shook his fist at them. "Ye idle vagabonds, ye! D——n my eyes, but I'll make ye work, instead of play. See here, you ——," to the overseer, "how many of these gallows-birds have ye here?"

"'Tis ten in th' gang, y'r Honour."

"Ten men! Ten —— useless ——'s, ye mean! Now see here, you ——, you select three of them, and report them for idleness, and tell the Superintendent I said they were to have two dozen apiece. And send the names of them up to Government House. I'll teach 'em they're not sent here to amuse themselves. I'll teach 'em—and you too, ye useless wastrel. I've a mind to send ye back to the gang yourself. Come along, Carnford, d——n ye. Don't stand staring there, like a stuffed monkey!" And His Excellency resumed his genial progress through the capital of his dominions.

We came at last to the end of the ridge upon which the western side of the little town lay, to Dawe's Point and Dawe's Battery, where there was a sergeant's guard over the little fortification which was the principal artillery defence of Sydney in 1806. The sentry recognised his august visitor at a distance, and had the guard turned out in good time. As we came abreast of the guard-room they presented arms in proper style, the sergeant, with his long halberd at the shoulder, standing stiff as a poker. His Excellency stopped opposite the little parade, and critically inspected it. The guard remained at the "present."

Suddenly he took two quick steps to the right flank, and held out his stick behind him to me.

"Hold that, Carnford, d——n ye—hold that stick."

I took it, and the Governor immediately grasped the musket of the man before him.

"Let me have it," he bellowed. The man, gaping with astonishment, yielded it up to His Excellency. Bligh turned it over in his hands, and examined it minutely, an angry frown on his face.

"Dirty, dirty, *filthy*," he exclaimed. He tore the flint from the lock, and dashed it on the ground, thrusting the piece back rudely into the man's hands.

"A pretty fellow, by G——d, to call himself a soldier. Pretty fellow—a —— useless ——, not fit to carry arms."

He repeated this performance with the whole six men of the front rank, using frightful language as he did so, and freely damning the eyes, limbs, and souls of each individual soldier. I could not help noticing the face of the sergeant. It was white with rage and anger. One could see that he would have given his chance of eternal happiness to bring his halberd down to the charge, and transfix the Governor upon its shining spear head. If ever there was potential murder in a man, it was in the sergeant of the guard at Dawe's Battery that morning.

The Governor took his stick from me, and called the sergeant out.

"Come here, you! Come out here—damme, move yourself." The sergeant stepped out to the front and saluted.

"What do you call this, hey?"—pointing to the flints lying in the dust before the line. "D——d disgraceful. 'Tis your fault, ye pasty faced ——, ye! Why do ye not see that your men keep their arms in proper condition? I'll report this to your commanding officer, by H——l I will. I'll have ye disrated, ye ——, crawling lubber. Dismiss the guard, and pick up those flints, and see that they are properly secured. Soldiers, by G——d! I'd not have one of them as a gift, if I was taking a press gang through Wapping. Ye're a disgrace to His Majesty's service, by G——d ye are!"

He turned about, and went back the way he had come,

causing terror and apprehension along the whole course of his morning's walk. It would have been interesting and instructive to listen to the comments of the Dawes' Battery guard as they returned to the guard-room. I could swear, at least, that the sergeant's were forcible and bitter enough.

CHAPTER XI.

The Road to the Green Hills.

It was about Christmas week, 1806, that the Governor sent me on a message to the Hawkesbury, this being the first occasion when he had seen fit to entrust me with any responsible task that took me far out of his sight. I was to deliver a letter to Mr. Andrew Thompson, his agent at the Green Hills, who looked after his newly acquired farm, and attended to the breeding and pasturing of his stock there.

It was about midday when I set out on my journey, which is one of close on forty miles. It was my purpose to stay in Parramatta for the night, and complete my ride in the early hours of the following morning. This would permit of my passing the next night, on my return journey, also in Parramatta, and of reaching Sydney about noon on the third day. I was to put up at the Governor's country residence in Parramatta, where I had often accompanied him, and was well known.

When I turned my back on the blue waters of the harbour it was a roasting hot day, and, crossing the bridge, rode into George Street, which was, as it is to-day, the road to Parramatta. I was riding the Governor's roan mare, Jessie, which was kept principally for use as a hackney by Mrs Putland, Captain Bligh's daughter. She was the wife of Captain John Putland, of H.M.S. *Porpoise*. The poor lady found little time for riding in these days, owing to the serious ill health of her husband, who was fast sinking into a decline, and who died in the

following year. I was always a favourite of hers, and she did me many little kindnesses. She herself it was who suggested that I should exercise Jessie by using her for this journey.

"See whether you can bring me back some little delicacy or other from the farm for Captain Putland, Carnford, if you please," she said, patting the mare's neck, as I awaited the Governor's letter before the house. I promised to do my best. Just then the Governor came to the door, gave me the letter, and told me to get along and be d——d to me, and not to dawdle.

You had not to ride very far to leave Sydney behind you in those days. Once past the burial ground on Brickfield Hill, where St. Andrew's Cathedral stands now, and you were in the suburbs, so to speak. Half a mile past the further foot of the hill, the road turned to the westward, round the end of Cockle Bay—which was subsequently called Darling Harbour, after the worst Governor the colony has had—and you were in the country. Beyond one or two isolated and rude little cottages, there was nothing but scrub and forest until, four miles out, you passed by Major Johnston's estate and house of Annandale. From that point onward it behoved the traveller to ride warily, and with his eyes open, on the look-out for bushrangers, who occasionally stuck up and robbed wayfarers using the Western Road. I had my brace of horse-pistols in my holsters, however, and being young enough to think I really was, felt myself a match for any desperado who might dare to molest me.

But nothing at all happened to me, save the annoyance caused by the heat and the flies, and a little before sunset I rode into Parramatta, and alighted in the stable-yard of Government House. Here I received a hearty welcome from Red Murphy, the Governor's groom at the place, who put me up in his own quarters, and attended to Jessie's wants most handsomely.

"An' how is Billy Bligh?" he enquired solicitously. "Is th' timper of him afther showin' anny sign of an

improvement—or is he jist th' same ragin' bellowin' divil as iver?" His Excellency's health was good, I informed Mr. Murphy, and his temper was normal—which was only a polite way of intimating that he was still the same raging and bellowing devil as usual.

We had a good supper, and afterwards sat out on the hillside, smoking, and gazing across the river and the beautiful valley through which it winds, to the distant heights about Castle Hill. Red Murphy entertained me with reminiscence and anecdote of the early days, some true, and some highly enough coloured. He had come out as a marine with the First Fleet, and had many tales of the privations and struggles of the first years of the settlement at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island. Later on was produced a rum bottle, of which I partook very sparingly, and Mr. Murphy very copiously. By bed time he was singing Irish songs lustily, and finally went to sleep in his chair, where he still snored fearfully, when I rose at the first sign of dawn, to feed and water Jessie. But he was all right when he awoke, and we breakfasted heartily together at six o'clock.

Wonderful hard heads had those old timers! He had finished the bottle of very bad Bengal rum overnight, and seemed none the worse for it in the morning, barring what he called "a bit of a twisht to th' tongue." He untwisted it with a pannikin full, neat, out of a fresh flask.

Except for the first mile or two, through Castle Hill, the Windsor Road in those days was little better than a rude track that had been cleared of scrub and timber, and left to form itself. In wet weather it was almost impassable in places, for wheeled traffic. To-day, however, it was a fair enough highway, and I passed several carts coming in with garden stuff for the market at Parramatta.

I had ridden on my way for some two hours, or thereabouts, and reckoned that I had almost broken the back of my journey, when, as I was ambling through a forest

of tall gum trees, I was startled by the sudden appearance in the roadway of four uncouth figures. They had sprung out of the undergrowth on either side, and, extending across the road, barred my way with uplifted hands? I immediately reined the mare in, and snatched a pistol from my holster.

A tall, thin man with a straggling black beard, barefooted and barelegged, came towards me, crying out:

"For th' love of th' Vargin, don't shoot, misther soger. If ye fire off y'r pistol, ye're a dead corpse entirely. 'Tis thim that has ye covered from behind th' trees. We wish ye no harrum."

I lowered the pistol. The tall man walked up and laid a gnarled hand on my reins, and the others, as ill clad and ragged as himself, crowded round.

"What is it you want of me?" I demanded, as bravely as I could. As a matter of fact, I was in a sad funk.

"'Tis but a very little thing, masther—wan that 'tis not in th' face of ye to rayfuse to half a dozen poor min in a bit of throuble for the want of it."

"Is it money you want?" I asked.

The man shook his head. "'Tis not, thin. Sure, money's not much use to us. We've run away from over yander," pointing towards Castle Hill, "from th' shtockade, an we've a long, long way to go. But will ye not be ridin' in to th' bush for no more than a minute or two? 'Tis dangerous for us to be in th' road. They might be comin' afther us anny minit, so they might."

I felt sure that they meant me no harm, so I suffered the tall man to lead Jessie into the timber. Some thirty yards in, we were hidden from the road, and, under a big tree, I found two more men seated, one of whom was washing, gently and carefully, the lacerated back of the other. There was no mistaking the flagellator's handiwork.

Of any men with firearms, who might have been covering me from the bush, I saw no signs, and I asked the spokesman of the party where they were. He laughed.

"Och, sure, y'r Honor, 'twas but a pretince, so it was. 'Twas th' mortal drid I did be havin' y'd bang off y'r pistol at us, so I invinted thim for the occasion."

The others joined in the laughter—good-naturedly and gleefully, like children—and from their conversation I gathered that they were all Irish. Some of the unfortunate peasantry who had been exiled in hundreds after the abortive rebellion of '98, no doubt. I could see that they meant me no harm, so I dismounted, and asked blackbeard what they were in such need of.

"Sit ye down, Misther Soger-man. 'Twas mesilf that knew ye th' minnit I set eyes on ye. Ye're not wan of th' redcoats, so ye're not. 'Tis th' Governor's mahn himself ye are, I'll be thinkin'? I t'ought so much. Well, Misther Governor's Mahn, 'tis good talk I hear of ye, an' I know ye'll not be hard on us. We've cleared out last night, an' 'tis bate we are for th' bit of a fire to do some cookin' wid. Mabbe 'tis y'silf'd be afther havin' a flint an' steel, wud ye now? We'd buy it off of ye, if t'would be ye'd sell. But we must have fire, for we've far to go."

"Where are you making for?" I asked him.

"To Chiny," he said. "Arrah now. don't be tellin' us we can't get there, for we know better."

"To China!"—I exclaimed in astonishment. I had heard of the wild dream that many of the simpler and more illiterate of the convicts sometimes indulged in as to the possibility of finding an overland route into Asia—but I had never believed that such ignorance was so possible, as to induce men to run away with the notion that it could actually be accomplished. And yet, here was the strange adventure in the making. "But, man," I said, "Australia's an island. You would have to cross the seas to get out of it—to China, or to anywhere else."

"Och, be jabers, we know better. 'Tis Michael Muldoon himself has the map in his pocket, an' paid ten shillin' for it to ould Granny Dacey in Parramatta. Show the gintleman th' map, Mike; show him th' map."

One of the men came forward, and exhibited the strange chart. It was a rude outline of Australia, and a convenient isthmus joined it in the North to a vast, vague, continent, which was labelled "China." A red line was traced over it, that went roughly westward, and then north, and blackbeard explained that this was the course they were to follow.

"See here," he expounded eagerly, "we've to cross thim mountains over yonder, an' we're over th' worst of th' journey, for there is towns and villages beyant thim, where Granny Dacey's made thim marks—th' mark of th' Houly Cross—an' 'tis help we'll be gettin' there, for they're th' good people that's livin' in thim, so they are, says Granny. A wise woman she is, Misther Governor's Mahn, an' she do be knowin' many a thing, so she does. If she says 'tis to be done, thin so 'tis—an' all th' talk in the wide worruld wouldn't prove her wrong. Annyway, we can't be worse off than we are at Castle Hill an' Toongabbee. 'Tis h——l we do be sufferin', so it is. I'd walk to h——l to get away from it."

For an hour or more, I sat and argued with the unfortunate creatures—but to no purpose. They would have it that their lunatic enterprise was possible of achievement, and nothing I could say would convince them otherwise. So I gave them my flint and steel, and tinder-box, and bade them farewell. I promised to say nothing of having met them when I should come to Green Hills.

Poor devils! They learned their bitter lesson. Four of them perished in the wild fastnesses of the inaccessible Blue Mountains, and one was killed by the blacks, and blackbeard himself came into the Cow Pastures six weeks afterwards, the sole survivor of the little band of intrepid explorers. He was insane, and dying of starvation. But they nursed him up, and brought him back to such reason as was possible to him—and then they flogged him, and sent him to Norfolk Island! It was a cruel world, the Australias, fifty years ago. It was more cruel to those

simple Irishmen of '98, I believe, than it was to any others who had come there in bondage. None of them were criminals, but the dreadful system turned them, often, into wild beasts.

As I came into the settlement at Green Hills I began to wonder how I would find out Andrew Thompson. This was my first duty. A group of soldiers, who seemed to be listening to someone who orated loudly in the roadway, attracted my attention, and I rode up to them. They were in various stages of undress, and one or two of them seemed to be the worse for drink. Judge of my astonishment, and my disgust, when I found that the loud voiced person who was making a speech was that same Ensign Keating who had commanded the guard on the transport *Olga*. He was very drunk indeed, very maudlin, and discursive, and hospitable. He had a bottle in his hand, and was serving out rum to the soldiers, in turn, in a little tin pannikin.

"'S what I shay, boys—'s what I'm shayin' to ye. Thish d——n placeh no goo', no goo' tall. T' h——l with th' Green Hills s' what I shay. T' h——l with th' Green Hills. No s'ciety, no 'musements, no hon' an' glory 'tall. Rotten plashe. No goo'. No dam' goo'. Worsh'n Par'matta—an' that's shayin' a lot. Hello old Cock—where you come from? Gov'nor Bligh's man, by —— so it is. H——l with 's Ex'lenshy, h——l with him, I shay! 'M goin' 'bandon shettlement, 'lease prish'ners, give up whole dam' 'stablishment. Have drink, old Gov'nor's man—take drop rum. Won't hurt you—'pon word, honour, wouldn't hurt a babby."

He fell over on the road, rolled on to his face, and fell fast asleep. I asked one of the soldiers, a corporal, who seemed more sober than the others, what was the matter.

"Matter!" he said, with a snort. "Oh, nothing's the matter. On'y our commandin' orf'cer a bit sprung before 'is usual time. 'Ere, pick 'im up a couple of yous, an' carry th' swine to 'is quarters. 'E'll be floggin' some

of ye in th' mornin'. This 'ere is our newly promoted Lootenant Keating—a King's hard bargain, if ever there was one. Who d'ye want? Thompson—Andrew Thompson? Yes, I'll show ye 'is 'ouse. Up th' road a bit 'ere. Well an' 'ow's Sydney Town? Wish t' Gawd I was there, 'stead of this 'ole."

CHAPTER XII.

Andrew Thompson.

It is a beautiful place, that hill by the side of the noble river that winds down through green fields at the foot of the purple mountains. I have always regretted that Governor Macquarie thought fit to change its original name to the one it bears to-day. It is not in the least like Windsor, really, and the old name of the Green Hills seemed to fit it better by far than this borrowed one. Only in one respect do the old and the new Windsor resemble one another at all. And that is in the charm of their loveliness, and quiet, peaceful beauty.

There is another thing about the place, too, that always seems to me to lend it an interest beyond any other locality in the Colony. It was the real cradle of the Australian race—the place to which someday, when Australia, as she inevitably must, has taken rank amongst the nations of the world, all her sons and daughters should turn as to the hearthstone of their ancestral home. For it was on the Hawkesbury that the first Australians were bred—and wherever was there a finer breed than those Hawkesbury natives of the first generation? The strong men and fruitful women who were the fathers and the mothers of the people who are the backbone of the country to-day. The last ten years—the years of the gold discovery—have brought an influx of new blood into the country from all the races of the world—a far stranger medley than came here in Arthur Phillips' little fleet in '88—but there has come no type that was a

better one than was given birth to here. I should say, myself, that the true aristocracy—using the word in its best sense—of this splendid country is made up of the descendants of the people who were born, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, on the Hawkesbury. I may be wrong, but so it seems to me.

The Corporal walked along beside me till we came to Andrew Thompson's house—not the fine two-storied one that he built during the government of General Macquarie, but the little cottage above the river which was the first dwelling place of this remarkable man, after he had begun to carve out his future.

Already, Andrew Thompson was one of the leading men amongst the Hawkesbury settlers. He lived for little more than four years after this time, and was only in the early thirties when he died. But he died a wealthy man, this young Scot, who had been transported when he was only seventeen years of age for setting fire to a hayrick. Had another thirty years of existence been vouchsafed to him, there is no knowing how far he might have gone, or what he might not have done in the development of the country he had been forced to adopt. He had the pioneering spirit as few men have it—a fact which his shrewd fellow countryman, Lachlan Macquarie, was not slow to recognise, nor backward in rewarding.

He received me with the grave courtesy which was characteristic of him, took the Governor's letter from me, read it as he stood in the sunlight on the threshold of his dwelling place, considered it for a few moments, and then stepped out and took Jessie's bridle reins from my hand.

"Ye'll be John Carnford, I'm thinkin'? I've heard of ye, my mon, an' I bid ye welcome. We'll juist give the mare—a likely animal she is—a drink of water an' a bite of hay, an' then ye'll tak a bite wi' me y'sel. I misdoubt ye'll have a fine appetite after y'r ride from Parramatta, where no doubt ye slept last nicht."

His accent was north-country, but not very broad,

and I found something likeable in his honest, shrewd face. I was always on good terms with Andrew Thompson, and count it an honour to have known him. And, as I have hinted above, I am always wondering what the man might not have done had he had more years to do it in than were allotted him.

While we were at dinner, he questioned me closely as to the state of affairs in Sydney, more particularly with regard to the attitude of the officers of the garrison towards His Excellency. I told him that it seemed to me that there was little love lost upon either side. He shook his head and laughed.

"Ye're richt, laddie—I ken weel that ye're richt. There's no love at all. And I'll tell ye the why of it. Governor Bligh, for all that he's a rude mon, an' a harsh mon, an' a mon that it's ill to cross—he's an honest mon, and has the welfare of the colony to heart. But the officers of the Corps—ah, well, they're no quite so honest as they might be, an' some of them have better heads than His Excellency. And there's this difference, too. He's for the good of us all—bond, emancipists, and free settlers—but they are only for the good of themselves. They're a poor lot, takin' them a' round, an' not one of them has ever had such chances as they've got here. They mean to make the most out of them that they can. He's for seeing that they dinna make it at the colony's expense an' loss. They won't be thwarted. No more will Captain Bligh. There'll be trouble will come out of it, laddie, there'll be trouble. I can see it coming. I can see big trouble—an' not so far awa', either."

He told me that the Governor had summoned him to Sydney, and that he would ride with me later in the afternoon, when it should grow cooler. If I would rest there for a few hours, he would go out and attend to some of his affairs, and we would make a start about five o'clock, carrying our supper with us, and eating it on the road. It would be a moonlight night, and we

might make Parramatta between 9 and 10 o'clock, and go on to Sydney in the morning.

He went about his business, and I snoozed in his living room throughout the warm afternoon. I was not sorry at the prospect of having company for the return journey. I had hopes that I might learn a good deal from him about the state of the Colony and its prospects. I was anxious to know all that it might be possible to find out, in view of the ultimate hope I had of investing my fortune in the new country. The more I saw of it the better I liked it, and although, just now, it was little more than a penal establishment, I was sufficiently wise, even at twenty years of age, to realise that it would not always remain such, and must inevitably have something infinitely better in store for itself.

We rode away from the Green Hills at the hour named by Mr. Thompson, and as we passed by the soldiers' barracks, I related to him my encounter with Mr. Keating in the morning. An expression of disgust crossed his features.

"Yes," he said, "the mon's a wastrel. He's naething at all but a drunken profligate—a gambler, a rake, and a liar. I ken that weel. When he's in his cups he will brag an' boast about what he has been, an' what a great mon he is. When he's sober, so far as the performance of his duties goes, he's just an incompetent ass. If it were not for Seageant Allen the ordinary routine of the establishment would not be carried out at all. As it is, 'tis the hardest thing in the world to get him to do anything of the work for which he has been sent here. A little while back, the blacks became troublesome, and we sought the assistance of the military to punish them, and to drive them awa' frae th' pasture lands. D'ye think we could get him tae dae anything? Not a move would he make. 'Twas only when a couple of us conspired with the sergeant that we were able to use the soldiers. We plied him with wine all one night, and the whole of next day, and on the following night, at our suggestion, mind ye, he gave a drunken order—simply that we might let

him go to sleep—that the so-and-so black somethings were to be dealt with, an' not tae bother him about it. I heard him tell Sergeant Allen so, cursing and threatening to break him, if he did not leave him alone."

"And did you deal with them?"

"Aye—that we did," he replied grimly. "We shot three of them, an' we hangit one to a tree in their camp, an' the rest fled across th' river to th' mountains. We've nae had ony trouble wi' yon black gentry syne. But 'twas no thanks to Mr. Keating."

Just as the sun set over the purple ranges behind us, in a glory of orange and crimson, we halted to make tea. Mr. Thompson carried a quart pot tied to his saddle, which we filled at a little creek in the bush. We soon had a fire going, and presently were enjoying a good meal which his housekeeper had prepared for us—a cold fowl, and some delicious scones, with fresh butter, and, for dessert, some splendèd peaches, grown on his farm. We had taken the saddles from the horses, and they grazed quietly close beside our fire. After our repast we lay and smoked, until the moon was well above the dark tree tops. I told Mr. Thompson of my encounter, the day before, with the expedition to China. He laughed sadly.

"Th' puir feckless loons!" he sighed. "Th' puir daft creatures! Mon, it is a sin to treat those unhappy men in the fashion they do. Ever since the rebellion at Castle Hill two years ago, they have been driven like cattle, and worked like galley slaves. The authorities are in mortal fear of another outbreak, and they deal with them mercilessly. Why, I have seen a man flogged for turning his back on an overseer. No crotty escapes the gallows, if he's once committed a capital offence—if 'tis only stealing a half-a-dozen pumpkins from a garden. They are eager for any excuse to hang the unfortunate Irish, an' they harry them an' torment them until they break out. And then, those they don't shoot or hang, or flog to death, they ship off in batches to the Coal River, or to Norfolk Island. And they say that

Norfolk Island is worse than death itself. Ah, me—man's a cruel deevil tae his fellow man. Look at me! They sent me round the world for what was on'y a boy's mischievousness, at the worst."

Whilst the dancing flames lit up his sun-tanned, keen, clever face, he gazed into the fire for a little while without speaking. He laughed again.

"But they puir fellies, an' their travels tae Chiny! Well, 'tis but a feast for th' dingoes they're providing. Maybe some stockman, mony years tae come, will find their bones, or some of them, in some wild glen of yon Blue Mountains. Maybe they'll eat one another—as has been done before. But more like they'll stagger into some settlement in a few weeks' time, prayin' tae be flogged an' fed. 'Tis pitiful, the ignorance of them. If ever Government committed a crime, the English Government did when it shipped these simple, honest, harmless lads to this sink of iniquity. But we'd better be gettin' on, I'm thinkin', if we wish tae sleep in Parramatta th' nicht."

We caught the horses, saddled them, and rode on, the moonlight glinting on the polished brass barrel of the blunderbuss which Mr. Thompson carried across his thigh.

"'Tis a guid weep on in a mix up, laddie—if 'tis nae to be relied on for any long distance shootin'," he said, when I pretended to admire the clumsy weapon, with its gaping bell mouth.

As we rode down from Castle Hill, the lights of Parramatta twinkling in the valley below us looked pleasant and cheerful. A thin white haze floated in the moonlight above the river, and the hills to the south were flooded with pale radiance. The moon was full, and it was a perfect night.

We came into the straggling street that led past the gaol—it stood not far from the northern bank of the river—and crossed over the wooden bridge that spanned those topmost waters of Sydney Harbour. Hardly had

we gained the further shore when we were accosted by two women, who, with shawls over their heads walked along the uneven roadway of Church Street.

"Good night to ye, boys," cried one of them, "an' where are ye a-ridin' this fine night? Do ye need a sweetheart, me pretty laddie," she said to me, as we involuntarily drew rein. "Will I do! Will ye not take me up ahint ye, an' ride away with me to Sydney Town? Do now, sweetheart."

"Aw, t' h——l with them, Mary!" hiccupped the other one, who swayed where she stood, and clasped a black bottle to her bosom. "T' h——l with them. We don' want 'em. Let's get along home, an' finish th' bottle. 'Tis good stuff. Mister Sinclair, th' sup'rintendent, give it me. Come along. Let 'em go to ——!"

The girl who had first spoken came close to us, and peered up at us, and the moon lit her white face, and showed it singularly beautiful, with a wealth of black hair straying from under the folds of the shawl. It was a sweet face—with something a little hard and sad in it. Mr. Thompson started, as he recognised it.

"Good God—Mary McBain!" he said. "What do ye with walkin' the streets at this time o' th' night? 'Tis ten o'clock,—an' ye were best at home. Are ye not in service at Mr. Marden's? Get ye hame, like a good lass,—or th' parson'll be sendin' ye back tae th' Factory. Be a sensible girl, and leave this woman."

"Home!" the girl laughed harshly. "Home! What home have I? Come, Mr. Thompson, you're from the Green Hills. Ask Mr. Keating about my home, an' why I left Parson Marsden's."

She laughed bitterly, and then covered her face with her hands and wept.

"Damn all you men!" she said, and fled down the bridge. "Yesh! To h——l with ye, to h——l with ye," screamed her drunken companion. "Th' whole d——n biling of ye. Give me a bottle of rum before any man born."

She howled out filthy blasphemies after us, as Andrew Thompson touched my arm, and we rode on.

"The pity of it, th' pity of it," he muttered. "Poor Mary McBain. I knew her as a bairn, at home in Ayrshire. The pity, th' pity of it."

We rode to James Larra's Inn, stabled our horses, and sought our beds—intending an early start for Sydney in the morning.

CHAPTER XIII.

Vaucluse.

The next year, for me, was passed for the most part, in such service upon His Excellency as I have detailed in the last chapters, combined with a good deal of secretarial work, and in a close attendance upon him whenever he went abroad.

During the twelve months the breach between the Governor and the military caste gradually widened, until such an atmosphere of hostility prevailed between Government House and the Officer's Mess of the 102nd Regiment that must, it seemed inevitable, before very long result in an open rupture, and some kind of serious outburst, provoked by one side or the other. The situation had become too tense to last. And it was not to be very long before the storm should break.

When Governor Bligh came to Sydney he found the New South Wales Corps in very questionable condition. It was perhaps the most singular regiment that had ever existed in the British Army. Specially raised to relieve the Royal Marines of the garrison duty that was no part of their function, it had been recruited almost from the gaols, and certainly from the dregs of society, and the leavings of other battalions. It was officered—although it would not be fair to assume wholly so—by gentlemen who had found it expedient to exchange from their former regiments, and by some whose only hope of escaping the debtor's prison, and even worse misfortune, lay in leaving England. It would have been impossible

to expect, at a time when the Napoleonic wars were raging in Europe, to find the flower of the British commissioned ranks in it. No officer of real military ambition and worth would have thrown away his chances of advancement by exiling himself, as a sort of glorified turnkey, to the other side of the globe, when such great things were doing in the profession of arms in the Old World. The best of the Corps' officers were those who, being possessed of limited private means and growing families, saw, in serving with its colours, an alternative to leaving the army altogether, and seeking a necessary competence in trade, or some civil employment. This class of officer, both from the army and the navy, is frequently to be found filling such positions as prison governors, deputy governors, and small colonial appointments—since it has found it impossible to exist upon its pay in either of the combatant services of the Crown.

But the officers of the New South Wales Corps had come to regard their military duties as being very much subordinate to the advancement of their private interests. Many of them had seized eagerly at the chances they saw of becoming rich men, and they were not above making use of their necessarily exalted and privileged position in the community to further their interests—very often with an entire disregard to any scruples as to whether their conduct was becoming in "an officer and a gentleman." They traded and trafficked, they speculated in land, and they dealt in spirits. Some of them actually owned in Sydney public houses and inns, that were no better than brothels. Some of them found profit in usury. So long as they derived a monetary advantage from doing it, some of them did not care a jot what they did.

Allied with them were many of the free settlers who had brought money into the country, and were determined that it should breed and multiply itself, in a fashion that it would never have had an opportunity of doing had they remained in Great Britain. They introduced abuses into the commercial world of the colony for the

furtherance of their own ends, and they found in the community ready aiders and abettors in the ruling military class.

Captain Bligh was determined to thwart the schemes of these powerful factions. In his own way he was a just man, and had high ideals as to the proper discharge of his duties. He was appointed to rule over this vast and rich territory, he considered, not for the sake of amassing wealth himself, or of permitting other individuals to do so—but, before all else, for the good of the Territory, and the majority of its inhabitants. Being a determined man, of choleric habit and despotic inclination, his attitude towards those whom he saw trying to benefit themselves unfairly at the cost of the public welfare was, to put it in his own way, "He'd be d——d if they should." So, before the storm burst, he had an anxious and troublesome term of office—and, in the end, his enemies were too strong for him.

One morning, he summoned me to him before breakfast, and told me to have his dingy made ready for him, as he intended to sail down the harbour, and would require me to go with him.

"Shall I warn the escort, your Excellency?" I asked him.

"Damn the escort!" he said. "No, I'm going privately. I shall only take you with me, Jack. So be ready after breakfast. We are going down to the South Head. I mean to have a day to myself, free from those d——n fellows, and their eternal plotting and scheming. See about it, now. Nine o'clock sharp, I want the boat at the jetty."

I departed gladly, looking forward to a day on the water with Bligh. He was in a good humour, too. He always was when he called me "Jack." I sent one of the orderlies down to the Government boat yard with the necessary instructions, and set about seeing to the commissariat side of our expedition.

It was always a pleasure to me to make these boat expeditions with the Governor. He was a consummate

seaman, and it was fine to see the way he could handle a boat. I always thought, when I was out with him, of the wonderful thing he had done, years before, when he navigated the *Bounty's* boat three thousand miles to Timor, after the mutineers had cast him adrift. I think he was more at home as a seaman than as an administrator. At any rate, he was happier.

It was a glorious morning, and the loveliness of the harbour seemed better than ever to me. The blue waters sparkled in the sunlight, as we rounded Bene-longs' Point, coming out of Sydney Cove, and every wooded point looked green and fresh, and the leaves of the gum trees sparkled in the sunlight, too. A gentle westerly filled our sail. Since it was early September, there was a smell of spring in the air. When we ran across the harbour, and coasted along the North shore, past Sirius Cove to Bradley's Head, we could see the golden wattle blooming in the dark green of the forests.

When we came to Bradley's, the Governor altered his course, and we ran across the harbour by Shark Island, rounded those curious rocks which have been so curiously named "Bottle and Glass," and ran into the beautiful little bay, with a curving white beach, known as Vaucluse. Our approach had evidently been observed, for, standing on the sands, with a telescope under his arm, was the owner of the beautiful estate himself—that remarkable Irish gentleman, Sir Henry Browne Hayes, ex-Sheriff of Cork, and now in New South Wales under a sentence of transportation for life.

The queer story of the offence for which Sir Henry was now paying the penalty of exile is a curious one. He had abducted a wealthy young Quakeress, against her will, the daughter of an Irish banker, had been outlawed for the crime, evaded arrest for two years, with a reward offering for him of one thousand pounds, and had finally surrendered himself to stand his trial. The manner of his doing the last named was eminently characteristic. He had one morning walked into the establishment of a hairdresser in Cork, of whom he and his

family had long been clients, and suggested to the barber that, as he intended giving himself up, he, the barber, might as well have the thousand pounds as anybody else. Accordingly the barber filed an information and collected the reward. Sir Henry was tried, found guilty, sentenced to death, and finally transported for life. He was a wealthy man, and his means did much to soften his exile, but he was born for trouble, and was always in hot water during his residence in the colony. He had had a particularly bad time of it under Governor King, but was on good terms with Captain Bligh. They had common enemies in the officers of the Corps, some of whom had treated the unfortunate Knight rather badly—and, as you shall hear, indeed, did so again after Bligh's deposition.

Running the boat on to the beach, the Governor, bidding me furl the sail and make her fast, jumped out. Sir Henry advanced to meet him, bowing politely, and with great dignity.

"Your Excellency honours me!" he said.

"Pooh, pooh! Not a bit of it, Hayes. Not a d——d bit of it. Wanted a blow. Sick of those fellows up in Sydney, with their eternal complaints, and infernal rogueries. D——d sick of John Macarthur. A villian, if ever there was one!"

"Will you come up to the house, and take some refreshment? I am delighted to welcome your Excellency to Vacluse. 'Tis a nate little place, I'm sure you'll agree, when you see it."

"Delighed, delighted. D——d pretty spot, —— my eyes, if it isn't!" responded the Governor, in high good humour. They walked up to the house, and I followed a few yards in the rear.

Sir Henry and Bligh were somewhere about the same age, in the neighbourhood of fifty, and about the same stature. The former was a straightly built man, with a fresh complexion and brown hair. His skin was a little marked by the small-pox, and he grew rather remarkable side whiskers. He always dressed very neatly,

and this morning was clad in spotless white duck, with a broad brimmed cabbage tree hat on his head. A bunch of seals depended from his fob, and he carried a yellow silk handkerchief in his hand, with which to flick away the flies.

As we came up to the house, I caught sight of a white skirt, and a pink sunshade. A lady and a gentleman were strolling amongst the flower beds—Sir Henry had a fine garden—and, in the distance, something familiar in the bearing of the latter struck me at once.

"You have company?" said the Governor.

"Oh, yes, yes," replied our host. "'Tis an old friend. Knew him in London, and he's stayed with me in the old country. Maybe your Excellency will be knowing him. I think ye granted him some of his estate at Emu Plains. 'Tis George Nutting, of Mulgoa. He'll be honoured to meet your Excellency. Ah—here they come to meet us."

It was, indeed, my beautiful fellow voyager of the *Olga*, with her exquisite father. The latter was as scrupulously attired as ever, and as full of graces, and the pretty airs of Pall Mall. He bowed to Bligh, and Miss Nutting dropped a curtsey, which the Governor returned by bowing and raising his hat.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Nutting—and how is Mulgoa?"

I saw that she recognised me. A quick light of recollection shone in her dear eyes, and her face dimpled in a sweet smile. You can have no idea how elated the Governor's Man felt. But he remembered that he was the Governor's Man, and kept respectfully in the background.

"Oh, vastly prosperous, your Excellency—vastly prosperous," replied Mr. Nutting to the Governor's polite enquiry as to his estate. "A charming spot—a fairy-land. A little in the wilds, perhaps—but quite charming. Oh, very. Adelaide, will you join us in a glass of wine?"

"Oh, no thank you, Sir Henry," laughed Miss Nutting. "I seldom touch wine. Papa may have my share. Pray

do not trouble about me. I beg of you. I will wait your return in the garden. It is delightful, Sir Henry—together delightful.

"As you please, Miss Adelaide. My man," he said to me, "if you go round to the back, they will give you a glass of beer. Come, your Excellency, ye must have a thirst after your voyage. Come, Nutting. Get your beer, my man—get a quart of beer, if you like."

"Thank you, sir," I said, touching my cap.

But I had no notion of leaving the garden while she was there. They went inside. I was left alone with her, amongst the flowers, with the blue bay behind us, and the far off shores of Manly in the distant background. Was there ever any joy like mine at that moment?

CHAPTER XIV.

Sir Henry Browne Hayes.

She came to me at once, with outstretched hands. There was a look of gladness in her lovely face, and her eyes sparkled with animation. My heart was pounding against my ribs, and I felt that I was red, and knew that I was shy.

"Oh, I *am* so glad to see you, Mr. Carnford. I have thought so often of my brave rescuer, and of those terrible moments we shared out in the ocean. I *am* gläd.

She took both my hands in her dear little ones, laughing joyously, and I know that I looked like a silly fool, and I murmured something foolish.

"It was nothing, Adel—I beg your pardon," I stammered, "Miss Nutting."

"Oh, yes it was," she said. "I wouldn't be here, enjoying Sir Henry's garden if it hadn't been for you. And my poor father would have been lost, for he never could have done without me. Now tell me about yourself, if you please. Why are you wearing that pretty uniform, and why are you with Governor Bligh. Are you an aide-de-camp?"

The idea of that made me laugh, and I lost my shyness. "No—I'm scarcely an aide-de-camp, Miss Nutting. You see, I'm a prisoner, and they don't make aides out of prisoners. I hardly know how to describe myself, except as one of His Excellency's servants. Everybody speaks of me as 'The Governor's Man.' They don't use my own name. They call me

that. I doubt if a good many of the people I come in contact with know that I've got a name."

"How absurd," she laughed. Then she grew serious. "I do hope you'll remember one thing, Mr. Carnford. I hope you'll remember that I'm very, very grateful to you, and that I always want to be your friend. Will you promise me something?"

"I would promise you anything, Miss Nutting—and try and do it, too."

"Well, I want you to promise to write to me now and then—to tell me how you are getting on, and what you are doing. And I will write to you, too. I'm afraid I'm a little selfish in this, though. You see, you are at headquarters, and can tell me lots of interesting news, and I've nothing much to write about. Would you care to have an occasional letter from the bush?"

"Care!" I stammered. "Oh, Ad—Miss Nutting, it would make a heaven of this place to me, if you would deign to think enough of me to send me letters."

I fear I was almost about to say, or do, something sentimental. I knew I could have kissed her—and might have been fool enough to incur her resentment by attempting to do so. But we heard the voices of the gentlemen coming back, and she looked up in a startled fashion, hastily giving me her hand for a brief moment.

"Don't forget!" she whispered—and there were tears in those deep, tender grey eyes. But the next moment she was all smiles to the Governor.

"So ye've been bewitching my man, have ye, Miss Nutting? I warn ye, he's incorruptible. Quite famous for it. One of the few I can trust, d——," the Governor remembered himself in time—"bless my soul, so he is."

"I am glad to hear your Excellency say so," she laughed, "for we are old friends. He saved my life on the voyage out, when I fell overboard from the ship in mid-ocean."

"He did, did he! Well, he's a lucky fellow, Miss Adelaide—to have earned your goodwill. Well, Hayes, let

us have a look at your snake ditch. 'Tis the strangest whim I've heard of. And it really acts, you say?"

"Not a doubt of it, your Excellency, not a doubt of it. The varmints won't come nigh the ould sod. I'm a good Protestant, and St. Patrick was a Roman—but I'll say this for him. He knew how to put a good curse upon the serpent, so he did. And the virtue of it's lasted, too—as I've proved. Step this way, if your Excellency pleases."

Waving her hand, and smiling, Miss Nutting ran indoors, and I followed the Governor and the other gentlemen.

"Here we are, gentlemen," said Sir Henry, striking his toe into the soil, and kicking up a little fragment of it, which he stooped and picked up in his hand. "Here we are—'tis th' soil of Ireland itself, so it is. And divil a snake will cross it. Th' smell of it is enough for them. Sure it must have been a good curse, to last so long as it's done. See for yourself, your Excellency. Look at it, Nutting. Smell it man, smell it—smell the howly Saint's curse in it!"

"I vow I smell something strange in it," politely murmured Mr. Nutting, sniffing at a little pinch of the brown loam as he might have taken snuff. "'Tis the snakebane, no doubt."

His Excellency looked sceptical, but the eager knight would permit of no doubt upon the subject.

"'Tis the solemn truth, y'r Excellency—and may I never spake another worrud if 'tis not so. The place used to be infested with snakes. Ye never saw anything like it in ye're born days. Black snakes, an' brown snakes, and yellow snakes, an' green snakes—every sort of snake that's in Australia used to live round about this bay. An' the bouldness of them! They'd come right into the house itself, so they would. I don't know how I stood them, indade I don't! And, by St. Patrick himself, wasn't I after finding one of them in me own bed! What d'ye think of that?"

"Oh, distressing!" murmured Mr. Nutting. The Governor smiled.

"'Twas too much for me. A bright thought came to me one night, when I was sitting up drinking rum with me friend Sam Breakwell. 'Sure, I'll spoil their game,' says I to Sam. 'How?' he asks me. But I'd not tell him. I wrote home to me agent in Cork, and instructed him to fill 500 barrels with good Irish soil, and ship them out to me here, as soon as maybe. And when they'd come—by different ships, I tould Sam, and he agreed 'twas a great schame, entoirely. So last Patrick's day, on the seventeenth of March, I set me men digging. They were special men I'd hired for the day—Irish, every mother's son of them. Not a Sassenach among them. We dug a trench six feet broad, and two feet deep, right round the house, and filled it up with the ould sod. An' there's not been a snake across it since. I give ye my worrud."

"Well, well," said the Governor. "Indeed, there may be something in it. But 'tis a charm very few of us could afford. I'll wager it cost ye a d——n fine sum to ship all this from Ireland to Sydney Harbour. Not many could stand for it. Eh! Mr. Nutting?" Mr. Nutting bowed respectful assent.

"Faith, then, that's true enough, y'r Excellency. It made a big hole in me bank balance, so it did. But 'twas worth it. Ye've no notion what a comfort it is to a man to go to his bed, an' find it free from serpents. 'Tis that, indeed. But will ye not take a walk round the far-rum? Mr. Nutting, if ye've had enough exercise, don't trouble to come with us. Take your aise in the house. Ye know where to find the decanter, and there are cigars in the sideboard."

"Thank you—if your Excellency will excuse me," gratefully assented Mr. Nutting. "I feel the sun a little, to be sure," and the excellent gentleman—who, whatever may have been his peculiarities, had the shining virtue, in my eyes, of being Adelaide's father—went inside.

Sir Henry and the Governor proceeded to walk round the boundaries of the place, the formerly eagerly pointing

out the improvements he had made since the farm had come into his hands. There was a sheepfold building, and Sir Henry mentioned that he intended to purchase a few head from Mr. Macarthur, as he had an idea of depasturing a small flock at Vacluse.

The Governor had been in a singularly gracious mood all the morning, but at the mention of Mr. Macarthur's name his strange temper burst out in one of its sudden and fiery eruptions. He halted, and stamped his foot on the ground.

"John Macarthur! Damme, yes—our great sheep breeder. A pestilent fellow, Sir Henry—a damnable fellow. "We'll have trouble with that fellow, very bad trouble. D——n him, I say—d——n him!"

"To be sure, your Excellency. But he is a successful sheep breeder," remarked the knight.

"Oh, yes—indeed, I admit that. But an artful villian, sir—a d——d artful villian. I know him. He'll not get to windward of me, sir. He'll not hoodwink William Bligh. Not that he hasn't tried. But, God bless my soul, I put him in his place when I first met him—or I tried to. 'Tis hard to keep such pertinacious fellows down."

"Now, thin, did you, your Excellency? I'm plazed to hear it. 'Tis small affection I have for John Macarthur—and his friend, George Johnston, ayther. Will ye not be telling me how ye did it, y'r Excellency?"

"Well, the d——d fellow came to call on me at Government House, soon after my arrival in the colony. He was full of airs, and self-importance, of which I did not take a great deal of notice, and I affected to know very little of him. This wounded his self esteem. He began to tell me all about himself—how much land he had, and how many cattle and sheep, and what a great —— he was altogether. But I cut him short. 'What have I to do with your sheep, sir?' I asked him. 'What have I to do with your cattle? Are you to have such flocks of sheep and such herds of cattle as no man ever had before? No, sir,' I said, 'I have heard of your con-

cerns, sir. You have got five thousand acres of land, sir, in the finest situation in the country, but by G——d you shan't keep it." And then he had the impudence to flaunt it in my face that the land had been granted him at the recommendation of the Privy Council, and by order of the Secretary of State. 'D——n the Privy Council,' I told him, 'and d——n the Secretary of State, too. He commands at home—I command here?'"

"Ha, ha—very good, y'r Excellency. And what did he say to that?"

"He said nothing, sir—nothing! But he went away somewhat crestfallen, I promise ye."

"Look ve, Sir Henry," said the Governor, very earnestly, some time after, breaking in upon his host's eulogy of certain beds of potatoes which he had planted himself. "I came here to-day for a very express purpose. I know that your situation here is a difficult one—but I know ye to be a gentleman, sir, and that your word is good."

Sir Henry drew himself up, and bowed stiffly. The Governor went on. "We're going to have trouble here. I would not be in the least surprised if these fellows of the Corps, and the Macarthur faction, did not seek to upset my government in some fashion. I have certain information. If it should be so, I want to know who are my friends, and the friends of the Government. I can count on many—particularly at the Hawkesbury, and, indeed, in the country districts generally. Can I count on you?"

Sir Henry seemed almost to inflate himself with loyalty. He tore open his waistcoat, and his shirt, and displayed a hairy chest. He slapped it vigorously with his open palm, and struck an attitude. There was fire in his eyes, and his whiskers almost seemed to bristle. He roared his response, as he seized the Governor's hand, and wrung it fervently.

"To the death, your Excellency. To the last drop of me blood!"

CHAPTER XV.

The Brink of Revolt.

September passed away, and spring ripened into summer, and Christmas drew near again. I continued, as I boyishly fancied, to assist Captain Bligh in his task of governing New South Wales. More than a year of my sentence had passed away. It was, in fact, two years, for the term would date from the day when they had spared the lives of Brian and myself, and had avenged the murder of Patrick Hanrahan by the hanging of the O'Toole.

And the governance of New South Wales was no light task in the year of our Lord, 1807. Each day it grew more difficult, and each day the vice-regal temper deteriorated. The glass was falling very low indeed, and the political barometer was fast moving its hand round from "rainy" to "stormy." The bad time that the Governor was having reflected itself disagreeably on the Governor's Man—very disagreeably indeed.

A queer thing happened one Sunday, towards the end of the year, that always seems to me to have been very ominous of what was to happen at the beginning of the next one.

As was his invariable custom, the Governor attended Divine Service in the morning. The service on Sunday was a sort of obligatory parade of the whole community. Everyone was expected to be there, and the head of the State was punctilious in setting an example to his subjects. Those of the soldiers who were not on

duty were marched up from the barracks to the church, and the convicts were marched also. The Rev. Mr. Fulton never had to complain of a poor congregation. The sacred edifice, being a very small temple indeed, was always well filled and brimming over. Whether there was room for them or not, the military and the felonry were most strictly required to put in an appearance. I cannot say that these two elements constituted a very devotional gathering. They gathered there because they had to—not because they particularly liked it.

Poor Mrs. Putland, but lately widowed, accompanied His Excellency, and occupied the front pew with her father. I sat immediately behind them, armed, as usual, with my two pistols, and becomingly arrayed in my best uniform. Behind, on our side of the church, the free inhabitants had seating accommodation, and across the aisle sat the soldiers. The back part of the church, on both sides, was filled up with prisoners, their superintendents and overseers interspersed among them. It was a horrible mockery, it seemed to me, to hear the chains clank and clatter, as we stood up and sat down, and knelt in prayer. A kind of sacrilege—so it seemed.

During the course of the service, something that had nothing to do with it seemed to be claiming the attention of part of the military congregation. Their officer, Lieutenant Cadwallader Draffyn—the only officer present—sat alone in front of them, and could not see what was going on, but I saw most of it. They were fooling in some way that I could not at first make out, and every now and again something very like a subdued snigger, instantly suppressed by nose sniffing and coughing, disturbed the decorum of the proceedings. More than once the parson glanced down at the troops, and paused for a moment in his conduct of the ritual. Every now and again the Governor, with a face as black as thunder, would glare across the church. Whenever he did so, there was an instantaneous hush.

Something seemed to be troubling Mrs. Putland. She fidgeted in her seat continuously, and was nervous and

ill at ease. All the time the current of irreverent distraction rippled amongst the scarlet figures of the military. I could not quite see what it was, but once I caught a glimpse of a fellow who held a piece of paper near the flaming red head of a man seated in front of him, drew it hastily away as if it had caught fire, and blew upon his fingers as though to cool them. Very likely this was the childish cause of the disturbance.

Suddenly His Excellency rose to his feet, gave his arm to Mrs. Putland, and escorted her across the front of the altar—she having her handkerchief to her face, and evidently being in great distress. He conducted her into the vestry, signing with his hand to Mr. Fulton to proceed with the service. In five or ten minutes he came back to his place, his face white with passion, and an expression upon it which boded ill to somebody. He leaned over the back of the pew, and whispered to me,

“Leave the Church, go round to the vestry, and take Mrs. Putland home in the carriage.”

So I tiptoed down the aisle, and did as I was ordered, finding the poor lady a little tearful, and a little hysterical. As I passed through the congregation, I noted a look of consternation on every face. The soldiers became as demure as schoolgirls. I cursed my luck for not permitting me to see the finish of the thing. It might be comedy—but the Governor's face held all the indications of tragedy. However, I heard what happened. A private of the 102nd, a humorous individual, related it as follows:—

“As soon as Mr. Fulton finished up, an' gives us his blessin', an' all that, we stands up, waitin' for th' free people to go out before we does, as we always do, ahead o' th' prisoners. They goes out. Then up jumps Breadfruit Billy.

“‘Hold!’ he sez—an' we held. He comes ragin' into th' middle of th' church, an' sez to Draffyn, ‘th' swine,’ he sez. ‘I say, sir—listen to me, I say!’

“An' that — sez, like a lady, ‘Yes, your Excellency, if you please?’

"'What's th' meanin' of this outrageous behaviour, sir?' says Billy.

"'What, sir? I beg your pardon, sir, sez Draffyn. 'I've not noticed anything.'

"'What!' yells his Nobs. 'Not noticed anything. Good G——d, sir, you must be blind, or mad, sir!'—an' he's right there. The lootenant ain't called Daffy Draffyn for nothing.

"'But what is it, your Ex'lency,' he sez again. An' then Billy lets go. Right out in church an' all, an' parson ain't game to check him.

"'These —— scoundrels!' he sez. 'These —— gaol birds you call soldiers—they've been makin' faces at my daughter. D——n 'em; —— you, sir! I'll say nothing here. Take your scourings of h——l away, sir!' he sez, 'an' send the Adjutant to me instantly!' An' Billy bolts out of church, an' off home, leaving that fool Draffyn near crying. An' all it was over was one of the drummers, young Micky Flower, pretendin' Tim Cayler's nob was afire. Th' boys couldn't but laugh, an' when they bursts into a giggle, they nat'rally looks across to see if th' Gov'nor twigs 'em. That's why she must ha' got it they was makin' faces. But I puts it to you, Mister Carnford—they fellies can't help havin' such ugly mugs. Th' mere look of some of our chaps is a hideous grimace!"

I saw the rest myself, when Mr. Minchin, the Adjutant, came hurrying up the hill to Government House. He was full of apologies, but they were no use to His Excellency, who insisted that the soldiers had gone out of their way to insult his daughter. He simply raved. I had never heard him break out so strongly before. Mr. Minchin had to flee before his wrath.

The truth of it was, the Governor's nerves were in such a state of tension that he was hardly responsible for himself. But this little incident did not add to the good relations that did not exist between Government House and the Corps. All ranks hated the Governor, and the Governor returned their hatred with bitter in-

terest. Neither side did anything at all to bridge the gulf that lay between them, and circumstances seemed to combine to dig it deeper and wider.

The Governor had, however, a strong backing. The settlers about the Hawkesbury remembered with gratitude all he had done in attempting to relieve the distress occasioned by the disastrous floods of 1806. They realised better than anyone else how anxious he was to encourage honest endeavour. Some of them even saw through his roughness and rudeness, and passionate ill temper, to the sound heart of the man. They knew that if they could pierce his prejudices, and bring a true realisation of their troubles home to him, they would get justice. They knew that they could trust him. The small men took him to be their friend, in resisting the oppression that was often put upon them by their wealthier and more powerful neighbours. If he were despotic, he was a benevolent despot.

It was to the interest of the opposing faction to make out that the whole colony was tyrannised over unjustly and wrongfully by Bligh for the satisfaction of his malevolent impulses, and for his own personal gain. They lost no opportunity of slander. There was no public press whose influence they could use to their own ends—the *Sydney Gazette* was little more than a vehicle for Government orders—but they found other means.

The fire smouldered for many months, gradually accumulating pent up heat, until it was ready to whirl into flame at a breath of wind. Finally, it burst out into raging violence, and the hand that fanned the embers of discontent and disloyalty into leaping flames of rebellion was John Macarthur's.

Even to-day, half a century after it all happened, I do not feel sure that I know John Macarthur. I cannot, as I write of him, altogether feel that I am competent to judge him fairly. I can say this of him—that he was a great man, a good man, a most able man, and a man who has been as useful to Australia as any man who ever came to the country, or was born in it. But he was

a selfish man—in the sense that he and his were more to him than anything else in the world. Let him alone, interfere not with his plans and arrangements for the advancement of the interests of his clan, and he was kindly, generous, considerate and public-spirited. Oppose him in his arrangements, venture to doubt that the good of John Macarthur was the same thing as the public good—and he was obstinate, narrow and ruthless. You may add to this that he was a confirmed dyspeptic. I think that a good deal in him, that does not recommend him, was due to this last fact.

Those last days were busy days for me. The Governor worked me from morning to night, and from night to morning. I snatched sleep when I could, and took my food whenever I was able to make time to sit and eat it. I rode the horses in the stable to death, in expeditions to Parramatta and the Green Hills. Whenever I send a message by the electric telegraph to-day I always think of what it would have saved the Governor's Man in the beginning of 1808. His Excellency worked me mercilessly. He would trust no one else—even if it was only to carry a letter down into the town.

On the twenty-fifth of January, as I was riding back from Annandale, whither I had been sent with an urgent letter to Major Johnston, and just as I crested Brickfield Hill, I met with Andrew Thompson, riding out to Parramatta on his way homeward to the Green Hills. I had not known that he was in Sydney and reined in my horse, gladly, to greet him, for I always had a feeling of affection for the shrewd, kindly young Scotsman—and I think he felt the same way towards myself.

"Well, well, Jock Carnford, an' how d'ye find y'sel'?"

He gripped my hand warmly, and looked at me with anxious eyes. Without waiting for my response he went on.

"Mon—I'm sore distressed an' worrit. Everything's amiss down here—everything's wrong wi' th' Governor. Something's going tae happen, John—something bad. mark my words. We're on the eve of an upset. I misdoubt.

but we're on th' brink o' revolt, here in Sydney. I wish tae G——d His Excellency had but ta'en my advice. For twa solid hours, Jock, I've been beseechin' an' prayin' him to ride awa wi' me this nicht tae yon Green Hills. At anyrate, his pairson would be safe there. He has friends there—guid friends. Here, he's surrounded wi' enemies, bitter enemies. But no—he won't budge an inch. Asked me if I thoct him a d——d coward that would strike his colours to any man, or any set of men. He's determined to face the trouble here. An' in twenty-four hours he'll have trouble enough to face. Mon," he whispered, "I fear for his life."

"Good God, Mr. Thompson," I exclaimed, startled. "Is it so bad as that?"

"Aye, laddie—'tis verra bad. As bad as it can be. I would stay mysel', but he has given me work to do out yonder," he pointed to the golden sunset in the west. "Guid nicht to ye, Jock, an' guid luck. I must get on."

He gripped my hand, and rode down the hill. Sick with apprehension—for I knew Andrew Thompson was no alarmist—I rode through Sydney to Government House.

It may have been fancy, but I thought I could see signs of the coming storm in the faces of the people. Outside O'Shaughnessy's "Square and Compass" Inn in George Street a drunken soldier called after me.

"Hoo, hoo—look at th' ——! Look at Billy's pet boy. Ye'll be out of a job soon, ye flunkey."

And a trollop that was with him threw a handful of mud that hit my horse on the rump, and accompanied it with a mouthful of cursings.

"Go home to y'r daddy, ye ——," she howled.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Rebellion.

Early in the afternoon of the twenty-sixth of January—the day after I had met with Andrew Thompson on Brickfield Hill—as I snatched a brief rest on my bed—I was awakened by a violent pounding upon the door of the outbuilding of Government House in which I slept. I was worn out from the fatigues of the previous day and night, and did not at first realise what the noise meant. But when I recognised that it was the voice of the Governor that broke in upon my dreams I was off my bed in an instant, and opened the door in my shirt and breeches, without waiting to put on my uniform—the summons seemed so imperative.

It was. I found His Excellency raging.

“D——n your eyes, Carnford,” he shouted, “I thought ye was dead. Here, saddle Jessie, and ride with this letter to Annandale. I want it to go to Major Johnston immediately. Now, shake a leg, d——n ye, shake a leg!”

The letter was, of course, sealed, and was addressed to Major Johnston, an Officer Commanding His Majesty’s 102nd Regiment of Foot. Some years afterwards, when the proceedings of the trials in England of John Macarthur and Major Johnston were made available, I took a copy of it. Here it is. It will explain the situation.

"Government House, Sydney,

"Sydney, 26th January, 1808.

"Sir,—In answer to my letter of yesterday, I received a verbal message by my Orderly from you that you were rendered by illness totally incapable of being at Sydney. I apprehend the same illness will deprive me of your assistance at this time, and the Judge-Advocate having laid a memorial before me against six of your officers for practices, which he conceives treasonable, I am under the necessity of summoning them before me, and all the Magistrates have directions to attend at nine o'clock to-morrow morning.

"I leave it for you to judge whether Captain Abbott should be directed to attend at Sydney to command the troops in your absence.

"I am, &c.,

"WM. BLIGH."

This is what had happened. I will put it as briefly as possible. On the previous day John Macarthur had appeared before the Criminal Court, charged with two separate offences. The court was composed of six officers of the Corps, and was presided over by the Judge-Advocate, Mr. Richard Atkins—a drunken humbug of a man, who should never have been in such a position. Still, there he was, as he was legally entitled to be; and it is certain that without him the court would have had no jurisdiction. Macarthur immediately protested against being tried by Mr. Atkins, saying, amongst other things, that Atkins owed him payment for a bill drawn in 1793. Atkins refused to hear the protest read, but the six officers heard it in his absence. When he came back, the Judge-Advocate proposed to commit Mr. Macarthur to gaol. The officers interposed on his behalf, and, after a long dispute, the Judge-Advocate retired from the Court House, leaving his papers behind him. Without ceremony, the officers took possession of the papers and investigated them. Then they discovered how the whole plan of the trial had been arranged and prepared.

Then ensued a running to and fro between the Court and Government House. The members of it—with, of course, the exception of Mr. Atkins—maintained the propriety of Mr. Macarthur's objection to the Judge-Advocate, and the Governor insisted that the Judge-Advocate must preside at the trial. At three o'clock, as the Governor had taken no notice of their protest, the members of the court adjourned, and, shortly afterwards, each one of them received a summons to appear before the Governor at nine o'clock on the following morning, to answer charges of treason, and usurpation of the Government.

Then the letter which I have quoted above was written by His Excellency, and given to me for conveyance to Annandale.

I was not long in equipping myself for the road, and in saddling the mare. As I rode through the town, I was once or twice vigorously hooted by little groups of soldiers. It was easy to see that the whole place was seething with excitement. Nobody seemed to be at work, except the gangs of prisoners, and everybody was discussing the doings between the Court, the Governor, and John Macarthur.

I reached Major Johnston's country house a little after four o'clock, and gave the letter into his hands. He was very much agitated, and was suffering from a fall from his gig, which had injured his arm, and bruised and cut his face. He carried his arm in a sling, and could not therefore give me a written reply to take back to His Excellency.

The reading of Bligh's letter added still further to Major Johnston's agitation. He said nothing to me, however, beyond offering me some refreshment, and telling me to inform His Excellency that "he was so ill as to be unable to write, but that he would get somebody to write an answer in the evening." So I turned Jessie's head towards Sydney, and rode back to Government House to deliver my message. Immediately, Major Johnston hastened into town to the Barracks.

Now followed two actions of Major Johnston's which,

to my thinking, put it beyond all doubt that the Rebellion was deliberately planned and organised, and that Mr. Macarthur's trial was only the peg on which the cloak was hung. Of course, one did not know these things until after the business was all over.

As soon as Major Johnston arrived at the Barracks, he assumed the title of Lieutenant-Governor, and signed a warrant for the release of John Macarthur from goal. Concerning this period of that eventful Anniversary Day, some of the finest lying was put up by the Governor's opponents.

So this was the situation, about six o'clock in the evening of the 26th.

Without unsaddling her, I had put the mare in the stable, and was lounging about smoking, and enjoying the freshness of the evening. It had been a hot day, but the cool nor'-easter was blowing in from the sea, and, at the back of the house, on the eminence on which it stood, as it swept up from the harbour, you got the full benefit of it. I strolled round to the end of the building, and watched the sun setting behind the "Rocks" in a glory of purple and gold. I shall never forget that sunset. It painted itself on my brain.

Down in the town there was an unusual hum of noise—as of many people talking and arguing—an extraordinary sound at this hour of the evening meal, when the place was wont to be so quiet. The blue smoke curled up into the clear air from many chimneys, and, except for the beehive hum of the distant voices, everything was very quiet and still.

Suddenly, and very clearly, I heard a bugle peal and echo in the Barrack Square, and, a moment later came the rattle of drums, beating the "Assembly." The rat-tat-tat of them clattered across the valley, and seemed to shiver the evening with its harsh vibration. Heavens! I thought, what on earth is this? I stood still and watched. The Barrack Square, being on a slope, was almost wholly visible from where I stood, and I had a fine view of anything that might happen in it.

Presently I could see the soldiers pouring out of their barracks, and rapidly forming up on the parade ground in their companies. Soon they were in well ordered ranks, standing still and immovable. It was too far to see whether they carried their arms or not—but I was not left long in doubt on that score.

I saw a small body move out of a building on one side of the square and march across the parade, coming to a halt on the right of the leading company. It was the band.

Then another and more scattered group came from the doorway of the officers' mess. I saw the commanding officer's horse led up to the verandah, and saw him mount and ride out in front of the leading company, where he seemed to be making a speech. The other officers took post with their respective companies. The colours, unfurled, were at the front of the regiment. There was no doubt that this extraordinary parade was being carried out with every proper attention to detail and decorum.

Suddenly the double lines of the companies thickened—they had formed fours. The colours were carried rapidly to the right of the leading company—they had turned to the right. The commanding officer placed himself at the head of the leading company. A faint burst of cheering came from near the Barrack gates.

Then—boom, boom—the big drum struck up, the fifes squealed out "The British Grenadiers"; the side drums banged and rattled in the stirring uproar of that brave old air, and the regiment moved off, wheeling to the left, in succession of companies. Presently the head of the column reached the gates, passed through them, and was lost to me in the houses of the town. A great roar rose up from the valley—yells, and women's screams, with the barking of dogs—and, above it all, the squeal of the fifes, and the boom, bang, and rattle of "The British Grenadiers."

Mrs. Putland had come out on to the verandah when

the "Assembly" had sounded, and stood for a minute or more, shading her eyes with her hand, and gazing, pale-faced and disquieted, in the same direction as myself. Then she retreated hastily indoors again. I did not see the Governor, until long after the regiment had effected his arrest.

I heard a noise down at the gate of Government House, and, turning my eyes in that direction, saw the guard tumbling hurriedly out of the guardroom, and forming up in front of it. Hardly were they in line before I heard the order given to them—"With ball cartridge—*load!*" Followed the rattle of the ram-rods, as they drove their charges home.

Every moment the noise and uproar, and the shrill music, drew closer, and at last I saw the head of the column reach the bridge across the Tank Stream. The sun was behind the opposite range of hills by this time, but it was still quite bright and daylight. A yellow afterglow lit up the western heavens, and the waters of Sydney Cove reflected it. I remember noticing a black line of ibis winging their way in solemn procession across the brilliant hues of the evening. Strange, how a trifling, irrelevant thing like that remains in one's head after such an experience!

I stood rooted to the spot—neglecting my duty, without a doubt, for I should have been at His Excellency's side. I wish that I had been, for then I could have refuted the cruel, lying gibes that were afterwards set afloat about Bligh's personal courage—which I, for one, never have believed, and have never hesitated to give the lie direct to, whenever I have heard them spoken. But I was so dumbfounded by the amazing things that were taking place under my very eyes, that I forgot all that I should have remembered—until it was too late.

And now the regiment was very close indeed, marching up the hillside, with colours flying at their head and bayonets fixed, and Major Johnston sitting upon his horse at its head. The noise of the drums was deafening now, and the fifes were ear-splitting. Out of the

town, behind the troops came a mob that howled continuously and without ceasing.

At the gate, the column halted for a few moments. Then the guard broke ranks, and joined their companies. The next moment the head of the column passed through the gateway. Some orders were shouted, and the soldiers came running along the drive, yelling and cursing, and hurrying to take up positions that would put them in the way of surrounding the house. In less time than I take to write it, they had drawn a cordon round Government House, and the last light of the fading day gleamed on the bare steel of a ring of bayonets.

As I saw the soldiers break into the double when they came running, my senses returned to me, and I jumped quickly behind a shrub. It came to me in a flash, what my duty was. At all events I must endeavour to escape, so that I could ride to the Hawkesbury, and warn the Governor's friends of the plight—the danger—that he was in. There was no knowing what this armed body of ruffians might take into their heads to do. At all costs, His Excellency must be rescued.

I remembered the mare ready saddled in the stables. If I could only reach her, and find a way out through the Domain, and round the outskirts of Sydney into the open country!

I dodged from bush to bush, from tree to tree, and passed unnoticed behind the soldiers. They were all intent upon the house, and had no eyes for a flitting shadow in the fast darkening garden. At last I got into the stables, and found the roan mare as I had left her.

"Steady, Jess, old girl," I whispered in her ear, as I led her out into the twilight. "Steady! We *must* do it."

At last I got her through the fence, mounted her, and rode away into the night.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Bad Night.

Macquarie Street in those days was only the crest of the hill that I rode along towards what was then known as the Exercising Ground, and afterwards was the Race-course, and is now Hyde Park. There were one or two cottages bordering on the Government Domain, but these were now deserted and dark. I did not pass a single person between Government House and the eastern side of the Brickfields. All the inhabitants, even the children, had flocked into the town. Life in Sydney was too uniformly monotonous to permit of anyone missing such a rare and fascinating excitement as presented itself to-night. They were all down in the valley, or on the hillside below Government House, assisting in the howling and yelling, and shouting that marked the disestablishment of the Government of Captain Bligh.

In order to gain the Parramatta Road, I struck across the rough and broken area of claypits and kilns. As I approached it, I could see the glare of a fire glowing redly from behind a great pile of baked bricks. I did not pause to think what I was doing, but rode round the pile, and almost into the midst of a group of soldiers who were standing and sitting about the fire. The mare shied a little at the sudden glare, and, instantly, I found myself looking down the barrels of at least three muskets. One of the red coats sprang forward and seized my reins.

"By G——d, boys!" he yelled. "Here's a go! 'Tis Billy's man himself."

Before I could draw a pistol—which, perhaps, was just as well, half a dozen hands dragged me from the saddle, and had me on the ground. The mare snorted and pulled back, tearing the reins from the man who had first laid hold of them, and, lashing out vigorously, galloped off in the darkness.

I had been captured by one of the guards which the rebel officers had quickly posted all about the town. This had been done with the object of preventing the Governor's messages for assistance getting out, and possible sympathisers from getting it.

"Search th' —— for papers," cried the sergeant who was in charge. "He may have something from the old devil in his pocket. Go through him properly, now."

And they did. My jacket was torn asunder, every pocket turned inside out, and the lining slit open. But they found nothing, except a letter, written from Mulgoa, which I had received only a day or two before, from Adelaide. I cursed and struggled, when a fellow found this and held it to the fire light to examine. But it was no use—they were too strong for me, and pressed me down on the ground, whilst the blackguard who had the letter proceeded to make merry over it."

"Oh, th' sly dog," he howled in delight. "'Tis a letter from his gur-r-l, so it is, no less. 'Me dear Mr. Carnford'—and he proceeded to read out to them what was, after all, only a very ordinary and polite letter from my dear lady, but was to me a sacred thing, unutterably profaned by the half-drunken wretch who jested over it.

Suddenly he was stopped by the Sergeant, whose face, indeed, seemed familiar to me, and whom, when he spoke, I remembered to have been one of the two Corporals of the guard of the transport *Olga*.

"That'll do, Mike. Give it him back. I remember this young fellow. We came out in th' same ship. Give him back th' letter, ye —— croppy. 'Tis a better man than you, this Carnford is. That's the lady he jumped overboard an' saved in mid-ocean—so sweet a

lady as ye'd ever see." Give it back, ye ——, or I'll crack y'r skull for ye, an' have ye to the orderly room in th' marnin'. Here, let him up, boys. He's not a bad lad, even if he is that old —— Bligh's orderly man."

They released their hold upon me, and I stood up. The Irish soldier handed me back the letter with a grin.

"Och sure, Sergeant dear, I've no wish for to threspass on our brave boy's presarves. He's welcome to his colleen's letters. Good luck to him!"

I could have smashed him in the face with my fist for the impudent leer with which he said this. But there was no sense in those tactics, and I was lucky to remember it.

"I'll have to send ye down to the Barracks, Carnford," said the Sergeant. "Take my advice, an' go quiet. 'Tis orders. All Bligh's people is being made prisoners."

So I was marched off, a soldier on either side of me. As we went through Sydney, the town presented an extraordinary spectacle. In the main thoroughfare, at the intersection of cross streets, large bonfires had been lit, and a great show of public rejoicing was being made. Drunken soldiers and convicts shouted ribald songs, and danced about the fires. Women of the town screeched obscenities to them. Beer was on tap in barrels, and nearly everyone had a bottle or a flask of rum. There seemed to have been a little looting of the inns, or else the inn-keepers were terrified into making good fellows of themselves by providing the rowdy element with spirits.

But the rejoicing seemed to me to lack spontaneity. I think that they had been mainly organised by the rebel leaders to lend the appearance of a universally popular movement to their mad deed. They were at the greatest pains, subsequently, to give it this aspect. But I am as sure as that I now sit writing, that it was not a genuine one. The people, as a whole, I am convinced, cared little about the business. It was the military officers and their friends who only really rejoiced. And

in all their rejoicing was an element of fear, for the consequence of the outrageous thing they had done. The shadow of High Treason hung over them. And, when no one was looking, they shivered in it.

We came down George Street to the Barracks, and I was marched straight across to the orderly room.

The room was full of people who were in the custody of soldiers, and three officers sat at a table holding a sort of court of inquiry into the political views of the captives. To my astonishment, I saw Mr. Nutting, and my agent, Mr. Blundell, and many others whom I knew.

I contrived to edge my way to where Adelaide's father stood dejectedly against the wall, awaiting his turn to go before the tribunal. I was anxious as to what might be happening to his daughter, rather than deeply moved on behalf of the unfortunate gentleman himself. When I spoke his name he looked up.

"Ah, Carnford," he said mournfully. "This is very distressing—very humiliating, is it not? Dear me! A sort of reign of terror—a French Revolution, by George. Oh, Adelaide? She is quite well, I thank you. At Mulgoa. I wonder where Sir Henry is? These fellows will surely have him before long. And what of His Excellency, Mr. Carnford? Has he escaped?"

I told him I did not think so, though I had seen nothing of him since he gave me the letter for Major Johnston early in the afternoon. I told him also how I had endeavoured to ride away to procure assistance, and how I had blundered into the soldiers' fire at the Brickfields, and been captured. He sympathised with me in his gentle way, and while he was speaking Mr. Blundell came away from the table, and spying me, edged his way over.

"Jack," he whispered, "I fear you're in a bad way with these fellows. D'ye know what they're doing! Why, discussing what they'll do with each individual that they arrest. They are sending those whom they think they can't trust to the Coal River. They had a very long debate over me, but have left the matter open—

telling me to go to my house, and stay there, for the present. But I fear they will deal harshly with you—since you were so well known as being in His Excellency's confidence. I should not be surprised if they sent you away. But I think I'll get through with them. One or two are in my debt pretty deeply, and will, I think, be a little careful of giving me too much cause to remember them unpleasantly. If I stay in Sydney, I will see to all your affairs, and will take every opportunity of serving your interests, and getting you back. Brian is well out of this. I sent him on a voyage to New Zealand last month. But, good-bye—I must get away, or they may alter their mind. Keep your heart up. These fellows daren't go too far, and they can't last for ever. England is still England—even though it is so far away."

The good fellow wrung my hand, and slipped away out of the room unostentatiously

Presently my name was called, and I was marched up to the table. Three officers sat there, and, to my sorrow, I recognised one of them as Mr. Keating. He was not quite drunk, but neither was he quite sober. He immediately recognised me. The other men were Captain Kemp and Mr. Laycock.

"Ho, by G——d," said Mr. Keating. "Look, Kemp, look whom we have here! Bligh's own man, by heavens! I know the fellow, I know him. Came out in the *Olga* with me. A d——d insolent fellow, a dangerous ruffian. Oh, by G——d, we can't let him remain in Sydney. He was that —— Bligh's right hand man. Coal River for him, I say—without question."

Captain Kemp looked me up and down.

"What d'ye say, Laycock?" he asked.

That giant of a man, the Quartermaster of the Corps, shook his head. "Better send him away, sir. He'll be out of mischief up there. A little discipline will do him good. He's had a fat time of it with Bligh. Coal River, I vote."

"You will go to the Coal River then, my man," said

Captain Kemp, writing something against my name on a list he had before him. "See that you behave yourself. There are even worse places than Newcastle, you know. Take him away."

So I was marched out of the Orderly Room, and out of the Barracks, and down George Street to the gaol.

"And I'll see ye at the Coal River, my man," called that brute Keating after me, as I left the room.

I shall never forget that night in Sydney Gaol. It was a night of the most unmitigated horror.

Picture to yourselves that it was the middle of January, and that, even for January the day had been a warm one. Then picture that fearful prison, and its condition that night.

The old gaol was a very primitive affair. There were only a few cells that were used for special prisoners. The bulk of the inmates were confined in a large building, that consisted of two rooms, each thirty-two feet long by twenty-two feet wide. I have heard that the average number of prisoners shut up in these apartments any evening was between eighty and ninety. Even then they were intolerably overcrowded. On the night of that famous Anniversary Day of 1808, the room in which I found myself had no less than one hundred and fifteen people in it. It was a veritable Black Hole of Calcutta!

My fellows in misfortune were drawn from every class in the community—the majority of them, of course, being convicts. But there were also a large proportion of drunken sailors, a few soldiers, and very many of the civilian inhabitants had been committed there by the tribunal which had sat in judgment upon myself. We were terribly crowded. The windows were small, and high up in the wall, and we almost suffocated for lack of air. Add to this that it was impossible for the whole number of the inmates of the room to lie down at once. Even if they lay with their heads between the legs of their fellows, some twenty-five or thirty must still stand up. The room seemed to me to be quite sufficiently full when I came in about half-past nine. Right up till

midnight further additions to our miserable company continued to be made by the gaoler. The count to which I referred above was made about two o'clock in the morning, by the light of one dim oil-lamp fixed to the wall near the door. Two of the unfortunates who had to stand up all night made it, and as I was one of them, and we went over it five or six times, I can vouch for its correctness.

Never did I welcome the rays of dawn more gladly than when they came creeping into that stifling cess-pool, about four o'clock in the morning. By that time the atmosphere was almost unbearable. But it was not until six o'clock that they opened the door, and allowed us out into the yard. When they did so, I was literally gasping.

We heard from late comers of most that had taken place on the night of the rebellion—and a good deal that never took place at all. And afterwards I heard how His Excellency had sought to have me sent to him, but without avail. He himself was a close prisoner at Government House, with his daughter, Mrs. Putland.

It is a strange thing to think of, that I never again in this life saw Captain Bligh—though I was in correspondence with him up to the time of his death—as a Vice-Admiral—in 1817. When I came back to Sydney from the Coal River he had sailed in H.M.S. *Porpoise* to the Derwent, in Van Diemen's Land. When he returned, on the arrival of Major-General Macquarie, I was away from Sydney. So this strange day and night actually brought an end to my occupation of the office of Governor's Man.

CHAPTER XVIII.

At the Coal River.

They fed us meagrely about seven o'clock—dry bread and several great kitcheners of boiled maize meal—hominy—that did not go nearly round. However, those who had been drinking heavily the night before, and they were not a few, had no particular fancy for such a breakfast, and the scanty rations went further than they might have done, had it not been for the large number of aching heads and sick stomachs there were in the gaol that morning.

Soon after we had finished this elegant repast, the gate of the yard was opened, and some thirty soldiers were marched into it. Behind them came that damnable fellow, Lieutenant Keating, accompanied by Mr. Nicholas Bayly, whom the rebel leaders had appointed Acting-Provost Marshal, in place of Mr. Gore, whom they had summarily imprisoned also. He had been considered of sufficient importance to be accorded the "luxury" of a cell, and was not one of our number.

"Stand over there," shouted Mr. Keating, pointing to the wall opposite to the entrance of the yard. "Shove the ——'s back, men," he cried to the soldiers.

With the butts of their muskets they drove us back in a dense mob—there were, out of the two rooms, a good deal more than 200 of us—and pressed us against the walls. They stood in line, threatening us with their muskets, and cursing us zealously.

"Fix bayonets!" commanded Mr. Keating, and we cowered there, menaced by these truculent ruffians, whose

inflamed faces and bloodshot eyes were good evidence as to how they had passed the night.

"Merciful heavens!" exclaimed a weak voice behind me. "Do the dreadful creatures mean to butcher us!"

I tried to reassure the speaker, and for the first time became aware that Mr. Nutting was a partner in my captivity. He was pale and tired looking, but, nevertheless, in his dress and elegant appearance, was in sharp contrast with his surroundings. I was about to speak to him comfortingly, when the unlovely voice of Mr. Keating, who had been in conference with the Provost-Marshall, again afflicted us.

"Now then, ye — do's, give attention. Listen to this list which Mr. Bayly is going to read to ye, and answer to your names."

The Provost-Marshall stepped forward, with a paper in his hand, looking at us malevolently a moment, and then began to shout it at us.

"John Carnford," he called.

"Here," I replied.

"Say 'Sir,' ye — insolent swine!" roared Mr. Keating.

"Here, sir," I answered, meekly enough to make the brute grin.

"Get over there, d——n, ye—against the other wall, and stand still," he bellowed at me, and then added, for the benefit of the company in general.

"Oho—the Governor's Man! Billy wont get his boots cleaned this morning!"

There was a roar of laughter from the soldiers, as I walked across, angrily, to the further side of the gaol yard. The Provost-Marshall went on calling names, and before long there were some forty of us, all selected as being adherents, or possible adherents, to the cause of Governor Bligh. Poor Mr. Nutting was one of the number.

"It is Paris over again," he murmured dolefully. He fully believed, he told me, that we were chosen for execution. His mind was possessed with recollections of the

Terror. He had been in France during that fearful period.

When the selection had been made, the soldiers drove those who had been left out of this interesting roll-call out of the way, formed us up in a little column of two abreast, surrounded us, and marched us out of the gaol into George Street. It was, of course, called High Street in those days. The names of Sydney's two principal thoroughfares, "Pitt" and "George," were bestowed by Governor Macquarie a few years later.

As we went through the town towards Sydney Cove, I noticed a strange difference in the aspect of the place from what had obtained yesterday and last night. All the wild excitement had died away—like the smouldering bonfires, at the intersection of the streets—and the people's faces wore an anxious, half-terrified look. The seriousness of the business had begun to impress them, and the danger of it to make itself apparent. They were bewildered. They knew that the Governor was in prison in a big cottage upon the hillside, but they knew also that he was nevertheless the Governor, and that any act against him was High Treason against His Majesty and the realm. But in the Officer's Mess at the Barracks was established the government *de facto*, and it was a government to be feared, since its self-endorsed powers were without limit—for the time being, at any rate. I think that the sight of us unfortunate victims of the rebels' distrust being sent away, no one knew whither, did much to augment this feeling.

They took us down to the Government wharf, where one of the colonial schooners was alongside, marched us aboard, forced us into the hold, and clapped the hatches on. They did not take them off for three days, and when they did so—after a miserable, dark period of seasickness and suffocation—we were at anchor in the Coal River. A black nor'-easter had been blowing, and we had taken all that time to beat up the coast, sixty-two miles, against it. Mr. Keating accompanied us as the new Commandant of the settlement.

Newcastle is a great port, and a fine town, to-day, in 1858, but it was a queer place fifty years ago. When I came on deck that morning, after the first sensation of the glorious fresh air and sunlight in contrast to the horrible hold of the schooner, my heart sank, as I looked at the primitive, wretched little settlement that was to be our place of exile for heaven alone knew how long. Its appearance, even on such a bright and sunny morning, was sufficiently depressing to fill me with gloomy apprehension as to our future.

Poor Mr. Nutting, whom I had to assist upon deck—he was so weak and ill—was almost overcome by the prospect.

“Good Lord, Carnford!” he whispered, “can they mean to keep us in this horrid place?”

“I fear so, sir,” I answered. “But there’s one comfort—they can’t keep us here forever. Help will come from England, when they learn what has taken place, and these usurpers will find themselves in Queer Street. I would not like to be in Major Johnston’s shoes, or Mr. Macarthur’s. I think, on the whole, we are better off than they are.”

“Yes, yes—but it will be months, it will be a year at least, before any help can come from London. And my poor little girl! She does not even know yet what has become of me! The news of the rebellion must have travelled to Emu Plains by this time, and she will have heard it at Mulgoa. She will be a prey to the most dreadful apprehension. She is quite alone with me in this country—and now I am snatched away from her in this fashion, and she does not even know where I am gone. It is too awful.”

“Cheer up, sir. I believe she knows by this time, and you will hear from her by the next vessel from Sydney. While we were in the gaol—during the night—I gave several written messages to a prisoner who stood near me all night. He is a man I know—a good fellow, except that he drinks too much at times. He will see, somehow, that they reach their destination. I sent one to the

Governor, one to Mr. Thompson at the Green Hills, one to Mr. Blundell, my agent—and I took the liberty of sending one to your daughter. It seemed to me that you might be in the gaol too, and, if that were so, you would probably know nobody who was likely to get out, and would have no opportunity of communicating with Miss Nutting. I hope I did right, sir?"

The poor gentleman grasped my hand and shook it fervently.

"God bless you, my boy," he said, with tears in his eyes. "You have lifted a load from me. I feel better already. I cannot repay you."

He cheered up wonderfully from that moment. I thought to myself that perhaps a time might come when he would be able to repay me—though I scarcely dared to think that sweet thought.

Newcastle, or, as it was called at that time, King's Town, was by far the most primitive outpost of British settlement in Australia. It had only been established a few years—primarily for obtaining the coals which are so abundant there, and so easily to be worked. Afterwards, very valuable timber was cut along the river and exported to Sydney—principally the red cedar. And it was a convenient place to which to send prisoners who had incurred extra punishment. Norfolk Island, of course, was the ultimate destination of the worst of the convict populace—and, unfortunately, of some who never deserved to go there—but the Coal River was not regarded by them as being at all desirable. Some of the worst and most abandoned of the iron-gangs were stationed at Port Hunter.

The settlement straggled from the riverside up the slope of the hills to the southward. Off the harbour, the Coal Island—now known as "Nobby's," and joined to the mainland by a convict-built breakwater, marked the entrance to the noble river that found outlet to the sea at this part of the coast. Away to the north-east, on the southern side, a long white beach curved for nearly twenty miles to Port Stephens. The houses of the

town, with the exception of the cottages of the military and civil officers, a storehouse and a primitive goal, were nothing better than miserable huts. You would scarcely recognise it for the same place to-day. At the most there were never more than three vessels lying at anchor in the stream. Generally there were none at all. Look at the shipping you may see there now—both steam and sail—and imagine, if you can, what it looked like at the end of January, 1808.

In the afternoon we were taken ashore, a few tents were pitched, and in these we huddled for shelter at night, until we had made for ourselves more permanent dwellings. A good many of the prisoners were set to hard labour, but Mr. Nutting and I were spared this additional penalty.

I should have referred, earlier in my narrative, to an event of much importance to me, which had occurred some four or five months previously—the fact of which stood me in good stead now. Governor Bligh—partly on the representations of Dr. Collingwood, on his next visit in the *Olga* to New South Wales, after my arrival, and, I believe, because he himself regarded my services as being worthy of such reward—had granted me a conditional pardon. This meant that I was free within the Colony, but not at liberty to return to England until the term of my original sentence had expired. It meant here, in this horrible outpost, that I need not join in the forced labour of the convicts. Mr. Nutting, of course, was a free man. Fortunately for ourselves, our lack of private means did not necessitate our living “on the store,” as it was termed when people were provided with Government rations by the Commissariat. Had we been forced to apply for such maintenance, I know well that the amiable Mr. Keating would have seen to it that we worked hard for our keep.

We were able, after a couple of weeks, to obtain possession of a little house on the hillside, not far from the top of what is nowadays known as Watt Street. Its owner, a political prisoner of the Crown, had received

his free pardon from the Home Government, and was so delighted with his good fortune that he generously presented the title of it to Mr. Nutting and myself.

He was a remarkable man, this Doctor Martin Boyle, a very remarkable man indeed—and I could have wished for the opportunity of cultivating his acquaintance. On our first arrival at King's Town, he had been very kind to us, inviting us to his cottage, and helping us in every way he could. He was one of those good souls who is continually helping his fellow creatures, and always seeking to keep the fact that he has done so from public knowledge. I had suffered somewhat from that distressing complaint known as varicose veins, and, on my mentioning it to Dr. Boyle, he offered to examine me. He did so, and was good enough to advise an operation—which indeed, he offered to carry out himself, and only the uncertainty of my position prevented me from accepting his generous offer. I had it done, with entire success, twelve months afterwards in Sydney.

He was a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, had travelled much, and was a man of wide reading and catholic literary taste. But all his life, from his student days, he had had a deep sympathy with the dog that was down, and the active expression of this had led him into trouble on more than one occasion. He was here now owing to an arbitrary action of the Governor's, in ordering the pulling down of some cottages in Sydney, which Captain Bligh maintained were built on Crown lands. The Doctor had valiantly espoused the cause of the unfortunate owners of the buildings, and had so fallen foul of His Excellency. The latter had peremptorily ordered his deportation to the Coal River. He had been sent to New South Wales for the part that he had taken in the Irish Rebellion of 1798, when he had acted as a, strictly honorary, surgeon to the forces of "General" Joseph Holt, of Vinegar Hill fame.

I always remember him with pleasure, and picture the three of us sitting outside his cottage in the summer evenings, smoking and talking, as we gazed up the coast

towards the blue mountains behind Port Stephens. He entertained us greatly with anecdote and reminiscence. Whenever I think of the Doctor, I always recall with amusement his discourse on the famous Mannequin of the City of Brussels in Belgium. He was said to be a very skilful surgeon, and I could well believe it—but what I liked him most for was his genial red face, his prematurely silver hair, and his shrewd wit. I have met many worse than the Doctor, and Mr. Nutting, who hated Irishmen on principle, was pleased to make an exception in favour of Dr. Martin Boyle.

One evening as we sat there, Mr. Keating walked, on his way down into the town, past the front of the cottage. He was obviously very drunk. The collar of his jacket was unbuttoned, and his stock was unhooked. He presented a pretty figure to point out to a stranger as the Commandant of the Settlement at the Coal River.

The Doctor chuckled as he passed us, and Mr. Keating, with a drunken man's acuteness of hearing, turned instantly. He regarded the three of us with alcoholic fury for a few moments, and then laughed scornfully.

"Ho!" he said, "'tish th' croppy doctor, an' Billy Bligh's lickspittle man, an' th' d——d old fool from St. James'—an' all drunk. By G——d, ye'd snigger as I go by, would ye?" He became angry again. "I'll teach ye, ye ——s I'll teach ye! Watch I don't send ye to work at th' lime kiln, ye scum. I can do it, and by G——d, I will, if I have any of y'r in-insholensh."

He stumbled down the road. The Doctor laughed quietly. "Ha!" he said, "our noble Commandant is a little sprung. A pleasant fellow, isn't he? But I'd go carefully, if I were Mr. Keating. I would be careful of dark nights, and keep away from the cliffs, if I were him. There are several here who don't love him, but if Mary McBain get a chance, well——." The Doctor shrugged his shoulders.

"Mary McBain?" I said vaguely, recollecting having heard the name somewhere before.

"Yes—a convict woman here. Living with a soldier.

She was in service at Parson Marsden's at Parramatta when this bright and beautiful young man was in the garrison there. A pretty tale, gentlemen, a pretty tale."

Then I remembered the girl whom Andrew Thompson and I had encountered that night in Church Street, as we rode into Parramatta from Green Hills. As I recalled the bitterness and loathing with which she had cursed the name of Mr. Keating, I, too, felt that she was no safe neighbour for that dashing officer. But I am not hypocritical enough to pretend that I was concerned for Mr. Keating's safety.

CHAPTER XIX.

Adelaide.

Dreary weeks that were to expand into dreary months, followed, and Mr. Nutting and I endured as patiently as we might our enforced residence on the banks of the Hunter River.

Little news reached us from Sydney, but plenty of rumour was manufactured in King's Town, and some of it was so absurd as to be almost worthy of record. French troops had landed at Botany Bay and were besieging Sydney. Sydney had been surrendered to the Napoleonic invasion by Major Johnston and the officers of the 102nd. Major Johnston had proclaimed John Macarthur King of Australia. The settlement had become a Republic, and Major Johnston had been elected its first President. Governor Bligh had escaped, raised an army on the Hawkesbury, and was marching upon Sydney. Governor Bligh had been hanged on Gallows Hill. These, and a hundred others of a similar sort, were the most frequent tidings we heard of the metropolis. It was extraordinary how such idle gossip was accepted as gospel by the convicts and private soldiers. I told Dr. Boyle that I half suspected him of devising many of them. I am not at all sure that he did not find diversion in inventing some. At any rate, he only winked at me when I challenged him about it.

But, of course, we had letters. They were opened and read both by the authorities in Sydney, and by the gallant Commandant at the Coal River, and it was gall

and wormwood to me to think of that drunken brute gloating over my dear girl's pretty handwriting, perhaps lifting the delicately scented note-paper up to his ugly countenance to smell. The filthy beast made a point of addressing me as "My dear Mr. Carnford," when he met me about the settlement. But I was careful to refrain from giving him the slightest pretext for exerting his authority, knowing that he would have been only too glad to do his best to make life a h——l, both for myself and Mr. Nutting.

I had letters from Mr. Blundell, too, and from their guarded phrases learned something of the political situation in the capital. The Governor was a close prisoner, and, later, was confined with his daughter in the Barracks. Though he could not say so, it was easy to infer from the worthy merchant's communications that the rebel leaders were making hay while the sun shone. They were granting each other tracts of land, issuing pardons to their sycophants among the convicts, and generally abusing the authority which they had so outrageously assumed. It was most gratifying to hear all these transactions declared null and void by Governor Macquarie, when, in 1810, he arrived from England to assume the governorship.

And then, one blessed morning, we saw the schooner from Sydney coming in round Coal Island, and, hastening down to the River, were just in time to welcome—whom do you think?

Why—Adelaide Nutting, and Sir Henry Browne Hayes!

The former had, thanks to Mr. Blundell's ceaseless efforts, been allowed to join her father at King's Town. What a joy it was to the latter to see her, you may imagine. And I don't mind confessing that it was a joy to me—but perhaps you will have guessed that.

As for the Knight of Vacluse, he had, in his usual fashion, brushed the temporary authorities the wrong way, and was now doubly exiled. He was there for eight months, and departed when we did. But it was

not so long before he was back again. I have a copy of a memorial he sent to Governor Macquarie. It refers to the latter occasion, and it is so amusingly characteristic of our good friend that I am going to insert part of it here. He states:—

“That in the month of May (1809) last your memorialist had occasion to come to Sydney to consult a physician on the state of his health, which was much impaired, and was walking peaceably in the town when he was suddenly set upon by a party of armed men, who said they were constables. They proceeded to drag your memorialist to the common jail; in committing which outrage on the person of your memorialist they tore your memorialist's clothes, wounded and bruised him, and at length, without any warrant or pretended authority bore off to prison your memorialist, whom they had thus overpowered. There your memorialist was that night confined, and early next morning, in like forcible illegal manner was sent off again to the Coal River (Newcastle), where, unfortunately for your memorialist, Lieutenant Lawson, 102nd Regiment, had got into the command. That on the fourteenth day of July, 1809, your memorialist was sent for by Lieutenant Lawson, and while your memorialist—unconscious of having done any wrong or offended Lieutenant Lawson—was proceeding to Government House there he was suddenly interrupted by Lieutenant Lawson, who vociferously called out to some of his people, and made use of the following words:—‘Seize the villian by the scruff of the neck and drag him to the guard house.’ That your memorialist endeavoured by remonstrance to learn the cause of this fresh outrage, but was prevented by the constant vociferation of Lieutenant Lawson, who loudly called out that he would flay your memorialist and put him to work on the shell-boat.”

On the present occasion, possibly because of some little influence which Mr. Nutting and myself may have had with him, the fiery Irishman managed to contain himself fairly well—though I always dreaded an outburst

whenever he met Mr. Keating, or even when he caught a glimpse of him. The sight of the dissolute Commandant's red coat was to Sir Henry what it might have been to a mad bull.

Adelaide was prettier and sweeter in my eyes than ever. She was delighted to be with her father again, and brightened our lives by her happy presence. I felt, somehow, that she was a little happier for seeing me, though I hardly dared flatter myself to so great an extent. Perhaps, reader, you have been through what I was going through then, and will remember how, at some moments, you were the happiest mortal on earth, and at others, the most wretched and miserable—and, on the whole, what a fool you were. Perhaps you will recollect your own case. At anyrate, I do not apologise for mine. I was twenty-two, and she was nineteen—and she was also Adelaide Nutting. That is all I have to say.

And, one night, she and I saw the tragedy of the cliff. It was a beautiful, clear evening in May, the moon at the full, the sky cloudless, and the air still. We had left Sir Henry and Mr. Nutting over their pipes and arguments, and we had walked over towards the sea, coming to the edge of the cliffs just at the back of our cottage, and above the part of the beach that is almost a third of its whole length from the southern end.

We stood there for a long time, gazing out over the glorious silver sheen that reflected itself from the surface of the placid ocean. Then, since it was such a fine night, and was yet very early, she proposed that we should walk a little further in the direction of Sydney. It was hardly eight o'clock. You may be sure that I was nothing loath to fall in with such a suggestion.

By the jagged edge of the uplands we had rambled along slowly, talking those things that do get talked by people who are in the situation we both, I think, tacitly recognised—which are to me yet too sacred to set down here—and had gone about half a mile, when we came suddenly upon two people, a man and a woman.



It was a beautiful clear evening in May.

We were in a little hollow—the undulation that held a tiny watercourse that only ran in rainy weather—and they were on the crest of the next undulation. I don't know why we had not seen them before, unless it was because we were so absorbed in our own agreeable affairs. It was only because of the dreadful words that he made use of, that they attracted our attention. It was because of them, too, that I seized Adelaide's arm, and drew her down on the grass out of sight. With that fierce threat, I could not leave the woman alone with the man. I had recognised his voice, and his figure was plain enough in the moonlight. It was the Commandant.

"D——n you, you trollop! I'll kill you for that!"

The woman answered him.

"Kill me then, John. Kill me. You've killed my soul. You made me kill my helpless bairn—may God forgive you! You've killed a' that was guid in me, an' I wasna' a bad lass—in that way—until you made me bad. What am I now? A drunken —— A common, drunken, sojer's mistress. An' 'tis you that made me such."

That was all we heard. I never know what she had threatened to do. The whole thing was so mercilessly swift that I had no chance to interfere.

He stood right at the edge of the cliff, and behind him was a sheer drop of at least one hundred feet. She stood opposite him, a yard away.

I saw him raise his clenched fist in the moonlight, as if to strike the cowering woman down. In a sort of paralysis of rage and hate, he seemed to hesitate. In that instant, she suddenly took one step forward, stretched out her open hand, and pushed him in the chest. He staggered back, trod on empty air, swayed with frantic arms clutching at the moonbeams—and was gone in a second. One hoarse scream—and then the rattle of stones and earth pouring down the face of the cliff, a dull thud—and the woman screamed, and jumped as I darted towards her.

I threw myself down on the edge of the cliff and tried

to see them, but, ten feet down, it bulged a little, and I could not do so. I ran down into the dip, and Adelaide clung to me, sobbing, and hiding her face in my breast.

I know I kissed her—and that was our strange betrothal. That was our mutual declaration of a love that has never waned, and that even the grave has not lessened for me. It was made above the bodies of that sinful man and that unhappy woman that lay on the rocks a hundred feet below us. Strange, that when our troth was plighted in such circumstances, so much happiness should have been our portion.

We stayed there, clinging to one another for a few moments, until my wits came back, and I hurried my dear girl home, so that I might give the alarm, and seek help. Sir Henry and Mr. Nutting came, and we found some soldiers, and tore two shutters down from the windows of our little house, and went to seek what we knew we should find. We went along the beach, and over the flat rocks, until we came to them.

He was quite dead. His neck was broken. She moaned a little when we lifted her, but before we had reached the top of the rough track that led from the beach to the cliff, she was dead, too.

One of the soldiers—and I heard after that it was the man she had lived with—mumbled, as we put her body down for a brief rest on the top.

"Poor Mary. 'Tis sorry I am for her. She was not so bad. But as for that —, why he got what was coming to him!"

And he spat on the ground, as he waved his hand contemptuously towards the group that walked on with Mr. Keating's body.

And that, as I have said above, was the strange manner of our betrothal.

I do not think that there is very much in omens.

CHAPTER XX.

In 'Fifty-Eight.

And now, when I am coming to the beginning of my story, I must stop writing. I am essentially a person of respectable inclinations, and it seems a little hard that I should have to cut short my biography just when I have finished dealing with the disreputable period of my career. But a simple calculation will serve to show how impossible it would be for me to continue at the rate which I have been going.

The foregoing veracious and spasmodic narrative covers a period of two years and five months, and some two hundred and odd pages of MSS. And this is the twentieth chapter. Supposing I went on, and related to you all the adventures and vicissitudes of John and Adelaide Carnford, between May, 1808, and December, 1858—do you think you would tackle the job of wading through those many volumes of small beer? It is a simple rule of three propositions. This unpretentious work runs into twenty chapters, over, say, two years. Therefore, fifty years would run into five hundred chapters, or twenty-five volumes. Do you suppose, my dear children and grandchildren, that all your unquestionable respect for the aged compiler of this *magnum opus* would induce you to read it all? Or, do you think that when he should have disappeared into the ground at Campbell's Hill, near West Maitland, your good wives and excellent husbands—who, after all, are not so interested in your garrulous ancestor as you are yourselves—would wish to

continue to afford that bulky library house-room? Well, I don't!

So here endeth the lesson of John Carnford, and Adelaide, his wife. And there is no particular moral to it. If I were inclined to point one, I should draw your attention to the misfortunes of the late Admiral Bligh, and say—"Don't swear at your subordinates."

I asked Adelaide one day what she would have done—since she insisted in demeaning her high estate, as daughter of George Mainwaring Nutting, Esquire, of the County of Bucks, and of Paddy's Flat, by marrying an Emancipist—if Governor Bligh had not been so kind as to have granted him a conditional pardon.

"My dear Jack," she replied, with her sweet smile and pretty little catch of a laugh—"I should have used my influence, and had you assigned to me. You know, Mrs. Macquarie and I are very good friends. She's a darling. That would have been simple."

"Oh, would you," I said. "But you might have had occasion to flog me?"

"You dear," she laughed merrily, "and it would have been so delightful to have handed you a little note to Mr. Mudie, requesting him, as a Justice of the Peace, to see that you received fifty lashes. Delightful!" Screamingly funny. Our neighbour Mudie, of Castle Forbes, was a great flogger.

"Oh, don't, Jack," was the next thing she said. "You have rumpled all my hair. You great bear!"

But in truth, Adelaide was a poor flogger. I was not much good myself, but I would occasionally bring an incorrigible criminal before the bench of magistrates, to be dealt with as they thought fit. She never would—dreading the possible penalty even more than they did. When I was away from Ludgate Hill, superintending my other property on the Macintyre River, the discipline amongst the convict servants would go to pieces. But I always noticed, when I came back, some indefinable atmosphere of happiness about the place. They worshipped her, and I know of more than one life that was

reclaimed by the sheer capacity she had of invoking the love of all with whom she came in contact. Not always, though.

On one of my returns, I remember asking her how a certain Paddy-the-Goat had conducted himself. She replied, enthusiastically—

“Oh, Jack, dear, I am sure that poor man has been maligned. He has been an angel—a positive angel. You know the poor fellow was transported for nothing”—(they all were)—“and has always been most terribly misunderstood. I am sure we are going to make a good man out of the poor fellow.”

A little investigation resulted in a discovery that Mr. Paddy-the-Goat had disposed of ten new scythes, a grindstone, an anvil, and half a dozen picks. His tangible assets were two kegs of rum, and one empty one. But, even then, Adelaide was in tears when the infernal rogue departed for Maitland Gaol. I regret to say that he was eventually hanged for bushranging; because I always had an idea that my dear wife held me partly responsible for this.

But I cannot bear yet to write very much of that dear woman. If—for some of you who are to come, and who did not know that saint of God—I copy this short paragraph from *The Maitland Mercury*, of July the 3rd, 1855. I know that you will forgive an old man with an aching heart, whose comfort is that he believes that he will be with her again ere many years are gone:—

“We regret to announce the death on Sunday last of Mrs. Adelaide Carnford, wife of John Carnford, Esq., M.L.A., of Ludgate Hill Station, near Singleton. The deceased lady was universally respected. She was the only daughter of the late George Mainwaring Nutting, Esq., of Mulgoa, and with her respected husband, who now represents it in Parliament, was one of the pioneers of the district in which she lived for so many years. Of a kindly, charitable and generous disposition, Mrs. Carnford endeared herself to all with whom she came in contact, and the large

gathering of mourners at Campbell's Hill Cemetery, where she was buried on Wednesday, was eloquent testimony to the esteem in which she was held. Mrs. Carnford leaves a family of two sons and three daughters to mourn her loss. The name of her eldest son, Colonel John Carnford, of the 2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys), who so distinguished himself in the Crimea as to be awarded Her Majesty's new military decoration of the Victoria Cross, is fresh in the public memory. Her second son, Mr. George Nutting Carnford, is well known in this district, and in that of the Liverpool Plains, where he manages his father's properties. Lady Elsternwick, wife of Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Elsternwick, R.N., who formerly held a command on the Australian station as Captain of H.M.S. *Argonaut*, is her eldest daughter. Another is Mrs. Brian MacMahon, widow of the late Mr. MacMahon, of Messrs. Blundell & MacMahon, the well known wool-brokers and shipping agents of Sydney and Newcastle. The youngest daughter, Miss Hester Carnford, is unmarried, and resides with her father at Ludgate Hill. The deceased lady left eleven grandchildren, who may well be considered fortunate in having so virtuous, so benevolent, and so universally beloved a grandparent upon whom to model the pattern of their future careers. The district has sustained a severe loss in the person of Mrs. Carnford, who, with her husband, was one of the earliest settlers. Our sincere sympathies are extended to the bereaved family of this estimable lady."

After all, that is the whole story of my dear one—a good woman, a good wife, and a good mother.

The first time I revisited my native country—to see the last of my dear mother, whom I never could persuade to leave Harrow Weald—was in the year 1827. One day, in the autumn of that year, whilst wandering about London, I found myself at the south side of the river, and close to Lambeth Palace. I was just outside Lambeth Parish Church. So, as I was not pressed for time, and only exploring the big city for my own amusement

and instruction, I walked into the churchyard with an idea of taking a look over the church. Just inside the iron gates I encountered a great square tomb, of imposing dimensions. Walking round it, to inform myself as to the importance of the personage who was buried there, I read—

Sacred
to
The Memory of
Vice-Admiral William Bligh,
Admiral of the Blue.
&c., &c., &c.

—and a lengthy eulogy, of such a character that it could not possibly have been composed by my late friend, Mr. John Macarthur.

So here was where my old master lay! How I went back over the years! How I remembered everything about that choleric man—his favorite oaths, above all else. He had died in 1817, yet it only seemed yesterday since he gave me the letter for Colonel Johnston, at three o'clock on that memorable Anniversary Day in Sydney. And I had never seen him since!

Well, I liked Bligh. I liked him, and respected him. With all his faults, he was a Man—and you cannot say more of any male human being than that. And he was a great seaman. Lord Nelson and Captain Cook have testified to that. As for his qualities as a Governor—well, perhaps I had better refer you to the private journals of Colonel George Johnston. Do you think so?

His monument reminds me of another churchyard, far away from dingy Lambeth, where there is also a tombstone of great size, that reposes above the bones of Andrew Thompson. It is in St. Matthew's at Windsor, on the Hawkesbury. The young Scot died in 1810, and the memorial stone that marks his resting place is fearsome with his virtues. They are recorded in the Macquarie manner, and it is also recorded that the good

Governor paid for the stone, and, very naively, that Andrew Thompson left him a fourth of his fortune.

During that visit to England, I journeyed to Cork, and did myself the honour of calling upon my friend, Sir Henry Browne Hayes. I found him an old man, and very glad to see me. He had received a pardon in 1812, and had gone home at once. He was very keen on talking of the colony, and especially of Vaucluse. He never tired of railing against the "villains" who had persecuted him in Sydney. Of all of them, I think, he most disliked my friend, Mr. William Lawson.

So I come to an end. I am writing this in the house of my old and well beloved friend, Dr. Peter Collingwood, who is still alive and well, and says he is only fifty. But he is fifteen years older than I, and I blushing confess to seventy-two. He has long retired from the fine practice he built up in Sydney after he left the sea.

Through the open window I look out from the North Shore, across that beautiful harbour, and dream many things. Where is the little town that I knew first of all? Where is Governor Bligh's house? Where is old Sydney? Gone, gone, gone—and yet it is the same beautiful place that could never be anything but lovely, even in its days of misery and sorrow. If you love Sydney as I have always loved it, and this splendid Australia of ours—well, neither city nor continent can complain of the lack of a fervent and whole-hearted love. It is a great country, and someday the people will be great.

Well, good-bye—good-bye.

THE END.





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