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HOW HE DIED, AND OTHER POEMS









# HOW HE DIED

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

JOHN FARRELL

SYDNEY

ANGUS AND ROBERTSON

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## AUSTRALIA.

O RADIANT Land! o'er whom the Sun's first dawning  
Fell brightest when God said "Let there be Light;"  
O'er whom the day hung out its bluest awning  
Whitening to wondrous deeps of stars by night—  
O Land exultant! on whose brow reposes  
A queenlier coronal than has been wrought  
From light of pearls and bloom of Eastern roses  
In all the workshops of high Poet-thought!—

O thou who hast, thy splendid hair entwining,  
A toil-won wreath where are no blood-splashed bays,  
Who standest in a stainless vestment shining  
Before the eyes and lips of love and praise—  
O wrought of old in Orient clime and sunny,  
With all His richest bounties graced and decked;  
Thy heart all virgin gold, thy breath all honey,  
Supremest work of greatest Architect!—

O Land of widest hope, of promise boundless,  
Why wert thou hidden in a dark, strange sea  
To wait through ages, fruitless, scentless, soundless,  
Till from thy slumber men should waken thee?—  
Why did'st thou lie, with ear that never hearkened  
The sounds without, the cries of strife and play,  
Like some sweet child within a chamber darkened  
Left sleeping far into a troubled day?—

What opiate sealed thine eyes while all the others  
Grew tired and faint in East and West and North;  
Why did'st thou dream until thy joyful brothers  
Found where thou wast, and led thee smiling forth?—  
Why did'st thou mask the happy face thou wearest?  
Why wert thou veiled from all the eager eyes?  
Why left so long, O first of lands and fairest,  
Beneath the tent of un conjectured skies?

We know thy secret. In the awful ages  
When there was silence and the world was white,  
Ere yet on the recording volume's pages  
The stern-browed Angel had begun to write;  
Ere yet from Eden the sad feet had wandered  
Or yet was sin or any spilth of blood,  
August in judgment, God the Father pondered  
Upon His work, and saw that it was good—



The Sovereign of suns and stars, the thunder  
Of whose dread Power we cannot understand,  
Sate throned and musing on the shining wonder  
Of this new world within His hollowed hand,  
With high sad eyes, like one that saw a vision—  
And spake “Lo ! this My gift is fair to see,  
But Pride will mar the glory, and derision  
Of many feet that will not follow Me.

“ I give my creatures shields of hope and warning ;  
I set in fruitful ways of peace their first ;  
But even these will turn from Me, and scorning  
My council, hearken to the Voice Accurst ;  
And sin, and pain, and death will make invasion  
Of this abode, and from a world undone  
To Heaven will sound the moans of expiation  
They wring from Him, My well-beloved Son.

“ And yet again will they, with eyes unheeding  
His sacrifice, uplift their guilty hands  
Against their brethren, and with rage exceeding  
And lust, and vengeance, desolate the lands.  
But this one land,” so mused He, the Creator,  
“ This will I bless and hide from all the woe,  
That worthier among men, in ages later  
May find it pure, and, haply, hold it so.”

Then, sweet Australia, fell a benediction  
Of sleep upon thee, where no wandering breath  
Might come to tell thee of the loud affliction  
Of cursing tongues and clamouring hosts of death ;  
And with the peace of His great love around thee,  
And rest that clashing ages could not break,  
Strong-sighted eyes of English seekers found thee,  
Strong English voices cried to thee " Awake ! "

For them a continent undreamed of, peerless,  
A realm for happier sons of theirs to be,  
One land preserved unspotted, bloodless, tearless,  
Beyond the rim of an enchanted sea  
Lay folded in the soft compelling languor  
Of warm south airs, like an awaiting bride,  
While strife, and hate, and culminating anger  
Raged through the far-off nations battle-dyed.

Here were no dreadful vestiges imprinted  
With evil messages and brands of Cain,  
No mounds of death or walls of refuge dinted  
With signs that Christ had lived and died in vain ;  
No chill memorials here proclaimed the story  
Of kingships stricken for and murders done ;  
Here was a marvel and a separate glory,  
One land whose history had not begun !

One unsown garden, fenced by sea-crags sterile,  
Whose iron breasts flung back the thundering  
waves,

From all the years of fierce unrest and peril,  
And slaves, and lords, and broken blades, and  
graves ;

One gracious freehold for the free, where only  
Soft dusky feet fell, reaching not thy sleep ;  
One field inviolate, untroubled, lonely,  
Across the dread of the uncharted deep !

O dear and fair ! awakened from thy sleeping  
So late ! The world is breaking into noon ;  
The eyes that all the morn were dim with weeping  
Smile through the tears that will cease dropping  
soon !

Thine have no tears in them for olden sorrow,  
Thou hast no heartache for a ruined past ;  
From bright to-day to many a bright to-morrow  
Shall be thy way, O first of lands and last !

## THE LAST BULLET.

SINCE the first human eyes saw the first timid stars  
break through Heaven and shine,  
Surely never a man was bowed down with the cross  
of a curse such as mine ;  
They of all the dead millions of millions whose dust  
whirls and flees in the wind,  
Who were born helpless heirs of the hate of a fate  
that is bitter and blind—

All whose lives pain has smitten with fire since God  
first set the sun to its course—  
What have they known of woe like to mine ? What  
of grief ? Of despair ? Of remorse ?  
Oh ! to cancel one hour of my past ! Oh ! to shut out  
all thought, to forget,  
Then go forth as a leper to die in hot wastes ! Listen !  
Over us yet,

Her and me, in the heart of the North, hung the  
glamour of Love at its height,  
Joy of things unperceived of the rest, holy hours of  
unwaning delight ;  
Joy of selfless devotion to each in each heart ; joy of  
guiding the feet  
Of our babe, our one daughter, our May, by three  
summers of childhood made sweet !

I had dared overmuch in the battle for wealth, I had  
ventured alone  
Upon verdurous tracts that lay fronting the edge of a  
desert unknown ;  
Fifty miles further out than the nearest I chanced on  
a green width of plain,  
In a time when the earth was made glad by a grey  
year of bountiful rain ;

Fifty miles from Maconochie's Gap. They had warned  
me. Some three years gone by,  
In a night when the flames of his home reddened far  
up the heights of the sky,  
With a hard ragged spear through his heart, and a  
tomahawk blade in his head,  
Lay the Master, in death, and his wife—Ah ! how  
better had she, too, lain dead !

Dark the tale is to tell, yet it was but a cruel resentment of wrong,  
The fierce impulse of those who were weak, for revenge upon those who were strong—  
Cattle speared at the first, blacks shot down, and the blood of their babes, even, shed ;  
Blood that stains the same hue as our own. It is written, red blood will have red !

But an organised anger of whites swept the bush with a fury unchained,  
Till the dead seemed as thick as the trees, and the black murdered corpses remained,  
Till the black glutted crows scarce could rise from their feast at the sound of a foot,  
And the far-away camps through the nights lay unlighted, and ghastly, and mute !

And a terror ran out through the tribes. Since that devilish crime had been done ;  
Not a dusk stealthy savage had crossed the wide bounds of Maconochie's run ;  
But the white sky in pitiless scorn stared at waterless plains that implored  
For the mercy of clouds that passed, mocking them.  
"Vengeance is mine," said the Lord !

They had warned me. "Out yonder," they said,  
"there's abundance of water and grass,  
You've Brown's Ranges beside you, they draw down  
and drain all the rain-clouds that pass,  
(We are outside the rainy belt here). But remember  
the words we have said—  
If you *will* go, prepare to have trouble ; take plenty  
of powder and lead !"

And I went, with my trustworthy helpers, and lived  
through a desolate year  
Of suspicions, and vigils, and hunger for her of all  
dear ones most dear ;  
But a year crowned with utmost successes, and crowned  
above all things in this,  
That it brought her again to my side with the gift of  
a new face to kiss !

And a blessedness came with her feet, and our life  
was a prosperous peace,  
And the years as they passed shed upon us a fair  
meed of worldly increase ;  
But a thousand times better to me than assurance of  
silver and gold  
Was the measureless love of a wife, mine for ever to  
have and to hold !

Oh! the pang of remembering *then!* Oh! could  
madness dishevel my mind,  
Till I babbled of wry tangled things, looking neither  
before nor behind!

But I shrink from the slumberless thought of one  
deed, as the first of our race,  
In the shame of his wrong-doing, crouched from the  
light of God's terrible face!

We had hardly been vexed by the blacks in our  
work, though all through the first year,  
And the second, we stood upon guard with the  
disciplined earnest of fear,  
But the summers and winters went by, and the wild  
tribes gave never a proof  
Of their hate, and our vigilance slept, and security  
came to our roof.

So, unwarned, fell the night of my doom. There was  
smoke in the west through the day,  
And an hour after noon all the hands had been  
mustered and sent out to stay  
In its course the red wave that approached, for the  
high grass was yellow and sere  
With the withering breath of the dense sullen heat of  
the last of the year.



They took rifles to shoot kangaroo, as it chanced. My  
two darlings and I  
Sat together at night by the door, with our eyes on  
a fringe of the sky  
Where the light of the late sunken sun was replaced  
by a wide lurid glow,  
Which pulsed high or grew pale as the fire under-  
neath it waxed fierce or waned low.

We had spoken glad-voiced of the time, soon to come,  
when our exile would be  
At an end, and our feet once again in the quiet lands  
over the sea,  
Till the large, lovely eyes of the child felt their lids  
grow despotic. She drew  
To her mother and slept in her arms, and the new-  
risen moon kissed the two.

I was looking beyond them to where the broad columns  
of tree-shadows slept,  
Stretching west twice the length of the trees, when a  
horror of something that crept,  
Something blacker than shade, through the shade,  
struck my heart with a hammer of ice,  
And with eyeballs dilated and strained, and hands  
clenched with the clench of a vice,

I leapt up; but a clear sudden whirr cleaved the  
night, and with scarcely a groan  
From her lips, the white soul of our child passed  
among the white souls at the Throne!

“To the house!” with the dead and the living, half  
dead, clasped before me, I sprang  
Through the strong door, and bolted and barred it  
before, on the stillness, out rang

A wild-volumed malignance of yells. To have light  
might be death. In the dark,

On the floor, the poor mother groped madly about  
the dead child for a spark

Of the hope of faint lingering life, till the blood that  
was mine and her own

From the boomerang gasli, warmed her hands, and she  
knew that we two were alone!

Yell on yell of the monsters without! crash of  
shutters behind!—but I knew

How the wall that divided was built; *that*, at least,  
they could never get through—

Crash of manifold blows on the door! but, I knew  
too, how that had been made;

And I crawled to the corner and found my revolvers,  
and hoarsely I said:

“ Kiss me now, ere the worst comes to pass, O most stricken and dearest of wives—

They will find out the window—I hold in my hands but a dozen of lives.

In the storehouse the arms are, God help us! Fold hands in the dark, dear, and pray!”

But she sobbed from my feet, “ God forgets us, and I have forgotten the way!”

Crash of spear through the window! an answering flash with the message of lead

From my hand!—and dull answer to that of a lean demon-form falling dead!

Crash on crash of a dozen of spears! till they lay in a sheaf on the floor!—

Red rejoinder of fire, as the moonlight revealed them—  
“ But one bullet more!”

I had hissed to myself. But she heard me, and seizing my arm, held it fast,

And a hard, altered voice that I knew not at once, cried “ Hold! *I* claim the last!

Dearest love, from *your* hand the divorce! One last kiss till the Infinite Life—

Once again, on my lips! *Hold it close, and . . . . .*  
*remember Maconochie’s wife!*”

By the white sickly light of a match, she had bared  
that true bosom, all red

With the blood of her slain one. I looked in her eyes.

“God forgive me!” I said . . . .

And the sound of the thing that I did was repeated  
outside by a sound—

Not as awful to me the dread Trump, when the time  
of my sentence comes round—

Rifle shots close at hand! devil-cries! counter-cheers  
of the voices I knew!

They were back! I was saved! Lost! lost! lost!

Can the blood of the Saviour they slew

Upon Calvary's hill wash out her's from my hands?

For I trusted not God

To the full in the hour of my need, and my lips will  
not cleave to the rod

Of his wrath, and I fall in the sand with the weight  
of the cross that I bear—

Who has ever gone out with a burden of pain, of  
remorse, of despair

Like to this? Let me stumble to death, or through  
life—it is equally well;

Doubly damned, what can death bring to me but  
translation from Hell unto Hell?

CHARLES GORDON.

To-DAY, there comes from where the English crags  
    Stare blindly on the war of winter seas  
    A woe of many voices, and a breeze  
Of sorrow from the stir of half-mast flags ;

To-day, with lifted eyes and folded hands,  
    Men pray for one new-lost, with stammering lips  
    Not often moved to prayer, in forts and ships  
And wastes and cities, and in many lands ;

To-day, across the earth sounds one long moan  
    Of sudden lamentation for the loss  
    Of him, who yielded up beneath his cross  
One of the noblest souls this world has known ;

To-day, in that stern stronghold by the Nile,  
    Far from us all, amid a dusk, strange race  
    Who knew not what they did, his martyr-face  
Looks up to Heaven to greet the Master's smile ;

This was the man who swayed fierce pagan hordes  
    With kind, strong wisdom in a time of flame,  
    When China swooned in horror without name  
Of brother-hate and blindly plunging swords ;

This was the man whose hand but reached for power  
    To use it in the help of human-kind ;  
    Who, leaving pomp and pageantry behind,  
Fought Sin and Want with all his strength's large  
    dower ;

This was the man who, having fought and won  
    His country's battles, turned from all reward,  
    And, hearing the command of his dear Lord,  
Sought all dark ways where good was to be done.

O dead, great hero ! true to peace or strife ;  
    Lifting a giant's arm to shatter chains,  
    Or kneeling by some couch to soothe the pains  
Of such as groaned away a bitter life !

Brave Christian soldier, who, on hostile walls  
    Won martial glory, envied by thy peers,  
    Then found thy duty through unnoticed years  
Down in the gloom of gaols and hospitals !

What need hast thou of our poor prayers? who wast  
In thy high self-denial half divine;  
Whose name as a clear beacon light will shine  
Above the names of kings, till Time has past!

So lie, while through the world the requiems roll,  
By the dark Nile, and have for monument  
A story of brave deeds and high intent—  
A name round which love makes an aureole!

## HOW HE DIED.

‘TAKE my horse,’ cried the Squatter to Nabbage,  
    “ ’tis thirty long miles at the least ;  
Ride as if all Hell’s devils rode after, and don’t spare  
    yourself or the beast,  
And just mark me, my cove—if I hear that you’ve  
    stopped for as much as a nip,  
I will hide you while God lets me stand, and then pass  
    Curly Johnson the whip!

‘ Give the doctor this letter and tell him to get his  
    best horses and drive  
As he never has driven before if he hopes to find  
    Freddy alive :  
Say I’ll pay for the pair twenty times if he flogs them  
    until they drop dead,  
And be there in two hours, or, by God ! ”—there is  
    no need to add what he said.



There was no need of threats to urge Nabbage ; one  
instant, and firm on the back  
Of the boss's blood horse he was racing away down  
the dimly marked track,  
Far away in the thickening night, with the hand of  
an icy despair  
On his heart, for the help that was vain for a life that  
was past even prayer.

Not a man on the station liked Nabbage ; he held  
himself coldly aloof  
From the boys in the hut, with his eyes mostly fixed  
on the floor or the roof :  
He was wrinkled, and pock-marked, and stooped, and  
at meal times sat silent, apart,  
As though nursing some scorn of them all which grew  
deep in the shade of his heart.

For awhile all the crowd thought him sulky and said  
he was "putting it on,"  
Then the sense of the hut, being taken, decided him  
just "a bit gone,"  
But Old Stumpy, the cook, held the view that the  
man was a natural skunk ;  
And to add to the public disfavour, he oft went *alone*  
and got drunk.

Curly Johnson, the super, despised him, and never  
neglected a chance  
To annoy or degrade the poor wretch who replied not  
with even a glance :  
He was general drudge at the station, and toiled in a  
spiritless way  
At whatever they told him to do, for whatever they  
fancied to pay.

Strange that Freddie, the Squatter's one darling, the  
golden-haired impudent boy,  
With the slang of the bush on his lips, and the great  
eyes of Helen of Troy,  
He, the eager imperious young master whose talk was  
of yearlings and brands,  
Should pick out this strange slouch for a chum from  
among the more sociable hands ;

But it was so, and often and often, from morning till  
set of the sun  
Rode these two through the light of the summer far  
out on the plains of the run,  
Freddie taking his favourite pony, and Nabbage—I  
think you can guess  
That the steed Curly Johnson let *him* have was not  
of the build of Black Bess.

And everyone noticed that Nabbage was gentle and  
kind with the child,  
And a rumour spread widely abroad that one night in  
the hut he had smiled  
As a man might whose thoughts were away in the  
grave of one cherished and kissed,  
While his comrades grew heated at euchre, or smoked  
their unspeakable twist.

And in this way things went on till one day, when the  
gum-leaves hung lifelessly down  
In the haze of a ring of bush fires that at night made  
each hill seem a town,  
They had yarded some steers to be branded—a wild-  
looking, dangerous lot,  
And young Freddie had lighted the fire, and the iron  
was just getting hot,

When Joe Smith, the new boundary rider, whose  
conduct was painfully flash,  
Passed along down the front of the yard, hitching in  
his red silk-woven sash ;  
All at once came a rush as of water, and Joe made one  
spring past the gate  
Which withstood for a moment, then crashed with the  
strain of the multiplied weight.

Just then Freddie, poor Freddie, looked up with a  
laugh to see what had gone wrong,  
When a score of mad steers burst upon him, and  
trampled and tossed him along—  
Every man rushed at once to his help, and they lifted  
him, silent and white,  
And that was the reason why Nabbage was riding  
away through the night.

Every light on the hills out of view, in the dim  
solemn glens not a light,  
Not a sound or a stir in the depths of the marvellous  
hush of the night,  
Not a pulse or a heart-beat of Nature, no break in  
the infinite rest,  
Not a star with the eyelight of God to be seen from  
the east to the west.

Half a mile from a town wrapped in midnight a  
broken-necked horse at a creek,  
And a man with death's dew on his forehead, and  
blood on his coat and his cheek ;  
“I am dying—I feel death upon me—but yet, even  
yet, if God wills  
I may crawl on my knees to the doctor's—yes, this is  
the last of the hills !

“To the left is the way I am certain ; God grant that  
it be not too late !

Heaven send that my life may be paid for the life of  
my poor little mate !

Darling child of the woman I loved in the days when—  
Oh, God ! is it vain ?

No ! for your sake, my dead sweetheart’s boy, I can  
fight yet awhile with this pain !

“ Years ago when the Curse overtook me, when drink  
brought the shame of my lot,

She recoiled with a shudder of loathing and scorn  
from the pitiful sot,

But to-night may be large with atonement ; to-night,  
if her spirit can know

How and why I am wrestling with death, may redeem  
all the lost long ago !

“ Not two hundred yards now ! if I reach it, though  
even to die at the door,

Here’s the letter to tell him—Oh, Heaven ! the thought  
never struck me before !

He will see I am dying and stop for awhile to attend  
me ! What way

Can I think of in time, to prevent half a moment of  
needless delay ?

“ Ha! I have it! He knows, like the rest, that when-  
ever I can I get tight,  
I’ll pretend that I stopped out at Brown’s and got  
drunk—for the last time—to-night,  
I can muffle this handkerchief well round my face  
and he’ll not see the mark  
Of the rock on my head where I fell with the horse  
when we leaped in the dark.”

So the man, like a serpent disabled, writhes on with  
low agonised moans,  
And just here and there touches with blood fallen  
logs, and dry twigs, and sharp stones,  
’Till he wearily drags round a corner and finds a warm  
light in the gloom,  
Then creeps further and beats with faint strength on  
the door of the young doctor’s room.

A strange man, most decidedly drunk, with a letter  
held out in his hand—  
For a moment the doctor can’t quite make it out, and  
proceeds to demand  
Who he is? What he wants?—but the drunkard,  
half-rolling away from the door,  
Curls up just where the light cannot reach him, and  
calmly commences to snore,

Then the doctor tears open the letter and shouts to  
the stableman, " Dick !  
Fix up Starlight and Fan in the buggy and have  
them around pretty quick,"  
Then indignantly kicks the fallen drunkard, and  
seizing the drugs he may need,  
Drives away up the street with the greys at the utter-  
most reach of their speed !

And the drunkard half-rises, and listens, a wistful,  
sad smile on his face,  
As he mutters, " Thank God I deceived him ! in three  
hours he'll be at the place ;  
And whether poor Freddie lives yet or has gone where  
the blessed abide  
I have triumphed an hour over Death for the child of  
my love !" So he died.

## THE PALACE OF ART.

*I built my soul a lordly pleasure-house,  
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
I said, "O soul, make merry and carouse,  
"Dear soul, for all is well."*

*A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd brass  
I chose. The rangèd ramparts bright  
From level meadow-bases of deep grass  
Suddenly scaled the light.*

*Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf  
The rock rose clear, or winding stair.  
My soul would live alone unto herself  
In her high palace there.*

—Tennyson.

Fronting the rock whereon that palace, thronged  
With treasures that my soul held revel with,  
Was reared, the land for half a mile belonged  
To a hard case named Smith :



A sordid churl, full gross and corpulent,  
Whom my still soul objected to, because  
He had no soul, and oft discoursed of Rent,  
Spurning grammatic laws.

And while a thousand workmen of rare craft  
Did toil in my soul's courts and shape her towers,  
This creature in his meadow stood and laughed  
Among the trees and flowers.

And after, when the shapely spires that were  
All people's wonder and her sure delight,  
Rose through the breathless and astonished air  
Perfect and finished quite,

He laughed again, and my soul laughed to see  
Him laugh, exceeding glad that he was glad,  
Not knowing at the time that I and she  
Had been severely "had."

But so it hapt. For soon arose a town  
Beyond the breadth of that sweet field, where they  
Who wrought for her desire had settled down  
(As common souls would say).

And many came who from afar did hear  
Of this fair miracle that had been wrought

And picnicked in Smith's field on bottled beer :  
Each day in passing brought

A troop of wondering gapers who did wend  
Their footsteps thitherward from rise of sun  
Till set thereof, and ere the seasons end  
Six 'buses there did run.

But when the town grew large and throve apace  
This field was measured into many a lot  
For building leasehold, and became a place  
Where rubbish might be shot :

A spot where, when the world was white with noon,  
Or red with sunset, villains wielding goads  
Urged weary horses, bearing late and soon  
Foul and unwholesome loads.

Vile offal and remains of things that were,  
Against the aspiring rock whereon I built  
That wondrous mansion, high and wondrous fair,  
The miscreants did tilt.

Below the oriels, when my soul peered out  
Vexed and affrighted, where soft peace had smiled,  
She heard discordant sounds, saw strewn about  
Confusion dire and wild :

Large bones and shreds of creatures newly dead  
And sordid relics from the kitchens cast,  
Old kettles, broken pans, and bits of lead,  
She viewed with eyes aghast ;

Boots past all use, and curved like black new moons,  
Fragments of earthenware and brick and glass,  
Parts of old blankets and old pantaloons,  
Made her cry out, " Alas !"

The trees were gone ; their stumps like skittle pins  
Stood up, and, scattered everywhere between,  
Were many dented and unwholesome tins  
That once held kerosene.

Here young plebeians of unresting jaws  
Assailed with words that did my soul surprise  
And grieve, in strife begot of playing taws,  
Each other's limbs and eyes ;

Here wayward hogs did root, from whose deep throats  
Came deep complaint, and sad discoloured cows,  
And many evil and disownèd goats,  
Like Holman Hunt's, did browse.

And often to my soul there came a cry  
Of anguish, sudden, loud and tremulous,

As these same goats some pensive passer-by  
Did butt, and sore concuss.

So at the last she said to me, " Look here !  
I'm full of these mean sights and discords hoarse,  
In consequence of which I almost fear  
My speech is growing coarse,

" Go to old Smith, confuse the soulless lout  
With gold ! This thing has overflowed the cup ;  
You with uncounted wealth can buy him out—  
So go and ante up !"

I went, but all in vain. He would not yield  
One rood of all that land for all my gold ;  
He said, " Not much, old Cocky, that there field  
Is mine ; I'm goin' to hold ;

" You spent your millions up on that old rock  
Building your thingumbob, while not a cent  
I parted. Well, you've simply made my block  
Worth fortunes : I will rent."

. . . . .  
Within a week there came a wizened knave  
With prying eyes and an uncertain air,  
Like a brave man who feared to be thought brave,  
Up by my palace stair.

(I said there was no stair, but that, you know,  
Was just poetic licence). He implored  
My soul, who was about the place, to show  
The marvels that were stored

Within her heaven to him, whereat in glee  
She clapped her hands (my soul had hands; all  
souls

Worth speaking of, have hands) and cried to me  
“Lo! I will heap up coals

“On this presumptuous stranger who has dared  
To reach his hand toward high forbidden fruits,”  
Then added, “The poor wretch is ginger-haired  
And shod with slop-made boots!”

Yet graciously, with grace that veiled deceit,  
She led him through the joy of her great halls  
O'er gem-wrought floors together ranged their feet,  
Their eyes o'er carven walls:

Together they passed on through many a scene  
Of beauty strange, illumed with every hue  
The sun had learned from panes of gold and green  
That he looked blandly through.

“Thus do I punish him!” she mused. “From here  
When he goes forth, how dead, and chill, and dim,

How utterly unbearable and drear

His world will seem to him!"

But ofttimes from the pocket of his vest

The stranger did a short lead-pencil draw,

And, like the average visitor, "expressed

Surprise at what he saw,"

Then made some entries in a shiny book

That might be bought for fourpence. Quite elate

He seemed, when all was seen, and warmly shook

My soul's hand at the gate.

. . . . .

Not thrice thereafter did this moving ball

Whereon we live show the sun both his sides

Ere this same stranger on my soul did call,

With a face like a bride's ;

From out his pouch a document he drew,

Then drew himself in haste beyond the gates :

The paper, like my soul herself, was blue,

And it demanded Rates ;

Rates, in proportion to the gold that I

Had spent, so that she might in bliss "carouse" ;

Rates on each object that did glorify

Her sumptuous pleasure-house ;

Rates on the cloistered courts and galleries,  
And fountains, in whose basins clear did swim  
All various fishes that might harmonise  
With even her lightest whim !

Rates upon everything, and tax, and fine,  
Beyond belief did my sad soul dismay—  
Rates she well knew, this angry soul of mine,  
That I could never pay !

So she said this, "It's just a cruel sin !  
They've even taxed us on each dragon's gorge ;  
Smith isn't taxed at all ! I shall begin  
To study Henry George !"

I sold the Palace below cost to Smith,  
And sadly on its towers we turned our backs,  
My soul and I, saying, "Freedom is a myth  
Without the Single Tax !"

## IN REPLY

*(To a letter from Her, enclosing portrait of, and rhapsody on, the nun, Sister Clare).*

“HER mouth is resolute,” you write  
In praise of her, your perfect Clare;  
“Her chin betokens silent might  
To suffer scorn, to do, to bear”  
(Or words to that effect), and I  
Agree. A paragon of chins!  
“One to front dangers fearlessly,  
And fight its way until it wins”—

So you, most dear enthusiast,  
Run on with pen that flows and flies,  
Out-pouring words of love too fast  
To cross their “t’s” or dot their “i’s”;  
So you, exhausting dips of ink  
In diligent succession, race  
To fill the sheets with what you think  
Of such a chin on such a face.



I gaze upon it long, and see  
What well may justify your praise :  
Strong purpose, iron constancy  
To walk through fire on chosen ways—  
To serve the cause appearing right,  
And not be turned away therefrom  
By all the woe of hopeless fight,  
And all the pains of martyrdom.

I gaze on yours, so different,  
And mine, so like in difference,  
That speak less firmness of intent,  
And more regard for consequence—  
Egg-ended, I regret to see,  
And rounded off like skittle-pins ;  
Alas ! alas ! why have not we  
Two square Napoleonic chins ?

There's some diversity, of course ;  
Mine, double, if the glass can speak  
The truth, but still devoid of force,  
Since both the knobs of it are weak ;  
Yours delicately tapered, one  
And indivisible, but that  
You must not pride yourself upon—  
It's just because you're not so fat !

Do I regret this, after all ?

Do I repine and judge it wrong  
Of Fate to give us chins so small

That, morally, we can't be strong,  
Or quite so strong as others are

To shun transgression's snares and sins—  
Who set their course by one fixed star  
Because of their more righteous chins ?

God knows I always wish to do

The right thing for Right's sake alone ;  
And know, dear love of mine, that you

Have just such feeling as my own ;  
But Eric Mackay sang full well,

For such a little trimmed squireen  
Of song, " That some will smile in Hell  
To think how sweet their sins have been."

The Power that rules the Universe,

And swings the worlds, and stirs the hearts,  
Has made so easy all the worse,

So hard the bitter, better parts—  
Has thickly-strewn our moral path

With treacherous banana-skins,  
And made us heritors of wrath  
And shapely, though unstable, chins !

I cannot answer "yes" or "no"

(Being round-chinned, irresolute).

What! to be stone, and quite forego

All munchings of forbidden fruit?—

To set the teeth and turn away

From rosy apples close o'erhead—

Never to halt or disobey

The stern commands of faith and dread?

I doubt, yet do not greatly fear,

The end of ends; for one thing plain

To me is this: We are not here

By any act of ours; the pain,

The sin, the wrong, the shame are His

With all things else He bade to be;

The chins like Clare's, and those like this

Of yours, just now confronting me.

But standing in the countless ranks

Of those who err, and yet will err,

Like you, I tender earnest thanks

For Sister Clare, and such as her,

Who shame us with the greater love

Than flutters after changing things—

No earthling of a Cupid's dove,

But white and high as angel's wings!

Yet, sweet, when all our days have passed,  
If at the Tribunal we stand,  
Clare on the right, we with the massed  
And trembling hosts on God's left hand,  
While she, against our doom abhorred,  
Prays, "Father, pardon these their sins,"  
I will advance this protest: "Lord,  
We never had our choice of chins!"

## A MESSAGE.

*“ Chanting their ‘Io Triomphe,’ the dockers marched up the green path to the Reformer’s Tree, with the white and violet Union Jack of Australia, flanked by bouquets and flowers on poles, in the van.”*

*—London Paper.*

So behind a flag, our flag, held up by hands that in  
besecching  
Had been stretched to all the world, you’ve walked  
in triumph, ours and yours ;  
Never will that flag be honoured with a crown of  
honour reaching  
To a glory passing this, while it or any flag endures ;  
Neither was there homage paid in bygone years to  
banners fateful  
Lifted over fields of death, like this to ours that,  
borne above  
All your shouting tens of thousands, tells of brothers  
who are grateful  
Unto brothers—waves the message that to love you  
answer love !

“Gold in God’s name or we famish!” came a cry  
from out the distance ;

“Gold to strengthen us to stand upright one hour  
and draw one breath ;

Gold to help us where we face them, maddened to a  
last resistance ;

Gold to fight with the damned tyrants, who are driving  
us to death !”

We that listened knew the voices, changed although  
they were and hollow

Like the cheeks of them that cried, the toilers fainting  
in their pain ;

Gold we sent them, by God’s blessing, and with  
twenty-fold to follow

Ere the burden they had spurned, their wasted hands  
should lift again !

What was gold to us to dare withhold a share from  
trampled kindred ?

We that, in a time whose memory burns our faces  
gave our hoards

As a kingly dole to Murder—by no hint of conscience  
hindered

Hired an angry setting out of sudden fools with naked  
swords !

We, that dazed and drunk with boasting, sent forth  
these to slay and ravish

Spite of all the bitter laughter and the voices crying  
“Shame!”

Is it wonder that our best gave of their store with  
hand as lavish

At the prayer of those who pleaded in the land from  
which we came ?

Dear our brothers, who too long have borne as brutes,  
and hoped, and waited,

Not from twenty or an hundred, like that offering  
accurst,

Came this gift but from Australians one and all, who,  
consecrated

To your freeing bade you turn and bid your drivers  
do their worst !

Not because of any glamour or for prize of gratu-  
lation

From the rulers and the mighty were we moved, not  
now as then,

But because the groans and curses rising from our  
mother nation

Told us men were making devils out of helpless fellow  
men.

For before your trembling lips had dared that "No!"  
so resolutely  
Here re-echoed by strong friends with swift persuasion  
in their tones,  
Bravely though you bore the torture, striving well  
and suffering mutely  
In a hell where they who earn the bread they ask  
receive but stones,  
This we knew, that you, the sons of mighty soldiers,  
mighty seamen,  
Sons of sires who swept oppression from the shores  
and from the waves,  
You, whose fathers gave their lives to make the world  
a place of freemen,  
Seeing not how you were fettered, vaunting freedom,  
bent as slaves;

This we knew, that some among you, few and scorn-  
ful, sitting shameless  
Upon coward heights of privilege, o'er all the rest  
prevailed,  
Robbing, murdering the others, who, not knowing,  
held them blameless,  
Clothed in purple by wan multitudes who wrung their  
hands and wailed:



Masters arrogant and sovereign, heirs of acres purchased redly  
With a letting out of blood maybe, or meed of harlot's gold  
Bidding strength and virtue wither down in kennels dim and deadly  
Where all thought of Christ is barred, and shame has prey of young and old !

Oh! we knew that in your England, standing sceptered there and stately,  
By the grace of iron manhood in a past that spoke for right,  
Things that fiends might shudder looking on have grown so common lately  
That untroubled earls have hardly shrugged their shoulders at the sight—  
Weary age, its white hair dyed to make a poor disguise of vigour,  
In the hope of finding masters, standing in the desperate crowd ;  
Girlhood pale and cowering graveward, with a face set from the rigour  
Of a youth that had no smiles nor time to stop and sob aloud !

Wealth and splendour waxing fourfold ; ease and  
luxury and pleasure,

Wide domains and waving oaks for those whose lord-  
ship holds the earth :

For the others, want, and filth, and degradation  
beyond measure,

Sire and child and stranger huddled in one den of  
death and birth !

This we knew, and that the tyrants against whom you  
so have striven

In the battle just victorious, were not, as you deemed,  
your worst ;

They who drove you without mercy, without mercy,  
too, were driven

By a power enthroned beyond them, cold, all mighty,  
all accurst !

You but saw who stood the nearest. Oh, our brothers,  
shed your blindness ;

Look beyond the whip that scourges, and beyond the  
hand that drives !

There are masters of your masters, at whose nod all  
loving kindness

Dies from hearts of men condemned to fight each  
other for their lives.

Lift your eyes and look in theirs who stand to bar  
you from God's bounties,  
You and others that you strive with in the bitterness  
of need,  
Ask them which among their ancestors made one of  
England's counties—  
Bid them show the Maker's signature or burn the  
title-deed!

It was little that you asked. What gain? To us,  
above all dowers  
Time may bring of manliest honour until all Time's  
course has run  
This will stand, that you beneath Australia's flag,  
decked out with flowers,  
Marched to hail the first clear triumph of your right  
beneath it won!  
What to you? A gain of brothers, strong to stand  
for every issue  
Side by side with you, believing as in Heaven that is  
above,  
In the grander victory coming. So we lean across  
and kiss you  
For to-day and all to-morrows, answering back your  
love with love!

## WIDDERIN.

(VIDE “*Geoffrey Hamlyn.*”)

IN an eastern verandah that looks on grey plains  
rolling out to the rim  
Of the sea, the fair lands of Baroona, with wavering  
smoke-films made dim,  
Near at hand a dry creek-bed's white glare sharply  
piercing the folds of the haze,  
In the drowse of a fire-smitten noon, three old men  
dreaming over old days—

In a garden whose grape clusters swing purple skins  
of warm wine from the bars  
Of a leaf-hidden trellis, whereunder large blurs of  
fierce light glow like stars  
That have fallen and splashed the dark path, moves a  
woman, white-haired in the grace  
Of the evening of life, with the beautiful sign of its  
peace in her face—

In a paddock close by an old horse, grazing sleepily,  
nearing his rest,  
Yet with flashes of spirit to gallop and kick up his  
heels with the best ;  
One old horse, honoured, tended, and petted, and  
held beyond price. Let me tell  
Once again of the Arcturus colt what another told  
long ago well :

Just a leaf from the large-hearted tale of magnificent  
years that are done  
Warm with manhood and splendid with hope, and  
fulfilled of the trees and the sun ;  
Just a shadow of terror and crime, black as ever was  
written or told,  
Thrown across the broad light of true friendships and  
loves that were purer than gold !

. . . . .

Doctor Mulhaus was at it again with the Major :  
“ Your poets,” he stormed,  
“ Have their merits, but where lives the singer to-day  
as divinely informed  
With the magic of sound as old Milton? Don't tell  
me”—the rest of it died  
On his lips, for an ashen-faced man and a black boy  
who clung at his side

In the doorway were standing! Before the pale  
trooper found words, in his eyes  
They could read that disaster had come. Hardly  
waiting to hear the replies  
Stammered forth to the questions they asked without  
speech, Doctor Mulhaus slipped past  
And was gone, unobserved, while the others sat  
nerveless, and blanched, and aghast!

Swift and silent that morning a dozen of horsemen  
had suddenly burst  
Upon Mayford's, the bushranger Touan's fell convict  
pack, bloody, accurst:  
Cecil Mayford was murdered; none knew where his  
mother and Ellen had fled:  
By the hut-keeper's side on the floor the dread cannibal  
Moody lay dead!

After riot of wolves in the house, brandy-maddened,  
pent there in the reek  
Of the smoke and the blood of their deed, they had  
ridden away down the creek—  
Down toward Brentwood's! It seemed to Sam  
Buckley his heart had been frozen to stone  
For an instant, then touched with red fire! Alice  
Brentwood was there, and alone!

Then there came to his mind a quick thought. By  
the way Touan's red-handed men  
Had set out it was twenty miles clear, straight across  
through the plain barely ten :  
For a man and a horse was it hopeless to save her ?  
At least they would try  
To the very last heart-beat of each—they would do it  
together or die !

To the stable he ran, as a stag in his strength runs  
for life, to the stall  
Where the thoroughbred bay he was proud of stood  
waiting, the pick of them all,  
With the tremulous hands of a haste that defeated  
the purpose of haste  
For a moment, he flung on the saddle, then flung  
himself in it, and raced

Past Baroona and out to the downs through the sweep  
of a hurricane wind  
That seemed cutting his face as he rode, though the  
dust-wrack hung heavy behind  
On the dead Summer air for a mile. Oh, good  
Widderin, all may be well !  
You, the colt from the Shoalhaven gullies, have blood  
in your veins that will tell !

For the sake of your hundred years' lineage, do all  
that you can do to-day—

For the fame of a long line of ancestors, able to go  
and to stay!

Think of how your own sire won the Derby, and  
think, too, of this, that you run

For a prize beyond value, surpassing all Cups that all  
horses have won!

For her sake who has kissed your arched neck, lay  
your ears back and stretch yourself flat

On the grass—by God's grace and your pluck you and  
Sam may preserve her from *that* ;

Tear along, heaving deep-chested sighs; all that  
stands in the way you must leap

Or go through; never heed if you maim a few  
startled and scattering sheep!

Take no thought what the shepherd may shout as you  
plunge through the thick of his flock,

(He's an old Vandemonian and therefore too free with  
expressions that shock),

What are shepherds or sheep to you now? On and  
on out of sight!—every curse

From his lips may be paid for ere sunset with heart-  
spoken blessings from hers!



Pass the Doctor, already far out on his way—steady  
mind and brave heart,

He had seen where the danger lay first, and was off  
with a five minutes' start—

Pass the Organ-hill columns and cliffs, lifting up  
their stern pile from the plains ;

Rush away through the scrub and the rocks, as the  
blood rushes now through your veins !

Round the bend to the river-flat ! Making the shingle  
spurned up from your hoofs

Like a wild burst of thundercloud hail that smites  
windows and roars upon roofs !

Far on high right and left fling the spray of your  
terrible dash through the ford—

Not a mouthful, dear horse, though thirst racks you :  
No second of pause, lest the sword

Of the Horror should fall in that second ! Away up  
the opposite slope—

At the crest of the bank he who sits on your back  
will know whether his hope

Shall bear goodliest fruit or die, instantly blasted, he  
dying with it ;

Up the steep then ! up ! up ! Does she live in the  
light ? Has she passed to the " Pit ? "

From the ridge Sam could see her, white-robed as  
her purity, feeding the birds

At the front of the house, and a cry of wild joy too  
impatient for words

From his breast seemed to break of itself. She was  
there—all the rest he would do ;

Racing nearer, he shouted and beckoned. She heard  
him, then saw him—and knew !

Not an instant to waste, that was clear ! Without  
even an impulse of doubt

Or a tremor of fear, she had fled through the hall, as  
she passed calling out

To Helena, the wrinkled old cook, well experienced  
in bushranging ways,

A loud warning to make for the bush—which she did  
at a notable pace.

Then her foot on his boot in the stirrup, her hand in  
his hand, and away

In his arms, to be held there for ever ! There's foam  
on your flanks, gallant bay !

You are gasping and ready to drop, but on still !  
Let your great heart not burst !—

You shall rest all your years for this hour, but on yet  
and make sure of her first !

How they hid on the high rocky brow overlooking the  
river and plain,

Peering out in the distance for sign of the infamous  
horde, but in vain,

Till there rose up behind them a clamour of horrible  
voices, so near

That they thought themselves lost; how for shuddering  
moments that each seemed a year

Sam held Widderin's head smothered close in his  
coat, lest an innocent neigh

Should betray them to guilt in its hunger; how after  
the Fear passed away,

While a devil's delirium of wreckage and ruin went  
on at its height

In the homestead below them, the Doctor, just then  
only come into sight

Down the bank to the left, would have gone to his  
death, thinking Alice there still;

How, at all risks, Sam coo-eed and pulled him up  
sharp, you may read if you will;

How Jim Brentwood limped there, broken-ribbed  
from his fall in the crabhole, and how

All the rest of them gathered that night to fulfil an  
inveterate vow;

And the end—how the bushrangers, standing at bay  
in the heel of the glen  
Where the rock walls rose sheer at their backs, fought  
that wild fight with Desborough's men ;  
How the father and son met at last face to face,  
driven on by the Fates,  
And the hellish unspeakable thing that was done at  
the foot of the Gates !

You may learn if you like, and you should like, how  
Sam and his Alice were wed ;  
And of flowers and crowns that were theirs in the  
generous days that are dead—  
I have told how they passed through the flame of an  
hour and made plain to you why  
One old horse shall be honoured and tended, and  
petted until he may die ;

Just a leaf from the large-hearted tale of magnificent  
years that are done,  
Warm with manhood and splendid with hope, and  
fulfilled of the trees and the sun—  
Just a shadow of horror and crime, black as ever was  
written or told,  
Thrown across the broad light of true friendships and  
loves that were purer than gold !

## A BALLAD OF RED HEART RUM.

RED HEART ; in fiery days gone over  
So dear to mine, a song to thee !  
I that was faithful and thy lover  
Have cast thee off and chosen tea—  
I that long worshipped thee, not wisely  
But far too well, have signed the pledge,  
And now drink acids, coloured nicely  
Like thee, that set my teeth on edge !

I was thy servant ; my defection  
Was great, for I was even as ten,  
(By this I do not make reflection  
Upon thy present serving-men),  
But what is one among so many ;  
Around thee, countless as the sands,  
Throng yet the swarms, with eyes uncanny,  
And stammering lips and shaking hands !

Thine still is empire : thou art royal  
    Beyond most Kings, O King of Pain !  
Ten thousand thousands, who are loyal  
    To nothing else, uphold thy reign.  
Thou still hast sorcery to win them  
    From wife and children, son and sire,  
To scorch all germs of good within them  
    And lead their feet through fire to fire !

I have forsworn thee, and already  
    For me a dull mazed mind grows sharp,  
The touch is true, the hand is steady,  
    With which to-day I wake the harp :  
But, as of old, in all the regions  
    Where thou art known thou holdest sway :  
The shuddering, blind, dishevelled legions  
    Are crouching at thy feet to-day.

The drover, far in wildernesses,  
    Spies where thy barken temple is,  
And, yielding to his love's excesses,  
    Consumes himself and thee in bliss,  
Then reels away with one last bottle,  
    Delirious, ragged, happy, brave—  
The rest thou knowest, Red Heart ! The wattle  
    Is said to bloom above his grave.

The carved bone scarf ring to the shearer  
Is dear, and the tan catskin vest,  
But thou, Red Heart, to him art dearer  
A thousand fold than all the rest ;  
He parts with them to fill a billy  
With thee, regardless of expense,  
Then rambles off, hilarious, silly,  
And slumbers by the dog-leg fence.

The navy delving in a tunnel,  
Counts every day till pay-day comes  
When he can make his mouth a funnel  
For many burning Red Heart rums ;  
He strikes the drill and hates the ganger  
Sustained by thought of the delights  
Of sprees to come 'mid noise and anger,  
Dazed friendships and ferocious fights.

The sailor, out upon the briny,  
Who cries " Yo ho ! " and furls the sheet  
Ingenuous, gallant, British, shiny  
With tar, and having flat bare feet,  
Devours salt junk and swallows weevils  
To make his way from port to port,  
Then joins the host, half men, half devils,  
Who throng thy Lower George Street Court.

Red fishermen ! in many waters

Thy nets are cast, and all that come  
Are fish to thee ; the tawdry daughters

That nibble baits hung near the slum,  
The bitter mothers at the mangle

Far in the night, with arms that ache ;  
For these thou knowest how to angle—

These thou cans't trifle with and take.

Thou hast divined that human nature

Is much the same in every grade ;  
Even in our halls of legislature

Thy cunning snares, O Rum, are laid,  
And there, as elsewhere, they have answered

Thy purpose ; many and many a thing  
Unprinted on the leaves of *Hansard*

Proclaims thee every inch a King !

My King no more ! My love was fervent

And long-enduring. I have said  
I was thy most obedient servant,

My heart was thine, my next-day head  
My own. The bargain wasn't equal,

It seemed when I began to think  
About it coolly ; and the sequel

Is that I've given up the Drink.



No more for me the seasons reckless  
Of joy when thou did'st o'er me reign ;  
No more for thee I'll stumble chequeless  
Across the glimmering Old Mau Plain !  
Red Heart, Red Hand ! no more for ever  
In thy blood-hues my soul I'll wash,  
But, being thirsty, will endeavour  
To meet the case with lemon squash !

## MY SUNDOWNER.

JUST as the bell at the men's hut had tinkled  
For tea he came—well, sundowners must eat !  
A back-block face he had, a visage wrinkled  
With lines of villainy and small deceit,  
A stock of hair upon his head, just sprinkled  
With iron-grey ; upon his ample feet  
Were weighty bluchers, each with common string  
tied—  
Bluchers that long ago had passed their spring tide.  
“ Good evenin', boss ! Got any work to do ? ” he  
Inquired, as on the dusty earth he flung  
His swag, the orthodox horse-collar “ bluey,”  
“ I've tramped these fifteen days ; I've been among  
The squatters, damn 'em ! Old Black Sugar Toohey  
The ”—here the wanderer's up-country tongue  
Tripped off expressions which may not be quoted  
In pages that make claim to be devoted

To blameless literature, but on stations  
Are much affected—“ offered me a job  
At ringbarking—ten bob a week and rations—  
I wouldn't take it under fifteen bob ;  
I've followed some (blank) rummy occupations  
With some queer bosses, but a one-horse swab  
Like that I never work for when I know him ;  
A pretty thing to offer a man—blow him ! ”

His indignation all at once subsided  
When I (full super) in plain language said,  
“ If Toohey knew his sort as well as I did  
He must have been a trifle off his head  
To offer even ten ; I rather prided  
Myself on knowing men. To yonder shed,”  
I added, “ Your time-honoured bluey take down  
And make yourself before it's dark a shakedown ;  
“ Thence to the hut repair—you'll get some damper,  
And mutton, and plum duff. To-morrow's sun  
Must find you further on. I will not hamper  
Your movements by insisting that this run  
Shall quite monopolise you ! Now then, scamper  
And fix your doss, and when you've got it done  
And had your tea and duff—the latter rich with  
Rare spices—you'll find lots of chaps to pitch with

About your wrongs." An hour or so thereafter,  
 Being close beside the dimly lighted hut  
 (Lit by a slush lamp from a smoky rafter  
 Hung by a wire), through the old door half shut  
 I heard excessive bursts of mighty laughter  
 And cries of "Go it, stranger! that's a cut  
 Above you Billy! you're a (bad word) duffer  
 Beside this cove at pitchin' of a cuffer!"

I stood to listen, and, 'mid noisy plaudits  
 I heard my sundowner asseverate  
 With earnest voice, "No, boys, so help me God! it's  
 The solemn truth—the man was my own mate;  
 The thing is rather odd, but though it's odd, it's  
 Not half so strange as what I'll now relate—  
 This yarn, you'll find, will knock the other silly;  
 I'm thirsty, though; just shove along the billy!"

"Tea's poor swill, anyway, compared to swankey,  
 But still one must lap something! What d'ye think?  
 Your Super—who looks like a sheep-dipped Yankee"—  
 (He little thought I watched him through a chink  
 Between the slabs)—"he says to me, 'Why, blank ye,  
 My man'—you know his style—'I fear that drink  
 Has been your trouble, or else how the devil  
 Could you—a man like you—have reached the level

“ ‘Of seeking manual toil, while I, much younger,  
As you’ll observe, have been made Super here?—  
Go, fellow, to the hut; appease your hunger;  
Assuage your thirst!’ ” At this, from ear to ear,  
The shearers grinned, and Sam, the Billabonger,  
Whose noted points were ribaldry and beer,  
Exclaimed, when after a protracted laugh he  
Could speak, “The Super, to an ephigraphy!”

“Well! twenty years ago I was with Dawson  
Of Murragumbalong, away out West;  
You’ve heard of him? No! Strange! He made me  
boss on

The station. ‘Edward,’ says he, ‘all the rest  
Are sodden fools! This place has been a cross on  
My back for years, and I’ll give bossing best;  
I’ll make you manager and go you whacks on  
The profits.’ Ah, he was a white-skinned Saxon!

“Of course I closed with him and fixed in writin’  
The terms. It wasn’t such a big chuck in  
As you might think; the look of things would  
frighten

An ordinary cove; the stock was thin,  
The paddocks hardly had a bloomin’ bite in,  
And on the run you could have seen a pin

A dozen yards away. They prayed for rain for  
Three months, but that you never get by prayin' for

“ Out West—I couldn't tell you what's the reason,  
But from the first they never seemed to care  
For Murragumbalong in Heaven. The season  
Was terrible ; the land was brown and bare,  
Without a blade of grass, and lots of trees on  
The ranges died. The water everywhere  
Was turned to puddle and our sheep got stuck in  
The dams by scores. Well, boys ! once more, here's  
luck ! in

“ Black tea ! If your imported Super's peeper  
Could spot me now, he'd say (his high-flown mag !)  
' As I surmised, this wretched man drinks deeper  
Than wisdom prompts, so has to bear a swag.'  
He shouldn't be about without a keeper  
That swell ! just chuck across the sugar bag !  
You don't call this tea sweet enough, boys, do ye ?  
They're meaner here than old Black Sugar Toohey !

“ Well ! things were bad enough out West that summer,  
And ruin seemed to stare us in the face ;  
From day to day each squatter's mug grew glummer ;  
Even I began to think it was a case

When a rum thing (I never knew a rummer)

Turned up to save us. I had gone to chase  
Some brumbies off the run with Wall-Eyed Abel,  
A rouseabout who hung around the stable ;

“ A mooney sort of chap, who used to study

Theology and all such stuff as that ;

Could tell you of some Indian cove call Buddy

Who squatted cross-legged on a bit o’ mat  
And saved his people, but at bustin’ wood he

Was a poor rouseabout. We crossed the flat  
Behind the homestead and struck out. ’Twas fully  
Seven miles ahead of us to Simpson’s Gully

“ Where we’d to go. It was a fierce day well in

December, and the horses soon were blown ;

The perspiration from their tired flanks fell in

A perfect stream. My colt was but half-grown,  
So I proposed that we should take a spell in

The shade of a big tree that stood alone  
Upon a strip of plain, and helter-skelter

We both crammed on the pace to reach its shelter.

“ I got there first. My horse seemed rather shy of

The tree and snorted and played up a bit !

But Abel ! boys, even now I’m like to die of

The buster he got when I think of it !

He didn't fall, he simply seemed to fly off

The horse's back ; you could have heard him hit  
The ground a mile off, while his nag skedaddled  
Like blazes, bridled as it was and saddled.

“ With spurs and curses and a good few lashes  
I quieted my moke—I always could

Do that. Poor Abel rose again ; from gashes  
About his head there trickled rills of blood,  
And all at once his face grew white as ashes—

With pointed hand and shaking knees he stood ;  
And then I knew what ailed the nags. Beside him  
A man hung by a piece of cord which tied him

“ To a low branch ! ‘ By ghost ! a suicide, as  
I breathe !’ I cried to Abel. ‘ Look, old man,

His swag lies over there ! his hands are tied as  
A safeguard against struggling ! What's our plan ?

I think I'll scoot towards the town and ride as

My neck depended on it : Jim M'Cann,  
The trooper's there—I'll fetch him. As you're  
shaken

A bit you'd best stop here. I'm much mistaken

“ ‘ If I'm not back within three hours. I'll fetch you  
Another horse. However did you fall



Like that? It served you right, you stupid wretch!

You

Will be more careful after this, that's all:

Now, Disraeli (my colt), I bet I'll stretch you

Across the plain.' I just drew rein to call

At Armstrong's with the news, then rode like thunder

Into the little one-horse township. Under

"The pub verandah, tossing Bull-necked Cooper,

The publican, for drinks, I found the trap—

A stuck-up half-grown kid, who thought a trooper

Was God Almighty almost, and his cap

A crown of glory—something like your Super,

A 'haw-haw-my-good-fellow' sort of chap,

Though if you reckoned the slop fairly up he

Was hardly such a milk-and-water puppy

"As your damned lunatic! I didn't stay there

Too long—got horses, told the story straight,

Then started off to show M'Cann the way there,

And reached the tree as it was getting late.

And what d'ye think? You think that Abel lay there

Just as I left him? No; as sure as fate—

As sure as I'm the son of my own mother,

He hung there stiff and stark beside the other!

“ Yes ! there they hung, the two of them together,  
And almost touching ! Jim M’Cann turned pale,  
And me—if you had hit me with a feather  
Just then, it would have floored me like a flail ;  
But I rode up and cut poor Abel’s tether  
And let him drop. I tried without avail  
To bring him round. Then Jim and I kept staring  
At one another. Jim was reckoned daring

“ Round Murragumbalong ; to perfect strangers  
He liked to skite ; you should have heard him blow  
About the way he’d hunted down bushrangers,  
And collared private stills, and high and low  
Played up old Nick ; of his escapes and dangers  
And all the bullet marks that he could show,  
Then seen him running in two drunken shearers  
To prove himself a hero to his hearers ;

“ But he was scared just then if ever man was  
And in the saddle (for he still sat there)  
I saw him shake. His face was ghastlier than was  
The corpses which yet dangled in the air ;  
That face of his told straight that Jim M’Cann was  
A coward out and out. ‘ A strange affair,’  
I said at last, ‘ one would have been enough for  
One day, without this half-demented duffer

“ ‘Improving the occasion ! What’s your notion  
Of who’s to be the next ? What’s to be done  
With this lot, anyhow ? Propose a motion,  
I’ll second it ; you see, old man, the sun  
Is down. Was ever upon earth or ocean  
A game like this ? Now that it has begun,  
Where will it end ? Rouse up, mate, do, and tell us  
What’s best ; will I ride down for Johnson’s fellows ?’

“ ‘No ! no ! I’ll go !’ was his wild exclamation,  
‘ I’ll not stop here—the living I can face,  
But not the dead ! How far’s it to the station ?  
Let me away from this infernal place ! ’  
‘ You’d never get to it in the creation  
Of cats ! Besides, just look at the disgrace  
If people get to know you were afraid of  
Two corpses ! Stop and show them what you’re  
made of,’

“ I answered. ‘ You could never find out Johnson’s  
From here ; you’d beat about the bush all night ;  
What ails you ? You must have a guilty conscience ;  
God knows my own’s not anything too white,  
And yet *I’d* stay. Drop this old woman’s nonsense,  
And tie your horse up here—he’ll be all right—

Then build a thundering fire, that I can see it  
Far off—I'll soon be back, I'll guarantee it.'

“ So I rode off. M'Cann still sat there shaking  
And staring at the tree; the last I saw  
Of him alive was that. My jaws are aching  
With all this talk; I'm not much good at jaw;  
Who's got tobacco?—thanks! I'll shove this cake in  
My pocket, so that I can have a draw  
To-morrow on the tramp; I must be stirring  
From here, or who knows what might be occurring?

“ Your Super might endeavour to detain me  
(As he would put it) as a sort of sub;  
And you can understand how it would pain me  
To have to boss you! So I'll pack some grub  
To-night—don't speak, boys, nothing can restrain  
me—

I'm quite resolved! This place will have to rub  
Along without me. Though the Super may break  
His heart about it, I am off at daybreak.

“ Well, as I rode the night came on as black as  
The ace of spades, and even *I* got lost,  
Although I thought I knew as well the track as  
The Ten Commandments. Several times I crossed

M'Nalley's Creek, and blundered like a jackass ;

But still I said, ' Whatever is the cost,  
I'll find the place if it is under Heaven ! '—  
And so I did, but not till past eleven.

" I roused them up and told my yarn, but no one  
Would come that night. ' What good is it,' they said,  
' To turn out now and saddle up, and go on  
A hunt like this ? If both of them are dead  
We can't well bring them back to life '—and so on ;  
So I had a cold feed and went to bed,  
And early in the morning off we started—  
Three of us, mounted well and cheerful-hearted

" As crickets. By and by we came in sight of  
The tree ; and there was Jim M'Cann's horse tied  
To a small sapling. In the growing light of  
The sun, just risen, all at once we spied  
*Two* dead men hanging ! Well, I fainted right off  
When my two mates at the same moment cried,  
' The trooper's done it ! ' As they had no brandy  
Or any stimmylant whatever handy,

" I soon came round again. There hung the second  
Of the two victims the accursed tree  
Before my very eyes, it seemed, had beckoned  
Over the brink into eternity ;

So, without thinking the thing out, I reckoned

It time to go. 'No more of this for me!  
Let us away!' I yelled, 'this very minute  
From here; I dread this Tree, the devil's in it!'

"I jumped upon my horse and jammed my hat down  
Across my eyes and galloped like the wind  
Until I got away upon the flat down

Below the tree, then stopped to look behind—  
And this was what I saw: Old Johnson sat down  
Upon a log, and (this is Gospel, mind,  
As sure as that I build my firmest hope on  
The Book) was fastening a halter rope on

"His neck! His man had just commenced to climb up  
The stem! And then I felt almighty queer  
And thought, 'I'll just see Johnson off, then *I'm* up;  
Am I less game than one of them? No fear!  
Though I'd go through it pluckier could I prime up  
With rum, or even a good fill of beer—  
I *must* get out my bit of cord and twist it;  
The Tree is drawing me, I can't resist it!'

"I turned my horse's head and came back slowly  
Across the plain. I saw old Johnson kneel  
And pray a bit, (he hadn't been too holy  
Before—I knew the beggar used to steal

Our lambs), then start to climb. Half up the boll he  
Saw me and called, 'Ye tried to cheat the Deil;  
Ye canna do 't—I tell ye, lad, ye canna—  
I'm thinkin' ye'll no sup the nicht on manna!

“ ‘I've been a sinner and I've stown the young of  
Your yowies, but I've cleused my saul wi' prayer;  
I'll reach the haven that yon Psalmist sung of—  
Farewell! I'll no meet ony Papists there! ’  
Just then the other fellow gently swung off  
And kicked his legs a moment in the air,  
Then hung quite lifeless, with the end of rope in  
His hand clutched tightly, and his mouth half open!

“ Old Johnson looked, and seemed much interested;  
Then firmly fixed his rope upon the limb,  
And prayed another spell, and then divested  
Himself of his old coat. To look at him  
Just then for all the funk he manifested  
You'd think he was preparing for a swim;  
Then in he went—no *off* he went, like winking  
While I stood plaiting up my cord, and thinking

“ How strange the whole thing was! I'd somewhere  
read of  
A tree that poisoned all who came within

Its shade, but not a word at all was said of

A tree that made you hang yourself. 'Ned Flynn,'  
I thought, 'the dance that the strange swagman led off

You've got to join in, so you'd best begin;  
Your partner's waiting—you'll just make the set up  
Of three dead couples, so look sharp and get up.'

"Well, up I shinned and off I lurched! The cord  
broke,

And down I came on top of Abel slap!

'I said I'd do it, and when was my word broke?'

I thought. I went again. The cord went snap  
Again! I went again, but no—the third broke—

And then I sat and thought like this: 'Old chap,  
It's not to be; whatever Fate may bring you,  
One thing is sure—no rope will ever swing you!'

"And then I turned my back upon the dead ones—

Four swinging in a row, one on the ground—  
The notion never came into my head once

To try again. Whatever spell had bound  
Me to the tree was broke; and so I fled once

Again, and never stopped to look around,  
Nor for my horse had much consideration  
Until he brought me to our own home station.



“ I'd lost my hat—a seventeen-bob soft beaver—

In galloping, and, as the sun was hot,  
I felt the rays of it as if a cleaver

Had split my head ; and by the time I got  
The saddle off I had a raging fever

Upon me. Then they had a doctor brought,  
Who told them that, but for his pills and doses,  
In one day more I'd be as dead as Moses.

“ Three weeks I lay before they were quite sure I  
Would live, but I came round all right by then,

And all was told to me. They'd had a jury  
And held an inquest on the five dead men.

(Now, Slushy, I can see you winking your eye ;

I tell the truth.) Out of twelve, but ten  
Lived through it (must I say to you once more, man,  
I never told a falsehood yet !'). The foreman,

“ It seems, had, while the rest deliberated,

Hid in his shirt a clothes-line, so's to be  
Quite ready, and then jawed away and waited,

And when his chance came slithered up the tree  
And went ! Another cried, ‘ He's emigrated !—

I'll cut him down ; just leave the thing to me !'  
And up he went to do so, but instead of  
Attempting it, swung too, and jerked his head off !

“The coroner that same night suicided  
Upon the Tree, and on the following day  
Four of the jurymen came back and tried it,  
But one of them came down the very way  
(Only he came down wrong end first) that I did  
And broke his neck. It went on like a play  
For days, until the jury were all laid out ;  
And even then the Tree did not seem played out !

“Odd stragglers now and then had patronised it  
And worked themselves off, bowing to their fate ;  
And all these deaths so much had advertised it  
That in the end there came a magistrate  
To see it—and he swung ! Then they advised it  
Should be cut down. But all at once a great  
Idea struck my mind, and I commenced in  
The morning with two men to have it fenced in.

“I had to shepherd them, though. Bill, from Wagga,  
Who dug the post-holes, once chucked down the bar  
And started, but—at that time I could slog a  
Real perisher—before he had got far  
I stretched him. And that day I brought a dog, a  
Great wolf of mine—I’d christened him ‘Three Star,’  
Because he’d killed a man (when quite a pup, too)—  
And got a good long chain and chained him up to

“The Tree, and by knock-off time we'd completed  
The fence, and built a humpy close beside  
The gate for me, where, on a gin-case seated  
Beside the fire, I watched till I could bide  
No longer, then turned in. Well—I was cheated,  
For, while I was asleep, ‘Three Star’ untied  
His chain, climbed up the Tree, and there he hung out  
On a dry branch, quite brazen, with his tongue out!

“And very close to him there hung as coolly  
A perfect stranger, comfortably dead!  
‘Well I *am* damned!’ I cried. Now, as a rule, I  
Don't use strong talk, but I was off my head  
With rage, and said, ‘Now, what a blasted fool I  
Have been! While I was snoring in my bed  
This swine got at me with the utmost cleanness;  
Who ever heard of such infernal meanness?’

“That dog, though, turned up trumps. Flash Dick,  
the Ringer  
From Wilson's shed, where they had just cut out,  
Came down to look at it. I saw him linger,  
Then go away, come back, and dodge about,  
Then draw his diamond ring from off his finger  
And bring it over. ‘This is good to spout  
For fifteen quid,’ he said. I answered ‘Is it?  
I'm sorry you can pay me but one visit!’

“ And then the shearers came in any number

To see *him* hang, and I stood at the gate  
And said, ‘ Ten quid ! ’ as cool as a cucumber.

They planked ‘ em down like men, and twenty-eight  
Swung before dark. I had no chance of slumber

That night—coves came along and wouldn’t wait  
Till morning—in the dark I sent a score off  
And before breakfast launched eleven more off !

“ All day I had a better class of custom—

Selectors and the like—and, coming on  
To noon, one cockie wanted me to trust him,

Though him and me had been at daggers drawn ;  
I wouldn’t, and it seemed to so disgust him

That off he went and hanged himself upon  
Another tree—just walked with a grim smile off  
And patronised a gum about a mile off.

“ I saw at once that it might burst my bubble

If this got known ; that it might take away  
Good business from my Tree, and cause me trouble ;

But no one twigged him. I took coin all day  
And, after dusk (though he was nearly double

My weight) I dropped him, and from where he lay,  
Dragged him across, and had the satisfaction  
Of hanging him again ! Well, the attraction

“Of the infernal Tree did not diminish  
At all ; the public came from far and near ;  
Some days, perhaps, the gathering was thinnish  
(As times were hard, some thought ten quid too  
dear),

But there were others when I couldn't finish  
My work. Upon an average I could clear  
Five hundred sovereigns a day, or slightly  
Above it, and I banked my stuff fortnightly.

“My game was watched, you may depend. Two fellows  
One night when sleepiness had grown too strong  
For me, stole in and grabbed some bags of yellows  
And scooted off ; but they did not stay long ;  
They might have hanged themselves at first as well as  
When they had done a fellow-creature wrong.  
That gold—you know how wrong it is to pilfer—  
Brought them to death, as did Iscariot's silver !

“There drooped the two of them at dawn, well  
weighted  
With my hard earnings ! So, for many a week  
I raked the bullion in. I estimated  
That I had netted by this single streak  
Of business, thirty thousand quid, or stated  
More accurately—mostly when I speak

I like to be exact, it is a gift I  
Had always—thirty thousand and odd fifty!  
“ When without any warning fortune played me  
A dirty trick, although it must be said  
I was in fault. I found the goose that laid me  
The golden eggs one morning lying dead!  
This was the way of it—a party paid me  
An extra figure, fifty quid a head  
To be select, to let them go to *the* top  
And hang (thirteen there were) right at the tree-top.

“ Well, I consented. They were stylish jokers,  
Rich squatters and bank clerks, and all like that,  
And two or three had dress suits and white chokers,  
And there they dangled gorgeous to look at,  
Rigged out like lords and dukes, and stiff as pokers  
Right up aloft. For quite an hour I sat  
At sunset in admiring contemplation  
My Tree just then aroused my admiration

“ It fairly drooped with men, the corpses swaying  
In the light wind, from scores and scores of strings,  
And ropes, and hides; the poorer classes staying  
Down low; the richer up above, like kings.  
I felt quite proud, but, boys, you know the saying  
That pride will have a fall. All human things

Must end ; but in the morning it took me down  
When I looked down and saw my priceless Tree  
down.

“ The last thirteen had done it. Hanging high up  
They made the Tree top-heavy, and a squall  
Had blown it over. I could only dry up  
My tears—at first I let a good few fall—  
And shut the humpy door for good, and tie up  
The gate, and cart away my little haul  
Quite sorrowful, but not at all unthankful—  
With notes and cheques I had the local bank full !

“ That was a year for us ! Deserted stations  
For miles and miles around, and not a man  
Left living ; storehouses with lots of rations,  
And stone cold fire-places, with pot and pan  
Just as the suicides had left them ! Lashin’s  
Of all that one could want. Our cattle ran  
On all the runs, our sheep mixed all the flocks with  
And no one came to claim those they might box with.

“ In twelve months’ time the pair of us had sold out  
For half-a-million ; and I went home then  
To England ! and shed my Colonial gold out  
And got returned to Parliament ; but, men,

I gave such sprees, my sugar couldn't hold out  
For ever, and—well, here I am again!  
Good night, boys! Slushy, my important buck! ere  
I go just fill this bag of mine with tucker.”

. . . . .

Such was my Sundowner. At early dawn he  
Went lightly off, and George, a shearer, who  
Was loud and large, though, all the same, a  
“Sawney,”  
Found that his watchguard had been cut in two,  
And Tom from Wellington, alert and brawny—  
The very kind of man you couldn't “do”—  
Found that his Waltham, with gold chain and locket,  
Had gone, like George's, into Ned Flynn's pocket.



## THE BELL OF THE LY-EE-MOON.

*“The horror of the scene was heightened by the slow ringing of the ship’s bell as the shattered hull went down.”*

AH my love ! my love ! In the garden olden  
She said, “ For ever, my own, my own ! ”  
And her eyes were true and the world was golden,  
And the sunset burned upon roses blown  
In a radiant day by an English river,  
And she said again, “ I believe, I wait ;  
To your heart mine answers a brave ‘ For ever,’  
And our love is stronger than years or Fate.”

We were still but children, unscarred and scathless  
Of life and trial, ah me ! ah me !  
For my heart is dead, and my dear is faithless,  
And I curse the moan of the envious sea,  
And the wet skies weep and the wan waves shiver,  
Where I wander, stricken and desolate,  
Ah ! the false words said by the English river !  
Ah ! the scornful strength of the blind, mad, Fate !

She had written lately, " The strife is over

And the years have crowned us ; a marriage bell  
In my ears is sounding—I come, sweet lover,  
To the faithful arms that have waited well ! "

Waited, still to wait, through a bitter shedding

Of tears, till they reach to her, late or soon—  
For the bridegroom Death at my darling's wedding  
Laughed and tolled the bell of the Ly-ee-moon !

## ANOTHER ADDRESS TO A MUMMY.

*“The sale of the zoological collection at Walton included a Peruvian Mummy, which was stated to be 6000 years old, and was a good specimen of the mummy tribe. It was knocked down by the auctioneer for the small sum of one pound seven shillings.”—LLOYD’S WEEKLY.*

ADAM of mummies ! Sire of all the race of  
Drysalted phantoms of the ages old,  
That seem to love being kicked about the face of  
The earth and dread to lie beneath the mould,  
Though you have fallen upon the sad disgrace of  
Being put up in an auction room and sold  
At such a wretched price, a parvenu  
Belzoni’s mummy was compared to you !

That hollow fraud that Horace Smith has sung in  
A strain which may endure while mummies last ;  
That stolid witness who still held his tongue in  
Some dead mysterious language of the past,

Compared with such as you was very young in  
 The cosmic catalogue. What changes vast  
 Must have swept o'er the races of the earth  
 Between your death and that impostor's birth !

*He* labelled as antique ! *He* put on airs of  
 Superior knowledge ! the poor recent sham !  
*He* called an actor in the strange affairs of  
 The earlier dynasties ! Why are you calm  
 Who had been dead and swathed in many layers of  
 Spiced wrappings—in your days they *could* em-  
 balm !—

Thousands of years before this understudy  
 Had thought of having a demnition body ?

Perhaps you never cherished great ambition  
 Even when your veins had blood in them aflow,  
 So let this humbug hold a false position  
 For all these years. Or were you lying low  
 For us to put you right—our present mission—  
 To lift you to Fame's pedestal and show  
 You, as to all the ages yet to come we  
 Here do, the genuine pre-Incarial Mummy !

Grim dead Peruvian ! Pre-historic carcass !  
 We will not catechise you *à la* Smith ;

Your eye and ear have grown too dull to mark us,  
Your tongue too dry to answer questions with ;  
Your story must remain to us as dark as  
That carven on some mystic monolith  
Before savants, more clearly than their own,  
Could read the writing on Rosetta's stone.

We let you stand unquestioned in your glory  
As oldest resident. If you could speak  
We would not credit half your wondrous story ;  
Strange as you are, you would be too unique  
If you were truthful. As a man grows hoary  
Whatever love he had for facts grows weak—  
That's our experience of old hands. They fable  
More wildly than a telegraphic cable.

You'd speak of marvels past our power to number ;  
Of dim dead peoples, who, ere Manco came,  
For centuries had lain in Death's cold slumber ;  
Of human sacrifices given to flame  
At mighty shrines whose ruins yet encumber  
Lake Titicaca ; you'd disclose the name  
Of him they worshipped in that temple olden  
At Pachacamac, whose great gate was golden ;  
You'd hint of mysteries whereat our marrow  
Would freeze, of awful rites of long ago ;

Then tell us how across that passage narrow  
    (Just having skipped three thousand years or so)  
In the dread Andes, the dark-browed Pizarro  
    Led his fierce thieves and gave Peru to Woe ;  
Then you'd propose to go and have a drink, as  
You'd lots of things to tell about the Incas ;

Then, when adown your pre-Incarial gullet  
    You'd poured some modern fire-water, your eye  
Would brighten, and you'd mention how a bullet  
    Had grazed your temple in its passage by  
At Cuzcos siege ; then take another pull at  
    The flask, and say you'd seen no season dry  
As this—although you thought warm weather  
    pleasant—  
Since Abel, at whose funeral you were present,

Was slain ; then growing just a trifle worse, off  
    You'd go again with memories of the days  
When, at Pompeii, you received a purse of  
    Their current coin and an address of praise  
For climbing up Vesuvius, while those curs of  
    Italians trembled, and, before the gaze  
Of all, extinguishing the burning mountain  
With pails of water from the public fountain !

And then you'd change the scene again and mention

How at the siege of Babylon you fought  
For Cyrus and received a generous pension,

Also how Cyrus himself said he thought  
Your valour won the fight, and bade attention

Be paid your slightest wish, and rich silks bought  
To robe you like a king, that far and near you  
Should be proclaimed the Victor of Assyria ;

Then back you'd move across a dozen eras,

And vow your present life had not the charm  
It had when, underneath the Cordilleras,

Six thousand years ago you ran a farm,  
And from your mummy eye would start a tear, as  
You bade us feel your shrunken mummy arm,  
And said you scarce could lift a pewter now with  
The arm that in those days you used to plough with ;

Though still you didn't give a modern damn for

Belzoni's mummy, and, in boastful tones,  
Asserted that the Copts could not embalm for

Sour apples, nor dissect, nor polish bones,  
Beside the old Peruvians ; that this sham for

Whom Smith had touted was a man named Jones,  
A modern body, and a foul deceiver,  
Who in the flesh had been a drunken weaver.

Next, you'd get further mixed, and dwell with relish

On things that happened when you were a boy ;  
With bygone blasphemies you would embellish

Your own experience of the sack of Troy ;  
Then shock us with disclosures dark and hellish  
Of how the Pagans scrambled to enjoy  
The Christian sacrifices—how proud scions  
Of Rome would put their money on the lions ;

And still you would run on apace and tell us

How you and Nero—who is much belied,  
And was a genial dog, the best of fellows—

Upon a mountain top sat side by side,  
And heard the sound of many a dying yell as

The smoke of burning Rome rolled far and wide,  
Saw Romans roasted as upon a griddle  
And played alternate solos on the fiddle ;

You'd liquor up again, and, waxing merry,

Romance of how you'd passed the time since then ;  
How you were at the siege of Londonderry

And personally slaughtered fifty men ;  
How you went with Munro to Pondicherry

And peppered the poor French ; although no pen  
Had told your deeds, you'd swear before your Maker  
You did a little thing or two at Acre ;



You'd ramble on in circles growing wider,  
As though round cobwebs in your ancient brain  
You trod the path of some erratic spider  
Who dropped a thread and picked one up again  
In the wrong place, you'd dwell on Sodom's pride, or  
The way the Inquisition ruled in Spain ;  
And, after once more looking on the flask,  
Say it was you who wore the Iron Mask ;

You'd tell us the real facts concerning Midas,  
Who couldn't turn things into gold a bit,  
But in his day was noted far and wide as  
A shady person and a counterfeit ;  
Then, with strong laughter shaking your dry hide, as  
Upon you came the memory of it,  
That you had written, but not put your name to,  
All Shakespeare's friends and Bacon's now lay claim to.

You'd babble of events that happened prior  
To Noah's time ; you'd solemnly declare  
The Tower of Babel never got much higher  
Than Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square ;  
And then, you peerless pre-Incarial liar,  
Assure us that in person you were there  
With quite a party on a neighbouring hill  
When Joshua's prayers made the sun stand still.

. . . . .

We know you like a book, you see, and so we  
Would *not* interrogate you as to what  
You've seen and done. We know you, and we know we  
Have hereby done our duty as we ought  
'Twixt man and mummy. But mark this, although we  
Proclaim you King, let it be never thought  
We'd trust you, for if dates are true as stated  
You died before the world had been created!

## THADEUS O'KANE.

You have left us and passed where the laughter  
Of this world sounds not, nor the sighs ;  
What is writ on the scrolls of hereafter,  
To-day is made plain to your eyes—  
You have found wings and soared from the regions  
That fence mortal destinies in ;  
You are far away now from the legions  
Of sorrow, and rancour, and sin.

You have fled from the heat and the anger  
Of Queensland, to dwell in the calm  
Of the King's land, where heavenly languor  
Folds round you the peace of its balm—  
You have gone from where life's thorns were sharpest  
To a totally different clime,  
Where the seraphim sing, and the harpist  
Vamps always in excellent time.

You have seen ; are you truly contented ?

Are you satisfied, quite, with the change ?

Is it up to what's been represented ?

Does the restfulness strike you as strange  
As you weave into garlands the flowers

That bloom on the Beautiful Plain ?

Does your memory go back to the Towers ?

Is it well with you, Thady O'Kane ?

Does it strike you, when roaming through moly

And asphodel fields and so forth,

That Eternity passes more slowly

Than Time did when you were up North,

In the infinite realms of perfection,

With never a wrong to set right ?

Do you, sometimes, in spells of dejection,

Feel rusty for lack of a fight ?

You, who battled so fiercely and stoutly

For any cause seeming like Truth ;

You, who knelt at her altar devoutly,

And smote against fraud without ruth ;

You, whose life than most men's lives was fuller

Of effort to do what seemed best—

Do you feel the least trifle " off colour " ?

In the regions of absolute rest ?

Do you yearn, in your new sphere diviner,  
For the bygone tumultuous joys,  
For the roaring old days of the *Miner*  
And all the acclaim of the boys ?  
In your ears does there yet ring the howl of  
Dismay and acclaim that arose  
When each issue came out and fell foul of  
All humbugs, your friends and your foes ?

You were harsh, but men saw that your Bible  
Was Progress, and you its true priest ;  
How you plunged into quagmires of libel  
And lashed at the greatest and least !  
How in language, unsparing and bitter,  
You made yourself heard, aye, and felt—  
You were ever a vigorous hitter,  
But you never hit under the belt !

You have passed. No hand grasped the great Lever  
More firmly ; none sought to do more  
For his kind. In Life's turbulent fever  
The days of your travail are o'er—  
Far too many like you have been taken,  
Far too few to the world yet remain :  
In the sleep from which none can awaken,  
May your dreams be good, Thady O'Kane !

## IN BALLARAT.

(FROM "*A Bad Sovereign's Story.*")

ONE tale among the many that were written  
With knife points, in the fever-throbbing years,  
When from the old cold lands came thousands smitten  
By lust of gold and sunlight—Pioneers  
Of every race, with the prevailing Briton  
In front; tales tragic, yet which scarce won tears  
From those who briefly saw, while yet attending,  
A frenzied round of getting and of spending.  
Lake Wendouree lay shining in the summer—  
Or what there was of it in those old days—  
When to its edge there drew a weary comer,  
Slow dragging on beneath the fiery rays  
Of the white sun—an outcast and a "bummer,"  
Whose later types and their deep devious ways,  
The world may know, through humorous quip and antic,  
In illustrated papers Transatlantic.

The wayfarer, who had a meagre swag on,  
Slouched forward with peculiar mien and gait,  
Which, to discerning eyes, wrote clearly "lag" on  
His whole identity. "Hullo there, mate!"  
He called to one, who, seated by his waggon,  
Cooked dinner in a mood disconsolate,  
"I've come from Creswick, where I had no luck or  
I wouldn't have to beg a bit of tucker."

The bullocky reached forth and took his pan off  
And turned the steak out on a plate of tin,  
Then, straightening up, while perspiration ran off  
His face, said "Right, old man, there's not much in  
The grub box, but I've never turned a man off  
Without a feed, and don't think I'll begin  
Just yet. Sit down then, mate, and take things steady  
And tell how you got lagged, till tucker's ready."

His words came out unthinkingly and freely  
As words were wont in that red-shirted Past,  
When sentiments were not expressed genteely  
And tongues were sure and swift to "damn" and  
"blast;"

But as he spoke the stranger's eyes grew steely,  
And like a man struck suddenly aghast,  
Whose dearest hope some blow has left invalid,  
His quivering lips grew all at once quite pallid.

And drawing to the teamster's side and grasping  
His hand, he tremblingly essayed to speak ;  
But no sound came from him, save a low gasping,  
While tears ran down upon each dusty cheek ;  
Then all at once the other's wrist unclasping  
He reeled and fell. " The devil—here's a streak  
Of luck ! " exclaimed the puzzled bullock driver,  
" The man must be a madman—or a lifer !

" Poor devil, anyway, whatever he is  
Or what he may have done, I'll do my best  
To help him. Ha ! upon his leg, I see, is  
The iron-mark ! If any of the rest  
Know this, I fear his chance right up a tree is.  
He's fainted—there, I'll open his shirt breast.  
His shoulder marked—quick ! let me see the other—  
My God above ! It's Harry—it's my brother ! "

The other teamsters, one by one, had yoked up  
Their teams, and gone upon their heavy way,  
Unwilling steers with saplings had been poked up,  
And every horse-waggon and bullock dray  
Was gone, save one ; the place was no more blocked up  
With fifty-guinea loads of native hay,  
Or what would to its inmost cockles grieve a  
Good Templar's heart, piled cases of Geneva.



But one all day, unheeded and untended,  
Remained upon the camping ground, for when  
The swoon that overcame his brother ended  
The teamster, fearing that the other men  
Might ask too closely whom he had befriended  
Had borne him off to an unholy den  
Which flourished where is now fair Sturt-street's  
centre  
Wherein the reader will be asked to enter.

A crowded tent, the air within is reeking  
With vilest utterance of vilest thought ;  
Mad diggers dancing, loose-haired women shrieking  
Wild words of sin that almost might have brought  
A blush of shame the devil's shameless cheek on.  
While in their midst, more pitiful than aught  
In all that scene of hideousness and loathing  
A girl stood, dazed and half bereft of clothing,  
Upon whose body satyr glances gloated  
And drunken hands drew letters with the lees  
Of rum—in Fifty-One the Miners doted  
On all such airy gaities as these ;  
The shanty was a den, its keeper noted  
For yielding succour to such refugees  
As shrank at sight of a policeman's garb, or  
Winced at the mention of Macquarie Harbour.

Just then the diggers' life was passed 'mid dangers  
Of sudden shot and unexpected knife ;  
Full half the men here gathered were bushrangers  
At heart, who lightly valued human life.

The shanty-keeper saw the entering strangers  
And whispering to his missus—not his wife—  
He said, " Amelia, twig that cove—the farther—  
Clear out—look sharp ! it's Harry from Port Arthur !"

The hostess, who had many stains of blood on  
Her dress, the traces of a recent fight  
'Twixt " Bloody Mary," who was thought a good 'un,  
And a frail sister known as " Hell's Delight,"  
As one entranced for half a moment stood on  
The floor with lips all tremulous and white,  
Then whispered back in low hoarse tones of terror,  
" He'll kill me, Billy—make no blooming error !"

And would have fled, but that her limbs were shaking  
With the swift cowardice that chilled her heart,  
While Charlie Simpson, through the turmoil making  
His way, took One Eyed Billy, the boss, apart  
And said " This fellow has been caught housebreaking  
And lagged, and bolted. Hide him ! and be smart.  
I'll make it doubly worth your while, old sonny,  
We won't dispute about a little money."

The convict stood, while all the uproar went on  
About him, and men drank and women swore,  
His head held downward and his look intent on  
The ground, till, turning round to seek the door,  
His eyes looked straight into the woman's bent on  
His face—the eyes he looked into of yore  
With love unspeakable and faith unbounded,  
Before his life Life's darkest deeps had sounded.

A sudden leap there was, a sudden gleaming  
Of a sharp dagger-blade that flashed on high,  
A rush of men, a wild affrighted screaming  
Of women, and a low, short, deadly cry  
From lips through which a crimson blood came  
streaming,

A woman lying with slow glazing eye,  
And voices crying, "Hold him, boys, and bring him  
Out to the shed, the murdering dog, we'll swing him!"

Then spoke the convict, in clear tones unfearing,  
"Hold on, mates, for a moment—let me say  
Why I have done for her. I ask a hearing,  
No more; my life is in my hand to pay  
For hers, and it has hardly been so cheering  
That I need wish a moment of delay:  
Just let me speak and tell my story; after  
I'm ready for the nearest rope and rafter.

“She’s dead enough—it’s useless to endeavour  
To help her now—I’ve spilt her evil blood ;  
I think the way I struck her heart was clever,  
Although I never, be it understood,  
Have murdered until now. No more for ever  
Will she ape modesty and maidenhood—  
Oh ! that I was so mad as to believe her  
When first I met the doubly damned deceiver !

“But that was when her cheek seemed fresh and  
blossoming  
Long years ago upon old England’s shore,  
When I had faith, and saw in every woman  
A thing to reverence and half adore ;  
The world was new to me and I was human,  
And no love that has ever been before  
Was blinder than the love I poured upon her,  
A viper of all baseness and dishonour.

“From Devonshire I came to London saying  
Farewell to my one brother—this is he—  
God help me ! When we two were children praying  
At bedtime by a darling mother’s knee,  
Or later through the fields together straying  
Or stealing apples from some guarded tree,  
When life to us seemed made for joy and laughter,  
How could I dream it had this curst hereafter ?

“ Amid the gaiety and shine and splendour  
Of Vauxhall, with the music at its height,  
When everything was wrought that could engender  
In youthful hearts quick pulses of delight,  
Her eyes invited and her voice was tender  
And I was passionate and void of sight,  
And yielding to my heart's desire not slowly  
I walked into the mesh of bonds unholy.

“ She wrung my heart with stories of denial,  
Of want and wretchedness and sordid woe,  
She plied me with concoctions from a vial  
Of black deceit, and made her voice sound low  
And touching as it told of bitter trial,  
And drooped her eyes and let their waters flow,  
While I, believing, freely poured my cash on  
The harlot's lap in innocent compassion.

“ When all was gone but one last coin, I met her  
To say good-bye, and bitterly she wept  
And begged me with tear-misted eyes to let her  
Have it, the last, to be for ever kept  
For my sake; and that I might not forget her,  
With gracious art, in which she was adept,  
And oft-repeated hopes in accents broken,  
Gave me a coin as her own love token.

“I went from her and tried in vain to borrow  
Enough to help me from the weary town ;  
That night I walked the streets and on the morrow  
I cried, ‘ Alas ! ’—I was a country clown—  
‘ Alas, that I am forced to feel the sorrow  
Of pawning her dear keepsake, but the frown  
Of fortune will not make me less esteem it :  
I’ll pawn it and not rest till I redeem it.’

“ The Jew’s eye flashed, I thought, with recognition  
Upon the coin, and as I told my tale  
He bent on me a look of keen suspicion,  
Then strong emotion turned his dark face pale,  
And in a tone of masterful derision  
He let me know that he was not for sale ;  
In vain I grew indignant and protested—  
Before five minutes passed I was arrested.

“ I told the story simply and sincerely  
Of how I came to have the disc of brass,  
But would not give her name I loved so dearly  
Lest harm should come through it to my sweet lass ;  
When I said this the scornful Judge was nearly  
Convulsed with mirth, and, fastening his glass  
In his left eye, he said ‘ For Life,’ and straightway  
Behind me closed the awful prison gateway.

“ But in the silence of that gloomy prison,  
I thought of her—this woman lying dead—  
Whose lips I had imprinted Love’s hot kiss on  
As still an angel, and my soft heart bled  
To think that had some other chance arisen  
My dear one might have suffered in my stead,  
Believing that some wretch the coin bestowing  
Had cheated her, poor innocent, unknowing.

“ At last it came, the day of my departure—  
That dread departure in the convict ship—  
‘ By-bye, my gallant Devonshire sweetheart, you’re  
Bound outward on a little pleasure trip—  
Hope you’ll enjoy yourself; a pleasant start you’re  
Just making!’ There she stood with mocking lip,  
This dead adultress, hemmed with evil sirens,  
As I marched past them clanking in my irons!

“ O God! that moment—what a fury flaming  
Blazed in my heart, made all at once aware!  
No after horror that outpassed the naming,  
No maddening agony of damned despair,  
No convict torture all Hell’s torments shaming  
Was like the pang that rent my bosom there,  
And left my life to vengeance consecrated  
And Hate, supreme o’er all that men have hated!

“How I escaped, or how God brought me hither  
It matters nothing. I have kept an oath.  
Tie me and take me out, I care not whither—  
Death finds Port Arthur men but little loth.”  
The diggers, almost to a man, cried “Slither,  
You and your brother, or they’ll nab you both.  
The thing was right: you’ve properly repaid her,  
She’s only fit to be the corpse you’ve made her!”

Too late—for One Eyed Billy, who had bounded  
Right through the rotten canvas of the tent  
When he beheld the knife, had fled and sounded  
A cry of “Murder,” yelling as he went,  
So that by now the shanty was surrounded  
By “bobbies” bent on the accomplishment  
Of daring deeds; for, used to diggers’ revels,  
They thought it but a case of the blue devils.

They found instead a spectacle most gory,  
And had (an easy duty) to arrest  
Harry, who afterwards was hanged—the story  
Is nearly through. Soon Charlie gave life best  
And died of grief; but the especial glory  
Of this tale is to come. Perhaps you’ve guessed—  
No? Well, the moral of exceeding weight is,  
’Tis—One Eyed Billy now a Magistrate is!



## AUSTRALIA TO ENGLAND.

*June 22, 1897*

WHAT of the years of Englishmen ?

What have they brought of growth and grace  
Since mud-built London by its fen

Became the Briton's breeding-place ?

What of the Village, where our blood

Was brewed by sires, half man, half brute,  
In vessels of wild womanhood,

From blood of Saxon, Celt and Jute ?

What are its gifts, this Harvest Home

Of English tilth and English cost,

Where fell the hamlet won by Rome

And rose the city that she lost ?

O! terrible and grand and strange

Beyond all phantasy that gleams

When Hope, asleep, sees radiant Change

Come to her through the halls of dreams !

A heaving sea of life, that beats  
Like England's heart of pride to-day,  
And up from roaring miles of streets  
Flings on the roofs its human spray ;  
And fluttering miles of flags aflow,  
And cannon's voice, and boom of bell,  
And seas of fire to-night, as though  
A hundred cities flamed and fell ;

While, under many a fair festoon  
And flowering crescent, set ablaze  
With all the dyes that English June  
Can lend to deck a day of days,  
And past where mart and palace rise,  
And shrine and temple lift their spears,  
Below five million misted eyes  
Goes a gray Queen of Sixty Years—

Go lords, and servants of the lords  
Of earth, with homage on their lips,  
And kinsmen carrying English swords,  
And offering England battle-ships ;  
And tribute-payers, on whose hands  
Their English fetters scarce appear ;  
And gathered round from utmost lands  
Ambassadors of Love and Fear !

Dim signs of greeting waved afar,  
Far trumpets blown and flags unfurled,  
And England's name an Avatar  
Of light and sound throughout the world—  
Hailed Empress among nations, Queen  
Enthroned in solemn majesty,  
On splendid proofs of what has been,  
And presages of what will be !

For this your sons, foreseeing not  
Or heeding not the aftermath,  
Because their strenuous hearts were hot  
Went first on many a cruel path,  
And, trusting first and last to blows,  
Fed death with such as would gainsay  
Their instant passing, or oppose  
With talk of Right strength's right of way !

For this their names are on the stone  
Of mountain spires, and carven trees  
That stand in flickering wastes unknown  
Wait with their dying messages ;  
When fire blasts dance with desert drifts  
The English bones show white below,  
And, not so white, when summer lifts  
The counterpane of Yukon's snow.

Condemned by blood to reach for grapes  
That hang in sight, however high,  
Beyond the smoke of Asian capes,  
The nameless, dauntless, dead ones lie ;  
And where Sierran morning shines  
On summits rolling out like waves,  
By many a brow of royal pines  
The noisiest find quiet graves.

By lust of flesh and lust of gold,  
And depth of loins and hairy breadth  
Of breast, and hands to take and hold,  
And boastful scorn of pain and death,  
And something more of manliness  
Than tamer men, and growing shame  
Of shameful things, and something less  
Of final faith in sword and flame—

By many a battle fought for wrong,  
And many a battle fought for right,  
So have you grown august and strong,  
Magnificent in all men's sight—  
A voice for which the kings have ears,  
A face the craftiest statesmen scan ;  
A mind to mould the after years,  
And mint the destinies of man !

Red sins were yours : the avid greed  
Of pirate fathers, smocked as Grace,  
Sent Judas missionaries to read  
Christ's Word to many a feebler race—  
False priests of 'Truth who made their tryst  
At Mammon's shrine, and reft or slew—  
Some hands you taught to pray to Christ  
Have prayed His curse to rest on you !

Your way has been to pluck the blade  
Too readily, and train the guns.  
We here, apart and unafraid  
Of envious foes, are but your sons :  
We stretched a heedless hand to smutch  
Our spotless flag with Murder's blight—  
For one less sacrilegious touch  
God's vengeance blasted Uzza white !

You vaunted most of forts and fleets,  
And courage proved in battle-feasts,  
The courage of the beast that eats  
His torn and quivering fellow-beasts ;  
Your pride of deadliest armament—  
What is it but the self-same dint  
Of joy with which the Cavemen bent  
To shape a bloodier axe of flint ?

But praise to you, and more than praise  
    And thankfulness, for some things done ;  
And blessedness, and length of days  
    As long as earth shall last, or sun !  
You first among the peoples spoke  
    Sharp words and angry questionings  
Which burst the bonds and shed the yoke  
    That made your men the slaves of Kings !

You set and showed the whole world's school  
    The lesson it will surely read,  
That each one ruled has right to rule—  
    The alphabet of Freedom's creed  
Which slowly wins it proselytes  
    And makes uneasier many a throne ;  
You taught them all to prate of Rights  
    In language growing like your own !

And now your holiest and best  
    And wisest dream of such a tie  
As, holding hearts from East to West,  
    Shall strengthen while the years go by ;  
And of a time when every man  
    For every fellow-man will do  
His kindest, working by the plan  
    God set him. May the dream come true !

And greater dreams ! O Englishmen,  
Be sure the safest time of all  
For even the mightiest State is when  
Not even the least desires its fall !  
Make England stand supreme for aye,  
Because supreme for peace and good,  
Warned well by wrecks of yesterday  
That strongest feet may slip in blood !

TO ———.

Some songs of this dark, silent land of ours—

Some rude poor strains and all unmeet to bring

To you whose ear has heard the sky-lark sing ;

In splendid dawns above the English flowers,

And him, your minstrel, the gray bard who towers

With crowned head over us, our English King ;

Yet, if my hand awakes the golden string

But faintlier, lacking his diviner powers,

Be sure that for the worthless gift I bear

I blush, and cry, " Would worthier gift were mine

To lay before the feet of one so fair

As perfect rose before a stainless shrine,"

And trust my voice to swell this whole land's prayer

That God will always be near thee and thine.



MEMOIRS



## MEMOIR

JOHN FARRELL was born at Buenos Aires, South America, on the 18th December, 1851 or 1852. There is some uncertainty as to the year; Farrell himself did not know whether it was 1851 or 1852, and no official record can be obtained; but the date first mentioned is that entered in the family papers kept by Mrs. Farrell, and it agrees with other records. His parents were Andrew and Mary Farrell, both of whom were born in Ireland, and came from fairly well-to-do families in the city of Dublin. The father, Andrew Farrell, was left an orphan at an early age, his parents falling victims to an epidemic of cholera which swept through the part of Ireland in which they were living at the time. He was, however, well educated and carefully brought up by his guardians, and was taught the business of a chemist. He married in Ireland, and three of his four children were born there—Andrew, Matthew, and Kate. About 1847 he took his family to South America, and settled at Buenos Aires, where he

started business and prospered as a chemist. There his youngest child, John, the subject of this memoir, was born. The year of his birth was a memorable one in the history of Australia, for it was the year in which gold was first discovered in New South Wales and Victoria. The news soon travelled over the world, and in due course reached Andrew Farrell, in Buenos Aires. Stirred by the stories of fortunes quickly made on the diggings, he sold the chemist's shop, and in 1852, with his family, including the baby John, set sail for England in order to get to Australia. They arrived somewhere towards the end of 1852 at Sandridge, where Mrs. Farrell and the younger children were left while Andrew Farrell and his eldest son went to the Ballarat diggings. Life at Sandridge at that time was primitive, the price of food and everything else was very high, medical attention was difficult to obtain, and, of course, there were no sanitary arrangements. It was no wonder, therefore, that John was attacked with a severe illness, and almost lost his life.

Andrew Farrell did not find much gold at Ballarat, so he returned shortly afterwards to his family and took them to Bendigo, where he was much more fortunate. Later on he migrated to Whroo, or Rushworth, where he mined for some years, and then bought horses and engaged in the carrying trade—a very profitable one in the ante-railway period. He was soon successful enough to be able to purchase a farm at a place called Baringhup, on the Loddon

River, not far from the town now called Maldon (Victoria). He continued to trade as a carrier for some time, but eventually devoted himself wholly to farming, aided by his sons, and became fairly prosperous, well-known, and respected throughout the district. He took part in public affairs, and held several positions of local importance, such as those of Secretary to the Agricultural Society of the district, Librarian, and Electoral Registrar. He continued to live at Baringhup until his death on the 17th February, 1897, aged 74. His wife had died in 1862, after a long illness.

John Farrell's parents were of that honest, industrious, self-reliant class, physically strong, and mentally clear and resolute, which forms the backbone of the British people. Andrew Farrell was a man of sterling worth, and John is said to have strongly resembled him in manner and appearance. Both father and mother were educated and fond of reading, and though their time was fully occupied in the early years of their residence in Victoria, they did not neglect the education of their children. The home life was genial and mutually helpful; all the children were fond of books and music, and John acquired the rudiments of a sound education from his parents. The country about their farm on the Loddon River was wild and beautiful. There were very few settlers in the district then and their houses were far apart, so that each family practically depended upon its own resources for culture and amusement. John was fond of roaming at large through

the bush with his brother Matthew, and occasionally they fished or hunted, but the younger brother had a strong aversion to inflicting pain or killing anything, and never became a sportsman. The children were sent to a private school in 1860. After their mother's death in 1862, however, they had no more schooling. The brief experience passed without any remarkable demonstration on John's part, but it was noticed that he was very anxious to learn and possessed a very good memory. He was popular amongst his fellows, and was regarded as a "very sociable and good humoured boy." For some years John worked on his father's farm, and occasionally on neighbouring farms—more for the sake of company than for the remuneration. He was eager to meet new people and hear the stories they had to tell. At shearing time on a station not far from his home he visited the men's hut as often as possible, and listened to their yarns or took part in their discussions. The gold fields had brought a strange medley of people into Victoria from all parts of the world, most of whom were of an adventurous turn and had journeyed in far countries, so young Farrell probably gained a good deal of second-hand experience. He earned such a reputation as a conversationalist and humourist while a boy that his company was sought by neighbours. He learned to play the concertina—"the piano of the bush" in the early days—and later the violin, and with his father and brothers often arranged concerts or took part in local festivities.

In one of the last articles which he wrote, he referred to his brief career as a musician :—" I, too, have begun with a mouth organ and passed with honours in the concertina, aspiring to play 'by note.' As the haughty owner of the first Anglo-German instrument seen by resident Victorians so far inland I have occasionally, but coldly, consented to play polkas, 'first sets,' caledonians, and the like, wrought from a very limited repertoire of compositions for the inspiration of uncritical dancing assemblies. These performances, and some truly rascally violin solos, the result of a mistaken ambition, represent my range of accomplishment in one great branch of art ; they are all I have done, or ever will do, in music."

Fortunately, young Farrell had, in addition to his fondness for company and gaiety, a taste for reading, and found ample enjoyment in the works of Mayne Reid and Walter Scott, the only novels at first available. Books were not plentiful in his home or in the district at that time, but he early became acquainted with the works of Byron, Burns and Shakespeare. As with many another boy, Byron was his particular favourite ; he read him through and through, and often at local entertainments, when he was asked to recite, he used to reel off passages or poems which he had committed to memory. His thirst for books developed rapidly, and most of his pocket-money was sent to Melbourne for more literature.

Life itself was, however, always more interesting to

him than the reflection of it in books, and the great world of which he had read and heard beyond the horizon of the farm on the Loddon filled his imagination and made him eager to go out and explore it for himself. Therefore in 1870 he left his father's home, and made a start in life on his own account, by going to Sandhurst (now Bendigo) seeking employment. He was then 19, strong and healthy, jovial, light-hearted, and ambitious. The world was wide and life was pleasant; somehow, somewhere there were great things to be done. Time stretched indefinitely ahead, and it did not matter how one made a start. By chance he found a position in a brewery owned by Messrs. Jackson and Co. Here he worked hard and showed himself quick and trustworthy; he advanced rapidly and became before long a proficient brewer. One of his brothers visited him in Sandhurst some time afterwards, and says that he was struck with the difference that twelve months or so of town life had made in John; he seemed more refined and energetic, he read more than ever, yet found time for social pleasures and dressed stylishly. After he had been working there for two years the brewery changed hands, and Farrell thought it time to continue his quest of fame and fortune elsewhere. He went with one or two companions to the colony of Queensland, visited Charters Towers and travelled a long way north towards the Gulf country on a gold digging expedition. The far North of Queensland was then almost unknown, but gold had been discovered in



Gympie in 1867, and there were rumours of rich goldfields on the Palmer River which drew many men thither in spite of the difficulties of travelling, the great heat and the hostile blacks. Farrell and his friends found no gold, but met with plenty of adventures and strange experiences. The party suffered many hardships, and Farrell fell ill with fever and ague. A strong constitution stood him in good stead and he recovered ; but all his money was gone, and he had to work his way back to Victoria. He entered into a contract to fell timber, which occupied him for six months, and brought him money enough to get to Melbourne and thence home to Baringhup. He had been away two years.

Some months were spent quietly on the farm, and with his father and brothers he entered into the work of planting a vineyard and making wine. He studied the vigneron's business as fully as possible, and intended to devote himself to it, but in 1875 he was tempted by the offer of a good position to return to his first trade—the brewing of beer. One of his Bendigo employers—a Mr. Jackson—established a brewery at Camperdown (Victoria), and asked Farrell to join him. Here for two years he worked as a brewer, and during this time he met Miss Eliza Watts (daughter of James Watts, of Camperdown), who became his wife on the 16th November, 1876, the marriage being celebrated in Melbourne before Mr. Richard Gibbs, the Registrar-General. After his marriage, Farrell decided to try farming on his own account, and the young couple journeyed to Benalla,

where they met Matthew Farrell. The two brothers travelled a good deal about the district in search of land suitable for selection, and John decided upon a place called Major Plains, where the Dookie Agricultural Farm is now situated, and there selected a small area of Crown land. The making of a home out of a wilderness requires hard work and immense patience; the clearing, fencing, ploughing, and all the other farming operations were endurable, but the monetary return was a long way off, and the young household was not established with any large amount of capital. Farrell found it necessary to find other and more quickly remunerative work. Abandoning the farm, he took a position in a cordial factory at Benalla, and thence went to a brewery in Melbourne. While at the latter place a firm of brewers in Albury (N.S.W.)—Messrs. O’Keefe and Manning—offered him the management of their brewery, and he left for Albury in 1878. Henceforth his life was passed almost uninterruptedly in New South Wales.

Farrell’s literary career may be said to have begun in Albury, although he had contributed occasional articles and humorous verse to the Camperdown paper in 1876. He wrote verses for the *Albury Banner* and the *Border Post* newspapers soon after his arrival, and in 1878, at the office of the latter paper, was published a little brochure entitled “Ephemera: An Iliad of Albury”—Farrell’s first independent publication. The name of the author is printed as “J. O’Farrell,” and some of his newspaper work at this

time was signed "O'Farrell"—merely to gratify a temporary Celtic whim, for his forefathers had dropped the "O." The preface to the first canto of the "Iliad of Albury" stated that it was the author's intention, if his leisure would permit, "to write and publish his extravaganza at intervals of about one month." It is signed—"J. O'F., Turk's Head Hotel, April 24th, 1878." This first canto consists of 58 stanzas in the ottava rima measure of his admired "Don Juan." The following is an example:—

"Thus I throw down my gage. Let none imagine  
 I fear one single man of woman born,  
 Or institution, which with time worn badge on  
 Lives as a butt for worth to laugh to scorn;  
 I mean to hammer, most persistently, the wedge on  
 Which will burst up the shades and ghosts forlorn  
 Of old abuses, and of new ones also,—  
 At least such as we all may safely call so."

The spirit of this stanza actuated Farrell throughout the rest of his life: he was always a foe of abuses, and a hater of injustice.

I have been able to obtain a copy of the first canto only and cannot ascertain whether or not further instalments were published as promised. It had, at any rate, a considerable vogue locally, and no doubt its success encouraged the author to continue writing verse. In 1879 he wrote an ode for the Melbourne Exhibition in the competition opened by the Victorian Government, which carried his name further afield, though it did not win the prize. It was

not until 1882, however, that he published any serious essay in verse. This was called "Two Stories, a Fragmentary Poem," and was printed by A. H. Massina and Co., of Melbourne, "for private circulation only." It is an unpretentious booklet of 50 pages, small 8vo. The poem opens in the flowing line of "Locksley Hall," in which measure one of the stories is told; the other, "a tale within a tale," being an interlude in octosyllabic lines. The imagery is occasionally strained and the construction often faulty; but there are some passages of great beauty, and there is ample evidence of genuine poetic feeling and imaginative power. It was reviewed with mild praise by several Australian papers, eulogised by the *Sydney Bulletin* and noticed by, apparently, only one English paper, which, however, credited the author with a "vivid and picturesque imagination," and stated that there was much to praise and little to blame.

As far as I can ascertain, Farrell's first contributions to the *Sydney Bulletin* appeared in 1882. In the issue of the 5th August of that year were printed some satirical verses entitled "An Auto-da-Fe," dealing, in a thin disguise, with an incident which had aroused considerable feeling in Albury. These verses were subsequently reprinted in a pamphlet relating to the affair, which was published at Beechworth (Vic.). On the 14th October, 1882, the *Bulletin* printed the first instalment of a long poem in "Don Juan" stanzas, called "Jenny—An Australian Story," which was

continued almost every week until the 31st March of the following year. The story is of a kind that might have been continued indefinitely. It is full of topical allusions and slang now obsolete, with some fine patches of description and plentiful incident of a broadly humorous character. The *Bulletin* was then very young and strenuously unconventional. Its language was racy and free, and it encouraged the class of verse that Farrell had begun to write—satirical, slangy, and vigorous. The publication of a poem in irregular instalments of about a column at a time was an unusual proceeding for the *Bulletin* or any other Australian paper, but it was apparently appreciated by the readers of the day. Farrell did not venture any further flights in the more ambitious class of verse represented by "Two Stories," but for many years confined himself to the lower level of fluent humorous narrative.

After "Jenny," verses appeared at frequent intervals in the *Bulletin* until 1887. Most of the verses were unsigned, but the more important were printed over the signature—"J. Farrell." The poem by which he has been most widely known—"How He Died"—appeared in the *Bulletin* of 21st July, 1883, and was reprinted in a volume of prose and verse by various *Bulletin* writers, called "A Golden Shanty." It was recited with great success by the well-known actor, Mr. G. S. Titheradge, and appeared in many English and American papers, by some of which it was attributed to Henry Kendall. The list

of poems which is printed in the Appendix is as complete as I could make it, but, of course, some pieces may have escaped my notice. His last poem—"A Hymn Before Battle"—was printed in the *Bulletin* Special Election Number on 5th December, 1903—a month before his death. His literary life was, therefore, more or less associated with that paper.

Farrell remained in Albury working at the brewery until 1883. When he first arrived in the Border City it was late at night and he was taken to "The Turk's Head Hotel," kept by one Luke Gulson. He stayed there for some time until he got a suitable house to live in, but with Luke Gulson and his brother Thomas he formed an enduring friendship which was not affected by an incident that occurred early in their acquaintance. On the night of his arrival he found the hotel filled with people. Business was going on as usual, although it was after the time limited by the Licensing Act. Shortly afterwards the hotelkeeper was prosecuted for his disobedience of the Act, and he called Farrell as a witness in his defence. When the witness was asked to describe what he knew about the matter, he guilelessly said "that there was dancing and singing and card playing, and everyone seemed to be having a good time, and he really did not know what the police wanted to interfere for." Farrell did not seem to understand the laughter of the audience, nor the consternation

of the hotelkeeper, who declined to call any more witnesses, and was promptly fined by the Magistrate.

In 1879 Farrell had a severe attack of brain fever, and was taken to the Melbourne Hospital. The doctors there gave up all hope of a recovery, and for some time he lay at the point of death. Though he eventually got better, he never entirely recovered from the effects of that attack. For the rest of his life—over twenty years—he was an almost constant sufferer from various forms of neuritis. He bore the pain uncomplainingly, but was continually seeking a cure, and tried innumerable medicines, courses of diet, and treatment. After a temporary breakdown, he went to New Zealand for the sake of the hot baths at Rotorua, and gained some benefit from them, but in the latter years of his life his energy was considerably dulled by the too-frequent pain, for which no permanent remedy could be found.

Anxious to make a bid for fortune, Farrell decided to leave his employment as a brewer in Albury, and persuaded Thomas Gulson to enter into partnership with him in the establishment of a brewery of their own at Goulburn. They accordingly left Albury on the 4th March, 1883, and arrived on the same day at Goulburn, where a brewery was duly established and progressed satisfactorily. Farrell stayed eighteen months in Goulburn, and made many friends and a little money there. He left towards the end of 1884 to start a branch brewery in the town of Quean-

beyan, not many miles distant. At Queanbeyan he worked away at the brewing of beer for two years, making a living, but certainly no fortune. It is related that one New Year's Eve a number of the lively spirits of the town who were "seeing the Old Year out" called at Farrell's house and asked for drinks. He said to them, "There is nothing here, boys, but I'll give you the keys of the brewery and you can go there and take what you want." Of course they did so, and Queanbeyan has not yet forgotten the affair. Naturally, a man who ran a business on such lines was not likely to make a fortune. As a matter of fact, Farrell was quite unfitted for business management. He was far more deeply concerned in poetry and politics than in his own beer—which, by the way, he seldom drank. He could, and did, for the joy of the thing and the traditional literary flavour of it, write dithyrambs about rum and lyrical lines referring to ruby and topaz wine, but he cared no more for these famous liquors than he did for the aforesaid brew.

At this time Farrell was a Protectionist. He had grown up in that fiscal faith in Victoria, and while in Queanbeyan he took an important part in an election campaign on behalf of the Protectionist candidate. It happened that Sir Henry Parkes had made a speech in which he referred to the Queanbeyan electors as "yokels." Farrell obtained control of a local paper and vigorously attacked the Free-trade leader, making the fight the hottest and most exciting Queanbeyan had ever known.



Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" was first published at the end of 1879, in England in 1880, and quickly spreading over the world was soon circulating in Australia. It came in John Farrell's way some time in 1884, and he read it eagerly and delightedly. His nature was sympathetic; his heart was distressed by the appalling poverty of the mass of the people and the flagrant injustices of modern civilisation. To him, therefore, whose mind was exercised by the bewildering problems of social life, upon which the old Political Economy threw no light, but rather increasing darkness—"Progress and Poverty" came as a wonderful revelation. That which had been hidden was now visible; that which had been perplexing was simple and clear. It was as if one who had been blind were suddenly made to see, and the phenomena of nature, vaguely guessed at in blindness, burst upon his astonished vision. This is not the place to attempt an estimate of the value and influence of Henry George's work, but the reading of "Progress and Poverty" marked an epoch in John Farrell's life. From that time onward he was an entirely devoted and enthusiastic disciple, and all his subsequent writing was coloured to some extent by the philosophy and the faith of the Prophet of San Francisco.

Some time elapsed, however, before Farrell finally abandoned the doctrine of Protection. At first many of the followers of Henry George failed to see that there was any immediate connection between the abolition of

tariff duties and his scheme for the destruction of land monopoly; and in New South Wales, as elsewhere, the organisations first established to advocate the Georgian theory comprised both freetraders and protectionists. Henry George's "Protection or Free-trade," published in 1885, finally cleared away any remaining doubts Farrell may have had about the fiscal question. He soon after avowed himself a freetrader, and in October, 1887, wrote, in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, a powerful attack on Protection (which he defined as a scheme of salvation by destruction) and Mr. David Buchanan, a prominent politician, whom he designated "the Father of the Smashers." Throughout the rest of his career he worked unceasingly for land value taxation and free-trade.\*

Meanwhile, in Queanbeyan, he had been writing a good deal of verse, and, encouraged by the late William

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\* Since the above was written, I have received evidence to the effect that not long before his death John Farrell changed his opinion on a matter in connection with land value taxation, which is of considerable importance in Australia. It was generally held by Single Taxers here that any tax on the unimproved value of land should fall on the total value of all lands, without exemption of any kind. In 1894 Mr. A. H. Sampson published a pamphlet, entitled "Principle before Party," in which he claimed that the price paid to the State for land purchased from the Crown should be free of taxation, so that the Land Tax should fall only on any increment in value beyond the original purchase money paid to the State. Mr. B. R. Wise adopted this theory (known as Land

Bede Dalley, he made preparations for the publication of the best of his work in book form. To Dalley, a man of culture, warmly interested in Australian letters, many a literary aspirant had turned confidently for criticism and encouragement, and, perhaps, in the future the many services by which Dalley helped to brighten

“ . . . . . the life austere

That waits upon the man of letters here”

will be counted as of greater worth than those which won him a Privy Councillorship.

In a letter to Mr. F. J. Broomfield, dated 28th July, 1887, Dalley relates the circumstances which made him acquainted with Farrell—

“It is six years ago—and he was then unknown—when from a distant country town he sent me a few lines containing some of his earliest

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Betterment Taxation), and it became part of the platform of the Free-trade Land and Reform League. Most Single Taxers opposed the theory, Farrell as strongly as any, and, for a number of years, he used all his influence against it. In 1901, however, he had several conversations with Mr. Sampson on the question, and eventually admitted to him that the theory seemed correct, and that if a man paid to the State £1000 for £1000 worth of land, the annual value of the money would be exactly equal to the annual value of the land, and the State could not equitably demand from him anything more than that annual value. Farrell fully acknowledged his conversion, saying, in a letter to Mr. Sampson :—“It seems to me that you are right, and that the view I held was wrong.”

compositions, and sought my judgment upon them. They were marked with occasional strokes of power, but were rude and unlettered, and showed such defective culture that I thought the kindest thing I could do was to tell him frankly that though I was convinced he had 'the vision and the faculty divine,' he would require the 'inspiring aid of books,' study, patience, and a severe discipline of refinement before he could produce anything worthy of his genius. He thanked me in very touching words, told me he would do what I advised, and when one day I read his poem of 'How He Died' I wrote to him on the spot, declaring that I recognised his hand at once. This is the origin of my knowledge of him and a brief history of my appreciation of his powers, concealed as they are partially by a rich veil of modesty."

The selection of poems was published by subscription through Turner and Henderson, of Sydney, in January, 1887. The volume, consisting of 178 pages, demy 8vo, was entitled "How He Died and other Poems," and was sold for 10s. 6d. It was dedicated to the Right Hon. W. B. Dalley, P.C., in a sonnet strongly deprecating the spirit which rushed us into the Soudan fiasco, but appreciating, nevertheless—

" . . . . him, who past the blue sweet bay  
Hides in a home with love and laurel crowned,  
Most honoured by high nations far away,  
Most loved by those, who, standing closest round,  
See all his life . . . . "

The book was reviewed at length in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 22nd January, 1887, by W. B. Dalley, in the *Brisbane Courier* by J. Brunton Stephens, and in *The Freeman's Journal*, while numerous other papers gave it more or less careful treatment, and, generally, ample praise. Dalley pointed out the resemblance of much of the subject matter of the volume to Bret Harte's work, and other reviewers found likenesses to Byron, John Hay, A. L. Gordon, and G. R. Sims. The influence of Byron is, of course, marked in the poem called "Adrift," which is part of the early booklet "Two Stories" before mentioned. Farrell had read a great deal of the then recent verse of Bret Harte, Joaquin Miller, J. Boyle O'Reilly, and other Americans of the same class. Preferring always the objective to subjective in literature, and direct statement to conventional periphrasis, he highly appreciated their fresh and vigorous verse, and was no doubt considerably affected by it in his own writing. Nevertheless, as Brunton Stephens remarked in his review, "the critic would make a great mistake who would insist upon Mr. Farrell's being merely an imitator or a product of the American writer (Harte). It is much more reasonable to suppose that the resemblance is due in large measure to certain features belonging in common to the materials from which both writers draw the sustenance of their spiritual activities."

A copy of the book had been sent to Tennyson, and Farrell received from him a pathetic note in his own handwriting:—

“ Farringford, Freshwater,

“ Isle of Wight.

“ I thank you for your volume of poems which has just reached me. I have only read two—‘How He Died’ and ‘No.’ The first is very spirited, and with the other I entirely sympathise. It is not much that I can read, for I have entirely lost the use of my right eye, as far as reading goes, and the left is slowly darkening, and every morning of my life come by post, from all parts of the world, poems—reams of them—with requests that I should pronounce upon their merits, and hardly ever a book of prose ; and I cannot live like John the Baptist on wild honey. Nevertheless

“ I thank you,

“ Tennyson.

“ And I may add to this brief note that the praise of your Australian critics, to which you allude so modestly, seems to me, from the little I have read, not unmerited.

“ Farewell.”

The book gave Farrell a definite place in Australian literature, and that a high one. The financial results, however, were very small, especially as he gave away a great many copies of the volume.

The passionate enthusiasm for humanity, and the imperative necessity which he felt to spread abroad the newly-discovered economic principles which he considered would

do so much to improve the condition of the people, made him anxious to find some means whereby he could effectively work for this great cause. His interest in politics was never a personal one ; he was naturally retiring and so averse to advertisement that he would never attempt to make a speech at a meeting ; but he, of course, recognised that it was only by political action that social reform could be obtained. His brief taste of journalism in Queanbeyan, and the literary position he had attained, showed him that by his pen he could do more to help in bringing about political action in the direction he wished than by any other means. He therefore sold his interest in the brewery at Queanbeyan in 1887, and came to Sydney to look about for an opportunity of obtaining journalistic employment. There was a paper for sale in the mining town of Lithgow, and as Farrell's health was very bad at the time, Lithgow seemed a good place for him to live in. He at once bought this paper, the recently-established *Lithgow Enterprise*, and went to Lithgow in March or April, 1887. There was another paper published in the town—the *Lithgow Mercury*—edited by J. P. T. Caulfield, then a Protectionist, which was a formidable rival to its junior contemporary. Farrell entirely changed the character of his paper, which soon became celebrated for the excellent articles which poured from his pen, articles explanatory of the various points of George's economic teaching and trenchant criticisms of current politics. Local happenings

were often dealt with in satirical verse, making the "Rum and Cloves" column in which they appeared an interesting feature of the paper. The rivalry with the *Mercury* was continued on different lines, Farrell proving too able an opponent for Mr. Caulfield, who, some time later, became a convert to the Georgian faith. The paper was not, however, a financial success, and after little more than twelve months Farrell was confronted with failure. He was quite unfitted for the management of a newspaper, as he never considered small questions of policy or local interest. A company was therefore formed by a number of Land Nationalisers, with a capital of £2000; the *Lithgow Mercury* was purchased and amalgamated with the *Enterprise*, a manager was engaged, and Farrell was appointed editor. The new paper, called *The Australian Land Nationaliser*, was the first special organ in New South Wales of the Land Nationalisers, or Single Taxers—the name by which the followers of Henry George were subsequently distinguished. *The Land Nationaliser* brought together the scattered forces of the Single Tax party, and did excellent propagandist work, but it became a very inefficient local newspaper. Of the petty personal and local news which characterises most country papers there was very little, and few of the bucolic readers cared for the lengthy disquisitions on the justification of interest or discussions as to whether rent entered into price—which were the principal features of the paper. While the circulation grew abroad, it declined at home,



the advertisers fell away, and again Farrell had to face a failure. The directors, therefore, sold out, at a heavy loss, and decided to establish a purely Single Tax paper in the capital.

Farrell left Lithgow for Sydney in 1889 to edit the new paper, which was named *The Australian Standard*, after Henry George's paper in New York. The paper started off well. Farrell wrote most of the contents of the early issues, including a good deal of verse, and from Sir Henry Parkes and many others he received warmly congratulatory letters upon the high quality of the journal. It was the year of the great Maritime strike, and questions of social reform were the burning questions of the time. The Single Taxers, though not very numerous, were very active, and politically influential. Negotiations were then in progress for bringing Henry George to Australia on a lecturing tour; the newspapers opened their columns to discussions on the Single Tax, and everywhere the question was debated and talked about.

*The Daily Telegraph*, a young and dashing paper, gave a good deal of encouragement to the new movement, reported single tax meetings fully, and devoted a larger portion of space than did any other daily to correspondence on the question. John Farrell was invited to write a series of explanatory articles for it, the first of which appeared on 24th October, 1889, under the title of "The Philosophy of the Single Tax," the remainder appearing irregularly up to

8th February, 1890. Before the series closed, Farrell was offered a position on the staff of *The Daily Telegraph* as leader writer. He accepted, and commenced work in February, 1890, handing over the *Australian Standard* to Mr. Frank Cotton, an early and prominent Single Taxer.

Henry George arrived in Sydney from San Francisco by the *Mariposa* on the 6th March, 1890. It must have been an eventful moment for John Farrell, as no doubt for many another, when first he met face to face the man who had so profoundly affected his life. Farrell wrote a lengthy account of the landing and reception of Henry George for the *New York Standard*, filling eight columns of that paper, and told how, upon hearing that the *Mariposa* would arrive early in the morning—a day earlier than expected—he and other Single Taxers secured beds at hotels near the wharf and remained sleeping or on sentry all night. The steamer did not arrive next morning, and all through the day they were in a state of unrest and excitement. In the afternoon they went in a launch to the Heads and waited there till dark, but still without a sign of the *Mariposa* on the horizon. Another sleepless night was passed, but at length, early on the following morning, the vessel arrived, and they met and welcomed their leader. Farrell attended all the meetings held in Sydney, and accompanied George on his inland tour and, subsequently, to Adelaide. This personal association with the man whom he held in such high regard that he considered him not

least amongst the few great benefactors of the race was, of course, an immense pleasure to Farrell. That George had a very warm regard for and high opinion of his Sydney disciple is shown by the correspondence which he carried on with him up to the time of his own dramatic end in 1897.

On the resignation of Mr. Ward, in June, 1890, Farrell was appointed to the editorship of the *Daily Telegraph*. In a letter to *The Standard* of 30th July, 1890, George expressed his delight at hearing the news, spoke of Farrell's ability and his valuable services to the Single Tax cause, and said—"But, perhaps, the most striking characteristic of the man is the affectionate regard which he seems to inspire in all who know him." The responsibility of his position was rather too much for Farrell, and perhaps his uncompromising spirit was too much for the proprietary—at any rate he resigned the editorship in September, 1890, but continued as a member of the leader writing staff until June, 1903. He was one of those who contributed to the "Notes of the Day" column in the *Daily Telegraph* over the signature of "Outis"—a striking journalistic success. Later on the various contributors adopted separate pen-names, that of Farrell being "Neimand." In 1903, Mr. Ward came back to the editorial control of the *Telegraph* after a long absence, when Farrell resigned his position on the editorial staff of the paper and became a contributor of promiscuous articles.

It should be mentioned that in February, 1901, Farrell

received from the directors an increase of salary and leave of absence for a month, and upon his final retirement last year was presented with a handsome cheque, accompanied by a letter which set forth "their high appreciation of his loyal and efficient services during the 15 years he had been associated with them," and their best wishes for his future happiness and well being. His colleagues presented him with an address and accorded him as hearty a demonstration of friendship at a farewell banquet as any Sydney pressman has ever received.

During the time he was on the *Daily Telegraph* staff he made a trip to New Zealand for the sake of his health, and about January, 1899, he journeyed to Tasmania—principally for the purpose of visiting the home of John Mitchel, author of "The Jail Journal," the result of which was a series of fine articles about John Mitchel, which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* during February and March, 1899. In 1902 he made another trip to Tasmania with Mrs. Farrell. These were the only breaks in the regular round of his journalistic life, his home all this time being a comfortable cottage called "Wollondale" in the suburb of Lewisham.

After his retirement from the staff, Farrell contributed special articles to *The Daily Telegraph* and other newspapers. He was offered Editorial positions in other colonies which he did not care to accept, as he felt it would be too hard to sever all his ties with Sydney. He was practically offered

the Editorship of the *Australian Review of Reviews*, and had the matter under his consideration just prior to his death. His health was, apparently, not any worse than usual until about Christmas, 1903. He kept up bravely till the end, only his family knowing how ill and utterly weary he was when he went to the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital at the beginning of this year. Even then the doctors thought he would recover and be able to go about again for some time, though they knew he could not last long. Very few of his friends knew of his illness, and when it was announced in the evening papers of 8th January that John Farrell had died that morning of heart failure, resulting from Bright's disease after a few days' illness, the shock was painfully severe to a large number of people who knew him, as well as to the widow and seven children whom he left behind. He died quietly as he wished to die. He was buried at Rookwood on 9th January, in the Roman Catholic portion of the cemetery, in the simplest way possible. Mr. Frank Cotton, his oldest friend present, made a brief, affecting address, and the Rev. W. H. Beale said a prayer, and all that was earthly of John Farrell returned to the earth.

If "to live in hearts we leave behind is not to die," Farrell will not die to the world that knew him in the flesh for a great many years to come. Few men, it may be safely said, have inspired such genuine affection in those who were associated with them as did John Farrell. He was so considerate and courteous, his manner so easy

and good humoured, that one felt on good terms with him on first acquaintance, and as the acquaintance grew, and one discovered the rich qualities of his nature, his generosity, his capacity of appreciation, his intense sympathy with the poor and the oppressed, combined with fine mental powers and a humorous, sanely optimistic outlook on life, one felt that here, indeed, was a man of rare qualities, whose modesty could not conceal his really great worth. There is unanimous testimony to his goodness in the numerous obituary notices which have appeared in Australian newspapers, two or three of which are reprinted in the appendix to this volume. There was no need to take refuge in the charitable maxim *De Mortuis*, for of this man there is nothing but good to be said. His life was full of

“ Little, nameless, unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love.”

He had a high idea of duty, and, as a citizen and as a friend, he always lived up to it. A thorough Bohemian in spirit, he cared nothing for conventions. What faults he had no one seems to know anything about; what mistakes he made seem to have been forgotten; detractors of his literary merits may arise, but never any enemies of the man. No one can point to a mean or dishonourable action on the part of John Farrell.

His early life as a brewer, and the strain of his later journalistic career, added to almost continuous suffering,

might easily have made him a hard drinker, but he seldom drank alcoholic liquors at all. He, however, derived a good deal of consolation from his pipe. One of his weaknesses in the latter part of his life was an over-indulgence in mining speculation. He dreaded the possibility of bad health affecting his capacity to earn money for his family, and always had the hope that he might be fortunate some day and make sufficient to put them beyond the fear of want. Alas! all his ventures were

“ . . . . but a fleet of glass  
Wrecked on a reef of visionary gold.”

Nothing seemed to disturb his equanimity. Whatever disappointment he felt at the failure of his speculations—and they were all failures—he kept to himself, making jests out of them for his friends.

Few people ever applied to him for help without success. He must have given away a good deal of his income to needy acquaintances, and he always contributed generously to the funds of the Single Tax organisation. He gave, also, what was more valuable—his time and services—to the cause he loved, spending hours almost every evening in replying to letters received from various parts of the world, and every Single Taxer who visited Sydney made a point of calling on John Farrell and taking up some of his time. When the *Single Tax*—a monthly journal of the league—was established in 1893, Farrell gratuitously edited it and wrote most of the contents for

the first year or two. For a number of years he acted as New South Wales correspondent for American Single Tax papers. Everything he could do for the advancement of the Single Tax cause he did cheerfully and well.

Farrell was a very well-read man, but by no means bookish. His preferences in literature were not guided by the principle of "art for art's sake"; the subject matter was his first consideration. "Style is not everything," he said; "kind hearts are more than style." On this account he regarded Dickens as one of the noblest of literary geniuses, and amongst living novelists he held Mrs. Sarah McLean Greene in highest esteem. Olive Schreiner's "Story of an African Farm," Reade's "The Cloister and the Hearth," and Besant's "Children of Gibeon" were great favourites of his. He was far from being impervious to the charm of style; Tennyson and Swinburne amongst recent poets, and Stevenson as novelist and essayist, were read with constant pleasure. Stevenson he considered to be "the head master of style; a fine, all-round literary artist, who can beautify, without in the slightest degree disguising, everything he touches." Kipling's early work appealed to him strongly on account of its force and frankness, but with the later Kipling of blatant jingoism he had no sympathy. Browning and Meredith he had grappled with, but failed to appreciate; and he had no interest in the modern symbolistic and mystical movement in literature. He had a high opinion of the works of many Australian writers, and



during the period in which he wrote the book reviews for *The Daily Telegraph* any new novel or book of poems by an Australian author was sure to receive the fullest appreciation possible from Farrell.

As a conversationalist Farrell was finely humorous and interesting. He was fond of talking, and, withal, an excellent listener. He would argue at length, logically and clearly, and with a wealth of illustration on most questions—particularly political economy, which he considered as first amongst the things that matter. When William Lane was in Sydney engaged in organising the expedition to New Australia, he saw a good deal of Farrell, and, I believe, they engaged in an argument on the scheme—an argument which lasted for many hours at a time all through one week. Farrell, an individualist, was opposed to this communistic settlement, and set forth his reasons against it in a series of articles—"For those who remain"—in the *Brisbane Worker* (February-July, 1893).

His prose was always lucid and persuasive, and he showed considerable ability in handling dry subjects in an interesting way. Without any special training, he developed rapidly into a very capable journalist, and for ephemeral newspaper publication he wrote many finely-phrased and eloquent articles. It should be worth while rescuing some of these, and I am sure that a selection of his contributions on literary and economic subjects would rank amongst the best prose produced in Australia. It is a pity that such a

fine writer should have been practically wasted on journalism—a regret expressed in many of the obituary notices, and Mr. J. Longmuir, in an article on Farrell which appeared in *The Newsletter* of the 16th January, aptly quoted J. G. Whittier's lines:—

“ And one there was, a dreamer born,  
     Who, with a mission to fulfil,  
 Had left the Muse's haunts to turn  
     The crank of an opinion mill,  
 Making his rustic reed of song  
     A weapon in the war with Wrong.

. . . . .

Yet, while he wrought with strenuous will  
     The work his hands had found to do,  
 He heard the fitful music still  
     Of winds that out of dreamland blew.”

Still, Farrell himself would not have considered his journalistic work a misuse of his talents, so long as he felt that his leaders were “ weapons in the war with Wrong.”

He had a very moderate view of the value of his own writings, and avoided any discussion of them. He knew in later years that the bulk of his early work was crude and diffuse, but he knew, without mock modesty, that he had written a few really good things—such as “ Australia,” which appeared as an introduction to the *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia* in 1888, and “ Ave Imperatrix,” which was first printed in the *Daily Telegraph* in 1897, and he felt himself capable of producing good verse if he had leisure

and freedom from the pain which often made the mere act of writing very troublesome. I well remember meeting him early in the morning before Jubilee Day, 1897, when he told me that he had a poem in his pocket which he would read to me. We went into a room near by, and he rolled out the poem in that rich brogue of his which was the delight of all his friends. I expressed my appreciation, and he said, "Yes, I think it is good myself," in an honest, dispassionate way. He had been asked by the editor of the *Daily Telegraph* on the previous day if he could write something appropriate for the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. He sat down that evening and, writing at a white heat all through the night, had finished "Ave Imperatrix" by the morning. It occupied about a column of the *Daily Telegraph* on the 22nd June, 1897, and elicited warm congratulations from all parts of Australia. The late J. Brunton Stephens wrote a characteristically generous letter of praise:—

"Brisbane, 8th July, 1897.

"My dear Farrell,

"I must congratulate you or bust. That is really a grand piece of work, your 'Ave Imperatrix.' I am showing it all round, and everybody to whom I have shown it has thanked me for doing so. To my mind, the poem was the event of the Jubilee Day in Australia. I have read it over and over

again, and each time with increased enjoyment.  
 Go on and prosper. . . . “Yours faithfully  
 and (I must now say) respectfully,

“J. Brunton Stephens.”

The poem, with slight alterations and a new title—“Australia to England”—was reprinted as a booklet by Angus and Robertson. Copies of this were sent to England and America for review, and the general verdict was highly laudatory. Professor Dowden wrote of it as “a memorable poem, fine and vigorous in spirit, in utterance and in the movement of its verse.” Rudyard Kipling, Cardinal Vaughan, Conan Doyle, Morley Roberts, Miss Jane Barlow, and many others wrote to the author in terms of appreciation.

The selection of poems printed in this volume is practically that made by John Farrell himself when he arranged with Messrs. Angus and Robertson to publish a volume which would comprise the best of the 1887 edition of “How he Died and other Poems,” and some new verses. He was dissatisfied with much of his old work, a great deal of it being occasional verse containing topical allusions, which soon become unintelligible. He hoped to write a good deal of new verse to include in the book, which was announced in 1896; but the opportunity did not come to him, and nothing of any value in verse was written after “Ave Imperatrix.” He had carefully

revised a good deal of his earlier work, and re-written most of the poems here printed. During the last few months of his life he had intended to complete the work of revision, but he became so engrossed in the Federal elections held in December last that he put everything else aside—and he died on the 8th January. He was aware of many blemishes, faulty rhymes, and technical errors in his poems, most of which were written rapidly for newspaper publication. A comparison of the present form of "How He Died" with that in which it first appeared will show that Farrell had recognised and removed the principal defects in this case; doubtless the same process would have been applied to the rest. I have thought it best to print them all as he left them. I have included "In Ballarat" in deference to his apparent intention, and omitted those poems which I believe he wished omitted. The selection as it stands may be considered to comprise John Farrell's best work in verse.

June, 1904.

BERTRAM STEVENS.

IN MEMORIAM.

JOHN FARRELL.

OLD mate, the night o'ertook you early ;  
    Death's sudden moon arose ;  
Beside the fire you lit I linger,  
    And watch your still repose.

The firelight lengthens thro' the forest,  
    The moonlit columns vast  
That lift that dread dispeopled city,  
    The all-abandoned Past.

Ah ! piteous light ! all Life's endeavour  
    A little space we see,  
Immersed in Death's pervading Spirit,  
    This moonlight Memory.

The firelight mingles with the moonlight ;  
    Life makes with death one dream ;  
The songs you sang, the days I met you—  
    And that still shape—they seem

Parts of the Pageant unrecorded,  
The Vision Infinite ;  
The which a great God dreams out, drowsing—  
Our God of Black and White—  
  
Our Mighty one of Pain and Pleasure ;  
Of Evil as of Good ;  
Who bears us in His boundless Being—  
Red atoms of His blood.

SYDNEY JEPHCOTT.

## JOHN FARRELL.

(FROM *The Bulletin*, 14TH JANUARY, 1904.)

THEY told me suddenly that John Farrell was dead. The first defensive impulse is not to believe anything that hurts you. Then comes inexorable Truth, that cares for no man and is always anxious to corroborate bad news. I would as soon have believed that I, myself, was dead. I remember how Farrell laughed, not so very long ago, when a person who seemed to have been wiping his pen upon his coat, and his eyes and mouth upon his sleeve, met us in King-street and told us that he was collecting subscriptions towards the cost of making a coffin for to-morrow. "Wisest lunatic I ever met," said Farrell. And then, with the large utterance of the early gods, he said, "Oysters." "When in doubt—eat," was one of his axioms.

Sometimes, very seldom, when I thought that the world was not treating me well enough, I used to walk up the stairs of the *Daily Telegraph* office and confide my worst suspicions about Fate to Farrell. He might be writing a



leading article that would change the destiny of Five Dock, but he would lay his pen aside and light his pipe, and open his large blue-grey eyes, and say in a rolling, comforting, charming brogue—I always think now that Charity speak with a brogue—“Is there ahnny-thing I can do to alter the petty designs of Providence, or (recollecting his poetic reputation) change the way of the stars in their courses?” And all this time he was in pain, and I and others, with paltry little worries, knew nothing about it. On one of those occasions we happened to speak of another man who had gone the long journey. I was annoyed about it, and told Farrell that I regarded it as little less than a personal outrage that a friend of mine should be so taken, without sufficient warning, out of my life. He laughed and said—“Which of us is going to write an obituary notice of the other?” We spun a coin. Heads I wrote, tails he wrote. The coin ran under the table and I think Courtney found it afterwards, but it must have been heads.

The mere fact of dying is nothing to the man who dies. It is a bagatelle. The hard part of it is for those who survive and, as friend after friend passes over the border, realise that all their interests are in another country. That means dying by pieces. The world is still as good as it ever was. The sun shines and the birds sing, but it is not the same sun and they are not the same birds. You meet new friends with bright, sympathetic eyes and the kindest

thoughts about you—but they did not know you when you were young. All your rosy dreams and winged hopes and soaring ambitions—they know nothing about them. What can you say? Nothing. It is a closed book. I have buried some fine years in the grave of John Farrell.

He was a lover of the sun and the sea, and had the heart of a lion and the voice of a Lablache in conversation. A big, deep chest and clear eyes, and a fine, theoretic gusto for the joy of living. A brewer in Albury was Farrell when I first heard of him. He sent me a little book of poems, which he was rather proud of at the time, but would never mention in later years. Subsequently he brewed in Goulburn, and informed me that—literally and because it was an accident of environment—he used the head of a cask as a desk. Wrote “Jenny” for *The Bulletin* in this fashion. Wrote “How He Died” in the same way. Somebody else will probably say something of him as a writer. It is somebody else’s business. I myself am too partial. But I will quote four lines from a ballad entitled “Australia to England” :—

Make England stand supreme for aye,  
Because supreme for peace and good,  
Warned well by wrecks of yesterday  
*That strongest feet may slip in blood.*

I have italicised a line that the author did not italicise. It expresses Farrell in seven words. He was virile or nothing. That is, when he himself was writing. Otherwise he liked to hear Roderic Quinn and others sing very sorrowfully about nightingales in Greece.

One evening I went to Goulburn at the invitation of Hugh Mahon, Senator. Mr. Mahon was then merely an editor. I arrived late at night and met Farrell, who was going to Queanbeyan. "Come with me," he said. It was a cold, blue, early morning with point-lace clouds on the horizon and an intoxicated driver whooping at the horses and jig-jagging the coach over the sides of the precipices—and the hotel ten miles away. Farrell and I were sitting on the box seat. The off wheel hung over an abyss for a moment. I was horribly afraid and looked at Farrell. He said nothing, but smiled grimly. When we came to a better road he laughed. "Death is not what it is cracked up to be," he said.

Farrell had a fine, strong grip of the hand and a hearty way of saying "God is great" that made you, in spite of your better knowledge, believe that life was worth living. But responsibility ruined him, as it ruins every man who is at heart a dweller in the Tents of Shem. Farrell put his brain, and the fire at which many hands might have been warmed, into perishable and perished articles about paltry questions concerning which no man knows or cares. Pegasus should never have been in that pound. He was the friend of every man worth knowing. I remember quoting to him on an evening the saying of Abou ben Zeyd—"I am a singing man of the singers—the world's guest and a stranger." He said he would say it about me. And I have to say it about him.

VICTOR J. DALEY.

JOHN FARRELL.

(FROM *The World's News*, 30TH JANUARY, 1904.)

THE pen falls from his nerveless hand,  
The light is fading from his eyes,  
The brain that nobly served his land  
Darkens and dies.

No, never dies ! From hour to hour  
The burning thought is living still,  
Onward it speeds with gath'ring power,  
To strengthen and fulfil.

Build him no mockery of stone,  
Nor shame him with your idle praise ;  
He liveth in his work alone  
Through all our days.  
Sleep, heart of gold, 'twas not in vain  
You loved the struggling and the poor  
And taught in sweet yet strenuous strain  
To battle and endure.

The lust of wealth, the pride of place,  
Were not a light to guide thy feet,  
But larger hopes and wider space  
For hearts to beat.

O, brother, dead ! Thus, one by one,  
Our broken swords remain to tell  
The fight is o'er, the work is done.  
Sleep ! " It is well."

GEORGE ESSEX EVANS.

Toowoomba, Queensland.

## AN APPRECIATION.

(FROM *The Daily Telegraph*, 9TH JANUARY, 1904.)

IT is about 15 years since I first met John Farrell, and was struck by his quaintly shrewd estimate of all mundane things. From then till the day of his death, without the break of a single moment, it was my privilege to be one of the many hundreds of intimate personal friends who loved him for his simple, manly good-nature, as much as they admired him for his robust intellectuality, softly tinged as it was with the fancifulness of the poet. The curious thing was that on the day I met Farrell it seemed as if I had known him all my life. "Hello; how goes it?" was his method of first introduction, as his big, hard, earnest hand reached out to grasp yours. Whoever you were, from that minute all the boundless good-nature of John Farrell was at your disposal to draw upon for any service that it was in his power to render. During many years of close daily companionship in journalistic work, I made use of this privilege more, perhaps, than most men.

Farrell had little or no scholastic training, but in the severe academy of human experience he had learned much. And a lifetime of omnivorous reading had given him a knowledge of the *belles lettres* such as no college could impart. He had a poet's mind, susceptible of the highest degree of literary polish, which, added to an exceptionally rapid and powerful reasoning faculty, gave him the first essentials of the ideal all-round journalist. Notwithstanding the constant view of the seamy side of things which the more or less behind-the-scenes life of the pressman gives, he retained till his last day on earth a perennial spring of enthusiastic interest in all public affairs. He had a human sympathy that nothing could daunt. Yet from the bizarre glare of the public limelight, Farrell's sensitive poet's nature shrank with an utterly unconquerable aversion. When the land value taxation boom, which carried the Reid Government into power in the middle nineties, was at its height, John Farrell, who by his writings had done more perhaps than any other man to produce that effect, was frequently pressed to go for Parliament. Albury had a standing invitation to him, and whomever the land value tax party nominated there in the old pre-Federal days got the seat. It was amusing to note the peculiar terror with which he used to recoil from the political snare when it was thus set before him. Yet I have known Farrell, after a night of hard journalistic work, when I was leaving the office to go home, commencing to reply at length

to ten or a dozen correspondents in various parts of the State who had written to him for information on doctrinal points connected with the single tax. For years that was a regular thing. And having enlightened each one of them he would continue on during the small hours writing gratuitous contributions to the single tax paper, the publication of which without fee or reward he for years superintended.

He was able to earn a good income as incomes go, and no man down on his luck from whatever cause ever waylaid him on the office steps for "a loan" without getting it. Farrell had no appreciation of the value of money. A man of the most abstemious tastes, he wanted little for himself, and could not understand the passion for wealth-gathering. Although a born Bohemian, he was, however, an intensely domesticated man. His one idea of a day out was to take the children for a romp on the beach at Manly or Brighton-le-Sands. Farrell never seemed to get any older either in his appearance or in his views of life. He was not a healthy man, but in spite of that and fifty-three years' wear and tear in the mill of life, he had up till the day he died all the artless vivacity of an overgrown boy. His was the charity that thinketh no evil and even against the fate which often compelled him to do arduous mental work under severe bodily suffering he had not an unkind word to say or thought to think. His indomitable good humour could extract amusement even out of his own



troubles, and although full of sympathy for every fellow bearer of life's burden and keenly sensitive to suffering in other people, the distressing rheumatic malady that frequently tortured him afforded material for many a quaint and curious jest.

Farrell often used to speak of death, which he regarded in the light of an interesting curiosity. He died as he always wished to die, suddenly, and without fuss. And fate in the end proved kind in sparing him the pain not of passing out into the dark, which would never have troubled him, but of witnessing the grief of those whom he was leaving behind. With John Farrell goes out one of the most unique personalities in Australian literature, and one the memory of whose simple, earnest, unselfish life will amongst those who knew him take long to fade.

THOMAS COURTNEY.

JOHN FARRELL: DIED JANUARY 8, 1904.

A TRIBUTE TO HIS MEMORY.

(FROM *The Goulburn Penny Post*, 12TH JANUARY, 1904.)

SOME 17 or 18 years ago, when I was wont to regard the spilling of ink and the spoiling of paper as one of the finest entertainments available to humanity, I had contracted to read a paper on the subject of Land Nationalisation before a Goulburn debating society, the identity of which I have forgotten. By some means or other the syllabus of the society came under the notice of John Farrell, then in Lithgow, and feeling his way into journalism. He wrote to me, asking me to send him a report of the essay, and touched with cheery optimism and marvellous lucidity of thought on the economics of the Single Tax and the wonders that were in store for a humdrum, workaday world when the theories of Henry George should be put into practice. I myself had been carefully studying the economics of the "Prophet of San Francisco," and had become a convert, and the friendship thus inaugurated lasted without inter-

mission and without a shadow until Farrell quietly passed "to where beyond these voices there is peace." I duly supplied him with a copy of the paper, and he expressed a wish to know me personally. Not long after I spent some weeks with him in the grimy town of Lithgow, and the good impressions his letter had created were more than realised when I met him face to face. A sweeter and more lovable personality it was never my lot to foregather with. Nothing ever seemed to ruffle the ineffable serenity of his soul. He looked on life with the broad comprehensiveness and toleration of a born philosopher, and there was nothing narrow or mean in his composition. He made no pretensions to be a public speaker—in fact he shrank from publicity in any form; but as a conversationalist I never met his equal. Negligently seated by his office table or with his feet in the fender by his homely fireside, he poured uninterruptedly forth quaint aphorisms, subtle criticisms of life, literature and politics, views that glittered with originalities, dreams of poesy—the whole suffused with a quiet, kindly humour that lost nothing from the touches of Irish brogue that clung to him to the very last. To be in his company for an hour when he was in the humour was like breathing the mountain airs. It was a spiritual tonic. One left him with kindlier opinions and a brighter hope for the future. His irrepressible optimism was the best of all remedies for the megrims which assail the professional journalist grown sick of the

sordid intrigues of politicians and the monotonies of our every-day life. At uncertain intervals ever since my first acquaintance with him—for the strenuous press life is one that admits of but few holidays—I had the privilege of knowing Farrell with his coat off and his hair tousled in his own home. The same gentle equableness of temper that only saw the good side of things characterised him there as in his public life. Many a night I have travelled with him by the mid-night tram to Dulwich Hill after he had finished his work on the *Daily Telegraph*, and forgot the lapse of time as he lingered over his supper and held forth racily and characteristically on things in general. His shrewd, philosophical observations, his quaint turns of phraseology, his boundless charity towards all men worthy of it, his eminently sane criticisms—these made the hours glide by imperceptibly. The poet in him bubbled forth in all he did or said. It was an essential part of his being; but he never posed. He was as natural as a tree in the forest or a flower in the garden. The man was sincerity incarnate. He told me once that that only was poetry to him which sent a thrill along his spine; the rest left him unmoved. Then, even at one o'clock in the morning, and wearied with the day's heat and toil, he would take down a volume from his bookcase and read selections of the genuine article in a low, crooning, expressive voice, full of exquisite modulations, himself evidently forgetful of everything but the miraculous visions conjured up by the magic of the poet.

These quiet hours of communion, when the city was asleep are amongst the most cherished of my recollections. They have helped me not a little. They taught me to look upon John Farrell as one of the noblest spirits ever linked in association with me.

On those profoundest questions of life over which every man who has been touched by modern scientific thought must commune with his intimates, Farrell and I had more than once or twice a serious talk. The purpose of the universe, the destination of man, the riddle of being, personality and its relations to the hereafter, death as the end-all or the portal to a newer and broader existence—these we discussed ; or rather he did and I listened. These things are too personal and too sacred to be made the subject of a fleeting article in a newspaper, but they gave me another side of Farrell's personality, the memory of which will persist as long as life itself. I shall never forget the rapt, far-away reverent look in his eyes as he laid bare his inmost soul on these tremendous issues. While professing no specific creed so far as I know, he seemed always to have an absolute trust that the Maker and Keeper of the universe would do justly towards His creatures, remembering that we are but dust ; and I have no doubt he died in that faith.

One thing has always struck me as pitiful. Perhaps, as a journalist myself, I see it more clearly in all its bearings than an outsider. It is that so gifted a soul, capable of

leaving an indelible mark on our nascent Australian literature, should, for the last twenty years of his matured intellectual life, have buried himself in the anonymity of daily journalism, wasting his genius on evanescent criticisms of the sayings and doings of tenth-rate politicians. His rightful place was on the slopes of Parnassus, within cooe of the gods, and breathing the elysian airs of Paradise. The press is doubtless a wonderful institution, but it eats up the best of our kind like an insatiable ogre; and Farrell was a victim to its devouring appetite. Under happier auspices he would probably have touched high-water mark in Australian literature. As it is, the better part of his work has floated namelessly down the tide of time, the most of it already forgotten—for what can be staler than yesterday's leading article!

I have already spun this sincere tribute to the memory of a dead friend to a greater extent than I proposed; but when I put pen to paper one thought led to another, and I found it difficult to stop. Looking back over the years I recognise the profound wisdom and truth of those verses of Young—

The friendless master of a world is poor,  
The world in purchase for a friend is gain.

We can do without riches, but the world would be indeed a gloomy prison were it not for friendship. Wherever in the illimitable universe to-day the soul of John Farrell may be I have little doubt it is well with it; and so, VALE.

T. J. HEBBLEWHITE.

## SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHN FARRELL.

"COME in," a mellow voice would shout as I tapped at the door of the den in the *D.T.* office overlooking King-street. "Sit down, and don't fall through that rickety chair . . . and have you been writing *anything*? Nothing? Then there's *nothing* to be explained or forgiven." And then we would drift into a gossip on recent books of which, strangely, none were ever seen in the den. John must have devoured them, as Charles Lamb used to, at the book-shops in the dinner hour. What a memory the man had for ephemeral works, too ; nothing new escaped his notice.

None who knew Farrell can forget the charm in the rise and fall of the rich Celtic voice, the brogue not crude and aggressive as was his friend Dalley's, but dissolved in a cheery sort of intonation that won a stranger's heart to John right away. Nothing remarkable at first sight in Farrell. A broad-shouldered, sturdy man of medium height and business-like manner, with refined, small, and pleasant features, clean-shaven chin, drooping moustaches,

broad forehead, and thick brown clustering hair ; he might have been merely an editor, but when the right key was touched John was a higher being.

Business-like and benign, sharp and sentimental, practical and visionary, brewer and bard, the coiner of cold economic exactitudes and the dreamer who penned "How He Died" — Farrell's life was a type of kaleidoscopic Australia. He was wonderfully good company, and could make himself the centre of any group of worldly men. In the street he saw things quizzically. I remember remarking the throngs in King-street. "Yes," he murmured, "they are simply redundant." There was something Whitmanesque in his love of the crowd, and his hearty pagan appreciation of all sights and sounds. "Let us wallow" was his invitation one day to a lunch at the A.B.C., and there we talked poetry and single tax alternately for an hour, leading to the final conclusion by my dear friend that "Nothing mattered, annyhow!" — a frequent observation of his that I never quite fathomed the meaning of.

It gave him joy to discover anything, however fugitive, that was good. I have forgotten a hundred fragments which lived for me only while Farrell read them out above the clang of the cable tram and the cricket-board crowd in King-street below. Australian verse he took as "read," although certain names were often on his lips. How



much there was I might have asked him—and now—and now—*Eheu! fugaces . . . labuntur anni.*

His devotion to ideals, not less exalted than, but utterly dissonant with literary pursuits, has left us with but a slender tablet to place to his memory on the walls of our Temple Beautiful. Yet there is some fine work carven there, and we who knew him will cherish it all the more. Remembering how much he worked and sacrificed for freedom and human enlightenment, how unselfish and genial was his friendship, we can scarcely realise yet that we may not meet him and clasp his dear hand again in the familiar sunny street, or hear again the cheery voice drawl as we turn to part—“Nothing -really—matters—anyhow!”

F. C. KENDALL.

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(FROM *The Newsletter*, 5TH MARCH, 1904.)

BRAVE brow of honour and frank eyes *sans* fear :  
Farrell, we knew thee for the Man thou wert,  
With kindest speech, e'en to the dull and pert—  
To flippant cynic and to quidnunc drear—  
Oh, that large utt'rance, with its notes, strong, clear,  
As ocean currents, freighted with rich craft  
And gallant galleons, yet the meanest raft  
Was to thy hailing not a whit less dear.

Broad, hearty, honest-hearted son of toil,  
With ready hands to help his fellows' need ;  
Full of large love and splendid kinmanship,  
We hail thee from our narrow marge of soil  
Across the Gulf, to where hearts no more bleed,  
In port, if port there be, where souls do re-equip.

FRED. J. BROOMFIELD.

27th February, 1904.





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