REMINISCENCES OF QUEENSLAND

1862-1899.

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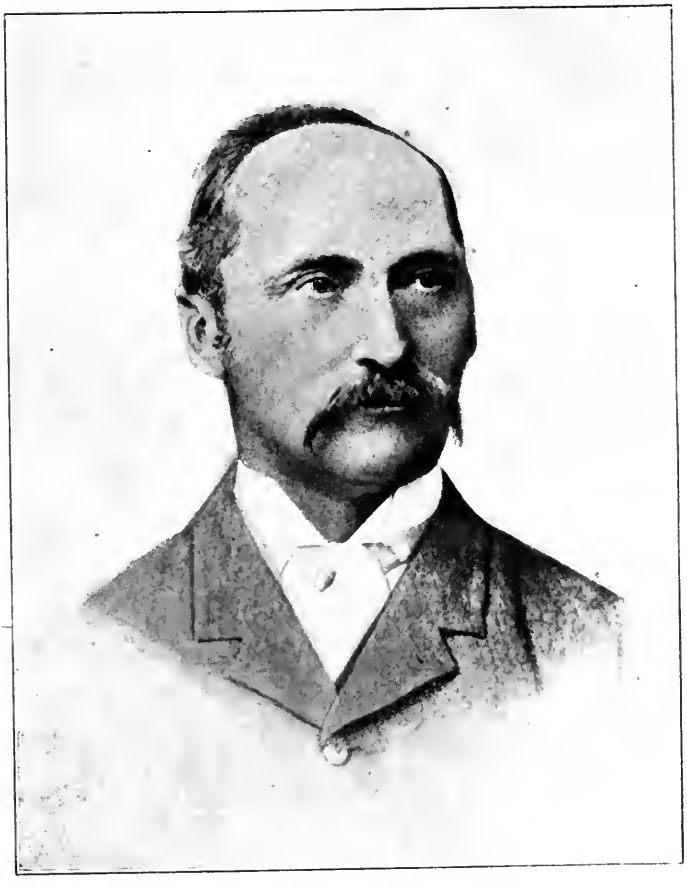

THE AUTHOR. 1890.

Reminiscences of Queensland

1862-1899.

BY

W. H. CORFIELD.

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To the Men and Women of the North and West.

To those who Blazed the Trail, and to those who Followed.

FOREWORD

THE reasons for this book are as follow :—Whilst talking over early days with Mr.Courtenay-Luck, the popular Secretary of the Commercial Travellers' Club, that gentleman suggested that I should write a paper, to be read at a meeting of the Historical Society of Queensland.

In writing that paper, so many long-forgotten men, places and incidents came back to memory that I thought my reminiscences might prove interesting to others. I may be occasionally incorrect in dates, or in the sequence of events, but I relate facts and personal experiences. As they are, I leave them to the kind consideration of readers.

W. H. CORFIELD.

Sandgate,
October, 1920.

Reminiscences of Queensland
1862-1899.

CHAPTER I.

AS it is in the blood of most Englishmen from the "West Country" to seek adventure abroad, it is little wonder that the visit of an uncle from Australia strengthened a desire I felt to seek my fortune in that country. This uncle —H. C. Corfield—was the owner of some pastoral country in the Burnett district, and described in glowing terms life in the Australian bush. I might say here this was not all it had been painted, but that by the way.

And so it happened that on a cold, foggy morning in February, 1862, I found myself with an old schoolmate—George Custard—on board of, as it was then customary to advertise, "the good ship, 'City of Brisbane,' 1,100 tons burthen, 'Neville,' Master," which lay in Plymouth Sound, waiting her final complement of passengers for Queensland.

Mr. Henry Jordan, who was representing the Colony, came on board to address the passengers, who, he said, were going to a land of promise, where in the evening of his life, a man—as the reward of his labour—would sit in the shade of his own fig tree and enjoy the rest he had earned.

Soon the capstan was manned, and the anchor lifted to the old chantey:

For tinkers, and tailors, and lawyers, and all,
Way! Aye! Blow the men down!
They ship for real sailors, aboard the Black Ball,
Give me some time to blow the men down.
Blow, boys, blow, to Californeo-o-!
There's plenty of gold, so we've been told,
On the banks of Sacremento!

This we found was our good-bye to England, and, towed out by a tug, we commenced our long voyage to Australia. When well clear of the land, the tug dropped us, and with a favourable breeze, we made quick passage to the entrance of the channel.

By this time most of the passengers were suffering the usual disabilities felt by landsmen for the first few days at sea. I soon gained my sea legs, and was able to take a view of my surroundings.

Here we were—365 human beings, who would be cooped up for weeks in a sailing ship, and with as many different characters, sympathies and antipathies, one wondered if it could be possible to live long with harmony and unselfishness in such daily crowded contact. I suppose we were representative of the many, who, whether in the poop or steerage of similar ships, were looking hopefully towards the far off, not-long-named southern colony, which was becoming known to the people of Great Britain.

I was just nineteen, and all things looked bright and cheerful, but I was impatient for the time when, on a bounding steed, I would be scouring the plains, following the sheep and cattle on my uncle's property where, as an employee, I was to begin my adventures.

After a passage of 137 days, spent either in glorious runs before favouring winds, wearisome calms, or battling against heavy gales, we arrived in Moreton Bay, and in due course at Brisbane.

The city, as it was in 1862, has so often been described, that it is unnecessary for me to say anything as to its appearance. All I need say is that it did not enter my mind to anticipate its growth and importance.

Our ship's surgeon was Dr. Margetts, who, for many years afterwards, practised his profession at Warwick. It is to his credit that we had no deaths on the voyage, but immediately after landing, a little girl passenger died. I helped to dig her grave on the ridges somewhere out towards Fortitude Valley.

My destination was "Stanton Harcourt," 55 miles north-west from Maryborough, which my uncle held as a station. He was taking an active part in the great developments which, at this time, were being carried out by the squatters. I was directed by my uncle's agents, George Raff and Co., to engage five or six of the immigrants as shepherds. These accompanied me to Maryborough by the old steamer "Queensland." On arrival at Maryborough the shepherds were taken charge of by the local agents, and I was instructed to ride on to the station. I left Maryborough alone the same afternoon, but had not gone far when I found I was bushed. Riding back I struck the main road, and followed it to the public house at the Six-mile, which was a favourite camping place for carriers. My new-chum freshness immediately attracted the attention of the bullock-drivers camped there, who told me of the dangers I would meet from the blacks, unless I propitiated them by generous gifts of tobacco.

These stories so much impressed me that I bought a large quantity of tobacco from the publican. After that, when I saw any blacks, even if off the road, I would ride over and give some tobacco, which surprised and amused them considerably. I arrived at the public house, at a place known as "Musket Flat," in time for dinner. A gentleman who knew my uncle happened to be there, and whilst waiting for dinner, said, "Come out, and I will show you a good racehorse." Outside a horse was being groomed by a man, who took some pains to describe his good points. I appreciated the man's kindness, and on leaving handed him a shilling to buy a drink. This he took with a smile, and thanked me. I felt somewhat small when my friend told me that I had tipped the owner of the horse himself, and that he would tell the joke in such a way that it would be long before I forgot it, and this proved to be so.

Towards sundown, my friend left me at the turn off of the main road. My first ride through Australian bush was very lonely, and I was very timid. I heard what sounded like revolver

shots, loud shouting, and much swearing. This I learned later was the ordinary language used when driving bullocks, while what I took to be revolver shots, was the cracking of bullock-whips. At the time I imagined a battle was being fought with bushrangers, but it turned out that it was merely the station bullock teams going to Maryborough for stores, and to bring up the hands engaged by me, with their belongings.

I found the station in charge of a manager, and that my uncle had gone north in search of new country for the sheep. Grass seed and foot rot were playing havoc with the sheep on "Stanton Harcourt." Shortly after my arrival, 1,000 head of cattle purchased from White, of Beaudesert, reached the station. In those days pounds were unknown, and I now had my first experience in drafting cattle in an open yard An old cow, evidently knowing that I was raw, came at me, and would have caught me, but that my hat fell off and attracted her attention. She impaled the hat instead of me. My next lesson was in bullock driving. I was sent with two loads of wool to Maryborough, having a black boy to drive one team, and another boy to muster the bullocks. These would not allow the black boys to go near them to yoke up, so I had to do this for both teams. After capsizing my dray three times on the road, and pulling down a fence in the town, I delivered the wool. The blacks had a short time before stuck up several drays, and carried the loading in their canoes across the river.

On the far side there was a dense scrub through which it was difficult to track them. My boys said I would be stuck up when passing this spot, so I rode on the dray, carrying a loaded revolver. However, I was not molested, probably due to the fact that, unknown to me, Lieutenant Wheeler with his troopers were at the moment busy among the blacks.

My uncle had returned before me, but had not been successful in securing country. When lambing came on, Custard and I were sent out without any special instructions to lamb a flock of ewes. Following the strong mob back to the yards in the evening,

the lambs tried my temper. I provided myself with stones, and being a fairly good shot, I reduced the percentage of lambs to some extent.

One night there was a great stampede in the yard, and thinking it was a dingo among the sheep, I went out with a gun. Seeing an object moving in the dark, I fired both barrels, and the supposed dingo fell. I had shot one of the ration sheep which had been dropped during the day. Being without any control or instructions in regard to the sheep, we decided our working hours to be—rise at 7 a.m., breakfast at 7.30, start work at 8. The sheep remained in the yard until the last-mentioned hour. This did not improve their condition. One morning my uncle arrived before we had turned out, and expressed himself strongly upon the laziness of new chums in general. Excusing ourselves by the fact that it was not yet seven did not calm the atmosphere. My uncle was one who insisted upon plenty of time for a long day's work. I very quickly learned the value of early rising in the bush, and in the interest of the sheep, when necessary, to go without breakfast.

I remember my first night alone in the bush. I was sent to an out-station with 300 sheep, and a black boy to assist in driving them. At sundown I could see nothing of the hut. I had read that fires would keep off native dogs or dingoes. I tied my horse to a tree, and gathered wood, forming a ring of fires around the sheep. The black boy said something to me in his own language. Thinking he asked me if he should bring some more wood, I replied with the only word I knew, "Yewi." After a little time I missed the boy, and cooeed for him. He replied as from a distance. I wondered why he had gone so far when there was plenty of wood close by. He did not return, and it was not long before my horse broke away. All night was spent walking around the sheep. What weird sounds I heard, and what strange shapes I saw moving. When one is alone in the bush at night, even after years of experience, the imagination is apt to run riot. Especially is it so at midnight

and towards the small hours of the morning. At daylight the sheep commenced to move. I followed them, carrying my saddle and bridle. About mid-day one of the station boys found me, and inquired why I sent the black boy home. It then dawned on me why I had been left alone. The boy had asked to be allowed to go home, and I had said "Yewi"—yes. I suppose I was only undergoing the usual bush experience of the new chum, and had a good deal to learn, but I was undoubtedly learning.

CHAPTER II.

FOLLOWING the cotton strike in England during 1863, a large number of Lancashire operatives emigrated to Australia. As the station needed shepherds, the agents in Brisbane were instructed to engage two married couples and three single men. I was despatched with a black boy, three horses and a dray, to bring them from Maryborough. Their luggage filled the dray, but I managed to find room for the two women and the children. The others had to walk. The first day out we reached Mr. Helsham's station at South Doongal. He allotted me an empty hut for the party. At dinner that evening I told him and the overseer how very frightened the emigrants were of the blacks. "Is that so," he said. "Well, we will try them to-night after the boys have had their evening corroborree." A number of blacks were camped there at the time, so he sent word to his station boys to come up. When they did so, he told them to surround the hut, and yell out, "Kill 'em white fella, kill 'em white Mary." We went down to see what we thought was fun. I never had to run harder than I did to reach the station before the new chums, who streamed out of the hut in their night attire, and made for the house. I had the greatest difficulty in pacifying them. They refused to return to the hut, and camped on the verandah, the single men remaining on watch.

After their flight from the hut, the pigs appropriated their rations which confirmed their belief in a narrow escape from wholesale slaughter. I felt sorry for the joke, more particularly as for the remainder of the journey they would not leave the dray, or go for water, unless the black boy or I went with them. As shepherds these men were not a success. They were invariably losing sheep, adding to my responsibility as overseer.

In September of that year, I had my first experience of shearing—getting through 20 the first day. It was back-aching and wrist-breaking work, and I longed for the day when I went out with the ration pack-horse.

In those days the sheep were hand-washed in a water hole, in which we worked up to our middle all day. The blacks had to be watched very closely, as, if opportunity offered, they would catch a sheep's hind leg with their toes, and drown the animal, expecting they would get the meat. I detected them in the act, so I burnt the carcase. This put an end to the practice. Mustering and branding the cattle followed the shearing, and these were much livelier occupations. We had a heavy wet season in that year, and I had plenty of opportunities to gain experience in flooded creeks. About April, 1863, Edward Palmer (years afterwards M.L.A. for Carpentaria), who was in charge of his uncle's station "Eureka," four miles from "Stanton Harcourt," started with the sheep depasturing there for the Gulf country. He eventually settled at Canobie, on the Williams River, a tributary of the Cloncurry.

In September one of the new shepherds absconded, leaving his sheep in the yard at an out-station. I was instructed by my uncle to take out a summons, and applied to Mr. W. H. Gaden, a neighbouring squatter, for it. The summons was sent to Maryborough for service. In due time I had to appear as prosecutor. The man had engaged a solicitor, who, when the case was called on, applied for a discharge, as the summons did not state it was sworn to, but only signed W. H. Gaden, J.P. The man was discharged on these grounds. I was not sorry. He was useless as a shepherd, but through him I had obtained an enjoyable ride to Maryborough with all expenses paid.

My uncle in the meantime had again started out to seek new country for the sheep, and engaged Mr. Walter Carruthers, of Carruthers and Wood, Rocky Springs station, Auburn River, to take charge of the mob of 12,000, leaving instructions that they were to start before the end of 1864.

Great preparations were required to equip the party. We were taking 30 saddle horses, two bullock teams, and one horse team. In addition to the stores, we had to provide all sorts of tools, etc., to build and form a new station.

I preferred to drive one of the bullock teams. My duties on arrival at camp were to erect a tent and two iron stretchers for Carruthers and myself, take my watch every night from three to daylight, and then to muster the bullocks. In the case of dry stages I also had to take water to the men.

When passing through Gayndah I purchased tobacco from John Connolly (who died lately at the very great age of 102 years), and for which I had to pay £1 per pound.

When we came to the Dawson River, near Mrs. McNabb's station, it was in flood. We felled a big tree across the stream, and with boughs and other timber, improvised a bridge. For three days we were working in our shirts only, getting the sheep and—when the water fell—the teams across. Mosquitoes, sandflies, and a hot sun made us nearly raw. Along this road Carruthers had his favorite horse "Tenby" stolen. He had hung the animal up to the verandah post of a wayside public house, to see the sheep and teams pass. After they had gone by, and while Carruthers was having a drink, a man jumped on the horse and galloped away. Carruthers walked on to the sheep, got a fresh horse, and with our black boy followed the thief until they came to the spot where, in a piece of scrub, he had pulled the mane and tail of the horse to alter its appearance. Darkness coming on, they had to abandon further pursuit. The horse was a very fine chestnut. A new saddle and bridle, a pouch containing cheque book and revolver, were taken with him, so the robber had a good haul. There were no telegraph stations out back in those days.

When passing Apis Creek, near the Mackenzie River, I met a man named Christie, whom I afterwards learnt was Gardiner, the ex-bushranger. We passed through Taroom, Springsure,

on to Peak Downs station, where we essayed a short cut on to the Cotherstone road, but when we had got half-way, the owner made us turn back. I had a very rough time driving the leading dray through the loose, black soil, and was glad to get back on the road, which was well beaten by the teams carrying copper from Clermont to Broadsound.

We eventually reached Lord's Table Mountain, where we had permission to remain, whilst I took the drays into Clermont to be repaired, and to obtain an additional supply of rations. Whilst staying at Winter's Hotel, I met Griffin, the warden—afterwards hanged for shooting the troopers guarding the gold escort, of which he was in charge.

I also met Fitzmaurice, destined in after years to become my partner in the far west. He had brought in drays from Surbiton station to be repaired.

Carruthers then rented some country from Rolfe, on Mistake Creek, on which to shear the sheep. I shore 800. My salary was now £80 per year, for which I acted as overseer, book-keeper, and giving a hand as general utility at all kinds of work. After shearing, the sheep were taken down to Chambers' Camp, on the same creek, whilst I took the wool to Port Mackay. When crossing the Expedition Range, before reaching Clermont, on my way from Mistake Creek, I rode over to a small diggings to purchase meat. The only butcher was a man named Jackson, whose wife served me. She was a fine, comely woman, whom I afterwards met on the Lower Palmer, where her husband was keeping a store. He was burnt to death on Limestone Creek on that river. Eventually, she married Thos. Lynett, a packer from Cooktown to Edward's Town (as Maytown was popularly known), and who, with Fitzmaurice and myself, was, in later years, one of the founders of Winton, on the Western River. Mrs. Lynett lately died in Winton at the ripe age of 84, her husband, Tom Lynett, having pre-deceased her some years. Like most of the women who pioneered, she had a grand heart, and I learnt how the diggers appreciated her motherly kindness.

The early wet season caught me at Boundary Creek, ten miles beyond Nebo. I was stuck in a bog for five weeks, rain pouring the whole time. I eventually delivered the wool, loaded up rations from Brodziak Bros., and started on my return journey. In those days the range was in a primitive state, and coming down my mate capsized his dray. While I was assisting him, I had a Colt's revolver stolen off my dray, presumably by some of the road party who were cutting down the steep parts.

After crossing the range, the pleuro broke out amongst my bullocks, and I lost one whole team. I went into Retreat station and purchased several steers. The hot weather and heavy pulling soon killed these, leaving me stranded on the Isaacs River. One day a squatter from North Creek station rode up, and hearing my plight, said there was a team of bullocks running on his country for several months. Who the owner was, or where they came from, was unknown. Acting on his hint, I picked out what I considered the best, and continued my journey to the sheep. Having met my requirements, I turned the bullocks loose. In response to enquiries, I denied that I was the owner of them; they had served my purpose, and I was content to let well alone.

The blacks were very bad, and continually worrying the men we had shepherding. One of these was rather daft. One night the rams did not return. I got on their tracks the next day and brought them to camp, but there was no sign of the shepherd. Two evenings after we were surprised to see a couple of Myalls bringing in the lost man. We gave the blacks some tucker, and they left, but not before the shepherd, raising his hat, said to them, "I thank you, gentlemen, most sincerely." His eccentric manner had doubtless saved his life, as the coloured races generally appear to respect a demented person.

I had a very bad attack of fever and ague, and managed to ride into Clermont, where I was treated by a chemist named Mackintosh, who kindly allowed me to stay at his house. I

shall never forget the kindness of him and his wife in pulling me through. Carruthers in the meantime had taken the sheep back to a creek which is still known as " Corfield's Creek." There the lambing took place.

We next moved down to Balgourlie Station, still on Mistake Creek, where we had an early shearing, and left the wool to be taken by carriers to Bowen.

I now had my first experience of what was called in those days, " Belyando Spew." Everything one ate came back again and no one seemed to know of an antidote to what appeared to be a summer sickness. The gidya around seemed to accentuate the complaint, until I became a walking skeleton.

In the meantime we received word that my uncle had purchased Clifton Station from Marsh and Webster, of Mackay.

This country was situated on a billabong 12 miles from Canobie, where Edward Palmer, as I have previously mentioned, had settled down.

The travelling away from the gidya scrubs down the Belyando River soon dispelled all signs of the sickness.

Previous to leaving Balgourlie Station we had lost a mob of horses, and on our arrival at Mount McConnell Station, the two men who had been despatched to look for them, returned without success. Carruthers then sent me back with an Indian named " Balooche Knight " to make a search. We had a riding horse each, and a pack horse to carry our blankets, tucker, etc. After scouring all the scrubs on Mistake Creek, we arrived at Lanark Downs Station, where a traveller informed me he had seen a number of horses at Miclere Creek, 17 miles on the road to Copperfield. My optimism suggested I should ask the owner of Lanark Downs to lend me a fresh horse. He did so, and I rode away one morning, returning the same evening with the whole of the 17 horses we had lost. I had now to travel over one hundred miles to where I had left the sheep, which were still continuing their journey. It was a most enjoyable ride

with only one drawback. The Indian's blankets and mine being together, I had gathered a lively community in my head. Procuring a small tooth-comb at a way-side place, I commenced operations, with the result that soon I had quite a colony on a newspaper in front of me. With the aid of tobacco water, I finally succeeded in driving the pests away.

In following down the Belyando River, I proved my expertness as a tracker by recognising the track of a bullock crossing the road. I did not know the beast had been lost, but the peculiarity of the track, caused by the hind feet touching the ground ahead of the fore feet, led me to follow the tracks through a scrub, and there I found him camped. We had over 60 miles to overtake the sheep, and as he could not keep up with the horses, I had to leave him.

We had passed St. Ann's and Mt. McConnell's Stations where Lieutenant Fred Murray was stationed with his black trackers. Proceeding up the Cape River, we overtook the sheep at Natal Downs, then owned by Wm. Kellett. We left the Cape River here, and followed Amelia Creek through a lot of spinifex country.

On the third camp, in my early morning watch, I noticed several of the sheep jumping. At daylight we found about 60 lying dead on the ground. We learnt that they had been eating the poison bush which abounds throughout what is designated as the " Desert Country."

The leaf of this bush is shaped like an inverted heart, and in colour is a very bright green. The flower resembles a pea blossom, and when in bloom the bush is most deadly to all stock. This experience taught us to be more careful, and in one place we cut a track through five miles of it for the sheep to pass.

When we reached Torren's Creek, we saw a water-hole containing the bones of some 10,000 sheep which had perished from the same cause. They were a portion of 20,000, which,

we were informed, were in charge of a Mr. Halloran, who had preceded us for the Flinders, and owned by a Mr. Alexander.

We afterwards passed a green flat, quite dry, but in the wet season covered with water, called "Billy Webb's Lake."

I was suffering from a severe attack of sandy blight in both eyes, so had to ride a horse which was tied to the bullock dray. I was *hors-de-combat* for over a week. Not having any eye-water, the only relief I could get was cold tea leaves at night. Both eyes were so swollen that I was completely blind. Fortunately, we met the McKinlay expedition returning from an unsuccessful search after Leichhardt. The doctor gave me a bottle of his eye-water, which he informed me contained some nitrate of silver; this he instructed me how to use, and I soon regained my eye-sight, but the eyes continued very weak.

Shortly afterwards we met some travellers, and enquired how far it was to the jump-up—meaning the descent from the plateau to the level country at the head of the Flinders. They replied, "in two miles you will be amongst the roly-poly."

These we found were not stones, as we thought, but dry stumps of a weed which grows on the open downs in the shape of a ball. The strong trade-winds blow the plant away from its roots, and send it careering over the downs, jumping for yards, and high in the air, frightening one's horse when it gets between his hind legs, giving him the impression that he had slept, and dreamt he was young again.

We passed Hughenden Station, which had just been taken over by Mr. Robert Gray from Mr. Ernest Henry, and camped the sheep where the town of Hughenden now stands.

We then had a long stage of fifteen miles to the bend of the river without water. The remainder of our trip down the river was uneventful. We passed Telemon (Stewart's), Marathon (then owned by Carson), Richmond Downs (Bundock and Hayes), Lara (Donkin Brothers), and Canobie (Edward Palmer).

At Clifton, our destination, there was a fine water-hole two and a-half miles long, trees on the banks were crowded with cockatoos, corellas, with galahs in flocks on the plains.

Work soon commenced in earnest, and progress made, in building a small house, sheep yards, and the necessary improvements for a sheep station. The country consisted of plains, with patches of scrub between, in which there was abundance of salt-bush, all carrying good feed for the sheep.

CHAPTER III.

MR. Carruthers' agreement to take charge of the sheep until they arrived at their destination having expired, my uncle wrote me to take over the station, and advised that if I remained in charge, he would increase my salary to £200 per year. As Carruthers was anxious to return to his station, I accepted the former, but replied that unless the pay for managing was increased to £300 per year, to send someone at once to take my place.

In the meantime, the blacks had come into Canobie at night, and attacked three men who were camped on the river, within sight of the station. They killed two, and the third was left for dead. He was found to be alive, and afterwards recovered from the severe battering he received.

Palmer sent word asking me to send all the men I could spare to come over to assist in hunting the murderers. I did so, Carruthers taking charge of the armed party.

A few days previous to this occurrence I had visited an out-station to count the sheep, taking a man with me to help in repairing the yard.

On returning after dark we passed a billabong, from which a very strong stench, as if from decomposed vegetable matter, arose. The following morning we both felt unwell, and vomited a good deal. The man with me was much older than I, and succumbed to the sickness in nine days.

After the party had left for Canobie, I was completely prostrated, and had no medicine on hand except Epsom salts. During the night we (the cook, a new-chum Cockney, and myself) heard voices down at the water-hole, which we took as from a

party of travelling Chinamen. In the morning we found that some of the blacks who were implicated in the murder had doubled back, and had taken away every article of iron they could find, our camp oven included, and my clothes, which had just been washed. This so preyed on my mind that when the party returned, they found me delirious.

Mr. Carruthers, seeing the helpless state I was in, and the condition of affairs generally, engaged Mr. Reg. Uhr to take charge on my behalf, whilst he took me down to Burketown, distant 155 miles, in a cart, with two horses. The road was almost deserted, and the blacks were very bad. Carruthers would boil his billy at water-holes in the afternoon, and go out to the centre of the plains to camp, with no bells on the horses. As for myself, I was sick and weak. Not being able to eat damper or meat, I was almost starved, lost all vitality, and cared little whether I survived the trip or not. We had to cross the "Plains of Promise." These consisted of an uninterrupted run of about 30 miles of devil-devil country. It was a succession of small gutters and mounds, which, to a sick man in a cart without springs, was intolerable. We arrived at Burketown about November, 1866, and the public house was the only place in which I could get accommodation. There I suffered all the nightly noises incidental to a bush shanty.

Burketown at this time was an almost new settlement, with a population of about 50 whites, but the number of graves of those who died within its short life from fever was more than twice as many, and increasing daily.

The Burketown fever was more virulent than any other I had hitherto or since come in contact with, and was supposed to be a kind of yellow jack fever, introduced by some vessel from Eastern countries.

The danger of a second introduction of the same, or perhaps worse, epidemic does not appear in these days to be realised in Australia.

There was no doctor in the town, but a chemist named Peacock was practising as one. Just as I arrived, Captain Cadell, in the old "Eagle," arrived to send despatches of his explorations of the rivers on the west coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria, where the party had seen numerous herds of buffaloes.

Mr. Carruthers heard that there was a doctor with the expedition, and on his interviewing him, the latter said he would see me, provided I paid the fee to the resident doctor. This professional etiquette was agreed to. The doctor took great pains in diagnosing my case, which he called something between a gastric and jungle fever, and prescribed five grains of calomel every night. This I found later to have loosened my teeth, and 15 grains of quinine daily seriously affected my hearing. The local chemist was then sent for. He felt my pulse, looked at my tongue, and prescribed a box of Holloway's pills. I paid him his fee of one guinea, but almost needless to say which advice I followed.

I remained in Burketown about a fortnight, slowly recovering. Before leaving I purchased a microscope which was for sale, and presented it to the doctor of the expedition with sincere thanks for saving my life. During the time I was in Burketown, Mr. Sharkey, Lands Commissioner, came over from Sweers Island, and offered to submit my name for the Commission of Peace, and said Mr. Landsborough, the Police Magistrate, would swear me in. I declined the honour.

When returning to Clifton Station we spent a week at Floraville Station, on the Leichhardt River. Here I purchased stores for the station from Mr. Borthwick, who was managing for Mr. J. G. Macdonald. At this station there was a water-hole 25 miles long, and in bathing one would see crocodiles basking on the rocks and bank, but they appeared to be harmless. At the lower end of this hole there was a perpendicular drop of over 40 feet, with a very deep hole at the foot, infested by sharks and alligators. The tides came to this point.

We called at Donor's Hill Station, where I first made the acquaintance of the Brodie brothers, one of whom afterwards managed Nive Downs for a number of years. The other—his twin brother—died in New South Wales not long since, after a long and successful business career. At this place I visited a cave containing many skulls of blacks, who had been dispersed by the whites, after committing a series of depredations in the district. I was told the cave was so dark that matches were lighted to allow of aim being taken at the blacks during the dispersal.

In later years, I have often thought what fortunes might have been won, or lost, or the settlement of Western Queensland been advanced by years, had the early seekers for pastoral country but known what was west of the so-called desert country, and south of the Flinders. This could only be learnt by forcing a way through the desert to the west instead of skirting its edge and going north. As it was, we, in following the Flinders down, were traversing some of the finest sheep country in the world, and did not realise there were millions of acres lying to the south, unknown, unowned. Ultimately, settlement of the west was affected more from Rockhampton than from northern ports; extending as it did from Springsure towards Tambo, Blackall, and thence north and north-west.

It seems, however, the irony of fate that Townsville, which did little or nothing towards the exploration or development of the country south from the Flinders, has obtained the trade of that portion of Queensland. But this is anticipating.

Mr. J. F. Barry, who first took up the country on the head of the Western River, was laughed at by residents of Blackall, when he rode in to have his application registered, and described the country. So that it might be recorded that his statements as to its quality would prove correct, he called the country "Vindex," by which it is now known as one of the finest sheep properties in Queensland.

But let me quote from " *The Polar and Tropical Worlds,*" written by two scientists, one apparently a German, the other designated " Scientific Editor of the American Cyclopedia." The book was published in 1877, eleven years or more after the north-western country was becoming occupied.

In alluding to the great deserts of the world, these authorities say :—" Perhaps the most absolute desert tract on the face of the globe is that which occupies the interior of the great island, or as it may not improperly be styled, ' Continent of Australia.'

" The island has an area of something more than 3,000,000 of square miles, nearly equal in extent to Europe.

" For the greater part of its circumference, it is bounded by a continuous range of mountains or highlands, nowhere rising to a great height, and for long distances, consisting of plateaus or tablelands.

" There is, however, a continuous range of water-shed, which is never broken through, and which never recedes any great distance from the Coast.

" The habitable portions of Australia are limited to the slopes of the mountains, and the narrow space between them and the sea. The interior, as far as is known, or as can be inferred from physical geography, is an immense depressed plain more hopelessly barren and uninhabitable than the great desert of Sahara."

These authorities say more on this imaginary desert, but the quotation is sufficient to show that even scientists do not know everything, although one might believe that they did.

I have not learnt that either Messrs. Landsborough or Phillips, who were on the Diamantina in 1866, and crossed from that river over to the Flinders, commented on the quality of the country through which they travelled, and I can only explain that its naturally waterless state up to early in the eighties prevented its value becoming known.

During these years immense sums of money were spent in water conservations by the Government of the day and Victorian investors, and in a large measure without meeting success.

When I went to Townsville in 1868, the principal, and also the first carrier there, was a man named Courtney, who owned eight bullock teams. He had been taking stores to the different stations on the Flinders as that country was opened up. In conversation one day, he informed me that some two or three years previously his bullocks had strayed many miles across the downs from Richmond Downs. Seeing the beautiful sheep country still extending to the south, he determined to explore it to learn if there were any good water courses. Taking a pack horse with rations, he started on a S.W. course until he found a large river running in a southerly direction. A few miles further north the river runs from west to east. He marked a tree with his initial C., and this was found long afterwards to be on a water-hole between Kynuna and Dagworth. He expected to realise money on his exploration, but the Diamantina country was, as I have previously remarked, occupied by people coming from the Central district. The route from Townsville through long stretches of dry country was out of the running.

In after years Courtney took to drink. Finally, after one of his bouts, on leaving Normanton in an intoxicated condition, he camped at a water-hole 10 miles out. His clothes were found, but not the body. It was supposed that he had gone in for a swim, and that alligators, which swarm in these holes, had taken him. I could not learn if he had given any information as to the country, but I have no reason to doubt his statements.

After my return to Clifton, I was kept busy preparing for lambing. This did not turn out very successful. The hot, scorching sun so scalded the backs of the lambs, that the growth of wool was greatly retarded.

After a month's hard work, I found myself so weak and depressed from the fever that I decided to return to England. In the meantime, Carruthers had left for his station on the Auburn River.

I was relieved in mind, by a letter from my uncle, who informed me that my request for a salary of £300 a year was exorbitant, and that he was sending a Mr. Hawkes to take the station over from me.

Soon after I was pleased to welcome this gentleman, and left for inside with a young fellow named Carolan, who had been working on Canobie. My uncle visited Clifton late in 1867, and decided to have the sheep boiled down at the works owned by Mr. Harry Edkins, on the Albert River.

During his stay at Burketown he became the guest of Mr. Surveyor Sharkey on Sweers Island, and met Miss Huey, sister of Mrs. Edkins, late of Mount Cornish Station, who became the second Mrs. Corfield. His first wife was a Miss Murray, sister of the highly-respected Police Magistrate, who died in Brisbane a few years ago, and also of the late Inspector Fred Murray, Her death on Teebar, in 1853, so affected my uncle that he sold the property for a nominal sum to his head stockman, John Eaton. He then took up and formed Gigoomgan, which he soon after sold to Anderson and Leslie. He afterwards bought Stanton Harcourt from W. H. Walsh, of Degilbo Station. There I joined him in 1862.

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER handing the station over to Mr. Hawkes, I went to Canobie to muster my horses, which were running on the Williams River, and thence travelled eastward in company with Carolan.

On arrival at the Punch Bowl, on the Flinders River, we heard that there was a hundred mile dry stage ahead, so decided to camp.

One afternoon, Mr. Roland Edkins, later so long manager of Mount Cornish, and his wife, travelling on their honeymoon, drove up and asked if we had any meat we could spare. I informed him we had none, but that if he had a gun, and lent it to me, I would get some. A mob of cattle had been to the water-hole earlier in the day. Armed with his gun I followed the cattle and shot a clean-skin, which we dressed, and jerked in the sun, not having salt. The supply of meat was sufficient for all our needs. Mr. Edkins informed us that thunderstorms had fallen up the river, so we made a start. While camping in the bed of the river one night the water came down on us rather suddenly. We managed to get our belongings up the bank before they became wet.

In those days thunderstorms seemed to be more prevalent during November than in later years. Before we reached Telemon, the river was a banker, flooding the plains, and compelling us one night to camp on an ant bed, which was the only dry spot we could find. Fortunately, the ants were not of the bulldog breed.

We arrived at Telemon about noon of a sweltering hot day, and found Mr. Stewart, the owner, lying on his bunk with a tallow cask in close proximity, the grease oozing out on to his

bed. He invited us to have some dinner, and we gladly availed ourselves of the invitation. Learning that we were bound for the coast, he advised us to take the short cut up Bett's Gorge. Mr. Stewart had been adjutant of the Cameron Highlanders during the Crimean War, and was then considered to be the smartest officer in the regiment. When he came to Australia, and took up the runs of Southwick and Telemon, he altered so much that he became known as " Greasy Stewart." When spoken to about it, he would say, " When you are amongst savages, do as savages do." Otherwise he was in manners and conduct a gentleman, and a delightful conversationalist. When visiting Sydney he was considered to be a remarkably well-dressed man. He afterwards became the possessor of a large estate in Scotland, where he died.

We found the creek running through Bett's Gorge a banker, and had to swim 23 crossings in one day. Being so often in the water, we did not trouble to dress, consequently the sun played havoc with our bodies.

All the country for miles around being of a basaltic nature, our horses became very footsore, and when we reached Lolworth Station we asked Mr. Frank Hann, the manager, if he would allow us to spell them. He consented, and invited us to the house. We stayed there about three weeks, assisting him at mustering, and branding the cattle.

The Cape River diggings had just broken out, and as I was now getting stronger—the fever was going off gradually—I decided to remain in Australia, and try my hand at gold digging.

Both Carolan and myself were novices at the game, especially in putting down a shaft. We decided to go up on a spinifex ridge, out of sight, to sink, what turned out to be a three-cornered shaft, and so gain experience. This we bottomed at 100 feet, obtaining good specimens of shotty gold. Mr. Robert Christison, owner of Lammermoor Station, and Mr. Richard

Anning, from either Cargoon or Reedy Springs Stations (I forget which), arrived with two horses and a dray. They camped close to us, and like ourselves, intended trying their luck at gold digging.

Whilst working at this, one Sunday evening, we overheard some Chinamen speaking of a flat they were going to in the morning. We decided to watch, and follow them. At daylight they made a rush to peg out claims; we did likewise, and obtained one well placed as to water. The difficulty then was how to work both claims, and it was decided Carolan should get a mate and go on with the deep sinking on which we were working. I was to work the shallow one myself. Our first claim turned out to be on the edge of rich gold-bearing country, which was good while it lasted, but soon petered out. The surrounding claims turned out very rich, and got the name of the "Deep Lead."

In the meantime I had bottomed my shaft at eleven feet. It turned out to be a very wet one, so I had to work without my shirt. When I took the first dish down to wash, I noticed a number of men taking great interest in it, especially when the panning-out showed two dwts. of shotty gold in the dish. The men engaged me in conversation. When I returned to my claim, I found my pegs thrown away and fresh ones surrounding the shaft in place of them. I strongly demurred to this, but without avail, until a party of men who were our camp neighbours came over and took my part. Through them I recovered my claim without more than wordy warfare. After doing well out of the claim I found I could not continue it without a mate. Having to throw the wash-dirt eleven feet, a lot of the pebbles in it would come back on and bruise my naked body.

Carolan and his mate determined to sink another shaft in the deep sinking to hit the lead again. We had a consultation, and decided I should take in as partner an old miner known as "Greasy Bill," who possessed a horse and cart, cradles, and all the plant required for shallow sinking.

For the first month we were getting as much as an ounce and a-half to the load of sixty buckets. As I puddled the wash-dirt he cradled it, and consequently was in possession of the gold bag which held the proceeds from the cradle. Although I could detect no difference in the wash-dirt, the cradling results dwindled down by degrees to a quarter ounce per load. As this did not pay our tucker bill, my mate suggested we should sink another shaft, which we bottomed, and it turned out with similar results. Carolan had now sunk his second shaft with no payable results, and as I was dissatisfied with the result of my new venture, we both decided to go prospecting. This we did, dry-blowing in the ranges with no payable results.

I afterwards met "Greasy Bill" at the Cape township, when he informed me that after I had left he had struck it rich in both claims. Others told me he had boasted he had got five hundred pounds out of the claim by abstracting the gold from the bag when I was not looking, and that the claim I pegged out was good throughout.

Our experiences as diggers had completely disgusted Carolan and me, so on hearing that carriage of loading to the gold field was very high, we determined to start as carriers.

I heard that a Mr. Mytton, of Oak Park Station, had a team of bullocks for sale, and having some money in the Savings Bank at ————, we decided to travel to Oak Park to investigate.

On reaching Craigie Station, on the Clarke River, to enquire the way, Mr. Saunders, the owner, informed us that he had seven bullocks and a dray for sale for £120, but I wished to purchase a full team of 12 or 16, such as Mr. Mytton had at Oak Park, and decided to go there. Mr. Saunders kindly lent us a Snider rifle for protection, as the blacks were bad through the ranges, between his station and Mytton's.

We camped the first night at the Broken River, a weird looking place. This was about May, 1868, and the nights

FITZMAURICE, CORFIELD, AND TOM FOX.
(Taken in 1880).

being very cold we would place one blanket under and have the other over us, with our heads on the saddle, and the rifle between us. During the night I was awakened by my saddle being pulled from my head. I immediately caught the rifle, and turning around saw a native dog dragging my saddle by one of the straps. Without waking my mate, who was a man six feet in height, I fired———. Carolan made one leap, taking the blanket with him, saying he was shot. This frightened me also. However, the howling of the dog who had apparently received the bullet through his body, and full explanations restored calm and a feeling of safety. In the morning we tracked the dog to the water-hole, where we found him dead.

On arrival at Oak Park, without further adventures, I found Mr. Mytton had leased his team of bullocks and waggon to a man named Jack Howell, who contemplated carrying. The latter was credited with being double-jointed, and I believe it. He was the strongest man I ever met. He afterwards married the widow of Jimmy Morrell, who had lived for seventeen years with the blacks in the Cleveland Bay district.

It is related that when he saw a white man after this length of time, Morrell jumped on a stock-yard fence, and called out, "Don't shoot, I'm a British object." The Government gave him a position in the Customs in Bowen, where he died a few years afterwards.

I later on attended Jack Howell's wedding. It was held in a house at the foot of Castle Hill, in Townsville. Some, uninvited, came up to tin-kettle the newly-married couple, but on Jack putting in an appearance they showed discretion and scampered away, leaving one of their mates hung up on a clothes line.

During our stay of three days at Oak Park, we received great kindness, which led to a life-long friendship with Edward Mytton. Carolan and I returned to Craigie Station to give back the borrowed rifle. I then decided to purchase

the seven bullocks and dray, giving Saunders a cheque for the price mentioned. I had to muster the bullocks myself, finding four of them the second day. Mr. Saunders said he would go out to find the remainder, as he knew where they were running. We both started, but in different directions. I found the tracks, and succeeded in bringing the bullocks to the yard, but Mr. Saunders did not turn up until the next evening, having been bushed on his own run. The bullocks were very fat, and had no leaders amongst them, so Mr. Saunders gave me a hand by leading my horse and driving the spare bullock. At every water-hole we came near these brutes would rush in, and I had to go, with my clothes on, after them. Carolan had left me at Craigie, and gone on to a public house at Nulla-Nulla, on the main Flinders road from Townsville. He bought in shares with a teamster, who had two teams, and as there was good grass and water, there he decided to camp. Here I met "Black Jack," who said he was the first white man to cross the Burdekin. Carolan having come out to give me a hand, Mr. Saunders returned to Craigie.

There were several carriers camped at Nulla, amongst them being a man named James Wilson, from whom I bought five bullocks. One of these was a good near-side leader, for which I was grateful. From that time Wilson and I became travelling mates. We loaded in Townsville for the Cape River diggings at twenty pounds per ton.

As my additional bullocks allowed me to put on three tons, the sixty pounds for carriage enabled me to pay for the bullocks and supplies for the trip. When I returned to Townsville I met Mr. Saunders, who had sold me the bullocks. He informed me that my cheque for payment had been dishonoured, marked "no account." This news was a staggerer. I explained that I had an account in the Government Savings Bank at ———, and that before I left the Cloncurry, I had sent my pass book and a receipted order to the Savings Bank officer, asking him to withdraw the money and place it to my credit in the local

branch of the A.J.S. Bank. Also that I had advised the bank of the prospective remittance, and following my request, had received a cheque book. Mr. Saunders was good enough to accept my explanation, and agreed to remain in Townsville while I proceeded to ————. I had very little money, so took a steerage passage in the old "Tinonee," which was conveying a large number of disappointed diggers returning to New eZaland. It was a rough and uncomfortable trip. One had to stand at the door and snap the food as it was carried to the table, not to do so meant going without. On arriving at ————, I put up at a boarding house, which was far from being first class. I called on the Postmaster, and told him my name. When he heard it he became very pale, and agitated, and showed great uneasiness. He invited me into his office, where I stated my business, and added that if my money was not forthcoming at once I would report him. He then told me that he was so long without hearing of me, that he was confirmed in believing the rumour of my death on the way in, and that he had invested the money in some land, which gave promise of soon rising in value. I gave him until the next boat was leaving for Townsville, which would be in four days, to repay the money. I also insisted upon being refunded my expenses, and a return saloon fare from Townsville to ———— and back. He gladly agreed to my terms, and I promised not to proceed further. I had a splendid trip back per saloon. I met Mr. Saunders, who was pleased that I had recovered the money, and remarked, "I thought you had an honest face," etc. He added that he would give me preference for loading to the station.

This affair was brought back forcibly to my memory owing to the matter having been mentioned not long since by a friend of later years, who, in his capacity as a Government officer, happened to be stationed in this town some 30 years ago. He told me of a property bought by the Postmaster of the place, upon which there was a fine orchard. This was looked after by a German of gigantic stature, who patrolled the orchard

with a loaded shot gun. He said that an old resident of the place had told him that the property had been bought with money drawn from the Government Savings Bank by a man out in the Gulf country, who was reported to have died on the road down, but who turned up some months afterwards, and claimed his money. I did not at any time speak of the matter, and can only conclude that the Postmaster raised the money in the town, and gave the information to the lender. It was peculiar that my friend, fifty years afterwards, should mention a matter in which I was so concerned and without having any previous knowledge that I was the reported dead man.

The late Hon. B. Fahey, M.L.C., was then second officer of Customs in Townsville. He allowed me to see the ship's manifests of cargo arriving. I was thus enabled to apply beforehand for loading to these merchants who would be receiving consignments. This was a great help to my mate—Wilson—and myself to obtain loading quickly.

When carrying became slack, Mr. Marsh, of Webster and Marsh, of Mackay, arrived in Townsville, and being an old school-fellow of mine, said he would send up two loads from Mackay to keep me going.

About this time (1869), I made the acquaintance of Messrs. Watson Bros., of Townsville, who were very kind to me, inviting me to their house to spend the evenings when in the Bay (as Townsville was then generally spoken of). They had two sisters, one of whom afterwards married my friend Edward Mytton, and the other, Mr. Page, in after years of Wandovale Station. They were a cultured family, and the time I spent with them reminded me of home life more than anything I had then experienced since I left England.

On my last trip to the Cape diggings, Wilson and I had returned as far as Homestead, when Bob Watson rode up, and enquired for what we would take loading to the Gilbert River. We knew this place to be somewhere beyond Oak Park, and

we asked for £30 per ton. This was agreed to, with the proviso that the teams were to be loaded at night on the Lower Cape. At the time the township was honeycombed with shafts, and we had many misadventures driving our teams in the dark. Watson explained the reason for our loading at night was that the Gilbert diggings had only just been reported, and his firm wished to get supplies on the ground early to obtain high prices. We were to travel *via* the Upper Cape, Lolworth, Craigie, Wandovale, Junction Creek. Lyndhurst, and Oak Park, etc.

Long before we reached the latter place droves of people of both sexes, in all sorts of vehicles, on horse back, and afoot, passed us. The news had quickly spread that good gold had been found on the Gilbert.

This move of the Watson's was rather smart. They had a quantity of damaged flour to get rid of. We had to purchase our rations from them. The only way in which we could use the flour was to make it into johnny cakes, and eat them hot. Flour was selling at 3/- for half-a-pint, and the damaged flour soon found ready customers at fancy prices.

The township consisted of tents, but as the storekeepers required something more substantial than calico, I sold my tarpaulin for a good price, and made contracts to supply bark at 5/- per sheet. We engaged men to strip the bark. This work kept us both busy hauling with our teams, and lasted until the wants of the township were fully supplied.

We then started on our 350-mile journey back to Townsville, and reached there about the end of September. Mr. Mytton arranged for me to load for him, and I obtained a load for my mate for Lyndhurst, the station adjoining.

This station was managed by a Mr. Smith from the Clarence River. For some reason, I could not learn how, he was known as "Gentle J———." He was a remarkably small man, but was noted as being a very plucky one. His store was stuck-up

by a man called "Waddy Mundoo-i," from his having a wooden leg. Smith fought and knocked him out, afterwards giving him help to get along the road. We spent about a fortnight in Townsville having repairs made to the drays, etc., and we started on our return journey to Oak Park on the 14th of November, 1869, making as much haste as possible before the wet season set in. This, however, caught us at the Broken River, where we had to camp for over nine weeks. We were joined here by many other teams loaded for the Gilbert.

With us we had an old ship's carpenter, who helped to make a canoe from a currajong tree. On the stern he attached a board, on which was painted "Cleopatra, Glasgow." This boat proved very useful in ferrying over the large number of footmen arriving daily, and saving our rations, as all travellers expected to be fed without payment. One day we ferried Inspector Clohesy and his troopers across the river, which at the time was running very high. After a great deal of difficulty and some danger, we landed them and 2,000 ounces of gold in safety. Before the river was crossable for teams, I cut my name on a tree, bearing date 1870, which I again saw many years later. On arrival, we were warmly welcomed at the station.

When in Townsville I had asked Fitzmaurice, who had reached there from Peak Downs and was going to Sydney for a spell, to get a waggon made for me below. I now decided to turn out my bullocks at Oak Park to spell, and take on stock riding and droving fat bullocks into the diggings, where Mr. Mytton, having taken a partner named John Childs to look after the station during his absence, had opened a shop, and was butchering himself. Mr. Childs was married and had one little girl, named Beatrice, now married to one of our greatest sheep-owners.

Amongst those who camped a night at the Broken River was a young new-chum Irishman, who asked if we knew a man in "Australia" called Tom Ripley. We replied "Yes, he is

now at the Gilbert with his teams." He said, "I am his brother; he has bullock cars, hasn't he?" This remark, simple as it was, was a long standing joke among the carriers.

In conversation we gleaned that he had left Ireland on the same day that we had left Townsville, had crossed the ocean, and was passing us bound for nearly the same destination as ourselves.

As two hundred and fifty miles is to thirteen thousand, so was the speed of bullock teams attempting travelling during the wet season to that of a sailing ship from the foggy seas.

CHAPTER V.

MY mate, Jim Wilson, returned to Townsville after delivering his load at Lyndhurst. Mr. Mytton had purchased Junction Creek Station (afterwards called Wandovale), from Mr. Cudmore, and had left the Gilbert to take delivery, intending afterwards to go on to Townsville to be married to Miss Watson. As the station was short-handed, and Mr. Mytton wished to make some alterations to prepare for his bride, he asked me if I would stay and use my team to bring in the timber, and also to assist Childs with the cattle. I consented to remain for a couple of months. During this time the black boys on the station bolted, taking with them Mrs Childs' gin, and my black boy. A carpenter named Jack Barker and myself started with three horses in pursuit, eventually finding the absconders where the Woolgar diggings now are. On our return we ran out of rations, and lived on iguanas, snakes, opossums, etc. Childs induced me to take charge of a mob of bullocks, and drove them to Wandovale, where Mr. and Mrs. Mytton were now living.

After delivering the bullocks at Wandovale, I returned to Oak Park to muster my bullocks and horses, and found a bay mare missing. Although assisted by the stockmen, we failed to find her. I then determined to start for Townsville, and again take up carrying. When I reached Wandovale on my way down, I camped at the station. Returning from putting my bullocks on grass, I saw a number of Chinamen with pack horses preparing to camp at the creek. One of their horses attracted my attention, so I rode over and recognised my mare. I rode on, and watched the direction in which the Chinamen hobbled their horses. Mr. Mytton and I then decided that

I should go out before daybreak to bring the mare in. He was to be at the slip rails to allow the animal to be driven into the paddock. In the dark of the early morning I had a difficulty in locating the animal amongst so many horses. Eventually, I found her, but I could not catch her. At daybreak I saw she was long hobbled, and getting near enough, struck her with the bridle, I turned her towards the station. The Chinamen were just starting out for their horses, and seeing me, tried to cut me off, and then ensued a race for the slip rails. I had half-a-mile to go to reach the paddock; however, putting on a spurt, I succeeded in reaching the slip rails first, hunting the mare through them, but I was completely winded. In response to the Chinamen's "Wha for," Mr. Mytton said he was a Justice of the Peace, and dared them to interfere with anything on his property. It ended by my giving my name and address, after stating that the mare was my property, and had been stolen from Oak Park Station.

Some time afterwards Inspector Clohesy, who was in charge of the police on the Gilbert, informed me that the Chinamen had come to him for redress, but he remembered how I had helped him and his escort across the Broken River, and assured them that he knew I would not have taken such action unless the mare was my property. The matter ended, and I found out afterwards the mare had been stolen and sold to the Chinamen.

Mention of Inspector Clohesy reminds me that he was a remarkable personality, now-a-days not so common—tall, slight and wiry, he could sit a horse as well as the best of riders and hold his own with men of all sorts. Endowed with quick insight into the character of men who were in many instances indifferent to law, he exercised a restraining influence without in any way neglecting his duty as a police officer. His presence and word alone frequently calmed excited diggers in a way that commanded their respect and admiration. When the diggers broke into rioting at Charters Towers, the tact, patience and courage of Clohesy was of more use and value than a posse

of police. Many a time I have heard a witty remark, or a pithy Irish phrase from him, turn a likely disturbance into a pleasant laughing meeting. Wherever he controlled, he kept things in order without his hand being felt. When he died about 1879, Queensland lost a good officer, and many a northern pioneer a true friend.

When I reached Townsville I procured a load for Ravenswood diggings, which had just been opened. I went to load my new waggon at Clifton and Aplin's store, accompanied by a man named Tom Hobbs, who was also loading at the same place, and for the same destination. When I drove my team and new waggon from Sydney through the streets toward the German Gardens—since the war, Belgium Gardens—where we were camped, I noticed every one laughing as I went by. After crossing the ridge where the Anglican Cathedral now stands, I went around to the off side, and there saw that some wag, while I was loading, had obliterated a letter on the name of my waggon, which Fitzmaurice had christened the "Townsville Lass." Striking the "L" out gave it a different name. I quickly procured a paint brush and renewed the name as it should be.

At that time the road to Ravenswood was lined with vehicles and pedestrians, making their way to the new field. Cobb and Co. were running a coach for mails and passengers, driven by Mick Brady, who afterwards was well and favourably known on the very bad road from Cooktown to Maytown. After making a quick trip we returned, and loaded again for the Gilbert diggings.

In going up Thornton's Gap, on the coast range, I had the misfortune to lose the top of my third finger on my right hand. We had 36 bullocks on the waggon, and a faulty chain breaking, only six bullocks were left to hold the waggon. The near side ones being lazy, allowed the waggon to drift down towards the steep descent of 500 feet to the bottom. I ran with a piece of heavy log to prevent a smash, but the wheels caught the log

before I could release my hand, and completely crushed the top of my finger until the bone protruded. That night I had to lay with my finger in hot water to relieve the pain. The next day I started at daylight for Townsville, had the finger dressed by the doctor, and returned to the teams the same day, having ridden a distance of 60 miles. I was unable to yoke my team, but this my mate, Tom Hobbs, kindly did for me. I was, however, able to drive the team the 350 miles to the Gilbert. On returning from there, I had a bad attack of fever and ague, which compelled me to ride on to Townsville for medical advice, having various difficulties on the way down. I left my black boy to assist my mate to bring down the two teams, by hitching my waggon behind his, and yoking up sufficient bullocks drafted from each team to draw them.

My mate, Tom Hobbs, was a "white man," which means a lot, but rather backward as regards education. In leisure moments I would assist him in reading, writing, etc. Before he left the Bay on this trip, he had become engaged to a young lady in the town, and enlisted my services to write his letters for him. I remember the last I wrote before leaving him contained the following:—

> But if all goes well on my return,
> We'll give the Parson some trouble,
> To write the license for friends to learn
> We're converted from single to double.

In a few weeks after reaching Townsville, under the doctor's care, I regained my usual good health, and found Tom's fiancee and delivered the messages which he had entrusted me with. The wet season of 1871 had set in, and Tom was stuck at the Burdekin River with the teams, so I concocted the following rhyme to send him as if they came from his lady-love:—

> Oh! Tom Hobbs, dear Tom, why don't you come back
> To redeem the dear promise you gave unto me,
> When you started with loading on the Gilberton track
> To hail your return as my husband to be.

Oh ! the days and the hours how slowly they pass,
And for me, I fear, there are plenty in store,
Since now there's abundance of water and grass,
To tempt you to spell your poor bullocks the more.

But, dear Tom, do write me a line to say
That your love is as fervent as ever it's been.
If so, on your return we'll both name the day
Which kind friends will finish with tins kerosene.

I pray my dear hopes are not born to be blighted,
By the tide of misfortune in earth's dreary life,
For you know, dear Tom, you have charms which delighted
A young girl to be your dear loving wife.

And now, dearest Tom, with a squeeze and a kiss
That would burst the staves of a six gallon barrel,
I pray God to grant you health and heavenly bliss
When united for ever to your loving E. Carrol.

When I last visited Townsville in 1917, I called on Mrs. Hobbs, who showed me the original of the above, still in good preservation.

Tom was a very shy man, and asked me if I could arrange for his marriage to be held by the Registrar at the Court House on a Sunday evening. This I did, the wedding party arriving at the Court House by different routes to avoid publicity. The Registrar had only a candle, which did not give sufficient light, so he asked if I could obtain a lamp. I went down the hill to Evans', afterwards Enright's, Tattersall Hotel, and borrowed a lamp ostensibly to look for lost jewellery for a lady. Several loungers, doubting the reason given, followed me, with the result that at midnight Tom's house was surrounded by uninvited guests, and I had to hand out some bottles of brandy before they could be induced to leave. We kept things up until daylight, when I rode back to my camp at Mount Louisa, six miles away.

About this time the carriers were challenged by the Townsville cricket club to a match, to be played on a ground prepared at the German Gardens. A carrier named Billy Yates took his

waggon, decorated with boughs and bush flowers, drawn by bullocks, to bring out the town team. The principal bowler for Townsville was L. F. Sachs, of the A.J.S. Bank. Ours were Charlie and Fred Hannaford. After a hard-fought game of two innings each, the carriers won, I having the honour of being top scorer. The particulars did not go into print, so I am unable to give the details, although I remember the happenings connected with and after the match were interesting.

I was loaded at Mount Louisa on my way to Ravenswood, when, during the night a man wakened me, and asked if I could give him a drink. I gave him a nip of rum from the jar. Shortly afterwards I noticed the smell of burning, and on looking round saw a dray with a load of wool well alight. I immediately raised the alarm, and the men from several other teams who were camped there ran over, but all that we could save were the bullock yokes. We then tipped the dray up, thinking the ropes had been burnt through, and that the bales of wool would roll off, when we could deal with them. This was not the case, and the wind getting underneath so fanned the flame that soon the wool was burning as fiercely as the wood. The police investigated the matter, and found that the man I gave the drink to had travelled down with this team, and had a grievance about the payment of his wages. The Police Magistrate committed him to the Supreme Court for trial for arson. I was subpoenaed as principal witness, and had to ride back some 70 miles to give evidence. The jury found the man guilty, and he was sentenced to two years' hard labour. As he was leaving the Court, in passing me, he said, "You have only two years to live," but in this he did not prove a true prophet.

About this time I first made the acquaintance of the gentleman now known as Sir Robert Philp. He has a reputation throughout this country, to which, if I attempted to add anything would be simply gilding refined gold. But in 1870 the name of Bob Philp, accountant for James Burns, was throughout North Queensland a synonym for business ability, integrity

of character, and kindness of heart. This reputation has not been dimmed by the passing of years. It is something of a pleasure to know Sir Robt. Philp, but it is a matter of pride to have known Mr. Philp "Lang Syne," when men of ability, character, and generosity were not rare or difficult to find.

I have alluded several times to "partners," or "mates," which was the more popular term. These partnerships were quite common amongst carriers and diggers in bygone days. It was simply chums, owning and sharing everything in common, and without any agreement, written or otherwise. There were many such partnerships involving large sums of money and valuable property which existed only on a complete trust in mates.

Among others on the Gilbert and Etheridge, were the mateship of Steel, Hunt and O'Brien. There were several such partnerships on the Palmer, notably that of Duff, Edwards and Callaghan. Of the high characters and generosity of all these men many interesting stories could be told. I doubt if their prototypes now exist. In my own case, in carrying and in business, I carried on with partners for many years without any agreement. The partnerships were based on mutual trust. When it was felt between the partners for some reason or other —generally a mere liking for a change—that the partnership might end, a friendly squaring-up would take place; each would go his own way and probably enter into partnership with some other party. With the exception of the partner I had in a claim on the Cape goldfield, I found all my mates or partners to be men in every sense of the term.

I had a very good black boy, a little fellow of about 10 years of age, a native of Cooper's Creek, whom I called Billy. On one of my trips to the Gilbert, when passing Dalrymple, Billy Marks, the store and hotel-keeper, presented me with a well-bred cattle pup and a gin case to put him in. This I placed on top of the load. We had six miles to go over very rough basalt country

to our camp. That day I had yoked a steer for the first time, and I intended to hobble him at night. When we reached camp I told Billy to bring up a quiet bullock called Darling, and this I coupled to the steer, instructing the boy to hold the whip-stick in front of the steer to attract his attention whilst I hobbled him. I had just put the hobble on the off leg, and was preparing to put it on the other, when the steer gave a tremendous jump, and the old bullock knocked me on my back on the yokes lying on the ground. When I rose I looked at the boy to see if he was laughing, but he was quite demure. I then saw the pup on the ground. He had caused my discomfiture by jumping on the steer's back, the box having broken open coming over the stones. When I returned from putting the bullocks on the grass, I saw my mate laughing, and to my inquiry he replied: "When you left with the bullocks I inquired from the boy what the trouble was?" The boy said, "Puppy been jump down on the steer's back, and old Darling been throw 'em a good way." My mate said, "You been laugh?" The boy answered, "Baal! me only been laugh alonga inside." He thought I might have beaten him if I had detected a smile on his face. While I was camped just outside Dalrymple, I one day told the boy if anyone wanted me, to say I was in the township. I had just finished a game of billiards at the hotel, when a man entered laughing. He called me on one side, and said he had asked my boy where I was. He said "That fella along public house playing—he got 'em spear in his hand, and knock about things all a same like it duck egg." He added the boy had followed me and watched my actions.

CHAPTER VI.

I CONTINUED carrying to Ravenswood, Charters Towers, the Gilbert and Etheridge goldfields until October, 1872, when I loaded for the latter place, delivering my load towards the end of the year, and just as the wet season set in. My travelling mate at this time was Billy Wilson, and he, wishing to return to port, left me in charge of his team. I camped on the Delaney River, and as there was abundance of grass, the bullocks gave no trouble. On Wilson's return, we decided to purchase two loads of stores from Clifton and Aplin's branch store, to take to the Palmer River rush which had just broken out, owing to William Hann's report on his exploration through the Peninsula becoming known.

William Hann was a first-class bushman, but it is quite evident he was very much astray in one portion of the trip, which led to the great gold discovery. On page 13 of his report, referring to his following up the Normanby River, he stated he crossed the divide between the Normanby and Endeavour Rivers, and followed a gully for nine and a-half miles; . . . . . when it became a considerable creek which he called Oakey Creek, it being the first place he saw the familiar oaks. Under date 21st September, 1872, he reports:—"Running this creek down in an easterly direction, and being compelled to cross it several times until it junctioned with a large river running north and south"; he adds "this river was, of course, no other than the Endeavour, of which so much has been said and heard from time to time." In this assumption he was far out. Owing to the rough country, Oakey Creek had to be crossed three times, and while being only one creek its crossings were afterwards known as Big, Middle and Little Oakey. The creek forms one

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of the heads of the Annan River, so named by Dalrymple. This river coming from the south-east falls into the sea some miles south of Mount Cook, which, with its spurs, divides it from the estuary of the Endeavour. Although there was a qualified surveyor in the party, it does not appear that he put Hann right. I do not mention this with any other desire than to show what difficulties our early explorers met with.

The manner in which Hann extricated his party from the terrible rough country at the heads of the Bloomfield and Daintree Rivers stamps him as a fine bushman, resourceful and dauntless.

We had a very exciting trip passing Fossilbrook, Mount Surprise, and Firth's Stations, crossing the Lynd, Tate, Walsh and Mitchell Rivers. These were all running strong. When we arrived at the Walsh, two horse teams had been camped there for a fortnight, and the owners told us the river was uncrossable. After putting the bullocks on grass, my mate (who was a splendid bushman), rode into the river. The water being clear, he was able to zig-zag a sand bank, avoiding deep water, and found we could get the waggons across by putting the goods on the guard rails. This we did that night unknown to the owners of the other teams who were camped farther on, but out of sight. In the morning we yoked up, and passed them, stating we were going to attempt crossing. This they declared was impossible, but came down to see us make the attempt. We only had our shirts on, and rode our horses bare-back. We made the crossing successfully, and camped on the northern bank. The river came down again that night, and delayed the horse teams another week. When we reached the Mitchell River, we found there were forty teams of all sorts and sizes waiting to cross. The next day my mate said that the river was fordable, and he would cross. We led the way, followed by the others. Quite a little village of people of both sexes camped that night on the north side of the Mitchell. Our troubles were now over, and we had thirty miles of easy travelling, past Mount Mulgrave to the Palmer River.

There was such a quantity of stores arriving at the one time that we could not dispose of ours, so it was arranged that Wilson should take his team to Cooktown, and purchase a load jointly for us, and that I should remain, put up a tarpaulin store for the goods, and dispose of them as opportunity offered. To do this I decided to sell my bullock team and horses, as I did not know how long I should remain.

In the meantime, another diggings called Purdie's Camp broke out forty miles up the river, so I purchased some more stores and engaged a horse team to carry all the goods there at £40 per ton. The only grass on the road was that known as "turpentine." This the horses would not eat, consequently we had to feed them on flour and water. On arrival, I disposed of everything at high prices. Thus flour, 200lb. bag for £20, and other things at like values.

When at Purdie's camp, a packer—that is, a carrier using pack horses—came in with his horses, one of which had thrown his shoe. This rendered the horse useless to travel over the stony ridges. The packer wanted horse-shoe nails, so, as a joke, a carrier named Billy Yates offered to let him have five horse-shoe nails for their weight in gold. The offer was accepted, and I saw the nails put in one scale and the gold in the other. The packer was receiving one shilling per pound for packing goods eleven miles, and on that day's trip the horse took 150lbs., thus giving him £7/10/-, less the price for the nails. I forget the value of the gold paid for the latter.

I was one day in a store kept by a man named T. Q. Jones, locally known as "Three Two," when a digger came in to buy a needle. He demurred at the price asked, one shilling, when the storekeeper remarked, "Good God, man, look at the price of carriage."

Query—at 1/- per needle, what would a ton cost?

I had only my gold bag—which was fairly bulky—and my black boy, and having again met my old acquaintance

Fitzmaurice, from Peak Downs, who had also sold his loading and had sent his teams down to Cooktown, we decided to walk the forty miles back to the Lower Palmer, carrying the gold in our blankets, which we slung over our shoulders. When we reached the township, which was then unnamed, we heard that the cost of carriage from Cooktown had risen to £130 per ton of 2,000lbs. for 165 miles. I learnt that there were some teams camped at the Mitchell River, and having borrowed a horse from a friendly teamster, rode out to try and make a deal for one or more teams. I succeeded in buying 24 bullocks and two old drays, with three horses, for £400, agreeing to take the carrier and his wife to Cooktown, and paid a deposit. The owner had not heard of the high prices ruling for loading. When we reached the township and he learnt this, he offered me £50 on my bargain to repurchase the teams, but I refused the offer. I then bought a new waggon for £60, and sold the two old drays to the blacksmith for £20. This enabled me to have one very strong team.

I found out afterwards that this was necessary, as the road was very heavy, notably fourteen miles of sand, known as the "Welcome Water-hole Sand," in which the wheels were buried to the axle.

Billy Wilson, my partner, arrived with our joint loading at Palmerville just as I arrived with my newly-bought team, and not liking the idea of remaining as a storekeeper, I preferred to accompany him on his return to Cooktown. We decided to sell our joint load at a price which netted us £70 per ton for carriage.

Before I reached Cooktown I met a storekeeper from that town who engaged me to take four tons of goods to what is now called Palmerville, at £120 per ton. This price enabled me to engage a Chinese cook, so that I could devote all my attention to looking after the bullocks.

After delivering my £120 loading, I made all haste on my return and succeeded in obtaining another load of four and a-half tons at £100 per ton.

Cooktown at this time (towards the end of 1873), was composed wholly of tents. Diggers, who had been more or less successful, were arriving on their way to "the Bay" (Townsville), or farther south.

I think that the Palmer was the last real alluvial gold rush in Australia, and the class of men who followed such rushes in the search for gold is now extinct. Imagine to oneself the "lucky digger" in cord pants, top boots, red shirt, and sash with fringes hanging down, the whole topped by a wide-rimmed felt hat, and we have a man who may be seen in present-day picture shows. There were some doubtful characters among the diggers, but they were as a general rule a fine stamp of men, slow to form friendship, but this once made, was loyally given and maintained when fortune smiled, and not withheld when she frowned, on one or other. The digger of the past was not often known to desert or turn down the man or woman to whom he once gave his friendship. Some were highly connected in other countries, some had been "'Varsity men." I once assisted to bury the remains of one whose real name could never be learnt. From the clothes found in his camp, it could be seen that they originally had been marked, but the name had been cut out from each article. I found two volumes from which the names had also been cut out; these were "Sheridan's Works" and "Cicero's Works" in Latin. Many passages in the books were well marked with marginal notes in pencil, and both showed signs of being well studied.

Carriage was invariably paid in gold at the standard of £3/15/- per ounce. On sending the gold to the Sydney mint through the banks it realised £4/7/6 per ounce, which, at the time, was considered to be a record price. The bank and shipping charges, and insurance, etc., amounted to 7/6 per ounce, so that we had a clear profit of 5/- per ounce on the gold by sending the gold to Sydney instead of paying it into the banks.

At Palmerville I met, for the first time, Dr. Jack Hamilton, afterwards M.L.A. and whip for the National Party in the Parliament of 1888. Among the Palmer diggers Hamilton was extremely popular because of his prowess as an athlete, and his medical ability, which was given gratuitously to all. He was said to have been concerned in some of the many South American revolutions, but although we were friendly from this time until his death, he never alluded to such an occurrence. I realised, however, that he was very reticent as to his early life, and the gossip may have had some foundation.

I delivered my load just as the wet season set in, so made my camp six miles down the river from Palmerville. My black boy caught a cold, which, in spite of the medicines I gave him, developed into pneumonia. He was very weak, and as he refused to accept food from anyone but myself, I was a prisoner in camp. One evening he called me over, and made a confession of what he said were lies he had told me at different times. Once when I had sent him to muster some of my horses on the Annan River, near Cooktown, he had returned saying he could not find them. He now told me that when he had reached the river, he saw a lot of myall black fellows, which so frightened him that he gave up looking for the horses, and camped until sun-down, thus leading me to think he had been looking for them all day. Several other little instances that I had quite forgotten, he told me were lies. In the morning he was dead. I buried him, and put a wooden cross over the grave. He was a splendid little fellow, and I missed him greatly.

On returning to Cooktown in 1874, I offered to make an agreement with a Chinese storekeeper to carry for him for twelve months at the rate of £50 per ton. After consulting Joss, he agreed, and I thus had constant employment at a lucrative price.

The Chinese storekeepers had sent to China to import a number of coolies to pack their merchandise from Cooktown to the Palmer.

The Government had just completed wharves and sheds at the landing, and rented these to Mr. F. W. J. Beardmore, stock and station agent there.

This gentleman hearing that a steamer from the north was about to arrive conveying 400 Chinamen, came out to the four-mile, where a number of carriers were camped, to ask if we would assist him at the wharf, as he intended to levy a poll tax of one shilling per head on each Chinaman who landed, and to bring ropes with us. After a consultation, we decided to help him. as these coolies were competing with our trade. Before the ship arrived, we had stretched our ropes across the exit, and marshalled our forces to prevent any leaving the wharf without paying the tax. A stormy scene then ensued, as the coolies strongly objected to the imposition, ending by the swag of each man being confiscated and placed in the shed until payment was made. In carrying this out, we were ably assisted by the sailors and sympathetic civilians. Several of the Chinese attempted to escape, but were caught by their pig-tails and brought back. After a controversy between Mr. Beardmore and the Chinese storekeepers, the latter paid £20, the sum demanded for the release of the swags. The Chinese had no sympathisers to assist them in obtaining redress.

The Chinese storekeepers generally packed their goods by their own countrymen, who carried them in baskets hung on bamboo sticks slung across their shoulders. The Chinese packers, through fear of the blacks, invariably travelled in numbers and in single file. Many a time they would draw down anathema of carriers by parading on the off-side of the bullocks, which were being yoked up, dangling their tins in an offensive manner to the animals, which often resulted in the drivers hunting them away with their bullock whips. As a further protection against the blacks, the Chinese kept up a loud conversation, which, if not understood, might be heard some time before they were met.

On their return from the diggings these packers were believed to carry back gold in payment for goods. In a similar way it was thought that gold was largely transferred to China.

The value of gold known to have been obtained from the Palmer, is estimated at about six millions sterling. If there was such a secret export by Chinese, the value would probably be very much more.

Shortly after making my first trip from Cooktown, I met Dr. O. Quinn, the then Roman Catholic Bishop of Brisbane, who was visiting the Palmer, and who with much glee told me he had just come safely through the "Gates of Hell." This was a short cut from the original track from Cooktown, and was opened up by Inspector Douglas to avoid the many crossings of the Palmer during the wet seasons, but was abandoned owing to the hostility of the blacks. Many a digger and several packers were murdered on this route and their remains eaten by the blacks of this locality. It is a sort of long passage, or cut through the rocks, just about wide enough for a pack horse to pass through easily. Overhead large boulders here and there are lying across the passage.

CHAPTER VII.

OWING to depredations and murders committed by the blacks between Cooktown and the Palmer, it was found advisable for teams and packers to travel in numbers for mutual protection. On the trip to Palmerville, I travelled in company with nine other teams, and after crossing the Normanby River we camped on the bank. Our bullocks strayed some miles down the river, and on mustering them in the morning we found the trend of the river was towards the Deighton, one of its tributaries, and in the direction of where the old road crossed it. A party was formed, of which I was one, to ascertain if it was possible to reach the Deighton without going through the "Welcome Water-hole Sand." We found good, firm country which made it practicable. On returning, we rode our horses single file, thus making a good pad for the bullocks to follow. Our first night out we camped between two lagoons. A mate and I went out to get some ducks or geese, which swarmed on the lagoons. We had previously noticed that the blacks' tracks had formed beaten pads, like sheeps' tracks, round the lagoons.

We crossed a soakage running through sand; there were dense patches of scrub near the lagoons, and I had an impression that it was not safe to go farther on foot, and said I would go back. My mate at first demurred, but eventually yielded. When we came back to the wet sand we saw blacks' tracks over our boot prints. It was evident we had been followed, and had we not returned would most certainly have been speared in some convenient place. That night dogs were barking incessantly. My waggon being on the outside, I let the tarpaulin down and

slept on the ground instead of on the bunk, rigged up between the spokes of the hind wheels—there was less likelihood of a spear catching me there.

After crossing the Deighton we met some empty teams coming down, and told them of the new road we had opened up. The carriers said they would go that way. We cautioned them to be careful of the blacks, as there were numbers of them in the vicinity. Some time after the carriers told us they found that the blacks had covered the road with bushes, sticks and small trees to screen their hunting grounds. They also said they had met a German, his wife and little girl, at the turn-off on the Normanby, and advised them not to go on the new track as the blacks were bad, and they had no firearms. However, the German, whose name was Johan Strau, persisted, saying he was not afraid of blacks, as he had been used to them.

On arriving on the Palmer, we met two carriers who were riding down with their gold. We told them also of the new road we had opened up, and they decided to ride that way.

We also advised them to be careful as the blacks were numerous near the lagoons, which they would pass. They said they had a revolver, but only three cartridges, which they deemed sufficient for protection, as they were riding.

Later these carriers had reported to the police, that on reaching the open space around the lagoons I have mentioned, they saw a large number of natives, and thinking mischief had been done, they discharged the revolver amongst the blacks, who decamped. When the carriers reached the abandoned spot they found Strau's body beneath the dray. The dead body of his wife was a little distance away. A spear had been driven through her mouth, and had pinned her to the ground. Both bodies were warm. Three horses were lying dead, but there was no sign of the little girl.

The carriers immediately galloped on to the fifteen-mile bend of the Normanby River, where a number of teams and packers were camped. In the morning a well-armed search party was formed. On arrival at the scene of the murders, scouts were posted to give notice if the blacks were returning. A grave was dug, and the bodies lowered into it. While this was being carried out noises were heard in the scrub. The party proceeded in the direction of the sound and found the little girl, a large gash across the forehead, her stomach ripped up by the blacks' wooden knives, and her eyes picked out by crows. The body was brought in, and buried with the father and mother. Flour, sugar, tea, gunpowder, etc., etc., were heaped up on the ground, but there was no sign of the dray. Inspector Douglas, in charge of the native police, was informed. His detachment followed the murderers across the Normanby River, where they overtook and dispersed them. Portions of the dray, stripped of all the iron work, were also found.

The police learnt, through the troopers from some blacks who were captured, that Strau's party was camped for dinner when the blacks attacked them. The man was speared while reading a book beneath the dray, and the woman was sewing, sitting against the wheel of the dray. Before being killed outright, the woman was subjected to horrible outrage by the blacks. It was intended to keep the little girl, but two old gins quarrelled over her possession, and it was decided to kill the child, and so avoid dissension among the tribe. From these murders the lagoons were known as the "Murdering Lagoons."

On my way back to Cooktown I camped near the grave. That night I laid down in the centre of the bullocks when they camped after feeding, holding my loaded rifle and horse by the bridle. Bullocks are very sensitive to the smell of wild blacks, and will almost certainly stampede should any be about. Camping among the bullocks is considered the safest place one can find.

Some time later, while at this camp, I was mustering my bullocks on the plain between the scrubs, when they stampeded. I looked, I could see nothing, but I knew that blacks must be the cause. On returning to the waggons, I was informed that three troopers, who had run away from Cape York, had been to the camp. They had no clothes, but rusty rifles, and had fought their way through the wild tribes of the Peninsula. My bullock bells were the first sign of civilisation they had met for three months.

Mr. William Hann had just arrived at Palmerville with a mob of fat bullocks from his Maryvale Station. I purchased 13 steers from him at £16 per head. The cattle were very quiet after their long droving, and as I was returning to Cooktown with my empty waggon, I was enabled to break them in. At that place I bought another waggon, and with spare bullocks from my first team, I was able to put two full teams on the road.

Sub-Inspector O'Connor's camp was at the Laura River. On one occasion, when dispersing some blacks, the troopers, who were all Fraser Island natives, saw the shiny, black skin of an aboriginal hiding in the bush some distance away. They fired, and a little fellow about six years of age got up and ran towards them. The troopers picked him up, and he became a favourite with them. They delighted in instructing him in drill and discipline, and he proved an apt pupil. O'Connor and myself became great friends, and many a happy hour I've spent at his barracks when passing to and fro to the Palmer. Knowing I had no blackboy, he gave me the little fellow he had so well drilled. I bought a pony for him to ride, and it was laughable to see him, if we happened to meet the troopers on the road, straighten himself up and salute the officer.

O'Connor told me an amusing incident which occurred at Government House in Sydney, when his cousin, Sir Hercules Robinson, was Governor. Invitations had been issued for a reception, at which Captain St. John, the aide-de-camp, called

out the names of the guests as they arrived. Presently, he called out "Mr. Smith!" In response, one of those present walked towards the Governor, saying, "I don't think your two-year-old filly will win the Stakes this year," and went on talking racing matters. The captain relieved the situation by informing him that there were refreshments in the other room. When all the guests were assembled, Sir Henry Parkes, the then Premier, asked Captain St. John, how that man, pointing to Mr. Smith, came to be there, and said, "Do you know that he is one of the greatest scamps in Sydney," and added, "For God's sake get him out of here, or there'll be a scene." Captain St. John said he only knew that his name was Smith, but acting on Sir Henry's advice, he approached him, stating that he had by mistake received the invitation intended for another Mr. Smith. The man retaliated by saying in a loud voice, "Oh, ah, very well; I've had two whiskeys and a soda, which comes to eighteen-pence. Here is half-a-crown; you may keep the change yourself."

In 1875, I loaded my two teams for a new diggings which had broken out about 40 miles S.W. of Cooktown. The township had been called Byerstown, after Johnny Byers, who had established a business there. Mr. Byers, many years after-was appointed Government Land Agent at Hughenden, and subsequently Land Commissioner there. He is now stock and station agent, doing good business in that town.

Finding carrying paid well, I purchased another waggon, and by breaking in more steers, established my third team. These I now loaded for Edwardstown. This was the popular name for the main township, about 40 miles up the Palmer River from Palmerville. It was officially known as Maytown, but the diggers would not recognise the latter name. To reach this place we had some very rough country to negotiate by a new road opened from the Laura, over what was called the Conglomerate. Although not as good as the road *via* Palmerville, it was much shorter. On returning to Cooktown

I loaded my three teams for Blacksoil, where there was a store kept by Sam Burns, who, I understand, is still in that locality.

The wet season set in much earlier this year, and caught us in the flooded country beyond the Normanby River, but by double banking the teams, and working in the rain, we reached an anthill flat which was so boggy that it was impossible to cross unless we made a sound road. We had passed two teams camped, but as I was within 15 miles of my destination, I determined to push on. My drivers and I cut down saplings, and made a corduroy, across which we sledged the twelve tons of loading. This was rather risky, as we had a quantity of dynamite on, the explosive caps of which were inserted in 50lb. bags of flour. During our work, which took three days to complete, the other teamsters would frequently ride past and say, "That's right, boys, make a good road for us," but did not offer to help. This riled me and my men.

Sub-Inspector O'Connor, knowing we were close, rode over with his troopers to give us a hand. When we had got the last of the waggons through, and put the loads on again, it was quite dark. After supper I said it would serve the other fellows right if we took up the saplings and burnt them. The idea caught on with the men, and by the aid of the troopers, we took up every stick and, with some trouble, made a huge bonfire of them. As they were saturated with water it was difficult setting them alight, and the rain continued the whole time. However, by about midnight we completed our job, tired out, wet through, and no dry blankets to sleep in. Next morning, we were yoking to move on when the owner of the other teams came up and threatened us with revenge for burning the timber. When he saw O'Connor and his troopers he calmed down, and returned to his teams, regretting he had not assisted us. He now had to do as we had done, but with all the saplings which had been in close proximity cut down. The next day we reached our destination, and formed a good camp at the Blacksoil to enjoy our Christmas dinner and a well-earned rest.

I now began to feel a tinge of rheumatism in my arms through wearing wet clothing continuously. About the new year one of my saddle horses came into the camp with a portion of a spear stuck in his rump. We threw him and cut out the barbed head of the spear, but the wound afterwards remained a running sore. I caught the camp horse, which we always kept hobbled, and started in search of the others. In following the tracks, I found where the blacks had rounded them up—killing two, one my favourite hack—and had taken away the meat for consumption.

After mustering the others, I reported the matter to O'Connor, who had just received the information of the murder of two packers, and was preparing for a long patrol. Six troopers, O'Connor and myself, started—all being fully armed. I took them to where the blacks had killed two horses; the boys then followed the track by instinct, as I thought. The rain had washed out all signs to me. When crossing a high ridge, so bare and hard that our horses left no tracks, two of the trackers were riding ahead, the others driving the pack horses behind. I said to O'Connor, "I don't believe they are on the tracks." "Well," he said, "I can't see any, I will call them back." He called out "Sambo!" which was the name of the Corporal, "Where track?" Sambo pointed to a blade of spinifex. I asked "Where?" He answered, "There." So I got off my horse, and there was a tiny speck of blood which had dropped on the root, and had not been washed off by the rain. It turned out the Myalls had been carrying the flesh of my horses, and the blood had dropped here and there.

We came to where the blacks had had a great feast on the bank of the Kennedy River. At this spot it was rather wide, with a sandy bed, the water running over it about two feet deep. I found the shoes, tail, and mane of my favourite horse on the bank. We held a consultation, and it was decided to send two of the boys with the pack horses back some distance from the river, and then to travel parallel with it, as the

country close to this river was very broken. The rest of the party were to follow the river down towards Princess Charlotte's Bay. We had a boy out on each side to see if the Myalls had left the river bed. They knew we could not track them in the water. We followed the river down for two days, and I shall not forget the torture of walking bare-footed on coarse sand with water running over it. I tried walking in the water with my boots on, but the sand came into my boots and made my feet quite sore. O'Connor was in the same plight as myself.

On the afternoon of the third day, the boys saw smoke rising about a mile ahead. We immediately left the river and put up our tents for a camp, short hobbling the horses with no bells on, but could not boil the billy, as smoke from the fire would be seen. The moon rose about midnight, and as the rain had ceased, we decided to start about 2 a.m., leaving our horses and belongings in camp.

It was a rather weird procession as we made our way along the river. Five naked black troopers in single file in the lead, their only dress a cartridge belt round the waist and cap on head. They were most particular in wearing it when going into action, otherwise there would be difficulty in recognising them or each other. O'Connor, myself and the corporal brought up the rear.

After travelling some distance through grass, which in places was over our heads, we heard a peculiar chuckle on an island in the bed of the river. It was decided to send the five boys round to the other side, whilst we, O'Connor, Sambo, and myself remained, and waited. Towards daylight we heard shots apparently about a mile down the river, and ran in their direction. We had not gone far when a big black fellow sprang up from the river, disappearing in the long grass before I could bring my rifle to the shoulder. I then heard a shot behind me. We afterwards found the Myall dead, and eventually reached the place where the blacks had camped. The boys had previously dispersed most of them. If at any time I felt a

compunction in using my rifle I lost it when I thought of the murders of Strau, his wife and daughter, and the outrages committed upon them, and again of the murder, and eating, of two packers a short time before.

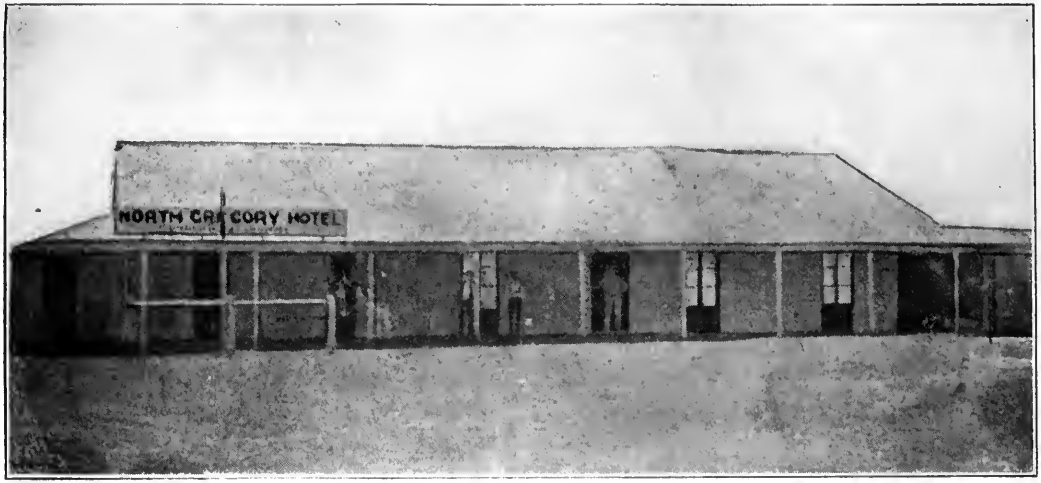
We burnt all the blacks' weapons and several dilly bags containing the dead bodies of infants which they carried about with them. The stench of burning human flesh was sickening.

I went with one of the troopers down the river, where the soil at the roots of a large gum tree had been hollowed out by the water. Underneath it resembled a huge cave. Without saying anything to me, the trooper fired two shots into the cave. I then asked, "What are you firing at?" He replied, "Two fella sit down there." After which he hauled out the dead bodies of two blackfellows.

On our way back we met the troopers from the Palmer, who were also out for the same tribe. The Palmer police went on down the river, and we returned to the Laura Camp quite tired out. The troopers told us the reason they did not stop at the island on their way down was because it contained only a mob of old gins, who had knocked up the previous evening, and could not make the camp.

When preparing to return to Cooktown, O'Connor prevailed upon me to wait at the police camp while he and the troopers patrolled the road past Murdering Lagoon. On his return, he told me the blacks had been there during the wet season, and had dug up Johan Strau's grave, and carried off the bodies. When I arrived at the place with the teams, I saw the stains made by the chest of tea the blacks had pillaged off the dray on the day of the murder.

Sub-Inspector O'Connor was a cultured Irish gentleman. Being possessed of a private income, he would provide money prizes for shooting amongst his troopers, and despite being only possessed of the old Snider rifle, they quickly developed into good shots. Probably this and their known capabilities in



North Gregory Hotel. Robt. Fitzmaurice, Licensee. 1879.

tracking induced the Victorian authorities to requisition their services to track the noted Kelly Gang bushrangers in 1878. Mr. O'Connor and his boys, with Constable King, from Maryborough, were at Glenrowan when Ned Kelly was taken prisoner, and the remainder of the gang burnt in the public house.

On reaching Cooktown I again loaded my three teams for Maytown, returning to Palmerville empty, where I sold one of my teams. On the trip my rheumatism became so bad that I determined to take a trip to Sydney, leaving my teams to camp during the wet season now commencing, in charge of one driver and the black boy.

I left Cooktown in the E. and A. Company's s.s. "Singapore" in December, 1875. On board I made the acquaintance of Captain Pennefather, lately Comptroller of Prisons, who, at that time, had a fleet of boats at Thursday Island, engaged in pearl fishing. On arrival at Townsville, John Dean (late M.L.C.), came aboard, and we renewed an acquaintance formed some years before when he was butchering at Townsville, and where I had purchased steers from him.

It was my first trip on the coast, and with fine weather, I was delighted with the beautiful scenery. Owing to the early rains the numerous islands were clad in their richest verdure, especially did the Whitsunday Passage appeal to me. Most of the islands in the passage were inhabited by aboriginals, who made a practice of coming out in their canoes to the steamers, picking up food, etc., thrown to them from the ship. One of our crew threw out a loaf of bread, which was attached to a piece of rope. A blackfellow and his gin in a canoe close by the ship caught the loaf, but the moving of our boat tightened the line, which pulled him out, his canoe being capsized, and he and his gin were struggling in the water. However, as they were good swimmers, they soon righted their canoe with the loss only of the loaf of bread. During

the trip lunch was spread daily under the awning on the top deck. This was much more pleasant than down in the stuffy cabin. After leaving Moreton Bay the sea became rough. A water spout formed not far from the ship, and it appeared large enough to swamp us had we been under it. The wind made it hard to light matches for a smoke, so Captain Pennefather introduced his flint and steel, and lit a stick composed of dry buffalo manure; this we found very useful with which to light our pipes.

CHAPTER VIII.

WE arrived at Sydney on a Friday night early in January, 1876. John Dean required a rig out, and being a man of 21 stone weight could not buy a ready-made shirt, so had to be measured. We stayed at the Occidental Hotel, in Wynyard Square, and hearing that "Our Boys" was being played at the Theatre Royal, took seats in the orchestra stalls, which consisted of wooden spring seats. We arrived when all was quiet and the play in progress. As John sat down every screw came out of the seat, and he plumped on the floor to the amusement of the audience. The fun was greater when he was seen slowly, but successfully, to lower himself into another seat.

After the performance, thinking we had sufficient bump of locality to find our hotel without inquiry, we walked, and continued walking until we found ourselves down at the wharves, which, we had been told, was an undesirable quarter at any time, but especially late at night. From a passer-by, we learnt that the hotel was a long distance off. After receiving instructions, we reached our lodging just as the bar was being closed at midnight. Dean suggested a drink, which we ordered at a side window, and asked the barmaid to bring the liquor into an adjoining room. A man calling himself Count Bismarck, and who was greatly excited about something, was in the bar. He said to Dean, "Aren't you going to shout for me." Dean replied, "No," at which the Count remarked, "Oh, never mind, I have plenty of money." Dean replied, "You must be a mean blooming beggar, then, to ask me to shout." Dean and I sat at a small table discussing the play, when a revolver shot rang out and something seemed to strike us. We immediately rushed for a green baize door, but saw no one. On returning

to the room, the barmaid, who was quite pale, asked "Are you dead?" I answered, "No." At the moment I did not realise the absurdity of the question, or that the answer was unnecessary.

We failed to find the German, who had disappeared. Mr. Yeo, the landlord, ran in to inquire what the trouble was. When we returned to the room I found a bullet under the chair I was sitting on. It had struck the ceiling, and brought down the plaster. Later, in Melbourne, John Dean heard that Count Bismarck had been sentenced to two years' imprisonment for shooting a man.

After a very pleasant time in Sydney, I found the rheumatism had left me, so I deemed it desirable to return north, and to work. On my arrival in Townsville I found the wet season was not yet over. Many friends prevailed upon me to stay back in Townsville, where I put in a most enjoyable fortnight with some of my old pals.

At the end of the fortnight, the s.s. "Banshee," a boat of about 100 tons, was advertised to sail for Cooktown, *via* the Hinchinbrook Channel. I booked my passage by her, and was informed she would sail at 5 a.m. on a certain day.

I was staying at the Criterion Hotel, on the beach, where the evening previous to my intended departure, I was given a send-off, which lasted into well-advanced morning. Owing to this I missed the boat.

A few hours afterwards it was blowing a cyclone. Spray came over the hotel. It was thought the "Banshee" could not live through the blow, and we were not surprised when we learnt very quickly that she was wrecked about 3 p.m. the same afternoon. It was ascertained later that, finding her engines were not powerful enough to make headway against the wind, the captain tried to weather a rocky point on Hinchinbrook Island, so that he might beach her in a sandy

bay beyond. She failed to get around the point, and lifted by a wave over the rocks, became fixed in a cleft, where she soon bumped a hole in her hull. Such of her crew and passengers who were not lucky enough to be thrown far inland were drowned, or crushed to death. One passenger, named Burstall, crawled out on a boom, from which the waves swept him high on to the rocks. A following wave put him out of danger, but left him considerably bruised. Out of thirty-seven on board, sixteen were saved, one a stowaway, who, it was said, walked out of the hole made in the ship's hull by the rocks.

A few days afterwards I returned to Cooktown by the s.s. " Singapore," and saw what was left of the "Banshee" in the distance. In February, 1877, the " Singapore" ran ashore on L. Island, off Port Mackay, and became a total wreck.

I had left my riding horses in Cooktown, and a day or so after my arrival, I went on to Palmerville to send my teams down to the Port. Having done this, and started them two days ahead, Mrs. Jackson, whom I have mentioned as having met some years previously in the Peak Downs district, asked me to take 200 ounces of gold down to the bank. I agreed to do so, carrying it in my valise on the saddle. I was very glad when I reached the waggons to get rid of the gold, as it proved a very dead weight on my legs.

During this wet season (1876), the Government had sent a boat to the Laura River to carry travellers across. These were very few. The boatman was very much alone, and I found that the blacks had taken the opportunity of eating him. While driving the leading team up the bank, I saw numbers of blacks' tracks all around the boat. We drew up a short distance from the bank, and after unyoking, I made my customary visit to water, with towel and bucket, which latter was filled for the cook. The water in the river was running in a channel on the opposite side, and when I was close to it, I heard a chuckle such as the blacks make. Looking towards the crossing I

saw a mob of blacks bathing, and one running towards the bank. Without a second look, I dropped the bucket, and sprinting across the sand and up the bank to the waggons, I called out, "Get the rifles ready! The blacks are at the crossing." After waiting some little time we saw Sub-Inspector Townsend and his black troopers riding towards us. He stayed for dinner, and from mutual explanations I learnt it was his troopers' tracks I had seen. They were returning from an inspection down the river, and had camped at the crossing over night. They decided to have a bogey before dinner, and the boy I saw running, went to get his uniform cap to denote a trooper. Had I taken a second look, I should have seen Mr. Townsend with them. He laughingly described me racing, hidden with sand, which my feet were scooping up, in my haste to get the firearms.

Up to now, carrying had been so remunerative that one would have seen one-time station managers, ex-inspectors of police, old naval men, and all sorts and conditions of other men wielding the bullock-whip and making good earnings, but as competition became keener, carriage fell much lower and more difficult to obtain. The goldfield was falling off, and more in the hands of the Chinese. I had a very hard time to keep my three teams in employment during the year.

In December, 1877, I again suffered severely from malaria, and having previously sold one of my teams, I decided to make another trip to Sydney, leaving the driver to bring down the two teams to the Laura, and camp there until my return. The wet season was setting in, consequently we could not procure any loading. I had an uneventful trip down to Sydney, and again met with John Dean at Mona House, in Wynyard Square.

I returned to Queensland about the beginning of March, 1878, the malaria having left me.

Passing through Townsville, I met Fitzmaurice, who told me that carrying had fallen away between Cooktown and the

Palmer, and that he had left that district. He suggested that I should join with him in carrying to the western country, and added that he had been informed by a squatter that there was a good opening for a store at the Conn Waterhole, on the Diamantina River. This is about forty miles down the Western River, from where Winton now is.

The suggestion appealed to me, and it was agreed that I should go on to Cooktown, start my two teams overland to Townsville, then return and drive one of his three teams on our western trip without loss of time.

On my arrival in Cooktown, I went to the Laura, where the teams were still camped. Everything was in order, and my bullocks fat. I started them on their long trip overland to Townsville, where Fitzmaurice and I had purchased sixteen tons of assorted merchandise from Clifton and Aplin. Arriving in Townsville in a few days by steamer, we loaded up for the far and, to most Queenslanders, what was then unknown country.

Both Fitzmaurice and myself were well known to the firm through our carrying for them from the Port to the several diggings. They generously gave us the goods without our paying any cash, and without giving even the scratch of a pen. When I returned to Townsville at the end of 1879 to purchase more supplies, I signed a promissory note for the cost of all the goods at four months. Practically, Messrs. Clifton and Aplin generously gave us the sixteen tons of goods on a credit which extended over twelve months, and which were only paid for when the note matured.

It was my fortune to have now met in Townsville a man who was then bearing a high reputation in North Queensland, but who was soon to become famous farther afield. By some reason I cannot even now understand, the diggers very seldom put their confidence or trust in the wrong man, and in John Murtagh Macrossan, they found their idol. Mentally big, physically small, his eloquence, ability and courage brought

him, on their behalf, into conflict with strong and powerful influences.

I met him later in the Parliament of 1888. In this were many able men, but none, not even the great chiefs McIlwraith and Griffith, could overshadow Macrossan.

In his private life, which was most exemplary, I found Macrossan—although it was said he was otherwise—to be most tolerant to all who might differ from him in social and religious matters. Like most of his countrymen, he was, however, in politics, a strong, bitter partisan. Once a question became political, if one did not agree with Macrossan, he made an enemy. Between him and McIlwraith a close, personal friendship existed for years, but towards the end of Macrossan's life they became estranged. This was due to the strong, independent stand Macrossan took on a political matter which gave McIlwraith offence.

In a conversation I had with McIlwraith just prior to his leaving Queensland, as it turned out to be, for ever, he spoke most feelingly of Macrossan's memory and their earlier friendship.

Although Macrossan had many chances of enriching himself, he died, in 1891, as he had lived, a man, poor in the world's goods, but rich in the esteem and respect of all, not excepting those who very widely, and strongly differed with him on political, national, or religious matters.

Had he lived in latter years, I doubt if he would have become a popular leader of what is generally designated as "The People."

He was not an opportunist, and he could not submit his independence of mind, character, or principles to any person or junta.

His breach with Sir Thomas McIlwraith proved this.

If an impartial biography of John Macrossan should ever be written, it will prove interesting and instructive reading.

CHAPTER IX.

WE started the teams from Townsville about the end of July, 1878, and passed a gang engaged on construction of the railway line to Charters Towers at Double Barrel Creek, now known as Toonpan, 17 miles from Townsville.

Our destination was Collingwood, more widely known as the Conn Waterhole, where the Government Surveyor had laid out a township situated about 40 miles west of Winton.

Having heard that the business men of Charters Towers were offering a reward of £50 to any carrier who would open a more direct road to the western country, and that a road party had left to mark the line, we decided to try and win it. On our arrival at the Towers, we interviewed the merchants, who disclaimed any knowledge of a reward having been offered for opening the road. We decided to follow the road party, who had marked a line to junction with the old Flinders road. On the journey I found a tree on which I had cut my initials when travelling to the Gulf with sheep, some twelve years before. Owing to double banking the teams through the heavy sand bordering " Billy Webb's Lake," we had to camp without water that night. There was green picking on the water-less lake for the bullocks, but they had to be watched. The road party had left an empty cask where they had camped on the lake, and one of the bullocks, a poly, smelling water in the bottom of the cask, forced his head into it. On lfting his head, the cask came with it. The bullock, being unable to see, made for his mates with their bells on, and then a general stampede of the bullocks took place in all directions. Finally, a bell bullock made for the timber, the poly followed him, and

running against a tree, smashed the cask. Thus ended an amusing incident, with no damage done except to the cask.

The road party left the old road and made a ploughed furrow across the downs to Rockwood Creek, which we followed, and camped the night there.

Fitzmaurice, whilst riding after the bullocks, met Mr. Bergin, the man in charge of the party, who told Fitzmaurice that he was instructed to mark a direct line to Collingwood, on the Western River, and that he intended going up Thornhill Creek, cross the divide between the Landsborough and Diamantina Rivers, and then run down Jessamine and Mill's Creeks to the Western River, and thence to Collingwood.

We took the road up Rockwood Creek to its head, and crossed the same divide as the road party were going, only farther north, striking the head of Manuka Creek, which we ran down to its junction with Mill's Creek. This we followed to the present site of Winton, which we reached at the end of October. The new road opened by the road party had so many patches of heavy sand on it, and long stages for water, that it was never used by carriers, and some years later Ramsay Bros. obtained permission from the Government to close that portion of it running down Jessamine Creek, on the Oondooroo run.

A few years later the Government made tanks on the road between Hughenden and Winton, after which all traffic from Townsville to Winton and the west generally, came that way.

Mr. Tom Lynett, whom I had previously known on the Palmer, and who was backed by Burns, Philp and Co. to start a store, had left Townsville for the same destination as ourselves, if the locality was found to be suitable.

He did not overtake his teams until they reached the Twelve-mile Hole, on the Elderslie road, where he stopped them while he rode on to Collingwood, the newly-surveyed township, to inspect.

He concluded the country was subject to floods, so he turned his teams back, and decided to build on the spot on which we found him camped when we arrived with our teams.

We also met a man named Bob Allen, who had been located in the neighbourhood for two years or more. Allen was an ex-sergeant of police, who left Aramac about 1875 to start a store and public house on what is known as the Pelican Hole, one mile west of the site of Winton. Very heavy rains fell in 1876, and we were told he was compelled by floods to remain two days on the wall-plate of his building.

When the water allowed him, he shifted what was left of his hotel and store, and re-erected them on the present site of the Queensland National Bank, Winton.

Allen, Lynett, Fitzmaurice and I discussed the removal of the building, and forming the town back on higher ground.

We offered to do the work without cost, but Allen and Lynett decided to remain where they were. We had to accept the position, and agreed to build in line with the others.

This formed the base upon which Mr. Surveyor Jopp laid out the township afterwards.

After putting up a skeleton shed covered by tarpaulins, I obtained from Ayrshire Downs two loads of wool for our teams, returning to Townsville. In the meantime, Fitzmaurice had disposed of £600 worth of goods. I was occupied a whole day pasting the pieces of the torn and damaged cheques. I then started for the nearest bank, which was at Aramac, 250 miles away.

A drought being on, I had many difficulties in getting through.

There were only 5,000 sheep on Vindex, and these were camped on a water-hole which had been filled by a stray thunderstorm. The remainder of the sheep from the run were travelling for grass and water on the coast near Townsville.

As a compliment, I was allowed to replenish my water-bag, and to obtain one drink for each of my two horses.

My next camp was off the road on East Darr Station, where a mob of kanakas were cutting down scrub for fencing.

When I reached Muttaburra, I found the hotel to be a grass hut. It proved to be a very rowdy place, so I decided to camp on the ridge outside the town without food, and have my breakfast when passing through in the morning.

I carried £600 worth of cheques in my trousers pocket. This I thought was the safest place.

I was very pleased when at last I reached Aramac, after bank hours, and handed the money to Mr. Fulton, the manager of the Queensland National Bank, and the next morning found only £30 of them dishonoured.

Immediately on my return to Winton, I started for Townsville to load my two teams with timber and iron to build an hotel. I travelled with Fitzmaurice's teams to assist them over a dry stage to Rockwood.

We camped close to Oondooroo Station and when bringing the bullocks in to be yoked in the morning, one of them jumped and tossed his head in the air, and I then saw a tiger snake disappear in a hole near by. The bullocks were yoked up, and after going a short distance the off-side poler of one of the teams dropped dead. On examination, we found two small punctures in the nose. It was the bullock I had seen jump and throw up its head.

When we reached Manuka Station there was only one water-hole near the road. The owner of the station was preserving this for his stock. The distance to the next water was 20 miles, so it was absolutely necessary we should obtain a drink for the bullocks before we tackled the long stage.

I interviewed Mr. Anderson, the owner, and having explained our position, asked to be allowed a drink for the bullocks. He flatly declined to allow this.

After about an hour's pleading, he gave his consent subject to the proviso that the bullocks should be watered in batches of ten at a time, and so preserve the hole from being puddled. We watered the stock in the evening, and by travelling all night, managed to reach Rockwood without mishap. Here I was told I would get water for myself and horses 25 miles further on.

The next water after that would be 55 miles to Hughenden, on the Flinders River.

I left the teams to make a long road round Tower Hill, which was a good-watered route. When I reached the 25-mile, where I was told I would get water, I found the ground just glassy, the water having evaporated in the December sun.

Knowing the distance I would have to go without water, I decided to hobble the horses out on dry grass, and dodged the sun round a tree until the afternoon, when I saddled up. In about ten miles I passed Cameron Downs Station, which was deserted. I reached the water about eight the following morning, very thankful to have come through the 80 miles safely. It had been a glorious moonlight, by which I could see the tracks of numerous snakes on the road. I felt that if my horses were bitten it would mean a perish for me.

I remained at the water until about 5 p.m., when I rode into Hughenden township, which was formed on the spot where I had camped with the sheep some twelve years before. I put up at Magnay's hotel, and was glad to have a square meal for dinner.

In the morning I resumed my journey, and having previously travelled the track frequently, went miles off it to obtain better feed for the horses to camp.

I overtook my own teams between Dalrymple and Townsville. and drove one of them to the camp outside the latter town.

After engaging another driver, the timber, iron, a billiard table and some stores were duly loaded and despatched. I remained to sign the four months' promissory notes for these and the goods previously referred to, and to give the teams time to negotiate the 30 miles to Thornton's Gap, as the crossing of the coast range was called at this place. At the foot of the Gap I joined them, and assisted in getting them to the top. I left the teams here and rode on to Winton.

On my arrival, I found that Fitzmaurice had sold out of most of the supplies except the grog, which he was keeping for the hotel. He then started on horseback for Townsville to give delivery of the wool, and load up his three teams with stores, etc.; also more timber and iron to build the store. He would also bring his wife and child with him.

At this time Winton was the rendezvous of some of the worst characters of the west; fights were frequent on the then unformed streets.

The rowdies threatened to take the grog in the store, and as there were no police nearer than Aramac, I deemed it best to dispose of all the liquor to Allen, the local publican, who jumped at the chance to obtain a supply.

A few residents formed themselves into a vigilance committee.

The late Mr. J. A. Macartney passed through to visit his property, Bladensburg Station, and seeing how things were, wrote to the Home Secretary asking for police protection.

My teams had now arrived with the building material, and carpenters were put on to erect the hotel. This was not finished until the end of 1879, when it was opened under the name of North Gregory Hotel.

Great difficulty was experienced with the floors, there being no timber for them. We puddled the mud and got the black gins to tramp it down, adding a picaninny to their backs to increase their weight.

About July of this year, Fitzmaurice returned from Townsville with three horses and a light dray on which he had brought his wife and little girl.

Taking a plan of the hotel with me, I started for Aramac to interview Mr. Sword, the P.M. (afterwards member of the Land Court), to obtain a provisional license. This he refused to grant until the building was erected.

When I returned Winton was entirely out of liquor, and Allen did a great business in selling bottles of painkiller as a substitute. It was laughable to see men take a bottle out of their pocket, saying, " Have a nip, mate, it's only five shillings a bottle ? "

About March, 1880, the Western River was in high flood, and ran miles wide.

Sub-Inspector Kaye, of the native police, and Mr. John Haines, the manager of Elderslie Station, were in town, and wished to get to the station 40 miles down the river.

We put our carpenter on to make a boat, which carried them and the troopers safely to their destination.

Shortly afterwards Sub-Inspector Fred Murray came out from Blackall, bringing with him Sergeant Feltham, who formed the police station in a small building which I rented to them.

There was only a log to which offenders were chained. One day Feltham went down to the store, leaving a prisoner chained up. Shortly afterwards he was surprised when he saw his prisoner (who was a very powerful man) marching into the public house carrying the log on his shoulder, and call for drinks. It took three men to get him back to the lock-up.

Fitzmaurice's teams arriving, we were enabled to complete the store building, stock it, and the hotel, and resume business, which had been suspended owing to running out of goods, etc. My teams had gone down empty, and were now on their way up with more loading.

The original name for the town—now known as Winton—was Pelican Water-holes. Bob Allen, the first resident, whom I have mentioned, acted as post-master. The mail service was a fortnightly one, going west to Wokingham Creek, thence *via* Sesbania to Hughenden. There was no date stamp supplied to the office, but by writing "Pelican Water-holes" and the date across the stamps, the post mark was made, and the stamps cancelled. This was found to be very slow and unsatisfactory.

Allen was asked to propose a name, and he suggested that the P.O. should be called "Winton." This is the name of a suburb of Bournemouth, Hampshire, England, and Allen's native place.

We had kept one of Fitzmaurice's teams to haul in firewood, and posts to fence a paddock on Vindex run, the lessees, Messrs. Scott and Gordon, having given us permission to do so.

The manager of Elderslie also gave us permission to fence in a piece of ground at the Pelican Waterhole for a vegetable garden.

The team obtained employment at Bladensburg, where Mr. Macartney was building a stockyard. As I felt clerical work to be hard on me, I would take an occasional trip with the bullocks to relieve the drudgery.

During this year the member for Gregory, Mr. Thomas McWhannell, passed through Winton, and opportunity was taken to bring under his notice the necessity for a water supply for the town. The disabilities we suffered under were pointed out. We had to procure water from a hole in Mistake Creek, two and a-half miles away, the water of which was frequently

Western River in Flood. Looking South from Railway Station.

polluted by numbers of dead cattle. By his efforts a sum was passed by Parliament for water conservation.

The Oondooroo bullock team had come in for supplies, but the driver started drinking, and was unable to take the team home.

Not having forgotten my old avocation, I took his place, and thereby began a close friendship with the Schollick Brothers, who were completely out of rations when I arrived.

During this year the town and district were invaded by a plague of rats, travelling from north-east to south-west in hundreds of thousands.

The vermin would eat the buttons off one's coat when camping out. Cats and dogs were surfeited from killing them. I told the Chinaman cook of the hotel that I would give him a pound of tobacco if he caught a hundred rats. That night, as I was sleeping on a stretcher at the back of the store, I was several times awakened by what seemed to be a stamping of feet. In the morning I found that the Chinaman had obtained an ironbark wooden shutter, and rigged up a figure four trap with bait underneath, and by this means had obtained a wheelbarrow full of dead rats.

These rats had bushy tails, and apparently lived on the roots of grass. These devastated the country through which they passed. It was unknown whence they came from or whither they went.

The rats were followed by a plague of dead cats in the water-holes. The rats had gone and the cats having had plenty, did not follow, but died in the water-holes.

Our team driver was James Gordon, one of two brothers who owned the selection which later became famous as Mount Morgan. We sold this team to Warenda Station, and James Gordon went with it.

During this year (1879), Vindex Station was purchased from Scott and Gordon by Chirnside, Riley and Co., of Victoria, who, like other investors, spent money lavishly to develop the country.

The manager was Mr. J. B. Riley. This gentleman died in 1889, but is still affectionately remembered throughout the district.

To those who knew him, his death was felt as that of a staunch personal friend. By none was his death more regretted than by those who worked for him, either as permanent or casual employees, and by whom a monument to his memory has been erected on Vindex.

Outside the property he controlled, J. B. had three personal hobbies, a good horse, the Winton Divisional Board, and the local Hospital. Of these three hobbies his principal one was the hospital and its sick occupants. On his death it was felt that the most appropriate monument to him would be a new ward for eye complaints to be added to the hospital.

This was generously subscribed to by all classes, and the J. B. Riley ward of the institution served to remind us of one who, by his charity, goodness and generosity, was a good man, but whose shyness did not allow of this being known. His brother, Mr. F. W. Riley, and Mr. R. L. Chirnside, who were closely associated with him, carried on his good work, and became as deservedly popular.

Throughout this year (1880) the town and district had made progress, and new people were coming in.

We were now doing a good business in both store and hotel, consequently we had to depend on drivers for our teams without supervision.

It was decided that I should follow the teams to Townsville to in some way dispose of them, and also to bring up a man to assist Fitzmaurice in the hotel.

When I reached Dalrymple I learnt that one of Fitzmaurice's teams had been swept over the rocks while crossing the Burdekin River, and that eight of the bullocks were drowned. It appeared that the river, though not a-swim, was running strong at the crossing.

The first team crossed safely, but on the other reaching the strong water, the driver of the team rode around to the off-side to keep the bullocks up the stream. His efforts were unavailing. With his horse he was carried into deep water, from which they were rescued in an exhausted condition. Not so with the team.

The bullocks were all drowned, and the waggon wrecked on the rocks. Fortunately, being empty, only eight bullocks were yoked to the waggon, but they were the pick of the team. This accident strengthened our desire to dispose of the teams.

I sold Fitzmaurice's remaining team at Townsville at a satisfactory figure, and my own two teams were sold on their arrival to one of the drivers on terms.

The agreement was that we should provide him with loading from Townsville to Winton at the rate of £30 per ton, until he had paid the purchase money of it. This he did in a few trips.

These teams could not carry the whole of the goods I had purchased, so I left an order with Clifton and Aplin to forward the remainder by carriers as soon as they could despatch them. I engaged a suitable man to assist Fitzmaurice, and we left with saddle and pack horses for Winton, taking the shorter road *via* Charters Towers.

This we left at Rockwood, to make a still shorter route across the Downs from Culloden Station, over which the road party had ploughed a furrow across to cut the head of Jessamine Creek, at the back of Oondooroo Station.

In crossing the divide between the Landsborough and Diamantina waters, we rode over virgin country which was infested with bush rats, and numbers of tiger snakes gorged after eating them.

In one place, which was 25 miles from water, the snakes were so numerous that we had a difficulty in getting our pack horses safely through them. Yet it is argued that snakes are never very far from water.

In 1880, Cobb and Co. bought up a number of mail services throughout Western Queensland, and the general regularity and convenience of their coaches served to open up the country. Cobb and Co. carried out its contracts under great difficulty in times of flood, but more frequently of droughts, and their record is one of which the company and its servants might well be proud. Their coaches are now practically of the past, but the time was when Cobb and Co.'s name was a synonym for efficiency and, when humanly possible, for punctuality. There were many less enjoyable ways of realising life than by, say, to be leaving Barcaldine for Aramac in the dark of an early morning on the box seat of a coach behind a spanking team of greys, driven by a master hand with the whip and ribbons. And then if one stayed the night at a stage, where two or more drivers met, and exchanged experiences of the trip, their horses, but more than all of their passengers, what an interesting time might be passed.

It was remarkable how observant of passengers the drivers would be, while the passenger all the time laboured under the impression that the driver's time was taken up with his horses.

The idiosyncracies of passengers would be discussed by drivers, and it more than once happened I have heard of the peculiarities of certain passengers at places hundreds of miles from where they came under observation.

Nearing Charleville, on a road I had not travelled before, I had a trip I had made from Normanton towards Croydon related to me by a driver whom I had never seen until then.

I learnt he was told the story by the driver of the Blackall coach, who had heard it in Barcaldine from Tommy Thompson, who was told it in Winton by Tommy Cahill, who received it at Hughenden from Martin Warneminde.

I was quite satisfied and did not inquire further.

Judging by the way they fulfilled the requests at different mail stages, these men must have been gifted with wonderful memories. At one stage a driver might be asked to call at Smith's, the storekeeper, and "tell him to give you a couple of pounds of tea and some potatoes for me;" at another to get a pair of boots, size three, for the missus; at Jones', to get a bottle of eye lotion, and so on. These orders would be faithfully given on arrival, and the goods obtained before the driver would attend to his own comfort or pleasure.

From personal knowledge of Cobb and Co.'s men, in fact to western mailmen generally, one might lift one's hat with respect as a tribute to honesty and faithfulness for work well done and duty honourably carried out.

CHAPTER X.

IN 1880, our young township was becoming heard of, and was honoured with its first police magistrate in the person of Mr. Robert Johnstone. This gentleman had been a Native Police officer, and was associated with Dalrymple in his explorations on the coast north of Cardwell. Dalrymple so much appreciated Johnstone's work that he named the outlet of one of our great sugar districts—and a most beautiful stream —after him.

I believe there is only one copy of Dalrymple's narrative of his expedition extant, and that is in our Parliamentary library. This narrative should be re-published as a school paper so that present-day Queenslanders might know something of the history of discovery within their own country. I doubt if many children, or even adults, know of the work done by Dalrymple, Hodgkinson, Landsboro, the Jardines, and many other Queensland explorers.

At this time the Court House and lock-up were in the same building, opposite our store, in the main street. It was built originally for a boarding house.

All the Winton streets were named after the stations which lay in the direction in which the streets were running. For instance, east and west—Elderslie, Vindex, Cork and Dagworth. Those facing the north were called Oondooroo, Manuka, Seshania and Werna.

Mr. Johnstone conducted the first Government land sale this year, at which Lynett and ourselves secured the allotments facing Elderslie Street on the north side, extending through to Vindex Street at the back, comprising an area of about three

acres each. We had put a high figure on our improvements, and we purchased the land at the upset price of £6/10/- per half acre. Allen had only a half-acre facing the same street, and this was purchased by the Queensland National Bank. The bank immediately opened business in a Coffee room, which Allen had erected at the back, pulling down the public house to erect banking chambers in its place. Mr. Doherty was the first manager, succeeded by Mr. Alexander, and by Mr. Arthur Spencer a year or so later.

In 1879, Julius von Berger, a refugee from Schleswig Holstein, to escape Prussian rule, commenced business as a chemist. He was clever in his profession, unassuming in character, and behind his retiring disposition was a fund of kindness and simplicity which endeared him to all. He died, much regretted, a few years back at a ripe old age.

The Government had now let contracts for building a court house and police barracks in Vindex Street and post office in Elderslie Street.

In 1881, a contract was also let by the Government to excavate a tank of 15,000 yards, to a man named Collins. He quickly commenced operations with his plant at Magpie Gully, about half-a-mile from the town. When he had made a hole of about 12 feet deep, a very heavy thunderstorm filled the excavation with water. Previously, he had to cart his water nearly three miles, and he was now desirous of utilising the water in the excavation for his camp and horses. With difficulty he obtained permission from the Government Inspector supervising the work to make another roadway on the opposite bank. When this was allowed, he was able to continue the work until he had got to a depth of 19ft. 6in., or 18in. more than the specified depth of 18ft. He then removed the earth from the opposite side to the required depth of 18ft. When completed, he put in a voucher to be paid for the extra 18 inches, which the Supervising Inspector refused to certify, unless the whole

depth across was 18 feet in accordance with the specifications. The earth was taken from one side of the bottom of the tank and deposited on the other, to reduce the whole depth by 18 inches. "Great is Red Tape."

There was a change of management on Elderslie by the appointment of Mr. Alexander Gordon. He was a splendid specimen of a man, 6ft. 7in. in height, built in proportion, and most popular. I first met him between Evesham and East Darr Stations. I inquired the distance to the latter station, which he was then managing. He replied, "Oh! a couple of canters and a smoke." It is told of him that when he was travelling on the coach between Charters Towers and Hughenden, he stayed one night at a stage which was a lignum hut, rather small in size. The driver informed the other passengers that when he called Gordon at 4 a.m., he found that he had stretched himself during the night, and that his feet were through the lignum, and so far outside that fowls were roosting on his legs.

About this time many of the properties were changing hands. The Schollicks still retained Oondooroo; Elderslie was held by Sir Samuel Wilson; Dagworth, by Fairbairns, who shortly afterwards sold out to Macpherson and Co.; Bladensburg, by John Arthur Macartney; Sesbania, by Manifold, Bostock and Co.; Manuka, by Anderson and Nicol, who sold out to Baillie, Fraser and Donald; Ayrshire Downs and Cork, by McIlwraith and Smyth. The latter gentleman had camped with us when we were on the road to Winton in 1878. He was taking out a blacksmith named Morgan for Ayrshire Downs Station. Morgan afterwards started a blacksmith's shop in Winton.

Mr. Smyth was afterwards elevated to the Upper House, and although of a retiring nature, was of a friendly disposition.

All these investors were pouring money as if from a stream, and developing their properties.

The greater proportion of the capital so spent was from Victoria, and to this State Western Queensland must be grateful for its development.

Of all the then owners I have mentioned, and most of whom were resident on their properties, only one remains—John Bostock, of Sesbania. If those men did not win success they deserved it, and no one was more worthy (and there were many worthy men) than John Bostock. Schollick's spent over £100,000 on Oondooroo, and left it practically penniless. Macpherson drove from Dagworth with all his belongings on a buck-board, leaving unprofitable, and lost many thousands of pounds. Fraser, of Manuka, who came a little later, died of a broken heart. Western Queensland is greatly subject to mirages, and it is of the nature of these which deluded many men with bright hopes to spend great fortunes. These men battled on to the end, but being of fighting races, when they went down they were still fighting with never a word of despair or of defeat, and John Bostock alone remains.

In this year Sir Thomas and Lady McIlwraith passed through Winton on their way to Ayrshire Downs. The whole of the inhabitants turned out to meet them at the police water-hole (six miles from Winton) after dark. An address was read to Sir Thomas by the aid of a lamp on the road. I had the pleasure of having them as guests in my cottage.

This was my first meeting with McIlwraith, and I was greatly struck with his personality. He was a man, big and broad, both physically and mentally. Yet like most strong men, he was very head-strong and impatient of obstruction to or criticism of his proposals. Neither could he understand that it was not given to every man to see quickly and to act promptly, attributes he possessed in a remarkable degree.

At this time he had his Trans-continental Railway in mind, and he patiently tried to get me to realise how closer settlement

of the western country by smaller areas would obtain under it more than it would, under the conditions by which it was then held, that is, in very large areas. The then short experience of residents of the western country were conditions of drought, and I must admit that I thought his ideas were visionary. I have, however, lived to see the success of the grazing farm system and the great improvements effected by underground water supplies. In 1881, these were practically undreamt of. It is likely that McIlwraith could see farther into the future and dream dreams unthought of by others.

The publication of McIlwraith's scheme without doubt gave the hint to Dutton, whose Land Act of 1884 was the inception of our present system of grazing farms. It was unfortunate that the most bitter opponents of McIlwraith's scheme were of the squatting class, who generally resented the cutting up of the vast areas held by them. Had the squatters of the day not defeated his proposals, the grazing-farm system would probably have come into existence some years earlier than it did, and long ago the Gulf country would have had an overland railway. That country would be maintaining a large and prosperous population instead of being, as it is now, almost deserted, and open to danger of occupation by coloured races, and a menace to the safety of Australia. McIlwraith was a far sighted statesman, having the interests of Queensland at heart, and not a politician ready and willing to secure votes.

In this year, Fitzmaurice's sight became affected, and he made a trip to Sydney for expert advice. The whole business of the store and hotel was now thrown on my hands. It was found on Fitzmaurice's return, after an absence of six months, that he was almost blind. By mutual arrangement, it was decided I should buy him out, and he left Winton one of the best-liked men connected with its foundation, and as I found him, a good friend and an honest partner. The life of a hotel-keeper did not appeal to me, so I found a purchaser for the

hotel at a satisfactory figure, in Mr. W. B. Steele, of Aramac, who took delivery in April, 1882.

William Brown Steele was a strange character. I believe he had qualified as a chemist, but followed the different gold rushes from California to Victoria, New Zealand, and Peak Downs, thence to Aramac and Winton. His delight was to be accused of being an unscrupulous gambler—of the type described by Bret Harte. I know he was fairly successful at a game of cards, but this was due more to superior playing than to good luck or manipulation. Still, if one who thought he was Steele's equal, proposed a game, the latter would ask:—"Shall we play the game, or all we know?" If the former was agreed to, the game was strictly honest. If the latter was decided on, well, there was some wonderful playing on both sides. I never knew of Steele playing with one inexperienced, or of transgressing the rules of the game unless he was first challenged by his opponent. Then he did play all he knew, and that was something. For many years Steele ran a consultation on the Melbourne Cup which was well patronised, until the anti-gambling legislation, which drove Adams from Queensland, suppressed it, but did not stamp out gambling.

I arranged a partnership with Mr. W. M. Campbell, traveller for Stewart and Hemmant, of Brisbane. He and his wife and family were settled in Fitzmaurice's house by the end of this year.

The Bank of New South Wales had also opened a branch in a small building on the south side of Elderslie Street. Mr. Barnier was the first manager, succeeded afterwards by Mr. Alf. Thompson.

Major Lewis, a veteran of the Indian Mutiny and Papal war, and a fine old Irish gentleman, arrived to succeed Mr. Johnstone as police magistrate. One of the first cases brought before him was a claim for the return of money, under the

following circumstances:—I had received a letter from a man on Hamilton Downs Station, stating he was coming in with the station dray for a load of rations, and was anxious to get married. He asked me to look for an eligible female who was willing to yoke up with him, and enclosed his photograph. Treating the matter as a joke, I read the letter to the girls employed at the hotel. The laundress, a big strapping woman, said she was willing to negotiate with him. On the man's arrival I took him round and introduced him. After a couple of days' courtship a date was fixed for the marriage. As an earnest of his good faith, the man gave the woman a cheque for £26 to buy her wedding trousseau. When the day arrived she refused to carry out the promise of marriage. The man came to me for advice, stating that she would not have him, neither would she return any of the money advanced.

I wrote Mr. Conran, the owner of Hamilton Downs Station, explaining the cause of the man's delay, and as the station was short of rations, Conran came in. He and I interviewed the woman, pointing out her dishonesty, but we were told to mind our own business. Mr. Conran then went to consult the P.M. The sergeant of police told Conran the P.M. was engaged, and asked could he do anything for him. Mr. Conran said he had come up about a girl appropriating a sum of money given as a condition of marriage. The sergeant said, "An' shure, an' won't she have yez now." Conran enjoyed the joke of being taken as the rejected lover.

Major Lewis and the police eventually recovered a portion of the money, and the man returned sadder but much wiser, and I renounced for the future any desire to act as matrimonial agent.

About October, 1882, we received a wire from Hughenden, advising that some teams which were carrying our loading had been caught in a flooded creek, and the goods damaged. I immediately started for Wongalee Creek, about 25 miles the

other side of Hughenden, or 170 miles from Winton. I found on my arrival the ground in the vicinity covered with drapery, boots, ironmongery, besides nearly empty salt bags, etc., etc., put out to dry. It appeared these teams had crossed the creek and camped on the flat below the bank. A heavy thunderstorm had fallen up the creek during the night and brought the water down a banker, submerging the waggons, and destroying about £1,000 worth of goods. We had no redress against the carrier, the accident, or incident, being considered an act of Providence. The merchants assisted us by renewing our bills for four months longer.

In the same year, we ordered a large consignment of goods from Townsville. It was a dry year, and the teams carrying them were stuck at Hughenden.

In those days the Government had not made the water tanks on the road between Hughenden and Winton, and on the high, open downs country permanent natural water was not obtainable only at long distances. Hearing of the teams being stuck up, we immediately wired a duplicate order to Rockhampton. The latter goods were despatched by rail to Bogantungan (the then terminus of the central line), and loaded on teams. The drought conditions, although not so pronounced as in the Hughenden district, also existed in the Central. These teams were also blocked.

In about six months after the first order was given, the whole 14 teams with the Rockhampton and Townsville goods arrived on the same day at Winton, and I was called upon to pay £2,000 cash down for carriage alone; while our summer goods arrived in the middle of winter.

Fortunately we were able to meet our liabilities.

In 1882, we had a visit—and the first—from a clergyman of any denomination.

He asked me if there was a place in which he could hold service on Sunday. I told him that the only place was the billiard-room at the hotel. I prepared it for the ceremony by draping a blue blanket over the table, and I put a red one opposite over the cue rack, thinking it might help him to put a little fire into his discourse. When all was ready, I obtained the bullock bell from the kitchen. The Chinaman cook, who was a sporting character, said :—" Wha for, nother raffle, all ri, put me down one pund." He refused, however, to give the money when he learnt it was for a church.

When the clergyman was leaving, we decided to present him with a purse of sovereigns in Campbell's house, and I was deputed to hand it to him.

In making a short cut to the house I had to pass the hotel stables, into which a squatter in the orthodox breeches, boots and spurs, was riding. He called out :—" I say, Corfield, what are you wearing a coat for ? " I replied, " There's a function on ; I'm going to present these sovereigns to a parson." He asked, " Any champagne ? " I replied, " Whips of it." He then said, " Hold on, till I put my horse in the yard, and I'll come with you." On reaching the house, I introduced him to the parson prior to the presentation, and we had some champagne. With a few words I presented the purse of sovereigns, when we naturally concluded we would be thanked, but instead the parson said, " Let us pray." We all then knelt to our chairs. Suddenly, as if from one in great pain, I heard the word " Ker-ist." Thinking the parson had been bitten by a snake or something, I looked round, but he appeared quite at ease. I then saw over in the corner the young squatter with blood oozing out of his pants. He had sat upon his long-necked spurs. The parson went on with the prayer, but those present were more occupied suppressing their laughter than in listening to the parson's prayers.

CHAPTER XI.

IN 1883, Judge Miller, with the present Mr. Justice Real as Crown Prosecutor, opened the first District Court in Winton. Fred Riley and myself had been put on the "Commission of the Peace," and appeared before the Judge to be sworn in. We then decided that we should without delay show that we were magistrates, and prepared to carry out our duties. We found a good, hard-drinking man, and offered him ten shillings to spend in drink. He gladly accepted the offer, and shortly afterwards we were asked by the police to sit on a case of drunkenness and disorderly conduct. Our man had kept to his agreement, and was brought before us. We severely reprimanded him for his conduct and discharged him. Judge Miller hearing of it, frequently recalled the joke to my memory, and we had many a good laugh over it.

Early in this year, Mr. Griffith (afterwards Sir Samuel) and Mr. Dickson (afterwards Sir James) made a tour of the north-west, and travelled by coach from Hughenden to Winton. The party was detained a night at Stack's public house, about mid-way between the two towns, whilst the mailman rode over to Sesbania with the mail. Mr. Griffith here made the acquaintance of Schofield, who was managing a store near Stack's for Charlie Rowe. Stack's house was not an inviting place, so the two Ministers spent the evening in Schofield's quarters. The latter was shortly afterwards appointed as Government agent on board the "Hopeful." The history of this vessel is well-known in the Law Courts of Queensland. Messrs. Griffith and Dickson were treated to a wine party in Winton. There was but little enthusiasm shown at the meeting, the majority of those present being strong McIlwraithians.

Mr. Fraser, the managing partner of Messrs. Baillie, Fraser and Donald, of Manuka Station, had been in the army, and had served through the Indian Mutiny. He was highly respected by all, but was not popular excepting among those with whom he was intimate. They knew him to be very hospitable and kind, and a thorough gentleman. He came of a high Scottish family, and was proud that one of his ancestral relations had his head cut off for loyalty to his King. I remember being a silent listener to the relation of some happenings which at one time or other occurred in Ireland. The postmaster was a man who, rather young in years, appeared to have had some experiences. He was telling Fraser of the ill-feeling which was existent between two British regiments in a town somewhere in Ireland, while he was there. One was the 65th, an English, and the other the 89th, an Irish regiment. It seems that the latter had been formed from the North Cork militia, which, I understand, bore an unenviable reputation from their conduct during the rebellion in 1798. The townspeople had a long memory of this, and in the disturbance amongst the soldiers, supported the English regiment against their own countrymen. Fraser listened to it all, and then said, " By jove, wasn't it bitter ; I was captain of a company of the 89th, and some of my men were badly knocked about." I thought it made the world very small to hear such incidents being related in the far west of Queensland.

Now that we had two banks, four hotels, a chemist, saddler, besides other branches of industry, we felt that we were being drawn perilously within the influences of civilisation and its drawbacks.

The manager of one of the banks, who was deservedly popular owing to his genial character, the kind way in which he could refuse one an overdraft, and then suggest quite friendly and cheerfully to the applicant: " What do you think ; shall we put the gloves on ? " This gentleman had a very peculiar hobby, to attend the sick and dying, and to bury the dead.

Sir Thomas McIlwraith

Some incidents connected with his hobby, are as follows:—A tank sinker from Ayrshire Downs died in the hospital. That day a new warder and his wife, who came from beyond Boulia, were put on. The doctor's instructions were that any person dying of typhoid fever, as did the man in question, was to be taken out of the ward and buried as quickly as possible. Immediately the man died, the wardsman was taking the body straight into the morgue, after sending word to the blacksmith, who was also the undertaker, to come up, and remove the body straight away for burial. Some of the patients, seeing the body being carried out, verbally assisted the new wardsman with their suggestions. Thus, the dead man was to be washed, shaved, and have a clean shirt put on. It was late in the afternoon; the wardsman did not like handling the corpse, so the story goes, that he got a bucket of water and a mop, and mopped the body down. This he left on the table in the morgue, and forgot all about the clean shirt or the shaving. There was an understanding between the police sergeant and the bank manager that as there were no clergymen of any denomination in the town, the sergeant would read the services for the Roman Catholics, and the manager for all others. The undertaker-blacksmith would notify the reader required, and funerals were carried out at any hour, day or night. The tank sinker's funeral was timed to leave the hospital about 12.30 a.m. For some reason the bank manager attended this funeral. The body was then in the coffin, and a start made for the cemetery. There were some of the dead man's mates present, and the bank manager heard them complaining that it was a d——d shame to bury a man naked. When the funeral reached the graveside, the idea struck the manager that, as he was wearing a clean, white shirt, it would be the proper thing to open the coffin, put his shirt on the corpse, and this was done. The action gave great pleasure and satisfaction to the men present, who, as a mark of gratitude, on return to town, wished to knock up the public-house people and shout drinks for all hands.

One night there was a funeral at which the manager was to read prayers. The undertaker in this case had a small cart, used as a hearse, drawn by a mule recently broken in, and not too quiet. As the funeral party was walking to the cemetery in the dark, some one struck a match. This was too much for the mule, which bolted across the plain at the back of the cemetery. He reached the edge of a small gully and propped. The weight behind, however, forced him over the bank. The coffin fell out, and the top coming off, the body rolled out on the ground. After extricating the mule, the body was put into the coffin again, and the top put on, the nails driven home with stones. As the mourners objected to the further use of the mule, the party carried the body to the cemetery much to the disgust of the undertaker.

Going home from Winton one night after a spree, a boundary-rider from Ayrshire Downs got off his horse a few miles out, and fell asleep. He woke up some time in the night, fairly sober, and found his horse gone, so he started to walk, but having got off the road, perished midway between the 20-mile and the Cockatoo dam, well-known places on this road. The bank manager was assisting in the search for the lost man, and happened to be with the police when the body was found, which was buried on the spot. The dead man's wife lived in Toowoomba, and as the manager had been remitting money from her husband to her, he informed her of the latter's death. She acknowledged the letter, and expressed a wish that the body might be dug up and brought into Winton for decent burial. She asked how long the body would have to be buried before the flesh would be off the bones and the remains could be brought in. The doctor advised it would be fully six months. At the end of this time the widow arrived in Winton to carry out her desires. Early one Sunday morning the widow, accompanied by the bank manager and the undertaker, left town to exhume the remains. The party had a white table-cloth in a red gin case with the cover on to carry the bones. It was an

extremely hot day as the party reached the grave, and hobbled the horses out. The manager related "that he and the undertaker soon had the bones upon the cloth in a nice little heap. The widow examined each bone as it was laid down, and she missed one of the knee-caps, so nothing would pacify her until it was found. This we did eventually by rubbing the soil between our hands and breaking the lumps. It was now near dark. We had arranged for the priest to be at the cemetery by sun-down, and that the grave would be ready. When we arrived about 10 o'clock at night the priest and the grave-digger had gone. I then suggested that we should take the bones in the box to Lynett's hotel, but the landlady wouldn't hear of the remains being left at the hotel. Eventually we left the box and the bones in the grave. The priest came out the next morning, and having read the service, the remains were buried decently, and the widow was happy."

The manager of one of the stations had died at the North Gregory hotel. The body was immediately carried into the manager's private quarters, at the rear of the business part of the bank. The accountant was seen shortly afterwards protesting against the room, which happened to be his, being used as a morgue. He is to this day certain that from the spot where the hand of the corpse struck the wall as it was being put down, knocking may still be heard on the anniversary of the incident. This bank manager was possessed of great energy and perseverance, and a business capacity seldom met with. He was highly respected and extremely popular with everybody high and low throughout the western country, but he is now the head of one of our principal industries. I often wonder if he still has the inclination to bury people.

Our firm had been supplying goods and spirits to a storekeeper at Boulia, whose P.N.'s for a considerable sum of money were not met. Early in 1884, I decided to go out to look into matters. I was accompanied by a Mr. Howard, who was on

the look out for a hotel. On my arrival at Boulia I found that the storekeeper had erected a building as an hotel on a piece of land which he had made several promises to purchase. I found the owner, bought the land, and claimed the building erected upon it. This I considered as equal to the money owing to us. Thos. Lynett, of Winton, had started a branch store in Boulia, and had been supplying the same customer with goods on credit, having the building as security. When he heard that I had purchased the land and claimed the building, he wired to Brisbane to stop the sale. However, nothing came of it. I sold the property to Mr. Howard, and it was not long before he was able to wipe out his indebtedness.

Mr. Eglinton, late P.M. in Brisbane, then held a similar appointment at Boulia. A race meeting, which included a hurdle race, was being held. In this race all the horses baulked at the jumps and delayed the running. It was then decided to let the races wait while the visitors had lunch, etc. The judge joined our party. It was a hot day, even for Boulia; refreshments were generous, and in demand. The judge, in common with the visitors, was a thirsty soul. When we next turned our attention to the course, a race was being run, so the judge decided to get into the box. A grey and brown horse had negotiated the hurdles and were coming up the straight neck and neck. When they passed the post the Judge decided that the piebald horse had won. During my stay at Boulia I camped, by the invitation of Mr. Coghlan, the manager at Goodwood Station, just across the Burke River from the township. Mr. Eglinton, P.M., and Mr. Shaw, manager of Diamantina Lakes Station, were also guests, and we were glad to retire to this retreat after the uproarious happenings incidental to western towns during race time.

Before leaving, the P.M. asked Mr. Shaw and myself, who were both magistrates, if we would take a " didemus potastatum " to Monkira, about 100 miles down the river from Diamantina

Lakes, and swear in Mr. Debney, the manager, as a Justice of the Peace. We consented; it was an excuse for seeing more of the country, and for a longer outing.

After a few days spent at the Lakes, we started with my team and buggy, accompanied by Mr. Shaw's little daughter. We reached Davonport Downs, then managed by Mr. McGuigan. He told us there were several very heavy sand hills to negotiate, and offered the loan of a pair of staunch heavy buggy horses. He suggested leaving my horses to spell. I accepted the offer. Shaw and myself took it in turns to drive. At one of these sand hills the horses stuck Shaw up, and refused, in spite of his persuasions, to budge. After giving them a spell, Shaw suggested I should take the reins. I had prepared my whip with a new cracker, but failed to start the horses. I then addressed the horses in the language of bullock-drivers, and stood up in the buggy to more effectually use the whip. The horses started, and I kept them going. Just then a small voice was heard from the back seat of the trap, "Mr. Corfield, will you please remember there's a lady in the buggy." Shaw and I immediately retired into our boots, but the horses gave no further trouble.

At that time I think Monkira was the farthest station down the river. Mr. Debney had come from Adelaide. He and Mrs. Debney gave us a splendid reception. The governess to the family afterwards became Mrs. R. K. Milson, of Springvale, and her eldest son lately was married to Miss Morgan-Reade, of Winton. On our return to Davonport Downs, we found Mr. McGuigan laid up with fever, so I took him into Winton.

In November, 1884, Sir Thos. McIlwraith, who had been inspecting his stations, passed through Winton, but while at Ayrshire Downs he received news of his father's death, and refused all demonstrations. I drove him to Vindex. On the road out I told him I contemplated leaving for England the following year. He gave me many hints for my guidance;

also a letter of introduction to his brother, William McIlwraith, in London.

The western country was now suffering from a very severe and prolonged drought which brought ruin to many men, and heavy loss to those who pulled through. Taking advantage of the dry spell, I had a small tank excavated in my paddock. A heavy thunderstorm, averaging a little over two inches, fell over the town, and being anxious to learn if it had any water, I asked two friends to walk with me to the tank. We plodded about a mile in the heavy soil. I was satisfied with the result of my inspection; not so my companions, who lost their shoes in the boggy ground, and heaped anathemas on me and my dam.

Altogether their language on the return journey was of a very lurid nature.

This was the first rain for eleven months, and to celebrate it, Winton held carnival for three weeks, during which time no business of any sort was attempted. The time was devoted to sports and jollifications. About two miles east and west of the town ran wire fences, the road passing through gates. The peculiarity of this storm was that no rain fell beyond the fences. It was a strange sight to see green grass on one side of the wires and outside perfectly bare.

I have somewhere in this narrative alluded to lignum, and it may not be out of place at this juncture to describe what it is. Lignum is a small shrub which grows in the dry water courses. It is much used as walls of houses—timber and iron being very expensive—roofing sheds, and such like. It does not keep out the rain, but is sun proof. With the thermometer running well past the 100 deg. in the shade, a roasting hot wind such as obtains in the western country, there are many worse pleasures to be enjoyed in the west than a lignum shed and a canvas bag of cool rain water. Had old Omar known of the canvas water bag, he would prefer to sing its praises rather than those of a jug of wine. Blessings on the man who first thought of it.

CHAPTER XII.

IN April, 1885, I left Winton by coach on my way to England. Mr. J. D. Wienholt, of Warenda Station, and Mr. J. B. Henderson, late Hydraulic Engineer, were fellow passengers. About 10 miles from Muttaburra we were met by a cavalcade of people on horse back and in buggies to meet Mr. Henderson. The coach having stopped, some bottles of champagne were opened, and Wienholt and I were invited to join in. Mr. Henderson accompanied the procession to town. Later in the day we were invited to the dinner to him, to celebrate the completion of the town dam and tank, which were still quite dry. Muttaburra had not had rain for nearly a year. Mr. Henderson left us here to be conveyed by private buggy to Aramac, where we again met. I travelled down the coast from Rockhampton by the old "Keilawarra," afterwards sunk in a collision.

The Russian war scare was on, and passing Lytton we had to undergo a strict examination to prove that we were not spies. It can be imagined with what prayers a number of sunburnt, outback Queenslanders paraded to satisfy the defence authorities that they were peaceful and law-abiding citizens. I remained three days in Brisbane, the evenings of which I spent at the Exhibition, which was frequented by ladies and gentlemen indulging in the pleasure of roller-skating. I resumed my journey to Sydney, and left this city by train a few days later for Melbourne. This was my first visit to the latter city, and I enjoyed perambulating through its streets. I joined the s.s. "Sir John Elder" here, and sailed for England.

Passing through the Red Sea, we met the New South Wales contingent returning from Suakim, where they had joined the

Imperial troops, just too late to take any active part in the Soudan campaign.

When we reached Lake Timsah, half-way through the Suez Canal, we were detained because of a dredge having sunk in the Canal and blocked the channel. A party from the ship, having its headquarters at Shepheard's Hotel, was formed to visit Cairo and the Pyramids.

The dinner at 9 p.m. was held in a quadrangle of the hotel.

The after-dinner scene was very charming. Chinese lanterns were hung in the trees, the ladies in evening dress, the officers of the Imperial Army in mess dress of different colours.

Among those present were Lord Wolseley and General Macpherson.

Coming down the Pyramid of Cheops, I had an Arab holding each hand, and a boy with a gourd of water behind. The boy had unwound his cummerbund to place under my arms by which to steady me in jumping down from one ledge to the other. Half-way down I suggested a halt, when one of the Arabs accosted me—"Which fella country you come from?" "America?"

"No!"

"England?"

"No!"

"Australia?"

"Yes!"

"Ah!" he said, "very good kangaroo, you!"

We visited all the places of interest, including the battle-field of Tel-eh-kebir.

We reached our ship, which was still blocked in the Lake. The French people in Ismailia sent their launches out to the ships, so we continued putting time in going ashore every day and riding on donkeys. These animals were generally called after

beautiful women celebrities. Mine was called " Lillie Langtry." When we got clear, 40 steamers were blocked. Our ship led the procession through the Canal. There was only just room for us to pass where the accident had happened, and when we reached Suez 200 ships, including several men-of-war, were awaiting our arrival to pass south.

We spent a day at Naples, and in time I arrived in Plymouth Sound in mid-summer, having left it 23 years before in mid-winter. As I had accepted an invitation to visit my cousin, Mr. S. P. Newbery, who resided at Plympton St. Mary, six miles out from Plymouth, so I left the ship. This relative was land steward to Lord Morley. He had been selected to judge the cattle at the Royal Agricultural Show at Preston, Lancashire, and I accompanied him. The warm, genial weather added to my enjoyment. We took up our quarters at Blackpool, as there was no accommodation to be had in Preston. The Prince of Wales (late King Edward the VII.) attended the show, and Mr. Newbery was appointed to show him round. I followed as if in the Prince's retinue, and enjoyed the novelty of the situation. Returning to Devonshire I spent a glorious time keeping my cousin's horse in condition, and occasionally following the hounds. Whilst there I made a trip to the Isle of Wight, and was present in Fotheringham Church when Princess Beatrice was married to Prince Henry of Battenburg. I need hardly say I was not present by invitation.

During my stay at Plympton St. Mary, the 1886 elections were held, and my relative being in politics a conservative, took an active part in the return of Sir John Kennaway (who died a few years ago, father of the House of Commons). Mr. Newbery was chairman of many of his meetings at which I attended. A polling booth was at the school house at Plympton, and on the day of the poll, I was much amused to see gentlemen's carriages being driven to the poll with the coachmen and footmen in livery, and men in their working dress

stepping out to vote. Presently a Devonshire farmer drove up in his donkey cart. I noticed the donkey was dressed in the Liberal colours. The farmer recorded his vote, and came out on the porch, when he was accosted by another farmer, thus:—

"Wull! Farmer Symes, you been an' voted?"

"Yus," he replied.

"Wull, but how's this, I allus thocht ye was a Conservative?"

"So I be."

"But look at yer dunkey ther' all dress'd up in the Liberal colours?"

"Ah!" he said, "I'm a man, but that's an ass."

On returning to London I delivered my letter of introduction to Mr. William McIlwraith, by whose kindness I met many leading business people, as well as Lord Randolph Churchill, who appeared to be built up of fine live wires.

I left England in May, 1886, taking my passage through Cook and Son, *via* America. From New York I made trips to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington. After a week or so I joined the overland train for Albany, visiting Niagara Falls, and other interesting places in that locality. Going on to Chicago, I spent a few days visiting the meat works. Wonderful energy had been shown in re-building the city after the destructive fire which happened a short time previously. From Denver I travelled by the narrow gauge "Denver and Rio Grande" line to Utah. Here I spent a week amongst the Mormans, who are a remarkably industrious and energetic, as well as peculiar people. One of the elders introduced me to a daughter by his tenth wife. I had frequent dips in the Salt Lake, in company with the Mormans, their wives and families. The water of the lake is so buoyant that one might throw up one's hands and remain upright. The body would sink only to the chest.

The trains were crowded with men belonging to the grand army of the Republic who were going to San Francisco, where the 20th anniversary of peace, after the Civil War was to be held. The Americans were all very friendly to me. I was invited to join them, and as I was much sunburnt easily passed as one of the veterans.

I took up my quarters at the Palace Hotel, which occupied about four acres of ground. I believe it was at that time the largest hotel in the world. I managed to get a room at four and a-half dollars a day. When I entered it I could see nothing but "Corfield." There were mirrors all round excepting where the furniture stood. In the quadrangle, just below my balcony, a band played continuously.

Frisco was *en-fete*. Arches were erected in Market Street, and bunting was flying everywhere. I spent a week in the city, having for a companion a young doctor, for whom I had brought a parcel from his parents in England. He obtained a *locum tenens*, and gave up the time to pilot me round. We visited every point of interest, including the Chinese gambling dens, in and around 'Frisco, which has a very interesting history dating from the time of the Spanish missions.

On the trip across the Pacific we had a nice complement of passengers. A day at Honolulu was spent enjoying the beauty spots. We tried to call on the "King," but as he was enjoying a carousal, he could not receive us. We called at Apia, in the Samoan Islands, and when crossing to New Zealand, we noticed that the sea was covered by what appeared to be pumice stone. On our arrival at Auckland we heard of the eruption of Mount Tarawera. Mr. Rutherford, a gentleman well-known throughout N.S.W. and West Queensland, the principal of Cobb and Co. in Australia, was a passenger with his daughter from 'Frisco. I accompanied them during the three days the boat remained in Auckland. Shortly after our arrival at the Star Hotel, Mr. Rutherford, who had picked up a "Queenslander," said to me,

"Who is driving the coach from Muttaburra to Winton?" I said, "Macpherson." "Well," he said, "he won't drive it long when I get back." "Why?" I asked. "Well, here is a paragraph in this paper, which says he capsized the coach in Elderslie Street, opposite your office."

We duly reached Sydney in August, 1886, and after spending a week there, I sailed for Rockhampton, and proceeded to Peak Downs Station, which my brother-in-law, Edmund Casey, was then managing for the Messrs. Fairbairn. I found he had broken in to harness for me two Arab ponies which would trot their 12 miles an hour. I trucked these and a buggy I had purchased in Sydney to Alpha, the then terminus of the Central railway line, where my other horses—brought from Winton—met me. Good rains had fallen in July, thus breaking up the long drought which had commenced three years before. I had plenty of grass and water all the way to Winton. I camped a night at Mount Cornish, and met Mr. and Mrs. Edkins for the first time for 20 years, having last met them on the Flinders River when they were on their honeymoon trip, as I have already related. They now had quite a large family, and made me very welcome. I arrived at Winton driving four grey horses, the two Arabs Mr. Casey broke in for me being splendid leaders.

A few evenings after my arrival I was the guest at a smoke concert given by the Dramatic Club in Steele's hall in my honour. Mr. Dodd, postmaster, the president of the club, was in the chair. There was some fine speeches, and a splendid display of wit and repartee. On entering the room, my attention was attracted by the drop-scene on the stage representing the Catskill Mountains in America. The members had given a rendering of "Rip Van Winkle," previous to my leaving for England. The scene was a daub of colours with a hole cut in the sky, to which a piece of calico had been affixed at the back to represent either the sun or the moon, I forget which. On returning thanks to the toast of my health, I related

many of my experiences since I left them in 1885, but apparently I made a hit when I described my sailing up the Hudson River from New York. Seeing a mountain in the distance, with numerous houses here and there, the afternoon sun shining and throwing different shades over mountain and river, I inquired from a fellow passenger if he could tell me the name of that beautiful mountain? He replied the "Catskill Mountains." I said, "Are you sure?" "Sure enough," he said. "Why?" "Well, because I have seen a painting of it in Steele's Hall at Winton, and it's not a bit like that." The laughter that followed easily made me feel at home with the company during the remainder of a very pleasant evening. Dr. Hawthorne made a great hit in his speech in explaining the anomaly of a bashful Irishman.

I found many changes had taken place during my seventeen months' absence. The Schollicks' had left Oondooroo, which had become the property of Messrs. Ramsay Brothers and Hodgson, with Mr. M. F. Ramsay as manager.

Winton also had grown quickly. The *Winton Herald* newspaper, with Mr. Maxwell as proprietor, was issued as a weekly.

Roller skating was the rage. I remember one afternoon when passing the Court House, I went over to see what was causing a noise there. Looking through the window I saw all the benches stacked on one side, and the police magistrate practising on skates. He had a pillow strapped at the back of his neck, and another on a lower portion of his body for buffers. He stumbled, and I saw the use for the pillows.

The growth of grass in 1886 occasioned extensive bush fires in the end of this and the beginning of the following year. A very large fire occurred at Vindex. I called for volunteers to join in putting it out. The call was readily responded to, and I headed a large party composed of all classes of men to assist

the station hands. By our combined efforts we succeeded in putting the fire out, but not until it had burnt many miles of country. In those days there was no ill-feeling between labour and capital, or employers and employee. All united to work for the common good. Subsequently the same generous help was extended to Elderslie and Ayrshire Downs Stations.

In 1887, I can say the residents of Winton were as if all were of one family. They made their own pleasures, at which all classes were welcome, and invitations were unnecessary. This proved one of the happiest times of my life.

The new owners of Oondooroo were developing their property regardless of cost. Amongst the many innovations introduced by them, but which now have become necessaries, was the system of private telephone lines over the run. In connection with this system was an ingenious idea, something like a compass card, by means of which bush fires were located, and which saved a great deal of unnecessary work and riding. With the exception of Norman, the youngest, who went "west" in France during the late war, I believe the Ramsays are still in the land of the living. It is a pity that Queensland is the loser by not having more men of the same high character as the Ramsay's, of Oondooroo.

In November, 1887, John Bartholomew, who was travelling manager for Cobb and Co., asked me—as their Winton agent—to accompany him to Croydon, to which place he was bound in connection with some coach accident which had occurred in that district, and I accepted the invitation. We travelled by coach to Hughenden 150 miles, thence down the Flinders to Cloncurry, distant 265 miles, and on to Normanton, 240 miles.

This latter portion was completed under great difficulties, the early wet season necessitating our working day and night to keep contract time. On our way we saw where a bullock-dray loaded with explosives had been blown up. How the

explosion happened was never known, but after it occurred nothing remained of the bullocks; some of the iron work of the dray was picked up a mile away.

Before we reached Normanton we were reduced to three horses, and the rains having been heavier, we were continually digging the coach out of bogs. At dark one evining I walked on to lessen the load, and on crossing a plain I saw a log on the side of the road on which I decided to have a rest. I sat on it in the dark, and feeling something move, I put my hand down on the cold, clammy tail of a snake. His lordship evidently had his head in a hole, or might have bitten me. The shock gave me increased energy, and I reached the groom's change at 10.30 p.m. The coach arrived an hour later. We were all thoroughly done up, and had a supper of stewed galahs. The stage-keeper was without flour.

When we arrived at Normanton we were in a sad plight from our rough experiences. The next day Bartholomew and myself were the only passengers on the coach for Croydon. Unusually heavy rain had fallen during the night, and the road was bad. We reached Creen Creek, half-way to Croydon, that evening. Here we met the coach from that place on its way to Normanton. The driver of this coach gave a bad account of the road ahead. It was decided that Bartholomew and the driver should ride, and pack the mail on horses to Croydon. Mr. Bartholomew arranged with the other driver to take me back to Normanton. The coach was full, and I had to sit on the splash board with my legs hanging over the two mules which were in the pole. We had not gone far before we got into a bog. The three horses in the lead were floundering so much that we had to take them out, but the mules stood quietly up to their bellies in the soft ground. The passengers were all males and turned to. By levering the wheels on to the cushions, we got the coach on hard ground again. This happened so often that I decided to walk on. I came upon a bullock team loaded with

timber, bogged. With it was Fred Shaw, who at one time was connected with Cobb and Co., and who was taking the timber to Croydon for building. I offered my help to get the waggon out of the bog by assisting the driver on the off-side with a whip. We succeeded after some time, but not without the use of some language.

In soft ground bullocks will stand up to their middle chewing their cud whilst a clear passage is being cut through for the wheels, and if once got to pull together they will invariably get through. Mules are practically the same, hence Cobb and Co. using them. The moment a horse loses his footing he commences to plunge about, and so turns the ground into liquid in which he has no footing.

The coach camped at a wayside place that night. I walked on in the morning; the coach overtook me eight miles from Normanton, into which I rode, and was glad to reach the hotel and comfort once more.

During the week spent in Normanton waiting the return of Mr. Bartholomew, and also the arrival of a steamer, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Forsyth, who was the resident manager for Burns, Philp and Co., and later on sat in Parliament for many years.

At Thursday Island there was no jetty, so our steamer anchored out in the channel. Here Mr. (now Sir Robert) Philp joined us from a tour of inspection of the company's branches. He had not long before been returned at a bye-election for Musgrave. When leaving, he and I boarded the steamer in a boat belonging to the company, with a black crew dressed in white shirts, which gave them quite a picturesque effect. On reaching Cairns, Mr. Philp included me in his party to go by rail to Redlynch, the then terminus of the line. The construction of the line up the range towards the Barron Falls was then going on, but we were unable to view the Falls.

On our trip down, Mr. Philp mentioned that the McIlwraith party would require a representative for the Gregory in place of the late Mr. Thos. McWhannell. He hinted to me that probably my name as successor would be acceptable to Sir Thomas McIlwraith. I replied, "I know nothing of politics, and have no desire to take them on."

I remained over Christmas in Townsville, and arrived in Winton to celebrate the new year of 1888. Election news was the absorbing topic.

I asked Sir Thomas McIlwraith by telegram who was the party's accredited candidate, giving certain names which were spoken of. He replied, "Know nothing about the gentlemen mentioned; why don't you stand yourself?" Mr. J. B. Riley, of Vindex, happened to be in town. I showed him the wire, which he took, and went away.

In the beginning of March, Mr. Riley, accompanied by others, presented me with a requisition to become the McIlwraith candidate. This was signed by nearly all the inhabitants of Winton and pastoralists of the district. When handing it to me, Riley said, "Now, I give you two hours to consult your partner, and give me your decision." After consultation with Mr. Campbell, my partner, I assented to the request, and called a meeting of the electors, which I addressed in the Court House in April, 1888. I then started in my buggy alone to hold meetings at the different stations. At Elderslie one was held at the woolshed, where I had a bale of wool as the platform. At Vindex, the meeting was held in the blacksmith's shop, I standing on the anvil block of wood, and so on.

Finally, when the nomination day came round, I was the only candidate. So I was returned unopposed.

During the Easter holidays in April, 1888, a cricket match, Country *v.* Town, was held at Vindex Station. At any rate, this was the name under which invitations were given by the Rileys,

Chirnsides, Ramsays and Bostocks to the townspeople of Winton, as an expression of the goodwill and friendship which then existed among all classes throughout the district.

Vindex was noted for its hospitality at all times, but it now excelled itself.

A lot of school-boys could not have enjoyed themselves more than did the many grey heads among the company. Woe betide any one, host or guest, who shirked, or did not join in the fun. A visitor from town tried to do so by fixing a nice quiet camp far away from the hurly burly. His actions were observed by the postmaster, who put his bull dog in the visitor's bed, instructing the animal not to allow any one into it. When the visitor who shirked, tried to retire for the night the bull dog tackled him, tore his pyjamas off, and left him as a subject for much raillery.

One visitor who had arrived from Rockhampton the previous day, was found wandering in the vicinity of the big dam, where he said he was enjoying the salt ozone.

The country won the match easily, but I think they took advantage of the town.

This will be understood from the fact that a dozen bottles of whisky, and a two-gallon jar of the same medicine were brought on the ground for refreshments. The town went into bat first, and by the time their innings was finished, so were the refreshments.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHEN returning from the Court House with my £20 deposit after the nomination, I was way-laid by Sergeant Murray, of the police, who in oily sentences of congratulation suggested that I should give half of the money towards the erection of a Roman Catholic church, then about to be built. I succumbed to his flattery, although my own clergyman was daily expected, and my name was coupled with Father Plormel, the resident priest, on a piece of paper, and inserted in a hole in one of the blocks underneath the building. The church has been enlarged since, and I heard that the paper with our names, and those of the members of the committee, was found in a good state of preservation. This Sergeant Murray was a man of great dry humour and shrewdness.

One day I was speaking to him, when one of two partners in a racehorse came up, and told us he and his partner had a dispute; the latter had the horse in his possession, in Lynett's stable, the door of which was secured with a padlock and trace chain. Murray asked him, "Why don't ye lock him up?"

"Hang it all, the horse is locked up already; what is the good of my locking him up?"

"Well, as your partner has the horse locked up you can't get him out, and if you lock the horse up, then your partner can't get him out."

"Oh, I see," said the owner, and immediately bought the lock and chain.

This advice was so novel to us that we all visited the stables and were amused to see two locks and trace chains to prevent the removal of the horse by either partner. It proved a common

sense way of settling the dispute in a few hours, and the partners became better friends afterwards.

On reaching Brisbane to attend the House, I interviewed Sir Thomas McIlwraith, who, after congratulating me on my return, said:—"I intend to put down an artesian bore at Winton." I asked if I might make use of this. He replied, "Well, it rests on me and my party being returned to office."

I felt certain that this would follow, so I wired to Winton that I had been promised an artesian bore. The town was painted red on the news.

At the opening of Parliament, Sir Samuel Griffith, seeing 45 members to his 27, resigned the Premiership, and Sir Thomas McIlwraith was sent for by Sir Anthony Musgrave. On the House meeting again within a few days, Mr. Albert Norton was unanimously elected speaker, and Sir Thomas McIlwraith asked for two months to construct his ministry. This was granted.

I returned to Winton, and on arrival was accorded a typical western reception for obtaining the promise of an artesian bore for the town. At this stage it was only a promise, but the residents had such faith in McIlwraith that they accepted it as a fact. Parliament assembled in July with Sir Thomas McIlwraith as Premier.

In the early part of the year a bush fire broke out on the road to Ayrshire Downs, and parties were organised to extinguish it. The police preceded us, and noticing fires springing up further on, decided to push ahead to ascertain the cause. They saw a man near the lighted grass with a box of matches in his hand, and arrested him on suspicion. When brought before the Police Magistrate, the man was charged under the English Act against arson.

Through correspondence with the Attorney-General, it was learnt that the English Act applied to artificial, and not to

natural, grasses. The offender was discharged with a caution, as the evidence was really only circumstantial.

Shortly afterwards he was caught red-handed firing the grass on Warenda Station, on his way to Boulia. He was brought before the Boulia justices, who sentenced him to three months' imprisonment under the "Careless Use of Fire Act." This was the maximum penalty that could be inflicted. On completion of his term the grass-burner was liberated, and vowed he would burn the whole of the d——d squatters out.

The pastoralists hearing of it, put men to watch him through their respective runs.

I returned to Brisbane with the intention of defeating his designs. On interviewing McIlwraith, he advised me to see Mr. Thynne (who was then Solicitor-General), and explain matters to him, adding:—"Thynne will draft a clause for you in the 'Injuries to Property Act.' You can bring in the Bill for the Amendment yourself." I did so, and found I was saddled with an amendment of an Act of Parliament without any previous knowledge of procedure. However, through the kindness of Mr. Bernays (the clerk of Parliament), I was instructed in this, and successfully carried through the second reading of the amendment to the Act.

Under this a man found burning natural grass may be prosecuted under the "English Act against Arson," which meant a maximum of 14 years' imprisonment.

In committee, Sir Samuel Griffith suggested I should insert a clause whereby it could be tried at a District Court, and so prevent witnesses having to attend a Supreme Court, held on the coast. The Bill, with this addition, went through committee. I was informed by Mr. Archer, M.L.A. for Rockhampton, that this was the first occasion in Queensland for a member to navigate a Bill through the House in his first Parliamentary year.

I thought I had completed my work with the Bill, but was surprised when Mr. Bernays asked me whom I had selected to take it through the Council. I asked the Hon. William Aplin to pilot it through, and the amendment to the "Injuries to Property Act" was assented to on the 23rd of October, 1888.

On the second evening after my arrival I sauntered in the Botanic Gardens to kill the time to dinner at 7 p.m. Being a stranger, I was ignorant that the Gardens were closed at 6 p.m. I noticed that the few people I had seen on entering had entirely disappeared. As the dinner hour approached, I went to the gate and found it locked, as were the other gates I tried to pass through. Continuing my walk, I found an opening in the hawthorne hedge, which separated the Gardens from the Domain, in which Government House was then situated. I crawled through, and when I reached the lodge gates, I was asked by a policeman stationed there, if I had been to Government House ?

I said, "No."

"Then where did you come from, my friend ? "

"From the Gardens."

"And how did you get here ? "

I then explained the circumstances.

"Where do you belong ? "

"Winton."

"What's your name ? "

"Corfield."

"Yes, is that so ? What are you ? "

"I am one of the new members of Parliament." Then the blarney came out.

"Pass on, Mr. Corfield, your face would carry you anywhere, sir."

And so ended the incident.

In 1888, £50,000 was put on the Estimates for sinking artesian wells, and a contract entered into with a Canadian company to sink 7,500 feet at certain specified places. Wellshot Station was selected as one, to encourage private enterprise, to try for water at great depths.

When at Winton, early in 1889, I was handed a telegram from Mr. Henderson, the Hydraulic Engineer, advising me that the sinking of the well at Wellshot had to be abandoned, and as carriers were not procurable at Barcaldine to take the plant to Winton, it had been decided to send it to Kensington Downs.

I immediately called a public meeting, and laid the matter before it. The meeting decided that I should go to Barcaldine the following morning. Owing to accidents to the coach, and want of sobriety at several of the coach stages, we were very much behind time in arrival. I found that I could obtain carriers to take the plant to Winton at a reasonable price, and wired the Engineer, but, although I remained a week in Barcaldine, I did not get even an unsatisfactory reply from that officer.

I now received a hint that there were influences at work to prevent the plant going to Winton, and to send telegrams through another place. I arranged a long explanatory wire to Sir Thomas McIlwraith, to be sent from . . . . the operator at that place cutting off Barcaldine while the message was being sent, and the following day I was authorised by the engineer to arrange with carriers for the transport of the plant to Winton.

It was very pleasant to witness the chagrin of the local people when they learnt how their engineering was defeated.

I learnt now that some Brisbane ladies did not possess politeness, as one of them sat on my hat when it was on my head, and did not apologise. It happened in this way. In those days the Brisbane trams were drawn by horses. I wished

to go to Ascot. When near the Custom House I saw a two-decker car just leaving. A lady was mounting the steps to gain a seat on the top. I ran and caught the car, following the lady up the steps. At the turn of the road the driver gave the horses the whip, they jumped forward, the sudden jerk caused the lady to lose her balance and her grip of the hand-rail. She sat on the hat on my head. The article, a hard felt, was pressed down with her weight. The sides opened up, and the rim fell down and became fast over my nose. I saw stars, but not the lady's face. The conductor assisted to dislodge the hat from my nose, and I left the car to purchase a new hat. Probably, I saved the lady's life, but she continued her way to the top, apparently treating the accident as an every-day occurrence. I was unable to make a claim for damages to my hat or self respect.

Mr. Tozer (the then Home Secretary), was a lover of deep-sea fishing, and I frequently accompanied him in his excursions. One Friday, when the House was not sitting, I accepted an invitation to join him in a trip to a new fishing ground. I joined the "Otter" at the Queen's Wharf at 2 p.m. Our party comprised Captains Pennefather and Grier, John Watson, M.L.A., and Messrs. W. H. Ryder, A. A. McDiarmid, Primrose and myself, besides the officers and crew. We cruised along Moreton Island and caught sufficient fish for our tea, after which we retired to our bunks, and the steamer made for the Tweed Heads. About 3 a.m., we were awakened by the cry of "Fish Oh!" On reaching the deck we found the officers and crew hauling in schnapper as fast as they could bait their hooks. We were all soon engaged in the same sport. Each line had four hooks on, and the fish were so plentiful that often when a line was pulled up with, as one thought, one big fish on it, there would be three or four, some hooked through the eye, others by the tail. We fished until 8 a.m., and found on counting we had 1,100 fish aboard. Tozer had caught the highest single catch of 155, whilst mine, the smallest number,

was 79. The sailors cleaned as many as they could on our return. When opposite the South Passage we sent a boat to the Light-house to wire Brisbane for any person wanting fish to meet the boat at the wharf, and to bring bags with them. Many did so, but all could not be taken away, and a quantity was dumped into the river. This was the record catch of the season, and I have never heard of it being beaten.

At this time, and for a few years afterwards, I had as partner in a small pastoral property, a Mr. Wm. Booth. He was said to have been mixed up with some troubles connected with Irish affairs, and that the name he went under was assumed. Whether this was so or not, I found him to be a fine, straight-forward man, and was greatly affected when in 1894 his charred remains were found on the run. The mystery of his death remains undiscovered. On his death I wound up the pastoral partnership, and placed the value of Booth's interest in the hands of the Curator of Intestate Estates. Every effort was made to discover his relatives, but so far, I believe, his estate remains unclaimed.

To those interested in constitutional law, the Kitt's case, which occurred in 1888, may prove interesting. This incident happened in connection with a pair of boots, but from it was obtained the decision that the Governor should follow the advice of his ministers on matters not affecting the authority of the Crown. It was laid down that they were responsible for giving the advice, not he for accepting it. The incident was a small matter to define a very important point.

I think it was about this time that the police were called upon to act in opposition to the Naval Forces of the State, under the following circumstances. The Naval Commandant of the time had a disagreement with the Minister administering the Navy, and ordered the two war vessels, the "Paluma" and "Gayundah" to put to sea, contending he was under the

control of the Admiral in charge of the station, and defied the Minister. Steam was up on the vessels, when a rather large body of police, fully armed, was marched down to the Botanic Gardens, and lined the river banks ready to fire on the ships if they were moved. Meanwhile, the wires were at work. The Admiral disclaimed control over the vessels, as it was a time of peace, and the Commandant retreated from the stand he had taken. The matter quietened down, but the Commandant shortly afterwards retired from the service of the State.

Mr. W. Little, more popularly known on northern goldfields as Billy Little, represented the electorate of Woothakata in the Assembly. When speaking on the railway which it had been decided should start from Cairns to Herberton, he argued, "S'help me G——, Mr. Speaker, they are building a railway at Cairns over a mountain, down which a crow couldn't fly without putting breeching on." The simile convulsed the House, but did not affect its decision.

During this session I could not but admire the patience and courtesy with which Sir Samuel Griffith treated all, even his opponents, after he once expressed himself on a measure. Time and again he would point out defects, which his legal mind detected in the wording of Bills, but which were not perceptible to the ordinary lay mind.

In 1889, when the Estimates were being formed, Sir Thomas McIlwraith insisted that £40,000 should be put on for building a Central Railway Station in Ann Street, Brisbane. His colleagues dissented, holding the view that the then existing station would serve for a generation, or longer. McIlwraith resigned the premiership, but retained the office of Vice-President of the Executive Council.

Mr. B. D. Morehead succeeded him as Premier, but there were no other changes in the personnel of the Cabinet.

During the recess of 1890, I left Winton in March, after a good, wet season, to make a tour of my electorate, visiting the townships and stations throughout the district, and going close to Lake Nash, over the border of the Northern Territory.

I held meetings at the places visited, covering a distance of 1,600 miles, yet I was unable to visit the whole district.

At Glenormiston, one of the stations visited, the blacks had just returned from the Mulligan River, where they had procured their season's supply of "Pituri." This is obtained from a small bush, and when prepared for chewing, has an effect similar to opium. The "pituri" is much prized by the blacks. It is prepared for use by the seeds being pounded up and mixed with gidya ashes, which the gins chew until it obtains the proper consistency. It then resembles putty, and when not being used as chewing gum is carried by the blacks round their ears. If the native offers one a chew it is a sign of friendship and hospitality. This friendship was offered me, but declined with thanks. I obtained a small bagful of the seeds, intending to give them to Mr. Bailey, Curator of the Brisbane Gardens, but I made other use of it. I was compelled to make easy stages on account of the heavy pulling. The season was bitterly cold; camping on the open downs with no shelter was not pleasant.

The distance from Boulia to Springvale is 80 miles, the only traffic along it being the pack horse of the mailman once a week. One of the places I camped at was known as Elizabeth Springs. This spring is a circular hole of about three feet in diameter, in which warm water is continually bubbling up. The overflow runs into Spring Creek, and runs for 15 miles, emptying into a large hole opposite the head station. A peculiarity of this spring is, if one jumps into it, the force of the water causes the body to rebound like a rubber ball, and small particles of sand coming up with the water causes a stinging sensation. The depth of the spring is unknown.

About 40 yards from this spring there is another hole, the water of which is quite cold, and of an inky colour. This hole has attributes opposite to the other, that is—a body will sink quickly in its water. The blacks have a tradition that a gin jumped into it, and was never seen again. These springs are on Springvale run.

On arriving at the station, I found Mr. Milson was out mustering, but Mrs. Milson, who remembered me at Monkira some six years before, made me very comfortable. I left the following morning to cover the 37 miles to Diamantina Lakes Station. When I reached the Gum Holes, on the boundary of the two runs, I decided to camp. Mr. Milson turned up here, and from him I learnt that the Diamantina River, which was about seven miles ahead of me, was uncrossable, and that it was running about four miles wide. He instructed me that when I reach the river, I was to go to a high ridge two miles back, and make a large bonfire at night. I arrived at the river the following day, when my man and I employed ourselves the whole afternoon in getting wood, which was scarce and some distance away. The closer timber had been used by the mailman to attract the attention of the station people in flood time, as we were to do.

The station was about eight miles from the ridge, and we had great trouble during the night to keep the fire burning. The next afternoon Mr. Shaw, the manager, came across in a canvas boat, and camped the night with us. It was arranged I should return with him in the boat and leave the man with the horses, as it was impossible to cross them. We were out of meat, so Mr. Shaw promised to send some to the man the following day. We started on our four-mile pull, Shaw with the sculls, and I in the stern to steer the canoe. In the shallow water between the channels we had to be very careful, as patches of lignum were showing above the water, and our boat being only canvas, a slight prick of the lignum would perforate

it. However, we made the crossing safely, and arrived at the station at sun-down. I was very glad to get comfortable quarters once more, and Mr. and Mrs. Shaw and their family treated me right royally.

After a stay of five days we found the water had gone down and left several islands visible between the channels. When the flood allowed we started, taking a long, strong piece of rope, p ovisions, and about ten black fellows. Shaw and I paddled the boat containing the rope and provisions. The black boys swam the channels, and carried the boat across the islands, where we walked. We arrived at my camp in the afternoon, and prepared for an early start on the morrow. Whilst I was away a mob of travelling cattle had come to the camp. The men had killed a beast, and were making a boat of the hide to carry their saddles and provisions across. The mosquitoes that night were something to be remembered, and my man looked as if he had measles.

We had a good breakfast at daylight, and then commenced crossing in the following manner :—Some of the boys would wade into the water until it was up to their waist. I would then drive the buggy and four horses up to them, unharness the latter, putting the harness in the boat to be rowed to dry land. The boat would then return for the provisions and every movable article in the buggy. The horses were then swam over, after which the rope was attached to the axle of the buggy and run along the pole, a half-hitch being tied at the point. When all were across, and the rope brought over by the boat, all hands would pull the buggy across. It would, of course, soon disappear beneath the water, and at each disappearance I wondered if I should see it again. Had the pole caught in a stump, the probability was that it or the rope would break. However, we got it safely across the channels, which varied in depth up to 25 feet of water. It was quite dark when we reached the station, all tired out. The black boys behaved

splendidly, so I gave them the "pituri" intended for Mr. Bailey. This gift they prized far more than money or tobacco. The next evening I held a meeting at the station, and resumed my journey up the river the day following. Travelling was now easy, the road being good, with plenty of grass and water for my horses. Meeting one's constituents in a western electorate is not a short, pleasant picnic.

A rather serious crisis arose during the early part of this session (1890). McIlwraith introduced a measure to levy a tax on all wool exported over the border to New South Wales and South Australia.

The intention of the bill was to divert the trade of southern and south-western Queensland to the Queensland Railways. The pastoralists of those districts obtained supplies, and sent their wool from and to the southern Colonies, where the rates were lower than those charged over the Queensland lines.

McIlwraith's argument was that Queensland was heavily taxed for the construction and maintenance of these lines; that this Colony was also incurring excessive expenditure for administrative purposes, and if the pastoralists would not give Queensland the necessary revenue towards these services, it should be forced from them.

The bill provoked heated arguments from McIlwraith's supporters. The Opposition looked on with some interest, anticipating a Government defeat. The bill passed its second reading by the casting vote of the Speaker. I voted with the Government. McIlwraith promptly tendered his resignation, but was induced by Sir Henry Norman, the then Governor, to reconsider this. McIlwraith said he would reintroduce the bill in committee, and make the recalcitrant members swallow it. He did reintroduce it, those previously against it voted for it, and it was carried by a majority. Those

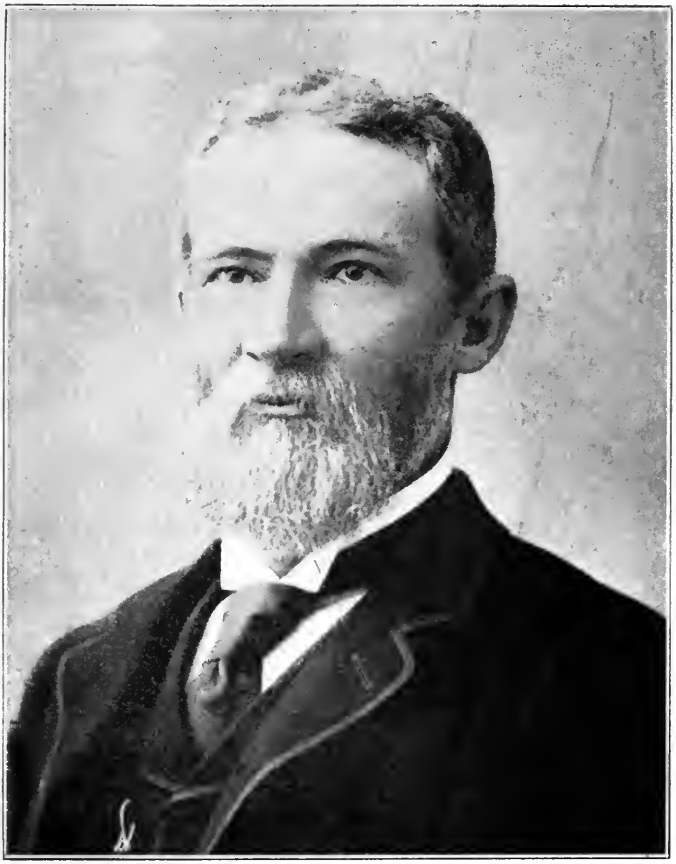
members who were compelled to stultify themselves did not forgive the Premier, and showed their resentment when the opportunity arose.

The money collected by the tax was utilised in improving the main roads to the railway, and when I was in that district some years afterwards I saw these cleared two chains wide through the affected districts.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN 1889, the Morehead Government had put on the Estimates £1,000,000 for unspecified railways. This the Opposition, led by Sir Samuel Griffith, strongly opposed. The sitting developed into a stonewall of 96 hours' duration. The Government withdrew the item at 10 p.m. on a Saturday night. Previous to its introduction, I had paired for the session with an Opposition member, as I was anxious to return home to review my business operations, and did not suspect any party measures.

At the opening of the 1890 session, I caught a very severe cold in Brisbane, which developed into "La Grippe," and I was confined to my room for seven weeks. During this time the Morehead Government introduced a "Property Tax," which met with strong opposition from McIlwraith—who was still in the Cabinet—and his supporters, of which I was one. Morehead carried his proposals by two. He felt that this majority did not justify his continuing in office, so he retired. The coalition between Griffith and McIlwraith followed. Both knights offered me a position in the Cabinet as Honorary Minister, but as I was to be considered as a Central member, I declined the honour. The House adjourned for two months. I decided to visit my electorate to inform my constituents of the position, and at a meeting in Winton they endorsed my action. I returned to Brisbane overland by coach, *via* Barcaldine, thence rail to Jericho, and by coach to Blackall, Tambo, Augathella and Charleville, and on to Brisbane by rail. This route was in consequence of the maritime strike, through which all steamers were laid up.



Sir Samuel Walker Griffith

At the close of the 1890 session, I made a trip to Melbourne, and made the acquaintance of a gentleman who persuaded me to join him in a trip to New Zealand. We called at Hobart *en route*, and landed at the Bluff, proceeding to Invercargill by rail. By this trip I renewed the acquaintance of bygone years with many old friends from North Queensland, who had become residents of New Zealand.

Before leaving the Dominion there were rumours of an intended strike of shearers in Queensland. When I reached Sydney I found this had eventuated, and as the House was in recess, I proposed visiting my electorate, but was prevented doing so because of the heavy floods stopping all traffic.

During the Parliamentary session of 1891, there were many stormy scenes and debates in connection with the shearers' strike, which took place throughout the pastoral districts of Queensland and New South Wales. The causes for the strike and incidents are of public history. It is, therefore, not necessary for me to do more than to mention it.

After the coalition was formed, Sir Thomas McIlwraith announced his policy of a ten years' extension of the "Polynesian Act."

Sir Samuel Griffith, as Premier, foreshadowed this would be brought forward in the session of 1892. I was returned as an opponent of black labour, and thought it necessary to justify my support of the new policy. To do so I obtained a letter of introduction to Mr. Neame, the owner of Macknade, on the Herbert River. I had some practical experience of what it was to work among cane, but did not give any hint of what action I was going to take in the House. Eventually, I informed my constituents of my change of views, and put myself in their hands. From them I received a free hand to act on my own judgment. I voted for the extension, and the House passed the bill.

1893 was the year of the great bank smash when so many institutions went under, and eventually had to undergo reconstruction. In this difficult time, Sir Hugh Nelson as Treasurer showed himself as an able and capable financier. He received help and sympathy from the banks which weathered the storm, but from none more than the General Manager of the institution which held considerable Government moneys.

Retrenchment was the order of the day. Members salaries were reduced to £150 per annum. Lively and acrimonious discussions continued during the sesssion, but Sir Hugh Nelson was firm in his resolutions to restore confidence, and backed up by the majority of the members, he soon allayed the panic.

A general election took place in this year, and I was again a candidate. On arriving at Boulia, where I addressed a meeting, I learnt that Mr. Wallace Nelson had been nominated by the Labour Party to oppose me, but when I reached Winton after completion of the tour, I found that I had been returned unopposed, Mr. Nelson's nomination paper being informal. At the opening of the session I was twitted by Labour members of having obtained the seat by an informality.

In those days I was not altogether a hardened politician, and felt somewhat sensitive on the charge. I returned to Winton, called a meeting to consider whether I should resign and contest another election, or retain my position. The meeting, which was a large one and representative, decided that I should retain the seat. I must say that after taking this course, my opponents made but little allusion to the way in which I had been elected, and then only in a joking, friendly manner. The Government of which Sir Hugh Nelson was now Acting Premier—McIlwraith having gone on a health tour—submitted its railway proposals to a private meeting of its supporters. Very much to my dissatisfaction I found that the Hughenden-Winton line was not included.

I will explain here that during the previous session I was invited by Sir Thomas McIlwraith to call at his office. He then explained to me what was in his mind in regard to railways in the west. This was an extension north-westerly from Charleville towards Barcaldine; from Longreach and Hughenden to Winton; from Hughenden to Cloncurry; from Winton to Boulia *via* Llanrheidol; and from Winton in a north-westerly direction towards Cloncurry and the Gulf, keeping to the higher country, but as low down the rivers flowing into the latter as would be safe. The mineral country which caused the present line to run in a south-westerly direction from Cloncurry was then unknown.

The terminus on the Gulf was to be on its western side, if possible in Queensland territory, but if necessary he might negotiate with South Australia for a port in the Northern Territory, from which, if advisable, that Colony might join up with Port Darwin. Such a scheme, Sir Thomas said, would bring the three principal ports, Brisbane, Rockhampton and Townsville, in touch with their western back country, which would also have its choice of ports. Queensland would become connected through its Gulf outlet with the Eastern countries; have a more direct route to Europe, and be practically independent of Sydney and Melbourne. He added that whether the scheme would eventuate or not, it was his intention to have a line from Hughenden to Winton, so as to bring the district within reach of its natural port—Townsville, instead of being forced to Rockhampton. He presumed he could count on my support, which I promised. I submitted the information as being strictly confidential to Fraser, of Manuka, who, as chairman of my supporting committee, would at his discretion disclose the matter to such as he might consider reliable. When I saw Nelson after the meeting, he disclaimed all knowledge of McIlwraith's promise as regards the Winton line, and looking at a map from Townsville out, said the line would be nothing but a "dog-leg business." I explained to him that, acting on the

information given by McIlwraith, and with his knowledge, I had told my committee, who had built their hopes upon his promise, and informed Nelson I felt so strongly on the point, that as I could not personally oppose the Government policy on any other matters, I would resign my seat. I explained the position to Fraser, who consulted my supporting committee. It was decided that as the promise given to me by McIlwraith, who was still Premier, as regards the Hughenden-Winton line was not kept, and as they could not ask me to sit opposed to the Government, they considered there was nothing for me but to retire from the House altogether. I submitted the letter to Nelson, who then laughed, and said he had gone into the whole question, and found that McIlwraith had pledged himself. It appeared that Byrnes was in his confidence, and "looking at it again," Nelson said, "it is a good policy in western interests, but what a howl there will be in Rockhampton." Finally, when the railway policy was made public, it was found that the first section of a line towards Winton was proposed.

I do not think that any railway proposal received such a searching criticism from its opponents. It was very amusing to see an immense map of Queensland hung in the chamber, and one of the Central members with a long pointer showing the boundaries of the several districts, and how Rockhampton rights would be encroached upon. However, in spite of all, the line eventually reached Winton, but that was the only part of McIlwraith's scheme which became finalised, which I think is a matter to be regretted.

In later years a scheme was adopted which put Sydney as near to the Gulf Territory of Queensland as Brisbane, and which, if carried out, will make the first-mentioned the Port of Western Queensland. The construction of the lines under Denham's and Kidston's schemes, is, however, making such slow progress that there is a hopeful probability that they will never be completed.

The Parliamentary session of 1894 was, I think, the most exciting in happenings and bitter in feelings than any I experienced during my time in the House. This state of affairs arose out of the shearers' strike, which existed in the Mitchell, Gregory and Flinders districts. So serious was the position of affairs in those districts that the Ministry felt it was absolutely necessary to introduce such exceptional legislation as would give far-reaching powers to the Government and its officers for the preservation of peace. Considerable damage had happened to the property of pastoralists in those districts by fire. In one or two places firearms were used.

When Nelson asked for the formal leave to introduce the bill, Mr. Glassey, who was leader of the Labour Party, bitterly opposed the request. The time and circumstances were very serious, but it was highly amusing to see the expression of surprise which came over Nelson's face as he questioned the sincerity of any man who opposed the introduction of a Bill for the Preservation of Peace. The scope of the bill was generally known to members, and the Opposition by Glassey at this stage, and the surprise by Nelson were the usual Parliamentary camouflage.

During the passage of the bill through the Assembly, both in the House and Committee, it was very difficult to control the members on either side. There were many suspensions of members on the Labour side, who were, of course, out to oppose the measure. The stormy passage of this bill, which, when it became law, did Preserve Peace, may be read in *Hansard* of the time.

The Government in 1895 organised a Parliamentary tour of North Queensland to enable many members to see for the first time that country for which they assumed they were competent to legislate. The tour was very successfully carried out, and those who were strangers to the North, realised that they knew only a small corner of Queensland, which, compared with what

they were visiting, was of comparatively less value. Amongst the 37 requests made to Mr. Tozer (who was Home Secretary) at Cooktown, was one to erect a statue to Captain Cook. It was pointed out a monument had been erected to him, but owing to low finances the scheme was uncompleted. It was thought Captain Cook deserved a monument at Cooktown; but Mr. Tozer, in reply, stated that he realised that Cooktown deserved some recognition of the historical fact that Captain Cook's only lengthy stay in Australia was in the locality, but, he explained, "The position is this: down in Brisbane we have deputations of unemployed asking us for bread; now I have come up here, and you have asked me for a stone." This reply settled the question.

Returning to Townsville and Bowen, the party visited Cid Harbour, in Whitsunday Passage. At this place there was a camp of timber-getters. There were two families of women and children who had not tasted meat since Christmas. It was now April. Two sheep were given from the ship, and in return we borrowed their fishing net, with which we caught a beautiful lot of parrot fish. Weighing anchor at mid-day, Captain South took us through the Molle passage, where, sounding the whistle, one could hear the echo reverberating amongst the islands for some minutes afterwards. It is considered that although Cid Harbour has not the extent of Sydney Harbour, it is quite its equal in beauty.

During the session, the plans and specifications of a line of railway from Hughenden towards Winton were laid on the table of the House. This gave rise to a bitter discussion dealing with interests of Rockhampton and Townsville, which were in conflict. Those of the western country and residents were not considered. Nelson consented to the request of Mr. Archer, member for Rockhampton, for a select committee, to take evidence as to the desirableness of constructing the line. The Central members on the committee were Mr. Archer, chairman; Messrs. Murray and Callan, MM.L.A. This committee was the

first to take evidence on a railway proposed in the Assembly, and formed a precedent afterwards availed of. The committee sat for a week, and in the evidence adduced the majority report to the House was in favour of the line.

The Central members, who sent in a minority report, stated that the Winton district belonged to Rockhampton, and asserted that the settled policy of the country was that the lines should be extended due west from the coastal ports. They were apparently oblivious to the fact that the coast line north from Brisbane trended in a north-westerly direction, and owing to this trend Winton was 185 miles nearer Townsville than Rockhampton. The Minister for Railways accepted the majority report, proposed the building of this section, and then followed an acrimonious debate, which resulted in an all-night sitting. I acted as Whip during the night, and allowed my supporters to camp in the Legislative Council Chambers, whence as they were required for a division, I brought them in, to the amazement of our opponents, who thought they had left and gone home.

The proposal was carried at 7.30 the following morning..

CHAPTER XV.

AT the end of this year I returned to Winton to prepare for the elections to be held in May, 1896. I addressed a meeting at that town, and received a vote of confidence. I commenced a tour of the district. The season was very dry, and I had to send feed for my horses by Cobb's coach to Boulia. I went over some of the same ground as in 1890, and when travelling between Boulia and Springvale I saw the tracks made by my buggy in the wet of that year. This shows the scarcity of travellers in that country. At the election I was in a minority by three votes in Winton, but the outside places returned me with a substantial majority. Labour gained a few more seats at this election, and the verbosity one had to listen to made an M.L.A.'s life, like a policeman's, not a happy one.

Towards the end of the session the Minister for Railways laid the plans and specifications of another section of the Hughenden to Winton railway on the table of the House. Messrs. Kidston and Curtis, MM.L.A., led the Central members in strong opposition to the proposal, but after a short debate it was carried. This section when completed brought the line from Watten to Manuka, or, as the station is now called, " Corfield."

The second sections of the railway from Hughenden to Winton were constructed by the late Mr. G. C. Willcocks, and in a record time. He had to carry ballast and water along the whole construction of 132 miles from the Flinders River at Hughenden. His system was to plough and scoop the bed for the permanent way. This being done, a temporary line was laid down alongside, upon which trucks were run to carry on the advance work, leaving permanent work to follow up.

As a consequence he was two months ahead of his time, and the line being available to carry traffic on the unopened portion, the Government decided to give him a bonus to hand the line over. Compared with present-day railway construction, as regards expense in time and in money, the Winton line is a monument to Mr. Willcock's ability and energy as a contractor, and to the relative merits of contract and day labour.

In 1896, Sir Hugh Nelson had been appointed President of the Legislative Council, and appeared in his Windsor uniform at the opening of Parliament this year. Mr. W. H. Brown, the leader of the Labour Party, who was sitting next to me in the Council Chamber, in a whisper loud enough to be heard around, remarked:—"I am just thinking how many ounces to the dish Sir Hugh Nelson would pan out if he were boiled down." Sir Hugh gave dignity to his new position, which was the reward of years of distinguished loyal and successful service to Queensland.

The Hon. T. J. Byrnes was now appointed to succeed Sir Hugh Nelson as Premier, and shortly afterwards visited England. Mr. Byrnes' career and successes were well known in that country, and these, aided by a frank, charming manner, made his tour one of triumph. It was a blow to Queensland that he did not long survive his return to the State. Although Byrnes was not in Parliament when Macrossan was alive, yet those who remembered the latter could not help comparing the two men. I do not recollect having seen Macrossan smile even after a successful speech. On the other hand, beyond a passing frown scarcely perceptible, even in the bitterness of debate, I have not seen Byrnes otherwise than smiling, but when one sat close to either and saw their eyes flashing fire, one could realise the strength and sincerity of both.

It is possible that had Byrnes lived to take the field against Federation, as it was thought he would, Queensland might not

have become one of the States, except under certain saving conditions. I was present at the funeral ceremony in St. Stephen's Cathedral, and saw many hardened politicians brushing tears off. It was felt that a great man and a good man had passed away.

Mr. W. H. Browne, more familiarly known as "Billy" Browne, was a lovable character. Firm in his belief that his principles were right and should be maintained, but without being bitter to those who might differ from him. His death was no doubt a temporary loss to the Labour Party, of which Queensland could easily spare others more bigoted, but less sincere.

Sir Samuel Griffith, after giving the best years of his life to Queensland, had now retired to the Supreme Court Bench, and his absence was a loss to Parliament.

Most members judged Griffith as being cold and distant, but personally, I have much to thank him for. I found him kind and sociable when approached, and at no time did he assume a patronising manner when doing a favour. Those who knew him intimately told me they found him to be the same. Looking at him from the opposite side, he seemed to be always on the alert to find his opponent tripping. I have known him, when he did so, to generously aid in putting them right, and apparently because he felt it to be his duty to do so. He was different to his great opponent McIlwraith, both in character and mental construction. McIlwraith was by nature impatient and irritable. Griffith, on the contrary, was very patient, and maintained a great control of his temper. This enabled him to frequently have his views adopted when they might not be, if too strongly forced. Had advantage been taken of opportunities, Griffith might have been a wealthy man. But to his honour, and to that of Queensland Parliaments, from the first even to the present, this State has been singularly free from what has been brought to light in other States.

The artesian bore at Winton was now completed by the Intercolonial Deep Boring Company. The bore has a depth of 4,010 feet, and a flow of 720,000 gallons of water per day, he temperature being 182 degs. Fahrenheit. It had many vicissitudes during its eight years' sinking. Two other companies went into liquidation in carrying out the work.

In 1898, I induced the Government to grant a loan of £2,500 to reticulate the town with water from the bore. As far as I can remember this session was uneventful in a political sense.

The bad health of my partner, Mr. Campbell, made it necessary that I should return to active business. I informed my constituents that at the end of this session, which would be the last of that Parliament, I intended to retire from politics.

Following Mr. Campbell's death, Mr. T. J. O'Rourke became my partner, and is so still.

I feel it would be out of place to express my personal opinion of Mr. O'Rourke. It is enough to say that he who can stand up against the criticisms, and hold the goodwill of western men of all sorts and conditions, needs no expression of opinion or feeling from me.

Although the Bush Brotherhood was founded by the Church of England at a period later than that at which I decided should end these reminiscences, it may not be out of place to allude to the good work of the Brethren, and the success of their endeavours to promote the spiritual and oftentimes the material welfare of the west. The members lived a life of hardship and self-abnegation, which was appreciated by people of all and of no religious beliefs.

One of its most notable members was the Reverend Hulton-Sams—known as the Fighting Parson—and who was the winner of many friendly fights. He travelled the west visiting

stations and shearing sheds with his Bible and prayer-book on one handle of his bike, and a set of boxing gloves on the other, and after preaching an impressive extempore sermon, concluding the service, would invariably say, "Now, boys, we will have a little recreation!" and invite his hearers to put on the gloves. He was not always the winner, however. His manly virtues, the sincerity of his life, and the beauty of his character, made him one of the best loved amongst western men. On his return to England, after the war broke out, he enlisted, and received a commission as a Lieutenant in the "Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry." He went with his regiment to France, and was instantaneously killed by a shell when seeking water for his wounded comrades. He died, as he lived, a Christian hero, and nothing better can be said of any man.

The following account of his death, received by his sister, Lady Wiseman, was published in the London *Evening News*:—

The Adjutant of a battalion of the D.C.L.I., said:—"He died a glorious death—that of a British officer and gentleman, commanding a company in an important position, and sticking it where many others might have failed. We were hanging on to the edge of a wood, and the Germans were trying to shell us out of it. That night the Germans attacked us again—bombs and liquid fire. C. Company stuck to it, and through all the terrific shelling they never flinched, although they lost heavily.

"They were there at 10 a.m., and I crawled to and talked to your brother several times. He was magnificent and very cheerful. His last words to me were, 'Well, old boy, this is a bit thick, but we'll see it through, never fear.' His company sergeant-major told me that at about 10 a.m. your brother crawled away to see if he could get any water for the men, many of whom were wounded and very thirsty.

"He was hit by a piece of shell in the thigh and side, and killed instantly. He died doing a thing which makes us feel

proud to have known him. He was a fine officer, a fine friend, and was worshipped by his men."

I was but one of a large number of members who, during 1888, entered the House for the first time. To one who had not had the inclination, even if one had the time, previous to this, for politics, everything in and around the House was novel and interesting, but it was difficult to understand why members should in the Chamber be so bitterly hostile to each other and yet as friendly outside. There were, of course, exceptions as regards the latter, but I soon learned that a good deal of what was being said and done was more or less theatrical. Sincerity was to a great extent at a discount, and later years of experience in politics confirmed my impressions that the whole was a game to induce the people to think that their friend was Codlin, and not Short. And the farce is continued to the present time, only more so, and with the same success.

It seems to me that the end of my Parliamentary life might be the end of my reminiscences. The opening of railway communication with Winton brought new conditions into our lives. The days of pioneering, bullock-driving, the trips by Cobb and Co., which were not always trips of comfort or of pleasure, were things of the past. In place of the crack of the whip and the rumble of the coach were heard the whistle and snorting of the engine. We were now within civilisation, so far as convenience might go, but whether we were morally and socially better or worse is a very open question. The great distances, the open plains, and the loneliness and monotony which is generally characteristic of the western country, even in these days of comparative closer settlement, have formed the western character. It is a character hard, shrewd, and impatient in good times, but strangely patient and resourceful in times of floods, drought, or difficulty. Invariably maintaining a certain reserve, yet hospitable and generous towards strangers, and ready to give help without question where needed,

the western-born man and woman carries a dignity and presence easily recognised, and a friend who visited the west after many years, remarks :—" I say, you have a grand stamp of man and woman growing up in the west, but you are not giving them encouragement to live in and develop their country as you should do."

The man of the west deserves much praise, but what might be said of its women. I have seen these following the waggon, or living in domiciles which, even at best, would be a shame to cities. Yet very rarely otherwise than patient, cheerful and hospitable, loving help-mates and mothers. " God bless them," I say.

I cannot help thinking that politics are the bane of the west. It is singularly free from religious rancour or animosity. The religious belief of the other man, or if he has any at all, concerns no one. So long as a clergyman does not hold that playing cricket or football on Sunday is wrong, even if he is not popular, he is at all times respected.

I remember a Roman Catholic priest (Father Fagan) speaking at a dinner of welcome, remark :—" A brother minister had asked him what good these social gatherings did ? " He replied :—" They did a great deal of good, and he went so far as to say that one such gathering was worth twenty sermons. They were simply putting in practice the virtues preached from the pulpit of hospitality, charity and gratitude."

It is my sincere hope that such kindliness and charity might continue to the end of time.

" FAREWELL."

WATER DIVINING:

A POSTSCRIPT.

"THERE are more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." Thus wrote Shakespeare, and as the centuries roll by, and the marvels of invention and scientific research are unfolded, this truth of the immortal bard becomes the more and more evident to thinking people of all nations.

The faculty or attributes of water divining—that is, ability to locate water running in natural channels beneath the surface—is one which of late years has received great attention in Queensland.

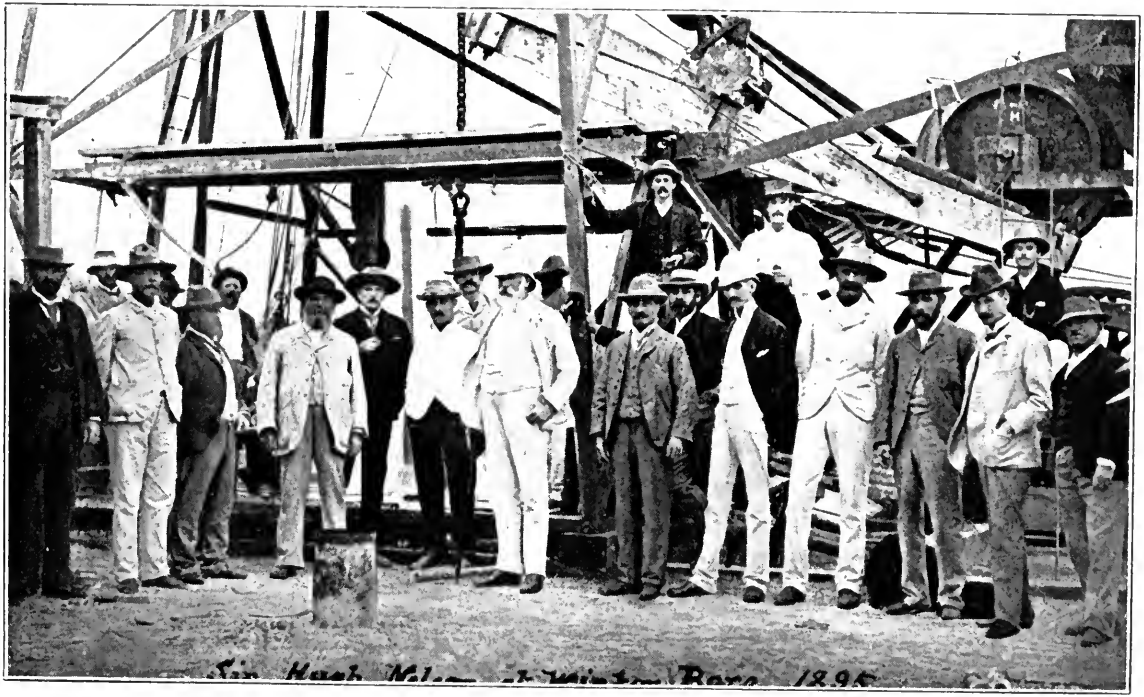
In this material and matter-of-fact age it is difficult to place belief in anything savouring of the occult—anything which cannot be explained by recognised natural laws, or which is not readily understood.

For this reason, and notwithstanding indisputable evidence of the genuineness of the claims put forward by water diviners, many people regard them all as a huge joke, and laugh outright at the credulity of their patrons. Certainly it is true that the faculty is claimed by many, but possessed by few. After all, however mystifying it may be to the ordinary mind, hard facts cannot be ignored, and proof positive has repeatedly been adduced of the good work done by men possessing this marvellous faculty.

In Queensland alone, many western landholders—shrewd, hard-headed, business men—have reason to be thankful that they secured the services of a genuine and expert diviner, whose "magic wand" quickly disclosed the whereabouts of sub-artesian water. Thus, it has happened as a result of the diviner's visit that a bore is driven, and presently by means of a wind-mill, or oil pump, a sparkling stream is brought from the vast caverns which have held it prisoner, turning the oft-times dreary waste into a smiling, life-giving oasis.

In my opinion, what constitutes the faculty of divination is an inherent quality that cannot be acquired. Some people describe it as a sixth sense, while Dr. Grasset, a French authority, believes that the ability to find underground streams proves the existence of a faculty belonging to a class of psychological feelings forming what he calls "psychisme inferieur," the study of which is just beginning to attract the attention of the scientific world.

Perhaps I should explain that, as a rule, a forked twig, the extremities of which are held loosely in each hand, is used to locate sub-artesian water, and in this connection its movements, so far as is known, can only be affected by natural running streams. The rod, or twig, does not work if carried over water passing through drains, culverts, and such like. My explanation of the movements of the rod is that they are caused by electro-magnetism, the diviner being perhaps highly charged with electricity. The water has absorbed the electricity of the adjacent bodies in the earth, the currents coming to the surface enters the air—ether—and the currents entering his body, he being a non-conductor, agitates him. Most people are conductors, consequently the current passes through them, and they do not feel it. The electric twig in the hands of the diviner forms a part of the connection between the body and the water, and by a law of nature, these two bodies must either attract or repel each other. If the experimenter is a person



Sir Hugh Nelson at Winton Bore. 1895.

with a small amount of the electric fluid in his nature, that is negatively charged, the water being positive will draw down or attract the twig, hence the downward movement. If on the other hand, he is surcharged with electricity, or positive, the positive electricity of the water will repel the other, and the twig will bend upwards. The movements of the twig may thus be accounted for, but, comparatively, so little is known or understood of the marvellous influences and workings of electricity that it is impossible to be dogmatic on the question.

The forks of the twig should be held lightly between the second and third fingers of the hands, pressing the thumbs on the side of the twig with just sufficient force to give the ends a slightly-outward direction. If a person possesses the faculty, and water flows anywhere beneath him, the twig will turn round on its ends between his fingers. In my own case, should I hold the twig tightly over a natural underground stream, it will bend under and round in an endeavour to follow out the movement I have just mentioned. It will, perhaps, be interesting to know that now I only use the twig for the purpose of indicating the presence of streams. The faculty is so sensitive in my hands that I can detect water if I am 20 yards away. I have found by careful observation and study that I can far more effectively decide upon the actual bore site by the indications which my hands give. Holding them downwards, open, and with the palms facing, I have found that as I approach the strongest, and therefore the most suitable, point in the stream for boring, they are thrust forcibly apart and upwards by the same power, apparently, that acts upon the twig. I found this out in a peculiar manner. After marking a site with the twig, I happened to place my hands together, and to my surprise they came up, and I could not keep them together.

I must say it was only by accident that I discovered my possession of this faculty. About 1906, a water diviner visited the Winton district, and one day several friends and myself

went with him in his quest for water. He explained his methods to the party, and naturally we all provided ourselves with twigs.

After living so many years in the dry, western country, I was, of course, very interested in the experiment, and closely following directions was astonished after walking about for some time to find my rod revolving slowly. Members of the party near at hand were equally astonished, and called loudly to the others to "come and look at Corfield's twig." They, thinking it was due to the twig alone, soon ruined it, but I felt that I was possessed of some power, which previously I did not know I possessed, as I knew I was not turning the stick myself. For about twelve months after that I closely studied every phase of the phenomenon, and during that time I discovered good water for many residents in the district.

In 1907, an opportunity came to me to employ my faculty for the benefit of pastoralists and the State generally.

Mr. R. C. Ramsay, of Oondooroo Station, invited me to ascertain if good water was obtainable in a dry belt of that country, and in this I was entirely successful.

It is an interesting fact that I do not require to leave a vehicle by which I may be travelling in order to carry out my search for water. Whilst seated in a train, or motor car, travelling at the rate of 30 or 40 miles an hour, I have by means of the rod located streams. If it were not that the currents were in the air, as I have previously referred to, I should be insulated by the India-rubber tyres of the motor.

Reverting for the moment to the extent to which the faculty may be exercised, a diviner is able to fix the breadth of these streams, the position where their current is strongest, and to give a fairly approximate estimate of what their supply may be. Without doubt water can be found by an expert at great depths from the surface (the greatest depth water was got in any of my

sites, that I know of, is 950 feet at Sandy Creek, eight miles west of Birkhead, where it flowed over the casing). If the water is stagnant the divining rod is silent. I do not profess to be able to tell if it is salt or fresh, although books on divining say this may be ascertained by placing salt in the hands.

Before giving the particulars of my water sites, I would explain that I was under the impression that I could not feel water at a greater depth than 300 feet.

I was engaged by the Gregory Rabbit Board to mark a site on very high country on Llanrheidol Station. I found a good stream not far from one picked by another diviner, and I guaranteed that water would be struck at 300 feet. A well was put down to that depth, but no water obtained. On the strength of my guarantee the sinking of the well was abandoned.

Later, I was engaged to mark sites on Vindex Station, and it was mainly due to the perseverance of Mr. W. H. Keene, the manager, that water was tapped over 300 feet. He sunk on one to 500 feet, the water rising to within 152 feet from the surface. It was tested by being pumped for six hours, but the 20,000 gallons per day could not be reduced. Water was obtained at all my sites on Vindex. These results proved that my 300 feet depth was wrong.

I then contracted to test for water on the Nottingham blocks, which are situated on very high downs country between Hughenden and Winton, at the heads of the Landsborough, Flinders, and Diamantina Rivers. My previous experience led me to believe that about 600 feet was my limit, and bores were put down to over that depth and abandoned without water. Eventually the owners selected a site, and put down an artesian bore, striking a flow at about 2,000 feet. I felt sorry they did not sink on one of my sites to prove exactly how deep I could feel underground water.

Another failure was at Vuna selection. The site was on a continuation of the high downs adjoining the Nottingham blocks. The bore was put down over 500 feet at a spot which another diviner had endorsed as being a good site. This and another one were also abandoned without water.

At Glendower, near Prairie, on the Hughenden railway line, I selected a site guaranteeing water if there would be at 300 feet, near a site which had been put down 700 feet without water. The latter had been marked haphazard, and I could not detect any indication of a stream. My site at 300 feet was also a failure. At this depth the bore was abandoned.

A controversy was started in Charters Towers over a paragraph in the *Northern Miner*, as follows: —"The Dalrymple Shire Council's well on Victoria Downs road, at the *head* of the 10-mile creek, on the spot picked by Mr. George O'Sullivan, was sunk to a depth of 38 feet, and at that depth water became so heavy that sinking conditions had to be discontinued. The water rises to within 18 feet of the surface. This site was stated to be barren of water by Mr. Corfield." The above requires an explanation from me, which I now give.

I was camped at Bletchington Park, where I had been marking sites for Messrs. Symes Brothers, who had just completed one I had previously marked within 100 yards of their homestead. They struck a supply of 15,000 gallons per day, at a depth of 70 feet. In the morning it was arranged that Mr. J. Symes should drive me into Charters Towers, and when on the road, asked me if I would mind looking at Sullivan's site at the 10-mile creek. He said he did not know exactly where it was situated. When we reached the creek we saw some trees stripped of bark close to the crossing indicating the spot, as we thought, but I could find no sign of water there. I did not go to the *head* of the creek, where I afterwards learnt the site was. Hence the statement that I had declared the site barren of water.

I have previously stated that water has been struck on my site in this country at a depth of 950 feet, and I feel certain that in all these instances, if boring had been continued, water would have been struck at a payable depth.

I will now relate some of my experiences of the efficacy of the divining rod.

It is my custom to use a compass to define the course of the underground stream, which I leave on paper with the manager or owner to show in which direction the stream is running.

I was engaged by Messrs. Philp, Forsyth and Munro to mark sites for tube bores on their property at Thylungra Station. After marking several sites on the station, when passing through Brisbane later, on my way to Cowley Station on the same errand, I interviewed Messrs. Philp and Forsyth, who told me there had been a well sunk on my site and no water obtained, but that the contractor had sunk a three-inch bore where my peg was, and had obtained good water for his camp use. I may state here that where water is unobtainable close to the workings, this was a usual occurrence. As the three partners were about to visit the station, I asked them to discontinue working, and I would meet them there at a certain date. This I did, and found in their presence that the well had been put down two feet outside the breadth of the stream in the opposite direction to which it was running. I advocated a new well being sunk in the proper place, but they preferred driving in the direction to which I had placed the peg. Such action may prove a partial failure, as they might not strike the strong stream. I have not heard the result of their decision, but it is certain that my directions of the course of the stream have not been followed. Either Sir Robert Philp or Messrs. Forsyth or Munro could corroborate the above statements.

The Dalrymple Shire Council obtained my services to inspect a well which had been sunk at Oakey Creek, distant

about 15 miles from Charters Towers, which they told me would only water twelve horses and then the supply gave out. I found the well was on the edge of a strong stream, the outer edge of which ran through the centre of the well, consequently the rod would not work at the outer edge of the well. I marked the site for a new one about six yards farther in. The members of the Council decided to put down a circular cement well. They tapped the water under 40 feet and obtained an inexhaustible supply. When I received the letter enclosing my fee, it contained a vote of thanks from the committee for the good work done. No better place could be chosen for a demonstration of the efficacy of the divining rod.

Later, the Directors of the Carrington United Mine invited me to visit their well at Lion's town, about 30 miles from Charters Towers, which had become dry. I found this well was not on any stream, but that a drive had been put in to drain the soakage from a sandy creek, which was in close proximity, and the season being a dry one, this had also failed to give any soakage. I crossed this creek, and found a stream 13 yards wide, which I marked. Being located on a flat, I had the idea that probably there might be more water further over. My surmise was right, for on investigation I found another stream 14 yards wide, but running in the direction as if it would join the other. This proved correct, the whole width of the two streams measuring 27 yards. I told the manager, who was present, I could get him a good site at a spot most suitable to himself. The site was marked in the centre of the 27 yards.

Miners were put on to work night and day, as about 100 men had been thrown out of employment owing to the failure of the water supply. Water was struck at 30 feet, which rose seven feet in the shaft in ten minutes. The sinking was continued to 40 feet, the water rising to within ten feet of the surface. When one considers the well was six feet square, the supply can be imagined.

Unknown to the man who was pumping the water to the mill, I later visited the site and enquired if the water could be reduced in the shaft. He replied:—"I have kept the pump going night and day, but cannot lessen the supply." I then asked him if I might lift the slabs which were covering the well. I did so with his permission, and saw the water flowing in a steady stream across it. This satisfied me as to the supply.

At Avon Downs Station, near Clermont, a large well had been sunk near a creek, with a diminishing supply of water. On investigation, I found the well had been sunk on the edge of an underground stream. I advised a drive to be put in towards the centre of the stream (which I marked). Mr. Sutherland (the Inspector for the Australian Estates at that time) informed me later that my advice had been carried out, and they had obtained very satisfactory results.

At Gindie State Farm, I was accompanied by Mr. Hamlyn (the Public Service Improvement Engineer) to mark sites for the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Jarrott, the manager, took us to a dry well sunk to a depth of 80 feet. I could not feel any indication of water there, but a few hundred yards away, on rising ground, I located two streams crossing each other, and by the assistance of pegs, marked a site in the centre of the two streams. Some months afterwards I met the manager in Emerald, who said:—"Mr. Corfield, when you were marking that site at Gindie State Farm, where the two streams crossed each other, the engineer and myself were laughingly criticising your action, but never more will I doubt your ability to find water." The Secretary of Agriculture later informed me by letter that the top stream only yielded a small supply, but the second stream, struck at 165 feet, augmented the supply that it could not be lowered by the pump more than 35 feet, and that the estimated yield of both streams was 10,000 gallons per day.

In 1907, I marked several sites in the vicinity of Winton, and between then and 1911, I travelled by coach and train, but principally by buggy, an approximate distance of 20,000 miles, marking sites at different stations, ranging from Charleville in the south-west, to Granada in the north-west, in the back blocks of this State, besides locating water on several stations on and near the eastern coast, and was successful in locating water to the satisfaction of those interested.

On a site marked by me at Mayne Junction, the Railway Department obtained water at a reasonable depth, but the water on being analysed was found to be unfit for locomotives, or for washing the carriages, consequently it was abandoned.

I also found a stream within two miles of Nundah railway station, which, on a well being sunk, tapped the water at 30 feet. It rose 18 feet in the shaft. This water is supposed to be of a highly medicinal character, beautifully soft and palatable to drink.

I also marked a few sites in New South Wales, and some at Birrallee Station, out from Bowen.

All this time I enjoyed perfect health, but in 1911 I began to get very stiff in the legs, especially about the hips. Thinking it was rheumatism, I went to the Innot hot springs, near Herberton. These baths gave me no relief, so I went to Sydney to consult Sir Alexander McCormack, who prescribed electrical treatment and hot air. This I tried for four months without any good results.

I then went to Rotorua, in New Zealand, consulting the doctor there, who prescribed all the baths which are so efficacious in removing rheumatism. The doctor, hearing of my having practised water divining so long, diagnosed my case as neuritis, brought on by constant use of my nerve energy in following that profession.

From this time I desisted from my occupation, and only used my powers to give a demonstration occasionally.

I have tried since the Muckadilla bore water on several occasions, but could obtain no improvement.

An amusing incident occurred to me when marking sites on a cattle station in the north-west of Queensland.

I was being driven in a buggy drawn by a spanking pair of horses which the driver, who was the manager of the station, could well handle.

The manager was a very smart young fellow, a splendid rider, and in every way qualified to manage such a property, and bore a high reputation for considering the interests of his employers before anything else.

He was driving me through some ridgy country where the grass in the gullies was very long and rank. I had located a good stream of water, and was describing its direction by the aid of the compass.

My companion asked if I could follow it, explaining there was a flat half-a-mile farther on which would be a better place for the site. I replied that I could do so, but asked him to drive along the outer edge of the stream, so that I could detect if it curved away on that side. We also zig-zagged inwards, so that I might be certain it was still going in the right direction.

Presently we came to a gully, which was covered with grass, and to all appearance very shallow. On reaching it the horses jumped across it, pulling the front wheel of the buggy into a deep hole. The back of the buggy, caused by the hind wheels lifting, caught me between the shoulders. I turned a somersault, and was thrown head first over the wheels, with my head on the bank, and my legs hanging over the hole.

Having the rod in both hands, I was unable to break the fall. I yelled out, "For God's sake, keep the wheels from going over my head." The sudden jerk had also sent the driver over the splashboard, but like a good horseman, he steadied himself with the reins and landed on his feet. I then heard him say, "My God! I've killed him, and he hasn't marked the site yet." Thinking of his employer's interest prevented him giving me sympathy.

When I found I was not hurt, and that I could rise without his assistance, I could not but enjoy the situation, although the wheel went over the rim of my hat whilst it was on my head.

I eventually marked the site on the plain, but have not heard the result of the boring.

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