

Southern Lights and Shadows

**Being Brief Notes of Three Years' Experience of Social,
Literary, and Political Life**

Fowler, Frank (1833-1863)

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Sydney, Australia

2002



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Source Text:

Prepared from print edition published by Sampson Low, Son, and Co
London 1859

All quotation marks are retained as data.

First Published: 1859

Australian Etext Collections at prose nonfiction 1840-1869

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Note Introductory

THE following pages were put together at sea, having been written in my bunk during a three-days' stiffish gale off the Falklands. On reading the Thing over, I see much that requires revision—many a line that reads flippant or flashy enough—but remembering the *genesis* of its composition—those awful lurches which threw ink-horn, paper, and writer upon the floor—I have some affection for the MS. as it stands, blots, blurs, salt-water stains, and all.

F. F.

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INTERESTING must it be to the English reader to mark how large an Australian element is gradually working itself into our current literature. Our fictionists have fallen upon the soil, like so many industrious diggers, and, though merely scratching and fossicking on the surface, have turned up much precious and malleable stuff. Jerrold—who sent young Jericho “out,”—said of the country long ago, that it was a land so kind that if you tickled it with a hoe, it laughed with a harvest; Bulwer, surfeited of Bohn and Pompeii, could find no better place than the Antipodes for Uncle Jack and Pisistratus; Howitt, in a “Squatter's Home,” has charmed us more of late than he ever did in the home (or haunt) of a poet; Charles Reade, facile as he was in his English descriptions, has shown, by those nervous Australian touches, that even with him and his art it is never too late to mend; it was to Sydney that Lady Waldemar purposed shipping poor Marian Erle; and—to drop this prefatory prattle at once—was it not to Australia that the great Wilkins Macawber transported himself and his abilities, his twins and his bills! Pleasant enough is it to find Romance thus transmuting this land of sharp and sheer Reality, just as its own central fires have, in Shaksperian phrase,

“Turn'd the meagre, cloddy earth to glitt'ring gold!”

I went to Australia in '55. I had been previously engaged for two sessions reporting in the House of Commons, and my health was rapidly breaking up. Doctors recommended a sea-voyage and a warm climate. Fifteen thousand miles of the one, and 85° in the shade of the other, were sufficient temptations held out by the good city of Sydney to induce me to decide on a run round the world. My original intention was not to stop in the colonies more than four or five months—one summer at most—and, appropriating any flotsam or jetsam of Australian incident which might drift in my way, to cargo the same, and, on my return home, to endeavour to cover the expenses of my journey by a “popular” book on my travels. By the time I arrived in Sydney, however, my health, under the sanitary influences of a long sea voyage, was quite restored; and this agreeable fact, coupled with the aspectable appearance of men and things about me—the many novel developments of character and scene—made me decide on staying, at all events for a year or two, in one or other of the Australian colonies. An engagement on a Sydney journal offering itself at the moment, I at once

settled on New South Wales, and, in less than a fortnight after bidding good-bye to the vessel which had brought me to El Dorado, was running through the country, sometimes two hundred miles in the interior, discharging the functions of newspaper correspondent. Since then I have filled various positions and performed a somewhat interesting and varied *rôle* of characters—lecturer, government shorthand-writer, playwright, magazine projector, editor, “our own correspondent,” and, last of all, candidate for political laurels. I catalogue these several personal items thus early, in order to get over at once what is always a disagreeable portion of a narrative—that which personally concerns the writer—but chiefly that I may be recognised by my readers as—may I say it?—an authority upon Australian matters, before entering upon the main features of this adumbration. I can safely affirm that no man ever strove more zealously to make himself acquainted with a country, than I did with the colony during my two years' sojourn beneath its fig-trees. If I crush the result of my observations and experiences into a duodecimo, it is only because, as an old traveller, I have learnt how to pack a good many things in a small compass. Coming with this much in hand by way of preface, I would fain hope that a brief outline of my observations and impressions of a far-off yet nearly allied country and people, ruled, as that outline is, with probity of utterance and a desire to present the nudest truth, is not unlikely to meet with some attention¹ .

For see: Australia, just now, is the most interesting and important of all our colonial possessions, India itself (if India can be called a colony) not excepted. I am not going to support this position with any broad generality, but shall leave it to stand by itself as an unimpeachable fact. Her imports and exports are larger by far than those of any other British dependency; her vast pastoral resources are comparatively undeveloped; her soil is affluent in gold and other precious metals; her cities, though reared but yesterday, are large, well-populated, and adorned from end to end with noble public buildings and palatial dwellings that Belgravia or Tyburnia might proudly own; her marts and warehouses are handsome combinations of our city emporiums and West-end bazaars; and, finally, her population is active, industrious, self-reliant; in mode and manner, government and religion, even more English than the English² .

In the course of this narration I shall studiously avoid all those arid details, the ever-repeated and never-remembered statistics, which, as a rule, form the staple matter of books on the colonies. Those who are intensely interested in the matter of hides, know pretty well by this time how many are annually sent from Australia: those who are not, would scarcely thank me for pausing to tell them. I have no desire to state, and I am sure the

reader has little desire to learn, how many sheep are annually boiled down on the Lachlan; how much rough fat is exported from the Darling; how many head of horned cattle are depastured on the Murrumbidgee. All this I beg respectfully to hand over to the Statistical Society, and young members of parliament desirous of “going in heavily” at Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton. Fighting shy, then, of blue-book, tabular statement, and commissioner's return, my aim will be to present, in as lively and pleasant a manner as I can command, a faithful, if hurried, etching of the everyday life and avocations of our friends at the antipodes. And here, at the outset, let me disclaim any intention of dragging the reader, for the thousandth time, over the Australian gold-fields. Bored enough must he be with “sinkings,” drowsed enough with “cradles,” and crushed enough with quartz; while profound must be his conviction, after reading these digging chronicles which promise so much and fulfil so little, that all is not gold that glisters—since it may be only mica!

It was at breakfast-time on a warm, cheerful morning in December, when *our* “long dun wolds are ribbed with snow,” that the “Kate” and I cast anchor in Port Jackson. Myriads of emerald cicadas were splintering the silence with their shrill, cricket-like chirrupings, as they glanced from bough to bough beneath the burning sun. It wanted three or four days to Christmas, but every tree was full of leaves, every bush afire with blossoms. Of the harbour of Port Jackson it is difficult to speak within the bounds of calm description. I have talked with travelled men—old salts who have weathered at Rio, young sprigs who have yachted at Naples—and they all agree in this, that, for scenery, capacity, and safety, the haven of Sydney is the finest in the world. It is a harbour *sui generis*. Great mouldering rocks, crowned with tall, solitary trees, stretch along the shore, while the water divides itself into a hundred streams, and runs, like the canals of Venice, along and around the greater portion of the city. Wherever you walk in Sydney, blue glimpses of the harbour are marked in the distance. In one direction you see it sheening away for miles, until it loses itself in the dim greenery of the far-off bush; in another you catch a mere shield of it set out bravely against the sun. Here it dwindles to the dimensions of a pillar of marble prone upon the hill-side; there it opens into a perfect sea, with a fleet of tapering masts cut clear against the sky. From almost any balcony in any part of the city, the eye, gazing through the torrid atmosphere, is cooled by the grateful breezes blowing off the water. For miles out of the town, too, you mark the tortuous windings of the stream. One arm of it—and it is a very Briareus in arms!—reaches up to Parramatta, a distance of about fifteen miles, and forms to my mind, and speaking so far as my narrow experience goes, the fairest river out of Eden.

Its banks, from Sydney to Parramatta, are crowded with orange trees, which shoot a keen delicious perfume across the water, and through the foliage of which the golden fruit gleams out, like lamps of palest gold, or, as Andrew Marvell sings so quaintly,

“Like stars of lighte in a greene night.”

Charming villas rise from every agreeable point along the banks, while here and there is a village of neat stone houses (with little garden and orangery to each, and sometimes a landing-place of rough water-whitened stones, running out into the stream), centred and consecrated by a toy-like church, with tiny spire, bright with copper, pointing through the air. Here, too, is a fine convent, with a wealth of tinkling bells, and a magnificent erie-like property, set high on a jut of rock and surrounded by a perfect forest of white-limbed eucalypti, belonging, I was told, to a lineal descendant of one who could have sung rich music there—one, alas! who climbed a higher alp to write *atheos* nearest heaven!

Rising from different parts of Port Jackson are verdant islets, singularly beautiful, and which look like bits of faërie-land—fragments of a dream—slumbrous homes for the companions of Ulysses or Mr. Tennyson's later “Lotus-Eaters.” They are edged with pendulous bushes and tropical water-plants,—which cool their brazen leaves and thirsty tendrils in the tide,—and smothered all over with a sward of matted bush-flowers, veined with the basanite stalk of the trailing melon.

Similar to these were my notes of the harbour on arriving at Sydney. Flocks of sailing-boats were hovering about the ship, and jumping into one of them, I soon found myself on the great public quay of the city. There must have been from twenty to thirty first-class vessels lying along the wharf, and scores of carts and drays were hurrying to and fro with cargo. A couple of cars, drawn by ten or twelve drowsy-looking bullocks, were going, at drowsy-bullock pace, along the wharf, each piled high with wool, and with a swarthy, heavily-bearded driver tramping at the side, whip in hand, and curt black pipe in mouth. Both the Australian pipe,—I mean the genuine cutty,—and the Australian whip,—I mean the genuine stock-whip,—are worth a word or two.

And first as to the pipe. The cutty is of all shapes, sizes, and shades. Some are negro heads, set with rows of very white teeth—some are mermaids, showing their more presentable halves up the front of the bowls, and stowing away their weedy fundamentals under the stems. Some are Turkish caps—some are Russian skulls. Some are Houris, some are

empresses of the French, some are Margaret Catchpoles. Some are as small as my lady's thimble—others as large as an old Chelsea tea-cup. Every body has one, from the little pinafores school-boy who has renounced his hardbake for his Hardam's, to the old veteran who came out with the second batch of convicts, and remembers George Barrington's prologue³. Clergymen get up their sermons over the pipe; members of Parliament walk the verandah of the Sydney house of legislature with the black bowl gleaming between their teeth. One of the metropolitan representatives was seriously ill just before I left, from having smoked forty pipes of Latakia at one sitting. A cutty-bowl, like a Creole's eye, is most prized when blackest. Some smokers wrap the bowls reverently in leather, during the process of colouring; others buy them ready stained, and get (I suppose) the reputation of accomplished whiffers at once. Every young swell glories in his cabinet of dirty clay pipes. A friend of mine used to call a box of the little black things, his "*Stowe* collection." Tobacco, I should add here, is seldom sold in a cut form. Each man carries a cake about with him, like a card-case; each boy has his stick of Cavendish, like so much candy. The cigars usually smoked are Manillas, which are as cheap and good as can be met with in any part of the world. Lola Montez, during her Australian tour, spoke well of them. What stronger puff could they have than hers?

And now the stock-whip. The thong is a strip of hide, from that well-tanned part of the beast, where, in life, he has been most whipped himself⁴, with a cracker of silk worked into the end of it. A romantic rattlebrain stockman, whom I once met at Singleton, had made a cracker out of a piece of a silk handkerchief given him by his sweetheart; "But it doesn't answer," he said to me half-confidentially, over our jug of beer. "You see when they get bogged and I have to lash them, every crack makes me think of Polly, and then, 'pon my soul, I can't give it them so smartly as I ought." "Is Polly in Australia?" I asked. "Oh! no; she mourns me by the classic Isis," he replied half-jocularly, but with a certain dash of sadness in his tone. "Are you from Oxford?" I inquired, for there was a good deal about the fellow which interested me. "Not exactly. I took my B. A. there five years ago." Read that, ye heads-of-houses! What a practical commentary on the Georgics!

The thong of the stock-whip is about fourteen feet in length, while the handle is not more than a foot and a half. My classic friend likened his whip to one of Mr. Disraeli's speeches, "For," said he, "there is plenty of lash, the sting is in the end, and there is deuced little to lay hold of." The stockmen are wondrously expert in the use of these whips. Look, there rides a driver by the side of a mob of cattle, and there, six or seven yards off, booms a large blowfly against the irritable snout of the foremost of the

bullocks. The stockman twists his wrist once or twice, until the thong of his whip goes coiling about his head like a snake. Crack, crack, as the distant sound of a musket, rings the lash; "Strawberry" snorts as the knot at the end of the thong just tickles his nose; but the blowfly, flattened and mutilated, falls dead upon the earth. Another whip-trick these drivers have is this: they place a sixpence—or, rather, *you* place a sixpence—on the ground, and, moving off some twelve or fourteen feet, the stockman twists his whip above his head and picks up the coin with the end of the cracker as nimbly and cunningly as a magpie. The difficulty of the performance is of course increased by the shortness of the handle and the length of the lash. That aforesaid Bachelor of Arts could do it *secundum artem*, while, on the other hand, I have seen amateurs literally half hang themselves in simply trying to make the cord twirl about their heads. We have the elder Mr. Weller's authority that it is not given to every man to be a great whip.

What first took my attention in Sydney, after I had sufficiently recovered from the bites of the mosquitoes to show myself in public, was the air of well-to-do-ness which characterized every thing about me. The carriages passing through the streets were quiet and elegant; the people were well and soberly dressed; the cabs on the ranks looked more like private carriages than public conveyances; even the cabmen swore and swaggered less, and chinked their money more—having, I suppose, more money to chink—than I ever noticed the fraternity chink, swagger, and swear elsewhere. It was London in good spirits,—as if every man had turned up a nugget or two in his back garden. This was when I arrived: when I left, the roseate light had somewhat mellowed. The shops struck me with surprise. George-street, the principal thoroughfare, is three or four miles in length. Every house is a place of business, and the majority of the marts and warehouses would bear comparison with the run of those in our leading arteries of trade. In fact, at Maitland, a country town, nearly one hundred miles from Sydney, I went over a drapery and general store larger and more lavishly appointed, incredible as the assertion may appear, than the great Manchester warehouses of St. Paul's Churchyard. One part of George-street is as much like Bond-street as it is possible one place can resemble another. Like Bond-street of old, it is hourly paraded by the bucks and Brummels of the colony. The Café Français, in this street, is much frequented by the young swells and sprigs of the city. They hold here a chess club, a billiard club, and a stewed-kidney club. Little marble tables, files of "Punch" and the "Times," dominoes, sherry-cobblers, strawberry ices, an entertaining hostess, and a big, bloused, lubberly, inoffensive host, are the noticeable points of the café left on my recollection. They serve eight hundred dinners a day at this house, for which they pay a yearly rent

of 2400*l*. Even M. Mivart—if there be such a person—might shrug his shoulders at that.

Melbourne, which I subsequently visited, is generally a much finer and livelier place than Sydney, but being younger, and not having had the equivocal advantage of convict labour, it lacks the substantiality of its sister metropolis. In Sydney there are many public buildings, every stone in which is marked with the initials of the convict who chiselled and laid it. They are sad monuments of the past, and perhaps, after all, Melbourne is better without them!

And at this point it may be as well to state, with becoming brevity, my comparative impressions of the two great metropolises of the Australias. Sydney is about seven times the age of Melbourne—which was a mud village but the other day—and is, it would almost seem as a consequence of this seniority, about seven times more comfortable to live in. In support of this, I may mention that Sydney has, by this time, a well-arranged, and all but complete system of sewerage; while the Victorian capital, whose geographical position requires it far more, is wofully deficient in this particular. The climate of Sydney, too, cooled by those perennial sea breezes, is more genial than that of Melbourne; the inhabitants are more staid and steady than the bustling, gold-digging, go-a-head Victorians. Sydney, again, lies with her breast against the sea; at Melbourne, three miles of hot shifting sand, through which it is almost impossible to walk, glares, like a burning lake, between the harbour and the city. So far, then, Sydney carries the palm. Still, were I ever to return to Australia, I should pitch my tent in Melbourne. The lively, business-like character of the place and people pleases me, and consoles for some lack of comfort. Moreover, the battle of “old-handism” against “new-chumism” is not everlastingly waging in Victoria as it is in New South Wales, where the natives are more intolerant and intolerable than the Bowery boys of America. Melbourne itself is splendid. Fine wide streets, finer and wider than almost any in London, stretch away, sometimes for miles, in every direction. At any hour of the day, thousands of persons may be seen skurrying along the leading thoroughfares, with true Cheapside bustle and eagerness. Hundreds of cabs and jaunting-cars rattle through the streets; trains come shrieking in from Geelong and the suburbs every ten or twelve minutes; all the classic cries of London, from hot potatoes to iced ginger-beer⁵, echo through the streets; restaurants and well-furnished coffee-houses send out the alluring perfumes of their shilling luncheons at every hundred yards; while, at each populous point of the city, rival news-boys make both day and night hideous with their constant and competitive yellings of “Melbourne Argis,” “Melbourne 'Erald,” “Melbourne Age,” “Melbourne Evening Mail,”

“Melbourne Punch,” “Melbourne Note Book,” “Melbourne Examiner,” “Melbourne Leader,” and Melbourne every thing else which could possibly be twisted into the name of a newspaper. While I was at Melbourne, the newsboys attached to the “Evening Mail” struck work; and it was amusing to see and hear them parading the streets, shouting out the name of the paper, coupled with the damaging intimation that it was permanently doubled in price. The Victoria newsboys are of the approved stamp of their class—smart, chaffy, and free of the trammels of orthography and pronunciation. They call the “Argus,” the “August,” the “Orgies,” the “Hardjest,” and every thing else but its proper and heathen name.

The Melbourne Press is a great fact, as we say. “In five years,” remarked the proprietor of one of the daily papers to me, “a quarter of a million of money has been sunk in this colony on our various public journals.” And very creditable specimens of newspaper literature some of these journals are. The “Evening Mail” is as large as the “Sun,” is one half the price, and, considering the dearth of topics with which the colonial journalist has to deal, as well written as any evening paper in the world⁶. The writers on the “Argus” are picked men, who have figured in the journalistic ranks of England; the “Herald” is conducted by one of the most practical newspaper managers with whom I ever came in contact; the Melbourne “Punch” is fit to show itself at its namesake's in Fleet-street without feeling ashamed of its title; while the “Examiner,” “Leader,” and “Note Book,” are worthy of relative comparison with the best hebdomadals of the old world. Here is a wide field for the literary labourer at a loss for occupation at home; for that large class of educated men in England who are crying out in the words of Peterborough to the minister, “We must have work found us, either in the Old World or in the New!” One gentleman I conversed with in Melbourne, told me, as he sat basting a snipe before the fire of his bachelor snugger, he was making 35*l.* a week by writing for the press. In New South Wales I earned myself 1000*l.* a year as journalist and bookseller's hack; but such a rate of payment is rare in Sydney, while, at Melbourne, if not usual, it is, at all events, far from uncommon.

The “Morning Herald,” is the only daily newspaper in Sydney, and has a circulation of between seven and eight thousand. It is worth, I believe, to Mr. Fairfax, its proprietor, about ten thousand a year. On the day of the departure of the European mail, twenty thousand extra copies are circulated. It has from five to six pages of closely-printed advertisements each morning. In politics it is Liberal-Conservative; its leaders are outspoken in tone; racy and vigorous in style. It is marked with an all but *Times*-like liberality of management, and has always extended its hand, and opened its purse to men of ability struggling in the colony. The

proprietor has lately built for the journal a new office—a huge stone fabric in the Italian style—at an outlay of 30,000*l.*

There was, until September last, a second daily paper, called the “Empire,” which was also characterised by considerable ability. This paper, however, was in the hands of an inexperienced, though persevering man, and, falling year after year into deeper difficulties, at length “died” with a debt of 60,000*l.* upon its shoulders.

The weekly press, in Sydney, comprises a carefully-edited Catholic journal, a “Weekly Dispatch,” and two very beery sporting papers called the “Era” and “Bell's Life.” The character of these last will be understood when I mention that “Bell's Life”—which ranks first—inserts births, marriages, and deaths under the playful headings of “hatched, matched, and despatched.” Its account of the wreck of the “Catherine Adamson” was entitled, “Down among the Dead Men⁷ !”

There are also, in New South Wales, a monthly magazine, devoted to criticism, costing about 100*l.* per issue, and published at a shilling,—but of which, as I was the founder and am still ostensibly the editor, it is not for me to speak,—a “Bradshaw's Railway Guide,” a “Shipping List,” a “Band of Hope Review,” and a sheet devoted to the proceedings of the scientific associations of the colony.

This is very different to Melbourne, which has three daily journals, one evening, six or seven weekly, with three or four monthly and two annual publications. In the whole of Victoria there are sixty-one papers⁸ : in the whole of New South Wales but twenty. At present Melbourne only needs a good literary journal to render her press complete, and the following extract from a letter sent me by Mr. Duffy on the day of my departure, will show that the existing want is likely to be soon removed by his (so far as literature goes⁹) competent and credentialed hand:—

“And, to say the truth, I had hoped that I might count upon your assistance in a Quarterly Federal Review, towards which I intended to invite the aid of the best intellects . . . in Australia, without reference either to their politics or their *locale*. Something like the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, in which every knight would fight under his own banner, and with his own proper battle-cry.”

Mr. Duffy's name recals to mind the parliament of Victoria, about which I must say a word. I went down to the House to bid good-bye to some old London friends, and was never more surprised than at what came under my notice. First I saw a chamber as fine, I should say, as any room in the world devoted to the “manufacture of statute law,” the “Lords” only excepted. And even finer than *that*, looked at from the grand rather than the glittering standpoint. Exquisitely proportioned Corinthian pillars, their capitals

sparingly picked out with gold, massive chandeliers, groined ceiling, and rich green hangings were the principal features which first took the eye. Next I saw a gentleman who had been a colleague of mine in the reporter's gallery of St. Stephen's acting as Chairman of Committees; next the "Times" correspondent performing the duties of Attorney-General; next the proprietor of a Melbourne journal high in the Liberal opposition; next the editor of the same vigorously backing his chief; and last the ex-manager of the "Nation" holding third place on the Treasury bench. Thus in this new and far-off country, with its heterogeneous community, literature takes its proper rank: here is the best answer to the scandal which has gone abroad that none but the hewer of wood and the drawer of water has chance of preferment in these young colonies.

I was much delighted during the early part of my residence in Sydney with the colonial young-stock. The Australian boy is a slim, dark-eyed, olive-complexioned young rascal, fond of Cavendish, cricket, and chuckpenny, and systematically insolent to all servant girls, policemen, and new-chums. His hair is shiny with grease, as are the knees of his breeches and the elbows of his jacket. He wears a cabbage-tree hat, with a dissipated wisp of black ribbon dangling behind, and loves to walk meditatively with his hands in his pockets, and, if cigarless, to chew a bit of straw in the extreme corner of his mouth. His face is soft, bloomless, and pasty, and you fancy if you touched his cheek you would leave the stamp of your finger behind. He baptizes female emigrants after the names of the ships in which they arrived, such as Susan Red Rover and Matilda Agamemnon. On the same principle he calls policemen "Israelites," because the majority of them came out with the "Exodus." He is christened, in turn, a gumsucker and a cornstalk. He can fight like an Irishman or a Bashi-Bazouk; otherwise he is orientally indolent, and will swear with a quiet gusto if you push against him in the street, or request him politely to move on¹. Lazy as he is though, he is out in the world at ten years of age, earning good wages, and is a perfect little man, learned in all the ways and by-ways of life at twelve or thirteen. Dickens and Albert Smith have given high celebrity to the genuine cockney youth, though for shrewdness, effrontery, and mannish affectation, your London gamin pales into utter respectability before the young Australian. In proof of this I find that, at twelve years of age, the colonial lad, having passed through every phase of probationary shrewdness, is qualified to act as full-blown 'bus conductor. To preside, in short, at the door of a 'bus, is the apex of the rising cornstalk's ambition. No Grecian matron was ever prouder at sending her son forth with a shield than is the native Australian mother at sending her boy out into the world with a badge.

I had been in Sydney a week when the character of the boys was forcibly brought under my notice. I was riding alone in a 'bus, and was much annoyed at the conductor, who was constantly opening and slamming the door. "What are you about, my boy?" I at length said. "Why can't you leave the door alone?" "Oh! you're a new-chum," was the contemptuous answer. "Well; but what has that to do with the matter? You are not paid to annoy new-chums, are you?" "Of course not; but don't you see every time I bang the door, the hosses think some one has got out, and—*my* oath!—that's the only way I can make 'em put on the steam. You see," he quietly added, summing me up as a Londoner with a look, "these here hosses is Cockneys, and must be dealt with *as sich*,"—and a smile broke from his mouth like the rich fruit bursting through the hard rind of a pomegranate he was voraciously devouring. I should add here that your thorough-bred gumsucker never speaks, without apostrophising his "oath," and interlarding his diction with the crimsonest of adjectives. He tessellates his speech with garnets and carbuncles. One is struck aghast with the occasional blasphemy of his language. The prattle of the little urchin in the street bristles all over with objurations and anathemas. I recollect pausing outside the play-ground of the Sydney National School one morning, and hearing epithets used by the boys as they *gravely* pursued their sports (the young Australian appears a man even in his play) fouler than those which pass current in the blackest purlieus of St. Giles's.

I need scarcely say that I except from the bearing of all these remarks, the children of the educated portion of the population. Among these I have met many refined and intelligent youths, boys of the true English stamp—manly yet modest—and have always derived pleasure from their companionship. The lower class juveniles of the colony however—those who affect the market-place, the shambles, the dancing saloon, and the gallery of the theatre—are about as saucy and crafty a set of young rascals as my Lord Shaftesbury need wish to reform.

There are some half-caste children living in Sydney, and these, semi-barbarous as they are, appear to have caught the smartness of their white compeers. There was one who used to sell oranges on the Circular Quay, and it was highly amusing to mark the easy way in which he would rid himself of a troublesome customer. One day a slim exquisite, with an elegantly-dressed young lady hanging on his arm, was tormenting the little black as he chattered for some fruit. The boy kept his temper for a time, but at length broke into a passion. "You fellow, gentleman!" he asked with a sneer. "You gentleman, want him three oranges for twopence? why"—and he tossed up his burnt-sienna chin—"my mudder eat many better fellow than you for her breakfast!" (Not impossible.) A friend of mine,

much struck with the acuteness of one of these young half-castes, took him to chapel. The boy relished the proceedings mightily, and the only thing which appeared to surprise him was the custom observed in Sydney, as elsewhere, of the brethren devoutly burying their faces in their hats on taking their pews. "Well, Abraham, what did you think of it!" asked my friend as they left the place. "Me like it cobbong well," he answered; but added, after a moment's pause, "Why him so much smell him hat?"

I have already said the young Australian is systematically insolent to the new-chum; so is every one indeed. How I, who had pretty well run the gauntlet of London life, was branded and fleeced during the first three months of my residence in Sydney! A new-chum is fair game for any one. Your villanous bullock-driver in the interior, when he cannot by any stratagem get his cattle to budge, culminates his oaths and imprecations by striking the leader of the refractory beasts over the head, and grunting from the depths of his stomach—"Oh! you —— NEW-CHUM! move on!"

Touching both bullock-driver and new-chum, here is a story for the truth of which I can vouch. A young German gentleman, green from one of the universities, came to New South Wales to learn wisdom and reap a fortune. Being unable to procure employment in Sydney, he went up the country, and, pitching Hegel and Schelling to the dogs, boldly turned shepherd. The time came when his master wished a dray, drawn by a couple of bullocks, very old and lame, to be driven to a neighbouring station, and thought he might safely entrust the work to his new hand. He accordingly looked into his hut, and asked him if he would undertake the job. "*Ich will es versuchen,*" said the poor fellow, "*wenn sie es aufschreiben—gee woo, sie verstehen² .*" The master, a fellow-countryman, could not refrain from smiling, but complied with the request; and the young gentleman started off with the two bullocks yoked to an empty dray. At first he managed pretty well: but the beasts, finding they had a new-chum to deal with, got deliberately round a tree—one on either side—and began pulling against each other like a brace of Kilkenny cats. Out came the tablets; but after shouting again and again, in succession, *all* the words inscribed on them, the driver trudged back to his master, and dolefully exclaimed, "*Es nützt nicht; Ich kann es wohl lesen, aber ich kann es nicht aussprechen³ .*" When I heard the story, I could not help remarking that it was a pity the young gentleman had not been educated at the university of *Oxon*. It requires good serious swearing to drive a bullock. Apis has sadly degenerated since he was a religious beast in Egypt. A pious and venerable clergyman came out to the colonies some time ago, and the first thing which startled him was the awful language of the bullock-drivers—the first mission he took in hand was their reformation. "It is of no use," he would say, "to swear at the

poor dumb things—they don't understand it. Try kind treatment, my good men; try kind treatment.” But his entreaties were of no avail; and the drivers continued to whip their bullocks and wither their own limbs to the same extent as usual. At length the old pastor could stand it no longer; and one day he determined to show what could be done with his “kind treatment.” To the amusement of a company of drivers congregated on one of the quays, he set off with a dray drawn by a dozen or fourteen head of cattle. They went well enough at first, but presently halted at the foot of a hill about twenty yards from the quay. “Up, Strawberry!” “Forward, Blossom!” said the driver encouragingly, now speaking aloud for the first time. On hearing his voice, the beasts made a dead stop, the leaders turned right round, looked the old fellow full in the face, mildly blinked their eyes, gave an amiable kind of snort, and walked deliberately back to the stockmen, who were roaring on the quay. Is it necessary to add, that the pastor returned home by another route?

But if the new-chum is laughed at in the colony, it now and then happens that he deserves it. Fastidious, empty fellows come out from England, and the first thing they try to do is to “astonish the natives,”—the said “natives” being about the last people in the world to be astonished at anything. I was at a friend's one night, and was introduced to a young gentleman just out from England. In the course of the evening, the conversation turned on English senators, and Mr. Roebuck's name was mentioned. Our new arrival having sustained a leading part in the conversation up to this point, I took the liberty of asking him what kind of a person Mr. Roebuck was in appearance. “Well,” said he, “you would be slightly disappointed with him. In the first place, he is very tall and thin, and then he wears a green cut-away coat with brass buttons, which gives him a very old-fashioned aspect. This would not be so bad in itself; but he tries to look like a swell, and generally has a scarlet waistcoat, diamond studs, Hessians, and spurs.” “Mr. Spooner is noted for his white-topped Hessians, I think?” I remarked inquiringly. “Yes, he is; but the most remarkable dresser in the House is Mr. Bright, who, being a strict Quaker, has a broad-brimmed hat, snuff-coloured coat, knee-breeches, and sprinkled stockings.”

Like the boys, the young ladies of Australia are in many respects remarkable. At thirteen years of age they have more ribbons, jewels, and lovers, than perhaps any other young ladies of the same age in the universe. They prattle—and very insipidly too—from morning till night. They rush to the Botanical Gardens twice a week, to hear the band play, dressed precisely after the frontis-piece in the latest imported number of “Le Follet.” They wear as much gold chain as the Lord Mayor in his state robes. As they walk you hear the tinkle of their bunches of charms and

suggests, as if they carried bells on their fingers and rings on their toes. The first time I visited the theatre I sat near a young lady who wore at least a half-a-dozen rings over her white gloves, and who, if bare musquito-bitten shoulders may be deemed beautiful, showed more beauty than I ever saw a young lady display before. Generally, the colonial damsels are frivolous, talkative, and over-dressed. They have, in brief, all the light, unenviable qualities of Eastern women. They excel in finesse. I heard of a young lady, who wishing to make a dilatory gentleman, who had been for sometime hovering about her, definitively propose, had her boxes packed and placed conspicuously in the hall of her father's house, thus labelled:

MISS P. JACKSON,

Passenger by the "Archimedian Screw"
for ENGLAND.

"If that doesn't bring him to book," she was heard to declare to her mother, "I'll get Fred to thrash him!" That is an incident for a comedy—here is something for a melodrame. I was at a ball last Christmas, and walking along a corridor saw two lovers in earnest dispute. "Augustus, you are mistaken," said the young lady. "Bosh!" returned the gentleman gruffly; "I saw him. Good night." "Augustus, don't leave me; you are wrong. I love you too well. Your suspicion kills me." "Pish! I'm off; so good night," and he really was moving away, when the lady changing her tone of supplication for one of solemn impressiveness said: "Go, sir—go; but, remember, I'll not survive it. This house, thank heaven! has a *spiral staircase!*"

The affectation of *ton* among the girls is remarkably funny. At a party given last year by a leading member of Parliament, all the young ladies talked school French, a *patois* which everybody seemed to understand, except myself and an unfortunate Frenchman who presided at the piano.

Of course folks who talk school French are special patrons of the Drama. On the appearance of a star, they flock to the dress circle by hundreds, and subscribe largely to the testimonials which are invariably given to all the famous players who visit the colony. This testimonialising has become an epidemic in Sydney. Everybody is presented with a testimonial by everybody else. Successful or unsuccessful one cannot escape a claret-jug or a tea-urn. I heard, before taking my passage home, of the establishment of an Australian Testimonial Club, each member of which, by paying a stated sum per week, became, in turn, entitled to a gold snuff-box with suitable enlogistic inscription. During the rather limited time I was in the colonies, no less than five-and-twenty testimonials were given to different individuals. The gifts themselves ranged from a daily newspaper and plant, to the monster egg of an emu.

Returning to the Drama, let me endeavour to convey some idea of the Thespian resources and proceedings of the colonies. The amusements of a people are a safe though slight index of their material prosperity—just as the bit of coloured bunting, or strip of albatross-down on the top of a mast shows in which quarter the wind sets. In Sydney there are three theatres, two of them capable of holding (each) from two thousand five-hundred to three thousand persons, and the third about the size of the Olympic. The “Prince of Wales” stands first, and cost about 28,000/. The “Victoria,” which ranks next, is the oldest and most popular house. The pieces which proved most attractive here, during my stay, were “Jack Shepherd,” “Jonathan Wild,” and a run of Shaksperian revivals, with Mr. G. V. Brooke as principal performer. At this establishment I first saw Lola Montez, and, profiting by the opportunity to get a chat with her after the entertainment had concluded, found her to be—much to my surprise—a very simple-mannered, well-behaved, cigar-loving young person. Her general conduct, in the colony, however, was very *outré*. A single illustration will serve as well as a score. On one occasion she took her passage from Sydney to Melbourne without paying her debts, and when the sheriff's-officer followed her on board the boat, she went to her cabin, “unclasped her warmed jewels one by one,” jumped into bed, and then defied the blushing official to come and remove her. A practice with Lola during her stay in Sydney was, whenever she was unfavourably criticised in the papers, to step forward to the footlights on the following evening, and throwing her pretty little white glove on the stage, challenge her accuser to come and pick it up.

The “Prince of Wales” was generally devoted to opera, and here I have heard Bellini, Meyerbeer, and even Verdi and Beethoven as carefully rendered as at any theatre in London, the two Italian opera houses only excepted. Madame Anna Bishop was generally first-lady, Miss Sarah Flower contralto; Messrs. Laglaise and Coulon—not quite unknown names—tenor and bass; and Messrs. Lavenu and Loder, men of some English reputation, leaders of the orchestra. At the “Prince of Wales” I heard a Miska Hauser fiddle. He plays Beethoven like Ernst, Paganini like Sivori.

The third house is called the Lyceum, and when first opened—about two years ago—affected the modes, manners, and class of entertainment of its English namesake when under the regime of Vestris⁴. From its bad, back situation, however, it was found not to pay, and has since been converted, first, into a circus, and, latterly, a dancing saloon of the most Paphian and least prudish description.

In Australia you stumble over the same class of theatrical speculators that

you meet with in England. I have noticed in both places, and I dare say it is the same all over the world, how a needy man (he is generally something in the African wine or foreign jewellery line) will take a theatre, open it with a clash of cymbals, become an insolvent in the middle of the first season, and, after getting his certificate, take a farewell benefit at a fashionable house. I have noticed, further, that after this, our “unfortunate speculator” is never known to do a stroke of work. Hence-forward he walks through life with a free ivory to the boxes. You may see him daily at some favourite French house taking his epigramme of lamb and pale sherry, but if you catch him at the desk, the counter, or the bench, will you be good enough to register the fact?

In Melbourne, there are three theatres, the Royal, the Princess's, and the Olympic. The Royal (though a little dingy) is but slightly inferior, in capacity and appointment, to Drury Lane: the two other houses I was not able to visit during my brief stay in the city. These theatres, it will be readily understood, afford a means of livelihood to a very large number of persons—actors, dancers, supernumeraries, and that nondescript class who follow the sock and buskin at indefinite distances and in equally indefinite characters. Some of the actors make large incomes, the average pay for the average performer being about 15*l.* a week. I heard that Mr. Brooke had netted upwards of 30,000*l.* during his “starring” career in the colony. This is gold-digging with a hare's-foot to some profit.

In the purlieus of the theatres there is any number of flash houses similar to those so plentifully found in London: barbers' shops with walls illuminated with the reigning danseuse and popular tragedian; barbarous houses with blinking bloodshot eyes of red-curtained glass in the doorways, and old harridans in the porches; supper-rooms lavish of gas and fair free-mannered waitresses; and bum-boat shops (I can find no better name), where they sell oranges, playbills, walking-sticks, whelks, nuts, saveloys, cheeroots, crackers, and fried fish.

Strange people one sometimes runs against in an Australian green-room! Lieutenant Perry, late of the 46th, of court-martial notoriety, made his “first appearance on any stage” at a Melbourne house. I saw, in Sydney, the brother of one of the greatest living men in the ranks of English literature, moving the gods to rapture by his exquisite comedy. The same night I came across the brother of another writer, alike eminent in a different walk of letters, looking on with fraternal reverence at “Black-eyed Susan.” Soon after I landed in Sydney, the son of one of our venerable archdeacons closed his wild colonial career, in which theatres and actresses largely figured, with forgery and transportation. There was a noise in England some years ago concerning a young gentleman who had been

wantonly struck by an Austrian officer. After considerable pother his father and the newspapers managed to screw some compensation from the House of Hapsburg for the insult. Well, this young gentleman used to live in a tent just outside Melbourne, and would nightly relate his continental adventures to a crowd of jovial admirers. In this way he soon got through his “compensation,” and was at last forced, I was told, to fret *his* hour on the stage in order to reline his pockets. The Jules Janin of Melbourne is R. H. Horne, the accomplished author of the farthing epic⁵. His theatrical notices are very readable. He holds a Government appointment, and, like Tom Taylor, has something to do with the sewers. The chief musical authority is that “sunburn Nathan” who set Byron's “Hebrew Melodies” to music. He is a pleasant old man, makes a good white port wine, and talks quite charmingly over it of the ill-starred bard.

The ladies, as already observed, are fond of the drama. They are addicted to blue dresses, red cardinals, straw-coloured gloves, and strained hair, embellished with two or three C's—aggravators they call 'em—running over the temple. Their voices are peculiar and unpleasant. They have a lisp, almost a snuffle, arising from the clouds of thin dust which particular changes of wind carry, like simooms, over the face of the country. Unconscious themselves of this defect, the dress-circle of a theatre is one buzz of woman's small-talk from the rise to the fall of the curtain. The tongue and the fan are kept wagging all night. I went one evening to see “Hamlet,” and was amused at hearing a lady remark, in a whisper, to her neighbour, “Whoth Thakspere? I don't think much of hith play.”

“Who's that?” I asked of a friend; “I don't think much of her criticism.” “That,” was the reply, “is one of the wealthiest ladies in the colony and a relative of Margaret Catchpole.” The pit of the play-house is generally well-filled, and a “transpontine” display of shirt-sleeves, babies, and pewter-pots charms the eye of the Londoner. The audience is very enthusiastic in its applause, and will have Macbeth to fight and fall a half-a-dozen times in an evening.

The upper boxes are usually given up to that class of the community who are partial to pink bonnets and cheeks to match; and lively flirtations, with an occasional dash of fighting, are carried on in these delectable regions in the most flagrant and unblushing manner. Sad this spectacle of vice in any city, but that vice like this should flaunt its woman's face in these young capitals, redeemed from the simplicity of nature and primal purity but yesterday, is a social anomaly stark and serious indeed. I have seen young girls who, a few short months before, had wept beneath a parent's blessing and farewell, gibbering incoherent curses in the worst abodes of new-world devilry and crime: such poor sad objects, that their mothers, praying for

them nightly in their quiet far-off homes, had passed them with a shudder in the streets and never known them for their own! Girls, with baby English faces; women scarred with years of stolid sensuality; decrepid harlots, blind with age and gin—

“With scarce a finger-touch of God left whole upon them,”—

meet us there, fifteen thousand miles away, in greater and drearier proportion than in the streets of the most wicked centres of old-world civilization. What will—what can, alas!—your philansterist, so fond of tracing this particular phase of degradation to want arising from the over population of European capitals, and baptizing it accordingly as the “sin of great cities,” say to this?—here, at the Antipodes, women who might easily win a livelihood and secure a happy home, rush deliberately and by sheer baleful choice into a career which ends in this world at “the dark arch o'er the black flowing river,” with but slender hope for brighter days in any world hereafter. So openly was this social plague contaminating the streets of Melbourne and Sydney when I left, that public meetings were daily held to consider of some philanthropic means of eradicating, or at least of checking, the evil. Already there were three or four admirable and well-managed benevolent institutions devoted to this object in both metropolises. May the Great Father prosper them!

Let it not be imagined from these remarks that the moral tone of the general population is unusually defective, or that there is any danger likely to befall the right-minded and well-disposed girl arriving in the colony⁶ even needy, friendless, and alone. Compendiously, Virtue is always safe, because Providence is always at her side. But to take lower and narrower ground, those who fall are young girls who, finding themselves their own mistresses for the first time, and without the restraints of home, friends, and early associations, are too weak to stand against the gauds and glitter which, in this land of gold, vice has so readily at command: those, in fact, who, with similar temptations and under like facile conditions, would have turned their faces from the light in any city in the world⁷. On every hand throughout Australia arise those edifices for the social and religious advancement of the population which are so fair and distinctive a mark of the English heart and intellect, so unique and satisfactory a sign of modern civilization. In a Melbourne publication I find the list of churches and chapels in the city and neighbour-good occupies three closely-printed pages of the smallest type; there are about seven hundred schools scattered over Victoria, under able boards of management, and with, as a rule,

efficient teachers; in the capital itself there are five religious commissions, an Evangelical Alliance, a Tract Society, numerous Bible classes, five museums, a public library, several mechanics' schools of arts, and about a dozen hospitals and other benevolent institutions. The eastern metropolis is alike wealthy in similar particulars. Perhaps Sydney has even more liberal resources for rarifying her moral atmosphere than Melbourne⁸. Under this circumstance, slight is the palliation vice can urge in its behalf. Where there are so many folds, where even the lamb which has wandered from the great human flock may find a refuge, the pitfalls surely should be empty! And yet the blotch of prostitution lies black upon the cities of the South, slurring the streets with thousands of

“—— wrecked women in one smile,
Who only smile at night beneath the gas!”

The lesser vices of the colonies are drunkenness and gambling. Why these should prevail, even in middle-class society, in the face of so many sources of healthy recreation, I am at a loss to understand. In Melbourne, for instance, beside theatres and concert-rooms, and the institutions already mentioned, there are a Society of Fine Arts, a Philosophical Institute, seven club houses, four learned associations, a young man's Christian society, several mutual improvement classes, and two Philharmonic societies. Still, with all these moral and intellectual resources at command, men who have toiled hard for months, digging treasure from the earth—and this *is* work with a vengeance!—will come down to Melbourne with their belts full of nuggets, and squander all, in the course of a few days, in the low grog-shop or the lower hell. There are particular neighbourhoods in both cities sacred to the Rowdy and Bohemian. Stevens-street and Little Bourke-street, in Melbourne, are as bad, in every vicious element, as St. Giles's: Durand's-alley, and the greater portion of the district called the “Rocks,” in Sydney, are, in roguery and raffery, as vile as Whitechapel. Scenes of riot and debauchery—sin in its bizarre and most lurid aspects—are daily and nightly enacted in these localities. Here, in these Alsatias, the last attenuated remnant of convictism may be traced—the most hideous developments of old and new world ruffianism are presented. This is worth recording; because as all such places in Australia owe their origin and, in fact, their population, to convictism, it is not out of place to inform our governing classes at home of the harm they inflict upon a country by making it, even in its infancy, a depôt for the scum and scoundrelism of the old world. Durand's-alley may be sketched as a fair sample of the “old-

hand haunts” of the colony. And yet, at the outset, the word alley scarcely conveys an idea of the place. It is, at least, a Seventeen Dials of alleys, one running into another, and most of the houses in which are single rooms with earthen floorings, and utterly destitute of windows, chimneys, and doors. Serpent-like gutters, choked with filth, trail before the tottering tenements, and a decayed water-butt, filled with greasy-looking rain-catchings—across which indecent slime-bred flies dart and dazzle in the sun—stands and rots at the end of each court. Brazen women, hulking bullies, and grimy children, loll about the doorways, and employ their time, the first in smashing mosquitoes upon each other's bare and brawny shoulders, after the style of the Italian women described by Mr. Dickens; the second in setting dogs to fight; and the third in floating bits of stick in the water-butts and gutters.

The fights and disturbances in this place at night are something terrific. Policemen never venture there alone; and any unfortunate stranger who might happen to stray into the district, would, to a certainty, be hounded and robbed, and—speaking from more than one past instance—brutally murdered. The awful old women who turn out of the alleys at night to beg and rob, are sublime in their repulsiveness. You can read a history of the blackest crime, commenced in the old world and culminated in the new, in the bleared face of every one of them. “How came you out here?” I asked of one who solicited alms of me as, in company of half-a-dozen friends, I passed through the place on a tour of inspection. “I was picked up by a scamp when I was a girl: he deserted me: I made away with his child: I was sent out here for life thirty years ago. *And now what are you going to give me?*” The English reader shudders at a tale like this—with that grim element of stolidity thrown into it by the last words—but I could chronicle far more horrible narratives, picked up in Sydney, did not the heart turn sick at them, and decency demand the curtain to be dropped upon even that single recital as speedily as possible.

The gambling propensities of the natives are in many cases hereditary. “My father was the inventor of the patent card-rake,” said the son of a wealthy convict to me. “He made a rake, you know, with a secret spring in it, for *rouge-et-noir*; in this he could put two banknotes, the one for a small, the other for a large amount. If his colour lost, he dropped the small note; if it won, he touched the spring, kept back the small and dropped the large one. Smart, wasn't it?” But the gambling mania of the colony, just now, is the comparatively harmless one of horse-racing. Australia owns some magnificent horses—sleek, strong, and thin of limb, with beautiful heads and proud nostrils,—and never was there such a place in the world for pitting the animals against each other. A grand contest took place last

year between a Melbourne and a Sydney horse. For a long time before the race it was the great topic of conversation. Thousands of persons went down from Sydney to Victoria to witness the contest; the daily newspapers sent special (and sporting) correspondents, and "Veno" and "Alice Hawthorn" rang from one end of the colony to the other. "Veno," the Sydney horse, *went*, saw, and conquered.

Every little Australian settlement has its race-course. Some townships entirely consist of this, a pound (which serves also for a lock-up), a gibbet with the skeleton of a black in it, and a finger-post with "this is Manchester," or, "this is Liverpool," painted upon it. Still, somehow or other, races come off in these uninhabited spots, and hundreds of folks gather to take part in the sport. When far up in the country, I came across a bullock driver, early one morning, sitting under a dray "making up his book" . . . Here is a description from a local print of some races at Omeo, in Gipp's Land;—

"If the meeting was intended as a burlesque upon racing, it was excellent—if otherwise, then it was a decided failure; as the races, instead of being decided by the judge and stewards, were settled *vi et armis*. The greatest excitement was created by a certain female (whom a person would suppose a cross between one of Barclay and Perkins's draymen and a coal-heaver), who, after enjoying herself in the most eccentric manner possible, and putting the ladies present in bodily fear, ended by horse-whipping one of the jockeys, who returned the compliment by pitching into her in a regular-rough-and-tumble sort of style⁹."

Now, without doubt, this "certain lady" was a "maiden sweep."

While speaking of the drunkenness and gambling of the colony, its "Rocks" and "Durand's Alleys," it is only fair this much should be borne in mind, that, so far, I have not been describing any local specialty, but merely what an Australian travelling in England might observe in every large and populous place throughout the country. There *is* a peculiarity, however, in the *complexion* of the every-day debauchery of the colony which startles the new arrival. Vice holds its place in all great cities, but never vice so high and feverish as that of the Southern world. If on such a subject it were pardonable to deal in figures of speech, one might say, that Dissipation, like Dantzic water, requires the *gold-leaf* to make it perfect. For example, looking at this great social defect of drunkenness, Australians are not content to drink, or even to get drunk—they never drop the cup until delirium-tremens overtakes them. A wealthy tavern-keeper who came to England with us, used to boast of "doing" his forty nobblers of brandy a day, a nobbler being in quantity little better than half a wine-glass. The most melancholy spectacle I ever saw was the number of young men—men

of family and education—who becoming drunkards soon after their arrival in the colony, and falling step by step in dissipation, had at length reached the lowest abysses of a sullen and sombre despair. I met with many such cases in Sydney—of men who told me their stories with their hands before their eyes, and their strong bosoms heaving with hopeless misery. “I came out to Sydney,” said one, “with a thousand pounds. I was the youngest son, I had always been taken care of at home. When I landed I felt very lonely, and this, coupled with other causes, drove me to drink. In six months I had not a penny. Since then I have had to sell oranges for a living; I must drink; there is no hope for me.” “Will you buy this old Bible?” asked a young man as I stood on the steps of the “Herald” office. “It is nearly two hundred and fifty years old, and was washed ashore in a barrel, on the Cornwall coast, about a century ago. We have had it in our family ever since. My mother gave it me when I came out, and I would not part with it under any than the most pressing circumstances.” “How much do you ask for it?” “You shall have it for a pound.” I bought the book; but afterwards found it was too heavy for me to carry home (a hot wind was blowing), so I allowed him to keep it. Five minutes afterwards I passed a public-house and saw the owner of the Bible standing at the bar with a decanter of spirits before him, and heard him offer to let the landlord have the book for half-a-sovereign. That young man I subsequently discovered was brother to a distinguished member of the two great guilds of politics and literature. All erring younger brothers fly to Australia. Some reform, and in a few years go home with pale faces but purged souls; others think much of those they have left behind, take to drink, die out, and are forgotten. Poor fellows! 'Tis the mournfullest thing on earth to die away from home!

My own profession in Australia affords many awful instances of the same character as those I have cited: of fine regal minds drowned, like the royal Clarence, in the fatal wine-cask. I have seen a man, with a heart as fine and tender as a woman's, and a genius and scholarship which I think would be considered rare in the highest literary circles in England, lying drunk and insensible in a tavern, his pockets drained to their last farthing, and his Apollo-lips pressed upon the dust. The greatest politician, perhaps, Australia ever produced was, at the same time, about the greatest drunkard. When he came home to England, and the vessel was in the Tropics, it is said he would sit drinking brandy-and-water on the poop nearly all day long. “You're very jolly,” remarked a fellow passenger to him one morning. “Jolly, yes,” he replied—and now mark the rough vigour of the man—“I couldn't be jollier. It's like yachting in Dante's Lakes of Hell!” Again: the cleverest barrister who ever came to the colony was similarly addicted. He, too, was a fellow of infinite good sayings. On one occasion

the judge was summing up in favour of the side our beeswing-loving friend had advocated, and was reading from a well-known law-book in support of his ruling. It happened that the barrister engaged on the losing side was the brother of the author of the book; and half in wonder that a work from so near a relative should be quoted against him, half in pride to communicate the fact of his relationship to the writer, he jumped up and interrupted his honour with, "That book, sir—that book—" "Well!" asked the judge observing the excitement of the learned gentleman, "what about the book?" "Oh! that book, your honour, was written by my—BROTHER!" giving out the last word in a voice of exultation. *Our* counsel was on his legs in an instant. He looked his learned brother mildly in the face, and said, "Pray sit down; the book may be a very good book for all that."

He was at a friend's house one evening, when a picnic on the following morning was agreed to. "I've plenty of 'ams in the 'ouse," said the host, a wealthy but illiterate person. "I've some good claret," observed one of the guests. "And I've some Bologna sausage," added another. "Well, what will *you* bring?" asked one of the party of the man of horsehair and humour. "Why, let me see—suppose I bring the h's, then, for Mr.——'s 'ams."

When the colony was mad about the *ornithorynchus paradoxus*, a wine merchant waited upon him for an account, and, in the course of some preliminary conversation, asked him if he had seen the animal so much talked of, and what was its colour. "Oh! it's a *dun*," was the reply; "one of those *Beasts with a Bill*¹⁰."

In Sydney and its immediate neighbourhood, there are no less than five hundred public-houses, many of them as great and garish as the gin palaces of London. Here is a mission already cut out for Mr. Gough! At present these drinking habits are ruining a large class of the population. Nothing is done without the nobbler. Merchants keep the bottle in their offices; and the first question put to you, even by respectable men, is, "What are you going to drink?" In fact, not to drink is considered a crime. *Aut bibat, aut abeat*—which means, in Australia, if you will not "stand," you may walk. Here, too,—as in America,—the Bottle has its literature. To pay for liquor for another is to "stand," or to "shout," or to "sacrifice." The measure is called a "nobbler," or a "break-down," and the following are a few of the names of the favorite beverages:—

<i>A Stone-fence</i>	Ginger-beer and brandy.
<i>A Spider</i>	Lemonade and brandy.
<i>A Sensation</i>	Half-a-glass of sherry.
<i>A Constitutional</i>	Glass of gin and bitters.
<i>A Cocktail</i>	Brandy, bitters, and sugar.

<i>A Smash</i>	Ice, brandy, and water.
<i>A Julip</i>	Brandy, sugar, and peppermint.
<i>A Maiden</i>	Peppermint or cloves.
<i>A Catherine Hayes</i>	Claret, sugar, and orange.
<i>A Madame Bishop</i>	Port, sugar, and nutmeg.
<i>A Lola Montez</i>	Old Tom, ginger, lemon, and hot water.
<i>A Band of Hope</i>	Lemon syrup.

At some of the taverns they serve bread-and-cheese, salads, and sandwiches for luncheon. The vernacular for these stands thus:

Bread and cheese	<i>Roll and rind.</i>
Salad	<i>Nebuchadnezzar.</i>

But turning the canvas once more, let us get a glimpse of the social life of the colony under its higher and purer aspects. Peep we a moment, then, into a snug villa at the edge of the harbour of Port Jackson, or rather let us call it a cottage, for it is only one story high, and is smothered all over, right to the tops of the chimneys, with vines and flowering shrubs. A well-clipped lawn, leading down to the blue waters, stretches before the house, picked out with clumps of the banana, the bamboo, the weeping nectarine, and the palm. English flowers and fruits—beds crammed with roses and trees crammed with pippins—are every where about us, relieved here and there with the dark green foliage of the orange, the lemon, and the citron. Vines, all prodigal in purple clusters, trail their cool green leaves in all directions. They climb the walls and hedges; they crawl along the ground; they cling to the rocks and rubble. You press out the rich juice as you walk! Each little rail or bit of stick supporting a flower, has its single branch of vine running round it, and hanging a crown of the imperial fruit upon the top. But, leaving the garden, its summer houses, its shady caverned springs, its fine aspect of shaggy hills streaked and silvered by a moon as large as our sun at noonday, let us step for a moment into the house, a house worth looking at, because it is one of a neighbourhood of such, and a fair sample of the run of first-class colonial residences. There are about a dozen ladies and gentlemen gathered round a table in a well-stocked library, on the walls of which are a few paintings by good English masters, a bronze by Woolner, and a new print or two. The table is covered with recent productions in English literature, the most attractive books when I left being “Aurora Leigh,” George Macdonald's and Coventry Patmore's Poems, “Friends of Bohemia,” and Livingstone's “Africa.” All the English magazines are on the table, from the profound “Quarterly” to the readable “Dublin University.” The gentleman at the head of the group is reading “Aurora Leigh” aloud, pausing occasionally to set his guests a good example by taking a glass of that delicious beverage on the centre of

the table¹. Book the first of the epic being ended, the guests adjourn to the cool verandah without, where the gentlemen smoke, the ladies sing, or both join in a quadrille on the lawn. This is no fancy sketch. I have seen it, just pleasantly varied, scores of times at various houses. At the particular cottage I have described, Shaksperian readings with amateur concerts and oratorios compete with the attractions of the last new book or late magazine. The club-houses of the colony, too, have, for the wealthy, the usual clubhouse attractions of libraries, billiard-rooms, and good cooks.

For the middle class there are the cafés and concert-rooms; and for the working population, the theatre, the literary institute, and the lecture-hall. The Mechanics' School of Arts, in Sydney, is a noble institution. It is entirely free of debt, has an average library, an efficient roll of teachers, a fine lecture theatre, a commodious reading-room, with coffee-room attached, and an able band of lectures. It sends to England some hundreds of pounds yearly for the purchase of newspapers, magazines, and the newest general literature.

Other sources of amusement for all classes are the political meetings, which are constantly being held. The people are always in solemn conclave. Meetings on every conceivable and inconceivable topic are convened from Monday morning till Saturday night On Sunday they have, *al fresco*, religious services. I don't know how many times the public of Sydney were called together last year for the purpose of rescuing a newspaper from its difficulties. On one of these occasions the working men subscribed five or six thousand pounds. Ultimately, they increased it to eleven thousand.

But the liberality of New South Wales is something verging on the fabulous. Sir Daniel Cooper, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, subscribed 1000*l.* to the Patriotic Fund, with 500*l.* a year as long as the war lasted. This gentleman's acts of unaffected munificence are as common as they are beautiful. He has an income of nearly 80,000*l.* a year, and his only aim appears to be to spend it wisely and well. If ever a man deserved to be ennobled, that man does. He has planted barren wildernesses with miles of noble houses, and placed large and industrious populations where none but the savage trod before. But a like liberal feeling permeates the whole community; it even runs, as gold penetrates the quartz, into the hard commercial relations of the country. Mr. Thomas Barker, of Sydney, has spent a fortune in trying to introduce native manufactures: to this end, he has built cotton-mills, and every other kind of mill, of vast capability and extent. Mr. Mort, the great Australian auctioneer, has sunk a mint of money in cutting a dry dock from the solid rock—an enterprise which cannot possibly pay during his lifetime, but the advantage of which to

Sydney, as a port, can scarcely be over-rated. Every large ship coming to any of the colonies and requiring to be overhauled, must go up to Port Jackson. The dock itself is a colossal work. The large steam-ship "Simla" was taken in, thoroughly cleaned, and turned out again in four and twenty hours. More than this, the engineers affirm, could not be done in England.

It has been the mode to rail at the greed and selfishness of Australia, and to stigmatise the people as sordid and avaricious. I am glad that my experience and observation are in direct opposition to the popular cry and belief. Braving the charge of egotism, I must chronicle one or two little incidents in my own colonial career which, for want of better and apter illustrations, will serve to show how grossly, in this particular, Australia has been maligned. When I arrived in Sydney, I delivered several lectures—extempore sketches of men and things in England, beginning with Lord Palmerston, and ending with "Pam's" coffee-house. I never gave one of these discourses without reaping from it at least a hundred guineas, while compliments as generous as, I am afraid, they were undeserved, would pour in next morning from all quarters. I received the day after one of my lectures six bank-notes—all from anonymous sources—for sums ranging from 10*l.* to 25*l.* The moment I announced an "oration," books on the subject would be sent me by the boxfull. I was quite amused sometimes by the drift the kindly impulses of the people would take. Soon after my third lecture, I was made a father; and presently *we* felt the necessity for a cradle. One was ordered and paid for at a basket warehouse, noted for its quaint poetical advertisements. In the evening it was sent home, but—equivocal sight for a very young father!—not alone. An elegant bassanette, fit for an imperial prince, accompanied it, and at the bottom of each cradle were a baby's basket and rattle; and at the bottom of one of the baskets, spread under a sheet of paper, inscribed with a complimentary ode to the little-one, was the money which had been paid when the purchase was made. Now, if I should ever do anything worthy of approval, depend upon it I could never derive a greater pleasure from the most lavish encomiums than I did from that simple, yet hearty, compliment of the Australian basket-maker. The reader will forgive me mentioning these things: apart from their personal reference, they are intrinsically valuable as Facts, and I record them as proofs of the spontaneous goodwill and generosity of our Trans-Pacific countrymen. As a Shadow to all these sunny Southern Lights, I must here mention that I did meet with a few extraordinarily mean men in Sydney. There was one, a merchant-prince, who made it a boast that he had never given away a shilling in his life. So far as I know, he only departed from his extreme selfishness on one occasion, and the circumstances are worth relating. One morning a poor

Irishman stepped into his counting-house, and, looking the very picture of misery, said: "Oh ! may it please yer honour, I've lost a pig—the *only* pig I had—and mistress,—, the governess, has given me a pound, and sent me to you for another. She says you have enough gold to build a sty wid, and will be sure to give me a little." At first old hard-fist refused; upon which Paddy threw himself on a stool, and raised such a piteous wail, that the merchant, thinking he was mad about the death of his pig, gave him the pound to get quit of him. Next day the proprietor of the defunct porker was passing the warehouse, and seeing his benefactor at the door, pulled his hat to him.

"Well, did you get drunk with that pound, or buy another pig?" asked the rich man gruffly.

"Bought a pig, yer honour—a darling little thing, wid a sweet twist in his tail, like a lady's curl."

"Well, it's to be hoped you'll take better care of him than you did of the other. What did he die of?"

"Die of? Did ye say die of now? Why get out widg ye, *he was so fat I killed him!*"

Having referred to the numerous public meetings which are held in Sydney, I may as well, at this point, take occasion to enter, if only for a moment, on the broad domain of Australian politics. To the intending emigrant, information under this head cannot come amiss; while to every one in the least devoted to matters of statism, it must be interesting to watch the progress of free English institutions in a distant country—to see how the Red Rose blooms in tropic soil—to learn how this fine young colony of ours has built up and strengthened her constitutional edifices, so as to confer the greatest amount of freedom on her people, without recourse ever being had to the extreme measures resorted to by America before a similar system of political emancipation was obtained, and like conditions of prosperity secured.

The *late* history of Australia is the history of liberal colonial policy. In little more than half a century the land of felony has changed to one of the most promising countries under the sun. While lacking some of the bolder and broader traits of American freedom, it has the advantage of immunity from that half-insolence of bearing which it would almost appear is inseparable from the precipitate prosperity of the Trans-Atlantic union, and of its ultra-democratical institutions. It would be impossible for me in so small a work—and I am not sure the recital would be interesting—to enumerate all the processes by which the remarkable advancement of the Australian colonies has been accomplished. In 1788 the first fleet sailed for Botany Bay, and in the following year the infant settlement consisted of

1030 persons—not many more than were, at about the same time, losing their heads each week in the French capital. The home authorities having neglected to send out artificers with the convicts, for some time the population lived in tents and mud huts; while, from the great disproportion of the sexes, the grossest immorality prevailed. (It is worth noting that just twenty years after the Union Jack was first unfurled at Botany, at a birthday party given by the wife of Governor Darling, the lady guests present first equalled the number of the gentlemen.) For many years the little colony depended for its existence on the casual arrival of stores from England; and on several occasions the whole community had to be placed on short allowance. Once, the settlement was barely saved from starvation by the fortunate arrival of a storeship. It is told on good authority, that when the governor of the day gave a dinner to his brother officers, the guests had to carry their own loaves with them, “which they did, borne aloft on the points of their swords² .” One of the convicts at this time found a nugget, and at once took it to his superintendent. The officer looked at it, saw it was the genuine metal, and immediately ordered the finder fifty lashes, firmly believing the fellow had stolen some money and melted it down.

All this was happening sixty years ago, and a prescient critic of the day was thus expressing himself in the “Edinburgh:”—“Why we are to erect prisons and penitentiaries at a distance of half the diameter (*sic*) of the globe, and to incur the enormous expense of feeding and transporting its inhabitants, it is extremely difficult to discover.” He then modestly and sagaciously adds: “It is *foolishly believed* that the colony of Botany Bay unites our moral and commercial interests, and that we shall receive hereafter an ample equivalent in the bales of goods for all the vices we export³ .” It is astonishing how very general this foolish belief has become now, when, in lieu of the thousand convicts, we have a free population of upwards of a million; when, instead of the colony being dependent on chance store-ships for her supplies, she has enough beef and mutton to feast all the world, and then have a joint or two to spare; when at the governor-general's house in Sydney fifteen-hundred guests occasionally meet, and, so far from being required to find their own bread, are surfeited with ice-creams and *paté-de-fois-gras*; and when, in place of that poor nugget-finding convict at the whipping-post, we have a successful digging population of one hundred and fifty thousand, and rich argosies of gold constantly floating westwards to support the credit, relieve the bourses, and fill the coffers of the old world. True, the colony has had its epochs of commercial depression; but, then, it has always recovered with surprising volatility, and taken up the work of progress as if nothing detrimental had

occurred. In short, in this particular of mercantile vitality, it has metaphorically played out the saying of Porson, who, when an ignorant person present in a room where the conversation turned upon Cook's voyages, asked if the great navigator was killed on his first voyage, replied, "I believe he was; but he didn't mind it much, for he immediately entered on another."

And the singular prosperity of the country has been mainly achieved by steady and sequent advances and with approved constitutional means: by the abolition of convictism and the gradual obliteration of those exclusive social landmarks⁴ which necessarily existed in the days of expatriation; the establishment of regular and rapid communication with England, and the increased commercial activity arising therefrom; by the pastoral settlement of the colony, with the consequent development of its vast grazing resources; by the discovery of gold; and, finally, by the inauguration of a well-considered system of Responsible Government. The temple of American freedom has blood upon its lintel: Liberty, in Australia, stands grand and calm, bearing the olive-branch as a thyrsus, and with English oak-leaves on her brow. Heart to heart, as well as foot to foot, rest England and her Southern children. With an improved land code, dealing fairly with town and country, the wealthy pastoral occupant and the striving agriculturist,—but with especial regard to the raising of that peasantry which experience equally with poetry teaches us is "a country's pride,"—Australia would attract the surplus population of Europe to her shores, and rapidly become one of the noblest monuments of Saxon rule and enterprise, and one of the greatest marvels of modern progressive civilization⁵.

Her political aspect, just now, is peculiar. Responsible Government has scarcely been in operation long enough to work smoothly, and the tried public men of the colony, however high their positions under the old order of things, seem to be little better than failures under the new and liberal constitution. They wish to fight in the cumbrous and clanking armour of Nomineeism, and with their faces protected beneath its visor. Moreover, in these venerable equipments, they demand to conduct the contest. This is where the mischief has arisen. It was only natural, perhaps, that the leading men in the days of Irresponsibility should desire to take chief places in the new Parliament; but as the popular members—especially those returned for the first time—chose to resist the assumption, the inauguration of the New Constitution was chiefly marked with pitched battles between the Old and the New orders of combatants. In fact, the whole of the first two sessions of the Elective Parliament were like the first two nights of a new pantomime. The traps stuck; the ruts creaked; the "lamps" that were to

have thrown so much light, went out with a stench; white-bearded obstinate old pantaloons—the nominees of the manager—rolled in the dust over the active young sprites; loaves and fishes were wildly thrown from hand to hand; the Queen of the Golden Nuggets and the King of the Golden Sheaves dropped spade and scythe, and stared grimly at each other; while, all the time, Mr. Grimaldi, as the representative of the people, moped in a corner and (as he well might!) fairly blubbered through his part. Ministers were elevated to power one week to fall the next. Every member of slightest influence or ability modestly concluded he ought to be at the head of affairs, and refused to act in any government in other than first position. The consequences of all this were, that legislation was impeded, the securities of the country degraded, its public works stopped, and the great boon of Responsible Government brought into contempt. Then, if the opponent of colonial independence had arisen in the imperial legislature, and pointed to the contemporaneous history of Australia as evidencing the clumsy working of free institutions in a young country, the advocates of Liberal Policy would have had but little to urge. I am now speaking more particularly of New South Wales; but I believe a similar state of things prevailed in Victoria. In Tasmania, even to the day of my departure from the colonies, it was common enough to read in the Van-Demonium prints of honourable members going down drunk to the legislature, and literally falling to battle with each other. In the Victorian Assembly great mirth was provoked on one occasion last session by a member coming in clad to the throat in rough serge, and who, being deep in his cups, persisted in rising about every five minutes during the sitting, to ask the Speaker, “whether a man coming to that House full-rigged in serge, might be considered in order?” The Speaker at length said he would call a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee on the following morning, and take an opinion upon the matter.

Both in Melbourne and Sydney, however, most of the asperity of bearing and outrage of Parliamentary discipline to which I refer has vanished; and, in their place, an earnest desire has taken possession of the two senate-houses to turn the gift of Responsible Government to account, and set about the task of practical legislation in serious, business-like manner. They have omitted the old pantaloons altogether, and now the play proceeds satisfactorily. The grand tableau stands thus: the apple of discord is thrown away, while the King of the Golden Sheaves and the Queen of the Golden Nuggets, with full arms and “cradle,” march into the Temple of Progress to the good old tune of “Rule Britannia.” In Victoria, the ballot has for some time been adopted; and, after careful inquiry and observation on the subject, truth and Mr. Berkeley compel me to say that it works with

incalculable benefit both to candidates and voters. Under its provisions, an election has now become quite a respectable kind of affair. So well was this understood, that when I left New South Wales, the government there had introduced the ballot—with the Melbourne machinery—into the new Electoral Bill. One colony thus copying the other is a hopeful sign; for what Victoria and New South Wales have much to contend against at present is the Peloponnesian spirit of rivalry,—in politics, trade, and social science,—existing between them. A more federal state of feeling would work wonders for both. As it is, they hate each other like surly twin brothers.

The political notabilities of Sydney are worth a word. It may be somewhat like looking at politics through the wrong end of the telescope; still, the Parliament which has sent several members to the House of Commons, and one able man to the Treasury-bench, is not too insignificant a place for even Tadpole or Taper to take a glance at. The “crack speaker” of the House is Mr. Donaldson, brother of the eminent and erudite author of the “Greek Theatre.” He is a well-to-do merchant, jovial and portly in aspect, has a passion for velvet waistcoats, and was the first Premier under Responsible Government. He is a still more fluent speaker than his late compeer, Mr. Lowe. But the great fault of all the antipodean orators is the rapidity of their utterance. I have seen it remarked somewhere—I think in Dr. Barth's “Africa”—that natives of warm climates do every thing indolently but talk; and certainly the members of the Australian senate seem to imagine Mercury was made the god of eloquence, because he had wings to his heels.

Mr. Donaldson's rival is Mr. James Martin, who is within a month or two of being a native. He came to the colony in long clothes, and has, for many years, steadily fought his way against the most bitter and personal opposition. He has been one year called to the bar, twice, during that time, Attorney-General, is a rapid and vigorous speaker, a sharp-edged epigrammatic writer, and an efficient lawyer. His practice at the bar is worth about 8000*l.* a year. . . . A comparatively short time ago he was writing for a Sydney newspaper at a salary of two pounds per week. He is the rising hope of the native party, and destined to take—and keep—an elevated position in the country.

Mr. Charles Cowper, the Premier, is a careful, plodding statesman, eaten up with officialism and evangelicism. He is commonly called “Circuitous Charley,” from Mr. Lowe's saying of him, that if he saw the gate of heaven opened, he would not walk in straight, but would *wriggle* in like a worm.

Mr. Deniehy, a native of about five and twenty summers, is the most accomplished man of the Chamber. Brought up under the care of the best

of guides, philosophers, and friends, the companion of Prof. Wilson and Sir William Hamilton,—and whose sweet home, by the way, overlooking the waters of Port Jackson, is the happy refuge of all poor workers in the field of art or letters,—Mr. Deniehy has attained the subtle critical faculty of a De Quincey with conversational powers as brilliant as they are profound. His grasp of subjects is wonderfully extensive, while his rare and highly-cultured intellectual faculties dart into every nook and cranny of a topic, convexing its hidden recesses into sharp and vivid relief.

These, then, are the most marked legislators of New South Wales; the lesser stars are about as big and bright as the very back-bench men of the Commons. Exception must be made in favour of Mr. Wise, the late Solicitor-General, Mr. Hay, a lettered squatter, and Mr. Dalley, a fine, genial-hearted, smart young native.

Sir William Denison—who demands a word here—is, for executive ability and private rectitude, a model English governor and gentleman. Despite his somewhat frigid bearing, every one honours him, his lady, and his family. He is a man of sound scientific attainments; a patron of literature in all its departments; and, though rather hard and dry in his manner, may be pronounced a first-rate speaker. Moreover, he is a devout Christian, and has purified the vice-regal court of much that was morally and politically objectionable. If he have a fault as a governor, it is an implacable determination, which has more than once threatened to lead him into difficulties; this is balanced, however, by a severe conscientiousness and an earnest desire to act right. Lady Denison is much loved. She strolls about the government grounds with her children, the very picture of domestic happiness and matronly virtue.

In Victoria, Mr. Duffy, Mr. Mickie, Mr. Chapman, and Mr. Aspinall hold the lead. Duffy has experience and tact; Mickie large gifts of volubility and a likeness to Mr. Roebuck; and Aspinall satirical powers of a cruel, unscrupulous, member-for-Bucks-like character. This last gentleman—late of the “Morning Chronicle” and now Chairman of Committees—may be met at almost any hour of the day in the streets of Melbourne carrying a baby!

While dealing with the great talkers of Australia, I must not forget the Bishop of Sydney, who is one of the most polished orators to whom I ever listened. In other respects he is a model of a bishop. He stands six feet two in his stockings, and sits his cob better than any other man in Sydney. . . . Here is a story rumouring round his lordship. He was riding out one evening in the neighbourhood of Botany when he saw a low-looking fellow sitting on a horse-trough outside a public-house, and swearing most colonially at a potman who had brought him something in a jug. Now this

low-looking fellow sitting swearing on the horse-trough was none other than a very rich member of council—one of those illiterate affluent vulgarians so often met with in a new country: men as earthy, as rough, and as rich as nuggets. The Bishop, startled by the violent language, pulled up, like a good diocesan, and said, “My dear man, you shouldn't swear like that. Here is a tract. Go home and read it.” “Taste this bad ‘bishop,’ old chap,” answered the sinner, handing him some mulled spiced claret, “and tell me if *you* wouldn't swear. Here, try it, the —— stuff isn't fit for a hog.” “No, thank you,” said his lordship, smiling, and rode on. “Do you know who that *tall slab* is?” asked the swearer of the potman, who was grinning behind the trough. “Know him? I should think I did: he's the Bishop of Sydney!” “Run after him, my boy; tell him I'm sorry for swearing, and that if he'll come back I'll stand a bottle of port.” . . . “Do you know who that rough-looking fellow is, sitting on that horse-trough?” said the Bishop to a gentleman riding by. “He, my lord? Why that's Mr. F——d, the rich member of council. He gave 200*l.* last week towards the new Cathedral.” As a speaker, the Bishop has the precision and elegance (though not that unctuous *synovia* of voice) of his brother of Oxford. He is liberal in tone, and identifies himself with most of the important movements of the colony. Notwithstanding this he cannot be called popular. The fact is, he wishes to be a Low Church Pope, and Low Church folks are not the class of persons to sanction the assumption. The leading dissenting clergymen in Sydney, are Mr. Cuthbertson, a Congregationalist, and Mr. Stanley, a Unitarian. They are both eloquent preachers and bachelors of arts. Among the Catholics there are many good and able men. Let me sketch the Archbishop in a stained glass light.

No monk ever looked more like a monk than he. There is scarcely a secular sign in his face. It is a benign, loveable countenance shaded, but not sombred, with the dim religious light of the monastic atmosphere of other days. It is a face dating long before shilling-pieces and “*Fid. Def.*” Look at the long trailing grey hair, tumbling down his back, like the snow about the head of a brother of St. Bernard. Look at the large deep eyes, blue yet burning as the “twin orbs of Leda.” The mouth, too, is a study. Power and patience, an almost terrible rectitude with an almost feminine sympathy—a mighty tenderness and a tender might—meet us at a glance in the fine Fra Angelico visage before us. The double chin is a great point: it throws a touch of home and every-day passion into the face like—to borrow a figure—the wine cellars under an old Rhenish cathedral. What a world of good feeling and geniality there *is* about that chin. Drop the Cowl over all the rest of the face, and one might swear upon that feature he was Falstaff or Brother John at once. A glorious thing this index of “like

passions with ourselves” in the countenance of an ecclesiastic whose religion has smothered all weakness, as the plumes of the albatross smother the down upon its breast. So far as that chin goes—and being double it goes a good way—this is the kind of man to have blessed the soup dispensed at the monastery wicket, but to have first written the recipe on which the broth was compounded.

The bearing of His Grace is particularly courtly. Here is a man, you say at once, who has moved in palaces, sipped from the Tabbia vessels of the magnificent Lorenzo, and hob-a-nobbed with cardinals and popes. One almost looks for the embroidered slipper of a Mazarin beneath the robe; and certainly in the fine full outline of the form we get a hint of his mighty and massive Eminence, who terrifies all Protestant Christendom from his gloomy little house out there in Golden Square.

They say his learning is fine—the light of the scholarly lamp without its smoke. It smacks, perhaps, rather of Suarez than Sallust; but still it is not with him, as with too many of his class, that the robe of the scholar means merely a robe of *beads*.

His preaching is of a high order. The merits and specialties of the style are described in a phrase, when we call it elegantly fervid. It is as delicately manipulated as the crux-hilt of a Venetian poignard; the true light, however,—“the light that never was on land or sea,”—plays lambently upon the blade. In light and shade it is like an old crucifix, where the figures of ivory are laid upon a back-ground of ebon. His elaborations are particularly chaste. They are never heaped on, but grow out and form part of the subject itself, as the glowing arabesques in an old missal.

The same lofty qualities meet us in his literary addresses. A splendid sobriety and a sober splendour mingle and charm us. The cloister is carved in marble, while a cierge of purest flame swings from every groin and pillar. I first heard him at the Catholic Institute in Sydney, listened and dreamed until the little room, garnished with green flags, became a Mediaeval oratory, and troops of monks with pale high faces and long dark robes, set with iron crucifixes and clattering rosaries, moved to the sound of solemn chantry before me.

I thought his address on that occasion the best thing I had heard since Talfourd. There was that precision of touch about it which never arises from mere scholarship; but only from the severest literary discipline. At the same time the power of the scholar *was* apparent; it stole through the chinks and crannies of the discourse as the light streams into the great hall of the Vatican from its seven thousand surrounding chambers.

Out of his *cappa*, the Archbishop is much loved. With him a gracious

and delicate hand plays almoner to a large and liberal heart. I heard the most lavish praises bestowed upon him, and never during my residence in Sydney, a single disapproving word. In his own church he is adored—in *ours* he is admired.—

In New South Wales the Church of Rome is very powerful. At the last University examination, the Archbishop, with all his clergy, left the examination-hall, because the Protestant bishop had, by mistake, been allowed precedence of place. What will Mr. Spooner say to this? The Congregationalists, too, are numerically and financially “strong.” At one meeting they subscribed 20,000*l.* to build their metropolitan chapel⁶. In Melbourne the Wesleyans take a leading place. They sold an allotment of land the other day for 60,000*l.* On the diggings the Chinese have their joss houses, and say their prayers in true Celestial manner.

And now may I, without irreverence, leave the temple for the household? The great drawback, just at present, to the comfort of the colony is the difficulty of obtaining good domestics—servants of the true home character—hard-working girls, who, for good treatment and liberal wages, will do an average amount of work with faithfulness and integrity. The Australian servant-girl is a nuisance. She demands 35*l.* a year, two holidays a week, and any number of followers. One night I was awakened from sleep with a violent fit of coughing, and almost frightened out of my life by a strong smell of fire pervading the room. I leapt out of bed, opened the door, and, hearing a noise overhead, called up to the servant to know if she had set fire to any thing. “La! sir, no,” she answered, with all the *naïveté* in the world; “it's only a friend of mine, who has looked in after supper, smoking his pipe.” A second girl left us the same day our child was born. She wasn't used to live in a nouse with a *regiment* of children. Another, after going to bed one night, as usual, at three o'clock in the morning, tapped at our chamber-door, affectionately bade us farewell, darted from the house, carrying an umbrella with her, and was never seen by us afterwards. Three or four days subsequent to her flight, however, we received the umbrella and the following letter:—

“Miss Maryann preents Her dutyfull respex, and she trusts and Prays U will not b Ankshouse on her account. I am goin 2 b married on Friday nex.”

The majority of the colonial servant-girls are provokingly doltish, and this is accounted for by the fact, that the good ones get married immediately after their arrival. On the other hand, and as a set-off to this, it cannot be lost sight of, that there are but few comfortable situations in Australia. I have noticed in England, that an industrious servant-maid will, after a time, become, as it were, part and parcel of the family circle in

which she lives, loving the children about her, and having a due respect for her master and mistress. The old housekeeper and the trim housemaids are “features” in every English country mansion; and, to show that they are features of some importance, it is only necessary to point to the large and interesting element they form in our national literature. Our best novelists, from Fielding to Dickens, have always gloried in the servant's-hall. There is a good deal in this. In fact, it is on our treatment of our servants that so much of that social comfort—which is *the* characteristic of England and of no other country in the world—necessarily depends. In Australia, the domestic is always in the kitchen. The majority of the mistresses having been servants themselves, keep, of course, their “dependants” at a “proper distance;” and as that most beautiful of all domestic customs—at once the most conservative and the most levelling—the reading of Family Prayer, is carried out in but very few colonial households, the “menial” and her “superiors” are never brought into contact in any other capacities. This, of course, produces a low state of moral feeling between them, and the race of servants look upon the race of mistresses as their natural enemies.

Both in Melbourne and Sydney, girls are hired at the offices of labour agents, where they assemble each morning, dressed in the height of fashion, waiting for employment. Towards the end of last year crinoline had reached its fullest breadth in Sydney, and I was much amused one day, to see a notification pasted on the door-post of the little office of one of these labour agents worded as follows: “*Ladies* coming to this establishment to be hired, will greatly oblige Mr. S—— by sitting as near together as possible, as for the last day or two many *persons* desiring to engage domestics have found it impossible to gain admittance.” The delicate hint conveyed herein for a reduction of the width of the skirt is excessively clever, and no doubt the persons who subsequently visited Mr. S——'s establishment were enabled to enter the office, and take a peep at the ladies in waiting before effecting engagements.

Not less amusing than that notice is the manner in which a thorough colonial servant will quiz a “person” with whose appearance she may not be prepossessed. The following is a verbatim transcript of a conversation I overheard between a tall, broad-shouldered Scotch woman and a young housewife about two and twenty, who wished to engage her.

“Do you desire a situation?”

“Not particularly.”

“Are you open to an engagement?”

“Well—yes.”

“I want a general servant.”

“Have you a large family?” (Young mistress blushes and all the girls

around indulge in a titter.)

“No; I have one little child.”

“Is it a cross child?”

“Oh, dear! no—quite the contrary.”

“Do you keep any other servant?”

“We have a very useful boy.”

“Who would wait at table?”

“Yes.”

“And run of errands?”

“Yes.”

“And open the door?”

“Yes.”

“And clean the knives and boots?”

“Yes.”

“And assist in the house-work?”

“Well, I—”

“And nurse the infant?”

“Oh, no! that would be your duty.”

“Then I am very sorry I cannot oblige you. I am neither a perambulator nor a baby-jumper, ma'am!”

Now, with a slight touch or two that conversation might have been made very funny; but I have chosen to adhere to the truth, and if the colloquy does not raise a laugh, it will, at all events, serve to illustrate the relative positions of mistresses and domestics on the other side of the world.

The great public resort of servantgalism in Sydney, is a place called “Lover's Walk,” situated in Hyde Park, and where from three to four hundred young ladies meet every Sunday night and carry on the most uproarious gambols with their male companions. This parade, on Sunday, is worse than our Hungerford Market used to be, and that was a disgrace to London. It is so thronged with lovers, ranging from ten to thirty years of age, that it is next to impossible for a quiet man, untroubled with the passion, to walk along. For rumpus and practical joke, it is like an Italian carnival, lacking the (substantial) sugar-plums. The girls are very fond of carrying lucifer matches, and marking phosphorescent crosses and ghostly profiles on the backs of their dark-shawled rivals.

Another colonial nuisance is the abundance of insect life. Flies—black, blue, bumble, and blow—mosquitoes, cockroaches, spiders, tarantulas, and even centipedes, annoy and terrify the new arrival. The mosquito is a beast. It comes buzzing against your cheek, with a drowsy sing-song *whir*, fixes its suckers into the flesh, and bounds off with another song—a kind of *carmen triumphale*—leaving a large red mark behind it, which is far more

irritating than a healing blister. While I am writing this little book, our ship is in the neighbourhood of Cape Horn, and my hands and feet are covered with chilblains. Still, I can safely say, never did chilblain—in its frostiest and most abandoned form—vex like the bite of a well-trained and experienced musquito. They use in the colony what are called musquito curtains; but so far from these keeping away the insects, I never found them of any other use than in imprisoning the little fiends who had sneaked in during the process of bed-making. Some nights they have driven me almost mad, forced me out of bed, and compelled me to dress myself, even to the putting on of gloves, in order to protect my skin. They have a great relish—being epicures in their way—for the round, fat, mottled part of the hand ridging the off-side of the palm. In about two seconds one will sow it with bumps and blisters from the wrist to the little finger. Strange as it may read, I used to let my beard grow in order that I might rub this part of my hand against my serried chin, and thus allay the irritation. If I slept in gloves, they punished my legs; if I slept in stockings, they riddled my hands; if I tried both, they punctured the edges of my ears. The walls of my bedroom were stencilled with their corpses; for whenever I was driven from the sheets, I used to go round with a slipper and—with intense satisfaction—settle hundreds of them as they stood stropping their stings upon the wall. They, too, especially hate and harass the new-chum.

Having thus given an outline—somewhat hard and dry, I am afraid—of the every-day doings and ordinary aspects of Australia, let me here frame the *coup d'oeil* with one or two little bits of description calculated to convey an idea of the natural beauties and peculiarities of the country. Australia is not the level and unvaried waste that some have represented: its trees are not all gums, its flowers are not all scentless. I have gathered posies in the wild bush which, for beauty and perfume, would have delighted the most fastidious loungeur at Chiswick. I have seen twenty different kinds of trees of twenty various shades of foliage, growing naturally in the space of about an acre; I have walked through rich and ever-changing scenes—verdant valleys, zoned with blue-capped hills—and, but for the somewhat dusty foliage, the ring of the cicada, the guffaw of the laughing jackass, or the rattle of the snake⁷, might have imagined myself in the fairest and fairiest spots of the Mother land.

The evenings in Australia are singularly beautiful. I have often read a newspaper by the light of the moon. The stars are very white and large, and seem to drop pendulous from the blue, like silver lamps from a dome of calaite. I used to visit a house a long way out of Sydney, for the pleasure of being lighted home by the stars. Generally, I did not admire the Australian climate—its sudden changes, occasionally of thirty or forty degrees in two

or three hours, its clouds of dust, its awful storms, and its hot winds; but an Australian evening—especially in winter—in its serene loveliness, defies all attempts at description. I have looked from my little study window sometimes at midnight, and seen the harbour so brightly argent with the moon, that it seemed as though He had walked again upon the sea, and left the glory of His footsteps on the water.

Having mentioned, in passing, a hot wind, let me endeavour to convey some notion of what a hot wind really is. It is early morning, and as you look from your window, in the suburbs of Sydney, you see a thin white vapour rising from the far-off bush. The sheep out there in the distance are congregated beneath the trees, while the old cows are standing knee-deep in those clayey creeks of water that trickle from the heaped-up rocks above. You have seen all this before, and know too well what it means. Before breakfast time, there will “be” a hot wind.

It comes. The white earth cracks as it passes over it, as though it were a globe of crystal struck by some invisible and mighty hand. The air is hot and murky, as the breath from an oven; and you *see* trees wither—the fruit shrivel and drop from the vines—as though the Last Seal were opened, and the breath of the Destroying Angel had gone forth. The cicadas seem to shriek (their shrill note is always shrillest in hot weather), and the birds drop dead from the trees. The dogs in the street lie down and hide their dry protruding tongues in the dust. Higher and higher rises the mercury in the glass, until now, at noon, it stands at 147°! You stop up every keyhole and crevice in your room to keep out the burning Sirocco, and endeavour, perhaps, to read. In a minute stars dance before your eyes, and your temples throb like pulses of hot iron. You allow the book to fall from your hands, and strive to drop to sleep. It is not much relief if you succeed, for you are safe to dream of the *Inferno* or Beckford's Hall of Eblis. There is only one thing you can do that gives relief. Light your pipe, mix your sherry-cobbler, and smoke and drink until the change arrives.

The “Southerly Buster,” as this change is called, generally comes

“————— sounding on,
Like the storm-wind from Labrador,
The wind Euroclydon,”

early in the evening. A cloud of dust—they call it, in Sydney, a “brickfielder”—thicker than any London fog, heralds its approach, and moves like a compact wall across the country. In a minute the temperature will sink fifty or sixty degrees, and so keenly does the sudden change affect the system, that hot toddy takes the place of the sherry-cobbler, and

your great-coat is buttoned tightly around you until a fire can be lighted. Now, if you look from your window in the direction where you saw that white vapour ascending in the morning, a spectacle terrible in its magnificence will meet your eye. For miles around—as far as the gaze can reach—bush fires are blazing. You see the trail of the flame extending into the interior until it grows faint and thin along the hill-tops, as though a wounded deer had moved, bleeding, upon the road. Nearer, however, the sight is grand and awful, and hints of the Final Apocalypse when the stars shall fall like those charred branches that drop with a thundrous crash and scatter a cloud of glowing embers around them.

No matter where you live in Sydney, looking from your window across the harbour into the surrounding bush, you can always see sights like this after a hot wind. The reflection upon the water itself is very fine. The emerald changes into ruby—the water into wine. The white sails of boats become of “purple” and “their prows of beaten gold.” Every thing seems bathed in an atmosphere of romance, and, if the impression were not lowered by the idea, the sheets of flame in the distance might be taken for the crimson walls of Aladdin's palace gleaming through the woods.

Sometimes these hot winds last for two or three days, and then the effects are something lamentable. Scarcely a blade of vegetation is left in the ground—the sere leaves fall from the trees as in a blast of autumn. The same week that I landed in Sydney, a hot wind lasted for four days, on the last of which no less than thirty persons dropped dead in the streets. I remember I had a little garden to my house, and the white-starred jessamine was in full flower in front of the lower windows. Before the wind was over nothing remained but a bunch of dry sticks, kept to the wall by the pieces of cloth with which they were fastened. But I have witnessed other phenomena in Australia as remarkable—if not as terrible—as a hot wind, and I must therefore pass on.

Soon after my arrival in New South Wales, I went up the Paterson, a charming river watering some of the richest soil in the country. While here I saw that beautiful phenomenon, known as the Aurora Australis. Imagine, reader, an arch of palest gold built right across the heavens, and set along the top with rows of Gothic spear-like points, suffused with violet and tipped with burning crimson. Imagine further these lambent spears darting out a thousand varied coruscations until every tree around glows like the bush of Horeb, and the tops of the distant mountains flush with a pale uncertain consecration. Imagine, now, that the arch is first splitting into purple gaps, and now falling into molten fragments, mixed with a rain of many coloured stars,—that the night is moonless, and all without the influence of the palpitating light as dark and sullen as the blasted strand of

Erebus,—imagine all this, and you will have a limning, faint and feeble enough, of one phase in the luminous existence of the Aurora Australis.

A leaf or two from my Up-Country Note Book, will not come in amiss here:—

Monday.—Nothing but gums and three-rail fences. Flies and parrots in abundance. Saw a flock of at least 500 paroquets, chased by a hawk. He caught one, and not being able to kill it on the wing, darted down to a gully, and held his little victim beneath the water until it was drowned.

Tuesday.—Scenery improved. Fine dark hills clothed with verdure. At night I witnessed a “corroboree.” About twenty naked blacks, painted hideously, with blue stripes along each rib and down each leg,—white around each eye, and splashes of red upon the forehead,—were dancing beneath the moon, and grunting all the while with a husky *hoo!*—*hoo!*—*hoo!* so as to keep a very *common* time. Five or six “gins,” one with a little boy upon her back, were sprawled upon the ground, tomtoming on opossum rags, piling the fires with fresh logs, and occasionally breaking in with a wild chorus of

“Corinda briár,
Corinda briarre!”

prolonging the last syllable for nearly half a minute. Catlin would have given a little for the picture.

Wednesday.—(I extract two brief paragraphs from a lengthy passage.)—A single fork of lightning struck the brow of a colossal rock rising from the waters along which we journeyed. A boom of thunder—low, rumbling, and long-continued—just wrinkled the face of the stream, and one or two large goutts of rain fell with a heavy plash upon the beach. There was a smell of balm wafted for a moment across the air. The atmosphere flushed suddenly to a pale lilac, and the water slept beneath its weight of lilies. The white leaves lay upon its surface like flakes of snow.

Fair prelude to the coming storm! In half an hour, black huddled clouds came sweeping up the sky, and presently *stream* upon *stream* of lightning (no other words will convey what I mean) began to pour down, until the air seemed saturated with the sulphurous vapour. The thunder appeared to shake the rocks, and the rain came upon us like a perfect deluge. It fell in water-spouts rather than drops, and we had to use our hats to bale the boat out. All nature seemed convulsed. Deep shadows moved upon the hills, and we could see the tallest trees upon their sides struck down, or rent in twain, by the half-blinding lightning. The storm, however, did not last

long. In an hour the air was as clear as ever, and flocks of black wild-duck rose out of the cool reedy fens where they had taken protection, and went careering, with a hearty *caw-caw*, after their leader up the stream.

Thursday.—Gave a black fellow sixpence for throwing the boomerang. It is in shape something like a mark of parenthesis, and (as the English reader must know by this time) when it misses the mark at which it is hurled, comes twirling through the air again, and falls near the spot from which it was thrown⁸. The black did not appear to be very expert in the use of it. He aimed a dozen times at a tree, and never struck it once. Chagrined at his own want of skill, he exclaimed, “My G—! me been throwing this boomerang altogether lot of times. Me throw him no more;” with which he struck his gin full in the face, and—when I called him to order—offered to let me knock him over the head with a heavy club for a shilling. Not caring to engage in the sport, he said I was a “baal new-chum,” and, seizing his wife by the hair, walked off. I heard her shrieking for some distance, “You — Irishman, let me go!”

Friday.—Visited a vineyard, cultivated by a German doctor, and tasted some good Australian Cawarra wine, of the true colour and flavour of Moselle. Afterwards saw great masses of rock heaped in the middle of a large plain, with some blanched skeletons of bullocks near them. The brilliant head of a snake gleamed damply from the mouth of one of the skulls. . . . In the evening came across a flock of emus. They resemble rough-haired ostriches, and a friend told me that, like the ostrich, they have the power of digesting bits of wood and even stone.

Let me add to that last extract all I now know about the emu. It is a gaunt, ungainly bird, with a body like half a butter-firkin, long legs, and a very pliable neck. It is fond of running up to horses, and, by crying *boh!* in their faces, frightening them half out of their wits. We had one caged up on board a steamer on which I was journeying up the Hunter. The bird one day put his head and neck through his prison bars, took a peep round the deck, and seeing some passengers laughing at him, drew his head back round another bar. Apparently much struck with the flexible nature of his own throat, he proceeded to twist it in at one bar and out at another, until he had exhausted its entire length. He then began to unplait himself; grew weary of the trouble of doing it link by link; drew back violently to effect a release at one effort;—broke his neck, and fell dead on the floor of the cage! On board the Royal Charter we had an aboriginal servant, and his favourite amusement was drawing these birds. Whenever he could procure a sheet of paper and a pencil, down he would throw himself on the deck, and begin to “write emus,” as he called it. He had a thrifty way of economising his paper by always drawing a little bird between the legs of a

large one. The sketches themselves generally resembled the birds about as much as those vases of Charles Lamb, especially "the ornate one which will do for ranunculuses," resembled—any thing under the sun. Perhaps the publishers of this little book will be able to present the reader with a picture of an emu, on the cover; if not, I must refer him to that most noble of all ornithological works—the "Birds of Australia," by Mr. John Gould.

And now to resume my landscape scratchings. Some of the Sydney suburbs are exceedingly rich in natural beauties. Let us take a sixpenny ride in an omnibus, and visit the neighbourhood of that cottage into which we looked just now when they were reading Mrs. Browning's great epic. The beauty of the road down which the old 'bus goes rumbling, increases at every yard. The quiet Rushcutter's Bay—deep in graduated shadows and walled in on one side with great rocks which look at a distance like a row of half-ruined castles rising from the water,—the rich foliage clustered all about the humble tenements which skirt the road;—the old cows grazing in the little narrow green lane, which runs off at the foot of the hill just beyond the cozy-looking "White Conduit House;"—the few great solitary trees standing on the brow of the heights towards Glenmore;—the white wing of a boat seen flying now and then across the bay;—the stray geese and grubby pigs luxuriating in the roadside paddocks;—all these with a thousand other picturesque items meet us in the course of our journey. I should think there are few finer villas in the world than some of those dotting the declivity facing Clark's Island on our left. Certainly I have seen few prettier churches, too, than that neat little Gothic temple, stowed away, as it were, on one side of the road, and which gives to the young neighbourhood quite an antique and dignified air. It is a perfect toy of a church, and sits as plumpy on its stone mound, as a castle, done in white sugar, on a twelfth-cake.

In the neighbourhood of "the Point," as the district is called, there are many interesting and picturesque spots. The "Dripping Rocks" are magnificent. It is so pleasant to stand under their overhanging ledges, and see the bright water falling just in front of you—sparkling in the sun, like a curtain of crystals. Beautiful is it, too, to look at this brilliant cascade from a distance, and see it flash out its thousand little snaky jets of rainbow. There are many varieties of ferns growing beneath the crags. I have gathered five or six specimens within a space of twenty yards.

The ruined vineyard and old boat-pond, about fifty yards from the Rocks, form the most romantic spot I saw in Australia. The massive tiers of moss-grown earth and stone steps, on which the vines *were* to have been planted, rise some hundreds of feet above the sea, and look like the remains of a Roman amphitheatre.

A meet there by moonlight when every step is turned to silver, and the drippings from the rocks fall with mysterious plash among the pale green ferns,—when the little duck-pond below, dammed across with weeds and stones, reflects the moon like the golden helmet of a warrior drinking from the stream,—when the wind comes creeping up the ocean, and moves with piteous croon across those Niobe-like rocks,—when the quietude is so intense that the dart of an opossum across the path seems to *shiver* the silence as with a blow— why a meeting such as this would sap the faith of the veriest cockney in Highgate, Harrow, or Richmond Hill.

One gets some grand glimpses of the Old Pacific in the neighbourhood of Sydney. Bondi Bay is a favourite spot with all fresh arrivals, and the following is an extract from a pen-and-ink sketch I made, when (*with Ruskin in pocket*) I first visited the place:—

“All night long roars the sea out there at Bondi. Licking the sharp angle of the Northernmost Rock that—like some fossil Tantalus— stretches and stretches for ever to the wave, the white tongues of foam dart at the dipping wings of the screeching gulls, or break in showers of feathery spray upon the giant crags laid prone along the shore.

“And when the stars and moon are out! When the little scant vegetation on the rocks casts its shadow in the wave, and the long dark hills towards the Beacon show out in a cold, defined blackness; when the broken crags look dimly grey, and the phosphorescent water gleams and glows like one vast burning lake; when the waves shoot up like flame, and seethe and smoke in the wild vortex of the Inferno; when the pebbles, turned over and over with the retreating wave, shriek demoniacally, or seem to be borne down with a low despairing wail; when, at particular points, you look into the boiling maëlstrom as into the crater of a volcano, or watch the reflection of the moon broken by the whispery wave, as though it were some fabled ‘Nicean bark’ of pearl dashed in pieces on a rock, or a casque of a steel shattered by a strong blade and arm into a thousand dazzling splinters!

“From Bondi to the Heads—tramping through the entangled scrub; leaping over gaps in the rocks, down which the eye sees the old sea creeping hundreds of feet below; climbing over crags with faces eaten by the waves into monster honey-combs, or carven into uncouth arabesques; stumbling through narrow rocky passes, with rough, overhanging cromlechs, meeting so close nearly half a furlong over head, that only narrow rifts of sky show through to bring out, as it were, the ugliness of the broken stones covered with green lymphic fungus, over which the timid foot goes sliding towards the ocean, thundering and roaring beneath, and angrily dashing its sharp stress of foam far up the narrow gap in the face of

the adventurer,—from Bondi to the Heads, I say, is a walk so fraught with fears and dangers, that no one but a Borrow or a Livingstone would care to take it more than once in a lifetime.”

I took it once, when I made that sketch; lost myself; and was compelled to stop out all night in the wet scrub. Rheumatism duly followed.

This may be relieved with a word or two on the Sydney Botanical Gardens. They are situated in a large natural park called the “Domain,” which, for a certain rugged beauty, is unequalled by any similar place we have in England. It is to Kensington Gardens, what Salvator Rosa is to Watteau. The Gardens run down, by gentle declivities, to the Harbour, and are stocked with the rarest trees and flowers. The Dammara, with its fine ripe corrugated cones⁹, and the Norfolk Island Pine, are conspicuous among the former. The crimson Coral Trees seem to light the pathways. Fit trees for baby fays and fairies to rub their gums upon! The Judas Tree is too lovely for its name. Did the Betrayer hang himself on *such* a gorgeous gallows! But, look! our attention is called from the tree, by that little steamerkin on the other side of the Harbour, panting and puffing along, and sending the lightest breath of white smoke far over yonder hills. While looking across the water, that black wooden pier, stretching out into the stream, catches the eye. It gives quite a Copley Fielding atmosphere to the picture, and reminds me of the old pier at Little-Hampton, where the red-capped fishermen meet on summer nights to smoke their pipes. The Melbourne Botanical Gardens, I should add here, are young, but particularly well laid out¹.

Cook's River, about five miles from Sydney, must—if only for its name's sake—be briefly pictured. Along its banks are varied scenery, snug wooden huts, miniature waterfalls, and—what is even better than these—the best school in the colony. It is a river that floats dreamily along between tall green rushes—is at one end blue and salt as the ocean, at the other white and fresh as the Thames at Richmond. Its sloping banks are remarkably English, and, at one spot, set out in market-gardens like Fulham. At this particular point the river is almost narrow enough to leap across, but it shoots bravely and flashingly along, until it buries itself, like an arrow, in the dim greenery of the distance. I went up this river with some friends one autumn afternoon. Far away our boat went drifting, until the solemn shades of evening fell on the dim circle of mountains imprisoning the Pacific, and forming the second-distance of the picture. What dark trails of shadow our oars cast on the deepening stream as we returned, what clear cold outlines the pensile rushes seemed to cut in the water! And all the while the august booming of the sea came to us from afar—and all the while the shades kept purpling and thickening on the

hills. How sweet in such a place, at such an hour,

“To hear each other's whisper'd speech. . . .
To muse, and brood, and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy,
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust.”

Here is a picture of another order—a water-piece with figures and cattle—from my Up-Country Note Book:—

Thursday.—Came down to Sydney with M—— and C—— in a Hunter steamer. At Newcastle (where we breakfasted off some splendid fish) took on a batch of blacks,—men, women, and children. They were nearly all drunk, and came tumbling, one over the other, into the boat, like so many hogs, or climbing up the ropes like cats. One or two had chains of Kangaroo dogs with them, others their arms full of little sable urchins, others bags full of young wollobis. The chief had a large stuffed snake's-skin coiled about his neck. The women were excessively drunk; and the moment the boat pushed off, they slipped off their blankets and set to fighting like trained Amazons, while their husbands went round with their hats and begged “tixpences” of the civilized passengers on the strength of their wives' pugnacity. It was a very hot day, and the whole scene on board seemed specially cut out for the glowing pencil of a Roberts. The steamer itself was big, broad, and gaudily coloured, with copper funnel and white-rimmed chimney. The awning was of dingy purple. Scores of live wild ducks, tied with their legs together, were thrown upon some trusses of hay; about a dozen long-legged Hibernian-looking pigs, who had broken loose from their sty, were grunting about eating from a pile of carrots and cabbages, standing in one corner of the boat; baskets of fish, some still alive, were lying in every direction; an old brown cow—with one broken horn—and her bleating calf were tied to the bulwarks of the boat; and, amongst all, were sprawled the blacks, in their many-coloured tatters, smoking their pipes, singing native choruses, and dancing the corroboree. On board I bought a “Red Hand” from one of the blacks for five shillings.

That “red hand” requires a word of explanation. Catlin, Stephens, and others have noticed that the American races marked their edifices, gunyahs, and even personal ornaments with a red hand. The European will scarcely credit it, but in Australia the same strange mark has been frequently discovered, especially in caverns near the sea. Judging from the one I was fortunate enough to obtain, the colouring matter must have possessed some power of eating into the stone, for it was impossible to

erase any part of it. It was a large hand—brick red—with the fingers widely extended. The piece of rock on which it had been stamped was quite level on the surface, as if it had been smoothed to receive the impression. The oldest aborigines know nothing about the origin of these strange relics: they always tell you they were the work of the “old people² .”

The following is another extract—containing two days' memoranda, with some interpolated matter,—from my Up-Country Note Book:—

Sunday.—What a magnificent sight is a company of bullocks—I mean a herd numbering some five or six thousand. Their white, dun, and black backs form a picture in themselves, without the red-shirted drivers on their high-spirited horses, galloping at maddest pace at their sides, and making the woods echo with the sharp quick cracking of their stock-whips. In the distance, the herd looks like a great cloud of dust—in fact, it *is* a cloud of dust you first see. Coming nearer, you catch the *thump, thump*, of that short quick gallop—asthmatic gallop alone conveys the precise notion—peculiar to the ox, and presently the herd itself appears in sight. The steam from their backs arises like smoke from a battle-plain, and their bellowings are as loud as distant artillery. We rode through about five thousand of them to-day with considerable difficulty—the animals keeping so close together that we had to use our whips to effect a passage. It was absurd to see the manner in which some of them lashed their tails upon their backs, to kill the dragon-flies which were constantly settling upon them. Sometimes they hit the exact spot with the tuft at the end of the tail, as if they had “eyes” in it like the peacock. As I rode among the herd, I noticed this much in connexion with bullocks: that their facial protrusion—that is, the angle at which the mouth is projected from the upper part of the head—prevents the horns of one striking into the hind quarters of another in front of him; while the breadth of the back, compared with that of the head, is a safeguard to the animals at either side. The first fact is the reason why bullocks lower their heads and butt upwards, instead of forwards, when they wish to strike with their horns; and the second, why in a herd—however apparent the confusion—the broad posterior quarters of the animals are made pretty much to range.

This bullock-driving cannot be a very pleasant life, although there is a certain smack of romance in camping out at night with a mob of oxen bellowing around, and the companion-drivers on watch attending to the fires—where the damper is cooking and the iron kettle boiling for tomorrow's breakfast—or only leaving their warm occupation for the warmer one of driving in “strays,” with song and shout loud enough to make the deserters scamper. These bullock-songs are uncouth snatches generally

improvised by the drivers themselves, but not destitute of a wild, runic poetry, as the following verses from one of them will show:—

Olle! heigh-ho!
Blow your horns, blow,
Blow the Southern Cross³ down if you will;
But on you must go
Where the fresh gullies flow,
And the thirsty crane wets his red bill.

Olle! heigh-ho!
Drink, boys, as we go,
Pass the brandy—let each take his fill:
On, “Strawberry,” on,
Run, “Blossom,” come run,
There is light enough left for us still.

Olle! heigh-ho!
“Blossom,” gee-woh,
There is water spread out for us here,
Fill horns while you may,
There is no one to pay,
But Mine Host up above, for such cheer!

Now, there may be some who object to that last line; but to me, when I heard it roared out by an olive-complexioned semi-ruffian tearing along after a mob of cattle with a brandy flask and revolver at his side, and the moon rising above a mass of “mackerel” clouds, and throwing long level lines of light upon a more advanced portion of the herd standing, some with their heads turning back, upon the summit of a wooded hill, in the distance,—I thought that same last line, rudely clothed as the idea involved in it may be, really orthodox and devotional. Strange that the boisterous fellow who, in these Australian solitudes, first thundered out the song after his loitering cattle, should have thought of MINE HOST at all!

Monday.—Towards evening, as the sun lay smouldering on the horizon, we passed along the edge of a valley of gums. As far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be seen but the white trunks and the sombre foliage of the trees; and they lay such a depth beneath the road along which we passed, that it seemed as though we stood upon a cliff gazing out across the sea. The flocks of paroquets and other birds of brilliant plumage which occasionally arose in clouds from the trees, battling for a moment at each other and then dropping quietly among the branches, might, with but a slender stretch of imagination, have been taken for showers of spray tossed up from the ocean, and were eminently suggestive of those fine lines in

Dobell's "Balder"—

“Behold, as one should spy from upper wave
Of seas unfounded, fathomless, and dark,
Low, through mysterious waters infinite,
Illumined by a gleam, some jewelled mine,
Emerald and ruby flashing dreamy gold,
Rent in the nether bed of the mid-main.”

In the course of our journey to-day, I met with one or two curiosities. *Item.*—A large specimen of the *ornithorynchus paradoxus*, or duck-billed platypus⁴, just taken by a black from its burrow at the side of a large creek or river, and which looked to me (it was the first I had seen) very much like a hedgehog *grafted* with a duck. *Item.*—A common cactus plant, almost as large as an elm. *Item.*—A piece of roasted snake, which I had the curiosity to taste, and found remarkably good. Its flavour was something like collared eel, but more “decided,” as Tony Veck says about the tripe. The blacks look upon the snake when full-grown and well-roasted as a great delicacy, and I had some trouble in inducing the “chief,” whom we met with it, to part with a morsel. “Me catch him damn thing—me eat him damn thing. You hab him none without money,” said the fellow, as I was going to pull a piece off with my fingers. Thus does the *trade* of the white man abolish the primitive hospitality of the black. But then, says the missionary, look what we have taught him about the Serpent!

To write a book on Australia and forget the literature of the country, would be rather anomalous. Besides, the one or two facts I have to set down under this head are rather interesting.

I first noticed that a large and an aesthetically valuable part of English literature was necessarily a blank to the native Australian. I mean all that portion which relates to winter, its charms and peculiarities—the yule log, old Christmas, the mistletoe, and the holly: the foot-prints, let us say, of the Muse in the snow. To read Tennyson's “Death of the Old Year” to a young Australian, who has never seen or felt hoar frost, would be like reading Hafiz to a Laplander. One Christmas poem, marked with the real home feeling, was written while I was in Sydney, and which I insert, because it is the only production of the kind ever printed in the colony, and because, moreover, I believe it to be well done, for a set composition written hurriedly and to order for the Christmas number of a magazine. Its author is my friend Mr. Richard Rowe, and it is entitled—

“ABSENT FRIENDS.”

A CHRISTMAS BALLAD.

Fytte the First.

White the snow upon the graves, white the frost upon the steeple,
Ruddy doorways flush the road, as the chatty neighbours leave
Going home to bed at ten: very late for quiet people
Like the villagers of Combe, but remember—*Christmas Eve!*

Johnny Cope who keeps the Crown takes his “nightcap” and his candle,
As his gossips whistle gay o'er the frozen meadows bright;
Polly, beauty of the bar, stoopeth, blushing, o'er her sandal—
Romping 'neath the mistletoe gives her eyes that roguish light.

When the windows all are dark, come the little carol-singers,
Wreathing sleepers' lips with smiles, for the music soft and thin
Summons angels to their dreams: in the vestry sit the ringers,
Cluster'd round a can of flip—they've to ring Old Christmas in.

Hark! a whirring breaks the hush, to the belfry now they hurry,
Slip their feet beneath the straps, seize the frosty bellropes fray'd—
Slow the deep notes clang and die—hearts all thumping in a flurry,
For the final stroke of TWELVE list they silent in the shade.

Still it echoes from the walls when the bells leap out in gladness,
Silv'ry through the startled night send their greeting far and wide:
Heav'nliest of earthly sounds, though its sweets are link'd with sadness,
For the Present wakes the Past—merry—mournful—Christmas Tide!

In a tiny cot at Combe dwell a widow and her daughter,—
Teacher in the market-town, home awhile at times like this;
Pretty, pensive Fanny Payne! Weary, waiting years have taught her
Men forget, whilst girls love on, pining o'er their blighted bliss.

Through her lattice looks the moon, not so pale as weeping Fanny
Heark'ning to the Christmas bells, murm'ring, as her fancies stray:
“Once—but that was long ago—Harry loved me. Oh, how can he
Break his word and leave me thus! What care I for Christmas Day!

* * * * *

“Not one little loving line have I ever had from Harry,
Though Joe Jocelyn's letter brought tidings of his luck and health.
How I hate that New South Wales! It was *him* I long'd to marry,
Handsome Harry, darling Hal—not a heap of dirty wealth!”

At the Grange upon the hill sleepless lies young Harry's mother,
Thinking of her laughing boy far away across the sea;
Of the many sons still left, gravely good, there's not another—
Naughty scapegrace though he was—close knit to her heart as he.

Therefore, last night came the note, bidding to a Christmas dinner

Mistress Payne and “dearest Fan,” from the Grange upon the hill;
Though but dull are now those feasts, lacking him, the witty sinner,
Who could make the sternest laugh, leaden brains with frolic fill!

Fytte the Second.

Brightly gleams the little Church. Faces, ruddy as the holly
Round them glowing, fill the pews, whilst the dear old Rector reads;
Harry's father, Farmer Fiske, jolliest of all the jolly,
In churchwarden majesty, anthem and responses leads.

Grandly, too, he leaves the church, all his clan around him crowded,—
Nephews, nieces, daughters, sons, come to spend their Christmas Day;
Proud he greets them, but his brow with a passing shade is clouded,
As he counts, and misses one, thinks of him that's far away.

Grace is said by Rector's lips. Pullets, ducks, with sav'ry dressing,
Alderman in sausage chains, baron brave of stall-fed beef,
Custard, pudding brandy-sauced, pies of mince, deserve a blessing;
And the carving Farmer finds solace for the Father's grief.

Much he marvels that poor Fan, chosen for his right-hand neighbour,
Cannot find in dainty food refuge from depressing fate;
Even “Pope's-nose” brings no peace—vain is all his honest labour,
Heavy-laden heart to soothe with a heavy-laden plate.

Fruit and fresh wine now are brought; healths are drunk, and toasts are
given,—

“Queen,” “Prince Albert,” “Church and State,” “Army,” “Navy,” “Rise
in Corn,”

“Second Derby Cabinet,”—long good Farmer Fiske has striven
To defer for Fanny's sake, one toast heavy to be borne⁵ .

But its turn has come at last—to omit it would be treason

At a Christmas gathering—cries he, “I have one toast more,
One for brimming glass and eyes, sadly drunk in festive season:
Charge!—I give you ‘Absent Friends!’ ”—open flies the oaken door!

Bearded like a patriarch—glossy-brown as any berry,
Rushes to his mother's arms—HARRY, as in days of old!
Bearlike was the way he hugg'd, fiercely loving, filial—very,
But the kiss he gives his Fan makes his other kiss seem cold!

Ere his tongue has told his tale, truant Hal receives his pardon,
For she reads unswerving truth flashing from his sunny eyes:
Angry that such darling duck she should ever have been hard on,
Marmaladish, bitter sweet finds she in the glad surprise.

When he tells how long his toil, fruitless, hopeless, made him doleful,
How he didn't like to write, thinking news like that no good;
How, as Joey Jocelyn said, suddenly he found a holeful,

How bushrangers bailed him up, hast'ning townwards through a wood;
How a fever laid him low, how for months he lay a-dying,
Thinking sadly of his home, of his precious little Fan;
How at length he made a pile, swag and self in clipper flying,
Shipp'd, and hurried o'er the sea, fully purposed, if he can,—

Christmas Day at Combe to spend (Diggings' Christmases are dreary);
How from Plymouth he came post, how he fill'd John Cope with fear,
Leaping out like Harlequin, how the postboy thought him beery,—
Laughing, crying, Fanny sobs: "*Could* I doubt of such a dear!"

Then he turns to Mistress Payne (winking slyly at the Rector),
Bids her straightway let her house, for he means to take a farm;
Circling, meanwhile, Fanny's waist: sisters' needle-eyes detect her
Squeezing Harry's freckled hand, nestling in his brawny arm.

Wasn't that a jolly dance, when they clear'd away the tables!
Wasn't that a sweet walk home! Wasn't that a clinging kiss!—
When again the midnight moon silvered the low cottage gables,
Fanny Payne, methinks, no more murmur'd of her "*blighted* bliss."

I cannot resist giving one short extract from this same writer's prose—if only to show the class of men one sometimes runs against in these far-off dependencies of ours. Here is a daguerreotype, then, of a yard or two of Australian sea-shore:—

"Beyond the churchyard was another haunt of mine, 'the Rocks.' The quarries make a red gap in the green wood on that side of the bay. The 'Giant's Footstep' we called the chasm, from its resemblance to a monstrous foot-print on the sloping hill. Beneath the wood and the quarries are the Rocks, a platform bordering, and often covered by, the sea. On the land-side, they form a pavement that might have been laid down by Cyclopean hands; cracks, running almost regularly at right angles to each other, give the huge mass precisely the appearance of an old-world work of art—a quay fit for a fleet of arks to moor at, for Titanic stevedores to tramp along. Farther out, the mass is more compact, with the fretted, rusty look of iron long exposed to wind and weather. Boulders, quaintly carven by the ocean, in Mohammedan mood, into all kinds of nondescript formations; black with 'honeycombs' in which you might expect to find soot or blasting-powder stored by negro-bees; white with oyster-shells as if they had been pilloried and pelted by the waves with molluscs; or plumply round, neutral-tinted, and lazily unwieldy as hippopotami taking their siesta in the mud and sun,—are heaped upon the platform, and grouped in miniature archipelagoes in the sea beyond. The old women of the village frequent this wild spot at times in order to gather 'lava bread,' an *alga* of a

spinachy hue and taste, which they make into oval cakes and fry with oatmeal. *I* went to the Rocks, when they were deserted, for their feast of beauty, the unflagging amusement, the thrill of mysterious terror, fascinating awe, their marine sights and sounds afforded me. The moist, mottled crabs sporting their gay waistcoats—light buff with fancy sprigs of many colours—were playfellows for me; sprawling every where in a countless swarm, scattering away awkwardly, when approached, to fall with a flop into some sheltering crevice from which they instantly protruded hostile claws,—peering out over them like little apoplectic old men with their heads upon their arms. And then how lovely were the rock-pools!—The tiny ones, with their subaqueous encampments of tent-like limpet-shells, blue periwinkles with such a plum-like bloom upon them in the water, so dull when taken out, and those strange, soft, tenacious knobs like buttons of black, and green, and claret-coloured velvet: the broad, shallow pools, with their floors of golden sand, and stones as glittering, on which fell the dark shadows of scores of gliding fishkins—far more substantial-looking than their owners; the surface of the water—clear, and yet potentially-solid-seeming (prisoned saltwater always has that look) as molten crystal—chequered with long ribs of brilliance, blending in fantastic, Moresque lattices of light when the freshening breeze changed the steady ripple into a chopping, circling canter: and *the* deep, emerald pool, with its bigger fish, black, rakish, and solitary as pirate-schooners, lying motionless in midwater, or sullenly cruising round and round, putting in at many a fairy harbour embosomed in tangle, and straightway, with a noiseless swing of their notched rudder-tails, 'bout ship, and out once more into their main of liquid gem. I think that I am morbidly inclined to suicide. I know that I could never look into that Liliputian lake without fearfully longing to disturb its calm, to go plunging down—rustling its sea-weed tapestry, green, golden, dusky-brown, and bloody-red—and rest on the smooth pebbles, dappling the silvery sand in streaked and purple patches, that glimmered up at me from the bottom, mocking my hesitation, daring me to the leap. I can quite understand the feeling that peopled the sea with seductive Nereids and Sirens in olden times, and Mermaids in more modern; rivers with luring Lurleys, springs with Undines. There was something *eerie*, too, in the muffled murmur of the water gurgling up hidden crannies far down beneath my feet, as the surging waves rolled in, and in the tumultuous haste with which it ebbed from the darkness to the light—to be again forced back into its gloomy cells. And, on stormy days, it was grand to see the green, glassy billows, foam-crested long before they reached the land, galloping on, with their white manes flying behind them in the wind, to break in thunder and in boiling snow—doubly white from

its contrast with the background of leaden sky on which it was embossed—upon the outlying crags. Buried for a moment, with what a sturdy pride they raise their black heads again—grey-tressed with countless cataracts—above the dazzling, dizzying chaos! ‘Firm as a rock’ is, I imagine, the most hackneyed of similes, and yet it always presents itself with a *fresh* truth about it to one who watches the truceless war of cliff and sea.”

The writers most appreciated in Australia are Dickens and Thackeray. Pendennis may be hardly pleased to learn the fact, but he is as much admired at Botany Bay as in May Fair. I saw one hundred copies of the first number of the “Virginians” sold over the counter of Mr. Clarke, the second bookseller in Sydney, in about two hours after they were unpacked. Any number of Dickens's books will sell. Mr. Moxon, too, might send out thousands of his “green covers” in a year, and never fear having one returned. “Livingstone,” “Aurora Leigh,” and the “Angel in the House,” would have gone off by hundreds when I left if any bookseller had been fortunate enough to possess them. Good American reprints have a large sale, and pictorial works of all descriptions are rapidly caught up. The “Examiner,” the “Spectator,” the “Leader,” the “Dispatch,” and “Lloyd's” are the favourite journals. The “Athenaeum” circulates all over the colony. One bookseller in Sydney disposes of a thousand copies of the “Illustrated News” on the arrival of each mail. The best patronised review is the “Westminster.” Book-stalls are plentiful in both colonies, and old men sit in the market-places on Saturday nights with their “fourpenny” and “sixpenny” boxes. I purchased, in Sydney, a copy of the second edition of the “Eikon Basilike” for six-pence. Book auctions take place daily, and as many as ten thousand volumes have been sold in one morning. I saw Mr. Charles Whitehead at a book sale in Melbourne bidding for some of his own fictions. I may mention, here, that the leading bookseller in Sydney, and the principal music seller in Melbourne, are members of Parliament⁶.

I believe more money is spent in Australia, in proportion to its population, on literature and art than in any other country. Dr. Bennett's private library in Sydney is believed to be worth 8000*l.* Mr. Stenhouse's still more⁷. The value of the stock of the leading bookseller in Melbourne is estimated at 12,000*l.*,—that of Mr. Clarke, bookseller, music importer, and print dealer of Sydney, at nearly 15,000*l.* Last year Mr. Clarke published a dozen books, including a two-guinea musical album. Still this must conclude: the Australians are not a reading people. The climate of the country forbids any thing like hard study—loss of sight and loss of reason being at present the commonest afflictions of the population⁸. They buy good books as they buy good furniture. They think they may as well spend their money in that way as in any other.

These remarks having led me back to the moral condition of the colony, it is worth mentioning here, as having a bearing on an important discussion which has been waged by two men eminent in literature in this country, that, throughout Australia, criminals sentenced to capital punishment are privately executed. In Sydney the extreme penalty of the law is carried out in Darlinghurst Gaol—a large prison situated on the highest site in the city, and over the wall of which one end of the topmost beam of the gallows always points, like an awful finger-post. Any one may, on application, be present at an execution; but I believe very few persons, unconnected with the gaol, ever attend. A man was hanged while I was in Sydney, and so far from the fact that the execution was privately conducted, lowering the solemnity of the warning which capital punishment is intended to preach, the effect upon the public mind seemed to me considerably heightened. On the morning appointed for the execution, every one felt that a fellow-being was to be launched into eternity, and although not a single word upon the matter appeared in the daily papers, a perceptible gloom hung over the city. I mention this for what it is worth, and trust it may one day fall under the eye of Sir Francis Head.

And now what shall be said in conclusion? To predict a future greatness for the colony would be simply to utter a truism—to post-date an accomplished fact. All that is needed by Australia to give her high rank as a country, is a constant tide of emigration. And considering that she offers a free home, liberal laws, and steady profitable occupations to all who choose to visit her shores,—considering that in her high places Wealth and Power now walk side by side with Probity and Perseverance,—no one who is needy and energetic—who wanting the money possesses the will to earn it,—should scruple to at once make up his knapsack, run down to Limehouse or Liverpool, and ship himself, his poverty and his pluck, on the next clipper bound for the Antipodes⁹.

Let not these remarks be misunderstood. One should not lightly, and without weighing all the expediencies which underlie the matter, recommend a good-bye to country and a break-up of home. What I say, I say considerately. All men of energy, WHATEVER THEIR CALLING, must succeed in a new and averagely populated colony. Lawyers, in Sydney, are as plentiful as locusts, and they, one and all, contrive to make a capital living. The chief pianist earns 2000*l.* per annum, and there are five or six musical professors in Sydney, each of whose yearly incomes averages over 1000*l.* In both cities there are scores of music masters and mistresses earning their six and seven pounds a week. Mr. Freeman, the principal Sydney daguerreotypist, makes 1500*l.* a year, and keeps a handsome sea-side villa. Mr. Batchelor, the Beard of Melbourne, must nett

still more. Miss Moore pays 500*l.* a year rent for her school-house in Sydney, and in the same city, the Misses Cooksey lease the magnificent seat of the late Sir Thomas Mitchell as a ladies' seminary. The Rev. Mr. Savigny, at Cook's River, has nearly one hundred pupils, paying 100*l.* a year each.

I know there are men sometimes out of work in Melbourne and Sydney—I know there are meetings occasionally in both places, of large bodies of unemployed artisans—I know the *Times*, the other day, grew terrified about this, and wrote a very un-*Times*-like, because ill-considered, leader on the subject. I know all this; but I know, also, that grumblers are to be found in every part of the world—that working men are sometimes ludicrously extravagant in their notions of what kind of labour befits them, and what rate of wages they have a right to expect,—that these meetings of the unemployed were ridiculed by the Colonial Press and every observant person living on the spot,—and that even the wisest journalists are now and then led into mistakes, by impressions hastily gathered from the bulky file of a late mail's papers. Moreover, admitting a dearth of employment at one especial time and in one particular spot, it is not fair that a mere temporary and local accident should be allowed to tell for any thing more. Summarily, on this point, I take this broad position—that there never was a mechanic out of employment in Melbourne or Sydney but who might, if so inclined, have obtained ready and remunerative labour away from the capital. But the fact is, on arriving in Australia, many men seat themselves on the public quays, and grievously complain that the ministry of the day forget to march out in a body to welcome and employ them. I am not now drawing on fancy. During the height of the “unemployed movement” in Melbourne, I saw hundreds of mechanics outside the General Post Office, waiting, with their hands in their pockets, for some one to COME and engage them.

Even when his set employment fails, a hundred resources are open to the needy man in Australia. If he cannot earn money by digging turnips, let him turn to digging gold. If he find carpentering down in the market, let him go into the bush and cut timber. I heard of a cabinet-maker in Melbourne who made 500*l.* a year as a woodman. The well-salaried secretary of the Australian Library, Sydney, is a dealer in firewood.

There is no enumerating the number of channels to liberal incomes which lie open in the colonies. For instance, cotton could be abundantly grown all over the country; tobacco and indigo could be cultivated at Moreton Bay; sponge could be liberally gathered on the Victorian coasts; the choicest fruit preserves could be made for the world at large; and productive fisheries might be established at scores of places within easy distances of most of the populous towns. No wonder that in Bushland “Uncle Jack”

should have reaped a fortune!

Then there is no lack of minor speculations for men of small means and large energies. It was only lately a fortune was reaped in Sydney by the exportation of rags. The bottle business is still untouched, and thousands of ale and stout bottles are thrown away every day. In any street, you might knock at the doors, and fill a waggon with “dead men” in ten minutes. The ginger beer trade is “well up” in the colonies. The principal dealer in this beverage, in Sydney, is a millionaire.

Finally, for those who have money, there are few more luxurious homes than the Australian capitals can offer—while for those who have hard hands and empty purses, there are no finer spots in the world for employing the first, and filling the second, than the township, the bush, and the gold-field of the Southern Hemisphere¹.

It must be borne in mind, too, that we are now only at two months' distance from the colonies: the “Royal Charter” has accomplished the passage in fifty-nine days—the “Leviathan” promises to make it in thirty. Moreover, the journey is in every respect like a pleasure-trip in a yacht. The “Royal Charter” in which I came home, is as richly and comfortably appointed as a private hotel. Sheep, pigs, and bullocks, geese and turkeys, were slaughtered on board every day. A cow or two supplied us with milk; cool fruits and rich conserves were constantly on the table; sodawater and shaving water came together if desired. Active stewards (there were a score of them) were always at hand; a motherly stewardess looked after the little ones; and at every remarkable point in the journey the jovial Captain gave “Sweethearts and Wives,” and exhilarated us with champagne.

And then — and this must close in all — the sights and studies of the Sea! The birds dipping their restless wings in the iris-crest of the wave, and shaking the drops off haughtily in the sun like a rain of stammel diamonds; the shark gleaming, green and still, just an arm's depth below the surface; the whale blowing its foamy fountain high above the wave; the shoals of porpoises playing leap-frog under the very bows of the vessel; the shadowy ships far off against the sun sets, their suffused masts melting behind the horizon, like ribs of molten copper; the *down-struck* shadow of the blue star darting and dazzling in the brine, like the forked flashing of a blade thrust through the water by some invisible hand beneath; the columned rainbow moving like a pillar of fire along the waves; the sun resting large and red upon the uttermost edge of ocean, and turning it for a moment into a sea of heavily-rippled blood; the white moon peering through the rigging, and bringing out every taut line in dark yet clear definity; the cloud-studies in the heavens—the blue clouds rimmed with cold dull grey, the lilac clouds stippled through and through with subtle glints of orange, the white

cloudlets faint and thin, floating away, like flights of silver-breasted doves, in the glittering wake of the declining sun; the salt, fresh, breezy look of the sea at morning; the storm at night, when the masts rock to and fro; when the billows dash their lives away in foam, when every timber strains and creaks, and when the “Cheerily O!” of the sailors is all but drowned in the thundering diapason of the winds and waves; the vivid lightning in the Tropics that comes playing about the mast like another Ariel; the stupendous rocks rising bluffly from the sea, and changing their craggy aspects with each bound of the ship and every play of the passing shadows—becoming now castellated ruins of blackest basalt, now gothic temples of pale pink coral, now (as the sun declines) Titanic tombs of dead and rayless purple; the getting near land; the dance on deck beneath the stars,—and all the other varied glories of the voyage that hold the poet and the painter at defiance, but mid which Memory sits and muses through the longest lifetime and the pleasantest experiences on shore.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE my return to England I have had the pleasure of reading Colonel Mundy's book on the colonies. How admirably it is written—how obsolete it has become! But no work on a new country—and especially such a new country as Australia—can be more than *retrospectively* useful longer than four or five years. Reading “Our Antipodes” in the light of 1858, seems like reading a new Munchausen. To talk *now* of flocks of parrots alighting on the trees about Sydney, would be like talking of wolves prowling about the city of London. And of course many other things have flown with the parrots.

December 6th.

Notes

1 I have here, and elsewhere, made slight verbal alterations in my sea-sanctified MS.

2 “Those who know the English Colonies abroad, know that we carry with us our pride, pills, and prejudices; Harvey sauces, cayenne pepper, and other Lares, making a little Britain wherever we settle down.”—*Vanity Fair*.

3 The epigrammatic couplet (which of course the reader has never met before!),—

“True patriots we, for be it understood
We left our country for our country's good,”—

formed part of the brilliant pickpocket's composition.

4

So the struck bullock stretch'd upon the plain,
No more with horn'd herds to browse again,
Sees a friend's rump-hide forms the biting thong,
Which gives the blow that writhes *his* rump along.
Keen are his pangs, but keener still to feel
Bulls help themselves to feed the butcher's steel;
For the same hide which now smarts on his back,
May,—neatly knotted,—*hide* the bovine pack!

5 Five hundred tons of ice were consumed in Melbourne last year.
It was sold at fourpence a pound.

6 With reference to this dearth of topics. . . . The Australian editor is sometime hard-pressed for a subject, and resorts to far-fetched expedients. I was sitting in a coffee-house one evening with a friend who was reading the late Sydney “*Empire*.” “This first leader is admirably done,” he observed. I glanced at it, saw it was headed “Wealth and Poverty,” read a few lines, and recollected it was Douglas Jerrold's, and had appeared in “*Lloyd's Newspaper*,” some months before, under the title of “Rich and Poor.”

7 Of course these two sporting prints are always falling to buffets with each other. An action for libel against “*Bell's Life*” was to come off last March, in consequence of that journal having said that a portrait of a race-horse given in the “*Era*” had been in the office some weeks before the race took place. Upon this the “*Era*” (besides entering the action) retorts by asking, Why the engraver of the portrait of the same horse in their contemporary had not been guilty of breaking the Second Commandment! and

suggesting, as an answer, Because his picture was not “in the likeness of any thing in the heavens above, the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth!”

8 Including an “Australian Builder,” a “Catholic Chronicle,” a “Phonographic Magazine,” an “Insolvency Circular,” a “Medical Journal,” a “Law List,” a “Directory,” and a “Hansard.” A German paper and an “Illustrated News” have lately died. The Congregationalists and the Temperance body have monthly magazines of their own.

9 How the small character some men suddenly make in one and a side direction, will swamp the great and *immanent* one they have achieved in another! Duffy, had he never meddled with politics—in the realm of which he is a very ordinary person—might have left a good reputation behind him. What a vital strength there is in some of his lyrics! while a preface from his pen I read the other day (it was to a noble book of Irish ballads), appeared to me, for a piece of brilliant critical writing without a taint of the meretricious, equal to any thing in that same line by Professor Wilson.

1 Is there not something in the bustle of a large city like London which *makes* a boy sharp in his movements. For instance, how can a youth who daily at four o'clock in the afternoon has to cross from Farringdon-street to Bridge-street help being prompt and decided? Mr. Thackeray has touched on the necessity to “push before the passenger in front of you, in Fleet-street, if you would avoid being tripped up by the passenger behind,” in one of the early parts of the *Virginians*.

2 “I will try to do it—if you will only give me written directions on my tablets about the ‘gee-woh.’”

3 “It's of no use; I can read it all well enough, but the devil of a bit can they understand the accent.”

4 I was in Sydney when I heard of Vestris's death, and can scarcely describe my feelings on receiving the intelligence. I must explain. Here was a woman who had enchanted thousands—who appeared, when I left England, as though she had run a race with Time and his attendant executioner, Death, and beaten both—taken from the realm of pleasure, the rouge hardly washed from her cheeks, where she had reigned supreme a half-a-century! Oh! the vanity of the world after this! Orchestra may pipe up never so sweetly, but the rattle of death creeping there in the green-room makes a sad medley of it!

5 In one of Poe's fine critical papers, he takes the position—and endeavours to prove it—that Horne's “Orion” is, after “Paradise Lost,” the greatest epic in the language.

6 I have sometimes used “colony” in the *home* sense of all the colonies.

7 The large bachelor population, climatic peculiarities, the idle voyage out, plenty of money for little work on arriving, are some of the causes, perhaps, which send so many women adrift in Australia.

8 In Cox's Australian (Sydney) Almanac for 1858, *five* pages are occupied with religious and educational institutions. The Sisters of Charity, too, are doing much good sister's work in New South Wales.

9 “Gipps' Land Guardian.” Gipps' Land is the finest agricultural district in Victoria. Omeo is the name of the diggings there.

10 It may seem that mere glints of humour, like the above, are too slight to be admitted as Southern Lights into these pages. If so, I can only say I bring them home as a Cockney brings home twisted shells from Brighton, a cart-load of which he might buy in London for a few shillings. Mere Australian jokes even do not seem insignificant to me—perhaps because of my long journey, and because, as a consequence, they bring—like those shells—the echo of the sea to my ears.

1 I have a right to call the beverage delicious, and I think the reader will agree with me when I let him into the secret of its brewing. Let the evening be warm—the guests genial. Get a few large Koh-i-noors of Wenham Lake ice, a bottle of full-bodied claret, a half a pound of white sugar, three lemons, a bottle of champagne, ditto of soda water, a nutmeg, and a large punch-bowl. Now rub your sugar on the lemons until it becomes alchemised to a pale yellow. Now put it in the bowl, and peeling the lemons (not too deeply), place the rind with the sugar. Next, rain in three or four considerate gratings of nutmeg, throw in the ice, and now pour on the claret, stirring well with a spoon until the sugar is quite melted. Now give one of your guests the soda-water, and another the champagne; and, at a solemn signal, let them pour both into the bowl. A rich blood-tinctured foam will rise to the top, seethe a moment, ripple round the little islets of ice, and then gradually subside. Now ladle out, and tell me if I am not justified in calling it delicious!

2 Here is a strange chronicle, bearing upon this period of Australian history. A store-ship, laden with good things, arrived on one occasion, and the jolly Governor of the day, noted for his love of hard drinking, was so overjoyed at the idea of replenishing his cellar, that he gave a party to the captain and officers of the vessel, and, in the height of his gratification, compounded a liquor which he called *blowhisskulloff*. It was made in this way: he removed all the ale, stout, brandy, rum, and lime juice from the vessel, and

mixed them in a large iron tank. From this tank, at night, tin pannikins of the beverage were served out to the guests—or, rather, each guest took his pannikin, and baled for himself. They were all soon drunk, the Governor particularly so, as became his rank. In the excess of their inebriation, they set fire to the bush, and had a glorious night of it. His Excellency was christened afterwards the Man of the Iron Tank.

3 “Edinburgh Review,” 1803.

4 Twenty years ago Australian society was divided into two great classes—the Sterling, denoting home immigrants, and the Currency, or colonial born. A division existed between the “Immigrants” and the “Emancipists.” The “Emancipists,” again, were sub-divided by a class known as “Exclusionists.” The “Exclusionists,” again, were sub-divided by the “Confusionists,” so-called from their endeavours to embroil society. The “Exclusionists” led the fashion. They were perfect Chesterfields in their way, and the peace of Sydney was on one occasion all but disturbed by the opening of a ball before the reigning beauty had made her appearance. All this is altered now; and even the word “convict” is always spoken *sotto roce*.

5 In an English print remarkable for the liberal scope and vigour of its articles and the general accuracy of its impressions, I was surprised to meet, some time back, with the following exordium to a review of Mr. Howitt's “Tallangetta:”—“We agree with those who think that writers are too rapid in their conclusions who predict the growth of Australia into a powerful and flourishing empire. It is a desert with a green border; it has its Stony Arabia by the side of its ‘Happy;’ its fertile territories have comparatively little depth; the valleys, the vast river bottoms, the immense plains 500 miles square, beyond the Appalachian Hills, the Mississippi of the American continent are wanting.” (*The Leader*.) Now, the only part of this which really fits Australia is the last clause. It has its valleys, its fertile plains, even hundreds of miles square, its cedar, its mines, its quarries, and, notwithstanding the popular English delusion, its large and navigable rivers. It has *not* a Mississippi. Wool, tallow, copper, gold, and coal—fine harbours, *average* rivers, and a fair climate—will go far to make a flourishing empire without a Mississippi. . . . Every flourishing empire is not to be as great, in all particulars, as America. What Australia has done she has done in a life-time. America took longer to strike the gyves of convictism from her wrists.

6 The first day I arrived in Australia Mr. F. C—e, an old England acquaintance, met me and said, “You should go to the Pitt Street Congregationalist Chapel. There is more wealth in those four walls

than in any other place in the colony. The sacrament service is splendid—real silver and crystal!”

7 Just after Christmas, last year, I was picnicing with some friends at Hen-and-chickens Bay, and was busy carving, or trying to carve, an antiquated fowl, when one of the party, a Dr. P—, said, “Bring it to me, I understand its anatomy, and can manage it better than you.” I stood up to carry the dish, when I was rather surprised to see I had been squatting on a large snake. In my astonishment I threw both fowl and dish at it, upon which it put out its tongue and wormed off.

8 The following is from Bonomi's “Nineveh:” — “In his (Hercules' or Nimrod's) right hand he holds an instrument that we infer to be analogous to the Boomerang of the Australians, the Hunga Munga of South Africa, the Trombash of Central Africa, or the Sellem of the Bishareen. It is used by all these different nations in hunting, and by some in war, as described by Denham and Clapperton in their journey to Timbuktoo. The universality of this weapon is sufficiently established by the fact of its being found in most widely-separated continents, and in evidence of its antiquity we refer to the woodcut taken from an ancient basso-relievo at Thebes, where it is commonly seen in the hands of the hunters. There is likewise in the Egyptian Hall of the British Museum another example of the instrument exhibited in the picture of a huntsman who is about to throw it at some birds which are taking flight over a papyrus grove. . . . The Australian boomerang is much more curved than either of the specimens we have given, and possesses in a higher degree the singular property of returning within a few yards of the thrower.”—Bonomi, pp. 136, 137.

9 “THE DAMMARA.—The genus to which attention is now invited is that of Dammara, or Kawrie Pines; trees which, although scarcely known to the public, are—judging from the species hitherto discovered—among the noblest and most beautiful of the vegetable race. They combine in their qualities the useful and ornamental in as great a degree as any other tree with which we are acquainted,—being, in fact, equally suited for the decoration of our parks and pleasure grounds, as for timber trees in our colonial forests. It is for the latter purpose, however, that they are likely to become the most valuable. Kawrie timber has been long and favourably known in Sydney and elsewhere, to carpenters and builders, and is generally supposed to be entirely furnished from New Zealand; but, occasionally, it is supplied from Aniteum, in the New Hebrides, and within the last few years considerable quantities from the White Bay district have reached Sydney. In neither of these places, however, is there an inexhaustible supply—for, unlike the Araucarias, of which the Norfolk Island Pine is a magnificent

representative, and to which the Dammara Pines are very closely allied both in botanical character and in mode of growth, they do not of themselves compose forests, but rather prefer to associate in a straggling manner with trees of a different description, in forests whose denseness only the hope of gain or the love of science would be a sufficient inducement to enter;—and, so far as has yet been observed, their local distribution appears to be of a very limited extent. The number of species at present known is about eight. In its native locality, this tree reaches a height of at least 130 feet, and usually two-thirds of the stem from the ground is entirely destitute of branches. This character, peculiar to the whole genus, renders Kawrie timber so much sought after for ships' spars, for which purpose the New Zealand Kawrie is understood to have been used in the British navy for many years past, and to have been employed in the first instance on the recommendation of the celebrated Captain Cook, on whose report of its qualities the Admiralty were induced to send out a ship to procure spars. We should add that these trees exude a valuable gum, known in India as Dammar, from which, by the way, the name of the genus.”— *The Month. (Sydney.)* Will the general reader, who is neither a dealer in gum nor a cutter of pine-wood, pardon so long a note! The Dammara is all but unknown in England, and any information about it must be acceptable to many.

1 Lieut. Maury, in his “Physical Geography of the Sea,” observes: “In Australia. . . . the trees cannot afford to spread out their leaves to the sun, for it evaporates all the moisture from them; their instincts, therefore, teach them to turn their edges to the rays.” I noticed this even with the exotics in the Gardens.

2 The following, supplied me by my friend Mr. Norton, of Sydney, will be read with interest:— “The human hand was usually dipped in colouring matter and then placed on the rock, but in some instances the hand was placed on the rock and the colouring matter applied to the uncovered surface, leaving a white hand on a red ground. The hands differ in size, and considerably in mode of position, and it is not improbable that the method of applying the colour might have distinguished the rank, the age, and perhaps the sex of the party. It is also supposed that the work is that of races which had disappeared before the arrival of Europeans: it was described by the earliest of the aborigines as the work of ‘the old people,’— a race that had probably been expelled to other lands, or destroyed in early wars. That such wars were common may be collected from the singular fact that the natives of Van Diemen's Land, now called Tasmania, are totally unlike the tribes occupying the continent. The Tasmanian aborigines differ in general contour, and have, besides, or rather had, for they are almost extinct, woolly heads. The Australian races, more elegantly formed, are

distinguished by the smallness of their hands and feet, and by gracefully curling hair. The history of these early people is not the less interesting because involved in total obscurity, and that problems present themselves it is difficult in any way to solve. "All the Australian tribes use canoes made of a single sheet of bark tied at the ends. The natives of Van Diemen's Land are supposed to have no canoes. How they found their way across the wide strait dividing their island from the mainland must for ever remain unknown. Is it possible that they could have lost the art of using canoes, or that never possessing it they were conveyed by those who subdued them to the island? The habits of savage conquerors make this improbable. Was the channel called Bass's Strait created by a comparatively recent convulsion, after the peopling of the continent? "But to return to the Caves of the Red Hand; they are not numerous, and the images have been partially effaced by the operation of the atmosphere. Virtuosi have also transferred them to the museums of Europe, and in detaching portions of the rock have destroyed many images they could not remove. The vulgar, too, have chipped and battered those within their reach. Last of all a quarry is now in active operation upon the site of one of the most interesting of these ancient records. We could not resist the invitation of a friend to take a last look at all that remains to tell of a race that once lived and flourished and suffered and became extinct,—to examine for the last time a monument perhaps more ancient than the tombs of Etruria,—a monument not the least interesting that it might, if preserved, have enabled some future inquirer to trace the distribution of the human race over the surface of the earth, and to ascertain that a connexion formerly existed between the early inhabitants of Australia and those of America."

3 Of course "any schoolboy" knows the Southern Cross is the great Constellation of Transpacifica.

4 This remarkable animal, which is peculiar to New Holland, was first described by Shaw in the year 1799, in the tenth volume of the *Naturalist's Miscellany*. Shaw calls it the *Platypus Anatinus*.

5 "Well, *you're* a nice one to describe a dessert," emphatically exclaimed Mrs. Balladmonger, who had been looking over my shoulder. "Why the ladies would have retired long before that fearful amount of wine was drunk!" Now, although, to her face, I always treat my wife's strictures on my productions with the supreme contempt which they—the criticisms, mind you!—for the most part, richly merit; yet as, on reflection, I am of opinion that in this instance, perhaps, some of my other readers may be as captious as very impertinent Mrs. B., I beg to justify my "position" as allowable,— 1st, by Temporal Licence: Women of all ranks linger around the festive board at Christmas time. 2ndly, by Social

Licence: Farmers' wives and their friends are not fine ladies. 3rdly, by Local Licence: Combe Grange may not have possessed a drawing-room. 4thly, and finally, by Poetical Licence: The position was indispensable.

6 The following is from the "Melbourne Age" of April the 10th:—"Mr. Hood proposes to introduce a Bill to repeal the English Copyright Act, so far as it applies to this colony, and thereby to enable us to import American reprints of English books, or reprint them ourselves. There is an English Act of Parliament which makes provision for this repeal on condition of allowing the proprietors of copyrights an interest in the reprint. Canada took advantage of this Act the year after it was passed, and imports American reprints, or has reprints of its own, on payment of a fixed percentage collected by the Customs' authorities and transmitted to the proprietors of the copyrights—a full list of whom is printed for Customs' purposes. Such a proposition, if carried here (and there cannot possibly be an objection to it), will be good for the printing trade, and will be hailed by all lovers of books, who wish to possess a good library at a moderate outlay."

7 "MR. DENIEHY'S LIBRARY.—Australia ought to make much of Mr. Deniehy. He most, of all her sons, keeps up the literary *character*. We read the other day, with sincerest pleasure and great surprise, that the honourable gentleman's library had been removed to Sydney, and that it weighed *several tons*. We hope we may some day have the gratification of diving among its treasures."—*The Month*. I seize occasion in this note to say that the Dr. Bennett referred to in the text is the eminent naturalist whose occasional letters to the "Athenaeum" we have all read with delight.

8 I observed more blind beggars in Sydney than I ever saw in London. Most of them are newspaper venders.

9 A great deal has been written regarding the high price of living in the colonies. Certainly house-rent and servants' wages are almost incredibly high; but most other things are reasonable enough. There is occasionally a singularly sudden fluctuation in prices. On Monday a cabbage will cost twopence; on Tuesday will come a hot wind; and on Wednesday a few half-withered leaves will cost a shilling. It is the same with many of the fruits and vegetables. Still, all through the season, melons can be bought for a few pence; pines for sixpence and a shilling each; peaches at sixpence a dozen; apricots at fourpence a pint; pomegranates at twopence each; grapes at fourpence a pound; and nectarines at threepence a dozen. Touching ordinary edibles, meat is generally threepence or fourpence a pound; sugar, fourpence; tea (best), two shillings, and coffee a shilling. Clothing is as reasonable in price as it is in

London, hats only excepted. Every thing is cheaper in Sydney than in Melbourne, but at the latter place wages are considerably higher. Fish is very cheap throughout the colonies. Oysters and prawns are very fine at Sydney. I know no better relish than going out with a flask full of vinegar, a hammer, a chisel, and some bread and butter, and eating the oysters off the rocks coasting Port Jackson. Every crag has its face dotted all over with the white shells. The rock oyster is small, but plump, white, and luscious. He has the merit, too, of not cultivating a beard. There are scores of oyster “saloons” in Melbourne—several in Sydney. As in London, they are to be found—with private boxes, red-curtained—in the neighbourhood of the theatres. (A strange contradiction is the life of the oyster! Let him once give up his utilitarian mode of living—clinging to rocks and hanging on to copper bottoms—and he immediately drops into the realms of fancy; hangs about the door of the theatre, and finishes his career in a candle-lighted grotto.) Prawns are sixpence a pint in Sydney, a shilling in Melbourne. They are brought to the former place by the Hunter river steamers, and as these boats generally arrive late at night it is not unusual to be awakened from your sleep at one or two in the morning by a fellow shouting “Fine fresh Prawns” just under your window. If the musquitoes are about it is as well to buy some of these prawns, and sit at the window and eat them for amusement. Talking of fish, I must not forget His Mightiness the Shark-Sharks are as plentiful in Port Jackson as dace are in the Serpentine. Notwithstanding this the native boys are to be found bathing in the Harbour from morning till night.

1 “Yes, how many young men must there be in this Old World, able, intelligent, active, and persevering enough, yet not adapted for success in any of our conventional professions— ‘mute, inglorious Raleighs.’ Your letter, young artist, is an illustration of the philosophy of Colonising. I comprehend better, after reading it, the old Greek colonization—the sending out not only the paupers, the refuse of an over-populated state, but a large proportion of a better class—fellows full of pith and sap and exuberant vitality . . . blending in those wise *cleruchioe*, a certain portion of the aristocratic with the more democratic element; not turning a rabble loose upon a new soil, but planting in the foreign allotments all the rudiments of an harmonious state, analogous to that in the mother-country—not only getting rid of hungry craving mouths, but furnishing vent for a waste surplus of intelligence and courage.”—*The Caxtons*.
