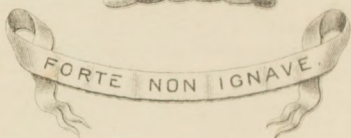


THE
BUSHRANGERS
BY
JAMES BONWICK

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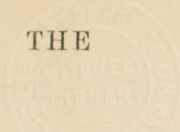
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THE
BUSHRANGERS;

ILLUSTRATING THE

EARLY DAYS OF VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.

BY

JAMES BONWICK,

AUTHOR OF "GEOGRAPHY OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND,"
"DISCOVERY AND SETTLEMENT OF PORT PHILLIP," ETC.,
AND COMPILER OF "THE GEOLOGICAL MAP OF VICTORIA."

MELBOURNE:

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY
GEORGE ROBERTSON, GREAT COLLINS STREET.

1856.

P R E F A C E.



THIS Work is not intended as a sort of Newgate Calendar,—a record of deeds of villany,—but a narrative of persons whose career affected the social condition of a whole country, and presented the best illustration of the operations of Prison Discipline, and the early career of a Penal Colony. The present sketch embraces a period anterior to the settlement of Port Phillip.

There is another phase of Tasmanian primitive history, full of melancholy interest, that will shortly be brought before the Public, under the title of "THE BLACK WAR OF VAN DIEMEN'S LAND;—THE END OF THE TASMANIAN ABORIGINES." A publication of somewhat similar character on the natives of Port Phillip is now in press, designated "BUCKLEY, THE WILD WHITE MAN, AND HIS BLACK FRIENDS."

Encouraged by the kind patronage of his fellow-colonists, the Author hopes to be enabled to bring out a further series of volumes, illustrating the history of the Australian Settlements.

MELBOURNE,

June 6th, 1856.



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INTRODUCTION.

EARLY STATE OF SOCIETY IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.

THE beautiful Island of Tasmania, the gem of the southern ocean, was first inhabited by wandering, houseless, naked savages. Its foundation, as a British colony was laid on felon chains. With the precedent of Rome before us, such an origin can neither be contemptible nor *disreputable*. As from the ruins of virtue in that ancient capital arose the patriotism of a Brutus, the morality of a Seneca, the eloquence of a Cicero, and the verses of a Virgil,—so may the fair land before us already boast among her youth the intelligence, the moral greatness, the social virtues, and the piety of the most distinguished of older nations.

Colonel Collins landed 307 male prisoners on the shores of the Derwent in 1804, after an unavailing attempt to form a settlement in Port Phillip. These were guarded by fifty marines. With the exception of seventeen married women, no females accompanied the expedition, nor arrived

on the Island for some time after. The convicts were first employed in making pathways through the scrub of the Hobart Town site, and erecting the necessary buildings for themselves and their officers. Although so far from headquarters, they were dependant upon New South Wales for supplies. The failure of the crops in that colony threw the Van Diemen's Land establishment into the greatest distress. The commissariat was obliged to rely upon native animals furnished by hunters; as much as eighteen pence a pound was paid for kangaroo meat. The dispersion of the men thus seeking for food was no auxiliary to penal discipline. It brought, also, the worst of persons in association with the aborigines, under the most unfavorable circumstances; lust and cruelty provoked retaliation and violence.

The moral state of this very early period was not satisfactory. It is no pleasing task to review the crimes of the dead, or to rebuke the improprieties of the leaders of a people. But it is truly sad to notice the disgraceful immoralities of the officers in charge of the new settlement. Their unholy practices excited the ribald jests of the most degraded. The absurd and criminal negligence of the British Government, in not providing some approximate equalization of the sexes, was one cause of this laxity of morals. An illustration of the times is given by Mr. John Pascoe Fawkner. That gentleman, when a boy at Hobart Town, saw the whole colony drunk for several weeks, from the Governor downwards. The Colonel had proclaimed a fortnight's holiday on account of the men's good behaviour during the time of the famine, and revelry reigned for six weeks. A number of violent deaths was the consequence of this shameless dissipation. Although there was a chap-

lain on the settlement, yet his social qualities were more in harmony with convivial mirth than the routine of pious duties. The amount and character of religious instruction communicated to the prisoners even in more recent times, is well described by a condemned man to a Judge; "What is done, your Honor, to make us better? Once a week we are drawn up in a square opposite the military barracks, and all the military are drawn up in front of us with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, and a young officer then comes to the fence and reads part of the prayers, and that takes may be about a quarter of an hour, and that is all the religion we see."

Before free emigration set in the system of government was sufficiently simple, and the authority of the chief officer unrestrained but by the veto of the Governor-General at Sydney. Even so recently as 1823, we find a colonial enactment [authorising the Governor or Acting Governor to proclaim or enforce any law which he may deem necessary to check or prevent rebellion, though every member of his Executive Council dissent from such procedure. Any port could be closed against merchant trading vessels at the will of the chief ruler. And yet for many years the internal government of the country was puerile and contemptible. No efficient staff of constabulary existed before the days of Colonel Arthur. Governors Collins and Davey were injudicious in their acts, and inconsistent in their discipline. The accumulation of disorders, and the consequences of lengthened misrule, nearly overwhelmed the more prudent and energetic Colonel Sorell, and formed for a series of years a most perplexing difficulty to the mind of our statesman Governor Arthur. The powerful Governor Macquarie, in 1814, had to compromise with the

numerous bushrangers. He proclaimed amnesty for past offences; this extraordinary document was legally drawn up by the Judge-Advocate of the colony. The home authorities were, doubtless, to be blamed for the want of necessary appliances for the enforcement of prison discipline. No adequate buildings were erected for the accommodation of the men, and no suitable employment was provided for their time. Before the construction of the present Hobart Town Penitentiary, in which the town gangs are confined after the day's work, the ill defined boundaries of their lodgings were easily passed, and the town became a prey to uncontrollable uproar and daring plunder. An old resident informed the writer that his loaded carbine hung behind his desk, a sword was beneath his counter, and pistols were ready at hand. Jorgenson, the eccentric prisoner author writes, "I remember when I arrived here first, the public-houses were filled with convicts night and day, tippling, gaming, and concocting robberies. It was often dangerous to walk the streets in day-time."

It was during that first reign of terror that bushrangers flourished, and "the most horrid murders were of common occurrence." One serious impediment to the operations of justice was the practice of sending all persons guilty of serious offences for trial to Sydney. It is true that there was a Judge-Advocate, who was, by the way, a military officer, but such gentlemen were not held responsible for the punishment of capital crimes. In Sorell's reign a Judge Advocate's Court was established for civil cases under £50, and no appeal to that decision was permitted. To show the fitness of the individual for the office, we read that once, when told about a certain course being the legal

one, the judge exclaimed, "I am no lawyer, and won't be troubled with law." It was, therefore, essential that matters affecting life or death should be brought before a true functionary. But, as Mr. Melville remarked, "The expense, the delay, the difficulty in bringing offenders to justice were such that, nine times out of ten, the law, or the insufficiency of evidence, allowed the guilty to escape." When a Supreme Court, in 1821, was established in Hobart Town, and still more upon the opening of the Sessions in 1825, there was a consolidation of legal authority, which became a terror to evil doers, and a defence to those who did well. In the course of some six or seven years the Rev. Dr. Bedford attended the execution of from 300 to 400 criminals.

As free settlers arrived in the colony, and men, emerging from bondage, were seated upon their grants of land, means were afforded the Government of relieving themselves of the support and trouble of many convicts, by the practice of the *Assignment System*, which was first introduced into New South Wales by Governor King in 1804. Persons were allowed to hire men and women from Government for a certain period, on condition of providing them with a certain amount of clothing and rations. The annual allowance for a man was two suits of woollen slop, three pairs of boots, four shirts, and one hat or cap; that for a woman was one gown, two bedgowns or jackets, three shifts, two flannel petticoats, two stuff petticoats, three pairs of shoes, three calico caps, three pairs of stockings, two neck-kerchiefs, three aprons, and one bonnet. The weekly rations for a man were, meat, $10\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.; flour, $10\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.; sugar, 7 ozs.; soap, $3\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. salt 2 ozs. The females then had, meat, $5\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.; flour, $8\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.; tea, 2 ozs.; sugar,

8 ozs. ; soap, 2 ozs. ; salt, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. No settler was allowed to transfer a servant, or, without an order from a magistrate, to turn him into Government. Disobedience of orders, or any misconduct, subjected the person to be punished at the accusation of the employer. It was no uncommon thing for masters to arrange with the magistrate the amount and description of chastisement. Letters have been despatched by the unsuspecting victim, requesting that the bearer have 50 lashes, &c. Friends of the officials received every convenience, and those who were obnoxious could not obtain punishment for their disorderly servants, or were needlessly and tyrannically deprived of their labours. An old Tasmanian settler told us the other day, that when living on Bruni island he had more than once ordered a couple of men who had offended him, to get ready the boat and row off to Hobart Town for five-and-twenty lashes. He has gone unarmed in the boat with them, they have received their allotted number, and the next day have rowed their master back to the farm.

Much, very much, depended upon the treatment individuals received in service. A high spirited man, perhaps of education and former respectable connexions, would not brook the coarse and brutal behaviour of an ignorant employer. This was the fruitful source of bushranging. Mr. West writes, "On the primary treatment of such men everything depends; and their first master determined whether they were to become active and intelligent agriculturists, or by pernicious indulgence and not less ill-judged severity, to pass rapidly, by a reckless and resentful temper, from the triangle to the scaffold." The amiable Mrs. Meredith adds her testimony:—"Bad masters and severe, dishonest magistrates have devoted more men to

live as bushrangers, and to die on the scaffold, than any inherent depravity of their victims." It was for this reason that the moral Governor, Colonel Arthur, was so solicitous about the Assignment System. In his reply to the address of the colonists upon his arrival in 1824, he says to them, "It is to your exertions, and, still more, to your example, that I mainly confide, under Divine Providence, for any effectual reformation in the moral character of a very large class in this community—a measure most essential to the security of your personal property and domestic peace—and, consequently, involving your best interests and happiness." An assigned servant had some advantages,—it was to the interest of the master to teach him, in order to make his labour profitable, and thus to become more useful. We can speak from experience of the attachment of the long assigned to the person, family, and concerns of his employer. The Van Diemen's Land settler felt no alarm at having thieves for his domestic servants, and his lady would not shrink at the presence of her help who had been transported for manslaughter. No doubt Mr. Prinsep much shocked his English friends when he wrote,—“In our small *menage* our cook has committed murder, our footman burglary, and the housemaid bigamy.”

Convictism, according to most old settlers, was attended with fewer evils when in the early days, and before the hated period of Probationism. Ten years before the introduction of Sodom infamy, Dr. Ross, of Hobart Town, had a vision of such a crushing aggregation of sin, as to fill his mind with horror, though he believed no Christian Government would ever sanction “such a Gehenna,” which would drive free settlers away from “the horror and the disgrace.” He lived not to realize his vision :—“Such an

aggregation of criminals, grinding, as it were, against each other, and mutually hurrying themselves still deeper and deeper into the gulf of moral debasement, would, without question, be truly awful." Writing, as we do, the early history of Tasmanian penal discipline, we forbear mentioning novel and disgusting enormities, belonging chiefly to another era, another and darker phase of convictism. The separation of the sexes may be a deserving infliction for offences, but it is attended with far greater evils than it seeks to punish.

In 1804 there were in the island 400 convicts to 80 free people; in 1825 there were 6,800 bond to 6,800 free; in 1838, 13,000 to 10,000; in 1835, 22,000 to 17,000. At the beginning of 1833, there were 11,062 male prisoners to 1,644 female. In that year arrived 2,643 males and 350 females; in 1827, 841 males and 222 females; in 1825, 687 males and 188 females. In October, 1832, out of 11,000 prisoners, there were 6,400 in private, and 1,645 in public services; 1,160 had tickets of leave, 543 were in chain gangs, 182 at Macquarie Harbour, and 240 at Port Arthur.

It was not until 1823 that the system of *Tickets of Leave* was established. By this a man was allowed to be his own master, and enter into business, within a certain district of the island. Tickets were first cancelled by the *Gazette* in April, 1827; and by an ordinance of September, 1829, were declared to be granted only on a condition of good conduct, irrespective of time of service. The *Conditional Pardon* enabled a man to go where he pleased about the colonies. Any one falsely passing himself off for a free man was, by the law of 1828, sentenced to Macquarie harbour. Publicans detaining assigned servants drinking in their houses were fined 20 dollars for each offence. The *Pass* system was

adopted in December, 1833; a man requiring a written pass from his master when off his premises. No female convict was allowed to be in the streets after dusk without her master or mistress. No such lady could, by the law of 1829, be permitted to marry until she had been in service one year, and given proofs of good behaviour.

In August, 1826, the Prisoners' Barracks of Hobart Town were declared to be for the reception of Government service convicts. Colonel Arthur on that occasion divided the prison population into six classes. The first class men were allowed to sleep out of the Barracks, and to have Saturdays to themselves; the second had only the Saturday; the third had half of Saturday; the fourth were doomed to work in irons; the fifth had separate cells as well as irons; the sixth were sent to Maria island; the seventh entered Hell's Gates of Macquarie Harbour.

While there were such incentives to good conduct, we are not unmindful of the provocations to bad feeling. The want of a sufficient number of free men to control the population was a serious evil. Convict constables may be supposed to exert themselves with diligence to obtain indulgences; but their deficiency of moral principle induced such recklessness of oath-taking as to peril the liberty and life of any man. Judge Montague having once expressed his opinion, that no jury ought to commit a man upon the unsupported testimony of a prisoner of the Crown, the Chief Justice Pedder said, "Situatēd as we are in this colony, if their evidence were to be wholly rejected from a court of justice, the best thing would be for every man to make his house his castle, and shoot the first suspicious character that came near him." As an illustration of the evil we give the following story:—

A man was hung for sheep stealing, on a charge supported only by two convict constables. One of these worthies was the sole survivor of a notorious band of bushrangers, his comrades being all executed, chiefly through his traitorous information. The other one had been heard to say, that he would hang twenty men to save his punishment in the chain-gang, or anything like it."

But then, again, such persons were useful in destroying the confederations of marauders. The admission of prisoners as evidence for the Crown broke up powerful gangs. These *Approvers* were held in utter abhorrence by the convict population, and they, in retaliation became spies upon their former associates. Many a bushranger mounted the scaffold and died with his secret; but when the hope of mercy was held out to him as a bonus for intelligence, the love of life prevailed over the robber's sense of honour, and the names of men and haunts were given.

But if the bushranger found some willing to peach upon his crimes, he was surrounded by many ready to conceal his offences, receive his plunder, and facilitate his escape. The last enemy, and the most implacable, was Dogherty, the hangman. This singular character, who is supposed to have performed the last sad offices on the scaffold for more criminals than any other man, was described as a merciful flagellator. It was his trade to give the lash and tie the last knot; but he did the one with gentleness and the other with decent solemnity. Mr. West thus describes him:—"There was no amateur gaiety in his manner, no harshness in his speech." He sought to drown the remembrance of his professional duties in the cup of intoxication; the day following an execution he always spent in a drunken stupor. Disgusted with his trade he contemplated

retirement from public life ; but the multiplicity of applications for his position restored his self-respect, and reconciled him to the degradations of his office.

While speaking in such dolorous terms of the state of Van Diemen's Land society, it is pleasing to record the improvement which appeared soon after the coming of Governor Arthur, and the zealous chaplain, Dr. Bedford. Through their gentle persuasion and stern reproof, many of the officers of Government relinquished the improprieties of concubinage, and married the mothers of their children. Such example was followed generally by the settlers in town and country, yet not without the reformers frequent endurance of much contumely and annoyance. The arrival of ministers of other denominations was productive of great good ; though at this period of our history their labours had scarcely begun. The leader of the press, some five-and-twenty years ago, observed of the clergyman, that "In Hobart Town he had to grapple at the very gates of hell if he would rescue a soul ;" that he had to "struggle with the enemy in close combat, face and face, and foot to foot." A competent authority in 1830 said, "One half of those who die in the colony in the present day perish, either directly or indirectly, through drunkenness." An old district chaplain told the author, that for several years, with one or two exceptions, all whom he buried met with their deaths through strong drink. It is grateful to acknowledge, however, that a change took place. A residence of eight years in beautiful Tasmania has convinced the writer that, despite the festering corruption of probation gangs, there were there men of as noble generosity, self-denying benevolence, high principle, and sterling piety as any in the world. He remembers hearing a distin-

guished clerical visitor declare in public, that for the exercise of charity, and for zeal on behalf of religion, the Hobart Town Christians exceeded any he had known in his extensive travels at home and elsewhere. We regret to learn that the shadow of the Australian gold discovery has obscured the virtues of Tasmania, as it has the moral beauty of the neighbouring states.

Poor Tasmania! how much, with all thy degradation, do we love thee! Who that has dwelt beneath the shade of thy noble mountains, wandered through thy fern and flowery vales, listened to the music of thy rippling streams, can refuse to own thee the loveliest of isles—a very *Periland*? And who, that has known the hospitality of thy warm-hearted sons, gazed on the sweetness of thy matchless daughters, passed sunny hours in thy halls of friendship, and breathed the soul of thy temples of piety, can do other than love thee? It is as if some pitying Spirit of the Golden City had cast a few flowers of the Celestial Eden upon the moral waste of Tasmania. Let us so cherish and cultivate the precious gifts, that this wilderness of humanity may become a very paradise of roses.

The foregoing description of the state of society in Van Diemen's Land, during the early period of its existence, will serve as an introduction to the "Lives of Notorious Bushrangers." The gratification of revengeful passions and acquisitive impulses, as well as the natural aspiration after freedom, though in the midst of danger and wretchedness, were the prompting motives of escape from restraint, and flight to the hills and woods. Taking them as a class, they were not more repulsive than others; indeed, they often exhibited a fearlessness, generosity, and courtesy as to justify the Tasmanian historian in saying that "High-

way robbers were not unfrequently the best conducted men." When we remember that they were expatriated for their violence and guilt, and were surrounded in the felon isle with the most debasing and brutalising associations, we are the more disposed to admire their forbearance when they roved as armed outlaws in the bush. While eschewing the mawkish sentimentality that would make a hero of a vulgar footpad, and adorn the everyday meanness or atrocities of his career with the charm of a romantic picture, we cannot be insensible to traits of manly intrepidity, courageous endurance of great physical suffering, self-restraint in the hour of triumph, and propriety of demeanour towards defenceless women. In these exhibitions of character the ruffianly Tasmanian Bushranger is seen sometimes to decided advantage beside the vaunted brigands of the Pyrenees and Appenines, round whose high peaked hats the pathetic novelist and enchanted poet have thrown so glorious a halo.

Before proceeding to the personal history of the men, we must give an illustration of their career from a local production, and then introduce the reader to the convict homes of Macquarie Harbour and Port Arthur, the training establishments of Tasmanian Bushrangers.



A very affecting theatrical piece appeared in a Hobart Town magazine some two-and-twenty years ago, a sketch of which may interest our readers. It is entitled "The Bushrangers, or Norwood Vale."

The first scene opens with a conversation between the lovely Marian and her father, Mr. Norwood. The latter is praising their security in their poverty. The daughter exclaims—

“Of security we cannot boast, when my servant Ellen every day tells me of outrages committed by the runaways. O that we were back in England.

Mr. Norwood.—Silly girl; back in England! From the Bushrangers you have little to fear; but from Frederick Seymour you have much—the gay, the thoughtless—.

Marian (solus).—O unhappy Marian! Is there more danger to be apprehended from Frederick Seymour than from a host of bushrangers? My father judges harshly.—But time may perhaps work a change. [Takes a letter from her bosom, and, sitting down on a chair, kisses it and reads.] Dear Marian,—You will be surprised to find me following you so near. I cannot help it; I am not my own master, and my attachment to you increases with absence. Do not forget the vows you made.”

The next scene brings us to a native and the servant Ellen.

Native.—Lady, bit baccy and bredly.

Ellen.—Come in, old Murrahwa, and let me know your wishes. You would make a charming suitor for a pretty girl, with your long, matted, red-ochred hair, all hung round your pole like a bundle of carrots. Fancy him kissing one!—Oh! but come in, blackey.”

In the third scene Frederick reveals himself to the maid, and in the fourth the lovers rush into each other's arms. Old Murrahwa is seen crying; and on the demand of the saucy Ellen, why he, the unfeeling, black, ugly mug was blubbering, answers,—

“Me cry, for me once love like mistress; me made prisoner: me separated long time; me meet like mistress. Oh, happy me, all happy; had wife; had piccaninnies; when white came, hunted kangaroos, hunted wife and murdered piccaninnies. Me no cry for blanket, me cry

for poor mistress, for poor gemmen, Bushranger murder them."

The fifth scene brings us to the camp fire of the three bushrangers, Bill Fellows, Harry Fawkes, and Charley Hoodwink. This is a sample of their talk.

"Bill Fellows.—Well, but what's to be done with old Norwood. You know the day after to-morrow's the time we fixed upon. That moll of the old rascal's a slashing wench, and is not to be sneezed at. What say you, Fawkes, which do you think the best, the moll or the moll's woman? I suppose your squeamishness would not allow you to look the girl in the face; you would be too squeamish to pay the old fool out; let me have a chance, I'll balance accounts with him."

The second act opens with the night camp of the bush worthies. In the second scene, while Marian and Frederick are arranging some Hymen plot, Hawkes fells the lover with the butt end of his musket, while his companion advances with a pistol to Marian.

"Billy Fellows.—Don't be frightened my little wench don't scream or I must shoot you; be quiet, and you shall not meet with harm. You are too pretty a wench to be maltreated by the Bushrangers; we are far too gallant to ill use pretty women. Come, hold up your head, my little chicken! and let's have a kiss of your pretty little lips. [Attempts to kiss her.]

Marian.—Monster! rather let me be shot than polluted with a kiss from such a horrid wretch.

Bill Fellows.—Why, there's a spirit. Well, my little dear, I like a spirit in a woman. Come, come along, my darling, we shall be better friends in a day or two; you have nothing to fear; come, come along. [Dragging her off.]

Marian.—Frederick! Frederick! come to my help. Oh, save me, save me, Frederick, from these monsters.

Harry Fawkes.—He's got too much gruel to help you, miss; his head is nigh ripping in two; he wants a doctor to help him die comfortably. There, he's nothing left worth taking. [Leaves Frederick, who lies for dead. Exeunt. Silence; soft music.]

Frederick. — [Shows symptoms of life, and gently revives.] My head, oh, my head; it turns, it is on a swivel. I cannot see; I am better; but where am I? Alone in the bush, alone. Where is Marian? What's this? [Sees blood on his hand, which he has held to his head.] Blood, blood; horrid truth, Marian gone. Oh, heaven, gracious heaven, preserve her. [Rises on his hands and knees.] Oh, Marian. [Creeps off.]”

After this fearfully exciting and dreadfully affecting scene, so effectively pourtrayed, we have the entrance of the father and servant. Poor Frederick staggers in before them, and announces the capture of the young lady by the Bushrangers.

The third act shows us the evening fire of the rascals. They determine to rob and murder Mr. Norwood. Fellows and Hoodwink depart on their errand, leaving Marian alone with Fawkes. The villain commences love making.

Harry Fawkes.—Miss (addressing Marian), Miss, Miss; those are two ugly fellows that are just gone cruising,—Miss, Miss, you are a very pretty girl. (Marian don't notice him; Fawkes getting up.) I say, Miss, Miss, Miss, (approaching her), you are a very pretty girl; Miss, I say, Miss, you are a very pretty girl. (Aside.)—What a fool I am; I don't know what to say to her. (Aloud): Miss! (advancing, and sitting down beside her, he puts his hand to her handkerchief and pulls it from her face).

Marian.—Monster! (starting upon her feet, and pushing him suddenly with such force that he tumbles over the log). Monster! dread my vengeance if you again approach me.

Harry Fawkes.—(Gets up.) This is an unpleasant kind of courtship, but I'll stand no nonsense; have her I will. (He is about laying hold of her, when she rushes to the side of the stage, and, laying hold of a pistol, fires it at him and misses him.)"

At this time a coo-ee is heard as he raises his musket to level her. He fires at the native, misses, flies. Frederick appears; and, after another clasp, she urges him to save her father. Thither all go, and arrive, of course, when wanted. Fawkes is throttled by Murrahwa, and then well waddied. Fellows is shot, and Hoodwink cries for mercy. Marian sinks, breathless, in her father's arms.

Mr. Norwood.—Oh, Marian, Marian, my daughter!

Marian.—Father, father!—(She cannot speak for joy).

Mr. Norwood.—Happy moment!

Frederick comes forward.

Mr. Norwood.—Marian, there is the preserver of both our lives. (She leaves her father, and the two embrace each other in the front of the stage. *Coup de theatre*: The father joins their hands.) Such perseverance deserves this recompense. Gratitude deserves more, but more I cannot give.

Marian.—Happiness to the inhabitants of Norwood Vale. The curtain drops."

And time it should; but the story is some illustration of the popular conception of Bushrangers in the land of their exploits.

MACQUARIE HARBOUR.

LIKE the Bastile of Paris, the Macquarie Harbour of Van Diemen's Land was associated with all that is revolting in crime and terrible in punishment. Hell's Gates, as its entrance was called, were first passed by Captain Kelly, in the service of Mr. Birch, a Hobart Town merchant, in 1816. The inlet received the name of the New South Wales Governor, and an island that of Sarah, from the name of the merchant's wife, the present Mrs. Edmund Hodgson. The reward of Mr. Birch's enterprise was one year's monopoly of the pine trade.

The harbour is on the western side of the island. The ever-rushing westerly breezes easily carry the mariner inwards, but oppose an obstinate resistance to his exit. The shores are rocky and gloomy, and the almost perpetual rains add no cheerfulness to the atmosphere. King's River is the northern tributary, and, at a distance of nearly thirty miles southward, the harbour receives the hurrying waters of the noble Gordon. The waters were dark, turbulent, and heavy, impregnated with noxious gases from the decomposing vegetation of this humid region; the fish would pass the Gates only to inhale the breath of death. The scenery is wild and repulsive, and the soil hopelessly barren. The cathedral-pinnacled sandstone ranges rise against the more sombre and rounded hills of slate, while the quartzose sea

cliffs glare painfully in the sun. The stern front of Mount Direction closes the harbour; the Frenchman's snowy cap, with the vast greenstone plateau of the lake country, bound it on the eastern side; and in the northern horizon are the two grim summits of Heemskirk and Zeehaarn. The hills are scantily covered with a coarse, wiry grass; the gullies are either choked with tangled brush, or as a fairy scene, adorned with the umbrageous and elegant Fern tree. The beautifully marked Pine, running one hundred feet high and twenty-five round, with its dark and graceful horizontal branches, is a striking botanical feature. The Gum, Stringy Bark, and Lightwood trees are of amazing size in a district so overloaded with moisture. The Zieria, or Stink-wood, enliven the bush with its white flowers; but it is rivalled in sunny blossoms by the rigid leaved Tea-tree. The scrub is almost impracticable on the steep banks of the mountain streams.

Separated from the settled parts of the colony by impervious forests, rapid rivers, dangerous marshes, and almost inaccessible acclivities, and reached only at sea by a tempest-tost voyage along an iron-bound coast, the locality seemed a fitting Tartarus for the worst of criminals. Those defiant and irreclaimable ones who fester society with their presence might there be safely confided to the guardianship of forbidding nature. Governor Sorell resolved to establish a penal settlement at Macquarie Harbour, and appointed Lieutenant Cuthbertson, of the 48th, commandant, in December, 1821 he was accidentally drowned two years after. He was succeeded by Lieutenant Wright, of the 3rd; the third officer was Captain Butler, of the 40th, in 1824; and fourth, Captain Briggs, of the 63rd, in 1830. Here it was determined to organise a system of terror. Unwatched by the vigilance of the tale-

telling Press, unrestrained by the voice of clergymen or messengers of mercy, well provided with appliances of coercion and punishment, without one hopeful avenue of escape, it was possible to concentrate horrors, and, if not reform the wretches sent there, inflict the greatest tortures. As an old journalist said, "It was thought that the voice of woe and cry of misery would not float in its humid atmosphere." Mr. West thus describes it: "Sacred to the genius of torture, nature concurred with the objects of its separation from the rest of the world, to exhibit some notion of a perfect misery. There, man lost the aspect and the heart of man."

Upon Sarah island, three miles from the mouth of the Gordon, a rock half a mile long by one quarter wide, the head-quarters were established. The prisoners' barracks consisted of a large two-story building; the gaol, with its dark, narrow, noisome cells, was an object of terror to the most hardened. The jingling of chains, the reverberations of blasphemous oaths, the sharp ringing of some sudden shriek of agony, mingle with the more disgusting sounds of savage mirth and brutal jesting. The convict dead were interred upon Halliday's Island, so called from the man first buried. A post, with rudely engraved initials, marked the rest of a troubled one. The free were provided with a last home on Settlement Island; Lieutenant Cuthbertson was buried there. About a quarter of a mile from this Settlement Island was a small rock, called Grummet or Pilot Island. Here cells were excavated for the reception of such incorrigibles as were unsubdued by the bastille of the harbour. Conveyed in a boat to within a few yards of the rock, the doomed man had to wade through the surf with his provisions, to clamber up into one of those comfortless recesses, and was left for days and weeks to add his yell to the

sea birds scream, and the dreary moan of the western wind. Whenever the waters were rough the cold spray washed over the rock and drenched the hapless captive.

The labours of the 300 or 400 men were chiefly confined to the construction of their prison homes, the building of vessels, and the cutting of timber for the Hobart Town market. The value of their work was estimated at about their maintenance. Piercing the thorny thicket, saturated by the wet foliage, they entered the forest, felled the trees, and carried the massive burden upon their shoulders along the tortuous and rocky path. Occasionally a tree buried some in its fall. A false step or weakness of any of the carrying party would expose the line to bruised bodies and fractured limbs. The grain of that beautiful timber, now adorning the drawing-room chambers of our Australian colonists, may be said to be marked with tears of blood from the poor convict woodcutter. Rafts of 100 logs each were taken to the Settlement, and thence conveyed in ships; the heavy timber that would not float was attached to boats. Their breakfast was of flour and water; no midday meal was prepared. At the close of their daily toil they were conveyed to their island gaol, and a more substantial repast afforded. But the double twisted and knotted cords applied to the excoriated back lashed forth the usual evening music. The brutality and injustice of convict overseers were the chief cause of such inflictions, and the exciting motive to escape from the cruelties of man to the heartlessness and horrors of surrounding natives.

That the punishment was rigorous enough, and life unendurable, the records of the Settlement furnish abundant proofs. Of eighty-five deaths only thirty were from natural causes. In three years two-thirds of the felon residents had received 6,280 lashes; but in the dreadful season of 1822

out of 182 men 169 were punished to the frightful amount of 7,000 lashes. During the ten years of occupancy 112 men had the hardihood to elope; of these 62 perished. At one period 350 were at the station. If anything could possibly add to the sufferings at Macquarie Harbour, beyond the venom of self-reproach, and the life of cruel servitude and tyranny, it was the wretched treatment of each other. Too degraded to sympathise with sorrow, too persecuted to temporise with feeling, they deadened their nature to every appeal of intellect or moral sentiment, and cursed alike their fellows, themselves, and their God. Priding themselves upon stoicism in receiving punishment, and indifferent to the continuance of their existence, they cared for nothing. When we remember that these slaves of ill-governed passions were thrust in herds of misery and vice, without one redeeming feature in their circumstances, one solitary expression of kindness, we wonder not at the phrase of *The Hell of Macquarie Harbour*. We are not astonished to hear of men, anxious for some change, however dreadful, tossing up for life. The gambling was to determine who was to be murdered, who was to be the murderer, and who were the witnesses. The blow would be struck, one sufferer would be released from the Hell, one would be hanged, and two or three would exchange for a few weeks the pine shore of one prison for the stone floor of the Hobart Town Gaol.

The place was wholly destitute of moral agencies. As an illustration, we have the statement of Messrs. Backhouse and Walker, that four women were sent down to the head of the Harbour, to help a man collect shells for lime burning, and it never once entered the head of the authorities to provide even a separate hut for their accommodation. When the first appointed minister of religion arrived at the settlement,

he saw the hopelessness of his task. The chief officers were living in open and shameless concubinage with the convict women. They refused to assume even the shadow of propriety in their conduct, and the heart-sick man of God was compelled to abandon the Pandemonium. It might be thought that such disgraceful libertinism, such reckless ferocity, such unmitigatable severity, would raise an open insurrection, and that in so bloody a struggle the slaves, or the slave-drivers, would be exterminated. But the men were too subjected, not only by strong coercive measures, but by a system of espionage among themselves. As one of the old Harbour residents wrote,—“ Treachery was the stepping-stone to preferment. Perjury divided comrades,—sending one to liberty, the other to the scaffold.”

And yet these same monsters of crime were not utterly unapproachable by kindness. Dr. Chalmers beautifully says, “ Fallen as a brother may be from the moralities which at one time adorned him, the manifested good-will of his fellow men still carries a charm and an influence along with it, and there lies in this an operation, which, as no poverty can vitiate, so no depravity can extinguish.” A Tasmanian writer, Mr. Maitland Innes, wrote thus of these poor creatures, some fifteen years ago : “ Their apparent hardness of heart is not always the native hardness of the rock, but more often the frozen hardness of the ice, which the sun of human sympathy may melt again.”

“ The tainted branches of the tree,
If lopped with care, a strength may give,
By which the rest shall bloom and live,
All greenly fresh and wildly free ;
But if the *lightning* in its wrath
The waving boughs with fury scathe,
The massy trunk the ruin feels,
And never more a leaf reveals.”

This was practically illustrated with the prisoners at Macquarie Harbour. Once, no gentle voice was raised on their behalf, or breathed peace to the despairing soul. A messenger of mercy arrived in 1829. The Rev. W. Scholefield, afterwards the first missionary among the Port Phillip Aborigines, was the first minister who had quarters on the Western Harbour. For awhile, he was so overwhelmed with horror at what he saw and heard, that he would doubtless have returned, like the other, had he not found in one of the officers, the Assistant-Commissary Lempriere, a friend and a Christian. A school was opened, and many were taught to read. Divine service was held, and the name of God was respected. Private entreaty was employed, and hardened men shed tears. The oppressed had a shield and refuge, and the distressed a sympathising brother and pastor. The immediate influence was most gratifying; it was the fall of dew upon the seared and drooping plant. The convictions, the lashes, the cell entombment, fell off one half. Some, who had dared the very Almighty in their impiety, and had cherished a quenchless hate for man, were beheld weeping in prayer, softened and subdued. The Quaker missionaries visited the settlement early in 1832, when the Rev. John Manton was the catechist. They added their testimony to the fruits of gentle suasion. Some of the Christianised prisoners told them that, since the change in their own natures, the very place had changed in their eyes, and ceased to wear the gloom by which it was formerly overcast. One poor man, who was indulged in a little liberty for good conduct, took the two Friends to a cave which he had hollowed out,—in which, without molestation, he might read the Scriptures and pray to his God. The writer of this narrative was once acquainted with a suc-

cessful and consistent teacher of religion, who first received his conceptions of pious duty in the prison-house of Macquarie Harbour.

But the principal association with this western settlement is the wonderful escapes, attempted or achieved. In 1822, Pierce and his fellow cannibals eloped. In the same year, Green and Sanders bolted, and were never heard of again; so with six others; then with eight more. In 1824, three seized the soldiers' boat and arms, but were overcome. In 1826, James Lacy and others killed Rex, a constable, took to the bush, were recovered and executed. Similar stories can be told of many others; as before stated, 62 of 112 runaways were known to have perished. We shall have occasion to refer to several felon worthies, who removed from Macquarie Harbour. But the most interesting escape was that on the way from Hobart Town to the Harbour, in the vessel "Cyprus," August 9, 1829. The particulars are gathered from the "Colonial Times," and are referred to by Messrs. West and Melville.

The "Cyprus," with thirty-one prisoners, under the charge of Lieutenant Carew, and ten soldiers, called at Recherché Bay, D'Entrecasteaux Channel, on her way to Macquarie Harbour. Among the chained captives, was the notorious Swallow, once a seaman who received sentence of transportation for some offence. On the way out, he contrived to save the ship in a storm, at the hazard of his life. This act procured some indulgence, and on the arrival of the vessel at Hobart Town, Swallow was not to be found. He had been secreted by the sailors, and the ship sailed away with him. On the return voyage, he was discovered, landed at Rio, and given up to the authorities. These took such care of him, that he was soon among his old acquaintances of Wapping, London. Again discovered, he was

more securely forwarded to Van Diemen's Land, and, at the time of our story, was *en route* for Hell's Gates. While the "Cyprus" lay anchored in the channel, Lieutenant Carew, and the surgeon, with one soldier and a convict, went out in a boat fishing. A few men at a time were allowed to come upon deck for air and exercise. Those brought up during the absence of the officer, were Walker, Pennel, McKan, Jones, Ferguson, and a carpenter who was not doubly ironed like the rest. Ferguson called them together and said, "Now is your time; six opportunities of escape you suffered to pass unnoticed. If you take no advantage of this occasion, I will tell of your plots before." They all agreed. Two sentinels were idly looking about them; these were immediately knocked down, and one had his head cut in four places. A rush to the hatchway secured the military from coming up, while the other prisoners were brought upon deck. The captain and soldiers fired without effect. Boiling water was poured down upon them, and a kettle of lighted pitch was promised if they did not surrender. The arms were passed up, after the priming had been wetted; the men came up one by one, and the liberty of the convicts was secured.

The firing brought the lieutenant back to the "Cyprus." A gun presented at his head, missed fire from the damped powder. He promised the insurgents that, if they would give up the ship, no notice should be taken of their misconduct. But his entreaties were useless. The soldiers were put in a boat, with thirteen prisoners who would not join the mutineers,—and, accompanied by an armed boat, were landed at different points of the coast. Mrs. Carew and her children were also put ashore, but were not allowed to carry baggage. The land party received 60 lbs of biscuit, 20 lbs. of flour, 20 lbs. of sugar, 4 lbs. of tea,

and 6 gallons of rum. The boats were all secured, in case the ship should be wind-bound, and unable to get to sea. The ousted party suffered considerably from want of food. Two men set off overland for Hobart Town, as no boat remained; they were driven back by hostile natives. Five attempted to head the Huon river; after great suffering, they were succoured by a relief party. One Morgan, and Popjoy a convict, resolved to make a boat without tools. Collecting some young wattle suckers, they framed a wicker-work craft, twelve feet in length. This was covered with hammock-cloth,—and, to keep out the water, boiled soap and resin were poured over all. Thirteen days had passed,—the last two without food. The primitive-looking boat was launched, and at a distance of twenty miles, the “Oxelia” was hailed, which brought all safely to Hobart Town. Lieutenant Carew was tried for negligence, but acquitted by the court martial.

In the meantime, the seventeen mutineers had pressed Brown, one of the sailors, to go with them; they had nominated Walker as captain, Jones as mate, and Ferguson, dressed up in Carew’s best uniform, as lieutenant. In a good ship, with six months provisions on board for 400 men, the captors gave three hearty cheers, at five o’clock on the Sunday morning, spread their sails, and were soon far away on the southern ocean. Steering first for the Friendly Isles, they came to Japan, where seven deserted; the rest went on to China. There, Swallow, and three others, appeared before the English merchants as shipwrecked mariners of the “Edward,” having seized a boat with that name on its stern. Swallow personated Captain Waldron, and exhibited a sextant having that name engraved upon it. Their sufferings were pitied, and a free passage home to England obtained for them. Four others

presented themselves, a few days after, with a similar tale,—they belonged to the ship “Edward.” Unfortunately, they had forgotten the name of the captain, and said Wilson for Waldron. This was an unfortunate mistake, and excited suspicion. Ultimately, the whole were brought before the Thames Street Police Office, London. The magistrate was perplexed, and knew not what to do, as there was no criminating evidence. The clerk of the court addressed the Bench, and brought to their recollection a curious tale lately told to their Worships, and with the circumstances of which the prisoners might be associated. A man named Popjoy had been brought up for some trifling offence in the London streets, and had greatly interested the magistrates with an account of the capture of the “Cyprus,” and of the praiseworthy part which he took in the affair, and for which he had obtained his pardon and a free passage home. It so happened, also, that Mr. Capon, the Hobart Town Gaoler, was in London at the time,—and, when confronted with the men, recognised several as old Van Diemen’s Land acquaintances. Watts and Davis suffered in London, and several were sent to Hobart Town for trial; one only was executed there. Swallow died at the penal settlement of Port Arthur.

In 1833, it was arranged that Macquarie Harbour should be abandoned, from the difficulty of maintaining connection with the place. But the last story of this wonderful locality, the record of its abandonment, is one also of another ship seizure and escape. The “Frederick,” Captain Taw, was sent to fetch away the last of the stores and men. Everything was ready for departure; there were Mr. Hoy, mate, ten prisoners, and a corporal’s guard. The convicts had been allowed to go ashore to wash their clothes before leaving; they returned on board with their

plans formed. Two soldiers were absent fishing, and two were sentinels on deck. The rest of the narrative we give in the language of one of the men, while lying under sentence of death in Hobart Town.

“About half-past three, P.M., we returned on board the brig, and after securing the whale-boat alongside, we all went into the forecastle, and there remained until we had our supper; during this time two of the soldiers (a private and a corporal) and a prisoner took the whale-boat and went fishing; there only remained on board the captain, Mr. Hoy, and his servant, who were in the cabin, and the mate and two soldiers, who were upon deck. I had not been down in the forecastle many minutes before I was asked to sing a song, I did so, and one of the soldiers came below to listen to it; before I had finished, James Lesly, William Cheshire, Benjamin Russen, John Fair, and John Barker, succeeded in getting on deck without the soldiers taking any particular notice of them; William Cheshire then went down the aft deck and passed the muskets up to his companions, who were ready to receive them, securing also at the same time the mate and the soldier; one of the prisoners who was on deck came down the forecastle and touched the toe of William Shiers, who instantly presented his fist at the soldier, who was down with us, and Charles Lyons, assisted by John Riley, caught hold of him and made him fast; William Shiers then rushed upon deck, and Charles Lyons, leaving the soldier in charge of Riley, followed after him, when the forecastle hatch was immediately shut down; I went to the hatchway and endeavoured to force it up, when it was suddenly opened, and down came the other soldier with the mate and prisoners, upon which I got upon deck, Riley and Jones following me; Fair ordered me to stand upon the forecastle hatch; I had

not remained there more than a minute, when I observed William Shiers make a rush from the cabin to the deck, Lesly and Russen standing by the companion ladder, each being armed with a musket, to prevent those in the cabin from coming upon deck, for the captain and Mr. Hoy defended themselves with astonishing courage. Captain Taw endeavoured to force his way upon deck, but was repulsed by the two men, Lesly and Russen, after which all was silent for a short time. William Cheshire went to the sky-light and lifted it off, exclaiming "There they are;" at those words four muskets were presented down the sky-light, and I heard the report of two of them; the persons who presented the muskets down in the cabin, were John Barker, John Fair, James Lesly, and Benjamin Russen; the moment the muskets were fired, William Shiers rushed to the sky-light, exclaiming "What are you about, are you going to commit murder?" they said "No;" he replied, "It can be done without." He then called to the captain and Mr. Hoy, and asked them if they would deliver themselves up; Mr. Hoy replied "Yes, we will if you are not disposed to injure us." Shiers replied, "My life shall be the forfeit if we do, we only want our liberty." They then came upon deck, and Mr. Hoy directing his discourse to John Barker, said, "Who is to be captain of the brig now you have her in your possession?" "I am," replied John Barker, "and with the assistance of the men, I can navigate round the world." Mr. Hoy then said, "deluded men, I will now declare before my God, upon the Bible, that upon condition of your giving up the brig, I will not mention it when I reach head-quarters, but will give all good characters." Barker then made answer, "We have the brig in our possession and we shall keep her, so it is needless for you to mention further about it, for it is liberty

we require." Shiers and Barker then asked the captain and Mr. Hoy if there was anything in their boxes which they required?—they answered "Yes;" they then went into the cabin, where they were allowed to take what they thought proper. Mr. Hoy also asked for his brace of pocket pistols, but those were refused him. There were in the cabin two bottles of wine, which I think was all the wine on board; those were given to Mr. Hoy, also his large pea-coat to keep him warm on shore, as he had been indisposed; there was also about half-a-gallon of rum in the cabin, and one bottle of that was given to Captain Taw, they had then all they asked for, and returned on deck, when William Cheshire bound Captain Taw's hands with a fathom of spun-yarn.

Meantime, a musket was fired over the stern of the brig as a signal for those in the whale-boat to come alongside, and we soon perceived them pulling towards us. During this time Captain Taw, Mr. Hoy, his servant, the mate, and two soldiers, were put into the jolly-boat alongside the brig, and in a few minutes the whale boat came alongside, and then the two soldiers and the prisoners who were in her, were ordered out of her into the jolly-boat, where the captain, Mr. Hoy, and the others, already were, they being nine in number. The whale-boat was then manned by seven of the mutineers, two pulling and one steering her, the other four armed with muskets formed a guard, in case of Mr. Taw and the others attempting to rescue themselves, whilst two soldiers rowed the jolly-boat to the shore, and on reaching it, Captain Taw and the rest were ordered to land, and push the jolly-boat as far as they could towards the whale-boat, when we took her in tow and brought her alongside the brig; the boats were then secured astern, and it being dark, a strict watch was kept for fear the captain should attempt to rescue the vessel from us. At break of

day every man was upon deck, and we consulted among ourselves concerning the parting of the provisions, between those that were on shore, and those on board, when Shiers said, "Do not let our affair be like that of the *Cypress*, to leave them to starve; my proposal is to share the provisions with them as nearly as possible, for there are nine of them and ten of us, and let us trust to Providence, and it will also be the means of preventing them from saying, when they reach head-quarters, that we have used them cruelly, or in a dishonourable manner." They consented to his proposal, and the provisions were brought upon deck. The pieces of meat were divided as nearly as possible, also a good portion of tea, sugar, flour and biscuit, and a live goat; they were all put into the whale-boat, and Shiers took with him another pair of shoes, and bandages, and plaister, for Mr. Hoy, thinking they might be useful to him, and rowed to the shore, and called to Mr. Hoy to bring two men with him to carry the provisions, three men standing in the whale-boat armed with muskets, to prevent those on shore from rushing upon the boat. After they had received the provisions, Mr. Hoy then expressed himself:—"Men, I did not for one moment expect such kind treatment from you, regarding the provisions you have now brought on shore for us out of so little which there was on board. When I consider also your present undertaking, without a competent navigator, and in a leaky vessel, your situation seems most perilous, therefore I hope God will be kind to you, and protect you from the manifold dangers which you may have to encounter on the wide ocean." The soldiers also cheered them on their departure, wishing they might be prosperous, on account of their kindness and humanity, in parting the provisions with them; the convicts then thanked Mr. Hoy for his prayer on their behalf, and the

soldiers for their kind wishes, and bid adieu to them all and returned on board the brig."

The narrative proceeds to state that John Barker was chosen as captain, John Fair as first mate, and Lyons as second. The weather was so boisterous that two men were required at the helm, and four beside the captain were laid by from the violence of sea-sickness. For nearly a fortnight the captain could not come on deck to take the sun, but he assured the crew that he could take them safely to South America by merely keeping a dead reckoning. They had left Macquarie Harbour on January 11th, 1834, and then made the Chilian coast in six weeks. The leaky brig was abandoned for the launch, and they occasionally landed to procure shell-fish for food. One morning they surprised a seal napping; the skin was nailed over a rent in the boat, and the flippers, heart, and liver were cooked for breakfast. They shared their meals with a large cat they had brought from the ship. Day after day did they search along shore for a port and civilization. A joyous change came at last.

"We suddenly heard the bellowing of a bullock on shore; all of us in the boat were instantly as silent as the grave; not an individual could be heard to breathe, as we listened intently that we might again hear the welcome sound, fearful that our ears had deceived us. We, however, shortly after heard it again, intermingled with the sound of the human voice; this was the most cheering sound any of us had heard for many, many days, and caused us much satisfaction."

They landed among some Indians, and proceeded thence nine miles to Valdivia. Brought before a judge they gave a full account of their escape, and the names they bore in Van Diemen's Land. Being asked why they came to Chili,

they declared, "Because we knew you were patriots, and had long ago declared your independence." They were kindly treated, but forwarded to the prison. Barker said to the Governor of the town, "If you should meditate delivering us up to the British Government, I pray that you would rather do what would be a comparative act of charity, and give orders that we should be all shot dead in the Palace square." The Governor shed tears at the account of their sufferings, and said, "My poor men, do not think I would take that advantage of you; do not make an attempt to escape, and I will be your friend." They lived at Valdivia two months, subsisting by honest industry, when the English frigate "Blonde," Captain Mason, entered the port. Their fears were excited, but no attempt was made upon their liberty. Barker now married into a respectable family, and the Governor and his lady danced at the wedding. Four others entered the happy state of matrimony.

Their good friend the Governor was succeeded by one of a more morose nature. Fair and two others now left the place. The new Governor commenced his tyranny. Barker offered to make a fine boat for him. The trap succeeded. The boat was built, rigged, and provisioned, and Barker, Lesly, and Russen disappeared in her. The displeasure of the disappointed Governor fell upon the remaining four prisoners, who were delivered up, at the close of 1836, to the "Blonde" frigate, and conveyed to London. They were afterwards forwarded for trial to Van Diemen's Land. The narrative thus closes:—

"We were found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged; but which we have every reason to believe will be commuted to transportation for life. And our case has gone home for the opinion of the English Judges.

Gaol, Hobart, 1st November, 1837."

The plea put in by these unfortunate men was, that they were not guilty of piratically seizing the brig "Frederick," seeing that that brig had been built at Macquarie Harbour, and had not been legally entered. The English Judges admitted the plea, and the poor fellows were merely found guilty of theft, and so saved from the gallows.

One who visited Macquarie Harbour after an interval of twenty years, went in pilgrimage over the scenes, formerly so fearfully active with life. He saw the old roofless Barracks, and walked over the prisoners' tombs, and the deserted garden of the commandant. The stone walls of the gaol gave forth a damp and noxious smell. The cells' floors were strewn with bones and rubbish, and upon their pine doors were several well executed drawings. The very planks were studded with initials and devices, which told of sorrows past. Thank God! the miseries of Macquarie Harbour are over and gone. They belong to an age of comparative barbarism in the treatment of criminals. A better day has dawned, in which the bodily comfort of the prisoner is regarded, and the wants of his moral nature are supplied.

MARIA ISLAND.

Maria Island, so called after the fair daughter of the Dutch Van Diemen, in 1642, is situated off the east coast, between Tasman's Peninsula and Schouten Island. The sea nearly cuts it in two, there being only a narrow sandy isthmus. The northern end is bold and romantic. Upon a mountain, whose base is washed by the waves, two remarkable rocks project one above the other, receiving the

appellation of Bishop and Clerk. The penal settlement of Darlington was near this picturesque feature. A sparkling stream dashed through the village, and added to the cheerfulness of this charming locality. The soil was so productive, that a lessee of the island once raised a turnip of such gigantic proportions, that a ewe and its lamb were placed inside, and it was sent to London as a vegetable wonder. This was the seclusion selected for prisoners in January, 1825. Peter Murdoch, Esq., was the first commandant. He was succeeded six months after by Major T. D. Lord. Men of a better class in mind and character to those of Macquarie Harbour were forwarded thither. They were employed in the manufacture of a coarse kind of woollen cloth, which was made up into garments by the suffering ladies of the House of Correction in Hobart Town. About £2000 worth was thus produced in 1829, and half that value of rough boots and shoes; it was nearly a self-supporting establishment.

In about 1830 Craven and three others bolted from Maria Island. A settler, in capturing the party, shot Craven in the thigh. This wound placed him in the hospital while his mates were hung. Strange to say, though with the consciousness that the first use of his leg would be to carry him to trial and to the scaffold, the fellow got uncommonly fat in confinement.

PORT ARTHUR.

Connected with the south-eastern corner of Tasmania is the rugged and barren Forrestier's Peninsula, in a bay of which a Dutch carpenter of Tasman's ship first landed and

planted a European flag, December 3, 1642. A low narrow rock is the division between this promontory of land and another peninsula, called after the discoverer Tasman; the isthmus is known as Eagle Hawk Neck. The first peninsula contains 15,000 acres and the latter 45,000. Such is the density of the scrub that many have perished in its entanglement. Many years ago Captain Booth was lost in one of these thickets for five days. Numbers went out after him with guns and bugles. His faithful dogs barked on the approach of a party, and relief was brought to the despairing and exhausted officer; his toes mortified, and he never recovered his former vigorous health. Tasman's Peninsula has much interesting and striking scenery, with remarkable natural phenomena, as the Blowhole, Needle, &c. The basaltic columns of Cape Pillar have attracted the notice of all navigators. To the southward is a deep bay formerly known as Stewart's Harbour, and afterwards Port Arthur, after the Governor.

Colonel Arthur sought to establish another penal settlement, combining the advantages of perfect safety and contiguity to head quarters. Many evils had arisen from the distance and difficult approach of Macquarie Harbour; supplies were not easily forwarded, and the officers were not sufficiently controlled. He also required a place as an intermediate penitentiary, where those who had been in gangs of punishment could be drafted for a time, previous to their transmission to Hobart Town for assignment. Mr. Welsh, was, therefore, sent round to survey the port, accompanied by Mr. Roberts of Bruni, who was to observe the character of timber, &c. The report was so favourable, that sixteen men were despatched thither under Mr. Russell, assistant surgeon of the 63rd, in September, 1830. The successive commandants were Captain Mahon, Major Briggs,

Captain Gibbons, and Captain Booth; the last, who was a good disciplinarian, was appointed on St. Patrick's Day, 1833. The settlement was admirably situated, and the disposition of dwellings upon the rising ground had a pleasing effect, especially after the erection of the noble stone church and its towering spire. Upon the introduction of the Probation System in 1841, several extensive establishments were formed in different parts of Tasman's Peninsula.

Point Puer, or Boy Point, was two miles from the chief station of Port Arthur, and between Opossum Bay and Safety Cove. In 1830 the juvenile male prisoners, the neglected orphans of society, were there placed under rigid and corrective discipline. They were taught various handicrafts, and instructed in secular and religious knowledge. The Rev. John Manton, now of Horton College, Tasmania, was the chaplain, and Lieutenant Montgomery the superintendent, in 1831. A military detachment guarded the neck of this slip of land. Opposite to Point Puer was the little burial island, L'Isle des Morts. In the year of the colonization of Port Phillip, 1835, there was at Port Arthur 911 men and 270 boys; their labour for the year was valued at £16,000. The employment of the men consisted of agriculture, ship-building, &c. The worst were put into the carrying party, who had to bring down logs from the forests. As many as sixty or seventy might be seen clinging to a massive tree, and presenting the appearance of some huge centipede, as they swayed to and fro beneath the weight. The inequality of pressure on their shoulders was a serious trial, often ranging from 40 to 200 lbs. The members of the Chain gang had the word "Felon" stamped in several places upon their yellow dresses. They slept in separate cells, and endured the heaviest and most degraded labour.

The Relief gang were the better conducted, who were allowed to use the hoe and spade. This large prison was well guarded. Escape by sea was well nigh hopeless. Eagle Hawk Neck was only 300 yards broad ; in addition to the patrol of soldiery, there were a dozen enormous mastiffs chained to lamp posts at regular intervals, and some out upon rafts in the shallow water. To pass these was impossible, but some would endeavour to swim through the surf upon a dark tempestuous night, and gain the shore of Forrestier's Peninsula, while others constructed rafts or boats. One ingenious fellow ventured out to sea in a washing bowl ; unable to preserve his equilibrium, he passed head foremost over its side into the sea, but managed to scramble back to land and slavery. Another party made a long basket of plaited wattle boughs and covered it with old shirts. Bark coracles were often tried ; the frail vessel would be found ashore, and the corpse of the hapless runaway beside it. Two men stole a packing-case and conveyed it to the sea side. They caulked it above and below and laid spars across, but for the want of a longitudinal preventer, the ark upset and both were drowned. Among the few successful bolters were two men and a boy, who contrived to get across to the mainland in a bark boat. Landing upon an unsettled part of the coast, wholly unprovided with food, they suffered the cruel torture of hunger. The men had recourse to murder and cannibalism ; the boy was killed and eaten. Not long after they were captured by constables. They told their tale, and when their dreadful account was doubted, they exhibited a portion of the roasted body which they had retained for another meal. On the scaffold one of them remarked, " If men were only once to taste human food, they would want none other as long as they lived."

Governor Arthur's regulations for the government of Port Arthur, dated January 25, 1833, are illustrations of this system. Four classes of persons are to be received:—convicts under Colonial sentence, those with extra bad characters from home, those behaving ill on the voyage, and the body of gentlemen convicts. The Governor thus speaks of the last class:—"The educated convicts, whom it is desired by His Majesty's Government especially to sequester, will have no victims upon whom their superior cunning will enable them to prey, and that intelligence which they have so miserably abused and misdirected, will not avail them." Colonel Arthur properly calls the place "a natural penitentiary." He states the design of the establishment to be "the severe punishment of the vicious part of the community, as the means of deterring others from the commission of crime, as well as the reformation of the criminals themselves."

THE FEMALE BOLTERS.

Though without historical records of a petticoated bushranger, cases of runaways are not unknown. Dislike of the restraint of service, fear of impending punishment, and a love of daring and debauchery, have led women to flee to the bush, though usually in company with those of the other sex. Bushrangers have not been indifferent to such society, and persons of more respectable social position have shown the same taste. Many years ago a sailor left his vessel and took refuge among the mountains, accompanied by a young girl, who preferred him to more orthodox

service. Instead of allying himself with bushrangers, he is said to have afforded the Government assistance during several years of his hermit life.

The home life of women exposed them less to the curses of convictism; in the opinion of most men, "when the judge passes sentence of transportation, he opens an ulcer in the heart that neither time nor penitence itself can wholly heal." Before Sorell's time female prisoners were left to do as they pleased; then an order came out for "all women at large to give an account of the grounds on which they pretended to pardon." After this the law took more cognizance of them. Incurrigibles are to be found among the females as among the men. We hear of an untameable one, who seldom remained beyond a few days, sometimes not an hour, with a mistress, to whom she was assigned. All sorts of inflictions were tried. She was repeatedly placed in solitary cells, for a week or ten days at a time; bread and water diet was tried; she was exposed in the stocks; and more than once suffered the degradation of head shaving. She received twenty-two convictions.

Nearly thirty years ago a free man married a very fine-looking female convict. The mate of an Indian vessel secured her favour and obtained her person. She bolted from the Colony. Neglected and even cruelly treated by her seducer, she lived a life of vice and misery in Calcutta, until she was discovered to be a runaway. Escaping from gaol, she went up into the country with her rescuer. Again observed, she was brought to town, and confined in a filthy and pestiferous cell, until an occasion offered to send her to Hobart Town.

EARLY ESCAPES.

One of the earliest attempts at escape from the island of which we have any record, is that of the seizure of the "Young Lachlan," in 1819. Sixteen prisoners rushed the vessel as she lay in the River Derwent. The sails were unfurled, and the town was past. Not wishing to carry off the seamen, they were landed at Bruni Island. Making to the northward, they rounded New Holland, landed at Java, and burnt the ship. Repairing to the Dutch settlement at Java, they told a tale of shipwreck. Some incongruities appearing in their story, and their looks not savouring of the Peri style, they were committed to prison. Eleven found a grave in that frightful climate. The remaining five were forwarded to Hobart Town, and re-consigned to the chain-gang. It was not until 1827 that an escape from a penal settlement was made a capital offence.

A London pugilist had some strange adventures in Colonel Sorell's time. Transported to Van Diemen's Land, he received many overtures to head a party of bushrangers. His gigantic size and enormous strength marked him out as a leader of some daring enterprise; but being more peaceably disposed than some of lesser stature, and not finding the company in the fair island quite to his liking, he relinquished the proffered honour. His predilections were more for the *fancy* of London, than roughing the bush of Van Diemen's Land, with the prospect of a halter at the termination of his ramble. A snug opportunity occurred for visiting Old England; he snatched at the prize. His well-known features were not long concealed from the runners of Bow-street, and again was the long voyage undertaken to the island of the south. The love of liberty

prompted another trial. He once more appeared among the old scenes of London life. However clever in escaping, he was not sufficiently shrewd or prudent in avoiding those artful dodgers of the police office. Discovered in his retreat, he was re-committed to the deep on board a felon ship in 1820. The authorities of Hobart Town looked better after him than before, or he became reconciled to the gum trees, as history gives no account of a third escape or third capture.

CATTLE STEALERS.

The wild and rugged character of the island caused frequent dispersion of cattle, and afforded facilities for clandestinely conveying them to distant markets. At certain times it was the usage of a settler to proclaim a branding season. Accompanied by several stockmen, the surrounding country was scoured, and all the young cattle driven into a yard. The neighbours visited the mob, and claimed, if they could, any supposed to be of their own breeding; the rest received the settler's brand, and became his undisputed property.

A funny story is told of an out squatter in the early days, once an unwilling servant of Government, and subsequently one of the richest carriage nabobs of the Colony. Observing one day a stockkeeper riding by with a mob of fine young beasts, he hailed him, and asked him to drop in and take a bit and a sup. Nothing loth, he dismounted and entered the hut. The liquor was good, the company was agreeable, and the sun was going down. The host

urged the absurdity of going off at that time, pressed the man to stop the night, and offered the stockyard for his cattle. The offer was accepted. The evening was passed in a most jovial manner, and loud and long was the merriment. Slipping out to the kitchen for a minute, the hut-keeper thus addressed his loving spouse: "Now, Molly, the irons, old gal." No further hint was requisite. The branding-irons of the honest settler were soon heating in the fire. While the two men were quaffing the rum in pannicans, and singing a rather irregular and not very harmonious chorus, the careful wife was applying the brand in the stockyard.

The morning came. The man must go, and this time the host does not press so warmly. "Well," said the traveller, "now I'll thank you to take down the bars, and let my cattle out, for master will be looking out for 'em." "*Your* cattle," exclaimed the astonished and indignant host. "Yes, mine, that I put in the yard last night," was the reply. "I don't know what you mean," said the other; "that rum must have been plaguy strong last night to make you dream of a herd." The man now petulently cried out, "Come, old —, don't be a fool, and stand there funning me, there's the cattle that you told me to put in your place; now, drop the rails, and let us be off." The settler shook his head, and assuring his friend that he was woolgathering, calls his better half for her evidence. She knew the young fellow had called at the hut, and had eaten no small amount of damper, and quite finished the bottle of spirits; but she never heard of any cattle in their parts, except her old man's, and they were in the yard. "Why," said the bewildered man, "they're the very ones I mean." "O!" sung out the other, "that's easily settled; look at the brand, and see if its yours." The poor fellow began to sus-

pect that he had fallen into the hands of the Philistines. He approached the yard, and looked at the cattle; there was the brand, fresh, it was true, but still there was the brand. He was sold. Muttering curses loud and deep, he rode sulkily away, while the worthy pair retired to chuckle over their cunning and their gain.

Another story is told of the same individual, evidencing the like character of wit with an equal amount of honesty. A long continued course of success in the art of mobbing, branding, and slaughtering had made him less cautious about his operations, and less particular about the subjects for the trial of his skill. The consequence was, that some skins which had received another mark, and which ought to have been destroyed to avoid misconceptions of his motives, were unluckily found upon his premises by the rightful owner. The case was so clear that the offender was fully committed for trial. This was the period when all such investigations were carried before the Supreme Court at Sydney. The skins were consigned to a cask, and carried with the prisoner on board a vessel sailing from Launceston. On the voyage the respected accused seemed far from uneasy at his position. He was not a poor man, and was, therefore, allowed every indulgence by those who had drunk of the rare stock of liquors he had ordered on deck.

The day arrived. The case was gone into. Nothing could be clearer thought the judge and jury. According to the form, the prisoner was carelessly asked if he had anything to say, &c., "Yes," said he, "there's been plenty of swearing about me, but no proof." "Proof," cried the prosecutor, "produce the skins." "Just so," replied the innocent victim, "if the marked skins are produced, well, then, I suppose I'm guilty." The cask was brought, and

the head knocked off, when, lo and behold, it was full of kangaroo skins! The prosecutor stared, the judge was bewildered, and the accused was indignant at this treatment of him—an honest man. Somehow, on the voyage, gold fell into the sailors' hands, the bullocks' hides got sunk to the bottom of Bass's Strait, and the harmless kangaroo skins were safely headed in the cask. The return voyage was a merry one. Doubtless the gentleman was afterwards more observant of the brands of his neighbours, as no other trip to Sydney was required.

The cattle stealers roamed about sometimes in large bands. Even so late as May, 1833, a horde that had committed wholesale depredations in the North East District, were attacked by a strong party of mounted police. The result of the engagement was more food for the scaffold in the shape of nine victims. A fearful story is told by Jorgenson of a couple of such villains roasting a man alive. They had secured a fine beast, and were in the act of taking away the hide, when an old man unexpectedly came upon them, Neither astonished nor conscience struck at the spectacle, but desirous of sharing the spoil, the old fellow sang out, "Halloa, I'm in for a feed there." The robbers were not well pleased at the interruption, and doubted the new-comer's power or willingness to keep his tongue still upon a future occasion. However, they expressed no surprise at the time, but merely told him to gather wood for the fire. A merry crackling of sticks soon followed, and the flame was strong and clear. When all was ready, and the old man was chuckling at the prospect of steaks, he was suddenly seized, thrown down, wrapped up in the green and smoking hide, and secured within its folds. A lift and a heave, and he was in his mummied covering lying on the blazing mound. The heat of the fire

shrank up the skin, which clasped the yelling wretch in its tightening embrace. As this death shroud rocked about among the live embers with the agonizing struggles of the old man, one of the brutal murderers cried out, "See, how the devil grins."

"a fib."

MICHAEL HOWE.

This atrocious bushranger, described by Bent in 1818 as "the last and worst of the Bushrangers" flourished in the reigns of Governors Davey and Sorell. Syme, the other historian of his exploits, informs us that he was originally a sailor in the merchant service. Here his love of adventure was not sufficiently gratified; he sought engagements in scenes of danger, and participation in deeds of blood. He therefore entered on board a man-of-war, in delightful expectation of pointing a gun at an enemy, or of cutting down some unfortunate being with his cutlass: thus gratifying the brutal propensities of his fallen nature under the sanction of human laws. But he had no notion of the restraints of discipline, nor inclination for its pains and penalties. The service was then no bed of roses, and boatswains were not like gentle swains of sylvan groves. Coarseness of speech, brutality of manner, hard fare, little glory, and less pay formed the lot of the British tar. Howe, like many others, found his dreams of licentious revelry and warlike strife sadly disturbed by the realities of a frigate life. His spirit was not a yielding one, and his enterprise and courage soon relieved him from ship-board slavery. He deserted.

We are not surprised at his next appearance as a highwayman. That same love of adventure, with the same

want of moral principle, made him a roving robber. But the arm of justice reached him. His crimes were sufficiently notorious to merit a ride to Tyburn; but a flaw in the indictment saved his neck, and he was forwarded to a hulk *en route* for Van Diemen's Land in 1812. Assigned to Mr. Ingle, a merchant and stockholder, he showed as little symptom of submissiveness as before. Though a convict he would be no man's slave; "for," said he "I have served the King." He disappeared from the camp. The colony was oddly-governed then by the good-humoured but incapable Colonel Davey. Annoyed with the depredations of runaways, he tried the military doctrine of martial law, under whose severe penalties he placed the whole island, because he could not catch a few Bushrangers. Governor-General Macquarie, at Sydney, disapproved of these violent and unjustifiable measures. The sapient Davey then tried the virtues of an amnesty. All naughty bush boys who surrendered themselves before a certain day were to be forgiven. The plan was thoroughly successful. Desiring at least a Hobart Town holiday, and a rest from their labours, every Bushranger came in; Howe with the rest. The Governor was satisfied, and so were the thieves.

When tired of their vacation, these gentlemen of the woods betook themselves to their old occupation, and the country was thrown into the greatest disorder by their predatory inroads. Michael Howe sought the companionship of kindred souls, and enlisted under the banner of one Whitehead, the leader of a party of twenty-eight brigands. Numerous were the robberies, and not bloodless the conflicts, in which this band were engaged. They broke open homesteads, and burned barns and stacks. A party of military and civilians engaged them in open combat. The

Bushrangers retreated to the cover of a large hollow tree. In the conflict one shot pierced the cheeks of Captain O'Birnie, and passed through his tongue; while Mr. Carlisle, a settler, was killed. After the total destruction of Mr. Humphrey's premises, the robbers attacked the mansion of Mr. McCarty's, New Norfolk. They wantonly threw in a volley of shot before their approach. But a secret enemy was near. Apprized of the threatened visit, some soldiers of the 46th lay in ambush. When the Bushrangers had discharged their pieces, the military rose and saluted them. Whitehead, the captain, fell mortally wounded. His last request was that Howe should cut off his head, to prevent any one obtaining the promised reward for its capture. McGuire and Burne were taken and executed.

Howe was now the captain of the gang. In his marauding expeditions he was attended by a faithful native girl, called Black Mary. Their head-quarters were near a marsh, about fifteen miles west of Oatlands, still known as Michael Howe's Marsh. There was little romance and less sentiment in this connexion. It was not exactly a parallel with Byron's hero and Haidee in the Grecian Isle; nor was it like the pure and beautiful life of Seeward and his wife, with their dog Fido, on the island of their shipwreck. Black Mary was useful she brought tidings of scouts, collected provisions, and watched while Howe slept. The boldness of the robber's attacks was only equalled by the stealthiness of his approach and the rapidity of his flight. A hundred miles were soon passed in Dick Turpin movement, and new outrages occurred many leagues from the haunt in which his pursuers expected to find him. Yet even then he contemplated a season of repose, and had indulged visions of some fairy spot, in

whose safe seclusion he might enjoy his plunder, and pass his days in the culture of a garden, the adornment of a home. In his knapsack was found a list of articles required for his distant and hermit retreat ; among these we notice seeds, fruits, and flowers. That human tiger, Tamerlane, could weep at a tale of distress ; and Michael Howe, the hardened ruffian, took pleasure in the delicacy and purity of flowers.

He was a strict disciplinarian before the dispersion of his gang. The oaths of obedience were administered upon the prayer-book, and the lash was employed to correct irregularities. Oddly enough, he completed the character of his quarter-deck government by occasionally gathering his worthy brotherhood of thieves, and authoritatively, if not solemnly, reading aloud a chapter of the Holy Scriptures. It would be curious to know his favourite writer, and whether he finished the scene by the bestowal of his blessing. Robin Hood had his Friar Tuck, and some of the Spanish and Italian banditti have been scrupulously mindful of the claims of their patron saints ; but never before was a captain of robbers known so solicitous for the Biblical instruction of his cut-purse company.

But this chosen and pious confederation were rudely scattered by military parties of the 46th. Separated from his mates, but accompanied by the faithful Black Mary, Howe was hotly pursued. The soldiers were gaining upon them as the strength of the native girl diminished. From caprice, vexation, or fear, the Bushranger turned upon his lagging fellow-fugitive, raised his musket, fired, and severely wounded her ; she was immediately seized. Howe, casting aside his gun, and flinging off his knapsack, rushed into the scrub, and was quickly out of sight. The ransacking of that knapsack revealed the superstition of the owner.



It contained a primitive-looking book of kangaroo skin, upon which were recorded, in letters of blood, his most important dreams. This hunted convict of the forests of Tasmania had his Book of Fate, as well as he who scaled the Alps and conquered the Pyramids.

Black Mary was highly incensed at the treatment she had experienced from her paramour, whom she had loved so well, and served so long. The instinctive feeling of the savage arose within her breast—she would be revenged. Healed of her wounds, she led the bloodhounds from haunt to haunt, from the cave in the mountains to the hollow tree of the lonely gully. As a scout, her natural subtlety, her experience with the banditti, and her lust for vengeance, made her a most formidable foe. So pertinacious was the persecution, so determined the pursuit, so successful the harassment, that the chased lion was compelled to come to terms. Powerful in the prowess of his arm and the terror of his name, he proposed a conditional surrender. He wrote the articles of this remarkable document, and sent them by one upon whom he could confide. The letter was addressed to the "Governor of the Town," and subscribed by himself as "Governor of the Ranges." Strange to say, the "Governor of the Town" entertained the proposals, and actually sent Captain Nairne officially to treat with a proscribed Bushranger. This might have been believed of some well organised Black Band and a feeble Italian state; but future historians would be sceptical of the story of a British officer of rank, controlling a whole colony, holding [such a conference with a single ruffian. Well might Mr. West exclaim, "Society must have been on the verge of dissolution, when letters and messages passed between the Government and an outlaw."

An assurance of his safety being guaranteed, Howe re-

lied upon safe conduct, and repaired to the rendezvous. The preliminaries being settled, he walked to town. There he was nominally in confinement while giving information that should lead to the capture of the others. But the intelligence was not satisfactory, the gang increased in force, and Howe was mistrustful and forest sick. He heard, too, of repeated conflicts between the soldiers and his men, and he could not bear the inactivity of his life, and the shame of his submission. Permitted, under the plea of ill health, to wander about under the surveillance of a constable, he was not slow in placing himself once more at the head of a party. A conspiracy brought the gun stock over the head of one, and a knife across the throat of another. One hundred guineas reward were now offered for Howe, one hundred for Watts, his lieutenant, and eighty and fifty for seven or eight others of the club. One after the other was captured, till only Howe, Watts, and Browne remained. Brown surrendered, and Watts plotted against his leader to save his own life. Leaguering himself with Drewe, a stockkeeper, the artful traitor prepared his plans. Returning after a brief absence, Howe suspected his fidelity. Before coming to an explanation, they agreed each to knock out the priming of his gun. Drewe, most probably an old confederate or thief friend, advanced with Watts, and a reconciliation took place. A fire was lighted, at which their meal was to be prepared. While Michael stooped down to apply the bush bellows, his mate leaped upon him, and, with the other's help, secured his hands. They took from him his pistols and knife, and told him to prepare for the gallows. In marching order they advanced towards town; Watts first, with a gun, the bound victim in the centre, and the stockkeeper behind. Watching his opportunity, Howe gave the Samson snap of his cords, drew

forth a concealed dirk, stabbed Watts in the back, seized the falling man's gun, and shot Drewe in the head ; but while preparing another and finishing charge, the wounded wretch managed to escape, and after great difficulty reached Hobart Town with the news. He was sent to Sydney out of the way of vengeance, and shortly died of his wounds.

Again at large, with an additional hundred upon his head, and no confidence in comrades, Michael henceforth led a solitary life, worried and chased as a wild beast. Clad in raw kangaroo skins, and with a long, shaggy, black beard, he had a very Orson-like aspect. Badgered on all sides, he chose a retreat among the mountain fastnesses of the Upper Shannon, a dreary solitude of cloud-land, the rocky home of hermit eagles. On this elevated plateau,—contiguous to the almost bottomless lakes, from whose crater-formed recesses in ancient days torrents of liquid fire poured forth upon the plains of Tasmania, or rose uplifted in basaltic masses like frowning Wellington ;—within sight of lofty hills of snow, having the Peak of Teneriffe to the south, Frenchman's Cap and Byron to the west, Miller's Bluff to the east, and the serrated crest of the Western Tier to the north ; entrenched in dense woods, with surrounding forests of dead poles, through whose leafless passages the wind harshly whistled in a storm ;—thus situated amidst some of the sublimest scenes of nature, away from suffering and degraded humanity, the lonely Bushranger was confronted with his God and his own conscience. Yet it is possible for one to dwell near the glittering Needles of the Alps, and have no appreciation of majestic beauty ; to witness the rushing waters of Niagara, and hear no voice of Deity in their roar ; to bask in the sunlit loveliness of rosy Cashmere, and bend the knee to the blood-spattered image of the Thug. When busy memory, in the repose of

evening twilight, or amidst the wild mountain dance of tempest fires, would revert to deeds of horror, or call up the softer shades of guiltless childhood, did no sigh expand that powerful chest, or tear bedew that passion-furrowed countenance? Dr. Ross, more than twenty years ago, wrote his reflections upon a visit to that locality: "With remorse of the most horrible robberies and murders upon his conscience, he was here left to himself to contrast the native innocence and serenity of God's works with his own wicked heart, added to the hourly dread of apprehension. The tumultuous laugh, the heated exhilaration of companions in sin to drown reflection, were wanting to him. The silent language of nature must have incessantly read him a lesson that would harrow up the soul."

But his days were numbered. He had constructed a hut in a secluded little mountain valley. The floor was neatly laid with bark, a huge honeysuckle sheltered it in the rear, and a sweet stream trickled below the grassy slope in front. A visitor in 1823 compared the place to the Valley of Rasselas, and was charmed with its scenery. He was awe-struck when standing at the brink of a neighbouring basaltic precipice, 600 feet deep to the dark abyss, through which a silvery line indicated the path of the Ouse, or Big River. He found the hut tenanted by the wife of one of Mr. Lord's stockmen. Interrogating her as to the loneliness of the situation, he received for reply these words of mystic import: "Nothing troubles me, except when I awake at night, and *my cow* comes to haunt me." The traveller wondered at her fears about the ghost of her cow. But the poor woman meant the spirit of Michael Howe, or Mike Howe as he was popularly called; deeming the *H* superfluous, she pronounced the name of this terror of settlers as *my cow*.

The manner of the Bushranger's capture will be best told in the language of one of the lucky captors, quoted by Mr. West from the Military Sketch Book. We merely premise that Worrall was then a transported Nore mutineer, and Warburton was a companion of the kangaroo hunter and stolen goods receiver. The conflict here narrated took place on October 21st, 1818.

“I was now,” said Worrall, “determined to make a push for the capture of this villain, Mick Howe, for which I was promised a passage to England in the next ship that sailed, and the amount of the reward laid upon his head. I found out a man of the name of Warburton, who was in the habit of hunting kangaroos for their skins, and who had frequently met Howe during his excursions, and sometimes furnished him with ammunition. He gave me such an account of Howe's habits, that I felt convinced we could take him with a little assistance. I therefore spoke to a man named Pugh, belonging to the 48th Regiment, one who I knew was a most cool and resolute fellow. He immediately entered into my views, and having applied to Major Bell, his commanding officer, he was recommended by him to the Governor, by whom I was permitted to act, and allowed to join us; so he and I went directly to Warburton, who heartily entered into the scheme, and all things were arranged for putting it into execution. The plan was this:—Pugh and I were to remain in Warburton's hut, while Warburton himself was to fall into Howe's way. The hut was on the River Shannon, standing so completely by itself, and so out of the track of anybody who might be feared by Howe, that there was every probability of accomplishing our wishes, and ‘*scotch the snake,*’ as they say, if not kill it. Pugh and I accordingly proceeded to the appointed hut. We arrived there before daybreak,

and having made a hearty breakfast, Warburton set out to seek Howe. He took no arms with him, in order to still more effectually carry his point, but Pugh and I were provided with muskets and pistols. The sun had been just an hour up, when we saw Warburton and Howe upon the top of a hill, coming towards the hut. We expected they would be with us in a quarter of an hour, and so we sat down upon the trunk of a tree inside the hut, calmly waiting their arrival. An hour passed, but they did not come, so I crept to the door cautiously and peeped out. There I saw them standing within a hundred yards of us in earnest conversation; as I learned afterwards, the delay arose from Howe's suspecting that all was not right. I drew back from the door to my station, and in about ten minutes after this we plainly heard footsteps and the voice of Warburton. Another moment, and Howe slowly entered the hut—his gun presented and cocked. The instant he espied us, he cried out 'Is that your game?' and immediately fired, but Pugh's activity prevented the shot from taking effect, for he knocked the gun aside. Howe ran off like a wolf. I fired, but missed. Pugh then halted and took aim at him, but also missed. I immediately flung away the gun and ran after Howe; Pugh also pursued; Warburton was a considerable distance away. I ran very fast; so did Howe; and if he had not fallen down an unexpected bank, I should not have been fleet enough for him. This fall, however, brought me up with him; he was on his legs and preparing to climb a broken bank, which would have given him a free run into the wood, when I presented my pistol at him, and desired him to stand; he drew forth another, but did not level it at me. We were then about fifteen yards from each other; the bank he fell from between us. He stared at me with astonishment, and to tell you the truth, I was a

little astonished at him, for he was covered with patches of kangaroo skins, and wore a black beard,—a haversack and powder-horn slung across his shoulders. I wore my beard also as I do now, and a curious pair we looked like. After a moment's pause, he cried out 'Black beard againt grey beard for a million!' and fired; I slapped at him, and I believe hit him, for he staggered, but rallied again, and was clearing the bank between him and me, when Pugh ran up, and with the butt-end of his firelock knocked him down, jumped after him, and battered his brains out, just as he was opening a clasp knife to defend himself."

Thus finished Michael Howe. His head was cut off and triumphantly exhibited in Hobart Town. We are told that "the countenance betrayed the lineaments of a murderer truly horrific." Syme, his historian, says:—"During his long career of guilt, Michael Howe was never known to perform one humane act." The Rev. John West was more charitable in asserting that he was "not wanting in those equivocal virtues which are compatible with a life of violence and guilt." Long was the rejoicing upon the fall of this Black Douglas of Tasmanian households. Even so late as twenty years ago we find one of our island poets referring to the theme in his laudatory remarks on Governor Sorell. The extract is from the "Hobart Town Magazine:"—

There may be some whose minds may yet recall,
 How much he laboured for the good of all;—
 Bushrangers scattered over the young land,
 Soon met their death-blow from his iron hand.
 Murderous banditti! But the daring crew
 Fell with that fiendish monster, MICHAEL HOWE.

LEMON.

Lemon was one of Michael Howe's contemporaries. The scene of his exploits is the neighbourhood of Oatlands, in the centre of the island. The swampy source of the River Jordan, once visited by the writer, was known as Lemon's Lagoon. The favourite haunt of this renowned footpad is now called Lemon Springs, half way between Jericho and Oatlands. A low speckled hill near that marsh was his ambush, whence he issued on the approach of a traveller.

We have a luminous account of the capture of this worthy mate of Mike's from the pen of Mr. Parker, barrister, some five-and-twenty years ago, and we cannot do better than give it in that gentleman's own language.

"In the autumn of 1815, Michael Mansfield, a prisoner holding a ticket of leave, and residing near the Black Bush, went forth one afternoon to look for some cattle of his own, and some he had in charge belonging to others. These were grazing at a distance from his hut, and he proceeded briskly onward, following a cattle-track through a dense forest, which he knew led to where the herd was pasturing. Suddenly his progress was arrested by two savage-looking fellows, one emerging from either side of the path. They were dressed in kangaroo skins, sandals of the same on their feet, and knapsacks on their backs; each carried a musket, and one had a brace of pistols stuck in his girdle, Mansfield immediately recognised one as Lemon, the robber and bushranger. Mike, however, being a true son of Hibernia and an old man-of-war's man, was a stranger to fear, and resolved to make the best of a bad bargain. Lemon asked who and what he was, to which Mike answered truly, and in his own native *naivete*. The Bush-

rangers then cast off their knapsacks (which seemed well filled), and commanded Mansfield to carry them, warning him at the same time, that if he attempted to escape they would shoot him on the spot. Poor Mansfield jogged on under his weary load, venturing now and then a few remarks on the *tratement* poor prisoners met with in this cursed country; and "troth and sure," he was but a poor prisoner himself, and never hurt nor meddled with no one, far less a Bushranger; and he was after hoping they were not going to ill-use him, or take him away from his poor dumb *bastes*; for sure they'd all be astray, master would have him *catted*, and poor Mick would be a ruined man for ever and a day. At this pathetic appeal the Bushrangers seemed to soften, and after consulting together, they proposed, on certain conditions, to allow him to depart. They stipulated that he should meet them on an appointed day at a particular spot, and bring them flour, tea, sugar, and spirits, if he could procure any; they would be on the look out, and his signal to them was to be the smoke of a fire which he was to light. Mike promised to comply, and was allowed to go his way without further molestation. On the day appointed, he selected one of his men on whom he could depend, and taking his musket and dogs, gave out that he was going to shoot kangaroos. When he had gone a short distance, he asked Phelim "Would he like to see ould Dublin?" "By the Piper of Leinster! that I would, master," was the reply. "Then by the holy poker, ye may," said Mike, "if you only stand by me and do a bould deed." "And won't I, sure," said Phelim, "only make me certain of setting my foot in ould Dublin agen, and I'll stand by you, master of mine, until every bone in this skin is bate to shivereens." "Well, I intend to take Lemon, and if you'll stand by me, we'll both of us just get pardoned,

and you'll be sent to ould Ireland agen as free as the babe just born." "Then I am the boy that will lend you a hand."

Mansfield handed Phelim a trooper's pistol, and desired him to conceal it; and setting briskly forward, consulted how they should best accomplish their enterprise. A good deal of rain had fallen, and it was nearly dark when they reached the place of rendezvous. Phelim, with the aid of his tinder-box, proceeded to kindle a fire, and Mike, with flour which he had provided for the purpose, daubed his own and his man's clothes, to make it appear they had been carrying a load. When the fire began to burn they cast themselves on the ground, pretending to be quite exhausted, anxiously waiting the arrival of the Bushrangers. In about half-an-hour they made their appearance, both well armed. Mike spun a long yarn about losing his way, being overcome with fatigue, and obliged to leave the prog about four miles off, in the hollow of a burned tree, declaring he was unable to retrace his steps that night, but if the Bushrangers would give him rest and food, he would go with them early in the morning and bring them all he had promised; as he concluded he produced a bottle of spirits, of which they all partook, and agreed to adjourn to the Bushrangers' hut, about two miles off. The hut was constructed of turf, low and uncomfortable in the extreme, covered with sheets of bark stripped from the large forest trees. The fire-place, also of turf, lined with stones at the bottom, was at one end of the hut, and within it a huge fire soon blazed. Some excellent beef was broiled, which Mike strongly suspected to be part of his own kine. They had neither bread nor potatoes to eat with their meat, but the two Bushrangers, long accustomed to such fare, made a hasty meal; the others swallowed a few morsels, and

after finishing the bottle of spirits, they all laid down on kangaroo skins spread on the floor; first Lemon, then Mansfield, then the other Bushranger, and last Phelim. Mike and Phelim snored away, but slept none. In the morning Mansfield began to toss and tumble about, to try if Lemon would easily awake, but finding that both the Bushrangers slept soundly, he cautiously withdrew the pistols from Lemon's belt, rose warily, gave one pistol to Phelim (who was still on the floor) and concealed the other. He then went to a corner where the muskets stood, took all but his own, and put them in a pool of water before the hut; returning to the cabin, he examined the flint and priming of his own piece. Finding all right, he gave the Bushranger a push with his foot, calling out at the same time, "Lemon, you are my prisoner." Lemon felt on one side and then on the other for his pistols; finding them gone he started to his feet, and drawing a long knife, was about to make a lunge, when Mansfield pulled the trigger. The ball went through the robber's head, and he fell a lifeless corpse. The report of Mansfield's musket awoke the other outlaw, who, seeing his companion's corpse, dropped on his knees and implored mercy. Mansfield only said, "Now, my tight fellow, be after taking that there knife, cut your master's head off, put it into that bag (pointing to it), throw it over your shoulder, and trudge along with us." The man shuddered at the command, and it required threats, and promises of intercession with the Governor, to prevail on him to do the deed. 'By Saint Patrick!' ejaculated Phelim, 'its a clane job, anyhow, barrin' the bloody head. Not a minnit ago it was the shy of a copper whose throats were cut. Be off on yer ten toes, ye thaef of the world, and bless the saints ye don't carry yer own ugly mug in the bag with yer master's."

They had thirty-six miles to walk, and it was night when they reached Hobart Town. Mansfield, however, went directly to Government House, and was most graciously received. The news spread quickly, but all considered Mike and Phelim deserved public rewards. The Governor accordingly gave each a free pardon, and to Mike a grant of land on the Derwent, and to Phelim a free passage to 'Ould Ireland.' The prisoner's life was spared, but he was banished to a penal settlement."

ALEXANDER PEARCE, THE CANNIBAL.

This man of horror and crime was one of a party escaping from the Western Hell, Macquarie Harbour, in 1822. The account we derive from the Hobart Town Gazette of 1824, as recited in Melville's old Almanac. Upon the occasion of the execution of this runaway, the Rev. Mr. Connolly, the Roman Catholic Clergyman, at the request of the condemned one, delivered an address to the crowd, detailing the enormities and sufferings of the men.

The difficulties of escaping from the penal establishment are scarcely to be exaggerated. Pearce was accompanied by Matthew Travers, Bob Greenhill, Bill Cornelius, Alexander Dalton, John Mathers, Bodman, and Brown. Seizing the provisions of the coal party, which would afford them each two ounces of food a day for one week, they prepared for their departure by two boats. It was customary, in order to give notice to the military of any attempt at bolting, to maintain near each out-working station some smouldering fires, by which the overseer in charge could

at any moment raise the signal smoke. The eight miserable men threw water to extinguish the embers before entering the boats. Subsequently looking behind, they saw the curling smoke, knew the certainty and speediness of pursuit, and relinquishing the water excursion, entered the gloomy forest. Constant moisture from heavy rains rendered travelling unpleasant in such a region under any circumstances. If, with a good commissariat and all available appliances, Sir John Franklin's overland expedition to the harbour from the capital proved so laborious and trying, that several men never recovered from the hardships and sufferings they then endured, we may readily imagine the wretched prospect before the eight wanderers in the Pine woods.

Their pursuers were on their trail. Hastily they climbed the rocky hills, and pushed their way through the scrub. The interlacing of the wild Macquarie Harbour Vine retarded their march, and the thorny melaleuca cruelly lacerated their jaded limbs. The danger of capture was past, but their provisions were gone. The bush of these colonies is not so kind to wanderers as the island home of Crusoe, the cocoa-nut coasts of the Pacific reefs, the guanaco plains of Patagonia. The western bush of Tasmania is especially unfriendly. The Kangaroo haunts are not there, and the very chattering Parrot is repelled by its sterility and solitude. For a time they found a scanty meal by plucking off the tender shoots of the Tea-tree and the Peppermint. These strongly aromatic plants would darken the water in their pannicans, and yield some little nutriment when boiled. But they could not always stay in the Tea-tree scrub. They had to wade through the morasses, penetrate entangled thickets, cross treeless plains of barrenness, and surmount the lofty tiers that separated

them from the centre and settled country. For eight days they subsisted upon this noxious decoction. Their hearts sank under their privations. Three of them resolved to return; chains, floggings, labours were preferable to that living death of misery. The physical condition of poor Dalton did not permit him to go far homeward to the gaol. His faltering steps were numbered; and, as the dreary wind howled his requiem, and the dim twilight rested upon his famine-stricken countenance, the sternest advocate of the penal code would have said that justice was satisfied. Lying upon the wet ground, forsaken by his very comrades in sin, with the dew of evening mingling with the chilly damp of death upon his brow, had he no mother, wife, or child in the far distant land, who, with love for even his degraded soul, might have soothed his last hours, and received his last sigh in the kiss of forgiving affection?

Cornelius and Brown succeeded in reaching the island prison. Whether they were carried to the spray-covered caverns of the rock, or were immured in the cells of the settlement, we know not. But they were not doomed to remain much longer beneath the tyranny of crime; their exhausted frames soon lay in the felon cemetery.

Their five companions at large still journeyed eastward. Some wild berries gave them a nauseous subsistence for three days. When this resource failed they took off their ackets, made of kangaroo skin, roasted and devoured them. Approaching the rapid stream of the Gordon, they searched in vain for food. Already each man in his heart contemplated a meal, a crime, but dared not give utterance to the thought. At last Greenhill and Travers, in a hissing whisper, spoke of the sacrifice. Pearce and Mathers were away gathering sticks for a fire, Bodman was near, and his shrieks would be only as the wild bird's cry. The

axe fell ; and the bleeding victim was ready for the burnt-offering. When the first horror was over, a consultation followed. Some would have died rather than live by cannibalism ; but it was fiercely contended that all should taste, that all might share in the guilt. Were they not companions in crime ? Had they not done many a dark deed ? Were they now to hesitate ? The desert might be traversed, and the corn field seen again ; could not he then who tasted not betray and impeach the others ? No, they must all eat. They ate, and there remained but the bare bones of a vulture's feast.

Four swam the Gordon ; the fifth attached himself to a pole, and was drawn across. But more food was wanted. The eye of the least villanous quailed as it turned upon the others. This must be the next victim. Travers and Pearce held him, while the butcher Greenhill performed his task. Upon such fare they made a long distance. Travers now lingered behind, for his feet were sore. He would soon die ; why should not others live by his death ? Greenhill's axe had another swing. But hunger, like an importunate creditor, comes again. Nothing is said ; but the stealthy glance from their stealthy balls indicates the purpose. Neither walks behind the other, nor near the other. Anxiety and weakness soon prevent them walking at all. They lie down, and their faces are towards each other. The sleep of one is the death of the other. For two whole days and nights is this fearful watch maintained. The brain of Greenhill reels, his eyes close, and they open no more. The victor eats the murderer ; this fiendish repast lasts four days.

Alone he pursues his course. For three days he finds no sustenance. Arriving at the Upper Derwent the attention of Pearce is attracted to a recent camp of the natives.

There he discovers some pieces of opossum flesh, a delicious meal. Tired of life he co-ees for the hostile blacks, hoping to provoke their anger, and receive their spears. No voice responds to his own. The flock of a settler afterwards appeared. He seized a lamb, and ate it raw. A stock-keeper saw him, and took pity upon the wretched object. He could not betray him. Giving him food he carried him to the mountain retreat of some Bushrangers, and left him with those outlaws. It was not long before the whole band were captured, and Pearce was once more sent down to his former abode at Macquarie Harbour.

The remembrance of past sufferings for some time checked him in attempting an escape. In the same gang with him, was a man named Cox, who was continually urging him to run away. One day, his arguments succeeded, for Pearce had just been flogged for the loss of a shirt, which some one had stolen from him. Cox showed him fish-hooks, a knife, and burnt rag for tinder. These afforded ground for hope, and they bolted. For two days they lay concealed in the forest. Then journeying along the Beach, they reached King's River, and saw a party of soldiers on the look out for them. Retreating quickly to the shade of the woods, they passed another day of entire abstinence from food. But Pearce remembered Greenhill, and slew the unfortunate Cox. The military had left, and the cannibal dragged the carcase to their dying fire. There he remained another day. Remorse, or fear, mastered him; he signalized the schooner *Waterloo*, surrendered, and was taken to the Settlement. Brought to Hobart Town, he made a confession of his crimes, and paid the last debt to society upon the gallows.

The story of Broughton is somewhat similar to that of Pearce. Breaking the heart of his father, and robbing

his mother, he left England as an irreclaimable convict. One of five to escape from an out-station of Macquarie Harbour, he had to endure the usual sufferings of bolters. Necessity led to murder and cannibalism. Upon arrival at the settled districts, Broughton and the only other remaining man delivered themselves up. The last moments of this heartless villain are thus described by a spectator: "We saw him ascend the scaffold with more heedlessness than the bullock goes to the slaughter."

BRADY, THE PRINCE OF BUSHRANGERS.

This celebrated character had the physical structure, the mental energy, and the culture of intellect which eminently fitted him for a leader. Under other circumstances, he might have become a successful explorer in savage lands, a distinguished warrior, or a prominent chieftain in some revolutionary struggle. But he was a convicted felon in Van Diemen's Land. Assigned to Mrs. Ransom, of the Crossmarsh Inn, he was esteemed as a quiet, sober, industrious servant. His countenance was open, good-tempered, but determined. Tall, robust, and handsome, capable of the most withering sneer, or winning smile, he was formed by nature for the control of man and the conquest of woman.

Condemned for some offence to Macquarie Harbour, he was not long contemplating escape. Forming a secret association of desperadoes, he sought occasion to seize a boat. On the 9th of June, 1824, Commandant Wright, the surgeon, and others, were out at some distance from the Settlement. The moment seemed opportune, and a

Brady

rush was made towards his boat; but the officer was on the alert, and pushed off just in time. The surgeon was not so fortunate. Falling into the hands of the insurgent prisoners, it was proposed to give him a flogging; the intercession of Brady saved him. Having secured another boat, the party made off for the narrow entrance of the Harbour. But Lucas, the pilot, was seen pulling after them with earnest vigour. The convicts gained the sandy bar at Hell's Gates, and were soon tossing on the Southern Ocean; the pursuers declined to follow them on those angry waves. Nine days after, they became Bushrangers, on the eastern coast of the Derwent. Brady harangued his men, as captain. He urged pity for the defenceless, kindness to females, plunder for maintenance, revenge for injuries, and death for traitors.

The escape of so formidable a number, and the formation of so desperate a gang, called forth the following proclamation from Colonel Arthur, August 27, 1824.

“The Lieutenant-Governor feels it necessary to announce that the party of prisoners who escaped from Macquarie Harbour, have again passed into the interior. His Honour begs, in the most earnest manner, to call upon all settlers, in their respective districts, to enter with increased zeal, and determination, into measures for the apprehension of these robbers. To the most common understanding, not labouring under the miserable depression of personal danger, means will be presented, after a robbery has been committed, of tracing the movements of the depredators; and it must be understood to be the positive duty of any settlers to spread the information immediately, and to adopt the most prompt and energetic steps for closely pursuing these miscreants, until they are fairly hunted down.

“All Crown servants are to be immediately assembled by their masters, and apprized that the Government expects every man shall give all possible information, and that a pardon is offered to any prisoner who may give such intelligence as may lead to the apprehension of these Bushrangers.

“By command of His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor.

“John Montague, *Secretary.*”

The first robbery was attended with great personal violence. A servant of Lieut. Gunn, a retired officer, was stopped and plundered. His master, a man of distinguished courage, gigantic stature and strength, and a most untiring energy, had previously offered his services to the Government for the repression of Bushrangers, and had received the charge of a few soldiers. When, therefore, he was apprized of the outrage upon his servant, he promptly and successfully followed the fugitives, and captured five of them. These were, with the least possible delay, brought to trial, and they were executed with Pearce, the cannibal. The remnant continued their depredations. According to custom, the objects of a burglarious attack were obliged to remain two hours without attempting to move from their places, with a view to give notice of the outrage, under penalty of incurring the future vengeance of the visitors. It was to this practice that the Governor alluded in his proclamation. Although it might be the “the miserable depression of personal danger,” few liked to run the risk of disobeying the orders of the Bushrangers. Again, a settler could not always rely on his own servants; they might not only be indifferent to the attack and spiritless in the pursuit, but often active confederates in the plan, and the receivers and disposers of the plunder.

The Government was surprised at the ease with which Brady's mob, so called, passed the Derwent; it was afterwards found that they had boats secreted on the shore. Travelling towards the high land of the interior, Brady came with a small band to the cold and dreary watershed of the midland district, whence flowed the tributaries of the Launceston and the Hobart Town waters. He arrived at Peter's Pass, near Oatlands, the only practicable route through the ranges;—a gloomy winding among precipitous slate rocks, with gaunt and spectre-like Stringy-bark trees overhanging, but not shading, sparse and straggling herbage. A settler had fixed a home in this sterile region of the wilds. When evening was descending, the Bushrangers crept stealthily to the outpost. A farm lad noticed the strangers, recognised Brady as an old acquaintance at the inn on the road some twenty miles below, and gently called his name at the fence. The robber answered the call, and a conference ensued. The boy told him that it was well he had come no further, for that in the neighbouring hut there were several soldiers, who had come up thus far in search of them. "But never mind," said he, "we'll best 'em. Wait a bit,—they are tired and hungry; I am getting their supper, so, when they are feeding, do you rush them." "But the guns!" exclaimed the leader. "Oh, they are all right in the corner of the hut," replied the young fellow; "all you have to do, is to come softly along when they are at supper, lay hold of the pieces, and then the work is done." It was dusk when the traitorous cook carried in the chops and tea. As soon as the military were busy in the first onslaught upon the dish, a rustling was heard at the door. They turned their heads, and the next moment every man was covered with a

loaded musket. Resistance was vain. The men were tied, the house was robbed, and the Bushrangers departed. Brady offered the lad a handsome present,—the only favour he sought was admission into the gang. This hopeful youth is said to have met with his end in the following manner. He was, with one of his mates, separated from the rest; the two were tired with travelling, and putting their guns against a tree, they lay down and slept. Two gentlemen rode by, and saw these ruffians. Knowing the desperate character of Brady's men, they resolved to give them no chance, and so shot them in their sleep. The Governor rewarded the act by the presentation of a fine tract of land.

The band increased, and ventured upon bolder and grander attacks. Meeting with Mr. Kemp's overseer, they requested his company and introduction to his master's house. Upon arrival, the seven assigned servants offered no resistance, but were obedient enough in procuring a substantial meal for the new comers. The health of the Old Patriot was drunk with all honours, his plate and other valuables were removed with care, and a pleasant farewell closed the intercourse. To show spite, the bushrangers destroyed three years' clip of wool belonging to Mr. Lawrence. There was a certain old lady who was known to have a good sum of money by her, and whom Brady had visited on two occasions in the vain attempt to *spring the plant*, in other words, to find the hidden bag of dollars. The treachery of her servant relieved the robber's perplexity. He came the third time. The dame received him in the passage and assailed him with abuse. "And sure," said she, "you wouldn't be after injuring your own countrywoman again." "Countrywoman or no countrywoman," called out the other, "just come off that trap door." The

lady from the Green Isle of Beauty had artfully covered the entrance to her treasure chamber with her voluminous garments. Unfortunately for her, the Bushranger had been *laid on* to the secret; a splendid booty was the result of this adventure. With tears of rage and grief, she bestowed a Connaught blessing upon her merry departing countryman.

The most dashing exploit of this gang was the capture of Sorell Gaol. Sometimes concealed in the saline caves of carboniferous limestone, abounding in the district, and then emerging from the secluded hut of some friendly stock-keeper, the worthy rambles debouched near the residence of Mr. Robert Bethune, Pittwater, some twenty-five miles east of Hobart Town. The Pittwater district was a rich agricultural one. A contemporary of Brady's wrote, in 1829, concerning the neighbourhood of Sorell, the township of the district: "The country around is beautiful, the land being very fertile, and divided into numerous small farms." The noble estate of Orielton, belonging to Edward Lord, Esq., once Acting Governor of the Colony, was a valuable property. Mr. David Lord had a farm on the Coal River, not far from the farm of Lieutenant Gunn, of thief-catching notoriety. Captain Glover, J. P., lived on the Iron Creek, a mile from the town, and Dr. Garrett's farm was two miles off on the Richmond road. The township then boasted of many houses, two hotels, a handsome church, the parsonage of the excellent Mr. Garrard, a "good gaol," and a school-house. It was into such a populous and established neighbourhood that Brady, with Dunne, Bird, Murphy, and four others, dared to venture. Arriving at Mr. Bethune's house on the Friday evening, they took that gentleman, his overseer and servants, prisoners, and then made themselves comfortable for the night. The next day was very

wet, and the Bushrangers did not feel disposed to change their comfortable quarters. In the evening Mr. Walter Bethune and Captain Bunster rode up. Personating a servant, Brady came out and called for the groom to take Mr. Bethune's horse. When the gentlemen got inside they found themselves in the hands of the Philistines. But Brady at once allayed their fears, ordered dinner for them, and behaved with courtesy and respect. In the course of conversation at table, a remark was made about Brady offering to yield to Government. He indignantly denied that he had thought of such a thing. It was afterwards ascertained that some other party represented himself to be Brady, when rifling a house at Bagdad, and there gave information of the intention of the gang to surrender. The brigand chief said that no occasion at present existed for such a course; for, when hard pressed by pursuit, they could easily retire to a farm they had among the mountains, where they had an abundance of sheep, horses, cattle, flour, and other necessaries. In that secure and pleasant retreat they could take a spell until the excitement had passed.

When it was about ten o'clock on the Saturday night, Brady announced to his friends his resolution to attack Sorell Gaol, and liberate some acquaintances. The two Bethunes were tied, as well as the other inmates, and the whole, eighteen in number, were marched in solemn and silent procession towards the town. Most opportunely for the eight Bushrangers, they arrived at a moment when least expected, and when, in fact, a party of soldiers within were cleaning out their guns. The military, under the command of Lieutenant Gunn, had been out all day looking for the very men who had thus civilly placed themselves in gaol—to make them prisoners. The arms were secured,

and the warriors and civilians securely locked up in a cell from which the prisoners had just been released. Mr. Long, the gaoler, was in his house adjoining the lock-up; and directly he saw how things stood, he made his escape over the wall, and ran off for Lieutenant Gunn, who was then staying with Dr. Garrett. Catching up their double-barrelled guns, they made for the town. The magistrate hurried too much, and fell into the hands of the Bushrangers, who broke his gun, and placed him with the others in the cell. Two of the robbers stood in the path of Mr. Gunn. He raised his fowling piece, but at that instant a shot shattered his arm above his elbow. When the rascals left the scene of their triumph, they placed against the door of the gaol a log ornamented with a coat and hat, to resemble a sentinel. The enterprising and brave Gunn was brought to town, and suffered amputation of his arm. The Government rewarded his zeal with a pension of £70 a year, and the honourable post of Superintendent of the Hobart Town Prisoners' Barracks. He is very remarkable for the acuteness of his observing faculties; his massive and projecting brow guards a pair of eyes of marvellous power, which have often detected a runaway acquaintance of some twenty or thirty years standing.

That our ruler was not quite at ease with these impudent Bushrangers may be gathered from the Government order of April 14, 1825, which offers a reward of twenty-five guineas for either Brady or McCabe, with fifty acres of land to the chief constable of the district in which he may be taken. The reward was afterwards doubled, with a pardon and free passage to England for any convict that might capture them. Then comes out the following Government regulation:—

“The inhabitants of Hobart Town, having most hand-

somely volunteered to undertake, as special constables, the protection of the town, the Lieutenant Governor feels the most perfect confidence in their prudence and courage, and accepts their services as a means of enabling him to despatch a greater number of troops into the interior.

“His Honor anticipates that this sacrifice of personal comfort on the part of the residents in Hobart Town, will at once operate as a stimulus throughout the Colony, and that every free inhabitant in the country will heartily cooperate with the military in assisting the civil powers in the apprehension of the gang of Bushrangers, headed by Brady. Every district is now reinforced with troops, so that none feel unprotected; and if all only unite in circulating information of the movements of the banditti, it is quite impossible that they can long escape the hands of justice. To this most material point His Honor anxiously calls the attention of the whole community, and more especially of the magistrates and district constables, and begs, as they value the security and protection of each other, that they will no longer be so negligent in giving information.

“It seems to have been the successful policy of the Bushrangers to threaten with violence any persons whom they plunder, if they stir within a certain number of hours to occasion alarm. The Lieutenant Governor begs that this threat may be despised; and though he would desire every master of a family to remember the conduct of Mr. George Taylor, and like him determine to resist, yet if any should be unavoidably surprised, he begs them not to hesitate in spreading the alarm the instant the robbers have withdrawn, and, if possible, watching at the same time the direction they take.”

One effect of this proclamation was the capture of

McCabe. Originally of respectable connexions, he had received a good education. A lieutenant of the gang, he enjoyed the confidence of his chief; but the friendship of men of such violence and blood is of short duration. They quarrelled and parted. When McCabe was in prison, every effort was made to extract information about Brady, but without avail; he considered it a point of honour to divulge nothing, and upon the scaffold adhered to that principle. Every expedient employed to take Brady failed. Soldiers were concealed beneath luggage upon drays, and so driven through the lonely paths of the bush, in the hope to fall in with him. He had a narrow escape from capture. A wretched confederate in crime had a hut beside the pretty Elizabeth river, within two miles of the township of Campbelltown, where he was wont to receive business visits from bandit associates. His avarice being stronger than his friendship, he resolved to sell the blood of Brady. That worthy paid him a visit in disguise, bringing no weapons with him. Exhausted with a long walk, he soon threw himself upon a stretcher, and went into a deep sleep. This was a favourable moment for the Judas, who stole away to the town and gave the alarm. A couple of soldiers stealthily approached the slumberer, and secured his wrists with a rope. Resigned to his fate, he begged a drink of water. The night was dark and the men were superstitious; neither would go alone; they resolved to keep company. Suspecting nothing from their bound captive, they left their muskets in the hut, and descended the steep bank to the river. Brady hastily improved the time. He held his hands over the blazing fire until the cord was consumed, then seizing the two pieces he awaited the return of the military; these he fastened in the hut, and then he retreated to his band. A long time elapsed before ven-

geance could be satisfied. Coming, however, one evening to the lonely hut of Bill Windsor, of the Cocked Hat Hill, a few miles out of Launceston, he encountered in that home of the receiver of stolen goods the very man who had betrayed him. Brady's address was perfectly intelligible:—"I'll give you while I have my supper." During the progress of the meal the brutal betrayer was indifferent and even jocose; but the companions around interceded for his life, though without avail. Rising from his seat, the Bushranger took his gun, and called out to his victim, "Walk to that tree yonder." The man deliberately stepped a few paces, when a ball pierced his brain.

This story we have from a respectable colonist, who visited the scenes of action in 1826, and who was acquainted with some of the parties concerned. But another version is current, part of which has received the sanction of the Rev. John West, in his "History of Tasmania." It is said that the leader heard of the contemplated treason, and came alone at night to expostulate with the villain, who, of course, denied everything. "Have I not," said the Bushranger, "done much for you? Do you not live and thrive by the hazard of my neck? Remember, vengeance follows hard upon the heels of treachery." It was not long after that Brady and one of his men were decoyed into this man's hut, and found themselves, after a short struggle, seized, disarmed, and secured. Brady was injured by a ball in his arm, and lay on a stretcher handcuffed in charge of the traitor, while the constable took his mate to the neighbouring watchhouse. The brutal man administered coarse comfort to his victim, saying, "Never mind, Brady, you'll only be hanged to end your miserable life, and there's neither God nor Devil." Cunningly concealing his indignation, the Bushranger asked for a rug to be thrown over him, for his

arm was painful. While turning about, as if in agony, he contrived to extricate his hands. In a moment he sprung upon the man, who cried out "O spare, for God's sake, spare me." "Miserable wretch," said the other, "just now you told me there was not a God. I will not shoot you, as you deserve, because of causing an alarm; but beware when we meet." Armed with his adversary's gun, he hastened away. Not long after he encountered the old sinner. "I give you a few minutes to say your prayers," said Brady. "A curse on your prayers," replied the heartless man. Then placing his own head against the door-post in the most convenient form, he called upon the robber to shoot him. The trigger was pulled, and the recreant dropped. That shot was the death-blow for Brady. A shocking story is told by Judge Burton of a man who offered to join the gang, but was suspected of being a spy. Tried by the Bushrangers, he was condemned to death by poison; the cup of laudanum was drunk, and the wretched man was left behind. Strange to say, the man recovered. Again falling into the hands of these implacable banditti, they shot him so effectually that he never troubled them more. Tradition says that Brady once cropped the ears of another spy.

Without zealous confederates, the robbers never could have carried on their depredations, nor escaped their numerous enemies. A Hobart Town paper remarks: "That there are wretches base enough to cherish and foster these unhappy men is certain. That such may meet the fate they deserve is our hearty wish. The mischief they do is incalculable; they are the worst of criminals, because every offence which the banditti commit, is in a certain degree to be attributed to their aid, without which their associates could not have so long evaded justice." The same paper

acknowledges the relieving points of the Bushrangers' character:—"Their treatment to the females at the different houses they have robbed has also been remarkable, in every individual instance, for propriety, if such a term can be applied to any of their lawless acts. Brady declared in one instance, that if any of the gang should dare to offer insult to a female, he would blow his brains out. We are happy to state this, because the most injurious reports have been circulated, calculated to excite misery in families, without the slightest foundation in fact." Upon one occasion, when plundering a house, one of the men addressed the servant girl, and said, "Well, my pretty maid, let us have a kiss." Brady turned, and immediately, with a violent blow, felled him to the earth. Mr. Young, of the Lake River, relates the story of a *sticking-up*. The first salute of Brady's was, "Are there any females in this house?" "Yes," was the reply. "Then tell them to get up," said the chief, "and let them dress themselves, and go into one room, and no one shall molest them."

The audacity of this wonderful gang seemed to increase with their success. Sometimes as many as twenty-five horsemen were seen following the standard of Brady. The brilliant feats, the daring attacks, the astonishing escapes, produced such an *eclât*, that a thorough bushranging mania seized the community. As many as one hundred armed criminals were out at once, each emulous to exceed even Brady himself. The constables and military were dreadfully harassed; but the chief burden of care rested on the responsible head of the Governor. He entreated and threatened; he wrote and rode; he lavished rewards and severely punished; but Brady's mob still burnt, plundered, terrified. In sheer sport they were cruel. It was usual for them to select a person to *carry the swag*, and then dis-

miss him after making him drunk. One day they got thus hold upon a poor fellow, and presenting a large vessel of rum swore that he should drink all the liquor. The man dreaded the consequences, and pleaded hard with these rough bush monsters. A pistol was put to his head, and with bitter curses he was told to take his choice. The rum was swallowed, and the stupified creature was left with shouts of laughter. Next morning some persons were out seeking for him, and found him lying where he had fallen the day before, with his noble dog fondly licking his face, as if entreating him to rise and return home. They raised the body from the damp earth; the poor fellow opened his eyes, cried "Water," fell back, and died.

Satisfied with their plunder, the Bushrangers now contemplated the means of their escape from the Colony, as a glorious finish to their adventures. On their way to the Tamar, they got into such an impracticable scrub, that they were forced to leave their horses there, after an ineffectual struggle to drag them through without their saddles. Brady left them for a couple of days, while he went reconnoitring from a hill the position of the "Glory," a vessel thought well-adapted for their purpose. While absent, one of his men, Guilders, made his escape to Launceston, and carried intelligence to Colonel Balfour of the 40th, then Commandant of the place. The anger of the chief was excessive, when he heard of this defection. He demanded that Goodwin, the sentry for the day, should be brought to trial. The thieves' court-martial condemned him. He was taken forth, shot, and his body thrown into the Tamar. Before this, Jeffries had been captured, and, true to his character, peached upon his mates, though without the least expectation of a reprieve. After the execution of Goodwin, the whole party entered a

fine boat which they had stolen, and sailed three times round the "Glory." A discussion then followed, as to the propriety of an immediate capture. Brady was in favour of the scheme; but he said to the others, "Decide among yourselves, let not my voice avail you anything." Some argued, that being so near Launceston, they were liable to pursuit and capture, without the chance of doubling their foes in the intricacy of the bush. The wind was foul, and so the chances of clearance were diminished; they decided upon another forest campaign, and landed again. Calling their carrier, Watson, they bade him go to Launceston with the Bushrangers compliments to the Commandant, and state their intention to do two things that night; namely, to rob the mansion of Richard Dry, Esq., the father of the Tasmanian Speaker, and to attack the gaol. He was also to tell him that they would take Jeffries out of his cell, well torture him for awhile, and then finish him with ball. The man delivered his message, which was considered a capital joke, and no more.

That evening, according to promise, they appeared at Mr. Dry's house, one mile out of Launceston. Visitors, family, and servants were secured. While some patrolled the premises, or guarded the prisoners, and others were busy in making useful collections in the house, Brady was in the parlour amusing the ladies. He succeeded in allaying their fears by the frankness of his manner, and even entertained them by the humour of his stories, and his pleasing address. Seating himself at the piano, he played an accompaniment to a sentimental song. One of the servants had escaped in the darkness, and given the alarm in the city. The active Commandant, Colonel Balfour, hastened out with ten soldiers, and a few volunteer gentlemen. The robbers retired behind a hedge, and active

firing on both sides commenced. All at once, the Colonel noticed the silence of his foes, and supposing they had fled, he resolved to go back to the town, as a party under Dunne had set out for the gaol. Leaving his hat behind him, which had been knocked off by a bullet, he hastily returned with half of his military force of ten. The Bushrangers were aware of this division, and began plundering some outbuildings. Dr. Priest had remained in charge of the house, with five soldiers; haranguing his men, he led them on to the charge. His white dress was too conspicuous that night not to attract attention. One ball brought down his horse, and another severely wounded himself in the knee. The terrible gang withdrew, and safely disappeared in the darkness. The brave doctor was carried to his quarters. An examination of the injury aroused the fears of his friends. Nothing but amputation of the limb could save his life. When implored to submit to the operation, he refused in excited fury; "What," said he, "go stumping about with a wooden leg, and have to say that I received my glorious wound in a fight with cursed convict runaways? Better die, than live in such disgrace!" And die the misguided man surely did of mortification.

Such a frightful exhibition of impudent villany, such a defiance of his power at his very northern capital, aroused the anger and determination of the Governor, in the highest degree. Another proclamation was issued. A reward of three hundred guineas, or three hundred acres of land, free of quit rent, was offered for the capture of either one of twelve of the dreaded band therein mentioned; any prisoner of the Crown so taking a man, should receive his pardon and a free passage to England. These terms aroused the cupidity and hopes of many before indifferent to the affair, or friendly to the men. The bush was soon

searched in all directions most vigorously ; and the Governor left his family and took the field. Detached parties of armed men were fallen in with, and fierce conflicts ensued. The spirit of vindictiveness, and the hope of a prize, were opposed to the aroused energies of tigers at bay. Successful engagements thinned the ranks of the robbers, and scattered their strength. So great a crowd of ruffians were gathered in the gaol, that the fears of the inhabitants for their escape, and the desire of vengeance, immediate and effectual, upon the men who had so long braved attack, and alarmed the country, induced fifty gentlemen to present a petition to Colonel Arthur, praying for the speedy execution of the prisoners. One is carried by imagination to the September days of the French Revolution, at this condition of society,—this frightful thirst of blood, in hunters and their victims. When we read of thirty-seven persons being condemned to death at one sitting of the court, we are appalled at the magnitude of crime, and the severity of justice.

But the following extract from the "Colonial Times," quoted in Melville's celebrated Van Diemen's Land Annual, will prove to the reader that mischief was still abroad, for that Brady was still at large :—

"On the night of the 5th, the Bushrangers set fire and burnt down the stock-yard, with all the wheat belonging to Mr. Abraham Walker and Commissary Walker, opposite Mr. Thomas Archer's. The extent of the damage is not yet ascertained. The Bushrangers were seen between the Punt and Mr. Gibson's stock-yard, and on the 6th they sent word to Mr. Massey, on the South Esk, Benlomond, that they would hang him and burn his wheat. A great fire was seen in the direction of his house, but it is to be hoped that they have not executed their threat. The

Bushrangers have Mr. Dry's two white carriage horses with them. They shot Thomas Kenton dead at the Punt on the South Esk; they called him out of the house and deliberately shot him. Two runaways were last week sent into Launceston Gaol, from Pressnell's, where they were taken; one of them broke out of gaol, and was met by the Bushrangers, who asked him to join them, and, on his refusal, they shot him dead. Brady now wears Colonel Balfour's cap, which was knocked off at Dry's. When the Bushrangers were going down the Tamar they captured Captain White, of the "Duke of York," in his boat; Captain Smith, late of the "Brutus," who was with him, being mistaken for Colonel Balfour, they knocked him down, but discovering their mistake they apologized. They then made Captain White go down upon his knees, and were going to shoot him, but Captain Smith interfered, and saved his life, on representing to them the misery it would inflict upon his children. During the night Captains Smith and White were allowed to depart, and they made the best of their way to Launceston, where they gave the necessary information; but unfortunately it was too late, the Bushrangers having crossed the river, and proceeded to commit the dreadful enormities before stated."

But the hour of Brady was come. Constantly harassed by assailing and pursuing parties, separated from his dashing band of roving horsemen, and disabled by a shot in his ankle, he was no longer the proud and chivalrous Prince of Bushrangers, but the anxious, suffering fugitive. Amongst those who sought the destruction of these troublers of the settlers' homes, was John Batman, the celebrated capturer of Tasmanian aborigines, and afterwards the renowned founder of Port Phillip Colony. Governor Arthur had great confidence in his prudence and

judgment, as well as in his energy and courage. Getting intelligence of the robber's movements, Mr. Batman left his Ben Lomond farm, and explored the gulleys of the Western Tier. That wild and romantic country had long furnished a retreat to Bushrangers. Rising abruptly from the plain, the greenstone Dry's Bluff towers 4,000 feet, and is the first of a series of elevations in one of the roughest districts in the world for a hundred miles. The hills are covered with enormous Gum and Stringy bark forests; and very unlike the open land of Victoria, the ground is hidden by thickets of the prickly Tea-tree, the Mimosa, the rigid Hakea, the sweet-scented Musk, &c. The valleys are shaded with that pyramidal botanical beauty, the Sassafras, the leafless She-oak, the Cherry-tree, and the graceful Acacia. The mountain sides are adorned with the rice-like flowers of the Richea, or the more gorgeous and princely scarlet of the Waratah. Occasionally the traveller thrusts aside the heartless scrub, and looks down upon a scene of such loveliness and sheltered beauty that he would fain believe he had been rubbing the magic lamp of Aladdin. There, free from tangled brush, a long and narrow vale, watered by a sparkling, springing brook, is studded with graceful fern trees, and looks like a vast enchanted temple, with festooned columns. Then, again, the adventurous rambler, after scrambling over basaltic boulders along the ravine of a mountain torrent, reaches the summit of a huge precipice, over which the mad torrent leaps two hundred feet into the dark and boiling basin below. There too, among these gloomy ranges, are limestone caves of wondrous extent and magnificence, with lofty halls and stalactitic ornaments; a fitting home for outlaws.

It was amidst such scenes that Batman sought poor

Brady. One day he spied a man limping along through the bush with the aid of a cut sapling. He was evidently in great pain, and bore a dejected, careworn aspect. His restless, suspicious eye suddenly lighted upon his pursuer. In a moment all anguish was forgotten, as in a loud and decided tone the word "stand" was uttered, the faltering step was firm, and the old lion spirit was roused. The gun was at his shoulder, and his finger on the trigger. Before he could fire, however, he called out, "Are you a soldier officer?" Mr. Batman's frock coat and foraging cap gave him a military appearance, and Brady had an unextinguishable hatred to the red-coated enemy of Bushrangers. "I'm no soldier, Brady," was the reply, "I am John Batman; surrender, for there is no chance for you." The Bushranger thought for awhile, and then said, "You are right, Batman, my time is come; I will yield to you, because you are a brave man."

The poor fellow was conducted to Launceston Gaol. The news spread, and a regular triumphal procession was formed. Some cowardly persons taunted the fallen chief, but most pitied his misfortunes while they rejoiced in his capture. For two-and-twenty months he had lived in the Bush. Of his numerous companions not one remained free within a month after the offer of the high rewards. Treachery to the Government long preserved their freedom, and treachery to the banditti now destroyed them. To his great vexation he was brought down to Hobart Town, in company with the notorious Jeffries. At his trial the court was crowded with sympathising ladies, who wept at the recital of his sufferings, and palliated the enormity of his crimes. His chivalrous behaviour to females had won their esteem; gentleness to the weak, and the brilliant feats of his career, had excited their imagination with pleasure. He was pro-

nounced guilty of being out at large with arms. This was death by the law; but so strong an interest was produced by his story, that a reprieve would have doubtless followed conviction. But he was proved guilty of murder.—

“Other crimes but speak,—murder shrieks out.”

Yet petition followed petition for his deliverance from the halter. Settlers told of his forbearance, and ladies of his kindness. His cell was besieged with visitors, and his table was loaded with presents. Baskets of fruit, bouquets of flowers, and dishes of confectionery prepared by his fair admirers, were tendered in abundance to the gaoler for his distinguished captive. The last moment came. The dramatic scene was maintained to its close. Pinioned, he stood on the scaffold before a dense mass of spectators, who cheered him for his courage or grieved bitterly for his fate. He received the consolations of the Roman Catholic faith, he bid a familiar adieu to the gentlemen about him, and he died more like a patient martyr than a felon murderer.

DUNNE.

This restless mate of Brady's was the terror alike of settlers and aborigines. In a work now preparing by the writer upon the “Black War of Van Diemen's Land,” the name of Dunne appears in bloody association with the story of the wild man's wrongs. The year 1826 was the period of this monster's cruelties. He was not always cruel. One time, entering a hut near the junction of the Ouse and Shannon, where three men were sitting, he

directed one to tie the other two, and then prepare him tea and fry some chops. After despatching his meal, he loaded the man with 50 lbs. of flour, 20 lbs. of sugar, and other necessaries, and took his departure. On another occasion he stole a fine dog belonging to Mr. Thompson, Magistrate of New Norfolk. Going up to that gentleman's sheep station, he bailed up the men, killed one of the sheep, threw the dog a leg, and then told the hut-keeper to deliver this message to his master :—"I have stolen his dog and fed him with his own mutton."

There is one horrible deed attributed to this man, but which is, by some, charged to the account of Carrots, another Bushranger. Anxious to get hold of a rather good looking gin of the natives, he encountered some obstacle from the husband. The musket removed the impediment. The poor woman wept bitterly at the death of her husband, and refused to go away from the mutilated body. The brutal Bushranger cut off the man's head, drilled a hole through it, and suspended it by a string around the neck of the outraged wife. Drawing his knife, he drove her onward at its point to his bush retreat—the den, indeed, of a tiger. Once closely pursued by constables on the Macquarie Plains, between New Norfolk and Hamilton, Dunne attempted concealment in a haystack, but was discovered and taken to Hobart Town. He appeared on the scaffold in a singular costume,—a long white muslin robe, with a huge black cross marked thereon, before and behind; his cap was of a similar character. He walked with the rosary in his hands. The assumption of a devotional demeanour, the theatrical striking of his breast in mock humility, and his well intoned ejaculations of "Lord, deliver us," greatly moved the ignorant crowd of fellow felons before him. His admirers presented him with an elegant cedar coffin; and

the remains of this much respected individual were followed to the grave by one hundred sympathisers. In such esteem were the bold acts of this villain regarded, and such were the demonstrations of approval in the early days of Van Diemen's Land.

In that epoch, when the bond and free were equal in numbers, the vast majority of the latter had only recently emerged from the state of bondage, and had still all the sympathies of the prisoner class. The scaffold of the Old Bailey, or the cart of Tyburn, has been greeted with cheers by a vast multitude of the most civilized and Christian nations of the world, when some hero of the highway appeared with nods for his palls and smiles for his girls, and his guinea and bright buttons for Jack Ketch.

We need not be surprised, then, at the favourable opinion cherished for the condemned bushranger by his fellow-felons. The bushranger was, in general, looked upon as a sort of a martyr to convictism. It was he who had experienced the shame, the lash, the brutal taunt, from which they had suffered. It was he who rose against the tyranny of their prison despot, and the dread consequences of their criminal law. It was he who was the bold Robin Hood of their morning songs; and it was he who was now the unfortunate victim of legal oppression, the captured of the chase. Without denying the atrocities of his career, they would discover many extenuations for his crimes. His reckless daring would be the noblest chivalry; and the jovial freedom of his manners, the frankest generosity. His immoral jests would be treasured for posterity, and the *eclat* of his life and death would stimulate the worthy ambition of sympathising souls. The very gallows had a charm; and the language of Byron's Corsair aptly describes the last sentiment.

“ Let him who crawls enamour'd of decay,
Cling to his couch, and sicken years away,
Heave his thick breath, and shake his palsied head!
Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed.
While grasp by grasp he falters forth his soul,
Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes control.”

JEFFRIES, THE MONSTER.

Originally a Scotch seaman, he was always notorious for his vile blackguardism. He was committed to prison at Edinburgh; but to receive commutation of sentence, and be sooner among his old companions, he proffered his services as Jack Ketch. The first man upon whom he made his experimental trial was Johnson, the Dick Turpin of the North. Immediately after the suspension, the mob of the Modern Athens cut down the body, carried it off, and restored the man to consciousness. But the police succeeded in rescuing the highwayman, and giving him another interview with Jeffries and the rope.

It was not long before the hangman of Scotland appeared in Van Diemen's Land. In a period of brief indulgence he was watch-house keeper in Launceston. One day the wretch tried his brutal humour upon a poor drunken fellow in his custody. He placed the feet of the insensible man among some hot ashes, until his toes were consumed. The discovery of this barbarous act caused his retreat to the bush, and he then became the terror of the northern settlers. His atrocities were fearfully horrible. He confessed

to five murders, and acknowledged that he had no object either of fear, revenge, or avarice, to prompt the bloody deed. One of his victims was his friend and companion.— But one of his crimes requires a more particular narration. In one of his expeditions he came upon a remote hut; the male inmate was struck senseless, and the wretch told the trembling wife to follow him. Her tears were of no avail with so hardened a being. Having an infant at her breast, she prepared to go after the brute, but did so with faltering steps, and in an agony of grief. The Bushranger, in coarse oaths, told her to be quicker, or he would have to throttle her. She sought to appease him by representing her condition as a new mother, pleading her weak state, and the weight of the child. The demon turned round with awful curses, snatched the baby from her breast, and dashed its brains out against a tree. Then seizing the frantic mother, he drove her onward at the point of the knife to his own forest den.

When this wild beast was hunted down, he was brought into Launceston in triumph. A young woman stood among those who came out to witness another Bushranger. When she caught sight of those hated, but too well-known features, she uttered a yelling scream of “My child! my child!”—sprang upon the man in the midst of the soldiers, and would have torn him to pieces, if not violently removed. It was the mother of the murdered infant.

There were men of like passions to Jeffries, who once came upon an out-station belonging to a reduced gentleman. In the absence of the proprietor and his two grown-up sons, the wretches seized the mother and her beautiful daughter, and detained them prisoners for three weeks;

half-dead from brutality and mental suffering, they were then recovered by their agonized friends.

BRITTON, THE LOST BUSHRANGER.

Born in a village near Bristol, he was well-known as an itinerant vendor of fruit and fish, and appreciated by the Fancy as a good judge of a horse. His abilities at horse fairs were not always esteemed. Some ungrateful customers doubted his honesty more than his judgment; and others were ill-natured enough to say, that he would occasionally dispose of other folks' horses, under the absurd delusion that they were his own. An unavoidable mistake of this nature led him to exchange the damp air of the West of England, for the exhilarating atmosphere of Van Diemen's Land. He was a man of gigantic strength, with a neck like that of an ox. Such was his agility, that he would vault over a horse. Upon his arrival in the island gaol, he soon got disgusted with interference with his own will, and brooked not the gentle influence of felon constables. Associated with Jeffkins, Brown, and others, he became a dreaded Bushranger, and continued so for several years. He paid a visit to Sawyer's hut, near Kerry Lodge, in May, 1833, but took no plunder. In February, 1834, Britton, Jeffkins, and Brown, came to the out-station of Mr. Wm. Field, on the Liffey. Ten men were inside. Two robbers stood at the door with pieces, and desired them to tie each other. As this was a second visitation, some apology was necessary. Britton told them that he felt quite hurt at the

lying reports about him, especially in the remark concerning the quantity of spoil he had carried off on the previous occasion, which he indignantly asserted was considerably less than that of which he had been accused. It was not his intention to rob them again, but the overseer's watch might be handy in the bush. Expostulation followed, and the watch was permitted to remain in the owner's fob, as the robbers wished to act like gentlemen. However, Brown solicited the favour of wearing another man's hat; and Jeffkins gave a token of his friendship to a person, by exchanging boots with him.

But the course of Bushranging never ran smoothly. Two of the pleasing trio were once admiring the beauties of Tasmanian scenery, when a party of four constables saluted them. A bloody contest ensued. Smith was shot dead by Brown, and his death was revenged by the fall of Jeffkins. Brown was severely wounded when captured. He reached Launceston Gaol and died there. Britton was only occasionally heard of afterwards. The close of his outrages was viewed as the termination of his life. While some supposed he had shot himself, the majority considered that he had been lost in the western scrub, and died of starvation; but after a lapse of nearly twenty years, he is said to have been seen in England by one of our colonists.

HARRY HUNT.

This was one of the last of the ancient rovers of Tasmanian story. He was for a considerable time an assigned servant to John Helder Wedge, Esq., then in the Survey

Office of Van Diemen's Land. His character stood so high, that his master treated him with the utmost confidence. With a smiling face and quiet manners, there was nothing to indicate the blackguard, or predicate the Bushranger. According to the testimony of his overseer, Connell, he was "the whitest man on the farm." Due for the indulgence of his ticket-of-leave, there was every incentive to good behaviour and expectation of honesty. But it is not very easy to overcome evil habits. Petty thievish propensities were his besetment. At different times, on surveying expeditions, some articles were sure to be lost. Persons, at whose stations Mr. Wedge was surveying, occasionally complained of the departure of certain property. A basket of linen disappeared from one place, and a gun from another. The men's hut was searched, but in vain. The loaded dray was inspected by a constable in vain. A half-caste girl one day came into the kitchen for some grease. Being asked why she wanted it, she replied that it was for Holland's gun. Suspicion was aroused, as it was known that the man had no gun previously. The weapon was seized, and proved to be the stolen one. Holland ultimately confessed he had bought it of Hunt. Both were tried in Launceston, and Hunt was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation. It was no uncommon circumstance for a man to receive such an extension of punishment. We remember hearing of one whose several periods of sentences amounted to nearly fifty years, in addition to transportation for life; another had three lives' sentences.

The nature of Hunt seemed changed in the chain gang of Launceston. He was not long before he escaped to the bush. Conscious of the perilous situation in which he had placed himself, he determined upon going the whole hog, and be a thorough Bushranger. Murder was added to rob-

bery. Captain Serjeantson, of the 40th, who had been engaged in the Peninsular War and Waterloo, was about returning to Europe with his family. One day in November, 1835, when riding near Campbelltown, he encountered the outlaw. Recognising him, he rushed forward to seize him. Hunt levelled his piece, told him to retire, and threatened him with instant death if he did not leave. The impetuosity of the old warrior overcame his prudence; he still advanced to ride him down; the bullet flew forth, and he fell mortally wounded. He survived long enough to tell his story.

Pursuit was now in earnest. A reward of £300 was offered for the person of the manslayer. For several months more he was at large, succeeding in keeping out of the track of constables and soldiers. In June, 1836, his career was brought to a close. James Carr was digging in his garden on the Nile,—not the overflowing stream of Egypt, but a small tributary of the Esk river,—when he observed the prisoner Hunt. He grappled with him. They rolled over and over in the mud. The wife of the settler came to the rescue; but unable to distinguish her husband, she called out, “Which is you, Jem?” Satisfied as to the identity, she raised a musket with which she was armed, and brought down the butt end of it so heavily upon the skull of the wretched murderer, as to shiver the stock and fracture the bone. The miserable man was borne to the hospital of Launceston Gaol. He lived long enough to confess the murder of the officer, but not to be brought to trial. The fortunate captors were established upon a snug little farm of their own.

J. P.
c.





NOTE.

BRADY.—Mr. Fawkner gives the following sketch of murders by Brady's gang:—"Before Brady finished his career he spent some days in the neighbourhood of Launceston, and he put to death, by pistol shot, with his own hand, Mr. Thomas Kenton; and the same day he caused to be shot, a man, whose name, I think, was Aken. This man fell as dead, but was only wounded in the belly. After being left, he got up, and was making his way to town, when the man, who would not shed blood, again fell in with Aken, and he ordered him to be shot through the head. He was again shot, but it was in the neck, bled much, was dragged off the road, and covered up for dead. He reached town and was cured.

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