

MISCELLANIES,

BY

WILLIAM WALKER.

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Alfred Leef.

CASE SHELF

N^o

MISCELLANIES,



WILLIAM WALKER,

WINDSOR.

PRINTED BY FULLER & CO., GEORGE-STREET, WINDSOR.

1884.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Self-Culture, Outline of a Lecture 	1
Australian Literature, a Lecture... 	9
Speech at Opening of Richmond School of Arts ...	41
Speech at Windsor Volunteer Rifle Corps Meeting ...	45
Speech at Opening Windsor Railway 	47
The Flood, a Poem 	49
Account of Flood, 1857 	51
The Floods of 1860 	59
Account of Great Floods of 1864... 	61
Speech in Legislative Assembly on Robertson's Land Bill	81
Speech in Legislative Assembly on Roberts' Motion of Censure 	83
Speech in Legislative Assembly on Samuel's Budget, 1869	85
Recollections of late Sir J. B. Darvall, Q.C.... ...	93

SELF-CULTURE.

OUTLINE OF A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE

Windsor School of Arts,

ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, JUNE 3RD, 1862,

BY

WILLIAM WALKER, ESQ., M.L.A.,

President.

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION,
BY BENJAMIN ISAACS, GEORGE STREET, WINDSOR.
1864.

SELF-CULTURE.



OUTLINE OF A LECTURE, &c.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I have the honour to appear before you this evening—to use the phraseology of the old play bills—“in an entirely new character.” And as the great dramatist says—“All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players,” and that “one man in his time plays many parts,” I suppose I can claim no exemption from the common lot, but must succumb to my fate. I have been called upon by the Committee of this Institution to give the first of a course of Lectures which it has been thought desirable should be presented to the public of Windsor during the ensuing winter months. It is with considerable hesitation, and with many misgivings of my own powers, that I enter upon the task—this being the first occasion that I have attempted anything of the kind. However, as President of this Institution, and having a sincere desire to the best of my humble ability, to promote its usefulness and objects, I felt I could not well refuse the demand that was made upon me; but should I fail in engaging your attention to such an extent as I could wish, I trust you will extend to me your generous indulgence.

The subject which I have undertaken at present to introduce to your consideration is “Self-Culture,” or in other words, “Self-Improvement;” in illustration of which, I shall make particular reference to the cases of those persons whose fortunes and positions in life had been such as not to have afforded them opportunities of obtaining a liberal education; yet who, in spite of these disadvantages and by the mere force of their own character, their industry and Self-Culture, raised themselves from humble stations to pinnacles of eminence, and honour amongst their fellow men.

That the improvement of the human mind is a matter of the highest importance, few, I think, will be disposed to deny. We cannot, in this enlightened age, give any credence to the doctrine, that "ignorance is bliss," and that if so, "'tis folly to be wise." On the contrary, we rather put faith in the correctness of the admonition of the highest authority, that with all our gettings, we should "get understanding;" and we ought ever to bear in mind, that one of England's greatest philosophers has promulgated an axiom to the effect, that "knowledge is power." That it should be so, is almost self-apparent. What a wonderful advantage a man of education has over an illiterate person! Not only does a moderate amount of learning enable a man to advance his interests in the affairs of the world, by giving him a clearer insight into and a better knowledge of matters of business and politics, but it enables him more thoroughly and consistently to comprehend the truths of religion and to prepare himself for a higher state of existence. Further than this, education and learning afford ineffable pleasure to the possessor. By their aid he can, as it were, transport himself back to the realms of antiquity, and hold sweet converse through their writings with those mighty spirits, who, like Homer and Herodotus, Virgil and Cicero, have shed immortal lustre and renown upon their own lives and the times in which they lived. To come to later days, the scholar can quaff "ambrosial rills" from the productions of a Newton and a Bacon, of a Shakespeare and a Scott, of a Moore and a Burns. It has been said by one of England's greatest poets (Pope)—

A little learning is a dangerous thing
 Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring.

And the philosopher Locke has remarked, that some persons, "that they may seem universally knowing, get a little smattering of everything. But these may fill their heads with superficial notions of things, but are very much out of the way of attaining truth or knowledge." Now, to my mind, there is both truth and error in these statements. A little learning or a smattering of knowledge may be dangerous or worse than useless when accompanied by presumption; that is, when it leads the possessor beyond his appropriate sphere, and induces him to enter upon themes and into controversies with those who are more intelligent and learned than himself. That such a person is sure to conduct himself into inextricable mazes, and often to involve himself in most unpleasant personal consequences, cannot be surprising. It often happens that such an

individual becomes a very disagreeable and detestable member of society—at once transforming himself into a peddling critic, setting honest people by the ears. But that a person should not strive to possess even “a little learning” rather than none, is to say, that when one has been afflicted with blindness for some time, he should refuse to accept the restoration of the sight of one eye simply because it has been found impossible to give him the use of both. A glimmering of knowledge should be as welcome to the man who cannot attain to more, as the twilight of the morning would be to the lost and weary wanderer, of a dark and dismal night, over unknown ways and rugged paths. At the same time, no one should be content with a superficial knowledge of things if more be attainable, but should, if possible, press onward to perfection. Ignorance is too often the parent of crime and wretchedness. How many of our fellow creatures might have been prevented from spending a great portion of their existence within the gloomy portals of a gaol, or perhaps terminating life itself upon the gallows tree, if their thoughts and actions had, by means of education, been refined and diverted to other channels;—if, instead of wasting their precious time in dissipation and criminality they had spent it in the pursuits of literature and science. If, instead of idling in the haunts of low pleasures and intemperance, they had devoted their “leisure hours” to such institutions as this—by such means they might have expanded their minds and enjoyed in the reading-room and library “the feast of reason and the flow of soul;” fitting them to become useful and worthy members of society, and of properly fulfilling the obligations of domestic life. As has been well remarked by an able lecturer in Sydney (the Rev. Dr. Ross) “the ignorant are easily deceived by the plausibility of the mere pretender—gulled by every quack—and soon led away by the frothy eloquence of noisy demagogues and political charlatans.” It should therefore be the earnest desire of every one to possess some education, much or little. No one should neglect to attempt to possess it. And let none say, however defective his early training may have been, or however scanty his present means may be, that he cannot hope to attain to it. Although he may not have the advantage of learned instructors, let him, as many have done before him, educate himself. In this age of cheap literature, and with Schools of Art in almost every village, the difficulties which once beset the pursuit of knowledge can scarcely be said to exist. Let the young men—the mechanics—of Windsor, remember the case of William Cobbett, who,

though there was much in his character that was objectionable, was yet highly worthy of imitation for his successful efforts at self-education, under circumstances of the greatest difficulty and discouragement. [Here followed sketches of the lives of Cobbett, Benjamin Franklin, James Ferguson, (the Scottish Astronomer,) James Watt, George Stephenson, Robert Burns, Shakespeare, and Hugh Miller, showing how, from comparative ignorance, poverty and obscurity, they had, each by his own self-improvement, elevated themselves to the highest positions in the world of literature and science.]

With these examples before us, who will say that they cannot, or ought not, to cultivate their intellect. If you meet with obstruction or disappointment, think of Martin Tupper's poem:—

Never give up! it is wiser and better
 Always to hope than once to despair,
 Fling off the load of doubt's heavy fetter,
 And break the dark spell of tyrannical care.
 Never give up! or the burthen may sink you:
 Providence kindly has mingled the cup,
 And in all trials or troubles, bethink you,
 The watchword of life must be, "Never give up!"
 &c. &c. &c.

I am happy to think that Australia has already produced some native ornaments—men who have in a great measure risen by dint of their own energy and efforts at Self-Culture. Have we not a few statesmen—and have we not a Charles Harpur and a Henry Kendall—true-born poets. Hear the former's Sonnet to

MORNING.

How beautiful that earliest burst of light
 Which floodest from the opening eyes of morn,
 When like a fairy palace dew be-dight
 Bough storying over bough upsreads the thorn,
 And sweet the melodies which tow'rd the corn
 In tassel, or the orchard there invite,
 And that most love like ever fresh delight
 Which breathes of many a blooming thing new born—
 Breathes from vine clumps in the moist dells appearing,
 Rich meads and river banks. And cheering then
 The voice of cattle to their pasture steering,
 And the full speech of fieldward hastening men!—
 My very boyhood seems renewed again
 'Mid these delights, like a delight careering!

I must also give you a couple of stanzas from Kendall's poem of

THE MOUNTAINS.

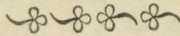
Rifted mountains clad with forests, girded round by gleaming pines,
 Where the morning, like an angel, robed in golden splendour shines;
 Shimmering mountains, throwing downwards on the slopes a mazy glare
 Where the noonday glory sails through gulfs of calm and glittering air;
 Stately mountains, high and hoary, piled with blocks of amber cloud,
 Where the faded twilight lingers, where the winds are wailing loud;
 Grand old mountains, over beetling brawling brooks and deep ravines
 Where the moonshine pale and mournful, flows on rocks and evergreens.

Underneath these regal ridges—underneath the gnarly trees,
 I am sitting lonely hearted, listening to a lonely breeze—
 Sitting by an ancient casement casting many a lonely look
 Out across the hazy gloaming, out beyond the brawling brook;
 Over pathways leading skyward, over crag and swelling cone,
 Past long hillocks looking like to waves of ocean turned to stone;
 Yearning for a bliss unworldly, yearning for a brighter change,
 Yearning for the mystic Aidenn, built beyond the mountain's range.

And I am proud to ask, have we not produced a native astronomer—the discoverer of Tebbutt's Comet—a gentleman who has attained to the highest proficiency in the science to which he devotes his attention by his own simple and almost unaided efforts? And perhaps I may be permitted to refer to myself, though in a lesser degree, as amongst those who have attained an honourable position in a great measure by individual exertions. Born of parents in limited circumstances, I was taken from my father's Elementary School at the early age of thirteen, and placed in an attorney's office. During eleven years of drudgery I improved what leisure I possessed, as opportunity offered, by private instructions, reading and study,—expending much of my spare money in the purchase of books. In due time I was admitted to the profession to which I now belong, and eventually, by the suffrage of my fellow-townsmen, became their representative in the Parliament of our common country; where, I believe, I occasionally give expression to my views upon public matters without doing violence to Her Majesty's English, “as the manner of some is.” The young men of Windsor now possess an advantage which was not accessible to me in my younger days, namely, access to an Institution like this. I trust they will prize their privilege and endeavour to improve it. Let us hope that the library will shortly be very much augmented with a good stock of well ordered

books; and with the classes which have been established for instruction in the classics and mathematics, little will be left to be desired by those who wish to cultivate their minds. The debating class will also afford an opportunity to those who wish to attain proficiency in public speaking to practice the art. Proceed then; the field is clear before you. Think of the great men, whose rise in life from humble beginnings I have brought under your notice this evening. Let your motto be *Excelsior*—higher and higher—and no doubt, in due time, Australia, aye, even our own fertile Hawkesbury—will produce poets, orators, men of science, and statesmen that will reflect credit upon their country, and not be unworthy descendants of that great and glorious land from which we have all sprung—a land with which it is our pride (and I trust for long) to be connected. Let us imitate and emulate her in those institutions and pursuits which have made her name a boast and a beacon amongst the nations of the earth, and by such means eventuate in making Australia, as one of her most distinguished sons has wished and sung

A new Britannia in another world.



AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE

WINDSOR SCHOOL OF ARTS,

ON THE EVENING OF WEDNESDAY,

THE 20TH OF JULY, 1864,

(JAMES ASCOUGH, ESQ., V.P., IN THE CHAIR,)

BY

WILLIAM WALKER, Esq., M.L.A.,

President of the Institution.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

SYDNEY:

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AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE.

A LECTURE, &c.

IN undertaking to deliver a Lecture on Australian Literature, I have to premise that I intend only to take within the range of my observations that portion of colonial publications which is peculiar to New South Wales. I have selected the term "Australian" not only as being more euphonious than "New South Wales," but because it is in a large degree appropriate, inasmuch as our Colony has not inaptly been termed "The Mother of the Australias," and was for many years in fact the only Australia recognized or generally known.

The subject I have taken in hand is of a varied, extensive, and interesting character; but the scanty materials at my command, and a vivid sense of my own inadequacy, compel me at once to the confession that I fear I will do but imperfect justice to it. I have no doubt however, that to many, the matters to which I shall refer will be curious and interesting, if not instructive; whilst as to others I may perhaps succeed by my remarks in exciting their sympathies for a subject which has not hitherto received much public consideration.

The Colony is now some seventy-six years old—one generation has departed and another is passing away, and yet no great Australian author has arisen to give lustre to the Literature of his country, or to entitle his own name to a high niche in the temple of fame. The celebrated Wit, Essayist, and Poet, Charles Lamb, the genial author of the *Essays of Elia*, once wrote a characteristic letter to his friend, Barron Field, Esq., then a judge at Sydney, in which he ventured to make some sarcastic allusions to the probable state of literary matters in this Colony. Lamb, who was a thorough "Cockney," and had seldom or never been beyond a few miles out of London in his life—and when he did go, soon sighed for the Metropolitan streets again—could not, it seems, imagine where or what sort of a place New South Wales could be, and thought, as his letter clearly expresses it, that if there should be any authors in that distant, benighted, and despised land, they must of necessity be plagiarists. Field's answer to this insinuation does not appear, although he himself became one of the *literati* of the Colony; but to me it is evident that Lamb's imputation was more humorous than just. Australia certainly has a Literature, though it is a circumscribed one, and her authors are not plagiarists, though few in number. Ours

would be a pitiable country indeed if it had not a Literature of its own ; and if its people were not imbued with some taste and desire for learning and knowledge. A classic author has sagely remarked

Vita hominis sine literis, mors est.

(The life of man without literature is death,) and no doubt the sentiment is morally true. Men of mind, as you must be aware, would experience a moral defunction were they altogether deprived of the luxury—or rather the necessary—of books. It is well known that if even a newspaper be delayed in its delivery beyond the accustomed time, a mental want is felt, as disagreeable in its way as the actual cravings of hunger—a want which has to be satisfied ere the longing individual recovers his wonted serenity and composure. The possession of a literature cherished by a community, is one of the surest signs of the existence amongst it of a state of high civilization. It forms a grand distinguishing mark between a people elevated by refinement, and another sunk in the depths and degradation of barbarism. Lord Bacon, the English Solon, says that “learning softens the barbarity and fierceness of men’s minds, prevents all levity, temerity, and insolence, by suggesting doubts and difficulties, and inviting the mind to balance the reason on both sides, and reject the first offer of things, or to accept of nothing but what is first examined and tried. It prevents vain admiration, which is the root of all weakness ; things being admired either because they are new, or because they are great. Learning also conquers or mitigates the fear of death and adverse fortune, which is one of the greatest impediments to virtue and morality. Again, the pleasure and delight of knowledge and learning surpass all others ; in all other pleasures there is a satiety. But of knowledge there is no satiety, for here gratification and appetite are perpetually interchanging, and consequently this is good in itself, simply without fallacy or accident. We see how much more durable the monuments of genius and learning are than those of the hand. The verses of Homer have continued above five and twenty hundred years without loss, in which time numberless palaces, temples, castles, and cities have been demolished and are fallen to ruin.” Bacon divides human learning and literature (including theology) into three grand divisions or classes, “derived from the three different faculties of the soul, the seat of learning—history being relative to the memory, poetry to the imagination, and philosophy to the reason.” I need scarcely remark that my lecture will touch only upon the two first of these classes, history and poetry, the colony not having yet produced any native philosophers—at any rate such as have become known by their writings. Nor is it my intention to advert to publications upon theology or the exact sciences.

In pursuing the course I have marked out for myself, I shall divide my subject into a consideration and review of the literature, whether of history or poetry, which is comprised in the journals, magazines, and volumes, which have, from time to time, appeared in, or been published

in connection with, the colony. I will commence then with the newspapers. Although New South Wales is considerably behind in other literary matters, the progress which she has made in this department of literature since the first dawn of colonial letters in 1803, is remarkable. "Sixty Years ago" was the alias, or second name, which Sir Walter Scott gave to his first novel, "Waverly;" but whilst he referred to the times of Prince Charlie and Flora MacDonald, "Sixty Years ago" with us was the era when the first newspaper was published in New South Wales. Would it be called a newspaper at the present day? I doubt it. I suspect such a production would be distinguished by the name of some less pretentious article. I possess one of the early numbers; they are extremely rare, and not to be had for love or money. The only complete sets that I know of to be found in the Colony are those at the Colonial Secretary's office, the Australian Library, and the Parliamentary Library. Mr. Justice Wise has been endeavouring at great pains and expense to gather in, as literary and historic curiosities, whatever stray numbers may be floating about in the colony or elsewhere. Having asked me if I could assist him in his object, I replied that I had only the one number, and my antiquarian predilections made me selfish enough not to part with it. From the histories of the period we learn that although a small printing press was brought to the Colony by Governor Phillip, (the first Governor), it was never turned to use during his administration. It was used for the first time under Governor Hunter, in November, 1795, for printing public notices and government orders. One George Howe, a Creole, born 1769, from the island of St. Kitts, (or Christopher) in the West Indies, was the first Government printer. It was not, however, till the government of Captain King, that a newspaper was tried. This was the *Sydney Gazette*, or *New South Wales Advertiser*. The printer was George Howe, already named. The first number appeared March, 1803. It was the only paper for many years, and was the sole recognized medium for government proclamations and notices—in fact it was a thorough government paper. Some of these old *Gazettes* contain accounts of matters which are amusing enough at the present day. From the number which I produce, dated Sunday, February 15th, 1807, it will be seen what kind of thing it is. It is only a small half-folio sheet of inferior paper, containing altogether six columns, and is printed in old worn-out type. It contains three general orders by command of the Governor, the first being against the erection of stills; the second against bartering grain for spirits, and sentencing prisoners to the lash and free persons to imprisonment with hard labour for an infringement of the law; and the third enjoining the destruction of all curs and useless dogs. The local intelligence is very bare. It seemed that the magistrates in those days regulated the price of bread, as the following announcement would shew: "The average price of wheat being as last week, the assize of bread was ordered by the Bench of Magistrates to stand as before, viz. 13d. the loaf for wheaten, and 10d. for household bread." Dear as the loaf is just now, it is not quite so bad as that. The *Gazette* gradually increased in size, and is a most

valuable record of the public events during the period of its existence. George Howe died 11th May, 1821, and was succeeded by his son, Robert Howe, who carried the paper on. In the year 1832 it ceased to be the Government medium. In that year the present *Government Gazette* was first published. The old *Gazette* lived for thirty-seven years altogether, down to the year 1840. I have one of the last numbers, June 13th of that year, shewing how it increased in size fourfold. At one time it was published daily. Up to the year 1824, when the liberty of the press was granted, it was unopposed as a colonial newspaper. During the government of Darling in 1824 and 1826, two independent papers were started. The *Australian* was brought out 14th October, 1824, under the auspices of Mr. Wentworth and Dr. Wardell, both barristers, the latter being the first responsible editor. The *Monitor* was established by Edward Smith Hall, May 19th, 1826. These papers were conducted for a number of years with much spirit and ability; but the editors embroiling themselves in libels upon the Government, for which they suffered fine and imprisonment, their papers ultimately succumbed to adversity, and are now amongst the things that were. The late George Robert Nichols attempted a few years back to revive the *Australian*, but did not succeed. In 1835 Dr. Lang established a paper called *The Colonist*, of which I have one number, dated March 24th, 1838. It was generally in opposition to the other papers, and was conducted with much talent and acted as the "censor morum" of the time. However, like its contemporaries, it also fell after a few years existence, but not without having effected considerable good in reforming the morals of the community. Amongst the numerous other papers, however, that have appeared at various times in the colony, *The Sydney Atlas*, which flourished for four years, viz., in 1845-6-7-8, was decidedly the most talented and influential. I possess the four volumes of which that paper consists. They are not now to be purchased, and I have been offered a large sum of money for my set. This paper was started under most favorable circumstances, and it took amazingly with the public at first. Amongst its early editors or contributors, were Robert Lowe, lately an imperial minister; William Forster, the present Colonial Secretary; the late Richard Windeyer, barrister; and James Martin, the present Attorney General and Premier. It was opposed to the administration of Sir George Gipps, generally favored the squatting interest, and contained some powerful phillipics, in prose and verse, against the government of the day. As a literary production it has never been equalled by any publication of the kind that has appeared in the colony. *The Weekly Register* was also published at this time, and though less pretentious than the *Atlas*, was a clever little paper. Its politics were opposed to the *Atlas*, and it favored Sir George Gipps' policy. Its editor, Mr. Duncan, on the paper ceasing to be published, was appointed Collector of Customs at Brisbane, an office conferred upon him, it has been said, by the Governor, as a return for the support the paper gave him. A good general weekly paper of the style of the old *Atlas* is much wanted at the present day; and it is a matter of surprise that none such exists.

The typography of the *Atlas* was of a most superior description, and merited for the paper a better fate than befel it.

Having now dealt with such of the departed papers as I think of sufficient note to mention, I shall next refer to the living Literature in that department. Chief amongst Colonial Newspapers of the present day stands undoubtedly the *Sydney Morning Herald*. It is unquestionably first in point of age, resources, and in the ability with which it is conducted. But when you look at the early numbers, you will be amazed at the progress it has made in every respect. Started as a weekly paper by Messrs. Stephens and Stokes, the first number appeared April 18th, 1831. I have the first volume. Look at its diminutive size! The small folio was slightly enlarged in 1832, again in 1833, and in the following year the page became double the original, in fact its present size. In 1836 it was published twice a week, in 1837 three times. In 1841 Messrs. Kemp and Fairfax bought the property and made it a daily paper. In 1853 Mr. Fairfax bought out Mr. Kemp, and at once enlarged the paper from four to eight pages. The present circulation of the *Herald* is immense, some thousands per day; and the monthly Summary for England is usually twice as many. The *Sydney Mail*—which may be called the weekly *Herald*—in four years has reached a circulation of 11,000. The *Herald* possesses the fullest, earliest, and most authentic information on all subjects from nearly every part of the Colony, and in fact I might say the world. Its leading articles generally exhibit much pungency and are models of English composition. Its reporting staff is of the best procurable character, and the paper itself has not improperly been termed the “Times of Australia.” In politics it is moderate or liberal conservative, but it is more as a commercial paper than as a political organ that its power and usefulness are felt and appreciated. Its younger daily competitor, the *Empire*, was originally started in 1850, as a weekly paper, by Mr. Henry Parkes, the well known politician; after the first four issues, it was changed into a daily paper half its present size. It is a more violently political paper than the *Herald*, and represents colonial democratic principles. The leaders are often written with great ability, full of cutting unsparing satire, and powerful invective. Occasionally the *Empire*, from too great readiness to accredit reports and to furnish startling news to the public, has been blamed for making inaccurate announcements, a course which has repeatedly involved it in trouble and expense; but on the whole it is a most useful publication, and has frequently ferreted out abuses, and been the means of drawing attention to grievances which but for the light of its pages would probably have never been thought of. Mr. Parkes, encumbered with debt in consequence of his great undertaking in 1858, failed, and the publication of the paper was suspended for about twelve months; but in May, 1859, it was re-established under the management of the present enterprising proprietors, Messrs. Hanson and Bennett. The circulation is considerable, but only about one half that of the *Herald*. The typography is susceptible of improvement; an alteration which, notwithstanding the heavy weekly outlay of the conductors, amounting, I understand, to between £300 and £400 weekly, will no doubt be carried

into effect some day. It is unnecessary that I should give any extracts from these papers as specimens of their style. They are so frequently before the public—such household words—that to do so would be an act of supererogation. Suffice it to say that the Colony has some reason to be proud of its daily press—whether as literary productions or as useful publications. In my opinion, the contemporary newspapers of the neighbouring colonies are not to be compared to ours in any respect. I shall not dilate upon the weekly or bi-weekly journals which are now published, as time would not permit, and they are so well known: but I cannot refrain from making reference with great pleasure to the two illustrated papers which have recently been started. A *Sydney Punch* has made its appearance, which does no dishonour to its great prototype, whether as regards its artistic or its literary characteristics; and the *Illustrated Sydney News*, which it is intended to issue monthly, has made a good beginning and is a highly creditable production. I trust both of these papers will be well supported. They are calculated to be of great benefit and use to the Colony, and will bring it into notice in a manner that no other means that could be devised would accomplish. Attempts have been made before to establish illustrated papers in Sydney, but they were such spiritless productions that they were very short lived.

The next branch of my subject relates to Magazines. Several endeavours to establish Magazines in Sydney have been made, but I regret to say they have all failed. One of the earliest efforts of the kind was that of *The New South Wales Magazine*, conducted by the Rev. Ralph Mansfield, in the year 1833. Magazines had been attempted before then, but this, though the best which had been tried up to that time, gave way after twelve months' experience: Another *New South Wales Magazine* was published in 1843, which only saw out eleven numbers. Together with merely literary and political articles these magazines gave summaries of the month's news. Some of the essays exhibit considerable talent. *The Sydney University Magazine* was started in 1855. It seemed to come out under favorable auspices, and was intended to supply a want urgently felt by the community. The design was copied from the *Dublin University Magazine*—one of the ablest and oldest of the kind in the mother country. In promoting it the members of the University, professors and students, naturally took a part as contributors to its pages; yet, notwithstanding the powerful talent at its back, it departed like its predecessors after only three monthly issues. Perhaps the day will yet come when a University Magazine will be permanently established amongst us. But I have next to speak of the best and most successful instance of a colonial Magazine which has ever appeared. I refer to *The Month*, which was commenced by Mr. Frank Fowler in July, 1857. It had a longer career and was characterised by more spirit and ability than any that had preceded it. It contained numerous articles of originality and interest—of a grave and gay, poetical and prosaic character—with some smart reviews and neat biographical notices. Mr. Fowler had some clever contributors to its pages, amongst whom were Mr. Richard

Rowe, (Peter Possum), Mr. Sheridan Moore, Henry Halloran, and J. L. Michael, and he seemed to be getting on well with his work when circumstances compelled him to leave the colony. The Magazine was then carried on under the editorship of Mr. Moore, but after seeing out eighteen numbers it came suddenly to an end. Bound together, these make a most interesting volume, well worthy of being placed on the shelves of a library. No successful effort has been made to establish a Literary Magazine in the colony since this, and at the present moment we are without one. This is some reproach to us as a community, particularly as I believe a very good magazine has succeeded in a sister colony. I hope, however, the period is not far distant when the colony will support periodical literature of this description. It affords a grateful outlet for latent talent, it being a well-known fact that many of the finest productions of genius in other countries have first been brought out through the medium of a magazine. In an article in the *Month* on the support of letters in Australia, the writer laments the fact that little encouragement is given to men of genius in this Colony. As pertaining to the subject under notice, and as a specimen of the style of writing in this periodical, I will quote the following passage, which bears marks of Mr. Fowler's pen. After premising that, in any country, old or new, the man of education has the same claim upon the State as the skilled or unskilled laborer, the writer proceeds;—

This much being conceded—and the basis upon which we start is surely narrow and modest enough—we unhesitatingly affirm that men of education in Australia have not up to this period in our history had fair play. We have no desire to prate the nobility of talent—although it is a common thing enough to prate of the nobility of labour,—but we believe we only utter a fact long apparent to all who have the faculties for any thing besides the groping together of dollars, when we say that the man of letters, the artist, the scholar, the profession in fact of any of the higher branches of art, is in this community most shamefully driven to the wall. Our custom in this matter is as antipodean to that of the old world as our geographical position. Let the reader imagine, if he can, a man of undoubted genius unaided by wealth or other adventitious advantages appointed to an exalted position in this country. Who can conceive of a person of high intellect nominated on that ground to the Upper House? Nay, would Mr. Thackeray himself stand any chance on the platform against the author of the “Murmurs?”

The Sydney Magazine of Science and Art was carried on by Mr. Waugh for two years, 1847-9, but was discontinued, I am sorry to say, for want of sufficient support. It contained the transactions and papers of the Philosophical and scientific societies about Sydney.

The Heads of the People was an agreeable miscellany or weekly illustrated magazine, published in 1847 and 1848, by that enterprising man in his day, William Baker, of almanac notoriety. Baker was a lithographer, and in his publication he found a field for the practice of his art; whilst the letter-press contained many well written and entertaining compositions, both in poetry and prose. The work contains some good likenesses of the men of the time, and even at the present day it may be perused with delight. In the absence of *Punch* it supplied a fund of amusement; and its weekly arrival was hailed with pleasure by its readers.

I ought not to leave this portion of my subject without a passing allusion to the Book Almanacs, some of which are rare and valuable for historical reference at the present day. The first of the kind is said to have been published in 1817, by George Howe, the Government printer, with very modest pretensions. Year by year it improved till it resulted in 1830 and 1831 in a substantial and creditable volume, containing as well a directory of the Colony. From this time the publication of Almanacs seems to have gone back till about 1849, when the "Australian Almanac" was commenced by Mr. Ford, at first as a small shilling publication but gradually extending itself till it had reached its present form. This almanac was very much improved under the auspices of Mr. James Waugh, who was its publisher after Mr. Ford for several years. Some of the volumes, particularly those commencing from 1857, contain interesting essays and articles on colonial subjects well worthy of preservation, and which I believe were specially prescribed by Mr. Waugh and obtained by him at considerable trouble and expense.

As I have referred to the Book Almanacs I cannot omit noticing, with pleasure, "Wellbank's Nautical Almanac." It is the same size as Waugh's; contains 160 pages of most excellent matter, ably and industriously compiled, and well printed, for the use of sea faring persons in these colonies. It is now in its fourth year of publication, and I am happy to find that the work has the entire confidence of the Nautical men of Australasia, and that its circulation, already large, is increasing.

Numerous pamphlets have appeared at various times from the Colonial press on miscellaneous subjects, but chiefly on political and religious questions. As few of them possess any literary merit, I do not consider it worth while to refer particularly to any of them. Some Colonial translators have appeared. A Mr. Marcus Collison was the author of a neat translation of a curious little Greek work, called "Psellus' Dialogue on the operation of Demons," with comments, which appeared from the *Atlas* press in 1843.

I now arrive at the Book literature of the Colony, and in briefly reviewing it, I have to state that I shall notice not only the works of native authors but of those who have made Australia their adopted country. I shall also deem it within the scope of my lecture to refer to some of those works, whether of native authors or otherwise, which have a purely Australian character. All works published in the Colony, whoever the author may be, I shall, in addition, include within my category. To confine my observations to native authors only, would, I conceive, be anything but satisfactory.

The first book said to have been published in the Colony, was "Busby on Vineyards," which appeared in 1825. But it is not my purpose now to notice this work; but to introduce to you the historical literature of the Colony. In doing so, I fear I must in all sincerity repeat the oft asserted phrase, "The History of the Colony has yet to be written." It is too true we have no purely historical work on the Colony, simply, perhaps, because we have no history to engage upon.

The books which are called histories, might more correctly be termed chronicles. None of them rise to the dignity of historical writing. But, as has been said "we are now making history," and the time will no doubt arrive when a native Gibbon, or a Hume will arise, worthy to be ranked with those great masters of historical composition. Meantime let us be content, if not gratified with what we have in that way; so far as it goes it is valuable.

After Governor Phillips' "Voyage to Botany Bay, with an account of the Colonies of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island," the third edition of which was published in 1790, the earliest noticeable work of a historical character on New South Wales, was that of David Collins, who was a lieutenant of the Royal Marines, under Captain Phillip, and afterwards Judge Advocate of the Colony. It consisted of two volumes quarto, issued in succession, and contained an account of the Colony down to 1801. It reads more like a book of memoirs or travels in the style of a journal, than anything else. However, it has been the groundwork of all the subsequent histories, and is venerated on that account. It is now exceedingly rare. It contains much information about the aborigines of the period in which it was written, and is embellished with several handsome engravings. It was reviewed by Sydney Smith of *The Edinburgh*, and that able writer says of it, "Mr. Collins' book is written with great plainness and candour: he appears to be a man always meaning well; of good plain common sense; and composed of those well wearing materials which adapt a person for situations, where genius and refinement would only prove a source of misery and of error." There were works on New South Wales prior to Collins', such as "White's Journal," (1790) and "Tench's Transactions of New South Wales, from 1788 to 1791." Barron Field, who was appointed Judge of the Supreme Court in 1817, and whom I have already spoken of as the correspondent of Charles Lamb, became the author (says Flanagan) of one of those works on Australia, in 1825, which evincing very little industry, and not much erudition, are at the present day all but valueless. It contained chiefly some papers read before the then Philosophical Society of New South Wales, with some wretched poetical effusions called "Botany Bay Flowers" at the end. Peter Cunningham's "Two years in New South Wales" appeared in 1828. O'Hara also wrote a work in the Colony, about this time, as did the celebrated Barrington, who was chief constable at Parramatta. These are now almost forgotten, and of little interest at the present day. The latter was chiefly remarkable for containing a clever poetical address, spoken at the opening of the first Sydney Theatre, and lately rescued from oblivion by my friend, Mr. Waugh, who re-published it in a little brochure, called "The Stranger's Guide to Sydney."

To the honor of the Colony be it said, the first really valuable and permanent work, comprising history and statistics upon the Colony, was that by a native author—William Charles Wentworth. The third edition, in two volumes, was published in 1824. It is generally designated "Wentworth's History of New South Wales;" but although it contains a certain amount of historical information down to the

period of publication, it is in fact nothing more than its title page indicates—"a statistical account of British settlements in Australia, including the Colonies of New South Wales, with an enumeration of the advantages they offer, and directions and advice to emigrants." A great deal of it is taken up with descriptive and topographical details of the physical features and characteristics of the Colony, as presented at the time he wrote, and taken from the surveys and observations of the early surveyors, Mr. Oxley and others. It was written shortly after the departure of Governor Macquarie from the Colony, in 1823, and the political portions of it contain an elaborate defence of that gentleman's government in answer to the adverse statement of Mr. Commissioner Bigge, who was sent out by the home Government to report upon the state of the Colony. Mr. Bigge made his report in 1819, and it contained most offensive allusions concerning, and serious charges against, the Governor. Mr. Wentworth apologises for and defends Macquarie with much warmth and ability, and some of his blows at the colonial aristocracy of those days who opposed the rather liberal social measures of the Governor, are dealt out in a most trenchant manner. Dr. Lang, in his history, is at issue with Mr. Wentworth in the matter. Both accounts are worthy of perusal by the curious. Of Mr. Bigge and his report, Mr. Wentworth thus delivers himself:—

"From the moment of his disastrous landing in the Colony, the tendency of his sentiments and feelings was sufficiently obvious. Though preserving a friendly deportment towards the government himself, he treated all those who were the objects of the Governor's confidence and support with a repulsive and supercilious reserve, whilst the most influential of the faction, who had been the systematic opponents of the Governor's measures, instantly became, by a sort of political instinct, his bosom friends, were consulted by him upon all occasions, had access to him at all hours, and were, in short, almost the only persons from whom he thought fit to receive any of the evidence on which his report has been founded. Such being the source of his information, it was obvious *a priori* what spirit that document would breathe; and, in fact, this phoenix of a Commissioner, to do him justice, has far outstripped the anticipations even of the most sanguine of the party to whose guidance he had resigned himself; for instead of healing those wounds, and allaying those animosities which have so long distracted this unhappy community, he has sown, with a prodigal hand, the seeds of new and still more inveterate dissensions. Instead of confining his report to public objects and public interests, he has polluted almost every page of it with private scandal and vituperation, as if these had been the exclusive ends of his appointment. This nauseous trash, the insertion of which could conduce to no one object of public utility, and could only indeed have been meant to inflict a gratuitous wound on individual feeling, he has not scrupled to promulgate to the world on the faith of mere *ex-parte* evidence, collected with mischievous industry from the very dregs and refuse of the people—from the rogues and vagabonds of Sydney—on evidence too, not even taken under the sanction of an oath, because, forsooth, his high mightiness could not brook the indignity of receiving a commission of the peace from his Majesty's representative."—Vol. i. p. 388.

He then winds up his powerful phillipic as follows:—

These infant communities are yet like a piece of un moulded wax, open to any impression that may be stamped upon them. They are a prolific evil yet unsown, and capable alike of producing the rankest weeds or the most luxuriant harvests. Benefits sown there will yield gratitude; justice, content; injuries, hatred; oppression, resistance in the first instance, defeat and separation in the end. Past history

attests that tyranny flourishes but for a season; that injustice triumphs but for a day. The events of the present hour are not less demonstrative of this great and consolatory axiom. Within the circle of their own Empire as without it, the most instructive lessons, the most awful warnings are everywhere to be gathered. Ireland, the West Indies, Greece, and South America are all living proofs of this truth; and Europe itself from one extremity to the other, is a pregnant volcano threatening to vomit its hidden vengeance on its trembling oppressors or those who have built their greatness on the thralldom and miseries of their fellow men. . . . Let the minister for the colonies then take heed how he acts; for on his conduct in the organization of that new constitution for these colonies which has been promised, and which their increased growth and necessities demand will depend, whether in fine these infant establishments will remain the attached and dutiful child of a considerate parent, or seize the first favorable opportunity that shall occur, to renounce the control of an unwise, and an unfeeling master. His Lordship should know that it is in the tendency of Colonies to outstrip even legitimate restraints! How then can it be expected that they will long wear the fetters of injustice and oppression? vol. i. page 418.

These extracts afford a fair specimen of Mr. Wentworth's style as a writer, and of his declamatory power. He was then a young man, and full of enthusiasm. I question much, whether in his riper years, he would have given expression to such inflammatory sentiments. The strictures were to some extent merited; but the *Edinburgh Review*, in an article from the pen of Sydney Smith supported Mr. Bigge. The publication at this juncture however of Mr. Wentworth's work must have had considerable effect in modifying public opinion concerning Macquarie, whilst Mr. Bigge himself no doubt quailed under its fierce assaults.

Time will not permit me to dwell longer upon Mr. Wentworth's work: and I can only make a passing allusion to a publication upon the colony, by Mr. James Macarthur, another native, which appeared in 1837. It relates almost solely to political and social matters, the public interest in which has long since passed away, and which it would be inexpedient now to revive, even by a simple reference. As a literary work it is carefully composed, and its contents will be found useful by the future historian.

The Rev. Dr. Lang's "Historical and Statistical" account of New South Wales, is perhaps better known than any of its kind in the colony. It is most frequently quoted, and certainly, the first volume has more the aspect of history than any work of that character on the colony which has yet appeared. As a literary performance it is decidedly superior to all the other histories of the colony which have been published; yet I regret having to remark that it contains blemishes which detract greatly from its merits. The author has disfigured his work with acrimonious personal attacks upon those who differ from him, whether in politics or religion; and I fear he has overdrawn a picture when it was necessary, as he thought, "to point a moral or adorn a tale." Nevertheless, the work is a most valuable one, and contains many interesting details not to be found in any other. It has reached a third edition, neatly printed and published in 1852. The first and second editions appeared in the years 1834 and 1837; but as is remarked in the preface to the third edition, "the wonderful development of the colony during the last fifteen

years, and the manifold and important changes that have taken place in its general condition and prospects, only a small portion comparatively of the original work has been embodied in the present edition." It was written at sea whilst on a voyage to England, as were several of the Doctor's works. The first volume is entirely historical—from the earliest period down to the administration of Sir Charles Fitzroy. The second volume dilates upon statistical and descriptive matters with large references to Educational and Religious topics. Passing over the many exciting narratives of a political and polemical character which the work contains, I will only quote the following interesting account of the great flood of August, 1806, which has been painfully referred to by way of comparison to the grievous visitation of the same kind which our district has recently experienced.

There had been a flood in the Hawkesbury and Nepean Rivers in the year 1801; but as the number of settlers on the alluvial land, on their banks, was then comparatively small, it had done but little damage, and had affected the Colony generally, but very slightly. But as the number of settlers in that fertile district had greatly increased during the five following years, and as a large majority of these settlers had, notwithstanding the warning already given them, continued to erect their houses, and to form their farm-yards within reach of the inundations of the river, which in 1806 rose from eight to ten feet higher than in the former flood, the alarm, and the loss sustained, were proportionally great. In places where there was high ground easily accessible, in the rear of the settlers' houses, they had to retreat as the waters rose; and one of the Scotch settlers at Portland Head informed me many years ago, that, during the night of Saturday, the 22nd March, 1806, the waters rose so rapidly, that he had to remove his family three times, successively, to higher, and still higher ground, before morning, although his wife had been confined only the preceding day. In many places, however, the high grounds were inaccessible, from the intervening waters; and in these cases, the settlers and their families were to be seen clinging for hours together, to the roofs or ridges of their houses, in the expectation of being at length swept away by the impetuous current, till they were rescued from their perilous situation by means of boats, which a few benevolent persons plied for the purpose, often at the risk of their own lives. The loss of life was indeed considerable, although by no means so great as might have been expected; but the loss of property, and especially of grain and stock, was extensive and exceedingly calamitous. Two hundred stacks of wheat were in one day swept into the river, and carried into the sea. Many of these were covered with pigs, dogs, and poultry, that had taken refuge upon them from the rising of the waters; and as they occasionally approached the banks, as they were swept along by the rapid current, the poultry generally took flight and reached the land. The settler whom I have already mentioned, and whose farm was situated on a beautiful bend of the river, with high ground in the rear, has told me that he has seen no fewer than thirty stacks floating down the river at one time. Several remarkable escapes are related as having taken place during the flood. For example, a settler of the name of Leeson, who with his mother, wife, and two children, together with two convict servants, had taken refuge on the top of a barley-mow in his farm-yard, was swept away with all his household on the mow, and carried to a distance of nearly seven miles, where they were all taken off during the night by another settler in a boat, although, with great difficulty. Walter Scott, a shoemaker, and two women, the wives of small settlers in the neighbourhood, had all taken refuge in the farm of another settler, named Chalker. But Chalker's house being within reach of the inundation, he had, at length, to take to his boat, together with the three persons I have mentioned, and a child of his own, of five years of age. By some fatal accident, however, the boat was upset, and these three persons were all drowned; but Chalker, who could swim, seizing his child, struck out for the nearest dry ground, which was nearly a mile distant. Instead of giving way to fear, as would have been natural in such circumstances, the child endeavoured

to embarrass his parent as little as possible, and even cheered him occasionally by telling him they were nearly out of danger, till they both reached the land. The boy Chalker, who appears to have been what his early associates would have called "game" from the first, lived to be a noted Australian pugilist, and was long the Champion of the Colony.

I am told on reliable authority that the Doctor is in error in asserting that the boy alluded to as having been saved by Chalker was Chalker's own son. The fact is, as I have been credibly informed, that the youth in question was William Bradley—now a very wealthy and influential gentleman, and who once represented Argyle in the old Legislative Council. Flanagan does not bear out the Doctor in the statement: he merely says that Chalker saved a boy, without giving his name. The account given of the height of this flood alone seems incredible. The late very high flood of June last only rose something less than fifty feet. A flood, eighty feet high, would have swept over the town of Windsor. Dr. Lang says in another part of his work that the flood of 1809 rose 6 or 8 feet higher than that of 1806, and Wentworth in his history actually states that one flood rose 93 feet; this is more incredible still. I suspect these were mere guesses, and, as all guesses very often are, very wide of the truth. The account, however, of the flood of 1806, apart from its height, is exceedingly well told; for although the destruction of property from the infancy of the district may not have been so great, it was more terrible in another sense than the recent inundation, inasmuch as some valuable lives were lost on that occasion, whereas we were so far fortunate lately that not a single individual perished, though many were in imminent peril. Dr. Lang has written several other works besides his history; in fact he is the most voluminous author we have in Australia. Besides a volume of sacred poetry, he wrote "Religion and Education in America," "A View of the Origin and Migration of the Polynesian Nations," "Transportation and Colonization," "New Zealand," "Phillipsland," "Cookland," and "Freedom and Independence for the Golden Lands of Australia." He has also published several Pamphlets.

I now come to the latest historical work on the Colony—that by Roderick Flanagan. This history might more properly be called "Annals of New South Wales." The author complains in his Preface, not without cause, that of only two works called "Histories of the Colony," which have appeared since Collins' account—alluding I suppose to Wentworth's and Lang's—one of them is scanty in its chronological details and glaringly partial, while the other is characterised in a still larger degree by at least one of the defects of the former, that of crudity in its narrations. Mr. Flanagan certainly cannot be condemned—if it be a fault—for the scantiness of his details. In fact I think he has erred in going too far in that direction, and many of his pages contain nothing but newspaper paragraphs of domestic intelligence scarcely worthy of being reproduced in serious history. But he says the design of his work is to furnish "a connected narrative" of the affairs of New South Wales from the period when the country first came under the notice of Europeans down to the present time. I gladly

admit that in this respect his history is the most complete and valuable work that has appeared. It contains simple chronicles of events, and is not incumbered with those statistical particulars and philosophical disquisitions which form so large a proportion of the work of Wentworth and of Lang. The author has exhibited much industry, and it must ever be a matter of sincere regret that he was cut off in the hey-day of life before the sheets of his first volume had passed through the press—an event which occasioned many typographical errors in the second volume, from the want of his personal supervision. Mr. Flanagan, like Dr. Lang, prominently betrays his denominational peculiarities in the course of his writings. This is a serious defect in a historian. The beauty of history is its impartiality—for which reason Gibbon will always hold a high place in the estimation of men of learning and discrimination. Mr. Flanagan, I believe, was a young man of worth and amiability, and had Providence seen fit to have spared him, he might have proved of great use in promoting the literature of his adopted country. Like many others of the *literati* of Australia, he was employed on the reporting staff of one of the daily papers—an occupation which brought him into personal contact with many of the leading men of the Colony, and befitted him the better for reducing into his second volume, from actual observation, much of the interesting matter which it contains. The first volume is, in my opinion, the most interesting: inasmuch as it treats of matters of which most of us have no personal knowledge. The following is respecting Governor Phillip and the discovery of the Hawkesbury:—

Early in June, 1789, the Governor set out on an excursion to Broken Bay, with the view to ascertaining whether or not it was practicable to reach the mountains from the head of that harbour. The result of this visit was the discovery of the Hawkesbury—an event of the greatest importance to the future career of the Colony. Not having sufficient provisions to allow of his tracing the stream to its source, Phillip returned, after an absence of ten days, with the intention of revisiting the river.

This design he immediately set about carrying into effect, and on the 29th set off a second time with a considerable party, and with provisions for twenty-one days.

On the 14th July he returned, having traced the river to the place where Windsor now stands. The indications of extensive freshes in the stream which here presented themselves, deterred the explorers from proceeding farther or remaining for a longer period. The traces of inundations rising from twenty to forty feet above the ordinary level were evident in various places. The windings of the stream were found exceedingly picturesque, and the soil on the banks very fertile. The river, which was the first of any note met with in the colony, was named the Hawkesbury, after the nobleman who was at that time at the head of the Council of Trade and Plantations. The discovery of this beautiful and noble stream is not the least of the honors to which the first Governor of the Colony is entitled. V. I. p. 46.

In December, 1792, Phillip began to make preparations for his departure from England. The following eloquent panegyric is passed upon him by the historian:—

Phillip was the Æneas of New South Wales—the conductor of the fleet that bore its founders over tempestuous seas, through severe climes, and even amid those dangers usually incident to war; for this was a period when wars were frequent

among the European nations. He was the chief contriver of those arrangements by which it was firmly established, and its absolute ruler for a period of five years. The leader of what must be regarded as the forlorn hope of Australian colonization, he never shrunk from the dangers and difficulties which presented themselves from the first outlet of the enterprise, and increased at every step taken in advance. Every present danger was met face to face; every future difficulty foreseen, and as far as possible provided against

The discovery of the Hawkesbury and the exploration of that important river, as far as those fertile localities, the occupation of which afterwards exercised so important an influence on the progress of the Colony, are events, which of themselves must ever make the name of Phillip honorable in connection with the history of New South Wales. The first Governor of the Country, by appointment, the discovery of the Hawkesbury entitles him to a place in the list of those enterprising men, who, by their explorations and travels, have perpetuated their own names, added large territories to the possessions of the Colony and of the Empire, promoted human knowledge, and enriched the various fields of science.

Of the first Governor of New South Wales it may be said, that however meritorious some of his successors may have been, the reader of Australian history will always transfer to the brow of Phillip a branch from the laurels of the best. V. I. p.—

Flanagan's second volume contains a succinct narrative of the principal occurrences of the colony which took place under the administrations of the later Governors—Gipps, Fitzroy, and Denison; and brings down the history to the recent period of 1860. A large portion of it is occupied with accounts of the conflicts and successful agitations which were carried on in the colony against the renewal of transportation—and of the political struggle for those free institutions which we now enjoy. Mr. Wentworth's name appears prominently in these contests, evidencing him as the foremost colonial politician and statesman of the day. The events referred to are within the memory of most persons. Almost the last thing mentioned by Flanagan, is an account of the disastrous floods which took place in 1860, which many will remember. The work altogether is a valuable addition to the historic lore of colony. Another edition would improve it very much, if it were only for the sake of correcting the numerous errors of the press in the second volume.

Judge Therry, after leaving the colony, published in 1863 his "Thirty years Reminiscences of New South Wales and Victoria." It is a light sketchy and amusing book—full of anecdotes—but is written with little care, and has been justly censured for its numerous blunders. I think the worthy Judge might have done something better had he taken the necessary pains.

I have now done with the works generally designated historical. There are some others of a quasi-historical, but more strictly of a scientific and geographical character, to which I can only refer by name. The only two necessary to mention particularly, that I am aware of—apart from the productions of the Surveyors and Explorers, Oxley, Mitchell, Leichhardt, and others—are "Cunningham's Botanical Researches"—and Dr. Bennett's Natural history of the Colony. I have not had an opportunity of perusing these books, and others of a similar character; but from Reviews of them which I have seen, I have no doubt they are

valuable contributions to the literature of the colony. Mr. Busby already referred to, wrote some treatises upon the Culture of the Vine and upon Horticulture, which were most useful publications of their kind. Time will not permit to refer to all the works of that character which have issued from the Colonial press.

It is my intention to conclude with a notice of the Australian Poets and Poetry. Previous however to doing so, I will touch upon the light literature of the colony. First, if not foremost in this field, stands amongst native geniuses at least, the present Premier, James Martin. Whilst but a youth of eighteen, he wrote a series of sketches after the manner of Washington Irving's, which, considering his then early age and disadvantages, are not the least creditable of the productions of his pen. A carping critic in the *Month* has characterised them as "sad twaddle;" but I hesitate not to say that some portions of them compare favorably with the emanations of the great American sketcher himself. Parts of them are jejune and stilted enough—the natural effects of juvenescence—but Mr. Martin is so far entitled to respect, that no Australian author in the same line has yet surpassed him. This may not be saying much, but it is something to his credit. The little volume published in 1838, contains articles on the Sublime in Nature, The Thunder storm, Botany Bay, the Colosseum at Rome, Genius, the Pseudo Poets, War, Bondi, Sunrise, Sunset, and others. Would time permit I should like to give a portion of the article on War, which is written with much originality and power. But I can do no more than subjoin portion of the piece on Bondi, which is short and descriptive:—

If, of all the places I have seen, there is one spot more proper for meditation than another—one spot more eminently calculated to inspire the mind with lofty sentiments, and to call forth the latent energies of genius, Bondi Bay is certainly that favored situation. Here might the poet, rushing from the haunts of man, the marts of commerce, and the din and bustle of a busy world, seat himself on some wave-worn stone, which has been washed for centuries by the ocean, draw inspiration from the scene before him, and leave to posterity the lofty sentiments which his excited imagination would create. Here might he stay the live-long day without being tired with the monotony of surrounding objects—idea upon idea, would crowd upon his fancy, and the longer he beheld, the longer would he desire to remain. Byron, in his glorious ode (as Jeffries designates it) on the aspiration of Greece after Liberty, makes the Grecian bard exclaim;—

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs weep;
There swan-like, let me sing and die;
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

Sunium or Helicon or Parnassus may doubtless possess many claims to captivate a poetic mind, but Bondi I feel convinced could, for natural scenery, dispute the palm with any of them. It is such a spot as this, that one might imagine Cowper to be situated when he wrote the exquisite lines supposed to be spoken by Alexander Selkirk in the desert Island of Juan Fernandez. Apart from mankind, exquisitely sensible of the impressions which the scene around might produce upon him, his eyes resting upon the silent solitudes of nature, and his idea of loneliness augmented by the expanse of Ocean before him, and the murmuring of its billows as they

rolled in successively and dashed in spray among the rocks, or covered the extended beach with one unbroken line of silvery foam; the poet might form a vivid idea of the situation of the man whose lament he endeavoured to relate. It may be under circumstances similar to these that the splendid piece which Selkirk is made to speak, was produced; and it is very probably to the inspiration caused by a scene like Bondi, that we are indebted for this classic effusion of poetic genius."

Mr. W. Woolls, of Parramatta, published in 1838 a small volume of *Miscellanies* in prose and verse. The first portion consists of a number of *Essays* on various subjects, amongst which are the *Press*, *Intemperance*, the *Southern Constellations*, the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, and *Education in New South Wales*. The little book exhibits scholarship and taste, and short though the contents be, they are exceedingly interesting. The following concluding paragraph from the *Essay upon Politics*, will convey an idea of Mr. Woolls' style as a writer:—

"Happy was the venerable warrior who preferred the labours of the field to the glittering pomp of the Dictatorship—happy was the Philosopher who could look with indifference on the luxury of Kings—happy was the Emperor who, in order that he might attain peace and serenity of mind, laid aside the imperial purple. The paths of honor are slippery and uncertain, they lead a man to a dreadful pre-eminence, therefore he, who in sweet retirement leads a peaceful and quiet life is rather to be envied than the mightiest of earth's potentates. And we may be assured that whatever our rank and station in society be, little happiness will follow from a constant discussion of political matters. Such enquiries too frequently induce the most painful disputes, and incapacitate the mind for more important subjects. The man who has sold himself to a party, views every thing with a jaundiced eye, and he can see nothing that is good, excellent, or virtuous in those who differ with him in sentiment. Let us then direct our minds to wisdom; let us pursue those subjects which are calculated to enlarge the mind; let us tread in those paths which are likely to secure happiness for us while we remain on earth, and to lead us to the acquisition of the greatest of all blessings, health of body and tranquility of mind."

Mr. Richard Rowe, under the pseudonyme of "Peter Possum," although he is no longer amongst us, before he left, bequeathed to the Colony his clever "*Port Folio*." It contains effusions in poetry and prose—the latter predominating. Most of the articles appeared previously in "*The Month*" magazine; but they come to us in a better shape, in a collected form. Peter was induced to publish, as he tells us in his preface, not from a desire for authorship, but from an atrophy in his purse. Had he been a richer man, Australia might have been deprived of one of its most rich and racy books. The first and longest piece is a fictional autobiography called "*Arthur Owen*," very well written. "*A Trip up the Hunter*," and numerous other amusing sketches follow. Some of them exhibit much wit and learning. Peter without doubt was a scholar of no mean order. Windsor can boast of having once been his "local habitation," though I cannot say that it ever gave him a "name." He still contributes to the literature of the Colony in the shape of monthly letters or articles from the Northern British Capital, published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. I have only time to give the following short extract from a sketch of his, as a specimen of his prose writing:—

AN ECLIPSE OF THE SUN.

"If you're waking, call me early, call me early, Bridget dear," was my poetical appeal last night to my Hibernian handmaiden; and Bridget, for a wonder chancing to wake before seven, I was called in time to see

The sunlight sheathed and gently charmed,
Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,
And as in slumber laid.

Calling to mind how often I had been "in slumber laid" at the unsheathing of his light, I hardly liked to look the sun in the face before his obscuration. It seemed so ridiculous in me, so rude to him, to be getting up at that unreasonable hour *not* to see him. An eclipse of the sun is a rare phenomenon, but so to most of us is his rising. I am almost ashamed to say that in the whole course of my life I have only once witnessed his levee—I was sleeping on the deck of the little "Vivid," darting through the calm summer waters, from Calais to Dover, swift and graceful as a mackerel, when I was aroused by the gruff old steersman with a "Look at that, Sir! It's a sight, I'm thinking, you dont often see." The eastern sky was mottled with a mantling red, recalling the sweet old world myth of the rose-sprinkling hours. The bridegroom was about to come forth from his chamber. A segment of the golden disc was just above the waves, and as it ascended into kingly stateliness, "unhasting, unresting" majesty, its dazzling glory, shooting horizontally along the sea, turned the water into blushing wine—as though in sacramental memory of the "beginning of miracles" wrought by the transmuter's sacred antitype, the Sun of Righteousness—itself an emblem of the enriching change. His mission was to work in the whole life of man. The blush vanished, but myriad spangles glittered on the gently heaving waves, and the wheeling sea birds wing, and here and there a streak of cloud—left white and lonely as a lingering snow wreath, on the deep blue sky—exchanged their spotless purity of hue for burnished brilliance. The cliffs on both sides of the channel *waking*, as it seemed drew back their veil's lavender mist, and smiled a sisterly "good morrow" to each other across the mirror that reflected their fair forms. And over all the sun glowed grandly beautiful, graciously sublime, as though it were the visible all seeing eye of God. Like a Persian, I could have fallen down and worshipped. And yet a sight like this we might see every morning if we chose &c., &c., &c.

Of the little brochure of Possum's friend, Frank Fowler, called "Southern Lights and Shadows," I shall say nothing—the sooner it descends into oblivion, with Baron Munchausen, the better. But I ought not to omit mentioning that Dr. Woolley, of the University, has collected a number of his talented lectures into a neat little volume, which is a most pleasing addition to Colonial Literature.

Australia has not yet produced any novelists of note, if we except Miss Atkinson, who, to the credit of her country and her sex, has published two works of fiction of a highly moral caste. The first, called "Gertrude," is a tale of the Colony, and exhibits life in the bush. Whilst it was being published, Peter Possum, no unworthy critic, described it, speaking to the Authoress as "your pretty, womanly, anxiously looked for, little work." The narrative of every day occurrences is instructive and fascinating: and a reviewer in the *Sydney Herald* described it as "a book of instruction inculcating moral and religious principles." The work is neatly printed and embellished by well executed wood engravings—illustrative of colonial customs and scenery. It was published in numbers, and it is difficult now to obtain a bound copy of the whole.

Miss Atkinson called her second story "Cowanda; or, The Veteran's Grant." It is not so large or pretentious as its predecessor, yet it is very nicely written. The incidents are few, but such as they are they are very graphically described. The following passage, taken at random, is from the seventeenth chapter, page 103. It refers to Rachel, one of the principal female characters:—

Half-past five: at least I shall see Sydney under a new aspect, she mused, securing her mantle, and stepping with noiseless feet down the passage and unlocking the door. The sun was just rising; the golden ball of St. James' Church glistened in the first rays, and then the roofs of the higher buildings caught the amber tint, and so it travelled from gable to gable, and shot in at the upper windows to waken the sleepers; but the streets were still in shade, cool, fresh, and quiet. A group of labourers passed her now and then, with flat baskets, from which protruded saws and squares, or a paint-pot, or trowels in hand; then near the tardy rising walls of the Cathedral, an old woman with a temporary table raised on benches, circulating large cups of coffee and thick slices of bread and butter among her customers—the workmen, and a few late boys, masons, labourers, or bus-boys, perhaps. Not much was said; they ate and drank quietly, and then filed away, and collected in groups, sitting along the curb-stones, and waiting for six o'clock.

The truthfulness of this scene may be ascertained at any time by an early walk in Sydney on a summer morning. I do not know how the works of the talented authoress took with the public—they merited success. I only trust that Miss A. will be encouraged to still greater efforts in that department of literature in which she has shown herself well qualified to shine. It will be known to many that the fair author is a resident of the Kurrajong, and that from her mountain home at Fernhurst, she has contributed many sketches to the columns of the daily journals—chiefly on the subject of botany, a science to which she is an ardent devotee, and in which she has an able guide and friend in Mr. Woolls, of Parramatta.

There was an Australian fiction once published, I believe, called "Martin Beck"; it attained but little recognition, and has not come under my notice. It is not, I conceive, a matter of much moment that I cannot now enter into its subject.

The Drama, which I shall next allude to, is a species of poetry. Dr. Johnson in effect defines it as a poem or fictitious composition in dialogue in which the action is not related but represented. In this peculiar field some of the noblest efforts of genius have been employed, and in its form of composition England's great master mind and greatest poet, Shakespeare, immortalised himself and shed renown upon the literature of his country. There is but little to notice in this line in Australia, but such as it is I will briefly refer to.

There may have been plays written prior to the one I am about to notice, but the earliest that has come under my observation was a tragedy in five acts, from the *Atlas* press, 1843, named "Tarquin the Proud, or the Downfall of Tyranny." The author was Mr. S. P. Hill. It is a production of some merit, but it does not seem to have attained much popularity, and I am not aware that it was ever acted. I have only time and space for one short passage. Tarquin, enraged with Turnus, thus exclaims:—

TARQUIN.—My soul is bursting from my frame,
 Ye gods! there was a time when I was free
 From all pollution, crimes, and murd'rous stains;
 But now they weigh me to the dust. There's nought
 Can blacken fame but I have done. My life
 Is one dark spot upon this glorious world's
 Creation; and all for nothing, less, less
 Than nothing. To be a king—to wear a crown,
 And all reward is ours. Ambitious fools!
 We always love the thing we want; but when
 We've gained the long'd for prize, our love dispels,
 And, like a vapour, disappears: disgust
 Succeeds, which is our only true reward.
 But still I am a King; and who shall dare
 To beard me to my face? Ah! was I King
 When Turnus belch'd his filthy words on me,
 And I did not revenge? And Brutus too!
 But hold! I'll be myself. Two murders more
 Will free me from these dogs. What ho! there boy.

Enter a Page.

This extract, whilst giving an idea of the author's style, will also serve to indicate the sanguinary character of the plot.

In 1853 Mr. Charles Harpur published, with some other poems, a Play in 5 acts, which he entitled "The Bushrangers." The scenes are laid in Windsor, Richmond, and various parts of the interior forest. Eighteen male characters, including the magistrates, the police, and four bushrangers, and five females sustain the action. It is an elaborate production, and evinces much industry on the part of the author, but I cannot award it high merit. It is partly plain prose, and partly blank verse. Several songs are interspersed of a bacchanalian and amorous character. There are some passages of considerable dramatic power and beauty; but Mr. Harpur's fame will rest more upon his regular poems than this species of composition. The play has never been represented, and I do not think it was written for the stage. Portions of the dialogue are forced and improbable. There is a very interesting passage, full of tenderness and poetic sentiment, which forms a conversation between Stalwart, the chief of the gang, and his sweetheart Mary; p. 7:—

STALWART.—So we depart; and here comes Mary
 To take another leave. Poor girl, she loves me;
 And as I deeply feel the charm of being
 Beloved by one, else innocent, despite
 My desperate fortunes, I must grieve as deeply,
 To know what sorrow and shame I and her parents,
 Her all-abandoned parents! are entailing
 Upon the creature that thus loves me! Yes;
 Although a wild, ungovernable heart
 Hath driven me neck-deep in crime;—though misery,
 And burning wrongs have stung me to commit
 Deeds terrible but to name! yet I, at times,
 Am quick to pity.

Enter Mary.

Why so sad, my girl?

MARY.—What Stalwart! can you ask me such a question?

Do you not now depart—going, as it were,
 In quest of an untimely grave, or bonds,
 Or worse than these, of crime? I would not vex you!
 They say you are a wild and fearful man,
 But I will not believe them;—be not angry!
 I ask not what you are: to me you seem
 Only unhappy, like myself; and very—
 Yes, very gentle—at least to me; and this
 Aye makes me weep to think on when you are gone.

STALWART.—This kindness kills me! &c., &c., &c.

The play ends with the shooting of Stalwart by the police. “He falls and dies, the bushrangers crowd round the body, grounding their arms in token of surrender; while the police rush forward to secure them;—the whole forming a large picture as the curtain slowly descends to triumphant music.” I only wish that the police of the present day would be as successful in bringing to such a termination the career of some of the desperadoes that now unhappily infest the interior of the country.

Mr. George F. Pickering, of *Bell's Life in Sydney*, wrote a drama a few years back, which was represented on the Sydney boards. Mr. Pickering is a poet of ability, and the pages of his paper are frequently adorned by lines understood to be from his facile pen. It has not been my good fortune to get hold of a copy of his play, but I remember it was spoken very highly of by the reviewers of the day. I believe it was the first colonial play ever placed upon the stage.

The most successful drama however which has been produced in the Colony is that called “Raymond Lord of Milan,” from the pen of Mr. Edward Reeve, a gentleman at present on the literary staff of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. It is a historical tragedy in blank verse, written in 1847, and published in Sydney, in 1851. “The action of the piece is laid at Milan, in the 13th Century, about the year 1263, when Ramondo Dello Torre (third prince of the house of Torriani) was the reigning chief of the Milanese state. The play is understood to comprise a number of historical facts, as they actually occurred at that strange eventful period, when Italy was convulsed with the terrible wars of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, the result of which was the temporary restoration of the various Italian states to liberty and independence. With the plot of the tragedy are blended several of the striking but less generally known events, which threw a gloom over the last days of Raymond the Lord of Milan, who was, like Rienzi, slain ere his mission was accomplished.” The play was expressly written, we are told, for the late W. Nesbitt, though never performed by him. It was played however for three successive nights in the month of September last at the Victoria Theatre, and a fourth time to a very full house on the 8th of October, 1863; Mr. Warner very ably taking the principal character. It was pronounced by the theatrical critics an unqualified success; and as a literary production, it has been reviewed in several of the Sydney journals in terms of the highest praise. I have only space for one short extract:—

SAL.—

I say

I left my country free, a virgin state,
 In which no coward tongue had dared defend
 The accursed cause of tyranny, she made her laws,
 And all with reverential joy obeyed.
 Aye, she ruled well, because she ruled herself;
 In her senate there was wisdom and vigour;
 And among the people liberty, order, and content,
 And thou—thou that dost well remember this—art calm
 And smilest at the change.

DA ROM.—

What if I do?

SAL.—Why then the love thou feigneds't for Milan
 Was worthless, changing, and contemptible
 As the love of fickle woman.

DA ROM.—

What art going?

SAL.—Aye to search for one that loves his country,
 And when I've looked on him to die.

Probably there are some other plays which have escaped my observation, but I doubt much whether there be any of such a character as to make it a matter of regret that I have overlooked them. Mr. Reeve, the talented author of the last play was once prominently connected with a little magazine called the "Australian Era," which I am sorry to say had but a short lived existence: and he is well known to have contributed largely and ably in various ways to the current literature of the Colony.

In introducing a cursory review of the Poets and Poetry of Australia at the end of my lecture, I fear I am to some extent dealing unkindly with the subject; but it is impossible within the limits of my command I can do more than touch upon the subject in a very brief manner. To do it full justice would require a lecture of itself. Nevertheless, I trust—I will not fail altogether in giving some idea of what has already been done for the fair fame of Australia in the most beautiful and enduring of all arts—the art of poetry—by her native sons and adopted children.

It has been said that to give a concise and satisfactory definition of poetry has hitherto baffled the most learned critics and even the poets themselves. Byron says, it is "but a passion"—others, "beautiful prose." It may with more accuracy be termed "metrical composition," yet metrical composition without passion or sentiment is but poor poetry. Verse is not always poetry. There are verse ~~writers~~ *writers* innumerable who have not a spark of the poet's fire within them. And I need scarcely say (with James Martin in one of his sketches) that Australia has not been free of those pseudo poets—individuals who have no proper conception of the real nature of poetry, and who only make themselves ridiculous by their attempts at versification. Poetry, to be good, must be pleasing to the senses. It ought to be smooth and grateful to the ear. This latter quality is one of the tests of true poetry. There may be fine sentiments expressed in measured lines and verses, but if they be inharmonious in numbers and harsh in language, they can only be considered as mere prosings of fancy. True poetry is

inseparable from music; and the ancients did well to regard the goddess Polymnia as presiding over both rhetoric and singing. We have some versifiers, thinking themselves poets, whose effusions are totally destitute of metre, and have scarcely a shade of rhythm. It is a pity they do not direct their literary meanderings in another channel. I am glad however to think that Australia does possess some true poets; although none of shining greatness has yet appeared in her literary horizon. The fugitive poets of Australia are numerous, and it will not be in my power to refer to them all. The most noticeable however shall receive attention.

First in the list is Australia's most gifted son, William Charles Wentworth, who was a poet before he became a politician. "Australia" has formed a fruitful subject for the poetic muse, but scarcely one has rendered it more justice than Mr. Wentworth. Whilst a student at Cambridge, in 1824, he was one of twenty-five competitors for the prize poem on Australasia, and was allotted the second place after Mr. Præd, the successful candidate. The following passage, having reference to Cook and his companion, Banks, exhibits much feeling:—

Illustrious Cook! Columbus of our shore,
 To whom was left this unknown world 't explore
 Its untraced bounds on faithful chart to mark,
 And leave a light where all before was dark:—
 And thou the foremost in fair learning's ranks,
 Patron of every art, departed Banks,
 Who wealth disdaining and inglorious ease
 The rocks and quicksands braved of unknown seas.
 Immortal pair! when in yon spacious bay
 Ye moor'd awhile its wonders to survey,
 How little thought ye, that the name from you
 Its grateful shrubs, and beauteous wild flowers drew,
 Would serve in after times, with lasting brand,
 To stamp the soil and designate the land;
 And to ungenial climes reluctant scare
 Full many a hive that else had settled there! &c., &c., &c.

The poem concludes with the following animated and highly patriotic apostrophe, which is often quoted:—

And oh, Britannia, should'st thou cease to ride
 Despotic Empress o'er old ocean's tide;
 Should thy tam'd lion, spent his former might,
 No longer roar, the terror of the fight;
 Should e'er arrive that dark disastrous hour
 When bow'd by Luxury, thou yield'st to power
 When thou no longer freest of the free
 To some proud Victor bend'st the vanquish'd knee,
 May all thy glories in another sphere
 Relume, and shine more brightly still than here;
 May this thy last born INFANT then arise
 To glad thy heart, and greet thy PARENT eyes.
 And AUSTRALASIA rise with flags unfurl'd
 A new Britannia in another world!

when/ Mr. S. P. Hill was one of the finest Poets that have appeared in Australia. He filled the office of Secretary to the Sydney School of Arts some years ago, he published some pieces that reflect the highest credit on his memory. His most prominent productions were the "Ode to the departing year," the "Loss of the Catarqui," "Australia," and the "Monody on the death of Sir George Gipps." The last was full of pathos and feeling. It begins thus :

There was a voice of wailing, and it came from lands afar,
 Proclaiming mournfully and sad the falling of a star.
 A light shone in the firmament—though pale, it glittered bright,
 Then sickened in eclipse beneath the sombre shroud of night.

'Tis past—'tis past! and all that now remains,
 The silent grave with mouldy grasp retains.
 His Sun is set! or scarce it had attained
 The bright meridian of its day—it waned. &c., &c., &c.

Mr. Hill, like the subject of his beautiful poem, is now alas no more. I recollect once spending an evening with him in Windsor, which he visited with a mutual friend, Mr. (now the Rev.) R. K. Ewing, another poet, and shall never forget the genial vivacity and wit of his conversation. He left New South Wales shortly afterwards, and settled in Tasmania: and I read with much sorrow that he died in Hobartown a few months ago. A collection of his poems would be very acceptable.

Mr. E. K. Sylvester, another sweet poet, has passed away, after contributing numerous pieces full of tenderness and merit. One was "the Battle of the Sutledge;" another "Leichhardt's Return." This latter was followed by a beautiful poem by a Mr. Lynd, also alas no more, but, sad to say, on an opposite theme, "Leichhardt's Grave." This dirge has been highly praised as a composition "whose touching measure has drawn from many an eye a tear." The following is the first stanza:—

Ye who prepare with pilgrim feet
 Your long and doubtful path to wend,
 If—whitening on the waste—ye meet
 The relics of my murder'd friend;
 His bones with reverence ye shall bear
 To where some mountain streamlet flows;
 There by its mossy banks prepare
 The pillow of his long repose. &c., &c., &c.

Mr. John Rae has contributed to the poetical literature of the colony in his "Mayor's Fancy Ball," "lines on the death of Miss Nathan," and several other pieces. Mr. Woolls, of Parramatta, has published several meritorious effusions—the most remarkable of which is his Ode written to commemorate the establishment of a University in Sydney, which commences thus:—

Amidst the vapours of the mental gloom
 Which hung o'er Sydney, murky as the tomb,
 I heard a voice above the ocean's roar.
 "Let there be light upon Australia's shore." &c., &c., &c.

Mr. Sheridan Moore, the friend of Kendall, has published some lyrics of merit which are deserving of a more lengthened notice than I can afford to give them. Mr. Moore is one of the chief literary men of Australia.

The late unfortunate and lamented Mr. A. J. Evelyn also wrote some beautiful lyrics, which appeared in the papers of the day, 1855. He termed them "Snatches of Song" and "Lyrics of the Sea." A full collection of his poems I have not met with; those I have seen prove him to have been strongly imbued with true poetic feeling. "The Lonely Rock" is a clever lovely little poem—the first and last verses are these:—

In the blue and middle sea
'Neath a heaven bright,
One tall rock imperially
Lifts its lonely height;
Gnomen of the water-dial,
Perch of wandering bird,
Standing there in dumb denial
Of the thunder's word.

* * * * *
Waves are moving all around,
Sun and stars above;
But the rock is steadfast found,
Still and strong as love.
Crowded ships go down to hell
In the tempest shock;
Quiet, calm, immovable
Stands the lonely rock.

Mr. Geoffrey Eagar, the present Colonial Treasurer, is said to have courted the Muses when a young man. I have read pieces by him on the "Myall Tree," "Parting with Friends," and "In memory of E. B. Kennedy." They are of a melancholy moralizing caste, as most of the Australian poems are. Mr. Eagar is a literary man of long standing, and has been a frequent contributor to the leading columns of the Sydney papers. His literary ability—whatever may be said of his statesmanship—is undoubted. His colleague and school companion, Mr. William Forster, the present Colonial Secretary, is also an eminent Colonial *litterateur* and poet. His forte however in the latter respect lies in a different direction to that of his old friend; and he has applied his talents more to the satirical than the sentimental. Some of the most pungent pieces, both in prose and verse, which appeared in the old *Atlas* newspaper were from the pen of Mr. Forster; and the well known dramatic sketch, "The Devil and the Governor," is understood to have been written by him. He has composed numerous Sonnets—the best of which are on the Crimean War. They originally appeared in the old *Empire*. The following is a specimen:—

Sebastopol! that on the sable sea
Sitt'st with the blood of many nations bathed,
Now that war's warning tempest leaves thee free,
How proudly frowning from thy craggy steep,
With haggard looks thou dost survey the deep,
Sublime, though shattered—terrible though scathed!

Oh! more enduring monument than brass,
 O marble shape, stern city! thou shalt pass
 From memory never—privileged to bear
 The horrid brand and character of war,
 Imprinted on thy forehead, as a scar
 Adorns a warrior. Oh! for ever wear
 Thy glory so. When noble foes are crowned
 By our own hands, we make ourselves renowned.

I am not sure that I have given the best of these sonnets, which are six in number. But Mr. Forster may be safely ranked as one of Australia's most gifted citizens. He, like Mr. Eagar, also supplied articles to the leading columns of the elder *Empire* and other public journals.

In alluding to the poets of Australia, I ought not to omit some mention of two of her most talented sons—Mr. D. H. Deniehy and Mr. W. B. Dalley, both men of genius. I know that they are orators of high character, and I believe they have contributed largely to the journalism of the Colony, both in poetry and prose, but from the fact of all, or nearly all, their productions being anonymous, I am unable to put my hand upon any of their effusions worth referring to. In the *Empire*, whilst under Mr. Parkes, and in the *Southern Cross* weekly newspaper, Mr. Deniehy gave vent to his great powers of criticism and satire; and Mr. Dalley in the articles he is said to have contributed to some of the periodicals of the day has proved himself a wit and humourist of extraordinary power. Mr. Deniehy has delivered lectures upon the poets of Australia, and Mr. Dalley has also distinguished himself as a public lecturer. I trust that some day or other permanent works will appear from their polished pens to adorn the literature of their Country.

Amongst the fugitive poets of Australia the greatest must undoubtedly be said to have been Henry Halloran. He has never published a book "for his enemy"; but the newspaper press of the day for many years past has been embellished by his poetic productions. He was born at Cape Town. His early days were spent in England, but Australia is his land by adoption. He has written a great deal, and, as he assures me, he had hoped at times to influence public feeling in a rightful cause, but not for fame, which he cares little for; if he has only—as I am sure he has—the love and affection of those who are most precious to his soul. One of his latest and best effusions is a poem in celebration of the Anniversary of the Birthday of our most Gracious Sovereign Victoria, 24th May, 1864. It is written in peculiar measure; and, like all Mr. Halloran's poetry, is occasionally rhapsodical, but possesses the true passion. It is as follows:—

Oh! pleasant month of May!
 What jocund memories float
 Round that loved land remote,
 Where in my earlier day
 I saw thy white foot on the dewy lawn;
 And felt young summer breathing in the sky,
 But more upon my heart and lip and eye
 Felt the glad influence of a higher dawn.

Sweet month, how many a pleasant thought
 Of Royal England bringest thou to me ;
 Great land of deeds sublime by heroes wrought :
 Land of the Fair ! land of the Free !
 Land of the loyal heart and gallant hand.
 Beloved Fatherland !

Mr. J. L. Michael has written and published the most elaborate poem which has yet appeared from a colonial author. It is named "John Cumberland," certainly a very unpoetical name. The matter however bears evidences of being charged with much poetic fervour. Some critics have awarded Mr. Michael the highest place among the Colonial poets. "John Cumberland" is an epic, written in irregular verse. Its commencement indicates its purport:—

Listen a little and I will impart
 The tale of my own life—no, hardly that ;
 There is but little in my life to tell ;
 No hair breadth 'scapes, no risks by flood and fell.
 Only a quiet story dull and flat,—
 The story of my mind and heart.

The worthy poet is very modest, the story is not by any means "dull and flat," there are passages of great spirit, passion, and feeling, well worthy of perusal. Sentiments of a religious and philosophical bearing also pervade the poem, and some portions of it are of a highly classic character. The subject of "Love" enters deeply into its pages, and to it some of the best lines are devoted. I will quote the following:—

Why was love painted child ?
 Had I the semblance of the passion plann'd
 I would have sketch'd the lines with firmer hand ;
 With eyes unfathomable, such as smiled
 Into the new born eve's in Eden land ;
 Bending above her, radiant as the sand
 Of Eldorado's fountain grottoes : wild
 With all intense imaginations ; grand
 In early manhood's majesty : defiled
 By nothing : least of all by weakness : wild—
 (Strength in repose is always mild) so stand
 Starlike the Gods on Ida. So are pil'd
 The clouds upon the mountain summits, fann'd
 By breezes, wafted from the summer strand
 Of pleasant waters, sleeping silver, is'd
 With spots that yet are Eden. So the band
 Stood, of the sweet star spirits, that beguil'd
 The morning of the world to understand
 Æolian melodies. As such my pen
 Should write the Love by whom men most are men.

Mr. Michael is also the author of "Songs without Music,"—another unhappy title, "Sir Archibald Yelverton" and other poems. He has been accused of copying from Longfellow and Tennyson. He certainly imitates their style, if he does not pirate slightly their words in some instances. When he trusts himself, however, it is admitted he writes

gracefully and well. Mr. Michael, as his name indicates, is a child of Judah, born in England, and is a member of the legal profession. It is seldom that the law and poetry are found together. The Muses abhor technicalities. It is gratifying however to find that in the person of Mr. Michael they have not been found incompatible.

I have reserved for the last the two best known and most popular poets—sons of the soil—Charles Harpur and Henry Kendall. Harpur has been long before his countrymen as a poet. He has been considered their laureate, and to some extent he is entitled to the honor. His name ought to possess especial interest to the natives of the Hawkesbury, for I believe he spent much of his youth, if he were not actually born about Windsor. Some forty years ago his respected parent was teacher of the Church of England School in this town, as many of the old residents well remember. His poetry is of the Shelley and Coleridge caste—dreamy and philosophical—often obscure, but betraying true poetic fire and inspiration. He takes lofty flights on his Pegasus, and often soars beyond Parnassus to the regions of higher thought. “The Creek of the Four Graves” has been much admired. It is written in blank verse, As an imaginative poem, Mr. Deniehy thought there was nothing superior to it in the whole range of poetry—exaggerated praise, I fear, which I do not think even the author approves. His verses to the Moon, a favorite subject with poets, is a beautiful composition, and possesses, for the dwellers on the Hawkesbury, a local interest in the third stanza. I can only afford to extract the following from the small volume which he published in 1853, page 88:—

TO THE MOON.

With silver step behold her steal
 Over those envious clouds that hid
 Till now her face, then stand—a seal
 Of silver-on heaven’s mighty lid!
 So round me would I have her light
 In one broad burst of beauty play;
 And who, whilst thus she rules the night
 Would wish the day?
 Nor feel the yearning spirit fraught
 With sweetly solemn strains of visionary thought!
 &c., &c., &c.

Kendall, however, promises to outstrip all his predecessors and compeers in the poetic art. His compositions possess the smoothness of Pope or Longfellow, with the tenderness of Kirke White. It is to be regretted that most of his subjects as yet are of a melancholy turn. He seems as one bowed down with grief, often looking upon the beautiful world around us as if it were cased in gloom. He appears frequently as if he felt himself passing away through murky ethereal shades to the world of spirits—to the poet’s Aiden. I trust he will soon grow out of this sadness and live to produce something more spirited and worthy of his talents, which are undoubtedly of a high order. He is a true child of nature, and some of his poems are beautifully descriptive. In 1862

Mr. Kendall published a small volume containing some forty-five of his poems. The first is an address to

THE MUSE OF AUSTRALIA.

Where the pines with the eagles are nestled in rifts,
And the torrent leaps down to the surges ;
I have followed, her clambering over the cliffs,
By the chasms and moon-haunted verges. &c., &c., &c.

With the following I must conclude my notice of Kendall's poetry, and of the poets. It is so natural that I am sure it will be appreciated.

THE CURLEW SONG.

The viewless blast flies moaning past,
Away to the forest trees :
There giant pines and leafless vines
Bend 'neath the wandering breeze !
From ferny streams, unearthly screams
Are heard in the mid-night blue ;
As afar they roam to the Shepherd's home
The shrieks of the wild Curlew !
As afar they roam
To the Shepherd's home
The shrieks of the wild curlew.
&c., &c., &c.

I wish I could repeat "the Maid of Gerringong," a most touching story ; but time will not permit. Let me advise all who can, to purchase the book. Mr. Kendall is a young man Australia may well be proud of ; and I only hope his countrymen will not fail to do homage to his genius whenever opportunity occurs.

I must now bring this long lecture to a close. I fear I have been tedious to some extent ; but if I have only succeeded in proving that our Southern land of sun and flood has a literature of her own of a progressive and promising character, and that we may reasonably hope she will yet shine as "a bright particular star" in the firmament of the liberal arts, I will not have laboured in vain. With our noble University, our Grammar School, and the many other seminaries of learning—not forgetting the School of Arts, which are now scattered throughout the Country ; there is every probability that Australia will yet produce sons as authors worthy to be placed by the side of the Bacons and the Shakespears—the Byrons and the Scotts of our glorious fatherland.

SPEECH

OF

W. WALKER, M.L.A.,

AT THE OPENING OF THE

RICHMOND SCHOOL OF ARTS,

AUGUST 27TH, 1866.

WINDSOR:

RE-PRINTED BY FULLER & CO., GEORGE-STREET.

1884.

NOTE.

IN consequence of my address at the opening of the RICHMOND SCHOOL OF ARTS having been reported in a condensed and inaccurate manner in the SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, some misconception has arisen as to the exact purport of my remarks therein with reference to Mr. John Stuart Mill, and a captious letter on the subject has been written to the HERALD of the 30th ultimo, bearing the signature of "Modus in rebus." I have therefore deemed it advisable, instead of replying to the writer of the epistle, to publish my address in full in the following form. Furthermore it affords me pleasure thus to print my speech as a souvenir of the part I took in the interesting proceedings on the occasion in question.

W.W.

Windsor, September, 1866.

SPEECH.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—After the elaborate and eloquent speeches of the gentlemen who have preceded me, some of whom may be said to be amongst the most practised orators of the colony, I fear little remains for me to say. I will endeavour, however, to make a few practical observations, in the hope that they will not be found altogether without use. Before proceeding further, permit me to congratulate you in having at last succeeded in erecting so commodious and handsome a building. I know that you have had many difficulties to contend with, and had it not been for the utmost perseverance on the part of the Committee and extraordinary support from yourself, Mr. Chairman, * the good people of Richmond would not now be in the favored position in which we find them to-night. Schools of Arts were first established in England, about forty years ago, by Dr. Birkbeck, Professor of Chemistry, in the Andersonian University of Glasgow; Mr. Jeremy Bentham, the political writer; the learned and distinguished Lord Brougham, and other gentlemen of enlightened and philanthropic views. They were then called Mechanics Institutes, and were intended for the instruction in useful arts and sciences of artisans and other humble persons whose daily avocations precluded them from the advantages of a liberal education. They have latterly been called Schools of Arts, though their primary design remains the same. Rightly managed, they are capable of an immensity of good, particularly to the youth of the locality in which they are situated. I have had some experience of the working of such institutions, from my connection with the WINDSOR SCHOOL OF ARTS, of which I have had the honor of being President for three years; and I believe I can point out, in some measure, at least, how they can be put to profitable account. You must not imagine that because you have completed a fine building that therefore you have consummated everything. That is but a small matter comparatively. Having got your building up, you will find it no easy matter to carry on operations successfully, but it can be done by an earnest and a strong effort on the part of those amongst you who have the will and the power. There are four chief uses to which you can put your institution:—1st,—Classes for instruction in matters of human learning and science. 2ndly,—Lectures on popular and useful

* George Bowman, Esq., J.P.

subjects. 3rdly,—A good library for general reading and reference. And, 4thly,—A debating class, where young men and others may acquire the art of public speaking, and so qualify themselves for taking part, creditably, at public meetings, on the platform, or in any arena where eloquence is an acquisition. Who knows, but that by means of your institution, some native intellects may be cultivated which may develop themselves afterwards with renown in the courts, the senate, or the pulpit. We sometimes hear it said disparagingly of some person who has made himself eminent by his own exertions and self-culture, “Oh, he is a man of no education,” as if it were absolutely necessary that to be educated you must have attended some high school or a university. This, however, was a great error. A man may educate himself to a great extent, and it is not essential that he should actually attend a school to become a scholar. John Sturt Mill was an instance of this. Mr. Mill never attended a school in his life, and yet he was one of the first scholars and literary men of the day. Home taught, and in a great measure self-instructed, he received no public education whatever. And I think I may venture to say, that by the aid of such institutions as these it is in the power of any person possessed of natural talent, so to improve his mental faculties as to qualify himself to fill the highest offices of the State. These institutions had, in their infancy, been opposed by some individuals, who thought with the poet Pope:—

A little learning is a dangerous thing,
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring

but such ideas were not entertained in the present age. It was universally believed, on the contrary, that a little learning was better than no learning at all, and was calculated to make its possessors more sensible beings, and better citizens, than they could possibly be without it. I hope your institution will go on and prosper. The young men of Richmond have now no excuse if they do not avail themselves of the advantages which it offers to them. I trust they will duly appreciate it, and that you will never have cause to regret its establishment. Let no small differences interfere to mar your progress; remember that “union is strength,” and that harmony is necessary for efficiency. I will conclude by stating, that should it be in my power to render you any assistance, at any time, my humble services will be at your disposal.—(*Applause.*)

VOLUNTEER RIFLE CORPS.

SPEECH

DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC MEETING AT WINDSOR, IN FAVOR OF
INITIATING A LOCAL VOLUNTEER RIFLE CORPS; J. ASCOUGH,
ESQ., J.P., IN THE CHAIR.—19TH SEPTEMBER, 1860.

(From the *Sydney Morning Herald*).

MR. WALKER, M.L.A., having been called upon, rose to move the first resolution, and was greeted with applause. He said there had been some meetings in Windsor recently, which, unhappily, had not been of a very unanimous character. He hoped, however—in fact, he felt assured—that unanimity would prevail upon the present occasion. The subject they had met to consider called for it, and he was confident it would be accorded, as there could scarcely be two opinions on the question as he thought. They had a duty to perform, and he was sure no one present would fail to respond to the demand made upon them, namely, to join together for the formation of a rifle corps in Windsor. As loyal hearts he believed were to be found in their little town of Windsor as in any portion of Her Majesty's dominions; and if they did not come forward willingly and enrol themselves as volunteers he considered they would not only be doing injustice and discredit to themselves, but would in a manner be ignoring their British origin. He was certain, however, that all were ready to put themselves in a position to defend this the land of their birth or their adoption—their hearths and homes. He had always been "a man of peace," because peace brought with it innumerable blessings; but it was impossible to read and hear of the hostile movements now going on in Europe, and of the large armaments in readiness for action kept up by the autocrats of France and Russia, without being filled with feelings of anxiety and alarm for their own safety; and he thought, therefore, they ought to prepare themselves for war—that being the best way to keep peace. Every district in the colony should be ready to take up arms for the general defence. When they saw that the French kept up an imposing naval force in these seas within a few day's sail of our port, and for which there was no ostensible necessity, would they consent to stand idly by with folded arms, having the prospect of perhaps the foreigner invading their land—putting his hand upon them and oppressing them, as is the case with some of the nations on the continent of Europe. Some persons objected to the necessity for war, and argued for peace on all occasions and at any price. He loved peace as much as anyone, and if all the nations could agree he

would like to see the principle acted upon. But when armies were being raised in every country, and appearances were assuming a threatening aspect, he thought the cry of "peace, peace, where there was no peace" was a delusion. He felt confident that Australians—young though they were in a national point of view—would never submit to be trodden upon; for through their veins flowed as proud and as brave blood as was in any people in the world—(cheers)—and there was no reason why they would not make as good soldiers as could be found anywhere. As it was said, "One volunteer was as good as ten pressed men," he trusted they would come forward, unhesitatingly and numerous, and join in the movement, for unless they did so there was every probability that a militia law would be passed by the Parliament, which would be anything but pleasant. Let them volunteer, and when the necessity arrived, if ever, go forward even at the front of the bayonet in defence of "The new Britannia in another world." (Cheers). He would now propose,—“That considering the very threatening aspect of affairs in Europe and the defenceless state of the colony, it is desirable (in conjunction with similar efforts elsewhere) that a volunteer rifle corps be formed at Windsor, to be called ‘The Hawkesbury Volunteer Rifle Corps,’ and that all British subjects throughout the district be invited to join the same.” No doubt the resolution would be passed by acclamation. He had no sympathy with those parties who wished, as it was said, "to cut the painter"—to sever their connection with Great Britain—and he believed none there present wished to do so. On the contrary, he hoped they would long remain united with that glorious old land, England, from which they had much to get and nothing to lose. He was confident that if America had been as liberally dealt with as Australia had been, the Americans would at that moment have been united in Government as they were in sentiment to Britain. In conclusion, he said that as the British army and navy had been the terror of the world and had won immortal renown, so he trusted the Hawkesbury volunteers would prove themselves worthy descendants of their illustrious progenitors. (Cheers).

[The resolution was seconded by S. Scarvell, Esq., J.P., and carried unanimously amidst great applause.]

THE WINDSOR RAILWAY.

SPEECH

DELIVERED AT THE BANQUET AT THE SCHOOL OF ARTS, WINDSOR, 29TH NOVEMBER, 1864, TO CELEBRATE THE OPENING OF THE WINDSOR AND RICHMOND RAILWAY. HIS EXCELLENCY SIR JOHN YOUNG, BART., AND THE MINISTRY OF THE DAY BEING PRESENT, BESIDES A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF THE MEMBERS OF BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

(From the *Sydney Morning Herald*).

THE Chairman (W. WALKER, M.L.A.), proposed,—“Prosperity to the Windsor and Richmond Railway,” and in doing so congratulated the company upon the happy result, which, after much labour and difficulty, had at last been obtained. He would submit to them a rapid sketch which he had prepared of the history of this line, and trusted it would prove interesting; it was as follows:—The subject of a railway to Windsor as an enterprise for the investment of private capital was mooted as far back as 1846, when a public meeting was held at Coffey’s Hotel, on the 18th of July of that year, to consider the subject of railways generally for the colony. The notice calling the meeting was to this effect:—“Railroads. A public meeting will be held at Coffey’s Hotel, Windsor, on Saturday, July 18th, 1846, at 1 p.m. All persons desirous of favoring the introduction of this most beneficial mode of transit into the colony, and especially the residents and proprietors of the Windsor and Hawkesbury district, are requested to attend.” Robert Fitzgerald, Esq., occupied the chair, and the meeting was addressed by Mr. J. L. Scarvell and Captain O’Connell, M.C. (who spoke at some length and as the representative of the company started in Sydney), Mr. Joseph Cope, Mr. George Bowman, Mr. J. A. Betts, Mr. F. Beddek, and other gentlemen. Though only a youth at the time, I was present, and took notes of the meeting, the particulars of which I communicated to the *Sydney Morning Herald*. A subscription was entered into for a preliminary survey of the line by Mr. Woore. The railway to Parramatta was afterwards commenced, and as all are aware, the company which had been formed, had to suspend operations, and the matter of railway was taken in hand by the Government. At all the elections which followed this, the candidates at Windsor were called upon to pledge themselves to advocate railway communication to Windsor, but it was not until after the first election under the New Constitution Act, in April, 1856, when Mr. W. Bowman was re-elected (beating Robey, Ross, and Redman), that the subject was taken energetically in hand. A public meeting was then held at the Fitzroy Hotel, and a lengthy

petition drawn up by me was submitted and adopted. It was signed by 1,600 persons, and was presented by Mr. Darvall, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Scarvell, and myself, to the Governor, and by the members to both Houses of Parliament. Nothing, however, was done in the matter until after the return of Mr. Whistler Smith (in December, 1857), as member for North Cumberland. In July, 1858, Mr. Smith moved for, and after some opposition from the Government of the day, obtained a select committee to report upon the desirability of a railway to Windsor. The previous question was negatived by 26 to 9. Mr. Smith was indefatigable in his labours. Numerous witnesses were examined, and in January, 1859, a Report was brought up of a highly favourable character for our railway. After this Mr. Dalley was returned member for Windsor, and held the seat for a short time, when he resigned. I was elected to succeed him in 1860, and at every opportunity I brought under the notice of the House and the Government, the propriety of giving effect to the report of Mr. Whistler Smith's committee. Accordingly, in the Estimates for 1861, under Mr. Robertson's administration, the sum of £51,000 was set down for an extension to Windsor and Richmond. The House, however, was dissolved on the Land Bill, in November, 1860, and the Estimate was never brought under consideration. On the occasion of the Governor's visit to Windsor, in 1861 (at the presentation to the volunteers), advantage was taken of the presence of the Ministry in Windsor, and a promise was then obtained from them that provision would be made in the Estimates for 1862 for a rail or tramway to Windsor. The Government kept their promise. The sum of £60,000 was submitted for a horse railway to Windsor and Richmond. After a severe fight for it, and a sitting up all night, owing to the opposition of some members, at an early hour on the morning of the 13th December, 1861, the Estimate was carried by a majority of 26 to 7. The first sod was turned by Mr. Arnold, Minister for Works, on the 15th of January, 1863. The plan was changed from a horse railway to a locomotive, and the result now has been that the Windsor and Richmond Railway has been completed—and we were now joyously celebrating its opening.

[The toast having been duly honoured, the Hon. J. B. Wilson responded].

T H E F L O O D ,

BY WILLIAM WALKER, WINBOSOR, 1850.

Drear passed the wintry day, whilst clouds of blackest dye
Encanopied the earth and filled the angry sky ;
Portentous of the storm—the swelling flood's advent—
Misfortune to our land, her course unhap'ly bent.
'Twas visible!—the wrath!—the elemental war!
Approached us nearer still, while onward from afar,
Fresh columns, thick and black, surcharged to fullest brim,
Brought up their hideous forms to fill the dreadful scene ;
They burst! asunder fly!—Heaven's portals open wide!
Down fall the rapid torrents, swelling deep the tide ;
Incessantly it pours, nor heeds the earnest call
Of man to stay its course, nor wrest him of his all.

The day is passed and gone, night's ebon veil is flung,
The world, at rest, is wrapt in darkness, while anon,
The howling winds aloft, like vigil's words proclaim,
The Tempest's sweeping rage—the overpowering rain ;
The roar of gushing waters, falling hard upon the ear,
Tells up in accents loud what ills we now must fear ;
How that the land so dry to water must give place,
And nature's mantle green assume a liquid face.

Bright broke the tranquil morn; but oh! a saddening sight—
The waters dread had risen—had flooded in the night ;
The Hawkesb'ry's banks o'erflown—the creeks were swollen high,
The vales and hollows filled—whole fields in water lie.
A world of labour's lost—earth's verdant produce gone ;
Young crops submerged at once—harvest there will be none ;
Luxuriance is laid low, and made to bend the head
To elements more potent—fertility is dead !

But scenes more direful far, fall to the poor man's lot ;
The farmer's washed away—his home and all he's got ;
The torrent roars around—the wintry wind blows drear ;
His children wet and cold, cry movingly with fear ;
Their mother sick—laid low—lies in a humble cot,
While still the waters rise, and help it cometh not ;—
Will they survive the scene, or meet a watery grave ?
'Tis hard to say when, think! OMNIPOTENCE CAN SAVE !

Oh sad Misfortune! Empress o'er fallen man,
Who rul'st at pleasure since Earth's course began,
Why has thou raised thy sceptre in thy strength ?
And prostrated e'en now the weak at length !

Declare, oh Fates eternal! why is man thus doomed ?
For what offence so grave—what crime is he thus gloomed ?
Why is he dashed at once to such o'erwhelming woe ?
Why destined to such grief—such wretched overthrow ?

Ask not—'tis utter folly—Heaven's decrees are just.
Man's die's unalterably cast, submit he must ;
Omnipotence's path presume not then to scan ;—
“ Whatever is is right,” and so “ God's ways to man.”*

*Pope.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

FLOOD ON THE HAWKESBURY,

OF

AUGUST, 1857.

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN FOR AND PUBLISHED IN THE
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD,

BY

WILLIAM WALKER.

PRINTED BY FULLER & Co., GEORGE-STREET, WINDSOR.

1884.

THE ACCOUNT

OF THE FLOOD OF THE HAWESBERRY,

AUGUST, 1857.

BY WILLIAM WALKER, ESQ.,
OF THE BAR AT NEW-YORK.

WILLIAM WALKER.

NEW-YORK: PUBLISHED BY LEITCH & COMPANY, 15 NASSAU ST.

N O T E .

AN excellent summarized Account of the Floods and Droughts, from the earliest recorded periods down to 1857, by Mr. W. S. Jevons, was published in *Waugh's Australian Almanac* for 1859. The Flood of 1857 was remarkable for having occurred during one of the heaviest storms ever known on the Eastern Coast of Australia, when the melancholy and disastrous wreck of the noble ship "Dunbar" took place at Sydney Heads, all passengers and hands being lost, except one man, who was rescued from the rocks, under the Gap, at South Head.

A C C O U N T

OF THE

FLOOD ON THE HAWKESBURY,

WINDSOR, AUGUST 24TH, 1857.

—(:)—

Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swell'd,
And the mix'd ruin of its banks o'erspread,
At last the roused-up river pours along :
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,
From the rude mountain, and the mossy wild,
Tumbling through rocks abrupt and sounding far ;
Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads
Calm, sluggish, silent.—THOMSON.

SATURDAY FORENOON.—How shall we describe the spectacle before us—so beautiful, yet so appalling? It would take the pen of a readier writer than ours to describe in adequate terms the direful scene. As we arose from our slumbers this morning—(alas, how many of our less fortunate neighbours never closed their eyes last night)—and pushed aside the blinds of our dormitory, what a sight was before us! A vast sheet of water, several miles in breadth, covering rich alluvial lands, with nought to relieve the glasslike surface but the roofs of houses and the tops of trees. Yes, there was one exception—a solitary one. Mr. Edward Robinson's house and barn, at Freeman's Reach, alone appeared to be above the waters, but with scarcely a foot of ground to spare. The flood seemed to have reached its height—but what a height, at least five feet above the line of the last, and a total rise of six and thirty feet. Not a fence is to be seen, nor a single oasis in the desert of waters, but all seem deluged save the distant mountains and our elevated town.

The rain has ceased, and we wander forth to view the scene around us. We can only give dry details, but a poet might write an epic upon the doleful circumstances. The first thing we observed was, that the water had covered the whole of the promenade along the river banks from the Windsor Terrace to the ferry. Beddek's cottages, with Cadell's brewery, were surrounded by some six feet of water, whilst the hollow of

Allen's paddock brought the element to within a few feet of George Street, at the rear of the White Horse Inn. At the Ferry the punt-man's house was half high; he had taken himself and family off, whilst his fowls remained at their roost, perched at the top of a willow tree, afraid to descend. Dr. Day's garden is partially under water, and another foot would fill the cellar of Mr. Barker's large building.

As we stood here for a short time, watching the progress of the stream, a flock of geese came floating, like corks, down the river. The poor things struggled hard to get out of the current to *terra firma*, but their efforts were unavailing. On they went, swept down with the overpowering torrent. We next walked over to Bridge Street. Here we found the waters had formed an impassable conjunction of Bridge and Court Streets—there was no getting round the corner of the Barracks except by wading up to the knees. The Windsor Hotel was flooded in the part next Bridge Street. Mr. Broderick's residence was completely surrounded, and the Toll-house was filled to the windows. The Travellers' Rest, public-house, on the opposite side, was flooded in the rear; several of the bed rooms were under water, and the bedsteads, washstands, &c., were swimming. The whole of the rear part of the houses and premises on the west side of Bridge Street, including Mr. Bullock's, Shamrock Rose and Thistle Inn, were under water. Several cottages were completely swamped, and the inmates had to decamp, without being able to save scarcely a dry article. Looking towards the expanse of water from Bridge Street to Macgrath's Hill, it seemed to us that there were not above fifteen feet in the height of the hill dry.

To give a general idea of the whole, we can only briefly mention, that the Peninsula farm, with the exception of Mr. Tebbutt's residence, Pitt Town Bottoms, Wilberforce, Freeman's Reach, Cornwallis, Richmond Bottoms, Fairfield Flats, the low lands of the South Creek, and portions of the Brickfields, are covered with water. Windsor is almost an island, - to all practical intents she is so, for there is no escape from her by dry land,—there is a water obstruction on every side, which cannot be got over except by boats or swimming. The top of the large arches of the Fitzroy Bridge can just be seen above water.

Several boats were employed during the morning, in bringing off the unfortunate tenants of the flooded farms. The Messrs. Ridge, Flood, Lane, Cunninghame, and others, were particularly active. One old lady, who would not move on the last occasion, was very glad to be taken off the roof of her house this time. A considerable number of families, however, still remain in lofts, declining to

be taken away until all hopes of safety should be gone. Happily we have not heard of any lives being lost, though it would not be surprising did we do so before all is over.

We have endeavoured to collect a few of the incidents occurring during the morning. About a dozen haystacks have been carried down the river, and a dray loaded with straw was seen floating bodily with the stream. A large box, with a live fowl on the lid, was also seen going down, whilst logs and other floating materials, to a great extent, were borne violently with the current. Some hundreds of pigs have been drowned, and fowls innumerable have perished. There is every reason to expect that pigs and fowls will be at a premium in this district after what has happened. Some thousands of bushels of corn have been damaged, and in many instances completely destroyed; while we fear there will scarcely be a sound bit of hay left in the district.

Saturday evening, 6 p.m.—The waters have only risen about three inches since noon, and they seem now about the turning point. The current is not nearly so rapid, and there is every probability that during the night the flood will fall considerably. The effect of the visitation upon the town during the day has been completely to stagnate everything like business. No one can settle himself to do anything—there has been the only one all-absorbing thought and idea—the horrors of the flood; what distress it has occasioned and will induce. We have seen men and women all day, some walking up and down in moody contemplation, others gazing with doleful countenances and heavy hearts at the scene before them, looking, in many instances, to the homes they have been compelled to leave, with nearly everything they valued sunk and ruined beneath the waters. Mothers have crossed our paths, leading their unhappy children, with tears in their eyes, whose sad lot has been to be washed out of house and home in the dead of night.

It is impossible for us to estimate, particularly, the extent of injury which this flood will inflict upon the district. No doubt its effects will, to some extent, be felt by the colony at large. The quantity of land submerged is considerably greater than has occurred for many years before, and the water seems as if it would remain much longer than on the last occasion. The consequences will be that the young crops will be in most places damaged, in many places entirely killed, and the wheat crop will not be half (perhaps quarter) as much as usual; besides a large quantity of land will remain flooded for a long time, and so prevent its being used as hitherto for the growth of maize.

We must draw our remarks to a close for this day. Whilst we write we hear guns of distress discharged. On the morrow we will pen the latest particulars, as no mail will leave here until Monday morning.

Sunday morning.—There have been some heavy showers during the night and early this morning. The waters, however, have commenced falling, but very slowly. They are about three feet lower than they were last night. No doubt before the morrow they will be down considerably, but apparently they will not fall nearly as fast as on last occasion. The consequence will be, that the damage done will be greater.—*S. M. Herald, 27th August, 1857.*

THE FLOODS OF 1860.

—:0:—

DURING this year, no less than four floods occurred. The first, in February, was not of much magnitude. The second took place in April, and was most calamitous. The waters of the Hawkesbury rose about forty feet above their usual level. Horses, cattle, sheep and stacks, were carried away and crops destroyed. Subscriptions were entered into for the supply of seed wheat and provisions to the settlers, and Government assistance was also afforded. In July a third flood took place, nearly as disastrous as the preceding one. Much damage was done to the wheat crops, sown from the funds raised after the April flood. A man named Clyburn was drowned, and fences and buildings were swept away. In November, the fourth flood happened, during which, a man named White was drowned. Crops were injured and destroyed and a great deal of damage done. Government relief was afforded in the latter two floods in addition to the local aid, to a great number of sufferers, the distribution being made by the Magistrates. In 1861, a Parliamentary enquiry took place, as to the mode in which the relief had been administered by the Bench, which resulted in nothing.

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
Great Flood on the Hawkesbury
OF JUNE, 1864,
AND
THE LESSER FLOOD
OF JULY FOLLOWING,

*With a Statement of the steps taken for the relief of
the sufferers ;*

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN FOR, AND PUBLISHED IN, "THE SYDNEY
MORNING HERALD," AND NOW CORRECTED AND ENLARGED,

BY

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ADVERTISEMENT.

It has been deemed desirable that a connected and permanent Narrative of the dire and eventful Floods, which, unhappily, visited the valley of the Hawkesbury, in June and July, 1864, should be preserved; and the author of the Correspondence on the subject, which has been published in the columns of the leading Colonial Journal, has thought that, no better or easier plan of accomplishing such an object could be adopted, than that of collating his own accounts of the calamity in the present form. He therefore presents the following pages to the public, in the hope that they will merit approval.

W.

CHAPTER I.

THE JUNE FLOOD.

Poor *luckless creatures*, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness defend you
From seasons such as these?

KING LEAR.

Sunday, June 12th, 1864.

It is with feelings of the deepest melancholy, I have to record the particulars of the highest Flood which has occurred at the Hawkesbury for many years. A more disastrous visitation of the kind has never been known. It commenced raining on Friday night, the 10th instant, and continued to pour incessantly for twenty-four hours, when the sky cleared, and the rain temporarily ceased. On Saturday morning, the 11th, all the creeks were up, and the river was bank high. During the night of the same day, the waters continued to rise, and by daylight, on Sunday morning, a tremendous flood was in view. The torrent roared terrifically. Guns were heard fired off as signals of distress, from parties inundated in Cornwallis, and Wilberforce. The police boat was first got out. By five o'clock a.m. it was taken to the rescue of Mrs. Connolly, a poor widow, at the Peninsula; but the current was so strong, that the house could not be safely approached. Sometime afterwards, the boat was handed over to Mr. W. Alderson, who with a stouter and more determined crew made a second attempt, and succeeded in getting the poor woman off, after cutting a hole in the roof of her house, through which to get her out. It was not till eight or nine o'clock however, that all the boats at command could be manned and got into use. They had their work to do, and were employed the whole forenoon, in bringing off the unfortunate flooded families from their houses. Many of the poor people had to be taken off the lofts and roofs of their dwellings; and it was pitiful to see the women and children, drenched with wet, who, in numerous instances, had to be rescued; some were found standing up to their waists in water. In the town of Windsor, the water came this morning up within a foot of the Barrack Gate, in Bridge-street; the Fitzroy Bridge itself was wholly under water. The Toll-house and adjoining buildings, with the Old Windsor Hotel, were entirely flooded; whilst Mr. Mc Donnell's public house, the property of Mr. W. Johnston, and several cottages higher up, were half filled with water. Near the

ferry, Dr. Day's cellar was three feet under water, and Cadell's brewery, and Beddek's cottages along the banks of the river, were half-way flooded. The waters came into George-street, by way of Caddell's paddock and lagoon; and they went down Macquarie-street, near Mr. Burke's cottages, at the one end, and by Marsden's paddock at the other. The old brewery, Cornwallis, was flooded half-way up, and the whole of Fairfield Flats, up to within a foot or so of Atkinson's viaduct, on the railway. Along South Creek, the waters came nearly level with the Taylors' viaduct, and portion of the railway embankments, at Cunneen's, have sunken, and been partially carried away. The water came half-way up McGrath's Hill, covering several of the cottages near the foot. There is a perfect sea in front of the Windsor Terrace. The whole of Cornwallis, Richmond and Clarendon Bottoms, Freeman's-reach, Wilberforce, and Pitt Town Bottoms, are under water. Mr. E. Robinson's house, which stands comparatively high, and never was known to be flooded before, has four feet of water in it. One of the Penrith Punts was seen early this morning floating above Cornwallis, and it was supposed three men were in it.—It was afterwards secured. The Windsor punt was fastened safely to a large tree, near the ferry, which has often been used for a similar purpose, having survived many floods which have taken place around it.

The loss of property, occasioned by this visitation, must be immense. A large quantity of maize, standing and stored, has been destroyed, and stacks of hay have been carried away in abundance. The settlers had been taken so much unawares, that they had neglected in many instances to drive their stock in proper time to the high lands. Numerous cattle, horses, and pigs have consequently been drowned. Fowls, pumpkins, and other farming produce might be seen floating irrecoverably away down the river, in numbers and quantities considerable. A few only of the stacks have been saved, by tying them with ropes. Some industrious persons caught great numbers of fowls. Successful efforts have also been made to save horses, but the instances are very few. Furniture and household effects have been hopelessly washed away. The only person I know, who managed, by means of his own boat, to save part of his domestic goods, was Mr. Jas. Cunningham. It was pleasing to notice, how anxious every one that could, was to help the unfortunates. The possessors of the few boats available, lent willing assistance, in every way possible.

The telegraph posts and wires are under water, between Windsor and Magrath's Hill; also between Windsor and Richmond, and all communication in that way, or by means of the coach to Blacktown, with Sydney has been stopped. It is believed that some of the wires have been broken.

It is calculated that the waters have risen upwards of forty feet—and are higher than the heavy flood of 1857, when the Dunbar was wrecked at the Sydney Heads. The old hands about, all concur in saying that so high a flood has not been known these forty years.

1 p.m. I regret to say, it has recommenced raining slightly, and the waters still continue slowly to rise. The greatest excitement prevails in the town, and the places of worship are all but deserted,

some of them quite closed. The School of Arts, and other public buildings have been then opened for the shelter of the poor flooded-out people, who are now crowding in town. Their sad countenances too truly depict the misery they are enduring. There is no doubt their distress will be great; and this visitation will be severely felt for many a long day. One gratifying fact amongst the surrounding gloom is that, no life has been lost so far as can be known, though I should not be at all surprised at hearing of some such casualty.

Monday, 13th.

Noon.—The waters rose several feet during the night, and are now fifty feet above the usual level of the river. About eleven this morning, they broke across George-street, and came up to the verandah of Mr. Collison's house. From Macquarie-street by Suffolk-street, the flood has nearly reached to George-street, and a "meeting of the waters" has almost taken place here, which, if consummated, would have placed the north-eastern end of Windsor on an island, and have cut it off from the south-western side. There is a vast expanse of water in view over Mr. Ridge's Paddock towards Magrath's Hill. Dr. Day's houses in Macquarie-street, occupied by Mr. Stonier and Mrs. Sharp, have the water in their ground-floors, the back premises being flooded half-way up. Mr. Dorset's kitchen and yard are also inundated. Mr. Dorset, an old hand, says—so high a flood has not taken place since the one of 1819, which he witnessed. There are several feet of water now over the railway line, and the arches of the South Creek viaduct can only be seen, and are covered half-way up. In Bridge-street, the waters have come past the corner of Macquarie-street, to Mr. McQuade's property, the old blacksmith's shop. The roof of the old Windsor hotel, McDonnell's public house, and some other cottages, have fallen in—parts of the walls have also given way, and the furniture and goods are being washed up Bridge-street, in large quantities.

Mr. John Tebbutt's residence, "Peninsula House," no longer holds its name. It stands now on an island, a small green knoll, as the water is within a few feet of the dwelling, The kitchen and cellars of Dr. Day's house, near the ferry, are completely filled, and the whole of the yard and stables are under water. Cadell's brewery is flooded more than half-way up, and the water has come within a few yards of Mrs. Cadell's house, Cockenzie Bank. The court-house, goal, and Mr. Edgerton's residence, are now on a peninsula, there being only a narrow track of land in the police paddock, to connect them with the town. The garden of Claremont Cottage is in the lower parts quite submerged and the water not far from the Rev. Mr. Moore's residence. Not an atom is to be seen of the viaduct of Fairfield, and it is believed the earthworks have partially been washed away. From a view through a glass, we can perceive the water nearly up to Mr. J. McDonald's house, at Pitt-town, and not far off the first inn at McGrath's Hill. Very little more would cause it to break over into the Richmond Hill Common.

The sufferings of some of the settlers are most severe—many of them have lost their all—the hard earnings of a life. They have

nothing but what they stand in, being glad to escape with their lives. The whole of the wheat, barley, and oat crops sown, have been destroyed, and many thousands of bushels of maize have been lost. It is impossible to particularize names or quantities at present: and to get an accurate return would be impossible. Horses, cattle, hay, pigs, and poultry in large numbers have irrecoverably been swept away by the foaming torrent. A smart southerly breeze has sprung up, and the clouds have cleared away, leaving the sun to shine brightly, at least for a time, upon the devastations which the unpropitious elements have caused.

2 o'clock p.m. The Toll-bar house and the old Windsor Hotel, with adjacent cottages have been completely carried away. Furniture of every description—tables, chairs, bedsteads, casks, pictures, &c., are being washed ashore. It was ludicrous to see a counter floating out of Holden's public house, with the tumblers, jugs, &c. standing upon it, just as they had been hastily left shortly before, by the occupants. McDonnell's public house is giving way fast, and before long, is expected to fall. There is a strong wind blowing from the south, and the waves breaking up Bridge-street, are like the surging of the ocean. Rain has also recommenced; and there is no sign as yet of the water ceasing to rise, though it has increased but little since the morning.

Tuesday, 14th.

When I closed my yesterday's communication, the waters had nearly reached their maximum, about 4 p.m. they came to a stand-still, and remained stationary till about 7 p.m., when it was noticed they began gently to fall. By ten o'clock, they had gone down several inches, and during the night they fell about three feet. They are now receding at the rate of six inches per hour, and at noon, were down to the corner of Holden's public house, in George-street. It was a lamentable sight, to view the wreck here, Mr. Burke's Cottages, at the rear of Holden's, had fallen in, and portions of the back of the public house, and Mrs. Rafter's had also given way. McDonnell's public house was down completely, and all his furniture was drifting to the shore. Several cottages in the Peninsula have been carried away with every thing in them. The damage to house property on the Wilberforce side of the river is enormous. Scarcely a whole house has been left—every one is injured more or less. In Pitt-town Bottoms, some have partially, others been totally destroyed. Cornwallis and Freeman's Reach have shared a similar fate. The earthworks of the railway have been seriously damaged. A great portion of the line has sunk, and been thrown out of level. At the approach to the bridge in Macquarie-street, the earth has sunken about nine inches below the rails, and the embankments are otherwise mutilated. Almost all the inhabitants of the Brickfields were driven to the more elevated parts of the town, the water having risen to the roofs of their houses. The water, we believe, actually came into Mr. J. McDonald's house, Pitt-town, and the family had to ascend up stairs. Mr. C. May, whose house was never flooded before, and who never was known to move at such time, had this flood to go off in his boat, the water having risen to the

ceiling. There were four feet of water in the parsonage at Pitt-town, and portions of the wall have given away.

In town, business is almost wholly suspended, the flood being the only topic engaging public attention. A large number of snakes, dead and alive, has been washed ashore at Windsor, affording amusement for the boys catching them. The debris coming up Bridge-street, is prodigious—broken tables, chairs, cheffoniers, sofas, hay, straw, pumpkins, and all sorts of farming and household effects. Information has just come to hand from Richmond, that there are about sixty persons in a loft, at Mr. W. Smith's, Richmond Bottoms, in a state of destitution. Boats with provisions have been dispatched to their assistance. It is pleasing to know that, there has been no sacrifice as yet of any human lives, though there have been some very narrow escapes from drowning.

From all I can learn, there is no doubt, this is the highest flood known here since 1806, 1817, and 1819. Those inundations are recorded as having risen to incredible heights—seventy, eighty, and even ninety-three feet above low water mark. I am very sceptical as to the waters having ever risen so high: and think, these accounts must have been greatly exaggerated. An old hand, who has resided these sixty years past on the Hawkesbury, has assured me that within his memory, the waters never rose much, if any thing higher, than the present flood: and I believe I am correct, in saying that, the height of this inundation, from low mark, is fifty feet. A flood eighty or ninety feet high, would be nearly double that of the present visitation, and would sweep over the whole town of Windsor. I have been credibly informed that there never was so much water in George-street before. It was so deep and long, that a boat was pulled up the street, opposite Mr. Collison's house, a considerable distance. The street has been raised in this place about three feet. and yet the water came nearly up to my horse's girth in riding through it.

The distress existing, is most appalling. Many persons have been wholly ruined. It is to be hoped, some effectual assistance will be rendered the poor people, by their Sydney friends and sympathisers.

4 p.m. The first mail from Sydney, this week, has just arrived. No telegrams have been working since mid-day of Saturday. It rains again slightly, but the waters continue falling.

Wednesday, 15th.

I am glad to state that, during last night the waters fell about six feet, and have now receded altogether about sixteen feet. They continue to subside, though but very slowly, which may be attributable to the as yet unsettled state of the weather, frequent heavy showers having fallen last evening and to-day. There seems to be no end to the destruction by the flood. Several of Hudson's cottages, in Macquarie-street, have been partially washed down. The telegraph wires have been broken in several places, and no communication can be had with Sydney. The mail-coach ran for the first time since the flood, this morning. The roofs of some of the remaining houses and sheds in the Cornwallis and Wilberforce are beginning to shew. The chimneys seem all to have gone. Wood

seems to stand better than bricks and mortar. There are about forty persons at Freeman's Reach, suffering from exposure and hunger. A boat with provisions visited some of these poor creatures yesterday. The children welcomed the bread with great earnestness. Another boat load has been sent to them. About thirty other persons are being sheltered and fed by Mr. Pendergast, on the Pitt-town Road. Several gentlemen of the town have been very diligent in affording relief by boats to the needy. At a meeting of the Committee of the Hawkesbury Benevolent Society, held this morning, it was determined to supply a week's rations to all those who required it. Contributions for affording temporary assistance to pressing cases of necessity have also been entered into by some of the more charitable townspeople.

The water has now fallen several feet below the viaducts at South Creek and Fairfield: and the railway embankments do not appear to have suffered so much damage as was anticipated. The middle arches of the Fitzroy Bridge are now perceptible, and from this, there is reason to believe, this structure which has withstood so many floods, yet remains uninjured.

Thursday, 16th.

Now that the waters are subsiding, a view can be had, though as yet not a complete one, of the ravages which the flood has made. The toll-bar house has the foundation and few feet of the walls left standing; but Mr. Tebbutt's cottage, Mr. Rose's old Windsor Hotel and cottage, Mr. McDonell's public house (the property of Mr. W. Johnston), and two cottages of Mr. Bourke, are totally destroyed. Two other cottages of Mr. Johnston, with Mrs. Rafter's back premises, are so much damaged as to be scarcely worth repairing. The waters came three feet up to the gaol wall on one side of the town, and within two feet of Dr. Day's front door on the other side. The Fitzroy Bridge is safe and sound; the water is now under the hand-railing. The roof of a shed of Mr. Fitzgerald's was lifted clean off its pillars, and now lies high and dry without a particle of injury on the ground, near its former site; the slabs, however, have quite disappeared. The water carried away part of the bottom end off the barrack wall, and came into the volunteers-room.

It is impossible to describe adequately the misery and distress which this fearful visitation of the Divine Power has caused. Mr. Cunningham informs me that, the avidity with which the poor people of Freeman's Reach in the lofts and on the roofs of their houses seized upon the boat load of provisions which he took to them yesterday was astonishing. One old couple had actually lost their senses, and could with difficulty be restrained by their friends from drowning themselves. Cold, wet, and hungry, their sufferings must have been great. There was no possibility of enjoying the comforts of a fire, as such a thing could not be made. I have heard that many valuable papers and documents have been carried away, there being no opportunity of saving them. It will take a long time to clear away the debris alone which has accumulated in various places; and it is most lamentable to see the destruction of valuable furniture everywhere around. Some hundreds of stacks of hay

must have been carried away, and the quantity of maize which has been destroyed and damaged, is immense. If some fine warm weather were to come, much of the corn saved, might be dried and made available; but if the prevailing showers continue, there is no chance of such good fortune.

4 o'clock p.m. The waters have fallen now to the level of the Fitzroy Bridge, and the Wilberforce lands are making their appearance, with large lagoons here and there. Cornwallis has not yet shown above water, but the river will no doubt, during the night, be within its banks again. Some of the farmers are returning to their desolate hearths again, and have commenced clearing away the vast accumulation of rubbish. One commendable start in the way of relief, by private charity, has just been made by Messrs. Moore & Co. butchers, who have sent the bellman round, to announce that one ton of beef will be given away to-morrow morning, to those in actual want. May they find many imitators. The weather has been tolerably fine to-day; a good deal of sunshine with only a few slight showers.

Friday, 17th.

The water has now run off the more elevated places, and is confined within the banks of the rivers and creeks. The floor of the Fitzroy bridge is dry, but there still remains a large sheet of water between it and McGrath's Hill. The low-lying places of Cornwallis, Richmond Bottoms, and Fairfield Flats, are also still inundated, and it will be some time yet before the waters leave them. By to-morrow, however, I expect the river will be near its usual level.

What a sad week we have had of it. The whole affair—rise and fall—has taken place in seven days, quite long enough to be in such a plight. What a wreck it has left behind! Nothing could be more desolate and wretched, than the present appearance of the flat lands surrounding the town of Windsor. Should even fine weather continue, it will be a long time before the face of nature resumes its usual, genial, and verdant condition.

I was glad to learn yesterday from one of the Messrs. Gaspers, of Colo, that there had not been much rise in the river in that locality. Colo and the McDonald will therefore have comparatively escaped the devastation about Windsor.

From the miasma and dampness which so generally prevail, a great amount of sickness is likely to ensue. Colds and sore throats are very prevalent.

The Bench of Magistrates have received a letter from the Colonial Secretary, stating that, they must act on their own responsibility in affording relief to urgent distress. But, as in other localities, besides what the Bench may see fit to do, the Government will provide an equal sum to what may be locally contributed for relief.

It has been determined to call a public meeting, to raise subscriptions, for Thursday next, at the Court-house. Some ladies have formed themselves into an association for providing clothing for the distressed women and children, and are getting on well.

The sky is still very cloudy, and threatens for more rain.

Monday, 20th.

Although the rain fell heavily on Friday night, causing some apprehension, lest the water should take another rise, Saturday morning was ushered in by the cheering rays of the sun; and, until this afternoon, we have been permitted to enjoy some of the comforts of fine weather. A sudden change took place about two o'clock p.m., and there has been a heavy thundershower. The clouds, however, are again breaking, and there is once more a prospect of its clearing up.

Within the last ten days, I have been the sorrowful spectator of a scene, the effects of which, time alone can overcome. The water has run off most of the lands, but what a wondrous change is observable. Looking over the Cornwallis, Wilberforce, and Pitt-town Bottoms—places recently adorned by fields of ripened corn, and hundreds of acres of young wheat and oats, the abodes of a happy peasantry, we find them now desolate and dreary, coated with mud and rubbish, the deposits of a calamitous inundation. Most of the farmers have returned to their land, but the accumulation of rubbish and filth upon it is so great, that a length of time must elapse, ere it can be brought into use again. So many houses have been washed away, that some families will have to reside for a time in the town. The river has now returned to its usual bed, and should the weather continue propitious, the punt will soon be at work again. Thank heaven, the worst is over.

Surely, some relief will be offered the poor sufferers, by their more fortunate brethren—by those who have not tasted the bitterness, and felt the anguish of several days subjection to wet, cold, and hunger, and who are blest with this world's wealth. Many of the unfortunate settlers have lost everything they possessed, and are without personal friends to succour them in this their time of need. When all are served alike, who can help his neighbour? When the watery element covered one abode, a higher eminence had to be sought. This, in time, had to be deserted, and greater flights had to be taken. "Let us flee to the hills" was the exclamation of many of the terrified people. I can scarcely believe that such adamant hearts can exist, as to prove impervious to the wailings of woe which may now be heard from the habitations of the Hawkesbury; and we rely upon some speedy steps being taken to meet the necessities which have arisen. In 1860, some splendid efforts were made. They should be repeated with fourfold effect. No doubt they will be. Already, some handsome donations have been received from generous individuals of Sydney.

CHAPTER II.

THE JULY FLOOD.

Winds of the *South* ! restrain your icy gales,
Nor chill the bosom of these happy vales !
Hence in dark heaps, ye gathering clouds, revolve !
Disperse, ye lightnings, and ye mists, dissolve !

DARWIN.

Saturday, July 16th.

11 a.m. Scarcely has the district had time to recover breath from the great and disastrous flood of last month, ere, in the wise and inscrutable dispensations of the Almighty, it has been doomed again to undergo a similar calamity—though happily of a less appalling character than its predecessor. The telegrams, which were despatched to Sydney, yesterday, would have given the first information of the heavy rains, which, commencing on Wednesday, fell on the night of Friday with uncommon violence. The creeks were soon swollen, and emptying their contents into the river, increased the mighty volume of water it already contained, poured into it from the smaller rivers and streams which form its numerous tributaries. The mountain torrent must have swept down the treacherous Grose in great force and extent, contributing in no small degree to the inundations of the plain. The river began slowly to rise on the evening of Thursday; on Friday, it rose at the rate of about two feet per hour, and by sundown, the water was level with the top of the high banks, and began in the lower places to break over. The clouds then began to dissipate and disperse; during the night they cleared away, and when I arose this morning, Phœbus was shedding his brilliant rays benignantly on an immense flood all round Windsor—the surface of which, shone like silver, and was as smooth as glass, with the exception of a slight current, visible only in the course of the river. I sallied forth to view the scene. How very different to the last! The waters had risen within twelve feet of the flood of last month. Scarcely any sound was to be heard—no guns were firing for help, save by some sportsman after ducks. No one was rushing madly here and there, seeking for a boat, to go and rescue an imperilled friend. No; this flood has come, and been taken as a thing almost “of course.” There were no stacks to be seen floating down the river—no cattle swimming for their lives—no fowls perched on portions of debris—and no one trying to save his furniture, simply because there was none to save. The late flood made such a clean sweep of the farmer’s store, that nothing remained, except here and there the wrecks of his habitation, and a portion of his damaged corn. Yet, this flood will not be without its disastrous results. It has aggravated the troubles, and increased the losses and the

destruction inflicted upon the settlers by the previous flood, inasmuch as what remained of their dwellings, and the little maize recovered will be still further injured, whilst the ground will be so saturated, that it will postpone—perhaps altogether defer this season—any attempt at cultivation, for the purpose of resowing wheat. A few of the farmers had already put in a second seeding; but it is to be feared, their labours will have been thrown away. The soil has been at many places washed away, which is the heaviest kind of loss which could possibly happen. A day of bright sunshine like this, is a luxury and a blessing. Could we but have a month of such weather, there might yet be hope for the poor farmer. It is so far fortunate, that none of the seed wheat and oats which have been purchased by the Windsor and Sydney committees for distribution, have been sown. If there be time yet remaining, such seed will still be at the command of the cultivators. Whilst writing this, the water continues to rise at the rate of two inches per hour. It is thought it will not get much higher. It has risen at present altogether about thirty-six feet, and has come to the town, by Bridge-street, nearly to the corner of the barracks' wall. About three feet of the tips of the Fitzroy bridge only are visible, and the waters are just touching the electric telegraph wires on the road between the bridge and McGrath's Hill. There is quite a sea along the south creek, the Peninsula, and Pitt-town Bottoms. Greater portion of Wilberforce and Freeman's Reach are inundated. Mr. Edward Robinson's house stands almost alone high and dry. Cornwallis—unfortunate lowly Cornwallis—has again been deeply submerged, and so have Clarendon and Richmond Bottoms. Rickaby's Creek, and the Chain of Ponds, with all the adjacent land below Fairfield, have once more given place to the watery elements. The Railway has so far escaped. The water will have to rise several feet yet, before the line can be touched, and if the present fine weather continue, it will be safe.

The foregoing will give some idea of the present flood. This time there are no "moving accidents" to relate—Alas! the mischief has already been done. Still, there is a renewed call for the efforts of the charitable to double their exertions for the relief of the sufferers. For the next six months, the poor settlers will be involved in the greatest misery imaginable, from want of the common necessaries of life. The Windsor Relief Committee met yesterday, when it was unanimously resolved that, the Sydney Committee be respectfully requested to forward their future donations in money without delay, and to discontinue any further expenditure for seed, as the season will be getting too far advanced, with the wet soil, to render it possible that more can be sown than has already been provided.

3 o'clock p.m. The flood has risen about two feet since the morning, and is now up to the corner of the barracks' wall, Bridge-street. A smart southerly breeze has sprung up, which has ruffled the water considerably, but the sunshine continues, and a beautiful blue sky enanopies the scene. The turbulence of the waters will increase the damage which will be done, but the wind will accelerate the escape of the flood, which, it is believed, will soon take place.

8 o'clock p.m. The water has now attained its height, and

begun to fall. I believe the flood has risen altogether about thirty-eight feet, or, within ten or eleven feet of the last flood. The moon is shining placidly on the aqueous scene, but the wind has not abated, and the night is likely to be cold and disagreeable. Most of the poor farmers with their families are safe upon the high lands, having timely left their ill-fated abodes.

Sunday, 17th.

4 o'clock p.m. The waters fell but slowly last night, and continue to do so; and I am unable to report a further recession than about five or six feet altogether. The higher ranges of Wilberforce and Freeman's Reach are becoming again visible, and the tops of fences, and heads of cornstalks are peering out here and there in various places. It is now fine sunshine again, but the wind continues high, and is freezingly cold. It is supposed, there must have been a fall of snow on the mountains, to cause the extreme frigidity which prevails, besides increasing bulk of the waters. God grant a speedy cessation to all our troubles.

Monday, 18th.

4 o'clock p.m. As I anticipated, yesterday, the waters went down, but slowly, last night. They do not seem to have fallen so far more than ten or eleven feet. The greater part of Wilberforce, and some portions of Cornwallis are reappearing. Parts of the banks of the river are now to be seen, covered with slimy mud. The weather has continued fine, though bleak and windy, and now and then a cloud has shewn itself, but has passed away without rain. The poor farmers are again looking anxiously upon the sites of their homesteads, patiently awaiting the further fall of the waters. Numbers of them were this time able to remain during the flood in the lofts of their houses and barns, that is, such of them as were left standing by the previous inundation; but their sufferings, in these positions from cold and wet, must have been great. When once the water gets within the banks of the river again, it will soon fall. At present, it is only going down at the rate of a few inches per hour. The floor of the Fitzroy bridge is now visible, but there is a large expanse of water yet between the bridge and McGrath's Hill, along South Creek and Pitt-town Bottoms. The water falls more tardily on this side of the town than the other. The fences which are visible, and some of the habitations seem, at a distance, to have been additionally injured, and the former hopes of the occupants, in various instances, of repairing, will be considerably, if not entirely frustrated. So far fortunate, the town of Windsor has sustained no physical injury this time; but the flood has hindered the operations which had been commenced for the repairs of some of the damage done by the former visitation.

Tuesday, 19th.

4 o'clock p.m. The river is now within its banks, and the waters have considerably subsided. Still there are large sheets remaining

in the lowlying parts of Cornwallis, and below McGrath's Hill. The roads, however, are clear, and both coaches travelled to-day as usual. By this time to-morrow, no doubt the river will be about its usual level.

The weather continues beautifully fine, tempered by a cool and bracing breeze. The lands surrounding Windsor look most dreary and desolate—enough to break the hearts of the poor settlers, and to cause many of them to abjure agriculture altogether. Yet, they cling to the places of their abodes with a lingering hope that, it will not always be with them as it has been lately, and that they may still recover their lost comfortable condition.

Wednesday, July 20th.

Once more, the treacherous Hawkesbury is itself again, and the waters are down to the usual level: the banks, however, seem to be very much cut up, and land-slips have taken place here and there. The weather is delightful. May it continue, so and postpone for ever these fearful visitations.

CHAPTER III.

RELIEF FOR THE SUFFERERS.

True charity, a plant divinely nurs'd,
Fed by the love from which it rose at first,
Thrives against hope, and in the rudest scene,
Storms but enliven its unfading green :
Exub'rant is the shadow it supplies,
Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.

COWPER.

Soon after the subsidence of the first flood, namely, on the afternoon of Thursday, the 23rd of June, a PUBLIC MEETING of the inhabitants of the town and district of Windsor took place at the Court House, for the purpose of adopting measures for the relief of the sufferers. The meeting was convened by a notice, signed by a number of the leading inhabitants, inserted in the 'Herald' of the 21st, and was most numerous and respectably attended, including nearly all the Clergy and Magistrates of the district.

MR. WILLIAM WALKER, M.L.A. was unanimously called upon to preside, and having taken the chair, addressed the meeting to the following effect :—He was glad to see so large an assemblage present, though it was no more than he expected, knowing, as he did, how deeply they all sympathised with their unfortunate fellow inhabitants, who had suffered so terribly by the recent disastrous flood. Unhappily, that was not the first time they had met together under such direful circumstances. In 1860, they were obliged to assemble in a similar manner, to meet a like calamity, but the flood on that occasion, neither in height, nor in its disastrous effects, could be compared with the present. When the recent flood began to subside, and they got a little time to reflect what was best to be done, it was at once thought desirable that a public meeting should be called. It ought perhaps to have been held sooner, but he did not think, the little delay which had occurred, would interfere with the extent of their charity. The notice convening the meeting (which he read) was signed in the course of a very short space of time, and many more names might have been attached to it; but mere numbers were not required in such a matter. He would now state, so far as he knew, what had been done for affording temporary relief to the sufferers, until something more substantial could be done. The Magistrates of the town, the Clergy, and himself, had addressed a letter to the Colonial Secretary, pointing out the great and widely spread distress which has arisen, and asking for some authority on the part of the Government to give relief. An answer was received, which he would read. It was—"That the Magistrates must act on their own responsibility in affording relief, as the Government could not pros-

pectively approve, unless the cases were specially reported. But, as in other localities, besides what the bench might see fit to do, the Government would provide an equal sum to what may be locally contributed for the relief of urgent distress, but in that case, a reliable Committee must undertake its distribution." The Magistrates, it seemed, so far, did not feel called upon to act on their own responsibility, but the meeting had a powerful incentive offered to them by the Government, to be liberal in their donations, inasmuch as, whatever they gave for urgent distress, would be doubled from the public purse. In addition to this, the Rev. Mr. Palmer, of Pitt Town, had communicated with the members for the Hawkesbury (Messrs. Piddington and Cunneen) upon the necessity of sending immediate relief to the starving and houseless people of Pitt-town and Wilberforce. In consequence of which, these gentlemen waited upon the Colonial Secretary, and obtained his authority to buy three tons of flour, and twenty pairs of blankets, which they did, and had speedily forwarded to their destination. The Committee of the Hawkesbury Benevolent Society, at an early period of the disaster, also met, and authorised a week's rations to be given to any poor person in need; and he believed, upwards of two hundred persons had been assisted in that way. Several other private contributions in money and kind had been received by him and others, from gentlemen in Sydney and elsewhere, which he mentioned. He had just had placed in his hands several large subscriptions, and one gentleman in Sydney, Mr. F. Chalders, had written to the Rev. Mr. Garnsey, offering £100. The Ladies of the town had also been energetically moving, and had formed themselves into an association for providing clothing and bedding for the women and children. It required but little to be said by him, to bring under notice the widely spread devastation, which the waste of water had occasioned. The flood which had taken place, if not the highest, was more destructive than any hitherto known on the Hawkesbury. They were the eye-witnesses of the great suffering which had been caused amongst the unfortunate settlers, and he was sure, no eloquence was needed to move them to noble acts of generosity and charity, to assist in alleviating the distress which had arisen. They would be addressed by several Clergyman and others, who had seen more of the desolation around them than himself, and he would therefore, without any further remarks of his own, call upon the movers of the resolutions. (*Applause.*)

The meeting was then addressed by the Rev. H. T. Stiles, the Rev. C. F. Garnsey, James Ascough, Esq., J. P., the Rev. P. Hallinan, D.D., the Rev. J. Dowson, the Rev. D. Moore, H. Day, Esq., J.P., Richard Ridge, Esq., and other gentlemen, and appropriate resolutions unanimously passed, expressive of sympathy with the distressed, and appointing a Committee to take steps for raising subscriptions, and affording relief to the sufferers.

THE REV. C. F. GARNSEY, after some preliminary remarks, spoke to the following effect:—He thought, the word, relief, or charity in its usual acceptation was scarcely applicable to the present case,

because he considered that, the saving the life of another, was something more than either relief or charity. They were called upon to-day, to uphold, if possible, the position of their fellow-men—men whose positions were equally as good as their own, and whose sufferings demanded assistance from them. The present was a special case—where all were called upon to give liberally, moved by a brotherly feeling for those in a state of poverty. The agriculturalists, the tillers of the soil, formed a class which England was ever proud of; the Yeomanry were the strength of Britain, and upon them, England principally depended for her volunteers, and it was they, who would yet be the strength of this Country. (*Cheers.*) In the present case, we should have to help a great many who were never flooded-out before, and who, through the height to which the waters had risen, had lost all they possessed. He had heard it said (and when he heard it, his heart almost burst within him) that there was no real distress; but he would appeal to all present, whether they had ever seen such widely spread misery in the district. There were many respectable families, who, to his knowledge, had no home to go to, and who were obliged to take their scanty meals in the open air, and at night to sleep under their drays. He knew many but a few days since, in a better position than himself, who were now suffering from almost actual starvation—reduced to most distressing circumstances, and not by any fault of their own, but by a sudden and calamitous visitation of Providence. The people of Windsor, he had always found most charitably disposed, and he believed, it was the easiest place in the Colony for raising subscriptions towards any good object. It would be absurd, however, to speak of being able to compensate in the smallest degree the losses of the farmers—the destruction of property had been so great, that it was next to impossible to form any accurate idea of the loss; few indeed had anything left, by which they could raise the means, either of repairing or rebuilding their houses. He knew of one man alone, who on the Saturday, when the water was rising, considered himself worth £500, and who on the following day could not say he was worth more than what he stood up in; and this was only one of the many similar cases. In conclusion, he urged, that the money raised, should, so far as practicable, be given to the people themselves for investment, because it would be impossible for any Committee, however intelligent, to know what might be the actual requirements of the people, under circumstances of so extraordinary a character. He trusted, that all present, would come forward doubly liberal on this occasion, that they might be able to restore many to a somewhat similar position to that which they occupied before the flood. (*loud applause*)

A Subscription List was opened, and before the meeting closed, upwards of £500 was subscribed.

With a vote of thanks to the chairman, the business was concluded.

Similar meetings to the above, were held at Sydney, (presided over by the Mayor); Parramatta, Bathurst, Goulburn, and various other towns in the interior, and eloquent speeches were in some

instances delivered. The subscriptions entered into, were general, and of the most liberal description, some being as high as £100 each. Altogether, upwards of £10,000 have been subscribed, and amounts continue to flow in.

The Windsor Committee has held meetings every Monday and Friday since the public meeting, and have been most assiduous in their labours. About £1500 has been locally subscribed, and large grants in money, seed wheat, oats, potatoes and clothing have been received from the Central Committee in Sydney for distribution. Numerous private contributions of clothing and blankets have also been received; and the bakers and butchers of the metropolis sent bread and salted meat.

It has been carefully estimated that, not less than £130,000 worth of property has been destroyed by the flood—and upwards of 250 families, representing more than 1,000 souls have been thrown into distress. The Windsor Committee has offered substantial relief to these unfortunate individuals. May they never need it again, is the fervent prayer, with which I must conclude this painful narrative.

July 30th, 1864.

SPEECH
IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
OCTOBER 25TH, 1860.

ON THE CROWN LANDS ALIENATION BILL OF MR. ROBERTSON,
IN COMMITTEE ON THE 13TH CLAUSE.

MR. WALKER said the honorable member for Braidwood (Capt. Moriarty) had stated, in the course of his very excited speech, that he was pledged to vote for the principle of this clause. Now, that was doubtlessly a very fair reason for the course which that honorable member intended to pursue, and applying it to his own case, he (Mr. Walker) might be permitted to say, that when he had the honor of appearing before his constituents, he had stated that he was in favor of free selection, but *after* survey, not *before*. He had been elected on that distinct understanding, and he had heard no sufficient reason to induce him to change his mind upon the subject. Some honourable members made no secret of having an interest in this question, amongst others, the honorable member for East Maitland (Mr. Dickson); he (Mr. Walker) however, had no personal interest whatever in the question, and would bring an independent judgment to bear upon it. He denied that there was free selection before survey, such as this clause provided, in America. The United States Land Laws compel the settler to wait for a survey, and to pay for his land when surveyed, not before, and then only can be obtained a title and legal possession. If he sits down upon the land before that, he is in the position of a trespasser. But even if they had free selection in America, the case was very different there to what it was here. There the land was previously unoccupied—here the contrary was the case—it was under lease; and the result would be that the selector would come into collision with the present occupant. (*Hear, hear.*) There was plenty of room for agriculturists, without injuring or destroying the pastoral interests—the two should go hand in hand, under a proper system. Large blocks of agricultural land should be surveyed in advance of the demand, similar to the system they had adopted in Victoria and Queensland. Suppose a squatter quarrelled with one of his men, the man might go and pitch down on some part of his master's run—a water-hole perhaps. [Mr. Robertson: *No!*] He said yes; and annoy him by impounding or interfering with his cattle; and he would have to be bought out at an enormous imposition. If the bill had provided for fencing, the objection as to impounding might have been met, but there was nothing about fencing in the bill. Selection before

survey must be injurious, and in the far interior would be a perfect delusion and a snare to the *bona fide* agriculturist. Agriculture in such places would never pay—even in districts near Sydney, in the County of Cumberland, the farmers complained now—and the more land that was cultivated the worse it would be for the farmers, for the prices would fall with an increased supply. He was therefore unwilling that any industrious man should be deluded by such a system. Where parties were desirous of applying themselves to agriculture, he thought the Government should take up large settlements or areas on the banks of rivers, and other suitable localities, have them surveyed and converted into lots, so that a man could put his finger on the map and select this piece or that piece, and pay for it without competition. The circumstances of America and this Colony were very different. People here would never be satisfied with two shillings a bushel for wheat. America was not a gold producing country. [Mr. Wilson : *California.*] That was an exception, but he believed California was now worn out as a gold country. No land system would induce people to come from the Mother-Country to this Colony. In this he was borne out by the honorable member for West Sydney (Dr. Lang) who was of opinion that the insuperable distance would prevent emigration to any extent. When they could go from England to America for £2 a head, they would not pay £15 to come here. He was, however, inclined to support Dr. Lang's proposal, to give land orders, believing that if anything encouraged emigration, that would. The honorable member had shown the necessity of survey before settlement, for his father had lost 1000 acres of land through taking possession before survey. He (Mr. W.) did not feel strongly on this matter, like some members, and he would be just as well pleased if the ministry carried their proposal as if the amendment were carried, although he believed they would be supported by some members contrary to their own convictions. He had no personal interest in the matter, but would give his vote for the amendment, as his conscience dictated to him. It was the best and most honorable course. (*Cheers.*)

[Mr. Hay's amendment for SURVEY before SELECTION was carried, by a small majority (5) ; when Mr. Robertson declined proceeding further with the bill.]

SPEECH
IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
NOVEMBER 8TH, 1860.

ON MR. ROBERTS' AMENDMENT (ON THE MOTION TO GO INTO
COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY) THAT THE MINISTRY OUGHT
NOT TO CONTINUE IN OFFICE.

MR. WALKER was unwilling to give a silent vote on this question, because he considered it a very important one. And as some honorable members had gone to considerable length in the matter, perhaps he might be excused if he addressed the House for a very short time. Before going further, he might express his surprise at the silence of honorable members who represented the Government on this question. They had had several speakers, but the only honorable member connected with the Government who had spoken, was the honorable Minister for Lands (Mr. Robertson). That honorable member had laid great stress on the point, that they had been wasting the time of the House, and that they ought to have thrown out the Land Bill on the second reading. He repudiated such an insinuation, and contended that both sides of the House met the consideration of the second reading in a *bona fide* and constitutional manner. It was evident that it was the desire of honorable members, on both sides, that the Land Bill should be gone into in a fair and impartial spirit, in order that some determination might be come to by the House on a question of such importance to the country. The vote he gave on that question he gave with disinterested motives, because it mattered little to him whether they had free selection before or after survey. Now he asked, was it not free selection that was in the Melbourne Land Bill? (*No, no!*) He thought it was, and although he cared very little about the matter personally, he had voted conscientiously. He should feel bound to vote for the present amendment; because, for one reason, the honorable member had challenged the House to bring it forward, and because honorable members, his supporters, had walked out of the House last night disgusted with the course the ministry had taken. He also gave his vote on another ground, namely, that the ministry had never stated how they were going to find the Ways and Means to pay the Estimates. He took the same view as the honorable member for the Williams, and could not see the use of voting large sums of money if no provision were made for their payment. Let the Government say they would go on with the Ways and Means, with the Land Bill, and with the business of the country, and then

he would vote against the amendment, but if not, they had better give up the reins at once, and there was no other course open to him than to bring this crisis to a head. For these reasons he should support the amendment.

[The amendment was carried by a majority of 2. Ministers then procured a dissolution, which resulted in the Free Selection Parliament.]

S P E E C H,

DELIVERED IN THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

NEW SOUTH WALES,

NOVEMBER 3^RD, 1869,

IN COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS,

BY

WILLIAM WALKER, M.L.A.

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1869.

S P E E C H, &c.

MR. WALKER fully expected that some honorable member, on the ministerial side of the House, would have risen to reply to the able and eloquent speech of the honorable member of Patrick's Plains. As, however, no one had attempted to do so, he felt called upon to give expression to his views on the subject under discussion. The Premier had given the Committee his history of all the deficits, but he would ask, what had that to do with the present question? The first known deficit occurred under the Government of Mr. Cowper and Mr. Robertson, and although it was long denied, so soon as they got an honest Treasurer, the startling fact was announced, that the deficit amounted to £400,000. Mr. Cowper shortly afterwards went out of office and the Martin-Forster Government came into power: and in consequence of the burdens and liabilities cast upon them by their predecessors, the deficit was doubled in one year. Mr. Martin's Government took steps to pay off this deficiency, and passed a measure through the Lower House for that purpose, but the Upper House rejected their proposals, through no fault of theirs. A dissolution soon afterwards took place, and Mr. Cowper came back to power, with an immense majority, returned upon the free trade cry. Mr. Samuel was his Treasurer, a free trader, and gave peculiar evidence of his adherence to such principles, by proposing to double the duty upon tea and sugar, and establish trade licenses and a tax upon servants. Of course, such a proposal would not go down in the present age, Mr. Cowper withdrew it, and substituted and carried the present much abused *ad valorem* duties. The friends of the honorable member at the head of the Government were alone responsible for the passing of these duties. It was not his intention to deal with figures in the estimated ways and means, because the matter had been very aptly treated already by the honorable member for West Sydney, Mr. Eagar, as also by Mr. Farnell, Mr. Piddington, and Sir James Martin. These honorable gentlemen did not exactly coincide in their estimates of the deficit, but they all agreed that at the end of 1870 there would be a deficiency of something like a quarter of a million. The figures of the Treasurer were entirely delu-

sive ; they looked very nice upon paper, but he was sure the honorable gentleman himself could scarcely rely upon them. The honorable gentleman had also, he contended, committed a gross breach of faith, and proposed violating a solemn Act of Parliament. By the Act 29 Vict. No. 4, the honorable gentleman was bound to pay £100,000 of short dated debentures each year out of the revenues for 1869 and 1870, whereas, he only proposes actually to pay off £50,000 each year. Such conduct as this was calculated to injure the credit of the country in the money market, and was unbecoming a Minister of the Crown. The honorable member had told us there were various schemes of retrenchment being carried out ; but when we compared the Estimates for next year with the Estimates for the present year, there was only a difference of about £5,000. That was comparatively a mere nothing. Expense was saved in one department and increased in another, so that practically there was no saving at all. He would defy the Government to shew that there was any sensible diminution of the expenditure proposed. There had been several motions carried last week for bridges, &c., which would have the effect of increasing these Estimates ; so that if even the honorable gentleman had the surplus which he imagined, it would be gone. There was, in fact, no retrenchment whatever. For there was the proposal to borrow £2,000,000 for railway extensions. No doubt the proposal was only submitted to please certain constituencies. But the Treasurer could not have been sincere in his proposal to obtain this loan, or else he would have mentioned the subject in his financial speech. He had said nothing about it, and when Sir James Martin had referred to it, he had made some sort of excuse, and said he had forgotten it.—(Laughter.) Either the Treasurer must be under some gross delusion, or he does not know what he is about. He (Mr. W.) was somewhat inclined to think with some honorable members, that *for the present*, we had carried railways far enough, and that we ought to pause for a while, until we got a little out of debt. The honorable Treasurer had said that £2,000,000 per year should be enough for our current expences. He thought so too, and more than enough ; but when we paid £500,000 annually for interest, we had, in reality, only a million and-a-half for general Government. If we did not get into debt, our revenue was amply sufficient for our necessities ; but if we went further into debt, we must fall short. There was £100,000 proposed to be bor-

rowed for the construction of our iron wharf at Circular Quay, and other large sums of a similar character were put down, the interest of which would have to be met. Was the Treasurer going to provide for all the increases and the large additional interest, by abolishing the *ad valorem* duties without providing some substitute for them? The retrenchments came to nothing. The only difference between the Colonial Secretary's Estimates of next year and the present year amounted to £7,000. The amount expected to be saved by the absurd police reserve system was more than swallowed up, by the sum of £30,000, put down for a most objectionable system of Assisted Immigration. This new police scheme was a complete sham, and would prove no retrenchment at all, even if carried out, for it was proposed to pay the men on duty about double the present pay of the regular policemen. It would be to the interest of these men, if they should be got, to increase crime. Then the police were to find their own horses. If so, they would save them as much as possible at the expense of their public duty; and as to allowing them a certain sum in lieu of forage, that might act as a temptation to some, to put the money in their pockets, and starve their horses. He did not think such a system would meet with the approbation of the country. In his system of retrenchment, the honorable Premier had dealt with some of the public officers in a most paltry manner. The honorable gentleman had knocked off £25 from the salaries of some petty officers, and reduced the poor District Registrars, whilst, at the same time, he had increased the salaries of some of the higher officials in his own department. The Superintendent of Lunatic Asylums was to have an increase of £150; the Chief Clerk and Inspector of Accounts was to have an increase of £50; and a gentleman, high in the Post Office, was to have an additional £100 per annum. This was the Government that was *par excellence* to be a retrenchment Government! Why, the whole thing was a sham and a delusion. In the department of the Secretary for Public Lands alone, there was an increase in the Estimates of £16,000 over those of last year. These increases might or might not be requisite; but he mentioned them to shew that the Government was entitled to no credit on the score of retrenchment. The honorable Treasurer expected to screw a large additional sum from the free selectors; but he thought that idea would be delusive without some alteration in the land laws. Then they were coolly told by some

persons that there was to be no further taxation, when they all knew there was a proposition, which in some shape or other, would have the effect of doubling the disagreeable stamp duties. But did the honorable Treasurer suppose that that House would consent to such a proposition? If he did, he thought he was labouring under a very great mistake. The honorable gentleman said he expected to raise an additional £55,000 by this proposition, but if the House threw it up, what would become of the honorable gentleman's Estimates? Suppose the revenue which the honorable gentleman expected to receive from additional stamp duties, free selectors, and other sources, was not realized, was it not clear that at the end of next year the deficit must be enormous? It was said that the *ad valorem* duties opened the way to a deal of fraud; but would there not be frauds under an income and property tax, which it was vaguely hinted would be resorted to? He had no particular liking for *ad valorem* duties, but he did not think they should throw away their dirty water until they had got clean, and that was what the House would be doing if they consented to abolish the *ad valorem* duties without providing some other means of raising revenue. If they were very bad, why not abolish them at the beginning, instead of the end of next year? No, that would not suit the Government. They wished to retain them as long as they expected to be in office, leaving to their successors the disadvantages of their loss. These *ad valorem* duties, obnoxious as they were, brought in a revenue of nearly £200,000 per annum. Was such a source of revenue to be given up without some other provision being made? It was said, that when the proper time came we were to have a property or income tax instead. Well, that might suit people who had neither property nor income. When the members of the present Government went out of office they would lose their income, and probably some or all of them might have no property; so it might suit them to suggest a property and income tax. But it was perfectly disgraceful to propose a property and income tax in a young country like this, with no standing army, or wars to maintain. He did not profess to be a protectionist, but he maintained that taxation through the Custom House was about as fair and legitimate a system of taxation as could be adopted. You paid your taxes at a time when and in a manner that you neither knew nor felt that you were doing so. But under a direct system of taxation, such as that

proposed, we should have an army of tax-gatherers who would go to nearly every person in the community, demanding their money, whether convenient or not. It would be a question of "give me your money or your life." If a poor man did not pay up, the tax-gatherer would sell him off. Why did not the Treasurer propose something in the shape of fixed duties in lieu of the *ad valorem*, which he proposed to abolish? The whole scheme of the Treasurer, in his opinion, was an attempt to impose upon the credulity of honorable members of that House and the gullibility of the people out of doors. It was simply a contemptible temporising policy, to tide over next year, while they hoped to be in office, leaving 1871 to take care of itself, and incurring a large deficit to be met by their successors. The revenue is said to be in a flourishing condition; but if so, it is owing to the large sum now receivable from the *ad valorem* duties. No practical good could come out of the present Session. If the Government really intended this to be a working Session of Parliament, why did they not call the House together three or four months earlier? The excuse they made for having taken such a long recess as six months was, that their predecessors had taken the same. But, in fact, their predecessors, under similar circumstances, only took a recess of two or three months. When the late Government did take a recess of six months the Parliament had some two years to run, and there was no inconvenience in their taking such a course. But why did the present Government take a recess of six months: was it to allow the Premier to gallop all over the northern districts of the colony, airing his usual oratory. That was the way Ministers had occupied their time during the recess. If the Government had studied the interests of the country and really wished the House to pass their measures, they would have called the House together many months ago. It was preposterous for the Government to attempt any serious business now. If constitutional precedent had been followed this House should never have met. Since assembling honorable members had done little besides abusing each other, except that they had passed a Gunpowder Bill, which he supposed was to blow them all up!—(*Laughter.*) Where were the twenty-one splendid measures the Government promised at the opening of the Session? Some of them which had been introduced were so bungled in the drawing up that it was clear nothing could be made of them. It was difficult to

keep a House together. The Government had in round numbers, about twenty, and opposition, about fifteen members in town. The others had either not come down, or gone home with no intention of returning. He asked, was this a competent House to transact the business of the country? Surely it was not, and the sooner it was dissolved the better. It was a simple impossibility for the House to get through the Bills already introduced and to pass the Estimates, in the short time remaining at their disposal. It was not likely the opposition were going to pass the Estimates *in globo* and so keep the present Government comfortably in office another twelve or eighteen months. It had been said that the Government had brought in a Bill to reduce their own salaries; but this was a misrepresentation. They had brought in a Bill to repeal Schedule A, and to reduce the salaries of the Judges, but not one word was said about reducing the salaries of the Ministers, which were placed upon the Estimates, in full.—(*Hear! Hear!*) We had, in this city, some highly respectable Hebrew merchants, and some highly respectable Christian editors, who seemed to possess only one idea, and that was, “repeal the *ad valorem* duties;” and they did not care one rap what Jacks were in office, so long as they could get a repeal of the *ad valorem* duties. That, however, was not the view he took of Government or of its duties. He thought they ought to look above these paltry mercenary transactions of mere business, and unite to secure the best Government they could; not thinking for a moment of any more pounds shillings and pence, consideration in furtherance of such an object. Holding these views and having no confidence in the present Government, from his past experience of the manner in which they had abused their patronage and power, he would not consent to entrust them with the Supplies until there had been an appeal to the country. When that appeal took place, he hoped the people would not be deceived by any sham scheme of retrenchment, or the proposition of respectable Hebrew merchants and Christian editors to repeal the *ad valorem* duties; but would return gentlemen of honor, intelligence, and integrity, to serve them in the Councils of their country. As far as lay in his humble power, not a shilling of the Estimates for the ensuing year should be voted until there had been a dissolution of Parliament.—(*Cheers.*)

SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS.

THE recent death in the land of his nativity of the above distinguished and accomplished colonist and gentleman, with whose friendship and confidence I was long honoured, and who represented this district in Parliament for a number of years, impels me to pen a few personal reminiscences of him, ere they fade from my memory, and in the hope that their perusal may not be uninteresting to the general reader. In doing so, probably, I shall lay myself open somewhat to a charge of egotism; but risking this, and knowing that if such considerations were to prevail, some of the brightest and most delectable productions of English literature would never have seen the light, I shall pursue my subject, regardless of censure.

The notice of Sir John, which has already appeared in the columns of the leading daily paper, is as much remarkable for its briefness as its brilliancy, and is admirable of its kind; but it makes no reference to the late honourable gentleman's connection with the Hawkesbury, which I regard as a striking defect; and I venture further to believe that an extended notice of his life would be as interesting a piece of biography as any that ever engaged the attention of a man of letters.

My acquaintance with Mr. Darvall began when he became one of the candidates for the representation of the North Riding of Cumberland at the first election under responsible government in 1856. I acted as his professional agent at the Windsor portion of the electorate, and had the good fortune to see him procure the premier position on the poll there. His colleague was Mr. James Pye, of Parramatta, defeating Dr. Sherwin. Upon Mr. D.'s taking office as Solicitor-General in the Donaldson Ministry, he was opposed in his re-election by Mr. William Hogan (proposed by his subsequent friend and colleague, Mr. Piddington), but was returned by a majority of more than two to one. He made a characteristic speech at the nomination at Parramatta, where Mr. Parkes appeared as an opposing elector, accusing him of deserting his former political allies, when he replied that his colleagues had come over to his opinions, and it had always been a motto with him to consider measures, not men. His maxim was "be to thyself and country true," and it followed that you could not be false to any man. Loud cheers followed this speech. He afterwards became Attorney-General in the Parker Administration, and was again opposed in his re-election by Mr. Richard Hill, but unsuccessfully. In December, 1857, on the fall of the Parker Government, he retired from Parliament, and was presented with an address at a public breakfast given to him at Parramatta, at which

I was present. He was succeeded in the representation by another friend of mine, Mr. Whistler Smith, who defeated Mr. Parkes by a large majority, a result which I got the credit or blame of helping to bring about. Next year, however, Mr. Parkes succeeded in supplanting Mr. Pye, and in conjunction with Mr. Smith, represented the North Riding as second member.

When the Electoral Act of 1858 was framed and a fresh division of constituencies was made, the Hawkesbury was constituted an electorate returning two members. I took an active part in the year 1859, when the Act came into force, in introducing Mr. Darvall and Mr. Piddington to the electors. They were fortunate in being both returned unopposed. At this time Mr. Darvall's relative, Mr. Lytton Holyoake Bayley, Attorney-General under the Cowper Administration, was elected for Mudgee, and Mr. Dalley, Solicitor-General, became member for Windsor. Mr. Dalley shortly afterwards retired from office and Parliament, and was succeeded by myself as member for this place. I then sat in the House with Mr. Darvall, and joined him as one of the Opposition to the Government, voting with him against that questionable boon to the country, free selection before survey. The Opposition threw out the clause in the Bill, and, as is well known, an appeal to the country took place. Mr. Piddington, being Chairman, though he was no friend of the Government escaped voting, and thereby retained his popularity. Mr. Darvall and I, however, had imperilled our seats; but I took steps which at once succeeded in making my election sure, though I had a formidable opponent at the last moment in Mr. James Byrnes, of Parramatta. Mr. Darvall, less fortunate, was opposed by Mr. James Cunneen, a popular native of the district, and one of his former supporters, who declared himself an advocate of free selection, with no quarter to the squatters. Mr. Darvall held his first meeting one Saturday night at the Fitzroy Hotel, Windsor, the late Mr. Joseph Cope being in the Chair. I was not present, and I blamed myself ever afterwards for not being so, having been persuaded to look after my own election only. The attendance was not large, and amongst the audience were some bitter opponents, friends of Mr. Cunneen, who came to give the learned gentleman a *warm* reception, taunting him with not attending to local matters, and with being no friend to "the poor man." Mr. Darvall was really no "road and bridge member," as the saying now is: he very properly considered himself in Parliament a representative and no delegate or alderman, as too many do now-a-days. But that would not suit the prejudiced people, so he had to face the public obloquy. This was too much for him, and the upshot was that he felt so disgusted with the reception accorded him, that he stopped short at one of their interruptions, and said that he would not trouble them any further, packing up his

papers and bidding them all a good night. Next morning before I was out of bed I received the following note from him: "Sunday. My dear Walker, — The odious conduct of the people last night, together with what I have heard and seen elsewhere, satisfies me that my friends would waste their time in polling for me. I therefore retire, having done my duty in the matter; but as to yourself, do not hold any more meetings in Windsor. Hitherto you have had no opposition, and meetings may show strength against you, and so weaken your support. Private canvassing and exertion as much as you like, but beware of meetings—Yours truly, J. B. DARVALL." I need scarcely say I felt very much disconcerted when I received this epistle, as I foresaw it would terminate, as it did, all future political relationship with this district of the hon. gentleman. Mr. Piddington and Mr. Cunneen were then in consequence returned without opposition. Mr. Darvall was placed in the Upper House, but after a while he left that serene region, and obtained a seat for East Maitland, becoming Attorney-General in the Cowper Ministry in 1863. On his taking this office, Mr. Parkes again assailed him, and had the temerity to go to East Maitland to oppose his re-election, when he received for so doing a severe castigation from the learned gentleman, who, as it was reported, in a semi-dramatic style, tucked up his coat sleeves as he commenced to speak, saying, as he had some butcher's work to perform he would set about it in an appropriate manner. He was returned by an overwhelming majority, and it was said of Mr. Parkes afterwards that there was no act of his political life up to that time which he so much regretted as doing this foolish thing.

As an orator, both in the courts and in the Senate, Mr. Darvall was unsurpassed; but he was incapable of doing what is known as the stump business. A simple yet respectable yeoman of Pitt Town once told me he would willingly travel twenty miles any day on foot to hear him speak, and this seemed to be his chief reason for according him his support. Language flowed from his lips in the most oleaginous manner, and he had no difficulty whatever in rounding his sentences. Once, when on a visit to address his constituents here, he asked me to suggest any topics I thought upon that I would like him to refer to; and on my doing so he expatiated upon them at great length with the utmost ease and apparent satisfaction. Twice he was entertained at a public dinner at Windsor—once on his own account at the Commercial Hotel, and secondly at the Fitzroy in conjunction with his colleague, Mr. Piddington. An honest but unclassical bucolic from Richmond was so charmed with his manner and conversation at the former of these treats that he declared afterwards to his friends, he felt all the time as if he were in a *lyceum*—meaning, no doubt, an *elysium*. One of his most memorable speeches in Parliament was when he delivered

an eloquent phillippic against Mr. James Macarthur for deserting his party by voting against the Parkes' Electoral Bill, when he likened that gentleman to a bat which flitted about the House, first on one side and then on the other, and finally suspended itself by the heels from the ceiling. He was too fond of ease and elegance, with his comfortable circumstances, to be a successful or persevering politician in a democratic country like this; and his epicurean tastes, no doubt, induced him to retire from Parliamentary life, which he did when he took his departure for England in the year 1867.

His social qualities, as in everything else, were exquisite. I shall only mention two occasions when I had the pleasure of partaking of his hospitality. First at a little dinner given by him at the Union Club in Wynyard-square to his friends, Mr. L. H. Bayley, Mr. Robert Isaacs, the barrister, and myself; and again one Sunday at his private residence, Lyons-terrace, at which were present only five persons, namely, himself and lady, Colonel B——, and Captain ——, of the British man-of-war in the harbour, and myself. On both these occasions he discharged the duties of host with his accustomed grace and dignity. At the former, Mr. Isaacs amused us with his jokes and anecdotes, and at the latter the bluff naval gentleman seemed in striking contrast to our accomplished entertainer. Of all these persons I think none now remain except myself and perhaps Mr. Bayley, who some years ago left the colony and became a judge in India.



After his final return to England he received the honor of knighthood from her Majesty, but otherwise little has been heard of him in the colony. I have been informed that his sight failed in his later years, which no doubt prevented his taking a prominent part in public matters; but it is well known he always took a deep interest in the country where he spent the best years of his life; and did all he could quietly to promote its welfare.

The telegram informs us that he died at London on the 29th ultimo, when he was, I believe, in the 71st year of his age. And so has passed away another of those bright intellects, who in days gone by laid the foundations of the political freedom and prosperity of New South Wales, amongst whom were Wentworth, Lowe, Windeyer, Martin, Cowper, Lang, and others whose names will easily be recalled by the student of colonial history.

Years following years steal something every day,
At last they steal us from ourselves away.—POPE.

Windsor, January 7, 1884.

W. W.

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