

# **Following the Equator, Illustrated, v3**

Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)



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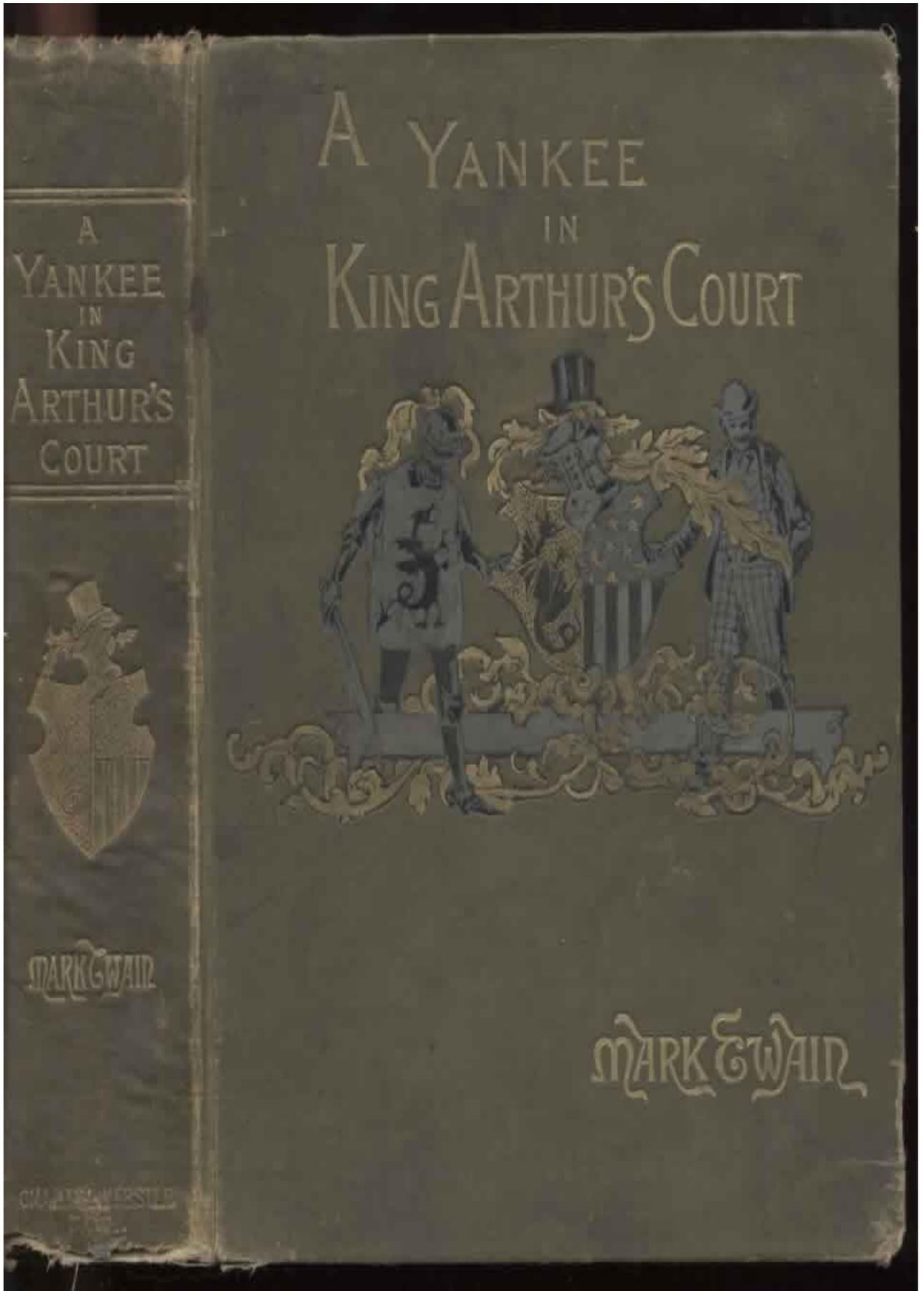
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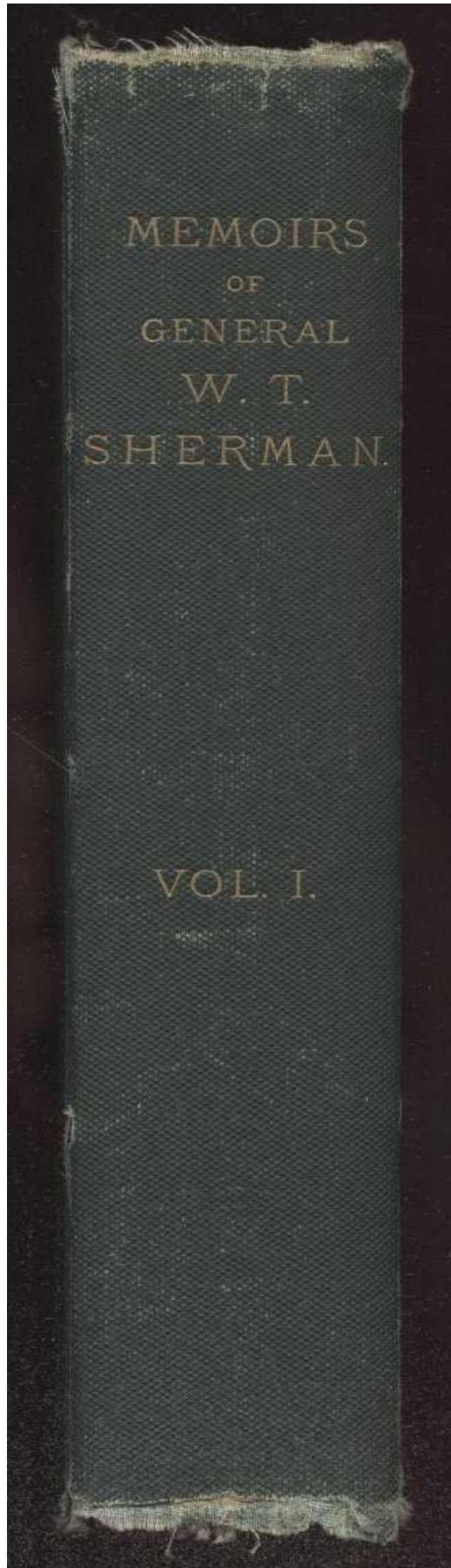
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FOLLOWING  
THE EQUATOR

A JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

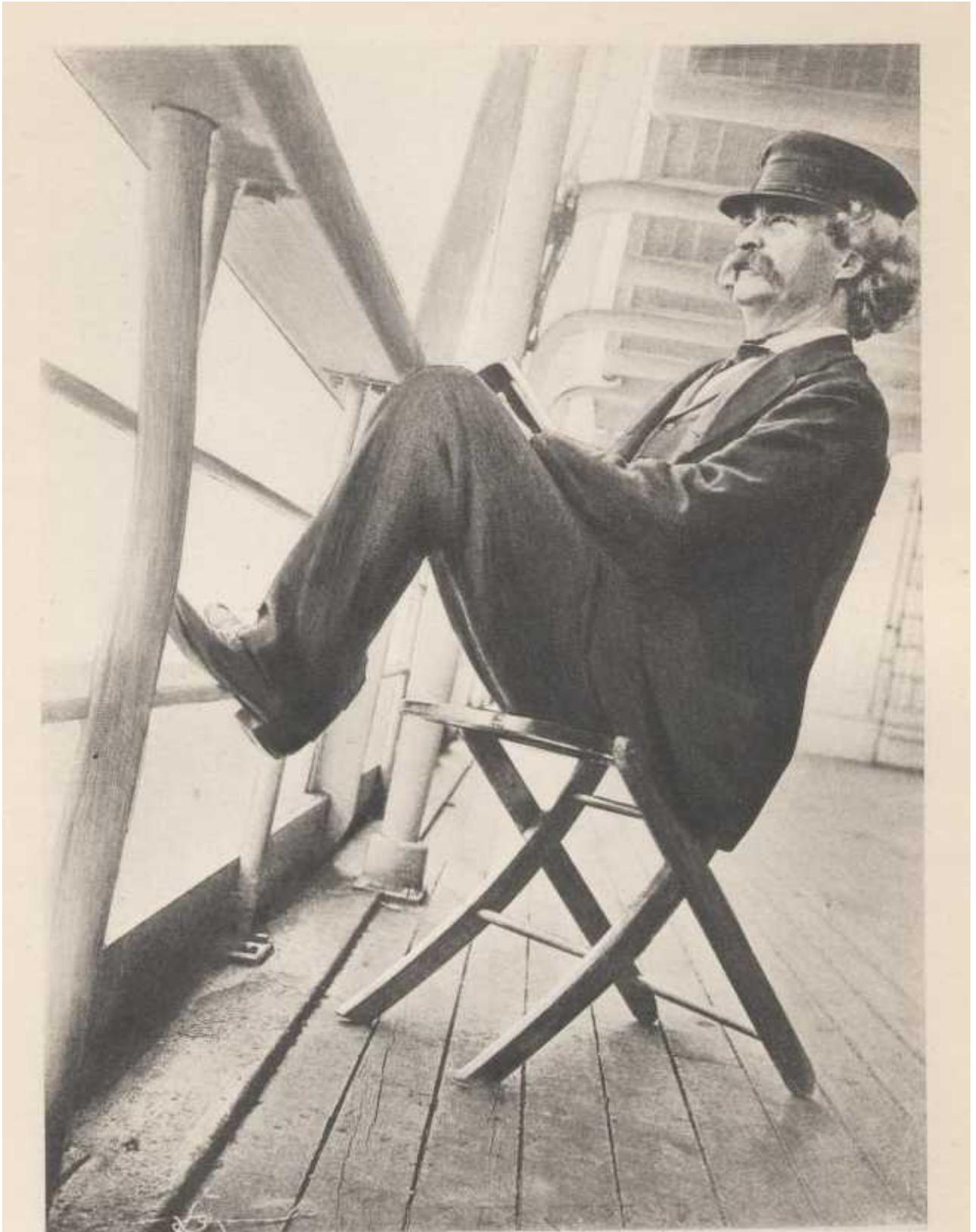
BY

MARK TWAIN

SAMUEL L. CLEMENS







*Be good + you will be lonesome.*

*Mark Twain*

THIS BOOK  
Is Affectionately Inscribed to  
MY YOUNG FRIEND  
HARRY ROGERS,  
WITH RECOGNITION  
OF WHAT HE IS, AND APPREHENSION OF WHAT HE MAY BECOME  
UNLESS HE FORM HIMSELF A LITTLE MORE CLOSELY  
UPON THE MODEL OF  
THE AUTHOR.

## THE PUDD'NHEAD MAXIMS.



THESE WISDOMS ARE FOR THE LURING OF YOUTH TOWARD  
HIGH MORAL ALTITUDES. THE AUTHOR DID NOT  
GATHER THEM FROM PRACTICE, BUT FROM  
OBSERVATION. TO BE GOOD IS NOBLE;  
BUT TO SHOW OTHERS HOW  
TO BE GOOD IS NOBLER  
AND NO TROUBLE.



Following the Equator, Illustrated, v3

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## CHAPTER XX.

*It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

From diary:

Mr. G. called. I had not seen him since Nauheim, Germany—several years ago; the time that the cholera broke out at Hamburg. We talked of the people we had known there, or had casually met; and G. said:

"Do you remember my introducing you to an earl—the Earl of C.?"

"Yes. That was the last time I saw you. You and he were in a carriage, just starting—belated—for the train. I remember it."

"I remember it too, because of a thing which happened then which I was not looking for. He had told me a while before, about a remarkable and interesting Californian whom he had met and who was a friend of yours, and said that if he should ever meet you he would ask you for some particulars about that Californian. The subject was not mentioned that day at Nauheim, for we were hurrying away, and there was no time; but the thing that surprised me was this: when I induced you, you said, 'I am glad to meet your lordship gain.' The 'I again' was the surprise. He is a little hard of hearing, and didn't catch that word, and I thought you hadn't intended that he should. As we drove off I had only time to say, 'Why, what do you know about him?' and I understood you to say, 'Oh, nothing, except that he is the quickest judge of——' Then we were gone, and I didn't get the rest. I wondered what it was that he was such a quick judge of. I have thought of it many times since, and still wondered what it could be. He and I talked it over, but could not guess it out. He thought it must be fox-hounds or horses, for he is a good judge of those—no one is a better. But you couldn't know that, because you didn't know him; you had mistaken him for some one else; it must be that, he said, because he knew you had never met him before. And of course you hadn't had you?"

"Yes, I had."

"Is that so? Where?"

"At a fox-hunt, in England."

"How curious that is. Why, he hadn't the least recollection of it. Had you any conversation with him?"

"Some—yes."

"Well, it left not the least impression upon him. What did you talk about?"

"About the fox. I think that was all."

"Why, that would interest him; that ought to have left an impression. What did he talk about?"

"The fox."

"It's very curious. I don't understand it. Did what he said leave an impression upon you?"

"Yes. It showed me that he was a quick judge of—however, I will tell you all about it, then you will understand. It was a quarter of a century ago 1873 or '74. I had an American friend in London named F., who was fond of hunting, and his friends the Blanks invited him and me to come out to a hunt and be their guests at their country place. In the morning the mounts were provided, but when I saw the horses I changed my mind and asked permission to walk. I had never seen an English hunter before, and it seemed to me that I could hunt a fox safer on the ground. I had always been diffident about horses, anyway, even those of the common altitudes, and I did not feel competent to hunt on a horse that went on stilts. So then Mrs. Blank came to my help and said I could go with her in the dog-cart and we would drive to a place she knew of, and there we should have a good glimpse of the hunt as it went by.

"When we got to that place I got out and went and leaned my elbows on a low stone wall which enclosed a turfy and beautiful great field with heavy wood on all its sides except ours. Mrs. Blank sat in the dog-cart fifty yards away, which was as near as she could get with the vehicle. I was full of interest, for I had never seen a fox-hunt. I waited, dreaming and imagining, in the deep stillness and impressive tranquility which reigned in that retired spot. Presently, from away off in the forest on the left, a mellow bugle-note came floating; then all of a sudden a multitude of dogs burst out of that forest and went tearing by and disappeared in the forest on the right; there was a pause, and then a cloud of horsemen in black caps and crimson coats plunged out of the left-hand forest and went flaming across the field like a prairie-fire, a stirring sight to see. There was one man ahead of the rest, and he came spurring straight at me. He was fiercely excited. It was fine to see him ride; he was a master horseman. He came like a storm till he was within seven feet of me, where I was leaning on the wall, then he stood his horse straight up in the air on his hind toe-nails, and shouted like a demon:

"Which way'd the fox go?"

"I didn't much like the tone, but I did not let on; for he was excited, you know. But I was calm; so I said softly, and without acrimony:

"Which fox?"



"It seemed to anger him. I don't know why; and he thundered out:

"WHICH fox? Why, THE fox? Which way did the FOX go?"

"I said, with great gentleness—even argumentatively:

"If you could be a little more definite—a little less vague—because I am a stranger, and there are many foxes, as you will know even better than I, and unless I know which one it is that you desire to identify, and——"

"You're certainly the damdest idiot that has escaped in a thousand years!" and he snatched his great horse around as easily as I would snatch a cat, and was away like a hurricane. A very excitable man.

"I went back to Mrs. Blank, and she was excited, too—oh, all alive. She said:

"He spoke to you!—didn't he?"

"Yes, it is what happened."

"I knew it! I couldn't hear what he said, but I knew he spoke to you! Do you know who it was? It was Lord C., and he is Master of the Buckhounds! Tell me—what do you think of him?"

"Him? Well, for sizing-up a stranger, he's got the most sudden and accurate judgment of any man I ever saw."

"It pleased her. I thought it would."

G. got away from Nauheim just in time to escape being shut in by the quarantine—bars on the frontiers; and so did we, for we left the next day. But G. had a great deal of trouble in getting by the Italian custom-house, and we should have fared likewise but for the thoughtfulness of our consul-general in Frankfort. He introduced me to the Italian consul-general, and I brought away from that consulate a letter which made our way smooth. It was a dozen lines merely commending me in a general way to the courtesies of servants in his Italian Majesty's service, but it was more powerful than it looked. In addition to a raft of ordinary baggage, we had six or eight trunks which were filled exclusively with dutiable stuff—household goods purchased in Frankfort for use in Florence, where we had taken a house. I was going to ship these through by express; but at the last moment an order went throughout Germany forbidding the moving of any parcels by train unless the owner went with them. This was a bad outlook. We must take these things along, and the delay sure to be caused by the examination of them in the custom-house might lose us our train. I imagined all sorts of terrors, and enlarged them steadily as we approached the Italian frontier. We were six in number, clogged with all that baggage, and I was courier for the party the most incapable one they ever employed.

We arrived, and pressed with the crowd into the immense custom-house, and the usual worries began; everybody crowding to the counter and begging to have his baggage examined first, and all hands clattering and chattering at once. It seemed to me that I could do nothing; it would be better to give it all up and go away and leave the baggage. I couldn't speak the language; I should never accomplish anything. Just then a tall handsome man in a fine uniform was passing by and I knew he must be the station-master—and that reminded me of my letter. I ran to him and put it into his hands. He took it out of the envelope, and the moment his eye caught the royal coat of arms printed at its top, he took off his cap and made a beautiful bow to me, and said in English:

"Which is your baggage? Please show it to me."

I showed him the mountain. Nobody was disturbing it; nobody was interested in it; all the family's attempts to get attention to it had failed—except in the case of one of the trunks containing the dutiable goods. It was just being opened. My officer said:

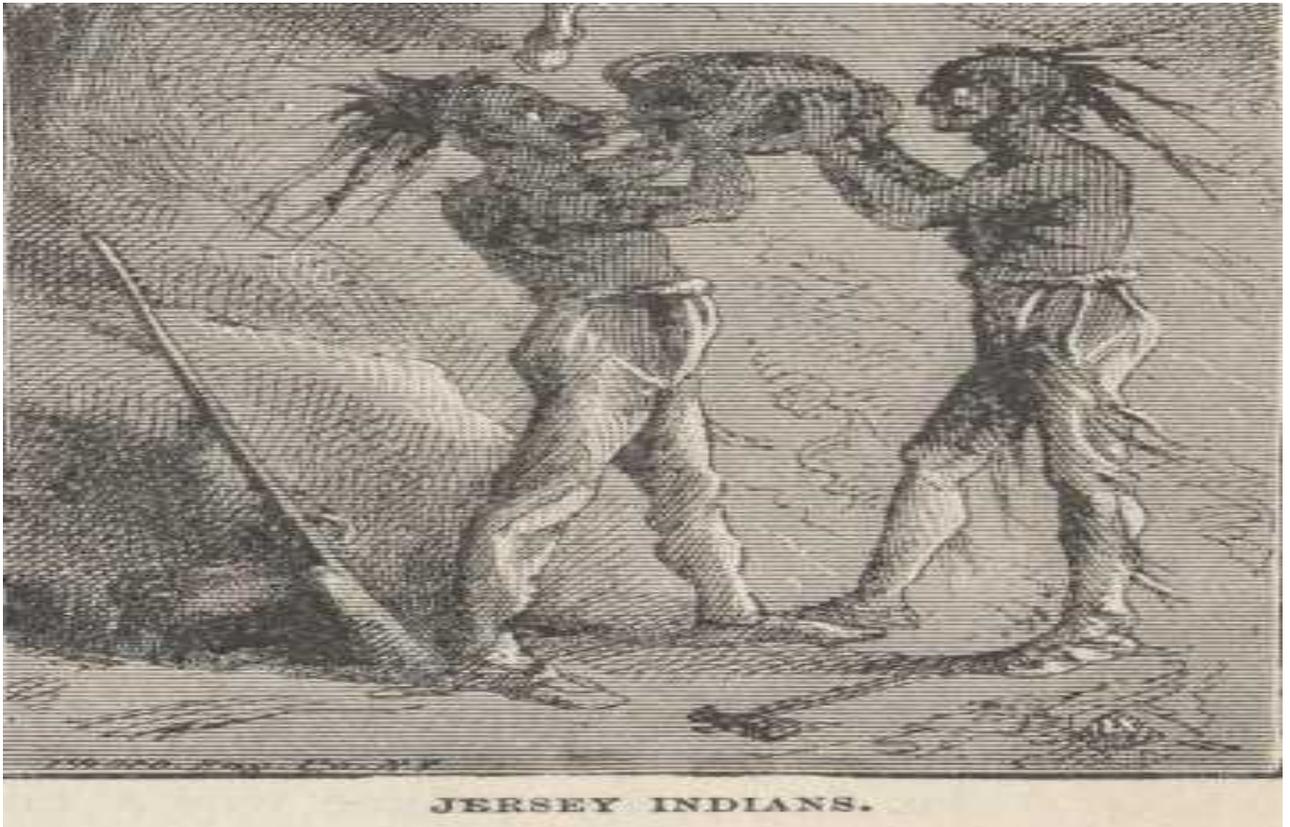
"There, let that alone! Lock it. Now chalk it. Chalk all of the lot. Now please come and show the hand-baggage."

He plowed through the waiting crowd, I following, to the counter, and he gave orders again, in his emphatic military way:

"Chalk these. Chalk all of them."

Then he took off his cap and made that beautiful bow again, and went his way. By this time these attentions had attracted the wonder of that acre of passengers, and the whisper had gone around that the royal family were present getting their baggage chalked; and as we passed down in review on our way to the door, I was conscious of a pervading atmosphere of envy which gave me deep satisfaction.

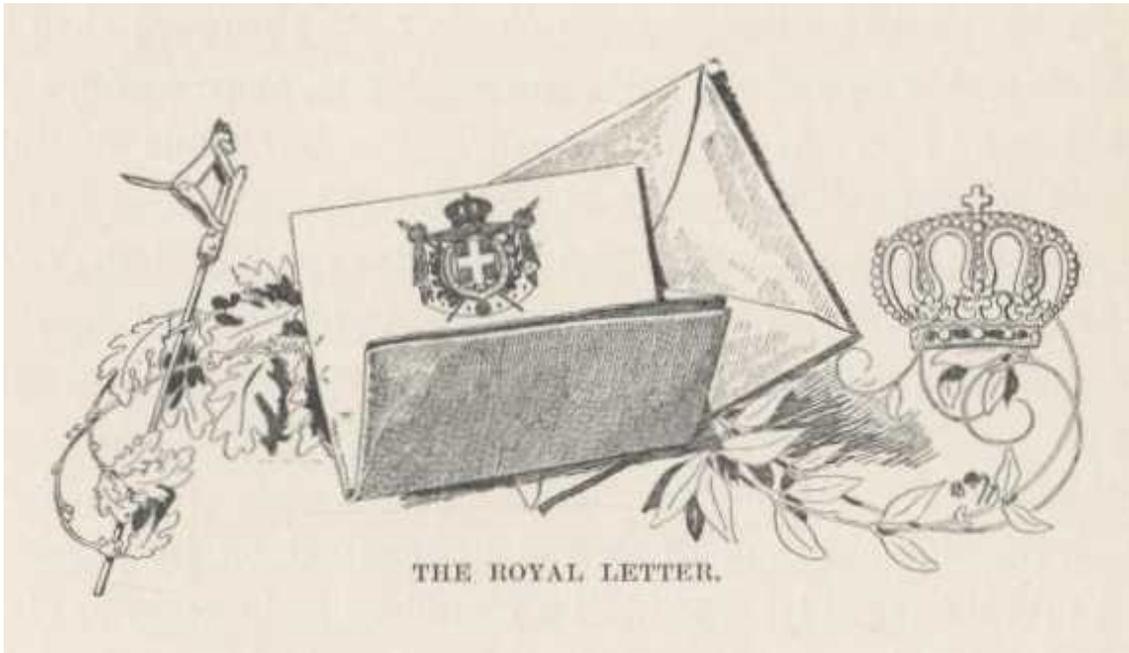
But soon there was an accident. My overcoat pockets were stuffed with German cigars and linen packages of American smoking tobacco, and a porter was following us around with this overcoat on his arm, and gradually getting it upside down. Just as I, in the rear of my family, moved by the sentinels at the door, about three hatfuls of the tobacco tumbled out on the floor. One of the soldiers pounced upon it, gathered it up in his arms, pointed back whence I had come, and marched me ahead of him past that long wall of passengers again—he chattering and exulting like a devil, they smiling in peaceful joy, and I trying to look as if my pride was not hurt, and as if I did not mind being brought to shame before these pleased people who had so lately envied me. But at heart I was cruelly humbled.



When I had been marched two-thirds of the long distance and the misery of it was at the worst, the stately station-master stepped out from somewhere, and the soldier left me and darted after him and overtook him; and I could see by the soldier's excited gestures that he was betraying to him the whole shabby business. The station-master was plainly very angry. He came striding down toward me, and when he was come near he began to pour out a stream of indignant Italian; then suddenly took off his hat and made that beautiful bow and said:

"Oh, it is you! I beg a thousands pardons! This idiot here——" He turned to the exulting soldier and burst out with a flood of white-hot Italian lava, and the next moment he was bowing, and the soldier and I were moving in procession again—he in the lead and ashamed, this time, I with my chin up. And so we marched by the crowd of

fascinated passengers, and I went forth to the train with the honors of war. Tobacco and all.



## CHAPTER XXI.

*Man will do many things to get himself loved, he will do all things to get himself envied.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Before I saw Australia I had never heard of the "weet-weet" at all. I met but few men who had seen it thrown—at least I met but few who mentioned having seen it thrown. Roughly described, it is a fat wooden cigar with its butt-end fastened to a flexible twig. The whole thing is only a couple of feet long, and weighs less than two ounces. This feather—so to call it—is not thrown through the air, but is flung with an underhanded throw and made to strike the ground a little way in front of the thrower; then it glances and makes a long skip; glances again, skips again, and again and again, like the flat stone which a boy sends skating over the water. The water is smooth, and the stone has a good chance; so a strong man may make it travel fifty or seventy-five yards; but the weet-weet has no such good chance, for it strikes sand, grass, and earth in its course. Yet an expert aboriginal has sent it a measured distance of two hundred and twenty yards. It would have gone even further but it encountered rank ferns and underwood on its passage and they damaged its speed. Two hundred and twenty yards; and so weightless a toy—a mouse on the end of a bit of wire, in effect; and not sailing through the accommodating air, but encountering grass and sand and stuff at every jump. It looks wholly impossible; but Mr. Brough Smyth saw the feat and did the measuring, and set down the facts in his book about aboriginal life, which he wrote by command of the Victorian Government.

What is the secret of the feat? No one explains. It cannot be physical strength, for that could not drive such a feather-weight any distance. It must be art. But no one explains what the art of it is; nor how it gets around that law of nature which says you shall not throw any two-ounce thing 220 yards, either through the air or bumping along the ground. Rev. J. G. Woods says:

"The distance to which the weet-weet or kangaroo-rat can be thrown is truly astonishing. I have seen an Australian stand at one side of Kennington Oval and throw the kangaroo rat completely across it." (Width of Kensington Oval not stated.) "It darts through the air with the sharp and menacing hiss of a rifle-ball, its greatest height from the ground being some seven or eight feet . . . . . When properly thrown it looks just like a living animal leaping along . . . . . Its movements have a wonderful resemblance to the long leaps of a kangaroo-rat fleeing in alarm, with its long tail trailing behind it."

The Old Settler said that he had seen distances made by the weet-weet, in the early days, which almost convinced him that it was as extraordinary an instrument as the boomerang.

There must have been a large distribution of acuteness among those naked skinny aboriginals, or they couldn't have been such unapproachable trackers and boomerangers and weet-weeters. It must have been race-aversion that put upon them a good deal of the low-rate intellectual reputation which they bear and have borne this long time in the world's estimate of them.

They were lazy—always lazy. Perhaps that was their trouble. It is a killing defect. Surely they could have invented and built a competent house, but they didn't. And they could have invented and developed the agricultural arts, but they didn't. They went naked and houseless, and lived on fish and grubs and worms and wild fruits, and were just plain savages, for all their smartness.

With a country as big as the United States to live and multiply in, and with no epidemic diseases among them till the white man came with those and his other appliances of civilization, it is quite probable that there was never a day in his history when he could muster 100,000 of his race in all Australia. He diligently and deliberately kept population down by infanticide—largely; but mainly by certain other methods. He did not need to practise these artificialities any more after the white man came. The white man knew ways of keeping down population which

were worth several of his. The white man knew ways of reducing a native population 80 percent. in 20 years. The native had never seen anything as fine as that before.



For example, there is the case of the country now called Victoria—a country eighty times as large as Rhode Island, as I have already said. By the best official guess there were 4,500 aboriginals in it when the whites came along in the middle of the 'Thirties. Of these, 1,000 lived in Gippsland, a patch of territory the size of fifteen or sixteen Rhode Islands: they did not diminish as fast as some of the other communities; indeed, at the end of forty years there were still 200 of them left. The Geelong tribe diminished more satisfactorily: from 173 persons it

faded to 34 in twenty years; at the end of another twenty the tribe numbered one person altogether. The two Melbourne tribes could muster almost 300 when the white man came; they could muster but twenty, thirty—seven years later, in 1875. In that year there were still odds and ends of tribes scattered about the colony of Victoria, but I was told that natives of full blood are very scarce now. It is said that the aboriginals continue in some force in the huge territory called Queensland.

The early whites were not used to savages. They could not understand the primary law of savage life: that if a man do you a wrong, his whole tribe is responsible—each individual of it—and you may take your change out of any individual of it, without bothering to seek out the guilty one. When a white killed an aboriginal, the tribe applied the ancient law, and killed the first white they came across. To the whites this was a monstrous thing. Extermination seemed to be the proper medicine for such creatures as this. They did not kill all the blacks, but they promptly killed enough of them to make their own persons safe. From the dawn of civilization down to this day the white man has always used that very precaution. Mrs. Campbell Praed lived in Queensland, as a child, in the early days, and in her "Sketches of Australian life," we get informing pictures of the early struggles of the white and the black to reform each other.

Speaking of pioneer days in the mighty wilderness of Queensland, Mrs. Praed says:

"At first the natives retreated before the whites; and, except that they every now and then speared a beast in one of the herds, gave little cause for uneasiness. But, as the number of squatters increased, each one taking up miles of country and bringing two or three men in his train, so that shepherds' huts and stockmen's camps lay far apart, and defenseless in the midst of hostile tribes, the Blacks' depredations became more frequent and murder was no unusual event.

"The loneliness of the Australian bush can hardly be painted in words. Here extends mile after mile of primeval forest where perhaps foot of white man has never trod—interminable vistas where the eucalyptus trees rear their lofty trunks and spread forth their lanky limbs, from which the red gum oozes and hangs in fantastic pendants like crimson stalactites; ravines along the sides of which the long-bladed grass grows rankly; level untimbered plains alternating with undulating tracts of pasture, here and there broken by a stony ridge, steep gully, or dried-up creek. All wild, vast and desolate; all the same monotonous gray coloring, except where the wattle, when in blossom, shows patches of feathery gold, or a belt of scrub lies green, glossy, and impenetrable as Indian jungle.

"The solitude seems intensified by the strange sounds of reptiles, birds, and insects, and by the absence of larger creatures; of which in the day-time, the only audible signs are the stampede of a herd of kangaroo, or the rustle of a wallabi, or a dingo stirring the grass as it creeps to its lair. But there are the whirring of locusts, the demoniac chuckle of the laughing jack-ass, the screeching of cockatoos and parrots, the hissing of the frilled lizard, and the buzzing of innumerable insects hidden under the dense undergrowth. And then at night, the melancholy wailing of the curlews, the dismal howling of dingoes, the discordant croaking of tree-frogs, might well shake the nerves of the solitary watcher."

That is the theater for the drama. When you comprehend one or two other details, you will perceive how well suited for trouble it was, and how loudly it invited it. The cattlemen's stations were scattered over that profound wilderness miles and miles apart—at each station half a dozen persons. There was a plenty of cattle, the black natives were always ill-nourished and hungry. The land belonged to them. The whites had not bought it, and couldn't buy it; for the tribes had no chiefs, nobody in authority, nobody competent to sell and convey; and the tribes themselves had no comprehension of the idea of transferable ownership of land. The ousted owners were despised by the white interlopers, and this opinion was not hidden under a bushel. More promising materials for a tragedy could not have been collated. Let Mrs. Praed speak:

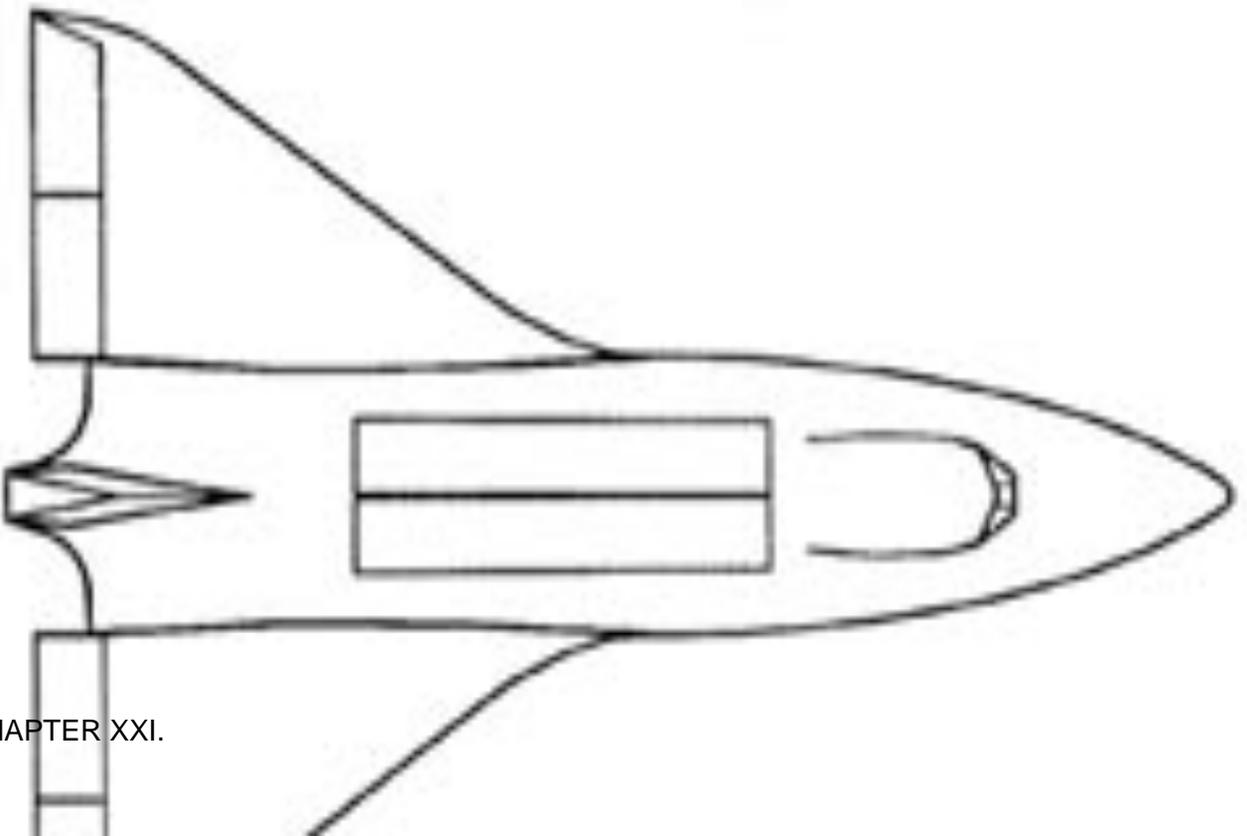
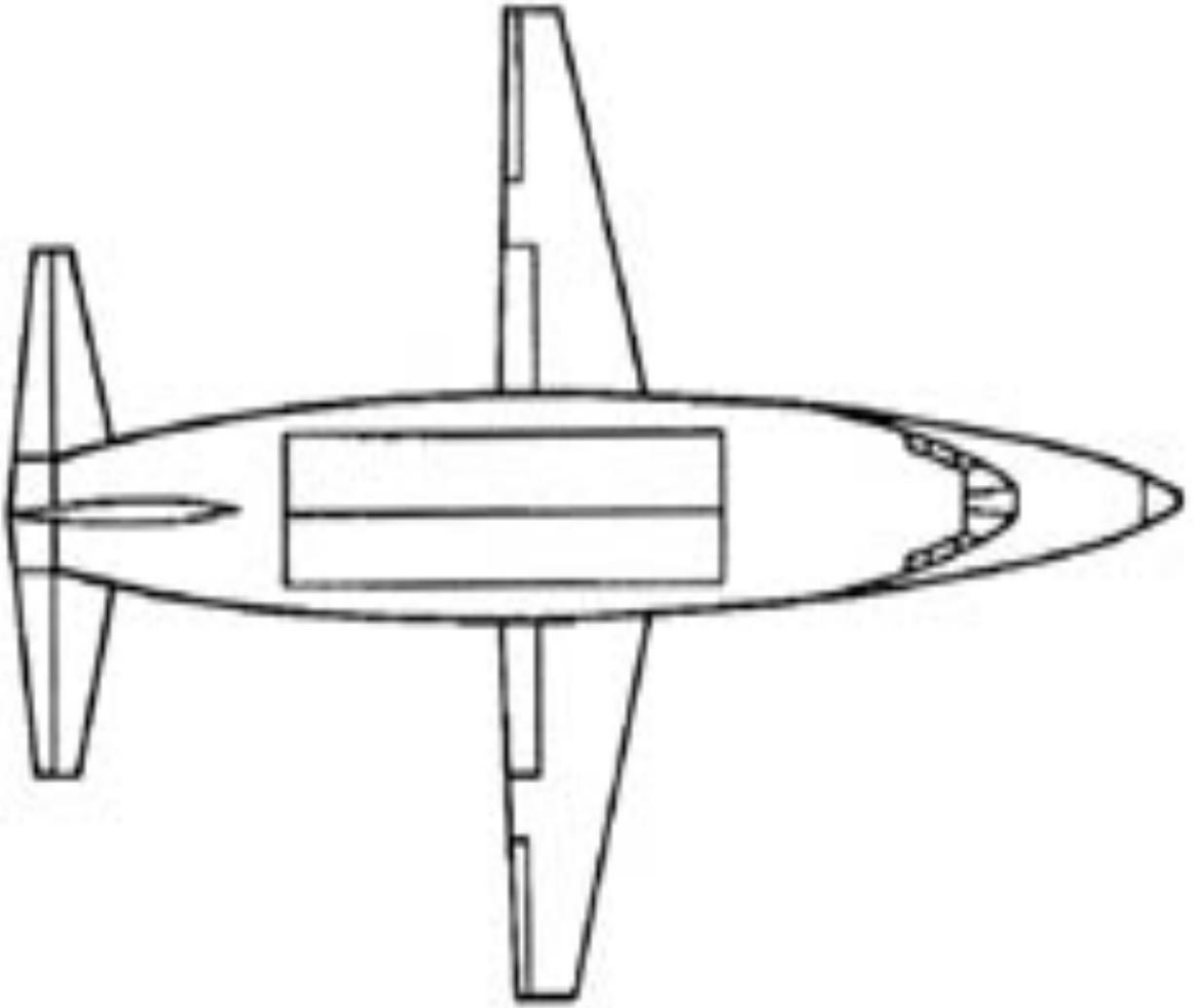
"At Nie station, one dark night, the unsuspecting hut-keeper, having, as he believed, secured himself against assault, was lying wrapped in his blankets sleeping profoundly. The Blacks crept stealthily down the chimney and battered in his skull while he slept."

One could guess the whole drama from that little text. The curtain was up. It would not fall until the mastership of one party or the other was determined—and permanently:

"There was treachery on both sides. The Blacks killed the Whites when they found them defenseless, and the Whites slew the Blacks in a wholesale and promiscuous fashion which offended against my childish sense of justice.

"They were regarded as little above the level of brutes, and in some cases were destroyed like vermin.

"Here is an instance. A squatter, whose station was surrounded by Blacks, whom he suspected to be hostile and from whom he feared an attack, parleyed with them from his house-door. He told them it was Christmas-time—a time at which all men, black or white, feasted; that there were flour, sugar-plums, good things in plenty in the store, and that he would make for them such a pudding as they had never dreamed of—a great pudding of which all might eat and be filled. The Blacks listened and were lost. The pudding was made and distributed. Next morning there was howling in the camp, for it had been sweetened with sugar and arsenic!"



The white man's spirit was right, but his method was wrong. His spirit was the spirit which the civilized white has always exhibited toward the savage, but the use of poison was a departure from custom. True, it was merely a technical departure, not a real one; still, it was a departure, and therefore a mistake, in my opinion. It was better, kinder, swifter, and much more humane than a number of the methods which have been sanctified by custom, but that does not justify its employment. That is, it does not wholly justify it. Its unusual nature makes it stand out and attract an amount of attention which it is not entitled to. It takes hold upon morbid imaginations and they work it up into a sort of exhibition of cruelty, and this smirches the good name of our civilization, whereas one of the old harsher methods would have had no such effect because usage has made those methods familiar to us and innocent. In many countries we have chained the savage and starved him to death; and this we do not care for, because custom has inured us to it; yet a quick death by poison is loving-kindness to it. In many countries we have burned the savage at the stake; and this we do not care for, because custom has inured us to it; yet a quick death is loving-kindness to it. In more than one country we have hunted the savage and his little children and their mother with dogs and guns through the woods and swamps for an afternoon's sport, and filled the region with happy laughter over their sprawling and stumbling flight, and their wild supplications for mercy; but this method we do not mind, because custom has inured us to it; yet a quick death by poison is loving-kindness to it. In many countries we have taken the savage's land from him, and made him our slave, and lashed him every day, and broken his pride, and made death his only friend, and overworked him till he dropped in his tracks; and this we do not care for, because custom has inured us to it; yet a quick death by poison is loving-kindness to it. In the Matabeleland today—why, there we are confining ourselves to sanctified custom, we Rhodes-Beit millionaires in South Africa and Dukes in London; and nobody cares, because we are used to the old holy customs, and all we ask is that no notice-inviting new ones shall be intruded upon the attention of our comfortable consciences. Mrs. Praed says of the poisoner, "That squatter deserves to have his name handed down to the contempt of posterity."

I am sorry to hear her say that. I myself blame him for one thing, and severely, but I stop there. I blame him for, the indiscretion of introducing a novelty which was calculated to attract attention to our civilization. There was no occasion to do that. It was his duty, and it is every loyal man's duty to protect that heritage in every way he can; and the best way to do that is to attract attention elsewhere. The squatter's judgment was bad—that is plain; but his heart was right. He is almost the only pioneering representative of civilization in history who has risen above the prejudices of his caste and his heredity and tried to introduce the element of mercy into the superior race's dealings with the savage. His name is lost, and it is a pity; for it deserves to be handed down to posterity with homage and reverence.

This paragraph is from a London journal:

"To learn what France is doing to spread the blessings of civilization in her distant dependencies we may turn with advantage to New Caledonia. With a view to attracting free settlers to that penal colony, M. Feillet, the Governor, forcibly expropriated the Kanaka cultivators from the best of their plantations, with a derisory compensation, in spite of the protests of the Council General of the island. Such immigrants as could be induced to cross the seas thus found themselves in possession of thousands of coffee, cocoa, banana, and bread-fruit trees, the raising of which had cost the wretched natives years of toil whilst the latter had a few five-franc pieces to spend in the liquor stores of Noumea."

You observe the combination? It is robbery, humiliation, and slow, slow murder, through poverty and the white man's whisky. The savage's gentle friend, the savage's noble friend, the only magnanimous and unselfish

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friend the savage has ever had, was not there with the merciful swift release of his poisoned pudding.

There are many humorous things in the world; among them the white man's notion that he is less savage than the other savages.—[See Chapter on Tasmania, post.]

## CHAPTER XXII.

*Nothing is so ignorant as a man's left hand, except a lady's watch.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

You notice that Mrs. Praed knows her art. She can place a thing before you so that you can see it. She is not alone in that. Australia is fertile in writers whose books are faithful mirrors of the life of the country and of its history. The materials were surprisingly rich, both in quality and in mass, and Marcus Clarke, Ralph Boldrewood, Cordon, Kendall, and the others, have built out of them a brilliant and vigorous literature, and one which must endure. Materials—there is no end to them! Why, a literature might be made out of the aboriginal all by himself, his character and ways are so freckled with varieties—varieties not staled by familiarity, but new to us. You do not need to invent any picturesquenesses; whatever you want in that line he can furnish you; and they will not be fancies and doubtful, but realities and authentic. In his history, as preserved by the white man's official records, he is everything—everything that a human creature can be. He covers the entire ground. He is a coward—there are a thousand fact to prove it. He is brave—there are a thousand facts to prove it. He is treacherous— oh, beyond imagination! he is faithful, loyal, true—the white man's records supply you with a harvest of instances of it that are noble, worshipful, and pathetically beautiful. He kills the starving stranger who comes begging for food and shelter there is proof of it. He succors, and feeds, and guides to safety, to-day, the lost stranger who fired on him only yesterday—there is proof of it. He takes his reluctant bride by force, he courts her with a club, then loves her faithfully through a long life—it is of record. He gathers to himself another wife by the same processes, beats and bangs her as a daily diversion, and by and by lays down his life in defending her from some outside harm—it is of record. He will face a hundred hostiles to rescue one of his children, and will kill another of his children because the family is large enough without it. His delicate stomach turns, at certain details of the white man's food; but he likes over-ripe fish, and brazed dog, and cat, and rat, and will eat his own uncle with relish. He is a sociable animal, yet he turns aside and hides behind his shield when his mother-in-law goes by. He is childishly afraid of ghosts and other trivialities that menace his soul, but dread of physical pain is a weakness which he is not acquainted with. He knows all the great and many of the little constellations, and has names for them; he has a symbol-writing by means of which he can convey messages far and wide among the tribes; he has a correct eye for form and expression, and draws a good picture; he can track a fugitive by delicate traces which the white man's eye cannot discern, and by methods which the finest white intelligence cannot master; he makes a missile which science itself cannot duplicate without the model—if with it; a missile whose secret baffled and defeated the searchings and theorizings of the white mathematicians for seventy years; and by an art all his own he performs miracles with it which the white man cannot approach untaught, nor parallel after teaching. Within certain limits this savage's intellect is the alertest and the brightest known to history or tradition; and yet the poor creature was never able to invent a counting system that would reach above five, nor a vessel that he could boil water in. He is the prize-curiosity of all the races. To all intents and purposes he is dead—in the body; but he has features that will live in literature.

Mr. Philip Chauncy, an officer of the Victorian Government, contributed to its archives a report of his personal observations of the aboriginals which has in it some things which I wish to condense slightly and insert here. He speaks of the quickness of their eyes and the accuracy of their judgment of the direction of approaching missiles as being quite extraordinary, and of the answering suppleness and accuracy of limb and muscle in avoiding the missile as being extraordinary also. He has seen an aboriginal stand as a target for cricket-balls thrown with great force ten or fifteen yards, by professional bowlers, and successfully dodge them or parry them with his shield during about half an hour. One of those balls, properly placed, could have killed him; "Yet he depended, with the

utmost self-possession, on the quickness of his eye and his agility."

The shield was the customary war-shield of his race, and would not be a protection to you or to me. It is no broader than a stovepipe, and is about as long as a man's arm. The opposing surface is not flat, but slopes away from the centerline like a boat's bow. The difficulty about a cricket-ball that has been thrown with a scientific "twist" is, that it suddenly changes its course when it is close to its target and comes straight for the mark when apparently it was going overhead or to one side. I should not be able to protect myself from such balls for half-an-hour, or less.

Mr. Chauncy once saw "a little native man" throw a cricket-ball 119 yards. This is said to beat the English professional record by thirteen yards.

We have all seen the circus-man bound into the air from a spring-board and make a somersault over eight horses standing side by side. Mr. Chauncy saw an aboriginal do it over eleven; and was assured that he had sometimes done it over fourteen. But what is that to this:

"I saw the same man leap from the ground, and in going over he dipped his head, unaided by his hands, into a hat placed in an inverted position on the top of the head of another man sitting upright on horseback—both man and horse being of the average size. The native landed on the other side of the horse with the hat fairly on his head. The prodigious height of the leap, and the precision with which it was taken so as to enable him to dip his head into the hat, exceeded any feat of the kind I have ever beheld."

I should think so! On board a ship lately I saw a young Oxford athlete run four steps and spring into the air and squirm his hips by a side-twist over a bar that was five and one-half feet high; but he could not have stood still and cleared a bar that was four feet high. I know this, because I tried it myself.

One can see now where the kangaroo learned its art.

Sir George Grey and Mr. Eyre testify that the natives dug wells fourteen or fifteen feet deep and two feet in diameter at the bore—dug them in the sand—wells that were "quite circular, carried straight down, and the work beautifully executed."

Their tools were their hands and feet. How did they throw sand out from such a depth? How could they stoop down and get it, with only two feet of space to stoop in? How did they keep that sand-pipe from caving in on them? I do not know. Still, they did manage those seeming impossibilities. Swallowed the sand, may be.

Mr. Chauncy speaks highly of the patience and skill and alert intelligence of the native huntsman when he is stalking the emu, the kangaroo, and other game:

"As he walks through the bush his step is light, elastic, and noiseless; every track on the earth catches his keen eye; a leaf, or fragment of a stick turned, or a blade of grass recently bent by the tread of one of the lower animals, instantly arrests his attention; in fact, nothing escapes his quick and powerful sight on the ground, in the trees, or in the distance, which may supply him with a meal or warn him of danger. A little examination of the trunk of a tree which may be nearly covered with the scratches of opossums ascending and descending is sufficient to inform him whether one went up the night before without coming down again or not."



Fennimore Cooper lost his chance. He would have known how to value these people. He wouldn't have traded the dullest of them for the brightest Mohawk he ever invented.

All savages draw outline pictures upon bark; but the resemblances are not close, and expression is usually lacking. But the Australian aboriginal's pictures of animals were nicely accurate in form, attitude, carriage; and he put spirit into them, and expression. And his pictures of white people and natives were pretty nearly as good as his pictures of the other animals. He dressed his whites in the fashion of their day, both the ladies and the gentlemen. As an untaught wielder of the pencil it is not likely that he has had his equal among savage people.

His place in art—as to drawing, not color-work—is well up, all things considered. His art is not to be

classified with savage art at all, but on a plane two degrees above it and one degree above the lowest plane of civilized art. To be exact, his place in art is between Botticelli and De Maurier. That is to say, he could not draw as well as De Maurier but better than Botticelli. In feeling, he resembles both; also in grouping and in his preferences in the matter of subjects. His "corroboree" of the Australian wilds reappears in De Maurier's Belgravian ballrooms, with clothes and the smirk of civilization added; Botticelli's "Spring" is the "corroboree" further idealized, but with fewer clothes and more smirk. And well enough as to intention, but—my word!

The aboriginal can make a fire by friction. I have tried that.

All savages are able to stand a good deal of physical pain. The Australian aboriginal has this quality in a well-developed degree. Do not read the following instances if horrors are not pleasant to you. They were recorded by the Rev. Henry N. Wolloston, of Melbourne, who had been a surgeon before he became a clergyman:

1. "In the summer of 1852 I started on horseback from Albany, King George's Sound, to visit at Cape Riche, accompanied by a native on foot. We traveled about forty miles the first day, then camped by a water-hole for the night. After cooking and eating our supper, I observed the native, who had said nothing to me on the subject, collect the hot embers of the fire together, and deliberately place his right foot in the glowing mass for a moment, then suddenly withdraw it, stamping on the ground and uttering a long-drawn guttural sound of mingled pain and satisfaction. This operation he repeated several times. On my inquiring the meaning of his strange conduct, he only said, 'Me carpenter—make 'em' ('I am mending my foot'), and then showed me his charred great toe, the nail of which had been torn off by a tea-tree stump, in which it had been caught during the journey, and the pain of which he had borne with stoical composure until the evening, when he had an opportunity of cauterizing the wound in the primitive manner above described."

And he proceeded on the journey the next day, "as if nothing had happened"—and walked thirty miles. It was a strange idea, to keep a surgeon and then do his own surgery.

2. "A native about twenty-five years of age once applied to me, as a doctor, to extract the wooden barb of a spear, which, during a fight in the bush some four months previously, had entered his chest, just missing the heart, and penetrated the viscera to a considerable depth. The spear had been cut off, leaving the barb behind, which continued to force its way by muscular action gradually toward the back; and when I examined him I could feel a hard substance between the ribs below the left blade-bone. I made a deep incision, and with a pair of forceps extracted the barb, which was made, as usual, of hard wood about four inches long and from half an inch to an inch thick. It was very smooth, and partly digested, so to speak, by the maceration to which it had been exposed during its four months' journey through the body. The wound made by the spear had long since healed, leaving only a small cicatrix; and after the operation, which the native bore without flinching, he appeared to suffer no pain. Indeed, judging from his good state of health, the presence of the foreign matter did not materially annoy him. He was perfectly well in a few days."

But No. 3 is my favorite. Whenever I read it I seem to enjoy all that the patient enjoyed—whatever it was:

3. "Once at King George's Sound a native presented himself to me with one leg only, and requested me to supply him with a wooden leg. He had traveled in this maimed state about ninety-six miles, for this purpose. I examined the limb, which had been severed just below the

knee, and found that it had been charred by fire, while about two inches of the partially calcined bone protruded through the flesh. I at once removed this with the saw; and having made as presentable a stump of it as I could, covered the amputated end of the bone with a surrounding of muscle, and kept the patient a few days under my care to allow the wound to heal. On inquiring, the native told me that in a fight with other black-fellows a spear had struck his leg and penetrated the bone below the knee. Finding it was serious, he had recourse to the following crude and barbarous operation, which it appears is not uncommon among these people in their native state. He made a fire, and dug a hole in the earth only sufficiently large to admit his leg, and deep enough to allow the wounded part to be on a level with the surface of the ground. He then surrounded the limb with the live coals or charcoal, which was replenished until the leg was literally burnt off. The cauterization thus applied completely checked the hemorrhage, and he was able in a day or two to hobble down to the Sound, with the aid of a long stout stick, although he was more than a week on the road."

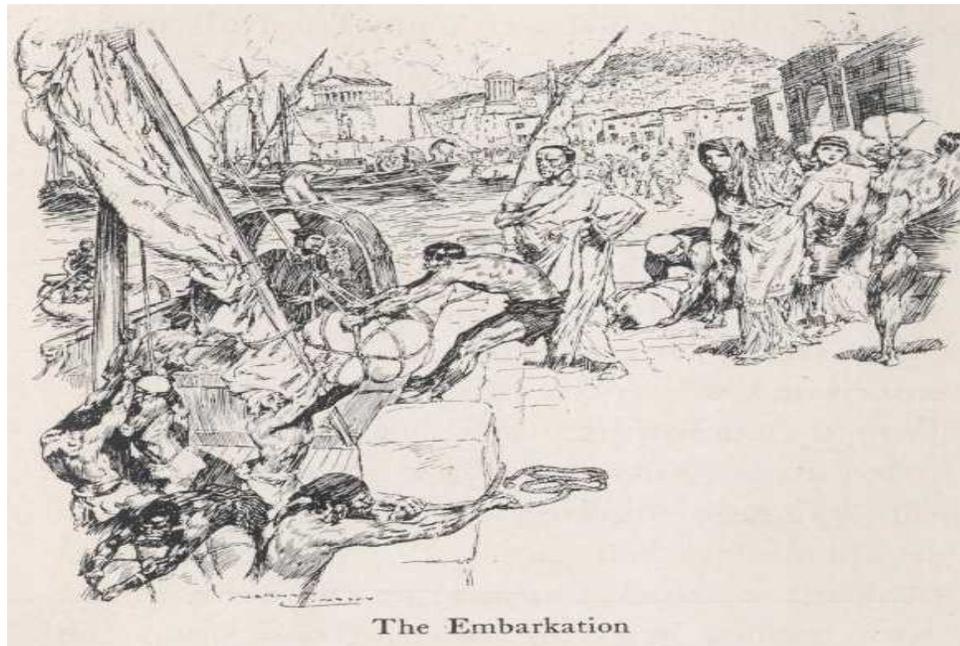


But he was a fastidious native. He soon discarded the wooden leg made for him by the doctor, because "it had no feeling in it." It must have had as much as the one he burnt off, I should think.

So much for the Aborigines. It is difficult for me to let them alone. They are marvelously interesting creatures. For a quarter of a century, now, the several colonial governments have housed their remnants in comfortable stations, and fed them well and taken good care of them in every way. If I had found this out while I was in Australia I could have seen some of those people—but I didn't. I would walk thirty miles to see a stuffed one.

Australia has a slang of its own. This is a matter of course. The vast cattle and sheep industries, the strange aspects of the country, and the strange native animals, brute and human, are matters which would naturally breed a local slang. I have notes of this slang somewhere, but at the moment I can call to mind only a few of the words and phrases. They are expressive ones. The wide, sterile, unpeopled deserts have created eloquent phrases like "No Man's Land" and the "Never-never Country." Also this felicitous form: "She lives in the Never-never Country"—that is, she is an old maid. And this one is not without merit: "heifer-paddock"—young ladies' seminary. "Bail up" and "stick up" equivalent of our highwayman-term to "hold up" a stage-coach or a train. "New-chum" is the equivalent of our "tenderfoot"—new arrival.

And then there is the immortal "My word! "We must import it. "M-y word! "In cold print it is the equivalent of our "Ger-rreat Caesar!" but spoken with the proper Australian unction and fervency, it is worth six of it for grace and charm and expressiveness. Our form is rude and explosive; it is not suited to the drawing-room or the heifer-paddock; but "M-y word!" is, and is music to the ear, too, when the utterer knows how to say it. I saw it in print several times on the Pacific Ocean, but it struck me coldly, it aroused no sympathy. That was because it was the dead corpse of the thing, the 'soul was not there—the tones were lacking—the informing spirit—the deep feeling—the eloquence. But the first time I heard an Australian say it, it was positively thrilling.





## CHAPTER XXIII.

*Be careless in your dress if you must, but keep a tidy soul.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

We left Adelaide in due course, and went to Horsham, in the colony of Victoria; a good deal of a journey, if I remember rightly, but pleasant. Horsham sits in a plain which is as level as a floor—one of those famous dead levels which Australian books describe so often; gray, bare, sombre, melancholy, baked, cracked, in the tedious long drouths, but a horizonless ocean of vivid green grass the day after a rain. A country town, peaceful, reposeful, inviting, full of snug homes, with garden plots, and plenty of shrubbery and flowers.

"Horsham, October 17. At the hotel. The weather divine. Across the way, in front of the London Bank of Australia, is a very handsome cottonwood. It is in opulent leaf, and every leaf perfect. The full power of the on-rushing spring is upon it, and I imagine I can see it grow. Alongside the bank and a little way back in the garden there is a row of soaring fountain-sprays of delicate feathery foliage quivering in the breeze, and mottled with flashes of light that shift and play through the mass like flash-lights through an opal—a most beautiful tree, and a striking contrast to the cottonwood. Every leaf of the cottonwood is distinctly defined—it is a kodak for faithful, hard, unsentimental detail; the other an impressionist picture, delicious to look upon, full of a subtle and exquisite charm, but all details fused in a swoon of vague and soft loveliness."

It turned out, upon inquiry, to be a pepper tree—an importation from China. It has a silky sheen, soft and rich. I saw some that had long red bunches of currant-like berries ambushed among the foliage. At a distance, in certain lights, they give the tree a pinkish tint and a new charm.

There is an agricultural college eight miles from Horsham. We were driven out to it by its chief. The conveyance was an open wagon; the time, noonday; no wind; the sky without a cloud, the sunshine brilliant—and the mercury at 92 deg. in the shade. In some countries an indolent unsheltered drive of an hour and a half under such conditions would have been a sweltering and prostrating experience; but there was nothing of that in this case. It is a climate that is perfect. There was no sense of heat; indeed, there was no heat; the air was fine and pure and exhilarating; if the drive had lasted half a day I think we should not have felt any discomfort, or grown silent or droopy or tired. Of course, the secret of it was the exceeding dryness of the atmosphere. In that plain 112 deg. in the shade is without doubt no harder upon a man than is 88 or 90 deg. in New York.

The road lay through the middle of an empty space which seemed to me to be a hundred yards wide between the fences. I was not given the width in yards, but only in chains and perches—and furlongs, I think. I would have given a good deal to know what the width was, but I did not pursue the matter. I think it is best to put up with information the way you get it; and seem satisfied with it, and surprised at it, and grateful for it, and say, "My word!" and never let on. It was a wide space; I could tell you how wide, in chains and perches and furlongs and things, but that would not help you any. Those things sound well, but they are shadowy and indefinite, like troy weight and avoirdupois; nobody knows what they mean. When you buy a pound of a drug and the man asks you which you want, troy or avoirdupois, it is best to say "Yes," and shift the subject.



They said that the wide space dates from the earliest sheep and cattle-raising days. People had to drive their stock long distances—immense journeys—from worn-out places to new ones where were water and fresh pasturage; and this wide space had to be left in grass and unfenced, or the stock would have starved to death in the transit.

On the way we saw the usual birds—the beautiful little green parrots, the magpie, and some others; and also the slender native bird of modest plumage and the eternally-forgettable name—the bird that is the smartest among birds, and can give a parrot 30 to 1 in the game and then talk him to death. I cannot recall that bird's name. I think it begins with M. I wish it began with G. or something that a person can remember.

The magpie was out in great force, in the fields and on the fences. He is a handsome large creature, with snowy white decorations, and is a singer; he has a murmurous rich note that is lovely. He was once modest, even diffident; but he lost all that when he found out that he was Australia's sole musical bird. He has talent, and cuteness, and impudence; and in his tame state he is a most satisfactory pet—never coming when he is called, always coming when he isn't, and studying disobedience as an accomplishment. He is not confined, but loafs all over the house and grounds, like the laughing jackass. I think he learns to talk, I know he learns to sing tunes, and his friends say that he knows how to steal without learning. I was acquainted with a tame magpie in Melbourne. He had lived in a lady's house several years, and believed he owned it. The lady had tamed him, and in return he had tamed the lady. He was always on deck when not wanted, always having his own way, always tyrannizing

over the dog, and always making the cat's life a slow sorrow and a martyrdom. He knew a number of tunes and could sing them in perfect time and tune; and would do it, too, at any time that silence was wanted; and then encore himself and do it again; but if he was asked to sing he would go out and take a walk.

It was long believed that fruit trees would not grow in that baked and waterless plain around Horsham, but the agricultural college has dissipated that idea. Its ample nurseries were producing oranges, apricots, lemons, almonds, peaches, cherries, 48 varieties of apples—in fact, all manner of fruits, and in abundance. The trees did not seem to miss the water; they were in vigorous and flourishing condition.

Experiments are made with different soils, to see what things thrive best in them and what climates are best for them. A man who is ignorantly trying to produce upon his farm things not suited to its soil and its other conditions can make a journey to the college from anywhere in Australia, and go back with a change of scheme which will make his farm productive and profitable.

There were forty pupils there—a few of them farmers, relearning their trade, the rest young men mainly from the cities—novices. It seemed a strange thing that an agricultural college should have an attraction for city-bred youths, but such is the fact. They are good stuff, too; they are above the agricultural average of intelligence, and they come without any inherited prejudices in favor of hoary ignorances made sacred by long descent.

The students work all day in the fields, the nurseries, and the shearing-sheds, learning and doing all the practical work of the business—three days in a week. On the other three they study and hear lectures. They are taught the beginnings of such sciences as bear upon agriculture—like chemistry, for instance. We saw the sophomore class in sheep-shearing shear a dozen sheep. They did it by hand, not with the machine. The sheep was seized and flung down on his side and held there; and the students took off his coat with great celerity and adroitness. Sometimes they clipped off a sample of the sheep, but that is customary with shearers, and they don't mind it; they don't even mind it as much as the sheep. They dab a splotch of sheep-dip on the place and go right ahead.

The coat of wool was unbelievably thick. Before the shearing the sheep looked like the fat woman in the circus; after it he looked like a bench. He was clipped to the skin; and smoothly and uniformly. The fleece comes from him all in one piece and has the spread of a blanket.

The college was flying the Australian flag—the gridiron of England smuggled up in the northwest corner of a big red field that had the random stars of the Southern Cross wandering around over it.

From Horsham we went to Stawell. By rail. Still in the colony of Victoria. Stawell is in the gold-mining country. In the bank-safe was half a peck of surface-gold—gold dust, grain gold; rich; pure in fact, and pleasant to sift through one's fingers; and would be pleasanter if it would stick. And there were a couple of gold bricks, very heavy to handle, and worth \$7,500 a piece. They were from a very valuable quartz mine; a lady owns two-thirds of it; she has an income of \$75,000 a month from it, and is able to keep house.

The Stawell region is not productive of gold only; it has great vineyards, and produces exceptionally fine wines. One of these vineyards—the Great Western, owned by Mr. Irving—is regarded as a model. Its product has reputation abroad. It yields a choice champagne and a fine claret, and its hock took a prize in France two or three years ago. The champagne is kept in a maze of passages under ground, cut in the rock, to secure it an even temperature during the three-year term required to perfect it. In those vaults I saw 120,000 bottles of champagne. The colony of Victoria has a population of 1,000,000, and those people are said to drink 25,000,000 bottles of champagne per year. The driest community on the earth. The government has lately reduced the duty upon foreign wines. That is one of the unkindnesses of Protection. A man invests years of work and a vast sum of money in a worthy enterprise, upon the faith of existing laws; then the law is changed, and the man is robbed by his own government.

On the way back to Stawell we had a chance to see a group of boulders called the Three Sisters—a curiosity oddly located; for it was upon high ground, with the land sloping away from it, and no height above it from whence the boulders could have rolled down. Relics of an early ice-drift, perhaps. They are noble boulders. One of them has the size and smoothness and plump sphericity of a balloon of the biggest pattern.



The road led through a forest of great gum-trees, lean and scraggy and sorrowful. The road was cream-white—a clayey kind of earth, apparently. Along it toiled occasional freight wagons, drawn by long double files of oxen. Those wagons were going a journey of two hundred miles, I was told, and were running a successful opposition to the railway! The railways are owned and run by the government.

Those sad gums stood up out of the dry white clay, pictures of patience and resignation. It is a tree that can get along without water; still it is fond of it—ravenously so. It is a very intelligent tree and will detect the presence of hidden water at a distance of fifty feet, and send out slender long root-fibres to prospect it. They will find it; and will also get at it even through a cement wall six inches thick. Once a cement water-pipe under ground at Stawell began to gradually reduce its output, and finally ceased altogether to deliver water. Upon examining into the matter it was found stopped up, wadded compactly with a mass of root-fibres, delicate and hair-like. How this stuff had gotten into the pipe was a puzzle for some little time; finally it was found that it had crept in through a crack that was almost invisible to the eye. A gum tree forty feet away had tapped the pipe and was drinking the water.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*There is no such thing as "the Queen's English." The property has gone into the hands of a joint stock company and we own the bulk of the shares!*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Frequently, in Australia, one has cloud-effects of an unfamiliar sort. We had this kind of scenery, finely staged, all the way to Ballarat. Consequently we saw more sky than country on that journey. At one time a great stretch of the vault was densely flecked with wee ragged-edged flakes of painfully white cloud-stuff, all of one shape and size, and equidistant apart, with narrow cracks of adorable blue showing between. The whole was suggestive of a hurricane of snow-flakes drifting across the skies. By and by these flakes fused themselves together in interminable lines, with shady faint hollows between the lines, the long satin-surfaced rollers following each other in simulated movement, and enchantingly counterfeiting the majestic march of a flowing sea. Later, the sea solidified itself; then gradually broke up its mass into innumerable lofty white pillars of about one size, and ranged these across the firmament, in receding and fading perspective, in the similitude of a stupendous colonnade—a mirage without a doubt flung from the far Gates of the Hereafter.

The approaches to Ballarat were beautiful. The features, great green expanses of rolling pasture-land, bisected by eye contenting hedges of commingled new-gold and old-gold gorse—and a lovely lake. One must put in the pause, there, to fetch the reader up with a slight jolt, and keep him from gliding by without noticing the lake. One must notice it; for a lovely lake is not as common a thing along the railways of Australia as are the dry places. Ninety-two in the shade again, but balmy and comfortable, fresh and bracing. A perfect climate.

Forty-five years ago the site now occupied by the City of Ballarat was a sylvan solitude as quiet as Eden and as lovely. Nobody had ever heard of it. On the 25th of August, 1851, the first great gold-strike made in Australia was made here. The wandering prospectors who made it scraped up two pounds and a half of gold the first day—worth \$600. A few days later the place was a hive—a town. The news of the strike spread everywhere in a sort of instantaneous way—spread like a flash to the very ends of the earth. A celebrity so prompt and so universal has hardly been paralleled in history, perhaps. It was as if the name BALLARAT had suddenly been written on the sky, where all the world could read it at once.

The smaller discoveries made in the colony of New South Wales three months before had already started emigrants toward Australia; they had been coming as a stream, but they came as a flood, now. A hundred thousand people poured into Melbourne from England and other countries in a single month, and flocked away to the mines. The crews of the ships that brought them flocked with them; the clerks in the government offices followed; so did the cooks, the maids, the coachmen, the butlers, and the other domestic servants; so did the carpenters, the smiths, the plumbers, the painters, the reporters, the editors, the lawyers, the clients, the barkeepers, the bummers, the blacklegs, the thieves, the loose women, the grocers, the butchers, the bakers, the doctors, the druggists, the nurses; so did the police; even officials of high and hitherto envied place threw up their positions and joined the procession. This roaring avalanche swept out of Melbourne and left it desolate, Sunday-like, paralyzed, everything at a stand-still, the ships lying idle at anchor, all signs of life departed, all sounds stilled save the rasping of the cloud-shadows as they scraped across the vacant streets.

That grassy and leafy paradise at Ballarat was soon ripped open, and lacerated and scarified and gutted, in the feverish search for its hidden riches. There is nothing like surface-mining to snatch the graces and beauties and benignities out of a paradise, and make an odious and repulsive spectacle of it.

What fortunes were made! Immigrants got rich while the ship unloaded and reloaded—and went back home for good in the same cabin they had come out in! Not all of them. Only some. I saw the others in Ballarat myself,

forty-five years later—what were left of them by time and death and the disposition to rove. They were young and gay, then; they are patriarchal and grave, now; and they do not get excited any more. They talk of the Past. They live in it. Their life is a dream, a retrospection.

Ballarat was a great region for "nuggets." No such nuggets were found in California as Ballarat produced. In fact, the Ballarat region has yielded the largest ones known to history. Two of them weighed about 180 pounds each, and together were worth \$90,000. They were offered to any poor person who would shoulder them and carry them away. Gold was so plentiful that it made people liberal like that.

Ballarat was a swarming city of tents in the early days. Everybody was happy, for a time, and apparently prosperous. Then came trouble. The government swooped down with a mining tax. And in its worst form, too; for it was not a tax upon what the miner had taken out, but upon what he was going to take out—if he could find it. It was a license—tax license to work his claim—and it had to be paid before he could begin digging.

Consider the situation. No business is so uncertain as surface-mining. Your claim may be good, and it may be worthless. It may make you well off in a month; and then again you may have to dig and slave for half a year, at heavy expense, only to find out at last that the gold is not there in cost-paying quantity, and that your time and your hard work have been thrown away. It might be wise policy to advance the miner a monthly sum to encourage him to develop the country's riches; but to tax him monthly in advance instead—why, such a thing was never dreamed of in America. There, neither the claim itself nor its products, howsoever rich or poor, were taxed.

The Ballarat miners protested, petitioned, complained—it was of no use; the government held its ground, and went on collecting the tax. And not by pleasant methods, but by ways which must have been very galling to free people. The rumblings of a coming storm began to be audible.

By and by there was a result; and I think it may be called the finest thing in Australasian history. It was a revolution—small in size; but great politically; it was a strike for liberty, a struggle for a principle, a stand against injustice and oppression. It was the Barons and John, over again; it was Hampden and Ship-Money; it was Concord and Lexington; small beginnings, all of them, but all of them great in political results, all of them epoch-making. It is another instance of a victory won by a lost battle. It adds an honorable page to history; the people know it and are proud of it. They keep green the memory of the men who fell at the Eureka Stockade, and Peter Lalor has his monument.

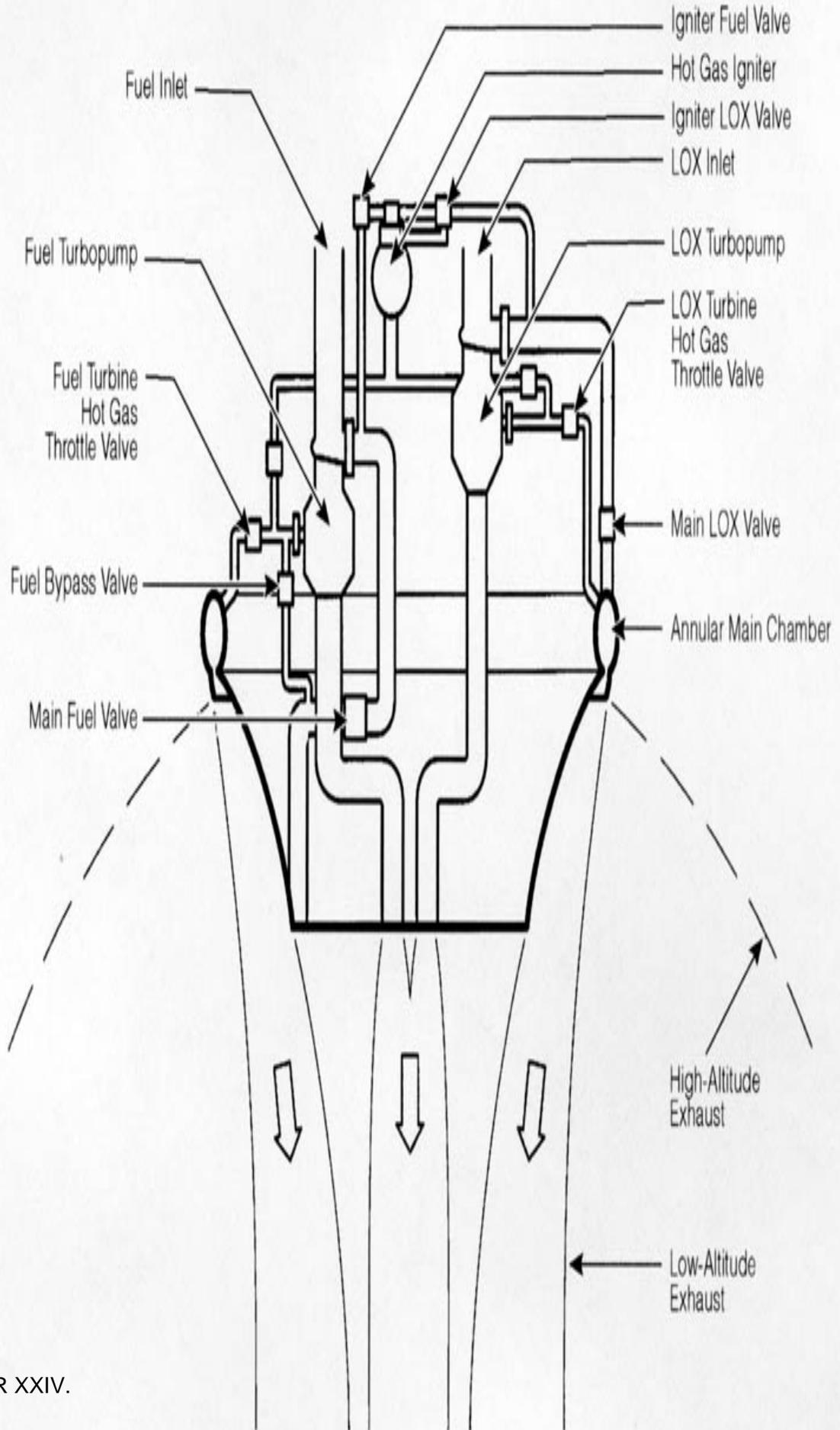
The surface-soil of Ballarat was full of gold. This soil the miners ripped and tore and trenched and harried and disembowled, and made it yield up its immense treasure. Then they went down into the earth with deep shafts, seeking the gravelly beds of ancient rivers and brooks—and found them. They followed the courses of these streams, and gutted them, sending the gravel up in buckets to the upper world, and washing out of it its enormous deposits of gold. The next biggest of the two monster nuggets mentioned above came from an old river-channel 180 feet under ground.

Finally the quartz lodes were attacked. That is not poor-man's mining. Quartz-mining and milling require capital, and staying-power, and patience. Big companies were formed, and for several decades, now, the lodes have been successfully worked, and have yielded great wealth. Since the gold discovery in 1853 the Ballarat mines—taking the three kinds of mining together—have contributed to the world's pocket something over three hundred millions of dollars, which is to say that this nearly invisible little spot on the earth's surface has yielded about one-fourth as much gold in forty-four years as all California has yielded in forty-seven. The Californian aggregate, from 1848 to 1895, inclusive, as reported by the Statistician of the United States Mint, is \$1,265,215,217.

A citizen told me a curious thing about those mines. With all my experience of mining I had never heard of anything of the sort before. The main gold reef runs about north and south—of course for that is the custom of a rich gold reef. At Ballarat its course is between walls of slate. Now the citizen told me that throughout a stretch of twelve miles along the reef, the reef is crossed at intervals by a straight black streak of a carbonaceous nature—a streak in the slate; a streak no thicker than a pencil—and that wherever it crosses the reef you will certainly find gold at the junction. It is called the Indicator. Thirty feet on each side of the Indicator (and down in the slate, of course) is a still finer streak—a streak as fine as a pencil mark; and indeed, that is its name Pencil Mark. Whenever you find the Pencil Mark you know that thirty feet from it is the Indicator; you measure the distance, excavate, find the Indicator, trace it straight to the reef, and sink your shaft; your fortune is made, for certain. If that is true, it is curious. And it is curious anyway.

### Following the Equator, Illustrated, v3

Ballarat is a town of only 40,000 population; and yet, since it is in Australia, it has every essential of an advanced and enlightened big city. This is pure matter of course. I must stop dwelling upon these things. It is hard to keep from dwelling upon them, though; for it is difficult to get away from the surprise of it. I will let the other details go, this time, but I must allow myself to mention that this little town has a park of 326 acres; a flower garden of 83 acres, with an elaborate and expensive fernery in it and some costly and unusually fine statuary; and an artificial lake covering 600 acres, equipped with a fleet of 200 shells, small sail boats, and little steam yachts.



At this point I strike out some other praiseful things which I was tempted to add. I do not strike them out because they were not true or not well said, but because I find them better said by another man—and a man more competent to testify, too, because he belongs on the ground, and knows. I clip them from a chatty speech delivered some years ago by Mr. William Little, who was at that time mayor of Ballarat:

"The language of our citizens, in this as in other parts of Australasia, is mostly healthy Anglo-Saxon, free from Americanisms, vulgarisms, and the conflicting dialects of our Fatherland, and is pure enough to suit a Trench or a Latham. Our youth, aided by climatic influence, are in point of physique and comeliness unsurpassed in the Sunny South. Our young men are well ordered; and our maidens, 'not stepping over the bounds of modesty,' are as fair as Psyches, dispensing smiles as charming as November flowers."

The closing clause has the seeming of a rather frosty compliment, but that is apparent only, not real. November is summer-time there.

His compliment to the local purity of the language is warranted. It is quite free from impurities; this is acknowledged far and wide. As in the German Empire all cultivated people claim to speak Hanovarian German, so in Australasia all cultivated people claim to speak Ballarat English. Even in England this cult has made considerable progress, and now that it is favored by the two great Universities, the time is not far away when Ballarat English will come into general use among the educated classes of Great Britain at large. Its great merit is, that it is shorter than ordinary English—that is, it is more compressed. At first you have some difficulty in understanding it when it is spoken as rapidly as the orator whom I have quoted speaks it. An illustration will show what I mean. When he called and I handed him a chair, he bowed and said:

"Q."

Presently, when we were lighting our cigars, he held a match to mine and I said:

"Thank you," and he said:

"Km."

Then I saw. 'Q' is the end of the phrase "I thank you" 'Km' is the end of the phrase "You are welcome." Mr. Little puts no emphasis upon either of them, but delivers them so reduced that they hardly have a sound. All Ballarat English is like that, and the effect is very soft and pleasant; it takes all the hardness and harshness out of our tongue and gives to it a delicate whispery and vanishing cadence which charms the ear like the faint rustling of the forest leaves.

## CHAPTER XXV.

*"Classic." A book which people praise and don't read.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

On the rail again—bound for Bendigo. From diary:

October 23. Got up at 6, left at 7.30; soon reached Castlemaine, one of the rich gold-fields of the early days; waited several hours for a train; left at 3.40 and reached Bendigo in an hour. For comrade, a Catholic priest who was better than I was, but didn't seem to know it—a man full of graces of the heart, the mind, and the spirit; a lovable man. He will rise. He will be a bishop some day. Later an Archbishop. Later a Cardinal. Finally an Archangel, I hope. And then he will recall me when I say, "Do you remember that trip we made from Ballarat to Bendigo, when you were nothing but Father C., and I was nothing to what I am now?" It has actually taken nine hours to come from Ballarat to Bendigo. We could have saved seven by walking. However, there was no hurry.



Bendigo was another of the rich strikes of the early days. It does a great quartz-mining business, now—that business which, more than any other that I know of, teaches patience, and requires grit and a steady nerve. The town is full of towering chimney-stacks, and hoisting-works, and looks like a petroleum-city. Speaking of patience; for example, one of the local companies went steadily on with its deep borings and searchings without show of gold or a penny of reward for eleven years— then struck it, and became suddenly rich. The eleven years' work had cost \$55,000, and the first gold found was a grain the size of a pin's head. It is kept under locks and bars, as a precious thing, and is reverently shown to the visitor, "hats off." When I saw it I had not heard its history.

"It is gold. Examine it—take the glass. Now how much should you say it is worth?"

I said:

"I should say about two cents; or in your English dialect, four farthings."

"Well, it cost L11,000."

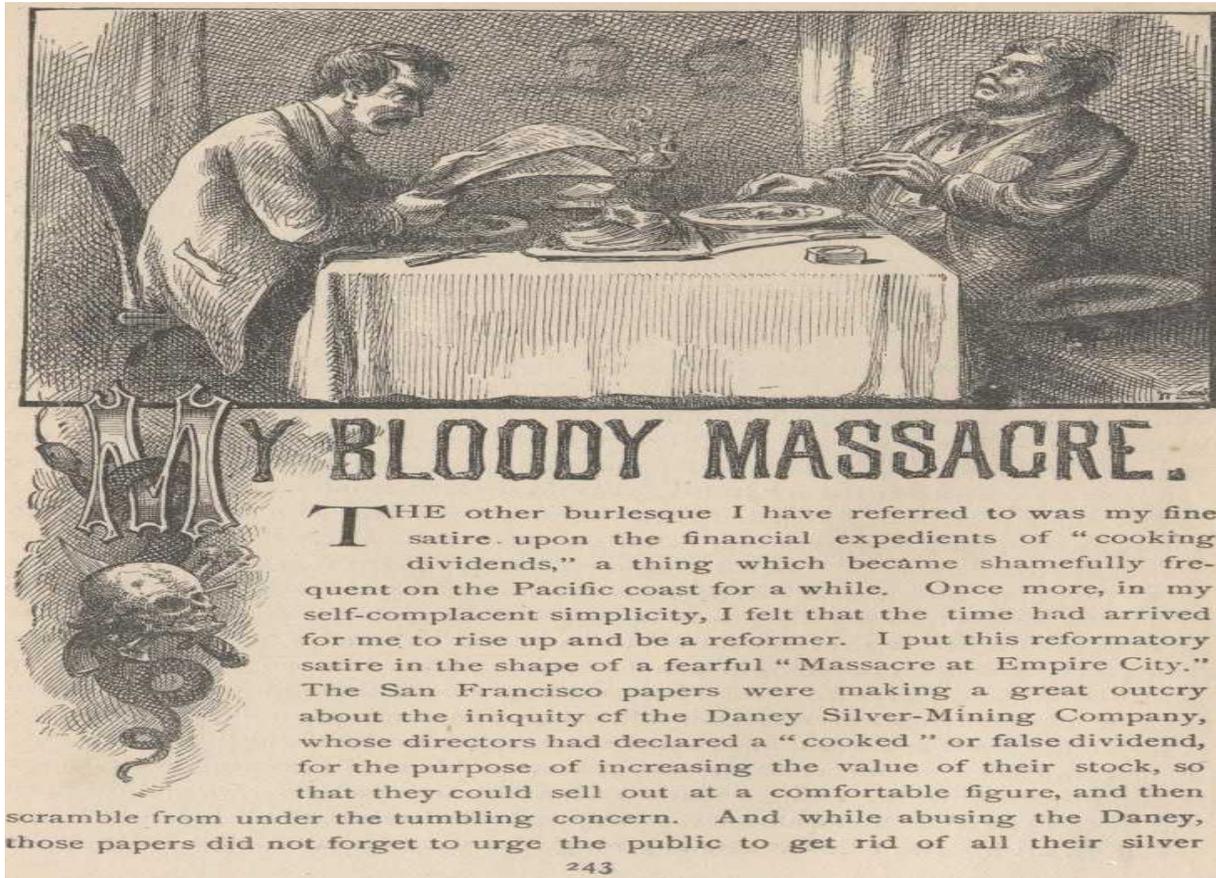
"Oh, come!"

"Yes, it did. Ballarat and Bendigo have produced the three monumental nuggets of the world, and this one is the monumentalest one of the three. The other two represent 19,000 a piece; this one a couple of thousand more. It is small, and not much to look at, but it is entitled to (its) name—Adam. It is the Adam-nugget of this mine, and its children run up into the millions."

Speaking of patience again, another of the mines was worked, under heavy expenses, during 17 years before pay was struck, and still another one compelled a wait of 21 years before pay was struck; then, in both instances, the outlay was all back in a year or two, with compound interest.

Bendigo has turned out even more gold than Ballarat. The two together have produced \$650,000,000 worth—which is half as much as California has produced.

It was through Mr. Blank—not to go into particulars about his name—it was mainly through Mr. Blank that my stay in Bendigo was made memorably pleasant and interesting. He explained this to me himself. He told me that it was through his influence that the city government invited me to the town-hall to hear complimentary speeches and respond to them; that it was through his influence that I had been taken on a long pleasure-drive through the city and shown its notable features; that it was through his influence that I was invited to visit the great mines; that it was through his influence that I was taken to the hospital and allowed to see the convalescent Chinaman who had been attacked at midnight in his lonely hut eight weeks before by robbers, and stabbed forty-six times and scalped besides; that it was through his influence that when I arrived this awful spectacle of piecings and patchings and bandagings was sitting up in his cot letting on to read one of my books; that it was through his influence that efforts had been made to get the Catholic Archbishop of Bendigo to invite me to dinner; that it was through his influence that efforts had been made to get the Anglican Bishop of Bendigo to ask me to supper; that it was through his influence that the dean of the editorial fraternity had driven me through the woodsy outlying country and shown me, from the summit of Lone Tree Hill, the mightiest and loveliest expanse of forest-clad mountain and valley that I had seen in all Australia. And when he asked me what had most impressed me in Bendigo and I answered and said it was the taste and the public spirit which had adorned the streets with 105 miles of shade trees, he said that it was through his influence that it had been done.



But I am not representing him quite correctly. He did not say it was through his influence that all these things had happened—for that would have been coarse; he merely conveyed that idea; conveyed it so subtly that I only caught it fleetingly, as one catches vagrant faint breaths of perfume when one traverses the meadows in summer; conveyed it without offense and without any suggestion of egoism or ostentation—but conveyed it, nevertheless.

He was an Irishman; an educated gentleman; grave, and kindly, and courteous; a bachelor, and about forty-five or possibly fifty years old, apparently. He called upon me at the hotel, and it was there that we had this talk. He made me like him, and did it without trouble. This was partly through his winning and gentle ways, but mainly through the amazing familiarity with my books which his conversation showed. He was down to date with them, too; and if he had made them the study of his life he could hardly have been better posted as to their contents than he was. He made me better satisfied with myself than I had ever been before. It was plain that he had a deep fondness for humor, yet he never laughed; he never even chuckled; in fact, humor could not win to outward expression on his face at all. No, he was always grave—tenderly, pensively grave; but he made me laugh, all along; and this was very trying—and very pleasant at the same time—for it was at quotations from my own books.

When he was going, he turned and said:

"You don't remember me?"

"I? Why, no. Have we met before?"

"No, it was a matter of correspondence."

"Correspondence?"

"Yes, many years ago. Twelve or fifteen. Oh, longer than that. But of course you——" A musing pause. Then he said:

"Do you remember Corrigan Castle?"

"N—no, I believe I don't. I don't seem to recall the name."

He waited a moment, pondering, with the door-knob in his hand, then started out; but turned back and said that I had once been interested in Corrigan Castle, and asked me if I would go with him to his quarters in the evening and take a hot Scotch and talk it over. I was a teetotaler and liked relaxation, so I said I would.

We drove from the lecture-hall together about half-past ten. He had a most comfortably and tastefully furnished parlor, with good pictures on the walls, Indian and Japanese ornaments on the mantel, and here and there, and books everywhere—largely mine; which made me proud. The light was brilliant, the easy chairs were deep-cushioned, the arrangements for brewing and smoking were all there. We brewed and lit up; then he passed a sheet of note-paper to me and said—

"Do you remember that?"

"Oh, yes, indeed!"

The paper was of a sumptuous quality. At the top was a twisted and interlaced monogram printed from steel dies in gold and blue and red, in the ornate English fashion of long years ago; and under it, in neat gothic capitals was this—printed in blue:

THE MARK TWAIN CLUB CORRIGAN CASTLE .....187..

"My!" said I, "how did you come by this?"

"I was President of it."

"No!—you don't mean it."

"It is true. I was its first President. I was re-elected annually as long as its meetings were held in my castle—Corrigan—which was five years."

Then he showed me an album with twenty-three photographs of me in it. Five of them were of old dates, the others of various later crops; the list closed with a picture taken by Falk in Sydney a month before.

"You sent us the first five; the rest were bought."

This was paradise! We ran late, and talked, talked, talked—subject, the Mark Twain Club of Corrigan Castle, Ireland.

My first knowledge of that Club dates away back; all of twenty years, I should say. It came to me in the form of a courteous letter, written on the note-paper which I have described, and signed "By order of the President; C. PEMBROKE, Secretary." It conveyed the fact that the Club had been created in my honor, and added the hope that this token of appreciation of my work would meet with my approval.

I answered, with thanks; and did what I could to keep my gratification from over-exposure.

It was then that the long correspondence began. A letter came back, by order of the President, furnishing me the names of the members—thirty-two in number. With it came a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws, in pamphlet form, and artistically printed. The initiation fee and dues were in their proper place; also, schedule of meetings—monthly—for essays upon works of mine, followed by discussions; quarterly for business and a supper, without essays, but with after-supper speeches also, there was a list of the officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc. The letter was brief, but it was pleasant reading, for it told me about the strong interest which the membership took in their new venture, etc., etc. It also asked me for a photograph—a special one. I went down and sat for it and sent it—with a letter, of course.

Presently came the badge of the Club, and very dainty and pretty it was; and very artistic. It was a frog peeping out from a graceful tangle of grass-sprays and rushes, and was done in enamels on a gold basis, and had a gold pin back of it. After I had petted it, and played with it, and caressed it, and enjoyed it a couple of hours, the light happened to fall upon it at a new angle, and revealed to me a cunning new detail; with the light just right, certain delicate shadings of the grass-blades and rush-stems wove themselves into a monogram—mine! You can see that that jewel was a work of art. And when you come to consider the intrinsic value of it, you must concede that it is not every literary club that could afford a badge like that. It was easily worth \$75, in the opinion of Messrs. Marcus and Ward of New York. They said they could not duplicate it for that and make a profit.



By this time the Club was well under way; and from that time forth its secretary kept my off-hours well supplied with business. He reported the Club's discussions of my books with laborious fullness, and did his work with great spirit and ability. As a rule, he synopsised; but when a speech was especially brilliant, he short-handed it and gave me the best passages from it, written out. There were five speakers whom he particularly favored in that way: Palmer, Forbes, Naylor, Norris, and Calder. Palmer and Forbes could never get through a speech without attacking each other, and each in his own way was formidably effective—Palmer in virile and eloquent abuse, Forbes in courtly and elegant but scalding satire. I could always tell which of them was talking without looking for his name. Naylor had a polished style and a happy knack at felicitous metaphor; Norris's style was wholly without ornament, but enviably compact, lucid, and strong. But after all, Calder was the gem. He never spoke when sober, he spoke continuously when he wasn't. And certainly they were the drunkest speeches that a man ever uttered. They were full of good things, but so incredibly mixed up and wandering that it made one's head swim to follow him. They were not intended to be funny, but they were,—funny for the very gravity which the speaker put into his flowing miracles of incongruity. In the course of five years I came to know the styles of the five orators as well as I knew the style of any speaker in my own club at home.

These reports came every month. They were written on foolscap, 600 words to the page, and usually about twenty-five pages in a report—a good 15,000 words, I should say,—a solid week's work. The reports were absorbingly entertaining, long as they were; but, unfortunately for me, they did not come alone. They were always accompanied by a lot of questions about passages and purposes in my books, which the Club wanted answered; and additionally accompanied every quarter by the Treasurer's report, and the Auditor's report, and the Committee's report, and the President's review, and my opinion of these was always desired; also suggestions for the good of the Club, if any occurred to me.

By and by I came to dread those things; and this dread grew and grew and grew; grew until I got to anticipating them with a cold horror. For I was an indolent man, and not fond of letter-writing, and whenever these things came I had to put everything by and sit down—for my own peace of mind—and dig and dig until I got something out of my head which would answer for a reply. I got along fairly well the first year; but for the succeeding four years the Mark Twain Club of Corrigan Castle was my curse, my nightmare, the grief and misery of my life. And I got so, so sick of sitting for photographs. I sat every year for five years, trying to satisfy that insatiable organization. Then at last I rose in revolt. I could endure my oppressions no longer. I pulled my fortitude together and tore off my chains, and was a free man again, and happy. From that day I burned the

secretary's fat envelopes the moment they arrived, and by and by they ceased to come.

Well, in the sociable frankness of that night in Bendigo I brought this all out in full confession. Then Mr. Blank came out in the same frank way, and with a preliminary word of gentle apology said that he was the Mark Twain Club, and the only member it had ever had!

Why, it was matter for anger, but I didn't feel any. He said he never had to work for a living, and that by the time he was thirty life had become a bore and a weariness to him. He had no interests left; they had paled and perished, one by one, and left him desolate. He had begun to think of suicide. Then all of a sudden he thought of that happy idea of starting an imaginary club, and went straightway to work at it, with enthusiasm and love. He was charmed with it; it gave him something to do. It elaborated itself on his hands;—it became twenty times more complex and formidable than was his first rude draft of it. Every new addition to his original plan which cropped up in his mind gave him a fresh interest and a new pleasure. He designed the Club badge himself, and worked over it, altering and improving it, a number of days and nights; then sent to London and had it made. It was the only one that was made. It was made for me; the "rest of the Club" went without.

He invented the thirty-two members and their names. He invented the five favorite speakers and their five separate styles. He invented their speeches, and reported them himself. He would have kept that Club going until now, if I hadn't deserted, he said. He said he worked like a slave over those reports; each of them cost him from a week to a fortnight's work, and the work gave him pleasure and kept him alive and willing to be alive. It was a bitter blow to him when the Club died.

Finally, there wasn't any Corrigan Castle. He had invented that, too.

It was wonderful—the whole thing; and altogether the most ingenious and laborious and cheerful and painstaking practical joke I have ever heard of. And I liked it; liked to bear him tell about it; yet I have been a hater of practical jokes from as long back as I can remember. Finally he said—

"Do you remember a note from Melbourne fourteen or fifteen years ago, telling about your lecture tour in Australia, and your death and burial in Melbourne?—a note from Henry Bascomb, of Bascomb Hall, Upper Holywell Hants."

"Yes."

"I wrote it."

"M-y-word!"

"Yes, I did it. I don't know why. I just took the notion, and carried it out without stopping to think. It was wrong. It could have done harm. I was always sorry about it afterward. You must forgive me. I was Mr. Bascom's guest on his yacht, on his voyage around the world. He often spoke of you, and of the pleasant times you had had together in his home; and the notion took me, there in Melbourne, and I imitated his hand, and wrote the letter."

So the mystery was cleared up, after so many, many years.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

*There are people who can do all fine and heroic things but one! keep from telling their happinesses to the unhappy.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

After visits to Maryborough and some other Australian towns, we presently took passage for New Zealand. If it would not look too much like showing off, I would tell the reader where New Zealand is; for he is as I was; he thinks he knows. And he thinks he knows where Hertzegovina is; and how to pronounce pariah; and how to use the word unique without exposing himself to the derision of the dictionary. But in truth, he knows none of these things. There are but four or five people in the world who possess this knowledge, and these make their living out of it. They travel from place to place, visiting literary assemblages, geographical societies, and seats of learning, and springing sudden bets that these people do not know these things. Since all people think they know them, they are an easy prey to these adventurers. Or rather they were an easy prey until the law interfered, three months ago, and a New York court decided that this kind of gambling is illegal, "because it traverses Article IV, Section 9, of the Constitution of the United States, which forbids betting on a sure thing." This decision was rendered by the full Bench of the New York Supreme Court, after a test sprung upon the court by counsel for the prosecution, which showed that none of the nine Judges was able to answer any of the four questions.

All people think that New Zealand is close to Australia or Asia, or somewhere, and that you cross to it on a bridge. But that is not so. It is not close to anything, but lies by itself, out in the water. It is nearest to Australia, but still not near. The gap between is very wide. It will be a surprise to the reader, as it was to me, to learn that the distance from Australia to New Zealand is really twelve or thirteen hundred miles, and that there is no bridge. I learned this from Professor X., of Yale University, whom I met in the steamer on the great lakes when I was crossing the continent to sail across the Pacific. I asked him about New Zealand, in order to make conversation. I supposed he would generalize a little without compromising himself, and then turn the subject to something he was acquainted with, and my object would then be attained; the ice would be broken, and we could go smoothly on, and get acquainted, and have a pleasant time. But, to my surprise, he was not only not embarrassed by my question, but seemed to welcome it, and to take a distinct interest in it. He began to talk—fluently, confidently, comfortably; and as he talked, my admiration grew and grew; for as the subject developed under his hands, I saw that he not only knew where New Zealand was, but that he was minutely familiar with every detail of its history, politics, religions, and commerce, its fauna, flora, geology, products, and climatic peculiarities. When he was done, I was lost in wonder and admiration, and said to myself, he knows everything; in the domain of human knowledge he is king.

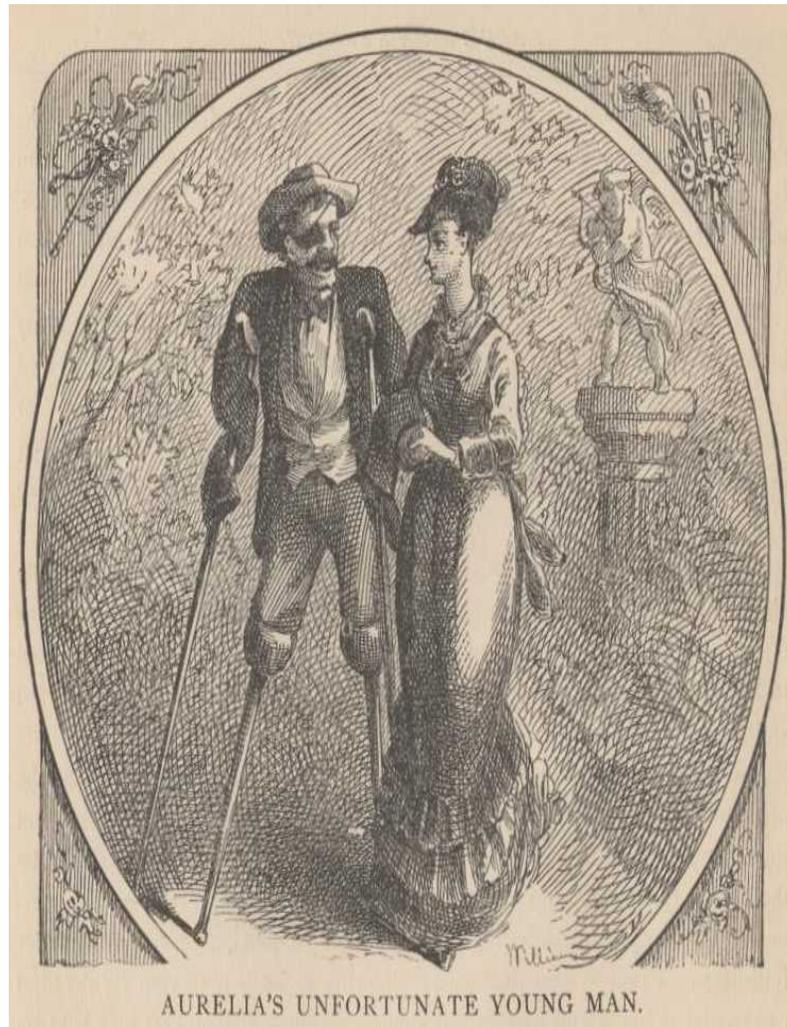
I wanted to see him do more miracles; and so, just for the pleasure of hearing him answer, I asked him about Hertzegovina, and pariah, and unique. But he began to generalize then, and show distress. I saw that with New Zealand gone, he was a Samson shorn of his locks; he was as other men. This was a curious and interesting mystery, and I was frank with him, and asked him to explain it.

He tried to avoid it at first; but then laughed and said that after all, the matter was not worth concealment, so he would let me into the secret. In substance, this is his story:

"Last autumn I was at work one morning at home, when a card came up—the card of a stranger. Under the name was printed a line which showed that this visitor was Professor of Theological Engineering in Wellington University, New Zealand. I was troubled—troubled, I

mean, by the shortness of the notice. College etiquette required that he be at once invited to dinner by some member of the Faculty—invited to dine on that day—not, put off till a subsequent day. I did not quite know what to do. College etiquette requires, in the case of a foreign guest, that the dinner—talk shall begin with complimentary references to his country, its great men, its services to civilization, its seats of learning, and things like that; and of course the host is responsible, and must either begin this talk himself or see that it is done by some one else. I was in great difficulty; and the more I searched my memory, the more my trouble grew. I found that I knew nothing about New Zealand. I thought I knew where it was, and that was all. I had an impression that it was close to Australia, or Asia, or somewhere, and that one went over to it on a bridge. This might turn out to be incorrect; and even if correct, it would not furnish matter enough for the purpose at the dinner, and I should expose my College to shame before my guest; he would see that I, a member of the Faculty of the first University in America, was wholly ignorant of his country, and he would go away and tell this, and laugh at it. The thought of it made my face burn.

"I sent for my wife and told her how I was situated, and asked for her help, and she thought of a thing which I might have thought of myself, if I had not been excited and worried. She said she would go and tell the visitor that I was out but would be in in a few minutes; and she would talk, and keep him busy while I got out the back way and hurried over and make Professor Lawson give the dinner. For Lawson knew everything, and could meet the guest in a creditable way and save the reputation of the University.



I ran to Lawson, but was disappointed. He did not know anything about New Zealand. He said that, as far as his recollection went it was close to Australia, or Asia, or somewhere, and you go over to it on a bridge; but that was all he knew. It was too bad. Lawson was a perfect encyclopedia of abstruse learning; but now in this hour of our need, it turned out that he did not know any useful thing.

"We consulted. He saw that the reputation of the University was in very real peril, and he walked the floor in anxiety, talking, and trying to think out some way to meet the difficulty. Presently he decided that we must try the rest of the Faculty—some of them might know about New Zealand. So we went to the telephone and called up the professor of astronomy and asked him, and he said that all he knew was, that it was close to Australia, or Asia, or somewhere, and you went over to it on—"

"We shut him off and called up the professor of biology, and he said that all he knew was that it was close to Aus—".



"We shut him off, and sat down, worried and disheartened, to see if we could think up some other scheme. We shortly hit upon one which promised well, and this one we adopted, and set its machinery going at once. It was this. Lawson must give the dinner. The Faculty must be notified by telephone to prepare. We must all get to work diligently, and at the end of eight hours and a half we must come to dinner acquainted with New Zealand; at least well enough informed to appear without discredit before this native. To seem properly intelligent we should have to know about New Zealand's population, and politics, and form of government, and commerce, and taxes, and products, and ancient history, and modern history, and varieties of religion, and nature of the laws, and their codification, and amount of revenue, and whence drawn, and methods of collection, and percentage of loss, and character of climate, and—well, a lot of things like that; we must suck the maps and cyclopedias dry. And while we posted up in this way, the Faculty's wives must flock over, one after the other, in a studiedly casual way, and help my wife keep the New Zealander quiet, and not let him get out and come interfering with our studies. The scheme worked admirably; but it stopped business, stopped it entirely.

"It is in the official log-book of Yale, to be read and wondered at by future generations—the account of the Great Blank Day—the memorable Blank Day—the day wherein the wheels of culture were stopped, a Sunday silence prevailed all about, and the whole University stood still while the Faculty read-up and qualified itself to sit at meat, "without shame, in the presence of the Professor of Theological Engineering from New Zealand:

"When we assembled at the dinner we were miserably tired and worn—but we were posted. Yes, it is fair to claim that. In fact, erudition is a pale name for it. New Zealand was the only subject; and it was just beautiful to hear us ripple it out. And with such an air of unembarrassed ease, and unostentatious familiarity with detail, and trained and seasoned mastery of the subject—and oh, the grace and fluency of it!

"Well, finally somebody happened to notice that the guest was looking dazed, and wasn't saying anything. So they stirred him up, of course. Then that man came out with a good, honest, eloquent compliment that made the Faculty blush. He said he was not worthy to sit in the company of men like these; that he had been silent from

admiration; that he had been silent from another cause also—silent from shame—silent from ignorance! 'For,' said he, 'I, who have lived eighteen years in New Zealand and have served five in a professorship, and ought to know much about that country, perceive, now, that I know almost nothing about it. I say it with shame, that I have learned fifty times, yes, a hundred times more about New Zealand in these two hours at this table than I ever knew before in all the eighteen years put together. I was silent because I could not help myself. What I knew about taxes, and policies, and laws, and revenue, and products, and history, and all that multitude of things, was but general, and ordinary, and vague—unscientific, in a word—and it would have been insanity to expose it here to the searching glare of your amazingly accurate and all-comprehensive knowledge of those matters, gentlemen. I beg you to let me sit silent—as becomes me. But do not change the subject; I can at least follow you, in this one; whereas if you change to one which shall call out the full strength of your mighty erudition, I shall be as one lost. If you know all this about a remote little inconsequent patch like New Zealand, ah, what wouldn't you know about any other Subject!'"



## CHAPTER XXVII.

*Man is the Only Animal that Blushes. Or needs to.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

*The universal brotherhood of man is our most precious possession, what there is of it.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

### FROM DIARY:

November 1—noon. A fine day, a brilliant sun. Warm in the sun, cold in the shade—an icy breeze blowing out of the south. A solemn long swell rolling up northward. It comes from the South Pole, with nothing in the way to obstruct its march and tone its energy down. I have read somewhere that an acute observer among the early explorers—Cook? or Tasman?—accepted this majestic swell as trustworthy circumstantial evidence that no important land lay to the southward, and so did not waste time on a useless quest in that direction, but changed his course and went searching elsewhere.

Afternoon. Passing between Tasmania (formerly Van Diemen's Land) and neighboring islands—lands whence the poor exiled Tasmanian savages used to gaze at their lost homeland and cry; and die of broken hearts. How glad I am that all these native races are dead and gone, or nearly so. The work was mercifully swift and horrible in some portions of Australia. As far as Tasmania is concerned, the extermination was complete: not a native is left. It was a strife of years, and decades of years. The Whites and the Blacks hunted each other, ambushed each other, butchered each other. The Blacks were not numerous. But they were wary, alert, cunning, and they knew their country well. They lasted a long time, few as they were, and inflicted much slaughter upon the Whites.

The Government wanted to save the Blacks from ultimate extermination, if possible. One of its schemes was to capture them and coop them up, on a neighboring island, under guard. Bodies of Whites volunteered for the hunt, for the pay was good—L5 for each Black captured and delivered, but the success achieved was not very satisfactory. The Black was naked, and his body was greased. It was hard to get a grip on him that would hold. The Whites moved about in armed bodies, and surprised little families of natives, and did make captures; but it was suspected that in these surprises half a dozen natives were killed to one caught—and that was not what the Government desired.

Another scheme was to drive the natives into a corner of the island and fence them in by a cordon of men placed in line across the country; but the natives managed to slip through, constantly, and continue their murders and arsons.

The governor warned these unlettered savages by printed proclamation that they must stay in the desolate region officially appointed for them! The proclamation was a dead letter; the savages could not read it. Afterward a picture—proclamation was issued. It was painted up on boards, and these were nailed to trees in the forest.



Herewith is a photographic reproduction of this fashion-plate. Substantially it means:

1. The Governor wishes the Whites and the Blacks to love each other;
2. He loves his black subjects;
3. Blacks who kill Whites will be hanged;
4. Whites who kill Blacks will be hanged.

Upon its several schemes the Government spent L30,000 and employed the labors and ingenuities of several thousand Whites for a long time with failure as a result. Then, at last, a quarter of a century after the beginning of the troubles between the two races, the right man was found. No, he found himself. This was George Augustus Robinson, called in history "The Conciliator." He was not educated, and not conspicuous in any way. He was a working bricklayer, in Hobart Town. But he must have been an amazing personality; a man worth traveling far to see. It may be his counterpart appears in history, but I do not know where to look for it.

He set himself this incredible task: to go out into the wilderness, the jungle, and the mountain-retreats where the hunted and implacable savages were hidden, and appear among them unarmed, speak the language of love and of kindness to them, and persuade them to forsake their homes and the wild free life that was so dear to them, and go with him and surrender to the hated Whites and live under their watch and ward, and upon their charity the rest of their lives! On its face it was the dream of a madman.

In the beginning, his moral-suasion project was sarcastically dubbed the sugar plum speculation. If the scheme was striking, and new to the world's experience, the situation was not less so. It was this. The White population numbered 40,000 in 1831; the Black population numbered three hundred. Not 300 warriors, but 300 men, women, and children. The Whites were armed with guns, the Blacks with clubs and spears. The Whites had fought the Blacks for a quarter of a century, and had tried every thinkable way to capture, kill, or subdue them; and could not do it. If white men of any race could have done it, these would have accomplished it. But every scheme had failed, the splendid 300, the matchless 300 were unconquered, and manifestly unconquerable. They would not yield, they would listen to no terms, they would fight to the bitter end. Yet they had no poet to keep up their heart, and sing the marvel of their magnificent patriotism.

At the end of five-and-twenty years of hard fighting, the surviving 300 naked patriots were still defiant, still persistent, still efficacious with their rude weapons, and the Governor and the 40,000 knew not which way to turn, nor what to do.

Then the Bricklayer—that wonderful man—proposed to go out into the wilderness, with no weapon but his tongue, and no protection but his honest eye and his humane heart; and track those embittered savages to their lairs in the gloomy forests and among the mountain snows. Naturally, he was considered a crank. But he was not quite that. In fact, he was a good way short of that. He was building upon his long and intimate knowledge of the native character. The deriders of his project were right—from their standpoint—for they believed the natives to be mere wild beasts; and Robinson was right, from his standpoint—for he believed the natives to be human beings. The truth did really lie between the two. The event proved that Robinson's judgment was soundest; but about once a month for four years the event came near to giving the verdict to the deriders, for about that frequently Robinson barely escaped falling under the native spears.

But history shows that he had a thinking head, and was not a mere wild sentimentalist. For instance, he wanted the war parties (called) in before he started unarmed upon his mission of peace. He wanted the best chance of success—not a half-chance. And he was very willing to have help; and so, high rewards were advertised, for any who would go unarmed with him. This opportunity was declined. Robinson persuaded some tamed natives of both sexes to go with him—a strong evidence of his persuasive powers, for those natives well knew that their destruction would be almost certain. As it turned out, they had to face death over and over again.

Robinson and his little party had a difficult undertaking upon their hands. They could not ride off, horseback, comfortably into the woods and call Leonidas and his 300 together for a talk and a treaty the following day; for

the wild men were not in a body; they were scattered, immense distances apart, over regions so desolate that even the birds could not make a living with the chances offered—scattered in groups of twenty, a dozen, half a dozen, even in groups of three. And the mission must go on foot. Mr. Bonwick furnishes a description of those horrible regions, whereby it will be seen that even fugitive gangs of the hardiest and choicest human devils the world has seen—the convicts set apart to people the "Hell of Macquarrie Harbor Station"—were never able, but once, to survive the horrors of a march through them, but starving and struggling, and fainting and failing, ate each other, and died:

"Onward, still onward, was the order of the indomitable Robinson. No one ignorant of the western country of Tasmania can form a correct idea of the traveling difficulties. While I was resident in Hobart Town, the Governor, Sir John Franklin, and his lady, undertook the western journey to Macquarrie Harbor, and suffered terribly. One man who assisted to carry her ladyship through the swamps, gave me his bitter experience of its miseries. Several were disabled for life. No wonder that but one party, escaping from Macquarrie Harbor convict settlement, arrived at the civilized region in safety. Men perished in the scrub, were lost in snow, or were devoured by their companions. This was the territory traversed by Mr. Robinson and his Black guides. All honor to his intrepidity, and their wonderful fidelity! When they had, in the depth of winter, to cross deep and rapid rivers, pass among mountains six thousand feet high, pierce dangerous thickets, and find food in a country forsaken even by birds, we can realize their hardships.

"After a frightful journey by Cradle Mountain, and over the lofty plateau of Middlesex Plains, the travelers experienced un wonted misery, and the circumstances called forth the best qualities of the noble little band. Mr. Robinson wrote afterwards to Mr. Secretary Burnett some details of this passage of horrors. In that letter, of Oct 2, 1834, he states that his Natives were very reluctant to go over the dreadful mountain passes; that 'for seven successive days we continued traveling over one solid body of snow;' that 'the snows were of incredible depth;' that 'the Natives were frequently up to their middle in snow.' But still the ill-clad, ill-fed, diseased, and way-worn men and women were sustained by the cheerful voice of their unconquerable friend, and responded most nobly to his call."

Mr. Bonwick says that Robinson's friendly capture of the Big River tribe remember, it was a whole tribe—"was by far the grandest feature of the war, and the crowning glory of his efforts." The word "war" was not well chosen, and is misleading. There was war still, but only the Blacks were conducting it—the Whites were holding off until Robinson could give his scheme a fair trial. I think that we are to understand that the friendly capture of that tribe was by far the most important thing, the highest in value, that happened during the whole thirty years of truceless hostilities; that it was a decisive thing, a peaceful Waterloo, the surrender of the native Napoleon and his dreaded forces, the happy ending of the long strife. For "that tribe was the terror of the colony," its chief "the Black Douglas of Bush households."

Robinson knew that these formidable people were lurking somewhere, in some remote corner of the hideous regions just described, and he and his unarmed little party started on a tedious and perilous hunt for them. At last, "there, under the shadows of the Frenchman's Cap, whose grim cone rose five thousand feet in the uninhabited westward interior," they were found. It was a serious moment. Robinson himself believed, for once, that his mission, successful until now, was to end here in failure, and that his own death-hour had struck.

The redoubtable chief stood in menacing attitude, with his eighteen-foot spear poised; his warriors stood massed at his back, armed for battle, their faces eloquent with their long-cherished loathing for white men. "They rattled their spears and shouted their war-cry." Their women were back of them, laden with supplies of weapons, and keeping their 150 eager dogs quiet until the chief should give the signal to fall on.

"I think we shall soon be in the resurrection," whispered a member of Robinson's little party.

"I think we shall," answered Robinson; then plucked up heart and began his persuasions—in the tribe's own dialect, which surprised and pleased the chief. Presently there was an interruption by the chief:

"Who are you?"

"We are gentlemen."

"Where are your guns?"

"We have none."

The warrior was astonished.

"Where your little guns?" (pistols).

"We have none."

A few minutes passed—in by—play—suspense—discussion among the tribesmen—Robinson's tamed squaws ventured to cross the line and begin persuasions upon the wild squaws. Then the chief stepped back "to confer with the old women—the real arbiters of savage war." Mr. Bonwick continues:

"As the fallen gladiator in the arena looks for the signal of life or death from the president of the amphitheatre, so waited our friends in anxious suspense while the conference continued. In a few minutes, before a word was uttered, the women of the tribe threw up their arms three times. This was the inviolable sign of peace! Down fell the spears. Forward, with a heavy sigh of relief, and upward glance of gratitude, came the friends of peace. The impulsive natives rushed forth with tears and cries, as each saw in the other's rank a loved one of the past.

"It was a jubilee of joy. A festival followed. And, while tears flowed at the recital of woe, a corrobory of pleasant laughter closed the eventful day."

In four years, without the spilling of a drop of blood, Robinson brought them all in, willing captives, and delivered them to the white governor, and ended the war which powder and bullets, and thousands of men to use them, had prosecuted without result since 1804.

Marsyas charming the wild beasts with his music—that is fable; but the miracle wrought by Robinson is fact. It is history—and authentic; and surely, there is nothing greater, nothing more reverence—compelling in the history of any country, ancient or modern.

And in memory of the greatest man Australasia ever developed or ever will develop, there is a stately monument to George Augustus Robinson, the Conciliator in—no, it is to another man, I forget his name.

However, Robertson's own generation honored him, and in manifesting it honored themselves. The Government gave him a money—reward and a thousand acres of land; and the people held mass—meetings and praised him and emphasized their praise with a large subscription of money.

A good dramatic situation; but the curtain fell on another:

"When this desperate tribe was thus captured, there was much surprise to find that the £30,000 of a little earlier day had been spent, and the whole population of the colony placed under arms, in contention with an opposing force of sixteen men with wooden spears! Yet such was the fact. The celebrated Big River tribe, that had been raised by European fears to a host, consisted of sixteen men, nine women, and one child. With a knowledge of the mischief done by these few, their wonderful marches and their widespread aggressions, their enemies cannot deny to them the attributes of courage and military tact. A Wallace might harass a large army with a small and determined band; but the contending parties were at least equal in arms and civilization. The Zulus who fought us in Africa, the Maories in New Zealand, the Arabs in the Soudan, were far better provided with weapons, more advanced in the science of war, and considerably more numerous, than the naked Tasmanians. Governor Arthur rightly termed them a noble race."

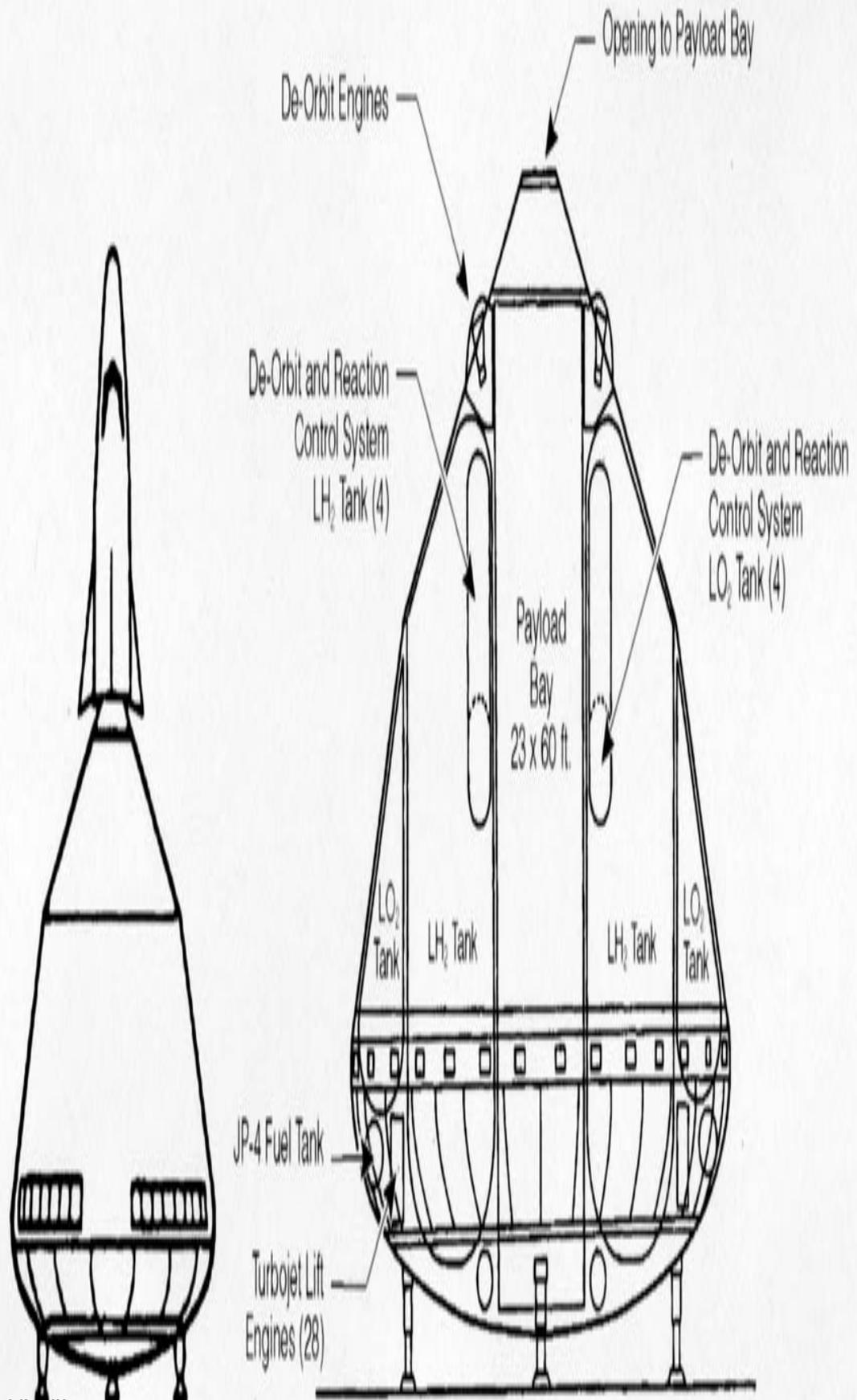
These were indeed wonderful people, the natives. They ought not to have been wasted. They should have been crossed with the Whites. It would have improved the Whites and done the Natives no harm.

### Following the Equator, Illustrated, v3

But the Natives were wasted, poor heroic wild creatures. They were gathered together in little settlements on neighboring islands, and paternally cared for by the Government, and instructed in religion, and deprived of tobacco, because the superintendent of the Sunday-school was not a smoker, and so considered smoking immoral.

The Natives were not used to clothes, and houses, and regular hours, and church, and school, and Sunday-school, and work, and the other misplaced persecutions of civilization, and they pined for their lost home and their wild free life. Too late they repented that they had traded that heaven for this hell. They sat homesick on their alien crags, and day by day gazed out through their tears over the sea with unappeasable longing toward the hazy bulk which was the specter of what had been their paradise; one by one their hearts broke and they died.

In a very few years nothing but a scant remnant remained alive. A handful lingered along into age. In 1864 the last man died, in 1876 the last woman died, and the Spartans of Australasia were extinct.



The Whites always mean well when they take human fish out of the ocean and try to make them dry and warm and happy and comfortable in a chicken coop; but the kindest-hearted white man can always be depended on to prove himself inadequate when he deals with savages. He cannot turn the situation around and imagine how he would like it to have a well-meaning savage transfer him from his house and his church and his clothes and his books and his choice food to a hideous wilderness of sand and rocks and snow, and ice and sleet and storm and blistering sun, with no shelter, no bed, no covering for his and his family's naked bodies, and nothing to eat but snakes and grubs and 'offal. This would be a hell to him; and if he had any wisdom he would know that his own civilization is a hell to the savage—but he hasn't any, and has never had any; and for lack of it he shut up those poor natives in the unimaginable perdition of his civilization, committing his crime with the very best intentions, and saw those poor creatures waste away under his tortures; and gazed at it, vaguely troubled and sorrowful, and wondered what could be the matter with them. One is almost betrayed into respecting those criminals, they were so sincerely kind, and tender, and humane; and well-meaning.

*They* didn't know why those exiled savages faded away, and they did their honest best to reason it out. And one man, in a like case in New South Wales, did reason it out and arrive at a solution:

*"It is from the wrath of God, which is revealed from heaven against cold ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."*

That settles it.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

*Let us be thankful for the fools. But for them the rest of us could not succeed.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

The aphorism does really seem true: "Given the Circumstances, the Man will appear." But the man musn't appear ahead of time, or it will spoil everything. In Robinson's case the Moment had been approaching for a quarter of a century—and meantime the future Conciliator was tranquilly laying bricks in Hobart. When all other means had failed, the Moment had arrived, and the Bricklayer put down his trowel and came forward. Earlier he would have been jeered back to his trowel again. It reminds me of a tale that was told me by a Kentuckian on the train when we were crossing Montana. He said the tale was current in Louisville years ago. He thought it had been in print, but could not remember. At any rate, in substance it was this, as nearly as I can call it back to mind.

A few years before the outbreak of the Civil War it began to appear that Memphis, Tennessee, was going to be a great tobacco entrepot—the wise could see the signs of it. At that time Memphis had a wharf boat, of course. There was a paved sloping wharf, for the accommodation of freight, but the steamers landed on the outside of the wharfboat, and all loading and unloading was done across it, between steamer and shore. A number of wharfboat clerks were needed, and part of the time, every day, they were very busy, and part of the time tediously idle. They were boiling over with youth and spirits, and they had to make the intervals of idleness endurable in some way; and as a rule, they did it by contriving practical jokes and playing them upon each other.

The favorite butt for the jokes was Ed Jackson, because he played none himself, and was easy game for other people's—for he always believed whatever was told him.

One day he told the others his scheme for his holiday. He was not going fishing or hunting this time—no, he had thought out a better plan. Out of his \$40 a month he had saved enough for his purpose, in an economical way, and he was going to have a look at New York.

It was a great and surprising idea. It meant travel immense travel—in those days it meant seeing the world; it was the equivalent of a voyage around it in ours. At first the other youths thought his mind was affected, but when they found that he was in earnest, the next thing to be thought of was, what sort of opportunity this venture might afford for a practical joke.

The young men studied over the matter, then held a secret consultation and made a plan. The idea was, that one of the conspirators should offer Ed a letter of introduction to Commodore Vanderbilt, and trick him into delivering it. It would be easy to do this. But what would Ed do when he got back to Memphis? That was a serious matter. He was good-hearted, and had always taken the jokes patiently; but they had been jokes which did not humiliate him, did not bring him to shame; whereas, this would be a cruel one in that way, and to play it was to meddle with fire; for with all his good nature, Ed was a Southerner—and the English of that was, that when he came back he would kill as many of the conspirators as he could before falling himself. However, the chances must be taken—it wouldn't do to waste such a joke as that.

So the letter was prepared with great care and elaboration. It was signed Alfred Fairchild, and was written in an easy and friendly spirit. It stated that the bearer was the bosom friend of the writer's son, and was of good parts and sterling character, and it begged the Commodore to be kind to the young stranger for the writer's sake. It went on to say, "You may have forgotten me, in this long stretch of time, but you will easily call me back out of your boyhood memories when I remind you of how we robbed old Stevenson's orchard that night; and how, while he was chasing down the road after us, we cut across the field and doubled back and sold his own apples to his own cook for a hat—full of doughnuts; and the time that we——" and so forth and so on, bringing in names of imaginary comrades, and detailing all sorts of wild and absurd and, of course, wholly imaginary schoolboy pranks

and adventures, but putting them into lively and telling shape.

With all gravity Ed was asked if he would like to have a letter to Commodore Vanderbilt, the great millionaire. It was expected that the question would astonish Ed, and it did.

"What? Do you know that extraordinary man?"

"No; but my father does. They were schoolboys together. And if you like, I'll write and ask father. I know he'll be glad to give it to you for my sake."

Ed could not find words capable of expressing his gratitude and delight. The three days passed, and the letter was put into his hands. He started on his trip, still pouring out his thanks while he shook good-bye all around. And when he was out of sight his comrades let fly their laughter in a storm of happy satisfaction—and then quieted down, and were less happy, less satisfied. For the old doubts as to the wisdom of this deception began to intrude again.

Arrived in New York, Ed found his way to Commodore Vanderbilt's business quarters, and was ushered into a large anteroom, where a score of people were patiently awaiting their turn for a two-minute interview with the millionaire in his private office. A servant asked for Ed's card, and got the letter instead. Ed was sent for a moment later, and found Mr. Vanderbilt alone, with the letter—open—in his hand.

"Pray sit down, Mr. —er—"

"Jackson."

"Ah—sit down, Mr. Jackson. By the opening sentences it seems to be a letter from an old friend. Allow me—I will run my eye through it. He says he says—why, who is it?" He turned the sheet and found the signature. "Alfred Fairchild—hm—Fairchild—I don't recall the name. But that is nothing—a thousand names have gone from me. He says—he says—hm—hmoh, dear, but it's good! Oh, it's rare! I don't quite remember it, but I seem to it'll all come back to me presently. He says —he says—hm—hm—oh, but that was a game! Oh, spl—endid! How it carries me back! It's all dim, of course it's a long time ago—and the names—some of the names are wavery and indistinct—but sho', I know it happened—I can feel it! and lord, how it warms my heart, and brings back my lost youth! Well, well, well, I've got to come back into this work—a-day world now—business presses and people are waiting—I'll keep the rest for bed to-night, and live my youth over again. And you'll thank Fairchild for me when you see him—I used to call him Alf, I think —and you'll give him my gratitude for—what this letter has done for the tired spirit of a hard-worked man; and tell him there isn't anything that I can do for him or any friend of his that I won't do. And as for you, my lad, you are my guest; you can't stop at any hotel in New York. Sit. where you are a little while, till I get through with these people, then we'll go home. I'll take care of you, my boy—make yourself easy as to that."

Ed stayed a week, and had an immense time—and never suspected that the Commodore's shrewd eye was on him, and that he was daily being weighed and measured and analyzed and tried and tested.

Yes, he had an immense time; and never wrote home, but saved it all up to tell when he should get back. Twice, with proper modesty and decency, he proposed to end his visit, but the Commodore said, "No—wait; leave it to me; I'll tell you when to go."

In those days the Commodore was making some of those vast combinations of his—consolidations of warring odds and ends of railroads into harmonious systems, and concentrations of floating and rudderless commerce in effective centers—and among other things his farseeing eye had detected the convergence of that huge tobacco-commerce, already spoken of, toward Memphis, and he had resolved to set his grasp upon it and make it his own.

The week came to an end. Then the Commodore said:

"Now you can start home. But first we will have some more talk about that tobacco matter. I know you now. I know your abilities as well as you know them yourself—perhaps better. You understand that tobacco matter; you understand that I am going to take possession of it, and you also understand the plans which I have matured for doing it. What I want is a man who knows my mind, and is qualified to represent me in Memphis, and be in supreme command of that important business—and I appoint you."

"Me!"

"Yes. Your salary will be high—of course—for you are representing me. Later you will earn increases of it, and will get them. You will need a small army of assistants; choose them yourself—and carefully. Take no man for friendship's sake; but, all things being equal, take the man you know, take your friend, in preference to the

stranger." After some further talk under this head, the Commodore said:

"Good-bye, my boy, and thank Alf for me, for sending you to me."

When Ed reached Memphis he rushed down to the wharf in a fever to tell his great news and thank the boys over and over again for thinking to give him the letter to Mr. Vanderbilt. It happened to be one of those idle times. Blazing hot noonday, and no sign of life on the wharf. But as Ed threaded his way among the freight piles, he saw a white linen figure stretched in slumber upon a pile of grain-sacks under an awning, and said to himself, "That's one of them," and hastened his step; next, he said, "It's Charley—it's Fairchild good"; and the next moment laid an affectionate hand on the sleeper's shoulder. The eyes opened lazily, took one glance, the face blanched, the form whirled itself from the sack-pile, and in an instant Ed was alone and Fairchild was flying for the wharf-boat like the wind!

Ed was dazed, stupefied. Was Fairchild crazy? What could be the meaning of this? He started slow and dreamily down toward the wharf-boat; turned the corner of a freight-pile and came suddenly upon two of the boys. They were lightly laughing over some pleasant matter; they heard his step, and glanced up just as he discovered them; the laugh died abruptly; and before Ed could speak they were off, and sailing over barrels and bales like hunted deer. Again Ed was paralyzed. Had the boys all gone mad? What could be the explanation of this extraordinary conduct? And so, dreaming along, he reached the wharf-boat, and stepped aboard nothing but silence there, and vacancy. He crossed the deck, turned the corner to go down the outer guard, heard a fervent—

"O lord!" and saw a white linen form plunge overboard.



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The youth came up coughing and strangling, and cried out—

"Go 'way from here! You let me alone. I didn't do it, I swear I didn't!"

"Didn't do what?"

"Give you the——"

"Never mind what you didn't do—come out of that! What makes you all act so? What have I done?"

"You? Why you haven't done anything. But——"

"Well, then, what have you got against me? What do you all treat me so for?"

"I—er—but haven't you got anything against us?"

"Of course not. What put such a thing into your head?"

"Honor bright—you haven't?"

"Honor bright."

"Swear it!"

"I don't know what in the world you mean, but I swear it, anyway."

"And you'll shake hands with me?"

"Goodness knows I'll be glad to! Why, I'm just starving to shake hands with somebody!"

The swimmer muttered, "Hang him, he smelt a rat and never delivered the letter!—but it's all right, I'm not going to fetch up the subject." And he crawled out and came dripping and draining to shake hands. First one and then another of the conspirators showed up cautiously—armed to the teeth—took in the amicable situation, then ventured warily forward and joined the love-feast.

And to Ed's eager inquiry as to what made them act as they had been acting, they answered evasively, and pretended that they had put it up as a joke, to see what he would do. It was the best explanation they could invent at such short notice. And each said to himself, "He never delivered that letter, and the joke is on us, if he only knew it or we were dull enough to come out and tell."

Then, of course, they wanted to know all about the trip; and he said—

"Come right up on the boiler deck and order the drinks it's my treat. I'm going to tell you all about it. And to-night it's my treat again— and we'll have oysters and a time!"

When the drinks were brought and cigars lighted, Ed said:

"Well, when, I delivered the letter to Mr. Vanderbilt——"

"Great Scott!"

"Gracious, how you scared me. What's the matter?"

"Oh—er—nothing. Nothing—it was a tack in the chair-seat," said one.

"But you all said it. However, no matter. When I delivered the letter——"

"Did you deliver it?" And they looked at each other as people might who thought that maybe they were dreaming.

Then they settled to listening; and as the story deepened and its marvels grew, the amazement of it made them dumb, and the interest of it took their breath. They hardly uttered a whisper during two hours, but sat like petrifications and drank in the immortal romance. At last the tale was ended, and Ed said—

"And it's all owing to you, boys, and you'll never find me ungrateful— bless your hearts, the best friends a fellow ever had! You'll all have places; I want every one of you. I know you—I know you 'by the back,' as the gamblers say. You're jokers, and all that, but you're sterling, with the hallmark on. And Charley Fairchild, you shall be my first assistant and right hand, because of your first-class ability, and because you got me the letter, and for your father's sake who wrote it for me, and to please Mr. Vanderbilt, who said it would! And here's to that great man—drink hearty!"

Yes, when the Moment comes, the Man appears—even if he is a thousand miles away, and has to be discovered by a practical joke.



## CHAPTER XXVIX.

*When people do not respect us we are sharply offended; yet deep down in his private heart no man much respects himself.*

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Necessarily, the human interest is the first interest in the log-book of any country. The annals of Tasmania, in whose shadow we were sailing, are lurid with that feature. Tasmania was a convict-dump, in old times; this has been indicated in the account of the Conciliator, where reference is made to vain attempts of desperate convicts to win to permanent freedom, after escaping from Macquarrie Harbor and the "Gates of Hell." In the early days Tasmania had a great population of convicts, of both sexes and all ages, and a bitter hard life they had. In one spot there was a settlement of juvenile convicts—children—who had been sent thither from their home and their friends on the other side of the globe to expiate their "crimes."



In due course our ship entered the estuary called the Derwent, at whose head stands Hobart, the capital of Tasmania. The Derwent's shores furnish scenery of an interesting sort. The historian Laurie, whose book, "The Story of Australasia," is just out, invoices its features with considerable truth and intemperance: "The marvelous picturesqueness of every point of view, combined with the clear balmy atmosphere and the transparency of the ocean depths, must have delighted and deeply impressed" the early explorers. "If the rock-bound coasts, sullen, defiant, and lowering, seemed uninviting, these were occasionally broken into charmingly alluring coves floored with golden sand, clad with evergreen shrubbery, and adorned with every variety of indigenous wattle, she-oak, wild flower, and fern, from the delicately graceful 'maiden-hair' to the palm-like 'old man'; while the majestic gum-tree, clean and smooth as the mast of 'some tall admiral' pierces the clear air to the height of 230 feet or more."

It looked so to me. "Coasting along Tasman's Peninsula, what a shock of pleasant wonder must have struck the early mariner on suddenly sighting Cape Pillar, with its cluster of black-ribbed basaltic columns rising to a height of 900 feet, the hydra head wreathed in a turban of fleecy cloud, the base lashed by jealous waves spouting angry fountains of foam."

That is well enough, but I did not suppose those snags were 900 feet high. Still they were a very fine show. They stood boldly out by themselves, and made a fascinatingly odd spectacle. But there was nothing about their appearance to suggest the heads of a hydra. They looked like a row of lofty slabs with their upper ends tapered to the shape of a carving-knife point; in fact, the early voyager, ignorant of their great height, might have mistaken them for a rusty old rank of piles that had sagged this way and that out of the perpendicular.

The Peninsula is lofty, rocky, and densely clothed with scrub, or brush, or both. It is joined to the main by a low neck. At this junction was formerly a convict station called Port Arthur—a place hard to escape from. Behind it was the wilderness of scrub, in which a fugitive would soon starve; in front was the narrow neck, with a cordon of chained dogs across it, and a line of lanterns, and a fence of living guards, armed. We saw the place as we swept by—that is, we had a glimpse of what we were told was the entrance to Port Arthur. The glimpse was worth something, as a remembrancer, but that was all.

The voyage thence up the Derwent Frith displays a grand succession of fairy visions, in its entire length elsewhere unequaled. In gliding over the deep blue sea studded with lovely islets luxuriant to the water's edge, one is at a loss which scene to choose for contemplation and to admire most. When the Huon and Bruni have been passed, there seems no possible chance of a rival; but suddenly Mount Wellington, massive and noble like his brother Etna, literally heaves in sight, sternly guarded on either hand by Mounts Nelson and Rumney; presently we arrive at Sullivan's Cove—Hobart!

It is an attractive town. It sits on low hills that slope to the harbor—a harbor that looks like a river, and is as smooth as one. Its still surface is pictured with dainty reflections of boats and grassy banks and luxuriant foliage. Back of the town rise highlands that are clothed in woodland loveliness, and over the way is that noble mountain, Wellington, a stately bulk, a most majestic pile. How beautiful is the whole region, for form, and grouping, and opulence, and freshness of foliage, and variety of color, and grace and shapeliness of the hills, the capes, the, promontories; and then, the splendor of the sunlight, the dim rich distances, the charm of the water-glimpses! And it was in this paradise that the yellow-liveried convicts were landed, and the Corps-bandits quartered, and the wanton slaughter of the kangaroo-chasing black innocents consummated on that autumn day in May, in the brutish old time. It was all out of keeping with the place, a sort of bringing of heaven and hell together.

The remembrance of this paradise reminds me that it was at Hobart that we struck the head of the procession of Junior Englishes. We were to encounter other sections of it in New Zealand, presently, and others later in Natal. Wherever the exiled Englishman can find in his new home resemblances to his old one, he is touched to the marrow of his being; the love that is in his heart inspires his imagination, and these allied forces transfigure those resemblances into authentic duplicates of the revered originals. It is beautiful, the feeling which works this

enchantment, and it compels one's homage; compels it, and also compels one's assent—compels it always—even when, as happens sometimes, one does not see the resemblances as clearly as does the exile who is pointing them out.

The resemblances do exist, it is quite true; and often they cunningly approximate the originals—but after all, in the matter of certain physical patent rights there is only one England. Now that I have sampled the globe, I am not in doubt. There is a beauty of Switzerland, and it is repeated in the glaciers and snowy ranges of many parts of the earth; there is a beauty of the fiord, and it is repeated in New Zealand and Alaska; there is a beauty of Hawaii, and it is repeated in ten thousand islands of the Southern seas; there is a beauty of the prairie and the plain, and it is repeated here and there in the earth; each of these is worshipful, each is perfect in its way, yet holds no monopoly of its beauty; but that beauty which is England is alone—it has no duplicate.

It is made up of very simple details—just grass, and trees, and shrubs, and roads, and hedges, and gardens, and houses, and vines, and churches, and castles, and here and there a ruin—and over it all a mellow dream—haze of history. But its beauty is incomparable, and all its own.

Hobart has a peculiarity—it is the neatest town that the sun shines on; and I incline to believe that it is also the cleanest. However that may be, its supremacy in neatness is not to be questioned. There cannot be another town in the world that has no shabby exteriors; no rickety gates and fences, no neglected houses crumbling to ruin, no crazy and unsightly sheds, no weed-grown front-yards of the poor, no back-yards littered with tin cans and old boots and empty bottles, no rubbish in the gutters, no clutter on the sidewalks, no outer-borders fraying out into dirty lanes and tin-patched huts. No, in Hobart all the aspects are tidy, and all a comfort to the eye; the modestest cottage looks combed and brushed, and has its vines, its flowers, its neat fence, its neat gate, its comely cat asleep on the window ledge.

We had a glimpse of the museum, by courtesy of the American gentleman who is curator of it. It has samples of half-a-dozen different kinds of marsupials—[A marsupial is a plantigrade vertebrate whose specialty is its pocket. In some countries it is extinct, in the others it is rare. The first American marsupials were Stephen Girard, Mr. Aston and the opossum; the principal marsupials of the Southern Hemisphere are Mr. Rhodes, and the kangaroo. I, myself, am the latest marsupial. Also, I might boast that I have the largest pocket of them all. But there is nothing in that.]—one, the "Tasmanian devil;" that is, I think he was one of them. And there was a fish with lungs. When the water dries up it can live in the mud. Most curious of all was a parrot that kills sheep. On one great sheep-run this bird killed a thousand sheep in a whole year. He doesn't want the whole sheep, but only the kidney-fat. This restricted taste makes him an expensive bird to support. To get the fat he drives his beak in and rips it out; the wound is mortal. This parrot furnishes a notable example of evolution brought about by changed conditions. When the sheep culture was introduced, it presently brought famine to the parrot by exterminating a kind of grub which had always thitherto been the parrot's diet. The miseries of hunger made the bird willing to eat raw flesh, since it could get no other food, and it began to pick remnants of meat from sheep skins hung out on the fences to dry. It soon came to prefer sheep meat to any other food, and by and by it came to prefer the kidney-fat to any other detail of the sheep. The parrot's bill was not well shaped for digging out the fat, but Nature fixed that matter; she altered the bill's shape, and now the parrot can dig out kidney-fat better than the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or anybody else, for that matter—even an Admiral.

And there was another curiosity—quite a stunning one, I thought: Arrow-heads and knives just like those which Primeval Man made out of flint, and thought he had done such a wonderful thing—yes, and has been humored and coddled in that superstition by this age of admiring scientists until there is probably no living with him in the other world by now. Yet here is his finest and nicest work exactly duplicated in our day; and by people who have never heard of him or his works: by aborigines who lived in the islands of these seas, within our time. And they not only duplicated those works of art but did it in the brittlest and most treacherous of substances—glass: made them out of old brandy bottles flung out of the British camps; millions of tons of them. It is time for Primeval Man to make a little less noise, now. He has had his day. He is not what he used to be. We had a drive through a bloomy and odorous fairy-land, to the Refuge for the Indigent—a spacious and comfortable home, with hospitals, etc., for both sexes. There was a crowd in there, of the oldest people I have ever seen. It was like being suddenly set down in a new world—a weird world where Youth has never been, a world sacred to Age, and bowed forms, and wrinkles. Out of the 359 persons present, 223, were ex-convicts, and could have told stirring tales, no doubt, if they had been minded to talk; 42 of the 359 were past 80, and several were close upon

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90; the average age at death there is 76 years. As for me, I have no use for that place; it is too healthy. Seventy is old enough—after that, there is too much risk. Youth and gaiety might vanish, any day—and then, what is left? Death in life; death without its privileges, death without its benefits. There were 185 women in that Refuge, and 81 of them were ex-convicts.

The steamer disappointed us. Instead of making a long visit at Hobart, as usual, she made a short one. So we got but a glimpse of Tasmania, and then moved on.

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