CHAPTER XXIX.

EXECUTIONS:

THE FIRST IN PORT PHILIP.—20TH JANUARY, 1842.

SYNOPSIS—Execution of Two Aboriginals, "Bob" and "Jack."—Jepps, Ellis and Fogarty, Bushrangers.—"Roger," Murderer of Mr. Codd.—Conwell, Murderer of Edward Martin.—"Florian" and "Buddy."—John Healey, Murderer of James Ritchie.—Dauncey the "Penrith" Murderer.—Kennedy for Wife Murder.—Banqueting the "Gentlemen Volunteers."—What Became of the "Fighting Five."—Melbourne Executioners.—

OB" and "Jack," the Vandemonian Aborigines, convicted of the murder of two sailors at Western Port, were the first persons hanged in Melbourne, and their execution was eagerly looked for by the thousands of persons who felt a morbid curiosity to witness the departure of the wretches out of the world. After their condemnation and removal to the condemned cell, the culprits regarded their position with levity, and were confident that not only would the extreme sentence be mitigated, but that they would be pardoned altogether, and permitted to return to Van Diemen's Land. Their minds seemed possessed by a delirious anticipation of the pleasure they would experience in going home to the Old Hunting Grounds of their race, and the zest with which they would resume those habits and customs of aboriginal life over the water, which they had voluntarily abandoned years before.

But when the day was fixed for their execution, and they became sensible of the fact, all their castle-building was knocked to pieces—the fairy fabrics constructed by the imagination dissolved like mist, and the dark blank of impending death stunned them. "Bob" grew sulky and taciturn; confessed his guilt, but declared that the women had instigated the murder in vengeance for the death of some of their friends who, they said, had been killed at Port Arthur. Both were allowed to smoke in gaol, but on their last evening "Bob" knocked off his pipe, and refused to partake of food; whereas "Jack," on the other hand, grew positively jolly, and, so far from manifesting any diminution of appetite, disposed of a supper consisting of half a 4lb. loaf, with three pannikins of tea, and by way of promoting good digestion, laughed and joked immoderately after. His pipe was by no means neglected, and having puffed until he was tired, he handed the clay to "Bob," who refused it with a passionate wave of the hand, whereat "Jack" told him he was a fool, and might as well enjoy the good things of life to the end. The Rev. Mr. Thomson, the Church of England minister, passed a good portion of the night with them. "Bob" seemed much affected and contrite, weeping piteously at intervals; but "Jack" was the impersonation of callous indifference. At five o'clock on the morning of the execution, breakfast was served, and "Jack" devoured over 3lbs. of bread, washed down by two pannikins of tea, but "Bob" could eat nothing, though he drank a little. "Jack" next consoled himself with a long and last smoke, and during "his toilet" "Jack" laughed, snapped his fingers, and shouted "that he did not care a fig for anything." He said he was quite certain he was going to his father, to be happy with him kangaroo hunting over the sea. He also expressed a belief that he had three heads, viz.:—One for the gallows, another for the grave, and the third and best for Van Diemen's Land. At seven o'clock the Sherif and the Chaplain arrived, when Divine Service was held in the prison yard. At eight o'clock the prisoners were removed in a vehicle. Thousands of persons had congregated, and such was the jostling and confusion, that a party of mounted police in attendance had difficulty in clearing a way for the death cart, which moved slowly ahead, surrounded by the shouting, laughing multitude, to whom it appeared to be a fine morning's fun. There was no Private Execution Act then in force, and it was necessary that the hanging of criminals should be performed in public. There was no Hospital, Public Library, or Court House to break the wild open country north of Lonsdale Street, and the walls of the intended New Gaol were only up to the height of some ten or twelve feet.
The place of execution was fixed on a green eminence some yards north-west of the western extremity of the present Old Gaol, about where the modern wing terminates, near Bowen Street. Approaching the spot from Swanston Street there was a gentle acclivity, the ground was grassy, and not unlike a forest in the commencement of partial reclamation from original savagery, studded with large trees, and presenting to the townspeople, in the inspiring freshness of the infant day, a prospect now looked for in vain. On this occasion there was shocking mismanagement in the construction of the scaffold, which was a kind of narrow shaky stage, consisting of two stout uprights sunk in the ground about twelve feet apart, and to the top of each was nailed a beam, round which the ropes were twisted. Beneath, at a height of half-a-dozen feet, an eighteen-inch planking of wood was extended from each upright, and in the centre, not six feet long, was the drop, i.e., a portion of plank working on a hinge at one end and sustained by several bricks and a piece of quartering at the other. Around the quartering was looped a piece of stout cordage, the other extremity of which was (on a signal from the hangman) to be pulled by a prisoner of the Crown, stationed close by for the purpose. When the cord was drawn, the quartering and bricks were supposed to come away, the drop fall, and the hanging was done. It was a "killing" contrivance of the roughest and most inhuman kind, and in its design was not unlike the trapping of birds in snowy weather in the Mother-country a century ago. This remarkable invention was reached by two short ladders as unstable as itself, and when mounted barely afforded standing room for the criminals and the executioner. Nothing could well be imagined more scanty and insecure; in fact, it was only a degree removed from the proverbial "bucket," the kicking of which is supposed to have constituted the original form of English hanging.

As the procession (which could not be called a melancholy one) slowly advanced, it was swelled at every few yards by groups of open-mouthed sight-seers, breathless for fear they should be too late. It passed by way of Collins, William, Lonsdale, and Swanston Streets, through the now Hospital and Public Library grounds to the gallows hill, where there were over 6,000 persons congregated. Early as was the hour, the town had not only turned out its inhabitants en masse, but the residents for a circuit of several miles in the country poured in as if to a carnival. It was the Christmas holiday tide, and there was consequently a large sprinkling of gay young bucks of bushmen, well mounted, and got up in the fashionable style of the period, in buff breeches and top boots, or strapped trousers, as excited and jovial as if mustering in a hunting field, or on a racecourse. The most prominent figure in the whole assemblage was a well-known publican named Byng—a tall, well-developed, Yankee blackfellow, who was dressed in the latest style, and astride a well-appointed prancing white horse. He was, apparently, much engrossed in the various turns of the tragedy, and from the consequential manner in which he bore himself was fully conscious of, and seemingly enjoyed, the short-lived notoriety of which he was the object. The part-built walls of the gaol, and the proximate gum trees afforded plenty of gratuitous viewing accommodation; but the trees were almost exclusively appropriated by a horde of Aboriginals, who gathered in from the neighbouring tribes, anxious to see the mode in which the white fellows rid themselves of obnoxious coolies. Every bough had one or more of these coloured people billeted in its foliage; and the swarm of big, dark, curly heads popping out from among the branches, made an European almost believe that the birds had been dispossessed of their patrimonial inheritances, and supplanted by a race of huge black apes. The black spectators, however, behaved with decorum, and so far presented an example which might have been advantageously followed by the "white barbarians," who shouted and yelled and vented their gratification in explosions of uproarious merriment, as if they were participating in the greatest sport. Old women and young, with children of all ages, to the babies in arms, were there. When the culprits arrived the Chaplain went through a twenty-minute farce of prayer reading, undeterred by frequent interruptions and loudly-expressed hints "to cut it short." During the offering of the prayers "Bob" never ceased crying; but "Jack" remained stolid. They were then pinioned, and "Jack" bounded the scaffold with difficulty by reason of his fastened arms. However, after some struggling, he got on to the staging and stood under one of the ropes. The executioner, who followed, proceeded to adjust the noose round his neck, during which he never winced, but asked that the cap might not be pulled over his eyes, "as he wished to look at "Bob." All this time "Bob" remained shaking below and bowing loudly. He shook hands with several
persons near him, and then like a man walking in his sleep, when he reached the foot of the ladder, stumbled, and was helpless to go further. Two policemen lent him a hand, and the hangman from above assisted; but even then he fell twice, stupefied with terror. When the executioner and the two criminals were on the platform any movement on the part of either of the three might pitch one of them overboard, and the wonder was that when the drop fell the hangman did not go down unhanged with the others. On being placed beside his companion, "Bob" was seized with a fit of shivering, and the executioner losing no time in giving the finishing touch to his arrangements, at last the ropes were secured, and the white caps pulled down over the black faces. The chaplain underneath had been reading the burial service, and when he pronounced the well-known words, "In the midst of life we are in death," the hangman signalled to the puller below, and the drop fell, but a horrible scene of strangulation followed. The ligature round the brick and timber support when tugged at, so worked that whilst the bricks were displaced the piece of wood settled obliquely, causing the "drop" to descend only half-way, and thus the two poor wretches got jammed, and twisted and writhed convulsively in a manner that horrified even the most hardened, until a bystander had the presence of mind to knock away the quartering, the removal of the obstruction clearing the fall. "Jack" died instantaneously, but "Bob" kept on struggling for some minutes longer. Loud and long were the execrations vented upon the botching hangman (though he was not so much to blame), who only "grinned horribly a ghastly smile" in reply, and many of the women, who were as loquacious as chattering monkeys before, now changed their tune and got up a cry, which, for loudness at all events, would do no discredit to a full chorus of demented Banshees. The dead bodies remained suspended for an hour, the period prescribed by law, when they were cut down, placed in shells, and sent off, to be interred close by, but outside the cemetery, in a corner of the now Victoria Market. For a whole hour, as an after-piece to the tragedy, most of the large crowd remained, and then dispersed, the men to have a "nip" and the women to "beer" or gossip over the morning's performance. For the disgusting clumsiness of the execution the Clerk of Works was responsible, and deserved more severe treatment than a mere reprimand. It would, in fact, have been better if he had simply introduced the mode adopted at Tyburn in the era of Jack Sheppard—slung the halters from the bough of a tree, beneath which the cart could be drawn up, and then, when the noosing was completed, the vehicle to quickly move off, and all would soon be over. The executioner, who had had no previous experience in the "turning-off" way, was also most inefficient and awkward with his work. This official was a prisoner of the Crown, named Davies, serving a sentence for life, and was chosen from half-a-dozen "applicants." The appointment was restricted to the convicts in the gaol, and the remuneration was a ticket-of-leave and a £10 note. That the two malefactors well deserved hanging there could be no doubt, for during the six weeks preceding the murder, they had committed a dozen during robberies, and dangerously wounded two or three white men in the Western Port district.

The Bushrangers Jepp, Ellis, and Fogarty.—28th June, 1842.

During the interval between the condemnation and execution of these three bushranging desperadoes, Melbourne ran almost literally hero-mad; and the air, so to speak, rang with the praises of the five gallant volunteers who so bravely brought them to justice. One of them was then entangled in the Insolvency Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court; and if it had been possible to take a plebiscitum, his universal "whitewashing" would have been voted nem. con. Gourlay, another, was out on bail to stand his trial for obstructing the police in the discharge of their duty at the recently held races; but the Crown Prosecutor declared in open Court that he could not find it in his heart to file an information against so brave a traverser; and the Judge approved of the nolle prosequi! A public meeting was held to express the sense of the community regarding the event, at which it was decided to present the volunteers with an address, and a case of pistols each, as well as to entertain them at a public dinner. To all this no grateful or reasonable person could offer any objection. But the thing was carried too far; for, whilst the condemned criminals were alive and waiting their doomsway, what appeared to be an outrage on decency and humanity, was committed by the convivial gathering in question, of which a detailed notice appears elsewhere in this chapter.
When the prisoners were returned to the gaol, after sentence was passed, Jepps and Ellis were attended by the Revs. A. C. Thomson and James Forbes, the Episcopalian and Presbyterian ministers, to whose respective religious persuasions the two convicts belonged; Fogarty, as a Roman Catholic, was looked after by Father Stevens, the then priest at St. Francis'. The culprits became very penitent, and sent to Mr. Fowler, one of their captors, asking him to visit them. He did so, and when they saw him they dropped on their knees and asked his forgiveness, which he freely gave, and kindly shook hands with them on leaving. At one of the clerical interviews it transpired that only that their career had been so shortened it was their intention to have murdered the Resident Judge. Why or wherefore they had resolved on the assassination they could not say; but they had talked it over amongst themselves, and the Judge's fate was sealed. He resided at Heidelberg, and was always punctually in town at a certain hour on every Monday morning. This they knew, and it was their purpose to have watched for and shot him whilst crossing the Merri Creek. The violent death he had so providentially escaped terribly scared Judge Willis, and he could not rest until he had interviewed the prisoners. This he did accordingly, and in the presence of the other two, Ellis confessed that what had been stated had been settled upon, but that Jepps, though finally acquiescing, was at first strongly opposed to the killing of the Judge. This had such an effect upon the intended victim, that if there had been sufficient time to have communicated with the Executive in Sydney, he would have sought to obtain a commutation of the extreme penalty on Jepps; but there was neither railway nor telegraph inter-communication to delay or countermand the issue of the death warrants, and the Judge was constrained to let the law take its course.

The Overland Mail at length arrived with the official fiat that the prisoners were to be hanged on the 28th June.

The place and appliances of the execution were somewhat similar to those already recorded, except that the stage or planking was larger and more firmly secured.

The Rev. Mr. Thomson administered the Sacrament to Jepps and Ellis, whilst Father Stevens attended Fogarty in another room. When the Sheriff (Mr. Raymond) made his appearance, each prisoner was taken separately into the prison yard and his fetters struck off. He was then handcuffed and capped, but not pinioned, and brought back to the cell. Jepps and Ellis went through this ordeal firmly; but Fogarty burst out crying, and upon being spoken to, declared "he did not cry through fear of death, but after his friends at home." A large open cart, with three rough coffins placed in it, was driven up to the gaol door, and an escort of military and mounted police was drawn around. The door, which opened into Collins Street, was drawn back, and the three prisoners and four clergymen stepped out in Indian file; assisted by the gaoler and a turnkey, the prisoners mounted the cart, and each, with his back to the horse, sat down upon his coffin! This was very different treatment from that given to the black murderers, hanged some months before; for their coffins were not produced until after the bodies were cut down, and "Jack" and "Bob" were driven in a covered two-horse van on their last journey.

All being in readiness, the officer in charge of the soldiers sang out the word "March," and the "death march" accordingly commenced, moving up Collins Street and through Queen Street. A temporary halt was accidentally made, turning by what was then known as "Mortimer's Corner" into Lonsdale Street, when the prisoners became excited. The procession again moved on down Lonsdale Street, along Swanston Street to its destination. There were not less than seven thousand persons present, and, with shame be it spoken, a very large preponderance of women and children. "Smells" from the neighbourhood of the town, and from all the country for miles around; and, as before, well-mounted, smartly-dressed settlers, with top boots and cord breeches, cantered about as if out on some equestrian spree. It appeared like a great gala celebration instead of the punishment of three guilty fellow-creatures. Jepps and Ellis knelt down to prayer, with the reverend gentlemen attending them, whilst Father Stevens engaged in devotions with Fogarty. The prisoners were then brought together, and Jepps, supported by the arm of the Rev. Mr. Forbes, thus addressed the assemblage: "Fellow Christians! you see before you three young men in the prime of life and strength about to suffer on the scaffold for the crime of bushranging. I trust you will take warning by our untimely fate, and avoid those crimes which have brought us to this end. Good people, I most humbly beg your prayers to the Almighty on our behalf. I die in the faith of our salvation through the blood of our Divine Redeemer."
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

The handcuffs being removed, the culprits were pinioned by the executioner. Ellis was the first to ascend the scaffold, assisted by the Rev. Mr. Wilkinson; Jepps and Fogarty followed, with the aid of the Revs. Messrs Forbes and Stevens. When the three wretches were standing together under the gallows, they shook hands with each other, and Fogarty, looking at Jepps, exclaimed "Farewell! We shall soon meet in eternity." The executioner then shook hands twice with each of them, adjusted the ropes, and drew the caps down over their faces; and whilst operating upon Jepps, the latter said to him, "May God bless you and your poor soul." The Rev. Mr. Thomson proceeded with the reading of the burial service, and whilst he was doing so, the culprits appeared to suffer terribly. Ellis was hardly able to keep his feet, and took a slanting position, as if sustained by the rope; whilst Jepps gave convulsive starts, and opened and closed his hands several times. At length, the supports were knocked away, the drop fell, and the three men died without a struggle. After hanging for an hour, the bodies were cut down, placed in the coffins (but not before the hangman, with outrageous indecency, had pulled off their clothes), carted away, and interred in the malefactors' burial place close by, but outside, the fence of the Cemetery.

The executioner went through his work much more artistically than he did at the hanging of the blacks in January. His unskilfulness then was so universally censured as to make him fearful of losing the "appointment;" and in order to be more up to his work the next time, and hopeful of making his post a permanency, he procured the stray effigy of a human figure, and upon this model was in the habit of taking frequent private rehearsals. He got £20 and their clothes for dispatching the bushrangers.

"Jack" Williams, the leader (who was shot) and Fogarty were what were known as "Bounty Immigrants," i.e., free persons whose passage to the colony was paid for out of the Land Fund. Fogarty was the son of a farm labourer, and born in Templemore, County Tipperary, Ireland. He had lost his mother whilst a mere boy. It was said that he turned approver in a murder case at home, and after helping to hang his companions, and receiving his share of the "blood-money," found his way to the Antipodes. Arriving in the colony about a year before his death, he obtained employment with a well-known butcher, named Roe; but, becoming neglectful of his duties and irregular in his habits, he was discharged, took lodgings at Seymour's, and picked up with his companions in crime there. He was not quite 19 years of age.

Daniel Jepps was 27 years old, and a native of Boston, U.S.A. He was known as "Yankee Jack." For ten years he led a roving life in South Sea whaling vessels, was of highly respectable connections, and had received a liberal education. He was the captain of a merchantman, trading to the port of Sydney in 1841, and at the close of that year travelled overland to Melbourne, where he idled his time, dissipated his money, and ended by putting up at Seymour's.

Ellis, about the same age as Fogarty, was a native of Surrey in England, and came of poor, but honest, parents. At an early age he was compelled to look out for himself, and went to sea. Arriving in Sydney as cook of an immigrant ship about the time that Jepps was starting southward, Ellis, as if by some fatality, followed in his track, travelled also overland to Melbourne, and came to an anchorage at Seymour's, where he met, for the first time, his co criminals.

THE MURDERER OF MR. CODD.—5TH SEPTEMBER, 1842.

After the condemnation of Figara Alkepurata, alias "Roger," for the murder of Mr. Codd at Mount Rouse, he took the world easily enough, seemed chiefly interested in practically testing how much of the prison fare he could absorb. On the receipt of the warrant for his execution, Judge Willis, who was often disposed to be ultra sensational, hastened to the gaol, and personally communicated the fatal intelligence. He expected an aboriginal scene, but both himself and his news were received with a stoical impassibility disappointing to His Honor. "Roger" appeared quite unconcerned, so the Judge left highly offended, but could do nothing, for the blackfellow was beyond the reach of denunciations or "attachments." For some unexplained reason, "Roger," during the interval between sentence and punishment, was not placed in separate confinement, but was one of twenty-six unfortunate prisoners thrust into one apartment. As the day of his death drew nigh, "Roger" apparently withdrew into himself, and was often observed to retire into a corner of the room and shed tears. When asked why he did so, he merely shook
The Chronicles of Early Melbourne.

399

his head and said nothing. He persisted in denying any complicity in the murder, stating that it had been done by other blackfellows; of death he professed the utmost indifference, and his belief in futurity went to the extent of his being sure that immediately after death he would be transformed into a white man, and so would remain ever after. The few hours he passed in bed the night before the execution were frequently broken by short troubled snatches of sleep. He rose at 6 a.m., and was removed from the common cell to the reception room, where he was supplied with mutton chops, bread, and tea, of which he breakfasted sparingly. Mr. G. A. Robinson, chief of the Aboriginal Protectorate, was at the gaol at an early hour, and during an interview with him, the prisoner was very low-spirited, and sobbed frequently. At half-past seven he was taken to something like a butcher's chopping block in the yard, on which his fetters were knocked off, and during the operation he appeared quite composed. When apparelled, he beckoned Robinson to come to him, and declared it to be a great mistake to think that he killed Codd, for on the day of the murder he was away from the place, and so sick that he was not able to walk; also that some blackfellows who were allowed to see him in prison, had told him that the two men by whom Codd was murdered had since died; as for the white fellows they had plenty, but he had none, that Codd had brought his death on himself for being too free with the black "lubras," several of whom he had ill-used, and had killed many of the black men. He also said that he knew a fact that since Codd's death the lives of several of the natives had been taken. Robinson having remarked that he should soon see his ("Roger's") wife and children, and would tell them all about him, the prisoner's reply was, "Then there will be plenty of crying when you do." In a few words further conversation, Robinson alluded to the prisoner's brother, "Milk-and-Water," and "Roger" broke out in a loud fit of weeping. He was next taken back to the public room, and a white calico cap was with some difficulty put on through his offering resistance, and it being somewhat tight for his big head. He tried to speak to Robinson, but his tongue failed; and though the muscles of the mouth were seen to work, each word of his eyes lighted up in intense agitation. He was then handcuffed and conducted to the door, outside which a horse and cart were drawn up surrounded by an escort of mounted police and some of the soldiers from the barracks close by. There was no minister of religion in attendance, and prayers were consequently dispensed with. "Roger" was lifted out of the cart and the handcuffs were taken off and pinions on his arms substituted. Davies, the executioner, took him in charge and led him up the step-ladder by which the scaffold was reached; but just as the culprit was mounting the third step a loud authoritative voice sung out to them to halt. The hangman looked about in amazement, causing the criminal to seat himself, which he did without hesitation. It was rumoured that the hanging of the blackfellow was only a ruse to frighten him, to bring him to death's door as a frightful warning, and then let him off. Some of the wise-aces shook their heads, and whispered to their neighbours that they had known all along how it would be. It was all a "dodge"—the Government had never intended to have the black hanged, and all this make show was to frighten him; and after he had been so warned, he would be turned over to the Protectorate, and allowed by them after a little further detention to regain his tribe and play up his deadly tricks again on the white population. Aroused as this kind of yawning was, it spread rapidly through the assembled thousands, who did not at all like being humbugged in this way. They would not be bullied out of their morning's fun, and "they were daring if they'd stand such tom-foolery." The vox populi was about to burst out in and "they were darned if they'd stand such tom-foolery." The vox populi was about to burst out in and "they were darned if they'd stand such tom-foolery." The vox populi was about to burst out in and "they were darned if they'd stand such tom-foolery." They arrived puffing and blowing, and breathlessly tokened the proceedings to be resumed. The man could not halt. The hangman looked about in amazement, causing the criminal to seat himself, which he did without hesitation. It was rumoured that the hanging of the blackfellow was only a ruse to frighten him, to bring him to death's door as a frightful warning, and then let him off. Some of the wise-aces shook their heads, and whispered to their neighbours that they had known all along how it would be. It was all a "dodge"—the Government had never intended to have the black hanged, and all this make show was to frighten him; and after he had been so warned, he would be turned over to the Protectorate, and allowed by them after a little further detention to regain his tribe and play up his deadly tricks again on the white population. Aroused as this kind of yawning was, it spread rapidly through the assembled thousands, who did not at all like being humbugged in this way. They would not be bullied out of their morning's fun, and "they were daring if they'd stand such tom-foolery." The vox populi was about to burst out in and "they were darned if they'd stand such tom-foolery." They arrived puffing and blowing, and breathlessly tokened the proceedings to be resumed. The man could not be hanged if the Sheriff was not there; and now that the hangman's administrative superior was on the field "Jack Ketch" was free to continue his so strangely interrupted work. All this time "Roger" remained
sitting, and looking about him like a wild beast at bay. Who can tell what new-born hope was throbbing in his heart, or what were the feelings with which he beheld the grinning, excited, merry-looking faces circled round him. There being no further impediment, the criminal resumed his ascent of the ladder. The executioner, who was now an adept at his business, placed “Roger” under the beam, quickly arranged the rope and cap; after which the drop fell, and with three or four struggles, life was gone.

The deceased was reputed to be a great fighting man amongst his people. He was brother of the chief of the Jarcoota tribe, who occupied a large territory in the westward, about 100 miles from Portland. His own tribe had been once numerous and powerful, but was almost extinct through native warfare, infanticide, and disease. It was said that the Judge had recommended that the sentence should be carried out at the place where “Roger” had committed the murder, in the hope of striking terror into the blacks; but this was not done in consequence, as was believed, of the large expense that would be incurred thereby. The scaffold was in some measure an improvement upon the one employed for the execution of the bushrangers, but it was an unchangeable and repulsive looking object. The Executive of the time was very penurious in all matters appertaining to Port Phillip, and to save a paltry £5 note—the cost of removing it—it was actually alloyed to remain up for some time, until the Press indignantly denounced the standing eye-sore as an outrage upon public decency, and at length, through mere shame-sake, the Superintendent had it taken down.

For more than four years, though there were several convictions for murder, no criminal was executed, in consequence of the existence of some doubts as to the legality of the removal of Judge Willis. The difficulty was said to have originated with Judge Jeffcott, the immediate successor of the unbenched Judge; and, though it was also stated that the Judges and law officers at Sydney did not concur, there was yet a disinclination to carry out any extreme penalty of the law, pending the decision of the Privy Council on Willis’s appeal. Even the semblance of an obstacle was at length removed by time, and henceforth there was no restriction to the law taking its course, whenever the Executive thought it desirable to enforce it to the uttermost.

THE BUNINYONG MURDERER.—27TH JANUARY, 1847.

Jeremiah Connell, the convict condemned to die for the murder of Edward Martin, at Buninyong, bore his fate with much firmness. He entertained some wild hopes of a reprieve, as nearly all criminals do though there was no tangible reason why the prerogative of mercy should be interposed on his behalf so long as capital punishment for murder remained the law of the land. A memorial had been forwarded praying for a commutation; but the grounds for clemency were weak, and only non-compliance with its prayer could have been expected even by those who signed it. By a singular coincidence, the “Shamrock,” steamer, from Sydney, which brought the unfortunate man’s death warrant, also had as a passenger the official who was to give it effect. This was the first duly appointed executioner in the district, which had now a hangman provided for on the Estimates. His name was Jack Harris, and he was as great a scoundrel as hangmen usually are. The 27th January was fixed for the execution. After this Connell appeared doggedly indifferent as to how time went, or what happened, and more than once declared “he was quite content to die.” He attributed his crime to gross ill-treatment, which he averred he had received at the public-house where the murder occurred, and at other times would say that the murder scene was a complete blank in his memory, for he had not the least recollection of it. For the first time in the Province the execution was to be intra-mural, and the scaffold was erected in the north-western yard of the gaol, adjoining the treadmill—the drop on a level with the outer wall, so that the criminal would be wholly visible until “turned off,” and the moment the bolt was drawn about three-fourths of him would disappear, leaving only the white calicoed face, shoulders, and breast to be seen by the outsiders. The reason for changing the place of execution from outside to inside was said to be some vague apprehension in the mind of Captain Lonsdale (then Acting Superintendent during a temporary absence of Mr. Latrobe in Van Diemen’s Land) that a rescue was meditated. This notion was simply preposterous, as there never was any such intention. A very unpleasant episode occurred in the prison, arising out of this business. The
turkey, named Griffin, selected four prisoners who belonged to the same country and creed as the condemned culprit to assist in the construction of the gallows, and they refused to do so. Their names were Whelan, Crawley, Mitchell, and Connors (the latter an intimate friend of Connell's), and, on being brought before Mr. James Smith, the Visiting Magistrate, for disobedience, he sentenced them each to fifty lashes on the morning of (and just after) the execution. When this became known much public indignation was aroused; some of the newspapers inveighed bitterly against such harshness, and the punishment was remitted by Captain Lonsdale. I was afterwards informed, upon reliable authority, that the Acting Superintendent was influenced a good deal by the perusal of a letter signed "Verax," published in the *Herald*, and of which I was the writer.

In the early sunny morning groups of people began to wend their way towards the gaol, and at 7.30 a detachment of military marched up, and were stationed in the front or end yard, and all the available police were distributed outside. The prisoner professed the Roman Catholic faith, and was spiritually advised by the Rev. Father Therry. The prisoner, who passed a restless night, was up early, and partook sparingly of breakfast.

At half-past eight the Sheriff made his formal demand, and Connell accordingly went forth from the condemned cell, holding a crucifix in one hand, accompanied by Father Therry, and followed by the sheriff, gaoler, and several turnkeys. Travelling the corridor and into the yard, both priest and penitent recited a litany, and the manner of the latter was such as to apparently indicate much sincerity, whilst his responses were uttered with deep fervour. On coming into the presence of the apparatus of death he looked up, and, preceded by the hangman, moving firmly forward, unhelped and unshrinking, ascended the ladder on to the scaffold, and, followed by the priest and a turnkey, stood firmly under the waving rope. The moment he was seen by the human gathering outside he gazed mournfully upon the couple of thousand up looking human faces, and, turning to Father Therry, asked to have the crucifix suspended from his neck, which was done. Connell then, with eyes glancing high over the heads of the people out into the green forest, exclaimed, in an unaltering voice: "I never intended to kill the man, or any other man. I am more sorry for taking his life than for losing my own; I am sorry for it from the bottom of my heart, and I pray to God for a favourable judgment." He then kissed the turnkey (one Sullivan, who had been kind to him whilst in prison), and shook hands with priest and executioner. The rope was next placed round Connell's neck, and knotted, and, as the cap was being drawn over his head, the poor wretch endeavoured ineffectually with one of his shackled hands to button his coat. All this time his bearing evidenced nerve in a wonderful degree. The bolt was drawn, but as the drop fell the rope-knot shifted under the culprit's chin, and for some eight minutes he seemingly suffered excruciating torture during a process of death by strangulation. During the terrible struggle, his hard smothered efforts to breathe were distinctly heard by the dozen persons present in the treadmill-yard, and, had not the "fall" been a long one, the horrible spectacle would no doubt have been further protracted. The mishap was said to have been brought about by two causes, viz.:—Rope of the proper thickness was unobtainable in Melbourne, and consequently coir had to be used; and next, though the executioner had been an *attaché* of the Sheriff's department in Sydney, he had never been more than a "hanging" assistant, and the present was the first operation performed by him. One of the newspaper representatives, becoming very indignant at Harriss's bungling, told the old fellow a bit of his mind as he leaped from the ladder and looked up at the swinging corpse; but Jack took it very coolly, hinted to the other something about the propriety of people minding their own business, that perfection in any art was not attained at once, and he would take care and do it better the next time. The body was handed over to a friend of the deceased, who took it away in a coffin, "waked" it that night in Collingwood, and had it interred early next morning.

Connell was 28 years of age, low-said, stout-made, and a native of the County Cork, Ireland. He arrived in Melbourne as a "Bounty Immigrant" in 1842, and had no relative in Australia. He was industriously disposed, and very inoffensive whilst sober; but when intoxicated, passionate and pugnacious. A few days before his execution Connell placed in the hands of the Rev. Mr. Therry a written paper setting forth what he declared to be the truthful narrative of the circumstances which led to the murder. It was published the morning after in the *Herald*, and was a minute recapitulation of a series of public-house
squabbles, in which Connell was represented as the butt of a lot of drunken fellows during a whole afternoon, many of whom insulted, and others assaulted him on account of his country and his creed. The assault, which culminated in Martin's death, had been (as alleged), provoked by prior quarrelling and ill-usage. The precision with which this statement set out everything in detail was utterly inconsistent with the drunken obliviousness urged for the defence at the prisoner's trial, and did not obtain much credence.

THE BEVERIDGE MURDERERS.—30TH APRIL, 1847.

Special care was taken in providing for the safe keeping of "Ptolemy" and "Booby" after their conviction, and when returned to the gaol they were heavily ironed. Mr. William Thomas, one of the Assistant Protectors of Aborigines, was frequent in his attendance upon them; though as he was altogether unacquainted with their language or customs he could render them but little benefit. The execution was appointed for the 30th April. The following day Messrs. Wintle (gaoler), and Thomas repaired to the prisoners' cell, and on its being explained to them that they were soon to be put to death, both burst into tears. It was understood that some ultra philanthropists in Sydney had endeavoured to procure a mitigation of the extreme punishment, for which there was no reasonable ground whatever. A faint ray of this intelligence in some unaccountable manner gleamed upon the darkness surrounding the prisoners, and kindled a hope to be suddenly extinguished. Rumours had also reached Melbourne, that the native tribe to which they belonged was fully aware of what was taking place in Melbourne, and that several chiefs had openly vowed a bloody vengeance, by the retaliations they would make upon the lives and property of the settlers located in their country, during the approaching winter, when the floods would present facilities for wreaking retribution. It was consequently suggested by some of the newspapers that the criminals should be taken to the Murray, and there, on the spot where the murder had been committed, hanged in a manner that would strike terror into the hearts of intending evil-doers; but the Executive decided otherwise.

Meanwhile, time began to work a change in the minds and demeanour of the criminals, and as each day passed since the irrevocable fixing of their fate, they became more depressed in spirits, and appeared at times as if feeling some contrition for their crime. "Ptolemy" was much the firmer and more indifferent. Indeed, "Booby" grew so attenuated, that in little more than a week he shrank to almost skin and bone. Both prisoners used to frequently break out in excessive fits of sobbing, and so remain for hours. At last they began to entertain a dim comprehension of a future state; they were getting easier in their minds, and more reconciled to the inevitable. Some Goulburn black-fellows coming to Melbourne, two of them were permitted to interview the criminals, an event from which the latter appeared to derive deep satisfaction. "Booby" especially was much comforted by this last "yabber" with his fellow-countrymen. The Reverend Father Geoghegan, at the services at St. Francis' on the Sunday before the execution, made a powerful appeal to his congregation to abstain from attending such disgustingly demoralizing exhibitions as public executions. The Press also wrote in the same strain, and to such laudable remonstrances was no doubt attributable the greatly diminished number collected outside the gaol on the fatal morning. The gallows was raised in the same part of the gaol yard as upon the previous occasion; but there was this difference in its construction, that the fall was to be now deeper than before, so that when the culprits dropped they would disappear altogether from the outward view, instead of having the bust visible as in Connell's case. The prisoners passed their last night and early morning in extreme nervousness, "Booby" especially. They would have nothing to eat, but drank some tea, and were attended by Mr. Thomas, with Messrs. French and Lacy (who interpreted at their trial). When their irons were struck away, they appeared as if pervaded by a sudden burst of relief, which was quickly stilled when their arms were strapped, and the white caps put on. The form of reading a prayer was then gone through by Mr. Thomas, but it was nothing more than the emptiest of formulas, as they for whom it was intended neither understood nor heeded a single syllable uttered. At eight o'clock they were led out into the corridor, and thence to the treadmill yard. They started on seeing a dozen white fellows in waiting for them; and when led to the foot of the scaffold both looked upward and began to cry. "Ptolemy," though greatly distressed, rallied sufficient resolution to enable
him to mount the ladder without help; but "Booby" could not do so, and had to be aided by Mr. French. When on the platform "Booby," as if dazed, turned away, seemingly powerless; but "Ptolemy" stood firm and immovable as a statue. The executioner was this time more expert with his work, and the rope being quickly adjusted and the caps pulled over, the drop went down and "Ptolemy" died momentarily. It was not so with "Booby," who, as he was commencing the leap in the dark, essayed a last desperate effort to stave off death, and pushing one of his feet against a portion of the platform, his fall was thus broken, when after nearly turning a somersault he dropped down, and terminated his existence in lengthened and violent convulsions. Amongst the attendance was a large number of aborigines from the tribes of the Upper Yarra, Western Port, and Mount Macedon, whose demeanour was a marked contrast to the loud laughter and coarse gibes of the white people, the great majority of whom were women, old and young, handsome and ugly.

**THE GIPPSLAND MURDERER.—29TH NOVEMBER, 1847.**

John Healey, alias "Pretty Boy," convicted of the murder of James Ritchie, at Tarraville, became in some degree resigned to his fate after removal to the condemned cell, but was hopeful of receiving a pardon. It was remarked of him by the prison officials that he was the least troublesome convict ever in their charge. He repeatedly declared "that he was drunk on the night of the murder, and the other two men were the murderers." During the time intervening from his trial to his execution, he expressed deep contrition for past transgressions, and his conduct presented a marked difference to that of all other criminals executed in the district. He persisted to the last in protesting his innocence, averring that the crime for which he was to yield up his life had been committed by others. A careful perusal of a full report of the trial leads to an almost irresistible conclusion not of the prisoner's innocence, but an incompleteness in the welding of the chain of circumstantial evidence coiled round him—a link or a strengthening of a link, or a something else wanted to thoroughly establish the identity of the prisoner as the murderer. He had prepared an elaborate statement, sought to demonstrate that he had been wrongfully convicted, and that it would be an enormous abuse of justice to hang him and allow two of the witnesses who swore against him to get off free, they being, as he declared, the true homicides. This appeal was ineffectual, and the prisoner was ordered for execution on the 29th November. Father Geoghegan and Dean Coffey were in attendance upon him, and one or both continued so up to the last moment. Healey expressed a wish to be hanged in the same moleskin trousers and red flannel shirt in which he was said to be dressed when he killed Ritchie. His desire was gratified. On emerging from the cell Father Geoghegan offered a consolatory remark, to which the prisoner, as in reply, declared, "If I got the weight of myself in gold, I do not think I should exchange for it. I am glad to die for my sins, and I am sure God will forgive me!" After entering the corridor, the Sheriff asked one of those absurdly purposeless questions which Sheriffs have been asking time immemorial from prisoners on the road to death, "If he was satisfied with the treatment he had received in gaol?" to which, as a matter of course, an affirmative reply was returned. The prisoner then begged permission, when on the scaffold, to address a few remarks to the people outside, on the evils of drink and bad company; but Father Geoghegan advised him not to do so. The executioner next stepped forth, and quickly buckled the pinion strap. The two priests accompanied the prisoner, chanting a litany, to which Healey responded. Though the responses became weaker, he passed into the gallows yard, and, unaided, mounted to the drop, followed by Father Geoghegan. It was now raining, and the priest descending, the few remaining formalities were hastily got over, and there was an end of the prisoner, who died very quietly. The attendance of the public was very small, not more than about three hundred, where there used to be twice as many thousands. The gathering outside seemed ill-humoured and impatient, and vented not over mild imprecations upon the gaol authorities for keeping them out in the rain. Just as the prisoner became visible on the drop, a sudden gust of wind swept overhead, as if about to unroof the prison, followed by an
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

instantaneous fall of rain which washed the dying exit of the prisoner from human sight, half drowned the spectators, and added to the gloominess of the scene. John Healey was a man of stout build, ruddy complexion, pock-pitted, and dark haired. He was a native of Mayo (West of Ireland), born in 1806, and on the 13th March, 1832, was tried at Sligo for stealing an ass, and, on conviction, was sentenced to seven years' transportation, leaving a wife and child behind. He was forwarded to New South Wales, and arrived in Sydney per the convict ship "Portland" in 1833.

THE "PENTONVILLIAN" MURDERER.—1ST AUGUST, 1848.

Augustus Dauncey, the young Pentonville "exile," sentenced to death for the murder of a younger companion, lay in the condemned cell. His youth and intelligence, and the cool recklessness of his conduct, attracted a good deal of public attention. The prisoner was condemned on the 16th June, and on the 18th July, Dr. Perry (the Anglican Bishop) visited the gaol, where service was performed, and in an interview with the prisoner expressed a few kind words of admonition, but was coolly assured that "he might spare himself the trouble, as he (Dauncey) knew all that before." This was not said in a jaunty or impudent tone, but as if giving expression to what he believed to be the truth. The order for the execution was received in Melbourne at 11 a.m. on the 18th July, and the Sheriff (Mr. Alastair McKenzie), a timid, well-meaning mite of a Scotchman, proceeded forthwith to communicate the ultimatum of the Executive. Dauncey heard this with the utmost unconcern, and said, "Oh, this is only what I expected. I knew very well it would happen; I expected to die a fortnight ago. I assure you, sir, I feel both happy and comfortable, and calculate to go to heaven right off, as I am innocent." The Sheriff remonstrated with the prisoner upon such indifference to his terrible position, but Dauncey told him he might make himself easy on that score; and he would save time and trouble by quietly "shutting up." However, he would thank him very much for a bit of tobacco, for it was the only consolation he cared about. This was a quietus for the Sheriff, who withdrew rather ceremoniously. Dauncey was made aware that he was to be executed on the 1st August, and when a turnkey brought him his dinner shortly after, he carelessly remarked, "All I shall have is thirteen dinners more." The next day he said, "The dinners are now down to twelve;" and so on at dinner-time every day he noted the gradually numerical diminution. The Rev. Mr. Thomson, Episcopalian minister, was in daily attendance at the condemned cell, but his ministrations were useless, for the prisoner was unwilling to speak on the subject of the murder, and whenever that was mooted, he promptly, and indeed pertly, changed the discourse. Singularly enough, Dauncey, whilst in gaol, read regularly from Bible and Prayer-book; and notwithstanding his sang froid by day, he was subject to frequent nocturnal fits of insomnia, and declared that something was about to catch him. Phantoms of every conceivable shape filled the room, and prominent amongst them was the bloody corpse of Lucke. On one occasion he remarked "that he might blame himself for being hanged, for if he had not stated that he had seen Lucke on the day of the murder, nothing could have happened to him." On Sunday, before the execution, the Rev. Mr. Thomson preached a "condemned sermon." Dauncey never looked towards the preacher. Up to the day preceding the execution there was no falling off in his appetite, and he consumed not only his ordinary rations, but also some extras supplied through the Rev. Mr. Thomson. He begged the Chaplain to procure him a pair of white trousers and a white shirt, in which to die decently, and his requirements were satisfied. He declared "that when on the drop he should take good care and let the people know something." But he felt a strong presentiment that he should be reprieved, and the Chaplain found him in a state of mind extremely indisposed to listen to religious consolation. He told the reverend gentleman point blank that remonstrances were useless, for he was positively certain that a something or other would intervene to stay the arm of the law. During the last night one of the prisoners was posted in the condemned cell, but both sentinel and criminal fell asleep. On awaking, Dauncey said, "I was never so happy in my life as this moment, and the reason is, because I am as innocent as a child unborn of the offence for which my life is to be forfeited." To this the sentinel rejoined, "I am equally innocent of the offence for which I am punished; and I shall be going out on Thursday." "Ah, but," responded Dauncey, "I shall have the start of you, for I shall be going out to-morrow morning." Dauncey arose at 6:30 a.m., and was un-ironed at 7. He then with a vigorous appetite tackled a breakfast, one of the elements
of which comprised three large cuts of beef steak, which he totally disposed of. Thus fortified he was in good condition for the Rev. Mr. Thomson, who persisted in entreating him to make an acknowledgment of his guilt, in the hope of obtaining pardon for his sins; but to no purpose. Dauncey was next led back to his cell, where he donned his white shirt and trousers, and with his own hands put on the ill-omened white cap. Devotions were renewed, in which the criminal joined in a distinct and apparently cheerful voice. The appointments for the execution were the same as before, and Dauncey looked up at the “drop” and smiled. Politely declining the executioner’s arm in the ascent of the ladder, and bowing that functionary on before him, he closely followed, and on reaching the top briskly kicked off his shoes. He laid down on the floor and, elevating his voice he thus spoke:—“Gentlemen, and all of you; I have just a few words to say to you; I hope you will all take warning by me.” (Here he stopped for some seconds, as if unable to proceed.) He seemed to make an effort to articulate; but all utterance ceased, as if his tongue had been temporarily paralysed. He soon recovered, and was able to proceed.) “I am quite innocent of the crime for which I am going to die, and I hope God will forgive them who swore against me. May God bless you all!” Retiring a little he was immediately in the hands of the hangman, who rapidly completed his arrangements. The Chaplain proceeded with the burial service, in the midst of which Dauncey passed without a struggle into eternity. On this occasion there were about two thousand persons present, and their behaviour indicated much improvement. There was a marked falling off in the number of women and children as compared with previous executions.

Augustus Dauncey was a native of Wooten-under-edge, in Gloucestershire, England. He was born on the 25th July, 1829, and was in his nineteenth year. He was by trade a blacksmith; had been half-a-dozen times in prison, and ultimately was sentenced to seven years’ transportation. He was transferred to the Parkhurst Reformatory, where his conduct was good, and he was permitted to become what was known as an “Exile.” On the passage to Melbourne, he made the acquaintance of the murdered lad, who conceived a strong affection for him, and regarded him in the light of a protector. During his incarceration no criminals could be better behaved, nor, considering his years, display more fortitude. So well did prison life agree with him, that he fattened on it, an incident recorded of no other criminal cast for death. A singular occurrence happened in connection with this tragedy. On the morning of the execution there was found a heap of stones piled on the spot at Stony Creek where Lucke was murdered, and on the top was planted a small, rudely constructed gallows, from which dangled the figure of a doll. This was removed by the police, but the next day there was a second doll exhibit, and on the disappearance of this, the third morning witnessed the suspension of a piece of wood in the doll’s place. This was regarded as a demonstration of feeling by some of Lucke’s shipmates. In the course of the week the Sheriff placed at the service of the Melbourne newspapers a written statement prepared by Dauncey. It was an ingeniously and evasively constructed narrative, in which the author persisted in asserting his innocence. It went back to his early life, and his honest and industrious parentage, his father being a small farmer and market gardener. He was the only member of a family of seven, who had ever been in prison. His troubles began by disobeying his parents, Sabbath breaking, and running away from home. He was grateful for the consideration shown him by Mr. and Mrs. Wintle (the gaoler and his wife), and the kind offices of the Rev. Mr. Thomson, Miss Langlands, a Mr. Smith, and Mr. Joseph Lowe.

The Mount Rouse Wife Slayer.—18th October, 1851.

Patrick Kennedy convicted of the murder of his wife, was after his condemnation, religiously ministered to by Dr. George, the senior pastor of the Roman Catholic Church, the Revs. J. J. Blesdale, H. Geoghegan, and Madden. It was decided by the Executive that the point of law reserved at the trial should receive every consideration, and it was accordingly transmitted to the Full Court at Sydney. The prisoner, therefore, in any case, would have the benefit of a “long day;” for supposing the decision to be adverse to him, his execution could not take place for some weeks. During the terrible interval of his suspension between life and death, the condemned criminal passed his time in quiet and resignation, indulging in frugal gleams of hope of a reprieve, never to be realised. In addition to the ecclesiastical staff before mentioned, a youth named O’Farrell, was delegated to read frequently to the prisoner. If this youth had had the gift...
of prescience—if it were possible for him to con his own fate between the lines in the prayer book from which he recited for Kennedy—he would have descried amongst approaching, though still distant, shadows, the silhouette of another prison in another colony, wherein, not past the prime of life, he would himself be the occupant of a condemned cell, and the recipient of spiritual comforts such as he was now himself administering. In 1867, this identical person (O'Farrell), was executed in Sydney for the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh, at Clontarf.

The 18th October was named for the execution. Turnkeys relieved each other, in the culprit's cell, but with them he scarcely exchanged a word; and, buried in himself, heedless of passing events, he spent the days in semi-somnolent abstraction. Of the poor wife so ruthlessly murdered he spoke kindly, and was heard more than once to say: "Mary was an excellent woman, and a good mother to her children." A fellow-countryman, from Roscommon, made him several visits, showing various small kindnesses. The Rev. Messrs. Blenchedale, Geoghegan, and Madden arrived early, and Mass was offered in a cell known as the Gaol Chapel, after which the procession moved away, a hangman at each side, like two masters of ceremonies, eagerly scanning everything that happened, as if desirous that no hitch should occur. Kennedy approached the ladder with a firm but hurried step. This he climbed with alacrity, and stood erect and unshrinking under the rope, amidst ascending prayers. On this occasion there were, for the first time, two executioners in attendance. Some twelve months before the regular hangman (Jack Harris) committed a robbery in Geelong, lost his appointment, and was succeeded by James Cahill. This was his first job; but, as Harris was serving a sentence of imprisonment in the gaol, it was deemed desirable to have him present, so that the tyro might have the benefit of his experience. Harris was loud and fussy in trying to "boss" Cahill, who performed his dreadful office with coolness and propriety. After the final death struggle, Harris turned round, rubbed his hands, and gleefully exclaimed to the few spectators in the yard: "I knew he wouldn't take more than three minutes; I said so. Hadn't the chap a nice, quiet tumble down?" Mr. William Corp, one of the two attendant journalists, was about to treat the bravoing hangman to a kicking, but was promptly prevented by the Sheriff sternly ordering Harris to quit the place, and a couple of warders, dragging him off, locked him up. A crowd of some 700 or 800 persons assembled to witness the execution.

Kennedy was a native of the County Galway, Ireland, and was 30 years of age. He was a strong, firmly built man, close upon six feet high, with a pleasing turn of countenance, though indicative of vicious propensities. His four children were provided for by the wife of a settler near the scene of the murder adopting the infant, and two others being taken care of by two aunts living in Melbourne, whilst the fourth, a three-year-old boy, died suddenly the day the father was sentenced to death. From conversations sometimes held by Kennedy with officials and visitors at the gaol, it was ascertained that he was a Fatalist, a firm believer that good or evil actions were inevitable. He once said to a turnkey: "It was drink that did it all; if drink had not done it something else would, as it was to be done." He also said he had been married just nine years on the day of the crime. What a frightful wedding anniversary! One of his family was a boy called "Micky," and a strangely ominous occurrence in reference to him was a great trouble to the unfortunate father. When "Micky" began to string together was the childish refrain of "Mammy dead and daddy gone!" The poor mother paid no attention to it; but the moody predestinarian steadfastly believed that it boded some terrible catastrophe, and this impression grew rooted in his mind. The child's innocent tongue went on with its tinkling about "Mammy" and "Daddy," whilst Kennedy became so painfully absorbed in the ever-recurring thought of some looming calamity that he prayed for the death of the little boy, which by an awful coincidence happened on the same day and hour that the father's doom was pronounced.

Banqueting the Gentlemen Volunteers.

An entertainment of this kind, the only instance on record in the colony, is a festive novelty of so peculiar a nature, that I am induced to append an abridged notice of it as a rider to the foregoing chapter, and also to annex to it a few facts relating to the after career of the men, the authors of such a dash of gallantry as has found no parallel in the annals of Victoria.
At the Royal Hotel, in Collins Street, on the evening of the 20th May, 1842, 120 gentlemen sat down to a repast which was said to have "reflected credit on the host." The Chair was taken by Mr. William Verner, the Commissioner of Insolvency; Mr. F. A. Powlett, Commissioner of Crown Lands, officiating as Vice. Messrs. Henry Fowler, Robert Chamberlain, Peter Snodgrass, James Thompson, and Oliver Gourlay were the "guests of the evening," and were greeted with enthusiastic acclamation. Special invitations had been issued to the Revs. A. C. Thomson (Episcopal minister), M. Stevens (Roman Catholic), and James Forbes (Presbyterian), but they declined the honour, because at the very time they were engaged daily in administering spiritual consolation to the unhappy men who were primarily the cause of the demonstration. The invariable introductory toasts were disposed of in the usual perfunctory manner, and after the health of Sir George Gipps, the Governor of New South Wales was "bumped," a letter was read from the Superintendent (Mr. Latrobe), testifying "His Excellency's (Sir G. Gipps') satisfaction at hearing of the recent capture of the bushrangers on the Plenty, and at the spirited manner in which it was effected." It further conveyed "to all the gentlemen who took part in the apprehension of the men his Excellency's thanks and acknowledgments of the service which they have rendered to the colony," adding "that he is quite satisfied a few instances of alacrity and gallantry such as they have displayed will do more to put down bushranging than any measures which the Government, without the assistance of the settlers, could effect." The Chairman then rose, and said:--"Gentlemen, I have now the pleasing task of proposing 'The Health of our Gallant Guests'—of those intrepid heroes who have so nobly distinguished themselves by the capture of a band of desperadoes whose career of rapine and violence they have arrested at the imminent risk of their lives, the preservation of which must strike everyone, under the circumstances in which they were placed, as attributable solely to the special intervention of a protecting Providence. I am sure there is no one here present who does not feel extremely indebted to our gallant friends for the services rendered not only to themselves, but to the district in general; and more especially those gentlemen who, like myself, are both husbands and fathers, must feel doubly on this occasion for having preserved their wives and families from danger and injury. I, therefore, beg to add to our own their acknowledgments for the gallant conduct of our distinguished guests."

The Chairman concluded amidst loud applause, and the toast was received with all the honours. Mr. Peter Snodgrass, who was gifted with great fluency, if not eloquence, was put up to reply "for self and fellows," and he did so in the following terms:—

"I shall be believed, gentlemen, when, in undertaking to return thanks for myself and brother volunteers, I assure you of the difficulty I find in expressing my feelings with adequate effect and in appropriate terms. The kindness that, however, you have shown in acknowledging our efforts for the peace and character of society, gives me confidence in this unusual attempt, and with such sympathy we are ready to brave a thousand times the dangers we have encountered in the protection of our fellow colonists, their lives, and their properties. The generous applause we have received will prove to the surrounding colonies and to far distant Britain, that the inhabitants of this country are as prepared to honour public services as, I trust, we have been in fulfilling our voluntary duties. But delightful as it is to meet with cordial thanks and a brilliant entertainment in return for the risk we have run, our pleasure rises with the belief that such a demonstration is more an approval of the moral service we have rendered by the suppression of vice, than the mere physical gallantry that has been so freely attributed to us. Your high-minded conduct, enhanced as it has been by public opinion, and honoured by the sanction of Government, must be an incentive to others to equal, if not to eclipse, our cheerful exertions in the common cause. Under the encouragement of both, then, our actions are amply rewarded, and the natural feelings of men gratified to the full extent of our pride."

"The Bench and the Bar" was introduced by Mr. J. L. Foster, and responded to by the Honorable J. Erskine Murray, in a speech from which I culled this extract, for the cogitation and digestion of the legal practitioners of to-day:—

"Mr. Foster has truly stated that to arrive at eminence in the legal profession, talent and integrity in its members are required perhaps more than in other professions. Such is doubtless the case, but there are other requisites than these most necessary for the Bar to possess, and without which its character and its independence would be nothing. Our guests of the evening have, by their late gallant conduct, evinced a
a courage honourable to themselves as it is a bright example to others; and we, members of the Bar, may well take a lesson on the occasion. Yes, courage is as necessary at the Bar as in the field. I mean that moral courage which is the safeguard of a Barrister's independence; and there are times and circumstances when the exercise of such courage can alone preserve to the Bar that character which it ought always to proudly maintain.

The demonstration did not pass off without its laughable incident. In “the brave days of old” the three Melbourne newspapers, Gazette, Patriot, and Herald, were in a state of incessant war with each other. On some very rare occasions the hatchet used to be buried, but it was no sooner covered than it was dug up again, and wielded as fiercely as ever. The Editors might be compared to three shoe-blacks, who, when unpolished boots are at a discount, keep their hands and brushes in practice by smirching each other’s face. The consequence was that the toast of “The Press” was a difficulty in the Stewards’ arrangements for all the old public dinners. Fix No. 1 was the position on the programme which the Press ought to occupy. If too far up on the list, someone that had a “down” on the papers would object, and he always had a couple of “bottle-holders” to back him. Then, if placed too low, the Editors would kick against it, interview the Stewards, and threaten all kinds of pains and penalties. Next, when this knotty point was arranged, there came the knottier one to be adjusted as to the particular Editor of the triplet to return thanks. Arden, of the Gazette, was the senior, as representing the first duly registered and printed newspaper; but Kerr, of the Patriot, claimed precedence, as his journal was the lineal descendant of Fawkner’s manuscript Advertiser; whilst Cavenagh, of the Herald, though the junior, possessed more influence with the magnates who “ran” those festive gatherings. On this occasion the Stewards did not know well what to do, and they decided upon doing nothing about the toast of the Press—that is, they left it out altogether. When the newspaper champions heard this, the Editors declared they would not attend the dinner. The Stewards, at the eleventh hour, became alarmed lest there might be no report of the proceedings, and finally added the toast, but too late to placate the offended dignity of the journalists, who were conspicuous by their absence; though out of consideration for the five chief objects of the festival, tolerably lengthy reports were published. The “Press,” notwithstanding, triumphed, for it was proposed in a very creditable manner by Mr. Archibald Cunninghame, a long-defunct, queer-looking stick of an Equity Barrister, and pompously acknowledged by the late well-known Mr. C. H. Elden.

And now a few remarks as to what futurity had in store for the gay and gallant “Five,” the heroes of the time, whose bravery was the theme on every tongue, and whose names were “household words” for many a day:—

Peter Snodgrass was the son of a military officer of high distinction, who at one time officiated as Administrator of the Government of New South Wales. So far back as 1838, Peter was gazetted as Commissioner of Crown Lands in the Colony; but, for some reason or other, never entered upon the duties. He was one of our earliest squatters, and a shining light of the Melbourne Club, when it was in its swaddling clothes. That he was rather partial to powder is evidenced by the fact that he was a prominent character in some of the early duels that came off in the Province. When the colony obtained the boon of Responsible Government, Peter, who had long before finished the sowing of his “wild oats,” was elected to the Legislative Assembly, and filled the office of Chairman of Committees for several years. Though his Parliamentary career was unmarked by any unusual display of eloquence, it was not through any deficiency in the gift of tongue, for, in putting a question from the chair, about saying “Aye” or “No,” or “the Ayes have it,” or “the Noes have it,” he was master of a rapidity of utterance which no other Parliamentarian in the world could beat. At his death he was very generally regretted.

James Thompson (better known as “Jemmy”), was a squatter, and the occupier of a station at Cape Schanck, and he and Chamberlain (also a squatter) left the colony, and died in England only a few years ago.

Oliver Gourlay was of Scottish descent, and a Melbourne merchant for a time. A year or so after the bushranging encounter, he sailed on a mid-cap expedition to some of the Pacific Islands, where it is believed he either supplied the materials for a cannibal feast, or died some other violent death. That he came to an untimely end admits of no reasonable doubt.
The last though not the least, but the most injured—Henry ("Harry") Fowler. He is the only one of the "Fighting Five" now amongst us (1888), and is no stranger about town, for he may be met any day sauntering leisurely up and down with hands philosophically folded behind his back, taking the world easily and very partial to peering through shop windows, or having a turn at a game of billiards. Mr. Fowler therefore remains the sole survivor—calm looking, white-haired, and time-bleached—the solitary remnant of five as gallant, light-hearted, and free-handed young men as ever enrolled themselves amongst the pioneers of a new country.

A "Hanging" Postscript.

If the ancient records of the world are to be credited, the status of that repulsive, but eminently indispensable, public functionary, the State Executioner, was variously determined at different times and places. In Imperial Rome the "carnifex" was an object of such aversion that he was not permitted to dwell within the City Walls. During the Middle Ages, the office of "headsmen" was held in such esteem as to be hereditary in certain European countries; whilst during the brief Danish Succession in England, the executioner was a functionary of such dignity that, according to Spelman's Glossary, he was treated as of equal rank with the Archbishop of York and the Lord Steward.

There was once upon a time in London a common hangman, known as Gregory Brandon, who by a trick so imposed upon a Garter King at Arms as to be enrolled as an "Esquire," and London hangmen were for some time designated "Gregories" or "Squires" after him. Another similar official was a Mr. Dunn, and, as a posthumous compliment, several successive "finishers of the law" were known as "Dunns." The London hangman, who has most effectually descended nominally to posterity, was a Mr. John Ketch, supposed to have flourished Anno 1682. He was a married gentleman, and his dexterity in ridding the world of condemned criminals inspired his wife with such admiration for his handicraft, as to make her boastful of his skill. She was incessantly declaring to her neighbourly gossips "that anyone might do a plain piece of work, such as a bare hanging; but to make a malefactor 'die sweetly,' was a gift that belonged only to her husband." Still the identity of this individual is by no means settled beyond dispute, notwithstanding an assertion of the great historian, Macaulay, that "Jack Ketch" was the popular name for a public hangman, derived from a person so called who officiated as such in the reign of Charles II. "Jack Ketch" was quite an apocryphal hero if there be truth in Lloyd's MS. collection of British pedigrees in the British Museum, where the following version of the origin of the unenviable nomenclature is to be found—"The manor of Tyburn, where felons were for a considerable period executed, was held by one Richard 'Jaquett,' whose cognomen was afterwards corrupted or anglicised into 'Jack Ketch,' a bisection or transformation which seems to have chimed in so 'ketchingly' with the vulgar taste, that when once caught it was detained, and so remains incorporated with English slang to the present time, not only in Britain, but in every portion of the globe where the Anglo-Saxon tongue is spoken." There was also in London during the 17th century a hangman named Derrick, whose cognomen is also imperishably inwoven with our language. This worthy was such a genius in his particular line of swinging, that he devised a novel mode of roping the wretches turned over to his care; but though his invention did not take in the manner intended, it suggested the construction of a special sort of crane by lashing spars in the manner in which Derrick rigged his gibbets, a contrivance found so convenient and effectual in unloading and hoisting purposes on board ship, that it grew into a regular maritime appliance, and a modification of it is still known as the Derrick.

In connection with the old English executioners, a curious fallacy exists as to their scale of remuneration. Hangmen's wages have been assessed at thirteenpence halfpenny per case, with the culprit's clothes thrown in as a perquisite; but this is a popular error, which originated in the fact that, stealing to the value of the amount stated was at one time regarded as a capital crime. In reality the hanging tariff was considerably higher, as is shown by the following transcript of an account furnished (10th November, 1813) to Sir John Silvester, a London Recorder—To executioner's fees, 7s. 6d.; to stripping the body, 4s. 6d.; to use of shell, 2s. 6d.; total, 14s. 6d.
Originally in Port Phillip there was no stated allowance provided for an execution, and the first hangman's office was required in the case of the two Vandemonian aborigines executed in January, 1842. When it was announced that a hangman was wanted, there were a dozen applicants for the post, but as the Government restricted the choice to convicts under sentence, one Samuel Davies was selected. He was a double-distilled scoundrel, who, after doing a sentence at the Ocean Hill—known as Port Arthur—passed over to the new settlement, where he soon got into trouble, and was serving, as a "lifer" when the stroke of luck came in his way which secured his enlargement. His remuneration for his first job must have astonished him, for he was not only paid £10 in hard cash, but he also obtained what was known as a "Ticket-of-leave," i.e., a discharge from prison and his freedom so long as he "mustered and reported" himself to the police. This fellow was about the best conducted of our hangmen, and he continued to officiate until certain doubts arising out of the validity of the removal from office of the first Resident Judge (Willis), led to the practical abolition of capital punishment for several years, when, Davies' occupation being gone, he slipped quietly out of the public mind, and neither nominally nor otherwise was anything known or heard of him afterwards.

The first permanent executioner in the colony was one Jack Harris, who was transported from England to New South Wales in 1818, and remained a prisoner of the Crown for twenty-nine years in the New South Wales penal establishments. Here he was employed for some time as assistant hangman, but never accomplished a "turning off" himself until a regular appointment was made. His emoluments were 2s. 6d. per diem, with rations and a cell in the Melbourne prison. Jack's prentice hand was in ridding the world of a convicted murderer, and a bungling muddle he made of the job. It took him just eight minutes to effect the strangulation of the hapless being on whom he had to operate, and it was a horrible sight to behold. He used too thick a rope, and was ignorant of the "professional knot," which, after the drop fell, shifted under the culprit's chin; and had there not been a long fall the eight minutes would probably have been extended to eight-and-twenty. Harris having obtained his freedom, became a thorough drunken scamp and public nuisance. The police often brought him before the Police Bench, whence he was usually sent back to gaol. One day he made his appearance before Mr. Henry Moor, one of the ancient Mayors. He was accused of having been drunk and disorderly, and begged hard for another chance, protesting most solemnly that if let off only this time he would most certainly turn over a new leaf. Moor good-naturedly took him at his word, which so astonished Jack that he burst forth into a profusion of thanks:—"And so, please your Worship" (concluded he), "I am so mightily obliged to you that, s'il vous plaît, I will do you a good turn." The roars of laughter that greeted this wind-up in a crowded Court seemed to tickle and annoy the Magistrate, who, though always good-humoured, did not much relish a laugh against himself, and he quickly retorted on the unconsciously offending "Mr. Ketch:"—"Be off, you scoundrel, or I will repent my leniency and give you six months. You rascal, I will take precious good care you shall never have a chance of doing me either a good or a bad turn. I will keep out of your clutches, never fear." Jack "quickly took the hint, twitched the hair over his forehead with thumb and forefinger, and with a lowly jerk of the head and a villainous half-smothered snigger, hastily went through a right-about-face and left the Court.

This fellow kept in and out of gaol for a couple of years, during which he was almost a sinecurist, for there was only one execution in 1848, none in '49 or '50, and but one in 1851. The gaol floggings did not average more than two per annum, and Harris began so to rust that he one day made a dash at Geelong, stormed the place, committed some larcenies, and only came to a halt in the Geelong gaol. At an execution towards the close of 1851 (Harris having been recently convicted of felony) it was thought desirable to have a brand-new hangman, and the office was conferred upon James Cahill, who was an "Emancipist," or prisoner free by servitude. But he was a poor hand with the "cats," and so fumbled over his first hanging that had not Harris been brought from Geelong as a helper, Cahill would hardly have got through with it. Cahill married a fine buxom immigrant girl of no mean personal attractions. One day soon after her arrival she was walking in the bush northward of the gaol. The hangman was seated on a stump, reading a well-thumbed novel. They met, they say, they conquered. The wedding was solemnized at St. Francis', in the presence of quite a concourse of ladies from 15 to 50, eager to see how a hangman could bear the tying of an ecclesiastical halter about his own neck. The
marriage was not, however, a happy one, for Jim soon pitched his billet to the winds and his wife to Jericho, disappeared from the colony, and was heard of no more. The young "grass widow" did not break her heart over the bereavement, for, during the goldfields turmoil of 1852-3, she made money, and years after was comfortably settled down, the reputed married hostess of a well-kept hotel in one of the principal streets in Geelong.

Cahill’s abdication brought about Harris’s re-appointment, but he rendered universal dissatisfaction by his riotous and rowdy conduct, for which the ordinary imprisonment punishment was altogether inadequate. The fellow at length determined upon making a bold coup, in which he succeeded. In concert with two or three expert goal pals, he engaged in an extensive burglary in the city, and the robbers wisely shook Melbourne dust off their feet, and got clean off with the most valuable part of their booty, plate and jewellery. Harris was subsequently convicted of a street robbery in Sydney, and died in bondage there.

Next on the roll figures Michael Gately, known to the convict world by the uncouth sobriquet of “Balla-ram,” a big bearish, monstrous-looking item of mortality, paid by piece-work for what he did, the greatest scoundrel of the batch, and a veritable “carnifex” in vocation and nature. This ruffian’s mad pranks, whenever out of goal, and rushing about like a drunken wild beast, are not so remote as to be unfamiliar to many readers of the present day. He also married a wife, but it must have been a good riddance for both when Gately divorced himself, without legal intervention, from what could in no sense be termed a “better half,” and followed in the wake of his predecessor for Sydney on the 11th June, 1880. He penetrated to a remote portion of Queensland, and had the astounding audacity to write to a Member of Parliament, beseeching his political influence to reinstate him in his former position, in reward for which he vows grateful remembrance, and a reciprocation of “kind offices,” should any future opportunity present itself.

The destruction of the Kelly gang of desperadoes, and the probable execution of their leader, led to the appointment of Mr. Elijah Upjohn, then a convict under sentence. This individual descended from a family of good account in Devonshire, and lived for years in fair repute at Ballarat. Dropping into habits of dissipation he gradually fell lower, and paid the penalty which, as a rule, dogs the steps of the criminal, and from which few escape. His first and only hanging was that of Ned Kelly on the 11th November, 1880, and from the modern improvements introduced in the mode of effecting executions, none of the hitches in carrying out the old capital sentences were possible. For so doing he received £5. It was subsequently thought desirable to revert to the medieval system of remuneration, and at the present time the arrangement is 5s. per day, with quarters at Pentridge, for which all executions and floggings are to be performed. Upjohn after receiving the appointment went on well enough for a time, until he was much upset by a serious disappointment. An execution was expected to come off at Adelaide, and as some difficulties were anticipated in procuring the services of a competent hangman, it was arranged that Upjohn should be retained specially for the occasion. He was to be wheeled away by train and coach to the Glenelg, and on crossing the South Australian border was to be taken up by a “guard of honour,” and so escorted to his destination. For such exceptional work, executed so far from home, Upjohn’s brief was to be heavily marked; and he calculated gleefully upon the wonderful results he should realise out of such an unexpected windfall. But he “counted his chickens before they were hatched,” for whilst in daily expectation of a telegram to start, he was astounded by the intelligence that, for some reason or other, the meditated hanging was deferred sine die. This was a sudden disruption of his golden vision. His short-lived steadiness deserted him, and, indulging in sundry indiscretions, he one day found himself minus his appointment, and plus a sojourn in the Melbourne Gaol.

Since the settlement of Port Phillip to the present time (1835 to 1882) one hundred and thirty-one persons have suffered death in the colony for violation of the law, viz., 130 men and one woman—Mrs. Elizabeth Scott, who, with two male accomplices, was, on the 11th November, 1865, executed at Beechworth for the murder of her husband.

Four men have been executed in Melbourne for murder since the last above-named date and the year 1888. The last execution was that of “Freeland Morrell,” on the 7th January, 1886.
CHAPTER XXX.

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA.

SYNOPSIS.—Aboriginal Theories of the “Heavenly Bodies.”—Theories of the “Black Man” Creation.—“Nooralie” Mythology.—Comets.—Eclipses.—Atmospherical Observations.—Earthquakes.

THE Aborigines of Victoria had not only some knowledge of astronomy, but a curious notion of the existence of what are known as “The Heavenly Bodies” prevailed amongst them. Fluttering in their traditions is one pointing to an early belief that a race of wise birds, of which the eagle-hawk and the crow were the first and second in command, ruled the country before the appearance on earth of the black people, and that all such ancestry was translated to the skies, and there became the sun, moon and stars. There are several theories as to how the first “black man” was created, one being that he appeared at a place called Koora-boort, near Ballarat, and was formed from the gum of the wattle-tree. Other folk-lore declares that the world was fabricated by mythical beings known as the “Nooralie,” so potent that they could ordain the sun and the moon to do just as they liked. At first the sun shone continuously, and the blackfellows tiring of the monotonous brilliancy prayed for a change; so as to oblige them the “Nooralie” decreed that the sun should divide his work with the moon, and thus were formed the alternations of light and darkness. The moon in those remote times was not the cold chaste goddess we are taught by modern poets to believe her, but a very roystering sort of young man, who raked away amongst the stars, and did no little mischief there. The “Nooralie,” however, soon put him on his good behaviour, by commanding him to die, and resume life at certain periods, and hence originated the punctuality with which the luminary goes away and returns. There is an amazing mixing up of the moon’s sex amongst the Aborigines of the Australian Continent, for whilst she was reputed to have been something of the high-blooded larrikin in the Victorian quarter, in portions of South Australia she was originally classed as a young woman—a capricious courtezan, whose presence tended much towards the demoralization of the male proportion of the community, on which she practised with her insidious and wicked spells.

COMETS

Were but little known of, and whenever one was seen it was terribly alarming to the sable race. The first recorded visit of a comet in Melbourne was on the 3rd March, 1843, when great consternation was caused by the appearance in the Heavens of an object resembling a gigantic moonbeam. When first observed it was shaped like a dart; then its extremity curved, and gradually turned into a sword-blade. On the third night it was ascertained to be a comet of first-class magnitude, the denser part of the tail being thirty degrees in extent. It was travelling eastward, and had traversed about thirty degrees since its first appearance. It remained until 10.30, and it is declared that “never were the eyes of man in this hemisphere greeted with a more magnificent appearance in the heavens.”

The effect the advent of such a “illustrious stranger” had upon the Aborigines is evidenced by the following extract from an interesting paper contributed by Mr. A. C. Le Souef, Usher of the Legislative Council, to Brough Smyth’s invaluable work on “The Aborigines of Victoria”:

They are very superstitious. Comets are their peculiar aversion. The first night the great comet of 1842 (1843) appeared, there was dreadful commotion and consternation among the Australian tribes. A large number were encamped close to the station where I resided, and I remember the intense alarm it created—different spokesmen gesticulated and speechified far into the night; but as the comet still
remained, and all their endeavours to explain the unusual appearance were fruitless, they broke up their camp in the middle of the night—the only time I ever remember its being done—and crossed the river, where they remained huddled up together until morning. Their opinion was that the comet had been caused and sent by the Ovens blacks to do them some direful harm. They left the station, and did not return until the comet disappeared."

A comet again showed itself on the 21st December, 1844, about ten degrees above the south-west horizon. Its tail was ten or twelve degrees in length, and it was shooting upwards, and inclining towards the ecliptic. It remained visible for an hour; and though smaller was much more magnificent in appearance than the comet of the year before. The next night it was not visible by reason of a hazy atmosphere; but on the third night it showed itself more clearly about nine o'clock—apparently moving towards the zenith in a north-easterly direction.

**ECLIPSES.**

An eclipse of the sun was visible in Melbourne, at 7.40 a.m., 30th October, 1845. The luminary was obscured by a thick mist, and the unfavourable state of the weather threatened to deprive expectant viewers of the sight altogether. About the time of the greatest phase, the sun burst forth occasionally, and then might be seen presenting the singular appearance of about a fourth of his disc being cut away. Shortly before the termination, some fourteen minutes before ten, the clouds rolled off and allowed a fine view of the glorious orb, gradually recovering its full proportions.

On the 15th April, 1847, there was an eclipse of the sun at 4 p.m. The disc was partly obscured, and the obscurcation increased until 4.30 p.m. when a third was under cover, and by 5 p.m. the half was hidden from view, so continuing until sunset. The greatest curiosity was manifested, and nearly all the townspeople turned into the streets operating with bits of smoked glass, and trying hard to obtain good "lunars" of the novel sight.

A total eclipse of the sun took place on the 18th August, 1849, which was partially visible in Melbourne, and appeared to excite uncommon interest. It is thus described:—"When first observable, about half-past three o'clock p.m., the moon appeared slowly making its way over the south-west limb of the sun, and the shadow gradually increased until about half-past four, when the centres of both luminaries seemed to lie in the same horizontal line, at which time about one-third of the solar horizontal diameter appeared wanting, and the luminary looked as of a crescent form, the cusps being perpendicular to the horizon and pointing due south. Shortly after this an immense dense mass of cumulus cloud rose from the horizon to that part of the heavens where the sun was, and completely hid him from view, nor did he again show till the morning of the 20th."

A partial eclipse of the moon appeared on the morning of the 3rd September, 1849. The first contact with the dark shadow took place at thirty-one degrees from the northernmost point of the moon’s limb towards the east, and the last contact was at sixty-four degrees from the aforesaid point towards the west. When the phenomenon commenced, the entrance of the limb into the penumbra was preceded by a gradually increasing dimness, as if entering the margin of a light cloud, and during the whole time the eclipse remained, this dimness was continued along the margin of the penumbra, which extended a considerable way over the moon’s centre.

An annular eclipse of the sun, visible at Melbourne, occurred on Saturday, the 1st February, 1851.

**ATMOSPHERICAL OBSERVATIONS.**

Were held of small account, and the thermometer and barometer were but little known in the olden times, possibly because the primitive colonists were too much engrossed in settling down in the wilderness, or that such air-gauging appliances were scarce and little consonant with the public taste. The first records of any climatic testing to be found is in the diary of the Rev. Robert Knopwood, the Chaplain to the Collins Convict Expedition, during its sojourn at Sorrento, in 1803-4. From entries therein, the 25th October is noted as a day exceedingly uncomfortable. At 12 the thermometer stood at 92; at 6.30 p.m. it was exceedingly cold, and it is remarked, "the sudden change from heat to cold is very great here, much more than in England." On the 31st, at 6 p.m., there was heavy rain; and at 8 much
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

lightning. At 10, "a very dreadful tempest, and lightning very severe." The rain continued over the following day (1st November) with a heavy thunderstorm. The thermometer was 93 at 12 o'clock, and down to 50 in the eve. December 21st, at 1 p.m., thermometer in shade 96, and 76 at the side of a marquee. 27th at 10 a.m. it was 96 in the shade. On Christmas Day thermometer 82 in the shade, and on the 27th it was 63 at 3 p.m. The New Year was very changeable, and in January there were all sorts of weather. On 14th January in the afternoon the thermometer was 92 at 4 o'clock, and 76 at 6:30 o'clock, whilst the next day the rain, thunder and lightning were something terrific. The following extra shows that the 18th of January, 1804, was quite a grilling day in the settlement—

"Wednesday, 18th.—A.M.—The day very fine. At 11 o'clock the thermometer stood at 82. At 12 o'clock, thermometer, 92 in the shade, 130 in the sun. At 13.0 p.m. the military assembled on the parade in their new clothes and fired three excellent volleys. At 2.45 p.m. a hut belonging to Lieutenant Johnson's, of the Royal Marines, took fire and burned down, with another of Lieutenant Lord's, and very near setting the marquee on fire. Observation of the thermometer taken by Mr. Harris in his marquee—7 a.m., shade 68; 12 noon, shade 92, sun 117; 1.30 p.m., shade 97; 2 p.m. sun 127; 2.15 p.m., shade 101, sun 130; 2.30 p.m., shade 102, sun 132; 3 p.m., shade 102, sun 130; 10 p.m., shade 83. This has been by far the hottest day since we came to the camp."

The convict colony passed away, and the skies might smile or frown unwatched, and the sun sulk or burn as it liked for more than thirty years; but that the thermometer was set experimenting soon after the permanent White occupation of 1835-6 is conclusively established by the following quotation from Fawkner's MSS. newspaper, the Melbourne Advertiser of 15th January, 1838.

"Meteorological.—Sunday, 14th January, at a quarter before 1 o'clock p.m., the thermometer in the shade stood at 102; at 1 p.m. fell to 78. Barometer at 8 a.m., was 29.89; at 1 p.m., 29.58; and at 8 p.m., 29.43. About midnight it came on to blow a violent northerly gale, which continued until 8 a.m."

These are the first journalistic readings of the kind extant, and they disclose the fact that in the management of his little "Foolscap Experiment," whatever other shortcomings were apparent, there can be no doubt that "Johnny" Fawkner, its redoubtable editor, had his "weather"-eye open.

In 1839, Mr. James Smith, one of the primitive inhabitants, supplied the Port Phillip Gazette with what were technically termed "Meteorological Tables," but they were little more than a crudely cooked re-hash from the English almanacs, with scarcely any attempt at localization. The same journal issued a sheet almanac for the year, which was simply a bare calendar of the months, week and days, padded with a few items of general information useful for the time.

In 1840 there was attached to the department of the Harbour Master an officer grandiloquently designated a "Meteorologist;" but his scientific services were not of much value, if assessed in proportion to the scale of his emolument—namely, eighteenpence per day! He was a Mr. Phillip Hervey, an obliging, gentlemanly, bustling sort of old fellow, domiciled in a small wooden tower on the Flagstaff Hill. Whatever spare hours he had were devoted to the compilation of brief calendar notices for the newspapers, and keeping his "sick-books" for Dr. Greeves, by which means he eked out a trifling addition to his one-and-sixpenny wage. As for anything like systematic meteorological records, they were never kept in those days, and the rainfall was only casually noticed by the general wetness of a winter, or a rough guess as to the number of feet the Yarra rose in floodtime at the Melbourne Wharf or the Studley Park Falls, where trees were notched at the various high water marks.

From an old journal of Hervey's, and other sources, supplementing it after his death, I have been enabled to ascertain the rainfall at Melbourne for the eleven years specified as under—1840, 22.58 inches; 1841, 30.16 inches; 1842, 31.17 inches; 1843, 21.54 inches; 1844, 28.26 inches; 1845, 25.92 inches; 1846, 30.54 inches; 1847, 30.18 inches; 1848, 35.15 inches; 1849, 44.23 inches; 1850, 26.99 inches.

The first published Meteorological Summary appears in Kerr's Melbourne Almanac for 1842, from which it seems that in 1841 the barometer mean of the year was 29.885; the thermometer 57.74; number of days with rain 98, and depth of rain 30.16.

In the course of my researches I have also picked up a few instances of the exceptional action of both thermometer and barometer, and I append them, pro tanto, in the promiscuous condition in which I found them.
1845, 14th January: The thermometer was 122 degrees in the sun.

1845, 25th March: On the Racecourse the thermometer was 135 degrees in the sun.

1846, 6th June, at 7 a.m.: The thermometer was at 28 degrees, or 4 degrees below freezing point. In recording this fact the Herald of the 6th declares "that the lowest temperature of the thermometer on record in Port Phillip was at sunrise on the 23rd December, 1836—20 degrees." This is almost incredible.

1846, 11th August, at night: Thermometer 23 degrees; and at sunrise of the 12th, 25 degrees at the Merri Creek.

1847: On the night of the 19th June the barometer was at 28 degrees 90 minutes, a degree of depression never noted before in the Province. It was attended by few remarkable atmospheric disturbances, but there was slight rain in Melbourne. The country round Seymour had been drenched with heavy rain for several days previous, and during the night was swept by a violent gale of wind, almost a hurricane, which uprooted several trees and inflicted considerable damage upon the settlers located about that quarter.

1851, 6th February (Black Thursday): The thermometer of Fahrenheit was no degrees in the shade and 129 degrees in the sun at the shop of Brentani, a jeweller in Collins Street. In another place at 10 a.m. it was 117 degrees in the shade, at 1 p.m. fell to 109 degrees, and at 4 was up to 113.

It is the opinion of old colonists that during the first fifteen years of the White settlement (1835-50) the winters were wetter and colder, and the summers warmer and more hot-windy than subsequently. During the first week of May in 1843 and 1847 hot winds in a very modified degree actually visited Melbourne and its neighbourhood.

Snow was known to have fallen only three times in or near Melbourne—viz., 14th July, 1840, and 31st August, 1849, in the town, and 27th June, 1845, at Heidelberg. There has only been one occasion when the snow came down in considerable quantity—i.e., 1849—an account of which is given in a previous chapter.

Earthquakes.

The first subterranean convulsion noticed by European residents in Port Phillip has given rise to some discussion as to its date, and more than one writer has affirmed that it occurred during Sir Richard Bourke’s visit to Melbourne, in March, 1837, when it so alarmed his Excellency as to cause him to hesitate about proclaiming a township on the site of Melbourne. Sir Richard’s decision as to the town was formed on the 4th March, for on that day he rode over the place, and determined upon having a township established there. Captain King was with him, but in his diary of his trip from Sydney is silent on the subject; and, singular to write, Mr. Robert Hoddle, the then Principal Officer of Survey, before his death in 1881, sent me a verbal answer to a written query, that he recollected nothing whatever about an earthquake at the time. Mr. Hoddle also kept a precise journal of the events of the period, and in the portions for March, 1837, with a perusal of which I was favoured, I found not a word referring to so important an event. Nevertheless, there was an earthquake, and in March, too, but towards the close of the month.

Mr. Thomas Halfpenny was then a publican in a wee wattle-and-daub bunk of a tavern, perched on the ground now occupied by the Theatre Royal, in Bourke Street, and one sultry night towards the end of March, sleepless from the heat, he suddenly felt a movement as if some supernatural visitant had gently given him a lift. He kept wondering until morning as to the cause of the commotion, for, though he lived by the dispersion of spirituous influences, he had no belief in spiritual agencies. On opening his bar to serve some early birds with a morning dram, to his astonishment he learned that a shock of earthquake had been felt by several of the inhabitants during the night.

On referring to Mr. Robert Russell, a sort of living oracle in an age apparently so remote, he assured me that there was an earthquake, and that he believed it occurred on the 27th March; but he promised to hunt it up from a cairn of old memoranda, which he religiously preserves as a memento of "Auld Lang Syne." He writes—"You asked me to state what I remember of the earthquake. Simply this: That D’Arcy and I were sleeping on the same stretcher, and that I got up to look under it, feeling as though some large animal had crept under and was lifting me up—bodily."
The D'Arcy referred to is the gentleman mentioned in another chapter as a member of the Survey Staff sent from Sydney in charge of Mr. Russell. Two or three days after, Mr. Russell supplied further particulars, including an extract from the oldest diary in the colony, except Batman's, which I give as a species of literary fossil, not often to be met with now-a-days:—"I find I was quite right in my surmises as to the precise date of the earthquake. It took place on the night of the 25th March, 1837. I transcribe a bit of my own journal. "24th March, 1837: Fine day in the morning—cleared up, but windy—slept at Cowie's—terrible night of wind. 25th: Slept at D'Arcy's tent on Barwon—bitten on the ankle yesterday by centipede; very sore and had. 26th, Sunday: Rode with D'Arcy towards settlement—slept at Simpson and Wedge's."

"Now, I saw to-day a lady of my acquaintance who remembers as a child D'Arcy's tent at the Barwon, opposite where she lived, and the talk of our being disturbed by the earthquake at the time, and I remember on that single occasion, that being absent from my own tent, D'Arcy and I had to share the same stretcher, which circumstance is connected in my mind with the earthquake, and ofbeing startled therewith. D'Arcy and I were frequent visitors at the house. So much for the earthquake."

Mr. Russell also kindly undertook to communicate with Mr. E. T. Newton, an old friend of his in the country, who was Batman's business man at the time, and he has supplied me with the following extract from the reply of his correspondent:—

"I cannot fix the date of the first earthquake, although I felt it distinctly. It was as near midnight as possible. I was with a friend encamped on rising or rather high ground, near a creek known then as the Deep Creek, about fifteen or twenty miles from Maribyrnong, on the Saltwater River. We had sheep there, and the men had been constructing brush yards, and had gone to bed in their tents tired, and with such an over-supply of strong rum, that they would not believe my report of the earthquake when they had come to their right senses in the morning. The oscillations of the earth, though not violent, were too palpable to be mistaken by anyone; and I had never felt anything like it before, nor have I since that date."

I think I have now fairly established the existence and period of Earthquake No. 1.

In 1841, Collingwood, then known as Newtown, was the refuge of most of the rascaldom of the period. It was one of the queerest collections of back-alums imaginable, and how the rogues and vagabonds could content themselves with the hovel accommodation afforded by the place is difficult to be understood. Early on the morning of the 21st April, the "black sheep" were rudely disturbed in their slumberings by the shock of an earthquake which shook them all in their lairs. They thought the end of the world was at hand, and all Newtown, good and bad, turned out in trepidation, many of them half dressed, and flew in fear and trembling into Melbourne, where to their intense joy they learned there had been no premonitory warning of "the crack of doom," so they returned, to find Newtown still in the land of the living, and were, no doubt, thankful for the long day vouchsafed to them.

But the most alarming shock of earthquake ever experienced in the colony happened in Melbourne at half-past four p.m. of the 28th April, 1847. It was sharply felt throughout the town, though almost instantaneous in its duration. A few houses in some of the streets were slightly shaken, and people rushed about in a state of considerable terror. In one or two of the churches and larger buildings there were appearances of a strain, and certain slight settlements in the foundations were noticed. The Flagstaff Hill showed some effects of the subterranean entente, inasmuch as the staff employed in vessel-signalling was shattered in more than one place. I happened to be in the Supreme Court at the time, where the shock frightened everyone. A smothered rumbling, as if the passage of heavy carriages in the earth, was heard, and the interior of the building seemed to rock. The persons in attendance were almost literally thunderstruck, and most of them rushed frightened into the open air. There was a special jury case on at the time, and Judge A'Beckett, unceremoniously adjourning the Court, hobbled with all his might off the Bench, for he was mostly in a state of gout or rheumatism, and had not the free use of his limbs. No material damage was caused.

At a quarter to twelve a.m. on the 12th October, 1848, another shock of earthquake was felt in Melbourne, but it was the slightest of any that had up to that time occurred.
CHAPTER XXXI.
OUR TWO OLDEST INSTITUTIONS.


Of the least singular fact to be recorded in the history of Early Melbourne is that of the flourishing existence of two Sodalities, originating in what must be regarded (measuring the age of the colony by its unrivalled progress) as a very remote era, one of them about a year the other's senior, each in its way initiated for a purpose praiseworthy in itself, yet both differing as day and night in the ends to be attained, and the means to be employed for such attainment. Rocked in their cradles at a time of which nothing can now be discerned but a few puffs of mist—which are yearly growing thinner, and will soon be completely dissipated—their infancy was perilous, and their nonage beset by difficulties and perils of no ordinary character. Through the sea of financial embarrassment by which Port Phillip was flooded, and almost overwhelmed, in 1842-43, a risky course was steered. Breakers ahead, "poopers" astern, quicksands on each side, and often obliged by necessity to hug a lee shore, the storm was "weathered," the breakers cleared, and with favouring gales a haven of prosperity was reached. With these few preparatory remarks I proceed to briefly sketch the Institutions indicated.

THE MELBOURNE CLUB

Was first mooted in that eventful month of November, 1838, when the first cricket match was played in the colony, at the foot of Batman's Hill. This happened on the 12th, when the necessity for organizing a club was first formally talked over. There was a fair muster of the Melbourne "respectabilities" of the time, and in the course of some casual conversation the Club question cropped up. Of all the gay young fellows sunning themselves on the green grass that day, there are only two of them, Messrs. Benjamin Baxter and Robert Russell, now (1888) alive in Melbourne. Before the next evening a Prospectus was prepared by Mr. Baxter, who succeeded in obtaining several eligible signatures in approval of the project. On the 17th November, 1838, a meeting of all taking an interest in the then hazardous venture was held at the quarters of the military officers at the south side of West Bourke Street, when the formation of a Club was ratified, and the following names were announced as the original members:—Captain Lonsdale, P.M., Dr. Cussen (Colonial Surgeon), Colonel White, Captain Bacchus, Lieutenant Smyth, Messrs. Munday, Powlett, Yaldwyn, Murdoch, Meek, McFarlane, Darke, Bacchus, Jun., White, Arden, Baxter, Russell, Scott, Hamilton, Smythe, and the Ryries (three).

The nev-born Club went on slowly but surely, and eve the first week of 1839 passed over, the Port Phillip Gazette, 5th January, thus reports progress:—"On the first day of the year a general meeting of the members of the Melbourne Club was held for the purpose of appointing a committee, and to take into consideration the building of a house suited to the convenience of the service it is intended to be applied to. The list showed nearly fifty names, amongst whom we may mention Mr. Hawdon, to whose enterprise the district is indebted for having opened a communication by land to South Australia. About twenty of the members subsequently sat down to a dinner at the Lamb Inn, laid out on a most splendid scale, comprising all the varieties this infant settlement could afford."
Mr. William Meek (Melbourne's first Solicitor) was appointed Honorary Secretary, and the next meeting was held at the residence of Dr. Barry Cotter (Melbourne's first practising physician), north-east corner of Queen and Collins Streets. This was on the 21st February, when the first ballot came off, and Messrs. Arthur Hogue, J. Browne, H. N. Carrington, and Peter Snodgrass were enrolled. The Club had been three months in existence; the members were increasing; a committee was appointed, and premises were being looked up to do duty until such time as funds would be available, the Club for the erection of a permanent Club-house. But many years were to roll by ere this could come to pass.

In June the Club had a house rented, viz, a rough, rakish-looking building at the corner of Collins and Market Streets, where now this old friend, with a very new face, and so much improved internally and externally as to be unrecognizable, appears before the public as the Union Club Hotel. In its original condition it was erected by Mr. J. P. Fawkner, as a third and revised edition of Fawkner's Hotel; but "Johnny" had grown tired of dram-selling, and retired to rusticate and grow grapes at Pascoe Vale, some eight miles from town, on the Moonee Ponds Road, where he had purchased a section of country land. A Club steward was next retained, and two advertisements appeared in the papers, viz, (1) Inviting tenders for Club supplies; and (2) Wanted a laundress, properly recommended. And so the Melbourne Club was now fairly started, and its beginning was quiet enough until September, when a row occurred, for the Port Phillip Gazette, of the 21st, announces that two gentlemen staying there (Messrs. Thomas and Cobb) "had fought with their fists over a card-table."

In Kerr's Port Phillip Directory, 1841 amongst the local Institutions appears this announcement:—
"Melbourne Club, established 1839. President, James Simpson, Esq.; Secretary, Redmond Barry, Esq.; Club House, Collins Street."

The Club remained at Fawkner's corner for some years, and throughout all its eventful career it never went out of Collins Street from those days to this. Where the Bank of Victoria is now built, Mr. Michael Carr, one of Melbourne's earliest publicans, purchased a half-acre allotment for £20, but it and its buyer soon obtained a divorce, the freehold passed into other hands, and a large brick house had been erected on the Collins Street frontage. This was occupied by the Port Phillip Bank during its short and troubled life, and when the Bank shut up shop there the Club moved down from the western hill to the flat—a swampy, uncomfortable place. But the house was more commodious than the one vacated, and it was soon turned into comfortable quarters. Hence again, after a sojourn for years, the Club migrated away far over the crown of the Eastern Hill, at a time when the place was no longer in the bush, but becoming one of the most flourishing and fashionable centres in the city. How it has fared since, how fat it has grown, and how respectable it has become, it is not for me to chronicle, for I have nothing to do with those modern developments which have been accomplished by the great changes wrought during the last thirty years, beyond stating that in 1882 there were 465 members on the books, and the premises are now the property of the fraternity, the capital value of the land and buildings being about £50,000. The Melbourne Club of 1882 is as the staid, comfortable, middle-aged, padded gentleman when contrasted with its boyhood of '42, when it was the rendezvous of the young rakes in town and the harum-scarum, full-blooded, full-pocketed, light-headed scamps from the bush, whose frolics kept it, if not in hot water, in a state of almost continuous effervescence both day and night. If the biography of the old, or rather the young Club could be written, it would unfold a "strange eventful history"—the duels initiated, the practical jokes perpetrated, the nocturnal "wild oats" scattered about the town, in which no mad freak seemed impossible, from the mobbing of a parson to pummelling a policeman, besieging a theatre or unbelling a church, demolishing a corporation bridge, or a wholesale abduction of signboards. Of such eccentricities a more detailed account will be given in another chapter. The Old Melbourne Club had many a hard struggle for existence; it had more than once run to the very end of its tether, yet it was always able to pull up just in time to avoid a smash. It seemed to have a charmed life, and so it lived, and struggled, and is now doing well and prospering.*

*Particulars of the present state of the Melbourne Club (1888) are not obtainable.
THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.

If there be any public Institute in Melbourne which should have respected the claims of its origin before changing its name, it is the Literary and Scientific Association now known under the pretentious designation of the Athenaeum; for it had primarily and essentially a mechanical beginning. It was started by mechanics, called a Mechanics' Institution, and, no matter how the personnel of its management might have changed in after years, the name should have remained unchanged and unchangeable.

On the 14th February, 1839, a Union Benefit Society was established in Melbourne, and from this humble source sprang the Mechanics' Institution. In the course of the year the necessity for some such organization became apparent, and on the 4th October the few master-builders in town, who were also connected with the Union, assembled, and, with a Mr. A. Sim as their Chairman, passed the following resolution:—"That a Mechanics' Institution be formed in Melbourne for the promotion of Science in this rising colony, particularly amongst the young, as well as the operative classes, and that a public meeting for the formation of such an Institution will be held in the New Scots' Schoolroom on the first Tuesday evening in November at 7 o'clock, when all persons friendly to such an object are respectfully invited to attend." The meeting was held, and the result was the issue of this announcement:

At an Adjourned Meeting held in the Presbyterian School House on the evening of 12th November, 1839 (Captain Lonsdale in the Chair) the following resolutions were adopted:—

Moved by Mr. J. J. Peers, seconded by Mr. John Sutherland—"That the following gentlemen be requested to act as Officers for the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution, being ex-officio members of the Committee:—President, Captain Lonsdale; Vice-Presidents, H. F. Gisborne, Esq., J. P., F. McCrea, Esq., M. D., H. Yaldwyn, Esq., J. P., T. Wills, Esq., J. P., Captain Smyth, J. P., George Porter, Esq., A. Thomson, Esq., Rev. J. Clow; Treasurer, J. Gardiner, Esq.; Auditors, W. Hightett, Esq., D. C. McArthur, Esq.; Secretary, Rev. James Forbes, M. A.; Assistant Secretary, Mr. W. Morrison; Curators of a Museum, Revs. Holland and Wilkie; Librarian, Mr. Thomas Burns."

Moved by Mr. J. J. Peers, seconded by Mr. George Say—"That the following gentlemen form the Committee for the ensuing year:—Messrs. Anderson, Beaver, Best, Bodecin, Brown, Burns, Caulfield, Dimwoodie, Graham, Kibble, Mayne, Murphy, McArthur, Hurlstone, Peers, Rankin, Rattenbury, Rushton, Russell, Sim, Stevenson, Strode, Sutherland, Winstie, Brewster, Craig, Reeves, Rucker, Welsh, and Williams."

Moved by Mr. P. Bodecin, seconded by Mr. John Sutherland—"That the payment of an annual subscription of £1, with an entrance fee of £1, shall constitute membership, and shall confer all the privileges of membership; and that a donation of £25 shall constitute membership for life, without annual subscription."

Moved by Mr. John Sutherland, seconded by Mr. P. Bodecin—"That the Committee shall exclude all such works from the library as contain polemical, divinity, or other matter which the Committee may deem objectionable."

Moved by Mr. John Sutherland, seconded by Mr. Anderson—"That the Committee shall exclude all such works from the library as contain polemical, divinity, or other matter which the Committee may deem objectionable."

Moved by Mr. Bodecin, seconded by Mr. Peers—"That the Committee be appointed to draw up a code of laws for the government of the Institution, subject to the approbation of a general meeting of members on an early day; and that ten form a quorum."

An amendment "That five form a quorum" was carried.

THE FIRST LECTURES IN MELBOURNE.

The Committee set to its work zealously, and prepared an elaborate code of rules in which the object of the Institution was defined to be the "diffusion of scientific and other useful knowledge among its members and the community generally." After considerable difficulties, an Inauguration Lecture was delivered on the 16th April, 1839, at the Scots' School, Collins Street East, by Mr. J. H. Osborne, a retired Presbyterian Minister, attached to the Synod of Ulster. The admittance was free, and the subject...
selected was "The Advantages of such Institutions." Mr. Osborne was appointed joint Secretary with Mr. Morrison, who some time after retired. The second lecture was delivered on the 1st May, by Mr. Redmond Barry, who produced a very learned and ornate discourse upon "Agriculture," its only fault being that the theme was not sufficiently popularized, for it was, in fact, an accomplished, scholarly, and recondite essay. The Rev. James Forbes, Presbyterian Minister, followed on the 15th May to a crowded audience and in the presence of Superintendent Latrobe. He spoke on "Colonization," and his address was a deliverance of remarkable interest, and eloquence. On the 29th, Mr. George Arden, the Editor of the *Gazette*, gave an exposition of "The Mechanical Agency of the Press in the Dissemination of General Knowledge." Dr. Greeses lectured on "Geology," 21st June, and was succeeded on the 26th by Mr. Edward Sewell, a Solicitor, who discoursed very interestingly on "Heat." The Rev. P. B. Geoghegan, Roman Catholic Pastor, appeared 10th July as the expounder of "The Existence of a Deity, deduced from Reason and Nature alone." As a speaker of rare gifts, he was at home alike in the pulpit and on the platform. On the 7th August, Dr. Wilmot, the Coroner, lectured on "The Science of the Present Day," Mr. Osborne followed (4th September), on "Phrenology," and Mr. Barry wound up the session on the 2nd October by a second essay on "Agriculture."

An application to the Government for a grant of land on which to erect a suitable building, and for pecuniary aid towards it, was refused by Sir George Gipps, considering the infancy of the movement, but if a building were commenced, and likely to be well supported, a contribution of £500 would be forthcoming. This qualified promise was not acceptable, and the promoters decided for the present to trust to self-reliance and public confidence to speed them onward. In neither of these allies were they disappointed, for at the close of the year they had 241 members on the books, and under one of their rules they were empowered to confer "honorary membership on persons in any part of the world, who have distinguished themselves by their researches or attainments in Science, Literature, and the Arts, or who might in any way have conferred signal benefit on the Institution." To secure a sufficiently central site for a building, and make a little money by the bargain, the Committee determined to purchase two allotments at a Government land sale, one whereon to erect the Institute, and the other to be resold at a favourable opportunity. This was done on the 13th August, 1840, and an old map of Melbourne shows the name of J. H. Osborne as buyer of lots two and three, of block eleven, extending from Collins to Little Collins Street, for £142 10s. each. This space adjoined eastward the reserve afterwards given to the Corporation for a Town Hall, and a portion—66 feet frontage by a depth of 155 feet was at once marked off for the Mechanics' Institution, and the remainder afterwards sold at a large profit. The Scots' School was used as a place of meeting until December, when a small brick house was rented in Bourke Street, where a library was commenced, which at first consisted mainly of free gifts of books. Tenders were called for the erection of a building not to exceed £2000, but no available offer followed.

In the course of 1840 the honorary sinecure of Patron was created, the eight V.P.'s were compressed into two, and the Committee reduced by 50 per cent, i.e., from 30 to 15. One Treasurer was considered a sufficient guardianship for the funds, and as the Museum was yet a myth, with little money by the bargain, the Committee determined to purchase two allotments at a Government land sale, one whereon to erect the Institute, and the other to be resold at a favourable opportunity. This was done on the 13th August, 1840, and an old map of Melbourne shows the name of J. H. Osborne as buyer of lots two and three, of block eleven, extending from Collins to Little Collins Street, for £142 10s. each. This space adjoined eastward the reserve afterwards given to the Corporation for a Town Hall, and a portion—66 feet frontage by a depth of 155 feet was at once marked off for the Mechanics' Institution, and the remainder afterwards sold at a large profit. The Scots' School was used as a place of meeting until December, when a small brick house was rented in Bourke Street, where a library was commenced, which at first consisted mainly of free gifts of books. Tenders were called for the erection of a building not to exceed £2000, but no available offer followed.

* The "Trades" element was rather considerably eliminated from this Committee, for only the names mentioned could be in any sense put down as representative of the mechanic or artisan classes of the community. The Committee, however, included much of the spirit of the day, and the influence and useful position of the majority of its members helped in no small degree to a better understanding of the ordinary difficulties, and which would in other hands have given rise to an ill-founded suspicion which were after based upon the Pretexts and begun in introduction for some years.
In 1841, Mr. Osborne was obliged by the pressure of private business to withdraw from the Secretaryship, in which he was succeeded by Mr. J. Stephen, the reverse of an improvement. Great exertions were made to push on with the contemplated building, and tenders were at length accepted, in February, 1842, for its erection for £1920, the contractors—Messrs. Donovan and Crosbie. It was a hazardous venture, but the available funds were £1472. On the 6th June, 1842, an important meeting was held at the Royal Hotel, Collins Street, presided over by Mr. James Simpson. A liability of £1921 had been incurred for the building, and the assets from all sources were estimated to yield £1569 3s. 3d. This included about £600 unpaid donations and subscriptions. Loans had been offered by the Freemasons and the Melbourne Debating Society, and it was the Committee’s opinion that it would be more advisable to borrow £1250 on mortgage in the ordinary way of business. The building was mortgaged for the sum required at 12½ per cent interest, and pecuniary obligations were incurred which it was afterwards at times difficult to provide for.

The edifice, early in 1843, was occupied by the members. It was a substantial two-story brick building, some feet from and above the street level. It was reached by several steps, and during the winter season the footway and street approaches were in a terrible state of mud and puddle. Yet in those primitive times the progress of the erection was regarded with much interest, and not only the people, but the newspapers, actually felt a pride in it as one of the coming constructive wonders of the Antipodes. One of the latter thus gushingly referred to it:—“The Hall of Arts is nearly complete, and will be ready for occupation in the course of a few days; the size, arrangements, and architectural proportions of the building will make it, when finished, the noblest edifice in the Province.” On the ground-floor were the Library and Reading-room, and for years the Town Clerk had his official quarters in another portion of the building. The meeting place for the Town Council was upstairs in the large room. This larger apartment or “hall,” as it used to be grandiloquently styled, was one of the most historic places in Early Melbourne, for here were held some of the most important gatherings in Port Phillip—social, charitable, and political.

A small grant was ultimately obtained from the Government, and Mr. George A. Gilbert was, in June, 1844, appointed Hon. Secretary, vice Stephen, who was never suited by industry or habits for the post. Mr. Gilbert was professionally a drawing-master, possessed considerable talent of a general kind, was fluent of tongue and facile of pen, with a plausible, gentlemanly manner, which made him a favourite. In the middle of this year the Library contained 600 volumes, and the Museum began to exhibit faint signs of life. The lectures were renewed with much vigour, and in October a welcome present was received in the form of a twenty-guinea cheque from Mr. Benjamin Boyd, a Sydney merchant, who made a political swoop upon the district, and picked up one of the locally little valued prizes—a seat in the Legislative Council of New South Wales. In November intimation was received that the Governor would sanction a grant of £150 a year towards the undertaking, and in March, 1845, the Management got the first taste of the so-much-wished-for, but long-forbidden State-aid. Mr. William Roycroft was appointed Assistant Secretary at a remuneration of £50 per annum and quarters. In the report submitted to the annual meeting in January, 1846, the total debt due on the building was £1400, the income for 1845 slightly exceeded £500, and the number of members 129. A great effort was made “to raise the wind,” and in a few months £416 accrued from donations and subscriptions. In 1846 the Members’ Roll went up to 194, and in June, 1847, to 220.

In September, 1847, Mr. Redmond Barry again appeared at the lecturer’s desk, and read a masterly paper on “Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture.” Mr. Barry delivered another lecture (24th October) on “Music and Poetry.” The subject was handled in an eloquent and artistically able style, was deemed a masterpiece, and had a good circulation as a pamphlet, in which form it was (as well as in some of the newspapers) published. At the annual meeting in February, 1848, the receipts for the past year were £869 7s. 4d., and the expenditure £494 10s. 2d., whilst the income of the current year was estimated at £705 17s. 2d. This year was distinguished by the appearance of some new faces as lecturers, the first being the Rev. W. Trollope, M.A., an Episcopalian Minister of high Academic attainments, and a writer of much power, but with too great a tendency to personal and sectarian acrimony. He delivered a course of lectures on “Mechanics,” and though marked by much ability, his audiences were more select than numerous. On the 27th February Mr. David Blair, so well and deservedly known in after years as a public speaker and writer, made his début before a Melbourne public, with a lecture on “Poetry and its Influences.” He was
announced in the newspapers as a protégé of the Rev. Dr. Lang, and had only lately arrived from England in the ship "Clifton." Mr. Blair, then a young man, displayed great ability and research in handling a subject which he seemed to have, not at his fingers' but at his tongue's end, and most unmistakably evidenced the possession of those powers with which Victorians have since been well familiarized.

At this time, the first Melbourne Gas Company was in embryo, and its projectors were making great efforts to bring it favourably before the public, to help which some interesting lectures were delivered, one by the Rev. John Allen, on the 5th July, "On the Manufacture and Employment of Gas, to be considered more especially with reference to its introduction in Melbourne." The Rev. A. Morrison followed with a brilliant dissertation on "Astronomy;" Mr. C. A. Gilbert on "Mesmerism;" and Mr. W. S. Gibbon on "Physiology and the Circulation of the Blood."

On the 29th January, 1851, the annual meeting was held under the Presidency of Mr. D. C. McArthur. The number of members was 471. The receipts showed £721 16s. 4d., which included £51 17s. 2d. from previous year (1849). The expenditure (including £200 paid off the mortgage) was £715 11s. 4d., leaving a balance in hand of £6 4s. 8d. The revenue of 1850 had exceeded the estimate by £66 2s. 6d., and the mortgage debt was reduced to £600. During 1850, the Library had received an accession of 348 volumes by purchase, and 45 by donation, and now consisted of 4025 volumes. The Reading-room was well supplied with periodicals and newspapers, but the Museum was rather stationary.

In 1851, the Rev. W. Trollope, Mr. T. T. A'Beckett, and others lectured at intervals. In the first Session of the First Legislature of Victoria, a vote of £500 was passed in aid of the erection of a "Theatre" wherein lectures might be delivered, in addition to £150 for maintenance for 1852. The probable incomings for 1852 were put down at £720, but the working expenses would be increased in consequence of the gold discoveries. During the year 381 standard and scientific works had been added to the Library, i.e., eleven by gift and the rest by purchase. There were now 4436 books in the Library, and the Reading-room was well supplied with Home and Colonial magazine and newspaper literature. The contemplated Theatre or Lecture-hall could not be put up for less than £1000, and to claim the Government moiety another £500 who have to be raised by private contribution. Already £350 of this had been subscribed. The Museum remained in a state of coma in consequence, as was alleged, of want of room.

Of what the future effected for the Institution, some notion may be obtained by a perusal of a few of the facts disclosed by the Report of the Committee of Management for 1881:—(1.) "The total revenue amounts to £2643 15s. 9d. The expenditure for ordinary purposes of the Institution is £2220 os. 4d. (2.) The payment on account of the mortgage has reduced the original debt of £7000 to £5500, and this reduction has been made within the last three years. The mortgagee, Mr. T. B. Payne, has agreed to reduce the rate of interest on the unpaid balance to 5 per cent. per annum from 8th June, 1882. (3.) The number of members is about the same as last year (1400), for although since the date of the last Report 326 new members joined, almost as many ceased membership. (4.) The number of books added to the Library during the year is 552. About £350 has been spent for books and magazines, £213 for newspapers, and £82 for binding. (5.) The Reading room and the News room have been well attended. The number of issues of works from the Library exceeds 34,000. The total number of visits to the Institution may be roughly estimated at 165,000, exclusive of those to the halls and class rooms."

The Report of the Committee for the year 1887 contains the following:—"In presenting their Report for the past year, the Committee have great pleasure in congratulating the Members on the continued progress of the Institution."

The gross Receipts for the year amount to £4124 5s. and the Expenditure to £3332 12s. 9d. The following are the details of the Receipts:—Subscriptions, £1061 1s. 6d.; Front Shops, £296 18s. 9d.; Large Hall, £882 19s.; Small Hall, £382 2s.; Rooms, £198 1s. 10d.; Sales, £28 1s. 11d.

Among the items of expenditure there is the large amount of £990 for interest on the loan of £18,000. This item will be considerably lessened when the term of the present mortgage expires, as your Committee have commenced the formation of a sinking fund for that purpose, which already amounts to £1250, and is bearing interest almost equal to that paid on the mortgage.
"After deducting from the gross Expenditure the sum of £990 for interest on mortgage, and £78 6s. 6d. for new catalogue, we have £2265 7s. 9d. left for ordinary expenditure. The principal items in this are:—Salaries and Wages, £939 15s.; Books, Magazines, and Newspapers, £591 15s. 5d.; Gas, £243 13s.; Repairs and Furniture, £122 12s. 10d.; Binding, £83 3s. 4d."

The number of books added to the Library was 613. The total number works issued to the Subscribers was 28,341, and 7150 magazines.

The number of Subscribing Members is 1568.

Mr. H. J. P. Curtis is Secretary to the Institution, and Mr. William Smith, Librarian (1888).
CHAPTER XXXII.

THE BOTANIC GARDENS; AND THE YARRA BEND.


THE GARDENS.

The assertion that the first site for the Melbourne Botanic Gardens was the Spencer Street Railway Station, will be heard with almost general incredulity. When Batman decided upon the location of a township on the south side of the River Yarra he designed the northern portion, known as Batman's Hill, as a reserve for public recreation. This idea remained fixed in the public mind so far, that in the early part of 1842, the Superintendent of the Province directed Mr. Hoddle, head of the Survey Department, to mark off fifty acres of the place for the purpose of a Botanic Garden. This was done, and the boundaries were defined to be from the River Yarra to Little Collins Street, and in a line westward; and from a fence surrounding the Survey Office, at the north east corner of Collins and Spencer Streets, and on the west side by the declivity of the hill sinking into the Swamp. It comprised the land flanked on three sides, viz., by the river, by Spencer Street, and by a prolongation of Little Collins Street, to the verge of the Western Swamp, and was actually the romantic she-oak hill and the broad green selavage that surrounded it. Meanwhile the shipping trade increased, and a vilely-smelling row of slaughter-houses jumped up along the river banks near the Gas-works, commencing that Yarra pollution which has grown into a huge and almost irremediable abomination. A couple of private docks next appeared, and then the rude, shaky-looking chimneys of boiling-down establishments, candle-making factories, and other kindred industries began to puff and poison the atmosphere. Doubts began to be entertained whether after all, Batman's Hill was the most desirable locality for the Garden, though it possessed the great advantages of diversity of soil, variety of surface, and convenience of access. Other sites were suggested, i.e., beyond the Flagstaff, adjacent to the (now Benevolent Asylum, the present Fitzroy Gardens, and the western end of the Government paddock (now Yarra Park). Each spot had its adherents and detractors, acted mostly by personal considerations. All four places indicated were alike unprotected on every side from the winds, hot and cold. The subject had been several times ventilated in the Town Council; a committee of selection was appointed, and there were several inspections of the sites proposed, and hunting up new sites, until December, 1845, when the Council Committee recommended the present site, then a small beautiful valley. This place was, in part, used by the Government as a sort of Missionary school site for Aboriginal children, from 1836 to 1841. The first wholesale meat establishment was located there. At the commencement of 1857, the Hawdons arrived overland from Sydney, to take up land for the depasturage of herds and flocks,
and they opened a slaughter-house there. The primitive retail victuallers of the period were four individuals known respectively as Paddy Smith, Jim Cawley, Dick Tancred, and Bob Fleming (after whom Flemington was named), and these “cleaverites” purchased the Hawdon beef at 8d. per lb, and re-sold it for a shilling. After much discussion in the Council Chambers, and opposition from Councillor J. P. Fawkner, who stuck “as a limpet to a rock” to the Batman Hill locality, the recommendation was approved and transmitted to the Superintendent. It was confirmed by His Honor, and in February, 1846, the reservation of the present site was announced. Mr. John Arthur was appointed head gardener, and the undertaking progressed so well under his watchful care, that in May, 1847, the Garden was in excellent condition, and a welcome walk from Melbourne. Mr. Latrobe would not consent to the Town Council having anything whatever to do with the Garden management, and the Reserve remained under the direct control of the Government, subsequently passing into the surveillance of the Public Works Department, as represented by Mr. Henry Ginn, the Colonial Architect. In January, 1849, Arthur died, and Mr. Daniel Bunce, a well-known botanist applied for the post without success. The Garden reflected credit upon Arthur’s skill and industry, considering his limited means and appliances. A Mr. John Dallochy was, subsequently, appointed Curator, and under his régime the Garden so progressed, that at the end of 1851 it was made the subject of a progress report submitted in November of that year to the first Session of the first Legislature of Victoria. A portion of the lagoon had been excavated, the margin formed with a line of borders 1800 yards long, and planted with shrubs and flowers. A rustic bridge was ornamented with plants. Walks had been extended and new ones formed. There were about 5000 varieties of exotic and 1000 indigenous plants. Packets of seeds had been sent from Ceylon, Bombay, Madras, Singapore, Calcutta, England, and other parts of the world. The attractions of the Garden were proved by the numbers which daily frequented it, especially on a Sunday, when an average of upwards of 800 visited there. Two Shows of the Horticultural Society had been held there, and attended by over 700 persons.

The estimated expenditure for the year 1852 was as follows:—Superintendent, £100; two Gardeners at £50 each per annum, £100; two Under Gardeners at £1 1s. each per week, £109 4s.; Carter, £52; eight Labourers at £1 each per week for six months, £208 13s. 6d.; Contingencies, £491 12s.—Total, £1060 16s. And now having written thus far I drop my pen, for it will tax a more fluent hand, and more picturesque style than I can command, to depict in sufficiently glowing colours the botanical reigns of the Baron von Mueller, and the present ruling Curator, Mr. Guilfoyle.

THE YARRA BEND ASYLUM.

Originally the provision made for the unfortunates afflicted with insanity was, after committal by the Police Bench, to be immured in some part of the wretched gaols of Melbourne, sometimes separately, but oftener mixed with the other prisoners! When the commodious brick prison (before referred to) was erected in West Collins Street, a small wooden apartment was attached to it as a lunacy ward, where unfortunate patients would be stowed away to live or die, or recover, according to chance, for anything like proper nursing or attendance was out of the question. But in the old times the death rate in the Melbourne “Bridewells” was of an infinitesimal character, and spoke volumes for the skill of Cussen, the Colonial Surgeon, and the humanity of Wintle, the first Gaoler, and his wife, the first Matron. In the course of time, a watch-house built in the Eastern Market, occasionally served as a temporary asylum. Violent or incurable lunatics were sent to the Tarban Creek Asylum, the public hospital for the insane near Sydney. The Superintendent of Port Phillip, though nominally the Governor of the Province, could not move a finger without orders from headquarters, and there was as much circumlocution, and far greater delay, in procuring the necessary passport for the transfer of an insane prisoner, as in issuing a warrant for the execution of a malefactor. In 1847, £1,000 was voted, and a movement made towards the erection of a small wing of a projected new building. The romantic bend of the river at Studley Park was selected as the site, and this beautiful spot, for centuries a favourite haunt of the Aborigines, was reserved for the establishment of an infirmary. Insanity was a malady quite unknown amongst the Blacks, though essentially a concomitant of civilization. The first Superintendent of the “Yarra Bend” was a Captain Watson, a
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

retired military officer, who had been for some years employed as a clerk in the Colonial Asylum at Tarban Creek. He was appointed in June, 1848. The opening day of the Institution was the 5th July, on which occasion ten lunatics were transferred under a police escort, from the Melbourne Gaol to the "Yarra Bend." But though there was now the desideratum of a Provincial Asylum, no provincial power existed to open its doors for the reception of patients, and up to July, 1849, it was necessary that passes should be issued from Sydney. An amended Lunacy Act was then passed, by which the Superintendent was empowered to sign orders for admittance. The accommodation for the female patients was still so insufficient that the Eastern Hill lock-up had to be used to ease the pressure.

In December, 1849, the New South Wales authorities had the inhumanity to return fourteen lunatics from Tarban Creek, and a number of the patients were placed under canvas. The first scale of payment for non-pauper patients was fixed at the exceedingly moderate rate of 1s. 4d. per diem, the amount to be secured by the bond of two respectable persons. The place was gradually enlarged, and though Captain Watson was no greater success than some of his successors, he did well under the difficulties in which he was placed. Even up to the gold discoveries in 1851, the Asylum did not give promise of becoming the overgrown mammoth of future years. The provision made for its maintenance for 1852, was only £2,138 2s., of which £1,492 2s. went for contingencies.

In connection with the melancholy subject of Lunatic Asylums, we frequently hear and read of the abnormal wanderings of the human mind which generate the strangest delusions and prompt the most irrational actions; but the following narrative, which I have received from a gentleman, the second actor in the ghastly, grotesque scene, is worth publishing:—"On a fine Sunday afternoon, Mr. Edmund Ashley, of Victoria and Madeline Streets, Carlton, was returning from a walk to the Merri Creek, and in traversing the portion of the bush now appropriated as College reserves, north of the University, he observed smoke issuing from what he thought to be the stump of a large tree. Curiosity tempting him to approach closer, he was astonished to behold thrown up near a blazing log a shelter of boughs like a blackfellow's gunyah, and lying in this lair was a man with a chain padlocked round his waist at one end, while the other was firmly stapled into the tree trunk. The man looked gaunt and hungry, and in reply to some questions, declared he had voluntarily settled himself there, where he had been, without breaking fast, for three days, and intended to so remain whilst he lived, which he did not expect to be very long. He shewed no wish to be released, and from his manner there could be little doubt of his insanity. Ashley hastened into town, and on communicating with Chief-Constable Sugden, the recluse was unchained, and near the place was picked up the key of the padlock, which, after he had made himself fast, had been thrown away. In the madness there was sufficient method to effectually carry out the conceived scheme of self-destruction, so Providentially frustrated. The emancipist was taken to the lock-up, and on medical examination, found to be so demented, that he was transmitted to the "Yarra Bend" Asylum.

"One day, twenty years after, Mr. Ashley took his wife and Mrs. Richard Heales to see the Asylum, and when shown over the place by the then Surgeon-Superintendent (Dr. Bowie), his notice was specially attracted by the antics of a man amusing himself with some bits of paintings of a theatrical character. On addressing him, Ashley recognised in the lunatic, the identical individual found so long before chained up under the tree. He had a vivid recollection of all that happened on that fine Sunday, 'twenty golden years ago,' and assured the visitor that he had been very happy and comfortable since their last interview. Mr. Ashley never saw him since, and whether he still survives (not likely) is not known."

PASTORAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND INDUSTRIAL.

The early colonists were not long located in Port Phillip before they turned their attention to the adoption of means for the development of its supposed exhaustless resources. The original inhabitants were very enterprising on paper. It took a few of the more energetic spirits little time to launch a Society or a Company for any conceivable purpose; but several of the projects never passed beyond the initiation. One of the most pretentious of such undertakings was started with a loud flourish of trumpets, and beating of drums, though, after a very big dinner and one little show, it collapsed. At a public meeting on 2nd January, 1840, the following aspiring prospectus was issued:—
PASTORAL AND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY,

President—William Mackenzie, Esq., of Kinlochewe.
Vice President—Farquhar Mc'Crae, Esq., M.D., J.P.

Treasurers—The Port Phillip Bank.
Secretaries—Messrs. Andrew M. Mc'Crae and William Kerr.

The Pastoral and Agricultural Society of Australia Felix, on the principles and with the objects of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, was founded in January, 1840.

The Society’s Annual Show of live stock, samples of wool, implements of husbandry, agricultural and horticultural produce, etc., which it is intended to hold on alternate years at Melbourne and Geelong, will be held in Melbourne on the first Wednesday in March of this present year; and the annual meeting for the election of President, Vice-Presidents, etc., will be held immediately after the Show.

In those times it was a cardinal tenet of popular belief that no enterprise could prosper unless set going by a good dinner, a blended baptism of post-prandial grog and oratory, and so to work the “undertakers” went to get up a convivial celebration accordingly. It was at first intended to hold it at the Lamb Inn—grandmother of the now Scott’s Hotel—where there was a tolerably large room for the time, but on measurement this was pronounced to be not sufficiently commodious, and a recently-erected store of Mr. Rucker’s, in Market Street, between Collins and Little Flinders Streets was finally selected as the feeding-ground. This was the first Public Dinner in the colony, and it came off on the 15th January. Mr. M’Kenzie, the President of the Society, arrayed in the “breckless” costume of a Highlandman, performed the duties of Chairman in a manner highly satisfactory. The Rev. James Clow, one of the Directors, invoked a blessing. Amongst the best speakers of the jolly evening was another clergyman, the Rev. James Forbes, the first Presbyterian minister. I believe this to be the only festivity of the kind in the colony where the American plan of wedding sentiments or prayers to the toasts was adopted, and judging from the following samples, the selections were not inappropriate, viz.:—

"The Queen—Bless her. May she ever be proud of Australia Felix, one of the brightest gems in her diadem."

"His Excellency Sir George Gipps, Governor-General of Australasia, and may the inhabitants of Australia Felix ever find in him a just advocate and protector of their rights."

"His Honour C. J. Latrobe, our much and justly respected Lieutenant-Governor, and may be long continue to watch over and advocate the interests of this colony."

"The Advancement of Religion and Education in Australia Felix, and may these necessary advantages to the well-being of all civilized society go hand in hand with the advancement of the colony."

"Old England, and may the Sons of Australia ever be proud of their noble Mother Country."

"Erin Go Bragh, and good luck to her."

"The Land of Cakes, and may she long continue to give her hardy and intelligent sons to Australia Felix."

"Bolts, Hocks, Wool, and Corn, and may God speed the Plough."

"Mrs. Latrobe and the Ladies—may God bless them."

In replying to the compliment to the fair sex, the gallantry of Captain Bacchus found vent in this spontaneous outflow of eloquence:—“Let them talk of their Durham and their Devon bulls as they please, but I would rather at any time see a lovely female emigrant landed at Melbourne, than a hundred of the finest Devon bulls England could produce.”

There were some minor toasts, without any accompaniments, the most notable being "Breeding in all its Branches," and "The Press." Possibly they considered these two well able to take care of themselves without any precatory well-wishing.

The dinner was productive of another American ingredient not calculated upon—"bunkum"; for after all their "tall talk" very little grew out of it. The Association was born several years too soon, and it was not surprising that the premature bantling should be an abortion. Annual exhibitions were promised at Melbourne and Geelong, but the materials did not exist in the Province to produce such unconsidered results.
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

The First Show.

Took place on the 3rd March, 1842, and it was a failure. It was held in the Melbourne Cattle Market (intersection of Elizabeth and Victoria Streets). The exhibits were a vast disappointment, and in the element where success might be reasonably expected, the deficiency was most marked, for the display of horned cattle was a most meagre turn-out numerically and otherwise.

Prizes were awarded for horses to Messrs. Watson and Hunter, J. Carmichael, H. Jamieson, J. Purves, and Captain Smythe; for cattle, to Messrs. Watson and Hunter, J. Thompson, Cooper, Carmichael, and Bolden; for wheat, to a Mr. Coulstock; water-melons, Mr. Bolden; and vegetables to Captain Smythe.

On the following evening the members consoled themselves over a dinner, much less enthusiastic, gushing and prayerful than the inauguration one.

The Port Phillip Farmers' Society

Was established in 1849, and an Anniversary Ploughing Match and an Exhibition came off on the Queen's Birthday of 1850, at the farm of Mr. John Grant, of Campbellfield, a few miles from Melbourne, when the issue was pronounced to be both gratifying and successful. The day was fine, the ground in order, the competitors in high spirits, and the cattle in good condition. Mr. Peter M'Cracken, of the Moonee Ponds, obtained first-class prizes for the best samples of wheat and barley, and Mr. A. Guthrie, of the Salt Water River, for the second. The following prizes were awarded — Messrs. Forrester and Monteith, of the River Plenty, for the best pair of plough horses. Mr. W. J. Cameron, of the Deep Creek, for the best brood mare, Messrs. Gibb and Robertson, of Campbellfield, for the second best brood mare. Mr. John Cameron, of the Deep Creek, for the best team of bullocks; James Nottle, in the employ of Mr. Browne, of Heidelberg, for the best ploughing with horses; and Messrs. Gibb and Robertson, Campbellfield (James Anderson, ploughman), for the second best ploughing with horses. The third prize for ploughing was decreed to Mr. Dugald M'Phail, Salt Water River (R. Murdoch, ploughman). In bullock ploughing, Mr. Grant, of Campbellfield (ploughman, George Greaves), was successful as a first prize man, whilst the second place was assigned to Mr. John M'Phail (Neil McCarthy, ploughman), and the third to Mr. Alexander Guthrie (John M'Bean, ploughman).

The day wound up with a spread at Somerville's Hotel, Mr. John Crowe, presiding.

A Ploughing Match came off on the 13th June, 1851, on the farm of Mr. A. C. M'Cracken.

The three Judges were Messrs. John Nicholson, John Dick, both of Salt Water River, and D. Lawson, Moonee Ponds. Their awards were thus:

Horse Teams.

No. 4—Owner Mr. John Robinson, Moonee Ponds; ploughman, David Anderson — 2nd class prize of medal, worth £2.

No. 6—Owner Mr. M'Phail, of Spring Hill; ploughman, George Marshall — 1st class prize of a gold medal, worth £5.

No. 10—Mr. John Wippel, Moonee Ponds; ploughman, Thomas Brownlow — 3rd class prize, of medal, worth £2.

Bullocks.

No. 5—Owner, Mr. Myers, of Merri Creek; ploughman, John M'Farland — 2nd class prize of medal, worth £3.

No. 9—Owner Mr. M'Phail, Middle Bank; Neil McCarthy, ploughman — 3rd class prize of a medal, worth £2.

No. 7—George Green, of Campbellfield, ploughed by himself — 1st class prize, a gold medal of £5 value.
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

By a happy notion, the occasion was made a double debt to pay, by uniting it to a Farming Industrial Exhibition at the same place and time, prizes only to be given for exhibits, the property of subscribers to the funds of the Association. The show of stock and produce was consequently limited, but the result was not the less encouraging.

At five o'clock the Judges of this branch of the day's proceedings, Messrs. Hassell, Brown, and Wippel, announced their decision to be—

FOR WHEAT.

The best sample, a gold medal valued at £5, to Messrs. Forrester and Monteith, of the River Plenty.

The second best sample of wheat, a silver medal valued £3, to Mr. P. M'Cracken.

The best sample of barley, a gold medal, to Messrs. Forrester and Monteith.

The best sample of oats, gold medal, Mr. Dougal M'Phail, of Spring Hill, Saltwater River.

STOCK.

The best team of horses, gold medal, of £5, to Messrs. Forrester and Monteith.

The second best team of horses, silver medal, to Mr. George Green, of the Merri Creek.

The best two-year-old filly, silver medal, to Mr. Armstrong, of the Moonee Ponds.

The best mare, gold medal, to Mr. John Brown, of the Plenty River.

The second best mare, silver medal, to Mr. John Nicholson, Keilor.

The best team of bullocks, a silver medal, to Mr. Myers, of the Merri Creek.

The attendance was almost exclusively confined to those interested in agricultural pursuits, and the day's proceedings evidenced the vast advance made by the Province.

The day closed with a spread at the Flemington Hotel, under the superintendence of Mr. John Yewers, a noted Melbourne caterer.

THE VICTORIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

This Society was mainly inaugurated by Mr. John Pascoe Fawkner. The meeting at which it was formed was held on the 29th November, 1848, in a long-vanished tavern, known as the Queen's Head, situated at the western side of Queen Street, midway between Collins and Little Flinders Streets. The attendance was more select than numerous, and Mr. Fawkner acted as chairman. A resolution was adopted "To establish an Association, to be called the Victoria Horticultural Society," and Messrs. J. P. Fawkner, King, G. Cole, D. Duncan, J. Cole, Barrett, and O'Neil were appointed a Provisional Committee to report progress to an adjourned meeting on 9th December. The projected Institution evidently found much favour, for at its first election of officers His Honor the Superintendent was elected Patron, the Mayor (W. M. Bell) President, and Mr. Redmond Barry, Vice-President;Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. P. Fawkner; Treasurer, Mr. D. C. McArthur; and Auditors, Messrs. Henry Ginn and William Hull. Work was at once commenced, and the rules were prepared and printed; yet the Society during the year 1849 partly dropped out of the public mind. A reaction set in, and the Secretaryship changed hands from Fawkner to Ginn, evidently to the advantage of the Society. The first annual meeting was held on the 9th January, 1850, at the Mechanics' Institution, presided over by the Patron (Mr. Latrobe). Some alteration in the rules were approved of, and the following Board of Management (practically the first) was appointed:—Patrons, their Honors the Superintendent and the Resident Judge (A'Beckett); President, the Mayor for the time being; Vice-Presidents, Messrs. Redmond Barry, William Firebrace, and James Simpson; Auditors, Messrs. Archibald M'Lachlan and P. Stevenson; Treasurer, Mr. William Hull; Honorary Secretary, Mr. Henry Ginn; Committee, Messrs. J. D. Pinnoch, Barrett, D. C. McArthur, J. Jordan, Dallochy, J. Hawdon, H. G. Ashurst, T. Dickson, H. Moor, C. Hutton, Drummond, and D. Ogilvie.
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

The First Exhibition

Was held on the 16th March, 1850, at the Botanic Gardens. As a beginning it was on the whole encouraging. There was an excellent show of fruit, and some apples from the garden of Mr. John Orr, of Abbotsford, could scarcely be excelled, though they were entered too late for competition. The flower display was much admired, and there were some exquisite bouquets. Though not coming within the category of horticulture, some latitude was permitted in exhibiting anything special, either manufacturing or mechanical. The Mayor made special mention of the wine from the Geelong vineyards, and the ribston pippins from the garden of Mr. Barrett on the Merri Creek. From their excellence the judges complimented this fruit by designating it the Victorian pippin. Some acorns shown by Mr. George James induced a belief that a day would come when Victoria would grow her own oak trees. The introduction of madder by Mr. Edward Wilson (of the Argus) was deemed of vast importance by the judges, by whom also particular allusion was directed to some French sorrel and onions presented by Mr. Redmond Barry. Prizes of the first class were awarded to Mr. James Sandhills for table grape, red Frontignac, and wine grape—black Pinot; to Mr. Barrett, gardener, Merri Creek, for ribston pippins (table) and coding seedling (cooking); to Mr. George Denham, market gardener, for long spine cucumber; and to Mr. Joseph Raleigh, for early-born carrots and long red mangel-wurzel. Wine prizes were given to Messrs. Brequet and Aimet, of Geelong—i.e., a first for Burgundy and Claret, and a second for Champagne. From the catalogue it may be interesting to pick out the names of a few old colonists well known and useful in their day. Amongst the first appears the late Sir Redmond Barry, Messrs. Jackson, Rae and Co., Mr. Henry Ginn, Captain Cole, Mr. William Overton, Mr. Edward Wilson, Mr. George James, Dr. G. Howitt, Mrs. Holston, W. M. Bell, Mr. James Rule, Mr. A. McLachlan, Mr. G. A. Robinson, Mr. J. Raleigh, Mr. John Orr, Mr. C. Jordan, Mr. R. A. Bulbinie, Major Davidson, Mr. Owen, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Brequet, Mr. Aimet, and R. Charles and Co.

The Second Exhibition

Was held in the same place on the 30th October, 1850, which happened to be a very hot day. It was a much more pretentious turn-out than its predecessor.

His Honor, the Superintendent and family, most of the officers of the Government and their families, and the principal gentility of the city and its environs, together with many country gentlemen and their families, crowded the tents and marquees; and, notwithstanding the intense heat, parties of ladies and gentlemen promenaded the walks of the garden during the performance of Mr. Hore's Saxhorn Band.

The following gentlemen were appointed judges, namely—Messrs. F. Bryant, Redmond Barry, D. C. M'Arthur, James Simpson, Henry Ginn, Thomas Barrett, and David Boyle.

Flowers.

There were several elegant floral contributions, for exhibition only, from the gardens of the Superintendent, Mrs. Howitt, Mr. Henry Ginn, R. Barry, Judge s'Beckett and D. Ogilvie, and medals were awarded as follow—Gold ones to Mr. James Rule (Richmond) and Major Firebrace, and silver medals to Messrs. Rule, William Hall, G. P. Ball, James Jackson and David Boyle (gardener to Mr. D. C. M'Arthur).

Fruit.

Silver medals to Mr. J. Orr, of Abbotsford.

Mr. Wm. Hall, of Richmond, exhibited gooseberries, and Mr. Hollick seedling Muscatel vine from a dried raisin, in the pot, in November, 1849.

Vegetables.

Mr. John Rule, of Richmond, silver medal; Mr. Charles Jordan, certificate of merit; Mr. John Orr, silver medals; Mr. John Duerrdin, silver medal; Mr. G. P. Ball, silver medals.
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

431

WINES AND SPIRITS.

In this department several prizes were bestowed, viz.:—Mr. Edward Willis, Geelong—Burgundy, gold medal; Frontignac, silver medal; Brandy and Champagne, also a silver medal.

Messieurs. Briquet and Aimet, of Geelong, Vin d'Etoile, made in March, 1849 (product of vine black cluster), gold medal; Australian wine of 1849, made from Pineau gris, silver medal; Muscadine wine of 1850, musca blanc, silver medal; Pineau of 1849, made from Pineau gris et noir, silver medal; and Mr. John Bear, of Collingwood, Victoria wine, 1849, silver medal.

Mr. William Barrett of Richmond, exhibited White wine, 1848, Rhubarb wine, 1849, made with moist sugar.

MISCELLANEOUS EXHIBITS.

Some basket-work was on view by a Mr. Arnold, a Melbourne manufacturer, amongst which was a fire-screen, of very beautiful colonial material and workmanship, fully equal to the imported basket-work, and ought to supersede it.

A very pretty glass bottle was sent by Mr. W. Overton, of Collingwood. The glass was very clear, and free from specks, and it was expected that such an industrial beginning would soon obviate the necessity for bringing such articles a distance of some thirteen thousand miles.

A lot of very finely-worked red clay flower-pots were also exhibited, manufactured by Mr. Arend, of the Merri Creek, and forwarded by Messrs. Helm and Co.

There were some very tastefully arranged bouquets. One sent by Major Firebrace contained no fewer than 60 sorts of flowers, and a very handsome one, arranged by D. Boyle, gardener to Mr. D. C. McArthur, contained 143 varieties. A bouquet of mixed fuchsias and geraniums, sent by Mrs. Howitt, attracted much admiration. The Superintendent, Mr. Redmond Barry, Mr. G. P. Ball, and Judge A'Beckett also contributed.

Fruit was but scantily represented, Mr. W. Hull and Mr. John Orr being the only exhibitors. The wines were well spoken of. Willis' Burgundy was full-bodied and richly-flavoured; the Geelong article good, but with scarcely sufficient body for keeping; and Bear's was a very superior full-bodied, sweet article.

In June, 1851, the Superintendent granted to the Committee, on a seven years' lease, at a pepper-corn rent, thirteen acres of land in the Richmond Paddock, opposite the Botanic Gardens, as an Exhibition ground.

THE THIRD EXHIBITION

Was held at the Botanic Gardens on the 30th September, 1851, amongst the incipient symptoms of the gold discoveries. Each branch was this time placed under the jurisdiction of a separate bench of judges. For flowers—Messrs. D. C. McArthur, John Dallochy, and Thomas Barrett. Fruit—Messrs. J. Rule and R. Barry. Vegetables—Messrs. C. Hutton, F. Bryant, and A. McLachlan. There was a great falling off in the display, and the prizes were thus awarded:—For flowers, to Messrs. J. Rule, J. Duerdin, J. Jackson, John Orr, G. P. Ball, J. Plumridge, and Major Firebrace. Fruit—Messrs. Thomas Barrett, John Orr, and John Jackson (lemons and oranges). Vegetables—Major Firebrace, Captain W. Buckley, Messrs. John Orr, D. S. Campbell, T. Barrett, J. Duerdin, and Joseph Raleigh.

For exhibition only, a beautiful assortment of flowers was presented by Mr. Henry Ginn. Bouquets, Captain Buckley and Mr. McArthur; violets from Mount Gambier, Mr. William Hull; fuchsias, Mrs. G. Howitt and Mr. J. Jackson.

THE FIRST VINE AND WINE.

The planting of the first vines in Port Phillip has been erroneously assigned to Captain Lonsdale, Mr. J. P. Fawkeen and others. Mr. Robert Russell kindly undertook to hunt up some reliable information on the point for me, and a letter received by him settles the question. The writer, Mr. Donald Ryrie, (one of two brothers who were amongst the earliest of our settlers) occupied a large portion of the Upper Yarra as a “squatting” ground, and a once well-known paddock bearing their name, embraced an extensive
section of Collingwood, and is now cut up into a network of streets, one of which was named "Ryrie." The communication is dated from Kalkite, Lindalbyn, New South Wales, and August, 1882, and the following extract cannot be now perused without exciting much interest, especially when the present and future prospects of the Victorian wine producing industry are taken into consideration—"Looking over some old papers I find that vines were first planted at Yering in August, 1838; for my brother William and I, in May, 1838, left Arnprior, on the Shoalhaven River, near Braidwood, with sheep and cattle. We had a punt on one of the drays, which we required to use at the Murrumbidgee, Hume, Ovens, and Goulburn Rivers. The vines planted, taken from Arnprior, were the black cluster or Hamburg, and a white grape the Sweetwater. Afterwards we had sent from Sydney other vines taken from McArthur's vineyard, at Camden. The first wine made was in March, 1845—a red wine resembling Burgundy, and a white wine resembling Sauterne, and both very good. Dardel, a Swiss, who had afterwards a vineyard in Geelong District, and perhaps has it now, used to come to Yering to prune the vines, and he also put us in the way of making wine." Up to and including 1851 the export of wine was so trifling as not to exceed £50 in value for any year. It could hardly be said to have regularly commenced until 1852, during which 22,531 gallons, estimated at £6350, were exported. In 1849, 108 acres of land were under vine-growing, from the produce of which 6306 gallons of wine and 100 gallons of brandy resulted. There are no returns for 1850, but in 1851 there were 161¾ acres of vine land, whilst produce fell to 4621 gallons, and the brandy increased to 286 gallons. The then incipient gold discoveries had doubtless something to do in the matter.

**Industrial Resources of Port Phillip.**

On the 1st April, 1850, there was held at the Royal Hotel, Collins Street, a public meeting to consider the development of the resources of the district. The idea originated with Mr. C. J. Griffiths (long deceased), a gentleman of much culture and acquirements. The attendance was influential and representative, and Mr. Griffiths was voted to the chair. "The Victorian Industrial Society" was彤彤inaugurated, and a Committee appointed to prepare a code of rules. The members' annual subscription was £1; £5 conferred a Life Membership; and proxy voting was to be allowed. The objects of the Society were to hold periodical exhibitions of live stock and agricultural produce, combined with ploughing matches; improved farming implements; prize essays on important subjects; an experimental farm, in which foreign grasses and plants could be introduced and their fitness for this climate tested; an improvement in pastoral exports, such as wool, by the exhibition of rams, and superior samples of fleece; attention to the breeding of cattle and the packing of tallow, whether in hides or casks; what indigenous woods were best adapted for cooperage; and the extraction of gelatine or preserved meats. Special attention was to be devoted to agricultural resources, such as the production of the vine, olive, and mulberry; the brewing of good beer; the manufacture of leather, parchment, glue, starch, soap, earthenware, etc, and the growth of hops, madder, and flax. It was also stated that indications of gold, coal, copper, iron, tin, lead, and other minerals had been found.

On the 13th June, a meeting of the subscribers to the Society was held at the Mechanics' Institute, the Mayor (Mr. A. Nicholson) presiding. Mr. C. J. Griffiths submitted a Report from the preliminary Committee, in which it was proposed to invite Prince Albert (the Consort of the Queen) to accept the office of Patron, and His Honor, Mr. Superintendent Latrobe, that of Vice-Patron. It was also recommended that the Society's Exhibitions be held alternately at Melbourne and Geelong. The adoption of the Report was moved by Mr. Redmond Barry, seconded by Mr. James Moore, and agreed to. Rules were adopted, and the election of the first Board of Management was fixed for the 1st September. It was resolved to invite Prince Albert, and the Superintendent, to accept the offices assigned to them by the Report. A bottle of Victorian wine was exhibited by Mr. John Bear, the product of his vineyard on the River Plenty, a sample of which would be sent to London for the Grand International Exhibition to be held there in 1851.

On the 27th July the Committee selected as Secretary, from 22 candidates, Mr. William J. Constant, one of the original Assistant Protectors of Aborigines in the settlement, at a salary of £100, and £25 for keep of horse, per annum, with an assurance that the former would be augmented to £200 if the Society prospered.
The Society met on the 1st September, with the Mayor as Chairman, and the following officers were elected:

President.—Mr. Charles J. Griffiths.


Treasurer.—Mr. Charles Bradshaw.

The Victorian Industrial Society’s First Exhibition

Was held on the 29th and 30th January, 1851. It was divided into two branches, viz. :—Manufactures and products were shown at St. Patrick’s Hall (Bourke Street), and live stock at the Auction Yards of Messrs. Bear and Son, Station and Stock Auctioneers, situated at the south-eastern corner of Bourke and Queen Streets. Hore’s Saxhorn Band was there in full blast, and there was a large attendance of the public. The hall presented an extensive display of exhibits, if times and circumstances are taken into consideration, and some of the articles were well worthy of special notice. The establishment of Mr. Rolleston exhibited a locally built phaeton made to order for £150. Mr. McCracken exhibited a turn rest plough, specially adapted for land on the slope of a declivity, as the share turned on a rotary axis, thereby facilitating the veering of the plough. There were some excellent samples of leather from the tannery of Messrs. Smith and Kirk, flax seed grown by Mr. Joseph Raleigh, and a packet of hops by Mr. H. James. Messrs. Raleigh and Fyfe, and Messrs. Watson and Wight, showed some prime tierced beef; that belonging to the latter firm, though cured in 1849, was in a state of good preservation and sweetness. The most admired exhibit was a tableau by a lady (no name) of a beautiful bouquet of flowers wrought in Berlin wool, and most artistically framed by Mr. Shotfort, of Geelong. The gem of the Exhibition was, however, a marvel of ingenious handicraft by Mr. William Broughton, a Collingwood mechanic. This was a writing desk composed of the following eighteen colonial woods—He-oak, tataruna, honeysuckle, sassafras, Murray pine, Huon pine, forest oak, blackwood, box, teak, musk, tulip-wood, silk wood, red gum, dog wood, Cypress pine, cherry-tree, and myall. It was purchased by Mr. Henry Moor as a Melbourne curio, and sent to England. Another Collingwood man, a German, named Frietson, was very successful in earthenware. As this was the first attempt of the kind in Victoria, it may not be uninteresting to quote from the official catalogue the prize adjudications:

CATTLE.

Gold medals for best imported bull, and best colonial bred cow, Mr. R. M’Dougall, of Glenroy; home-bred cow for dairy purposes, Mr. Thomas Miller.

Silver medals for best colonial three years heifer, Mr. R. M’Dougall; best colonial three-year-old steer, Mr. James Robertson, Keilor.

PIGS.

Best boar of any age—Mr. R. M’Dougall, gold medal.

Best sow—J. Kyle, silver medal, the same to Mr. T. H. Power, Yarra, for best hog.

HORSES.

Imported stallions—Premier—Mr. Jeffries, gold medal.

Colonial best mares—Miss Letty—Mr. T. H. Power, Yarra.

Imported cart stallion—Mr. Ryan; Colonial bred cart stallion—Mr. Rawdon Greene, gold medals.

Cart mares—Mr. James Austin, and Mr. Rawdon Greene, gold medals.
SHEEP.

Best pen of sheep—Mr. William Campbell, Strathloorden, gold medal.

SUNDRIES.

Gold medals were awarded for the following:—Best tierce of salted beef—Mr. Francis Clark, of Collingwood.

Best cask of mutton tallow—Messrs. Raleigh and Fyfe.
Best cask of beef tallow—Messrs. Raleigh and Fyfe.
Silver medals:—For the best tallow candles—Messrs. Raleigh and Fyfe.
Best white soap—Messrs. Watson and Wight.
Best brown soap—Kildare Soap Works, Geelong.
Best fresh butter, 1 lbs.—Mr. Balbirnie, South Yarra.

LEATHER.

Large silver medals (1) for the best bale of kip, calf, sole, harness, and kangaroo skins—Messrs. Smith and Kirk.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE.

Best sample of velvet wheat—Mr. Collier Robertson, of La Rose, silver medal.
Best sample of early potatoes—Mr. Jordan, gold medal.
Best sample of madder—Mr. Edward Wilson, of Collins Street, gold medal.

WINES, SPIRITS, ETC.

Two gold medals for wines of colonial growth were awarded to Mr. John Bear, of Queen Street.

MANUFACTURES.

Best specimen of pottery—Mr. Fitzell, silver medal.
Three casks made of colonial staves—Mr. J. F. Born, Collins Street, gold medal.
Three casks made of colonial staves—Mr. Furnell, Elizabeth Street, silver medal.
Best carriage—Mr. Rolleston, Melbourne, gold medal.
Desk made of colonial wood—Mr. Broughton, of Collingwood, silver medal.
Best case of mathematical instruments—Mr. White, of Collingwood, silver medal.
Best fire screen—Mr. Stratford, of Geelong, silver medal.
Best set of harness—Mr. Smith, of Collins Street, silver medal.
Best specimen of hat of colonial manufacture—Mr. R. F. Bickerton, gold medal.
Best six pairs stockings, and six pairs socks—Mr. James Robertson, of Keilor, silver medal.
Best agricultural roller—Mr. Addis, of Geelong, silver medal.
Best sample of blacking—Mr. Heffernan, silver medal.
Best sample of wax candles—Messrs. Raleigh and Fyfe, silver medal.
Best sample of neats'-foot oil—Messrs. Raleigh and Fyfe, silver medal.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Best skip of honey—Mr. Jordan, silver medal.
The judges also highly commended the following exhibits:
Crayons by Mr. G. A. Gilbert, embracing well-known views in the vicinity of Melbourne and Geelong.
Superior copperware by Mr. Cunningham.
Three casks made from colonial staves, by Mr. Mooney.
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

Two hats, one from the fur of the opossum, and one from wool, Mr. Penzel.
A church tablet, Mr. Warble.
Two specimens of wicker work, by Mr. Gummer.

An application was made to the Government for a site as a Show Ground, and in August, four acres of land off the Sydney Road, and opposite the University, were given on a ten years' lease. The members numbered 400 and the movement had been much enhanced by the establishment of a Geelong Committee of Management. The medals were not procurable in Melbourne, which made it necessary to order them from Hobart Town. The first year's receipts were £364 8s. 6d. and the balance in hand was £69 6s. 2d. The liabilities were £127, and when discharged would leave a balance of £22 13s. 2d. Thanks were offered to the Lieutenant-Governor for his grant of a Show Ground and promise of medals and money.

THE SECOND EXHIBITION

Was held at Geelong on the 24th September, 1851, and though not the success anticipated, was far from being a failure. Amongst the articles displayed were some specimens of polished marble obtained at Lime Burners' Point, by Mr. Reynolds; several boxes of minerals collected by Dr. Bruhn, and a model bird-cage by Mr. Hardwick. A Mr. Stratford was awarded a gold medal for a curiously exquisite work table, the top of which consisted of 291 pieces of colonial woods, of twenty-four sorts, exclusive of the border fashioned out of colonial myrtle. It was much admired and purchased for £18 by Mr. Gore, who forwarded it to England.

The other prizes were thus adjudged:

HORSES.

Gold medals:—Mr. Mercer, for best thoroughbred imported stallion.
Mr. Thomas Austin, for best thoroughbred colonial mare.
Mr. C. J. Dennys, for best imported cart stallion.
Messrs. Drysdale and Newcome, for best colonial bred cart stallion.
Mr. James Austin, best for colonial bred cart mare.
Large silver medals:—Mr. Moore, for second best colonial bred cart stallion.
Mr. David Fisher, second best colonial bred cart mare.

CATTLE.

Gold medal to Mr. James Austin, for best colonial bred cow for grazing; and large silver medal to Mr. Cumming for best colonial bred cow for dairy purposes.

RAMS AND EWES.

Gold medal to Mr. Thomas Austin, for the best four rams in their wool, imported from Europe; and large silver medal for the second best sample. Gold medals to Mr. W. C. Yuille, for pen of 15 best colonial bred rams in their wool, and for like sample of ewes. A gold medal was recommended to Mr. Otto Newhauss for an imported ram.

Mr. Cumming obtained one large and one small silver medal for the first and second best exhibits of domestic fowls.

LEATHER.

Two large silver medals to Messrs. Smith and Kirk, for the best bale of calf and kangaroo skins.

ANIMAL PRODUCE.

Large silver medals to Mrs. Fisher, for the best butter; Messrs. Trotter and Wood, the best two flitches of bacon; and Messrs. Jackson, Rae and Co, the two best samples of brown soap and candles.
GOLD MEDALS TO MR. ROBERT STRATFORD, FOR THE BEST ARTICLE OF FURNITURE; MR. MARSH, THE BEST SADDLE; AND MR. WILLIAM TURNER, COLONIAL TOBACCO. LARGE SILVER MEDALS TO MR. GUNDAY, FOR BEST COLONIAL MADE POTTERY; AND THE MESSRS. DRYSDALE AND NEWCOME FOR SUPERIOR SAMPLES OF LINSEED AND CAYENNE PEPPER.

SOME VERY EXCELLENT SAMPLES OF VEGETABLES WERE SHOWN BY MR. LEWIS, BUT THEY WERE OVERLOOKED FOR PRIZES IN THE PROGRAMME.

GUNPOWDER EXPLOSIONS, AND THE FIRST POWDER MAGAZINE.—THE FIRST EXPLOSION.

When Fawkner vacated his original "groggery," pitched at the rear of the Custom House, off Flinders Street, the wooden materials of which it was constructed were re-erected at the eastern side of the Market Reserve, facing what is now Market Street, which had not then an existence. In 1839 Fawkner's second hotel, at the south-east corner of Collins Street, and the same embryo Market Street, was occupied as the Melbourne Club House, and at a distance of some yards South of it, with only a narrow right-of-way intervening, stood the ex-Fawknerian hostelry, recently furnished with a profusion of painting, and known as "The Sporting Emporium." It was kept by a Mr. John Blanch, the only gun and ammunition dealer in the town. Next door resided John MacKenzie, a recently arrived Scotch emigrant, the first regular tobacconist. On the 17th December, 1839, "The Sporting Emporium" blew up with a terrible loss of life, and though I have searched in every possible way for any printed narrative of the shocking occurrence, I have been unsuccessful. I have conversed, however, with half-a-dozen individuals, some of whom actually witnessed the explosion, and all were on the ground immediately after the occurrence, and from these I have obtained such irreconcilable versions of the calamity as induce me to thoroughly sympathise with Sir Walter Raleigh's idea as to the impossibility of writing history under even the most favourable circumstances. The following, however, will, I believe, present a substantially correct version of the disaster.—Two brothers named Griffin arrived as immigrants, per the "Westminster," from England, and put up at one of the town hotels. It was their intention to start for the bush, but they thought it desirable to supply themselves with firearms and ammunition. The waiter at the hotel accompanied them to Blanch's. Accordingly, the three started on their mission, two of them little dreaming that it would be their last walk upon earth. Blanch was in the shop, whilst his wife was in an adjoining room, and sitting near a cupboard in which was stored a quantity of powder. In one corner of the shop also there was a bag of powder and some open powder on the counter. The tobacconist had just stepped in to have a friendly cigar and chat with his neighbour, and during the process of puffing and talking, the Griffins and their cicerone, who was simply known as "Charles," entered. The intending bushmen were inspecting a particular piece which Blanch was strongly recommending, and one of the Griffins placed a cap on the nipple and pulled the trigger, when an explosion followed very different from what was expected, for the whole establishment was sent with a tremendous detonation into the air. The cap in exploding, it was thought, had ignited some of the loose powder on the counter, and it is supposed that in the immediate consequences, the bag of powder in the shop was included, and hence one of the most shocking events that ever happened in Melbourne. When the smoke cleared away, Blanch and his wife were found shockingly mutilated amongst the ruins, the two strangers were propelled into the Market Square, and the tobacconist and the waiter lay close by the dismantled house. A crowd quickly gathered, and amongst the first to render assistance were Mr. T. F. Hamilton (now residing in Scotland), Lieutenant D. Vignolles, and Ensign McCormick, connected with a military detachment then in Melbourne. Captain Benjamin Baxter (still in the Colony) was riding into town, and on reaching the crown of a not very passable hill, near the late site of the statue of Burke and Wills, in Collins Street, he heard the explosion, and quickening his pace was also in time to lend a helping hand. Dr. Cussen, the Colonial Surgeon, and Mr. D. J. Thomas, a well-known medical practitioner, were promptly in attendance; but very little could be done. Blanch and his wife were shattered and partially disembowelled, and were removed by wrapping them in a quantity of wadding and tar. Unfortunately, there was no public Hospital then in town, and all the poor creatures had to be taken to places in the neighborhood. Blanch was carried to a druggist's shop kept by Dr. Barry Cotter, at the North-east corner
of Queen and Collins Streets, where he lingered in intense agony until the following morning. Mrs. Blanch was conveyed to the Police Office, on the other side of the Market Square, and died almost immediately after. She was in such an advanced state of pregnancy that the unborn babe was actually seen alive for a few moments by the medical attendants! The two strangers were humanely taken in by a Mr. Shaw, the keeper of an hotel in Little Flinders Street, where they were skilfully and kindly ministered to for a fortnight, when they died. Shaw afterwards applied ineffectually to the Government for some remuneration for the trouble and expense to which he had been put. Maceknie, the tobacconist, whose house sustained no injury, was attended to at home; but he also expired on the 29th December, and on the last day of the year was buried in the Presbyterian subdivision of the Cemetery. He was a favourite with his countrymen from "The Land o'Cakes," and his funeral was attended by nearly every adult Caledonian settler in and about the town. But a most extraordinary fact remains to be mentioned with respect to "Charles," the waiter, and only survivor. With only a blackened face he was removed to where he was employed, and having sustained no vital injury, he soon became all right. Up to the accident his face was deeply pock-pitted, but during the process of recovery, with the disappearance of the disfigurement, a new skin grew like a mask over his face, rendering the pock marks invisible; and when convalescent he appeared before an astonished public with a fair and smooth face, and lived in Melbourne for many years after. The Blanches left five orphan children, who were at school at the time of the mishap, and a sum of money was raised by public subscription for their assistance. One of my informants was an eye-witness of the occurrence, and declared that at the time of the explosion a Mrs. Jackson was sitting in an upstairs room, and was blown under a sofa, but not injured. I have no doubt such was his impression, however formed, though an event of the kind could hardly be possible, considering the whole house, except part of the roof and outer timber partitions was blown away, and even these were on fire until it was put out through the daring gallantry of Ensign M'Cormick, who went aloft for that purpose at no small risk to his own safety. Blanch's stock of powder was rather limited, and if it had been larger, the Club House would have come to grief, and with it some colonists who did good service in after years, viz., Messrs. C. H. Elden, T. F. Hamilton, Peter Snodgrass, and three or four other notabilities, who would have gone to glory. Singularly too, after all the harm was done, a small keg of powder was found untouched in a corner of the demolished shop. The frightful occurrence naturally created a profound sensation, and was talked over with a shuddering feeling of deep commiseration for the hapless victims; and it still lives a terrible spectre in the traditions of the colony. It supplied the newspapers with a potent reason to call loudly for the erection of a powder magazine, and the enforcement of stringent regulations for the custody of gunpowder, but it was several years before the Executive took any steps in the matter.

ANOTHER EXPLOSION.

On the 19th July, 1849, the portion of the Eastern Hill in Collins Street, in front of the Argus office was being lowered, and a formidable ledge of rock lay in the way. This the contractors (Messrs. Gavin and Roberts) had to blast. Mr. Samuel Crook had an undertaker's and carpenter's establishment on the site of the present Victoria Coffee Palace opposite. The quarriers sprung a blast, when the explosion was such that some of the stony projectiles dashed through the windows of Crook's show-room smashing ten squares of glass. One heavy block passed through the roof of a work-shop several yards rearward of Crook's, and the windows of the shop of Mr. Cracknell, a turner, were dashed in, but no damage was done to life or limb. There was much consternation over the occurrence, for the blasting operations were heedlessly conducted in the middle of the day, and without any intimation to the public.

THE STORAGE OF GUNPOWDER

In Melbourne was utterly disregarded, notwithstanding the explosion of 1839, and the well-known fact that powder was kept in considerable quantities in some of the shops and stores in Melbourne. It was imported, and often brought up to Melbourne promiscuously with other cargo, and landed at the wharf regardless of consequences. The people were alarmed, and the newspapers denounced such a gross disregard of the public safety, but an apathetic Government closed its ears, and heard—or pretended to hear—
nothing. There was an old hulk in the Bay to be had for a few pounds, and the Government was vainly
entreated to purchase this as a powder store. On the 7th May, 1844, the "Joseph Cripps," schooner,
arrived from Launceston with twenty large casks of gunpowder; and when the craft anchored in the Yarra
there was no responsible person to accept delivery of it. The captain begged of the Customs officers to
take the dangerous customer off his hands; but they laughed at him, and told him to keep it, for they
would have nothing to do with such a ticklesome entry. Returning on board, the indignant skipper
coolly had the combustible twenty tumbled out on the wharf, where they remained for several days.
Superintendent Latrobe felt himself at length constrained towards the exercise of some supervision of
imported powder, and for some time that article was directed to be taken ashore at Williamstown, and
there, reposing in a tent, was honoured with a military guard.

The First Powder Magazine.

Governor Sir G. Gipps occasionally entertained good intentions towards Port Phillip; but they were
of the same materials as those with which a certain unnameable place is said to be paved. He was seized
with a fit of this kind when he visited Melbourne in 1841; but the notion then conceived evaporated on
his departure. One of his good intentions was the erection of a powder magazine on the beach near
Albert Park, and he actually fixed upon the place where the building was to be put up, but nothing further
was done in the matter. In the course of years it was determined to have the magazine erected on the
western side of Batman's Hill, which has since bodily disappeared from the face of creation; and here, during
1847, a small stone building was erected at a cost of £500. It was opened on the 22nd January, 1848,
when the gunpowder at Williamstown was deposited therein. In July, a Captain Sutherland was appointed
keeper. This magazine, and the hill under which it stood, rendered good service in their day, until the
exigencies of changing times caused the dismantling of the one, and the levelling of the other.

Early Closing Movements.

It is interesting to note how early in the colony efforts were made to ameliorate the condition of a
very deserving section of the community, whose claims upon public co-operation and sympathy have never
been adequately recognized. So long ago as 1841, a movement was organized for "the early closing
of the shops in Melbourne," and the drapers then, as at all times since, were the first in endeavouring
to introduce a usage which, if honestly carried out through all grades of retail business, would be
productive of vast benefit to both employers and employees. The negotiations were started by some of the
young men familiarly known as "counter-jumpers," and so promptly responded to that the following
advertisement was inserted in the three Melbourne newspapers—The Gazette, Patriot, and Herald:—

PUBLIC NOTICE:—

We, the undersigned, Drapers of Melbourne, do comply with the wishes of the young
men of our respective establishments, and agree to close our houses of business at
eight o'clock precisely, Saturday excepted, from Monday, February 22nd, 1841—M.
Cashmore and Co., Donaldson and Munroe, Isaac L. Lincoln, E. and I. Hart, D. and S.
and Marks, R. Whitehead, C. and J. S. Beswicke, A. Ashman.

This small roll included the whole of the trade then located in Collins and Elizabeth Streets, whose
excellent example was followed in a few days by the grocers for a similar privilege for their "helps." But
the good work was not of long duration, for one shop infringed the compact, and then another, and so on.
Spasmodic efforts were occasionally made for a revival, but with indifferent success. In April, 1846, all the
Melbourne drapers, save one, agreed to shut up shop at seven p.m. in winter, and eight p.m. during the
summer months, except on Saturdays; but the dissentient drove such a roaring trade that the others were
compelled in self-defence to withdraw from the treaty, and the arrangement consequently fell through.
At a public meeting held in the Temperance Hall, Russell Street, on the 19th September, 1851, the chair
was taken by Mr. Richard Heales, and the matter ventilated in addresses by Messrs. N. Kinman,
J. A. Marsden, P. Virtue, and others. The result was the formation of
THE YOUNG MEN'S EARLY CLOSING ASSOCIATION,

And a Provisional Committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Peter Virtue, T. H. Lightfoot, H. and J. Kerr, J. A. Marsden, J. Morris, R. Cuslin, J. Lush, N. Kinsman, T. Moubray, Bridge, and Jarrett. The movement secured some influential sympathizers, and on the 2nd October the election of the following office-bearers took place:—Mr. William Nicholson (the Mayor) accepted the Presidency. Messrs. William Williamson and Robert Campbell, Vice-Presidents; Messrs. Thomas Moubray and A. McCullum, Auditors; Mr. T. Lightfoot, Treasurer; Mr. R. G. Benoon, Secretary, at a salary of £10 per annum. The principal shopkeepers pledged themselves to close their places of business at seven p.m., except on Saturdays, so long as they found it "conducive to the well being of those they had in their employ." For some time the majority of the retailers scrupulously kept their word, but as anything like durable unanimity became hopeless, the praiseworthy object was frustrated, as it has often been since, and will continue so, until the Legislature shall think proper to interpose, and render Early Closing compulsory.*

It is difficult to apply Parliamentary action to a social subject of this kind, but nothing will ever be permanently effected without it. An Early Closing Movement dependent solely upon voluntary effort seems to me a continuous impossibility, because absolute unanimity is so essential, and so difficult—not to obtain, but to keep. This is the weak point, and so long as it remains unremedied the movement resembles a chain made of strong links, with an unsound one here and there, which may snap at any moment.

BUILDING SOCIETIES.

Through the agency of Mr. J. F. L. Foster, one of the Provincial Members of the Legislature of New South Wales, there was passed in September, 1847, an Act of Council for the Regulation of Benefit Building Societies in New South Wales. The system had been found to work well in England, and one had been already established in Adelaide. A preliminary meeting was convened at Anderson's Commercial Inn, Collins Street East, on the 27th September, to consider the measure as applicable to the Town of Melbourne. Mr. William Clarke, Hon. Secretary and Town Councillor, officiated as Chairman. The expediency of starting a Building Society was determined on, and initiated under the designation of the Melbourne Building Society, the shares to be £120 each; the payments, 5s. entrance per share, 10s. monthly subscription, with 6s. per month redemption fee on borrowed shares. A committee, consisting of Messrs. William Clarke, William Nicholson, C. Laing, J. C. King, L. Rostron, N. Guthridge, J. J. Peers, J. A. Webster, Wm. Thacker, and Wm. O'Farrell, was appointed to prepare the necessary rules, and report to a future meeting. In a few days there were fifty-two enrolled members, and at a meeting held the following week the rules were approved and transmitted to the Attorney-General at Sydney. The following Board of Management was also elected:—President, Mr. William Clarke; Trustees, Messrs. J. C. King, L. Rostron, J. T. Smith, J. A. Marsden, W. H. Buckley; Treasurer, Mr. Charles Vaughan; Stewards, Messrs. C. J. Mills and John Hood; Committee, Messrs. W. Nicholson, J. J. Peers, N. Guthridge, A. J. Webster, Henry Crossley, James Barwick, J. Webb, John Bland, and John Bullen; Surveyor, Mr. Charles Laing; Solicitor, Mr. J. Bowler; Secretary, Mr. Charles C. Dunn.

This Society so far succeeded that three others followed in quick succession, and in 1849 one was started at Geelong.

In January, 1850, Mr. Edmund Ashley conceived a design of establishing an undertaking of a somewhat analogous nature, excepting that instead of putting people in their own houses, its object was to place them on their land. Mentioning his intention to Mr. J. P. Fawker, the latter rapidly "jumped" the notion, made it his own, and forthwith launched it. It was called the Co-operative Land Society, and Fawker stuck so well to the work that, in a year, some £6000 had been subscribed and invested. The shareholders were so well pleased with Mr. Fawker's exertions that they procured from England a handsome silver service as a presentation to their benefactor. It consisted of tea-kettle and lamp complete (weighing 82 ozs.), with coffee and tea pots, cream ewer and sugar basin, and what certainly was

*The Factories and Shops Act 1875 has become law since the above was written, and considerably grants some of the privileges so eagerly sought for by the author.—Ed.
not the least pleasing to the recipient this flattering inscription:—"Presented to John Pascoe Fawkner, of Pascoe Vale, the founder and manager of the Victoria Co-operative Freehold Land Society, for his ability in originating, and his philanthropy and perseverance in maturing, the above Society, and for his diligence in putting each member into full possession of a landed estate at the lowest possible cost, viz., £1 per acre. The shareholders gratefully present this Testimonial of their high approbation, and with their best wishes for his temporal and eternal happiness. Province of Victoria, Melbourne, 1851." As an evidence of the wonderful fecundity of the germ from which the first Building Society was evolved, sixty-three years ago, it may be stated that, at the end of 1880, little more than thirty-two years, there were in Victoria forty-seven building societies, numbering 18,252 members, with a yearly income of £1,040,926, assets at date of balancing £2,854,795, and £2,352,808 liabilities. The advances during the year amounted to £564,414, and the societies had £829,041 in moneys on deposit.

The Victorian Year Book, 1886 (Hayter's Tables), gives the following statistics about Building Societies—Number of Societies, 60; Number of Investing Members, 19,907; Number of Borrowers, 16,250; Value of Landed Property, £391,698; Amount of Paid-up Capital, £2,502,799; Amount of Deposits at end of the year, £2,910,792; Advances under Periodical Repayments during the year, £2,358,729; Repayments by Instalments during the year, £1,526,221.
CHAPTER XXXIII.

BLACK THURSDAY.

SYNOPSIS.—The Eventful 6th of February, 1831.—Dandenong Race Meeting.—Burning of the Course.—Narrow Escape of Doctor Ronald and Family.—Death of Edward Doversdale.—Destruction of Messrs. Williamson and Blow's Station.—The Loddon Country Ablaze.—Darkness in Gippsland.—Mr. Thomas Earle's Wedding.—"Dick" Ryan and the Magistrate.—Shocking Tragedy at the Plenty.—Mrs. M'Lelland and Five Children Burnt to Death.—Relief of the Sufferers.—Improper Appropriation of Relief Funds.—Indignation Meetings.—Insurance Companies; Formation of the "Fire and Marine Insurance Company."—Mr. Jonas Smith, Manager.—The First Fire Brigade.

THE day following the Easter Sunday of 1351 is commemorated in English History as "Black Monday," because, in the language of the quaint old Chronicler Stowe, it "happened to be full dark of mist and hail, and so cold that many men died on their horses' backs with the cold," and by an extraordinary providential contrast, five hundred years after (6th February, 1831) there was a Black Thursday in Port Phillip, so called from the country being overwhelmed with fire and smoke, as if a destroying angel had winged its way through the air, scattering firebrands far and wide; its wake lit up with flaming forests, the fire and smoke, as if waging a war with each other, spreading consternation and dismay throughout the length and breadth of the Province.

From an early hour in the morning a hot wind blew from the north-north-west, and as noon approached, vast gusts of dust enveloped the town to such an extent as to obscure the rays of the sun. The atmosphere became so dense as to render out-door life almost intolerable, for every mouthful of air was like flame puffing out of a furnace, which, added to a strong stifling smell of smoke, reduced anything in the form of physical work or exercise to nearly an impossibility. Short, hot, blinding spurts of wind whizzed into the wayfarer's face, so stunning in their effect as to make him imagine himself ablaze, an illusion dispelled only when he felt and found his clothes unburned and his hair unsinged; and when the dust got a chance it half-choked him. Not only out-door, but mostly all in-door avocations were suspended for three or four hours in the mid-day, and the Supreme Court was compelled to strike work by adjourning the business, and giving lawyers and suitors a half-holiday. At 12 o'clock the thermometer of Fahrenheit was no degrees in the shade and 129 degrees in the sun at the shop of Brentani, a jeweller in Collins Street. At 11 o'clock in another place it was 117 degrees in the shade and 129 degrees in the sun at the shop of Brentani, a jeweller in Collins Street. At 11 o'clock in another place it was 117 degrees in the shade; at 1 fell to 109 degrees; but at 4 p.m. went up to 113 degrees. In the evening a reviving southerly breeze began to blow, before which the pestilential exhalations of the day vanished, and a grateful feeling of relief was the result; whilst later on some showers of deliciously refreshing rain fell like manna from the heavens. There was then not only no electric telegraph communication, but scarcely any communication, unless a slow and scattered course of post, so that it was not possible for the townspeople to obtain any intelligence from even a few miles in the country until next day, and the citizens accordingly strayed forth in small groups to the Flagstaff and Batman's Hills to look about them, in the expectation of beholding some distant indications of anything that might have happened in the interior. All that was observable was a reflected glare from the south and southeast, and an occasional temporary illumination—a sudden flare of light like a house on fire a few miles from town, which immediately disappeared. This was afterwards ascertained to be about Dandenong, where some preparations had been made for a Race meet that day; but a bush-fire rushed the course, causing both sport and spectators to decamp without ceremony, and doing much general damage that the inn was about the only house left standing in the neighbourhood. Three newspapers were issued the next morning, and, singular to record, only a tame six-line paragraph referring to the day before appeared in the Herald, the Argus observed a solemn silence, whilst the Daily News exploded in the following hyperbolic
"Yesterday was the most oppressively hot day remembered in the colony. The sirocco that prevailed during the day was as hot as the blast of a furnace—really scorching; clouds of dust, accompanied by stifling heat penetrating every building in the city. People going out on business were like millers dealing in very dirty flour. If readers can imagine the atmosphere of dust, ashes, steam, heat and suffocation that one might experience in looking into Mount Etna immediately after its being extinguished by a waterspout, they can form a tolerably fair idea of Melbourne on the 6th February, 1851." If the volcanism and waterspouting be excised from the above, there is a strong substratum of reality in it.

But it was not long before accounts of woe and desolation came trooping into town, and for a week after every wind that blew bore upon its wings tales of general ruin, individual losses, and suffering that harrowed those who listened to them. East, west, north, and south joined in the same refrain of the ravages caused by the bush conflagrations. Amongst the Plenty Ranges the calamity was hardly capable of description. The fire had, it was said, originated in that quarter through the carelessness of two bullock-drivers, who had camped on the Wednesday evening by the Diamond Creek, and left some logs burning when they went away next morning; these setting fire to the long drought-parched grass, the flames spread everywhere, and fanned by the hot winds fired the bush in every direction. The conflagration sped along to the surrounding ranges, and the whole country side was so rapidly turned into a billowy ocean of fire, that the few settlers looked on half dead with fear, and, in the words of one of them, "thought there was an end of the world." The fire kept enlarging its orbit, rolling about like some huge monster, destroying everything it touched, its track marked by charred timber, embers and ashes, cries and lamentations. Not content with dashing along the ground, it ran up the highest trees, and the flames leaped in monkey fashion from tree to tree. The scrub and brushwood were ignited as if by the wind, which acted as an avant courier in piloting the course of the fiercer element. The fire also glided swift as lightning along the margins of the several creeks up one side and down another, and some of the people ruined by its operation, never even saw it until it crashed in about them with a crackling and roaring clamour positively astounding. A shepherd in the employ of Dr. Ronald saw a large column of fire appear suddenly on the top of a hill opposite to where he was, deploy, and make rapidly towards him, when he rushed to his hut to warn his wife, who, with their child, had just time to save themselves by taking refuge on some burned ground over which the blue had passed. All the chattels they recovered was half a blanket, and some of the personal effects which sought to be rescued were burned in the man's arms. The damage done in the Plenty district was considerable. An unfortunate settler named McLelland lost his wife, five children, home and 1100 sheep. Mr. John Bear suffered much by the loss of cattle, and more than 100 persons were left homeless and penniless. A farmer named McPherson left home on the Thursday morning to borrow a threshing-machine, but on returning in a couple of hours he found all his worldly property a heap of ashes. Everyone about there was more or less a loser, and there was nothing talked of but the fire and its horrors. Mr. John Harlin was nearly quite burnt out. Every inch of the fencing at his place was destroyed, and four men in his employ only saved themselves by plunging into a waterhole. One Edward Doversdale was with a mate herding cattle when the flames suddenly encircled them. The mate escaped to an eminence clear of timber and grass within a short distance, and Doversdale jumped into a creek, where he was afterwards found so maimed that he was conveyed to the Melbourne Hospital, and died after lingering in excruciating agony for a week. Every place was a scene of misery and lamentation; the dead carcasses of sheep, horses and cattle blocked up the waterways and thoroughfares; and an excursion such as I made in that quarter two days after was a sickening trip to take. In one portion of the Diamond Creek was a pile of sheep and bullocks, most of them dead, but some of the bullocks were in the last agonies of life; and when anything was seen to approach some of the poor creatures would emit a yell enough to freeze the blood in one's veins. Amongst them was a valuable mare, alive and otherwise uninjured, except being rendered stone blind from the effects of the fire. About twenty bullocks were blind and half roasted, though alive and writhing with torture, and moaning in a heart-rending manner. Another remarkable occurrence was the finding in several places of hundreds of dead opossums and snakes, some of the latter of several feet long. From the Plenty head to Diamond Creek was one vast area of desolation; and had not the wind changed at a critical period of the day, many believed that the ruin would have travelled along the Yarra to Heidelberg.
and thence by the Merri Creek to the Moonee Ponds. The country between Geelong and Ballarat suffered extensively, and much property was destroyed for miles around Geelong, especially on the Barrabool Hills, the western side of the Moorabool, and the Leigh. At the Barrabool Hills one James Bowman was burned to a cinder whilst endeavouring to extinguish a fire; Phoebe Horslop, a young girl, was severely burned; and Stephen Hopper, a farmer, had to run for his life. Dr. A. Thomson declared that not one house in ten was left on the Barrabool Hills, and all the small farmers were either burned out or ruined. The quantity of hay lost there and around Geelong was put down at 3000 tons, and the wheat at 50,000 bushels. Barran, and Bacchus Marsh also suffered, and Birinying forest was for several days in a famous blaze. Messrs. Williamson and Bow, of the Pentland Hills, had a station completely destroyed—everything consumed save the clothes worn by the people there, and Bow was obliged to come to Melbourne to procure a supply of covering for them. At the Werribee, 4000 sheep belonging to Mr. Inglis perished, and his whole loss including crops and wool was estimated at £4000, whilst the hands employed on the station were unable to save their wearing apparel. Mount Macedon was lit up in numerous places in a style that would gladden the hearts of the Druids of antiquity, in whose worship the old Baal-fires were instituted, and three men were known to have perished there; whilst along the overland route to Sydney commencing at Campbellfield, and on by Kirochewa and Donnybrook, much injury was done. Mr. R. H. Budd, an innkeeper, was in Melbourne, and on returning home found himself a poorer man by a thousand pounds. His wife and several children had had hair-breadth escapes. Attached to the premises was a dairy sunk six feet in the ground, and when the flames closely menaced the place the mother thought the youngsters might be safely stowed away in the butter-vault, and there they were planted accordingly, but it was soon apparent that if left in their hiding-place they would be baked to cinders, so they were, after much difficulty, safely extricated, and the family safely got away. The fires reached northward as far as the Goulburn, where the sheep on several stations were considerably thinned, Mr. H. N. Simson alone losing 7500. As to Kilmore, how it escaped was inexplicable, as the country for a circuit of miles in every direction was a black burned-up desert, in the midst of which stood the township, with several large ricks of wheat and oats scattered about, and the grass destroyed almost to the corn-steads. If this had not been verified by ocular evidence it would be incredible. The neighbouring ranges were on fire early on the Thursday morning, caused, it was reported, by two men engaged in burning some stubble not far from the town. For some time it was in imminent peril, fifteen farmers in the vicinity being ruined, and 10,000 bushels of corn destroyed. The small townships of Seymour and Honeysuckle luckily escaped—though they were like islets in an ocean of flame for some days. The creeks were crammed with festering carcases of working bullocks, through the famished animals rushing into them for a drink, and finding no water, being unable to get out, they perished. No quarter of the district escaped, for the conflagration might be said to be general, from Gippsland to the Murray, and from the Plenty to the Glenelg. At the Pyrenees, for a distance of fifty miles, the fires skipped along in every direction, playing some curious pranks, skirting a marked-out road or small creek in their courses, and not crossing them; then suddenly jumping over, disdaining to meddle with small trees, and when they were impeded by one of uncommon height or width, choking it without mercy, and choking it off with an explosion like a gun-shot. The Loddon country was fire-swept over a large portion of its superfices, and for six days the conflagration held high revel on the Loddon. Colac was not spared, and disastrous intelligence was received from the "far west." Over what was then known as the "Portland country," the bush was on fire in every direction, and creeks and waterholes were never known to be so low. Amongst the suffering squatters was Mr. Neil Black, to the tune of 4000 sheep. At Mount Gambier, near the Glenelg (the South Australian boundary), the township was almost completely extinguished.

The Western Port District and the wild Gippsland country, then nearly a terra ignota, were not spared. The Dandenong division was devastated by fire in such a manner that every vestige of sillage or verdure was burned from off the ground. The homestead of Dr. Bathe, of Western Port, was besieged by the flames, and Mrs. Bathe laid the presence of mind to rush to the stable and release the horses, which flew out, but, terrified by the burning, returned to their shelter, and perished. Mrs. Bathe herself took to the bush, and escaped. Dr. Bathe was reported to be a heavy loser, and it was said a sum of £500 in bank notes had been destroyed in the house.
In Gippsland there was luckily no loss of life, and the destruction of property was trifling, owing to small population and sparse settlement. But the fiery tempest there lost none of its fury, and was even more awe-striking, as may be imagined from the following extract, printed about a fortnight after in the Church of England Messenger:—

"DARKNESS IN GIPPSLAND."

"Among the effects of those terrible fires which will make the 6th of February memorable in the annals of this colony, was one of which very little notice has been taken, and which is perhaps almost unknown to the public generally, but excited the greatest awe, and even terror, in the minds of many who witnessed it. We allude to a total darkness which overspread the whole of Gippsland, and literally changed day into night. This darkness, according to the accounts which we have received of it, began to be perceived about one o'clock in the afternoon, and gradually increased until it became so intense as to hide from sight even the nearest objects. Settlers were obliged to feel their way from their out-houses to their huts. One gentleman told us that in unsaddling his horse he actually could not see the animal while he was standing close beside it. Throughout the remainder of the day it continued perfectly dark, and many went to their beds fearful lest they should never see the break of day again. Such a phenomenon was indeed calculated to inspire in all a vague and undefined dread of some impending evil. For the smoke, which, carried by the north winds from the burning forests on the ranges over the plains below, totally intercepted the sun’s light, was so high as scarcely to be perceived by the smell, and to produce none of that suffocating sensation which might have been expected, and hence few conjectured the real cause of the sudden and complete darkness in which they were enveloped. We do not wonder, therefore, that thus, unaccountable as it appeared to them, accompanied moreover by the rolling of distant thunder and occasional flashes of lightning, deepened also, rather than relieved, in many places by the blaze of the fires which were crackling in the neighbouring woods, running with a fearful rapidity through the open country, or perhaps threatening their home-stations with destruction, it should have suggested to many the thought that the end of the world was at hand, and that many trembled under the expectation of the immediate coming of the Lord to Judgment. That expectation was indeed groundless. On the following morning the sun rose in unclouded brightness, and the terrors of the preceding day were dissipated."

"Among the effects of those terrible fires which will make the 6th of February memorable in the annals of this colony, was one of which very little notice has been taken, and which is perhaps almost unknown to the public generally, but excited the greatest awe, and even terror, in the minds of many who witnessed it. We allude to a total darkness which overspread the whole of Gippsland, and literally changed day into night. This darkness, according to the accounts which we have received of it, began to be perceived about one o'clock in the afternoon, and gradually increased until it became so intense as to hide from sight even the nearest objects. Settlers were obliged to feel their way from their out-houses to their huts. One gentleman told us that in unsaddling his horse he actually could not see the animal while he was standing close beside it. Throughout the remainder of the day it continued perfectly dark, and many went to their beds fearful lest they should never see the break of day again. Such a phenomenon was indeed calculated to inspire in all a vague and undefined dread of some impending evil. For the smoke, which, carried by the north winds from the burning forests on the ranges over the plains below, totally intercepted the sun’s light, was so high as scarcely to be perceived by the smell, and to produce none of that suffocating sensation which might have been expected, and hence few conjectured the real cause of the sudden and complete darkness in which they were enveloped. We do not wonder, therefore, that thus, unaccountable as it appeared to them, accompanied moreover by the rolling of distant thunder and occasional flashes of lightning, deepened also, rather than relieved, in many places by the blaze of the fires which were crackling in the neighbouring woods, running with a fearful rapidity through the open country, or perhaps threatening their home-stations with destruction, it should have suggested to many the thought that the end of the world was at hand, and that many trembled under the expectation of the immediate coming of the Lord to Judgment. That expectation was indeed groundless. On the following morning the sun rose in unclouded brightness, and the terrors of the preceding day were dissipated." Some of the Gippsland aborigines, who had acquired a small smattering of the English vocabulary, accounted for the physical phenomenon in a very matter-of-fact way, by sagely wagging their curly heads and declaring that "bright fellow (pointing towards the sun) had got the blight in his eye." Throughout the country generally traffic was temporarily suspended, and the carriers of several of the inland mails were intercepted by bush fires. The coasting vessels at sea so perceptibly experienced the immense heat blowing from land, that several passengers were oppressed with mingled feelings of sleepiness and incipient suffocation. Even twenty miles from shore flakes of fire were seen shooting about, and the air was filled with cinders and dust, which fell in layers on the vessels’ decks.

There are not many now in the colony who had actual experience of the horrors of the Black Thursday of 1851, to whom one can apply for any written recollections of the calamity. From a kind friend (Mr. A. C. Le Souef, Usher of the Legislative Council) I have received an extremely interesting communication corroborating some of the particulars embodied in my narrative. From this document I transcribe the following sombre, eloquent extract:—"For some days before, the weather was exceedingly hot, and bush fires were burning in several directions. The sun in the morning rose like a ball of blood, and an intensely hot wind blew from an early hour, which, as day advanced, fanned and spread the fires already burning. By eleven the heat was almost unbearable; a fierce, scorching, and blasting wind withered all before it. Dense volumes of smoke, rising in all directions, embrowned portions of the country in partial obscurity. The fires extended from Cape Otway to Cape Schanck; and northwards to the Murray. In viewing it from an eminence all Victoria appeared a vast conflagration. Vessels fifty miles at sea had their decks covered with leaves and ashes. Going over the big hill on the Sydney Road after dark was a sight I shall never forget—the whole forest lighted up with a most indescribable unearthly glare—the lofty trees burning to their very tops with a sullen, angry roar—while above hung a dense canopy of heavy
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

... lurid smoke. As we rode along on our trembling horses the trees crashed down close to us, and on one occasion the burning leaves struck in our faces as a huge old tree—a species of the stringy bark—came thundering down, a mass of fire and flame. Every now and then some cattle or horses, stupefied or maddened by the fire, would gallop wildly by. As we entered the open ground near the township of Kilmore, the surrounding hills, burning from base to summit, presented a grand and terrible sight.

But, in chronicling all the saddening consequences of this day of terrors, the writer cannot overlook two amusing incidents that occurred in Melbourne, one at each extreme in the City—two separate and distinct acts in the drama of life—the one flashing like a small gleam of sunshine, a sparkling bit of comedy; and the other a queer black mark, a scrap of bouncing farce. The first refers to the moral courage evinced by a lady and gentleman who, disregarding all the inauspicious omens of the clerk of the weather, rushed from the syveltering heat of Melbourne into the Plymeneal Sanctum, and contracted a life partnership, which it is to be hoped made them happy ever after. This auspicious event is thus announced in the Daily News of the 7th—“Married on Thursday, 6th February, at St. Peter’s Church, Melbourne, Mr. Thomas Earle, late of Hull, to Miss Hortensia Hoyves, daughter of Captain John Hoyves, of Cliff House, Gorleston, Suffolk.” It is evident from this that “Black Thursday” was a “white” day for one “happy pair” of Melbournians, at all events; and that the presence of mind necessary for setting sail on the ocean of wedlock under such Simoon discouragements ultimately found its reward is evidenced by the fact that the two, now old Earles, are still alive and prosperous—the gentleman filling a responsible position in a leading wool warehouse, and the lady the centre-piece of a family ring of nine young colonists.

Whilst the nuptial knot was being tied on the Eastern Hill, the Police Court on the Western Hill was solemnly engaged in the untying of a different complication. Mr. Edward Bell, J.P., and Private Secretary of Mr. Latrobe, the Superintendent, and Mr. Richard ("Dick") Ryan, a squatter, were having some personal altercation. “Dick” somewhat unpolitely informed Mr. Bell that “he did not care a d— for him, or for all the Magistrates in the country,” and for this heinous offence a summons was taken out against him of the unruly tongue. The charge was laid as “cursing,” though it is doubtful if the phrase complained of could bear that interpretation, as it was simply communicating an item of intelligence, and not conveying either invocation or imprecation. However, the case was investigated by a Bench of Magistrates, who, either from the lassitude provoked by the atmospherical condition of the weather, or the legal difficulty involved in the issue, reserved judgment for a week, and in the end “Dick” was fined one shilling. As to this defendant cared neither a “d” nor a dump, and could well afford to laugh at such a trifle, for, outside the restricted circle of the Melbourne Club, he was accounted a better fellow than his prosecutor. And such were the two odd episodes—the two comic flashes that shot up like rockets amidst the general gloom.

On the Friday rain fell lightly in several parts of the interior, and on Sunday, the 9th, prayers for rain were offered in several of the Melbourne churches.

SHOCKING TRAGEDY AT THE PLENTY.

All the smoke and fire, the crashing of burning forests, the lands laid waste, and the pyres of sheep and cattle carcasses festering in the broiling sun, sink into insignificance beside a horrible incident which occurred at the Plenty, where a mother and five children were killed by roasting and suffocation.

The deceased woman, before referred to, was Mrs. M’Lelland, wife of George M’Lelland, a thriving and industrious settler, residing on the banks of the Diamond Creek, a tributary of the Plenty. Their family consisted of five children, of ages varying from one to eight. Their names were John, James, Joseph, Mary Anne, and William, and these with their mother were the victims of the terrible catastrophe. Their homestead was situated near what is termed “The Ranges,” and about thirty-five miles from Melbourne. M’Lelland was what is known as a well-to-do man, worth about £800, and gradually bettering his condition until crushed by this overwhelming misfortune. On the day of the occurrence M’Lelland and his family were in their hut, little thinking of the destruction which was hurrying upon them with lightning speed from the mountains. Mrs. M’Lelland looked out from the door,
and feeling the effect of the fiery wind sweeping along, she hastily re-entered, declaring it was like the Day of Judgment. In a few minutes a crash was heard as of a peal of thunder, and instantly the hut was a sheet of fire. The horror-stricken inmates endeavoured to break through the flames, the father madly trying to save the children. All, however, he could do was to take the boy Johnny, his pet child, eight years old, and dash out with him through the furnace. A creek of water was close by, and almost surrounded the hut, but short as was the distance, it was too much for the little boy, who faintly begged his “daddy to lay him down,” and, with the words, died from heat and exhaustion. McLeod then placed the body on the ground, and, maimed and half dead himself, succeeded in reaching a creek about 100 yards off, into which he plunged, and, buried to his neck in the water, was able with much difficulty to keep alive until the worst was over. The wife and the other four children forced their way out of the hut after the father, but died a few yards away in the bush. The six corpses, or what remained of them, were collected, placed in a bullock dray, and sent to Melbourne, and they arrived at Fitzroy about 9 o’clock on Saturday evening. The husband was brought in about half-an-hour after, and was an object of deep commiseration. He was so severely burnt and weakened that there were but faint hopes of his recovery. One of his arms was little more than a charred bone. Where the King’s College now stands in Nicholson Street, facing Faraday Street, there was a rakishly rigged-up hostelry known as the Traveller’s Rest, and here the bullock team with its load of roasted corpses pulled up, and the dead were moved inside. Dr. Wilmot, the Coroner, decided upon holding the inquest there the same night, and this having become generally known, there was a large exodus of people from Melbourne to the place. It was moonlight, and the moon has hardly looked upon a more ghastly spectacle from that day to this. It was my painful duty to be present, and the impression engraved on my mind has never been erased. Stretched on a bed was the invalid husband, writhing and groaning piteously; and though his evidence was considered desirable, to use him as a witness was out of the question. Laid out on a tarpaulin in an outhouse were the six corpses, unshapen masses of blackened bones and grilled flesh; all except the poor mother unrecognizable, and the baby more than half consumed. A jury was empanelled, and after the sickening though necessary ceremonial of “viewing” was gone through, Alexander Miller, a shepherd in McLeod’s employ, was examined, and his testimony disclosed as additional facts: That, though there were fires in the Ranges for some days before, they did not approach nearer than ten miles to McLeod’s place until the Thursday morning. He was out driving his sheep to water when he saw the flames coming rapidly towards him through the bush with a loud hissing, crackling noise; and getting alarmed he hurried the sheep back towards the homestead to have them as much as possible out of danger. On arriving there about noon the place was on fire, and he shouted loudly but received no answer. The fire now began to press him so closely as to compel him to abandon the sheep and run for his life, the flames almost up to his heels. With his utmost speed and much difficulty he kept ahead until he arrived at the creek, into which he plunged head foremost, and remained there with only his chin upward above water, scarcely daring to move, and not emerging from his unpleasant bath until dark, when he crept forth and approached to where he had left the hut; but there was not a trace of it remaining. Going back to a portion of the creek from which the family used to fetch water, he there found McLeod up to his neck, and helped him out. Inquiring after the woman and children, he was told they were all dead, and both he and his master then lay down on the bank of the creek, remaining there until the morning, when McLeod proposed that they should go in search of the bodies; but the witness strongly advised that before doing so they should proceed to the station of Dr. Ronald (about three miles distant) for assistance, and this they did. Here McLeod, who was unable to travel further, remained, and Miller procured at the Bridge Inn a bullock team and dray, and returned to McLeod’s, where he found Dr. Ronald, Peter Hunter and John Parish. He was then shown, lying with their faces to the ground, the six dead bodies or what remained of them. They were found some twenty yards from the hut, and had not been moved. The eldest boy was about a dozen yards from the others. Not a scrap of clothing remained on any of them. They were stark naked, black, and burnt. A verdict of “Accidental Death” was returned. Next day, Sunday, all the burnt remains were coffin and interred in the Melbourne Cemetery, and McLeod was transferred to the Hospital, where he slowly recovered, and lived for a few years.
THE RELIEF OF THE SUFFERERS.

It was the Geelong Advertiser that first designated the 6th February "Black Thursday," and to the credit of Geelong a movement to raise funds to alleviate the distress occasioned by the misfortunes of the day, was commenced in that town, where the considerable sum of £1100 was soon raised, and it was subsequently augmented to £1500. On the 18th February a public meeting of the citizens of Melbourne was held at the Mechanics' Institute, to devise means for the relief of the Bush-Fire Sufferers, but the attendance was not so numerous as one would have expected from the nature of the object. The Mayor presided, and addresses were delivered by Messrs. J. P. Fawkner, J. F. Palmer, Wm. Westgarth, N. L. Kentish, John Hodgson, J. T. Smith, Abel Thorpe, T. M'Combie, and J. C. King. Resolutions were passed (1) "Declaring the movement to be one deserving of the hearty support of all persons who have under Divine Providence been exempted from the ruinous losses occasioned by the late dreadful conflagrations, and that by liberal contributions in money or kind to aid in the alleviation of the misery and distress." (2) "That subscription lists be immediately opened, and all be asked to subscribe to meet the emergency of the case;" and (3) "That the Clergy of every denomination be solicited to grant their aid and assistance in promulgating the views and objects of the meeting, and stirring up their congregations to co-operate." The following Committee was appointed to take the steps necessary to effect the purposes contemplated:—viz, the Mayor, Messrs. J. F. Palmer, John Beat, J. B. Bennett, G. S. Brodie, J. Dinwoodie, J. S. Griffin, Robert Kerr, M. O'Connell, N. Guthridge, John Lush, A. F. Greeves, Peter Davis, Abel Thorpe, Dalmahoy and D. S. Campbell, J. R. Pascoe, J. Dunbar, W. U. Tripp, T. Lane, M. Lynch, J. P. Fawkner, J. T. Smith, David Young, Joseph Raleigh, Captain G. W. Cole, and Major W. Firebrace. The Mayor and Mr. Charles Bradshaw were nominated co-Treasurers, and £301 6s. was subscribed in the room, the Chairman, Mr. A. Nicholson, heading the roll with a cheque for £25.

A meeting of the subscribers was held on the 22nd April, with Dr. Palmer as Chairman. The Committee's report showed the total receipts at £1671 17s. 8d., viz, £1603 4s. 8d. subscriptions, and £68 13s. donations from the newspapers in account for printing and advertising. The expenditure consisted of—Various Grants, £633 12s.; To Kilmore Relief Committee, £281 5s.; Incidental Expenses, £9 17s. 4d.; Commission for collecting, and grant to Secretary, £70; Balance, £777 3s. 4d.—£1671 17s. 8d. The balance would be reduced by some outstanding claims to £68 10s. 4d., and this the Committee regarded as any further relief use for it, thus appropriated—£30 each to Melbourne Hospital and Benevolent Asylum, £30 each to the Friendly Brothers and St. James' Visiting Societies, £30 each to St. Peter's Visiting and the Strangers' Friend Societies, and £18 12s. 4d. to the Ladies' Society, established in connection with the Church of England—the uncollected balance when received to be distributed, pro rata, to the same purposes. The report declared that the damage supposed to be suffered, fell considerably short of general expectation. The losses sustained by persons who had been relieved were much over-estimated, and amounted to £6502 5s. 5d. The returns as furnished by a Relief Committee appointed at Kilmore amounted to £3145, and the Plenty £2360, or an aggregate of £12,007 5s. 5d. The number of individuals, inclusive of children, relieved by the Committee was 255, and the amount £914 16s. Separate collections had been made for the Plenty and Kilmore, and for the latter, £281 5s. had been given to purchase seed corn, whilst the Plenty had £131 12s. for the like purpose. The relief was administered upon certain principles determined by the Committee, and to be regulated by the losses and position of the sufferers.

Such a summary appropriation (or mis-appropriation, as many preferred to term it), evoked much dissatisfaction; but as the Committee had not only disposed of, but actually paid away the balance to the several Charities there was no alternative but to grin and bear it. The credit, or discredit of the "sharp practice" was accorded to Dr. Palmer, who had an unhappy knack of often doing a good thing in a wrong way; but there is no doubt that he was freely aided and abetted by three-fourths of his co-Committee men, who were members of the Directories of the several Institutions so pecuniarily benefited.

The surprise and dissatisfaction prevailing amongst the general body of subscribers found vent at a public meeting, held in the Mechanics' Institute, on the 6th May, presided over by Mr. Thomas M'Combie. Here a letter was read from the Rev. A. M. Ramsay, Presbyterian Minister, expressing strong disapproval...
of the action of the Committee. Addresses vehemently denouncing the unauthorized alienation of a fund contributed for a special purpose were delivered by the Chairman, Messrs. John Hodgson, John Hood, N. Guthridge, J. S. Johnston, J. P. Fawkner, and W. R. Belcher. A personal encounter took place between J. P. Fawkner and N. L. Kentish, which was prevented from ending in a pugilistic “set to” only by the strong personal interposition of some of the parties present. Mr. Guthridge stated that M’Lelland, who had lost, wife, family, and all he had in the world by the conflagration, all he received was £40. Resolutions were passed (a) strongly censuring the Central Relief Committee for alienating to other purposes funds collected for the relief of the sufferers by the bush fires; (b) declaring that a gross breach of faith had been committed; and (c) appointing Messrs. R. Gricc, N. Guthridge, T. M’Combie, W. K. Bull, J. Hood, J. R. Pascoe, S. Creswell, E. Sayce, W. R. Belcher, M. Cantlon, R. Duff, J. Bennett, and R. Kerr, a Committee to carry out the intention of the subscribers, and to apply to the several Charitable Institutions specified to refund the money wrongfully paid over to them.

As might be supposed the several applications so made met with refusals, and not a farthing was paid back, for which the several Charities were not to be blamed; for, so far as they were concerned, the cash reached them in a regular way, and they did right to stick to it.

The next course adopted was the presentation of a requisition to the Mayor to convene another indignation meeting, which he declined to do. It was held, however, without his co-operation on the 27th May, when the proceedings were stormy, recriminatory, and very unedifying. A resolution was, however, affirmed insisting in strong terms that the Fire Relief Committee should make restitution of the £658 10s. 4d. so misapplied, and a Committee was appointed to urge the demand accordingly.

The demand was made, and treated with contemptuous silence. No one anticipated any other result, and this was the last publicly heard of a transaction, the undoubted irregularity and injustice of which could not be defended on any honest or rational grounds.

Insurance Companies, and the First Fire Brigade.

Insurance.

The delay and uncertainty entailed in effecting insurances through Sydney and Van Diemenian agencies, suggested the formation of a local Company; and accordingly at a public meeting in the Lamb Inn, on the 6th April, the project was started and the following prospectus adopted: —

Fire and Marine Insurance Company.


Capital, £50,000 in 1000 £50 shares.

The shares were in tolerably good demand, and another meeting was held on the 2nd August, when the first Annual Board of Management was elected; the difference between it and the Provisional Directory being the substitution of Messrs. G. B. Smyth, F. A. Powlett, Alex. Thomson, R. Jamieson, J. O. Denny, and C. Williams, for Messrs. S. J. Browne, John Gardiner, W. F. A. Rucker, J. Simpson, P. W. Welsh, and W. H. Yaldwyn. Further changes in the personnel were subsequently made.

The manager was the same Mr. James Smith who so assiduously watched over the infant destinies of the Savings Bank. Whatever he undertook he stuck to with a zeal and perseverance not to be excelled. Though slow, he was sure, and honest as the sun, and any project with which he was responsibly associated, if it did not rise to an absolute success, never descended to a dead failure. The Insurance Company was conducted in the same offices as the Savings Bank, in Collins Street West; and, though it never did a large share of business, it contrived to pay a dividend. It was not fixed to enjoy a long life; but when it died it gave up the ghost with a clear conscience, for it had not much to answer for. There had been few fires, and the working expenses of the concern were very small, for outside the managerial expenses no outlay was
incurred, except for a few buckets and ladders (not to be found when wanted) and a moderate remuneration to the water-carriers on duty. There were six classes of risks, at premiums ranging from 5s. 6d. to 42s. per cent. Loose straw, hay, or any kind of dry fodder knocking about the yards or street corners, was a constant source of terror to the manager for fear of a fire accident; and if he saw a haystack within a dozen yards of any premises insured, it assumed the proportions of a terrible bogie in his eyes. To make it worse, the townspeople were careless in this respect, and the innkeepers and others used to pile up hay and straw in the enclosures near their houses. In March, 1840, Mr. Smith persuasively hid his Board to issue a notice "declaring the existence of one or more ricks of hay or straw in the immediate vicinity of a building or other property which has been previously insured by the Company, if not duly notified and additional premium paid, to be a violation of the policy, and no such risks would in future be accepted." The rates of premium on marine risks graduated from 1% per cent, to Launceston, to 3 per cent, to England. Towards the close of 1842 there were two extensive fires in Collins Street, which gave the Company such a twist as it never got over, and the next year it shut up. It was said to be the only one of the early companies that was able to return the capital invested.

In 1840 there was established in Melbourne a branch of Lloyd's Agency, with Messrs. Arthur Arnold and Co. as its representatives, and Mr. David Goodall as Surveyor.

In 1841 the Australian Trust Company, incorporated by Royal Charter, with £1,000,000 capital, and a Colonial Board of Directors at Sydney, appointed Messrs. Montgomery and McRae as its Melbourne Solicitors.

In 1840 there was started in London the Australasian Colonial and General Life Assurance and Annuity Company, with a capital of £200,000; and in 1841 it opened an agency at Melbourne under the control of Mr. Alexander Andrew, with Dr. E. C. Hobson as its local Physician. Its leading features were described as participation in the profits, and lower rates of premium than those of most Societies which do not give profits to the Assured.

The Melbourne Fire and Marine Insurance Society was started in April, 1847, with the following Provisional Committee—Messrs. James Simpson, Edmund Wedley, Joseph Raleigh, W. F. Spill, George Annand, Henry Moor, Charles Williamson, James Jackson, F. G. Dalgety, Isaac Buchanan, F. D. Wickham, and Dr. Thomas Black.

It issued a preliminary address, in which it was declared as a reason for its establishment that there are at present about 2536 houses in the Town of Melbourne; and it appears by the late Census, taken in February, 1846, with the increase since that period, that the population of Melbourne exceeds 12,000 souls, with every prospect of a rapid extension of the Town and suburbs. For some years the only means of effecting Insurances was in the Cornwall Fire and Marine Insurance Company, established in Van Diemen's Land, which derived annually a large profit from its operations in Port Phillip. The capital of the Company was to be £50,000—namely, 1000 shares of £50 each, on which £15 per share was to be paid on allotment.

Though this undertaking was inaugurated under the auspices of some of the best business names in Melbourne, it collapsed in a few days, as only 15 persons applied for shares—in all 405—and the Preliminary Committee determined not to go on unless the whole thousand were taken up.

The Victoria Fire and Marine Insurance Company.

In October, 1848, another, but successful, effort was made to float a local Company under the above designation, and on the 11th a preliminary meeting was held at the Royal Hotel. The capital was to be £100,000 in 4000 £25 shares, and the chief projectors were Messrs. C. H. Ebden, Henry Moor, F. D. Wickham, Henry Condell, W. Mee, and W. Mortimer. A further meeting followed on the 12th January, 1849, when it was announced that 3000 shares had been subscribed, but dissatisfaction was expressed that the name of the Chairman (Mr. Ebden) was not down for any. The following Provisional Committee was appointed to promote the object contemplated, viz.:—Messrs. J. R. Murphy, Henry Moor, William Higlett, A. M'Lachlan, George Annand, J. W. Horey, Henry Miller, George James, Hugh Glass, Matthew Gibson, George White, and W. B. Burnley.
A special meeting of shareholders was convened at the same place on the 9th March, Mr. M'Kenzie (the Deputy Sheriff) in the chair. A report from the Provisional Committee disclosed the fact that 3653 shares had been allotted to 370 applicants, of which 3150 were paid for; and of the applicants 300 had signed the deed of settlement. Shareholders of twenty shares were qualified for the Directorate, and there were twenty candidates for the dozen seats of which it was to consist. The election was at once proceeded with, under the scrutiny of Messrs. D. S. Campbell, Frederick Cooper, and Samuel Thorpe. The ballot showed the following result:—Henry Moor, 431; A. M'Lachlan, 416; J. R. Murphy, 413; A. M'Kenzie, 407; Henry Miller, 390; W. B. Burnley, 388; E. B. Greene, 385; M. Gibson, 384. These twelve, as the pollers of the highest numbers, were declared to constitute the first Board. Appended are the unsuccessful aspirants:—George James, 254; J. T. Smith, 162; Hugh Glass, 148; Joseph Hall, 139; John Watson, 109; David Young, 85; Thomas Black, 83; Robert Robinson, 58.

For the Secretarieship there were three candidates, in which contest George Frazer received 187 votes; James Damyon, 173; and Edward Courtney, 176. Frazer continued for several years as Chief Executive Officer of the Institution. Messrs. J. B. Bennett and J. H. Ross had a fight for the Solicitorship, but the first-named won by nearly two to one, the voting being—Bennett, 318; Ross, 160. Subsequently the Board of Management nominated Messrs. Charles Laing and James Ballingall to be House and Marine Surveyors respectively. Such is the origin of a Company which prospered in its work, and continues in its thriving condition to the present.

THE FIRST FIRE BRIGADE.

The occurrence of several fires in Melbourne and notably the one at Condell's Brewery, in Little Bourke Street, in July, 1845, quickened into activity a long slumbering desire for the formation of some recognized body outside the military and police to assist in the extinction of fire. To effect this purpose a public meeting, convened by the Mayor (Moor), was held at the Royal Hotel, Collins Street, on the 21st July. The result was the formation of a "Fire Prevention Society," to be supported by voluntary subscriptions. In September the Society made the following appointments, viz.:—Inspector: The City Chief-Constable (Mr. A. J. Sugden). Foreman: Mr. Jeremiah Dalton. Firemen: Henry Rankin, Peter Cartmough, Daniel M'Intosh, John Cross, Robert Knox, and William Jordan. It was bitterly complained that the public support was not accorded as liberally as it ought to have been, for the maintenance of such an institution, and it was mentioned as a reproach upon the public spirit of the time that out of a town population of 12,000, only 204 persons opened their pockets in the good cause. The Directors of the Victorian Insurance Company, in February, 1851, took the concern under its wing, and reformed it very considerably. In its reconstructed condition it thus appeared:—Superintendent, Chief-Constable Bloomfield; Foremen Jeremiah Dalton, and Daniel O'Reilly; Firemen, Michael Lynch, J. W. Roberts, R. Williamson, D. McCarthy, John Ryan, P. Ryan, M. Herphoy, M. Doohan, Oliver Johnstone, and David Rosier.
CHAPTER XXXIV.
THEATRICAL AND KINDRED ENTERTAINMENTS.

SYNOPSIS:—The Pavilion Described.—Hodges the Moving Spirit.—Hodges' Misfortunes.—Collapse of the Pavilion Management.—First Amateur Theatrical Association.—First Theatrical Performance.—The Theatre Royal.—Death of Mr. Richard Capper.—Attempted Abduction of Miss Sinclair.—A "Green-room" Fight.—Entr'Acte Amusements:—Attempt to Capsize a Theatre.—"The Crib."—"Captain of the Guard."—The Royal Victoria Theatre.—Hodges in the Insolvent Court.—Collaps of the Amateur Dramatic Association.—Formation of an Amateur Club.—Batters, the Tinker.—First Professional Playbill.—Storming the Dress Circle.—"The Ghost" Coned to Walk.—Death of Mr. Knowles.—New Arrivals.—A Theatrical Riot.—Demolition of the Pavilion.—Smith's Queen Street Theatre.—Opening of the New Theatre Royal.

THE PAVILION.

WHEREAS a time (not very long ago) when taverns, though unlike angels, were, like angels' visits, few and far between, in Bourke Street, and towards the end of 1840, there were only three licensed victuallers in all that now throbbing thoroughfare. Where the big Bull and Mouth fattens and flourishes on public favour, there nestled a small single-floured, weather-boarded, shingle-roofed, cottage-like hostelry called the Eagle Inn, a drinking rendezvous of some note, kept by a Mr. J. Jamieson who though he reigned, did not govern, for its constitution was an absolute gynocracy, administered by the hostess, known far and near as "Mother Jamieson." The establishment was specially patronized by a not very fascinating, though lively, Cyprian, named Jenny M'Lood, and acquired a questionable popularity. The barman was a Mr. Thomas Hodges, much given to boasting of the confidential relations that subsisted between him and the elder Charles Kean in the Mother-country, and by all accounts Hodges had, at some time, rendered himself useful to the great tragedian by polishing his boots, brushing his coat, or in some equally necessary domestic offices. Whilst engaged in such menial attentions, either brush or boot-jack might have communicated some germs of contagion, for Hodges became partially stage-struck, and began whispering some of his theatrical musings in the ear of Jamieson. There was a certain method in his madness, for he succeeded in making Jamieson believe that in the establishment of a theatre he should discover a mine that would open to him a door to untold wealth. The project was fully considered at several "cabinet" meetings attended by the landlord, "Mother" Jamieson, Jenny, and Hodges, and it was at length resolved to start a theatre—Hodges to be the ostensible proprietor, and Jamieson to supply most, if not the entire, sinecures of war. In January, 1841, it was publicly announced that a wooden theatre, or pavilion, was to be erected. Its dimensions were to be 65 feet by 35 feet, the sum of £1000 was to be expended on its construction, and it was to be completed in two months; but it was not until the end of February that the foundation was laid. The finishing touch was at length put to the Pavilion, which stood on the centre of the ground now occupied by the Spanish Restaurant and Hosie's Scotch Pie Shop, and it was one of the queerest fabrics imaginable. Whenever the wind was high it would rock like an old collier at sea, and it was difficult to account for it not heeling over in a gale. The public entrance from Bourke Street was up half-a-dozen creaking steps; and the further ascent to the "dress circle," and a circular row of small pens known as upper boxes or gallery, was by a ladder-like staircase of a very unstable description. Internally it was lighted by tin sconces, nailed at intervals to the boarding, filled with guttering candles, flickering with a dim and sickly glare. A swing lamp and wax tapers were afterwards substituted, and the immunity of the place
THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

from fire is a marvel. It was never thoroughly water-proof, and, after it was opened for public purposes, in wet weather the audience would be treated to a shower bath. Umbrellas were not then the common personal accompaniment they are now in Melbourne, but such playgoers as could sport a convenience of the kind took it to the theatre, where it was often found to be as necessary within as without. The expanded gingham would, of course, very considerably incommode the comfort and view of the adjacent sitters, but that was a consideration so trifling as to be scarcely thought about.

Hodges now looked upon the realization of his fondly-cherished hope, and was a happy man; but his happiness was of brief duration, for the Pavilion brought to him and Jamieson a series of tribulations. One difficulty followed another until the Insolvency and Equity Courts ultimately stepped in, curing the one of his dramatic craze, and, though not reimbursing the other for his outlay, teaching him a bitter lesson which might have done him much good had it come earlier. On one important point the promoters of the scheme had singularly reckoned their chickens before they were hatched, for the first hitch cropped up in the obtaining a license. An application was made to the Police Court, and was refused because (1) the Magistrates were in doubt as to whether Melbourne was then sufficiently ripe for such a species of amusement; and (2) there was no reasonable guarantee that the place would be properly conducted. This unexpected rebuff threw Hodges on his beam ends, and the result was that the Pavilion was opened with a musical performance, but of a very equivocal description, spiced with low buffoonery, ribaldry, and interludes of riot and confusion.

The police were obliged to interfere, and the disreputable doings having been brought under the notice of the Police Magistrate, he peremptorily ordered Hodges and his Pavilion to shut up. The arrival of a Mr. George Buckingham, from a Dramatic Company at Adelaide, brought a little sunshine to the heart of poor Hodges, who induced the new comer to memorialize the police bench for a license; but the document was not considered to be respectably signed, and there was a second refusal which sent the Pavilion to the auctioneer's hammer; but no one could be found fool-hardy enough to knock it down, and it was bought in for £700. After this, occasionally, the authorities, from motives of compassion, winked at the giving of a public concert now and then, but no application for a regular license would be listened to. One evening in January, 1842, a so-called concert was given, but of such a very low class as to outrage all the proprieties. Hodges was consequently summoned by the Chief-Constable for breach of the Act of Council 9, Geo. IV, Sec. 2, regulating places of public exhibition and entertainment, convicted and fined £50 or six months' imprisonment. He was still able to raise the wind sufficiently to keep out of gaol, for the fine was paid.

It was suggested that the Pavilion might be temporarily utilised for a course of amateur performances, in aid of an Hospital then in course of projection. A theatrical license could only be recommended by the bench of Magistrates, its issue lying with the Colonial Secretary, at Sydney, but the sanction of the local bench obtained, the other followed almost as a matter of course. Six gentlemen accordingly enrolled themselves as an Amateur Theatrical Association for charitable and benevolent purposes, and as their position supplied prima facie evidence that any licensing privilege conceded was not likely to be abused (an erroneous supposition), the recommendation of the local bench of magistrates was easily obtained, and so, in the beginning of 1842, the Sydney authorities granted permission to open the Pavilion for theatrical representations for one month. The half-dozon obtainers of the temporary license constituted a Board of Stewards, and as they comprised a barrister, an attorney, three newspaper editors, and an assistant editor, they exercised considerable influence. Kerr, of the Patriot, had obtained some reputation for his private rendering of Scotch characters, his great hit being an impersonation of Bailie Nicol Jarvie. Gilbert Beith, the first Town Treasurer, was quite at home in the Dugald Creature. Mr. George Cooper, a big black barber, possessed some small dramatic ability, overlaid by a tremendous quantity of assurance; and Mr. Michael Cashmore, Inspector of the Meat Market, felt himself equal to anything, from Hamlet or Shylock down to executing a hornpipe. Then there was old "Jemmy Warman," the owner of two dashing daughters; and Menes. John Davies, reporter for the Patriot, and G. D. Boursiquot, of the Gazette, smart, wide-awake, self-possessed "gents," who responded to the call made upon their good nature freely, and so matters moved swimmingly. A five-guinea prize was offered for the best inauguration ode or poem, but there was no response.