

SIR GEORGE DIBBS.

Sir George Dibbs Premier of New South Wales is a much talked of gentleman just now.

He was born on Flagstaff Hill, opposite the Sydney Observatory, sixty years ago, the son of Capt. John Dibbs, a Scotch seaman and Presbyterian, and his wife an English woman and an adherent of the Established Church. Both his parents had seen the world and had had many adventures, including an attack by pirates on a lonely sea. For four years George attended the Australian College, founded by Dr. Lang. At fourteen he left school to occupy a stool in a merchant's office. There he received a good commercial training, but growing restless, at nineteen he struck out for himself in company with his brother, secured vessels, and traded between Newcastle, Sydney, and Melbourne. About 1864, when the crops failed all over Australia, the Dibbs conceived the idea of extending their operations to South America, and George undertook to manage the interests of the firm at Valparaiso and San Francisco. He left Sydney with his wife and family, to find when he arrived at Concepcion that the colonies had rebelled against Spain. Concepcion was being bombarded, and when Dibbs' vessels was sighted a blank shot was fired, the usual signal to heave to. Dibbs took no notice, but proceeded in through shot and shell which the frigate sent flying over his decks. When he dropped anchor a boat with a brass gun was put off from the warship, and an officer boarded the vessel. When asked why he had not obeyed the signal, Sir George says he "replied in the language of Queen Caroline, 'I don't know what you mean.'" He was ordered to clear out, but by appealing to the British Consul his case was referred to the Admiral. This caused a delay of fourteen days, and in the meantime Dibbs was transacting his business, so that when the Admiral gave his decision against him he was prepared to leave Concepcion. At Valparaiso he ran the blockade in a little boat with his wife and family on board and a storm on his heels; at the dead hour of the night stealing through the war vessels, who had strict orders to sink all intruders. His business transactions here succeeded famously. These were stirring times. Every hour brought a fresh adventure—"which surpasses anything in dime novels," he says. It was soon after this that he got into trouble over a libel action, and upon declining to pay the costs, which he considered unfair, was removed to the debtor's department in Darlinghurst Goal. For twelve months he remained there, and he now declares that he never spent a more enjoyable time in all his life. Sir Henry Parkes, who was then Colonial Secretary, granted him a lathe, and as a token of gratitude he turned a cup, which he presented to Sir Henry. Three thousand five hundred people visited him, and ladies decorated his cell regularly with flowers. He had a sitting room, a bedroom, and a servant to wait upon him, and he amused himself by making boats and ornaments, reading, and assisting to conduct a newspaper. But at the end of twelve months he found that his liability instead of having vanished was as fresh as ever, so he paid the costs and was set at liberty. When invited a day or two after to Government House, he said to Lady Loftus, "You should be careful of what you are doing. You have asked a man who has just left jail." "If I had been in your place," she said, "I would have gone to jail myself."

But if Sir George Dibbs could be only persuaded to write his confessions the most picturesque chapter in an exciting book would be—"How I became the Lion of London." I can only give a weak description of his interview with the Queen. Lord Knutsford presented him to Her Majesty at Buckingham Palace, where he had the honor of answering her many inquiries about the people of Australia. She introduced him to one of her daughters. The Queen, being in mourning, wore a plain black dress. Sir George was charmed with her simple manners.

The political life of Sir George Dibbs is a matter of history. "I have always been fighting," he said, "and since I took office I have had to stand at my post sword in hand." "Payment of members," he told me on another occasion, "is as bad as the Irish potato rot." To that he attributes the low standard of Parliamentary life in New South Wales. In the Cabinet, I have heard his ministers say, he proves himself an ideal chief. He does not, perhaps "see things steadily, and see them whole," but he is always ready to listen to the humblest of his members, and is always amenable to reason. He decides promptly, and carries his resolution into effect with the energy and determination of his character. He must face the music of general election in June. "Federation is the only thing worth fighting for in politics," says Mr. Barton; but Sir George Dibbs is opposed to Federation. He would advocate unification, placing all the colonies under one central government and one governor. Whether the electors return Sir George Dibbs to power or reject him, he is likely to be for some years a great force in the political life of Australia.—*Review of Reviews.*

Life as It is in a Mining Camp.

Life as it is in a mining camp bears an ideally picturesque aspect, and whether situated in the dark shadow of some rocky gorge, through which rushes a noisy, snow-fed torrent, or upon a rocky and precipitous hillside, the scene is equally wild and romantic.

The little cabins are nestled in sheltered nooks, where a bit of level ground can be found large enough to hold the miniature structure, with usually a sentinel pine at the door and a well-worn path to the stream, which lashes and foams along its rocky bed; or they cling to the steep mountain sides, where winding trails lead to the ravine below. The hills, the gulches, the very rocks are liberally honeycombed with dark tunnels and "prospect holes," where men have searched with pick and powder for the precious metals, and many a hope lies burned in these excavations, with thin white "clumps" gleaming like new graves among the grey rocks and the green pines.

The camp that has outlived its boom has an especially desolate air. The old shaft houses, with their tall smoke-stacks leaning like the Tower of Pisa, the long tunnels, the deep, dark, and gruesome shafts, going down hundreds of feet into the earth, with their rotten timbers and damp, slippery ladders, which erst have borne the feet of merry workmen to their labors, give one a chill of horror to look down into their yawning depths, and one can fancy he sees the ghastly sight of the miner's candle flickering here and there in the gloom.

But the busy camp, the camp that is booming, is anything but quiet. At seven o'clock whistles blow, and swarms of men begin to disappear into the earth like prairie dogs into their burrows, and hundreds of feet below the surface, by the pale light of tallow candles, they drill and blast the solid rock all day. At five they come up pale and half blinded by the sunlight, while the "night shift" goes down to their place to continue the work through the night.

Once a miner always a miner, seems to be the rule. Perhaps it is the spice of danger ever present in the probability of an exploding cap of the giant powder, a loosened rock, or the falling of timber or machinery that leads to a fascination to many whose nature it is to toy with danger. At any rate, a real miner seldom abandons his occupation, although he may meet with countless mishaps or lose months of pay in some dishonest company.

While the work underground has its attractions for the brawny arm and skilled hand, that of the anxious proprietor above, prowling among the rocks and scanning every seam and crevice in search of gold, is full of alternate hope and despondency, and many a man grown grey in the work has finally lain down to die, broken in heart and body in his mad following of the most exasperating will-o'-the-wisp that ever lured men to despair.

And if ever the gentle Goddess of Hope transforms herself into a demon, it is when she beckons with her alluring fingers through mountain fastnesses, while her victim plods with weary tread, ever searching step by step for that which he will never find.

A man may be learned in mineralogy, and may be able to tell at a glance the nature and quality of ore. He may explain to you the difference between telluride and tellurium. He may know all the different strata and formations, and be able to survey the distance through a mountain to an inch.

And while this learned man canters gaily along, fully equipped for a successful prospecting tour, some poor tenderfoot, or green hobo, plodding by abstractedly, kicks over a rotten stump, or digs his heels into the ground as he rests in the shade of a pine; and lo! the precious metal is in sight.

The tenderfoot may or may not know that the rusty ore beneath his feet is worth £200 per ton. The smart man may ride along and offer him a fair price for his find, or hoot at the idea of its value, and eventually get it all; and, again, the finder may be smart enough to hold on to it.

Mr. Wilson's Views.

Mr. Wilson, author of the Wilson bill, has given the following statement of his views on the tariff situation in the United States:—"I cannot see where we fail to do anything we could do to bring about a better result. When I have done the best, according to my capacity and judgement, I must fall back on the consciousness of duty done. The difficulty which the country must recognize is that on the tariff we did not have a democratic senate, and whatever has been gained has been wrested from a protection body. I have been willing to take any, even the most desperate, chances that gave the least hope of success in getting rid of the most objectionable senate amendments, and would have fought to the fourth of March with any ground to stand upon any following to sustain me. We have been confronted by a senate with closed ranks, while we have had divisions from the beginning that have been fomented from the senate, and the growing impatience of members to go to their districts with anything that might be called a tariff reduction bill has made them unwilling to stay unless promise could be given of assured or most probable victory. We could not honestly give such a promise, and a man cannot continue a battle with his army ready and eager to break away."

Horses succumb to cold quicker than any other animal.

Is Marriage a Failure?

No more stupid question is propounded than the current inquiry, "Is marriage a failure?" You might as well ask, "Is business a failure?" Men embark in marriage as they do in business from a variety of motives; have a vast variety of methods, a vast difference in ideals. If we knew nothing of business except from the records and testimony of bankruptcy cases, prosecutions for misfeasance or malfeasance in business, we should conclude that no man ought to embark in a commercial career: so of marriage, if we knew nothing of it save the records and testimony of divorce suits or of those notoriously unhappy marriages that never seek the relief of divorce courts, but either take flight, lead lives of infamous infidelity within wedlock or sullenly "grin and bear," the consequences of their mistake until death puts asunder what God never joined, we should think "marriage a failure," but we all know that it is the wounded birds that always flutter; we all know that there are thousands of successful, upright, honest men of business who are not obliged to go into court to confess the failure of their methods or their incapacity for a commercial career; we all know there are thousands of married folks who never trouble the divorce courts because they have no cause for serious dissatisfaction. Marriage is a failure just as a commercial career is a failure which is subordinated to low motives, sharp practice and immoral ideas. If a man or woman marries without affection, for a home, for social advantage or for some equally mercenary thought, what business have they to pronounce "marriage a failure" if they get more than they bargained for and a mercenary, worldly marriage becomes by happy evolution a true marriage of affection, conjugal loyalty and felicity they surely have reason to congratulate themselves, but if they married from low motives and got only what they bargained for, what business have they to be denouncing "marriage a failure" because they find no spiritual sweetness in it?—*Seattle Post-Intelligencer.*

The Guillotine's Work.

After the work of fitting up the guillotine had been finished at 4.30 o'clock last Thursday morning at Lyons, France, Headsman Diebler went to the prison to bring Caserio to the guillotine. When the director of the prison went to call Caserio he found him fast asleep. He said in a loud voice: "Caserio, the hour has come when you must expiate your crime." Caserio sat up in bed, but said nothing. The prison director added: "Here is a judge to here your dying confession, a chaplain to give you religious consolation and your legal defender to receive your last wishes and recommendations." Caserio replied: "I have nothing to say to the judge, I do not wish to hear the chaplain, I have no recommendation to make." All this he stammered out in a trembling voice. During his toilet he said not a word, but trembled violently, and it was necessary for the attendants to almost carry him to the van waiting for him. When the guillotine was reached he twisted and struggled violently, trying to resist the headsman's aides.

At the moment of the fatal stroke applause burst forth from the crowd. Spectators who had witnessed a number of executions stated they had never observed on any former occasion the spontaneous expression of satisfaction at the carrying out of the death sentence. The corpse was hurried directly to the Cimetiere Guillotiere. When the basket was opened the head of the victim presented a disgusting spectacle. At the point where the knife had cut through the neck the skin had rolled back in ridges on the back of the head, showing the effects of the strait to which the body had been subjected by the victim's struggles at the moment of the fatal stroke. The remains were thrust into a coffin, the head being placed between the legs of the corpse, and without ceremony the coffin was thrown into a grave and quickly covered up with earth.

Looking Backwards.

"I was with Debs—" the stranger said, Cried John Most: "Say no more But stay and drink a schooner Within my humble door!"

"As I remarked—" began the tramp; "Nay, rest thee!" cried John Most, "Slave, bring the worthy Anarchist Much beer and eggs on toast!"

"It was a bitter struggle—" "Aye, truly!" quoth John Most, "But ere thee tell thy story, Eat! Drink! I'll be thy host."

The stranger ate voraciously, And quaffed deep mugs of beer: While John Most waited patiently The thrilling tale to hear.

"You were with Debs?" he asked at last, The stranger cried: "Sure, Mike! I took the Keady cure with Debs Two years before the strike!" —*New York Sun.*

She (tenderly)—"Tell me, dearest what emboldened you to propose? How did you guess that I loved you, darling?" He—"To be frank with you love, your papa intimated that if I didn't mean business after coming to see you for two years I had better clear out and let some other fellows have a chance."

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