

OLD AUSTRALIAN DAYS.

THE STORY OF A MAN WHO SAW THE TIMES OF GOLD FEVER.

Conclusion of an Interesting Narrative of Personal Adventure—The Last Seen of Lanky Jim—How The Colony Has Progressed in Later Times.

The roads that winter, being very heavy, caused freights to run up, as high at one time to £100 per ton, thus making the cost of living, even for the bare necessities of life, quite an item in one's income. For instance, flour in bags at the rate of \$80 per barrel; butter, Irish mostly, 4 shillings per pound; English ham and bacon at the same price; sugar one and sixpence per pound; in fact, nothing in the way of groceries was not sold less than one and sixpence per pound. Fresh vegetables were rarely seen; milk was not to be had at all. As to horse feed, the prices would astonish farmers of the present day. From a memorandum book now before me of our expenses at the time, I find that the lowest price we paid on Bendigo, for oats was 20 shillings per bushel, up to 32 shillings, the highest. Bran from 11 shilling to 15 shillings per bushel. For a stack of wild hay, about 1½ ton, £50; for 800 pounds of oat hay £18. At another time, £5 for 112 pounds; oat hay was oats cut green and made into hay. Of course in Melbourne, the prices were less than one half, yet with such heavy expenses we could not get \$10 per day each. I also see that the price of oats varied according to the place of growth. American was the lowest, Cape of Good Hope next, and English the highest, thus showing that they were imported from those places.

One would imagine that such a fertile country as Australia, could supply its own wants. The fact was that the influx of population was so great and so sudden, that it was impossible to do so, therefore nearly everything had to be imported. In course of time, as the lands were thrown open for selection, a change came over the face of the country, figuratively. It began to blossom as the rose, in ten years time cereals, fruit and vegetables, were as plentiful and as cheap as in this country. Victoria to-day, ships grain to Europe, and I read not long ago that Australia was competing with Nova Scotia, for the apple trade in the London market.

I fear it may be thought that I have lost sight of the subject of my story. Not so. The last time I saw Lanky Jim on Bendigo was one morning he called on his way to a new rush, about 50 miles away, called Simpson's ranges, now known as Maryboro. "If you come lads find us out and I will lay you on," said Jim, and we did follow in a month or so. In our case it was dropping the bone to grasp the shadow.

New rushes had a wonderful drawing influence. It was hard to reason against the folly of giving up a certainty for an uncertainty when one heard of their acquaintances making lucky hits. We did not meet with Jim at the new rush—it was any wonder amidst a helter skelter population of 25,000?

About seven years after, whilst walking through a small mining town in the Mount Arrat district, two hundred miles from Melbourne, I saw a man rush out of a tent, followed by a woman who was pounding him with a good sized stick and accompanying each blow with a well known colonial epithet. Such encounters I had often witnessed before, so I halted with the view of acting as mediator. The appearance of the man interested me. Surely I have seen that heavy bow-legged figure before. Can it be Lanky Jim? Yes it was. When the woman retreated to her tent I said, "Hello Jim, is that you?" Don't you know me?" My word lad I do not. Do you remember Eagle Hawk and the night you saved me from the dogs?" "My colonial oath I do," grasping my hands. Supposing him to be married I asked if his wife had been reading him the riot act. "Oh," said he, "I am not married, that is old Dick Downey's wife. It is a way she has of thanking anyone who does her husband a good turn. I think it is my misfortune to be always misunderstood. In passing that shanty you see there below the hill I saw old Dick very drunk and daring every one to fight. Knowing that he could not fight even when sober, I brought him home and put him in his tent. So you saw how she rewarded me. Of course the old woman thought it was I who had made him drunk. No, as a rule I avoid drinking with married men, as their wives, the fools, think their husbands would never drink unless enticed out."

Poor Jim was very changed and broken down. "Still digging?" I inquired. "Yes, I am working in a shallow gully just over the range. I am a hatter (that is, working alone). I knock out a few pennyweights a day when I choose to work. That keeps the pot aboiling. My wants are not many—besides I have £100 planted."

I then enquired what he had been doing since we last met. "Oh, very well. Had a golden hole on Simpson Range. Then went to Firey Creek rush and to many others. Yes, and did well at nearly every place. My word, but the amount of gold I have dug this last ten years—but what good has it been to me? By the way," he asked, "is 'Bendigo Mac' the terror still alive?" "Yes," I said. "Ah, the devil never hurries those he is sure of. I am not much of a believer in the brimstone lake story, but I do think there should be some place of

punishment to meet such cases as Bendigo Mac. It would not be advisable for any of our lads to write his epitaph." "Ah, Jim, everything is changed there now," I said. "Mr. Public Opinion and the press have rectified the oppressions of the early days. Now Jim," I continued, I should like to know something of your early history if you have no objection." "You shall have it lad, but you will find it not a pleasant one, I assure you." "Well, come and see me this evening. You see that store on yonder flat with the two blue flags—you will find me there."

In the evening he came as arranged, and perfectly sober. The thoughts of having to refer to his past life had quite a depressing effect on him.

In a tone of melancholy sadness he related in substance as follows:

"The thought of my misspent life is breaking me down. I have nothing to live for, and do not care how soon the end comes. I am rushing on, as it were, without hope. I drink not for the love of liquor but to drown the recollection of the past. My old pals and acquaintances are fast disappearing and I am not now disposed to form new friendships. My parents are dead and I am dead to all my relatives. When a man is banished from his native country as a convict, though it be for a limited term, that country is no longer his."

"My parents were plain, hard working, respectable folk. My father was a blacksmith, and I was brought up to his trade. As a young man I was jovial, industrious and happy. I was naturally honest, but I did wrong, not realizing it to be so at the time. Sometimes with lively companions I would be tempted to snare a hare or part-ridge. We knew it was against the law, but could see nothing wicked in it. Of a sudden I was caught and in self defence, resisted the game-keeper rather vigorously. However I was over-powered and hurried off to goal. My trial was short. I was sentenced to seven years penal servitude. But the greatest trial was yet to come, and that was in parting. Oh the remembrance of the last interview with my dear old mother in the goal is ever before me."

"I was her favorite son. Poor thing, it broke her heart; she died two years after. My prison life in Tasmania was hard and dreary, particularly to one brought up in a country village, and always used to freedom. I was not of a rebellious spirit, and therefore did not chafe under restraint as some did. A year of my sentence was abated. I was let out on ticket of leave. Then I worked at my trade, and earned money sufficient to pay my way to Melbourne, and thence to Bendigo. My success there and subsequent movement, you are familiar with."

"But," said I to him, "Jim, I wonder that when you made your first money on Bendigo, that you did not take a trip home, it only on a visit."

"Ah, lad," said he, in his Lancashire dialect, "you little know the feelings of a man banished his country for breaking its laws. My mother I knew was dead. My father, if alive and my brothers and sisters would rejoice to see me but the odium surrounding a returned convict would cause a mortification which would more than outweigh the pleasure of seeing each other for a short time."

The pathos and feeling exhibited by Jim in his confession appear inconsistent with the rough character as shown in our first acquaintance with him, thus clearly proving that we cannot always judge one's heart by external appearances, for behind his rough exterior there was an honest kindly nature, as I had proof of it on many occasions. He was to be pitied more than condemned."

A few days after I bade him good-bye, never to see him again, as the following year found me 400 miles from there in the Australian Alps, Gipps Land. Before leaving Australia I had a desire to revisit the scene of my early gold digging days. So one morning I stepped into a railway car and was whirled up to Bendigo in as many hours as it used to take days to cover the distance. The change in appearance was surprising. Old landmarks were gone, canvas shanties had given place to fine hotels, slab stores to fine brick and stone buildings. The government offices of wood and canvas to permanent structures. Yes, Bendigo Mac was still there and in the same capacity, but the camp was no longer supplied with confiscated liquors. For dusty roads and dangerous crossings there were well macadamized streets. The cotton tents of the diggers had been supplanted by snug weather browned houses with lovely gardens attached.

To look back 12 years to the first night spent there of the thousands of tents, each with its campfire lighting up the district far and near, the discharge of fire arms during the evening, barking of dogs, songs, shouting, etc., it was difficult to realize that it was the same place.

Bendigo has since continued to advance. It is now the greatest quartz mining centre, with the deepest mines in the world. In my day three fourths of the gold was dug by the light of day. Now they are burrowing to a depth of over half a mile into the bowels of the earth. By a late paper I learn that there are 24 perpendicular shafts 2000 feet and over, and one, the deepest, is crosscutting at two thousand eight hundred feet.

The growth of the colony of Victoria has been phenomenal. It is about 55 years since Bateman built the first house on the present site of Melbourne. True, its sudden rise was due largely to the gold discoveries, but independent of its mineral wealth, Victoria has within herself the element of success namely a productive soil and healthful climate. The Eucalyptus, with its fever destroying and health growing properties, standing sentinels to ward off epidemics, defying even cholera, at the same time beckoning the world at large to come and partake.

I. E. WILSON
Halifax.

A small boy gives his views on a very pertinent subject in these graphic words: "Some boys is honestest than others, and there's no way to tell them apart except you pretend to forget your knife, and watch 'em jump for it. The one that jumps last is the honestest one."

A QUEBEC MIRACLE.

A CASE THAT HAS ASTONISHED THE ANCIENT CAPITAL.

Thomas, Crotty's Remarkable Recovery—Helpless, Tortured and Deformed by Inflammatory Rheumatism—Taken to his Home from a Hospital to Die when Relief Comes—The Particulars of the Case as Investigated by a "Telegraph" Reporter.

(The Telegraph, Quebec.)

It is admitted on all sides that this is an age of wonders, and there is no reason why wonders should not be accomplished in medical as well as in other branches of scientific research. Of late scarcely a week passes but what we read in Canadian and American newspapers of remarkable cures accomplished through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. We confess that we have not paid much attention to their worth until lately, when more than one marvellous cure in our midst has been brought to our attention, convincing us, as well as others, of the priceless value of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Among the cases thus brought to our notice is one which we consider it our bounden duty to chronicle. The case is that of Mr. Thomas Crotty, a young man well known in the city of Quebec, who has been brought back from the very brink of the grave to restored health.

The subject of this sketch is the son of Mr. Thomas Crotty, who resides at No. 63 St. Patrick street. Thomas Crotty, jr., is 29 years of age, and for the past eight years has been a martyr to inflammatory rheumatism, in fact so much so that for the past year he has been a deformed cripple. Last winter he was removed to the Hotel Dieu hospital for treatment. Every day he gradually grew worse, and his sufferings, according to the good sisters in charge, were excruciating. The very flesh left his body, and from his chest downward he became paralyzed. His arms and legs were twisted into a mis-shapen condition, and the poor fellow was an object of pity to look upon. During the month of May last he became blind and deaf, and was unable to move even his head without causing intense pain. His digestive organs refused to act, and the only nourishment he could partake was milk, and that had to be given him with a spoon, and at one time his mouth had to be forced open while the poor fellow was being spoon-fed. Finally his life was despaired of by the attending physicians, Drs. Vallee, Cattellier and Turcotte, who admitted that they could do nothing for him, and said that his death was only a matter of time. When Crotty's mother heard this she determined on bringing her son home to die. Consequently on the 24th of May last the patient was wrapped up in flannels and taken to his parent's home by means of the city ambulance. After an elapse of two weeks his sight returned, but otherwise his condition was apparently growing worse. It was at this juncture that the members of the family had their attention arrested by one of the remarkable cures published in the Telegraph, resulting from the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Crotty asked his mother to procure some. The good woman never for a moment thought they would be of any use, but determined to gratify him. By the time the second box was used it was seen that there was a very slight change for the better, and this gave hope to persist in the use of the Pink Pills, and Crotty continued taking them until he was brought so often to the attention of the Telegraph, that we determined to investigate the matter for ourselves, and one of our reporters was despatched to see Crotty, who we knew very well for years, as he was one of the first boys, when the Telegraph was started twenty years ago, to sell the paper, and we have known him ever since and watched his enterprising career, and the majority of the citizens of Quebec will recognize in him Thomas Crotty, the book agent.

MR. CROTTY'S STATEMENT.

When it was found that Crotty was getting better it was decided to remove him again to the Hotel Dieu hospital, and there our reporter found him reading a newspaper and looking quite cheerful, and apparently very far from the grave. In the course of a long interview Mr. Crotty corroborated what the reporter had already heard, adding that "he never expected to be alive at present, and the friends who saw him alive last May entertained the same opinion." Said Crotty, "I owe my life to Dr. Williams' wonderful Pink Pills. It is well known in this city that I have suffered with inflammatory rheumatism for the past eight years, but no one but myself can know the agony I suffered, because it is indescribable. I often prayed to be relieved by death. On the 24th of May last, when the doctors gave me up, I was taken home and I was resigned to meet death as a pleasure, but kind Providence had willed it otherwise. It was then that I came across one of those wonderful cures through Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and determined to try them. At my solicitation my mother got some, and, strange to say, before I had been taking them very long I felt a difference in my condition. This encouraged me, and the blood which had left off coursing through my veins was once more circulating. As time went on the terrible pains began to ease and my appetite began to return, and I found that I was being brought back from the grave to a new life. My legs and arms, which had been paralyzed, began to show life, and I now became sensitive to the least draught of air. I then thought that I would be better in the hospital, and was again brought back, and am improving in health and strength every day. The doctors have not interfered with my taking Pink Pills, though they first examined them very curiously."

Crotty showed the reporter how his once deformed limbs were regaining their proper shape. There is a stiffness still in the joints of his knees and wrists, which is only to be expected after his years of suffering, but in other respects he is a healthy man, eating well and sleeping well. The good sisters in charge of the hospital agree that he is cured through the agency of Dr. Williams' wonderful Pink Pills, and every day they bring visitors to see the patient and the wonderful cure which has been accomplished by this remarkable remedy, which is today acknowledged to be one of the greatest achievements of modern science."

The reporter called at the residence of Mr. Crotty's parents, and this story was fully corroborated by Mrs. Crotty, an intelligent woman, who expressed in warm terms the gratitude she felt at her son's restoration from a life of agony, from, in fact, a living death.

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