

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1893.

A GOLD HUNTER'S LIFE.

[Australian Incidents--Written for PROGRESS.]

As I have already said that old hands at times liked to show their cleverness at stealing. I was told of a party of three Nova Scotians who on arriving on the diggings, after a hard day's tramp over a dusty road and being very tired, pitched their tent temporarily, made a field bed on the ground and retired to rest. During the night some one quietly removed the tent from over them. In the morning when they awoke they found themselves veritable star gazers. I feel sure that this was intended as a joke. As a rule there was not much petty thieving on the diggings. Their chief object was gold and money. We once had our tent entered while we were at work notwithstanding there was a dog tied to the door post. With the exception of three pistols and some gold specimens nothing else was taken. They turned up the beds and ransacked the place thoroughly but failed to find some gold I had planted inside.

The average old hand was a puzzling combination of character. Dishonest but not grasping, would steal from a stranger and help a friend, generous always. If you did them any act of kindness they would repay it four fold. As to religion they pressed none, therefore could not be charged of backsliding or hypocrisy. "No," said Jim to me, "all religious instructions instilled into me in my youth were effectually crushed out during my prison life, and it is now so long a time since I was inside a church that I would fear it might fall on me if I entered one, no we would never wear a church out." In politics they were neutral but always against government, no matter which side was in power.

There was another class of ex-convicts known as bushrangers. They were desperadoes of the most determined kind, daring and reckless, with an utter disregard to life. Their great forte was highway robbery and horse stealing. They had an organized system extending from Melbourne to the diggings, by which constant communication was kept up and the whereabouts of the maritime police known. One day perhaps 50 people would be bailed up and robbed. The next day the same thing would occur 40 miles away, thus eluding capture. Their mode of horse stealing was thus. Say they stole a horse on Bendigo. That night it would be ridden 20 or 25 miles across country, then hobbled and turned loose to feed in an out-of-way flat or gully in the vicinity of some well known rendezvous—a roadside shanty, or accommodation house of which there were many on the Melbourne road. They were well known and avoided. When near one we used always to watch our horses at night. The next night the horse would be taken up by another man and passed on always avoiding the main road, when in a few days it would be placed in the auction market at Melbourne. Having changed hands three or four times—even if found in possession of the last man no one could prove he had stolen it. He could say it was a stray horse he had found and was bringing it in to claim the reward as was usually done.

Another dodge of theirs was to plant horses as they called it, which was to ride a horse off at night, and leave it in a certain place; beside a creek, five or six miles away, and then wait until a reward was offered. Then they would go to the owner and say, they had seen some horses feeding in such a place, answering to the description; knowing that he could not prove they had been stolen. Then he was only too glad to pay the reward, and get his stolen property back.

I had a very good opportunity of becoming familiar with their ways of horse stealing, as I once had one stolen, and was afterwards arrested for having a stolen horse in my possession.

Horses were very expensive in the early days. One hundred pounds was the usual price for a draft horse. They were in great demand, and the difficulty was to get them broken, ready for work. There were two daily auction sales of horses in Melbourne, but there was more or less risk in buying there. The first we brought was at private sale from one Yankee Frank, a Missourian and therefore no more Yankee than I was. He was just down from the Owens on his way home, having made what he considered his pile. When we went into the bank of Australia to get paid, he handed my check to the teller, who asked how he would have it. "Gold," was the reply. Then taking a brass soap up the teller ran it into a pile of sovereigns then shot them into a scale and from there to the counter, all within a half a minute's time. Frank looked at the hundred sovereigns on the counter for a moment, then remarked, "Well, isn't that a deal of money for a cart horse; but you will find him a good one, you bet." Still keeping his eyes on the sovereigns, he continued, "Ain't they pretty, boys. Well, I have five thousand of them, and nearly all made on the Yakandanda Creek at the Owens in less

than a year." Then commencing to pick them up and counting them into a bag, he said, "Yes, three years ago I left my log cabin on the head waters of the Missouri and footed it overland to California. Didn't do much there. Heard of the gold discoveries down here in Australia, took ship from Frisco for Sydney, swagged it overland 600 miles to Victoria, struck it good at the Owens. In four months hope to be (as the down east Yankees say) 'to him.' Have a good little gal all ready to marry me when I get there. Give us a look in it ever you come round that way, and I will set things up fine, you bet."

One week after our arrival at Bendigo that horse (which proved very satisfactory) was stolen. We searched the country for miles around in case he had been planted; also offered a reward of £20, but we never saw him again.

Our next venture in horse flesh proved not much better. To replace the one stolen we bought another at auction, a fine large mare for £70, which proved to have been stolen and therefore got us into some trouble. As the winter, or rather the rainy season, approached, we deemed it advisable to go to Melbourne for supplies. Therefore one of our party and myself started with a horse and cart, each for Melbourne. The first night out on our return trip, we camped on Keilor plains. When about to unharness, I saw a man on horse back ride up and make what I thought a rather an impertinent inspection of the Bendigo mare. I said to him "Mate, I think you will know that horse again when you see her"—"My word I will," he replied and rode off. The next morning, shortly after getting under way, and having fallen in line with other teams, a string of a mile in length, I noticed a party of horsemen riding towards us at a fast rate; when they came up they halted. There were three troopers and two men in plain clothes. One of the latter pointing to the big mare said, "That is my horse, that mare was stolen from me." I indignantly replied, that we did not steal her, that we had bought her at auction on Bendigo, and had the receipt to show. "Well for you, if such is the case," said he, "but that is my horse. I brought her over from Sydney, and she was stolen from me six months ago, and I am bound to have her. I shall not let her out of my sight. I can prove ownership by the brands on near shoulder, and off hip, and have a witness here to prove what I state." Finding that matters were beginning to look serious, I undertook to reason with him—to consider our position, that it was not possible to give up the horse then and there, even were his right proven, but let us go on to Bendigo, and there have the matter settled before the proper authorities. No, the fellow was incorrigible. Turning to the troopers, he reminded them that he had made the proper charge, and called upon them to do their duty. Then one of the troopers, acting as spokesman said, "It is a very hard case, but I see only one alternative. You have either to give up the horse, or go before a magistrate and let him prove his case. If you choose the latter course you will have to go back to Melbourne as there is no magistrate nearer. Five miles back is a temporary police station where you can store your loads and pick them up on your return." After many protestations and some remarks that would not set well to some music, we turned our horse heads for a twenty mile tramp back to Melbourne, accompanied by the three troopers, supported by the two riders in plain clothes, who seemed more afraid of our escape than the troopers. We unloaded at the police station then took our seats in the empty carts, my mate leading, driving the suspected horse and I following. It was an imposing cavalcade—we were on the main road to the various diggings and scarcely five minutes without meeting some one. Occasionally it would be a party of new chums just landed, who would stop short and gaze at us with peculiar curiosity. They had read of bushrangers, now they had actually seen them having been caught in the very act. Possibly many a letter by the west outgoing mail contained a description of those two desperadoes being marched into Melbourne under an heavy escort. I am pleased there were no Kodaks in those days or my meek boyish phiz and my partner's grizzly face might now be adorning the pages of some thrilling bushranger story in Cassell's Illustrated. Poor old Thompson, an Aberdeen Scotchman with a heart as honest as his face when seen behind a year's growth of an ugly sandy beard, began to feel rather uncomfortable by the continual stare of the passers-by which was intensified as we neared Melbourne. Calling me to him he said, "Mon Wilson, what is to become of me tomorrow." (This was Saturday evening.) "Well," I said, "I don't think you will go to the Kirk tomorrow unless he hold service in the lockup. As your name is in the receipt you will of course be the one who will have to go to jail. However, I will see that you have a good dinner." In truth I dreaded the parade through Melbourne as much as Thompson did. A happy thought struck me. When within five miles I proposed that I would step in ahead and get a shipmate of mine, a resident, to bail him out till Monday. Unfortunately my friend could not be found. I hurried to the police court in Swansons street, our party was there. The trooper had handed Thompson over to the chief of police, who asked what the charge was. The man who claimed the horse said he gave him in charge for having a stolen horse in his possession. The officer said,

"I can't hold a man on that charge." "Then I give him in charge for horse stealing." I stepped forward and handed him the auctioneer's receipt when turning to the man he said, "I advise you not to do so as it is a very risky thing to do, that of giving a man in charge for horse stealing when he holds an auctioneer's receipt. Finally it was arranged that the horse be put into a livery stable in charge of a policeman. On Monday morning we all, including the horse, presented ourselves at the police magistrate's court—verdict against us, but were granted a restitution order to have the money returned.

To get another horse was the next move. After examining the stock at the auction markets we decided to bid on a large fine looking horse that took our eye. The usual guarantee was shouted out by the auctioneer viz. "Well broken, gentle in harness, would carry a lady and draw a ton weight up any hill in Melbourne." He was knocked down to us for £110, the money paid, and then for the test. When the stable men commenced to harness him I could see that he was wild and unbroken, and said to my partner, "Thompson we are sold again." With some difficulty they got him into the shafts of a dray in which was a ton of 56 lbs. weight. Though two men were at his head he bolted out of the yard and across the street. They however, managed to lead him down Burke street. At the foot of the hill he ran into a watering cart, creating quite a sensation. They then turned his head up Elizabeth street, which was level, intending to go along a few blocks then ascend a street not so steep as the one they went down, and so round to the place of starting. I then saw our chance. Running up and ordered them to turn about and go up the street they had come down. They kicked and protested, but I insisted that the guarantee was a ton up any hill, and I demanded it. At last they turned the horse about, but he would not face the hill. They coaxed, urged and swore, but to no avail. Another horse had to be sent to haul up the dray. We returned to the office and got our money back, and were glad enough to get off as we did.

After our experience of auctions we concluded to buy at private sale, so the next day we inspected a mob of horses just imported from Van Demans' Land, and purchased one for which we paid £140—(imagine seven hundred dollars for a draft horse). A month after we sold this same horse to a young Englishman on Bendigo who was about to commence carting on the roads—being induced by the high rate of freight—£80 per ton from Melbourne to Bendigo. On the second trip the horse was stolen and the owner never saw him again.

A COLD IN THE HEAD.

Some of the Reflections that are Apt to attend the Advantages of a Cold in the Head.

It has always been a puzzle to me why people cannot be satisfied with an effect, particularly when that effect is an unpleasant one, without trying to pry beneath the surface and drag forth the reluctant cause, wriggling and squirming to the light of day. And yet they can't; it seems to be part of human nature never to leave well enough alone, but to fret and worry over the inevitable until it seems worse than it really is. This is especially the case with a cold in the head, that comparatively harmless, but soul-searching ill, of which the poet wrote in these touching words:

"A cold in the head
What can be said
Uglier Stupider
More ill bred."

One would imagine that a man's cup would be sufficiently full of misery when he comes downstairs some morning with his nose swollen out of shape, his eyes sore, his head aching, a burning spot the size of a stove cover at the back of his throat, a general kink in his temper, and but one well defined wish in the world; that the man who invented handkerchiefs had made them two yards square. But not so. That man hurries over to the fire-humps up his chilly back spreads his hands over the comforting flame, wipes his nose, because it is too sore to blow, and remarks in a voice choked by emotion and cold. "I've bid wodering, ad wodering the whole dight through how I banaged to catch this blasted cold, ad I cant understand it!" Just as if it would do the cold any good to trace it to its source! It ought to be sufficient for the victims to know that the cold is there and has come to remain for a certain length of time, unless dislodged from its position by vigorous remedies. But no, he sits, if not in the ashes, as near them as the tender will allow, and he wastes the precious moments in lamentation, interspersed with speculations as to how he happened to catch that cold and applications of his handkerchief from blush of morn till dewy eye. One would really imagine that the source of a cold was something like the end of a rainbow at which, radiation says a pot of gold lies buried, and that once you run it down some mysterious remedy for the cold itself would be discovered to repay the search.

But such a hope is apt to prove fallacious, since few of the human family seem to succeed in locating the exact moment, when the cold first claimed them for its own, what draught, or what exposure did it, what work; so perhaps after all the sheepest "road to health" as the patent mercantile advertisements say would be a hot toothbath of mustard and water, and a bowl of hot gruel, so that the speculation can speedily be changed to the query. "How in the world did I happen to get rid of my cold?"

EVENING WEAR. BALL DRESSES.

New Goods in all Departments.

Bengaline Silks, Faille Francais Silks, Surah Silks, Brocade Silks, Japanese Silks, Pongee Silks, Gauzes, Crepes and Crepons, Plushes, Velvets and Ve'vetens Latest Evening Tints and Combination.

Nets and Flouncing Laces.

Hosiery, Gloves, Flowers and Feathers, Ribbed Silk Undervests, low necks, in Pink, Cream and Sky. White Skirts, Gauze Corsets and Corset Covers. Cream Cloth Serge for Evening Wraps.

Fans, Fans, Fans.

Feather and Incandescent Trimmings.

MANCHESTER, ROBERTSON & ALLISON, St. John.

FOR MONDAY ONLY. \$4.00 SUITS FOR \$2.00. MONDAY, ONLY.

The Suits we advertise for Monday only, will fit any boy from 3 to 10 years. They are placed on our Bargain Counter, and you can take your pick. The regular price of these suits is from \$2 to \$4 and if you take us at our word, we're the loser.

Read what we write, then you'll know what's written. We'll offer bargains every week. (In Progress) every day (somewhere else.) Watch for Bargains, Here, There, Everywhere!

P. S.—For out of town Customers on short time Bargains, we will fill orders mailed not later than the date of advertisement.

SCOVIL, FRASER & COMPANY,

Corner King and Germain Streets, St. John, N. B.

SONGS AND THEIR AUTHORS.

Famous Lyrics Which the World Must Sing For all Time. It is not so very long ago since one of the most prolific and deservedly popular of British song writers passed away—Dr. Charles Mackay—whose "Cheer, Boys, Cheer," "There's a Good Time Coming," "Baby mine," and "England, Dear England," have been, and are still being sung, wherever on the face of the globe, men of the English-speaking races are gathered together; and whose music was so fluent and fertile, that over 120 songs have been set to music by Sir Henry Bishop alone.

Dr. Mackay, besides being a song writer was an all-round literary man of no mean merits, in proof of which he attained the post of sub-editor of the "Morning Chronicle" against even so redoubtable a rival as Thackeray himself, who was also a competitor for the appointment. Dr. Mackay was afterwards a constant contributor of verse to the "Daily News," then in its earliest infancy, and for which paper, "There's a Good Time Coming, Boys," was specially written, and which stirring song, immediately on its publication, attained enormous popularity.

Another thoroughly English song that it may positively be stated has been sung in every land under the sun is Henry Russell's "A Life on the Ocean Wave," which has recently, by special authority of the Admiralty been given to the Royal Marines as their own particular march—just as "The British Grenadiers" is used by Her Majesty's 1st Regiment of Guards—to be used by the gallant amphibious corps whose proud motto is "Per Mare, Per Terram" wherever their duty calls them.

There is another song of world-wide celebrity, "Home, Sweet Home," which, although of American origin, yet reveals in its tender lines the very essence of English feeling, and may safely be classed amongst those few other productions of human inspiration that are what we call immortal. Its author, Colonel John Howard Payne, was twice American Consul at Tunis, in which city he died after a long and tedious illness. In the Protestant cemetery there is a tomb erected to his memory, on which is placed an inscription ending: "His fame as a poet and dramatist is well known where the English language is spoken, through his celebrated ballad, 'Home, Sweet Home,'" and round the tombstone are engraved the following lines, written by Colonel Payne himself shortly before his death:—

"Sure, when thy gentle spirit fled
To realms beyond the azure dome,
With outstretched arms thou'st saugl said,
'Welcome to Heaven, Home, Sweet Home.'"

The body of the dead singer, however, lies, as it should, in his own native land, having been taken over to New York, after a long interval, by the late Mr. W. W. Corcoran, of Washington, ex-banker, philanthropist, and millionaire, where it lay in state in a metallic coffin, covered by the American flag, and was afterwards interred with military honours under a suitable monument.

It is regrettable to notice that such-like honor and respect have not been the portion of every famous writer whose songs have given pleasure, and perhaps brought whisperings of hope and comfort, to thousands of his fellow-creatures. Even now the body of Topsy, the author of the beautiful "Rock of Ages," lies hidden away with only a tablet, engraved in a little name and age, to mark the spot, in a little chapel in Tottenham Court Road; and quite recently, Mr. L. M. Thornton, and other once popular songs, died—in Bath Workhouse! Pleasant it is to remember that when Dr. Mackay, above mentioned, fell a victim to strained circumstances, a fund, entitled "The Charles Mackay Fund," was started by his numerous friends and admirers, to comfort the latter days of the man to whom the English nation owes

HOW AN OYSTER GROWS.

Each Overlapping Layer of Shell Means a Year of Age. The oyster at the commencement of its career is so small that 2,000,000 would only occupy a square inch. In six months each individual oyster is large enough to cover a silver dollar piece, and in twelve months a silver dollar piece. The oyster is its own architect, and the shell grows as the fish inside grows, being never too small.

It also bears its age upon its back, and it is as easy to tell the age of an oyster by looking at its shell as it is that of horses by looking at their teeth.

Every one who has handled an oyster shell must have noticed the successive layers overlapping each other. These are technically termed shots, and each one marks a year's growth, so that by counting them the age of the oyster can be determined.

Up to the time of its maturity—that is, when four years of age—the shots are regular and successive, but after that time they become irregular and are piled one upon another, so that the shell becomes bulky and thickened. Fossil oysters have been seen of which each shell was nine inches thick, whence they may be guessed to be more than 900 years old. One or two million oysters are produced from a single parent, and their scarcity is accounted for by the fact that man is not the only oyster eating animal. The starfish loves the oyster and preys upon it incessantly. A variety of whelk is also very fond of young oysters, to get at which it bores right through the shell and sucks the fish up through the hole thus made.

Butler and the Silver Spoons.

Samuel Smith and Andrew Smith, who comprised the banking firm of Smith Brothers in New Orleans during the war, were the bankers who achieved national note on account of Gen. Butler's connection with them during his occupation of New Orleans while the civil war was in progress. While he held that city under martial law General Butler appropriated from the Smith bank to the use of his soldiers over \$80,000 in gold coin, which at that time was worth \$160,000, and also confiscated a large amount of silverware deposited with the bank by private individuals. At the close of the war proceedings were instituted against Butler by the Smiths and a judgment for the par value of the coin received. Butler's counsel tried to throw the responsibility of the confiscation on the federal government. The judgment was valueless for many years, until the General's brother died, leaving him a large estate, whereupon the judgment was satisfied and the \$80,000 refunded to the Smiths. Gen. Butler's confiscation of the silverware placed in the bank for safekeeping led to the numerous cartoons of Butler running away with silver spoons.

Why The Water-Mark Was Moved.

The Parisians are not exactly an untruthful people, but foreigners who live among them note a disposition to keep any story which they tell at least as large in the successive tellings as it was at the start.

Two Americans who were dining at tables in front of the cafe in Paris, near the Seine, noticed high up on the front wall of the building, a red mark, and underneath it this inscription, evidently painted:—

"Inundation of 1875. High-water Mark... 'Come! come!' said one of the Americans to the restaurant-keeper; 'you don't expect us to believe that the river ever rose as high as that!'"

"Oh, no!" said the proprietor, blandly; "it only came up to here." He made a sort of scratch with his thumb-nail down near the ground. "But you see, when the mark was down there the children rubbed it out so continually that we had to put it up there out of their reach."

Geo. H. McKay, 61 Charlotte St., St. John.

Remnants of Dress Goods and Cloths, AT HALF PRICE.

Naturally such an outflow as we have had for the past week has left many short ends of Dress Goods and Cloths. These we have Grouped on a Counter and marked one half of original prices.