

A CONVICT HISTORIAN.

Probably as Skillful and Successful a Thief as Ever Lived.

In the second hand book stores one can find occasionally a quaint, diminutive volume, usually well worn and yellow with age, which is entitled 'A History of New South Wales.' Its author was George Barrington. Officer to the Crown, and the history of his life is given in old-fashioned style in the introduction to the book, which was dated 1808. If there was ever a romance of crime, that history embodies it.

George Barrington, whose real name was Henry Waldron, was the son of a silversmith and a mantuamaker. When a boy, he quarrelled with a fellow scholar at a Dublin grammar school, and was whipped. In revenge he stabbed his opponent and, if possible, would have murdered him. For this affair he was flogged so furiously that he determined to run away from school. So he stole £12 and a silver watch from his preceptor, and disappeared in the middle of a May night.

At Drogheda he met a company of strolling players and lodged at the inn where they were staying. Their manager, John Price, took a fancy to Barrington, and engaged him as an actor. Indeed, it was Price who suggested the changing of Henry Waldron to George Barrington, because it looked better on the bills. Under this name he made his first appearance on any stage, as Jaffier, in O'way's "Venice Preserved," in a barn in the Drogheda suburbs. The debut was a success, and, pawning the stolen watch to pay expenses, young Barrington set out with the company for Londonderry. Price brought him into tender connection with a member of the company who called herself Miss Egerton, and, when he had him enamored completely of the young woman, proposed to him to share the management of the troupe.

Barrington complied and became joint manager with Price. It was not long before Price found it expedient to insinuate to Barrington that a young man of his address might introduce himself easily into public places, and that he might find opportunities of picking pockets unnoticed and of escaping undetected, more especially at that particular time when the fair was being held. Price's scheme pleased Barrington, and the next day he carried it into execution with great success. The acquisition amounted to about £190 in Irish currency. Ballyshannon was the next place visited, where Barrington spent the autumn and winter of 1771, playing on Tuesdays and Saturdays and picking pockets every day in the week; it there was opportunity. While in this place Barrington quarrelled with Price, with the result that the two adventurers parted company. Accompanied by Miss Egerton the young man left Ballyshannon and journeyed southward, until, in crossing the River Boyne, she was drowned. After the funeral he went to Limerick and in a few weeks more to Cork. There Barrington found Price penniless and his company dispersed. They formulated a scheme by which Barrington was to pass for a gentleman of fortune, while Price was to play servant. The plot worked to a charm. They had credit enough to secure horses and an outfit, and Barrington's plausible address did the rest. Operating among the best class of the extravagant gentry of the time, the two rogues became familiar and popular figures in the first society of Ireland, and at the end of 1772 had a capital of £1,100. On this they settled in Cork, where Price was detected in an attempt to rob a young squire, arrested, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. Barrington escaped to Dublin, where he lived quietly for a time. Then he obtained passage as a guest in Sir Alexander Schomberg's yacht to England. Schomberg was very useful to him, and the adventurer also found of great service the friendship of a fellow passenger on the yacht, the Duke of Leinster.

A more profitable acquaintance to Barrington, however, was a young captain in the army. For many months they lived a wild life in London. Then Barrington's funds ran low, and he went to work again. He picked pockets right and left, even dropping unsuspected into his friend's, the Duke of Leinster. On one occasion, while the Duke was dining him and some friends at Ranelagh, he emptied the pockets of the whole company. Another pickpocket, who was after the same game, detected him and demanded a share of the spoil. To save himself, Barrington divided the proceeds, and, over the dinner, they sealed a compact of friendship. Barrington's partner introduced him to the fences in London, and the pair thus disposed of plunder of high value. Tiring of London, Barrington visited Brighton in the summer of 1775, and there met the Duke of Ancester, who received him as a gentleman of fortune and noble family. This opened up to him a royal array of victims and brought him into contact with the most fashionable circles. He spent the

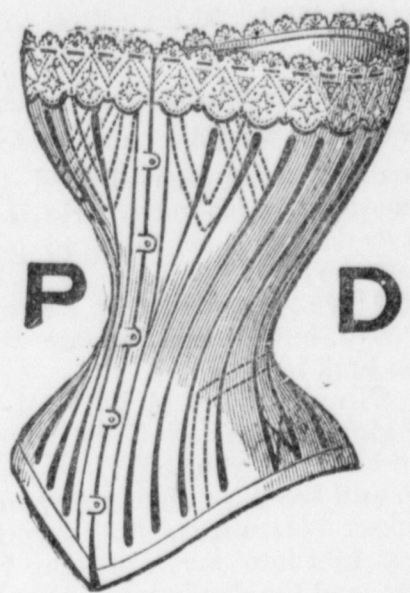


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THOMAS DEAN,
City Market.

day at court on the anniversary of the Queen's birth, when he not only contrived to rob the nobility present but to cut off the diamond order of a nobleman. He got it away from the palace without suspicion. As this was an article of too much value to be disposed of in England he sold it to a Dutch Jew.

In 1775 the Russian Prince Orloff paid his first visit to England. The Empress Catharine had expressed her appreciation of his merits by presenting to him a gold snuff box, set with brilliants. This trophy which was said to be worth £30,000, was fancied by Barrington, and he determined to get it. One night at Covent Garden Theatre he took it from the pocket of the Prince, but was caught before he left the box the nobleman was seated in and for the first time was arrested. In court he told such a pitiful and plausible story that the Judge was deceived, and in consequence the Prince declined to prosecute him. His release followed, but he left the courtroom a ruined man socially. Cut by his former intimates, he sank rapidly and in a year was virtually a common thief. He was arrested repeatedly, until, in 1777, he was discovered robbing a woman at the entrance to Drury Lane theatre. For this he was sentenced to three years' hard labor on board of the hulks at Woolwich. Six months after his liberation he was arrested for pocket-picking at St. Sepulchre's Church during service, and was sentenced a second time to hard labor on the hulks. This time his sentence was for five years. An attempt at escape having failed, he stabbed himself in the breast with a penknife, but the wound proved a trifling one. So he continued to linger in his wretchedness until a philanthropist secured his release and supplied him with sufficient money to go to Ireland, where he continued to steal. Finally he was caught fairly, and was sentenced to seven years' transportation to the Australian penal settlements.

During the voyage to Port Jackson, in 1791, he rendered great service on the convict ship by assisting in the quelling of a mutiny. This reward was a ticket of leave as soon as the colony was reached. As a convict prisoner overseer he proved so honest and zealous that he received a Government grant of land on the Paramatta River, the stream where Trickett and other Australian oarsmen made records years after he was dead and forgotten. He retained a place as convict overseer until his death in 1811.

His ticket of leave expired, and he found himself a rich and free man, but he declined to return to England. There he had been a common malefactor. In Australia he was a potentate in a small way. So he remained a potentate to the end. His history brought him no fame; he is remembered to-day because of two lines in the prologue which he wrote for the opening of the first theatre in Australia:

True patriots we, for he it understood,
We left our country for our country's good.
Even those lines are remembered better than their author.

AN ORANG-OUTANG AND A WATCH.

He Didn't Like Anything That was not to be Eaten.

An orang-outang which rejoices in the name of Joe, and is as docile and affectionate as any of the more ordinary domesticated pets, was lately on exhibition in Philadelphia. It chanced that on the very day on which a member of the Inquirer's staff paid Joe a visit, Joe's master, Mr. Forster, presented his favorite with a Waterbury watch.

The new plaything was handed to the animal without a word, and Joe set his wits at work upon it. First he looked it over carefully; then he began to pound the arm of his chair with it, in the laudable attempt to find out its properties by direct experiment.

'Stop, Joe! That is not intended to be used as a hammer,' said Mr. Forster, in a stern voice.

The experimenter paused, considered a moment, and then laid the watch on the floor. But the gift was of no value to Joe unless he could find out how to use it. After further consideration he picked it up and put it in his mouth.

'Hold on, old fellow! It was not made to be eaten,' said his master.

Thereupon Joe took the watch from his mouth, hesitated, and came to a decision. He handed the watch back to the giver.

Mr. Forster turned the cap once or twice partially winding it, and then put it into his vest pocket. These acts he from time to time repeated, and ended by giving the watch back to Joe. The animal was no longer at a loss. His watch was of some use to him now. He took it, twisted the cap round gravely, and then dropped the watch into the pocket of his blue sweater.

At this time Joe was preparing to start for New Orleans with his master—literally preparing, for already he had himself packed his wardrobe in a new yellow leather dress-suit case. He was a very well dressed animal, for he wore a dark blue overcoat, set off by brass buttons, and he is an exceedingly accomplished one.

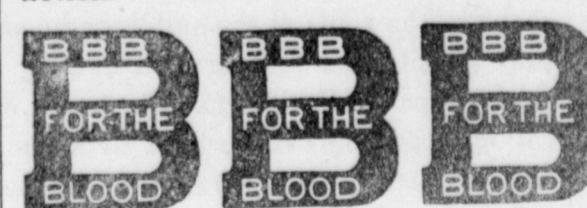
He can play on the violin as well as pack up his belongings, and he appears to understand the English language fairly well. He will do almost anything he is told to do. When he has done wrong he comes and purses up his lower lip, whimpering like a child. But when his master says, 'Joe, kiss and I'll forgive you,' he puts up his face and seems as happy as a child that has escaped a scolding.

Joe is not renowned for his bravery. He is terribly afraid of dogs, and is in mortal terror of the small monkeys. When frightened, he utters little cooing cries. Joe is four years old, and is about as large as a child of seven.

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THE WONDERFUL ALBATROSS.

Its Marvellous Flight in the Air and its Ridiculous Waddle on Land.

The albatross has been the theme of poets and naturalists ever since the first one dawned upon the sight of man. The scientist has offered many theories for the bird's long-sustained power of flight, but it remains as much of a mystery as ever.

An albatross will follow in a ship's wake for days, sailing steadily along with no motions of the wings, silent and inscrutable as fate. No other motions than an occasional veer of the wings when the bird desires to turn an angle is observed. Despite the bird's marvellous power of sailing along, it is very hard for it to rise from the water.

The home of the albatross is in the antipodes and the Auckland Islands. No lighthouse rears its heads here, and heavy fogs and treacherous currents swirl about the place. The land is rough and mountainous on the coast, but inland marvellous flowers grow; wonderful asters, marguerites, lilies, and gentians, and here millions upon millions of birds make their homes.

Among the coarse herbage the pure white head of the albatross meets the eye. The body is larger than that of the swan, and its expanded wings measure seventeen feet from tip to tip. Its glory has departed, for while nothing can be grander than its flight over the ocean, nothing is more ludicrous than its waddle on the land. Its only sign of defence is to clasp its back in a helpless manner, for it cannot use its wings.

The nest is a pile of earth like a child's sand castle, and in the cup-shaped top the albatross lays one egg. During the sixty days the egg is hatching the mother does not stir from the nest, for if she did the sea hawks would swoop down on the egg and destroy it. The young bird is covered with fluffy down, pure white in color and silky as flax. The nestling is fed so assiduously that it becomes immensely fat and rivals its parents in weight. It is then deserted by the parents, who wander over the ocean, sometimes encircling the globe before returning home.

The most remarkable thing in the history of the albatross is that during the absence of the parents the young nestling does not receive a mouthful of food. During the whole time, sometimes four months, it lives on the fat it has accumulated. In the open nest on a bleak hillside the young albatross is exposed all winter to sharp winds and the fiercest gales that ever rush across the ocean, yet at the end of its fast the young bird is lively and in a good condition.

The reason the parent birds go away is not known. Their desire for flight is a mystery, for it is not the same as the migration of our Northern birds to the South. When the parents return they unceremoniously bundle out the nestling, which has become a slaty-gray in color, and set about repairing the nest. The young bird still stays around, evincing in many pretty ways its fondness for its parents, and not till next year does it take its first flight to sea in company with its hard-hearted father and mother.

SHIP CUSHIONS.

Measuring Vessels for Their Outfit—What Ship Cushions Are Made of.

When a new vessel is ready to be fitted out with her cushions she is measured for them; not as a church would be, for a certain number of cushions of a specified size to supply a certain number of pews, but every space in which a cushion is to be placed separately. On a large vessel there might be a number of cushions of the same dimensions, but a marine architecture is such that cushions may be required on the same vessel in great variety of forms and of varying dimensions even within given lines, narrower at one end for instance, than at the other. And cushions are made to fit around masts, and around the rounded ends of cabins, and in other spaces where they must be made in the form of an arc of a circle; and ship cushions are made V-shaped and in other shapes to fit into various nooks and jogs.

All cushions are made with a vertical front edge, and most of them are made with a vertical rear edge. But ship cushions are often made with a rounded or bevelled rear edge to fit handsomely against the side of the vessel, which serves as a back to the seat, but may slope away at a sharper angle than seat backs commonly do.

Practically every boat that is set afloat, whatever she may be, big or little, is individually measured throughout for her cushions. The same materials for stuffing cushions that are used on land are used on water—hair, moss, cotton, and so on. And ship cushions are sometimes stuffed with cork clippings for their buoyant properties. The materials most commonly used in covering church cushions are damask and reps, the damasks more generally. The material most commonly used in covering ship cushions is mohair plush, which is made in various colors and qualities. Leather is also used in covering ship cushions, especially in smoking rooms and chart rooms and aboard yachts, and it costs little, if any, more than a fine quality of mohair plush.

Bad Blood Between Them.

The ever-slaving farmer's wife, her delicate sister in the city, suffer more than they care to tell. The dark rings round the eyes, headaches, dizziness, palpitation or rheumatic twinges, betoken a run-down system. The blood is poor, and is a bar to enjoyment of life. Scott's Sarsaparilla purifies the blood, strengthens and vitalizes the system, and speedily restores the bloom of health to the cheeks. It cures when all others fail.