

and thrown across the horse's back. He got to the office about 5 o'clock, then about break of day, and was able to give a detailed account of a new rush in time for the morning's issue. There was poor Strickland with as much descriptive talent as ever fell to the lot of a war correspondent, went out one dark night at Friar's creek, to follow a party who he was informed, had discovered a pile claim in a wattle tree gully. He fell into a deep hole, and was found with his spine broken, his grasp holding on to a ginger-beer bottle filled with brandy, unhappily his ruling passion strong in death. There was Sandy Paramour, of the Chronicle, left his tent one afternoon to deliver his "copy" to the camp to be forwarded on to Melbourne when he was stuck up by three men and bludgeoned. He received a terrific blow on the hip, which disabled him from walking, and in defending himself from the blows of the ruffians had his left arm broken. Paramour, suffering terrible agonies, crawled, by the aid of his knees and right hand, until he reached the camp, a distance of nearly a mile and a half. Here he gave in his despatch, with instructions to have it forwarded on, and then fell back in a dead swoon. I don't know of any war correspondent that has done anything much better than this in the interest of his employers. Old Marsden was killed in a drive, at the Thames, who was correspondent to the *Cross*. I think it was the Southern Cross. He was told that it would be dangerous to go in. He said he had got his report to send away, and he must go in and see for himself. He entered the drive but never came out until he was brought out a mangled and horribly disfigured corpse. A portion of the unsupported drive had caved in suddenly.

John McElwaine's ride from Bendigo to Melbourne was never touched by a long way by any correspondent I have known or read of. He had an important report to send away, and there was only the coach (Cobb's) to take it. But there was a correspondent of an opposition journal taking his passage by the conveyance, and McElwaine determined to be before him or die in the attempt. He did not die, but as his journey drew to a close, he was not far off the concluding event of a man's earthly career. He had hired a horse to take him as far as it would carry him. Having to swim the Gundayah Creek, then much flooded, the horse made a plunge, and McElwaine was thrown off the saddle into the stream. The horse was carried down to the Falls, where it was drowned. McElwaine, a splendid swimmer, got to the bank and scrambled up, his report wet through in his shoulder bag, but still all right. McElwaine then walked ten miles in his clothes which were soaked with water. Came upon a man mounted on horseback, and offered to buy his horse at any fair price. The man said the horse was not his, and, therefore, could not sell it. McElwaine then offered the man £10 to be knocked off, to which he consented. McElwaine knocked him off, figuratively, so to speak, when he galloped off as hard as the horse could take him. McElwaine then made a short cut through a break in the ranges, but getting among timber was caught by a protruding branch of a tree and thrown to the ground with great force. The horse was away and the rider by himself. Walked three miles and met Jeremiah Ware, a wealthy squatter. Told his trouble, when Ware dismounted and lent him his horse, by which he reached Melbourne one hour and twenty minutes before the coach pulled up at Cobb's office. It was reckoned one of the most plucky rides ever made, not excepting Dick Turpin's alleged ride from London to York.

There was Harrison's walk from Grey-mouth across the fearful Razorback when he wanted to get to Charleston to report a rush. He missed his footing and rolled over the cliff three hundred feet, almost plump down into the sea. His flesh was scraped all over as a carrot might be scraped, but he reached Charleston, got his information and despatched his letter by a small steamer before he sent for a doctor to be put to rights with lint dressings and healing ointments. Three months after he died from erysipelas caused by his wounds.

Again at Brighton, on the West Coast of the South Island, where there was an outbreak among the diggers, who would have murdered the warden in consequence of a judgment given against them. Heskith, a newspaper correspondent, with a revolver in his hand, threatened to shoot

the first man who offered violence to Mr Broad. Finding two big fellows not inclined to take wholesome advice he rushed forward, and taking both by the throat, knocked their heads together until they became senseless or silly, after which he threw them to the ground. The row was stopped. If any war correspondent now living would have done better I should like to make his acquaintance.

I am not now, after a lapse of so many years, able to mention all the names of men who acted as correspondents at gold diggings; but taken as a whole, a finer, more intelligent, and braver lot of fellows it would be hard to find. In the days I am speaking of, there were no telegraph offices to gallop up to and send off reports. There were no railways. Sometimes, indeed very oftentimes, no country of a kind through which a horse could be ridden.

I don't claim much for myself. I was, on and off, a gold diggings' correspondent for some seventeen years in various fields; but I am going to ask any war correspondent who may feel inclined to give me an answer, what he would have done in my case, under the following circumstances. In 1861-62 I left Victoria for New Zealand, at a time when the rush set in for Tuapeka, Gabriel's, the Dunstan, and parts thereunto adjacent. In sometime within six weeks after my arrival, I was engaged as a special correspondent for eight newspapers—the Ballarat Star, Melbourne Age, Bendigo Advertiser, and Geelong Advertiser. These were Victorian journals. Then for the Lyttelton Times, Invercargill Times, Hawke's Bay Herald, and for a paper at Tuapeka, the name of which I forget. These were New Zealand journals. It was not so much for the hard work cut out that scared me, but it was to satisfy conflicting interests and diverse opinions. The Ballarat Star wrote me deprecating the glowing accounts I was giving of the New Zealand goldfields. We do not, wrote the editor, want you to drain us of our mining population, which you would do if you continue writing as you have. Please draw your communications a little milder. Said the proprietor of the Geelong Advertiser, your letters are giving a great impetus to our shipping trade. Many vessels are being laid on for Otago which are rapidly filling with diggers. Newton, which had a population of 700, has only one man remaining, and if it were not that he is crippled in both legs, he too would have been off. It is not desirable the districts should become depopulated. The Age excised much of my matter, and gave a depressing tone to my letters.

On the other side, I failed to please the New Zealand journals on which I had been engaged. I had missed giving the correct returns of the yield of gold. I only mentioned what was brought down by escort, and never spoke of the large quantity brought down from the diggings by private hands. I stood between two fires. Still, I could not afford to lose the money I was earning.

Then the question sprung up as to whether New Zealand would be better governed under one central government, or several provincial governments, which then existed. The provincial governments which benefited by proximity to a gold field wanted to remain "as you were," because they looked to secure the half-a-crown-an-ounce duty, while those, or most of those, who were not within hail of a diggings were for a central government and a fair division of the spoil. I had to write "central government" for one set of papers, and "provincial government" for another. In the end, I got so confused that I made many mistakes; and, at this day, I don't know which of the two kinds of governments I best advocated. I got into such a habit of lying that it has only been by the most strenuous efforts I have succeeded in breaking myself from continuing the sin, while I used up so much of my imagination that I have nothing of it remaining in stock.

Notwithstanding, should it be made to appear to me that a gold-digging's correspondent would pay as a lecturer, and should any enterprising speculator wish to take me up and send me along, he has only to make the offer of a good round figure, pay saloon passages, and provision me at first-class hotels, then, I tell him, I'm on, and the man for his money. I have a sweet and a pleasant way about me, am of prepossessing appearance, and engaging manners, highly polished, and neatly finished off for the kind of work, in support of which I can produce the highest testimonials.

#### UPON LITERARY MORALITY.

WHAT will be the end of it all, I for one don't pretend to say; but there has been such a flagrant act perpetrated in one of the Victorian settlements—Bendigo, or Ballarat, or one of those places, I forgot which—that society—good society of course—has received a nervous shock from which it has not yet recovered. A clergyman, some Sundays ago, preached an evening discourse with so much eloquence and earnestness, and in such thrilling sentences that it was estimated half the congregation went away impressed with the profound truths which had been told them, that they determined each man in his own heart to turn in future from the error of his ways and lead a new life. But in a few days it was brought to light that the clergyman had not preached a sermon of his own composition, but had taken it from one of the old divines, who was able to turn a discourse and impress his hearers if you like. The people became very shocked, and considered they had been swindled. The clergyman pleaded as an excuse that he could not have composed such a discourse if his year's stipend had depended on it. He argued that, as we adopted other men's thoughts without incurring censure, where was the harm if we borrowed their language, when we were unable of ourselves to come up to such a high standard of excellence? Men sought for ideas from among the writings of great thinkers of past ages without acknowledging their indebtedness, and why not their words? But the people refused to harken to the voice of reason, and those who had listened and were impressed became all at once unimpressed, and weren't going to allow themselves to be made moral by a second-hand influence. They insisted upon it that to pirate a discourse was as flagrant a violation of the correct thing as pirating an invention for a new sort of steam engine or a thrashing machine. Upon my honor, my dear madam, I cannot view the matter in the light this reverend gentleman's hearers did. I suppose, in reading Mr Snyder's compositions, you have failed to be struck with the similarity of his style with Paradise Lost, and that his vein is decidedly Miltonic, flavoured with Socrates, Plato, Homer, the Ancient Druids, Martin Tupper, the Roman Empire, Webster, Johnson, Walker, and the Organic Forces. Hence the elevating tendencies of his writings which the world will not willingly let die. If I wanted to copy the life and example of an out-an'-out super-extra superlatively good man, why, according to what would be said of me, I should only be perpetrating piracy.

It was not so many years ago when I was struggling with existence that the publisher of a Church Magazine called at my humble dwelling and told me the editor of that journal wished to get some one to write a good scriptural article for the next number—a sort of lay sermon—as he was then engaged in reading up for a lecture he was about to deliver upon the moral influences of the Solar System. The publisher said there were two guineas hanging to it, but that the whole thing was to be in strict confidence. The editor was to be presumed to be the author. Then he repeated the words which he knew contained the charm of the proposal—that there were two guineas hanging to it.

I looked round the room of my humble abode, and I saw my little lambs a-hungry, for they had partaken of literally nothing, so to speak, since their breakfast, and as to what they were likely to get to sustain them for their mid-day meal, I was utterly ignorant, although I discovered subsequently that an Irish stew and apple dumpings formed the staple of their repast. Then I looked at a suffering wife, and a mother, who was at that particular juncture giving nourishment to a suckling babe at the fountains of life, with nothing to assist nature beyond a modest and unpretentious tumbler of Guinness's stout. Viewing this thing, my bosom heaved a heave within me, and I said to the publisher, that not my will, but poverty and stern necessity only induced me to consent. And he departed in peace. It was soon afterwards I sat me down and contemplated the task I had undertaken. I sweetened my anxiety with the perfume of honey-dew tobacco, and I allayed my thirst with the balance of the bottle, which, through the agency of a fond mamma, had contributed to my babe's sustenance. There was nothing, as a

newspaper writer, I had not turned my hand to, excepting only one thing, and that was composing a sermon. My genius for elaborating shocking incidents was admitted on all sides. I was great at burglaries, my cautions to parents few other writers could equal and none could excel. I was something almost beyond belief at conflagrations, but my great forte was murders and watery graves. My reputation was established on a foundation not to be shaken when I had given to the world that thrilling description of a mother who had sacrificed her living infant to a sausage machine, in order to support an aged husband and his first wife's relations. How that account was read, and how second and third editions were worked off to meet the demand, is not for me to say. But well do I remember the keen public disappointment which was felt and expressed when, on the next issue of the paper, it was related that owing to a misconception nothing of the kind as related had ever happened, but was the result of a wild dream produced by a supper of those mysterious preparations which may be seen hanging in tempting festoons in the shops of pork-butchers. There was nothing my pen could not do in the descriptive heart-breaking line. A shipwreck in mid-ocean "by one of the survivors," while I was a hundred miles inland, was mere child's play to me. I had witnessed with my own gaze the eruption of a volcano where no volcano existed. I had done storms and earthquakes, balloon ascents, and had given my experiences when three miles above the clouds with an aurora borealis raging beneath. I had done the largest gooseberries and hen's eggs ever known to the world. And when a contemporary once came out with a calf having two bodies and eight legs, I produced in the next number of the journal I was engaged on a puppy with three heads and a loud bark coming simultaneously out of each of them, while they all wagged their tails in harmony. I had done all of these things, and very many more. I had written upon political questions from a south-west point of view; from a north-west point of view; and from a nor'-nor'-west, down to an east-sou'-east-three-quarter-east point of view. I had, in fine, at one time or other completely boxed the political compass; but I had never attempted a sermon, and now I had got to make the effort. I thought of the days of my early youth, and the good teachings I had been compelled to listen to. I thought of all the learned discourses my old schoolmaster used to deliver to us of a Sunday afternoon, with cane in hand if we were not giving due attention, and I thought of other things not in connection therewith. I thought of a neglected corner among my bookshelves, and there I got just what I wanted. It was an ancient book of sermons by the venerable Fuller; of such sermons, the like of which perhaps never were written before, and probably never will be again. I seized the treasure and felt mentally eased and physically glorious. I said to myself people now-a-days don't read the fine works of the old divines—they prefer Spurgeon. So I sat me down and copied the whole of one of the most beautiful allegorical discourses I ever read, merely giving a head and a tail to it, and modernising the English to adopt it to the understanding of the churchwardens and the people of the parishes in which it would be read. It was an exquisite discourse, full of wonderful imagery. It described a poisonous tree which grew in Central Africa or somewhere else, which grew and grew and extended its branches, while blighting and killing all that it over-shadowed. The writer compared the tree to the spread of sin, *et cetera*, and culminated in one of the grandest "lastlys" I ever read or heard of in my life, and I had read and heard much. Then, when it was all copied out I took it to the publisher, and the publisher took it to the editor, and the editor, who had never heard of such a writer as the venerable Fuller, read it; and he said it was a very poor composition altogether; "quite below par" were his words. He supposed now it was written it must go in, but instead of paying me two guineas he told the publisher he should only give me one, which was twice what it was worth—the villain! Of that guinea I invested one pound in a coral and silver bells for my suckling babe and two small tumblers of colonial wine for myself. I recollect the circumstance as if it were only yesterday. The

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