

shillings in excess of five pounds, and I have a watch worth quite twenty-five shillings. Oh, yes; it will be better to start a paper. The advice is so very, very excellent indeed. A good large paper, you know—a daily paper, with sixty columns of solid reading matter in it. That's what I must go in for, of course. But perhaps it would be as well, before I do this thing, that I should engage a family mansion and furnish it handsomely, and give dinners to those who intend to support me. And I think it would be as well if I set up a carriage with two high-stepping bay horses, full of blood. Because you see," said Manning, resting his forehead on the palm of his right hand, and soliloquising, as it were, to himself, "after the mansion has been furnished, and the high-stepping horses, full of blood, have been purchased, and the liveries have come home, there will be plenty of change out of my five pounds to start a first-class journal, with a full editorial staff to conduct it." And then, looking up to me, he quietly said, "You see it all, don't you? Quite easy, isn't it? Five pounds, you know, besides a twenty-five shilling watch, and start a daily paper. But when you go about chaffing a man, don't do it at the expense of a poor devil down on his luck. It isn't kind, you know. Not the thing by any means; especially to a man you once did a good turn for, and who don't forget it because it was when your boy, who is now a man, sat on my knee as a baby."

"Manning," I said, "I had no intention of wounding you, I really mean what I say. I know you have no means of your own, but your countrymen are liberal and many of them hereabouts are rich and well-to-do." Then it was, I suppose, that the suggestion took root, shortly to grow into something practicable. He went his way, and in somewhere about a fortnight returned, and said he had been successful beyond anything he could have anticipated. His countrymen and co-religionists had agreed to find him in sufficient money to pay for the printing of a newspaper. Would I, having abundant printing material, presses, type, and con-

venience, print the paper for him? And it was so agreed upon; and the agreement was drawn up by a lawyer, duly signed and attested. After this we went into details. Manning asked what name I would recommend he should give his paper, and I, never having anything else in my mind than that he intended to produce a journal of fun and humour, and droll yarns, and pleasant extracts from Irish journals, with light-hearted leading matter—I say, I never having any other thought in my head, said, as I lit my pipe and leaned back in my chair,

"What do you say, Manning, to calling it the *Sprig of Shillelagh*?" He shook his head in dissent. "Well," I said, "call it *Erin-go-Bragh*."

Another shake. "Won't do, won't it? Well, what do you say to the *Wild Irish Boy*?"

Another shake. Then I felt that my powers of invention were getting used up, and, in desperation, I suggested *Kathleen Mavourneen*, or *Cushla Macree*, or *Teddy the Tyler*.

The number of shakes which followed I did not count. There were a good many of them.

Then Manning told me that he had asked me as much out of compliment as anything else to suggest a name; for he had some days back determined to baptise it *The Celt*.

I said, "be it so;" but to my fancy the name was neither comic nor side-splitting enough by a great long way.

Now it had so happened that when the agreement was drawn up, stipulating for me to print a newspaper, the lawyers—these lawyers—clever dogs are these lawyers—had inserted a clause that the printer should hold the power to refuse to print any matter which he might consider libellous.

And I afterwards thanked that lawyer.

In a few days Manning handed in as much copy and reprint as was sufficient for the first issue. I had never troubled to look at it, but merely said to the overseer of the office, "If you should happen to see anything intended for the *Celt* a little too strong, although it's not at all likely, perhaps you will be good enough to let me see it?" and he said he would, and within two hours afterwards brought me some six or eight proof-sheets.

Thunder and lightning and snow-capped mountains! It was the most terrific combination of deadly writing I think I ever

read. There was a tirade against the late Prince Consort, in which he was called a German showman; there were articles, extracts, and quotations, all calculated to breed rancour between the two nationalities. There wasn't a joke or a yarn, or anything comic or humorous about the whole thing. There was, in fact, everything I never expected to see, and nothing which I had looked for.

Then I went to Manning, and spoke out my mind, and asked the meaning of it all, and whether the fun had departed from him, and the spirit of anarchy had taken its place?

He told me his object was to redress the grievances of his country.

I said, "In this colony your countrymen have no grievances but what are common to us all. The law applies to one equally with another, and no more favour is shewn to an Englishman or a Scotchman than to an Irishman." Manning admitted it all, but insisted that he had a mission to fulfil, and he intended to fulfil it.

I couldn't get out of my contract for the three months during which it was to hold good, but I made no hesitation in exercising my right to exclude all matter I considered libellous. And then there arose an angry feeling on the part of Manning, against me. At the end of that three months, which had brought me more grey hairs than I had been able to cultivate the previous years of my life, Manning, with the aid of his friends, bought a printing-plant to his own uses. He was now at liberty to write and print what he liked, and he liked nothing but what was hot, and strong, and peppery, and highly combustible. Copies of the *Celt* were forwarded to Wellington for the opinion of the law officers, but a huge latitude was allowed, and no steps, at that time, were taken to bring the editor to account. Then it came about that the *Celt* advocated that a cross should be erected in the Hokitika cemetery to the memory of Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, three men who had been executed in Manchester for aiding and abetting in the killing of an Inspector of Police. I know not that, if these men who suffered by the law, were from some stand-point, which I don't pretend to understand, whether considered as martyrs, why it should have been looked upon by the authorities as any great harm for their countrymen to plant a cross to their memory; because, as was explained at the time to the municipal officers, it was quite common in Roman Catholic countries to erect in grave-yards and cemeteries monuments to the dead, although the body was absent.

Howbeit, leave was asked of the authorities, and the authorities refused. Whereupon the *Celt* newspaper urged defiance of the law, and the planting of the cross in opposition to expressed authority.

Then there arose among the inhabitants a strong feeling of alarm, for threats were held out that unless the cross and the procession which was to accompany it were allowed to proceed uninterruptedly there would be bloodshed; that the police on attempting to interfere would be met with armed resistance. The authorities at

came a trestle carried by men bearing the cross. A hearse was in the procession in town, but it was not at the cemetery. When the procession entered the gates, which had been removed, it proceeded to the Roman Catholic reserve, and a funeral ceremony was gone through. Afterwards a wooden cross was planted on a mound. There was nothing to be seen in the procession calculated to produce fear in any but the most timid.

Another reliable witness detailed how the procession was directed by mounted marshals. On some of the sashes were the letters I.R. One banner had a small cross with the names of Allen, O'Brien, and Larkin inscribed on it. There were banners with mottoes on them. Some had pictures painted. One very large banner had the figure of a woman on one side, while on the other was painted a round tower with the letters I. R., and a wolf-dog surrounded with shamrocks. Underneath was a harp. The woman's hands were represented as in chains, pointing towards the tower, and grasping a flag. When the procession arrived at the cemetery two men dismounted from their horses. One of these took a hammer from his pocket and bent a nail on one side, and then handed it to the second, who did the same to one on the opposite side, the gates being fastened together in the centre. The two gates were then lifted from their

hinges and placed against a side fence. For this proceeding seven men were arrested, charged with riot, and committed to take their trial at the next sitting of the Supreme Court.

Public feeling now rose to an intense pitch. There were two opposing parties, one insisting that the law should be vindicated; the other that the men charged with riot had not exceeded the powers placed in the hands of the people, and ought not to be punished. The professional services of the most eminent among Victorian barristers, Mr Ireland, was engaged at a cost of £1200—the amount subscribed by the friends of the prisoners reaching £2000, which was all needed for additional professional assistance.

The trial lasted several days, and resulted in the prisoners being fined each in the sum of £20, which was immediately paid.

Mr John Manning and the Rev. Father Larkin, were then charged under indictment with the writing of a seditious libel, to which, by the advice of their counsel, Mr Ireland, they both pleaded guilty.

The Rev. Father Larkin, in addressing the Court, said that the proceedings at the procession, so far as he was concerned, were merely of a religious character, and explained the view taken by the Roman Catholic Church in regard to persons who had died in sin. The procession was in the form of a religious ceremonial, and was entirely intended by him as such. He had no idea that the proceedings at the procession would have been offensive to anyone. If he had thought so he would not have joined it. With respect to the *Celt* news paper, he was not a partner in it. True, he might have taken an interest in that journal, and had been desirous of promoting its establishment in this part of the country; he had, therefore, allowed his name to be used as a security; but if the law held him to be a partner, he bowed to that decision.

Mr John Manning, the second defendant, asked permission to take up the time of the Court for a few minutes. "He had," he said, "certain ideas of the freedom of discussion, which might be evinced in three methods, by acts, words, and writings; and that so long as these opinions were expressed openly and publicly, there could be no wrong in expressing them. The procession was the expression of that opinion, by an act which he had not thought was in any way unlawful. The expression of opinions by words and writings he considered, as a journalist, it was his duty to

By SNYDER.  
No. XVII.  
THE NEWSPAPER PRESS IN THE EARLIER DAYS OF THE COLONY.

I trace my memory back through a span of years long antecedent to the discovery of the Victoria goldfields; to a time when the Fourth Estate was but feebly represented; when the small sheets, coming under the denomination of newspapers, contained little else than a few Government notices, and a few business advertisements, the rest of the printed matter being made of reprint extracts from Home papers, which time had stamped with the antique. I desire to shew how much of good newspapers eventually accomplished, and how the colony fared ill until this came to pass. I shall shew what deadly abuses remained unredressed and unchecked; what arbitrary acts were perpetrated by those in authority; how innocent men were punished, and the guilty permitted to escape; how men came into possession of large territories at the price of a few pounds, by which gigantic estates now yielding the revenues of princes were founded. I shall shew how the squatters on the land, then being all-powerful, framed their own laws, by which their personal interests were jealously watched and cared for—to the exclusion of all other interests; and I shall shew, although it may be briefly, how one after another these abuses were swept away by the all-powerful influence of the Press, the writers for which were for the most part able men; some for their great literary ability, and others for their thoroughly independent principle, and their complete disregard of all consequence in enunciating them. Such men were Dr. Lang, George Arden, Thomas Macombie, James Harrison, Dr. Thomson, and others of the same stamp. At the time now referring to Port Phillip (Victoria) and New South Wales comprised one colony and continued so for several years.

The first newspaper issued in Port Phillip was a manuscript one, to which all who were so inclined had free access. It contained commercial advertisements, interlarded with paragraphs, local quarrels, and territorial disputes. It consisted of four pages of foolscap. The first contained the leading article; the remaining three pages were announcements of goods for sale, the arrivals and departures of ships, Government intimations, and the like. A copy of this manuscript newspaper is still in existence in the Public Library in Victoria if I be not mistaken. It was edited and issued, under the style and title of the MELBOURNE ADVERTISER, by Mr John Pascoe Fawkner, and as a sample of early colonial journalism I give the following specimen:—"We do opine that Melbourne cannot reasonably remain longer marked in the chart of advancing civilization without its ADVERTISER. Such being our imperial fiat, we do intend, therefore, by means of this, our ADVERTISER, to throw the resplendent light of publicity upon all the affairs of this new colony, whether of commerce, of agriculture, or of the arts and mysteries of the grazier. All these patent roads to wealth are thrown open to the adventurous Port Phillipians. All those sources of riches are about to, or already have, become accessible to such colonists of ours. The future fortunes of the rising Melbournians will be much accelerated by the dissemination of

intelligence consequent on the Press being thrown open here. But, until the arrival of the printing materials, we will by means of the humble pen diffuse such intelligence as may be found expedient, or as may arise. The energies of the present population of this rapidly rising district have never been exceeded in any of the colonies of Britain. Its giant-like strides have filled with astonishment the minds of all the neighbouring States. *The sons of Britain languish when debarred the use of that mighty engine—the Press.*"

Like as he did in Tasmania, Mr Fawkner established an hotel in connection with his newspaper. It was said of him in his day that no man drank less rum or sold more, and that no man procured more reading matter for the instruction of the colonists, or benefitted so little by it as Mr John Pascoe Fawkner himself did.

I make one or two more extracts from this manuscript journal, and shewing the form and embodiment of the times in those days. On the second page we read:—"Wanted by the commercial world at Williamstown and Melbourne, about forty beacons—good tea-tree stakes would answer—to mark the channel for the outer anchorage to the town. Whoever will perform this service shall be entitled to public thanks."

The only local is as follows:—"A report has reached Melbourne that Cammerfield, the murderer, who was sent from Sydney to point out where the seven men were murdered, has killed the two constables and one of the soldiers who had him in charge, and is now at large in the bush, well mounted and armed." The career of this villain, traced back to the time of his first landing in Sydney, shewed that he had perpetrated no less than nineteen cruel murders—six of which were upon females—not for money, or booty, or in any way to enrich himself, but through his brutal, lustful, and revengeful passions.

There were nine issues of this manuscript newspaper. Then, in time, there came over from Launceston a small quantity of type, the whole in "pie." In fact it was the rejected, worn-out and refused type of another office.

The only compositor procurable was a lad who seven years previously had served twelve months in a printing-office. He knew where to put his fingers on the letters, but beyond this he was absolutely ignorant of his art. However, in due time out came the first printed newspaper ever issued in Port Phillip, under the title of the MELBOURNE ADVERTISER.

Here is a brief extract, which will serve in some slight degree to mark the difference between Melbourne as it is and as it was:—"The undersigned begs to inform the public that he has a boat and two men in readiness for the purpose of crossing and re-crossing passengers between Williams' Town and Sandridge. Parties from Melbourne are requested to raise a smoke, when the boat will be at their service as soon as practicable. The least charge is five shillings, and two shillings each when the number exceeds two.—H. McLean."

In later days the charge between Sandridge and Williamstown was threepence.