

dusk, amid the wistful echoes beneath the beech-trees, there breaks in the glad rush of wheels, and Dora, whispering, "He has come!" steals away, and leaves her sister in the long, low room alone.

One moment Rachel kneels by the flickering wood fire, and with clasped hands prays for strength to bear this joy. As she rises there shines upon her sweet face a better calm than the old proud coldness—a calm mingling with blushes and maiden fear.

Her father's hand opens his study door—the low-arched door leading into this dusky room—and he says, half laughing, with a tremble in his tone—

"The new incumbent of Warewood, Rachel."

The new incumbent! A stranger is it? How her heart fell! A stranger? No! Is this a stranger's hand that draws her to his breast? Are these strange arms that hold her as though all his soul met hers in that close embrace?"

"Rachel! my love! my life! Are you truly mine again?"

Her weeping face is on his shoulder, her clinging hands about his neck. She cannot speak. All the words her thoughts had coined before he came die now upon her lips. But there are kisses there; and these he takes, nor seems to want any sweeter speech than these can give. At last she says it—such a tiny whispered sentence—right in his ear, with her warm, sweet breath upon it—

"Do you quite forgive me, Eugene?"

"Hush, dearest! It is I who am the culprit, the blunderer that I am! Why did I meddle with another woman's love, knowing there was a jealous heart in my keeping?"

"Jealous!" said Rachel.

"And the dearer for it," he answered.

And his eyes, shining with love's triumph, looked into hers, and saw tears—happy tears—and bending down, he kissed them softly away.

* * * * *

"The trustees appointed by Mr. Haslam," wrote Milly, "have, after a consultation with Mr. Gwynne, resolved on applying some of the funds in endowing Warewood Church, and building a new aisle in memory of Cordelia. This soothes and pleases Mr. Gwynne, for he dearly loves his churches, but is too feeble now to do duty at both.

"The new incumbent is to be Eugene Maberly.

"He and Rachel, of course, will live at dear old Warewood with uncle, and Dora and Harry (so he is to be Farmer Harry?) will take up their abode at the rectory. Well, God bless them all! They deserve happiness. Time has tried their love, and made it a sure foundation on which to build—what I shall never have—a peaceful, loving home."

THE END.

DISTRIBUTING THE TYPE.

BY W. SENIOR.



force to the fullest extent you should sojourn in one of the colonies; the younger it is the better. I flattered myself I knew something of the world and its ups and downs, but it was only when I became an inhabitant of Queensland I was made aware that I knew absolutely nothing. Of a truth, travel does open your eyes, and make you very humble, very grateful, and very confident that there is no spot in the world like dear old England, with all its faults.

FA C T stranger than fiction, is it? I should think so, indeed! You may have heard the expression, written it, and moralised upon it a thousand times in the old country, but to realise its

Let me give an illustration of what I mean in a short narrative, one of many of a kindred nature which might be laid before English readers.

We—a well-known member of the Legislative Assembly and myself—were rocking ourselves in the cosy smoking room of the House, and chatting about the work and ways of our fellow-journalists in the big city we both knew so well on the other side of the globe. Full of yearning remembrances of scenes I had not long left 16,000 miles behind me, I had told him of the lovable coteries in which the modern journalist at home meets with his fellow, of the well-appointed reading and writing rooms at their command.

"I dare say," he observed, "you used to think your life a hard one, and your duties very arduous."

"Not a doubt of it," I answered.

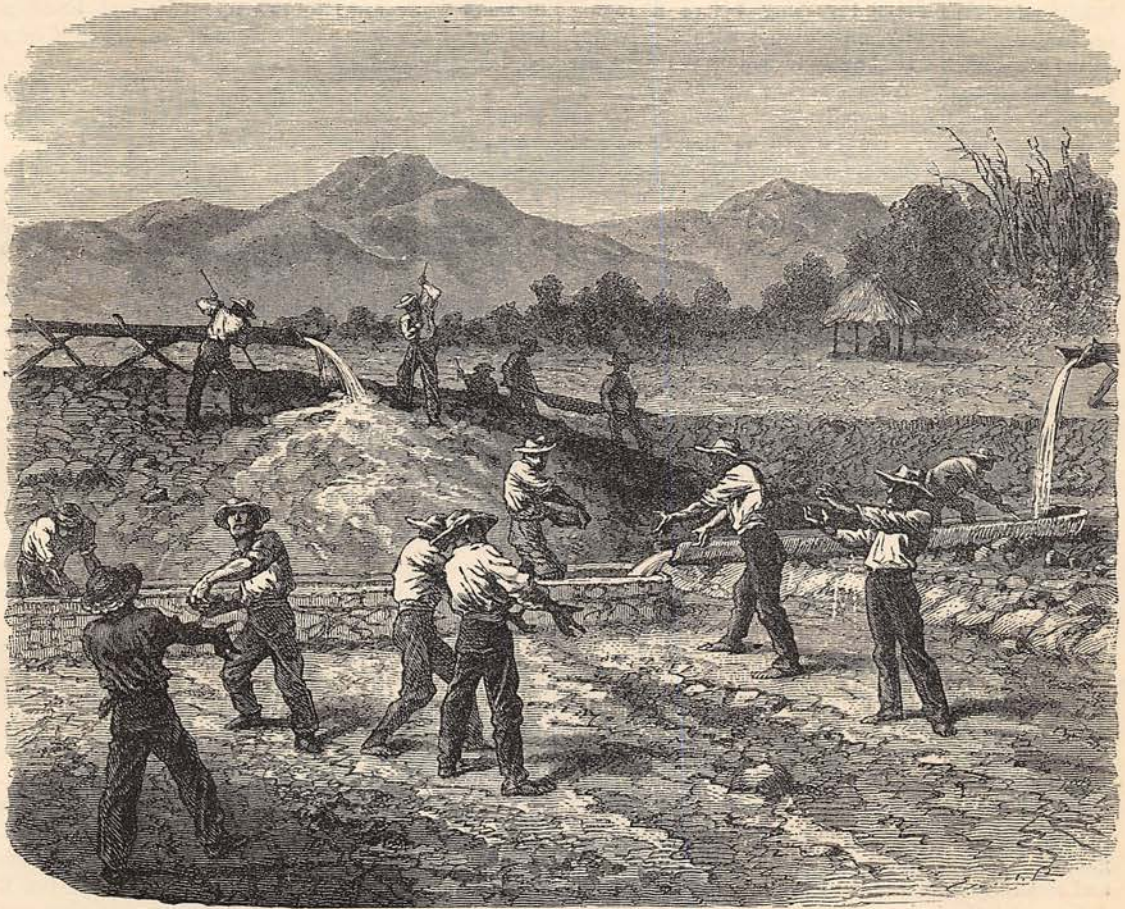
It was upon that hint he spake, bidding me remark the contrast between his picture and mine; and I now tell the story as I received it.

Mr. B—, the son of a missionary whose name should be familiar to every English-speaking Sunday scholar, had been given up by five doctors in succession as an incurable consumptive. Queensland was recommended to him as one of the countries which might offer him a reprieve from the fate to which he seemed doomed. This was many years ago, and the patient now is advancing considerably beyond middle age, a

man enjoying fair health, and a living specimen (amongst others of my acquaintance who landed in Queensland apparently only to die there of swift consumption) of the marvellous effect of a change of climate.

As usual, at first, things did not promise well, save that the sick man regained strength, and began to think of living rather than dying. It was a very happy idea of the great novelist to send the typical man who was always expecting that something would turn up

the interior, but on the spot where, before the outbreak of the rush, not a living soul was to be found, within a few months there were gathered together 3,000 persons—people, you might almost say, of every class, every clime. Life, with all its conditions, was rough-and-ready; hopes were at fever-height. Rude shanties sprang up mushroom-like, and the well-known scenes which ever characterise the opening of a suddenly proclaimed mining field were repeated. Into this community Mr. B— staked his all, and started a



AT WORK IN THE GOLD-FIELDS.

to Australia. The country is the Paradise of such, as Mr. B— found one fine morning when, in the community in which he was living and waiting, every tongue was busy with a reported "rush." Gold had been discovered on Peak Downs, and fortunes were to be made there without trouble. The miners' "rush" is but too often a mischievous will-o'-the-wisp, leading into perilous quagmires; but a perfect knowledge of this fact never seems to stop a man from leaving quarters that are certain, and hurrying to adventures that are uncertain. Mr. B— knew the danger quite well, yet went with the rest.

A few fortunes were made at the newly-found gold-fields at this time. It was a far-away place in

newspaper. For five years and a half he led the life of a slave, struggling on against fearful odds, with the grim consciousness that every year found the tide receding more and more from fortune. He set up his own articles, composing them as he stood at case, and dispensing with the ordinary medium between thought and type. With his own hands he worked the little double-demy Albion press—the thermometer often at 100 degrees. More than once, deserted on publishing days by the office-boy, he would set forth and distribute his journal amongst the miners. On one such occasion, worn out with worry and work, he sat under a leafless gum-tree and cried like a child, deeming that a lower depth of misfortune

could not be reached. Upon that point he was soon rudely enlightened.

Tired, as usual, one night he retired to the box which was called bedroom, brought his kerosene lamp to the side of the stretcher which was called bed, and tried to forget his troubles in one of Carlyle's essays. What between essay and fatigue he soon fell asleep, book in hand. It was then half-past eleven. At a quarter to twelve he shook himself out of his doze. His ears were filled with a strange and terrible noise, that oppressed him with foreboding. A multitude of trampling steeds seemed rushing before a raging hurricane. Otherwise, an ominous silence prevailed in the settlement. He hastily turned up the light, sat up, and listened. An ice-cold wave of air passed through, and he was simultaneously deafened by an indefinable uproar. He jumped to the floor, and found himself knee-deep in water. Then he knew that a flood—one of those Australian floods that sometimes come without warning, roaring and tearing down from the mountains—had brought him, and probably others, wreck and disaster.

In another box that was called bedroom, an overtired compositor was heavily slumbering, and Mr. B——'s first thought was to awake him. It was done with difficulty, but being done, the belated editor returned for his clothes. Clothes and bed had, however, disappeared; the box-bedroom was a bath full of seething, yellow foam.

Outside it was too dark to see exactly what had occurred, but they battled with the flood towards higher ground; here a sleepy German appeared at a shanty door, rubbing his eyes.

"Do you think it will be higher?" he asked indifferently and with a yawn.

"Very likely," answered Mr. B——, still with his compositor making for safety.

"Don't agree with you," retorted the German, again yawning, returning to his room, and calmly shutting the cottage door.

Just then a large kitchen-table floated towards Mr. B—— and his companion, and to it they clung, dragged it up a slope, and stood upon it. The roaring and galloping of the mad waters continued. Crashings and shoutings were heard along the line of the flood. A house (all the houses that were not of canvas were of wood) came floating down bodily, gyrating in the current as if it were a straw or stick. This made the aspect sufficiently serious to justify decisive action; Mr. B—— and his compo. climbed straightway into an iron-bark tree, wondering much afterwards how they surmounted the fourteen feet of straight trunk intervening between the ground and the branches. Chilled to the marrow by the rain, which now fell in torrents, believing that all their worldly goods had been swept away, they still found cause for thankfulness. They had not been five minutes in their to airy perch before a house, upon whose dim outlines they were gazing, collapsed and altogether disappeared. It was the residence of the sleepy German and his family. It had been struck by drifting *débris*, and in a moment weather-boards, furniture, and family

were swirling in dire confusion under the tree in which the editor and compositor were horror-bound spectators. The German's wife, brought to the surface for the last time, looked up and sank again within a yard of the trunk; her husband, stupid to the last, was probably drowned before he clearly comprehended what was happening. A young child was the last survivor of that hapless family. Mr. B——, helpless to save her, watched the little victim, conspicuous in her white night-dress, carried hither and thither, the sport of the resistless waters, saw a pair of small white arms thrown upwards, and heard a tiny cry of agony as a huge piece of timber rolled over all, leaving no trace behind.

In one brief half-hour the flood did its work. The township next morning was desolation. Fifteen lives were known to have been lost; how many more it was impossible to say. It was at the best a come-and-go population, consisting largely of waifs and strays, of whom nothing was known, of whom no record was kept; a half-dozen more or less would not therefore be missed.

Daylight found the editor and printer half-dead with cold and hunger in the tree-top—a couple of sorry crows in a sorry roost. The miseries of that night will never be effaced from their remembrance. Mingled with the roar of the waters, and howling of the wind, were yells, shrieks, and noises that seemed to belong to another world. With the dawn, however, came an assurance at least of personal safety, for the waters were assuaged. On the higher ground there were dwelling-houses still remaining, but where was the devoted printing-office? Its shell was standing, but the flood had attacked it endwise, sweeping clean through the building, and carrying its contents before it.

"Well, Mr. B——," the printer ruefully said to his master as, shivering and miserable, they surveyed the ruin, "I never saw type distributed so quickly in my life before."

And then both the men laughed, slid down to the ground, and waded across to the hotel, thinking themselves—with the fate of the German family fresh in their eyes—highly fortunate that their lives had been spared. The hotel, it need scarcely be explained, was a coarse but strong construction of slabs and rafters; but it boasted a great circular bar, across which plenty of money always passed. A shilling a nobbler for adulterated liquor means large profits and quick returns. The landlord, on this morning after the flood, was in high demand. The bar was full of excited men; landlord and men alike were standing ankle-deep in water, but the liquor had been preserved, and the nobbler business was in full swing. The nobblerising fraternity saw the representative of the local newspaper and his faithful henchman wading towards them, and stood aside to form a channel for them to approach the bar. A "nip" was promptly handed to Mr. B——. "Give me some water," he, always abhorring spirits, asked.

The landlord was quite equal to the occasion. He simply dipped a mugful out of the muddy water in which he stood. Mr. B—— says he never got so

near the idea of nectar as at that moment. The men around him were, to use his own expression, as jolly as sand-boys. True, they had lost everything; but the monotony of their existence was broken. No doubt they must begin life anew; but for once they could throw the blame of failure from themselves. So they "shouted" (meaning "stood drinks") for each other, laughed, and joked, though at the further end of the apartment, where the conformation of the circular bar created an eddy, men could only be kept from being swept away by holding on with both hands.

Mr. B — and his comrade were as happy as the rest. They knew the worst, and a softening sense of peace stole into their hearts. During a night of terrors they had been over-strung; now the tension had relaxed into a feeling of relief, and not the least source of such relief was the thought that for once there was no newspaper to be published. A newspaper, even in a miners' camp, resembles time and tide in that it waits for no man. The weary editor and compositor had at last found breathing-time.

The press had become a free press with a vengeance. "Bourgeois," "brevier," and "nonpareil" had been washed out of the cases, and distributed by the damp, indelicate fingers of King Flood. The leading article, newly revised and marked ready for press, never stirred the patriotic breasts of the Peak Downs miners; a "galley-proof" of the first column was found a fortnight after it was pulled, stranded, along with other useless lumber, upon the carcass of a drowned bullock. The list of subscribers to the paper was cast as bread upon the waters, and was discovered, after many days, with half the names and addresses obliterated.

The flood, in short, cleared away a vast number of old scores. There was no gainsaying it. It covered a multitude of sins. Good and bad, reduced to a common level, as does happen sometimes, had to make a fresh start—the twentieth, thirtieth, fortieth, or fiftieth, perhaps—in life. The flood-sponge had left a clean slate.

My good friend the editor, very reasonably you will say, came to the conclusion that he had had enough of it. He sold the goodwill of the business, the copy-

right, together with whatever salvage might be recovered, to a successor, and went further afield, eighty per cent. poorer than on the day when he started for that wonderful El Dorado of gold. But before the transfer was completed, he tucked up his shirt-sleeves, as did the honest journeyman, and entered into a novel mining speculation of his own. He unearthed the lost type. A few jolly miners entered into the joke of the thing and assisted. They lent their shovels, tin dishes, and wheelbarrows. The vein was struck in a gutter, which widened out into a sort of lagoon, on the site of a store where they used to sell inferior flour at eighteenpence per pound. For three weeks the searchers delved and washed, and nearly a hundredweight of type was recovered. It was inconvenient that the bulk showed a preponderance of capital letters, but even so it was not labour lost. The operation afforded much amusement, and, with dray-rates at famine prices per ton, anything in the shape of printers' gear recovered was gain. Mr. B —'s successor found the old cutting-machine in the head of a she-oak tree, eight miles from the township; and there were drinks all round at the circular bar when it was brought back in triumph. The paper lived again. The press never dies; it survives more virulent foes than Australian flood, or even Australian drought.

After the flood, the community was attacked with fever and ague, and almost as quickly as it had swelled to 3,000 souls it dwindled down to 500; but the printing-press stood its ground; and the circular bar for a long time afterwards showed a deeply stained line several inches from the floor — it was high-water mark.

As for Mr. B —, he will, I have no doubt, reprint this humble re-telling of his story in the flourishing daily newspaper of which he has been for some time the honoured proprietor and editor. CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE I have met as a welcome old friend in bushmen's huts and shepherds' humpies, hundreds of miles from village or town; and I know right well that, in due course, it will find its way into his office, and that the number which contains this contribution will be discussed in the mining township, an incident of whose infant days it faithfully records.

