

August twilight was falling fast, when Leila at last raised herself slowly from her nest, and dragged her cramped and wearied limbs homewards. But as she reached the gate that led to the shrubbery she heard excited voices on the other side of the hedge and caught clearly words that made her heart stand still.

"Upset the boat!—Bertie—drowned!" she heard distinctly. She was too much overcome to speak or cry out; she heard the voices die away in the distance, and clung helplessly to the gate-post, with her head resting on her hands. Her mind was too full of the one Bertie to think for a moment of the other; she had only an awful vision of the young man she had seen so lately full of life and vigour, who was now lying drowned under the treacherous waters of the Broad.

A step sounded down the path, but she would not look up, for she knew her ears deceived her. Then a voice she thought never to hear again cried in surprise and anxiety—

"Here you are at last! We could not find you anywhere! What has happened? What on earth is the matter?"

Leila raised her face incredulously. There he stood, no wraith in the fading light, but himself, handsome and full of life as ever.

"Someone has been frightening you about Bertie!" he cried with sudden comprehension, as he saw her white scared look. He vaulted the gate and stood beside her. "He is all right, I assure you. He only got a ducking, young monkey! though he nearly upset the boat. He is tucked up warm in bed now, and will get no harm."

Leila turned away from him in utter confusion.

How should she hide from him what she had really dreaded? How play her part with every nerve unstrung?

Captain Law drew a little closer to her. "Is it a case of the wrong Bertie again?" he asked, in a voice that she had never heard from him before. "Did you think I was drowned, Leila?"

For answer she stammered desperately something about Maud.

"Maud?" he repeated. "Don't you know that Maud has been our best friend? Have you never discovered what she found out long ago: that I love you, Leila?"

Was it the same world that she had been living in an hour ago? Leila wondered vaguely, as he took her hand in his, and went on—

"It was Maud who contrived that you should come here, that you might learn to know my people and my home; and it is she who has undertaken to persuade her father and mother to let you go out to India with me in October, if you will. Leila, will you come? Or shall I throw up my appointment and wait till after Christmas? For I cannot go without you."

Would she not have gone with him next day? But her happiness seemed too great to be true.

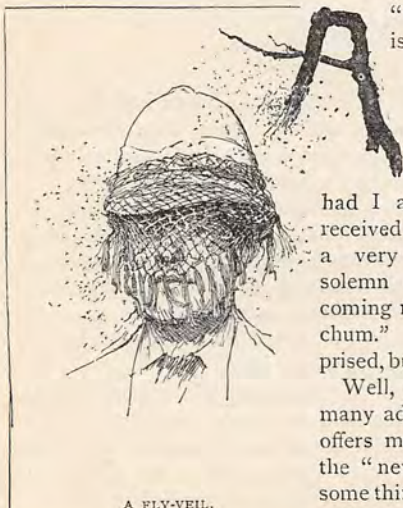
"You cannot want me; I am so young, and do such foolish things," she murmured deprecatingly.

"Don't I love all your little impulsive ways? Didn't I love you from the moment you rushed to open the door for me in the fog? Am I the wrong Bertie still, Leila?" and smiling, he drew her closer.

"No, never again," she answered softly, almost afraid of her great joy. "You are the right Bertie for me now, and always!"

THE WORRIES OF A "NEW CHUM."

BY THE REV. FREDERICK HASTINGS, ADELAIDE, S.A.



A FLY-VEIL.

"NEW CHUM" is the familiar term applied to a new-comer to Australia. No sooner

had I arrived than I received a letter from a very devout and solemn minister welcoming me as a "new chum." I was surprised, but not shocked.

Well, this land has many advantages and offers many joys, but the "new chum" has some things which tend to worry him. First

and foremost are the mosquitoes. They not only worry, but torment. They seem to let the colonist

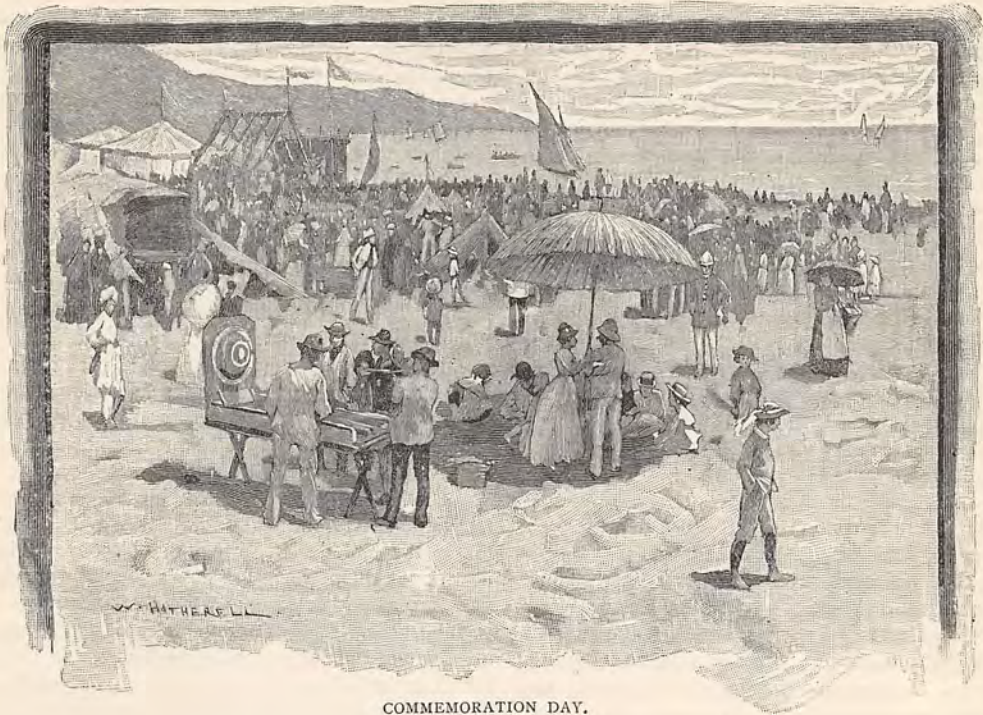
alone, but they go for the "new chum." His blood is richer and sweeter. His skin is not so hardened by the sun. The poison from previous bites has not yet inoculated him.

One lady said, "Mosquitoes never touch me." I envied her, and wanted to know the secret, but could not find it out. When the dry weather comes the mosquitoes are not quite so troublesome. Anyhow, at present I and others of my family find it an advantage to use plenty of oil of lavender and camphor, both to prevent bites and to check irritation after a surreptitious puncture.

Then the flies are a great worry. We have them in much larger numbers than at home. They swarm over everything. Sugar, butter, preserves, milk will be black with them. To-night, when at an hotel in the country, I could not see a particle of preserve in a well-filled dish; the flies made it a mass of blackness. Then they are so persistent. They mean business. I find they will even creep under my dark goggles unless I wave them off.

Many men wear netted silk veils to keep them off.

and foremost are the mosquitoes. They not only worry, but torment. They seem to let the colonist



COMMEMORATION DAY.

To-day I saw a minister with puggery and veil. In another place I saw a ploughman in the field with a white (!) gauze veil over his hat and face. One man, who had lost his way in the bush, left a written paper saying that he did not despair of finding his way, but the flies tormented him so much that he shot himself to avoid feeling any longer their attacks.

The residents generally, by means of gauze blinds and gauze doors, manage to keep out the flies; and when they get in, wives, by opening the windows on the lee side of the house, and by going about with towels, will drive them out.

Then the dust is, of course, a worry to a "new chum." At times there are dust-storms. The cry is then "Windows shut!" "Doors shut!" Even then through the ventilators the impalpable fine dust, borne in great clouds over the city, will penetrate and smother everything. I never saw such clouds of dust flying as when at Broken Hill.

But the heat, ah, that worries, tires, exhausts, enervates you at first. Some profess to enjoy the hot weather, but to most people 100 degrees in the shade is unbearable. One man who was warned not to go too near the crater at Vesuvius replied, "Oh, it won't hurt me, for I come from Australia."

"Ah! last Christmas was a scorcher. Then we could only lie down and mop ourselves, or we went down into the cellar to try to get cool. If we had had a refrigerator large enough, we should have got into that. This is not hot, or what we call hot. You wait a bit." So spoke an old colonial last Yuletide.

The "new chum" thought it quite hot enough. It

seems that sometimes 110 degrees in the shade is reached.

It was Christmas-time, but anything more unlike an English Christmas cannot be conceived.

The handle of a door that had been exposed to the sun was not bearable. An attempt to turn it was speedily abandoned, until a leather glove had been placed over it. A wooden handle of a spade exposed to the sun for some time, was just as hot as one could bear it without dropping. Yes, the weather is very different here on December 25th from that in England. No fog, no snow, no sleet, no biting east wind. Instead, cloudless skies; hot winds at times like a blast from a furnace. Harvest is just being gathered: peaches, apricots, cherries are abundant. Almond-trees are laden, the oranges and lemons are giving a good show of fruit. The cacti are blooming, and the oleander and hibiscus are smothered with white, pink, and vermilion blossoms. My own garden is prolific in huge geraniums, in tomato-plants, and water-melons. I have just had to spend an hour with the hose, for the ground is so dry. Think of that at Christmas!

But at Christmas here, as in the Old Country, you must take up the worry of trying to find out presents to suit your friends.

All the shops are decorated, and the posts of the arcading in front have branches of pepper-tree, of gum-tree, or bamboo fastened to them. Gay flags flutter; crowds are in the shops; present-buying is the rage. You cannot get served for a long time. You must learn patience, and try and get all the moral good you can out of that present-hunting worry. When you

have ended your difficult task, you are thankful and tired. Yes, here is a café with fine sheltered balcony. From your *point de vantage* you look down on the crowds in Rundle Street, the busiest in Adelaide. You can enjoy an ice, strawberries and cream. In the luxurious bamboo chair you can also enjoy the balminess, and gaze your fill on the constellation of the Southern Cross.

Santa Claus is moving. The young people are anticipating his coming. Can he travel as far? Will he be as much at home here as in England, Germany, and America? Stockings are hung up. When Christmas morning dawns there is excitement in many a home—shouts of surprise and joy. One friend told me that his little ones were up before dawn, and worrying Santa Claus. He wished their eyelids had been as heavy as his own.

The goose and plum-pudding of Christmas did not find such keen appetites as would have probably been found in England: the heat takes that away for a time. But there is something else that deprives you of it: that frightful sense of loneliness and that homesickness that will come over you as a "new chum" at such a season. You try to drive off the worrying feeling. With some friends, as soon as the rays of the sun begin to moderate, you try a game of tennis on the lawn. Afterwards the Japanese lanterns are lit. Then we throw down rugs upon the grass, draw our lounging-chairs in a circle, and armed with palm fans, moreover with a chemical preparation for keeping off mosquitoes, we pass the rest of the evening in telling a tale.

Strolling homewards from our friends, we give peeps into several gardens. Illuminations are in many. In one, belonging to a poor man, the luxuriant vine that grew over poles was gay with paper lanterns.



"AN HOUR WITH THE HOSE."

Little poverty in this land: every man can, if he will, make his children happy. You conclude that the working classes here have fewer worries than those at home, and fewer than the "new chum."

As showing how the "old chums" banish worries, let me mention how they keep Commemoration Day. This year, as it fell on a Saturday, it was observed on the Monday. Then the Governor goes down to Glenelg—the Brighton of this district—the place where South Australia was proclaimed a colony. He is entertained by the Mayor in honour of the event. Just fifty-three years ago a naval officer from H.M.S. *Buffalo* landed here, and, hoisting the Union Jack, proclaimed this a British colony. Since then what wonderful progress has been made! That magnificent city behind has been built, hundreds of miles of railway have been laid down, thousands of miles of roadway made, homesteads planted, mines opened out, and great commerce carried on.

Fifty-three years ago a few landed on a shore all marsh and scrub for a dozen miles. It must have been lonely then. The lofty range of hills beyond looked down upon them gloomily: now a beach thronged with as many as gather along Yarmouth Sands at its most popular time. Horses and vehicles of all descriptions are scattered about: tents of various kinds, from the elaborate bell-shaped to the few yards of sacking attached to the cart-side and a couple of poles. The people make shades for themselves. They settle down in the sands, make small fires in disused paraffin tins, boil the kettle, and eat and drink from arrival till leaving. As I saw this huge seaside picnic—looked at the long crowded pier, the people enjoying themselves in merry-go-rounds, and swinging boats, and sailing boats—saw also many out bathing in the shark-protected part, and many others outside the enclosure risking being snapped up suddenly—as I looked on the brilliant costumes of a few Afghans and Hindoos, and the prevailing white of the colonists, it was very difficult to realise that it was Christmas-tide. I tried in the sights around to forget all worrying home-sickness.

Perhaps among the small worries of a "new chum" is the visiting worry. So many friends call to see you on arrival that you find it difficult to return the calls. They expect return calls very speedily, or feel slighted. Each lady leaves not only her own card on the hall-table, but two from her husband. The position of each residence, in a district almost as large as the area covered by London and its suburbs, in streets without numbers, is most difficult to ascertain. I have had to give up some in despair.

Then, house-hunting is a great worry to a "new chum." The style of house is different from the English, and ladies think it is a great improvement. Generally, there is only one floor. The two-storey houses are cooler than those in the bungalow style, except where the latter have a layer of seaweed between the uniform corrugated roof and the ceiling.



"WE PASS THE REST OF THE EVENING IN TELLING A TALE" (p. 604).

Landlords generally undertake to pay the rates, and so the rent asked strikes a "new chum" as excessive. Experience shows that it is not higher than in London—indeed, much lower if the quantity of ground to each house is taken into account. I could not get my house for longer than a year, as the owners wanted to sell. Now I have probably to turn out. Even readiness to pay higher rent will not enable me to stay. When I have ceased to be a "new chum," I shall probably know how to manage better than to have to move all my furniture again so speedily.

Protective duties cause much worry to the "new chum." The Custom-house officials have keen scent, and can easily make you smart if you bring things with you. I did not relish paying duty on a piano several years in use, or on a bicycle on which I had travelled hundreds of miles. A Wesleyan minister

coming from another colony is said to have been assessed at the frontier so heavily on his buggy that he left it to be sold for the duty. It is said that he might even then have been worried to pay any deficiency.

After all, "new chums" now have nothing to worry them comparable with the difficulties and annoyances which beset the first settlers. I have just been hearing of the trials of some; of their hardships in crossing the mountains to their houses; of how great trees with their sharp branches were cut down, and "hitched" on to the bullock-waggon to keep them from going too fast down the steep hill; and I have come to the conclusion that it won't do for me to speak of any more worries to which a new-comer may now have to submit, or I shall run the risk of being laughed at. Perhaps I might find that a heavier worry than others I have already mentioned.