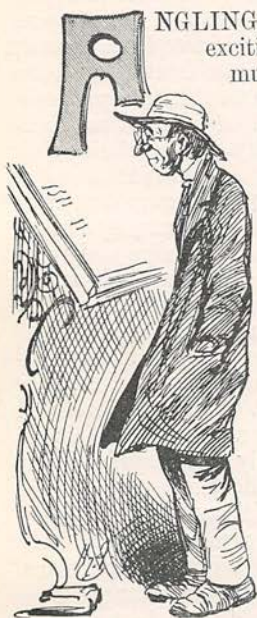


A VISIT TO ADELAIDE.

Written and Illustrated by HARRY FURNISS.



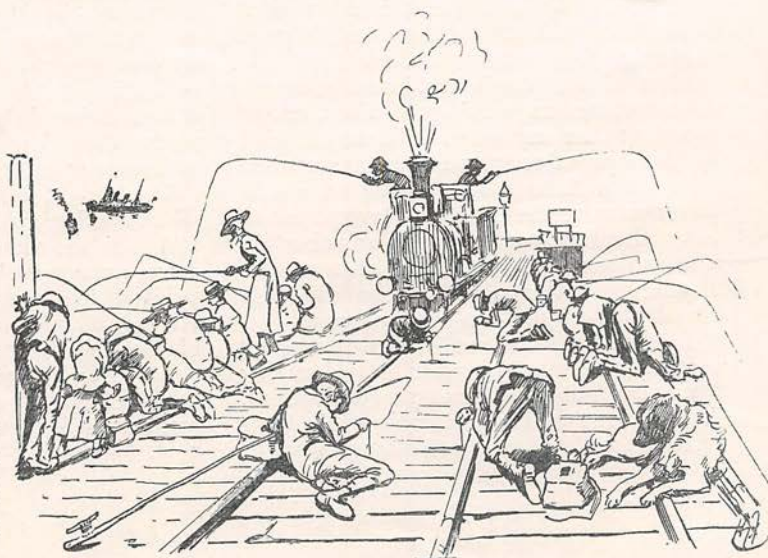
AN "AGENT."

angling on the jetty is an exciting sport, and there must be something heroic in the composition of the anglers of Australia, for here at Largs they ply their sport regardless of the screeching puff-puff. They may be run over and lose life or limb, but they go on angling just the same. I have sketched the driver and fireman of the engine, resigned to the impossibility of clearing the line of prostrate fishermen, giving in to the popular passion and doing a cast or two on their own account. At Port Melbourne the same infatuated self-devotion is observable. On the railway pier, enthusiastic followers of Isaac Walton sit all day long, unmindful of the trains which nearly push them off into the sea. The hawsers of the mail steamers may decapitate them, or whirl them away in fragments—their enthusiasm suffers no abatement. In Sydney, also, anglers will sit over the water while the sharks nibble at their toes; they do not care so long as they get a bite. This fervour would not be surprising if Australian fish were worth catching, but they are not. They are of different shapes and sizes, and have various misleading names; but, as far as eating goes, they are all alike—flavourless, coarse, and dry.

Adelaide is a bright,

cheerful city, very prettily situated on a small plateau raised above the general level of the plain which stretches from the foot of the hills to the shore of St. Vincent's Gulf. Adelaide is modest and does not compete with Melbourne and Sydney. Melbourne is proud of its fine streets and its trams, Sydney of its harbour, but Adelaide "blows" about nothing. Still, Adelaide has its "brick-fielder," which blows like all creation. This is the north wind which comes down hot off the centre of the continent and carries all before it. In a north wind Adelaide's modesty is so apparent that you can see nothing else; she is veiled in an impenetrable mist of sand, pebbles, waste-paper, and other unconsidered trifles.

Adelaide on wheels is a curious study. The tramcars are all drawn by horses and are of the old American pattern, with top seats and an awning, the latter giving a very cumbersome look, especially in a gale of wind. The mail coaches are extremely ancient, ugly, and noisy, most of them dating from the early days when they were built to stand the rough wear of bush roads; consequently they are indestructible. I have sketched one of these conveyances in a dust storm as I saw it, with an unfortunate



FISHING EXTRAORDINARY.

gentleman alone in a privileged seat on top. There is another conveyance called a "curette," which is the wonder of this city,



A DUSTY DAY.

to which it is peculiar. It is like a piece of a railway carriage tacked on to the outside platform of a tramcar, the whole running on small wheels, which increase the appearance of heaviness and clumsiness. These vehicles are a comparatively new invention, though their appearance suggests a survival from last century.

In nearly all Australian cities the post-office is the most important building. Adelaide is no exception to this rule. The stranger in search of the interesting is sent to the post-office first of all. It is a fine building, out of all proportion to the size of the city. The central hall is an excellent place in which to study character. Here, all letters addressed to the post-office, and all unclaimed letters, are tabulated alphabetically, the names of

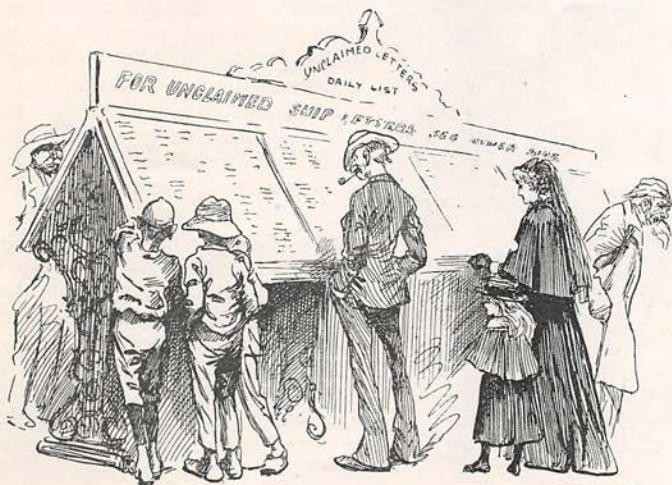
addressees being placed in frames on screens, where anyone may inspect them. Here come the "new chum"—a rather rare creature now—to look for letters from "home"; the feckless "remittance man," to see if that letter "with enclosure" has arrived; the widow, anxious for news from the relatives of the late lamented; the old identity, whose daily task it is to come and scan this board, vaguely expecting, like Mr. Micawber, that something will "turn up." All these and many other characters come in hope of finding their names on the board, and while some may be seen to leave in various stages of the dejection of "hope deferred," others rush off to the delivery window and eagerly demand the expected letter. I noticed one man who went through all the names on the board, and now and then made a note of some name.



STATUE OF ROBERT BURNS—ONE LEG UP TO DATE!

I was informed that this was an "agent," who made small "commissions" by informing people who could not read, or who are unable to go to the post-office, when letters are awaiting them.

North Terrace is a pretty boulevard, though not sufficiently patronised by the Adelaide gentry, who seem to prefer Rundle Street, with its narrow footways and miscellaneous shops, as a place for promenading. Strolling along North Terrace, I came on Robert Burns, "presented to the city by the South Australian Caledonian Society." It is a speaking likeness of the poet, who seems to be



A SKETCH IN THE POST-OFFICE.



CLERICAL TYPES IN ADELAIDE.

complaining that they have put him into striped trousers, one leg of which he has torn off in his rage. Walking round to observe the expression of the angered poet, I found him wearing the usual complacent smile, and not trousers at all. The effect from the back is caused by a pillar placed behind the poet to support him. It was unkind of the Adelaide Caledonians to provide this reminder that their national poet frequently needed the aid of some such visible means of support.

On North Terrace the ministers of religion



ADELAIDE TYPES.

mostly seem to meet, probably on their way to or from the public library. I sketched a typical group, and should gather that, as a rule, the lot of a Colonial divine is not a hard one; those seen about the towns do not give the impression of overwork. At the same time, I am told that often the ministers in country districts have very hard times, as they have to travel great distances to fulfil their duties, and often have very small stipends.

In Adelaide a large number of people appear to live all day in the streets. Many of these are bookmakers, and



THE MARKET GARDENER.

jobbers in mining shares, and their clients; the rest seem to be made up of country people and loafers. The note of the loafer in these parts is independence; he is never looking for a job, but he is not above taking an occasional contract for "deep-sinking" at an adjacent bar. One type, which the most hasty traveller cannot miss in any part of Australia, is the Chinese market gardener. He is a thrifty, peaceable creature, who works hard and lives anyhow, and finally returns to China to live on his savings. Chinese women are not allowed to immigrate, hence "John" does not multiply; also, the number of Chinamen permitted to land is strictly limited, though few people would vote for the total exclusion of these Celestial visitants.