

A PEEP AT ALBANY, WEST AUSTRALIA.

Written and Illustrated by HARRY FURNISS.

ALBANY is far from being a fair sample of Australian towns. It is known as "Sleepy Hollow," and bears out its name well, in



"CAB, SIR?"

spite of its increased importance owing to the recent mining boom in West Australia.

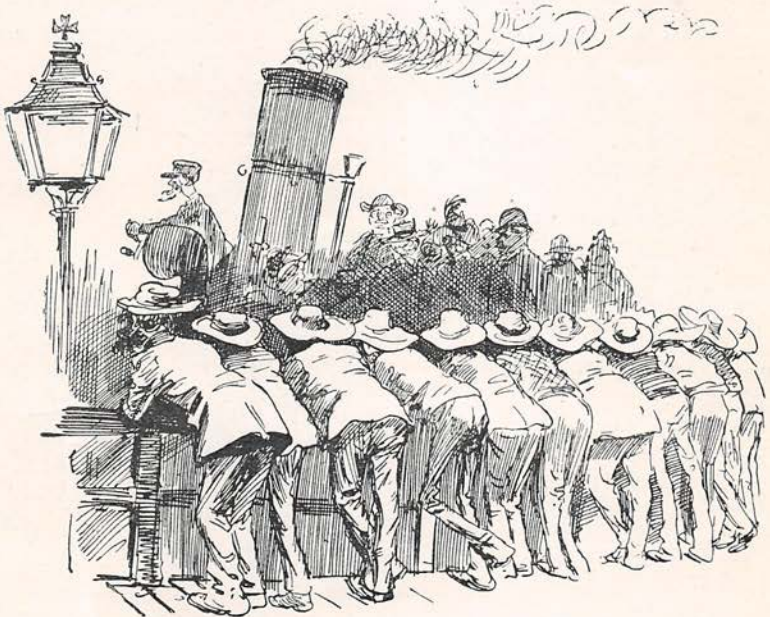
I have shown the customary attitude of the Albanians, and it would appear that, presuming that there were some active members of this community once, they have flown to the goldfields, and only left behind the "dead-beats." The solitary case of activity I saw was that of a party of five boys, who had the only cab at the end of the pier, and were loudly soliciting the custom of the arriving travellers. The courage of our party did not rise to trusting our lives to a driver sub-divided into five morsels, so the vociferations of the youngsters were without reward.

A careful survey of the visible specimens of West Australian society leads one to the conclusion that Albany has given way at the knees. The lanky Cornstalk who met the tender was clearly afflicted that way. Then the Dutch-looking gentleman in the *pince-nez* had the

same blemish. He was a carter, by the way—think of it, a carter wearing a *pince-nez*! The row of loafers that I sketched, watching the tender as it arrived—watching, it seemed, for the unwary "new chum"—were also gone at the knees, as must be obvious from my drawing.

Our first sight of "Sleepy Hollow" fully justified its name. On the Parade, every seat was occupied by sleepers in all stages of repose, from the deathlike slumber of the person who had evidently been making a night of it elsewhere, to the torpor of the rest-weary creature whose natural condition seemed to be an unvarying compromise betwixt waking and sleeping. Some of the weary ones had, however, sufficient energy to crawl across the Parade and watch some Indian jugglers performing outside the hotel.

The police trooper apparently shared the popular aversion to exercise, as, seated at ease on his noble charger, he chatted pleasantly with a kindred lazy citizen. Judging from



ALBANY INHABITANTS, AS SEEN FROM THE P. AND O. STEAMBOAT.



THE CARMAN WITH THE PINCE NEZ.

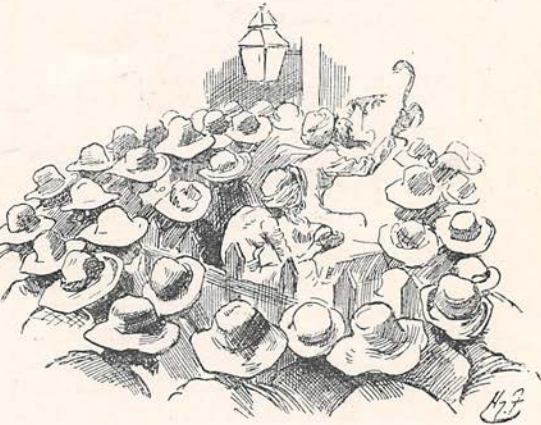
the proportion of this trooper's anatomy which was utilised in feet, one would suppose that he must be of the mounted infantry order. His appearance recalled an old sketch by John Leech, in *Punch*, of "the footiest man on a horse that was ever seen."

A feature of the visit to Albany is the shipping of gold for London. The gold is packed in wooden boxes and sealed, and an eagle-eyed official accompanies them and sees them securely locked in the bullion room. The mere sight of the outside of the boxes containing such precious freight produces some semblance of eager interest in the bystanders, and they crowd around to catch a glimpse as it comes along on the railway trucks. When the gold is placed on board the tender, we are allowed to go too, but not before. The look on the face of the man at the wheel denotes plainly that he has in his care a charge much more valuable than our poor lives. So stern is the glint in the eye of this son of the brine that it might well strike awe into the

heart of the boldest gold-robber and forbid him from plying his trade here.

One poor mortal, who is seated gazing with hungry eyes at the gold, bears unmistakably in his countenance the crushed and beaten look of the stony-broke. I cannot help wondering whether he is one of those hopeful new arrivals, whom I sketched a few weeks ago, flying off to the goldfields. Perhaps he is one of the poor, overlaid and harassed

millionaires of these parts. The dead-beat and the millionaire have, after all, much in common—particularly the millionaire.

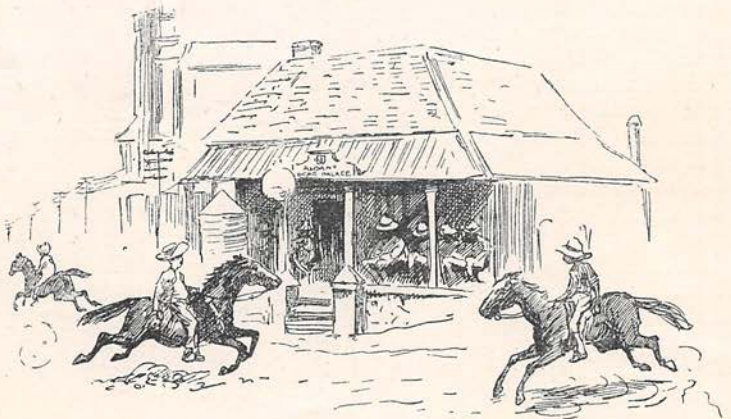


THE SCENE OUTSIDE THE HOTEL.

The casual visitor quits Albany without gaining a glimpse of the glory of the Golden West. All the activity is in Perth, to which place all the intercolonial steamers go, as well as some of the vessels from other parts; and, but for the calling of the mail steamers, Albany, one would presume, would scarcely exist at all. The position is, however, one

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SOME ALBANY HORSEMEN.

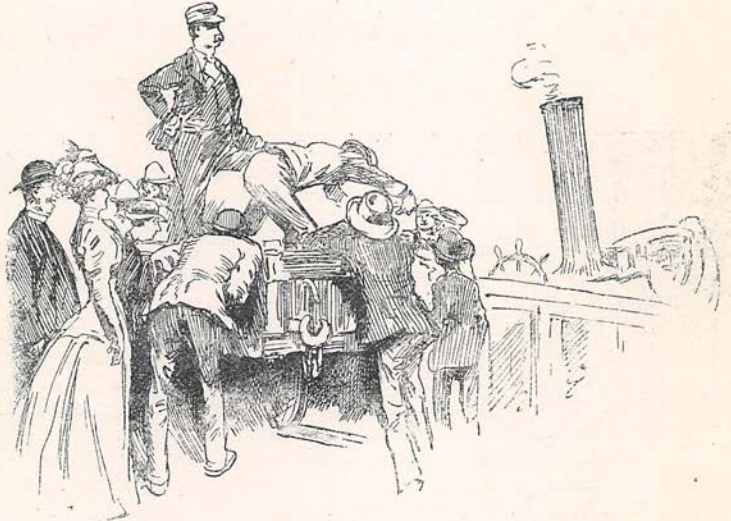
of much importance in a strategic sense, and King George's Sound is well defended.

It is well known that the Australians are very particular indeed about the quarantine laws, and great is the anxiety experienced amongst the passengers as the ship approaches St. George's Sound; for those who are desirous of landing at Albany, in order to rush off to seek their fortunes in the mines of Western Australia, are well aware that should there be the slightest symptoms of contagious disease on board, they will be doomed to a prolonged stay, possibly of several weeks' duration, on "Quarantine Island."

Except to those who are anxious to hurry to the mainland, and who consequently resent the delay, there is no very great hardship involved in this compulsory residence.

"Quarantine Island," which is in reality not an island at all, but a peninsula, is at the side of the Bay, and contains a building greatly resembling a small hospital, which is presided over by a Mr. Douglas and his wife, who ably fulfil an arduous position, for not

only have they to cater for the stranded passengers, but they have to do their best to pacify and console those who chafe under



SHIPPING GOLD.

the restrictions and rules which are necessarily enforced in order to make the isolation efficacious—the most stringent rule, of course, being that which prevents any of the passengers undergoing quarantine from visiting the mainland on any pretext whatever.

Provisions are brought to the "Island" daily in unstinted quantity and of excellent quality, and a safe means of communication exists in the use of the telephone, through which medium both the temporary and habitual residents can converse with their friends on the mainland without the slightest danger of spreading infection.

Students with a taste for natural history will find much to interest them on the "Island," for not only does it boast of the common or garden spider in considerable quantities, but also the tarantula, snakes, alligators, and black cockatoos—at least, so I am informed. I am also assured that, while fowls and game may be purchased daily from the mainland by those who wish to supplement the *menu* provided by the management, the true sportsman will have no difficulty in bagging a snipe for his breakfast, should he wish for a little sport in the early morning.



GAZING WITH HUNGRY EYES AT THE GOLD.