William McCann

THE INVASION

Sydney
Turner & Henderson

Author's copy

THE

INVASION,

BY

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LICENSED SURVEYOR,

PARKESTOWN.

Sydney:

TURNER & HENDERSON,

16 & 18 HUNTER ST., AND 7, 9, 11, & 13 LITTLE GEORGE ST.

1877.

THE INVASION.

We had lived such a hum-drum life at Parkestown for long, that when on the morning of the 18th May, 187—, the *Herald* was not delivered as usual, I almost felt as if the Solar System had gone out of gear. Reflection showed me that the irregularity might be accounted for by some minor cause, but when ten o'clock came, and brought, instead of the paper, an appalling rumour, through our butter and pumpkin merchant, I thought that I might as well walk across the paddock and see my neighbour Smith. Living a mile from the main road, and a long way from town, the news that reached us through such irregular channels was generally wholly unreliable, and this might be only one of the hundred false alarms that had startled Sydney for a year past. Still I detected, or fancied I detected, a colour of fact in this, that distinguished it from other reports that had reached us before, and the non-arrival of the paper might, after all, augur some event of importance.

Remembering the excitable female element with which my abode is blessed and enlivened, I took care, as I walked away, to assume as leisurely and unconcerned a manner as I could.

Whatever had happened, the more easily we took it the better. If it was a fact that the Russians had landed in force on the shores of Botany, there would be trouble enough without the useless addition of panic and hysterics. Even as it was, when I glanced over my shoulder, I could see our Marchioness, with her eyes dilated to double their usual size, pouring forth to her mistress, even my wife Kate, the full details of what she had heard from her usual gossiping station at the garden fence.

I had a misgiving that the report was well founded. Besides the authentic stamp of the story, it coincided exactly with something that had reached me from another quarter, but which till now had made little impression on me.

A circumstance of the kind some years ago, I would have hesitated to speak about, but now such signs and wonders meet us at every turn, and my previous indifference in this case arose not from any disbelief as to the fact of the communication, but from doubt as to its being trustworthy. The very man I was going to see now had in his own household daily evidence of unseen presences and invisible influences at work around him. James I, of happy memory, or Dr. Cotton Mather, of Boston, would certainly have readily treated my poor friend, with his gentle wife and loving children, to a blazing tar-barrel each, accompanied with the *anathema maranatha,* or greater malediction of the Church.

Many good people here now would like to subject all such persons to petty persecution—even perhaps to fine and imprisonment—and would denounce them as imposters, catch-pennies, and so on. In this case it would have been a mistake.

What happened in that house was a secret from the public, and was never published or paraded either for the sake of money or any other motive. I might justly vindicate the couple I speak of from all mercenary imputations or suspicion of imposture, by saying that they were people of good repute —a gentleman and a lady—but I feel that the use of these designations might convey an erroneous impression.

Conventional commonplace, and feeble ignorance seem to have become of late the most approved signs of correct breeding, and on such grounds *they* certainly could not expect social acceptance. So I will simply say that their happy modest home was open only to a few intimate friends, that when anyone went in, the husband was generally seen "skylarking" with the children, and the wife was, in her busy kindly way, "on household cares intent."

Anything less like a witch's cave, a Delphic shrine, or the abode of the Pythoness, one could hardly imagine. The romping happy children, the thoughtful courteous matron, the jolly head of the house, full of jokes and stories; and yet withal, whatever things are represented by the words seer, medium, second-sight, clairvoyant, were in daily existence and operation there. You don't

believe it, my practical reader. Just so. Many like you can give no reason either for their belief or unbelief on this or any other subject.

Don't you think it would be a good plan to read, listen, look and wait till you know something before you give an opinion ?

If a fact is a fact, your not looking at it, or shutting your eyes will not extinguish that fact.

Here, there was no affectation or mystery in connection with the operation of the power. The house-hold was like others—with less gloom and more cheerfulness than many. Neither the father nor mother were in the least wrapt in ecstacies—transcendental—haggard—long-haired—or ghastly, and the children were not in the least afraid to be alone in the dark.

His good, comfortable, well-proportioned figure of fifty years, filled his garden gate exactly as he stood looking up and down the road, and when she called him in to breakfast, she rated him for keeping them waiting, and he answered in his usual good-humoured, bantering way. But ever and anon, a sheet of paper would be found on the table covered with strange writings, and stranger yet, some one of the family, when resting on a sofa or arm-chair in the evening, yielding to the peaceful quiet and languor of the

hour, would become possessed of strange power of sight, and things far off and hidden to corporeal faculties would be revealed.

An instance of this had occurred three days ago, and Smith going into town had found me with two other friends at our usual haunt. He then and there gave us the substance of what had apparently come under the eye of his informant. It was of startling import, if it was to be believed; and we talked the subject over. Smith placed full confidence in the truth of the communication. I believed in the existence and power of disembodied intelligences, but doubted their veracity. The other two had seen some of these things, but not enough to form decisive opinions. Still we had all perfect confidence in Smith's good faith. We determined at last to put the whole circumstance in writing, and we sent the same to the Premier to let him take it for what it was worth.

The statement was this. A hostile armament was to be seen within three days sail of Sydney. To windward there were three or four Ironclads, and half a dozen light steamers within sight of each other. Far down to leeward there were as many heavy steamers that looked like transports full of men, and there were many other vessels within a circle of three hundred miles, converging on the same point. The Hero, two days out from Auckland, and two colonial sailing

craft had been captured by the light steamers, and the Hero was coming along under convoy. The sailing craft seemed to have been scuttled.

Smith believed in it so fully that he determined to move his family up to the Weatherboard at once, and he recommended us to do the same. I did not feel that there was any sufficient reason for taking such a step, and with the others decided to wait to see what would come of it.

I had never thought the idea of an armed descent upon our coasts absurd or impossible. With the fearful additional power given to war by steam, there was nothing to baulk such an attempt. As to our means of defence, their value was a matter on which various opinions were formed. For my part, I had no faith whatever in the wisdom, foresight or presence of mind of our Government, but I had great belief, as a last resource, in the fighting powers of my countrymen both imported and native to the soil.

When the echo of war first reached us, the prospect of actual danger produced a good deal of preparation, and the fighting spirit was for a time high, till we got tired of endless canards, the last always contradicting the one before. The authorities had made it no better by treating us, without notice, to several alèrtes.

The first told no doubt well for the promptitude and spirit of our Defence Force, but each repetition seemed to have a tendency to defeat the very

purpose for which it was intended. The cry of "Wolf! Wolf!" too often heard, fell at length on listless ears, and if all the big guns on the batteries were fired half the night or day, people assumed that it was only more squibbing or target practice.

There was another cause at work that befooled us, while it played into the hands of the enemy.

The insatiable craving of our "good society" for "Counts" had thrown open the Colony to as worthless a lot of scoundrels as ever preyed upon the hospitality of silly people.

From the days of Miranda it was always the same.

Runaway valets with stolen jewels from Vienna—Magyar nobles much experienced in billiard-marking—Syro-Phoenician eunuchs and others from the Lord-knows-where—had all got the run of the best houses, and had been put in the way of securing all possible official information—and they were all spies to a man.

The last of these honored guests had left Sydney a year before somewhat hurriedly, the ever charming and radiant Count Kaskowhiski. And is not his name recorded in many ledgers to this day?—His departure was a sad blow to his many creditors.

If two of our fashionable damsels met during the forenoon on Banksia Point or in Waratah Bay, the odds were that one carried a copy of music from the "dear Count," and the other a book from "our beloved Pastor."

The Pastor and the Count divided the female homage, and the fair owners of bright eyes and snowy shoulders, swarmed and fluttered round both wherever they went.

How the women adored them both, and how the men hated them!

Kaskowhiski had seen life and no wonder. A fiddler in Moscow—a pimp in St. Petersburg—a commissionaire in Constantinople—a waiter in Paris—head-liar to the top-swindler of the Hamburg Bourse—a secret correspondent to the Imperial Intelligence Office wherever he went,—he knew a thing or two.

"Oh, Lady——the Count has four Estates in the Ukraine, and a Summer Palace on the Vistula," says Angelica.

"Yes, of course, Chateâux-en-Espâgne—castles in the air—I've seen them—I once lived there myself"—replies her astute Ladyship to the puzzled nymph.

"Oh, Miss Angelica! the riches of this world are but fleeting joys," says the Vicar, who is always putting a spoke in the Count's wheel.

The Pastor and the Count were by no means unlike in their ways. Both played on the charming sensibilities of the adored sex, and therefore they were rivals. The beauty of this Count was—that he was always taking notes in the most open manner. His love for sketching was a mania, and he

had every strip of beach—every landing-place—and every road, both in the harbour and along the coast for many miles, in his portfolio before long.

At pic-nics, riding parties, and drives, he worked away without concealment. Fairy feet guided him over the cliffs, and fair fingers filled in his sketches. The dear Count was so fond of scenery! If the men had kept their eyes open, they could not but have seen that the villain was up to some mischief. But they stuck to their yarns and cigars, and did not want to be bothered with a fellow that they took for a singer or a man-milliner.

Yes, young ladies, you managed to do a good deal of mischief, with your love of admiration and proneness to the idolatry of shams. But far better be out of the world than out of the fashion. Oh, my dear countrywomen, when will you learn true breeding and common sense? You know, at least two-thirds of you, that in your heart you do not care twopence for either counts or pastors, but you fear to leave the paths followed by the "best sets," and you would worship the Prophet and his tom-cat if it were the "correct thing" done in "society."

Now, don't you think you could find a better motive, and enjoy yourselves a great deal more as well, if you determined to act more independently. For instance, do a thing only because it is a duty, or because you like the fun of it, and, if you feel disposed "to take religion," eschew reverend

hypocrisies, and try for a change the religion of the heart and life—but this no doubt is very low, and I admit at once that I am a vulgar person.

Well, Kaskowhiski and the rest sent to their employers cases filled with maps, plans of roads, soundings, surveys, and details of armament, and they sent what pleased them even more, confirmation of a fact that would have been otherwise quite incredible to a Continental government, namely, that we had no secrets of State, and no plans of defence; that everything was open, unprepared, and unguarded; in fact that there was a throat ready bare for anyone who had a knife.

But when conversing in society these gentlemen had always scouted the idea of war, and spoke of peace, fraternity, and the fine arts.

It came out afterwards that our Ocean and Intercolonial Telegraph lines were all more or less under like influences. Our communications, while they lasted, were most contradictory as to the doings of the enemy.

The most startling rumours from Jeddo, Singapore, and San Francisco, were repeated and repeated again with the most convincing circumstantiality, only to be contradicted the week after, and followed by the most soothing assurances of peace and safety.

This had the effect intended, which was that no one at length paid any attention to these telegraph reports.

The ramifications of intrigue that these scoundrels of spies had established surprised us when our eyes were opened.

When the day came that the overland lines were wanted, they all stopped at once, and nobody knew who did it. It was not a single break of the wire. The damage was done so that immediate repair was impossible, and it was done on every line in a dozen places. It could not be the foreign-looking lemonade dealer at the Central Junction for one, or the young gentleman with the Greek name who was so well mannered, and who had lately been made operator at Valentia; or any other such-like, for there were lots of them; or it could not be the all-pervading John, from the Flowery Land, carrying out a little pigeon contract entered into between the Great Ruski Emperor and a boss in Shanghai.

No, we will exonerate John. We prefer to put it on the cigarette-smoking gentlemen who play the piano so well, and are so civil-spoken and so oily.

Notwithstanding our resources for defence, though pitiably insignificant in the eyes of these foreigners, were more formidable than either they or their kind entertainers in Sydney knew of, or indeed than our military authorities themselves, biassed by their professional notions, could have believed.

Our readers will, we hope, understand our wish to place on record views and opinions held prior to those stirring events not long past, and which will be remembered for many years

to come. The facts have become historical, but the current notions and theories that preceded them have vanished into thin air, and have been given up and scouted even by respectable well-to-do people.

How these same good folks used to sneer at the Permanent Force, and go into fits over the Volunteers, and as to an undrilled man facing fire, why it was more than absurd to suppose it possible!

To propound that any colonist would behave like a man at all in the national peril, was to be smiled down by all the responsible people who wished to get credit for mental soundness. A different song is sung now. Everyone says that an armed nation is its own best defence, and that those military schools which will not, or cannot, adapt their technicalities to facts as they are, must henceforth be dispensed with.

The Imperial Military Commissioners who visited the colonies in the year 1877, had based their plans for defence on the supposition—stated by them as a fundamental axiom—that the control of the seas would still remain with Great Britain in any future war, as it had remained since Trafalgar.

In assuming this as a certainty, these officers must have disregarded the opinion of the great soldier, who recognised a revolution in the science and practice of war when he announced, in his famous epigram, that "steam had bridged the channel."

Late events had not failed to shew the efficacy of this new power for sudden and formidable attack, more especially during the American civil war, when the success of the blockade-runners, and of the cruisers of the "Alabama" stamp opened a new page in warfare to those who could read and understand.

It was first from the hint thus supplied, that the Russian authorities had adopted the tactics which have distinguished their recent operations.

These were no secret on the Continent. They were discussed even in the Russian Press, and reprinted in the English papers. The theory on which they were based was as follows, "Why should we hamper ourselves with a fleet to defend our barren coasts? If an enemy lands, he can get nothing; our wealth is inland, and our few ports can be best protected by land-batteries and sub-marine mines. Let us form a naval force for aggression, not for defence. Our enemy's wealth and population lie on coasts in positions accessible from the sea. Let us fill the ocean with cruisers, which will cut up his shipping, and plunder and destroy his ports."

How the method was put in practice we all know now. Cruisers and transports, with orders merely to muster at a certain geographical point, would leave a dozen ports in Europe and Asia. They would assemble

close to the object of attack, and, upon the success or failure of the attempt, the shipping would immediately again scatter over the ocean.

The seas for long before this had been almost as safe as the streets of a city, piracy had been suppressed, and the slave trade was kept down, and this was mainly owing to the supremacy of the British flag; but now the world was convulsed with general war, aggravated by the formidable character of the new motive power, and a spirit of piratical adventure, long repressed in the maritime countries of Europe and Asia, now arose, beckoned again into life by the rich prizes studding the shores of the Indian and Pacific oceans—the scores of thriving settlements untouched by former war—the fruits of sixty years' peace and colonization—and this buccaneering element readily rushed into the channel opened by the Russian policy.

The mutiny of the military classes and warlike tribes of India had twenty years before given proof—if proof were needed—that, in this stage of the world's growth, there are large numbers of people who do not find their interest in peace, industry, and lawful commerce.

Time-honored institutions had reared whole populations to look upon the sword as the legitimate winner of bread, wealth, and honor, and all such felt their ideal of "good times" realised in general rapine and confusion.

In like manner the prospect of adventure, prize-money, and plunder, drew numbers of the maritime outlaws of the globe to the Russian flag, and they were readily assimilated and organised under a system which for the last two hundred years had lived and grown by the absorption of foreign adventurers.

The success of a raid in another part of the Empire had caused a lively sense of alarm all over the colonies, and the inhabitants began to see that they must be prepared to defend themselves for the future in a much more practical, personal, and immediate sense, than by the mere voting through their representatives, for the equipment of so many regiments or batteries.

The enemy had appeared all at once on the occasion referred to, without warning, and vanished in the same fashion in a few days, leaving blood and ashes behind him.

The cruisers on the Station never saw anything of the attacking force, and the local military under regular officers were taken by surprise—the Staff scattered about—and ammunition wanting.

Nothing of the kind had yet happened on the Australian coast, but all who were not wilfully blind could see that so successful an experiment would be repeated, that this first sally was only trying the "prentice hand," that a grand

"coup" would follow on a greater scale, and that if the blow against this colony was cautiously withheld, it was none the less impending.

But neither the Imperial nor Colonial authorities were to be shifted out of the old groove by the lesson.

Those who reverted to the pages of history, were by no means surprised, when the war of 1878 opened as those of 1808 and 1854 did, with Great Britain utterly unprepared.

Nevertheless, it is a curious fact, that accounts of military and naval preparations had filled the English papers and interested the public for long.

Lectures and writings by distinguished officers, made the theory of war familiar to every one. Engineers and ship-builders in their meetings and publications brought forward improvements and adaptations, which were diffused abroad and utilised largely by our enemies; but these hints never told upon the Lords of the Admiralty, while every little attempt at preparation made in England, was known sooner and understood better in St. Petersburg, than by the politicians of London.

With an executive service blind to reason, and moreover paralysed by the constant meddling of Parliament, a proper plan of operation, well-considered, secret, and feasible, was thus impossible. Consequently, it was the Crimea over again —a paper army and a toy fleet, starved by a sham adminis-

tration—strangled in red tape—choked with senseless officialism—and summoned all at once to confront a gigantic power—secret and silent—fertile in intrigue—apt at imitation—commanding through the wide variety of nationalities under its flag every phase of human capability—and actually having picked from our own brains, many of the ideas to be put in practice in their attack on our Empire.

Remembering those times, one feels how incredible the facts then in existence must appear now.

For a generation, the instincts of the country had been struggling against the shams and follies of officialism.

The scientific and technical knowledge of the day was laid open in every way to the naval and military authorities, but generally fruitlessly.

At times a wave of popular feeling too strong to be resisted, forced on the unwilling Departments—steam, improved firearms, the telegraph, and other inventions—but in most cases the veteran functionaries managed to stave off, or quietly get rid of those encroachments on established usage.

Just before the war, daily experiments were made at Chatham and Portsmouth with Torpedo boats, rocket skiffs, projectile grapnels, and other naval appliances; and these were witnessed without restriction by numbers of foreign officers, and their descriptions were published in the papers—all to be shelved or

rejected by their Lordships of the Admiralty—but almost every one of these inventions to be adopted within the year in the Russian or Prussian service.

An angry vote of the Commons at length forced one or two of those designs on the Navy, but the Admiralty passed them on to be addled by a Commission, and nothing came of them.

The Army was if anything worse—being manacled in the irons of a cross grained, brainless fogeyism.

After the war of 1870, the public voice demanded that the British Army should be organised like that of Prussia. They meant that it should be put on such a footing as would make it effective for service whenever it was wanted; but that spurt of national excitement ended merely in filling the papers with the cant terms of Continental tactics—which nobody ever understood—or in tailoring innovations. "Krieg Spiel," for instance was introduced, though nobody had the least notion what it was, except that Royal Princes played it.

The War Office clerks must have indulged in a chuckle of gratified malice when they succeeded in burking the cry for "mobilisation" by arraying the Infantry of the Line in spiked helmets of the Prussian type—while the public seemed to be fully satisfied that the troops had mastered the German field manœuvres, when they appeared with their boots over their trousers.

The clothing department was that in which the "Horse Guards" was always strongest.

To make the Army a serviceable machine was by no means the aim of the War authorities—but to change the uniform with every passing fashion, had been the chosen and delighted duty of each successive administration.

To us in the colonies, it looked as though the settlement of these matters was in the hands of nursery-maids, or the artists of Illustrated Papers.

If the French had "licked" in 1870, (to use the school-boy term) there is little doubt that the British Infantry would have been turned out in peg-tops and kepis.

It is beyond question that in this twaddling spirit the most expensive army in the world was administered.

We Australians, having seen all this, with its consequences, in the recent sack of New Dorset, naturally acquired a complete distrust of the Imperial military system; and consequently, right or wrong, of the preparations for defence adopted on the report of the Commissioners, but equally there arose among us a very resolute determination to defend our homes against the enemy.

The Assembly, on the spur of a well-founded alarm, added to the Permanent Force four batteries of artillery, and four companies of infantry, and they removed the obstructions which had existed for some years to the recruiting of the Volunteer Force.

These regiments, long thinned and diminished by mismanagement, were speedily filled to the full strength, and drill and target practice were pursued with spirit.

As an instance of the previous mismanagement, it is a fact that to evade the granting of Volunteer Land Orders, numbers of the best men—technically under sized—but often noted as shots and athletes, were drafted out and dismissed the ranks, without other reason given —just as they had nearly completed their full time.

But there remained a strong section of the population that was by no means satisfied to trust the safety of their families and homes either to the care of a military system that seemed to reach the accustomed goal of blunder or break-down whenever it was tried, or to the spasmodic and uncertain patriotism of a colonial legislature.

Seeing that in spite of British cruisers and troops under regular discipline, towns on the coast might be surprised, plundered, burned, or their inhabitants held to ransom, many felt that it would be weakly credulous to risk their all to a guardianship that had been proved blind, unready, or crippled, and the discussion that arose brought out facts that had not previously been taken into consideration.

It appeared that there were among the population thousands of men who had already passed through the volunteer ranks here, besides others—for instance—barristers who had

served in the well-known "Devil's Own," merchants and their employés who had been members of the favourite London Scottish, or 3rd Middlesex, and other English corps, who would have joined with our volunteers if the system had been on a proper footing,—moreover there were many who had acquired certain experience both in regular military service and in frontier and bush life, and all of these, it was pointed out, would certainly prove most formidable adversaries to an invading force, in defending rough or scrubby ground.

This suggestion, coinciding with the spreading distrust of regular organization—partly justified by facts—had re-echoed through the country with considerable effect, but the arming that followed was most irregular.

Rifle clubs were formed in suburbs and villages—everywhere old volunteers returned to the butts to renew their practice, but beyond this, and a pretty general buying up of arms and ammunition, nothing was done. Discipline, drill, and combination under regular officers were not only discarded by these "free rifles," but all attempt at such organization was condemned, justly or unjustly, as the case might be, from late experience, as more likely to prove a rotton reed to lean on, than any real aid.

After all, this was not to be wondered at, after the recent astounding failure.

Naturally, this irregular movement was from the side of authority, condemned as wholly irrational and useless, but it came quite naturally to many of the colonists. Not a few had spent years of their lives in districts where a loaded rifle hung above the bed was a necessary part of the furniture of the hut. Most of the colonists came of races from which they inherited far more valuable qualities than drill or barrack-yard routine. They had warlike blood in their veins, and warlike traditions in their memories.

A great Frenchman has said that at the first roll of the drum, the whole French youth fall into columns of companies. It is in the blood. It turned out that it came quite as readily to our lads to lie on their stomachs among the scrub and sand-hills, and squint along a barrel.

But to most Army men, all action outside the Regular Service appeared useless and contemptible.

The Volunteer Forces in the mother country had been shelved, the highest authorities, under the influence of their prejudiced professional notions, condemning them as unfit for active service—suited only for sentry duty—for garrisoning citadels when there was no enemy attacking them—and for parades.

This being the orthodox estimate, nothing was expected of the colonial volunteers, but that they would disperse quietly on the first symptom of danger.

Even our Permanent Force, though commanded by officers of the Royal Army, was snuffed at, and sneered down as unfit to be mentioned in the same breath with other regular troops.

Nearly all the wholesale well-to-do people who had made their fortunes, and were beginning to ignore all colonial ties, and to talk of living in England, advised in a faint patronising pitying tone, that we should give up all idea of resistance, and if an enemy did appear—a most unlikely event—simply pay what was demanded, and trust to the motherly kindness of the Home Governmeut to make it up to us.

And lo! in spite of this deluge of cold water, here were the Permanent and Volunteer Forces daily growing in numbers and efficiency, while the movement spreading over the country seemed to promise, in addition, an irregular levy or army of "franc-tireurs." Clearly the colonists—right or wrong—had plenty of grit and self-confidence, and were, if they would stand the proof, resolute to defend themselves.

It was a moot question, according as people's predilictions led them, whether this last accession was an element of strength, or simply a nuisance to be suppressed.

Prejudice on both sides prevented a just estimate being arrived at.

The regimental officers, up to the day of action, would never admit that these irregulars were more than a rabble, to run away the first shot fired.

The Volunteers they could barely be civil to, but us "free rifles" they could by no means abide.

No doubt they spoke according to their cloth, and it is remarkable that with the knowledge of military history accessible to those from whom they got their views, how such an estimate of the value of the Volunteer and Irregular Forces could have been formed.

If the question had to be settled by argument, we might have cited history for the last one hundred and fifty years, and pointed out instance after instance of regular armies being not only matched, but beaten, and at times utterly destroyed, by raw levies, irregulars, and armed rabbles.

We might have begun with 1745.

The well-appointed army, commanded by Sir John Cope, was at Preston Pans utterly dispersed and destroyed, by an equal number of undisciplined Highlanders. These Celts were used to carry arms, but probably few of them before this had ever seen any worse fighting than a desperate cattle stealing or tavern brawl.

Thirty years after, at Bunker's Hill, a body of Boston citizens, mechanics, and country people, commanded by a surveyor and a doctor, fought a bloody, hard-won field with regular British troops.

In less than twenty years after, the armed rabble of Paris drove out of Holland the armies of the Hapsburgs, and the troops under the Duke of York.

In 1808 the citizens of Saragossa fought a French army for possession of their town for three days, inflicted immense loss on the enemy, and held their position.

During the same war, Spanish guerillas, being armed peasants and civilians, made the country so unsafe for the French, that it needed the escort of a regiment to take a letter from one position to another.

In 1814 the best of our Peninsular veteran regiments were beaten back from before New Orleans by General Andrew Jackson, commanding a rabble of back-woodsmen, shop-boys, and roughs, entrenched behind cotton bales.

Within our own memories, Garibaldi, accompanied by a few hundred adherents, landed in Sicily, and gathering force as he moved on, passed to Naples, and, without regular discipline or organization, drove King Bomba with his regular army out of his kingdom.

Now, it would have been fair to ask our military Solomons, "Is this history, or is it not?"

It may certainly be read differently at the Horse Guards, but many of our people here believed these things to be true, and the theory they founded on the same they intended to put in practice if necessary,

and they would on no account have it that they were at all worse men, or could pull worse triggers from living south of the line.

This general movement in New South Wales was about the first evidence of the rising manhood of the country. A spurious prosperity had for years covered the community with a growth of proud flesh, and the healthy current of national life was clogged. We were becoming a nation of pawnbrokers and publicans. But of all our fields of action the political was the busiest, the most useless, and the most corrupt. Three Ministries had followed each other within the last two years.

A new Government was hardly in office before the party ejected assumed the rôle of their opponents; they stopped supplies, wasted time in personal attacks and verbiose blackguardism, and sometimes within a fortnight brought in a vote of want of confidence. The last Ministry had been put out three weeks ago by a vote on the Defences, and their successful opponents signalised their entrance into office by appointing two Commissioners for Defence, at salaries of £2,000 a-year each—Messrs. Bummington and Buzz. These functionaries held seats in the Cabinet and were Members of Assembly. They were to have full authority over the troops and armaments, and, under their responsibility to Parliament, to provide for the safety of the

country. The House generally sat now for thirty-six hours at a stretch, talking against time, the only work done being making new billets, and the undisguised aim of the Opposition being simply to have their hands again into the Treasury.

This long preamble will serve to shew our readers what we were about in New South Wales when the storm of invasion burst upon us, and what in fact was passing through my head as I walked across to my neighbour Smith's.

Meanwhile, reverting to my own home, to Kate and her treasure, the "dulce domum," I felt that she was as safe here as she could be anywhere on this side of the Mountains, as we were fully eight miles from the nearest part of the town, and off the main road.

With the calamity that seemed to threaten us, there would be thousands of women and children in actual immediate peril, including some whose safety I was bound to provide for, and if I saw to the present security of my little household, it was all that could be thought of.

As I reached the well-known rose covered porch, Smith came out, looking cheerful, alert, and jolly as ever, but I was staggered with the change in his outward man. A douce respectable town body, rigged out in character for a dog-fighting or poaching adventure, may partly convey the impression which my friend's attire gave me, and the old

grey tweed suit and leather leggings in which he had pleased to array himself might have left me in wonder as to what he was up to, but that a serviceable Hay rifle was in his hand, and a weighty pouch was on the broad black belt that girt him.

In following out the events of that memorable day, I cannot but wonder how largely the ludicrous is mixed up with the horrible in my recollections. Deeply anxious as I and thousands more were, and fully conscious not only of the peril to life and limb, but, what was of much more consequence, the risk to all who were dear to us, I can aver, that absurdities and extravagances were indulged in through the whole time while everything of ours in the world hung in the balance.

The prospect of conflict seemed to evolve from congenial natures a certain instinct of sport, and I don't exaggerate the least when I say that a vast number of men enjoyed themselves thoroughly, even when they carried away on their persons lasting marks of the day's doings—and they will tell you to this day they would not have been absent for anything.

I have at times thought that this recoil of the spirit, whether from nervous excitement, or the rising of the physical courage to meet danger, may be part of our heritage from our Norse and Celtic ancestors.

Sailors still cheer when the masts fall and the good ship is rent to fragments on the bar—just after the fashion of the old Berserkars,—and soldiers have laughed in the face of death elsewhere than in the pages of Lever; and does not the same blood run in the veins of us Australians? Be that as it may, many can bear me out that this was the spirit in which numbers of our people met the day of danger.

It had arisen with the times. Living for long on the dead Bœotion level of peace and money-making, we were becoming a very dull people. The thoughts of few in these former years rose out of the groove of daily work and ready money. The literature most valued and best paid among us was the knack of cooking an advertisement. Science was unappreciated, unless it could be made subservient to doctoring grog, or starting bogus schemes. Humour we had absolutely none. Fun and wit were superseded by buffoonery and dramatised boorishness.

But as soon as the people took in the idea that they were carrying their lives and fortunes in their hands, depths of feeling dormant for long were stirred into healthy vigor, and the immediate outcome to be seen all around was a cheerfulness and almost a levity of demeanour in vivid contrast to the staid and smug business-like deportment which had for long been the "mode." As for myself, even in the most anxious moments, I was subject to fits of school-boy frivolity,

and in spite of the overwhelming urgency of the occasion, when I saw Smith's figure, I wondered, turned him round, and grinned.

Being one of the "free rifles," he had donned what he thought an appropriate costume, and to say the truth, it was far from unsuitable for bush fighting.

What amused me was, that, the combination of tints as well as the outline of the figure gave him much the look of a grey magpie. Before many hours, I got full ocular proof of the fallacies of our military costume.

A red coat in day-light could be seen even in wooded ground, a good half mile off, while the grey and black in which Smith was clothed, among tea-tree foliage and black stumps could barely be distinguished a hundred yards away.

He looked at me with his usual comical expression of self-satisfied assurance—pointing down towards Botany, and leaning on his rifle.

"Now, then," he said at length, "Who's right? Do you hear them?"

I listened in the direction he pointed, and no doubt of it, though faint, there was firing to the eastward. I could hear both the boom of the cannon and the dropping rattle of musketry come up the wind.

"But—firing has been common lately—are they really here?"

"Twelve steamers came into Botany at two this morning. I was down to Burwood to make sure, and I was just on my way to tell you. There's rare sport on the Botany road, or I'm mistaken."

I was sobered in a moment. "God help us Smith—such sport!"

"Come, come, old fellow, none of that; 'away with melancholy;' there's only one way to go into action. Keep a stiff upper lip. It's too late to think of spilled milk. You can't move your family now; and I'll be bound they're much better staying where they are than for you to make the attempt, unless you can get them right beyond the Hawkesbury. But I believe both railway and road will be blocked. I wish you had sent them with mine all the same."

"By the bye, Mrs. Walker might go over to old Mrs. Johnstone, and they could keep each other company. I believe it will be all over to-day, and if you cannot look after them I will. So, quick, settle all that and get your shooting-iron and come on."

"Bless you for your promise, old man, and I will send my wife to Mrs. Johnstone's; its a capital idea. But I have some other women folks to see to in Sydney in the first place, so you had better go on, and I will follow."

"Goodbye then; I'll look out for you." And he was off to join a neighbour driving in on the same errand. A light

waggon stopped at the corner, and I saw him get in beside two young fellows—one of them a noted rifle shot. Both of them made good scores that day, and got through unscathed.

The next time I saw Smith he was in St. Paul's College, on a stretcher, with a broken arm and a bayonet wound through his thigh.

In a very few moments I was home. I had caught and saddled my mare, and went into the house for my kit and carbine. I had also to arrange all for Kate—to tell her what to do—and get the parting over. Smith's suggestion as to her going to our good old friend Mrs. Johnstone, was excellent. It was only half a mile off, and she with the boy and maid could easily walk there. The example and protection of a lady of age and experience were the very thing she needed. I felt that leaving her so placed, I could go without misgiving.

One of the noticeable features of this time was seen in the various forms in which our women were affected when the storm burst upon us.

Some seemed to grasp at once the whole circumstances involved in the word "war," and many of them acted with a courage, promptitude, presence of mind and humanity wonderful to observe and difficult to account for. Others, apparently differing little from these in every day life, gave

way to senseless and selfish terror, and made themselves nuisances to their husbands and to every one else. These were the two extremes.

Those between, the common-place, and the young and inexperienced, gravitated towards the one type or the other, very much according to the example set them, and among the last was my little Kate.

Seeing that the approved education of girls consists mainly in the re-iteration of certain "must'nts" and "sha'nts," with a mechanical learning of accomplishments, manners, catechism and scales, it is not surprising that their thinking faculties are not much developed thereby.

We do not need to read of Dora, the child-wife of Dickens, to know that there are plenty of amiable, gentle girls among us who are content to take all their ideas from those near them, and whose thoughts hardly reach beyond the happy home circles in which they dwell.

Nevertheless, there were hundreds who, like Kate, had sterling character under this child-like exterior, and to such, the events of that day acted like years of experience and wisdom.

But now, as I passed her door, I got proof that she was not in the least prepared for the fiery trial that was upon us. She was singing and playing with her child. Her words showed that she had heard of the event of the

morning, but she had as plainly failed to realise in her own mind the horrors, most likely enacting not far off. If I might judge from her unconscious levity, her idea of military invasion was something of the nature of a parade or an Opera with a good deal of dress, music, and fireworks. I really believe that if I had told her to come for a drive and see the battle, she would have dressed herself and little Johnny, and been ready waiting for the buggy without a shade of misgiving; but the first sight of slaughter would have burst like a revelation upon her, and she would have sunk in a phrenzy of fear and disgust. She did not know then, she knew before long what a grisly filthy monster war is. But I felt so far relieved.

As long as these facts were not objectively presented to her, I might get the parting over without needless fuss, and then I trusted to Mrs. Johnstone's experience to prepare her for what might happen.

Such was my selfish wisdom, and the consequences will be seen. I had purposely talked in a frivolous way about the prospect of this very danger, turning it into a joke, and I really was fool enough to believe that the best way to consult a woman's comfort, was to deceive her on disagreeable subjects.

So I wrote a note to the old lady, for Kate to take, and after buckling my accoutrements on the saddle, I went back to say a few words. "Kate, dear, you must go over to Mrs.

Johnstone's, and take Johnny and the girl, and stay there till I come back, and give her this note. And if there's any disturbance in the town, you are better with her than anywhere else for the day. Meantime I must go to see after Mrs. White, and Elly. You know they have no one else to look after them." Mrs. White is the widow of an old friend, and Eleanor is our cousin, married to Jack Mitchell, who is most of the time away bank-inspecting, and of course I was bound before doing anything else to see to the safety of those ladies.

Kate approved—only of course she begged me to be careful—but her mind was not yet impressed with any positive idea of danger to me or herself and child; and I kissed them and made my way to the gate, keen to be down the road, when the irrepressible Marchioness burst out behind me.

"Oh please Sir, don't go—oh please missus mum—the grocer's cart's here, and he says as how they're batterin' Sydney all to pieces, and they've made the Exhibition into a hospital, and there's 'undreds and 'undreds of poor unfortunets which their legs and arms is shot off, and the doctors cutting them up like anythink!"

This grisly narrative fairly put the fat in the fire. It upset all my fine-drawn scheme for letting my wife down easy. I felt at once how wrongly I had acted in not telling her more of what really was going on. The thought made me feel like a savage, and with the usual injustice of a man in fault,

I was ready to blame anybody but myself. I would not stop now. I held on rapidly for the gate, pretending not to hear, but Kate was after me like a shot.

She took one side of the oval fence, shrieking, "Willy, Willy, stay with me and Johnny," and the Marchioness took the other side, yelling a running commentary on battle, murder, and sudden death, while Johnny, abandoned in the verandah, opened his mouth and howled like a small fat demon.

Usually I believe I am tenderly considerate of my wife—not to be maudlinly sentimental—but in my present temper to be clung to and screamed at—on such a day too—was more than I could stand, and I wrenched myself away.

Cuddy Headrigg, when he tore himself away from his loving and yelling Jenny on a like occasion, expressed himself in a rough way. I am sure that I did not repeat Cuddy's remark, but I must have said something that I should not, for the consciousness of my harshness made me turn my head as I reached the saddle, and there was a woe-begone crying face. "Could it be her Willie who had spoken to her in that way? Oh dear!"

My roughness and impatience had been shameful. I had acted like a wild beast, and I myself alone was the cause of this outbreak. I had not neglected her safety and comfort indeed, and I fully believed—what turned out to be the fact,

namely—that our house was beyond the circumference within which the explosion would expend itself. I was not to blame so far, but I had treated her like a child in not preparing her better for a possible event.

Now—the crisis had come—actual danger was the only thing to be considered. Nervous alarm and acute sensibilities were neither to be encouraged nor tolerated; but I had caused this paroxysm by lulling her in a fool's paradise, and I got good proof before the day was over, that if forewarned, she could have braced her mind to meet whatever fate might send.

I was plainly wrong. My folly, blindness, and injustice rose up against me, and I dismounted to soothe her and make all right again. "Now Kate, don't be foolish; suppose the worst has happened. We have expected it, and should be ready (this was humbug.) You and Johnny will be safe, and with others in real danger and distress, it will not do to think only of ourselves. Surely you would not have me abandon our friends and countrymen at such a time, and show myself a laggard. What would you say of any man who stayed at home to nurse his wife on a day like this."

The poor little woman's pride was touched, and she composed herself though she said good-bye with a quivering lip. But she set out directly, helped Mrs. Johnstone to make up things for the hospital, and behaved like a trump before the day was over.

I determined even then—always in future—if a future was in store for me—to tell my wife the plain truth about everything, and to lay down as an axiom for my guidance, that she has quite as much sense, if not more than myself.

I was free at last, and Black Bess flew down the road as she had not done for twelve months.

As I got on to the main line at Burwood I saw that a panic had set in. Carts, carriages of all kinds, omnibuses, and buggies, crowded the western thoroughfare.

The Railway Station was blockaded by a crowd waiting, hampered with every conceivable description of baggage and furniture, and the same was to be seen at every other station on the line.

When I got to Petersham I could hear the firing distinctly; there was for a time a lull with only an occasional shot, and then for a moment or two it rose to a continued roar, and while these heavy volleys re-echoed the crowd swayed and the people crushed and trampled each other.

These fugitives had a type of their own. Terror and tenacity in clinging to their property were the ruling characteristics.

Egoism in all shapes of selfishness and fear was seen around, sometimes relieved by the more human instinct of the family, but even then it was simply that, "my wife,

my children," took the place of "my life, my property;" all others might be trampled in the dirt so long as *their own* were saved.

One disgusting proverb was in all their mouths—"Every man for himself, and God for us all." They were evidently what, if we were classing them in a sale-yard as stock, we would call "culls." I was glad that my wife and child were not in that struggling trampling crowd, but I don't think in any case we should have joined in such a stampede.

The men had all narrow foreheads and goggle eyes. They were like those who used to hang about G—v—e's Rooms, and other haunts of mining projectors in 1872, the lawful prey of the clever rogues who floated the bubble schemes of that day. They were now following each other in the same way, like a flock of sheep.

Among them I met little Jones, of the great tea warehouse. He was sweating after a dray on which were packed Mrs. Jones, seven children, and their best piano, and he was carrying a bottle of cordial and a mug, and mopping himself with a child's pinafore. Mrs. Jones was evidently of the vulgar-genteel kind. She sat "yammerin" at Jones, as the cause of all this distress.

The children, too, seemed spoiled, and treated their uxorious perspiring parent to the same chorus. I felt, like Burns

when similarly annoyed, that I could have "charmed her with the magic of a switch," and the brats too. Jones, seeing me, stopped to puff and blow.

"Bless me, Mr. Walker, ain't it dreadful; dreadful—this ain't in my line at all;—think of my pore wife and children turned out of doors." Mrs. Jones now felt herself neglected, and screamed at Jones for her drops—*brandy, I expect*—and the poor little slave of a husband had to climb up in the dray with his bottle. "Oh, my pore dear wife."

"Bless your pore dear wife," was my unfeeling reflection as I dug the spurs into Bess, and spun along, "I hope some of the women are keeping their senses."

At first I had to go through some fences, the road was so full, but it thinned very much before I reached Camperdown, and beyond that there were only occasional groups. I found the reason for that by and by.

I speedily reached Redfern. I rode into the station to look round and ask questions. There never was seen before such a well dressed crowd blockading the terminus. The opening of the Exhibition and the last night of Madame Ristori were nothing to it.

All vested interests were represented there, from the Bank to the back-slums of Queer-street.

There is a wonderful sympathy in wealth, and in what goes by the name of "respectability." Money is money, however it may be got.

King Jamie, to whom we have already referred, remarked in reference to certain vicious accumulations, "non olet;" and if the produce of fraud and profligacy did not offend the royal nostril, why should we be nice ?

But, mind—I don't say that the best people of Sydney were at the terminus—though money and success were largely represented.

There is a principle embodied in the axiom "noblèsse oblige," which no doubt would have been quite incomprehensible to the swell crowd waiting, and they would have been amazed if they had known how certain families—the R——ns, for instance—and others that I could name, only I have no authority, were spending that morning.

Not that I knew half a dozen of those big folks; I go nowhere. Being only a working surveyor, the owner of a cottage and a paddock, I suppose among the families of the commercial and financial magnates waiting for the train I would not even be classed as a gentleman.

I have tried to give a hint as to who were *not* there; I must now, to be fair, tell who *were*. Well, then, among the prominent elements represented in seal-skin and velvet were, grog,—kite-flying,—and successful insolvency.

I hesitate to refer to a fourth source of wealth,—for our morals are so squeamish,—so I must say at once it is to the recipients I allude as being present, who are stainless

as the Maids of Honour—those who earn the money are not so much so. The plain truth is that many handsome carriages are run, and many churches are towered and sculptured from rentals produced by certain poor, vulgar, improper persons.

I must confess that my sympathies are at present entirely with these last, for I heard from many men how the wounded were, on that day nursed and cared for by these poor Magdalenes. And yet, it was said that the wives and sisters of the patients turned away from these nurses with hard pitiless faces, even when they found them doing all that charity and mercy could inspire for suffering strangers.

Alas, the times are out of joint. Surely some day yet the social balance will not always be thus double-weighted against those poor outlaws.

The cup of cold water given in kindness bears blessings, and for those female sinners we may well put in the same plea as once prevailed of old, "*Quia multum amavit,*" or, as the vulgate hath it, "Because she loved much." But Heaven forbid that such remarks should be held to apply to those doves of fashion in the railway shed—they recked little of either charity or mercy—money was more to the purpose with them.

I was told that special trains at £200 each had been running since four in the morning, till an order from the

Commissioner compelled the drivers to leave their goods at the first siding, and come back.

Imagine the sufferings of those "gentle gazelles" turned adrift in the wilderness! Half Waratah Point were thus "bushing it" between Picton Lagoons and Nattai.

The remainder were with their beloved Pastor, waiting for their train, long ordered but ungraciously delayed.

Among the *crême de la crême,* thus slighted, was the Hon. Mrs. Haybag, with her five daughters. They are very high Church, and do not care much for common colonial society.

No wonder, considering the blue blood that runs in their veins. Their grand-papa was the celebrated left-handed flogger at Barrigal Stockade, and he married a lady who ran a bum-boat on Monaro, called Carroty Sal. A bum-boat was a two-horse dray, carrying a hogshead of rum and a red flag.

There were also one or two of those superior creatures, hierarchs in the Temple of Mammon, whom we common people look up to as super-angelic in their nature. Their papas, by dealing in sugar, rum, and shoddy, had got the pull of the Banks, and now, through playing the game of "beggar-my-neighbour" with the cogged dice called "discount," they had achieved possession of millions of acres of Crown lands and hundreds of thousands of sheep and cattle.

As I looked on one serene, self-satisfied, orthodox-looking version of a prosperous and bumptious Tittlebat Titmouse, I remembered the Waramba Station Account in 1867, made up quarterly with 4¼ per cent. added each time, and "ecce signum!" here was the magnificent result.

You say why should not such grandees fight for their country?

My dear Sir, finance has no country—at least he—the person in question, had secured as much country as he could already, and how can you fairly expect gentlemen to aid in the common defence who have already paid in hard cash £130 for Volunteer Land Orders!

Is not that enough? Don't you think your comments indecent? Surely you have not learned your catechism!

Beside him there was a fashionable doctor, with soft, unctuous voice, a turn for gossip, and delicate hands. He did not know much about doctoring, and he disliked those nasty surgical operations which were already coming into requisition, but he had an excellent practice, for he was so gentleman—or rather so lady-like.

There were not many men though, on the whole—mostly women capitalists, and a parson or two.

There was nothing to be learned there—the twaddle they talked was frightful.

"England should have protected them"—"They knew the colonial troops and volunteers would fail when they were wanted."—"It was cowardly and unlike a gentleman for the Russian commander to attack a place where there were people of wealth and position"—"It all arose from vulgar 'democratic government.'"

At last "our beloved pastor" put the cap upon it, and washed his hands of the whole business, when with meekly folded hands he simpered out in a gentle modulated monotone "that war was a thing of this world—that we of the church had chosen the better part—that the prevalent infidelity was no doubt the cause of this judgment,—and so let us go out from them, for we are not of them."

I had heard quite enough of this rot. The Berserkar blood or something akin to it, was bubbling up within me, and a lingering regard for the "convenances," barely prevented me from treating the company to a rallying whoop, such as will turn a mob of scrub cattle a quarter of a mile a-head. But I took it out in spurring Bess, and she shot down Brickfield Hill as if she had a hornet on her croupe.

I heard afterwards that this last party at the station was shunted on to a coalsiding at the Junction, after being in mortal terror of being fired into, and they were left there, while the guard and engineers brought down another train, with the Hawkesbury Volunteers—and I rejoiced greatly at the same.

A patrol of armed constables held all George-street to keep the traffic clear and prevent the gathering of mobs.—An ugly feature in the disorder of the day was the swarming at every street corner of the larrikin element, plundering and molesting women, and mobbing unprotected people under the pretence of helping them. I am glad to say that a good many of these vermin paid the penalty for their misdeeds before the day was over. If the Russians had got in, our own rabble would have burned and plundered the town—so much for the want of compulsory education.

As I went on, I became aware that there was a steady migration by the cross streets towards Darling Harbour. The people were getting across the water by the Pyrmont Bridge and the Balmain ferries.

When I reached Market-street, I found out the cause.

A hoarse scream sounded a hundred yards ahead of me, accompanied with the crash of a chimney, and an explosion on the pavement, that smashed in part of the bar-front of the Royal Hotel, and sent splinters of wood and stone all about.

The enemy outside the Heads was shelling the Town.

I heard afterwards that the ironclads Tsargrad, Paskevitch, and Suwarrow were standing of and on under the Gap, making this diversion, while Milarovitch ran into Botany Bay with 6000 men.

Though the people were flying from the east side of the city, it is marvellous how few casaulties there were. A cab, with horse, driver and all, was knocked into smithereens in Bridge-street, and one of the stone saints on St. Mary's Cathedral was reduced to powder, but the shells seemed mostly to drop into the Gardens or the water.

Still there was no wonder at the general terror, and I was glad that my little house-hold was nine miles off. I found that the first result of the alarm was to cause a rush to the Railway Station and the Western Road, but I had seen the last of that as I rode in. Some shots by skirmishers to the west of Waterloo conveyed the idea to the panic-stricken crowd that the enemy were approaching Newtown. Some who had started for the Railway came back—those who went by the last train got a fright, and all followed the current that had set in across Darling Harbour.

The Post Office was shut, as was every business place, excepting the public-houses, which were lively.

The Telegraph Office seemed in full work, and the yard was full of the mounted boys, who were coming and going unceasingly.

As I passed the colonnade, a mounted officer galloped up from the back— I recognised Major Ranger.

"For God's sake, Mr. Walker, do something for me. I can get nothing done here. The Commissioners for Defence are sitting up-stairs, and they cannot spare a messenger or

clerk. Its my opinion they're playing Old Harry with the whole business—so far as they can.—You have a good horse. Hunt up all the cabs or other vehicles you can—get a dozen if possible, and bring them to the Brigade Office at once.—Get them by hook or by crook—give or promise anything you like,—I'll pay whatever they cost. It's very pressing, so excuse further explanation. You'll find me at the office."

I said I would willingly, and guessing the cabmen's haunts, I managed before long to drum up a dozen with cash, liberal promises, and liquor.

They had been doing a great trade in the early part of the morning, but the Bridge-street tragedy had scared them.

However, I pointed out that the doctrine of chances was clearly against a cab being hit a second time—the next would certainly be a private carriage or a 'bus, and I coaxed them up to the Brigade Office—I ran into the gate.

There was nobody in attendance, but I guessed my way by the infernal noise that arose from the lower regions. A stair led under some out-houses, and at the bottom of this the row was raised. Ranger was there with four sturdy artillery-men, a couple of them evidently being black-smiths. They had their shirts off, and were doing their best to burst in an iron-plated door that looked like the entrance to a vault. Fore-hammer, pinch, and wedges were in full play—I guessed what was up—"For heaven's sake take care, the concussion might cause a blow-up."

"So it might," said the Major, "and it would be a pity to have one's life fooled away at such a time."

At last a hinge yielded—a lever went in—a wedge beneath —a few more thundering strokes, and the door turned over and fell with a clatter that drowned the explosion of a shell which at that moment crashed in the roof of the Honorable John Fraser's Store.

This, it turned out, was about the last shell fired from the Heads. It had been banking up to to the south-east, and the gale piped up about eleven. The war steamers had to hold up for Botany to get shelter, and this was perhaps the turning point of the day.

Ranger caught my arm and led me aside—"You'll not believe what's going on, Walker. These infernal fools are enough to drive one mad. We, I mean the officers of the Volunteer Staff, anticipated the very muddle about ammunition that has taken place. We are in action now, and there are companies with hardly a cartridge—waggons have gone out with the wrong cartridges, and with cases supposed to contain cartridge and filled with other stores, and the Ordnance Staff is racing up and down between Victoria Barracks and Goat Island without having the least clew as to where the right stock is. We partly expected this,—so we stowed away, on the quiet, two hundred thousand under our own office, believing that we could always lay our hands on them, and you'll not credit me—these Defence

Commissioners Messrs. Bummington and Buzz have actually sent our Staff Sergeant with the key of cellar down to George's Head Battery."

It turned out afterwards, that the Sergeant, when he received this order, which he was obliged to obey, handed the key to Mr. Bummington, telling him clearly what it was.

That great man, with a mind above detail, put it in his pocket and kept it there, and he says to this day that if Major Ranger had only asked for it, he might have had it at once!

However, the cartridges were got out, and the cabs were there, so we might do yet.

They were speedily filled with ammunition and artillerymen. The last driver proved rusty.

"Look here—ten sovereigns is my fare before I move, and that's the way to say it;" but the Major was ready for him.

"Here, Wilson, pull him down, and drive the cab yourself." Wilson slapped the butt of his carbine—"Come now, young man, better go easy"—the other cabbies shouted at him to "come on," and the cabs were off to Moore Park.

Major Ranger thanked me for my help, and asked me if I was for the front. I said I would be out presently, so he started off, and I never saw him again.

I hurried then to look after Mrs. White and my cousin Eleanor. I found both ladies together working away at lint and bandages.

I told them what was going on, so far as I knew, and recommended them to stay where they were, and keep on the basement of the house.

Jack Mitchell had been in—had got his rifle and old uniform and was away to the front—as was to be expected if he got the chance—it was in the breed—if there was powder burning, it would be queer if the Major's son was not there.

"And he looks such a guy as you never saw," said Eleanor.

"Why Elly," I said, "do you know what's going on?" I was amazed to find a woman not in the gushing and heart-broken line.

"Of course, I know what's going on—Am not I a soldier's daughter—and have not we all talked over the prospect of what is going on now, often? My Jack's kit has been strapped up ready for weeks, and he has gone with his wife's blessing. Every woman in Sydney has her all at risk this day, and why should I be better off than others?"

This was so new and unexpected, that I spun my hat in the air and kissed her. "Why—cousin Elly—you're a trump."

But she very properly rebuked me for my levity and said "Willy, don't be a goose, and throw your best hat about that way. There's an old box of your's in Jack's room with a uniform in it. Had not you better put it on?"

I went to look at the things—There was an old undress flannel tunic and volunteer cap of 1861. I put them on, and these same old rags saved my life, as will be seen by-and-by.

There's no mistake about Elly—she is a plum.—But then you see, poor little Kate's mother is one of those good kind of women, always distributing tracts, reading aloud, and sewing moral quilts—but I do think that Kate, through my example, is gradually working away from the maternal standard.

So I said good-bye to the ladies, and as I rode round the corner of Bligh-street, there was Walton the orderly, powdering down the hill with his sword on his thigh, and a huge bundle of yellow posters from the Government Printing Office under his arm.

At the same moment behind me arose a well-known voice, and there was Mr. "Garden Honey" plying his vocation.

The cessation of the shelling had brought people out of doors, and he was doing a roaring trade selling to the quidnuncs at the gates, and chance pedestrians, telegrams from the front at five shillings each.

"Witty—witty—witty—Terrible conflict—Heroic defence by the First Regiment—Advance of the Rooshians stopped—Skirmishing on the Sand-hills—!"

Walton twigged him in a moment. "Hallo, old man!" "Mornin, Guvnor," said Mr. Honey.

"Look here—stick a lot of them up—one at every corner —three or four at the Parliament House in Macquarie-street —a couple at the Supreme Court—and I'll make your fortune for you."

"Well, I'm blessed," said Mr. Honey—"anything else you would like? What are they—let's see them."

Walton handed him a bundle, and seeing me stopping to listen, presented me with one. I read.

PROCLAMATION.

V.R.

MARTIAL LAW.

The country being in danger, all functions of Government are till further notice vested in the Military Authorities,—and all loyal subjects are hereby commanded and enjoined to place their services at the disposal of the Officers commanding.

The Commandant of the Forces alone is authorised from the time this Proclamation is issued to take charge of the Defence.

Take notice that disturbances or disorderly gatherings in the streets will be dispersed by the fire of musketry at the discretion of the officers in command.

The Governor has full confidence in the loyalty and courage of the people. He goes to the front himself, and invites all able to serve to follow him.

The Public Buildings will be fitted as Hospitals, and to the women of Sydney the care of the wounded, the bereaved and helpless is confided.

H.———— R.————, K.C.B.,
Governor of New South Wales.

"You stick them up so that everybody will see them; some here, for instance."

And both Clubs were speedily adorned with the placards.

There were no members at the Union—they seemed all better employed.

One old gentleman came out of the Australian—read the Proclamation and approved highly—so much so that he ordered Walton and Mr. Honey something to drink, which was duly served on the pavement.

"But Guv'nor," said Mr. Honey, his memory refreshed by the liquid—"what am I to get? I'll stick 'em up, and I say as how Sir H—— is doing right; but could'nt you get me made something—a Judge, or a Bishop say—I don't mind which."

"Look here," grinned Walton, "I don't mind if I advise his Excelleney to send for you to form a Ministry, when things get quiet—I'm hanged if you would not do better than either of the Defence Commissioners as they call them. Speak of the devil—if they're not here. I must be off;" and Walton hammered along to distribute his Proclamations and follow the Governor to the front.

Bummington and Buzz came along and eyed the yellow poster—they read it and scowled—the bystanders in spite of the general calamity chuckled, and the insulted tribunes took their way in gloomy mood to Macquarie-street.

The Governor had at last taken resolute action.

Parliamentary government had degenerated to huckstering jobbery, and idiotic incompetence.

Acting on his high commission from the Crown, and with full confidence in the support of the people, Sir H—— had done a bold and wise thing.

When he put out his Proclamation and went to the front, all the manhood of the country rose to follow him.

As I rode up the hill, a party of horsemen galloped along Macquarie-street.

There was the well-known figure on a black bang-tailed Tocal horse, and on His Excellency's right, there rode on a frisky grey, a plump bounding form, in a tight blue frock coat and light waistcoat.

Valor blazed in the eye of the gallant Q.C., and it also tinged his chops with magenta—It seemed also to swell his portly form, for each caracole that he encountered threatened to burst his buttons off.

If courage to meet danger—and more than that—if endurance to ride a light-mouthed horse on a hard saddle for a whole day—could entitle a man to the New Decoration, the Southern Cross, D——y deserved it.

The Governor had been all the morning arranging for the distribution of the numbers of men, who as expected, came forward on the issue of the Proclamation.

One Commission to carry out these arrangements, sat at the Supreme Court, another at the Town Hall.

One body of men was detailed as special constables to keep the peace of the town, and allow the removal elsewhere of the armed police.

Another was told off to strengthen the fire companies;

A third to throw up a line of barricades across all the approaching throughfares in case the troops had to fall back;

And a fourth body was to prepare the public buildings for the reception of the wounded. All those who had arms were meantime to be posted behind the barricades in reserve.

But already the "irregulars" were in scores on the flanks of the troops and hanging round the enemy on all sides, and their number was increasing every hour.

His Excellency was soon in Moore Park and I was not long behind him.

There was now a skirmishing fire going on over a front of above a mile.—at intervals there would be an attack in force on some point—indicated by a continuous roar of cannon and musketry.

I remembered the story oft-read of Hougomont and La Haye Sainte, and understood it.

It was now nearly twelve o'clock, and before going further I must try to glean up for my kind and patient reader an account of the day's proceedings since the signal gun fired at two in the morning.

* * * * * * * * * *

Few in Sydney will forget the morning of the 18th May, 187—when the signal-gun at the Flag-staff fired by wire, and the electric light at the Town Hall answering that at Botany, told that the enemy was entering the Bay in force.

The tolling of the bells—the beating of the drums —the sound of the Volunteer's bugles—re-echoed through every street, while scared white faces, looking more ghastly in the livid light, appeared at every window.

The thoroughfares instantly swarmed with groups of people in the full buzz of alarm and enquiry,—presently to be jostled and scattered by the hundreds of armed Volunteers already hurrying to the Southern suburbs.

There was no sign shewn by them of that white-livered faint-heartedness which had been foretold by rational people. If they were in a funk, the fear seemed to be that they would not be in time,—and but for the accessories of time and place, one might have fancied that they were bound for some national sport or entertainment.

The City Regiment went off at once to their regular place of muster—Moore Park. It was well that they did so, and lucky that their pouches were full of ball-cartridge.

Many a merry sham-fight had they of old on the ground beyond—the scrubby sand-hills on the Bunnerong Road. The rehearsal was now to be changed to grim tragedy, and they were to give proof with their heart's-blood that the uniforms they wore were not put on either for the sake of

Land-Orders or from childish frivolity. Strange to say, as they arrived breathless on the ground—fell into their companies—and told off from right to left—they were in high spirits; but they were hushed quickly into silence when a prolonged hollow reverberation that seemed to shake earth and air rose from the south—quivered in the upper atmosphere, and died away in echo after echo among the distant hills. What could it be? "The Torpedoes?" "Then—it's all over—I suppose we may go home?"———*not yet.*

"Steady there—Company No. 1. Quick march—forward."

The Suburban companies likewise mustered promptly on the appointed stations—the Eastern volunteers at Waverley—the Western at Waterloo—the Northern Companies in Wynyard Square.

A strong force of Mounted Police, under their Commandant Foxley, was within an hour scattered over every road and track between Coogee and Cook's River to watch for the advance of the enemy and keep up communication. *Where* then was our Volunteer Cavalry? The troopers of the police did all that any like number of light cavalry could do, but their number was woefully short before the day was over. Detachments of the foot police were likewise under arms.

The Commandant of the Forces, "in consequence of private information received," had been in the saddle twenty-minutes

before the alarm—had sent off half-a-dozen messengers, and was now with his staff, the Telegraph Officer, and the Reserve of the Permanent Force, at Victoria Barracks, waiting for specific information of the enemy before he mounted again to go to the front, and satisfy himself as to the muster of the Troops; when the explosion to the southward seemed to call for his immediate presence, and leaving the necessary instructions, he called an orderly and galloped towards Botany.

The landing of the Russians will be best described from the notes written in the diary of Major Fluellen Lloyd, now prepared by me for publication through the courtesy of that gallant officer.

—o—

EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY

Of Major Fluellen Lloyd, in command of the First Division, New South Wales Permanent Force, stationed at Botany, 18th May, 187—

No doubt for my sins, I a veteran who had followed Sale and Gough on every battle-field from Jellalabad to Delhi—the brother officer of Lawrence, Edwards, and Neill, found myself in command of a small squad, I suppose I may as well say—of Colonial Troops on the classic shores of Botany Bay—living in a shanty, by courtesy called Officer's Barracks, with my three daughters, in the year 187—. My command

consisted of two companies of infantry and a battery of field artillery. The New South Wales Gazetteer for the year places a battery of Whitworth guns on Bear Island, close to my camp—but there are no guns there yet!

Heavens! of all places Botany Bay! The name in my young days was redolent of Newgate and Portland!

When I joined the army first in the year 1830, the service had just entered on that downward career which has since taken it to the devil—but still, it was full of the Duke's men, of those who had not sheathed their swords till peace was given to Europe after thirty years of war; men of the old school, the manly school, before those twaddling days of peace, progress, paper collars, and cheap literature! Ha—ha!

This reading and writing of the present day is an infernal nuisance. The result is that everybody knows everything—there are no orders; no degrees. In my day, it was—every man to his trade—civilians stuck to tailoring and shoe-making—and soldiers were soldiers.

If you had seen my company when I first carried the colors under Captain Maxwell at Chatham, you would have seen real soldiers then—clean—close-shaved—in tight red-coats and pipe-clayed belts. Each man carried his 40-lb. knapsack with a tight hard black leather stock round his neck, and a full-toned flint musket—none of your sputtering rifles—on his shoulder. They were men, then, Sir—They got drunk,

and they were flogged Sir—and not half-a-dozen of them could read and write,—and the best scholars were the worst men in the company.

"Oh papa," here remarked Miss Nelly—(apropos of what?)—"you know our men did well—that they fought like tigers—and they were praised by everybody—even by the newspapers."

"I know nothing of the kind, Miss—These Colonials have not the stamina of Englishmen—of the sort of men we had in the times I speak of. How would young Scott and his company like to march up to the guns at Mudkee—with twenty thousand bearded Sikhs grinning behind them. *That* was something like fighting—not like your bush shooting and target-practice. No Englishman in my day would have sought the life of a gallant enemy with a rifle lying behind a tree or hid in a ditch. We bared our breasts to the foe, and only fired in volleys at the word of command—We trusted to the cold steel."

"Oh papa," sings out Miss Norah, "have you not always insisted on the skirmishing drill and target practice till the officers were quite sick of it? Only to think of your abusing your own soldiers when you keep them in such order and are so kind to them too!"

"I'm not abusing them Miss—I only say they are degenerated. They may be rifle-men, they are not soldiers. And as to the shooting, would you have me draw my pay and

do nothing for it. If they tell me to arm the men with pea-shooters or to dress them in peacock's feathers, I would obey these orders too. I repeat that the times are woefully out of joint—that the service has gone to the devil,—and it would be more becoming in young ladies to listen modestly to their father than to sport ideas of their own."

The three laughed aloud at this—one patted me on the head—another kissed me—and the third lighted a cigar for me. They know how to humbug the old soldier, the monkeys.

But I must go on and put together what this Editor wants. He has written a very proper letter, and must be treated civilly. Who is to read my composition I cannot fancy. There is really nothing to tell. The whole thing was a muddle between Volunteers, Civilians, and Defence Commissioners. We did not run away—that's the best that can be said of any of us,—but what little fighting there was, was completely contrary to all rules and regulations.

Well—as I have it set down—on the night of the 17th May, I went to bed at 11 p.m., and was roused up by Sergeant Green at 1·15 a.m., who reported rockets to the eastward. I did not like to trust the fisher lads with these fireworks, and I cautioned them well about not using them without reason, but old Warren the pilot "went bail," as he said, that they would not be sent up without good cause. I was soon

at the look-out station with Green, and there, sure enough, rose, seemingly two miles beyond the Heads another of our signal rockets.

"Minute time, sir," said Green. True, it looked like it. "The fishing-boats are coming in, I think, sir."

The gallop of a horse now sounded near, and trooper Flanagan in a minute came in from the Point—opened the gate, and saluted.

"Steamers to the eastward, sir,—boats signalling."

"Have you made out the steamers, Flanagan?"

"No, sir, not to swear to, but anybody can see there's something beyond common—there's a light cloud rising on a width of three or four mile: and with the night-glass Hawkins makes out what looks like masts and rigging — the boats ——"

"Never mind the boats, I'm asking what you saw."

Yes, I reflected, ten miles from the Point yet.

"Go back, Flanagan, and when you see the steamers distinctly, fire your blue light, and come down yourself with three troopers; let the other three wait to watch and count the steamers. Let them saddle up now."

"Green, ask the Telegraph Superintendent to come here; pass the word for the officers to assemble in the mess-room, and let the men turn out quietly without fuss; we are not certain yet."

I *was* pretty sure though that in an hour the hurly-burly would begin, and that then I could attend to nothing but duty, so I wakened Nelly and told her to get herself and her sisters into the buggy.

On looking across the yard I saw that Dwyer had already got out old Buffer, and put the harness on, and I saw the Camp Wagon with its four horses already out and ready for the women, children, and baggage.

Though I had kept it quiet, as I thought, they all seemed to know as much about what was going on as I did.

The gossip and tattle of a barrack are astonishing.

The girls were smart and alert as became a campaigner's daughters—though with tears in their eyes they each hugged their old father.

I told them to go to the barracks at Paddington and to do whatever Mrs. Fortescue told them, and to drive slowly; there was no need to hurry; but they must needs bundle in beside them Mrs. Dwyer and her three dirty-nosed children; however, old Buffer could take them all right enough, and the girls were quite right to look after the poor woman and her children.

My cares so far were over, so I walked into the mess-room; where were my eight officers and Mr. Grigor of the Telegraph staff.

Leslie reported his four-gun battery ready for immediate service. Scott and Montague had their companies mustered in full strength. Grigor reported his arrangements complete both for the Electric Light and the Torpedo service. The Camp-officer reported all ready to clear out in five minutes notice.

I said the waggon and carts with the women and children might move away at once, and after that there was nothing to be done but watch and wait. But first a message in cipher had been wired to Colonel Richards, stating what appearances were, and I cautioned the Superintendent that not another word was to be telegraphed without my knowledge.

After walking round the camp, I went up the ladder of the signal station and looked to seaward. The night-glass now showed me the two fishing boats running in with a light breeze on the port beam, and I could partly make out the appearance on the water that the trooper had reported. Twenty minutes more would place the matter beyond doubt.

As I came down, there was a horseman coming into the gate, and a second glance shewed me it was Joey Munn, one of the lads from the Training Stables. What could have started him ?

"Well, Joey, come to sell me a horse at this time of night ?"

"No, Sir, but I had the filly in the box, and so I came down to say that the young ladies are well on their road by this time, and to see if I could be of any use."

The whole country seemed awake; and a false alarm was such a mischievous nuisance. Still the probabilities were that it was real this time, and I might as well put this volunteer to some use. In an hour I might regret, if all the helpless folks and women and children round the Bay, were not well on their way to Sydney.

"Well, Joey, I suppose the filly can go a bit—so you may as well canter round the Bay and give a hint that the folks may as well be clearing out; the night's fine, and a little starlight walk or drive will not hurt. Be sure to go to the Sir Joseph Banks, and warn Mrs. Smith and Miss Costello; they will be sure to see that the hotel is cleared. All the women folks are as well away. Don't raise a panic now, like a good lad; do it quietly. Mind, I'm trusting you."

"Yes Sir, I'll be careful." So I got rid of Joey, and put him to good use.

It was a beautiful night—I took a few turns up and down—the girls were well on their way—and all the scattered inhabitants of Botany would in a few minutes be on the road.

The troops were at hand with their arms stacked—two guns horsed and ready to move, and every eye watching the signal-man or fixed on the water. The fishermen were landing and coming up to make their report—when

"Blue light at the Point Sir."

Sure enough there it was. "Pass the word to the Telegraph Officer." I raised my handkerchief. Grigor was at his battery ready to fire the Electric Light.

In a few minutes Flanagan's horse panting and foam-flecked was at the fence.

"They're plain now Sir—three light steamers within two miles of the Heads carrying on racing speed, and behind them on each side masts and funnels like trees."

I gave the signal, and the Electric Light rose from its perch and threw a livid glare on the water of the Bay, lighting up the opposite shore, but keeping the camp in perfect darkness.

It was splendidly done, but I remarked to Grigor that we did not get a view of the beach and the village. He turned a screw, and a gleam was shot out that threw a vivid streak right over the shallow water, the sands and tree-tops, till I could see the hotel, garden, and cottages plain. All would move now without further warning. I was struck with the beauty and perfection of the thing. I found reason to change my mind in half-an-hour about this and other devilish modern nick-nacks.

I now lifted my hand—Scott and Montague's infantry had already fallen in—the word to march was given, and they wheeled out of the gate by the track cut to Bunnerong. We

knew well enough where the landing would be. The half-battery of artillery next passed out by the other road for the Dam with all the supernumeries and camp-followers and a cart of entrenching tools. Nearly every one of the fellows had some sort of weapon or other. I suppose there's some reason for coast-guardsmen having arms—but telegraph clerks, fishermen, and hangers on of all sorts—every man had a shooting tool, a good many these little breech-loading carbines. I hate to see civilians with weapons—it reminds me of Papineau and those French-Yankee rebel scoundrels in Canada in 1838. Many a good red-coat did I see drilled by those "*citizen's rifles*"—rubbish!

"Now, Flanagan, you leave one trooper with me, and with the other two go carefully round and see that not a living soul is left in any house on the north side of the Bay—then after that—let your men patrol on the flanks of the troops and keep their eyes open. Report to me at the Dam."

So I was left with a half-battery of artillery, the Telegraph officer and one operator, and a trooper to wait for the enemy.

Those who don't know what soldiering is, must think that I had been taking it very easy—that I should have been for the last half-hour buzzing and gandering all over the camp—cackling among the men and guns like a laying hen; but such as are acquainted with "the discipline of the wars"

can guess that my preparations were all made weeks ago,—that every officer knew what he would likely be called on to do, and that the men were trained to their work.

We veterans are often laughed at as fogies, but the muddles of modern wars have not been made by us—but by politicians meddling with what they don't understand, by newspapers gabbing everything out, by the infernal innovations hatched by crazy theorists, and by rascally contractors and commissaries.

I walked over to Grigor. He had the Torpedo battery ready, and he assured me that not a steamer would ever get half-a-mile beyond Bear Island.

If so, of course the business would be over at once, and though unpalatable to my military notions, I felt that it was the right and necessary thing to do. Still I was too old a bird to believe there was any certainty about it—I never now count my chickens before they are hatched.

We had not long to wait.—In twenty minutes three beauties of iron Clyde-built boats appeared cutting the water with their razor-like stems. In the bright light we could see every plate and rivet with the glass. As they came in sight, they checked their speed.

The first was near the southern shore of the Bay, the second near the middle some hundred yards behind, and the third nearer this side followed at an equal distance.

It was the regular Echelon infantry formation, and it was evidently adopted for some object.

As the first boat slowed and opened out into full view she fired what seeemed to be rockets that fell in the water at various distances, and as she drifted slowly on, I saw lines of light in the water.

The other boats as they came up did the same—slacked speed—and fired rockets—then they all slowly zigzagged across the Bay.

As they turned their sterns to us, I could see that they were each dragging what looked like dozens of copper wires behind them.

Grigor looked puzzled and uneasy, and kept his hand ready on the key of the instrument for the moment that they should come within the torpedo buoy.

Heavens—I saw it at last—*they were trawling for our torpedo wire.*

I shouted to Musgrave "*fire*"—and his two guns sent their shot at the nearest steamer—but I might have left it alone—it was too late, and merely exposed our position.

As the last steamer cleared Bear Island, and the first had got within a few chains of our marked line, the water in the Bay rose in pyramids—showers of sand and mud fell for a

mile round—a flash like a levin-bolt dashed down the instrument and levelled Grigor on his back—while our electric light was snuffed into darkness.

Every one of our torpedoes had exploded harmlessly, and the concussion from the powerful batteries in the steamers had destroyed our apparatus—here for certain was "the engineer hoist with his own petard."

This fiendish contrivance had been shown before their Lordships of the Admiralty at Chatham a year before—they condemned it of course—and so do I from hard-earned experience. I concur fully with their Lordships.

We were in total darkness, and the crackling timbers and rending planks around showed that the Telegraph Office was a ruin. I struck a match, and there lay Grigor stunned and bleeding. I lifted him the best way I could, and carried him among shattered furniture and broken glass to the yard, where the men had just quietened the terrified horses and lighted some lanterns. Artillery horses are not easily frightened, but this electric shock was something much more trying to the nerves than an ordinary cannonade. Some spirits and water revived Grigor a little, but even when he was mounted half-an-hour after, his assistant had to lead the horse.

The Bay was still heaving with such billows as Botany had never seen before, but the Russian steamers were

riding safely, and one of them managed to send a whiff of bullets from a Gatling, that, though they flew wide, were evidently intended as a return for Musgrave's shells.

I then told Musgrave to move his guns to lower ground near the extremity of the point. I meant still to lie dark as long as I could and watch the landing. I could no longer telegraph to head-quarters, but the general alarm was given, and after the explosion I was sure the Commandant would not be long in learning what was going on. So I decided that the best thing I could do, was to make a diversion in aid of the Infantry force in ambush near the beach at Bunnerong, and thus help to retard the landing—and send the trooper with the news to Colonel Richards.

We were now recovering our sense of sight, and I could make out the transports gliding up the Bay in two lines, and it was plain that their course had been accurately planned beforehand. The three light steamers that led, I could make out by the night glass, aided by their lights, ran up before the water settled to nearly opposite the hotel, and each seemed at once to detach a steam-launch full of men, as if by magic. Of the large ships, one line speedily lay between the camp and the Hotel, while the other lay parallel in the direction of the southern shore; but the water literally was alive with launches before they cast anchor, while boats in numbers appeared ready to lower and fill with soldiery at once.

The first group of launches passed towards the shore, and as I expected they touched the sand directly opposite the ambushed Infantry. The Russian Intelligence Department is most accurate and admirably conducted, and a good sharp rattle of musketry left me in no doubt that they had reached the right spot. I now saw the chance I wanted. Launches and row-boats covered in swarms two miles frontage of the beach crossing the short interval of water. Musgrave had his bearings already, and set to work. Six rounds were discharged as fast as they could fire and load right through the flotilla, and we took our change out of them. The musketry from the scrub was well sustained, and the boats hung back, but it was only for a minute. I could do no more, for two of the larger steamers backed till they brought their massive hulls right between the point and the flotilla; and began a shower of bullets and shells, that tore up the turf, sent fragments of the rock in the air and knocked splinters off poor old "La Perouse's" monument. It was well the guns were placed low, and I was glad to clear out before I lost men and horses.

Montague and Scott had their orders; they would skirmish back as soon as a large force was on the beach, and when across the road, they would make their way straight across the bush for the Dam; the ground was well-known to them.

Now my way was to the Dam. I hurried on and the guns followed. I told them to put Mr. Grigor on a gun carriage

if he could not ride, but he managed to get along. It was no time to wait, as some of the Russians would certainly be landing on the Battery Point from boats, or be feeling their way from the beach through the scrub, and their scouts would be all round directly.

The three troopers from the Heads joined me before I got far. "The steamers were all in, and they had counted them entering. There were twelve heavy Transports, and an equal number of lighter steamers. The last of these lay just below Bear Island. They had seen eighty soldiers, thirty sailors, and a gun put on board boats from this last—one of the smallest, and towed away by a steam-launch. Three large ships, men-of-war they believed, were steaming north towards Port Jackson"—exactly, no doubt, to try the entrance.

If the large Transports carried men in the same proportion as this light steamer, there would not be less than six thousand troops disembarking, without counting sailors and marines. If so, our work was cut out for us.

The firing at Bunnerong was now dropping away—a faint bugle call that came over the ridge told that the retreat had begun, and as I gained the higher ground, I could see by the flames rising over the trees that our Muscovite visitors had lost no time in commencing to use the license of war. The old Hotel was evidently in a blaze. No doubt the dogs were ransacking the cellars, and I hoped that the whole con-

cern would blow up with them; or if not, that they might drop on such grog as you sometimes meet with in roadside inns—bluestone and kerosene—and get poisoned. But alas! our Hostess' liquors would go down the gullets of these northern bears like the balm of Gilead! The flames seemed spreading; tongues of fire flickered as if they were in different parts of the village, and I was truly glad to think that I had got the poor inhabitants moved. What might not happen if the brutes got into Sydney?

Some boys hung about hidden among the trees and told afterwards what went on. It seems that their officers had a job to get their men into column on the Waterloo road. The Provost Marshal, with Corporal Knout in attendance, had to be appealed to first. They just tasted enough of drink and plunder to want more.

Thank God the women and children were all away.

But for all that detention, the head of the column was half way to Sydney long before daylight, and their scouts and skirmishers held every hill and cover on both sides of the road. They knew what they were about.

A few minutes more brought me to the Dam. The spot had capabilities for defence, if we only had men enough, and Leslie had not been idle. Pick and shovel had been plied for an hour, and a strong earth-work (sand-bags, fascines lever and planks were ready planted on the spot) cut off the

road, fitted to carry four guns; two were already in position. The men were now digging rifle-pits on all sides of the Embankment, and I am bound to admit that the tag-rag and bob-tail worked nearly as well as the soldiers.

With water on one side, a natural glacis without cover for a quarter of a mile on the other, and the road commanded by our four guns, I took my solemn affidavit that his Imperial Majesty's troops would need to pay toll before they passed us,—come as many as they might. With more men I could keep them there till broad daylight.

"Well, Leslie, this is not so bad."

"Colonel Richards has been here; he has just left for Moore Park and Waterloo. Major Livingstone, with a strong party of Volunteers, may be expected every minute."

"Volunteers coming here! Heavens—is Richards mad?"

"Livingstone is to command the position."

"As to that, I have no objection. Though a younger man, Livingstone is a crack soldier—only he is eccentric, and has a lot of these new-fangled notions—like most of those travellers and tiger-shooters. But Volunteers! Why not special constables, beadles, cooks and waiters at once?"

"That's exactly what Richards said you would say, and so he wrote you this line— You could never get on with the Volunteers and other Irregulars—(there's some of them here

already, and precious irregular they look); but Livingstone believes in that kind of thing, and certainly he has a knack of making men work and follow his lead."

I read the note. It was most friendly, and I had been treated with the utmost consideration throughout, and in candour I could not but admit that if work was expected from the Volunteers and other civilians, I was not the man to manage it.

"Well, Leslie, I'll tell you what we'll do. Why don't you make a trench away to the right, and one also to the left, both obliquely bearing on the road?"

"Why? look at the rifle-pits."

"Don't you see it's for the Volunteers and the other tag-rag, to get them out of the way, and let them shoot each other to their heart's content."

Leslie laughed, and went to have it done.

Besides the coast-guardsmen, fishers and others who followed the guns out, there were gathered there some score or two from Botany and the neighbourhood, mostly young men, and to my astonishment they gave the Artillery Captain three ringing cheers when he told them what was wanted, and they set to at once. There were plenty of hands now and every implement was at work directly.

I went back along the road for a short distance to examine the effect of the arrangements — so far as the moonlight would allow. It was well done. The guns being barely on the level of the road could not be seen, and the rifle pits also were so well masked as to show no sign to troops approaching.

The Russians coming on in this light, would find themselves all at once on a dangerous little fortification that they could not force easily and could not pass without tough fighting—If the tag-rag could only be depended on—but then they were not under martial law, and there would be little seen of them when the fray began!

These were my reflections at the time—I am told now that recent events should make me change my opinions. I don't see it. Nobody will ever make me believe in non-professional soldiering—but I have seen this much, which was never evident to me before, namely, that *there are positions from which it needs a great deal more courage to run away than to fight.*

Having a little leisure to think, I began to weigh mentally the policy of our tactics. No doubt they had not been adopted without due consideration; and certainly it would never have done to leave this road undefended—but suppose all the enemy's troops went by the Waterloo Road, what then? Well, then, we could still be on their flank in little more than

an hour. At the same time I thought it almost certain that such a force as six or seven thousand men would be divided and sent by every possible road, both for the sake of speed and to surprise any undefended point. But, in that case, while we were being tackled here, another detachment might be making their way by Coogee, following the Coast road?

The more I thought, the less I liked it. With a couple of thousand regular Infantry of the old sort, I would have faced three times the number of Russians readily, but we had only four hundred trained Infantry—colonials—and the rest Volunteers—shop-boys, clerks, and apprentices—faugh!

Thinking was a waste of time—it always came to the same point. In a few minutes my separate command would come to an end, and I was listening for the arrival of Livingstone's force and the rest of my men.

Presently there was a stir in the brush-wood to the left and there soon appeared coming up the face of the glacis my two companies of Infantry, and a trooper cantered past, and seeing me, stopped.

It was Flanagan.

"He had seen a large body of Russian Infantry with sailors, guns, and marines in their rear, march along the Waterloo Road. He had then watched a much larger body form column and head along this road. They could not be

more than a mile from this now. Hawkins was watching them, and would be in presently. Stewart had been up to the head of the column two miles out of Botany, and had seen skirmishers thrown out all over the rough ground. He had gone to the Kerosene Works and had met two of Mr. Foxley's troopers. They told him that out-posts of the Suburban Regiment of Volunteers were almost at the point the Russians had reached. He heard several shots fired. He, Flanagan, had seen no force go along the Long Bay Road, but they might turn off yet."

I then sent him off across the bush to watch that track.

There was no doubt about it now, and if Livingstone were only here, I could give undivided attention to my own men. I had not to wait long. A jingle and rattle arose behind the earth work, and there was a most unmilitary spectacle!

First—Livingstone on horse-back and in uniform riding alongside a fat man on a pony with some kind of carbine slung at his back. Then half-a-dozen cabs, out of each of which stepped three or four men, all armed of course. I stared when I recognised some of them as gentlemen of undoubted position. Surely Englishmen and their descendants were much changed since they could form part of an armed rabble!

Last of all came the Volunteers—devil take the hindmost—arms trailed—accoutrements anyhow, talking and shouting.

At length, something that they called an *Officer* called "*halt!*" and they lolloped off the road, flopped down on the grass, and began lighting their pipes. And this was the Defence Force!

However, Livingstone highly approved of all I had done, and greatly to my satisfaction he sent his Volunteers to the trench on the right prepared for them, and already pretty well on.

The civilians and other bob-tail dispersed themselves likewise, and left us soldiers comfortably to ourselves.

Livingstone laughed heartily at my "pipeclay prejudices" and I wished him joy of his followers.

But a sound now rose in front that gave us both plenty to think of. It was the long swinging tramp of the Russian column. In a few minutes, it would be in sight.

As what follows has already been chronicled by the regular reporters, I will here close my notes. On consideration, I regret somewhat having bored the kind people of Sydney with the spleens and crochets of an old Campaigner. By the bye, I may as well say that the girls got all right to the Barracks, and they are sitting beside me at this moment.

This ends the extract from the gallant old officer's diary. He got a contusion in the course of the day, but soon got well. He talks a good deal of "pipeclay" yet, at which his daughters and others laugh, but he is evidently softened a good deal both to Volunteers and Colonials.

* * * * * * *

The Assembly was sitting, engaged as usual in a "want of confidence" debate when the alarm was given.

The Hon. Member for the Northern Hunter had just moved the adjournment of the House in order to say that he had heard, promiscuous-like, in the street, from a man whose name he did not know, that the Hon. Member for the Cotton-bush District had once stolen a calf from a neighbour—when a murmur outside the windows suddenly swelled to loud ejaculations, and thence spread up to the Stranger's Gallery.

The Honorable Commissioners for Defence hurriedly left the Treasury Benches.

A whisper went round the House, and the members dropped away in twos and threes so hurriedly, as to omit the customary obeisance to the Chair.

It looked as if Mr. Speaker and the orator were to be left to a tète-a-tète in the House. The former was rising to announce the cause of alarm in a few well-chosen and dignified words, when a second glance shewed him that he was alone, and the lobby was echoing with the flying feet of the last of the legislators.

After all, these hon. members merely did like many of the rest of us.

Some looked after their families, and then went to aid in the defence; others to disappear for days and spend the

time in soothing their nerves with needful tonics; and some of the long-headed kind to adjourn to hurried meetings gathered on the spur of the moment.

At some of these conferences great capitalists and merchants were found who acted in a spirit becoming the occasion; but it is said that there were other meetings at which the position was shrewdly and carefully discussed from a totally different point of view to that taken by the men composing the forces that were hurrying to the front and manning the batteries.

The Projectors of the famous Northern Copper Mine Rig naturally took their places among these last, and it is needless to say that to them "*hard cash*" was the one thing needful—patriotism and public duty were mere moonshine.

When the Assembly, three weeks after, passed a vote of thanks to the Defence Forces, the following remarks were made by a well-known barrister.

"In dealing with this motion, Mr. Speaker, in which I most heartily concur, I think it desirable that the House take this opportunity to mark their sense of the conduct of a certain clique or section of this community during the late crisis.

It is universally said, and has not yet been denied, that the deliberations of a certain financial body on that occasion embraced every proposition that might tend to bring the securities of the colony, whether public or private, hitherto unmortgaged into their safes, and in such ways as would give them individually good pickings all round, and that, in

the death-throes of the colony, when her blood ran like water, they had every preparation made to deal with the Muscovite robber and murderer, and give their business services to the Power that was then slaying and trampling down those who had enriched them.

In their eyes—business was business, and money was money—If these wealthy and highly-respectable gentlemen (as they are designated), thought at all of their relation to the community in which they lived, it was to bless their God that they had a country to sell, and to determine, if they got the chance, to get a good price for it."

Whether the animadversions of the Hon. gentleman were borne out by fact, of course could not be proved, but there is little question that among certain sections of the leading Plutocratic circles, it was accepted as a decree of Providence that persons who had accumulated large quantities of property were thereby absolved from all *other* national, civic, and social obligations.

The many-headed and many-handed public were expected —as a matter of course—to give their blood and money for the public defence, but the only thing that those others felt called on to do was to shepherd their interests carefully and if possible to turn the occasion to profit.

But these top-sawyers were not the only individuals of the commercial world, who thought they saw their way to do business on the occasion.

A few hours later, a great Shipping Butcher was going to be off for orders to the Russian Squadron, when he was "scruffed" as Jack Tarbrush called it, by the ever-vigilant water-police.

Lancaster grew livid with wrath—"stopped by a pack of varmint as he could buy up the whole bilin' of them, ministers and all—What if they was Rooshians—he supposed Rooshian's money was as good as any other man's. Fight—he didn't want no fightin'. Let them fight as fancied it—every man for his-self was his mortar—he wanted to do business, and he asked what kind of —— Government this here was as allowed them kind of doings. Blessed if he seen the likes of this yet.—Here he was man and boy in the butchering line forty year, and he never seen the shipping yet that he could not supply, best beef 5d, mutton 4d a pound clean carcass, and here was a jackanapes of a Government 'ack as he didn't believe was worth two hundred pence let alone two hundred pound as said he was'nt free to go aboard. He wanted no more nor what was fair, and no man could say a word agin him, and he'd be blessed if he did'nt make somebody pay for it."

Thus with fierce gesticulation of his fists, and in wild Ossianic trope and metaphor did the virile soul of the great wholesale Butcher find relief.

What were empires and dynasties to him, so long, as in his own language, he could sell wholesale, beef 5d, mutton 4d per lb.? He was a truly practical man. The breed is yet kept up in the colony.

But we must go back to an earlier hour and see the doings of the Defence Commissioners.

From the Assembly they had adjourned to the Telegraph Office, where they took up their quarters.

With all the wires coming into the room where they sat, they could conduct the defence of the colony to great advantage.

Everything that happened from Broken Bay to Cape Hacking would be wired to them at once through a large and efficient staff of operators and signal-men,—and from their easy chairs they could pull the strings that were to set in motion the military chief with his staff.

The members of a ministry, elected by a popular majority, are of course, on the "vox populi vox dei" principle,—omnisciently endowed with wisdom,—and thus, it never occurred to either of the two honorable gentlemen that they were at all unfit for the job they had undertaken, or that the "bloody game of war" was more difficult to play, than a parliamentary round-hand at billet-hunting, or a trick at that highly profitable form of loo called "insolvency."

It must withal be admitted that their administration of our military resources on that eventful day was thoroughly successful, but this result arose greatly from causes that the Commissioners could hardly have calculated upon.

For one thing, their blunders were so numerous and so complicated as often to neutralise each other.

For example, the ammunition that Major Ranger was making such a fuss about, and that the whole Ordnance Staff were turning over Goat Island to find, was actually on the ground after all.

The accidental breaking-down of a waggon on Constitution Hill, and the bursting of some of the cases with which it was loaded, shewed that though marked, "Telegraphic Service," "Field Hospital Stores," &c., they were filled with the cartridges wanted; and thus it turned out "that good luck" was an element in the day's proceedings not to be under-rated.

The Chief Clerk of the Ordnance (nephew of the Senior Commissioner) lately appointed at £500 a year, had on his assumption of office, issued orders for the repacking and cataloguing of ammunition, and as it was done by newly appointed hands, with nobody to look after them, the result we have seen followed.

Moreover, the Telegraph Branch got into a somewhat chaotic state before the day's work was far on.

It was said, but I don't believe it, that only such of the Commissioner's messages as the operators approved of were faithfully forwarded.

But I can tell of matters that did really occur in this Branch, and my readers can judge of their meaning themselves.

Two young men had recently been appointed as operators at stations situated on the head-lands of Port Jackson. They had been recommended through a most respectable channel, the great fancy-goods and private discounting firm of Himmelreich and Co., who were Count Kaskowhiski's agents during that nobleman's visit here.

These young men spoke excellent English, and from that and from their names, no one could have guessed that they were foreigners,—and their promptitude, anxious courtesy, and good discipline, soon recommended them to the notice of their superiors.

Well, at half-past three in the morning, when the electric light was illuminating the entrance, and the batteries on the Middle Head were on the alert, the three Iron-clads shewed, and upon the guns opening on them, they steamed behind the North Head.

Petersen, stationed at the Quarantine ground, wired at once to the Commissioners. "Squadron heading for Manly—appear preparing to land troops."

The three steamers held round till they faced the beach, and then half-a-dozen boats were manned and sent off towards land.

Petersen wired at once—"Force landing in boats." This was all that was wanted; the boats hung about for an hour while a pretence of preparing to land went on, then they

were recalled and the steamers again bore up for the entrance, shewed again at day-break, and finally as we have seen, they settled somewhat to the south of the Gap, and went in for shelling the town till about mid-day, when the Southerly rising sent them into Botany for shelter.

Meantime Skinner, the Manly fisherman, had been "piping" them, and he let go a pigeon with a written message, which flew straight for Hunter-Street.

Himmelreich's other *protegé* was stationed on the South Head—Mr. Gregg. He did not give his full name—Woronzoff Gregg. His paternal ancestor's name was safest and best for the purpose.

This gentleman had been reckoned upon as the one most likely to be of service to his Imperial master, and Himmelreich and Co. had made strong interest to get him a military command.

Our good friend Mr. Buzz has displayed in his career an instance of that success which in this colony always attends virtue and industry.

He had landed in Sydney forty years ago a pious, friendless lad with half-a-crown in his pocket, *and now he owed fifty thousand pounds.*

Himmelreich's application on behalf of Mr. Gregg came on him at a critical juncture, just two days before that "dies

iræ"—of commerce, the *fourth of the month,* and Mr. Buzz knew from his Bill-book, that certain documents of his would then be scrutinised by a financial Inquisition.

If the *Kites* he flew to make his living did not bear the needful autographs, then they would fly no more, and the great firm of Buzz & Co., like other "cloud-capt towers and gorgeous palaces," built of wind and paper, would dissolve in thin air, "and leave not a wrack behind."

As Mr. Buzz remarked—business is business—and Himmelreich's signature was appended to the Bills, as soon as a Gazette-notice was written out, of *Colonel* Gregg's appointment to the command of the First Division Permanent Force Station at Botany.

A note, written to Colonel Richards, was all that was further wanted to place Gregg in his position—a mere matter of form to a subordinate—the same as if Mr. Buzz had called to the office-boy to fill his ink-bottle.

To his amazement, as much indeed as if the said office-boy had told him not to make so much noise, Richards wrote him a firm but logical and well-worded remonstrance, pointing out the danger of entrusting such a responsible position to a stranger, and moreover stating that Gregg, though he shewed commissions and military certificates from various European Powers, was not accustomed to English military habits, and certainly would never command the respect of the officers and men.

No wonder Mr. Buzz was wrath.

He had never got such a dressing since he was smacked for not brushing the beadle's boots at the religious foundation where he studied in his youth.

He turned over the corner of the letter, and wrote.

"Colonel Richards will carry out the instructions of the Defence Commissioners. When his opinion is wanted, it will be duly asked for."

But power of all kinds is tempered by some modifying element, even among our nice allies the Turks by the bowstring and the dagger, and among ourselves by weapons almost as much dreaded; for instance, the pointed shafts shot at times by our friend Mr. Punch.

Richards indignant, wrote out the resignation of his command, and sent it to a personage in exalted position.

It was sent back to him with a pacifying note, and in two days Mr. Buzz found the town too hot for him, and he had to go to the Kurrajong for a fortnight.

Every paper, every tavern, every club made Buzz, Himmelreich, and Gregg their topic. The jokes were not very brilliant, but they answered the purpose.

But before the Commissioner went for change of air, Gregg was moved quietly to the post of Telegraph Agent at the South Head, and the appointment of Commanding Officer at Botany was offered to Major Fluellen Lloyd, a veteran not

long in the colony, sometimes called a fogey and a martinet, but a tough soldier, as true as steel, and as wide-awake as a weasel.

Gregg could not have chosen a better position than the one he thus accidentally got, for influencing either the attack or defence, and he hoped by his day's work to make his mark for promotion in the Imperial Secret Service; but his intentions were thwarted by what he naturally condemned as the brutal stupidity of a subordinate.

Joe Bowers was an old coast-guardsman. He could be perfectly deaf when he chose, and he was cross-grained and whimsical as spoiled old sailors are. He was insolent to the verge of mutiny at times to such of his superiors as he did not approve of, and he had either a dog-like intuition of character, or he was much more knowing than it was his pleasure to appear. To look at, he might have been an old salt of Camperdown or the Nile, and Mr. Woronzoff Gregg found him too hard a nut to crack.

If Gregg reported him for insubordination, somehow there was always an influential friend behind the scenes to take Joe's part. If he read his instructions to him, he got for answer, "and how do you expect a man to be a scholard at fifteen bob a week, and dog rations?"

Joe's sole duty was to haul up and down two flags as directed by the Telegraph Operator, and he lived in a kind of hut or

kennel at the foot of his flag-staff. The station was fixed so as to be visible from all the batteries. When the Union Jack was hoisted, it was the signal to open fire—a white flag substituted was "cease firing."

Joe guessed the meaning of these signals, though no one had told him, and as soon as the Tsargrad showed her bows round the cliffs from Manly about six o'clock, he hoisted the Union Jack at once without waiting for any order, jerked the halyards over the stays so as to be beyond his superior's reach, and then went chuckling into his hut and began to cook bacon in a frying-pan.

In addition to these very reprehensible proceedings, I must confess that he had an hour before bundled up not only the white flag, but his single pair of sheets and every white rag in his possession and dropped them over the cliff—he said he "didn't see they was wanted that day."

The first shot brought Gregg out in a fury "You old brute, what have you been about? Haul down that flag and run up the white one."

"Mornin', Mr. Gregg," said Joe cheerfully—"bitter cold mornin' Sir. Have a warm pot of tea and a snack of bacon Sir."

"Cut down the flag," roared Gregg, in vain trying to reach the halyards, and in agony for the consequences to the Imperial shipping, while George's Head and Middle Head

alike in obedience to Joe's signal poured their shells upon them.

Joe was deafer than ever, he put his hand to his ear, and at last caught the word *flag*. "What's wrong with the flag —oh, it's up, is it—why didn't ye say so," with a fiend-like grin.

"Well now if they aint a-firin' and me frying bacon. Why, the flag's all right then Sir—Union Jack in action all the world over. Blessed if that warn't a close shave, knocked the dirt right over your office Sir. Skeers a man a bit at first them whistling beggars of shells—don't mind them much myself."

Gregg saw it was no use trying to stop the cannonade now, and presently the steamers disappeared behind the South Head —The tinkle of a bell had told him that the order to open fire was given, and Joe's interference had just got the Iron-clads about two dozen shells more than they would have otherwise had; quite enough to do infinite damage in all conscience, but on what ground could he report him?

He knew that Englishmen had been promoted for exceeding and even disobeying orders when the result seemed to justify the transgression; so he had to stomach it.

Meantime Joe went maundering on—"Ye're a hard-working gentleman Mr. Gregg, but you're too anxious Sir—and I seen when ye was howlin' that way that your inside was bad. A man's sure to get the gripes if he worrits

hisself on an empty stomach. You do look mortal bad now, but ye only make it worse by givin' way. A warm feed is what you want, and if you're patient you'll get it. Most people allows tho' that bacon needs time to fry and should be well done. Says Dr. Bowles to me, 'Joe,' says he —for he knows how for to speak to a man, and he don't howl as if he had the gripes, 'don't you be a-going to stuff yourself with meat and above all with under-done pork, as will give you hydrapids in your liver.' 'But Doctor Bowles' says I, as it might be to you, 'I don't hold with them as would go for to blow a man out with cabbages and cold water.'"

"Eh,—what's that—tooken bad again—read my orders—mind in future—aint you my superior, of coorse you are, and aint I takin' care on ye? Don't you be a-feard Sir. Them Rooshians is round the point Sir and they got a good dose, didn't they Sir. So you're off without your tea Sir," and Joe stood wagging his grey head and winking as if he had just obtained some signal triumph.

Such being the manner in which the Signal and Telegraph service was conducted at the Heads, the panic of confusion in the office of the Commissioners may be imagined.

Mr. Bummington thirsted to explode all the torpedoes with which the channel was studded, but he did not get the chance, as the Russian Commodore was perfectly

aware, and had down on black and white the precise nature of these preparations. Moreover, the salute he had received through the officiousness of Joe Bowers disposed him to keep out of the entrance, and he preferred staying where he was, and pitching just enough shells in the direction of the city to raise the needful amount of alarm.

Petersen's messages however had been attended with some decisive results.

Mr. Buzz, with the prescience of genius, saw at once,—or said so at least,—that Manly was the real point of attack, and that the Botany operations were merely feints to withdraw attention from a far more formidable advance which would take the batteries in rear. The Spit would be passed by portable pontoons, and the battalions of invaders would in three hours swarm from Bradley's Head to Kirribili with the guns of these batteries turned on the city.

A part of the Defence Force could still be stopped, and he could send them by steamers at full speed to Manly to resist the enemy landing, or oppose his advance.

There were still at Victoria Barracks, waiting orders, two companies of the Permanent Infantry and one Battery of the Permanent Artillery, and three companies of Volunteers had been detained in Wynyard Square for orders.

These were the St. Leonards' and Balmain companies, and a large efficient company of Engineers.

They formed a very important section of the Volunteer Force, the Companies being so largely manned as to be almost double the ordinary strength, and containing a very large proportion of crack shots and hardy able-bodied men.

It was plain that the presence or absence of this combined body of the Permanent and Volunteer troops would tell greatly in the crisis of the day, and thus Mr. Buzz, in determining to send them to Manly, was falling into the very trap set for him by Mr. Petersen of the Russian Intelligence Department, and for the time *Telegraph Operator* at the North Head.

Three hours after the alarm, confusion was at its height.

The North Head and Manly wires had been dumb since the last message.

Petersen was never seen again; what became of him, no one knows. His office was found half burned and the apparatus smashed—whether by a shell or not was only a matter of surmise.

* * * * *

Colonel Richards had left the Reserve Force at the barracks under Major Fortescue with instructions not to move except on his order conveyed by wire.

Seeing what was going on towards Botany, Fortescue was surprised to get a message to bring his command down to the Telegraph Office in George street.

He demurred, but at length on receiving a telegram signed by both Commissioners stating that the object was to oppose a landing at Manly Beach, he hurried down to the town.

On the way he was passed by Richards pushing his brown throughbred to the gallop.

On reaching the barracks, he had heard with alarm that the Reserve Force, which he counted on for strengthening his left towards Randwick, likely to be the most critical point of attack—was off, doubling into the City by order of the Defence Commissioners.

At five o'clock Colonel Richards was on Constitution Hill.

A heavy fire had been heard for about twenty minutes on the Bunnerong Road, and then there had been a spluttering of rifle shots in the direction of the Kerosene Works, shewing that the enemy on the Botany Road also had reached our out-posts.

The City Regiment of Volunteers, with a battery of Volunteer Artillery, were holding the road below Moore Park and the ridges around, with their skirmishers extending to the point where the track to Randwick forks off.

There were also waiting, held in hand in the Barracks at Paddington, the Reserve of the Permanent Force, consisting of two companies and a battery.

The firing ceased a little before five, and in a few minutes a Telegraph boy put the following message into the Colonel's hands :—

"Russians drawing back. Watch Coogee, troops on that road; written report in ten minutes by Orderly."

(Signed)—Livingstone.

This was pressing, and he sent off an officer with half-a-dozen troopers to scout in the direction mentioned; meantime, he would wait for the Report. It was as follows (in pencil) :—

Dam, 4·45 a.m., 18th May.

The Colonel Commandant.

Sir,—I have the honor to report that owing to the admirable arrangements made previously to my arrival here by Major Fluellen Lloyd, C.B., the attack of the enemy on this position has been resisted with severe loss to them, and with comparatively little to our troops.

I expect a renewal of the attack at day-break, and am now engaged in strengthening the defences.

I have to report most highly of the conduct of all concerned.

The Permanent Force acted like Veteran Troops.

The Volunteers ambushed in a Trench, cut by the military skill and foresight of Major Lloyd, fairly swept the approaching road-way with their deadly fire.

The unattached riflemen and civilians proved useful and obedient to discipline.

I have reason to believe, from the report of a Trooper sent out by Major Lloyd, that a force of Russians, believed to be five or six hundred strong, is on the Long Bay Road advancing to Randwick.

I have the honor, &c.,

H. Livingstone,

Major.

Mem. for Quarter-master. Wanted twelve vans for wounded and Doctor.

Prompt action was wanted, as with day-break, it seemed certain that the attack of the enemy would develope on, at least, three different points. Meantime, all Colonel Richards could do was to ask Mr. Foxley to occupy Randwick with a force of about one hundred foot police, while he hurried off for the Reserve and for the remainder of the Volunteer Force.

On reaching the Barracks he found, as we know, that the troops were gone. The evils of a command, controlled as his was by civilian interference, now pressed bitterly upon him, but though time was short, he felt he could do nothing to better it except by his personal presence. So he had to ride for it.

The Colonel held straight on for Government House. He knew that it was hopeless to argue with the Commissioners, and he had made up his mind some days before that when he got into serious difficulty, he would go straight to the Queen's Representative. His military instincts told him at once that the alarm at Manly was only a ruse, and that even if it developed into an actual advance in force, it could hardly take serious shape for many hours.

Meantime the troops that had landed at Botany were almost within sight of the city.

They were on separate roads in parallel divisions, the brushwood and broken ground between being covered with swarms of skirmishers.

Our cavalry scouts described what they saw in the moonlight, the tea-tree alive with crouching figures and glancing rifle-barrels—the solid columns standing in arms on the roads, and reaching far towards Botany—then behind—guns drawn by sailors, and a strong rear-guard of infantry and naval supernumeraries.

It was plain that if not vigorously opposed, both Divisions would be in Sydney an hour after sunrise.

As it was, with all the force at his disposal, the Colonel could hardly hope to do more than protract the contest and gain time.

The enemy had advanced steadily, till the vigorous defence they encountered at the Dam, and the dropping fire of the Volunteer scouts gathering along their front, made Milarovitch doubtful as to the strength opposed to him, and determined him to wait for daylight.

Although the peril was doubtless great, the Commandant did not fear an immediate rout of his troops. The gallant defence made by Lloyd's men shewed good fighting stuff, and in any case, he counted upon making the Russians pay dear for every step they made in advance. He knew that in gaining time, he doubled his chances, but the removal of some of the best of the troops would undoubtedly prejudice his position very much.

Meantime, the men had by no means lost heart. The Infantry of the Permanent Force that had borne the brunt of the first skirmish were in great feather. Their first brush with the enemy had given them no sense of inferiority, and although hardly one of them had ever smelled powder before, they seemed as steady, whether in line or in skirmishing order, as if they had been at the Alma.

The force at the Dam had been reinforced by the Waverley, Woollahra, and Paddington Volunteers, but neither officers nor men of the Regulars expected anything from these citizen soldiers.

They had been taught that the Volunteers would bolt at once, and they heartily wished to do all the fighting by themselves. In this luckily they were disappointed.

But their professional sensibilities had to undergo still greater trials that morning. When the Russians made their last attempt at the Dam before they fell back, while the conical balls were whistling merrily all about, the Subaltern of the Company on the left found to his horror on his flank within a few yards, not the enemy, but some half-dozen fellows not even in uniform—"pot-shooting" deliberately and carefully wherever a spiked helmet glittered or a rifle cracked. Fresh from Addiscombe and Aldershott, his alarm and disgust may be conceived. Here were civilians—cads for anything he knew—not bolting or falling down in fits as they should do, but actually shooting regular troops with as much zest as if they were wild ducks or snipe.

This seemed not only a breach of the unities and proprieties of the profession, but a positive subversion of all accepted theories. All that the youth could gasp out was,

"For goodness sake, gentlemen, keep out of our way—as long as you don't shoot us, you may shoot anybody else you like."

For various reasons the Commandant's anxiety and hope centred in occupying the high ground to his left.

He had little fear that the Moore Park position would be carried by a rush in the teeth of such marksmen as filled the City Regiment.

They were now clearing away such of the brush as would favor the advance of the enemy, and their first line of skirmishers lay so that they would support Livingstone's right as soon as he fell back.

About the Waterloo position he had been more anxious, but Mount Pisgah was strong ground, and a four-gun battery was mounted on the top, so as to sweep a mile of the road. Moreover, the force holding the position was strong in numbers, though somewhat patchy and miscellaneous.

It consisted of four companies Suburban Volunteers, two companies of Highlanders, a company formed of the older cadets under the Rev. Captain M'Arthur and Captain Strong —a strong party of foot-police, and about three hundred of the Volunteer Artillery acting as Infantry.

(The treatment of this Volunteer Artillery was one of the most scandalous matters connected with our Defence Administration. Though a most capital body of men, they were persistently befooled by the authorities. Only one battery was horsed, and that insufficiently.

The guns placed in position on the Mount were got there entirely by the good will and determination of the men—no thanks to anybody else. Again, the arms they were supplied with made it a farce to call them soldiers at all, the greater part having the old smooth-bored police carbines. They might knock a man down, they could never hit a mark. Indeed it is said that as many Russians suffered from their butt-ends as from their bullets.)

But a Sub. had just come from Mount Pisgah and had given Colonel Richards such an account of preparation as greatly relieved him.

"The Artillery were barricading the Road—the Highlanders and Police were digging rifle-pits—civilians in numbers, armed and not armed, were helping in the preparations—there were old soldiers among them undoubtedly, wherever they came from—the guns were in position on the height—the sand-hills swarmed with riflemen, and outposts with lines of skirmishers extended beyond the Kerosene Works."

This was so far good, and moreover, the Parramatta Corps might be expected shortly—and the companies from the Hawkesbury before many hours.

Besides the enemy's force on the Waterloo Road was the weaker of the two divisions, so, with the City Regiment on their left flank, he felt no great distrust as to the Officer in command of the position keeping his ground for a time.

This being the case, Richards felt that his left required his utmost attention.

The enemy at the Dam was in great strength, and if the skirmish that had just ended had taken place in day-light, the small force that opposed them would have been driven like chaff before the wind.

Even if they should have succeded in occupying Randwick and Waverley heights, unless in greater strength, the Russians in pursuit would have scattered them, and then come in on the rear of the main position in overwhelming force. The troops on the middle and lower roads could hardly be expected to be steady with the enemy in their rear as well as in their front, and indeed such a catastrophe might and probably would have ended in panic and ruin.

Now, there was in addition the danger arising from the force said to be advancing by Coogee—a comparatively small body, but still quite enough, without resistance, to turn his flank and throw his line of defence into confusion, to be a prey to the main body of the enemy on their advance.

On the other hand, if he could occupy these heights with sufficient strength, he might beat back this advance from Coogee, strengthen Livingstone, and operate to great advantage on the flank of the enemy advancing on Moore Park.

He had this much opinion of his troops,—he believed that with five or six hundred more men and another battery, so

long as they contained a proportion of regulars, he could turn the tables on the enemy, and drive them mobbed and in confusion into the sand-hills on the right.

And it was for this he wanted to hurry up the Permanent Reserve and the Volunteer companies waiting in Sydney.

Now, the Commissioner's interference had well-nigh thwarted him, and there would be day-light in an hour, when the attack would certainly be renewed, and the weakness of the defending force would become apparent.

So, as I before said, Richards determined to appeal to the Governor. As he rode up, Government House was alight—Secretary and Orderlies were astir, and horses stood saddled in the front.

The Governor came to the entrance with a gentleman who stepped into a cab. "Then Mr. —— you will bring me at once anything further you get?" "Without an instants' delay, Sir H——," and the cab drove off.

"Colonel Richards! Come in."

The Commandant in that short interview learned something that opened his eyes. The whole attack and defence up to the last twenty minutes was placed before him—on a plan. The Manly affair was only a ruse; the three Iron-clads were steaming slowly round the North Head; there was no force but that landed at Botany; the telegraph lines had been cut, but mounted police were galloping from Parramatta and from

every point which could be communicated with, and there was no doubt that communication would soon open, and all the country corps of Volunteers and the armed Police on the Line would be down by mid-day.

Colonel Richards had full authority from the Governor to do what he thought best. He advised him to stop the troops under orders for Manly, and to carry out his plan of putting them all on the Long Bay Road.

He, the Governor, would send some one who would secure every vehicle in the town that was to be got for the quick conveyance of the troops. Meantime let them be marched off at once. A Proclamation was ready for printing that would end all interference with Richard's command.

"You're puzzled now, Richards, are not you ?"

"Indeed I am."

"Well, I'll tell you a secret, tho' there's little time. I've had the Pigeon Club working for me. They have birds all round in safe hands within twenty miles, and you saw Thompson leave just now; he brought me two billets—one from Botany and one from Manly. Good-bye: good luck to you."

The Colonel's heart exulted within him; he felt as if he held six trumps. He already saw his Reserve Infantry advancing, firing in line on the flank of the Muscovite column, while the field guns rolled grape into them from the heights.

He even thought that the Volunteers might be coaxed to a bayonet charge, though in his heart he suspected that they preferred long shots in a horizontal attitude.

Before these ideas had quite shaped themselves, the good horse was tossing his head at the Colonnade in George-street, where Fortescue had just arrived with his men well breathed and hot, but none the worse. "All right, Fortescue—straight back—its all humbug about Manly," and the Major in a twinkling, "Right about face—by your left. Quick march."

Richards was rattling off to Wynyard Square where the three companies of Volunteers were, when Buzz burst out of the Telegraph Office, hot, bumptious, and imperious.

"Colonel Richards: I have ordered these troops to Manly to oppose the enemy's landing."

The Colonel got off his horse, and walked under the portico. He felt bound to be civil and to put things fairly before this civilian administrator; their recent dispute made it all the more imperative, under the feeling natural to a gentleman, that he should treat him with justice. Nevertheless, it was a struggle to act up to the rule, and there was no time to spare. The public did not give him the chance to enter into explanation.

A crowd had gathered—some of whom really seemed to guess the merits of the matter. It was not a common crowd.

It consisted of all the heterogeneous elements that compose the Australian democracy (except capitalists and larrikins), and naturally they spoke their minds free.

There were cricket-players, street preachers, gamblers, spiritualists, drunkards, politicians, and, in fact, all the most prominent of every eccentric class, but undoubtedly containing men of brains and energy. Most of them went to the front that day, and a good many did not come back.

Buzz raved and bounced. Richards tried civilly to get a hearing; the crowd talked all together, shouted, and hurrah'd. At length a voice that drowned all others like the beat of a drum or the bay of a blood-hound—rolled out—

"Go on Richards, don't mind the born idiot." Nothing more could be heard in the tumult. Buzz disappeared livid up-stairs. Fortescue's men were wheeling into King-street, and the Colonel the next minute started the three companies of Volunteers for the Waverley Road.

Mulroney's new place was lighted up, and men with rifles in their hands stood all about. A big man came out with soda and b—.

"Here Colonel, wet your whistle."

It was Mulroney himself.

"We'll all be out directly Colonel."

An up-country man whom he knew slightly came to the other side of his horse, "I suppose, Colonel Richards, we can act with the troops?"

The Colonel considered, "I dare not say yes, and I will not say no—It's very irregular—you must obey the officer in command if you will go out, and keep out of the way of the troops."

"God bless my soul," said the honest Colonel to himself in perplexity, "I believe a lot of these civilians will fight after all."

With the break of day the advance of the enemy was renewed on both lines of road, but thanks to the two hours of preparation, and the promptitude with which the Commissioners' plans were baffled, they were well met.

It needs good troops to beat back step by step a double line of deadly shooting skirmishers, to lead only at last to open ground swept by volley-firing and field guns.

The dense columns of the Muscovites and their stolid courage presented only the better mark, while their skirmishers plainly could not for a moment quell the fire of our ambushed rifles. Dead weight and numbers might no doubt, backed by their bear-like audacity, force their way, but the success would be attended with fearful loss.

This was the character of the fighting over the whole line of defence for two hours after day-break.

In the grey dawn the Dam was rushed so suddenly, by such numbers, and with such impetuosity, as might have been

a surprise if met with less vigilance and promptitude. The enemy apparently had guessed in some way the smallness of the defending force, and hoped to gain a victory with one blow. But the foresight of the Officer in command, and the resolute discipline of the Permanent Force were equal to the occasion.

The mass of grey-coats and helmets had barely dashed up the embankment when a crash of grape and musketry burst in their midst, and through the smoke appeared along the road a line of levelled bayonets, while away to right and left for a hundred yards on each side, the crack of rifles told whence came the shot that kept falling on each flank of the writhing and staggering column.

But the position was no longer tenable. To think that the attack was over was absurd. The worst was coming yet there was no doubt. The enemy were seven to one, and they would be round them in no time. So the guns were limbered up and galloped back to a position already decided upon, and the Infantry fell back skirmishing and steadily disputing every inch of the advance.

Major Livingstone might easily have retreated at once rapidly and without loss to his new ground, before the enemy had sufficiently recovered to pursue him, but he had decided to fall back inch by inch for good reasons.

He meant that his men should "establish a funk" in the Russians by their shooting, and he knew that nothing would so much tend to this as the perilous and exhausting work of driving such men as those following him out of cover.

Though a distinguished officer for his years, Livingstone was not a bigoted army man, and his ideas had less by far of the House Guards and Hyde Park pattern than almost any other Regular Officer in the colonies. He was a keen sportsman and a bold explorer, and had seen a good deal of rough and irregular frontier service on the scattered outposts of the Empire, and being a crack rifle-shot himself and knowing all the shooting statistics, he listened with good-humoured mockery to the shallow absurdities retailed by his Subs., and by many older officers who should have known better.

He knew that since the year 1860, the rifle had been a house-hold institution in all British communities, and he had seen bank clerks in New Zealand and boatmen in Ontario make uncommonly good shooting against tatooed warriors and heroes in green uniforms—and on looking round him he saw no reason to doubt that a like experience was in store for the soldiers of the Czar.

There near him were three Volunteers whom he had seen at the Butts at Paddington, making bulls-eye after bulls-eye, and they seemed to find no difficulty in covering a half-hidden cross-belt or shoulder scale.

There was a grey-jacket on the other side with a short Westly-Richards, whom he had seen with that same weapon stalking kangaroos and bowling over wild horses at the gallop, and the other men there outside of the Permanent Force, whether in uniform or not, seemed all of the stamp of fellows that meant work.

It fell out as Livingstone expected.

A mile's retreat in the morning mist fairly galled Milarovitch and his picked battalions into desperation.

In spite of their advanced and flanking companies, the column was wrapped in a continuous fire. When he extended his front to the left he drew the fire of the advanced company of the First Regiment (the City Volunteers).

The large force seemed to be in danger of being surrounded by the smaller; so to extend his front he caused the regiment of Ekatrinoslov to come up from the rear and drive in these new antagonists, while with the leading battalion he continued to press Livingstone along the track to Randwick.

The best shots were pushed to the front to pick off the red-coats (now far too prominent marks), but they met only the scathing bullets of the retreating force.

Skirmishing was useless. To push through the leafy screen of the scrub only drew a shot from a rifle hidden in the undergrowth, while to charge home with the column only served to concentrate within a focus of thirty yards the fire of four hundred marksmen.

The attacking force were dropping fast, and the defenders lost few.

When the Russians at times came on a red uniform or grey tweed suit clothing a wounded or dying man, they finishsd him savagely with their bayonets and musket-buts.

It was then Milarovitch shewed his Tartar blood, and gave the order which has ever since stained his name with infamy.

At the Brussels' Conference of 1874, held with the view of establishing an International Code of War, a proposition condemning as banditti all combatants not in regular uniform, was supported by the chief Continental Powers.

Though approved by a majority of the Governments there represented, this resolution had been in no sense accepted as law in Europe, but the vote having passed the Conference, seems to have been interpreted by Russian Military jurists into accepted assent, and whether by regular Imperial authority or not, Milarovitch decided to act upon that interpretation.

Exasperated beyond control by the resistance of four or five hundred men to the famous regiment of St. Wincislaus, he observed some of the opposing force out of uniform, and remembered the vote of the Conference.

Four Randwick lads had been out since the first alarm, keen to fight against the invaders, and to save their parents and homes from slaughter and spoil.

They had been Grammar School Cadets only a year ago, and were now members of the local Rifle Club.

They had hung too far back in the retreating line. A rush of the advancing force cut them off, and before they could fight or run they were knocked down and disarmed.

Milarovitch was near. "Bayonet them, and the next you catch, hang them up wherever there is a tree or a telegraph post."

It was done.

The poor young fellows, hardly more than school-boys, died with the shouts of their country-men in their ears, for Richards was up with his Reserve, and his guns had formed in alignment with the battery already in position on the height.

The mist was rolling in white masses off the basin to the right. The deepening echo on both sides of the middle-road shewed that the assault there had begun, and the white puffs rising beyond told of an advance on Waterloo.

It was clear that there was a fight on, and that the Randwick boys would not die unavenged.

The Commandant's arrangements had been well-timed.

The Russian troops advancing by the Coogee Road, on reaching Randwick, found themselves opposed by Foxley's

men, and not being able to guess the strength of the force before them, they fell back under cover, and waited for daylight.

On seeing the retreat of Livingstone's detachment before the Regiment of St. Wincislaus, they made a second attempt, not knowing of the arrival of Richards' Reserve, when they were hurled with great loss down hill right on to Milarovitch's column.

This mobbed and confused mass was now exposed to the crushing fire of the eight field-guns ranged on the sandstone plateau, and after vain attempts at extricating their troops and leading them to the attack, the Russian officers had to withdraw them to the shelter of their own guns, which were now waiting to open fire.

But Richards had no wish to enter into an Artillery duel.

He could use his guns to better purpose; and he entrusted to Livingstone the task of continuing to press the enemy with rifle fire—a service peculiarly acceptable to that officer—while he caused the artillery to limber up after a few rounds, and moved them to bear upon the strong column that could now be seen pressing up the road towards Moore Park.

The Russians made in the course of the forenoon three desperate attempts to carry the heights against Livingstone's rifles, but it was only to leave their dead and wounded in

scores on every open patch of ground. At length, towards mid-day, they concentrated their force under cover, and kept on the defensive.

The tables were turned.

The Colonel, having arranged as we have seen, felt anxious about Mount Pisgah.

That position was perilously near the town and near the Railway. The ground was naturally strong, but a disaster there would be followed more immediately by crushing ruin than anywhere else.

With the Naval Brigade and the Country Volunteers on the ground, he would not feel afraid of the result, but the first were needed in the Harbour while the iron-clads were menacing the entrance, and it might be hours before the country corps could be brought up.

Meantime, his place was at Waterloo.

Before he got there, the sound of skirmishing had changed to the heavy roar of field-guns and the ceaseless rattle of volley-firing.

The delights of early dawn have been eulogised for ages by poets and other imaginative people.

I always think that such individuals can hardly have personally experienced the facts which they delight to present to their readers. I can hardly conceive that Pope or Milton

can have watched cattle all night on a frosty plain, or can have waited for the first grey streak in Australia in the month of May, crouching in dripping scrub.

At least if they had, I'm sure they would not have displayed a bit more patience than did Lieutenant Donald MacPherson of the First Company Duke of Edinburgh Highlanders, New South Wales, when he commanded an outpost on the Botany Road looking out for the Russians that morning.

If the Lieutenant had been Ossian son of Fingal himself, he could not have more effectually piled maledictions on the early dawn, the damp, and above all the costume in which the mistaken zeal of his countrymen had clothed him.

For MacPherson had been used to breeks since his childhood and he had no belief whatever in the hearse plumes, little tartan scarf, and other fixtures in which it had pleased George IV. of sacred memory and the London tailors to travesty the "war paint" of the clans of the Gael. For he knew well enough that there was little historical about the dress, and that nothing would astonish both the old wives and the dun deer on Cabarfae so much as the apparition of a warrior in modern Highland uniform.

Moreover, there had been mosquitoes at three o'clock, and there was something like frost at six. Such are the amenities of the Sydney climate.

But the Lieutenant had plenty to warm him before long—a sound like the stirring of grass and leaves rose to the front—then with his ear to the ground he heard a twig crack—then a scuffle of feet—"look alive there," a shot! another—a rattling volley—and the game began.

The Regiments that led the attack on the Upper and Middle Roads were pure Russians, and they wore the spiked silver-tinted helmets and green facings so well remembered in the Crimea. The rank and file had a strong Tartar look.

The Officers nearly all shewed the German blood more or less, but, in nationality and ambition they were as thorough Muscovites as Peter the Great himself could have desired. They were nearly all descended from the foreign population of soldiers, teachers, and artificers introduced and acclimatised by that Sovereign.

The Regiment that led the advance on Waterloo was of a different race.

It had been drawn originally from the Baltic Provinces wrested from Sweden in the last century, and since had undergone a tempering and seasoning under every clime from the Wall of China to Warsaw. Though, under the Institutions of the Empire, the men had become in their habits Russianised, still they inherited the Scandánavian blood of their Finland ancestry, and very resolute dangerous stuff they proved.

Their dark-haired countrymen of Slavonic and Tartar ancestry would go to the death for Holy Russia freely if their Father sent them and their priests blessed them, and sprinkled them with the holy oil; but the heavy fair-haired Finlanders cared little for the benedictions and promises of the Patriarch himself.

They had none of the child-like faith and loyalty of the pure Muscovite, but like true sons of Thor and Odin, they gloated over the prospect of drink, blood, and plunder, and their dull grey eyes glittered from beneath their flat caps and yellow hair when they saw the villas of Newtown and Marrickville, as the men of Rollo or Hardrada might have looked on first seeing the palaces and towns of Italy.

These were the characters that beat up the outpost commanded by Lieutenant MacPherson, and they conducted themselves so as to give that gallant officer reason to remark, as he does to this day, that "they were kittle cattle to deal with."

Their advance was slow but resolute. It was long before they could force back the skirmishers from the scrubby ground, and afterwards each defensible position had to be carried, while the road was commanded by the guns on the top of Mount Pisgah;—but at length they fairly forced their way to the main position, and the fighting there became specially desperate, daring, and cold-blooded.

Again and again they came up to the barricade and rifle-pits—there could be no doubt of their using their bayonets—again and again they burst among the artillery-men to be beaten down and driven back, and to be followed by the fire from the rifle-pits and sand-hills till they gained the shelter of their guns.

The sight of the houses to the left and rear seemed to inflame them like wolves at the sight of their prey, and it was only after half-an-hour of this work, when their dead and wounded lay along the line of defence "like leaves in Vallumbrosa;" that their commander drew them back behind the low-hills on the road, and set to work with his six field-pieces to try to shake the position.

Shortly after this, that Officer received an order from his Chief.

Milarovitch instructed him to shell all buildings to the rear and left of the position—to set on fire all he could—and to hang up in sight all non-military combatants taken prisoner.

The savage was a true pupil of the great Suwarrow. Though blazing with crosses and orders, he was as veritable a Hun as Attila; and yet probably he was the most religious man then in Sydney, not even excepting Mr. Buzz.

He spent an hour every morning howling and posturing among lighted candles and crucifixes, and no doubt he had a fervent belief in some cannibal kind of Deity that he worshipped.

He had made his way before, by burning Circassians in their villages, and he calculated now that the panic raised by the blazing city, and the fate of the civilians taken in arms, would before an hour lead to all resistance ceasing.

But his former experiences had not shewn him the character of the people against whom he was making "war to the knife."

If my patient reader has gathered together the strands of this disjointed narrative, he will see clearly, with the aid of a local map, that our line of defence about ten o'clock on the morning of the 18th May extended from a point near Randwick Asylum to the ridges below the Racecourse, and thence to Mount Pisgah, at Waterloo.

The force which attacked the Dam at daybreak consisted of two Regiments, the whole numbering from three to four thousand men.

One regiment followed the retreat of Livingstone's detachment to Randwick heights, while the other drove in the skirmishers of the City Volunteers, and tried to force their way to Moore Park.

The reception the Russians met with on all the points of attack was not what they had been led by their Officers to expect.

On that noted day to the end, the contrast between the opposing forces was vividly brought out.

Of the attacking force, the tactics and discipline were perfect. Their officers were shrewd, educated, and courageous men—while the soldiery either were animated by enthusiastic devotion to the Czar, or they were of the sort that liked war, and meant fighting—and the whole together formed a military mechanism, that in adaptation of parts and organization, it would be difficult to excel.

Of the defenders, on the other hand, it could hardly be said that tactics or discipline were their chief moving principles, or that they constituted a united organism—in the same sense. They formed rather a band of highly galvanized atoms.

The Regular Soldiers among them had been Britons by blood, and Australians by birth before they were soldiers, and their native instincts could not be obliterated by mechanical drill.

If Fortescue, in the crisis of the morning had told his two companies of Reserve Infantry to ground arms and surrender, the answer he would likely have got would be that "they would see him at Jericho first—and that they were going a-shooting with them Volunteers."

In fact, it became plain as the day went on, that in defiance of all the opinions of our Military Solons, our paid

soldiery were a great deal more citizens than they were soldiers,—and the main reason why they would fight, and could hardly be choked off it,—was, not that they were getting good wages, or because they would be flogged or be liable to three months' imprisonment if they did not, but simply because they liked it; and "if them Sydney and Parramatta boys thought they could lick the Rooshians, was'nt they as good as them ?"

From the same reasons, it became pretty evident that every Briton-born or Australian native in the city and suburbs, claimed the right to shoot Russians as a privilege or luxury which had accrued to him as a birth-right,—and indeed the idea was acted upon pretty generally.

Every man between the South Head and Parramatta who thought he could shoot was there, and they seemed all to be accommodated.

The general results up to twelve o'clock were not altered from the point to which we have brought the detail.

All along their front, but especially at Waterloo, the Russian Artillery sought to raise a conflagration, while their Infantry lying close, tried to keep down the gnawing advance of our rifle fire.

They waited till their shells had told before making another advance.

Meantime an unexpected ally was working for them.

The southerly that now drove their Iron-clads for shelter into Botany was to bring them the opportunity to make their decisive blow.

Up to this point, I have described what I learned from various sources.

Now, I will resume my own personal experiences.

When I rode up to the rear of the position at Constitution Hill about 12 o'clock, I came first upon some private carriages, and there was Dr. M——n fixing up some wounded men that they might be placed in the carriages and taken to Alfred Park.

Then I came to an Officer distributing ammunition, and he gave me a bag of about 50 lbs. weight to carry on my saddle and leave with the first Company to the right.

I found Major Gillott there, and he advised me to ride straight across the sand-hills to Waterloo, where, he kindly said, I would be sure to get a job if I wanted one.

As I passed the end of Waterloo Swamp, a rattling volley of bullets cut the sand in front of me, and I met a horse, pressed hard at the gallop. He got a shot behind the shoulder—crashed headlong to the ground, and the rider rose bleeding and staggering to his feet. It was one of the Aides-de-Camp.

I had found time and opportunitv to put a flask of whiskey in my saddle-pouch, so I drew it out and handed him a noggin. Poor fellow, he was half-stunned and faint, but the grog brought him round. His shot horse and anxiety to get on seemed to affect him painfully, but he was not further hurt.

"Heavens," he said, when he recovered breath, "what will I do? I am sent to hurry up the Naval Brigade."

I thought but a moment and got off. Bess must take her chance like the rest of us, and if I am going shooting I don't need a charger.

"Keep her for me till I send for her," and he was soon in the saddle and off. She had done almost no work for a month, and was full of corn, so, unless she happened to get in the way of a shot, she would be none the worse.

There was no doubt about my road. The whistling of the bullets and the scattering of the sand were guide enough, though I saw nobody yet, so I unslung my Henry, put a cartridge in, and trudged along leisurely.

I noticed then, what I had heard of before, but never could understand—the distinction between the attack and return fire. I could tell by the ear already which shots were fired by the enemy, and which by our men.

On topping the first rise beyond the swamp, I found myself on the edge of the skirmish. The Russians who had fired on the Aide-de-camp, I could see three hundred yards off, down towards the road. They seemed to form part of a strong body of skirmishers to their left, and they were trying to make their way in a swarm up the sand hills. At times they made a rush, and then sunk down in such cover as they could get, and so tried to press on. I could see lower down,

by the more concentrated smoke, dust, and noise about the foot of Mount Pisgah, that that was the main object of the attack.

These skirmishers were opposed by a ragged chain of riflemen, in knots and groups, lying, kneeling, and standing in all postures along the face of the sand ridge—sometimes single men by themselves—generally two and three, and sometimes as many as ten or twelve together—but all seemingly, by some inherent discipline, acting in concert, for they were all irregulars. I began to see how this was. A jolly young Sub. doing field officer, cantered along the rear. "Right you are, gentlemen—don't get in each other's way—feel to the right—can any of you give me a cigar? Now, keep steady—you know (puffing away) *there's nothing behind you.*"

This inspiriting piece of information was received as a capital joke, and the Sub. got a volley of cheers as he went off to the other end of the line he had in charge.

I found some friends at once—Ross, Binny, and others. They were lying in the lee of some tea-tree, and every now and then, as the chance offered, a barrel was raised, steadied, and the bullet sped.

As I was watching carefully a particular dip in the ground, where I had seen at least a dozen Russians crouch down, two of our fellows fired together.

"My bird down," shouted Binny.

"Not a bit," said Ross, "I hit him. It was that thief of a Corporal, the dead spit of Judas Iscariot. I'll bet you five pounds I caught him right under the beard. Didn't you see it Baker—you were looking through the glass?"

This discussion was interrupted by a little incident near our left. A youth, with more pluck than prudence, and disregarding the Officer's caution, had not only left the line, but had crawled to a point where, if he moved, he would be equally exposed to our shot and the enemy's.

At length he saw within a hundred yards what he took to be a head, but what we saw perfectly well to be a cap stuck up on the end of a rifle to *draw him.*

In spite of warning cries behind, he rose slowly and fired; but he was down at once with a shot through his leg.

Three Russians dashed out to finish him. One was knocked over, but the other two got into a drain, and were making their way to bayonet him, when a stout little red man, I think in one of the Insurance Offices, dashed out of his cover, humped him, and took him off out of danger, in defiance of the bullets whistling round.

A big Hawkesbury youth, six feet four, who had come down to see his cousins, and had come out to see the sport, was delighted with the feat.

He went up to the little man, shook hands with him warmly, invited him to visit him at Greendale, and swore that "he would do—he was as game as a cock soldier ant."

We were all much diverted with this episode, but the youth who had got into the scrape got off with little sympathy.

He was heartily abused, and it was given out that any one else who did the same might expect to be left to shift for himself, if we did not think it necessary in the circumstances to fire at him. However, somebody looked after the poor fellow, and before long we managed to pass the word for a van, which came and took him and another wounded man.

So it was plain that the irregulars were working into tactics of their own.

But this was mild luxurious work in comparison with what was in store for us.

For some time there had been no advance by the enemy in full force.

They had been trying to shell the city, while our Artillery had been working to keep down their fire, and these skirmishing movements were mainly caused by the attempts of our marksmen to bring their shot to bear on the enemy's batteries, met by corresponding action on the other side.

Thus, the main force of the Russians lay back in reserve, while the swarms of skirmishers on both sides swayed back and forward, as they found opening, or had to give way to a superior force.

The general result was greatly in favor of our men, and Major Gillott's four Suburban Companies having relieved

the right wing of the City Regiment from pressure, and forced a sailor's battery near the Bunnerong Road to clear out, now turned to the right, and swept our antagonists clean out of their cover on to the main road under the fire of Mount Pisgah, while the sand-pits and swamps were in turn occupied by the Riflemen of Redfern and the Western suburbs.

Our division, if so I may call it, was therefore no more wanted there, and following our jolly field-officer, whom we already looked upon as our commandant-proper, we trooped along, to where he assured us, "we would get pepper"—and so we did.

The critical moment of the day was fast approaching, though none of us guessed it at the time. As we crossed the open road, the southerly which had set in was blowing clouds of sand and dust, darkening the air above us. We had no suspicion that the gale, which had told so opportunely for the safety of the town two hours ago, was now to prove a powerful ally to the enemy.

As soon as the Iron-clads anchored in Botany Bay, the Commodore landed every marine, sailor and gun, that he possibly could, and thus formed a body of six hundred men and six guns which was marched at once along the Waterloo Road.

The time had come for Milarovitch's grand attempt, but he had decided on a certain change in tactics.

His original scheme of a triple attack was disconcerted mainly by the superiority of our rifle-shooting, and he decided to concentrate his main attack on his left where the shelling had been most successful, and to leave on the other points merely sufficient force to keep the troops before them engaged, and to be ready to push home any advantage that might arise,—for he calculated that if he turned or forced Mount Pisgah, and let the Finlanders and sailors into the suburbs and city, the panic that would follow the spreading conflagration, rapine and slaughter, would shake and dissolve our whole line of defence.

With the fresh force now come from the Bay, and the gale blowing—with other matters he had in view—he was sure the game was in his hands; so he gave the word to advance.

The enterprise of our skirmishers, and the alacrity of the staff, soon brought to our Commandant a knowledge of these preparations, and he moved every man he could to his right, and sent orders that the troops at Randwick and Moore Park should push hard those opposed to them, and if possible concentrate towards Waterloo.

Looking forward to this necessity, the Aide-de-camp had been previously despatched to hurry up the Naval Brigade—which might now be released from duty in the Harbour—as also any Artillery, or other force, that could be got.

After that, Richards' resources were all but exhausted. There was indeed due a strong force of Volunteers, armed Police, and Riflemen, from Goulburn and Bathurst; but the wires were cut, and the mounted messengers might have failed; he could only hope against hope.

In this pinch, we, among the rest, had been called to a weak part of the position, and we presently found ourselves manning a barricade of carts, wool-bales, and barrels full of bricks and sand, built across Botany main Road, and flanked by broken ground and sand-pits.

To our right were the little gardens and enclosures of Alexandria, occupied by the four companies of Hawkesbury Rifles.

To our left was a party of Irregulars like ourselves, mostly men from the Clubs and that vicinity who had put themselves under the command of Captain Macdonald,—and on the sand-hill behind was the Parramatta Corps. We knew that Major Gillott, with his wing of the Suburban regiment, was on the rough ground to the left, between the Waterloo Dam and the Mount, but we could see little or nothing from the brickfielders that came over us in gusts.

The artillery fire which had gone on nearly the whole forenoon had ended, in this position, greatly to the advantage of the enemy.

Our single battery stationed on the Mount had been dismounted and silenced, and the church behind was one pile of ruins.

Still the superiority of our rifle-fire had balanced the loss of the battery, and nobody thought we would be driven out of the position, but the sand was getting very annoying; surely, we hoped, it would stop soon.

It was two o'clock when the last attack began.

A single gun fired behind the low hill to our front, and we could hear by the sharp rattle of musketry that the Russians had left their cover.

Gillott's men fortunately were less exposed to the sand-storm, and though they had to give way to numbers, still they made themselves felt to the end of day.

On our right the swarm of Russian light troops had less trouble to drive back the Hawkesbury men, for the gale came right in the faces of the latter, and to use their rifles against it was impossible.

From the small mound of sand on which our barricade abutted we tried to open fire, but we failed for the same reason.

I can hardly describe all that took place—the catastrophe was so sudden.

It seemed that in a moment our barricade was being torn with cannon-shot; while at the same time we were enveloped in black smoke, which carried by the southerly, blinded and suffocated us.

It turned out that the enemy on clearing the way with their skirmishers brought down their twelve field-pieces to a position from which the barricades could be pounded, and then set fire to the Kerosene Works, Goodlet and Smith's premises, and the Woolwashing buildings, already prepared by them for the purpose.

But we were helpless, blinded, and choking, and at the time we could not guess what was going on.

Shortly the wind abated, the smoke rose, and then we saw the extent of our loss.

The barricade was nearly knocked to pieces.

Burst wool-bales and smashed carts were littered about on the ground covered with our killed and wounded.

We hastily moved the wounded to the side of the road, for we could hear the sound of the enemy and guns advancing.

A clear glimpse shewed us the guns passing the bridge, and the enemy coming up in numbers on each side of the road; but what alarmed us most was this: *the long column of the Finlanders was making its way right through the gardens and open ground on our right.*

I believe at that moment, and then only during the day, panic appeared among us.

Our rifle-shooting, which was our strong point, had been useless in the gale. Even yet we could barely see, and had just begun to breathe freely—our comrades had been helplessly slaughtered beside us—and now we were out-flanked by the main body of the enemy, and the dullest at once felt the conviction that we had met with an appalling disaster.

It was not either so much personal fear that affected us, as bewilderment at the catastrophe, and the want of guidance.

All this passed in a moment; but the leader came with the occasion.

Macdonald shouted out, "Keep together; save your cartridges, and follow me."

We cleared the ruins of the barricade, and hurried rapidly away.

There were fifty or sixty of us. We left the main street, for we expected it to be swept with grape directly, and kept along the lanes.

We soon met many parties from the sand-hills keeping the same direction by some common understanding.

Presently our young Field-Officer rode among us. He was now bare-headed—his right arm was helpless, and his horse bled terribly.

He told us that the main body on Mount Pisgah was falling back to the line of barricades built across Redfern, and that he was collecting men to hold the Railway Line as long as possible. The Naval Brigade and Western Volunteers would be up directly, when all would go well. He then jumped over a low fence to the left, and rode among the cottages in the direction taken by the Hawkesbury Companies.

We saw that we must lose no time to reach the Railway before the enemy. Waterloo was soon blazing behind us. We saw none of the inhabitants, and hoped for pity's sake that they were all gone.

Milarovitch, leaving a strong rear-guard to keep in check Gillott's detachment, went over the ruins of our barricade with his guns and reserve of marines; flanking parties of skirmishers and sailors, meantime scouring out the back lanes and firing the houses. His advance was deliberate and secure. A party of pioneers went first, *testing the roadway first to see if it was mined with dynamite,* and if a group of people shewed,—a gun poured a shower of mitraille upon them.

The reason of the route taken by the column through the gardens was, it appeared, *the fear of the streets being mined.*

The Chief's advance in this fashion on the flank and rear, protected the column from ambuscade, while he made sure of every foot he advanced in the town.

This was the true Muscovite policy of devastation. It was meant to appal, but it served more to exasperate us.

We could now hear the rifles of the Hawkesbury men holding ground against the pursuing troops. They had reached some position that they could defend.

We put on a short spurt—got through some cow-yards and small enclosures, and found ourselves on the Railway Line opposite Calder House.

There they were, holding a large sand-pit near, and their antagonists were hanging back among the cottages and ditches, waiting for the column, which soon appeared rising in sight behind.

We were speedily joined by groups rallying to this second line of defence—first light-footed Cadets, and then Police and Highlanders.

The numbers quickly grew. The importance of the Irregulars could not now well be questioned. As I looked around, I saw scores of men, who as youngsters had been Volunteers, now ready to do good service in the country's peril, but to whom drill and barrack-yard routine were necessarily unsuitable.

They might not be soldiers certainly, but the fashion in which a wing of the Finlanders got handled by them that afternoon on the embankment told its own tale.

Many of these had been waiting in reserve for such a crisis as the present, and their appearance was most timely.

As civilians, no doubt, they incurred one additional very horrible risk, but many already felt that impulse of desperation which made the destruction of the enemy the one overwhelming object, to be obtained at any cost.

Perhaps unconsciously we were beginning to show symptoms of the hereditary character that has been historical for generations. It had been said of our fore-fathers in the old wars that they were "never more dangerous than in defeat and disaster," and our defence began to give evidence of a vitality that must have astonished Milarovitch.

We were beaten—a panic had begun—we were broken and dispersed. Still the cohesion was not dissolved. The atoms came together again and joined spontaneously.

Was this from drill or from the want of it? Or was it from another cause altogether? Was it in the blood?

Macdonald kept up our spirits, assuring us that the game was not played out yet—that but for the dust-storm and the kerosene smoke we would have beat them hollow, and urging us to make the most of the undulations of the ground and to use our few cartridges to the best purpose.

The column speedily debouched from the lanes and gardens and opened out for attack.

The Hawkesbury Rifles ambushed to their eyes in the sand soon made their shot tell upon them, and we backed them as well as we could. The last arrived party took ground to the right, and held the Railway embankment for some time with good effect.

The enemy came on in loose order in front—solid formation behind—losing heavily, but pushing their way in their customary dogged manner, till at length they forced the Hawkesbury men by pure weight and numbers out of their sand hole, and made them retreat, though fighting obstinately along the Railway.

This success of the Finlanders led however to their front being considerably extended, and when we saw the capital shooting that the party on our right was making among their advance companies, we thought things not so hopeless, and I began to wish that the Hawkesbury men would continue to retreat and draw their line further out yet.

Our party had been lying down, trying with their rifles to protect the retreat of the Hawkesbury men, but as soon as they fell back, we came in for some direct attention.

Though the line of the enemy was now stretched out, it was still at every point greatly superior in numbers to all that we could oppose to them—but yet encouraged by the continued accessions to our ranks of more fugitives and fresh men, and by the hope of the long looked for force by the Railway, we held on and waited for the attack.

Macdonald passed the word to reserve our fire till they were close, and we all lay still till they were upon us.

It was a desperate little tussle, and though only one of a dozen such that were taking place within the radius of a mile, and perhaps unimportant of itself, still it showed the temper of the combatants.

We held the Railway almost muzzle to muzzle with these light-infantry and sailors, till we were fairly forced up the embankment at Calder House.

I fired my last cartridge into a group of sailors rushing across the Line; but on looking to right and left I saw that they were round us on both flanks.

It was all up with us at last. The sailors, headed by a young warrant-officer, were carving their way with cutlass and revolver through the Cadets. I took a turn of my sling-belt in my hand, and resolved that their leader should be my bird. He was within reach, and my carbine was whirling round my head to give him a two-handed swinger—Bannerman fashion—when my left leg cracked under me, and I fell heavily on my side.

The tide of fight passed over, leaving the ground strewn with the fallen. The Muscovites might have stabbed or hung me, but their discipline was absolute, and I was recognised in virtue of my old uniform as a legalised combatant.

It was not so with all. From where I lay I presently could see groups of prisoners pinioned and guarded being hurried along the line, and shortly each telegraph post bore a horrid burden.

It is better to forget these things. The crime and brutality rest upon the heads of those who made the war. The fate of these victims differed nothing essentially from that of those

who fell in hot blood with arms in their hands, but, it is just as well that their friends should not learn what actually happened.

We know now what are the blessings of peace and order. Such horrors we had heard of in countries suffering from *Coups d' Etat* or from foreign conquest, but now they came home to us.

One shudders to think that if we had fallen a prey to the conqueror, our "fair Australia" might have seen re-enacted the miseries and crimes that crushed poor Poland.

It was no use trying to rise. My leg was broken. Our dead and wounded lay thick along the edge of the Railway. Among them were numbers of the Police and Highlanders. They had tried in vain to save the Cadets.

Near me lay young Bell of the Treasury—shot through the body—pallid and clammy—he could not speak but did not seem to be in pain.

The Greendale giant was spitting blood out of his lungs and trying to say something about his mother—his new friend the little red man lay with his head half blown off.

The fight continued close behind—Macdonald with a desperate remnant held Calder House. Through every window and door flashed the shot of the Defenders—but it could not last against the infuriated crowd that already had burst into the garden and had set fire to the out-houses.

These things passed before me like a dream. What the ultimate fate of the day might be, I could not realise—the present moment—the terrible interest of the facts themselves —my wound—precluded other thoughts.

I only knew that resistance had not ceased, and I hoped and wondered. But I little guessed how the tide had at that moment turned, and that our protracted undisciplined resistance had sapped deeply into the Russian General's force. Before a little more pressure, a fresh application of strength —it was to crumble like a crushed egg-shell.

* * * * * * * * *

Our comrades to the Left had not been idle.

Livingstone and Fortescue, who commanded there, on receiving the Commandant's order, knew that the crisis had come, and that the time for counting the cost was past.

They pushed on, rushing the enemy from cover to cover, often at the point of the bayonet—the guns galloping on to bear from every point of vantage on the Russians clustering on the roads and open ground.

The two Regiments of St. Wincislaus and Ekatrinoslav forced in this fashion got boxed together.

The City Rifles, holding the scrubby ridges galled them with an incessant fire. The guns played upon them, front and flank. The Permanent Infantry advanced in line.

Then the difference in the men showed. This great mass had no soul—no vital cohesion. When the mechanical formation made by drill and discipline gave way, its strength was gone.

It reeled, staggered, and finally, as at the Alma, melted away and became a mere crowd, taking their way for their comrade's position on the Botany Road.

Their Artillery, picked companies, and Officers hung behind and made a dogged retreat, but they left their dead and wounded at every step, and at last had to abandon their guns. Their power for attack was gone, and when they massed with Milarovitch's rear-guard at Waterloo Dam, they were still followed and menaced by a foe, not much over one-third of their number.

But the loss incurred by our troops had been frightful, and combined with the remains of Gillott's detachment, the whole was able to do little more than maintain a defensive skirmish.

It was in fact, with all the brilliance of the achievement, little better than a *stale-mate*.

I picked up all this afterwards, but it deserves to be recorded by a better pen than mine.

* * * * * * * * *

I could not have lain long, though much thought was crowded into the time, and it was while the tumult yet raged in the enclosures round Calder House, and while the fight went on along the Railway, that the welcome sound of bugles reached my ears from the direction of Newtown.

I started up, but fell back with a groan. When I could look again, the Russians seemed to be under some new pressure. They were retreating across the Railway Line in numbers, and a noise of shouting and heavy firing arose towards Wilson-street.

Heavens! could it be. I managed to lean on my elbow, and gazed around listening eagerly.

The sounds came nearer. There was a crash as of fences pulled down, and an old officer in blue riding a tall chestnut horse, followed by half-a-dozen troopers, dashed up the bank.

Thank God, it was Captain Gooch! The Paddock was covered in a second with the Goulburn and Bathurst Volunteers, and along with them on their flanks and rear was every rifle-man from Mulwarree to Wingecaribee—from the Macquarie to the Blue Mountains.

They rushed the force that were investing Calder House like tigers, and I shall never forget their yell of horror and execration when their eyes fell on the sights in the Railway Cutting.

The Hawkesbury Companies, or what remained of them, were already crossing the Line above in pursuit, and now the tide of battle had fairly turned.

Other sounds to the left—the sustained discharge of Artillery—now told that Milarovitch's devastating advance through the streets had met with a check.

The Naval Brigade had at length brought their guns to bear upon him. A short Artillery fight at pistol-range took place among the houses of Redfern, and then our sailors, breaking loose, drove the Russian Reserve back through the burning streets, to join, in mobbed confusion, the fugitive Finlanders and the remains of the other Divisions—beyond Waterloo Dam.

It wanted but a few plunging rounds from the Naval Brigade Guns and the rush of the fresh troops to complete their defeat.

Every man of Livingstone's, Fortescue's, or Gillott's who could crawl rose to the sound of the "advance," and the Russians before five o'clock had turned their backs on the blazing city, and slaughtered people, to take to their shipping and disappear as they had come.

But for the hundreds of wounded they left, we might have kept up a feeling of hostility and hatred; but the charity that tended and healed them touched mutual chords of sympathy, and we came to see that men are much better than

their institutions. So we blamed the red demon war for what had passed; grudge and ill-will gradually disappeared, and many of them lived among us, and became as our brothers.

* * * * * * * * *

From the sounds, I partly guessed what had happened. I felt that the great danger had passed, and I lay and listened.

Now, all was silent near me, but the burning house. The last of our men, before leaving to join the pursuit, had seen that there were no wounded left inside. As to my comrades outside—all were still—most of them were dead. The wind luckily blew the flames away, and I waited and thought of this new page of our history.

Our wounds were deep, but they would heal in time. Our homes—thank Heaven, would not be desecrated by a brutal soldiery—our necks would not be even for a day beneath the yoke of the robber.

* * * * * * * * *

But, in these gory scenes, we have unpardonably lost sight of our "noblesse."

While I lay among the dead and wounded beside the Railway, Mrs. Haybag and her daughters arrived at Nuggetville, the seat of the Hon. Matthew Pike, after a journey attended with trials and humiliations, rarely endured by persons of position and refinement.

Now, they were safe in a mansion, where, in the words of their distinguished relative, "there was the very best of everythink."

They found several of the family expecting them. The Hon. Matthew worth £40,000 a year—the Hon. John worth £30,000 a year, and Thomas Pike, Esq. (considered a mere boy) worth only £10,000.

The Hon. Matthew held up the hands of horror on hearing the news. "Well now—what do ye think of that? and sich a loss of property—and all along of this here democracy!"

John began, "If proputty had doo weight in Guv'ment."

Mat.—"To be sure—now what call have we got to be dragged into a quarrel by England? I say this here—We've no dispute with them Russians—Let them take English property if they like, and leave us alone—Now that's fair."

(The Hon. Matthew had just been bragging the day before to a great Squatting Knight "that his son 'Arry was at Oxford, and knowed no end of Lords and Dooks.")

John highly approved of letting the Russians help themselves to anything as long as it belonged to somebody else.

Mat reflected, "Now, I would like to know this—wouldn't they be satisfied if they were let take awa the English shipping in port?"

John thought deeply, "I've got it—*We've* got no call to lose, now isn't that right? Well there's them Companies—

the Agricultural and the Caledonian Investment Companies. Now, put up their property at auction and pay the Russians —and I'll be bound there's no loss— *I'll bid.*"

Mat., "Well done Jack—well said Sir—you must speak more in the 'Ouse—Blessed if I've heerd anything so statesman-like for years."

Little did the Proprietory of these Corporations guess how these Honourables were chuckling over the idea of making piles of money out of their Hunter River and Liverpool Plains possessions.

"But," said Mat, "it's no go, Sir—Parliament ain't up to the mark—not the stamp of men at all. Bad state of things, I'm fear'd—What do you think of it mum ?"

Mrs. Haybag made no audible response, but she raised her eyes to heaven—at least to the ceiling—and breathed a heart-broken sigh.

The perils of her journey—her grievance against Providence for allowing those highly profitable haunts of vice and typhoid—the back slums of Queer-street, to be shelled—but above all, the forenoon spent in enforced contact with such a mixture of what she put down as pauperism and vulgarity, had been too—too—much for her.

Thomas had not spoken yet.

In personal appearance, he was like a sanctified pawnbroker. He had given his jaws a writhe or two by way of

expressing delight at seeing his fair cousins—(some of whom are really nice-looking), but he was not made in the groove for flirting,—at the same time, nobody could get round him in selling cull sheep.

At length, with a modulated whine, not unlike "our beloved pastor's" monotone, but without the apostolic mellowness, he drawled out, "Expect there should be a good market for fat stock with so much shipping abe-a-ut."

And pray, who told me all this, do you say?

Why, the Governess, to be sure. There she is on my best sofa, with my brother Bob making love to her at this moment; and many a story she tells about Nuggetville—and they're to be married in October.

So you see the perils of high life.

* * * * * * * * *

Before the sun had sunk, people were all abroad picking up the wounded, and help came to me.

Mr. May in his parcel-delivery van, well-filled with straw, took me and poor young Bell.

The latter died quietly beside me.

I was laid carefully down on a bed in the College, and my limb was speedily set and bandaged. With fatigue, and a sense of relief, I dozed at once into a deep sleep.

I awoke after many hours with a consciousness of something familiar near me. It was night. There was a good fire, and the room was lighted with gas. There was a girlish figure, seemingly engaged in rolling up bandages, and a doctor whom I thought I knew was tending a wounded man whom I was sure I had seen before.

Though free from pain, I was hazy and could hardly rouse myself to look. I must have had an opiate.

At last the young woman turned her head, and if it was not my Kate looking as resolute as a rat-terrier, with no sign of nerves or sensibilities about her whatever.

Another doctor came in. "Anything I can do, Mac——n."

"No, thank you, M——n." "Who's that?"

"Walker—simple fracture of the tibia—strong as a bull—will be well in a fortnight. I have just been telling Mrs. Walker there's little the matter with him. By the bye, if you want to see a really interesting case, there's a man in the next room with a fragment of shell which has gone right through him, and lodged beneath the os sacrum. It will make a beautiful operation," and both the Doctors smacked their lips and spoke of it as a rare and delicious treat.

I watched Kate's face—her indignation at my wound being made light of, and her wonder and disgust at the Medicos' professional enjoyment tickled me, and I could not but snigger.

She was on her knees beside me in a moment.

"Oh, Willy, I'm so glad, and you'll be well soon. I thought you were sleeping, and Johnny's all right with Mrs. Johnstone, and I came in as soon as Mr. Smith sent for me, and I hav'nt cried or gushed once till now;" and the kind face was hidden then for reasons best understood by those principally concerned.

Bye-and-bye, when these little connubialities had somewhat abated, there was a kind of feeble crow from the next bed, and it was poor old Smith trying to be jolly.

"Walker, you beggar, so we've been to the wars, and we've got something to blow about at last."

"God bless you, old fellow, for thinking of me and sending for Kate."

He had got a messenger away almost as soon as he was brought in, and Kate drove herself in, and found me asleep.

* * * * * * * * *

But time would fail, and the patience of my readers as well, if I told of the hot tears shed for the fallen and the tender pity for the wounded—how every house was open and how every heart was keen to aid—how the Ladies' Committee with the whole town and country working for them kept on duty permanently night and day—how we buried our noble dead in one common sepulchre on Flag-staff Hill and raised over

them a massive column, with the name of every man engraved on it—how ecclesiastics when they came back to croak and wrangle abont consecration, found no one to listen.

The ground was already hallowed by the blood and tears of a nation.

But such sorrow as ours was ennobled and left no lasting bitterness, and there were other associations less deep, but still of meaning for the times.

"Good society" came back and it became the fashion to patronise the wounded. But the wounded would not be patronised, and the Ladies' Committee, the members of which had nursed them like mothers, yielded to their refractory patients, and shut the doors on visitors.

Her Majesty Queen Victoria, whom may Heaven long preserve, when she read of the defence of Sydney by her trusty and well-beloved lieges of New South Wales, looked round to see how she might do us honour, and a patent of knight-hood drawn up "by the best advice," was communicated by Telegraph. The three names selected were the

Hon. G. A. S. Buzz,

Hon. A. S. S. Bummington,

Hon. Matthew Pike.

Strange to say, it has been a good deal discussed since, how a man can get himself *unknighted.*

So, the memory of our short war will not be all sorrow. With laughter and with weeping will for many a day be told the tale of the Invasion.

Joe Bowers,—the shipping Butcher—the Defence Commissioners—the Major's ditch—and how Sir Matthew Pike won his knighthood—will they not be heard of for many a night at happy fire-sides and beside red-glowing box logs in camp?

No doubt, too, we have grown bigger since—one is not so much bored now with the eternal sycophancy that used to be expressed by the phrase, "any amount of money."

Only the other day a gentleman with no property to speak of—but with a silver cross on his coat—was triumphantly returned for Parkestown by an overwhelming majority, in opposition to all the Pike and Haybag interest, backed by all the publicans, priests, and parsons, and he was pledged only on two points, namely, "Compulsory Education, and a Sanitary Building Act."

And what's this at the gate, Kate?

Why, it's Joey Munn, leading a horse.

Well, if it isn't Black Bess—and we thought her dead on the field of honor! And Bess it is, for as she comes into the gate she lays back her ears, kicks up her heels, and makes

a grab at her mistress' best rose bush, who, unheeding, overwhelms her with such caresses as most young men would appreciate.

And here's a note about her—Just so—Aide-de-camp's severe wound—long illness—strange black mare—explained —many thanks and apologies.

"So Bess, you're none the worse for his Excellency's corn."

"And Joey—how are you—why surely you're the master of the horse"—for Joe has a hat with black cockade, white cords, and tops.

"No, Sir, I've gone to Major Lloyd."

"Well, Joe, go in and get your dinner."

"And what's this next—letter from the post—why the Smiths are in town for a day—going back to the Weatherboard —he's nearly well—want us to come in and see them— —great news—Insurance Companies done the handsome— Liverpool and London usual magnificent liberality—paid every life policy—also fire ditto, including wool—say Hinchcliffe's bales had some of them ten and twenty pounds of lead in them—did well by them—Mutual Provident the same. What stuff. Shall we go?"

"Oh yes, Willie—the whole bilin' of us, as Mr. Smith says."

"You slangy young woman—well, so be it. I'll not have another chance of a holiday for three months, for I have to do a big survey on the Narran. So I must leave on Monday, and the House meets in September."

"And we'll go to the Opera, and you'll wear the cross on your coat."

"Gammon."

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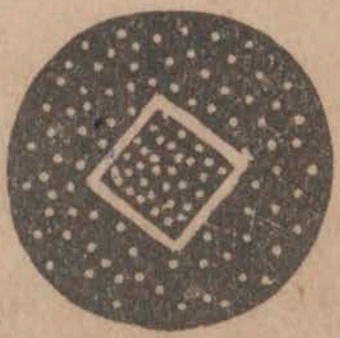

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