THORVALD PETER WEITEMEYER

MISSING FRIENDS

Thorvald Peter Ludwig Weitemeyer

Missing Friends

Weitemeyer T.

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Содержание

Thorvald Peter Ludwig Weitemeyer
Missing Friends / Being the Adventures of a Danish Emigrant in Queensland (1871-1880)

INTRODUCTORY

was born in Copenhagen in the year 1850. My father was a builder there in moderately good circumstances. I was the second son of a large family, and it was my parents' great ambition that we all should receive a good education. My eldest brother was intended for a profession, and I was to be, like my father, a builder, and to take up his business when old enough to do so.

My father ruled us with an iron hand. I am sure he had as much love for us all as most fathers have for their children, but it was considered necessary when I was twenty years old to treat me as boys of ten are ordinarily treated. During the time I learned my trade in my father's shop I never knew the pleasure of owning a sixpence. After I had learned my trade, it was just the same. I worked for my father and received my food, clothes, and lodging as before, but I never dared to absent myself for a quarter of an hour even without asking permission, and that permission was as often refused as granted. A rebellious feeling kept growing up in me; but I dared not ask my father to relax a little and give me more liberty. To assert my independence before him seemed just as impossible, and yet my position had become to me unbearable. There was but one thing to do, viz., to run away, and I had scarcely conceived this idea before I carried it into execution.

I was now twenty-one years old. One evening, after saying good-night to my parents in the usual orthodox fashion, I went to my room, and when all was still, crept downstairs again and left the house. I had a bundle of clothes with me and a watch, which I pawned next morning. I forget the exact amount I received for it, but to the best of my recollection it was the first money I ever possessed, and it seemed to me a vast sum to do with just as I liked. I dared not to stay in Copenhagen for fear of meeting my father, or somebody who knew me, so I bought a through ticket for Hamburg the same day, and although the purchase of this ticket nearly exhausted my funds, it was with a feeling of glorious freedom that I left Copenhagen. On arriving in Hamburg I obtained work at my trade without difficulty, and soon saved a little money, so that a few months after I found myself on board an emigrant ship bound for Queensland, where I have been ever since; but for fourteen years I never wrote home. After that interval I sent a short letter to my eldest brother, telling him that I was in Queensland, married, in good health, my own master, but that I had not made my fortune; however I owed nobody anything, and was satisfied, &c., and asked only for news.

By return of mail came two letters, one from my father and the other from my brother. My brother wrote that our father was now getting to be an old man, and that his one sorrow these many years had been what had become of me, coupled with the fear that I did not remember him as a loving father; that he had always acted as he thought best for us, and that the greatest joy the earth could offer him would be if he might see me again. My father wrote in the same strain, adding that if I could not come home I must write, and that nothing I had done would seem trivial or uninteresting for him to read about.

When I had read these letters my conscience smote me. Not that I had ever felt indifferent to my parents. I had thought of them often. I do not think ever a day went over my head during those fourteen years in which I did not remember them. Yet I had never written. But I was now a married man, had children of my own, and I could fully realize how it is that the parents' love for their children is so inconceivably greater than children's love for their parents. Would it not be a hard day for me if ever I should have to bid good-bye to any of my sons, even if they went out of the front door, so to

speak, with my blessing? Would the least they could do be to write to me circumstantially and often what they thought, what they did, how they fared? And here was I who never to that moment had been conscious of having done my parents any wrong! Yes; I would write. I began the same evening, and kept writing on about all my wanderings from the day I had left home up to the time of writing, and as I wrote, many things which I thought I had forgotten came clearly to my mind; and so I grew interested in it myself. I had my writing copied. All this took time; but at last the manuscript was posted to my father with a large photograph of myself enclosed. It arrived the day after his death, but before the funeral. They buried the manuscript and photograph with him.

These are matters far too sacred to write much about, even anonymously. I only touch upon them to show the origin of the following narrative. The copy I had taken has been lying in my desk now for some years, and when I took it out the other day it occurred to me that as it gives a faithful picture of life that thousands of people lead here in Queensland, it might be of general interest. I doubt if ever a book was written with more regard to truth. I have added nothing to the original manuscript, but I have erased such private matters as, of course, would be out of place in a publication, and I have also considerably shortened the description of the voyage out, as a voyage across the sea is a more than twice-told tale to most Australian people. I have also altered the names of persons and places mentioned wherever I have thought it necessary. It is now several years since the events recorded happened. The incidents themselves are sometimes trifling and always harmless. Should any one who may read this book think they recognize themselves in any part of my descriptions, I must beg them to accept my apology. They will most likely then also recognize the substantial truth of my description and my endeavour not to be too personal.

Although it will be seen by the reader that I have often acted foolishly and seldom excelled in wisdom, yet I do not wish it to be understood that I consider my life altogether misspent. As I look back, I think of myself as being always cheerful. It is the privilege of youth to be happy under almost any circumstances, and I was young when these things I here set down happened. If the tale has a moral, I think it will be found sufficiently obvious. Queensland is full of missing friends. Some come to the colony in the hope of making a speedy fortune, that they may go home again and bless the old folks with their good fortune. Others come out with the hope of making a good home, and to bring the old people thither. The successful man is generally a dutiful son too, insomuch, at least, that he lets everybody know of his success; but the man who fails, either from lack of perseverance or from untoward circumstances, too often becomes a "missing friend." It is generally true that a man is valued according to the cut of his coat, but it is not true between parent and son. So! write home, you lonely swagsman on the dusty track of the far interior. Do not think yourself forgotten. If you have parents alive you have friends too, who think of you night and day. If you will only let them know that you yet have a thought left for them, they will bless you.

I have nothing else to add to this introduction, except that possibly the book might have been more interesting if it contained more thrilling adventures, but in my opinion the only merit which it may possess lies in the strict regard paid to truth and the avoidance of all exaggeration from beginning to end.

CHAPTER I.
MY FIRST EXPERIENCES ON LEAVING HOME

Having left Copenhagen in the way just described and arrived in Hamburg, my first care was to get work, which I fortunately obtained the next day. The place I worked in was a large building or series of buildings, four or five stories high, with cabinet-makers' shops from the cellars to the loft. We had to be at work at six o'clock in the morning, and to keep on till eight o'clock at night. Even on Sundays we worked from six o'clock to dinner-time. Some would keep on till it was dark on Sunday evening, and content themselves with knocking off early, as they called it. And such work! Everybody would work as if the house were on fire. It was all piecework. The man who stood next myself had made veneered chests of drawers for thirty years, and never had made anything else. He would turn out two veneered chests of drawers in a week, and the work was faultless. These chests would, I am sure, sell readily in Brisbane for from twelve to fifteen pounds each. He earned about nine Prussian thalers per week. On the other side of me stood a man who made German secretaires. There were nine or ten men in the shop. The master was working too. He seemed just as poor as the men. Whenever work was finished, some furniture dealer would come round and buy it. The men seemed all more or less askew in their bodies with overwork. If ever they had an ambition in their lives, it was to instil a proper sense of respect into the two apprentices. I did pity these two boys. They received their board and lodging from the master, but they could, I am sure, easily have made one meal out of their four daily allowances. They slept in a corner of the shop. They had, of course, to be at work at six o'clock in the morning the same as the men, but while we had half an hour for breakfast and "vesperkost," they were supposed to eat and work at the same time. After work-hours at night they had to carry all the shavings out of the shop to the loft above, from which they were occasionally removed; then they had tea, and finally, if they liked, they were allowed to work a couple of hours for themselves. They would get odd pieces of veneer and wood and make a workbox. When it was finished, they would one evening run round among the furnishers from door to door to sell it. The dealer would know that the materials were not paid for, and of course he did not pay them. A shilling or less is the price a dealer in Hamburg pays for one of those beautiful workboxes which are sold all over the world. I wonder how often the buyers of these boxes think of the lean, ragged youth who has stood late in the night and made it, most often perhaps to buy an extra morsel of bread from the proceeds—because, as a matter of fact, that was what these two boys used to do. The master was accustomed to beat them daily, and if he was at any time thought too sparing with the rod, and thereby neglecting their education, the men would themselves beat the lads. It was winter-time, and daylight only about eight o'clock in the morning. But in order to reach the shop at six o'clock, the men, who lived mostly in the suburbs, had to be up at half-past four. I had rented a small room from one of them, and he and I would generally arrive together. As we scrambled our way up the dark staircase, he would caution me to walk softly because, as he said, he wanted to catch these rascally boys in bed. Poor fellows! If we were the first to arrive they would most often lie in a heavy sleep. Then he would rush at them, tear the bed-clothes off them, box their ears, and call them all sorts of *endearing* names. The master and the other men, with scarcely an exception, approved of this. It was not breakfast-time before eight o'clock, and very often when the apprentices had been hunted to work in this manner they would get another correction before then for neglecting to wash themselves! Poor fellows, they had no time. But, as is well known, the harder an apprenticeship a boy has served, the more cruel does he in his turn become after his time is out. The Prime Minister himself has not, I am sure, half as serene a contempt for an apprentice, as a journeyman only three months out of his apprenticeship.

This work in Hamburg certainly did not suit my ideas of liberty. My head would swim of an evening when I came out of the shop. As already stated, I had rented a small room from one of the

men for a mere trifle, and I boarded myself, and very frugal fare I had. This self-denial was because I soon made up my mind that I would not stay in Hamburg; and so I saved all that was possible, and it did not take long before I could commence to count a few thalers in my pocket.

On Sunday evenings I used to go and sit in one of the public gardens, and listen to the music and watch the faces of the people there. Sometimes when there was a free show I would be there too, but I never spent any money. With the din of the shop scarcely out of my ears, and Monday morning looming only a few hours away, I almost fancied myself of a different species from such happy, chattering crowds as would pass and repass seemingly without a care in the world. There was not a soul to speak to me. For one thing, I could scarcely make myself understood in German; for another, the men in the shop, who were the only people I knew, if I did go down the street with one of them, conversation had but one subject for which was sure somehow to turn on the quality of the glue we used. They all had a vast reverence for the furniture dealers, and they were just the people I did not like. I was therefore quite alone. I was also wonderfully homesick. Often and often did I wish that I had never run away, but it seemed to me impossible to go home again, and so I used to sit and speculate on what I had better do. I thought when I had saved a little money I would go to Paris, or Vienna. They were nice places I believed; but of one thing I was certain, and that was that as yet I had not seen anybody I liked as well as myself, or any place I liked so well as my own home!

One Sunday evening as I walked about the streets, I saw in a window a large attractive placard on which was printed in red letters, "Free Emigration to Queensland, Australia." I am certain I had never heard the name of Queensland before, and my impression of Australia was that it was the place to which criminals were sent; I had also read something about gold-diggings in Australia, but it was in the form of a novel, and I did not believe it. I called to mind what I had read in school in the geography about Australia, and I remembered it well. It was only a short paragraph. It ran thus: "Australia. Travellers who come from this distant continent, bring us very conflicting statements. It seems to be a land in which nature is reversed. The leaves are hanging downwards on the trees instead of upwards. Rivers run from the ocean inland. The interior seems to be one vast lake of salt water. It is the home of the kangaroo and the black swan. Altogether but little is known about it. Captain Cook discovered it in the year 1788. It belongs to England. The Dutch have possessions in the North. It has been used as a penal settlement by England, but this is now abolished. Of late years gold has been found in considerable quantities and in several places. Wool, tallow, and hides are exported. Towns, Sydney and Melbourne."

I can scarcely help laughing to myself now when recalling to mind this piece of information about Australia. It was really an ignorant and disgraceful morsel of information for one of the best schools in Copenhagen to offer to its pupils, but it was all the knowledge I had or could get, and it was not much assuredly to give one any idea what Queensland was like. But somehow I determined to find out what I could for myself. There was gold there that might be more easily got, perhaps, than by making chests of drawers, so the next day I presented myself at the office, and asked for information.

Yes, it was right. The ship would sail in a fortnight. "Did I want to go? Two pounds sterling please. Only three or four tickets left." "Well—I would like a little information." "Information, yes, we have every information. What is it you want to know? You get, to begin with, all your food, and splendid food I can tell you is provided for you on the whole journey. You also get bed-clothes, and your own knife, spoon, and fork. This will all become your own property on arrival in Queensland. Here is the bill of fare."

I hesitated. "When you have arrived in Queensland," cried my informant, "the Government of that country further engages to board you in a first-class hotel for two or three weeks, free of all cost, while you make up your mind what occupation to engage in, and—here it is in the prospectus, look at this!—they further guarantee to find work for you making roads, for at least two years after." "Do you yourself know anything much about Queensland?" I ventured to ask; "I suppose you never were there?" "I, no, I never was there—I wish I had been, I should not have to stand here to-day. But

we have every information. They have found gold-diggings again. Here are the statistics of exports; I will read them for you:—

Marks.	Marks.
Hides, 100,000,000,000,000.	Horns, 1,000,000,000,000.
Wool, 10,000,000,000,000.	Tallow, 10,000,000,000.
Cattle, 1,000,000,000,000.	Horses, 100,000,000,000,000.
Gold, 100,000,000,000.	Silver, 1,000,000,000,000.
Copper, 1,000,000,000,000,000.	Tin, 1,000,000,000,000.

What do you think of that now?"

What I thought was that it was all Latin to me. I did not know why they exported all this wealth, or why they did not keep it at home. No more did the man in the office, I am sure. I asked, did he think it probable that I should obtain work as a carpenter and joiner, and did he know what wages were going? To that he replied that, of course, I could get work as a carpenter and joiner, and that wages were at least one pound per day, but that if I wanted to go he would have to enlist me as an agricultural labourer, because a whole cargo of carpenters was already engaged, but that undoubtedly it would pay me better to dig for gold myself. I concluded that Queensland was a sort of vast gold-field. I asked what was the cost of living. He said, "If you like to live in an hotel and be waited on hand and foot, of course you can have it at all prices; but if you like to cook your own food, it will cost you nothing. Why man! don't I keep telling you that the cattle are running wild; if you are wise enough to buy a gun before you go, your meat supply is secured when you get there, and all sorts of game are in equal abundance—kangaroos, parrots, and all sorts." I inquired how much, or rather how little, money did he think it indispensable for me to have when I landed. He said as for that, no doubt the less I had, the less chance there was of my being robbed. It would, in his opinion, take some little time for any one to get alongside the people over there, but, once having taken their measure, there was no mistake about the resources of the country. Then, as an afterthought, he added, "In case on your arrival in the country you should decide to establish yourself as a farmer the Government makes you a present of"—I think it was—"eighty acres of land. This land is the best and richest agricultural land in the colony, and you can pick it out yourself wherever you like best in Queensland. I will give you the order which entitles you to your deeds."

I felt very undecided. I did not buy any ticket, nor did I go to work again that day. I kept roaming about the streets, thinking of Queensland and the information I had received. Wages a pound sterling per day! if I would only work for it—the price of food scarcely anything—cattle running wild—large gold-fields! How was it, then, that there were hotels where people would wait on the immigrants, "hand and foot." What silly fellows those publicans must be; would it not pay them better to work at a trade, or look out for gold? Truly the order of things seemed to be reversed in that country. And eighty acres of their best land would they give me if only I would go! Perhaps horses were running wild as well as cattle. I might be able to catch some and break them in to plough the land. But what about the plough? Surely nobody made ploughs there; I should have to bring that with me. Perhaps there were saddlers. No doubt it would be a good country for a saddler to go to, as it seemed they had so many hides over there that they had to export them. Probably if a saddler wanted materials, all he had to do was to flay a bullock and carry its hide away. But were there bricklayers to build houses? Certainly I could do the carpentry myself; on a pinch I could do the bricklaying too. Everything seemed so satisfactory. Perhaps I should even find gold enough while I was sinking the foundation for my house to pay for the lot! It need not be such a large piece either. A couple of nuggets, as large only as one brick each, would go a long way. Perhaps, too, if I found them, it would be as well to go home again at once. Then I began to wonder if the fellow in the office would not, if I had asked him, have told me that houses, by careful cultivation, would grow out of the ground themselves in

that country. In a word, I gave it up. Perhaps it was all one tissue of falsehood. Perhaps the diggers over there were only trying to get slaves to work for them. That seemed to me more reasonable. Why should the Government of the country make me a present of a large estate? All bosh! But I would go, just to see the land in which swans were black and rivers running from the ocean inland. If I should be caught on my arrival, perhaps I might escape to the interior. There would be no cabinet-maker's shops there, of that I felt certain. The prospectus said that the Government would guarantee to every intending emigrant work on the roads of the colony for two years, if he desired it. I could not think it probable that I desired that, but perhaps it was meant to pay our passage money. Anyhow, I promised myself I should not fail for the want of firearms if I did go, and perhaps we could slay any enemies we found altogether, because undoubtedly there would be others on board ship who would fight for their liberty. Liberty, delightful liberty! To be the captain of a gang of warriors, half robbers, half gold-miners, roaming over the continent of Australia, seemed a delightful prospect.

This is, I am sure, quite a faithful picture of my wild ideas of Queensland after I had elicited all the information I could get.

The Government of Queensland spends yearly, I do not remember how large a sum, in promoting free emigration. They prepared at great cost, and with elaborate exactness, statistics to show the commercial position of the country. Then they trust all this to the care of some office at home, whose officials know little or nothing about Queensland. The principal in such an office puts a clerk at the counter who has, perhaps, no other qualification for the work than a facility for talking. Fancy a home-bred peasant coming into such a place with the care of a family on his shoulders, and a little money in the bank, and think of the clerk talking to him about gold-fields and firearms and statistics, all the time admitting he never was in the colony himself! I think it is quite enough to prevent any one going out. And yet people of that class are the only class of poor men who really can do well in Queensland, and they are almost the only desirable sort of emigrants for the country itself. The reason is that such a man can, after a very short spell of colonial experience, go on to a piece of crown land, and by residing there for five years, and making certain improvements thereto, very soon get a living out of the soil, and while keeping his children round him, be independent of everybody. But such people are at a premium in Queensland. On the other hand, the towns out here are crowded with men who seek for light work, and I have no hesitation in asserting that for certain people, such as junior clerks without influence, grocers' and drapers' assistants, second-class tradesmen, &c., it is quite as difficult, if not more so, to obtain a living in Queensland as in Copenhagen. The land order I obtained, and which entitled me to eighty acres of land wherever I chose to take them, I did not consider of any value—in fact I threw it away; so did all the other emigrants on the ship: one might have bought a whole hatful for a dozen biscuits!

But all this is digression. Still, it is a matter which excites considerable interest in Queensland, and as I think of that time, these thoughts come uppermost in my mind. No doubt if I, in the office, had met a man who came from the colony, and who could have advised me and spoken with confidence about the country itself, I should have made up my mind to go in a far less reckless way, and probably I should never have acquired, after my arrival in the country, that roving disposition which I contracted, and which did not leave me for many years, if it has even left me now. Well, I made up my mind to go. I also made up my mind that it was unnecessary for me to work any more in Hamburg while waiting for the ship, so I took a holiday and went about town every day, spending my money to the last farthing. I had bought a revolver, ammunition, and a long knife. I had bought my ticket too, and so the day arrived when we were all mustered and put on board the ship.

CHAPTER II.
ON THE EMIGRANT SHIP—
THE JOURNEY TO QUEENSLAND

What a motley crew we were: Germans, Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, a Russian Finn, and an Icelander. There were many nationalities, but in the majority of cases extreme poverty was evident in their dress and stamped upon their faces, and it was easy to see that the same spirit of recklessness which filled me had somehow also been instilled into them. Nearly everybody had guns, revolvers, and knives, which were promptly taken from us as we stepped on board. Then the Germans would sing in their language of the Fatherland they had left, and in overflowing gush, men, women, and children would hang about one another's necks. Everybody acted in such a mad manner as, I am quite sure, he would never have thought of behaving in any time before. Most of the men were drunk, and as it grew dark at night one would seek for the other, and as no one knew the way about, a perfect pandemonium was raging—singing, fighting, blubbering in all languages. I do believe if I had had a sixpence left, I should have spent it in schnapps too, because my courage had never been tried so hard before. But I had spent my all, and so I made a virtue of necessity, and stood aloof looking round me in silent wonder as to what the end would be.

The prospectus said that the best and most wholesome food would be served out to us in abundance, and to look at the bill of fare one would think it enough to satisfy any gormandizer. But we got nothing at all the first day, and I was unspeakably hungry. The prospectus said also that bed-clothes were supplied to us, and these were already in the bunks—it said mattrass, pillow, sheets, and blanket. The mattrass and pillow were right enough. The sheets it did not matter much about—they were no good at all for their purpose. But the blanket, the only thing we had to cover ourselves with at night on a four months' voyage, was smaller than the size of a little dining-table when it was spread out, about the size of a saddle-cloth and much inferior in quality to anything worthy of the name of blanket I have ever seen before or since. As a consequence, those who had like myself put faith in that part of the promises made us, and who had no other bed-clothes, were compelled when we went to bed at night, to put on all the clothes we had and sleep in them. I slept every night for months at a stretch in my overcoat, woollen comforter around my neck, and the blanket, the all sufficient bed-clothes, rolled round my head!

I did not, as it may be imagined, sleep at all the first night on board the ship. At break of day the cook came in with a large wooden bowl of hot potatoes, which he put on the table singing out, "Breakfast!" I was thankful because I was very hungry, and I began at once to get out of the bunk so as to lose no time, but I was not half way to the table before a dozen Germans had rushed the dish and stuffed all the hot potatoes into their pockets, their shirts, anywhere. There was not a taste left! We were twenty-six men in that compartment, and now the row of last night began again with renewed vigour. I looked upon it as a lesson in smartness which I should have to learn, and I thought that if I did not learn it soon it would be a bad job. Half of the twenty-six men were Danes—in fact we were fourteen Danes in the compartment against twelve Germans, because I, who hailed from Hamburg, had been classified as a German although I am not. I believe it was a premeditated assault on the potatoes by the Germans, because they were all in it, and not one of the Danes had got a morsel to eat. The twelve Germans gave nothing up. They ate the potatoes intended for us all with great composure while we others were storming at them. Didn't I feel wild!

While the dissatisfaction was at its highest point, somebody we had not yet seen came into the cabin. He was a person with a decided military air about him, and he was also dressed in a gorgeous uniform. Two of the passengers who had already been sworn in to act as police constables during the voyage came behind him, and in one of his uplifted hands he held a document which he was waving

at us. "Halt," cried he. "Halt, Donnerwetter, I say, halt, while I read this paper." All the Germans without an exception had just come from the Franco-German war, and the sight of the uniform and the determined military air about the doctor, as we soon discovered him to be, had the effect of shutting them up in an instant. Some of the Danes were also old soldiers; anyhow, you might have heard a pin drop while the doctor, who also came straight from the war, where he had been army surgeon, read a proclamation, the exact words of which I forget, but which was to the purpose that he had supreme command over us all, and—"Donnerwetter," cried he, "Donnerwetter, I will have order. If you are not amenable to discipline I will handcuff every one of you. What sort of Knechte are you?" This last remark was addressed to a big strapping-looking German who happened to stand close to him. The German stood as stiff as a statute, saluting with the one hand, while with the other he made a slight movement which threw his overcoat a little to one side and displayed a silver cross which he wore on his vest. "Ha!" cried the doctor, greatly mollified, "I see you have served the Kaiser to some purpose. Don't forget you are not outside the Kaiser's law yet. I hope we shall be friends." Then he marched off to read his proclamation in other parts of the ship. These Germans, I found out by degrees, were not at all bad fellows, but we did not for a long time forgive them the assault on the potatoes, and I have often thought what a peculiar sign of German thrift it was. They had simply taken in the situation more quickly than we; indeed it has become nearly a proverb in Queensland to say that a German will grow fat where other men will starve. After that time order was restored, and no disturbance worth mention occurred on the whole voyage.

Nothing can well be more tedious than a sea voyage of four months under our circumstances. The food was wretched and insufficient, and, as I have already mentioned, most of us had to sleep with all our clothes on us. We did not undress; we rather dressed to go to bed!

There was not a single individual among the passengers who understood English. It is true I had learned English for seven years in school, but when we came ashore it proved that I could scarcely make myself understood in a single sentence. None of us knew anything about Queensland, and many were the surmises and guesses at what the country was like and what we were going to do there. I remember distinctly once a number of us were sitting talking about the colony, and that one ventured to say that he had heard how in Queensland, when journeymen tradesmen were travelling about looking for work, they needed no "wander-book," and travelled about on horseback; whereupon another got up much offended, and said that he had heard many lies about Queensland, but this last beat all. He did not know so much about the "wander-book," although he had taken good care to have his own in order, but if any one tried to make him believe that beggars went about on horseback over there, then it was time to cry stop. "No," said he, "he knew we should have to walk." We others concurred.

One of my companions, I remember, was a shoemaker, and a religious maniac besides. He would lie in his bunk and pray aloud night and day. It was quite startling sometimes in the middle of the night when all were asleep to hear him in a sanctimonious voice chanting a hymn. If the spirit moved him that way, then it was good-bye to sleep for us for a long time after. He would be quite irresistible. Most of us in the cabin were a phlegmatic set who did not mind, but one, a Swiss, was of a very excitable temperament. He was "down" on the shoemaker. When the hymns began in the night one might be quite sure to hear after a minute, from the bunk in which the Swiss lay, a smothered whispered little oath like "Gottferdam." Then ten seconds after he would exclaim in an everyday voice, with, however, an affected resignation, "Gottferdam"; and as the full burden of the sacred song kept rolling on, he would start screaming out of his bunk with a real big "Gottferdam." But the others did not allow him to hurt his enemy. They seemed to agree that even if it was not very nice, yet it must be wicked to hurt any one for practising his religion; but I believe that their motives were not quite so pure, because this shoemaker had an inexhaustible fund of anecdote, and if anything were allowed to annoy him in the night, he would tell them no stories during the day. When all went smooth, it was the practice for him to gather a score or two around, the numbers swelling as he proceeded, and then

tell a story, something of a sensational sort about love and murder. His whole soul would then be in it, and he gesticulated as if he felt and believed it all. Every Sunday he was always more or less ready to cry out for hunger, and would at such times sit and look right before him straight out into space. Then he would say, "I wish I had a dish of German dumplings. With cherry-sauce, with cherry-sauce. Not the way one gets in the steam-kitchens, but the way my mother used to make it." Then we would get a long description of his mother's recipe for German dumplings. There is no mistake about it, too, we *did* fast on that ship.

In reading over to myself some of these last pages, I am afraid I have given my readers the impression that the people on board, taken as a whole, were a bad lot. If I have done so, it is erroneous. It is true that my first impression of the emigrants was not a good one, and perhaps few among us excelled or were remarkable for anything in particular, but taken as a whole they were honest, hard-working people, and as I became acquainted with them one after another I found that men of whom I had a very low opinion when we first came on board, were in reality entitled to very much higher estimation.

We did not know anything about the country to which we were going. We had an idea that we were to begin a new life somewhat freer than in the old world, and, simpleminded as we were—because I was just as bad as anybody—thought that when we came on board ship we could dispense with such formalities as those the old world had taught us. That is, I am sure, the true reason why so many emigrants, when they leave home as well as when they arrive in a colony, behave so foolishly as to make one think that they never had known the decencies of life before. It is the same with the English emigrants, only they are more quickly absorbed into the general population. Still the word "New Chum" has in Australia much the same meaning as the word "fool." I never felt more bitterly ashamed than once, several years after I came to Queensland, when I saw a number of Danish immigrants just arrived. It was in Toowoomba, and I had come down there from up country on some business, when one of the first things I was told was that there were a lot of my countrymen in the depôt waiting for engagements. Toowoomba is about a hundred miles inland, and they had been sent up from Brisbane. Well, I felt quite pleased, and decided at once to go and see them and to speak a kind word to some of them, if I could not do them any other service. But I came away a great deal less pleased than I had gone. There were some long forms outside the building, and on those forms sat as close as they could find room a score or so of men. Each man had wooden clogs on his feet and a long pipe in his mouth. On his knees sat his girl with her arm round his neck, and there they sat smoking and kissing perfectly regardless of ladies and gentlemen who would walk about looking at them and going on again. One I stood glaring at seemed to me the worst. He was a big ugly fellow, dressed in a blue calico blouse, black trousers and wooden clogs. In his hand he had a pipe five feet long, but on his head he had a sugar-bag. These sugar-bags are of straw and about two feet six inches in length. He had tied in the corners to fit his head. This gentleman would rush about and look in at the doors of houses, throwing side glances in all directions with the evident desire to attract attention. At last he stood in the middle of the street singing an old Danish song and jerking his body about like a maniac. I could not contain myself, so I went up to him and asked him if he did not think he was ugly enough already without trying to make himself still more so, and what did he mean by sticking that sugar-bag on his head?

"Oh," cried he, quite unconcerned, "here we are right up on the top of these blue mountains, that does not matter. It is a first-rate straw-hat. Does it not look nice? Why! this is a free country," &c.

One very conspicuous figure on board the emigrant ship was the Icelander, Thorkill; he was so unlike anybody else that I would like to describe him, especially as he became my mate in Queensland and we became close friends. His eyes were bluer and his complexion clearer than that of any one else I ever saw. He had long yellow curly hair, and a big yellow beard. He was himself also big and strong, and about twenty-eight years of age—altogether I should say, as far as appearance went, the beau ideal of a man. But as no one is perfect, so had he also a grievous fault, viz., a certain softness, like a woman.

He always spoke as with a comma between each word, and although he had plenty of good sense and was, like all Icelanders, well educated, yet he would, I believe, give most people the impression that he was not fit to battle with a wicked world. I often wondered what might have brought him on board that ship, but he was very reticent about his own affairs. Meanwhile I have never known anybody whose mind was so pure, whose thoughts were so lofty as his. But he was unpractical, to a degree. He claimed to know all his ancestors from the twelfth century, when they had emigrated from Norway to Iceland, and he said his father still farmed the same land. Unless as a professor in ancient folklore, I do not know what Thorkill was good for. I had, in school, learned much Icelandic folklore, and to see his eyes sparkle with joy when he discovered this and knew that I was interested in it besides, did me real good, and so we agreed that during the voyage we would refresh each other's memory in "Sagamaal." He arranged to teach me the whole complete "Rümi Kronike." So we bribed the fellow who lay next to me (we had double bunks) to exchange berths with Thorkill, and he and I then lay together, and there we were telling "Sagamaal" from morning to night and sometimes the whole night through. He would make me tell him one of the "Sagas" I knew, although he knew it far better himself, just to see if I had mastered it properly. He would listen with all his might, then he would say: "Excuse—me—for—interrupting you—but—are—you—sure—that—you—are—correct—in—describing—Sharpedin—the—son—of—Hakon—as—a—longbearded—man. The—Rümi Kronike—does—not—say—so—on—the—contrary." Then we would have a long argument about that, Thorkill insisting upon the importance of being exact.

He wrote a splendid hand, but from the pedantic ungainly way in which he took hold of anything, I made sure he was not a good worker. He had studied scientific farming at the agricultural college in Copenhagen, and afterwards had been, he said, a sort of overseer on a large farm on the island of Als. Whether he had given satisfaction at that or not, I did not know, but what was the good of all his knowledge, supposing he had any, when he did not understand English, had no friend nor money, and was a bad worker? One day I said to him:

"Thorkill, do you ever try to draw a real picture to yourself of how we shall get on when we come to Queensland? I am thinking of this, there are, according to what we have been told, no more people in all Queensland than there is in a good-sized street in Copenhagen, and here are all these people on board ship who will be, the moment they land, ravenous in their competition for something to do, and another ship has sailed from Hamburg a week after us. How will they fare? I cannot solve it. But it strikes me very forcibly that if the sail of this ship were set for Copenhagen harbour instead of Queensland, the only solution to the problem there would be for the police to have some large vans in readiness and to give us a drive in them straight out to the workhouse." "Oh say not so," cried Thorkill, "say not so. God will protect us. You and I will never part." "No," cried I, in the fulness of my heart, "we will stick together, and we will get something to do too, you will see." And then, with a new sense of responsibility on me, I would talk to him cheerfully about Queensland, and the opportunities there would be to do well for both of us, which could not fail, but meanwhile I would rack my brain with thinking about how to make a few shillings to land with. I had not got a cent, and I knew very well that Thorkill had nothing either. It was a bad place I was in for making money, for there was not much of it on the ship, but I now very much regretted that I had spent all that I had before I came on board. Here were all these empty bottles lying about the ship which nobody seemed to claim. Why, thought I, they must be worth a little fortune in Queensland. Good idea! We will collect them all. I communicated with Thorkill. "Oh," said he, "you—will—make—your—fortune—in—Queensland. They must be worth a mint of money. But is it right to take them? What—a—business—ability—you—have—got. Nobody seems to want them. I think we might have them."

So then we went about begging and borrowing empty bottles everywhere, without letting anybody know for what we wanted them, and we piled them up in our bunks so that we could scarcely get into them; then people, when they saw what we were after, put a price on the bottles and came to us to sell. So Thorkill bought five shillings' worth on my recommendation, all the money he had,

and still they came with bottles, but the firm was compelled to suspend payment. Then I, who was understood to know a little English, opened a class for teaching that language. My pupils had no money, but I took it out in empty bottles, and by and by we had them stacked by the hundred all round about ready for market.

The food we got was so wretched and insufficient that it was scarcely possible to keep body and soul together upon it. I have asked many people since how they fared in other ships, and I have come to the conclusion that our ship was the worst provided of any in that respect. Indeed, the emigrant ships which leave England are well supplied with everything, even luxuries, for their passengers. But in this ship we were sometimes on the point of despair with hunger. We got our week's supply of biscuits served out once a week. Those who were unable to practise self-restraint, generally ate them in a couple of days, and for the rest of the week subsisted on the so-called dinner which consisted of a couple of mouthfuls of salt pork or mutton, with a little sauer-krout to keep it company. Our ration of sugar was a small table-spoonful per week to each man. The tea and coffee we got morning and evening was served in the same wooden trough in which we fetched our dinner, and as the sugar ration was, as already stated, served separately once a week and quickly consumed, our beverage was void of any sweetening. But as for me, I never fooled about all the week with my spoonful of sugar; I always put it into the first pint of tea I got. We also got some butter, and we never troubled much either about the quantity or quality of that article. The trouble was that we had seldom a biscuit to spread it on. The prospectus had said that cordials were served out, and in conformity with that every sixteen men received one bottle of lime-juice per week. These were our rations. There was on that account an amount of dissatisfaction on board verging sometimes on open mutiny. The water was also fearfully bad, with inches of froth on it, but bad as it was, we would drink it as soon as we got it and then feel like dying of thirst sometimes before the time came to serve out the next rations. As a sort of proof of the correctness of this statement, I might mention that one of the passengers had a canary bird which died of thirst because some of us would steal the drop of water in its glass!

I have already written that no disturbance worth mentioning occurred on the voyage. When I wrote that, I forgot an incident which happened when we had been out to sea about a couple of months. The doctor, as I have already stated, was also in command of us. He had been an army doctor in the German army during the Franco-German war, and came straight thence. Whether he made the mistake of thinking he was in command of a convict ship full of criminals, or whether it was that his military training was the cause of it, I cannot say, but in one word, he was boss of that ship. Every now and then somebody would be handcuffed and shut up during his pleasure, without anybody taking much notice; but one day he went a good deal too far. One of the single girls had been accused by the woman in charge of them of some fault, upon which I need not farther enlarge more than to say that it was trifling, and that the culprit was a very respectable girl, who shortly after her arrival in Queensland got married to a good husband, and that both she and her husband are, and always were, pre-eminently respectable people. The girl was tied with ropes to the mast, with her hands fastened behind her in such a way that she was exposed to the full view of all the six hundred people on board. I was lying in my bunk when a fellow came in very excited, and said, "Look here, chaps, is not this getting red hot? There is that poor girl, so and so, chained to the mast and crying as if her heart would break. What are we coming to?"

The moment I heard there was a girl chained to the mast and crying, I jumped up and registered an oath aloud that she should not stand there one second longer than it would take me to reach the mast. So did every other man who was in the cabin; even meek Thorkill cried out, "It is too bad, too bad." Then I grabbed the wooden trough in which the concoction of roasted peas that passed for coffee was served out in the morning. So did every other man grab at something to strike with—one would take a wooden clog, one a long stick, another a boot, and all something, and in less time than it takes to read this we were all on deck. But to reach the mast was then impossible. The girl had not stood there yet for five minutes, but there was already a surging, impenetrable crowd on the scene

of action. As I could not see, and could not content myself to stand still, I jumped up in the rigging, and from there, right enough, I saw the girl and four German constables (passengers who had been sworn in as police) watching her. How shall I describe the scene. It all seemed to me to happen in one instant. Hundreds of men were yelling from behind at the top of their voices, "Throw them in the sea. Cut her down! Where is the doctor? He shall not live another hour." A dozen men were struggling round the girl, some with the constables, and some of the more moderate among the passengers with the aggressors. One towering fellow, a Dane, had one of the constables by the throat, and the wooden bowl swinging over his head, and held back by another man, who implored him to give the doctor a chance to order the girl's instant removal. The doctor was not on deck, but he came running on now, with a revolver in each hand. He kept on the quarter-deck, but he sang out to the constables to cut her down and take her into the hospital. Somehow that was done, and the doctor walked down the steps from the quarter-deck, turned the key in the lock, put it in his pocket, and faced the crowd.

Did you ever notice two dogs when they meet, and before they begin to fight? How unconcerned they try to look. They will look at anything, anywhere but at one another. So looked the doctor as he stood there with a cigar in his mouth, smoking away and looking at anything but the sea of faces around him. Around him like a solid wall had the men closed, armed with knives, wooden bowls, sticks, &c., and the howl, "Throw him in the sea," kept on from the rear. No doubt the doctor realized that he had gone too far, and he tried all he could while he stood there not to give further offence, but I watched him particularly from my seat in the rigging. Fear was not in that man. Not a muscle in his face shook, and yet I am certain that his attention was strained to the uttermost, and that the fingers which closed on the triggers of the two revolvers would have caused them to blaze away the moment he had felt any one touch him ever so gently. Behind him again, but up on the quarter-deck, stood the captain and the first mate, with large overcoats on, and their hands in their pockets. I had a suspicion that they also had revolvers—who knows how many—within easy distance.

But it was one thing to see a young woman tied to the mast and crying, and it was (the doctor and his revolver apart) quite another thing to look at a closed door and know that she was there and that no further harm would befall her. But most of the men had a few minutes ago been so excited, that it was not in human nature for them to cool down at once. The man who had when I came on the scene taken the most prominent part, was still the foremost person. He stood within three feet of the doctor, and, as I said already, like a solid wall stood the others armed with divers things; but no one touched the doctor, and no one spoke to him, and there was a sort of undecided silence. Then the leader cried, "Well, what are you waiting for? You said throw him in the sea; just give the word and he shall be overboard in a second." My heart beat violently. I thought murder would be committed in an instant, and not a single life either, but perhaps scores would be sacrificed. There was a dead silence. The wind whistled through the rigging, but it was the only sound heard. The doctor did not move; the captain did not move; the mate did not move; and none of the men moved. None dared to give the aggressive sign, and each seemed to feel it just as impossible to beat a retreat. It might have lasted a couple of minutes, perhaps less. It seemed an age to me. Then we all heard Thorkill's voice, he was somewhere in the rigging too, and he cried, "Countrymen —listen—to—me! hear—what—I—say! Disperse! Disperse!—quietly. Let—us—complain—when—we—come—ashore! He—will—shoot—the—first—ten—or—twelve—men—who—touch —him—and—those—who—escape—now—might—be—hung—when—we—come—ashore. Let —us—complain—when—we—come—ashore—and—we—will—get—justice." Thorkill still kept on talking, but the outburst of relief from all sides completely drowned his voice. There was an honourable way to get out of it. "We will complain when we come ashore," "Disperse," "Let it be enough," and similar expressions, were heard on all sides, and the doctor, I suppose nothing loth, had quite a pleased appearance as he stepped up on the quarter-deck again as soon as the road was clear, and disappeared out of sight simultaneously with the dispersion of the men.

That day the doctor did not show up again, but on the next, I suppose just to show that he did not consider himself beaten, all the single men were ordered below at sundown as a punishment for insubordination, and with that the matter ended. But now the men were pressing Thorkill to write out a complaint which should embody all we had suffered, and all our supposed wrongs. Thorkill, however, would do no such thing. It was not in his line, he said. Many a talk he and I had about it, but he could not see his way. "All these poor people," said he, "are treated with contempt because they are poor, and I cannot help them for I am just as poor. We do not know to whom to complain; we cannot write English, and what we do will rebound on our own heads. Still," said he, "it—is—a—shame—that—they—should—be—allowed—to—treat—people—like—this." Then I wrote out a complaint in Danish addressed to the Danish Consul, Australia. The exact contents of it I have long since forgotten, but it was to the effect that we had been starved, ill-treated, had had no sick accommodation, insufficient bed-clothes, &c., and from that day I looked upon myself as an important personage on board ship. All the single and married men, with about a dozen exceptions, signed the statement. All the single girls wanted also to sign it, but I feared the woman in charge might confiscate the document (the matron in charge of the girls on our ship was only an ordinary emigrant selected by the doctor, and in my opinion scarcely the best that might have been selected. In English emigrant ships an educated lady is engaged as matron.) Thus I could not bring myself to go among them for the purpose of getting signatures, and so the females were not represented in the complaint. (It might, however, be interesting to English readers, as showing the standard of education on the continent of Europe, that of all the people on board only one, an elderly man, had to sign his name with a cross.)

One day while I was getting these signatures, and the men were coming to where I held my levee as fast as they could, the doctor stormed the cabin with two constables behind him and ordered me to give up the document to him. Then the doctor and I talked, I in Danish and he in German, and we had a wordy war. I liked the doctor in my heart, because he was about as brave a man as one could wish to see, and very likely, too, some of the severe discipline on board was not altogether uncalled for; yet he was not going to have it all his own way, and to this day I maintain that whatever else might have been right or wrong, to starve as we starved was scandalous. I write about these things, and I do not know whether my readers may think them of much interest, but all these little incidents seem engraven upon my memory. On board ship there is nothing to think about or to talk about but the same old things. One is cross, perhaps, and everybody talks much about the same thing. "Where are we, I wonder?" "I wonder how many knots we are running?" "I wonder how it will go when we come to Queensland?" "I wonder if any one ever was so hungry as I?" So it goes on, day out and day in, and one has to discuss and answer these questions about five hundred times every day.

But now we are nearing Australia, and high time I dare say the reader probably thinks it is; but if my readers are tired out, so were we. Yet there is another of the passengers I must describe, as I intend to mention him again. I will do so in a few words. He was a quiet, gentlemanly man, about thirty years old. He told me he had been a lieutenant in the Danish army, but had been dismissed for insubordination. He managed, without giving offence to anybody, to keep himself completely in the shadow in the ship, and one seemed not to know he was there. I will call him "A." A. understood and spoke English fluently, but nobody knew it. Indeed, when the complaint-fever was on, he denied all knowledge of the language. A young lady was travelling with him—that is, she went as a single girl, but they got married as soon as we came ashore. They had quite a number of things with them to set up house with, and lived for a short time very comfortably on their means; when they went away again I lost sight of them.

CHAPTER III.
MY ARRIVAL IN QUEENSLAND

Never can I forget the joy I felt, a joy universal to all on board the ship, the first day we saw Australia. It was Sunday. The whole night before the ship had cruised about outside Bass's Straits, and at break of day we ran in. We did not know at all we were so near. We had not seen land for three months when we had made out the island of Madeira. Since then, as far as I remember, we had not even passed another ship. In the Indian Ocean, storm, sleet, rain and cold had been the order of the day. This day, the first time for months, the sun was shining brightly, and a crisp, altogether different air fanned our cheeks. It was blowing very strongly, but every sail the ship could carry was spread, so that the ship lay over very much, and we seemed to fly past the land at lightning speed.

This, then, was Australia, our future home—and beautiful it seemed. Land lay on both sides. That on the Australian side was flat, seemingly, but Tasmania showed up with a majestic chain of mountains. I had never seen a mountain before, nor had any of the other Danes, and we wondered whether anything could grow on them, or whether they were all solid stone. People were so glad, that they ran about and shook one another's hands. Three or four of the passengers had telescopes, and we were all dying to have a long look at the coast. It is amusing to myself to think of the amount of ignorance which really existed among us about the land to which we were going.

"Do you make out anything over there?" one would ask of the man with the telescope. "Yes," came the answer, "it seems all big trees." "Trees, did you say? I am glad of that. I will lay a wager where all those trees will grow, something else will grow." "This is not Queensland, though." "Oh, well, only let me see plenty of big trees when we come to Queensland, then I am satisfied." "Do you think we shall be allowed to cut the trees down?" "I do! they must be glad to get rid of them. Why, it is self-evident that you can take as much land here as you want; here is so much of it and nobody to use it."

"Do you know, I do not believe there is any desert in that land at all!" "No more do I. I am sure there is not. Why should there?" "I am glad I went, now I have seen the land." "So am I."

In another part of the ship, as I walked about, I heard a very dogmatic fellow laying down the law to a lot of married men who were discussing their chances of obtaining employment.

"Why," cried he, "anyone with a spark of common sense can see at a glance that there must be *plenty* of work in Queensland. Look around you here on the ship. All these people must have shelter, and food, and clothes; I say they must. That gives work—does it not?"

The others did not seem quite convinced by the argument. They appeared to know that there was a missing link somewhere, but, like the Italian smuggler in Charles Dickens' "Little Dorrit," they kept saying, "Altro, altro, altro!"

With such hopeful conversation the day wore away, but before night we were out again in open sea, and for another fortnight we saw no more of Australia. Then we made the coast again and sailed along in sight of land. Once more we were out to sea again. At last one morning before daybreak we dropped anchor, and when daylight came found that we were quite close to land, and right in front of a large flagpole and some neat wooden cottages which stood on the shore. This, then, was Queensland —Moreton Bay, and Brisbane, the capital, lay some miles up the river. A man came from one of the houses and hoisted a flag, then another, and another. Our company thought he did it to do us honour, or in joy for our safe arrival, and in the wildest excitement they screamed hurrah! until they were hoarse. Of course, the man was merely making signals to the town, and a few hours after a small steamer came out, and some live sheep were put on board, also fruit for the children, and potatoes—sweet potatoes they are called, different from our potatoes at home and much larger.

Kind people!—Good Queensland!—Happy country! No starvation here or smell of poverty. Look at these potatoes, five, six, ten times as large as those we have at home! Who said Australia was a desert? So thought and spoke we while we scanned, with a sort of reverent awe, some ladies and gentlemen who were on board the little steamer, and the pilot who had come on board our own ship. Much to our regret, we found we were not to land here. We were now informed, for the first time on the whole voyage, that our destination was a place called Port Denison, which lies about half way between Brisbane and Cape Somerset, and which was at that time the farthest northern port opened up of any importance.

So now we were off again on our interminable voyage. Only our troubles were over. Alas! for the complaint which I carried in my pocket, we were all as healthy and strong a set of people as any one could wish to see, for since we arrived in Bass's Strait we had been served with plenty of food. Just now we lived on roast meat, potatoes, and pudding every day. I could feel my cheeks grow redder and sleeker day by day. Alas! what should I do? As a public man I was, of course, not allowed to change my opinions, but when I looked at all these fellows gormandizing from morning to night, it seemed to me a sort of treason to our cause. And what was worse, I bore no ill-will to anybody. Surely the Danish consul, if there was one, would expect to see a lot of emaciated objects when we had been starved so cruelly, and I myself so anxious to get something to do. I might be hindered, and have to travel about more yet, and, if I could not prove the truth, be cast into prison! I often wish the complaint was as nearly forgotten as our troubles seemed to be. Yet, after all the talk there had been, it was too late to draw back. The ship was now for a whole week longer sailing northwards, always in sight of land—often, indeed, so close that we could almost have thrown biscuits ashore. The whole way along was dotted with small islands, which became more numerous the further north we sailed. There must be some thousands of them if they were all counted, but with the exception of a few of the largest which lie near Brisbane, they are nearly all uninhabited.

To look at the coast on the mainland, one would think that the man who said he would be satisfied if he only saw plenty of trees in Queensland, ought to feel contented. It seemed to us one vast forest. Occasionally we saw smoke curling up from among the trees, and at night we could see large fires. This was the dry grass burning among the trees, a very common thing in Queensland, but to us it was a most startling and awe-inspiring sight. We thought that it was the aboriginals who were trying to get on to the ship, and that these were their fires. One night the fires extended for many miles, and a most beautiful sight it was, but no one gave a thought to its being a bush-fire. We simply said, "What a lot of them there must be? Why, there must be more niggers here than there were Frenchmen at Sedan. Look at their fires!" And then we thought it strange that we did not get our weapons back again that they had taken from us when we came on board. I do not think any one was afraid. I myself rather liked the novelty of being so near the "enemy." We would sit and discuss how many we thought we could keep out, supposing, for argument's sake, that they dared to come —and altogether we felt ourselves great heroes.

I have a suspicion that the Queensland pilot who was now in charge of the ship, along with the other quality up on the quarter-deck, were having a laugh at our expense. Anyhow, one evening I happened to come near him I pointed round me and towards the sun, which was just going down, and summoning to my aid all my stock of English I said, "Very nice, Queensland." "Yes," cried he, "it looks beautiful. All that red glow in the sky you see there is the reflection from the gold on the gold-fields."

I could not understand the meaning of what he said, but I looked deferential and thankful for the information all the same, and for fear I had not taken it all in he called the mate and asked him to explain it to me. Probably he thought I believed it! That same night we sailed in between a mountainous island and the coast, and one of the guns was loaded and fired off. The echo reverberated far and near in a most startling fashion, and perhaps it was for the echo they fired it off, but we were certain that it must have frightened the natives out of their wits. We were even positive we could see

them round their fires trying to put them out. Poor harmless aboriginals of Queensland! They little know what respect they are held in by new arrivals! It is only familiarity which breeds contempt in their case. In a few more years the last of them will have joined the great majority. After that event has happened, no doubt the bard will sing their praises and descant about their matchless beauty, their enormous strength, and their bloodthirsty cruelty.

We had very little wind in the sails as we came along, and nothing can be thought more beautiful than the climate we now enjoyed. I am now so used to the Queensland climate that I take it as a matter of course, but how can I give the reader an adequate idea of the joy I then felt in the very fact of my existence: the beautiful sun in the day, the glorious sunset in the evening, the full moon, and the sparkling rippling silent water! Then all these islands we passed were so full of mysterious interest, while the vast unknown mainland lay beyond. The reckless spirit of which I spoke as universal when we came on board in Hamburg, seemed now to have taken wings and fled. Indeed, the main trouble on board just now was how we should make a good impression when we landed. It was looked upon as a matter of honour that each should be on his very best behaviour when we came ashore, and I know of several of whom it was thought by the rest that their clothes were scarcely good enough, and who were lent by the others sufficient to appear in better trim and circumstances. The ship was now so clean that one might have eaten his dinner off the decks anywhere. Altogether there was a decided change for the better since the day we first saw Australia. At last, one day after having sailed along the apparently uninhabited coast for eight or nine days, we suddenly rounded a cliff, sailed into a little bay, and dropped anchor. There lay Bowen in full sight of us, and this was Port Denison. How strange it seemed that these few scattered wooden cottages we saw lying there on the beach in appalling loneliness should be the spot that we, through storm and trouble, had all been trying to reach. For some time not a human being was to be seen. There was a long jetty running out into the water for a great distance, but we did not go alongside. We lay, I think, half a mile out, and we were given to understand that we were not to go ashore before the morrow, and that on landing all our wants would be attended to until we obtained employment. Now it began to look lively on the beach. A lot of people came out on the jetty, and at last a boat, with a dozen gentlemen in it, got under way and pulled straight for the ship. These are Queenslanders, thought I, men who had fought with the Blacks and been on the gold-diggings. Rich, no doubt they were. Oh, how we screamed hurrah! for them, and how kind they looked as they came nearer, waving their handkerchiefs and smiling in response to our greeting. They were not at all ferocious looking; really much the same sort of people we had seen before. Yet what adventures must they not have gone through; what stories could they not tell if they liked? But, of course, that would be beneath their dignity. At last they were on board. Most of them greeted the doctor and captain in German, being, in fact, Germans. After a short interval, one of the Queenslanders, who proved to be the agent and interpreter employed by the Government to attend to us when we came ashore, got up on a big box and made a long speech in German, exhorting us to do well, and gesticulating with much gusto and great force. He advised us to take the first work we could get, and while we were accommodating ourselves to the new habits of life and customs existing in this country, to try to feel contented. "Where," cried he, "will all of you be in twenty years? Some will be dead; others perhaps alive. Some rich and honoured; others perhaps only servants to those among you who are more pushing or lucky. These little children who are now running about us fighting for an orange, may become members of Parliament in time. To-day you start with an equal chance, but from to-morrow your fortunes will begin to alter, and for certain not one of you will for ever forget this day; and no doubt in after years you will look back on to-day often, and as you recall to your mind how your time has been employed, wish you had it over again, that you might act more wisely or become better."

All this was good advice, and very well and kindly spoken. He said much more to the same purpose, but as good advice is everywhere cheap and plentiful, I will not inflict the whole of his carefully prepared speech upon my readers. He spoke for nearly an hour. At last he congratulated us

on our clean appearance, wiped his perspiring brow, and the performance was at an end. We were not sorry, to tell the truth—at least I was not, because this was the day on which our best dinner, grey peas stewed with pork, was served out; and as it was past the usual dinner hour when the sermon was over, not only did I stand right in the tempting smell from the kitchen, but I had also noticed how, gradually, as the speech proceeded, the "skaffers," or men whose duty it was to fetch the food from the cook's galley, had one by one crept away, and now they stood in a long row ready with their wooden troughs while the cook began to dish up the peas.

After dinner, when we came on deck again, I heard some one cry out, "Are there any carpenters on board? Carpenters—any carpenters who want employment?"

"Yes!" I was one. Five more came forward. One of the Queenslanders said he wished to engage one or two carpenters. Of course some one acted as interpreter. Well, he would give thirty pounds sterling per annum to a good man. He would also give him his board and lodging. We all thought it a fair offer, although scarcely up to our expectations. But then, again, what were our expectations? Half the time we were afraid we should get nothing at all to do, and the other half we thought we were to pick up bucketsful of gold. Anyhow, we were all anxious to engage, and I, with a full regard to the fact that my only property was a partnership in two hundred and odd empty bottles, was not at all sorry to see that I seemed to find favour in his eyes. I was offered an engagement on the above-named terms. Would I kindly step this way to sign the agreement? A document written in English was placed before me for signature. I could pretty well understand the meaning of it, and an interpreter was there ready enough to explain matters, but there were certain very important features in it which never were explained to me, and which I myself totally overlooked, and if I had seen these I should only have agreed to them as a last resource from starvation. As the agreement was just like those signed by thousands every year all over Queensland to this present day, I will give it here. It ran thus: – promised to serve – for the term of twelve calendar months and to obey all his lawful commands. In return for which, – would pay the sum of £– sterling and rations. Then followed the signatures. I understood that the word "rations" meant my board and lodging, and so it proved in my case, and as it was explained to me; but most of my unfortunate shipmates who signed similar agreements in the same good faith as I found out in a practical manner that to them it had another meaning. It will be noticed that the agreement says nothing whatever about lodging. Legally, a Queensland employer who engages a man for wages and "rations" might let his employé camp under the gum-trees without giving him any sleeping accommodation whatever, and that is very often done. If a man gets a shed or a corner of a stable to live in, it is more than he is entitled to under these agreements. So far as the food is concerned, the word "ration" as used in these agreements means a fixed quantity of certain things, which, therefore, again is all an employé can expect from his master. These consist of twelve pounds of raw beef or mutton, eight pounds of flour, two pounds of sugar and a quarter of a pound of tea. As long as these eatables are tea and sugar, flour and beef, nothing is said as to quality, and the most inferior goods which are in the market are called *ration-tea* and *ration-sugar*. But what is an unfortunate new arrival, who never made a cup of tea in his life before, to do, when on his arrival at some out-of-the-way place in the bush his "boss," as the employer in Queensland is called, hands him these rations instead of giving him three square meals a day?

But what was happening now? The constables were running about among the people telling them to stand here and to stand there. All the single girls were packed together up by the wheel as close as they could stand. Then the married men with their families were told to stand as near them as they could, and the single men were again packed as close to them as possible. All of us were now on the quarter-deck. Then came the Queenslanders, the doctor, the captain, and the first mate, and took up a position in front of us down on the deck. One of our own constables with a very sanctimonious face was also there. What did it mean? The Immigration Agent read out of a large protocol, "Anna Frederica Johnston, come forward." "Anna Frederica Johnston, Anna—Anna, Anna Frederica Johnston. They want you—you are wanted; you have to go." The unfortunate girl

was half paralyzed with terror, as she came forward. She was a Norwegian. The immigration agent asked her, "Had she been well and kindly treated on the voyage, and was she satisfied?" This had to be translated from German into Norwegian before she understood it. But scarcely did she understand what they said before she cried, "Oh yes, oh yes, I am thankful and satisfied." "Good," she might pass forward. Then another was called who also testified to her kind treatment, and so on until all the girls, even the one who had been tied to the mast, had said they were satisfied and had been well treated. While this was going on, some of the men who stood nearest to me told me to erase their names from the written complaint which I carried. Others advised me that it was now too late altogether to complain; others again said, "Now is the time." I felt myself surprised beyond measure that the Queensland Government should take the trouble to cause such a question to be put to each individual immigrant, and I felt certain that it could not have been Queensland's fault if we had been badly treated. Anyhow, I saw no reason to tell any falsehoods, and my mind was soon made up how to act. As soon as the last girl had declared herself satisfied, the question began with the single men. The first who happened to be called was rather a dense sort of a fellow, and although he had signed the complaint, still he said he was "well satisfied." So then I thought the time had arrived for me to act. I went forward and presented my document written in Danish and addressed to the Danish Consul, Australia; it was translated from Danish to German and from German to English. Meanwhile I glared at the doctor and the doctor glared at me. I felt in rare good humour, the observed of all observers. As a Queenslander would say on such an occasion, it was the proudest moment in my life. I was asked to stand alongside the doctor and captain, and watch my case. The fellow who had already declared himself satisfied was called back and asked had he signed the complaint, and only passed forward after admitting that he had. Then the question to the remainder became, "Have you signed the complaint?"—to which each of them, evidently pleased, replied in the affirmative. Those who had not signed, on saying "no" were then asked "did they wish to sign?" Every one of them signed it then right before the eyes of the doctor. I would as soon that they had not, because it was easily seen that they signed it more because they were asked to do so and did not want to cause trouble, than because they had changed their minds since they had been requested to do the same thing on the voyage. From that time to now I never heard any more about the complaint. Very likely it was forwarded to the proper authorities, and they perhaps took notice of it although unknown to us. The ship was clean when we landed, so were the emigrants, and we had all a healthy, well-fed appearance I am sure, and that must have been greatly in the doctor's favour. But let me say here at once, that if there had been one amongst us who had known the proper way to punish whoever was responsible for our ill-treatment, I believe it would have been a simple matter to have ruined the owners of the ship. If instead of writing our complaint to the Danish Consul, one of us had been able to issue a writ against the doctor upon some definite matter, he could have had as many witnesses as he chose, ready to hand, to prove what the fare of the ship had been. He might have produced his rag of a blanket in court too, and then have claimed damages. I am certain that no Queensland judge or jury would have said, after seeing it, that such a rag, two feet six inches by three feet, was a sufficient covering on a four months' sea voyage, or that the food we received was either sufficient or that it in any way tallied with what we were promised. Such damages as would then have been awarded to the first plaintiff, could indisputably have been claimed by any other emigrant, and that would have meant more than the ship and all that was in it was worth.

My boss told me before the Queenslanders left the ship again that I might, as soon as we landed, come to his house for my food and lodging, and that he would not expect me to go to work for a few days, so that I was well provided for already. Three or four dozen other immigrants had also been engaged by the other Queenslanders, all for thirty pounds a year and rations, on exactly the same agreements as mine. But Thorkill was not among them, and I felt a little ashamed and sorry that it was so, as we had agreed not to part, and I had in this way taken my first chance regardless of him; but he was earnest in his gratulations and certain, he said, he would be right too, somehow. We had

all these empty bottles, and we expected nothing less than sixpence, or perhaps a shilling, apiece for them. At least I felt greatly consoled to think of them, and I made up my mind that he should have the whole return from them if he needed it. The next day arrived, when we should go ashore, and, full of excitement and expectations, we sailed up to the jetty. Slow work that; it took us some hours to do it. Every one was hanging over the side of the ship looking to see what the place was like, and watching a number of people who stood there. Now we were alongside, so close that we might have jumped ashore, but still we were forbidden to leave the ship before the doctor, who was ashore, arrived. A man stood on the jetty with a large basketful of bananas, which he offered for sale at sixpence per dozen, and handed them over the side of the ship to any one who would buy. He sold them readily, and my mouth watered to taste them; but I had no money. Thorkill stood alongside me, so he said, "I should like so to taste some of those bananas."

"So should I."

"He charges sixpence per dozen."

"Yes."

"I wonder if he would take a bottle for a dozen?"

"We will try."

I dived into the cabin as fast as I could for a bottle, because the man had only a few bananas left. We had all the bottles, or most of them, wrapped up in paper, and I took one which looked nice and clean, and came out again just in time to secure his attention. Now I had to try to make myself understood. "I give you bottle," said I, "if you give me bananas."

"Are you going to shout?" cried he. "What have you got?"

I did not know what that meant, but as he had a pleased sort of appearance, I nodded and smiled, and caressed the bottle, saying, "Very good, very good bottle."

"All right," said he, "let us see what you have got. I give you some bananas; here you are, hand down your bottle."

So I took the bananas with the one hand, and handed him the bottle with the other.

He took it, smelt it, shook it, pulled off the wrapper, held it up towards the sun, and cried, "Dead mariner, by Jove."

Then every one on the jetty laughed like fun, but I was totally ignorant where the joke came in, and asked, "Is it not a very good bottle?"

"Oh, yes," said he, "splendid bottle," and they all kept on laughing and talking at me, assuring me that I would do well in Queensland! I understood that much.

Thorkill and I now retired into the cabin to eat the bananas, and while we ate them we had some conversation.

"I wonder what they all were laughing at?"

"Who shall say? Is—it—not—a—nuisance—that—we—do—not—understand—English—better? I—cannot—talk—to—them—at—all. You—seemed—to—do—fine—though. My—word—you—did. I—never—would—have—believed—it. I—will—study—that—language."

"Did you notice that he said, 'Dead mariner,' when he held the bottle up towards the sun?"

"Yes; now I should translate that as a dead sailor. I wonder what he meant?"

"Perhaps it is a slang name for a bottle."

"I do not think you will find that a correct explanation. It was a dark bottle; now, I am inclined to think that that sort of bottle may be used for some liquor peculiar to this country called 'Dead Mariner;' the same as in Denmark you have so many different names for nearly the same thing. In that way you might be right in saying it is a slang name; but anyhow, we will find out the true meaning of it some day."

"Yes," I replied to Thorkill, "and the sooner we find it out the better. Don't you see, the bottles may have a different value, and I should like to have full value for them. We are now in Queensland, Thorkill, and I do not intend to let any one fool me. So, before we sell to any one, I will find out

exactly what they are worth. They did not laugh at nothing down there on the jetty. I am afraid he had too good a bargain."

"They seemed to say we would do well with the bottles," remarked Thorkill.

"I hope we shall. But see! They are at last going ashore. Now, if you take my advice, one of us will stay on board for another hour or two watching the bottles, while the other goes up to the town to find out their true value, and a customer for them."

Thorkill replied to this: "Ah, yes; you go up to the town. I will stay and watch the bottles. I am sure you can sell them to far better advantage than I."

Meanwhile, a number of the immigrants had gone ashore, and Thorkill and I were getting the bottles out of their hiding-places and putting them on the table. Some Queenslanders came in. They looked on a little. I said, "How much money you pay me for one bottle?"

"Have you got all these bottles for sale?" inquired one.

"Of course," said I.

He did not answer, but went outside and called out "Mick."

In came the man who had sold me the bananas.

"Do you want to buy any more 'dead mariner'?" asked the first.

"Has he got all these bottles for sale?" inquired the banana man.

"Certainly," cried I. (Of course, I did not make myself quite so easily understood as might appear from this conversation, but still I managed both to understand and to make myself understood on this occasion.)

"No," cried he; "he did not think he wanted any more just now."

"How much money you think I receive for one bottle?" inquired I.

"Oh, plenty money," cried he, "my word ready; market, any one buys them."

"What do they say?" asked Thorkill of me.

"They say the bottles are worth a lot of money."

"See if you can find out what 'dead mariner' is."

I took a porter bottle up, and then said, "You name that one 'dead mariner'?"

Queenslander: "Yes, certainly; that is one 'dead mariner.'"

I took up a clear bottle and inquired, "This clear thing, you call that empty bottle?"

Queenslander: "To be sure that is an empty bottle. But if you are willing to sell, you take them all up to that large hotel you see there. They give you half-a-crown apiece for them."

I then asked, "Which one is most costly, 'dead mariner' bottle or clear bottle?"

Queenslander: "Oh, that fellow—'dead mariner'—very dear; three shillings, I think."

"Heavens! here, we have made our fortune already, Thorkill," cried I. "Three shillings apiece for these bottles and two-and-sixpence for those. And it appears any one will buy. Are we not lucky?"

"Oh, but," said Thorkill, "I shall never feel justified in taking half of all that money. It was your idea. I should never have thought of it. I shall be very thankful to receive just a pound or two."

"Oh, no," cried I, "you shall share half with me whatever I get. But, excuse me for saying it, you are so unpractical. Why are we not up and stirring? Why are we sitting here yet? Remember time is money in this country." Then I ventured to ask the Queenslanders if in the town there was any one whom I might ask to assist us in carrying the bottles ashore.

"Oh, yes," they all cried, as if with one mouth. "You go up in town and get hold of a couple of black fellows, and then you take them all up that street you see there. Any one will buy them there."

Thorkill remained on board keeping watch over the bottles, while I went ashore to see what I should see.

Just as I came to the end of the long jetty I saw standing there an aboriginal and three Gins. They were about as ugly a set of blacks as I have ever since seen in Queensland, and I was quite horrified at their appearance. The man had on a pair of white breeches, but nothing else. The Gins were also so scantily dressed that I am afraid of going into details of their wearing apparel. All of

them had dirty old clay pipes in their mouths, which they were sucking, but there was no tobacco in them. The gentleman of the party saved me the trouble of accosting him, as he came towards me and inquired my name. Then he informed me that his name was Jack. He next introduced me to the ladies, who, it appeared, all had the same name—Mary. Of course I fell in with the humour of this arrangement at once. It seemed to me a delightfully free and easy way of making acquaintance. They all spoke a lot to me, which I did not in the least understand, and I did the same to them no doubt. They asked me for tobacco, which I had not got; but it appeared that all was grist that came to their mill, for they asked in succession for matches, pipe, "sixpence," and I do not know what else, and even wanted to feel my pockets! Of course I did not like this familiarity, so I began to explain to them that I wanted them to work—to carry burdens from the ship. That was soon made clear to them. Then the "gentleman" of the party was very particular to know what I would pay him. I had thought to get them to carry the bottles up, and, having sold them, to pay them out of the proceeds; but as he seemed anxious to make a fixed bargain, I said, "I give you one bottle." In case he should have refused that, I intended to have gone on further, and to have offered a "dead mariner," but to my joy he accepted the offer with evident satisfaction, which again more thoroughly convinced me of the value of my bottles. I and the black fellow with his three Gins accordingly went back to the ship, where Thorkill sat keeping watch over our treasure.

I loaded the four blacks with four bags, in each of which were two dozen assorted bottles, and now we started for town in earnest. I thought it beneath my dignity to carry any bottles myself. I had exhorted so many of the immigrants that it was our duty to one another to try to make a good impression when we first landed, that the least I could do I thought would be to set a good example. Therefore I was faultlessly got up, in my own opinion, or at least as well as the circumstances of my wardrobe would permit. Still, my attire was not very suitable to this country, and indeed, when I think of it now, I must have cut a strange figure. I had on my black evening-dress suit, which so far would have been good enough to have gone to a ball in, but my white shirt, I know, was of a very doubtful colour, for I had been my own washer-woman, and it was neither starched nor ironed. Then my tall black hat, of which I was so proud when I got it, had suffered great damage on the voyage, and brush it as I would, any one might easily have seen that it had been used as a foot-stool. My big overcoat, I, according to the most approved fashion in Copenhagen, carried over my arm. In one hand I had my handkerchief, with which I had to constantly wipe the perspiration off my face, because it was very hot. Still, I felt myself a tip-top dignitary as I stalked along in front of the four blacks, who came, chattering their strange lingo, behind me.

We marched up to the main street, and I saw at once a hotel, that pointed out to me from the ship as the place in which to sell my bottles. In the bar were two or three gentlemen, of whom I took no notice. Behind the bar stood the barmaid, whom I profoundly saluted, also in Copenhagen fashion. I had what to say on the tip of my tongue, and indeed I have never forgotten it since. So I spoke to the barmaid thus: "I have bottles I will sell to you. Will you buy? Three shillings every one." She looked bewildered, not at me but at the gentlemen in the bar, as if she appealed to them for assistance, and they began to talk to me, but I did not understand them at all. I could feel myself getting red in the face, too, but I manfully made another effort. I called in the blacks and ordered them to deposit their load inside the door. Then I said with great exactness, "I—do—not—ferstan—thee—thou—ferstan—me. I—sell—this—clear—bottles—to thee—for three shillings every one. This—dead—mariner—I—sell—three—shillings—and sixpence every one. Will thou buy?" Meanwhile I had taken out of the bags two samples, a clear and a dark bottle, and placed them on the counter, and I now looked inquiringly around me.

Oh, the mortification which became my portion! The girl seemed to faint behind the bar, and the gentlemen made not the slightest excuse for laughing right out in my face. What they said I do not know, but it was clear they did not want my bottles. I felt insulted, and I determined to pay the blacks off and to leave the bottles here until I could find a German Queenslander to whom I might

explain my business, and who might help me to sell them. So I took the clear bottle which stood on the counter, and handed it to the black as payment for his service. He looked viciously at me and said, "That fellow no good bottle."

I said, "Very dear bottle that." Then I decided to satisfy him at any cost, and gave him the other one, too, and said, "Very dear bottle this, dead mariner."

Now began a scene as good as a play. The blacks appealed to the gentlemen, and the gentlemen howled with laughter, and I wished myself a thousand miles away. What did they laugh at? Why did these scampish blacks not feel satisfied after having received double payment? What did it all mean? More people came in and seemed amused and happy, but I was not in the swim. Something was wrong. But what was it? I began to suspect that my bottles could not be so very valuable, as the blacks had thrown both the bottles out into the gutter. Anyhow, for me to stand here to be made a fool of would not do, so I went out of the bar and down the street. But to get away was no easy matter. In fact I found it impossible. The coloured gentleman with his three ladies were in front of me, behind me, and on both sides, crying, howling, yelling, cursing, and appealing to every one who passed, or to those who came to their doors, "That fellow big rogue. That fellow no b– good. He b– new chum. He say he give me bottle, he give me no good b– bottle; dead mariner no b– good." This was more than human nature could stand. I threw my overcoat and belltopper into the gutter, and went for the black fellow straight. I got on the top of him in a minute, but the battle was not nearly won by that, because the black ladies were tearing at my coat-tails, which just formed two fine handles for them. They split my coat right up to the shoulders, pulled my hair, and belaboured me in a general way. Now came a policeman and grabbed me by the neck. All the "ladies" ran for their lives out of sight, but I suspect their spouse was too bruised to follow their example. Anyhow, he stuck to his guns yet, and while the policeman tried to march us both down the street, he kept appealing to him, declaring his innocence, and my villainy. That I should have spent the next few days in the watch-house I am sure enough, had not an elderly man stepped out of the crowd of onlookers and spoken to the policeman. Then he addressed me in German. I learned then, through much merriment on his part and heartburning on my own, that empty bottles are in Queensland just so much rubbish. Indeed, after the policeman let me go, he took me round to the backyard of the hotel, and there I saw bottles lying by the thousands, some broken and others sound, ready to cart away. But how was I to have known that? Was it easy to guess that a bottle, which might pass for twopence English money in Copenhagen nearly as readily as cash, would here in Queensland have absolutely no value? It is like all other things one knows, easily explained: here there being no distilleries or breweries for making liquors of any kind, they are all imported, hence empty bottles become a drug in the market.

But I was not out of trouble yet. The German who had in so timely a manner come to my rescue, seeing the state of mind I was in, tried to console me by offering me a glass of spirits. I accepted his offer very readily, I admit, and coming into the bar again, which so vividly reminded me of my former shame and all the indignities heaped upon me, I poured out a whole tumblerful of raw brandy —which I should not have done, considering that I came from a ship on which nothing of that sort was served out. But I will draw a veil over the rest of this miserable day. Not but that the worst is told. Intemperance was never my weakness, but I will leave the reader to fill out the picture, and to think of me as I returned to the ship, bleeding, torn, and battered, and there I had to face poor Thorkill, who, in his mild surprise and disapproval, was to me more terrible than if he had stormed and raged ever so much.

CHAPTER IV.
GAINING COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

Having returned to the ship after the incidents related in the last chapter, and having somewhat soothed my agitated feelings, and changed my apparel, Thorkill and I were under the necessity again of returning on shore; which we did, and had no difficulty in finding the depôt or place prepared for the reception of the immigrants. I had yet scarcely noticed anything on land, but we saw now at a glance that the town was very small, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the town was large but thinly inhabited. In Queensland we generally estimate the size of a place by the number of public-houses which it contains, and in Bowen there were three of these institutions. Grass was growing luxuriantly enough in the main street, and altogether it did not, as we came along, strike us that people here seemed remarkably busy. But when we came down to the depôt, the scene was changed.

The depôt was a large building, or series of buildings, without particularly good accommodation, but it had the advantage that there was plenty of room for everybody. I felt quite glad to again see the familiar faces of the other immigrants, although we had only been separated a few hours. There was a large kitchen attached to the place, and a vast quantity of bread and beef and potatoes had been left there, more than could possibly be eaten by those present. Two or three butchers among the immigrants, too, were quite in their element here, cutting up the bullocks, and all the girls seemed to have formed themselves into a committee in order to dress the meat in various appetizing ways. But what seemed the most encouraging feature of all was to see thirty or forty saddle-horses "hung up" outside the fence and their owners walking about among the men offering them engagements. The girls were also in great request. A number of English ladies stood about the yard, or went in and out of the kitchen. They all seemed to want the girls who were doing the cooking, and what between the English ladies who kept trying to attract their attention, their own sweethearts—who had now the first opportunity since they left Hamburg to speak to them—and the preparation of food for six hundred and odd people, they certainly had enough to do. It was comical to watch them. Among the men the scene was but one degree less animated. They might, I am sure, all have been engaged that first day if they had liked. A number were engaged, and over and over again were offers made to them of further engagements, until at last they turned their backs to the Englishmen who seemed almost to implore some of them to sign agreements. They were all offered the same terms—thirty pounds for twelve months, and rations. The girls got only twenty or twenty-five pounds a year, but there seemed to be very little difference between the agreements. The Queenslanders would go for the biggest and most able looking of the men first, and when they had secured them, engage the others with the same terms. I saw my "boss" down there, and went home with him for supper. I was received with the greatest kindness by his family, and he himself could not have looked more friendly if I had been a long-lost relation. He proved to be a contractor, and had also a carpenter's shop and showroom attached to his place. He took me into the shop and showed me several things, and asked me could I make this or that? There was nothing in the shop that a boy who had served two years of his life in Copenhagen could not make, but when I said "yes," he seemed greatly pleased with me, and patted me on the back. We could not understand each other very much. After tea, I was shown into a neat room, where stood a nice bed, a chest of drawers, table, chair, &c. This was to be my abode.

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