

William Baldwin  
Tom Hungerford

A Story of the Early Days of the Otago Goldfields



New Zealand Colonial Texts

**Tom Hungerford**

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of the Otago Goldfields**

## **New Zealand Colonial Texts**

*The Merry Marauders* (1913)

by Arthur J. Rees

*Tom Hungerford* (1872)

by William Baldwin

**Tom Hungerford**  
**A Story of the Early Days  
of the Otago Goldfields**

**By**

**William Baldwin**

Edited with Notes and Introduction by Jim Sullivan



Department of English  
University of Otago  
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## Preface

I discovered William Baldwin when I was writing the history of a Maniototo farming property (*Patearoa Station*, 2010). Baldwin had managed Patearoa Station (indifferently, some would suggest) in the early 1870s and the owners of Patearoa Station in 2010, John and Pauline Beattie, were as intrigued as I was by this extraordinarily colourful character. We felt that, at the very least, William Baldwin deserved a brief biography and when *Tom Hungerford* came to light I suggested to the English Department at the University of Otago that here was an ideal candidate for their series of Colonial Texts.

This book is the result and it manages not only to make the novel available after 140 years of languishing in the files of the *Tuapeka Times* but also provides an opportunity to tell something of William Baldwin's story. That the book should appear at the time of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gabriel Read's discovery of gold at Tuapeka is a pleasant bonus.

I wish to record my personal thanks to various staff at the University of Otago Department of English: for help with editing and picture permissions, Ulrike Scherer and Kirsten Francis; for help organising fees and printing contracts, Liz Lammers; for proof-reading Megan Kitching; for help with book layout and editorial matters, Shef Rogers. It is wonderful to be able to bring Baldwin's tale back to life and to make it available for new readers in order to deepen our understanding of our region and its dramatic history.

Jim Sullivan  
Dunedin  
February 2011





# Introduction

## Gold Rush Novels

Gold rushes were dramatic events in nineteenth-century history and made exciting backdrops for fiction writers. In California the first gold rush novel, *Aurifondia; or Adventures in the Gold Region* (1849) by “Cantell A. Bigly” (George W Peck), was published only a year after the rush began and Bret Harte’s *The Luck of Roaring Camp: And Other Stories* (1870) includes some of his best writing. Novels set in the Californian rush continue to appear regularly, as do those set in the Australian and New Zealand rushes. The Australian gold rushes inspired their own library of adventures; perhaps the best-known being Rolf Boldrewood’s *Robbery Under Arms: A Story of Life and Adventure in the Bush and in the Goldfields of Australia* (1882). The Otago gold rushes provided inspiration for several novels, with Ruth Park’s *One-a-Pecker, Two-a-Pecker* (1957) being the best known. However, Park and many of the other novelists who chose, and still choose, gold mining settings were and have been writing many years after the rushes themselves and, unlike Vincent Pyke, William Baldwin and Robert Carrick, to name but three, were not drawing on their own experiences.

Pyke is the best-known of these New Zealand gold fields novelists. His *The Story of Wild Bill Enderby* (1873) and its sequel *The Adventures of George Washington Pratt* (1874) enjoyed some popularity, especially the former, which went to more than one edition. Pyke’s stories provide heroes and villains, dastardly misdemeanors and noble deeds done in wild places of magnificent scenic attraction. In *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature* Nelson Wattie has likened *The Story of Wild Bill Enderby* to “the frontier literature of America; the authenticity of the background being emphasized in footnotes.” Pyke’s rollicking yarn sets a livelier pace than Baldwin’s *Tom Hungerford* but both novels tell the tale of a good man as hero overcoming evil.

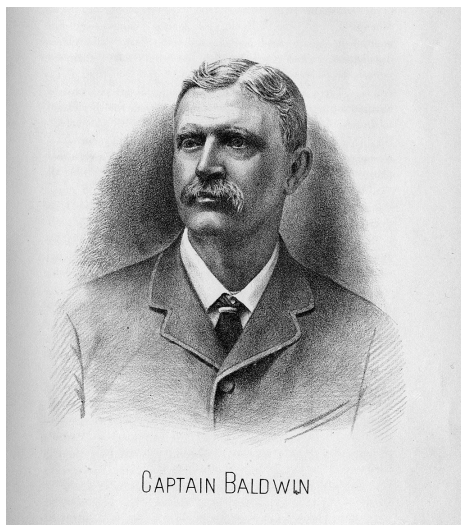
The background to the time and setting of *The Story of Wild Bill Enderby* is provided by Pyke in his *History of the Early Gold Discover-*

*ies of Otago* (1887). Here Pyke tells the story of Gabriel Read and his Tuapeka gold discovery in 1861 and also of Read and William Baldwin's discoveries at nearby Waitahuna shortly afterwards.

Robert Carrick's *A Romance of Lake Wakatipu* (1892) is a curious book. Carrick was Southland-based but the book was published by the government printer. This official involvement may be explained by the appendices which take up almost as many pages as the narrative and are practically a tourist guide to the region. The novel itself is relatively brief and is in many ways amazingly similar to *Tom Hungerford*. Action takes place in Tuapeka and around Lake Wakatipu; there is a criminal gang involved (the Garrett gang this time), a legal wrangle over an inheritance and a happy ending. All this is packed into fewer than one hundred pages. The characters have little time to develop but the descriptions of gold fields' life and townships, of which Carrick had first-hand experience, ring true. In all, though, *A Romance of Lake Wakatipu* emerges as a brief and pale imitation of *Tom Hungerford*. Interestingly, at about the time Baldwin was supplying his tale to the *Tuapeka Times*, Robert Carrick was acting in some editorial capacity at the same newspaper.

While Carrick's story became a published book, Baldwin's superior tale achieved, until now, only the lesser distinction of newspaper serialisation. Some newspapers reported in August 1872 that he intended to "publish" *Tom Hungerford* but that may well have simply been a reference to the *Tuapeka Times* serialization. That Baldwin never saw his story published as a book might be the result of the fact that in the early 1870s he was involved in far too many other enterprises. On the other hand, the apparent lack of enthusiasm for *Tom Hungerford* from the readers of the *Tuapeka Times* may have persuaded Baldwin to put his novel writing behind him and pass on to other endeavours.

## Captain William Baldwin



A portrait of William Baldwin as reproduced in Vincent Pyke,  
*History of the Early Gold Discoveries of Otago*

William Baldwin was an Anglo-Irishman with some claim to be a member of the gentry. His entry in Sir Bernard Burke's *History of the Colonial Gentry* (1895) tells of two Baldwin brothers, the elder of whom was ranger of one of the royal parks, who came to the south of Ireland during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603). The brothers bought land in Cork and lived near Bandon. Some generations on, Henry Baldwin JP was living at Lissard near Bandon with his wife, Helena Williamson. One of their sons was the William Baldwin who wrote *Tom Hungerford*. There is some confusion about the year of his birth. Burke's book (for which Baldwin presumably supplied the information) gives 1838 and John Sinclair's *Who Was Who in Otago* (an unpublished manuscript held at the Dunedin Public Library) suggests 1836. Baldwin's obituary in the *West Australian* on 31 July 1917 gives his age as 83, making his year of birth 1834.

Sinclair's notes describe Baldwin as "a precocious and successful scholar" who enrolled at Trinity College, Dublin, at the age of 13.

There is mention of him being destined for the Anglican Church but he changed his course from divinity to law, in which subject he graduated from Oxford University. He suffered “an inflammation of the lungs” (pleurisy) and, an outdoor life being recommended, he bought a commission in the army and served with the 19th Foot (later with the 87th Regiment) during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He returned home but soon decided to emigrate to New Zealand. He sailed on the clipper *William Miles* which left Bristol on 5 May 1860. The ship was carrying many immigrants destined for the Canterbury settlement but Baldwin was heading for Otago. The *William Miles* made landfall at Lyttelton on 21 August 1860 and, rather than wait while the ship unloaded before heading on to Port Chalmers, Baldwin took passage to Dunedin on the *Lord Ashley* and arrived on 3 September 1860.

He was soon in the public eye—delivering a lecture on the art of public speaking at the Dunedin Atheneum on 18 September about which the *Otago Witness* reported, “the address was ably delivered and excited considerable applause.” He was almost immediately thrust into public life, being gazetted as a magistrate not long after his arrival. Baldwin would certainly have met officers of the 70th Regiment (to which the unfortunate Lieutenant Stevenson belongs in *Tom Hungerford*) when a detachment of that regiment was stationed in Dunedin during 1861 and 1862. By February 1861 he was a member of the Tokomairiro Agricultural Society, which he probably joined when he bought some freehold land at Waihola Gorge.

His aim, however, had been to buy a run, and by 1861 he had purchased Long Valley Station (Run 262) near the Teviot River, across the Clutha not far from the site of Roxburgh. Although the run in *Tom Hungerford* is not given a name, it is modelled on Long Valley. According to A. H. Webster in *Teviot Tapestry*, this run had been originally taken up by Charles Elliott of Nelson in 1859 and after several other owners was transferred to John Jones on 2 May, 1860 with Jones transferring the run back to earlier owners, the Filleuls, on 29 October 1861. However, in his own writings, reproduced in Vincent Pyke’s *History of Early Gold Discoveries in*

*Otago*, Baldwin states that early in June 1861 he had just purchased Long Valley from J. S. Worthington. However, the numbering and selling of runs during this period is often confusing and Webster himself notes that “probably it is now impossible to gain the facts” (p. 29). The homestead which Baldwin built at Long Valley in the 1860s is still standing.



Roxburgh, from above the Roxburgh Bridge, 1860s  
(Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago S10-351e)

Baldwin was one of the many runholders who were members of the Dunedin Club and he made fairly frequent journeys to Dunedin. In his notes he describes hearing about Gabriel Read’s gold discovery at Tuapeka from various shepherds early in June 1861. He tracked Read down and the miner told Baldwin his life story (much as it is told in *Tom Hungerford*). Baldwin then describes the Waitahuna expedition he and Read made about six weeks later. The novel describes those events again almost word for word, with Tom Hungerford “playing the role” of Baldwin. The *Otago Colonist* carried a shorter version of the exploration than the one found in *History of Early Gold Discoveries in Otago*:

Mr. Read, accompanied by Captain Baldwin, a neighbouring runholder, and John Cargill, an old experienced Australian digger, left the diggings last week, on a prospecting expedition. They returned on Thursday after a week’s absence, and

the intelligence they bring must be truly gratifying to those who have the advancement and prosperity of the province at heart; for whatever a few interested parties may think to the contrary, I believe every reflecting member of the community must admit when the present excitement has subsided and given place to the second and more proper phase of digging life, when digging shall have become a distinct and settled occupation, and the unfit (at present, a host whose names are legion) shall have returned to his more immediate and proper calling—that the advantages of this province derived from the existence of a workable and payable gold-field must be great and important. Mr. Read has, I believe, discovered the existence of such a gold field, extending ten miles towards the Waitahuna; and I have seen a specimen of half an ounce washed out of two tin dishfulls of clay. This gold is heavier than the generality of that found in the present gully; and is—to a casual observer at least—of an equally fine quality.

*Otago Colonist* 2 August 1861



Major J. L. C. Richardson (1810–1878), the Otago Provincial Superintendent when William Baldwin was in Dunedin and the model for Superintendent Dickson in *Tom Hungerford*.

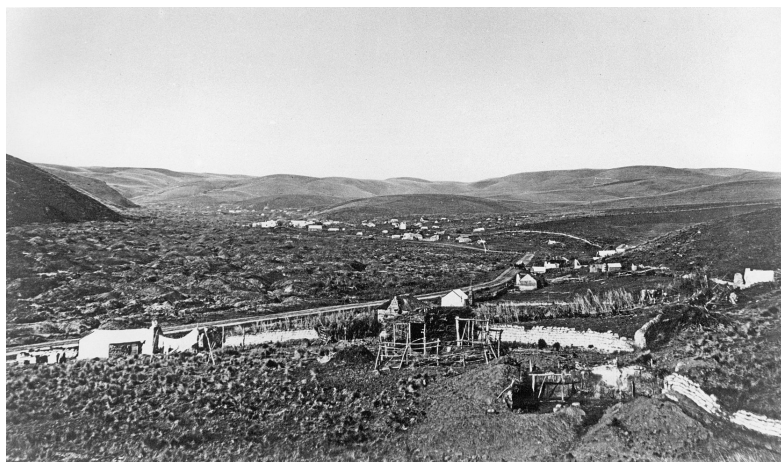
(Making New Zealand Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library,  
Wellington, F-435-1/4-MNZ)

Baldwin and Read had originally decided that Waitahuna prospects were not promising, but after the strike described in the *Otago Colonist* Baldwin accepted the post of gold field commissioner there on 1 October 1861 and one report noted that he “seems to have given pretty general satisfaction.” He resigned in October 1862 after it was claimed that there was something of an irregularity in Provincial Superintendent Richardson’s commissioner appointments and, although Baldwin and his colleagues in other gold fields were well regarded, their posts were taken over by others in 1862.

The misdeeds of the Kelly/Burgess gang in the novel are an echo of their adventures on the Otago gold fields and Baldwin had at least one brush with “stick up” men:

We understand the two men who attempted to stick up Captain Baldwin are known to the police, and that those indefatigable guardians of the public peace are on their track. Captain Baldwin it is supposed was mistaken for a storekeeper who was also on the road.

*Otago Daily Times* 4 June 1862



Waitahuna, c. 1865

(Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago S10-351f)





The Derby Inn, Waitahuna, in the 1860s  
(Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, F-214391/2)

In November 1862 Baldwin was back in office, this time officiating at Waitahuna as warden and resident magistrate. His experience as commissioner, warden and magistrate at Waitahuna forms the basis of Tom Hungerford's adventures in the same place. The primitive facilities at Waitahuna are echoed by those at Tuapeka in its early months [see front cover illustration] and the tribulations of Mr. Field with the wind echoes the blowing away of the money Tom Hungerford was counting in his tent:

The present dilapidated tent in which justice is administered is a disgrace to the Government which allows it to remain. A tent about 12 x 10, by no means waterproof, and on hot days so steaming from the crowd that throng the precincts, as frequently to cause people who are compelled to stay in Court, to become ill. Only the other day a man, while giving evidence fainted from the suffocating heat and smell of the place. The dignity which should hedge about a Court of Justice is entirely abandoned, and the presiding Magistrate occasionally finds himself in the undignified position of having his papers whirled in his face by some passing gust of wind and the Clerk of the Bench, Mr. Field, is to be seen laying vio-

lent hands on depositions that will not remain in their proper place, or else endeavouring, by the exercise of considerable ingenuity, to find some spot where they will be safe from the stream of water that will pour in on rainy days.

*Otago Witness* 5 April 1862

An accommodation house was established at Waitahuna soon after the gold discoveries and it seems to have been the responsibility of the provincial council as one of Baldwin's tasks was to recruit the staff:

WANTED, a Married Couple, to erect and carry on an Accommodation House on the Main Line of Traffic between the Dunstan and Tuapeka Gold Fields, To a respectable party every facility will be given, and provisions supplied at a reasonable rate. Application to be made to Captain Baldwin, Waikouaiti.

*Otago Daily Times* 18 November 1862

(The next day the advertisement was run again but the address was corrected to read "Waitahuna").

Baldwin was well regarded by the Waitahuna miners and when he left the area early in 1863 they made a public presentation citing his approach as being "considerate to those who needed your kindly sympathetic offices" and Baldwin wrote this letter of thanks:

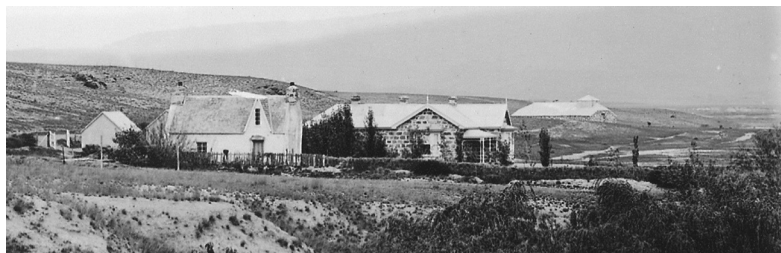
Connected as I have been with the Otago gold fields from the first week of their discovery, until now, I naturally feel deeply interested in their advancement and prosperity. But with the Waitahuna my connexion has been of a still closer and more intimate nature—one of its discoverers, and of the first party who worked on its ground, as well as its first Commissioner, I have seen its foundation, and watched its aftergrowth, and it is not therefore to be wondered at that I should always continue to feel a lively interest in its welfare. And now, whilst again thanking you for your kind present, and the feelings of regard expressed towards me in your Address, let me assure you that I shall ever cherish in my memory a recollection of your kindness, and ever wish you every happiness and pros-

perity. Believe me to be, Gentlemen, Faithfully yours,

William Baldwin. Teviot, March 19th, 1863.

*Otago Witness* 27 March 1863

While Baldwin returned to farming at Long Valley early in 1863 he had obviously been spending time in Maniototo as the Puketoi Station diaries mention him several times during 1862. The reason for his visits was undoubtedly Janet Buchanan, the daughter of the owner of Patearoa Station, Dr. Andrew Buchanan. On 4 August 1863 Baldwin married Janet at St. Paul's Church, Dunedin, and their first child was born at Patearoa Station in 1864.



The Patearoa Station homestead in 1877. The new 1874 homestead is to the right while remnants of the old homestead are in the centre. The Baldwin family were in Dunedin when the Patearoa homestead caught fire in September 1874 when Baldwin was, at least nominally, the manager of the station. The old homestead was one of four houses which burned down while in the care of William Baldwin. (Museum of New Zealand)

He was elected to the Otago Provincial Council as a Gold Fields member in 1863 and is said to have “celebrated his election in the correct manner by shouting for the crowd.” One of his first actions as a provincial councillor was to ask for a thorough report on ferries throughout the province, perhaps because an important one bearing his name operated at his station. The Clutha was regarded as a treacherous and dangerous stretch of water and the “rescued from drowning” sequence in *Tom Hungerford* (ch. XVIII) draws on Baldwin’s experiences of the Clutha and Teviot rivers. He was also chairman of a committee which recommended that

the number of miners' members be increased by two and that businessmen and miners who had held a miners' right for nine months should be entitled to the vote.

From as early as 1862 he had been regarded as an ideal candidate to be a gold fields representative in central government:

The practical knowledge of the requirements of the gold fields, and of the alterations which are needed in the present Gold Fields Act, which the gallant Captain has acquired as Commissioner at Waitahuna, points him out as likely to prove an eminently useful member of the Assembly, should he be returned. In addition to this, Captain Baldwin is a fluent and practised speaker, and a man whose social position would at once command the attention and respect of the House.

*Otago Witness* 28 June 1862

(Although Baldwin's "social position" was that of a man of the very minor nobility, his daughter Fanny would marry the Hon. Edmund William Parker, 8th son of the Earl of Macclesfield, in 1883.)

In 1864 he was elected to the General Assembly as a Gold Fields member and resigned from the Otago Provincial Council, expressing some dissatisfaction about the lack of influence the gold fields members had over matters concerning the miners. According to the incomplete parliamentary records of debates kept at that time, he appears to have spoken rarely in the General Assembly, and when he did it was usually to express his support for the ruling clique. He does not appear in the list of members in 1865 but in 1866 he stood for the Manuherikia seat and won easily. Again, this was before the establishment of the full parliamentary record, but Baldwin appears only three times, twice asking a patsy question of the Post Master General about mail coming through the Panama Canal and in the only record of a speech by Baldwin, he briefly opposed the move to politically separate the north and south of the country. He had originally supported separate governments for each island but during his election campaign he had explained why he had changed his mind.

Baldwin's experiences after he wrote *Tom Hungerford* would provide material for another fascinating novel. One report has him in "financial difficulties" in 1869 when he was still at Long Valley, perhaps leading to the sale of the run in 1874 to his brother-in-law William Low and R. Campbell. After his trip to the United States in the early 1870s he managed Patearoa Station for Sir John Roberts. Baldwin (one sixth share) and Roberts had bought Patearoa Station from Dr. Andrew Buchanan for £22,500 (\$2.7 million in 2010) in early 1873. Much of his time at Patearoa Station seemed to have been spent writing letters to John Roberts explaining why things were not going well. When he sold his share (perhaps originally his wife's dowry) of Patearoa Station in 1875 it would have been worth about \$400,000 in modern values, certainly enough to put an end to "financial difficulties" had there ever been any, and enough for him to buy land in North East Valley and St. Clair in Dunedin when he became a sub-division promoter in the 1880s.

In December 1872 his house in North East Valley was destroyed by fire and he lost "valuable papers" (perhaps some relating to *Tom Hungerford* which had about six weeks to run in the *Tuapeka Times*).

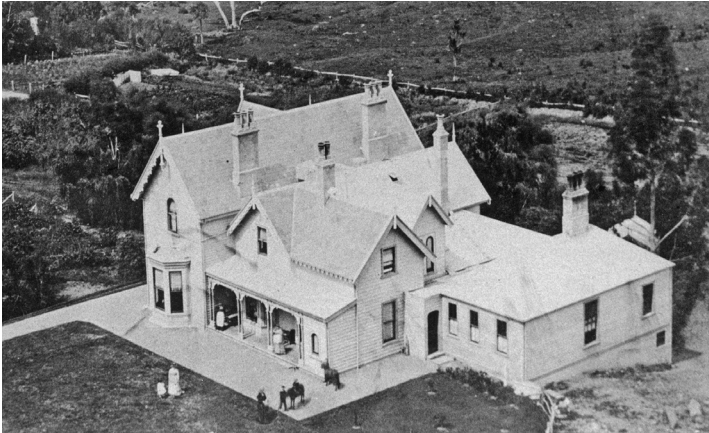
His early 1870s trip to the United States allowed him to investigate commerce, agriculture and mining. He edited the *Otago Guardian*; sold shares in the Dunedin-based National Insurance Company and went on the road as a travelling salesman for the Government Life Insurance Office. Otago MP, Captain Thomas Fraser, described Baldwin and his Government Life colleagues as "broken down men employed as touters." (Fraser was most infamous, perhaps, for losing his Otago seat in 1862 because he had been absent for the entire session. He had been elected almost by accident when no-one else turned up for the election and he had chosen to sail to England rather than attend the session in Auckland.)

Although his tenure at the *Otago Guardian* was not a long one, Baldwin retained his ability to generate the high regard of those with whom he worked and at a farewell function at the Occidental Hotel (on the south-east corner of Manse and High Streets) in January 1876 an illuminated address was presented:

We, the undersigned employees of the Guardian Printing Company, desire to express our regret that private circumstances should have induced you to relinquish the editorship of the *Guardian* and *Southern Mercury* [The *Southern Mercury* had been started by Vincent Pyke in 1874]. During the time we have had the pleasure of working with you, we have found you on all occasions gentlemanly, straightforward, and obliging, and whilst zealously looking after the interests of the Company, you have always been careful to do justly with those under your supervision. Wishing you, dear sir, a prosperous career, we beg to subscribe ourselves, very sincerely.

[Here follow 35 signatures.]

*Otago Daily Times* 24 January 1876



The Chingford mansion of Dr Andrew Buchanan, William Baldwin's father-in-law, in North East Valley, Dunedin. William Baldwin and his family moved in to Chingford when their own home in North East Valley was destroyed by fire during the time *Tom Hungerford* was appearing in the *Tuapeka Times*. Chingford (demolished in 1968) was one of early Dunedin's grand homes and illustrates the life style of the class of gentry to which William Baldwin belonged.

(Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago S10-351a)

During the 1880s Baldwin was involved in several ventures in Dunedin, including property subdivisions. He gave his name to what is now regarded as the steepest street in the world and the name of his father-in-law Andrew Buchanan to an adjoining street. Buchanan built Chingford, a grand property in North East Valley, later bequeathed to the Dunedin City Council by P. C. Neill but demolished in 1968. Baldwin took a full part in public affairs, including the debate about the future of the sheep industry. With some courage he questioned the views of Thomas Brydone, later to pioneer the frozen meat industry:

Mr Brydone is an expert; I am not. I have nothing to guide me beyond the mere ordinary knowledge that one manages to pick up after some 10 or 12 years of sheep farming life. But we all know that a razor-strop, though the bluntest of instruments itself, is often useful in sharpening the blade of the keenest-edged razor. I am the razor-strop; Mr Brydone is the razor.

*Otago Daily Times* 15 August 1883

By 1890 Baldwin had moved to Wellington and was running the *New Zealand Times* which he then sold to a group of Liberals who wanted to set up a paper which would push the party line. He was in the headlines in 1893 when he was almost convicted of causing the destruction by fire of the historic home, Tredenham, at Lower Hutt. He moved to Perth, Western Australia, where he died in 1917. One obituary noted that “his youthful cheeriness won him many friends” (*West Australian* 31 July 1917).

Such was his energy that it is surprising William Baldwin wrote no autobiography. The task of writing a full biography for this enterprising and engaging figure remains, but *Tom Hungerford* captures some of the adventures of his earlier days in New Zealand.

## ***Tom Hungerford as a Novel***

*Tom Hungerford* is a strongly autobiographical novel and the aspects of William Baldwin's life which are reflected in *Tom Hungerford* can be summarised briefly. His comments on politics and politicians are supported by his own experience as a Gold Fields member of the Otago Provincial Council and as an MP in the General Assembly. His Indian and army experience is reflected in some characters and incidents in the novel. Generally, the characters in *Tom Hungerford* mirror something of Baldwin's own life. They enter politics, purchase runs and keep servants. We hope they marry! Apart from the love scenes between Tom and Nelly (Baldwin's writings tell us nothing of his courtship of Janet Buchanan) many of the events in *Tom Hungerford* parallel Baldwin's own experiences



*The Golden Age* paddle steamer tied up at low tide at the old Dune-  
din jetty in 1876, the year she was taken out of service. *The Golden  
Age* was broken up at Port Chalmers in 1884. William Baldwin has  
Tom Hungerford come up the harbour from Port Chalmers in *The  
Golden Age* in 1860 but, in fact, *The Golden Age*, built in Melbourne in  
late 1862, was not in service until January 1863 when it began ser-  
vice for Johnny Jones' Harbour Steam Company. Much was made  
of the fact that "the *Golden Age* only draws 22 inches with coals and  
machinery on board which will enable her to come in to the jetty  
at almost any state of the tide, except unusually low."

(Gavin McLean Collection)



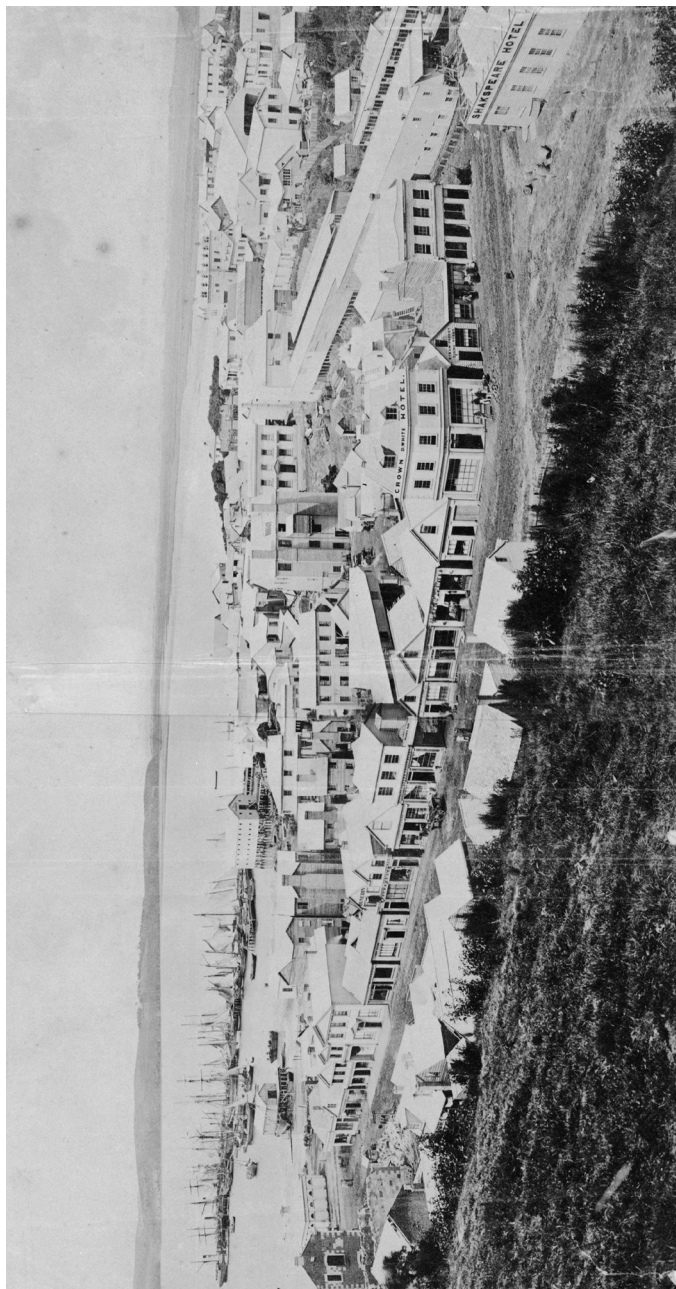
during the Otago gold rush. Tom arrives in Dunedin from Ireland in the spring of 1860 and William Baldwin's day of arrival in Dunedin was 3 September. The Dunedin which greets Tom is a reflection of what Baldwin discovered when he landed, although in some instances he has been cavalier with the chronology of events, as when Tom Hungerford spends a night at the Princess Theatre in 1861. The theatre as the Royal Princess Theatre was not actually in operation until 1862. Other links between Baldwin's own experiences and the adventures of Tom Hungerford are discussed in the notes to the text.



Dunedin's High Street in 1859, much as it would have been when Baldwin/Hungerford arrived in 1860. The Commercial Inn with its public house lamp over the door and beer barrels lined up outside had been extended since its early days and was a little too expensive for Tom Hungerford.

(Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago S10-351a)

Unlike some New Zealand novels of the Victorian era, *Tom Hungerford* does not set out to right wrongs or promote any of the causes of the day. Instead, it is comfortable in the role of “a ripping yarn” in which the evil-doers meet their come-uppance and the hero seems most likely to be rewarded for his steadfastness and almost-unblemished purity of spirit. The plot operates at a simpler



A panorama of Dunedin at about the time of Hungerford's arrival. It shows the wharf, the Mechanics' Institute (the modest building second from the left, near the waterline) where he visited the provincial superintendent, and Farley's Arcade (the long tunnel-like street to the right) where he had his fight with the Jews.

(W. H. Field Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, F-115913-1/2)

level than the great novels of the time as it focuses on following Tom Hungerford's journey towards his goals of regaining his misappropriated inheritance, his farm and his woman.

Like almost all the New Zealand novel writers of the period, William Baldwin makes much of the physical appearance of what was then a new country. That the readership was actually limited to people who probably knew the territory reasonably well was no fault of Baldwin's. We must assume that he originally hoped for a much wider audience than the subscribers to the *Tuapeka Times*. The opportunities for descriptive writing based on the author's own experience provide the element of travelogue which is a part of many colonial novels. The pleasing vista of Otago Harbour before the bush was felled, the slush of the streets of "Mud-Edin," the travails of tramping to the gold fields and the harsh mid-winter endured by the diggers are all part of the mix. Baldwin has chosen a most appropriate setting for his heart-stopping dramatic climax in the Teviot River. The phrase "national death" for drowning was being used in the 1860s and was certainly appearing in print from the early 1880s. His readers would relate easily to the wild and dangerous rapids from which Tom rescues his lady love.

Tom Hungerford the man may seem too good to be true, but then, most Victorian heroes were flawless. Any peccadilloes they may have possessed were usually forgivable, such as Tom's overheated ardour in kissing Nelly when she has scarcely regained consciousness after her near drowning. By Victorian standards, Baldwin has probably verged on "soft porn" in this sequence, but in the end his characters are models of probity and any suggestions of outrageous sexual shenanigans must await the novels of Thomas Hardy and others.

Baldwin joins the novelists of his time in engaging in "Dear reader" sequences that allow him to comment directly on the events he is describing. Thus, for example, he is able to provide his own gloss on the exigencies of investing in property, drawing on his own experience of buying Long Valley. He is also unable to resist another habit of his contemporaries, the urge to display some erudition. Baldwin's study of Greek and Latin is made use of as he

sprinkles tags and quotations throughout the text, unnatural as this may seem to the modern reader, and his knowledge of Shakespeare and other greats of English literature is demonstrated regularly. In earlier times, when most novel readers would recognise at once the references he was making, such literary allusions were common. To see them still being employed in the 1870s when many more people were literate, but not in any way classicists, smacks rather of the author showing off, but then Baldwin would not have been alone in this. Even Vincent Pyke drops in a few, though reasonably familiar, quotations in *Wild Bill Enderby*.

Baldwin's use of dialect, like the Irish brogue and thieves' cant, is appropriate. He avoids the excesses of many Victorian novelists and can be said to have found the fine line between realism and comprehension. In general, the great novelists like Dickens and Hardy, show a similar restraint, while some of the lesser writers simply leave their readers befogged in a morass of incomprehensible gibberish. In fact, Charlotte Brontë was critical of her sister Emily's over-use of dialect. Two standard comic figures which Baldwin introduces are the loveable Irish "minder" and the eccentric and independently-minded maidservant. Baldwin probably did not have a servant but Tom Hungerford has the services of Tim Dwyer. Tim, as the classic faithful retainer, is part of a strong literary tradition and provides opportunities for generous helpings of stage-Irish blarney as he delivers his monologues on subjects close to his heart, such as the well-being of his master and the contempt to be shown to all Protestants and most Englishmen. Tim, in spite of his "blagards" and "gossoons" and "spalpeens" never becomes utterly incomprehensible. The maid, Rebecca Tonks, while not resorting to extreme cockney for effect, employs another literary device, the catch phrase: "come to the point and walk uprightly."

To the modern reader, the violent anti-Semitism of Tom Hungerford himself comes as something of a shock. Within colonial New Zealand society there was little evidence of strong anti-Jewish sentiment but within the literature of the time it was an attitude which appeared frequently. Robert Carrick has unpleasant comments about Jews in *A Romance of Lake Wakatipu* and the best of

novelists, like Dickens and Trollope, would also denigrate Jews almost as a matter of course.

Victorian novelists became skilled in writing for the serial form: chapters for weekly instalments and then perhaps for two or three sections to fit double- or triple-decker book publication. It is impossible to know whether Baldwin wrote with serialisation in mind, but in general the chapters start and finish fairly conventionally, indicating that he was not consciously striving for a cliff-hanger as each chapter finished. In fact, some chapters seem to have been arbitrarily split in two as space ran out. It is likely that he would have preferred the story to appear in book form, but the offer from the *Tuapeka Times* settled the matter.

For some readers the oddest aspect of *Tom Hungerford* is the sudden ending. In Vincent Pyke's *The Story of Wild Bill Enderby* we are left with no doubt about the happy marriage in the last chapters. Baldwin gives only strong hints that his story will end in a similar fashion. The final chapter of *Tom Hungerford* grabs the loose ends and swiftly ties them into a knot which we would like to see untangled at a more leisurely pace. Certainly, we are pretty well assured that sometime in the future the happy endings will round off the story, but we are accustomed to having those happy endings spelled out in detail—almost as a reward for having ploughed through the preceding chapters. We know, for instance, that Sam Weller did marry the pretty servant girl and we are frustrated when matters remain unresolved, as with Trollope's *Lily Dale*. With *Tom Hungerford* the frustration lingers. We long for Nelly to get well, fling herself into Tom's arms, get married and have children, while being the perfect farmer's wife and lady of the manor at Teviot. It may well be that Baldwin was too busy to keep the story going. Around this time he was involved in touring for the Government Life Office, keeping an eye on his properties and any number of other time-consuming tasks. On the other hand, *Tom Hungerford* may have been completed before the first chapter even appeared in the *Tuapeka Times*, in which case the last chapter was the result of a courageous authorial decision. As mentioned earlier, it is also possible to speculate that Baldwin lost some of his manuscript in the

fire of December 1872 and that he may have been tempted to pen a “rounding up” chapter rather than rewrite what had been lost.

One thing we do know is that *Tom Hungerford* was read by a relatively small number of people. The subscribers to the *Tuapeka Times* would number in the hundreds rather than the thousands. The nearest we can get to a review or contemporary opinion is provided by the neighbouring (and no doubt rival) newspaper, the *Bruce Herald*, whose Lawrence correspondent, treating the story with less decorum than Baldwin would have wished, had this to say when *Tom Hungerford* did not appear on 30 January 1873:

The readers of fiction were sadly disappointed last week, not having the usual feats provided by *Tom Hungerford* in the local paper, and to make matters worse, I see that interesting narrative will reach its denouement next week. Of course after the fearful struggle for life in the foaming torrent of the Teviot in company with his “ladye love,” and wherein he exercised such superhuman efforts to prevent them sharing a similar fate to that of the parties alluded to in “Lord Ullin’s Daughter;” poor Tom needed some rest, and probably a treacle posset, besides a dash of candle grease down the nose to cure him of the cold that must necessarily have ensued from such a ducking. We are all on the tip toe of expectation as to the *finale* of such a series of startling adventures and romantic incidents and, although some are bold enough to assert that many of the events recorded are somewhat apocryphal, yet it is but fair to say that they *may* have happened, and the dialogue is carried on in a style beautifully free from the restraints of ordinary and more particular fiction writers.

*The Bruce Herald* 4 February 1873

The reference to Lord Ullin’s daughter confirms that New Zealanders, or at least journalists, of the 1860s were fond of literary allusion. Thomas Campbell’s ballad about Lord Ullin was published in 1809 and told the story of an attempted elopement which resulted in the deaths of the couple, the young chief of Ulva and his “bonny bride,” Lord Ullin’s daughter. The best aspect of the

comments by *The Bruce Herald* is the confirmation that *Tom Hungerford* was actually being read, although the critic's expectation that a novel should include only events which have *actually happened* is unusual, to say the least. *The Bruce Herald* was the only contemporary publication to pass comment on the story of *Tom Hungerford*. A subsequent letter to the editor claimed that the novel had been taking up valuable space:

The death of *Tom Hungerford* and the disappearance of "A Mother" from your columns must be very consoling to every reader of your paper; especially when their places are occupied by the wise inspirations of men of practical experience, in both the farming and the mining industries. The thanks of the public generally are due to those writers who have lately been contributing to your columns.

*The Bruce Herald* 25 April 1872

Seven months later *The Bruce Herald* was still gnawing at the bone:

The *Tuapeka Times* has at length adopted the bi-weekly plan, and is an improvement on the old one, although from its reduced size it will not afford the opportunity of publishing such racy tales as *Tom Hungerford*. This, however, will not be regretted by many.

*The Bruce Herald* 18 November 1872

Whether the passing of *Tom Hungerford* was regretted by the readers of the *Tuapeka Times* will never be known, but for the modern reader *Tom Hungerford* provides a mixture of history and romance which is not only very readable but also manages still to outshine many other novels of its time.

## **The Tuapeka Times**

The *Tuapeka Times* was published in Lawrence, Central Otago, from 1868 to 1941. It was started by Andrew Ferguson (who later enjoyed great success in business in Edinburgh), Andrew Burns and John Ludford and proved to be one of the most respected of the gold fields newspapers. From the late 1860s novelist-to-be Robert Carrick was in the editorial chair and may have encouraged Baldwin to write for the paper, although Ferguson was also a literary man and could have been the catalyst. In 1869 the paper took over the rival *Tuapeka Press* (1866–1869) and in 1881 the *Tuapeka Times* was bought by Thomas and Richard Pilling. It published bi-weekly from 1873, usually with no more than four pages to an issue. The Pillings published the paper until 1896 when it was sold to the Tuapeka Times Company, managed by John Norrie. Norrie remained in charge of the paper until his death in 1938 and the newspaper did not long outlive him. The *Tuapeka Times* expired quietly in November 1941. The only hint that it was about to cease publication was an editorial in the last issue exhorting the public to support local newspapers in general. The paper probably succumbed to shortages of paper and labour due to the war. Many other small newspapers folded at the same time for the same reasons. It is likely that the paper had struggled for years to remain solvent.

The demise of the paper contrasts with its early years when it was at the centre of the gold boom in Central Otago. Gabriel's Gully, the site of New Zealand's most significant gold find, was nearby. The *Tuapeka Times* was a product of the boom and the issues from this time are an essential resource for the study of New Zealand's history in the mid-nineteenth century, when the gold from this area made Otago the leading province in the colony.

The *Tuapeka Times* showed some courage in running a locally-written serial novel. The extra typesetting involved was reason enough for not taking up the opportunity which William Baldwin was offering. (It is unlikely that Baldwin would have insisted on payment). However, it was a move worth trumpeting:



# TOM HUNGERFORD

## A STORY OF THE EARLY DAYS OF THE OTAGO GOLDFIELDS.

By Captain Baldwin.

We have much pleasure in announcing that we have made arrangements with Captain Baldwin for the production of a new and original Tale, entitled, "Tom Hungerford" which will shortly appear in the *Tuapeka Times*, and be continued weekly in its columns. Captain Baldwin's literary abilities are sufficiently well known to warrant the belief that this tale will be both attractive and instructive. His letters, descriptive of California, of the route along the Pacific Railway, and of Salt Lake City, which appeared in the *Otago Daily Times* have stamped him as a writer of no mean order. Besides, he has an intimate acquaintance with the early days of our goldfields – an acquaintance acquired from personal experience. In "Tom Hungerford" he intends to give us the result of this experience, we believe – to tell us much that has hitherto remained untold, and to lay before us much that is now forgotten respecting an important period in the history of the colony. The interest of the story will be further enhanced by the fact that it is intended, we understand, to lay the plot for the most part in the districts wherein our readers principally reside.

Tom Hungerford's life will be the life of a New Zealand settler, such as it actually is and has been – "a plain unvarnished tale," wherein fiction will be blended with facts so far only as is necessary to give the plot sufficient interest.

The opening number will appear in our issue of the 29th August. Our own expense and trouble bringing out the tale will be amply repaid if it possesses only half the interest for our readers which we anticipate.

*Tuapeka Times* 25 July 1872

## **Publication Dates in the *Tuapeka Times***

Chapter 1	29 August 1872
Chapter 2	5 September 1872
Chapter 3	12 September 1872
Chapter 4	19 September 1872
Chapter 5	26 September 1872
Chapter 6	3 October 1872
Chapter 7	10 October 1872
Chapter 8	17 October 1872
Chapter 9	24 October 1872
Chapter 10	31 October 1872
Chapter 11	7 November 1872
Chapter 12	14 November 1872
Chapter 12 (continued)	21 November 1872
Chapter 13	28 November 1872
Chapter 14	5 December 1872
Chapter 14 (continued)	12 December 1872
Chapter 15	19 December 1872
Chapter 15 (continued)	26 December 1872
Chapter 16	2 January 1873
Chapter 17	9 January 1873
Chapter 18	16 January 1873
Chapter 18 (continued)	23 January 1873
<i>(No chapter included in the 30 January issue)</i>	
Chapter 19 (conclusion)	6 February 1873



# Tom Hungerford

## Chapter I. — Landing.

*The Queen of the May*<sup>1</sup> has just anchored in Port Chalmers, and the passengers are all bustling about in every direction in the greatest state of excitement, preparing to get away by the *Golden Age*<sup>2</sup> that is coming steaming up alongside.

*The Queen of the May* had made a very bad passage out, and the usual amount of ill-feeling and unpleasantness had cropped up during the voyage, as they will crop up, somehow or another, on board most emigrant ships. But these things were all forgotten now as that good, round, honest cheer that was given the old ship at parting showed. It rang out heartily, full of forgiveness and good-will. There was another meaning, too, in that ringing cheer. It rang out the old life; it rang in the new. What more fitting starting point can I have for my story?

“It certainly is very beautiful.” The words came from a group of first-class passengers, who were standing a little apart by themselves, at the stern of the steamer, talking about the scenery. The speaker, Tom Hungerford, was a pleasant looking young fellow, with a frank, honest, open face that glowed with health and excitement, and great dark eyes that sparkled with animation, as they wandered away from those around him, to the picture beyond.

Yes; it certainly did look beautiful. They were easily pleased, no doubt, as people generally are who have just escaped from the monotony of a four months' voyage; but, the beauty around required no such extraneous aid as this. It was about as bright and as pleasant a picture as one would wish to see. Things looked at their best, perhaps, just then, as they always do, I think, at that time of the year.<sup>3</sup> The spring, you see, had set in a short time before, and the foliage was rich

and green, and warm; and there was in the growth a luxuriance that was almost tropical, and in shade and coloring, a never-ending variety.

The rounded hills, covered with dense bush, sloped softly upwards on all sides from the waters' edge and ran away backwards into little sharp pointed cones. Shrubs and creepers grew thick along the shore, fringed the margin of the little winding bays, and covered the sharp jutting points, which the steamer was rounding every five or ten minutes. Here and there small log huts peeped out of patches of clearing, full of great gnarled stumps. What great huge stumps they were, to be sure, and what a weary life this work of clearing must have been! What a world of pluck, and patience, and toil those poor men must have had who undertook it!

So thought Tom Hungerford, as his glance rested on the openings, and took in the huge size of the tall trees beyond and the dense mass of tangled undergrowth around. And those cranky looking boats, moored close by; who, in the world, would ever think of entrusting himself in any of them? And yet here was one, gunwale deep, loaded with firewood, about to start for Dunedin.

Tom was speculating on the chances of her ever arriving safely at her destination, when he was aroused by a rich voice, at his side, exclaiming in a brogue, broad as the Atlantic, "Well glory be to God, we're safe, at last, Mистер Tom, if what they sez is true, that's the town over there. Town indeed! Begor<sup>4</sup>, its more like Mickey Morrissey's bathing boxes, down at Tramore,<sup>5</sup> it is, thin a town."

"Yes; I suppose that's Dunedin, Tim."

"Maybe it is," was the rejoinder, cautiously given, as if the speaker had his doubts about the matter. "But, I came now to tell you I have put all our things together by themselves."

"Just listen to me a minute, Tim," said Tom Hungerford,

walking a little apart, and speaking in a low tone. "We are now at our journey's end, and, I think, it is just as well we should understand one another. You remember what I said to you, when you asked me to let you come out to New Zealand with me. I told you then, you remember, I wasn't well off, and scarcely knew what I was going to do after I landed; and that, therefore, you would have to look out for some place for yourself. You know, Tim," he continued speaking in a kindly tone, and laying his hand softly on the other's shoulder, "I shall be very sorry to part with you. Since I was a child, I have known you, and you've always been kind and affectionate to me. I know you think you ought to stay with me, but it can't be. We must really part when we get ashore. You are sure to get a place at once; and I do hope you'll keep yourself sober and steady. If you do, there's no doubt you'll get on well."

"Misther Tom, I've been listening to you attentively, and I find this is what you sez. 'Tim Dwyer,' sez you, 'I brought you out here with me, and I paid away a lot of money for you, when I couldn't well afford the same.' —I must go on, sir," he exclaimed, as Tom tried to stop him. "I ain't no argifier, and I niver was, as is natural, seeing that, man and boy, I'd very little edication, and that my time was mostly spint running after the hounds with the boys or at some other divarsion; but, I asks you as a scholard, what should I say? Why, sorra a bit, more or less than this, that if I desart you now, in this sthrange country, I'm the greatest blagard of my name as iver lived, and the Dwyers, as you know, are a dacent people. No; it ain't right, and it don't stand to rason. It's true enough for you, as you sez, I have known you since you was a gossoon, the height of my knee, and faith, I ain't agoin' to forget that same now. The divil a halfpenny of money I'll ask you to spind on me, but I'm goin' to stick to you through thick and thin, that I am, unless you sinds the polis at me; and, be me sowl, if any of

thim spalpeen<sup>6</sup> has a mind to come to tarms with Tim Dwyer, why he's not the boy to balk 'em." And, as if to give due emphasis to what he was saying, he struck one hand into the palm of the other, and as he did so, you could see there was nothing in the world he would have liked better than to have had one of these national foeman of his race close by, within reach of his arm. And it was an arm that few men would care to come within reach of either if put out in anger. The owner of it, as he stood there, talking with Tom Hungerford, overtopped him by half a head at least. Indeed, he was as manly and as powerful looking a fellow as you would wish to come across. And he had a good natured, honest, humorous look about him that won men's confidence, and women's too, before he had been twenty minutes in their company.

I have very little more to say about Tim Dwyer, that he cannot say for himself; excepting, perhaps, to explain the relationship he stood in towards Tom Hungerford and a very few words will do that.

From father to son, for generations back, the Dwyers had been small farmers in the south of Ireland; and for years and years, some member of the family had been in the family of the Hungerfords. In this way it came about almost as a matter of course, that Tim, being a smart lad, should have been employed about the place by Tom's father; and equally, as a matter of course, was it understood by all concerned, that he should continue in the same employment as long as he lived. It was the usual life for one of the Dwyers to live; and there is no reason to doubt Tim would have followed in the traditional footsteps of the family, contented with his lot, had it been permitted him to do so. But Mr. Hungerford's death, a year or two previously, and the misfortunes of the family since, had interfered with his prospects, and entirely altered his after course of life. But he never wavered in his

attachment to Tom Hungerford. Tom was the very apple of his eye, and the pride of his heart. In his loyalty to him he was brave and honest, and faithful and true; aye, to the very heart's core. This kind of devotion was not uncommon in Ireland some years ago; but I am inclined to think it is, to a great extent, a thing of the past. When the Incumbered Estates Court<sup>7</sup> swept away the old Irish families, it swept away much of this loyalty and devotion too.

But we left them engaged in a discussion as to the footing they were to stand on in future towards each other. There was no very definite arrangement come to about the matter, one way or another. It was decided that, for the present, they should go on just in the same way as they had been doing until there was time to look about them and settle down in the ways of the place; and there the thing rested. Tom had done everything he could before acquiescing, even so far as this, to try to persuade his follower to leave him, but it was of no use; his persuasion was all thrown away. Tim was not to be moved. Putting aside his feelings of attachment, it was his duty, he told himself to act the part of protector; and it would but ill become him to neglect his duty, and that too for the purpose of benefiting himself. To do so would be to lower himself in his own eyes, and in the eyes of the world; it would be to sink him to the level of the basest of men. In fact, he might just as well change his religion, and "turn a Protestant" at once; and he shuddered as he thought of the degradation, the very lowest to which an Irishman can fall into in the eyes of his countrymen. By the time the matter had been talked over, they found themselves close to Dune-din, and were soon alongside the jetty. Then there was the luggage to look after. It was stowed carefully away in a corner, but a watchful eye was necessary to prevent any of the things being snatched up in the hurry of landing.



## **Chapter II. — Dunedin.**

Tom Hungerford and Tim escaped from the throng of their fellow-passengers as soon as possible, and then made their way, as best they could, in the direction of the Commercial.<sup>1</sup> They had a good deal of luggage to carry, and their movements were consequently somewhat slow. Everybody had to shift for himself in those days. Labor, as a matter of course, was a very scarce commodity just then in the young colony and the arms and muscles of the place were in great demand. Porters were unknown and even the “loafer” could find some congenial occupation that brought him in grist to the mill. Nothing in the way of assistance was to be had for love or money; and it was, therefore, just as well for our two friends that they did not require any. They had certainly a good load, but nothing to trouble two young fellows and, under ordinary circumstances, they would not have given the matter a moment’s thought, but it was no joke to have to stagger along up to the knees in mud, as they had to do. In such a case, I think, a man would be inclined to grumble; I know I should, and very likely have growled out a few good round oaths before I came to the end of the journey, as Tom Hungerford did. If the truth were known, Tim was not a whit more amiably disposed than his companion; but you would never for a moment have gathered from his manner that there was anything wrong. He looked as jolly as Mark Tapley<sup>2</sup> himself, and I doubt if Mark would have behaved better under the circumstances. He threw out an occasional word of comfort to Tom as he labored along in his wake; but he occupied himself principally in whistling snatches of his two favorite tunes—the “Cruiskeen Lawn” and the “Shan van vocht.”<sup>3</sup>

At last they stood in front of the hotel, and there they rested awhile. The entrance lay down below them ever so many feet, indeed the roof was not much above the level

of the road on which they stood; and many of the houses around were not much better off in this respect.

After resting a little, they tried to make their way down, but the doing so was not quite so easy as one would fancy, for the steps were very steep and very slippery; and it was only by dividing the luggage that the feat was accomplished at last. Then they found themselves in a dark, long, and narrow room, with a bar at the further end, surrounded with men dressed in boots, breeches, dirty Panama hats, and jumpers, who were all lounging about drinking, smoking, and talking.

The place was full, the landlord said; but he would try what he could do, and returned soon afterwards to say he had managed to get them a room. They were then led along a dark, narrow passage, and shown into a small, unwholesome looking den at the further end, some eight feet square at the very most, where they were supposed to stow themselves away for the night. They were both very hungry, but when Tom asked for something to eat, he was informed, in a very emphatic manner, it wanted still two hours of tea-time, and until then he could have nothing supplied him. At last, much to their satisfaction, the gong sounded, and they sat down at one of the two crowded tables that ran lengthwise along the room.

Tom Hungerford was too busy, just at first, with his dinner to pay much attention to anything else, but as the meal proceeded he had more time to look around him. What struck him most was the tone of conversation, so different was it from anything he expected. He was a new chum, remember, and in the horny handed, rough bearded, seedily dressed individuals he saw around the table, he never expected to find men, of refined tastes and cultivated minds.

But the refinement and the cultivation were there present that was quite certain. True, the subjects of conversa-

tion were principally sheep and cattle, and the severity of the previous winter—the severest known in the colony for many years; but, now and then, a passing topic of the day at home cropped up, or some literary or scientific question was started, and all were discussed with a readiness and a tact that could only have resulted from deep reading. Apropos of this came a conversation he heard when he awoke the next morning. “Poluphlosboies thes thalasses,<sup>4</sup> construe Jack,” shouted a great rough voice to a friend in adjoining room. “Shut up. I don’t see it,”<sup>5</sup> punned Jack, drowsily, and turned round again to sleep. “You’ll do, old boy,” guffawed the first speaker and Tom could hear him repeating line after line of Homer for the next twenty minutes at least.

After tea, our two friends strolled out to have a look at the place. Princes-street was then, as now, the principal thoroughfare of Dunedin. It was a great mud hole from beginning to end, with swamps and quagmires strewn all along it, thick as blackberries, into which a man might easily tumble, if unwary in his footsteps, and possibly disappear altogether too; and through which bullock teams floundered along, slowly, sinking well nigh out of sight at times.

The roofs rose and fell, too, in an uneven sort of way. One was on a level with the ground, the next peeped above it a few feet, and the third was where an ordinary roof ought to be. There was no system, no regularity, in the houses; nor, for the matter of that, in anything else either. Here, one jutted out in front of its neighbours, some half-a-dozen feet, or more; and, there, another ran away back, just as far, behind them. This one faced the street; and that one turned its back on it, with sovereign contempt. Some were built of weatherboards; some of wattle-and-dab. Then, there were no two alike in shape or size. As they saw it below them, from the top of Bell Hill,<sup>6</sup> it was, altogether about as odd a-looking place as one can well

imagine; or, to use Tim Dwyer's expressive phraseology, "The devil a lie in it, but it bate Banagher."<sup>7</sup>

The track they followed wound in and out amongst great tall flax bushes that drooped above them a foot at least. A little way beyond the bottom of the hill it crossed a steep, precipitous gully which they had some difficulty in getting over, and then it curved about the flat, in every direction, towards the Water of Leith. Here the forest began: this, and the lateness of the hour, warned them to retrace their steps homewards. The sun was just setting at the time and tipping Flagstaff with its last rays of purple glory. It was a delicious evening. There was a feeling of freshness and elasticity in the air that seemed to brace up the system, and make a man forget his cares for a time. Like a glass of good champagne, it expanded their hearts with feelings of joyousness and geniality; and they returned all the better for the walk, arriving at the hotel just as darkness was setting in. Bear in mind, I am speaking of Dunedin as it was some twelve or thirteen years ago.

Burke,<sup>8</sup> referring to the then American colonies, speaks of the marvellous rapidity with which they sprang from families into communities, from communities into villages, from villages into towns, from towns into populous cities; and we know his words are just as true now as regards the growth of many of the colonies of the present day. In New Zealand, indeed, with its eight or nine would-be capitals, scattered along its thousand and odd miles of seaboard, the change is not so rapid as in some of the Australian colonies; but even here, with us, the progress is very marked. It is very marked as regards our own chief town, at all events. Think of what Dunedin was, and look at what Dunedin is. It has now its flagged, well-paved, gas-lit streets; its numerous hotels, many of them well-built, well-kept places of resort, providing every comfort and luxury that can be desired; its banks, merchants'

offices, and private residences, not a few of them tastefully designed and pleasant to the eye; its public buildings that would be no discredit to many a first-class town at home. And it all seems the work of yesterday.

The following day, Tom Hungerford and Tim moved to Tamora House,<sup>9</sup> which was a quieter place to stay at than the hotel, and not so expensive either. Some half-a-dozen other lodgers were staying there at the time, principally squatters,<sup>10</sup> with one or two members of the Provincial Council,<sup>11</sup> which was then sitting. Having nothing better to do, Tom strolled down to the Council one evening to hear what was going on there. The place and the proceedings, however, were unimpressive and uninteresting to the last degree. He had his own ideas as to the appearance of deliberative bodies, and to his mind it seemed naturally to follow, in the fitness of things, that those who sat in high places should have about them something of the world's pomp and outward show in their surroundings. But there was certainly no pomp, nor show, nor comfort either, for the matter of that, in the room he entered; nor did the men who occupied it bear about them, in their looks, anything in the way of statesmanlike dignity. It was about one of the most cheerless, miserable looking rooms he had ever come across, and the sitting there listening to what was going on, for any length of time, the most dreary work imaginable. Tom was soon tired of it, and was preparing to get away, when there came, an interruption to the proceedings that detained him a little longer. This interruption came from a small, red-haired child at the door. Pushing it half open, and thrusting her unkempt head inside, she called out, in a shrill treble, and the broadest of Scotch accents, "Faither! faither!" There she stopped suddenly. The members all turned round in astonishment, and stared at her; and the heavy countenance of the Speaker became still more

heavy as he frowned ominously upon her from his Speaker's chair.<sup>12</sup> She was frightened for a moment, and withdrew outside the door. But, after a little, the unkempt head was thrust in again, and the shrill voice trebled out once more, "Faither! faither! You're a-wanted the noo."

Did ever anybody hear the like of it; the solemn deliberations of state to be interrupted in such a way! It really was too bad. The members evidently thought so and glowered at her, poor little thing; and the honorable gentleman who was addressing himself to the question thought so too, and paused angrily in his eloquence. Every one looked from the child to Mr. Speaker. He was expected, evidently, to do his duty, and he did it like a man.

"Shut that door," he growled out savagely, waving his hand indignantly at the small delinquent. The red head disappeared from sight with a sudden jerk. Then the orator proceeded. But the little thing was not to be turned from her purpose, even though the heavens should fall, and the wrath of the Provincial Councillors consume her. Opening the door cautiously, the head became visible again, for the third time, and the thin voice, in hysterical accents, exclaimed, "Faither! faither! you're a-wanted the noo. Rabbie Ramsay wants his breeks!"

It was too much this even for senatorial gravity. Roars of laughter followed, in which the Speaker joined heartily, though raised at his own expense, for he himself was the "faither."

For the first four or five weeks after his arrival, Tom Hungerford did nothing but "loaf" about town. It was becoming very tiresome to him this sort of life he was living, and he was therefore anxious to find something or another he might turn his hand to, if it were possible. But these kind of some-things seldom do turn up readily to one's hand when they

are wanted, and were not easy to be had even in those early days. In some respects, though, the time passed by pleasantly enough. He got to know a lot of squatters who happened to be knocking about Dunedin just then; and, take them all in all, they were as nice a lot of young fellows to be amongst as one would wish—full of spirits, and up to all sorts of fun. The companionship might be pleasant, but I doubt if it did him much good. They were inclined to be rather fast in their ways of life, as was only natural, perhaps, in young men who had been living away beyond the pale of civilisation, in the far interior, for the past twelve months or more; and they led Tom into all kinds of temptations. He found himself lounging before bars, all day long, with some of his new companions, smoking and “nobblerising;”<sup>13</sup> nor could he well help himself either.

The “nobbler” was then, as now, an institution of the country. Then, as now, friends never met or parted without “shouting;”<sup>14</sup> and no bargain was ever looked upon as complete unless ratified by a “drink.” As to refusing, the thing was out of the question, unless, indeed, you wanted to insult a man. It was the custom of the place, and we know “What custom wills in all things must we do it.”<sup>15</sup> There were exceptions, of course, but they were very few. There were a few men, even then, who set their faces against this pernicious habit, but they were men who had around them all the soft influences of home, and were blessed with the companionship of gently-nurtured women—not the restless, energetic, hot-blooded young manhood, amongst whom he found himself.

There was a good deal of gambling going on too, and he was sometimes drawn into it, whether he would or no. Altogether, it was an indolent, unprofitable kind of life, and he knew it; and he told himself, more than once, it behoved

him to get away from the place as quickly as possible. He had two or three pressing invitations to go up country given him, and he made up his mind he would accept one of them, and start off at once.

The day before he intended starting, a friend of his, named Whitney, came into the room where he was sitting alone.

“I’ve had most infernal luck lately,” he began, after he had carefully closed the door and sat down. “After you left last night I was let in pretty heavy.”

“I’m very sorry to hear it. I noticed lately you’ve been losing a good deal. I’m thoroughly sick of the place myself, and I’m thinking of going up with Hornsby to-morrow for three or four weeks. You’d better start too and come along with us as far as our roads lie together.”

“It’s too late, my dear fellow,” answered Whitney. “I wish to heavens,” he continued, “I’d never come near this infernal hole. And yet, what’s one to do? Take my own case, for example. I’ve been knocking about up-country for the last thirteen months, with scarcely a soul to speak to, and sometimes not enough to eat. Why, just before I came down to town, I was snowed-up there in that place of mine, and for two months I had nothing to eat but corned beef and a few pounds of flour. Now, you know, after leading that sort of life, a fellow fancies he’s a right to enjoy himself, and have a bit of a “spree”<sup>16</sup> when he comes to town and gets among a lot of fellows he knows again. But I’ve gone too far this time; and the fact and the matter is, Hungerford, I must clear out altogether. I thought, perhaps, my interest in the station might suit you, and so I came up to speak to you about it.”

“Well, I don’t know,” said Tom, slowly, after he had paused for a minute to think the matter over. “Of course, it would depend altogether on the price you want. But isn’t there any chance of your being able to pull through? It seems such a



pity for you to sell out now, after you've got over the difficulty of starting the place."

"I must sell, old fellow. The station belongs to Atkins, but I have a lease of it for five years. I have got six hundred head of cattle of his running there for which he pays me ten shillings a piece a year, and I get a fourth of the increase given in. In eighteen months from this, he must put on two thousand ewes, and I am to give him two shillings wool-money and forty per cent increase, and at the end of the time he pays me for improvements. I have got some stock of my own too on the place. You can have the whole thing for a thousand pounds, if you like, and I'm sure it will pay you well at that."

"I'll think the matter over, Whitney, and I'll give you an answer tomorrow morning."

Tom did think the matter over, carefully, and the more he thought of it the more desirable did it seem that he should close with the offer. It was a good bargain: there was no doubt about that, as far at least as he could gather from the facts as they had been laid before him. As far as means were concerned, he saw his way to the making of the purchase. Then it would enable him to give up the kind of life he was leading, and provide Tim and himself with occupation and a home. And in this way it was settled that he should purchase the place, if, upon looking at it, he found it suited him.

### **Chapter III. — Off up Country.**

Tom Hungerford having made up his mind to close with Whitney's offer, if, upon looking at the place, he found it suited him, it was settled between them that they should both start up the country in the course of a day or two. There was a good deal to be done, however, one way and another, before they could get away. There was a horse to be picked up for Tom in the first place, and a good, useful horse was not to be picked up all at once; and there were a number of odds and ends besides to be got together, and they took some time in the getting; so that, instead of leaving on the second day, as they expected, it was with some difficulty they got off on the fourth.

When, at last, they did get off, they took the main south road, as it was called—though where the “road” was it would be difficult to say—and pushed on quickly past Lookout Point and Caversham. Then, at a good, swinging trot, they wound round by Green Island, with its bright, sunny knolls and pretty clumps of green bush, and, rising Saddle Hill, were soon on the top, looking down on the Taieri Plain beyond.

What a glorious expanse of plain it looks as you come upon it suddenly for the first time; and how rich, and fresh, and wholesome it appears all the year round—spring, summer, autumn, and winter! It certainly looked fresh, and fair, and fertile that morning, as it lay down below them, a couple of hundred yards from where they stood—fresh and fair as the garden of Eden itself, and fertile as the Delta of Egypt, as the eye followed it stretching away southward, some fifteen miles or more; with its rivers curving through it in the far off distance, like the trails of two silvery serpents, and its lakes glancing merrily in the midday sun, as pleasant to look on as the fish-pools of Heshbon.<sup>1</sup>

They stopped gazing at the scene for a minute or two, and then got down on to the plain below. The track nestled close

in alongside the hills now for some distance, and brought them to a little wayside accommodation house at last, where they stayed for a short time to bait their horses. Then they had the Taieri river running close by them until they got to the ferry;<sup>2</sup> and from the ferry onward they skirted the Waihola Lake for four or five miles. After passing the Gorge, they got out on to the Tokomairiro Plain beyond; but the country was very different, as to its appearance, from that they had come through lately. There was not a lake, or a river, or a mountain to be seen, nor anything in the way of greenness either; nothing, in fact, but a dreary, monotonous expanse that you might represent, accurately enough for all purposes of recognition, by a great daub of yellow ochre.

By this time the evening was closing in, and, as they had ridden pretty smartly the greater part of the way, they were not at all sorry to find themselves at the accommodation house where they meant to put up for the night.

It was a queer looking, straggling kind of place, this accommodation house, made up of wings and lean-to's. Everything about it was small—everything but the one room that occupied the entire front of the building, and that was large only by comparison.

To enter the house one had to go through this room. Now this going through it was not quite so easy as you would imagine, for it was crowded with all sorts of odds and ends; with cases of brandy, and gin and whiskey pushed away into the corners; with bags of flour, and corn, and sugar piled up a-top of one another in little heaps; with chests and half chests of tea lying carelessly about the floor; with shirts, and blouses, and jumpers, and moleskins, and hams, and flitches of bacon, and billies, and frying pans hanging down from the ceiling. Tom was very careful and very cautious in his movements as he made his way slowly through these obstacles; but, with all

his care and caution, he came to grief more than once before he reached the bar at the further end.

“Is that you, Mr. Whitney?” asked the buxom landlady, who was busily engaged, as they entered, serving her customers, but had desisted from her occupation for a moment to peer through the darkness at the new comers.

“Yes. How are you, Mrs. Galton? We’ve just come from town, and are precious hungry. Will tea soon be ready?”

“It will be ready in a minute or two.” And shortly afterwards the meal was announced.

They were both very hungry, and quite prepared to enjoy anything that was set before them in the way of food, provided, of course, the food was wholesome, and cooked with anything like ordinary care. The food placed before them on the table was “cooked,” but I doubt if it was wholesome, and it certainly was not tempting. There was nothing but beef steak; and the beef steak was very tough, and it was cut into great coarse joints; but that was not the worst of it. It was cold, and it was covered over with a thick coating of grease, and the grease floated about it in large lumps in the cold gravy at the bottom of the dish. It may readily be understood that, hungry as they were, Tom and his companion partook but sparingly of the fare—of the beef steak portion of it, I mean. But no such scruple seemed to interfere with the other guests around the table. But, then, they were great big, hulking fellows who had been out in the open air all day long, hard at work, and cared very little whether meat was tough or tender, hot or cold, provided only there was enough of it. There was certainly enough of it, and they all seemed very happy over it. No; not all of them, though. That stout florid looking man down at the end of the table didn’t seem very happy. There was nothing of the geniality of the dinner table about him, but then he looked as if he were a choleric old fellow at the

best of times. He looked choleric enough now, at all events, and had about him all the premonitory symptoms that tell of rising wrath; that is to say, he was very red in the face, and there was a deep scowl gathering darkly on his brow, and he kept on muttering to himself audibly from time to time. The outburst came at last, as everybody expected it would; but it came so suddenly, and there was such savage energy in the old fellow's ways and words, that the people were all taken by surprise, and startled for the moment.

“Damn you, you miserable crawler, what do you mean by asking a man to sit down to such stuff as that,” he shouted out fiercely in the ears of the landlord, who happened to be passing by behind him with a large teapot in his hand, thrusting a piece of the tough beef steak up into the poor man's very face, almost as he spoke. He was a poor, meek, mumbling creature, this landlord, and he was so astonished and utterly confounded at the savage abruptness of the attack, that he let the teapot tumble out of his hand in his dismay and very nearly scalded his angry guest. Then he stood looking down despairingly at the teapot, mumbling out some indistinct words of excuse the while as to the goodness of the meat; but the angry man would hear of no excuse.

“Speak out man, can't you,” he said, aggravatingly; but not a single word would he suffer the poor landlord to speak.

“Don't call it meat, for it isn't meat,” he continued, without pausing for a single instant. “Meat, indeed! Why, I've a fifteen year old bullock that would make better meat than that. I tell you what it is,” and, now he rose and confronted the meek man, “if you charge a single farthing for that stuff, I'll have you up for obtaining money under false pretences! But I'll expose you, you miserable crawler; I will, as sure as my name's Macgregor. I'll bring the whole thing before the Pro-

vincial Council; by Heavens, I will. See if I don't." And he stalked away out of the room, foaming with passion.

He was a runholder, so Whitney told Tom, an eccentric, impulsive kind of man, who was always getting himself into hot water with people. Later on in the evening, as the two young men were chatting away over their grog, Macgregor came over and joined them. He was a character, in his way, and a very amusing one to listen to, they thought him, as he sat there telling them of his colonial experiences in a dry pugnacious sort of way. He had lived pretty well in all the colonies and, according to his own showing, had been always an ill-used individual.

"You've heard of Mackenzie, haven't you?" he asked, after they had sat talking together about some indifferent matters for a short time.

"What Mackenzie do you mean? I know a lot of Mackenzies," answered Whitney.

"I mean Mackenzie the sheep stealer;<sup>3</sup> that fellow that went about the country stealing sheep, and driving them away back into Canterbury, into the Mackenzie Country as it's now called."

"Oh, yes; I've heard of him."

"Well, I was up in Christchurch when they brought him in there, and as I happened to be looking out for some country just then, I thought the fellow might be able to put me in the way of getting some, and so I managed to get in to see him in gaol. But he was as sullen a scoundrel as ever I came across in my life, and I couldn't get anything out of him, though I stayed talking to him half-an-hour at least. But somehow or another, he managed to escape that night, and would you believe it, the damned miserable crawlers up there thought I helped him to escape; and what did they do but arrest me the next day, and

the Superintendent kept me locked up for forty-eight hours.<sup>4</sup> I appealed to the law; but there was no law for a man then, nor now either, for the matter of that. I gave that miserable crawler of a Superintendent a bit of my mind though. I happened to meet him at a party one night; and seeing I was a stranger, without knowing who I was, he came up to speak to me. 'I hope you like this place,' he says to me. 'I like the place well enough,' I said, 'though I'm going to leave it shortly.'

'Why is that?' he asked. 'Because it's mismanaged. There's that damned miserable crawler of a Superintendent, he ought to be shut up in a lunatic asylum. I owe him a grudge, sir, myself, and I'll pay him out; I will. I'm a Botany Bay man,<sup>5</sup> sir, and by Heavens I'll throttle him if ever I come across him. Tell him so, sir, if you know him, with my compliments—Mr. Macgregor's compliments; and I walked away.'"

"Talking of Botany Bay," he continued, after a moment's pause, "reminds me of my first night in Dunedin. I was sitting, by myself, smoking in the long room of the Commercial,<sup>6</sup> when one of the men around came over and spoke to me. We were speaking away about one thing and another, when he asked me where I came from.

"I came from Botany Bay, sir," I said out loud. You should have seen how scared they all looked, and how quickly they all bolted out of the room. You might as well say you were the devil himself," he remarked, by way of explanation, "as say you were a Botany Bay man, a couple of years ago."

After this he sat silent for a short time smoking his pipe vigorously, then he called for another glass of whisky toddy, drank down this fresh supply of toddy, and again continued.

"I said, just now, a man had no protection here, but it's just as bad in Australia. I bought some sections once in Bathurst. Some little time after I bought them, I got a letter from the Commissioner of Crown Lands saying they found it was nec-

essary to alter the boundary of the town, and, as my sections were outside the new boundary, they were willing to give me as many equally good ones inside it. I went to Bathurst at once and found that the sections they wanted to give me weren't worth having and that the whole thing was a swindle from beginning to end. The Chief Commissioner and Chief Surveyor, I found out, had some sections on the other side and moved the boundary that way, so as to get their land inside the town. I went to the Waste Lands Board and I told them plainly what I thought of them. I told them, in very plain terms, that they were nothing more or less than a parcel of swindlers. One of the members was a canting old hypocrite, but I don't think he'll forget me in a hurry.

'You believe in the Bible, don't you, sir,' I said to him.

'I hope and trust I do, Mr. Macgregor,' says he, turning up the whites of his eyes, with a look of pious horror on his sanctimonious face, as if he were shocked at the bare mention of such a doubt.

'Well, sir, if you do, I don't envy you.'

'What do you mean?' he asked, forgetting his sanctimonious look in his surprise.

'I mean this, sir,' I said, 'that the Bible tells you 'cursed is he that moveth his neighbour's landmark.'<sup>7</sup>

The people around burst out laughing, and I left the room; but I never got any satisfaction about my sections from that day to this."

Whitney and Tom started away the next morning in good time after breakfast. When they got some little distance beyond the accommodation house they turned off to the right, and from that out had to make their way along as best they could, for there was not a single mark or vestige of a track of any kind to be seen until they got to their journey's end. But Whitney was a first-rate bushman and very seldom at fault. He



had a good eye for the lie of a country and knew a lot of prominent landmarks along the way and seemed intuitively, as it were, to follow the best spur. There was not very much difficulty, however, as far as Mount Stewart, for it was visible pretty well the whole way from the plain upwards.<sup>8</sup> They got to the top about midday, and rested there a short time, and let the horses feed about while they did so.

All along the spur as they came up the way was thick with tutu but here, on the top, it grew thicker than elsewhere. The young shoots looked fresh and tempting and it did seem odd to see hungry horses pushing aside the dainty mouthfuls with disdainful tossings of their heads, and carefully pick out the grass instead. It seemed very odd to Tom, the new comer, as he sat watching the proceeding, until he was made aware of the danger; and then he spoke a word or two to his companion about the deceptiveness of appearances. Appearances were deceptive certainly as far as this tutu was concerned. To look at it, gleaming softly and brightly in the noonday sun, its virgin greenness dotted with clumps of bright purple berries, that hung about it like bunches of currants, who would suppose that beneath this beauty there lurked a deadly upas—destructive alike to man and beast.<sup>9</sup>

The air was still and rare, with no fog to cloud it; and here, from Mount Stewart, the wide look-out was distinctly visible for some distance; but it was a look-out that had nothing of interest in it, and gave you no pleasure. Everything was colored with a yellow monotonous tinge; and the color was unrelieved by any other shade, except the thin shadows that rested on the deep gullies in long dark streaks, but they only added to the dreariness of the out-look.

Descending from Mount Stewart by a spur of easy gradient, they forded the Waitahuna river and, after leaving Waitahuna, they came into the speargrass country.<sup>10</sup> The speargrass

grew close and thick; and though Tom was a good horse-man—and what Irishman is not?—he had quite as much as he could do to keep an easy seat in his saddle. I don't mean to say there was any very great danger of his being thrown off, but I do mean to say he was in much danger of being jerked on to the pommel of his saddle, or of being disturbed unpleasantly in some other way. No; the getting through this speargrass was not easy; was certainly not comfortable. To my mind, indeed, there is little or no comfort in riding where the rider has always to be on the look-out, always ready with knee, and hand and eye to guard against being bumped on his saddle, and sorely bruised in his nether parts. Now a man must be ever in this state of readiness when riding through speargrass country, for the ride is a constant succession of jumps the whole time; and the jumps are quick, sudden, uncertain—now to this side, now to that, anon straight ahead.

The sun was sinking low down behind the hills, and the light of day had all but merged into twilight as they pulled up on a little flat, by the side of the Tuapeka creek that ran rippling through it. It was good camping ground, and they decided to remain there for the night, and set about making the necessary preparations at once. The horses were unsaddled, and then tethered; and after that some firewood was collected and a fire lit, and then the billy was filled with water and put on the fire, and Whitney remained superintending the preparations for supper, whilst Tom went and fetched some manuka scrub for their beds.<sup>11</sup> Then, when the meal was ready, they sat down and enjoyed it thoroughly, as men do under similar circumstances. And afterwards, by the blazing watch fire, followed two hours of calm enjoyment, when tales were told and confidences imparted; and the purple tintings on the mountains and the short-lived twilight merged imperceptibly into the gloom of night; and Tom and his companion

at last wrapped themselves in their possum rugs and pressed their soft and fragrant couches. And there was a hush and a stillness around, unbroken, save by the murmuring of the brook, or by the whirr of the pekapeka<sup>12</sup> or by the browsing of the horses, when an unearthly sound in the air startled Tom, but only for a moment, to learn from Whitney it was the cry of the “more-pork” he had heard.

They were on their way by sunrise next morning; and their way led them past clumps of green manuka scrub that scented the air far and near with a pleasant aromatic perfume. And, in the early morning, the tui and the korimoko<sup>13</sup> trilled forth their soft, low notes of melody. And solitary cabbage trees shot up silently along the route; and slender stalked toi-tois drooped their heavy tufted heads up above them.<sup>14</sup> And, as the morning advanced, there was an unbroken calm around—a stillness as of death in the air, and a silence as of primeval earth in the ranges. But there was nothing else worth speaking of until the Molyneux<sup>15</sup> appeared in sight towards evening. When they got down on to the bank, they halted to watch the flood of waters below.

What maddening tumult and commotion to be sure! Whirling, and struggling, and battling onward rolled the mighty masses of water, tumbling one another over and over in vast volumes and in close embrace, as if they were angry spirits of the flood let loose, and were fighting fiercely for the mastery. There was no pause, no cessation. Hither and thither the fierce warfare raged with sullen roar, hissing about from side to side in angry eddies flecked with foam.

It was getting late, however; and the Carrick<sup>16</sup> ranges were throwing dark shadows across their path already, so they pushed on quickly along the bank for two miles or so, and then they struck off through the flat until they came to a deep gully; and they found themselves at their destination.

#### **Chapter IV. — On the Station.**

Having arrived at their destination, the first thing Tom Hungerford did was to look about him; and there was very little to look at. There was a small “whare” close by,<sup>1</sup> and that was about all there was to be seen. There was no homestead, nor stockyard, nor enclosure of any kind; nothing in fact, but this solitary little hut, which was one of the smallest and most primitive of its kind that a man could well crawl into. And a man had actually to crawl to get inside it, and to stoop very low too, when he got in; for the little canvas doorway was a small hole and the ridgepole stood scarcely four feet and a half above the floor.

Altogether, it was a most simple affair outside and in; just a few manuka poles stuck in the ground and lashed to one another at the top, and covered over with some coarse grass; that was all, that, and a little mud chimney at the end. It was just as simple inside. There was nothing, in fact, within, but a few bunks made of bullock hide and covered with fern; excepting the little deal candle box where the pannikins and tin plates were kept. I am wrong, though, the roof was pretty full of things; and an odd assortment of things they were too.

It was not that the things were either rich or rare

But one wondered how the devil they got there.<sup>2</sup>

And well might one wonder, too, to find, stuck above his head, pipes, and spurs, and stock-whips and stirrups, and bits, and pocket-books, and boxes of matches, and watches, and sheath knives, and belts, and a gun or two, and some moa bones.

Whitney’s arrival was a cause of great rejoicing to the inhabitants of the little hut, who rushed out to meet him when they knew of his presence and welcomed him back with words of warm welcome. To them his coming was a great event. You can readily understand that it should be so, when you bear in mind he was bringing them letters from their far-

off homes; letters that have been lying in dusty pigeon holes at the post-office for many and many a long month, whilst those who sent them, dear loving souls, have been yearning and pining, and waiting for answers until hope has well-nigh died away within them.

Then, besides these letters, he was bringing them news from the outside world; and what, I am afraid, they valued very nearly as much as the letters, and a great deal more than the news, he was bringing them tobacco.

Sublime tobacco, which from East, to West,  
Cheers the Tar's labour, and the Turkman's rest;  
Which on the Moslems Ottoman divides;  
His hours, and rivals opium and his brides.<sup>3</sup>

Aye; so it may. But not in Wapping or the Strand; no, nor in Stamboul itself, either, has it ever been enjoyed with a keener zest than in those little huts of bygone days, that dotted the far interior.

The little party who welcomed them back so very warmly, consisted of three individuals. Two out of three were cadets.<sup>4</sup> Now cadets, as a rule, are very objectionable young men, who come out to the colonies to make their fortunes in a year or two, and fancy the right way to do so is to be very lazy, and very idle, and to give themselves airs; or worse still, they are young reprobates who are sent out amongst us to reform, and they carry out the reformation in the most approved style, by going headlong to the devil at railway speed. But there was nothing objectionable about these two young fellows; at all events, they were neither of them given to the running of the devil's race, nor to the shrinking of their work, either.

Henry Fitzherbert was not, certainly, one of this sort. He had better stuff in him than that; and was a bright, sunny-faced, fine-looking young lad if, indeed, he could be called

a lad, seeing that twenty years had passed over his head. His father, Colonel Fitzherbert, having decided to settle in Otago as soon as the completion of his children's education permitted of his doing so, had sent his son out, beforehand, as the pioneer of the family. Happening to fall across Whitney, some little time before, young Fitzherbert had come on with him to the station and there remained since, picking up such information as he could as to the management of cattle.

George Lindsay, the other cadet, was just as good a lad, in his way, as his companion. One of a large family of a poor Warwickshire clergyman, young Lindsay had to push himself on in the world as best he could. But he was going the right way to work about it, by which you are to understand, he relied entirely on his own exertions, and was ready, at all times to turn his hand to the doing of such work as came in his way to do. We will not meet him often in these pages but he, assuredly, never came to grief in after years, nor did he attain great wealth, either, though, when last I saw him, he was contented and a well-to-do settler.

Gabriel Read was the third member of the party. Gabriel Read, whose name has since become a kind of household word amongst us as the first discoverer of gold in New Zealand. I have his photograph in my mind's eye, now as I write, such as he was when I first knew him.

Let me see if I can't produce this photograph. He was not a tall man to begin with, about five feet nine, or five feet nine and a half at the outside; and he was well put together, though he gave you the idea of being an active man rather than a strong one. The face was a very pleasing one, that is to say the expression was pleasing; and it was fair and ruddy, and very much bronzed by constant exposure to the weather; and was set off, I think, by a great long brown beard he wore, soft and silky looking, and very luxuriant in its growth.

He was what you would call “a regular good fellow” always good natured, and always obliging, but never cringing. There was about him, in fact, in his words and in his ways, a happy combination of two qualities you seldom find going hand in hand together, the *suaviter in modo* and the *fortiter in re*.<sup>5</sup> He was a Tasmanian native, and of a respectable family. Like most other young Tasmanians, he left his native country at an early age, and crossed over to Victoria, where a brother of his settled down as a sheep-farmer. He knocked about Victoria for some years, turning his hand to such work as fell in his way, until the goldfields broke out and gave him occupation of a more exciting nature. The digger’s usual luck attended him for two or three years as he knocked about from field to field worth hundreds of pounds today, without a shilling to bless himself with to-morrow and, on whole, doing very little good for himself. He was a restless kind of fellow, and grew tired of this knocking about in Victoria, and he must needs go to California, but, for some time, he was no better off in California than had been in Victoria. At last, as luck would have it, he came across a good claim up by Marysville somewhere,<sup>6</sup> and he stuck to it for a time, and what was more to the purpose, he cleared out of it eventually, with a good round sum of money in his pocket. With this money he bought a schooner and some cargo, and went cruising about amongst the Islands of the Pacific, and, on the whole, was doing very well when he was wrecked. It was close by the spot where Captain Cook was killed, near Kara Kakooa Bay,<sup>7</sup> I think, in Hawaii, one of the Sandwich Islands, that this misfortune befell him and deprived him of his all; and very nearly deprived him of his life too. He fared badly on the coral reefs and, altogether, had a very narrow escape of it; but he did escape and made his way up to Honolulu, and, from Honolulu he worked his passage to Sydney, and from Sydney he came on

to Nelson. At Nelson he fell in with Whitney, assisted him to drive some cattle overland, and then entered his services for a few months, until, the winter was over.

Gathered together, and briefly told, this was Read's history, as I learnt it from himself, in detached pieces, by the blazing watch fire, by the wayside journey in the tent at night when telling me of the many adventures that had befallen him during his chequered and somewhat eventful life.

Tom and Whitney rested the next day; and as they were both very tired after the long ride, they enjoyed the rest thoroughly. To Tom, however, the rest was more especially enjoyable, for he was without practice in the way of riding of late and felt stiff, accordingly, and sorely bruised. But the next morning they, all five of them, started off by daybreak for a distant portion of the run where some cattle were supposed to be knocking about. They arrived on the ground in good time and camped for the night in a large cave where they were very comfortable and very happy. The next day the muster began. The great object of the muster seemed to be to make as much noise as possible, and they made enough of noise in all conscience, who-ooop-ing, and coo-e-ing and cracking their stockwhips like maniacs; as they scoured the country for miles and miles, looking sharply on the ground the while for any cattle tracks that might be visible. But this noise was not made without a meaning: It was meant to rouse the cattle. Resting under some friendly shade or another or hidden away down in some deep gully, browsing off the green herbage by the margin of the creek, this sound comes suddenly upon them, causing them to scamper up to the nearest height to satisfy their curiosity. Curiosity is strong within them—strong as in a woman—and must be satisfied. The stockman's eye is upon them in a moment: Then comes the pursuit and flight. What a glorious exciting race it is, to be



sure! How quickly a man's breath comes and goes; and how instinctively he settles down in his saddle; and little he thinks of danger, as he rushes through dangerous swamps, over ugly creeks, and down precipitous gullies in that mad headlong race! And the horse is just as excited as the man. How he quivers and strains and takes the bit between his teeth! Try to pull him up; you might as well pull at the Pyramids of Egypt. Sit still and feel the fresh air strike sharply your face, and let him have his own way, for he will have it whether you like or no, until he heads yon mob of cattle in front. Then, once they are headed, look out for yourself, for quick as thought, he will turn around, suddenly, on his own length.

This was the kind of work they were at all day long, and they were hungry, and jaded and sunburnt, and covered thickly over with dust, as they dropped into the camp in the evening, in ones and twos. Young Lindsay was the last to return. He was very late in turning up, so very late, indeed, that some alarm began to be felt about him, and they were just on the eve of starting off in search of him when he came in on foot. He had lost his horse altogether, he said, in a swamp a few miles off higher up on the Rough Ridge.<sup>8</sup> The loss occurred in a somewhat unusual manner too, at all events I know of but one other instance of the same kind occurring. The thing happened in this way. As the young man was making his way back, towards dusk, rather tired and very thirsty, he came across some water and got off to have a drink. Tying the bridle to the stirrup, he let the horse graze about whilst he filled and lit his pipe. This done he got up to get his horse but there was no horse to be seen. At last he caught sight of the animal in a swamp close by, plunging violently and sinking deeper and deeper every plunge he made until, finally, he disappeared from sight altogether. They all went over next

morning and saw the thin crust of the swamp broken and muddy, but it was too dangerous to get near.

The cattle were driven home, and then a general muster was made. Satisfied that the number was tolerably correct, and satisfied too as to the goodness of the bargain, Tom Hungerford became the owner of the place. Then he and Whitney and Read started for town; and Tim Dwyer returned with him to take Read's place.

After their return their hands were pretty full for some time. A stock yard and a larger hut were put up; and a small patch of garden was fenced in and, altogether, they had as much to do as they could well manage.

It was a rough life to live, perhaps, but take it all in all, it was a very pleasant one for a young man; full of freedom, and excitement, and healthy occupation. It was a life without care and without anxiety, when the days flew quickly by, and the summer glided into autumn, and the autumn into winter, unnoticed by those whose history I have been writing.

## **Chapter V. — Gabriels Gully.**

A new epoch is now about to dawn on the colony. Otago, at the time its southern province, is about to emerge from obscurity and insignificance, into the noonday glare of notoriety and importance. Founded originally on Free Church principles, and colonised a dozen years previously by a hardy band of Scotchmen, the young settlement had hitherto preserved undisturbed the distinctive features of its birth. In the meantime, its handful of inhabitants lived a life of peaceful industry, unless when, now and then, aroused by some petty squabble, social, political or religious; but too few in numbers to develop the resources placed within their reach. These resources were neither few nor unimportant. Nature, indeed, had scattered them around with lavish profusion. To a country of considerable size, equal in extent to Scotland,<sup>1</sup> she gave a fine invigorating climate, large plains and valleys, unequalled in richness of soil; large lakes, great rivers, and immense tracts of finely grassed and well watered country, admirably adapted for pastoral pursuits. Such was Otago when it was suddenly aroused from its state of Arcadian simplicity, and sluggish inactivity, into sudden animation, by the whisper of the magic word—Gold.

Then the old story. When the Mormon volunteer of the Mexican war, James Marshall, working at the race of Sutter's Mill in the Coloma Valley, California, picked up that handful of yellow flakes, and rushing to his employer told the news, the echoes of his voice awoke the world. Thousands of hardy, reckless adventurers hastened thither from every quarter of the habitable globe. The bands which knit society were suddenly rent asunder, and in the confusion and disorganization that followed, chaos seemed to have come again. Then—but why go on, why weary the reader with details already too well known. The end justified the means. The end meant progress, civilization.

Then away across the broad Pacific, in the great Australian continent, the wondrous tale was taken up. Here, again, the accidental flashing of those shining scales, exposed to the eyes of Mr. Campbell through the thin coating of sand, and at first mistaken by him for mica, electrified mankind.<sup>2</sup>

And now in Otago, Gabriel Read is about to produce the third act of the drama. The results the same; the manner of the discovery different. The first two being merely accidental; the third resulting from sagacious deductions. It was the 8th of June, 1861. The short wintry day was drawing to a close. There was a chill frosty feeling in the air; and everything around looked cold and cheerless, everything save the deep sunset coloring, that was bathing the rugged Mount Valpy in a copper colored glow,<sup>3</sup> as Tom Hungerford and Henry Fitzherbert descended the spur, leading to the Tuapeka flat. They were descending in single file, leading their horses, and had approached close to the usual camping place at the bottom of the spur, when Tom, who led the way, stopped suddenly, and pointing to a small tent at a little distance off, exclaimed.

“We’re to have company to night, it seems.”

“So it seems. Some stockmen, I suppose, looking out for stray cattle.”

“Very likely. It can’t be shepherds travelling sheep, or we’d have heard the dogs before now. But no matter who it belongs to, the shelter of the tent won’t come amiss to night.”

“It does look as if it were going to freeze uncommonly hard,” was Fitzherbert’s rejoinder, as they moved in the direction of the tent.

When they reached it there was nobody to be seen; but, shortly after, the owner appeared in sight emerging from a gully close by.

“I’m blest if it isn’t Read,” said Tom to his companion. “Hallo, Read,” he shouted out, “What in the name of Heaven, brings you here.”

“Look at that, Mr. Hungerford.”

He had come close up to them by this time; so close that they noticed, at once, how strangely excited he was; close enough, too, to take in, at a glance, that the small wet mass at the bottom of the dish consisted of dull yellow flakes.

“It’s good honest gold.”

They had turned their eyes from the dish to his face, inquiringly, and he answered the look of inquiry in these words. Good honest gold. Yes; so it certainly seemed. And yet—surely there must be some mistake. Gold! The thing seemed astounding; nay, impossible; incredible. But what was it, then? They examined it; weighed it; in handfuls, in pieces. Yes; it was gold. Very likely it lay scattered all around, them, thick as sand on the sea shore, and if so, what was to prevent, them from gathering it up in handfuls, from enriching themselves beyond their most sanguine of day dreams? Had not people become suddenly rich in this way already; and was it not a fact that monster nuggets had been picked up before now by men inexperienced in digging life? After all; what was it? Why, nothing more than luck; a mere lottery in fact. But were they less lucky than their neighbours; less likely to draw a prize than other men? Told in few words, these were the thoughts passing through their minds. You may smile, and call it weakness; but smile as you may, it was a weakness you would have succumbed to yourself. The gold fever was upon them, remember, in its first and most malignant stage. The blood was coursing swiftly through their veins and their pulses were beating audibly, and there was a burning flush on the cheek, a quick throbbing of the heart, a choking sensation about the throat. *Auri sacra fames.*<sup>4</sup> They had all the unmistakable symptoms of the malady. Mechanically they followed Read into the tent; mechanically they partook of the meal placed before them.

Then he began to tell them the story of the discovery, and the telling aroused their attention.

“After leaving the station,” he began, “I went to Dunedin, as you know, intending to stay there a few days, and then start away up-country, on a prospecting trip. You all laughed at me, you remember, when I told you there was gold in the country, but from the very first moment I set eyes on it, and saw how very like California it was, I was quite certain in my own mind, the gold was there. I meant, as I say, to have stayed only a few days in town, but I stopped longer. The fact of the matter is, I got on the “spree” and spent all my money. There was nothing for it, of course, but get a job somewhere, and make a fresh rise again. I got on with a Tokomairiro farmer, stayed with him until I made enough to start me afresh, and, then, with my swag on my back, I came straight up here to Tuapeka. That gully you saw me come out of just now, struck me as a likely looking place, and so, yesterday morning, I walked up along it until I came to a spot where a sheep track crossed the creek. The track made the bed rock quite bare just here, and stooping down to examine it, I saw several bright specks lying about. I knew at once it was gold. I was quite certain in my own mind I would find it, but now that the gold was lying before me, my heart jumped into my mouth. I ‘fossicked’ about with my knife for some time, and scraped out eight ounces before I left. I prospected the gully today in several places along the creek, and I found gold everywhere I tried for it. I think I got about twenty ounces altogether.”

“But do you think there’s any quantity of it, Read? Mightn’t you have only dropped upon a few scattered patches?” asked Henry Fitzherbert, filling in a short pause.

Read’s natural ease had returned to him after the first few words of greeting had been spoken, and, until now, he had been telling them of the discovery in a voice calm and

emotionless. But now this calmness deserted him again, and he flushed up, once more, and became visibly excited as he answered.

“Scattered patches! No, Mr. Fitzherbert. I have been pretty well on every goldfield in the world, and, I tell you, I’ve never seen better prospects than I got yesterday. It will turn out a large goldfield, and a rich one, too. In a few weeks you will see yonder gully crowded with people, and every spur and gully about turned over and worked. Before we know where we are, hundreds and thousands will be amongst us here, and from here they will spread out and discover other fields. For my own share in the matter, I ask for nothing in the way of reward or compensation. It will be reward enough for me to know that hereafter my name will not be forgotten in connexion with this discovery.”

Though late in retiring to rest, they were, all three, astir next morning at early dawn. Read had slept well, he said, but his two companions could not say the same, having, in fact, slept anything but well. They were too excited to sleep. Their minds were too busy with the events of the day to permit of their doing so; and they became feverish, and restless, and tossed about from side to side, and once a man gets into this state, we know, there is but little chance of his sleeping well. A few good sousing of their heads, however, in the creek refreshed them, and the unpleasant results had well-nigh vanished altogether, as they started with Read, after breakfast, for the scene of his operations.

Entering the mouth of Gabriels Gully, as it was afterwards called, they followed the little creek, that ran through it, for half a mile or so. It was a gully two hundred yards wide, perhaps, at its entrance, and from the entrance curved away for some distance, and then became a narrow gorge, that was not thirty feet across; and beyond this gorge it opened out

again into a large circular basin. It was here, in this gorge, just before it opened out into that basin I have been speaking of that the sheep track crossed the gully that Read had picked up those bright golden specks from the bed-rock and it was here that his claim lay. They soon reached the spot; but when they got there, there was nothing very wonderful to be seen. They saw a square, shelving, shallow hole, and nothing more. When they looked in they saw the bottom had a blue slaty look about it, and it was full of fissures, and crevices, and "purses" and gutters that ran into all sorts of shapes and forms. They saw, too, that in some places, this square hole was not a foot in depth; whilst, in other places, it was two and a half or three feet deep; and that in this deeper portion of it, there was a lot of water lying. They saw all this, but it was in a vague dreaming kind of way. Gold lay down below them, and they begrudged every minute that kept them from getting at it. Eagerly pick and spade were seized on and used, excitement lending additional strength to young arms already strong. Boulders and earth soon disappeared, and the wash dirt was reached before very long, and, there, sparkling thickly through it, was the bright yellow gold. And, then, this stuff was "washed up" and the yet richer stuff was "fossicked" out of the "pockets" and crevices, and the softer portions of the slaty bottom, with spoon and knife, and panned off; and, in this way, they worked on with unwearied energy, all day long, until darkness set in and put an end to further work. That night when they divided the gold, they had a pound weight each of them.

Before retiring to rest, Hungerford and Fitzherbert took counsel together as to their future plans; and the result of this counsel was that Henry should start for the station, returning with Tim Dwyer, young Lindsay, and such provisions as he could lay his hands on; whilst Tom would go on to town,



bringing back tools and other necessaries. Read, meantime, promised them he would mark them off a claim, next his own, and protect it, if need be, during their absence.

The morning following his arrival in Dunedin, Tom Hungerford went to call upon the Superintendent. He had been entrusted with a letter from Read for him, respecting this gold discovery, and proceeded in person to deliver it as soon as the Government offices were open.<sup>5</sup> Of course you are prepared to be told that these Government offices were unpretentious and humble in their appearance; and so they were very humble. But humility is not inconsistent with comfort, and they were not comfortable; in fact, there was not one iota of comfort about them. The wind blew through the walls with easy freedom, and the rain descended through the roof in refreshing showers; and altogether they were suggestive of extreme misery. They had none of the surroundings of Government offices. There was nothing to remind one of the traditional awe of mysterious statecraft there and outwardly, to the eye, they seemed to have dispensed with the quips, quibbles, and “how not to do it” of circumlocution offices; but it was only outwardly. The office Tom Hungerford found himself ushered into was not one whit better off as regards comfort than any of the others, though it was the Superintendent’s sanctum sanctorum. Colonel Dixon, the Superintendent,<sup>6</sup> was sitting in the office when Tom entered, and received him very kindly, asking him to sit down and excuse him whilst he read Read’s letter.

“This is very strange news,” he remarked, as he ran his eye hurriedly over the contents. “Very strange news, indeed,” he continued, reading it over a second time, more carefully, and then laying it on the table. He spoke in a crisp, cheery tone of voice, and was crisp and cheery to look at too. Then he had a chatty, offhand way about him, and was suave and

pleasant in his manner, and altogether impressed Tom very favorably. He was a gentleman—a thorough gentleman—there was no mistake about that; and he was an old soldier—that too you could tell at a glance. But you would never have guessed that he was a Company's man, for he had nothing of the bilious old Indian officer about him; but, on the contrary, was bright, and brisk, and active. Publicly and privately he stood high in the estimation of the world around him, and he knew it, and hugged the knowledge close to his breast, for he dearly loved the praise of men.

“I suppose you have just come down from this—what do you call it again?—aye, Tuapeka? Now, tell me, what are the particulars of this discovery?”

Tom told him the facts fully.

“And you think it will become a large goldfield, eh?”

“Well, sir, I'm a new chum at digging, and my opinion isn't worth much; but Read says it's going to turn out a very large goldfield, and I suppose he ought to know something about the matter.”

“Let me see, whereabouts is this—this Tuapeka?” and he walked across the room to a large map of the province hanging against the wall.

“Will you just mark, the exact spot, as nearly as you can,” he added, handing Tom a pencil. When the position of the place had been found out, and marked, then they resumed their seats, and he continued his inquiries.

“What sort of a fellow is this Read?—middle-sized, long brown beard, pleasing, intelligent face?” he repeated, re-echoing Tom's description. “Let me see; I fancy I must have met him somewhere,” and he paused. “Ah! yes, I have it; I remember now,” he continued after a moment.

“It was at a meeting of the Tokomairiro electors. I was addressing them just before the election for the Superinten-

dency, when a man answering your description got up and asked me if I would recommend that a sum of money should be placed on the estimates for the purpose of prospecting the country. He was a very intelligent fellow, I remember, and impressed me very favorably at the time.”

“I have no doubt it was Read, for he lived at Tokomairiro just about that time,” replied Tom.

“I suppose you brought some gold down with you?”

“Yes, sir; I brought down two pounds weight.”

“Two pounds weight, eh? Upon my life that looks well,” and the Colonel weighed the bag in his hand as he spoke. Then he emptied a portion of the contents on a sheet of foolscap paper, held his eyes close to it, ran his fingers through the flakes, picked out the larger ones, and placed them on the palm of his hand for a more careful scrutiny.

“It certainly looks as if there was something in it,” he said, handing the bag back to its owner—speaking not of the bag, however, but of the discovery.

“If it should turn out anything,” he continued, “of course it will have a great effect on the future of Otago. I can’t say what the Government will do in that case, but I shall certainly recommend that Read should be rewarded. I must call the Executive together at once, and lay all the particulars before them. They may wish to see you; if so, I will drop you a line by the messenger. Where shall he find you?”

“I’m staying at Tamora House but I’m going away back again tomorrow.”

“Upon my life, I envy you. I only wish I were going too. Nothing in the world would give me greater pleasure than to have a shy at it myself. Much better fun that, I can tell you, than being stuck up here in this dingy office. Good bye,” he added, shaking Tom’s hand warmly, as the latter rose to leave, “and thank you very much for your kindness. I shall

very likely take a run up myself in the course of a few days, and will probably ask you for a shake-down. I'm an old campaigner, you know, and I want nothing more than my plaid, and a mouthful to eat. By-the-bye," he continued, as Tom reached the door, "the *Colonist* comes out to-morrow. Would you mind seeing Hamilton and giving him the particulars."<sup>7</sup>

He did call at the *Colonist* office, and went over the story again, whilst the editor, pen in hand, took down the notes for to-morrow's paragraph. In fact, he had not a moment's peace or quietness until he retired to his bed late that night. At the corners, as he passed along, he came upon excited knots of people, who appealed to him anxiously for information. The storekeepers and their customers rushed out of the stores, when they saw him go by, asking him the same questions over and over again. And when he got back to his lodgings, rather hungry, at last, it was only to find a crowd there awaiting his arrival. Then, during the evening, the Provincial Secretary, Provincial Treasurer, a few squatters, and others, dropped in to hear the news. It spread throughout the town in every direction, and Dunedin was strangely agitated that night with excitement, hope, and anticipation.

## **Chapter VI. — *Auri Sacra Fames.***

The news of the discovery of gold swept over the land like the blast of some fierce revival. The minds of men, even of strong men, bent beneath its force, and succumbed to the fever and frenzy of the hour. Reason, common sense, discretion, all those qualities, in fact, which we are supposed to bring into use in our common everyday life had for the moment vanished - swallowed up by this rapacious golden hunger, this *auri sacra fames*. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, with the blood so hot and the brain so feverish? Of all unaccountable things, surely one of the most unaccountable is this sudden frenzy that possesses men, body and soul, when the first sight of gold is seen. *Auri sacra fames*. Aye, the malady was on all men just then. Here were runholders, farmers, storekeepers, merchants, shrewd men, sharp in business, frantically rushing off in search of golden nuggets when the nuggets lay around them; ready to their hands.

Did they but think for a moment before they scampered thus away, they would have seen that the mutton and beef, the butter and eggs, the spades and shovels, the tea and sugar they were turning their backs upon would turn out richer claims than any they should find up in yonder gully. But there was no method in this madness.

The lawyer thought not of clients when he closed his office; not, indeed, that a client would have darkened his door for many a day even if he had remained, but he never gave himself a moment's thought about the matter one way or another. The doctor, in going to this El-Dorado, was unconscious that he should find himself in the midst of his patients and on the very spot where his skill would be most required.

The ploughman left his plough and team unyoked in the furrow. The clerk's ledger was left open on his desk. The shepherd fled past his boundary; but his sheep were not

turned back. The shout of the stockman would have sent his mobs of bullocks back to their camping ground; but he rode past them, and that shout was not given. Master and servant, employer and employed thought of nothing, cared for nothing but to reach this promised land. They jostled past one another on the road, each one striving to reach Gabriels Gully first, and, by stooping down, pick up those golden nuggets that lay scattered about up there.

But they very soon found out that nuggets were not to be had for the mere stooping; were sometimes not to be had by those did more than stoop—who blistered their hands, and broke their backs, and splashed about all day long up to their knees in mud and water. In a few days, or in a month at most, the illusion vanished, and men were brought to their right minds.

Some sickened under the privations and discomforts. Many wanted stamina—the bone and muscle which they must have who would successfully dig and delve with pick and spade. But even they who had health and strength did not all succeed. Gold did not always come in quick enough to satisfy the impatient. Then too, claims could not always be had in desirable localities—in localities, that is to say, where claims were worth the having. There were, certainly, some snug, comfortable claims along the banks of the creek, where the sinking was shallow and the water not more than knee-deep; where the labor was light, and a man could earn his five or his fifty pounds a day, as the case might be; but this ground along the creek was limited in extent. The background was not then regarded in a very favorable light; indeed, just at first, it was quite unoccupied. Perhaps now and then some more daring spirit than ordinary would attempt a “shaft” or a “paddock” in this background; but the fierce rush of water soon stopped this proceeding. In this way it came about that, besides the

sick and weakly, there were many disappointed men too who left the goldfields in those early days.

Just at the first, however, there was very little change observable in the population, as to numbers, I mean. But after a while, perhaps in the space of a month, or it might be six weeks after Read's discovery, a change was observable, and very plainly observable too. It began to be pretty plainly seen that the new goldfield was no longer in the hands of the "old identity" altogether; and if things went on much longer in the same way, one might well doubt if it would remain in their hands at all soon. Wild looking fellows, raw boned and long limbed, strangely got up in slouch hats, long boots, red shirts, bowie knives and revolvers began to troop in, in tens, in twenties, and in fifties. They had been startled in their claims at Ballarat, at Bendigo, Castlemaine, and Lambing Flat by the news of this discovery of gold at Tuapeka,<sup>1</sup> and, after the manner of miners, had started forthwith for the "new rush," bringing with them their energy and experience. And this energy and experience soon began to work wonders. That unoccupied ground; lying away to the back of the creek, was no longer unoccupied. But what became of the water, you will ask? Water, indeed! Tell these old hands where to get water for their sluice boxes and they understand you; but they would not have understood you had you referred to it as an obstacle in the way of sinking paddocks:<sup>2</sup> Indeed, I think the chances are they would have laughed in your face had you mentioned the subject to them, and very likely, would have asked you what the blazes you knew about it; or, would have flung a much hotter word in your teeth in all probability.

A strait laced man might possibly object to the strongness of the language of this old hand, but he could not withhold from him his admiration for the wonderful changes his industry and experience had wrought in Tuapeka. You know

that, previous to his arrival, the neglected swampy flat which lay behind the creek had withstood all attempts to work it, but now it was paddocked and burrowed from one end to the other. In truth, there was a rich harvest being gathered there now; richer, I think, than in any other part of the field; and this being so, “jumping,” of course, became a favorite pastime, as did also fierce combats over every foot of ground. But this burrowing was not confined to the flat. If you walked up the spurs, or along the gullies, or on the tops of the ranges you saw they were pierced with shafts and tunnels. The whole neighborhood, in fact, was one large honeycomb, through which it would not be pleasant to grope one’s way after dark; but there were other dangers besides the chance of tumbling into a deep hole. I have just told you that the Tuapeka had become a large honeycomb, and I have intimated that the human bees who formed this honeycomb had the hum, the industry, and the energy of their insect prototypes. But they had other qualities besides.

They were rough and rugged, but open-hearted and generous withal. If I had to describe them in one word, I would say they were plucky. They were just the sort of fellows a man would like to have by him in some fierce struggle where life and death were at stake. Now the appearance of such men on this young goldfield, could not be accounted otherwise than good; but like all good things it had its drawback. Along with this inpouring of what was desirable there had come too, unfortunately, a great deal of scum and dirt—a great deal of dishonesty and of depravity.

These early rushes were swelled by old lags—men who valued a man’s life as little as they did that of a dog; thus gambling, robbery, and murder, every description of villany and crime, in fact, which one can think of, flourished side by side with industry and honesty. Even in the open light of day, a



person had to hold his own by the strength of his arm, whilst at night a man carried his life in his hands. Now you will see why this groping about after dark was unpleasant.

The reader may not have forgotten, perhaps, the promise made by Gabriel Read to his young friends, when about to part from them, that he would peg off a piece of ground for them adjoining his own, and protect it if need be, during their absence. He had kept his promise; so far, at least, as the pegging off of the claim went. His protection, however, had not been necessary, seeing that no violent hands had been laid upon it during their brief absence. Indeed the claim was scarcely rich enough to tempt any interference; and, compared with those around it might have been called a poor one. That adjoining claim of Read's, for instance, was bringing him in something like forty pounds a day, and the same amount to a young fellow, named Brooks, whom he had lately taken in as his mate.<sup>3</sup> And Read's claim was not a very rich one either; at all events, there were many richer ones in the gully. Then those neighbours of theirs, on the other side, a party of old Identities, were making their twenty pounds a man, a day. Now Tom Hungerford's party were making no such sum as this; taking the good days and the bad, I don't think they made on an average more than five pounds each. Then with flour selling at two shillings a pound, mutton fetching about the same sum, and the other necessaries of life proportionately dear, living was, of course, a serious item of consideration.

Just at first they felt very savage over this bad luck, but the feeling of disappointment passed away before long. The old feverish longing was wearing off; and the golden flakes that once had looked so gloriously bright in their eyes were losing much of their brightness now. You see, that aching of the arm and straining of the back, and dampness about the feet, which had proved too much for so many new comers, was

beginning to tell upon the members of this party too; and that no doubt, had much to do in dispelling the illusion. Tim Dwyer was about the only one of them upon whom the hard work was not beginning to tell but Tim had been accustomed to hard work of one sort or another, all his life. I am inclined to think, however, that he took more than his fair share of the work; I am quite certain of this, at all events, if he had had his own way Tom Hungerford should never put spade or pick near the ground. It was amusing, sometimes, to watch the way he tried to induce Tom to take occasional half-hours of idleness; the little cunningly devised plots and stratagems he would use to effect his purpose. And the best of the joke was that he looked upon himself as an adept at finesse—a kind of second Machiavelli in his way; quite a match for Joe Bagstock himself in deepness and slyness.<sup>4</sup> Kind, honest Tim!

“Yirrah thin, Misther Tom,” he would say, “jist go and sit down in the kitchen awhile, and smoke your pipe at your aise. Do now thin, agrah, and lave that little drop of water to me. Shure I’ll bale it out in half a jiffey.”

“I’m all right, Tim,” Tom would answer; “we’ll all take a week’s holiday when we find that big nugget.”

“Wisha, thin, it’s making game of me he is,” and here he would bring big diplomacy into play.

“Shure, isn’t it speaking for myself I am entirely. The divil a lie in it thin, for don’t I want to sit down myself when you come back.”

Then, remembering his companions, he would add; “and there’s the young gentlemen, too; shure their mouths is just wathering for a smoke; but of course they’ll wait till you have yours first.”

Now this kitchen spoken of by Tim Dwyer as a place where Tom might smoke his pipe at his ease was a rough shed; devoted to other purposes besides smoking. It was noth-

ing very much to look at, with its calico roof and walls of manuka scrub; but it was commodious, and, compared with the tents around, might even be called comfortable; at all events, it answered all the purposes for which it had been built, and so much cannot always be said for more pretentious buildings. What led mainly to its erection was that the two parties—Read’s and Hungerford—thought it would be pleasanter and more economical to have something of the kind to serve as a common mess room, where they could take their meals together. It was very pleasant, as they sat here at night around the fire, smoking their pipes and chatting with such acquaintances as happened to drop in; and here too the Vigilance Committee used occasionally to meet, when they had anything to do.

There was a Vigilance Committee in those early days, but I’m sorry to say it did nothing very dreadful, in the way of cutting men off suddenly, for then I should have had something to tell worth the telling. On the contrary indeed, on more than one occasion, by stepping in at the right moment, it had prevented violence, and spared more than one cut-throat, with whom it would have gone very hard, but for the interference of this committee. Of course, the scoundrels didn’t deserve to get off free, and people thought a little rough handling would have done some of them good; but Read set his face against anything of the kind. He had seen this sort of thing tried before by Vigilance Committees, he said, and knew how dangerous was the experiment.

“Rough handling,” he told his colleagues, “once commenced generally leads to something worse. It is much better for us not to meddle with edge tools.”

Accordingly the culprits were driven off the field unpunished, but with a significant warning against returning. In this way things had gone on quietly enough for a time; but lat-

terly an outcry began to be raised throughout the gully, for rowdyism of the worst sort was very much on the increase. The Committee, foreseeing that the time was coming when moderate counsels would no longer be listened to, warned the Government of the danger.

The Vigilance Committee had been called into existence in the first instance chiefly for the purpose of framing temporary regulations for the proper working of the new field. There were twelve members in all. Read was, of course, a member; so, too, were Fitzherbert and Hungerford; and the remaining nine elected were all "old identities."<sup>5</sup> Read, I need scarcely say, was the most useful and experienced member of the lot; and, indeed, I don't know how they could have got on without him, more especially when disputes had to be settled.

Now, the settlement of disputes, of any kind, is not a pleasant thing, as we know, even under favorable circumstances; and if the circumstances are unfavorable, of course, the unpleasantness is all the greater. But I doubt very much if on any possible occasion they can be more unfavourable than when the subject of dispute is about mining. A man who undertakes this kind of work on the first starting of a goldfield must put up with being jostled and hustled about by scores of angry diggers; he must bear being sworn at with great round oaths; and his nerves must be strong enough to stand the devil's tattoo being played upon picks and shovels near his head. I doubt very much indeed if the unpleasantness of the task can be matched in our practical every day life.

Of course, by drawing on our imaginations, we might place a man in as uncomfortable a position. For instance, if a man were to step in between two rival motions in Donnybrook Fair in the old days when Donnybrook was in all its glory,<sup>6</sup> and were to attempt to settle the matter in dispute, whilst shillelahs were flying about his head, I can fancy he would feel any-

thing but comfortable. Though even then, mind you, I think the advantage would lie with Donnybrook. The blow from a good shillelah would be painful no doubt: but the blow from a pick or shovel would be a different thing altogether. Then as to swearing, why, bless you, the oaths a score or two of angry diggers will throw about them broadcast would make the hair of Donnybrook Irishmen stand on end.

Of course, no man in his common senses would think of interfering in this Donnybrook dispute; but men have to interfere every hour of the day in those mining questions. Commissioners had to do so, and when there was no officer, then it had to be done by somebody else, generally by some body of men such as this Tuapeka Vigilance Committee I have been speaking of.

Soon after that intimation, as to the approaching danger that was feared, had been forwarded to the Government, a gentleman was sent up from town to take charge of the field temporarily, until a permanent officer should be appointed. This happened towards the end of July; but some days previous to its happening, a new goldfield had been discovered.

## **Chapter VII. — Prospecting.**

“I’m thinking of starting on a prospecting trip to-morrow, Mr. Hungerford. Would you like to come with me?”

“Starting on a prospecting trip, are you? Nothing I should like better, by George. In what direction do you intend to go?”

“Well, I was thinking of going up somewhere about the head of the Waitahuna River. The country up that way looks as if it was auriferous. But it would be just as well to say nothing about our intentions.”

“I shall certainly say nothing about the matter, as you wish it.”

“I think it would be just as well not to do so. You see it would only unsettle people. A lot of men would be sure to leave their claims and follow us. Whilst, if we quietly make up our swags and be off before daybreak, no one need be a bit the wiser.”

“All right. I suppose I had better get in two of the horses and have them ready. I hope I shall find them safely though, for there are a lot of damned thieves knocking about just now—looking-out for any stray horses they can lay hold of.”

“I hear a good many horses have been stolen lately.”

“Yes, so I hear. Tim keeps a pretty sharp eye on ours though, and God help the man he finds meddling with them.”

This conversation took place in Read’s tent. After breakfast, Tom Hungerford had asked Read to lend him a piece of tobacco until he got some at one of the stores in the evening and they both went over to the tent to get it, and then the proposal was made and discussed as just mentioned.

About noon the following day they were seated on the banks of the Waitahuna River. The river had been crossed at the usual crossing place, that is to say at the place where the Dunedin road crossed it, and had been followed up to the left about two hundred yards, where a good camping ground had

been come upon. The cooking was just over, and they were eating away vigorously, as hungry men will eat.

But, before going any further, perhaps it would be just as well to say a word or two as to their previous movements that morning:

They had started before daybreak, and they had got away very quietly, and without being observed, as far as they could tell. The mastiffs and bulldogs in the neighborhood were very noisy and very savage whilst the horses were being got ready; but these brutes were always noisy, and an extra amount of savageness attracted but little, if any, attention. But though their bark did no harm, their bite would have been dangerous and Read and Tom had to look out very carefully as they groped their way through the gully, not only for dogs, but for the holes, and ruts and quagmires also. The dogs, however, were much the worse; for they were sudden in their attacks, and there was no knowing how long their chains might be. As is the fashion with these brutes, they would crouch quietly in their lairs and corners, patiently biding their time, and when the time came, they would spring out suddenly with growls of savage rage.<sup>1</sup> Then, finding that the objects of their attack were not to be got at, they would swing round and round the stakes to which they were chained; sometimes stopping to paw the air in impotent rage, but seldom, if ever, ceasing in the fierceness of their outcry until the two had passed on some distance. Now and then the sleepy voice of the owner would be heard damning the dog's eyes, telling him he was a brute, and that he'd better lie down at once, or he'd catch it; but then this was the exception, for people were too much accustomed to the outcry to think anything of it. And even if anybody did thrust his head outside his tent, moved thereto by motives of caution, he quickly withdrew it again, satisfied that no mischief was meant either to himself or his property.

But they encountered other nuisances besides these dogs and digger's holes. They had to push their way past parties of drunken fellows, who staggered up in front of them and, with horrid imprecations, wanted to know who they were and were very pressing in their invitations to drink or fight, no matter which.

And then some of them would tumble down amongst the horses' feet, and have to be pulled out again.

Some of the large tents were still alight. Grog shanties these; places full of rowdyism and rascality, wherein drunken shouts, and wrathful strife, and frightful oaths could be heard as they passed by. But they were leaving all these things behind them now, thank goodness, when, just as they were passing the last of these shanties, they became witnesses of a scene it was painful to witness. A man rushed out yelling frantically, followed by a dozen other men equally frantic, and then a fierce struggle ensued; one of those struggles wherein men forget their manhood—forget that they are human beings and throw aside every particle of that divine nature that God has implanted within them.

“For God's sake, let us get away from this beastly row,” said Tom to his companion, disgusted at the exhibition.

“It's certainly not a pleasant sight to look at,” answered Read, as they moved on; “but, Lord bless you, you'll soon get used to that sort of thing,” and then he told him stories of things he had seen in his time, in the early days of California and Victoria.

At last they got clear of the gully, and then the day began to dawn. Here and there along the track they came upon knots of diggers, some of those sturdy, stalwart fellows I have mentioned as coming from Castlemaine, Bendigo, and Lambing Flat. As they first came upon them in the early dawn, the men were uncoiling themselves out of their blankets; and a little



later they found them getting their breakfasts ready, and the breakfasts having been disposed of, they passed them by moving on towards Tuapeka, with their heavy swags. And those swags of theirs were heavy, mark you. Rolled up something the shape of a horse collar, and crosswise over his shoulder, like a masonic scarf,<sup>2</sup> were his red and blue blankets—and your digger’s blankets are always red or blue. Then there was the tin dish tied to the blankets; and there were his pannikin and billy secured to his belt, and hanging down behind his nether man; whilst on his unoccupied shoulder he carried spade and pick, often too his double-barrel gun. Truly, a man unpleasantly weighted, considering the steep gullies and muddy roads he had to come over; but, for all that, he steps out sturdily and for the most part, silently. Your old digger is a man not given to much speaking. He doesn’t care to waste his words or his time, especially on strangers.

“Good day, mates,” with a side nod of the head, that’s the style and manner of salutation in vogue with him. To Read and Tom Hungerford little more was said at all events. Once or twice perhaps they were asked the distance to Tuapeka, and that was all the exception there was to that usual salutation of, “Good day, mates.”

At best, the fellows were nothing better than “loafers,” or they would not be turning their backs on the honest work of yonder gully, where work was plentiful, according to all accounts, and well paid for too. If he were to ask these good-for-nothing fellows any news about this new field, your old hand knew well enough the answer he would get. He knew well enough he would be told it was a “duffer”—a place where a man couldn’t make his “tucker.”

But perhaps these two chaps were fellows of another sort altogether—some of your dangerous “coves,” up to no good—better give them a wide berth, and ask them no questions.

This was the way these old Victorian hands looked upon our two friends, and so they saluted them in the words I have just mentioned, without turning their heads, and passed on, caring but little whether the words were heard or [not.]

In this way the Waitahuna River had been reached and crossed; and then the dinner had been eaten, and half an hour given up to a quiet smoke; and when this smoke had been finished, they started off again. Keeping along the river's bank for a mile or so, until the mouth of a large gully opened upon them—a gully that ran away in a southerly direction, at right angles to the river's bank—they halted here a while, uncertain as to what they should do next. Read said he would like to go higher up the river, but Tom, on the other hand, looked favorably on the gully. I don't think he did so because he expected to find gold there, but simply because it seemed a good camping place for the night.

"It's just as likely we mightn't drop upon as snug a camping place," Read had said, in reply to an observation which had fallen from Tom; "but I wish we could get higher up the river."

"But look here, Read, it won't take us much out of the way, will it? At the same time, mind, if you wish to push on, why let us push on, old fellow, by all means."

"I don't suppose it signifies much, Mr. Hungerford, one way or another. However, as the evening is coming on, perhaps we may as well camp in the gully tonight, and we'll sink a hole or two in it before we start in the morning."

Then they turned to the right up the gully, and when they got little better than half way up it, they pitched their tent there for the night amongst some manuka scrub.

"Not up yet, Mr. Hungerford?"

"Hallo, Read! Is that you?"

And Tom, awakened by Read's voice, yawned, and raised himself up on his elbow as he thus answered.

“How beastly cold it is,” he said, diving down quietly into the warm folds of his possum rug again.

It was a very cold morning, and Hungerford shivered as he got back again into his rug, for the air in the tent was colder than usual, owing to Read in his entrance having admitted frosty draughts from without.

“Have you been long up?” asked Tom, in a smothered voice from his possum rug.

“I suppose I’ve been up about an hour, and I want you to get up now as quickly as you can, and come along with me to have a look at our new goldfield. I’ve just found another close by here.”

“Found a new goldfield!” exclaimed Tom, with sudden animation. “The devil you have.” And he jumped suddenly out of his rug, and commenced throwing on his clothes with a rapidity that must have satisfied the most impatient person in existence.

“You don’t really mean it, though, do you, old fellow?” and he looked into Read’s face enquiringly, to see whether he really did mean it or no.

The face had a look of thorough earnestness about it, however, that there was no mistaking; and there was just a perceptible look of triumph, too, about the eyes—perceptible to him at least, though perhaps a stranger would not have remarked it.

“I’m really in earnest, Mr. Hungerford. You were asleep when I got up this morning, and I thought it a pity to wake you up; so I just put my spade on my shoulder and strolled away up the gully by myself to have a look about me. A short way from here I sunk a hole, and have just bottomed it, coming on a first-rate prospect. But come along, and see for yourself what it’s like.”

With these words he took up a tin dish, and left the tent,

followed by Tom; and they proceeded to the spot. It was not very far off, but far enough for the latter to become conscious that something of the old excitement of early days had risen up again within him—not in all its old strength, indeed, but still strong enough to make him aware of the fact, and to move him more than he would have thought possible had he been told of it beforehand.

Naturally, he thought to himself, he ought by this time to be above anything of the kind; and yet here he was, like a timid girl, with his heart bumping against his ribs, and face all of a glow, and this, simply because he was going to look at a sight he had been seeing daily and hourly, for the last seven weeks. But, in reality, this feeling of his was only natural under the circumstance. A man may be ever so good a swimmer, but plunge him suddenly into a cold river, and his breath will be taken away for a while, and he will splash about just at first, even although he has been accustomed to water all his life.

“There it is,” said Read, breaking in on his companion’s thoughts.

Yes; there it was, sure enough, close to them; in size some two feet every way; and there, too, at the bottom, lay the gold glittering brightly, and sprinkled about plentifully.

“That looks well, Mr. Hungerford.”

“I believe you, old fellow. By George, it does so,” exclaimed Tom, stooping down to have a closer look at it.

“Jump in and get a dishful of the bottom stuff. It will be something for you to say hereafter, you know, that you washed up the first tin dishful. At least I thought you would like it, and so I left it for you.”

“Thank you, Read, What a regular brick you are.”

The dish was soon filled, and was then taken to the creek, near at hand, to be “washed up.”<sup>3</sup>

Now by this "washing up," I intend the reader, unacquainted with the process, to understand, that Tom having in the first place, tucked up the sleeves of his jersey, and having in the next place, knelt down by the side of the creek, had then filled the tin dish with water, and plunged his arm into it, stirring up the whole so as to get the gold settled well down in the bottom. When this is done it is not very difficult to get rid of the surrounding impurity of the clay, and the rotten slate, and the gravel, and the sand I mean. A little patience, and a little care are necessary, perhaps, in lapping up the water, and emptying it back again, gently enough; in keeping a sharp look out on the ebb and flow that takes place, lest the ebb that carries off the impurity might carry off some of the finer gold also.

On the present occasion, no doubt this washing operation was carried out as it ought to be, at all events, the result was highly satisfactory, for from that dish of washdirt, they got three quarters of an ounce of gold.

After breakfast they came back and secured whatever gold there was left in the bottom of the hole, getting some five or six ounces altogether out of it. Then they bottomed two other fresh ones, at different points along the gully, and though neither of them turned out so well as that first one, they yielded quite enough to show Read and Tom that it was no mere patch they had struck upon, and that the new field was a payable one.

After satisfying themselves upon this head, and pegging off prospecting claims for themselves and their mates, they made off for the ranges, and, towards evening came upon a shepherd's hut, about two miles distant from the gully and here they remained for the night. The next day they returned to Tuapeka. This was on the 20th of July.

Gabriels Gully, as you may suppose, was in a great state of emotion over the news. There was scarcely a soul to be seen

at work, throughout it the following morning, when the regular working hour came round. The men were all otherwise busily engaged, putting their swags to rights, and making the necessary preparations before, starting off for the "new rush." Meanwhile, a sharp watch was kept on Read and Hungerford's movements, lest they should slip away unseen. They had neither of them the least notion of doing anything of the kind, and had been very open, telling exactly what they knew, and what their intended movements were. But the men were suspicious, and fully believed in their minds, that the story they had heard was a lie from beginning to end.

They were expected to receive as gospel all that these fellows had chosen to tell them! Were they, indeed! They'd very soon show them they weren't so green as all that. It was a gully lying about a mile above the Waitahuna ferry, and on the south side of the Waitahuna River: was it though! More likely it was ten miles off in some other direction altogether. Read and his mate were going to stay where they were; but these other chaps were going to start for the new rush in the course of the morning. Ah! Yes, to be sure. It was all very fine this pretended openness, but they weren't going to be taken in so easily as all that. They knew well enough what the fellows wanted; they just wanted to make things quiet, and get away all the easier. This was the form the men's arguments took, and so the watch became closer than ever.

At last the start was made.

"Good bye, Read," said Tom as he was about to move away. "I'm sure I don't know how we're to get on without you. Hang me if I've felt so down in the mouth for many a day. I'll always remember your kindness, old fellow."

"Nonsense, Mr. Hungerford, the kindness has been all the other way. I'm sorry you're going to leave us; but I daresay we'll see one another often."

They did see one another again, but not often; not above four or five times altogether. But we shall meet Read no more in these pages, for he left the colony for good, some little time afterwards.

### **Chapter VIII. — The New Rush.**

When Tom Hungerford and his companions reached Waitahuna that evening, they were accompanied by a number of diggers. The crowd that had started with them from Tuapeka that morning had increased very much at first, and had then fallen off again, afterwards attaining its greatest when about half way, where the number of men present could not have fallen far short of twelve hundred. Up to this point, those who had been detained behind, when the start was made, came hurrying up every minute, swelling the main body; but when the watershed was passed there was a decrease, for reasons which I am about to explain.

When Read and Tom had told everything they knew about this new rush, their statements, we remember, had been received with suspicion; but a number of those around were now beginning to change their minds. It was beginning to dawn upon them, that, perhaps, after all, the gully spoken of was the right one. They admitted that so far, at all events, the fellows had acted up to what they said; that is to say, Read had remained behind where he was, and this other lot had started, and were making their way straight for the very spot they mentioned. There was the gully itself, too, away yonder in the dark shadow.

“Yes, that’s it, I tell you,” said “Cornish Bill” to those around him. Hadn’t that chap Hungerford pointed it out a minute ago to some of the men near him? “Yorky” was one of the men present at the time when he did so, and hadn’t “Yorky” just shown it to him, Cornish Bill.

“And its my belief, do you see, mates,” added Cornish Bill, “that them ere chaps ain’t been a humbugging us after all. Blow me if I don’t think they’re acting on the square,” he continued, looking hard and fierce at a neighbour of his, who had laughed in his face derisively. Others, too, beside Cornish



Bill began to think they were acting on the "square." Very likely that was the right gully they saw, and if it was, why then they ought to push on and have their pick and choice of the ground. Then one party, and then another forged ahead, and there was a regular stampede at last, in which horsemen and footmen joined pellmell. But our friends were not deserted altogether, as they hoped they would be. There were a number of cautious, suspicious old hands in that crowd, who were proof against this enthusiasm, and stuck all the closer to them, never losing sight of them for a moment, until the Waitahuna had been reached.

There was not much work done that evening, in the way of prospecting. A great many holes were commenced indeed, but there were not many of them bottomed; for the water was not very easy to manage, and the short midwinter day closed in before people well knew where they were. But the following day many of the unfinished holes were bottomed, and many new ones too. In several instances, however, the water was too much, even for the old Victorian miners, rushing in upon them, as if it were rushing through a sieve. Water may be a matter of small concern to your old digger, but it is only so, when he can lay his hands on his Californian pump, and, of course, there was no pump of this kind, nor of any other kind either, to be had at Waitahuna.

Had it not been for the water, I think, it is more than probable this first rush to Waitahuna would not have turned out so unsatisfactory as it did. But whatever may have been the cause, the prospects obtained on this occasion were not at all encouraging, and a feeling of dissatisfaction sprang up in consequence amongst the men, finding vent in loud and angry words. They were very unreasonable and unjust in their anger, as angry men usually are, abusing Read and Tom in no very measured terms, for having raised up such false hopes,

and sent them here on this fool's errand. Read, however, was beyond their reach just then, and they could say nothing to him; but Tom was there, and should be told of his misdeeds. Of course, we know how very unjust this feeling of anger was, and the men themselves acknowledged afterwards it was unjust; but before they did so, things had looked rather serious, and at one time it seemed certain that Tom would have come in for some rough handling.

The thing happened in this way. He and Tim Dwyer were busy at work cutting a drain around the tent, when some dozen fellows or more came passing by, evidently a lot of low rowdy blackguards, up to all sorts of mischief and rascality, and the greater the mischief and rascality the better. Seeing Tom thus occupied, they began at once to make themselves very disagreeable to him. They were very abusive and very insulting, and he saw they were bent on having a row, and so he thought it better to be prepared for what was coming. He stepped into his tent therefore, where his revolver was and fastening on the belt around his waist, inside his serge shirt, came back again, feeling more at his ease, now that he knew, if the worst came to the worst, he could lay his hand upon this weapon in a moment.

Most men, I suppose, would derive some comfort from the knowledge that they had it in their power to protect themselves, if assailed, and, that if they were pushed into a corner, they could send a few of their assailants headlong to Hades, even though, they themselves should have to cross over at the same time. What then; better go over in company with others, than have the gruff old ferryman all to one's self. But Tom hoped that things would not come to this pass, but if they did, he determined it should be from no fault of his.

They called him a "damned swell cove," and told him they were going to "knock the swellness out of him," and said

many other things which it was not easy to bear, nor would it be pleasant to repeat; but he was very patient under it all, and kept his temper for some time, until flesh and blood could no longer stand it.

“Serve him right, damn him, if we cut off his blasted ears,” said “Hobart Town Jack,” a thick set, beetle browed scoundrel, who was the ringleader of the gang, and a noted character in those days. Then Tom boiled over with rage and fury. He had put up with the abuse of these fellows long enough, longer than he ought to have done, he told himself, but he would put up with it no longer.

“What’s that you say, you infernal scoundrel?” He had thrown down his shovel and had stepped forward, revolver in hand confronting them, but addressing himself specially to Hobart Town Jack.

And that ruffian, reckless as he was, was taken aback for the moment, by the suddenness of the movement, and by the look of wrathful determination he saw written on the young man’s countenance.

“What’s that you say, you infernal scoundrel?” asked Tom, but he got no further than that.

“The divil take ye, ye dirty spal’peen; ye low, mane, dirty blagard, and that’s what ye are.” The speaker was Tim Dwyer, who had in this way burst in upon the proceedings.

Tim had hitherto been a silent spectator of what was going on, listening to Hobart Town Jack’s abuse, quietly, to all outward appearance, but in reality boiling over with anger. Hitherto, however, he had managed to restrain his anger, though the effort to do so had well nigh proved too much for him; but he was very anxious to avoid a row of any sort on Tom Hungerford’s account, not on his own, for the light of battle was in Tim’s eye, and pleasant to his heart would it have been, if he himself only were concerned, there

and then to have laid violent hands upon Hobart Town Jack, or some of his gang.

“Holy Virgin, just listen to the murdering villians of the world! And shure it’s just that same they are,” he would mutter, adding, as some more offensive epithet than usual caught his ears.

“Whisha thin, and may the divil himself choke ye, before ye spakes another word; and that’s my prayer for ye. May God forgive me for saying it, but shure they deserve it, the haythens of the world.”

It had been some little consolation to him to express himself in this way, even though it were to himself; but, now that the necessity for action arose, he looked upon the quarrel entirely as his own, and rushed in at once between Tom and his assailants, swinging his pick high above his head.

“Put your ugly mug an inch nearer this way,” he continued, scowling fiercely at Hobart Town Jack, “and be me sowl I’ll make it uglier for ye. I will by the vartue of my oath, or my name ain’t Tim Dwyer,” he added, bringing down his pick to the level of his chest, and thrusting it slowly backwards and forwards in front of Hobart Town Jack’s face.

A crowd had collected by this time, and on the whole, the crowd was inclined to side with the rowdies; not going so far as Hobart Town Jack went when he talked about cutting off people’s ears, but still inclined to be very rough and very disagreeable.

In the breathing time that this interruption of Tim’s had given him, Hungerford had the sense to see that the temper of the crowd was against him, and this being so, that any quarrelling on his part was out of the question. He did, therefore, perhaps, the best thing he could do under the circumstances, he restrained his anger by an effort, and pushing Tim aside, he raised his voice and addressed himself to the

crowd. And he did his work pretty well for a young hand, and was successful on the whole; that is to say, he poured forth his suppressed wrath in vehement words, and carried the men along with him, and changed the current of their thoughts, making them see at last how very unjustly he had been treated in this matter.

The very fact, he told them, that he himself and his companions had cast in their lot for good and all in the gully, ought to be proof positive that he believed in the place. Yes; he was very successful, and he knew it, for the crowd cheered him as he finished. He felt quite sure now that were Hobart Town Jack to suggest anything as to the cutting off of his ears, that worthy would meet with no very friendly reception. But Hobart Town Jack was too old a hand to try anything of the kind and had wisely made off, himself and his companions, when they saw the turn things were likely to take. And then shortly after the crowd went away too, leaving the tent and the gully; and from that time for many a-day, our friends and a party of Maoris had the place all to themselves.

They got very little gold, however, less even than what they had been getting at Tuapeka.

They wasted a good deal of their time over a deep hole from which they expected great things, talking to themselves of making their pile, there and then, when they came to the bottom; but when they did bottom it, they got very little worth speaking of. It was a kind of natural basin, this hole, some ten or twelve feet deep perhaps, lying close to the spot where Read had struck upon that first prospect of his, but lower down the creek a little; and the creek ran through it, dropping in gently in a small waterfall, and rippling quietly out again at the other end.

They thought, naturally enough I think, that whatever treasure had been swept down into this basin during the lapse

of countless ages, was still there in the bottom, ready to their hands; but they were doomed to disappointment as persons generally are, in nine cases out of ten, who apply any theory of this kind, or of any other kind either for the matter of that, to gold digging. After working away very hard for a fortnight, and getting rid of the water, they reached the bottom at last, but what was their disgust to find there, not the pounds weight they expected, but just an ounce and a half.

Still they stuck to the gully some four or five weeks longer, but as day after day of weary disappointment passed by they lost all heart at last, and prepared to leave the place for good and all. And so, when the first week of September had set in and their earnings had dwindled down to fifteen shillings a day each, they started away, Tim Dwyer and young Lindsay, going on to the station to muster the cattle, and Tom Hungerford and Henry Fitzberbert proceeding to Dunedin.

## **Chapter IX. — The Fitzherberts.**

When making the acquaintance of Henry Fitzherbert, some few chapters back, possibly you may have forgotten the fact that casual reference was then made to his father, one Colonel Fitzherbert, a retired officer of the army who, for reasons stated at the time, purposed following his son to Otago whenever certain domestic matters permitted of his doing so. The matter in question was the completion of the education of his younger children, which, we may presume, had been got over; at all events, the Colonel and his family had started on their way out, and Henry was now going to town to make arrangements for their reception.

Tom Hungerford had business to transact there too. Atkins, from whom he leased his run, was to meet him there by appointment about the sale of some of those cattle now being depastured upon it “on terms.” He had written some time previously to Atkins about the matter and Atkins had replied by saying he would meet him in Dunedin on the 10th of September where they could talk the matter over between them.

He offered Atkins fourteen pounds a-piece for a draft of one hundred of the fat stock, and, if his offer were accepted, he made out he would nett between five and six hundred pounds by the transaction—providing, that is to say, that his calculation as to their averaging seven hundred weight all round was anything near the mark.

At first, when the matter suggested itself to him, he made up his mind that it would be better for him to have nothing to do with it; it would be better for him he thought not to enter into a large transaction of this kind when he had not ready money by him to pay for his purchase. And, perhaps, in the main he was right. In nine cases out of ten a man is all the better, I think, for resisting the temptation of buying when he has

not by him the wherewithall to pay for his purchase. Ready money payment is always an excellent check on the imagination. No doubt there is a tenth case where the buying in this way has its advantages; but then that tenth case only goes to prove the rule. Be this as it may, however, it is very certain that this mode of doing business obtains very largely amongst us in the colonies in our buying and selling. Indeed the temptation of giving and receiving bills as a medium of exchange comes so much in our way that we soon cease to look upon it as a temptation at all. The mere signing of one's name across a piece of paper is such an easy matter, and it's very soon done; and it's done by everybody around us. Why then, you ask yourself, should you not buy that chestnut horse you had your eye upon for some time, or that nice villa residence you have been hankering after for so long, or that Mount Olympus Station which you have the offer of? You don't clearly see your way just now, perhaps, as to where the money is to come from to meet your engagement; but why should you bother your head about the matter at present, when you have such a long time before you to think it over? Even if the worst does come to the worst, why that horse will always fetch his own price; and, in the meantime, it will be very pleasant to have such a handsome, showy animal as he is under you.

That villa residence you are quite sure is a good investment. Things are at their very lowest now and house property of every description is safe to rise in value before long. And if nothing else turns up before that bill you have to meet falls due, why you must get the bill renewed, that's all. Then what a snug, comfortable house it is, and how proud you feel when your friends call upon you there for the first time.

As to that Mount Olympus Station, with its thirty thousand sheep, for which six, twelve, and eighteen months after date you have promised to pay the owner of Mount Olympus,



or his order, the sum of twenty-five thousand pounds,<sup>1</sup> how pleased you are and glad at heart when your friends squeeze your hand and say all manner of complimentary things to you respecting this purchase of yours. You will have your qualms of conscience, my friend, bye and bye about this purchase, and that spectre care will yet sit beside your elbow though you pooh pooh all ugly thoughts from you now.

You are forced to admit that wool is depressed of late, but you argue that this depression is only temporary; shrewd man that you are, you clearly foresee there must be a rise in the market at home when America receives our wool duty free, as she is sure to do before long, and when the anticipation of the coming harvest in England being a good one is realised, and there is no doubt whatsoever but that it will be a good one. Besides, there's the meat preserving; this must give an increased value to your stock, and enable you to get rid of all your surplus sheep at a good figure. Things are sure to turn out all right somehow or another in the long run.

In this way men comfort themselves with a comfort that is hollow, and lend an ear to hopes that are delusive; purchasing things they ought not to purchase thoughtlessly, and doing so because the payment is distant, and a matter for future consideration.

But there is that exceptional tenth case to which, of course, these remarks do not apply. Hungerford's purchase of those cattle from Atkins might be looked upon, perhaps, as a transaction of this kind; he himself at all events looked upon it in this light, going over the calculations again and again carefully, and seeing clearly that he could dispose of the cattle before his acceptances fell due.

A few days after the arrangement of this business, as he was strolling along Princes-street, thinking to himself how wonderful were the changes he saw everywhere around him, and

how short a time it had taken to bring about these changes, a hand was placed upon his shoulder, and on looking around there was his friend Fitzherbert, and leaning on his arm was a military looking, white haired old gentleman, whom he knew at once must be his father.

“I am very glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Hungerford,” said Colonel Fitzherbert, as soon as the introduction had been made.

Tom replied by saying he was glad to see Colonel Fitzherbert had arrived safely. “My son Henry has often spoken of you,” continued the Colonel.

“Do you make a long stay in town?”

“I daresay I shall be in for a few days longer.”

“When did you arrive, Colonel Fitzherbert?”

“We arrived the day before yesterday, and are just now as busy as ever we can be trying to get things to rights in our new quarters. We are in a state of great confusion, but if you don’t mind taking us as we are, I shall be glad to see you before you leave town.”

Tom said he would be very glad to accept the invitation, if his doing so would not be causing any inconvenience.

“I can’t ask you to dinner, Mr. Hungerford,” continued the Colonel, apologetically, “for I really don’t know when we shall dine, or what we shall have for dinner. The fact is we just eat and sleep when and how we can; but, if you have nothing better to do and will come up this evening, I have no doubt we can manage to give you a cup of tea and a glass of grog.”

Tom accepted the invitation, and then they separated, it being understood they were to meet one another again at half past seven o’clock.

“He seems a nice young fellow, Henry,” said the father, when they had gone on some little distance.

“He’s a first-rate fellow,” was the son’s rejoinder.

“I hope we’ve ordered everything. Would you mind reading over that list again, Henry, so as to make sure we’ve forgotten nothing?”

And then the son read over a long list of odds and ends, and having assured themselves that everything had been ordered, they proceeded homewards. They had not very far to go; just through the cutting, or where the cutting now is, and past the parsonage a little; on the opposite side of the road to the parsonage, was the cottage Henry had engaged for his family. It was a small weatherboard house surrounded itself and a little patch of ground in front of it, by tall Hobart Town pailings.<sup>2</sup>

“Now, then, what’s kept you two out so long. I’m sure you’ve forgotten half the things you went out to get. I know you have.”

The speaker was a young girl, who, when they entered the room, was busily engaged in dusting the newly arranged furniture.

“You’re wrong then, Nelly, as you generally are. By George, what a fright you have made of yourself!”

“Not I faith, and I’m sure you don’t think anything of the kind, Henry. I think my costume very becoming, and I know I’d make a very pretty housemaid, I can tell you. Besides, if I were a fright, it’s very rude of you to tell me so. Isn’t it rude of him, papa?”

“Yes, dear, indeed it is; but I’m afraid his life out here hasn’t improved his manners.”

“I’m sure it hasn’t. Do keep those great big ugly hands of yours to yourself, or you’ll be breaking those vases,” she added, as Fitzherbert commenced arranging some knick-knacks on the table.

“Just wait until you’re out here awhile, and you’ll find your hands big enough, I can tell you,” replied her brother, desisting from his occupation.

“Indeed, then, I shall do nothing of the kind. I have very pretty hands, and I intend that they shall remain pretty too. See.” And as she spoke, she held out both her hands, covered with an old pair of gloves.

The brother looked at her hands, and from her hands, he looked up to her face with a glance of pride and affection. And, in good sooth, she was a girl that any brother might well be proud of. She was one of those girls that we come across, now and then, in our lives, whom a man intuitively understands, he had better not see too often, but continues, nevertheless, to go on seeing as often as possible; though he is aware, at all times, that in doing so, she may come to occupy a larger portion of his thoughts than is good for his comfort, or peace of mind. But she wasn't a flirt, mind, nor one of your forward minxes, either; though, of course, you understand that, for girls of this sort are not dangerous; not near so dangerous as they try to persuade themselves, at all events. No; Helen Fitzherbert wasn't one of this sort. On the contrary, she was very natural; and though by nature, she was very pert, and very saucy, and very outspoken, she had, at the same time, about her, in her ways, all that softness and pleasantness that give to women their greatest charm. Now, where a pretty girl, like Helen Fitzherbert, is gifted in this way, most men will admit she is dangerous. But I want you to think of her as she is, a dear merry good hearted girl; and to love her just as much as I do myself.

Looking at her and her brother, as they stood there together, you could see at a glance that the resemblance between the two was very striking; so striking that it was almost impossible to mistake the relationship. There was the same brown hair; the same blue eyes; the same pleasing expression of countenance; the same regularity of features.

Had she tried to do so, I doubt very much if she could have succeeded in making herself look more piquant and roguish than she looked now, with that handkerchief of hers tied around her head to keep off the dust from her hair, and that natty white apron, and her dress tucked up, showing her pretty small feet and well shaped ankles. Yes; she was right when she said the costume was becoming, and that it did not make a fright of her.

“If Bertha comes in, and finds me wasting my time in this way, talking with you, Henry, she’ll box my ears for me.”

“Where’s Bertha, Nelly?” asked the father.

“She’s in your room, papa; she and George and Frank.”

George and Frank were the two younger sons.

“Here, Henry,” said the Colonel, “perhaps, you wouldn’t mind finishing the hanging of this picture for me. I want to go in and see how they’re getting on in my room.”

“By the bye, dear,” he added, turning round to his daughter, “I almost forgot to tell you we’re to have a visitor to-night. Henry’s friend, Mr. Hungerford, is coming up to drink tea with us.”

“Mr. Hungerford coming up this evening! Goodness gracious me, Henry, how could you ask him when you know the state we’re in. Well, he’ll have to sit on your lap, that’s one comfort, for there’s no other place for him to sit on.”

“If you must blame anybody, Nelly, blame the governor, for he asked him. Look here, acushla machree, tell me if this picthur is hanging straight fore ninst ye, as my friend Tim Dwyer would say.”

“A little more to the left—there; that’s right. And who may your friend, Tim Dwyer, be?” she asked, laughing.

“Who’s Tim Dwyer? Why, Hungerford’s faithful henchman, to be sure. If you were to lay your little finger upon Hungerford, Tim Dwyer would knock you down quick; aye, even you, Miss.”

“I’m sure I shan’t touch him with my little finger. Indeed, I begin to dislike this Mr. Hungerford very much, for I think, you like him better than you do me; and I won’t have you like anybody better than me, until you get a wife of your own. There.”

And she put her arms round her brother’s neck, and kissed him. Just then the door opened.

“Has papa told you, Bertha?”

“Told me what, dear,” asked Bertha.

Bertha Fitzherbert was Colonel Fitzherbert’s eldest daughter, but not his eldest child. There was a brother older than she, now a Captain in the Artillery: and, between her and Nelly, came our friend Henry; and after Nelly came three other children, all boys, the youngest a midshipman in the Navy, and the others, now in the colony with their family.

The management of the household had devolved on Bertha, and of late years she had had a good deal of care and anxiety. Ever since her mother’s death, some five years previously, when she found herself mistress of her father’s house, the burthen of her daily life had been heavy, heavier than usually falls to the lot of young girls of her age, more especially in the early days of that sad bereavement. She had, however, since then, filled the dead mother’s place; not with the mother’s gentle love and kindly instincts, indeed, for that is what is permitted to no one to do, but with quietness, with tact, and without repining.

At first, after her grief had subsided, and the responsibility of her position began to dawn upon her day by day, and she came fully to understand how very difficult were the duties she had to perform, she thought she must sink beneath the weight. But she bore herself bravely through it all, though the strain on her young mind was not good for her, making her more staid and thoughtful than befitted her five and twenty years.

“Told me what, dear,” she asked her sister.

“Why, that he and Henry have been asking Mr. Hungerford up to tea to-night, and everything in this horrid state of confusion.”

“Papa did mention it to me just now; but, I daresay, Mr. Hungerford is not very particular.”

“That he’s not, by George,” put in Henry.

But there was very little in that room which a more critical person than Tom Hungerford could have found fault with. There are men, as we all know, who possess this critical turn of mind—men to whom that primrose by the river’s brim is something more than a yellow flower; who take in, intuitively, at a passing glance, the several shades of its yellowness. Nothing escapes the eye of men like these. With the critical eye of M. Worth, the man milliner, they will scan every little detail of your wife’s dress, and note all the minute tag ends appertaining to your daughter’s toilette. In the comprehensiveness of their great minds they grasp the pattern of your carpet; they make a mental entry of that speck of dust on your window, and the arrangement of your vases is stamped indelibly on their memories. They are the detectives of our social life, who have their eye upon you, as it were; and whilst they are chatting with you, are inwardly noting down the colour of your hair, and the cast in your eye.

Now, Tom was not gifted with this critical turn of mind. He saw that the primrose was a pretty yellow flower; but he neither saw, nor did he seek to see, anything more about it.

The primrose by the river’s brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.<sup>3</sup>

Just at first, however, as he entered the room and was made acquainted with the several members of the family, he was too shy and uncomfortable to observe anything. Men, and especially young men, who have lived up country for any

length of time, generally have this feeling of shyness about them when they first find themselves in the presence of ladies. And they are aware of the fact—aware that the semi-civilisation and semi-isolation in which their lives have been passed, have taken from them much of that softness and smoothness of manners which are so pleasing to women, and, accordingly, they shun the society of ladies when in town, or at best submit to it as an unpleasant infliction.

Tom Hungerford, as I have just said, had this feeling of shyness about him when he first found himself in the room with the Miss Fitzherberts; but the feeling soon wore off in the attention he was called upon to give to the conversation going on around him, and in which he had to bear his own share.

“I should certainly never have come to Otago,” said Colonel Fitzherbert, “had I known anything about the finding of this goldfield. I have been quartered in many parts of the world in my time, but I have never known any place equal to Dunedin for expense and discomfort.”

“No doubt it must be a very expensive place to live in just now, and very disagreeable too, especially for ladies,” replied Hungerford.

“Disagreeable! Why actually we can’t get a female servant. My daughters have to do most of the household work themselves, and they would have to do it all but that fortunately we get a woman, who came out in the ship with us, to do the washing, and sometimes the cooking.”

“But we don’t mind it, Papa. Indeed, we think it great fun; at least I do,” put in Nelly. “You see, Mr. Hungerford,” she added, smiling as she addressed Tom, “my sister does all the work, and I look after her, and of course it’s good fun for me.”

Tom laughed, and thought he would not mind how hard the work was he had to do, if she were by to look after him as he was doing it.



“She’s only joking, Mr. Hungerford,” added the elder sister, “and does much more than she ought to do. But I hope, in a few days, we’ll manage to get a servant.”

“I’m sure I hope we shall, my dear,” said her father; “and then as to the expense. Just fancy my having to pay a hundred and fifty pounds a year for a miserable place like this; and, I’m told, we may consider ourselves fortunate in having got a house at all at any price.”

“You just may then,” rejoined Henry, “for it was by mere chance I happened to drop across it.”

“The expense is more than I can stand with my limited income,” continued the Colonel. “I intend, however, to buy a run as soon as I can, and live on it. Do you know of any for sale just now, Mr. Hungerford?”

“Yes,” replied Tom, after a few moment’s consideration, “there’s a nice piece of country now for sale. You know the place, Fitzherbert,” addressing Henry, “better than I do. It’s that back run of O’Neil and Nicholson’s, next to mine. I met O’Neil to-day, and he told me they intended selling.”

“I know the country well, and have been pretty well over it all. It’s first rate country.”

“What would be about the price of it?”

“Well, Colonel Fitzherbert, the way things are going now, it ought to be worth about eight thousand five hundred pounds.<sup>4</sup> There are fifty thousand acres in it, I think, and they are worth about two shillings an acre, that’s five thousand pounds; and, as well as I remember, he said they had two thousand ewes on it, and they ought to be worth thirty-five shillings a-piece. But I’ve an engagement with O’Neil to-morrow, and, if you like, I’ll casually find out everything I can about it.”

“Thank you, if it’s not giving you too much trouble, I’ll feel very much obliged to you if you will. Of course, I need

scarcely say it will be a great consideration to me to get a place as near town as I can.”

“No doubt it would be pleasanter for you, if you make up your mind to live on a station, to be near town; but I’m afraid wherever you go the discomforts will be too great for the ladies. There’s one objection, however, to buying country near town, and that is that it’s sure to be thrown into hundreds before long.”<sup>5</sup>

“We intend to enjoy station life very much, Mr. Hungerford,” said Nelly. “We’ve been talking of nothing else since we left England but the fun we’re going to have on the station; so I warn you, you’ll find it very hard to disabuse our minds. I’m going to have a horse of my own, and turn stockman.”

Then Tom took his departure, promising to find out all particulars from O’Neil, and to come up the following evening with the news. And as he strolled along homewards, smoking his pipe, he felt very happy, and thought what a pleasant evening it had been altogether: and Nelly Fitzherbert, what a jolly girl she was—so pretty and full of fun.

Then he began to speculate upon the pleasures in store for him if he could secure for neighbors such a nice family as this was; and then his speculations branched off in other directions, and the future was looking bright and fair, when he was brought back to the present by a party of friends he happened to fall across in the street.

## **Chapter X. — “How would the Waitahuna Commissionership Suit You, Hungerford?”**

The following morning Tom Hungerford was seated at a late breakfast with a mind ill at ease, and looking thoroughly out of sorts. After falling across those friends of his in the streets the evening before he had accompanied them to the Princess Theatre,<sup>1</sup> then recently opened; and after the performance at the theatre was over, they had all gone on together, to the Arcade<sup>2</sup> to have some supper at Waters and Morton's.<sup>3</sup>

They had had their supper, or rather the supper was nearly over, when a row had taken place in which all the young fellows had got mixed up, Tom amongst the rest. Some low noisy Jews,<sup>4</sup> accompanied by three or four half drunken and wholly disreputable women, had forced their way into the room in which the young men were sitting, refusing to leave it when told to do so, and persisting in their refusal, even after they were told the room was a private one. Then, this row had taken place, the intruders having been summarily ejected from the apartment.

The Jews themselves had been easily managed, offering on the whole, but a feeble resistance when the affair had come to be one of actual physical force, but with their companions it had been otherwise. The women had fought tooth and nail, disputing every inch of ground; and had at last retreated when the arrival of fresh forces, in the shape of proprietors and waiters, had rendered the continuance of the contest no longer possible. All things considered, Tom had come out of the affair better than he had any right to expect; better certainly than did any of his companions, inasmuch as, outwardly, he bore no sign of the fray on his person, and this was more than any of the others could say. But, though to all outward appearance he had come off scathless, in reality he had suffered much bodily pain, and great

agony. He had knocked down one of his opponents and was in the act of throttling another, when he had suddenly been set upon by a red-faced woman, large of frame, and strong of arm, who had seized him by the hair of the head, and caused him to relax his hold of the Jew, and made him well nigh cry aloud in his agony. Then, opportunely for him, had come the friendly aid I have just mentioned, and he had been extricated from the clutches of this terrible virago; but the extrication had not been accomplished without the loss of a considerable quantity of his hair, which she held triumphantly as she was driven from the room.

He was thinking of it all now, feeling very much annoyed and thoroughly ashamed in having allowed himself to be drawn into this low pothouse row, as he termed it.

“But the fellows had no right to stay in the room when they were told it was a private one,” he muttered to himself, trying to excuse his conduct, though he knew well enough how weak was the excuse. He knew well enough when these people had forced their way into the room and refused to leave it, the proper course to have adopted would have been to have called in one of the proprietors and left the settlement of the matter to him. Then he put up his hand to his head. “It feels infernally sore,” he said, “and no wonder; good heavens, how that rip did punish me to be sure! And of course I couldn’t raise my hand against her, rip though she was.”

Of course he could not. She had no claim upon his forbearance, perhaps, for by her conduct and manner of life, she had placed herself outside the pale of womanhood, and of the considerations due to womanhood; still, for all that, she was a woman, and he could not well raise his hand against her in anger. But no such considerations had restrained him in dealing with the Jews; and there was some little comfort in the thought that they, at all events, had had

their deserts. He was perfectly certain of this, that that particular Jew of his whom he had knocked down, and that other fellow whom he had half strangled, had both got what they deserved. He was thinking the matter over to himself, in this way, when he was interrupted by the entrance of the landlady, with a letter.

“It’s from the Superintendent, sir,” said Mrs. Hegarty, handing him the note, “at least, the messenger who left it said it was.”

And Mrs. Hegarty was right; it was from the Superintendent. The note was a very short one.

“I wish particularly to see you as early as possible this forenoon,” that was all it contained.

I wonder what in the world he wishes so particularly to see me for, thought Tom, when he had read over the note. Something about the gold fields no doubt; but, then, it was only yesterday he had met Colonel Dixon in the street and nothing had passed between them beyond a few ordinary words. The Colonel had asked him when he had come to town and how long he intended to remain; and that was about the sum and substance of what had taken place.

Stay though. He remembered now having said at the time, in answer to Colonel Dixon’s question as to the length of his stay in town, that he meant to leave in a day or two; and no doubt it was in connexion with this that the Superintendent wished to see him, intending probably, to ask him to become the bearer of some letter or another to Simmons. Simmons was the officer who had temporary charge of the goldfields in those days; and Tom knew that letters were constantly passing between the Government and Simmons upon every available opportunity. He was an available opportunity, that’s all. Then he put on his hat and made his way to the Government buildings.

“Do you do anything in this way, Hungerford?” asked the Colonel when the customary salutations had passed between them. He had taken a cigar box from one of his table drawers, and having selected one from the box, was holding it between his fingers as he spoke.

“Why, yes, sir; a little. I suppose every fellow out here smokes.”

“Upon my life, then, I wish every fellow out here acted as if he did; people seem to think I shouldn’t do so, at all events. In the old days, I smoked away in here, as a matter of course, just whenever the humor seized me; but, for the very life of me, I daren’t attempt anything of the kind now. Upon my soul, I think, if Callaghan were to find me here with a cigar in my mouth, he’d think me”—and he finished the sentence by putting his finger up to his forehead. “I fully expect he’d tell off one his detectives to keep an eye on me. I do indeed.”

The Callaghan referred to, was the Commissioner of Police, who had lately come over from Australia to take charge of the force in Otago.<sup>5</sup>

“I stood out against this abominable tyranny for some time,” continued the Colonel; “indeed, I considered, I was bound to do so, because I looked upon it that the freedom of the Superintendent was at stake. But it was no use; the scandalised looks of the Victorians, and the thought of Callaghan’s detectives were too much for me, and I gave in. But I still have my smoke, though, when I feel disposed,” he said, with a twinkle in his eye.

“I’m off to have one now, and you may as well join me,” and handing the cigar box to Tom, they retired to a small room in the back of the building.

“I suppose, Hungerford, you have heard the news of this new rush that’s set in to your old quarters at Waitahuna, eh!”

commenced the Colonel, when they had sat down and lit their cigars.

“Well, yes, sir, I heard something about it; but nothing very definite.”

“It’s quite true. We had a letter from Simmons yesterday, and he says there are between five and six thousand men there now, and all doing well.”

“Five or six thousand men!” exclaimed Tom, in tones of surprise. “Well I’m glad the old place has turned out trumps after all.” And then, naturally he thought of the early days of Waitahuna, when it seemed very improbable indeed, it would ever reach its present stage of prosperity—turning out trumps, as he expressed it.

We ourselves have seen how it had been prospected from end to end by men experienced in this kind of work; and we know that the result of all this prospecting had been very unsatisfactory; so much so, that the old hands had all left it, disgusted and very angry, speaking of it as a “duffer,” and calling Read and Hungerford all kinds of hard names. And yet, here it was now, in the face of all this, some two or three months afterwards, suddenly turning up an important gold-field with a population of five or six thousand persons settled down upon it, and all of them doing well.

“Simmons is anxious to be relieved of his duties as soon as possible,” said Colonel Dixon, breaking in on the pause. “His domestic arrangements, it seems, require his presence in Dunedin, and at his suggestion, we have decided to appoint two Commissioners of Goldfields; one for Tuapeka, and one for Waitahuna. How would the Waitahuna Commissioner-ship suit you, Hungerford? The salary will be six hundred a year with extras in the shape of quarters, coal, and candle-light.”<sup>6</sup>

Then he paused, waiting for Tom’s reply.

But the offer had come upon Tom so very unexpectedly, that for the moment he sat silent, taken too much aback to say anything.

After reading the Superintendent's note, he had gone down to the office, believing he knew exactly what was required of him when he got there. He did, perhaps, think it somewhat odd that in the conversation which had taken place, the Superintendent should have discussed with him, a comparative stranger, such important alterations as those proposed in the management of the goldfields. What had he to do with those alterations, and why should he be taken into the Superintendent's confidence, were questions he had asked himself at the time? But he had explained the matter to himself, by supposing that these particulars had been confided to his keeping for the benefit of Simmons, to whom he was to retail them afterwards. He was an available opportunity; and these items of news were entrusted to his care, as a kind of supplement to that letter, of which he was to be the bearer.

But instead of taking the turn he expected, things had turned out altogether different; and here he was offered an appointment as Commissioner of Goldfields, suddenly and unexpectedly. Should he accept the appointment? That was the question he had now to decide. Yes; he thought he ought to. Looking at it from a pecuniary point of view, the appointment was a good one. Six hundred a-year was not to be picked up every day, not even in those golden days when money was easily made, and when a man's services were highly prized and highly paid for. His experience of colonial life was that without a large capital to trade upon, a man would find it difficult to turn his hand to anything that would bring him in this sum with anything like certainty.

Then as far as his private affairs were concerned, there was nothing to interfere with his acceptance of this offer.



Whatever little capital he had brought out with him to the colony, had, for the most part, been invested in that run he had purchased from Whitney; but it was not in the slightest degree necessary that he himself should look after the run personally, for he could easily get somebody else to do that for a couple of hundred a year. He had no doubt in his mind that young Lindsay would be very glad to do it for that sum, or even less.

Possibly you may think this was a very material and sordid view for Tom to take of the matter; but when we come fully to know the history of his life, as we shall do bye-and-bye, we will see how it was that the acquisition of money came to be a matter of more than ordinary consideration to him. But is this apology necessary? *Que voulez vous mon ami.*<sup>7</sup> The days we live in are very material days, and if it is sordid to give to money our first and chief consideration, who amongst us is not sordid?

It is true we are told that the uses of adversity are sweet, and so they are no doubt; but, who amongst us, I should like to know, ever cares to test the sweetness by practical experience? Is it not rather a fact that we admit to ourselves that prosperity is sweet, and that the good things resulting from prosperity are very pleasant? Is it not a recognised code in our colonial morality that we are to put money in our purses as quickly as ever we can; no matter whether we put it in them honestly or not, provided we do put it in them, and put it in them quickly?

But his thoughts were not wholly mercenary; and passing through his mind were other considerations besides the amount of salary he was to receive. He was thinking of his relatives at home; thinking how pleased they would all be, they and his friends, to hear of his advancement; and he was thinking of one such relative in particular, one who would, he

well knew, rejoice at his good fortune, with a joy that was as pure and as unselfish as her own heart.

And he felt flattered at being selected as worthy to fill the position, and all the more flattered inasmuch as the selection had been made without any solicitation whatever on his part.

Then there was the power and authority with which it would be invested; there was something alluring in that to a young man. Young or old, we all of us feel a pleasure in knowing that our word is law, our nod the signal for obedience.

It is true he knew well, no one better, that the men he was invited to go amongst, were a sturdy lot of fellows who cared very little for nods and becks; but he knew equally well, that at heart they had a strong feeling of respect for anything like properly constituted authority. If the man who went amongst them as a Commissioner had firmness of purpose, and pluck, and tact, and some little knowledge of the details of his business; if he possessed something of these qualities, I say, and carried himself as if he did, then he would be respected and warmly supported. But did he possess these qualifications? could he—

“Well, Hungerford, what do you say?” asked the Superintendent, interrupting his thoughts.

Well, he scarcely knew what to say. For the last few minutes he had been sitting silent, thinking of it all, but as yet he had come to no very definite conclusion one way or another.

“The truth of the matter is, Colonel Dixon, I scarcely know what to say,” he replied. “One thing, however, I may say, and that is, that I feel very thankful to you for your kindness in thinking of me. Honestly, I should like well enough to accept the appointment, but the fact is I’m afraid to do it. It’s a very difficult position to fill, and I’ve had scarcely any experience about mining, and —”

“Say nothing further about that, Hungerford,” said the

Colonel, interrupting him; “if you have no other objection to make I’ll look upon the thing as settled. We at all events are quite satisfied as to your fitness,” he continued, “and you may rest assured that if we were not, the appointment would never have been offered to you.”

“Well, sir, I can only say I’ll do my best to justify your good opinion.”

“Well, that’s settled then. Your appointment will appear in the next “Gazette.”<sup>8</sup> Now, about starting. You must get away as quickly as possible. Let me see. This is Tuesday. Will you be ready to start on Friday?”

Tom said he would and rose to depart.

“If you’ve nothing better to do Hungerford, you’d better come down to me this evening.”

“I should be very glad, sir, but I’m engaged to spend the evening with Colonel Fitzherbert.”

“With Colonel Fitzherbert, eh! Ah, to be sure, he’s got two pretty daughters, hasn’t he? Well I’m a lonely old bachelor, and can’t hold out any such inducement as that to a young fellow, to come and see me.”

“By the bye,” he said, when they got back into the office, “we intend appointing a gold receiver for each of the gold-fields, at a salary of four hundred a year and quarters. If you happen to know of anybody fitted for the appointment, we will be very glad to consider favorably your recommendation.”

Tom when he got back to his lodgings, sat down and wrote the following letter to his friend Henry Fitzherbert.

Dunedin, Sept. 17th, 1861.

Dear Fitzherbert,

I have just accepted the appointment of Commissioner of Goldfields for Waitahuna. There is a gold receiver also to be appointed. The pay will be four hun-

dred a year and some extras. The Superintendent asked me if I knew of anybody I could suggest for the billet, and your name at once occurred to me. Think the matter over, and if the thing suits you, I have no doubt it can be managed. You can let me have an answer tonight. I need not say old fellow, I hope the answer will be in the affirmative.

Yours sincerely,  
Thomas Hungerford.

## **Chapter XI. — Miss Tonks.**

“You’re wanted, Bertha.” Nelly Fitzherbert was the speaker, and the words were spoken by her on the same morning that the events narrated in the previous chapter occurred, as she entered the room where her sister was busily employed removing the breakfast things. “There’s a woman at the door waiting to see you about the servant’s place” she continued by way of explanation. “Such a serious dapper looking little woman,” nodding her head towards the passage; and she pursed up her mouth, and folded her hands in front of her, and assumed a quaker-like staidness, as her elder sister passed out with a smile to the proposed interview. She certainly did look serious and dapper, Bertha thought, as she led the woman into an adjoining room, and glanced her over hastily. Not unprepossessing, although peculiar looking. She was a crisp Ripston pippin-faced little woman, with very inquisitive grey eyes, very sharp features, and very jerky manners.

Just at first, however, these characteristics of Rebecca Tonks’ outward appearance, were unnoticed by Bertha, who was too much intent on the cool impudence of the woman to notice anything else. No mistake, she was a cool hand; very quiet, but so thoroughly free and easy. When she got into the room, she stood there for a minute pausing coolly to look about her; and then, after carefully laying her little black bag and parasol on the chair, she walked deliberately across to the armchair and possessed herself of it; and, altogether, she departed herself with such easy freedom, that Bertha’s breath was taken away for the moment, and she stood still in speechless astonishment.

You and I would have thought nothing of all this; we know better; but we must remember that Miss Fitzherbert was as yet a stranger to our ways of life, and hugged closely to herself her old world notions and prejudices. She had a great deal to

learn, and a great deal to unlearn. All her life long you see, she had been girt around with those surroundings that make the ways of life pleasant ways. Her household duties had been duties of love, so far as the affections of those who moved about her, and did her bidding were concerned, for they were soft, and smooth, and deferential in their words, and in their ways, and in their manners. But she had to unlearn all this now. Rebecca Tonks was giving her her first lesson.

We are taught, indeed, that soft words, and smooth ways, and deferential manners, are the offspring of luxury, effeminacy, and decay, and that these qualities attain their greatest growth in the old worn out countries of the east, but gradually grow smaller and smaller as liberty, following in the wake of the sun, moves westward, and that finally they disappear altogether from view in the great rolling prairies of America. Well, yes; there's very little softness or politeness in the prairies. But I am inclined myself to think that liberty is not a whit the better or the fairer for the absence of those old world accompaniments.

But whatever you or I may think about the matter, we have just seen what Bertha Fitzherbert's thoughts were, and it is with her we are now more especially concerned.

"May I ask," she said, looking her visitor all over, and endeavoring, as far as in her lay, to throw a world of sarcasm into her tone and manner, "who have I the honor to address?"

"Rebecca Tonks. I was christened Rebecca; they sometimes calls me Becky for shortness like."

The words were uttered with perfect composure, the speaker heaving a little sigh of relief as she finished.

All that sarcasm of Bertha's was evidently thrown away upon the woman, and Bertha knew it, and we may be perfectly sure the knowledge added nothing to her amiability of mind. Just for the moment, indeed, she felt very much inclined to

order her out of the house there and then; but supposing she were to act on this inclination of hers, what then? She knew well enough how scarce female servants were in the colony, and how difficult a matter it was to get one even at the best of times; but just then they were scarcer than ever, and it was almost impossible to get one at all, for love or money. Then she thought of the discomforts her family were being put to, owing to this scarcity of servants, and, she saw at once that these discomforts might be prolonged indefinitely if she were to drive this Rebecca Tonks away from her door.

“Better bear with the impertinence than that,” she said to herself, but, at the same time, she mentally resolved she would, if possible, teach Miss Rebecca a lesson she was not likely to forget in a hurry as to the respect that was due to herself.

“Now that I know your name, Miss Tonks, perhaps you would be good enough to let me know your business?”

“That’s coming to the point. I likes to see people coming to the point at once. Come to the point and walk uprightly, Rebecca Tonks. Them’s my father’s last Christianlike words to me when I was leaving home four years ago come next December, and I always has ’em afore me day aud night, I has.”

She became really animated at last, for the first time during the interview.

“When I heard last night you wanted a female, I said, now Rebecca, come to the point at once, and act uprightly, which I did, for I made up a parcel of something to eat, and prepared myself over night, so as to start by daybreak next morning.”

“You heard I wanted a servant, and came to ask for the place; is that it?” asked Bertha.

Rebecca Tonks nodded her head in reply.

“And is it usual for servants out here, to sit down in arm-chairs without being asked, for in the country I come from,

it would be thought a piece of impertinent liberty, for which they would be turned out of doors.”

She was provoked well nigh beyond all endurance, and conveyed that lesson she had mentally promised herself she would teach Rebecca in the quick sharp tones of an angry woman.

For a minute the woman seemed provoked too. Her restless grey eyes became fixed and steady for a moment as they looked into Bertha's, and flashed out upon her sharp angry glances. But this gleam of anger was very transient, and passed away just as quickly as it came, leaving the face calm but pitiful.

“Well, yes; we makes ourselves comfortable when we can,” was the reply, in the tones which a mother might have used in speaking to a wilful child, “which ain't often in this heathen land. But I see you're new to the ways of the country. Oh! you've a great deal to learn,” and she shook her head compassionately.

“Here am I now, as has the blessing of knowing what moral and Christianlike parents is as has a warned me to come to the point and walk uprightly; how can I walk uprightly as hasn't been inside a Christianlike church or heard a Christianlike minister for twelve long months?”

And she looked enquiringly into Bertha's face, and paused, as if waiting for the solution of a problem that she knew could not be solved. Look at me; look at me well, for you have never before in your life seen such a woman. I try to be good, and I am good, though I have none of those opportunities which fall to the lot of other women, and have been deprived of those lights that guide them in the way of goodness. Come now; how do you account for it; answer me that, if you can, but you cannot? This was what Rebecca's pause and look seemed to convey.

But for a moment or two the pause was unfilled, for Bertha's thoughts were busy about other things just then.



She saw that this woman was an oddity in her way, and now, for the first time, it flashed across her mind that the impertinence of Rebecca Tonks' manner, which had so angered her, was unintentional on the woman's part; was, in fact, nothing more or less than a specimen of the free and easy style that obtained in colonial life. She was new to the ways of the country, and had a great deal to learn, so Rebecca Tonks had told her, and in telling her so, Rebecca was no doubt right. Yes; she had a great deal to learn, no doubt. The learning might not be a very pleasant process, would not be so, indeed, if this, her first lesson, was, a fair sample of what was to follow. But what then?

She had not come out to the colony with any high-flown romantic notions; on the contrary, indeed, her brother's letters had made it perfectly clear to her, that in coming to Otago, she would find herself surrounded with difficulties of every description, subjected to annoyances of every kind; but she had resolved within herself that none of these things should come between her and her duty. And, now, how was she carrying out this resolution? Why, by giving way to her pride, and her prejudice, and her temper, on the very first opportunity. She mentally resolved she would be more careful for the future and that, meantime, she would bear herself more lowly towards this woman. Such were the thoughts that passed through Bertha Fitzherbert's mind, and it was in a much more humble voice than heretofore that she replied, filling in that pause of Rebecca's.

"It's no doubt a very sad thing not to be able to go to church every Sunday; but I suppose you've been living in the country."

"I have been living in the country. I've been living out at the Taieri these last twelve months; but it ain't a fit place for a Christian female to live in, and I left it. Now, what's your terms?"

The woman was certainly very provoking, and seemed bent, Bertha thought, on trying her patience to the very uttermost; but strong in her good resolutions, she determined she would not again suffer herself to be provoked.

“The ordinary rate of wages, fifty pounds a year.”

“Any men folk in the house?” asked Rebecca.

“My fathers and brothers; no one else.”

“I can’t abide men folk,” added Miss Tonks, “imperent rampageous creatures that they be. Don’t you consort with men folk.”

The grave seriousness of Miss Tonks’ face, and the earnestness of her manner, as she tendered this advice, was too much for Bertha’s gravity.

“Do they trouble you so very much then,” she asked, laughing aloud.

“Do they trouble me,” repeated Miss Tonks in a heightened tone of voice; “I’d like to see ’em.”

And she glared fiercely around the room, as if in search of one of those devouring enemies of her sex with whom to do instant battle there and then.

“Leastwise,” she added, correcting herself, as her woman’s vanity got the better of her, “they be imperent enough and rampageous enough to try; but I’m a virtuous female as comes to the point, and I tell’s sich like I’ll have none of their rampaging ways with me. Many of a family?” she asked, resuming her enquiries.

“Five.”

“Fifty pounds a-year; no men folk; five of a family,” repeated Rebecca Tonks slowly, telling off each particular categorically on her fingers, and looking sideways the while, in a wise deliberative sort of way, something after the manner of an Australian magpie, as he asks you who you are, and then turns his eyes up blinkingly at the sun, to all appearance

unconscious of your presence.

“Sundays to myself?” and the forefinger of the right hand rested on the fourth finger of the left, as she paused waiting for an answer.

“You can go to church, of course, on Sunday mornings, and have the whole of the evenings to yourself.” Miss Tonks shook her head.

“I must have the whole Sunday to myself,” she said, “for my religious exercises. I’ve a voice inside of me as is a ticking like a clock day and night, and it’ll soon commence a striking if I go on a living a misspent life, as is a flying in the face of them blessed words of my father’s come —”

“Very well; very well,” said Bertha, interrupting the coming words, and anxious to bring the interview to a close as soon as possible. But Rebecca Tonks was not to be interrupted in that way.

“Come to the point and walk uprightly,” she repeated in a more measured tone of voice than usual, concluding her unfinished sentence. “Sundays to myself for my religious exercises, and Thursday evenings for spiritual comforts,” and the forefinger passed on from the fourth to the fifth finger.

“Spiritual comforts! What do you mean?”

We must admit Miss Fitzherbert was being very sorely tried, and we cannot wonder if she asked the question sharply, angrily.

Miss Tonks paused for a minute, pulling herself together for the coming effort, like an old hunter before taking a fence he intuitively understands will tax all his powers to get over safely.

“Spiritual comforts—leastways what I calls spiritual comforts,” she answered, slowly, “is the talking with a spiritual friend Christianlike words a Thursday night, over a nice strong cup of tea. When you gets a number of such Christianlike men and women together of an evening over their

cups of tea, is what I calls a spiritual tea party. But we ain't got no spiritual tea parties out here, and so has to put up with spiritual comforts."

"Is that all you want?"

"That's all as I knows on."

"Then I suppose I may look upon the thing as settled," said Bertha.

"You may look upon the thing as settled," assented Miss Tonks, as she rose from the arm chair.

"You'll see me here to-morrow, and you'll find we'll get on better as we come to know each other better," she added, as she walked across the room and possessed herself of her little black leather bag and parasol. Then she opened the door, and, shaking her head slowly, remarked, "You've a great deal to learn: Good day," and passed out, much to Bertha's relief.

"Well, Bertha, have you engaged her?" asked Nelly, as her elder sister returned to the room.

"Yes," was the rejoinder, "but she's the most provoking woman I ever came across in the whole course of my life," and then she described the interview.

"What fun!" said Nelly, roaring with laughter. "But I dare-say she'll behave herself better when she's been with us a short time."

About eight o'clock that evening Tom Hungerford dropped in according to promise.

"It was very kind of you to think of Henry for that Gold Receivership," said Colonel Fitzherbert, when the usual salutations had been gone through.

"I'm selfish enough to hope he's going to accept it."

"He has accepted it. I met Colonel Dixon to-day in the street, and ventured to speak to him about the matter, taking the liberty of mentioning your name as a friend of my

son's. He was kind enough to say he would do what he could for him, and this evening Henry received an official letter of appointment."

"And is he to have a gold-laced cap, and a gorgeous uniform, Mr. Hungerford?" asked Nelly, "for if so he'll be perfectly unbearable. Goodness knows he's conceited enough as it is."

"What!" exclaimed her brother, who had entered the room a short time before, assuming a look of horror as he spoke, "debase a free and independent colonist with such badges of slavery as that. No, Miss, I should think not, indeed."

Then, over their tea, Rebecca Tonks and her eccentricities gave them something to talk about, and after tea the Colonel proposed a rubber of whist. Colonel Fitzherbert, I may tell you, was great at whist. Whist, he was wont to say, was a splendid game, a noble game, when well played and properly understood. He was a good player himself, and loved his rubber dearly—so dearly, indeed, that he willingly sat down to double dummy all the evening,<sup>1</sup> when nothing better offered; and I don't know any greater proof of a man's love of whist than that. He never by any chance made a mistake himself in his play, and when a partner of his so sinned, he never by any chance forgot to tell him of his misdeeds—managing that telling, however, in a quiet, jocular kind of way that left nothing in the way of a sting behind. On this occasion Nelly and Tom Hungerford played against the Colonel and his son.

"We threw away a trick there, Henry. I'm afraid you've something or another weighing on your mind to night. Perhaps this new promotion of yours is too much for you, and that that's the reason why you threw away your thirteenth trump, on my ten of hearts, when it was best card out."

"It's the gold laced cap and the gorgeous uniform, papa; that's what he's thinking of," said Nelly.

“A misdeal, by Jove,” exclaimed her father, “just count the cards, Nelly. Well,” he continued, after the cards had been counted, and found correct, “I haven’t done such a thing as that for many a year.”

“I’m afraid you’re none of you fit to play to-night,” put in the daughter. “I must very soon call you to account too, Mr Hungerford, if we go on much longer,” and she threw an arch merry glance across the table at Tom as she spoke, which sank deep down into his heart, and remained there for many a day after.

In the course of the evening, before Tom left, the subject of O’Neil and Nicholson’s run was referred to and discussed.

“I saw O’Neil this afternoon,” observed Tom, “and he said they felt disposed to sell if they could get ten thousand pounds for the place; but I think myself they’d take nine thousand for it, on the usual terms, and I’m quite certain it’s worth that.”

Then, before separating, it was agreed between them that Colonel Fitzherbert and Henry should accompany Tom the following day, as far as Waitahuna, and leaving him there, proceed on to look at this station of O’Neil and Nicholson’s.

## **Chapter XII. — “Would that mine enemy were a Commissioner of Goldfields.”**

“How very much changed it is, to be sure,” thought Tom, as he walked slowly along by himself through Waitahuna the evening of his arrival, and marked what was passing around him in this township of an hour.

He had left Colonel Fitzherbert and his son by themselves behind at one of the hotels, and had strolled out to have a look around him whilst tea was being got ready, and the first thing that caught his eye was this change in the place. The place was certainly very much changed since he had last seen it. Yes; as he looked back and thought of it all, and remembered what it was when he had last seen it, he admitted the fact to himself. Why, it seemed to him as if it were only yesterday that he and his companions had betaken themselves away from the place for good and all, as they supposed at the time—driven away from it because of its very poorness, and glad at heart of the pretext for leaving because of its utter loneliness. How deserted and utter lonely, to be sure, it used to seem in those days he was thinking of, when there wasn't a single soul to speak to in the whole gully, from one end of it to the other, with the exception of those couple of Maories that used to work up in Maori Gully; and even these Maoris had left it too in sheer disgust.

But no one could say it was lonely now. No; it was noisy enough in all conscience—full of life and animation, and so very much crowded that it was just as much as ever he could do to elbow his way through it at all.

It was very crowded, and there was no mistaking the crowd; no mistaking it for any other crowd than the one it was—a goldfields rush; no, not even though one had dropped across it in the most out of the way place in the world—out of the way as far as the getting of gold is concerned. As he elbowed

his way along he could see there around him all the characteristics that stamp the men who follow after new rushes, and set them apart from the outside world—all the outward characteristics as to dress, and bearing, and language; and all the inward characteristics too, that tell of honest aims, and high spirits, and reckless indifference, and desperate villany—there they were to be seen at every hand's turn.

I need not say that the men were very noisy and very boisterous, for anybody who knows anything of these new rushes is aware that loudness of voice and superfluity of animal spirits are some of their inseparable belongings. Some of them recognised him as he passed by, greeting him kindly in those hearty outspoken tones that belong to your prosperous digger, and ring out upon you pleasantly as the chimes from a blacksmith's anvil.

There was a good deal of drinking going on about the township; but that is a matter of course; and equally is it a matter of course that the men were, many of them, disposed to be rather quarrelsome amongst themselves, disputing and fighting, and blocking up the street, so that Tom was sometimes brought to a stand still altogether.

There was one fellow in particular who was kicking up a tremendous row. He was a big raw-boned Connemara man,<sup>1</sup> and his voice could be heard some distance off as he poured out his wrongs, and wrathfully abused his opponent, a countryman of his own, as it turned out.

“And you calls yirsilf an Irishman, do ye?” Tom could hear him ask, tauntingly. “An Irishman, indeed! My rispicks to you, Mither,” and he put his arms akimbo, and made his adversary a low mocking obeisance. “An Irishman! Begor, Cromwell will be calling himself an Irishman nixt. An Irishman! ha, ha, ha!” and he laughed derisively. “You're no Irishman; you're a low Hibernian—a dhirty, low, mane blagard, that's



what you are; and shure it's demaning myself I'd be, and a dhirting my hands I'd be, to lay 'em on the likes of ye."

"Lay your hands on me, is it," exclaimed the other, no wise daunted by the size of his adversary. "Tirrah thin, do, and by the virtue of my oath the mother that bore ye wont know ye this same blessed night. But it's my thinkin' it's readier with yer tongue ye are than your hands, and it's a dhirty black tongue of your own ye have too. Who are ye at all, I'd like to know, as dares to speak to a dacent man like me. But shure all the world knows ye. Upon my sowl ye carries the look of the yellow male about ye in your hungry carcass.<sup>2</sup> For sure, isn't it in the workhouse ye've been bred and born all your life."

The roar of laughter that flowed this reference to the "yellow male" and the workhouse, was too much for the Conne-mara man, and without more ado, he rushed upon his opponent with a frantic yell of rage, hugging him tightly in his bearlike grip, to the immense delight of the bystanders.

Anything in the shape of interference was, of course, out of the question, and Tom was aware of it, so he pushed on as quickly as possible, and as he did so he caught a sight of some crouching figures, skulking stealthily away into the darkness behind the tents. They were up to no good these fellows, he could see that; indeed they had it plainly written on their faces, for they were fellows:

By the hands of nature marked,

Quoted and signed to do a deed of shame.<sup>3</sup>

Yes; they bore about them the broad arrow of crime, and were unmistakably stamped with the devil's stamp; very likely they were now busy in the concoction of some piece of villany or another, that would raise them high in their master's estimation.

When he got to the end of the street, which was about half a mile long as he had traversed it, he turned back homewards

again. Speaking of it as a street, of course you understand that the township was a canvas township, and the street a street of tents. But in other respects I did not miscall it when I spoke of it as a street, for it was a regular street, in so far as this at least, that the tents lined it regularly and thickly, and that most of the necessaries of life could be had in these tents—of digging life I mean. As to their size some of the tents were more pretentious than others, and more crowded, and better lit. They were the hotels and stores, and the billiard rooms, and bowling saloons of the township; that is to say, they were avowedly devoted to these purposes; but they were devoted to other purposes, too, that were not avowed—openly at least. They were places where fiery poison was gulphed down,<sup>4</sup> sapping life of its vitality; where [a] reckless gambling house was carried on, and honest industry deprived of its earnings; where midnight orgeries<sup>5</sup> held riot, and men lost all sense of shame and self-respect in the delirium of the hour.

There were several hotels in the township; but the Golden Age and Miners' Arms were allowed the right such as it was, of being considered the two best,<sup>6</sup> and it was at the latter of these that Tom and his two friends the Fitzherberts, had taken up their quarters. They were sitting by themselves—the Fitzherberts, I mean—in a little room at the back, to reach which it was first necessary to go through the bar. Tom when he got inside of it, on his way through, found it full of men who were all conversing very loudly together, all at the same time, and producing a very Babel of noise; and the conversation was thickly interspersed with loud oaths, which they threw about them broadcast. But as he passed through, and his presence became known to the men, their tones became rather lower, and the oaths were not scattered about so plentifully, and there was an audible buzz in the room as neighbour whispered neighbour, "that's the Commissioner."

At the time he entered, the proprietor was standing behind the bar serving his customers, but he shoved his gin, and whiskey, and brandy, dexterously out of sight, under the counter,<sup>7</sup> when he caught sight of Tom. And it was really amusing to witness the dexterity with which he did this; and what made it the more amusing, was that he evidently thought his sleight of hand had escaped all detection, when, in truth, no one could have entered the door, and not taken in the whole performance. The bland smile and look of unconscious innocence, that his face wore, as he turned towards Tom and told him tea was ready, and that the Sergeant of Police had been enquiring for him, were perfect in their way. And having left the bar, which he did as speedily as might be, got out into the passage, and as he did so, he could hear this poor landlord appealing, in words of deprecation, to one of his noisier customers, as the man called for his nobbler of brandy in loud tones, and in still louder tones, asked those around him, who the devil cared for the commissioner? Not he; he'd have his nobbler of brandy, or his nobbler of anything else either, in spite of any damned Commissioner that ever was born; yes, that he would.

Poor M'Quaid! He was to be pitied that night, and, when you come to think of it, you must admit that his was no enviable lot. Here, on the one hand, were those noisy, unruly daredevil customers to deal with; hot-headed, hot-blooded fellows, who would listen to no words of his in the way of reason, no matter how strong the words he might select, or how much of justice they might have in them; fellows who would enjoy themselves in their own way, drinking, gambling and fighting, or not at all. He knew well they could have these enjoyments elsewhere, have them to their hearts content, and he knew also that they would very soon betake themselves from his house, for good and all, if he were to put anything

in the shape of restraint upon them, pouring out their money in handfuls into some other fortunate tills than his. But here, again, on the other hand, was this Commissioner, staying in his house, within earshot of his very bar, this Commissioner who would, tomorrow or the next day, be withholding from him his publican's license, ruining him to all intents and purposes, because he was keeping a noisy house, and selling spirits when he was not licensed so to do. He was to be pitied, and wished to heavens Tom had never come inside his door; wished he had gone to the Golden Age, any where else, in fact, provided he had kept away from his house.

But aid came to the poor man, when he least expected it, and from the least likely quarter too, from no other a person in fact than the Sergeant of Police. The Sergeant called upon Tom in the course of the evening, and placed his tent at his disposal, and in this way the man was relieved from his dilemma, and every one else concerned just as much pleased as the landlord.

"If I had my choice, I don't think I should care to live on the goldfields," ejaculated Colonel Fitzherbert, as he was tucking himself up in his opossum rug, that night in the Sergeant's tent.

"Well, no, I don't suppose any one would make choice of such a life if he could help it," answered Tom.

"Of course, it's all very well for two young fellows like you," said the Colonel, seeing the blunder he had made, and trying to extricate himself. "I should not have minded it myself, when I was your age, but at my time of life, a man does not care for that sort of thing, you know."

The Colonel and his son started away betimes the following morning. Tom was up to see them off, and now that they were gone, he was standing by himself, looking around him at the camp—or rather at the clump of policemen's tents,

which constituted the camp. There was nothing else to be seen about the place, but these few tents, and he was turning his eyes towards the township, to watch the signs of awakening life, and the movements of busy preparation, that preceded the labor and toil of the day, when the Sergeant of Police came up to him. O'Leary, the Sergeant, was a shrewd sensible fellow, and in a brief business like way, he proceeded to put him in possession of the state of affairs in the district.

There were about seven thousand people in the place he said, and though no crimes of any magnitude, had as yet been committed, still, there was a good deal of rowdyism of one kind and another, and a large number of bad characters were knocking about. There were a number of Lambing Flat men there, and they were disposed to be rather rowdy and troublesome, setting others a bad example. He himself had only arrived a few days before, and the men at his disposal, were not sufficient for the duty they had to do, but now that Tom had arrived, the force would no doubt, be increased, and things would soon settle down of their own accord. He also said that jumping was very prevalent, and that a large number of disputes were awaiting his arrival for settlement. The people had been all anxiously looking out for him too, and now that his coming was known, they would come swarming up in crowds, before very long.

"Is there anything come up for me Sergeant?" asked Tom, when the man had finished his explanation.

"Yes, sir, a tent, and a case of miners' rights. They came up from town yesterday."

"I'll want you to help me, Sergeant, until Mr. Fitzherbert comes back, and takes over his own duties. He won't be very long away. If you don't mind, perhaps, I might just as well step into your tent, and write a few notices, saying I'll do nothing for the next four or five days, but issue miners' rights, and

business licenses. I don't well see how I can do anything else. It's all very well men coming to me about their disputes, and asking me to protect them, but how can I interfere with their disputes, and give them any protection, unless they have their miners' rights. Will you be good enough to get these notices posted up, get one posted up in the Golden Age, one in the Miner's Arms, and one in the Camp," and the Sergeant left to carry out his instructions.

Thence forward they had very busy times of it, Tom and the Sergeant. Nominally, indeed, the office hours were from ten to four, and the Union Jack flying aloft on the top of a tall flagstaff, intimated this fact to all concerned; but very little the people of the place cared for any such intimation as this. They kept hovering about the camp from the first hour of early dawn, till dark at night, caring very little whether the Union Jack was flying above them, or no, and not paying much heed either to the words of warning the stalwart policeman on duty, flung at them from time to time. There they stayed, watching their opportunity until the man's back was turned for a minute, and then, in they rushed, two or three at a time, into Tom's tent, caring little whether he was asleep or no, as they poured out their grievances, and drove him almost mad before he could get them turned out.

I remember once a Commissioner of Goldfields telling me he was very much persecuted in this same way when he took charge of a new rush; and that, do what he would, he could not rid himself of his persecutors, until by mere chance he happened to fall on the following plan. He always slept with his open razor close by within reach of his hand, he said, and whenever one of those intruders came inside his tent of a morning, he laid hold of the razor and, waving it frantically above his head, rushed at the man in his nightshirt and red woollen nightcap, worn specially for the occasion. The man,

of course, was frightened out of his very wits—who indeed would not be?—and fled from the spot—fled for his very life, too frightened to turn round and see whether this mad apparition was on his track or not until he had put a safe distance between himself and the place. But no such expedient as this being known to Tom, he had to put up with the annoyance in the best way he could; and a very great annoyance too it became at last. It did occur to him indeed that a good bulldog chained at his door would not be a bad ally to have; but it also occurred to him that just at first the dog would be more dangerous to himself than to anybody else; so that bulldog idea of his was given up.

Perhaps the crowd was denser between ten and four than during any other time of the day. Indeed during these six hours there was no getting near the office tent at all; and how the police saved it from being crushed in a dozen times a day at least must, I am quite sure, have astonished the men themselves. The thing was a regular scramble from morning to night; but it was a scramble that brought in a good deal of money in the way of revenue. Why, during these first few days, there was something over three thousand pounds collected, though the whole lot of it, the greater portion of it at all events, narrowly escaped being lost on one occasion. It was in this way: One windy day shortly after his arrival, as Tom and O’Leary were sitting together in the tent counting over this money, as was their custom before commencing their day’s work, a great gust struck the tent, tearing it away, and catching up the notes, before the two occupants knew where they were, swept a whole lot of them over the heads of the crowd outside. O’Leary, and his men, and the crowd gave instant chase. Of course it was good fun to the crowd, and they enjoyed the thing thoroughly—jostling one another, and tumbling each other over and over as they ran laughing

after the notes. But it was no laughing matter to Tom, who was naturally anxious about the money, and, if the truth were known, never expected to see the half of it back again. A goldfields crowd is, however, proverbially an honest one; this one was so at all events, for the entire amount was recovered, with the exception of a few pounds, and they were probably lost down some digger's hole or another.

Yes; they had altogether a hard time of it, Tom and the sergeant; but Tom's hard time commenced in real earnest when he set to work at the settlement of those disputes. In fact, when he came to think of them, his heart well nigh sank within him, so numerous were they, and so never ending did they seem. All day long he was at them, worn out in mind and body, moving about from one end of the field to the other with his tape line in his hand, hearing evidence, measuring off the claims, restoring their property, to rightful owners, and assessing damages.

We know, for it has already been mentioned in a previous chapter, that the settlement of these mining disputes was a disagreeable and a difficult task; but I am not sure that any mention has been made as to the danger, for it was sometimes dangerous, as I think you will come to admit before you lay down this chapter. And as to the difficulty: besides the difficulty and unpleasantness that usually attends the settlement of disputes of this kind, there was this in particular to be remembered when thinking of those early days, that the first Commissioners had nothing whatever to guide them; nothing but the common sense they possessed, and whatever little experience they had acquired themselves beforehand. There were no rules, no regulations, nor anything of that kind, you see, that men can now a days fall back upon for guidance; and so these early Commissioners had just to get on as best they could, that's all.



Now the men at Waitahuna knew all this perfectly well, and tried to take advantage of the knowledge; but they very soon saw it was time thrown away to try anything of the kind, and so they soon gave that up.

It was the “jumping” that gave Tom so much bother and trouble and annoyance. Now this process of “jumping” is a very unpleasant process; whether on the goldfields or off them matters not a whit. The forcible seizure of our goods and chattels by other men who are stronger and more powerful than ourselves, for no other reason than that they are stronger and more powerful, is all very well; very enjoyable and very laughable when we come to read of it in the pages of a novel, but when the thing comes home to our door it ceases to be a laughing matter any longer. Now a man’s claim is as much his property as much as any of his other possessions can be so called, and the forcible seizure of it by that process known as jumping is a matter very grievous to him.

Men on the goldfields accordingly, as a body, set their faces against this jumping; but it is not easily stamped out just at first, being as much a part and parcel of a new rush as drinking, swearing, and fighting.

As I have just said, it was a very common practice at Waitahuna; so much so indeed, that many of the old hands about the place declared to Tom, in an aggrieved kind of way, that they had never before seen anything like it in their lives.

“I have a-been all over Victoria, and I have a-been all over California,” Cornish Bill said to him one day, “and I have never seen so much jumping afore in my life, as is a-going on in this here gully. Blow me if I have,” he added emphatically.” And, it’s my opinion, do you see, Mr. Hungerford, as them here chaps as is a playin’ of this ere little game are a playin’ of it together, and they aught to be put down.”

Tom began to think so too; began to think that Cornish

Bill might be right as to the concert that was being observed in the playing of this game; and so he began to keep his eyes about him, and observe the fellows more narrowly, determining within himself that if it were so, he would put it down. And he found out that it was so, and that Cornish Bill was right. No doubt of it, the fellows had a strong family likeness, and very often the very same faces were turning up. Seeing this he set about making enquiries into the matter, and before long, had proof positive afforded him that the jumping was carried on systematically, by a gang of some fifty or sixty fellows, who were all leagued together, although, the better to escape detection, they acted in small parties of fours or fives. He had proof positive, I say, of all this; and moreover knew that they met secretly over night, and there and then came to an understanding among themselves, as to the claims that should be jumped next day; and when the jumping was made, they would come pouring in from all quarters, with their picks and shovels, ready by word and by deed to support their confederates.

“What, turn these poor decent chaps out of their claims, which was theirs as they knew, for hadn’t they seen all of ’em a working it for days and days?” they would say to the crowd. Things were going on this way for some little time before Tom got to the bottom of the matter; and a good deal of indignation was beginning to be felt in the gully, as the facts of the case came to ooze out, when one day he was sent for to settle a dispute in the flat.

“What’s the matter?” he enquired, as he came close up to the mouth of the claim, making his enquiry of the party who had sent for him, and who were covered over with blood, and sorely battered and bruised, and otherwise bore about them outwardly the marks of the rough handling they had experienced.

“Me and my mates,” answered one of the men, “took up this here claim four days ago, and have been a working of it ever since, until them chaps,” pointing to his opponents, who were working away quite unconcernedly at the bottom of the claim, “came up to-day and drove us out of it.”

“Come up here out of that, and show me your miners’ rights,” called out Tom, savagely, for he recognised the gang, and determined within himself that he would bring the matter to a crisis there and then, giving the fellows a piece of his mind, and warning them as to what they might expect for the future if they continued to carry on this nefarious work of theirs.

The men looked up doggedly, but never offered to move.

“Do you hear me. Come up out of that, will you,” he repeated, still more savagely.

“Who the devil are you?” asked one of the fellows defiantly, leaning the while on his long handled shovel, and looking up scowlingly.

Tom lost his temper.

“Damn you, I’ll teach you who I am. Come up out of that or I’ll have you dragged up.”

“You may go to h—ll,” said the fellow, with cool deliberate audacity, staring fixedly at Tom.

“Look here, boys,” spoke Tom, brimful of rage, to the crowd, “you are all of you as much interested as I am in maintaining order here. I can’t permit these fellows to go about in this way, jumping honest men’s claims and setting the law at defiance. Most of the police are away just now, but we’ll bring them up to the camp ourselves. You’ll help me, won’t you?”

“Horry,” shouted Connemara Pat, a big strapping Irishman, “begor we’ll ate ’em.”

“Hurrah, for the Commissioner, boys,” cried Cornish Bill,

pulling his trousers well up under his strap.

“Hurrah!” echoed the crowd of angry diggers, as a number of them jumped down into the claim after Tom, and overpowering the jumpers pulled them along roughly.

“Thank you, boys, they’ll not trouble you again for some time; I promise you,” said Tom, when the men had been handed over to the two solitary policemen on duty at the camp.

“Hurrah for the Commissioner! Give it them hot,” responded the crowd of diggers, returning well pleased to their work.

Yes; he had a very hard time of it just at first; a very hard time of it indeed. He was sick of it all, thoroughly sick of it, and so utterly prostrated in mind and body that he would gladly have thrown the whole thing up there and then, had it been only possible for him to do so. But of course it was not possible, was not to be thought of, in fact, for a single moment; his honor, and reputation, and self-respect, and his duty to the Government forbade the serious entertainment of such a thought for an instant. He knew this, and so he went on grind, grind, grind all day long from morning till night, with never a companion, or a friend, or a pleasure in the world to soften this hard grinding life of his. Can we wonder that, when he retired to his bed at night, he thanked God in his heart of hearts that one day more was past and gone. He longed earnestly for the return of the Fitzherberts, and the expectation of their speedy arrival was the one ray of comfort that made his lot at all endurable. At last they came, after ten days absence, bringing Tim Dwyer with them, and then the worst of his troubles were over.

“How have you been getting on, old fellow?” enquired Henry Fitzherbert as they all sat together in the tent the evening of their arrival.

“I tell you what it is,” answered Tom, “I hope to heavens I shall never again pass ten such days. I didn’t think it was possible for a fellow to undergo so much misery—such downright torture I might say—as I have undergone since I saw you. If Solomon had only known the sort of life a fellow lives up here, instead of wishing that his enemy would write a book,<sup>8</sup> I fully believe he would have wished him to have been a Commissioner of Goldfields. I know this, I should wish my bitterest enemy no worse fate.” And then he gave the father and son an outline of the sort of life he had been living since they left.

### **Chapter XIII. — Things Come to a Crisis at Last.**

Young Fitzherbert and Tim Dwyer returned to Waitahuna about the first week in October, and thenceforward things began to take a turn very much for the better as regards Tom's comfort and peace of mind. For one thing, there was no more jumping now in the gully, none worth speaking of, at least, seeing that that gang of fellows who had caused all this kind of trouble had been discomfited and put utterly to rout in the manner hereinbefore described. Besides this, Fitzherbert's assumption of his own duties made a very perceptible difference in Tom's work, enabling him to have a little breathing time to himself during the day, instead of being worked off his legs as formerly. Then, too, there were something like habitable quarters being put up in the camp, in lieu of those flimsy tents; so that, altogether, as I said, things began to assume a brighter aspect; and the life began to become more endurable, and the bright warm October days seemed all the more warm and pleasant in Tom's eyes.

He had a little difficulty, too, on his hands with Tim Dwyer, about this time, and this difficulty had been got over satisfactorily—that is to say, he had had his own way in the matter, and was of course satisfied. It was about the bailiffship of the district, that this little difficulty arose between himself and Tim. He wanted Tim to accept the bailiffship, urging him to do so, but Tim had refused to accept it, had refused positively and at once to have anything whatsoever to say to it. Tom had never known him to be so positive and obstinate before in his life. And his behaviour was all the more aggravating, because the appointment was really a good one. A comfortable well paid appointment, and certainly beyond what could have been expected by a man in Tim's position; but no; he had his prejudices, and for some time would have nothing to say to it. Tim when he first heard

of Tom Hungerford's appointment, which he did through the Fitzherberts, had hurried away back with them at once to Waitahuna. Indeed, once he had heard of it, he begrudged every moment until he got there, assured as he was in his own mind, that his presence was absolutely and indispensably necessary for Tom's comfort, and not only for his comfort, but for his safety. He felt assured and morally satisfied that Tom could never get on without him; that without his presence and supervising care the young fellow would be getting himself into all sorts of scrapes—dangerous scrapes too—very likely. So he posted off forthwith for Waitahuna. His arrival brought up this bailiffship question. Tom wanted a bailiff just then, and he made up his mind it was just the very thing to suit Tim, so he casually referred to it a day or two after the latter's arrival; casually and with some caution, knowing full well that Tim, like most of his countrymen, had strong prejudices of his own about the matter, and must be approached very carefully. Tim certainly had very strong objections about the matter; entertaining at heart a feeling of thorough dislike for everything and every person connected with law, more especially for policemen and bailiffs. Policemen and bailiffs were the natural enemies of himself and his countrymen; but in his mind he drew a line of distinction between the two. He disliked a policeman, but he utterly loathed and abhorred a bailiff. He looked upon a policeman as the natural foe of all Irishmen, a badge of his country's degradation; and as such he ought to be resisted, determinedly resisted on every possible occasion, but to his way of thinking, the man was an open foe, and the resistance ought to be offered openly and in the light of day. He believed in a fair honest stand-up fight with a policeman, and for himself would desire no better sport; but to satisfy him, it ought to be honest and above board.

But a bailiff! Who ever heard of a bailiff's deserving anything in the way of fair play? Fair play indeed! Wasn't he the curse of the country, a devourer of the substance of the widow and the orphan, the active agent of all evictions? Show fair play to such a low cunning stealthy vermin as that! Not he; he would hunt him to the earth as he would a fox. They were both pests; and as such, might be lawfully tracked, circumvented and destroyed by every possible and impossible device, stratagems and cunning. This was the way he thought of bailiffs, and so thinking, it was no easy task Tom undertook, you must admit, when he sought to obtain his acquiescence to the acceptance of this bailiffship.

"Yurrah, thin Mистер Tom," he had said, in tones of utter amazement, when the proposal was first made to him, "it isn't in earnest, you are. Shure you wouldn't ask me to demean mysilf by taking the likes of that."

"But I do ask you, Tim, and there's nothing in it demeaning. Do you think I'd let you take it if you were demeaning yourself by doing so, let alone ask you take it. You must remember that a bailiff out here, and a bailiff at home, are two different things altogether," and then he proceeded to explain fully wherein these differences lay, "and there's the salary of two hundred pounds a year, and you know well enough two hundred a year is not so easily picked up out here."

"Sorrah a bit of me cares about the money, Mистер Tom, if a man can't come by it honestly. And how can a man come by it honestly as is a bailiff. Bad luck to all of 'em for bailiffs, and bad luck to me, too, if I'll have anything to say to 'em."

"Now look here, Tim, just be guided by me," said Tom, beginning to get vexed at the man's obstinacy, and showing his vexation in his words and ways. "Don't you let those absurd childish notions you have got into your head about bailiffs stand between you and this appointment. You'll never



again in your life have such another chance, mind that, never again. And besides —”

“Don’t you go on asking me, Misther Tom,” interrupted his listener, in pleading tones of the deepest entreaty. “Don’t now thin agrah, for I can’t do it, I can’t indeed. Ask me to do anything else in the world for you, and I’ll do it willingly. Shure God knows there’s not a drop of blood in my body I wouldn’t shed for you or any of your name, and isn’t it to the end of the world I’d go to plase you, but don’t ask me to be a bailiff, Mister Tom. Don’t ask me now. Shure its neither luck nor grace attinds thim bailiffs, nor any one as belongs to ’em. Look at Micky Hoolahan the blagard of the world. Shure didn’t Father Power himself,—may the heavens be his bed—deny him extreme unction.<sup>1</sup> And there’s Jack Leary—you minds Jack Leary, doesn’t you, Misther Tom?—Shawn Duv as we used to call him—shure didn’t the divil himself—God between us and harm—snatch away his corpse out of the coffin, in the dead of night, lavin’ the people half dead of fright a screechin’ out *mille murther*.<sup>2</sup> Don’t ask me, Misther Tom. Don’t now thin agrah. For the love of the holy Virgin don’t.” And he threw an appealing look at Tom as he spoke, and took up his hat in his hand, and shifted about uneasily on his feet, and showed unmistakably that he wished he were well out of the room and the interview brought to a close.

Nothing further was said about the matter at the time, nothing beyond this that as Tim was taking his departure, Torn suggested that he could turn the matter quietly over in his mind, between then and the morrow, when he hoped he would come to think better of it.

On the morrow Tom had him in again and spoke to him for half an hour at least, striving as far as in him lay by word and argument, to combat his prejudice, but all to no purpose. Tim was as firm as ever in his refusal. Tom was growing angry,

and decided he would trouble himself no further in the matter; but as a last resource he pointed out that, of course, Tim could not continue to remain in idleness, and must prepare to go back to the station at once. Had he consented to accept this appointment, things would have been different, but there was no use talking about that now. He had declined to do so, and there was an end of it. Then he acquiesced in the arrangement, but very reluctantly even then, and not without something very like reproach in his words of acquiescence.

“Well, sooner than lave ye all alone by yourself, I’ll take it, Misther Tom. Only I niver thought I’d see the day as a Dwyer ’ud demean himself to be a bailiff. But it’s for your sake I takes it, and who knows may be the sin’ll be forgiven me here and hereafter.”

But though, on the whole things had taken a decided turn for the better, as regards Tom Hungerford’s comfort and peace of mind, you must not therefore infer that his position was as yet wholly comfortable. There was too much rowdyism in the place for that; and latterly this rowdyism had gone to such lengths as to become a matter of serious uneasiness to himself and others.

The Lambing Flat men were principally, if not entirely, to blame for it. These fellows had been all more or less concerned in that Lambing Flat business,<sup>3</sup> had been more or less implicated in those riotous proceeding over there, when the Chinamen were so maltreated, and the authorities terrified out of their lives, and the very camp itself was besieged; and now that they had come over to New Zealand they thought, no doubt, to themselves they would try on the same game here. At any rate they acted as if they thought so, and were becoming very troublesome to Tom and the police—but more especially to the police, whom they opposed, openly and persistently, opposed on every possible occasion.

Altogether, the police had a very hard time of it amongst the fellows; having been very roughly handled and shamefully maltreated in the frequent skirmishes that on divers occasions had taken place between them and the Lambing Flat men.

These skirmishes were now becoming more and more frequent, were become, at the time I am alluding to, matters of daily occurrence, and things had arrived at that pass, that respectable men gravely shook their heads, speaking of another Lambing Flat business as nigh at hand, and very nigh at hand too, unless these fellows were brought to their senses—and that at once.

So when one Sunday afternoon, a man come running up to Tom and young Fitzherbert who were enjoying a quiet stroll amongst the ranges, and told them that the camp was attacked or about to be attacked for the moment the news took them both thoroughly aback, after all it was nothing more than they might have expected under existing circumstances. They both rushed away back as quickly as ever they could, and sure enough, things looked very much as if the camp was about to be attacked—that is to say, there was a crowd of some two thousand fellows collected together there, very riotously disposed, shouting and yelling and taunting the police, who were drawn up opposite them, in front of the lock-up, with fixed bayonets, under the charge of Sergeant-Major O'Hara.<sup>4</sup> A derisive cheer was raised by the crowd, as the two young fellows came running up, but they pushed on, unheeding the cheer, until they came within speaking distance of the Sergeant-Major. Then Tom asked him the cause of the disturbance, gasping out his words breathlessly.

“They have been trying to rescue some drunken men from us, sir,” answered the Sergeant-Major; “and they have knocked us about, pelting us with mud and stones, and shamefully ill-used us. Just look at the way they have ill-used us.”

Tom did look at the men and saw, could not help seeing, that they had been ill-used; bearing about them very plainly as they did, the outward marks of the ill-usage.

“And now,” continued the Sergeant-Major, “they talk of rescuing the men out of the lock-up, in spite of us; but they’ll have to walk over our dead bodies first,” and then he muttered to himself something signifying that he only hoped that they would try it, adding something to the effect that he would desire nothing better than to get the chance of shooting them down, like rabbits. He was an impulsive overbearing fellow this O’Hara, capable of any act of rashness; and was very unpopular amongst the miners; a man easily aroused at the best of times, but just now well nigh beside himself with rage. In his present state of mind, Tom could see he was not fit to be consulted, and so without further words he left him, moving over towards the crowd. He moved over towards the crowd, walking slowly and thinking to himself the while how he might best bear himself in the emergency. As far as he could see there was but one course open to him. He must bear himself firmly, firmly but quietly showing the men by his manner that he was not in the slightest degree afraid of them, and giving them clearly to understand they must betake themselves away from the camp at once, or take the consequences.

Some of the fellows there, he felt quite certain would not go away. A thought struck him. What if he could so manage it as to persuade the more respectable portion of the crowd to withdraw altogether, leaving him face to face with these Lambing Flat men. Nothing he should like better than to get at some of these fellows, if only it were possible, and make an example of them. Possibly something might turn up; at all events his proper course was to get the peaceful and respectable men in the crowd to withdraw, and this done, he must act according to circumstances.

These were the thoughts that passed through his mind as he moved slowly towards the crowd, and his mind was fully made up as to what he should do, when he paused in front of the men.

“What do you want?” he asked of them, very quietly. His question was answered by a chorus of voices.

“We wants to get at that O’Hara, and we’ll get at him, too.”

“We’ll have his life’s blood.”

“He drewed his sword on us in cold blood the villain.”

“We wants them ’ere prisoners. They did no harm. Let ’em out and we will go quietly away.”

“I’ll do nothing of the kind, and you know very well I won’t. You have told me what you want, now let me tell you what I want, and what I’ll have. I want you to move off this camp at once, every one of you. At once mind. I’ll give you five minutes to leave it, and anybody that’s on it when the five minutes are up, I’ll have him arrested.”

The announcement was received with a laugh of derision.

“To the devil we pitches you, you and your police.”

Tom proceeded to put his plan into execution.

“I am surprised to see you and you and you here,” he continued, addressing some dozen of the men he knew by name. “I am really surprised to see respectable men like you lending yourselves to such a disgraceful proceeding as this. Do you think it is any credit to you to be mixed up in a thing of this kind? I am surprised that you should allow yourselves to be led away by a lot of rowdy fellows who have nothing of their own to lose, and are leading you into trouble. Now just take my advice, you and the other respectable men I see around here, go home quietly before worse comes of it—for worse will come of it—you take my word for that.”

The words had evidently some effect on the men named,

and after a little Tom could see them withdrawing from the crowd. The crowd was beginning to cool down by this time—that is to say, the more respectable portion of the crowd were beginning to do so, were beginning too to think that Tom was right when he said that there was no credit in being mixed up in a rowdy proceeding of this kind, and so by degrees they moved off slowly towards the township.

Tim Dwyer, too, had been hard at work amongst the mob—he and his friend, the big Connemara man. Tim and the Connemara man exercised some considerable influence amongst their countrymen, particularly the Connemara man, who was a sort of leader amongst them; and they were both hard at work now bringing this influence of theirs to bear upon the Irishmen present. They had hard work of it, the two of them, we may be pretty sure of that; and they must have both used their time, and influence, and persuasion to some purpose to get the Irishmen to consent to stand aloof from the row; but they did get them to consent, and what was more, got them to promise that when the row did commence they would rush into Tom's assistance, bearing him off scatheless, whilst the mob and the police fought it out amongst them. This he afterwards learnt was the arrangement come to, but my own impression is, if anything in the shape of a row had taken place, any arrangement of the kind would have been thrown to the winds by these hot-headed fellows. I verily believe nothing in the world would have kept them from having a hand in it; no, not if there were fifty Tims and fifty Connemara men amongst them. However, the defection of the Irish and of these other men caused the mob to dwindle down by that time to four or five hundred, and though still formidable as regards numbers, in reality the mob was not formidable. The Lambing Flat men kept on encouraging them, it is true, by word, and voice, and

example, to stand firm; but Tom could plainly see they were not firm; that, on the contrary, they were beginning to lose confidence in themselves, wavering in their purpose. This, he thought, was the proper time for action, and accordingly he stepped across to O'Hara.

"We must make an example of some of these fellows, O'Hara," he whispered, "and now is the time. Be ready with half of your best men. I'll go across and speak to them again, and when I say 'Very well,' rush on them, and pick out the ringleaders. I don't think they'll show fight."

"Well," said Tom, addressing the mob, "are you going to leave the camp, or are you not? The five minutes are just up, and you had better get away as quickly as you can."

"To h—l with the Commissioner! To h—l with the police! Hurrah for Lambing Flat!" shouted an answering voice.

"Very well," said Tom; and no sooner had he said the words than O'Hara and his men rushed in upon the mob, and the mob—well, the mob fled—fled incontinently, pursued by the whole body of police. Eighteen of the ringleaders were made prisoners, and thenceforward there was peace in the gully.

After that Sunday evening's work Tim Dwyer and the Connemara man, to whom passing reference has been made more than once in these pages, became warm friends. Tim was one of those fellows who never forgot a good turn; not unfrequently seeing more of goodness in so called turns of the kind than they actually possessed, and feeling proportionately more grateful than the occasion that called forth the gratitude required. Warm-hearted, impulsive, good-natured people allow themselves very often to be carried away by feelings of the kind, and Tim was all three. At all events, he felt very grateful to the Connemara man for the friendly part he had taken in that evening's work, telling himself that the man

had proved himself a good friend in the hour of need so he showed his gratitude in every way he could, and spent most of his spare evenings with him.

“Will you want me any more tonight, Misther Tom?” he asked one evening about a week after the disturbance.

“No, Tim, I shan’t want you tonight. Where do you want to go?”

“Wisha, just down to Mickey Murphy’s.” Mickey Murphy was the Connemara man.

“All right Tim. Mind you two keep away from those public houses.”

“Public houses is it. Av coorse I will, Misther Tom. Shure haven’t you made a bailiff of me, and it is demaning the situation I’d be by going to the publics. Divil a fear of me doing the likes of that, Misther Tom.” There was a humorous twinkle in his eye, though his tones had in them just a shade of reproach, for he had not as yet quite reconciled himself to the bailiffship. I am sorry to say though he did not adhere to his promise on this occasion. Indeed, if the truth were known, he and his friend Mickey Murphy seldom let an evening pass without betaking themselves, to some public house or another; and on this particular evening, Tim—after a slight show of resistance—allowed himself to be persuaded by Mickey Murphy into visiting those forbidden haunts.

“Begor, Mick, I dursn’t go, in troth I dursn’t. Shure. I took my Bible oath to Misther Tom. I did, indeed, I wouldn’t put my head inside a public this blessed night, and shure you wouldn’t have me brake my word,” he had said to his friend when the latter had referred to the matter.

“Oh, yeh, wisha niver you mind Misther Tom. Shure it isn’t the likes of him as ’ud stand in the way of a boy’s innocent divarsion. Where’s the harm in having a little innocent divarsion, I’d like to know. Just come along to the Golden



Age, Tim, and have a small taste of somethin'. We won't be away a jiffey. Come along."

Mick Murphy had answered with something of craft in his words. So they both betook themselves to the bar of the Golden Age loitering about there for twenty minutes or half an hour, drinking and chatting with such acquaintances as happened to be about the place at the time; and from the bar they dropped into the saloon, a large room close by, where there was some music and dancing going on. They sat down in the room watching the performance, highly delighted with it, and expressing their delight by clapping their hands and stamping their feet very loudly. Heaven knows one would think there was very little there to delight anybody. The music was simply excruciating, and the dancing was of a very free and easy character; so much so indeed that most persons would have spoken of it as actually indecent. The way these three or four women were pulled and mauled about the room by their half-drunken partners to the tune of a discordant fiddle, certainly did border very closely on indecency; but, as I have said, Tim and the Connemara man and the other lookers on were highly delighted, and this being so, doubtless it matters not what we may think about the matter.

The women themselves appeared perfectly indifferent. They went there to be mauled and pulled about, and if anything, I think they enjoyed it—enjoyed the excitement: They were such brazen-faced women, so bold and impudent, and animal looking, and scantily dressed, scantily and tawdrily, and bearing about them not one single trace of the softness of womanhood; nor anything, in fact, to remind you of a woman, but the outward form. And they were such hard, vulgar, repulsive creatures too, using the very coarsest words they could think of in their conversation, and saying what they had to say in loud tones, and in the harsh hoarse voices that

comes, as a rule, to be part and parcel of women who have become—well become, no better than they should be.<sup>5</sup> Presently one of them came over and sat herself down in a vacant seat beside Tim, looking very hot and weary and jaded. The poor creature, she's half dead, he thought to himself, his sympathy and compassion excited on her behalf.

"Yirrah, thin it's tired you looks, my dear," he said addressing the woman, and giving expression to the feelings passing through his mind. "And shure it's a dhrop of of somethin' warm as 'ud do you all the good in the world. Me and my friend here," pointing to Mickey Murphy, "is going have a dhrink, and maybe you'd join us."

"Well, I don't mind if I do."

"That's right. And what might it be you'd like, my dear?"

"I'll take brandy and water. Brandy and water cold."

"Brandy and water cold, is it? Very good, my dear. It'll be here before you sez Jack Robinson. And what's yours, Mick?"

"The ould thing thin, Tim—with the water screechin' hot mind."

"All right, Mick, I'll be back in a jiffey," and then he proceeded towards the bar to execute the orders but it was a very long jiffey before he got back again. He went towards the bar to execute the orders, I say, and as he did so he heard the word "Hungerford" whispered at some little distance from him, he heard the word, or thought he did so, but he was not altogether certain about the matter, so he stopped to listen, looking cautiously about him to see where the word came from. The place was crowded at the time; but he could tell pretty well where the word came from—was quite certain indeed in his own mind it came from those three fellows in the dark corner by the door with their backs to him. He moved a little closer to them—just a step or two—to all seeming quite unconscious of their presence, but the movement

was useless as far as the deriving any definite information was concerned. They were whispering with their heads close together, and there was a perfect babel of sounds around, so that, listen as he would, he could not catch what they were saying. A stray word or two he did catch, and that was all, but he was not a whit the wiser after for the words. He caught the words "job," and "dangerous," and "cove," and he heard "to-morrow night" mentioned; and that was all he did hear, for just then, the men left the house, without his being able to recognize their faces. Tim stood there after they left, utterly oblivious of the object of his errand, too intent upon this conversation he had overheard, or partly overheard, to think of aught else beside. He stood there thinking of it, pondering over these words, asking himself what it meant and how he should act. Were they speaking of Tom, or were they not? He couldn't say with any degree of certainty, though the impression on his mind was that they were speaking of him. And if they were, what did they mean? Did they mean Tom any harm? Harm Tom! By the heavens above him, if he but thought so, he'd follow them there and then, the gallows birds, and choke them; yes, do it himself single-handed. But perhaps after all he was mistaken. Well, he hoped he was; but all the same he'd keep his eyes open, and meantime he would mention the matter to the sergeant that very night; yes.

"Why thin, man alive, what in the devil's name is keeping you with thim drinks all this time?" shouted out his friend Mickey Murphy, cutting short his thoughts and recalling to him the object of his errand.

That night he mentioned the matter to the sergeant; but the sergeant poohpoohed the idea of danger to Tom.

"The fellows are very likely after no good," said the sergeant, "But likely enough they are old hands, and old hands are too wide awake to have anything to say to the Commis-

sioner. They are too knowing to try their hands at that game. Very likely they're up to some lay or another, and Mr. Hungerford's name was casually mentioned, if it was mentioned at all. I'll set Jones on 'em to-morrow."

Jones was a keen-eyed detective, the terror of evil doers. This was the way the sergeant spoke of the matter, and before such an authority Tim was obliged to appear satisfied.

#### **Chapter XIV. — Burgess, Kelly, and Levy.**

“Blow me, if I was ever a more taken in my life, Tommy, than I was with that ’ere lay last night. It was cursed hard luck. Twenty notes, and not a damned long tail one among ’em all; that’s what I call hard luck—cursed hard luck.”

“It was a blasted sell, and no mistake.”

“The blastedest a sell as ever I see’d. Blow my eyes if I know as how Phil could be so taken in, a saying as how he had see’d the bloke stowing away that ere pile, and a swearing as how there was no end of “long tailers” among ’em, when blow the long tailer there was in the lot. It ain’t like Phil.”

“I wonder what’s a-keeping Phil. He aught to be here afore now, he and that young bloke.”

“Blow me if I know what’s a-keeping him, Tommy. I only hope in the devil’s name he ain’t been and got ‘pinched.’ If he don’t stop that ’ere trick, he’ll be bringing that leery cove Jones down on the top of us afore we knows where we are. He is a sharp one that ’ere cove, damn him. I passed him to-day in the township, and blow me if he didn’t a-screw his eyes through and through me like gimlets. But he’d better let me alone, he had, or I’ll do for him, sharp as he thinks his self. By G—d I will.”

“Pass the bottle, Dick? What about that ere ring?”

“Phil says as it’s schneiu.”<sup>2</sup>

“We had the Devil’s luck last night, and no mistake; but this ’ere lay as we’re after now, is likely to turn out better.”

“Look here, Tommy, I don’t half like the look of this ’ere lay; I don’t indeed, I don’t care for the job, I tells you that. It’s a dangerous job; a damned dangerous job; and if we takes it in hand, this here young cove must bleed freely, and we must do it *cautiously*, yes; we must do it very *cautiously*.”

“But I say, Dick, it’s a running go, ain’t it.”

“What’s a running go?” asked Dick impatiently.

“Why this ’ere cove,” answered the other, “wanting to put,” and he nodded his head sideways, “out of the way. It ain’t about that escort business; and there ain’t no use in thinking as how it is, cause it ain’t. Damn my eyes, Dick, if I don’t think as it’s a plant, and that this ’ere young cove ain’t square.”

“Damn you, and your plant,” was the angry response.

“Blow me,” continued the speaker, “if you and Phil ain’t a-growing white livered of late. Phil goes on a sermonising as to how it’s against his conscience to spill blood. Who the h—l cares for him or his conscience, I’d like to know. And here are you a-going on talking about plants when there ain’t no plants a thought on. I tells you, once for all, I’ll not stand any more of this parson dodge from him or you. It ain’t the kind o’ dodge as ever I see’d your brother Bill Noon a-coming.<sup>3</sup> Ah! he had rare stuff in him, had Bill.”

“But wasn’t Bill a squeezed cause of Sandy Fraser peaching?” asked the other quietly, without heeding this outburst of temper.

“Yes, Tommy, he was,” was the answer, and there was in the answer something of softness, nor was the tone altogether devoid of sadness. “Poor Bill,” he continued; “Sandy Fraser, curse him, did for him and no mistake. But Lord, Sandy Fraser and this ’ere cove, ain’t chaps of the same kidney. This ’ere cove is a cur, Tommy, and a cur as you might kick without his so much as turning round to bite you; and Sandy Fraser was no cur, blast him, that he wasn’t. People think as how it’s your cur as peaches; but it ain’t, leastwise it takes more pluck nor what people thinks to peach. Damn my eyes, Tommy,” he continued after a moment’s pause, “if I b’lieved as this ’ere cove thought of playing us any such little game as that ’ere, I’d do for him this very night, as I did for Hewitt at Ballarat, and many a better man nor Hewitt. But I don’t b’lieve it, I don’t indeed. I wish to God Phil would come, though,” he

added anxiously, and then they both paused to listen, paused for some time, speaking never a word the while.

And now, whilst so pausing, it will no doubt be expected we should bestow upon them a passing glance, and give them a few brief words in the way of description. And I may as well tell the reader at once, before I proceed any further, who these two men are; tell him they are none other than the now notorious Burgess and Kelly;<sup>4</sup> and I may also say he has met them both before in these pages—and that very recently, but the meeting was a casual one, and of the very briefest. They were two of those men whom Tim Dwyer had overheard, or, speaking more correctly, had partly overheard, the previous evening, whispering together in the bar of the Golden Age, whose words had so sorely troubled him, and caused much anxiety of mind. Cause for sore trouble and deep anxiety of mind in good truth was there, did Tim but know all. Could he but have guessed at the character of the men, or had it been permitted him to catch the very faintest glimmering of their purpose, of a surety but little comfort or peace of mind would have come in Tim's way that night.

The two fellows were sitting in their tent, in one of the outlying gullies near Waitahuna, awaiting the arrival of a confederate, awaiting him with some impatience, discussing meanwhile some robbery of the previous night, and some contemplated piece of villainy they had on hand, doing so in the words I have just narrated. They sat, as I say, impatiently and silently, and as they so sat in the dim candle light, seldom has the light of candle or the light of day either, fallen on two such thoroughly repulsive ruffians. Yes, assuredly they looked two thorough ruffians, carrying about them in their appearance very plainly the outward visible signs of their ruffianism. And as far as outward looks went, it would be difficult to say which seemed the greater ruffian of the two. Their

eyebrows were shaggy, their eyes small and sunken, and their faces fierce and scowling. Brutality and savageness, and fellness of purpose, were written on these two faces, but assuredly there was not one single trait of mercy, nor one single gleam of pity in either of them; no, not one. They were both small men—remarkably small men. Kelly was a shade the taller of the two; and Kelly stood little if anything above five feet five in height; but they were both men of muscular build. As I have just said, it would be difficult to say which of the two seemed the greater ruffian; but I think that at the first glance, the ruffianism of Burgess was not so glaringly repulsive. At the first glance, but not at the second. Just at first you saw that Burgess had more regular features, that his whiskers and moustache had a trimmer nattier look about them, that his complexion, instead of being sallow as Kelly's, was fresh and more inclined to be ruddy ; that his forehead was freer from wrinkles, and his eyes were of a deeper hazel. At the first glance you gave the man, these things would have told in his favor as regards the contrast; but the second showed you he was the more dangerous and more deadly villain of the two. There was that in his snake-like glittering eye that warned you to beware, warned you to do so as plainly as if you heard the rattle of the rattlesnake; and that about the jaw and mouth which showed he had, what Kelly had not, determination, fierce full determination, determination and ferocity combined.

Yes; Burgess was a man truly ferocious of purpose, and immovable of purpose as he was ferocious. Truly one of the doomed ones of the earth, to all human seeming born for no other purpose than to commit deeds of darkness himself, and to lead others into the commission of such deeds, permitting of no rivalry in such leadership. Sullivan spoke truly of him, when he said, "Burgess's word was law," amongst the gang,



and when armed he was “like a spoilt child.”

Heaven help the man who had to appeal to either of these miscreants in his hour of need, but assuredly heaven’s help would be needed fourfold for the man who had to appeal to Burgess for mercy.

“Here he comes at last, damn him,” said the latter, as the sounds of approaching footsteps caught his sharper ears, and as he said so the two men instinctively laid their hands on their revolvers, instinctively and with a caution that had become a sort of second nature with them. But this caution of theirs was unneeded on the present occasion.

“What in the devil’s name has been a-keeping you, Phil,” asked Burgess angrily, addressing his words to the foremost of the two new comers, a hooked nose man of decidedly Jewish appearance. “Blow my eyes, if I didn’t think as it’s pulled you’d been.”

“Pulled. Phil Levy pulled.<sup>5</sup> Come that’s good, Dick. My God it is. Whoever tries to pull Phil Levy, I’ll find him a chicken as roosts high. But it’s this here young chap,” he added, pointing to his companion “as kept me a-waiting. But the time wasn’t a wasted. A young friend of mine as thinks his self no end of a swell at euchre, comes up to me as I was a-waiting, and asks me to play with him. ‘No, my dear,’ says I, ‘I would rather not, seeing as I knows nothing at all about euchre.’ ‘Gammon,’ says he, a-winking at me. Ah! he was a wicked young man, and would make me a play with him, in spite of myself. And would you believe it, Dick, that ’ere young man had the misfortune to lose all his money, while I was awaiting. Ha! ha! ha!” and he laughed a low chuckling internal laugh.

He spoke in a facetious, oily, cringing sort of way, and his manner of speaking corresponded with his outward looks, for he was oily and cringing and cunning to look at. He was

a Jew; you could see that, see it at a glance. Jew was plainly to be seen in his low retreating forehead, black hair, dark restless eyes, long hooked nose, large cruel mouth, and thick sensual lip. This was Phil Levy, the most despicable member of that gang of ruffians; despicable in that, though just as cruel, and more cunning he was, without one spark of Burgess's or Kelly's daring; was at heart a thorough coward. Burgess and Kelly we think of with deep horror; Levy with deep loathing. I know of nothing more truly loathsome in the whole annals of crime than these wretches[] last—what shall I call it—a deed without a name. Refusing to shoot his victim, refusing to do so because the shedding of man's blood was forbidden him in express words, and strangling him in consequence. Verily, "a deed without a name."<sup>6</sup>

But reference has been made to two new comers, to another individual besides Levy. This individual had entered the tent in company with Levy, and was referred to by the latter as the young chap on whose shoulders rested the responsibility of that delay of his which Burgess had taken in such ill part. He was young as to age—the younger of all the party—their junior by a dozen years at least; and as to crime immeasurably their junior. But he had much of the gallows bird about him for all that, being a bloated, dissipated, disreputable looking young miscreant, whose connexion with this gang will be explained before the present chapter closes.

"Sit down, Mither. What did you say as your name was again—Delany; well, Delany is as good a name as any other," exclaimed Burgess, addressing himself to Delany, and giving him a meaning glance as he did so; a sharp searching suspicious glance. "Stow yourself away on them ere blankets, mate," he said. "and have something to drink afore we begins to talk of this here little job of yours." And as he said so, he poured him out some whiskey in a pannikin; pouring it out

carefully, and not without something of mental calculation as to the result.

Burgess had read this fellow, this Delany, through and through the previous evening, had then read the cowardice and currishness of his nature, speaking of him to Kelly, and speaking of him truly, as a cur who might be kicked, and who would bear his kicking as curs do by putting his tail between his legs. Burgess knew the man he had to deal with, and he accordingly determined inwardly to himself to turn his knowledge to good account; determined he would do so at the very outset, by striking terror into the fellow's inmost heart, such terror as was not likely soon to pass away.

Now to carry out this object of his, it behoved him in the first place, so he told himself, to be careful as to the quantity of whiskey he gave Delany; careful that the dose should carry with it nothing in the way of fictitious courage, "Dutch courage," as Burgess would have expressed it, had he given expression in words to the thoughts within him. Just at first, indeed, the giving the fellow any such dose at all seemed to him a questionable course of procedure; but upon second thoughts, he decided it would be best, and all things considered most advisable to treat Delany with some outward show of cordiality. It would be best so far as making that terror abiding, he told himself, to bear himself towards his visitor with seeming openness, teaching him the lesson he intended to teach in a friendly off hand kind of way. We will see with what craft the lesson was taught;

"We tries to treat our friends well, mate," he said as he handed Delany his whiskey, and at the same time drank of some himself, doing so as a matter of form, for Burgess was a man of abstemious habits. "We tries to treat our friends well," he said. "Them as acts friendly by us 'ull always find as how we acts friendly by them; but a friend as pretends he's a friend

and ain't, why blow my eyes, he'd better keep out of our way, do you see, mate. Blow my eyes if it wouldn't be better for him, do you see, to swallow a keg of gunpowder, and then set fire to his self, nor to come near us: leastwise it would be better, nor to come near Charley." "Charley is our Boss," he added, winking at his confederates.

"Did the Captain ever tell you, Phil, how he served out Flash Jimmy?" he asked turning to Levy.

The latter answered in the negative.

"Nor you, Tommy?"

Kelly shook his head. "Not as I knows on, Dick. How was it?"

"Well, there was a little job as we'd been concerned in at the Ovens;<sup>7</sup> and somehow Charley heard as how Flash Jimmy a-meant to split. You and I would have blown his blasted brains out on the spot, mates."

"If it was my own mother as a meant to do it, and she was a-feeding me with a spoon, I'd 'squaize' her on the spot,<sup>8</sup> I would, by —, and that afore she could once 'pay out'," answered Kelly fiercely, scowling at Delany as he did so.

"Of course you would, Tommy," continued Burgess, "and so would Phil, and so would I; but ah, Charley ain't like us. 'No, Dick,' says he to me, when I said as how I'd like to slash Jimmy's throat one night; 'no, Dick,' says he, 'you leave Jimmy to me.' 'I can't a-fancy,' says he, his eyes flashing fire, as how anybody as knows me would split. I can't indeed, Dick,' says he, 'and maybe Jimmy 'ull think better of it. But if he does split,' says he, 'I'll tear his heart out, I will, if I have to follow him to H—l.' Well, Jimmy did split, damn him, and we was all pulled. But Lord, Charley wasn't to be caught like that. He was a-ready prepared, and it was showed as clear—as clear as daylight, as how we could have had nothing to do with that ere job, a-seeing as how we was a hundred miles away at

the time, and so we gets off. Flash Jimmy sees as how it was all up with this little game of his, and he turns white-livered, and bolts to Melbourne by the escort, and from Melbourne he bolts to London by the very first ship as sails, a-thinking as how he'd get clear of Charley. But Charley wasn't to be got clear of; not he. Now, what do you suppose Charley did, mates? Why, he starts away in the very next ship for London, and he tracks that ere Flash Jimmy through London, and from London he tracks him to Dublin, and from Dublin, blow me, if he didn't a-track him to New York."

"At New York he come'd up with him, and what do you think he does to that Flash Jimmy?" he asked, he paused for a minute or two as he asked this question. "What do you think he does to that ere Flash Jimmy?" he repeated slowly. "He had him watched, and at last he was grabbed, and Charley gets him into his own hands and he killed him—killed him by inches, Tommy," he added, addressing himself to Kelly. "Yes, killed him by inches, taking days to do it and weeks to do it; a tortoring him all the while—tortoring him in a way as would have made a red Indian ashamed of his self. And afore he was dead he tore out his heart, and got it preserved and brought it back with him, to show us how he was as good as his word. Ah! if the devil himself was to try and trick Charley, mate," he said looking at Delany, "the devil would find as how Charley was his match at that 'ere game. Blow me if he wouldn't."

Now this story, as told by Burgess, it is needless to say was altogether a piece of pure invention on his part, but not the less on that account, nay, all the more perhaps, is he deserving of some little credit for the ingenuity he undoubtedly displayed in the telling of it. As has been already stated, his object was to terrify this fellow, to give him plainly to understand that vengeance of the most fearful kind would overtake him,

assuredly and without fail, if he attempted to deal falsely with this gang in any dealing he might happen to have with them. Now most men of the Burgess stamp would have sought to attain this object in another way. They would have sought to do so in all probability by hurling dire threats of vengeance at him there and then, if his falseness should ever become apparent; and I am not sure but threats of the kind would have caused the craven wretch quite as much—if not more—terror at the time, than this plan resorted to by Burgess.

But Burgess argued with himself, and argued I think justly, that the terror would not be so abiding, so permanent in its results. There was a vagueness, an undefinedness about the terror as he put it, that made it all the more terrible. The unseen, unknown, omniscient Charley dogging his prey from one end of the earth to the other, and when at last he came upon the prey, the direness of his vengeance, was fearful and terrible in the extreme, to anybody who believed in it, and there was no doubt that this fellow believed in it; believed in it implicitly, for there he sat from the beginning to the end drinking in every word of it all, with open mouthed horror.

But now that Burgess had attained his object; now that this pitiable wretch Delany shivered and shook in every joint and limb of his body, another and a different course was necessary. That Dutch courage, the supplying him with which Burgess had a moment before considered so undesirable; he now considered, for the furtherance of his purpose, not only desirable but absolutely necessary.

Without the supply of this so called Dutch courage he saw the fellow would never in his present condition summon up resolution enough to tell his tale in express words; that were he indeed to strive to do so, he would find the words fail him.

“Pass us the bottle, Tommy,” he said to Kelly.

“It’s dry work talking. Drink it off mate,” he added,

addressing himself to Delany, who held the half full pannikin in his trembling hand.

“Here’s to your health, and damnation to your enemies; this here swell cove as you was a-telling us of last night, in particular,” he continued, drinking some whisky himself as he spoke.

“Now, mate, what’s this here job as you a-said last night you wanted us to do? Let us come to it at once, cause why, we’ve other work on hand tonight, and it’s getting late!” This he added after a moment’s pause, seeing that Delany hesitated before answering. Delany had hesitated when asked what he wanted done for by this gang, and now though pressed to answer, he remained silent, just for a moment or two, answering never a word. In truth, the words wherewith to answer would not come for a moment or two, try as he would. At last when by an effort the words did come, they came in a half whisper, and were spoken in a nervous stammering way.

“I—I want you to put that chap Hungerford out of the—the—the—way: and—and—and Damn him, do for him,” he exclaimed in sheer desperation. “Do for him, and—and I’ll pay you for the job.”

“He kicked you out of the escort,<sup>9</sup> and you want to have your revenge. Blow me if I don’t like you all the better for it,” answered Burgess, in encouraging tones. “If he was the Governor or the King of England his self, I’d do for him if he was to treat me in that way. Blow me if I wouldn’t.”

“But that isn’t the reason, though,” exclaimed Delany, with a sudden burst of confidence, as the whisky began to do its work; “at least,” he added stammering, noticing the peculiar look Burgess bent upon him, and striving to recover himself, “at least, it is—it is because he cheeked me too. But how did you know about that escort business?”

“How did we know about that escort business,” repeated

Burgess. "Why Charley told us of course. Charley knows all about this here business," he added significantly. "What did Charley a-say about this here job Phil?" he asked of Levy.

"He said as how it was a dangerous job," answered the latter glibly, "and wasn't to be taken on hand on no account, 'cepting on them 'ere terms as he told you on."

"Dangerous job," repeated his confederate. "I know'd as how he'd say it was a dangerous job. It just is a dangerous job, a damned dangerous job; the very dangerest a-job as could be a-taken on hand. Blow my eyes if it isn't," he added earnestly. "It ain't like doing away with a ordinary individual, do you see, cause why, a ordinary individual ain't got nobody particular to look after him 'cepting the police; and what's the good of the police if they ain't got a good cry at their back, a-egging of 'em on. But the doing away with this here Commissioner cove, ah —" and he paused shaking his head, as if words failed him to express how dangerous was a job of this nature.

"But we likes to help a plucky cove like you, mate," he added, after a minute, with grim irony, ["and we'll do it for you too, for five hundred pounds, and blasted cheap at that.["]

"Five hundred pounds," repeated Delany slowly, "I couldn't afford to give you that sum, I couldn't indeed. Couldn't you do it for three hundred now? I don't mind three hundred, but five hundred, I —"

"Shut up, blast you, will you," interrupted Burgess savagely. "Shut up I tell you, and don't you try any of them 'ere humbugging games with us, or by G—d I'll put you past humbugging mate. Say one word more, and I'll make it seven hundred, and if you says a word at that, I won't do it at all. There. Do you suppose as we don't know of this here blind of yours about that escort business. Now are you going to give us that five hundred pounds, or are you not mate?" he asked in menacing tones.



“But I haven’t got it. I —”

“You haven’t got it; of course you haven’t got it; who said as you’d got it. It ain’t likely as you’d come here with five hundred pounds in your pocket. We ain’t such d—d fools as to think that. But you must give us half down afore we puts a hand to this job, and the other half when the job is done, or we can show you it’s in our power to do it. Come, is it a bargain.”

Of course it was a bargain; of course it was, seeing that Delany was reduced to that state of mind, reduced thereto by those savage words flung at him by Burgess, that he would have there and then have given in his adhesion to any bargain, however monstrous the terms of the bargain might be. But in reality he looked upon the terms as by no means monstrous. Burgess had spoken of asking seven hundred pounds, and had Burgess done so the seven hundred pounds would in all probability have been given him. Yes, of course it was a bargain; a bargain that had in it the buying and selling of Tom Hungerford’s life; but why Tom Hungerford’s life? Ostensibly for this reason, in that Delany when in the escort service had been impertinent, and for the impertinence had been dismissed the service.

Ostensibly this was the reason assigned for the contemplated deed by that young miscreant Delany; but as Burgess shrewdly surmised, and as the reader is now given clearly to understand this assigned reason, was a mere blind. This is the only explanation that can be offered, and with this explanation we must rest satisfied for the present. Meanwhile a strict watch was kept upon Tom and his movements, and this task of watching him was entrusted to Levy, to whom, indeed, all tasks of the kind were entrusted. And at this kind of work he was an adept, being low and cunning and stealthy: thoroughly unfitted for deeds of violence, because

of the contemptible cowardice of his nature.

I am aware it has been surmised that many of the men who came by their death during the early days of the Dunstan rush, presumed by falling into the Molyneux, were, in reality, thrown in by the hands of this miscreant, when he kept his lonely store along its banks at Long Valley;<sup>10</sup> but Levy's life long history is, I think, opposed to the correctness of any such surmise. At all events, I have been unable to trace to him one deed of actual violence up to the time he committed that final one at Nelson, for which he lost his life on the scaffold.

Note.—Charley was the Mrs. Harris of the gang.<sup>11</sup> Sullivan in his evidence, says:—"Burgess authorized them to take the four men away one at a time, as it was difficult to take them in a body and hand them over to Charley. Charley was a supposed person. There was no such man in the party to my knowledge. Burgess then told them not to be frightened if they heard a shot fired, as it was only to give notice to Charley to let the others go."

## **Chapter XV. — Nelly Fitzherbert Accepts a Present.**

On that very self same evening that this gang of miscreants sat together discussing Tom Hungerford's death, doing so in the words and manner just narrated, Tom himself was busily occupied in the discussion of a matter of an entirely different nature. He and his friend Fitzherbert were sitting together in Tom's room, discussing the contents of an open letter that lay on the table—a letter Henry had received a few hours before, from his sister, Bertha. After visiting that station of O'Neil and Nicholson's, Colonel Fitzherbert had, upon his return to town, called upon their agents, Dutton and Rooke, and after sundry interviews with these gentlemen, Mr. Rooke, the managing partner of the firm, had closed with the Colonel's offer, and the Colonel and his family were now on their way upcountry to reside on this new place for the present, at all events. Bertha's letter announced this fact, and the two young men were taking counsel together as to their arrangements.

"We shall sleep at Tokomairiro on Tuesday night,"<sup>1</sup> wrote Bertha, "and expect to be with you on Wednesday evening. Of course, it is not to be expected you can manage to accommodate us all; but if you can possibly arrange it as to give Nelly, Rebecca, and myself any kind of sleeping accommodation, Papa says he and the boys can put up at one of the hotels."

"Of course your sisters will take my place, Fitzherbert," said Tom. "And, I have no doubt, we can persuade Mrs. Honeyman to stow the servant away somewhere."

Mrs. Honeyman, it may be observed, was a policeman's wife who waited upon Tom and Harry.

"You can give up your own bed to your father," continued Tom, "and as for the rest of us, why we must just manage as best we can."

"But it's a great shame turning you out of your quarters."

“Nonsense, man. You know well enough I am only too glad to do any thing I can for any of your people. And, by George, it isn't every day we have lady visitors. Perhaps though,” he added, after a short pause, “I had better see Mrs. Honeyman about the matter, before she turns in. She might turn crusty if she were not told of the matter to-night.”

“Well, sir,” said Mrs. Honeyman, when she came fully to understand what was required of her, “if the ladies ain't particular, and don't mind taking things as they find 'em, I'll do the best I can to make 'em comfortable.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Honeyman I'll leave the matter entirely in your hands,” said Tom, and then he returned to his companion, glad in his inmost heart at having thus easily secured the co-operation of such a useful ally as was Mrs. Honeyman—a cooperation that he knew from bitter experience was not at all times to be secured thus easily, was sometimes, indeed, not to be secured at all on any terms. Then after his return, they spoke together a few words as to what they had best have for dinner, making a note of such little delicacies as it would be advisable to order on the morrow, and then Henry Fitzherbert wished his companion good night, and took his departure.

Tom Hungerford sat up some time after. For the first half hour he gave himself up to the writing of some official letters, which behoved him to write that evening, and after the letters had been written, he sat there for some time thinking. His mind was busy with thoughts of this visit of the morrow. He thought of his first introduction to this family, and of that pleasant evening he had first spent with them; an evening that had been present with him on many an occasion since then. It was the very evening that the subject of this run had been first mooted. How well he remembered it. How well he remembered the walk borne that evening, and the pleasant

nature of his thoughts as he went along, dwelling on the good things in store for him, if only it should ever come to pass that he might be fortunate enough to get as his neighbors such a family as this one was. Well, here now were things come to pass just as he had wished—here was this family about to settle down next him upcountry as neighbors; but now that they were about to do so, of what avail was it to him as regards these good things he had promised himself? What pleasure could he possibly derive from the neighborhood, seeing that here he was, settled down as a fixture at Waitahuna, and that a fixture he was likely to remain for some time to come? And Helen Fitzberbert, with her pleasant ways and her bright, merry, laughing face—poor girl!—how lonely she would feel, she and her sister, buried up there on that station, without one single soul in the world to speak to.

Well, it would be very pleasant to meet them all again; pleasant to have them as his guests, and offer them such little attention and hospitality as lay in his power. It was not much certainly he could offer them in the way of hospitality, but they would understand that—understand that he offered them of the best he had, and did so from the fullness of his heart. Yes, he would certainly use such efforts as in him lay to give them a hearty and a cordial welcome. He would do that, and he could do no more. Nelly indeed would, by her merry lightheartedness, do much to make things go off well. What a fund of good spirits the girl possessed to be sure, and how bright and sunny she always looked. He had never before in his life, he thought, met such another pleasant, loveable girl. Thought! nay, he felt quite certain he never had—felt equally certain he had never met a girl he liked half so well. And she was a good girl, a good, honest, genuine girl, who would give a charm to some home by and bye, and make some man's life happy.

Ah! Thrice happy indeed the man who was fortunate enough to woo and win her for his wife. He wished to heavens such happiness as that might, by any possibility, fall in his way; but there was not the most remote possibility that anything of the kind could happen. What had he to do with wooing and winning? Ten years hence it would be time enough for him to think seriously of such things. But if it ever should come in his way to think seriously of things of the kind, he should certainly like that the girl of his choice might in all respects prove herself just such another girl as was Nelly Fitzherbert. Yes, she certainly was a prize worth the striving for; and, if he were only in a position to do so, he would strive for it as far as in him lay. Strive for it heart and soul, and might and main. No striving of the kind, however, must, under existing circumstances, be thought of by him, so he told himself, and told himself in a way that put the matter beyond the shadow of a doubt. And in so telling himself he was thoroughly sincere, never for a moment calling in question his ability to carry out his intentions. But Nelly Fitzherbert had, in truth come to occupy a larger portion of his mind and heart than he himself was aware of.

He admitted to himself, as we have seen, that the man who was fortunate enough to win this girl as his wife would have bestowed upon him a large measure of happiness, threefold larger than falls to the lot of most men. Now when a young man makes such an admission as this to himself, the chances are, I think, that he who makes it will strive that the happiness shall pass into no other hands than his own. Tom Hungerford, indeed, would have it appear that his was entirely an exceptional case, but other men, besides Tom Hungerford, tell themselves the same thing every day in the year, using words full of cogent reason and wordly wisdom in the telling. But what, I should like to know, has reason or wisdom to do

with it? Reason, wisdom, indeed! A bright glance; a pretty girl, a soft pressure of the hand, and psha an “a fico” for all your reason and your wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

The Fitzherberts arrived late on the afternoon of the following day. Both the ladies looked tired, especially Bertha, who was far from strong, and suffered from the effects of the journey much more than did her sister. So when tea was over, they betook themselves to their beds.

“We shall have to make an early start of it in the morning, remember,” said the Colonel, as he wished them good night.

“Surely you’re not going to start tomorrow,” put in Tom.

“You are very kind, Hungerford; but we could not think of taking up your quarters longer than tonight. We have given you trouble enough as it is already.”

“Indeed, you have done nothing of the kind, and I trust you won’t think so for a moment,” answered Tom, earnestly. “I am sure the rest will do the ladies good, and if they can put up with the poor accommodation they find here, I can only say they are heartily welcome to it as long as they like to use it.”

“What do you say, my dear?” asked the Colonel, of Bertha.

“Well, Papa, do you know, if it would not very much inconvenience Mr. Hungerford, I should really like the rest to-morrow.”

And then it was agreed that the party should remain where they were the following day. This was on the Wednesday. On the Thursday, after lunch, they all went out to have a look at the township and the workings. Bertha had declined to accompany them, giving as her reason for not doing so, that she still suffered from the effects of the fatigue of the previous day. The two young lads, George and Frank, were away with Tim Dwyer. Nelly, the Colonel, Henry, and Tom consequently constituted the party. The father and son kept

together, and the charge of Nelly fell specially to Tom's lot, I need scarcely say much to his satisfaction. I am afraid, though, he abused the opportunity. In getting her safely across the workings, it certainly was necessary for him to take her hand in his frequently, but I am afraid he took it much more frequently than was necessary, holding it longer and more warmly, perhaps, than the occasion required. As they passed along, the men rested on their long-handled shovels, throwing admiring glances after her, and whenever they stopped at any of the claims to watch the working, she had pressed upon her acceptance, delicately, but in a manner that made refusal impossible, some little token or another of good will, generally, a curiously shaped nugget.

“What a pretty nugget that is, Mr. Hungerford, isn't it?”

It was one she had just had presented to her, and she handed it over to Tom for his inspection as she spoke.

“Well, yes; it is pretty. It would make a very nice ornament. What a good Commissioner you would make,” he added as he handed it back to her.

“Should I? Why? Because I should get a lot of nuggets given me, is that it? Well really, Mr. Hungerford, I never knew before that that was a qualification for the appointment.”

“Well no, not for that reason. I didn't mean to insinuate you would be open to bribery and corruption. What I did mean was you would be very popular. Why you need only lift your little finger and the whole gully, to a man, would rise to do your bidding.”

“Would they, though?” said Nelly. “Well, do you know, I have always had a prejudice against miners until I saw them to-day, but, since I have seen them, my opinion has been altered.”

“But are you an impartial witness. Miss Fitzherbert?”

“What! You think the nuggets have made me change my mind, is that it? Fie, Mr. Hungerford. I really did think you



had a better opinion of me than that,” and she looked up demurely in his face as she spoke, “But it is not the nuggets that have made me change my mind,” she continued; “it is the bearing of the men themselves. There’s a frank, manly, independent look about them that I like. All the same though, I wish they would not be giving me all these nuggets. I suppose I couldn’t well refuse them, could I?”

“No. You couldn’t well offend them worse than by refusing these little presents of theirs. By-the-by, I hope I may be permitted to offer you this little one, as a memento of Waitahuna. It isn’t so pretty as some of those others, but it was the first one found here.”

He took the little piece of gold from his pocketbook as he spoke, where it had been carefully placed that morning, in anticipation of some such opportunity as was this, and presented it to her. He took it from his pocketbook and held it out in his hand towards her, ready for acceptance; but the accepting of it did not come readily on her part. She stood for a moment looking at the nugget—looking at it but not offering to take it. Then she answered, and in so doing the half bantering tones she had been using were no longer observable.

“Thank you very much, Mr. Hungerford,” she said, keeping her eyes fixed on the nugget; “but I would really rather not accept it. I have got such a number of them as it is,” she added in explanatory tones, striving to excuse herself, “that I scarcely know what to do with them. Besides, I could not think of depriving you of it, seeing how very valuable it must be from old associations.”

If she wished to have declined accepting it, and she really did, much better would it have been for her to have offered no excuse at all. The excuse gave him an opening.

“I have got another nugget equally historical, Miss Fitzherbert, and hope you will accept this one. I shall feel hurt if

you don't. I really shall," he said, as she looked up into his face enquiringly; and she saw that he meant what he said.

What was she to do, she asked herself? She would have much preferred to have refused this nugget that was thrust upon her in this way, if the refusal were possible. There were reasons, and those cogent reasons too, why she should refuse it but the refusal could not well be made without some inkling as to the reason of it being conveyed to Tom. She herself could not possibly do this by any words of hers—could not as much as hint at it even in the very vaguest of words; and yet she was very loathe to offend him. What was she to do? Under the circumstances, she thought she could do nothing else than accept it.

"I shall always keep it," she said, stretching out her hand at last to take it, "in remembrance of my pleasant visit to Waitahuna."

He looked up into her face gratefully, and was about to express his gratitude in words of warm acknowledgment when the Colonel and his son walked up alongside, and there remained until they reached home.

The party left the following morning.

"I am sure we shall always remember your kindness, Mr. Hungerford," said Nelly as Tom assisted her into her saddle and was arranging the folds of her habit.

"Ah!" said Tom, in a low tone, "if you only knew what a pleasant visit it has been to me, and how very lonely the place will feel when you are gone, perhaps you would really think of us all sometimes."

"Indeed we shall often think of Henry and yourself," she answered, in the same low tones.

"Will you?" he said, as he took her hand and held it in his. "You don't know how often I shall repeat these words of yours. Good-bye."

“Good-bye, Hungerford,” called out the Colonel. “I have to thank you very much for your kindness and the pleasant time we have spent with you. I hope we shall soon see you up the country.”

It was a very busy time just then with Tom and Henry, as ill luck would have it, and neither of them could get very well away from the place, so Tim Dwyer was sent on with the family to render them any assistance they might require. And no more useful assistant could they have had than Tim. It was not only that he was civil, and obliging, and good humored, but he was always ready in an emergency, and very fertile in the way of expedients. And these qualities of his were in constant requisition during the journey, more especially, were they required that first night.

They camped out that first night contrary to their expectations, and, on the whole, they enjoyed the thing rather than otherwise—the enjoyment being greatly due to Tim’s efforts.

The day had been oppressively close—a close, murky, sweltering day that made travelling anything but pleasant—and began to tell upon Miss Fitzherbert before she had been many hours in the saddle. But she stood out bravely for some time, never once complaining, until further standing out was no longer possible; then towards evening, whilst they were as yet some seven or eight miles from their destination, she spoke a word or two to her father about the matter.

“Do you know, papa,” she said, “I am really afraid I cannot go on much longer. I am very sorry, but I feel thoroughly knocked up.”

“I’ll just find out where we are, dear; and if this place of Stuart’s is much further, we will remain where we are for the night.”

Then the Colonel rode up to Tim and consulted him on the matter, and the result of the consultation was that

they came to a halt shortly afterwards, intending to camp there for the night. And before very long Tim and the two Fitzherbert lads had made things snug and comfortable—as comfortable as could be expected at least under the circumstances. The little tent with which they were provided was pitched, and a couple of nice, soft fern beds were arranged inside it for the two girls, to whom, and Rebecca Tonks, it was specially devoted. Then tea was prepared, and the evening was a very delicious one, and the ladies enjoyed the thing, telling themselves, and telling themselves truly, it was preferable this to being stuck into some close, dirty hole or another for the night.

They were all more or less fatigued, and very glad to turn in early, dropping off to sleep before they had well wrapped themselves up in their blankets and possum rugs. It need scarcely be told they slept soundly—at least they would have done so had there been nothing to disturb them in their sleeping. The Colonel lay dreaming. He was again on one of his many battle fields, sword in hand, leading on his men to victory, pressing over whole hecatombs of the slain as he did so.<sup>3</sup> The ringing cheer of those gallant hearts he led was still in his ears—the sweetest of incense that the world could have offered to him—when—what was that? He shook himself, awoke, and jumped quickly out of his blanket. A succession of piercing shrieks burst upon him, coming from the tent close by.

“Oh! oh! oh!” shrieked Rebecca Tonks, sitting up in her bed, wringing her hands.

“What’s the matter with you!” asked the Colonel, rushing into the tent.

“Oh! oh! oh! That Irishman, that wicked rampageous Irishman!” she shrieked.

“Can’t you tell me, woman, what’s the matter with you?” asked the Colonel, angrily.

“Oh! oh! It’s that wicked, rampageous Irishman, as has been lurking about a’pinching and a pulling of my toes.”

“Is it me you mane?” said Tim, who was standing outside listening to the charge. “Me pull your toe, is it? The devil take yoursilf and your toe, you ould hag of the world,” he added in great wrath. “God knows, sir,” he said to the Colonel, when the latter came out, “I nivir left my bed this blessed night. By the vartue of my oath I didn’t. And shure, what would I be doing a pulling of her toe? Bad luck to ye, ye she vixen,” he added to himself in an audible whisper.

“Oh! You wicked rampageous creature,” shouted Rebecca from within the tent. “I’d have you know I am a virtuous female as comes to the point and walks uprightly, I am.”

“Never mind her,” said the Colonel, “she’s a foolish silly creature, and knows no better. I wonder, though, what could have frightened her?” he asked.

“I fancy it was one of the horses that’s tethered close too,” said George Fitzherbert.

“I have no doubt it was. Move him a little further off, George,” said the Colonel. “Don’t be alarmed, my dears,” he called out to his daughters; “it was only one of the horses moving about.”

“Horses, indeed!” exclaimed Rebecca. “A nice country this for a respectable female to live in, when she can’t go to sleep at night without having her toes bitten off at night by horses.”

“Just go to sleep, Rebecca,” put in Nelly, “and the next time the horses come to bite you, instead of biting your toes off, I hope they’ll bite your head off.”

Then the party all went to their beds again.

“Whisper, Masther George,” said Tim Dwyer to young George Fitzherbert, who slept close beside him. He spoke cautiously, and in an undertone, careful lest his words should meet the Colonel’s ears.

“Whisper, Masther George; you won’t tell of me, will you?”

“Tell of you, Tim? What is it I am not to tell of you?”

“You heard what that old vixen said of me?”

“Who—Becky? She said you were pinching her toe. Were you, Tim?” asked the lad, maliciously.

“Pinch her, is it? May the divil pinch her, God forgive me for saying so. No, I didn’t pinch her, Masther George, but I’m going to do, honor bright, though you won’t tell, mind.”

“No, I won’t, indeed, Tim. What larks,” he added. “But mind you don’t let the Governor see you, or, by Jove, there will be a row, and no mistake.”

“Divil a fear of the Governor seeing me.”

“Pinch her well, Tim, when you’re about it,” said George, diving down into his blanket to smother his laughter; and nothing further passed between them.

Tim waited a little longer before proceeding to carry out his project; waited until a sufficient length of time had elapsed to permit of things settling down quietly, and then he arose from his bed and betook himself to the tent. He was very careful in his movements—creeping along stealthily and with much caution—knowing full well if he were discovered the Colonel would be unsparing in his severity and anger. At length he reached the tent in safety, and then his caution redoubled itself. He had some difficulty in finding Rebecca’s feet; but at last he did find them, and laying hold of her toe, he gave it one hard, sharp pull. Then he made off as quickly as possible, getting clear of the tent before the woman’s agonizing shriek had aroused the Colonel.

“Rebecca,” said the Colonel, hastening up and speaking angrily, “I am afraid you ate too much supper last night, and are having nightmare in consequence. Are you in the habit of having nightmare and calling out in this way in your sleep?” he asked in tones of cutting irony.

“Nightmare, indeed!” exclaimed Rebecca indignantly. “It’s my opinion as them horses is cannibals and aught to be shot. There’ll be a cor’ner’s inquest afore morning, and then you’ll see if you calls it nightmare. I’m a virtuous female as comes to the point and walks uprightly, not oats and straw. Nightmare, indeed!”

“Bertha, my dear,” called out the Colonel, “if you should hear Rebecca snoring loudly wake her up—it may prevent our being disturbed again to-night.”

## **Chapter XVI. — O'Hara to the Rescue.**

The period at which the story has now arrived is not far off Christmas, 1861.<sup>1</sup> A month and more had elapsed since the taking place of that discussion as to the doing away with Tom Hungerford, but as yet nothing in the way of harm had befallen him. But though still unharmed, you must not therefore run away with the idea that the project had been given up. It had not been altered in any way—much less given up. The fact of the matter is no fitting opportunity had arisen to give effect to the project, and it had consequently lain in abeyance all this time. Opportunities had indeed arisen, and these opportunities had all been faithfully reported to Burgess from time to time by the lynx-eyed Levy, but on each occasion Burgess had seen some objection or another, and accordingly the matter had not been proceeded with.

From the beginning, we may remember, Burgess had recognized the danger of the undertaking. He had seen from the very beginning that it was an undertaking requiring much caution, and he had been most wary and cautious throughout in the matter. So he waited and waited all this time for a favorable opportunity, and now at last the favorable opportunity had come—as favorable a one—so he admitted to himself, as could be expected. There was a new rush to Waipori,<sup>2</sup> and Tom had intimated his intention of riding over to put matters to rights there. No sooner was the intimation made than Levy had got ear of it, and he was now in the very act of speaking of the matter to his confederates.

“What time to-day, Phil, did the cove say as he was going to leave?” asked Burgess when Levy had finished.

“He didn't say when he'd be a-leaving, but he said as how he'd be at this here new rush afore six. He is going to stay there to night, and is coming back to-morrow.”



“He’ll be there at six, will he? Then he’ll be passing by here about three?”

“Between two and three.”

“There won’t be no trouble in getting hold of him, anyhow,” added Burgess. “We wants him to look at our claim and when he stops to talk to us about it that ere part of the job can be easily done. But there is more to be done nor that. We must throw people off the scent, and I’ve been a thinking of how this here dodge would be a good blind.”

He paused for a second or two, and then continued.

“People must think as how it’s drowned this here cove is; and you must carry out that ’ere part of the job, Phil. When Tommy and I brings him here, you take his horse and ride on, when it’s late, to the river. Cross over where the river’s deep, only near the or’nary crossing place, do you see, and break down the bank where you get out. Throw the bloke’s hat into the river, and let the horse go. What do you think of that?”

“It’ll do,” answered Levy, nodding his head approvingly.

“Go on to Delany’s then, Phil, and tell that ’ere blasted cur as how we’ve our hand on this here Commissioner chap, and wants the rest of that money a-fore we squeezes him. We’ll keep him till you comes back, then we’ll do for him and bury him.”

These ruffians were camped near Waitahuna when we last saw them, but they were camped there now no longer. Since then they had been very busy. Since then Burgess and Kelly had been engaged in several robberies, and more than one sticking-up case was laid at their doors by the police. The police asserted—and I believe asserted truly—that the two fellows were responsible for three-fourths of the outrages that occurred about this time. Of course, the police were very anxious to lay their hands on them both, but the laying hands on them was by no means an easy matter. They kept well out

of the way, and never remained long in the same place, and put into force those wiles and stratagems that, old game birds that they were, they had need of so frequently before.

Just at this particular juncture, the fellows were camped in a lonely gully on the Waipori ranges. Here, they naturally thought, they were safe from anything in the shape of prying curiosity, and so, no doubt, they would have been, but for one of those unlooked for occurrences that now and then fall within the scope of our observation. It so happened that Detective Jones was out scouring the country in search of his horse, and whilst so occupied his keen eye fell upon the tent.<sup>3</sup> It is scarcely necessary to say Detective Jones was a suspicious man, and being so, that the moment his eye fell upon this lonely tent pitched in this out-of-the-way-place, he suspected there was something about it that was not altogether right. At all events he resolved he would enquire into the matter and satisfy himself on the subject; so he dismounted and fastened his horse in a gully close by; then detective-fashion he proceeded in this satisfying of his curiosity. He got as close to the tent as he well could, and there he remained at full length on the ground motionless, for half an hour at least.

“It’s them; blowed if it ain’t,” he said at last; “that’s your game is it,” he added, nodding his head in the direction of the tent.

“Ah,” there was a smack of satisfaction in the way this last word escaped him. This occurred between twelve and one o’clock in the day, and in a couple of hours after Tom Hungerford came cantering along on his way to Waipori. The Waipori track passed about a mile or so from the tent, and as Tom came cantering along it, two diggers hailed him.

“You’re the Commissioner, ain’t you?” asked one of them.

“Yes, I’m the Commissioner,” assented Tom, “is there anything I can do for you.”

“We was just a-going over to see you, Mither,” answered the man who kept his hat well down over his face during the conversation, “me and my mate here have found very good prospects, and we was a-going over to see you about a prospecting claim.”

“How far is the place from here?” asked Tom.

“Just down there.” And the speaker nodded his head in the direction of a gully close by.

“As near as that, is it? Then I may as well run down and see it. Will one of you hold my horse?”

The man who had just addressed Tom took hold of the rein, giving his companion a meaning look as he did so. Tom was in the act of dismounting, and had just touched the ground when he was suddenly seized from behind by one of the men, who was none other than Kelly. He tried just for a moment or two to shake himself free from his assailant, but he found himself in a vice-like grasp from which there was no getting free.

“Stop that ere game will you,” said Burgess, savagely placing his revolver within a foot of Tom’s head. “You just be quiet,” he continued, “or, by G—, you’ll be quiet enough before long. Come along quietly without any damned nonsense and no harm’ll happen to you, mate; but, blow my eyes, if you don’t you’d better just say your prayers at once.”

“What is it you want?” said Tom, seeing there was nothing for it but to submit quietly.

“We don’t want to harm you, unless you drives us to it,” answered Burgess, who was tying Tom’s hands behind his back.

“Now you can let him go, Tommy,” he said to Kelly, “and just help him to get on his horse.”

Then they proceeded to the tent—Kelly leading the horse and Burgess walking alongside.

Nothing, or next to nothing, passed between them along the

way. Tom attempted once or twice to learn from the fellows what they meant to do with him, or where they were taking him; but, beyond an assurance of no harm being meant him, he could obtain no information from them, and at last gave up the attempt as a bad job, relapsing into silence. Then they reached the tent, and Levy was despatched on his errand, strict injunctions being given him as to his speedy return. Meantime Tom lay in the tent, watched over by one or the other of the two ruffians, thinking of his position; and, as he did so, we can readily imagine his thoughts would be none of the pleasantest. At first when he was stuck-up and was being bound he thought, naturally and as a matter of course, that the fellows simply wanted to rob him of his money and jewellery. Then, as they brought him along bound, he thought the proceeding was an unusual one on the part of the bush-rangers, as far as his knowledge of bushranging went; still he explained the matter to himself by supposing that they wished to get him away from the track, so as to carry on their operations unseen. But what did they mean by thrusting him into this tent of theirs, and by allowing him to lie there hour after hour without showing any signs of liberating him? Then here were these flax fastenings—how they did torture him to be sure; and he groaned inwardly in spirit as he tried to alleviate the sharpness of the torture by changing the position of his hands.

Kelly was sitting close by smoking his pipe. What a villainous scoundrel he looked Tom thought. He only wondered he did not notice him at first, him and his mate, and give them a wider berth. But what did they mean to do? Murder him. No; he didn't think it. They had no motive in murdering him, so he told himself, telling himself also that these kind of fellows never committed murder without some good motive. But what did they mean by keeping him bound so long? Did they

mean to leave him bound hand and foot, helpless, and so have time to get off themselves into some place of safety? Why he should starve before he was discovered. How long would it probably be before he was discovered? Let him just think for a minute. He would be missed the following evening. Say the following day, Thursday, people would be out in search of him. It would be Saturday or Sunday before he could be discovered. This was Tuesday; Wednesday one, Thursday two, Friday three, Saturday four; four days at least, and very likely five, before he was discovered. He would, he determined within himself, make yet one effort more to extract from these fellows something in the way of information as to what they meant to do with him, and accordingly addressed himself to Kelly, who was the only other occupant of the tent at the time.

“Now that you have got all you can out of me, don’t you think it is nearly time to put an end to this farce and let me go?”

Kelly looked at him scowlingly. “What the devil hurry is there for your going?” he asked.

“What hurry is there?” repeated Tom. “You don’t think it’s a pleasant place to stay in, do you? It isn’t likely a fellow cares to be kept here against his will a minute longer than he can help, and tied up too in this way.”

“There are worse places than this, mate,” answered the fellow significantly. “And the less you says the better, do you see,” he added as Tom was about to answer.

“Many sich cautions you have given to others, as beaks always do, damn ’em; just you take it to yourself this time.”

“But —” began Tom.

“Shut up, blast you, will you” interrupted Kelly, savagely, “or it’ll be the worse for you. Blow me if I don’t gag you if you says another word.”

The fellow was in earnest, thoroughly in earnest, Tom

could see that at a glance; could see also that any attempt at the extraction of this information he so longed to get at was useless, worse than useless in fact, and so he wisely gave up the attempt, remaining silent during the remainder of the night. The two ruffians manifested signs of great impatience as the night wore on without bringing them any tidings of Levy. They were constantly going outside to listen, now one and now the other, returning again with lowering brows, and calling down fearful anathemas on their confederate's head.

At last Tom's legs were secured as well as his hands, and he was left helpless as the two fellows went outside together, and remained without for 20 minutes at least, engaged in earnest conversation. He could hear them conversing together at some little distance off—could hear them, but fortunately could gather nothing of the meaning of their conversation. Fortunately, I say, seeing that the subject of the conversation was nothing more nor less than his own death. Kelly was for putting him to death that night—for doing so there and then, arguing that it was better to get the matter over and have done with it at once. Burgess to some extent agreed with his companion; but on the whole, and all things considered, deemed it advisable to wait Levy's return before committing the deed.

"No, Tommy," he said; "I think we'd better let it alone till morning, till Phil comes back. We couldn't bury him anyhow till morning, and it's just as well to squeeze him and bury him at the same time."

Then they both retired to rest for the night. And the villains, though they were steeped in crime and evil in their lives, slept soundly enough after retiring—sounder than many a man just and honest in his ways in the sight of God and the world. Tom could tell this from the regularity of their breathing. Poor Tom; assuredly he was to be pitied, as he lay there during the long watches of the night wide awake, within reach

of those two fellows' hands, thinking to himself of the hardness of the fate that had thrown him into these men's power, and undergoing, as we may imagine, much agony of spirit, and no small amount of bodily suffering. At last he too slept, but slept for a short time only—a few minutes, not more. He had not been above five minutes asleep when, in the grey dawn of the early morning, two figures came creeping along towards the tent. Carefully, cautiously, noiselessly, they crept up to it; the foremost undid the fastening, peeped in, noting accurately the position inside; then he thrust in his head, then his body. He was a brave man this, if ever there was one—brave, and powerful, and athletic; but with all his bravery and his strength, his heart beat fast and loud that moment and his breath came and went with painful distinctness. And no wonder that it should be so; no wonder, seeing that he knew full well how reckless and desperate were the men he had to deal with, knew full well that his life was staked on the issue. A false move on his part meant his death, so he told himself; his own death, and that of his companion also. The men were asleep, so far everything was right. One slight movement more, and he was far enough in. Then he rose to his feet with a sudden bound, a revolver in each hand held within a foot of the two villains' heads.

“If you move hand or foot, by the living God I'll blow your brains out, I will, by —” roared Sergeant-Major O'Hara. They were daring and reckless, but they were taken by surprise. Could they but have reached those weapons of theirs under their heads, they would have shot him—shot him, aye, though the whole police force of Otago were around the tent. But any attempt at reaching them would have been their death knell. But even so, even though it were their death knell, I am inclined to think the attempt would nevertheless have been made, had it been possible to make it. But before they

knew where they were, Detective Jones had put anything of the kind out of the fellows' power. Detective Jones had played his part in the matter, and played it well, too. As the Sergeant-Major stood over Burgess and Kelly, Jones had crept in at the back of the tent, and, putting up his hands, had snatched their weapons from underneath their heads. After that, their capture was an easy matter. It was a plucky capture; we must admit—one that did much to put a stop to bushranging in Otago, and saved Tom Hungerford's life.



## **Chapter XVII. — Retrospective.**

The English mail had just arrived at Waitahuna, and men were hurrying to and from the post-office, eager for news from their far-off homes. Outwardly to the eye there may perhaps be but little of eagerness discernible in these men's demeanor as they receive their letters and thrust them away hurriedly out of sight—hurriedly and with seeming unconcern; but could you see into their utmost hearts, you would find there gentleness and love, and a yearning desire to master the contents of these loving missives. By-and-bye, my friend, when no human eye is on them, this seeming unconcern will disappear quickly enough, and these treasures will be read and re-read carefully, with softened hearts—aye, and mayhap with moistened eyes. By-and-bye they will sit in their solitary tents, with emotions welling up within them, as memory dwells on the dear ones faraway and the old, remembered spots—emotions pure and sacred, and ennobling as those of the devotee prostrated before the shrine.

When we last saw Tom Hungerford, he was lying bound hand and foot in the tent of those miscreants, Burgess and Kelly; but we left him, it may perhaps be remembered, in no danger, seeing that with the capture of the gang had come, as a matter of course, his immediate release. He is now sitting in his own room once more, sound in wind and limb, reading over one of his home letters, some half a dozen of which are lying before him on his table unopened. It was a rather a long letter, written in a lady's hand, and crossed after the fashion of ladies' letters.<sup>1</sup> It is a letter that evidently has in it much of interest to Tom, who is sitting there devouring its contents oblivious of everything else beside. As I have just said, it was rather a long letter, and may very likely prove wearisome in the reading, but, even so, I have decided to give it at full length, just as written, without the alteration of

a single word or phrase. I have so decided because the letter will of itself help to explain some matters connected with Tom Hungerford's past life—matters which need explanation before this history comes to a close.

Clouties, Dunmanaway,<sup>2</sup>

September 5th. 1861.

My dearest Tom,

It is now nearly two months since I have heard from you, and I cannot tell you how very, very unhappy I have been in consequence. You know, dear Tom, you are the only one now I have in the world—you and Aunt Martha; and she, dear soul, though she says but little, and that little is meant to cheer me up, is very nearly as unhappy at heart as I am. But, if I go on in this way, you will think I am blaming you, when in reality I blame the irregularity of the post-office.

My last letter was written to you from Dublin; but shortly after the writing of it we started for here. We have now been at home for a fortnight, and you cannot think how nice the dear old place looks, nor how glad I am to be back again. Our return was quite sudden, and a month sooner than we intended, and, though Aunt Martha has never said so, I cannot help thinking I have been the cause of this disarrangement of her plans. The truth of the matter is I had a proposal. There; what do you say to that? After all, you see I needn't die an old maid, if I like. And who do you think has honored me? Now mind you mustn't laugh, for I won't have my sacred feelings made light of; no, not even by you. Joking apart, however, I must tell you that Mr. George Buckley was good enough to do me the honor to offer to make me his wife.

“George Buckley offer to make Mary his wife!” exclaimed

Tom in amazement, throwing down the letter violently on the table and springing to his feet. "George Buckley, curse him, the low hound, how dare he?" he continued as he walked up and down the room with rapid strides, full of fierce wrath. "We must have sunk low, very low indeed, when he dared to presume as far as that. Well it's all of a piece, all of a piece," he repeated. "He and his father have robbed us of all we had, and now they want to rob us of our self respect. The hound thought, no doubt," he added ironically, "he was doing a magnanimous thing in offering to provide for one of the family out of our property. But it's well for him I wasn't there, or I'd make him remember his presumption the longest day he lived. I would, by heaven!"

I know how surprised you will be on reading this, (the letter went on to say) but your surprise will not be so great as was mine, My meeting him was quite casual, at a party given by the Newenhams. Now that his father is a member of Parliament, of course they are asked out to places where one would never expect to see them. Aunt Martha was very indignant about the matter when I told her of it; and I am quite certain that it was owing to it that she left Dublin two days afterwards. "George Buckley!" she exclaimed in horror. "Ah! my dear, I am sure I really don't what is coming over the world. I know this, it certainly is not the same world it was when I was a young girl. Why, in my time, if that young man, or any of his name had dared to insult the humblest member of our family in the way he insulted you, it's shot he'd have been, my dear. Aye, and by my faith, it's little your dear father or your poor uncle George would have thought of taking his life for it either. But I suppose it's all right. I suppose," she added, with hypocritical resignation, "we are now come down

so low in the world that any beggar's brat can turn round and insult us with impunity." By-the-bye, I hear one of the young Buckley's is in Otago.

Mr Johnston was, as usual, very kind and attentive to us during our stay in Dublin. He spent several evenings with us, talking a good deal to my aunt about the property. She bids me tell you that Mr. Johnston is still sanguine of success, and to repeat her offer of placing at your disposal all she has to carry on the lawsuit. Mr. Murphy, the new Attorney-General, views the matter favorably, Mr. Johnston says, but he thinks it will not stop short of the House of Lords. For my part, my dear Tom, I cannot help thinking it would be very much wiser on your part to give up all idea of prosecuting your claim to the old place. I cannot help thinking, it would be wiser to do so, and I am quite sure you would be all the happier. But I know how useless it is my speaking in this way.

"Useless," repeated Tom, "I should think it was useless. Mary is a dear, good, honest girl, as good as gold and as honest as the day," he muttered to himself; "but she always was timid, even for a girl. Give up my claim to the old place! No, by heavens, that I won't as long as I have hands to work with or a breath left in my body. Allow a sneaking blackguard, a low, pettifogging attorney like that fellow Buckley deprive me of what is rightfully mine! I should be a poor, weak, despicable creature indeed were I to do anything of the kind. No, Mr. Cornelius Buckley, I have not done with you yet, I can tell you that."

Then he continued his reading of the letter.

I do wish you could make some money and come back to us, for you don't know how we weary to see you. Mick Dwyer came up last evening to know if we had

any tidings of Tim. Tell him they are all well.

Aunt Martha is as kind as ever. She has not, I am sorry to say, been very well of late, having been confined to her room for some days; but Dr. Townsend says there is nothing serious the matter. Scarcely a day passes but some of your old friends are asking after you. It was only yesterday that Mr. Morris rode up to make enquiries. He says his brother Harry is going out to Auckland in a month or two, and hopes meet you.

I won't ask you to write regularly, for I know you will strive to do so as far as in you lies.

Aunt Martha bids me send you her best love, and she hopes you will accept her offer and come back as soon as possible. All my own love I need not send you, for you always have it.

I am, my dearest Tom,  
ever your affectionate sister,  
Mary Hungerford.

Tom Hungerford read this letter of his sister's through a second time, and, having re-read it, he put it carefully back into its own envelope again; then he took up those other letters lying before him on his table, and set about mastering their contents. But with these other letters we have nothing whatever to do, and will therefore leave him at his occupation while we add a word or two of our own, explaining such matters as may require explanation in this one of Miss Hungerford's.

The Hungerfords were a very old family in the South of Ireland. I cannot now exactly remember how many generations of ancestors they could boast of; but I do know this, that Miss Martha Hungerford, Tom's maiden aunt, was accustomed, when she got upon the theme, to carry you away back in the family genealogical tree far beyond the time of the Conquest. She could tell you the names and titles of the

particular Hungerfords who had accompanied William of Normandy in his filibustering expedition, tracing the history of the family through each successive reign down to Elizabeth's time. In Elizabeth's time, Miss Hungerford, forsaking England and the elder branch of the family, took you across to Ireland in the train of the adventurous Hubert Hungerford, who, by doughty deeds and knightly devoir,<sup>3</sup> won himself the broad lands of Anahogue. One Hungerford had been Lord Chancellor of Ireland, one had been a Chief Justice of the King's Bench; another a Baron of the Exchequer; and a fourth a Provost of Trinity College, Dublin. As to members of Parliament and high sheriffs of the county, they had been as thick as blackberries in the family.

Yes, they came of a good old stock, did the Hungerfords, and, as a matter of course, like all the good old Irish stock, they had been keen sportsmen, and lavish to profusion in their living. The Anahogue fox hounds were the best in the county, but a costly heirloom to the family. The Anahogue lands were broad, and the Anahogue rent-roll a long one; but no rent-roll, no matter how long, could stand for ever the demands made upon it by the Hungerfords; and when James Hungerford, Tom's father, came into possession, he became the owner of a heavily-encumbered property. The Irish famine set in shortly after; but the fox hounds were continued at Anahogue, notwithstanding the famine; and though no rents were paid, the style of living was lavish as ever. Woe betide the man who ventured to suggest to James Hungerford the necessity for retrenchment. His agent, an old friend and an honest man, ventured, indeed, upon some suggestion or another of the kind, but, though he could say more to James Hungerford than any other man living, his friendly offices were so received that he threw up his agency there and then, and never again put his foot inside Anahogue during his former friend's lifetime.

Then the agency passed into the hands of one Cornelius Buckley—a keen, shrewd, clever fellow—an attorney in a neighboring town—a smooth, plausible man, who made things pleasant to his employer, as far as the keeping him supplied with money went. A year or two previously to the opening of this story, James Hungerford had been killed out hunting. His affairs, upon examination, were found to be in a state of hopeless confusion. The property was mortgaged to its full value, or very nearly so, and was sold in the Encumbered Estates Court. There was nothing so very wonderful in this, indeed it was only what might have been expected; but it was unexpected, and a matter for wonderment that the principal creditor of the estate should be none other than the small provincial attorney, Mr. Cornelius Buckley. But when it became known that he had actually purchased the property, people stood aghast.

Con Buckley the owner of Anahogue! Why, it seemed almost incredible. So it was, however; and when the debts were paid, and everything wound up, four thousand pounds was all there was left for the two children, Tom and Mary. He and his sister, meanwhile, took up their residence with a maiden aunt, and as soon as their grief had somewhat subsided, it was decided that Tom should go into a profession. But just about this time, and before he could carry out his decision, he received a letter that entirely changed his future life. This letter was from a Mr. Johnston, a barrister, residing in Dublin, and an old friend of the family's. Mr. Johnston stated in his letter that he had carefully gone into the matter, and had no doubt in his own mind that Buckley had not dealt honestly with his old friend James Hungerford.

“How,” he asked, “could the man have made so much money? Where did these thousands of pounds, for which he held security over Anahogue, come from? Only from his practice? But what was the practice of a small provincial attor-

ney? Of course, you cannot now prove his dishonesty," added Mr. Johnston, "but you can, I think, upset his purchase, and I think, also, under the circumstances, you are perfectly justified in doing so. The Encumbered Estates Court Act specially provides that the agent of a property cannot become the purchaser of any property for which he is acting in that capacity. True, Buckley resigned his agency a day or two before the sale, but this was manifestly an evasion never contemplated. You had better come up to Dublin, and we will have a consultation," added Mr. Johnston, in conclusion.

Tom accordingly went up to Dublin, and the consultation was held. The Solicitor-General coincided with Mr. Johnston's views, whilst Mr. Sergeant Sullivan took the opposite side of the question.<sup>4</sup> There was one thing certain, however, that a large sum of money would be required to carry on the suit. Miss Hungerford was for carrying on the suit at once, offering to stake her all on the issue; and Mary, though averse to legal proceedings, placed her money at Tom's disposal; but Tom would not hear of it.

"No, aunt," he said in reply to Miss Hungerford's offer, "I cannot do that. It's very, very kind of you, and I do feel truly grateful, but I cannot accept your offer. Never fear, I'll carry on the suit, please God, if I live; but I'll risk nobody's money but my own."

And in so saying, in declining to risk his aunt's money and his sister in this uncertain issue, Tom was acting as any honorable man would have acted under the circumstances. The risking of his own money was, of course, a different thing altogether; but his own money was quite inadequate to carry on the undertaking with—was inadequate to do more, in fact, than pay the preliminary expenses. What, then, was to do? He thought the matter over day after day, and week after week; but think as he would, he could find no way out of the



difficulty. Fortified with the Solicitor-General's opinion, he sought the assistance of several respectable solicitors; but they each and all declined, under the circumstances, to take up the case for him. One firm, indeed, offered to take up the case, provided five thousand pounds were lodged to their credit, and this was the most liberal offer he had made him. As a last resource, he decided upon going to New Zealand, hoping in this new country to fall across some profitable investment that might in the course of a few years bring him in a sufficient sum wherewith to return and prosecute his lawsuit.

### **Chapter XVIII. — An Eventful Ride.**

Just at first, and for some time after their arrival, it will be readily imagined the Fitzherberts had to put up with many discomforts, and no small amount of inconvenience in their new home. It was a rough life—it was a rough one at all events for gently nurtured girls, but there was a freshness and novelty about it that made the roughness not only bearable, but even attractive, more especially in these early days; and then in a very short time, things began to improve. In a very short time the presence of the ladies began to make itself visible.

Nameless little comforts grew up all around, and the thousand and one odds and ends that women turn deftly to such good account, were being used to some purpose by the two sisters and Rebecca Tonks. They had been only a few months living on the place when Christmas came around; but when it did come, the place wore a trim tidy look that was scarcely to be expected under the circumstances. They were a happy and united family as they sat down to their Christmas dinner, in this new home of theirs. And they were all there together—all then in the colony, at least—Henry included. Henry and Tom Hungerford had ridden up together from Waitahuna a day or two previously and Tom, as a matter of course, had been invited to join the family circle, and had, equally as a matter of course, accepted the invitation.

It was a pleasant, merry, social gathering, and everyone admitted its pleasantness; at all events, Tom Hungerford made the admission to himself, and that more than once, as he galloped homewards that night in the bright moonlight. The only member of the party, not wholly pleased perhaps, was Bertha Fitzherbert. Bertha had observed during the evening, or thought she had observed that in Tom's manner towards her sister that had taken away much of the pleasure

she would otherwise have felt, and given her food for much anxious thought. Not that she disliked Tom; on the contrary, indeed, he was a special favorite of hers; but the fact of his being so, made her all the more anxious on his account. Had it been possible for her to welcome him into the family as a brother, the welcome accorded him as far as she was concerned, would have been warm and affectionate. But it was not possible he could make good his footing in any such brotherly way, nay, indeed, it was impossible he could do so seeing that her sister was already engaged. It mattered little that in her heart of hearts, Bertha had disapproved of this engagement, or that the affair stood in anything but a satisfactory position just then. It was an engagement nevertheless, and, therefore, anything in the shape of an attachment on Tom Hungerford's part for her sister could only be productive of unhappiness to him, and ought to be put a stop to, somehow or another, at once.

This engagement had taken place on their way out to New Zealand, and requires but a few words in the way of explanation. Amongst the fellow passengers of the Fitzherberts, there was a Mr. Stevenson, a lieutenant of the 70th Regiment,<sup>1</sup> then quartered at Auckland; a pleasant agreeable young fellow, who did much to while away the tedium of a long sea voyage. Thrown daily into Nelly's company, the natural result followed. They became engaged, but not for some time would Colonel Fitzherbert sanction the engagement. Young Stevenson had very little to depend upon—not more than two hundred a year at the outside—besides his pay and the father felt, naturally enough, that under the circumstances, he would not be consulting his daughter's welfare were he to sanction such an engagement. At length, however, after urgent entreaties, he yielded to this extent, that if they both so desired it, he

would give his consent to their union at the end of a year, provided Stevenson had obtained in the meantime his expected company.<sup>2</sup>

There was thus an uncertainty attached to the affair, that made any reference to the engagement undesirable on the part of the family, and in this way had it come to pass that Tom Hungerford was ignorant of it. But Bertha determined within herself this ignorance of his should not continue much longer. She would avail herself, she resolved, of the very first opportunity that presented itself to place him in possession of the facts of the case; meantime she would not let the morrow pass without saying a word or two of caution to Nelly also.

The opportunity for saying these few words of caution to Nelly presented itself the following morning; but, for reasons shortly to be explained, no such opportunity ever arose, as far as Tom Hungerford was concerned—at least, when the opportunity did arise, no necessity for any reference of the kind was needed.

“I wish you would come out with us, Bertha, it is such a beautiful day, and I am quite sure a ride would do you all the good in the world. Do come.”

The two sisters were sitting together; Nelly, dressed in her habit, was waiting for her brother Henry, with whom she was going out for a ride; and Bertha was busy about some household arrangements. The younger sister looked very pretty, prettier even than usual; so fresh, and fair, and piquant, and bright, and sunny, and instinct with life. Her figure, lithe and active, but fully developed, showed to full advantage in her close-fitting habit—the most becoming dress, I take it, a pretty woman can wear. The bright sunbeams played joyously through the wavy masses of her glorious golden hair, and her bright blue eyes sparkled with animation and antici-

pated pleasure. Truly a fair sight to look upon, in the first flush of her beauty, and in the pride of her young girlhood.

“Do come, Bertha,” she repeated.

“No, dear, not to-day. It’s very hot, and you know how terribly the heat knocks me up.”

“You overworked yourself yesterday. What a pleasant day it was though. I don’t know when I ever enjoyed a Christmas Day more. It was so nice having Henry with us, and Mr. Hungerford was very pleasant, don’t you think so?”

“Yes, dear, I think he was,” answered Bertha, slowly and seriously. The opportunity had come for speaking to Nelly about Tom, and she paused, thinking what words she might best use on the occasion.

“Nelly, dear,” she said, breaking the pause, “I hope you won’t be angry, if I say something to you.”

The girl looked up quickly into her elder sister’s face.

“What is it, Bertha?” she asked. “Why, you look as grave as a judge. Angry? of course I won’t be angry.”

“Well, dear, I could not help thinking last night that Mr. Hungerford is beginning to like you better than he ought—better, at least, than may be good for him.”

“Mr. Hungerford like me better than he ought!” repeated Nelly, a flush suffusing her face. “What makes you think that? He has been always very kind and friendly to us all, but not more so to me than anybody else. I am quite sure you are mistaken, Bertha.”

“I hope I am, but I really don’t think so; at all events, I thought you would not mind my saying a word or two about the matter. You see, Nelly, he knows nothing of your engagement, and it is only natural he should grow to like you. I don’t blame you, dearest; but I think it just as well to put you on your guard for Mr. Hungerford’s sake. You don’t misunderstand me?”

“I understand you perfectly, Bertha. You think I ought to be more staid and circumspect when Mr. Hungerford is by, and perhaps you are right,” she added demurely. “I know I am very giddy and thoughtless; but I will try to behave better for the future. My goodness, but there’s Henry calling, and I must be off,” and she went out of the room, mounted her horse, and rode off with her brother. She rode along by his side silent and thoughtful. Had Bertha any good grounds for the statement she had made?

Did Tom Hungerford in truth entertain for her warmer feelings than those of friendship? These were the questions she kept asking herself. If so, if her sister were right, it was certainly very wrong, and somebody or another was greatly to blame. But who was this somebody? Why, manifestly she herself. But what had she done? She looked back, thinking of that first evening she had met Tom, and of those other meetings that had taken place since then; but she could not call to mind one single word of his to herself that might not be proclaimed aloud from the housetops. He had always been very nice, and kind, and pleasant to her; soft, and smooth, and deferential in his words and ways, and she certainly did like him—like him very much—so she told herself, but only as a friend. Surely there was nothing wrong, nothing unmaidenly, nothing immodest in this; nothing to sully that maiden troth she had plighted to her lover. And yet; and yet she was not wholly satisfied with herself either. In the inmost recesses of her heart there was a lurking consciousness that all was not right; that there had been a warmth in Tom’s manner to her, a brightness in his glance, and pressures of her hand by him that betokened something more than an excess of friendship. Yes; Bertha was undoubtedly right in speaking to her those words of warning. She would be more careful and cautious for the future.

And Tom Hungerford, what of him? What if he really were attached to her? What if she should be the cause of bringing misery and unhappiness on his future life? He was not to blame, seeing that he knew nothing of her engagement. And he was so good, and honest, and generous—good as gold and honest as the day; it certainly would be grievous to her—grievous beyond all words—if she should be the innocent cause of bringing upon him aught of trouble and sorrow. She earnestly hoped and prayed that it might not be so; but, even if it were, she must do her duty. *Fiat justitiam ruat cælum.*<sup>3</sup> Yes; though the heavens should fall she must do her duty.

“I say, Nell, old girl,” said her brother affectionately, noticing her abstraction, “what makes you so down in the mouth? You have not had bad news from Auckland, have you? I hope there’s nothing wrong with James. When did you last hear from him?”

“I have not heard from him for some time, Henry. When he last wrote he was going up to the Waikato. I feel rather low spirited, but I’ll soon get over it.”

“Let us have a good gallop, Nell. Nothing like a gallop to put one into good spirits. Here comes Hungerford,” said Henry suddenly, as Tom rose the crest of a ridge close by them.

“I say, Fitzherbert,” he said, after he had pulled up and greeted Nelly warmly, “we’re in for some fun. I passed a wild dog five minutes ago up the flat. Come along and set Harold on him; I see he’s with you.”

They set off at once, tearing along the Teviot Flat at full speed, and before long caught sight of the object of their pursuit. The wild dog, however, was some distance off, and had got well into the ranges before the kangaroo hound could get near him, and as the ground was too rough for Nelly, she pulled up to await their return. Tom seeing this, turned back to remain with her, whilst Henry, with shouts of

encouragement to Harold, carried on the chase alone. Nelly did all she could, using such words and arguments as came to her aid in the spur of the moment, to induce Tom to go on after her brother, but it is needless to say her words and arguments were all in vain. What, leave her there all alone by herself! He could not, he said, think for a moment of doing anything of the kind.

“Besides,” he continued, “the probability is your brother will work his way homewards by the head of the Teviot.”<sup>4</sup>

“But I could find my way home by myself. I wish you had gone on with Henry, Mr. Hungerford. Could you not still overtake him? It is such a shame to deprive you of your sport,” she added, by way of excuse.

“You surely are not serious.” he said, looking at her. “You surely do not imagine I would prefer riding after a wild dog to being with you? Why I am never so happy as when I am near you.”

“You must not speak like that Mr. Hungerford. You must not indeed. If you do I will ride home by myself. I declare I will.”

“You’re not angry with me are you?” he asked appealingly. “You know I would not willingly say a single word that could give you annoyance.”

“I am not angry, but I shall be if you speak to me like that again; but I think we had better be moving home,” and she forced her horse into a swift canter to prevent further conversation if possible.

When they reached the Teviot, she pushed into the stream without pausing an instant, tucking her habit under her feet as she got into the water. Now to cross the Teviot with safety, the horse must be allowed to pick his way slowly and cautiously but just then Nelly never thought of safety. The thought of nothing else, in fact, but the unpleasantness of her position in



being alone with Tom Hungerford, and was desirous above all things to reach home as quickly as possible. The natural result followed. The horse stumbled over one of the large slippery boulders, strove for an instant to recover himself, and then tumbled over on his head.

Tom sprang from his saddle and caught her in an instant, but when he attempted to reach the bank, he found his attempts to do so utterly unavailing. The accident occurred just above the junction of the Teviot and Molyneux, and there was a strong current running there at the time, which swept them along, powerless, to destruction. Once they got into the Molyneux, no power on earth could save them, and Tom knew this, knew it full well; and there it was hissing, boiling, seething within ten yards of them.

What was he to do, how save this girl whom he held in his arms, and loved better than all the world beside? Just then, when hope had well nigh died out within him, he managed, as good luck would have it, to obtain footing for an instant on a large boulder. It was his last and only chance. Could they but get clear of the current they might yet get off safely. He rested for an instant on the boulder, and then thrusting his feet against it, pushed himself off towards the bank, but his feet slipped as he did so, and his last hope was gone. He knew it was all over, and that nothing on earth could now avail them. And was this to be the end of it all; all his hopes and aspirations, and the promises of his young life, were they all to end in this way. And this girl too, so young and beautiful and loveable, was she to perish thus in all the opening glory of her girlhood. If he could but save her, he would not so much mind though he himself should perish. But it was fated otherwise.

Well, they would die together at all events. Die, yes, and what then? In a few short moments they would stand before their God with all their sins and transgressions arrayed before

them. And then the long array of his own deeds flashed across his mind with terrible distinctness, and a great, fervent, agonizing mental cry for mercy went up from the flood of waters to God's throne, heralding the approach of two immortal souls.

No more hope for them now: consciousness itself was dying out fast within him, even as it had died out already within his companion, and dark oblivion began to possess him body and soul, when lo, a sudden shock aroused him once more to life, and he found himself and Nelly tossed by the current on a spit of sand beside the river's brink. He crawled out dragging her along with some difficulty a few feet from the water's edge, and then he rested against a rock close by for a minute or two to recover himself. Then he knelt down beside the girl, and as he did so, an undefined dread possessed him. She lay pale and motionless and breathless; dead to all seeming.

Was she really dead? He lifted her head and felt for her pulse, but there was no pulsation there to feel. What was he to do, how act, what remedy adopt? Just then a slight quiver passed through her frame, a scarce audible sigh escaped her, and after a little her bosom rose and fell slowly and—as it seemed to him—painfully, and at last she opened her eyes languidly.

"Thank God you're safe, Nelly, dear," he whispered, as he lifted her up gently into a sitting posture. "For a minute or two I really thought you were dead."

"Where am I? What has happened?" she asked, confusedly. "Oh, yes; I remember it all now. What a mercy we escaped."

"How did it happen?"

"God is very good," she murmured, almost inaudibly when Tom had told her all, and then she sat silent, pouring out her heart in fervent prayer for their miraculous rescue.

“Let us go home,” she said, after a while, and she strove to rise, but sat down again, too weak to do so.

“You had better wait a little until you get stronger, and until I wring the water out of your habit. There,” he added, when he accomplished his task, “that’s better. Just lean against me for a few minutes longer, and then we’ll make our way home.”

She sank back against him without a word, thoroughly exhausted.

“Oh, Nelly, my own darling, Nelly,” he said passionately, putting his arm around her to support her, “I never knew how much I loved you until now. I do love you—love you more than all the world,” and he pressed her warmly to his heart as he spoke. His words and action re-called her to herself.

“It’s very very wrong of you to speak to me in that way,” she exclaimed, wrenching herself from him, and rising to her feet, “and I won’t permit it.”

“Wrong of me! Why should it be wrong of me to tell you I love you when I do love you—love you as devotedly as man loved a woman.”

“But it is wrong, Mr. Hungerford, very wrong, and I am sure you will think so too when I tell you I am already engaged.”

A look of keen anguish, as if some sharp pain had seized him, passed over his face, leaving it pale and colorless.

“You don’t mean that—say you don’t mean it,” he said, seizing her hand and looking into her eyes, hoping to find there some expression that would contradict her words. There was such utter misery in his look and action that the girl pitied him from her very soul indeed for a moment she allowed her hand to remain in his, and her heart yearned towards him as it had never done before. She had an undefined feeling within her, painful and yet delicious, that the

man was dear to her; aye, very dear to her just then in his wretchedness. He was so brave, and noble, and generous, and true; verily one worthy of being esteemed by any girl; yes, but not by her.

“But indeed I do mean it,” she replied in a low tone of voice, gently withdrawing her hand from his grasp. “I have been engaged since we came to New Zealand to Mr. Stephenson of the 70th. Do please, let us go home.”

He leant against the rock beside him, burying his face in his hands unheeding her request.

“How is it I never heard of this before; how is it that no mention has ever been made of it? Was this reticence fair do you think? Here have I been permitted to know you and meet you; of course I have loved you, never dreaming for a moment it was wrong of me to do so, and now, when it is too late, you tell me of this, I wish to God I had never seen you,” he added bitterly, pouring out his words vehemently, passionately almost fiercely; and then, after a minute he addressed her pleadingly.

“Nelly,” he said. “no one in the world loves you as I do; neither father, nor sister, nor brother, nor anybody else. God alone only knows the depth of my love; surely things have not gone so far but that you can give me some little word of hope or comfort.”

She shook her head, “Please don’t say anything more. Please don’t Mr. Hungerford. I appeal to your generosity not to do so. It has made me very, very, unhappy all this, for I like you very much—as a friend, Shall we be friends?” and she held out her hand to him. He took it in his hand silently, grief and despair gnawing at his heart. She looked into his face pleadingly, and her eyes met his. Then his great love swelled up within him, and like some fierce torrent burst all bounds for a moment.

“Give me one kiss first,” he said, “just one, and I will never again trouble you.”

Before she could utter a single word he had caught her in his arms and pressed her to his heart in a strong, fierce irresistible embrace. He was by nature warm, impulsive and impassionate and now all the warmth, the passion and the loving feeling within were stirred to their lowest depths. He was hot, feverish, frenzied; his youthful blood coursed madly through his veins, a great quivering throb shook him, he yielded himself up body and soul to the delirium of the moment, and heaven and earth seemed to fade away as he held the girl in his arms and kissed her lips. Affrighted, indignant, she tore herself from him at last.

“How dare you,” she said angrily, her face aglow, and panting after her recent exertion. Then she burst into tears.

“Do forgive me,” he exclaimed penitently, thoroughly ashamed of himself, and deeply distressed at the grief he had caused. “I am very, very sorry, I am indeed, and will never again offend you. Heaven is my witness,” he continued, almost distracted as the girl’s hysterical sobbing smote his ear.

“I did mean to annoy you. I could not help myself. I was carried away by the impulse of the moment. I know I don’t deserve your forgiveness; but oh, do forgive me this once,” and he strove to take her hand, but she pulled it away from him angrily.

“I want to get home,” she said, in a hard, cold sharp tone of voice, never looking at him; and he took his place by her side, walking along without a single word being spoken by either. But it was scarcely possible they could walk so and no word be spoken; scarcely possible they could traverse those three miles before them, and no reference be made to what had happened. A grievous wrong had been done the girl, and she felt it. She had been insulted—deeply insulted, and the

insult was all the deeper because of her position at the time. She was alone, unprotected, rescued but a moment before from the very jaws of death, and what stronger claims than these could she have had upon his forbearance, his courtesy, or his manhood? It was the act of a base recreant, she told herself, a blot upon chivalry. She was a good, honest, high-minded girl pure in thought and word, and she felt—could not but feel deeply, keenly, the insult that had been offered to her. Her virgin modesty had been outraged, her maiden fears aroused, and the brightness of her woman's armour dimmed. Yes; she had been insulted, injured—deeply injured; injured almost to death, and that too, by one she had learnt to respect and admire, because of the nobility of his character, by one whom she would have trusted beyond and above all other men she had ever known. As she thought of it all, hot, fierce, implacable wrath possessed her. Forgive him in sooth. Not she. She would never forgive him as long as she lived; never, never, never. She was full of this as she walked along silently by his side—full of it to overflowing, thinking of nothing else beside for the moment. But after a time, as the measure of her wrath had somewhat subsided, other thoughts possessed her. Her providential and miraculous escape from death recurred to her, and she felt that she was very ungrateful indeed in forgetting this, and very sinful too in allowing herself to give way to her anger at such a moment. Yes, she had been wonderfully and miraculously preserved; and she knew that, next to God, her preservation was due to Tom. How well, and nobly, and bravely he had behaved.

Why, oh why had he permitted himself to act so very wrong, she asked herself in sorrow? But for this last action of his she would have blessed him to her dying day. The first place in her heart she could not have given him, seeing that it was already given to another; but, next to this other, he

should have occupied the highest place in her regard and estimation. He had behaved very badly; but yet she owed him her life, and perhaps, all things considered, she ought to forgive him. Then it occurred to her that but a very few short minutes ago she herself had been a suppliant for mercy and forgiveness; and across her mind there flashed the words “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.” Yet here she was withholding this very forgiveness from a fellow creature.

“I did not mean to annoy you. I was carried away by the impulse of the moment,” he had said, excusing himself to her, and that he said so truly she now believed. And after all, poor fellow, he was very unhappy; nor could she but admit to herself that, to some extent, she and hers were responsible for his unhappiness. And he looked so contrite and very unhappy too she thought, glancing furtively across at him.

“Miss Fitzherbert,” he said after a little, in a low, sorrowful tone of voice, “in all human probability we shall never meet again. Are you going to part from me in anger? I know I have acted badly—shamefully; but if you knew how I suffer, I think you would forgive me.”

She held out her hand to him.

“I do forgive you, Mr. Hungerford. Let us say nothing more about it.”

“Thank you,” he said humbly and penitently. He was truly penitent, and he showed his penitence in the deferential manner he treated her. Shortly afterwards George Fitzherbert rode up with Nelly’s horse; but, before he did so, I am inclined to think that not only had Tom been forgiven, but that he had won back that place in her regard and estimation which she had told herself he should possess were it not for his offence.

On reaching home, Nelly betook herself to her bed forthwith, and the next day she was raving in the delirium of fever.

For days and days she hovered between life and death. And during these days Tom's name was often on her lips. Now she would reproach him in fierce, wrathful, bitter words; and then, changing her tone, she would address in the soft, low, endearing language of affection. Poor Bertha! As she sat, and watched, and listened, tears would pour down silently her cheeks, and a prayer would rise to her lips; the wail of a sad, and sorrowful heart would ascend on high, imploring health and strength for a beloved sister—strength of body and mind; strength to bear this cross with fortitude and resignation.



## **Chapter XIX. — Conclusion.**

Some fifteen or sixteen months have elapsed since the taking place of those events recorded in the last chapter.<sup>1</sup> And on the whole, as far as concerns the principal personages of this story at least, they have not been uninteresting months; at all events, sufficient interest attaches to them to render a few brief words of explanation necessary. This explanation made, my task is finished.

When parting from her last, we left Nelly Fitzherbert, it may be remembered, in sore straits and dire distress of mind and body, lying at death's door in the delirium of fever, past all hopes of recovery, to all outward seeming. But she did recover. At the last moment, when the malady had reached a crisis, and the flickering lamp had all but sunk for ever, a change for the better had taken place, and thenceforward her youth and good constitution had stood her in good stead. But notwithstanding her youth and constitution, her recovery was very slow and very gradual; a matter of weeks and months; consuming the last dying days of summer, and running far on towards the end of departing autumn. At last, however, as far as bodily strength was concerned, the girl appeared her old self again, moving about the house strong and active as ever. But ah me! So sadly changed. No longer the bright, cheerful, saucy girl we remember her; but crushed, and cowed, and humbled in mind and spirit. Day and night her mind dwelt on the past. She was full of that one great temptation of her life, that had been thrown in her way and unresisted, and all other thoughts were swallowed up by this one, that she had given her love to one man when that love belonged to another. She never attempted to plead to herself anything in the way of excuse. The temptation had been sore and grievous; but she never admitted this to herself, never even so much as thought of it. It never crossed her mind in the way of excuse that Tom Hungerford was kind, and

pleasant, and attentive; that, as her brother's bosom companion and warm friend, he had ever been greeted with a hearty welcome, free to come and go whenever he chose, and make his soft speeches without let or hindrance; that he had saved her life at the risk of his own, and won her girl's heart unknown and unthought of by her. And though at an earlier period she did feel sore with her lover, James Stevenson, telling herself that he had neglected her, and was not bearing himself as a lover should do, writing her, on the few occasions that he did write, short, brief, unloverlike letters, at the period I am now referring to no trace or recollection of the soreness remained.

She thought not of all this now. She thought of nothing but that she had fallen from her lofty pedestal, and, groveling in the dust, repented in the sackcloth and ashes of a sorrow stricken heart. Ah me! It is grievously bitter when we first lose our good opinion of ourselves; and exceedingly grievous is the bitterness when we come to look upon ourselves as unworthy the regard of all good men and women. To this pass had Nelly Fitzherbert come in the first days of her convalescence. And afterwards, when these days of convalescence had passed, news was brought her that distressed her sorely, and smote her to the very heart's core. News was brought her of the fall of Mere-Mere,<sup>2</sup> and with this news came tidings that her lover was no more. Poor James Stevenson! Like many another brave fellow, he had met his death on Mere-Mere's stricken field on that fell day when Maori pluck, and Maori courage, and Maori daring, setting at defiance English discipline, English generalship, and English bravery, held their own for hours and hours, disputing fiercely, hand to hand, every inch of ground that was won from them. The keen, sharp tomahawk, flashing through the air in lightning circles, had beaten down sword and guard, and crushed his head in its irresistible swoop.

For many and many a long day she grieved for him sadly, sorrowfully, keenly, with a grief all the keener because of the wrong she felt—could not but feel—she had done him. There had been, during his lifetime, one little small ray of comfort amidst the darkness of her soul, in that she had told herself, nay sworn to herself, in words of serious, solemn, import, that she would strive her lifelong to make him amends—living for him, and him only, the life of a loving, honest, dutiful wife. But now this small solitary ray of comfort was snatched from her, and from the depths of the darkness, despair, and anguish that filled her heart, like Job of old, she prayed that she might die and be at rest.

She had never once seen Tom Hungerford since her recovery—had never once thought of him, I was going to add, but any such addition on my part would be incorrect, seeing that she had thought of him, and that often—could not help thinking of him, in fact; but her thoughts of him were of the very briefest. She had come to watch herself carefully, and by the exercise of much mental control had gone far to wean him from her thoughts.

Meanwhile, Tom Hungerford had resumed his duties. He, too, had his own share of suffering to bear, for the blow had been keenly felt by him. But, we know blows of the kind never fall so keenly upon men as they do upon women; at all events their keenness is less enduring. The force of the buffet may indeed cause a man, in the first flush of his agony, to reel and stagger and clutch at the nearest support at hand to prevent his falling; but as a rule he seldom does fall, no matter how forcible the buffet may have been. But it is not so with women. They fall prone in the dust without clutching at anything that might break the force of the fall. Then, again, when a man has pulled himself together, there is always something or another to turn his hand to—some resource or another to distract his

attention, and prevent his feeding on his own thoughts—that most poisonous of all thoughts on which a mind diseased can feed itself. Tom Hungerford was peculiarly fortunate at this unhappy period of his life, in that he had onerous duties to perform, and he was wise enough to avail himself of his good fortune, giving himself up wholly to their performance. He worked away incessantly day after day. He never before got through more business; no, not even in the earlier days of Waitahuna. This business, we need scarcely say, was for the most part quite unnecessary, made specially for the occasion; but he himself was quite unconscious of this. Nay, indeed on more than one occasion he told Henry Fitzherbert it was unaccountable this increase of his work. Neither Henry nor Tim Dwyer could understand him. Tim especially was sorely puzzled. And he had a hard time of it, too, had poor Tim. Tom Hungerford was so snappish and irritable, and altogether unreasonable, that Tim scarcely dared approach him.

“Begor, Mick,” said the poor fellow one evening to his friend Mickey Murphy, the big Connemara man, “Misther Tom bates me inthirely. I don’t know from Adam what’s come over him of late, for he ain’t hisself at all, at all.”

But after a time all this disappeared, and Tom’s old ways came back to him. I am afraid the news of poor James Stevenson’s death had something to do with this change. At all events the change became apparent about the time this news reached him. Naturally, and as a matter of course, he now began to look forward more hopefully. In that old popular ballad, “Roy’s wife,” we may remember Johnny, the discarded swain, uses himself the following words of comfort:

But Roy, he’s older thrice than I,  
Perhaps, his days may na’ be mony;  
Sine when the carl is dead and gane,  
She then may turn her thoughts on Johnny.<sup>3</sup>

Now it is needless to say no such comfort as this had ever occurred to Tom Hungerford. He had never seen James Stevenson, never known him, nor heard of him until his name was mentioned by Nelly Fitzherbert as her accepted lover. Since then he had in his heart envied him, and hated him; but unlike the discarded Johnny, he had never speculated on the possibility of his death. But now that this lover was dead, the probability of her turning her thoughts on him, Tom Hungerford, rose up strong within him, and gave him food for much speculation. At all events she was free again, and he might now venture to tell her his tale of love without impropriety, or the fear of calling down upon his head her wrath and anger. Any telling of the kind must, of course, be a matter of time, still the telling might be honestly made, aye, and successfully made to.

Then, too, some little time after, another equally important event as regards his future life befell him. It happened in this way. One day he was called away to hold an inquest on the body of a young man who had lost his way in a snow storm on the ranges and perished. The dead man was no other than that Delany whose connexion with the Burgess Kelly gang has been already referred to in the course of this narrative. It was this unfortunate young fellow, it may be remembered, who had instigated the gang to murder Tom Hungerford, instigating them to do so for reasons which I promised should be explained at a later stage of this story. The production at the inquest of some documents found on his body makes this the fitting time, perhaps, for the offering of such explanation. From these documents it appeared that the name of the deceased was not Delany, but Buckley. He was, in fact, a son of Mr. Cornelius Buckley, the *ci-devant* agent, and present proprietor of the Hungerford property of Anahogue. One of these documents was a letter in the elder Buckley's handwrit-

ing. And well Tom recognised that handwriting as he read the letter over. And there was his own name too. He was to be carefully watched, and his actions reported from time to time to the writer. And stop[,] what was this.

“As long as he lives, in fact, we can never expect peace or quietness; and it is only in the event of his death that we can call the place our own.”

Why, this meant in so many words that he was to be put out of the way. Then followed a paragraph giving the son authority to draw upon the writer for any sum of money he might require; and was requested in conclusion to destroy the letter when he had read it. Tom placed the letter carefully aside and proceeded with the inquest. The only portion of the proceedings of any interest to us, as far as this narrative is concerned, was Tim Dwyer’s evidence. Tim swore that the dead man was the one he had seen in conversation with Burgess and Kelly at the Golden Age that night when he overheard Tom’s name mentioned, and his death darkly hinted at. As Tom rode homewards that evening in company with Tim Dwyer, the whole thing began to dawn upon both of them. They now began to see why Tom had been stuck up, and the fate that awaited him at the hands of these miscreants, but for their opportune capture. With this letter, in his possession, the attempt made upon his life, and the connexion of young Buckley with this attempt, he felt that his claim to the property was irresistible. He felt that under the circumstances, the elder Buckley would never face the exposure of a public trial. He would have started home at once, were it not for Nelly. But he would not, he told himself, leave her under existing circumstances; no, not though twenty such properties were at stake. What was this property, what was his very life itself without her warm love and joyous sunny smile? And so he waited and waited; and at last visited the station once more,

avowedly to bid the family good-bye, but in reality to tell his love to the girl again.

Will he succeed in his mission, will his tale of love be listened to? Well, yes; I think so. If not upon this occasion, upon some future one at all events. In the course of a year or two, Henry Fitzherbert became a Goldfields Commissioner, or Warden, as the appointment came to be called in after days. Some time afterwards he was returned to the Assembly.<sup>4</sup> When I last had the pleasure of meeting my friend Henry, there was some talk of his getting married, and he mentioned to me on that occasion that he had some intention of giving the world his experiences of political life, under the title of Henry Fitzherbert, the goldfields member. I cannot say whether he will carry out his intention or no; but should he do so, I have no doubt we will learn something further of Tom Hungerford's movements, as well as of other personages of this story.

Tim Dwyer is looking forward anxiously to his return to his old home. He has, thanks to Tom's care, laid by a few hundred pounds, and looks forward to his snug farm; and a certain bright, wholesome, buxom lass, a farmer's daughter of his acquaintance, who occupies a warm corner of his heart, will, he thinks, make that farm all the more comfortable. I hope she will make poor honest Tim as happy as he deserves to be.

My task is finished, the play is played, the actors have fretted and strutted their brief hour upon the stage, and will henceforward be heard no more.<sup>5</sup> They file by you, my dear reader, in making their exit, and addressing you in the words of the ancient gladiators when bending low before the throne of Imperial Caesar, "Ave Caesar, salutant te morituri" pass out into oblivion.<sup>6</sup>

# Endnotes

## Chapter 1

1. No ship of this name appears to have reached Port Chalmers about this time, but Baldwin would have been well aware of the iron-clad clipper *May Queen*, which at the time he was writing this story in the early 1870s was one of the best known vessels on the London–Otago run.

2. This was an Australian-built paddle steamer which could operate even at very low tides on Otago Harbour. It was introduced a year or two after the events Baldwin is describing and it was taken out of service in 1876.

3. The mention of spring puts the arrival at about September 1860, which is exactly the time Baldwin arrived in Otago.

4. No doubt a shortened form of “begorrah” (sure and by God), and the first example of “stage Irish” which Baldwin uses throughout *Tom Hungerford*. Few of the uses will require a note.

5. A small seaside town on Ireland’s east coast which from the 1850s on, with the arrival of the railway, became a popular tourist resort.

6. Irish for a scamp or a rascal.

7. The court, actually “The Encumbered Estates Court,” was established by a law of 1849 which was designed to facilitate the sale of insolvent landed estates whose owners had been bankrupted by the Great Famine, thus putting more capital into Irish farming. After a creditor’s petition, the court could enforce the sale of any land or lease encumbered with debts worth more than half the net annual rental. Creditors, including the petitioner, were entitled to bid for the land.

## Chapter 2

1. Dunedin’s first pub was the Commercial Inn in High Street which began in 1848 as little more than large cottage. By 1860 it had been



rebuilt with 14 rooms and its own gas lighting system invented by publican George Duncan. No doubt it was a more expensive hotel than the Tamora.

2. Mark Tapley is the devoted servant of Martin Chuzzlewit in Dickens' novel of that name. He gives practical support as well as possessing indomitable good humour.

3. Cruiskeen Lawn is a brand of whiskey (as an Irishman Baldwin uses the spelling whiskey, though he or his composers reverted to whisky on three occasions in the novel) made in Belfast and the song is an old drinking song which implores that the singer's glass will never run dry. "Shan Van Vocht" is from the Irish *Sean bhean Bhocht* ("The Poor Old Woman"), a traditional Irish song from the period of the United Irishmen's Rebellion of 1798. The phrase was used by poets to personify Ireland during the dark days of English rule.

4. A quotation from Homer's *Iliad*, Book I, l. 33, meaning "loud roaring of the sea."

5. A pun on "thalasses" which means "the sea."

6. Bell Hill was a major obstruction in Princes Street near what is now Dowling Street. It was cut away in late 1862.

7. Dunedin is being compared unfavourably with Banagher, a town in Ireland's midlands with an important strategic position on the River Shannon. It was once the focus of thriving river business and was an important stop on the Dublin to Limerick canal.

8. Irish philosopher Edmond Burke (1729–1797) wrote extensively about North American matters, being especially critical of the way Britain was conducting the war with its American colonies.

9. An actual boarding house in High Street, Dunedin, it advertised in the *Otago Witness* on 21 May 1859: "IN OPENING the above House as a PRIVATE HOTEL, the Proprietor can with confidence recommend unsurpassed Accommodation to those who desire Comfort and Quietness. Married and Single Parties can be

accommodated. GOOD STABLING. Horses carefully attended to. JOHN FLANAGAN.”

10. At this time in Otago, the word usually referred to those holding a large amount of grazing land, in most cases leased from the government. Baldwin leased the Long Valley run within a few months of arriving in Otago and was one of the many squatters who were early members of the Dunedin Club, their town base.

11. The governing body of a province. It had wide local powers while the central government General Assembly had “national” powers. Baldwin was a member of both the Otago Provincial Council and the General Assembly during the 1860s.

12. The Provincial Council Speaker at the time Tom Hungerford is supposed to be visiting the debating chamber (about September 1860) was Edward Teschmaker, but in July 1861 a tailor, Alexander Rennie, was appointed Speaker and Baldwin may be having some fun at Rennie’s expense, with the little girl telling her “faither” that a customer wants his trousers.

13. Drinking nobblers, a nobbler being a nip of spirits.

14. Buying a drink for, a widespread custom in colonial New Zealand.

15. Shakespeare, Act 2, Scene 3 of *Coriolanus*.

16. A period of excessive alcohol drinking which in colonial New Zealand might extend over many days, as when a shearer might “cut out” his cheque at the nearest pub.

### **Chapter 3**

1. Heshbon was a city in ancient Jordan known for its magnificent pools of fish to which the poet in the *Song of Solomon* 7:4 likens his lover’s eyes: “Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; your eyes like the fish pools of Heshbon.”

2. This was the Lower Taieri ferry not far from Henley. The surge of goldfields traffic saw it replaced by a bridge in 1863.

3. By 1861, the time of which Baldwin was writing, James Mackenzie had already become a legendary figure. Early in 1855 he stole sheep from The Levels Station near Timaru and took them through a pass to the country which was named after him. He spent nine months in prison at Lyttelton during most of 1855.
4. The Canterbury provincial superintendent in 1855 was James Fitzgerald and the story which Baldwin tells against him may reflect what Baldwin had heard about Fitzgerald's abilities. Baldwin may well have met Fitzgerald (who had strong Irish connections) as both men were active in national politics during the 1860s.
5. Botany Bay, Sydney, was the landing place of the First Fleet bringing its convict cargo to Australia. Thus, a "Botany Bay man" is used to describe an ex-convict and probably one who has shown little signs of reform. In this case, McGregor appears proud of his connection with the place.
6. The Long Room is a phrase used of customs department offices and members' rooms at Lords and other cricket grounds. It was commonly used in the nineteenth century to describe a large hotel bar.
7. Deuteronomy 27:17. This piece of Biblical "law" is particularly apt for a story which includes claim jumping by gold miners.
8. A high point approaching Manuka Gorge on the road from Milton to Lawrence. Now spelt as Mount Stuart.
9. Tutu (*Coriaria arborea*) is poisonous native shrub. Upas is the Javanese word for poison, derived from the name of a larger poisonous tree (*Antiaris toxicaria*) not native to New Zealand.
10. Sometimes called "Spaniard," the grass is sharply pointed and at times almost impassable.
11. A native scrub or small tree, commonly used as firewood.
12. A small native bat.
13. A bell bird, usually "korimako."

14. More correctly “toetoe,” a native grass with tall plumed flower heads.

15. The early name for the Clutha River. Molyneux was the sailing master of Cook’s *Endeavour* and although Molyneux Bay appears on Cook’s chart, the naming of the river came later.

16. Mountains near Bannockburn.

## **Chapter 4**

1. A Maori word usually meaning a small hut or shelter.

2. Alexander Pope, *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, ll. 171–72.

3. George Gordon Byron, Lord Byron, *The Island*, 2.19. Baldwin’s next comments refer to the next lines in the poem:

Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,  
Though not less loved, in Wapping or the Strand.

4. Cadets were young men who worked on sheep stations to learn about farming.

5. The Latin phrases mean “gentle in manner” and “resolute in execution.”

6. Marysville is the county seat of Yuba County in California. It was an early gold-mining centre and a sign on the roadside still bears the slogan: “Gateway to The Gold Fields.”

7. Correctly Kealakekua Bay, the spot in Hawaii where Captain James Cook was killed in 1779.

8. Assuming that Baldwin has used his own Long Valley Station as the model for this fictional property, then Rough Ridge, which runs from Oturehua to the upper Taieri, would be at the northern end of the station.

## **Chapter 5**

1. Baldwin is fairly close—Scotland covers 19,460,000 acres while Otago (which included Southland when Baldwin arrived in 1860)

covered 16,449,400. Southland became a separate province in March 1861.

2. William Campbell (1810–1896) was one of Australia’s richest pastoralists and one of the first people to discover gold in Australia. In early 1850, he discovered gold on the Clunes station owned by his brother-in-law Donald Cameron.

3. A peak in the Blue Mountains named after William Valpy, Jr. who was the first owner of Patearoa Station, which Baldwin was later to manage. W. G. McClymont describes the discovery of Mount Valpy in *The Exploration of New Zealand* (1940): “In March 1851 [Charles] Kettle and W. H. Valpy went from the latter’s station near Lake Waihola, over the hills to Waitahuna, seeing Lake Waipori and going on past the source of the Tuapeka river. In the distance they saw the valley of the Molyneux river and beyond that the Blue Mountains, the highest point of which, until gold-mining times, was known as Mount Valpy.” It seems the name Mt Valpy is little used these days.

4. Virgil wrote of *auri sacra fames*, the “holy lust for gold,” and the troubles it causes mankind (*Aeneid* III, 56).

5. At this time the Provincial Government was using the tiny Mechanics Institute building in what is now the Exchange. It was the mid-1870s before a proper provincial Government Building was erected on the site of the now-abandoned Chief Post Office.

6. Dixon is not the name of the real superintendent, but Baldwin may be enjoying a little play on words. The superintendent at the time of Read’s gold discovery was John Larkins Richardson, and to a generation brought up on punning (in Greek, Latin and English) it would be an easy step from Dixon (Dick’s son) to “Richard’s son.” Richardson, though not known by his military rank, was a captain during the First Sikh War and had been a staff officer of the East India Company before coming to New Zealand. No doubt there were a few grins from readers of Baldwin’s later sentence: “But you would never have guessed that he was a Company’s man, for he

had nothing of the bilious old Indian officer about him.”

7. The *Otago Colonist* began publishing weekly in 1856 and ran until 1862. The newspaper which carried the first news of Read’s discovery was actually the *Otago Witness*, on 8 June 1861, when it published Read’s letter to the Superintendent of 4 June. *The Otago Colonist* was actually edited by William Lambert. In the spring of 1861 Julius Vogel arrived in Dunedin and secured a job on the paper. Within weeks, however, he formed a partnership with William Cutten, editor of the rival *Otago Witness*, with the intention of founding a daily newspaper, the *Otago Daily Times*.

## Chapter 6

1. The place names are all those of Victorian gold rush locations.
2. In gold mining, a paddock was a shallow open-cast excavation from which wash-dirt was systematically taken.
3. In Baldwin’s notes, which Vincent Pyke used for his *History of Early Gold Discoveries in Otago*, the following extract occurs:

The next morning I started home to bring back my station hands and some provisions. Before leaving, however, I pegged off a piece of ground adjoining Read’s claim, and this he undertook to look after and protect during my absence. When I returned some four or five days later the place was rapidly filling with people, and Read’s mate, a young fellow named Brookes, had joined him.

After news of Read’s discovery local politician John Hardy with his son Edwin, Gabriel Read and Brookes worked in Gabriel’s Gully for two weeks and took 112 ounces of gold.

4. A character in Dickens’ *Dombey and Son*. Major Joey Bagstock is a conceited and garrulous “faithful friend.”
5. The phrase is said to have been coined by Edward Cargill to describe the original Otago settlers and it gained wide use throughout the country in later times.

6. Refers to Donnybrook Fair held near Dublin until 1855. The fair was renowned for its carousing and brawling.

## **Chapter 7**

1. Baldwin probably witnessed many such attacks. Typical is this one, which took place during Baldwin's time on the goldfields:

On Tuesday last, about noon, Dr. Burrows conducted by Constable Carter, was proceeding towards the upper end of Waitahuna Flat to visit a sick man, when, as they were passing at some distance from two tents, a ferocious dog rushed upon the constable and bit him seriously in two places on the right arm above the elbow. Dr. Burrows at once went to his assistance, and drove off the dog, and afterwards dressed the wounds at the Dart Hotel, which was not far off. The wounds were of a serious nature, and it is by no means certain that the constable will escape permanent injury.

*Otago Daily Times* 17 January 1862

2. Sometimes known as a "baldric" the Masonic scarf passed from the shoulder over the breast to the hip. Baldwin had connections with the Odd Fellows Lodge.

3. This discovery of gold, and the invitation from Read to Tom Hungerford to be the first to wash up the gold, mirrors exactly Baldwin's own experience when he and Read explored the Waitahuna area.

## **Chapter 9**

1. This would be about \$2.6 million in 2010. Baldwin's share of Patearoa Station while he was writing *Tom Hungerford* was about £4000 or \$450,000.

2. Fencing timber called Hobart Town palings was a major Tasmanian export in the nineteenth century.

3. William Wordsworth, "Peter Bell," ll. 248–50:

A primrose by the river's brim  
A yellow rose was to him.  
And it was nothing more.

4. Worth about \$8.8 million in 2010.

5. The word “hundreds” was used, especially in Otago and Southland, to describe a subdivision set aside for settlement. Land grants property could be confiscated and used to create small farming settlements called “hundreds.”

## **Chapter 10**

1. Baldwin has anticipated the events of 1862 when the first two theatres were built in Dunedin. The saleyards and stables of Jones, Bird, and Co. were converted into the Princess Theatre which opened on 5 March of that year under the management of the Fawcett brothers, presenting *The Cramond Brig* and *That Rascal Jack*.

2. Baldwin has again anticipated events, as the Royal Arcade was built by Henry Farley early in 1862. It provided retail space for a collection of small businesses and eateries. It was later rebuilt in grander style and for about 50 years or so was an important retail centre.

3. In 1862 Mr. Waters and Mr. J. W. Morton were associated with “M’Cubbin’s Café and Restaurant, Farley’s Arcade.”

4. In this episode and later, when describing criminal Phil Levy, Baldwin displays a virulent level of anti-Semitism.

5. The name “Callaghan” is probably a thinly-disguised reference to St. John Branigan, who was recruited from the Victorian police force, along with a number of his men, as soon as the Gabriel’s Gully rush was on, but Branigan would not have arrived in Dunedin by the time of the conversation being reported here.

6. This would be a salary of about \$60,000 in 2010

7. French for “What do you want, my friend?”

8. The Otago Provincial Government “Gazette” included notices about appointments.



## **Chapter 11**

1. Dummy whist is a variant of whist which can be played by three players rather than the usual four. In double dummy two players each have a “dummy” partner.

## **Chapter 12**

1. Connemara is a district on the west coast of Ireland.
2. This may be a reference to a Chinaman or a coward.
3. William Shakespeare, *The Life and Death of King John*, Act 4, Scene 1.
4. An obsolescent form of “gulped”.
5. This word appears to be a colourful invention by Baldwin.
6. Both were actual Waitahuna hotels, the Golden Age being the stopping place for Cobb and Co., coaches.
7. The publican seems to have had a license to sell only beer and not spirits.
8. Job 31:35—“Oh, that I had someone to hear me! I sign now my defense—let the Almighty answer me; let my accuser put his indictment in writing” (New International Version). Presumably Baldwin has tangled up Solomon’s wisdom with Job’s lamentation. Tom, as tormented as Job, would not call on God to have his enemies accuse themselves, but would instead appoint them as commissioners of goldfields, in order to make them suffer as he has.

## **Chapter 13**

1. A sacrament of the Catholic Church also called the Last Rites or Anointing of the Sick which is given to those who are gravely ill, especially those in danger of death.
2. The Irish phrase means “a thousand murders” and occurs in *The King and the Bishop: A Legend of Clonmacnoise*.
3. Lambing Flat (now Young) was a gold field in New South Wales which was notorious for a series of violent anti-Chinese demonstrations in 1860–1861 during which several Chinese were killed.

4. The colonial police force drew strongly on army traditions and organisation and the rank of sergeant-major was retained but given commissioned officer status. Sergeant Major O'Hara is a thinly disguised version of Sergeant Major Hugh Bracken who served in the gold fields at this time and was involved in the arrest of the Kelly-Burgess gang.

5. A euphemism for a prostitute or loose woman. Cf. Henry Fielding, "She is no better than she should be." *The Temple Beau* (1730), Act 4, Scene 3.

## Chapter 14

1. Harry Orsman's *Oxford Dictionary of New Zealand English* notes that "long tailed ones" was thieves' cant for bank notes, but does not explain the origin of the phrase. Baldwin would have known the phrase because it was used by Burgess gang member Joseph Sullivan when giving evidence in Nelson September, 1866: "he saw a good deal of money with one person of the four, and some 'long tailed ones,' a cant expression for large notes" (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, 14 September 1866).

2. Possibly from "schmee," which is German thieves' cant for "fraud" or "a fake"

3. The brother of Thomas Kelly.

4. Richard Burgess (originally Hill) and Thomas Noon (later called Kelly) arrived in Otago from Australia early in 1862 and specialised in attacking and robbing lone prospectors. In March the Otago Mounted Police arrested Burgess and Noon over a robbery at Weatherstones and they received three and a half years' hard labour in Dunedin Gaol. In September 1865 they were escorted to the provincial border with Canterbury and headed for the West Coast goldfields. They gained later infamy for the Maungatapu murders near Nelson.

5. Levy joined up with Burgess and Kelly and with Joseph Sullivan formed the gang responsible for the Maungatapu murders.

6. William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act 4, Scene 1:

*Macbeth*: How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags?

What is't you do?

*Three Witches*: A deed without a name.

7. The Ovens Valley in Victoria was the site of a gold rush in the early 1850s.

8. Slang meanings of “squeeze” include “to extract by dishonest means; extort; pressure or intimidate (someone) to comply with a demand, as to make an extortion payment.”

9. The gold escort was formed using armed mounted police to bring gold from Central Otago to Dunedin.

10. Long Valley was the station near Roxburgh which Baldwin took up when he first came to Otago.

11. Mrs. Harris is the imaginary friend of Mrs. Gamp in Dickens' *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Sarah Gamp is a midwife and “layer out” of the dead, more concerned with her own comforts than those of her patients and in her constantly inebriated state she creates the imaginary Mrs. Harris whom she reports as having the highest opinion of Sarah Gamp.

## **Chapter 15**

1. At this time, though not for much longer, Milton was usually known as Tokomairiro.

2. Psha—verbally to shake something off; in modern times often spelt “pshaw.” A fico—the value of a fig, practically nothing.

3. Hecatombs—a large number of animals set aside for sacrifice.

## **Chapter 16**

1. The Burgess gang was actually captured in March 1862.

2. The Waipori goldfield, about 20 kilometres from Lawrence, was discovered in December 1861, and developed into a rich alluvial field.

3. The detective involved in the actual capture was F. Johnston.

## Chapter 17

1. Before the introduction of uniform penny postage in 1840 cross-written letters were common, as postage was charged on the number of sheets of paper used. Cross-writing involved filling a page in the conventional manner and then turning it to write more lines at right angles to the first ones. The result was not always easy to read but twice as much could be written on one sheet. Baldwin is suggesting that ladies continued the habit long past the start of penny postage.

2. In County Cork, Ireland.

3. An act or expression of respect, courtesy or civility.

4. Serjeants-at-Law were members of an order of barristers which faded away after the 1870s as Kings/Queens Counsel replaced them.

## Chapter 18

1. The 70th (East Surrey) Regiment of Foot arrived from India and was chiefly involved in the Waikato War, including actions near Meremere in November 1863. Baldwin would certainly have met officers of the regiment when a detachment of the 70th was stationed in Dunedin in 1861-1862, ostensibly to provide support for the police should any major trouble erupt on the goldfields as had happened in Australia.

2. As an officer in an infantry regiment Lieutenant Stevenson would have been in charge of a platoon, but once in charge of a company he would be a captain—a rank of some prestige, carrying a larger salary and making him a much better marriage prospect.

3. Often as *fiat justitia (et ruat caelum)*, a Latin phrase meaning “Let justice be done.”

4. Baldwin is drawing on his own knowledge of central Otago. His own station bordered the Teviot River, which flows into the Clutha near Roxburgh.

## Chapter 19

1. The torrid love scene at the river can be dated about August 1862 which means that news of Stevenson's death eighteen months later coincides with the 70th Regiment fighting at Meremere in November 1863.

2. The fighting near Meremere on the Waikato River took place in the spring of 1863 and British lives were lost nearby at the battle of Rangiriri.

3. From a Scottish song, "Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch," often played for the Highland fling dance.

4. Henry Fitzherbert seems to be following in the footsteps of Baldwin who was also a gold fields commissioner and Member of Parliament.

5. William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act 5, Scene 5:

Out, out, brief candle!

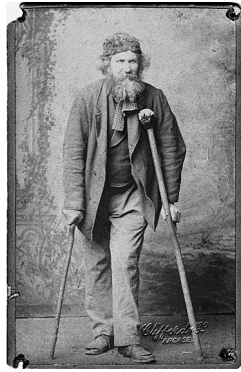
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage

And then is heard no more.

6. "Hail Caesar! Those who are about to die salute you!" is a well-known Latin phrase used by doomed gladiators taking part in combat to the death. It is found in *The Life of the Ceasars* by Suetonius.

## Jock Graham's Map of the Gold Fields



Jock Graham was “Red Coat” and his map shows his short (and more challenging) route from Dunedin to Gabriel’s Gully using the Upper Taieri Ferry at Outram and passing through the Wai-pori diggings. In his journeys Tom Hungerford takes the long way, crossing the river at the lower Taieri Ferry and generally following what is now the route of the main road from Milton to Lawrence. The map also indicated the original route to the Dunstan across the Maniototo plain and past “Valpy’s” (Patearoa Station) which Baldwin managed in the 1870s.

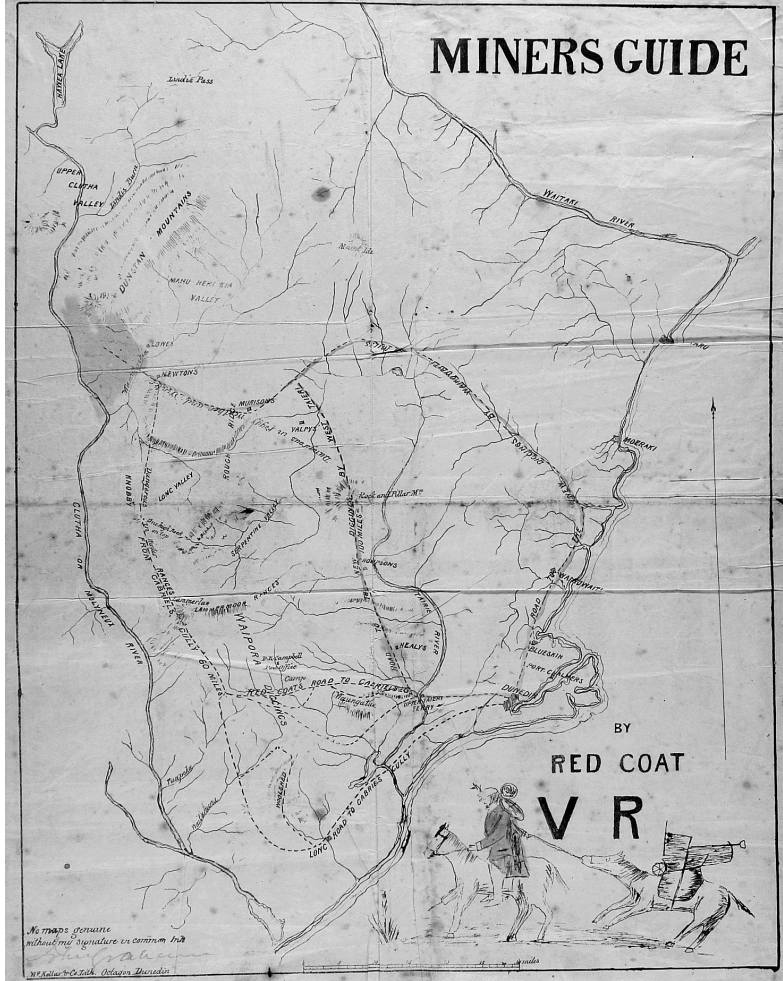
Red Coat’s map was drawn at the time of the events described in Tom Hungerford. Jock Graham, one of the great eccentrics of Otago history, had been appointed postman in 1856 to carry weekly mails to the Clutha for £150 [\$15,600] a year. He made a scarlet cloak from an old blanket, wore white feathers in his hat, and announced his arrival with the blare of a horn (which is still held at the Otago Settlers Museum). When the rush began he charged, although unauthorized to do so, 2 shilling and 8 pence [\$25] for a letter to the diggings. Baldwin’s descriptions of the importance of the mail to the miners suggest that they may well have been happy to pay Graham his exorbitant fee. He also carried copies of the *Otago Witness* which he lent out for one shilling a night. Baldwin does not mention Graham by name but he would certainly have known him and some of the stories about him. The most famous

was when he heard that the rat-plagued West Coast miners had paid £5 [\$500] for a cat. Graham shipped a hundred cats to the West Coast and he boasted that he and his partner in the venture (John Bathgate, later a judge) had made a fortune from the cats but this is unlikely as there is a story of a shipment of cats from Canterbury reaching the Coast before Graham's felines arrived. In his gold fields novel, *A Romance of Lake Wakatipu*, Robert Carrick sets the Jock Graham cat-selling story in the Tuapeka goldfield. An equally well-known Graham story is the yarn about the drunk who fell into a newly-dug grave in the old Arthur Street cemetery and fell asleep. He was awakened next morning by postman Graham riding past and blowing his horn. Startled into wakefulness, the man leaped from his temporary resting place crying, "It's the last trump!" In later years Graham was crippled by rheumatism and ended his days at the Benevolent Institution. He died in November 1904.

One of the mysteries of *Tom Hungerford* is how William Baldwin resisted the temptation to include Jock Graham in the story.

(Both images courtesy of Otago Settlers Museum, Dunedin)

# MINERS GUIDE







New Zealand Colonial Texts

William Baldwin

# *Tom Hungerford*

Edited with Notes and Introduction by Jim Sullivan

*Tom Hungerford* was inspired by the Otago gold rush of 1861, but is practically unknown as it was published only as a serial in the *Tuapeka Times*. The author, William Baldwin, a larger-than-life figure who was a runholder, goldfields warden, politician and entrepreneur, wrote the novel as a record of his own adventures.

His hero, Tom Hungerford, is the model of the great Victorian hero, staunch, loving and determined to right the wrongs done to his family.

Cover illustration: John Turnbull Thomson, Gabriel's Gully, 1861,  
just a few weeks after the discovery of gold.  
(Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago 92/1313)

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