

infested the woods. I placed my slender stock of provisions before them, and, with the aid of a little water the young man had provided for bathing his mother's burning head, we all partook eagerly, although unable to eat much.

I learned from them a short history of their sad life. They were natives of Wales, and had at one time been in respectable circumstances. The woman's first husband died when her son was four years old, leaving some property. A villain, under the mask of love, insinuated himself into her favour, whom she married. From that moment all her happiness fled. He squandered away her property, beat her and the boy, and at last left them in a state of utter destitution. Thus left, her life became one of sin, by which her son became contaminated. Ultimately he committed a robbery, and the degraded mother acted as a resetter of the stolen property, for which crime they were banished. For a considerable period after their arrival in the colony, they never saw one another. At length chance brought them in contact, when the plan of attempting their escape was entered upon. The rest is known to the reader.

The woman sincerely repented her misconduct. She seemed to reflect seriously on the ruin of her poor son, reproaching herself as being the cause; and bitter was the price she had paid for turning from the penalty of virtue and rectitude. The stamp of death was on her brow, but all her thoughts were centred in the wish, that her son might be enabled to return to society, and by an exemplary life atone for the failings of himself and his parent. The strength urged forth to support her giving these details, gradually disappeared, and again she became the same inanimate being as I first saw her. However much the son would have suffered to revive the helpless form before him, or wish her days to be lengthened, yet he could not hide the stern fact that her journey was near its end. An earthly judge might have pronounced him hardened in iniquity, but what man could look on the picture of filial and tender affection, evinced at this moment by that unhappy youth, and deny that he possessed the holiest and most sacred feelings belonging to humanity? Properly trained and educated, he would have been an ornament to his domestic world. I need not dwell longer on this subject; suffice it to say, that, after a burst of the most endearing affection, the poor woman breathed her last in the arms of her beloved son—the sky for her covering, the trees for her curtains, and the leaves for her bed.

I will pass over the scene which followed. I have stated before the horror the young man had of leaving the remains of her he loved so well to become the prey of beasts.—Silently we stole forth in search of some spot of earth which might be made to receive the body, and where it might lie in security. In a spot where a tree had fallen and torn a portion of the earth up with its roots, we cut out with knives the resting-place of her who had known prosperity, but had breathed her last amongst the wood-covered mountains of a penal settlement as a runaway convict. No deep-toned bell told of her departure—no priest delivered an

oration over her remains, ere they were forever consigned to their lonely habitation—no; but the evening breeze, with its melancholy whisperings through the branches, and the last notes of a solitary bird far off in the wood, lent a more solemn influence than all the gaudy pageantry attendant on the funerals of high-born mortals. At the bottom of the grave we placed a layer of dried leaves, and, when the body was laid down, the same substance covered it. We then drove strong pieces of branches into the ground on each side, and throwing broken shrubbery and brushwood over the body, we at last covered it with the loose earth, pressing it firmly down, then placing some heavy roots over all, it was left to repose till that great day when the God of all will call on earth and sea to give up their dead.

The funeral procession was small, but our feelings were keen, and the grief expressed sincere. We returned silently to our resting-place under the tree—few words were spoken, and in the end I sunk into a pleasant slumber. When I awoke I found my companion sitting in the attitude of deep thought, his head resting on his hand. I spoke, and he looked up. I then told him of the constables being in search of me, and proposed that we should part, as the safest mode for both. After dividing with him what remained of my victuals, we shook hands, and I bade him farewell.

About the middle of the afternoon the dogs, which still continued to follow me, got into the track of a kangaroo, and went off in pursuit of the animal.—Fatigued with incessant walking, I sat down to await their return. In this position it was not allowed me to remain long, for a few minutes had only elapsed, when I was astonished at the report of a musket fired very near the spot where I was seated; but my astonishment increased to something like terror when I observed that I had been the object aimed at by the cowardly villain who had discharged the gun. I was made aware of this fact from the circumstance of the ball falling within a few feet of me. I sprang up in an instant, when I perceived a man in the act of re-loading a gun. There could be no doubt as to who he was, and what was his aim. The thought of my pursuers being so close upon me, the absence of my dogs, and not knowing where to go, rendered me almost incapable of moving. Flight seemed my only resource; I therefore started off in the direction opposite to where the person stood. In my haste I had taken my pistol, but my ammunition, and other things I had, were left on the ground. Heedless of everything save escape, I continued to run. In time I became exhausted, and at last fell to the ground unable to proceed a step farther, giving myself up for lost, and my mind over to despair. In this position I became so much excited that in a few moments I was altogether insensible, nor did I awake to consciousness till aroused by a fierce grip from the fellow who had fired upon me. Being thus recalled to a sense of danger, the gloomy and sullen looks of the person who now stood over me, grinning as he was with malicious satisfaction, made me exert what strength I had left in order to escape. I got upon my feet, and a violent struggle ensued between us. I succeeded in