

The governor having perused the contents of the packet, expressed a wish that I should be called into his presence. After putting several questions to me, he expressed his satisfaction at the manner I and the crew had conducted ourselves in the perilous situation of Captain W—— and his friends, and before leaving him, he rewarded me with the present of a sum of money and a free pass till the return of the captain. The same indulgence was also extended to those of the crew who had come down with me. Thus freed for a time from the trammels of the convict, I passed nine happy days in the enjoyment of every rational and instructive amusement within my power, as far as the little money I had received from the governor would admit of.

At the end of nine days, Captain W—— and his friends returned in the brig Prince Leopold, and immediately waited upon the governor. In the course of their conversation, the captain took occasion to speak very much in my favour, and the consequence was, that some days afterwards I was appointed to the command of a sloop of thirty tons, to be engaged in carrying provisions to several stations on the coast. For this responsible duty, I was not only to be at perfect liberty, but I was to receive a certain sum monthly. With this appointment, I had reached the pinnacle of my greatness, and for some time every transaction I was engaged in prospered under my hand, and for which I really felt grateful to God. But alas! the time of my trial was near at hand,—my prosperity and happiness was but of short duration, and the phial of God's wrath, opened on account of my iniquities, was almost too much to bear. The first token I received of this, was the death of my esteemed and worthy patron, Captain W——. In his death I felt that I had really lost a friend and protector, and I shed tears on his account, as sincere and full of sorrow as if he had been my father. In my deep sorrow for his loss, there was nothing selfish, although on many occasions after I had cause to regret his death. From this point, therefore, I begin to note the second series of my troubles.

Few months elapsed after the melancholy event I have just recorded, when the sloop was sold. I was therefore transferred to a schooner, named the Finisher, and I thought often afterwards that there was meaning in the name, for with her all my hopes of happiness in the colony were *finished*. My air-blown bubbles were all burst, and I was torn from comparative comfort and liberty, to undergo a second time the realities of a convict's life. In the schooner, I had two men to assist me, both, like myself, having

"Left their country, for their country's good."

One of the two was a quiet, easy, good-tempered fellow, and who, I really believe, had no viciousness or malice in his constitution more than the common run of mankind, but his neighbour was very differently constituted. He had, long previous to his transportation, connected himself with an obnoxious and daring gang of burglars, and from all accounts he was an adept at his unlawful

profession. In his youth he had been apprenticed to a locksmith; so that in joining the lawless association, he became a great desideratum. In confirmation of this fact, I will relate an instance. After he had, with other two of his accomplices, been apprehended, and was lying in prison awaiting trial, by some means or other, a small saw had been concealed about his person.

The window of the cell in which he was confined was strongly guarded by strong iron bars. He thoroughly examined the state of the whole, and then coolly calculated his chance of escape. The lead with which the bars in the window were secured in the stone, was within his reach; he therefore set about picking from the mass as many small pieces as he considered would be necessary for the construction of a key, with which he intended to open his cell door. He had no fire, neither had he anything in which to place the lead for the purpose of melting. At last he discovered in the corner of his room a small piece of sheet iron, placed upon a broken piece of the floor. He had little difficulty in forcing this off, and appropriating it to the intended purpose. His ingenuity was next turned to the melting process. In accomplishing this desired object, his attention was directed to the small lamp furnished him in the evening, over the light of which he placed the sheet iron, on which were laid the small particles of lead. In this manner he formed the whole into a key. The next step was to procure the impression of the lock on the cell door. He examined the door minutely. It was studded with strong iron nails, running up and down in an oblique direction. His plan was to cut a small piece out of the door, directly under the lock, to enable him to thrust his arm through the aperture thus formed, and putting his leaden key into the key-hole, by this means he would be able to fix the lead so that it would fit the lock, and thus open the door. The task he had assigned himself was a difficult one, but it was one he was determined to prosecute to completion, and he succeeded; so neat, so clean, had he performed his work, that unless with the closest attention and inspection of the part, it was impossible to detect the spot where the door had been cut, so very close were the joinings when the piece was inserted. He was now master of his own room, and could walk out and in when it suited, but which was only at a time when neither turnkeys or jailer were at hand. He and his accomplices possessed certain signals, and he was not long in finding out the cells in which they were confined, and he soon managed so to alter the key, that it opened their cell doors also. Thus having the means of meeting and acting in concert, a plan was soon formed, by which they intended attempting their escape. They had thus met for two or three nights, and always on retiring, the locksmith secured the cell doors, and then retired to his own, making the door fast by means of the opening he had cut under the lock, replacing the piece as if nothing particular had taken place. At last it was agreed as the most likely means of escape, that each of the three prisoner's blankets should be cut into stripes and attached to each