

Ida, if he ever thinks of those sacred words, 'Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy'! Oh, 'tis heartbreaking, saddening, deplorable beyond words that such things can be! A man who is supposed to teach the gospel of our Saviour——"

Mrs. Lathom shivered. "How strangely you talk, Fred. No one would think you were a soldier to hear you speak. And we *must* be civil and nice to Mr. Marsbin. He has great influence—and—and the convicts are dreadful characters."

"Ah, Ida, you do not know how I pity them, especially the worst, the most vicious, the most degraded. The Governor, thank God, is a humane man, and though he may err at times by being overlenient, 'tis a noble fault. Would that there were more men like him in the colony."

"Mrs. Feilding says that Mr. Feilding thinks the Governor is making a great mistake in pampering and pardoning some of the convicts."

Lathom made a gesture of contempt. "Feilding is like nearly all the civilian officials, my dear. He thinks that the convict system was created for the benefit of creatures like himself to fatten upon. God knows that some of the military men here are bad enough, but the civilian are worse. Feilding himself, in England, was only a vulgar little clerk to a pettifogging Old Bailey lawyer, and by some mischance was given an appointment here. As for Mrs. Feilding, she is but a shallow-brained chattering idiot, with no thought beyond dress, and an intense desire to hang on to the Governor's coat-tails."

Then the irate commandant of Waringa strode out to attend to some of the many duties which always demanded his attention, and of which he was never neglectful.