

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1893.

BUSHRANGERS' COUNTRY.

FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE AUSTRALIAN GIPPSLAND ALPS.

Vegetable Habits of the Lyre Bird—Giant Trees of Southern Latitudes—Reverence for Shingles—Sources of Water Supply—With an Old Miner and Party.

His selection was large, as ornithologists must 650 distinct species of birds in Australia to 400 in Europe. Notwithstanding the Lyre bird's imitative powers it never flies under an alias but always holds its own distinct alarm note.

A certain high note in the well known "mocking bird waltz" is as clear to it as it is possible to copy sounds on an instrument. I feel certain that the composer of that beautiful waltz was familiar with the peculiar note of the Australian mocking bird.

My journey through these interesting Alps is about ended. In the afternoon of the second day after leaving Woodpoint, the roadway commenced to descend more rapidly; though still following the ridge I had started on. By sunset I emerged from the dark forest into a beautiful rich level country and halted for the night, in the village of Healsville, and there enjoyed the comforts of a good country inn, and a chat with the proprietor, a New Brunswick, a ship carpenter from St. John, whom I had previously known.

The next day's ride of forty-five miles to Melbourne was through a country, rich in agriculture and vineyards, and watered by the river Yarra, that takes its rise in the mountains I had just left, to flow leisurely in a meandering course until it passes Melbourne, under Princess bridge and empties into Hobson Bay.

There is one feature of the Australian Alps that I have omitted to refer to, and that is the abundance of water. One of the drawbacks to Australia generally is the scarcity of water and the frequency of droughts. The rivers, notwithstanding their high-sounding names, are tame according to an American's ideas of rivers. Though rushing and rather portentous in winter, are during the dry summer months a delusion and a snare to the thirsty traveller. There are some not unlike the Avon and other rivers at the head of the Bay of Fundy which at certain hours of the day lack the essential element of a river, namely water. Creeks, which are always assembled in one mind with water, hold good there a portion of the year, but it is too often the case that when reached by the weary and water-seeking traveller, he finds cattle and sheep quietly feeding in the bed of the creek, the water having receded into holes a quarter of a mile apart. It is astonishing how long these water holes will continue to supply not only the wants of man but stock as well.

But in the Gippsland Alps the parallel of opposites is more marked in the matter of water. As mountains intercept clouds and precipitate rain, the Alps shower enjoy off and on copious rains when other parts are thirsting, thus producing a prolific vegetation and moist soil necessary to support the heavy growth of timber it is called upon to carry. Water is found everywhere—rivulets springing from the tops of the mountains and flowing rivers at their base.

These Alps are the fountain from whence spring the principal rivers of Victoria, also the river Murray, which finds an outlet to the sea in South Australia, about 2,000 miles from its source.

For fear my story about those big trees, may, like the trees, be considered rather tall, I may be permitted to corroborate my statements by copying a few extracts from a Melbourne paper written the following year after I was there as follows:

The Giant Trees of the Dandenongs.

"It may not be generally known that within a few days' journey of the metropolis there are the loftiest trees of Australia, and perhaps of the world; constituting locally a mass of the forest. In the back gullies of Dandenong, on the Black Spur, and near the source of the La Trobe river, as well as in some of the remotest valleys of the Upper Yarra, a kind of gneiss, botanically known as eucalyptus amygdalina, attains such a marvellous height as to rival, at least, in this respect, the Wellingtonia pines of California, to which hitherto, the palm of elevation has been conceded.

The roads and roads more recently formed, for communication with the mines in the back ranges and the Alps have given facilities of approach to these huge trees, and thus many of them have been subjected to actual measurement. The tallest tree gullies and the mutual protection which on the slopes they afford to each other, cause them to rise as straight as masts, but with a height exceeding the masts of any naval structure.

Indeed it has been ascertained that some of these trees equal the Egyptian Pyramids and the Strasburg Munster in height. And yet it is clearly evident that the tallest of all has not come within actual measurement. The height of the loftiest of these eucalypti ranges from 400 to 500 feet. It may suffice to state that a fallen tree on the Black Spur measured 480 feet in length. Another in Dandenong showed a height of 295 feet to the first branch, the height then extending 70 feet in ramifications to the broken top branch, which still measured three feet across. Thus the whole length to the place of fracture was 365 feet. A still larger tree at Berwick measured 81

feet in circumference at a distance of 4 feet from the ground.

The stems, with the exception of the base, are beautifully smooth and of an ashy color, in as much as the bark periodically exfoliates. The wood is excellent for shingles, and splits with facility. It would be curious to calculate how many shingles one of these huge trees would yield.

As I have already stated I did not run against any of these extra tall trees, but plenty away above 200 feet; however, it is difficult to gauge the height of a tree by the eye after it goes beyond 200 feet. They are very deceiving and generally higher than they appear. I had evidence of this on one occasion on Woodpoint. The town was built along one side of the head waters of the Godfurn river. At that point it was a turbulent stream from 50 to 400 feet in width. Across on the opposite side was a camping ground for miners, who used to cross to the town on fallen trees. Behind our store on the other side of the river stood an immense tree which we decided to have cut down to form a natural bridge to direct customers to our place of business. It was eight feet in diameter and we judged it to be 150 feet high. A man was engaged to fell it. On the second day after commencing he came over and advised us all to clear out of the store as he feared it was not going to fall where we intended it should. He returned and before long it came sweeping through the air and fell with a crash, all right with in 20 feet of the store. It measured 30 feet more than we had estimated.

That afternoon, I noticed another tree being felled some distance down the creek. I judged it to be higher than the one just felled, and from the experience, just gained, I placed it to fall on or very near a certain long, low canvas covered shanty; a barber shop owned by a Boston darkey and a rendezvous of gentlemen of his complexion, or "colored Americans" as they called themselves. On kindly bent I entered to warn the occupants of their danger, that a tree was likely to fall on them. The proprietor was just commencing to remove a quarter century's growth of beard from the face of a white gold digger. Both followed me out. The colored American, swinging his bare curly head around, with eyes turned upwards, sang out "Whar, whar, is the tree?" I pointed to the other side of the river where two men were earnestly engaged at the demolition of a stately tree. "There, I said, is the tree I refer to." With a disdainful wave of the hand, still holding the open razor, and a look corroborating his complexion, he said "Go way, go way, boss none of your d—n fooling round here!"

"Evening is sweet, I then began to hope they would get a brush for questioning my judgment and ignoring my advice. The American returned to his work and I awaited developments. This particular tree was a beauty. So slender, so straight and so clean, from the base to 325 feet up a man could have carried all the branches intact forth. It seemed an act of vandalism to molest it. Centuries were required to bring it to such perfection but soon it was belaid low. Forward it came and with a swift it goes crashing to the earth. The topmost branches reaching out to the back of the shanty and the concussion of air was of such force as to sweep the covering off, leaving nothing standing but the skeleton frame and four or five terrified darkeys and a still more surprised white man, with one side of his face smoothly mown and the other side in ragged despair. I enjoyed my revenge, also a hearty laugh, as did the crowd now assembled, at the ludicrous scene, particularly when the boss barber undertook to abuse the men on the opposite bank for attempting to kill him.

If Woodpoint is still inhabited that tree will still be doing duty as a footway. The water of the Godfurn, that flowed under it and in time becomes quite a formidable river and ultimately joins the great Murry has to travel 2,500 miles before it mingles with the ocean. J. E. WILSON.

Anecdotes of Prof. Blackie.

Appropos of Prof. Blackie's pronouncement that "Germans drink beer, ladies tea, wine, and fools water," it is worth recalling that he was once present at a semi-public dinner, where Free Church Ministers were in the majority, and where, in consequence, all the drinks were temperance ones, and that, when called upon to propose one of the toasts, he rose, held his glass high above his head, so that all might see it, and said: "Mr. Chairman, no man can drink a toast in cold water." This speech, though it provoked laughter, left the party in a very awkward quandary, which, however, the Professor thoroughly enjoyed.

Here is another story about Prof. Blackie, which is not bad. Not long ago he paid a visit to the sanctum of Mr. David Douglas, the publisher, who is issuing a new book for him, "Christianity and the Ideal of Humanity," and mentioned that he had lectured the previous night on Scotchness in Dandenong. "Do you know an exhibition of yourself?" Prof. Blackie, without another word, turned on his heel, and went away, slamming the door. Presumably he came back, opened the door, thrust in his head, and said: "Do you know that's just what my wife tells me?" Westminster Gazette.

LIFE OF A BRAKEMAN.

IT IS ONE OF HARDSHIP, PERIL AND UNTHANKFULNESS.

The People Who Ask Him Questions—The Difficulties in the Way of His Moral Status—A Few Pictures of His Work and Daily Life.

The various fondness for asking foolish questions, just for the sake of saying something, which seems to be part of human nature, shows to special advantage in a railway-car, where the cold conventionalities of society are cast aside, and a sort of universal Brotherhood of Railway Travelers prevails. The men and women who may be the dullest, most indifferent mortals imaginable, when seen in the familiar setting of their own home life, become possessed of a thirst for information which a whole encyclopedia would scarcely quench, and they beguile the tedium of any journey they undertake, with a series of questions, which would seem, to the intelligent mind, to be utterly unanswerable. They lie in wait for the hapless brakeman or conductor, and pounce upon him each time he passes through the train, as a spider pounces upon a fly, and any answer he chooses to give, is accepted in perfect faith. I heard a railway-man say once, that as long as a man perceived a respectful manner, and did not laugh in the questioner's face, no statement was too absurd for a passenger to accept as gospel. All they wanted was information of some kind, as long as there was plenty of it they were not particular as to either the quality or reliability of the matter furnished. For instance, if a train slows up at a time when the passengers are not expecting a stop, they want to know, as one man, why the train was made, and if the hurrying brakeman who comes rushing through the car soon after the stoppage, only has presence of mind enough to about over his shoulder that "the slipped her hitching gear" he will be reasonably sure of being free from further molestation until something else happens to excite their curiosity; because they will be too much occupied in exchanging notes and questioning each other as to the probable extent of the damage, and the possible length of the detention it will cause, to give him any more trouble, until some one wants to know whether it is cold out of doors now, and whether he thinks it is going to snow, or until some rural passenger seizes him by the coat sleeve and inquires excitedly, how many miles it is now to Backwoodville and whether she is going to get there before dark.

I have heard people complain of the inactivity of railway men and say that it is almost impossible to get a polite answer, from either a conductor or a brakeman, that one could never succeed in catching the eye of either when their assistance was required and speak generally as if the chief duty of the travelling public consisted in reporting the train crew at every opportunity and abusing them behind their backs between times.

The person who travels on a pass is usually the most vigorous kicker. I have given on the subject some attention myself, and have arrived at the conclusion that conductors and brakemen don't go straight to glory, after death, then patience is a virtue which does not count. I believe brakemen have the reputation of being very profane as a class, and never losing an opportunity of making a few cursory remarks, but I fancy that if the most decorous and pious young man who ever went as delegate to a Y. M. C. A. convention, could take the place of a brakeman for a single day, he would learn to swear with a vigor and fluency which would paralyze his former associates, before the trip was over and on his return he might be willing to admit that circumstances alter cases, swearing is sometimes not only excusable but absolutely unavoidable, and the train hands not such very bad fellows after all.

The conductor, of course, is a mighty man, and one greatly to be feared because he is as absolutely in command of the train, and all it contains, as the captain of a merchantman on his ship, or a native Indian prince in his own dominions; but somehow no one ever seems to take much count of the brakeman, until he gets crushed to death in coupling cars, and then of course, the interest and excitement of his sad fate calls forth, come too late to benefit him in the least, and they seldom take a sufficiently permanent or tangible form, to be of much assistance to his bereaved wife and children, if he happens to have any. His life can scarcely be said to be one of meteoric splendor but still it often comes to an end with almost meteoric suddenness, leaving scarcely a memory behind; a brief notice in the papers of "Another Railway Accident," the usual condemnation of the prevailing system of car coupling, which nobody pays the least attention to; a statement of the amount for which he was insured, and the matter is forgotten. A hard life, a cruel death, and then oblivion, as far as this world is concerned.

I don't mean to assert that train men are saints; far from it, they would scarcely be suited for their work if they were; but they

PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS.

"TIMELY ADVICE."

Now is the time to Purchase Materials for Embroidering and the making up generally of a thousand and one articles suitable for Holiday Gifts.

Stampell Linen Pieces, such as D'Oyley Tray Cloths, Table Centres, Fire O'Clock Ties, Handkerchiefs, Cases, Glove Cases, Toilet sets, Combed Covers, Bureau Scarfs, Sideboards. Many of the above for cutting out and buttonholing.

Small Spools Knitting Silks. Large Spools Pearls and Filoselles, Embroidery Silks, Latest Braids, Laces & Threads. Colored Art Linen Pieces in Centre pieces, Scarfs and Fire O'Clock's Colors: Art Blue, Art Yellow, Art Pink. Stamped Cotton Shams with mottoes, such as "Good Night," "Good Morning."

Denims Art Draperies by the yard. Trained Fancy Work, Sewing Work, Mosaic Work. The above in D'Oyley, Cushions, Table Covers, etc.; Openwork Linen D'Oyleys, Centre pieces, Trays, Pillow Shams.

Silk Holding Cloths, Bolton Art Cloth. Art Serges in Colors, Art Silks, Art Satens, Art Crotonnes, Art Silkaines, Ball Crochet Cord in all the Art Colorings. Zephyr Wool, Andalusian, Priscilla Wool, Berlin, Yarn, etc. Berlin Slippers, Solid Linen Bags, Slipper Bags, Duster Bags. BASKETS, BASKETS, BASKETS.

An immense variety of Fancy Baskets for the Holiday Season, suitable for trimming up with Fancy Ribbons.

EXERCISE WISDOM. MAKE EARLY SELECTIONS. MANCHESTER, ROBERTSON & ALLISON.

are as a rule a brave and faithful class of men who take their lives in their hands many times each day, besides holding in those grimy members the lives of hundreds of others, men with whom duty always comes first even at the risk of life itself, and to whom the public certainly owe some better return than a perpetual grumbling because the high cap, and sometimes greasy jumper are worn by a man, and not a being who is a sort of compromise between a medieval saint, and a bureau of universal information.

Just as we were closing up a few nights ago a young man came in to see an ulster. Never wore a ready-made, but thought, perhaps, he could get one to fit. Tried one on—just fitted, Bought the ulster.

"Can't we sell you a suit?" "Oh, no, it's bad enough to have to buy a ready made ulster, but I couldn't get a ready-made suit." Couldn't get him even to look at one. But he will some day.



OAK HALL, King St., Corner Germain.

The SCOVIL, Big Shop. FRASER & CO., St. John.

he is at home, and rehabilitated, at least in his own eyes, no one is aware of his sins he fondly imagines, so the past lies behind, the future is still a blank and the glorious present is his own. Presently he begins to think of dinner, and scratches at the door with the lordly impudence of one who is sure of his position, but feels that its importance is scarcely being recognized.

I let him in, and he enters with a breezy haste, and a boisterous joy at seeing me, which is intended to distract my attention, and telling me he has spent the entire morning in an eager search for me, which has only just been successful.

Of course the dog is at a disadvantage in not having had language bestowed upon him with which to conceal his thoughts, but still he does the best he can with the means at his command; and when he has had the advantage of constant association with man, and the opportunity of observing his little ways, he is really not far behind him in powers of deception.

WONDERFUL ECHO.

But Not Just What the Marquis Expected it Would Be.

At Madame Arabelle's the conversation turned upon echoes, and a lady in the company declared that she knew of one that repeated a sound nine or ten times. "Pooh! that is nothing," said the Marquis; "I have an echo in my park that can beat yours into fits."

"Impossible!" said everybody in chorus. "You can easily put it to test, if you like," "Very good, we will step across to-morrow to hear for ourselves."

"Yes, come without fail," and so saying, the Marquis took his departure, meditating a little scheme of his own. On reaching his mansion he sent for his old lackey, Sancho by name.

"You are up to all sorts of tricks, old chap; do you think you could manage to play the part of an echo?" "Certainly my lord; you have only to shout Ho! Ho! and I repeat the same."

"Very well, to-morrow afternoon you shall go and stand in that clump of trees behind the lake and repeat thirty times any call that you may hear, gradually lowering your voice; but mind—mum's the word!"

Next day his lordship's friends came trooping into the park. Sancho was at his post pricking up his ears. "Now, ladies and gentlemen, your doubts will soon be dissipated," said the Marquis; "will you be the first to try the experiment, madame?"

"No, thanks, Marquis, your voice is louder and more effective for the purpose than mine."

Whereupon the Marquis inflated his lungs and called out at the top of his voice:—

Watching the Press.

The thoroughness of Press censorship in Austria is demonstrated by an amusing story told in a German newspaper. An editor, being at his wit's end for a leading article, had the inspiration at the last moment to print these lines:—

"After carefully perusing the leading article written for the present number by one of the ablest of our contributors, we have arrived at the conclusion that it may be misinterpreted by the authorities, and regarded as an attack upon the Government. We ourselves consider it to be perfectly innocent; but as we are unwilling, for our readers' sake, as well as for our own, to have our newspaper confiscated, we think, prudently, resolved to withdraw the article. This must serve as an apology to our readers for the blank space in our present issue."

"Imagine the shock with which he heard from his clerk the next morning that the paper had been confiscated by the police. 'For what reason?' asked the astonished editor. 'For malicious Empire by the omission of the leading article,' replied the clerk.

Japs in Australia.

Large numbers of Japanese are appearing in the Australian colonies. There are two peculiarities about them, which will tell both upon the future character of the population among whom they settle and the present character of the labour problem. The first is, they go to stay as genuine emigrants, and with no intention of returning to their native land. In this respect they differ entirely from Chinese, who, if possible, must find their way back to China alive or dead. The Chinaman is a mere periodical migrant who wants to make his little pile among the Outer Barbarians, and then return to the Flowery Land to spend his declining years and to be buried in the land of his fathers. They are in every way superior to Chinese servants, and in Australia command wages on the Australian or English scale. Men and women alike emigrate, and the Japanese Government favors the emigration.

Two of a Kind

A certain lady, having had a few hot words with her husband one day, had occasion a few weeks after to send her servant for some fish for dinner. "Jane," she said, "go to town as soon as you can and get me a plaice."

"Indeed an' I will, ma'am," said Jane, "an' I may as well get wan for myself, for I can't put up with the master any more than yourself."

Wore Itself Out.

Arthur: "And do you really love me, pet?" Mabel: "If I didn't, do you suppose I could possibly endure hearing you ask that silly question thirty or forty times a day?"