

the elegant native cherry, the stately gum, and the noble blackwood reared their tall stems around. Whose grave could it be? It was no Indian's grave; it was no grown-up person's, for it was small—a little unpretending heap of earth. Pursuing our way, we soon found that we were nearer the haunts of man than we had supposed; and upon arriving at the next homestead we there learnt the story of the little grave.

Years and years ago, when first the settlers came to this colony, some pitched their homes in one place and some in another. A small space was quickly cleared round the habitation, and the surrounding forests soon echoed with the work of the axe and the various implements employed to clear the scrub. Nevertheless, far as the eye could reach were dense masses of foliage; and once immersed in the thickness of the forest, it was often impossible to know the direction in which the homestead lay. No one who has not been in Australian scrub or bush can comprehend what it really is, or the difficulties inexperienced people find in guiding themselves safely through it.

It appears that at the farm in question there was a little girl that minded the cows. Her work was to take them out in the morning and leave them to feed, whilst she returned to assist in dairy and house occupations. Towards evening she always sallied forth to find her four-footed friends, which she did without any difficulty, and no one doubted her ability in discharging the office. Some considerable time passed on; the day as it rose brought with it its appointed work, and each evening witnessed the return of the child with the kine. But one day she went out never to return. As usual, she had sallied forth to her duty, and it was not till the usual hour of her return had passed that any anxiety was felt about the little girl. But as the sun got low in the heavens, and no signs of the lost one appeared, every one on the place went in various directions to trace the wanderer. Finding, however, that their labour was unsuccessful, all the surrounding settlers were summoned, and with their usual heartiness joined in the pursuit for days. The master of the girl was untiring in his exertions, and, as he believed, left no place unexplored.

The wild Australian 'Coë!' resounded through the forests, but was answered only by the echoes; and after searching till they became utterly hopeless, the pursuit was given up, and the child never appeared.

Two years came and went, and though parties were continually passing to and fro, not a trace had ever been discovered of the poor little fugitive. One day the girl's master had been out hunting for cattle, not very far from the house but amidst the scrub. All at once his attention was arrested by a little erection of branches and bark. It somewhat resembled a native's whirly, but was evidently not their work; and his curiosity being aroused, he dismounted from his horse to examine the structure. It appeared to have been erected some time, and was falling to pieces; but he pushed his way under the boughs, and on entering there lay all that was left of the little girl who had never been found. Her frock and her little hat and shoes told the tale to whom the remains belonged. By her side lay a little hymn-book, somewhat damaged with exposure, but in fair preservation. As the gentleman stood gazing on the scene, he involuntarily opened the book. In it was written her name; but underneath that writing were some letters pricked with a pin by the departed. On hastening to decipher them, the following touching message was to be traced:

"Dear father, love God, follow me, and don't drink any more."

The hymn-book and its message were at once conveyed to the hands of the sorrowing father. It was supposed that the child had gone as usual for the cattle and had wandered out of her usual tracks, and that then, thinking she had lost herself, she became utterly confused and unable to retrace her steps, though in reality she was but a comparatively short distance from her own home. How it was that she heard no one, and was never found by any of the searchers, must for ever remain a mystery; but finding it useless to wander longer, she had built herself a slight shelter, and there had perished, unable to support life for any time. She must have been a brave little creature, and her story deserves a passing tear. She appears to have met death peacefully, and in her