

surprise, immediately placed the telegram book before his master so that he might send a wire to the agents of the company and secure berths. He drew up mysterious lists, resurrected forgotten leather trunks and kit-bags, and began to pack them with such clothing as was necessary for a tropical climate. He also gathered together sufficient firearms to stock a small armoury.

As the General had predicted, Parker took charge of Maitland. He simply told the latter off-handedly that we were all going for a little pleasure trip into the interior of unexplored Australia, and that he would help him with what packing there was to be done. Before the bewildered Oxonian had grasped the import of his communication, Parker had taken possession of the luggage and packed it—with certain omissions !

Honestly, I do not believe that the tutor, although the principal party interested, was allowed to entertain any option of making up his mind as to what he should do. Parker settled that. When Maitland crossed the gangway to board our ship, I verily believe he only imperfectly realised he was really *en route* for Australia. Until we were well out at sea and had dropped the pilot, he might have been a deserter with an affable plain-clothes escort, so jealously was he guarded by the watchful Parker. Never, surely, was a distinguished classic kidnapped in so barefaced a fashion !

I am not going to weary the reader with facts and details of our voyage. It was much of a kind with the average. We had a few dirty spells, during which Maitland yearned in vain for his missing pills,