A STRANGE PARTNER.

AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

When the P. & O. steamer called at Albany, West Austra-
lia, only two passengers came on board, a young Englishman
and his wife. Before we reached Sydney I made his acquaint-
ance in the smoking room and he told me the following
story. I give it in his own words:

My name is Henry Detmold, I was born in Lincolnshire,
England, and I am twenty-nine years of age. My parents
were of the middle class and gave me a fair business educa-
cation. When I was eighteen my father secured me a posi-
tion in the County Bank at a very small salary; there I re-
mained until two years ago. My salary had been increased
to eighty pounds a year and I saw no prospect of an advance
for years to come. I had never been out of my native county
save two flying trips which I made to London for a few days
during my holidays. By accident I picked up a copy of the
Melbourne *Age* in which I read an account of the discovery
of gold in Western Australia. The spirit of adventure, so
strong in an Englishman's blood, was aroused. I resigned
my position and took passage for Sydney. From that point
I made my way to Perth, the capital of West Australia. I
took passage on the coach for Coolgardie, and during my
trip over the desert of sand, which I was compelled to walk,
my box only riding on the stage, I more than once came to
the conclusion that a situation in a bank at a meagre salary
was highly to be preferred to gold seeking with the thermo-
meter at 120 degrees in the shade. Coolgardie was a wilder-
ness of tents and fleas, with absence of water, and what was
worse, I discovered that the prospector's country lay still in
the interior, but for shame and the knowledge that my posi-
tion in the bank had long since been filled, I would have
turned back. In Coolgardie I made the acquaintance of George
Vail, a young Australian from Gipps Land, who like myself
had been attracted to the west coast by the tales of wonder-
ful finds made by the first comers to this land of sand and
heat. Vail was very slight in build and in no wise adapted