CHAPTER VI. PAUL

And then, on the brightest of bright summer mornings, they came to Melbourne.

They did not quite know what they had expected to see, but what they did see astonished them. The wild things caught in the bush, and carried in cages to the Eastern market, could not have felt more surprised or dismayed by the novelty of the situation than did these intrepid damsels when they found themselves launched into the world they were so anxious to know. the world they were so anxious to know. For a few minutes after their arrival they stood together silent, breathless, taking it all in; and then Patty—yes, it was Patty—velaimed.

claimed:
"Oh, where is Paul Brion?" "Oh, where is Paul Brion?"
Paul Brion was there, and the words had no sooner escaped her lips than he appeaaed before them. "How do you do, Miss King?" he said, not holding out his hand, but taking off his hat with one of his father's formal salutations, including them all. "I hope you have had a pleasant passage. If you kindly tell me what luggage you have, I will take you to your cab; it is waiting for you just here. Three boxes? All right. I will see after them."
He was a small, slight, wiry little man, with decidedly brusque, though perfectly polite manners; active and self-possessed, and, in a certain way of his own, dignified, not withstanding his low stature. He was not handsome, but he had a keen and clever face—rather fierce as to the eyes and mouth,

face—rather fierce as to the eyes and mouth, which latter was adorned with a fierce little

which latter was adorned with a fierce little moustache curling up at the corners—but pleasant to look at, and one that inspired trust.

"He is not a bit like his father," said Patty, following him with Eleanor, as he led Elizabeth to the cab. Patty was angry with him for overhearing that "Where is Paul Brion?"—as she was convinced he had done—and her tone was disparaging.

"As the mother duck said of the ugly duckling, if he is not pretty he has a good disposition," said Eleanor. He is like his father in that. It was very kind of him to come and help us. A press man must always be terribly busy."

"I don't see why we couldn't have managed for ourselves. It is nothing but to call a cab," said Patty with irritation.

They arrived at the cab, in which Elizabeth had seated herself, with the bewildered Dan in her arms, her sweet, open face all Is will have the cab and enterior to the property of the p

Dan in her arms, her sweet, open face all smiles and sunshine. Paul Brion held the door open, and, as the younger sisters passed him, looked at them intently with searching eyes. This was a fresh offence to Patty, at whom he certainly looked west. Improves your end strange. offence to Patty, at whom he certainly looked most. Impressions new and strange were crowding upon her brain this morning thick and fast. "Elizabeth," she said, unconscious that her brilliant little countenance, with that flush of excitement upon it was enough to fascinate the gaze of the it, was enough to fascinate the gaze of the dullest man; "Elizabeth, he looks at us as dullest man; "Elizabeth, he looks at us as if we were curiosities—he thinks we are dowdy and countryfied and it amuses him."
"My dear," interposed Eleanor, who, like Elizabeth, was (as she herself expressed

it) reeking with contentment, "you could not have seen his face if you think that. He was as grave as a judge."
"Then he pities us, Nelly, and that is worse. He thinks we are queer outlandish creatures frights. So were also have the second of the second

"Then he pities us, Nelly, and that is worse. He thinks we are queer outlandish creatures—frights. So we are. Look at those women on the other side of the street, how differently they are dressed! We ought not to have come in these old clothes, Elizabeth."

"But, my darling, we are travelling, and anything does to travel in. We will put on our black frocks when we get home, and we will buy ourselves some new ones. Don't trouble about such a trifle now, Patty—it is not like you. Oh, see what a perfect day it is! And think of our being in Melbourne at last! I am trying to realize it, but it almost stuns me. What a place it is! But Mr. Paul says our lodgings are in a quiet airy street—not in this noisy part. Ah, here he is! And there are the three boxes all safe. "Thank you so much," she said warmly, looking at the young man of the world, who was some five years older than herself, with frankest friendliness, as a benevolent grandmamma might have looked at an obliging schoolboy. "You are very good—we are very grateful to you."

"Your lodgings are in Myttle street, Miss King. That is in East Melbourne volumes and means, but to get them fashioned into gowns seemed to treble their price at once; and, as Patty represented, they must have looked at an obliging schoolboy. "You are very good—we are very grateful to you."

ner.
"And I hope you will be comfortable," concluded the amiable landlady,
"and let me know whenever you want anything. There's a bathroom down that passage, and this is your bell, and those drawsage, and they you see, and lunch will ers have not keys, you see, and lunch will be ready in half-an-hour. The dining-room is the first door at the bottom of the stairs, and—phew! that tobacco smoke hang about the place still, in spite of all my clean ing and airing. I never allow smoking in the house, Miss King—not in the general way; but a man who has to be up o' nights writing for the newspapers, and never getting his proper sleep, it's hard to grudge

THE SISTERS him the comfort of his pipe—now isn't it? claimed, speaking in his sharp and rapid And I have no ladies here to be annoyed by it—in general I don't take ladies, for gentlemen are so much more comfortable to do for; and the prince is so considerate, and continuous and

gives so little trouble—"
"What! Is Mr. Paul Brion lodging here?" broke in Patty impetuously, with

here?" broke in Patty impetuously, with her face aflame.
"Not now," Mrs. McIntyre replied.
"He left me last week. These rooms that you have got were his—he has had them for 'over three years. He wanted you to come here, because he thought you would be comfortable with me"—smiling benignly. "He said a man could put up anywhere." nignly. "anywhere."

At four o'clock, when they had visited the bathroom, arranged their pretty hair afresh, and put on the black print gowns—when they had had a quiet lunch with Mrs. McIntyre (whose other boarders being gentlemen in business, did not appear at the mid-day meal.) prattling cheerfully with the landlady the while, and thinking that the cold beef and salads of Melbourne were the most delicious viands ever tasted—when they had examined their rooms minutely, and tried the sofas and easy-chairs, and stood for a long while on the balcony looking at the other houses in the quiet street ing at the other houses in the quiet streetat four o'clock Paul Brion came; and the maid brought up his card, while he gossiped with Mrs. McIntyre in the hall. He had no sooner entered the girl's sitting room than Elizabeth hastened to unburden herself. Patsooner entered the girr's sitting room than Elizabeth hastened to unburden herself. Patty was burning to be the spokeswoman for the occasion, but she knew her place, and she remembered the small effect she had produced on him in the morning, and proudly held aloof. In her sweet and graceful way, but with as much gravity and earnestness as if it were a matter of life and death, Elizabeth explained her view of the situation. "Of course we cannot consent to such an arrangement," she said gently; "you must have known we could never consent to allow you to turn out of your own rooms to accommodate us. You must please come back again, Mr. Brion, and let us go elsewhere. There seem to be plenty of other lodgings to be had—even in this street."

Street."

Paul Brion's face wore a pleasant smile as he listened. "Oh, thank you," he replied lightly. "But I am very comfortable where I am—quite as much so as I was here—rather more, indeed. For the people at No. 6 have set up a piano on the other side of that wall"—pointing to the cedarchiffonnier—"and it bothered me dreadfully when I wanted to write. It was the piano drove me out—not you. Perhaps it will drive you out too. It is a horrible nuisance, for it is always out of tune; and you know the sort of playing that people indulge in who use pianos that are out of tune."

CHAPTER VII. A MORNING WALK.

But they slept well in their strange beds, and by morning all their little troubles had

and by morning all their little troubles had disappeared.

After breakfast they had a solemn consultation, the result being that the forenoon was dedicated to the important business of buying their clothes and finding their way to and from the shops.

"For we must have bonnets," said Patty, "and that immediately. Bonnets, I perceive, are the essential tokens of respectability. And we must never ride in a cab again."

an obliging schoolboy. "You are very good—we are very grateful to you."

"Your lodgings are in Myrtle street, Miss King. That is in East Melbourne, you know—quite close to the gardens—quite quiet and retired, and yet within a short walk of Collins street, and handy for all the places you want to see. You have two bedrooms and a small sitting-room of your own, but take your meals with the other people of the house; you won't mind that, I hope—it made a difference of about thirty shillings a week, and is the most usual arrangement. Of course you can alter anything you don't like when you get there. They ended by choosing—to the whole of the house; they could feel it safe to manufacture for themselves. They ended by choosing—to the same are any rate, that was made in the mode before they could feel it safe to manufacture for themselves. They ended by choosing—to themselves. They ended by choosing—to the them say as a measure of comparative safety, for thus only could they know what they were doing, as Patty said—three ready-made costumes of black woollen stuff; ladylike, and with a captivating style of "the world" about them, but in the lowest class of goods of that kind dispensed in those magnificent shops. Of course that was the end of their purchases for the day; the selection of mantles, bonnets, gloves, boots, and all the other little odds and ends on Elizabeth's list was reserved for a future cocasion.

It was half-past twelve by this time, and at one o'clock Mrs. McIntyre would expect.

him capable of, "And—and can I assist you in any way?"
Elizabeth explained their dilemma; upon which he declared he was himself going to East Melbourne (whence he had just come, after his morning sleep and noontide breakfast), and asked leave to escort them thither. "How fortunate we are!" Elizabeth said, turning to walk up the street by his side; and Eleanor told him he was like his father in the conportuneness of his his father in the opportuneness of his friendly services. But Patty was silent, and

friendly services. But Patty was silent, and raged inwardly.
When they had traversed the length of the street, and were come to the open space before the Government offices, where they could fall again into one group, she made an effort to get rid of him and the burden of obligation that he was heaping upon them.
"Mr. Brion," she began impetuously, "we know where we are now quite well—"
"I don't think you do," he interrupted her, "seeing that you were never here before."

before."

"Our landlady gave us directions—she made it quite plain to us. There is no necessity for you to trouble yourself any further. You were not going this way when we met you, but exactly in the opposite direction."

site direction."

"I am going this way now, at any rate,'
he said, with decision. "I am going to
show your sisters their way through the
gardens. There are a good many paths,
and they don't all lead to Myrtle street."

"But we know the points of the compass
—we have our general directions," she insisted angrily, as she followed him helplessly through the gates. "We are not
quite idiots, though we do come from the

lessly through the gates. " We are not quite idiots, though we do come from the country."

"Patty," interposed Elizabeth, surprised, "I am glad of Mr. Brion's kind help, if you are not."

"Patty," echoed Eleanor in an undertone, "that haughty spirit of yours will have a fall some day."

Patty felt that it was having a fall now. "I know it is very kind of Mr. Brion," she said, tremulously, "but how are we to get on and do for ourselves if we are treated like children—I mean if we allow ourselves to hang on to other people? We should make our own way, as others have to do. I don't suppose you had any one to lead you about when you first came to Melbourne"—addressing Paul.

"I was a man," he replied. "It is a man's business to take care of himself."

"Of course. And equally it is a woman's business to take care of herself—if she has no man in her family."

"Pardon me. In that case it is the business of all the men with whom she comes in contact to take care of her—each as he can."

"Oh, what nonsense! You talk as if we

"Oh, what nonsense! You talk as if we lived in the time of the Troubadours—as if you didn't know that all that stuff about women has had its day and been laughed out of existence long ago."

"What stuff?" "That we are helpless imbeciles—a sort of angelic wax baby, good for nothing but to look pretty. As if we were not made of the same substance as you, with brains and hands—not so strong as yours, perhaps, but quite strong enough to rely upon when necessary. Oh!" exclaimed Patty, with a fierce gesture, "I do so hate that man's cant about women—I have no patience with it!" " What stuff ?"

"You must have been severely tried," rou must have been severely tried,"
murmured Paul (he was beginning to think
the middle Miss King a disagreeable person,
and to feel vindictive towards her.) And
Eleanor laughed cruelly, and said, "Oh, no,
she's got it all out of books."

sne's got it all out of books."

"A great mistake to go by books," said
he, with the air of a father. "Experience
first—books afterwards, Miss Patty." And
he smiled coolly into the girl's flaming face.

he smiled coolly into the girl's flaming face.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN INTRODUCTION TO MRS. GRUNDY.

And, as the days wore on, even she grew to be thankful for Paul Brion, though, of course, she would never own to it. It was he who finally found them their home, after their many futile searches—half a house in their own street and terrace, vacated by the marriage and departure to another colony of the lady who played the piano that was out of tune. No. 6, it appeared, had been divided into flats; the ground floor was occupied by the proprietor, his wife, and servant; and the upper, which had a gas stove and other kitchen appliances in a back room, was let unfurnished for £60 a year. Paul, always poking about in quest of convertunities, heard of this care and the results of convertunities. year. Paul, always poking about in quest of opportunities, heard of this one and pounced upon it. He made immediate inpounced upon it. He made immediate inquiries into the character and antecedents
of the landlord of No. 6, the state of the
drains and chimneys, and paint and paper,
of the house; and, having satisfied himself
that it was as nearly being what our girls
wanted as anything they would be likely
to find, called upon Elizabeth, and advised
her to secure it forthwith. The sisters were
just the adding up, their accounts taking "I—I will call on you this afternoon, if you will permit me—when you have had your lunch and rested a little. Oh, I know the cabman quite well, and can aswer for his taking our safely. This is your address" hastily scribbling it on an envelope he drew from his pocket—"and the landlady is Mrs. McIntyre. Good morning. I will do myself the pleasure of calling on you at 4 or 5 o'clock."

Then they went into the house—the middle house of a smart little terrace, with a few ragod fern trees in the front garden. —and Mrs. McIntyre took them up to the top of Collins street, turn to the middle house of a smart little terrace, with a few ragod fern trees in the front garden. —and Mrs. McIntyre took them up to the top of Collins street, turn to the middle house of a smart little terrace, with a few ragod fern trees in the front garden. —and Mrs. McIntyre took them up to the top of Collins street, turn to the middle house of a smart little terrace, with a few ragod fern trees in the front garden. —and Mrs. McIntyre took them up to the top of Collins street, turn to the gardens, pass straight through these gardens, pass traight through these ragod fern trees in the front garden. —and Mrs. McIntyre took them up to the top of Collins street, turn to the gardens, cross a road and go straight through the gardens, pass straight through these they would see a gate leading their possible and the provident straight through these gardens, and showed them drawers and cuporate, in a motherly and hospitable man.

""And I hope you will be comfort, le," concluded the anniable landlady, and showed them drawers and cuporate, in a motherly and hospitable man, and the control of the middle house of a smart little terrace, with the world the middle house of a smart little terrace, with a few steps of Myrtle street, and the landlady, the street of the middle house of a smart little terrace, with the middle house of a smart little terrace, with the middle house of a smart little terrace, with the middle house of a smart little terrace, with the

or ceasing to caress her cheek with Elizabeth's hand. "Well," she said," don't you think it would be a graceful thing to ask him to come and have tea with us some night? We have made our room pretty"—looking round with contentment—"and we have all we want now. We might get our silver things out of the bureau, and make a couple of little dishes, and put some candles about, and buy a bunch of flowers—for once—what do you say, Nelly? He has never been here since we came in—never farther than the downstairs passage—and wouldn't it be pleasant to have a little house-warming, and show him our things, and give him some music, and—and try to make him enjoy himself? It would be some return for what he has done for us, and his father would be pleased."

himself? It would be some return for what he has done for us, and his father would be pleased."

That she should make the proposition—she who, from the first, had not only never "got on" with him, but had seemed to regard him with active dislike—surprised both her sisters not a little; but the proposition itself appeared to them, as to her, to have every good reason to recommend it. They thought it a most happy idea, and adopted it with enthusiasm. That very evening they made their plans. They designed the simple decorations for their little room, and the appropriate dishes for their modest feast. And, when these details had been settled, they remembered that on the following night no Parliament would be sitting, which meant that Paul would probably come home early (they knew his times of coming and going, for he was back at his old quarters now, having returned in consequence of the departure of the discordant plano, and to oblige Mrs. McIntyre, he said); and that decided them to send him his invitation at once. Patty, while her complaisant mood was on her, wrote it herself before she went to bed, and gave it over the garden railing to Mrs. McIntyre's maid.

In the morning, as they were asking

over the garden railing to Mrs. McIntyre's I maid.

In the morning, as they were asking which of them should go to town to fetch certain materials for their little fete, they heard the door bang and the gate rattle at No. 7, I and a quick step that they knew. And the slavey of No. 6 came upstairs with Paul Brion's answer, which he had left as he passed on his way to his office. The note was addressed to "Miss King," whose amanuensis Patty had carefully explained herself to be when writing her invitation.

"My Dear Miss King,—You are indeed very kind, but I fear I must deny myself the pleasure you propose—than which, I assure you, I could have none greater. If you will allow me, I will come in some day i with Mrs. McIntyre, who is very anxious to see your new menage. And when I come I hope you will let me hear that new piano, which is such an amazing contrast to the old one. Believe me, yours very truly—"PAUL BRION."

"PAUL BRION."

This was Paul Brion's note. When the girls had read it, they stood still and looked at each other in a long, dead silence. Eleanor was the first to speak. Half laughing, but with her delicate face dyed in blushes, she whispered under her breath, "Oh—oh, don't you see what he means?"

"He is quite right—we must thank him," said Elizabeth, gentle as ever, but grave and proud. "We ought not to have wanted it—that is all I am sorry for."

But Patty stood in the middle of the room, white to the lips, and beside herself with passion. "That we should have made such a mistake!—and for him to rebuke us!" she cried, as if it was more than she could bear. "That I should have been the one to write that letter! Elizabeth, I suppose he is not to blame—"

"No my dear—quite the contravy."

one to write that letter! Elizabeth, I suppose he is not to blame—"
"No, my dear—quite the contrary."
"But, all the same, I will never forgive him," said poor Patty in the bitterness of her soul.

CHAPTER IX. MRS. AARONS

so much as say good night to him on the balcony any more. The lesson that he had taught them was sinking deeply into their hearts; they would never forget it again while they lived. They sat at their needlework in the bright gaslight, with the window open and the venetian blind down, and listened to the sound of his footstep and the day again of his half and clearly realized. dragging of his chair, and clearly realized the certainty that it was not because he was too busy that he refused to spend the evening with them, but because he had felt obliged to show them that they had asked him to do a thing that was improper. Patty's head was bent down over her sew-ing; her face was flushed, her eyes restless, her quick fingers moving with nervous ing; her face was flushed, her eyes restless, her quick fingers moving with nervous vehemence. Breaking her needle suddenly, she looked up and exclaimed, "Why are we sitting here so dull and stupid, all silent, like three scolded children? Play something, Nellie. Put away that horrid skirt, and play something bright and stirring—a good rousing march, or something of that sout."

"The Bridal March from 'Lohengrin,"

suggested Elizabeth, softly.

"No," said Patty; "something that will brace us up, and not make us feel small and humble and sat upon." What she meant was "something that will make Paul Brion understand that we don't feel small and humble and sat upon."

understand that we don't feel small and humble and sat upon."
Eleanor rose and laid her long fingers on the keyboard. She was not in the habit of taking things much to heart herself, and she did not quite understand her sister's frame of mind. The spirit of mischief prompted her to choose the saddest thing in the way of a march that she could recall on the spur of the moment—that funeral march of Beethoven's that Patty had always said was capable of reducing her to dust and ashes in her most exuberant moments. She threw the most heartbreaking expression that art that flowed up and down. "If only we had Paul Brion here!"

It was very provoking to Patty, but he was there. Being a small man, he did not come into view till he was within a couple of yards of them, and that was just in time to overhear this invocation. His ordinarily fierce aspect, which she had disrespectfully amiably.

"I don't dislike him," said Patty, quite how you could dislike him," said Patty, quite had insulted him, had for the moment disappeared. The little man showed all over him the pleased surprise with which he had caught the sound of his own name.

"Have you got so far already?" he ex-

broke into a brief but passionate fit of weeping, such as she had never indulged in in all her life before. At the sound of the first sob Eleanor jumped up from the music stool, contrite and frightened—Elizabeth in another moment had her darling in her arms; and both sisters were seized with the fear that Patty was sickening for some illness, caught, probably, in the vitiated atmosphere of city streets, to which she had never been accustomed.

In the stillness of the night, Paul Brion, leaning over the balustrade of the veranda, and whitening his coat against the partition that divided his portion of it from theirs, heard the opening bars of the funeral march, the gradually swelling sound and thrill of its impassioned harmonies, as of a procession tramping towards him along the street, and the sudden lapse into untimely silence. And then he heard, very faintly, a low cry and a few hurried sobs, and it was as if a lash had struck him. He felt sure that it was Patty who had been playing (he thought it must always be Patty who had fallen a victim to the spirit of melancholy that she had invoked—simply because she always did seem to him to represent the action of the little drama of the sisters' lives, and Elizabeth and Eleanor to be the chorus merely; and he had a clear conviction, in the midst of much vague surmise, that he was involved in the causes that had made her unhappy. For a little while he stood still, fixing his eyes upon a neighboring street lamp and scowling frightfully. He heard the girls' open window go down with a sharp rattle, and presently heard it open again hastily to admit Dan, who had been left outside. Then he himself went back, on tiptoe, to his own apartment, with an expression of more than his usual alert determination on his face.

Entering his room, he looked at his watch, shut, his window and bolted it.

in a partment, with an expression or more than his usual alert determination on his face.

Entering his room, he looked at his watch, shut his window and bolted it, walked into the adjoining bedchamber, and there, with the gas flaring noisily so as to give him as much light as possible, made a rapid toilet, exchanging his loose tweeds for evening dress. In less than ten minutes he was down in the hall, with his latch key in his pocket, shaking himself hurriedly into a light overcoat; and in less than half an hour he was standing at the door of a good-sized and rather imposing-looking house in the neighboring suburb, banging it in his peremptory fashion with a particularly loud knocker.

mocker.
Within this house its mistress was received. Within this house its mistress was receiving, and she was a friend of his, as might have been seen by the manner of their greeting when the servant announced him, as also by the expression of certain faces amongst the guests when they heard his name—as they could not well help hearing it. "Mr.—Paul—Brion," the footman shouted, with three distinct and well-accentuated shouts, as if his lady were entertaining in the Town Hall. It gave Mrs. Aarons great pleasure when her domestic, who was a late acquisition, exercised his functions in this impressive manner.

great pleasure when her domestic, who was a late acquisition, exercised his functions in this impressive manner.

She came sailing across the room in a very long-tailed and brilliant gown—a tall, fair, yellow-haired woman, carefully got up in the best style of conventional art (as a lady who had her clothes from Paris regardless of expense was bound to be)—flirting her fan coquettishly, and smiling an unmistakable welcome. She was not young, but she looked young, and she was not pretty, but she was full of sprightly confidence and self-possession, which answered just as well.

"Ah?" said Mrs. Aarons, shaking hands with him impressively, "you have remembered my existence, then, at last! Do you know how many weeks it is since you honored me with your company?—five. And I wonder you can stand there and look me in the face."

He said it had been his misfortune and

He said it had been his misfortune and

not his fault—that he had been so immersed in business that he had had no time to indulge in pleasure.

"Don't tell me. "You don't have business on Friday evenings," said Mrs. Aarons

promptly.

"Oh, don't I?" retorted Mr. Brion (the fact being that he had spent several Friday evenings on his balcony, smoking and listening to his neighbors' music, in the most absolute and voluptuous idleness.) "You lidies don't broat that a series of the series of ladies don't know what a pressman's life is —his nose to the grindstone at all hours of the night and day."

"Poor man! Well now you are

"Poor man! Well, now you are here, come and sit down and tell me what you have been doing."

"Of course I wanted very much to see you—it seems an awful time since I was here—but I had another reason for coming to-night," said Paul, when they had comfortably settled themselves (he was the descendant of countless gentlefolk and she had not even a father that she could conveniently call her own, yet was she constrained to blush for his bad manners and his brutal deficiency in delicacy and tact. his brutal deficiency in delicacy and tact).

"I want to ask a favor of you—you are always so kind and good—and I think you will not mind doing it. It is not much—at least to you—but it would be very much to

them—"
"To whom?" inquired Mrs. Aarons with
a little chill of disappointment and disapproval already in her voice and face. This
was not what she felt she had a right to ex-

something of that cumstances.

'Three girls—three sisters who are orphans—in a kind of way, wards of my father's," exclaimed Paul, showing a disposition to stammer for the first time. Their name is King, and they have come to live in Melbourne, where they don't know anyone—not a single friend. I thought, pernaps, you would just call in and see them some day—it would besoawfully kind of you, if you would. A little notice from a woman like you would be just everything to them."

A Warm Day.

The best method to resolve doubt into certainty, if any such doubt exists as to the efficacy of St. Jacobs Oil, is to use it and be convinced. A warm day is a good day for experiment upon any form of pain and for such, St. Jacobs Oil has no equal.

Berlin ladies recently applied to the police authorities of that city for permission to ride horseback man fashion in public. Baron Ritthofen, chief of police, refused to grant the petition, and an appeal has been made to the Empress herself.

Hunker-So Gildersleeve is married. The match was made in Heaven, of course. Bloobumper—No; in Chicago.